



UCD SCHOOL OF HISTORY & ARCHIVES

MA IN HISTORY - RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Religion and Society

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The programme

Religion was a central preoccupation of human societies in all historical epochs down to the very recent past. Since the Enlightenment much of the western world, particularly Europe, has become secularised, an evolutionary development which recently has begun to be perceived as a case of European exceptionalism, rather than the inevitable triumph of rationality over superstition. In many ways, the global society of 2013 is more actively religious, and in a greater variety of ways, than ever before. This MA programme offers an introduction to the historical study of religion and its adaptation to a variety of societies.

What will I study?

Students will take one core module, one research training module and two further optional modules within the School of History and Archives or within a cognate field in another School in the University. It is recommended that one of these should be Reason and Faith: Religion in the early modern world, which focuses upon the centrality of religion in the period c. 1500-1800, but this is not mandatory. Students will also undertake a 15,000 word dissertation (50 credits) to be completed by the end of July.

Core Module

Religions and Societies

This module comprises 10 two hour seminars. It focuses on a series of case studies of the role of religion in particular historical societies. The case studies will vary from year to year, depending on staff availability, but may include topics such as the exceptionalism of Judaism in the Roman Empire, Christianity and the expansion of medieval Europe, Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Spain, Religion and the Regulation of Sexuality in post-famine Ireland, Jewish and Islamic fundamentalism in the modern Middle-East, and the decline of Religiosity in Twentieth Century Europe. The assessment of the module is based on a 4,000 word essay on a subject to be chosen in conjunction with the course director and a student presentation.