

## 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\*

R.J. Clifford, The Hebrew Scriptures and the Theology of Creation, *Theological Studies* 46 (1985) 507-523\*\*.

E. Lucas, Some Scientific Issues Related to the Understanding of Genesis 1-3, *Themelios* 12 (1987) 46-51\*\*.

S.Jaki, *Genesis 1 through the Ages*, London 1992

R. Simkins, *Creator and Creation. Nature in the World View of Ancient Israel*, Peabody, Mass. 1994, chs. 2,3&5

#### b) Did God create the world in six days?

Gen. 1-2 (cf. Ps.104; Job 38-40)

M.F. Wiles, chapter 8, in: J.Hick (ed.), *The Myth of God Incarnate*, London 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1993\*

C.E. Gunton, *The Actuality of Atonement*, Edinburgh 1988, ch. 2\*; \*\*

D. Cupitt, *What is a Story*, London 1991, ch. 4

K. Ward, *Religion and Creation*, Oxford 1996, part 1, sections 1&2; part 2.

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> - an 19th century and thus slightly outdated translation, but in principle reliable)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> - the same as above applies)

Z. Hayes, *The Gift of Being*, Collegeville 2001, ch. 8  
R.A. Norris, *God and World in Early Christian Theology*, London 1966\*  
C.E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, Carlisle 1992  
J. A. Lyons, *The Cosmic Christ in Origen and Teilhard de Chardin*, Oxford 1982, part I

### **b) What can 'creation out of nothing' possibly mean?**

C.E. Gunton, 'The doctrine of creation', in: id. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, Cambridge 1997, ch. 8  
Theophilus, *To Autolycus* II 10 (Online at: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iv.ii.ii.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> )  
G. May, *Creatio ex nihilo: The Doctrine of "Creation out of Nothing" in Early Christian Thought*, Edinburgh 1995  
F.M. Young, 'Creatio ex Nihilo', in: *Scottish Journal of Theology* 44 (1991) pp.139-151

### **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\*  
J. Polkinghorne, *Science and Providence. God's Interaction with the World*, London 1989\*, chs. 1-6  
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/bk1ch16.html>)  
K. Ward, *Religion and Creation*, pp. 261-265  
P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology* I, London (SCM) 1978, 264-269\*  
R. Swinburne, *The Christian God*, Oxford 1994, ch. 3\* and online at: <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/public/content/philosophy/0198235127/toc.html>

#### **4a) If God is good, why is there evil in his creation?**

- P. Vardy, *The Puzzle of Evil*, London 1992  
Origen, *On First Principles* II 9 (Online at: [http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-04/anf04-46.htm#P6684\\_1358950](http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-04/anf04-46.htm#P6684_1358950) )  
K. Ward, *God, Faith and the Millennium*, ch. 8  
A. Farrer, *Love Almighty and Ills Unlimited*, London 1966  
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?**

- J. Polkinghorne, 'Creation and the Structure of the Physical World', in: *Theology Today* 44 (1987), 53-68\*\*  
A. Peacocke, *God and Science*, London 1996  
P. Atkins, *Creation Revisited – The Origin of Space, Time and the Universe*, London 1994\*  
R. Stannard, *Science and Wonders*, London 1996, ch. 1 and pp. 161-169, 178-187 (re Atkins)\*  
K. Ward, *God, Chance and Necessity*, Oxford 1996\*

#### **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 19<sup>th</sup> 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\*  
R. Dawkins, *River out of Eden*, London 1995, chs. 3 & 4\*

#### **6a) In what sense can human beings be said to be 'in the image of God'?**

- J. Barr, *The Image of God in the Book of Genesis*, 1968  
J.F.A. Sawyer, 'The Meaning of "in the divine image" in Genesis 1-11', in: *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1974), 418-26  
R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, New York 1964, vol. 1, chs.9-10\*  
A.A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, Grand Rapids 1986, ch. 5  
W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids 1994, vol. 2, ch. 8, § 2\*.  
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?**

- S. Coakley, ‘Creaturehood before God – Male and Female’, in: *Theology* 93 (1990) 343-354  
P. Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, London 1992  
J. Aldredge-Clanton, *In whose image? : God and gender*, London 1990  
E. Moltmann-Wendel/J. Moltmann, *Humanity in God*, London 1984

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

- P. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, London 1969, chs. 1-4\*  
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?**

- Chr. Schwöbel, ‘God, Creation and the Christian Community: The Dogmatic Basis of a Christian Ethic of Createdness’ in: C.E. Gunton (ed.), *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy* Edinburgh 1997,  
J. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, ch. 2  
G. Kaufman, *Theology for a Nuclear Age*, Manchester 1985  
J. Passmore, *Man’s Responsibility for Nature*, London 1974, esp. chs. 1&2  
P. Haffner, *The Mystery of Creation*, Leominster 1995, ch. 9&10\*

**8 a) ‘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  
U. King, ‘Women and Christianity – A Horizon of Hope’, in: *Women’s Voices*, ed. T. Elwes, London 1992

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

- C.E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, Edinburgh 1998, pp. 157-162  
J. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, ch. 1  
J. Williams, ‘The Doctrine of the Trinity’, in: *Women’s Voices*, ed. T. Elwes, London 1992  
K. Ward, *God, Faith and the New Millennium*, Introduction, chs. 1 & 4  
P. Haffner, *The Mystery of Creation*, ch. 7\*