RELG 334  Christian Thought and Culture
W2020 TR 11:35–12:25
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General Description

This seminar considers selected cultural and countercultural features of Christianity, with attention to theological anthropology and to political and legal philosophy, or social ethics and bioethics, or the creative arts.

Selected Topic

- Augustine’s ‘two cities’: we will think with Augustine about human nature and human history through a challenging book that belongs at or near the top of any serious list of the great works of western civilization

Primary Text

- though Augustine is available on-line, a paper copy of the specified version is required for class and can be obtained at Paragraph Books; the unabridged two-volume set is on reserve in the library

Assessment

1. Participation: 10%
   - attendance, ability to answer questions, and quality of contribution
   - more than three absences may result in loss of participation marks

2. Examination: 20% and 30%
   - two written tests demonstrating familiarity with the text
   - the first will be on 13 February (20%) and the second on 2 April (30%)

3. Research Paper: 5% and 35%
   - Option A: Examine the study questions attached by the editor to each book of The City of God. Pick one (or a series of related questions) and write a paper that either answers the question or demonstrates from Augustine that the question is misguided.
   - Option B: Augustine, obviously, is not a universalist. Show how The City of God can serve as an effective critique of universalism.
• Option C: *The City of God* has influenced countless works of theology and philosophy, political or social theory, and more than a few works of fiction; find one that interests you and set to work showing how that influence is displayed.

• a prospectus of one or two pages, making clear your intentions and the main resources for the project, is due on **20 February** (5%)

• the paper of 3600–4000 words is due no later than **26 March**; earlier submissions are welcome (35%)

• papers will be graded according to the seriousness of their engagement with Augustine and with their secondary sources; the quality of those sources will also be taken into account, along with clarity of presentation and citation

**Seminar Schedule**

For each book, consult in advance the topics listed in the table of contents and the relevant introductory remarks at *xiii–xl ix*. This will assist your reading and note-taking.

**Week 1 Jan. 7 & 9**

A. Orientation

B. Babcock *xi–xvii, l–lix*; *Civ. 1a* [1–8]

**Week 2 Jan. 14 & 16**

A. *Civ. 1b* [8–25]

B. *Civ. 2–3* [27–67]

**Week 3 Jan. 21 & 23**

A. *Civ. 4–5* [69–118]

B. *Civ. 6–7* [119–146]

**Week 4 Jan. 28 & 30**

A. *Civ. 8–9* [147–85]

B. *Civ. 10* [187–213]

**Week 5 Feb. 4 & 6**

A. *Civ. 11* [215–238]

B. *Civ. 12* [239–261]

**Week 6 Feb. 11 & 13**

A. *Civ. 13* [263–282]

B. **TEST 1**
Week 7  Feb. 18 & 20
   A.  Civ. 14 [283–311]
   B.  Civ. 15 [313–328] prospectus due

Week 8  Feb. 25 & 27
   A.  Civ. 16 [329–63]
   B.  Civ. 17 [365–384]
       Reading Week

Week 9  Mar. 10 & 12
   A.  Civ. 18 [385–410]
   B.  Civ. 19a [411–429]

Week 10  Mar. 17 & 19
   A.  Civ. 19b [429–455]
   B.  Civ. 20a [457–472]

Week 11  Mar. 24 & 26
   A.  Civ. 20b [472–486]
   B.  Civ. 21a [487–501] paper due

Week 12  Mar. 31 & Apr. 2
   A.  Civ. 21b [501–515]
   B.  TEST 2

Week 13  Apr. 7 & 9
   A.  Civ. 22a [517–531]
   B.  Civ. 22b [531–555]

Resources

- Augustine: *Political Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, ed. E. M. Atkins and R. J. Dodaro) Reserved
- Peter Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*
- Henry Chadwick, *Augustine*
- G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*
- Mary T. Clark, *Augustine* (Outstanding Christian Thinkers)
- Christopher Dawson, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*
- Robert Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine* Reserved
D. F. Donnelly, *Augustine’s De Civitate Dei: An Annotated Bibliography of Modern Criticism, 1960-90*
Douglas Farrow, *Ascension Theology* (chap. 6) and *Desiring a Better Country*
Allan Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages: an Encyclopedia*  
Carol Harrison, *Augustine: Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity*
John von Heyking, *Augustine and Politics as Longing in the World*
Matthew Levering, *The Theology of Augustine: An Introductory Guide to his Most Important Works*
Robert Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Augustine*
Gerald O’Daly, *Augustine’s City of God: A Reader’s Guide*
Oliver O’Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology*  
Oliver and Joan O’Donovan, *Irenaeus to Grotius: Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought*
John O’Meara, *Understanding Augustine*
Johannes van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: a Study into Augustine’s City of God and the Sources of His Doctrine of the Two Cities*
John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized*
John Edward Sullivan, *The Image of God*
https://www.pdcnet.org/augstudies/Augustinian-Studies
http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.toc.html
http://www.augustinus.it/links/inglese/index.htm
http://www.augustinus.it/latino/cdd/index2.htm

**Additional information**

- Schedule and weekly reading assignments are subject to revision (with due notice)
- Notes will be taken by hand. No computers or electronic devices may be used in the classroom except in cases of disability.
- Consultation is available after class or T/R by appointment in Birks 208.
- PFNP and related matters: Surnames are used by the instructor. No one is required to adopt views, claims, or linguistic forms with which they disagree, though all are bound by the obligations of the syllabus and by traditional standards of civility.
- McGill University values academic integrity. *Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.* For more information, see ‘Keeping it Honest’: www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/
- In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. English is preferred by the instructor.