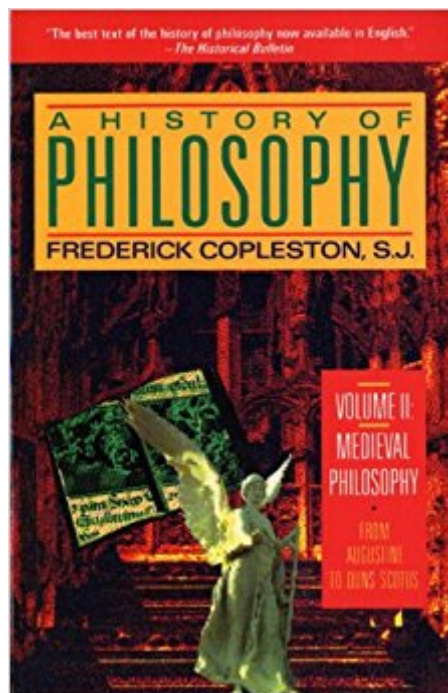




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A History Of Philosophy, Vol. 2: Medieval Philosophy - From Augustine To Duns Scotus



Synopsis

Conceived originally as a serious presentation of the development of philosophy for Catholic seminary students, Frederick Copleston's nine-volume *A History Of Philosophy* has journeyed far beyond the modest purpose of its author to universal acclaim as the best history of philosophy in English. Copleston, an Oxford Jesuit of immense erudition who once tangled with A.J. Ayer in a fabled debate about the existence of God and the possibility of metaphysics, knew that seminary students were fed a woefully inadequate diet of theses and proofs, and that their familiarity with most of history's great thinkers was reduced to simplistic caricatures. Copleston set out to redress the wrong by writing a complete history of Western Philosophy, one crackling with incident and intellectual excitement - and one that gives full place to each thinker, presenting his thought in a beautifully rounded manner and showing his links to those who went before and to those who came after him.

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Customer Reviews

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Copleston's history remains one of the best introductions to the philosophy of Medieval Europe for any serious student of philosophy. Copleston has the ability to view ideas as part of a broader whole while also being able to give detailed discussion on particular questions, and has obviously done extensive research and given careful thought to matters. He is also skilled in presenting a relatively neutral analysis of disputed points and not letting his own views interfere with his exposition. All in all, just the sort of scholar you'd want writing a history of philosophy for you. The result is a history which is relatively accessible to someone with some basic knowledge of philosophy yet informative enough to give the reader a general understanding of ideas and thinkers that can be quite extensive without getting weighed down with trying to read and interpret all the primary texts (but if one wishes, ample references to them are provided). It touches on major thinkers and controversies and superbly captures the issues at hand, while at the same time covering more marginal and transitional figures that might normally be left out. I particularly commend this text to any undergraduate philosophy student whose university does not offer any courses on medieval philosophy.

I've always found Father Copleston's History of Philosophy series informative with clear narrative. This particular volume was helpful in grasping the roll out of Aristotle's views through the various Islamic interpreters like Avicenna and Averroes into the Latin west and the chief expositors Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. I was really fascinated by Bonaventure's thinking and the central role of introspection regarding awareness of God. All in all the text was well laid out and the approach supported by clear thinking. Likewise filling in briefly and concisely the role Origen and Tertullian played in the development of Christian philosophy was a plus. These are helpful for students and mature scholars for gaining context and building a bibliography. A great purchase..

As one who has read a number of other history of philosophy books dealing with--at least to some extent--the medieval era, I can unquestionably recommend this one as being the overall best available in English, in spite of the fact that it was written several decades ago; but, then again, philosophy from hundreds of years ago doesn't exactly change overnight! On a more serious note, what seems to make Copleston's work on medieval philosophy stand out is not only the fact that it's written by an extremely erudite, passionate scholar, but that it possesses the enviable quality of doubling as both a readable introduction to the period, as well as a fairly comprehensive history at that.

The best book that I have read on Medieval philosophy! Wordy, but good reading.

Back in 1974, I took a course in intro philosophy, and the teacher said that the Copleston 9-volume History of Philosophy was one of the best histories of philosophy out there. However, it's very long, and probably more suitable for philosophy majors and teachers than for people who have little or no prior education in philosophy and its history.

This is a thorough review of Medieval Philosophy. The author wisely extends coverage beyond that of other authors to include the transitional period between Neo-Platonism (the "Dark Ages") and what is commonly considered as the "Middle Ages." I found it useful to find treatments of philosophical writers beyond Aquinas, Eriugena, etc.~ A History of Philosophy, Vol. 2: Medieval Philosophy - From Augustine to Duns Scotus~ I would like to see it available for the Kindle.

Copleston's analyses are penetrating and elucidating. Was a philo major in college, now in my 60s - fun to go back and read thru the history of philo again. Only wish these came in Kindle versions!

good book

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