

6.00 credits

30.0 h

Teacher(s)	Point Christophe ;Pourtois Hervé ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Learning outcomes	
Evaluation methods	Evaluation of the active participation to the workshops and oral discussion of a written final rapport
Teaching methods	Three workshops from February to May 2024, and one international congress in June 2024.
Content	<p>Seeing the Invisible God</p> <p><i>PhD Seminar (Feb-May 2024) open to all PhD students from the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (UCLouvain, but also ULB, ULiège, UNamur, Saint-Louis) (9 ECTS as part of the doctoral training), as well as to UCLouvain MA students within the elective course "Approfondissements".</i></p> <p>Coordination: Dr Patrícia Calvário (UCLouvain)</p> <p>Abstract:</p> <p>The concept of the Beatific Vision holds a central place in various religious traditions and philosophical discussions. This seminar offers a comprehensive exploration of the Beatific Vision, examining its origins, theological foundations, and philosophical significance in the history of thought, specifically the Christian and Islamic perspectives. Students will delve into the intricate web of philosophical arguments surrounding the Beatific Vision, engaging with theological and mystical perspectives as well. By the end of the seminar, students will gain a nuanced understanding of this concept and its implications.</p> <p>Contextualization:</p> <p>The ultimate destiny of human beings is a matter that concerns both philosophers and theologians, as both have been preoccupied with answering this question. Intense debates on this subject have persisted throughout the history of philosophy, with a particular focus during the medieval and early modern periods. These debates assumed that the ultimate purpose, towards which all aspects of life were oriented, and which everyone ardently desired, was the union with God, the ultimate experience of communion with the divine being. In the Gospels, within the context of the Christian tradition, it is referred to as "seeing God face-to-face", that is, directly, without intermediaries, the so-called beatific vision. This was the ultimate objective of human existence, colouring all aspects of life. However, it would only be fully realized in a perfect manner after death, in Heaven. This highest experience of God, beyond this world, brought about absolute happiness, hence the term "beatific vision". In Latin, <i>beatus</i> means happy.</p> <p>This "seeing" is a metaphor for knowing. And seeing God face-to-face means knowing God as He is. In philosophical language, it means knowing the essence of the divine being. But how can a finite mind, whether of a human being or even angelic entities, fully comprehend an infinite being, which some thinkers, like Dionysius the Areopagite, claim to be beyond being itself? How could this be the ultimate and perfect happiness of human existence? Would not the divine essence remain forever inaccessible to the human intellect?</p> <p>But seeing God also holds a literal sense. Saint Augustine, for instance, contemplated the possibility that a human being could see God with the eyes of the body, in the resurrected body. And in the Byzantine Christian tradition, an intense debate raged during the 14th century concerning the bodily vision of God even while still in the earthly world. These are some of the questions within the realm of the beatific vision that were debated in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period.</p> <p>Seminar Objectives:</p> <p>Familiarize students with the historical context of the Beatific Vision across Christian and Islamic philosophical traditions.</p> <p>Examine key theological foundations and interpretations of the Beatific Vision.</p> <p>Analyse philosophical arguments for and against the existence and nature of the Beatific Vision, addressing questions of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics.</p> <p>Investigate mystical and contemplative approaches to the Beatific Vision, exploring the practices, experiences, and transformations associated with this concept.</p> <p>Programme Outline</p> <p>Workshop 1 (Patrícia Calvário) : The Vocabulary of the Vision of God</p>

	<p>Historical and cultural contexts: Origins and development of the concept in theological and philosophical tradition. Exploring key terms and definitions: knowledge and comprehension of God, theosis, and other related concepts. Inventory of Key Source Texts in the Western Traditions</p> <p>Workshop 2 (Patrícia Calvário & Jacob Schmutz): Reading Seventeenth Century Scholastic Treatises on the Beatific Vision</p> <p>Comparison between commentaries on Aquinas and independent treatises. Seventeenth century sources. The presence of the beatific vision among philosophers. Aline Smeeters (UCLouvain) could contribute with a presentation on Maximilianus Sandaeus.</p> <p>Workshop 3 (Cécile Bonmariage & Gregory Vandamme): Seeing God in Islamic Contexts</p> <p>In this workshop we will explore key representative texts, ranging from exegesis (especially on verses such as ""Vision touches Him not" (6:103) and "Faces that Day will be radiant Looking at their Lord" (75:22-23)), to early and post-Avicennan kalam, tasawwuf and philosophy in order to get a broad understanding of the debates around the vision of God in pre-modern Islamic thought.</p> <p>International Congress on the Beatific Vision (June 2023), organized by Patrícia Calvário and Jacob Schmutz</p> <p>An international congress on Beatific Vision will be held at UCLouvain in June 2024, and participation to this congress will be part of the seminar.</p>
<p>Inline resources</p>	<p>See Moodle</p>
<p>Other infos</p>	<p>Texts will be presented in their original language, with translations. Discussion in French and English, depending on the participants</p>
<p>Faculty or entity in charge</p>	<p>CDP</p>