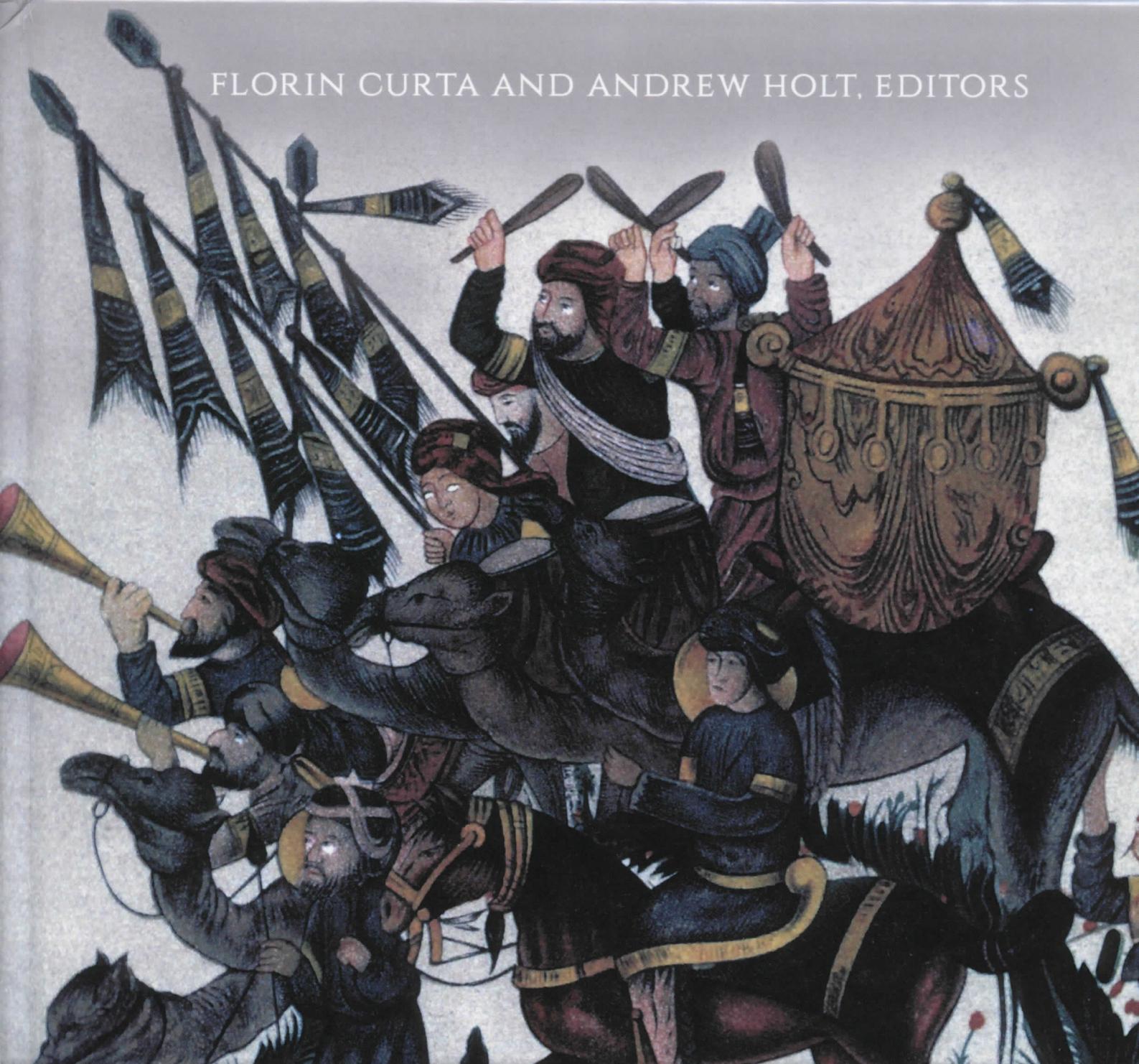


FLORIN CURTA AND ANDREW HOLT, EDITORS



GREAT EVENTS IN RELIGION

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PIVOTAL EVENTS IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

VOLUME 2

AD 600 TO 1450

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Papal Government and Administration in Avignon

After Pope Clement V (r. 1305–1314) moved the papal capital from Rome to Avignon, a number of key developments strengthened the papal government. The role that the college of cardinals had in that government was greatly consolidated during the period in which the papal capital was in Avignon. A vast program of reorganization and centralization of the administrative offices was introduced under Pope John XXII (r. 1316–1334). Upon his election, the papacy was bankrupt, largely because of overspending. Pope John laid claim to a very large number of *annates* (taxes levied upon recipients of ecclesiastical benefices), and in a short time he was able to create a large reserve in the treasury. He also made sure that income from vacant sees was sent to the papal treasury regularly. To keep a record of who owed what, Pope John made the existing secretarial offices much more efficient. His successors introduced a number of reform measures for the clergy, and they greatly expanded missionary enterprises. For example, Pope Benedict XII (r. 1334–1342) sent four churchmen (one of whom was John of Marignolli) as missionaries to China. A great emphasis was placed on education, with the Avignon popes founding provincial boarding schools in southern France to recruit and train talented young students. In addition, they distributed a great number of benefices to support university students in Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier, Bologna, and Perugia.

is perhaps most notable for his decision to return to Rome as a base of papal operations in 1377. Although Gregory XI remained loyal to the French crown, he was forced to return to Rome when Florentine rebelliousness demanded his presence.

After Pope Gregory XI died in 1378, a conclave of cardinals met and elected Urban VI, an Italian, who was not beholden to the French monarchy. In response, French cardinals held their own conclave to elect their own pope, Clement VII. This began both a new line of Avignon popes and a schism known as the Western Schism (sometimes called the Great Schism), which did not end until 1417. During this time non-French rulers, like the king of England, supported the Rome-based papacy, while the French supported the Avignon-based papacy.

In November 1417, the Council of Constance elected Pope Martin V, and the Western Schism was effectively healed. It is not a surprise that the Council of Constance closed the issue of the Western Schism. After the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, the French monarchy lost its influence in Europe. England was now in a position to influence the reunification of the church, and even to unite London and Paris under the same royal crown in 1422.

The Avignon popes established a new degree of control over the Western Church. The age of the Avignon Papacy culminated in a large-scale reorganization of the church; the development of centralized administrative offices and agencies; and the emergence of the college of cardinals, which played an influential role in the governance of the

church. The Avignon Papacy also led to the growth of missionary activities of the church pushing evangelism even as far as China. Also notably, during this time university education was highly promoted by the church.

ARDIAN MUHAJ

See also

Investiture Controversy (1076–1122); *Unam Sanctam* Proclaims Papal Supremacy (1302); Joan of Arc's Impact on the Hundred Years' War (Early 15th Century); Council of Constance (1414–1418)

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UZBEK KHAN'S CONVERSION TO ISLAM (CA. 1313)

Muhammad Uzbek Khan (r. 1313–1341) was a fifth-generation descendant of Jochi, Genghis Khan's eldest son. He ruled over the Golden Horde—one of the four Mongol

khanates extending from Eastern Europe to Siberia in the north, and to the Caucasus and the Black Sea in the south. A prominent figure in both Islamic sources and modern scholarship, Uzbek Khan significantly influenced the Islamization of the Golden Horde during his long, stable reign. Arabic and Persian chronicles often glorify this period as a golden age and praise Uzbek Khan for spreading Islam. Prior to his reign, two other khans had accepted Islam, but their conversions had little effect on subsequent leaders and the population of the khanate. After Uzbek Khan, however, all leaders of the khanate were Muslim.

Uzbek spent his early adulthood in exile in Khwarezm (south of the Aral Sea near modern-day Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) due to a dynastic struggle. He then returned to the Qipchaq (or Kipchak) steppes in what are now Ukraine and southern Russia to stake his claim to power. Some within the ruling elite did not approve of Uzbek Khan's Islamic inclinations, and they planned to assassinate him at a banquet. Forewarned of the plot, Uzbek Khan purged disloyal elements at court, preserving those who viewed his Islamic leanings as instrumental in unifying the largely fragmented political environment of the khanate.

Uzbek Khan formally converted to Islam either immediately before or during his ascent to power. The information regarding the conversion is contained in an anonymous

work titled *Shajarat al-atrak*, written in the 15th century in central Eurasia, as well as in the travelogue of Ibn Battuta, who visited Uzbek Khan in 1334. According to both sources, a Sufi sheikh named Sayyid "Ata" Ibn 'Abd al-Hamid converted Uzbek Khan to Islam and renamed him Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad Uzbek. Sayyid Ata had been sent as a missionary from Khwarezm to the Qipchaq steppes. Allegedly, those who accompanied Sayyid Ata to Uzbek Khan's court were so impressed by his conversion that they adopted the name "Uzbek" for themselves—although this is likely an apocryphal explanation of the *ethnonym* ("name given to an ethnic group") of the modern Uzbeks.

Despite his efforts to spread Islam throughout the khanate, Uzbek Khan was not always successful in convincing his subjects to adopt his religion. While Buddhists and shamanists more easily accepted his proselytizing efforts, Russian traditions were, by this point, deeply rooted in Orthodox Christianity. Still, the increasing Islamization of the Golden Horde shaped Russian perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and the greater Islamic world during this period.

While enthusiastic in spreading Islam, Uzbek Khan was tolerant of Christians, as long as they paid the *jizya* (a religious tax traditionally levied on non-Muslims living under Muslim rule). In 1313, he went so far as to grant Peter, the

Golden Horde

Following the 1241 expedition into east-central Europe, Genghis Khan's grandson, Batu, established himself north of the Caspian Sea, in the steppe lands that had until then belonged to the Cumans (Desht-i Kipchak). From Sarai (later, Sarai Berke) on the Volga River, he and his successors ruled over a vast territory between the Carpathian Mountains to the west and the Obi and Irtysh rivers to the east, and from the upper Volga River in the north to the Caucasus Mountains in the south. The name "Golden Horde" comes from one of the four color names used by Mongols and other steppe nomads for geographical directions. Yellow (or gold) in that nomenclature referred to the central location; the Golden Horde was therefore the "central camp" ("horde" derives from the Mongol word for "camp"). All the senior princes of Rus' acknowledged the supremacy of the Golden Horde; others who did not were exterminated (for example, Michael of Chernigov; d. 1246). The Horde was ruled by the khan, who was chosen by a *quriltai* ("assembly") of descendants of Genghis Khan. The Mongols exacted tribute from the subject peoples—Rus(sians), Armenians, Georgians—but a large amount of revenue came from trade taxes made possible by the Genoese trade centers of Soldaia, Caffa, and Azak in Crimea. Mamluk Egypt was the most important trade partner and ally of the Golden Horde. Although established by nomads, the Golden Horde developed as an urban culture, particularly after one of Batu's successor, Uzbek Khan (r. 1312–1341) converted to Islam. The city of Sarai, the Horde's army, and the Crimean trade centers were destroyed by Timur Lenk (also called Tamerlane) in 1391, and the state sank into civil war in the 1440s. Three of its successor states—the khanates of Crimea, Astrakhan, and Kazan—continued the Mongol presence in eastern Europe.

metropolitan of Moscow (r. 1308–1326), a charter that protected the Orthodox faith as well as the church's activities and property. In a letter to Uzbek Khan, Pope John XXII (r. 1316–1334) praised him for his kind treatment of Christians within his realm. There were exceptions to this tendency, however, as when Uzbek Khan issued an edict forbidding the ringing of church bells in Crimea in 1320.

In addition to the khanate's Islamization, Uzbek Khan ruled over the Golden Horde during the golden age of its political, economic, and social development. He built up a strong administration in his capital city, Saray (northwest of the Caspian Sea near the lower Volga), and he installed ministers to manage local affairs when he was away. Uzbek Khan encouraged trade relations with the Genoese and the Venetians, and he maintained close ties to the Byzantines and the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria through marriage alliances. Not only were his relations with the Mamluks profitable, but also they provided him with an ally against the Mongol il-khans in Iran when territorial disputes arose.

The conversion to Islam by the Golden Horde's inhabitants during Uzbek Khan's reign fostered the growth of urban life, thanks to developments such as the construction of Islamic places of worship and schools. With the spread of Islam, population centers began adopting the Arabic script for various Turkic dialects. This permitted two-way cultural exchange and the dissemination of Persian and Arabic texts in the Golden Horde and beyond. The increasing circulation of the Qur'an, hadith, and other Arabic religious materials helped to solidify the Golden Horde's position in the Islamic world.

AUGUST SAMIE

See also

Kublai Khan's Conversion to Tibetan Buddhism (13th Century);
Rise of the Mamluks (1250–1517); Ilkhan Mahmud Ghazan Converts to Islam (1295); Tarmashirin Khan's Conversion to Islam (ca. 1330s)

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AZTEC CULT OF HUITZILOPOCHTLI AND THE FOUNDATION OF TENOCHTITLAN (1325–1519)

Huitzilopochtli was the principal deity of the Aztec people. He was associated with the sun, fire, warfare, and the ruling lineage of the Aztec. The name *Huitzilopochtli* means "hummingbird on the left" or "hummingbird of the south," and he was frequently depicted as a hummingbird. His shrine was located in the temple complex at the center of the Aztec capital city, Tenochtitlan. The temple of Huitzilopochtli was joined with the temple of Tlaloc, who was the patron deity of water and rain. Together, their temples formed the Huētocalli, or Great Temple, which appeared as a double pyramid located at the center of the temple precinct. The cult of Huitzilopochtli played a central role in the militaristic Aztec society, which blended religious and state power.

The term *Aztec* is first referenced by Hernando de Alvarado Tezozomoc, a chronicler of Aztec noble descent who was writing after the Spanish conquest, and it was later recorded by the European naturalist Alexander von Humboldt. The appellation became more widely recognized after the publication of William H. Prescott's *The History of the Conquest of Mexico* in 1843. The term *Aztec* is derived from *Aztlan*, which means "Place of the White Heron" or "White Land." The name with which the Aztec people self-identified was *Méxica* (sing., *Méxihcatl*), which they believed was given to them by Huitzilopochtli himself.

Aztec religion was composed of a complex pantheon of deities that reflected the political, social, and emotional range of human experience. They could directly affect all