

## PHILOSOPHY 211: HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY II

**Text Notice: The Henry Regnery Co. publication listed in the syllabus as the source for Thomas Aquinas' "Treatise on Law" is out of print. It has been replaced by:**

Saint Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, W.R. Baumgarth & R.J. Regan, eds., Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1988. The "Treatise on Law" may be found in this edition on pp. 11–83. It is available in the Purchase College Bookstore for \$7.95.

TOPICS FOR FIRST PAPER (given out: 2/21/91)

**Four Pages** (double-spaced typing)

**DUE 3/14/91** (no extensions)

- A. For questions of style and timeliness, consult the hand-out, "Ten Clues to Better Papers in Philosophy," before and during the writing of your paper.
- B. Conferences on these and proposed topics are available (Humanities 2003) Mondays & Thursdays, 1:15–2:00, and Wednesdays, 11:00–12:00. If desired, please make an appointment (after class or call 914-251-6568).
- C. Be sure that your paper addresses *specific questions* raised in the readings, lectures, and discussions of *this* course.
- D. No research beyond the texts and lectures of this course is required (naturally it would be a good idea to consult *texts on your topic* listed as "recommended" on the syllabus and you may examine further literature if you wish; but this assignment is principally an occasion for you to formulate an interpretive argument concerning the materials at hand, not to do a "research paper").
- E. Devote about half of your essay to a fairly detailed interpretation (what the French call an "*explication du texte*") of the PRIME TEXT(S) in one of the topics listed below; use the remainder of the essay to show how the problem indicated in the PRIME TEXT(S) arose and how, in general terms, it shaped the development of subsequent philosophy (up to the condemnations of 1277, which closed the University of Paris and led to the rise of 14th century nominalism and the advent of modern natural science, a topic for the next part of this course.)
- F. The following are suggested *topics*; others are acceptable *if* proposed (in writing), with a PRIME TEXT, by 3/7/91, and approved:

### TOPICS

1. On the Distinction between "Internal Reason" ["Logos" as internal "meaning" or mental language, "Lecta"] and "External" or "Uttered Reason" ["Logos" as expressed, physical or materially perceptible speech, spoken or written] in *Stoicism* and its Significance for Philo, Plotinus, and Augustinianism. PRIME TEXTS: [pagination from our text, *Greek and Roman Philosophy after Aristotle*, Saunders ed., in brackets] SVF [ = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, von Arnim, ed.] II, 80 [67]; SVF II, 83 [68]; SVF II, 144a [75]; SVF II, 166 [76]; SVF II, 194 [78]; SVF II, 329 [81–2]; SVF, 334 [82]; SVF II, 836a [98–9]; SVF II, 837 [99]; SVF II, 862 [100, text from *Philo*]; Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* [163–166], Philo, *On the Account of the World's Creation* [204], Plotinus, *Ennead* V, First Tractate [251 & 255]; Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata*, ch. X [326]; the most explicit text: Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*, II., 275–6 (in handout; best translation in *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Long & Sedley, eds., pp. 317–8); also consider: B. Mates, *Stoic Logic*, pp. 16–17 (in handout); and

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Sextus, *Adv. Math.* VIII, 245ff. (in handout). [This is the most basic topic for the entire course; obviously not all of the prime texts can be mentioned in your account. But an adequate essay will reflect consideration of all of them.]

2. On Philo's Articulation of God as the Creator of the Cosmos *from Nothing* [not to be found in the book of *Genesis*] and its Significance for Gnosticism, Augustine and Aquinas. PRIME TEXT: Philo, *On the Account of the World's Creation Given by Moses*, from "Not so Moses ..." to "... the work of God" (Saunders, pp. 201–202). [The challenge here is to see Philo's invention of "creation" as an extension of the Stoic bifurcation of the human Logos to an interpretation of the God of *Genesis* which has stuck—so much so that you had probably thought Philo's reading was "in" *Genesis* itself. Consider the handout, Philo, *Moses*, II, 127–130.]

3. What is the Gnostic Problem? Why did it follow from the positing of God as the creator of the cosmos out of nothing? Why was God the Creator thought to be the source of evil as well as good in the world? Why did this seem, to so many, to require an evil as well as a good God? [Texts for an adequate consideration of this topic are indicated in the syllabus, but to get them into focus will probably require some consideration of secondary texts such as Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, Part II—see "Texts Recommended" in the Syllabus.]

4. On Plotinus' "Pagan" [i.e., neither Jewish nor Christian] Response to the Gnostic Challenge: The Principle of Plenitude or "The Great Chain of Being." [The Plotinus texts in Saunders are sufficient, but some consideration of secondary literature is probably necessary to get the topic into focus. Consider A.O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1936) and consult with your instructor if this topic is appealing.]

5. How Augustine "Solved" the Problem of Evil and Answered the Gnostic Challenge by Placing the "Blame" on Man. PRIME TEXT, a careful reading of the *Confessions*. [This is the most challenging of all the topics proposed because the prime text is long and will require selective interpretation; it will appeal to better students and will be rewarded accordingly.]

6. Why Thomas Aquinas' Reconciliation of Reason and Revelation has been regarded as the Consummate Expression of Medieval Philosophy. PRIME TEXT: Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I. q. 90–97 [*Treatise on Law*; compare: Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*]. [The main difficulty of this interesting topic is that it will not have been very much discussed in class before the paper due date.]

Whatever topic you choose—whether one of these or one of your own devising—try to develop an *argument* that will exhibit your *present* orientation (you have no other) within the context of post-classical thought as you have come to know it. You are not being asked to come up with any radically novel or especially "brilliant" interpretation. Simply take the opportunity to put together your thoughts on the readings and arguments considered so far in this course. Do not try to *say* everything; your paper will *show* how much you have comprehended the materials studied. You may well be astonished to discover how much you have learned. But you will only make this discovery once you have attempted to put your thoughts in written form.

Be sure to stay within the 4-page limit. Verbosity is no virtue.