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Division of French and Italian Studies
University of Washington
Winter 2017

French 376: Culture, Politics and Society in France

Tues, Thurs 3:30-5:20
Gowen 201

Description. This course proposes a **historical exploration of French culture and literature** from the Religious Wars to the Revolution of 1789 and beyond. We will focus on the growth of an intellectual and artistic culture in the context of the profound political and social changes that defined the emergence of France as a modern nation in this period. We'll emphasize the centralization of the State and the evolutions of the hierarchical Old Regime social structure, exploring the opportunities and constraints that these parallel developments presented to writers, whose works and careers can be studied as products of and reactions to the new political and social realities of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

Course Goals. **1)** to understand key political and social changes of France from the 16th to the late 18th centuries; **2)** to understand, against the backdrop of this history, the development of intellectual culture in its major articulations from Humanism through Classicism and the Enlightenment; **3)** to reflect more broadly upon the notion of culture and its relation to events and to media; **4)** to develop analytical, reasoning, and writing skills.

Texts. The following texts are available at the University Book Store.

Natalie Zenon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard)
William Beik, ed., *Louis XIV and Absolutism. A Brief Study with Documents* (Bedford)
Colin Jones, *The Great Nation* (Penguin)

Other readings available at the Canvas site for the course:
<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1099564>

Work, Expectations, and Grades:

Written work: **3 tests**, accounting for **45%** of your final grade.
Scheduled for 1/26 (15%), 2/16 (15%), and 3/9 (15%)
3 papers – 2 short papers (1-3 pages) and a longer paper (5 pages),
accounting for **40%** of final grade.
Due 1/17 (10%), 2/9 (10%), and 3/13 (20% including topic and outline)

Class work: **will account for 15% of your final grade.** This will include:

- * participation in group discussions (*please bring readings to class*)
- * in-class writing assignments (please also bring pen and paper to class)
- * short exercises and essays to complete at home
- * quizzes

Our course has been assigned a teaching associate.

Florentina Dedu-Constantin
Email: fdconst@uw.edu
Office: PDL C-236
Office hours: Tues, Thurs 2:30-3:30

In addition to grading, Florentina will be available to discuss paper ideas and will run workshops and reviews sessions throughout the quarter.

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Academic honesty and use of sources. Students in French 376, like all UW students, are expected to maintain “the highest standards of academic conduct,” and any misconduct will be taken very seriously. This includes cheating and plagiarism. Please consult the statement on “Student Academic Responsibility” prepared by the Committee on Academic Conduct in the College of Arts and Sciences:

<http://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>

2. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the office of Disability Services which coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities:

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/>.

PLAN FOR THE COURSE

Do the readings for the session in which they are assigned. There will be quizzes.

Jan 3 – Introduction: Stability and Change

Jones, from *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, 127-35

Beik, “Introduction: France and its Population,” 1-14

Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*, 1-26

Jan 5 – Religion and Religious Wars

Beik, “Ecclesiastical Power and Religious Faith,” 164-200

Jones, from *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, 135-43

Davis, *Martin Guerre*, 26-61

Archive to explore: <https://lib.byu.edu/collections/french-political-pamphlets/>
(browse under the appropriate monarch)

Jan 10 – Old Regime Society

Loyseau, “A Treatise on Orders,” 13-15 (“Foreward”), 19-23 (chs. III and IV),
27-31 (ch. VIII)

Excerpt from Corneille, *Le Cid*, act 1

Beik, “The Monarchy and the New Nobility,” 134-161

Collins, *The State in Early Modern France*, 38-53

Jan 12 – Selfhood and Identity in the Age of Humanism, Discovery, and Communications Revolution

Montaigne, “To the Reader” and “On the Cannibals,” 228-241

Aldus Manutius, “The Life of a Scholar-Printer,” 396-401

Davis, *Martin Guerre*, 63-125

Archive: <http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.0:2:0.montaigne>
(French version of “Au lecteur”; image of page with Montaigne’s corrections:
<http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/images/montaigne/0000b.jpg>)

Visit of Deb Raftus, Romance Languages Librarian

Writing Workshop: Friday, Jan 13

Jan 17 – Early Modern Politics I – Defining Tensions

Richelieu, *Political Testament*, 9-12 and 20-33 (Ch. IV is Richelieu’s portrait of Louis
XIII. Worth reading if you plan to write your paper on kingship, but not required
for class).

Collins, 36-38; 53-70

FIRST PAPER DUE – uploaded to Canvas by class: 1-2 pages

Jan 19 – Early Modern Politics II – The Fronde

From *Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents*:

“Mme de Motteville’s Account of the Paris Disturbances,” 19-29

“A Mazarinade Against the Queen and the Cardinal,” 29-35

Optional: selected Mazarinades in French (available on Canvas site)

Bercé, *The Birth of Absolutism*, 157-82

Jan 24 – Early Modern Politics III – “Absolutism”

From Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism* (I suggest you read in this order):

Louis XIV, “The King’s Own Words” (from his *Mémoires*), 204-215

Bossuet “Divine Right Monarchy” 166-173

Colbert, “Managing France,” 82-96

Louis XIV, *Mémoires*, 101-104

Saint-Simon, *The Age of Magnificence*, “Portrait of the King,” 137-150 (optional, if you
want to write a paper on monarchy: “The King’s Day,” 160-166)

Review Session: Wed, Jan 25

Jan 26 – **TEST 1**

Jan 31 – Women’s Lives in the Early Modern Era: Marriage, Religion, and Work

Mademoiselle de Montpensier, letters to Mme de Motteville, 27-61

Sharon Kettering, from *French Society: 1589-1715*, “Women and Men,” 20-33

Feb 2 – Crises of Conscience I – Religious Controversy

Bayle, from *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, “Manicheans,” 349-354 (skip “The Third Clarification”); from *Diverse Thoughts on the Comet*, “On the Authority of Tradition,” 22, and “What the True Case is of the Authority of an Opinion,” 65-66

Beik, from *Louis XIV and Absolutism*, “Dealing with the Gallican Church,” “Dealing with the Jansenists” and “Dealing with the Huguenots,” 173-197

Collins, *The State*, 121-128

Jones, *The Great Nation*, 18-23

Sources: ARTFL database of French texts

<http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/baylepublic.pl?objectid=2072>

Writing Workshop: Friday, Feb 3

Feb 7 – Crises of Conscience II – War and Poverty in an Time of Climate Change

Fénelon, letter to Louis XIV

Collins, *The State*, 152-163 and 180-190

Jones, *The Great Nation*, 23-28

SECOND PAPER DUE – uploaded to Canvas: 2-3 pages

Feb 9 – Regency, Bubbles, and Colonial Adventures

Montesquieu, from *Persian Letters*, letters 24, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 92, 140, 142

Jones, *The Great Nation*, 43-73

Feb 14 – A New Society

Voltaire, selections from *Philosophical Letters*; and “Le mondain”

Collins, *The State*, 239-254

Jones, *The Great Nation*, 159-170

Kwass, “Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption in 18th-Century France,” 631-659

Review Session: Wed, Feb 15

Feb 16 – **TEST 2**

Feb 21 – Enlightenment, War and Attempted Regicide
Selected articles from the *Encyclopedia* of Diderot and d’Alembert
<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/did/>
Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment*, 6-17
Lyons, “Censorship and the Reading Public in Pre-Revolutionary France,” 105-118
Jones, *The Great Nation*, 171-178 and 226-245

Feb 23 – Inventing and Contesting the “Public Sphere”
Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, 3-13
Jones, *The Great Nation*, 270-271
Darnton, “An Early Information Society,” 1-35
Chartier, “The Public Sphere and Public Opinion,” from *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 20-23

PAPER TOPIC DUE (posted to Canvas)

Writing Workshop: Friday, Feb 24

Feb 28 – Self and Society in the Age of Enlightenment
Voltaire, “Poste” from *Dictionnaire philosophique*
Goodman, “Epistolary Property: Michel de Servan and the Plight of Letters on the Eve of the French Revolution,” (excerpts) 339-359
Hunt, “Torrents of Emotion: Reading Novels and Imagining Equality,” from *Inventing Human Rights*, 35-69

March 2 – Origins of the Revolution
de Toqueville, from *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*
Maza, “The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited (1785-86): The Case of the Missing Queen,” 73-94
Chartier, “Do Books Make Revolutions,” from *Cultural Origins*, 67-91

**In-class work on papers – bring materials: outlines, notes, bibliographies, etc.
Post to Canvas.**

March 7 – Catch-up and review session for Test 3: bring questions!

March 9 – **TEST 3**

THIRD PAPER DUE, uplodaded to Canvas; Monday, March 13 – 5 pages

***** Syllabus subject to change, depending on interests and discussions**