The Role of Scholastic Philosophy in the Western Intellectual Tradition in Medieval Education

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses Scholastic Philosophy as one of the main intellectual legacies of the Middle Ages (5th to early 17th centuries) and its contribution to the philosophical tradition and the Western educational system. Scholastic Philosophy is an approach that integrates philosophical logic with theology, where major figures such as Thomas Aquinas, Anselm, and Albertus Magnus attempted to harmonize religious doctrine with rationality. Scholastic educational methods, such as disputatio (structured debate) and lectio (reading and commenting on texts), became the core of learning at major universities such as Paris, Oxford, and Bologna. In addition, the Middle Ages were also marked by the great influence of Islamic civilization which was at the peak of its intellectual glory. Muslim scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd not only maintained and developed the Greek philosophical tradition but also transmitted this knowledge to Europe, which ultimately influenced Scholastic Philosophy. This study aims to explore how Scholastic Philosophy plays a role in shaping the Western intellectual tradition through education and philosophy, and its relevance in integrating faith and reason. This study shows that the educational elements in Scholasticism contribute significantly to training the ability to think logically and systematically, which is the basis of the modern intellectual tradition.

Keywords: Scholastic philosophy, Middle Ages, Scholastic education

INTRODUCTION

Medieval Western philosophy, which lasted from approximately the 5th century to the early 17th century, was one of the important periods in the development of human thought. This period often begins in 476, which was the end of the Western Roman Empire and the development of the Eastern Roman Empire centered in Constantinople (now Istanbul). This era ended around 1492 with the discovery of the American continent by Christopher Columbus. The Middle Ages were marked by intense philosophical thought struggles, resulting in various periods of philosophy that each had their own characteristics. The struggle of thought in this era was inseparable from the problematic situations faced by philosophers. They tried to answer various challenges of the times with arguments that were sometimes accepted, but also often gave rise to new problems that were not yet resolved. In this case, medieval philosophical thought shows the dynamics and tensions between various traditions of thought, especially between classical Greco-Roman philosophy and the influence of religion, especially Christianity (Khirul Umam, 2022).

One of the main characteristics of medieval philosophy is the emergence of Scholastic Philosophy, an approach that combines philosophical logic with theology. Theologian-philosophers of this period, such as Thomas Aquinas, Anselm, and Albertus Magnus, attempted to integrate religious belief with rationality. They used philosophy, especially the legacy of Aristotle and Plato, to support religious doctrines, with the famous slogan, Ancilla Theologiae (Knowledge as a servant of religion). At the same time, Islam was in its golden age. Muslim scholars, such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), played an important role in saving and developing the Greek intellectual tradition that would later influence the development of philosophy and science in Europe. Through the works of Muslim scholars, Europe gained an important foothold in developing science and philosophy during the Middle Ages. Scholastic philosophy not only became the foundation of theological and philosophical thought, but also played a major role in education in the Middle Ages. The scholastic approach was applied in the cathedral schools, monasteries, and universities that emerged in Europe. Universities such as the Universities of Paris, Oxford, and Bologna developed into centers of learning that used scholastic methods to teach various disciplines. try to make a research title above (Fahmi Salatalohy, 2011).

The educational element in scholastic philosophy lies in its efforts to train logical, analytical, and systematic thinking skills. The methods of disputatio (structured debate) and lectio (reading and commenting on texts) are the core of scholastic learning. Education at this time was directed at forming individuals who not only understood religious doctrine but were also able to articulate the truth of faith rationally. Thus, Scholastic Philosophy became an important foundation in the Western intellectual tradition. Its educational elements not only contributed to the development of science and philosophy, but also formed educational methods that survived into the modern era. This study will further explore the role of Scholastic Philosophy, both in the context of philosophy and in its influence on the educational system that developed at that time (Rizal Mustansyir, 2022).

METHOD

This study uses a literature study approach (library research). According to Sarwono (2006), literature study is a method of collecting data sourced from various reference books and previous research findings that are relevant to the research topic, which aims to build a theoretical foundation. This approach was chosen to obtain comprehensive results by integrating information from fourteen books and two relevant primary journals.

The steps taken include:

Library Data Collection: Identifying and collecting secondary data sources, such as textbooks, scientific journals, articles, and related literature reviews.Reading and Note-taking: Reading abstracts, main contents, and important parts of the literature to determine relevance to the research problem. Comparing Literature: Conducting comparative analysis between various sources to gain in-depth understanding and produce logical and valid conclusions.

Research materials are selected based on the level of relevance to the topic. The process begins by reviewing the abstract or summary of the research to ensure compliance with the focus of the research. Relevant sections are recorded and critically analyzed to support the discussion and produce coherent conclusions.

This method provides a systematic framework for understanding Scholastic Philosophy in the context of education and philosophy through various sources that have been recognized for their credibility. It is important to note that you do not need to use too many formulas or tables unless it is absolutely crucial to be displayed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Scholastic Philosophy

The term Scholastic comes from the word school, which means school. So, scholastic means a school or something related to school or it can be said that at this time philosophy was taught in schools or universities. Scholasticism is a typical pattern of the history of Middle Ages philosophy. The term scholastic also comes from the Latin "scholasticus" which means student, as a philosophical and religious movement that seeks to synthesize human reason and faith. Or applying Greek metaphysics to Christian beliefs. The method used is disputatio, which is comparing arguments between the pros and cons. The name scholastic indicates the magnitude of the role of schools (including universities) and monasteries in the development of philosophical thoughts. The scholastic period began after philosophy experienced a period of stagnation due to the unstable political situation (Muliadi, 2020).

There are several definitions of the typical scholastic style, as follows.

1. Scholastic philosophy is a philosophy that has a purely religious style. Scholasticism is part of the religious medieval culture.
2. Scholastic philosophy is a philosophy that is devoted to theology or rational philosophy that solves problems regarding thinking, the nature of being, physicality, spirituality, good and bad. From this formulation, the terms Jewish scholasticism, Arab scholasticism and others emerged.
3. Scholastic philosophy is a system of philosophy that includes the ranks of natural knowledge, which will be included in. in the form of a higher synthesis between belief and reason.
4. Scholastic philosophy is Christian philosophy because it is heavily influenced by the teachings of the Church (Asmoro Achmadi, 2023).

History of Scholastic Philosophy

Medieval philosophy began around the 5th century to the early 17th century. Writers/historians generally determine the year 476 AD as its beginning. This coincided with the end of the Western Roman Empire centered in the city of Rome and the emergence of the Eastern Roman Empire which would later be centered in the city of Constantinople (Istanbul). The year 1492 (the time of Columbus' discovery of the American Continent) was its end.128 This period began with the rebirth of philosophy in Europe. Just as classical Greek philosophy was influenced by myth, philosophy or thought during the Middle Ages was influenced by Christian belief and faith. This means that the philosophical thought of the Middle Ages was dominated by religion. Discussion of all issues must always be based on dogma (absolute belief) from religious teachings, so that the style of philosophical thought is theoretical (Ansharullah, 2019).

Medieval philosophy in the West was basically a combination of philosophy and theology, because philosophy was based on Christian teachings, where religious teachings were maintained and placed on a rational foundation. One of the main themes of medieval philosophy was the question of the relationship between faith and knowledge and the effort in relation to overcoming the seemingly irreconcilable differences between the truth of revelation and philosophical reflection. Around 200 AD-700, overlapping with the late Ancient Greek era, St. Augustine played a role as the foundation for all medieval philosophy. European religious and philosophical teachings are known as Scholasticism. becomes from Latin Schola, meaning school. This term also refers to the way in which the truth of faith is explained by using practical methods. scholastics at monastery schools (Siti Nurla.ili, 2015).

In the Middle Ages, the history of philosophy is divided into two main periods, namely the Patristic Period and the Scholastic Period. The Patristic Period was the early period influenced by the thinking of the Church Fathers, such as Augustine (354–430 AD), who

combined Christian teachings with Greek philosophy, especially Neoplatonism. After Augustine, the intellectual spirit in the world of Christian philosophy declined. The next period, the Scholastic Period, began around the 9th century and reached its peak in the 13th century. The name "Scholastic" comes from the tradition of teaching philosophy in cathedral schools and universities that developed at that time. Philosophy in this period tended to serve the interests of Christian theology, with a focus on proving the truth of religious doctrine using a logical and rational approach.

Important figures in the early Scholastic Period include Scotus Erigena (810–877 AD), who attempted to combine Neoplatonism with Christian teachings. Other influential figures include Anselm (1033–1109 CE), known for his ontological argument for the existence of God, and Abelard (1079–1142 CE), who excelled in his dialectical method. The later Scholastic period reached its peak with figures such as Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus, who integrated Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology. Scholastic philosophy during this period not only influenced the development of theological thought but also made significant contributions to establishing the framework for formal education in Europe.

The Golden Age of Scholasticism (1200–1300 M)

The Golden Age of Scholasticism is often referred to as the flowering period of Medieval philosophy and theology. During this period, there were significant developments in education and science, accompanied by the establishment of universities and religious orders that paid great attention to the development of intellectual thought.

Some of the main factors that made this period reach its peak include:

1. The Influence of Aristotle, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd
   Since the 12th century, Aristotle's works began to be translated into Latin, accompanied by the thoughts of Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd who provided critical comments on Greek philosophy. In the 13th century, this thought developed into a broad science and became the basis for many philosophical and theological discourses.

2. The Establishment of Universities
   Large universities began to be established during this period, such as the University of Paris (1200 CE), Oxford, Cambridge, and Montpellier. These universities became centers of learning that introduced scholastic methods in teaching philosophy, theology, and other sciences.

3. The Emergence of Religious Orders
   Orders such as the Dominicans and Franciscans also made major contributions to education and the development of scholastic thought. Members of these orders, including figures such as Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham, played an important role in the philosophy and theology, as well as the spiritual life of the time.

This period not only marked intellectual progress but also provided a solid foundation for an academic tradition that has survived into the modern era. The ideas born during this period continue to be references in the study of philosophy, theology, and education (Muhammad Taufik, 2020).

Late Scholastic Era (1300–1450 M)

In the second half of the 13th century and the first quarter of the 14th century, the world of Scholastic thought began to experience intellectual fatigue and stagnation. The long struggle between the two major schools of thought, namely Thomism (followers of Thomas Aquinas) and Scotism (followers of John Duns Scotus), gave rise to a saturation of philosophy that was too speculative and metaphysical.

Over time, a new school emerged that was fundamentally different from the system of thought during the heyday of Scholasticism and the ancient tradition (via antiqua). This

school was called the via moderna or "modern way." This school rejected the metaphysical approach and directed more attention to the "human way of knowing" and things that were real, scientific, and practical. This approach focused on concrete problems, such as aspects of the church and political issues, rather than abstract and philosophical problems.

Two major schools of thought that marked the end of the Scholastic period were:

1. Nominalism

   Developed by William of Ockham (1285–1349), Nominalism rejected the idea that universal concepts have a reality outside the human mind. It placed greater emphasis on the importance of the individual and empirical reality

2. Humanism'

   Humanism began to emerge towards the end of this period with the foundations of its thought laid by Nicolaus Cusanus (1401–1464). Humanism focused on human values, individual potential, and a rational approach to knowledge (Nurasiah, 2021).

   His views shifted the orientation of philosophy from metaphysical speculation to a more practical and scientific direction. With the development of Humanism, philosophical thought finally entered the Modern Age, which was marked by a revival of classical values and an empirical approach to knowledge. The Late Scholastic Period was a significant transition connecting the intellectual tradition of the Middle Ages with the early Renaissance and the subsequent modern era.

CONCLUSION

Scholastic philosophy is a school of thought that developed in the Middle Ages, which combines Christian theology with the methods of logic and rationality. This philosophy serves to explain and defend the truth of faith through a rational approach, focusing on the relationship between faith and knowledge. Along with the development of the history of the Middle Ages, scholastic philosophy is divided into several periods, including the early scholastic period (800-1200 AD) and the late scholastic period (1300-1450 AD). In the early period, thought was heavily influenced by the teachings of St. Augustine and neo-Platonism. This thought tries to integrate classical philosophy with Christian doctrine, producing a synergy between rationality and faith. In the late period, new schools of thought emerged such as Nominalism and Humanism which marked a change in the focus of scholastic philosophy, leading to more practical and empirical thinking.

Some important figures who played a role in the development of scholastic philosophy were Thomas Aquinas, William Ockham, and Johannes Scotus Eriugena. They attempted to unite rationality with religious teaching, using Greco-Roman philosophy, especially Aristotle, as a basis for explaining and supporting Christian theology. During the golden age of Islamic science, the thought of Muslim scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) had a major influence on the development of philosophy and science in Europe. Their works preserved and developed the Greek intellectual heritage, which in turn helped form the basis for scholastic thought in Europe.

Towards the end of the scholastic period, an intellectual saturation occurred that led to the birth of modern thought. This thought was more empirical, scientific, and practical, marking a shift from a theological focus to a more rational approach based on experience and observation of the real world. Humanism, which developed during this period, also played a role in this change, emphasizing human values and the potential of the individual. Overall, medieval philosophy, especially scholasticism, was a complex and dynamic period, in which theological and philosophical thought interacted, forming the foundation for the future development of modern thought.

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