

# Old Regime & Revolutionary Europe

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30–11:45 a.m., Sandbridge 107

Office Hours: Research 1, Room 473, Tuesday 12–2 p.m. and by appointment

This course explores the history of Europe from the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648 through Napoleon's defeat and the resulting Congress of Vienna in 1815. The first part of the course contrasts two responses to the social, economic, political, and military crises of the seventeenth century: the rise of absolutism in France and constitutionalism in Britain. The middle part of the course examines the intellectual and cultural movement known as the Enlightenment from its scientific origins through its philosophical and social contributions to human understanding. The final part of the course focuses on collapse of the Old Regime in France, the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic wars that reshaped Europe. Throughout the course we pay particular attention to Europe's increasingly important global entanglements.

## Grading

No makeups will be provided for in-class assignments. All late papers will lose one full letter grade per day. Final grades will be calculated as follows:

- Class Participation: 10%
- Map Quiz: 10%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Essays: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%

## Printed Course Texts

- Beik, William. *Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000.
- Lindley, Keith. *The English Civil War and Revolution: A Sourcebook*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Olga Gomez et al. *The Enlightenment: A Sourcebook and Reader*. Routledge, 2001.
- Winks, Robin W, and Thomas Kaiser. *Europe, 1648–1815: From the Old Regime to the Age of Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments

### *Absolutism & Constitutionalism*

#### 1. Space and Place in 1648 (28–30 August)

- Winks and Kaiser, Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1

## **2. Life Cycle and Population; Absolutism in Theory (4–6 September)**

- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 8–11 (Hobbes)
- Cardinal Richelieu, [Political Testament](#)
- Jacques Bossuet, [Political Treatise on Kingship](#)
- Beik, 167–170

## **3. Absolutism in Practice (11–13 September)**

- 13 September: Map Quiz
- Beik, 1–16, 22–34, 82–107, 121–146, 193–196

## **4. English Civil Wars (18–20 September)**

- Lindley, pages TBD

## **5. Constitutionalism; Economy (25–27 September)**

- [Habeas Corpus Act](#)
- [Declaration of Right](#)
- [English Bill of Rights](#)
- John Locke, [“Letter Concerning Toleration”](#)
- [“Two Treatises of Government”](#)

## ***Science & Enlightenment***

## **6. Natural Philosophy (2–4 October)**

- 4 October: First paper due (5–8 pages)
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 122–127
- René Descartes, [“Discourse on Method”](#)
- Isaac Newton, “Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy,” in *The Enlightenment*, pp. 37–39
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 102–107 (Linnaeus)

## **7. Midterm Exam (11 October)**

## **8 The Triumph of French Civilization (16–18 October)**

- Winks and Kaiser, chap. 2
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 201–208 (Gibbon)

- [Encyclopédie](#) articles to be assigned in class

## **9. Material Happiness; Consumer Revolution (23–25 October)**

- Mandeville, [Fable of the Bees](#), Preface and pp. 1–12.
- Hume, [Of the Standard of Taste](#)
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 264–269 (architecture)

## **10. Enlightenment and Society; Global Commerce (30 October — 1 November)**

- Winks and Kaiser, chap. 3
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 304–310 (Raynal)
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 319–327 (Diderot)

### *Revolution & Empire*

## **11. France in Crisis; Print Culture and Popular Opinion (6–8 November)**

- Voltaire, [Treatise on Tolerance](#), pp. 1–23
- [Liberty, Equality, Fraternity](#) articles to be assigned in class

## **12. From Constitutional Monarchy to Terror (13–15 November)**

- Winks and Kaiser, chap. 4
- *The Enlightenment*, pp. 249–253.

### **Thanksgiving Break**

## **13. Napoleonic Wars and Empire (27–29 November)**

- 27 November: Second paper due (5–8 pages)
- Articles from [Liberty, Equality, Fraternity](#) to be assigned in class.

## **14. Congress of Vienna (4–6 December)**

- [Speech to Troops, 1796](#)

- [Account of the Situation of the Empire, 1804](#)
- [Wellington's Crossing of the Douro, 1809](#)
- [The Return of Napoleon from Elba, 1815](#)

## **Final Exam (Tuesday, 18 December 10:30 a.m. — 1:15 p.m.)**

### **Fine Print**

#### **Technology Policy**

Cell phones, pagers, and other communication devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but I strongly discourage you from using them even for this purpose. Unless you are practicing to become a court stenographer, you will gain little by transcribing my lectures or your classmates verbatim. You will learn and recall far more if instead you take notes selectively on paper and then copy them into your computer later. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g., gaming, email, chat, etc.) is not permitted in the classroom and will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade.

#### **Disability Accommodations**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office for Disability Services at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. The need for accommodations should be identified at the beginning of the semester, and the specific accommodation has to be arranged through the Office for Disability Services. Faculty cannot provide accommodations to students on their own.

#### **Communications**

Periodically I will send you information regarding this class via email. I will send all messages to your GMU email account with no exceptions.

#### **Academic Integrity**

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

#### **Changes to this Syllabus**

Fair warning: changes can and will happen.