Tutorials: History

OXFORD'S FACULTY OF HISTORY is one of the largest in the country with about 100 permanent teaching staff, 1200 undergraduates and 500 graduates, and served by a large teaching collection of books and electronic resources as well as the Bodleian Library. The size and quality of the department mean that a broad range of subfields are studied: British history is at its core, but American, European, Asian, African and other histories are also studied, supported in some cases by specialist collections such as the Vere Harmondsworth Library for Americana (the largest collection outside North America) or the collection of the Indian Institute. Students have the opportunity to study primary texts as well as secondary literature across a broad range of tutorial options.

The descriptions below are copyright University of Oxford and cover tutorial courses offered by the University to matriculated undergraduates. SSO students follow such courses as closely as is practicable, though there may be scope for minor variation to take into account students' previous experience. Students will not necessarily cover all the material cited in the description (especially when they take the course as a secondary tutorial). All tutorials involve in-depth study: where the title might suggest a survey course, the content of the tutorial will involve focused study on part of the syllabus.

Tutorial list
A Comparative History of the First World War, 1914–20................................................................. 2
Anglo-Saxon Archaeology of the Early Christian Period, 600–c.750 ...................................................... 3
Approaches to History .............................................................................................................................. 4
British Economic History since 1870 .......................................................................................................... 4
British Society in the Twentieth Century ................................................................................................. 5
China in War and Revolution, 1890–1949 ................................................................................................. 5
Conquest and Frontiers: England and the Celtic Peoples, 1150–1220......................................................... 5
Court Culture and Art in Early Modern Europe ......................................................................................... 6
Culture and Society in Early Renaissance Italy, 1290–1348 ................................................................. 6
Culture and Society in France from Voltaire to Balzac ............................................................................. 7
Culture, Politics and Identity in Cold War Europe, 1945–68 ................................................................. 7
English Chivalry and the French War, c.1330 – c.1400 ......................................................................... 8
English Society in the Seventeenth Century ......................................................................................... 9
Flanders and Italy in the Quattrocento, 1420–80 .................................................................................... 9
From Julian the Apostle to Saint Augustine, 350–95 .......................................................................... 10
General History I (285–476) .................................................................................................................. 10
General History II (476–750) ................................................................................................................ 11
General History III (700–900) ................................................................................................................ 12
General History IV (900–1122) .............................................................................................................. 13
General History V (1122–1273) ............................................................................................................ 14
General History VI (1273–1409) ........................................................................................................... 15
General History VII (1409–1525) ......................................................................................................... 15
General History VIII (1500–1618) ..................................................................................................... 16
General History IX (1600–1715) ......................................................................................................... 16
General History X (1715–1799) ......................................................................................................... 17
General History XI (1789–1871) .......................................................................................................... 18
General History XII (1856–1914) ...................................................................................................... 18
General History XIII (1914–1945) ..................................................................................................... 19
General History XIV (1941–1973) .................................................................................................... 20
General History XV (Britain's North American Colonies from Settlement to Independence, 1600–1812) .. 21
General History XVI (From Colonies to Nation: the History of the United States, 1776–1877) ............ 21

For more information and to apply visit bestsemester.com/sso; email sso@bestsemester.com
A Comparative History of the First World War, 1914–20

At the end of 1914, most of the nations of Europe were locked in to a brutal struggle which tested their endurance to the utmost. In 1917 the United States entered the war and Russia collapsed into revolution. Both events raised new and utopian visions which profoundly influenced all of the combatants. Finally, in 1918, German representatives crossed the Allied lines and sued for an Armistice. Why did Germany lose the war? Were other outcomes possible? Early allied success? German victory? Compromise peace?
Tutorials: History

The focus of the course will be on the great battles. Were the battles the futile slaughter of popular myth or the very essence of industrial war? Was Verdun ‘a meaningless battle in a meaningless war’ or a true turning point in the twentieth century? Was Douglas Haig an incompetent butcher or one of the greatest generals in British history? Was the war in other theatres fundamentally different to that in the West? The course will examine the writings of the military and political decision makers, often written as conscious apologias for their actions. It will also examine their contemporary critics. In addition, it will examine the writings of the subjects of these actions, the ordinary soldiers and civilians who had to live with the consequences. It will seek to examine the relationship between the two, how far did the decision makers have to act with the consent of their ‘victims’?

The comparative perspective plays a valuable role in this exercise. Did the nations face variants on the same problem or substantially different problems? Were they pursuing similar strategies or fundamentally different ones? Were the generals the ‘donkeys’ of popular legend or genuinely creative figures (or a mixture of both)? Did anyone really win? To answer this, we should ask about the relationship between history and popular memory. Much of what we think we know about the war has been shaped by artistic representation: poetry, novels, film and painting. We should examine these sources critically to try to discover how far they aid our understanding and how far they hinder it. The film of All Quiet on the Western Front and the poetry of Wilfred Owen have shaped our understanding of the war more than Haig’s diary or Ludendorff’s Memoirs, but should they? Few subjects raise larger questions about the critical examination of sources. Finally, did these years ‘make’ the twentieth century with all its subsequent horrors?

Anglo-Saxon Archaeology of the Early Christian Period, 600–c.750

In 600 the peoples who came to be known as ‘the Anglo-Saxons’ were ethnically diverse, politically fragmented and largely pagan; by 750 they had emerged as one of the major cultures of post-Roman Europe, with towns, a complex economy and a network of richly-endowed churches. The fusion of Germanic, Celtic and Mediterranean traditions produced a material culture of astonishing richness and originality, including such internationally famous works as the Sutton Hoo grave goods, the Ruthwell and Bewcastle crosses and the Lindisfarne Gospels. This is currently one of the most lively areas of medieval history, as old discoveries are reassessed, and new ones (especially in the areas of economy and settlement) overturn accepted views. The excitement of this subject is to trace the remarkable growth of English society and culture in response to external stimuli. Archaeology is defined in the widest sense, to include illuminated manuscripts, precious objects, coins, sculpture and buildings as well as sites and finds. The subject-matter covers a spectrum from the primary (e.g. photographs and excavation reports) to the secondary (e.g. interpretative books and articles). A series of specific sites, structures and objects are prescribed for detailed study, but the bibliography also contains a range of other ‘primary’ material which illuminates the wider context, and which is revised from year to year as new discoveries are made. Mastering the art of using physical evidence, and of reading and criticizing excavation reports, involves some initial intellectual effort but is highly rewarding. A selection of (very brief) extracts from contemporary written sources (amounting to some 5000 words) is also set for study.

By the end of the course, students should have gained knowledge of sites, buildings, sculptures, manuscripts, coins, and other artefacts from c.600 to c.750, with special reference to the following:

a) The Sutton Hoo cemetery;
b) The sixth and/or seventh century cemeteries at Snape, Dover, Castledyke (Barton-on-Humber), Finglesham, Leighton Buzzard, Ashall, Winnall, and Swanlowcliffe Down;
c) The Cuthbert burial;
d) The ecclesiastical sites at Wearmouth, Jarrow, Hexham, Ripon, Hartlepool, Whitby, Winchester, Canterbury, Reculver;
e) The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Lichfield Gospels;
f) The Ruthwell and Bewcastle Crosses;
g) The secular sites at Yeavering, Mucking, West Stow, Chalton, Cowdery’s Down, Thirlings,
Tutorials: History

Hamwic, Ipswich, London, York, and Northampton;
h) The following rich objects: The Desborough necklace, the Ixworth, Wilton, Cuthbert and Milton Regis crosses, the St Martin’s, Canterbury hoard, the Canterbury Pendant, the Franks Casket, the Monkton and Amherst Brooches;
i) The coins of the period.
j) Bibliographical lists of the principal relevant works will be made available.

Approaches to History
This course introduces students to ways of looking at the past that will probably be novel to them. The course explores both the strengths and the weaknesses of looking at the past from the perspective of other intellectual disciplines, with their varied methodologies and their different types of evidence (anthropology; archaeology; art history; economics and sociology). The course also offers a chance to examine the particular perspective on history offered by an awareness of the role of gender and gender difference, an approach that has been developed powerfully in recent decades. The study of each Approach is organized around a series of broad sub-topics, which are described more fully below.

Prescribed topics: The course is concerned with the ways in which the writing of history has been influenced by other disciplines, methods and techniques. Students will focus on two or three different ‘approaches’ out of the six set out below.
1) Anthropology and History: Family and Kinship; Authority and Power; Religion; Magic and Popular Culture; The Construction of History.
2) Archaeology and History: Landscape; Production and Exchange; Burial: Belief and Social Status; The Built Environment: Form and Function.
3) Art and History: Creation and Consumption; Art and Politics; The Power of Images and Ways of Seeing; The Idea of the History of Art: Displaying, Writing and Collecting.
4) Economics and History: From Poverty to Mass Prosperity; The Spread of Commerce; Economics and Population Change; Economics and Social Structure.
5) Gender and History: Family and Sexuality; Gender and Work; Gender, Religion and Culture; Gender and Political Change.
6) Sociology and History: Sociological Techniques; Social Stratification; Power and Authority; Sociology and Religion.

Students should state at time of application which approaches they wish to study.

British Economic History since 1870
The emphasis in this course is on the successes and problems of British economic development in an international context. The course covers a period from the time period of Britain’s global industrial leadership to its current position as one of a number advanced economies. The course explicitly uses economic reasoning and students should have some familiarity with economic concepts. There are no set texts; the formal syllabus is given below. The main themes covered include Britain in the late nineteenth-century international economy, loss of technological leadership to America, the problems of inflation, unemployment and depression between the wars, Britain’s relative performance during the post-
Tutorials: History

World War Two: Golden Years, the end of the ‘golden years’ in inflation and unemployment.

The syllabus is: trends and cycles in national income, factor supplies, and productivity; changes in the structure of output, employment, and capital; foreign trade, tariffs, international capital movements, and sterling; prices, interest rates, money, and public finance; Government economic policy in peace and war; wages, unemployment, trade unions, and the working of the labour market; management and entrepreneurship; the location of industries, industrial concentration, and the growth of large firms; the distribution of incomes, poverty, and living standards.

British Society in the Twentieth Century
This subject offers an opportunity to study in depth the profound changes that affected British society and popular culture in the past century. The focus is on the history of society rather than on social policy and the course extends to the present day. Themes explored within the subject are: population, sexuality, and the family; class, gender and stratification; immigration and ethnicity; health and living standards; urban life; the experience of work and of unemployment; religion; education; crime; leisure and the influence of the mass media; the impact of war; and methods of social research. There is an extensive, lively and often topical secondary literature and primary source material includes oral history and memoirs as well as social surveys and commentaries, official reports and quantitative data. There are opportunities, too, for using film. The course will require students to acquire some familiarity with primary sources.

China in War and Revolution, 1890–1949
This course introduces the history of modern China, concentrating particularly on the early twentieth century. No previous knowledge of Chinese history is necessary to take it, and all the texts are in English. The course looks at the politics, society and culture of China during a period when the country experienced a constant battering by war, foreign imperialism, and economic and social crisis. The late nineteenth century saw China wracked by one of the bloodiest civil wars in history, the Taiping rebellion, as well as widespread addiction to opium, popularized by British traders. As China became a republic after the 1911 Revolution, nationalism and anti-imperialism emerged as strong forces, and the Communist Party, which would eventually rule over a quarter of humanity, began its rise to power. The early twentieth century also saw the emergence of a mass popular culture (novels, films, cartoons), the growth of the modern city, huge changes in the position of women, an increase in the role of the underworld and triad gangs, and not least, the massive upheavals of the 1937–45 war against Japan. The course ends by considering the effect of the Chinese experience of war and revolution in shaping the communist victory in 1949. The course aims to give a thorough grounding in the issues that have shaped this important and influential nation. Students will be encouraged to develop particular interests with further reading.

Conquest and Frontiers: England and the Celtic Peoples, 1150–1220
The reigns of the first three Angevin kings – Henry II, Richard I, and John – provide the first opportunity to look in some documentary detail at the impact of the English on the countries we know as Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. The story is, in part, one of military conquest and confrontation, as the English tightened their grip on Wales and for the first time (in 1169–70) began to bring Ireland under their control. But it is also a story of economic, cultural, and institutional change, as the impact of English models and practices came into contact with native societies, cultures, and polities. The results could range from close imitation (as in the governance and law of Scotland) to an entrenched duality of cultures (as in Wales and Ireland). The sources for studying these processes are exceptionally rewarding on the English side: notably the splendid accounts of the Welsh and of the conquest of Ireland by the irrepressible Gerald of Wales and a vivid and lively Anglo-Norman poem on the conquest of Ireland. These English sources can be illuminatingly complemented by Irish, Welsh, and Scottish annals and poetry. The secondary reading for this subject is also now rich and approachable.
Tutorials: History

Court Culture and Art in Early Modern Europe
This subject is intended for students who wish to combine an interest in the structures of courts and court culture with an introduction to some of the major issues and methodological challenges involved in studying the history of art in a courtly context. The study of courts as the focus of political, social and cultural authority within the early modern state has been a dynamic and exciting area of historical enquiry in the last few decades. No less important has been the impact of both art-historical and historical scholarship in exploring the practical mechanisms of art patronage, the use of art by rulers and other élites to construct justifications for the legitimation of authority, and the respective role of artists, patrons and scholars in the formulation of ideological programmes within a court context. The course will seek to bring these two areas together in a study that will focus on a number of specific courts and on wider issues connected with court patronage of the arts, the resources and aims of patrons, and the reactions of both courtly and non-courtly élites to these initiatives. The course will examine some of the historiographical and methodological problems involved in studying courts and in coming to terms with what will be for most students the unfamiliar context of art-historical scholarship, and will then look at a range of European courts, from Papal Rome, through the early Stuarts, the Habsburg court at Brussels and Louis XIV’s Versailles, while additional topics will include the role of female patrons, the place of collecting in court patronage and the use of theatrical, musical or other staged performances in court culture.

The prescribed texts and documents will introduce the student to a variety of texts and documents concerning the detail of commissions and execution of works of art, inventories of collections, correspondence between artists, courtiers. Near-contemporary writings about artists give insights into issues such as factional rivalries, political or familial strategies, perceptions of artistic merit and the status of artists in court culture. There are no prescribed images for this course, though students will be encouraged to analyse particular works of art as case studies in understanding the workings of patronage, the politics of display or the operations of court ritual and etiquette. In a number of cases, holdings in the major Oxford art galleries will be used to supplement this visual evidence.

Culture and Society in Early Renaissance Italy, 1290–1348
This subject engages with Italian society in a period of extraordinary flux and creativity. As the city-communes came to the end of their period of dominance in Italian politics, several amongst them – including Florence, Siena and Padua, studied here – produced the most elaborate manifestations of civic pride and republican identity. These took the form not simply of governmental and financial institutions, but of newly created piazzas and town halls, statues and frescoes, church building and the elaboration of civic ceremony. In addition, the writing of history and of political and religious polemic contributed to current debate about the character and purpose of life in the cities – a debate which was conducted against a background of conflict and often extreme violence. All of these aspects of urban culture are represented amongst the various texts and images prescribed for the course.

Linking many of these themes is the career and work of Dante, whose Comedy is both an extraordinary creative achievement and a sustained critique of contemporary society. The psychological realism introduced into literature by Dante’s vast panorama finds a miniature successor in Petrarch’s The Secret, the witty self-analysis of a Christian man of classical letters. The transformation of the visual arts which also occurred at this time is represented by Giotto, Duccio, and their contemporaries, whose painting and sculpture is examined both with respect to its style and technique, and in relation to its patrons, setting and audience.

The textual sources are prescribed in translation. A rich secondary literature exists in English. Texts: Dante, La Divina Commedia; Dante, Monarchy; Marsilius of Padua, The Defender of Peace, tr. A. Gewirth (1951), Dictio I and Dictio II, pp. 102–56; Selections from the Chronicle Fiorentine of Giovanni Villani, trans. R. E. Selfe
Tutorials: History


Culture and Society in France from Voltaire to Balzac

This subject will allow you to explore the main developments in French thought, manners, and social structures from the age of Enlightenment to the post-revolutionary period of Romanticism and Realism. The prescribed texts thus offer a variety of sources (treatises, memoirs, novels, commentaries), and it is hoped that these will be studied within their social contexts, whose mœurs and mentalités they reflect. These texts will leave sufficient scope for candidates and indeed encourage them to pursue any interests they may have in particular topics: e.g. the literary and artistic transition from classical or neo-classical forms to Romanticism and to the early manifestations of Realism (especially in the novel); the function of land and office as mechanisms for social advancement from the noble and privileged society of the old regime to the emergence of other notables under Napoleon, the Bourbon Restoration, and the July Monarchy; how people survived the Revolution and adjusted to Napoleon’s dictatorship; the implications for the Church and for religious expression of the Revolution’s secularizing measures and of Napoleon’s Concordat with the Pope; the impact of urbanization and embourgeoisement on the older rural structures and mentality, and the interaction and conflict between them. The prescribed texts (many of which are available in modern English translations) allow considerable flexibility, and each student should be able to create a preferred ‘core’ from them, in consultation with his or her tutor.


Culture, Politics and Identity in Cold War Europe, 1945–68.

This subject is intended to provide a stimulating and wide-ranging introduction to the social, cultural and political history of post-Second World War Europe, both east and west. By crossing the fixed frontier between western and eastern Europe, it encourages students to regard...
the history of post-war Europe as a unity. Similarly, it deliberately transgresses the boundaries between political, social and cultural history. By using cultural sources, it seeks to illuminate political and social trends; and by placing those cultural texts in a political context, it challenges students to see those texts as emphatically historical sources. At the heart of the course is the examination of the broad social and cultural shape of Europe after its traumatic exit from the personal and political horrors of the 1930s and 1940s. What Richard Bessel has recently termed the era of 'Life after Death' was one of rapid political change, notably the emergence of two dominant forces, Communism and Christian Democracy, which had hitherto been minority currents in European political life. At the same time, social processes of 'modernization' were accelerated by state policies and by the rapid levels of economic growth experienced in almost all areas of Europe. The consequence was a European society of unprecedented social and geographical mobility, in which the gaps and tensions between regions, classes, the sexes and generations were widened by cultural, technological and economic changes. Central to these overlapping and often tumultuous processes was the quest for identity, both collective and individual. National and political identities had been transformed and quite literally uprooted by the events of the previous decade. New regimes were installed in almost all of the major European states, new frontiers drawn and new social and political contracts established. Amidst these wider processes, families and individuals sought to recover a sense of 'normality' and personal identity. By exploring the culture of the era, this course will seek to recover the personal experience of Europeans during the twenty-five years which followed the Second World War.

This is not therefore another Cold War history course. It is an attempt to get under the skin of post-war Europe by approaching it from a range of cultural sources. The set texts include a number of major novels by Böll, Calvino and Kundera, films such as Fellini’s La dolce vita, political writing by de Beauvoir, Sartre, Marcuse, Fanon and Orwell and a number of memoirs written by ‘ordinary’ Europeans who lived through the extraordinary upheavals of these years. The topics which will be covered include the legacies of war, the impact of consumerism, generational conflicts and the origins of the social and cultural carnival of 1968. The course requires no prior knowledge of the period and all texts are in English translation.

**English Chivalry and the French War, c.1330 – c.1400**

This subject focuses on the history of the fourteenth-century phase of the Hundred Years War between England and France, and on the social, military, and political preoccupations of the knightly sector of English society that was so deeply involved in it. This period, which witnessed the great victories of Edward III and the Black Prince at Crécy and Poiitiers, the foundation of the Order of the Garter and Richard II’s distribution of his famous white hart livery badge, has been hailed as England’s Age of Chivalry. Though concentrating on the English side, the subject necessarily has also a continental dimension. The prescribed texts have been chosen in order to open up and illuminate a series of major themes, and it is expected that those studying the subject will want to concentrate more heavily on some of these than on others, according to individual choice and taste. A wide selection from the principal chroniclers introduces the basic narrative history, and includes detailed accounts of the major campaigns and battles. There is a substantial body of material chosen to illustrate the cultural history of the period, the ideals of chivalry and of courtly love, the contemporary concern with heraldry and with tourneying and the abiding interest in the crusades; this includes both literary and iconographic evidence, selections from Chaucer and from alliterative poetry, and artefacts such as the Wilton Diptych, the Black Prince’s tomb and some monumental brass. Another theme is the organization of war, the problems of recruitment, discipline, provision of horses, the sharing of spoils; and the problem of soldiers’ pay, and of raising of taxes to meet war expenditure. Diplomatic history, naturally, has its place too and the selection here is designed to introduce questions about the making of truces and treaties and also to open up some important related topics: war propaganda, contemporary
views of the morality of war, and of the value as well as the means of making peace.

**English Society in the Seventeenth Century**

This course offers vivid insights into English culture, society and social relations during a century when they were undergoing far reaching changes; and in exploring the nature of these developments and their inter-relations, attention is focused as much on contemporary perceptions and representations as on modern historians’ understanding of what was happening. The course ranges very widely, encompassing such topics as the economic and social order; orality, literacy and culture; the rise and fall of witch-hunting; attitudes to poverty, crime and sexual delinquency; ideas about manners and gentility; gender relations and family ties. All these themes are explored in ways that will be found rewarding both by students who come to the period afresh, and those who wish to deepen their understanding of social and cultural history during this time. The subject is based in a rich historiography that is constantly being reinvigorated by lively research. Specifically, the subject embraces seven broad areas: social relations; patterns of settlement, including the causes and effects of population change, migration and the growth of London; family and household, in all their aspects from marriage to the role of women, children and servants; agrarian, industrial and commercial change; patterns of consumption, in such matters as fashion, diet and recreation; cultural differentiation, including the diffusion of reading and writing skills and the variety of popular cultures; and finally poverty and poor relief, social regulation and crime. Among the prescribed documents are extracts from contemporary tracts, including William Gouge’s Of Domesticall Duties, on family and domestic relations; Hannah Woolley’s The Gentlewoman’s Companion; or A Guide to the Female Sex; Francis Hawkins’s Youth’s Behaviour; and William Higford’s Institution of a Gentleman. There are also local census and poor relief documents, a travel journal, a diary chronicling a troubled marriage, extracts from church court and criminal proceedings (including witchcraft cases), and the incomparable History of Myddle, Richard Gough’s lively account of the inhabitants of a Shropshire parish. The collection is completed by extracts from J. Thirsk and J.P. Cooper, Seventeenth-Century Economic Documents, chosen to illustrate contemporary opinion on social structures and patterns of consumption, as well as economic developments more narrowly defined.

**Flanders and Italy in the Quattrocento, 1420–80**

This subject offers candidates the possibility of studying and comparing themes in cultural history which are often considered apart. Its aim is to examine aspects of the civilizations of both the ‘Gothic’ North and ‘Renaissance’ South in fifteenth-century Europe. In the North, the Low Countries witnessed the emergence of an art of remarkable naturalism (represented by Jan van Eyck, Roger van der Weyden and Hans Memling). Meanwhile, the Italian peninsula saw the development of a more idealized vision of the world, beginning with the works of Masaccio and drawing increasingly on Greek and Roman antiquity for both subject-matter and inspiration. Beside these apparently divergent tendencies, some common ground existed between the two cultures: urban life, the rise of princely courts and households, mercantile and financial contacts, and important movements in devotional religion. One purpose of the subject is therefore to examine the relationship between the visual art of these regions and the societies from which it emerged.

The prescribed texts and documents introduce the student to the theoretical literature of the arts as well as to the study of patronage and purchase: humanist treatises, contracts, inventories and correspondence between patrons and artists. Devotional trends are illustrated by saints’ lives and by texts emanating from the devotio moderna of the age. Intermediaries between North and South such as diplomatic envoys, the agents of the Medici bank and foreign observers are also represented. A selection of photographs of works of art, chosen to illustrate both differences and affinities, forms an important part of the source material. By studying visual and documentary evidence together, a reappraisal of the comparisons and contrasts between
Tutorials: History

Netherlandish and Italian culture can be undertaken. In the process, material from cities other than Florence (e.g. Milan, Ferrara, Mantua and Urbino) is studied and the role of princes as patrons emphasized.

The prescribed texts (with one exception) are available in English translation, and in practice no foreign language is required for the course. Students will be required primarily to study and compare cultural and artistic developments in the Low Countries and Italy during the fifteenth century, but attention should also be given to political, economic, social, and religious issues.

From Julian the Apostle to Saint Augustine, 350–95

The Late Roman Empire, an age of traditionalism and far-reaching change, is no longer dismissed as ‘decadent’. This course offers an opportunity to study its culture and society in the half-century before the fatal impact of barbarian invasion, reflected in the writings of two of the most articulate graduates of the classical system of education: a Greek-speaking emperor who rejected the Christianity which had been forced upon him and tried to revive a moribund paganism, and a university teacher of Latin rhetoric whose conversion has given Christianity one of its most influential theologians and philosophers. The Confessions of Augustine, the most vivid autobiography of Antiquity, is the central text, counterpointed by some of Julian’s uneasy and self-revelatory writings, in a literary context. It includes the work of pagan intellectuals known to Julian and letters of two of Latin Christianity’s most forceful champions, St. Ambrose and St. Jerome, as well as of the litterateur Symmachus, author of what has been called the swansong of Roman paganism. There are glimpses of figures like Petronius Probus, the millionaire who crowned a career of misgovernment by being buried in St. Peter’s, and the pagan Praetextatus, who jokingly demanded the Papacy as the price of his conversion. A historical background is provided by extracts from the last great Roman historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, and from the abundant surviving legislation. All the prescribed texts, which have been chosen for literary merit as well as historical interest, are read in translation; some knowledge of Latin is desirable, but it is not compulsory.

General History I (285–476)

Ancient and medieval history meet in this period. In 285 it was still possible for a humbly-born autocrat to impose his will, more or less, upon an empire which extended almost from the Cheviots to the Sahara, from the Atlantic to the valleys of the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Nile. Within this vast area, which for centuries had been a cultural, economic, political unity, it was still possible for an ordinary citizen to travel anywhere unarmed, if he carried one coinage and spoke two languages. Early in the fifth century a theologian born in Britain, educated at Rome, could by his teaching stampede bishops in Africa and Palestine. But by 476, the end of this period, when the last Roman emperor of the West was deposed, although there was still an emperor in the East, most of Roman Africa, almost all of Roman Europe, had been fragmented into a medley of sub-Roman kingdoms ruled by the descendants of German invaders. This is the moment when Edward Gibbon’s History of the Decline and Fall – as he memorably calls it – pauses mid-way, as if to catch its breath.

Few scholars would now agree with Gibbon, when he reflects upon the end of the western Empire, that ‘the story of its ruin is simple and obvious’; but many share his surprise that ‘it had subsisted so long’. In the richly-documented fourth century, if we read A.H.M. Jones’s monumental The Later Roman Empire (1964), it is fascinating to see how the Empire actually functioned; its army and bureaucracy, its self-congratulating aristocracy and intellectuals, the steep-sided, appalling economic pyramid, all those ‘emperors and barbarians, soldiers, landlords and tax-collectors’ brilliantly dismissed by Peter Brown from The World of Late Antiquity (1971); and rightly so, for this was also a century which produced the last great Roman historian (incidentally a Greek who wrote in Latin), the first illustrated edition of Virgil, the greatest autobiography of all antiquity, Augustine’s Confessions, and which even saw the invention (at least on paper) of the paddle steamer. Where Gibbon saw ‘the ripening of the principles of decay’, we might see a renaissance strangled; and
see the conversion of Constantine and the progressive Christianization of the Empire, his foundation of a New Rome at the cross-roads of Europe and Asia, as the catalysts of change and survival.

‘Survival’ is too negative a word for this great age of transition and transformation. Yet we must try to answer the questions posed – or evaded – by Gibbon. Were the Empire’s neighbours, the Germans and Persians in particular, its mortal rivals or its partners in a dangerous but fertile symbiosis? Did the Church fatally weaken the Empire with its ‘idle mouths’ and other-worldly teaching, or did it revitalize it? Did Christian unity, imposed by argument if not by force, make for strength or for division? Was ‘heresy’ a human perversity, or the latest flowering of Greek ingenuity, philosophy and intellectual gymnastics? Did paganism fall, or was it pushed? Are these ‘interesting times’ a hazardous age of social mobility, of careers in Church, army and government open to talent, or the dull landscape of repression and conformity painted by imperial legislation? Was late-Roman art and culture going down the easy road of ‘decadence’, or was it striking out in new directions? Why did Byzantium and the East prosper? Why did Rome, the Eternal City, cease to be the capital and lapse into a run-down museum of Roman collaborators ruled by a German king?

**General History II (476–750)**

Two events of great symbolic significance frame this period – the final, formal elimination of imperial rule in the western half of the Roman empire in 476 and the installation of a new Abbasid regime in the Caliphate in 750. In a period such as this of dramatic shifts of political fortune and impressive military feats, the history of events attracts its due share of attention – whether it be the creation of a large, unitary Frankish kingdom in Gaul, or Justinian’s determined reassertion of East Roman authority in the West, or the Islamic conquests. But the principal concern of tutors is to encourage analysis of structural change and cross-cultural
Comparisons. A wide range of cultures come under scrutiny. The whole of western Eurasia, from the inner Asian frontiers of Iran to the Atlantic, lies within the potential remit of this period. In practice the individual taker’s coverage is more limited and tends to be geographically clustered – with perhaps one week devoted to probing an outlying culture by way of contrast and another dealing with a thematic topic (religious, say, or economic) which transcends individual polities. Actual pathways through the subject are determined by the varying expertises of tutors and specific interests of students. The principal justification for this restriction in the range of study is that it enables undergraduate historians to probe individual topics in depth and, in particular, to read many of the relevant primary sources. Mastery of the primary material is achievable by undergraduates in the course of essay assignments, the sources themselves being easily accessible in convenient English translations. It is therefore possible for students to subject the principal sources to proper critical appraisal, and thereafter to explore the subjects of their choice with considerable independence.

The overarching theme is that of continuity/discontinuity at all levels of history – economic, social, governmental, religious and cultural. In the economic sphere, students can investigate the sharp contrast between the fortunes of Europe and the Mediterranean, on the one hand (clear evidence of steep and fairly generalized economic decline), and the eastern hinterland of the Mediterranean, on the other (three centuries of sustained growth following the coming of Islam). In the pattern of society, a number of central themes can be examined: in the West the fate of Roman élites in the new Germanic states, the pattern of Germanic settlement, and the interplay between the two cultures; in the East, the initial impermeability of the Slavs to classical culture in central and southeastern Europe, the far-reaching social effects of Byzantium’s war effort, and the promotion of urban life and the growing tension in relations between Arabs and non-Arabs in the Islamic community. In government, thought must be given to another sharp contrast between West and East: in the latter developed fiscal systems continued to function, in the former they gradually failed, thereby weakening the institutions and eroding the ideology of centralized monarchical rule. In religious life, the period saw a number of new developments – in particular the spread of monasticism and the rise of the Papacy as an independent force within Western Christendom – but also some important continuities, such as the vital role of the bishop as a force for stability in a rapidly changing world. Finally, a divergence in cultural fortunes between West and East must be registered, although, in this case, continuity characterized Christendom (as exemplified by the collectors and systematizers of knowledge such as Boethius and Isidore of Seville), while in the East the coming of Islam eventually brought about a complete cultural revolution.

General History II confronts undergraduate historians with a number of fascinating problems that require a direct appraisal of the surviving evidence (how much faith to put in hagiographical sources? How much can be read into a highly selective archaeological record of trading activities? How much have historical narratives been shaped by a wish to present a very particular image of the past?). It demands that polities and cultures be studied in the round, as whole systems of interconnected economic, social, institutional and ideological phenomena, and, thanks to the accessibility and manageability of the source material, it is possible for undergraduates to do so. It encourages sound judgement and controlled imagination. It introduces undergraduates to what is undoubtedly the formative period in which the main component parts of modern western Eurasia took shape.

General History III (700–900)
This period began with the frontiers of Christendom shrinking under the impact of Islam to the smallest area that it ever occupied after Constantine’s conversion. It concluded with writers using the word ‘Europe’ in a recognizably contemporary sense. One of the pivotal periods of European history by any standards, it was also one of expansion in almost all areas of human activity.
The central episode from most points of view was the reign of Charlemagne, king of the Franks 768–814 and ‘emperor’ from his coronation at Rome on Christmas Day 800. He was the most powerful ruler that western Europe saw between the end of the Roman empire and the reign of his namesake Charles V: his significance for the history of medieval Europe was comparable to that of Napoleon for modern times. The ruthlessly effective leader of the army of the Franks, the West’s ‘superpower’, Charlemagne could be said in his famous biography by Einhard to have doubled the area of his kingdom: at his death, it stretched from the Ebro and Volturno to the Channel and the Danish border, and from Brittany to Bohemia. His reign also saw an explosion of visible government activity, whether in law-making or economic management (through coinage). More important, it was an era of ideological reform: of a Renaissance conceived literally as society’s spiritual rebirth through observance of the Bible. The pressure to reform generated prodigious growth in the output of books: three times as many Latin manuscripts survive from ninth-century Francia as from the entire period prior to 800. So important was this activity to the survival of the Classics that Italian humanists believed its elegant and versatile ‘Caroline minuscule’ script to be that of Cicero’s time, which is why its letter-forms are those we still use today. The object of the exercise, however, was not to rediscover antiquity but to forge a Christian society; intellectually, the period was one of vigorous theological controversy, which was already raising some of the central issues of the Reformation (predestination, the Eucharist) 700 years before Luther, and which featured in the Irish John the Scot one of the most brilliantly original philosophers of any age.

Developments in the visual arts left no less palpable marks in manuscript illumination of vivid creativity, and in the first monumental buildings to survive north of the Alps since Roman times – most obviously Charlemagne’s own palace chapel at Aachen.

The Franks may be the central characters of the period, but it was also one of major developments in other parts of the documented world. The Papacy began to reorientate itself from allegiance to the emperor at Constantinople in favour of a more obviously western outlook. Having narrowly escaped extinction at the hands of Islam, the Byzantine empire began the recovery that would restore most of its old frontiers and glory by 1000, and also commenced the expansion of its influence among the Slavs, leading to the conversion of the Bulgars (and the creation of Cyrillic, another script still in use). The Islamic caliphate itself, based at Baghdad, was certainly the most prosperous, urbanized, literate and generally ‘civilized’ society that the known world had seen since the end of Antiquity: it was a culture capable of creating from scratch a city the size of Greater London. At other corners of Europe, a rival Arab dynasty in Spain was forging the state and culture that would make it the most formidable and colourful polity in the tenth-century West; while in the far North, the ‘Vikings’ burst into the consciousness of literate man in a movement that was not only one of ‘Vikings’ (i.e. raiders) but also of urban and commercial growth throughout the North and West of Europe – one whose settlements east of the Baltic are the acknowledged origins of Russia, and whose North Atlantic adventures created in the Icelandic republic the first major stepping-stone in Europe’s route to the New World.

Among the most attractive features of earlier medieval history is the amount that is not and never will be known about it. There is always scope for debate and speculation. But this much is certain: while any period of western history can lay claim to its own special importance, the Carolingian era saw more seminal developments than most.

General History IV (900–1122)
This option offers you the challenge of coming to grips with societies quite different from our own, whether they be those of the emerging medieval kingdoms and churches of western Europe or the neighbouring and more developed worlds of the Byzantine Empire and Muslim Caliphates of Cordova and Baghdad. You can now also approach the period through a rich body of translated sources as well as material sources (e.g. Romanesque churches, illuminated manuscripts, archaeology, numismatics).
Tutorials: History

In the West the period opens with the invasions of Vikings, Arabs and Magyars following the collapse of the Carolingian Empire: here the focus is as much on the fragmentation of authority as on the gradual formation of the new kingdoms and empires which were to hold sway for much of the middle ages. Instead of taking the rule of kings and nobles for granted, you are encouraged to ask what were the bases of their power and authority, looking at topics such as sacral authority and ritual, kinship and gift-giving, rebellion and feud, and the way in which castle building transformed the landscape of power. The tenets of classic works such as Marc Bloch’s Feudal Society (1961) will be explored and questioned. The role of monasteries, the church and the miraculous (the cult of saints) provide further central themes. The nature of religious reform will come into stark relief, whether in relation to monasteries such as Cluny and Gorze in the tenth century, or in relation to the eleventh-century papal reform movement named after Gregory VII, which established the papacy as a central institution in the Middle Ages and beyond. By the end of the period we see the first stirrings of the twelfth-century renaissance, brought alive by sources such as the letters of Abelard and Heloise.

Any attempt to analyze what life was like for those within this world will lead you to consider the extent to which we are still dealing with a subsistence economy at the beginning of this period but one in which we can chart the increasingly vigorous stirrings of a moneyed and market-orientated economy. With the emergence of Venice, Genoa and the towns of Flanders and the Baltic it becomes possible to speak with confidence of urban life and long-distance trade for the first time since the decline of the Roman Empire. At one level the peasantry can be viewed as mere chattels of the elite, but from other angles it is population growth, the peasant land market and peasant colonization which provided the most dynamic and decisive forces shaping this period. Consideration of the role of women will challenge the idea that development was all one way; for instance, in the late tenth century the German Empire, West Francia, Lorraine and England were all ruled by women on behalf of their sons.

Many students will concentrate on western Europe, turning to neighbouring societies as points of comparison and contrast, but for others these neighbouring societies will be central to their work. Key areas for study include: the relations between Muslim and Christian Spain, the former with a far more developed economy and culture than anything in the West during this period; the wider Muslim world centred on the vast metropolis of Baghdad; the First Crusade, pogroms and the Jewish communities of Europe and the Middle East; the Byzantine Empire which can be glimpsed so vividly through the translated writings of Liudprand, Psellus and Anna Comnena; and the emergence of the kingdom of the Russ through a process of ethnogenesis between Slavs and Vikings.

General History V (1122–1273)

On this course you will have the opportunity to study the main political developments in the monarchies of France, Spain, the western Empire, Byzantium, and the kingdom of Jerusalem. Together with the achievements of monarchs or dynasties, these developments will be understood to include the fortunes of Italian cities, the papal-imperial contest, and the rise of powers to the east of Germany and north of Byzantium like Poland, Hungary, and the Mongols. The papacy, present in some of these developments as an Italian territorial interest or as the organizer of crusades, was also the focus of the church’s system of canon law, as of many of its religious and intellectual aspirations (as shown, for instance, by Cistercian monasticism, the rise of the friars, scholastics such as Abelard and Aquinas, and the University of Paris). Popes also helped organize ecclesiastical reactions to heresy, the Albigensian heresy among others, and in order to investigate heresy, towards the end of the period, they devised a special court in the form of the heresy-inquisition. While these political, religious and intellectual themes will form the main subject areas for a student’s choice of essays, they cannot be understood without some knowledge of social, economic, and artistic developments. Once you are grounded in political and institutional history, these latter can be tackled in more specialist essays. Topics here might include population-growth, the relation...
Tutorials: History

between the sexes, urbanization, trade, technological innovation (as in Gothic building) and the burst of vernacular writing that created courtly romance and the poetry of the troubadours. If the variety of such topics were not endless the subject would stagnate – one thing the study of this period, at least, never does.

General History VI (1273–1409)
The fourteenth century is usually associated with disaster: the famines of 1316–22, the Black Death, popular revolts, the Hundred Years’ War, schism in the church. It is also an era of innovation: the birth of western art, the first great age of vernacular literature, the invention of banking, the compass and reading glasses. The primary sources, chronicles such as that of Froissart or travellers’ accounts like Ibn Battuta’s, are accessible and richly rewarding, not to mention Dante and Boccacio. You will be considering why this is the great age of the soldier of fortune or exploring the character of lordships which were not quite states such as the duchy of Brittany and the territories of the Este family round Ferrara. Or if you are interested in social history, you can examine the effect of plague on rural or urban communities. Popular religious movements were a feature of the age and invite intelligent study. The interaction of Latin Christendom with the orthodox and Islamic world is another rich theme of this period. The scholarly study of the era has generated a body of first-class historical literature, most of which is easily accessible.

General History VII (1409–1525)
For many of the students who follow this period of General History, its significance in European cultural history is likely to prove a principal attraction. The concept of ‘The Renaissance’ provides an opportunity to analyze the interplay of innovation and tradition in a number of different contexts. And the religious life of lay people in the period suggests challenging issues as well: unprecedented evidence of popular piety contemporaneous with massive movements of dissent among Hus’s Czechs or Luther’s Germans.

Political historians once tagged the period the age of ‘new monarchy’. Some more-or-less monarchical systems did acquire greater cohesiveness, for reasons that you may wish to explore. But the scope for political enquiry and comparison goes a lot further than that: the period saw challenging assertions of consultative principles (not least within the Catholic church); a bewildering proliferation of city-states and city-leagues; and some ambitious plans for dynastic aggrandisement, from the Trastámara of Iberia to the house of Jagiellon in East-Central Europe. ‘Christian Europe’ is itself a notion that invites critical reflection. In the Spanish lands, centuries of Christian-Islamic-Jewish coexistence were coming to a close; but to the East, Islam was acquiring new force in Ottoman form. And there was a world beyond, opening, for better or worse, to European encounters. By the end of the period, Cortés was in Mexico; and Sebastian del Cano safely home – the first mariner in history to circumnavigate the globe.
Tutorials: History

General History VIII (1500–1618)
The religious changes of the sixteenth century provide a central set of themes for students of this period. By exploring the interaction of personality, theological principle, and political, social, and economic circumstances, you acquire an understanding of the dynamics of religious change. The impact of the Protestant and Catholic reformations on popular belief systems and on spheres of social life such as the family, discipline, poor relief, and the gender order provide insights on the processes of social and cultural change. The linkages between religious and political change may be explored through studies of the confessionalization of politics in the Low Countries, France, and Germany. By studying a variety of European polities you can get to grips with the processes of territorial consolidation and the conditions promoting stability and cohesion on the one hand and revolt and disintegration on the other. Key issues to be explored are: the development of the military and financial resources of the state, the relations between rulers and local élites and the role of patronage and courts, the fate of representative assemblies, the level of penetration of central agencies into local life, and the changing conceptualization of the state. Most students will look at a number of case-studies from Europe, but the course does provide an opportunity for a wider comparative perspective through the study of India, China, and Japan. The changing content of humanist discourse with the emergence of a more sceptical and pessimistic strain in the later sixteenth century provides a helpful case-study of the relationship between ideas and political change. Likewise, the study of the diffusion of humanism and its adaptation to different political, social, and cultural contexts provides an opportunity to test various models of cultural change. The contribution of humanism to notions of civility, ideas about the nature of the state and the responsibilities of the citizen have also occasioned much lively debate among historians of this period. The rich artistic heritage of the sixteenth century makes art historical themes particularly rewarding: students can look at the determinants of stylistic change and artistic innovation, the relationship between art and power, and the debate over the role of art between rival confessional groups and their differing uses of it.

The main dynamics of economic change were population growth and the impact of the European discoveries overseas. Their contribution to inflation, social polarization, shifting patterns of urbanization, and proto-industrialization is keenly debated. By studying the adaptability of different European economies to the changes, one may gain an understanding of the variables determining economic growth and retardation, and the contrasts between the development of eastern and western Europe.

Some of the most innovative and influential social historical writing takes the sixteenth century as its pivot. Topics such as poverty, crime, witchcraft, and gender enable you to further explore the interaction between political, cultural, economic, and religious forces in the process of social change.

General History IX (1600–1715)
The seventeenth century is above all an age of violent and extreme contrast. The century was seared by the experience of savage and destructive mercenary armies waging thirty years of warfare at the expense of civilian populations, warfare which seemed capable of threatening the entire political, social and economic order. Yet it was also supposedly the century of ‘absolute monarchy’, shaped by powerful, centralized and triumphalist dynastic rule. European societies were characterized by the coexistence of unprecedented extremes of wealth and poverty: unparalleled conspicuous consumption amongst the élites coexisted with subsistence crises which could kill 10% of the ordinary population through hunger and disease. The great majority of peasants and townspeople existed in a state of day-to-day economic misery that would have been outside the experience of most of their great-grandparents. It was a century of unparalleled courtly grandeur, extraordinary artistic and cultural sophistication and dramatic developments in science and philosophy. Yet the baroque magnificent of church architecture or court drama, the ground-breaking thought of Descartes or Newton, occurred in societies which were for the most part violent, confessionally
intolerant and economically stagnant, and whose populations were parochial, traditional, and justifiably suspicious and hostile of any external authority or intervention.

Study of General History IX seeks to provide a detailed introduction to the European territories during the seventeenth century, though with considerable opportunity to extend the examination to Asia and the Americas. The aim is to provide students, whether or not they already have some familiarity with the period, with an opportunity to think extensively about major issues shaping states and societies, and about historical approaches which have been forged in this ‘century of contrasts’, and which have done much to challenge traditional interpretations of political, social and cultural history. Seventeenth-century European studies have figured largely in many of the key historiographical currents of the twentieth century, whether the methodological challenges posed by the Annales school, structuralist critiques of traditional social and cultural history, or the rejection of étatist, bureaucratic/centralizing models of political development. Thus for many tutors the study of ‘absolutism’ in seventeenth-century states provides the opportunity to encourage far-reaching reconsideration of the mechanisms of political power in the early modern state, the limitations upon central authority and the persistence of societies based upon localized power and privilege. Similarly detailed studies of war and society can raise fundamental questions about the Weberian paradigm linking expanding military demands with bureaucratic rationalization and state development. Elsewhere, studies of the imposition of the catholic and protestant reformations, repression of crime, and the treatment of minorities and those on the margins of society allow the student to make use of extensive recent work calling into question dichotomies such as ‘popular’ and ‘élite’, and exploring concepts such as acculturation and syncretism as alternatives to simplified models of ‘top-down’ imposition. The great age of baroque and classicism also offers students the possibility of pursuing both seventeenth-century and modern debates about the relationship between art and patronage, about the projection of power through art and wider cultural manifestations. It is equally possible to slant the course towards economic history, examining profound shifts in patterns of trade, the rapid development of commercial colonialism, the ascendancy of mercantilist doctrines and their political and social impact.

You will encounter a significant number of these broad themes during the course. While this may be in the form of tutorial assignments examining large-scale, Europe-wide topics – peasant revolts, witchcraft persecution, political theory, the spread of baroque art – many tutors and students choose to focus on the experience of political, social, economic, or cultural issues in particular territorial contexts, whether within or outside Europe, building up a number of individual case studies from which comparisons can be made and broader patterns extrapolated.

General History X (1715–1799)
The eighteenth century offers you the opportunity to study the foundations of the modern world. After nearly a century of stagnation, population and economy began to grow and by 1800 Europe was the most developed commercial civilization the world had ever known. Economic growth, however, entailed growing social dislocation as the greater affluence of the few meant increased poverty and insecurity for the many. Economic growth, too, made it increasingly difficult to integrate new and old wealth within a society which associated rank with inherited and corporate privilege. Meanwhile the dominant Augustinian form of Christianity which underpinned that society was itself under attack from the new, much more egalitarian and secular ideology of the Enlightenment. Across Europe the philosophes and their allies made human betterment in this world the focus of their writing. Since many princes and their advisors after 1750 took up these new ideas in the hope that the abolition of the corporative society would increase the state’s ability to mobilize its subjects’ resources, the stage was set for a battle royal between many of Europe’s governments and the privileged orders, which culminated in the American War of Independence and the French Revolution of 1789. While this provided an opportunity for the ideas of the Enlightenment finally to be turned into reality, it also proved the
Prelude to a decade of war as the French Revolutionaries, divided amongst themselves, attempted to impose their view of the new Jerusalem on the rest of the continent as well as on Frenchmen and women. In such a period of conflict and change, there is no shortage of topics for you to study in tutorials. Central topics are the Enlightenment, the leading ‘Enlightened absolutists’ (Frederick of Prussia, Catherine of Russia, Joseph II, Charles VIII of Naples and III of Spain), the failure of administrative and fiscal reform in France, the outbreak and impact of the French Revolution. There are, however many other topics in economic, social and cultural history which you can explore, among them popular culture and changing attitudes to women and children.

Nor need your attention be confined to Europe. The eighteenth century was a period when Europe and the rest of the world were more tightly bound together than ever before. There is a large secondary literature in English on the American Revolution and the framing of the 1787 Constitution. The decline of the Mughal Empire in India and the coming of the British to Bengal are also well covered, as is the development of Spanish America in the eighteenth century. It is also possible now to study Japanese, Chinese, and aspects of African history.

**General History XI (1789–1871)**

This period of General History is usually taught as a Europe-centred paper, and deals with such issues as rapid but uneven industrialization, the growth of large cities, the shift from a society of orders to one of classes, concerted state-building and the emergence of fundamental ideologies of liberalism, democracy, socialism and nationalism, secularization and religious revival, the first manifestations of feminism, together with the Romantic movement in art and literature. The destructive and constructive force of the French Revolution was transported across Europe through the Napoleonic Empire, an increasingly bureaucratic state system. Through the Congress system European powers sought to control the revolutionary nationalism generated by France, while governing elites struggled to find a balance between order and liberty. The liberal, democratic, socialist and nationalist forces which challenged the established order came to a head in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848–9. The struggle for nation-building was characterized by a decade of war involving Italy, Austria, France, and Germany, a period of political reaction coupled with intense modernization and continuing radical unrest. These processes culminated in the unifications of Italy and Germany, the collapse of the second empire, and attempts at extensive reform in Russia. The period ends in 1871, with the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune.

The subject is usually studied partly comparatively, partly on a country by country basis, looking at such issues as Italian nationalism, the debates over German integration, the failure of the monarchy to re-establish itself in France and the experience of autocracy in Russia. Outside Europe, it is possible to study the United States (slavery, the Frontier, Jacksonian democracy and the American Civil War), British rule in India and the Indian Mutiny, the Latin American revolutions, the Greek and Egyptian revolts against the Ottoman Empire, and the impact of the west on China and Japan, leading to such phenomena as the Taiping rebellion and the Meiji restoration. Altogether the course deals with a crucial period which witnessed the painful emergence of modern Europe and a decisive phase in the relations between Europe and the wider world.

**General History XII (1856–1914)**

This course introduces you to European and world history in the period between the Crimean War and the outbreak of the First World War. As with other General History papers, it is designed to provide a thematic overview of the principal developments of the period while at the same time allowing you to concentrate on issues and countries in which you are particularly interested. The course covers a period of profound importance for economic, social, political and cultural history alike. Economic topics covered include the role of economic factors in state formation; the economic modernization of Eastern Europe (especially Tsarist Russia); the ‘second’ industrial revolution in Western Europe and the USA; protectionism in trade policy; the gold standard and the economics of imperialism.
Among the major social or cultural issues the course covers are: working class and socialist movements (looking especially at revolutionary crises such as 1870 in France and 1905 in Russia); education; the position of women and the origins of feminism; generational conflicts; Jews and anti-semitism, and the Churches and anticlericalism. Other subjects which can be studied include the history of science (especially the impact of Darwin) and artistic modernism.

Political history remains at the core of the paper, however. The period 1856–78 saw the high tide of European liberalism, but already it was clear that its intimate association with nationalism might entail important compromises. To name just two major political topics, students have the opportunity to study in detail the plebiscitary dictatorship of Napoleon III and the role of Bismarck as Germany’s ‘white revolutionary’.

Domestic politics and diplomacy are not easily disentangled in this age of state-building, and partly for this reason a good deal of attention is devoted to major events in international relations such as Italian and German unification, the Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich and the American Civil War. There are also opportunities to study the importance of overseas imperial rivalries in European diplomacy and the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. Most students devote one or two weeks to working on the origins of the First World War, with the foreign policy of Wilhelmine Germany an especially popular subject.

Though the course has traditionally concentrated more on Europe than on the rest of the world, there are now also numerous non-European topics, for example, the ‘scramble’ for Africa, the Boxer Rebellion in China, Japan in the period of the Meiji reforms, India under British rule and the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

General History XIII is a well-established course, but the period it covers continues to attract new and exciting scholarship which the specialists in the History Faculty, who include experts of international renown, are keen to relay to students.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a stimulating introduction to European and world history in the period of the two World Wars. The history of the world between 1914 and 1945 is a field rich in political and historiographical debates.

The course covers a wide canvas of events, ranging from the military struggles of the two World Wars (and their manifold consequences) to the intense political conflicts which resulted in the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the Fascist and Nazi seizures of power in Italy and Germany and the Spanish Civil War of 1936. International history, and in particular, the emergence of Europe from the cataclysm of the First World War and its return to mass warfare at the end of the 1930s, is a prominent theme. The scope of the course is, however, much wider than a catalogue of military and political violence. Students are encouraged to contrast the rise of political extremism in some areas of Europe with the survival (and adaptation) of democracy in other European states. Moreover, through providing the opportunity for students to study the wide variety of ‘fascist’ and other authoritarian regimes that emerged during the inter-war years, the course encourages a more critical understanding of the complex dynamics of European politics in these years. Nor is the focus of the course exclusively political in nature. The rapidly evolving social structure of Europe and changes in relations between generations and the sexes are a major theme, as is the impact of modernism on the arts and new forms of mass communication such as the cinema and radio. Non-European topics also form a well-established element of the paper. In addition to the development of mass politics in the United States and Latin America, there are the often tumultuous developments in China, Japan and the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. The resilience of the European colonial empires in South and South-East Asia as well as Africa is analysed along with the wider transformations in global power brought about by the changing world economy and the events of the world wars. The course covers five broad areas:

1) War and International Relations: This section comprises the two world wars, inter-war diplomacy, international economics, etc.
Tutorials: History

2) Democracy and its Discontents: This section analyzes parliamentary regimes (including those of Weimar Germany, Third Republic France, Republican Spain and the USA), and the problems they encountered (and in some cases overcame) during the interwar years. It also looks at the revolutions of the left, including that in Russia in 1917.

3) Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes: This section includes Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Soviet (post-1917) Russia, but also the wide range of other authoritarian regimes of these years such as those in Austria, Spain, and Turkey. The focus is largely European but allows scope for extra-European comparisons as appropriate.

4) Social and Cultural Modernization: This includes a wide range of social and cultural themes such as gender, cinema, class experiences, generational conflicts, and modernist art.

5) A Changing World Order: This section looks at the resilience of colonial forms of order, but also the emergence of new states (notably Japan and China) and the nationalist movements (such as those in India and sub-Saharan Africa) of the inter-war period.

Within each of these five sections there is the opportunity to consider a mixture of country-specific and comparative or general questions. Course teaching is designed to ensure that each student who wishes to do so is able to concentrate their studies on the two sections of the paper which interest them most. In this way, the structure is intended to correspond to the pattern of student interests, while also encouraging students to engage with the comparative and conceptual issues which form a strong element of the historiography of this exciting period of European and world history.

General History XIV (1941–1973)
This course is designed to introduce students to world history in the period 1941–1973. The course offers a great deal of choice and provides the opportunity to study a large number of individual countries and particular topics, but those taking the course are encouraged to concentrate on two or three out of five central themes: the international relations of the period; the political and economic development of the ‘West’; the communist world; decolonization and the establishment of new states outside Europe; social and cultural change. Many of those taking the course examine the origins and development of the Cold War and its broader effects on international relations. The collapse of the wartime alliance and the changing relations between the superpowers from confrontation to detente are examined. Students are encouraged to explore the effects of the Cold War on the politics of various regions, including the Middle East, South-East, and East Asia. They can also explore the more economic aspects of international relations during the period. A second central theme is the establishment and development of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Students can examine the nature of the regimes, and analyse their differing responses to internal pressures and to changes in the communist world following the death of Stalin. They can also explore these issues through a more detailed analysis of the attempts of Tito, Khrushchev, and Mao Zedong to create their own models of non-Stalinist socialism, and by studying rebellions against communist regimes, from the Hungarian uprising to the Prague spring. A third set of themes is the economic and political reconstruction of the ‘developed’ non-communist world. In particular, the development of European economic and political integration, and the creation of stable liberal democratic politics in Western Europe and Japan are examined. Students are also given the opportunity to study the United States, analyzing the internal political struggles over socio-economic, foreign policy and racial issues during the period. A fourth set of related issues concerns the causes, nature and aftermath of decolonization, and the history of the developing world more generally. Students can compare French, British and Dutch decolonization and explore the often violent outcomes of these processes, particularly in Palestine, India, Indo-China, Algeria and Indonesia. The development of post-colonial states is also examined, and students are encouraged to focus on particular regions, whether sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South Asia or South-East Asia. A fifth set of
Tutorials: History

Themes include the social and cultural changes of the period, including questions such as the influence of American culture and the emergence of radical cultural movements in the late 1960s.

This paper is one of the more popular General History options. In recent years the literature on many of these topics has improved significantly and the period has become an especially stimulating one for study at undergraduate level. The publication of new sources on the Cold War and Eastern Europe, in particular, has led to the appearance of a great deal of interesting material.

**General History XV (Britain’s North American Colonies from Settlement to Independence, 1600–1812)**

This option is designed to introduce you to the formative period of American history. The course stresses the point that Britain’s colonies on the mainland of North America possessed a distinctive history from the moment of first settlement. That history originated in the unintended, and unmanageable, consequences of the attempt to transplant and nurture old world institutions in a ‘new world’ environment. The course is centred on the interplay between expectation and experience. Tutors develop the theme of cultural adaptation and divergence in varying ways. However, the main emphasis of teaching in this option rests on cultural factors. Students learn of the unintended ‘democratization’ of cultural and political institutions wrought by an abundance of land and by the distinctive demographic characteristics of colonial societies. They examine the paradoxes which adhere to the codification and defence of slavery in a ‘land of opportunity’. They learn of relations between settlers and indigene relations which promised cooperation but delivered a chauvinistic, and yet curiously insecure, sense of American identity. The institutional and theological history of America’s Protestant denominations, and the influence of religion in American life in this period, are themes which receive detailed coverage. Moreover, throughout the course you are made aware that the organizing theme of this offering – the old world in the new – challenges the assumptions of other, paradigmatic interpretations; chiefly the environmental determinism of Frederick Jackson Turner, the ‘psychological’ determinism of Daniel Boorstin, and the cultural determinism of David Hackett Fischer. A secondary aim of the course is to introduce you to the origins and influence of regional diversity in the American past. All tutors point out the differences between life on the Chesapeake and life in Puritan New England. All tutors ask students to consider why culturally distinctive colonies could unite in opposition to Britain, and whether and how their unity in that cause informed the history of the early republic. Some tutorial assignments add to this theme an appreciation of the ‘middle colonies’, or the ‘lower south’, or the ‘old northwest’. In this way students are exposed to readings which ask them to assess the origins, the strengths, and the weaknesses of American national identity in this period. The design of the course assumes little or no previous knowledge of American history.

**General History XVI (From Colonies to Nation: the History of the United States, 1776–1877)**

At the heart of this option is the issue of how the thirteen loosely-bound colonies of 1776 and the plural states of 1787 were forged into an indestructible, singular American nation. The leaders of the Revolutionary generation put into place new constitutional and governmental structures that would be pushed to breaking point over the next three generations, as the new nation sought to come to terms with profound social, economic and cultural changes. The course addresses these developments, which included stunning territorial expansion, through purchase and military conquest, which filled out the continental United States to the shape we recognize today; the uprooting and forcible westward expulsion of settled, indigenous Indian tribes; the quadrupling of an ethnically and racially diverse population through natural reproduction and mass immigration; a communications and market revolution that drew previously self-sufficient and local economies into a system of national as well as international commerce; the entrenchment and expansion of one of the most formidable slave-based economies the New World; a surge of Protestant evangelicalism that sacralized the landscape,
shaped social relations and gender roles, prompted a host of reform movements, and encouraged millennial expectations. At the same time the more deferential republican polity of the 1770s and 1780s swiftly evolved into the world’s first mass democracy, in which recognizably modern political parties – run by a new professional type, the party manager – mediated the relationship between government and ‘the sovereign people’.

The option explores the evolving and ultimately incompatible perspectives on American identity and destiny held by a free-labour North and a slave-holding South. Addressing the power of republican and religious ideologies, and the competing claims of liberty, equality and individualism, the course considers the political process by which the sections tumbled towards the Civil War. It assesses the view of the conflict as a ‘total war’, and examines the strength of Confederate nationalism, the complex motivation of wartime Unionists, the role of slaves themselves in securing their own freedom, and the extent to which, in the post-emancipation era of Reconstruction, the old Union gave way to a new nation. This paper demands no previous knowledge of American history.

**General History XVII (The History of the United States since 1863)**

It may be useful, albeit problematic, to view the end of American Civil War in 1865 as marking a second beginning for the American nation. At the least, the years that followed saw America wrestling in new ways with old dilemmas and controversies. With the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the federal government embarked on an effort to reconstruct relations between the races, hitherto defined by the institution of slavery, and to define the elusive concept of ‘freedom’. This, together with the war that had led to emancipation, had powerful implications for the American system of government. The immutability of the Union was newly established, and the previous pattern of federalism would never be fully re-established. That said, federal Reconstruction lasted for only a
dozen years, and by the turn of the 20th century
the formal freedoms that it had granted to African
Americans counted for little, as a system of rigid
racial segregation and repression known as 'Jim
Crow' took hold in the South (where nearly all
blacks lived at this time). As W.E.B. DuBois had
predicted at its beginning, the existence of the
'colour line' helped to define the political
struggles of the twentieth century, which
climaxed with the post-World War II civil rights
movement.

Relations between the races provide one of the
central themes of this course, in part because of
their intrinsic significance and interest, but in part
also because they had such dramatic knock-on
effects (in terms of the rights of other Americans,
for example, or in terms of governmental power).
A second major theme, anticipated in the first
paragraph, is war. Starting with the Revolutionary
War, the history of the United States has been
punctuated by wars that have had powerful, and
often unintended, impacts on the development of
the American economy, on the distribution of
wealth (between individuals, races, and regions),
on the political system, and on the rights of
women. The civil war, the Spanish-American war,
the two World Wars, and post-1945 conflicts in
Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East will all be
covered in this course, both in terms of the
development of foreign policy (a third theme),
and in terms of those domestic impacts.

Recent historians of the United States have been
much interested in the rise of the State, and also
in the limits to the expansion (compared to other
western industrial societies). In the late
nineteenth century, the projection of federal
power took the form mainly of Indian fighting
and the disposal of public land, but — starting in
the late nineteenth century — growing calls were
heard for a stronger federal role in regulating the
national economy, and in ameliorating the great
inequalities of wealth and power that had
emerged during the massive economic expansion
of the period. (Two manifestations of this
impulse were Populism, and Progressivism.) That
expansion provides a leitmotiv of national
development between 1865 and 1929, and
another theme of this paper. Among its
manifestations and consequences were mass
immigration (until the 1920s), urbanization
(since 1920, the United States has been a
predominantly urban nation), environmentalism
(the first national park was created in the 1870s),
and radical political protest movements
(including a promising socialist movement and
enormous labour unrest). The period was also
marked both by a strong evangelical awakening
(sometimes termed the Third Great Awakening,
to distinguish it from those of the eighteenth and
early nineteenth centuries), and by a more
humanist faith in the power of experts and new
knowledge to solve hitherto unyielding problems
such as poverty, alcoholism, and disease. There
were obvious tensions between these two
developments, but both were apparent in the
Progressive Movement (for example in the ‘social
gospel’ movement), which – accordingly – has
resisted easy categorization by historians.

Some historians have conceived of the twentieth
century in terms of cycles of reaction and reform,
with the Progressive Era (c.1900–1914), the New
Deal (1930s), and the Great Society (1960s)
marking the high points of an intermittently
strong liberal reforming impulse that has greatly
expanded the size of the American state, but
which has been checked by a persistent strain of
anti-statist conservatism. More recently, however,
this version of events had been challenged both
by social historians emphasizing the agency of
‘ordinary people’ in shaping their own lives, and
downplaying the role of élites, and by political
historian preoccupied by the autonomy of ‘the
State’ and the way that its expansion has persisted
during periods of ostensible reaction.

**General History XVIII (Imperial and
Global History, 17501914)**

The purpose of this course is to offer a
distinctively ‘global’ approach to the world
history of this period. What this means in practice
is: an emphasis upon the significance of mobility
and exchange — in goods, ideas, and people —
across Eurasia, the Americas, and Africa; upon
supra-regional phenomena, including religions,
patterns of consumption, environmental stresses,
and the differential impact of scientific and
technical knowledge; and on the reciprocal
influences exerted on each other by European,
Asian, African, and other societies. Asia and Africa
Tutorials: History

may have been influenced by Europe, but the reverse was equally true.

1750 is an arbitrary starting point, but it marks, perhaps, the beginnings of a decisive shift in the relative position of the strongest European states and societies on the one hand and those of other parts of Eurasia on the other, and the onset of what some historians have called ‘the great divergence’ between the East and the West which, in wealth and power, has lasted into our own times. Part of the aim of the course is to consider some of the reasons for this, but also the factors behind the remarkable resilience of many Asian societies, Islamic, and other. Inevitably, the assertion of European imperial power is an important part of the story. But there were other empires in Eurasia (the Ottoman, Qajar, and Qing) with a strong instinct for survival and considerable success in keeping the Europeans at bay. What allowed them to do so? This period is also one in which an astonishing range of new communities was formed in response to unprecedented levels of migration by Asians and Africans as well as Europeans; to the revolution in communications which allows a sense of community to extend over thousands of miles; to the economic changes associated with industrialization and the creation of labour-hungry plantation and mining economies; and to the shifts in status and culture that encouraged new solidarities around gender or race, as well as reinforcing old ones based on religion.

Historiography: Tacitus to Weber

There are two routes commonly pursued in the study of historical writing and method: first, study of the techniques which, as of today, we hold to be most relevant, and secondly, the study of classic texts in Western historical writing. This course takes the second road, and the student may reasonably hope to be exercised (or derive profit) in the following areas: 1. the close reading of texts which really will bear close reading – reading being still the most fundamental of all historical techniques; 2. grasp of central problems in their broadest outlines – such as the scope and proper subject matter of history; historical objectivity; the interrelation of the author’s past and present concerns; the relations of literature and history; and (not least) why we should bother with history at all; 3. the outlines of how the Western historical tradition has evolved in fact.


History of the British Isles I: c.370–1087

These centuries saw the growth of new forms of social, religious and cultural organization after the collapse of Roman Britain, and the forging of the ethnic and political identities that would eventually be England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. During the last twenty years the period has seen some remarkably lively debates and re-evaluation, which enable you to engage both with new ideas and – perhaps more surprisingly – with new evidence. The central written sources (for instance Bede’s Ecclesiastical History, and Beowulf, which may be read in translation) are limited enough to allow the subject to be approached directly through them, while the new emphasis on archaeology, landscape and art
makes students confront challenging methodological problems. Those who study this period will quickly develop a sense of how diverse fragments make the foundation for a coherent picture. During c.400–550, Germanic settlements in eastern Britain established the communities who would eventually think of themselves as ‘English’. The west and north still comprised Celtic states which remained Christian, literate and in contact with the Mediterranean world, while the Irish were developing a remarkable literary, artistic and religious culture; their overseas impact included the colonization of western Scotland, and missionary activity in Europe. Some long-accepted orthodoxies, such as the scale and ethnic homogeneity of the Germanic settlements, or the distinctive character of the ‘Celtic Church’, have recently come under attack, and students can re-examine these issues in the light of new perspectives. The seventh-century conversions of the English to Christianity were part of an extraordinary series of cultural and political developments, involving increased contacts between the various inhabitants of the British Isles and of Europe, in which the sequence of cause and effect leaves much room for debate. Outstanding works of art were produced, such as the Sutton Hoo treasures and the Lindisfarne Gospels; with the growth of continental trade, ports were established and coinage reintroduced. Prosperity financed a rich monastic culture. During c.680–750, northeast England became one of the intellectual centres of Europe, and the English launched missions to their still-pagan relatives abroad.

Kingship and government operated on an ever-widening scale, though tempered by the enduring realities of warrior societies: marriage-alliances, gift-giving, plunder and the blood-feud. In 850 Britain was still divided between British and English states, while in Ireland provincial kingships were forming. Students can debate the size and ferocity of the late ninth-century Viking attacks, and the extent to which they altered the political map (by destroying some states, allowing others to expand) and the economic map (by linking Britain and Ireland to Scandinavian trade networks).

Alfred of Wessex (871–99) and his heirs built a unified, ideologically coherent English state, with systematic local government and tight control of the coinage. Meanwhile, the countryside and its inhabitants were being organized into more self-contained farming and parish communities; the network of manors, villages and market towns crystallized. All this makes late Anglo-Saxon England look much more developed than it seemed thirty years ago. The Norman-Saxon England looked much more developed than it seemed thirty years ago. The Norman Conquest, conventionally taken as a starting-point, is the epilogue to this course: by the time you reach it, you will be well-placed to make up your own mind about how much it really changed.

**History of the British Isles II: 1042–1330**

Historians have debated for centuries whether the Norman Conquest was a turning point in English history, and the controversy shows no sign of slackening. Yet part of the enduring fascination of the topic is that larger changes were transforming Europe in this period, in politics, the economy, society, culture and religion. As historians adopt new approaches to old questions, they continue to generate historical exploration and debate.

It has long been obvious that medieval England cannot be studied in isolation: the Conquest immersed England in the Continent politically and culturally, while the pope’s jurisdiction expanded throughout this period. Recently historians have opened up more comparative perspectives by foregrounding the other occupants of the British Isles. This time it was the ‘English’ who attempted to dominate the very different societies of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, reaching a climax with Edward I: was this ‘the first age of English imperialism’? Colonial themes have also informed the central concept of medieval lordship, through an emphasis on aristocratic aggression and expansionism.

Our view of the aristocracy has also been influenced by the recent cultural dimension in historical writing, through investigation of their lifestyle and ideals – ‘Chivalry’. The physical manifestations of kingship have also come under the spotlight, as the Plantagenets sought to reflect a dominant ideology through buildings (notably Westminster Abbey). A cultural concept long central to this period, the ‘twelfth-century
Tutorials: History

The history of the British Isles III: 1330–1550

This period presents the opportunity to study political, religious, economic, social and cultural history across the British Isles in an age often seen in terms of turbulence and transition. The era of ‘the expiring middle ages’ was one of social and political ferment, borne out in the depositions and murders of kings, the long sequence of popular revolts, and the coups, plots, demonstrations and battles that mark the political history of every part of the British Isles. Yet even before the age of ‘Reformation’ and ‘Renaissance’, of ‘peace, print and Protestantism’, the societies of the region were maturing fast, government reaching more deeply into the population, ethnicities solidifying and mixing, architecture, commerce, craft and the arts of communication developing strongly. There is ongoing debate among historians, many of them teaching in Oxford, about virtually every aspect of the period – both its large-scale changes and its detailed dynamics. The course thus poses challenging questions of historical interpretation about issues as diverse as the effects of the Black Death on rural and urban society and on the status of women, the origins and persistence of academic and popular heresy, the rise of vernacular literature, the nature of aristocratic power, the qualities needed for success in English and Scottish kingship, the growth of courts, parliaments and judicial systems and the causes of the Reformation. Even the period itself is in question – is it one period or two? Medieval or early modern? An age of decline, or of growth, or of something else besides?

There is a rich range of primary sources, many, like the Paston Letters, the Canterbury Tales and Barbour’s Bruce, The Book of Margery Kempe, the buildings of Oxford, Windsor and Westminster, the Wilton Diptych and the Holbein portraits of Henry VIII, readily available to students. The historical literature is provocative and exciting – the Oxford academic, K. B. McFarlane, and the Cambridge one, G. R. Elton, revolutionised the study of this period in the mid-twentieth century, but there is plenty of disagreement over the value and implications of their findings, and there are lots of more recent insights to consider in what is now the most widely-studied part of the middle ages. Historians increasingly try to connect culture, society and politics in this period; they employ comparisons and contrasts across the British Isles, to ask for example why Scotland had no equivalent to the Wars of the Roses and why
Wales was more effectively assimilated to the English state than Ireland.

**History of the British Isles IV: 1500–1700**

‘An erring colleague,’ R.H. Tawney wrote ruefully, ‘is not an Amalekite to be smitten hip and thigh’. Tawney was reflecting on a particularly venomous contribution to the debate on the social origins of the Civil War that he had inaugurated with his essay on ‘the Rise of the Gentry’, but the historiography of this period has been rich in such smitings. Theories that have depicted the period as one of major watersheds have been advanced, often in the language of Revolutions – in Government in the 1530s; Bourgeois a century later; Glorious at the end of the period. The Scientific Revolution thought by some writers to characterize the seventeenth century has been paralleled by similarly seismic views of transformed attitudes to the family, or to Imperial expansion. Each of these suggestions has been challenged by scholars stressing continuity or contingency. These debates often parallel the contentions of contemporaries concerning the startling events of their own lifetimes, and draw their vibrancy from their language. Was the English reformation merely an Act of State? Harpsfield and Foxe had clashed on that issue within a few decades of the event. Was the execution of Charles I rooted in a fundamental breakdown of the political system: Harrington argued that case; Clarendon was not persuaded. Our period has a dense historiography, littered with spent hypotheses, and yet its study remains extraordinarily vigorous and creative. The intellectual duels have proved fertile in suggesting new lines of inquiry, new research agendas.

One of these is implicit in the British focus of this course. The accession of James VI and I necessarily gives a British dimension to the political and religious history of the 17th century. The events of 1642–1651 were a British Civil War, and saw the collapse of a British monarchy: anglocentric explanations have been abandoned or revised to accommodate the perspective of an Atlantic archipelago. The potential inherent in approaching old sources in new ways has also been demonstrated. Elton’s ‘Tudor Revolution in Government’ was firmly rooted in the history of administration and of the formalities of legal texts. Those who assailed his interpretation have focussed on the court as the centre of political life, on ways of fashioning monarchy through display – building projects; pageants and masques; portraiture – and on political discourses encoded in works of literature. New areas of research have galvanized old themes. So work on the central themes of social history – on attitudes to gender, or concepts of stratification, on definitions of crime, and responses to poverty – has revealed the potential inherent in previously overlooked sources. And this has been reciprocated in the concerns of historians of religion (Was the Break with Rome popular?) and of political development (Who supported the Parliamentarians in 1642?) to create a vibrant field of research into popular religious and political culture.

The drama of the period and the vitality of the controversies surrounding it have drawn a number of great Oxford historians to its study. Its infinite variety makes it still a subject for intellectual engagement and excitement.

**History of the British Isles V: 1685–1830**

During the past three decades, there has been a great upsurge of interest in the history of this period, which is currently one of the liveliest in early modern and modern British historiography. Whereas it was once portrayed as a somnolent ‘age of oligarchy’, only belatedly challenged by the rise of a reformist popular politics, recent work has stressed that the period as a whole saw a complex interplay between politicians, ‘public opinion’ and popular opinion. The period began with a revolution which left many loose ends. Historians have stressed the continuing power of dynastic and especially religious preoccupations to divide and disturb thereafter. There has been new work on the structures and practical operation of government at all levels – from the court to the street. Interest in political culture has helped to extend the study of political life out beyond formal political processes – allowing due weight to be given to, for example, the power exercised by aristocratic women as well as aristocratic men. The period has much to offer to those interested in interactions between the different peoples of the British Isles, and in the nature of ‘national identity’. It saw the English
parliament united first with that of Scotland (1707) secondly with that of Ireland (1801). There were important economic, cultural and political differences as well as similarities between the different parts of the British Isles – most dramatically manifested in the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 and the Irish rebellion of 1798. Leading figures in the Scottish Enlightenment interacted at an especially high level with continental European intellectual life. The period saw British power successfully challenged in North America, with the revolt of the Thirteen Colonies, but expanding in India; the impact of these developments on Britain provides another focus for study.

‘Polite culture’ and its diffusion, and the impact of commerce and consumerism have also attracted recent interest – and ‘class’ and other social identities have been re-examined, and are the subject of some debate. The nature and impact of the industrial revolution remains a major preoccupation. Many members of the Oxford History Faculty have contributed to these debates. If you choose to study this period, you will have the opportunity to join in the process of rethinking it!

**History of the British Isles VI: 1815–1924**

The course covers a period which is today regarded by journalists and sentimentalists as an epoch of British ‘greatness’. That it was a very remarkable epoch is certain, and its most obvious defining feature is provided by a history of political and institutional change which appears in retrospect like a blaze of technicolor. To say this is not just a comment on heroic individuals such as Gladstone and Disraeli; rather it is reflection of what all ordinary Britons (though not necessarily Irishmen) really thought: politics lay at the centre of their historical world. The centrepiece of political struggle lay in the attempts variously to reform and to preserve England’s ‘ancient constitution’. How could it be made more compatible with modern ideas about political representation, perhaps with ‘democracy’ even? But how at the same time could one preserve those unique historic features, such as traditional English liberty under the sovereignty of Parliament, which had served Britain so well since 1688 – features which (it was alleged) would continue to protect her from foreign perils such as despotism, revolution, and dictators? The course thus invites students to consider how satisfactory and how complete were the ‘Victorian’ reforms which still supply the basic structure of our political institutions today. Why were they so seemingly successful in Britain and so troubled in Ireland? It also asks how these notoriously insular institutions functioned in Europe and as the ultimate rulers of a large and expansive empire. Could one have both empire and liberty?

However, it is a guiding principle of this course to make equal provision for the study of politics and society, where ‘society’ is broadly defined to include culture and the economy. In considering British society students will be able to draw on rich and established traditions of writing on the working classes and on the traditional landed elite, alongside a more recent and open-ended body of writing on gender, to say nothing of that elusive residuum the ‘middle classes’. Of course social class can no longer be seen simply as a material fact, or as a reflection of the workplace, important though this dimension undoubtedly was. Social situation also requires a consideration of social cultures and mentalities. Of these some were class bound and some were not, and here the histories of religion and of ethnicity occupy a prominent place in the focus of the course, both of them relatively new and expansive areas of research inquiry. So in social history, too, students are invited to reflect on features which render England and Britain unique in a European context. For example: a notorious preoccupation with wealth creation; a religious geography based on the peculiarly Anglo-Saxon polarity between established Churches and Dissenters, and the absence of any tradition of a prestigious state bureaucracy on the Continental model. Were these distinctive traditions a source of privileged advantage, or did they render the British Isles merely backward and provincial? Both points of view were advanced with much enthusiasm by Britons and Europeans alike over the lifetime of this course.
Tutorials: History

History of the British Isles VII: Since 1900

This course is a history of the British Isles in the twentieth century. The significance of the twentieth century lies in the speed and extent of political, economic and social change, and in the immense national and international pressures to which British society was subject. The twentieth century, for example, produced two world wars whose intensity and destructiveness, the demands they made on the combatants, were unprecedented. Britain alone of the major powers fought in both wars from their beginnings to their ends; and the British spent per capita on these wars more than any other nation. At the end of the first world war the formal British Empire in both territory and numbers reached its apogee. At the end of the second world war not only was that Empire still in place, but British troops occupied the French and Dutch empires in the East, much of the Mediterranean littoral, and large parts of Germany and Austria. Yet within less than a generation that Empire had disappeared, the British had withdrawn from Asia and the Mediterranean, Germany was restored and Britain was a middling power struggling to remain competitive with the rest of the world. One of the themes of this course, therefore, is Britain in the world; and more particularly Britain’s relations with Germany and the United States – the two powers who have had, negatively and positively, most influence on Britain – and with the nationalist movements which eventually made formal British imperialism untenable.

Nationalism was also active within the British Isles. The relations between Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and Ireland have been central to British history: as much in the twentieth as in previous centuries. The end of the Union with Ireland, and the establishment of the Irish Free State (later the Irish Republic), did not, however, settle the ‘Irish Question’. Dormant for some time in the 1950s it re-emerged in 1968 in the North and once again relations between Great Britain and Ireland became of political significance. Although their historical experiences diverged with the repeal of the Union, the histories of Britain and Ireland cannot be understood in isolation from each other. Thus the history of Ireland in the twentieth century – both North and South – is an important part of this course, as are the electorally powerful nationalist parties which developed in Scotland and Wales in the last third of the century, a development which in turn led to major constitutional changes within Great Britain.

In 1900, although there had been significant Jewish migration since the 1880s, the British Isles were overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic; at the end of the century, much less so. In fact, the century has seen constant demographic movement. There was continuing Irish migration to England until the 1970s; Jewish migration before 1914, then again in the 1930s. From the 1950s there was migration to Britain from the West Indies, East Africa, West Africa and Southern Asia which has had profound social and cultural consequences. In the 1990s there has been large-scale migration from the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The changing ethnicity of the British Isles – and all that follows from it – is thus inevitably also an important part of the course.

In the twentieth century the process by which Britain became a political democracy was more or less completed. In 1900 Britain was a semi-democracy: a majority of men were enfranchised (though many were not), but no women were. Two Labour MPs were elected in the general election of that year but the prime minister was one of the grandest of Britain’s peers and was soon to be succeeded by his nephew. At the end of the century all men and women over the age of 18 were enfranchised, there were no hereditary peers in government, most of the hereditary peers no longer sat in the House of Lords and the Labour Party had over 400 seats in the House of Commons. The consequence of such change has been the fact that, despite two world wars, increasingly British politics have centred around, not empire and war, but social and economic issues – broadly speaking, who gets what of the country’s economic and cultural wealth. Furthermore, arguably one result of Britain’s wars was actually to accelerate the speed with which this happened. Political democratization widened the notion of citizenship and thus of social rights and entitlements. Another of the aims of this course, therefore, is to see how far the social and economic issues raised by an ever expanding
definition of democracy were settled, if they were settled, and how far the country’s political institutions adjusted or failed to adjust to democracy. Why, for instance, was the Conservative Party, a party based upon well-defined social hierarchies, to be so successful throughout much of the twentieth century?

Many of the most important questions of domestic politics were ‘standard-of-living’ ones. As a result, the performance of the British economy – its capacity to meet the expectations of its citizens as well as strategic-military demands – was a fundamental preoccupation of domestic politics. Although real income and personal wealth rose in the twentieth century at rates never before attained, there was often a sense of economic failure – and not just during the interwar depression – which we examine. Was this sense of failure justified and what were its consequences? The core of the course is political, but the definition of politics is broad. Much of what is normally thought of as ‘social history’ is embodied in the course. Social class, both as a concept and a fact – how can we define classes and how did they change over the century – is central. We examine not just the political consequences of large-scale migration to Britain but its cultural impact. A significant determinant of political allegiance in Britain has been religion; but religion has been important to many as personal faith. We are interested not only in its political significance, but in the nature of religious belief in the twentieth century, and how far we can legitimately speak of the ‘secularization’ of the British Isles. Similarly, we are concerned not just with the political significance of feminism, but the effect of the women’s movement on society and social life more generally. And we study what is usually called ‘popular culture’, both in its own terms and its wider political significance. How far, for example, has Britain been ‘Americanized’ via popular culture or is British popular culture simply part of a common Anglo-American culture which has now become internationally predominant?

Imperialism and Nationalism, 1830–1980

An opportunity is offered in this subject to study empire-building and freedom-fighting as aspects of the historical processes of imperialism; and so to extend a knowledge of European history to other continents and other civilizations. Consideration of the rise and fall of empires and the flight of phoenix nations from the ruins during the past century and a half is divided into two parts: the one invites broad analysis of the European and extra-European foundations of empire in the light of existing theories of imperialism and ‘orientalism’. The other requires closer study of the working of European expansion within the societies of a particular region, in the light of theories about indigenous collaboration and resistance, anti-imperial nationalism and decolonization.


For the purposes of the second part, those who take this subject may choose one of the following topics for particular study:

a) South Asia, 1885–1947
b) Sub-Saharan Africa c.1870–1980
c) Britain’s settler colonies, 1830–1939
d) Maritime South East Asia: Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, 1830–1975
e) Themes in the History of Slavery and Abolition

Students will be expected to study the expansion of Europe and its ramifications in societies outside Europe. Topics to be studied from the extra-European point of view include the nature of non-European societies, the effects of European influence on local political economy, indigenous collaboration and resistance, techniques of colonial rule, neo-traditional and modern nationalism and decolonization. Students must state at time of application which geographical area they wish to focus on.
Intellect and Culture in Victorian Britain
This subject aims to study the ideas and culture of the Victorians with some reference to their analytical content and social context. The topics covered range from progress and faith, through natural and social science, to fine art and gender. There are many common themes running through the texts, such as the tension between materialism and idealism, and between historical and positivist modes of thought.

The set texts are grouped under headings which suggest the major issues to be explored.
1) Historical writings introduce the concept of ‘Whig’ history and the interaction between religious beliefs and the claims made for the value of the study of the past.
2) Social and economic thought examines the attempt to advance beyond the apparently well-established principles of political economy towards a ‘general science of society’ or sociology.
3) The religious texts embrace the spectrum from Catholicism and natural religion to agnosticism and secularism.
4) The section on art and society assesses the enormous influence of ‘cultural critics’, Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, and William Morris, whose perspectives were distinct from those of churchmen and sociologists. We are particularly fortunate in having a grand Ruskinian project – the University Museum – in Parks Road in Oxford, and Ruskin’s own collection of drawings and watercolours, used in his teaching, in the Ashmolean Museum.
5) Education is important in raising directly the question of the role of women in Victorian culture, and shows how many of the intellectual developments of the period were reflected in the reform of the universities and public schools, and in the professionalization of study.
6) The scientific texts focus on Darwin and the impact of evolutionary thinking.

Literature and Politics in Early Modern England
The period for study, a golden one in English literary achievement, was one in which major poets and dramatists were involved in or preoccupied with political events. This subject invites candidates to explore the relationship between literary developments and political ones. The following authors have been selected for study: More, Skelton, Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare (for whom the set texts are taken from his English and Roman history plays), Bacon, Jonson, Middleton, Massinger, Milton, Marvell. Candidates are encouraged to consider the lives and influences, as well as the writings, of these men, and to relate the writings to their historical contexts. They are also encouraged to read more widely in the literature of the period and to consider the historical changes which the literature of the period illuminates or reflects. Among the themes of the subject are: the Court; humanism; nobility, honour and service; biography; literature and the nation; the relationship between Christian and classical values; early Stuart monarchy and the masque; the development of the history play; the relationship of the drama to politics and to Puritanism; the responses of writers to the Puritan Revolution.
Tutorials: History

Medicine, Empire, and Improvement, 1720–1820
This subject aims to offer the broad appeal of the social history of medicine, which sees medicine as a response to problems of health and disease as experienced by most people. 'Medicine, Empire and Improvement' connects with topics of increasing interest such as racial difference, consumerism, colonialism, ‘medicalization’ (the increasing authority of medical ideas in society as a whole), environmentalism, and alternative medicine. No technical or specialist background is assumed.

The primary focus is on Britain, but the chosen themes look outward to incorporate Britain’s relationships, physical and mental, with its growing empire, with America, and with France. The authors of the texts have been chosen partly on the basis of their intimate involvement with religion, politics, literature, or popular culture.

The emphasis is on medicine as a measure of the economic, social, and physical environment. Overall, the environmental emphasis is strong, but you will also be looking at medicine as an example of the rise of the middle class and in particular of the professions. Were the new voluntary hospitals dominated by their medical staffs, or by their lay governors? Does the eighteenth century deserve its reputation as the high point of quackery and the commercialization of medicine? Or should we think more in terms of divisions between popular and élite culture, or of increasing intellectual pluralism following the upheavals of the seventeenth century?

Two further prominent themes are war, which was increasingly acquiring a global dimension; and colonialism, including the pathogenic effects of empire. During this period, Britain and most major European powers established or extended medical provisions for their armed forces, this being one of the few areas in which the State was prepared to intervene to protect the health of its subjects. Many of the medical writers of the period were enterprising, outspoken, observant, and ideologically committed (or alternatively, unscrupulous) individuals who wandered the globe and played a major part in creating images of foreign environments for home consumption. They made major contributions to a debate on the effects of luxury which took on a new lease of life as imperial commerce expanded. They also helped to define ‘Britishness’ in terms of Britons’ physical and mental responses to the colonial experience.

Health, disease and medicine were, and are, matters of universal concern, creating a shared but changing vocabulary and set of ideas; this subject demonstrates how medical concepts were used in defining the health of the body politic in the context of Enlightenment society.

Modern Japan, 1868–1972
An opportunity is offered in this subject to study the modern history of Japan. The prescribed texts are available in English or English translation, and no knowledge of Japanese or previous study of Japanese history is expected.

The course covers Japanese intellectual, cultural, social and political developments in wider world context from the late Tokugawa period to the post-Asia Pacific War period. Students will examine different types of sources for historical interpretation such as children’s stories, print, philosophy texts, literature, government documents, and private diaries. Within modest limits, candidates are free to pursue any interests they may have along particular lines of enquiry: e.g. the origins and nature of revolution; the changing status of women; the vernacular movement; the relationship between human and natural environment; the impact of the Russo-Japanese War; the rise of anarchism and Marxism; religion and modernity. Texts will be studied in translation.

Nationalism in Western Europe, 1799–1890
The tumultuous events of the last decade of the twentieth century and the first years of this century have shown vividly the enduring power and influence of nationalism on the states and peoples of Europe. This subject sets out to explore a central aspect of modern European history, and to introduce students to some of the genuinely seminal texts in the canon of contemporary political and social thought. Few political ideologies have exercised so long or so consistent an influence over the lives of contemporary Europeans as nationalism, making the search for its intellectual foundations – and the
Tutorials: History

incongruities it spawned— all the more vital for an understanding of modern history, and of the European condition. The course traces the concept of nationalism to its modern origins and studies its evolution over the nineteenth century. This was the crucial period when nationalism entered the mainstream of European politics and came to dominate the political agenda of the continent, as witnessed by the political unifications of Italy and Germany.

This is not a straightforward political history of the nineteenth century. Rather, its purpose is to trace the evolution of an ideology, primarily through the founder-texts of its most influential exponents in Italy, Germany and France, those parts of Europe where nationalism is now most readily identified with both state and people. The set texts include the seminal works of Hegel, Mazzini, Renan, Treitschke, Michelet, Fichte and Gioberti. Their visions will be tested against their opponents, Marx and the Catholic Church among them. A continuing theme of the course is the shift of nationalist ideology from being the child of the revolutionary Left—culminating in the 1848 Revolutions—towards its identification with the Right and the forces of state authority by the end of the period. The thoughts of nationalist writers on the roles of religion, the nature of the state, and the place of the past in shaping cultural identities will all be studied in depth. Their ideas will also be set beside those of the leading, contemporary theorists of nationalism as a political ideology, including Benedict Anderson, John Breuilly, Ernest Gellner and Anthony Smith. In this way, it is hoped to reveal the richness, potency and complexity of the concept of nationalism in the era of its definition, and to test current thinking against its founder-texts. Tutorials will provide the essential background, and no previous knowledge of the period is required. All texts are in English translation.

Nationalism, Politics and Culture in Ireland, c.1870–1921
This subject explores events and ideas in Ireland from the Home Rule era to the Anglo-Irish Treaty, stressing themes and rhetoric as much as narrative. Topics covered include the Fenian tradition (separatist ideology, republican rhetoric, emigre nationalism); the idea of Home Rule (Isaac Butt, federalism, Protestants and nationality); the land issue; the Home Rule crisis of the 1880s; the polarization of Ulster Unionism and Catholic nationalism from that era; cultural revivalism and the debates over ‘Irishness’ from the 1890s; the development of radical political options such as Sinn Fein, suffragism and co-operativeism in the early 1900s; the pre-war crisis over Ulster and Home Rule; the 1916 Rising, the transformation of nationalist politics, and the rearrangement of Anglo-Irish relations.

A detailed knowledge of Irish history will not necessarily be assumed. Those studying the subject will have the opportunity to concentrate on some less conventional aspects of the period, such as the place of religion in Irish social life, the rhetoric of historical justification in Irish nationalism, the development of radical feminism and its interaction with nationalist politics, the language revival, journalistic controversies, the evolution of an Ulster identity, and the place of creative literature in creating nationalist imagery. W.B. Yeats, Augusta Gregory, Douglas Hyde and George Moore are as central as Charles Stewart Parnell, Edward Carson, Constance Markiewicz and Eamon de Valera. Thus the set texts and suggested additional sources include pamphlets, newspapers, memoirs, polemic, poetry, and fiction as well as more conventional sources.

Nobility and Gentry in England, 1560–1660
This subject is concerned with the English nobility and gentry in a century when the landed classes played a critical role in the political, religious and social life of the nation. It uses family papers, letters and biographies as the primary sources to study the élite’s own attitudes and its diverse experience in this disturbed period. There will be an opportunity to investigate the political allegiances of the nobility and gentry, their pattern of office-holding, attitudes towards the court, and to study the divisions generated by religion and civil war. The private life of the upper orders, their education, marriage patterns, family life and estate management will be major themes of the course, and there will be specific sections on architecture and portraiture to provide a brief insight into the
Tutorials: History

cultural activities characteristic of the propertied. Several of the texts used are by, or related to, noble women, and offer some entry into their mental world as well as that of their husbands. It is hoped that the course will provide an introduction both to a fascinating period of English history and to various aspects of the study of history.

Political Theory and Social Science, c.1780–1920
This course is organized around a body of authors who still form the basis of our thinking about politics and society today. Later twentieth-century thinkers may have gone beyond Marx and Weber (for example), but they have not yet managed to present their ideas except as developments of what was said by their nineteenth- and early twentieth-century forebears. We still live in a world dominated by the polarities of Liberalism and Socialism, and reports of Marx’s ‘death’ at the end of the Cold War have been greatly exaggerated. The many themes running through these texts include serious engagement with the problems raised by a strongly historical view of social and political evolution: should one believe in ‘progress’, and if so why? If one chose not to believe, did this mean that history was meaningless and that, by the end of our period, the world was ‘disenchanted’? Another major trend lay in the increasing predominance of theories which were ‘critical’ of established modes of social and political behaviour, whilst those which were ‘positive’ and reconstructive were more and more at a discount. Why should this be? The decline of ‘positivist’ thought in this sense was also linked to a set of estimates about the role of natural scientific models in analysing human society: French thinkers rather preferred them, whereas German and British ones did not. Again, why so? The earliest serious modern discussion of the role of gender in political and social life forms another significant theme. You will enjoy taking this course if you enjoy the careful reading of texts, and if you have an interest in decoding the meaning of apparently abstract concepts – such as ‘ideology’, ‘class’, ‘charisma’ and ‘liberty’ – by looking not only at texts but at the historical contexts from which they emerged.

Revolution and Empire in France, 1789–1815
There is little need to emphasize the importance of this period in the transformation of the political and social system and consciousness of France and of the wider European world. The protracted wars of 1792–1815 and the almost continuous Anglo-French conflict similarly had far-reaching effects on the military and economic development of European states. The period thus offers a set of clear problems within a well defined chronological context. The emphasis of this option is on the nature of the conflicts that brought instability during the 1790s and on the character of the Napoleonic settlement after 1799. Students will be asked to reflect on the relationship between these two phases. The course examines the process of revolutionary politics and the mechanisms of the Napoleonic system. Students will also study the multiple threads of the revolutionary political discourse, exploring the emergence of liberal, radical and conservative systems of thought, as well as examining the elements of Bonapartist and Imperial ideology. Furthermore, the course raises the practical difficulties experienced in trying to give stable political and institutional form to theory and ideal. One central issue here is the emergence of revolutionary and Napoleonic myths and the dichotomy between ‘myth’ and ‘reality’. Finally, students will be asked to assess the degree, nature, and significance of the changes undergone by France between the Ancien Régime and the Bourbon Restoration.

With these aims in view, the prescribed texts include the famous polemical writings of the Abbé Sieyès and Edmund Burke, a selection of French revolutionary documents (acts, speeches, proceedings, and the like), and selections from Napoleon’s letters and from the Memorial of Saint Helena by the Count de Las Cases. Such texts will enable students to measure contemporary perceptions against those of historians since that time.

Scholasticism and Humanism
This subject deals with the transformation of systematic political thinking in the west from sublimated theology and jurisprudence into an autonomous discipline. The process was
Tutorials: History

primarily one of interpreting recently rediscovered texts from the ancient world. The first, and arguably the most important, of these were the authoritative sixth-century compilation of Roman law known as the Corpus Iuris Civilis and Aristotle’s major philosophical works. Both presented, or were taken to present, ready-made intellectual systems which could only with some ingenuity be reconciled with the teachings of the church, the realities of later medieval Europe, and with each other. A third strand was represented primarily by writers of Latin prose, notably Cicero and Seneca, most of whose works had not been lost during the early middle ages, but who began to be read in a new way by the scholars we term humanists.

The set texts by Aquinas and Marsilius of Padua represent very different attempts to grapple with the implications of Aristotle’s teaching: Aquinas’s on an abstruse, architectonic level, Marsilius’s in terms of the (allegedly pernicious) reality of papal authority within Western Christendom. Machiavelli tried to apply the teachings of the Roman moralists to politics as it was practised in the early sixteenth century, and shocked his readers by excising God from the question. The further texts allow us to explore the issues in greater detail, looking at how Aristotle, Roman law, and the canon law of the church could be used to develop coherent theories of government covering emperors and popes, kings and city communes, and their interrelations. They also illustrate the early development of humanist political thinking, and the different forms it took in Northern Europe and in Italy. By the end of the course it should be clear why western political thought has taken such a distinctive form.

Society and Government in France, 1610–1715
The seventeenth century was the decisive period in the formation of the French ancien régime, born out of a series of acute tensions within state and society. The long reigns of Louis XIII (1610–43) and Louis XIV (1643–1715) both began with royal minorities, classic occasions for troubles, followed by powerful reassertions of royal authority as the kings came to maturity. Such notable ministers as Richelieu, Mazarin, Colbert, and Louvois played leading roles in creating a new style of authoritarian government, which has often been rather simplistically described as absolutist.

The subject relies on a wide selection of documents to illustrate this process in the widest sense, and more particularly its impact on French society at large. Kings, ministers, and their provincial officials reflected extensively on the problems they faced, so that the records of the royal administration preserve a vivid and dramatic picture of repeated conflict on numerous fronts. Similar themes emerge from pamphlets, memoirs and other documents produced by those who experienced the changes of the period as threats to their independence and prosperity. Among the principal subjects for study are extensive revolts by both the people and the nobility, the crucial mid-century crisis of the Fronde, the ideological battles over the limits on royal autocracy, and the pervasive effects of the great Catholic reform movement. This period has attracted many distinguished historians in recent decades, so there is a rich secondary literature in both French and English, and students can familiarize themselves with lively ongoing debates about social structure, economic development, the nature of absolutism, and much else. Above all, the subject offers an opportunity to build up a coherent picture of early modern France, at both the national and the regional level.

All of the French documents have been translated into English and many are available on the Faculty website. A reading knowledge of French is not a requirement for this subject, though students who can read French, or wish to improve their reading knowledge, will find that it considerably enhances the range and richness of the secondary reading available for this subject. Students will be required to study the social, political, economic, and religious developments in France from 1610 to 1715.

The Age of Jefferson, 1774–1826
At an Oval Office reception honouring all living US Nobel laureates President John F. Kennedy joked, ‘there hasn’t been so much talent assembled in this room since Thomas Jefferson dined alone.’ Jefferson stands out, even in an age
Tutorials: History

of polymaths, both for the breadth of his interests and for his influence on American history. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and served as America's minister to France during the initial stages of the French revolution. Breaking with Washington, he helped create partisan politics in America before serving as the third president of the United States. By concluding the Louisiana Purchase and authorizing the Lewis Clark expedition Jefferson established the United States as a nation with continental aspirations. His actions in respect of the Haitian revolution and the Napoleonic wars, coupled with his Anglophobia, situated America within the wider world. Following the deaths of Franklin and Washington, Jefferson was to all intents and purposes the embodiment of the Founding Fathers and the recipient and originator of a vast correspondence on American government, science and culture. In retirement as in office he helped define the new nation.

This course uses Jefferson's life and writings to pose a number of questions about the age in which he lived. For example, what was the impress of the Enlightenment on the conduct of government and intellectual enquiry during this period? Was Jefferson's obnoxious racism and hostility to the abolition of slavery sui generis or widely held? What were the origins and influence of 'Jeffersonian' theories of democracy? How far were men in Jefferson's position able to embrace 'the age of the common man'? What value should historians place on intellectual or political consistency? To what extent is America an exceptional nation?

The American Empire, 1823–1904
The United States became an imperial power in the nineteenth century. In less than one hundred years, American statesmen transformed their nation from a cluster of states in the areas east of the Mississippi River into an empire spanning across the North American continent, with additional territories in the Caribbean and Pacific. Commercial expansion and 'informal imperialism' also marked American foreign relations in this period, particularly in Latin America. Expansionism, however, was not without its critics and the formation of the American empire was a highly contested process — indeed, the many failures of expansionists in this period are as demanding of study as are their successes.

This subject leads students to interpret and analyse this process, from the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 to the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904. Specific attention is given to the formation of the Monroe Doctrine, relations with Native Americans, continental expansion and Manifest Destiny, overseas commercial expansion and the overseas empire acquired in 1898. In viewing continental and overseas expansion together, this course connects two processes that historians have all too often viewed in isolation. The impulses behind expansionism and the debates it invoked were remarkably similar throughout this period. No prior knowledge of American history is required.

The Authority of Nature: Race, Heredity and Crime, 1800–1940
Starting with the second half of the eighteenth century, power relationships between peoples on earth, the growing and dramatic division between dominant nations and nations that were dominated, or even eliminated, and indeed the foundations of social inequalities, were increasingly seen by Western naturalists and intellectuals as inevitable (albeit, to some, unpleasant) features of the order of nature. Racial weakness was regarded as inscribed in the shape of human skulls, individual deficiencies in the traits of human faces. Across the world, as within societies, every human group and individual occupied the place that nature had assigned to it. The attempt to ground political and social phenomena on the authority of nature preceded the advent of Darwinism in the 1860s. It could indeed be claimed that the immediate and chaotic spread of social Darwinism within the Western world simply reflected the widespread presence of attitudes and beliefs for which Charles Darwin, often unwittingly, provided authoritative scientific evidence. Darwin himself, in the last analysis, shared many of the presuppositions of his self-appointed and at times extreme followers, and predicted that many peoples of earth would disappear as the inevitable, depreciable consequence of natural laws regulating the relationships between nations. Yet, the 'natural' triumph of the 'civilizing'
Tutorials: History

imperial western powers was not granted. Once again, the struggle for life and natural selection had to be called upon to express anxieties about the stability of the social order. The mounting aggressiveness of the ‘dangerous classes’ and the fertility of the lower orders were jeopardizing the efforts of the ‘natural’ elites that were responsible for civilization and imperial advances. The superior races had to exercise control over the less endowed ones, in the same way as the social elites had to carefully monitor demographic and political transformations that in the long term would endanger the survival of the race itself. Chronic illnesses, moral insensitivity, atavist aggressiveness had to be curbed through a rigid control of immigration and reproduction. New ways to investigate dangerous traits emerging in social groups would have led to scientifically based preventive actions. Racial anthropology found its parallel in criminal anthropology and criminology. Crime was seen as a natural phenomenon for which, often, there was no cure. Individuals as well as crowds often showed the survival of traits that characterized previous stages in the development of society, or in the natural history of man. ‘Beastly behaviours’ and ‘savage crimes’ became expressions that summed up a widespread climate of opinion. The survival of nations depended on their capacity to steer the reproductive flow and to isolate and possibly eliminate the danger that lethal traits would further spread throughout society. To some legislative body, such as the State of Indiana in 1907 and 1927, forced sterilization appeared as a benign solution capable of stopping the spread of dangerous individual traits. To National Socialist political and scientific leaders in Germany, sterilization had to be accompanied by stronger measures, such as forced isolation and straightforward physical elimination. A strong State had to take strong measures to survive and to lead. Has the tragic lesson of negative eugenics during the 1930s and the early 1940s been learnt? The course will also consider the periodic resurgence of attitudes appealing to the authority of nature and of science to explain complex social and historical phenomena. Is intelligence hereditary, geographically and socially distributed, and can ‘science’ prescribe social norms and suggest political measures?

The Carolingian Renaissance

‘Carolingian Renaissance’ is a term of convenience used to describe the cultural, intellectual and religious awakening of Western Europe in the eighth century which in due course found its natural centre in the court school of Charlemagne and thence returned, in the ninth century and under fresh stimulus, to the churches and monasteries equipped to realize its implications. It thus gathers up what of Antiquity and Patristic learning had been preserved and hands it on, transmuted, to become the basis of European thinking about the aims of society till comparatively recent times. Its range is so great, and its implications so vast, that no set of prescribed texts could in practice cover it. Those that have been chosen (all in English or French translation) illustrate some of its principal themes and some of the ways in which those themes were modified in the course of a century’s experiment, as a result, first, of the directing force of Charlemagne and his advisers and, thereafter, of the widely differing interpretations placed on the royal programme by bishops, monks and others left to their own devices. The texts include a generous selection of the revealing correspondence of two scholars at the centre of affairs, Alcuin and Lupus of Ferrières; biography and narrative material; an educational manual; several Carolingian capitularies (the programmatic foundation of the Renaissance); some charters; a little theology and liturgical material; and a selection of poetry. Special attention is paid to the artistic and architectural aspects of the Renaissance.

The Crusades

The Crusades were a central phenomenon of the High Middle Ages. The product of an aristocratic society suffused by a martial culture and a militant religion, they reveal aspects of social relations, popular spirituality, techniques of waging war and attitudes to violence. They retain interest for a modern world to which Holy War and ideological justification of violence are no strangers. The aim of the course is twofold: (i) a full exploration of the dramatic events of the campaigns in the Near East, covering the experience as well as the motivations of crusaders and settlers in the Crusader Kingdoms; and (ii) investigation of the interaction over a period of
Tutorials: History

two centuries between western Christians and the indigenous populations, both Christian and Islamic, in and around the states and settlements established in the East. The subject embraces spectacular events and vivid personalities, including Saladin, one of the few Muslims to gain a reputation in medieval Europe, but the set texts also enable students to study broader themes: ideologies (Christian Holy War and Islamic Jihad), institutions (the ‘feudal’ structure of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem or the Military Orders), military history (castles, siege warfare) as well as the social and cultural history at this meeting point of the Mediterranean civilizations of the Middle Ages: Greek, Arabic, Jewish and Latin. In recent years the Crusades have attracted a wealth of new research and debate, much of it conducted in English. This provides students with rich and accessible secondary material against which to pit their own views. The texts, translated from Arabic and Greek as well as Latin and medieval French, are kept to a manageable size and provide opportunities for critical comparison of different viewpoints on the same events or issues. Students will be required to study the history of the Crusading movement and the Crusading states down to the fall of Acre (1291).

The First Industrial Revolution, 1700–1870

This subject explores the transformations of Britain’s society and economy during the industrial revolution. It explores the causes and nature of industrialization, urbanization, and economic modernization; the social dislocations associated with economic change; and the changing economic, administrative, and social discourses which helped reshape Britain’s economic relations and social institutions. Topics studied include agricultural change, the rise of manufacturing industry, the nature of British capitalism, labour discipline, the problems of poverty and attitudes towards the poor, changes in social structure, demography, public health and social reform, fiscal and financial policy, and the central analytical concepts embedded in a vibrant and extensive secondary literature. Prescribed texts range from Gregory King’s Natural and Political Observations (1696) and Daniel Defoe’s Tour thro’ the whole Island of Great Britain (1724–6) to social surveys in the mid-nineteenth century and Sir Robert Giffen’s ‘The progress of the working classes in the last half century’ (1883). Other texts include the classic surveys of agriculture by Arthur Young and James Caird, Malthus’s seminal ‘Essay on the Principle of Population’ (1798), parliamentary reports on poverty, education, and banking, Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations, and autobiographies of working people.

The Metropolitan Crucible, London 1685–1815

‘Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life: for there is in London all that life can afford.’ Imbued with the spirit of Samuel Johnson’s famous dictum, this course analyses eighteenth-century London’s profound influence as an agent of change across a broad range of themes – social, economic, political, and cultural. As capital city, London has always played a significant role in national developments, but many historians have seen its impact in this era at its most fundamental, ushering in many of the recognizable features of modernity. A variety of vibrant and stimulating texts have been chosen to stimulate student thinking on London’s influence on great transformations such as the rise of the public sphere, the dawn of empire and the birth of the financial City, which sources give voice to both the excitement and the concerns resulting from the capital’s growth.

The course is structured to enable close study of important developments within the capital. Specific topics for study may be structured along topographical lines to focus attention on key sites of change, taking a tour through the polite West End ‘town’, the courtly and parliamentary world of Westminster, the commercial-finance district of Exchange Alley; the burgeoning press of Fleet Street; the East End centres of manufacture and shipping; and the new suburban areas. This may be complemented by the study of London’s growth in more thematic terms, embracing such topics as social change, political culture, economic organization, religious pluralism, and the imperial metropole. When combined, these approaches would enable students to gain a comprehensive overview of metropolitan change, and to locate it within broader contexts of urban and national development. This course will take...
advantage of an exciting and growing historiography of recent years, but it has been purposely designed to provide plenty of research opportunities for students. The texts will enable students to engage with a wide range of sources, including maps, literary works, histories, statistical series, diaries, travellers' accounts, and cartoons.

**The Near East in the Age of Justinian and Muhammad, 527–c.700**

This subject provides an opportunity for historians to study in depth the dramatic transformation of the Near East at the end of the classical period. The scope of the subject is vast, encompassing as it does eight cultures and two seismic events. The twin civilized powers of classical antiquity, the Roman and Persian Empires, were both destroyed in the period, under the violent pressure of the Arab conquests and the massive influx of Slavs into the Balkans. These two old and two new cultures stand at the heart of the subject, but four other cultures are illuminated by the prescribed texts – the Coptic society of late Roman Egypt, the Syrian world of the Fertile Crescent, the fragmented society of Armenia, and the great nomad powers of the Eurasian steppes.

Students are not expected to accumulate knowledge about every facet of these eight cultures. The prescribed texts focus attention on four major themes: (i) the social and cultural history of the rich eastern provinces of the Roman Empire – Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt – in the reign of Justinian, and, in particular, the half-articulated thought-world of monks and holy men and the strident, sophisticated theological arguments of the higher clergy; (ii) Roman-Persian relations; (iii) the nomad invasions and Slav colonization of the Balkan provinces of Rome; (iv) the rise of Islam and the Arab conquests. It is this last theme which has proved particularly absorbing; for the biography of Muhammad (a prescribed text) together with the Koran enable the historian to trace the growth of Muslim power from the first halting words of the Prophet to Islam’s conquest of the Near East.

Students will be required to study the history of the Byzantine Empire from 527 to c.700 with special reference to its eastern and northern frontiers (i.e. excluding Italy and North Africa).

**The Science of Society, 1650–1800**

Between 1650 and 1800 political thought in Europe was transformed by the need to come to terms with the rise of commercial economies and the open, mobile societies which they created. At the same time many political thinkers were inspired by the contemporary revolution in the natural sciences to attempt to place the workings of economy and society on a similarly new footing. New theories of human nature and historical development were advanced and the scope of political thinking extended to include the key issues to be confronted as a result were the role of divine providence in human history, the historical authority of the Bible, the scope for religious toleration, the rights and obligations of the individual in person and property, the moral consequences of commerce and luxury, and the value of civilization itself. The subject is studied in set texts by four authors and further texts by another six authors, all chosen for their intrinsic interest and because they illustrate the subject’s major themes and contrasts. The starting point is Hobbes’s Leviathan, whose rigorous attempt to place the understanding of man and society on a natural, scientific basis provided a constant reference point for later thinkers. By contrast, Vico’s New Science offers an extraordinarily imaginative historical account of how man became social. From the period of the Enlightenment, Rousseau’s Discourses On the Arts and Sciences, On the Origin of Inequality, and On Political Economy present a radical critique of modern man and his civilization, while Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations and Theory of Moral Sentiments respectively expound the new discipline of political economy, and defend the moral values of modern society. The texts by Spinoza, Locke, Mandeville, Montesquieu, Herder and Kant enable you to reconstruct the debates which link the four set texts. The highly original thinking of Mandeville, for example, had a decisive impact on both Rousseau and Smith, while the moral and
Tutorials: History

political philosophy of Kant provides a challenging climax to the course as a whole.

The Soviet Union, 1924–41
This subject provides an opportunity to study the history of the Soviet Union from the later years of the 'New Economic Policy' to the outbreak of war with Germany. The course examines the establishment of the Stalinist regime, its changing policies and developments in Russian culture and society. Particular topics include political and social conflict in the late 1920s; the 'Right' and 'Left' oppositions; the consolidation of Stalin's power; the origins of the 'Great Terror'; industrialization; collectivization and the peasantry; the cultural intelligentsia; film, literature and music during the 1930s; propaganda; popular culture; women; the family; the Comintern and foreign policy.

The primary material, all in English or in English translation, includes a wide range of sources, including official documents recently released from the Russian archives, memoirs and film. There is also a lively secondary literature.

The Wars of the Roses, 1450–1500
The Wars of the Roses were a prolonged period of political disorder and conflict in fifteenth-century England, stemming from the disastrous reign of Henry VI and issuing forth in a series of popular uprisings, magnate rebellions, battles, skirmishes and usurpations of the throne. They took place in a polity with strong central institutions and powerful civic values – and they were, in this sense, civil wars, fought by lords and commons alike over the demand for good government and the need to restore authority. Yet because this polity was also founded on structures of lordship, deriving from the ownership of land and perpetuated by habits of deference, chivalry and personal authority, the Wars were also conflicts between families and friends, and were equally concerned with property, territory and local power. This dual nature makes the causation and development of the conflict peculiarly interesting, and has produced copious debate over the political values and culture of the period and its place in the evolution of English government and political society. What lay behind the assertive behaviour of such 'overmighty subjects' as Richard of York and Warwick the Kingmaker? What led to the usurpations of Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII, and why did only two of them succeed? How did politicians, thinkers and ordinary people respond to the experience of civil war? How much impact did the limited fighting – estimated at only 13 weeks of actual campaigning – really have? And how was this fighting managed? The English were used to sending small semi-professional armies to France: how did they raise troops and conduct campaigns when the enemy was
other Englishmen, and the aim not conquest, but political advantage? As far as government is concerned, many historians have argued for a strengthening of royal power during the 1470s, 80s and 90s, but it remains unclear what caused this strengthening, or how it fits with the many challenges and set-backs experienced by the kings of these decades.

To these interpretative questions, the sources add a further layer of interest and complexity. The government records of the time are often very bland, masking conflict and precarious authority behind the measured language of bureaucrats. Gentry correspondences, such as the Paston Letters, contain rumours, newsletters and even eyewitness accounts, but they are far from neutral and not always as well-informed as they appear. Then there are the highly coloured narratives of contemporary politicians and commentators: not only are the biases of these accounts difficult to read, they also involve a further complication – the first substantial reception into English political discourse of Renaissance terminologies and motifs, as the Englishmen of this period compared their politics to those of the decaying Roman republic. And there are other materials requiring even greater ingenuity to read – prophecies, buildings, works of art, and the recently-discovered burial pit at Towton. What J. R. Lander called ‘the dark glass of the fifteenth century’ can be approached from many directions, and discovering how to see through it is one of the great challenges of the period.

So it is that although the Wars of the Roses have attracted a great deal of research and provide the focus for extremely lively (not to say combative) historical debate, there is no overall agreed characterization of the conflict; lots of questions, both large and small, remain open; and there remains a lot for students to get their teeth into. Oxford, finally, is a good place to study the Wars of the Roses. This University is home to a very distinguished tradition of fifteenth-century history (among others, C. L. Kingsford, K. B. McFarlane, C. A. J. Armstrong, Gerald Harriss, Maurice Keen, C. S. L. Davies, Jeremy Catto), library collections are strong in this area, and a number of historians in today’s faculty continue to research and publish on the period.

Theories of the State
No understanding of Western history is complete without knowledge of the ideas which have fundamentally shaped social and political life; and it is as theories of the state that these ideas have been given their clearest expression. Built upon such constantly reinterpreted concepts as justice and liberty, authority and community, theories of the state have ranged far beyond the institutions of government to consider the position and power of the church, the role and responsibility of the individual, the interests and conflicts of social classes. This option provides the opportunity to study these theories through reading works by four major political thinkers, Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau and Marx.

Inspired by a timeless conviction of the value of political life, Aristotle’s Politics provides a detailed account of the first and for long the model European state form, the city republic of ancient Greece. Written in the midst of civil war, Hobbes’s Leviathan is not only a remarkable attempt to construct a science of politics on an analysis of individual motivation; it is also a classic of the English language, offering readers an unforgettable and often provoking experience of sustained, rigorous argument. Rousseau’s Social Contract, by contrast, is a vision of what men might achieve in politics – and a radical critique of what they have been forced to put up with. Finally, Marx’s Communist Manifesto and other works illustrate his pioneering theory of the relation between the state, economic forces and class conflict, and his hopes for a communist revolution.

The paper requires candidates to show knowledge of the prescribed texts of at least three of these authors; making connections and drawing comparisons between them will be encouraged. You will have the advantage of working with an unusually coherent and self-contained set of texts, and there will be the opportunity both to place them in historical context and to consider their subsequent relevance and lasting value.

Tutorials: History

Marx, The Communist Manifesto; The Eighteenth Brumaire; preface to the Critique of Political Economy; Critique of the Gotha Programme.

Theories of War and Peace in Europe, 1890–1914
The origins of the First World War have been exhaustively studied from the diplomatic documents, and the attention of historians is increasingly focussing on social attitudes to war and peace during the quarter-century before 1914. The early twentieth century saw two conflicting movements reaching a climax. The Peace movement, with its origins in the Enlightenment of the 18th century, saw in the Hague Conference the dawn of a new, more peaceful era of international cooperation, while on the other hand a 'War Movement', drawing strength from contemporary Social Darwinism, looked forward to a century of heroic national struggles. Marxists saw war and militarism as the inevitable result of capitalism; the early Fascists saw it as the only cure for a diseased society; but the increasing destructiveness of weapons made some thinkers doubt whether in future war would be possible at all.

This subject introduces students to some of the thinking on this topic in the pre-war era. Much of it remains highly relevant today.

Witch-Craft and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe.
This course aims to give students an understanding of the causes and courses of witch-hunting in early modern Europe. It will consider the intellectual background of the witch-hunt; the relationship of witchcraft to the Protestant and Catholic reformations; the diverse and changing legal and judicial arrangements. Literary and feminist theories jostle with readings inspired by anthropology and psychoanalysis. We will also focus upon the cultural and social context of the witch-hunt: issues such as the high proportion of women who were accused and executed will be addressed. The literature of witchcraft is diverse and methodologically sophisticated. There are many conflicting interpretations, and many different approaches. Students will be introduced to these approaches, and encouraged to engage with them critically. Students will also be introduced to primary source material from a wide geographical area, and a variety of genres, and encouraged to analyse these carefully.

Women, Gender and Print Culture in Reformation England, c.1530–1640
This subject offers students the opportunity to develop an interest in the culture of the English Reformation, and to deepen their understanding of gender, and of the ways in which historians can engage with popular literature to illuminate early modern society. The texts selected for this course include broadsides, ballads, pamphlets, advice literature, sermons and drama and are arranged under eight broad headings:
1) Holy Maids: Elizabeth Barton and Anne Wentworth
2) Martyrs: brides of Christ and wilful wives
3) Maternal instruction: upbringing and conversion
4) Catholicism: polemic and policy
5) Godly counsel: advice literature and funeral sermons
6) Marriage: expectations and tribulations
7) Unnatural transgressions: infanticide, murder, and witchcraft
8) Women-hating polemics and the praise of women

The primary focus of students’ work will be the cultural representations of women gender and religion within the prescribed texts. Issues of style and genre, and their evolution in this period, as well as the ‘marketplace of print’, will also be a matter of concern, especially where they have a bearing on how such literature can be interpreted as part of the historian’s task. Students will also be encouraged to explore the development of themes, including the presentation of authorship; strategies of conversion and persuasion; representations of the devil, temptation, providence and divine intervention; and the use of scriptural models in godly advice and the nature of women polemics.

Many of the set text resources for this course are drawn from the wide range of sources now available online.