A living tradition...is an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition. Traditions, when vital, embody continuities of conflict.

-- Alasdair MacIntyre
AFTER VIRTUE

Required Reading:


Ivan Illich, IN THE VINEYARD OF THE TEXT: A COMMENTARY TO HUGH'S 'DIDASCALICON' (Chicago, 1993).


An excerpt from Martin Bernal, BLACK ATHENA: THE AFRO-ASIATIC ROOTS OF CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION, VOL 1 (Rutgers, 1987), along with some collateral materials (copies to be provided).

Boyd and King's HISTORY OF WESTERN EDUCATION, now in its 12th edition, is a splendid example of how the subject that concerns us this semester might be packaged as a single, coherent story. I've chosen another approach, however. Each of our authors brings a significant topic into focus -- childhood, books and reading, science and gender, the liberal arts, modernity, and euro-centrism -- but when taken together they also suggest why the very idea of a history of western education as 'master narrative' now looks to some like an impossibility, or worse, a grotesque error. In addition to reading conscientiously and participating in class, there will be some written assignments, the details of which we can work out together, but there will be
no final exam. Short papers on the reading we do together might be useful, or you might prefer to undertake a longer project. No matter what, though, the aim is to enhance your authority over this material. What others have made and continue to make of the history of western education is no substitute for you what make of it. I hope you enjoy the course.