

The Salvation of Non-Christians: Studies in Theology of Religions

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Dr. **Najib George Awad**

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Office Hours: every Monday and Tuesday, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Meetings:
upon appointment to be agreed upon with the instructor via email message.

- **Course's Description:** In the light of the multi-religions and multi-faiths worldly context, wherein we live today, the questions of how the Christians view other religions, and how they view God's stance on other faiths, become of a crucial importance and primary relevance. This course attempts, first, to introduce students to the main exclusivist, inclusivist, and pluralist trends of thought on other religions within the field of study called "theology of religions." Second, it takes them more specifically into the question of the salvation of the non-Christians and explores with them a possible pneumatological-trinitarian hermeneutics of Christian soteriology that endeavors to exceed the theologically narrow, and seemingly inter-religiously controversial boundaries of Christocentric theology.

- **Course's Objectives:**

At the end of the course the students would:

- 1- acquire knowledge of the basic components of the exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist approaches in this field of study.
- 2- analyze and perceive the core argument of every approach in the field
- 3- would be exposed to parallel approaches to other religions in Islam and see how the trends of exclusivity, inclusivity and plurality find traces in a non-Christian thought
- 4-would practice, by means of the presentations and the term papers, an attempt to present some theology of religions' discourses to religious communities or lay audiences in an accessible and relevant manner.

- Course's Object in Relation to the Study Program (MA #1):

At the end of the course the students would have the chance to

- 1- To acquire foundational and critical knowledge of Christian religion.
- 2- To accumulate knowledge of the practices of Christian religious tradition
- 3- To acquire knowledge and skills for dialogical and constructive engagement with diversity.

- Required Readings During the Course's Sessions: parts of chapters or essays are going to be read, studied and presented by the students from these books during the sessions. The texts that are available in the library would be available to the students on the course's shelf in the library. Other texts that are not available in the library would be provided by the instructor in hard copies form, and they would also be placed on the course's shelf in the library. The students are encouraged, before and during the course, to acquaint themselves with one of the following basic introductory texts on the subject. They texts are not required, yet highly recommended

D'Costa, Gavin. *The Meeting of religions and the Trinity*, Mayknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000.

Dupuis, Jacques, SJ. *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997.

Hick, John. *A Christian Theology of Religions: The Rainbow of Faiths*, Louisville, Ken: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *An Introduction to the Theology of Religion: Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press. 2003.

Knitter, Paul F. *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005.

Sullivan, Francis A, S.J. *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002.

Waardenburg, Jacques (ed.), *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

- Course's Schedule:

(On Theology of Religions)

I- Week One (Thur, Jan. 23, 2020):

Introducing the Syllabus and the subject of the course

II- Week Two (Thur, Jan. 30, 2020):

1- (4:00 – 5:30): What is theology of Religions? (1)

[**R.R:** V.M. Kärkkäinen, *Introduction to the Theology of Religions*, pp. 17-29]

2- (5: 40- 6:45): What is Theology of Religions? (2)

[**R.R:** J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, pp. 1-23]

III- Week Three (Thur, Feb. 6, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Religious Plurality in the Bible (1)
[R.R: V.M. Kärkkäinen, *Introduction to the Theology of Religions*, pp. 33-51]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Religious Plurality in the Bible (2)
[R.R: J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, pp. 29-52]

(The School of Exclusivism)

IV- Week Four (Thur, Feb. 13, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Exclusivism (1): Early Church Fathers
[R.R: Cyprian, *Letters (1-81)*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 51, Lt. 73]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Exclusivism (2): St. Augustine
[R.R: St. Augustine, *Letters*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, Lt. 102]

V- Week Five (Thur, Feb. 20, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Exclusivism (3): Karl Barth
[R.R: K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/2, pp. 283-285; 294-303; 308-309; 314-315; 323-328; 344-359]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Exclusivism in Islam?
[R.R: Y. Qadi, “The Path of Allah or the Paths of Allah?” in *Between Heaven and Hell*, M. H. Khalil (ed.), 109-121]

(The School of Inclusivism)

VI- Week Six (Thur, Feb. 27, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Inclusivism (1): The Second Vatican Council
[R.R: Pope Paul VI, “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” and “Decrees on the Missionary Activity of the Church,” in *The Teachings of the Second Vatican Council*]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Inclusivism (2): Karl Rahner
[R.R: K. Rahner, “Anonymous Christian,” in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 6, pp. 390-398; and Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, pp. 311-321]

VII- Week Seven (Thur, Mar. 12, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Inclusivism (3): Clark Pinnock
[R.R: C. Pinnock, *A Witness in God's Mercy*, pp. 149-184]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Inclusivism (4): Paul Tillich
[R.R: P. Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*, pp. 27-5]

VIII- Week Eight (Thur, Mar. 19, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Inclusivism in Islam?
[R.R: at-Ṭabarī, *The Book of Religion and Empire*, A. Mingana (ed.), pp. 1-19; 162-169]

(The School of Pluralism)
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Pluralism (1): John Hick
[R.R: J. Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, pp. 11-30]

IX- Week Nine (Thur, Mar. 26, 2020):

- 1- (4:00 – 5:30): Pluralism (2): Raimundo Pannikar
[R.R: R. Pannikar, “The Jordan, the Tiber and the Ganges: Three Kairological Moments of Christic Self-Consciousness,” in *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*, J. Hick & P. Knitter (eds.), pp. 89-116]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Pluralism (3): Paul Knitter
[R.R: Knitter, *No Other Name?* pp. 171-186, 197-203]

X- Week Ten (Thur, Apr. 2, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Universalism in Islam?
[R.R: R. Shah-Kasemi, “Beyond Polemics and Pluralism: the Universal Message of the Qur’an,” in *Between Heaven and Hell*, pp. 87-105]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Assessing the Three Schools: Toward a Pneumatico Trinitarian Theology of Religions

Reading Week + Easter Reading Week & Easter... Reading Week & Easter... Reading Week & Easter

(A Pneumatico-Trinitarian Theology)
of Religions

XI- Week Eleven (Thur, Apr. 23, 2020) :

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): Trinitarian Inclusivism: Gavin D'Costa
[**R.R:** D'Costa, "Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality," in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered*, D'Costa (ed.), pp. 16-29]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): Pneumatic Inclusivism: Amos Yong
[**R.R:** Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, pp. 35-56; and Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, pp. 81-120, 235-266]

(Beyond Classical Theology of)
Religions

XII- Week Twelve (Thur, Apr. 30, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): An impasse in Theology of Religions: Impossibility of Inclusivism
[**R.R:** Kenneth Rose, *Pluralism: The Future of Religion*, pp. 25- 35; 65-83]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): from Theology of Religions to Comparative Theology
[**R.R:** Francis Clooney, S.J., *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning Across Religious Borders*, pp. 3- 23]

XIII- Week Thirteen (Thur, May. 7, 2020):

- 1- (4:00- 5:30): from Theology into Interreligious Worship
[**R.R:** Marriane Moyaert, "Introduction: Exploring the Phenomenon of Interreligious Ritual Participation," in *Ritual Participation and Interreligious Dialogue*, M. Moyaert and J. Geldhof (eds.), pp. 1-16]
- 2- (5:40- 6:45): conclusion & Assessment

- Course Requirements and Assessment Expectations

- 1) **Assigned readings' preparation and active class participation:** Students are required to read these texts as thoroughly and perceptively as they can and then to demonstrate an active class participation by coming to the sessions with questions or comments on them and the taught materials therein.
- 2) **Presentations:** the students are required to prepare a presentation on one of the listed topics in the course's outline. The instructor would ask the students to sign in for the required presentations during the first introductory session of the course. The presentation must be no more than **45 minutes** long. The second 45 minutes or so of the session would

be spent in open discussion between the presenter and the classmates over the texts' contents and aspects related to their subjects. The students are free to use any audio-visual or material they find useful in performing their presentations. Every presenter must:

- A- present the content of the readings perceptively and coherently and to make sure that every main argument in the texts have been given fair presentation before his/her class-mates.
- B- give his/her own appraisal and point of view on the text's subject and claims.
- C- attend to the questions of the classmates in a way that would invite for further discussion.

2) **Term Paper:** students are expected to write 12- 15 pages-long papers (foot/endnotes, bibliography, outlines, are excluded). Every student is to imagine that he or she was invited to read an essay/give public lecture to a church/mosque/religious community or lay religious audiences on the theology of religious approach he or she made a presentation on. Every essay must:

- A- introduce lucidly and correctly the field of study called 'theology of religions'
- B- present in a lucid and interesting way a specific theology of religions' approach (i.e. of the scholar which the student already made the presentation on)
- C- displays the importance/problematic influences of this approach and its relevance/irrelevance and validity/invalidity in today's human religious life.

The students must submit their essays to the instructor on **May 7, 2020.**

- Grading Division:

- 1- reading's preparation and class participation (30%)
- 2- Presentation: (30%)
- 3-Term Paper: (40%)

- Grading Criterion

Students are graded using the **A, B, C, or F** system, with "+" and "-" markings allowed. For purposes of this course, these grades mean:

- A (95-100) Demonstrates excellent mastery of the subject matter, a superior ability to articulate this, and provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.

- A- (90-94) Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
- B+(87-89) Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets expectations of the course.
- B (83-86) Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.
- B-(80-82) Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.
- C+(77-79) Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.
- C (70-76) Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.
- F (below 70) Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

Auditors are welcome to participate in discussion and assignments to the degree they wish and should clarify their intent with the instructor, but their work will not be graded.

- Additional Policies:

1) Attendance : Active attendance in class is required. If you know you will be unable to attend a class session please inform the professor in advance. Missing two sessions will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade by 10%. Missing three or more sessions will result in automatic failure of the course. 3 - 4 or more absences --- without a serious reason should be an automatic failure.

2) Plagiarism: Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Plagiarism exists when: a) the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work, b) parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement, c) the whole work is copied from another source [especially a web based source], or d) significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course. See "Plagiarism" at <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>

3) Appropriate Classroom Etiquette and Use of Technology: In order to respect the community within the classroom: 1) Mute all cell phones during class; 2) Utilize laptops for the sole purpose of taking class notes. Please do not surf the web, email, or other programs during class time. Such use of the computer during class is disrespectful of the class and professor, and may result in lowering your participation grade.

4) Inclusive Language: Hartford Seminary is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects

the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God.

5) Extensions: Extensions for papers will be given for illnesses or family emergencies only in consultation with the instructor.

-Selected Bibliography

-General Bibliography

- Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Ayoub, Mahmoud, *A Muslim View of Christianity: Essay on Dialogue*, Irfan A. Omar (ed.), Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. "Faith as Venture", in *Existence and Faith*, Schubert M. Ogden (trans.), New York: Living Age Books, 1960, pp. 55-57
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- Clapsis, Emmanuel, "The Boundaries of the Church: An Orthodox Debate", from www.goarch.org.
- Clooney, Francis, S.J. (ed.), *The New Comparative Theology: Interreligious Insights from the Next Generation*, New York: T&T Clark/ Continuum Imprint, 2010.
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- Eck, Diana L, "On Seeking and Finding in the World's religions", from www.religion-online.org.
- Eliade, Mercia (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987, Vol. 12, "Religious Pluralism", pp. 331-333.
- Gill, Robin (ed.), *Readings in Modern Theology, Britain and America*, London: SPCK, 1995.
- Grenz, Stanly J. *Theology for the Community of God*, Grand Rapids, USA/ Cambridge, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000
- Griffith, Paul J. *An Apology for Apologetics: A Study in the Logic of Interreligious Dialogue*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991.
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- . *The Christian Faith; An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, Oxford; Oxford University Press, Ltd. 2002
- . *The Actuality of the Atonement: A Study of Metaphore and Relationality and the Christian Tradition*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000
- Hallencreutz, Carl F. *New Approaches to Other Faiths, 1938-1968: A Theological Discussion*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1970.
- Hart, Trevor. "Redemption and Fall", in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, Colin Gunton (ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003
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- Hinnelles, John (ed.). *A New Dictionary of Religions*, Oxford: Balckwell Publishers, 1995, "Religious Pluralism", pp. 419-420.
- Hodgeson, Peter; Robert King (eds.). *Readings in Christian Theology*, London: SPCK, 1995.
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- Khalil, Mohammad Hassan (ed.). *Between Heaven and Hell: Islam, Salvation and the Fate of Others*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
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- . *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005.
- Küng, Hans. "What is True of religion? Toward an Ecumenical Criteriology", in *Toward a Universal Theology of Religion*, L. Swidler (ed.), Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987.
- Lampty, Jerusha Tanner. *Never Wholly Other: A Muslima Theology of Religious Pluralism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Lochhead, David. *The Dialogical Imperative: A Christian Reflection on Interfaith Encounter*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988.
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- Niebhur, Richard H. *The Kingdom of God in America*, New York: Harper and Torch Books, 1959.
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- . *Letters (III. 131-164)*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, W. Parson (trans.), New York: The Fathers of the Church, Inc. 1956, Vol. 20.
- . *Letters (IV. 165-203)*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, W. Parsons (trans.), New York: The Fathers of the Church, Inc. 1955, Vol. 30.
- . *Adversus Judaeos*, Marie Liguori (trans.), in *The Fathers of the Church*, R.J. Deferrari (ed.), New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc. 1955, Vol. 27.

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