

**The Long Nineteenth Century:
The European Crisis of Modernity to 1933**

Syllabus

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Course Website:

Required Texts:

Freud, Sigmund, *Civilization and its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 1961.

Huysmans, Joris-Karl, *Against Nature (A Rebours)*, New York: Penguin, 2003.

Kierkegaard, Søren, *The Present Age*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Gay Science*. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.

The texts for this course will be available on course reserve at the library and/or online. In addition to this I will supply some additional handouts throughout the term.

Course Goals and Objectives: This course deals with the troublesome experience of modernity in European history since the French Revolution. Between the mid eighteenth century and the mid nineteenth century the world changed irrevocably for the peoples of Europe. The intellectual, cultural, political, and economic impacts of the Enlightenment, French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, and continued scientific revolution, affected nearly every aspect of European society. Traditional ways of life and traditional ways of viewing the world were confronted with new realities in a seemingly ever-shifting and increasingly accelerating nineteenth century that opened up into a twentieth century that brought no respite. These two centuries of massive, accelerated, and accelerating change, masses of information, and overwhelming pluralities provoked and challenged thinkers of all stamps, and it is largely from their contemporary works that the material for this course will be drawn. Each week we will read works relating to various issues from the nineteenth and early twentieth century (in roughly chronological order) and examine them as a group. We will attempt to probe the roots of our fast-paced, global, and technologically saturated world, and explore the ways in which people of the time attempted to come to terms with fundamental changes to their own world. This course begins with the legacy of the Enlightenment and draws to a close in 1933 when the Nazis come to power in Germany and a new episode of crisis and trauma begins.

Format: The class will meet twice a week as a seminar. The class may include some lecture content, but the primary focus will be on discussion of the weekly readings. Students will be required to hand in a one-page discussion of one of the week's readings

before the first class of each week. This should be typed and double-spaced and focus on analysis of and response to the reading. There will also be a final term paper.

Grades: Your final grade will be constituted in the following manner:

- 1) Weekly written responses 30%
- 2) Class participation 30%
- 3) Term paper 40%

A: 100-93

B-: 82-80

D+: 69-67

A-: 92-90

C+: 79-77

D: 66-63

B+: 89-87

C: 76-73

D-: 62-60

B: 86-83

C-: 72-70

F: 59 or below

Written assignments: In addition to the weekly reading responses there will be an article-length and article-quality term paper, which will be due on the Monday of final exams week. This paper should discuss three figures in the course and will include research beyond the weekly required readings. You must see me to approve your paper topic by the end of the fifth week.

Weekly Response Guidelines

The goal of the weekly reading responses is *analysis*. This means that you will have to think about and comment on such issues as the *significance*, *context*, and *meaning* of the document –what are the broader issues, what seems to be the intent behind this document, what other texts does it seem to relate to, etc. will be the type of questions you will need to answer. ***Do not merely summarize what you have read.*** We will discuss this further in class.

Final Term Paper

For the final paper you must examine three of the thinkers we have engaged with during the term. The goal of this paper is to work towards a situated, comparative understanding of these figures in relation to each other, the events and concerns of their day, and the broader themes of the course. This will require further research beyond the course readings. Remember to compare *and* contrast – look for similarities as well as differences, and relate each thinker to broader concerns. As noted, you must see me about your topic by the fifth week.

Internet Sources: The internet is full of good information and bad information. One of the practical things we will discuss is how to tell the difference. For the purpose of your assignments *please check with me if you have any questions about a source.*

Late papers: Late papers will be accepted but with a penalty for each day past the due date. Please inform me immediately if you think you will not be able to hand your paper in on time. Papers are due by Monday of final exams week, no exceptions!

Plagiarism: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. We will discuss ways to avoid plagiarism in class. You can also look at OSU's student conduct page for more information:
<http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/plag.htm>

Please turn off cell phones!!

Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term.

Schedule & Readings List

Week 1

The Manichean Legacy of the Enlightenment

Kant, Immanuel: "What is Enlightenment?" And excerpts from *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*

Condorcet: "The Future Progress of the Human Mind"

Burke, Edmund: Selections from *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

Blake, William: Excerpts from *Jerusalem*

Schlegel, Friedrich: "German Romantic Philosophy"

Kierkegaard, Søren: *The Present Age*

Week 2

The Higher Criticism

Strauss, David Friedrich: Excerpts from *The Life of Jesus*

Feuerbach, Ludwig: Selections from *The Essence of Christianity*

Parker, John William: *Essays and Reviews*

Catholic Encyclopedia (1911 Edition): "Biblical Criticism (Higher)"

Week 3

Darwin

Darwin, Charles: Selections from *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*

Wilberforce, Samuel: *On Darwin's Origin of Species*

Gladstone, J.H.: "Points of Supposed Collision Between the Scriptures & Natural Science"

Huxley, Thomas Henry: "On the Physical Basis of Life"

Tyndall, John: "Belfast Address"

Week 4

Fin de Siècle – Decadence, Millenarianism, Etc.

Huysmans, Joris-Karl: *Against the Grain (Against Nature)*
Shorske, Carl: Selections from *Fin de Siècle Vienna*

Week 5

Nietzsche and the "Death of God"

Nietzsche, Friedrich: *The Gay science and Schopenhauer as Educator*

Week 6

The Cataclysm of the Great War

Jünger, Ernst: Selections from *Storm of Steel*

Graves, Robert: Selections from *Goodbye to All That*

Rosa Luxemburg: "The War and The Workers"

Sassoon, Siegfried: "Suicide in the Trenches"

Simmel, Ernst: "War Neuroses and Psychic Trauma"

Week 7

Freud & the Unconscious

Freud, Sigmund: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, "Civilization and Weltanschauung,"
and selections from *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*

Jung, Carl: Selections from *On the Nature of the Psyche* and *The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious*

Week 8

Modernity in the Arts

Worringer, Wilhelm: Selections from *Abstraction and Empathy*

Ball, Hugo: "Dada Manifesto"

Musil, Robert: "The Obscene and Pathological in Art"

Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso: "The Futurist Manifesto"

Kandinski, Wassili: "On the Spiritual in Art," "On Point" and "On Line"

Week 9

Scientific Relativities

Russell, Bertrand: "Icarus, or, The Future of Science"

Heidegger, Martin: "The Question Concerning Technology"

Musil, Robert: "The Mathematical Man"

Bohr, Niels: "Atoms & Human Knowledge" and "The Unity of Human Knowledge"

Week 10

Interwar Anxiety, Experiments and Disasters

Russell, Bertrand: "On Modern Uncertainty"
Jünger, Ernst: Selections from *The Worker*
Spengler, Oswald: Selections from *The Decline of the West*
Heilig, Bruno: "Why the German Republic Fell"