

Christianity in Late Antiquity

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Description: How did Christianity become a religion? A study of the communal struggles, personal rivalries, theological conflicts, and social controversies among early Christians that shaped Christianity and its history: heresy and orthodoxy, hierarchy and charisma, gender and class, persecution and martyrdom, paganism and classical tradition, creeds and councils, asceticism and the body, church and state, eastern and western Christianity. Focused in the 2nd through 6th centuries A.D. Lecture and discussion.

Required Books: (available at Brown University Bookstore)
Joseph Lynch, *Early Christianity: A Brief History*
Robert Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*
Bart Ehrman, *After the New Testament*
Bart Ehrman and Andrew Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*
Robert Gregg, *Athanasius: the Life of Antony*

Required books are also available on reserve at the Rockefeller Library circulation desk.

Other Required Readings are available through Brown's Online Course Reserves (OCRA). Readings marked "OCRA" are available at the Brown University Library website, through the OCRA link: <http://dl.lib.brown.edu/reserves/>. The class password for RELS 0410 is: Antiquity.

Course Requirements:

1. Careful reading of the assignments; thoughtful participation in class. Attendance is taken at every lecture and discussion section meeting and is factored into the grading.
2. Two papers, 5-7 pp. double-spaced (approx. 2000 words); two exams. Rigorous analytical writing is required. Papers and exams will rely closely on the class readings. Grades will be calculated on this scale:
Discussion section participation: 10%
Paper #1: 20%
Exam #1: 20%
Paper #2: 25%
Exam #2: 25%

All students are required to adhere to Brown's Academic Code:
http://brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/curriculum/academic_code.php.

Course Plan and Assignments:**ALL READINGS GIVEN ARE REQUIRED FOR THE DATE SHOWN.**

- 1/22 Introduction**
- 1/24 The Roman World**
 Wilken, *Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Ch. 1, "Pliny: A Roman Gentleman," pp. 1-30. (Recommended: Introduction, pp. xi-xvii)
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 3, "The Greek and Roman Context of Early Christianity", pp. 24-35.
 (OCRA) *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church to AD 337*, ed. J. Stevenson and W.H.C. Frend (London: SPCK, 1987), pp. 1-6, 18-22: "The Church in the First Century AD: Persecution, Conflict, Organization," selections 1-5; "Conflicts with the Greco-Roman and Jewish Worlds in the Second Century," selections 16-18.
- 1/27 Beginnings and Contexts**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 1, "Jesus", pp. 1-10, Pt. 1, ch. 2, "The Jewish Context of the Jesus Movement," pp. 11-23, ch. 4, "The Jesus Movement in the First Century," pp. 37-44.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Spread of Christianity," "Acts of John," "Acts of Thomas," pp. 7-18.
- 1/29 Spreading the Movement**
 Wilken, *Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Ch. 2, "Christianity as a Burial Society," pp. 31-47; ch. 3, "The Piety of the Persecutors," pp. 48-67.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Justin: Dialogue with Trypho", pp. 18-24
 "The Structure of Early Christianity", "First Clement", "the Didache", "Letters of Ignatius," pp. 317-28.
- 1/31 Stories and Boundaries**
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Anti-Judaic Polemic", "Epistle to Barnabas," "Justin: Dialogue with Trypho," "Melito of Sardis, On the Passover," pp. 95-128.
- 2/3 Diversity: Competing Cosmologies**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Pt. 2 intro and Ch. 5, "Christian Diversity in the Second and Third Centuries," pp. 51-61.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Diversity of Early Christianity," pp. 131-3,
 "Gnostic-Christian Texts," "Secret Book of John," pp. 144-53,
 "Internal Conflicts," "Ireneaus" pp.193-8, pp. 208-9 (ch. 27 on Marcion)
 "Apostolic Writings Outside the Canon", "Apocryphal Gospels," "the Gospel of Thomas", "The Gospel of Peter," pp. 235-47.
- 2/5 DISCUSSION SECTIONS- - Gnostic Worldviews**
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Hymn of the Pearl," "Gospel of Philip," pp. 185-92,
 "Gospel of Truth", pp. 160-65.
 "Gnostic Heresiologists," "Coptic Apocalypse of Peter," "Second Treatise of Great Seth," pp. 227-34.

- 2/7 Faith and Reason: the Apologists**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 8, "Christian Intellectuals, Justin Martyr," pp. 91-6.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "The Defense of Christianity," "Minucius Felix," Justin Martyr, "First Apology," "Athenagoras," "Letter to Diognetus," pp. 51-75,
 "Justin: First Apology," pp. 347-9. Compare Irenaeus, "Against the Heresies," pp. 201-2 (ch. 8, 10), pp. 209-11 (Bk. 3, ch. 3-4).
- 2/10 Persecution and Martyrdom**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 7, "Roman Society and the Christians," pp. 79-88 (through the 'first phase').
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Attack on Christianity," "Ignatius to the Romans," "Martyrdom of Polycarp," "Churches of Vienne and Lyons," "Scillitan Martyrs," "Perpetua and Felicitas," pp. 25-50.
- 2/12 Diversity in Context**
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Acts of Thecla," "Acts of John," pp. 278-89;
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, ch. 6, "Emergence of a Proto-Orthodox Christian Consensus," pp. 62-78.
 (OCRA) Ross Kraemer, *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): readings on Montanists, texts 93-7.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "New Scriptures," "Muratonian Canon", "Irenaeus, Against Heresies," pp. 309-313;
 "Development of the Liturgy", "Didache" pp. 343-7
 Paper 1 assigned; due Thursday Feb. 20, by 4:00 p.m.
- 2/14 Reason and Faith: Tertullian**
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Hippolytus," "Didascalia," pp. 328-39.
 "Tertullian: Apology," pp. 75-82;
 "Tertullian: Prescription of the Heretics; On the Flesh of Christ; Against Praxeas," pp. 211-26;
 "Tertullian: Apology; On the Crown," pp. 349-52,
 "Tertullian: To His Wife," pp. 399-404.
- 2/17 *** no class (long weekend) *****
- 2/19 DISCUSSION SECTIONS- - Pagan Criticisms**
 Wilken, *Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Ch. 4 "Galen", and Ch. 5, "Celsus," pp. 68-125.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*: "Origen: Against Celsus," pp. 82-94.
 Paper 1 due Thursday Feb. 20, by 4:00 p.m.
- 2/21 Architects of Faith: Clement and Origen**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, ch. 8, "Christian Intellectuals – Origen," pp. 97-104.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Clement of Alexandria: The Educator," pp. 387-98;
 "Origen of Alexandria," p. 314;
 "Origen: Homilies on Luke," pp. 369-75;
 "Origen: On First Principles," pp. 413-30.

- 2/24 Communities and Criticism**
 Wilken, *Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Ch. 6, "Porphyry," pp. 126-63.
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 9, "Proto-Orthodox Christian Communities in the Third Century," pp. 105-20.
- 2/26 Church and State: Persecutions**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, pp. 88-90 (Ch. 7, Second Phase), Pt. 3, Ch 10, "Diocletian, the Great Persecution," pp. 121-4
 (OCRA) Stevenson and Frend, *A New Eusebius*, pp. 213-21: "The Decian Persecution," selections 192-200.
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Cyprian: On the Unity of the Catholic Church," pp. 340-2;
 "Novatian: On the Trinity," pp. 430-5.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 Lactantius: the Deaths of the Persecutors," pp. 11-23.
- 2/28 Diversity and Disorder**
 Ehrman, *After the New Testament*:
 "Dionysius of Rome," pp. 435-6.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Heresy and Orthodoxy; Trinitarian Controversy: Arius, Alexander of Alexandria, Arius," pp. 155-67;
 "Athanasius: On the Incarnation," pp. 190-200.
- 3/3 The Council of Nicea: Order and Disunity**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 10, "The Conversion of Constantine", pp. 124-30
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Canons and Creeds," pp. 242-56;
 "Canon and Apocrypha; Eusebius: Church History; Athanasius: Easter Letter," pp. 419-27.
- 3/5 DISCUSSION SECTIONS: Constantine**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, ch. 11, "The Christian Empire and the Imperial Church," (beginning) pp. 131-4;
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Christianity and the Imperial House; the Origin of Constantine;
 Eusebius: Life of Constantine; Zosimus: New History," pp. 24-47.
- 3/7 In-Class Exam**
- 3/10 Architects: The Cappadocians**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity* Ch. 13, "The Trinitarian Controversy," pp. 160-9;
 Ch. 16, "The Ascetic Movement" (Basil), pp. 198-9, Ch. 17, "Christian Thinkers," (Gregory of Nyssa), p. 214.
 (OCRA) *Creeds, Councils and Controversies: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church AD 337-461*, ed. J. Stevenson and W.H.C. Frend (London: SPCK,, 1989), pp. 83-92, 96-101, 104-6: Readings on the Cappadocians, Selections 66-72, 75-9, 82-4.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Creed and Canons of Constantinople," pp. 256-9;

- 3/12 The Emperor Julian**
 Wilken, *Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Ch. 7, "Julian the Apostate," pp. 164-205.
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 11, "Julian the Apostate," pp. 134-7.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Julian: Letters on Religion," pp. 48-53;
 "Christian Bible," pp. 417-8.
- 3/14 Antony and the Desert**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 16, "The Ascetic Movement", pp. 191-8.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Asceticism and Monasticism," pp. 268-9;
 Gregg, *Athanasius, the Life of Antony*, (Recommended: Intro: pp. 1-26) pp. 29-99.
- 3/ 17 Syria: Body and World**
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Theodoret: Religious History," pp. 377-88.
 (OCRA) R.M. Price, *Theodoret, A History of the Monks of Syria*, Ch. 1, 2, 9, 22, 23, 24, 28 (James of Nisibis, pp. 12-22; Julian Saba, pp. 23-36; Peter the Galatian, pp. 81-88; Thalassius, Limnaeus, John, pp. 150-53; Baradatus, pp. 177-79; Thalelaeus, pp. 180-82)
- 3/19 DISCUSSION SECTIONS: Asceticism**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 16, "Ascetic Movement", pp. 198-201.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Antony: Letters," pp. 310-16.
 "Pachomian Rules," pp. 291-9;
 "Sayings of the Desert Fathers," pp. 300-309.
- 3/21 Ascetic Bodies, Sacred Bodies**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, ch. 16, "Criticism", "Impact" and Case Study, pp. 201-11;
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "History of the Monks of Egypt; Life of Pelagia," pp. 389-416.
- 3/ 24 – 3/28 *** no classes: Spring Break*****
- 3/31 Christian Splendor**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 12, "Church Governance," pp. 144-50, and Ch. 15, "Worship and Piety", pp. 177-85.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Gregory of Nazianzus on Himself and the Bishops", pp. 139-50;
 "Christian Art and Architecture", "Paulinus of Nola, Song on Felix's Church", and "The Images," pp. 466-80.
 Paper 2 assigned; due Thursday 4/10
- 4/2 DISCUSSION SECTIONS: Pilgrimage**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 15, "Worship and Piety", pp. 185-9.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Pilgrimage, Relics, and Holy Places; Egeria: Travel Journal; Gregory of Nyssa: Letter on Pilgrimage; Victricius of Rouen, In Praise of Saints; Lucianus: On the Discovery of Saint Stephen," pp. 331-65.

- 4/4 Christianizing the Empire (i): Western Views**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 11, "Theodosian Empire," pp. 137-43; ch. 17, "Christian Intellectuals: Ambrose," pp. 212-13.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Ambrose: on the Death of Theodosius," 57-67;
 "Christianity and Roman Law; Theodosian Code: On Religion; The Novellas," pp. 68-77;
 "Becoming Christian," pp. 78-80;
 ("Sulpicius Severus: Life of Martin of Tours", "Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews," pp. 92-106 – recommended)
- 4/7 Western Developments: Jerome and Augustine**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 17, Christian Intellectuals: Jerome, p. 213;
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Jerome: Letter to Eustochium," pp. 270-91.
 "Augustine: On Catechizing the Unlearned", pp. 107-23
 "Augustine, On Christian Doctrine", pp. 433-8
- 4/9 DISCUSSION SECTIONS: Augustine on Identity and History**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch.17, "Christian Intellectuals: Augustine," pp. 214-20.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Augustine: Confessions," pp. 80-92;
 "Optatus: Against the Donatists; Augustine: Sermon on the Dispute with the Donatists" pp. 212-25.
- ***Paper 2 due Thursday 4/10 by 4:00p.m.***
- 4/11 Augustine, Sin and Grace**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 17, "Christian Intellectuals: Augustine", pp. 220-2.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Jerome: Letter to Ctesiphon," pp. 200-10;
 (OCRA) Stevenson and Frend, *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies*, pp. 230-42:
 "The Pelagian Controversy", selections 179-89.
- 4/14 The West, the Barbarians, and the Papacy**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 12, "Government of the Church," pp. 150-9; Ch. 18, "Conversion and Christianization," 229-34, 236-8 (the west, the Franks, and Ireland);
 (OCRA) Stevenson and Frend, *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies*, pp. 322-9:
 "The West: Authority Catholic and Papal, 430-35", selections 229-34.
- 4/16 Christianizing the Empire (ii): Eastern Views**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 18, "Conversion and Christianization," pp. 223-9.
 (OCRA) Stevenson and Frend, *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies*, pp. 280-4:
 readings on Synesius and Hypatia, selections 211-3.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "John Chrysostom: Second Baptismal Instruction," 123-8;
 "John Chrysostom: First Speech Against the Judaizers," pp. 227-37.
- 4/18 Towards Chalcedon: Cyril and Nestorius**
 Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 14, "Jesus, God/Man", pp. 170-6.
 Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:
 "Diodore of Tarsus: Commentary on the Psalms," pp. 455-61;
 "Christological Controversy; Nestorius: Letter to Cyril; Cyril: Third Letter to Nestorius," pp. 178-88; "Canons of Ephesus," pp. 259-61.
- 4/21 Chalcedon to Justinian**

(OCRA) Patrick T.R. Gray, "The Legacy of Chalcedon: Christological Problems and their Significance," *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 215-38.

Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*: "Definition and Canons of Chalcedon," pp. 261-7.

(OCRA) *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 89-91: The Henotikon of Zeno.

4/23

Aftermaths: Communities

(OCRA) Lucas Van Rompay, "Society and Community in the Christian East," *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 239-66.

(OCRA) S.P. Brock and S. A. Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), John of Ephesus, Mary and Euphemia, pp. 122-33.

4/25

*** no class***

4/28

East of the Empire

Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 18, "Conversion and Christianization," pp. 234-6, 238-9 (outside, Armenia, and Axum);

(OCRA) S.P. Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties," *Religion and National Identity*, Studies in Church History 18 (1982), pp. 1-19.

Ehrman and Jacobs, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*:

"Christianity Outside the Empire; Sozomen: Church History; Acts of the Persian Martyrs; Passion of Saint Shushanik," pp.481-504.

4/30

Parting Ways

Lynch, *Early Christianity*, Ch. 19, "The Eastern and Western Churches Go their Separate Ways," and Ch. 20, "Mohammad and Islam", pp. 240-255.

(OCRA) Fred M. Donner, "The Background to Islam," *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 510-33.

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY MAY 15, 2:00 P.M.