

## Elective course “Søren Kierkegaard - Subjectivity, Irony and the Crisis of Modernity”

**Abstract:** It is often claimed that relativism, subjectivism and nihilism are typically modern philosophical problems that emerge with the breakdown of traditional values, customs and ways of life. The result is the absence of meaning, the lapse of religious faith, and feeling of alienation that is so widespread in modernity.

The Danish thinker Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55) gave one of the most penetrating analyses of this complex phenomenon of modernity. But somewhat surprisingly he seeks insight into it not in any modern thinker but rather in an ancient one, the Greek philosopher Socrates.

**Learning Objectives:** In this course created by former associate professor at the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre, Jon Stewart, we will explore how Kierkegaard deals with the problems associated with relativism, the lack of meaning and the undermining of religious faith that are typical of modern life. His penetrating analyses are still highly relevant today and have been seen as insightful for the leading figures of Existentialism, Post-Structuralism and Post-Modernism.

**Learning Outcomes:** You will get acquainted with the philosophy of Kierkegaard, as well as see how he looked at his contemporary world. In addition, familiarize yourself with a critical look at our present through the prism of his thoughts.

### Plan:

- a. Course Introduction: The Life and Work of Kierkegaard as a "Socratic Task"
- b. Kierkegaard, Martensen and Hegelianism
- c. Kierkegaard's View of Socrates
- d. Kierkegaard, Heiberg and History
- e. The Trip to Berlin and the Beginning of the Authorship
- f. The Development of the Pseudonymous Works
- g. The 2nd Half of the Authorship and the Attack on the Church

### Reading List:

1. Fear and Trembling / by Søren Kierkegaard (URL: <https://www.religion-online.org/book/fear-and-trembling/>)
2. The Sickness Unto Death / by Søren Kierkegaard (URL: <https://www.religion-online.org/book/the-sickness-unto-death>)
3. The Oxford Handbook of Kierkegaard / Edited by John Lippitt and George Pattison / Oxford 2013 (URL: <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199601301.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199601301?rskey=t3J1gC&result=1>)

**Grading System:** 80% Cumulative Grade +20% Exam

**Methods of Instruction:** Video lectures