

# Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, 2009-2010

## Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond

First Colloquium:

‘Converting States’

16 January 2010

Corpus Christi College,  
MBI Al Jaber Auditorium



9:30 **Session 1: East Asia**

Antonello Palumbo, “From Constantine the Great to Emperor Wu of the Liang: The rhetoric of imperial conversion and the divisive emergence of religious identities in Late Antique Eurasia”

*Chair and discussant:* Mark Whittow

10:30 Coffee

11:00 **Session 2: Legislation**

Uriel Simonsohn, “Conversion, apostasy, and penance: the shifting identities of the first generations of Muslim Converts”

Simon Corcoran, “From unholy madness to right-mindedness: or how to legislate for religious conformity from Decius to Justinian”

*Chair and discussant:* Fergus Millar

12:30 Lunch

1:30 **Session 3: Incentives**

Christopher Kelly, “Collusion, conformity, coercion: making Christians in late Antiquity”

Petra Sijpesteijn, “The Islamic state as an agent of conversion”

*Chair and discussant:* Hugh Kennedy

3:00 Coffee

3:30 **Session 4: Propagation**

Joel Walker, “How Christian was the Late Sasanian Empire?: Patterns of Conversion in the Late Antique Middle East”

Michael Bonner, “‘Even if the unbelievers dislike it’ (*wa-law kariha l-mushrikūn*): conversion and the early Islamic state”

*Chair and discussant:* James Howard-Johnston

5:00 **Conclusions and discussion**

Richard Bulliet and Chris Wickham

5:45 Reception

All are most welcome to attend but please register for the colloquium with Dan Schwartz ([daniel.schwartz@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:daniel.schwartz@orinst.ox.ac.uk)). There is no charge to attend the colloquium; however, a sandwich lunch will be available on site for £5. If you would like to take part in the lunch please indicate this no later than Thursday 7 January.

Further details for this event, including paper abstracts, and information on the other colloquia of the Mellon Sawyer Seminar can be accessed on the web at <http://www.ocla.ox.ac.uk/conversion/index.html>.