

Chapter 4: The Premodern World (1000 – 1600)

- First cities appear – citizens not ruled by the Church or the feudal lords – local rulers, but the rulers didn't own the cities.
 - Independent businessmen – trades people with skills & products to sell
 - Technology develops – clocks & watches
 - Development of credit & companies
 - 1215 – Magna Carta – imposition of limits on the king's power (in England)
 - International trade, voyages to North & South America (1400s & 1500s)
 - Conflict between secular and religious leaders
 - 1517 – Martin Luther's *95 Theses* – criticism of the Catholic Church
 - Abelard (1079 – 1142) – voluntaristic ethics – intention is critical
 - St. Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226) – sought solitary contemplation & personal communication with God without mediation of priests, ascetic & mystical

 - St. Bonaventure (1221- 1274) – Neoplatonist
 - soul (with body) could have knowledge of the world, universal knowledge
 - soul alone – knowledge of God. – know God by knowing one's soul (introspection)→ separation of knowledge of the world & knowledge of God

 - St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) – Aristotelian
 - Aristotle's Philosophy not incompatible with Christianity – e.g. *Scala Natura*
 - Followed St. Anselm's teaching: faith through reason
 - Adopted Aristotle's model of the soul
 - Distinguished between animals and humans: human "intellectual appetite" & seek higher moral good
 - Notion of free will (cf. Abelard)
 - Knowledge as product of human reasoning, not from divine illumination
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- Rejected platonic dualism of body and soul – had to argue that body and soul reunited during the resurrection so as not to commit heresy

William of Ockham - (1287 – 1347)

- can have direct knowledge of the world through senses → concepts = terms that apply to some objects and not others
 - distinction between faith and reason
 - *nominalism* – concepts do not correspond to something real (like Plato's Forms) but are merely words or mental images
 - no ground in experience to believe we have a soul - know this through faith
- Note: The distinction raises the question of whether we do have souls (heresy) but did justify the possibility that we could have knowledge of the world through observation & reason.

→ God's truth and human knowledge may not be the same thing.

Nicholas of Autrecourt (B. 1300)

- rejected idea that God could intervene to maintain perceptual illusion. Therefore, we could probably trust our senses. Empiricist.
- Promoted skepticism (Can we have true knowledge of anything?) & promoted study of perception & cognition?

The Concept of the Individual

- *Fin amour* – love of one individual who was valued. → Individuals could be valued for themselves, not just because of their social position.
- Movement from *psychomachia* (mechanical operations of the mind seen as external to individuals & personified in morality plays) to seeing individuals as having the causes of behavior within themselves.
- Dante, Chaucer, & Shakespeare created individualistic characters with motives that drove their behavior

Dante: *The Divine Comedy*

- characters personified vices, but the characters were based on real people known to the audience

Chaucer: *Canterbury Tales*

- fictional characters with realistic personalities

- earlier plays showed people personifying vices, but the characters were stereotyped; Shakespeare's characters were like real people with complex personalities and realistic motivations

The Renaissance: 1350 – 1600

Renaissance Naturalism – example of a magnet.

- traditional explanations of magnetism referred to spells, demons or other supernatural phenomena. Renaissance explanations referred to the inherent nature of magnets—something that was not supernatural. “Explanations” offered no mechanism & was a type of “natural magic”.
- Living things – life & mind were a result of some “natural power” possessed by living things not some immaterial soul or spirit.
- Note: suggests that soul may not exist.

1517 – beginning of the Reformation

- protestant Christians broke from the Catholic Church. → many different versions of Protestantism
- Who knew the real Truth about God & heaven? → a lot of people questioning whether there really was a world other than the material world, whether the soul existed, whether God existed etc.
- The Black Death (bubonic plague) made people question God's intentions

- Humanists saw the best in humanity; people often saw the worst.

1561 – Sir Francis Bacon born.

- Experimental method. Don't merely observe nature, manipulate nature to see what happens. This leads to greater understanding.
- The beginning of true science

Chapter 5: The Scientific Revolution

Why did the Scientific Revolution occur in Europe and not in China or Islamic world?

- 1) How religion spread – by persuasion (Christianity) or by the sword (Islam)
- 2) Separation of Church and State – government of the people was not based on religious writings, but was based on human-made laws.
- 3) Neutral spaces – cities and universities
- 4) Authority of the Book – Christians discussed interpretations of the Bible rather than taking it literally
- 5) Aristotelian Natural Philosophy
- 6) Public knowledge – printing press, open discussions in universities
- 7) Secondary causation – God did not control everything in the universe. He created a machine which could function on its own.

John Locke & Rene Descartes: The Way of Ideas

Note: There is more about Locke in the 6th ed of Leahey than in the 7th

John Locke - sensations & ideas as units of thought + principle of associationism
 - ideas as representations of real world objects. (Cf. Aristotle: form of object entered through senses -> perception veridical)
 -> skepticism - how could we truly know anything if perceptions illusory?
 - section on Locke in Ch 6, 7th ed.

Primary and Secondary Properties

- objects were not as they appeared. → had to distinguish between “true” properties & properties as we perceived them.

Primary Properties: properties inherent in objects (e.g. mass, extension etc.), true properties which exist in absence of person perceiving them

Secondary Properties: properties as perceived by people (e.g. colour, texture, smell etc)

- led to distinction between “real world” and “world of which we are conscious” -> Cartesian Theatre
 -> notion of consciousness as separate from self - Human perception & consciousness as an object of study

- Reflection - reflect on our own sensations & ideas → new ideas.
- importance of reflection & reason (Newtonian successes in explaining planetary motion)
- reflection = new source of knowledge (about consciousness)

Rene Descartes - Dualism - immaterial soul in material body

- linked psychology with physiology - humans as machine-animals plus soul
- Cartesian theatre (Dennett's term) - soul in pineal gland observed representations of objects (Cf. Plato's Allegory of the Cave)
- > senses deceiving, therefore can't have true knowledge of world → skepticism.

- creation or discovery of consciousness → study of psychology → could study consciousness (mind). Could certainly study perception.

- by making soul immaterial but interacting with the body, Descartes created a problem for psychology. Not clear where soul ended and mind began.

- Now see "mind" as something the body (brain) does. Mind & body are necessarily united (Spinoza) (compare to Aristotle's ideas).

- Descartes - big separation between humans and animals (Cf Aristotle). Humans had souls; animals were "beast machines". We now see a continuity between humans & animals because of Darwin's theory of evolution

- ultimately people moved to either (1) Enlightenment: Materialistic, mechanical view of world - attempts to integrate religion & spirituality with science, faith in reason.

- or (2) Romanticism (Pascal), Spiritualism, mysticism, renewed religiosity

- > concern that ethics not possible, skepticism (we cannot know Truth),

- No soul & no God, so no ethics is possible

Other Philosophers

Leibniz - Monad theory

Thomas Hobbs - political theory

Baruch Spinoza - pantheism, no free will

Blaise Pascal - religious, saw thinking as mechanical, developed some probability theory