

CLASSICAL and MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES

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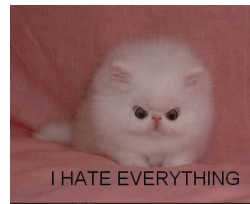
A BRIEF DETOUR INTO **THE DARK AGES** (**DUM DUM DUUUUUUUUM!**)

- WHY

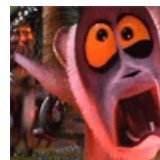
- Platonic continuities!



- Epistemological concatenation!



- The PROBLEM OF POLYSEMY!



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Medieval Relationship between Christian and Classical Philosophy

- Pre-11th century:
 - Classical philosophy considered compatible with Christian theology

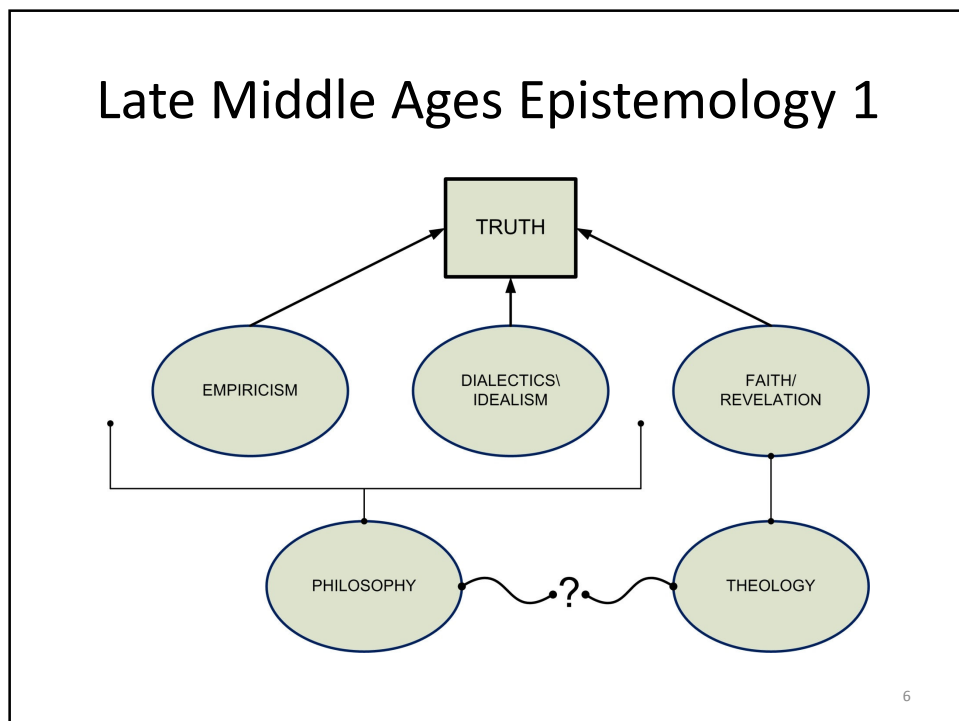
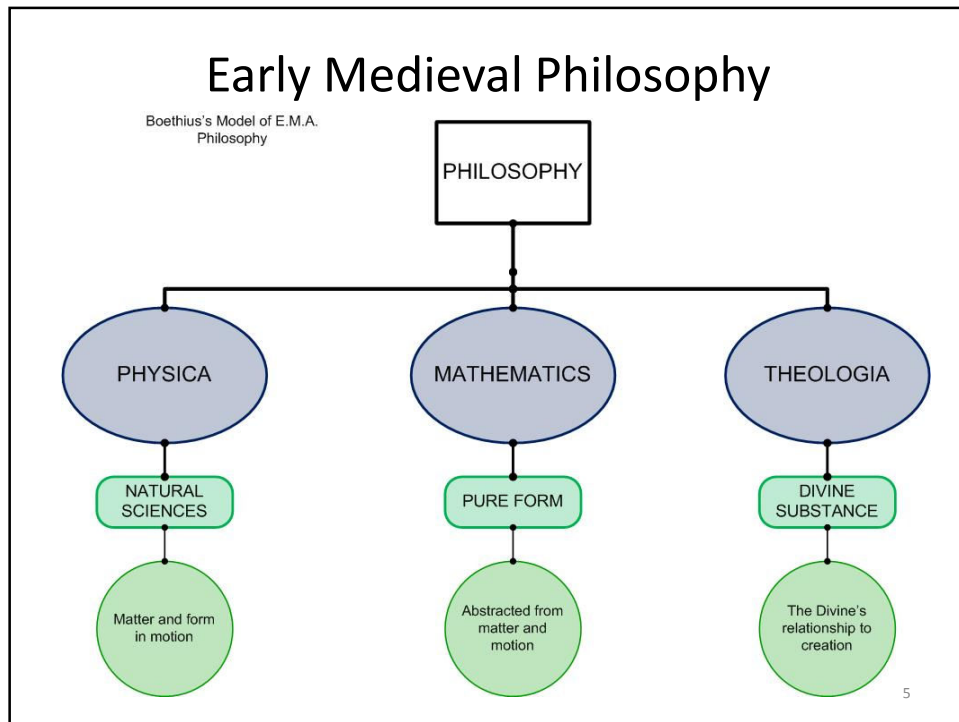
- Post-11th century (establishment of educational institutions eg. Oxford, Cambridge):
 - Classical philosophy considered potentially at odds with Christian theology
 - DIALECTICS as a potential challenge to FAITH

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THEOLOGIA

- Early Medieval theology was considered a BRANCH OF PHILOSOPHY
 - PHYSICA: natural science (body and form in motion)
 - MATHEMATICS: pure form (abstracted from matter and motion)
 - THEOLOGY: “that which is wholly free of matter and motion, the divine substance”; “the nature of God, his Trinity and his relation to his creation” (Evans 10).

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QUESTIONS to ASK about the relationship of Classical Philosophy and Christian Theology

- Can reason alone be used to discuss matters of faith?
- What role should ancient philosophers play in Christian epistemology?
- What should be done when philosophy CHALLENGES matters of faith?

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Medieval Platonism: Textual Limits

- Limited availability:
 - Eg. *Phaedrus* not available in Latin until the 12th century
- Mediation:
 - read through later philosophers such as Plotinus and Porphyry
- Translation:
 - Greek → Arabic → Latin

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Medieval Platonism: Linguistic Disadvantage

- “Dark Ages”: Breakdown of communication
 - Few scholars retain a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew
 - Had to rely on intermediate translations through Arabic and into Latin
- Latin = less abstract language relative to Greek
 - Greek: distinction among

BEING

EXISTENCE

ESSENCE

Latin = no linguistic distinction

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Philosophical Continuities

- **TRANSCENDENTAL Christianity** has many epistemological equivalencies in Platonic **IDEALISM**
- **AUGUSTINE’S PLATONISM**
 - Location of **TRUTH** in a realm beyond perception;
 - The Platonic **FORM** provides a framework for the consideration of **GOD**;
 - Self-abnegation, cultivation of intellectual purity etc.

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