

## Hilary Term Special Subject Options for Senior Fresh



Léonard Defrance, *Women Drinking Coffee* (1763), Musée d'Ansembourg, Liège.

**HIU22031 Coffee: Colonization, Consumption and Culture in the Long 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Co-ordinator** Joseph Clarke

**Credits** 10 ECTS

**Semester** Hilary Term

**Assessment** A primary source commentary (40%), and a 2,000-2,500 word end-of-term essay (60%)

**Module Description:** In February 1793, riots erupted in Paris in response to the rising price of coffee. From an exotic luxury available only to a wealthy elite a century before, coffee had become an everyday necessity, something ordinary men and women felt was worth rioting about. This module explores themes of colonialization, consumption and cultural change through the entangled history of coffee in the long eighteenth century. From the opening of the first coffee house in Venice in 1645 to this commodity becoming an indispensable element of the urban worker's breakfast in towns and cities throughout Europe by the end of the eighteenth century, coffee – and the sugar that went with it – transformed Europe's relationship with the world and Europeans' relationships with one another. As a consumer good, coffee generated new social spaces, fostered new codes of conduct, and fuelled new kinds of conversation; it inspired political unease, prompted philosophical debate, and created new kinds of material culture. However, if coffee energized the Enlightenment, its production was also predicated upon the exploitation of millions of Africans in a brutal trade that connected European consumers, enslaved African workers and colonial authorities across the Atlantic world. By exploring coffee's place in both the eighteenth century's 'consumer revolution' and its colonial project, this module investigates the complex relationship between socio-economic change and the coming of cultural and political modernity.