



Western Civilization I.: The Ancient World

Term:	Fall 2022
ECTS credits:	5
Lessons per week:	2 x 90 min
Language:	English
Instructor:	Katalin Nun Stewart, PhD. (kns@katalinstewart.com)
Form of study:	Lecture + class discussion

Prerequisites

No prerequisites needed.

Course description

The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century witnessed great changes in the way people perceived themselves and their relationship to the society around them in the Western world. This was a period of growth and prosperity in Europe, which saw rapid advances in science and technology; moreover, it was during this period that the social sciences were born and became scholarly disciplines at universities and academies.

Yet, despite this, in most European countries, the atmosphere was shaped by decadence, pessimism, anonymity, alienation, and a doomsday mood. The rise of secular society that had begun after the Enlightenment caused a crisis of faith and a great reduction in the power of the Church. The well-defined world of the bourgeois society of the 19th century came to an end, and people awaited the new century both with a hope of a new beginning and with anxiety and fear.

In this class, we will explore different aspects of this special period of Western civilization. Important new perspectives arose concerning age-old questions such as what is a human being? What is a good life? What is the nature of civilization? What is the nature of religion?

Course objectives

- 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
- A strong focus on developing the skills involved in academic writing
- To learn the relevant factual information about Western Civilization in antiquity

This course is interdisciplinary, and the readings come from history, religion, philosophy, drama, poetry, and literature. This course can be seen as complementing and supplementing the BISLA core course, Introduction to Political Philosophy: From Plato to Marx.

Office Hours

By appointment.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

The course assessment will consist of the following:

30% One in-class written Midterm exam

35% One in-class written Final exam

30% Three in-class writing exercises (each worth of 10%)



5% Class participation

The exams and the writing exercises are mandatory assignments. The dates of the assignments are written here in the Syllabus, and so please be sure to come to class on these days. Please note that assignments not completed will be considered as failed, and make-up exams or writing exercises will be given only in exceptional and well-documented cases.

Grading System

A – excellent:	100-93%
B – very good:	92-84%
C – good:	83-74%
D – satisfactory:	73-63%
E – sufficient:	62-51%
Fx – fail:	50-0%

Passing a course assumes that a student was not absent at more than 4 lessons.

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 and to practicing for the exams. For this reason, attendance is mandatory. In accordance with BISLA policy, only four unexcused absences per term will be accepted.

Academic Integrity

In accordance with BISLA's rules for academic ethics, there will be a no tolerance policy towards cheating and plagiarism. The submission of any paper which is not your own work and which does not honestly state the sources used will be regarded as plagiarized. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will automatically result in a failing grade for the course.

Expectations in the Classroom

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 Wi-Fi or to access the internet. No surfing or texting during class is permitted. Please turn off your cell phones during class.

Texts

Mandatory readings

1. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, trans. by N.K. Sanders, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1960.
2. The Old Testament, in *The Bible*, New Revised Standard Version, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003 (excerpts from Genesis).
3. Homer: *The Iliad*, trans. by Richmond Lattimore, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press 1961 (excerpts from Book 1, 6, 22).
4. Homer: *The Odyssey*, trans. by Richmond Lattimore, New York: Harper Collins 1965 (excerpts from Book 5, 9, 11).
5. Herodotus: *The Histories*, trans. by Andrea L. Purvis, New York: Pantheon Books 2007 (excerpts from Book I, III, VII).
6. Plutarch: "Sayings of Spartan Women," in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. by Richard J. A. Talbert, London: Penguin 1988, pp. 157-163.
7. Plato: *Symposium*, trans. by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff, in *Complete Works*, ed. By John M. Cooper, Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett 1997, pp. 458-504.
8. Thucydides: *The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War*, trans. by John H. Finley Jr., New York: Random House 1951 (excerpts from Book I, II, V).
9. Euripides: *The Trojan Women*, trans. by Alan Shapiro, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009, pp. 30-103.



10. The New Testament, in *The Bible*, New Revised Standard Version, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003 (excerpts from Matthew).
11. Virgil: *The Aeneid*, trans. by David West, London: Penguin 1990 (excerpts from Book II, IV).
12. Ovid: *The Metamorphoses*, trans. by Horace Gregory, New York: Viking Press 1958 (excerpts from Book I, X).

Topics

1. Introduction to Ancient Mesopotamia
2. Israel and Judea
3. The Greek World: The Bronze Age
4. The Greek World: The Archaic Period
5. The Greek World: The Classical Period
6. The Rise of Christianity
7. The Roman World

Course Schedule (including the deadlines of assignments)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading (pp.)
1.	Sept 20	Course Introduction and Introduction to Ancient Mesopotamia <i>The Epic of Gilgamesh</i> Prologue Chapter 1: "The Coming of Enkidu"	p. 61 pp. 62-69
	Sept 22	<i>The Epic of Gilgamesh</i> Chapter 2: "The Forest Journey" Chapter 3: "Ishtar and Gilgamesh, and the Death of Enkidu"	pp. 70-84 pp. 85-96
2.	Sept 27	1st Writing Exercise <i>The Epic of Gilgamesh</i> Chapter 4: "The Search for Everlasting Life" Chapter 5: "The Story of the Flood" Chapter 6: "The Return" Chapter 7: "The Death of Gilgamesh"	pp. 97-107 pp. 108-113 pp. 114-117 pp. 118-119
	Sept 29	Israel and Judea The Old Testament Genesis 1:1-2:24, The Creation Genesis 3:1-3:24, The Fall	pp. 3-4 pp. 4-5
3.	Oct 4	Genesis 6:1-9:17, The Flood Genesis 11:1-9, The Tower of Babel	pp. 7-10 p. 11
	Oct 6	The Greek World: The Bronze Age Homer: <i>The Iliad</i> Book 1: The Conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon	pp. 59-75
4.	Oct 11	2nd Writing Exercise Homer: <i>The Iliad</i> Book 6. 237-529: Hektor and Andromache Book 22: The Death of Hektor	pp. 159-167 pp. 435-449
	Oct 13	Homer: <i>The Odyssey</i> Book 5.1-295: Odysseus and Kalypso Book 9.1-104: Odysseus and the Lotus-Eaters Book 9.105-565: Odysseus and the Cyclops	pp. 88-95 pp. 137-140 pp. 140-151
5.	Oct 18	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> Book 11: Odysseus and the Underworld	pp. 168-184



	Oct 20	The Greek World: The Archaic Period Herodotus: <i>The Histories</i> Book I, 1-5: Proem and Introduction Book I, 28-45: Solon and Croesus Book III, 37-38: The Relativity of Custom Book III, 39-43: The Story of Polykrates and Nemesis	pp. 3-5 pp. 17-25 p. 224 pp. 224-226
6.	Oct 25	Herodotus: <i>The Histories</i> Book VII, 99-105: Demaratos and Xerxes Book VII, 130-137: Xerxes' Demand Book VII, 204-213, 219-228: The Battle of Thermopylae Plutarch: Sayings of Spartan Women	pp. 534-537 pp. 546-552 pp. 584-8; pp. 590-3 pp. 157-163
	Oct 27	Midterm Exam	
7.	Nov 1	No Class: Reading Week	
	Nov 3	No Class: Reading Week	
8.	Nov 8	The Greek World: The Classical Period Plato: <i>The Symposium</i> Introduction The Speech of Phaedrus The Speech of Aristophanes	pp. 458-463 pp. 463-465 pp. 472-476
	Nov 10	Plato: <i>The Symposium</i> The Speech of Socrates (or Diotima) The Speech of Alcibiades	pp. 484-494 pp. 494-504
9.	Nov 15	Thucydides: <i>The Peloponnesian War</i> Book I, 20-24: Thucydides' Method Book II, 34-46: Pericles' Funeral Oration	p. 3, pp. 13-15 pp. 102-109
	Nov 17	Thucydides: <i>The Peloponnesian War</i> Book II, 47-55: The Plague in Athens Book II, 55-65: The Policy of Pericles Book V, 84-116: The Melian Dialogue	pp. 109-114 pp. 114-121 pp. 330-337
10.	Nov 22	Euripides: <i>The Trojan Women</i> (The Fate of Cassandra)	pp. 30-47
	Nov 24	Euripides: <i>The Trojan Women</i> (The Fate of Andromache)	pp. 47-60
11.	Nov 29	3rd Writing Exercise Euripides: <i>The Trojan Women</i> (The Fate of Hecuba)	pp. 61-78
	Dec 1	The Rise of Christianity Matthew 1:18-1:25: The Birth of Jesus 3:1-4:24: Jesus' Ministry 5:1-7:29: The Sermon on the Mount 8:1-9:38: Jesus' Miracles	pp. 3-4 pp. 5-6 pp. 6-10 pp. 10-12
12.	Dec 6	Matthew 10:1-10:42: The Apostles 13:1-13:58: Jesus' Parables 21:1-22:22: Jesus in Jerusalem 26:1-27:31: The Arrest and Trial of Jesus 27:32-28:20: The Crucifixion of Jesus and his Resurrection	pp. 12-14 pp. 16-18 pp. 26-28 pp. 33-36 pp. 36-38
	Dec 8	The Roman World Virgil: <i>The Aeneid</i> Book II: The Fall of Troy	pp. 25-47



13.	Dec 13	Virgil: <i>The Aeneid</i> Book IV: Aeneas and Dido	pp. 69-89
	Dec 15	Ovid: <i>Metamorphoses</i> Book I: Chaos and Creation, The Ages, The Flood, Deucalion and Pyrrha, The New World, Apollo and Daphne	pp. 3-20
14.	Dec 20	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , Book X: Orpheus and Eurydice, Cyparissus, Gangymede, Apollo and Hyacinthus, Pygmalion	pp. 269-279
	Dec 22	Final Exam	

*******This syllabus is subject to change.*******