**Ss. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary**

**3605 Perrysville Ave.**

**Pittsburgh, PA 15214**

Theosis and Gregory Palamas

DT 208

Spring 2019



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3 Credit Hours

Online M.A.T. Program

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**Course Description**

This course presents students with a study of the thought of Gregory Palamas concerning grace and theosis. Topics covered will include: created vs. uncreated grace, the issue of God’s simplicity (in terms of Palamas’s distinction between God’s essence and energies), the role of philosophy in Byzantine theology, and contemporary comparisons of Palamism with Western thought. Students will engage with primary source material from Palamas as well as texts drawn from various forms of “Palamism.” While the course’s primary focus falls within dogmatic theology, it will consider these topics in connection with their importance in moral and spiritual theology. The following will covered in the course:

**Course goals:**

* A systematic study of the theological topics involved in the issues of theosis and grace surrounding the debates arising between Gregory Palamas and his contemporary adversaries.
* A direct study of relevant texts of Palamas on this topic
* Historical receptions of Palamism and Neo-Palamism
* A comparison of Palamas’s thought with Western articulations of these same theological topics

3 hours; 1 semester

**Program of Priestly Formation Contents Relevant to this Course**

Although this course is primarily designed as fulfilling the purely academic curriculum of our M.A.T. program, it nonetheless helps to bolster discussion of grace in accord with the following norm found in the USCCB’s Program of Priestly Formation:

* 202. In dogmatic theology, the core must include theology of God, One and Three, Christology, Creation, the Fall and the nature of sin, redemption, *grace* and the human person, ecclesiology, sacraments, eschatology, Mariology, and missiology. A separate course on Holy Orders, with a thorough study of the nature and mission of the ministerial priesthood including a history and theology of celibacy, is required.

**Course Goals**

The course goals are listed with each week in the lecture schedule below

**Note regarding translations used in class**

Any translations done by the professor for this course’s readings are not to be distributed without express permission from the instructor.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

The final grade is composed of…

* (30%) Weekly Comment

Each week, the professor will begin a discussion online in which the student will be expected to participate in intelligently. The primary concern will be to see that students engage with the professor’s prompt, though interaction with other students is highly encouraged. (Such interaction can occur merely through one’s own written prompt, which may incorporate insights from other students or respond to them in the course of one’s own reflection.) This online interaction will be used by the professor then to respond to students’ assimilation of the material.

* (30%) Term Paper (Written)

The student will write a research-oriented term paper based on the course content. The length of the paper is to be 15-20 pages and is expected to synthetically and carefully approach one of the themes taken up in the course of our lectures.

* (40%) Final Examination (Written)

The final examination will be comprehensive. Details will be provided in class. It is intended to be synthetic and will be given to students sufficiently early so that they work through the content with sufficient attention to details.

**Readings and Lecture Schedule**

Optional readings are included only to provide students with some basic additional resources if they so desire and have time.

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| Lecture Schedule |
| Week 1 – Introduction, the Life of St. Gregory Palamas  Goals: Present historical overview of life of St. Gregory Palamas and controversies involving his teaching  Present thematic overview of course |
| *Readings*  Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, Introduction  *Optional*  Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, part 1 (p. 1-115)  Sinkewicz, “Gregory Palamas”  Kokkinos, “Miracles of Gregory Palamas” |
| Week 2 – The Historical Reception of Palamite Theology  Goals: Present overview of the history of reception of Palamas within Orthodoxy  Present history of early response and reaction to Palamas in the West (and counter-reaction)  Present the importance of the work of John Meyendorff as well as the progress made since the time of his work on Palamas. |
| *Readings*  Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, chs. 1-3 |
| Week 3 – Larger Questions Considered (pt. 1)  Goals: Thematically consider questions of theological methodology and epistemology relevant to the controversies surround Palamas. |
| *Readings*  Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, chs. 4-6 |
| Week 4 – Larger Questions Considered (pt. 2)  Goals: Thematically consider questions of divine indwelling and grace relevant to the controversies surround Palamas.  Undertake initial reflections on the possibilities of shared reception of Palamas in East and West. |
| *Readings*  Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, chs. 7, 8, and Conclusion |
| Week 5 – Palamas Triads (Close Text Reading, wk. 1)  Goals: Close reading of selections from the *Triads*, focusing on themes most relevant to *theosis*, grace, and mystical experience |
| *Readings*  Palamas, *Triads* (Selection sections A and B: “Philosophy does not save” and “Apophatic theology as positive experience”) |
| Week 6 – Palamas Triads (Close Text Reading, wk. 2)  Goals: Close reading of selections from the *Triads*, focusing on themes most relevant to *theosis*, grace, and mystical experience |
| *Readings*  Palamas, *Triads* (Selection sections C and D: “The Hesychast method of prayer” and “Deification in Christ”)  *Optional*:  Dialogue, *Dialogue Between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite*  150 chapters, *Saint Gregory Palamas: The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*  Selections from Palamas in vol. 4 of the *Philokalia*  Palamas, *Homilies* |
| Week 7 – Palamas Triads (Close Text Reading, wk. 3)  Goals: Close reading of selections from the *Triads*, focusing on themes most relevant to *theosis*, grace, and mystical experience |
| *Readings*  Palamas, *Triads* (Selection sections E and F: “The uncreated Glory” and “Essence and energies in God”)  *Optional*:  Dialogue, *Dialogue Between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite*  150 chapters, *Saint Gregory Palamas: The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*  Selections from Palamas in vol. 4 of the *Philokalia*  Palamas, *Homilies* |
| Week 8 – Basil Krivosheine vs. Martin Jugie  Goals: Consideration of the early controversy between Jugie and Krivosheine, pursued as presenting some of the basic parameters of later discussions (and debates) surrounding Palamas and “Palamism” |
| *Readings*  Jugie, “Palamas, Gregory” (Entry from *Dictionnaire de théologie Catholique*, trans. Gilbert)  Krivosheine, “The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas” |
| Week 9 – Vladimir Lossky  Goals: Consideration of one work of Vladimir Lossky as presenting a single narrative arch of “Palamite” theology as applied to mystical experience.  Undertake supplementary reflections drawn from Lossky’s *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* |
| *Readings*  Lossky, *The Vision of God*, chs. 1-4  *Optional*  Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, chs. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11 (“Introduction,” “The Divine Darkness,” “Uncreated Energies,” “The Way of Union,” “The Divine Light”) |
| Week 10 – Vladimir Lossky  Goals: Consideration of one work of Vladimir Lossky as presenting a single narrative arch of “Palamite” theology as applied to mystical experience.  Undertake supplementary reflections drawn from Lossky’s *Image and Likeness of God* |
| *Readings*  Lossky, *The Vision of God*, chs. 5-9  *Optional*  Lossky, *Image and Likeness of God*, chs. 2 (“Darkness and Light in the Knowledge of God”), 3 (“The Theology of Light in the Thought of St. Gregory Palamas”), 5 (“Redemption and Deification”) |
| Week 11 – Favorable (or at least gentle) Western Approaches to Palamas / Eastern Fathers  Goals: Present three different kinds of favorable (or at least “gentle”) Western approaches to topics related to the works of Palamas: Yves Congar (Ecumenical interest); Karl Rahner (Intra-scholastic debate over Uncreated Grace, looking or correction in light of the Fathers); Charles Journet (Kind review of Meyendorff’s work, written by a well-known relatively conservative Thomist Cardinal)  Present students to the fact that there have historically been many *Scholae* in the Catholic theological world |
| *Readings*  Congar, “Deification in the Spiritual Tradition of the East”  Rahner, “Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace”  Journet, “Palamisme et Thomisme, À propos d’un livre récent” (trans. Minerd)  *Optional*  De Halleux, “Palamisme et scolastique”  Hayes, “Deus in se et Deus pro nobis: The Transfiguration in the Theology of Gregory Palamas and Its Importance for Catholic Theology”  Kappes, Select popular writings on Palamas and the West  Keating, *Deification and Grace*  Lison, *l’Esprit répandu: la pneumatologie de Grégoire Palamas*  Spencer, “The Flexibility of Divine Simplicity: Aquinas, Scotus, Palamas”  Williams, *The Ground of Union* |
| Week 12 – Thomism and Grace  Goals: Present a general account of two representatives of the Thomist school concerning Grace and the indwelling of the Trinity |
| *Readings*  J.-H. Nicolas, “Grace créée et grace incréée” (trans. Minerd)  Selections from vol. 1 and vol. 2 of *Synthèse dogmatique* (trans. Minerd)  Gardeil, “La grâce sanctifiante,” “L’Intérieure de l’âme juste” (trans. Minerd)  *Optional*  Arintero, *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church*, vol. 1  Garrigou-Lagrange, “Love of God and the Indwelling of the Blessed Trinity”  ———. *Grace*  J.-H. Nicolas, *Les Profondeurs de la Grace* |
| Week 13 – Thomist Concerns with Palamas  Goals: Present a recent work on the Palamite Controversy from a Thomist Perspective  Introduce students concerns surrounding divine transcendence, simplicity, and theological language (e.g., analogy) arising from Thomist interlocutors interacting with the thought of Palamas |
| *Readings*  Totleben, “The Palamite Controversy: A Thomistic Analysis”  *Optional*  (Non-Thomist Concerns:) Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity* |
| Week 14 – Summary and Spiritual Reflections  TERM PAPER DUE  FINAL EXAM DUE  Goals: General review and spiritual reflections drawn from course content and several homilies on the Transfiguration |
| *Readings*  Selected Homilies from *Light on the Mountain: Greek Patristic and Byzantine Homilies on the Transfiguration of the Lord*  *Optional*  Demetracopoulos, “Palamas Transformed. Palamite Interpretations of the Distinction Between God’s ‘Essence’ and ‘Energies’ in Late Byzantium”  Mantzaridis, *The Deification of Man*  Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*  Palamas, *Homilies*  Romanides, “Notes on the Palamite Controversy and Related Topics”  Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought* |

**Grading Policy**

**Late Work**

Late work will be accepted with penalties. The first day the assignment is late, a full letter grade will be deducted from the score. From the fifth day (inclusive) after the assignment is due, half of a letter will be deducted daily.

**Letter Grades**

All grades are based upon the following scale:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Letter | PCT | Qual. |
| A | 96-100% | 4.0 |
| A- | 91-95% | 3.7 |
| B+ | 86-90% | 3.3 |
| B | 81-85% | 3.0 |
| B- | 76-80% | 2.7 |
| C | 66-75% | 2.0 |
| D | 61-65% | 1.0 |
| F | 0-60% | 0 |

**Course Policies**

**Build Rapport**

If you feel that you are having difficulties, contact the instructor as soon as possible. Rapport is very important in all walks of life and will be *very* important in the ordained life. This basic aspect of human interactions can reduce many difficulties to *nil*. Be proactive and do not be afraid of coming to the professor!

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Any cheating on tests, through whatever means, will not be tolerated. Because such cheating vitiates the process of evaluation, the student will receive a zero percent for any cheating-related infractions. Dishonesty is directly incompatible with the virtue of justice, and nobody studying in the seminary should commit sins against justice, whether natural or supernatural! Any breaches of academic integrity will be reported to the relevant parties in the seminary faculty and administration.

By the same stroke is all plagiarism forbidden. This includes any use of any content or ideas from other sources (of whatever medium, including other students) without acknowledging the source of the information. Acts of plagiarism risk failure of the course and possible dismissal from the program at the seminary.

Plagiarism, the use of texts, language, ideas or research from any sources or from other students without proper acknowledgment that the work is not one's own, is likewise forbidden. Any instance of plagiarism or cheating is grounds for immediate failure of the course in question.

**Academic Accommodations**

Any special needs related to learning, testing, or physical disability in this course, require the student to inform the instructor prior to the onset of classes and to contact the Dean so that those needs might be addressed.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Students are expected to be present at all classes, to be engaged, to take notes, and to politely discuss topics in a relevant manner. Computer use is permitted for the sake of notes and any other uses *directly related to class*. Students are to silence all cell phones and are not to use them except as emergencies dictate. If the professor feels that a student is using a phone in a distracting manner, he will discuss the matter with the student. This activity, as well as unacceptable use of one’s computer, will have a negative effect on one’s participation grade.

**Translations**

All unpublished translations provided for students are *not to be redistributed* and are solely for use in this class.

**Bibliography**

**Required Readings (Most of these are selections; all are found on Populi)**

Congar, Yves. “Deification in the Spiritual Tradition of the East,” in *Dialogue Between Christians: Catholic Contributions to Ecumenism,* edited by Yves Congar, translated by Philip Loretz, 217-231. London: Chapman, 1966.

Gardeil, Ambroise. “La grâce sanctifiante” and “L’intérieure de l’âme juste,” in *La structure de l’âme et l’expérience mystique*, 3rd ed., vol. 1, 353-392 and vol. 2, 1-88. Paris: Lecoffre, 1927 (trans. Matthew K. Minerd).

Journet, Charles. “Palamisme et Thomisme, À propos d’un livre récent.” *Revue Thomiste* 60 (1960): 429–52 (trans. Matthew K. Minerd).

Jugie, Martin. “Palamite (Controverse),” *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 11, pt. 2, cols. 1777-1818. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932). Translation by Peter Gilbert. <https://bekkos.wordpress.com/martin-jugie-the-palamite-controversy/>

Krivoshein, Basil. “The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas.” *The Eastern Churches Quarterly* 3 (1938): 26-33, 71-84, 138-156, 193-214.

Lossky, Vladimir. *The Vision of God*. Translated by Asheleigh Moorhouse. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1963.

Nicolas, Jean-Hervé. “Grace créée et grace incréée,” in *Les Profondeurs de la Grace*, 150-160. Paris: Beauchesne, 1969 (trans. Matthew K. Minerd).

———. *Synthèse Dogmatique: de la Trinité à la Trinité*. Fribourg, CH: Éditions Universitaires, 1985 (selections, trans. Matthew K. Minerd)

———. *Synthèse Dogmatique: complément, de l’Univers à la Trinité*. Fribourg, CH: Éditions Universitaires, 1997 (selection, trans. Matthew K. Minerd).

Palamas, Gregory. *The Triads*. Edited by John Meyendorff. Translated by Nicholas Gendle. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1983.

Rahner, Karl. “Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace.” In *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, translated by Cornelius Ernst, 319-346. New York: Seabury Press, 1974.

Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Totleben, Peter. “The Palamite Controversy: A Thomistic Analysis,” Licentiate thesis. Dominican House of Studies Washington, DC, 2015.

**Optional Readings**

Arintero, John [Juan]. *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church*. Vol. 1. Translated by Jordan Aumann. St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1949.

De Halleux, André. “Palamisme et scolastique.” *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 4 (1973): 409–42.

Demetracopoulos, “Palamas Transformed. Palamite Interpretations of the Distinction Between God’s ‘Essence’ and ‘Energies’ in Late Byzantium.” In *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History 1204–1500*, edited by M. Hinterberger and C. Schabel, 263–372. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

Garrigou-Lagrange, Reginald. “Love of God and the Indwelling of the Blessed Trinity” in *The Love of God and the Cross of Jesus*, vol. 1, translated by Jeanne Marie, 136-173. St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1949.

———. *Grace: Commentary on the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Ia-IIae, q.109–114* Translated by The Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery. St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1952.

Hayes, Cory. “Deus in se et Deus pro nobis: The Transfiguration in the Theology of Gregory Palamas and Its Importance for Catholic Theology.” Ph.D. Dissertation. Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA, 2015.

Keating, Daniel A. *Deification and Grace*. Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2007.

Kokkinos, Philotheos. “Miracles of Gregory Palamas,” in *Miracle tales from Byzantium*, translated by Alice-Mary Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Lison, Jacques. *l’Esprit répandu: la pneumatologie de Grégoire Palamas*. Paris: Cerf, 1994.

*Light on the Mountain: Greek Patristic and Byzantine Homilies on the Transfiguration of the Lord*. Translated by Brian E. Daley. Edited by John Behr. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2013.

Lossky, Vladimir. *In the Image and Likeness of God*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974.

———. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. Translated by the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1976.

Mantzaridis, Georgios I. *The Deification of Man*. Translated by Liadain Sherrard. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1998.

Meyendorff, John. *A Study of Gregory Palamas*. Translated by George Lawrence. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1998).

———. *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*. Translated by Adele Fiske. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1998.

Nicolas, Jean-Hervé. *Les Profondeurs de la Grace*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1969.

Radde-Gallwitz, Andrew. *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Palamas, Gregory. *Dialogue Between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite*. Translated by Rein Ferwerda. Binghamton, NY: Global Publications).

———. *St. Gregory Palamas: The Homilies*. Translated by Christopher Veniamin. Waymart, PA: Mount Thabor Publishing, 2009.

———. *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters.* Edited and Translated by Robert E. Sinkewicz. Toronto: PIMS, 1988.

———. *The Philokalia*, vol. 4, edited and translated by G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Ware, et al., 287-426.

Romanides, John. “Notes on the Palamite Controversy and Related Topics.” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 6 (1960-1961): 186-205; 9 (1963-1964): 225-227.

Sinkewicz, Robert E. “Gregory Palamas,” in *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. 2 (13th – 19th centuries), edited by Carmelo Giuseppi Conticello and Vassa Conticello, 131-188. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

Spencer, Mark K. “The Flexibility of Divine Simplicity: Aquinas, Scotus, Palamas.” *International Philosophical Quarterly*. 57, no. 2 (June, 2017): 123-139.

Tollefsen, Torstein Theodor. *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Williams, A. N. *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

**Otherwise, see the comprehensive and excellent bibliography in Russell’s recent text.**