

ICS Calendar Title: “To the Unknown God” : Paul and Some Philosophers

ICS Course Code: ICS 220510 F10

Instructor: Dr. Ron Kuipers

Term and Year: Thursdays, 1:30-4:30 pm, Fall 2010

Last Updated: November 2, 2010

1. Course description

Key contemporary thinkers within and beyond the borders of Christianity have engaged in a new exploration of Pauline texts, in order to uncover what Jacob Taubes calls Paul’s “political theology”. We shall explore key texts in this growing literature, paying particular attention to the motivations that inform the secular (or better: ‘extra-Christian’) turn to these Pauline texts for insight into the contemporary political situation. How might this turn affect the future course of secular thinking? In turn, how might the insights of these philosophers affect a Christian’s understanding of scripture?

2. Reading Schedule

1: Sept. 16	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reading TBD
2: Sept. 23	Jacob Taubes, <i>The Political Theology of Paul</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Introduction▪ Part I—Paul and Moses: The Establishment of a New People of God
3: Sept. 30	Jacob Taubes, <i>The Political Theology of Paul</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Part II—Effects. Paul and Modernity: Transfigurations of the Messianic
4: Oct. 7	Giorgio Agamben, <i>The Time that Remains</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The First Day: <i>Paulos doulos christou Iēsou</i>▪ The Second Day: <i>Klētos</i>
5: Oct. 14	Giorgio Agamben, <i>The Time that Remains</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Third Day: <i>Aphōrismenos</i>▪ The Fourth Day: <i>Apostolos</i>
6: Oct. 21	Giorgio Agamben, <i>The Time that Remains</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Fifth Day: <i>Eis euaggelion theou</i>
Oct. 25-29	Reading Week—no class
7: Nov. 4	Giorgio Agamben, <i>The Time that Remains</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Sixth Day: (<i>Eis euaggelion theou</i>)▪ Threshold or <i>Tornada</i>
8: Nov. 11	Alain Badiou, <i>Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prologue▪ Chapter 1: Paul: Our Contemporary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 2: Who is Paul? ▪ Chapter 3: Texts and Contexts
9: Nov. 18	Alain Badiou, <i>Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 4: Theory of Discourses ▪ Chapter 5: The Division of the Subject ▪ Chapter 6: The Antidialectic of Death and Resurrection
10: Nov. 25	Alain Badiou, <i>Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 7: Paul Against the Law ▪ Chapter 8: Love as Universal Power ▪ Chapter 9: Hope ▪ Chapter 10: Universality and the Traversal of Differences ▪ Chapter 11: In Conclusion
11: Dec. 2	Slavoj Žižek, <i>The Puppet and the Dwarf</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction: The Puppet Called Theology ▪ Chapter 1: When East Meets West ▪ Chapter 2: The “Thrilling Romance of Orthodoxy”
12: Dec. 9	Slavoj Žižek, <i>The Puppet and the Dwarf</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 3: The Swerve of the Real ▪ Chapter 4: From Law to Love...and Back
13: Dec. 16	Slavoj Žižek, <i>The Puppet and the Dwarf</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 5: Subtraction, Jewish and Christian ▪ Appendix: Ideology Today

3. Course requirements:

Total reading: 1250 pages, including research for paper, of which approximately 40-60 pages per week is required to prepare for class.

In-seminar leadership: In order to structure class discussion in a way that is both meaningful to students as well as guided by a close reading of the assigned texts, each week different students will take turns introducing the readings for that class. The goal for these presentations, however, is manifestly *not* that of complete exegetical coverage of the assigned reading. Instead, the presentation will *begin* with the most pressing question that the assigned reading raises for the student. This question might be pressing for intellectual, but also existential and religious reasons. After stating the question, the student will pinpoint the *particular* location(s) in the text where that question emerged for him or her, and then go on to offer a *close reading* of that limited portion of text. This close reading should take the form of a line-by-line analysis of the selected text, complete with suggested interpretation *and* explanation of why that portion of text raises the question it does. This interpretation may in turn radiate out from that selection and touch on other parts of the assigned text, but again, complete coverage is not required or requested. I will provide formative assessments of these in-seminar leadership assignments throughout the course, so they are to be submitted to me after the class in which they are used. They will also be used to assess the seminar leadership portion of the overall class evaluation.

Course paper: One course paper whose theme arises from in-class reading and discussion. Length: Master's: 3000–5000 words; Doctoral: 5000–7000 words. *A substantive outline*, including tentative thesis statement (50-100 words), outline, and proposed extra reading is *due on Thurs., Nov. 4, 2011*. The paper is *due on Fri., Feb. 4, 2011*.

4. Description and weighting of elements to be evaluated:

ICS Students:

Class Participation: 10%; Seminar Leadership: 30%; Paper: 60%

TST Students:

Class participation: 20%; Seminar Leadership: 30%; Paper: 50%.

5. Required Readings

- Agamben, Giorgio. 2005. [*The Time that Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2665.3 .A4413 2005)
- Badiou, Alain. 2003. [*Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2650.52 .B3313 2003)
- Taubes, Jacob. 2004. [*The Political Theology of Paul*](#). Trans. Dana Hollander. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2665 .52 .T3813 2004)
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2003. [*The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*](#). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BR121.3 .Z59 2003)

6. Some Recommended Readings

- Barth, Karl. 1968. [*The Epistle to the Romans*](#). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2665 .B34 1968)
- Benjamin, Walter. 1968. Theses on the Philosophy of History. In [*Illuminations*](#). Ed. Hannah Arendt. New York: Schocken Books: 253-64. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: HM101 .B46 1985a)
- Caputo, John D. and Linda Martin Alcoff, eds. 2009. [*St. Paul Among the Philosophers*](#). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2650 .52 S7 2009)
- Donaldson, Terence L. 2005. *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. (Robarts Library: BS2651 .D66 1997X)
- _____. 2008. *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press. (Robarts Library: BM720 .N6 D66 2007X)
- Dunn, James. D. G. 2008. *The New Perspective on Paul*. Revised Ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (Robarts Library: BS2651 .D833 2008)
- Elliot, Neil. 2007. [*The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*](#). Minneapolis: Fortress Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2665.3 .E44 2007)
- Harink, Douglas. 2003. [*Paul Among the Postliberals: Pauline Theology beyond Christendom and Modernity*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2651 .H37 2005)
- Hawthorne, Gerald F., et. al., eds. 1993. [*Dictionary of Paul and His Letters: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*](#). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2650.2 .D53 1993)

- Keesmaat, Sylvia. 1999. [*Paul and his Story: \(Re\)Interpreting the Exodus Tradition*](#). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2665.2 .K43 1999)
- Keesmaat, Sylvia and Brian J. Walsh. 2004. [*Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire*](#). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2715.6 .R65 W35 2004)
- Kroeker, P. Travis. 2005. Whither Messianic Ethics? Paul as Political Theorist. In *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 25/2: 37-58. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf)
- Milbank, John, Slavoj Žižek, and Creston Davis. 2010. [*Paul's New Moment: Continental Philosophy and the Future of Christian Theology*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BR100 .M45 2010)
- Ridderbos, Herman. 1977. [*Paul: An Outline of his Theology*](#). Trans. John Richard De Witt. London: SPCK. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2651 .R513)
- Sanders, E.P. 1977. *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*. London: SCM Press. (Robarts Library: BM177 .S2 1977)
- _____. 1991. *Paul*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Robarts Library: BS2651 .S23 1991)
- Schmitt, Carl. 1985. [*Political theology: four chapters on the concept of sovereignty*](#). Cambridge: MIT Press (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: JC327 .S3413 2005); LAW: JC327 .S3413 1985 -STL)
- Segal, Alan F. 1990. *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (Robarts Library: BS2655 .J4 S44 1990)
- Stendahl, Krister. 1976. [*Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*](#). London: SCM. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2506 .S76)
- Wenham, David. 1995. *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (Robarts Library: BS2653 .W45 1995)
- Witherington III, Ben. 1994. *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Triumph and Tragedy*. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press. (Robarts Library: S2650.2 .W57 1994)
- _____. 1998. *The Paul Quest: The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (Knox Library: BS2506 .W56 1998)
- Wright, N.T. 1991. [*The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*](#). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2655 .C74 W75 1993)
- _____. 1997. [*What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?*](#) Sutherland, NSW: Lion Publishing. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2651 .W75 1997)
- _____. 2005. [*Paul: In Fresh Perspective*](#). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2651 .W748 2005)
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2000. [*The Fragile Absolute—Or, Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?*](#) London: Verson. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT1102 .Z58 2008)
- Žižek, Slavoj and John Milbank. 2009. [*The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic?*](#) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT40 .Z59 2009)