

**Modernity and its Discontents:
European Thought and Culture from Fin de Siècle to World War Two**

HIS 201
Instructor: Peter Mann
Stanford Continuing Studies
Fall 2021

Class Schedule and Readings:

Week 1: Work, Art, and Socialism

-Oscar Wilde, "The Soul of Man under Socialism"

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/wilde-oscar/soul-man/>

Week 2: Nietzsche and the Revaluation of Values

-Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*

The Gay Science (excerpt/PDF on Canvas)

Week 3: Decadence and Vitalism

-J.K. Huysmans, *Against Nature* (selections)

-André Gide, *The Immoralist*

Week 4: The Artistic Avant-Garde

-F.T. Marinetti, "The Futurist Manifesto" (PDF on Canvas)

-Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm>

-FILM: Fritz Lang, "Metropolis"

Week 5: Modern Consciousness and the Modern Novel

-Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

"Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown" (excerpt/PDF on Canvas)

Week 6: Sex, Death, and the Future of Civilization

-Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*

Week 7: Identity and the Burden of the Past

-José Ortega y Gasset, *Revolt of the Masses*

-Karl Jaspers, *Man in the Modern Age* (excerpt/PDF on Canvas)

Week 8: Old World Nostalgia

-Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard*

Week 9: Totalitarianism

-Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*

Assignments:

At the end of the quarter, students will be required to write a 5-6 page analytical paper comparing two texts from the course readings, according to a topic of their own choosing.

Grade Options and Requirements:

-Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)

Students must attend at least 80% of class sessions and write the final paper.

Note About Live Attendance and Recording:

These class sessions will be recorded.

Live participation is required in order for students to receive the full benefit of the course. Class recordings are not intended to be a replacement or substitute for class attendance.