Nominalism / Aquinas

Nominalism

1) The issue: realism vs. nominalism

2) What turns on this debate?

a) If the realist are right mankind is implicated in the Fall.

b) If the nominalist are right Adam’s sin was individual and not a sin of mankind, church and state have no substantial reality.

3) Abelard’s major departure from tradition was that he thought reason could proceed on it own to find truth.

4) Where does this lead?

Aquinas 1224 – 1275

1) Why think about Aquinas?

a) Aquinas synthesizes Ancient Greek ideas, Aristotle, and Church doctrine.

b) To understand Hobbes and what comes later it is important to keep in mind Feudalism and the Thomistic view of law and the state.

2) Teleological & Hierarchical conception of the universe.

3) Natural law tradition.

4) Reason (Freedom)

5) Descriptive & Prescriptive

6) Organic view of the state.

8) Why does the feudal system falls apart?

a) There arose within the feudal system the beginnings of a capitalist class with notions that were illegitimate in feudalism – conflicts that were not contained by the natural law tradition.

b) The major focus for discontent with the established system in the eleventh century was not the emerging bourgeois class of the new urban centers. The merchants and townsmen were beginning to become a significant force, but they could not approach the influence of the monks.

c) Bacon, Galileo, Copernicus, Hobbes