

OVERALL CHART: The Conciliar Period--325-900 AD

Historical Conditions

The Roman Empire is divided (mostly) in political alignment from the time of Diocletian (300 AD). The eastern sement has its capitol at Constantinople (after Constantine) and will continue as a governmental and military force until 1453 AD. The western empire grows progressively weaker and the "fall of Rome" or the end of the western empireship, is dated at 476 AD. Rome, the city, following the imperial collapse, will be for a time under the care of Gothic warlords, then under the aegis of the Roman emperor of the east. But with the failure of this system, the Roman city, by 600 AD, will develop its own defenses and will become the continuing force for civilization in the west. Following the conversion of the Franks, a Frankish kingdom in the 8th century will take the military leadership in the west, followed by a Germanic power and the eventual development of the "Holy Roman Empire" about 964.

The eastern church will be continually harassed by the Islamic forces after the 7th century AD.

The "Dark Ages" in Europe coincide with the loss of military structure in the west and feudalism will rise as the more standard governmental form while monasticism will highlight the religious life.

Conflicts

In Theology Proper, the Arian and Sabellian controversies are the most notable. These are followed with the rash of Christological controversies that marked the period...in order of occurrence:

Appolinarianism
Nestorianism
Eutychianism
Monothelitism
Adotionism

Questions in anthropology will occur in the teachings of Pelagius and the continuing obscurities of Origen.

The image controversy (iconism) will loom in the 8th century and will be followed by the filioque arguments (the procession of the Holy Spirit) and the continuing authority postures of the bishops.

Sacramental conflicts abound consistently and hermeneutics of the fathers will offer issues.