

Michael Szlachta

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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION AND COMPETENCE

AOS: Medieval Philosophy

AOC: Early Modern Philosophy, Ethics, Free Will & Action Theory

EMPLOYMENT

Lecturer 2018-2019
Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Philosophy, University of Toronto 2012-2019 (Defense: Jan. 11)

Dissertation: *A Defense of Intellectualism: Will, Intellect, and Control in Late Thirteenth-Century Philosophy*

Abstract: For the philosophers of the later Middle Ages, the question of how volition is related to cognition was a question about how the faculties of the intellect and the will are related. The two most prominent views in this period were *intellectualism*, according to which the activity of the intellect causes that of the will, and *voluntarism*, according to which the activity of the intellect does not cause but is nonetheless necessary for that of the will. In general, scholars of medieval moral psychology have neglected intellectualism and praised the philosophical innovations of the voluntarists. I show that intellectualism is worth careful study, for although they were very much criticized by their contemporaries, the intellectualists have a more plausible understanding of the relationship between volition and the activity of our cognitive powers, and of human free will.

Committee: Martin Pickavé (supervisor), Deborah Black, Peter King

B.A., Philosophy (specialist) and Math (minor), University of Toronto 2007-2011

PAPERS

- “Peter John Olivi, Free Will, and the Threefold *Aspectus*,” forthcoming in *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*

In Preparation

- “‘Why Did You Choose That?’ Some Thoughts on Preference and Motivation in Peter John Olivi’s *Summa*”
- “Thomas of Sutton’s Intellectualist Doctrine of the Will’s Self-Motion”

TALKS (“*” = invited)

- “Immateriality as the Root of Freedom” July 2019
- *International Medieval Congress 2019*
University of Leeds, UK
- “A Challenge for Later Medieval Voluntarism”
- *American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting* January 2019
New York, NY, USA
 - *Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Congress* June 2018
Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Canada
- “‘Why Did You Choose That?’ Some Thoughts on Preference and Motivation in Peter John Olivi’s *Summa*”
- *Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248-1298). La construction de la personne humaine : Anthropologie, éthique, société* October 2018
Rome, Italy
- “An Intellectualist Conception of Human Freedom”
- *The XXIV World Congress of Philosophy* August 2018
University of Peking, Beijing, China
 - *American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting* March 2018
San Diego, CA, USA
 - *Western Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Meeting* October 2017
University of Regina, Regina, Canada
- “Conditioned Freedom in Thomas Aquinas’ *Disputed Questions on Truth*”
- *Canadian Society of Christian Philosophers Annual Meeting* June 2018
Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Canada
 - *Reuniones Filosóficas: Inteligencia y Voluntad en Tomás de Aquino* April 2018
Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
- “The Kingdom of the Soul: Walter of Bruges on Whether a Human Being Wills Necessarily”
- *UofT Philosophy of Religion Research Group** October 2017
University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
- “The First Movements of the Will and the Intellect: A Puzzle in Thomas Aquinas’ Moral Psychology”
- *Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Congress* May 2017
Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada
 - *American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting* March 2017
Kansas City, MO, USA
- “The Role of Meta-Volition in Peter John Olivi’s Account of Free Will”
- *American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting* January 2017
Baltimore, MD, USA
- “Human Agency in Thomas Aquinas and Godfrey of Fontaines”
- *uOttawa Summer Conference in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy** July 2016
University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada

- *Collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (CPAMP) Work in Progress Series** February 2016
University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
- “Godfrey of Fontaines on ‘Perfect Knowledge’ of the End”
 - *Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Congress* May 2016
University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada
- “Body on Body Causation in Descartes”
 - *American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting* March 2016
Chicago, IL, USA
- “Peter John Olivi, Freedom, and the Will’s *Dominativus Aspectus*”
 - *The University of Toronto Colloquium in Medieval Philosophy** September 2015
University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
- “Finding Unity in Godfrey of Fontaines’ Thoughts on Freedom”
 - *Mind, Matter, and Metaphysics: Berlin-Toronto-Groningen Workshop on Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy** May 2015
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany
- “Thomas Aquinas and the Power to Do Otherwise”
 - *American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting* April 2015
Vancouver, Canada

AWARDS

- University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies Conference Grant May 2017
The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Conference Grant provides financial support to eligible students who will be actively presenting their research at an academic conference.
- APA Graduate Student Travel Stipend (×4) 2015-2017
Graduate student authors whose papers or posters are accepted for presentation at a meeting of the American Philosophical Association are awarded graduate student travel stipends.
- Ontario Graduate Scholarship (×3) 2014-2017
The Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) Program provides funding to students in graduate studies at the master’s and doctoral levels. It’s a merit-based scholarship, with awards available to graduate students attending participating schools in Ontario in all disciplines of academic study.
- Dr. Yee Scholarship in Medieval Philosophy (×5) 2012-2017
Established by Dr. Richard Yee and matched by the Graduate Studies Endowment Fund. It is awarded to a graduate student enrolled in University of Toronto’s Department of Philosophy.
- St. Michael’s College Gold Medal 2011
To be awarded to University of Toronto undergraduate students in St. Michael’s College with the highest cumulative grade point average upon graduation in Humanities / Social Sciences, Sciences, and Commerce and Finance.
- Mercier-Knowlton Prize 2011
To be awarded to a St. Michael’s College graduating student in good academic standing, who has excelled in the study of Christianity and Culture or Philosophy or Religion with an emphasis on Christianity.

TEACHING

Instructor

University of Toronto

- PHL307: Augustine Winter 2019
- PHL341: Freedom, Responsibility and Human Action Fall 2018
- PHL210: 17th-and 18th-Century Philosophy 2018-2019
- PHL100: Introduction to Philosophy Summer 2016

Teaching Assistant

University of Toronto

- PHL206: Later Medieval Philosophy Winter 2015, Winter 2018
- PHL275: Introduction to Ethics Fall 2017
- PHL210: 17th-and 18th-Century Philosophy 2015-2016
- PHL205: Early Medieval Philosophy Fall 2014
- PHL245: Modern Symbolic Logic Winter 2013
- PHL100: Introduction to Philosophy 2010-2011, 2013-2014

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Research Assistant to Professor Peter King 2016-present
(Project: "The History of the Will")

Research Assistant to Professor Martin Pickavé Summer 2013, 2015-16

LANGUAGES

Latin; German; French

GRADUATE COURSEWORK (** = audited)

University of Toronto

- The Philosophy of William of Ockham* (Peter King) Winter 2018
- The History of the Will* (Peter King) Winter 2017
- Aquinas* (Martin Pickavé) Winter 2015
- The Metaphysics of Avicenna and Averroes* (Deborah Black) Fall 2014
- Descartes (Marleen Rozemond) Winter 2014
- Reading Course: Aquinas on Freedom (Martin Pickavé) Winter 2014
- John Buridan (Peter King) Winter 2014
- Imagination in Medieval Philosophy (Deborah Black) Fall 2013
- Hume (Donald Ainslie) Fall 2013
- Thought Experiments (James Robert Brown) Fall 2013
- Conditionals (Nate Charlow) Winter 2013
- Propositions and Numbers (Gurpreet Rattan and Byeong-uk Yi) Winter 2013
- Aristotle on *Phantasia* (Jennifer Whiting) Winter 2013
- Normativity and the Will (Philip Clark) Fall 2012
- Scepticism: Old and New (Rachel Barney and Jennifer Nagel) Fall 2012
- Medieval Islamic Philosophy (Deborah Black) Fall 2012

REFERENCES

Professor Martin Pickavé (supervisor)
University of Toronto
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Professor Peter King
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Professor Peter Eardley
University of Guelph
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Professor Deborah Black
University of Toronto
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Professor Franz Huber (teaching advisor)
University of Toronto
Department of Philosophy
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Professor Mark Johnson
Marquette University
Department of Theology
Marquette Hall, Room 350
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