

### Church History II (HSTH 312; Muller)

- A)** The transition between the ancient world and the "Middle Ages" was a gradual alteration of culture and perspective that took place between the fourth and ninth century. (Source: from exam prep materials prepared by many)

The **barbarian** Goths, Vandals, and Burgundians were federated peoples and, to a large extent, culturally "Romanized" when they invaded the empire that had formerly employed some of them as mercenaries... although they were Arian rather than Catholic Christians. Barbarian kingdoms were established in most of Gaul and Spain as well as in North Africa, and the constant warfare which accompanied the movements of these nations devastated cities and countryside, inhibited commerce and communication, and thus further eroded the social and economic foundations of the Roman world. By 490 the Italian provinces were under the rule of the Ostrogoths; their king Theodoric ruled formally as a governor under the emperor at Constantinople. After this "first wave" of invasion, the barbarian victors stemmed a second wave of invasions from the east to preserve the culture that they had taken over.

Before the **rise of Islam**, the network of Roman roads and trade patterns remained largely intact throughout the former Empire. But the Islamic conquests of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century disrupted trade tremendously; food no longer came to Europe from North Africa and the barbarian kingdoms became more economically isolated. By the time Islam had taken hold of Spain in 715, the Mediterranean had become a Muslim lake. Even the sea-routes were gone, heralding an economic shift northward.

This shift contributed to the **Carolingian Renaissance of the 9<sup>th</sup> Century**. The Germanic (and Catholic) Franks emerged as a powerful nation in Gaul, and their rulers became allies of the pope. Charlemagne, the most prominent Carolingian, installed an administrative system which enabled him to give religious cohesion and a measure of political unity in a society which had not yet fulfilled its potential for disintegration. A lover of learning, he consciously employed the best minds of his day to preserve Christian learning. In 800, the pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne "Holy Roman Emperor".

**Boethius** (ca. 475-ca.525), called by some as the "last classicist before the decline of education", was an advisor to Theodoric who aided the culture of preservation by translating Aristotle's *Organon* (body of logic) into Latin (the result was that the medieval West had access to the logical and literary Aristotle, but not the physical and metaphysical Aristotle). He also authored a philosophical treatise called *The Consolation of Philosophy*; other theological works (most notable a treatise on the Trinity) are also attributed to him. He died in prison under the charge of treason (he was a Catholic).

**Cassiodorus** (477-580) was a "secretary" to Theodoric at age 20 (at 65 he retired in a monastery). He developed a system to read, copy and preserve old manuscripts... and affirmed oldest manuscripts as generally being the best ones to follow. He standardized the style of public writings (i.e. official letters), chronicled events, and influenced medieval education by stressing the importance of classical learning.

**Gregory the Great** (540-604) ranks with the purest and most useful popes. Perhaps his greatest achievement was to send missionaries throughout Europe, paving the way to the complete Christianization of the continent... replacing "Romanitas" with "Christendom". As a former politician (prefect of the Italian peninsula) he had great organizational skills; as a former monastic he stressed clerical poverty and chastity.

- B)** The Reformation was not a monolithic movement, but rather the result of series of rather diverse and separate strains of change and reform. (Source: from exam prep materials prepared by many)

The Reformation was the culmination of several changes in theological thinking and various Reformation movements.

The influence of **Nominalist theology**: the Nominalists believed that one can only know what is observable reality. Observable reality is the only reality of which scientists can speak. Theology is no science. Nominalism quickly became the majority. Nominalism rose up in opposition to realism. It is opposed to natures, substance, categories, and **universals**. William of Ockham was a strong supporter of this movement. He says there is no empirical evidence for universals. Universals may be helpful, but they are not real. God's absolute power and the authority of scripture are important to Nominalist theology. One can gain no knowledge of theological truth through reason. Logic can only function once revelation has taken place. Reason does not transcend revelation. Out of this thinking comes the "potential ordinate" - - what God decides to do. God can do whatever he wants, just as long as it doesn't conflict with the law of non-contradiction. Gives rise to the "divine commence theory". "For those who do what is in them, God will not deny him grace." This is a sort of semi-Pelagians. This places an increased emphasis on good-works salvation. Also, gives rise to an Arminian view of salvation and predestination. Various leaders in the nominalist *via moderna* movement were Robert Holst, Adam Wodhma, Piere D'Ailly, Jean Gerson, William of **Ockham**, and **Biel**. Luther later condemns nominalist theology because of its emphasis on mans work in salvation. Any talk of merit was blasphemous and heretical to Luther.

Some rejected the nominalist idea of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grace, such as, Thomas Bradwardine, and Gregory of Rimini.

Out of *via moderna* and Nominalist theology developed the conciliar movement, which encouraged the Reformation movement further. The pope was not seen as the ultimate authority. Many began to argue that the **general council** has more authority than the pope.

The **devotia moderna** and the **Brethren of the Common Life** was another movement that contributed to the overall Reformation movement. This was a movement that began in eastern Netherlands. Houses were formed of lay women and men who took no monastic vows, but devoted themselves to pursue, in common, a life of service to God and to society. Groote and Radewijns' original ideal was a life of common religious observance without the separation from society. Chief work was pastoral care, and copying/providing religious literature. This movement strictly observed the Augustinian rule. Encouraged a meditative piety, conscious of a deep personal relationship with God and meditation on Christ's life and passion. They opposed the abuses of the church strongly. Thomas a' Kempis was a prime mover of the Modern Devotionalists. This movement was in part due to the immorality of the clergy and church laity, increasing frequency of absenteeism, poorly trained clergy, and decreased spirituality of the laity (superstitious and anti-clergy).

There was a growing expectation among all those involved in the above movements and reforms that God was coming to intervene in history. Many preached for reform and change in the church. Another debate that contributed to the Reformation was over **scripture and tradition**. Which has more authority? A gradual split begins to widen between sola scriptura and other stances. **Hus** and **Wycliffe** preached against the abuses in the church and emphasized the centrality of scripture. After Hus was burned at the stake, his followers were even more ready for reform.

The Reformation was already in motion before **Luther** came onto the scene. Yet, Luther was a critical mover of the Reformation because he attacked the foundation of the understanding of the gospel. Luther is positioned in a critical spot historically and geographically. The Protestant movement is gradually growing and gaining momentum quickly. Luther's Reformation was supported by the aristocrats and monarchs. Luther doesn't rely on the cities, as Calvin, Bucer and Zwingli do. Luther is posing a greater and greater threat to the Roman church through his writings and influence. Luther pushes the already fragile relationship between the Protestant churches and the Roman church beyond repair through a series of encounters over indulgences, sacraments, and salvation by grace vs. works by writing his **95 Theses** and a set of 3 Treatises. The princes of the local governments support Luther and the Reformation. Luther attacks the heart of the doctrine of the Roman church as well as the abuses. Luther separated church and state, two separate kingdoms: 1<sup>st</sup> is God and church, 2<sup>nd</sup> is people and local government. The church has no say in politics, and visa-versa.

**Zwingli** led a Reformation movement in Switzerland. He advocated a joining of politics and religion. Church and State belonged together. Magistrates were expected to promote the gospel and regulate moral behavior in the society and church. Magistrates closed shops on Sundays and enforced church attendance. Zwingli preached a combination of Swiss Nationalism and Protestantism. He also declared the Bible as the only authority. He came up with 67 Theses, some of which are : good works useless, condemned the mass, prayer to saints, monastic vows not binding, ministers should marry, and scripture is sole authority. He also had conflicts with the Roman church. Switzerland hated the Roman Empire. He made a more radical break from the Roman church. NO feasts, no holidays, no instruments in worship, no choirs. Sacraments were only signs and seals. Sola scriptura became the motivating force in the Zwinglian Reformation movement. The Zwinglian Reformation depended on the Imperial independent cities for survival. These cities were independent of the control of the local dukes and nobles and also the Roman church. They were for the Protestant Reformation. They would love to be out from under the control of the Roman Church authority. Zwingli's Reformation was mainly supported by the middle class of the Imperial independent cities. Whole cities would become Protestant. They would no longer need to pay indulgences, taxes, or pay for services of the priest. The papacy was seen as leeches and an intrusion on the life of the city. People desired a removal of clergy/laity distinction. Zwingli died in battle for the Protestant cause.

**Calvin** was the great formalizer and systematizer of Reformational thought, doctrine, and practice.

### C) Leading Figures (Source: from exam prep materials prepared by many)

**1) Thomas Aquinas** (1225-1274). "The Greatest of the Scholastics". Italian Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher. Was a Dominican monk (the Order of Preachers). Peter and Paul spoke with Aquinas to give him the proper interpretation of Isaiah. Wrote using a "Model of Disputation" method which consists of asking a question, giving objections, and answering objections. His theological system is referred to as Thomism. Studied under Albertus Magnus. *Summa Theologiae* was probably his greatest work. Aquinas followed Aristotle and wove Aristotelian through into Christian Theology. Aquinas insisted that reason and faith are not in conflict (actually, they cohere), but they are two distinct sources of knowledge -- both ultimately from God. Some truth comes through man's reason and some through God's revelation. Aquinas was declared a saint in 1323.

**Further on Aquinas:** born 1224 or 1225 to noble parents, near Naples, 1274 on way to Council of Lyon... Early schooling was obtained in a Benedictine monastery and the University of Naples. Much to displeasure of his family, he joined the young, mendicant order of Dominicans. Sent to study at University of Paris and later at Cologne with Albert the Great. His life as a Dominican teacher and preacher was divided between the University of Paris and Italy. A profoundly religious man who was gifted with intellectual clarity and logical consistency, considered one of the church's great teachers (the "Doctor universalis"). Canonized in 1323; in 1876, his teaching was made the "touchstone of Roman Catholic theology" by declaration of Pope Leo XIII. Wrote over 100 works, including: *Summa contra gentiles*, a handbook for debate with Muslims, and *Summa Theologica*, a statement of Dominican theology.

Significance in the history of doctrine determined by his view of the roles of reason and revelation in knowing God and Aquinas appropriation of some, but not all of Aristotle into an Aristotelian Christianity. Aquinas, the "big truths" (the Trinity, incarnation, resurrection) can be known only by revelation, reason (primarily Aristotelian logic) is capable of knowing the "preambles of a faith" (attributes of God such as omnipotence and omniscience) by reflecting on data obtained through sense experience, but this must be perfected through divine revelation. Reason and revelation are two separate ways of knowing, but they can cooperate - - reason gives us a tiny glimpse, revelation tells us much more.

It is because reason can come up with some of the attributes of God that we have the right to talk about Him.

During his lifetime, particularly at the University of Paris, where his ideas were opposed on one hand by Bonaventure (of the Augustinian/Platonic/Franciscan line of thought) and of the Latin Averroists on the other (who held to a pure form of Aristotle which was inconsistent with Christianity), Aquinas advocated an appropriation of the “truths” of Aristotle. Formulated five proofs of God’s existence – the efficient cause argument was adopted by Calvin. According to his theory of divine potential (also adopted by Calvin) whereby God pulled the world out of nothingness and continually holds it in being. His view of scripture was likewise embraced by Reformers: scripture is sufficient for Salvation, but not for knowing everything about God.

**2) Duns Scotus, John:** (1265-1308) John Duns Scotus, known as “the Scot,” was from the Franciscan school and one of the greatest of the Scholastics. He was born in Scotland. Scotus, joined the Friars Minor in 1281, ordained as a priest in 1291, and studied at Oxford and Paris. He lectured on the Sentences at Oxford (1300) and then at Paris (1302-1303)). In Paris, he became a master of theology in 1305, and taught there until 1307 and died in 1308. Throughout the Middle Ages, he was known as the most formidable of Thomas’s critics and he rejected the Augustinian doctrine of the divine illumination of the intellect, adopting in its place Aristotle’s theory of knowledge. Duns and his followers became theologians of the via antiqua, but still made room for natural theology, which launched a new age of Scholasticism. His theology focused on a series of “ontological” proofs, instead of the intellect as the royal faculty, the will is the nobler faculty because it directs the intellect to its object and, above all, because it is the seat of love- and love of God is greater than knowledge of him (the human will is essentially a free power while the intellect is not). Thus, Scotist “voluntarism” opposes Thomist “intellectualism”.

**Added** (given out 12/6): Muller’s class-handout chart on transubstantiation, consubstantiation, etc ...

**Added** (given out 12/6): Via Antiqua vs. Via Moderna chart

**Recommend:** look up Anselm