Teaching Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century: Text and Image

Philosophy was a central discipline in the early modern period. In the philosophy class, students learned how to reason and argue, how to think about morality and the greatest good, as well as physics and metaphysics, cosmology, biology and the ultimate metaphysical categories of reality. Since virtually every educated European in the period went through this curriculum, no matter what they did afterward, understanding what was taught and how it was taught illuminates virtually every corner of literate culture in the period.

A number of disciplines have recently turned to the close examination of the teaching of philosophy in the period. Historians of philosophy and science have been examining how philosophy was taught, how students within the university were exposed to the new intellectual currents outside of the university, such as the new scientific and philosophical thought of Bacon, Descartes, and Galileo. Historians have also been looking into the proliferation of pedagogical materials available to students and teachers in the period. Particularly striking are recent studies of visual materials, charts and engravings designed to be used in the classroom and outside to help students learn and remember their lessons.

This workshop will break new ground in a number of ways. First of all, it seeks to bring text-based scholars in the history of philosophy together with social and cultural historians to examine the interaction between tradition and innovation in the early-modern classroom, the site where traditional views of the world were transmitted to the generation that was to give birth to modern philosophy and science. And secondly, it brings together scholars who are centered on ideas and words with other scholars who focus in the role of images in the classroom and the intellectual world in this central period of intellectual history.

The conference is sponsored by the David A. Gardner '69 Magic Project, The Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts, the Department of Philosophy, the Department of History, the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. Organizing committee: Roger Ariew, Susanna Berger, Daniel Garber, Anthony Grafton, Jennifer Rampling.

PROGRAM

Friday, October 23

1:15 Welcome
1:30 Ann Blair (Harvard University): “Methods of Note-Taking in the Philosophy Classroom”
2:45 Jacob Schmutz (Université de Paris IV Sorbonne) “Printers vs. Notetakers: How Material Classroom Culture Shaped the French Philosophical Canon”
4:00 Coffee Break
4:30 Rebecca Wilkin (Pacific Lutheran University): "Philosophy and the Public: Pedagogies of Print in Seventeenth-Century France"
5:45 Roger Ariew (University of South Florida) : “Le meilleur livre qui ait jamais été fait en cette matière: Eustachius a Sancto Paulo and the Teaching of Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century”
7:00 Reception
Saturday, October 24

9:30 Coffee
10:00 Martine Pécharman (CNRS, Paris): “Pierre Bayle as Teacher of Philosophy”
11:15 Renée Raphael (University of California, Irvine): “Literary Technology and its Replication: Teaching the Air-Pump at the Collegio Romano in the Late 17th century”
12:30 Lunch
1:30 Sophie Roux (École Normale Supérieure, Paris): “The Mathematical Theses Defended at the Collège de Clermont (1637-1673): How to Guard a Fortress in Times of War”
2:45 Louise Rice (NYU): "Picturing Philosophy in Seventeenth-Century Rome."
4:00 Coffee Break
4:30 Raphaële Garrod (University of Cambridge): “Dichotomies, Diagrams, Emblems: The Visual Pedagogy of Philosophy at La Flèche in the 17thC”
5:45 Susanna Berger (Princeton University): “Apin’s Cabinet of Printed Curiosities.”
7:00 Reception and dinner

All sessions will take place at McCormick 106 on the campus of Princeton University. For further information, please contact Susanna Berger (scberger@Princeton.EDU).