

History of philosophy

– Course preview –

BSCS 2013, 14 – 18 October

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Day 1: Ontology in Antiquity

Parmenides: *Fragments*

- Appr. the oldest surviving phil. text in Western tradition
- Being and not-being in general
- Relation b/w reasoning, perception and testimony
- Impossibility of
 - becoming
 - change
 - motion
 - many
- Emergence of arguments and logic

Plato: *Parmenides*, 126a-136e

- Plato's reply to Parmenides' challenge
- Problem of abstract concepts: existence and knowability
- The theory of Forms
 - their separation
 - their existence
 - their primacy
- The Third Man paradox
- Dialogue form, arguments and sophistics, the Socratic method

Day 2: Theology in the Middle Ages

St. Anselm: *Proslogium* 1-4

- Relation b/w believing and understanding
- The ontological argument for the existence of God
- Existence as
 - property
 - perfection
 - matter of degree
- Definition, contradiction, conceivability
- Some versions and criticisms of the ontological argument

St. Thomas: *Summa... I/1/ii*

- The *Quaestio*-form of argumentative discourse
- Versions of self-evidence
- Versions of demonstration
- The 'Five Ways'
 - motion
 - causation
 - modalities
 - gradation
 - design
- Occam's razor
- Privation theory

Day 3: Epistemology in Early Modernity

Locke: *Essay... II/1-3*

- *Tabula rasa*: anti-innatism, strict empiricism
- Criticism of Descartes' 'mental perpetualism'
- Ideas of the mind
 - sources, origins
 - types
 - relations
- Capacities and operations of the mind
- Transparency of the mind
- Mental atomism

Leibniz: *New Essays... II/1-3*

- Criticism of the *tabula rasa*
- Empiricism as methodology vs metaphysics
- Non-transparency of the mind
 - conscious vs unconscious attention
 - animals
 - sleeping
- Correspondence dualism
- Reflection regress
- Refutation of mental atomism

Day 4: Language and science in Modernity

Heidegger: *What is metaphysics*

- About "the nothing"
- The limits of logic
- Philosophy of feelings
- The nothing as
 - primary to negation
 - object of experience
 - relation to the world
 - action of existence
- "Why are there beings at all, and why not rather nothing?"
- Science in the modern era vs philosophy in the modern era

Carnap: *The elimination...*

- On what is meaningful
 - words
 - sentences
- On what is not meaningful
 - words
 - sentences
- Verification theory of meaning
- Logic vs metaphysics: against Heidegger
- Science in the modern era vs philosophy in the modern era