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Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective

Instructors

Kwok Pui-lan
 Episcopal Divinity School
 99 Brattle St
 Cambridge, MA 02138
 (617) 868-3450
Puilk@aol.com

Letty M. Russell
 Yale Divinity School
 116 River St.
 Guilford CT 06437
 (203) 453-6640 [h]; (203) 432-5322 [wk]; (203) 458-0328 [fax]
Letty.Russell@yale.edu

Institution

Yale Divinity School

Course Level and Type

Master level team-taught course

Hours of Instruction

3hrs/week over a 12 week term

Enrolment and Last Year Taught

1996; 22 students

Description

A critical study of the challenges and the contributions of Third World Feminist theologians to the theological discipline. Analyzing emerging themes and issues in African, Latin American, and Asian feminist theology through studying the works of important figures such as Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elsa Tamez, Ivone Gebara, Chung Hyun Kyung, and Kwok Pui-lan. The class will promote global awareness in doing theology and explore possibilities for dialogue and solidarity among women in different contexts.

Course Schedule

1. The Challenge of Multicultural Dialogue

Sept 4 Introduction

Sept 11 Social Location and Theological Method

Sept 18 Postcolonial Discourse

2. African Feminist Theologies

Sept 25 African Contexts

Oct 2 Mercy Amba Oduyoye

Oct 9 Convocation (Mercy Oduyoye as speaker)

3. Latin American Feminist Theologies

Oct 16 Latin American Contexts

(Slides shown of women in Central America by Yale Divinity School students who participated in a travel seminar to Central America)

Oct 23 Elsa Tamez

Oct 30 Ivone Gebara and Maria Clara Bingemer

4. Asian Feminist Theologies

Nov 6 Asian Contexts

Nov 13 Chung Hyun Kyung

(A video on prostitution and militarism in Korea was shown)

Nov 14 "Grapes and Figs Are in Season: A Palestinian Woman's Story," a one-woman performance on Palestinian issues.

Nov 20 Kwok Pui-lan

5. Concluding Remarks

Dec 4 Third World Feminist Theology and the U.S. Context

Closing ritual

Course Requirements

1. Participate in class and small group discussions
2. Attend a racism workshop led by Andrea Ayvazian and Beverly Daniel Tatum (October 24-25).
3. 6 books, plus articles
4. A short introductory statement (2-3 pages) **Due: Sept 11**
5. 2 short papers of approximately 5-7 pages. **Due: Oct 16 and Nov 13.**
6. A final paper of 12-15 pages or a project approved by the instructors. **Due: Dec 13**

Required Readings

Mananzan, Mary John, et al., eds. Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life. Maryknoll: Orbis,

1996.

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

Tamez, Elsa. The Amnesty of Grace: Justification by Faith from a Latin American Perspective. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

Gebara, Ivone, and Maria Clara Bingemer. Mary: Mother of God, Mother of the Poor. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1987.

Chung, Hyun Kyung. Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990.

Kwok, Pui-lan. Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

Other required articles will be made available.

Some Recommended Readings

Aquino, María Pilar. Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993.

Fabella, Virginia, and Mercy Amba Oduyoye, eds. With Passion and Compassion: Third World Women Doing Theology. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988.

Fabella, Virginia, and Sun Ai Lee Park, eds. We Dare to Dream: Doing Theology as Asian Women. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989.

King, Ursula, ed. Feminist Theology from the Third World. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994.

Kinukawa, Hisako. Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994.

Kwok, Pui-lan, ed. "Asian and Asian American Women's Voices"

Journal of Asian and Asian American Theology 2:1 (1997).

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba, ed. The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1992.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford, ed. Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1996).

Tamez, Elsa, ed. Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989.

Weekly Readings

Sept 11 Social Location and Theological Method

Kwok, Pui-lan. "Mothers and Daughters, Writers and Fighters," in Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens: Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective (Louisville: Westminster, 1988), 21-33.

Russell, Letty M. "From Garden to Table," in Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens, 143-55.

Tolbert, Mary Ann. "The Politics and Poetics of Location," in Reading from This Place, vol. 1, ed.

Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 305-17.

Brock, Rita Nakashima. "Interstitial Integrity: Reflections Toward an Asian American Woman's Theology"

Williams, Delores S. "Womanist Theology," in Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action, ed. Ofelia Ortega (Geneva: WCC, 1995), 112-26.

Sept 18 Postcolonial Discourse

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. The Post-Colonial Studies Reader (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1-4, 117-18.

Johnson-Odim, Cheryl. "Common Themes, Different Contexts: Third World Women and Feminism," in Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 314-27.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Ibid, 51-80.

Chow, Rey. "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" in Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 27-54.

Trinh, T. Minh-ha. "Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism," in The Post-Colonial Studies Reader, 264-68.

Johnson, Mike. "Wanting to Be Indian: When Spiritual Searching Turns into Cultural Theft," The Brown Papers 2:7 (April 1995), 1-15.

Sept 25 African Contexts

Sudarkasa, Niara. "The 'Status of Women' in Indigenous African Societies," in Women in Africa and the African Diaspora, ed. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, Sharon Harley, and Anderea Benton Rushing (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1987), 25-41.

Nasimiyu-Wasike, Anne. "Polygamy: A Feminist Critique," in The Will to Arise, 101-18.

Hinga, Teresa H. "Jesus Christ and the Liberation of Women in Africa," in The Will to Arise, 183-94.

Okure, Teresa. "Feminist Interpretations in Africa," in Searching the Scripture, vol. 1, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 76-85.

Kanyoro, Musimbi. "Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Contribution," in Women's Visions, 18-28.

Oct 2 Mercy Amba Oduyoye

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. Daughters of Anowa.

_____. "Spirituality of Resistance and Reconstruction," in Women Resisting Violence, ch. 15.

Oct 16 Latin American Contexts

Aquino, María Pilar. "Economic Violence in Latin American Perspective," in Women Resisting Violence, ch. 9.

Valente, Virginia Vargas. "The Women's Movement in Latin America: A Challenge for Analysis and Action," in Confronting the Crisis in Latin America, ed. DAWN (Santiago, Chile: DAWN, 1988), 75-80.

Tamez, Elsa. "Cultural Violence against Women in Latin America," in Women Resisting Violence, ch. 1.

Russell, Letty M. "Spirituality, Struggle and Cultural Violence," in Women Resisting Violence, ch. 2.

Bidegain, Ana Maria. "Women and the Theology of Liberation," in Through Her Eyes, 15-36.

Oct 23 Elsa Tamez

Tamez, Elsa. The Amnesty of Grace, ch. 1,2,6,7,8,9.

Oct 30 Ivone Gebara and Maria Clara Bingemer

Gebara, Ivone. "The Face of Transcendence as a Challenge to the Reading of the Bible in Latin America," in Searching the Scripture, vol. 1, 172-86.

Gebara, Ivone, and Maria Clara Bingemer. Mary, ch. 2,4,5,6.

Nov 6 Asian Contexts

Mananzan, Mary John. "Sexual Exploitation of Women in Third World Setting," in Essays on Women, rev. ed., ed. Mary John Mananzan (Manila: Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1991), 104-12.

_____. "Paschal Mystery from a Philippine Perspective," Concilium 1993:2, 86-94.

_____, and Sun Ai Park. "Emerging Spirituality of Asian Women," in With Passion and Compassion, 77-88.

Gnanadason, Aruna. "Towards an Indian Feminist Theology," in We Dare to Dream: Doing Theology as Asian Women, ed. Virginia Fabella and Sun Ai Lee Park (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989), 117-26.

_____. "A Spirituality that Sustains Our Struggle," International Review of Mission 80:317 (January 1991): 29-41.

Kinukawa, Hisako. Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), 1-50.

Nov 13 Chung Hyun Kyung

Chung, Hyun Kyung. Struggle to Be the Sun Again.

Nov 20 Kwok Pui-lan

Kwok, Pui-lan. Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World.

Dec 4 Third World Feminist Theology and the U.S. Context

Williams, Delores S. Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993), 178-203.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. "Ecofeminism: First and Third World Women," in Women Resisting Violence, ch. 3.

Russell, Letty M. "Education as Transformation: A Model of Feminist Theological Education," The Brown Papers 2:8 (May 1996), 1-14.

Bivens, Donna K., and Nancy D. Richardson, "Naming and Claiming Our Histories," The Brown papers 1:2 (November 1994), 1-15.

Eugene, Toinette, et al. "Appropriation and Reciprocity in Womanist/Mujerista/Feminist Work," in Feminist Theological Ethics: A Reader, ed. Lois K. Daly (Louisville: Westminster, 1994), 88-120.

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POSTCOLONIAL DISCOURSE

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature. London: Routledge, 1989.

_____, eds. The Post-Colonial Studies Reader. London: Routledge, 1995.

Bhabha, Homi. The Location of Culture. London: Routledge, 1994.

Chambers, Iain. Migrancy, Culture, Identity. London: Routledge, 1994.

Chambers Iain, and Lidia Curti, eds. The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Chow, Rey. Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993)

Donaldson, Laura E. Decolonizing Feminisms: Race, Gender, and Empire Building. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

Duran Eduardo, and Bonnie Duran. Native American Postcolonial Psychology. Albany: SUNY Press, 1995.

Gallagher, Susan VanZanten, ed. Postcolonial Literature and the Biblical Call for Justice. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1994.

Hall, Stuart. Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies, ed. David Morley and Kuan-hsing Chen. London: Routledge, 1996.

Said, Edward. Culture and Imperialism. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues. London:

Routledge, 1990.

Tiffin, Chris, and Alan Lawson, eds. De-Scribing Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality. London: Routledge, 1994.

Trinh, T. Minh-ha. Women, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Williams, Patrick, and Laura Chrisman, eds. Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

FEMINIST THEOLOGY FROM THE TWO-THIRDS WORLD

Anthologies from Third World Perspective

Fabella, Virginia, and Mercy Amba Oduyoye, eds. With Passion and Compassion: Third World Women Doing Theology. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988.

King, Ursula, ed. Feminist Theology from the Third World. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994.

Lewis, Nantawan B., et al. eds. Sisters Struggling in the Spirit: A Women of Color Theological Anthology. Louisville: Women's Ministries Program, Presbyterian Church USA, 1994.

Mananzan, Mary John et al., eds. Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996.

Ortega, Ofelia, ed. Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action. Geneva: WCC, 1995.

Pobee, John S., ed. Culture, Women and Theology. Delhi: ISPCCK, 1994.

_____, and Bärbel von Wartenberg-Potter, eds. New Eyes for Reading: Biblical and Theological Reflections by Women of the Third World. Oak Parks: Meyer Stone Books, 1987.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford, ed. Women Healing Earth. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996.

Russell, Letty M. et al., eds. Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens: Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective. Louisville: Westminster, 1988.

African

Amoah, Elizabeth, ed. Where God Reigns: Reflections on Women in God's World. Accra: Circle of Concerned Women Theologians, 1997.

Kanyoro, Musimbi R., and Nynambura J. Njoroge, eds. Groaning in Faith: African Women in the Household of God. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996.

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

_____. Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1986.

_____. Who Will Roll the Stone Away? Geneva: Risk Books, 1991.

_____, ed. Transforming Power: Women in the Household of God. Accra: Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, 1997.

_____, and Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, eds. The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1992.

Wamue, Grace, and Mary Getui, eds. Violence against Women: Reflections by Kenyan Women Theologians. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996.

Asian

Abraham, Dulcie, et al., eds. Asian Women Doing Theology: Report from the Singapore Conference, November 20-29, 1987. Hong Kong: Asian Women's Resource Centre for Culture and Theology (AWRC), 1989.

_____, eds. Faith Renewed: A Report on the First Asian Women's

Consultation on Interfaith Dialogue. Hong Kong: AWRC, N.d.

AWRC, ed. Faith Renewed II: A Report on the Second Asian Women's Consultation on Interfaith Dialogue, November 1-7, 1991, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Seoul: AWRC, 1995.

Cho, Wha Soon. Let the Weak Be Strong: A Woman's Struggle for Justice. Bloomington: Meyer Stone Books, 1988.

Chung, Hyun Kyung. Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990.

Fabella, Virginia. Beyond Bonding: A Third World Women's Theological Journey. Manila: EATWOT, 1993.

_____, and Sun Ai Lee Park, eds. We Dare to Dream: Doing Theology as Asian Women. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989.

Gnanadason, Aruna. No Longer a Secret: The Church and Violence against Women. Geneva: WCC, 1993.

_____, Musimbi Kanyoro, and Lucia Ann McSpadden, eds. Women, Violence, and Non-Violent Change. Geneva: WCC, 1996.

In God's Image. Quarterly journal published by AWRC, Seoul.

Katoppo, Marianne. Compassionate and Free: An Asian Women's Theology. Geneva: WCC, 1979.

Kinukawa, Hisako. Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994.

Kwok, Pui-lan. Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

Lee, Oo Chung. In Search for Our Grandmother's Spirituality. Seoul: AWRC, 1994.

_____, et al. eds. Women of Courage: Asian Women Reading the Bible. Seoul: AWRC, 1992.

Mananzan, Mary John, ed. Essays on Women. Rev. ed. Manila: St. Scholastica's College, 1991.

_____, ed. Women and Religion. Rev. ed. Manila: St. Scholastica's College, 1992.

Women's Concern Unit, Christian Conference of Asia, ed. Reading the Bible as Asian Women. Singapore: CCA, 1986.

Latin American

Aquino, Maria Pilar. Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993.

Gebara, Ivone, and Maria Clara Bingemer. Mary: Mother of God, Mother of the Poor. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1987.

Tamez, Elsa. Against Machismo. New York: Meyer Stone Books, 1987.

_____. The Amnesty of Grace: Justification by Faith from a Latin American Perspective. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

_____. Bible of the Oppressed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982.

_____. The Scandalous Message of James: Faith without Works is Dead. New York: Crossroad, 1990.

_____, ed. Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989.

Pacific

Meo, Lisa. "The Role of the Church in Combating the Exploitation of Women Garment Workers." M. Th. Theses, Pacific Theological College, Suva, Fiji, 1993.

Minorities in the USA: Asian American

Brock, Rita Nakashima. Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power. New York: Crossroad, 1988.

_____, and Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite. Casting Stones: Prostitution and Liberation in Asia and the United States. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

Kim, Ai Ra. Women Struggling for a New Life: The Role of Religion in the Cultural Passage from Korea to America. New York: State University of New York Press, 1996.

Kim, Jung Ha. Bridge-Makers and Cross-Bearers: Korean American Women and the Church. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997.

Kwok, Pui-lan, ed. "Asian and Asian American Women's Voices," Journal of Asian and Asian American Theology 2:1 (1997), whole issue.

Ng, Greer Anne Wenh-In, ed. Generations Trying to Live Together. Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1995.

Minorities in the USA: Mujerista Theology (Hispanic women's theology in the USA)

Isasi-Diaz, Ada Maria. En La Lucha (In the Struggle): A Hispanic Women's Liberation Theology. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

_____. Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty-First Century. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996.

_____, and Yolanda Tarango. Hispanic Women: Prophetic Voice in the Church. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988.

Minorities in the USA: Womanist Theology (African American women's theology)

Cannon, Katie Geneva. Black Womanist Ethics. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.

_____. Katie's Canon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community. New York: Continuum, 1995.

Douglas, Kelly Brown. The Black Christ. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994.

Grant, Jacquelyn. White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989.

Sanders, Cheryl J. Empowerment Ethics for a Liberated People: A Path to African American Social Transformation. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

_____, ed. Living the Intersection: Womanism and Afrocentrism in Theology. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Townes, Emilie M. In a Blaze of Glory: Womanist Spirituality as Social Witness. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.

_____, ed. A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993.

_____, ed. Embracing the Spirit: Womanist Perspectives on Hope, Salvation, and Transformation. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1997.

Weems, Renita J. Battered Love: Marriage, Sex, and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

_____, Just a Sister Away. San Diego: Lura Media, 1988.

Williams, Delores S. Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993.

Pedagogical Reflections

The purpose in teaching this course was to open up the horizon of women and men to the riches of theological perspectives available from women whose voices are not ordinarily heard in white feminist discourse. These voices from women of color both in the US and abroad provide a rich cross-cultural, national, and racial mix from which to learn about global solidarity among women. Having an interracial, cross-cultural team doing the teaching modeled the possibility of dialogue and cross cultural learning for the class. The work load was reasonable and most could do the reading assignments. Some needed guidance in entering the frameworks of

other religious worlds. Particularly important was the unpacking of white privilege as part of the class, so that white students could own their own privilege while being in a context where all students were encouraged to risk dialogue about difference and its impact on theological perspectives.

Select a location 

http://www.wlu.ca/~wwaar/syllabi/feminist_theology-puilan_and_russell.html

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