

HST 393
THE AGE OF REVOLUTION, 1765-1848

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will revolve around two main questions: first, what is the Age of Revolution? As we will see, one way to understand the Age of Revolution is as a moment of breakage from the Old Regime and the intellectual tradition that another course you have all taken has called the “Western Heritage.” After a few classes in which we will review a few key traits of the premodern intellectual universe and of Old Regime society, we will discuss in what ways the revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century rejected that intellectual and social universe. At the same time, we will see that not all movements of the “age” were alike; they were not all fighting the same tyrants nor trying to build the same kinds of new societies. We will delve into the nuances of the Age of Revolution, look at how the word “revolution” itself changed meaning in the final years of the eighteenth century, and try to build an account of the Age of Revolution that takes its complexity into account.

The second main question that the class will address is: what is the legacy of the Age of Revolution? We will look at the intellectual movements that were born out of the revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth century and the problems that the Age of Revolution left open or generated. We will discuss what features of the Age of Revolution we can identify in our modern world and possible ways to approach them.

GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Course components will be weighted as follows:

Class participation – 10%
Discussion posts on Canvas – 10%
First 2/3-page paper – 10%
Second 2/3-page paper – 10%
Final 5-page paper – 20%
Mid-term exam – 15%
Final exam – 25%

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Course taught biweekly (1 hour and 15 minutes meetings)

- Class #1 **The Western Heritage and the Age of Revolution**
- Selections From *Western Heritage: A Reader*
 - Dante, On Nobility
 - The Great Chain Of Being
 - Suarez, Selected texts on Rights, Law, and the Political Order
- Class #2 **The Old Regimes of Seventeenth Century Britain and France**
- Bossuet, Absolutism
 - Perrault and La Fontaine, Old Regime Fables
 - The Old Regime in Britain
- Class #3 **The “Colonial” Old Regime #1: The Colonies of British North America**
- Hakluyt, *Discourse of Western Planting*
 - The British Colonies of North America – Founding Documents
 - Virginia Statutes on Indentured Servitude
 - Byrd, The Secret Diary
 - Franklin, *Autobiography*
- Class #4 **The “Colonial” Old Regime #2: Ireland, Haiti, and Latin America**
- Vitoria, On the American Indians
 - Grotius and Bacon, *Hostis Humani Generi*
 - The Penal Laws in Ireland
 - Sources on Life in Colonial Saint Domingue
- Class #5 **Enlightenments**
- Diderot, *A Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville*
 - Voltaire, On Tahiti
 - Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*
 - Adams, On Progress and Human Nature
- Class #6 **The American Revolution: Interpretations**
- Wood, Greene, and Nash - The American Revolution: Interpretations
- Class #7 **Towards Independence**
- Rush, On a Visit to the House of Commons

- Dickinson, Essay on the Constitutional Power of Great Britain
- Hamilton, The Farmer Refuted
- Adams, “Novanglus” Letter
- Burke, On Conciliation with America
- Causes and Necessities of Taking Up Arms
- Declaration of Independence
- Paper #1: The Declaration of Independence in light of the texts by Rush, Hamilton, Dickinson, Adams, Burke, and the Continental Congress (2-3 pages, due at the beginning of class)

Class #8

1776

- Paine, *Common Sense*
- Reactions to Paine’s *Common Sense*

Class #9

Building an Independent America #1

- Constitution of the United States
- Monarchical Republic? – Selected Sources
- Madison to George Washington

Class #10

Building an Independent America #2

- Madison and Hamilton, *Federalist Papers* - Selection
- The Bill of Rights
- Adams, On the Form of Government, Morals, and Religion

Class #11

Slavery and the American Revolution

- Hannah-Jones, “1619 Project”
- Jefferson, The Slavery Clause in the Declaration of Independence
- Petition to the New Hampshire Assembly
- Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*
- Petition from Amelia County, Virginia
- Northwest Ordinance
- Wilson and Adams on Slavery

MID-TERM EXAM

Class #12

The French Revolution: Interpretations

- The French Revolution: Interpretations

Class #13

The Great Debate: Burke and Paine on the French Revolution

- Mazzei, Dispatches from the Early Months of the French Revolution
- Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen

- Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* – Selected passages
- Paine, *Rights of Man* – Selected passages

Class #14

The Jacobin Turn

- Marat, The Objectives of the Revolution Completely Unattained by the People
- Debate on the Trial to the King
- Robespierre, On Constitutional Principles

Class #15

The Terror of Natural Rights (the “destructive” phase)

- Fouquier-Tinville, “Why have witnesses?”
- 22 Prairial Law
- Furet, “The Vendée”

➤ **Movie screening, *Dark Knight Rises***

Class #16

The Terror of Natural Rights #2 (the “constructive” phase)

- Revolutionary Calendar
- Ozouf, “Regeneration”

Class #17

Sister Republics

- The Federalist Revolt in Lyon
- Napoleon and the Revolution - Sources

Class #18

The French Revolution in America and the Reinvention of Revolution

- Baker, “Revolution 1.0”
- Italian Patriots on the American and French Revolutions
- Jefferson on France and the French Revolution
- Raimbow-Hale, “Regenerating the World”
- Paper #2 due: Christopher Nolan’s take on the Age of Revolution (2-3 pages)

Class #19

Revolution in Haiti: Black Jacobins?

- Selected documents from the Haitian Revolution

Class #20

The Irish 1798

- Burke, On the Irish Question
- Tone, Declaration of the Society of United Irishmen
- Tone, *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*
- The Fenian Movement

Class #21

Liberal Revolutions in Europe

- Constant, On the Limits of Popular Sovereignty
- Constant, *The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns*
- Mazzini, *Young Italy Manifesto*
- Mazzini, On the Superiority of Representative Government
- Mazzini, On Republicanism and the United States
- Mazzini, *Principles of International Politics*

Class #22

Bolivar's (Liberal?) Revolution

- Bolivar, Cartagena Manifesto
- Bolivar, Proclamation of War to Death
- Bolivar, Jamaica Letter
- Bolivar, The Angostura Document

Class #23

Criticizing Liberalism (from the Right)

- De Maistre, *Study on Sovereignty*
- Bonald, On Jacques-Benigne Bossuet
- Fichte, *Addresses on the German Nation*
- Randolph, Speech to the US Senate

Class #24

Criticizing Liberalism (from the Left)

- Marx, Communist Manifesto

Class #25

Alternative Perspectives on Modernity

- Burke, On the Impeachment of Warren Hastings
- Schlegel, "Philosophical Fragments" from the *Philosophical Apprenticeship*
- Schlegel, *Ideas*
- Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
- Tocqueville, *Old Regime to the Revolution*
- Douglass, "What to a Slave is the Fourth of July?"
- Lincoln, Gettysburg Address

Class #26

Conclusion: What is the Age of Revolution?

- Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*
- Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*
- Adelman, "The Age of Imperial Revolution"
- Paper #3: Evaluate Palmer's, Hobsbawm's, and Adelman's accounts of the Age of Revolution in light of the sources encountered in this class (5 pages)

FINAL EXAM