The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Why did Christianity prevail? trends in the Study of The Christianization of the Roman Empire - 24600

Last update 31-08-2017

HU Credits: *2*

Degree/Cycle: *1st degree (Bachelor)*

Responsible Department: *comparative religion*

Academic year: *0*

Semester: *2nd Semester*

Teaching Languages: *Hebrew*

Campus: *Mt. Scopus*

Course/Module Coordinator: *Dr. Yonatan Moss*

Coordinator Email: *yonsmoss@gmail.com*

Coordinator Office Hours: *Mondays, 10:30-12:30*

Teaching Staff:
  Dr. Yonatan Moss

Course/Module description:
  This seminar will treat one of the biggest and most intriguing questions in the study of the ancient world. How and why did a marginal and persecuted Jewish sect become, within fewer than 300 years, the official religion of the Roman Empire? This question has occupied historians since the very beginning of Christian historiography, but it has resurfaced with new vigor in our generation with the rise of the term 'late antiquity' and the popularity that category enjoys in scholarship. We will trace the spectrum of answsers given to the big question about the Christianization of the empire, while emphasizing current trends in scholarship, and through the analysis of both the sources and the theoretical approaches upon which these answers are founded.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
  Reply to an age-old historical and sociological question with many different answers.

Attendance requirements(%):
  100 with exceptions coordinated with instructor

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

1) The Triumph or Defeat of Christianity?

Robert A. Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
J.C. Russell, The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity: A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
Gillian Clark, Christianity and Roman Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 93-117.

2) Models of Victory: The Eusebian Paradigm:
Eusebius, Church History, selections.
Eusebius, Life of Constantine, selections.

3) Models of Victory: The Contributions of Gibbon and Harnack:

Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, book 15.
Adolf Harnack, The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries (James Moffatt, trans. and ed.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1908), books 1 and 2.
Jan N. Bremmer, The Rise of Christianity through the Eyes of Gibbon, Harnack and Rodney Stark (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2010), 2-47.

4) Models of Victory: Popular vs. Intellectual:

Ramsay MacMullen, Christianizing the Roman Empire (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).
Idem, The Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200-400 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).
Jeremey Schott, Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

5) Models of Victory: The Psychological-Cultural Model:

E. R. Dodds, Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).
Kyle Harper, From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013).

6) Models of Victory: The Political Model:

Robert M. Grant, Augustus to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1970), 225-312.
Leif E. Vaage, ed., Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity (Studies in Christianity and Judaism 18; Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 3-19; 253-278.

7) Models of Victory: The Sociological-Demographic Model:

Rodney Stark, The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
Bremmer, The Rise of Christianity, 47-63.
Douglas Boin, Coming Out Christian in the Roman World: How the Followers of Jesus Made a Place in Caesar's Empire (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).

8) Models of Victory: The Media Model:

Doron Mendels, The Media Revolution of Early Christianity: An Essay on Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History (Grand Rapids, MI, 1999).
Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, Christianity and the Transformation of the Book:
Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

9) Models of Transformation: The Invention of Late Antiquity:

Peter Brown, Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianization of the Roman World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 3-26.
Idem, Through the Eye of the Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

10) Models of Transformation: The Discursive Model:

Averil Cameron, Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

Richard Lim, Public Disputation, Power and Social Order in Late Antiquity (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

11) Models of Transformation: The Gender Model:

Kate Cooper, The Woman and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).
OR: Kate Cooper, "Gender and the Fall of Rome," in Philip Rousseau, ed., Companion to Late Antiquity (London: Blackwell, 2009), 187-200.
Mathew Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

12) Models of Transformation: The Liturgical-Performative Model:

Richard Lim, "Christianization, Secularization, and the Transformation of Public Life," in Philip Rousseau, ed., Companion to Late Antiquity (London: Blackwell, 2009), 497-511.
Martin D. Stringer, "Worship and the Christianization of Public Space," in idem, A Sociological History of Christian Worship (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 58-88.

13) Summary:
Averil Cameron, "Christian Conversion in Late Antiquity: Some Issues," in Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond Papers from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, University of Oxford, 2009–2010 Edited by Arietta Papaconstantinou, with Neil McLynn, University of Oxford, UK and

Daniel L. Schwartz (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2015), 3-21.

<u>*Required Reading:*</u>
Exact (and more limited!) page numbers from the readings listed below will be announcted closer to the second semester.

1) The Triumph or Defeat of Christianity?

Robert A. Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
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 <u>*Additional Reading Material:*</u>

 <u>*Course/Module evaluation:*</u>
 End of year written/oral examination 0 %
 Presentation 15 %
 Participation in Tutorials 10 %
 Project work 60 %
 Assignments 0 %
 Reports 15 %
 Research project 0 %
 Quizzes 0 %
 Other 0 %

<u>*Additional information:*</u>
  During the semester a tour is planned of the Israel Museum.