

Final Exam (THE516 Historical Theology II)

(40% of total course grade; to be written in class at the appointed time during final exam week without access to notes or course materials)

Short Answer (10 questions [each 6% of total exam grade]=60% of total exam grade): Supply a definition and/or explanation (1-5 sentences each, as appropriate for the term being defined) for each of the following major theological concepts introduced in the course readings and lectures:

(1) traducianism and its relevance to the transmission of original sin in Augustine's anti-Pelagian works (Week #3a Lecture--The Background and Origins of the Pelagian Controversy)

- Traducianism is a theory concerning the origin of the soul, which holds that souls have a quasi-material nature and that the soul of the child is formed from a portion of the soul of the parent (father).
- In explaining the nature of original sin, Augustine used traducianism to explain how Adam's sin could affect all human beings descended from Adam (the defects/stains affecting the parent's soul will be passed on to the child's soul).

(2) *lectio divina* (meaning and the 4 actions involved) (Week #4b Lecture—Humility in Prayer in the Benedictine tradition; Rule of Saint Benedict, ch. 48)

- *Lectio divina* (=sacred [i.e. divinely-inspired] reading)
 - (a) *lectio* ("reading") (slowly, attentively reading aloud in a soft voice, so that the text is entered into one's memory and the literal sense is grasped by the intellect)
 - (b) *meditatio* ("meditation") (as one repeats the text from memory and reflects on it, the passage is seen to contain a surplus of meaning in regard to nature of the person of Christ and the character of the history of salvation and also in connection with one's present situation)
 - (c) *oratio* ("prayer") (one's meditation on the text is turned into a prayer)
 - (d) *contemplatio* ("contemplation")—silent communion and conversation with God centered around themes that have arisen from reading/meditation on the text.

(3) penitentials (Week #5b Lecture--Confession and Penance)

- Books written to assist priests in hearing confessions and assigning appropriate penances. These books offered a set of questions the priest could ask the penitent in order to identify the root motives and differing circumstances that gave rise to a sinful act. Once this had been determined, the books then recommended an appropriate penance (e.g. fasting for the gluttonous, almsgiving for the miserly, etc.).

(4) *anamchara* (give meaning, role and significance) (Week #5 Summary Review; cf. the discussion of private confession and spiritual direction in #5b Lecture-Confession and Penance)

- The Celtic “soul friend” was a person of holy life in early medieval Ireland, who heard confessions and offered spiritual direction to individuals and their extended families. The “soul friend” did not need to be a priest and could be a woman.

(5) hagiographical (Week #7a Lecture: Bernard of Clairvaux on Loving God)

- A work is hagiographical when it describes a person’s life according to the conventions of what was expected of a saint; not an objective biography, but emphasizes dreams, visions, ecstatic experiences, victory over temptations to unchastity and other traditional features of saints' lives.

(6) the four stages of love in Bernard of Clairvaux (Week #7b Lecture: Bernard of Clairvaux on Loving God)

- (a) love themselves for their own sake (a carnal form of natural, instinctive self-love=self-love distorted by the influence of sin)
- (b) love God for their own sakes (i.e. for the benefits he provides=a mercenary, servile love, which does however acknowledge one’s need for God)
- (c) love God for God's sake (filial love) (i.e. one loves God for who he is [his character] apart from his actions toward us and the benefits he provides)
- (d) receiving the love of God, one loves both oneself and other people for God's sake (a pure love of God which is devoid of self-interest, so that one that can pray “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” and really mean it, even to the point that one no longer loves oneself except for God’s sake)

(7) *a priori* argument (Week #8b Lecture: Anselm on the Relation between Faith and Reason and on God's Existence)

- An argument based upon a certain definition; this definition states a truth that can be known with certainty apart from and prior to experience/empirical observation.
- Mathematical and geometrical theorems are often of this type, i.e. “ $2+2=4$ ” and “The internal angles of a right triangle will always total 180 degrees,” etc.

(8) *scala naturae* (“the ladder of nature”) (Week #10 Lecture: Anselm on the Incarnation and Atonement)

- God has ordered the universe in a hierarchical manner.
- Each being should maintain its proper place within this order, fulfilling the functions for which it was made and being useful to beings on the next higher level above it (e.g. grass is food for cows, cows are food for humans, etc.).
- Within this order, human beings stand below God and were made to worship God.

(9) apophatic prayer (Week #12a Lecture: God's Hiddenness and Self-Revelation in *The Cloud of Unknowing*)

- When one tries to understand God by reference to created realities, none of the things one affirms can satisfactorily represent God's uncreated nature.
- One must begin instead by recognizing that created language and concepts are not adequate to know God.
- One should instead empty the mind of words and concepts and try to know God directly through an experience of love, rather than through images, concepts and reasonings.

(10) the cosmological argument and Aquinas' First Way (the argument from motion) (Week #14a Lecture: Thomas Aquinas' Five Ways)

- Everything that is in motion was set in motion by something else and depends on that other thing for its motion.
- By analyzing causal chains, we can see that one thing sets another thing in motion; the motion of that latter thing is caused by and dependent upon a cause that came before it.
- These chains of causes cannot go back endlessly. There must be a first cause that originally gave rise to motion. This first cause is God.

Essay Question (40% of total exam grade) (3-4 pages)

Describe in detail Thomas Aquinas' conception of transubstantiation and explain (based upon the assigned readings for the last week of class lectures)

- the philosophical background of the doctrine (i.e. the Aristotelian conception of substance vs. accidents);
- the significance of Aquinas' account of sacrifice as destruction and
- the relation of Aquinas' doctrine of transubstantiation to the contemporary practice of eucharistic devotion (which Aquinas himself endorsed).

(1) Aquinas, following Aristotle, distinguished between

- a. a thing's **substance** (what a thing fundamentally is in itself=those characteristic features a thing must possess to be what it is) and
- b. a thing's **accidents** (those incidental qualities a thing may have, but which it doesn't have to have to be what it fundamentally is).
 - i. Thus, for example, if someone asks me, "What is a whiteboard marker?" I could say, "It is a writing instrument which has a felt tip that applies erasable ink to a slick, non-porous writing surface."
 1. Note that by giving a definition, I am specifying all those characteristic features that are necessary for that thing to be fundamentally what it is (its substance).
 - ii. Of course whiteboard markers come in many colors; they can be black, green, red, etc. A thing does not *have* to be green to be

a whiteboard marker. Still some whiteboard markers *may* happen to be green. This incidental quality (green) which a thing *may* have, but which it does not *have* to have to be what it fundamentally is (a whiteboard marker) is called an “accident.”

- (2) The Lord’s Supper, Aquinas argues, involves a **sacrifice**.
- a. Just as the believer’s return to God in the Old Testament depended upon a sacrifice, so also Christ’s death was a sacrifice which made it possible for us to return to God.
 - b. When the church celebrates the Lord’s Supper, it is not just a representation of Christ’s sacrifice, but a re-presentation of his sacrifice, which God regards as supremely valuable.
 - c. By definition a sacrifice involves **destruction** and thus **total conversion**, so that what is sacrificed ceases to be what it once was (e.g. a cow) and becomes something fundamentally different (e.g. steak) and cannot go back to being what it was before (once steak, it cannot go back to being a cow).
 - d. **As a sacrifice, the Lord’s Supper must also be characterized by total conversion.**
 - i. **When the elements are consecrated during the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, the substances of bread and wine are wholly converted into the substances of the body and blood of Christ.**
 - ii. **Nothing of the former substances of bread and wine remain in the elements, although they may incidentally retain the outward appearances of bread and wine.**
 - e. **Transubstantiation=Total conversion of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, so that nothing of the substance of bread and wine remains.**
- (3) Aquinas, following the contemporary practice of eucharistic devotion, saw the Lord’s Supper as **training the believer to live not by sense/sight** (what things outwardly appear to be), **but by faith** (learning to look away from present appearances and believe that things are as God says they are).
- a. In the Lord’s Supper, we are invited to move beyond looking at the outward appearances (medieval peasant: “Gee, it sure looks to me like bread and wine!”) and learn to believe by faith that what God says is true (“This is my body, which is given for you”).