# History of Medieval Philosophy

## Prof. Paola Anna Maria Müller

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of the course is to present and explore medieval philosophy. By the end of the course, students will have developed modular and cumulative knowledge of essential elements of medieval philosophy, and the ability to identify historical and theoretical factors and make use of the latest literature. Beginning with the critical analysis of the terms “medieval philosophy” and “scholastic”, the course will adopt the perspective that historical and philosophical research is critical knowledge. By the end of the course, students will be able to navigate, with independence of judgement, the field of the history of philosophy, and understand the importance of overcoming the clichéd view that classifies the medieval period and its philosophy as the “dark ages”.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*Truth and freedom in Anselm of Canterbury.* After having contextualised the discussions in the medieval period on the nature and the limits of free will, as well as the ambiguities arising from the synthesis between the concept of kerygma in the New Testament and Greek philosophy, the course aims to offer an introduction to the figure and the works of Anselm of Canterbury, with a focus on the relationship between truth and freedom, as it is explained in the treatises: De libertate arbitrii (where the use of the paronym foreshadows a discussion over the essence of truth) and De casu diaboli.

***READING LIST***

Lecture notes and material provided by the lecturer and uploaded on blackboard.

M. DE CARO, M. MORI, E. SPINELLI (edited by), *Libero arbitrio. Storia di una controversia filosofica*, Carocci editore, Città di Castello (PG) 2014, p. 133-221.

I. SCIUTO, *Il libero arbitrio nel pensiero medievale. Da Agostino al XII secolo*, in C. VIGNA (edited by)*, La libertà del bene*, ed. Vita e Pensiero, Milan 1988, p. 123-145.

ANSELMO D’AOSTA, *Opere filosofiche*, Biblioteca filosofica Laterza, Bari 2008, p. 133-219.

Non-attendees will choose one of the following studies:

S. VANNI ROVIGHI, *Introduzione ad Anselmo*, ed. Laterza, Rome Bari 1969

C. E. VIOLA, *Anselmo D'Aosta: fede e ricerca dell'intelligenza*, Italian translation by A. Tombolini, Jaca Book, Milan 2000.

T. WILLIAMS, *Saint Anselm* , <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/anselm/>

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered primarily in the form of frontal lectures. The lecturer will guide students in reading and commentating direct and indirect sources. The lecturer will use IT resources (concept maps in Word or PowerPoint, the Blackboardportal) There will be a particular focus on the texts of medieval authors, presented in Italian translation.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The intended learning outcomes will be assessed by means of an oral exam on the contents of the course on medieval philosophical traditions related to Augustine*.* The exam will assess students’: methods and critical thinking skills; ability to express themselves dialectically with accuracy and confidence by organising structured argumentation; and their use of specific philosophical vocabulary, both in terms of accuracy and understanding, and ability to demonstrate and apply the various concepts clearly and effectively.  
Students who demonstrate historical and philosophical knowledge of the themes on the syllabus alongside independent thinking regarding the critical use of bibliographic tools and secondary literature and strong communication skills - both spoken and written - will achieve the highest marks. Students whose knowledge is primarily memorised and who demonstrate poor summarising and analytical skills will be awarded low pass marks. Students who have gaps in their knowledge and who use inappropriate language will not pass the exam.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students require basic knowledge of the history of ancient philosophy.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.