



AH32420

Visual Culture of Religion 1: Chapels in Wales 1696-1918

Co-ordinator: John Harvey

Other Staff: RCAHMW: Sue Fielding, Stephen Hughes, Penny Icke, and Richard Suggett

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| Course Delivery: | Lectures: 12 x 1 hr | |
| | Seminars: 0 | |
| Field Studies: | 2 x 9 hrs, 1 x 3 hrs | |
| Tutorials: | 1 hr | |
| Practicals: | 0 hr | |
| Study Time: | 168 hrs (General reading, Essay and Project Document preparation) | |
| Assessment | Essay | 50% (5,000 words); Deadline: 3 May |
| | Project Document | 50% (2,500 words); Deadline: 3 May |

Brief Description

The module combines a study of the historical development of the chapel from a humble vernacular building into, what some architectural historians consider, the 'national architecture' of Wales. The study combines a survey of the general development of chapel styles with an in-depth examination of particular regions, edifices, and architects in Wales. Students are, in this way, introduced to the most recent research on the subject. They also engage in the formation of that research through a hands-on experience of chapel conservation and recording in collaboration with staff from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. This practical and vocationally orientated method of study is allied to a historical, socio-economic, cultural, and theological investigation of the edifices. The module argues that the visual character of the Nonconformist meeting-house and chapel was influenced by a complex of interrelated factors besides vernacular building methods and materials, prevailing architectural styles and tastes, such as the congregations' visual sensibility, practical expedience, theological restrictions, liturgical requirements, economics, social structure, indigenous and prevailing culture, and national, geographical, and historical contexts.

Syllabus

Backgrounds

1. *Lecture*: The Protestant Reformation of Church Architecture (JH)
2. *Lecture*: 'After the Fire' 2: Wren's Parish Churches after 1675, and their Relation to Nonconformist Chapels (JH)
3. *Lecture*: 'Between Magnificence and Meanness': The Theological Significance of the Meeting-House and Early Chapels (JH)
4. *Lecture*: 'After the Pattern God had shown them': Biblical Connotations of the Classical-Styled Chapel (JH)
5. *Lecture*: Welsh Church Architecture: An Overview (RS)
6. *Lecture*: Writing on the Walls 1: Word-orientated Elaborations of the Victorian Chapel Interior (JH)

Case Studies by Region and Architect

7. *Lecture*: Religious Buildings in Nineteenth Century Industrial Communities of Wales (SH)
8. *Lecture*: Chapels in Cardiganshire (SF)

EASTER VACATION

10. *Lecture*: Thomas Thomas: The Buildings of the First National Chapel Architect in Wales (SH)
11. *Lecture*: Chapels in Aberystwyth (SH)

Conservation, Representation, and Interpretation

12. *Field Study*: Visit to Capel Pen-Rhiw (rebuilt at St. Fagan's) and Examples of City and Urban Chapels in Cardiff and the Valleys (JH)
13. *Field Study*: Recording Chapels: An Introduction to the RCAHMW Chapel Project (SF) (Part 1)
14. *Workshop*: Creating and Using RCAHMW's Chapel Data-Base (PI)

Pre-Requisites
AH10120

Co-Requisites

None

Incompatibilities

None

Skill Development

The module will assist the development of the following academic and transferable skills:

- *Self-directed project work* – is developed through self-directed library research and, where appropriate, visits to local chapel sites towards the completion of the assessed essay.
- *IT and information handling* – is developed in the context of on-site digital photographing, and data-base writing and access management under the supervision and training of RCAHMW staff.
- *Writing in an academic context* – is developed and assessed through the essay and the project document.
- *Oral discussion and presentation* – is developed (though not assessed) chiefly through collaborative discussion with RCAHMW staff responsible for the field study and data-base management, and an essay tutorial with the Module Co-ordinator.
- *Careers need awareness* – is developed (though not assessed) through hands-on experience in the professional practice of architectural history, preservation, and archiving.
- *Self-management* – N/A
- *Group activity* – is developed (though not assessed) through collaborative work with RCAHMW staff responsible for the field study and data-base management..

Assessment

Components

Essay (5,000 words) = 50%

Project Document (2,500 words) = 50%

Conditions

Both assessed elements must be passed. Only the failed component need be resubmitted.

Brief Bibliography

C. Church and A. Saints (eds.), The Victorian Church (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995)

John Harvey, The Art of Piety: The Visual Culture of Welsh Nonconformity, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995)

John Harvey, Image of the Invisible: The Visualization of Religion in the Welsh Nonconformist Tradition (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999)

Deborah Howard, The Architectural History of Scotland. Scottish Architecture from the Reformation to the Restoration, 1560-1660, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995).

Anthony Jones, Welsh Chapels, Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited; Cardiff: National Museums and Galleries of Wales, 1996

Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, Communities: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales, (Llandysul: Gomer 1987)

James Munson, The Nonconformists, (London: SPCK, 1991)

Mark A. Noll et al. (ed.), Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700–1990, (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)

David Parsons, Churches and Chapels: Investigating Places of Worship, (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1989)

M. T. Purdy, Churches and Chapels, (Oxford: Butterworth Architecture, 1991)

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England, An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses in Central England (London: HMSO, 1994)

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea (Aberystwyth: RCAHMW, 2000).

J. B. Sinclair & R. W. D. Fenn, Marching to Zion: Radnorshire Chapels, (Cadoc Books, 1990)

Christopher Stell, An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses in the North of England (London: HMSO, 1994)

Michael R. Watts, The Dissenters: Vol. 2 – The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995)

Aims

The module aims to:

- A. combine a general overview of the historical development of chapel buildings and architecture with a series of in-depth studies of the work of particular architects and chapels derived from new research in the field
- B. study chapel building in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Wales, principally, within a visual, historical, socio-economic, and theological context
- C. provide students knowledge of current practices and methods of chapel preservation through field-study experience in chapel recording, and in developing and accessing a data-base system for storing recorded information
- D. mount an historiographic examination of key texts on chapel architecture written during the period of study
- E. where relevant, address chapel building during this period to precedents in the seventeenth century and cognate building practices in Great Britain, Europe, and the United States of America

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module the student should be able to:

1. account for the development of the visual styles of chapels in Wales from their origin in the eighteenth century barn-type building to the classical and eclectic edifices built in the late nineteenth century, and the relationship of such to Nonconformist architecture elsewhere, while demonstrating knowledge of specific case studies and relevant cultural determinants (Aims: A, B, E)

2. undertake a systematic and varied recording of a specific chapel to a professional standard following the principles and methods prescribed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) (Aim: C)
3. effectively write and access such information in the RCAHMW's chapel data-base and, in the process, contribute to the extension and refinement of data-base fields (Aim: C)
4. critically appraise past and current scholarship on the architectural history of chapels (Aims: B, D, E)

Relation to Assessment

Outcomes 1, 4: are assessed in the form of an essay that examines the student's ability to synthesis historical and theoretical knowledge, critical opinion, and a first-hand experience of chapel architecture

Outcome 2: is assessed in the form of a project document comprising an orderly account of the findings derived from the field-study experience

Outcome 3: is not assessed towards a final mark at present, although the student will be given feedback on their performance.