THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

History 73101: Autumn 2002
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W 1:30-4:20

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SEMINAR

EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN ORDER(S)

This is a two-quarter seminar designed to introduce beginning and advanced graduate students to the early modern European background behind the principles of order that governed the European and American worlds from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, but are now giving way under the impact of changes that are both obvious and poorly understood. We mean principles such as certain familiar distinctions (e.g., public/private, state/church, political/social, legal/moral, past/present, nature/culture) and fundamental concepts (e.g., sovereignty, democracy, nation, liberty, progress, science, conscience, rights ... the list is easy to extend).

The reading is European in scope, rather than focusing on one particular country. Authors as different from each other in historical temperament, method, and national focus as Giovanni Levi, Fernand Braudel, Norbert Elias, and Ernest Gellner appear on the reading list. France, England, Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Netherlands, the Germanies and so on are all fair game. So are social, legal, political, intellectual, religious, and other areas of historical inquiry. The point is simply to explore the reality of order and disorder in different spheres and from different points of view in order to clarify how Europeans organized and comprehended the world around them in the early modern period.

The seminar is at once thematic and historical. It is designed to distinguish what is typical from what is unique about order in the modern world; what is modern from what is owed to traditions of long standing; and what may be expected to be easy to change from what will most likely prove enduring. Though we shall naturally have to focus on particular books and specific issues, we have singled out works with a broad perspective, a distinctive approach, and a clear thesis. We have done so in a conscious attempt to encourage reflection upon the subject as a whole, respecting neither geographical boundaries nor chronological divisions nor even distinctions such as those between legal, political, and social. All such preconceptions are only too likely to beg the basic question: what was order like before it came to be understood along the lines of such distinctions?

The first quarter of the seminar will serve two different, but concurrent and equally important purposes. First, it will introduce you to the fundamental issues and the basic tools of research in this field of inquiry. Second, it will furnish you with the opportunity and the challenge to develop a research topic of your own design. For this purpose you will have to start thinking about a topic early on in the seminar, identify possible leads in the
sources and the secondary literature, pursue those leads in the library, and report regularly (orally as well as in writing) to the instructors on your on-going research. In order for us to be able to assist and supervise you at every stage of this process, you will be expected to keep in close contact with us. That will be the most effective way for you to develop a topic that will be not only of interest to you, but also clearly delimited, meaningfully related to the current state of the scholarship, and above all else manageable for you in the time allowed. In order to engage the whole class in this process, you will be asked to present an outline of your research plans in the fifth week of the quarter, and to submit a written research proposal for general discussion in the ninth and tenth weeks.

The second quarter of the seminar will allow you to turn the research you started in the first quarter into a successful seminar essay. We will continue to meet on an ad-hoc basis in order to discuss the progress of your research and writing.

The following books have been placed on reserve in Regenstein Library and ordered at the Seminary Co-op (5757 University Ave.):


**Schedule of readings**

**First week:**
- Introductory

**Second week:**

**Third week:**

**Fourth week:**

**Fifth week:** **one page outline of your research proposal is due**

**Sixth week:**

**Seventh week:**

**Eighth week:**

**Ninth week:** **presentation and discussion of research proposals**

Tenth week: presentation and discussion of research proposals (ctd.)

Requirements
Students taking this course as a two-quarter seminar will be expected to:
- complete the assigned readings
- submit a brief (1-2 pages) statement on the readings for a given week by 5 pm on Tuesday of that week
- participate actively in class discussions
- report in class on their progress in researching and writing a seminar paper
- submit a one-page outline of a research proposal by fifth week and a research paper proposal for discussion in class by ninth week
- meet regularly in the winter quarter to report orally and in writing on the progress of their research
- submit a draft of their seminar paper for discussion by the class during the winter quarter
- submit a final version of their seminar paper by the departmental deadline

Students who do not need to fulfill a two-quarter seminar requirement may register for the first quarter of the course without taking the second quarter, unless registration exceeds a total of fifteen. Students who wish to take only the first quarter for letter credit will be expected to do the same work as students taking the full seminar, except that they will write a paper of about 15-20 pages length in lieu of a full-length seminar paper (or Master's Thesis). Students who wish to take only the first quarter for R credit will be expected to do the same work as students taking the full seminar, except that they will write no paper.

Deadlines
One-page outline of research proposal is due fifth week
Full draft of research proposal is due ninth week
Paper of students taking the first quarter only (for letter credit) is due tenth week

Reserve readings:
In addition to the required readings, the following items have also been placed on reserve in Regenstein Library. We considered each of them for inclusion on the list of required readings, and we would have included all of them if the quarter were a little longer. If you have time to read any of them, please do. If not, keep them in mind for future reference. They deserve to have a place in your historiographical repertoire.

Books whose importance is chiefly as works of reference and orientation have been marked with an asterisk.

Gilmore, Myron P. Argument from Roman Law in Political Thought, 1200-1600. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941).
Kirshner, Julius, ed. The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

June 2, 2003
