

Session II

- *O God, who made Saint Thomas Aquinas outstanding in his zeal for holiness and his study of sacred doctrine, grant us, we pray, that we may understand what he taught and imitate what he accomplished.*



The Welcome Quiz

- When was the War of 1812?
- Who is buried in Grant's Tomb?
- To whom is the Washington Monument dedicated?
- Who is commemorated in the Lincoln Memorial?
- What color is the White House?
- How many people does a two-person bike hold?
- What state is featured at the Minnesota History Center?

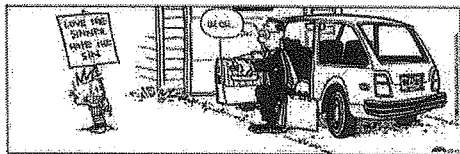
The Dreaded Quiz

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Essence | a) habit tending to goodness |
| 2. Accidents | b) realization of a being |
| 3. Transcendentals | c) composed of matter and form |
| 4. Natural Law | d) a stable inclination to behavior |
| 5. Hylomorphism | e) what a thing is in itself |
| 6. Cause | f) essence ordered to operation |
| 7. Virtue | g) a rational creature's participation in the eternal law of God |
| 8. Nature | h) the why of a being |
| 9. Habit | i) incidental characteristics |
| 10. Act | j) one, good, true, beautiful |

- A Preface: the plan of the *Summa*
– *exitus et redditus*
 - God – existence and attributes
 - Creation
 - The Human Person
 - The Body
 - The Soul – essence, powers, operations:
 - Form of Body
 - Powers: Intellectual (Reason) and Appetitive (Will)
 - How the soul understands and chooses
 - Passions, Natural Law, and Virtues/Vices
 - Christology
 - Sacraments



- Aquinas and Augustine; the Philosopher; the Commentator; the Apostle
- Physics, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Morality; Linguistics; Empiricism and Rationalism (the senses); Realism and Nominalism (what is "real"?)



- "Philosophy begins in wonder" (Plato)
- Thesis: all philosophical thought revolves around reason's search for answers to three basic questions:
 - 1) What is real, and how do we know what is real?
 - 2) How much control do we have over this reality?
 - 3) What is the meaning, purpose, or goal of human existence?
- These might then be called the questions of **Truth, Freedom, and Fulfillment**



From the PreSocratics through the Middle Ages, **Premodernity (Classical Philosophy)** focused largely on the **objective**:

- **Truth** = knowledge of the divinely-established objective order of things
- **Freedom** = the liberty to choose to conform our lives to that objective order of things
- **Fulfillment** = happiness, consisting in a life of virtue (holiness); to live in accord with our God-given nature; for believers, ultimately human fulfillment is eternal life

Despite many differences, philosophers of **Modernity** somewhat **altered** (reduced) the core ideas:

Truth = objective rational order of the universe attained through science with mathematical certitude (while religious beliefs are private matters)

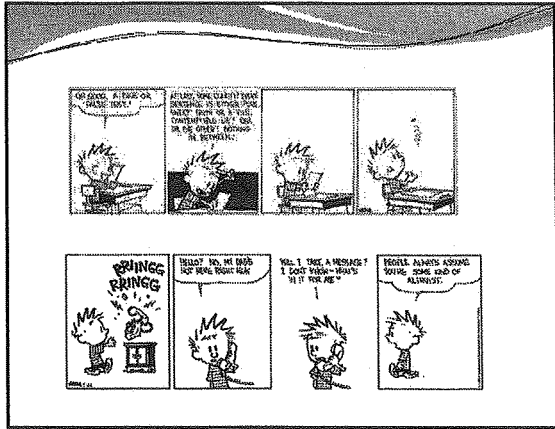
Freedom = "autonomy" – choosing in accord with one's individual insight (whether originating in reason or in emotion) into the universal laws of morality, which are as certain as those of mathematics

Fulfillment = the constant and inevitable improvement of human life for all through the rational application of technology and obeying the universal laws of morality – towards "utopia"

History has shown these ideas to be overly optimistic and incomplete in their exclusion of spiritual truths


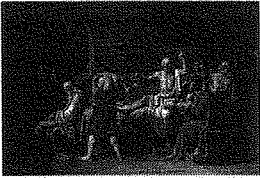
Postmodernity has radically changed our triad of concepts and focuses on the **subjective**:

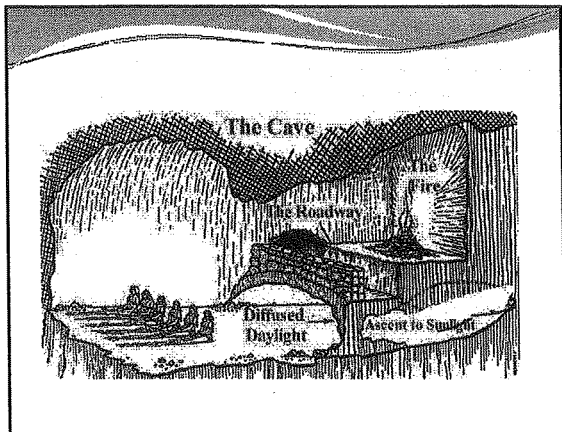
- Skepticism about *truth*; all we have is relativism – whatever you want to believe, since "the" truth is simply unknowable and undecidable; for most, the criterion of truth is the pragmatic/functional/historical
- **Freedom** = nearly unconditioned individual liberty to pursue your own life projects; thus the supreme value of tolerance
- The meaning of life is self-creation – whatever you judge is important is your *fulfillment*



An Irresponsibly Sweeping View of Western Philosophy

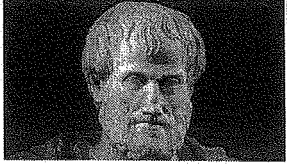
- The Pre-Socratics (Thales, Anaximenes, Anaximander, Democritus); Stoics and Epicureans
- Socrates, Plato and the Ideas






- Aristotle and Moderate Realism

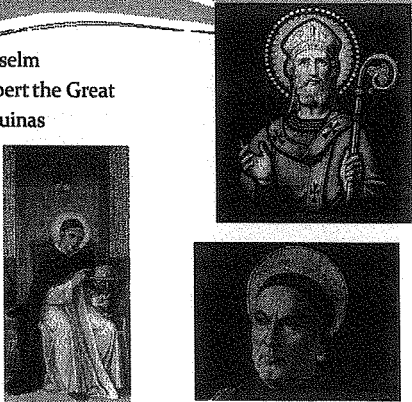
- Hylomorphism
- Substance and accidents, being and becoming, change (metaphysics)
- Logic
- Natural science
- The four causes
- The soul (*De Anima*)




- Plotinus and the One; Zeno; Parmenides, Heraclitus ... the problems of movement/change and unity/plurality
- Augustine – *semines Verbi*, Platonism, free will
- Arabic philosophy (Averroes, Avicenna) – Aristotle into Latin; unity of all intellects; eternity of universe; plural truths




- Anselm
- Albert the Great
- Aquinas

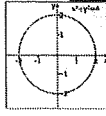





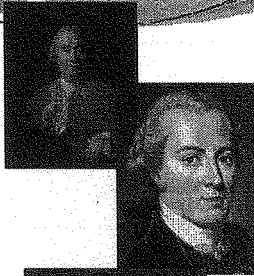
- Bonaventure (OSF) – will and intellect
- Duns Scotus (OSF)– *haecceitas*; Doctor Subtilis
- William of Ockham (OSF) – “Ockham’s razor” and nominalism





- Descartes: *cogito ergo sum* (*The Turn to the Subject*); mind-body dualism; mathematics




- Hume (cause and effect)
- Kant (the *noumenon*)
- Modernity (*science* as the criterion of truth; Francis Bacon’s proposal “to relieve the human condition”)
- At roughly the same period: Copernicus, Newton, Columbus, Drake, Magellan, etc. ... called into question the certitude of past ideas



- Later 19th – 20th Centuries:
- Logical positivism
- Linguistics
- Phenomenology
- Nihilism
- Existentialism
- Postmodernism (*Nietzsche, Freud, Marx* - “the masters of suspicion” [per Ricouer/JP II]; *Ayer, Wittgenstein, Hegel, Heidegger, Derrida, Foucault*)



- Back to Thomas ...
- "Seldom affirm, never deny, and always make distinctions"
- *Summa Theologiae* "for beginners"
- For each question: *Videtur quod / Sed contra est / Respondeo / Ad obiectiones*
- **What is truth? How do we know it? What is Freedom? How real is it? What is the purpose of life? How do we achieve it?**



- Basic Philosophical Concepts to read Aquinas and others (handout) – these are tools used by many philosophers in various ways ...
- **Essence:** what a thing is in itself, its particular distinguishing being; related to Substance (ousia)
- **Nature:** essence ordered to operation
- **Accidents:** those characteristics of a substance that can change without altering its being (quantity, quality, relation, *habitus*, time, location, situation (or position), action, and passion ("being acted on"))

- **Existence:** the reality of a being (can be essential or contingent)
- **Transcendentals:** unity, goodness, truth, beauty (they transcend or cross essences)
- **Form:** the essence of a thing, its "shape" or identity abstracted from the material of which it is made (common examples: table, chair, tree); sometimes called "substantial form" (related to but distinct from Plato's Ideas)
- **Matter:** the material of which corporeal beings are composed (wood, stone, glass, etc.)
- **Hylomorphism:** Aristotle's term suggesting that all material objects are composed of form (*morphe*) and matter (*hule*)

- **Potency:** the potential of a being to develop into its fullness
- **Act:** the actualization of a being, its complete realization
- **Cause:** the "why" of a being, the reason it is what and as it is. Aristotle classically proposed four distinct but interrelated causes: material (the matter out of which); formal (the shape or form by which); efficient (the agent who makes it which); final (the end, or purpose, for which)
- **Virtue:** a habit (stable disposition towards action) that facilitates what is good (vices are habits that facilitate actions towards what is evil)
- **Natural Law:** the rational creature's participation in the eternal law (truth and goodness) of God

• Is truly Christian philosophy possible? Is truly non-Christian philosophy possible?

