

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Department of History  
Semester II, 1986-87

History 320

EARLY MODERN FRANCE, 1550-1815

Ms. Desan  
5124 Humanities

Reading:

Robin Briggs, Early Modern France, 1560-1715.  
Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France, Volume 1: 1715-1799.  
David Jordan, The King's Trial.  
Molière, Middle-Class Gentlemen.  
Montaigne, Selected Essays.  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract.  
Alexis de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution.

The above books have been ordered and should be available at the University Bookstore and at Brown's. There is also a reader of xeroxed documents and articles available at Kinko's at 620 University Avenue. The reader is required. Readings from the xeroxed packet are marked "R".

All students will take a one-hour exam (March 6) and a final exam. A paper (6-8 pp.) will be due on April 6.

There will also be two films shown during this course:

"The Return of Martin Guerre" in Week 2,  
"La Nuit de Varennes" in Week 13.

Week 1 (January 21-23): INTRODUCTION: THE DIVERSITY OF FRANCE

Week 2 (January 26-30): RURAL LIFE IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE

Reading: Robin Briggs, Early Modern France, 1560-1715, pp. 35-76.  
Selections from N. Z. Davis, The Return of Martin Guerre (R)  
\*\*I will show the film "The Return of Martin Guerre" this week.

Week 3 (February 2-6): SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CULTURE: RENAISSANCE & REFORMATION

Reading: Briggs, pp. 1-34.  
Rabelais; Dunn selections on French Wars of Religion;  
"Vindiciae contra tyrannos" (R).

Week 4 (February 9-13): MORE CULTURAL HISTORY & THE BUILDING OF THE MONARCHY

Reading: Montaigne, Selected Essays.  
Documents on images of women and on witchcraft (R).

Week 5 (February 16-20): THE ABSOLUTIST STATE

Reading: Briggs, pp. 77-211.  
Dunn Selection on the Rise of Absolutism (R).

Week 6 (February 23-27): SOCIETY AND CULTURE UNDER LOUIS XIV

Reading: Molière, Middle-Class Gentlemen.  
Selection from Louis XIV's letters to his Heirs and  
from Bossuet and Madame de Sevigné, selected letters (R).

Week 7 (March 2-6): SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY  
\*\*\* MIDTERM on March 6.

Reading: Selections from Descartes and Pascal (R).

Week 8 (March 9-13): IN THE WAKE OF LOUIS XIV

Reading: Cobban, A History of Modern France, 1715-1799, pp. 1-81.

Week 9 (March 16-20): THE ORIGINS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Reading: Cobban, pp. 82-151.

Excerpts from The Encyclopedia and Montesquieu's Persian Letters (R).

Week 10 (March 30-April 3): THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Reading: Rousseau, The Social Contract.

Week 11 (April 6-10): REFORM VERSUS REVOLUTION

Reading: Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution:  
Part 1; Part 2: cha. 1, 2, 8, 9; Part 3: cha. 1, 3, 8.

PAPER DUE on Friday April 6, 6-8 pages, topics will involve  
Rousseau and other Enlightenment documents

Week 12 (April 13-17): THE OUTBREAK OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Reading: Cobban, pp. 152-200.

David Jordan, The King's Trial, pp. 1-100.

Excerpts from Sièyes and Rights of Man (R).

Week 13 (April 20-24): THE RADICAL REVOLUTION

Reading: Cobban, pp. 200-241.

Jordan, pp. 101-116, 126-60, 178-237. You should skim  
the other chapters briefly.

Excerpts from Robespierre, Olympe de Gouges (R).

\*\*I will show the movie "La Nuit de Varennes" this week.

Week 14 (April 27-May 1): REVOLUTIONARY CULTURE AND THE DIRECTORY

Reading: Cobban, 241-266.

Lynn Hunt, "The Imagery of Radicalism" (R).

Excerpt from James Miller, Rousseau: Dreamer of  
Democracy (R).

Week 15: NAPOLEON

Reading: Selections from Gordon Wright in (R).

Final Exam