

McGill University - Department of History
History 390 [CRN: 3296]

Eighteenth-Century France

Winter Semester 2010

Class Time: **Tue - Thu 2:30-4 pm** Place: **Otto Maass 10**

Professor Nicholas Dew nicholas.dew (at) mcgill.ca (514) 398 2919

Office hours: Thursdays 11-1 (or by appointment), Leacock 623

MyCourses: <https://mycourses.mcgill.ca/webct/logon/3256680941011>

Course description:

This course covers the history of France from the late seventeenth century to the Revolution, or the period which begins with the accession of Louis XIV (1643) and ends with the outbreak of the French Revolution (1789). This period of French history is often known by the name the Revolution gave it: *l'ancien régime*. This century-and-a-half saw France complete its recovery from the religious civil wars and instability of the sixteenth century, and rise to a position of political and cultural dominance in Europe. How did France evolve in this period—politically, socially, and culturally—and what explains these developments? And—to ask a question as old as the Revolution itself—is it possible to find the origins of the French Revolution within the political and social history of the *ancien régime*?

The course will move through two sections, which chart the rise and fall of the *ancien régime's* political culture. Part One covers the period of Louis XIV (1643-1715) and deals with such topics as: the nature of 'absolutism'; the workings of court culture; the social structure of France; religion and culture in the 17th century. Part Two covers the period 1715-1789 (the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI) and deals with the French Enlightenment, public opinion and political culture, the history of Paris, and the origins of the Revolution. A reading knowledge of French is highly recommended but is not essential.

Pre-requisites: students should have taken *at least one* of either Hist-214 (Introduction to European History) or Hist-215 (Modern Europe). Those who have not should see Prof. Dew in the first week of term.

Assessment structure:

1. Class and conference participation: **20 %**
3. Midterm Exam (take-home): **40 %**
4. Final Exam (take-home): **40 %**

Deadline: **Thursday 18 February, 2:30pm**
 Deadline: **Friday 16 April, 3pm**

The exams (both take home) will include four short answer questions (from a choice of at least six) in the form of passages for commentary (drawn from the assigned reading), and a choice of essay questions (one essay from a choice of at least six questions). Full instructions will be given with the assignment.

Note:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information). L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, consultez le site www.mcgill.ca/integrity). Students are welcome to submit written work in French.

Readings:

The books and the coursepack are available from the McGill Bookstore, and are also on Reserve at the library.

Required:

Hist 390 Coursepack : available from McGill bookstore

David Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (London: Penguin, 2002).

Optional:

Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000) [isbn 978-0521649698].

Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance* (Paris: Gallimard (folio "2 euros" series), 2003). [isbn 2070428710]

A contemporary translation is available online:

Voltaire. *A treatise upon toleration. By Mr. de Voltaire. Carefully corrected* (Glasgow, 1765). Via Eighteenth Century Collections Online: <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO> [search under author and title]

Note: Colin Jones, *The Great Nation* is organized chronologically, whereas the course is structured in thematic units. This means that the book will need to be read in parallel with the readings (in part 2), and that there will be sections which do not correspond to any part of the course, but which will nonetheless be useful as background.

Class Schedule

* = in Coursepack

Week 1: Introduction

Tuesday Jan 5: **Introduction**

Thursday Jan 7: **Models and myths: l'Ancien Régime, le Grand siècle, le Siècle des Lumières**

* McMahon, Darrin M., "A century blinded by light", in his *Enemies of the Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 18-53.

Week 2: Defining France

Tue Jan 12: **Defining France (1): space and territory**

* Revel, Jacques. "Knowledge of the territory." *Science in Context* 4 (1991): 133-161

* Sahlins, Peter. "Natural frontiers revisited: France's boundaries since the seventeenth century." *American Historical Review* 95, no. 5 (1990): 1423-1451. Available from:
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00028762%28199012%2995%3A5%3C1423%3ANFRFBS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-K>

Thu Jan 14: **Defining France (2): nation, history, language**

* Weber, Eugen. "Nos ancêtres les gaulois," in *My France: Politics, Culture, Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 21-39

* Bell, David A. "Lingua populi, lingua dei: language, religion, and the origins of French revolutionary nationalism." *American Historical Review* 100, no. 5 (1995): 1403-1437.
Available from

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00028762%28199512%29100%3A5%3C1403%3ALPLDLR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-U>

Week 3: Social Structure

Tue Jan 19: [add/drop period ends] **Social structures (1): rank, honour, privilege**

- * Gail Bossenga, "Society", in William Doyle, ed., *Old Regime France: 1648-1788* (Oxford: OUP, 2001), 42-77.
- * Elias, Norbert. "The structure of dwellings as an indicator of social structure", from *The Court Society* [1933], trans. Edmund Jephcott (NY: Pantheon, 1983), pp. 41-65.
- * Herr, Richard. "Honor versus absolutism: Richelieu's fight against dueling." *Journal of Modern History* 27, no. 3 (1955): 281-285. Available from:
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022801%28195509%2927%3A3%3C281%3AHVARFA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C>

Thu Jan 21: **Social structures (2): patrons, clients, *fidélité*, *civilité***

- * Kettering, Sharon. "Patronage and politics during the Fronde." *French Historical Studies* 14, no. 3 (1986): 409-441.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00161071%28198621%2914%3A3%3C409%3APAPDTF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6>
 - * Herman, Arthur L. "The language of fidelity in early modern France." *Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995): 1-24.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00222801%28199503%2967%3A1%3C1%3ATLOFIE%3E2.0.CO%3B2-U>
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Week 4: Representing Absolutism

Tues Jan 26: **Royal Absolutism: theories and representation**

- * Sommerville, J. P. "Absolutism and royalism", in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, eds. J. H. Burns and M. Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 347-373.
- * Church, William F., ed. *The Impact of Absolutism in France* (New York: John Wiley, 1969), pp. 69-81, "Sources" (i.e.: Louis XIV, "On Kingship [*Mémoires for the Dauphin*, 1666]"; Bossuet, "The majesty and justice of kings [*Sermon on the duties of kings*, 1662]"; Jean Domat, "The ideal absolute state [from *Le Droit public*, 1697].")
- * Blanning, T. C. W. "Louis XIV and Versailles", in his *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), ch. 1, pp. 29-52.

Thur Jan 28: **Conference 1: the moralistes and the critique of society**

[times/places for conference sections to be arranged]

- * La Bruyère, Jean de. *Characters*, trans. Jean Stewart (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), "Of the Town" (ch. 7, pp. 118-128), "Of the Court" (ch. 8, pp. 129-150). (A French edition of La Bruyère will be on reserve / webCT).
 - * Pascal, "Discourses on the condition of the Great", translated by O. W. Wight. In Pascal, *Thoughts, Letters, Minor Works* (New York: P. F. Collier, 1938), pp. 378-383. Original text:
 - * Pascal, Blaise. "Trois discours sur la condition des Grands", in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. L. Lafuma (Paris: Seuil, 1963), 366-368.
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Week 5: Politics under Louis XIV

Tues Feb 2: **Government: Absolutism in practice**

- * Beik, William. "The absolutism of Louis XIV as social collaboration." *Past and Present* 188 (2005): 195-224.
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/past_and_present/v188/188.1beik.pdf
- * "Etat et société (XVIIe siècle)", in J.-F. Solnon, ed., *Sources d'histoire de la France moderne* (Paris: Larousse, 1994), 385-401.

Thurs Feb 4th: **Opposition to Louis XIV**

- * Burke, Peter. "The reverse of the medal", in *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 135-150.
- * Beik, William. "Notable uprisings under Louis XIV", in *Urban protest in seventeenth-century France: the culture of retribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 145-172.

* Keohane, Nannerl O. "The conduct of a prince and a program of reform", in *Philosophy and the State in France: the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 332-357.

Week 6: Religion up to 1715

Tues Feb 9: **Religious tensions (to 1715)**

- * Briggs, Robin. "Belief and Culture", *Early modern France, 1560-1715*. 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 160-196.
- * Van Kley, Dale. "From Calvin to Quesnel", in *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: from Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560-1791*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 58-74.
- * "Vie religieuse, église et état (XVIIe siècle)", in J.-F. Solnon, ed., *Sources d'histoire de la France moderne* (Paris: Larousse, 1994), 297-311.

[Take home exam on part 1 will be given out on Feb 9th at the latest.]

Thurs Feb 11: **Conclusion to Part 1 and Revision Discussion**

[Jones, *Great Nation*, 1-35.]

Week 7

Tues Feb 16: **Representing the ancien régime (1)**

No reading

Thurs Feb 18th: **Representing the ancien régime (2)**

No reading

[Deadline for Midterm : Thurs 18th Feb 2:30 (papers collected in class)]

STUDY BREAK WEEK (February 22nd-26th)

Week 8

Tue Mar 2: **Introduction to 18th century: the Regency and Louis XV**

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 1-11 (Introduction).

Thu March 4th: **Finance, the Economy, the State:** [A. Deguise (tbc)]

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 15-44 (ch. 1).

Week 9: Consumption

Tue 9 March: **Bread, Poverty and Urban Society**

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 45-83 (chs. 2-3), 115-141 (ch. 5).

Thu 11 March: **Luxury, Consumerism, Fashion**

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 84-111 (ch. 4).

Jones, *Great Nation*, 349-363.

- * Jones, Colin. "The great chain of buying: medical advertisement, the bourgeois public sphere, and the origins of the French revolution." *American Historical Review* 101, no. 1 (1996): 13-40.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8762%28199602%29101%3A1%3C13%3ATGCOBM%3E2.0.CO%3B2-0>

* Shovlin, John. "The cultural politics of luxury in eighteenth-century France." *French Historical Studies* 23, no. 4 (2000): 577-606.

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/french_historical_studies/v023/23.4shovlin.pdf

Week 10: Crime, Punishment, and Reform

Tue 16 March: **Crime and Punishment**

* Lisa Silverman, "'...as if pain could draw the truth from a suffering wretch': Pain as Politics," ch. 6 in *Tortured Subjects: Pain, Truth and the Body in early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 153-176

* Solnon, *Sources d'histoire*, "Crimes et châtements (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle)", pp. 493-504

Thu 18 March: **Conference 2: Voltaire and the Calas affair (1763)**

Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000); *Traité sur la tolérance* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003 [1975]). Also available at: http://hypo.ge-dip.etat-ge.ch/athena/voltaire/volt_tol.html

Translation available online: Voltaire. *A treatise upon toleration*. By Mr. de Voltaire. Carefully corrected (Glasgow, 1765). Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale Group.

<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>

Week 11: The Public Sphere

Tue 23 March: **Reading and the public sphere**

* Darnton, Robert. "Policing writers in Paris circa 1750." *Representations* 5 (1984): 1-31.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0734-6018%28198424%290%3A5%3C1%3APWIPC1%3E2.0.CO%3B2-S>

* "Livres, journaux et opinion publique", in J.-F. Solnon, ed., *Sources d'histoire de la France moderne* (Paris: Larousse, 1994), 785-819.

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 163-183 (ch. 7).

Thu 25 March: **Sociability and Gender roles** [M. Carlyle]

* Goodman, Dena. "Public sphere and private life: towards a synthesis of current historiographical approaches to the Old Regime." *History and Theory* 31, no. 1 (1992): 1-20. Available from:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0018-2656%28199202%2931%3A1%3C1%3APSAPLT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F>

* Goodman, Dena. "Enlightenment salons: the convergence of female and philosophic ambitions." *Eighteenth Century Studies* 22, no. 3 (1989): 329-350. Available from

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00132586%28198921%2922%3A3%3C329%3AESTCOF%3E2.0.CO%3B2I>

Week 12: Colonies, Religion

Tue 30 March: **France and its colonies** [G. Aubert]

* Geggus, David P. "The French slave trade: an overview." *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 58 (2001): 119-138. <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/58.1/eggus.html>

* Dubois, Laurent. "An enslaved Enlightenment: rethinking the intellectual history of the French Atlantic." *Social History* 31, no. 1 (2006): 1-14. Available from:

<http://www.journalonline.tandf.co.uk/link.asp?id=p212h13w7670r280>

Thur 1 April: **The Enlightenment and Religion**

Jones, *Great Nation*, 91-110, 171-225.

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 142-160, 184-206 (chs. 6 and 8).

Week 13: Towards Revolution

Tue 6 April: **The City: Paris pre-revolution**

Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 207-319 (chs. 9-12 and epilogue).

[Take-home Final exam given out on 6 April at latest]

Thur 8 April: **From Reform to Revolution**

Jones, *Great Nation*, 280-394.

* "Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen", in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (London: Penguin, 1995), pp. 466-468.

Week 14

Tue 13 April:

Concluding Discussion and Revision

[Thurs 15 April: NO CLASS]

Take home final exam: deadline Friday 16th April, 3pm
