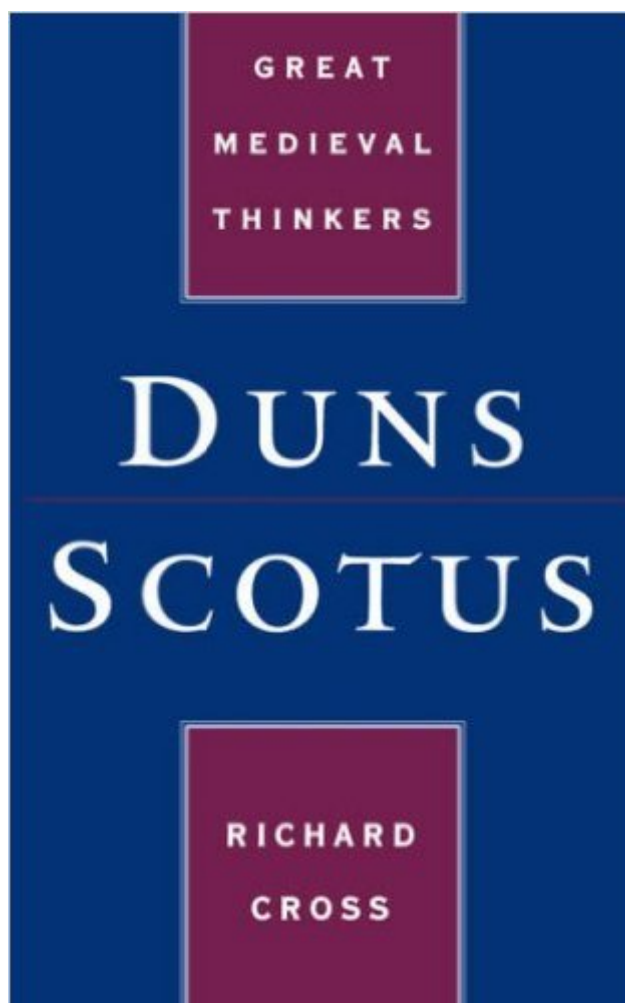


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Duns Scotus (Great Medieval Thinkers)



Synopsis

The nature and content of the thought of Duns Scotus (c. 1266-1308) remains largely unknown except by the expert. This book provides an accessible account of Scotus' theology, focusing both on what is distinctive in his thought, and on issues where his insights might prove to be of perennial value.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Duns Scotus, along with William Ockham, is one of the finest scholastic philosophers of the medieval period. Unfortunately because Scholasticism has a somewhat unfortunate reputation for hair splitting, this important and interesting period of Western philosophy is often neglected in university studies of Philosophy. Yet, as Cross shows, Duns Scotus still has much of interest to offer to the modern philosopher. Scotus's major strength, as you would expect with a medieval schoolman, is logic. Scotus formulates his conclusions with a clarity and precision which is probably not matched until the renaissance of logic in 19th and 20th century analytical and linguistic philosophy. Scotus attempts to offer several arguments for the metaphysical existence of God, using a number of arguments and formulations quite different than those of other philosophers such

as Aquinas, who Scotus often criticises at several points for fallacious reasoning. Some of Scotus's concepts and ideas relating to God and his nature are extremely interesting to the contemporary philosopher of religion, as Scotus argues God is more knowable than we realise and philosophically we can speak meaningfully about God and his nature, which is somewhat in contrast to more mystical philosophers like Meister Eckhart, who might claim we can say little which is really unequivocally true about God and his inner nature. Scotus also presents to us an interesting analysis of the nature of causation, and uses this to prove God exists. The logical complexity and depth of the argument means it is well worth looking at, even if you are an atheist. This book represents an important introduction to Scotus, whose strong emphasis on the proper use of language and the use of powerful logic to clarify metaphysical questions makes him strongly relevant to the questions of philosophy and theology today.

This is an extremely thorough and interesting book. Cross puts personality into each page, demonstrating why the debates are important and whether Scotus's solutions to some of the great questions are likely to hold within the context of medieval debates. The book is illuminating even to a non-specialist with an interest in finding out more about Duns Scotus. This is the best introduction to the subject.

Richard Cross clearly explains the philosophy of Duns Scotus and continues to restore understanding of an often overlooked influence on Catholic Church theology.

I bought the book hoping that I would get a clear explanation of Scotus' views from within. Instead I found an exposition of an analytic philosopher's contracted views on Scotus. To be blunt, Cross should not presume that the reader cares about his views in a work that purports to expound Scotus' views. I find this to be a common defect amongst the analytic philosophers, who seem intent upon telling us that we can make good use of mediaeval philosophy, but fail to see that they themselves are peripheral to that renaissance. I give it three stars for the sake of Duns Scotus, not for the sake of Cross. Beware also his work on the Physics of Duns Scotus, unless, that is, you are an analytic philosopher.

Couldn't agree more with review below! Analytic philosophy almost invariably fails to grasp the uniqueness of historical philosophers; instead they seem to view the history of philosophy as a great catalogue of mistakes where there's not a whole lot to draw inspiration from. This is just sad.

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