

THE AGE OF REASON

Subject Description. In this subject we will study the incomplete transition from tradition to modernity that took place in Europe from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries. We will examine trials, art, literature, music, politics, society and culture to understand how the traditional triad of monarchy, aristocracy and religion gave way provisionally and imperfectly to the modern triad of democracy, equality, and ideology. Although the intellectual and chronological scope of the class is broad, we will study several distinct events in depth in order to understand the period, including the trial of Galileo, the English Civil Wars of the mid-seventeenth century, the publication of the French *Encyclopédie* in the mid-eighteenth century, and the French Revolution of 1789.

Subject Requirements. Active class participation is central to our work together. Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to arrive in class on time and prepared to discuss common readings. Students will write four five-page papers during the term. The first essay will be discussed in class and revised before a final grade is assigned. In addition, to satisfy the CI-H speaking requirement, we will stage the trial of Louis XVI in class during the week of April 28; students will be assigned a character and expected to participate in the trial. There will be no exams and no final. Each assignment will be weighted as follows in the calculation of the final grade, although these calculations will also take into account improved performance during the course of the semester:

Class Participation	20 points
Four 5-page essays	35 points each, 140 points total
<u>Oral Exercise (Trial of Louis XVI)</u>	<u>40 points</u>
TOTAL	200 points

Required Reading. The following books are available for purchase at the MIT Bookstore; they should also be on reserve in the Hayden Library. All other class readings, indicated with an asterisk (*), are available online at the class website, listed above.

Lynn Hunt, *et al.*, *The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures. Vol. B: 1320-1830*
David Lagomarsino & Charles Wood, eds. *The Trial of Charles I: A Documentary History*
Voltaire, *Treatise on Toleration and Other Writings* (Cambridge UP edition, 2000)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and the Discourses* (Everyman edition, 1973)
Jack Censer and Lynn Hunt, eds. *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution, with companion CD-ROM*
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (Penguin, 1985)

Criteria for HASS CI Subjects. Communication intensive subjects in the humanities, arts, and

social sciences should require at least 20 pages of writing divided among 3-5 assignments. Of these 3-5 assignments, at least one should be revised and resubmitted. HASS CI subjects should further offer students substantial opportunity for oral expression, through presentations, student-led discussion, or class participation. In order to guarantee sufficient attention to student writing and substantial opportunity for oral expression, the maximum number of students per section in a HASS CI subject is 18, except in the case of a subject taught without sections (where the faculty member in charge is the only instructor). In that case, enrollments can rise to 25, if a writing fellow is attached to the subject.

Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism: The web now hosts many sites which offer college-level papers of varying quality on a variety of topics. I am well acquainted with these sites, and with others that offer detection services to professors. **Buying a paper and submitting it as your own work is cheating. Copying sections from someone else's print or online work into your own without an acknowledgement is plagiarism.** MIT has strict policies against both activities that I will fully enforce. For the appropriate MIT definitions and policies, visit the following websites. If you are uncertain about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please contact me **before** submitting the work in question.

- MIT Online Writing Communication Center: <<http://web.mit.edu/wcc>>
- Citing and Using Sources: <<http://writing.mit.edu/wcc/avoidingplagiarism>>
- Plagiarism and How to Avoid It:
<<http://writing.mit.edu/wcc/avoidingplagiarism>>

Class Meetings and Reading Assignments

Week One

2/5. Introduction

Week Two

2/10. Material Europe, 1600-1850: Demography, Geography, Agriculture

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 15, 525-60.

2/12. Authority and Its Discontents: Europe ca. 1600

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 16, 563-601.

Week Three

2/17. **No Class—President’s Day**

2/18 & 2/19. Class cancelled.

Week Four

2/24. Galileo’s Discoveries

1. *Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*, in Stillman Drake, ed. *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, 1-58.
2. *John Heilbron, *The Sun in the Church: Cathedrals as Solar Observatories*, 3-23.
3. *Browse “The Galileo Project”, an online resource, paying particular attention to the pages on Galileo’s daughter, Suor Maria Celeste Galileo.

2/26. **Session 1 (2-3:30, 16-628):**

Galileo’s Trial

1. *Maurice A. Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History*, 1-43, 256-93.

Session 2 (7-8:30, 56-180):

England Before 1640

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 17, 603-43. Pay particular attention to 618-27.

Week Five

3/3. **Session 1 (2-3:30, 16-628):**

The English Civil Wars, 1642-49.

1. Review documents in *The Making of the West*, 622-23. Additional documents will be distributed in class.
2. *The Trial of Charles I*, 1-16.

Session 2 (7-8:30, 56-180)

The Trial of Charles I

1. *The Trial of Charles I*, 16-148.

3/5. The Restoration and The Glorious Revolution

1. *Margaret Jacob, “Science in the Crucible of the English Revolution”, in Jacob, *Scientific Culture and the Making of the Industrial West*, (Oxford, 1997), 51-72.
2. *The English Bill of Rights, 1689, available online.
3. *John Locke, Excerpt from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in Herbert H. Rowen and Carl J. Ekberg, eds., *Early Modern Europe: A Book of Source Readings* (Peacock Publishers, 1973), 274-8.
4. **FIRST PAPER DUE**

Week Six

3/10. Writing Workshop

3/12. The Absolutism of Louis XIV: Bureaucracy and War

1. Review *The Making of the West*, 605-12.
2. *William Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents*, 1-16, 82-107

Week Seven

3/17. The Art of the Baroque: Velazquez, Rembrandt, Vermeer

1. REVISED FIRST PAPER DUE

3/19. The Absolutism of Louis XIV: Versailles and Culture

1. Duc de St Simon, *Mémoires*, excerpts to be distributed in class.

SPRING VACATION, MARCH 24-28

Week Eight

3/31. The *Encyclopedia* of Diderot and d'Alembert: Preliminary Discourse

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 18, 645-81.
2. *"Preliminary Discourse", in Denis Diderot's *The Encyclopedia*; selections. Edited and translated by Stephen J. Gendzier, pp. 1-53.
3. **SECOND PAPER DUE**

4/2. The *Encyclopedia* of Diderot and d'Alembert: Articles and Circulation

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 19, 683-720
2. *Articles, in English translation, online. Read "Intolerance", "Law of Nature", "Philosopher", "Sunday".
3. *Robert Darnton, "The *Encyclopédie* Wars of Prerevolutionary France" *The American Historical Review* 78 (December 1973): 1331-52. (J-STOR)

Week Nine

4/7. The French Enlightenment in Action

1. *Review "Intolerance", from the *Encyclopedia*.
2. Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, vi-xix, 3-105

4/9. Opponents of the French Enlightenment

1. *Review “Philosopher” from the *Encyclopedia*.
2. *Robert Darnton, “The High Enlightenment and the Low-Life of Literature in Pre-Revolutionary France” *Past & Present* 51 (May, 1971): 81-115. (J-STOR)
3. *Darrin McMahan, “A Century Blinded by Light”, in *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford, 2001), 18-53.

Week Ten

4/14. The Political Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau

1. *Brief online biography of Rousseau
2. *Review “Natural Law” from the *Encyclopedia*.
3. *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, 49-61, 84-117
4. *The Social Contract*, 181-2, 229-60

4/16. No Class Meeting

1. **THIRD PAPER DUE (Turn in paper by 3:30 in History Dept. Office, E51-285.)**

Week Eleven

4/21. **NO CLASS – PATRIOTS DAY**

4/23. **Session 1 (2-3:30, 16-628)**

The Origins of the French Revolution

Session 2 (7-8:30, 56-180)

The French Revolution: Events

1. *The Making of the West*, Ch. 20, 723-61.
2. *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*, skim 1-114, browse accompanying CD-ROM

Week Twelve

4/28. The Trial of Louis XVI

1. *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*, study 62-66 in the text, and Chapter 6, “The Monarchy Falls” on the CD-ROM. Be sure to study all documents, images and songs that accompany Ch. 6 on the CD-ROM.
2. Further instructions to be handed out in class.

4/30. The Trial of Louis XVI

1. *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*, study 62-66 in the text,

and Chapter 6, “The Monarchy Falls” on the CD-ROM. Be sure to study all documents, images and songs that accompany Ch. 6 on the CD-ROM.

2. Further instructions to be handed out in class.

Week Thirteen

5/5. Romanticism

1. *The Making of the West*, 763-801
2. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 3-68

5/7. Frankenstein

1. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 69-144

Week Fourteen

5/12. Frankenstein

1. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 145-214

5/14. Conclusion

5/15. **FOURTH PAPER DUE**

NO FINAL EXAMINATION

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21H.433 The Age of Reason: Europe from the 17th to the Early 19th Centuries
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