SECTION II: THE MIDDLE AGES

Co-ordinator: W.J. Hankey

<u>**GENERAL INTRODUCTION**</u>

We owe the notion of "Middle Ages" or "Dark Ages" to the Renaissance which established itself by representing the preceding centuries as a barren period characterized by darkness and ignorance, in comparison with the earlier glories of Greece and Rome. The hybristic spirits of the Renaissance supposed themselves to have recaptured and even surpassed the Ancient birth of humanism. The thousand years from 500 to 1500 A.D. between these two moments of humane light and glory thus became the dark middle period. This view of European history as having a negatively characterised middle was reinforced by the leaders of the Protestant Reformation. They set the Bible against Christian tradition and sought to recover the purity and simplicity of primitive (or "Patristic") Christianity behind all the supposed accretions of a thousand years of ecclesiastical mediation. "Gothic" became a term of opprobrium, more or less equivalent to "barbaric."

The Romantic movement of the 19th century brought a new appreciation of medieval culture. Poets, artists and religious thinkers, oppressed by the bleakness of their own time, nostalgically looked back behind modernity to what they thought of as an age of faith and cultural unity, a time of richness of imagination, of warmth, light, and colour. Medieval styles (Romanesque and Gothic) were widely revived and emulated in architecture and other arts, especially for religious buildings, so that even Protestant churches built in other styles acquired windows with pointed Gothic arches – many Nova Scotian churches were treated to this radical redecoration. A great impetus was given to the study of medieval history and thought. In our own time, some "Post-Modern" writers take up positions built on this anti-Modern stance and return to Antiquity and the Middle Ages against Modernity.

In opposition to both of these attitudes, the first negative, the second enthusiastic, and despite its pejorative origins, the notion of a "middle" age can serve us in characterising this period. In general, <u>medievals are related to the ancients through the mediating "middle" of the religions and philosophical schools of Late Antiquity</u>. The character of philosophy in the Middle Ages is indicative.

The Hellenistic period (Antiquity after Alexander the Great) involved the development of philosophical schools: Stoic, Epicurean, Skeptic, Platonist (the last of the ancient Platonist schools, we call "Neoplatonic"), Aristotelian (called "Peripatetic"), to name the chief ones. Two of these traditions, the Neoplatonic and the Peripatetic, continue into the new period and these schools of interpretation *mediate* the great Hellenic philosophers (especially Plato and Aristotle) to the medieval thinkers. For example, two of the greatest mediaeval thinkers, John Scottus Eriugena and Anselm, acquired their knowledge of philosophy almost entirely from the ideas embedded in the texts of Augustine and other Christian Platonists. Thomas Aquinas knew and wrote a great deal about Hellenistic Platonism, but he probably never read a dialogue written by Plato. His knowledge of Aristotle was by means of translations and through the medium of Peripatetic and Neoplatonic commentators, first of all Arabic commentators who continued these school ("scholastic") traditions. It was not until the great rush of Greek scholars to the West, which was a consequence of the fall of Christian Constantinople to the Islamic Turks in 1453, and the subsequent renaissance in the knowledge of Greek, that the old Greek texts became generally known to philosophers. Because the chief of these mediating traditions for our period was the Neoplatonic one—the Peripatetic tradition tended to become assimilated towards it—our treatment of this period begins with a consideration of Neoplatonism.

Neoplatonism dominates in the Middle Ages on account of another principle feature of the period: <u>the refashioning of culture by a new bringing together of the Hellenic inheritance and "the religions of the</u>

Book." During the time of the Ancient Roman Empire, Christianity and Judaism established their identities both with respect to one another and to the "pagan" world. They formally closed their sacred Scriptures to further addition (in technical language, the "Canon" was "fixed"), and developed the institutions by which they would continue. In the case of Jews this required learning to live outside their homeland and worshipping with the permanent destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. In the case of Christianity it involved assimilation to the Roman Empire when Christianity became its official religion with the refounding of the Empire by the Emperor Constantine as a Christian Empire having a new capital, Constantinople (founded 330). In the 7th century these religions of the Book were joined by Islam whose Koran had an explicit and often positive relation to the Jewish Torah and the Christian Bible. The Middle Ages is the period in which the several Biblical religions developed their cultures through a new or different relation to the civilization of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Neoplatonism is at the heart of this not only because it is a synthesis of the philosophy and spirituality of the ancient world, but also because in it religion and philosophy discovered and worked out their need for one another.

In general, the philosophies of the Middle Ages are developed for religious purposes, i.e., for the understanding and defence of faith or for the contemplation of God. This is why Neoplatonism and medieval philosophy are rarely studied in the normative universities of the Protestant Anglo-American world (Oxbridge and the Protestant Ivy League) where such a unification of reason and religion transgresses what Protestant secularity defines as "Philosophy." The synthetic character of the Neoplatonic systems and medieval *summae* also offends the empiricist and positivist spirit of Anglo-American reason. In consequence, the millennium and a half of Neoplatonism and medieval philosophy and their contemporary continuations are largely missing from the consciousness and reason which dominate our world and are studied either in provincial, "red brick", or Catholic universities, in marginal localities (like Ireland and Canada), or as outside our tradition (so are treated in Departments of Islamic Studies, for example).

The coming together of "the religions of the Book" and of the antique Greek and Roman intellectual culture mediated through Neoplatonism and the Peripatetic tradition takes very diverse forms. In part this is because "the Book" has so many forms. Besides the Torah and the Koran, each major Christian tradition has a different version of the Bible. These differences derived from language differences: the Oriental (or Orthodox) Churches had Bibles in Greek, Coptic, Syriac, etc., whereas the Western (or Roman) Church had a Latin Bible, the Vulgate. These Bibles varied in content as well as language because the several communities of "the Book" placed different books in their Bibles. The remote origin of this second difference lies in the difference between the language and contents of the Jewish Torah as translated or composed in Greek in Alexandria (the *Septuagint*), and used there by its very large and influential Jewish community, and the language and contents of the smaller Hebrew collection as used in Palestinian Judaism. At the Reformation the Catholic Church continued with its larger canon and with the Latin Bible. In contrast, the Protestants assisted the rise of nationalism by translations into the modern languages, and increased difference by fixing a smaller number of books as authoritative.

The study of medieval culture is particularly difficult, because its relation to the sources of western civilization is mediated through Late Ancient forms and traditions. Nothing from the sources ever passes through the mediating traditions unchanged. What results is never just as we expect it to be. For example, having learned to contrast Plato and Aristotle, we discover that the medievals come to them through a tradition which reconciles their differences. Or, again, having learned to distinguish Biblical revelation from Greek reason, we discover that the medievals read the sacred texts through a hermeneutic (method of interpretation) in which they made their Bible conform to Greek reason. The mediating traditions transform opposites into one another: Neoplatonism is as much Aristotelian as it is Platonic, the Peripatetic (Aristotelian) tradition has been profoundly Platonized, Scepticism becomes a step on the way

to the contemplation of God, etc. There are rewards, however, for mastering these difficulties. Contemporary postmodern approaches to the past are through and through hermeneutical. We are conscious that we cannot step outside the traditions and structures through which we know the past to "the facts themselves." It could be said that our contemporary relation to the past is medieval, but modified by historical self-consciousness.

Our aim in this Section will be to trace the main features of the new union of Latin Christianity with Greco-Roman culture while trying to remember that other unifications of that culture with the Book in its different forms are also taking place. We need to keep in mind that these are "Middle Ages" only for the Latin West. It is the period of the "Christian Empire" for the Roman Empire in the east (what we call the "Byzantine Empire"), and for Islam it is the period of its first encounter with Hellenism.

After introducing the Section by way of looking at Neoplatonism and how it mediates Ancient philosophy and religion, we shall consider two Christian authors, one Greek and the other Latin, who had an unsurpassed influence in the Middle Ages. Dionysius the (pseudo) Areopagite wrote in Greek, although he probably came from Syria; his writings were as authoritative for Latins like Thomas Aquinas as were the writings of Aristotle or Augustine, and he is the pre-eminent guide of Christian mystics. Augustine is far and away the most important figure for determining the character of the Latin Christian assimilation of Hellenic culture and we shall devote a week to his *Confessions*. *The Song of Roland* shows us the other as antipode, in the way Islam is depicted in the narrowly Augustinian Latin West, when, at the beginning of the Crusades, the West starts to encounter external non-Christian cultures. We will note how the other is represented as perverse inversion. Anselm shows the creativity of a deep Augustinian meditation which took place within monastic walls and reminds us of the religious origins of modern Western philosophy.

Escaping from those limits, we make a small endeavour to consider the Islamic and Jewish mediations of the philosophical tradition. We look at what Jewish and Islamic philosophers and theologians conveyed to the Latins whose knowledge of the philosophical tradition was, until the 13th century, far inferior to that in Moorish Spain and the Near East. The Arabic mediation of Hellenic culture transformed the West. We shall look at writings of al-Fârâbî and Moses Maimonides who helped bring Aristotle and a new account of all reality, as well as Peripatetic and Platonic texts and traditions, to the northern barbarians. Arabic philosophy (Moses Maimonides wrote in Arabic) continued the practice developed in Byzantium of passing on Neoplatonism by way of commentaries on Aristotle's texts. Aquinas was one of the greatest of the recipients of those sciences, texts, and hermeneutical traditions. We shall concentrate on how the new sciences and systems forced and enabled him to open Latin Christianity to the natural world in a radically new way and how his interpretation of Aristotle set the West on the path towards its secular rationality, humanism, and individualism.

Dante's *Divine Comedy* is the focal point of our study of the Middle Ages. This great work was the supreme poetic expression of medieval culture, just as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid* were of their own cultures. An attentive reading of Dante should give us insights into every aspect of medieval life: political, social, religious, artistic, etc. Dante comes towards the end of our period (14th century) and Christine de Pisan belongs to the next century. These two will also point us to the waning of the Middle Ages which broke up in a new darkness of decimating plagues, unresolvable divisions—religious, institutional and national—terrifying wars and oppressions.

The Middle Ages may be regarded as a kind of nursery in which the new civilization of Europe came to birth, was nurtured and finally came to its maturity in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the 17th century it definitively reversed the march of Islam, burst out of its European cradle, and spread triumphant over the entire globe. The origins of what is unique in western civilization, that by which it is distinguished

from all other cultures, are here. If we are, then, to understand where we are, and what we are, it is necessary for us to look at that thousand years of our own history both appreciatively and critically, in all its complexity, with attention both to its achievements and its unresolved conflicts. The lectures, readings, etc., in this part of the course are an attempt to make a beginning at this task.

INTRODUCTIONS TO READINGS AND LECTURES

Neoplatonism And Philosophy In This Section Generally

(Monday, October 6)

An Evolving and Diverse Synthesis

Neoplatonism is the systematized synthesis of the philosophies and the religions of Greco-Roman antiquity initiated by the pagan Plotinus (d. 270) and dominating Western philosophy and theology until the 16th and 17th centuries. The union between philosophy and religion it developed provided the controlling forms for philosophy in the Middle Ages when the pagan religions were replaced by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In the 15th century Renaissance, the recovery of the ancient Greek texts together with the more general ability to read them stimulated the creation of new systems within this movement. Until the 17th century, ancient philosophy was largely mediated to us through Neoplatonic systems, treatises, and commentaries. The modernity of 17th century was defined by a new beginning for philosophy with Descartes, Hobbes, etc., who set themselves against the mediating synthetic traditions. Nonetheless, the modern period was also a rich time for Neoplatonism, which was revived yet again in the 19th and 20th centuries and is an important aspect in the philosophical, literary, and religious life of our time.

The diversity of this spiritual and intellectual movement is indicated by what has attracted thinkers to it in recent times. In the 19th century, Neoplatonism was largely associated with the great systems of German Idealism for which Proclus (d. 485) and his followers provided models. By contrast, in our own time, the strongest interest comes from postmodern thinkers who are reacting against the totalizing rationalism and intellectualism of Modernity and Idealism and who find in the Neoplatonic elevation of Plato's First Principle as the Good above both thought and being (*Republic* VI, 509b 10) a way to openness to what is irreducibly Other.

A beginning from the Human Self

Neoplatonism is a retrieval of the intellectual content of the thought of Plato and Aristotle lost in the dogmatic and sceptical philosophies of individual salvation which succeeded them. These successors were the philosophical schools of the Epicureans, Stoics, Cynics and Sceptics of the Hellenistic world. [For an account of these schools and their relations to Platonism, see the Appendix at the end of this Introduction "Plato and the Platonisms."] What we call Neoplatonism begins from within the individualism and concern for personal salvation which characterizes these Hellenistic philosophies. The Neoplatonic return to Pythagoras, Plato, and even to Aristotle (despite the name, "neo-Platonism," invented in the 18th century and intended to designate it as decadent) from within the presuppositions of the continuing search for individual salvation, makes Neoplatonism the preferred intellectual and spiritual framework for the revival of pagan religion in Late Antiquity.

The kind of individuality which Neoplatonism assumes requires that it begin from the simple One above all division multiplicity and division because the human self is reflected and founded in this unity. Neoplatonism gives a hierarchical priority to the simple, the unknowable, the ineffable, and the

immaterial. The One is the first cause of everything else. The descent toward multiplicity, intelligibility, and corporeality takes place in stages. With Plotinus, there are three primary spiritual subsistences: the One, Mind (or *NOUS*) which comes immediately after the One, and Soul (or *PSYCHE*) which images Mind and stands between the incorporeal and the corporeal worlds. The three Hypostases or subsistences of incorporeal reality—the One, Mind, and Soul—correspond roughly to the "Persons" of the Christian Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Plotinus a very strong division is made between the whole incorporeal world (the three initial Hypostases) and the realm of the sensible and change. In the descent from the One, each step is a diminution; for Neoplatonists every cause is superior to its effects.

The Victory of the Conquered

The founders of this movement aimed to unite the warring philosophic sects of Hellenism, and even to bridge the gap between these and the wisdom of the "barbarians", in order to preserve Hellenic culture. More and more the Neoplatonic reconciliation of the intellectual and religious elements of Hellenism was undertaken to save it from Christianity. Nonetheless, in 529 the Christian Emperor Justinian abolished the chairs of philosophy which his pagan predecessors had established in the Empire and closed the Academy which Plato had founded in Athens. By this time, the Academy had passed from being the center of Skepticism to becoming the greatest center of Platonism as a systematic teaching conveying a way of life fundamentally religious. The Christians imitated their pagan predecessors, who had regulated religion and had tried to suppress Christianity, by using penal laws to eliminate the cults of the old gods, and they exterminated the Neoplatonic schools, burning the books of those philosophers who had been the most effective critics of the new religion. Ironically, however, from this time onwards, Christian theology, already thoroughly Neoplatonised, became the principal bearer of Neoplatonic thought and spiritual forms.

One example, which we will explore at length, is Augustine's *Confessions*. It reiterates the Plotinian journey through Stoicism, Scepticism, and other positions resembling those of the major Hellenistic schools, in order to arrive at a Neoplatonic understanding of the self and God. Augustine (d. 430) testifies that the Platonic understanding of God, the human self, and the cosmos enabled him to become a Christian. His Christianity was so completely assimilated to Neoplatonic forms that Augustine became the most important bearer of them to the Latin West. What Augustine did for Latin Christianity was reiterated in different ways by other Christian, Jewish and Islamic theologians and philosophers thus creating the intellectual and spiritual cultures of the Middle Ages. Dionysius the (pseudo) Areopagite did for Greek Christianity what Augustine effected among Latins. He was a crucial figure for the transmission of Neoplatonic forms first within the Greek Christian Empire and then within the Latin West. Islamic reworkings of Neoplatonic texts were essential to the transmission of Aristotle to the Latin Middle Ages and to how Aristotle was understood by the Latin Mediaeval theologians. In this Section, we shall look at texts from al-Fârâbî (died 950) and Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), who were among the greatest of those writing in Arabic determining how the Latins understood and reacted to philosophy.

Two Traditions

Neoplatonism has endured as a philosophical movement for so long partly because of its openness to religion and the assimilation to it of the religions of the Mediterranean world. Another reason for its endurance is its internal diversity. This interior multiplicity includes at least the difference between Plato and Aristotle as well as the difference between them and their Stoic and Sceptic successors. Moreover, after Plotinus, two traditions emerge, each developing a different side of his thought. On the one hand, there is the interpretation of Plotinus by his immediate disciple Porphyry (d. 303), who taught after him in Rome. This tradition, transmitted by Victorinus, a pagan philosopher who became Christian, determined what Augustine (d. 430) thought Plato taught. This Plotinian tradition has its strongest

influence in the Latin West. On the other hand, there is a tradition emerging from Iamblichus (d. 325, who lived in present day Syria), part of whose criticism of Porphyry we shall read. This tradition was transmitted and developed by the heads of the Academy in Athens (Syrianus, Proclus, d. 485, and Damascius, who taught there until exiled in 529). This is primarily a Greek tradition but, in fact, both traditions meet in Western culture and their meeting is profoundly creative. During the Middle Ages the most authoritative transmitter of the second tradition to the Latin West is Dionysius the (pseudo) Areopagite (6th century, perhaps the Bishop of Athens).

Neoplatonism continues to develop substantially among its mediaeval Christian heirs. Notable are John Scottus Eriugena (9th century, the translator of the Pseudo-Dionysius and the author of the first completely formalized Christian Neoplatonic system), Anselm (d. 1109, largely dependent on Augustine), Aquinas (d. 1274), Bonaventure (d. 1274), Duns Scotus (d. 1308). The later of these were dependent upon Arab Peripatetics and Neoplatonists for their texts and understanding not only of Proclus but also of Aristotle, who was often actually identified with Proclus! Important are the author of the *Liber de Causis* (c. 850, thought until 1268 to be "the theology of Aristotle," it turned out to be mostly Proclus with additions from Plotinus), Avicenna (d.1037) and Averroes (d. 1198). A result is that Aquinas, who cites the Pseudo-Dionysius as often as he cites Augustine and Aristotle, discerns a common way of thinking between the Pseudo-Dionysius, Proclus, and Aristotle.

Neoplatonism enjoys a great revival and important development in the Renaissance (Nicholas of Cusa, d.1464, Pico della Mirandola, d. 1494, Marsilio Ficino, d. 1499). Among the Renaissance Christian Neoplatonists, the later Athenian Academy and the Pseudo-Dionysius were strongly influential. This influence included the theurgic side of Iamblichan Neoplatonism and its interest in a secret wisdom communicated by the divine to the ancient Near Eastern "barbarians": e.g. the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Assyrians, and, the Hebrews. ("Theurgy" is the co-operative religious activity in which the gods act toward and in us and we humans act towards and by them. There are various levels of theurgy, the lowest of them require material means. Owing to the character of the human soul, theurgy using material objects is necessary for humans. Augustine recognised that theurgy was equivalent to Christian sacraments, e.g. the Mass and Baptism.)

Neoplatonism is not only a movement within Western Latin culture. It endures, or has enduring effects, within the culture of the Greek and Slavic Orthodox churches, Judaism and Islam. We cannot follow the developments there at any length. In the West there is a dynamic history because the two principal traditions oppose one another, change each other, and combine. The Porphyrian tradition, whose main conduit is Augustine, and the Iamblichan-Proclean tradition, whose main conduit in the Middle Ages is the Pseudo-Dionysius, are drawn together in Latin culture.

The Augustine tradition at the foundations of Modernity

In the Porphyrian and Augustinian tradition there is a drawing together of the One, Mind (*NOUS*) and Soul so that the One and the triad of Remaining, Going out (*Exitus*) and Return (*Reditus*), which constitutes the structure of everything below the One, also come together in a trinitarian First Principle. The First Principle includes trinitarian self-division and self-return. As opposed to what Plotinus explicitly taught—but developed from his teaching that the One is free activity—the Neoplatonic First Principle becomes like the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle. God is the highest activity of being and thinking, and is accessible to humans when they are elevated to rationality and freedom. The Plotinian One, Mind, and Soul become moments of one activity. For Augustine the divine and the human are both trinities constituted by the self-related activity of Memory (or Being), Knowing (or Word) and Loving (or Will). The divine and the human meet in mind, and human knowing depends in a Platonic way upon immediate access to the divine mind (or Word).

The results of this understanding of spiritual reality are: (1) a knowable God who founds human knowing, who is the first of beings and the Beingness of beings, and with whom we can become united intellectually. (2) The rest of reality is subsumed within the divine-human exchange. Ultimately, in Western Modernity, the two sides are equalized so that the human becomes the divinity and the divinity becomes the progress of humanity (Feuerbach, who theologically underlies Marx). (3) There is a prioritization of being and of thinking, and of the movement away from the body and the senses into self, so that interiority gives access to true being, knowledge, and freedom. We shall see these results in Anselm. (4) Non-being, irrationality, feeling, the sensible world, and the body are subordinated or at worst suppressed. In the current postmodern revival of the alternative tradition, i.e. that of Iamblichus, Proclus and Dionysius, the Porphyrian - Augustinian Neoplatonism is represented as identified with Western psychological interiority, humanism, objectifying rationalism, and as triumphing in Modernity through Protestantism, Cartesian philosophy and Hegelian Idealism.

Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Postmodern Otherness

In the Augustinian tradition as we shall look at it in Anselm, everything depends upon the inclusion of otherness within the divine and human thinking. For the alternative tradition which developed out of Iamblichus' response to Porphyry, the First Principle is elevated beyond being and thought. It is an Other, which, although active at the interior of all which is, itself remains above all knowing, naming and predication. It is no thing. It is better understood through Non-being than through Being, and it cannot be represented as an object of thought. The human soul for Iamblichus and his successors, both pagan and Christian, is essentially in the sensible world. The individual soul has descended into the changing world of sensible objects and has no direct access to the Ideas in *NOUS*. Humans must therefore turn towards sensible substances for knowledge and for historically and sacramentally (theurgically) mediated salvation. Humans need divine revelation and grace working for them in the material world. So, the material world is understood as the place of the manifestation and action of the First Principle itself (see on this Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1.1.9, noting the use of the authority of the Pseudo-Dionysius). The transcendent First cannot be attained by intellectual interiority and is approached through religious rites involving material reality ordained by the gods, i.e. through theurgy. Iamblichus, (*De Mysteriis*, II.11) writes: "Theurgic union is attained only by the perfective operation of unspeakable acts correctly performed, acts which are beyond all understanding; and by the power of the unutterable symbols which are intelligible only to the gods." Within this tradition the material and sensible, because they are the means of return toward the Good, are elevated. The tendency is toward breaking down the division between the intellectual and the sensible worlds.

Aristotle, because he broke down the Platonic division of these worlds, and turned the soul to the sensible, is regarded very positively in this tradition. The later Neoplatonists reconciled Aristotle with Plato, and commentary on Aristotle's works becomes an essential task of teachers of philosophy. The Arabic Neoplatonic and Peripatetic philosophers continue this tradition of reconciling commentary. When in the 13th century, Aristotle's sciences are accepted as the rational account of reality, so that he is "The Master of those who know" (*The Divine Comedy*, Inferno, IV. 131), thinkers like Aquinas prize these Neoplatonic commentaries on his texts. The Arabic commentaries of Averroes are so valued that he is called "The Commentator" (Ibid., IV. 144). Following the Pseudo-Dionysius, Aquinas writes of God: "we cannot know what he is but rather what he is not" (*Summa Theologiae* I.3. prologue). St. Thomas draws together a sacramental and hierarchical theology which brings us into union with this unknown God and Aristotle's teachings (1) that individual sensible substances are primary, (2) that human knowing must begin with sense, and (3) that what we know other than the sensible we know only abstractly.

You will also meet the Unknowable Other who encounters us in ritual, the occult, and the sensible with Pico della Mirandola in the Section III. Such an understanding of the absolute source is a permanent

legacy of this Iamblichan and Dionysian Neoplatonism in Western culture. This Other re-emerges for us in the Postmodern reaction against a totalizing and objectifying rationalism, represented as the result of Modern secularized Augustinianism.

Between the Modern and the Postmodern

Before leaving the general history of Neoplatonism, we must note that Neoplatonism does not cease to be culturally powerful with the arrival of Modern philosophy in the 17th century. In figures like the Cardinal de Bérulle in Counter Reformation France and the Cambridge Platonists in England, it even enjoys a modern revival. The Cardinal de Bérulle constructs a revolutionary Catholic approach to Modernity by an astonishingly creative new unification of Dionysius and Augustine. Moreover, the philosophical revolutions of Classical Modernity are carried out both positively and negatively in relation to the Neoplatonic tradition. Nowhere is this clearer than in natural philosophy. Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo are only comprehensible in relation to Renaissance Neoplatonism. Something similar is increasingly being said of Isaac Newton.

The 18th century is a low point for Platonism, but the German Idealism of the 19th takes up the great Neoplatonic tradition of systematic and synthetic philosophy again. For example, Hegel, even if his absolutizing of *NOUS* is Augustinian, says of himself that he wished to be a Christian Proclus. The 19th century begins a new kind of historical study of philosophy which sets Plato and Aristotle against each other. The first half of the 20th century, despite its philosophic reactions against Idealism, was rich in poetry and literature with a Neoplatonic inspiration (T. S. Eliot is an example). At present, both philosophy and religion have joined art to find again in Neoplatonism the priority of the generous superabundant ground of Being, the inadequacy of both thought and language to what is fundamental, and the old quest for union with the whole, a union ultimately beyond thought.

Ennead V.1 of Plotinus (d. 270)
translated by Stephen MacKenna, 1872-1934

Entitled "The Three Initial Hypostases," this is one of the six groups of nine treatises compiled by Plotinus' disciple, biographer, and interpreter Porphyry. Although Porphyry was a notable and dedicated opponent of Christianity, important points of whose teaching Augustine criticized, it is through Porphyry and through an orator, teacher and translator of Neoplatonic writing, Marius Victorinus (a Christian convert living in Rome about 350) that Augustine knew Plotinus' thought and "the books of the Platonists" (see *Confessions* VII.xi.13, Chadwick translation, p. 121). You will find much in common between the doctrine of *Ennead* V.1 and what Augustine says in *Confessions* VII.ix ff. that he found in those books. An investigation of the teaching about the Initial Hypostases by Porphyry would yield something still closer.

De Mysteriis (selections) of Iamblichus (c. 240 - 325)
translated by Thomas Taylor, 1758-1835

Title: known to us as *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, it was written by Iamblichus under the pseudonym of "Abammon," presented as an Egyptian priest, and its original title is *The Answer of the Preceptor Abammon to the Epistle of Porphyry to Anebo and a Solution of the Doubts contained in it.* Iamblichus wished by this to identify himself with Abammon's priesthood. Two centuries later, the writer of the works we call the Dionysian *corpus*, a disciple of the Athenian Neoplatonism developed by Proclus and Damascius in the tradition of Iamblichus, would do something analogous (perhaps even

imitative) for Christians. This person we call Dionysius the pseudoAreopagite but his real historical personality has never been discovered. He identified himself with St. Paul's Athenian convert on the Areopagus, traditionally the first bishop of Athens (Acts 17. 15-34) but he must in fact have lived four centuries after Paul.

It is most significant that Iamblichus' epistolary treatise is an answer to criticisms of theurgy made by Porphyry. In comparison to the Neoplatonic tradition as a whole, Porphyry and Plotinus maintained a very intellectualist philosophical spirituality. For Plotinus and Porphyry a part of the soul remained always above in contemplation of Mind (*Ennead* V.1.11); the human mind always truly knows by virtue of its permanent contact with the Ideas in the Divine Word. (Augustine continues this teaching, see *Confessions* VII.x.16, X.xl.65, etc.). Thus, the proper movement of soul is recollection of its origin by a rational movement inward and upward, from lower things to higher things, from outer things to inner things (see *Confessions* VII.x16 with the references to Plotinus in Chadwick's translation). The human cannot come to itself through externals (see *Confessions* VII.vii with the references to Porphyry and *Confessions* X.vi ff.). Moreover, theurgy appears to Porphyry as an attempt to manipulate the gods (a criticism of it which Augustine adopts from Porphyry and then directs against him in *City of God* X and elsewhere).

Iamblichus' answer to this is two fold. <u>First, the human soul is altogether descended into the realm of becoming.</u> He says that nothing else accounts for our weakness and misery. Therefore, humans can only ascend if unity with the spiritual world can be restored through material things. This the gods provide by revealing the ordained theurgies, which, in a recently discovered letter, Augustine calls "pagan sacraments." Rational theology is not enough; more than thought is required for union with what is unthinkable and unspeakable. <u>Second, theurgy which means "god's work" cannot be primarily our action toward the divine, but is also the divine action toward us in which we are enabled to participate</u> (see *De Mysteriis*, II.11). In the divine and human mutual action which the gods cause, the two meet and the divine returns to itself through the human.

Some Names and Dates

<u>Non</u>-<u>Christian</u>	<u>Christian</u>
Before the 2nd century	
Philo Judaeus (d50), the Jewish initiator of the reconciliation of "the Book" and Platonism	
2nd century	*2nd century*
<u>"Middle Platonists"</u>	Clement of Alexandria (d215)
Plutarch, Numenius of Apamea (florished 160-180), Alcinous, Celsus	
Chaldean Oracles (end of the century)	
3rd century	*3rd century*
Alexander of Aphrodisias (appointed 198/209): the greatest Peripatetic	Origen (d254), *Contra Celsum*
Ammonius Saccas (d242)	
Plotinus (d270), Porphyry (d303)	
4th century	*4th century*
Iamblichus (250-d330)	Eusebius of Caesarea (d340)
Syrianus (teacher of Proclus d437)	Basil of Caesarea (d379)
Emperor Julian [the Apostate], the last pagan	Gregory of Nyssa (d395)
Roman Emperor, converted from Christianity	Gregory Nazianzus (d389)
(d363), *Against the Galilaeans*	John Chrysostom (d407)

Themistius (florished 340s-384/385)	
5th century	*5th century*
Ammonius (435/445-517/526)	Jerome (d420)
Plutarch of Athens (d431)	Victorinus
Proclus (410-85), Macrobius	Augustine (d430)
Martianus Capella (active 410-439)	Cyril of Alexandria (d444)
Marinus (successor of Proclus)	Theodoret of Cyrrhus (d466)
6th century	*6th century*
Damascius (teaching when the Academy was closed in 529)	Boethius (d525/526)
	Emperor Justinian (d565, closed Academy)
Simplicius the greatest Neoplatonic commentator on Aristotle (wrote after 532), Asclepius,	Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite Philoponus (c490-570s)
	Elias (fl 541)
Olympiodorus (495/505-after 565)	

****

The *Confessions* Of Augustine

(Wednesday, October 8, Friday, October 10, and Wednesday, October 15)

REQUIRED READING from **Augustine's *Confessions*:: Books I to V, Book VII, Book VIII (from VIII.vii.16 to the end), Book IX (from IX.x.23 to IX.xi.28), Book X (**i-viii, xx-xxix, xl-xliii: on memory and truth); **Book XI (**i-iii, xi, xvii, xx, xxvi-xxx: time and eternity, measure of time in the self singing a psalm); **Book XII.**xxviii.38 (the return of creation toward the One); **Book XIII** (ix-xi, xxxiv-xxxviii: my love is my weight, the trinity in the soul, knowledge and rest.)

Born in 354 A.D., Augustine lived in the dying days of the Western Roman Empire in a time of great confusion. He died in the North African city of Hippo in 430 A.D., as the Vandals were besieging the city. In the course of his conversion Augustine went through all the major philosophical positions of late antiquity and, in discussing each in his *Confessions*, he shows their deficiencies, how they enabled him to understand Christianity, and led him toward conversion. His own history is thus his account of the failure and collapse of antiquity and of the birth of the new culture of mediaeval European Christendom. [For an account of the philosophical schools through which Augustine passed, and of their relations to Platonism, see the Appendix at the end of this Introduction "Plato and the Platonisms." It is crucial to note that Skepticism is for Augustine an aspect of Platonism, see "The New Skeptical Academy" in the Appendix].

There are three main parts of the *Confessions*.

(1) Autobiographical, Augustine's life until his conversion to Christianity. The first nine books are the first autobiography in western literature and are a confession both in the primary sense of praising testimony to God and in the secondary sense of a public self-exposure of sins. Confession as praise is primary in the *Confessions* as a whole, which importantly begin with the words of Scripture in the form of psalm verses by which God is praised in a song his Word gives us to sing. God is praised (or confessed) by Augustine because Augustine regards his conversion as God's work. The first nine books are Augustine's telling of his own story as understood by him and are, thus, subjective and narrative, even if the personal history is often designed to show that his life fulfills typical and necessary patterns. By far the best account of these books is C.J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion. A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I-IX* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991).

(2) <u>Transitional, Book X is a movement from this subjective perspective to the objective perspective (God's perspective) of the last three books.</u> The means of the transition is Augustine's self-examination (an essential element of the confession of sin) primarily by the search of his memory. In memory he finds (remembers) God, who is the author of his self, and, finally, of his history. The aim, as Augustine says at the very beginning of Book X, is that he will know here and now "as also I am known" by God (I Corinthians, 13:12). In this self-examination, Augustine demands that he judge himself by the divine standard. He is to judge himself by God or, in other words, God is his judge . He does in fact find God within himself and above himself by finding that he has always been moved relative to the Truth, the Truth has always been with him and also above him. In consequence, this Book closes by pointing to the Mediator between God and humans, Jesus Christ.

(3) <u>Exegesis, understanding the objective basis</u>: Books XI, XII, XIII are an interpretation of the beginning of the first book of the Jewish and Christian *Bible*, the Book of *Genesis* (Greek for becoming). The world is seen in *Genesis* from God's perspective which is communicated to its author, Moses. In this confession (praise) of God as the Creator, Augustine passes to a vision of the objective working of God. God's work is conversion both of the individual and of the cosmos which come from God and return to God. In the work of "Genesis," Augustine's conversion, his subjective story, and all histories whatsoever are grounded. The consideration of the relation of time to eternity (Book XI) concerns how the creature who has moved in time can share the eternal knowledge of God. How can the creature in time know its changing process from within the perspective of the divine eternity? The extent to which Augustine can understand *Genesis* is the extent to which he comes to know himself even as he is known, to understand that through which he has been understanding himself since the first words of this book (words of Scripture), and to know the patterns or forms in which his personal history has been enacted.

Overall, then, there is a subjective movement (i.e. a becoming, *genesis*, within the person) to an understanding in which the human historical subject (or person) discovers and possesses, as well as being possessed by, its own objective foundation or, in philosophical language, its principle. This movement and its result define the specific character of Western culture with the centrality and priceless value it gives the human individual. For humans to possess such a divine understanding of their own lives rescues those lives from mere change and chance and gives them and such knowledge an infinite importance.

By way of introduction to the first nine books let me expand on three features of Augustine's confession and story about himself. They are (1) confession as praise, (2) told within the words of Scripture, (3) told by Augustine so as to show that his life enacts the universal patterns, the typical and necessary patterns by which change is contained within the divine providence and by which our going out becomes return, conversion to origin.

(1) Confession as Praise: "You are great, Lord, and worthy to be praised." Singing the words of Psalm 47, Augustine begins his *Confessions*. Just as he came to know God, and himself as God knows him, through self-examination, i.e. within the process of repentance and forgiveness, therefore his auto-biography, his own story, is told above all, and first of all, as the praise of the God whose story it primarily is.

Telling his own story is praise of God because in that praise he has already the end of the story, the God at whom he arrives, the God who at the very beginning and the very end of this work is called "rest." "Our heart is restless until it rests in you," says Augustine at the beginning. At the end of the whole work he testifies: "You, the Good, in need of no other good, are ever at rest since you yourself are your own rest."

He has, in his praise, the beginning of the story because he has here the creator of the movement which makes the story. As he says: "Man, a little part of your creation, you stir up to praise you because you have made us for yourself."

Finally, he has in praise what he discovers has moved him throughout, what connects the beginning and the end, namely, the desire to praise God: "Man desires to praise you ... you stir man to take pleasure in praising you." This is what moves the whole *Confessions*, Augustine's life, the life of humans generally, and the creation as a whole, namely, the pleasure in manifesting God, the enjoyment of God in the praise of Him. <u>This is another way of saying that what moves everything is the desire to enjoy the absolute Good.</u>

(2) The Words of Scripture: The praise which is primary in the *Confessions* as a whole, begins with the words of Scripture, i.e., psalm verses by which God is praised in a song his Word gives us to sing. It ends, as we have seen, with the exegesis of Scripture.

This is how Augustine deals with the problem he faces next in beginning the *Confessions*, a problem he faces, significantly, by quoting the Psalms again: "Grant me Lord to know and understand." How will he know what he is to praise? How will he know his beginning and his end? How will he know what moves his desire? How will he know what his primal memory of happiness and pleasure seeks?

For Augustine, his knowledge of himself is contained within God's knowledge of him, and that knowledge is conveyed, as we have seen already, in Scripture. The knowledge of God and of himself and of his story within God's story would be outside of his reach were Augustine to try to take it. However, it is given as a gift (in technical language, as a grace). <u>This gift of God's knowledge conveyed in Scripture, is the condition *sine qua non* (the without which nothing) of his self-knowledge and self-disclosure.</u>

(3) *What is that story?* **Augustine's life enacts the universal patterns, the typical and necessary patterns which God imposes on his creation.** Perhaps the most surprising thing about this autobiography for us is that, so far as Augustine is concerned, his story is interesting precisely because it is not unique. It is important, and is to be confessed in praise, because it shows that his life is contained within the typical and necessary patterns which God imposes on his creation. So his life tells the universal story, the story by which our going out, our *exitus* from God, both as creature and sinner, becomes *reditus*, return, conversion to origin.

I point to three elements of the first seven books: the account of his infancy in Book 1, the famous stealing of the pears in Book 2, and the philosophical journey.

Augustine's account of his infancy is remarkable because he tells us that he remembers nothing about it himself. Moreover, he says that what he knows about it from others shows that his infancy was the same as all other infancies! It is part of his *Confessions,* and stands at their beginning, because his infancy – like all other infancies – contains both the moment of cosmic harmony, which is the recollected peace and joy toward which subconscious desire draws us, and also the moment of fall or disharmony, the wilful *exitus* from which we can return only because God in Christ becomes the middle between us and God. This is the first and most fundamental pattern which structures every human story.

The Second Book of the *Confessions* is devoted to the story of his typical adolescent prank, when, with fellow members of the local gang, he stole a neighbour's pears, pears they did not need or want, and merely threw away. If the account of the infancy is intended as the Augustinian explanation of how we all enact the Fall and have all lost our original justice, the story of the theft of the pears is intended to pose the problem of the mystery of evil in the form of rebellion, evil apparently willed for its own sake. A solution to this problem, a solution which neither allows evil to exist as an independent reality, nor implicates God in evil, a solution which enables humans to discover the responsibility and which permits

repentance and forgiveness, does not appear until Book Seven. The intervening books relate Augustine's move from one religion and philosophy to another in search of the solution to the mystery of human evil, a mystery which adolescence made deep and dark for him.

Book Seven is the heart of the *Confessions*. Here we find Augustine finally arriving at a true knowledge about the substance of God. There is for him a tight interconnection between: (1) his coming to this knowledge of the divine substance as incorporeal spirit and essential goodness, and (2) his coming to a knowledge (a) of his own metaphysical nature, (b) of the nature of good and evil, and (c) of his responsibility for his own deeds. Augustine is explicit that he is dependent for this saving knowledge on the *libri platonicorum*, the books of the Platonists, i.e. Neoplatonic philosophy. **Without the Platonic philosophy, his conversion and his Christian religion are impossible. Without the knowledge of God as immaterial substance and the perfect Good, knowledge coming to him from the Platonists, Augustine could not become a Christian. Both of these doctrines, acquired from Plato, are essential to the construction of Christianity.** The solution Platonism provides answers to a problematic built and deepened from the beginning of the *Confessions*, the problem of a God who is both near him and above him, the question of his motive in the useless theft of the pears, his attraction to spiritual and materialistic dualism, his refusal of responsibility for his evil acts, etc. Augustine's movement, his conversion, the subject of his confession as praise, is a passage through universal human moments which can be represented as philosophical forms.

In sum, **the autobiography is the story of how an individual lives out the structure given to reality by the Beautiful God, comes to know that he does so, and, therefore, comes to know his infinite value.** Augustine's story is intelligible, meaningful, interesting, and important because it manifests the universal determining structures of reality and so is a witness to and a praise of God.
****

The New and Christian Rome: Byzantine Hierarchy, Theurgy And Mystical Theology

(Thursday, October 9)

The lectures on *The Mystical Theology* of Dionysius the (pseudo) Areopagite (with selections from his *The Celestial Hierarchy* and *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*) and the *Confessions* of Augustine allow us to explore two directions of Neoplatonism which were taken over and developed by Christians. These directions are very different and developed by two profoundly different figures.

The Latin Augustine was one of the most prolix authors in history, revealing himself and his thoughts in scores of books and hundreds of meditations, letters, and sermons comprising millions of words. He is the first person to have presented himself in an autobiography, the *Confessions*. In that testimony he moves back and forth between himself and God. His aim is to know himself in the same way that God knows him. In the movement between himself and God, he discovers that he is the image of his trinitarian God; both self and God are manifest as intellectual activities of being, knowing and loving. In principle this dialogue between self and God is subversive of hierarchy; the connection between God and self is immediate, i.e. nothing stands between the self and God. Everything else appears only in its connection with this relation between the self and God.

In contrast, the figure who calls himself Dionysius, hid his own personality by identifying himself with St. Paul's Athenian convert on the Areopagus, traditionally the first bishop of Athens (Acts 17. 15-34). That Dionysius is represented as having became a Christian as a result of hearing Paul preach about "the Unknown God." and was traditionally the first Bishop of Athens. Writing in Greek in the 6th century about four hundred years after the death of St. Paul, Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite, made himself an icon (religious image) of that Hidden God by successfully obscuring his real historical personality. As a

result, for about 1000 years, the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius which seemed to come from St. Paul's secret teaching, conferred on the Athenian Neoplatonism they conveyed an authority among Christians which was only exceeded by the authority of the Bible itself. In contrast to the millions of words from Augustine, the (pseudo) Dionysian *corpus* is tiny. The *corpus* consists of only four small treatises: *The Divine Names* (on the conceptual names applying to the divine unity), *The Celestial Hierarchy* (on the spiritual beings called angels mediating between God and the material cosmos including humans), *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* (on the theurgic mediation between the human and the divine realms by the sacred officers of the church and its sacraments), *The Mystical Theology* (on the union with the Unity beyond speech and knowledge which this mediation secures) and ten letters. The smallness of this *corpus* and its clear *exitus* (going out) and *reditus* (return) structure helped make it so influential. Its clear logic—in marked contrast to the endless size, variety, and complexity of Augustine's *opera*—provided the structure for many of the mediaeval systems, most notably the *Summa Theologiae* of Aquinas.

Reading *The Mystical Theology* and thinking about the system to which it belongs (and which it summarizes) will show us a Greek Christian Neoplatonism in the tradition of Iamblichus. Perhaps it was produced by a Bishop of Athens in succession to the first Christian Dionysius, a bishop in the "apostolic succession" who identified himself totally with his predecessor. He certainly thought of himself as continuing the great spiritual tradition in Athens inaugurated by Plato. He read with admiration the works of Proclus and may have been a student of Damascius, the last head of the Academy. These teachers he seemed to have regarded as divinely inspired, even if they were pagans; he sought to unify the Hellenic and the Christian. In this enterprise he would have many successors in the Middle Ages.

In Dionysius, essentials of later Neoplatonism: (1) the divinely inspired teacher who in Neoplatonism has become a theurgic priest, (2) the hierarchy of spiritual levels by which the many gods are conceptualized, subordinated to the One, and reconciled to each other, (3) the need for priests, rituals and sacred writings in order that the embodied soul be raised toward the intelligible and beyond through purification, illumination and union, and (4) the secret wisdom handed on within the School, all assume Christian forms. The result is hierarchy: angelic, ecclesiastical, and political.

Mediation is the law of hierarchy. The law requiring that all union of extremes take place through a middle term is derived from Iamblichus and is called by Aquinas the *Lex divinitatis* (the Divine Law) because he believed that all things, including God, were subject to it. *The Mystical Theology* 2 gives one form of it: "we began with the first things, moved down through intermediate terms until we reached the last things." A consequence of the *Lex divinitatis*, that the power of every hierarchy derives from the hierarch, is made explicit in the first chapter of *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. Dionysius specifies: "Talk of 'hierarch' and one is referring to a holy and inspired man, someone who understands all sacred knowledge, someone in whom an entire hierarchy is completely perfected and known."

Eastern (primarily Greek and Slavic) Christianity and Western Mediaeval Christianity developed hierarchy differently and identified different figures with the supreme earthly hierarch. In the East, the bishops and priests are subordinated to the sacred Emperor. In the West, owing to the transfer of the Imperial capital from Rome to Constantinople, the Pope took both the sacred and the secular power (the two swords) into his hands—Dante's *Divine Comedy* is filled with reflections on the problems consequent on this claim. In the East, and even more in the West, the writings of Dionysius were used to develop, understand and to dispute about hierarchy, both political and ecclesiastical. For Christians in the Middle Ages *The Celestial Hierarchy* and *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* stand together with Augustine's *City of God* and Aristotle's *Politics* as the essential works for the development of political theory. Dionysius, and the *Lex divinitatis* which is identified with him, are part of the picture even in the Modern world. For example, when, after the Protestant Reformation, the Church of England wants again to elevate a sacred monarch above Pope and priest, the Dionysian law will be cited as an authority. The Dionysian

systemization of the angelic hierarchy in accord with Neoplatonic principles is at the heart of the structure of the *Divine Comedy* (see *The Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, X. 115-17 and note; XXVIII *passim*).

The lecture on *The Mystical Theology* will be accompanied by a presentation of Christian art and architecture from Constantinople and of the copies of Hagia Sophia in Ravenna and Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen).

****

The Song of Roland **and the Feudal Oath**

(Thursday, October 16)

The Song of Roland is a so-called "chanson de geste" which tells you two things immediately: first, that this epic is at a great remove from the events it depicts—the tradition of "chanson de geste" belongs mostly to the 12th Century. Second, this is a text native to Old French—our first encounter in this Programme with what we would now call a "modern" European language.

The great "deed" or "action" around which this epic is constructed can be dated very precisely to the 15th of August, 778, when the rearguard of Charlemagne's army was ambushed in the valley of Roncevaux (or Roncesvalles) in the Pyrennes mountains, on his return from Spain. The most famous historical account of this event was provided by Einhard, Charlemagne's biographer, who mentions in particular the death of one Roland (Hruodlandus), the Count of the Breton Marches.

The historical ambush was undertaken by the Basque settlers of Northern Spain, but over the course of the centuries, this Basque treachery was attributed to the Saracens, as we shall see.

There are two great Mediaeval cycles of epic chivalry and romance: those that centre around King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table at which we shall look at the end of this Section, and the other great (and more historical) figure of Charles the Great, the Emperor Charlemagne and his Paladins. The discerning reader will have no trouble understanding why both Arthur's favoured knights and Charlemagne's Paladins are represented as being twelve in number. Both monarchs are represented as Christ-like figures, even vicars of Christ, as Roland's *Song* will make abundantly clear. It is equally significant that the miraculous powers of Arthur's Excalibur are also fully present in Roland's Durendal. We need to enter a world in which swords can carry proper names. In both traditions, there is also the privileged traitor, the Arthurian "nephew" Mordred and Roland's stepfather, Ganelon. The heinous character of Ganelon's betrayal has to be read in the context of the feudal vow, the voluntary oath of "fealty", which is still present to our consciousness in the form of the marriage vow—and the significance of which will remain obscure if ripped from its mediaeval context. In Dante, the betrayal of Judas will be treated as a crime that Judas has undertaken against his "liege," because his indebtedness to Christ is voluntary (*The Divine Comedy*, Inferno, XXXIV).

The Roland epic itself was probably extant in the form in which we have it right at the end of the 11th Century, which means that its popularity and longevity must also be partly attributable to the zeal for the "liberation" of the Holy Land and Jerusalem—remember that the First Crusade was preached in France in 1095. A significant version of the Roland epic was already part of the popular consciousness in 1066, since we are told that the bard Taillefer sang a song of Roland to William the Conqueror and his Norman troops before the Battle of Hastings. This puts Roland firmly in the great bardic tradition of Achilles and Odysseus; at a banquet as a guest of the Phaeacians, the incognito Odysseus even had the privilege of hearing a song about his own exploits at Troy (Book viii of *The Odyssey*).

Another help in understanding the world of *The Song of Roland* is the acknowledgment that the poem is produced in the era of what is called the *Reconquista* of Spain. The sketchy knowledge of what happened

on August 15th, 778 is interpreted within the contemporary geo-political context of the re-conquest of Spain from its Moorish overlords. The Christians in Spain were at one point restricted to the Asturias, and the "Song of Roland" can be appropriated as a rallying cry as much for the re-conquest of Spain, as a text for the "liberation" of Jerusalem.

It has everything to do with this text and this period of European culture that when the Caliph Omar rode into Jerusalem in 638, he rode first to the Temple of Solomon. From these his friend the Prophet was taken to the heavenly realms (the Dome of the Rock). While there the Caliph recited the prophecies of Daniel and Jesus concerning the "the abomination of desolation." To the Christian pilgrims the loss of the Holy City—now hostile religious environment—seemed to be the final realization of Daniel's vision.

To this must be added the 9th century rediscovery of the body of the favoured Apostle St James: it was believed that a star hovered over the field where the body was buried. Around the field of the star (*campus stellae*), there arose the greatest goal of all mediaeval pilgrimages, Santiago de Compostela. The normal starting point for this pilgrimage (800km and more) always occurred in France, north of the Pyrennes, but all pilgrimage routes led through the Pass of Roncesvalles -- and then the Asutrias, so that the warrior Saint of the Spanish reconquest came to be associated closely with the saintly heroism of Roland in his unwavering opposition to any accommodation with the pagans.

When we think about the caricature of Islam with which we are presented in the *Song of Roland*, it is helpful to bear in mind that politics, as every religion knows, make enemies of persons, who, the religion teaches, are meant to be brothers. For the truth of the matter is that Charlemagne's original incursion into Spain, with its climactic siege of Saragossa, was undertaken at the behest of the Caliph of Baghdad -- a city which was then one of the three centres of world history -- the other two were the Eastern and Western successors of the Roman Empire, Constantinople and Rome respectively.

If there are three dates of fundamental importance in this stage of European history -- the occupation of Jerusalem in 638, the ambush of the rearguard in 778 -- then the third is the coronation of Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor in 800 in Rome by Pope Leo III. This taking of the mantle of the Emperor Constantine under the authority of the successor of Saint Peter in the classical Latin capital was not enthusiastically welcomed by the Imperial court in Constantinople, since it so effectively undermined their own claims to speak for the unified voice of Christendom. Strangely, then Charlemagne's authority as *the* Christian monarch was a result of both the rivalry between Christianity and Islam (cf. Henri Pirenne), and a strategic alliance between Charlemagne, the King of the Franks, and the Caliph in Baghdad, both of whom opposed the independence of the Abd al-Rahman I in Spain.

In the strange world of international alliances, the Spanish Moors and the Byzantine Empire were common rivals and opponents for both the Caliph and the Frankish King. As a token of the extraordinary respect in which Charlemagne was held, the Caliph even made Charles the gift of an elephant—the more extraordinary in that it was a "white" elephant, shipped to Marseille and then made to travel by foot up to the Charlemagne's seat in Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle).

The subsequent, historically ignorant interpretations in *The Song of Roland* do not diminish the meaning of these events for the 11th Century. This is what European Christians came to *believe* about the obscure heroism of the 8th Century; thus, the epic tells us a great deal that we need to know about Christian beliefs and actions, centuries after the event. The most profitable way of reading *The Song of Roland* is to take it as an expression of the "mentality" of Christians in the 11th Century, rather than as an historically inaccurate account of what happened nearly 300 years earlier.

Charlemagne was eventually afforded the title of *Rex Carolus, Pater Europae*, as one of figures who provided history and us with a defining idea of Europe. This first occurred with the defeat of the great

Persian Empire by a rag-tag alliance of Greek city-states in the early 5th Century BCE. In his tragedy, *The Persians*, the Greek playwright, Aeschylus, purports to discover a divine authority, for the permanent separation of Asia from Europe. The natural barrier established by the straits of the Hellespont and the Bosphorus is understood in that play as in accordance with the divine will for the permanent separation of the Greek world from the hubristic aspirations of the Persian Empire.

At Charlemagne's coronation, there was a highly symbolic convergence of three disparate elements, without which our modern conception of Europe would hardly be conceivable: first, the recovery of the "marches" (borders) of the ancient Roman Empire -- along with Rome's antique glories in literature, ritual, and law. Second, the crowning of Charlemagne represented a united Christendom, with a universal spiritual head in the Bishop of Rome and an imperial temporal head in the new Roman Emperor. Third, the crowning of the King of the Franks with this office represented the incorporation into the idea of Europe of tribes and peoples who were both foreigners to ancient civilization and only late converts to Christianity. The Frankish-Germanic peoples—foreigners also to a settled, agricultural lifestyle—brought with them a notion of commonality of pastures and collective ownership of property (cf. Herder), in short a "tribal" mentality in which the "common good" took precedence over any considerations of individual well-being and glory. These were nomadic peoples, used to warfare and protection of the *commonwealth*. All this was achieved in one ritual act on Christmas Day, 800, and so much of what we read in *The Song of Roland* gives concrete expression to this mentality, this self-understanding, this "ideology."

Roland became a European hero, as is partly evident in the vast number of statues erected in his honour, throughout Europe—around 40 statues of Roland were known some 400 years after his rather obscure death in 778. It is also evident in the vast number of versions of Roland's song in all the European languages, which used the *Chanson de Roland* as their common source; the most important of these may be the Middle High German version of *Das Rolandslied* authored by Konrad der Pfaffe (the Priest) circa 1170, not quite a century after the version in Old French. Finally, this is evidenced by the "Nachleben," the "afterlife" of Roland. So some of you will have heard of him from *Orlando Furioso* (a poem by Ariosto published in its complete form after the conclusion of "The Middle Ages" in 1532).

When you are reading the *Song of Roland*, you will need to pay attention to two points with extreme care; first, why does the poet assert both in laisse 1, and then again in laisse 7, that the events at Roncesvalles are "inevitable": King Marsile "cannot prevent disaster from overtaking him" and there is nothing that Charlemagne "can do to avoid deceit". What gives the poet the right to assert that this ambush of the rearguard is inevitable?

Secondly, (laisse 87) "Roland is brave and Oliver is wise"; why does Roland three times refuse to blow the horn at Oliver's request? In terms of the disastrous consequences of Roland's refusal, this must have seemed to Oliver the equivalent of Peter's three-fold denial of Christ. Why is the "impetuous," pig-headed Roland the hero of this saga? Why is the catastrophic consequence of Roland's stubborn, proud refusal not—quite simply -- the moral teaching of this story?

Many of the laisses (stanzas) in this poem end with the mysterious annotation AOI, which is reproduced from the original manuscript. The best assumption is that these vowels represent a unified, answering shout offered by the assembled warriors who are listening to the heroic deeds of the great Roland. This shout may function in the same way as a resounding "Amen" at the conclusion of a prayer.

In reading *The Song of Roland*, try to think your way into this 11th Century mentality, so that you can begin to appreciate the "folly" of Roland as a defining moment in what for these Europeans was the epitome of Christian virtue. We must be attentive to this "epic", if we are ever to take hold of that

mediaeval imagination, which we term both "Carolingian" and "Romanesque." (These introductory notes are the work of Dr Thomas Curran.)

****

<u>Monastic Meditation: **Anselm of Canterbury's *Proslogion***</u>

(Friday, October 17)

St. Anselm (1033-1109) moved from being a wandering student (out of Northern Italy), a Benedictine monk at Bec in Normandy, then Abbot of Bec (1078), and finally Archbishop of Canterbury (consecrated in 1093). Much of his troubled time as Archbishop was spent in exile from England while he sought to get the Pope's support in his contest over the question of Investiture with King William II from whom Anselm refused to receive the symbols of his episcopal power. The controversy was only settled in 1107, twenty months before Anselm's death, when William gave up the right to confer the symbols of church office. Anselm thus helped forward the reform movement by which the Church separated itself from the "secular" power—the power which governed this world, i.e. this *seculum* (on the conflict between Church and Empire generally see *The Divine Comedy*, Purgatorio, XXXII). Later the Church inverted this triumph by which it purified itself from secular control, and, by claiming total jurisdiction, spiritual and sacred, it corrupted itself (on Pope Boniface VIII, loathed by Dante on this account, see *The Divine Comedy*, Inferno: XV.112; XIX.53 and XXVII.70 & 85). Anselm himself appears in the Paradiso at XII.137, some features of his demonstration of the rational necessity of the Incarnation in his treatise *Cur Deus Homo* (*Why the God Man*) are put in the mouth of Beatrice in Canto VII).

The Logic of the Quest

The *Proslogion*, and its earlier mate the *Monologion*, were written just before Anselm became Abbot of Bec. As the Prologues to the two works make clear, they arise out of the actual experience of meditation, the lifting up of the soul toward God in the monastery. This contemplation is the highest purpose of monastic life. The method of the *Proslogion*, as indeed of Anselm's other works, is very different from that which the mediaeval Scholastics will begin to develop in the next century in the university, which is located in the very opposite of the monastery, the city. Rather than reconciling many opposed authorities by means of a philosophical logic distinguished from the revealed content, as the Scholastics will do, Anselm thinks his way from within the limited data of faith to the necessary structure of reason. In the consciousness of Anselm, the *Proslogion* is no more than can be developed from careful consideration of the writings of St. Augustine (d. 430). Like essential aspects of Augustine's thought, Anselm's treatment of the existence and attributes of God is an example of the varied Christian developments of Neoplatonism. How the *Proslogion* continues and deepens the Neoplatonism of Augustine will become especially apparent when Anselm's arguments are contrasted with the use of them made by Descartes in the 17th century.

Like most other theology in the Middle Ages, Anselm's thought is more systematically and consistently philosophical than that of Augustine. Like Latin Christian theology from Boethius (d. 524) until the 14th century, the *Proslogion* does not have the ambiguous and polemical relation to philosophy which caused Augustine to misrepresent Platonism and, sometimes, to underestimate his debt to it. After the pagan philosophical schools were shut down by the Christians, the Christians discovered that they could not understand the teachings of their religion without the pagan philosophy in whose terms they had turned revelation into doctrine. These doctrines often surpassed or even contradicted the literal text of the Bible (for example, the doctrines of the simplicity, incorporality and passionless perfection of God, or of one substance in three hypostases [Latin "persons"], or of the creation of the world from nothing.) In consequence, they were forced to retrieve philosophy.

Anselm transforms Augustine's notion of Christian life as "faith seeking understanding" to require that the doctrines of the Christian religion—both those concerning the nature of God (including his trinitarian nature) and those concerning the Incarnation and Atonement (*Cur Deus Homo*)—be properly held by reason alone. For Anselm, these doctrines have "necessary reasons" *rationes necessariae*; in consequence, their rational necessity should be known independently of the authority of the Bible or of the Church. What is thought in them is only truly known when thinking can generate them independently of authority. Thus Anselm seeks "a single argument which would require nothing other for its proof than itself alone" (Preface). This he supposes he has attained, for, at the end of Chapter 4, Anselm gives thanks that what he previously believed by God's gift he now knows in such a way by God's illumination that even if he were unwilling to believe it, he would be compelled to understand it to be true. That faith leads him to a reasoning established independently of faith is crucial. This is the kind of Augustinianism which will reappear with Descartes.

Among the many simultaneously Plotinian and Augustinian features of Anselm's *Proslogion* are the notions that the knowledge of God and of the self are essentially connected, that we know by moving from external things to inward things, from inferior things to superior ones, that our relation to God comes in comparing what reason grasps to what it does not grasp (this is essential to the so called proof and to Neoplatonism), and the organization of all else around the movement of the soul toward God.

Outline of the <u>*Proslogion*</u>

Title, Meditation and Text.

Anselm called the work we are reading *Fides* **quaerens** *intellectum*, "Faith **seeking** understanding," and said that it was an *alloquium,* an "address" to another. Anselm's writings are records of meditations, spiritual assents which originally took place within the divine - human dialogues at the heart of monastic life—dialogues which were face to face encounters and which were intended to lead to seeing God "face to face" in the life of the world to come. The texts were first written so as to enable participants to recall and thus reproduce these dialogues and encounters.

Prologue, the quest

Anselm tells us that the *Proslogion* was undertaken because he wanted an argument for the existence and nature of God which conformed to the divine nature. He was dissatisfied with the form of the *Monologion* which he characterized as a concatenation of many arguments woven together. He wanted, instead, one argument (*unum argumentum*) which by its own simplicity and self-sufficiency imaged the divine self-sufficient unity. The quest for a thinking which conforms in this way to its divine object led him to his famous proof and constitutes a journey to God. <u>Anselm's quest derives from what most distinguishes Augustine's doctrine, namely a conformity of thought's ultimate object (God) and the human *mens* (a term which is wider than the word "mind") because the First Principle, like the human mind, is a self-reflective trinity.</u>

As Anselm understands it, faith demands that he seek to find by "one argument" what he believes is proper to the knowledge of God, proper both on our side and on God's. The reason which knows God should conform to God's simple self-sufficient being. **The demand for full adequacy between God and our experience is essential to the argument at every stage. In fact, faith's demand or quest moves the whole work. Ultimately, it requires that God's true being is experienced in a way which accepts the process of human knowing and the real character of human being.** God may not be relegated to a mystery hidden except for the recognition that God is beyond our knowledge. Nor may God be an abstract idea known only for a disembodied universal mind. Thus, God must be known to exist, being

must belong to God, the knowledge of God's being must be necessary to human thinking, and such knowledge must be the complete satisfaction of the human self.

This conformity between our thought and God is both beyond mind's grasp and inescapably necessary to it. Thus, the "one argument" appears to have "given itself" to Anselm after he so despairs in his search that he attempts vainly to stop. Then, in the very conflict of his thought, he is given God's name as "that than which nothing greater can be thought." **This name requires comparing what the mind knows to what it does not know. The name is, in fact, the structure of this unresolvable self-conflict.** In the conflict which the quest for an adequate knowledge of God arouses, the mind is related to what is beyond it, namely to the existence of God as the unity of thought and being. Thinking presupposes this unity. Because, on one side, the beginning is in what lies beyond the mind, the beginning is grace and faith. Because, equally, this conflict belongs to mind's essential quest, Anselm "eagerly embraces" what he is given, and the end of the quest must be total understanding and complete experience fully satisfying the human as human.

Chapter 1, the "address"

Chapter 1 has two mutually connected addresses: the "address" (*alloquium*) or exhortation to the soul to seek God, and the address, or demand or prayer, to the God who is sought. This demand must be understood relative to the human end. Because the human and divine trinities mirror each other, the "one thing necessary" which will satisfy Anselm's quest is able to give its very essence to the human, and the human is able to remain with and to be satisfied with the divine Goodness. In consequence, a direct dialogue between the human and the divine, dominates the work from beginning to end and "unveils the true nature of inquiry as a lover's exchange." [Marilyn McCord Adams, "Romancing the Good: God and the Self according to St. Anselm of Canterbury," *The Augustinian Tradition*, ed. Gareth Matthews (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 91-109 at 102.] When Anselm was forced to give the work a title, he called it *Proslogion, id est alloquium*.

Throughout the *Proslogion*, Anselm's address, or exhortation, is alternatively to himself and to God. To make this evident, the first addresses to himself and to God at the start of Chapter One begin with the same word, *Eia*, "Go." Significantly, when the goal of the quest is reached, there is no division between the seeker's address to himself and to God. In the last Chapter, God is asked affirm that the seeker has reached what the Lord counselled him to demand and Anselm asserts that he will go on seeking and receiving in accord with the Lord's command.

The first address is by the seeker to himself as other and in his otherness. He seeks rest and joy in an inner place of peace but is "banished far from your face", weighed down by occupations, tumultuous thoughts, cares and labours. This externalized self is identified in the first Chapter as belonging to the fallen Adam who lost and remembers bitterly a former fullness. In the next Chapter, he reappears as the Fool who has said "There is no God." **In his various identities, this is someone who, because of the externality of words to their meanings, can say what neither he nor anyone can think.**

Such a one must be exhorted to turn inward toward God. God is addressed with the demand that he reveal his face hidden "in inaccessible light," a place where he ought to be known because it is light, but where, in fact, he is inaccessible, because, as we discover later, God is greater than what is able to be conceived. The work depends upon the self-division required and intensified by such addresses and demands, by such a quest, by such a comparison of the states of the self, and by such a difference between ought and is.

Though Anselm begins with an exhortation to search, the fundamental problem is that he must search. **Search is inescapable for the believer. Faith by its nature, distinguished as it is from vision**

(*intellectus*), **and possession, compels search**. Continuing the quest, which requires acknowledged loss, involves both the intensification of the self-division, and also the intensification of its accompanying sense of loss. Both intensifications are essential for attaining the object of the quest and thus healing the divided self. To resolve the dilemma which the search entails, the questing, reasoning and choosing self must be embraced; what is negative in desire must be overcome. **The seeker prays that God will accept his labours and strivings, will reveal Himself to seeking. This is also what Augustine sought and found. The *Proslogion* is the *Confessions* condensed and rendered as philosophical meditation.**

Intensified quest leads again and again to the despair whose structure is exhibited in the *Prologue*. Chapter One shows that we are dealing here with what belongs to us essentially but is lost to us, so that questing defines the human. As in the Prologue, the essential movement is from despair. **The whole aim is to find how the seeking of God which must lead to despair can be positively included in our relation to God.** How can our seeking for knowledge, which quest is both the cause ("I was heading for God and stumbled over myself") of our fall and its manifestation, be positively included in our necessary relation to what is necessarily beyond our understanding? Anselm prays that God will accept our labours and strivings, that the quest will not just remain with the frustration which belongs to it: "show yourself to me when I seek."

The problems have correlative solutions. While the inadequacy of faith to its object compels the search for vision, understanding, and possession, faith is also the way beyond the loss it both makes evident and creates. The self can remember what it lost and who it once was because it remains an image of the Creator even if a darkened one: "[Y]ou have created in me this image of you so that I may remember you, think of you, and love you". The trinitarian soul is itself the basis for union with its trinitarian source and contains the means of recognizing what it seeks and willing what it has lost. The unknown Cause can remake what it has made, and the remaking and renovation are in and through the one who suffered the loss.

A Comparison

On the human side, the solution lies in the relation between two selves, or more correctly between two aspects of the self which reason compares. Comparison is the very heart of this work. Its famous proof of God's existence, the name of God on which the proof depends, and the demonstration of the divine nature and attributes, all make this clear. The proof depends upon comparing two ways of existing: what is *in intellect only* and what is both *in intellect* and *in reality*. The name reaches to what is *greater* (*maius*). The demonstration depends on a comparison which attributes to God *whatever it is better* (*melius*) *to be than not to be*.

The all-important formula ("that than which nothing greater can be thought") requires comparing thoughts with one another. But these are thoughts about a being in which thought and existence cannot be separated. Further, being is hierarchically graded. Objects of knowledge are more or less true in virtue of their degree of being and are more or less knowable or beyond knowledge because of their degree of being. Finally, and crucially, the knower ought to know the divine and would know God if he had not forsaken his true self. On this account, and because knowledge is equivalent to enjoyment, and because the knower acquires its being and its well being from the divine object of knowledge, there is a direct correlation between the state of the knower and the degree to which the divine is grasped or lost. Failure or success in the knowledge of God determines the knower's ontological status and moral worth.

The intensity and deep problem of the quest results from the fact that for Anselm **the human ought to enjoy God in every way**; there ought to be nothing abstract in our knowledge of God (i.e. no separation of any kind between us and God). When Anselm demands to see, to hear, to smell, to eat God (**Chapters 1 and 17),** he wants complete satisfaction of the whole human self. Reiterated and clarified in Chapters 14,

17 & 24, the address (*alloquium*) of **Chapter 1** is a continuing demand for the conformity sought in the Prologue between our knowing and God's nature. This is a feature of Anselm's thought which he derives from Augustine and is not found in this way in Plotinus where union requires the stripping and simplification of the self. The position of Augustine and Anselm is more in line with that of the later Iamblichan Neoplatonism. Put in religious terms, the view of the self in its relation to God with which Anselm is working is that expressed by the Christian belief in the resurrection of the body.

The Proof that God exists

Chapters 2-4: the movement to God, as what cannot be thought not to be, lies in **denying** the existence of "that than which nothing greater can be thought." In self-contradiction, the relation of thinking to what is assumed beyond thought is first brought into thought because "what he understands exists in his understanding, even if he does not understand that it exists [in reality]." After it is shown that this, **and this only** (the crucial point in his reply to his critic Gaunilon), cannot exist in the mind without existing in reality (*in re*) and that, because of its nature communicated in the name, it cannot be thought not to be (**Chapter 3**), the problem becomes how what cannot be denied is, as a matter of fact, denied by the fool (**Chapter 4**). Anselm locates the problem where Plotinus and Augustine also found it, namely, in the forgetfulness and ignorance which belongs to mind immersed in sensuous externality. Speech is an instance of such externality because you can say what you do not think. The solution requires the rise of mind to thought.

The *Proslogion* is also an "address" (*alloquium*) because the dialogue with the fool represents an essential human dialogue. This is movement back and forth between the inner thoughtful self and the outer self-forgetful "insignificant mortal" which is required for the ascent to God and for God's manifestation. Here, when showing and explaining the inconceivability of God's non-existence, it becomes explicit that we never have in Anselm a simply objective argument. The knower's relation to what is known—or not known—is always present and must always be considered. This inseparable joining of the subjective and objective in the argument comes out very clearly again in the treatment of God's attributes in the following chapters. Even before these, Anselm has come, at **the end of Chapter 4** by this union of an objective and a subjective consideration, to intellectual illumination, a state of understanding such that, even were he to be unwilling to believe God exists, he could not cease to think God's existence. This is the true understanding (*intellectus*), understanding independent of faith, which mediaeval theology, generally, and Anselm, particularly, demanded.

God's Hidden Nature

Chapter 5 begins coming to know God's other attributes (except existence) as a result of the one self-sufficient argument. This is the programme described in the Prologue. "That than which nothing greater can be conceived" is the greater or better which lacks no good. Attributes are ascribed to God on this basis in the chapters from **6 to 14. Thus,** God has perception without being a body (**6**), omnipotence without being able to do everything (**7**). God has compassion and is also passionlessness (**8**), just and merciful (**9, 10, 11**) and all these contradictory things without self-contradiction. BUT, <u>in every case, **God is all these things in the opposite of the human way:** "in relation to yourself but not in relation to us"</u> (**Chapter 10**). This contradiction between our way of being and God's comes out even more intensely in **Chapters 12 & 13** where the difference between the way everything is in God and in creatures is brought out. God is "through yourself," (**12**) and alone is "wholly everywhere at once" (**13**). So, when Anselm asks himself in **Chapter 14** the same questions he asked in Chapter 1, i.e. whether he has found what he sought and why he does not perceive what is in its entirety everywhere, he recognizes that **<u>in all this naming knowledge God has become yet more distant</u>**. He discovers, to his despair, that **God is also "a being greater than can be thought" (Chapter 15)**. God dwells in inaccessible light (**16**) which we cannot

approach. What has every perfection, including the sensible ones (**17**), has them, entirely in a way absolutely unique to himself. In consequence, **Chapter 18** reiterates the despair essential to the **quest** for God: "Once again, 'behold confusion!' (Jeremiah 14:19). Behold, once again mourning and grief stand in the way of one seeking joy and happiness."

However, **Chapters 18-21,** which in this despair consider how God contains everything, are <u>both the ultimate despair and also the ultimate turning</u>. Out of his renewed and ever deeper despair, Anselm prays in **Chapter 18** that God will reach across the infinite distance between them and bring him over. Anselm prays to be lifted beyond himself: *Releva me de me ad te* and to have his eyes illumined "so as to look upon you." He wants the divided seeker who is through another (*per aliud*) to pass over to the simple self-sufficient fullness which is through itself (*per se*). Everything now depends on whether what is other than God, yet through God, as through another (*per aliud*), is, in fact, contained in God. Is the other, especially the human in that questing otherness which is both the cause and the continuing sign of its Fall, which quest now defines it, excluded from God's ever more recognized difference from us? Or, on the contrary, <u>does God's self-sufficient being include what is in principle divided and divided from it</u> (because *per aliud*)?

Anselm's Solution: God's inclusive Being

The answer emerges. God is absolutely simple (**18**) BUT **"all things exist in you"** (**19**). **"You fill and embrace all things"** (**20**) and "your eternity contains" time. Thus, by **Chapter 22**, Anselm has completed the programme set out in the Prologue, the argument which faith demanded of thought: "you are nothing other than the one supreme good, utterly self-sufficient, needing nothing, whom all things need for their being and their well-being." This unique good can be the good of all who seek God, because **God contains rather than excludes all else in his perfection**. This is brought out in **Chapter 23** where the doctrine of the Trinity is introduced in order to show that God is capable of including equally good substances within his simplicity: "Now, this is that one necessary thing, in which is all good – or rather which is itself the complete, one, total and unique good." Not multiplied, **God includes otherness in his very simplicity, every good in his simple goodness, and thus, the quest of reason in the knowledge of his simplicity.** The solution is as much subjective as it is objective: not only does God contain all that is other but also God contains, inspires, and demands the human quest for God. Contemplation of this inclusive simplicity is a union which confers on the knower a mode of knowledge like that of the object known.

In consequence, the last chapters (**24, 25, 26)** return to the quest for the enjoyment of God, but this time with confidence because God is now known as simple but inclusive goodness. We begin again with another address of the soul to itself to awaken and arouse itself to conceive the greatness of this goodness. Now, however, even more depends on the satisfaction of this quest. Since all good is in this single all-inclusive simplicity—the *unum necessarium* to which the *unum argumentum* has brought us—, we either enjoy this or we are condemned to utter misery. Nonetheless, we still do not possess all our good directly in this good as we must. What is Anselm's final solution?

Anselm makes clear that the complete enjoyment of all the good in the Divine simplicity, though in principle possible and indeed required from both the divine and the human sides, will necessitate a change in our mode of being. For the proper knowledge and enjoyment of God in himself, we must pass from time to eternity. There, **we shall be perfectly included in that other which is the only good and our good**. For example, knowledge will satisfy every desire which the senses have. Further, our love for ourselves and our neighbour will be included in our love of God: "for they will love God and themselves and one another through God, and God will love himself and them through himself." In virtue of having the divine will, humans will have the omnipotence which formerly divided the human and the divine.

Indeed, time itself and its process are included in our possession of that truly infinite good. Though we cannot possess it now, in virtue of being directed toward that good, we can make progress from day to day until we come to the fullness.

Fruitless quest has become growth. Desire, quest, reason's activity have become activities toward the divine. Anselm now has confidence in and can accept the divine counsel to ask in order to receive the fullness of joy which the one who asks is promised. This is the subject of the concluding Chapter as a whole. What is positive in faith has emerged. The quest for God in despair of our own efforts is known as the activity of the divine in us. We are in God, because otherness and what is through another are in God. All this is contained in "that than which nothing greater can be thought," because, in this formula, what is known and grasped has essential relation to what is not thought and cannot be thought. Reason and intellect are held together in a comparing thought which must thus be both.

****

<u>Traditions in Medieval Philosophy and the Recovery of Aristotle by the Latin West</u>
In the following Table, the Platonist positions on the left are epistemologically more intellectualist. They depend upon an immediate access of the human soul to its own essence, to self-knowledge, and to rational interiority. For the Peripatetics, on the right, there is no immediate self-knowledge: the soul knows itself only through its acts, not by direct access to its own essence. For the Peripatetics, humans can only know because their souls are moved by what comes to them from corporeal matter through the senses. The middle positions mix the two extremes, but no positions are pure and all comparisons are matters of emphasis. Epistemologically Iamblichus is well on the way to being a Peripatetic. If the Table were arranged objectively—relative to the nature of the First Principle—it would look very different: then the Peripatetics would be more intellectualist and the succession from Iamblichus would be the least.

Plato 428-348 BCE	**Aristotle** 384-322 BCE
NEOPLATONIC TRADITION	**PERIPATETIC TRADITION**
Plotinus d. 270	**Alexander of Aphrodisias**
Founder of the Neoplatonic Tradition	198 begins teaching at Athens

Porphyry d. 303   **Iamblichus** d. 325
Victorinus 4th century

    Augustine d. 430   **Proclus** d. 485
                 Pseudo-Dionysius
                 6th century
                 Liber de Causis
                 circa 850, Arabic
                 (Baghdad)
                 in Latin West accepted
                 as written by Aristotle
                 until 1268

THIRD TRADITION
THE ATOMISTS
Applies only to Islam and Jewish Medieval philosophy and theology (Kalâm), an atomism of the will. Called Ashᶜarites in Islamic theology, Mutakallimûn by Moses Maimonides. In a perfectly adequate Table, this position would be on the far left. It is not a part of the Peripatetic Tradition.

NEOPLATONIC TRADITION (continued)	PERIPATETIC TRADITION (continued)
	Al-Fârâbî died 950

Ibn Sînâ died 1036, called
Avicenna by the Latins, the
most Neoplatonic of the
Arabic philosophers.

                                             ATOMIST: al-Ghazâlî
                                             between 1091 and 1095
                                             wrote *The Incoherence of*
                                                 the Philosophers

Anselm d. 1109

	Moses Maimonides	**Ibn Rushd** 1126-1198
	1135-1204, his	(called **Averroes** and
	cosmology is	"The Commentator"),
	Aristotelian, with the	*The Incoherence of the*

crucial difference that *Incoherence* vs. al-Ghazâlî the world has a temporal beginning, his doctrine of God is Neoplatonic.

Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, translation of Aristotle's major works into Latin. Lecturing on Aristotle's works forbidden at Paris in 1210, overcome by a Strike, condemnation renewed in 1231, 1263, 1270,1277. Making Aquinas a saint in 1323 belongs to changed climate; in 1346 Pope Clement VI <u>blames</u> scholars for not studying Aristotle.

Bonaventure d. 1274, both more Augustinian and more Dionysian than Aquinas, accepted Anselm's proof.
FRANCISCAN

Albert the Great d.1280, taught Aquinas, identified himself as a Peripatetic, but accepted that *Liber de causis* was by Aristotle, thus, more Neoplatonic than Aquinas.
DOMINICAN

Aquinas d. 1274 sources: Aristotle, Augustine, Proclus, Ps-Dionysius, *Liber de causis*, Avicenna, Averroes, Moses Maimonides, a
DOMINICAN

Siger of Brabant, d. 1282 Latin Averroist, i.e. a single Agent Intellect, "secular", member of the Faculty of Arts, condemned 1277.

Locating each of these four and many of the others in the Heaven of the Wise (or the Sun), and their relative positions in the two circles of that heaven, will be very helpful, see *Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, Cantos XI, XII, and XIII. This Heaven is a compact *summa* of the philosophical and theological life of the Christian West in the Middle Ages.

<u>Islamic Philosophy: Al-Fârâbî's *Mabâdi' ârâ' ahl al-madîna al-fâdila*, i.e. *The Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City* or *The Perfect State*</u>

(Monday, October 20)

Reading: Al-Fârâbî's *The Perfect State* consists of a "Summary" (his own) and nineteen chapters organised into sections as follows: Section I, The First Cause, 1) The First Cause is One and Mind, 2) The First Cause as the Origin of All Being, Section II, The World Above the Moon, with one chapter on the same subject, i.e. 3) The World Above the Moon, Section III, The Sublunary World, 4) Sublunary Existents, 5) Matter and Form, 6) The Worlds Below and Above the Moon, 7) The Celestial Bodies, 8) Becoming, 9) Sublunar Bodies, Section IV, Man, 10) The Faculties of the Soul, 11) The Limbs and Organs of the Body, 12) The Organs of Reproduction, 13) Reason, 14) Representation and Divination, Section V, 15) Perfect Associations and Perfect Ruler, Faulty Associations, 16) After-life, 17) Philosophy and Religion, Section VI, 18) Views of the Cities which are Ignorant of the True Good, 19) Views of the Cities which Miss the Right Path.

The thought of Moses Maimonides depends closely on that of Al-Fârâbî. Because the material both on the emanations constituting the "World Above the Moon" and the on the structure of the Sublunary world is repeated in the reading from Maimonides, we will concentrate on other matters – though Maimonides only modifies Al-Fârâbî on these matters also. We shall read Al-Fârâbî's "Summary", and 1) The First Cause is One and Mind, parts 1 and 2, 6, 7, and 8; 2) The First Cause as the Origin of All Being; 6) The Worlds Below and Above the Moon; 13) Reason; 15) Perfect Associations and Perfect Ruler, Faulty Associations.

Al-Fârâbî (died 950) is the greatest of the Islamic philosophers of the period we are studying and, after al-Kindi, he is the founder of the rich tradition which we shall trace briefly. His cosmology, physics, biology and psychology are in the Aristotelian tradition (so he is a "Peripatetic"), but the overall structure of his system and his theology are Neoplatonic. Allowing for different measures of each, and the vagueness of the terms Peripatetic and Neoplatonic, the same could be said for his successors who wrote in Arabic and who importantly influenced the Latin mediaevals: Ibn Sînâ (died 1036, called Avicenna by the Latins), Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) and Ibn Rushd (1126-1198, for the Latins, "Averroes" and "The Commentator").

There are some general features of this philosophy which stand out for us. (1) The Arabic philosophical tradition (which includes Moses Maimonides) possessed and read the dialogues of Plato—thus distinguishing it from the Latin mediaeval philosophic tradition in general. Among these dialogues the *Republic* was of crucial importance and it is still taught in the Islamic theological seminaries. The Arabs seem either not to have known or not to have been interested in Aristotle's *Politics.* A moment's reflection will make apparent the influence of the *Republic* on *The Perfect State*.

(2) As a matter of emphasis, the Islamic and Jewish religious communities function as united by law, and are governed by judges of the law. In contrast the Christian Church became deeply Hellenic. Its "New Testament" is in Greek: as Jaroslav Pelikan puts it: "It remains one of the most momentous linguistic convergences in the entire history of the human mind and spirit that the New Testament happens to have been written in Greek ... the Greek of Socrates and Plato." [Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism*, Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, 1992-1993 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 3] The Christian Church was fundamentally shaped in the interchange with the Hellenistic philosophical schools, especially the Neoplatonic ones. The Church is more a theological community, united by the doctrines in its creeds than a practical one and Sacred Doctrine is a theoretical, rather than a practical, science (Aquinas, *Summa*

Theologiae, I.1.3). Its governing authorities are as much concerned with what Christians believe as with what they do.

(3) As a result of this difference, the Christian theologian must also be, in an important sense, a philosopher (thus the character of the writings of Augustine and Dionysius, of Anselm and Aquinas). In the Islamic and Jewish world, the theological teachers are primarily concerned with the practical interpretation of the law and are sharply distinguished from the philosophers. Philosophy in the Arabic tradition tends to a total intellectualism in which the revealed is only the imaginative form of what is better known rationally by philosophers. The writings of al-Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ provoked a strong attack from the theologian al-Ghazâlî who between 1091 and 1095 wrote his *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* (*Tahâfut al-Falâsifa*). Al-Ghazâlî's book came to the legal judgment that some of the philosophers had committed blasphemy and should be punished. It was essential for the continuation of philosophy within Islam that this be answered and in 1178-79 Ibn Rushd (Averroes) wrote his *The Incoherence of the Incoherence* (*Tahâfut al-Tahâfut*) as a response. However, no compromise between the distinct spheres of revelation and reason, like that produced by Aquinas, was worked out in the Arabic tradition.

(4) The strongest difference between the doctrines of the Jewish and Islamic Peripatetics, on the one hand, and Aquinas, on the other hand, concerned the question of the individuation of the Agent Intellect, the power by which ideas are made. For al-Fârâbî and his successors, including Moses Maimonides, all of whom had good precedents among the Greek Peripatetics, there is only one Agent Intellect for all humans. For al-Fârâbî this Agent Intellect is the Eleventh Emanation of the First Principle (God). We humans know ideas by receiving in our material or passive intellect what the Agent Intellect knows. Both by practicing the disciplines of community and by rising towards intellectuality independent of our bodily we are assimilated to by degrees to the character of the one separate Intellect by which we all know. Thus, we become immortal. In marked and determined contrast, Aquinas thought it of the greatest importance for human individuality, dignity, responsibility, and immortality that the divine power of intellectual agency belong to each person individually. He conducted an investigation and criticism of the Peripatetic tradition in order to establish that his position was Aristotle's own. It is beyond the scope of our inquiry to consider whether he or the Arab tradition was right or wrong, but in the ancient and medieval periods the majority historical opinion was with the Arabs.

****

The Mediaeval Cosmos and the Study of Nature

(Thursday, October 23)

The 12th and 13th centuries witnessed a kind of 'Renaissance' in Europe: a greatly extended retrieval of ancient texts, especially those of Aristotle, along with important commentaries by late antique and Jewish and Muslim philosophers on those texts. This 'Renaissance' put in place, among other things, all the basic elements of the 13th century university scholar's view both of the whole natural universe (the *cosmos*) and of what it was to 'study nature'. These two aspects of mediaeval 'science' formed an integral whole. Based on a common heritage of ancient texts and the methods of studying them, university scholars throughout Europe broadly shared what they took to be a complete picture of the cosmos, although there certainly remained substantial questions open to dispute. We will try to appreciate that completeness, and why this account of the cosmos remained more or less intact well into the 16th century.

An excellent place to start is our selection from *The Guide to the Perplexed*, written by the pre-eminent Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides (1135-1204). In the section from the *Guide* which you will read, Maimonides attempts "to explain to you that which exists as a whole by informing you of what is demonstrated and is indubitably correct" concerning the natural world. Largely derived from the texts of

Aristotle dealing with the *cosmos* (all that is in the heavens and the earth), this account is an excellent example of a mediaeval synopsis of the basic Aristotelian view of the cosmos, one that was assumed by figures such as Dante and Aquinas. Although Maimonides was aware of many points of contention in this account of the natural world, and of some major theological problems with Aristotelian science, it is important to read this in the spirit in which Maimonides wrote it. He is giving you the broad brush strokes of the canvas of the cosmos, painting a rough, but nevertheless true, picture of all that is in the natural world – as far as human knowing can attain it. Maimonides (and many others) regarded this as the most true account available to human thinking and observation.

Although Maimonides presents the elements of this 'canvas' as more or less beyond dispute, we will explore *why* this account made sense, what made it hang together, and why it seemed to paint a true picture of the natural world. When you read, recollect your Aristotle readings back in section I, and consider the following questions. What are the basic divisions in the cosmos for Maimonides? What role does "motion" play, and what kinds are there? For what kinds of phenomena is he trying to account? What is the place of the human in this account, and how is the human related to the divine?

****

Complex System: Thomas Aquinas, the Gothic Cathedral in Words.

(Friday, October 24)

Reading: *Summa Theologiae*, Prologue, I.1.1 (i.e., Part One, Question One, Article One), I.1.2, I.1.3, I.1.4, I.1.5, I.1.7, I.1.9; I.2 all three articles; I.3.1; I.75.1; I.75.2; I.79.3, I.79.4, I.79.5.

With the Dominican Friar Thomas Aquinas (died 1274), we have moved outside the monastery into the city, to the university which develops within it, and to the new religious Orders whose freedom from stability of place matched the new situation. We come, in consequence, to a system of great complexity and to the characteristic forms for High Mediaeval theology and philosophy, the *summa* and the *quaestio*. The opposing elements of Thomas' complex system are indicated by the thinkers who have the greatest authority for him: Augustine, Aristotle and Dionysius.

Like all Latin mediaevals Aquinas is a follower of Augustine—especially in his treatment of the divine trinity. But, as the very first article of the first question of his *Summa Theologiae* makes evident, in contrast to Augustinians, Thomas accepts as his beginning point a complete account of the cosmos offered by reason apart from faith. Thomas also rejects Anselm's beginning for theology. His proof for the existence of God is cast aside *ST* [= *Summa Theologiae*], I.2.1 obj. 2 and *ad* 2. The problem from which Thomas' system starts is that "whatever is not above reason is fully treated in philosophical science. Therefore, besides philosophical science, there is no need of any further knowledge" (*ST*, I.1.1 obj. 1). The philosophical sciences which give this complete account are, for Aquinas, the sciences which were founded by Aristotle.

His assumed scientific account of the cosmos, Aquinas owed to the recovery of Aristotle by the Latin west in the 12th century, through the medium of Arabic philosophy. In late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Aristotle's sciences were conveyed and up-dated by the commentators on his works, both Peripatetic and Neoplatonic. Aquinas himself becomes one of these philosophical commentators. As a theologian, he works explicitly under the authority of the Bible, and then in secondary way, under authoritative Christian writers like the pseudo-Dionysius. Aquinas agrees with Dionysius and Aristotle that our reason starts with sense knowledge. In consequence, he integrates a sacramental and hierarchical Christianity—whose logic is derived from Neoplatonists in the Iamblichan tradition, especially Proclus—with Aristotle's teaching about the nature of substance and about how humans know (*ST*, I.1.9). Thomas' *summa* (complete system) is a complex reconciliation of these opposed authorities. Its questions develop

out of and are solved (though always only relatively) by the balancing of these authorities through a *sic et non*, a yes and no. Crucial to the new complexity is a strong separation between what can only be known because God has revealed it religiously (e.g. the Trinity, the temporal creation of the world, a universal providential care for individuals) and what reason knows naturally.

Our lecture on the questions taken from the *Summa Theologiae* will concentrate (1) on the Neoplatonic features of the overall structure of Thomas' system, (2) on the *sic et non* dialectical method which he took from his predecessors in the mediaeval university, (3) on the sharp separation Aquinas makes between what is revealed and what is known by natural reason, and (4) on his radical reinterpretation of Aristotle's account of the human self.

Thomas' treatment of the self is established both against Augustinian theologians, on his right (so to speak), and against the Islamic and Jewish Peripatetics, on his left, whose teachings are continued by the so-called Latin Averroïsts in the Faculty of Arts in Paris. The stakes in this conflict were high. In 1270, the Bishop of Paris, moved by conservative Augustinians, many of them Franciscans—the Friars most in competition with the Dominicans—condemned propositions which figured in this dispute. In 1277, an even more reactionary and extensive condemnation opposed Thomas' separation of philosophy and revelation touched positions which Thomas had adopted. Happily, by this time he had been dead for three years, but philosophers like Siger of Brabant were not so fortunate. This reminds us that Thomas was a revolutionary in his own day, not at all the safe and sound standard of orthodoxy into which he has been fashioned since.

For Aquinas, the human self, which is eternally saved in and through its relation to sensible substances, is a rational, sensible, bodily individual. The human soul is the form of its body and humans must turn to the sensible in order to know. Dante's doctrine as exposed in *The Divine Comedy*, Purgatorio, XVIII depends on this view of the individual (see Sayer's notes). In the Paradiso the poet gives us a picture of the 13th century struggles these conceptions involved. So Aquinas, Dante's first guide to the Heaven of the Wise (*The Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, X and XI), is represented as opposed to the Franciscan heirs of Augustine, like Bonaventure, who is Dante's second guide to this Heaven of the Sun (*The Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, XII). Bonaventure's views of how humans know and of body and soul came mostly from the Plotinian Platonism conveyed by Augustine. From Augustine the Franciscans took their teaching that the soul was itself an independent substance (and so by nature immortal), and properly knows, not through turning to sensible substances, but by turning to the Divine ideas. The complementary relation of Aquinas and Bonaventure is insisted on by Dante, who makes the Dominican and the Franciscan praise one another and their associates, groups violently competing against one another on earth. Besides these Augustinians, Aquinas' other principal opponents were the followers of Averroes' interpretation of Aristotle teaching in the Faculty of Arts at Paris. The chief of these was Siger of Brabant. Dante places him beside Aquinas, on his left (*The Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, X. 136-38). The significance of this is controversial (see Sayer's note on pp. 147-46). We cannot doubt that Dante intends that Thomas' praise of Siger is genuine [see R.D. Crouse, "Dante as Philosopher: Christian Aristotelianism," *Dionysius* 16 (1998): 141-156] and that Thomas' Aristotelianism is genuinely modified by its mediation through the Neoplatonic and Arabic commentators.

In considering Thomas' treatment of the human, we will emphasize two points. First, as against the Augustinian tradition, humans know, not by seeing in the Forms or Divine Ideas above them (*illuminationism*), but, they know, instead, as Aristotle taught, by *abstracting* forms from sensible substances. Second, as against the Islamic and Jewish Peripatetics, there is not a single Agent Intellect—the power of making ideas—for all humans, existing as the last of the intellectual hypostases emanating from God. Rather, the agent intellect is radically individualized and each human individual has the divine power to make ideas by abstracting from sensible things. In consequence, science is a collective

activity of humans just as the scientific work of the university is. Aquinas is essential to the Western move to knowledge as a secular activity of human individuals working in common in relation to the world given to sense. His teaching is a step on the way to overcoming the view that knowledge is seeing not making, is eternal not temporal, and is Divine not human. Both Aquinas and Dante would want us to embrace both terms in these binary oppositions. In making Aquinas praise the circle over which Bonaventure presides, Dante tried to persuade us to adopt this interpretation of Thomas.

****

A Mediaeval Synthesis: *The Divine Comedy*

(Six lectures from Wednesday, October 22 to Wednesday, November 5)

For a good part of the mediaeval section, we shall be reading Dante's *Divine Comedy*. It is important to read all of the *Comedy* (Hell, Purgatory, Paradise) to get an impression of the structure and movement of the whole. Dorothy Sayers' introductions (Penguin edition) are very helpful. But some cantos will be emphasized in the lectures and they are indicated below. When you read "Inferno" (Hell), you will find it useful to reread Book Six of Virgil's *Aeneid*, which Dante had in mind, and you should consider the differences carefully. You will find that everything you have read so far (ancient as well as mediaeval) is highly relevant to Dante's argument, and all the problems of unity and diversity, the nature of love and freedom, etc., find a place in his brilliant synthesis. In comparing the *Divine Comedy* with the great epics of antiquity (Homer and Virgil), particularly with reference to the world-view and the conception of heroic "virtue,", you should be able to focus upon what is characteristic and significant about mediaeval culture. Perhaps most important of all is the consideration not only of how Dante manages to hold all things together in a marvellous unity and synthesis, but also of what falls outside of this unity or is but imperfectly and incompletely held within it.

Dante's *Comedy* is a very precise logical construction, in which there are no irrelevant or unimportant cantos. However, you cannot read all the cantos with equal attention, and the following list indicates the ones which will be emphasized in the lectures.

1. Inferno. Upper Hell. Cantos I and II (the poetic image of the journey: compare Homer, Plato, Virgil, Augustine); the encounter with Virgil, the heavenly ladies. Canto III (the vestibule: compare *Aeneid* VI). Canto IV (Limbo). Canto V (the story of Paolo and Francesco). Canto VII (the destruction of community: the sullen).

2. Lower Hell. Canto XI (the plan of the Inferno, based on Aristotle's *Ethics*). Canto XIII (the violent; the story of Pier della Vigne: compare Virgil, *Aeneid* III, Polydorus), Canto XXVI (Counsellors of fraud; the story of Ulysses: compare Homer, *Odyssey*, Virgil, *Aeneid* VI). Canto XXX (falsifiers of words, persons coinage). Cantos XXXI-XXXIV (the death of *amor*: betrayals of kindred, country, guests and lords, spiritual and temporal; the figure of Satan).

3. Purgatory. Canto I (the rebirth of poetry). Canto III (the story of Manfred). Canto VI (the story of Sordello). Canto IX (Dante's dream of the eagle). Cantos X-XII (the cornice of pride). Cantos XVII-XVIII (Virgil's speeches on love and freewill; the structure and logic of purgatory). Canto XIX (Dante's dream of the Siren). Canto XXIV (the "sweet new style": the problems of poetry). Canto XXVII (Dante's dream of Leah and Rachel: action and contemplation. The limits of Virgil).

4. The Earthly Paradise (compare Virgil, *Aeneid* IV and "Fourth Eclogue," and Dante, *De Monarchia*, III, 16). Canto XXIX (the procession of scriptures; the appearance of Beatrice). Canto XXXII (the giant and the harlot). Canto XXXIII (Lethe and Eunöe: compare Plato, "Myth of Er," *Aeneid* VI).

5. <u>Paradise.</u> Canto I (the divine ordering of the cosmos). Canto IV (the stories of Piccarda and Costanza). Canto VI (the story of Justinian). Canto IX (Cunizza, Foulquet, Rahab). Cantos X-XIV (the Heavens of the Sun; the circles of Thomas and Bonaventure; the wisdom of Solomon). Canto XVII (Dante's exile). Canto XX (the just rulers; the stories of Trajan and Rhipeus: compare *Aeneid* II, 426-427). Canto XXI (the Heaven of Saturn: the contemplative life).

6. Cantos XXIV-XXVI (Examinations in faith, hope, and love). Canto XXVII (the Primum Mobile; angels). Canto XXVIII (the point of light: compare Aristotle, *Metaphysics* XII, 7, 1072b). Canto XXX (the celestial rose). Canto XXXIII (Dante's vision of the Trinity).

****

<u>Romanesque and Gothic Art and Architecture.</u>

(Thursday, October 30)

An illustrated lecture showing how the changes in mediaeval history and the major developments in mediaeval culture are reflected and expressed in the visual arts, with special attention to the development of Gothic art in Dante's Italy and the building of a new Gothic Church for the Royal Abbey dedicated to Saint Dionysius (Saint Denis) in Paris.

****

<u>Christine de Pisan</u>

(Thursday November 6)

Born 100 years later than Dante, in 1365, Christine de Pisan belongs to the late mediaeval period of the XIV and XV centuries, sometimes described as the Waning of the Middle Ages, but also seen as the beginning of the Renaissance. A prolific writer she was well known and admired in her own lifetime, and her works continued to be popular long after her death. She was remarkable by her learning and her writing, her courage in the face of adversity, her involvement in the political affairs of her time—she wrote a large number of political works—and her defence of women.

L'Epistre au dieu d'Amours sparked the first recorded literary controversy in France, known as the 'Quarrel of the Romance of the Rose'. The High Middle Ages had elevated the position of women in literature to a high place, as seen in Dante's poetry. The Romance of the Rose, written earlier, around 1225, by Guillaume de Lorris, was the most popular work in French of the late Middle Ages. The first part presented in lovely poetry the ideals of courtly love, in which the woman's grace and virtue is seen as the inspiration of man's heroic actions. The second part, written 50 years later by a poet of the next generation, is very different in spirit. For Jean de Meung, the old ideals are only an object of scorn and parody. A strong misogynist and immensely learned, he knew everything that was ever written to denigrate women and managed to incorporate most of it in his poem.

Christine was prepared to admit some of the literary qualities of Jean de Meung's poem, but deplored his attacks against women. In her criticism, she was strongly supported by the influential Chancellor of the University of Paris, Jean Gerson, but she had powerful opponents, who included some of the most distinguished humanists of her age. The Letters she wrote in this debate between 1401 and 1403, as well as those of her opponents, were gathered in the work Epistres du débat sur le Roman de la Rose.

We shall look at Le Livre de la Cité des Dames, which continues the argument started in the Quarrel and which constitutes a brilliant defence of women, while presenting at the same time numerous examples of illustrious women from the past and from Christine's own times, influential in the world of politics, ethics and the spiritual life.

****

<u>Appendix</u>

<u>PLATO AND THE PLATONISMS</u>

The following is adapted from a paper by a French Canadian scholar working in Paris, Luc Brisson, and is offered to assist you in identifying the various Platonisms you encounter.

What allows us to distinguish a Platonic philosopher from any other Greek philosopher, despite the fluctuations which marked the history of Athens and of its various Academies?
From the point of view of doctrine, fidelity to Plato was displayed by the following three features:
1. Constant reference to Plato's works and doctrines. This was done with a great deal of freedom; as proof, we may cite the fact that none of Plato's successors in the Older Academy defended the doctrine of intelligible Forms in its orthodoxy, probably because Aristotle's criticisms were considered definitive.
2. Fidelity to what constituted the basis of Platonic philosophy. This entailed a twofold distinction: a) the initial distinction concerned the totality of being between two levels of reality: sensible things were held to be only the reflections of intelligible entities, whatever the definition of such entities and their mutual relations might be. b) the other distinction, within human beings, was between the body and an entity which moves it. This entity was the soul, which survived separation from the body, and was susceptible of retribution as a function of its previous way of life. Within this soul, moreover, was postulated a faculty more or less different from the rest, which could apprehend objects whose existence was independent from that of the things of the sensible world, and could therefore not be perceived by sensation, that is the intelligible Forms. Obviously, it was this second distinction which, in the eyes of most people, constituted the distinctive feature of Platonism, in so far as the question of the survival of the soul is of interest to every human being.
3. The will to defend these two points against rival doctrines. Naturally, such fidelity implied confrontation, and in each case this opposition could not be dissociated from a strong counter influence on the critics themselves. Thus, we can say that the history of Platonism corresponds to the history of its relations with the other philosophical Schools, and with Christianity, first in Athens, but also throughout the Roman Empire. In the case of the Older Academy, opposition was directed towards Aristotle, in the New Academy, towards Stoicism. In the case of Middle Platonism, there was a reaction against a Platonism excessively marked by Aristotelianism and by Stoicism; whereas in the case of Neoplatonism, there was a critique of Middle Platonism, and an ever-more-violent opposition to Christianity, first in its dissident form (above all, Gnostic), and then orthodox.

THE OLDER ACADEMY

According to some testimonies, the Academy was founded in 387 B.C. by Plato. He established his School on a tree-shaded estate, watered by springs, which had been the sacred enclosure of the hero Akademos; a gymnasium rose in its midst. The goal of the Academy was to prepare young people to play an active role in politics, and to give them philosophical training, in accordance with the program spelled out in books VI and VII of the *Republic*. The Academy was soon a great success, and it entered into conflict with the school of Isocrates, in which the main subject taught was rhetoric.
From its beginning, the Academy seems to have been a place for discussion, rather than an institution which ensured the authoritarian transmission of a body of restricted doctrines. We must repeat and underline the fact that neither Aristotle nor any of the men who succeeded Plato at the head of the Academy maintained the doctrine of separate intelligible Forms. Moreover, political action, together with the elaboration of astronomical theories and the development of geometry, seems to have held an important place in the Academy.

After Plato's death, the Academy remained faithful to its Founder's orientations. Essentially, it concentrated on systematizing, diffusing, and defending the master's thought, in the face of the rival thought proposed by other Schools. Institutionally, the Academy seems to have existed only by elections, through which an Academic chosen by his peers became one of Plato's successors, or a "scholarch." At Plato's death, in 348/7, Plato's nephew Speusippus, whom he himself had designated, became head. After the death of Speusippus, by contrast, it seems that a genuine electoral process was instituted. The scholarchs who succeeded Speusippus were Xenocrates, Polemo, whose disciple was Crantor, and finally Crates.

THE NEW SKEPTICAL ACADEMY

With Arcesilaus of Pitane, who succeeded Crates in 268/4, the Academy became the "New Academy." The epithet "new" may be justified in several ways: 1). Arcesilaus affirmed he could not know anything, and he made the universal suspension of judgement (*epokhê peri pantôn*) the goal of his philosophy. 2). Unlike the scholarchs of the Older Academy, who had written a great deal, the leaders of the New Academy limited themselves to oral teaching, taking Socrates, in part, as their model. 3). Like Socrates, Arcesilaus never stated his views dogmatically; instead, he asked his interlocutors for their opinion, and engaged in living dialogue with them. They were not to be guided by the authority of a master, but by their reason; and Arcesilaus' responses were, in turn, new questions.

Arcesilaus returned to the practice of Socrates, as depicted by Plato's earlier dialogues. This is why he gave prime importance to critical dialectics and the affirmation of ignorance, and understood Plato's dubitative utterances and mythical narrations in this sense. His primary target was, naturally enough, Stoicism, which was the most widespread form of dogmatism at the time, and which, starting out from overall conceptions which concerned the universe and were based on certainty, presented itself as the precondition of wisdom. As a result, the skepticism which seems to have been espoused by the New Academy must be interpreted not in an offensive sense, as the refusal of all convictions, but as a defensive position, opposed to the powerful, universal dogmatism represented by Stoicism. This tradition was maintained, amid many fluctuations, by Lacydes, Carneades, Crates of Tarsus, Clitomachus, Metrodorus of Stratonice, Philon of Larissa, and finally Antiochus of Ascalon.

MIDDLE PLATONISM

The period from the fourth to the first century B.C. presented the following two characteristics: 1) the existence of philosophical institutions at Athens, and 2) instruction which was conceived as training in the arts of speaking and of living. The Schools (Platonist, Aristotelian, Epicurean, and Stoic), had organized themselves in various parts of the city of Athens. Instruction consisted in dialectical exercises and discussions, which were intended to train students for political action, as illuminated by science (in Platonism), for a life of erudition (in Aristotelianism), or for a moral life (in Epicureanism and Stoicism).

There is every reason to believe that these philosophical institutions did not survive Sulla's sack of Athens in 87 B.C. They did not reappear until 176 A.D., when the emperor Marcus Aurelius created four chairs of Philosophy: Platonist, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Epicurean. Those philosophical Schools which went back to their founder were in their death throes in the last years of the Republic, and were practically non-existent in the first years of the Principate. Their disappearance, and the creation of numerous philosophical institutions throughout the Mediterranean basin, inaugurated a new phase in the history of philosophy, which modified the course of Platonism.

In order to affirm their fidelity to the man they considered as their Founder, the four philosophical Schools, now dispersed throughout various towns of East and West, could no longer rely on the Athenian institutions created by these Founders, which perpetuated an oral tradition transmitted from generation to generation. This is why philosophy courses at this time consisted above all in commentaries on texts.

The existence of philosophical commentaries goes back far in the Platonic tradition: it seems, for exemple, that Crantor commented upon Plato's *Timaeus* in around 300 B.C. What was new at the beginning of the Empire, however, was the systematic character of this practice. Previously, students had learned how to speak; and as they learned how to speak, they learned how to live. Now, they learned less how to speak than how to read, even though, as they learned how to read, they also learned how to live. Philosophical thought thus became exegetical. Reflection was no longer brought to bear on problems themselves, but on problems as dealt with by Aristotle and by Plato.

It was at this point that Pythagorean influence, already noticeable in the Older Academy with Speusippus and Xenocrates, became a deciding factor in Platonism. Pythagoreanism introduced into Platonism several of its own features; one of these—secrecy—acquired fundamental importance at this time. Secrecy entailed two elements which play a part in communication: means of transmission and encoding. In contexts where secrecy prevails, the privileged means of transmission of fundamental truths must be speech, for writing makes information available to everyone, at least in theory. This is why the Pythagorean doctrines were designated by the term *akousmata* (things heard); with writing intervening only in the form of notes used as memory-aids (*hupomnêmata*). In addition to this first restriction, which bore upon the means of transmission, there was another which concerned the way in which these transmitted doctrines were formulated. Doctrines had to be formulated in a symbolic and enigmatic way, which is why they were characterized as *sumbola* and *ainigmata*.

From the end of the first century B.C. and at the beginning of the Roman Empire, the dominant philosophy was Stoicism, which even pervaded the Platonism of the time, which was itself under the influence of a cultivated and eclectic Scepticism. One of the best witnesses to this Platonic tradition is Diogenes Laertius, who seems to have written at the beginning of the third century A.D., long after the Middle-Platonic reaction.

In the face of this Stoicized and Aristotelianized Platonism, Platonists gradually felt the need for a more religious philosophy. This was when the thought of Plato reappeared as a means of acceding to another order of reality: that of the intelligible Forms and of the divine, which could be apprehended only by the soul. Thus, there occurred among the Platonists that rebirth which has been called Middle Platonism, and represented by Plutarch of Chaeronea, Atticus, and Alcinous.

The passage from Middle Platonism to Neoplatonism turned on the question of whether the Model—that is to say, the Intelligible—was on the same level as the Demiurge—that is to say, the Intellect—or was prior to him, or posterior to him. Proclus enumerates the positions of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Longinus on this point: "Among the Ancients, some, like Plotinus, posited that the Demiurge himself contains the models of the universe; whereas the others rejected this opinion, and placed the Model either before the Demiurge or after him: before him, like Porphyry; or after him, like Longinus" (Proclus, *In Tim.*, I, 322.18-24). Thus, Longinus defended a position in conformity with the Middle Platonic doctrines on God and the Model: since the Demiurge was the supreme principle, the Model could only be inferior to him.

NEOPLATONISM

The history of Neoplatonism originates with Plotinus. At Alexandria, he had been taught by Ammonius "Saccas," about whom we know very little. Under his influence Plotinus undertook to explain the principles of Plato, which he had already assimilated to those of Pythagoras. Plotinus was inspired by what we now call the Platonic "dialogues of the last period," above all the *Parmenides*, a difficult text which until then had been either neglected or else superficially explained. This gigantic undertaking of explaining it was the cause of a new renaissance, which left a decisive mark on the history of Platonism.

At Rome, Plotinus founded a genuine School of philosophy, which functioned on a non-institutional basis from 244 to 269. Porphyry, who attended it from 263-268, gives us a succinct description of how this institution functioned in his *Life of Plotinus*. Porphyry tells us he found fifty-four treatises by Plotinus, which he gathered into six groups of nine treatises, or *Enneads*. The number six, obtained by multiplying

the first odd number (3) by the first even number (2), and the number nine, obtained by multiplying the first odd number (3) by itself, had profound metaphysical meaning within neo-Pythagoreanism.

Plotinus probably belonged to a family of high-ranking Roman civil servants in Egypt. After studying philosophy under Ammonius "Saccas" in Alexandria, he wanted to get to know "the philosophy practiced among the Persians and that which flourished among the Indians" (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 2, 15-17). Thus, Plotinus accompanied the court of the Emperor Gordian, who had launched a military expedition against the Persians. But the Emperor died in the East, and Plotinus came to Rome. The School, which he founded soon after his arrival, met at the home of a noble lady. Senators attended the courses, during which Plotinus expressed himself in an original way, without rhetorical grandstanding, and paying great attention to the best commentators: "In his classes, he had the commentaries read to him; for instance, those of Severus, Cronius, Numenius, Gaius, or Atticus; and among the Peripatetics, those of Aspasius, Alexander, Adrastus, and other authors, depending on the subject. Yet Plotinus did not borrow anything from these commentaries, but was personal and independent in his theoretical reflection, bringing to his research the spirit of Ammonius [Saccas, his master]." (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 14). He examined problems raised by Plato and by Aristotle, in a context of polemics against the Stoics.

Plotinus' major achievement in metaphysics was to make a radical break with Middle Platonism on the level of the principles. He drew all the consequences from the position of Numenius, who had identified the Good with the first Intellect, and made of it a principle superior to the Demiurge; in turn, Numenius identified the Demiurge with a second Intellect. Since Aristotle's divine intellect did not suffice to explain the world of beings, Plotinus held that a principle beyond being was required, i.e. the One, which he identified with the Good. In Plato's *Parmenides*, Plotinus found not only the theory of the One, but also that of the Intellect and the Soul.

The new Platonism of Plotinus was developed in a direction different from that of Porphyry by Iamblichus. The teaching of Iamblichus at Apamea lasted throughout the first quarter of the fourth century, and his School was flourishing and animated. At Athens, Neoplatonism must have experienced a favourable environment, perhaps because there, a Platonic School could lay uniquely valid claim to the heritage of the Academy. A new dynasty of philosophers took over from the successors of Iamblichus. More than any others, they could consider themselves the successors of Plato. Plutarch of Athens, Syrianus, Proclus, and Damascius represented themselves in this way. We know that, every year, Proclus considered it his duty to go to the Academy, in order to celebrate the memory of his "ancestors": that is, Plato and all of his successors. Obviously, the Platonic tradition was more laden with significance at Athens than anywhere else.

Thanks to the testimony of Syrianus, we can get an idea of the pedagogical program which was offered to students. During the first two years, all of Aristotle was read; then the dialogues of Plato, one after the other, in the order established by Iamblichus. Finally, the harmony between Plato's doctrine and the Orphic and Chaldaean theologies was shown. This was done by commenting in detail on the *Timaeus*, for the philosophy of nature, and on the *Parmenides* for theology.

With Proclus, it can be said, we reach the summit of Neoplatonism. Proclus' unique importance comes from the fact that it was he who provided the definitive great synthesis of Neoplatonism, under the title of *Platonic Theology*. The following is a highly schematic representation of his system:

The One

Henads

Intelligible / Intellect

        intelligible gods

        intelligible and intellective gods

<pre>
                    intellective gods
Soul

                    hypercosmic gods
                    hypercosmic- cosmic gods
                    cosmic gods
Our world

                    cosmic souls
                    universal souls
                    intelligible souls: demons, angels, heroes
                    partial souls: human, animal
                    bodies
Matter
</pre>

All of reality is thus integrated within this continuum which flows forth from the One; and for this reason, it cannot be anything other than good in some way.

Damascius succeeded Proclus and became the last head of the School of Athens; he had come from Alexandria where another Platonic School had developed, which defended almost the same doctrine as that of Athens, but in a different style.

As head of the School of Athens, Damascius conserved the essential features of the School's doctrinal beliefs, although his works are full of endless discussions of the positions defended by Proclus. In most cases, the goal was to carry out a return to Iamblichus. In his essential work, entitled *Treatise on the First Principles*, Damascius takes his inspiration from Iamblichus. He shows great originality, especially when he gives the One a principle above it, i.e. the Ineffable, which is totally buried in silence. Although it has come forth from the Ineffable, the One remains as close as possible to it, even though, in an initial moment of distinction, it projects itself below it into three henadic principles: the One-Many, the Whole-One, and the Unified. Damascius was the only Neoplatonist to prolong procession through the negative hypotheses of the *Parmenides*, which, for him, constituted the structure of the sensible; in this he went farther than his predecessors, who did not go past the level of the Soul. In all other respects, Damascius remained faithful to the system elaborated by Proclus.

The closure of the School of Athens in 529 by the Christian Emperor Justinian was a defeat of an attempt which was specifically Greek, insofar as it sought harmony between all philosophical systems and between philosophy and theology, in order to affirm and maintain genuine transcendence, both within being in general, and within the human.

The idea of transcendence was maintained by Christianity, which had eliminated Neoplatonism institutionally, all the while borrowing from it the primary rational elements of its theology. This transcendence was henceforth made available to everyone, and no longer reserved to a minuscule group of thinkers who led a specific way of life within the framework of a School. Its ultimate goal was no longer the dissolution of the individual in fusion with the universal Good, whether or not this was identified with the One, but individual immortality.

Luc Brisson, CNRS, Paris.

CHRONOLOGY

14	Death of Augustus and Accession of Tiberius
35	Conversion of St. Paul
70	Destruction of Jerusalem

161-180 Marcus Aurelius, the last of the "Five Good Emperors"

205-270 Life of Plotinus (Neoplatonic philosopher)

284-305 Reign of Diocletian

312	Constantine gains control of Rome and the West
313	Edict of Milan (Christianity tolerated)
325	Christian Council of Nicaea
330	Byzantium becomes new imperial city of Constantine (Constantinople)

354-430 Life of St. Augustine

360-363 Julian the Apostate (last pagan emperor) reigns

410	Rome sacked by the Visigoths

413-426 St. Augustine writes the *City of God*

430	Death of St. Augustine; Siege of Hippo (Vandals)
496	Clovis (King of Franks) baptized, with 3000

523-524 Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*

529	St. Benedict founds Monte Cassino; Emperor Justinian closes Academy at Athens; Second Council of Orange condemns "Semi-Pelagianism"

622	"Hegira" (Mohammed's Flight from Mecca to Medina)
732	Charles Martel stops Arabs at Poitiers
754	Pope Stephen II crowns Pepin King of the Franks

768-814 Charlemagne's reign (crowned by Pope, 800)

790	Alcuin of York, head of Palace School
c. 810-880	John Scotus Eriugena (*On the Division of Nature*)

910	Cluny founded
950	Death of al-Fârâbî
962	Otto I's coronation as Emperor, Holy Roman Empire
1033-1109	St. Anselm of Canterbury (*Proslogion*)
1036	Death of Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna)
1054	Final separation of Eastern and Western Churches
1073-1085	Gregory VII Pope; Investiture Controversy
1079-1142	Life of Peter Abelard
1084-1086	Carthusian order founded
1089-1130	Abbey Church of Cluny rebuilt
1096	Cistercians founded

1096-1099	First Crusade: Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem
1091-1095	al-Ghazâlî writes his *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* (*Tahâfut al-Falâsifa*)
1122	Concordat of Worms
1122-1152	Suger, Abbot of St. Denys
1134-1150	West facade of Chartres Cathedral
1135-1204	Moses Maimonides
1147-1149	Second Crusade
1158	Death of Otto of Freising (*The Two Cities*)
1175	University of Paris

1178-79 Ibn Rushd (Averroes) writes his *The Incoherence of the Incoherence* (*Tahâfut al-Tahâfut*) in response to al-Ghazâlî

1179	Death of Hildegard of Bingen
1189-1193	Third Crusade
1202	Death of Joachim of Fiore

1198-1216	Papacy of Innocent III
1202-1204	Fourth Crusade, Latin Empire of Constantinople to 1261
1221	Death of St. Dominic
1225	Guillaume de Lorris begins to write *The Romance of the Rose*
1226	Death of St. Francis of Assisi
1250	Death of Frederick II
1274	Death of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure
1282	Death of Siger of Brabant
1265-1321	Dante Alighieri (*Divine Comedy*)
1266-1337	Giotto (Frescos at Assisi, etc.)
1269	Death of Mechthild of Magdeburg
1302	Pope Boniface VIII, Bull "Unam Sanctam"
1363-1430	Life of Christine of Pisan
1413-1431	Life of Joan of Arc
1453	Fall of Constantinople to the Turks, the end of the Roman Empire in the East

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I.   General Introductions

Cantor, N.F. *Inventing the Middle Ages*. New York, W. Morrow, 1991. Various perspectives on mediaeval history.

Dronke, P. *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Translated texts and commentary.

Heer, Friedrich. *The Medieval World*. Translated by Janet Sandheimer. N.Y.: New American Library, 1962. Provides an extraordinary interesting account of the period from 1100-1350, with 100 well-chosen illustrations.

Huizinga, J. *Waning of the Middle Ages*. Anchor/Doubleday, N.Y., 1954. This remains the classic analysis of the late Middle Ages.

Pernoud, Régine. *The Glory of the Medieval World*. London: Dobson, 1950.

-----. *Women in the Days of the Cathedrals*, San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1998. A well-written account of women's contribution to mediaeval civilization.

-----. *The Crusades*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1962.

Read, Piers Paul. *The Templars.* London, Phoenix Press, 1999. This book starts with Abraham. A journalistic rather than a scholarly history, it is a excellent beginning for those who know nothing about the context of mediaeval history.

Southern, R.W. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*. Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1970.

Tuchman, Barbara. *A Distant Mirror. The Calamitous 14ᵗʰ Century*. New York: Ballantine, 1978.

Waddell, Helen. *Peter Abelard*. London, 1933. This exquisitely beautiful novel brings the reader into the soul of the Middle Ages.

II.   Particular Themes

The best books by far on the history of late ancient philosophy and Medieval philosophy are by French scholars. The King's Library has a good collection. If you wish particular recommendations, feel free to ask me or to email me at hankeywj@dal.ca.

a)   Neoplatonism

O'Meara, Dominic J. *Plotinus*: *An Introduction to the Enneads*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993.

The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus. ed. Lloyd Gerson. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Hankey, W.J. "'Knowing as we are Known' in *Confessions* 10 and Other Philosophical, Augustinian and Christian Obedience to the Delphic *Gnothi Seauton* from Socrates to Modernity," *Augustinian Studies* 34:1 (2003) 23-48. Available on Wayne Hankey's Website at www.dal.ca/~claswww/KeyfileHankey.html.

Shaw, G. *Theurgy and the Soul: the Neoplatonism of Iamblichus*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1996.

b)   Dionysius the Areopagite

Rorem, Paul. *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence*. Oxford & New York, Oxford University Press, 1993.

-----. "The Place of *The Mystical Theology* in the Pseudo-Dionysian *Corpus*," *Dionysius*, 4 (1980), 87-98.

Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works. translated by Colm Luibheid and Paul Rorem. The Classics of Western Spirituality, New York, Paulist Press, 1987.

Hankey, W.J. "Denys and Aquinas: Antimodern Cold and Postmodern Hot," *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*. ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones. Studies in Christian Origins, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 139-184. Available in the King's Library or Wayne Hankey's Website: www.dal.ca/~claswww/KeyfileHankey.html.

Runciman, S. *Byzantine Civilization*. London: Edward Arnold, 1975. Includes a discussion of relations with Islam, Western Europe, etc.

c)   Early Christianity and St. Augustine

Chadwick, H. *The Early Church*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1967.

McWilliam, J., ed. *Augustine. From Rhetor to Theologian*. Waterloo, Ont., Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1992.

Jaroslav Pelikan. *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism*, Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, 1992-1993. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995.

Saint Augustine through the Ages: an Encyclopedia. edited Allan Fitzgerald. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999.

Starnes, C. *Augustine's Conversion. A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I-IX*. Waterloo, Ont., Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991.

d)   Economic and Social History

Ganshof, F.L. *Feudalism*. 3rd ed., trans. P. Grierson. N.Y.: Harper-Torchbooks, 1964. The best introduction to this subject.

Kantorowicz, E., *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957. A classic of historiography.

Pirenne, Henri. *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*. Trans. E.I. Clegg, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, 1965.

-----. *Mohammed and Charlemagne*. Trans. B. Miall. London: Unwin University Books, 1968. Both of Pirenne's works are classic studies in this area.

e)   Philosophy and Theology

Hankey, W. *God in Himself, Aquinas' Doctrine of God as Expounded in the Summa Theologiae*. Oxford Theological Monographs/ Oxford Scholarly Classics, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987 and 2000. Detailed interpretation of the first 45 Questions of the *Summa Theologiae*.

Hick, J. & McGill, A., eds. *The Many-Faced Argument*. New York, 1967. A selection of modern interpretations and criticisms of Anselm's argument.

Kerr, Fergus. *After Aquinas*: *Versions of Thomism*. Oxford: Blackwells, 2002. Interpretations of Aquinas.

Pieper, J. *Scholasticism*. N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Southern, R.W. *Saint Anselm. A Portrait in a Landscape*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Vignaux, P. *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. Trans. E.C. Hall. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. These may be the best elementary treatments of this topic - chosen from a vast number of available works.

f)   Mediaeval Literature, Romance, Courtly Love

Lamberton, R. *Homer the Theologian*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986. Allegorical interpretation from Homer to Dante.

Lewis, C.S. *The Allegory of Love*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938.

-----. *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1964.

g)   Music, Art and Architecture

Male, E. *The Gothic Image*. Trans. Dora Nussey. N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1973. On French Gothic Art.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*. N.Y.: New American Library, 1957. This is the best short book for understanding the structure of high Mediaeval culture.

Robertson, A. & Stevens, D. *The Pelican History of Music*. Vol. 1. Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1960.

h)   Monasticism

Duckett, E.S. *The Gateway to the Middle Ages*. N.Y.: Macmillan, 1938. Contains a particularly vivid picture of life in the Benedictine Order.

Leclercq, J. *The Love of Learning and the Desire of God*. 2nd edition translated by C. Misrahi. N.Y.: Fordham University Press, 1974. The classic account of the character and place of learning in the mediaeval monastery.

i)   Mediaeval Figures

Pernoud, Régine. *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. N.Y.: Coward-McCann, 1968.

-----. *Heloise and Abelard*. Paris: A. Michel, 1987.

-----. *Joan of Arc by Herself and her Witnesses*. N.Y.: Stein and Day, 1988.

j)   Dante

Singleton, C. *Dante Alighieri. The Divine Comedy*, 3 Vols. Princeton, 1970-75. Italian text, English prose translation and detailed commentary.

Crouse, R.D. "Dante as Philosopher: Christian Aristotelianism'" *Dionysius*, 16 (1998): 141-156.

III.   Reference Works

Cross, F.L. and Livingstone, E.A. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press.

Previté-Orton, C.W., and others. *The Cambridge Medieval History*. 8 Vols. Cambridge: University Press, 1964.

Bowerstock, G.W., Brown, Peter, Grabar, Oleg. *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Postclassical World*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Canto-Sperber, Monique en collaboration avec Jonathan Barnes, Luc Brisson, Jacques Brunschwig, Gregory Vlastos. *Philosophie grecque*. 2nd edition, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

SECTION II: THE MIDDLE AGES

Co-ordinator: W.J. Hankey

TIME	TOPIC	READ
Monday, **October 6**	Neoplatonism and Introduction to the Section	Plotinus, *Ennead* V.1 (M11) and Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, Selection (M12)
Tuesday, **October 7**		
Wednesday, **October 8** **W.J. Hankey**	Augustine, *Confessions*. The Cosmic structure: Union, Fall, Return, and the Problem of Evil.	Augustine, *Confessions*, Books I - III and Book XIII (ix-xi, xxxiv-xxxviii).
Thursday, **October 9** W.J. Hankey	The New and Christian Rome: Hierarchy, Theurgy and Mystical Theology	Dionysius the (pseudo) Areopagite, *The Mystical Theology, The Celestial Hierarchy, Chapter Three, The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, Chapter One* (M16); Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, Canto XXVIII.
Friday, **October 10** W.J. Hankey	Augustine, *Confessions*. A Platonic and Christian Redemption.	Augustine, *Confessions*, Books IV-V, VII.

TIME	TOPIC	READ
Monday, October 13	**THANKSGIVING DAY**	**University Closed**
Tuesday, October 14		
Wednesday, October 15 W.J. Hankey	Augustine, *Confessions*. Putting the elements together: Self, God and Cosmos.	Augustine, *Confessions*, Book VIII (from VIII.vii.16 to the end), Book IX (from IX.x.23 to IX.xi.28), Book X (i-viii, xx-xxix, xl-xliii); Book XI (i-iii, xi,xvii,xx, xxvi-xxx); Book XII.xxviii.38 (the return of creation toward the One); Book XIII (ix-xi, xxxiv-xxxviii)
Thursday, October 16 Matthew Robinson	*The Song of Roland* and the Feudal Oath.	*The Song of Roland*; and Documents concerning the Feudal Contract (M13)
Friday, October 17 W.J. Hankey	Monastic Meditation: Anselm of Canterbury.	Anselm, *Proslogion* and Prologue to the *Monologion* (Mxxx).

TIME	TOPIC	READ
Monday, **October 20** W.J. Hankey	Islamic Philosophy: Al-Fârâbî's *Mabâdi' ârâ' ahl al-madîna al-fâdila, i.e. The Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City* or *The Perfect State*.	Al-Fârâbî's *The Perfect State*, Summary, and Chapter 1, parts 1 and 2, 6, 7, and 8; Chapter 2, Chapter 6), Chapter 13, Chapter 15. (M18)
Tuesday, October 21 Wednesday, **October 22** R.D. Crouse	*The Divine Comedy* I: Introduction.	Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, *Hell*, Cantos I-XI (see Introduction above for emphases)
Thursday, **October 23** I.G. Stewart	The Mediaeval Cosmos and the Study of Nature	Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Selections (M15); "Dante's Universe", by D. Sayers, in Dante, *The Divine Comedy, Hell*, pp. 292-295.
Friday, **October 24** W.J. Hankey	Complex System: Thomas Aquinas, the Gothic Cathedral in Words.	Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Selections (M17); Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Purgatorio, XVIII, Paradiso, X-XII.

TIME	TOPIC	**READ**
Monday, **October 27** R.D. Crouse	The Divine Comedy II: The Structure and Movement of Upper and Lower Hell.	Dante, *The Divine Comedy, Hell*, Cantos XII-XXX ((see Introduction above for emphases)
Tuesday, **October 28** **Wednesday**, **October 29** R.D. Crouse	*The Divine Comedy* III: The Pit of Hell and Purgatory	Dante, *The Divine Comedy, Hell*, Cantos XXXI-XXXIV; *Purgatory*, Cantos I-XVI (see Introduction above for emphases)
Thursday, **October 30** R.D. Crouse	Romanesque and Gothic Art and Architecture.	Abbot Suger, *On the Abbey Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures*, Selections (M14)
Friday, **October 31** R.D. Crouse	*The Divine Comedy* IV: Purgatory: The Empty Paradise	Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, Purgatory XVII-XXXIII (see Introduction above for emphases)

TIME	TOPIC	READ
Monday, **November 3** R.D. Crouse	*The Divine Comedy* V: The Figure of Beatrice and the Logic of Paradise	Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, *Paradise*, Cantos I-XVI (see Introduction above for emphases)
Tuesday, **November 4** **Wednesday**, **November 5** R.D. Crouse	*The Divine Comedy* VI: The Movement of the Empyrean and the Celestial Rose	Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, *Paradise*, Cantos XVII-XXXIII (see Introduction above for emphases)
Thursday, **November 6** M. Kussmaul	The Later Middle Ages: Christine de Pisan	Christine de Pisan, *The Book of the City of the Ladies, Selections*
Friday, **November 7**	**Mid-term Examination** **Section 2 ends**	