GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2011
Instructor: Ulrich Lehner
Course #: THEO 8433
Course Title: Theology of the Enlightenment and 19th Century

Content:

Since Peter Gay’s “The Enlightenment” (1969) the interpretation of the 18th century has changed dramatically. Today the Enlightenment is no longer regarded as a movement that was against the faith; instead the existence of religious and theological Enlightenments is now established. However, all textbooks on the history of theology still reiterate the old ‘myths’ about the anti-religious Enlightenment and the importance of Voltaire. Therefore, this course will be an exciting introduction to the religious Enlightenment which receives enormous attention by historians but undeserved little attention by theologians. Since the research of Jonathan Israel has shown that Spinoza is by far the most influential thinker of the Enlightenment until Immanuel Kant we will begin our journey with his TREATISE to see the long-term trajectories of his thought over the centuries. After all, his main ideas continue to shape theological thought until today (e.g. in exegesis). We will then spend considerable time on the 18th century, e.g. how Jesuits attempted (similar to the Marechal-school in the 20th c.) to merge Locke, Newton and Aquinas into a new system of theology, how Muratori anticipated the liturgical renewal of the 1960s, how the Berlin Jew Moses Mendelssohn reflected on a new radical ecclesiology and religious liberty, and how in the 19th c. the former mason Joseph de Maistre developed the “Bible of Ultramontanism.” Possibly we will also look at religious art. Authors that will be read are among others Muratori, Moses Mendelssohn, de Maistre, Lamennais, Alphonsus of Liguori, Immanuel Kant. In support of the Marquette Scripture Project a special emphasis of the course will be on the history of exegesis.

Format:

seminar

Assignments and/or Examinations:

- tba

Language Pre-requisites:

- none (foreign languages will be used according to individual abilities in assignments)