

**BISLA**  
**Katalin Nun Stewart**

Spring Semester 2023  
Mondays 10:40-12:10, Johnson Room  
and Wednesdays 10:40-12:10, Tatarka Room

E-mail: [kns@katalinstewart.com](mailto:kns@katalinstewart.com)  
Office Hours: by appointment

ECTS Credits: 6  
Lessons per week: 2x 90 min  
Language: English  
Form of study: Lectures and classroom discussions  
Prerequisite: Western Civilization I: The Ancient World

## **Syllabus**

### **Western Civilization II: The Modern World**

#### **Course Description**

This course traces the history and culture of the modern world from the end of the Middle Ages in the 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### **Course Objectives**

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.

### **Course Requirements and Evaluation**

The course assessment will consist of the following:

- 30% One in-class written Midterm exam
- 30% One in-class written Final exam
- 30% Three in-class written Quizzes (each worth of 10%)
- 10% Class participation

The exams and the quizzes are mandatory assignments. Dates of the assignments are announced in the Syllabus, so please be sure to come to class. I only accept absentiae in exceptional and well-documented cases. Assignments that are not written will be considered as failed.

### **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%

### **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 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.

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

### **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 that does not honestly state the sources used will be regarded as plagiarized. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in a failing grade for the course.

## Texts

### Mandatory Readings

- Christopher Columbus [1492-93], *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, ed. and trans. by Clements R. Markham, London: Chas. J. Clark 1893 (excerpts).
- 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 (excerpts).
- Bartolomé de las Casas [1552], *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, trans. by Nigel Griffin, London and New York: Penguin 1992 (excerpts).
- Martin Luther [1520], *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, in *The Protestant Reformation*, ed. by Hans J. Hillerbrand, New York: Harper 1968, pp. 4-28.
- 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, pp. 17-23.
- 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](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, pp. 40-53, pp. 64-85.
- 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* (excerpts).
- Harriet Taylor Mill [1851], *Enfranchisement of Women*, Reprinted from the *Westminster Review* for July, 1851, London: Trübner and Co. 1868, pp. 3-22.
- John Stuart Mill [1869], *The Subjection of Women*, in *On the Subjection of Women*, in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vols. 1-33, ed. by John M. Robson, Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1963-1991, vol. 21, *Essays on Equality, Law, and Education* (1984, pp. 259-340), Chapter 1, pp. 261-269, Chapter 2, pp. 283-289 and pp. 292-298.
- Mikhail Bakunin [1882], *God and the State*, ed. by Paul Avrich, New York: Dover 1970, pp. 9-44.
- Virginia Woolf [1929], *A Room of One's Own*, London: Grafton 1977 (excerpts).
- Jean-Paul Sartre [1946], *The Humanism of Existentialism*, in *Essays in Existentialism*, ed. by Wade Baskin, Secaucus, NJ: The Citadel Press 1965, pp. 31-45, pp. 45-62.
- Simone de Beauvoir [1949], *The Second Sex*, trans. by H.M. Parshley, London: Jonathan Cape 1953.

<b>Course Schedule</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<b>Week 1</b> Febr 20	<b>The Age of Exploration and Colonization</b> Columbus, <i>The Journal of the First Voyage of Columbus</i> (1492-93) The Goals of the Voyage and the Departure from Spain The Arrival in the New World A Description of the Natives on Cuba A Description of the Land and the Natives of Española The Shipwreck of the Santa Maria The Departure from the New World The Arrival back in Spain	pp. 15-18 pp. 35-40 pp. 69-76 pp. 111-114 pp. 135-139 pp. 143-146 pp. 192-193
Febr 22	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
<b>Week 2</b> Febr 27	Las Casas, <i>In Defense of the Indians</i> (1550) Chapter 1: Thesis and the First Definition of "Barbarian" Chapter 2: The Second and Third Definition of "Barbarian" Chapter 3: The Legitimate Form of Slavery and Christian Duty to Them Chapter 4: The Native Americans do not fit the Idea of Slaves by Nature	pp. 25-30 pp. 30-36 pp. 37-41 pp. 41-49
March 1	Las Casas, <i>A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i> (1552)   Prologue Preface Hispaniola New Spain New Spain (continued) Conclusion	pp. 5-8 pp. 9-13 pp. 14-17 pp. 42-44 pp. 45-56 pp. 127-130
<b>Week 3</b> March 6	<b>The Reformation</b> Luther, <i>The Freedom of a Christian Man</i> (1520)	pp. 4-16
<b>March 8</b>	<b>Quiz 1</b> Luther, <i>The Freedom of a Christian Man</i>	pp. 16-28
<b>Week 4</b> March 13	<b>The German Enlightenment</b> Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> (1779), Acts 1-2	pp. 23-62
March 15	Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> , Act 3, Act 4, Scenes 1-6	pp. 62-94
<b>Week 5</b> March 20	Lessing, <i>Nathan the Wise</i> , Act 4, Scenes 7-8, Act 5	pp. 94-118
March 22	Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784)	pp. 17-23
<b>Week 6</b> March 27	<b>The French Enlightenment</b> 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
March 29	<b>The English Enlightenment</b> Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> (1792)	pp. 40-53
<b>Week 7</b> April 3	Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>	pp. 64-85

April 5	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>No Class: Reading Week</b>	
	<b>No Class: Reading Week</b>	

<b>Week 9</b> April 17	<b>The Industrial Revolution</b> Engels, <i>The Condition of the Working Class in England</i> (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. 297-301 pp. 302-304 pp. 307-309 pp. 324-327 pp. 328-331 pp. 393-396, pp. 405-407
April 19	Engels, <i>The Condition of the Working Class in England</i> Chapter 6, Single Branches of Industry: Factory-Hands  Chapter 9, The Mining Proletariat	pp. 442-446 pp. 466-472 pp. 530-537
<b>Week 10</b> April 24	Harriet Taylor Mill, "Enfranchisement of Women" (1851)	pp. 3-22
April 26	<b>Quiz 2</b> John Stuart Mill, <i>The Subjection of Women</i> (1869) Chapter 1 Chapter 2	pp. 261-269 pp. 283-289 pp. 292-298
<b>Week 11</b> May 3 Wednesday	<b>Anarchism</b> Bakunin, <i>God and the State</i> (1882)	pp. 9-28
<b>NB!</b> <b>May 5</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>9:00-10:20</b>	<b>Make-up class for the public holiday of Monday, May 1</b>  Bakunin, <i>God and the State</i>	pp. 28-44
<b>Week 12</b> May 10 Wednesday	<b>The Twentieth Century</b> Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> (1929) Chapter 2	pp. 30-46
<b>NB!</b> <b>May 12</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>9:00-10:20</b>	<b>Make-up class for the public holiday of Monday, May 8</b>  Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> , Chapter 3	pp. 47-63
<b>Week 13</b> May 15	Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> , Chapter 6	pp. 103-123
May 17	<b>Quiz 3</b> Sartre, <i>The Humanism of Existentialism</i> (1946)	pp. 31-45
<b>Week 14</b> May 22	Sartre, <i>The Humanism of Existentialism</i>	pp. 45-62
May 24	De Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> (1949)	pp. 13-28
<b>Week 15</b> May 29	De Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>	pp. 60-64, pp. 673-687
May 31	<b>Final Exam</b>	