

**SGBI 451: The Modern World**  
Spring 2022  
Tuesday/Thursday, 3:30-5:00 (via Zoom)  
Instructor: Adam Kotsko

**Course Description**

This course is the conclusion of the Integrative Studies sequence, the capstone of the Shimer curriculum. As we move through the early modern period to the contemporary world, we will again emphasize conflict, appropriation, and synthesis in the development of cultural traditions. We will be hearing from the “standard” voices of Western modernity as well as their critics and victims, with a special emphasis on the impact of European colonialism.

**Course Objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate fundamental similarities, differences, borrowings, and conflicts among major global traditions from late medieval to contemporary times.
- Offer historical accounts for developments within and between social, political, cultural and intellectual aspects of these traditions.
- Relate contemporary ideas and issues to those presented in historical texts with attention to continuities and discontinuities between them.
- Consistently demonstrate a high level of intellectual rigor and generosity in the discussion of challenging and widely varied materials.

**Required Course Readings**

Hadewijch, *Complete Works*, Paulist Press, ISBN 0809122974  
Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, Oxford University Press, ISBN 0199535620  
Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqqadimah*, Princeton University Press, ISBN 0691166285  
Erasmus and Luther, *The Battle over Free Will*, Hackett, ISBN 9781603845472  
Viveiros de Castro, *Inconstancy of the Indian Soul*, Prickly Paradigm, ISBN 9780984201013  
Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Norton Critical Editions, ISBN 0393978193  
Césaire, *A Tempest*, Theatre Communications Group, ISBN 1559362103  
Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Norton Critical Editions, ISBN 0393617084  
Goethe, *Faust: Part I*, trans. David Luke, Oxford World Classics, ISBN 9780199536214  
Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*, Autonomedia, 9781570270598  
James, *Black Jacobins*, Vintage, ISBN 0679724672  
Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. U Chicago, ISBN 9780226458120  
Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, Touchstone, ISBN 0684826806  
Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, Vintage, ISBN 067974472X  
Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, Zone Books, ISBN 1935408542

Additional readings will be distributed as handouts and marked as follows: (\*\*)

**Student Assessment**

Each student’s grade will be based 60% on class participation and 40% on written presentations. All assignment expectations are identical to those for SGBI 451, with the exception of the

absence policy. Given that we will have only two-thirds as many classes, the number of absences for each consequence is altered as follows:

1 absence No grade penalty, in recognition of our shared human frailties. (If students have perfect attendance, however, then in cases where a student is at the threshold between two grades, the professor will go with the higher one.)

2-3 absences A half letter grade is deducted from the student's final grade for each absence; this penalty may be lifted by doing an absence make-up for each missed class.

4-5 absences For each absence, the student *must* complete an absence make-up (described below) to avoid failing the course, and a half letter grade penalty is imposed on the student's final grade which *cannot* be made up.

6 absences Automatic failure of the course.

### Class and Reading Schedule

Tuesday	January 11	Hadewijch, Introduction (pp. 1-7); Poems in Stanzas 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 19, 22, 24, 27, 38, 43 (see table of contents on pp. 125-126 for easier reference)
Thursday	January 13	Hadewijch, Letters 5, 8, 9, 13, 17-20, 25-29; Visions 7, 11; Poems in Couplets 8, 10, 13, 15, 16
Tuesday	January 18	Chaucer, <i>Canterbury Tales</i> : General Prologue; Miller's Prologue and Tale; Reeve's Prologue and Tale
Thursday	January 20	Chaucer, <i>Canterbury Tales</i> : Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale; The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale
Tuesday	January 25	Ibn Khaldun, <i>Muqqadimah</i> , pp. 35-48, 91-122
Thursday	January 27	Ibn Khaldun, <i>Muqqadimah</i> , pp. 123-70, 238-42
Tuesday	February 1	Erasmus/Luther, <i>The Battle over Free Will</i> , pp. 1-57
Thursday	February 3	Erasmus/Luther, <i>The Battle over Free Will</i> , pp. 86-126
Tuesday	February 8	Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i> (whole text)
Thursday	February 10	Césaire, <i>A Tempset</i> (whole text)
Tuesday	February 15	Viveiros de Castro, <i>Inconstancy of the Indian Soul</i> , pp. 1-52. (See notes on Blackboard.)
Thursday	February 17	Viveiros de Castro, <i>Inconstancy of the Indian Soul</i> , pp. 53-103
Tuesday	February 22	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 1, 2, and 4; Argument (opening summary) for Book 3
Thursday	February 24	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 5-7
Tuesday	March 1	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 8-10 and lines 607-649 of book 12 (plus Argument for books 11-12)

Thursday	March 3	Goethe, <i>Faust: Part 1</i> , 9-62
Tuesday	March 8	Goethe, <i>Faust: Part 1</i> , 62-115; Gretchen songs (**)
Thursday	March 10	Goethe, <i>Faust: Part 1</i> , 115-133, 140-148; selections from <i>Faust: Part 2</i> (**)
Tuesday	March 15	<b>Spring Break—NO CLASSES</b>
Thursday	March 17	<b>Spring Break—NO CLASSES</b>
Tuesday	March 22	Kuhn, <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i> , chs. 1-8 (pp. 1-91)
Thursday	March 24	Kuhn, <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i> , chs. 9-13 (pp. 92-172)
Tuesday	March 29	Federici, <i>Caliban and the Witch</i> , pp. 7-10, 61-132
Thursday	March 31	Federici, <i>Caliban and the Witch</i> , pp. 133-162, 219-243
Tuesday	April 5	James, <i>The Black Jacobins</i> , prefaces through pg. 117
Thursday	April 7	James, <i>The Black Jacobins</i> , pp. 118-198, 224-68, 289-92
Tuesday	April 12	Levi, <i>Survival in Auschwitz</i> , preface, chs. 1-8; See map of Concentration Camps and transport routes (**).
Thursday	April 14	Levi, <i>Survival in Auschwitz</i> , chs. 9-17
Tuesday	April 19	Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , pp. 3-47
Thursday	April 21	Brown, <i>Undoing the Demos</i> , Preface, chs. 1, 4
Tuesday	April 26	Brown, <i>Undoing the Demos</i> , ch. 6, epilogue
Thursday	April 28	Benjamin, "On the Concept of History" (**)
Thursday	May 5	<b>FINAL EXAM PERIOD—All late written work due by 5pm</b>