

Religious Studies 140
Political Theology: Sovereignty, the Reformation and the State.

Tuesdays, 3-5.50pm
HSSB 3041

Instructors: Roger Friedland, Stefania Tutino
Office hours: Tuesdays, 10 am-noon (Tutino)
Tuesdays, 8-9:30 a.m. (Friedland)

This seminar explores the intertwining between political theory and theology in different registers -- religious, historical and theoretical. In the wake of the French revolution, which was fought in the name of *liberté* and the French nation in opposition to the Church, and secularization theory, which suggests that political modernity involves the progressive distancing of the nation-state from religious legitimacy and authority, we have tended to assume that political theory is and should be a domain constructed without regard to religion. The seminar will begin by examining the relationship between Protestantism and the rise of the early modern state, so as to situate our theoretical horizon within a historically specific context. Then we will do a close reading of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, which is a pivotal text for framing and understanding of the theological dimension of politics. Finally, we will read Carl Schmitt's work on Thomas Hobbes's book, and through Schmitt explore the political and theoretical implications of Hobbes' -- and Schmitt's -- notions of political theology and sovereignty in the history of Western thought. We will also discuss the relevance of these notions for our understanding of political modernity.

Course Requirements: This seminar is based on the discussion and debate on the readings, thus students are required to participate actively and engage in the intellectual debates. Students should come to class prepared, that is, having done the reading in advance. In addition, every week one or two students will be the leaders of the discussion, which means that they will be in charge of selecting the key themes and problems that they see as relevant in the text/s assigned for the week, and of leading the class discussion. Moreover, each student is responsible for preparing a question on each week's reading. The question, and its analytic basis, should be typed and enough copies brought in for each member of the seminar. We will devote part of our discussion to examine the questions.

Grading scheme: Participation in the general discussion: 40%, weekly written questions: 20%, performance as discussion-leaders: 40%

Because this class is based on active and engaged participation on the part of the students, every student is allowed only ONE absence (this should be well justified and documented). Any absence aside from that one will result in one full grade-reduction.

Three books, which are available for purchase at the UCSB Bookstore and which have been put on reserve at the UCSB Library:

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Cambridge University Press 1996. There are, of course, many available editions of *Leviathan*, but we suggest this one because it is enriched by clear and informative notes, and it contains a very useful introduction. If students wish to use another edition, they should first consult the instructors for approval.

Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, University of Chicago Press 2008.

Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe*, University Of Chicago Press, 2003.

The items marked with ‘*’ will be distributed by the instructors in class.

Suggested reading: We assume that students taking this class are relatively familiar with the Reformation and, in general, the basic historical background on sixteenth and seventeenth-century Europe. If this is not the case, we STRONGLY encourage students to refresh their knowledge. They can do so in several manners: they could go back to the textbook they used for courses such as History 4B, or Religious Studies 80B, or they could peruse any good introduction to the Reformation, such as, for example, Patrick Collinson’s *The Reformation*, or James D.Tracy’s *Europe’s Reformations*. Textbooks for History 4B and/or Religious Studies 80B, as well as the introductions mentioned above, are easy to find in the library (there are usually multiple copies of different textbooks), so that students should have no problems finding what they need. Should students have any specific question or doubt, they should not hesitate to consult with one of the instructors.

Class Schedule:

September 29: Introduction to the course, and organizations of the weekly seminars

October 6: G.R.Eton, Introduction to *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Reformation**, and Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe*, University Of Chicago Press, 2003.

October 13: Gorski, continued.

October 20: Philip S. Gorski, “The Mosaic Moment: An Earl Modernist Critique of Modernist Nationalism,” *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 105, No. 5, March, 2000, pp. 1428-1468.*

October 27: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part I

November 3: Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, part II

November 10: Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, part III

November 17: Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Part IV

November 24: Carl Schmitt, The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes

December 1: Conclusions and final discussion