

4. The emergence of stronger national powers: the city states in Italy; France, England, the Teutonic states. Nationalism is slowly but surely becoming more important than religion and it is bringing with it powerful sociological changes.
5. The opening of the new world

C. Church Developments

The church had lost a great deal of public image and credibility by this time: overcome with superstition and sacerdotalism. Nevertheless it remained a powerful institution...people might not like it but the potential of eternal loss was too big a gamble for a considerate person...there seemed to be no alternative to the church and its synergistic theology but there were plenty of ripples in the water to suggest that a change was imminent.

1. Earlier hints at church renewal

You will remember that worldliness, etc. have been troubles in the church almost since the beginning. The problems increased with time and with fewer persons who could contend with the monolith of ecclesiasticalism. But there were some notable calls given from the 11th century on in persons such as Damiani (1072), Bernard of Clairvaux (1153), Arnold of Brescia (1155)

2. Determined (and/or determinate) movements

These grow out of the realization of the need for reform and the inability of the body to reform or restructure itself. The following are the important items in this discussion.

a. Peter Waldo (1217)

We include him at this point as the great thrust of his work came following his demise. I will talk about him, his methods, accomplishments, etc., at some length. Even though the movement was condemned in 1179 it remained a reforming force until the Reformation...and there is a formalistic continuance of it yet today. You will often see the Waldensians referred to as the "Poor men of Lyons"...a reference to their point of origin and their insistence on apostolic poverty.