

HC1315: EARLY/MEDIEVAL CHURCH HISTORY (100-1400AD)

Summer Intensive, 2009

Instructor: Walter Sundberg

Class Meetings: HC1315: Weekdays (June 1-12), 1:10-5:00, GH 102

Office: BH126A, Ex.: #270

Description: This course covers theological developments in East and West from the Apostolic Fathers to Nominalism. Major issues examined are: the authority of tradition, hellenization of the gospel, the development of trinitarian and christological doctrine, controversy over the understanding of sin and grace, church and sacraments, the development of scholastic method, and selected social issues.

Requirements: Students are expected to attend all classes, complete all reading assignments on time, and pass a take-home final examination; due date to be determined. Examination questions are attached.

Texts: Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 4th ed.

Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*

Cyril Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers*

Augustine, *Confessions* (Henry Chadwick tr.).

Eugene R. Fairweather, ed. *A Scholastic Miscellany*.

A.M. Fairweather, ed. *Aquinas on Nature and Grace*.

Schedule:

June 1: Introduction: The *Kairos* of the Augustan Age

Reading: Walker, 5-56

Richardson, 43-73; 102-116; 171-179

June 2: Tradition; Apologists

Reading: Stark, 3-47
Richardson, 242-289

June 3: Heresy, Gnosticism, Orthodoxy

Reading: Walker, 61-79
Richardson, 343-397

June 4: Church and Sacraments; Donatism, Church and Civilization

Reading: Walker, 79-125

June 5: The Trinitarian Controversy

Reading: Walker, 129-153

June 9: The Christological Controversy

Reading: Walker, 159-72

June 9: Theological Anthropology

Reading: Walker 197-217
Augustine, 3-154

June 10: Middle Ages; Introduction to Anselm

Reading: Walker 221-332, *A Scholastic Miscellany*, 47- 96

June 11: Aquinas: Context and Method

Reading: Walker, 332-359

Aquinas, 101-118, 182-218; 344-346

June 12: Church and Politics

Reading: Walker 367-415

HC1315: EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Directions: Answer six out of the following twelve questions . Each answer should be three-pages, typed, double-spaced, hard copy (not emailed!). Three must be from Questions #1-#6; Three must be from Questions #7-#12.

1. Pliny calls Christianity "a perverse and extravagant superstition." What was a superstition in Roman culture? How did Christianity relate to the *kairos* of the Augustan age?
2. How would you describe as sympathetically as possible the function of heresy in Christian thought? Illustrate your answer with reference to Gnosticism.
3. List and briefly describe the advantages and disadvantages of Constantine's conversion.
4. Explain the Donatist controversy. What was its impact on the development of Augustine's ecclesiology?

5. In his great *History of Dogma*, Adolf von Harnack asserts: "Dogmatic Christianity. . .is always intellectual Christianity and therefore there is always the danger here that as knowledge it may supplant religious faith, or connect it with a doctrine of religion, instead of with God and a living experience." To trace the development of the trinitarian dogma is certainly to enter into "dogmatic Christianity." As you present an account of the major theological positions leading to Nicea, *defend* the orthodox trinitarian dogma against Harnack's attack.

6. There is no Christian dogma concerning the Atonement. What can we say about the Atonement based on biblical sources?

7. Trace the dogma of the Person of Christ as it develops after the Council of Nicea (325) to the Council of Chalcedon (451).

8. Describe the debate between Augustine and Pelagius on the relation of sin and grace. What is the significance of the Synod of Orange to the outcome of this debate?

9. Describe three incidents or experiences in the life of Augustine as narrated in the *Confessions* that, in your opinion, contribute to his conversion to Christianity and explain why they are important.

10. "Faith seeking understanding" (*fides quaerens intellectum*), "I believe in order to understand" (*credo ut intelligam*) These famous assertions of Anselm describe a certain relationship of faith to theology that characterized the rebirth of Christian thought in the 11th and 12th centuries in Europe. What is the nature of this relationship according to Anselm? Illustrate from your reading of the *Proslogion* and *Why God Became Man*.

11. Describe and illustrate the theological method of Thomas Aquinas.

12. Using the late Middle Ages as your focus by drawing on class lecture and your reading from Walker (367-415), is it possible to identify distinctive features of a "Christian point of view" in politics. If so, what are they? If not, why not?

HC1315: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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