

TRANSNATIONAL CATHOLICITIES: FAITH AND POPULAR CULTURE IN
GLOBAL DIALOGUE – INTEREST GROUP

Topic: Transnational Catholicities: Faith and Popular Culture in Global Dialogue
 Convener: Linh Hoang, OFM, Siena College
 Moderator: Sophia Park, SNJM, Holy Names
 Presenters: Linh Hoang, OFM, Siena College
 Kevin P. Considine, Independent Scholar
 Min-Ah Cho, Georgetown University

Linh Hoang began the presentations with his paper, “*Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) and Asian Christianity,” where he examined the film and a transnational audience’s reception of it. He explained the movie *Crazy Rich Asians* provided an interpretation of Asians as agents of popular culture and consumers of worldly goods and services. A small snapshot in the movie showed Asians as Christian believers and worshippers. His presentation explored how popular movies have traditionally stereotyped Asians as nonbelievers, practitioners of some Eastern religions, and ambivalent towards Christianity. Those stereotypes have been a disservice to the world and also it dismisses the fact that large swathes of Asians in Asia and around the world are Christians and faithful participants in Christianity. His presentation reflected theologically on how popular culture has depicted Asians and their attitudes towards Christianity.

Kevin Considine’s presentation, “Popular Music, Intersubjectivity, and Sacramentality: A Narrative-Experiential Approach to Transnational Catholicities,” argued that the global flows of popular music are transnational catholicities that can be experienced as “secular sacraments.” He explained that they are secular because they come from the world and are not intended for official worship and they are sacramental because they convey God’s presence and awaken a natural human inclination for encountering the divine. He framed his study through the intercultural theology of Robert J. Schreier and the theological aesthetics of Alejandro Garcia-Rivera and suggested that the communal experience of musical performance and audience reception and participation fosters intersubjectivity and communal experiences analogous to experiencing God’s Spirit. His presentation elaborated upon these insights through narrative reflections on the music of Juice WRLD and BTS.

In Min-Ah Cho’s presentation, “‘They’ Stink: Body Odor Disgust Sensitivity, Transnational Catholicities, and Bong Joon-ho’s Film *Parasite*,” she explained how the Korean auteur Bong Joon-ho’s latest film *Parasite* is a disturbing social satire that captures the deep-skinned repulsion of the wealthy against the poor — manifesting through their body odor disgust sensitivity. Though rarely discussed because of its intimacy, the place of smell is never peripheral in the transnational contexts of Catholicism, nor something we tolerate. Expanding the film’s insight into the discussion of transnational Catholicities and engaging Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of the body, this paper addresses the relationship between the olfactory sense and xenophobia, with particular attention to the dominant cultures’ treatment toward the immigrant and refugee.

The presenters used artwork, music, and movie clips to explain their positions. Approximately 10 participants were in attendance and there was no discussion due to lack of time.

*KEVIN P. CONSIDINE
Independent Scholar
Chicago Heights, Illinois*