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Spring 2003
TTh 11:00-12:15 PM Aderhold Building #2
Office Hours: MW 11:00-11:45; Th 10:00-10:45
(and by appointment)

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 3300/3300H

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

Course Description and Goals

This course will examine the emergence and development of Christian thought from biblical times to the onset of the Enlightenment. Topics to be treated will include: Christian conceptions of God, human nature, free will, the afterlife, morality, politics, sexuality and the role of women. We will explore the way orthodoxy took form amid a myriad of competing (and conflicting) conceptions (e.g., gnostic, Arian, Pelagian, Manichean). Readings will be derived both from primary sources (with particular emphasis on four of Christianity's most important thinkers: Paul, Augustine, Aquinas and Luther) and from contemporary commentators and critics.

My hope is that, during the course of the quarter, you will gain not merely a better understanding of this pivotal period in the history of Western civilization but also a facility for writing and commenting on the central issues of the course.

Course Requirements

Each student's grade will be based upon:

1. Active and well-prepared class participation (10%). Each reading assignment should be completed before the class in which its contents will be discussed.
2. Two short (maximum of four double-spaced, typed pages each) "thesis" papers on topics selected by the student. Papers will be due February 13 and April 17. (20% each)
3. A mid-term examination (March 13) (20%) and a final examination (May 1) (30%). In lieu of the final exam, students taking the course for Honors credit will write a final paper (8 to 10 pages in length).

Attendance/Make-up Exams

Class attendance is required. You are responsible for all material covered in class. While there is no formal deduction for each absence, absences can and will affect your class participation grade and your ability to do well on the exams. Exams can be made-up at the discretion of the instructor. If you are to miss an exam, let him know at the earliest possible time.

Required Texts

Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (Vintage, paperback).
Religious Studies 3300 Reader (to be purchased at The Printshop, 6 Decatur Street, a block and a half west of the General Classroom Building).

Readings

(Except for the readings from Pagels, all assignments can be found in the Reader. Some of the following readings may be designated optional as the constraints of time and the interests of students dictate.)

I. Christian Origins

Elaine Pagels, Chapter IV: "The Passion of Christ and the Persecution of Christians"
Pliny: "Roman Investigation of Christians"
Anonymous: "Martyrdom of a Young Christian Woman"
W.T. Jones: "The New Religious Orientation/Mystery Cults"
Tertullian: "On Pagan Shows"

II. Paul and His Critics

The Letters of Paul
Galatians
Romans
I Corinthians

Paul's Critics

Various (ancient), "Paul As Satan's Apostle"
Adolf Von Harnack, "The Founder of Christian Civilization"
George Bernard Shaw, "The Monstrous Imposition Upon Jesus"

III. Women and the Early Church

Women's Roles

Constance Parvey, "The Theology and Leadership of Women in the New Testament"
Carole Christ, "Heretics and Outsiders" (optional)
Unknown, "The Acts of Paul and Thecla"
(Topic is continued in Section IV)

IV. Heresy and Orthodoxy

Christian Pluralism

W.T. Jones, "Heresy and Orthodoxy"
Marcion, "The Antitheses"
Irenaeus, Anonymous, "The Scripture Canon in Formation"
Infancy Gospel of Thomas

Wayne Meeks, "The Model Ascetic"

Gnosticism

Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*

"The Gospel of Thomas"

"The Second Treatise of Great Seth"

"The Raising Adam From the Mud By Eve"

"The Gospel of Philip"

Reincarnation, Arianism

Geddes MacGregor, *Reincarnation in Christianity* (selections)

Various Authors, The Arian Controversy

V. Augustine and the Emergence of Christian Sovereignty

Augustine, *The Confessions* (selections)

"The Problem of Evil"

"On the Manichean System"

"On Grace and Free Will"

"The Spirit and the Letter"

Lactantius, "The Great Persecutions"

Eusebius, "The Conversion of Constantine"

Constantine, "The Edict of Toleration"

Theodocius, "'Prohibition of Worship of the Roman Gods"

Augustine, "Origins of Coercive Government"

VI. The Middle Ages

Pope Leo I: "The Petrine Doctrine"

W.T. Jones, "Monasticism"

Francis Assisi, "The Canticle of Brother Sun," "The Testament"

Anselm, "The Ontological Argument for the Existence of God"

Abelard, "Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans"

VII. Aquinas

Aquinas, "Five Ways to Prove God's Existence"

"What It Means to Act Voluntarily"

"On Natural Justice," etc.

"Political Philosophy," etc.

Summa Theologica, Selections on Women

Selections on Sexuality

The Witches' Hammer: "Why Women Are Drawn to Witchcraft"

Jeffrey Stout, "Moral Abominations"

VIII. Luther and Reformation

Clement VI, "On Indulgences"
Martin Luther, "Ninety-five Theses"
 "On the Bondage of the Will"
 "Commentary on Galatians"
 "On Secular Authority"
John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (excerpts)
Jacobus Arminius, "The Five Arminian Articles"
The Canons of the Synod of Dort
John Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation"
 "Predestination Calmly Considered"

IX. Postscript

Immanuel Kant, "Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone"

This syllabus represents a general plan for the course; changes may be necessary as dictated by the constraints of time and the interests of the class.