

THEO5954: Special Topics on Christianity and Society I:

Theology of Interculturation—A Catholic Approach

Teacher: Antoine Ren

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Language: Putonghua/English

Time: Fri. 7:00 pm–9:30 pm

Venue: Esther Lee Building 206

1. Course Description

What is the relationship between faith and culture? Every believer exists within a cultural context, and every faith or religion reflects cultural characteristics. Yet faith, particularly the Christian faith, often presents a challenge to culture. Understanding and navigating the complex and nuanced relationship between faith and culture is crucial for determining whether the Christian faith can take root and express itself within a given culture, as well as how Christians live out their faith within their own cultural contexts. Building upon a critique of several traditional approaches to this relationship, this course proposes an inseparable and balanced perspective within fundamental theology: interculturation—the inculturation of the Gospel and the evangelization of culture. We will explore how the Christian faith should engage with culture and society across various dimensions, including doctrine, ecclesial community, liturgy, ethics, and spirituality, through the lens of interculturation.

2. Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- 1) understand the relationship between faith and culture
- 2) how the two should interact with each other
- 3) in what ways they should live out their faith within their particular culture as Christians.

3. Course Syllabus

Week 1	Jan. 9	General Introduction: Existing Models for Understanding the Relationship Between Faith and Culture and Their Problems
Week 2	Jan. 16	The Essence of Culture and Faith
Week 3	Jan. 23	The Possibility of Speaking about God within Culture
Week 4	Jan. 30	The Possibility of Revelation or God's Self-Communication Through Culture
Week 5	Feb. 6	The Theological Foundations and the Archetype of the Relationship Between Culture and Faith

Week 6	Feb. 13	Interculturation and Its Issues in Fundamental Theology
Week 7	Feb. 27	Interculturation of the Biblical Message
Week 8	Mar. 13	Principles of Doctrinal Interculturation
Week 9	Mar. 20	Examples of Doctrinal Interculturation
Week 10	Mar. 27	Interculturation of Ecclesial Communities
Week 11	Apr. 10	Liturgical Interculturation
Week 12	Apr. 17	Interculturation of Moral and Spiritual Life
Week 13	Apr. 24	Societal Interculturation

4. Course Components

Lecture, discussion, mid-term reflective essay, and term reflection paper.

5. Assessment

1. Class participation 20 %

Attendance and active participation in discussion.

2. Mid-term reflective essay 30%: 1,500–2,500 Chinese characters or 1,000–1,500 English words (**Due: Mar. 13**):

Identify one cultural element in your context that can inculturate an aspect of the Christian faith—whether doctrinal, liturgical, or spiritual—and at the same time be evangelized.

Explain why and how this process of interculturation can occur.

3. Term Paper Proposal 10 % (**Due: Mar. 27**)

The proposal outline should contain the following:

- 1) Title
- 2) Problematized motivation (what problem motivates you to undertake this research?)
- 3) Research question (what questions can guide your research to solve this problem?)
- 4) Steps (paper outline) for answering this question.
- 5) Hypothesis.
- 6) Bibliography (references).

4. Term Paper 40 %: 5500–6500 Chinese characters or 3500–4000 English words, including footnotes. The bibliography is not included (**Due: Apr. 30**).

Students may develop a theological reflection by critically addressing an approach to the relationship between culture and faith or explore a possible interculturation between a specific

cultural element and faith within a given context.

6. Grading Rubric for Term Paper

Weight	Category	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
20%	Problematization and theological question	The chosen topic is thoroughly and clearly analyzed and problematized through a critical and probing theological question.	The chosen topic is thoroughly and clearly analyzed but is not problematized through a critical and probing theological question.	The chosen topic is generally analyzed and is not critically problematized.	The chosen topic is neither properly analyzed nor problematized.
30%	Thesis and Arguments	The hypothesis or thesis is clearly stated and supported with evident, logical, realistic, thorough, and comprehensive arguments.	The hypothesis or thesis is identifiable but not well articulated. The arguments are clear but need to be improved in terms of their evidence, consistency, and realistic nature.	The hypothesis or thesis is present but not easily discernible and lacks support from clear, relevant and realistic arguments.	The hypothesis or thesis is not clearly defined, making it difficult to unify the paper. The arguments presented are off-topic or irrelevant.
30%	Structure and Development	The paper's structure is exceptionally logical and clear; its flow is coherent and well-developed, with consistently and smoothly articulated transitions.	The paper's structure is sufficiently clear, and the flow and transitions are apparent but need improvement.	The flow is not smooth, and the transitions are sometimes incoherent, making the structure difficult to follow.	The structure is confusing and illogical, lacking consistent development and transitions.
20%	Style and Formatting	The paper is written with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation, using clear, precise, and appropriate expressions. Its format adheres to	The paper is written mostly with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation, using clear, precise, and appropriate expressions, with only minor errors. Its format generally	The paper contains frequent grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Some expressions are inappropriate or unclear. It does not sufficiently	The paper contains numerous errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Many expressions are inappropriate or unclear. It also lacks an academic format, and many source

		academic formatting, and all reference sources are properly cited.	adheres to academic formatting, and most reference sources are properly cited.	adhere to the academic format and citation standards.	materials are used without documentation.
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7. Required Readings

International Theological Commission, *Fait and Inculturation*, 1988

Grenham, Thomas G., “Interculturation: Exploring changing Religious, Cultural, and Faith Identities in an African Context”, in *Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies*, 14 (2001), 191-20.

Grenham, Thomas G., *The Unknown God: A Cognitive Semantic Perspective Religious and Theological Interculturation* (Oxford, Bern...Wien: Peter Lang, 2005).

Ratzinger, Joseph, “Christ, Faith and the Challenge of Cultures”, in *Origins* 24, 30 March 1993, 679-686.

Tillich, Paul, *Theology of Culture*, edited by Robert C. Kimball, London-Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.

8. Recommended Readings

Anscar J. Chupungco. *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis*.
Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1992.

Ariarajah, S. Wesley. *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion Within the Ecumenical Movement*. Geneva: WCC, 1994.

Bergmann, Sigurd. *God in Context: A Survey of Contextual Theology*. Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003.

Bevans, Stephen. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll, NY.: Orbis Books, 1992.

Chauvet, Louis-Marie. *Symbol and Sacrament. A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, Translated by Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1995.

Chauvet, Louis-Marie. *The Sacraments. The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*.
Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2001.

E. Palmer, Richard. *Hermeneutics. Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969.

Gerald A. Arbuckle: *Culture, Inculturation, and Theologians. A Postmodern Critique*.
Collegeville, Minnesota: A Michael Glazier Book, Liturgical Press, 2010.

Hall, Douglas John & Rosemary Radford Ruether. *God and the Nations*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995.

Rahner, Karl and Ratzinger, Joseph. *Revelation and Tradition*, Translated by W. J. O’Hara.
New York: Herder and Herder, 1966.

- Kraemer, Hendrik. *World Cultures and World Religions: The Coming Dialogue*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960.
- Kraft, Charles H. *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1979.
- Kwan, Simon Shui-Man. "From Indigenization to Contextualization: A Change in Discursive Practice Rather than a Shift in Paradigm." *Studies in World Christianity* 11, no. 2 (2005): 236–50.
- Luzbetak, Louis. *The church and cultures: new perspectives in missiological anthropology*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Milbank, John. *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, and Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997.
- Orji, Cyril U. *A Semiotic Approach to the Theology of Inculturation*. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick, 2015.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Hermeneutics and Human Sciences. Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, edited and translated by J.B. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Schillebeeckx, Edward, "Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics", in his book *God the Future of Man*, Translated by N. D. Smith. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968.
- Schineller, Peter. *A Handbook on Inculturation*. New York: Paulist Press, 1990.
- Schreiter, Robert J. *Constructing Local Theologies*. London: SCM, 1985.
- Schreiter, Robert J. *The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and the Local*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997.
- Sedmak, Clemens. *Doing Local Theology*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2002.
- Shorter, Aylward. *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989.
- 王曉朝，《基督教與帝國文化》（北京：東方，1997）。
- 尼布爾·利查（H. Richard Niebuhr）著，賴英澤、龔書森譯，《基督與文化》（臺南：東南亞神學院協會臺灣分會，1963）。
- 任安道，《福音與文化的姻緣——本地化的實質與進程》（臺北：光啟文化，2018）
- 何夫內爾（Joseph Höffner）著，寧玉譯，《基督宗教社會學說》（上海：華東師範大學，2010）。
- 何光滬，〈「本土神學」管窺〉，《道風》，第2期（1995），頁152–167。
- 吳智勳，〈神學本土化的原則〉，《神思》，47期（2000），頁1–21。
- 吳羅瑜編，《福音信仰與社會倫理》（香港：中國神學研究院，1993增訂版）。
- 沈清松，〈從外推策略看第三千禧年天主教本土化〉，《輔仁宗教研究》第33期（2016），頁127–144。
- 沈清松，〈論梵二之後天主教的本地化：以中華新士林哲學為例釋〉，《哲學與文學》2/43（2016），頁19–38。

亞提拉主教 (Attila Miklosazy, S.J) 著, 張毅民譯, 《唱一首新歌: 梵二的禮儀精神》(臺北: 上智, 2009)。

特雷西著, 馮川譯, 《詮釋學·宗教·希望》(上海: 上海三聯書店, 1998)。

張春申, 〈教會「本位化」的癥結〉, 《神學論集》第 33 期 (1977), 頁 347-361。

張春申, 〈梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議與教會本地化〉, 《中華學術院天主教學術研究所學報》第二期 (1970), 頁 63-72。

漢斯·瓦爾登菲爾斯 (Hans Waldenfels) 著, 張榮芳譯, 《處境化基本神學》1-5 卷 (香港: 原道, 2019)。

鐘鳴旦 (Nicolas Standaert) 著, 陳寬薇譯, 《本地化: 談福音與文化》(臺北: 光啟文化, 1993)。

9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Please refer to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

10. Use of AI Tools

Students are permitted to use AI tools only for translating reading texts and for grammar checking in writing assignments.