

# THOMISTIC PSYCHOLOGY: A RETRIEVAL

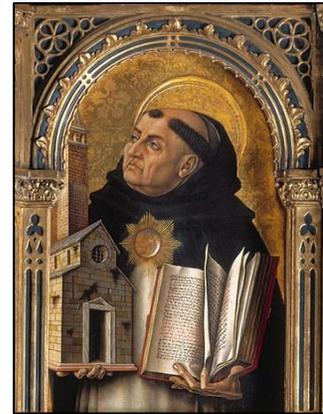
SEMINAR SYLLABUS

[SPRING 2022]



## DESCRIPTION

Two momentous intellectual events occurred in 1879: Wilhelm Wundt founded the first formal laboratory for psychological research at the University of Leipzig, and Pope Leo XIII released the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, which exhorted the retrieval and teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Catholic universities. The first, while a legitimate and necessary approach to understanding the human psyche, *needs* a more robust follow-through on the second; that is, the scientific understanding of the human psyche needs a philosophical understanding, and no philosopher has provided as **strong** an understanding of the human psyche as Thomas Aquinas. Thus, we seek to retrieve this understanding in a way conducive to an overall deepening of our psychological insight.



At the center of this retrieval is a threefold recovery and clarification: 1) of the understanding of the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , *anima*, or soul; 2) of the faculties by means of which the soul operates; and 3), of the notion of habits as structuring both these faculties individually and the entire soul. These recoveries and clarifications will help us understand personhood.

## METHOD

The seminar is 8 weeks long, with one recorded lecture and one discussion sessions each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from Thomas Aquinas. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor. Moreover, *continual discussion* will foster that participation and engagement throughout the week. Participants will be expected to partake in these discussions on a regular basis, and will be challenged to do so directly.

## READING

Each week includes (scheduled below) an assigned reading, primarily from the *Summa Theologiae*, *Prima Pars*, and specifically from the *Tractatus de Homine*, or *Treatise on Human Nature*. This portion of the *Summa theologiae* is available in English translation on Amazon in two acceptable translations, one [by Robert Pasnau](#) (covering qq.75-89) and one [by Alfred Freddoso](#) (which covers qq.75-102). They may be found used for lower costs (I also recommend checking [Bookfinder.com](#)). I highly recommend purchasing

these books, as the reading is a central part of participation in the seminar, and while the text is available online (<https://isidore.co/aquinas/>), nothing beats a physical book. There are many other options for purchasing the *Summa* in translation, so please ask me if you'd like to consider some other options (the [complete Summa](#) is available from the Aquinas Institute in a Latin-English facing edition). Secondary readings (provided by PDF) will be taken from Robert Brennan 1941: [Thomistic Psychology: A Philosophic Analysis of the Nature of Man](#) and Spalding et al. 2019: [The Human Person: What Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas Offer Modern Psychology](#). Further supplemental readings may be provided at the instructor's discretion in PDF form.

## LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 40+ minute audio lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific). The primary (but not sole) purpose of these lectures is to help clarify some of the more difficult concepts and arguments contained within the reading, as well as to raise specific questions that should help structure and guide our discussion sessions.

There *may* be accompanying visual aids (not necessarily) in order to provide some clarity as to textual points, but one *should* be able, in most cases, to simply listen to the lecture (and perhaps consult the visual aids later). This should allow more flexibility: making the lectures suitable accompaniment for a commute, while doing chores, going for a run, etc.

## DISCUSSION

The heart of the seminar is the discussion session (**Saturdays at 10:00–11:00am ET**): where all the thoughts emergent and encountered throughout the week—via the reading, lecture, and on-going conversations in the Teams channel—are brought into explicit conversation. This allows us to attempt a concerted effort at bringing resolution to our difficulties, and—failing such a resolution—to direct our inquiry further.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material or a question, a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

## AUDITS OR COMPLETES

Beginning in 2022, all Lyceum Institute seminar participants will be able to either **audit** the seminar or **complete** the seminar. To **complete** the seminar, the participant **must** submit an essay of 2000+ words pertaining to the subject. This essay may be evaluated for publication in *Reality* and will be included in each Lyceum Institute member's profile, along with the mark of auditing or completing. Due date for a submission is **28 June 2022**.

## SESSION SCHEDULE

April 2	<p>The Current State of Psychology</p> <p>Lecture: A Brief History of Psychology</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kemple 2019: “The Need for Thomistic Retrieval”</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spalding et al. 2019: “Introduction” in <i>The Human Person: What Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas Offer Modern Psychology</i>.</li> </ul>
April 9	<p>The Meaning of the Ψυχή   Anima   Soul</p> <p>Lecture: The Scientific Nature of Thomistic Psychology</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars (ST Ia)</i>, q.75-76.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brennan 1941: “Man: The Integer” in <i>Thomistic Psychology: A Philosophical Analysis of the Nature of Man</i>.</li> </ul>
April 16	<p>Objects, Operations, and Faculties</p> <p>Lecture: The Methodology of Philosophical Psychology</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST Ia</i>, q.77.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spalding et al. 2019: “The Metaphysical Foundations of the Human Person” in <i>The Human Person</i>.</li> </ul>
April 23	<p>The Lower Faculties</p> <p>Lecture: Our Animality</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST Ia</i>, q.78, 80-81.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brennan 1941: “The Sensitive Knowledge of Man” and “The Passions and Actions of Man” in <i>Thomistic Psychology</i>.</li> </ul>
April 30	<p>B R E A K</p>
May 7	<p>The Higher Faculties</p> <p>Lecture: Our Intellectuality</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST Ia</i>, q.79, 82-83.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spalding et al. 2019: “Emotion and Cognition” in <i>The Human Person</i>.</li> </ul>
May 14	<p>Consciousness</p> <p>Lecture: The Metaphysical Grounds of Consciousness</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST Ia</i>, q.84.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spalding et al. 2019: “Embodied and Humanistic Views of Cognition” in <i>The Human Person</i>.</li> </ul>
May 21	<p>Habits and Consciousness</p> <p>Lecture: The Formation of Behavioral Patterns</p> <p>Required:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST</i> Ia, q.85.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brennan 1941: "The Habits of Man" in <i>Thomistic Psychology</i>.</li> </ul>
May 28	<p>Development of Personhood</p> <p>Lecture: A Teleological Orientation</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1266-68: <i>ST</i> Ia, q.86-88.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brennan 1941: "Man: The Person" in <i>Thomistic Psychology</i>.</li> </ul>