

WM 511 Cultures and Contextualization – Course Guide
Spring 2011 – Covenant Theological Seminary (St. Louis, MO, USA)

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Course Purpose

Formulate an operative understanding of ongoing contextualization processes that necessarily take place among all the world's various cultural settings in relation to God's World Mission.

Course Objectives

- Articulate the historical setting of contemporary theological discussions on Christian contextualization.
- Describe the broader historical settings of various instances of Christian contextualization.
- Identify the process(es) of Christian contextualization characteristically taking place within one's own setting(s).
- Be further equipped to handle Christian contextualization issues in one's future ministry.

Texts

Sanneh, Lamin. *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Second and rev. ed. American Society of Missiology Series, No.13, gen. ed., James A. Sherer (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009).

Shaw, R. Daniel and Charles E. Van Engen. *Communicating God's Word in a Complex World: God's Truth or Hocus Pocus?* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003).

Jennings, J. Nelson. *Theology in Japan: Takakura Tokutaro (1885-1934)*. American Society of Missiology Dissertation Series, gen. ed., Gary McGee (Lanham, Maryland: United Press of America, Inc., 2004).

Recommended Readings: Frost, Michael, "Translating the Gospel," available online at www.thejerichoroad.com/download.../Translating%20the%20Gospel.pdf

Jennings, J. Nelson, "The Tapestry of Contextualization," in Mission to the World, comp. and ed., *Looking Forward: Voices from Church Leaders on Our Global Mission* (Enumclaw, WA: Winpress Publishing, 2003), 24-30. Also available online in the August, 2006 issue of Mission to the World's *InVision* Newsletter at http://www2.mtw.org/home/site/templates/mtw_invision.asp?resolutionfile=templatespath%7Cmtw_invision.asp&area_2=public/Resources/Invision/2006/08/TapestryContext

Jennings, J. Nelson, "Suburban Evangelical Individualism: Syncretism, (Harvie) Conn-textualization, or Something Else?" *Global Missiology* 2.4 (July, 2005). Available online at <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/viewFile/81/236>

Academic Honesty Statement

As part of our purpose to train servants of the triune God to walk with God in all of life, we expect godly integrity in the academic work done at Covenant. At the heart of this integrity is the commitment to accurately represent our work to others. This means that members of Covenant's community will not engage in presenting the ideas of others as their own (plagiarism) or in violating the rules under which papers, projects, and examinations are to be completed (cheating). Please refer to the Student Handbook for a complete explanation of this policy. For tutorial help through the writing center, please contact the Dean's office.

The first violation of academic honesty standards will result in failure of the assignment or test in question and could, depending on the assignment, result in failure of the class. A second violation will result in dismissal from the institution.

Cultures and Contextualization Course Reading Schedule (Spring, 2011)

Class #1, Jan 28:	Introduction	(No required reading)
Class #2, Feb 2:	I. Translation	
	Contemporary Historical Setting, NT	Sanneh, thru Ch.1
Class #3, Feb 4:	The Hellenistic Factor	Sanneh, Ch.2
Class #4, Feb 9:	KJV and Vernacular	Sanneh, Ch.3
Class #5, Feb 11:	Vernacular & Colonialism-Westernization	Sanneh, Ch.4
Class #6, Feb 16:	Comparing England and the Niger Region	Sanneh, Ch.5
Class #7, Feb 18:	Relig and Theo Themes of Trans in Africa	Sanneh, Ch.6
Class #8, Feb 23:	Further Repercussions	Sanneh, Ch.7
Class #9, Feb 25:	Islam & Christianity, Other Themes	Sanneh, Ch.8 thru end
Class #10, Mar 2:	II. Methodology	
	Intro to Takakura, S&V	thru NJ-I; S&V, 237-259
Class #11, Mar 4:	The Intent: Knowing God in Context	S&V, thru Ch.1
Class #12, Mar 9:	The Source: God's Word	S&V, Ch.2
Class #13, Mar 11:	The Message: Eternality & Development	S&V, Ch.3
Class #14, Mar 16:	Theologically Appropriate Communication	S&V, Ch.4
Class #15, Mar 18:	Class Discussion	NJ-II(1)
Class #16, Mar 30:	Communicationally Appropriate Comm.	NJ-II(2); S&V, Ch.5
Class #17, Apr 1:	Culturally Appropriate Comm.	S&V, Ch.6
Class #18, Apr 6:	Seeking Relevant Communication	S&V, Ch.7
Class #19, Apr 8:	Enabling Relevant Communication	S&V, Ch.8
Class #20, Apr 13:	Pursuing Relevant Communication	NJ-III; S&V, Ch.9
Class #21, Apr 15:	S&V Recap; Crystallizing Issues	S&V, 209-235
Class #22, Apr 20:	III. Particulars	
	Contextualization and Takakura	NJ-IV
Class #23, Apr 27:	Takakura's <i>FK</i> and our Analysis	
Class #24, Apr 29:	Takakura's Particulars	NJ-end
Class #25, May 4:	PCI Stmt on War; Reports	http://worldwidefreeresources.com/upload/4925845a90ccc.pdf
Class #26, May 6:	Reports & Conclusion	(No required reading)

Requirements

1. Class attendance, which will be checked at the beginning of each class period. Unexcused absence from class time exceeding the number of credit hours for the course will result in a deduction from the final grade of five percentage points per hour of such excessive unexcused absence. (If providentially possible, excused absences must be requested by emailing the professor before the class period missed.)
2. Read assigned materials by the class periods in which they are scheduled to be discussed (see class schedule). Completion of reading assignments will be checked at each class period. (Assignments may be completed late for reduced credit—reduced 20% per class period.) **23%** of total grade.
3. Submit (as with all other assignments, via the Portal, in Word format, with student’s last name listed first in filename) a 1000-word historical overview of 15th–18th century (a) China, (b) Indonesia, (c) Mexico or (d) South Africa (or the areas roughly equivalent to these contemporary nation-states), with special reference to that area’s relationship with Europe. Due on the Portal at 9:30 am, Tuesday, March 1. **20%** of total grade.
4. Submit a 1000-word critical analysis evaluating the implications of S&V’s methodology for understanding contextualization processes. Due on the Portal at 9:30 am, Tuesday, Apr 19. **20%** of total grade.
5. Submit a 2000-word contextual analysis of a select Christian thinker, movement, confessional statement, or some other manifestation of the Christian faith from the list below (or otherwise approved by the instructor). Interaction with course themes must be integral to the paper. Due on the Portal at 9:30 am, Tuesday, May 4. Brief reports on these papers will be given and discussed in class. **37%** of total grade.

Note: There is no final exam for this course ☺.

Approved Thinkers, Movements, and Confessions for Requirement #5:

Thinkers	Movements	Confessions
Thomas Aquinas	Acts 29	Barmen Declaration (1934)
Kwame Bediako	Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)	Chalcedonian Creed
John Calvin	Armenian Apostolic Church of Iran	Council of Trent (canons and decrees)
Jonathan Edwards	Church of Uganda (Anglican)	Kairos Document (1985)
Samuel Escobar	Coptic Church	Kairos Document (2009)
Gustavo Gutierrez	Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa	Lausanne Covenant (1974)
Abraham Kuyper	Harrists of West Africa	Nicene Creed
Martin Luther	Presbyterian Church in America	Westminster Confession Faith
John Mbiti	Russian Orthodox Church	
Nestorius	Southern Baptists (U.S.A.)	
Vinoth Ramachandra	Three-Self Church (China)	
Bakht Singh		
Alessandro Valignano		