Course Rationale
This course surveys “religious thought” in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe. By
religious thought, we understand the interactions among theology, philosophy,
literature, history, and political thought. In considering this hybrid concept, the theme
of “political theology,” the perceived nexus between power and divine revelation, comes
in for particular attention. We concentrate only tangentially on the history of specific
confessions, liturgy, or denominational conflicts. Moreover, we focus mainly on
Christian thinking, although there will be references to other faith traditions that have
influenced Christianity in the last two centuries. The aim is to discuss Christian
religious thought (and political theology) in the context of secular society, wherein
belief in God is seen to be voluntary rather than something unquestioned. Another aim
is to put religion back into the main narrative of late modern European culture and
politics, a narrative that for at least the past thirty years has overlooked or under-
emphasized the continued influence and transformation of Christian thinking.
Geographically, the main focus is Germany, England, and France, with occasional
forays into Russian and U.S. history.

Course Requirements
Students are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections. Attendance at
discussion sessions will be graded. Assignments consist of one four-page paper (due
Sept. 30) and one six-page paper (Oct. 30). There is also a take-home final exam (Dec.
14; maximum ten pages). Papers and exams will be responses to pre-circulated
questions. There may be additional short writing assignments as part of the discussion
grade. Grading is determined as follows:

Discussion=20%
Four-page paper=20%
Six-page paper=25%
Take-home final=35%

Required Reading (in order assigned)
(U)=books available for purchase at Underground Textbook Exchange, 664 State St.
(R)=required reading available in a course reader at Humanities Copy Center, 1st floor,
Mosse Humanities. Books and the course reader will also be on three-hour reserve at
Helen C. White.
(E)= instructor will send text to students as e-mail attachments.

(R) James C. Livingston, Modern Christian Thought: The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth
Century, 93-105
(R) Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion, 18-54
(R) Karl Barth, “Introductory Essay,” in Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity,
x-xxxii
(R) Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, 1-32
(E) Gustave Flaubert, “A Simple Soul.”
(U) Peter Fritzsche, ed., *Nietzsche and the Death of God: Selected Writings*. Bedford/St. Martin’s.
(R) Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, 27-54.
(R) J. M. Robinson, ed., *The Beginnings of Dialectical Theology*, 58-130
(R) Carl Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, 1-43.
(E) “Theological Declaration of Barmen,” 1934.
(R) Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 3-83

**Supplementary Reading (On Reserve, Helen C. White)**
Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century.*
John Macquarrie, *Twentieth Century Religious Thought.*
Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: A Cultural History*
Peter Scott and William T. Cavanaugh, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Political Theology* (in reference section, Memorial Library)

**Course Schedule and Assignments**
Week 1: Introduction (Sept. 2-4)

**I. The Nineteenth Century**
Week 2: Enlightenment, Romanticism, Christianity (Sept. 9-11)
Reading: Livingston; Schleiermacher, 18-54

Week 3: Construction and Deconstruction: From Hegel through Feuerbach to Darwin (Sept. 14-18)
Reading: Barth, x-xxxii; Feuerbach, 1-32
Week 4: Kierkegaard’s and Dostoevski’s Subversive Orthodoxy (Sept. 21-25)
Reading: Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, entire

Week 5: Whence Religious Authority? Catholic Neo-Thomism, Liberal Protestantism, and Modernity (Sept. 30-Oct. 2)
**Four-page paper due (Sept. 30)**
Reading: Flaubert; Harnack, excerpts

Week 6: Untimely Thoughts: Nietzsche’s “Death of God” (Oct. 5-9)
Reading: Fritzsche, entire

**II. The Twentieth Century**

Week 7: World War I and the Barthian Revolt in Modern Theology (Oct. 12-16)
Reading: Barth; Robinson

Week 8: Christianity, Judaism, Personalism (Oct. 19-23)
Reading: Morgan; Biemann/Buber

Week 9: Theologies of the Profane (Oct. 26-30)
Reading: Hesse, *Demian*, entire
**Six-page paper due (Oct. 30)**

Week 10: The Interwar Catholic Revival: Theology and Literature (Nov. 2-6)
Reading: Bernanos, *Diary of a Country Priest*, entire

Week 11: Leo Strauss, Carl Schmitt, and German Political Theology (Nov. 9-13)
Reading: Myers; Schmitt

Week 12: The German Church Struggle (Nov. 16-20)
Reading: Barmen Declaration; Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, excerpts

Week 13: Barth and the Prospects of Postwar Theology (Nov. 23-25)
Reading: Barth, *Humanity of God*, entire
**Nov. 26-29: Thanksgiving Recess**

Week 14: A New Theology of the Subject (I)? (Nov. 30-Dec. 4)
Reading: Metz, 3-83; start Soelle

Week 15: A New Theology of the Subject (II)? (Dec. 7-11)
Reading: Soelle, *Against the Wind*, entire

**Take-home final due (Dec. 14, 11:00-11:50)