Sensorveiledning—Eksamen

In TEOL2003, The Ancient Church, the students learned about the history of the ancient church, from its earliest formation in the 1st century to its fragmentation in the 5th century and after (roughly until the emergence of Islam).

Practical requirements

The students are asked to write a three-day-home essay for their exam. The minimum word count is 3000 words. If they are below this, this should have significant negative impact on their grade. Students may go above the maximum word count (4000 words), but only up to 10% more (4400 words). Going significantly above this limit should also negatively impact a grade, since it is a failure to follow the rules given.

The course put emphasis on the importance of primary sources for the study of history, and demanded that students would familiarize themselves with them, to be able to work (at least) with translations. Hence the demand that students should use at least one primary source. If students fail to do so, this should have a significant negative impact on their grades. If they use more than one primary source (in an effective and useful manner) then this should have a positive effect. If they use the sources also in their original languages, this should have a positive effect.

The students were asked to use three secondary sources. They have an extensive syllabus with many readings at their hands, so that they should be able to use three secondary sources without having to do their own literature research. If they fail to use three secondary sources this should have a significant negative impact on their grade. If they manage to use more than three sources or if they use additional literature not from the syllabus, this should have a positive impact on their grade, since it shows that they worked for themselves and have prepared well.

Ideal contents

The students have two choices of questions for their exam: (1) exploring the emergence of the ancient Church as a unified organization in the 2nd and 3rd centuries; or (2) exploring the resolution of the Trinitarian question in the 4th century.

For the first, a satisfactory answer should create a reasonable and understandable narrative that sufficiently explains the emergence of the ancient Church in the given time period. It should touch on several of the factors that were discussed in the course as being contributors to this development: the engagement with early so-called heretics (Gnostics, Montanists), and their eventual condemnation and exclusion, the emergence of the notion of the apostolic succession, the formation of the New Testament canon, the development of a unified church organization with different offices (bishops, priests, deacons), the development of uniform rituals (baptism, eucharist etc.) and feasts (Easter, Pentecost). A very good answer should cover almost all of these points, a bad one only a few. A good answer should also be able to connect these factors in the essay, highlighting how they all work into each other.

For the first, a satisfactory answer should create a reasonable and understandable narrative that sufficiently explains what the Trinitarian question is, and how it was eventually resolved in the 4th century. It should touch on several of the factors that were discussed in the course as being contributors to this development: the emergence of different interpretations on the relationships between God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the 2nd and 3rd centuries (“Economic Theology”, Logos Theology, Origen, Adoptionism, Modalism), the Arian controversy, the council of Nicaea, the

implications of Homoousian, Homoiousian, Homoianism, and Heteroousian as theological positions after Nicaea, the contributions of Athanasius and the three Cappadocians to an eventual compromise between Homoousians and Homoiousians, and the resolution of the Trinitarian question in the Council of Constantinople and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. A very good answer should cover almost all of these points, a bad one only a few. A good answer should also be able to link these points together, to create a proper narrative.