

RLGN 205 – CATHOLIC IMAGINATION: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

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FALL SEMESTER 2015
Tue/Thu 11:30 AM – 12:45 PM (Tomlinson 243)
Office Hours: Tue/Thu 10:00 – 11:00 AM / by appointment

ONLINE COURSE WEBSITE

<http://www.jonathantan.org/RLGN205/>

Please bookmark and visit the online course website regularly for announcements, links to online readings, etc.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to the diversity and plurality within the Catholic tradition, focusing attention on the global perspectives of Catholicism in recognition of the fact that more than two-thirds of the world's Catholic population today are from the Majority World, the so-called "Global South." It will explore the challenges posed by, and the possibilities offered by studying the Catholic imagination from transnational and global perspectives, as expressed in diverse and pluralistic forms through both historical experiences and contemporary developments.

Upon the completion of this course, students would be able to:

- appreciate the complexities of, and understand the implications arising from the global, transnational, and postcolonial dimensions of the Catholic imagination beyond its classic Eurocentric roots;
- gain familiarity with how the central themes of the Catholic imagination are expressed in different ethnic, social, and cultural contexts around the world;
- explore how the forces of cultural diversity and pluralism, historic colonialism, globalization and migration, race and race relations, as well as contemporary postcolonial and transnational consciousness shape the diverse and pluralistic Catholic imagination in all its complexities; and
- consider how subaltern and minoritized Catholics are reshaping traditional Eurocentric understandings of the Catholic imagination.

II. COURSE PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

1. Organizational Structure and Procedures of Class Discussion

- (i) Unless otherwise indicated in the Weekly Schedule/Readings, all class sessions will be held in the seminar/discussion format according to the following procedures:
 - Each session will begin with a 5-10 minute presentation by a student presenter summarizing the salient facts, principal ideas, key players, and/or important events that are discussed in the required reading(s) assigned for the day.
 - For this purpose, student presenters are required to prepare a **one-page handout** summarizing the key points of the presentation (bullet points are acceptable) to be distributed to all students and the instructor. Each class presentation (oral presentation & presentation handout) will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - evidence of engagement with assigned reading(s);
 - potential for stimulating discussion;
 - accuracy; and
 - depth of analysis.
- (ii) For the remainder of the class, the instructor will moderate a discussion and analysis of the materials and relevant issues among the students.

2. Active Class Participation

This course is structured around active student participation and in-depth engagement in critical discussions of assigned readings in a seminar setting. To prepare for each class, all students (except for

the student presenter) are asked to prepare beforehand and bring to class a typed and printed one page with the following:

- 2 or 3 insights that they have gleaned from the assigned reading(s) [bullet points are acceptable];
- 2 or 3 questions arising from the reading(s) for class discussion.

These insights and questions, as well as actively listening, asking questions, making relevant critical responses, and engaging in discussions will comprise active class participation for grading purposes. The instructor will collect these sheets from the students after each class. Students are reminded to include their name and student ID in their submissions. Because these insights and questions serve as a stimulus for class discussion, **they cannot be made up later (i.e., after the class session has been concluded)**. Students who attend class without bringing their insights and questions will only receive **50%** of the allocation for class participation for that day.

3. **Completion of Requirements for Each Class Session**

As the primary format of this course is seminar discussion, it is imperative that students complete all reading assignments before class, as well as attend and participate at all class sessions. Students are expected to do all the required readings assigned for every class before coming to class on that day, and encouraged to explore the "Recommended Resources," which complement the required readings and provide additional discussion for those who are interested to explore further.

4. **Class Attendance**

Class attendance is required of every student enrolled in this course. A 1% point will be deducted for each class you miss without excuse. Excuses will be accepted only for grave emergency situations (e.g., major illness with proper written documentation, death in family) or university-approved activities off-campus, to be reported to the instructor through a Dean and only at the instructor's discretion. Every two late arrivals will count as an unexcused absence and a 1% point will be deducted accordingly. Please note that **any student with three or more unexcused absences will receive a grade of F for this course.**

5. **Scholarly Papers**

All students will write two scholarly papers (1,500 words each) as follows:

PAPER #1: Laudato Si' (due: by 4:00 PM on Wednesday, October 14)

This assignment requires you to:

- (i) identify the key ideas and proposals;
- (ii) discuss critically the scientific, environmental, social, economic, political, ethical, and religious implications for the ongoing debate over climate change in the U.S. and globally; and
- (iii) conclude with your own response to the encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*.

PAPER #2: Black Catholic Imagination (due: by 4:00 PM on Monday, December 7)

This assignment requires you to:

- (i) explore the vision of Catholic imagination as articulated by the two African American Catholic theologians Professors Bryan Massingale and M. Shawn Copeland in the readings assigned for this class;
- (ii) examine critically the ethical, social, economic, political, racial, and religious implications of their visions of Catholic imagination for African American Catholics and the broader U.S. Catholicism, as well as the U.S. Catholic responses and engagements with the #BlackLivesMatter movement and the ongoing challenges arising from social and racial upheavals in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Ferguson, Baltimore, Charleston, etc.; and
- (iii) conclude with your own analysis of the contributions of African American Catholics to the ongoing constructions of the U.S. Catholic imagination and vision of being Black and Catholic in the contemporary U.S. society.

6. Formatting & Submission Requirements for Papers

(i) Formatting

All papers should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, printed with a 1-inch margin on all 4 sides, paginated in the footer and your name and student ID in the header on every page. Please check the spelling and grammar before submission.

(ii) Citation

Please cite all your sources that you consulted or quoted in your papers. The citation style is open (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc), so long as you are consistent. Please include a bibliography at the end of your paper. Please visit the Writing Resource Center (<http://www.case.edu/writing/writingcenter.html>) if you need any assistance in writing.

(iii) Late Submission

All submissions that are 1-5 days late will automatically receive a full letter grade reduction. Please be warned that the instructor **will not accept any submission that is more than five (5) days late**, and will accordingly **assign a zero for non-submission of that paper/book report**.

7. Safe Space

While we recognize that students come from diverse backgrounds with different life experiences, this course seeks to provide a safe space to engage in fruitful conversations and dialogue among students on issues of race, race relations, religion and race, etc., as they pertain to the subject matter of this course. Hence, all class participation should be *respectful*. Racist, sexist, homophobic, misogynistic, and other discriminatory remarks are unacceptable and would not be tolerated because of the sensitive subject matter on religion, race, ethnicity, culture, and identity constructions that we will discuss in this course. Students who violate this provision will be asked to leave the class and be counted as absent for that class.

8. Fairness Provisions

Every student must complete all the requirements of this course in order to receive a passing grade. The final grade for each student will be carefully determined according to the requirements specified in this syllabus. The final grade is absolutely final and will not be changed. If you are struggling in this course or not performing to expectations, please arrange to meet with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss strategies for improving one's grades. In fairness to all students, no extra credit or additional assignments will be assigned, over and above the requirements stated in this syllabus, to improve one's grades.

9. Academic Integrity

CWRU's Academic Integrity Policy: <http://students.case.edu/groups/aiboard/policy.html>

The instructor will strictly enforce the university's rules and regulations on proper academic conduct, including the university policy on academic integrity. Please be warned that there is a zero tolerance policy on academic dishonesty in this course. The instructor expects all work that appears under the student's name to be that student's own, and will follow up on evidence that a student has contravened the university's regulations on academic integrity. If an incident of academic dishonesty is established, the student will be subjected to the sanctions specified in CWRU's Academic Integrity Policy.

III. COMPUTATION OF GRADES

1. Class Presentations (oral presentations & presentation handouts)	20%
2. Active Class Participation (insights, questions, active listening & discussion)	20%
2. Paper #1	30%
3. Paper #2	30%
TOTAL	100%

IV. READINGS

The following books are required for this course. As they are **not available** at the campus bookstore, please order them through the Amazon links on the course website (www.jonathantan.org/RLGN205) or other sources:

- Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, *Theology Brewed in an African Pot*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008.
- Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.
- Jeremy Clarke, *The Virgin Mary and Catholic Identities in Chinese History*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013

Additional readings are available online.

V. COURSE SCHEDULE

Aug 25: Introduction to the Course

Required Reading: Jeremy Zipple, "Global Catholicism: The Church is Changing, But Not How We Might Think" (*The Jesuit Post*)

URL: <https://thejesuitpost.org/2014/02/global-catholicism-the-church-is-changing-but-not-how-we-might-think/>

No Student Presentation for today

Recommended Resources

Watch Prof. Peter Phan's public lecture, "World Christianity: Its Implications for History, Religious Studies, and Theology" (Burke Lectureship on Religion & Society, University of California San Diego, October 13, 2011). URL:

- <http://www.uctv.tv/shows/World-Christianity-with-Peter-C-Phan-Burke-Lecture-22878>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-E0ObYnPI6o>

Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population* (2011)

URL: <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>

(A) African Approaches to Catholic Imagination: Faith, Culture & Inculturation

Aug 27: Chukwuka—Talking About God

Required Readings:

(1) Orobator, ix-xiii, 1-12

(2) "African theologians, bishops cry out for more expansive synod discussion" (*National Catholic Reporter*)

URL: <http://ncronline.org/news/global/african-theologians-bishops-cry-out-more-expansive-synod-discussions>

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 1: A "New God" Comes to Mbanta

Required Reading: Orobator, 13-25

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 3: The Mad Preacher and the Three Persons in One Go

Required Reading: Orobator, 26-36

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 8: In The Beginning There Were Many Stories

Required Reading: Orobator, 37-51

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 10: Mama Mercy Meets Lady Grace

Required Reading: Orobator, 52-65

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 15: I Said “God Had a Son,” But I Did Not Say “He Had a Wife”!

Required Reading: Orobator, 66-80

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 17: The Church Looked Like the Open Mouth

Required Reading: Orobator, 81-93

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 22: Mama Maria, Mother of Sorrows

Required Reading: Orobator, 94-109

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 24: Our Fathers and Mothers Who Art in Heaven

Required Reading: Orobator, 110-124

Student Presenter: _____

Sep 29: If Two Hands Wash Each Other, Both Are Clean

Required Reading: Orobator, 125-138

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 1: On the Other Side of Heaven: Spirituality Brewed in an African Pot

Required Reading: Orobator, 139-156

Student Presenter: _____

(B) Catholic Imagination Meets Environmental & Ecological Concerns: *Laudato Si'*

Oct 6: Laudato Si' – Part I

Required Readings:

- (1) Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* – overview/introduction, chapters 1 and 2

URL: http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

- (2) Thomas Reese, *A Reader's Guide to 'Laudato Si' (National Catholic Reporter)*

URL: <http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/readers-guide-laudato-si>

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 8: Laudato Si' – Part II

Required Readings:

- (1) Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* – chapters 3 and 4

URL: http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

- (2) Thomas Reese, *A Reader's Guide to 'Laudato Si' (National Catholic Reporter)*

URL: <http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/readers-guide-laudato-si>

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 13: Laudato Si' – Part III

Required Readings:

- (1) Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* – chapters 5 and 6

URL: http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

- (2) Thomas Reese, *A Reader's Guide to 'Laudato Si'* (*National Catholic Reporter*)

URL: <http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/readers-guide-laudato-si>

Student Presenter: _____

NB: Paper #1 due at Tomlinson 243 (department office) by **4:00 PM on Wednesday, October 14.**

(C) Chinese Approaches to Catholic Imagination: Chinese Marian Devotions

Oct 15: Images of Mary in China Before 1842

Required Reading: Clarke, 1-47

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 20 – No Class. Fall Break.

Oct 22: After the Treaties – the Chinese Catholic Church Since 1842

Required Reading: Clarke, 51-82

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 27: Our Lady of Donglu

Required Reading: Clarke, 83-110

Student Presenter: _____

Oct 29: The Rise and Fall of the French Protectorate

Required Reading: Clarke, 111-139

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 3: The Furen Art Department

Required Reading: Clarke, 143-174

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 5: The Christian Dimension to the Furen Christian Art

Required Reading: Clarke, 175-200

Student Presenter: _____

(D) African American Catholic Imagination: Negotiating Faith, Race & Identity

Nov 10: What is Racism?

Required Reading: Massingale, ix-xiv, 1-42

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 12: Catholic Social Teaching on Racism

Required Reading: Massingale, 43-82

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 17: Toward a More Adequate Catholic Engagement

Required Reading: Massingale, 83-129

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 19: "A Dream Deferred"

Required Reading: Massingale, 130-150

Student Presenter: _____

Nov 24 – No Class. Instructor at the American Academy of Religion conference

Nov 26 – Thanksgiving Day. No class

Dec 1: The Vocation of the Black Catholic Theologian/Struggle of the Black Catholic Community

Required Reading: Massingale, 151-180

Student Presenter: _____

Dec 3: Reflections on Being Black and Catholic

Required Readings:

- (1) Bryan N. Massingale, "The Systemic Erasure of the Black/Dark-Skinned Body in Catholic Ethics" In *Catholic Theological Ethics Past, Present, and Future: The Trento Conference*, ed. James F. Keenan (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 116-124
URL: http://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1179&context=theo_fac
- (2) M. Shawn Copeland, "Revisiting Racism: Black Theology and a legacy of oppression" (*America Magazine*) URL: <http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/revisiting-racism>
- (3) M. Shawn Copeland, "Overcoming Christianity's Lingering Complicity" (*Syndicate Theology*)
URL: <http://syndicatetheology.com/commentary/overcoming-christianitys-lingering-complicity/>

Student Presenter: _____

NB: Paper #2 due at Tomlinson 243 (department office) by **4:00 PM on Monday, December 7.**