Pilgrims in the Early Christian World

Start date  2 February 2018  
End date  4 February 2018

Venue  Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

Tutor  Professor Edward James  
Course code  1718NRX039

Director of Programmes  Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact  
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To book  See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Edward James is Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at University College Dublin. He has taught at York and Rutgers, and held the Chair of Medieval History at the University of Reading before being appointed to the equivalent post in Dublin. His DPhil from Oxford was on the archaeology of south-west Gaul in the early Middle Ages, and he has taught archaeology as well as history, and always tries to use both archaeological and historical evidence where possible. He has written numerous articles on the archaeology and history of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and his books include The Origins of France (1982), The Franks (1988), Britain in the First Millennium (2001) and Europe’s Barbarians, AD 200-600 (2009). His most recent book is Lois McMaster Bujold, in the University of Illinois Press’s series “Modern Masters of Science Fiction” (2015). He is working on two projects at the moment, an introduction to the sixth-century writer Gregory of Tours, and a study of how to post a letter in Late Antiquity.
Course programme

Friday
Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00        Dinner
20:30 – 22:00 Pilgrimage in the pre-Christian world
22:00        Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Saturday
07:30        Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30 The origins of Christian pilgrimage
10:30        Coffee
11:00 – 12:30 The earliest pilgrimage narratives: the Bordeaux Pilgrim and Egeria
13:00        Lunch
14:00 – 16:00 Free
16:00        Tea
16:30 – 18:00 Christian opposition to pilgrimage
18:00 – 18:30 Free
18:30        Dinner
20:00 – 21:30 Pilgrimage to Rome
21:30        Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday
07:30        Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30 The architecture of pilgrimage
10:30        Coffee
11:00 – 12:30 Pilgrimage to Tours: the Miracles of St Martin
12:45        Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch
Course syllabus

Aims:

- Outline the history of Christian pilgrimage before the eighth century AD
- Discuss the nature and significance of pilgrimage within the early Church
- Critically discuss the nature of the evidence for early pilgrimage

Content:

It is difficult to discuss early Christian pilgrimage without imposing later ideas of pilgrimage on the early centuries. The early Christian languages (Latin and Greek) did not have a specific word for pilgrimage, and had no clear idea of the purpose of travelling to holy places; indeed, some Christian thinkers did not actually approve of such travel at all. But gradually the idea of pilgrimage took hold, and travelling to particular holy places — above all Jerusalem, but also Rome and other places (Santiago comes outside the compass of this course) — became an integral part of Christian practice. Churches were designed to accommodate pilgrims; pilgrim hostels were set up in all major pilgrimage centres; guide-books were written to help the travellers. This course will look at three main pilgrimage sites: Jerusalem with its Biblical sites, Rome with its martyrs, and Tours with the tomb of St Martin. The course will introduce some of the important texts in the early history of pilgrimage, which will be given out in a hand-out and discussed in the sessions.

Presentation of the course:

Each class will begin with a short lecture, followed by a class discussion, which as far as possible will centre on a text or series of texts that will be given to students.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of the main outline of early pilgrimage history
- Critically read the sources for early pilgrimage history
- Begin to understand the wide variety of motives that pilgrims had for undertaking their difficult and often dangerous journeys
Reading and resources list

There is no single book discussing pilgrimage during the whole period of this course. Probably the best single book on pilgrimage as a whole is Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage* (Faber, 1975, and later editions), which is not apparently in print but is available on Kindle and through Amazon. Other rather more technical but nevertheless very interesting books are:


Frankfurter, David. *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt* (Brill, 1998)

Hunt, E.D. *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312-460* (Oxford University Press, 1982)

Llewellyn, Peter. *Rome in the Dark Ages* (Faber and Faber 1971, and later editions): an excellent chapter on "Rome of the Pilgrims"

Stopford, Jenny, ed. *Pilgrimage Explored* (Boydell, 1999)

Van Dam, Raymond. *Saints and Their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul* (Princeton University Press, 1993)


The project “Egeria: Mediterranean Medieval Places of Pilgrimage” is at [http://www.egeriaproject.net/main.aspx](http://www.egeriaproject.net/main.aspx)

The Centre for Pilgrimage Studies, at the University of York, also has a website: [http://www.pilgrimagestudies.ac.uk](http://www.pilgrimagestudies.ac.uk)

Early Christian Pilgrimage to the Holy Land:
http://www.christusrex.org/www1/ofm/pilgr/00PilgrHome.html

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.