Theology after the Holocaust

Religious Studies 268: Modern Judaism
and
Religious Studies 285: Roman Catholicism's Encounter with Other Religions
cross-listed as Catholic Studies 271

Spring, 2001
T-TH 11:50-1:20, SAC 254
DePaul University

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Office Hours: T-TH 9:00-10:00             T-TH 9:00-10:00

(other days and times by appointment)
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Course web site: http://www.depaul.edu/~jcarlson/extra/holocausttheology.html. Consult this site for an
electronic copy of the syllabus, which will make it easier to view and print readings simply by clicking on the
links as they appear the last section of the syllabus. Discussion questions and other materials relevant to the
course will also be posted at this location.

A. Description and Goals

This course seeks to engage students in a critical consideration of the moral, religious and theological
implications of Nazi Germany’s "war against the Jews," the intentional and calculated destruction of some 6
million European Jews (accompanied by the enormous suffering and losses experienced by other
"undesirable" groups) which is referred to as the Shoah, or Holocaust. In order to do this, students will
consider those events and perceptions that allowed the Holocaust to come about, particularly the development
of racial anti-Semitism and religious anti-Judaism, which trace part of its lineage back to the Catholic and
Christian theological perspectives, values and actions of the early and medieval church. The behavior and
teachings of the church, its leaders, and lay adherents during the holocaust will be explored, as will the
religious motivations for the extraordinary courage displayed by those Christians who risked their lives to
save Jews. The course will also focus on traditional and contemporary theologies of Judaism and Christianity,
and explore how various thinkers have chosen to respond to the Holocaust’s challenge to Jewish and
Christian traditions, values, and theological positions.

This course has some specific learning goals, and if you complete the course successfully you will achieve
the following:

1. You will be able to define, describe and explain some of the key facts about the important themes, figures,
texts and other materials we consider in our course.

2. You will be able to analyze complex ideas to show an understanding of their structure and meaning.

3. You will be able to make plausible and insightful comparisons of different concepts and thinkers.

4. You will formulate evaluations of the relative merits of some of the ideas under consideration, and
articulate your own ideas as well, drawing upon knowledge and insight you have gained in this class or
elsewhere in order to make a solid, plausible and potentially convincing case for your own position.
5. You will develop your capacity for clear and effective writing.

6. You will develop your capacity for clear and effective verbal communication.

This course counts for Traditions in Context credit in the Religious Dimensions liberal studies learning domain.

B. Student Requirements

1. Preparation of readings and assignments. Please come to each class session having done any assigned readings, taken thorough notes, and having tried your best to find out the meanings of terms and concepts in the readings that are unfamiliar to you. If you do this carefully and consistently you will be well prepared for our discussions and quizzes and you will have a strong foundation from which to write your papers. This course has been designed with the expectation and requirement that you will spend at least six hours per week outside of class preparing readings and assignments. Being in college is hard work, but hopefully it is work you enjoy doing, and take pride in doing well. You owe it to yourself, to others in the class, and to the integrity of the learning process to approach your academic work with sufficient seriousness. Missing class or coming to class late will result in a lower grade in this area.

2. Discussion in class. Asking questions, raising concerns and offering your own ideas during class discussions are crucial components of the learning process. The overall degree of intellectual engagement you demonstrate in the course will be assessed, focusing on the extent to which you are an active, informed, stimulating participant in class discussions.

3. Quizzes. These will allow you to demonstrate your ability to define, describe and explain some of the key facts about the important themes, figures, texts and other materials we consider in our course. Dates for quizzes will not be announced in advance. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. A missed quiz will be scored as zero. However your lowest quiz score will be dropped in calculating your final grade.

4. Extra Credit. There will be two opportunities to complete optional assignments for extra credit.

   - Attend a performance of *The Action Against Sol Schumann* at the Victory Gardens Theater, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago (just a short walk of a few blocks from the Lincoln Park Campus). Play dates: Tuesday, April 17 at 8:00 PM or Thursday, April 19 at 8:00 PM. Cost = $5.00. You must sign up and pay by Thursday, April 5. Write a 2-page critical analysis of the play in light of some of the materials discussed in our course. Due at the next regular class session. Worth up to 20 points.

   - Attend at least two hours of the conference "*Eichmann in Jerusalem*: 40 Years Later" taking place on DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus on Friday, May 11 and Saturday, May 12. Details to be announced. Write a 2-page critical analysis of the conference in light of some of the materials discussed in our course. Due at the next regular class session. Worth up to 20 points.

5. Papers. These will allow you to demonstrate your ability to analyze complex ideas, to show an understanding of their structure and meaning, make plausible and insightful comparisons of different concepts and thinkers, formulate evaluations of the relative merits of some of the ideas under consideration, and articulate your own ideas, drawing upon knowledge and insight you have gained in this class or elsewhere in order to make a solid, plausible and potentially convincing case for your own position. Three papers will be assigned (each approximately six typed, double spaced pages). See the schedule below for specific due dates for the papers.

C. Grading
Grades will be based on a point system as follows:

- Discussion in class worth 150 points
- Quizzes combined worth 210 points
- First paper worth 200 points, assigned Apr. 19, due May 1
- Second paper worth 220 points, assigned May 10, due May 22
- Third paper worth 220 points, assigned May 31, due June 12 by 11:00 AM

The final course grade will be determined according to the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total points accumulated</th>
<th>Final course grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>930-1000</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900-929</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>870-899</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>830-869</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800-829</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>770-799</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>600-669</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 600</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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D. Academic Integrity

Please read the Academic Integrity Policy in the current Student Handbook. It describes violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism and cheating, noting that students who commit such violations are subject to sanctions such as (but not limited to) lowering a grade or failing the course. The policy states that students "must abstain from any violations of academic integrity and set examples for each other by assuming full responsibility for their academic and personal development…"

E. Required Texts


These texts are available for purchase at DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus Bookstore. Also, they may be checked out for two hours at a time from the Richardson Library Reserve Desk.

F. Schedule

**Tuesday April 3**
Introduction and Syllabus. Film: *Night and Fog*.

**Jewish and Christian Religious/Theological Traditions**

**Thursday April 5** (print and bring these texts to class) Note: The easiest way to get these materials is to visit the course web site at [http://www.depaul.edu/~jcarlson/extra/holocausttheology.html](http://www.depaul.edu/~jcarlson/extra/holocausttheology.html) and simply click on
• Genesis 1:26-31 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Genesis&chapno=1&startverse=26&endverse=31
• Genesis 18:16-33 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Genesis&chapno=18&startverse=16&endverse=33
• Exodus 14:30-31 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Exodus&chapno=14&startverse=30&endverse=31
• Leviticus 19:33-34 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Leviticus&chapno=19&startverse=33&endverse=34
• Pastoral Constitution On the Church in the Modern World (This link takes you to the entire text, but you only need to read Sections 11-32; print and bring these sections to class) http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

Tuesday April 10 (print and bring these texts to class)

• Deuteronomy 29:1-29 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Deuteronomy&chapno=29&startverse=1&endverse=29
• Lamentations 1:1-22 http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=citation&book=Lamentations&chapno=1&startverse=1&endverse=22

Thursday April 12
Tuesday April 17


Thursday April 19

- Gospel According to Matthew (Read the entire text; print it and bring it to class as well as the selections from Paul’s Letter to the Romans listed below) [http://www.hri.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=DIV1&byte=4563978](http://www.hri.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=DIV1&byte=4563978)

**PAPER 1 ASSIGNED.**

Tuesday April 24


Thursday April 26

Ruether pages 183-225: Chapter 4, "The Social Incorporation of the Negative Myth of the Jews in Christendom."

Tuesday May 1

**PAPER 1 DUE.** Film: *The Cross and the Star*.

**Narratives From Inside the Holocaust**

Thursday May 3


Tuesday May 8


**Theological Reflections after the Holocaust**

Thursday May 10


**PAPER 2 ASSIGNED.**
Tuesday May 15

Thursday May 17

Tuesday May 22
PAPER 2 DUE. Films: Shoah and Weapons of the Spirit (excerpts).

Thursday May 24

Tuesday May 29
- Declaration On The Relation Of the Church to Non-Christian Religions [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html] (Read the entire text; print it and bring it to class)

Thursday May 31
PAPER 3 ASSIGNED.

Tuesday June 5

Thursday June 7

TUESDAY JUNE 12: PAPER 3 DUE BY 11:00 AM.