**Prelim Paper: The Christian Doctrine of Creation**

**Essay Topics and Suggested Readings**

In each week choose one of the two topics!

A useful resource for many of the topics covered in these tutorials is the textbook *God, Humanity and the Cosmos*, ed. C. Southgate et al. (Edinburgh 1999). It is held by the Trinity Library, but perhaps more importantly is available in full online on the site [www.counterbalance.org](http://www.counterbalance.org) (browse the list of titles on the right hand side of the screen to find it). This site contains generally useful information for the paper. Books that are held by the Trinity Library are marked with an *. Material that is part of the Digital Library of the Theology Faculty is marked with two ** (http://resources.theology.ox.ac.uk).

1. a) ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ What does the Bible tell us about creation?

   Gen. 1-2 (cf. Ps. 104; Job 38-40)
   C. Westermann, *Creation*, Philadelphia 1974
   P. Haffner, *The Mystery of Creation*, Leominster 1995, ch. 3*
   S.Jaki, *Genesis 1 through the Ages*, London 1992

b) Did God create the world in six days?

   Gen. 1-2 (cf. Ps.104; Job 38-40)
   C.E. Gunton, *The Actuality of Atonement*, Edinburgh 1988, ch. 2*; **
   D. Cupitt, *What is a Story*, London 1991, ch. 4
   S.Jaki, *Genesis 1 through the Ages*, London 1992
   C. Knox, Changing Christian Paradigms and their Implications for Modern Thought, Leiden 1992

2a) ‘Through him all things were made’: how is Christ involved in creation?

   John 1,1-18; Col. 1,15-18
   Irenaeus, Against all Heresies V 18 (Online at: [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.vii.xix.html](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.vii.xix.html) - an 19th century and thus slightly outdated translation, but in principle reliable)
   Origen, Commentary on the Gospel of John I, esp. 17.22.40 (Online at: [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf09.xv.iii.i.i.html](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf09.xv.iii.i.i.html) - the same as above applies)
b) What can ‘creation out of nothing’ possibly mean?

Theophilus, To Autolycus II 10 (Online at: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iv.ii.x.x.html - on the translation see above)
Augustine, Confessions XI 1-7 (Online at: http://www.ccel.org/pager.cgi?file=a/augustine/confessions/confessions-bod.html&up=a/augustine/confessions/confessions.html&from=14 )

3a) What did God do before he created the world?

Augustine, Confessions XI 12-27
J. Moltmann, God in Creation, London (SCM) 1985, ch. 5*
P. Helm, ‘Eternal Creation’ in: Gunton (ed.), The Doctrine of Creation, Edinburgh 1997, ch. 2*
N. Pike, God and Timelessness, London 1970*
P. Davies, About Time, Harmondsworth 1995*
P. Tillich, Systematic Theology I, 274-279*
I. Barbour, Religion in an Age of Science, London 1990*

3b) Does any sparrow fall from heaven apart from God’s will?

P. Helm, Providence, Leicester 1993, ch. 4*
M. Wiles, God’s Action in the World, London 1993*, chs. 1-3.6
Calvin, Institutes I: 16-17 (Online at: http://www.reformed.org/books/institutes/hk1ch16.html)
K. Ward, Religion and Creation, pp. 261-265
P. Tillich, Systematic Theology I, London (SCM) 1978, 264-269*
4a) If God is good, why is there evil in his creation?

K. Ward, *God, Faith and the Millennium*, ch. 8
K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III/2, 100-112*
P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology* I, pp. 269-270*
M.W. Worthing, *God, Creation, and Contemporary Physics*, Minneapolis 1996*

4b) Does modern physics make a doctrine of creation less plausible?


5 What challenge to theology is constituted by the theory of the evolution of life?

Ch. Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, chs. 3, 14
R. Stannard, *Science and Wonders*, ch. 2*
C. Welch, *Protestant Thought in the 19th Century*, vol. 2, New Haven 1985, ch. 6*
K. Ward, *God, Faith and the New Millennium*, ch. 9
M. Ruse, *Philosophy of Biology*, London 1973*

6a) In what sense can human beings be said to be ‘in the image of God’?

A.A. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, Grand Rapids 1986, ch. 5
J. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, chs. 9 & 10
b) ‘... male and female he created them’: does the doctrine of creation improve our grasp of gender issues?


7a) Are human beings ‘creators’ of their own world?

C. Geertz, *The Interpretations of Cultures*, New York 2000, ch.4*
C. Schwöbel/C.E. Gunton (eds.), *Persons Divine and Human*, Edinburgh 1991*
A. Peacocke/G. Gillett (eds.), *Persons and Personality*, Oxford 1987, ch. 6 (by R. Harre)

b) Does a theology of creation legitimately come out in support of environmental protection?

J. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, ch. 2
G. Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, Manchester 1985
P. Haffner, *The Mystery of Creation*, Leominster 1995, ch. 9 & 10*

8a) ‘Veni creator spiritus …’: Discuss the relation between creation and redemption!

K. Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, London 1966 chs. 8 & 9*
G. Daly, *Creation and Redemption*, Dublin 1988
R. Simkins, *Creator and Creation*, ch. 6

b) Does Trinitarian theology hold the promise of a better doctrine of creation?

J. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, ch. 1
K. Ward, *God, Faith and the New Millennium*, Introduction, chs. 1 & 4
P. Haffner, *The Mystery of Creation*, ch. 7*