

The Book of Revelation with Greek Option: A Course Outline



Professor: Dr. Bruce Worthington

Telephone: 852-9197-9015 **Email:** bruceworthington@cuhk.edu.hk

Teaching Assistant: TBA **Office Hours:** By Appointment

Location: CKB UG04 **Time:** Monday 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM

Course Code: THEO3214/5951 **Chinese Title:** N/A

Course Description: If we are completely honest with ourselves, we often have no idea what is happening in the Book of Revelation. Most of the New Testament (Gospels, Letters, etc.) are rather easy to understand—this is not the case with Revelation. While it may be impossible to know everything about the Book of Revelation (the numbers? The visions?) there are some things that we can know, especially when we compare Revelation to other Jewish Apocalypses. This course is intended to situate the Book of Revelation amongst two contexts: the genre of Jewish Apocalypse in the First Century CE, along with the context of Greco-Roman associations/synagogues in the Province of Asia Minor, and the larger Roman Empire. After some initial exploration into the immediate historical situation in Revelation, the course expands to larger themes which may be of interest for theological reflection on the Book of Revelation, including gender and sexuality, violence, ethnicity, monsters/zombies, and the afterlife.

Course Outcomes:

- 1) To place the Book of Revelation within the larger contexts of Jewish Apocalypses near the turn of the Common Era. To compare Revelation with other contemporary apocalypses (Enoch, Apocalypse of Baruch, Fourth Ezra, Daniel, Ezekiel) in order to draw out similarities and differences, which are significant for biblical interpretation.

- 2) For students to be able to situate the Book of Revelation into the context of life in the Province of Asia Minor, a province of the Roman Empire at the turn of the first century. Students will become familiar with the seven cities of Revelation (Ephesus, Pergamum, etc.) and their notable political or religious allegiances. Careful attention will be paid to comparing Christ associations in these cities with other common associations in the region, as they reflect the spread of Christ Groups into the Roman Provinces.
- 3) For some students to continue with their Greek language learning and practice translations on a regular basis.
- 4) To critically reflect on the use and appropriateness of violence (particularly sexual violence) in the Book of Revelation, to identify the gendered nature of John's rhetorical approach and contextualize its use.
- 5) To creatively reflect on the topic of heaven and the "afterlife." To develop the student's theological imagination on this topic through the images of heaven and afterlife in the Book of Revelation.

Course Syllabus (Weekly Mandatory Reading Schedule):

Week One (September 2nd): Introduction: What is Revelation?

Week Two (September 9th): Who Wrote Revelation? John as "Author"

Week Three (September 16th): Revelation as Jewish Apocalypse

Week Four (September 23rd): Life in Seven Cities of Asia Minor (Revelation 2-3)

Week Five (September 30th): Revelation and the Roman Empire

Week Six (October 7th): Gender and Sexuality in Revelation

Week Seven (October 14th): Christology: Who is Jesus in Revelation?

Week Eight (October 21st): Who is Satan?

Week Nine (October 28th): Zombies and Monsters in Revelation: Explorations on the Undead

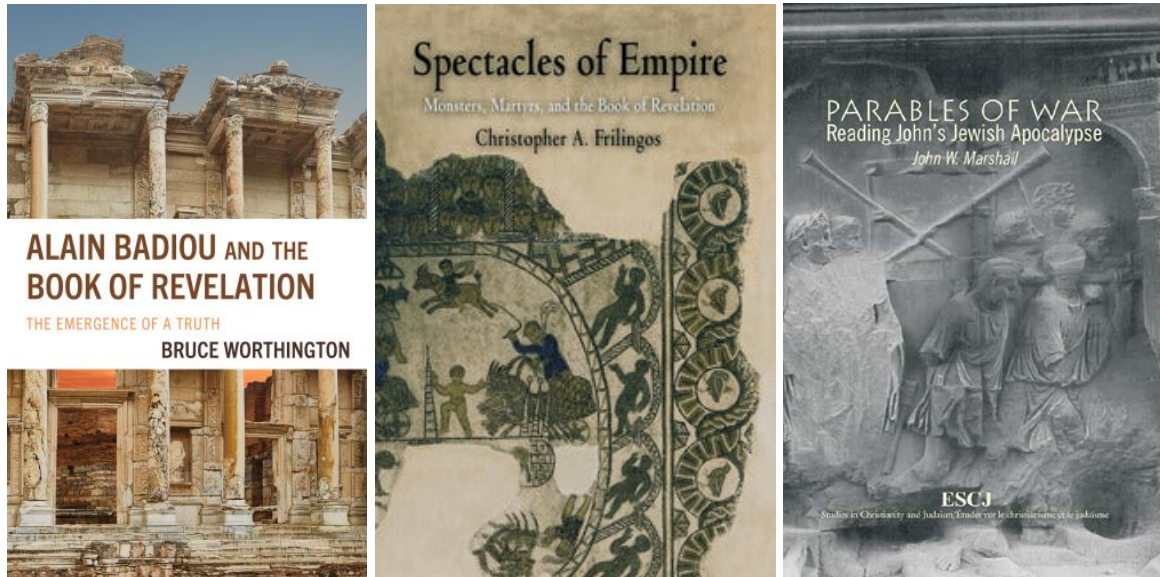
Week Ten (November 4th): Wealth in Revelation

Week Eleven (November 11th): The New Jerusalem (Revelation 21)

Week Twelve (November 18th): Revelation in Popular Culture

Week Thirteen (November 25th): Concluding Remarks—What is Heaven?

Course Textbooks (Readings Provided on Blackboard):



Worthington, Bruce. *Alain Badiou and the Book of Revelation: The Emergence of a Truth*. Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2024.

Frilingos, Christopher. *Spectacles of Empire: Monsters, Martyrs, and the Book of Revelation*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Marshall, John. *Parables of War: Reading John's Jewish Apocalypse*. Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001.

Course Components: Lecture, free writing exercises, guest lecture, tutorial discussions.

Blackboard Course Address:

Will be posted when available.

Assignments and Course Assessment

1. **Class Attendance (10% of Final Grade):** Students are expected to come to class and arrive on time. Students will use the Ureply app to log attendance at the beginning of class. Students may miss class due to medical or personal reasons but must consult with the instructor ahead of time.
2. **Class Participation (10% of Final Grade):** This course places an emphasis on weekly readings and interactions. Please come prepared to participate in classroom discussions,

both with the instructor and with your peers, as is appropriate for a senior level university course.

3. Personal Reflection Paper (For English Stream Students Only, 15% of final grade per paper, 750 words)

Reflection #1 Revelation and the Roman Empire (Due October 14th)

Reflection #2 Revelation and the Afterlife (Due December 2nd)

4. Greek Translations (For Greek Stream Students Only, 15% of final grade per translation)

Translation #1: October 14th

Translation #2: November 25th

5. Academic Essay (50% of Final Grade, date negotiated at beginning of semester):

Students will be required to submit a 2500–3000-word essay on a topic of their choice, related to one of the topics listed below. Proper footnoting and bibliography are required according to the Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition). Deadline will be negotiated at the beginning of the semester. Topics include, but not limited to:

- 5.1 Wealth in the Book of Revelation
- 5.2 Meat Sacrificed to Idols: A Conversation between John and Paul
- 5.3 Old Testament Images in Revelation
- 5.4 When was Revelation Written?
- 5.5 What is Heaven in Revelation?
- 5.6 The Whore of Babylon: Sexuality and Gender in Revelation
- 5.7 Another topic in consultation with Professor

Structure of the Class: The class will begin with attendance, then follow with brief group discussions and free writing exercises. The bulk of the class will be lectures which combine primary text material from the weekly reading and additional sources provided by the instructor. There will be two, ten-minute breaks over the course of the lecture.

The course readings will generally be given on the Blackboard site, along with courses grades, Professor feedback, and written submission guidelines.

Academic honesty and plagiarism: Attention is drawn to University's policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines, and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is

principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

Grading: The grading follows the general grading policy of the CUHK outlined below (in short form):

Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

Grade A- / Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on all or almost all learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

Grade B / Good: Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

Grade C / Fair: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

Grade D / Pass: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

Grade F / Failure: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand the assignment, perhaps completely misses the point.

Excellent

Good

Needs Improvement

Unacceptable

Thesis	A clear statement of what is being proposed or argued in the paper.	The thesis is easily detectable after reading the paper, but it is not	The thesis is present, but a reader must work hard to reconstruct from the entire paper.	There is no thesis or central argument/proposal to tie the paper together, or the thesis is unclear.
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Organization	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is consistently sensible, logical, and always with clear transitions. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is easy to follow and coherent.	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is largely sensible and logical. Transitions are mostly appropriate. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is distinguishable if not easy to follow.	There are signs of sensible and logical organization, but these are mixed with abrupt or illogical shifts and ineffective flow of ideas. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is not clearly distinguishable.	The paper does not flow well in terms of organization or for the argument of the thesis. Transitions from paragraph to paragraph or from one idea to the next are missing. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is non-existent.
Style	The paper is written in complete and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is precise; definitions are provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains no errors.	The paper is written in complete sentence and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is understandable, definitions are generally (though not always) provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains only a few errors.	The paper contains some incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is imprecise, at times not understandable, and/or not defined when needed. Not clear if the paper has been spell-checked and proofread because of the number of errors present.	The paper is written with many incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is not understandable and definition of particular terms or words is not given even when needed. The paper has clearly not been spell-checked or proofread, and hence contains an excessive number of errors.
Documentation	Notes to indicate sources of information are given whenever they are needed. Both notes and bibliography use consistent and academically acceptable format.	Notes to indicate sources of information are generally given when they are needed. Notes and bibliography are generally but not always consistent or conform to required academic standard.	Sources of information are not consistently documented. If they are, format is inconsistent or does not conform to required academic standard.	Source materials are used without documentation.

Bibliography

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