History of Medieval Philosophy

## Prof. Paola Anna Maria Müller

Module A (*General Section*): *Prof. Paola Anna Maria Müller*

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

The aim of the course is to present and explore medieval philosophy from Augustine of Hippo to Petrarch. At 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 term “medieval philosophy", the course will develop from the perspective that considers historical and philosophical research to be critical knowledge, with the intention of preparing students to be able to navigate, with independence of judgement, within the field of the history of philosophy, and to understand the importance of overcoming the clichéd view of the medieval period, and its philosophy, as the “dark ages”.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will cover the history of medieval philosophy through the study of the most important figures and most frequently debated themes. The course will analyse texts by different authors to build up knowledge of the various genres of medieval philosophical literature, focusing in particular on anthropological and metaphysical discourse.

***READING LIST***

Lecture notes and material provided by the lecturer.

G. Cambiano-L. Fonnesu-M. Mori (ed.), *Storia della filosofia occidentale/2. Medioevo e Rinascimento,* Il Mulino, p. 17-257.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered primarily in the form of frontal lectures. The lecturer will guide students in reading and commenting direct and indirect sources. The lecturer will use IT resources (concept maps in Word or PowerPoint, the *Blackboard* portal). There will be a particular focus on the texts of medieval authors, presented in Italian translation with a Latin facing-page translation.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The intended learning outcomes will be ascertained and assessed by means of an oral or written exam (students’ choice) on the content of the course related to medieval philosophical traditions. The exam will assess students’ methods and critical thinking skills, their ability to express themselves dialectically with accuracy and confidence by organising a structured discourse, use of specific philosophical vocabulary, both in terms of accuracy and of understanding, demonstrating and applying the various concepts clearly and effectively. Students’ who demonstrate historical and philosophical knowledge of the themes on the syllabus alongside independent thinking on 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 learned by rote 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.

The written test will consist of two closed questions and one (chosen by the candidate) of three open questions on a general theme (e.g. the universals, the relationship between faith and reason).

Students will have the option of preparing a paper (on transversal themes indicated by the teacher through the proposal of texts on particularly well-identified themes in medieval philosophy) to discuss with the lecturer.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students enrolled on the year-long history of philosophy course must also take Module B. Their final mark will be out of 30 and cover both modules.

Knowledge of the history of ancient philosophy will be beneficial.

 *“In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.”?*

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.

Module B (*Single-subject section*): *Prof. Paola Anna Maria Müller*

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

The aim of the course is for students to learn knowledge and skills in the field of medieval philosophy by focusing on a number of particular works by medieval authors. At the end of the course, students will be familiar with the methods of textual investigation and collating texts. They will also be able to read and comment on a philosophical text from the Middle Ages independently and present its key themes clearly and accurately.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*The foundations of the Thomist ontology starting from the work De ente et essentia.* The course will consist of two parts: the first one, characterised by a historical and historiographical approach, will introduce the most significant elements of Thomas Aquinas’ thought, through a general reconstruction – in chronological order – of the structure and composition of his works, and a dialogue on the main sources he used, from Aristotle to Neoplatonism, and from Augustine and Boethius to Avicenna and Averroes. The second one will carry out a critical reading of the pamphlet *De ente et essentia*, that introduces some core issues like the principle of individuation, the problem of universals, the rejection of the universal hylomorphism, and the formal indefinability of God.

***READING LIST***

Lecture notes and material provided by the lecturer and uploaded onto Blackboard.

Tommaso, *L’ente e l’essenza*, edited by P. Porro, ed. Bompiani.

Pasquale Porro, *Tommaso d’Aquino. Un profilo storico-filosofico*, Carocci editore, Rome 2012.

In addition, students will have to choose one of the following textbooks:

Etienne Gilson, *L’essere e l’essenza,* Massimo, Milan 1988.

Anthony Kenny, *L’essere secondo Tommaso d’Aquino. Un’ontologia problematica*, Carocci Editore, Rome 2013.

Battista Mondin, *La metafisica di Tommaso d’Aquino e i suoi interpreti,* EDS Edizioni Studio Domenicano, Bologna 2013.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered by means of frontal lectures, in which the lecturer will read through and comment on texts by medieval authors in Italian with Latin facing-page translation, and refer to the latest historiographic frameworks and reflections on philosophical themes. There will also be seminars with visiting experts. The lecturer will use IT resources (concept maps in Word or PowerPoint; the *Blackboard* portal)

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam. Students must be assessed based on content they present, relevance of their answers, their formal and doctrinal precision and their ability to express themselves logically, justify their assertions and use specific terminology appropriately.

Students who demonstrate historical and philosophical knowledge of the themes on the syllabus alongside independent thinking on the critical use of bibliographic tools and secondary literature and strong communication skills will achieve the highest marks. Students whose knowledge is primarily learned by rote 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 will benefit from prior knowledge of medieval philosophy from Augustine to Petrarch. To sit the exam, students must have already taken the general section (Module A) on The History of Medieval Philosophy.

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