

Graduate Division of Religion

Spring 2018 Course Atlas

(Please check back for changes and updates - last update 11.27.2017)

RLE 732 – History of Christian Theological Ethics

Wednesday, 2:30-5:30

Timothy P. Jackson

This course provides a critical look at a broad range of Christian moral theologies and theologians, from early in the fifth century to roughly the middle of the twentieth. It is meant to be a companion course to RLE 730, "Contemporary Theological Ethics," which looks exclusively at twentieth and twenty-first century figures. We begin with St. Augustine and read selectively from Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Martin Luther, Jacob Arminius, Søren Kierkegaard, and Simone Weil. Additional diversity of perspective will be provided, in part, by secondary essays – feminist, pragmatist, liberationist, deconstructionist, or etc. – on these figures reported on by students. Some of the enduring questions that concern us are: • How are we to understand human nature and its virtues and vices? • What is the nature of sin and the place of Jesus Christ in overcoming it? • What specifically is the relation between Christ-like love, personal prudence, and social justice? • What is the relation between God's providence and human freedom? • Is the Kingdom of God, a.k.a. "eternal life," open in principle to everyone or only to the elect few? • Does the Kingdom, esp. love and sacrifice, look different for women and men? No claim is made to be comprehensive; the object is to hit a few influential high points in a very rich tradition, noting continuity and change, as well as insight and error, as we go along. The format is seminar, but I will lead off each new Part with an orienting lecture.

Required Books, Available for Purchase

Treatise on the Virtues, by Thomas Aquinas

Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, ed. by Anton Pegis

The Works of James Arminius, Volume 2, ed. by James Nichols Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 1st Series, Volume V ("Saint Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings"), ed. by Philip Schaff

Revelations of Divine Love, by Julian of Norwich

The Sickness Unto Death, by Søren Kierkegaard Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings, ed. by John Dillenberger

Gravity and Grace, by Simone Weil

RLHB 792 – Liturgies and Prayers in Second Temple Judaism
Thursday, 2:30-5:30
Carol Newsom

Refashioning Community and Self: Liturgies and Prayers in Second Temple Judaism In the Persian and Hellenistic periods forms of psalmody and prayer undergo striking changes. Communal penitential prayers significantly displace laments, psalmody becomes a means for forming community around a set of encapsulated historical memories, and liturgical cycles and psalmic cycles begin to be developed. Individual psalms and prayers are also transformed, displaying a newly articulated concern over the pervasive sinfulness of the individual and the necessity for radical transformation. This course will examine several of these trends in liturgical poetry and prayer texts, attempting to discern the ways in which they were shaped by contemporary conditions and the ways in which they reshaped understandings of community and the self.

Extensive reading of Hebrew texts. Secondary literature includes Jeremy Penner, *Patterns of Daily Prayers in Second Temple Judaism*, M. Boda, D. Falk, and R. Werline, *Seeking the Favor of God: The Origin of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (vol. 1) and *Seeking the Favor of God: The Development of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (vol. 2), as well as other books and articles.

RLHT 735 – Topics in American History
(Place and Space: Location, Contestation, Devotion)
Tuesday, 1:00-4:00
Bobbi Patterson

This seminar will engage how, when, and why dynamics of place and space impact, shape, and respond to cultural and religious identities, texts, practices, material cultures, architecture, and dynamics of personal and collective/structural power. Investigating ways historical, religious, and cultural patterns and assumptions of place and space, including relationships between humans and the more-than-human world shape cultural and religious productions of space and place - the hidden, half-hidden, and stark dimensions.

These and other questions will shape the work of this class with particular attention to American and some Trans-Atlantic contexts.

From foundational to current theories and methods, this course will explore a range of approaches including: architecture, human and regional geography, socially and politically produced space, meaning-making, materiality, and toponymia - affective bonds embodied in space and place.

Below is a list of selected articles and books (chapters or whole books) from which a final selection for the syllabus of this class will be drawn. Students are encouraged to request certain books or articles be included. We will shape the final syllabus together.

Books

Botanicas: Sacred Spaces and Devotion in Urban America (student suggested)

Place: A Short Introduction

Topophilia

New Materialisms

How Racism Takes Place

Critical Regionalism

Landscapes of the Sacred

Social Justice and the City

The Lure of the Local

Space, Place and Gender or For Space

Wisdom Sits in Places or Senses of Place

New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of American Immigration
(edited by Douglas S. Massey)

Immigration and Religion in America: Comparative and Historical Perspectives
(edited by Richard Alba, Albert J. Raboteau, Josh DeWind)

Articles

“Building, Dwelling, Thinking” *Martin Heidegger*

“Space, Knowledge, and Power”, *Michel Foucault*

“New England Cartography and the Native Americans” in *The New Nature of Maps*

RLNT 711M – The Gospel of John

Wednesday, 1:00-4:00

Susan Hylan

This seminar is designed to acquaint students with critical issues in the translation and interpretation of the Gospel of John. Students will engage in translation and discussion of the Greek text of John, analyze interpretive choices of prior interpreters of the Gospel, and craft an

argument about the interpretation of a passage of the Gospel. Prior knowledge of ancient Greek is required.

RLNT 771 – History of NT interpretation II

Monday, 1:30-4:30

Vernon Robbins

This seminar covers the entire spectrum of interpretation of the New Testament from the sixteenth century to the present. It will begin with an exploration of forces at work in New Testament interpretation during the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter Reformation. After this, it will investigate the overall “Enlightenment” context of analysis and interpretation of history, myth, philosophical truth, and biblical theology in which the literary-historical methods of text, source, form, tradition, and redaction criticism emerged. Then the seminar will turn to some of the more recent modes and methods for interpreting the New Testament. An overall goal of the seminar is to gain an understanding of the contexts that gave rise to literary-historical methods and to assess the relation of those methods and contexts to more recent approaches to interpretation of the New Testament in our present context.

RLR 700/ICIVS 710 – Topics in Religion

(Historiography of Islam)

Tuesday, 1:00-4:00

Vincent J. Cornell

This course is an advanced graduate-level introduction to historiography as applied to the study of Islam and Islamic Civilizations Studies. The first half of the course will be an introduction to major theoretical approaches in historiography, particularly as applied to Middle Eastern and South Asian societies. This section of the course will cover the most prominent theoretical approaches to historiography and will focus in particular on the “New Historicism” or “linguistic turn” in contemporary historiography. The second part of the course will examine critically the historical study of Islam and Islamic civilization. Special attention will be given to major historiographical problems in the field and how Muslims have expressed their history.

RLR 700/ICIVS 770 – Topics in Religion

(Islamic Mystical Theology)

Thursday, 1:00-4:00

Vincent J. Cornell

This seminar will introduce graduate students in Islamic Civilizations Studies, Religion, Philosophy, and related fields to the major theologies of Islamic mysticism, concentrating in particular on metaphysics and epistemology. Although Sufism is a major focus of the course, it is not only a course on Sufism. Students will also cover the theology of Islamic Hermetism and other types of Islamic mystical philosophy, such as Ibn Sīnā’s “Eastern Philosophy” (al-ḥikma al-mashriqiyya) and Suhrawardī’s “Philosophy of Illumination” (ḥikmat al-ishrāq)

RLR 700 - Topics in Religion

(Religion and Material Culture)

Monday, 11:00 -2:00
Ellen Gough

This seminar introduces key theoretical frameworks for the study of religion and material culture and then examines case studies of material religion from a range of religious traditions (Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism, in particular). Materiality both creates and reflects religious ideologies, social structures, values, and worldviews; further, specific culturally contextualized case studies will raise new questions of the theoretical readings.

Readings may include selections from, among others:

Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*

Kenneth George, *Picturing Islam: Art and Ethics in a Muslim Lifeworld*

Richard Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* Janet Hoskins, *Biographical Objects: How Things Tell the Stories of Peoples' Lives*

Dick Houtman and Birgit Meyer, eds., *Things: Religion and the Question of Materiality*

Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* Daniel Miller, ed., *Anthropology and the Individual: A Material Culture Perspective*

W.J.T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*. David Morgan, *The Embodied Eye: Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Feeling & Religion and Material Culture*

Cynthia Packert, *The Art of Loving Krishna: Ornamentation and Devotion*

RLR 700 – Topics in Religion
(Christian Identities and Expressions in Colonial Africa and Asia, 1800-1970)
Monday, 2:30-5:30
Arun Jones

This course explores the development of Christian identities and expressions in select Asian and African societies, when these were either directly controlled or significantly influenced by European imperialism and colonialism during the 19th and 20th centuries. Through rich case studies, it interrogates assumptions about the unidirectional movement of Christianity, from missionary and colonizer to convert and colonized. The course employs various comparative schema to elucidate the history of Christian communities and persons in Africa and Asia. Methodologically, it compares works of social history with those in the new and burgeoning field of anthropology of Christianity, to assess relative strengths and challenges in distinctive disciplinary approaches to the writing of history. In subject matter, the course compares various regions of the world in order to apprehend particular perceptions and appropriations of Christianity in Africa and Asia. The course also compares diverse forms of European rule, and the effects these had on local populations, as well as different local understandings of power and

authority, and how these interacted with specific forms of colonialism and imperialism. Finally, it compares distinct expressions of Christian mission, and of various local religious traditions and cultures, to discern their roles on the formation of Asian and African Christian thought and practice.

**RLR 700/ICIVS 770 – Topics in Religion
(Islamic Society in South Asia)
Wednesday, 1:00-4:00
Scott Kugle**

This seminar explores concepts and controversies related to the Muslim presence in South Asia (including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh), covering the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal eras (12th-18th centuries CE). The seminar uses interdisciplinary approaches from social history, religious studies, art history and gender studies.

**RLR 700 – Topics in Religion
(Postcolonial Theory and Theology)
Wednesday, 1:00-4:00
Kwok Pui Lan**

This seminar explores the development and major concepts of postcolonial theory by studying the works of representative figures such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The emphasis will be on the implications of postcolonial theory for biblical interpretation, theological method, and critique and reformulation of Christian doctrines. (Prerequisites: ST501 and one other course in theology)

Required Texts:

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture* (Routledge Classics edition). London: Routledge, 2004.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Moore, Stephen D., and Fernando F. Segovia, eds. *Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Interdisciplinary Intersections*. New York: T. and T. Clark International, 2005

Kwok, Pui-lan. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Rivera, Mayra. *The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

Joh, Wonhee Anne. *Heart of the Cross; A Postcolonial Christology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

Hill, Johnny Bernard. *Prophetic Rage: A Postcolonial Theology of Liberation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.

**RLR 700 - Topics in Religion
(Scripture and Music)
Friday, 9:30-12:30
Joel LeMon and Stephen Crist**

This class explores the musical exegesis of scripture, that is, how music shapes the interpretation of sacred texts. From the cantatas of JS Bach to the pop anthems of U2, every musical setting of the biblical text recreates scripture for its hearers. This course brings together biblical scholarship, reception history, and historical musicology through a series of case studies that explore how composers interpret scripture for their listeners. In many cases, the composition provides something of a musical re-setting of a text for which we have lost the original score. Indeed, a huge swath of what we know today as the Bible was originally intoned. Put another way, before the text of the bible was Scripture it was song. But since we do not have the score, composers throughout history have provided new melodies, harmonies, and rhythms. After an introductory discussion of the theory of reception history of biblical texts and an orientation to historical musicology, the class proceeds through a set of cases studies in musical exegesis. We will analyze musical works from various genres to show how the crafts of composition, including instrumentation, tonal painting, and harmonic structure, come together to convey the message of that biblical text.

**RLR 700 - Topics in Religion
(Kierkegaard and Job)
Wednesday, 1:00-4:00
Jill Robbins**

How do literary and religious texts pose questions within and to Continental philosophy? In this seminar, we will consider Soren Kierkegaard's phenomenology of mood, his hybrid genre of writing, and the distinctive way in which he deploys biblical texts, such as "the binding of Isaac" (Gn. 22) and the Book of Job, in developing his philosophy of existence. The "trembling" to which the narrator of Fear and Trembling refers is experienced not only by the biblical Abraham, who is in a religious relation to the absolute, and whose orders from God are sealed in secrecy, but also by Kierkegaard's narrator, himself brought to the point of inexpressibility in the face of Abraham's ordeal. In Repetition, the fictional protagonist offers an intensely personal reading of the Book of Job. The book's formulation of the problem of theodicy, the theological justification of suffering, and the example of Job's legendary patience, provide the protagonist with a means of making sense of his broken engagement. The stakes of pseudonymity are vividly put in play in Either/Or's first-person description of aesthetic existence, Judge William's ethical diagnosis of it, and the supplementary text appended to William's letters by an unnamed pastor friend.

Requirements: one term paper (25-20pp.) and one in-class presentation.

Required Texts: Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling/Repetition, trans. Hong and Hong (Princeton); Kierkegaard, Either/Or, Part I, trans. Hong and Hong (Princeton); Kierkegaard, Either/Or, Part II, trans. Hong and Hong (Princeton); The Wisdom Books, trans. Robert Alter (Schocken); Kierkegaard: A Critical Reader, eds. Ree and Chamberlain (Blackwell).

Recommended: The Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version (Oxford).

**RLR 700 – Topics in Religion
(Introduction to the Study of Religious Practices)
Wednesday, 9:00-12:00
Ted A. Smith**

This seminar will explore critical issues in the conception and study of religious practices. Particular attention will be paid to questions about movement between descriptive studies of practice and more normative or theological claims. The seminar is interdisciplinary in both sources and outcomes. Readings come from thinkers identified with anthropology, sociology, religious studies, theological studies, and critical theory. And members will develop ideas from the seminar in relation to a variety of home disciplines. Readings include texts from thinkers such as Svetlana Alexievich, Walter Benjamin, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel de Certeau, Marla Frederick, Clifford Geertz, Kathryn Lofton, Saba Mahmood, Sherry Ortner, Kathryn Tanner, and Loïc Wacquant.

Note: This course is required for all Concentrators in Religious Practices and Practical Theology.

**RLR 700 – Topics in Religion
(Religion and Human Rights)
Thursday, 9:00-12:00
Theophus ‘Thee’ Smith**

This course envisions a millennial goal among religions and societies to advance the ‘long arc of the universe bending toward justice.’ (Theodore Parker as popularized by M.L. King, Jr.) In that adventure the religions have their distinctive role for establishing human rights as normative for all peoples. To optimize such contributions the course will frame human rights as a restorative justice venture alongside often contested United Nations declarations on human rights. Our working hypothesis will explore religious practices and traditions as distinctive resources for fostering a restorative justice approach to human rights advocacy in the new millennium. Nonetheless we rightly anticipate continuing instances where faith-based communities and leaders need additional resources and interventions first to recognize, and then to act on their opportunities and intrinsic obligations in these matters. By the end of this course class members will share an interreligious collation of such resources based on world religions surveys and selected case studies. Particulars: (1) Each class member will conduct 2 seminars on the readings, plus submit (2) a term paper incorporating elements major themes of the course.

Required Readings

Muhammad Abu-Nimer, Muhammed, Reconciliation, Justice, and Co-existence: Theory and

Practice (Lexington Books, 2001) ISBN-10: 0739102680; ISBN-13: 978-0739102688

John Esposito et al., *World Religions Today* (Oxford, 2014) 5th Ed. ISBN-13: 978-0199999590; ISBN-10: 0199999597

Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (Oxford, 2002) ISBN-10: 0195157257; ISBN-13: 978-0195157253

Micheline R. Ishay, ed., *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present* (Routledge, 1997) 2nd Ed. ISBN-10: 0415918499; ISBN-13: 978-0415918497