

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON BA IN PHILOSOPHY

Course Schedule 2001-2

Course: Mediaeval Philosophy

Convenor: Christopher Hughes

Intended Audience:

2nd and 3rd year

undergraduates

Aims of Course:

The mediaeval philosophy contributes to the general aims of the London Philosophy Course by giving them an appreciation of the richness of mediaeval philosophical thought.

Objectives:

Students will study for this course by means of tutorials, independent study, and lectures. Students completing this course will have:

- (a) acquired a knowledge of the kind of philosophical problems that especially exercised the mediaevals (in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophical theology, and ethics)
- (b) acquired a knowledge of how various of the problems that exercised the mediaevals (the metaphysics of the Trinity, the problem of universals, the relation of intellect to will, and so on) were addressed throughout the middle ages, and in particular of the way in which some of those problems were transformed as Aristotle became increasingly influential in mediaeval thought
- (c) been encouraged to think critically about the adequacy or otherwise of various mediaeval views (in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophical theology, and ethics)
- (d) answered questions in finals which involve both expounding and evaluating the views of mediaeval philosophers.

No. of Lectures: 20 Back-up Classes: College Tutorials

This is: an optional course.

Term 1: Psychology and Ethics

Lecturer: Martin Stone

Aims and Objectives of Course

This course will examine early medieval psychology and ethics from Albert the Great to Francisco Molina. Historical in scope yet philosophical in aim, it will cover the principal discussions and debates that dominated discussion in the Latin West from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Textually based, the course will not only restrict itself to Christian philosophers but will also consider the distinctive contributions made to medieval thought by Jewish and Islamic thinkers. The course will consider the work of Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Henry of Ghent, John Duns Scotus, Pierre de la Palud, William Ockham, Gregory of Rimini, Thomas Bradwardine, Luis de Molina and Francisco Suarez. The topics considered will be: moral psychology; the immortality of the soul; practical reason, and natural law.

Description

Through lectures, the course will outline the philosophical controversies of the period and explain how a coherent picture of events may be derived from the range of primary sources which survive. In tutorials, students will be expected to study particular texts in order to enhance their understanding of the methodological issues involved, and to develop their understanding of the medieval period.

Lecture plan:

1. Scholastic Theories of the Soul from Philip the Chancellor to Albert the Great
2. Thomas Aquinas on Natural Law
3. Bonaventure on Conscience

4. The Critique of Averroism
5. Henry of Ghent on *liberum arbitrium*
6. Scotus on the Soul
7. Pierre de la Palud on casuistry
8. Ockham on Virtue
9. Bradwardine and Rimini on Grace and nature
10. Molina and Suarez on human freedom

Each week students will be provided with a handout setting out the primary and secondary issues and some basic commentary of the issues.

Term 2: Metaphysics

Lecturer: Chris Hughes

Topics: We shall look at Aquinas' metaphysics of material and immaterial creatures. Special emphasis will be given to Aquinas' ideas on the nature of matter and form, the roles of matter and form in individuation and specification, and the roles of matter and form in change. We shall then consider Aquinas' account of divine simplicity, discuss its motivations, and see how Aquinas responds (or would respond) to mediaeval (or contemporary) arguments against the coherence of that account of simplicity.

We then look at Ockham's classic but problematic attempted solution to the problem of how God can have infallible knowledge of the not yet inevitable future. We conclude with a discussion of Molina on middle knowledge.