



Transcendentals in the Twenty-First Century

Conference and Workshop 29.08.2019 – 03.09.2019

Transcendentals, in medieval philosophy, are the ‘most common’ (*communissima*) properties of being. Traditional examples include unity, goodness, and truth, and the more controversial example of beauty. The doctrine of the transcendentals has precursors in Plato, Aristotle, Dionysius, Augustine, Boethius, and Avicenna. It plays an important role in the thought of the great scholastic thinkers including Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. While the modern inheritance of the doctrine is harder to trace, it is closely related to the commonly cited triad of the truth, the good, and the beautiful, which makes an early appearance in the medieval *Summa Halensis* and reappears in the nineteenth-century work of Victor Cousin.

The 2019 conference and workshop asks what role the transcendentals have to play in twenty-first century thought. Special attention will be given to two traditional transcendentals in particular, truth and beauty, whose relationship has been a topic of recurrent interest in recent philosophy. This ranges from Theodor Adorno’s anxiety about the deceptive possibilities of beauty in the twentieth century to the cognitivist and expressivist theories of art defended by analytical philosophers like Nelson Goodman and Roger Scruton. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on historical precursors to the doctrine of the transcendentals, the medieval doctrine itself, as well as work in other traditions that sees an important relationship between unity, goodness, truth, and/or beauty.

This event is organized by the Humane Philosophy Society part of the Humane Philosophy Project in collaboration with the John Templeton Foundation Project, Science, Theology, and Humane Philosophy: Central and Eastern European Perspectives, and is supported by the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion, University of Oxford; the Institute of Philosophy, University of Warsaw; the Centre of Excellence for Integrative Bioethics, University of Zagreb; the Emmy Noether Group For Scientific Theology, Ruhr University Bochum; and the American Catholic Philosophical Association.



AMERICAN
CATHOLIC
PHILOSOPHICAL
ASSOCIATION



RUHR
UNIVERSITÄT
BOCHUM

RUB