

Medieval philosophy and theology

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Although it started earlier, the medieval period marks the culmination of the transition from Paganism to Abrahamic religions. The immense influence of theology on philosophy in the medieval period can be seen by the fact that the names of the three Abrahamic religions of the time are used to identify and distinguish three major strands of medieval philosophy: Christian philosophy, Islamic philosophy and Jewish philosophy. The interplay of philosophy and theology has certainly endowed medieval thought with a unique richness. Furthermore, from a cross-cultural aspect, the influence of this interplay is noticeable even today. The special collection, *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, is an attempt to highlight the richness of medieval philosophical and theological thought, and its relevance for the world today. This special collection consists of five articles.

The first article, 'On Augustine's theology of hope: From the perspective of creation' is authored by Professor Chen Yuehua. In this article, he considers Augustine as a representative of the theology of hope in the Patristic age. Chen Yuehua (2022) argues that Augustine sets up a basis for the medieval theology to see hope as the grasp of Eschatological eternal happy life for humans in this world. The virtue of hope, which comes from the grace of God given through Christ, is the knowledge of eternity, not of a future in time, and it helps one to resist the temptation of goods that comes from the flesh and earthly things.

The second article, 'On the transmission of Greek philosophy to medieval Muslim philosophers', is authored by Ishraq Ali. In this article, Ali (2022) highlights the significance of a thorough understanding of the transmission of Greek philosophy to the medieval Muslim world as one of the important approaches towards proper understanding of medieval Muslim philosophy, particularly medieval Muslim political philosophy.

In the third article, 'Hierarchies of basic goods and sins according to Aquinas' natural law theory', Lingchang Gui (2022) reconsiders the modern debate about Aquinas' hierarchical theory of basic goods and provides a more authentic understanding of Aquinas' own view, which can be applied to his theory of sin as well: firstly, there are hierarchies of basic goods and sins; secondly, these hierarchies are horizontal and vertical according to the order of participation and the dignity of substances, respectively. The article shows that Aquinas' natural law theory can hence be clarified in a more profound way.

In the fourth article, 'Against discontinuity: Augustine's theory of happiness', Teng He (2022) explores Augustine's theory of happiness and revises the 'two Augustines' paradigm. This article argues that Augustine is confident in happiness through faith, hope and love.

In the last article, 'A comparative approach to the theistic proofs of Anselm of Canterbury's "Monologion"', Alberto Di Falco (2022) analyses the Anselmian categories of being *per se* and being *per aliud* through a comparison with the metaphysics of Zhang Zai, an exponent of Neo-Confucianism. The comparison provides new insights into the function of these categories in describing the relationship between an absolute and a sensible world.

It is obvious that the articles included in this special collection deal with the various aspects of our theme. We hope that the collection will serve as a valuable source for readers who are interested in a variety of interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary medieval studies.

Acknowledgements

The earlier versions of most of the articles included in this special collection were presented in the 3rd National Medieval Philosophy Forum that was organised by me and my team at Zhejiang

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University, Hangzhou, China in April 2022. The feedback of the participants of the forum helped a lot in improving the quality of these articles, for which we are grateful to them. To enhance our understanding of the academic heritage of Greco-Roman philosophy and medieval religious studies (especially *Christianity studies*), we welcome global academic collaboration and look forward to mutual cooperation in the future.

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