

Phil 43151: Aquinas on Human Nature

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Purpose of Course: A close examination of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 75-102 (actually, we'll only make it to q. 96), the so-called treatise on human nature, in a spanking new translation. Among the questions to be discussed: the ontological status of the human soul and its role as the form of a human being; the cognitive and appetitive powers of the human soul; human origins; the creation of man and woman and their status as images of God; the original natural and supernatural condition of the first human beings; the metaphysics of human procreation; and the interplay between St. Thomas's account of human nature, contemporary cognitive science, and contemporary biological accounts of human origins.

Texts:

- St. Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise on Human Nature: The Complete Text* (St. Augustine's Press) (ISBN: 978-1587318818) (**Note: this translation is required.**)

In addition, there are several required and supplementary texts available on the [online handout section](#) of the course website.

- For those interested, the Latin text of the *Summa Theologiae* is available online at [Index Corporis Thomistici](#), which is maintained by Prof. Enrique Alarcon of the University of Navarre, Spain, and on the website of the [Dominican House of Studies Priory](#) in Washington, DC. (The latter also has an alternative English translation.)

Requirements:

- Before the course begins**, you are strongly encouraged to read part 2 of my "[Suarez on Metaphysical Inquiry, Efficient Causality, and Divine Action](#)," as well as my classnotes on [Aristotle](#) and [St. Thomas's metaphysics](#) from Phil 30301. This is a refresher for Phil 30301 (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy) and goes beyond what I do in Phil 30301.
- Class Participation** (25% of course grade). This consists of two separate things:
 - (a) You must submit to me by email, before 10:00AM on each class day, a question/comment based on the readings assigned for that day. (When we are spending more than one day on a given topic, I will give more specific instructions about which texts are relevant for a given class.) I expect the questions/comments to be well thought out and well articulated, but not particularly long. They will serve as the starting point for my class comments on the day in question. (I pay close attention to the quality of these questions in determining the participation component of the grade.) (15% of course grade)
 - (b) Active and intelligent participation in seminar discussions. In general, student initiative and signs of self-motivation will be rewarded in this course. (10% of course grade)
- Papers.** You are required to write three 6-7 page papers, worth 75% of the course grade. These will be due on 2/24, 4/7, and 4/30. The topics are assigned and are linked above.

Syllabus:

- 1/15 & 1/20:** St. Thomas, "[On the Principles of Nature](#)" (handout page) (1/15: no question; 1/20: submit question)
- 1/22 & 1/27 & 1/29:** *ST* 1 q. 75: The human soul's essence (1/22: question from aa. 1-2; 1/27: question from aa. 3-4; 1/29: question from aa. 5-7)
- 2/3 & 2/5 & 2/10:** *ST* 1 q. 76: The union of the soul with the body (2/3: question from aa. 1-2; 2/5: question from aa. 3-4; 2/10: question from aa. 5-8)
- 2/12 & 2/17:** *ST* 1, q. 77: The powers of the soul in general (2/12: question from aa. 1-4; 2/17: question from aa. 5-8)
- 2/19:** *ST* 1, q. 78: The specific powers of the soul
- 2/24 & 2/26 & 3/3:** *ST* 1, q. 79: The intellectual powers of the soul (2/24: no question - **paper due on q. 79, aa. 1-5**); 2/26: question from aa. 6-9; 3/3: question from aa. 10-13)
- 3/5:** *ST* 1, qq. 80-81: The appetitive powers in general and the sentient appetite in particular
- 3/17:** *ST* 1, qq. 82-83: The will and free choice
- 3/19 & 3/24 & 3/26:** *ST* 1, q. 84: How the conjoined soul understands lower corporeal things (3/19: question from aa. 1-4; 3/24:

question from aa. 5-6; 3/26: question from aa. 7-8.)

- **3/31 & 4/2:** *ST* 1, q. 85: The mode and order of intellectual understanding (3/31: question from aa. 1-4; 4/2: question from aa. 5-8)
 - **4/7:** *ST* 1, q. 86: What our intellect has cognition of in material things (no question - [paper due comparing angelic and human intellectual cognition](#))
 - **4/9:** *ST* 1, q. 87: Our intellect's cognition of itself
 - **4/14:** *ST* 1, q. 88: Our intellect's cognition of things that are above it
 - **4/16:** *ST* 1, q. 89: A separated soul's cognition
 - **4/23:** *ST* 1, qq. 90-92: The production of the first man, soul and body, and of the first woman + Pope Pius XII, [Humani Generis \(1950\), no. 36-37](#) + Kenneth Kemp, ["Science, Theology, and Monogenesis"](#)
 - **4/28:** *ST* 1, qq. 94-95: Human intellect and will in the state of innocence (no question -- work on paper)
 - **4/30:** *ST* 1, qq. 96: Relations of dominion in the state of innocence (4/30: no question, [paper due on q. 93](#))
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