

Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe : vol. 2: the Heroic Age

R.W. Southern, with notes and additions by
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SUMMARY

This fine work is the second part of a trilogy which aims to show how many of the North-West European theological thinkers of the Twelfth Century applied their theological conclusions to matters of state and polity. The bridge between these two may well have been their own lives, as is implicit in the book's argument.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese wertvolle Arbeit ist der zweite Teil einer Trilogie, die zeigen will, auf welche Weise viele theologische Denker aus Norwest-Europa im 12. Jahrhundert ihre theologischen Schlussfolgerungen auf die Fragen des Staates und des Gemeinwesens anwendeten. Die Brücke zwischen diesen beiden Bereichen bildete sehr wahrscheinlich das eigene Leben der Denker, wie aus dem Buch implizit hervorgeht.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce volume est le second d'une trilogie ayant pour objet de montrer à quel point les théologiens de la partie nord-ouest de l'Europe au XII^e siècle ont appliqué leurs conclusions théologiques aux affaires politiques. L'idée implicite est que le lien entre théologie et politique a été la vie de ces théologiens.

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This is the second part of a planned trilogy, the first volume of which appeared in 1999 and the concluding one (Vol 3 = *History of the schools*) is still in stages of editing from the notes the author left on his death. In some ways it is fair to see it as his *magnum opus*, though sadly there are signs in this volume that the author was running a race with his own mortality – a number of instances of repetition (e.g., pp 160 and 165); although sometimes saying something twice can be helpful to the reader! Southern labels the period 1060-1200 as the heroic age. Why the heroic age? Because scholars during this period tried 'nothing less than to embrace all knowledge and every kind of activity in a single world-view,' and because these pre-1200 scholars created bonds between scholarship and the organised life of European society: a combination which is the subject of this work. They were more crucial than the later, more famous scholars for matters societal and political. What unites the theology and the politics is the biographies of the characters and Southern had an ear for a story-Anselm of Laon and William of Champeaux's sudden deaths are related with relish.

Southern's thesis is that scholastic theology was not done for its own sake: exposition of biblical texts was

followed by sentences based on these (opinions on disputed matters arising from them) leading to an application to practical life and government. It is however not altogether clear just how theology (the subject matter of the disputations) rather than the lives of the theologians helped link the biblical texts with the practical problems. If anything it would appear that a 'canon law' mentality went straight to the text with its 'practical' questions. If there is a failing in this work, it is that there are too few examples from primary sources.

Whereas monastic works like Rupert of Deutz's commentaries could be long and heavy, the schools were about producing portable and thus influential small works of 'text-book' style. Abelard reflects his time: but, Southern argues, was not influential on following generations, which may come as a surprise. In fact Southern portrays Abelard in the last 20 years of his life as a faithful Trinitarian theologian, although the justification for why Abelard used language which was not that of the church fathers is not terribly helpful (107) The author is at his best when describing the big picture and making connections between authors and generations. For example, the concept of the World Soul moved from being understood as the same as the Holy Spirit in William of Conches to being just the vital force (in William's later works) to being (in anonymous successor) a metaphor for order in universe.

A fine book, readable, written with passion and authority, a fine testament to a great illuminator of medieval Christian thought and life.

Mark W. Elliott, *Liverpool Hope*

Image of the Invisible: The Visualization of Religion in the Welsh Nonconformist Tradition

John Harvey

Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999, xiv + 218 pp.
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SUMMARY

In *Image of the Invisible* John Harvey shows that Welsh Nonconformity did employ visual representations in its spiritual and religious life. The Bible was the use of the various forms of art used in Nonconformist worship, devotional literature and buildings. Dealing with the period from the early eighteenth century to the first decade of the twentieth century, Harvey focuses on the Calvinistic Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Apostolic Church, providing many informative glimpses into the history and thought of these Nonconformist traditions.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

John Harvey zeigt, dass walisische Nonkonformisten visuelle Repräsentationen in ihrem geistlichen und religiösen Leben verwendeten. Die Bibel bildete die Grundlage der verschiedenen Kunstformen im