

# *Philosophy of Religion, 2001-2002*

## COURSE DETAILS AND READING LIST

This course will survey a variety of philosophical topics that are connected with the separate yet related notions of the soul and immortality. Among the major topics to be considered are: Central aspects of the philosophical debate about the nature of the soul and immortality from Heraclitus to Wittgenstein; mind-body dualism; arguments for the resurrection of the body; recent theories of the mind; the identity and the moral importance of persons.

In the First Semester, full attention will be given over to the rich history of philosophical discussion about the soul. Beginning with the Ancient Greeks, we shall trace the assorted arguments that philosophers have used in order to establish (i) that the soul exists, and (ii) that it is immortal. Of particular relevance to this part of our enquiry will be the work of Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Neoplatonists, the Church Fathers, and Augustine. Our work for this term will conclude with a study of the medieval contribution to this topic. Here early 13<sup>th</sup> thinkers will be studied.

Armed with a thorough overview of ancient and early 13<sup>th</sup>-century discussions of the soul and immortality, we shall devote our attention in the Second Semester to an examination of late medieval, early-modern, and modern philosophical attempts to make sense of the soul and the issue of immortality. Under this head, we shall consider the work of Bonaventure, Aquinas, Scotus and

Ockham; Renaissance thinkers such as Pomponazzi, Ficino and Suarez; and Modern thinkers from Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza to Kant and Wittgenstein. We shall also consider the relation of debates about the soul to the issue of personal identity. Here, we shall consider the influential theory of Locke and the famous criticisms of his position by Butler, Reid and Hume. We shall also consider the recent theory of Parfit. The course will conclude with a study of such issues as the possibility of bodily resurrection; and the place of the ideas of the soul and immortality within recent philosophy of religion (here the individuals studied will be those of Swinburne and Geach).

### Survey Books:

As there isn't a work of reference that covers the varied subject matter of this course, I have provided you with a list of works that together cover most of the authors and topics that will figure in the course. Do note that these books are to be used *sparingly*; you do not have to read every one. However, do ensure that you read at least **five** of the works cited, in order that you may gain some sort of overview of the subject. I strongly recommend that you pay special attention to those items marked with an asterix.

### Primary Sources

(1) G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Third Edition (Cambridge, 2000). Alternatively Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Early Greek Philosophers* (London, 1997) can be used.

- \* (2) Plato, *Phaedo*; *Republic*; and *Timaeus* (Any edition).
- \* (3) Aristotle, *De anima* (Any edition).
- \* (4) A. Long and D. Sedley (eds.) *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge, 1988); Vol. 1. [Standard source book for Stoics and Epicureans]
- \* (5) Richard Sorabji (ed.) *The Philosophy of the Commentators (200-600 AD). A Sourcebook. Volume 4 Psychology* (London, 2001). [Contains all relevant material on late antiquity].
- (6) V. Bourke (ed.), *The Essential Augustine* (Hackett, 1974) [Contains all relevant passages from Augustine's writings on the soul].
- \* (7) Thomas Aquinas, *Selected Writings* (R. McInerny ed.) (London, 1998).
- \* (8) Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings* (A. Wolter ed.) (Indianapolis, 1987).
- (9) William Ockham, *Philosophical Writings* (P. Boehner ed.) (Indianapolis, 1990).
- \* (10) René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*; and *Passions of the Soul* (Any edition).
- (11) Benedict Spinoza, *Ethics* (Any edition).
- \* (12) John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (P. Nidditch ed.) (Oxford, 1975).
- \* (13) Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Use either N. Kemp-Smith (Macmillan) or P. Guyer-A. Wood ('Cambridge' edition)).
- \* (14) Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*; *Culture and Value*; and *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Blackwell, 2000).

## Secondary Sources

- \*(1) Paul Edwards (ed.), *Immortality* (Macmillan, 1992). [Helpful anthology].
- (2) Anthony Kenny, *The Anatomy of the Soul: Historical Essays in the Philosophy of Mind* (Basil Blackwell, 1973).
- (3) Richard Swinburne, *The Evolution of the Soul* (Oxford University Press, 1986).
- (4) Peter Geach, *God and the Soul* (Thoemmes Press, 1994).
- \*(5) John Perry (ed.), *Personal Identity* (University Of California Press, 1975). [Contains a good mixture of classic and contemporary readings on personal identity].
- \*(6) Amelié Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), *The Identity of Persons* (University of California Press, 1976). [Includes more recent discussions of the topic; an ideal supplement to Perry].
- \*(7) Tim Crane, *The Mechanical Mind* (Penguin Books, 1995). [Clear and stimulating introduction to contemporary philosophy of mind].
- (8) H.D. Lewis, *The Self and Immortality* (London, 1973).
- (9) H.D. Lewis, *Persons and Life After Death* (London, 1978).
- \*(10) R. Warner and T. Szubka (eds.), *The Mind-Body Problem: A Guide to the Current Debate* (Basil Blackwell, 1994).
- \*(11) Steven T. Davis (ed.), *Death and the Afterlife* (London, 1986).
- (12) Anthony Flew, *The Logic of Mortality* (Basil Blackwell, 1987).

- \*(13) Anthony Flew, 'Immortality', in *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 4, (ed.) Paul Edwards.
- (14) Terence Penelhum, *Survival and Disembodied Existence* (London, 1970).
- (15) Sydney Shoemaker and Richard Swinburne, *Personal Identity* (Basil Blackwell, 1984).
- \*(16) Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford, 1984).
- \*(17) M. James C. Crabbbe (ed.), *From Soul to Self* (Routledge, 1999). [Good anthology, contains many papers of the history of the subject].
- \*(18) Kevin Corcoran (ed.), *Soul, Body and Survival* (Cornell University Press, 2001). [A recent and thorough anthology, very useful for last part of the course].
- \*(19) Tim Crane and Sarah Patterson (eds.) *History of the Mind-Body Problem* (Routledge, 200). [Best anthology on the history of this issue].
- \*(20) John P. Wright and Paul Potter (eds), *Psyche and Soma* (Oxford, 2000). [A useful supplement to Crane and Paterson].

## Order of Lectures

Each week I will provide you with a handout that will include a summary of the particular topic under discussion. Each handout will include a list of the primary reading materials as well as suggestions for further reading. Do make sure that you keep these materials in good condition, as they will be of use to you in the activities of essay writing and revising for the end of year examination.

## **FIRST SEMESTER**

Part 1: (Weeks 1-5) Ideas of the Soul and Immortality in Ancient Greek  
Philosophy

Week 1: Introduction to Course. The Early Greeks on the soul.

Week 2: Heraclitus and other Pre-Socratics on the soul and immortality.

Week 3: Socrates on the immortality of the soul.

Week 4: Ideas of the soul in Plato's *Republic*.

Week 5: Aristotle's conception of the soul in *De Anima*.

Part Two (Weeks 6-9): Ideas of the Soul and Immortality in Late Antiquity

Week 6: Epicurus and Lucretius

Week 7: The Stoics

Week 8: The Church Fathers on the Resurrection.

Week 9: Neoplatonists: Plotinus.

Week 10: Augustine on the origin of the soul.

Part Three (Weeks 10-15): Medieval Theories of the Rational Soul from Philip  
the Chancellor to William of Ockham

Week 11: Early Scholastic Theories of the Soul: From Philip the Chancellor to  
Albert the Great

**SECOND SEMESTER**

Part Three Continued:

Week 12: Bonaventure on the Soul

Week 13: Aquinas on the Rational Soul

Week 14: John Duns Scotus: Can the Immortality of the Soul be proved  
'philosophically?'

Week 15: William Ockham on the Resurrection

#### Part 4: Renaissance and Early Modern Theories of the Soul

Week 16: Pomponazzi, Ficino and Suarez: Three Renaissance theories of the Soul

Week 17: Descartes on Mind and Body

Week 18: Locke and Butler on Personal Identity

#### Part 5: Modern Criticism of Traditional Thinking About the Soul

Week 19: Kant's Criticism of 'Rational Psychology'

Week 20: Wittgenstein and the Private Language Argument

#### Part 6: The Idea of the Soul and Immortality and Modern Philosophy of Mind

Week 21: What is the Soul? Is it Immortal?

Week 22: What is Personal Identity?

Revision classes will be provided in Term 3. See the noticeboards nearer the time for details.

