## 1st term

### COURSE TITLE
Early Modern History.

**History and Theories of State and Forms of Government (17th-18th century)**

### Scientific area
Early Modern History

### Department of Historical Studies

### Language used to teach
Italian, French, English

### Teaching Commitment: 36 hours

### Course summary
This course aims at presenting how legal concepts are wholly intertwined and interlocked in historical discourse and context. This is especially true when historians describe the way the constitutional forms of government are settled. They need then to use legal concepts such as constitution, representation, sovereignty, government, State, which had been elaborating over the shaping of the Modern State between the mid-sixteenth and the end of the eighteenth century. While we could think these words belong to common language, their meaning has been shaped after many discourses and argumentation so that it is very useful to complete the historical knowledge with legal knowledge. Such an interdisciplinary approach allow to follow the process of metamorphosis of words and concepts as well to understand what people in the past meant by legal concepts they used and what these concepts meant for them. Such a knowledge needs not to be dogmatic nor to replicate the content of legal norms, but to highlight contexts and contingent circumstances which made the elaboration of legal concepts a central issue in the shaping of modern politics. On the contrary, it is a theoretical approach which is relevant. One which can bridge the gap between history and law. A particular attention is paid to the shaping of the modern concept of political representation and its relationship with democracy between the collapse of the Old regime and the French Revolution, as a case study for a better comprehension of this methodological approach.

### Learning objectives
The learning objectives are both methodological and epistemological.

The latter is to make students understand how interdisciplinary approach of historical topics can highly serve the debate in social sciences. Because there is no Archimedean point of view, it should be necessary to cross over different way of telling the story.

The former is to display questions that are common to both history and law: under what conditions can we describe such a form of government as it has been changed? Under what conditions can we use such a linguistic category to describe such a practice? How should we trust the historical actors’ discourse? Shall we consider they are making interpretations of their own decisions? How free are they to determine themselves from conceptual and discursive environment in which they operate?
**Tuto Tutorship activities**
Office hours will be scheduled once a week to meet the students working on the small case-study papers on sixteenth-eighteenth century first hand material (legal documents, periodical press, pamphlets). Periodical meeting are planned to follow the work before the final evaluation. It will be based on the written paper and the discussion on it, in order to offer critical tools providing a reading of historical documents and a critical analysis of different contemporary political categories, in order to have a more precise understanding of the historical dimension of modernity. Students will be able to develop skills in analysing historical documents paying particular attention to the eighteenth-century legal and political lexicon. Students will develop interdisciplinary competence between history and law within a frame of intellectual history.

**Other activities besides the course: i.e. seminars and conferences addressed to PhD students and research fellows, dissemination conferences**

Two conferences could be given to the PhD students either in English, French or Italian on methodological topics as parts of activities of the group of research “Rappresentanza politica, partecipazione, cittadinanza” (Department of Historical Studies) and the GISI (Gruppo Interdisciplinare di Storia delle Idee).

**Visiting Professor Profile**
The candidate will have to be a renowned specialist of the History and Theory of State, in a wide interdisciplinary perspective. Knowledge of legal and historical subjects are required and particularly of the questions related to political representation. This point is considered as essential to the recruitment.
The candidate will have a large scientific production, in multiple languages: monographies and articles in international papers.

**Contact person at the Department**
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