

THEO5910 New Testament in Contexts
 Prof. Alex Hon Ho IP
 7:00pm -9:30pm (Fri)
 FYB UG01

1. Introduction

This introductory course in New Testament studies is designed to equip students with foundational knowledge and analytical skills essential for exploring and interpreting the various contexts of the New Testament. By engaging with this course, students will develop the basic competencies needed to embark on independent investigations and further studies in this field.

2. Course objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to comprehend and engage with the intricate nature and varied contexts of the New Testament in their interpretative practices. Throughout the course, students will be introduced to a range of contexts, including literary, socio-economic, material culture, and philosophical perspectives, utilizing methods grounded in Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation. While in-depth exploration of each context is not required, students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to facilitate an academic dialogue between the New Testament text and at least two selected contexts of their choice.

3. List of Topics:

Topics	Content
History of the New Testament	Explore the origins of the New Testament and its establishment as the canon of Christianity.
Contexts of the New Testament	Examine the social, political, economic, philosophical, and literary contexts of the New Testament and their influence on the development of the text.
New Testament Criticisms	Study the key concepts and methodologies of major historical criticisms related to the New Testament.
Interpretation of the New Testament	Learn basic interpretative methods for understanding the New Testament in light of its various contexts.

4 · Teaching Schedule:

Lecture	Date	Main Theme	Main text
1	6/9	Introduction to the course + Brief History of Interpretation	
2	13/9	NT and Greek Language: How important is Greek Language to shape the NT?	Romans
3	20/9	NT and Different Genre and literary theory: Form of NT	Revelation
4	27/9	NT and Ancient Rhetoric: Persuasive skill of NT	Galatians
5	4/10	NT and Interpretation Method: Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation	Philemon
6	11/10	Chung Yeung Holiday	

7	18/10	NT and Jewish Context 1 + Presentation (Group 1 to 2)	Galatians
8	25/10	NT and Material Cultures + Presentation (Group 3 to 4)	Agora and Gospels
9	1/11	NT and Greco-Roman Context 1 + Presentation (Group 5 to 6)	Philippians + Stoics
10	8/11	NT and Greco-Roman Context 2 + Presentation (Group 7 to 8)	Luke 10 + Roman Institutions
11	22/11	Online Lecture: Intertextuality of NT (Pre-recorded)	
12	29/11	NT and Contemporary World: Ethical Teaching of NT (Group 9 to 10)	

5. Assessments:

1. Group Presentation: Text analysis 20%
3/4 in a group. Choose a text (no more than 20 verses, negotiable) to analyse its literary characteristics and explain how this text could be related to other contexts (no need to go into detail of contextual analysis).
2. Contextual Analysis Paper 30%
Choose a NT relevant context (Jewish, Literary, Greco-Roman Religious, Greco-Roman Politics, Greco-Roman Economics, etc) to study and write no more than 2000 (Eng) and 2500 (Chinese) paper to summarise the key findings and their possible relevance to NT interpretation. (Details and instruction will be given later)
3. Essay: NT in Dialogue 50%
Interpretation (No more than 4500 words (Eng) and 5500 words (Chi) excluding all footnotes)
Making use of the SRI as a framework to investigate how a chosen text can be interpreted in the dialogue with various textures (contexts), in the paper you should have at least three main sections investigating the grammatical and literary aspects of the text, the possible intertextuality, other relevant context, and how these layers help you to interpret the meaning of the chosen text.

Final Paper (50%)

Criteria:	Excellent (43-50)	Good (35-42)	Fair (28-34)	Fail (under 28)
1. Content: Provide relevant points and information to support the argument (50%)	Strong arguments are well presented. Well explained the text (Grammar, syntax and rhetoric) Well argue and dialogue with the relevant contexts	Relevant arguments are well provided but not fully or strongly argued in some areas.	Some arguments provided but not substantial enough	Only weak and incomplete argument provided
2. Logically sound of argument and critical thought reflected (25%)	Well and clearly argued and made use of SRI. Critical thought demonstrated	Well and clearly argued and made use of SRI	Overall a logical presentation provided but no critical thought shown	Cannot provide a logical argument throughout the paper
3. Coherence: the question is clear and the flow of the paper is addressing the question (25%)	Tightly connected and argued throughout the paper	Coherently argued overall with some parts may not be totally connected with the flow.	Either the question is not clear enough or the structure of the answer may	Simply incoherent due to unclear question or

			not totally connected.	structure of answer.
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6. Textbooks:

T1. deSilva, David A.. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Context, Methods and Ministry Formation*. Illinois, IVP Academic, 2018. (有中文版)

Ip, Alex Hon Ho. *A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of the Letter to Philemon in Light of the New Institutional Economics*. WUNT 2. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017. (中文版 10 月出)

Major References:

Aune, David ed. *The Blackwell Companion to The New Testament*. West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2010. (E-book in Library)

Goodman, Martin. *The Roman World 44BC-AD 180*. London: Routledge, 1997.

華倫·卡特 (Warren Carter)。譯者：顧華德。《羅馬帝國與新約聖經要點指南》(聖經資源中心：2016)

孫寶玲。《新約聖經研究導論：初代基督徒的信仰與實踐。》校園書房：2018

馮蔭坤老師的註釋書。中英文版及不同出版社

Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller. *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015.

Scheidel, Walter ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Warren Carter. *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide*. Nashville, Abingdon, 2006. (with Kindle edition)

Other references: C- Context; I- Introduction; T- Theology .. Others for specific topics

Alfoldy, Geza. *The Social History of Rome*. London: Croom Helm, 1985. (C)

Bassle, Jouette, ed. *Pauline Theology*. Vol. 1 of 3. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994. (T)

Brown, Raymond. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1996. (I)

DeSilva, David A. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*.

Dunn, James. *1 Corinthians*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995.

----- . *New Testament Theology: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2009. (I)

-----, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. (T)

----- . *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 1998. (T)

----- . *New Testament Theology in Dialogue*. London: SPCK, 1987. (I)

----- . *The Living Word*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009. (I)

----- . *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. London: SCM, 1990. (I)

Fagan Garrett G. *The Lure of the Arena: Social Psychology and the Crowd at the Roman Games*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Friesen, Steven. "Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-called New Consensus." *JSNT* 26, no. 3 (2004): 323-361.

Furnish, Paul. *Theology and Ethics in Paul*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009. (T)

- Georg Oesterdiekhoff. "The Arena Games in the Roman Empire: A Contribution to the Explanation of the History of Morals and Humanity." *Narodna Umjetnost* 46 (2009): 177-202.
- Hays, Christopher. *Luke's Wealth Ethics*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- Hellerman, Joseph. *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Lendon, Jon. *Empire of Honor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Meeks, Wayne. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. (C)
- Meggitt, Justin. *Paul, Poverty and Survival*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998.
- Phillips, Thomas E. *Reading Issues of Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*. Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.
- Pilgrim, Walter. *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*. Reprint. Oregon: Wipe & Stock, 2011.
- Robbins, Vernon. *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation*. Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1996. (I)
- . *The Invention of Christian Discourse*. Dorset: Deo, 2009.
- . *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. Allen Lane: Penguin, 1993.
- . *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*. London : SCM Press, 1985.
- . *Jesus and Judaism*. London: SCM Press, 1985.
- . *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: a Comparison of Patterns of Religion*. London : SCM Press, 1977.
- Schnelle, Udo. *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2003. (T)
- . *Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009. (T)
- Theissen, Gerd. *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Edited and translated by John H. Schutz. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982. (C)

7. Learning activities

There are various learning activities in this course.

Presentation and discussion: Group presentation can help to stimulate the class knowledge as well as the awareness of the complex layers of New Testament.

Online resources will be used to facilitate class discussion from time to time.

6. Contact details:

Email: alexip@cuhk.edu.hk

7. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

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 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.

8. Feedback for evaluation

Feedback and recommendation are welcome. Students are advised to either give feedback during lecture or through email. Response will be made promptly based on the need of students.