

OSTROM WORKSHOP COLLOQUIUM SERIES

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IU Bloomington

“A Voice of Moderation in the Age of
Revolutions: Jacques Necker’s Reflections
on Executive Power in Modern Society”

Monday, March 19, 2018

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park



When Auguste de Staël edited Jacques Necker’s complete works in fifteen volumes in 1821, the public was surprised to discover how prolific the former minister of Louis XVI had been. For Necker, the wealthy banker originally from Geneva, was the author not only of a monumental two-volume history of the French Revolution (*De la Révolution française*, 1796), but also of one of the most important books ever written on the role of the executive power in modern society (*Du Pouvoir exécutif dans les grands états*, 1792) as well as two important books on religion and politics, *De l’importance des opinions religieuses* (1788) and *Cours de morale religieuse* (1800). In *Du Pouvoir exécutif dans les grands états*, Necker restated the fundamental principles of his political moderation and made a strong case for an energetic and limited executive power. He challenged the Rousseauian view according to which the supreme power in a state is the legislative power as an expression of the general will of the people. By rereading this book today, we are invited to explore the complexity of the executive power and its key role within a constitutional framework.



Aurelian Craiutu is professor of political science at IU. His research interests include French political and social thought, political ideologies, as well as theories of transition to democracy and democratic consolidation (mostly Central and Eastern Europe). His two most recent books are *Faces of Moderation: The Art of Balance in an Age of Extremes* (Penn Press, 2016) and *A Virtue for Courageous Minds* (Princeton University Press, 2012) ([website](#)).

Presentations are open to the public and are live streamed (see our website for URL and papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon (sturgeon@iu.edu; 812/855–3151).