

THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: HUMAN LIFE IN INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

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Course Description

At the most simple level, theological anthropologies investigate what it means to be human. Yet the answers we pose will radically influence the way we see human life and live it, not just individually but together in society. Furthermore, our questioning is rarely neutral. Instead it aims at the practical alteration of human life as we know it: to enhance life and promote its flourishing, or to better manipulate, control, and destroy it.

Over the last two millennia, the western philosophical discourse on human nature has been deeply influenced by the resources and traditions of the Christian faith. This influence has also spilt over into the public sphere to impact on the development of broader western culture itself. In principle, those societies that came under the influence of Christianity engaged with ideas of human equality, of human value, and of our limitations and sinful fallenness. But in practice, the discussion of anthropology and the practical implementation of its models in society were incredibly ambivalent events. Furthermore, in today's Asian context, a highly individualized Christian view of the human being as sinner and as image of God fits poorly with local, more social concepts of humanity. Therefore, if programmes for the enhancement of human life in individual and social dimensions grow out of our underlying anthropologies, we need to begin with deeper understandings of those anthropologies.

In this course, students will:

1. be introduced to the historical traditions in theological anthropology and philosophical anthropology;
2. understand the development of the concept of the *image of God* in church tradition;
3. examine the problem of human sinfulness;
4. understand theological anthropology in the context of philosophical and scientific views of the human being;
5. test the sturdiness of theological anthropologies under the weight of current challenges facing the concept of the human being; and
6. investigate ways that traditional western theological anthropologies could be brought into engagement with the Taiwanese context, with a view to enhancing human life in Taiwan.

Assessment

1 research paper 100%

Core Texts

Niebuhr, R., *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. 1 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996)
[Chinese Edition]

Pannenberg, P., *What is Man?* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970) [Chinese Edition]

Additional Texts. Students will receive a reader with excerpts from these selected texts:

Brown Taylor, B., *Speaking of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley, 2000).

Brown, W. S., N. Murphy, H. N. Malony, *Whatever happened to the soul? Scientific and theological portraits of human nature* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998).

Calvin, J., *Institutes of the Christian Religion* [Chinese Edition]

Dekkers, M., *Dearest Pet* (London: Verso, 2000).

Hampson, D., *Theology and Feminism* (Chichester: Wiley, 1991).

Helwys, T., *A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity*, ed. R. Groves (Macon: Mercer, 1998).
 McGrath, A., *Christian Theology Reader* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013). [Chinese Edition]
 Moltmann, J., *God in Creation* (London: SCM, 1985).
 Niebuhr, R., *Moral Man and Immoral Society* = 道德的人與不道德的社會 (台北：永望, 1982).
 Nietzsche, F., *Genealogy of Morals* (Mineola: Dover, 2003) [Chinese Edition]
 Pannenberg, W., *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* (London: T & T Clark, 2004).
 Peters, T., *Playing God? Genetic Determinism and Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
 Taylor, C., *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2000).
 Welker, M., *The Depth of the Human Person. A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014).

Course Outline:

Note: The content of the course may be adjusted during semester to meet student needs.

Session	Content
1	<u>Part I: Introduction</u> Existence and Personhood: What is a human being?
2 & 3	<u>Part II: Philosophical Anthropology</u> 1. The Human as a Unique Being: Scheler, Gehlen, Plessner
4 & 5	2. The Human as Animal: Darwin, Nietzsche, Singer
6	<u>Part III: The Human Being as Image of God</u> 1. Early Church: Augustine
7	2. Reformation: Calvin and Helwys
8	3. Modern Theology: Barth and Moltmann
9	<u>Tutorial: How to write advanced research papers for systematic theology.</u>
10	<u>Part IV: The Human Being as Sinner</u> 1. Sin, Guilt, and Responsibility in Theology and Law
11 & 12	2. Original Sin and the Origins of Sin: Classical and Modern views
13	<u>Part V: The Human Being as Creature</u> 1. Divided Beings: Body, Soul, and Non-reductive Physicalism

Session	Content
14	2. Human Sexuality and Gender
15	3. Beyond Individualism: The Human Being as Social Network