

DP 3213 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOGMA OF THE TRINITY

Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas

Academic Year 2018-19, first semester

Mondays, 14.30-16.15

David Dawson Vasquez

dawson@romestudy.org

www.romestudy.org/trinity.html

DESCRIPTION

The course will explore the fourth century debates that led to the articulation of the dogma of the Holy Trinity at the councils of Nicea (325) and Constantinople (381). It includes a close reading of texts from Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus.

LEARNING GOALS

The successful student will be able to present the following, with reference to the relevant texts

- The motivations and problems with the positions of Sabellius and Paul of Samosata
- The position of Arius
- The declaration of Nicea and the various issues surrounding the creed
- Athanasius's defense of the nature of the Son and his understanding of Arianism
- The theology of the Holy Spirit in Athanasius, Basil, and Gregory Nazianzen
- The position of Eunomius
- The analysis of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa of the theology of Eunomius
- Gregory Nazianzen's position on the Trinity
- A detailed presentation of the Church's understanding of the Trinity as articulated at Constantinople I
- An exegesis of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

COURSE SCHEDULE

Students should complete the readings listed before coming to class, taking detailed notes

1. October 8: Introduction
2. October 15: Sabellianism
3. October 22: Arius and the Council of Nicea
Reading: Arius's writings contained in Rush, *Trinitarian Controversy*
4. October 29: Athanasius and the construction of Arianism
Reading: Athanasius, *Orations Against the Arians*
5. November 5: The Councils of the mid-Fourth Century
Reading: Athanasius, *De Synodis*
6. November 12: Eunomius
Reading: Eunomius, *Apology*
7. November 19: Basil the Great Against Eunomius
Reading: Basil the Great, *Against Eunomius*
8. November 26: The Holy Spirit
Reading: Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*
9. December 3: Gregory Nazianzus, Orations 1-3
Reading: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Theological Orations 1-3*
10. December 10: Gregory Nazianzus, Orations 4-5
Reading: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Theological Orations 4-5*
11. December 17: Gregory of Nyssa Against Eunomius

Reading: Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, "On Why Not Three Gods to Ablabius"

12. January 7: The Council of Constantinople

13. January 14: Further questions, including the *filioque*

Exam: January 21 & 28 (afternoons)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander of Alexandria, *Letter to Alexander of Thessalonica*, in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Arius, *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia*, *Letter to Alexander of Alexandria*, *Letter to the Emperor Constantine* in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Athanasius of Alexandria, *Against the Arians*; excerpts from book 1 in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980); excerpts from book 3 in *The Christological Controversy*, trans. and ed. Richard Norris (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Athanasius of Alexandria, *De Synodis*

Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, *Fathers of the Church* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014).

Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011).

Council of Antioch (325) Synodal Letter, in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Eunomius, *Apology*

Eusebius of Caesarea, *Letter to His Church Concerning the Synod at Nicea*, in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Gregory of Nazianzen, *Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius*, trans. Frederick Williams and Lionel Wickham (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002).

Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*

Gregory of Nyssa, "On Why not Three Gods to Ablabius" in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, trans. and ed. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

ESSENTIAL SECONDARY LITERATURE

Anatolios, Khaled, *Retrieving Nicea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

Ayers, Lewis, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Beeley, Christopher A., *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in the Patristic Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

Behr, John, *The Way to Nicaea: Formation of Christian Theology* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001) and *The Nicene Faith* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004).

Hanson, R. P. C., *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988).

OTHER USEFUL MATERIAL

Anatolis, Khaled, *Athanasius* (London: Routledge, 2004)

Barnes, Timothy D., *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

McGuckin, John, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

Meredith, Anthony, *Gregory of Nyssa* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

Petterson, Alwyn, *Athanasius* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1995).

Rousseau, Philip, *Basil of Casarea* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).