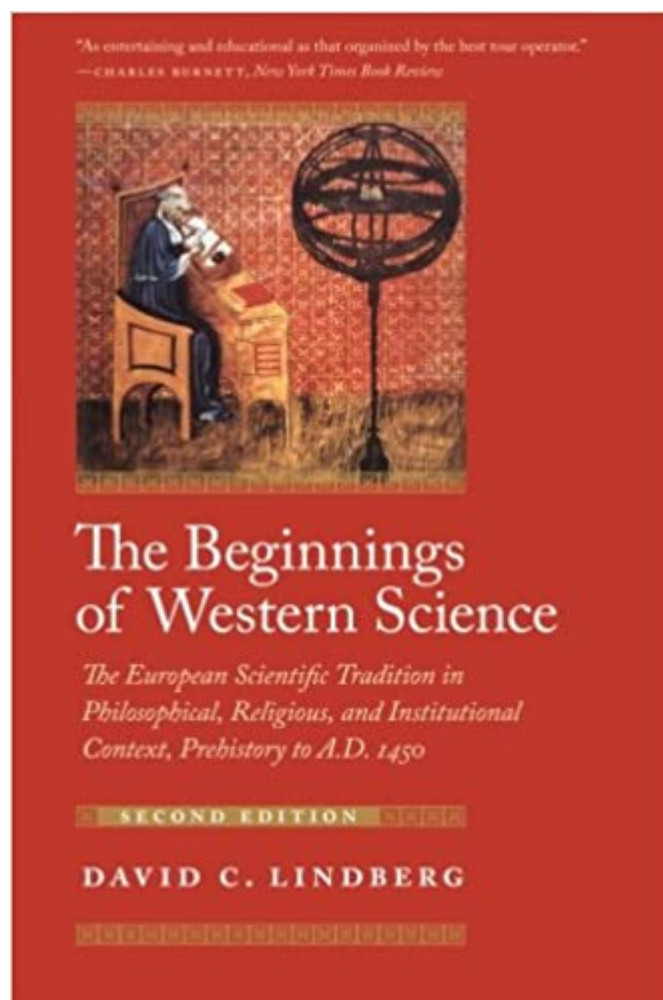


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The Beginnings Of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition In Philosophical, Religious, And Institutional Context, Prehistory To A.D. 1450





Synopsis

When it was first published in 1992, *The Beginnings of Western Science* was lauded as the first successful attempt ever to present a unified account of both ancient and medieval science in a single volume. Chronicling the development of scientific ideas, practices, and institutions from pre-Socratic Greek philosophy to late-Medieval scholasticism, David C. Lindberg surveyed all the most important themes in the history of science, including developments in cosmology, astronomy, mechanics, optics, alchemy, natural history, and medicine. In addition, he offered an illuminating account of the transmission of Greek science to medieval Islam and subsequently to medieval Europe. *The Beginnings of Western Science* was, and remains, a landmark in the history of science, shaping the way students and scholars understand these critically formative periods of scientific development. It reemerges here in a second edition that includes revisions on nearly every page, as well as several sections that have been completely rewritten. For example, the section on Islamic science has been thoroughly retooled to reveal the magnitude and sophistication of medieval Muslim scientific achievement. And the book now reflects a sharper awareness of the importance of Mesopotamian science for the development of Greek astronomy. In all, the second edition of *The Beginnings of Western Science* captures the current state of our understanding of more than two millennia of science and promises to continue to inspire both students and general readers.

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Customer Reviews

"The value of Lindberg's book as an introductory text for students is clear, but it will also serve as an

excellent resource for non-specialists, particularly those teaching comprehensive survey courses. . . . [The book] offers a concise, highly accessible introduction to the essential elements of western knowledge about the natural world that will help guide instructors in developing curricula. . . . The possibilities presented to enrich and enliven a general history course abound. . . . This second edition of *The Beginnings of Western Science* will remain a fundamental and reliable resource for many years to come." (Angela Smith H-Net Review)"This is a fine book, the culmination of a century of distinguished research on premodern European science. And it tells an important story that . . . needs to be read not only by undergraduates but by professional historians and anyone seeking to understand the origins of modern science." (F. Jamil Ragep Isis)

David C. Lindberg is the Hilldale Professor Emeritus of the History of Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and past-president of the History of Science Society. He is the author or editor of many books, including, with coeditor Ronald L. Numbers, *When Science and Christianity Meet*, also published by the University of Chicago Press.

This is one of several books that serve as a corrective to the popular myth that the fall of Rome was followed by the "Dark Ages." In this book, the development of modern science is traced from pre-history through the classical period (Greece and Rome) and afterward. Discoveries and the transmission of learning after the fall of Rome in Islamic lands and in the West is covered in readable detail. Unlike similar books, the author does not wish to address why science withered away in Islam, instead wanting to end that section on a positive note (something to the effect that we should instead be amazed at how long it lasted). It is also rather more detailed tour on the thought and discoveries of the "ancients". For anyone who has been steeped in the mythology that the history of scientific progress was Greece/Rome, the Dark Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment, this book (and/or the others listed below) should be required reading. That would cover mostly anyone educated in our colleges and high schools in the last fifty years. Other books in this vein worth reading: *The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution*, *Intellectual Curiosity and the Scientific Revolution: A Global Perspective*, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: Their Religious, Institutional and Intellectual Contexts* (Cambridge Studies in the History of Science).

Good introduction to Medieval science in new paradigms. Lindberg knows his History and presents it in an uncomplicated but interesting way. It will give anybody hours of enjoyment. A good

beginning for the subject. He starts with Aristotle's influence on Medieval scholarship and then recounts what the Medieval scientist did with it. Revisionist history. Good bibliography.

Very interesting history of science and philosophy through the Middle ages.

An informative and inspiring introduction to the history of scientific development. If you really want to have a grasp of the history, this is a wonderful starting point, easy to follow.

It is a very interesting book chalk with useful information. My class in Ancient Technology and Science used it for about half of the course.

The book may be too much for some but it is an accurate and scholarly review of the history of western science.

as expected

So far (I'm only half-way through) this book is very clear and direct. It covers the BEGINNINGS of science, so don't expect any discussion of Newton or anything recent. It only goes up to the 1500s. Obviously, then, a lot of the "science" is not very accurate. But the point of this book is not to learn science, but to learn the history of the study of science. If you're a PROFESSOR reading this review and considering using this book as a textbook, I suggest that you do what my professor did and give supplementary readings of primary sources (actual passages from Aristotle, Galen, etc.)

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