

THE SCHOLASTIC PERIOD....1200-1500 AD (broad coverage) (Overall Char

Historical Conditions

This period actually overlaps the conciliar age and begins with the birth of the university movement and the work of Anselm, et al. The earlier portion is marked with the social order of the feudal system and the machinations of the newly organized ideal in the Holy Roman Empire. The western world is a rash of individualized kings and kingdoms but all nominally holding to the Roman faith and supposedly loyal to it. Most of western Europe (including Scandinavia) has been "Christianized" and so has most of eastern Europe but it is largely in line with the Greek church since the Greek/Roman division of 1054. This is the age of the crusades and the birth of newer nationalism in Europe. The higher period is marked by the national development of schools (university level) and the expansion of monastic orders. The church is in a rather sterile role save for the inventiveness of the newer monastics and an occasional reforming pope. The monastic structure offers the calmist place for living during this time and the burden of the production is from these centers. As the period moves on, the coming of humanism and the re-birth of an interest in man produces an anti-clerical spirit that helps in preparing the world for the later reformation movements. It is a mistake to think of this period as non-productive...history allowed the scholastics time to study and produce.

Conflicts

There was the large conflict between the Eastern and Western wings of the church that saw the schism of 1054. Most of the conflicts that arrest us after that are in the Roman system and they revolve around the re-interpretation of Augustine and the growth of the religious ideals begun under Gregory the Great--600 AD. The arguments over the Lord's Supper are pressing and the east west problem over how the Spirit comes (from the Father or from the father and the Son). The Eucharist problem is ended in Rome at the Lateran council of 1215 when Transubstantiation is made the rule of the church.

There is a scholastic conflict within the church between realists, nominalists, et al. and we will mention that as we come to it. Conflicts involving the investiture of religious office are also prominent and the whole clergy/laity matter is a situation of unrest. Moral conflicts, with the demoralization of the Roman See, will also be primary sources of trouble in this age.