



# AHIS352

## Early Christian Literature and Thought

S2 External 2014

*Ancient History*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Christopher Forbes

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Contact via [christopher.forbes@mq.edu.au](mailto:christopher.forbes@mq.edu.au)

W6A 536

TBD

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp or (6cp in AHIS or AHST units at 200 level)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit is an examination of early Christian writings both as literary texts and as witnesses to the variety of early Christian life and thought. New Testament and other early Christian texts are studied to determine what sort of literature they are, what ideas they express, and what they reveal about the different Christian groups of the period, down to 150 CE.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;

conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;  
engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;  
formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence  
and modern interpretations.

## General Assessment Information

All written assessment tasks (Short Papers and Major Essays) are to be submitted via Turnitin, using the links to be found in the Unit iLearn page.

Late assignments will normally be penalised at the rate of 2% per day, unless prior arrangements have been made with your Tutor. If your assignment is going to be late, please contact your Tutor *in advance!*

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Tutorial Paper</a>	20%	Variable (see Description)
<a href="#">Major Essay</a>	35%	07/10/2014
<a href="#">Participation</a>	15%	End of Semester
<a href="#">Examination</a>	30%	Examination Period

### Tutorial Paper

Due: **Variable (see Description)**

Weighting: **20%**

The student must write a c. 1,000 word short essay based on the weekly tutorial discussion topic of their choice. It must be handed in within a week of the relevant tutorial. Tutorial Short Papers are to be handed in **via Turnitin**, using the link in the relevant Week of the Unit iLearn page.

For each week you will find a number of questions on the document(s) set, and an overall interpretative question. All of these ought to be prepared for the weekly Tutorial. When you decide to hand in the short paper based on a particular week's topic, you should write on the overall interpretative question, using the individual questions as a guide as to what ought to be discussed.

The Short Papers are exercises in careful and critical reading of documentary sources. Their aim is to develop skills of analysis and deduction, and the ability to write a lucid short answer to a precise set of questions. They are not primarily exercises in the collection of the opinions of others, even if those others are great scholars. The assignments will be marked primarily on your understanding of the sources themselves.

Please note that essay form is required for all work submitted. Point form or extended notes are

not good enough. Footnotes should be given, and should conform to the rules laid out in “Essay Presentation & Conventions: Style Guide”, which is available from the Ancient History Office on the Fifth Floor of W6A (Room 540), and in the Departmental website, at <<http://mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=44149>>.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Major Essay

Due: **07/10/2014**

Weighting: **35%**

Major essay topics are to be chosen from the list of topics, with introductory bibliographies, which will be made available before the fourth week of Semester. Students may also negotiate for an alternative topic with Dr. Forbes. All Major Essays are to be submitted **via Turnitin** on or before Tuesday October 7th. The submission link will be found on the Unit iLearn page.

Like Short Papers, Major Essays are exercises in careful and critical reading of documentary sources. Wider reading is also required for the essays. Referencing should follow the guidelines in “Essay Presentation & Conventions: Style Guide”, which is (again) available from the Ancient History Office on the Fifth Floor of W6A (Room 540), and on the Departmental website (as above). Footnotes and a full alphabetical Bibliography are required.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;

- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Participation

Due: **End of Semester**

Weighting: **15%**

Internal students will be assessed on both their attendance at, and their contribution to Tutorials throughout the Unit. External students will be assessed on their participation in the weekly Online Forums (iLearn) and their attendance at, and their contribution to the On Campus Session.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Examination

Due: **Examination Period**

Weighting: **30%**

The examination will run for two hours. Students will be asked to answer four questions: two precirculated document-based questions and two unseen questions from a range of approximately six.

The University Examination period in the Second Semester of 2014 is from Monday November 17th to Friday December 5th. You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations at:

<<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>>.

The only exception to sitting an examination at the designated time is documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for special consideration under the University's Disruption to Study provisions. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available under the Extension and Disruption to Study section of this Unit Guide.

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Disruption to Study process, the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, that is, the final day of the official examination period.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Delivery and Resources**

### **Technology:**

Lectures will be given live and also made available on Echo360. Visual materials used in lectures will be taken from the main Unit Booklet or made available as PDF files on iLearn. Brief bibliographies, lists of people, places and technical terms will be made available for each lecture on iLearn.

A computer and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement. You will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader, as most Unit documents are provided in PDF format. This software is freely available on the Internet. Please consult the Unit Convenor for any further, more specific requirements.

Face-to-face Tutorials will be held for Internal students; for External students there will be regular postings on iLearn and discussion on the Online Forum. External students who can come to Internal tutorials are welcome to do so.

### **Lectures and Tutorials:**

Lecture times: Tuesday 3pm, E7BT5, Wednesday 12 midday, W5AT2.

Tutorial times (as at end of June 2014): Tuesday 4pm, W6B 338; Wednesday 10am, Y3A 211, Wednesday 2pm, W6B 325; Wednesday 3pm, W5A 205. With current enrolment numbers it seems unlikely that all of these times will be maintained.

### **Books you will need:**

The required Text Book for the Unit is B.D. Ehrman, *After the New Testament: a Reader in Early Christianity* (Oxford, 1999).

If you have a copy of P.J. Achtemeier et al., eds., *Introducing the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 2000), from having previously studied AHIS 251, The New Testament in its Times, you will find the book very useful for the first half of this Unit.

You will (of course) require a copy of the New Testament. The R.S.V., N.R.S.V., Jerusalem Bible, N.I.V., N.A.S.B. and E.S.V. versions are all acceptable: if you have another version please check with us. The King James (“Authorised Version”) is not recommended; its translation is over 400 years old.

### **Other Material:**

The Main Unit booklet, a PDF file of introductory material, Unit requirements, the Weekly schedule, Tutorial questions and full Bibliographies will be made available on iLearn. There is no need to print it all out; in most cases only 2-3 pages per week will be needed in class.

## **Unit Schedule**

Week 1	Monday August 4th  Lecture 1: The First Christian Documents: the early letters of Paul. Form, style, context.  Lecture 2: The Pauline letters as witnesses to early Christian ideas.  Tutorial: Unit Introduction and Administrative matters
Week 2	Monday August 11th  Lecture 3: The Jesus tradition before the known Gospels  Lecture 4: How much can we know about “Q” and the people who passed it on?  Tutorial: Roman views on the Moral Decline of society.
Week 3	Monday August 18th  Lecture 5: Recent Debate on St. Paul.  Lecture 6: Paul's Gospel in its Context. The Bad News and the Good News.  Tutorial: Various accounts of the conversion of Saul.
Week 4	Monday August 25th  Lecture 7: “Sayings Gospels” and “Narrative Gospels”  Lecture 8: The Gospel of Mark.  Tutorial: The Parable of the Wicked Tenants, in the Synoptic Gospels and “Thomas”.

Week 5	Monday September 1st Lecture 9: Matthew's Gospel Lecture 10: Luke's Gospel Tutorial: The Markan and Lukan crucifixion narratives.
Week 6	Monday September 8th Lecture 11: John's Gospel Lecture 12: Early Christian Wisdom Literature: James Tutorial: Features of John's Gospel.
Week 7	Monday September 15th Lecture 13: Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature: Revelation. Lecture 14: The "Gospel of Peter" Tutorial: "2 Clement"
Week 8	Tuesday October 7th: Major Essays due. Lecture 15: The Letter of Clement of Rome. Lecture 16: The Letters of Ignatius of Antioch. Tutorial: There is no tutorial discussion this week.
Week 9	Monday October 13th Lecture 17: The "Didache". Lecture 18: The "Letter of Barnabas" Tutorial: Ignatius' Letter to the Magnesians.
Week 10	Monday October 20th Lecture 19: The "Shepherd" of Hermas. Lecture 20: Marcion. Tutorial: The Didache and the Shepherd of Hermas on Christian prophecy
Week 11	Monday October 27th Lecture 21: The "Gospel of Thomas" Lecture 22: The "Secret Gospel of Mark": ancient fake, modern fake or new data? Tutorial: Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians.
Week 12	Monday November 3rd Lecture 23: The Development of Asceticism. Lecture 24: Unity, Diversity and its limits: the beginning of "orthodoxy"? Tutorial: The Martyrdom of Polycarp.



Week 13	Monday October 10th Lecture 25: The development of a concept of "Canon". Lecture 26: Unit Summary. There is no tutorial this week.
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## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

### Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

### Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;

- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## **Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
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- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- The student will: learn from a variety of ancient text types, both “canonical” and “non-canonical” about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- show an awareness of both the selectivity and the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Assessment task**

- Major Essay

## **Effective Communication**

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's

historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- relate these early Christian text types to their contemporary Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural environment, in terms of both form and of content;
- demonstrate a broad comprehension of a range of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- engage with and responding critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- formulate an independent view in dialogue with a wide range of both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcome**

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic at an advanced level;

## **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Changes from Previous Offering**

The Unit was last offered in Semester 2, 2010, when it was co-badged as AHIS 209 and 309. The balance of assessment has been modified for 300-Level (see Assessment Tasks). Minor changes have been made to the order of lectures.