BCRE35  Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity

Semester: B  
ECTS: 5  
Duration: 11 weeks  
Contact hours: 22  
Quota: Maximum of 10  
Prerequisite subjects: None

Module Description:

Using literary sources as well as material evidence (archaeological finds, artwork, inscriptions), this module explores customs, beliefs, institutions and identities of the early Christians within the social, political, religious and cultural context of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. The course will help students to think about central questions in the study of early Christianity such as: who were the early Christians? How did they articulate their identities across different languages and in different areas of the late antique world? How and where did they eat, pray and live? How did they understand their beliefs and interact with the cultures around them? What did their Roman, Greek or Syrian neighbours think about them? Students will reflect on different models of cross-fertilisation between emerging early Christian identities and the cultures and religious phenomena which characterised the later stages of the life of the Roman Empire.

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. Discuss and synthesise the key historical events and main cultural, political and economic factors which shaped the life, thought and institutions of the early Christians.
2. Identify methodological challenges inherent in the study of Christianity in Late Antiquity.
3. Analyse the principal trends in the historiographical debates surrounding the study of Late Antiquity.
4. Interpret early Christian primary sources and other ancient texts in English translation with competence and awareness of their contexts and premises.
5. Illustrate scholarly views of early Christianity to both specialists and non-specialists, write well-structured essays and use and compile relevant and informed bibliographies.
6. Demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in assessing data concerning the development of early Christian thought and practice as a foundation for further studies in religion and theology.
Indicative Reading:


**Assessment:** One 3,000 word essay

**Name of Lecturer(s):**

Professor Daniele Pevarello