

## EMT 5931 Theologies and Ethics in Postcolonial & Intercultural Frames

Fall 2010  
Thursday, 2-4pm  
Emmanuel College Room 205

Dr. M. Legge  
Room 210  
416-585-4537



### **Goals**

An examination of several approaches to postcolonial theories, theologies and ethics as critical resources for intercultural practices. What is at stake in Canadian discourses of multiculturalism and postcolonialism for religious communities becoming intercultural? How is culture variously understood and contested? These queries will foreground attention to theo-ethics of the politics of social location; the power of social difference; an ethics of ambiguity and perseverance; identities and epistemology in global, local and transnational frames; living at interstices of complex difference, dislocation and connection; and the negotiation of shared meanings through discourses of class, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexuality, and place. In-class honing of collegial skills for intellectual life based on comprehension of and critical engagement with texts and being willing to be self-reflexive and to communicate one's own stance in relation to others. Seminar discussion format, some lectures. Book review, presentation, and final research paper.

### **Learning Outcomes** *The students completing this course will be able to:*

1. Clarify how postcolonial relations shape cultural interactions and theo-ethical work.
2. Recognize and explore key competing claims of the discourse-- e.g., nationalism/globalism; strategic essentialism/hybridity; solidarity of sameness/solidarity of difference -- as historically rooted in discourses of power and material relations of domination and subordination.
3. State criteria and practices for an adequate theology/theo-ethics of becoming postcolonial intercultural church and communities.
4. Articulate one's own theological or theo-ethics of intercultural relations and several practices adequate and appropriate to one's own situation.
5. Demonstrate critical skills in reading and writing.

### **Texts**

Leela Gandhi. *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*. Columbia University Press, 1998  
Kwok Pui Lan. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Westminster John Knox, 2005.

### **Recommended reading for First Class** (Readily available!)

Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. London: Oxford, 2002.

**Note:** All major presses have their own postcolonial series. Check these out in UT libraries.



#1.	September 16	<u>Getting Started</u>
#2.	September 23	<u>Critical Contexts</u>
#3.	September 30	<u>Imagining Identity, Difference, Social Relations</u>
#4.	October 7	<u>Searching for Moral Wisdom</u>
#5.	October 14	<u>(Re)Making the Other and Resistance</u>
#6.	October 21	<u>Postcolonial Intercultural Hermeneutics I</u>
	<b>October 28</b>	<b>READING WEEK – no class</b>
#7.	November 4	<u>Postcolonial Intercultural Hermeneutics II</u>
#8.	November 11	<u>Postcolonial Feminist Theologies</u>
#9.	November 18	<u>More Theological Voices in Postcolonial Frames</u>
#10.	November 25	<u>What’s at Stake in Canada?</u>
#11.	December 2	<u>Religious Difference and Mending Creation</u>
#12.	December 8	<u>Staying Power: Wild Geese and Solidarities</u> Last class – Closure and Evaluation



**1. Class Participation (10%)** Come to class having done the readings and thought about them. For example, as you read and have questions, write them down, with page reference(s) and then attempt to find an answer.

Similarly, if you have aha's or are baffled, make notes. This is preparation to discuss. Attentive and active listening, sharing air time, and constructive critical engagement of texts and one another are signs of respect and hospitality which are key practices of religious moral life.

**2. Option A: Three short in-class text presentations (15% each x 3 = 45%)** Choose readings marked \*.

**Overview for Class Presentations.**

These should not be summaries. Assume that everyone has done the reading. The purpose is to identify the most important and distinctive moves the author is making, and to raise up for class discussion good (provocative, comparative, substantial) questions for class discussion. Not all the points made by the author can be discussed. Refer to the learning outcomes in some way and pose 2 questions for class discussion. You have 20 minutes to present. The instructor will co-facilitate the class.

**Guidelines Overview for Class Presentations**

Prepare a one page hand out to the class on the day of your seminar: on one page, outline your presentation, with your questions for discussion. [6 double spaced pages plus one-page handout = 15 minutes]

- i. How does the author's particular context and/or experience shape their reading strategies and stance?
- ii. What is the key issue or problem being addressed? What is the thesis? What's at stake and for whom?
- iii. How does the author address the issue (their method, how they proceed)? What explicit (and perhaps distinct) methodological and/or hermeneutical moves does the author make?
- iv. How does the author define and use key methodological or interpretive concepts, e.g., 'starting point', sources of authority, ("scripture, tradition, reason, experience"), 'hermeneutical suspicion' etc?
- v. What counts as religious, moral, and scientific knowledge? What social theory is used in their theological analysis? How does it affect the handling of doctrine(s) and moral agency?
- vi. Do you see any notable/interesting contrasts or similarities with other texts read so far in the class?

**OR**

**2. Option B: 1 text presentation (15%) and Book Review (30%) 8-10 pages, typed, double-spaced.**

Think of yourself as doing an academic book review for a journal such as *The Toronto Journal of Theology* or *The Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, or if you prefer, a church publication such as *Touchstone* or imagine using the review as material for another setting.

First, be clear about the purpose and content of the book. To get a sympathetic reading of the book and its project, you might find it useful to go one chapter at a time and then synthesize your findings to get a grounded understanding of the contours of the book, key terms, and its content and how the argument is put together with what particular sources and hermeneutics, i.e., be conscious of the method. Write about what you discover. The questions for the presentation above can serve well here too.

Then, when you have fairly and accurately presented the book, discuss your response from your context. Name several insights and/or appreciations and limitations. You might dis/close by asking some pithy question(s) to continue the conversation. If you want to share your reviews with colleagues in the class, I invite you to do so.

**3. Major Paper (30%)** 15 -20 pages. On a topic germane to this course and your current academic work.

**NOTE: ALL WRITTEN WORK is due by email to [m.legge@utoronto.ca](mailto:m.legge@utoronto.ca) AND hard copy.**



## #1. September 16 Getting Started

**Introductions** -- situating ourselves and the course

**Frames for doing theology and ethics:** postcolonial and transformative intercultural work *viz.*, postmodern and Marxian

**Recommended reading for first class:**

Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. London: Oxford, 2002

## #2. September 23 Critical Contexts, Necessary Considerations

**Read:** 1. Kwok Pui Lan, ch. 1, 1-28.

2. Leela Gandhi, "Preface", "After Colonialism" in *Postcolonial Theory*, viii-22.

3. Stan McKay, "Healing Communities Following an Experience of Mission as Oppression" in *Violence against Women and Children*, eds. C. Adams et al, 404-411.

3. "A Transformative Vision for the United Church of Canada" (executive summary)  
<http://www.united-church.ca/intercultural/articles>

4. Homi Bhabha, "Introduction" in *The Location of Culture*, 1-24.

5. \* Nausner, Michael, "Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity" in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, Catherine Keller et al, eds. 118-132 .

**Recommended:**

United Church of Canada, *Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire; Challenging Empire*.

## #3. September 30 Imagining Identity, Difference, Social Subject Spaces

**Read:** 1. Leela Gandhi, "Thinking Otherwise" in *Postcolonial Theory*, 23-41.

2. \* Himani Bannerji, "The Passion of Naming: Identity, Difference and the Politics of Class," in *Thinking Through*, 17-40.

3. Iris M. Young, "Five faces of oppression" in *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 39 - 65.

4. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *The post-colonial studies reader* eds. Ashcroft et al (Routledge 1995): 24 - 28

5. Homi Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" in *The post-colonial studies reader*, eds. Ashcroft et al, 206-209.

## #4. October 7 Searching for Moral Wisdom

**Read:** 1. Leela Gandhi, ch. 3 "Postcolonialism & the new humanities" and ch. 6. "Postcolonialism and feminism" in *Postcolonial Theory*

2. M. Shawn Copeland, "The Power of Difference: Understanding, Appreciating, Critiquing Difference" in *the Ecumenist*, Vol. 43. No. 2, (Spring 2006): 1-11.

3. \* Kwok, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, ch.2

4. \* Mayra Rivera, "God at the Crossroads: A Postcolonial Reading of Sophia" in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* eds. Keller et al, 186-203.

**#5. October 14**                    **(Re)Making the Other and Resistance**

- Read:** 1. Gandhi, ch. 4 “Edward Said and his critics” in *Postcolonial Theory*, 64 - 80.  
2. Edward W. Said “From Orientalism” in *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 132-150.  
3. \*Kang, Namsoon, “Who/What is Asian? A Postcolonial Theological Reading of Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism” in *Postcolonial Theologies: divinity and empire*, eds. Catherine Keller et al, 100 -117.

**#6. October 21**                    **Postcolonial Intercultural Hermeneutics I**    **GUEST: Prof. Wenh-In Ng**

- Read:** 1. Wenh-In Ng, “Reading the Bible ‘As If We Were on the Other Side’” in *That All May Be One*, 58 – 59.  
2. Kwok, Pui-lan, “Overlapping Communities and Multicultural Hermeneutics,” in *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible*, 203-215.  
3. Wanda Deifelt, “Intercultural Ethics: Sameness and Otherness Revisited” in *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* (vol 46, No 2 (Summer 2007): 112-119.  
4. Sugirtharajah, R.S. “Textual Takeaways: Third World Texts in Western Metropolitan Centres” in *Postcolonial Reconfigurations: An Alternative Way of Reading the Bible and Doing Theology*, 162-175.  
5. Kwok Pui-Lan, “Feminist Theology as Intercultural Discourse.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, Susan Frank Parsons, ed., 23- 39.

**October 28 -- No class -- READING WEEK**

**#7. November 4**                    **Postcolonial Hermeneutics II**

- Read:** 1. \*Kwok, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, ch. 3, 77- 99.  
2. Musa Dube, “Postcoloniality, Feminist Spaces, & Religion” in *Postcolonialism, Feminism, & Religious Discourse*, ed Laura Donaldson and Kwok Pui-Lan, 100 -122.  
3. \*Musa Dube, “Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations” (Matt 28 :19a): A Postcolonial Perspective on Biblical Criticism and Pedagogy” in Fernando Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, eds *Teaching The Bible*, 224 – 246.  
4. \*Rebecca Todd Peters, “Decolonizing Our Minds: Postcolonial Perspectives on The Church” in Letty M. Russell, et at, eds. *Women’s Voices and Visions of The Church: Reflections from North America*, 93 – 110.

**#8. November 11**                    **Postcolonial Theologies I**

- Read:** 1. Boyung Lee, “From a Margin within the Margin: Rethinking the Dynamics of Christianity and Culture from a Postcolonial Feminist Perspective.” *Journal of Theologies and Cultures of Asia* 3, (March, 2004): 3-23.  
From Kwok, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*:  
2. Chapter 5, “Postcolonial Feminist Theology,” 125 – 149.  
3. \* Chapter 6, “Polifical Theology: Voices of Women from the Third World,” 150-167.  
4. \*Chapter 7, “Engendering Christ: Who do you say that I am?,” 168 – 185.

**#9. November 18      Postcolonial Theologies II**

- Read:** 1. Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner and Mayra Rivera, “Introduction: Alien/Nation, Liberation and the Postcolonial Underground,” in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, eds. Catherine Keller et al, 1 – 21.
2. \*Mark Lewis Taylor, “Achieving Postcolonial Theology in the United States,” 39 – 57, in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, eds. Catherine Keller et al
3. \*Joerg Reiger, “Postcolonialism and the Challenge of the Margins,” in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, eds. Catherine Keller et al, 204 – 220.
4. \*Wenh-In Greer Anne Ng, “Intersecting Journeys within and with Other Nondominant Communities: Toward a Theology of Solidarity,” in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans*. Fumitaka Matsuoka and Eleazar S. Fernandez, eds. 108-112.

**#10. November 25 What’s at Stake in Canada: Multiculturalism & Postcolonialism?**

- Read:** 1. \*Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, “Charting the New Terrain: Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada” in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, eds. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, 3 - 48.
2. \*G.A. Wenh-In Ng, “The United Church of Canada: A Church Fittingly National” In *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, eds. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, 204-246.
3. \*Sneja Gunew, Sneja, “Introduction: situated multiculturalisms,” and “The terms of (multi) cultural difference” in *Haunted Nations: The Colonial Dimensions of Multiculturalisms*, 1-29.
4. \*Razack, Sherene, “When Place Becomes Race” in *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping White Settler Society*, ed, Sherene Razack, 1 – 20.
5. Paula Butler, “Complicity and Resistance: Canadian Churches and Racism in Canada” in *Making Waves (4:2)*: 18 – 24.
6. \*G.A. Wenh-In Ng, “Salmon and Carp, Bannock and Rice: Solidarity between Asian Canadian Women and Aboriginal Women,” *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology*, eds. Rita Nakashima Brock, et al 197-216.

**#11. December 2 Religious Difference and Mending Creation**

- Read:** 1. \*Kwok, ch 8. “Beyond Pluralism: Toward a Postcolonial Theology of Religious Difference” in *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, 186-208.
2. \*Kwok, ch 9. “Mending Creation” in *ibid.*, 209-230.
3. Sharon D. Welch, “Ceremonies of Gratitude, Awakening and Accountability: The Theory and Practice of Multicultural Education” in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within: White People on What We Need to Do*, 249 -280.

**#12. December 8 Staying Power: Wild Geese and Solidarities -- Evaluation and Closure**

- Read:** 1. Leela Gandhi, ch. 7, “One world: the vision of postnationalism” and ch. 9 “The limits of postcolonial theory” in *Postcolonial Theory*, 122 – 140; 167 – 177.
2. Marilyn Legge, “Wild Geese and Solidarity: Conjunctural Praxis for a Spirit-filled Ethics,” 165-185 (via the web on T-Space).