Syllabus

Art Religion and Society in Late Antiquity - 5803

Last update 07-02-2016

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: history of art

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Rina Talgam

Coordinator Email: rina.talgam@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday, 14.15-15.15

Teaching Staff:
Prof Rina Talgam
Course/Module description:
The course traces the intricate visual dialogues between polytheists, Jews, Samaritans, Christians and Muslims in the eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity. The traces of these encounters are found not only in historical and literary texts, but also in architecture and art. In a multi-cultural society, different religious groups share a common mental and physical space, yet, at the same time, they all strive to define their separate identities. In ancient societies, where few were literate, art played an important role as a means of proliferation and amplification of the religious experience, as an instrument of political propaganda and as a tool for the promotion of social agendas. Works of art are historical documents that sometimes confirm what we know from written sources, and at other times, make us aware that the picture is complex or different from what we supposed. The course examines both the intimate links, as well as the disjunctions, between art and text.

Course/Module aims:
a. The course uses a body of literature that is interdisciplinary (art history, archaeology and history, Judaic and Christian studies) and aims to encourage students to cross the boundaries of their discipline.
b. To advance the students' academic skills to deal with methodological aspects relating to the connection between text and visual imagery in Late Antiquity.
c. Using contrasting texts to each subject will provide an opportunity to engage in critical discussion.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
The students will be able to write a research paper.

Attendance requirements(%):
80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar

Course/Module Content:
Lesson 1:
Part 1: Introduction to Late Antiquity in the Mediterranean, periodization, Late Antique studies over the past generation, general remarks concerning methodology (blurring of academic divisions and shifting the boundaries between traditional cultures, visual representation and text).
Part 2: Dura Europos and its cults, Polytheism, Judaism and Christianity

Lesson 2:
The encounter between Pagans, Jews, and Christians at Roman Dura-Europos and other sites in Palestine and Syria

Lesson 3:
Hellenism in Late Antiquity (Part 1)

Lesson 4:
Hellenism in Late Antiquity among Jews and Christians (Part 2)

Lesson 5:
Ways of viewing art in Late Antiquity: continuity and change. The Imagines of Philostratus and the Tabula of Cebes vis-à-vis the ekphraseis of the School of Gaza in the sixth century.

Lesson 6:
Changes with regard to figurative Art in Jewish and Christian Society: The Rabbinical laws of idolatry, the attitudes of Christian scholars and the archaeological evidence.

Lesson 7
The rise of the religions of the Book: Depictions of sacred texts in synagogues and churches

Lesson 8:
Sacred Spaces; Liturgy and Architecture in the synagogue and church

Lesson 9: Mosaics in churches and synagogues: differences and similarities.


Lesson 10: Methodological aspects of the analysis of style; periodic styles vis-à-vis personal styles

Lessons 11 and 12: A visit to the Israel Museum

Lesson 13: Visual imageries of time in the Roman and Byzantine culture: 1. The zodiac, Helios and the Seasons in Roman art (private and imperial) and within the synagogues. 2. Personification of the four seasons and the months of the year in churches.
Lesson 14: Jewish, Pagan and Christian Pilgrimage

Lesson 15: Samaritan self-determination: A minority group up against Jewish and Christian Art. A visit to the Good Samaritan Museum

Lesson 16: Facing the gods; from the pagan god and the emperor to the icon

Lesson 17: The Holy Sepulcher, the Dome of the Rock and Solomon's Temple

Lesson 18: 1. Islamic attitudes toward the Arts and the origins of Umayyad art

Lesson 19: The Umayyad Desert Palaces, their function, Meaning and artistic Sources

Lesson 20: A visit to the Rockefeller Museum

Lesson 21: Jews and Christians under Islamic Rule

Lesson 22: The defacement of images on the mosaic floors in churches and synagogues

Lesson 23: Students' presentations

Lesson 24: Students' presentations

Lesson 25: Students' presentations:

Lesson 26: Students' presentations

**Required Reading:**

**Lessons 1&2:**


**Lessons 3&4:**


G.W. Bowersock, Hellenism in Late Antiquity, Ann Arbor, 1990, 41-53.
Lesson 5:


Lesson 6:

אפרים א' אורבך, הלכות עבודת סעד והڧיתתת האנכרונולוגית והיסטרוורית במאיה השמימה ובמואה השילושית', ארץ ישראל (תש"ח), עמ' 189-205 (דפים מתקדמים של תוספות בתוך ה'א' א"א אורבך, משלולמים של הנכון, ירושלים תש"ח, י' 125-178).

Lesson 7:

ג. סטרומזה, קץ עידן הקורבנות; תמורות דתיות בשלהי העת העתיקה, ירושלים, 64-42.

Lesson 8:

ג. סטרומזה, קץ עידן הקורבנות; תמורות דתיות בשלהי העת העתיקה, ירושלים, 89-65.

Lesson 9:


Lesson 13:

ג. פרסטר, "גלגל-המזלות בבתי הכנסת ומוקורות האיקונוגרפיים, ארץ ישראל (תש"ת"ב), 391-380.

ג. פרסטר, "גלגל-המזלות בבתי הכנסת ומוקורות האיקונוגרפיים, ארץ ישראל (תש"ת"ב), 225-234.

Lesson 14:


Lesson 16:

J. Elsner, Roman Eyes: Visuality and subjectivity in Art and Text, Princeton 2007, 225-252.


Lesson 17:

Lesson 18:

Lesson 22:


Additional Reading Material:
Principal Readings:


G. W. Bowersock, Hellenism in Late Antiquity, Ann Arbor, 1990.


J. Elsner, Roman Eyes; Visuality & Subjectivity in Art & Text, Princeton, 2007.


S. Fine, This Holy Place: On the Sanctity of the Synagogue during the Greco-Roman Period, Notre Dame, 1997.


R. M. Jensen, Face to Face; Portraits of the Divine in Early Christianity, Minneapolis, 2005.


D. Milson, Art and Architecture of the Synagogue in Late Antiquity Palestine in the Shadow of the Church, Boston, 2007.


P. Rousseau (ed. with the assistance of J. Raithel), A Companion to Late Antiquity,


Recommended Reading for each Lesson:

Lessons 1&2:


Lessons 3&4:


Lesson 5:

Lesson 6:
ע' פרידהיים, 'מעשה רבן גמליאל במרחץ אפרודיטי בעכו-יעז ע'равיאליא ארצישראלית', קתדרה 37-32 (תשס"ג)


Tertullian, (segments from) De idolatria.

Lesson 8:


Lesson 13:


Lesson 14:
Lesson 15:


Lesson 16:


J. Elsner, Roman Eyes: Visuality and subjectivity in Art and Text, Princeton 2007, 225-252.


Lesson 17:


Lesson 22:

C. Barber, Figure and Likeness; On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine iconoclasm, Princeton, 2002, 7-11, 39-59, 83-105, 125-139.


Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 15 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 75 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
The Course is open to advanced BA students of the Dept. of Art History