

## **T 2010: Contemporary Christologies**

Working Syllabus  
Spring Term 2011  
Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Sherrill 2A

The Rev. Patrick S. Cheng, Ph.D.  
Episcopal Divinity School  
Email: pcheng@eds.edu  
Office: Sherrill 104  
Phone: 617-682-1538

### Course Description

Who is Jesus Christ for us today? This course will explore a number of contextual theologies, including the Black Christ, the feminist Christ, the womanist Christ, the Asian Christ, the Asian feminist Christ, the Latin@ Christ, the queer Christ, and the disabled Christ. This course will also explore the intersections of postcolonial and queer theory with contemporary christological reflection.

### Specific Learning Goals

- Obtain a general familiarity with contemporary christologies from various global contexts.
- Read and critically assess primary theological texts from a variety of theological voices.
- Construct a christology from the student's own social location.
- This course will honor multicultural worldviews, respect the contributions by multiple voices, and be taught with a commitment to anti-racism.

### Course Requirements

- 30% Attendance and active participation in class
- 30% Weekly posts on Blackboard
- 10% In-class "creative" presentation
- 30% Constructive christological paper, 10-12 pages (shortened version of 2-3 pages presented in class on April 27, 2011; full paper due via email by Monday, May 2, 2011, for graduating students, and by Monday, May 16, 2011, for all other students)

#### 1. Weekly Posts on Blackboard

No later than 11:59 p.m. on each Tuesday prior to a class session, post on Blackboard one paragraph for each of the following three questions:

- What in the readings surprised and/or excited you the most and why?
- What in the readings troubled and/or upset you the most and why?
- What in the readings would you like to see covered in class for clarification or further discussion and why?

#### 2. In-Class "Creative" Presentation

Each student will make a presentation to the class of no more than five minutes about a given week's readings. Creativity is highly encouraged, whether it is the use of handouts, liturgy, art, music, video, dance, and/or other forms of media.

### 3. Constructive Christological Paper

For your constructive christological paper, you are asked to write a 10-12 page essay in response to Jesus Christ's question in Mark 8:29 ("Who do you say I am?"). That is, construct a christology from your own social location and enter into dialogue with at least two of the theologians assigned for this term. You will present a shortened version of your paper (2-3 pages) at the last class on April 27, 2011. For graduating students, the final paper is due via email to pcheng@eds.edu by Monday, May 2, 2011, at 5:00 p.m. ET. For all other students, the final paper is due via email to pcheng@eds.edu by Monday, May 16, 2011, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

#### Course Grading Criteria

A level -- Submits work on time; proposes creative ideas in class sessions and online discussions; demonstrates critical and creative thinking in the paper. No unexcused absences.

B level -- Submits work on time; shows enthusiasm in class sessions and online posts; demonstrates cogent and coherent thinking in the paper. No more than one unexcused absence.

C level -- Does not submit work on time; shows minimal engagement with the class sessions, online posts, or paper; and/or more than one unexcused absence.

#### Pass/Fail Option

Those who are taking this course on a pass/fail basis need to inform me by the end of class on Wednesday, February 23, 2011. The pass/fail grading system is:

Pass: B or better  
Marginal Pass: B-  
Fail: Lower than B-

#### D.Min. Students (Permission By Instructor Required)

Course work for all Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) students must demonstrate an advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, enhanced competencies in pastoral analysis and ministerial skills, and the integration of these dimensions into the theologically reflective practice of ministry. D.Min. students are encouraged to focus their course work on a particular subject germane to their anticipated thesis project.

#### Required Texts

The following required texts are available for purchase through the EDS online bookstore or the Harvard Coop. They are also available on reserve at Sherrill Library.

- Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christology: A Global Introduction* (hereinafter "*Christology*"), ISBN 978-0801026218, \$21.84
- Kelly Brown Douglas, *The Black Christ*, ISBN 978-0883449394, \$11.66
- Robert E. Goss, *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up*, ISBN: 978-1556351617, \$25.20
- Kwok Pui-lan, ed., *Hope Abundant: Third World and Indigenous Women's Theology* (hereinafter "*Hope Abundant*"), ISBN 978-1570758805, \$22.44
- Robert J. Schreiter, ed., *Faces of Jesus in Africa*, ISBN 978-0883447680, \$18.09

- R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *Asian Faces of Jesus* (hereinafter “*Asian Faces of Jesus*”), ISBN 978-0883448335, \$22.70

The other required readings for the course are marked with † in the course schedule below and are available on reserve and/or on Blackboard.

### Optional Texts

The following optional texts are helpful introductions to various contextual theologies and christologies. They can be purchased through the EDS online bookstore or the Harvard Coop. They are also available on reserve at Sherrill Library.

- Virginia Fabella and R.S. Sugirtharajah, eds., *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, ISBN 978-1570754050, \$35.00.
- Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas and Anthony B. Pinn, eds., *Liberation Theologies in the United States: An Introduction*, ISBN 978-0814727652, \$23.00.

### Extensions

Students who cannot finish their final paper on time must submit a petition for an extension to the registrar’s office.

### Course Schedule

Below is the tentative course schedule, which is subject to change. Please note that the readings marked with † below are available on reserve and/or Blackboard.

Class 1 – January 26	<p><b><i>Please read the following <u>before</u> our first class meeting:</i></b></p> <p>Introduction; The Biblical Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Christology</i>, 9-58</li> <li>• † “Christology,” in <i>Global Dictionary of Theology</i>, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 167-69</li> <li>• † Dorothee Sölle, <i>Thinking About God: An Introduction to Theology</i>, 102-19</li> </ul>
Class 2 – February 2	<p><b><i>The first weekly post on Blackboard is due at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, February 1, 2011.</i></b></p> <p>Christ in History; Jesus Christ and Contemporary Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Christology</i>, 59-108</li> <li>• † “Christology,” in <i>Global Dictionary of Theology</i>, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 169-71</li> <li>• † Images of Jesus Christ in contemporary art</li> </ul>
Class 3 – February 9	<p>Contemporary Western Christologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Christology</i>, 109-78, 189-95, 212-21</li> <li>• † “Christology,” in <i>Global Dictionary of Theology</i>, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 171-75</li> </ul>
Quiet Day – February 16	No Class

- Class 4 – February 23
- The Feminist Christ
- *Christology*, 187-88, 196-203
  - † Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*, 116-38
  - † Rita Nakashima Brock, “The Feminist Redemption of Christ,” in *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power*, 50-70
  - † Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 150-69
- Class 5 – March 2
- The Black Christ; The Womanist Christ
- *Christology*, 204-11
  - Kelly Brown Douglas, *The Black Christ*, 53-117
  - † James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 110-28
  - † JoAnne Marie Terrell, *Power in the Blood?: The Cross in the African American Experience*, 126-44
- Spring Break – March 9
- No Class
- Class 6 – March 16
- The Latin American Christ; The Latin@ Christ
- *Christology*, 222-44
  - † “Christology,” in *Global Dictionary of Theology*, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 175-80
  - † Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 97-105
  - † Michelle A. González, “Jesus,” in *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, ed. Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, 17-24
  - † Ada María Isasi-Díaz, “Identificate con Nosotras: A Mujerista Christological Understanding,” in *Jesus in the Hispanic Community: Images of Christ from Theology to Popular Religion*, ed. Harold J. Recinos and Hugo Magallanes, 38-57
  - † Luis G. Pedraja, *Jesus is My Uncle: Christology from a Hispanic Perspective*, 60-84
- Class 7 – March 23
- The African Christ; The African Feminist Christ
- *Christology*, 245-64
  - Robert J. Schreiter, ed., *Faces of Jesus in Africa*, 3-23, 116-50, 164-80
  - Mercy Amba Oduyoye, “Jesus,” in *Hope Abundant*, 167-85
  - † “Christology,” in *Global Dictionary of Theology*, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 180-84
- Class 8 – March 30
- The Asian Christ; The Asian Feminist Christ
- *Christology*, 265-78
  - *Asian Faces of Jesus*, 131-72, 223-46
  - Sharon A. Bong, “The Suffering Christ and the Asian Body,” in *Hope Abundant*, 186-93
  - Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon, “Dalit Women and the Bible: Hermeneutical and Methodological Reflection,” in *Hope Abundant*, 103-22
  - † “Christology,” in *Global Dictionary of Theology*, ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 184-85

- † Kwok Pui-lan, *Introducing Asian Feminist Theology*, 79-97

Class 9 – April 6

The Asian American Christ; The Indigenous Christ; The Ecological Christ; Postcolonial Christologies

- Lee Miena Skye, “Australian Aboriginal Women’s Christologies,” in *Hope Abundant*, 194-202
- Andrea Smith, “Dismantling the Master’s House with the Master’s Tools,” in *Hope Abundant*, 72-85
- † Denis Edwards, *Jesus, the Wisdom of God: An Ecological Theology*, 69-87
- † Virginia Fabella and R.S. Sugirtharajah, eds., *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, 45-47, 50-52
- † Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, 7-27, 77-99
- † Achiel Peelman, *Christ Is a Native American*, 163-93
- † Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, 168-85

Class 10 – April 13

The Queer Christ

- Robert E. Goss, *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up*, 113-82
- † Marcella Althaus-Reid, *Indecent Theology*, 110-20
- † Patrick S. Cheng, “Rethinking Sin and Grace for LGBT People Today,” in *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, 2nd ed., ed. Marvin M. Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas, 105-18
- † Carter Heyward, *Speaking of Christ: A Lesbian Feminist Voice*, 9-25
- † Justin Tanis, *Trans-Gendered: Theology, Ministry, and Communities of Faith*, 138-43

Class 11 – April 20

The Disabled Christ; The Interfaith Christ

- *Christology*, 179-85, 279-85
- *Asian Faces of Jesus*, 9-45, 75-103
- Clara Luz Ajo Lázaro, “Jesus and Mary Dance with the Orishas: Theological Elements in Interreligious Dialogue,” in *Hope Abundant*, 203-16
- † Nancy L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*, 89-105
- † Thomas E. Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality*, 197-213

Class 12 – April 27

***In-class presentation of shortened version of paper (2-3 pages)***

Conclusion

- *Christology*, 287-90

Monday, May 2

***For graduating students, final paper (10-12 pages) due via email to pcheng@eds.edu by 5:00 p.m. ET.***

Monday, May 16

***For all other students, final paper due via email by 5:00 p.m. ET.***