

**History 1976Z:**  
**Charlemagne: Conquest, Empire,**  
**and the Making of the Middle Ages**  
**SYLLABUS**

Prof. Jonathan P. Conant

J. Walter Wilson 201  
Brown University  
Th. 4:00-6:30 p.m.  
Fall 2014

The age of Charlemagne sits at the nexus of antiquity and the middle ages. For two hundred years the Carolingians – the family of Charlemagne – welded together fragments of the splintered Roman imperial tradition and elements from the Germanic world to forge a new civilization that was to define Western Europe for centuries. This seminar examines that process by taking students inside the historian's workshop, exposing them to the tools, texts, and objects from which historians construct their interpretations of the medieval past. Class meetings will focus on discussion of primary sources in translation, the archaeological evidence, and modern scholarly debates. Topics include the rise to power of the Carolingian house; Charlemagne's imperial coronation; Carolingian interactions with the Islamic and Byzantine worlds; the revival of classical learning; art and architecture; warfare and the techniques of rule; political dissent; the early medieval Papacy; sanctity and monasticism; peasant and aristocratic life; slavery; the economy; the Vikings; the collapse of the Carolingian Empire and the early development of Charlemagne's legend.

**GETTING IN TOUCH:**

E-mail: Jonathan_Conant@Brown.edu	Office Hours: Tu 1:00–2:00 p.m. at Annmary Brown
Phone: x3-5121	Memorial, 21 Brown St.
Office: Peter Green House (PGH) 010,	Th 1:30–3:30 p.m. at PGH 010, and by
79 Brown St.	appointment

**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

1. Attendance, preparation of required readings, and informed participation at all seminar meetings (including periodic oral reports and short written assignments on the weekly reading, as assigned by instructor): 30%
2. Written assignments:
  - A short paper (3-4 pages = 900-1,200 words) presenting a historical critique of a Carolingian primary source in translation, chosen in consultation with the instructor: 10%
  - A 3-page prospectus (900 words) *plus* a complete bibliography for the research paper: 15%
  - A *full, complete* draft of the research paper: 15%
  - A research paper (15-20 pages = 4,500-6,000 words) that will develop, deepen and extend the analysis of the primary source evaluated in the short paper: 30%

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Graduate students taking the seminar for graduate credit will be asked to choose between *either* writing an additional 10-page (3,000 word) historiographical essay on a topic worked out in consultation with the instructor *or* writing a longer research paper (25-30 pp. = 7,500-9,000 words). If the former, the percentages will break down as follows:

Participation in seminars	25%	Prospectus and bibliography	12%
Short paper	8%	Draft	12%
Historiographical essay	18%	Research paper	25%

### REQUIRED TEXTS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:

The following texts will be available for purchase at the Brown Bookstore:

*Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories*, trans. Bernhard Walter Scholz (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan P., 1972). ISBN: 0-472-06186-0. Price: \$18.95 new.

Marios Costambeys, Matthew Innes, Simon MacLean, *The Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2011). ISBN: 978-0-521-56494-6. Price: \$34.99 new.

Paul Edward Dutton, ed., *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader*, 2d ed. (Toronto: U. of Toronto P., 2004). ISBN: 1-55111-492-5. Price: \$42.95 new.

Einhard and Notker the Stammerer, *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (London: Penguin Books, 1969). ISBN: 0-14-044213-8. Price: \$15.00 new.

Richard Hodges and David Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe: Archaeology and the Pirenne Thesis* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell U.P., 1983). ISBN: 0-80149-262-9. Price: \$19.95 new.

Joanna Story, ed., *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1983). ISBN: 978-0719070891. Price: \$35.00 new.

You may be able to find these books (new or used) for less through an online vendor such as amazon.com. Readings not available for purchase will be available online through e-reserves.

### SEMINAR SCHEDULE

\*\*\* Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings on the day indicated \*\*\*

#### **Week 1 Introduction**

(September 4) Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 1-30

#### **Week 2 The Carolingians' Ascendancy**

(September 11) Reading: *Royal Frankish Annals*, pp. 37-47; Correspondence of Boniface, Reanointing of Pepin in 754, Donation of Constantine (Dutton nos. 2 and 4-5) (18 pgs.); Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, pp. 49-58  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 31-65; P. Fouracre, "The Long Shadow of the Merovingians" (Story pp. 5-21); S. Airlie, "Charlemagne and the Aristocracy" (Story pp. 90-102)

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- Week 3**  
(September 18) **Land and Power**  
Reading: Inventory of a Royal Estate, Capitulary *De Villis*, Polyptychs, Royal Judgment of Pepin in 828 (Dutton nos. 13.5-6 [pp. 85-89], 31-32, and 35) (19 pgs.)  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 223-323; C. Loveluck, "Rural Settlement" (Story pp. 230-258)
- Week 4**  
(September 25) **The Great Charles**  
Reading: *Royal Frankish Annals*, pp. 47-97  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 65-79; *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, pp. 1-12; J. Nelson, "Charlemagne the Man" (Story pp. 22-37)
- Week 5**  
(October 2) **The Burdens of Empire**  
Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, pp. 59-90; Charlemagne and Pope Leo (Dutton no. 12) (3 pgs.)  
Background reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 160-170; D. Ganz, "Einhard's Charlemagne" (Story pp. 38-51); R. Collins, "Charlemagne's Imperial Coronation" (Story pp. 52-70); N. Christie, "Charlemagne and the Renewal of Rome" (Story pp. 167-182)
- Week 6**  
(October 9) **Charlemagne's Heir and the Politics of Remembrance**  
Reading: *Royal Frankish Annals*, pp. 97-125; *Ordinatio Imperii* of 817, Vision of the Poor Woman of Laon, Louis' Public Penance in 822 (Dutton nos. 28-30) (8 pgs.); Nithard, *Histories*, pp. 129-140  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 194-222
- Week 7**  
(October 16) **Running an Early Medieval Empire**  
Reading: Capitularies (Dutton no. 13) (27 pgs.); Charlemagne's letter to Queen Fastrada (e-reserves) (1 pg.)  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 170-194; M. Innes, "Charlemagne's Government" (Story pp. 71-90); S. Coupland, "Charlemagne's Coinage" (Story pp. 211-229)  
➤ *Short paper (4-5 pp.) due at the beginning of class*
- Week 8**  
(October 23) **Carolingian Renaissance**  
Reading: Writings of Alcuin, Theodulf of Orleans, and Agobard of Lyons (Dutton nos. 15-18, 20-22, and 33) (40 pgs.); review Dutton pp. 89-92  
Background Reading: D. Bullough, "Charlemagne's 'Men of God'" (Story pp. 136-150); R. McKitterick, "Carolingian Renaissance" (Story pp. 151-167); J. Story, "Charlemagne and the Anglo-Saxons" (Story pp. 195-210)

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- Week 9**  
(October 30)      **Society and the Holy**  
Theodulf of Orleans' Precepts, Life of Benedict of Aniane, Statutes of Adalhard of Corbie (Dutton nos. 19, 27, 34) (43 pgs.)  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 80-153; M. de Jong, "Charlemagne's Church" (Story pp. 103-136)  
➤ *Prospectus and full bibliography for research paper due at the beginning of class*
- Week 10**  
(November 6)      **Trade, Commerce, and the New Archaeology**  
Reading: Hodges and Whitehouse, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, pp. 77-176; Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 324-378  
Recommended Reading: Hodges and Whitehouse, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, pp. 1-76; F. Verhaeghe, "Urban Developments" (Story pp. 259-288)
- Week 11**  
(November 13)      **Civil Wars and Worse**  
Reading: Nithard, *Histories*, pp. 141-174; Engelbert at the Battle of Fontenoy, Treaty of Verdun, Annals of Xanten for 844-862, Annals of St-Vaast for 882-886, *Ludwigslied*, Abbo's Account of the Siege of Paris by Northmen (Dutton nos. 46-47, 49, and 74-76) (17 pgs.)  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 379-419; T. Reuter, "Charlemagne and the World Beyond the Rhine" (Story pp. 183-194); M. McCormick, "New Light on the 'Dark Ages': How the Slave Trade Fuelled the Carolingian Economy," *Past & Present* 177 (2002), 17-54 (e-reserves)  
➤ *Full draft of research paper due at the beginning of class*
- Week 12**  
(November 20)      **From History to Legend: Notker the Stammerer**  
Reading: Notker the Stammerer, *Charlemagne* (80 pgs.)  
Background Reading: Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 419-427
- Week 13**  
(November 27)      **No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday**
- Week 14**  
(December 4)      **Conclusions**  
Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean, *Carolingian World*, pp. 428-435  
➤ *Final draft of research paper due at the beginning of class*

### IMPORTANT DATES:

- October 16:      Short paper due  
October 30:      Prospectus and complete bibliography due  
November 13:      Draft of research paper due  
December 4:      Final text of research paper due

\*\*\*All assignments are due at the beginning of class\*\*\*

Key to Grading Abbreviations	
✓ = Good point	Rel.? = Is this relevant to your thesis?
* = Expand this idea	Rd = Redundant
Awk = Awkward wording	Ref? = Footnote/citation needed
C = Clarify/explain further	Sig.? = What is the significance of this?
Evid.? = Where is the evidence?	Sp = Spelling error
F = Factual error	T = Explain thesis or link to thesis
G = Gramatical error	VT = Verb tense
O = Improve organization	Vg = Vague
P = Paragraph unfocused/incomplete	WW = Wrong word
PN = Unclear pronoun	X = Logical error
PV = Passive Voice	<u>Underlined</u> = See notes in margin
Q = Interpret/introduce quotation	

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***The Fine Print:***

By taking this class, you are agreeing to the following terms:

1. **Attendance and participation:** Informed participation accounts for 30% of a student's final grade in this class; thus regular, punctual attendance is expected of all students. If you are going to miss class for any reason, please call or e-mail me *ahead of* the scheduled class meeting time to let me know (see "Getting in Touch," above). Students may take up to one excused absence without affecting their participation grade; further excused absences may negatively affect a student's grade. Any unexcused absences will result in a penalty of 10% of the student's participation grade per class session missed. Excused absences for medical reasons require a note from Brown Health Services indicating that the student has been sick.
  2. **Students with disabilities:** Students requiring accommodation for disabilities should contact Student and Employee Accessibility Services at 20 Benevolent Street (401-863-9588 or SEAS@Brown.edu), and notify the instructor at least two weeks in advance of the accommodation needed in order to ensure that proper arrangements can be made.
  3. **Academic integrity:** All students enrolled in this class are expected to abide by Brown University's Academic and Student Conduct Codes.
  4. **Submission of late work:** Late work will be penalized one grade fraction per day late (thus an A paper submitted one day late will receive an A-; two days late, a B+; three days late, a B; and so on). Work submitted two weeks or more after the deadline will receive an automatic F.
  5. **Changes to this syllabus:** This syllabus is provisional; the instructor reserves the right to make changes to it as necessary throughout the course of the semester.
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