

# **Scholasticism, Humanism, and a prelude to a revolution**

# **the spirit of the times** Middle Ages (476 - 1450)

**not much goes on until around the year 1000...**

**1085: Toledo, Spain falls to Alfonso VI**



**classic works rediscovered by West... translated by Christian, Jewish, and Islamic scholars**

**European scholars slowly begin to separate theology from philosophy, leading eventually to a focus on human nature**

**dangerous times**

**Islam starts to slip into fundamentalist theocracy**

**Roman influence weakens identical fate for Europe**

# Logic in faith

**Perception & reason should inform faith**



**St. Anselm**

**"Faith seeking understanding"**

**ontological argument for God's existence**

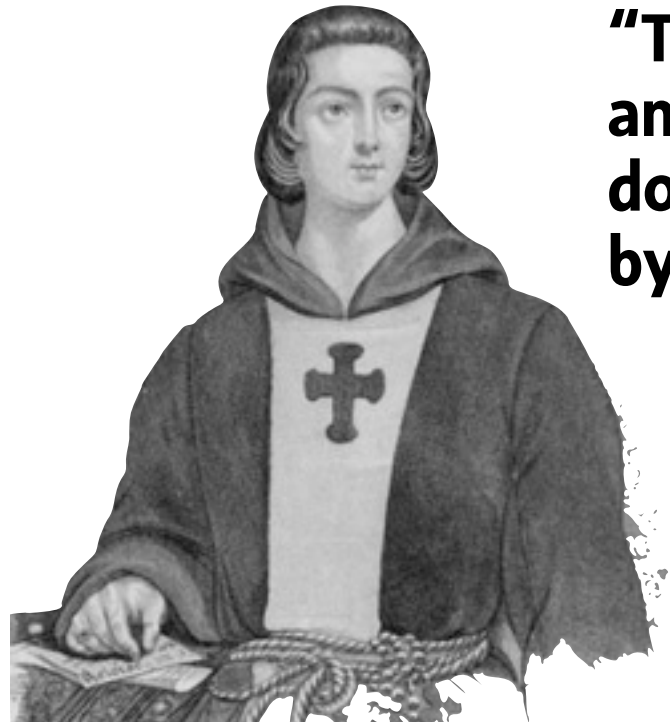
**if two propositions are self contradictory,  
then one must be false**

1. existence in the mind and reality
2. God = that which nothing greater can be thought. Can something greater be thought of? No. Then GOD IS REAL.

**to understand God is to understand his works**

**set the stage for re-integration of Aristotle**

# Realism v. nominalism



**Peter Abelard**

**"The key to wisdom is this - constant and frequent questioning, for by doubting we are led to question and by questioning we arrive at the truth"**

sought to resolve inconsistencies in doctrine using logic (dialectic method)

***Sic et Non***

troubled by logical concept of universals  
do not apply to real referents **just names**

**realism:** there must be a real object corresponding to every object of thought. (\*realism need not be material - see Plato and Aristotle... hmm sort of)

**"man" v. "man"**

**nominalism:** universal category the name given to large collection of particulars

# Aristotle rediscovered



*up to this point, most scholastic work referred to Augustine. Around the 1200's a shift to Aristotle occurs*

**translates Aristotle to Latin**  
made corrections were needed

**"Albert the Great"**

**has an effect on his outlook of scholarship:  
collects data about the natural world**

**"Theology has no place in natural philosophy" and vice versa**

**begins movement that separates theology from philosophy...**

# **impact on European scholarship**

**rise of the papal university... all scholars mentioned here connect to universities**

**medieval universities divided into faculties:**

**trivium: grammar, logic, rhetoric**

**quadrivium: geometry, astronomy, arithmetic, music**

**advanced degrees in law, medicine, or theology**

**Universities provide a relatively safe haven for students and teachers for study and learning.**

# St. Thomas Aquinas

Aristotelianism v. Christian doctrine

Averroë's "two truths": philosophy and theology need not correspond.

"God cannot do 3 things: sin, copy himself, **make a triangle with greater than 180 degrees**"



Universe is eternal v. created by God

Argument from **contingency**: Universe existing is one of many possibilities. Its existence must have a cause that exists by necessity.

**Aristotle's unmoved mover v Aquinas' first cause**

**philosophy can go only so far in revealing truths, but should never disagree with revelation.**

**attempted to strengthen church by reason, but...**

# Ockham's razor

only those ontological viewpoints supported by **natural observation** should be accepted (razor: extraneous arguments should be “shaved” from explanations)

knowledge based on **experience** rather than access to transcendent reality

**epistemology as psychological concern and not metaphysical**

**secular approach to knowledge**

**nominalist** and among first to place creation of concepts in the mind itself.

**philosophy cannot prove the existence of God**