Jesus Christ in a Pluralistic Age THEO 091-01
Doyle Seminar on Engaging Difference

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Fall 2012
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Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:15 PM
Healy 104
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:00-11:30 AM and by appt.

Description:

Christians today interpret the significance of Jesus Christ in many different cultures and social settings and in dialogue with other religions. Interpreting these differences is one of the most important challenges in contemporary Christian theology. This course will explore understandings of Jesus Christ in African and Asian cultures and in relation to a variety of religious traditions. The course will examine the place of Jesus in dialogues of Christians with Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Taoists, and Buddhists. It will also explore the development of recent interpretations of Jesus in relation to the cultures of Africa and Asia.

This course will be a seminar in the Doyle Engaging Difference Program. Students will engage in critical research leading to a major essay analyzing the significance of social, cultural, religious, and moral difference in Christian theological interpretations of Jesus Christ. The course will discuss methodological issues involved in research involving such differences.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will have an understanding of the following issues:

--interpretations of Jesus Christ in light of Jewish-Christian dialogue and the history of Jewish-Christian conflict (Cunningham)

--interpretations of Jesus Christ in light of Muslim-Christian dialogue (Leirvik, Küng, Lefebure)

--the development of recent African views of Jesus Christ in relation to African religions and cultures and contemporary African life (Orobator)

--historical interpretations of Jesus Christ in China in relation to Chinese religious traditions, especially Buddhist and Taoist thought (Riegert/Moore)
--interpretations of Jesus Christ in relation to the religions and cultures of South Asia, especially Hinduism and Buddhism (Amaladoss)

--an understanding of the methodological and substantive issues involved in considering Jesus Christ in relation to cultural, social, and religious differences (individual research project).

**Course Requirements:**

Each student is expected to do the assigned readings and come prepared for class discussion. Each student may take three unexcused absences. Any further unexcused absences will result in a lowering of the final course grade by five points on a scale of 100. Students who enter class late are responsible for notifying the instructor of their presence; excessive tardiness may be counted as an absence.

Each student will prepare a question for discussion based on the readings assigned for each class. Active class participation will count for 30% of the course grade.

Each student will write a major, 20-page research paper on a topic related to the issues of Christology and difference discussed in the course. Research topics are due on September 27, 2012. Each student will offer a presentation to the class of research in progress and will participate in critiquing the work of other students. Class presentations and research papers will count for 70% of the course grade.

The provisions of Georgetown University’s Honor Code will apply. All quotations must be cited, with credit given to the original author. In accordance with university policy, the instructor will refer any violations to the proper authorities.

**Class Rules:**

No laptops may be brought to class. No cellphones or other electronic devices may be used during class.

**Required Readings (in order of discussion)**


The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus and schedule as deemed appropriate.

**Schedule:**

Aug 30  Introduction: Engaging Difference in Christology
Sept 4  Cunningham x-xxxii, 1-30
Sept 6  Cunningham 31-76
Sept 11 Cunningham 77-113
Sept 13 Cunningham 114-63; guest speaker Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Sept 18 Cunningham 164-201
Sept 20 Cunningham 202-228
Sept 25 Leirvik 19-53
Sept 27 Lefebure and Küng 485-503; research topics due
Oct 2  Orobator 1-25
Oct 4  Orobator 26-51; guest speaker Rev. Dr. Caleb Oladipo
Oct 9  No class—instructor lecturing in Dublin, Ireland
Oct 11 Orobator 52-93
Oct 16 Orobator 94-156
Oct 18 *Lost Sutras* ix-xi, 1-42
Oct 23 *Lost Sutras* 43-91
Oct 25 *Lost Sutras* 92-136
Oct 30 Amaladoss 1-28
Nov 1 Amaladoss 29-68
Nov 6 Amaladoss 69-104
Nov 8 Amaladoss 105-134
Nov 15 student research presentations
Nov 20 student research presentations
Nov 27 student research presentations
Nov 29 student research presentations
Dec 4 student research presentations
Dec 6 student research presentations
Dec. 19    Research Papers due at 4:00 PM