

# THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

HIST 75001 & 75002

Cross-listings: HIST 55001; SCTH 55001; SCTH 75001; HCHR 46500; HCHR 53200

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Tu 3:00-5:50

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## SEMINAR

### CHRISTIAN POLITICS IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

"But as for my enemies, who deny my sovereignty, bring them here and slay them before me." Gospel of Luke, 19.27

## SYLLABUS

Is there such a thing as a Christian politics, or does all politics in this world take place—as Augustine put it—under the sign of Cain? If there is a this-worldly Christian politics, what should it look like? What are its ends? Where are its borders? Who is sovereign within those borders, and what are the limits of that sovereignty? These and similar questions were asked by the earliest Christian communities and continue to be asked today. This course will focus on how they were answered in the five hundred years stretching from the Investiture Controversy and the emergence of “Christendom” in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, continuing with the re-introduction of Aristotelian political theory in Latin Europe, and concluding with Luther and Calvin’s reformation of the Christian polity in the sixteenth century.

The course is designed as a two-quarter graduate seminar. It is meant to prepare graduate students for original research in medieval and early modern political thought, and to guide them in carrying out a significant piece of such original research. Students who do not intend to write a seminar paper are welcome to take only the first quarter as a graduate colloquium.

In the first quarter, we are going to concentrate on two things: reading paradigmatic primary sources, and helping you develop a topic for the research paper you are going to write in the winter quarter (unless you are taking this course as a one-quarter colloquium). Early on in

the fall quarter, you should identify possible leads in the sources and the secondary literature and report regularly to the seminar (orally and in writing) on your on-going library 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 and to meet the deadlines for the submission of drafts and research proposals. 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 and with the resources available.

The second quarter of the seminar is meant to give you the opportunity to turn the research you started in the first quarter into a seminar paper that will satisfy the standards of professional historical scholarship. We will continue to meet on an ad-hoc basis in order to discuss the progress of your research and writing.

### *Requirements for students taking the seminar*

If you are taking this course as a **two-quarter seminar**, you will be expected to:

1. Complete the assigned readings
2. Send us via email a brief (1-2 pages) statement on the readings for a given week by 5pm on the Monday of that week for dissemination to the rest of the class
3. Participate in class discussions
4. Consult with us in and out of class about an appropriate topic of research for your seminar paper
5. Report in class on your progress in researching and writing the seminar paper
6. Send us via email a written draft of a paper proposal on Wednesday of seventh week for dissemination to the class and discussion in eighth week
7. Meet at a separately scheduled time in eighth week in order to discuss everyone's research paper proposals
8. Submit a revised draft of the paper proposal on Wednesday of tenth week
9. Meet as scheduled by arrangement in the winter quarter to report orally and in writing on the progress of your research
10. Submit a draft of your seminar paper on Monday of sixth week in the winter quarter for discussion by all members of the seminar in seventh and eighth weeks
11. Submit a revised draft of your seminar paper on Monday of tenth week for a final reading before submission
12. Submit the final version of your seminar paper to the Department of History no later than the deadline that will be announced by the Department

The most important requirement for the first quarter is the formulation and submission of a research paper proposal. This, and the paper you will go on to research and write, will determine your success in this seminar.

In order to make sure that you get started early, we have set the deadline for a first draft of a paper proposal for the seventh week of Fall quarter. We do not expect a finished product at this point. The purpose of scheduling the proposal so early is to give you an opportunity to try out your ideas and to leave you with sufficient time to modify your proposal in the course

of your research. Modifications are a natural by-product of research. You may even have to change course completely and start on an altogether different subject, but that is undesirable. We will therefore do our best to stop you from taking any approach on which you run the risk of such an outcome.

We do expect a first draft that will identify, however roughly, the subject on which you plan to do your research, place that subject in an appropriate intellectual context, and offer a preliminary bibliography. You will need not only to describe what the subject of your research is, but also to address the reasons why you have focused on it, what is already known about it, and what you intend to find out about it yourself. You must include a brief review of the existing secondary literature, as far as you understand it at this point, and a basic bibliography divided into the primary and secondary sources with which you plan to deal.

We will post your proposal on the web, so as to make it available to all members of the seminar, and schedule a separate meeting in eighth week at which we are going to discuss each proposal and offer constructive criticism.

### *Deadlines for the seminar*

- Your short statement on the readings assigned for the week is due via email by 5 pm on Monday of each week, starting Monday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week
- The written draft of your paper proposal is due by 5 pm on Wednesday of 7<sup>th</sup> week
- Discussion of paper proposals will take place at a special meeting in 8<sup>th</sup> week
- The revised draft of your paper proposal is due by 5 pm on Wednesday of 10<sup>th</sup> week
- The paper of students taking only the first quarter, for letter credit, is due by 5 pm on Monday of 11<sup>th</sup> week
- The first draft of your seminar paper is due by 5 pm on Monday of 6<sup>th</sup> week in the winter quarter
- The revised draft of your seminar paper is due by 5 pm on Monday of 10<sup>th</sup> week in the winter quarter
- The final version of your seminar paper is due in the office of the Department of History before the deadline that will be announced by the Department

### *Requirements for students taking the colloquium*

If you do not want to take this course as a full two-quarter seminar, you may take the first quarter of the course as a **one-quarter colloquium** (HIST 55001).

If you want to take the colloquium for **letter credit**, you will be expected to:

1. Complete the assigned readings
2. Send us via email a brief (1-2 pages) statement on the readings for a given week by 5pm on the Monday of that week for dissemination to the rest of the class
3. Participate in class discussions
4. Write a paper of anywhere from 10-20 pages. The paper is be due by 5 pm on Wednesday of eleventh week.

If you only want **R credit**, you need not write a paper.

### *Deadlines for the colloquium*

- Your short statement on the readings assigned for the week is due via email by 5 pm on Monday of each week, starting Monday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week
- The paper for students taking the course for letter credit is due by 5 pm on Wednesday of 11<sup>th</sup> week

### *Readings*

The readings consist of a mixture of primary and secondary literature, but with emphasis on the primary. They comprise different genres of writing. They deal with theology, with society, with law, and with politics. They do not agree with one another. And for every text that we've assigned, we could have chosen from hundreds of others. There is therefore a lot that has been left out in terms of coverage. These omissions result from a mixture of our special interests with purely pedagogical concerns. They should not deter you from exploring other subjects in your own research.

We have assigned too much for you to read everything with equal attention. We will therefore point you to sections we consider particularly telling. If you read those, you've read the minimum. Skim the rest. But pay special attention to tables of contents (because they are both the summary of a book and an indication of its structure); to prefaces, introductions, and conclusions (because that's where writers tend to make their most revealing statements); and to footnotes and bibliographies (because that's where you learn whom writers like and trust, and whom they don't believe). Take notes and come to class prepared to discuss the readings with your peers.

In case that we are wrong and you would like to read more than we have assigned, we will be glad to point you at further readings.

If you feel the need to get an overview of the history of medieval and early modern European political thought, we recommend the following:

- Robert Warrand Carlyle and Alexander James Carlyle, *A History of Mediaeval Political Theory in the West*, 6 vols. (Edinburgh - London: Blackwood, 1903-36) – dated, but never surpassed
- Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1964; rpt. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) – a concise and well-informed selection of primary documents in translation from a great variety of legal, theological, and philosophical sources from antiquity to the late middle ages and Tierney's pointed commentaries make this one of the best introductions to medieval thinking about the relationship of earthly power to heavenly power
- Janet Coleman, *A History of Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) – an unusually intelligent and straightforward survey of major figures from antiquity to the Renaissance in the grand manner of the history of ideas,

suitably leavened with insights into social and historical context and brief accounts of lesser figures

Joseph Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought, 300-1450* (London - New York: Routledge, 1996) – a concise narrative history of the whole sweep of medieval political thought by one of Walter Ullmann's students

Antony Black, *Political Thought in Europe, 1250-1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) – a concise topical history of medieval political thought at the height of the middle ages by another of Walter Ullmann's students

Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) – easily the most successful survey of late medieval and early modern political thought available, but almost entirely devoid of real attention to the significance of the impact medieval religion and ecclesiastical institutions had on the European understanding of politics

John William Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1928) – just as dated as the survey by the Carlyle brothers, but also never surpassed

James Henderson Burns, ed., *Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350 - c. 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) – more of a handbook than a survey, but filled with excellent chapters on discrete topics by leading scholars in the field, and amplified with useful pointers to the literature

James Henderson Burns and Mark Goldie, eds., *Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) – same format as the preceding volume

### *Weekly written statements*

In order to lay a good foundation for discussions in class, we expect you to prepare a brief written statement—no longer than two pages, double-spaced—on the readings for each week. You may write about whatever you found interesting in the readings, whatever attracted your attention, or indeed, about what did not. Your statement should be posted in the discussion thread on Chalk by 5 pm on Monday. We expect everybody to read everybody else's statement before we meet. In order to make posting on the web as uncomplicated as possible, write your statement as a .doc file attached to your message with as little formatting as possible. The first line should contain your name. The second line should identify the readings to which your comments apply. And then post it on that week's discussion thread. (We'll review how to do this at the first meeting.)

### *The paper proposal*

The first version of your paper proposal should be simply this: a proposal for the paper that you would like to write. There is no specific limitation on its length. But there are some crucial requirements regarding its substance.

At the most general level, a good paper proposal will have three main features.

1. It will raise a question that is interesting—first and foremost interesting to yourself, but also to others, especially to other historians in the field.

2. The question that it raises will not have been answered before, and will perhaps not even have been posed before.
3. The question that it raises will be possible to answer with the means you have at your disposal.

Let us elaborate on each of these main features. First of all, you really need to be interested in whatever question you propose to research, or whatever problem you propose to solve. Otherwise, you will get bored, your energy will flag, and the result will be lifeless or incomplete. Finding an interesting question is especially important for a major project, such as a dissertation or a book, which may keep you preoccupied for several years. But it is equally true of a seminar paper.

At the same time the question should not merely be your private hobby. It should be of interest to other people, and especially to other historians in the field, because these are the people who make up the profession and whose judgment of your work will have a huge impact on your career.

That leads directly to the second main feature. In order to be interesting, the question you raise must promise to change what we already know. It must therefore fit into the current state of knowledge and reflect the current problematic. The best kind of question is one that has never occurred to anyone before, but that fits directly into an issue in which everyone is interested. For example, everyone studying the history of the Reformation is interested in understanding what brought it about. But until Bernd Moeller wrote a famous article about the role of cities in the Reformation, nobody had ever quite asked the question that it occurred to him to ask first: why did the Reformation spread so rapidly in the cities in the southwest of the Holy Roman Empire?

Put differently, in order to formulate an interesting question, it is not enough merely to be curious. Your curiosity must be informed. You need to know what other historians have already figured out, and you need to know what they are currently interested in. Otherwise you run the risk of raising a question that has already been answered or one that interests no one—and it is difficult to say which of the alternatives is worse.

Third, the most interesting question imaginable is a waste of time unless it can be answered. Whether or not it can be answered depends on two factors: the materials available to you and your ability to master those materials in the available time. It might be interesting to know what went through the mind of Jan Hus as he was being burned at the Council of Constance. But we'll never know, because he died before he could tell anyone or write it down. It would be interesting to know what caused the expansion of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But that's too big a question to figure out a new answer in a two-quarter seminar. It would be interesting to know how the manuscripts of Bartolus' commentaries on Roman law differ from the published edition, but unless you know Latin paleography, and know where the manuscripts are, and can go where they are, and have the time to read them, you won't be able to answer that question.

Lack of material that is both accessible and manageable is one of the most common pitfalls in which students get trapped when they forget that an interesting question is not to be confused with an answerable question. One of your main priorities should therefore be to formulate a question that is not merely interesting, but also answerable. Cover the ground. Make sure you know what materials there are with which you could answer your question, make sure that you can get your hands on them, and make sure that you have what it takes to read them in terms of time and skill.

You might even consider going all the way to the opposite extreme: don't start with an interesting question, and figure out afterwards whether it's possible to answer with the materials available. Start with the material that's available and figure out if it's possible to ask an interesting question about it. The biggest danger here is not that you won't be able to answer the question you have posed, but that the question will be trivial.

So there's a tradeoff to be made. If you start with an interesting question, you run the risk of winding up with nothing at all because you cannot find the material you would need to answer the question. In that case, you'll have to backtrack, ask a new question or reformulate your old question, and look for different material. If you start with the available material, you run the risk of winding up with a boring paper, because you could not think of an interesting question. In that case you won't be forced to backtrack, because you have something you can turn in. But you'll be disappointed that it doesn't amount to anything exciting. The ideal lies somewhere between these two equally unpleasant opposites.

These general considerations translate directly into the requirements for your paper proposal. Your paper proposal must include:

- A title
- A general description of the topic in which you are interested
- The particular question(s) that you would like to answer through your research
- An explanation of the reasons why this is the question you would like to answer
- An account of what you intend to do in order to find the answer
- A tentative formulation of the answer you hope to find
- An account of what other historians have already contributed to answering the question you have posed and of the reasons why they have not yet answered it
- An explanation of the difference the results of your research will make to what we already know about the past
- A list of the primary sources and the secondary literature by means of which you intend to answer the question you have posed

Your paper proposal must address each of these points, though not necessarily in this order. The length at which you will be able to address them, and the confidence with which you can do so, will naturally depend on how much you already know. Don't let that worry you—and especially don't let it discourage you from tackling an ambitious project. Writing a seminar paper is a process that needs to go through a series of stages. If you are engaged in original research, by definition you start without knowing where you will wind up. If you knew where you are going, you would not need to do the research in the first place. The

reason you need to do the research is precisely in order to find out where you will wind up. You won't know where that is until after you have arrived there. Not knowing where you will wind up is obviously a source of potentially great anxiety. But it is also completely normal. Indeed, it is more than normal. It is necessary. It is the coin in which you pay for the originality of your research.

What matters, therefore, is not that you start fully confident of being on the right track. It may well turn out that you are not. You may run into a dead end and have to turn back. You may have to try a different tack. You may discover that the question you are trying to answer is impossible to answer. You will doubtless gather a great deal of material that you will never be able to use, because it is boring, besides the point, or otherwise recalcitrant. Do not regard any of that as a failure. So far from being a failure, that is precisely what must happen in order for you to make real progress. You cannot tell a dead end from a promising road forward until you have actually gone there. Sometimes the fear of running into a dead end can keep researchers from exploring what will turn out to have been a tremendous missed opportunity, just as soon as some intrepid soul decides to give it a try. What makes the difference between a gifted researcher and an ordinary one is not the confidence they have in the hypothesis with which they start out, but in the courage and the ingenuity with which they try to nail it down until they are forced to change course.

There is only one thing that really matters, namely, that you take no shortcuts. So long as you focus on meeting the requirements for the proposal that we have listed above, you will do well. These requirements, simple as they may seem, frame the substance of research. They can be refined in many ways. But none of them can be left out. If you treat each of them as thoroughly as you can, and keep thinking about them in a sustained and methodical way, your initial, tentative, preliminary paper proposal will gradually turn into a long and substantial piece of original research. That will be your seminar paper.

### *Schedule of readings and assignments*

**1st week:** Introduction: What is "Christian Politics"?

**2nd week:** Gospel of Matthew; Letter of Paul to the Galatians; Letter of Paul to the Romans, 13:1-14

Eusebius, *Oration in Praise of the Emperor Constantine* in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Second Series*, vol. 1 (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1890), 581-610 (also at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iv.viii.i.html>)

Henry Chadwick, "Christian Doctrine," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350-c. 1450*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 11-20

A. J. Carlyle, "The Political Theory of Cicero," "The Political Theory of Seneca," "The Political Theory of the Roman Lawyers," and "The Political Theory of the New Testament and the Fathers," in *A History of Political Theory from the Roman Lawyers of the Second Century to the Political Writers of the Ninth*, by A. J. Carlyle, (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1903), 1-193 (available on Chalk)

**3rd week:** Ambrose, letters 40 and 41 on the burning of the synagogue at Callinicum, and letter 51 after the massacre at Thessalonika, in *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and*



- Speeches*, ed. and trans. J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz (Liverpool England: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 95-123, 262-69 (in an older translation at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.v.html>)
- Augustine, Letters 133, 134, 138, 139 to Marcellinus and Apringius; Letters 185, 189, 220 to Boniface, in *Political Writings*, ed. and trans. E.M. Atkins and R.J. Dodaro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) (most of these are also available in an older translation at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf101>)
- Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichean*, book 22, chapters 74-79 (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf104.iv.ix.xxiv.html>)
- Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), preface, book 2, chap. 21; book 4, chap. 4; all of book 19 (in an older translation at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.iv.html>)
- Pope Gelasius, Letter to Emperor Anastasius (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gelasius1.html>)

- 4th week:** Gerd Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society at the Time of the Investiture Controversy*, trans. Ralph F. Bennett (London: Basil Blackwell & Mott, 1959), introduction, chapters 1-3, 5 (available on ACLS Humanities E-Books at <http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://www.humanitiesebook.org/>)
- Tomaz Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), chapters 1-3
- Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion: Cluny and Christendom Face Heresy, Judaism, and Islam, 1000-1150* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), chapters 1-4, 8-9, 12
- The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII: Selected Letters from the Registrum*, trans. Ephraim Emerton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 6-8, 22-23, 25-26, 39-42, 48-49, 56-58, 86-91, 100-105, 111-113, 123-125, 138-139, 149-152, 154-156, 158-160, 163-164, 166-175 (available in ACLS Humanities E-Books at <http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://www.humanitiesebook.org/>)
- Gregory VII, *Dictatus Papae* (<http://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/inv11.asp>)

- 5th week:** John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, ed. and trans. Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990)

- 6th week:** Thomas Aquinas, selections from *Summa contra Gentiles*, *On Kingship*, and *Summa Theologiae* in *On Politics and Ethics: A New Translation, Backgrounds, Interpretations*, ed. and trans. Paul E. Sigmund (New York: Norton, 1988), 3-83

#### Recommended:

- John Quidort of Paris, *On Royal and Papal Power*, trans. Arthur P. Monahan, Records of civilization, sources and studies no. 90 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), Prologue and chapters 1-9, 12-13, 22 (available at <http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://www.humanitiesebook.org/> in ACLS Humanities E-Books)

R. W. Dyson, *Giles of Rome's On Ecclesiastical Power: A Medieval Theory of World Government. A critical edition and translation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), Part 1, chapters 1-4; Part 2, chapters 7, 10-11

**7th week:** Dante Alighieri, *Monarchy*, ed. and trans. Prue Shaw (Cambridge - New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

**8th week:** William of Ockham, *A Short Discourse on the Tyrannical Government Over Things Divine and Human, but Especially Over the Empire and Those Subject to the Empire Usurped by Some Who Are Called Highest Pontiffs*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, trans. John Kilcullen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

**9th week:** *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, ed. and trans. Harro Höpfl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Martin Luther, *An Appeal to the Ruling Class of German Nationality as to the Amelioration of the State of Christendom*, in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Doubleday, 1961), 403-85

**10th week:** Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1994), Letter Dedicatory, Introduction, chapters 6, 12, 13, 14, 17, 32, 35, 39, 42, 43, 44, 46, A Review and Conclusion