CHAPTER VII

Eastern and Western Christendom

The Period before the Crusades: The Byzantine Schism

It was remarked earlier in this volume that the church in the eastern or Byzantine parts of the former Roman Empire and in lands like Russia and the Balkans which were affected by Byzantine culture followed a course of history different from that of western Christianity. It would be impossible to relate all that history here. Enough should be said, however, to establish the background for an event which occurred in the year 1054 and which was one of the most unfortunate in the long history of Christianity. Although its significance was not realized at the time, the schism which then developed between Constantinople, the major patriarchate of the East, and Rome has persisted down to the present. As a consequence all the relations between East and West—such developments as crusades and missions, as well as political matters—have been affected by this state of schism.

The term “eastern Christendom” is generally understood to mean that part of the Christian world which at one time fell under the jurisdiction of Constantinople. The patriarchate of Constantinople had not always enjoyed a pre-eminence in the East. Such venerable sees as Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria had been, in view of their apostolic
traditions, of even greater eminence. With the Moslem conquest their prestige had diminished somewhat while that of Constantinople, the flourishing metropolis of the Mediterranean world, had risen. Indeed, much earlier, at the second ecumenical council held at Constantinople in 381, the see of the “new Rome” had been declared second only to the original or old Rome.

It should also be noticed that Syria, Palestine, and Egypt had been the scene of certain heresies which undermined the unity of the Byzantine church. These all had to do with the Trinity, or more specifically with the person and nature of Christ. Nestorians, who held that in Christ were two distinct personalities, the human and the divine, were exceptionally active as missionaries to the East. By the eleventh century they had become strong in Persia and had even earlier penetrated central Asia and China. Monophysites, who believed that Christ possessed only one humano-divine nature, were the most numerous in the immediate Mediterranean region. In Syria they were called Jacobites. Many inhabitants of Egypt and Ethiopia and most of the Armenians of Asia Minor and the lower Caucasus were also Monophysites. There were scattered communities of Monothelites—one will in Christ—of whom the Maronites of the Lebanon mountains were the most prominent. Finally, there were in all these regions many communities which remained orthodox. Because of the close association between orthodoxy and the imperial government at Constantinople, they came to be known as Melkites or “king’s men” (from melko, king).

The Moslem conquerors of the seventh century did not alter the religious picture as much as might at first be supposed. Over the years, conversions to Islam took place, but
the usual Moslem policy of tribute instead of conversion made possible the continued existence of oriental Christianity. It is also a well-known fact that the native Christians were the cultural intermediaries between the ancient Hellenistic and oriental civilizations and Islam. There was, however, a cultural change inevitably resulting from life in a Moslem environment. Some oriental Christians, for example, abandoned their native liturgical language and adopted Arabic. It became possible, therefore—and still is—to assist at a Christian religious service in the language of the Koran.

Although orthodox Christianity lost ground to Islam and to heresy in Asia and Africa, it made some gains in eastern Europe. In the ninth century two Greek missionaries, Cyril and Methodius, journeyed to Moravia on the fringes of the East Frankish kingdom. There they worked among the native Slavs, and there they derived from the Greek an alphabet suitable to their speech which came to be known as Cyrillic. Despite objections from neighboring German clergy, Rome authorized the Slavonic liturgy. But the Moravian kingdom, which at one time gave promise of forming the nucleus of a flourishing Slavic state, was eventually overrun in the German eastward expansion. As a consequence Moravia became associated politically with Bohemia in the mediaeval German monarchy and ecclesiastically with Rome. Latin replaced Slavonic as the liturgical language. Yet the work of the two missionaries was not in vain, for the Slavonic liturgy was later adopted by Bulgaria and the Slavic peoples of the Balkan peninsula. In 987 Vladimir, prince of Kiev, accepted the Christian faith and opened the way for Byzantine religious and cultural penetration in Kievan Russia. Mediaeval Russian architecture and iconography are thoroughly Byzantine in their inspiration.
Such was the state of the church around the year 1000. Byzantine Christianity, though depleted by heresy and conquest, had made gains elsewhere. Moreover, it was fully in communion with Rome, which it recognized as the supreme see in Christendom. Why, then, did a break occur within a half century?

To begin with, 1054 was not the first official break between the two sees. We need not here explain all the circumstances, but estrangements had occurred before. Broadly speaking, the differences were cultural, political and jurisdictional, and theological. Ever since early Christian times the two sections of Christendom had vastly different historical experiences. Everyday habits of life diverged as did the liturgical languages, Greek and Latin. Not without reason Byzantines looked upon the West as a collection of semibarbarian kingdoms far beneath them in civilization. They regarded the western Holy Roman Empire as a usurpation. On the other hand, westerners who traveled to Constantinople often misunderstood Byzantine ways. At least one mid-tenth-century ambassador from the western empire, Bishop Liutprand of Cremona, was quite scornful of the Greeks. During the eleventh century a complicating factor was added when Norman knights created a new kingdom of southern Italy and Sicily. A number of formerly Byzantine bishoprics were, as a result, transferred to Roman jurisdiction. There were also jurisdictional disputes over Moravia, Bulgaria, and the western Balkans. But the basic difference was the growing unwillingness of Constantinople to admit Rome’s supremacy. In fact, this unwillingness underlay such religious divergences as clerical celibacy, the use of leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist, and the adoption by the West of the “filioque” phrase in the
Nicene Creed. This last embodied the western insistence that the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, proceeded from the Father and the Son, not, as the Byzantines held, from the Father alone.

The historic reason why so serious a rift developed in the mid-eleventh century was the transformation in the western church which the preceding pages have described. It was no longer true that Byzantine bishops were culturally superior to their western colleagues. The western church had revived and was led by men of intelligence, character, and ability. In its display of religious energy, it was about to outstrip the older civilization of the eastern Mediterranean, and this, unfortunately, the Byzantines failed to realize.

It was equally unfortunate that among the legates sent by the pope for the purpose of discussing various differences was Cardinal Humbert. Humbert was an extremely able person, intelligent and well trained; but he was hardly the soul of tact. Moreover, he epitomized the youthful, energetic, somewhat intransigent spirit of the western church of the Cluny period. That there is much to be said for this spirit earlier pages have demonstrated. It was to accomplish great things during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But it was singularly inappropriate for eleventh-century Constantinople, which still regarded itself as the divinely appointed custodian of all that was best in ancient Christian civilization.

The Byzantine patriarch Cerularius was an ambitious man who had insisted on the supremacy of his see over other eastern patriarchates and was now ready to claim at least equality with Rome. Whether the differences could have been resolved by men possessed of greater diplomatic finesse is a question. At any rate, in 1054 negotiations broke down
and each party excommunicated the other, Humbert taking the lead. Although neither included the faithful in the opposing jurisdiction, actually a schism resulted which has to this day proved impossible to repair.

Whatever the ultimate responsibility for the schism of 1054, it was one of the most tragic events in Christian history. Not only was Christianity divided, but a cultural rift tending to separate eastern and western Europe was widened with consequences which can be observed even in modern times.

The Crusades

From the time when they occurred to the present, the crusades have commanded public attention and called forth innumerable chronicles, histories long and short, and even poems. Their place in the historiographical tradition of Europe is thus assured, and the very word crusade has become familiar in our vocabulary. But if historians, mediaeval and modern, have agreed that the crusades were interesting and important, they have differed widely in explaining their origins and interpreting their significance. Indeed, it might be questioned whether they belong in a discussion of the mediaeval church. They were, however, launched originally by the papacy; and the church's role, though it diminished, was never negligible. In this brief account it will be possible only to summarize the more generally accepted conclusions.

First, it is clear that the eight large expeditions from 1096 to the later years of the thirteenth century, as well as the many less important ventures, were occasioned by the political and military successes of Islam. In particular, they were a response to a comparatively new menace presented in the second half of the eleventh century by the Seljuk Turks.
The Seljuks had overrun the Bagdad caliphate and as a consequence of a resounding victory over a Byzantine army at Manzikert in 1071 opened the way to the conquest of Asia Minor. Byzantium had faced Islam across the straits before, but never had it lost the entire hinterland of Asia Minor.

Second, the crusades were made possible by the religious, political, and economic energy so characteristic of the eleventh century. The Cluny reform reached a climax in the second half of the century, and it was not difficult for an ecclesiastically militant church to direct its forces to the military defense of Christendom and the recovery of the Holy City, Jerusalem. Politically and economically, eleventh-century Europe was entering one of those periods of expansion which has characterized its civilization down to modern times. Feudal society was far more dynamic than has commonly been supposed. Men were constantly seeking new areas of cultivation and creating new fiefs. Commerce, which had reached a low point during the Dark Ages, was showing a revival which directly affected and was affected by the expeditions to the eastern Mediterranean. In fact, without the shipping facilities of the Italian merchants the crusades would scarcely have been possible.

These are general considerations, and it is over the relative importance of the more immediate causes of the crusades that historians have tended to differ. One of these was the danger to pilgrims making the journey to Jerusalem. Pilgrimage was a well-established feature of European society; it was a journey of devotion to a holy shrine. At first simply a pious act, pilgrimage had in the course of time been adopted by the church as a form of canonical penance. In the eleventh century there were three shrines of especial appeal: Rome, Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and Jerusa-
lem. Although Jerusalem had long been in Moslem hands, pilgrims had usually enjoyed free access until the coming of the Seljuk Turks. Thereafter, hostility toward pilgrims seems to have been fairly common. To the general objective of opposing Islam, therefore, was added the specific purpose of freeing Jerusalem.

To churchmen and especially to popes in the late eleventh century the Byzantine schism was not the long-standing rift which it appears today. It must have seemed merely the latest in a series of misunderstandings which somehow always were overcome. Whether Urban II actually conceived of the crusade as a possible step toward reconciliation may not be said with certainty. But there is no doubt that he ardentely desired a reunion and, independently of the crusade, took steps to heal the breach.

The immediate incentive for the First Crusade was the appearance in 1094 at a council held at Piacenza of envoys sent by the Emperor Alexius Comnenus. These Byzantine ambassadors urgently requested military aid against the Turks. Thus, Pope Urban II was made aware of the danger to Europe and, as we have suggested, may have hoped that western assistance might create a more favorable atmosphere in the Byzantine patriarchate.

At the moment the pope apparently planned only a small expeditionary force. From Piacenza he traveled into southern France; there he interviewed a number of people active in both the Cluny movement and the Spanish reconquest, and his ideas seem to have broadened. At Clermont in 1095 he addressed a vast concourse of people in their native tongue, for he was himself a Frenchman. He made a vigorous appeal to naturally warlike knights to abandon their petty quarrels and join their arms in the common defense
of Christendom. He spoke of eastern Christianity in peril. He hinted at material reward in the Biblical “land flowing with milk and honey.” Finally, he offered the spiritual reward of a plenary indulgence.\(^1\)

The response was overwhelming, probably far greater than the pope had anticipated. The cry, “God wills it,” resounded through the crowd, and those who expected to go were soon wearing the cross over their armor; hence the word crusader. Of the men who took the cross, some, in fact probably most, were moved by sincere religious devotion and planned to return once their mission was accomplished. In others, religious zeal was diluted by a desire to win land and glory in the East. Sheer love of adventure was unquestionably a large factor. Further, part of the response had no military significance whatever. Indeed, the motley band of peasants and riffraff which followed the popular preacher Peter the Hermit or the knight Walter the Penniless was actually an embarrassment. But Urban appointed a legate, Adhemar of Puy, to take charge of the real armies and, considering the individualistic habits of feudal knights, a remarkable organization was effected.

Although no kings joined this first expedition, several prominent magnates, notably Raymond of Toulouse, Hugh of Vermandois, brother of the king of France, Bohemond the Norman from southern Italy, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Stephen of Blois, and the Lorrainers Godfrey of Bouillon with his brothers, Eustace and Baldwin. Lesser nobles and ecclesiastics associated themselves with these leaders, the great majority being French or Norman. All converged by different routes on Constantinople.

At Constantinople there was trouble. Although Emperor

\(^1\) Not to be confused with sacramental absolution. See above, pp. 8–9.
Alexius desperately wanted military assistance, he was embarrassed by so many westerners who had to be supplied and fed. Moreover, there soon developed a fundamental divergence of aim. Alexius expected conquered territory, at least as far south as Antioch in Syria, to be returned to the empire. Urban II’s precise intentions will probably never be clearly known. Both he and his legate, Adhemar, died before the expedition reached its goal. There is no doubt, however, that most of the western leaders fully intended to carve out territories in the Levant for themselves. Yet the necessity for Byzantine aid was evident to all, and therefore, albeit with reluctance, they took an oath of allegiance to the emperor.

Then followed the crossing of the Bosporus, the capture of Nicaea which, according to agreement, was handed over to the emperor, the arduous but victorious march across Asia Minor, and the entry into Syria by different routes. The great city of Antioch offered stout resistance, but when it finally fell, it was at once appropriated by Bohemond the Norman. The Byzantine claim to this city was to prove a serious cause of contention in the future. The other armies continued the southward march and took Jerusalem on July 15, 1099, amid scenes of bloodshed and rejoicing.

Latin Civilization in the Levant: The Later Crusades

We have dwelt at some length on the First Crusade because in many respects it was unique. At no later date did Christendom show even the semblance of unity, imperfect though it was, which was achieved then. And no other crusade attained its objective. This will appear evident in the brief survey which follows.
After the capture of Jerusalem, a great many crusaders, probably the majority, returned to Europe. They had accomplished what they came to do, and they had fulfilled their vow to visit the Holy Sepulcher, the holiest of shrines. But a substantial number remained in the East and settled down as colonists in an alien land. Four principalities were formed: Jerusalem, first ruled by Godfrey of Bouillon with the modest title Advocate of the Holy Sepulcher, then after 1100 by a succession of kings; the county of Tripoli; the principality of Antioch; and the county of Edessa. The last named, being the most vulnerable to attack, was recaptured by the Moslems in 1144. Jerusalem and most of the surrounding territory was taken by the great Saladin in 1187. The remaining two states, Antioch and Tripoli, survived to the last decade of the thirteenth century.

In each of these states western political and military institutions were superimposed on the native agricultural and commercial life. They were, in short, typically feudal structures with native underpinning. In addition, Italian merchants, especially Genoese and Pisans, were accorded privileges in certain of the ports. Their fleets brought reinforcements and supplies and maintained essential contact with Europe. It is true that crusaders adopted many eastern customs, but they were for the most part such things as food and dress which did not fundamentally alter their western culture. Many learned Arabic and other oriental tongues, but their laws were written in old French and their learning was in Latin. The crusaders’ states in the Levant may, therefore, best be understood as experiments in colonization, the first chapter in the long history of Europe overseas.

Although there was no formal political connection between the papacy and the crusaders’ states, Rome’s solici-
tude persisted. Popes tirelessly preached crusades long after European princes had lost interest. Rome also bestowed privileges and exemptions on the religio-military orders of Knights Templars and Knights Hospitallers. The former, established initially at the Temple in Jerusalem, was dedicated to the protection of pilgrims. The latter, originally devoted to the care of the sick, later added military functions. Both performed yeoman service in the defense of the crusaders' states, especially in garrisoning the frontier castles.

Papal legates were constantly sent to the East and local bishops attended western councils. There was, indeed, a Latin hierarchy in the East, and the major religious orders soon made their appearance. Churches and parishes were established in converted mosques or in new edifices erected in western style. In short, everything was done to create a normal ecclesiastical situation.

Although all crusades were essentially religious and the First Crusade pre-eminently so, the lay element predominated more and more in later years. The Second Crusade (1148–1149), for example, occasioned by the capture of Edessa in 1144, was authorized by the pope and preached by the great St. Bernard. But it was really managed by King Louis VII of France and Emperor Conrad III of Germany. It was a disappointing failure. Moreover, three decades later that most distinguished Moslem leader, Saladin, had combined Egypt and the Syrian hinterland, thus surrounding the Latin states with a single Moslem power. Profiting cleverly by chronic dissensions among the crusaders, he defeated a Christian army at Hattin and recaptured Jerusalem in 1187.

Once again Rome endeavored to arouse Europe, and with no little success. The Third Crusade (1189–1192) was, how-
ever, a lay affair and was led by three kings, Richard the Lion-Hearted of England, Philip Augustus of France, and Frederick Barbarossa, Holy Roman Emperor. Cyprus was captured from Byzantium and the Levantine port of Acre was recovered in 1191, but Jerusalem remained in Moslem hands.

The troops assembled for the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204) began by capturing—largely at Venetian urging—Zara on the Adriatic in Christian Hungary and then (1204) converged on Constantinople. The former diversion resulted from the crusaders’ inability to meet the Venetian’s fee for transportation with cash; instead they arranged to pay for their passage with this military service. The attack on Constantinople, however, derived in part at least from a desire of some of the leaders to support a pretender to the Byzantine throne. The conquest of the great metropolis of the eastern Mediterranean was, therefore, probably not originally intended. But many of the crusaders and the Venetians profited handsomely. Pope Innocent, who had originally levied contributions to support the crusade, excommunicated the leaders, but, finding himself utterly unable to control their actions, made the best of a bad situation by recognizing a new Latin empire in Constantinople with Latin patriarch and clergy. The consequences of this misdirected crusade were far-reaching. Not only were relations between the eastern and western churches irrevocably injured, but the Byzantine empire was permanently damaged. It maintained a precarious existence in Asia Minor until 1261, when with the aid of Genoa, traditional rival of Venice, the Latin empire was overthrown and Constantinople recovered. Not all former Byzantine territory, however, was restored, and the empire never regained its former prestige. In its weak-
ened state it was a prey to the Moslem invasions of the later Middle Ages.

Innocent continued his efforts, but did not live to see the Fifth Crusade (1218–1221). It was just as well. Although the plan to attack Egypt was sound, the papal legate in charge of the expedition disregarded the advice of lay leaders, and the Christian armies were defeated. The Sixth Crusade (1228–1229) was a distinctly lay affair. The Emperor Frederick II succeeded—he was under excommunication at the time—in arranging a treaty permitting partial control over Jerusalem. This ended in 1244. The last two expeditions which have been designated by number, the Seventh (1248–1250) and the Eighth Crusades (1270), were directed by St. Louis IX of France. Both failed. Finally in 1291 the last Christian territory on the Levantine mainland was taken by the Mamluks of Egypt. For about two centuries a “kingdom of Jerusalem” was maintained in Cyprus, and popes never ceased the attempt to arouse Europe. But Europe was no longer concerned. Even the Ottoman Turk invasion of the Balkans in the fifteenth century failed to elicit any response except from the people immediately affected in eastern Europe. And that was not enough.

The Consequences of the Crusades: Eastern and Western Christendom in the Thirteenth Century

It is not easy to estimate the consequences of the crusades to the church. On the whole, it seems clear that the First Crusade, by establishing the papacy as leader of a great cause, immensely strengthened that institution at a critical period in its history. It is equally clear, however, that no such favorable consequences followed thereafter. In the first
place, as we have observed, the movement became at once less papal and more lay in its direction and control. Second, there was failure. An added factor was the increased use of crusades and crusade privileges for European causes. The long intermittent war of reconquest in Spain was a crusade, and there were critical occasions when Rome sought to achieve a united effort by active intervention. Success, for example, crowned Innocent III’s efforts when a Christian army drawn from France and the various Spanish states won a striking victory at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. There was also the crusade against the Cathari in southern France. But if the former resembled the expeditions to the Orient in being directed against the Moslems and if the latter was religious in origin, Innocent IV’s proclamation of a crusade against his Hohenstaufen enemy, Frederick II, seemed to many contemporaries a political move. It is entirely possible that this policy contributed to the loss of support by Europeans for crusades to the East.

This is not the place to discuss the many developments, economic, political, and social, which were directly or indirectly the result of the crusades. What is pertinent to a study of the mediaeval church is the matter of eastern Christendom. It was remarked earlier that Urban II was anxious to end the Byzantine schism and may well have hoped that the crusade would produce a favorable atmosphere. The result was otherwise. Mutual suspicion accentuated by the fundamental divergence of purpose marred the relations between westerners and Byzantines from the first meeting at Constantinople. During the twelfth century there were controversies over Antioch. There were, it is true, a few occasions when a Latin-Byzantine military alliance operated, but nothing tangible was accomplished. Toward the end
of the twelfth century relations deteriorated and were irreparably injured by the Fourth Crusade. Discussions between eastern and western ecclesiastics proved equally futile. The last of these in the period here under consideration was at the Council of Lyons in 1274 under Pope Gregory X (1271–1276), a man who had been papal legate in the Orient and was as a result particularly well informed about the entire situation. The hard-pressed Byzantine emperor, Michael Paleologus, made a profession of faith; but the church in Constantinople declined to follow. Thus the Byzantine schism deepened.

Although failure must be recorded in Romano-Byzantine relations, there were several notable successes with other oriental Christians. The establishment of the crusaders’ states provided the first direct contact which the western church had had with these people since the Arab conquest in the seventh century. Actually, oriental Christians had become largely Arabic in culture and without marked sympathy for the crusaders. And too often the latter regarded their Syrian confrères with unconcealed contempt. But although local Latin ecclesiastics sometimes lacked understanding, Rome generally championed the ancient liturgical customs of any oriental group which accepted the primacy of the Holy See. Moreover, as a consequence of an expanding missionary movement much was learned of the languages and usages of oriental Christianity.

In the kingdom of Jerusalem the Melkites, or orthodox Syrian Christians, seem to have accepted the Roman hierarchy. Indeed, it is a question to what degree they had been affected by the schism of 1054. Their colleagues in Antioch, on the other hand, remained loyal to Byzantium. Of the heretical Christians, aside from a few individual Jacobite and
Nestorian bishops and their congregations, the largest gains were made among the Maronites of the Lebanon mountains (1182) and the Armenians. In the thirteenth century King Hayton II of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia just to the north and west of Antioch entered the western church and became a Franciscan. At the synods of Sis (1307) and Adana (1316), Armenian bishops accepted a formula of reconciliation with the western church. During the fourteenth century Dominicans won over a large group in what is known as Greater Armenia, the region south of the Caucasus. In fact, a native branch of the Dominican order was established. As later events were to prove, however, many Armenians remained hostile to Latin Catholicism. After the Turkish conquests in the later Middle Ages, all but a few of the Armenians reverted to the Monophysite heresy.

The Latin states of Syria and the temporary occupation of Constantinople provided the jumping-off-places for missions deeper in Asia. These were further facilitated by the great expansion of the Mongol empire. Although Genghis Khan and his armies had terrorized Europe in the early decades of the thirteenth century, his successors founded a vast empire which stretched from the borders of Hungary to the Pacific Ocean and adopted an attitude of toleration toward western missionaries and travelers. It was in 1245 that Innocent IV sent out his first missionaries to the Mongols with a threefold aim: to mitigate the Mongol depredations in eastern Europe, to secure an alliance against Islam, and to make conversions. Rumors reached Europe that many Mongol chieftains and their princesses were on the point of embracing Christianity. Although these reports were grossly exaggerated, it remains true that a number of Mongol magnates were Christian and that Nestorian Chris-
Christianity had expanded in central and eastern Asia with the Mongol conquests. It is also true that the Mongol push southwestward was stopped in Syria in 1260 by the Egyptian Moslems. An alliance between Mongols and western Christians was not, therefore, entirely fantastic.

The first missionary-ambassadors were two Franciscan friars, John of Plano Carpini and Benedict the Pole. They journeyed overland and, after experiencing terrific hardships, reached the capital or camp at Karakorum in Mongolia. Fortunately, although the mission was not successful, John left a remarkably detailed account of his travels. Together with Benedict’s shorter story, it is invaluable as the first glimpse by Europeans into central Asia. A decade later another Franciscan, William Rubruk, made a similar journey which he also described in detail.

After the Mongols had founded their capital at Khanbalik (later Peking), Europeans were not slow in making an appearance in China, as the book of Marco Polo testifies (c. 1297). Indeed, one of the most celebrated of all missionaries was the Franciscan John of Montecorvino, who in 1291 set out from Persia for Khanbalik, arrived in 1294 after traversing parts of India, and established a mission in the Mongol capital. He was so successful that in 1307 Pope Clement V created the archdiocese of Khanbalik, probably the largest in the history of the church because it embraced the entire Mongol empire. John was the first incumbent and was consecrated by three bishops whom the pope sent out to

* It was also widely held in Europe that a Christian king, Prester John, ruled somewhere in Asia. Marco Polo and others attempted to identify this kingdom. During the fourteenth century it came to be believed that Prester John was an African, presumably an Ethiopian, ruler.
strengthen the Franciscan mission. Two letters John wrote to the pope have survived as evidence of his accomplishments. But others testified to the esteem in which he was held by pagans as well as Christians.

That archbishop, as it pleased God, is lately passed from the world. To his obsequies and to his burial there came a very great multitude of Christian people and of pagans. And these pagans rent their mourning robes as their way is; and these people, Christians and pagans, most devoutly took the garments of the archbishop and kept them with great reverence and for relics. There was he buried with much honor in the fashion of faithful Christians. People still visit the place of his burial with very great devotion.\(^a\)

Meanwhile, Dominican missionaries had been active in the Latin empire of Constantinople, in the Crimea, and in other parts of the Mongol dominions. As we have already mentioned, they were particularly successful in Greater Armenia. In 1318, Pope John XXII withdrew from the province of Khanbalik some of its southern territory and created a new province with Dominican bishops and with archiepiscopal see at Soltania in Persia.

Political upheavals of the fourteenth century, the recovery of the Ming dynasty in China (1368), the conquests of Tamerlane, the advance of Islam in central Asia, and finally the rise of the Ottoman Turks brought a premature end to these far-flung missionary ventures. There had not, in all probability, been many converts, and apparently most of these were from formerly oriental Christian sects. But

\(^a\) Quoted from *The Book of the Estate of the Great Khaan*, tr. in A. C. Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550* (London, 1930), p. 250.
promising beginnings had been made, and it is well to re-
member that early in the fourteenth century Latin Chris-
tianity had reached the Pacific and the Indian oceans.

**Conclusion**

The preceding chapters have reviewed the development
of the church as an institution, and we have seen something
of its impact on mediaeval society. Viewing it in this light
—as an institution developing within a given period of his-
tory—historians generally agree that the mediaeval church
reached a climax in such development sometime during the
thirteenth century and that there followed a falling off or
"decline." To evaluate and explain the growth and expan-
sion of the mediaeval church has been the purpose of this
essay; but, except to note the political and economic tensions
of the later thirteenth century, no attempt has been made
to explain the role of the church in the later Middle Ages.

It is, however, appropriate here to repeat what was said
in the introduction—that the institutional history of the
church is only part of the story. What is at once less appar-
ent and more important is the church's influence over the
lives of individual men and women. To a certain degree we
have observed this in the careers of the great. But what of the
ordinary person, the knight, the peasant, the merchant, the
housewife? Inadequate as our estimate must be, it may never-
thelss be worth while to attempt, by way of conclusion,
some answer to this question.

To begin with, the cultural atmosphere of the high
Middle Ages was definitely religious. Religion permeated
learning, art, and literature. Although learning was the
privilege of a comparatively few people, art and literature
were enjoyed by a much wider and a growing public. There
is also ample evidence of popular religious devotion. Books of hours, adaptations of the monastic office, were prepared, sometimes with handsome illustrations, for the laity. Men and women formed religious confraternities, and guilds contributed stained glass windows to the cathedrals. The supernatural was very real. Angels and evil spirits were ever at hand. Men venerated saints and prized their relics. Indeed, the authorities were forced to take action against the traffic in spurious relics. As is evident from the Middle English vocabulary, religious terms, or perversions thereof, became everyday ejaculations or oaths.

Above all, mediaeval man held the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, in the highest devotion. Countless cathedrals and churches were erected in her honor, and many were the hymns dedicated to her. Recitation of the popular prayer, the “Hail, Mary,” with the aid of rosary beads became extremely popular during the Middle Ages. Mary was the “gracious advocate” for sinful souls fearing divine punishment.

If we understand the term in its proper significance, the Middle Ages were religious. This does not mean that mediaeval men and women spent all their hours in prayer or that they took little joy in living. Manifestly, such was not the case; and the exaggerated contrast between mediaeval “otherworldliness” and Renaissance secularism has largely been abandoned. What is true is that mediaeval society accepted the principle that man was destined for another life and that all his actions were potentially significant in shaping his eternal destiny.