

Fall History & Heritage -- #8 (Nov. 4)

Martin Luther --- (Grant/Wilbur; *Christian Almanac*, Oct. 31)

This German religious reformer (1483--1546), a son of the peasantry, abandoned his early studies in law in order to join an Augustinian monastery? The Augustinians' Johann von Staupitz assigned the young monk to the faculty of the new University of Wittenberg, where at first he taught moral philosophy and, later, biblical theology. Astonishingly, the Reformation would be ignited by his protest in his *Ninety-Five Theses* (1517) to the way the Church was coaxing donations through indulgences.

Free University of Amsterdam --- (*Christian Almanac*, Oct. 29)

This Dutch educational institute (1880), founded free of governmental control by Abraham Kuyper, affirmed the Bible as the basis of knowledge in all fields of study? The school's affirmation was a logical extension of the Calvinist Kuyper's Christian worldview: God's Word must take precedence over man's, and true understanding of what is made cannot get far without an understanding of its Maker. Education, as Kuyper saw it, had to bow before Christ's kingship just like everything else.

The Greeks --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 51-59)

This ancient people, a reproach to the notion that all civilizations are created equal, performed feats in a wide variety of arts and sciences which astonish us still? The "cleverest people of antiquity, and the best soldiers," writes Kirk, they nonetheless lost their liberty to lesser nations because of their ruinous bent toward vanity and rivalry. Accordingly, America's Founders, among the more astute students of history, found little worth emulating in their political practices (as opposed to the works of their writers).

Hubris --- (*Roots of American Order*, pp. 51-59)

This key concept among the Greeks, who had a word for all things their insatiable curiosity gave consideration to, denoted man's deepest flaw—his overweening pride? The flaw, the pagan myths say, incurred the wrath of the gods and made the average Greek generally untrustworthy, not likely to keep his word to foreigners or live in peace with his brothers for long. The famous city-states (poleis) cooperated or confederated only in emergencies, only temporarily, and always with great reluctance.

Paganism --- (*Roots of American Order*, pp. 51-59)

This root of Greek culture was based in many deities, both primitive chthonian gods representing nature's raw forces and more refined, humanistic Olympian powers? The overall effect was unending, unresolved tension between opposing attributes, as in the Apollo-Dionysius standoff pitting reason and restraint against passion and pleasure. As always, religious beliefs had political consequences, fueling internecine rivalry within and between autonomous Greek city-states (poleis).