PART II PAPER 05:
PHILOSOPHY IN THE LONG MIDDLE AGES

SYLLABUS

Theme 1: Thinking and the Self

Set Texts:

*Avicenna, 'On the Soul' from al-Najat; the 'flying man' argument in its different versions.
*Averroes, Long Commentary on Aristotle's 'De Anima', extracts from Book III
*Aquinas, Summa Theologiae I, qq. 84-85, 87
Olivi, Peter John, Questions on Book II of the Sentences, q. 72
Pomponazzi, Pietro, On the Immortality of the Soul, chapters 1-12
Descartes, Meditations II and VI, with the Objections and Replies to those parts.

Theme 2: Determinism and Divine Power

Set Texts:

Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, Book V
Peter Abelard, 'Whether God can do what he does not do' = Theologia scholarium III (extract)
Averroes, Incoherence of the Incoherence, About the Natural Sciences, first discussion
William of Ockham, Treatise on the Predestination and Prescience of God with regard to Future Contingents, quaestio 3 (How can the contingency of a created or an uncreated will in causing something external be vindicated?)
Gersonides, Wars of the Lord, Book IV
Spinoza, Ethics, Book I

[Asterisks* denote texts from which commentary questions will be set]

COURSE OUTLINE

This paper covers philosophy in the period from c. 400 to c. 1700, in the Latin, Arabic and Hebrew traditions. All texts are studied in translation. For 2017-18, the two set themes will be (a) Thinking and the Self and (b) Determinism and Divine Power.

Prerequisites

None

Objectives

Students taking this paper will be expected to:

1) Acquire a detailed knowledge of some of the texts studied.
2) Acquire some sense of how the positions on different topics relate to each other.
3) Engage closely, in an historical and critical manner, with some of the ideas and arguments studied.
4) Consider the different positions in relation to their wider intellectual, cultural and historical context.

READING LIST

This reading list is intended to give the details of the set texts and some basic secondary reading. Further bibliographies will be available at the seminars and on request.

General Introductions to Medieval Philosophy

There is a reasonably full, annotated bibliography of medieval philosophy available at Oxford Bibliographies Online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780195396577-0172.

ADAMSON, Peter, and Richard C. TAYLOR, eds., The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521817439

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You should be aware of:


**General Introductions to 'Renaissance' and Seventeenth-Century Philosophy**


**The History of Philosophy**

MARENBON, John, 'Why We Need a Real History of Philosophy', in M. Van Ackeren and L. Klein, eds., *Philosophy and the Historical Perspective* (Proceedings of the British Academy, 214) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Also available in Moodle. [This article raises questions you should think about when doing the paper, even though you may well disagree with the radical answer. See also the chapters by Van Ackeren and Kusch, and (on medieval philosophy and women philosophers) Van Dyke]


**The Concept of a 'Long Middle Ages'**


MARENBON, John, *When Was Medieval Philosophy?* [Inaugural lecture], available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521762182.


**THEME 1: THINKING AND THE SELF**

**Set Texts**


*AQUINAS, Thomas, *The Treatise on Human Nature: Summa Theologiae 1a 75-89*, translated by R. Pasnau (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002), Questions 84-85 & 89. [Other translations may also be used – most conveniently the old Blackfriars translation online at: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa/home.html.]


OLIVI, Peter John, *Questions on Book II of the Sentences*, q. 72 'Can bodies act on the spirit and on its apprehensive and appetitive powers?' [A translation by Robert Pasnau is available at: http://spot.colorado.edu/~pasnau/research/olivi72.htm.]


DESCARTES, Rene, 'Meditations on First Philosophy', in his *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdoch. Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Second and Sixth Meditation, with the Objections and Replies to those parts (pp. 16-23, 50-62, 87-120, 278-301). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511818998.

**Introductory Reading on Thinking and the Self**


LAGERLUND, Henrik, ed., Representation and Objects of Thought in Medieval Philosophy (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007).


Further Reading on Thinking and the Self

Avicenna

BLACK, Deborah, 'Avicenna on Self-Awareness and Knowing That One Knows', in S. Rahman et al., eds., The Unity of Science in the Arabic Tradition (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), pp. 63-87.

DAVIDSON, Herbert, Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), ch. 4 'Avicenna on emanation, the active intellect, and human intellect' (pp. 74-126).

KAUKUA, Jari, Self-Awareness in Islamic Philosophy: Avicenna and Beyond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Introduction, chs. 1-4 (pp. 1-103). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316105238


Averroes

An extensive, searchable bibliography on the whole of Averroes, the Digital Averroes Research Environment, compiled by David Wirmer, is available online at: http://dare.uni-koeln.de/?q=node/129


DAVIDSON, Herbert, Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), chs. 6-8.


TAYLOR, Richard, Long Commentary on the De Anima of Aristotle, translated by R.C. Taylor (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009). [This is a very substantial study, almost book-length, and one of the best places to begin]


Thomas Aquinas


PASNAU, Robert, Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), chs. 1, 2, 9-12. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511613180


Olivi

THEME 2: DETERMINISM AND DIVINE POWER

Set Texts


ABELARD, Peter, Whether God Can Do What He Does Not Do Theologia Scholarium liii, 27-56 (extract). [A translation will be supplied]

*VERROES, Incoherence of the Incoherence. About the Natural Sciences, First Discussion. [Translated by S. van den Bergh, Averroes' Tahafut Al-Tahafut (Cambridge: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1954), I, pp. 311-33]

WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, 'Treatise on the Predestination and Prescience of God with Regard to Future Contingents', quaestio 3 (How can the contingency of a created or an uncreated will in causing something external be vindicated?) [William of Ockham, Predestination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents. 2nd ed. Translated by M.M. Adams and N. Kretzmann (Indianapolis, IN: Hacket, 1983), pp. 70-76]


Introductory Reading on Determinism and Divine Power

BEEBEE, Helen, Christopher HITCHCOCK, and Peter MENZIES, The Oxford Handbook of Causation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chs. 1 & 2. Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199279739.001.0001


NADLER, Steven, and Tamar RUDAVSKY, eds., The Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), chs. 18-20. Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521843232

PASNAU, Robert, ed., Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy (Cambridge University Press, 2009; 2nd ed. 2014), chs. 17, 29 & 55. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521762168 (Vol. 1) and https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521762182 (Vol. 2)

SORABJI, Richard, Time, Creation, and the Continuum (London: Duckworth, 1983). Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472598288

Descartes

Here there is a vast bibliography, and introductory works on Descartes are already given in the Reading List for Part IA. These are just some suggestions of interesting discussions, with particular relation to the theme of Thinking and the Self.


HATTAB, Helen, Descartes on Forms and Mechanisms (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511596612

MENN, Stephen, Descartes and Augustine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511608995

Individual Philosophers on Determinism and Divine Power

Boethius

There is a detailed bibliography available at:

SHARPLES, Robert, 'Fate, Prescience and Free Will', in J. Marenbon, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Boethius (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 207-27. Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521872669.010

Abelard

AUBRY, Gwenaëlle, Genèse Du Dieu Souverain (Paris: Vrin, 2018), 97-143. [On order at the UL]
MARENBON, John, The Philosophy of Peter Abelard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511582714. [This is given as a general introduction to Abelard. The discussion of the set text is replaced by the different and more detailed examination in my later book]

Averroes

GLASNER, Ruth, Averroes' Physics. A Turning Point in Medieval Natural Philosophy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199567737.001.0001

Gersonides


FELDMAN, Seymour, Gersonides: Judaism within the Limits of Reason (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010).
GLASNER, Ruth, Gersonides: A Portrait of a Fourteenth-Century Philosopher-Scientist (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2015). Also available online at: https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198735861.001.0001. [To use as a general introduction, if that]

Spinoza

MELAMED, Yitzhak, Spinoza’s Metaphysics of Substance and Thought (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195394054.001.0001
NADLER, Steven, Spinoza’s Ethics: An Introduction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511815737
ROBINSON, Lewis, Kommentar Zu Spinozas Ethik (Leipzig: Meiner, 1928). [Available from the UL. Only the first volume, on books 1 and 2, of two planned was published]

We welcome your suggestions for further readings that will improve and diversify our reading lists, to reflect the best recent research, and important work by members of under-represented groups. Please email your suggestions to phillib@hermes.cam.ac.uk including the relevant part and paper number. For information on how we handle your personal data when you submit a suggestion please see https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/general-data.