HI2L3-15 Espionage and Intelligence in Premodern Europe

26/27

Department
History
Level
Undergraduate Level 2
Module leader
Penny Roberts
Credit value
15
Module duration
10 weeks
Assessment
100% coursework
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This second-year early modern option module will investigate the development of espionage and intelligence-gathering in various settings, geographicaly and chronologically, across pre-modern Europe

Module aims

It will explore how espionage was used and understood as well as its relationship with diplomacy and the development of communication and information-gathering more broadly from the ancient world to the Enlightenment. In particular, it will focus on the extensive historiography on spying in early modern Europe (c.1500-1800), which has primarily concentrated on Elizabethan England, comparing and contrasting this example with developments in other times and other places. It will interrogate the definition of espionage and consider its correlation with the activity of rulers and their ambassadors as well as other agents linked to military, religious and socio-economic or commercial considerations. It will make use of a rich variety of case studies and engage with the associated primary sources in order to bring these activities, and our understanding of them, to life.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

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1. What is a Spy?
2. Espionage and intelligence in the Ancient World and the Middle Ages
3. Espionage and diplomacy during the Renaissance
4. The Elizabethan paradigm of the Spymaster
5. Ambassadors, merchants and other agents
6. Religious and other considerations in information-gathering
7. Ottoman and other non-European networks
8. The material culture of espionage
9. Espionage and intelligence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
10. Conclusions: whither espionage?

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- -To develop enhanced research, writing and communication skills through essays and oral presentations in seminars
- To gain an understanding of the historical development of espionage and intelligence
- To be able to make effective comparison of the operation of secret networks in different historical periods and national contexts
- To critically engage with a variety of primary and secondary sources
- To demonstrate an enhanced knowledge of the political, religious and diplomatic history of the premodern period

Indicative reading list

Reading lists can be found in Talis

Research element

Writing of assessed essays based on primary and secondary sources

Interdisciplinary

Engages with work in social sciences especially intelligence studies

International

Covers a variety of Western European countries as well as case studies from the Ottoman and Byzantine empires

Subject specific skills

To gain an understanding of the historical development of espionage and intelligence
To be able to make effective comparison of the operation of secret networks in different historical periods and national contexts
To critically engage with a variety of primary and secondary sources
To demonstrate an enhanced knowledge of the political, religious and diplomatic history of the premodern period

Transferable skills

To develop enhanced research, writing and communication skills through essays and oral presentations in seminars

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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Tutorials	1 session of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	131 hours (87%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Reading and preparing presentations and writing essays

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Essay or equivalent / applied task	80%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Seminar contribution	20%		No
Reassessment component			
1000 word Reflective Essay in lieu of Seminar Contribution			Yes (extension)

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback through Tabula, oral feedback in tutorial.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 2 of UENA-VQ34 Undergraduate English and History (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History

This module is Option list F for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy