FRENCH HISTORY, 1770-1871 focuses on the revolutionary period of modern France. This was a tumultuous and creative time, a time of revolution and reaction, republics and monarchies, liberalism and centralized power. We will study this period in three principal ways: by learning about the various regimes, politics, ideologies, and social patterns that marked the era; by reading documents written during this time and texts composed by some of its principal figures; and by analyzing selected works of present-day historical scholarship that help us understand modern France.

As we build this understanding, our thinking will be guided by the following questions: Why was it so difficult during the century following the French Revolution for France to develop a stable political regime? Why, in this connection, did France irrupt into revolution in response to the problems it faced? And to what extent did the French Revolution define the nature and meaning of the period that followed it? Finally, what were the principal social and political groups that characterized this era, and how did those groups change during the century we consider?

Because the French Revolution is fundamental not just to French history but to world history, we will devote considerable attention to the origins and meaning of this event. We will also consider other nineteenth century revolutions and examine the different social groups—middle classes, workers, peasants, women, men—pivotal to the history of this period. French colonialism will receive significant attention, as will the question of the extent to which France became a modern society in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Since this course is a seminar, discussion is its central feature. Each week you will be asked to talk in class about key aspects of the readings in question. To facilitate that discussion, I will organize the group into study teams of three members each. Every week, one team will be responsible for opening the discussion with a set of questions its members think the whole seminar should consider. The purpose of these questions is not to present the readings but to help create a structure for discussion.

In addition to completing the assigned readings in time for each class, you will be required to write three short essays during the semester. For each essay, you will analyze aspects of the course readings in response to a choice of questions or topics I will hand out. The first two papers should be 6-8 pages; the third 8-10.

**READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

(All books are on reserve at Bobst, and many are in the IFS library as well)

The following books can be purchased at the NYU Bookstore (*denotes translation from the French. Those who can read the originals are encouraged to do so):  
Albert Soboul, *A Short History of the French Revolution* (California, 1989)*  
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery* (Johns Hopkins, Sept. 2003)*  

**Weekly Topics and Assignments**

**Week 1 (Sept 4) Introduction**

Jeremy Popkin, *History of Modern France*, chs. 1-4

**1. THE OLD REGIME AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**
Week 2 (Sept. 11) The Cultural Origins of The French Revolution
Roger Chartier, *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, chs. 1,2,4,5,7,8
Keith Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution*, chs. 1,2,8,9

Week 3 (Sept. 18) Origins of the French Revolution: The Classic Synthesis of Georges Lefebvre
Jeremy Popkin, *History of Modern France*, chs. 5-7
Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution*

Week 4 (Sept. 25) The French Revolution: Revisionism and its Discontents
Popkin, chs. 8-9
Albert Soboul, *A Short History of the French Revolution*
François Furet, “The Revolutionary Catechism” in *Interpreting the French Revolution*

Week 5 (Oct. 2) Furet’s Revolution

II. THE LEGACY OF REVOLUTION
Week 6 (Oct. 9) Napoleon and His Legacy
Popkin, ch. 10

First paper due
Week 7 (Oct. 16) The Restoration and July Monarchy: Gender and Class
Popkin, ch. 11-12
William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France*, chs. 7-10
Susan Grogan, “Playing the Princess:” Flora Tristan, Performance, and Female Moral Authority during the July Monarchy,” in Jo Burr Margadant, ed., *The New Biography*

Week 8 (Oct. 23) The French Conquest of Algeria
Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery*

Week 9 (Oct. 30) The Revolution of 1848
Popkin, ch. 14
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Recollections*, Parts I and II
Joan Wallach Scott, “The Duties of the Citizen: Jeanne Deroin in the Revolution of 1848” in *Only Paradoxes to Offer*, ch. 3

Week 10 (Nov. 6) France: 60 Years of Revolution
Popkin, ch. 13, 15
Second Paper Due

III. THE EMERGENCE OF A MODERN FRANCE?
Week 11 (Nov. 13) Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century
Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire, a Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism

Week 12 (Nov. 20) The Second Empire and its Opponents
Popkin, ch. 16
Rupert Christianson, *Paris Babylon*, ch. 3

Week 13 (Nov. 27) No Class
Week 14 (Dec. 4) Industrialism and the World of Labor
Popkin, ch. 17
Zola, *L’Assommoir*
Week 15 (Dec. 11) *The New Colonialism*
Jules Ferry, “On Imperialism”
Robert Aldrich, *Greater France*, chs. 1-5
**Final Paper Due: Monday, December 15**