

Scholasticism essay

Philosophy



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Scholasticism is derived from the word “scholasticus” which denotes “that belongs to the school.” This term refers to the “school of philosophy” that were instructed by the “academics or schoolmen of the medieval universities between the periods of 1100 to 1500.” The “medieval Christian theology and the ancient classical philosophy” were brought back together by scholasticism (Webster’s online dictionary, 2008, “Scholasticism”). The definition of scholasticism is not generally based on a particular belief or principle but more of a method and a system for the academics that focused on dialectical reasoning. To provide answers to philosophical questions and to reconcile conflicts are the main objectives of scholasticism (Truner, 1912, “Scholasticism”).

“Logic, metaphysics and semantics” were included in the study of scholasticism which had been considered as major factors in the advancement of knowledge about logic. More so, “philosophy of nature, psychology, epistemology and philosophy of science” were deemed significant elements for inquiries. Most scholastics read books as part of their “basic course literature” in every discipline that was usually written by authors who were famous scholars. Reading is a method of the study that ensured aspiring scholars to become learned individuals. Through this process, scholars have developed a sense of appreciation for the “theories of the author.” As a result, the problems tackled throughout the whole discipline were dealt with by the scholars in a critical and confident manner. However, scholastic works usually “have tendencies to take the form of a long list of “footnotes” to the works studied, not being able to take a stand as theories on their own” (Truner, 1912, “Scholasticism”).

According to Gerard Defaux, criticisms on scholasticism are rooted on scholasticism's closed attachment to Aristotelian dialectic and philosophy that were used in the formulation of concepts and methodologies which were evident in biblical commentaries and Christian doctrine. Because of the immense "audacity in the domain of speculative theology and superior rationalism and intellectualism of scholasticism," pagan philosophy had prevailed over "intelligence of faith" (Defaux, 1995, p. 1017).