

Aarhus Seminars in Classical Antiquity

KLASSISKE STUDIERS SEMINARRÆKKE F2022

Matthew Larsen, University of Copenhagen

On the Origins of Limited Term Sentences of Incarceration



The prison is imagined as a modern invention, with the core of the modern prison being a limited term sentence of incarceration (e.g. a five year prison sentence). Yet even this aspect of the history of incarceration has a much longer history. In this talk, I trace the origins of the limited term sentence back to Mediterranean antiquity, with special reference to the emerging history of Christianity, to show that the practice of sentencing a convict to a specific amount of time in prison was not uncommon and was tied to emerging Christian discourse on punishment.

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Antikmuseet

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