

THE AGE OF REASON

Subject Description. Has there ever been an “Age of Reason?” In the western tradition, one might make claims for various moments during Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. In this class, however, we will focus on the two centuries from the early 1600s to the early 1800s, a period when insights first developed in the natural sciences and mathematics were seized upon by social theorists, institutional reformers and political revolutionaries who sought to change themselves and the society in which they lived. Through the study of trials, art, literature, music, politics, philosophy, and culture more generally, we will consider evolution and revolution in these two centuries. We will also attend to those who opposed change on both traditional and radical grounds.

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 on April 23; students will be assigned a character and expected to participate in the trial. There will be no midterm 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	25 points
Four 5-page essays	35 points each, 140 points total
<u>Oral Exercise (Trial of Louis XVI)</u>	<u>35 points</u>
TOTAL	200 points

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

Lynn Hunt, *et al.*, *The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures*, 2nd ed. Vol. II: *Since 1340*

Peter A. Morton, ed. *The Trial of Tempel Anneke* (Broadview, 2006)

René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Hackett, 1998, 3rd ed.)

Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance* (Cambridge, 2000)

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Bedford/St Martins, 2002)

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://writing.mit.edu/wcc>>
- Avoiding Plagiarism: <<http://writing.mit.edu/wcc/avoidingplagiarism>>

Class Meetings and Reading Assignments

Week One

2/9. Introduction: Ages of Reason

1. *The Making of the West*, 504-9, 567-77, 707-13

Week Two

2/11. Trials: Galileo and Tempel Anneke

1. *The Making of the West*, 509-20
2. *Browse the Galileo Project web site: <http://galileo.rice.edu/>. Be sure to read "Galileo and the Inquisition," including all the links embedded in the text:
http://galileo.rice.edu/bio/narrative_7.html
3. *The Trial of Tempel Anneke*, xiii-xliii (introduction)

2/13. Discussion of the Trial of Tempel Anneke

1. *The Trial of Tempel Anneke*, 3-151

Week Three

2/18. No Class – Presidents’ Day

2/19. No Class.

2/20. The Cartesian Method

1. René Descartes, *The Discourse on Method*, all
2. *Optional: browse the “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy” site on Descartes at <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/d/descarte.htm>
3. **First Paper Due**

Week Four

2/25. English Radicalism and The Trial of Charles I, 1647-1649

1. *The Making of the West*, 540-7
2. * “The Putney Debates, 1647,” in Eric Cochrane, Charles M. Gray, and Mark Kishlansky, eds. *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization. Volume 6, Early Modern Europe: Crisis of Authority* (Chicago, 1987), 349-84.
3. * David Lagomarsino and Charles J. Wood, eds. *The Trial of Charles I*, 1-12, 74-82, 118-28.

2/27. Writing Workshop

Week Five

3/3. The Radical Enlightenment

1. *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.
2. * Baruch Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, ed. Jonathan Israel (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-12, 230-59.
3. * *The Treatise of the Three Impostors*, in Margaret Jacob, ed. *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St Martins, 2001), 94-114

3/5. Louis XIV, Versailles, and the Culture of Absolutism

1. **Rewrite of First Paper Due**

Week Six

3/10. The Public Sphere and the *Encyclopedia* of Diderot & d’Alembert

1. *The Making of the West*, 552-63, 600-5.
2. *Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, ed. Robert J. Allen (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1955), v-xvi, 3-17.
3. *Robert Darnton, “The *Encyclopédie* Wars of Prerevolutionary France” *The American Historical Review* 78 (December 1973): 1331-52.
4. * Jean le Rond d’Alembert, “Preliminary Discourse” in *Denis Diderot’s The Encyclopedia: Selections*, ed. Stephen J. Gendzier (New York, 1967), 1-12, 35-43.

3/12. *Encyclopedia* Articles

1. * Browse the online web site for English translations of *Encyclopedia* articles: <http://www.hti.umich.edu/d/did/>; read “Artichoke,” “Sunday,” “Philosopher,” “Tailor of Suits” and accompanying plates. [See stellar web site.]
2. * Browse the French online version of the *Encyclopedia* at <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/projects/encyc/>. Be sure to look at the engravings for “*chirurgie*” and “*imprimerie*.”

3/15. Visit to the Museum of Fine Arts

Week Seven

3/17. Tolerance: An Enlightenment Ideal?

1. *Read the English translation of the *Encyclopedia* article “Intolerance” online: <http://www.hti.umich.edu/d/did/>
2. Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, 3-105.

3/19. The Persistence of the Old Regime and the Problem of Slavery

1. **Second Paper Due**

SPRING VACATION, MARCH 24-28

Week Eight

3/31. A North American Perspective

1. *Read the English translation of the *Encyclopedia* article “Virginia” online:
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/d/did/>
2. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. David Waldstreicher (Bedford/St. Martins, 2002), 43-77.

4/2. Discussion of *Notes on the State of Virginia*

1. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. David Waldstreicher (Bedford/St. Martins, 2002), 79-213

Week Nine

4/7. Jean-Jacques Rousseau

1. **The Social Contract*, excerpts, in Margaret Jacob, ed. *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2001), 177-201.
2. Optional: browse the “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy” site on Rousseau at
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/r/rousseau.htm>

4/9. No Class Meeting

1. **Third Paper Due**

Week Ten

4/14. Revolution in France I

1. *The Making of the West*, 747-52
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*:
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapters 1-3, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.

4/16. Revolution in France II

1. *The Making of the West*, 752-73
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*:
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapters 4-6, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.

Week Eleven

4/21. Patriots Day – No Class

4/23. The Trial of Louis XVI [N.B.: We will hold two class sessions this day.]

- 11-12:30 PM: Assignments to be distributed in class
 - 7-8:30 PM: Assignments to be distributed in class
1. *Mona Ozouf, “King’s Trial,” in François Furet and Mona Ozouf, eds. *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution* (Harvard, 1989), 95-106.
 2. *Michael Walzer, “A Defense of the Trial and Execution of Louis XVI,” in Walzer, *Regicide and Revolution: Speeches at the Trial of Louis XVI* (Cambridge, 1974), 69-89.

Week Twelve

4/28. From Saint Domingue to Haiti

1. *The Making of the West*, review 567-77
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapter 8, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.
3. *Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, eds. *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804*, 7-40, 188-96

4/30. Romanticism

1. *The Making of the West*, 723-6
2. *William Wordsworth, *Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting The Banks Of The Wye During A Tour. July 13, 1798*, <http://www.bartleby.com/145/ww138.html>

Week Thirteen

5/5. Conservatism Created: A Response to Reason and Revolution

1. *The Making of the West*, 714-23
2. *Massimo Boffa, “Counter-Revolution,” in *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution*, eds. François Furet and Mona Ozouf (Harvard, 1989), 640-8
3. *Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Excerpted in Keith Michael Baker, ed. *The University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization. Vol. 7: The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, 1987), 428-45.
4. *Joseph de Maistre, *Considerations on France*, excerpts in *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization, Vol. 7: The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (Chicago, 1987), 445-52

5/7. Industrialization and Political Liberalism

1. *The Making of the West*, review 714-23

2. *Kevin Reilly, ed. *Readings in World Civilizations. Volume 2: The Development of the Modern World* (St. Martins, 1992), 121-34
3. *Katharine J. Lualdi, ed. *Sources of the Making of the West. Peoples and Cultures: Volume 2: Since 1500* (St Martins, 2005, 2nd ed.), 119-29
4. *John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, excerpted in *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West* (Columbia University Press, 3rd ed., 1961), 592-619.
5. Optional: browse the “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy” site on Mill at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/m/milljs.htm>

Week Fourteen

5/12. Back to the German Village

1. *David W. Sabeau, “The Sins of Belief: A Village Remedy for Hoof and Mouth Disease (1796),” in *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1984), 174-98

5/14. Conclusion

1. *Percy Bysshe Shelley, “A Defence of Poetry (1821),” excerpted in Warren Breckman, ed. *European Romanticism: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St Martins, 2008), 142-52
2. **Fourth paper due**

NO FINAL EXAMINATION

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<http://ocw.mit.edu>

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