

THEO 5224 God, Creation and Eschatology

Instructor: Dr. Keith, Ka-fu CHAN

Date & Time: Fri 19:00-21:15

Venue: ELB 207

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1. Course Description:

Postmodernism is typically constructed as an enemy of Christian faith. Critics within ecclesial institutions often have not read its thinkers, and instead relay a second-hand report that postmodernism is against “absolute truth” and religious meta-narratives. Critics further question its ethical contributions, suspecting its lack of prescriptions for an endorsement of moral relativism. This course prefers to read postmodern thinkers (theologians and philosophers of religion) more generously and positively. As a result of this course, students will be able to: 1) understand key concepts (the death of God, the infinite, alterity, gift economy, *différance*, etc) in the major figures of postmodern thought, 2) articulate how these concepts acquire a theological resonance, 3) voice their own critical questions for postmodernity, rooted in close readings of the course texts, and 4) suggest how postmodernism is not entirely at odds with Christian theology and its ethical discourse.

The content and readings of this course are dense. Students are strongly recommended actively to participate in the learning and teaching activities in this course. This course is NOT a general introduction course in Christian theology, but an in depth discussion of the possibility and actuality of the postmodern theological discourses.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

On completion of this course, students should be able to:	
CILO 1	Understand the complicated Christian concepts of God, creation and eschatology, and their historical interconnection with the intellectual backgrounds.
CILO 2	Apply the concepts and ideas to evaluate the relevance of their numerous implications.
CILO 3	Reflect on their own beliefs and value towards Christian ideas.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs):

CILO 1	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach and describe various key ideas and historical events in approaching these three concepts in the development of the Christian thought through discussion, written exercise and group project. Evaluate the comments given by different theories and concepts towards the relationship between Christianity and her contexts.
CILO 2	<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and examine different aspects of the relationship between these three doctrines and other related concepts by participating class discussions and reading. Evaluate the religious import of the different aspects of these three doctrines.
CILO 3	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct their own judgements to evaluate their views towards some controversial issues through debate and class discussion. Apply the knowledge and techniques they learn from the course to complete the project.

4. Assessment:

4.1. Tutorial Presentation (35%)

Each student required to present the reading materials in the tutorials at the end of the term. Basic summary and critical discussions are required. High mark would be given to those students who can address the advanced theological scholarships.

4.2. Lecture writing (25%)

Each student is assigned to submit 2 written reports of the lecturer's lecture content.

4.3. Research paper (40%)

Each student is required to submit a research paper on a given topic. For your reference, usually the number of words required for term paper in undergraduate courses (coded THEO1xxx-4xxx) is 4000-5000, for postgraduate courses (coded THEO5xxx) is 5000-6000.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	
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Sept 8	1.Theology in Postmodernity	
Sept 15	2.God as Gift	
Sept 22	3.God as Becoming	
Sept 29	4.Radical Trinity	
Oct 6	5.Creation	
Oct 13	No class	
Oct 20	6.Nothingness	
Oct 27	7.Evil or Divine Providence	
Nov 3	8.Kairos	
Nov 10	9.The Time of the End	
Nov 17	10.Eschatology	
Nov 24	Tutorial Presentation (1-4)	
Dec 1	Tutorial Presentation (5-8)	
Dec 8	Tutorial Presentation (9-12)	

Basic Reference:

God:

1. God and freedom : essays in historical and systematic theology / edited by Colin E. Gunton for the Research Institute in Systematic Theology King's College, London
2. Trinitarian theology today : essays on divine being and act / edited by Christoph Schwöbel for the Research Institute in Systematic Theology, King's College, London.
3. The Trinity : global perspectives / Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen.
4. The doctrine of God : a global introduction / Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen
5. The Trinity / Roger E. Olson & Christopher A. Hall
6. Classical trinitarian theology : a textbook / Tarmo Toom
7. The Trinity and the kingdom : the doctrine of God / Jürgen Moltmann
8. The mystery of the Trinity / Edmund Hill
9. The promise of Trinitarian theology / Colin E. Gunton
10. The theological imagination : constructing the concept of God / by Gordon D. Kaufman
11. Persons, Divine and Human / Christoph Schwobel and Colin Gunton

Creation:

1. God and creation in Christian theology : tyranny or empowerment? / Kathryn Tanner
2. Creation / Hans Schwarz.
3. Creation : a reader / edited by Jeff Astley, David Brown and Ann Loades.
4. Creation and fall : a theological exposition of Genesis 1-3 / Dietrich Bonhoeffer
5. Creation and reality / Michael Welker
6. God in creation : an ecological doctrine of creation : the Gifford lectures 1984-1985 / Jurgen Moltmann
7. In the beginning-- creativity / Gordon D. Kaufman
8. Creatio ex nihilo : the doctrine of 'Creation out of nothing' in early Christian thought / Gerhard May
9. The human factor : evolution, culture, and religion / Philip Hefner
10. The work of love : creation as kenosis / edited by John Polkinghorne

Eschatology:

1. The Oxford handbook of eschatology / edited by Jerry L. Walls
2. Eschatology / Hans Schwarz.
3. Theology of hope; on the ground and the implications of a Christian eschatology, Moltmann
4. The coming of God : christian eschatology / Jürgen Moltmann
5. Christian hope / by John Macquarrie
6. The Christian hope / Brian Hebblethwaite
7. The last things : biblical and theological perspectives on eschatology / edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.