History 114A/History of Christianity, beginnings to 800 C.E.

Summer Session B, 2016

University of California, Santa Barbara

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Classroom and Time TBA

Course Description: This course will examine the evolution of Christianity, from its origins in first century Palestine up until the reign of Charlemagne. This course will focus on the ways in which the formation of Christianity really embodied the flavor of the Late Antique period, a time of change, transformation, and also continuity. Along the way we will examine the formation and shape of the early Christian communities, with an eye toward the regional differences between them and the discursive processes that resulted in the development of triumphal narratives of orthodoxy. Early Christianity (not unlike Christianity today) had many working parts, and to cope with that we will approach our subject matter chronologically at times and thematically at others. By the end of this course you should have a better understanding of Christianity as a product of the ancient world, with shared influences and idea common to other groups like the Jews and Romans. You will be more familiar with the sources of Early Christian practice and doctrine, and have a better grasp of the ways political invective shaped Christian dogma. Finally, the student will gain an understanding of the experiences of early Christian communities, and the ways in which those experiences shaped the church as an institution.

**Required and Suggested Readings**:

The required textbook for this course is Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. Oxford: University Press, 2008. [in syllabus as **Ehrman** ]

I will also provide PDF’s of other primary source readings required for this class, either on Gauchospace or on the history department website (TBA). Please use these versions for assignments and discussion!

Each day will have some required primary source readings, a short selection from the textbook, and then suggested further readings. I will place copies of the most important suggested readings on reserve in the library. While you are not required to do any of the suggested readings, beyond those you choose to write about, often they might aid you to understand some of the more complicated issues that I do not spend a lot of time on in lecture, or about which you are curious. If you are the type of student who prefers a text-book be handy for more detail or for reference, the most important suggested readings are:

Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996. [in syllabus as **Brown RWC**]

**Assignments and your grade**: This will be a smallish group, and six weeks is not much time to cover 800 years of history. *Participation and preparation will be crucial, and failure to be prepared will be readily apparent.*

**Free-Writes**: (30% of overall grade, p/np assignment-will track attendance. Missing more than 3 will result in an overall failure for the free-writes.)We will begin each day by discussing the previous day’s readings for a short while, with a “free-write” prompt to guide discussion. In short, you should prepare for class by attending the lecture, which will provide context and background, and then by doing the required reading. The next day you will be asked a guiding question about that reading, allowing us to discuss the reading and the lecture together. This is the seminar-style portion of the class. After discussion, we will proceed to the next lecture. These free-writes will be pass/no-pass, i.e., they will not be graded on punctuation, organization, etc., only on whether or not you’ve completed one of them.

**Quizzes:** (30% of overall grade, 3@10 points each) Over the course of the quarter there will be **4** quizzes, the lowest of which will be dropped from your grade. These will quiz you on your reading of the primary sources assigned for the previous day. When we have a quiz, there will be no free-write.

**Response papers**: (20% of overall grade, 2 separate papers)

Each day there will be required readings associated with the lecture themes and goals. These will be listed as “Readings” in the syllabus. **You should always** **read those after lecture** in preparation for the next day’s discussion. In addition, each day will have a short bibliography of “suggested readings” for further consideration, use in your response papers, and of course for further reference if you would like more background. To help tailor this class to your interests, these sources will be tailored to the major theme of the day.

**Twice this quarter, pick a day** (any day except day 1). *Read all of the required* ***AND*** *suggested readings for that day.* Come to class and listen to the lecture for that day. Then think about the entire picture you have been presented—readings, suggested readings, lecture, discussion, and *within 1 week* turn in a 2-3 page paper responding to all of that together: how do they fit together, or do they? What is happening in the sources, and how are modern academics interpreting those sources? What are the most important “pieces of the puzzle”, so to speak, and what evidence are they based on?

**Response papers should be 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12 point- Times New Roman font, and use footnotes. (I will disburse a handy quick reference for this)**

**Final Exam:** (20% of your grade)There will be a short written final exam on (Date TBA)

**Academic honesty: this is a must. If you are quoting, referring to, or using someone else’s idea, you must cite it (with a footnote) or you are plagiarizing! Likewise, turning in a paper from another class, or another student, is not acceptable, and will result in automatic failure of the assignment, as well as a report to the administration. I use the internet too! So don’t rely on Wikipedia, or Google, do the work yourself!**

**Schedule of Readings**

**Day 1. Introduction: Jargon, Secularism, Methodology, and Periodization**

Readings: PDF on Textual Criticism. Excerpt from Peter Brown’s *World of Late Antiquity*.

Suggested Reading: Gillian Clark, *Late Antiquity: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: University Press, 2011.

**Day 2. Context I: The Roman World**

Readings: PDF, excerpts of Livy, Plutarch, Apulleus. Ehrman CH 2.

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 1 & 5. And Donalson, Malcolm Drew. 2003. *The Cult of Isis in the Roman Empire: Isis Invicta*. Vol. 22: Edwin Mellen Press. PGS. 1-45

**Day 3. Context II: Occupied Jerusalem**

Reading: PDF, excerpts from the Book of Job, Leviticus, Josephus, Plutarch. Ehram CH 3.

Suggested reading: Also read Lieu, Judith, John North, and Tessa Rajak, *The Jews among pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*: Routledge, 2013. READ CH 1.

**Day 4. Jesus in Post-Colonial Jerusalem**

Reading: PDF, Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of Mark. Ehrman NT CH. 4-5 and 8. **ALSO VIEW “MONTY PYTHON’S LIFE OF BRIAN” IN KERR HALL.**

Suggested reading: E.P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. Penguin Books, 1995. CH 1-9. Ehrman CH 14.

**Day 5. Jesus as literary construct/ textual issues**

Reading: PDF, gospel of John, excerpts from the Epistles of Paul, Ehrman CH 7, 16, and 17.

Suggested reading: Dale C. Allison, Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet. Fortress Press, 1998. CH 1.

**Day 6. From Jesus to Following: the Apostles and the Apostolic period**

Reading: PDF, Book of Acts. Ehrman CH 18, 19 and 22.

Suggested reading: Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert*. London: Yale University Press, 1990. Chapters 4 and 5.

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**Day 7. Early communities, early practices**

Readings: PDF, letters of Pliny and Trajan, excerpts from Tacitus Annals, Martyrdom of Perpetua. Ehrman CH 23, and 25.

Suggested readings: Claudia Setzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics, 30-150 C.E.* Fortress Press, 1994. Read Introduction and Chapter 11.

**Day 8. Heresy and Canon, Apocrypha and Sects**

Readings: PDF the “Harrowing of Hell”, excerpts from Tertullian. Ehrman CH 28. **ALSO VIEW “THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST” IN KERR HALL.**

Suggested readings: Pagels, Elaine. 2011. *The origin of Satan: How Christians demonized Jews, pagans, and heretics*: Vintage

**Day 9. More Heresies, Apocrypha, and Gnosticism**

Readings: PDF excerpt Irenaeus against Docetists, excerpts Qumran Fragments, excerpts Nag Hammadi library, excerpts from Origen.

Suggested Reading: Pagels, Elaine. 2011. *The origin of Satan: How Christians demonized Jews, pagans, and heretics*: Vintage

**Day 10. The Persecutions**

Readings: PDF, the Martyrdom of Polycarp, revisit Perpetua. Ehrman CH 22.

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 2-4. Robert Louis Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*. London: Yale University Press, 2003. Chapters TBA

**Day 11. Yet more Heresies, Exegesis, and the Patristic Age**

Readings: PDF, excerpts from John Chrysostom and Origen

Suggested readings: Ehrman CH 24, 26, 27, and 28

**Day 12. Cult of Martyrs, and the Saints**

Readings: PDF, excerpts from Book of Kings, Herodotus, Acts, and the “finding of the true cross”, hagiography of Saint Catherine **ALSO VIEW “BROTHER SUN, SISTER MOON” IN KERR HALL.** I know it is about a much later saint, but I think it is a beautiful film that encapsulates the aims of hagiography well. Also, Donovan does the soundtrack, so…ENJOY!

Suggested reading: Peter Brown “Enjoying the Saints in Late Antiquity” and Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages.* Princeton University Press, 1990. Chapter 1.

**Day 13. Constantine and Nicaea**

Reading: PDF, EXCERPTS Lactantius and Eusebius on the conversion of Constantine, the Nicene Creed, and Julian’s *Caesar’s*.

Suggested reading: Harold Drake, *Constantine and the Bishops*. Chapters TBA.

**Day 14. Asceticism, Monasticism, and the internal self**

Readings: PDF excerpts, Rule of Pachomius, Rule of Benedict, Rule from Nag Hammadi, *Vita Antonii*, *Apothegmata*

Suggested readings: Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, 2004. Chapter 1. And Introduction to “Soldiers of Christ” and David Brakke’s “Demons and the Making of the Monk” selections TBA.

**Day 15. Demons and the Devil, Angels and the Holy**

Readings: PDF excerpts from Tanak, Job, Enoch, Jubilees, Origen, Antony. Ehrman CH 29.

Suggested readings: J. B. Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition*, 1987. Chapters TBA.

**Day 16. Julian and the Triumph of Christian Propaganda**

Readings: PDF excerpts from Julian’s letters, Panagyric to Julian (Libanius), excerpt Ammianus Marcellinus, Eunapius, **ALSO VIEW “AGORA”, IN KERR HALL.**

Suggested Reading: Peter Brown “The Last Pagan Emperor” in Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity. “Julian’s School Laws” article, and Chapter 4 of S. Elm’s “Sons of Hellenism” or the shorter article about Julian and Gregory N.

**Day 17. Saint Augustine**

Readings: PDF excerpts from *The Confessions*, by Saint Augustine

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 3. Saint Augustine, City of God, selections tba. And also Intro and Ch. 1 of Peter Brown’s *Augustine of Hippo.*

**Day 18. The city and the church: Gregory and Ambrose**

Readings: PDF, excerpts of *Pastoral Care*, *Dialogues*, and Letters

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 4 and 8. and Thomas Sizgorich “Not Easily were the Stones…”

**Day 19. Regional case: Anglo Saxon England**

Reading: PDF excerpts from Gildas Fall of Roman Brittain, and from Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

Suggested Reading: Brown RWC 10 and 15. Also intro from *Anglo-Saxon England.*

**Day 20. Regional case: North Africa**

Reading: PDF excerpts from Augustine against the Donatists, McGowan, Andrew B. (2004) Rethinking Agape and Eucharist in Early North African Christianity. Studia Liturgica, 34. pp. 165-176. **ALSO VIEW “ST. PATRICK: THE IRISH LEGEND”,2000. IN KERR HALL.**

Suggested Readings: Brown RWC CH 16. And W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church* Ch. TBA and S. Davis “The Early Coptic Church” Chapters TBA.

**Day 21. Regional case: Syria**

Readings: PDF excerpts from the hymns of Ephrem, and Libanius on Antioch

Suggested reading: *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius*, trans. A. F. Norman. Read the General Introduction, and the section on Oration 31. Also read Brown RWC CH 16.

**Day 22. The image and the word: Manuscripts, images, and teaching in the West**

Reading: PDF on the illuminators, excerpts from Gregory, excerpts from MSS, PDF on Lindisfarne Gospels, Franks Casket, and Ruthwell Cross.

Suggested reading: De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*. 1992. (all, but it is short, and mostly awesome images). And Brown RWC CH 9.

**Day 23. Fear of the image: Iconoclasm in the East as a reaction to the rise of Islam and the fall of Persia.**

Reading: PDF, excerpt from Brown RWC CH 17. Excerpts from Nikephoros and other Byzantine responses to the rise of Islam.

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 12-13 and 18

**Day 24. Charlemagne, Iona, Byzantium: Snapshots and Reflections… Look how far we’ve come!**

Reading: PDF excerpts on Charlemagne, Iona, Byzantium

Suggested reading: Brown RWC CH 18-19. **ALSO VIEW “HISTORY OF THE WORLD PART I” in Kerr Hall. AND ENJOY!**

**Final Exam (TBA)**