February 25, 2016

Nicholas of Cusa in Oxford Bibliographies

Jason Aleksander

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Introduction

Over the past century, Nicholas of Cusa (Nicolaus Cusanus, Nikolaus von Kues, Nicolas de Cues, Nicolás de Cusa, Nicolau de Cusa, Nicola Cusano) (b. 1401–d. 1464) has garnered increasing attention as a barometer of the intellectual history of the European Renaissance. From a superficial perspective, it is not difficult to account for this interest. Nicholas’s theological and philosophical treatises offer a unique perspective on human nature and its relationship to the divine. Moreover, his ecclesiastical career is impressive. In 1432 he took part in the debates at the Council of Basel, where he defended the Conciliarist cause in a manner that earned him a reputation for diplomacy. In 1437–1438, having switched allegiance on the Conciliarism debate, Nicholas was appointed by Pope Eugenius IV to a delegation sent to Constantinople to summon the Byzantine emperor, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and other high Eastern Church officials to the Council of Florence. He was made cardinal in 1448 and appointed Bishop of Brixen in 1450. Beginning in 1451, he served as papal legate and, among other things, was charged with introducing religious reforms in Germany. In 1459 and 1460, Nicholas governed Rome and the Papal States as Legatus urbis in temporibus while Pope Pius II attended the Congress of Mantua. In the last six years of his life, Nicholas served in the papal curia as an advisor to the pope. Given the significance of Nicholas’s ecclesiastical career, it is no surprise that a good deal of academic attention on Nicholas has focused on his role in the history of the church. Nevertheless, it would also be fair to say that a good deal of the attention that is focused on the life and thought of Nicholas of Cusa is the legacy of prior generations of scholars who saw in his theoretical work an opportunity to define the most salient features of transformations in the habits of thinking leading from the Middle Ages into the epoch of modernity. Thus, although contemporary scholars have not been able to achieve any clear consensus on the question of whether Nicholas belongs to the Middle Ages or to modernity, the field of Cusanus studies has become much more attentive to the possibility that the uniqueness and significance of Nicholas’s vision is a function of his ability to synthesize and redeploy a variety of strands in the Catholic intellectual tradition—strands that are as apt to involve practical matters of canon law and church reform as they are to hinge on a unique and richly developed mystical theology. Given the flourishing of the attention devoted to Nicholas in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the choices about which texts to include in this article were difficult ones. The rationale for this article’s predominant focus on scholarship of the late 20th and early 21st centuries is that, insofar as the recent studies listed here enter into the debates that have been shaped by their predecessors, the sources mentioned here will point readers to the prior work in the field not acknowledged here.

General Overviews

Despite the currently flourishing state of scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa, there remain relatively few works (especially in English) that are devoted to providing non-specialists with accessible introductions to his career and thought. Kremer 2002 provides a basic introduction to the life and career of Nicholas of Cusa. Meuthen 2010 (originally published in 1964) remains the best biography available. Flasch 2004 and Gandillac 2001 provide accessible overviews of Nicholas’s thought in German and French. Bellitto, et al. 2004 and Watanabe 2011 provide useful overviews of a number of topics relevant to contemporary Cusanus scholarship. Albertson 2010 is a good entry point for those wanting an orientation to current key topics of interest and debate in scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa.


Albertson’s review of recent literature on Nicholas of Cusa highlights scholarship that attempts “to unify potential divisions in the German cardinal’s writings: between science and religion, novelty and tradition, action and contemplation, and mathematics and theology” (p. 471).


Contains thirteen essays providing overviews of the main topics of inquiry in Cusanus studies as well as a glossary and an extensive, topically arranged bibliography (pp. 409–457) that “attempts to list all published literature in English on Nicholas of Cusa from Tudor times to the end of 2002” (p. 411).


Flasch’s scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa has made a significant impact on the field for more than forty years. In this brief volume (111 pages), however, Flasch intends to reach an audience of non-specialists. His essay focuses on Nicholas’s biography and career and includes annotated selections from Nicholas’s writings.


Gandillac’s first major contribution to scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa was his 1942 dissertation La philosophie de Nicolas de Cues. In this brief (128 pages) introduction, Gandillac intends to reach an audience of non-specialists. Includes annotated selections from Nicholas’s writings.


A brief (seventy-nine pages), basic introduction to Nicholas of Cusa’s biography, career, sources, and legacy. Originally published as Nikolaus von Kues (1401–1464), Einer der grössten Deutschen des 15. Jahrhunderts (Paulinus, 1999); also available in French as Nicolas de Cues: (1401–1464); Un Des Plus Grands Allemands Du 15e Siècle, trans. Patrick Wilwert (Trier, Germany: Paulinus, 2002). Includes a number of full color images.


Provides encyclopedic entries on the “Ideas and Events,” the “Persons,” and the “Places” associated with Nicholas of Cusa. Many of the entries are revised versions of essays that were originally published in the American Cusanus Society (cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources). Each entry includes a brief bibliography.

**Primary Sources**

Although there are a number of publications of various parts of the corpus of Nicholas’s Latin writings, Nicholas of Cusa 1929–, Nicholas of Cusa 1932–, and Meuthen and Hallauer 1976– are the most comprehensive and reliable critical editions. Wilpert 1966–1967 is the best source for works not yet included in the critical editions. Reliable Latin-German editions include Gabriel 1964, Bormann 2002, and Nicholas of Cusa 1936–.


A Latin-German collection based on the materials previously published in the Schriften des Nikolaus von Kues in deutscher Übersetzung.


A Latin-German edition that includes a number of major works and translations and commentary by Dietlind und Wilhelm Dupré.


The volumes in the Acta Cusana collect detailed documents related to Nicholas’s life and career. Most of the material is in Latin with preliminary matter, summaries, and critical appraisals of the documents in German. The latest volume (covering 1 April 1452–29 May 1453) appeared in 2012, so the Acta Cusana project is far from complete at this point.


Like the Acta Cusana, this is a good source for many of Nicholas’s minor works, including letters, sermons, and manuscript annotations. Much of this material also appears in the recent volumes of the Opera Omnia.

Nicholas of Cusa. Opera omnia, iussu et auctioritate Academiae Litterarum Heidelbergensis ad codicum fidem edita. 22 vols. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1932–

The authoritative edition of Nicholas’s Opera omnia as directed by the Cusanus-Kommission of the Heidelberg Akademie der Wissenschaften. This edition is now nearing completion, and only a few of Nicholas’s works remain to be included. The Opera omnia is also available through the Cusanus Portal website (cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources).


An accessible Latin-German edition commissioned by the Heidelberg Academy to keep pace with the Opera Omnia.


The best source for works that have not yet appeared in critical editions and other collections.

**English Translations of Primary Sources**

Most of Nicholas’s individual treatises and a large number of his sermons have been translated into English (see Izbicki’s extensive bibliography in Bellitto, et al. 2004, cited under General Overviews). The entries below include publications that either (a) offer the only published English translation of one of Nicholas’s works or (b) collect translations of several treatises or other writings. Among publications that offer the only published English translation of one of Nicholas’s works, Sigmund 1991 provides the only complete translation of the The Catholic Concordance (De concordantia catholica), and Wertz 1995 provides the only English translation of On the Quadrature of the Circle (De quadratura circuli). Among collections of translations of Nicholas’s writings, Bond 1997 includes translations of five treatises, including the only English translation of On Seeking God (De quaerendo Deum). Izbicki 2008 includes several of Nicholas’s political writings and sermons. Hopkins 2001 includes translations of twenty-four of Nicholas’s major treatises, mostly from the editions of the Opera Omnia, as well as John Wenk’s attack on Nicholas in the De ignota litteratura. Hopkins 2003 and Hopkins 2008 offer translations of a number of Nicholas’s sermons.


Includes translations of On Learned Ignorance (De docta ignorantia), Dialogue on the Hidden God (Dialogus de Deo abscondito), On the Vision of God (De visione Dei), On the Summit of Contemplation (De apice theoriae) and the only English translation of On Seeking God (De quaerendo Deum). Also includes an introductory essay (eighty-four pages), notes, a glossary, and a bibliography.
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These volumes contain translations of twenty-four of Nicholas's major treatises, mostly from the editions of the Opera Omnia, as well as John Wenk’s attack on Nicholas in the De ignorantia literatura. Many of these translations are reprinted from Hopkins’s prior publications offering studies of individual works. Hopkins’s translations are also available on the Cusanus Portal and Hopkins’s personal website, Jasper Hopkins (both cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources).


Includes translations of sermons 1–25. These translations are also available at Hopkins’s personal website (Jasper Hopkins, cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources).


Includes translations of a selection of sermons covering the years 1442–1456. These translations are also available at Hopkins's personal webpage cited under online research tools below. Hopkins’s self-published translations of Nicholas’s sermons from 1457–1464 are also available at his at his personal website (Jasper Hopkins, cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources).


A critical edition that includes Latin and facing English translations of a number of Nicholas’s political writings and sermons. Selections are indicative of the different phases of the development of Nicholas’s ecclesiology and attitudes toward church reform throughout his career.


Although excerpts of De concordantia catholica are translated elsewhere, Sigmund’s remains the only complete English translation of the work.


Includes sixteen treatises (in whole or in part) that are translated in other collections. However, this collection also includes the only English translation of On the Quadrature of the Circle (De quadratura circuli).

Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa has benefitted enormously from the efforts of professional societies in a number of countries. Among these societies, the American Cusanus Society and the Cusanus-Gesellschaft (the German Cusanus Society) have played a significant and direct role in the publication of a number of books included in this article as well as four of the journals mentioned in this section. The thirty-one volumes to date of the American Cusanus Society Newsletter (1983–) include reports on the society’s activities as well as annual bibliographies covering research in the field of Cusanus studies. Many of the volumes also include papers delivered in conference sessions sponsored by the society as well as original contributions by society members. Cusanus Jahrbuch offers articles, book reviews, and reports on the activities and events of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft and the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung at the University of Trier. Litterae Cusanae, which was also sponsored by the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung, published two issues per year containing articles, book reviews, and announcements. The annual volumes of the Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft include articles, book reviews, and conference proceedings. Also included in this section is the website for the Circulos de Estudios Cusanos de Buenos Aires, which provides information about the activities of the society and a well-maintained bibliography of recent research in the field. In addition to these resources, Miller 2013 provides a good introduction to Nicholas’s speculative thought. The Cusanus Portal provides useful research tools for Cusanus scholars, including a fully searchable digital archive of the critical edition of the Opera Omnia. Jasper Hopkins is Hopkins’s personal website, which provides a wealth of information and links to other online resources.

American Cusanus Society.

The society’s website includes a blog that provides timely updates about events relevant to the study of Nicholas of Cusa. Members of the society are also able to access a full archive (1983–) of the American Cusanus Society Newsletter, each issue of which contains both original contributions to Cusanus scholarship as well book reviews, bibliographies, and reports on the activities of the American Cusanus Society.

Circulos de Estudios Cusanos de Buenos Aires.

Provides information about the activities of the society as well as bibliographies that emphasize Spanish contributions and translations of other important works in the field of Cusanus studies.

Cusanus Jahrbuch. 2009–

Annual issues offer articles, book reviews, and reports on the activities and events of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft (the German Cusanus Society) and the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung at the University of Trier. Members of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft receive free copies of the Cusanus Jahrbuch. Non-members may access tables of contents and purchase back issues through the website for the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung online.

Cusanus Portal.

Contains a fully searchable digital archive of the critical edition of the Opera omnia, a large number of German and English translations of the primary sources, an encyclopedia on the life and work of Nicholas of Cusa, and a regularly updated, searchable research bibliography. The portal can be accessed in either German or English.
Jasper Hopkins.

Jasper Hopkins’s personal website offers downloadable versions of the English translations that are found in Hopkins’s Complete Philosophical and Theological Treatises of Nicholas of Cusa as well as archived and self-published versions of Hopkins’s other contributions to the field of Cusanus studies.


This journal, which appears to have been superseded by the Cusanus Jahrbuch, typically published two issues per year containing articles, book reviews, and announcements. Tables of contents for each issue are available at the website for the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung online.


Provides an excellent overview of Nicholas’s philosophical views and useful bibliography.

Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft. 1989–.

Includes articles, book reviews, and conference proceedings. Issued by the chairman of the advisory board of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft in cooperation with the members of the advisory board. Volumes 1–17 published by Matthias-Grünewald Verlag; Volumes 18–33 published by Paulinus Verlag. Tables of contents for all volumes to date are available through the website for the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung online.

Landmark Scholarship

Although this article focuses primarily on Cusanus scholarship from 1980 to the present, the works included in this section are landmarks in the field. Cassirer 1927, Gandillac 1942, and Jaspers 1964 are seminal works but are no longer widely cited in Cusanus scholarship. Sigmund 1963 and Watanabe 1963 did much to bring attention to Nicholas’s ecclesiology and political theories. Blumenberg 1985 offers a famous example of the attempt to use Nicholas as a barometer for broad shifts in intellectual history. Burgevin 1969 and Hagemann 1976 did much to bring attention to discussion of Nicholas’s philosophy of religion and interest in the theme of interreligious dialogue. The work of Flasch 1973 on Nicholas’s philosophy and Haubst 1952 on Nicholas’s theology remains more current than other landmark works.


Originally published in German as Die Legitimität der Neuzeit (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1966), though Wallace’s translation is from a revised version of the 1966 German edition. Blumenberg makes use of Nicholas of Cusa along with Giordano Bruno to defend a notion of an epochal shift that separates modern from pre-modern intellectual history.


Burgevin offers a detailed analysis and criticism of Nicholas’s interpretation of Islam and the Qur’an.


Cassirer’s scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa is no longer cited widely in contemporary Cusanus studies, but Cassirer’s crucial role in the revitalization of the study of Renaissance philosophy was greatly abetted by his analysis of Nicholas of Cusa’s speculative philosophy in this work. Later published in English translation as The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).


The first of Flasch’s many contributions to Cusanus scholarship. This volume focuses mainly on metaphysical themes in Nicholas’s philosophical writings. Flasch’s recent work is especially focused on the internal developments of Nicholas’s philosophical thought across his career.


A well-reputed study of Nicholas’s philosophy that has been largely supplanted by more detailed studies on the same themes in more recent scholarship. Gandillac later revised and published the work in German translation as Studien zu seiner Philosophie und philosophischen Weltanschauung (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1953).


Hagemann offers a detailed analysis of Nicholas’s Cribratio Alkorani.


This volume is the first of Haubst’s many important contributions to the study of Nicholas of Cusa’s theology. This study focuses in particular on Trinitarian theology in Nicholas’s writings. Haubst’s later work also discussed Nicholas’s Christology.


Although Jaspers discusses some of Nicholas’s political ideas and the historical context from which they emerge, the main focus of the work is an exemplary of Nicholas’s speculative philosophy.

Like Watanabe 1963, Sigmund focuses primarily on the De concordantia catholica. But whereas Watanabe emphasizes the relationship of Nicholas’s political theory to its historical predecessors, Sigmund attempts to provide an account of how Nicholas’s early political theory relates to views articulated in his later speculative writings.


Provides an overview of Nicholas’s life, writing, and sources that emphasizes Nicholas’s career in canon law and his interactions with the Conciliar movement. Like Sigmund 1963, Watanabe pays particular attention to Nicholas’s De concordantia catholica.

General Essay Collections

Although there are relatively few works devoted to providing accessible introductions to the career and thought of Nicholas of Cusa, the following essay collections provide useful points of entry to the broad range of issues in Cusanus studies. Casarella 2006, Christianson and Izbicki 1991, Christianson and Izbicki 1996, and Izbicki and Bellitto 2002 were sponsored by the American Cusanus Society and provide essays in English on the wide range of topics current in Cusanus studies. Catà 2010 provides a good introduction to contemporary Italian scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa. Counet and Mercier 2005 provides a good introduction to contemporary French scholarship. Machetta and D’Amico 2005 is a rewarding entry point to contemporary Spanish and Portuguese scholarship. Yamaki 2002 illustrates the extent to which Cusanus studies draws from scholarship throughout various parts of the world.


Collects fourteen essays in English that were originally presented at a conference organized by the American Cusanus Society at the Catholic University of America in 2001 in order to celebrate the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth. Essays cover a variety of subjects, including Nicholas’s speculative thought, attitudes toward Islam, ecclesiology, and influence in math, natural philosophy, and the visual arts.


Includes eighteen essays in Italian on a wide variety of subjects. Contents include introductory and biographical essays as well as essays on Nicholas’s theology and philosophy, Nicholas’s place in the history of ideas, the significance of the natural sciences in Nicholas’s thought, the relationship between mathematics and aesthetic theory in Nicholas’s thought, and essays about Nicholas’s views on ecumenism.


Collects fourteen essays in English that discuss a broad range of issues in Cusanus studies, including Nicholas’s speculative theology, cosmology, metaphysics and epistemology, views on interreligious dialogue and ecumenism, role in the Council of Basel, and general place in the history of ideas.


Collects twenty essays in English that discuss Nicholas’s historical context, his ecclesiology and role in church reform, and his Christology, negative theology, and metaphysics.


Contains twelve essays in English and French originally offered for a conference celebrating the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth on a broad range of themes in Cusanus studies. Among the topics covered are the ethical and hermeneutic implications of Nicholas’s conjectural method, Nicholas’s ecumenism, the sources for Nicholas’s mathematical theology, the influence of Eckhart on Nicholas’s mystical theology, Nicholas’s anthropology and epistemology, and the relationship between Nicholas’s ecclesiology and mystical theology.


Collects thirteen essays in English that discuss a broad range of issues in Cusanus studies, including Nicholas’s speculative theology, pastoral concerns, ecclesiology, and his historical context.


This volume contains the proceedings of the Primer Congreso Internacional Cusano de Latinoamérica held in Buenos Aires 1–4 June 2004. The volume includes thirty-four essays in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, English, and German on a wide array of topics.


Collects twenty-five papers in German, English, and French originally presented for a conference celebrating the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth held 6–8 October 2000 at Waseda University, Tokyo. The essays cover a broad range of subjects, including: Nicholas’s speculative theology, philosophy, mathematics, and cosmology; his career and biography; his significance in the history of ideas; and his theology from “the point of view of the encounter” with non-European cultures.
Speculative Theology and Philosophy

The scholarship mentioned in this section covers the major themes of Nicholas’s work: his philosophy of human nature, epistemology, metaphysical commitments, and various aspects of his mystical theology. The cited essay collections provide a good overview of the major topics of discussion in scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa’s philosophy and theology. The monographs provide more detailed discussions of some of these themes.

Essay Collections

The following essay collections provide excellent overviews of current topics of discussion in the study of Nicholas of Cusa’s theology and philosophy. André and Alvarez-Gómez 2002 collects twenty-two essays exploring Nicholas’s concept of the “coincidence of opposites” throughout his writings and in relationship to the other major themes of his treatises. The contributors to these volumes hail primarily from Europe and South America and were brought together for a conference held jointly in Salamanca and Coimbra that celebrated the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth. Four other recent proceedings volumes listed here are also each devoted to particular themes of Nicholas’s work and include mainly essays by European scholars. André, et al. 2006 includes essays on the theme of “self” and “imagination.” Euler, et al. 2010 includes essays on “The Self, Self-Consciousness, and World View.” Pasqua 2011 includes essays that discuss themes of identity, unity, and/or difference as they are taken up in individual treatises. Schweitzer and Reinhardt 2003 includes essays on Nicholas of Cusa’s anthropology, epistemology, and mystical theology. Cranz 2000 and Duclow 2006 collect essays by these two individual authors on a variety of subjects in the field.


Collects eleven essays in German, Portuguese, and Italian originally presented in 2001 at a conference on the theme of “Coincidence of Opposites and Concord: Ways of Thought in Nicholas of Cusa” that was held in Coimbra and Salamanca to celebrate the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth.


Collects eleven essays in Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese that were originally presented in 2001 at a conference on the theme of “Coincidence of Opposites and Concord: Ways of Thought in Nicholas of Cusa” that was held in Coimbra and Salamanca to celebrate the sixth jubilee of Nicholas’s birth.


Proceedings volume that collects ten essays in German on the themes of “intellect” and “imagination” in the works of Nicholas of Cusa.


Collects six of Cranz’s previously published essays and seven previously unpublished lectures on Nicholas of Cusa, including: essays on “major themes in Nicholas of Cusa”; essays that analyze specific treatises; previously unpublished lectures on the influence of Augustine, Proclus, and Pseudo-Dionysus on Nicholas; comparative assessments of Nicholas and Martin Luther; and a previously unpublished lecture on the bibliographic background for the De visione Dei.


Collects twenty of Duclow’s previously published essays on Eriugena, Eckhart, and Nicholas of Cusa. The introductory essay discusses the hermeneutics of the divine names as a common theme in Pseudo-Dionysus, Eriugena, and Nicholas of Cusa. Part 1 of the volume includes seven essays on Eriugena. Part 2 includes five essays on Eckhart. Part 3 includes seven essays on Nicholas of Cusa.


Includes papers in German and English on a wide variety of topics in Nicholas’s speculative thought. The papers in this collection were originally presented at a conference on “The Self, Self-Consciousness and World View in the Later Writings of Nicholas of Cusa” that was held 31 July–8 August 2008 at Åbo Akademi University, Finland.


Summarizes and collects a number of Haubst’s many significant essays contributing to the study of Nicholas’s theology.


This volume’s eleven essays, all in French, were originally presented at a colloquium held at the Institut Catholique de Rennes, 24–25 April 2009. Most of the essays focus on the themes of identity, unity, and/or difference in one or two specific treatises.


Includes fifteen essays (twelve in German, one in Spanish, and two in English) focused mainly on Nicholas of Cusa’s anthropology, epistemology, and mystical theology.

Monographs
Among the monographs below, those of Hopkins 1996, Hopkins 2000, and Miller 2003 are devoted to the explication of specific treatises—Hopkins 1996 discusses De sapientia, De mente, and De staticis; Hopkins 2000 discusses De coniecturis and De ludo globi; Miller 2003 discusses De docta ignorantia, De coniecturis, Idiota de mente, De visione Dei, De il non aliud, and De venatione sapientiae. Bocken 2004 focuses on Nicholas’s De coniecturis but does so in order to leverage a discussion of hermeneutic theory. Albertson 2014, Hudson 2007, and Wolter 2004 focus on Nicholas’s theology. Albertson 2014 also discusses Nicholas’s situation in the history of ideas. Hudson 2007 assesses the extent to which Nicholas’s doctrine of theosis (deification) remains consistent with traditional Roman Catholic incarnational theology. Wolter 2004 focuses on how Nicholas of Cusa’s theology of creation is itself an immanent expression of a Trinitarian theophany. Schwaetzer 2000 is focused specifically on the idea of aequalitas (equality) as it expresses itself both explicitly and latently throughout Nicholas’s works.


Hopkins, Jasper. Nicholas of Cusa on Wisdom and Knowledge. Minneapolis: Banning, 1996. Contains Hopkins’s translations of De sapientia, De mente, and De staticis experimentis and a lengthy analysis of the major themes of these works (pp. 3–84).

Hopkins, Jasper. Nicholas of Cusa: Metaphysical Speculations. Vol. 2. Minneapolis: Banning, 2000. Contains translations of De coniecturis and De ludo globi and a lengthy “orienting study” of these works. The first part of the orienting study (pp. 3–60) is an “expository purview” that Hopkins intends to be of use to “all students and scholars who are interested in Nicholas of Cusa’s thought.” The second part is an “analysis of specialized topics” (pp. 61–145) that “is meant only for those scholars who are directly working in the field of Cusan studies.”

Hudson, Nancy. Becoming God: The Doctrine of Theosis in Nicholas of Cusa. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007. Discusses De docta ignorantia, De coniecturis, De filiatione Dei, De visione Dei in order to draw out Nicholas of Cusa’s doctrine of theosis (deification) and assess the extent to which Nicholas’s emphasis on the possibility of “intellectual salvation” remains consistent with traditional Roman Catholic incarnational theology.


Nicholas of Cusa’s Sources

One of the chief characteristics of Nicholas’s thought is his broad, synthetic approach to the resources available to him. Moreover, that Nicholas cites these sources explicitly and frequently has given rise to a great deal of contemporary scholarship discussing Nicholas’s unique synthetic approach to his precursors. Consequently, a great number of works included in this bibliography, to greater or lesser degree, touch on one or more sources of influence on Nicholas. Beierwaltes 1989 focuses on John Scottus Eriugena’s impact; Hankey 2006 focuses on the impact of Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius; Moran 2007 and Moran 2008 focus on Pseudo-Dionysius, Meister Eckhart, and other neo-Platonic sources; the essays in Schwaetzer and Steer 2011 and Vannier 2006 focus on the impact of Eckhart. Cranz 2000 includes essays that focus on the influence of Augustine, Proclus, and Pseudo-Dionysius. Duclow 2006 contains essays that discuss the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius, Eriugena, Gregory of Nyssa, Anselm, and Eckhart.


Cranz, F. Edward. Nicholas of Cusa and the Renaissance. Edited by Thomas M. Izbicki and Gerald Christianson. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2000. Collects six of Cranz’s previously published essays and seven previously unpublished lectures on Nicholas of Cusa. Among these, the essays in Part 3 include the previously published “Saint Augustine and Nicholas of Cusa in the Tradition of Western Christian Thought” and three previously unpublished lectures: “The (Concept of the) Beyond in Proclus, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Cusanus”; “Nicholas Cusanus and Dionysius Areopagita”; and “Cusanus’ Use of Pseudo-Dionysius.”
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Evaluates prior scholarship on the question of Nicholas's modernity. Offers a reassessment by arguing for the specific relevance of Nicholas's concepts of

Maurizi, Marco. La nostalgia del totalmente non altro: Cusano e la genesi della modernità. Soveria Mannelli, Italy: Bubbettino, 2008.

Evaluates prior scholarship on the question of Nicholas's modernity. Offers a reassessment by arguing for the specific relevance of Nicholas's concepts of concordantia, coincidentia, and praecisio to the question of his modernity.

Reception and Place in the History of Ideas

The most significant perennial matter of debate in Cusanus studies concerns the question of whether Nicholas belongs to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, or modernity. Recent scholarship has shown that Nicholas's direct impact on the development of modern philosophy and science was probably negligible. Nevertheless, a number of scholars have tended to see Nicholas as a figure who at least occupies or exemplifies an epochal threshold between the Middle Ages and modernity. At the same time, recent scholarship has become more attentive to Nicholas's historical context, and so many contemporary scholars maintain that the best way to appreciate the uniqueness of Nicholas’s vision is to attend to his own perspectives on his historical context and the views of his predecessors (see Nicholas of Cusa’s Sources) rather than put him forward as a harbinger of modernity. Each of the five monographs explicitly evaluate previous scholarship on the question of Nicholas’s modernity in order to ground their own assessments of the question. Brient 2002 argues that Nicholas of Cusa and Meister Eckhart’s work indicates an historical transformation in perspectives on divine immanence that mark a transition from the medieval to the modern work. Hoff 2013 reads Nicholas of Cusa’s De visione Dei as an exemplary expression of late-scholastic responses to the realism/nominalism controversy. Maurizi 2008 argues for the specific relevance of Nicholas’s concepts of concordantia, coincidentia, and praecisio to adjudicating the question of his modernity. Meier-Oeser 1989 evaluates arguments about Nicholas’s modernity by offering a detailed discussion of the history of Nicholas’s reception in the 17th and 18th centuries. Moore 2013 discusses the question of Nicholas’s modernity through the lens of the historiography of post–Second World War debates (especially between Gadamer and Blumenberg) about Nicholas’s role in the history of ideas. The three essay collections provide essays that represent the breadth of perspectives on the question of Nicholas’s reception and place in the history of ideas. Müeller and Volf 2013 includes essays on a broad variety of perspectives on Nicholas’s influence, reception, and the applicability of his ideas to contemporary philosophical and theological issues. Schwaetzer and Zeyer 2008 offers essays that discuss Nicholas’s influence in four main arenas: religion and science, aesthetic theory, social processes, and the history of European philosophy. Thurner 2002 collects essays that focus on the influence of 15th-century German and Italian culture on Nicholas’s thought and Nicholas’s subsequent influence on Renaissance German and Italian humanist philosophy.


Brients assesses Hans Blumenberg’s argument in Die Legitimität der Neuzeit (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986) that Nicholas, paired with Giordano Bruno, occupies an epochal threshold between medieval and modern worldviews. Contrary to Blumenberg’s identification of this threshold with nominalism’s impact on the understanding of divine transcendence, Brient argues that this epochal threshold is more accurately located in transformations of perspectives on divine immanence, as witnessed in the works of Eckhart and Nicholas.


Offers a reading of Nicholas of Cusa’s De visione Dei in order to argue that Nicholas’s analogical thinking is both an exemplary expression of late-scholastic responses to the realism/nominalism controversy and a potential resource for what Hoff regards as a contemporary challenge to find meaning in what otherwise seems to be a world of "completely ordinary chaos."

Maurizi, Marco. La nostalgia del totalmente non altro: Cusano e la genesi della modernità. Soveria Mannelli, Italy: Bubbettino, 2008.

Evaluates prior scholarship on the question of Nicholas’s modernity. Offers a reassessment by arguing for the specific relevance of Nicholas’s concepts of concordantia, coincidentia, and praecisio to the question of his modernity.
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http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396501...


Evaluates arguments about Nicholas’s modernity by offering a detailed discussion of the history of Nicholas’s reception in the 17th and 18th centuries. Argues that Nicholas’s supposed modernity cannot have been a consequence of his actual historical impact on the development of modern science and philosophy even while acknowledging that attending to Nicholas’s unique concepts may help appreciate the historical transition from a medieval to modern worldview.


Discusses the question of Nicholas’s modernity—and, more generally, the meaningfulness of all discussions about the essence of “modernity”—through the lens of the historiography of post–Second World War debates (especially between Gadamer and Blumenberg) about Nicholas’s role in the history of ideas.


Includes twenty-four essays, mostly in German, offering a broad variety of perspectives on Nicholas’s influence, reception, and the applicability of his ideas to contemporary philosophical and theological issues.


Includes sixteen papers in German originally presented at a symposium “Cusanus als Europäer” held in Trier, Germany, 3–5 March 2007, by the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung, the Theologische Fakultät, Universität Trier, and the Katholische Akademie Trier. The volume is arranged in four main parts with sections on “A New World View: Art, Religion, and Science”; “Perspectives on Art”; “Social Processes”; and “Nicholas of Cusa in the History of European Philosophy.”


A collection of essays, mostly in German and Italian (one essay is in English), that focus on the influence of 15th-century German and Italian culture on Nicholas’s thought and Nicholas’s subsequent influence on Renaissance German and Italian humanist philosophy.

Mathematics, Cosmology, and Natural Philosophy

Contemporary scholarship on Nicholas’s views on mathematics is often tied to discussions of his theology. Among the works below that emphasize the connection between mathematics and theology in Nicholas’s thought, Böhlandt 2009 argues that Nicholas’s mathematical theories are an expression of medieval theological views. Hösle 1990 argues that Nicholas synthesizes Platonic/Euclidian mathematical impulses with conceptions of infinitude that arise in Christian theology. Nagel 2007 emphasizes the influence of Boethius and neo-Pythagorean philosophy on Nicholas’s mathematical theories, especially as these pertain to Nicholas’s discussions of the possibility of squaring the circle. Other scholarship focuses on the relationship between Nicholas’s views on mathematics and cosmology and/or natural philosophy or on the connection between Nicholas’s views on mathematics and his understanding of human nature and epistemology. Harries 2001 treats Nicholas as a pivotal figure in his wide-ranging discussion of the historical transition from pre-modern to modern science and cosmology. Powrie 2013 focuses on the possible influence on Nicholas of mathematical innovations and thought experiments of 14th-century natural philosophy. Nagel 1984 argues that Nicholas’s epistemological views and understanding of mathematics and measurement may be seen as a development away from the ambitions of late-scholastic philosophy. Vengeon 2006 discusses the mathematical implications of Nicholas’s epistemological and anthropological theories throughout a number of his major treatises. As is the case to greater or lesser degree for all of the works, discussions of Nicholas’s views on mathematics, cosmology, or natural philosophy tend to be offered as grounds for an assessment of the question of Nicholas’s place in the history of ideas.


Provides a historically oriented discussion of the formation of Nicholas’s mathematical views as they are expressed in Nicholas speculative and mathematical treatises. On the basis of a detailed reconstruction of the context for Nicholas’s work, Böhlandt maintains that Nicholas’s mathematical theories are an expression of his theological views and that these theories are fully rooted in the medieval worldview.


In the midst of his wide-ranging discussion of the historical transition from pre-modern to modern science and cosmology (and Harries’s advocacy of “a new postmodern geocentrism”), Harries draws on Nicholas as a liminal figure who occupies a conceptual link between ancient and modern worldviews.


Discusses Nicholas’s cosmological views as an outgrowth of his philosophy of mathematics. Argues that by synthesizing tensions between Platonist/Euclidian mathematical impulses and conceptions of infinitude that arise in Christian theology, Nicholas becomes “one of the fathers not only of modern mathematics, but also of modern science” (p. 103).


Argues that Nicholas’s epistemological views and understanding of mathematics and measurement may be seen as a development away from the ambitions of late-scholastic philosophy. The first part of the book discusses Nicholas’s work; the second part discusses Nicholas’s reception and legacy.


Focuses on the relationships between Nicholas’s mathematical theories and theology, especially as these are expressed in Nicholas’s discussions of the possibility of squaring the circle. Nagel
emphasizes the influence of Boethius and neo-Platonic philosophy on Nicholas's mathematical theories.


Focusses on the metaphysical presuppositions that influence Nicholas's mathematical theories, especially with regard to the question of the possibility of squaring the circle. Nicole emphasizes the influence of Proclus on Nicholas's thought.


Argues that Nicholas of Cusa's discussion of limit, measure, infinity, and incommensurability in *De docta ignorantia* was shaped by the mathematical innovations and thought experiments of 14th-century natural philosophy.


Discusses the mathematical implications of Nicholas's epistemological and anthropological theories throughout a number of his major treatises. Also offers some reflections on Nicholas's reception and legacy.

**Ecclesiology, Political Theory, and Role in the History of the Church**

Roughly speaking, there were two main strands of scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa in the mid-20th century: one devoted to his speculative views and mystical theology, the other devoted to his ecclesiological, political theory, and role in the history of the church. The essays collected in Watanabe 2001 are indicative of that individual scholar’s significant impact on the latter strand of research. Sullivan 1994 contributes a detailed summary of one of the most significant periods of Nicholas’s ecclesiastical career. Other works, however, illustrate how the two major strands of the prior generations of research have begun to merge so that scholars reflecting on Nicholas’s ecclesiastical career have increasingly drawn connections to his speculative works, while those interested in his speculative works have been increasingly attentive to the significance of Nicholas’s historical context, including his ecclesiastical career. The essays in Bocken 2004 focus on Nicholas’s ecclesiological career, his role in the consiliarism debate, and his views on interreligious conflict. Bond and Christianson 2011 collects several essays concerning Nicholas’s role in the Council of Basel and his ecclesiological views at the time. Frank and Winkler 2012 collects essays focusing on Nicholas’s theoretical views concerning church reform as well as his concrete reform efforts in his ecclesiastical roles. Miroy 2009 argues that Nicholas’s political theory and ecclesiological views are expressions of his speculative views concerning the metaphysics of concordance. Ziebart 2014 discusses Nicholas’s role in the Tegernsee Debate in order to discuss the entwining of his ecclesiological views and his speculative views and their common roots in traditional Roman Catholic theology and Aristotelian philosophy.


Includes thirteen essays in English and German. The volume includes essays under five main headings: “Cusanus and the Spirit of the Devotio Moderna,” “Cusanus and Consiliarism,” “On Religious Conflicts and Tolerance,” “Theology Between Conflict and Resolution,” and “Freedom and Reconciliation.”


Includes eight essays by Christianson and seven by Bond. All of Christianson’s and one of Bond’s focus on Cusanus’s role in the Council of Basel and his ecclesiological views at the time. Bond’s other seven essays in Nicholas’s speculative theology.


Papers (nine in German, one in English) originating in a February 2011 workshop and fall conference held at the Freie Universität Berlin. Contributions focus on Nicholas’s theoretical views concerning church reform as well as his concrete reform efforts in his ecclesiastical roles.


By discussing the relationship between Nicholas of Cusa’s *De concordantia catholica* and *De docta ignorantia*, Miroy argues that Nicholas’s political theory is best understood neither as a theory about the significance of political equality nor as an argument derived primarily from principles of canon law, but instead as an expression of his speculative views concerning the metaphysics of concordance as a harmonious, hierarchical arrangement of diverse elements within a single, unified whole.


Discusses Nicholas of Cusa’s reform commission and assesses the success of his legation tour through Germany. Contrary to the views of earlier scholars, Sullivan concludes that, “on the question of the success or failure of the German legation as a whole, the answer must lie, in any measurable sense, near to a judgment of failure” (p. 422).


Following an introduction by Francis Oakley (pp. xix–xxv), this volume collects twenty of Watanabe’s previously published essays (one co-authored with Thomas M. Izbicki) on Nicholas of Cusa and the legal and ecclesiastical context for his career and contributions to the history of the church.

Focuses on Nicholas's work through the lens of Nicholas's role and participation in the Tegernsee Debate concerning the relationship between faith and reason in mystical theology. Ziebart makes a compelling case for a historically contextualized reading of Nicholas's work and maintains that both his ecclesiological views and his speculative views tend to be more rooted in tradition than those who read him as a modern or proto-modern thinker have appreciated.

**Views on Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism**

Closely connected to research on Nicholas of Cusa’s ecclesiology, political theory, and role in the history of the church are questions concerning his theoretical views on ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, especially as they are expressed in the *De pace fidei*s (On the Peace of Faith) response to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and Nicholas’s criticisms of Islamic theology in Cribatio Alkorani (The Sifting of the Koran). Among the sources below, Biechler and Bond 1990 provides a useful introductory essay discussing Nicholas' *De pace fidei*. Helander 1993 interprets both Nicholas’s overtly political and ecclesiological works as well as his speculative views as broadly expressive of the same ecumenical ambitions. Hopkins 1990 provides a useful introductory essay concerning the *De pace fidei* and the Cribatio Alkorani. Levy, et al. 2014 provides several essays on Nicholas’s *De pace fidei* and Cribatio Alkorani, Nicholas’s views on Islam, and a few essays discussing the wider range of late-medieval texts on Christian-Muslim relations. Bakos 2011 uses a focused analysis of Nicholas’s concepts of manuductio and pia interpretatio in order to discuss Nicholas's understanding of the value of interreligious dialogue. Costigliolo 2012 provides a historically contextualized analysis of Nicholas’s apologetic strategies in *De concordantia catholica*, *De docta ignorantia*, *De pace fidei*, and Cribatio Alkorani. Euler 1990 provides a detailed analysis of Raymond Lull’s and Nicholas of Cusa’s attempts to reconcile their ecumenical ambitions with their apologetic defenses of Christian theology. Riedenauer 2007 makes a case for the contemporary relevance of Nicholas’s views on interreligious dialogue.


Discusses Nicholas’s understanding of the value of interreligious dialogue through a detailed analysis of the concepts of manuductio and pia interpretatio. Bakos emphasizes the practical import of Nicholas’s understanding of the value of a manuductive approach to non-Christian religions. In doing so, Bakos acknowledges but deemphasizes the extent to which Nicholas offers an apology for the privileged doctrinal status of Trinitarian theology.


In addition to Bond’s excellent translation and a concordance (rendered obsolete by the searchable texts on the Cusanus Portal, cited under Journals, Book Series, Academic Societies, and Other Resources), the volume contains a useful introduction to the *De pace fidei* (pp. ix–xlvii).


Discusses Nicholas’s apologetic strategies in *De concordantia catholica*, *De docta ignorantia*, *De pace fidei*, and Cribatio Alkorani. While Costigliolo shows that these works share the same coherent set of assumptions and apologetic aims, she also emphasizes the ways in which these works are indicative of the development of Nicholas’s views in response to the concrete historical context in which they were written.


Lays out a detailed analysis of Raymond Lull’s and Nicholas of Cusa’s attempts to reconcile Christianity’s insistence on its universality with their own impulses to regard all religions as expressing, in some fashion, the same underlying truth.


Helander interprets both Nicholas’s overtly political and ecclesiological works as well as his speculative views as broadly expressive of the same ecumenical ambitions.


Contains an introductory essay, notes, a bibliography, and translations of the two treatises most directly relevant to a discussion of Nicholas of Cusa’s views on interreligious dialogue and ecumenism (these translations are also available in Hopkins 2001, cited under English Translations of Primary Sources and on Hopkins’s personal website, Jasper Hopkins).


Contains several essays originally presented at the 2012 biennial symposium of the American Cusanus Society on the topic of Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Late Middle Ages. Includes essays on Nicholas’s *De pace fidei* and Cribatio Alkorani and Nicholas’s views on Islam as well as a wider range of late-medieval texts on Christian-Muslim relations.


Riedenauer explicates Nicholas’s views on interreligious dialogue in order to argue for their contemporary relevance. Chapters 2–3 discuss Nicholas’s historical context. Chapter 4 discusses Nicholas’s general epistemological views and philosophy of human nature. Chapter 5 provides a detailed analysis of Nicholas’s *De visiöne Dei* in order to expose the theoretical foundations for Nicholas’s views on the legitimacy of religious diversity.

**Aesthetic Theory and Contributions to the History of the Visual Arts**

A recently emerging topic of discussion in scholarship on Nicholas of Cusa concerns his aesthetic theories and contributions to the history of the visual arts. Bender 2010 situates Nicholas’s doctrine of beauty in relationship to the legacy of Pseudo-Dionysus and Albert the Great. Carman 2014 argues that Albert’s *On Painting* and various works of Nicholas Cusanus reveal a “shared epistemology of vision.” Cizala 2008 compares Nicholas’s philosophical principles to the iconography of 15th-century art in order to show that his philosophy is an exemplary product of a Renaissance culture. Cucuzzo 2012 discusses Nicholas’s aesthetic theory by comparison to the artistic works and treatises of a variety of well-known Renaissance artists. Roark 2010 discusses Nicholas’s “perspectivalism” in the context of Renaissance developments in theories of vision and artistic production. These four monographs also offer perspectives on the question of Nicholas of
Cusa’s broader role in the history of ideas. The essays collected in Eckert and Schwaetzer 2013 offer a broad range of perspectives on Nicholas’s aesthetic theory.


Chapter 7 (pp. 269–350) offers a detailed discussion of Nicholas’s doctrine of beauty. Bender situates Nicholas’ doctrine with particular attention to the influence of Pseudo-Dionysus and Albert the Great.


Argues that Alberti’s *On Painting* and various works of Nicholas Cusanus reveal a “shared epistemology of vision.” In light of the commonalities in these two thinkers’ aesthetic theories, Carman argues for a reassessment of Alberti that emphasizes the mystical Neoplatonic dimensions of his views.


Compares Nicholas’s philosophical principles to the iconography of 15th-century art (especially in the artworks and treatises of Alberti, Paolo Uccello, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, and Michael Pacher) in order to show that Nicholas’s philosophy is an exemplary product of a Renaissance culture that must be understood as driven by a “new idea of God” rather than, “as Cassirer wanted, a new epistemological principle” (p. 301).


Discusses Nicholas’s aesthetic theory by comparison to the artistic works and treatises of Leon Batista Alberti, van Eyck, Albrecht Dürer, Lorenzo Lotto, Leonardo da Vinci, and Leonardo da Bressanone.


Contains eight essays in German relating to various aspects of Nicholas’s aesthetic theory and a German translation of Nicholas’s Sermon 243 (“Tota pulchra es, amica mea et macula no est in te”) by Matthias Simperl.


Discusses Nicholas’s “pespectivalism” in the context of Renaissance developments in theories of vision and artistic production. Argues that neither Nicholas’s nor Alberti’s views on perspective offer radical departures from ancient and medieval cosmological and epistemological theories.