

*A History of Psychology...*  
Thomas Hardy Leahey

CHAPTER  
FOUR  
The Premodern World

1000 C.E. – 1600 C.E.

*From Antiquity to the Scientific  
Revolution*

## Outline

- The Middle Ages
  - Creative Development
  - The Black Plague
- Scholastic Psychology
  - Development of Universities
  - St. Thomas Aquinas
    - Approach to Knowledge
    - Concept of the Mind
  - St. Bonaventure
    - Approach to Knowledge

# Outline

- Empiricism
  - William of Ockham
    - Views of the Mind & Concepts
  - Nicholas of Autrecourt
  - Abelard
    - Logic and Psychological Approach

## **The Middle Ages: 1000-1350 C.E.**

## The Middle Ages

- The rise of European cities.
- Technological creativity.
- “The turning point of world history”.
  - Several reasons. Three Main reasons:
    - Autonomy
    - Focus on economics
    - Embracing technology

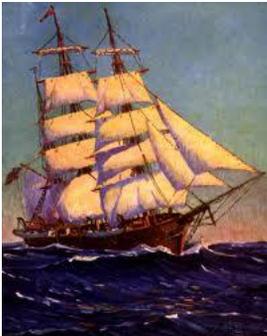
## “City Air Makes Free”

- Citizens of cities were now becoming autonomous.
- Free from rule of Lords or Churches.

## Rise of European Cities

- First time citizens began thinking like businessmen.
- Focus on trade and profits that Greeks and Romans had never considered.
- Modern methods emerged: concepts such as credit & companies.

## Rise of European Cities



- Citizens began to embrace technology.
  - The Greeks and Romans detested technology – had slaves to do their work for them.
- Businessmen and artisans began adopting and creating technologies not pursued before.
  - The development of ships opened the world to trade.

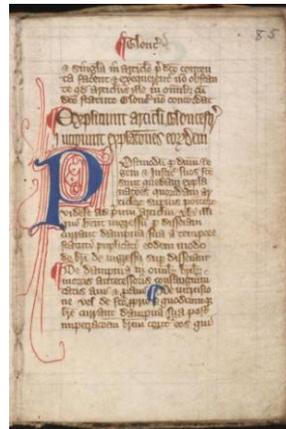
## “Machine Thinking”

- This concept emerged, the central idea being that *the world is a machine*.
- This would become central to the Scientific Revolution.

Development of cities, business and technology –  
“uniquely European”.

## The Creative Period of the Middle Ages

- Major creative development in Western philosophy and science.
- Greek works (Aristotle and others) were recovered bringing forth ideas for modern science.
- Modern political forms began emerging, especially in England, limiting power of the Royals.



The Magna Carta, 1215

## The Creative Period

- Recovered literary works began to show a focus on individualism.
  - Stereotypical dramatic and literary characters that had been the norm in writing became overshadowed by the presence of more 'human' characters.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The "Black Death" killed one third of the population of Europe between 1348 and



## Bubonic Plague: 1348-1350

- Killed about one third of the population of Europe.
- Conflict between secular and religious leaders.
- People began to question God and their faith.

- Turbulent time in history, but still very *creative*.
- Aristotle's pre-scientific thought expanded.
  - Naturalistic investigations began.

# **Scholastic Psychology in the Middle Ages**

## Scholastic Psychology

- Aristotle's naturalistic philosophy brought a fresh approach to knowledge and human nature.
- Conflict between intellectual emergence and the Church.

## St. Thomas Aquinas

- Synthesized the faith of God's word as taught in Catholicism and the reason of Aristotle's philosophy.
- Harmonized philosophy and theology.
  - Distinguished the two; Reason (empiricism) bringing only knowledge of nature – can explain only the world, but not God.

## William of Ockham

- Separated faith and reason.
- Pursued the knowledge only of reason.



# Establishment of Universities

The 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries showed the emergence of the first universities

- St. Thomas Aquinas
- St. Bonaventure

These universities were each  
Built with cathedrals.



## St. Bonaventure University

- 1221-1274
- The Platonic-Augustinian approach.
  - A mystical way of approaching knowledge, human nature and God.

## St. Thomas Aquinas University

- 1225-1274
- Aristotelian - Thomistic approach.
  - Natural reason constrained by faith.

## St. Bonaventure

- A dualistic view
- The soul and body as two separate entities
  - Immortal soul uses the mortal body while on Earth.
  - The Soul was capable of two types of knowledge.



## Bonaventure's Ideas of Knowledge

- *The soul* could have knowledge of the *external world* (via the body).
  - Following Aristotle's empiricism; denying innate ideas – suggesting that we can build concepts from external stimuli.
  - BUT, that this alone was not sufficient – this knowledge must include “Divine Illumination”.

## Bonaventure's Ideas of Knowledge

- *The soul* could have knowledge of the spiritual world, God.
  - Includes introspection.

## Aquinas's View

- Generally follows Aristotelian view, with input from Islamic writers (Ibn Sina).
- Humans have souls, animals do not.
- Two types of estimation (differs from Ibn Sina):
  - *Estimation proper*: non-voluntary, characteristic of animals
  - *Cogitativa*: under rational control, found only in humans

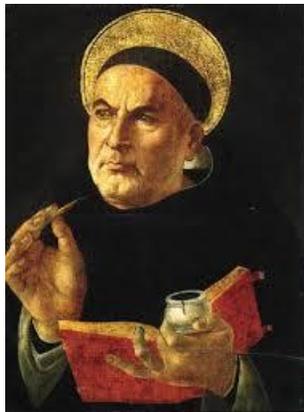
## Aquinas's View

- Two kinds of motivation/appetite:
  - *Sensitive (animal) appetite*
    - Natural, wanting to pursue pleasure & avoid harm
    - Pleasure vs. pain
  - *Intellectual (human) appetite*
    - "Will"
    - Power to seek higher
    - Moral, under the power of reason
    - Right vs. wrong

## Aquina Differing from Iba Sina

- Did not use the idea of “composite imagination” as part of rational thinking
- Did not use “practical intellect”, as cogitava was already a rationally guided concept
- Attaching intellect to the human soul – to make it consistent with Christian theology

## Aquina Differing from Iba Sina

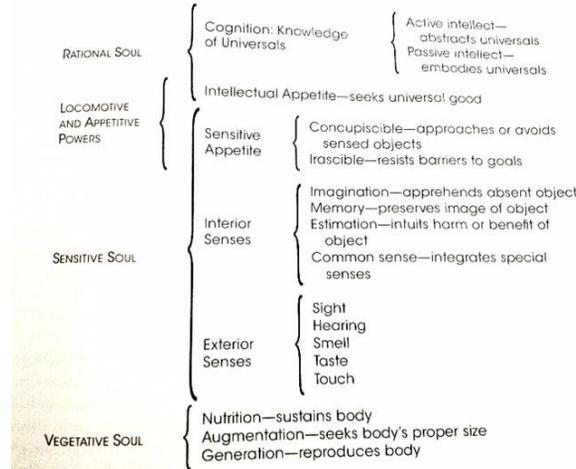


Aquinas



Sina

# Aquina's Conception of the Mind



# Aquina's Conception of the Mind

- Opposed Bonaventure's dualism of soul and body
- A person is a soul and body as a whole
  - Some dispute from Christianity saying that the disembodied soul is bliss
  - He defended saying that the soul is transcendent, but fulfills the body in life

- “A heroic attempt to reconcile science – Aristototle – with revelation” – Leahey, page 110
- By separating science and the divine, he foreshadowed the future conflict between reason and revelation (science vs. faith)...

“The future belonged to those who...divorced faith from reason and pursued only the latter.”

- Leahey, page 108

# The Rebirth of Empiricism: Psychology in the Late Middle Ages

## Rebirth of Empiricism:

- Until this point, for Greeks and Medievals, the only true knowledge could be of universal truths
- Even Thomas Aquinas, who believed in abstraction to obtain knowledge, said that abstract things corresponded to holy ideas.

## Ockham's Empiricism

- Ockham was one of the first to challenge this
- Knowledge comes from “intuitive cognition”  
 Yields knowledge about what is true and false in the world
  - “Abstractive cognition” – knowledge of universal concepts. *But*, these concepts existed only in the mind, not in reality.
    - Fully hypothetical, not necessarily true or false

## Ockham's Empiricism

- Believed that the mind notes similarities between objects, allowing classification
- Universals = logical terms to apply to some things and not others; concepts that indicate relationships
- Believed the soul did not have the faculties of *will* or *intellect*, rather these things are mental acts.
  - The soul in the act of willing
  - The soul in the act of thinking

## Ockham's Razor

- Ockham believe keeping things simple was key
  - Originally Aristotle's idea
- He saw the idea of faculties as unnecessary; they are not entities separate from the mind

## Ockham's Razor



**“With all things  
being equal, the  
simplest  
explanation  
tends to be the  
right one.”**

**William of  
Ockham**

## Ockham's View of the Mind

- Concepts = learned habits
- Ideas = derived from experiences
  
- Our thinking is independent of just sensing objects
  - We think about derived, **habitual** concepts – mental concepts
    - If we did not, we would just be animals responding to external stimuli (just bodily responses)

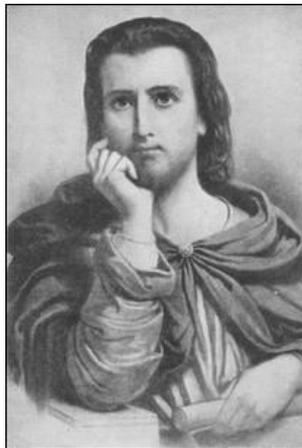
## Abelard's Influence

- Peter Abelard considered one of the greatest philosophers until the High Middle Ages (when Aristotle's work was recovered)
  
- Concepts are mental ideas and labels – not 'forms' as told by God's word in religious teachings
  
- His idea of universal concepts
  - *Logical and psychological*

## Abelard's Influence

- A precursor for Ockham's views that experience, what we learn, gives us concepts connected to things – not divine, universal ideas.
- We learn from the real world; not from God.

## Peter Abelard



## Nicholas of Autrecourt

- A follower of Ockham
- Belief that knowledge lies in what we are told by our senses (like later empiricists)
  - Knowledge is grounded in experience
  - Beginning of the idea of perception
  - Rejected divine intervention
- Shared with Ockham the assumption that 'whatever appears is true' - the basis of empiricism

## Consequences of Emerging Views of Psychology

- Movement away from belief of God's omnipotence
- Skepticism
- Ockham's ideas especially
  - By excluding faith from reason, he directed attention toward the physical world

# Outline

- Rise of the Concept of the Individual
  - The Individual in Academic Psychology
  - The Individual in Popular Psychology
- The Renaissance
  - Humanism in the Renaissance
  - Naturalism in the Renaissance

## **The Individual in Academic Psychology**

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- Individualism entered medieval academic culture through:
  - Ethics
  - Mystic religion

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- Before the 12th century, sin was acknowledged but not felt as something personal.
  - Penance was an automatic procedure for atoning sin.
- During the 12th century, people began to weigh personal intention in judging transgressions.
  - Peter Abelard's voluntaristic ethics.

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

Peter Abelard's voluntaristic ethics:

- Believed sin was a matter of intention, not of action.
- The intention behind the act is right or wrong, not the act itself.
- Intentions are personal and individualistic.

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- People began to question the mediation between priest, self, and God.
- Sought a direct connection between self and God.
- Way to God is introspection not ritual.

# The Individual in Academic Psychology

- St. Francis of Assisi:
  - Popular medieval preacher.
  - Abandoned wealth and status in favor of connecting with God through nature.
  - Catholic Church considered it rebellious.
  - Narrowly escaped persecution as a heretic.

# The Individual in Academic Psychology



St. Francis of Assisi

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- Poverty was not an ideal the wealthy church supported.
- Church preferred the complex rituals they claimed brought salvation.
- Physical hardship to attain religious salvation is common in world religion.

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- ☞ Celtic Christian hermits.
- ☞ Lived in remote forest areas or on small, bleak islands.
- ☞ Christianized by St. Francis of Assisi.



## The Individual in Academic Psychology



- ☞ Buddha and his followers.
- ☞ Sought release (*samsara*) from the cycle of life.
- ☞ Through meditation and asceticism.

## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- ☞ Hindu followers of Shiva
- ☞ Forest sages
- ☞ Lived away from society and its temptations.



## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- Early Christian Hermits
- Lived in the desert.
- They were the first monks.



## The Individual in Academic Psychology

- Druids
- Forest sages



# The Individual in Popular Psychology

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

High Middle Ages:

- “Individual” concept emerged.
- A person was not represented merely by his or her status.
- Biographies and autobiographies were written.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- Development of transparent glass led to good mirrors.
  - Led to self-reflection.
  - This led to development of consciousness within psychology and literature.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

In early Christianity:

- Early Middle Ages had many strong female figures.
- Women fully participated in religion.
- Preached.
- Lived in chaste mixed-sex monasteries.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- As Christianity absorbed Roman misogyny and Platonic aversion to sensual pleasure.
  - Women were unable to preach
  - Priest could not marry
  - Women could not approach holy relics
  - Women became men's helpers

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- As the oppression of women grew:
  - It spread throughout the Middle Ages and into modern times.
  - Created ambivalent attitude towards women.
  - Women were viewed as holy vessels of God, at best.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- *Fin Amour Literature:*
  - Artistic detailing of experience of being “madly in love”.
  - Powerful and important response to women’s oppression.
  - Not written with morals in mind.
  - Later renamed “courtly love” by 19th century librarian.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- Sex was the major topic of many tales and poems.
- Concept that individuals had within them the causes of their own behavior.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- Since pre-arranged, loveless marriages were widespread:
  - Adultery was common
  - Adulterous hopes were the basis of *fin amour* literature.

## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- Most famous collection of *Fin Amour*.
  - *Carmina Burana*
  - Represented sacrilegious worship of Venus, the pagan goddess of love.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Venus was Cupid's mother?

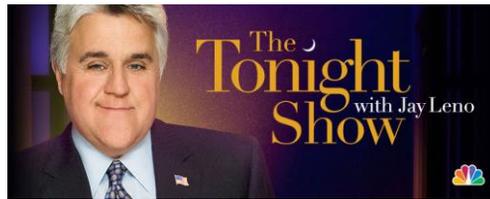


## The Individual in Popular Psychology

- 24 of the poems in *Carmina Burana* were set to music by Carl Orff.
  - Most famous: “*O Fortuna*”.



## The Individual in Popular Psychology



## The Renaissance 1350–1600

## The Renaissance

- French translation – “rebirth”.
- Celebrated for its creativity in the arts.
- For the history of psychology:
  - Initiated the transition from medieval to modern times.
  - The idea of humanism reappeared.

## The Renaissance

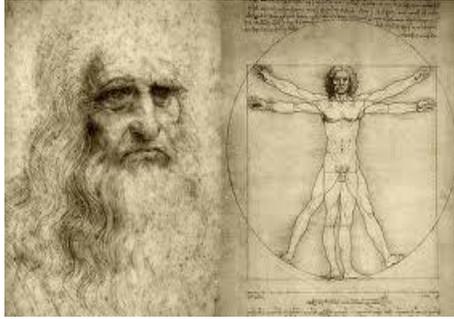
- Placed importance on individual human beings
- Since Psychology is the science of individual mind and behavior, it owes a debt to humanism.

# Humanism in the Renaissance

## Humanism in the Renaissance

- Renaissance humanism:
  - Focus on human inquiry.
  - Study of nature and human nature.
- Medieval views on dissection were reversed.
  - Leonardo da Vinci & Physician Andreas Vesalius
    - Key to scientific psychology.

## Humanism in the Renaissance



Leonardo da Vinci

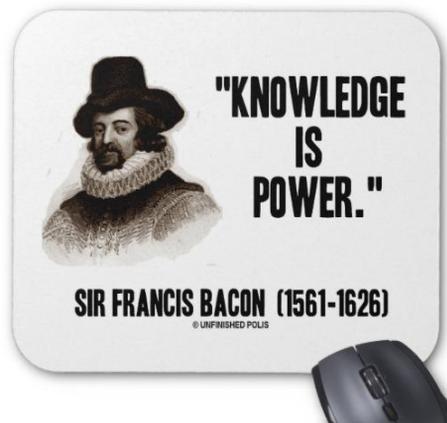


Andreas Vesalius

## Humanism in the Renaissance

- In the past:
  - People observed nature but did not interfere with its operation
- In the Renaissance:
  - Francis Bacon:
    - Led scientists to interrogate nature by experimentation
    - Attempted to use knowledge to control nature

## Humanism in the Renaissance



## Humanism in the Renaissance

- In the 20th century, psychology followed Bacon's saying, aiming to be a means of advancing human welfare.
- However, there were those who opposed the idea of Humanism.
  - Michel de Montaigne

# Naturalism in the Renaissance

## Naturalism in the Renaissance

- A view halfway between religion and modern science.
- Michel de Montaigne supported naturalism.
- Example:

Magnets are mysterious:  
How does a special lump of metal attract and repel others?

## Naturalism in the Renaissance

- Traditional explanation:
  - Supernatural; the magnet is inhabited by a demon or is under the spell of a sorcerer
- Renaissance naturalism:
  - Attributed magnet's power to a "secret virtue inbred by nature".
- Rejecting supernatural explanation represented step toward science.

## Outline

- Popular Psychology during the Renaissance
  - Dante Alighieri
  - Geoffrey Chaucer
  - William Shakespeare
  - Miguel Cervantes
- The Reformation
  - Martin Luther
- Michele de Montaigne
- The End of the Premodern Outlook

## **Popular Psychology in the Renaissance**

## **Popular Psychology in the Renaissance**

- The concept of mind changed from being external to individualistic and internal.
- This change in concept of the mind was demonstrated in literature of the time and this is what led to the Renaissance.

## Popular Psychology in the Renaissance

- Dante Alighieri
  - 1265 – 1321
- Geoffrey Chaucer
  - 1343 – 1400
- William Shakespeare
  - 1564 – 1616
- Miguel Cervantes
  - 1547 - 1616

## Dante Alighieri

- Dante's Divine Comedy
  - Epic poem
  - Dante's Journey through Hell, Purgatory and Heaven
  - Dante was guided by Virgil.



Dante Alighieri

## Dante Alighieri

- Orthodox Catholicism
  - Sins of the flesh were easily forgiven if the sinner expressed regret and completed penance.
  - Sins that the sinner had consciously chosen to do are not so easily forgiven.

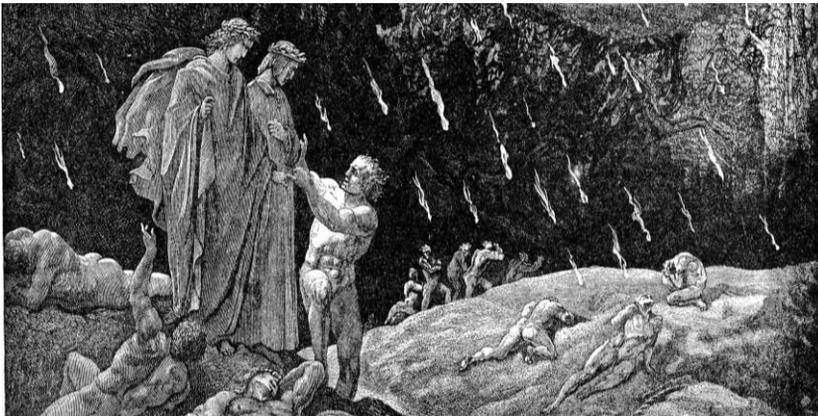
# Dante Alighieri

- The story of Francesca and Paolo



# Dante Alighieri

- The story Bruneto Latini



## Dante Alighieri

- The main moral of the stories from Hell is that sinners are condemned to Hell when they cannot see their own sins.
- The characters in the poem did not express regret, or complete penance. If they had searched for salvation they could have been saved from Hell.

## Geoffrey Chaucer

- English Poet
- Raised by a winemaker, but became a squire to a noble
- First poet laureate under King Richard II
- Known for writing Canterbury Tales



Geoffrey Chaucer

## Geoffrey Chaucer

- Canterbury Tales
  - A group of people telling stories on their journey.
  - Mainly the stories involved themes of love, sex and marriage.
  - Dame Alison – The Wife of Bath.

# Geoffrey Chaucer

Dame Alison's Story



## DID YOU KNOW?

This story is similar to today's version of the Princess and the Frog, however the gender roles are reversed.



## Dame Alison's Story

- The moral of this story is that when it comes to love, being respectful, courteous, keeping your word and doing good deeds are more valuable than wealth.
- It is important for men to love, honor and sometimes obey their wives.



## William Shakespeare

- A playwright
- Owned a theatre called the Globe
- Audiences of all social classes
- Well known for Othello



## William Shakespeare

- Othello, the Moor of Venice



## William Shakespeare

- The Moral of this story is that even a noble man can be destroyed by jealousy.

## William Shakespeare

- Other Plays by Shakespeare:
  - Hamlet
  - Macbeth
- Shakespeare saw the good and bad of humans in a time where many people only saw the good.

## Miguel Cervantes

- Wrote the novel Don Quixote
  - The first novel where the characters personality and consciousness were key factors.

# Miguel Cervantes



# Miguel Cervantes

- Don Quixote



## Miguel Cervantes

- Don Quixote
  - Quixote has created the perfect world in his mind, and since there is no place for him in reality, Quixote chooses to view the world in a fantasy way, rather than living in reality.
  - He was considered to be the “idealistic individual” of the Neoplatonic ideal.

## The Reformation

# The Reformation

## Christianity

- Originally believed that salvation from sin was gained by praying and going to mass.
- People would say prayers for their dead relatives, this reduced their relatives' time in Purgatory.
- People would buy indulgences from the church which would free their dead relatives from Purgatory.

# The Reformation

- Began In 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to a Cathedral.
- 95 Theses was a list of what the church was doing wrong, it specifically emphasized how people of importance in the church were abusing their power, and how purchasing indulgences was misguided.
- Emphasized the importance of having faith in God that sins will be forgiven after death.

# Martin Luther

- 1483 – 1546
- Catholic Priest until he became a German Monk
- Professor of Theology



# The Reformation

- Christians should be more introspective.
- Priests, rituals and the hierarchy of the church should be de-emphasized.
- The counter-reformation involved the Catholics fighting against the Protestants, this was the 30 Years' War.
- Significantly affected Europe and changed how people thought about religion

## Martin Luther



## The Reformation

- The Catholic Church integrated some aspects of the Protestant religion into their own including:
  - Becoming introspective about their faith
  - Controlling the behaviors of people – specifically sexual behaviors.
  - Catholics began to emphasize the soul

## The Reformation

- The Reformation and the counter-reformation caused Europe to divide.
- People of both religions wanted theirs to become the dominant religion of Europe.
- Neither the Catholics, nor the Protestants won this fight.

## The Reformation

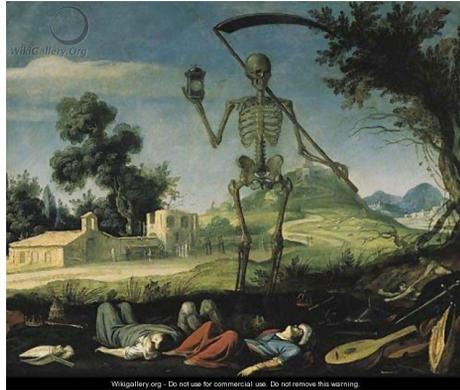
Thirty Years' War

– 1616 – 1648

- The conflict between Catholics and Protestants caused this war to begin. however it escalated to become a more general conflict within the European empire.

# The Renaissance

- The Renaissance was a dark time in Europe
- There were many refugees
- Occultism was practiced
- Death was a popular theme



# The Renaissance

- Humanism
  - The belief that humans are noble and godlike.
  - Humans are the center of the world and they are on top of the hierarchy of all earth creatures.

# Michel de Montaigne

- 1533 – 1592
- Opposed humanism
- Human senses cannot be trusted
- Skeptical and naturalistic view on humanity

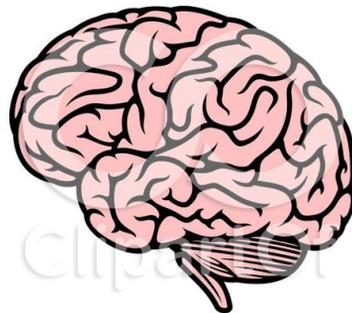


Michel de Montaigne

## The End of the Pre-Modern Outlook

### The End of the Premodern Outlook

- In the middle ages and throughout the Renaissance was the popular belief that everything in the universe is related.



## Worldview

- This worldview that humans were the center of the world began to change after Montaigne argued against it.
- This change prepared the world for true science to occur throughout the Scientific revolution.
- Galileo (1564 - 1642) believed that the right way to learn about the world was to understand and apply mathematical principles.

## Overview

# Overview

## Middle Ages:

- Rise of European cities brought about great change - period of creativity
- The black plague caused many people to question their faith
- Recovery of Greek philosophical works contributed to emerging ideas behind science

# Overview

## Renaissance:

- Feudalism and authority of church diminished by the 1700s
- St. Thomas Aquinas - separated reason & faith - the idea of study of natural reason, but still constrained by faith
- Suggested that the soul and body were as one, moving into the idea of the body possessing the mind (today we know that the mind is the brain).

## Overview

- St. Bonaventure - the soul could have knowledge via experience with the external world - but this is still in line with religious ideas about the soul obtaining knowledge, not the individual mind.
- Peter Abelard - preceded Ockham's ideas.
  - Believed that objects had attached mental ideas
  - Concept of logical and psychological universal concepts (rather than divine ideas transcended from God).

## Overview

William of Ockham

- separated faith and reason, but pursued knowledge solely in reason
- The precursor to empiricism (as suggested by Aristotle)
- Believed that the soul did not have will, but that we engage in mental acts

## Overview

William of Ockham (*continued*)

- We learn concepts through habit
- We learn ideas through the relationships we make between concepts/objects, based on experience (empiricism)
- Followed by Nicholas Autrecourt, who also believed that knowledge lies in what we are told by our senses (perception) , it is grounded in experience

## Overview

- Followed by Nicholas Autrecourt:
  - believed that knowledge lies in what we are told by our senses (perception) , it is grounded in experience.
- Ockham's ideas excluded faith from reason and fostered the birth of physical science

## Overview

- A more modern concept of the “individual” emerged during the High Middle Ages.
- There was more of an emphasis placed on how people felt, their intentions, and their beliefs.
- People started to question the Church’s ritualistic methods of pardoning sins.
- *Fin amour* literature was created.

## Overview

- It represented individualistic views that emerged in society.
- They were written with no morals in mind, rather, the literature embraced themes of adultery.
- In the Renaissance the concept of mind changed from being external to individualistic.
  - This theme was reflected in the literature of the time.

## Overview

- In 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to a Cathedral; this started the Reformation.
- The Reformation led to the birth of the Protestant religion, which branched away from Catholicism.
- The Reformation caused the Catholics to emphasize the soul in their religion.

## Overview

- Montaigne challenged Humanism at the end of the Renaissance
  - This prepared the world for true science to occur throughout the scientific revolution.

## Quiz & Essay Questions

### QUIZ QUESTIONS

ca St. St. Thomas Aquina's believed in two types of motivation (or appetites). Which of these is not a type of motivation he described?

- a) Sensitive Appetite
- b) Emotional Appetite
- c) Intellectual Appetite

## QUIZ QUESTIONS

- Q The Invention of \_\_\_\_\_ lead to the development of trade?
- Q William of Ockham separated reason and faith. He pursued knowledge
- a) through faith; the word of God  
 b) only in reason  
 c) through introspection  
 d) by synthesizing the reason of the natural world with the universal concepts of faith

## QUIZ QUESTIONS

- Q Peter Abelard believed sin was a matter action, not of intention. True or False?
- Q Venus was the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ .
- Q \_\_\_\_\_ was a major theme of *Fin Amour* literature.

## QUIZ QUESTIONS

- The moral of the play Othello implies that any man can be destroyed by \_\_\_\_\_.
- In 1517 Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to a Cathedral. What did this lead to?
- Who argued against the Humanistic view of people?

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

- Describe Ockham's ideas about the two types of cognitions. Explain how he felt people could gain knowledge about the true and false in the world, and how he felt about universal concepts.
- Describe Thomas Aquina's conception of how the soul and body were related. Do they reflect the ideas we have today about 'the mind'? Was his idea about the soul and body accepted within Christianity?

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

- Describe the difference in how women were viewed in Early Christianity versus how they were viewed later on?
- Explain *Fin Amour* and the themes present in *Fin Amour*.
- Explain the view on love that Chaucer emphasizes in Dame Alison's story?

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

- How did Martin Luther want the Christian Religion to change?
- In what ways did the Catholic religion change due to the Reformation?

Questions?

