

Georgetown University
Liberal Studies Program
Fall, 2017
LSHV 603-01

Terrence Reynolds
New North 134
202-687-4610(o)
E-mail: reynoldt@georgetown.edu

The Rise of the Modern Spirit

The major religious and epistemological issues of today have their roots in European thought and culture from the Enlightenment to the end of the nineteenth century. Traditional forms of Christianity were repeatedly challenged by the emerging spirits of modernity. The success of the new science in explaining the natural world, together with weariness as the long strife over religious doctrine that followed the Reformation gave rise to a new spirit of Enlightenment, and a renewed confidence in the abilities of human reason. The critical study of history threatened the authority of both scripture and tradition. Skepticism about all claims to supernatural knowledge, reaching a climax in Hume and Kant, seemed to undermine the very core of religious belief. The struggle to reconcile traditional faith with these new forces produced a fascinating variety of issues and new religious ideas. The course reviews the highlights of this struggle and examines several of the significant alternatives in thinking about religion and human knowing that emerged during this period.

Books: All students should purchase the following paperbacks:

James Livingston, Modern Christian Thought, 2nd Edition, Vol. I: The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century
Immanuel Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone
Søren Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments
Additional Materials (Available on Blackboard)

Requirements: All students are expected to attend class regularly, to read the assignments carefully and critically, and to come to class prepared to discuss them. Written work for the course will consist of seminar presentations, six papers of approximately four-five pages in length, and a final paper of approximately ten pages. Grades for the course will be based upon the class presentations, the six written assignments and the final paper, and on participation in class discussions. Students are expected to adhere to the Georgetown University Honor System in all course assignments.

Office Hours: By appointment, whenever convenient to the student

Note: Assignments may be modified as the semester progresses and the class may meet on December 1st in the event of a cancellation due to inclement weather.

- September 5: James Livingston, Modern Christian Thought, “Introduction: Modernity and Christianity,” and Chapters 1 and 2, “The Enlightenment and Modern Christianity” and “The Religion of Reason,” Also, Jean Jacques Rousseau, “The Creed of a Savoyard Priest” and Immanuel Kant “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”(Blackboard)
- September 12: Livingstone, Chapter 3, “The Breakdown of the Religion of Reason,” Also, G.E. Lessing, “On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power,” “The Testament of John,” and “The Education of the Human Race.” Also, James Boswell, “An Account of My Last Interview with David Hume, Esq.” (Blackboard)
- September 19: David Hume, “Of Miracles” and “On Providence and a Future State” (Blackboard). Also Immanuel Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, Book One.
- September 26: Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, Books Two, Three, and Four
- October 3: Livingston, Chapter 4, “Christianity and Romanticism: Protestant Thought.” Also, Rudolph Otto, Introduction to On Religion and Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion, Second Speech (Blackboard)
- October 10: Livingston, Chapter 5, “Christianity and Speculative Idealism,” Also, Stephen Crites, “The Gospel According to Hegel” (Blackboard)
- October 17: Livingston, Chapter 6, “Romanticism and French Catholic Thought: Traditionalism and Fideism” and Chapter 7, “Romanticism and Anglo-Catholicism: The Oxford Movement.”
- October 24: Livingston, Chapter 9, “The Post-Hegelian Critique of Christianity in Germany.” Also, Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, pp. 12-32 and Karl Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach” and selection from Introduction to the Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s “Philosophy of Right” in Marx and Engels on Religion, pp. 41-42, and 69-72 (Blackboard)
- October 31: Livingston, pp. 384-397. Also, Neils Thulstrup, “Commentator’s Introduction” to Kierkegaard’s Philosophical Fragments, 2nd Edition (1962), pp. XIV-XCVII (Blackboard). Also, Søren Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments, pp. 1-71.

- November 7: Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments, pp. 72-111. Also, Livingston, Chapter 10, “The Encounter Between Science and Theology: Biblical Criticism and Darwinism” and Darwin’s “The Descent of Man,” Ch. 21 (Blackboard)
- November 14: Livingston, Chapter 11, “The Ritschlian Theology and Protestant Liberalism.” Also, Adolf Von Harnack, “What is Christianity?” pp. 1-74 (Blackboard)
- November 21: Livingston, Chapter 14, “Roman Catholic Thought at the End of the Century: The New Apologetics and Modernism. “Also, Loisy, selections from “The Gospel and the Church,” in Reardon (ed.), Roman Catholic Modernism, pp. 69-109 (Blackboard)
- November 28: Concluding discussion or additional evening in the event of a class cancellation.

Academic Standards: MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Disability Notice: If you believe you have a disability, you should contact the Academic Resource Center—Suite 335, Leavey Center (arc@georgetown.edu)—for further information. This office is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.