



Prof. Jane Cartwright

Celtic Sanctity and Spirituality: Hagiography and Saints' Cults

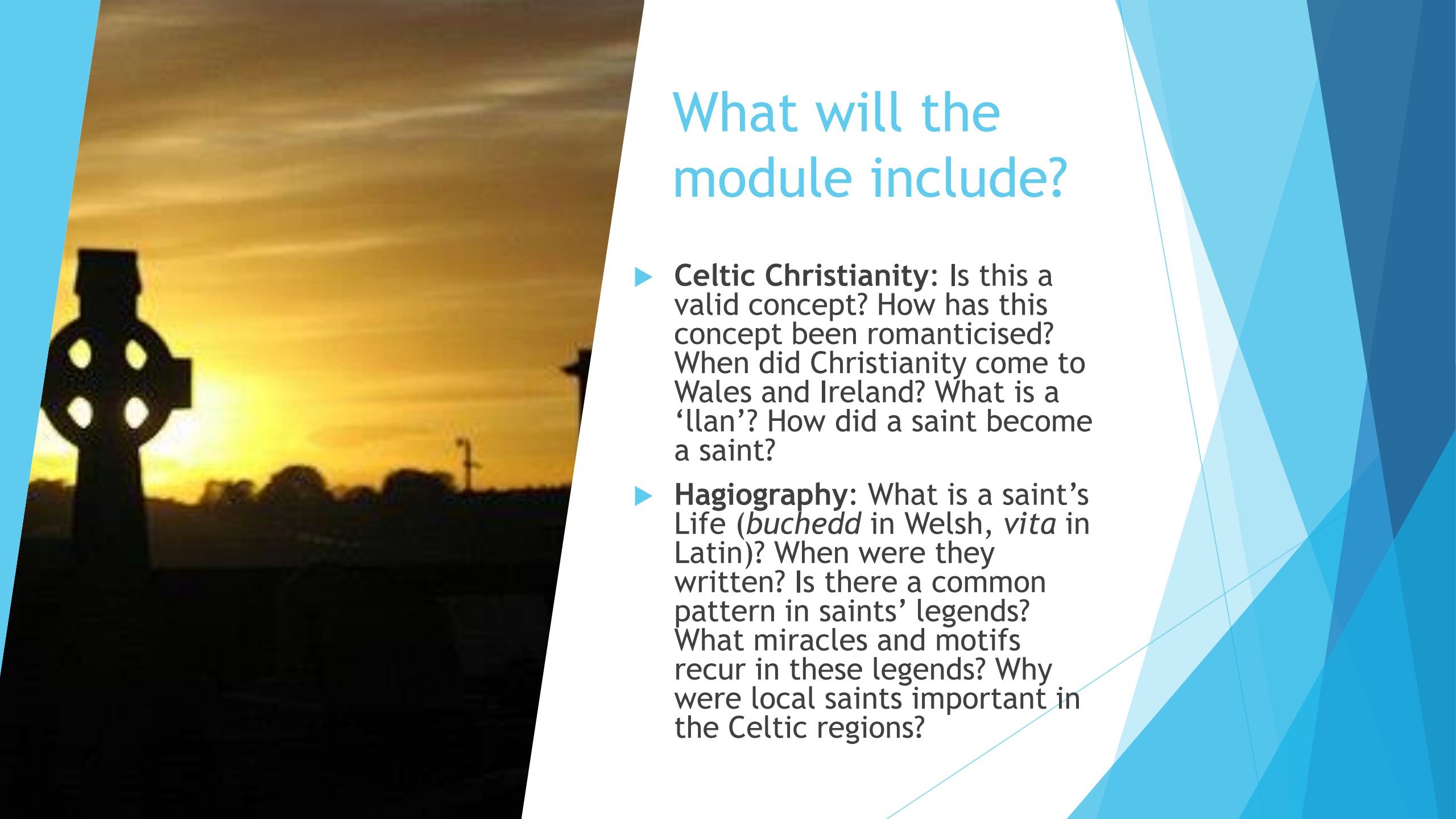
Introduction to the Module

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What will the module include?

- ▶ **Pre-Christian religion(s):** Who were the 'Druids'? What sources shed light on the Druids and druidic practises? How reliable are these sources? Are they biased in any way? How contemporary were these sources and what was their authors' motivation/purpose?
- ▶ **Celtic gods and goddesses:** who were the main figures? What were some of their attributes? What theories have been proposed concerning their relationship with later Welsh and Irish legends and mythology? Did any Celtic deities later transform into saints (e.g. Bridget / Bríd of Kildare)?



What will the module include?

- ▶ **Celtic Christianity:** Is this a valid concept? How has this concept been romanticised? When did Christianity come to Wales and Ireland? What is a 'llan'? How did a saint become a saint?
- ▶ **Hagiography:** What is a saint's Life (*buchedd* in Welsh, *vita* in Latin)? When were they written? Is there a common pattern in saints' legends? What miracles and motifs recur in these legends? Why were local saints important in the Celtic regions?

What will the module include?

Selection of saints:

Patron saints (e.g. David, Patrick),

female saints (e.g.

Gwenfrewy/ (Winefride, Dwynwen, Melangell),

local saints (e.g. Cadog, Teilo, Gwnnen, Gwenog, Eluned),

international saints (e.g. the Virgin Mary, Ursula, Mary Magdalene)





Sources:

Saints' Lives (medieval prose narratives - *vitae*, *bucheddau*) - the legends that recount the tales/legends about the saints

Medieval poetry

Material culture: relics, holy wells, churches and pilgrimage sites

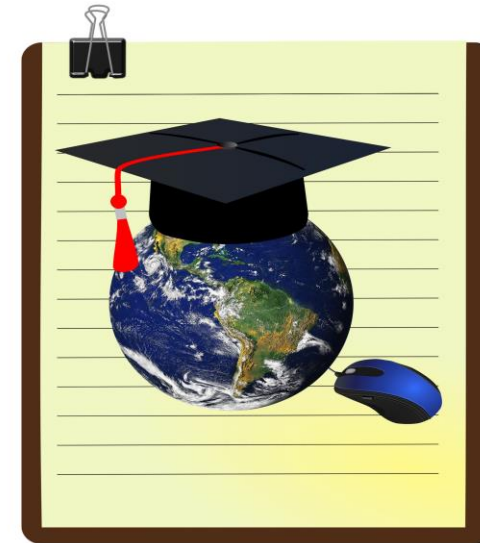
Images: stained glass, wallpaintings, carvings, reliquaries, iconography



What are the learning outcomes?

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should: •

- ▶ demonstrate a detailed knowledge and appreciation of a selection of medieval hagiographical texts relating to the Celtic regions;
- ▶ • be able to analyse, interpret and evaluate specific examples of primary medieval sources and the hypotheses proposed about these texts in a range of secondary sources;
- ▶ • be able transmit their understanding and knowledge of key aspects of these texts in written



How is the module assessed?



Task 1 summary and evaluation of an academic article/chapter (25% of module mark)



Task 2 an essay (75% of module mark)

How is the module assessed?

- ▶ Task 1 Compile a Powerpoint presentation that summarizes and evaluates one of the key texts that has been posted in Moodle as preparatory reading for this module. This may be a journal article or a chapter from a book. You should locate the study in its wider context, discussing the author's contribution to the field; provide a summary of the text's content and a critique/appreciation of its key themes and features noting your own views on the subject. You will be asked to submit your Powerpoint (via Turnitin) and also present this orally to the rest of the class.
- ▶ Your talk should last for 10 minutes.
- ▶ (25% of module mark)

How is the module assessed?

Task 2 Write an essay on ONE of the following topics (approximately 3,500 words):

- ▶ 1) Is 'Celtic Christianity' a valid concept? In your answer consider the arguments that have been put forward to support and refute this concept.
- ▶ 2) According to J. W. Willis Bund: 'a woman could never become a saint...a woman could never fill the office which certainly among the Welsh entitled a person to become a saint'. Is this a fair assessment of feminine sanctity in Wales? Analyse a range of extant sources that document the traditions associated with some of the female saints of Wales.
- ▶ 3) Trace the origins and development of the cult of any saint from the Celtic regions paying particular attention to the literary texts associated with them.
- ▶ Submit your essay via the Turnitin link in the module in Moodle (75% of module mark)

Important dates:

- ▶ **Deadlines:**
- ▶ **3 and 4 October 2022** talks: everyone to present their summary and Powerpoint orally in class (10 mins each) - you will each be given a slot
- ▶ **6 October 2022** Upload Powerpoint as PDF to module in Moodle (you will need to have prepared this before your individual presentation on 3-4 October, but the deadline for uploading to Moodle as PDF is 6 October)
- ▶ **16 October 2022** deadline for uploading essay via Turnitin to module in Moodle

Mwynhewch y modwl!
Enjoy the module!