

Jon Stewart/Katalin Nun Stewart
BISLA
Spitzer Room

Fall Semester 2021
Tuesdays, 14:40-16:10
Thursdays, 13:00-14:30

Syllabus
Western Civilization II: The Modern World

This course traces the history and culture of the modern world from the end of the Middle Ages in the 15th century to the present day. The modern period is characterized by the development of subjectivity and individual freedom in opposition to tradition and authority. In this class we will examine this long struggle for individual freedom in many different forms. This struggle involved an ever-changing definition of what it is to be human, and the idea of a human being as something valuable in itself gradually emerged against great adversity. Our focus will be on the development of the idea of human rights that emerged for the first time in the modern world. We will examine the main periods and movements of Western thought in the modern period: the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, Marxism, Anarchism, Existentialism, and Feminism. Each of these important movements contributed to the development of the idea of the modern individual.

The class will help to develop important skills such as reading primary source texts, formulating and defending one's opinion both in writing and orally, and critical thinking and reasoning. In addition, our goal is to learn the relevant factual information about the development of Western Civilization in the modern period especially as it is related to the texts that we will be reading. The course is interdisciplinary, and the readings come from the fields of history, literature, philosophy, religious studies, and drama. This course can be seen as complementing and supplementing the BISLA course on Modern Political Philosophy.

Instructor: Jon Stewart

M.A. (Philosophy, 1986), Ph.D. (Philosophy, 1992), Dr. habil. (Theology, 2003), Dr. habil. (Philosophy, 2007).

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Instructor: Katalin Nun Stewart

Ph.D. (German Literature, 2000).

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Office Hours

By appointment.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

The course assessment will consist of the following:

30% One in-class written midterm examination (on October 28)

40% One in-class written final examination at the end of the semester (on December 16)

20% A series of unannounced quizzes throughout the course of the semester

7% Class participation

3% Attendance

Participation

The course consists primarily of readings and in-class discussion. The readings build on one another, and so it is imperative to keep up with them. The class discussion will be dedicated to coming to a better understanding of the texts. For this reason attendance is mandatory. In accordance with BISLA policy, only four unexcused absences per term will be accepted.

Computer and Cell Phone Policy

You may use your computers and tablets in class to take notes or to read the texts, but during the class period it is not permitted to use WiFi or to access the internet. Please turn off your cell phones during class. No surfing or texting during class is permitted.

Texts

- Christopher Columbus [1492-93], *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, ed. and trans. by Clements R. Markham, London: Chas. J. Clark 1893.
- Antonio de Montesinos [1511], “Sermon on December 21, 1511” as “Document 8. ‘By what right and with what justice’: *History of the Indies, 1511*,” in *Bartolomé de las Casas and the Defense of Amerindian Rights: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. by Lawrence A. Clayton and David M. Lantigua, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 2020, pp. 52-56.
- Pope Paul III [1537], “Sublimis Deus” as “Document 15. ‘Those Indians...should not be deprived of freedom’: *Sublimis Deus, Pope Paul III, 1537*,” in *Bartolomé de las Casas and the Defense of Amerindian Rights: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. by Lawrence A. Clayton and David M. Lantigua, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 2020, pp. 85-87.
- Charles V [1542-43], *The New Laws of the Indies for the Good Treatment and Preservation of the Indians Promulgated by the Emperor Charles the Fifth 1542-1543* (facsimile reprint), London: The Cheswick Press 1893.
- Bartolomé de las Casas [1550]: *In Defense of the Indians*, trans. by Stafford Poole, Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press 1974.
- Bartolomé de las Casas [1552]: *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, trans. by Nigel Griffin, London and New York: Penguin 1992.
- Martin Luther [1520]: *The Freedom of a Christian Man in The Protestant Reformation*, ed. by Hans J. Hillerbrand, New York: Harper 1968.
- Gotthold Ephraim Lessing [1779]: *Nathan the Wise*, trans. by Ronald Schechter, Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martins 2004.
- Immanuel Kant [1784], “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, trans. by Donald L. Colclasure, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2006.
- Nicolas de Condorcet [1788 and 1790]: “On Slavery” (1788) and “On the Emancipation of Women” (1790) in *Political Writings*, ed. by Steven Lukes and Nadia Urbinati, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012, pp. 148-155, pp. 156-162.
- “The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen” [1789]: Lillian Goldman Law Library 2008. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp
- Mary Wollstonecraft [1792], *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman in The Feminist Papers: From Adams to Beauvoir*, ed. by Alice S. Rossi, Boston: Northeastern University Press 1973.
- Friedrich Engels [1845]: *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, in *Marx/Engels Collected Works*, vols. 1-50, Moscow: Progress Publishers 1975-2004, vol. 4, *Marx and Engels 1844-1845*, pp. 295-596.
- Mikhail Bakunin [1882]: *God and the State*, ed. by Paul Avrich, New York: Dover 1970.
- Virginia Woolf [1929], *A Room of One’s Own*, London: Grafton 1977.
- Sartre [1946], *The Humanism of Existentialism in Essays in Existentialism*, ed. by Wade Baskin, Secaucus, NJ: The Citadel Press 1965.
- Simone de Beauvoir [1949], *The Second Sex*, trans. by H.M. Parshley, London: Jonathan Cape 1953.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1		
Sept 14	The Age of Exploration and Colonization Columbus, <i>The Journal of the First Voyage of Columbus</i> (1492-93)	pp. 15-18, pp. 35-40, pp. 69-76, pp. 111-114, pp. 135-139, pp. 143-146, pp. 192-193
Sept 16	Antonio de Montesinos, "Sermon on December 21, 1511" Pope Paul III, "Sublimis Deus" (1537) Charles V, <i>The New Laws of the Indies</i> (1542-1543)	pp. 52-56 pp. 85-87 pp. xii-xviii
Week 2		
Sept 21	Las Casas, <i>In Defense of the Indians</i> (1550)	pp. 25-49
Sept 23	Las Casas, <i>A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i> (1552)	pp. 5-17, pp. 42-56, pp. 127-130
Week 3		
Sept 28	The Reformation Luther, <i>The Freedom of a Christian Man</i> (1520)	pp. 4-16
Sept 30	Luther, <i>The Freedom of a Christian Man</i>	pp. 16-28
Week 4		
Oct 5	The German Enlightenment Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> (1779), Acts 1-2	pp. 23-62
Oct 7	Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> , Act 3, Act 4, Scenes 1-6	pp. 62-94
Week 5		
Oct 12	Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> , Act 4, Scenes 7-8, Act 5	pp. 94-118
Oct 14	Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784)	pp. 17-23
Week 6		
Oct 19	The French Enlightenment Condorcet, "On Slavery" (1788) "The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen" (1789) Condorcet, "On the Emancipation of Women" (1790)	pp. 148-155 pp. 1-2 pp. 156-162
Oct 21	The English Enlightenment Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> (1792)	pp. 40-53

Week 7

Oct 26 Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* pp. 64-85

Oct 28 **Midterm Exam**

Week 8

Nov 2 **No class: Reading Week**

Nov 4 **No class: Reading Week**

Week 9

Nov 9 **The Industrial Revolution**

Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845)

To the Working Classes of Great Britain

Preface [to the German Edition]

Introduction

Chapter 1, The Industrial Proletariat

Chapter 2, The Great Towns

Chapter 5, Results

pp. 297-298, p. 301

pp. 302-304

pp. 307-309

pp. 324-327

pp. 328-331

pp. 393-396, pp. 405-407

Nov 11 Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*

Chapter 6, Single Branches of Industry: Factory-Hands

Chapter 9, The Mining Proletariat

pp. 442-446, pp. 466-472

pp. 530-537

Week 10

Nov 16 **Anarchism**

Bakunin, *God and the State* (1882)

pp. 9-28

Nov 18 Bakunin, *God and the State*

pp. 28-44

Week 11

Nov 23 **The Twentieth Century**

Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Chapter 2

pp. 30-46

Nov 25 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, Chapter 3

pp. 47-63

Week 12

Nov 30 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, Chapter 6

pp. 103-123

Existentialism

Dec 2 Sartre, *The Humanism of Existentialism* (1946)

pp. 31-45

Week 13

Dec 7 Sartre, *The Humanism of Existentialism*

pp. 45-62

Dec 9 De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949)

pp. 13-28

Week 14

Dec 14 De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*

pp. 60-64, pp. 673-687

Dec 16 **Final Exam**