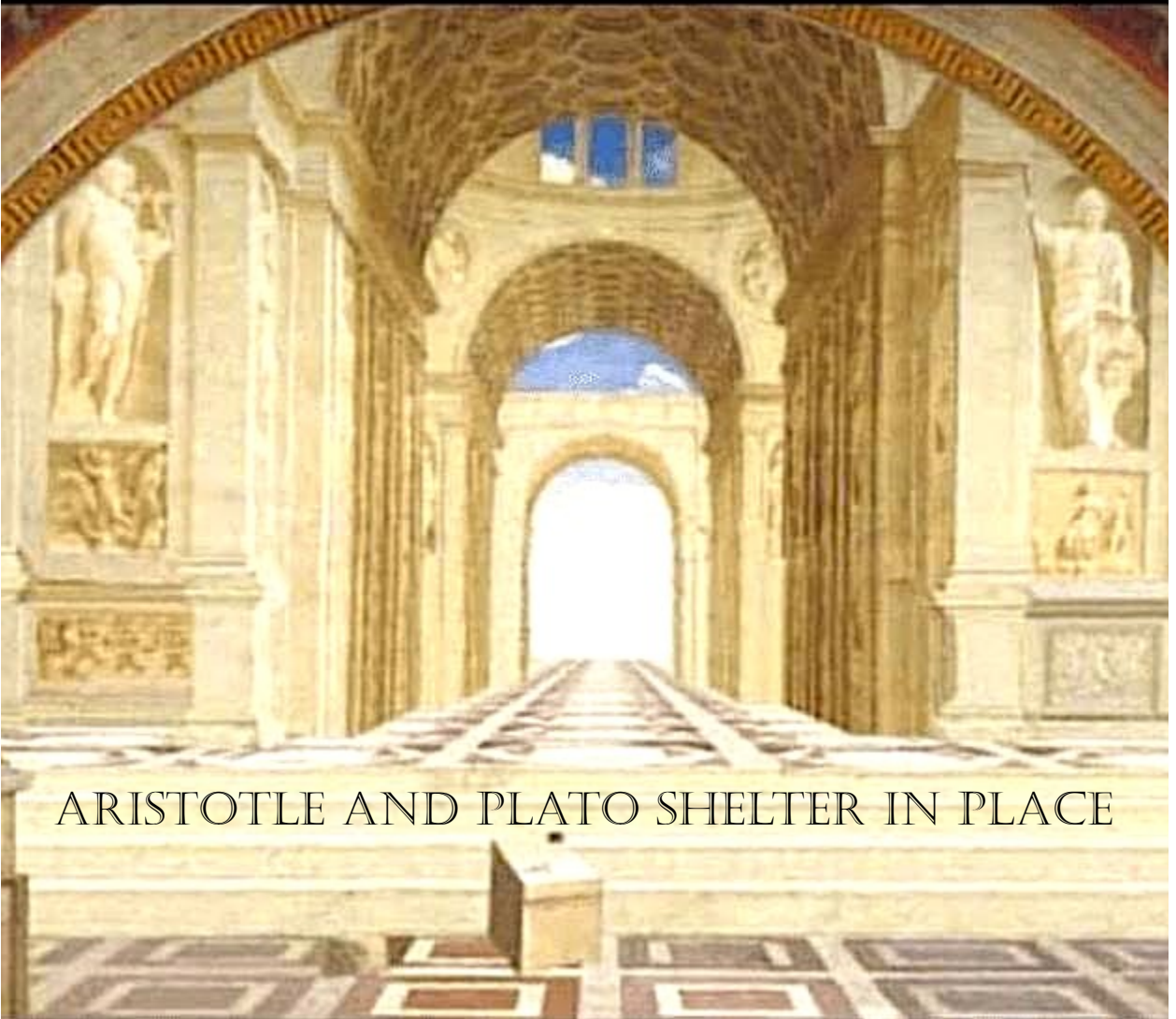


Spring 2020

# DIALOGOS

*(Greek: To See Through to Meaning)*

A Magazine of the Institute for the Study of Western Civilization



## ARISTOTLE AND PLATO SHELTER IN PLACE

MISSION: To improve our understanding of how we came to be who we are, why we think the way we do and what assumptions about the world and human nature trace back to earlier periods in the 5,000 years of Western Civilization.



# From the Founder Roots

By William Fredlund, PhD

M

any people have asked how the Institute got started, so I thought that I would tell that story in this our first issue of our new quarterly magazine *DIALOGOS*. It all started at Stanford University when Bruce Thompson and I were teaching in the Western Civilization program for undergraduates. In 1987-88 the Great Western Civ Debate broke out at Stanford with Jesse Jackson coming to the campus and leading demonstrations. With snake dances, he strode across the campus shouting, “Hey ho, hey ho, Western Civ has gotta go.” And a campus-wide debate unfolded with national speakers coming to Stanford to speak about the Western tradition and Greece and Rome and Homer and Virgil. Stanford professors appeared on PBS, CBS, and ABC debating whether to teach Western Civ or not. The debate ended with the Stanford faculty senate voting in favor of closing the Western Civ program—by a margin of one vote. All of us teaching in the program were furious and broken-hearted and wondered what the future would bring.

As a result of this debate and national attention, I

Stanford professors  
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was offered the opportunity to teach the course in exactly the way I wanted at the University of

California Santa Cruz Continuing Studies—for adults in the evening. The class was a big success and soon we were teaching 4 classes a week with 50 or 60 people in each class. We were bringing in so much money that my friends said that we really had enough interest to

fund an independent program in our own building. So we broke away from UCSC and went down the street and rented part of a building at 10060 Bubb Road in Cupertino and got started. That was 2003. And here we still are—the little Western Civ Institute out behind the gas station.

It is pretty amazing that we're still here. The general cultural mood during the past 30-some years has not mellowed toward teaching Western Civ. It has darkened. Every major Ivy League university—Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and my own Stanford—have closed all versions of Western civilization survey courses. It's just plain shocking. Universities that offer courses on whale migration, Amazon forest tribe diets, Mongolian horse breeding, and everything else under the sun, do not want to teach the story of the Western tradition from Greece to the present. You will all ask why.

The answer is cultural politics. These universities, our premier institutions of higher learning, have accepted the argument that the Western tradition and Western civilization and ideas are all terrible; that it is misogynistic, racist, LGBT-phobic, and riddled with many other phobias. This is of course untrue. The Western tradition—and *only* the Western tradition—has led the fight against racism, against slavery (Christians stopped that), against the oppression of women, and against the injustice toward gays. Islamic Iran is still hanging men for being gay. But it doesn't matter. If *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, ABC, CBS,



NBC, PBS, *Time* magazine, and everyone else say that the Western tradition is all about oppression, well then, that's it. Debate over. And now in 2020, only in a few isolated small colleges and one little Institute in Cupertino, California do people hear the true story.

So here we are doing our best to tell that story. And so far, even the coronavirus has not been able to stop us. Do we see any hint of a change on this? The one venue that is heaping a massive amount of praise and explanation of the Western tradition is in new books. They flood out from publisher after publisher and often with huge sales. So the success of these books suggests there is a great big “underground” community with true knowledge and understanding of the great achievements of the

Western tradition. And so it could be, that one of these days, this shared knowledge will finally re-emerge into a new consensus that says it is worth teaching the story of Western Civilization. One can only hope.

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# Western Civ Then and Now

## Italy in the Time of COVID-19

*By Kim Nameny, a student at the Institute. She is a history and language teacher with degrees from Stanford and UCSC. Kim has taught in both California and Italy, most recently at the University of Milan. While a Fulbright scholar doing PhD research in sociology in Italy, Kim “went native” and spent the next 30 years there before returning to the United States. This plus her scholarly pursuits, her professional and family ties to Italy, and her Italian fluency all position her to be an insightful interpreter of one of our favorite countries.*

# H

ere at the Institute, Italy has often been at the center of our discussions of Western Civilization. Today in the United States, Italy has become a household word, but for a completely different reason. As Northern Italy became the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in Europe, and then overtook China in numbers of cases (while being a much smaller country), with its hospitals overwhelmed, we were told that our own COVID-19 curve looked very much like Italy's and 10-14 days behind them. We therefore had that much time to flatten the curve and avoid catastrophe, if

we acted decisively and swiftly.

Those of us who follow social media were deluged with pleas from Italy to “please take this thing seriously.” Our medical professionals told us to learn from the Italian example, both the good and the bad of it. The bad was the time they lost at the beginning. The good was that they finally got the whole country in lockdown and were starting to flatten the curve.

Italians are as freedom-loving as any American, and they chafe at following rules more than most citizens of this country. In the South of Italy especially, it is almost a point of pride to not stop at a stop sign, unless, of course, a car is coming. Italy has one of the highest tax evasion rates in the Western world, primarily among the self-employed. And Italians are famously wary of the government. But curiously, over the past month or so, as if by miracle, Italians have accepted a strongly enforced stay-at-home order across the entire nation, and are exhorting their fellow citizens to comply with the new rules.

**As if by miracle, Italians have accepted a strongly enforced stay-at-home order across the entire nation, and are exhorting their fellow citizens to comply.**

They admonish *non fare i furbi* (don't be wise guys), considered a typical Italian behavior. Acting more like Germans, Italians complained about other Italians who defied the rules, and pretty soon everyone was basically conforming. On social media they reached out to



*Piazza San Marco on March 11, 2020 in Venice*

Italians remembering their shared history as they combat COVID-19. They come from Italian television, from social media and mainstream media. I list them in chronological order, starting with the evocation of *The Aeneid*, a Latin epic poem written by Virgil between 29 and 19 BC that tells the legendary story of Aeneas, a Trojan who travelled to Italy, where he became the ancestor

people in other countries, like the United States, with strong appeals to take the virus seriously and stay at home. They serenaded each other from balconies, created “Italy-the-Beautiful” videos and shared examples of resistance and resilience from their long history, all to hearten each other. Many of us listened, and were inspired. We shared their pleas widely, exhorting our own friends and family to take this seriously . . . *just look at Italy!*

Italians are an ancient and oft-tested folk. They have weathered much in their long history. They have survived numerous hardships and combatted countless dangers. Today, facing COVID-19, they are rallying together with a collective and proud Italian spirit rare for people who typically identify more with local loyalties than with being Italian (e.g. being Sicilian as opposed to Milanese, or Florentine and not Sienese, though both are Tuscan). They are now identifying as Italians, surprisingly so, and are remembering their common history.

Here are some recent examples that struck me of

of the Romans. That example begins with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

- Italians reacted strongly and disdainfully to the lax measures of some of the northern European countries, especially to the March 13 announcement of Boris Johnson. On that day he proclaimed that he intended to let the virus take its course in order to create “herd immunity” by sacrificing some of the most vulnerable. His phrase “*Get used to losing your loved ones*” was met with a wall of pushback in his own country and an outcry from Italy. As a result, he subsequently reversed his position and adopted a policy more similar to Italy’s. When Johnson first announced his policy, many Italians were quick to distance themselves from this man who claims to be a “classicalist” and to love Rome, but who just as clearly, they thought, never received the true humanistic message of a classical education. One of the most eloquent expressions of opposition and distance-taking to Johnson, was a poetic tribute to *Italian-ness* I



*Bernini's Aeneas, Anchises and Ascanius (1618-19)*

found on social media from Mauro Berruto. Mr. Berruto is head coach of Italy's men's national volleyball team, but more importantly he is an Italian with a classic education and a degree in philosophy that stirred him to write the following moving tribute to Italians:

*"I waited a while to write. I was hoping I*

*got it wrong. Instead, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom meant exactly what he said: 'Get used to losing your loved ones.'*

*"Boris Johnson graduated from Oxford with a thesis in ancient history. He is a scholar of the classic world, passionate about the history and culture of Rome, about which he wrote an essay. He even proposed the reintroduction of Latin to English public schools.*

*"Mr. Johnson, listen carefully. We are Aeneas who carries on his shoulders Anchise, his old and paralyzed father, to save him from the fire of Troy, who protects his terrified son Ascanius, and who that very*

*same Rome, which you so love, founded.*

*"We are Virgil who gave that story to the world.*

*"We are Bernini who at 22 years old carved that message for eternity, in marble.*

*"We are dwarfs, maybe, but we are sitting on the shoulders of those giants and thousands of other giants who made Italy's great beauty available to the world. You, Mr. Johnson, are simply one who studied us. Not understanding and not learning anything, however."*

- Italians during the time of coronavirus remember the early Christians hiding out in the catacombs, finding refuge in those labyrinthine networks of tunnels from the persecutions of Nero and other emperors, before the legalization of Christianity with the Edict of Milan in 313 AD.
- Italians find irony in contrasting themselves with the beloved Dante, exiled from his Florentine home in 1302 and condemned to wander the outside world, while they are condemned to stay at home and forsake the outside world.
- They liken themselves to Boccaccio's protagonists in *The Decameron*, 10 young Florentines escaping the Black Death in the

epidemic of 1348, entertaining each other with stories as they quarantine themselves in a countryside villa to avoid the feared (and little understood) contagion.

- They remember the cholera outbreak of 1867, immortalized by Mark

Italians are discovering  
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have rarely exhibited.

Twain in *The Innocents Abroad*. As Twain left Milan and headed toward Naples, he was fumigated, encountered closures, and risked quarantine more than once. He thought the authorities were overreacting with their measures, much like some present-day pundits.

- Many Italians are old enough to remember and identify with the Roman Jews and resistance fighters who in 1943 escaped death during the Nazi roundups by taking refuge in the ancient Fatebenefratelli Hospital on Tiber Island, established as a sanctuary before the year 1000 AD. They were saved by complicit Roman doctors who disguised them as patients quarantined with the deadly, highly contagious but entirely fabricated illness they called “K Syndrome.” For many this is an example of “ordinary” people becoming heroes by taking care of the most vulnerable.

In their responses to the coronavirus, Italians have been reaching out to each other and remembering their collective past. This is a source of comfort, pride and inspiration. Their collective past is one that we study in our history courses and which we visit whenever we travel to Italy. They, on the other hand, study those same events, those same artistic and literary treasures, as their national heritage. They are surrounded by the memories of those events in their physical environment, in the monuments and art



*The Spanish Steps, Rome, in the time of COVID-19*

works they encounter in their everyday lives, which they are now deprived of through quarantine. Italians are discovering a sense of national patriotic pride in their *Italian-ness* that they have rarely exhibited. And it is energizing them. Hard-tested by the pandemic, they are rallying to save each other as a way of honoring their shared heritage. They are realizing that they are indeed “sitting on the shoulders of giants” and that they have a responsibility to themselves and to the world to live up to their own past greatness.

In closing, it is fitting to remember that even the word “quarantine” comes from Italy! The practice of quarantine, as we know it, began during the 14th Century in an effort to protect coastal cities from plague epidemics. Ships arriving in Venice from infected ports were required to sit at anchor for 40 days before landing. This practice, called quarantine, was derived from the Italian phrase *quaranta giorni* which means 40 days.



# Notable Books from the Classroom

## *The Iliad and The Odyssey*

By Joan Niemeier, an employee and student of the Institute since 2001

**L**ong before Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*, there were twin epics by Homer—*The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The greatest war story of all time, his story of the Trojan War (written about 750 BC) was followed by the ultimate “hero’s journey” of Odysseus’ return voyage from Troy to his home in Ithaca. It is not only Tolkien and Dante (as well as Joseph Campbell) who have a debt to Homer, but all those novelists, screenwriters, and movie producers who have plumbed the depths of his themes and tweaked them for so many years. Students at the Institute owe Homer as well.

The students in Dr. Bill’s class, **The History of Ancient Greece**, sailed into the text of both books. Reading the full text is best, but individual scenes contain small gems. Using the backdrop of war, Homer presents Greece at the threshold between one-man rule and the development of the Greek city-states. The meeting of Agamemnon and the Greek kings, and the tense give-and-take between Agamemnon and Achilles, foreshadow

the negotiation required for man and woman to live in close proximity to their neighbors. Strife and negotiations such as these eventually led to the development of law in the city-states. The Greeks were embroiled in it, and we are the beneficiaries.

But in quieter passages Homer gives readers a glimpse of Greece itself in the “old days.” In Book 18 of *The Iliad* he describes the making of a new shield for Achilles. Hephaestus, the god of fire and master of metal-working, hammers heavenly bodies, cities, and country life into the metal. In *The Odyssey*, descriptions abound of seashores, rivers, starry nights, trees, and bird songs. There is even a diminished Odysseus who, after suffering a shipwreck and washing ashore, is reduced to sleeping naked in a bush. Yet he emerges in the morning like a magnificent lion.

Their seafaring ways put the Greeks into contact with the Phoenicians and their system of writing. As a result, the Greeks revised their alphabet and added the vowels. How lucky it was that Homer had the

advantage of that revised system. Today we can hold great translations of his works in our hands to read, or listen to them on phones or computers, and share in these incredible journeys. Thank you, Homer!

The Greeks, embroiled in negotiations required for people to live in close proximity, led to the development of law. We are the beneficiaries.



# Top Seven Online Resources...

## To Feed Your Heart, Mind, and Spirit and Keep Your Sanity While Sheltering in Place

### 1) 12 World-Class Sites You Can Virtually Tour from the Couch (Washington Post article):

[washingtonpost.com/travel/2020/03/18/these-historic-sites-attractions-are-offering-virtual-tours-during-coronavirus-pandemic](https://www.washingtonpost.com/travel/2020/03/18/these-historic-sites-attractions-are-offering-virtual-tours-during-coronavirus-pandemic)

The Louvre, Sistine Chapel, Guggenheim Museum, Yosemite National Park, Van Gogh Museum, The Great Wall of China, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Yellowstone National Park, Museum of Modern Art, San Diego Zoo, British Museum, and Metropolitan Opera House

### 2) Culture for the Self-Quarantined: Virtual Museums, Historic Landmarks, Concerts, and More:

[wendyperrin.com/culture-for-the-self-quarantined-virtual-museums-historic-landmarks-concerts-and-more](https://www.wendyperrin.com/culture-for-the-self-quarantined-virtual-museums-historic-landmarks-concerts-and-more)

Historic landmarks; museums; concerts, theater, talks, and books. Oh my!

### 3) Hike Trails and Stroll Through Gardens Without Leaving Your House:

[wendyperrin.com/hike-trails-and-stroll-through-gardens-without-leaving-your-house](https://www.wendyperrin.com/hike-trails-and-stroll-through-gardens-without-leaving-your-house)

Watch the cherry blossoms bloom, take a scenic train trip to the Arctic, or explore national parks (underwater too!). It's all possible online.

### 4) The Metropolitan Museum of Art Collection Highlights:

[metmuseum.org/art/collection](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection), then click "Collection Highlights"

Browse, ponder, and linger over the best of the best of The Met from the comfort of your couch!

*NYC's Metropolitan Opera is presenting videos of its full performances. Here: Il Barbiere di Siviglia.*



### 5) RealClearBooks: [realclearbooks.com](https://www.realclearbooks.com)

Provides a daily reference point to help readers take in the world of books, the changing nature of publishing, and the latest industry issues and controversies that attach themselves to the written word.

### 6) Ten Museums You Can Virtually Visit (Smithsonian magazine article):

[smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/ten-museums-you-can-virtually-visit](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/ten-museums-you-can-virtually-visit)

The Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza; The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea; The Anne Frank House; The Vatican Museums; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; The London National Gallery; NASA Research Centers; The National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City; San Francisco's De Young Museum; and The Louvre

### 7) WikiArt: [wikiart.org](https://www.wikiart.org)

An exhaustive source featuring 3,000 artists. Search any artist by name to see their complete body of work! These artworks are in museums, universities, town halls, and other civic buildings of more than 100 countries. Most of this art is not on public view. Home page showcases "Artwork of the Day" and "Short of the Month."

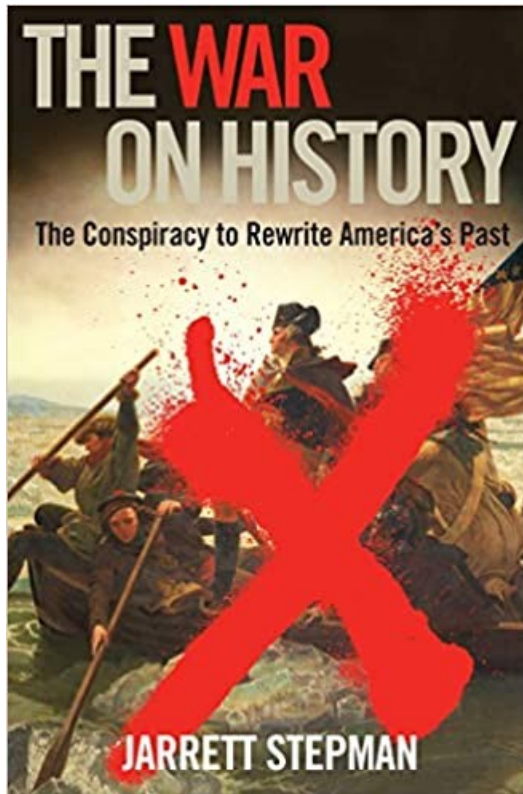
# Book Review

## 21st Century Rewriting and Ignorance of History Impact Us All

Review by Eno Schmidt, a Silicon Valley retired executive and entrepreneur, community volunteer and student at the Institute

Jarrett Stepman identifies and focuses on seven key episodes in American history, including the founding of America, the Civil War, and more recent events in the “American Century.” He first shows how various underlying principles and actions were foundational in the ultimate prosperity of 21st Century American society and then describes why some would like to erase these from collective memories.

Most readers will know the basic outlines of the events described, but many may not know the important context and fuller reasons why each of these events helped to create America and the concept of America. Why, for example, have Americans honored the leaders in these historical episodes, and how did America benefit from their leadership and actions? Stepman attempts to provide balanced perspectives in considering the



### **The War on History: The Conspiracy to Rewrite America's Past By Jarrett Stepman**

successes and imperfections of these leaders, both from the contexts of their own times as well as from our modern perspectives.

Furthermore, Stepman also asks, why should these leaders and events still be honored? Since Jefferson did not free his slaves upon his death as his fellow founder George Washington famously did, should all of his other achievements be discarded? Once Stepman addresses the fuller narratives of the historical events and why they were important, he then suggests why certain revisionist historians and political activists would want to pull down these symbols and wage these wars to rewrite history. For example, Stepman observes in his analysis of the significance of the events involving Thanksgiving,

“Thanksgiving is a celebration of the things the Pilgrims stood for: religious faith and the Christian origins of our nation, family, charity, and thankfulness for earthly blessings—the fruits of our labor. Thanksgiving is deeply woven into American culture. And it’s what the holiday

says about America that makes it problematic to its modern assailants.”

Of course, in studying the arcs of history, it is not a good idea to “cherry pick” only certain negative (or positive) actions and then move to show with what purpose and according to what plan those highly selected things were accomplished. We want the narrative to include many significant elements and then to reach a balanced evaluation. And so, another theme in Stepman’s work revolves around his subtitle, “The Conspiracy to Rewrite America’s Past.” In the context of Thanksgiving, Stepman observes,

“[Howard] Zinn and others...tell the story of these conflicts [involving Puritan battles with the Pequot tribe and others] to deceive people into believing that somehow Puritans, Americans, and Westerners are inherently violent and malicious—to convince their audience that somehow the bad things in this world are attributable to Western civilization rather than the fallen nature of man. It’s an attempt to prove that our civilization was uniquely built on cruelty and that...another, better way is attainable if we reject those Western norms.”

Stepman argues that focusing on leaders’ flaws without recognizing their positive contributions can lead people who do not know the historical context to conclude that it makes sense to erase these leaders and episodes from history. One of the recent such attempts has been the pulling down or open vandalism to their symbols including various long-standing statues throughout the country.

All individuals, leaders, and groups have flaws, says Stepman, and focusing on flaws risks losing the good in order to flee the flaws. Instead, by using examples from each of these seven episodes, Stepman advises moving the focus to the good and openly discussing the bad within the context of the time. Stepman’s approach to weigh the fuller contexts makes sense,

although individual readers will reach varying conclusions about how much weight to assign the achievements as well as the “sins.”

Stepman provides the narrative context for these leaders and explains how their positive accomplishments resulted in and help to sustain the continued prosperity and freedom of America. According to Stepman, many 21st Century American iconoclasts have the specific aim to remove the symbols for the positive accomplishments so that society as a whole might forget the underpinnings of America’s prosperity and freedom. Those circumstances would then make it that much easier to substitute different principles on which to create a totally different society, one that, in Stepman’s view, is much less likely to be prosperous and free.

Ultimately Stepman’s themes and recommendations are optimistic while looking to conserve America’s foundational history. Stepman’s prescription is to teach more of the history of these great leaders and the contexts for their positive accomplishments. Doing so reverses the erasure of history that has been going on. In Stepman’s words:

“We must demand that our institutions—our education system, media, and popular culture—quit attacking our heritage, restore what has been lost, and ensure that our future will not be a slow slide into the well-trodden and bloody paths of most of human history. Only by taking up this challenge can we reject civilizational suicide and win the war for our history.”

**DIALOGOS** is published quarterly by the Institute for the Study of Western Civilization for our teacher scholars, members, and students.

Editor: Michele McCarthy

Contributors: Patricia Fredlund, William Fredlund, Kim Nameny, Joan Niemeier, Eno Schmidt

Founder: William Fredlund, PhD

# Odysseys

## Turin: Scenery, Vineyards, and the Shroud

By Patricia Fredlund, travel guide editor

T

orino (its Italian name) is a lovely northern city in Italy and is

located in the Piedmont region, Italy's northwestern corner just across the alpine border from France.

This region sits at the foot of the Alps and is gorgeous! **From almost anywhere in Turin you can see the great, high, snow-covered Alps.** And best of all, its **lovely summer climate** is usually in the mid-70's!

### The Shroud of Turin

The Shroud is what draws most visitors to Turin. Many believe it to be the burial cloth of Jesus of

Nazareth. The 14-by-3.5-foot cloth, possibly brought to Europe from Constantinople during one of the Crusades, made its first documented appearance in 1355 in a chapel in Lirey near Troyes, France. By the late 16th Century, it had made its way into the possession of the ancient royal family of Savoy whose capital was in Turin. Ever since, it has been the subject of intense debate over its authenticity.

The first serious scientific analysis, done in the 1970's, determined that the image on the cloth, which appears to be of a bearded man with crucifixion-like wounds, was not made with any artificial pigments. In 1988 a radiocarbon dating of a sliver of the Shroud came back with a date of origin between 1260 and 1390, more than 1,000 years after Jesus is believed to have been crucified—a result





that led scholars to conclude it was a hoax. Since then, various teams of researchers have made conflicting claims, many supporting the hoax theory, others attempting to debunk the debunkers. In 2009 a researcher in the Vatican's secret archives claimed that the fragments of words written in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin suggest the Shroud was placed over Jesus. By contrast, last year a researcher

concluded that none of the early descriptions of the shroud predate 1355. **The actual Shroud of Turin is housed in the city's cathedral** in a climate-controlled case in a chapel built just to hold it. A 10-minute walk away is a separate **Museum of the Shroud**, devoted to scientific and historical questions. Only the pope can declare a public viewing of the actual Shroud. Pope John Paul II declared the next viewing to be 2025.

## Vineyards

Piedmont is also the location of some of Italy's most admired vineyards. If you are visiting Turin for several days or a week, you will want to make at least one day trip to the vineyards surrounding Turin to sample the vino. I suggest you start with **Alba** and **Barolo** to the south and then on another day visit **Asti** for the bubbly in the northeast. In Barolo, you must visit **Cantina Francesco Borgogno**. Founded in the early 1930's, this winery is a great example of a classic family-run wine estate. They produce 25,000 bottles of wine every year using the classical method



*Vineyard in Alba, Piedmont, Italy*

of aging in big wooden barrels. This is a visit you will never forget—wonderful welcoming family with a real personal touch!

Turin Cathedral (Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist )  
Piazza San Giovanni, 10122  
Phone: +39 011 436 1540  
Website: [duomoditorino.it](http://duomoditorino.it)

Museum of the Shroud  
Via San Domenico, 28  
Phone: +39 011 436 5832  
Email: [museo@sindone.org](mailto:museo@sindone.org)  
Website: <http://sindone.it/museo/en/home>

Cantina Francesco Borgogno  
Via Crosia 29, 12060 Barolo  
Phone: +39 0173 56178  
Email: [info@cantinaborgogno.it](mailto:info@cantinaborgogno.it)  
Website: [cantinaborgogno.com/en](http://cantinaborgogno.com/en)  
Open 10 am-12 noon, 2-6 pm  
Call prior to visit!

## Who's Who at the Institute: Spotlight on Bruce Thompson, PhD



Born in New York City, **BRUCE THOMPSON** grew up 90 miles east of Manhattan on the beautiful East End of Long Island. His home town, Riverhead, was still a farm-based community during the 1960's, a short ride from the Hamptons. He attended Princeton University during the mid-70's, studying

European intellectual history with several of the finest teachers of the subject during that era—Carl Schorske, Sheldon Wolin, Robert Darnton, Theodore K. Rabb, Jerrold Seigel, Teofilo Ruiz, and Dorothy Ross. But, until he arrived at Stanford University as a graduate student in history and humanities in 1977, he had never been west of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. His Stanford mentors included Gordon Craig (Germany), Gordon Wright (France), Peter Paret (Germany), James J. Sheehan (Germany), Peter Stansky (Britain), Paul Robinson (European intellectual history), Van Harvey (religious studies), Lorenz Eitner (art history), Ian Watt (literature), and William Chace (literature). In 1991 he began teaching at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he developed a popular course on the history of espionage and intelligence and became a founding member of the Program in Jewish Studies.

He later began a long association with the Institute for the Study of Western Civilization in Cupertino, teaching courses on a wide range of subjects, from biographical courses on Lincoln and Churchill to successive eras in American history. In recent summers, he has delivered a version of his course on the history of espionage and intelligence at the Institute.

## How Pandemics Change Art, History, and Literature A Select Bibliography

["Brush with the Black Death: How Artists Painted Through the Plague"](#) by Jonathan Jones, *The Guardian*

The Renaissance was just getting started, and the plague, too, was at the beginning of its reign of terror. Yet artists created incredible treasures and beacons of civilization. History is actually full of optimistic messages.

[The Decameron](#) by Giovanni Boccaccio

This Florentine humanist witnessed firsthand the carnage the plague brought to his city in 1348—and lived to tell the tale.

[Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present](#) by Frank M. Snowden

The World Economic Forum #1 book to read for context on the coronavirus outbreak . Also see ["How Pandemics Change History"](#) by Isaac Chotiner, *The New Yorker*, for an interview with the author.

[The Great Mortality: An Intimate History of the Black Death, the Most Devastating Plague of All Time](#) by John Kelly

Chronicles the journey of the plague as it traveled from the steppes of Russia, across Europe, and into England, killing 75 million people—one third of the known population—and changing society forever.

[Plagues and Peoples](#) by William McNeill

A radically new interpretation of world history as seen through the extraordinary impact—political, demographic, ecological, and psychological—of disease on cultures.

## Individual May/June Lectures at a Glance

7 pm

These lectures will be streamed direct to purchasers via high-quality live video broadcast. In-person attendance will also be offered for a limited number of purchasers if/when permitted by county health authorities.

### **MONTE CASSINO: FATED ABBEY OF ST. BENEDICT**

**William Fredlund**

Saturday, May 16

### **WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT SHAKESPEARE?**

**Arlene Okerlund**

Friday, May 22

### **THE LION'S CUB: DAVID BEN-GURION**

**Bruce Thompson**

Saturday, May 23

### **IRAN: HISTORY, CULTURE AND FUTURE**

**Naeem Zafar**

Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30

### **HISTORY OF THE ORCHESTRA II: THE CLASSICAL ERA**

**Thomas Shoebotham**

Friday, June 5

### **HISTORY OF THE ORCHESTRA III: THE ROMANTIC ERA**

**Thomas Shoebotham**

Saturday, June 6

## Cocktails with a Curator

### Love the Institute? Get Premium Access with a **Membership**

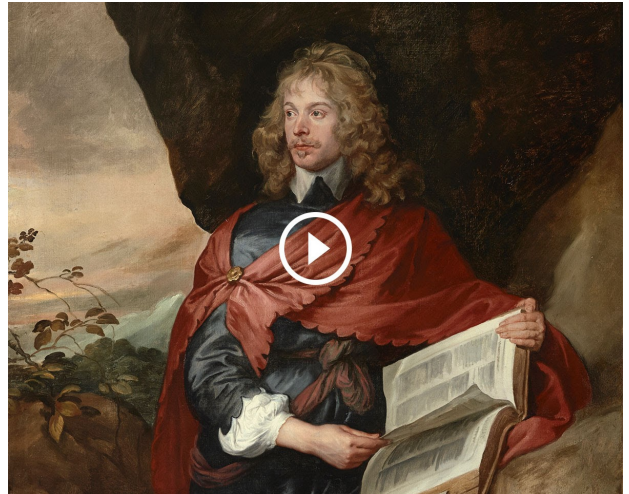
Member benefits include access to —

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*Detail of Edvard Munch's Self-Portrait After the Spanish Flu (1919)*

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