"When and how did we become modern? Many twentieth- and twenty-first century thinkers have identified an "age of reform," roughly 1350-1600, as the birthplace of modernity. Many of these accounts are declension narratives that locate the origins of modernity’s ills in late-medieval and Reformation-era intellectual developments.

This seminar will re-examine several influential declension narratives and explore alternative possibilities from within the relevant disciplines: philosophy, theology, art history, and literary studies, along with intellectual, social, and religious history. In addition to the faculty co-leaders, specialist faculty include Profs. Thomas Ward, Chris Hackett, and Chris Nygren.