



# Early Christianities

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## And the Ancient Mysteries

With Andrew Linnell

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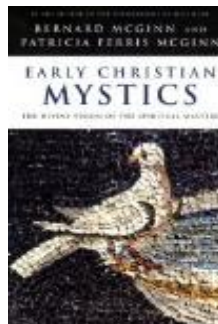
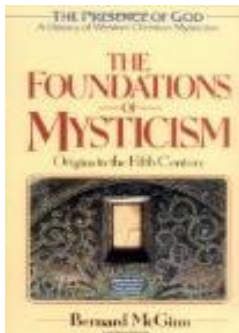
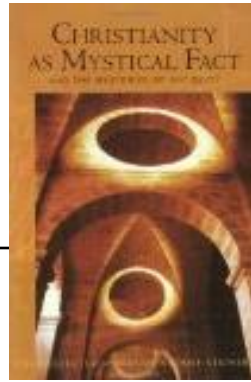
# Schedule (Intense!)

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- **1 – 2:20 pm:** The Vanishing of the Mysteries: From Plato, Aristotle, & Alexander to Theodosius & Justinian
- *2:20 - 2:40 Break*
- 2:40 - 4:00: The Many Streams of Christianity, Heretical Theology Destroyed: Arians, Manicheans, Templars, Cathars, Islam & Harun al Rashid
- *4 – 4:20 Break*
- 4:20 – 5:40: The Flowering of the Ancient and Early Christian Mysteries in Renaissance Art, Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks*

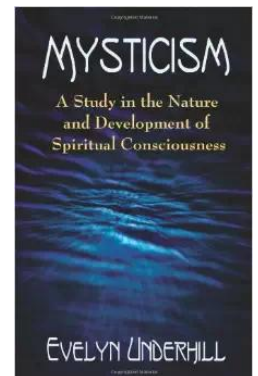
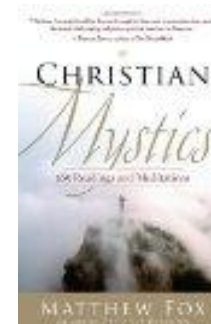
# Overview

- Way too much material
  - How to condense without making superficial?
  - History classes largely ignore role of Mysteries
- Key Points:
  1. Spread of Christianity via Mystery Centers
  2. Roman Christianity sought to free itself of past
  3. Mysteries continue, underground, rising up from time to time
    - Anthroposophy is its latest flowering



[www.thechristianmysteries.com](http://www.thechristianmysteries.com)

<http://www.rsarchive.org/>





Background, What were the Mysteries?, What role? Mythologies, The Vanishing of the Mysteries: From Plato, Aristotle, & Alexander to Theodosius & Justinian

# LECTURE 1



# Difficulty Really Knowing This History

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- Conflict in Christianity between the two directions
    - Especially in fourth and the early fifth century, Augustine as lightning rod
    - Wisdom-filled Christianity
    - A Christianity seemingly tending toward a materialistic view
  - Historic documents, until DSS, called forth false ideas of what existed prior to the fourth century
    - Knowledge, cultivated in the schools
    - Ritual, veneration, of the religious element
    - Belong to very ancient times
    - Still extends into these two areas
    - Present during the first Christian centuries.
    - Sphere of wisdom has preserved a teaching from earlier times
- Rudolf Steiner, *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy*, lecture 4

# Mystery Centers Existed Everywhere

- Indian Mysteries: Brahman
- Mysteries of the Persian: Zoroaster and Mithra
- Egyptian Mysteries: Osiris, Isis, & Horace
  - Hermes Trismegistus
  - Babylonian Mysteries: Nimrod & Queen Semiramis
  - Mysteries of the Near East: Hanmi, Tao
- Greece: the Eleusinian, Delphic, Orphic, Dionysian, Samothracean Mysteries
- Others: Syrian Adoniac, Phrygian Cabirian, Minoan



7/25/2015

Earlier Christianities



Slide 6



# When Did the Mystery Centers Begin?

- Gurdjieff claims the mystery schools went back at least 30,000 to 40,000 years
- Rudolf Steiner points to the Atlantean Period from where 'modern' mysteries continued after the flood
- After Adam and Eve:
  - Humans 'elsewhere'
  - Two mystery streams
    1. Abel / Seth
    2. Cain





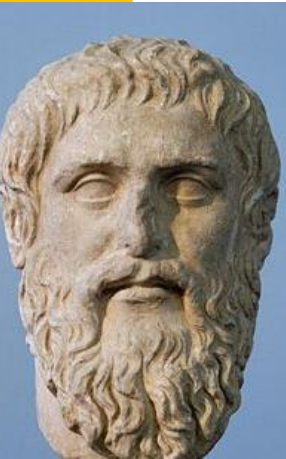
# What Were the Ancient Mysteries?

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- Mystery Centers (wisdom & guidance) in all societies as oral tradition
  - This “secret” wisdom existed side by side with the local religion
  - It shed light upon the highest questions of contemporary times
  - Their sages speak of the Mysteries with the greatest reverence
- What was concealed in them? What did they reveal?
  - Those initiated are in the position of a man who can see and who imparts his visual impressions to one born blind
  - The spiritual eye sees what the material eye sees, but in a higher light (consciousness)



# Mysteries from the Golden Age of Greece



- **Plato**(424-327 BC): "the ultimate design of the Mysteries ... was to **lead us back** to the principles from which we descended, ... a perfect enjoyment of the spiritually good
- **Cicero**(106 – 43 BC): "For among the many excellent and indeed divine institutions which your Athens has brought forth and contributed to human life, none, in my opinion, is better than **its Mysteries**. For by their means **we have been brought out of our barbarous and savage mode of life and educated and refined to a state of civilization**; and as the **rites** are called **initiations**, so in very truth we have learned from them the beginnings of life, and have gained the power not only to live happily, but also to die with a better hope." — Laws II, xiv, 36



# Mystery References from Wikipedia

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- Plato, an initiate himself, often mentions the Mysteries. In his dialogue on the immortality of the soul from *Phaedo* he says, "our mysteries had a very real meaning: he that has been **purified and initiated** shall dwell with the gods" (F.J. Church trans)
- Plutarch, writing to his wife on the death of their daughter, says, "because of those sacred and faithful promises given in the **mysteries**...we hold it firmly for an undoubted truth that **our soul is incorruptible and immortal**. Let us behave ourselves accordingly" (Hamilton)
- Plutarch: "When a man dies he is like those who are **initiated into the mysteries**. Our whole life is a journey by tortuous ways without outlet. At the moment of quitting it come terrors, shuddering fear, amazement. Then a light that moves to meet you, pure meadows that receive you, songs and dances and holy apparitions" (Hamilton)



# Experience Within a Mystery Center

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- Mysteries were seen as something dangerous
  - The way to the secrets of existence went through a world of terrors beginning with the sensation of death, the underworld before climbing to the Eternal
  - Woe to him who tried to reach them unworthily
    - Purification, moral stature
- There was no greater crime than the “betrayal” to the uninitiated
  - The “traitor” was punished with death and confiscation of property
- All ancient schools of learning were ‘connected’
- Real Purpose? to prepare for the coming of Ahura Mazda, of Ra, of the Sun God, of Christ (Acts 17:16-34)



# Mystery Center Experiences

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## ○ **Humans go there**

- Goal to experience beings of the spiritual world
- Egyptians journeyed back to Lemuria
  - Importance of bloodline to carry memory
  - Memories of when Gods were present
  - Pictures of the Gods (phantoms) rather than full experiences
- Early Greeks journeyed back to Atlantis

## ○ **Gods come here**

- Gods appeared in the Mystery center, Temple
  - Time aligned – long waits possible
  - For example: Saturn: 30 years, Moon: 18 years
- Building suitable temples for the gods to appear



# Concept of the Human in the Mysteries

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- We come from extra-planetary into the planetary
- We are a template, a microcosm of the macrocosm
- We consist of Body, Soul, and Spirit
- Planetary relations to etheric body
  - Mercury, Venus, Moon: Astral
  - Saturn, Jupiter Mars: Etheric
- Earth: forces that lead one into earthly existence
  - Ensure physical body is fitted into this etheric body
  - That of the physical body where the etheric body has expressed itself
- Sun: Insofar as the human being raises himself with his ego beyond the etheric and astral body
  - Leads beyond one's earthly life



# Degrees of Initiation

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## Mithraic:

1. Raven: the messenger between spirit & earth
2. Disciple: Meditant within the Temple
3. Warrior: Proclaimed the Truth experienced
4. Lion: Consciousness has reached Tribal level
5. True (nation): e.g. "True Israelite" or "A True Persian"
6. Sun Hero: precise as the sun in rhythms, Christ
7. Father

## Jerome of Stridon

1. Corax
2. Nymphus
3. Miles
4. Leo
5. Perses
6. Heliodromus
7. Pater



# Experiencing the Midnight Sun on 12/25

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The pupils gathered in the early evening. In quiet contemplation they had to make clear to themselves what this most important event signified. In deep silence they sat together in the darkness.

By the time midnight drew near, they had been sitting in the dark room for hours. Thoughts of eternity pervaded their souls. Then, toward midnight, mysterious tones arose, resounding through the room, up welling and diminishing. The pupils who heard these tones knew that this was the music of the spheres.

Then the room became dimly lit, the only light emanating from a dimly lighted disc. Those who saw this knew that this disc represented the earth. The illumined disc became darker and darker, until finally it was quite black. Simultaneously the surrounding space grew brighter.





# Experiencing the Midnight Sun on 12/25

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Those who saw this knew that the black sphere represented the earth. The sun, however, which ordinarily irradiates the earth was concealed; the earth could no longer see the sun. Then around the earth-disc, at the outer edge, rainbow colors formed, ring upon ring. Those who saw it knew that this was the radiant Iris.

At midnight a violet-reddish circle gradually arose in place of the black earth sphere. On it a Word was written. This Word varied according to the peoples whose members were permitted to experience this Mystery.

In our language the Word would be Christos.

Those who saw it knew that this was the sun, which appeared to them at the midnight hour, when the world around rests in deepest darkness. The pupils were now told that what they had experienced was called, "Seeing the sun at the midnight hour." -- *Rudolf Steiner*

<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/SignSymbols/19061217p02.html>



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Purpose of Mythologies

# **COMMUNICATING, GUIDING, AND FORETELLING**



# Great Initiates: Heraclitus (535–475 BC)

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- Declares the everlasting Logos is the archetype of all
- “Immortals take on mortality, mortals immortality; death is the eternal life of mortals, earthly life the death of immortals”
- Describes a “path which is difficult to travel”
  - The uninitiated will find only “obscurity and darkness but if an initiate be your guide, the path shines brighter than sunlight” (Anth. Pal. Book IX, 540)
  - Heraclitus was called “The Obscure” because only the light of the Mysteries provided the key to his conceptions
- Opposites are necessary for life, but they are unified in a system of balanced exchanges [creation from nothing]
  - “Hades is the same as Dionysus,”
  - Dionysus, the god of lust for life, of germination and growth is, for Heraclitus, the same as Hades, the god of annihilation and destruction
  - Law of Dualities (later with Mani)
- “Everything is in a state of flux” Moralia, Fragments 40, 41
  - Physical things are becoming and transitory
- “For men to get all they wish is not the better thing; it is disease”
  - Heraclitus intends primarily to point out not the transitory quality of earthly things, but the splendor and majesty of the eternal

# Mystery Centers: Ephesus

- The mythical founder of the city was a prince of Athens named Androklos
  - Left Athens after the death of his father, King Kadros
  - According to the legend, he founded Ephesus on the place where the oracle of Delphi indicated
- 560 BC, conquered by the Lydian king Croesus
  - He treated the inhabitants with respect
  - He funds Temple construction of marble
  - Was one of the 7 Wonders of the Ancient World
- Major mystery center, it trained
  - Heraclitus & Pythagoras
  - Plato & Aristotle



# Later Ephesus

- 100 BC – 100 AD, slave trade capital of the world
- 52 AD Christianity comes, Paul lived in Ephesus
- Gospel of John written here, c 90–100
- Mary, mother of Jesus, may have died here
- Ephesus abandoned after the harbor silted up 5<sup>th</sup> C



# Mystery Centers: Delphi

- The Temple of Apollo was built on intersecting geographical fault and ley lines at Delphi
  - Built on the slope of a 900 foot cliff
- Pythia, high priestess of Apollo would sit on a golden tripod
- 560 BC King Croesus of Lydia wanted to find the best oracle in the world
- Every major Greek and Roman leader, soldier, or politician would either personally travel to Delphi or send emissaries to Delphi to consult the Oracle
- Last recorded oracle was given in approximately 360AD for the Emperor Julian the Apostate of Rome
- Emperor Theodosius abolished the Delphi oracle 392AD





# Mystery Centers: Eleusis

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- Mysteries of Demeter and Persephone
- Around 300 BC, the state took control
  - Two centers: lesser and greater
  - Two families, Eumolpidae and Kerykes ran the mystery center
  - Led to a vast increase in the # initiates
- New, simple requirements for membership:
  - Freedom from "blood guilt", no murders
  - Able to speak Greek, not a barbarian
- Men, women, and slaves initiated
- In 170 AD, Temple sacked by the Sarmatians
- Rebuilt by Marcus Aurelius who was then allowed to become the only lay person ever to enter the Anaktoron
- Emperor Julian was the last emperor to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries



# Mystery Centers: Eleusis

- The Roman emperor Theodosius I closed the sanctuaries in 392 AD
- The closing of the Eleusinian Mysteries is reported by Eunapius, a historian and biographer of the Greek philosophers.
- Eunapius had been initiated by the last legitimate Hierophant who had been commissioned by the emperor Julian to restore the Mysteries
- The very last hierophant claimed the rank of Father in Mysteries of Mithras
- The last remnants of this Mystery was wiped out in 396 AD, when Alaric, King of the Goths, invaded accompanied by Christians "in their dark garments", bringing Arian Christianity and desecrating the old sacred sites



# Mithra: Preparer for Christianity

- The ancient mystery teachers knew
  - One does arrive at a full conception of the gradual approach of an entity out of extra-planetary spheres into the planetary and hence to the earth sphere
  - Imaginative view → not a human being; rather a bull
  - No human beings would exist on earth if there were nothing besides this extra-planetary being that descends through the planetary sphere into evolution
  - The time had come when human beings must struggle against this bull-like nature with something still higher
- Conclusion: overcome view given by this ancient wisdom
  - Image of the bull with Mithras on top of it
  - Mithras: the human being who struggles to overcome the bull
  - Mithras was the sun force in the human being who rebelled against the merely planetary and terrestrial aspects
  - I must be of far loftier origin than the being that was pictured according to the ancient teaching of wisdom
  - Remnants: bull-fighting Spain and Mexico
  - Note: Gaze, crab, snake, dog, where on bull each is





# Fear of Spiritual Death

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- Schools were in trouble – inability to penetrate to high level
- Crisis amongst initiates – what if the ability to penetrate to the spiritual worlds is lost to humanity?
- Kali Yuga – the Dark Age – at peak
- We cannot betray the Mysteries but will there be enough knowledge transferred to the future so that Mankind will once again seek the spiritual world and its guidance?
- Will Evil win out and Mankind fail to achieve its goal?



# Daniel & King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

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- 600 BC, Babylon
- Daniel 10: The astrologers answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. 11 What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans."

# Symbolic End of Mysteries

- July 21, 356 BC:
- Herostratus seeking fame
- Burns Temple of Artemis/Diana at Ephesus
- Same day Alexander was born
  - Plutarch remarked that Artemis was too preoccupied with Alexander's delivery to save her burning temple
- Edict of Thessalonica, emperor Theodosius I 392
- What remained of the temple was destroyed in 401
  - Mob led by St. John Chrysostom
  - Columns used in building Hagia Sophia
    - Mother Church of Constantinople





# Aristotle

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- Dream-state mystery knowledge being replaced by Logic
  - Note: logic never plays a role in dreams (but perhaps this will change?)
- Physical body from father and mother
- Two parts of the soul
  1. One tied to the physical body: apprehends sense-perceptions
    - Arises as a necessary by-product of man's parental inheritance
  2. Second is the spiritual part, the “Active Reason” intellection in the spiritual life
    - This “nous” is immaterial and immortal
- The whole man is born of the co-operation of God with the father & mother
- From God man receives his spiritual soul or “Active Reason” that evolves during life between birth and death
- When one passes through the gate of death
  - Earth gets the physical body and the lower part of the soul, the “Passive Reason”
  - The “Active Reason” separates just as it is entering into a world remote from the phenomenal world where it enjoys immortality
- This soul is able to look back upon the fruits of good deeds but cannot change the karma of past actions
  - All through eternity the soul looks back on the good or evil it has wrought



# Alexander

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- Inspired by Aristotle to build Alexandrias
  - To found a spiritual Ephesus *far and wide*
  - To record the many Mysteries and their oral traditions
    - Before they were lost
    - At least 20 such cities were built
  - Plutarch: Olympias, mother of Alexander, on the eve of the consummation of her marriage to King Philip, dreamed that her womb was struck by a thunder bolt, causing a flame that spread "*far and wide*" before dying away
- Does not impose Aristotelian knowledge – works for harmony of Hellenistic and local civilization
  - Hailed as a savior, a deliverer from spiritual fetters





# From the Fifth Gospel

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From the Bath-Kol:

- AUM, Amen!
- The Evils hold sway,
- Witness of Egoity becoming free,
- Selfhood-Guilt through others incurred,
- Experienced in the Daily Bread,
- Wherein the Will of the Heavens does not rule,
- In that Man severed himself from Your Kingdom
- And forgot Your Names,
- Ye Fathers in the Heavens.
- For Jesus of Nazareth, the Mysteries were corrupted
- Ancient wisdom no one could assimilate
- Even if the Mysteries could be restored, no one was capable of integrating
- Essene greatness but he saw Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing from their gate
- Hillel – community
- Jesus felt overwhelmed, unable to right this ship with his own talents



# The Emperor and Initiate Augustus

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- 27 BC – 14 AD
- Led Rome's transformation from republic to empire
- Father was a senator and governor
- Mother was Caesar's niece
- Raised by his grandmother, Caesar's sister
- July named after Julius, August – guess who!
- Passed laws harkening to the traditions of the Roman Republic – worked to improve and beautify the city of Rome – and rule from Britain to India

# Philo of Alexandria (20 BC - 50 AD)

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- Philo used the term Logos
  - Logos as divine wisdom
  - Logos as the image of God after which the human mind (nous) was made
  - God's "blueprint for the world"
- John too speaks of Logos, "through Him"
- Considered to be the reincarnated Plato
- Philo followed the Platonic distinction between imperfect matter and perfect idea
  - The logos was necessary, he taught, because God cannot come into contact with matter

# Plutarch (46 - 120 AD)



- Initiated into the Apollo Mysteries
  - High priest, temple of Apollo, Delphi
- Writings and lectures: a celebrity in Roman empire
  - Guests came from all over the empire; congregated for serious conversation
  - Influenced Renaissance writers, Shakespeare, and Emerson
  - Many of these dialogues were recorded and published
  - Moralia includes
    - On the Decline of the Oracles
    - On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander
    - On the Worship of Isis and Osiris
    - On the Malice of Herodotus
    - On the Delays of the Divine Vengeance
    - On Peace of Mind

# Plutarch (46 - 120 AD)



- “For the god addresses each one of us as we approach him here with the words ‘Know Thyself,’ as a form of welcome, which certainly is in no wise of less import than ‘Hail;’ and we in turn reply to him ‘Thou art,’— (discussion of the coming and going of Beings) –
- But we have a ridiculous fear of death, we who have already died so many deaths, and still are dying! For not only is it true, as Heraclitus used to say, that the death of fire is birth for air, and the death of air is birth for water, but the case is even more clearly to be seen in our own selves: the man in his prime passes away when the old man comes into existence, the young man passes away into the man in his prime, the child into the young man, and the babe into the child. Dead is the man of yesterday, for he is passed into the man of to-day; and the man of to-day is dying as he passes into the man of tomorrow.
- Our senses, through ignorance of reality, falsely tell us that what appears to be is.”
  - Moralia, De E apud Delphos, 392 A–E. (The E at Delphi, 17 and 18.)



# Who References Plutarch?

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The founders of America:

- Samuel Adams, Peyton Randolph, Patrick Henry, Samuel Davies, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, Henry Lee, John Jay, George Mason, Gouverneur Morris, and Thomas Jefferson, to name just a few

Stream to American Freemasons:

- Cain→Hiram→certain Mysteries  
→Templars→Masons
- 1723 Ben Franklin PA Lodges
- 1733 St. John's Lodge Boston: Paul Revere, Tea Party
- 1752 George Washington, Fredericksburg, VA
- Many associated with Scottish Grand Lodge



# Emperors and the Mystery Centers

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- Constantine accepts Christianity
  - His mother was Christian
  - Romanization of the Church “hierarchy”
- Council of Nicea, 325 AD
  - Attain consensus in the church → Nicene Creed, divinity of Jesus
- Julian the Apostate: born: 330 AD in Constantinople, Roman Emperor from 361 to 363
  - Initiated into several mysteries
  - Murdered trying to restore Mithraic and Persian Mysteries to Empire
- Theodosius I closed the Greek Mystery Centers in 392 AD
- Arian Christians under Gothic King Alaric desecrate in 396 AD
- 525 Emperor Justin I allowed intermarriage between social classes allowing Justinian to marry Theodora, his courtesan
- 527 - 565: Justinian as Emperor destroys remnants
- 553 Second Council of Constantinople: recognized that nothing could be done in the Church contrary to the emperor's will and command





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# CHRISTIANITY AS FULFILLMENT OF THE MYSTERIES

# Paul in Athens

## Fulfillment of the Mysteries

Acts 17:22-23 (NIV):

- 22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: *to an unknown god*. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.”
- Dionysius was a judge of the Areopagus
  - He converted to Christianity through Paul who places him as head of the Christian Mysteries
- “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.”  
— *I Corinthians 3:1-2*





# Paul to Ephesus (Ephesians)

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- 2:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of **wisdom and revelation**, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the **eyes of your heart** may be enlightened ...
- 3:3 ... the **mystery** made known to me by **revelation**, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the **mystery of Christ**, 5 which was **not made known to people in other generations** as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. 6 This **mystery** is that through the gospel the Gentiles are **heirs** together with Israel, **members together of one body**, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.
- 7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.



# Paul to Ephesus (Ephesians)

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- 3:8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone **the administration of this mystery**, which **for past ages** was **kept hidden** in God, who created all things. 10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the **rulers [archai] and authorities [exusiai] in the heavenly realms**, 11 according to his purpose of the ages that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with **freedom** and confidence.



# Church Fathers Had Ties to the Mysteries

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## **Origen** (185–254)

- Egyptian taught at Alexandria
- Name means “Son of Horus” [Osiris, Isis, and their son Horus]
- One of the most distinguished of the early fathers of the Christian Church
- Neo-Pythagorean (Hermes), Platonist, and Gnostic
- Pre-existence of the soul (reincarnation)
- Final reconciliation (apokatastasis) of all creatures
- Father God was The First Principle not Yahweh
  - To whom even Christ, the Logos, was subordinate
- “For the contents of scripture are the outward forms of certain mysteries and the images of divine things”
  - *De Principiis*



# Church Fathers Had Ties to the Mysteries

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## **Clement of Alexandria (150 – 217)**

- Writer, Eastern Saint
- Education was pagan and part of Mysteries
- Scholar of Greek philosophy, claimed it originated in Egypt
- Wrote “Thus the Lord did not hinder us from doing good while keeping the Sabbath, but allowed us to communicate of those divine mysteries, and of that holy light, to those who are able to receive them. He did not disclose to the many what did not belong to the many; but to the few to whom he knew that they belonged, who were capable of receiving and being moulded according to them. But secret things are entrusted to speech, not to writing, as God confided the unutterable mystery to the Logos, not to the written word.”



# From Ancient Mysteries to Christianity

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## **Augustine** (354 – 430):

- “What is called the Christian religion today (400AD) existed already among the ancients and was present with the beginnings of the human race
- But when Christ appeared in the flesh the true religion which was already in existence, received the name of Christian”
- What the mystic had sought through preparation in the Mysteries had appeared in Christ Jesus
- Milan 387: Augustine, 33, received the teachings of Ambrose
  - All his doubts about the Old and New Testaments vanished when the most important passages were interpreted by his teacher, not in a merely literal sense, but “were spiritually laid open and expounded by him, the mystical veil thereof being removed.”
- Mystical marriage of soul & spirit, e.g. Gospel of Thomas  
“Many are standing at the door, but the unified ones are the those who shall enter the Marriage Chamber”





# Faith versus Knowledge (Freedom)

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- “The mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets.”  
*Ephesians 3* by Paul
- “For the source of His righteousness is my justification, and from His marvellous mysteries is the light in my heart. My eyes have gazed on that which is eternal, on wisdom concealed from men, on knowledge and wise design hidden from the sons of men” *Essene Community Rule*
- “The testimonies of pagan wise men must not be thrown away” *On True Belief, anon. see Lane Fox Pagans and Christians, 1986*



# Faith versus Knowledge (Freedom)

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- St. Augustine “I would not believe the msg of the gospel if I were not urged to do so by the authority of the Catholic Church” *Contra epistolam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti*
- St. Athanasius: “Let us, who possess the scope of faith, restore the correct meaning of what they had wrongly interpreted” *Florovsky, p. 81*
- “‘Rule of faith’ as it had been maintained in the Church and ‘transmitted from fathers to fathers’, while the Arians had ‘no fathers’ for their opinions” [website](#)
- Origen: “while the whole law is spiritual, the inspired meaning is not recognized by all, but only by those who are gifted with the grace of the Holy Spirit in the word of **wisdom and knowledge.**” *De Principiis*



# New Mystical Path

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- Before Christianity, path of
  - Learning for the elect → monks
  - Path of mythology for the rest → faithful
- After Christ, two similar paths of development
  1. The human soul develops within it the forces leading it to the cognition of its true self and eventually to Christ
    - This becomes a Mystery knowledge path enriched through the Christ event
    - Augustine rejected this way as springing from pride of soul
  2. By developing forces of the soul as far as possible and then proceed to receive the ideas connected with the Christ event from written accounts and oral traditions
    - Augustine thought the second way was the way of true humility
    - Now it was possible for every soul to experience the spiritual



# Augustine on the New Mystical Path

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- Augustine, *De quantitate Animae*: "You may find peace in the truth, but for this, humility is needed, which does not suit your proud neck. ... What bliss, what abiding enjoyment of supreme and true good is offered to us, what serenity, what a breath of eternity! How shall I describe it? **It has been expressed, as far as it could be, by those great incomparable souls who we admit have beheld and still behold ... We reach a point** at which we acknowledge how true is what we have been commanded to believe and how well and beneficently we have been brought up by our mother the Church, and of what benefit was the milk given by the Apostle Paul to the little ones ..."



# The New Path in the Middle Ages

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- It is in the nature of the human soul to be able to arrive only at a certain stage of cognition through its own powers; from there it can advance further only through faith – Intellectual Soul
  - Natural perception bounded by a certain sphere above which the soul could not rise by its own efforts, thereby requiring faith for its perception
- John Scotus Eriugena, *De Divisione Naturae*: God derived the material, transitory world from the Logos
  - The path to God, humanity's goal, is through the Logos
  - Reason and authority, belief and cognition, stand side by side
  - Faith brings that to which knowledge alone can never raise itself
  - Faith in the content of the writings about the Logos, leads to salvation
- Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274), greatest teacher of the Church:
  - Human perception can only attain to that which led Augustine to self knowledge, to the certainty of the divine
  - The nature of the divine and its relation to the world is given by revealed theology, which is not accessible to man's own perception



# At What Age Do We Know?

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- Children are taught *to believe*
- Before eighteen, the child must depend upon those who are older, just as the infant depends on mother's milk
- Great significance applies to the intercourse between teachers, educators, and its younger generation
- The young cannot be brought to the point of actual knowledge: judgment begins only at 18 or 19
  - Real knowledge is awakened out of one's inner being
- Inducing the young to believe in what we, according to our knowledge, hold to be true was a sacred task
- Applied to monasteries and trades, any education



# Why the Ancient Mysteries Had to Fade

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- Rise of personality/egoism over tribal identity
- Corruption
  - Bloodline priests – kept in the family
  - Elitism competed against rise of Intellectual Soul
  - Emperors demanded to be initiated
- Christianity – declared the new mysteries
  - All can now be initiated
  - Inner choice to prepare and purify (faith)
  - Spread through the mystery centers
  - Later, zealous early Christians sought to destroy the old mysteries – their death opened new life
  - Heretics blamed for retaining old mysteries
    - Gnostics, Arianists, Marcionites, Manichaeists, Nestorians, Paulicians, Bogomils, Cathars, others





# What Became of the Old Mysteries?

---

- Heresy Hunters, Crusades, Inquisitions
  - Leads to deaths of 10s of millions
  - Destruction of books and relics
  - Ecumenical Council used to justify exterminations and genocides
    - Constantinople crushed the Paulicians
    - Cathars: First a European Crusade, then Inquisition
- Go underground as secret society
  - Remnants rise up in the Knights Templar – only to be massacred again
- Witch hunts (pagan mystery practitioner)



# Early Christian Theologies

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- Early Christianity was about Easter and the Mystery of Golgotha – not Christmas
- Most “heretics” held belief that Christ did not enter the body of Jesus until the baptism
  - “Mine hour has not yet come” referred to the process of becoming fully Man
  - Once this had been accomplished, then Christ could go through the experience of death and become united with the Earth
  - Knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha lost with the loss of knowledge of the human spirit, soul, and body (pnuema, psyche, and soma) – loss also of transmigration of soul, of spirit
- Today, association of reality only with body, most believe birth of Jesus = birth of Christ but not so before 333 CE

# 12 Apostles: 12 Christianities



Arian Baptistry in Ravenna, Italy 5<sup>th</sup> Century



Built by  
Ostrogoth King  
Theodoric the  
Great, an Arian  
Christian

Right to left:

- John the Baptist
- Jesus receiving the Spirit (Dove)
- God of the Jordon River
- = Man + God



# Fading of the Mysteries

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- Blood line
- Tradition, “it always has worked this way”
- What was outside was moving inside
- No longer could the god be found outside in the temple or in nature



# Change in Consciousness

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- Mysteries arose in Atlantean times
- Sleep consciousness
- Dream consciousness – Moon
- Awake consciousness – Sun
- Imagination
- Inspiration
- Intuition





# Questions about God

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- Can God reveal himself?
  - Logos and Demiourgos needed for revealing
  - Through Him all things became
- Is God's justice "an eye for an eye" or is God merciful, forgiving, and loving?
- Can a human experience God?
  - Can finite, ponderable see infinite, imponderable?
  - Are mystical experiences about God or angels?



# Recap

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- Ubiquity of Mystery Centers
- Culture arises from the Mysteries
- Mysteries & Humanity were evolving
- Spread of Christianity via Mystery Centers
- Roman Christianity sought to free itself of this past
- Mysteries continue, underground, rising up from time to time
- **Question: Why did they fade away?**





# Schedule (Intense!)

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- 1 – 2:20 pm: The Vanishing of the Mysteries: From Plato, Aristotle, & Alexander to Theodosius, Justinian, & Haroun al Rashid
- *2:20 - 2:40 Break*
- **2:40 - 4:00:** The Many Streams of Christianity, Heretical Theology Destroyed: Arians, Manicheans, Templars, Cathars
- *4 – 4:20 Break*
- 4:20 – 5:40: The Flowering of the Ancient and Early Christian Mysteries in Renaissance Art, Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks*

Goethe:  
As long as you have not  
Died and been reborn,  
You are but a gloomy guest  
Upon the darkened earth



The Many Streams of Christianity, Heretical Theology  
Destroyed: Arians, Manicheans, Templars, Cathars, Role  
of Islam and Harun al Rashid

## LECTURE 2



# The Historical Situation

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- Fading of the Mysteries
  - Loss of Initiation
  - Loss of Ancestry
  - Fear of [Spiritual] Death
- Rise of Intellectual
  - I Know, Freedom
  - I Can Be X, Egoism
  - Equality – end of bloodline, elitism
- Descent to the Earthly
  - E-H Balance of Greece
  - Oral becomes written
  - Focus: this earthly life
- Rise of New Mystery
  - Golgotha
  - Resurrection
  - Whitsun
- New Christian Initiation
  - Saul to Paul is the first
  - Inner Holy of Holies
  - 7 stages from WofFeet
- 11 + Paul Christianities
  - Spread via MysCtrs
  - Multiple 'personalities', books
  - Heresy hunting



# Historical Perspective

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- 333 BC – 333 AD Vanishing of Mysteries, Rise of Heretics
- 200 AD – 500 AD Spreading of Christianity to the World
  - Heretics: Marcion, Mani, Apollinarius, Arius, Nestorius
- 400 AD – 1000 AD Mystery Remnants Go Underground
  - Split of Roman Empire 395 AD: West (Rome) and East (Constantinople)
  - Justinian (483-565): Destroys Mystery Centers and Heretics
  - Byzantine destruction of Persia 629 AD
  - Muhammad (d 632 AD), Islam conquers Persia 632, N. Africa
  - Charlemagne and Harun al Rashid 800 AD
  - 8th Ecumenical Council in 869 – End of Spirit in Man
    - Pilgrimages 900-1200 AD, need for relics, for physically real
    - Troubadours and the Grail Knights → Knights Templar
      - Parzifal & Titerel, Northern Spain & Southern France



# What is Known of the Heretics?

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- From their detractors e.g. Irenaeus (books burned)
- 1773: Gnostic text Pistis Sophia found
- 1945: Gnostic texts in earthen jar in Egypt
  - Nag Hammadi: 52 mostly Gnostic tractates in 12 books
- 1947: Dead Sea Scrolls discovered
  - Essene settlement called Qumran
  - More found till 1979 in 11 caves
  - 872 scrolls were written by initiates
    - Some in Hebrew, some Aramaic
  - Apparently written between 150 BCE and 70 CE
    - Roman army dispersed Jews including Essenes
    - Herod's Great Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed
- 2006: Gnostic Gospel of Judas translated
  - Elements of theology unlike Christianity today



# Surging of New Ideals

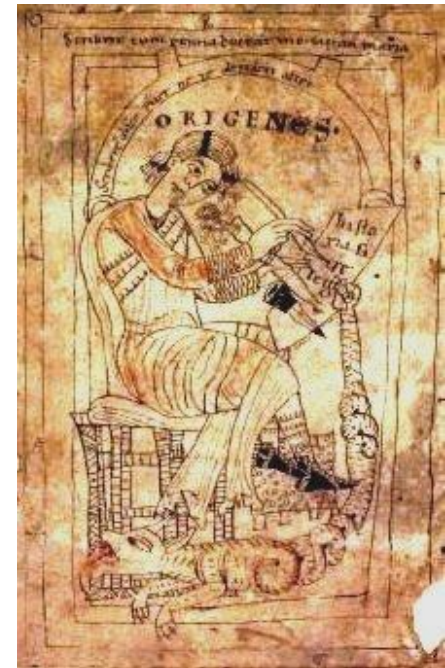
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- Universality & Individual Person
  - Replacing Tribal
- New vs Old Mysteries
- Freedom & Love
- Rise of Equality
  - Jew – Gentile – Citizen
  - Man – Woman
    - Judaism at the time treated women as inferior to men
- Plato & Hellenism
  - Ponderable - Imponderable
- Many new religions
- 2nd Temple Esotericism
- Concept of God - Love
  - Poly vs monotheistic
  - Demiourge creator
  - Could He enter Matter & Death (on a cross)?
  - In Nature or within
- The Law
- Struggle against Rome
- Coming of (2) Messiah
  - To stop the fall, anew
  - Kingly and priestly

# Establishing a Canon

## Drama of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century: The Authority of our Faith

- Once the Apostolic Fathers died, there arose the perceived need for a “blessed” set of books
  - On whose authority?
  - Modifications of some texts to fit one’s Christianity
    - Proto-Orthodox, Paul’s Letters
- Criteria for an accepted book
  - An initiate or ‘lineage’ to an apostle
  - Inspired writing (truth revealed on multiple levels)
- Several Canons arose
  - Role of Origen
  - Roman Church’s selection won out
    - Role of Proto-Orthodox





# Four Gospels, Four Forces of Man

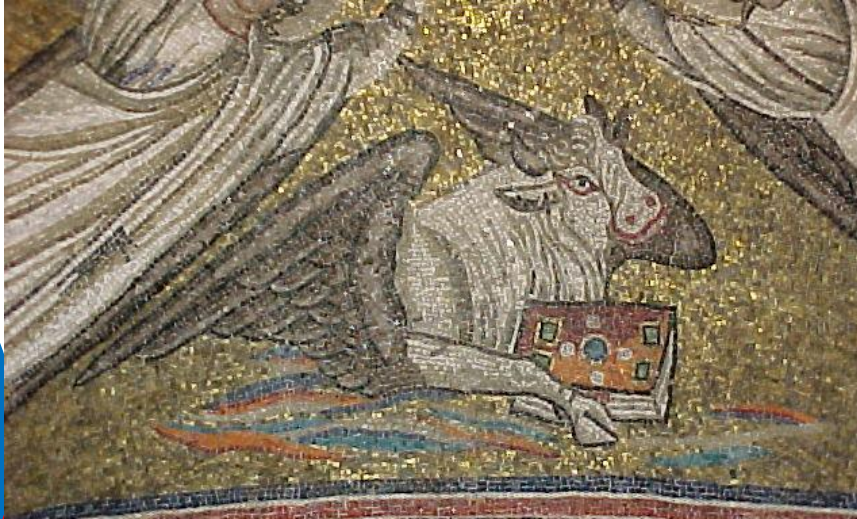
- Bull, Taurus
  - Luke
  - Paul
- Lion, Leo
  - Mark
  - Peter
- Angel-Man, Aquarius
  - Matthew
  - Matthew
- Eagle, Scorpio
  - John



*Ceiling Mosaic of the Archepiscopal Chapel, Ravenna*



**Luke**



**John**



**Matthew**



**Mark**



# The Great Debates

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- Contents of the Canon (New Testament)
- The Two Natures of Christ (Christ's humanity & divinity)
- God the Father same as God the Creator?
- The doctrine of the Trinity (substance)
- The doctrine of Divine grace
- The doctrine of the Church
- The role of [Jewish] tradition
- The fixing of the ecumenical creeds
- Fixing of the date of Easter



# Why Was It So Difficult?

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- Twelve (or more) Christianities + mystery centers
- Prevailing view of reality:
  - Total separation of Divine and physical worlds
    - Spirit and matter : Reality and illusion : Pure and impure (and there were *unclean spirits*)
    - Human flesh: from darkness/evil, not worthy of divine spirit (*and the Logos became flesh*)
  - Only an initiate could, through raising consciousness, experience & understand the imponderable spiritual world and its beings
- Christian Creed: God became Man, suffered, died, and resurrected
  - Was God born as a man or did God become Man?
  - Is the 'substance' of Father, Son, & Holy Spirit, (and Man) the same?





# Theological Battle About Christ

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- Christian view: God entered Earth & became a Man
  - Fundamental change to traditional wisdom
- “Heretical” claims (by some):
  - Christ and Jesus were two distinct entities
    - Christ unites with Jesus at baptism but leaves him on the cross
    - Because the Divine is from above, it cannot experience death
  - Christ only appeared to be human, but never had a physical body
  - Christ “descends” only as far as the air element
  - Christ-Jesus had no human soul; the Logos takes its place
- Filioque – from whom proceeds the Holy Spirit?



# Dead Sea Scrolls, Nag Hammadi

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- Dead Sea scrolls, discovered 1947 at Essene Qumran site
  - High emphasis on learning as step towards initiation
  - Understanding of scriptures through “illumination” from initiation
  - Sons of Light were those initiated to join battle against Darkness
    - Zoroastrian influence?
  - Used a Sun-based calendar rather than Moon-based Jewish
  - Testament of the 12 Patriarchs: Two Messiahs expected
    - King lineage and priest lineage (Compare to Temple Legend)
  - Damascus Document: Two become a compound being
- Nag Hammadi: earthenware pot found 1945 with 12 codices contain excerpts from Plato and Hermes
  - Discourse on the 8th and 9th Level of Consciousness: all about initiation
  - The Apocalypse of Adam, Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Philip



# Gnostics

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- The name is derived from the Greek word "gnosis"
  - Literally means "knowledge"
  - Knowledge as the mystical path to God
- Gnosticism is a philosophical and religious movement which started in pre-Christian times
  - Plato consider a Gnostic
- Reported they had a secret knowledge about God, humanity, and the rest of the universe of which the general population was unaware
- An Aeon, Sophia, a virgin, gives birth to an defective, inferior Creator-God, known as the Demiourge
  - Demiourge means "public craftsman" in Greek
  - This God is Jehovah, the God of the Hebrew Scriptures
  - Portrayed as the creator of the earth and its forces and forms
  - Viewed by Gnostics as a jealous God lacking in compassion



# Gnostics

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- Sophia, as Goddess of Wisdom, gave to humanity a seed of divine light
  - Goal is the release of pneuma (spirit) from imprisonment in the flesh
- The movement and its literature were essentially wiped out before the end of the 5th century CE by Catholic heresy hunters (e.g. Ireneaus) with the help of the Roman Army
- Interest renewed with the discovery of
  1. Gospel of Thomas plus an ancient Gnostic library at Nag Hammadi, Egypt in the 1940s
  2. Gospel of Judas at El Minya, Egypt, in the 1970s

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/gnostic.htm>





# Gospels of the Canon

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- *The 34 Gospels: Diversity and Division Among the Earliest Christians* by Charles W. Hedrick, the Bible Review
- “In sum, in addition to the four canonical gospels, we have four complete non-canonicals, seven fragmentary, four known from quotations and two hypothetically recovered for a total of 21 gospels from the first two centuries, and we know that others existed in the early period
- “I am confident more of them will be found; for example, I have seen photos of several pages from a Coptic text entitled ‘The Gospel of Judas’”



# Gospel of Judas and the Canon

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- Tixeront, translated by Raemers, states (*A Handbook of Patrology*, p. 67): "Besides these Gospels, we know that there once existed a Gospel of Bartholomew, a Gospel of Thaddeus, mentioned in the decree of Pope Gelasius, and a Gospel of Judas Iscariot in use among the Cainites and spoken of by St. Irenaeus"
- This document has recently surfaced and been published by National Geographic Society
- "It remains to be firmly established that the recently uncovered 'Gospel of Judas' corresponds to the Gospel of Judas mentioned by Irenaeus of Lyons"
  - <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/gospeljudas.html>



# Gospel of Judas and the Canon

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- Roberts-Donaldson translation from Irenaeus:
- “Others again declare that Cain derived his being from the Power above, and acknowledge that Esau, Korah, the Sodomites, and all such persons, are related to themselves. On this account, they add, they have been assailed by the Creator, yet no one of them has suffered injury. For Sophia was in the habit of carrying off that which belonged to her from them to herself. They declare that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things, and that he alone, knowing the truth as no others did, accomplished the mystery of the betrayal; by him all things, both earthly and heavenly, were thus thrown into confusion. They produce a fictitious history of this kind, which they style the Gospel of Judas.”



# Gospel of Judas and the Canon

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- On the new discovery, Bart Ehrman says,
- "The reappearance of the Gospel of Judas will rank among the greatest finds from Christian antiquity and is without doubt the most important archaeological discovery of the past 60 years. What will make this gospel famous—or infamous, perhaps—is that it portrays Judas quite differently from anything we previously knew. Here he is not the evil, corrupt, devil-inspired follower of Jesus who betrayed his master; he is instead Jesus' closest intimate and friend, the one who understood Jesus better than anyone else, who turned Jesus over to the authorities because Jesus wanted him to do so."

# Early Theological Battles

- Marcion (85-160 AD)
  - Born in Sinope on the Black Sea
    - Where Alexander the Great meets Diogenes
    - Where a mystery center existed for 100s of years
  - His teacher was Cerdo, a Gnostic
- From Rome he began to spread his message far and wide
- Justin Martyr (c.100-165) wrote in the 150's that Marcion was "teaching men to deny that God is the maker of all things in heaven and earth and that the Christ, predicted by the prophets, is His Son"
- Excommunicated in 144
- No other heretic called forth such a widespread response from the Orthodox church
- By the 4th century most of the Marcionite churches had been absorbed into Manicheism





# Paul of Samasota (200-275 AD)

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- Bishop of Antioch from 260 to 268
- Believer in monarchianism, a doctrine about the Trinity
  - Taught that Jesus was born a mere man
  - At baptism: infused with the divine Logos or word of God
  - Jesus was man-become-God
  - Christ was God-become-man
- 264 – 269: 3 synods on Paul of Samosata
- 269: Antioch synod with 70 bishops, priests and deacons
  - Removed him from the position of bishop (but he remained)
- 272: Introduction of Roman rule into the Church; Emperor Aurelian called feuding parties to his own tribunal
  - Though not a Christian and with no interest in the doctrinal matters of the Church, he wished to restore order
- Paul's pupil Lucian of Antioch is considered to have had a major influence on Arius the founder of Arianism



# Manichaeism: Son of the Widow

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- 240 AD: Founded by Manes, aka Mani (216-277)
  - **Son Of A Widow**
    - Born as Corbicius in **Babylon** to Iranian parents
    - Grows up with a **Jewish** mystic group, the Elkasites, a branch of **Essenes**
- Mani presented himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ
  - In the 4th century, Manichaean Coptic papyri identify Mani as the promised Paraclete (The Holy Ghost)
  - According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315–386):
    - Teacher: Terebinthus the Maitreya **Bodhisattva**
    - Who was taught by Scythianus of **Alexandria**, author of *Doctrine of Dualities* in **India** in 50 AD

<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/Classes/US310/Manichaeanism.html>

# Manichaeism: Uniting Religions

- Mission: to deal with evil
- Mani's teaching unites Christianity with
  - Gnosticism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism,
  - Hinduism, and Taoism (and more)
  - Spreads rapidly west to Spain and east to China
- Dualities: dry-wet, warm-cold, light-dark, life-death
  - Christ path is the middle path
- Manichaeists were brutally exterminated
  - All books destroyed
- Council of Niceae tries to unite Christianities while Mani tried to unite all religions out of the mysteries



<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/Courses/US310/Manichaeism.html>





# Destroying Manichaeism

<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/Classes/US310/Manichaeism.html>

- Mani travels and teaches for 40 years
  - When he returns with his retinue to Persia he converts Peroz, King Shapur's brother – at GundeShapur
- Manichaeism spreads quickly throughout the Middle East, Roman Empire, and as far east as China
- In 296 A.D., Diocletian decreed: "We order that their organizers and leaders be subject to the final penalties and condemned to the fire with their abominable scriptures" resulting in many martyrs
- In 382 A.D. Theodosius I issued a decree of death for Manichaean monks
- In the West, Manichaeism disappears after the sixth century, but Manichaeans were active in China until the thirteenth century



# GundiShapur University

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- Shāpur I made Gundeshapur his capital in 260
- Shāpur's wife, the daughter of Emperor Aurelian, brought with her two Greek physicians who taught Hippocratic medicine
- King Shāpur encouraged mystics and scholars from Persia and India and China to teach at Gundishapur
- 489: Nestorian cultural center in Edessa was ordered closed by the Byzantine emperor Zeno
  - Transferred to become the School of Nisibis at Gundeshapur
- 529: Justinian banished from Greece its scholars and Pagan philosophers/mystics leading to important research in medicine, astronomy, and mathematics
- Baghdad copied and imported Gundishapur scholars for its House of Wisdom

# “Heretical” Christian Streams:

## **Arius** (d 336), presbyter of Antioch

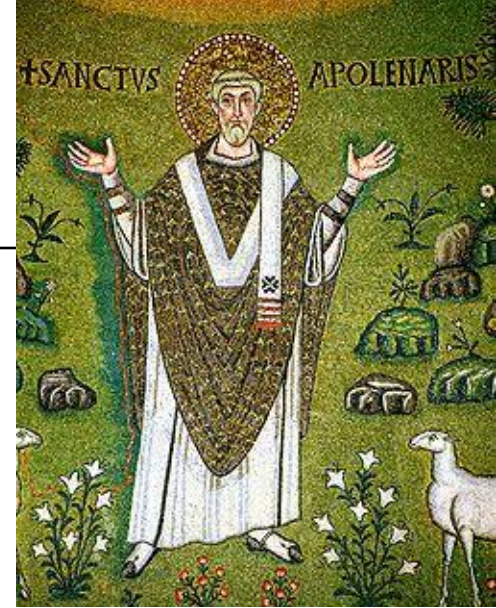
- Taught in Alexandria:
  - Divine Logos incarnated into Jesus
  - Son, while divine and like God ("of like substance") was created by God as the agent through whom he created
- Excommunicated
- Later welcomed back by assembly in Constantinople but poisoned on way
- Followers convert “barbarians” to Arian Christianity



# “Heretical” Streams:

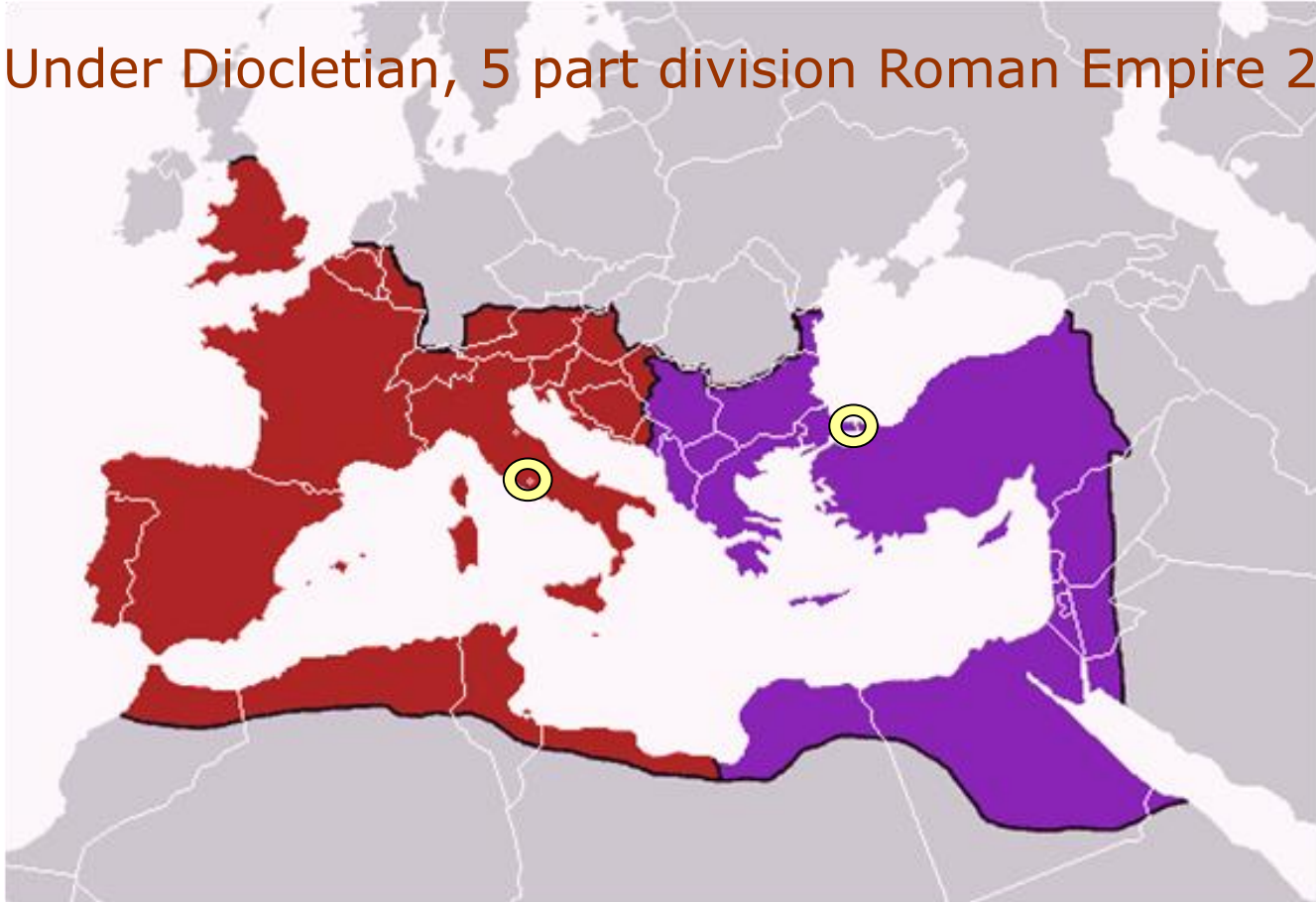
## **Appollinaris (d 392)**

- Platonic division of human nature:
  - body, soul, and spirit
- Christ assumed a human body
  - Also a human soul or principle of animal life
  - But not the human spirit
- The Logos can take the place of the human spirit
  - Becomes one’s spiritual centre:
    - Seat of self-consciousness and self-determination
  - “I am the I am”



# Splitting the Empire Into East and West

Under Diocletian, 5 part division Roman Empire 286 AD



Constantine 306 AD becomes Augustus of West. Unites both 314

# Constantine

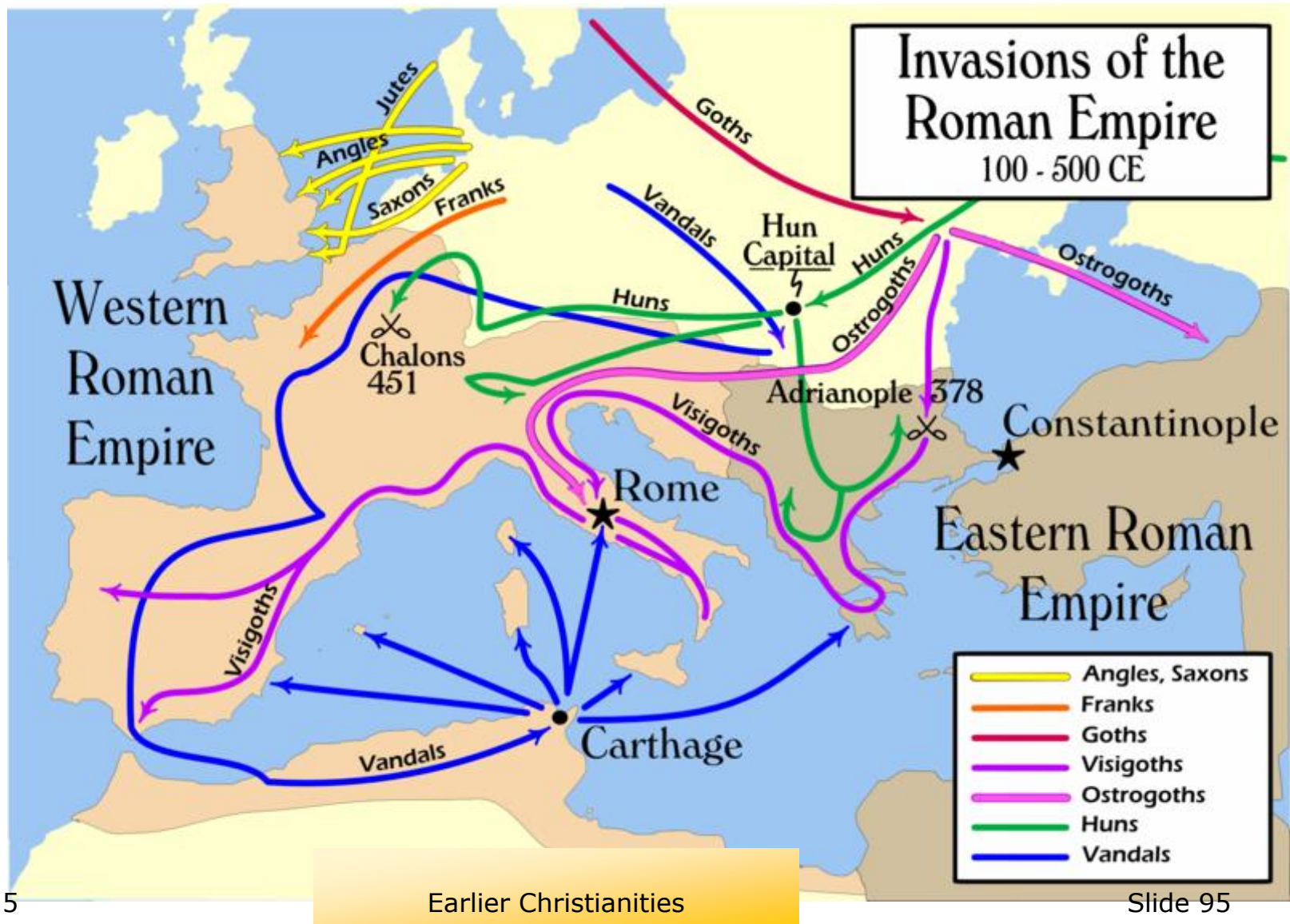
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- Consolidate Christianities
  - One Universal religion
- Council at Niceae → Nicene Creed
- Center of Roman empire moved
  - EASTward to Constantinople
  - Eventually empire divided for sons
- Sees in Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem and many others
  - Power competition
  - Latin or Greek
  - In 1054, The Great Schism





# Migrations of Peoples: 100–500



# Vandals and Goths

○ Conv

● V

○ 406-

○ 409:

○ 429:

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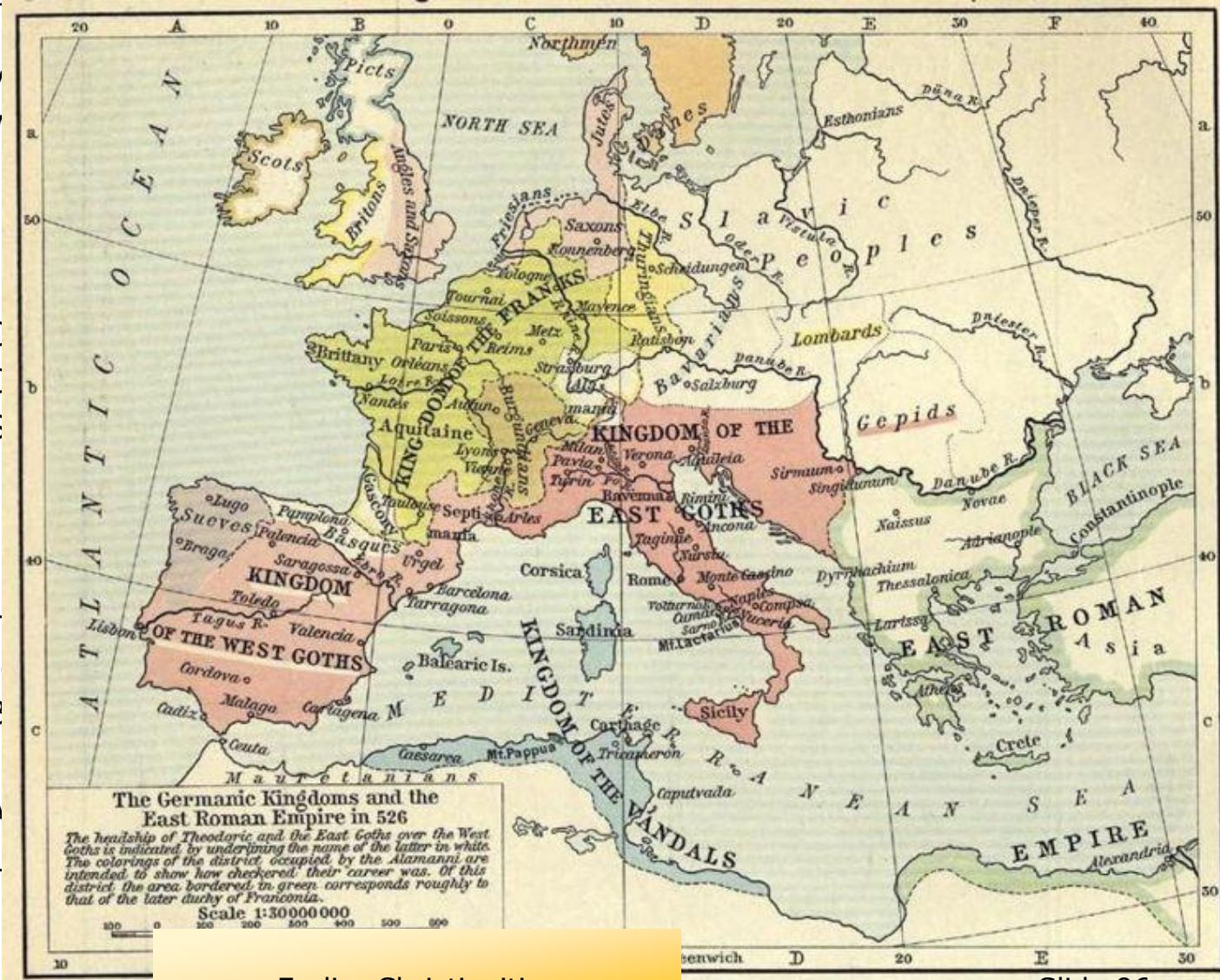
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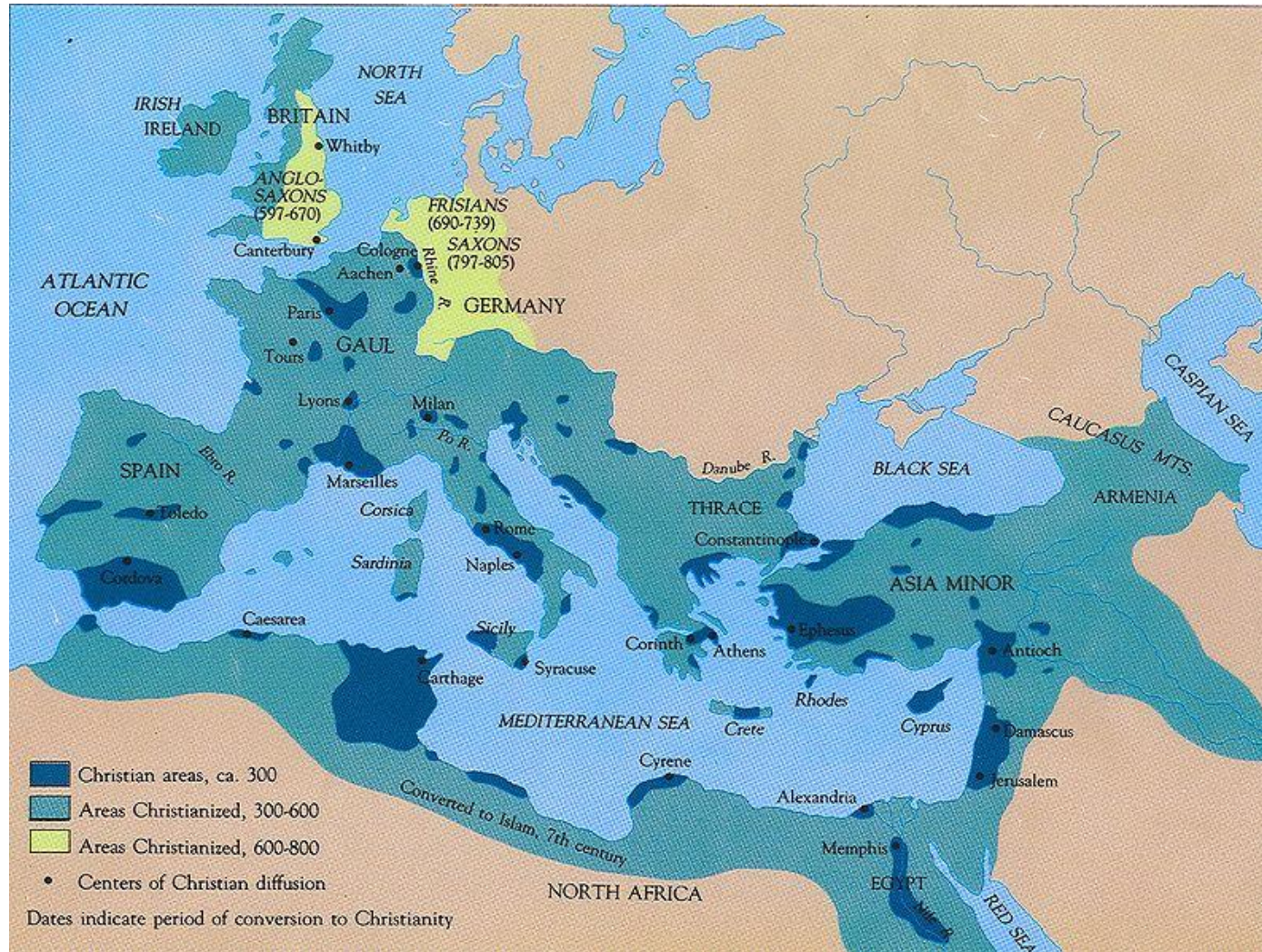
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# Spread of Western Christianity





# Nestorian Church: The Church of the East

- Nestorius
  - (386–451)
  - From Antioch
- Spread from Persia
  - To India & **Mongols**
- 9th – 14th C world's largest (geo) Church
  - From Japan & China to Mediterranean
- What was different?
  - New Mysteries
  - Jesus (human) + Christ (god) @ baptism
  - Each person + Christ



# “Heretical” Christian Streams:

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## **Nestorius** (d 451) Patriarch of Constantinople

- Human and divine essences of Christ-Jesus
  - The man Jesus
  - The divine Logos – Christ
  - They become one on Golgotha
- Mary was Mother of Jesus, not of God
  - Denied Theotokos
- Teachings spread from Syria/Persia to Kazakhstan to China
  - Mongols who sack Baghdad



# Authority Battles Knowledge

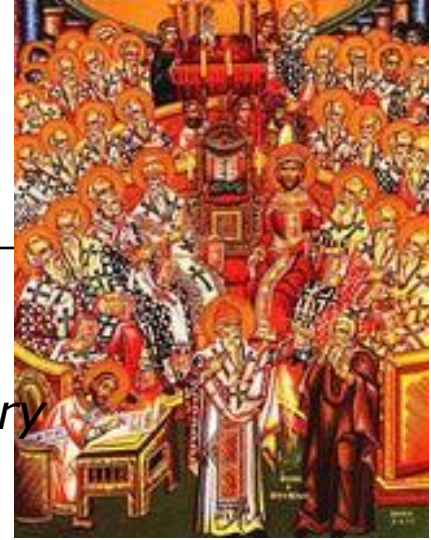
Spirit	Pneuma
Soul	Psyche
Body	Soma
Matter	Earth

- Was Christ a Man? Were Jesus and Christ the same?
- What was the substance of God(s)?
- Gnostics: all matter is 'corrupt' (from Heraclitus)
  - Alexandria to Antioch to Athens – a Gnostic "hot bed"
  - Opposed by Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 185AD
- Authority used to repudiate Arianism, Gnosticism
- 325: Council of Niceae: Substance of F, Son, & HS
  - "Being of one substance with the Father"
  - 381: New Nicene Creed to further stamp out heretics
- Many Christian groups and individuals banned
  - Aristoteleans driven out of Christendom → Gondishapur
- Established the supremacy of the apostolic sees as follows: Rome → Alexandria → Antioch → Jerusalem

# Synods & Councils, Seeking Unity

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- Council of Niceae 325 AD
  - Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Council in Constantinople in 381 AD
  - The doctrine of the Trinity was finalized
  - Holy Ghost as equal to the Father and the Son
  - Doctrinal debates: e.g. The Filioque, split East & West
- 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical council of 869
  - Man was no longer a being of Body, Soul, and Spirit
    - Now only body and soul
    - Today, only body!







# Other Ecumenical Councils

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- 431: 3<sup>rd</sup> Ecumenical Council of Ephesus
  - Repudiated Nestorianism
- 451: 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon
  - Rejected Nestorianism
- 553: 5<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council of Constantinople
  - Removed vestiges of Gnostics
- 680: 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council of Constantinople
  - The human and divine wills of Jesus
- 787: 7<sup>th</sup> in Nicaea
  - Restored veneration of icons
  - Tried to improve East-West relations
- 809: Council at Aachen
  - Holy Spirit proceeds from Father and Son (Filioque)



# Theological Crisis of Intellectual Soul

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- 869: 8<sup>th</sup> in Constantinople
- 879: Extended to restore Patriarch Photios
  - What is the reward for a good and pious life?
    - Formerly – return to the Father, go back via descent route
  - Everlasting life is spiritual – when can such be given?
    - Greek model largely lost
  - Where are the dead?
    - Ancestor worship gone but still a strong tradition
  - What is the ultimate goal of humanity?
    - Reincarnation wisdom already wiped out
  - Result: Christ gives one spirit on Judgment Day
    - Wine taken away from mass – only for the priests
    - Profound change from mystery wisdom - Melchizedek
    - Start of troubadours and the search for the holy grail
    - Poet-musicians of Provence, attached to **Albigensian** courts
  - Re-splits East & West Church



# Demise of the Mystery Centers

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- Julian the Apostate: born: 330 AD, Constantinople.
  - Roman Emperor from 361 to 363, murdered trying to restore the Mithraic and Persian Mysteries within the Empire
- Theodosius I closed the Greek Mystery Centers in 392 AD
- Arian Christians under Gothic King Alaric sack Greece and desecrate its Mystery Centers in 396 AD
- 525 Emperor Justin I allowed intermarriage between social classes allowing Justinian to marry the commoner Theodora
- 527 - 565: Justinian the Byzantine Emperor – destroyed all Mystery Center and pagan remnants
- 553 Second Council of Constantinople: Power. Recognized that the emperor's will and command trumped the Church





# Julian the Apostate

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*Against the Galileans* was an argument against Christianity:

- Knowledge of God is natural; does not come by teaching
  - The account of Creation is inferior to that of Plato
- Idea of a jealous God and a chosen people is unacceptable
- The New Testament is full of inconsistencies
  - Matthew and Luke disagree on the genealogy of Jesus
  - Matt. IV, 5, is illogical and in Luke XXII, 42-47, since the disciples were asleep, who could have told him the story of the angel?
- The Christians were fanatics and cheerfully massacred heretics
  - By contrast the Greeks were mild and forbearing, they were superior in wisdom and intelligence
- Christianity has achieved little or nothing in the fields of science, astronomy, arithmetic and music
  - The achievements of Plato, Socrates, Aristides, Thales, Lycurgus, the Sibyls, the Delphic Oracle and the pagan Mysteries surpassed anything that Christianity had to offer



# What Did Julian Accomplish?

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- Guarantee of freedom of religion
  - Proclaimed that all the religions were equal before the law,
  - The Empire should not impose any religion on its provinces
- State ensures religious tolerance
  - Reopened pagan temples
  - Offered restitution of confiscated temple properties
  - Welcomed the return from exile of dissident Christian bishops
- During Julian's brief reign from 361-363 CE, his popularity among the people and the army indicated that he might have brought paganism back to the fore of Roman public and private life
  - Keep this point in mind



# What Happened to Julian?

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## 363: Julian takes a large army into Persia

- 26 June: Samarra, Julian stabbed by a spear dies 3 days later
- Libanius, "He was assassinated by one of his own soldiers"
- Rudolf Steiner "Julian was brought face to face with the deeper implications of the problem of evil and the relation of Christ Jesus to this problem; he hoped to find an answer through initiation into the Persian Mysteries [Mithraic and Zarathustrian] and to return to Europe with the solution
- Unfortunately he fell by an assassin's hand during the Persian campaign
  - It can be proved historically that this was the work of an adherent of Constantine
- "In the following years the Augustinian principle triumphed
  - [Blind] faith in the Authority of the Church
  - "Ideas that in any way echoed Manichaeism [a Christian sect founded by Mani] were forbidden, i.e. the inclusion of material ideas into spiritual thinking



# What Happened to Julian? – R. Steiner

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- "The West was driving to an abstract mode of thinking and in the course of time this mode of thinking permeated the whole of Western Europe"
- "Julian therefore was engaged in a titanic struggle
- He finally attempted, by reviving Manichaeism, to bring about continuity in the evolution of the pagan Mysteries
- That he was doomed to fail was a necessity of the time
- And we shall not understand the reason for his failure if we belittle his great achievements, if we fail to see him as a titanic figure, fighting for a realistic understanding of the relations between man and the universe
- And it is of paramount importance today to recall these great moments in the historical evolution of the West
- For we are living in an age from which we shall not emerge with a healthy outlook unless we make a fresh assessment of the aims of Julian the Apostate



# What Happened to Julian?

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- It was not possible in his time - herein lies his great tragedy - to reconcile the old principle of initiation with the real essence of Christianity
- Today this has become possible and we must not fail to translate the possibility into reality if the world and mankind are not to suffer evolutionary decline
- People must realize the need for regeneration in all spheres of life and above all the crying need to restore communication with the spiritual world
- From Karmic Relationships, Volume 4
  - Julian reincarnates as Herzeleide (Parzifal's mother) ~ 10<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Then reincarnates as Tycho Brahe (1546-1601)



# Mystery Stream Flows East to Islam

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- Hellenistic philosophers, teachers chased out of Europe – settled in Muslim world – along with the fruits of the Mysteries
- Development of the Intellectual Soul
  - 9<sup>th</sup> Century: Ego centers itself in I Soul
  - Islam – Sufism
  - Baghdad the cultural center of the world
  - Also flows west: Cordova, Spain second
    - Al-Jebr (reunion of broken parts) and mathematics
    - Logic
  - Islamic perspective of Aristotle
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council (4<sup>th</sup> Constantinople)

# Spread of Islam

- Muhammad (570 – 632 AD).
  - Visions from 610-632 brought by arch-angel Gabriel
  - Recorded in the Qur'an (Koran)
  - Like Christianity, power struggle: Sunni & Shi'a
  - Mystic sect: Sufi
- Weakened by war
  - Persia
  - Northern Africa
- Century of war
  - 632-732
  - 717: Constantinople
  - 732: Tours-Poitiers





# The Warrior Christ

- 337 Christianization of
  - Germanic tribes
  - By Ulfilas the Initiate
  - Arian
  - Theodoric rules Ravenna
  - Christ as Warrior
    - Arch-angel Michael
    - Concept leads to Grail and Templar knights (?)
- Secret Grail Knights
- 869 AD – 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council declared it heresy to speak of a human spirit or a 2<sup>nd</sup> soul
- Rise of Troubadours and Minnesingers - Parzifal
  - Search for the Holy Grail
- Knights Templar
  - No longer my blood, but Christ's in me
- Outer battle becomes inner battle



# Charlemagne & Irene

## Neither of Royal Blood

- Irene of Constantinople
  - 768: married to Leo IV
  - 780: became regent for 9 yr son
  - 781: seeks ties to Pope and
  - Proposes her son marry Charlemagne's daughter
- Charlemagne of Aachen
  - 752: Donation of Constantine forgery to win Pepin
    - Legal basis to Papal States
  - 778: led an army to Saragossa, Spain on invitation of Muslim rulers, Sulayman al-Arabi & Kasmin ibn Yusuf
    - 785: captured Girona and Catalan
    - 797: captured Barcelona
  - 800: Pope Leo III crowned him Holy Roman Emperor
    - Charlemagne had rescued him from Romans





# Charlemagne (742-814)

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- Determined to bring order to Europe
  - 772: launched 30-years of military campaigns consolidating an empire of France, Germany, and northern Italy
  - Culturally “pushed” by Moors in Spain
  - By 800 Charlemagne was the undisputed ruler of Western Europe
- Government should be for the benefit of the governed
  - Legislated for agriculture, industry, finance, education, religion, and morals
  - Set up money standards to encourage agricultural commerce
- Education and culture lagging far behind Islamic world
  - Established centers of learning → Europe’s universities
    - Alcuin of York (735–804) as head of the Palace School
    - Johannes Scotus Eriugena and the Carolingian Renaissance
  - At meals, instead of jesters, he listened to visiting scholars



# Mysticism's Role in Education of Europe

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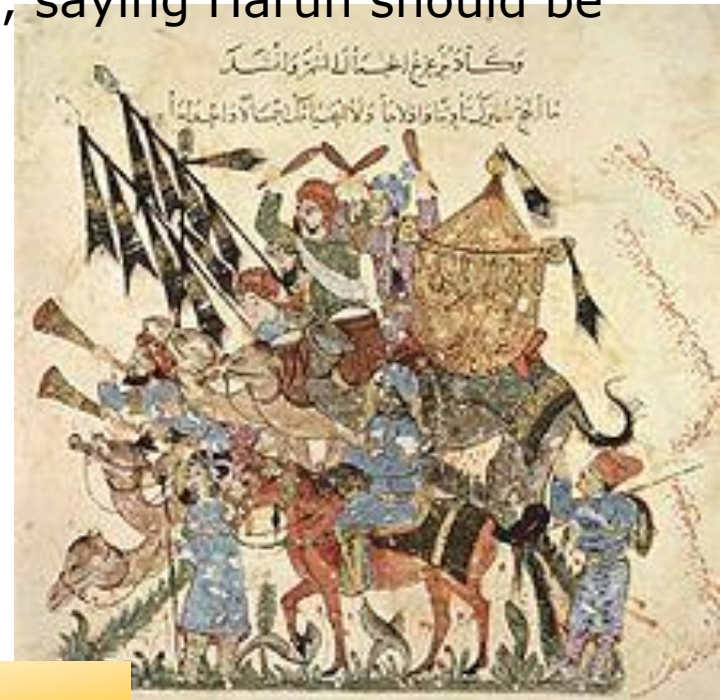
787: Charlemagne decree: a school in every abbey

- What teachers? What curriculum? What goal?
- "The study of the Bogomil movement has its own, and by no means negligible, part to play in the investigation of the cultural and religious links between eastern and western Europe, the importance of which is increasingly perceived at the present time." -- Dimitry Obolensky, *The Bogomils: a Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge, 1948
- Scholasticism (1100 – 1500): Bonaventure (Franciscan – Plato), Albertus Magnus & Thomas Aquinas (Dominicans – Aristotle)
- Averroës 1126 – 1198, "founding father of secular thought in Western Europe" was a Muslim
- Lord Byron: *Cain a Mystery* (1821), claimed he had written in accordance with the old "very profane" mysteries and moralité in which Lucifer reigns together with Jehovah: "Lucifer: No we reign together; but our dwellings are asunder"

[http://www.bogomilism.eu/Studies/Tyndale\\_the\\_covert\\_dualist.html](http://www.bogomilism.eu/Studies/Tyndale_the_covert_dualist.html)

# Harun al-Rashid, 763-809

- Name means Aaron the Just (or the Upright)
- Baghdad – at the time was the cultural center of the world
- Eastern emperor Leo IV, in retaliation, encourages the emir of Cordova to renounce allegiance to Baghdad
- After Irene (802), emperor Nikephoros I (806-815) refused to pay tribute to Harun, saying Harun should be paying him
- Harun wrote back “In the name of God the most merciful, from Harun al-Rashid, commander of the faithful, to Nikephoros, dog of the Romans, Thou shalt not hear, thou shalt behold my reply”





# Harun al-Rashid and Charlemagne

- Moorish Spain more advanced than Franks
- 799: visits Harun al-Rashid in Ar Raqqa (Syria)
  - Given keys to Christian holy sites
  - Importance of physical relics for faith
  - Start of pilgrimages – path to Crusades
- What happens to Harun al-Rashid and his counselor?
  - Spiritual meeting with Aristotle & Alexander
  - Become Francis Bacon and John Amos Comenius
  - Islamic perspective sweeps 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe





# What Happened to Islam's Golden Years?

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- Internal fighting
  - East (Baghdad) versus West (Cordova)
  - Sunni versus Shi'a
  - Dividing caliphates to give to sons
  - General war-nature of 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries
- Crusaders
- Mongols
  - Hulagu (1217–1265), Nestorian Christian
    - Destroys Baghdad and its cultural riches
- End of cultural advancement
  - Why does this happen?





# Charlemagne's Theological Influence

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- Doctrinal issue of contention between East and West
- 447: The Filioque used in Toledo, Spain
  - Purpose to counter Arian faith of the nobility of Spain
  - "We believe in the Holy Spirit ... who proceeds from the Father *and the Son*".
- 767: Filioque repudiated at a council held at Gentilly
- 809: Council at Aachen called by Charlemagne to confirm his belief that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (ex Patre Filioque) and sanctioned inclusion in the Nicene Creed the phrase Filioque (and the Son)
  - Pope Leo III forbade the Filioque clause and ordered that the Nicene creed be engraved on silver tablets so that his conclusion may never be overturned
  - Eastern Orthodox theologians: Filioque is a heresy



# Charlemagne's Theological Influence

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- 869: 8th Ecumenical Council brings Christianity closer to Islamic theology
- 10th century: Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, accuses the West of having fallen into heresy through continued use of the Filioque
- 1014: Filioque clause appears in the coronation liturgy of Emperor Henry II by Pope Benedict VIII
- 1054: The Great Schism, each excommunicates the other
- 1274: Officially adds Filioque to the Latin version of Nicene creed by the Second Council of Lyon
  - Effectively ended a short-lived reunion between East & West
  - "Deum de Deo" (God from God) is also not found in the Greek
  - Several other Greek-Latin differences



# Holy Fire

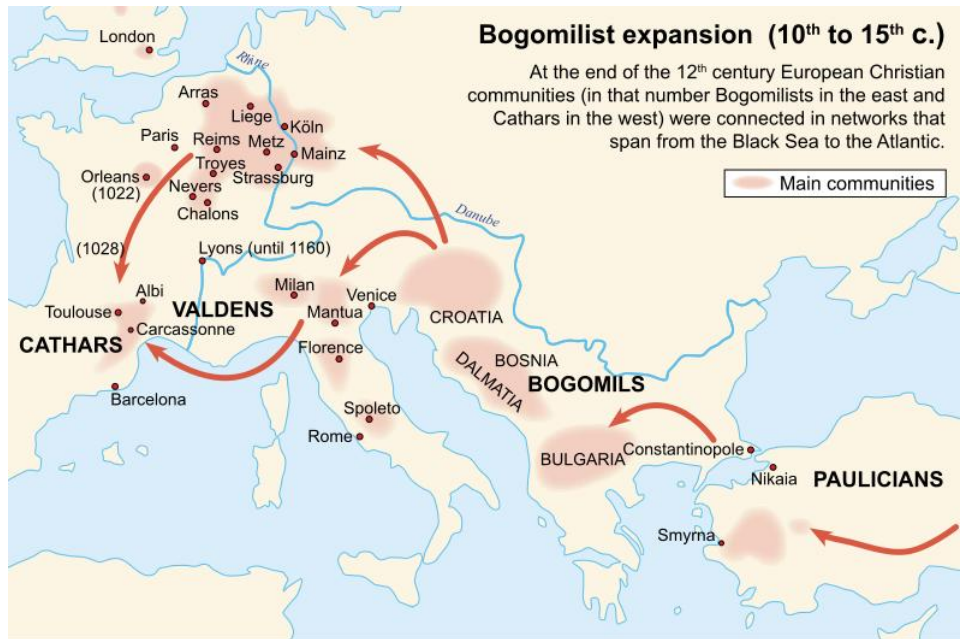
## WHAT IS FIRE?

- This Fire descends every Great Saturday of Easter upon the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem
  - Descent of this fire from Heaven to the Tomb of Christ through the openings in the dome of the Rotunda of the Resurrection and of the Edicula
  - Special baldachin-shaped construction above the dome
  - Patriarch of Jerusalem received the fire and passed it to bishops and people
    - They came from all over the world
- Sign of the Resurrection
  - To some also the promise of the Second Coming
  - Eternal life in the Heavenly Jerusalem
  - Not by the flesh, this fire kindled lamps which hang above the Sepulchre
  - The miraculous fire became the major source of light for Jerusalem and other Christian cities
- The miracle is well documented since the ninth century

# Dualists: Jewish God not = Christ's Father God

## Migration of the Dualists

- 660: Constantine of Mananalis received an initiate who put in his hands a New Testament copy – called to restore the pure Christianity as taught by Paul
- Using only the NT, he taught there were 2 gods: one made human soul, the other made human body and matter
- 845-852: Byzantine Empress Theodora had over 100,000 Paulicians executed
- 970: Emperor John I Tzimiskes forced 200K Armenian Paulicians to resettle in Philippopolis
- 1234: Pope Gregory IX calls for a crusade against Bogomils & Cathars
- 1650: After Cathar extermination and centuries of brutality, both convert to Catholicism





# History of the Cathars

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- A Christian brotherhood became very popular and almost became the official state religion of Bosnia and Serbia – took a Turkish invasion in the 17th C blot it out
- The sect moved across Europe and became known by various names in different countries
- The Cathars formed settlements in France
  - Languedoc became a center for the Cathar sect
- The Cathars were devotees of John the Evangelist and carried his gospel in their cloaks at all times
- In John it states that Christ's true disciples are called Katheroi – Cathars comes from this word meaning to purify, cleanse, purge – to baptize w/fire to liberate, free



# Life of the Cathars

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- Simple lives based on freeing themselves from earthly riches
- Yet built a brotherhood-rich, democratic, and cultured society
- Vegetarians w/knowledge of herbs, harmonizing nature, & alchemy
- Female equality in society, separate but equal ministries
- No prejudices: the wealthy and the poor were equal before God
- Valued virtues and self transformation
  - The initiated were called Perfecti
- Here the Arts, especially the troubadours flourished
  - Songs and poems: Chivalry for Sophia and concerning higher union
- Mysticism and Gnosticism flourished - remnants of a once vibrant understanding of the Cosmic Christ
  - Also Cabbalistic, Greek, and Arab philosophers
- Perfecti men and women soon were everywhere in southern France





# What Did the Cathars Teach?

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- Pacifism and the shunning all violence – had no military
  - Killing any living thing was forbidden
- Lies were abhorred as were the swearing of oaths
- The transformation of evil through the power of love
- The I am was to be cultivated as the Christ within
- One did not need a (corrupt) priest as an intermediary since the ritual of the sacrament or confession if enacted by a corrupt priest was not valid (akin to the Donatists)
- Reincarnation (which had been formerly abolished by the Church)
- Their beliefs could be called Manichean and dualist
  - The material world was created by an demiurge, not by The Father
  - Along with the darkness there was a good heaven and goodness on the earth
  - Retarded angels incarnated into human bodies until they became pure
  - The human being was given a spark of inner light and could choose evil or good



# Theology of the Cathars

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- Initiates could perceive the good world that was said to be more real than the evil world – where the good souls would go - the Arcadia
- Christ had come to help mankind find a new way home therefore ending the cycle of incarnations
- To a Cathar, Jesus-Christ had not died on the cross, only Jesus' body because Christ was an immortal being
- Cross was symbol of mortality of the lower nature of man
- The mass had lost its meaning however the Eucharist represented Christ's body and blood because his blood had entered the earth from which all things, e.g. grain and grapes, are grown
- The mother of Christ was Sophia (Isis)
  - Virgin Mary was mother of Jesus
- The virgin birth of the self happens only within a purified soul (astral body - manas)

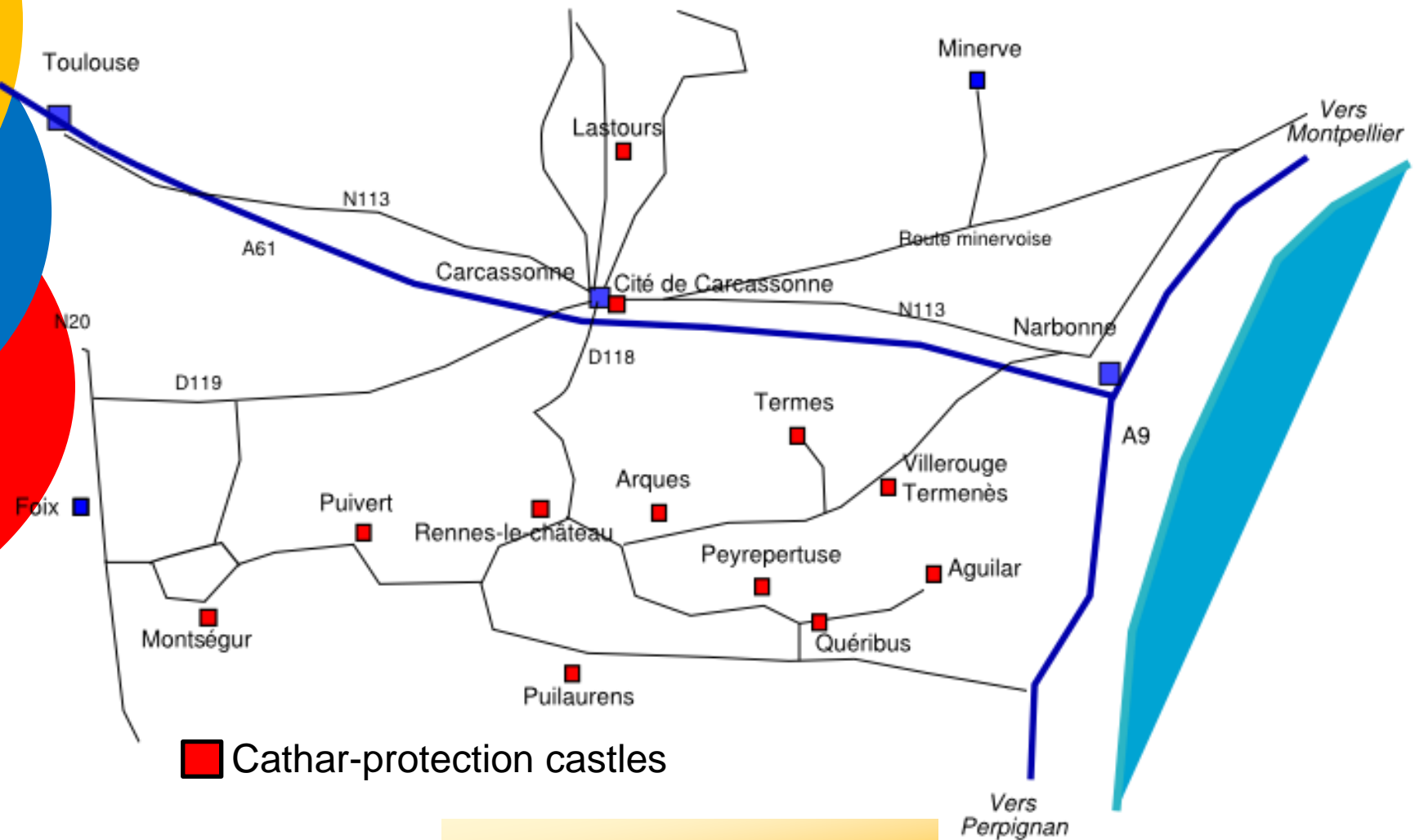


# The Albigensian Crusade

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- May 1208: Bishop of Citeaux, Arnaud Amaury, and local clergy join an army of northern knights to form the Crusade in Albi, France
- The invasion began at Quercy then they marched in the direction of Toulouse plundering, murdering, raping, setting fires, destroying crops, farms, and villages
- Onward they marched against Beziers a large Cathar center
- Outside the town when asked how must the crusaders tell between Catholics and Cathars
  - Amaury answered famously, “Kill them all, God will recognize His own!”
- 7000 killed in their church as they kneeled celebrating a saint’s day
- Amaury wrote to Pope Innocent III, “Today your Holiness, 20,000 heretics were put to the sword, regardless of rank, age, or sex.”
- [Ghandi’s non-violence would not work here]

# Map of Cathar Homeland



# Crusade Cruelty

- August 1208
- Carcassonne attacked
  - “God will know his own”
- Simon de Montfort
  - Coat of arms
    - Lion with the forked tail
  - Recruited as a new Crusade leader
- Simon was ambitious and intensely cruel
- It was written that he felt great joy at seeing mass executions
- It was by his order that in Bram the knights and mercenaries slit noses and lips, lopped off hands ears and feet, gouged out eyes





# From Crusade to Inquisition

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- Historian Zoe Oldenbourg tells how hundreds of blind, mutilated men, women & children were led by a one-eyed victim to next town to show consequences of opposition
- Thousands were either massacred or burned alive
- Their only refuge being **Templar** houses and castles, grottoes and forests
- This goes on for another fifteen years
- Two popes later Pope Gregory, ordered an Inquisition
- The Dominicans became known as the 'Domini Canni' a play on Latin meaning "the hounds of God"
- Together with the Franciscans they had the power to interrogate and send any person to the pyre who was suspected of being a Cathar or a Cathar protector

# Inquisition's Findings

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- Repentant first offenders (of being a Cathar) were released with the penance to: "carry from now on and forever two yellow crosses on all their clothes ... to be worn in front on the chest and the other between the shoulders"
- 14th C Cathar Perfect Pierre Authié: "just as a man should with an axe break the gallows on which his father was hanged, so you ought to try and break crucifixes, because Christ was suspended from it, albeit only in seeming"







# Coincidentally – Sack of Constantinople

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- 1204 (siege began in 1203 by Crusaders)
- Shame of Knights Templar and Crusaders
  - Warriors had sworn to fight in service of Christendom without question
  - Despite their oaths violated holy sanctuaries
    - Altars were smashed for their gold and marble
  - Destroyed or stole all they could lay hands including the Library of Constantinople
  - Civilian population subject to lust for spoils
    - Thousands killed in cold blood
    - Most women, even nuns, were raped
- Templars could no longer win in battle

# Montsegur

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- Force headed by King Louis of France with an army of mercenaries
- After 20 years of Inquisition and Crusade, there was nothing of the Cathars left save the citadel of Montsegur
- 500 Cathars fled there
- Siege: 10 mo.
- Given 15 days to prepare for fire





# The Treasure of Montsegur

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- In those 15 days they fasted and prayed and prepared to save the treasure: the child of Montsegur
  - Would one day become Christian Rosencreutz
- Escaped 3/12/1244 at night led by 4 Cathars
  - Ropes down the cliff, through secret passageways
  - Travelled to a Templar monastery near the Pyrenees
  - Here the child underwent initiation by 12 initiates who possessed all the wisdom of the past and of their time
  - This child would die young – but be born again
- 3/16/1244: 215 Cathars descended from the citadel
  - Singing, holding hands, knowing their treasure was safe
  - Made their way to a waiting pyre in a field
  - Became known as the Field of the Cremated

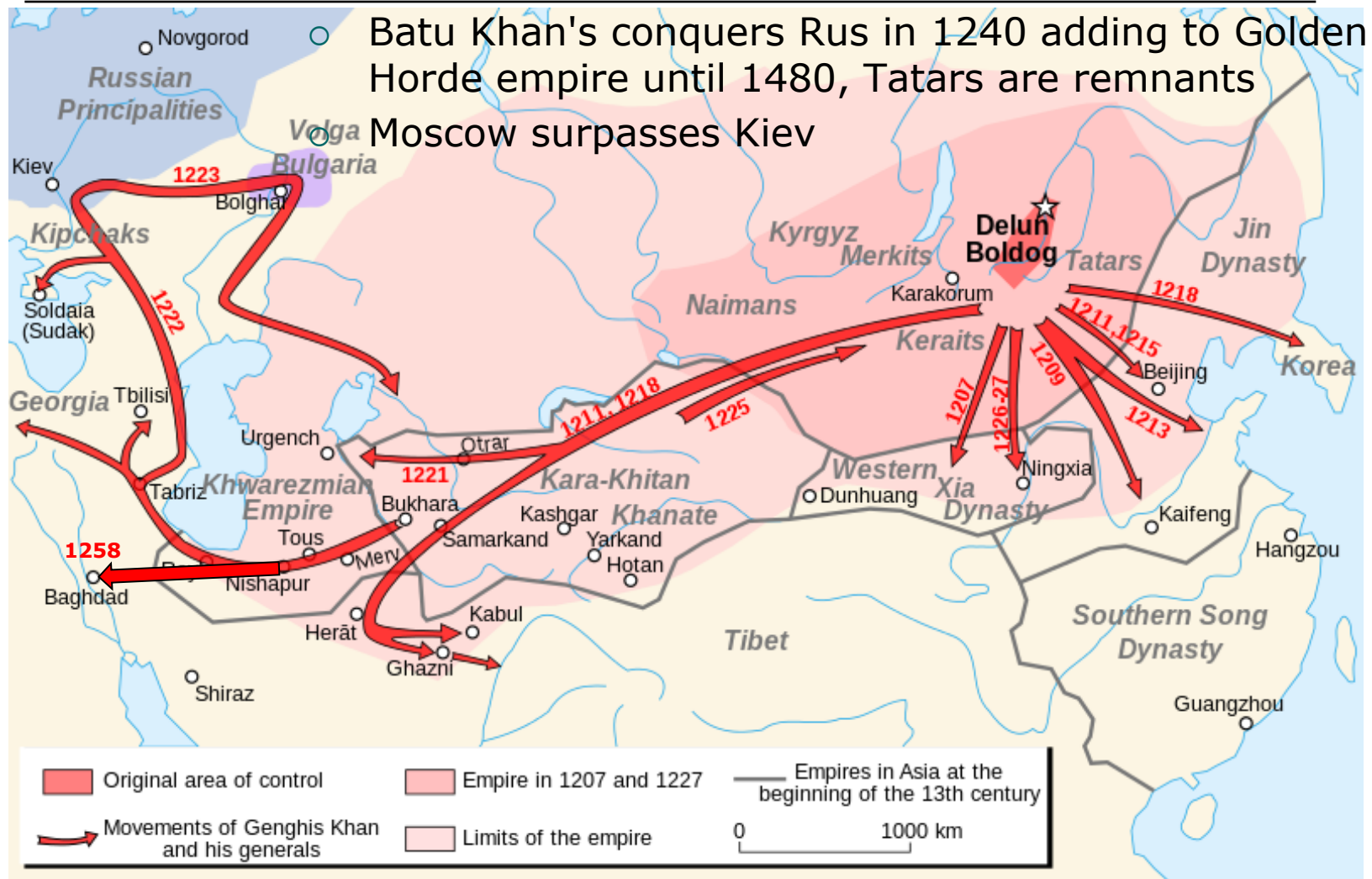


# Rise of the Mongols

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- Genghis Khan: (1162-1227)
  - Tall, long-bearded, **red-haired, and green-eyed**
  - Inspired to bring Divine Justice – even with ruthless slaughter
    - Shamanistic – tolerated other religions, interest in Taoism
    - 10,000,000s killed in China – terror preceded army's advance
  - Attempted to create a civil state under the Great Yassa that would have established the **legal equality** of all individuals, including women
- Ogedei Khan (1186-1241)
  - Vast empire built from Korea to Ukraine, Russia to Kuwait
  - Vienna and Europe about to fall when Ogedei dies
    - Generals recalled – never return (although Tartars return)
  - Empire divided into 4 parts
- Kublai Khan (1215-1294) and Marco Polo (1275)
  - Summer palace of Xanadu visited
  - Book *Travels* inspires Christopher Columbus

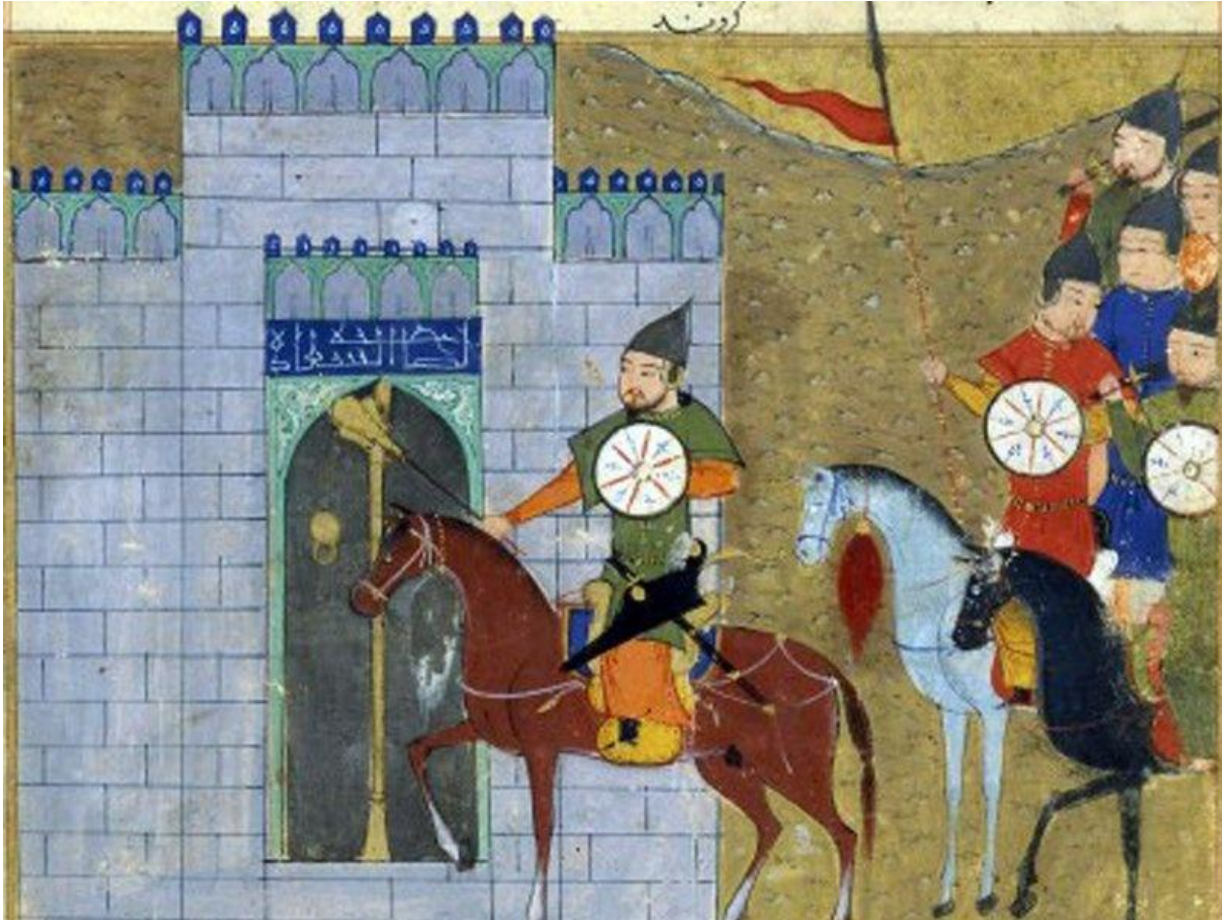
# The Mongol Empire





# The Mongol Empire

- Mongol Christians sacked Baghdad in 1258



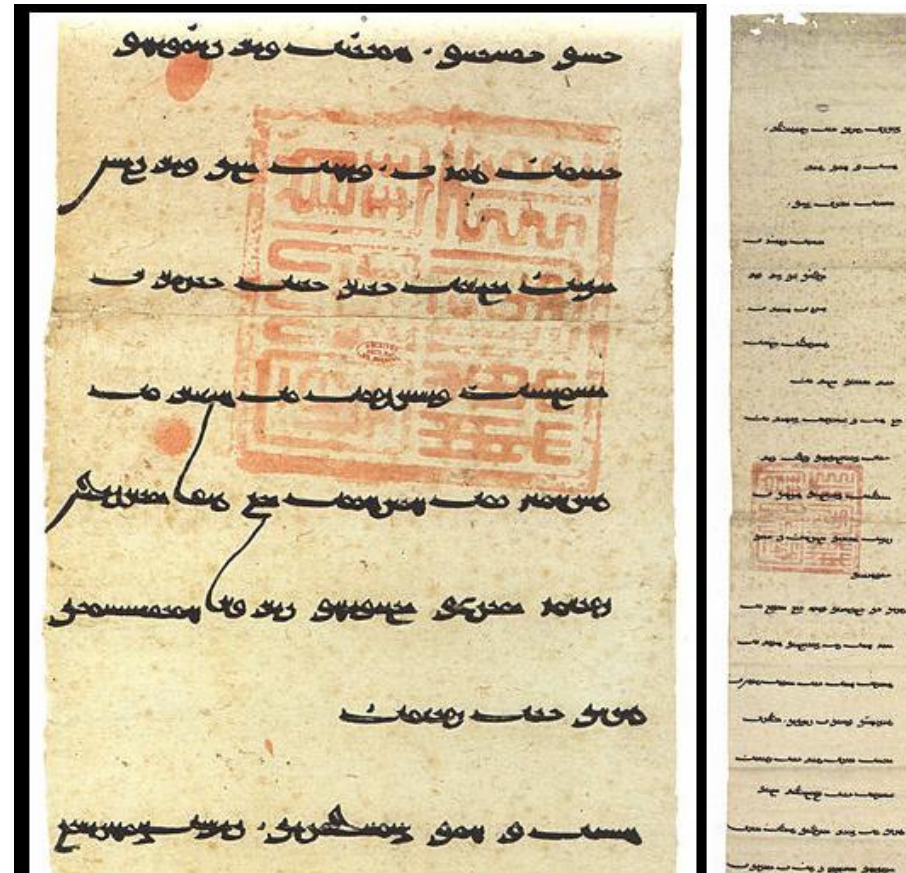
Islamic historians decry (Nestorian) **Christian** cruelty

# King Philip and the Mongols

## 1289: Letter from Mongol King Arghun to Philip

"Under the power of the eternal sky, the message of the great king, Arghun, to the king of France..., said: I have accepted the word that you forwarded by the messengers under Saymer Sagura (Bar Sauma), saying that if the warriors of Il Khan invade Egypt you would support them. We would also lend our support by going there at the end of the Tiger year's winter [1290], worshiping the sky, and settle in Damascus in the early spring [1291]. If you send your warriors as promised and conquer Egypt,

worshiping the sky, then I shall give you Jerusalem. If any of our warriors arrive later than arranged all will be futile and no one will benefit."







# King Philip More Interested in Gold

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- Not till 1298 does Philip agrees to military collaboration with the Mongols through the Knights Templar and their leader Jacques de Molay
- In 1300, Templars raid the Egyptian and Syrian coasts to weaken the enemy's supply lines
- 1302: Templars are defeated at island Ruad
- 1305: New Mongol ruler Oljeitu sent letters to Philip, the Pope, and Edward I of England *again* offering military collaboration but Philip's focus on Templars
  - 1305: Philip's boyhood friend made Pope
- 1307: Jacques de Molay summoned to France
  - Oct. Friday 13<sup>th</sup>: Gestapo-like sweep across former Holy Roman Empire – Knights Templar tortured
  - Famine and plague follow, 70% of Europe will die



# Review

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- See: way too much material !!
- Key Points:
  1. Early Spread of Christianity via Mystery Centers
  2. Roman Christianity sought to free itself of past
  3. Mysteries continue, underground, rising up from time to time – but brutally crushed each time
    - Anthroposophy is its latest flowering
- Leading Questions
  1. Where today is the temple?
  2. Can/should the Mysteries be renewed?



# Schedule (Intense!)

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- 1 – 2:20 pm: The Vanishing of the Mysteries: From Plato, Aristotle, & Alexander to Theodosius & Justinian
- *2:20 - 2:40 Break*
- 2:40 - 4:00: The Many Streams of Christianity, Heretical Theology Destroyed: Arians, Manicheans, Templars, Cathars, Role of Islam & Harun al Rashid
- *4 – 4:20 Break*
- **4:20 – 5:40:** The Flowering of the Ancient and Early Christian Mysteries in Renaissance Art, Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks*



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The Flowering of the Ancient and Early Christian  
Mysteries in Renaissance Art, Leonardo's *Virgin of the  
Rocks* with pictures of Leonardo's painting

## LECTURE 3



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# CHANGE TO VOR SLIDES



# Rudolf Steiner Bibliography (partial)

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- Egyptian Myths and Mysteries, 9/2-14, 1908
- The Balance in the World and Man, 11/20-22, 1914
- The Realm of Language, The Lost Unison between Speaking and Thinking, 7/17-18, 1915
- Inner Impulses of Evolution, Mexican Mysteries and Knights Templar, 9/16 – 10/1, 1916
- The Work of the Angels in Man's Astral Body, 10/9/1918
- Rosicrucian Esotericism, 1909
- Theosophy of the Rosicrucian, 1907
- The Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman, 11/1-15, 1919
- The Mission of the Archangel Michael, 11/21-30, 1919
- The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric
- Life between Death and a New Birth as Image of the Future Jupiter, 10/21, 1921





# Mani and Manichaeism

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## Mani d.274 in **Gundeshapur**

- Considered himself an apostle of Christ
- St. Augustine was originally a Manichaean
- Manichaeism spread in the Middle East and from Spain to China where it was active until the 13th C
- A Greek parchment dating to ca. 400 AD was discovered in 1969 in Asyut, Egypt: Codex Manichaicus Colonienis
- Mani's teachings are revealed to him through his spiritual companion and celestial "Light Twin" (his syzygos) who is said to be or to be with the Holy Spirit or Paraclete
- Mani's cosmic-mission is to deal with the role of Evil
- Strove to attain a knowledge of the interplay between the spiritual and the material worlds
  - Dualities: dry-wet, warm-cold, light-dark, life-death, acid-alkaline
  - Christ path is the middle path, caduceus (staff of Mercury) – alchemy
- Elects (Perfects) and Auditors (Faithful)
- Several medieval religious movements come from Manichaeism



# Brief History of Manichaeism

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- Manichaeism spread with extraordinary speed east and west
- The spread and success with message of one religion were seen as a threat to other religions thus it was widely persecuted in Zoroastrian, Hellenistic, Buddhist Christian, Islamic, and other cultures
- 244: established in Egypt; 280: reached Rome through the apostle Psattiq
- Manichean monasteries existed in Rome in 312 AD during the time of the Christian Pope Miltiades
- 291: persecution arose in the Persian empire with the murder of the apostle Sisin by Bahram II, and the slaughter of many Manicheans
- 296: Diocletian decreed against the Manicheans: "We order that their organizers and leaders be subject to the final penalties and condemned to the fire with their abominable scriptures" – martyrdoms across North Africa
- 354: Hilary of Poitiers wrote that the Manichean faith was a significant force in southern Gaul
- 381: Theodosius I stripped Manicheans of their civil rights, then in 382 issued a decree of death for Manichean monks – many thousands die
- Manichaeist was a label thrown at nearly all "heretics"
- Manicheans were brutally exterminated, all books destroyed



# Legend of the Battle of Dark & Light

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- Manichean Legend of the Mission / Meaning of Humankind
- The Spirits of Darkness wished to storm the Kingdom of Light. They came to its borders for the attack. They were, however, able to achieve nothing. Now they were to be punished by the Kingdom of Light. But in the Kingdom of Light there is only good. Thus the Demons of Darkness could only have been punished through good. Therefore the Spirits of the Kingdom of Light took a portion of their own kingdom and mingled it into the Kingdom of Darkness.
- Thereby a leaven, so to speak, came into the Kingdom of Darkness and a kind of vortex arose. Death became pulled into the vortex, whereby it consumed itself. It now carried within itself the seed of its own destruction. There then arose from the Kingdom of Light the Archetypal Man of the human race who must mingle with the Kingdom of Darkness and overcome it.
- John 1:5 "And the Light shines in the Darkness, but the Darkness comprehends it not"





# Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)

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- 372: Becomes a Manichean
- 382: Theodosius I issues decree of death for Manicheans
- 387: Converts to Christianity from Manichaeism
- 391: Declares Christianity to be the only legitimate religion for the Roman Empire
- Opposes Manichean Faustus of Mileve claiming their belief that knowledge was the key to salvation is too passive and not able to effect any real change in one's life
  - “I still thought that it is not we who sin but some other nature that sins within us. It flattered my pride to think that I incurred no guilt and, when I did wrong, not to confess it... I preferred to excuse myself and blame this unknown thing which was in me but was not part of me. The truth, of course, was that it was all my own self, and my own impiety had divided me against myself. My sin was all the more incurable because I did not think myself a sinner.” (*Confessions*, Book V, Section 10)


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- Now, a certain endeavor arose, traces of which can be observed everywhere when we look back at the first Christian centuries. The tendency arose to connect the historical fact, the Mystery of Golgotha, with the Mithras worship. Great were the numbers of people at that time, especially among the Roman Legions, who brought with them into the lands on the Danube and far into central Europe, indeed even into western Europe, what they had experienced in Asia and the Orient in general. In what they brought across as the Mithras worship there lived feelings that, without reflecting the Mystery of Golgotha, definitely contained Christian views and Christian sentiments. The worship of Mithras was considered as a concrete worship relating to the sun forces in man. The only thing this Mithras worship did not perceive was the fact that in the Mystery of Golgotha this sun force itself had descended as a spiritual entity and had united itself with the human being Jesus of Nazareth.


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- An ancient, significant image of man's being — Mithras riding on and vanquishing the bull — was to be brought into relationship with the Christ Being. One might say that a quite glorious endeavor existed in this direction, and in a certain respect it was a powerful one.
  - Anyone who follows the spread of Eastern Christianity and the spread of Arianism can see a Mithras element in it, even though in already quite weakened form. Any translation of the Ulfilas-Bible into modern languages remains imperfect if one is unaware that Mithras elements still play into the terminology of Ulfilas (or Wulfila). But who pays heed nowadays to these deeper relationships in the linguistic element? As late as in the fourth century, there were philosophers in Greece who worked on bringing the ancient etheric astronomy into harmony with Christianity.

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- From this effort then arose the true Gnosis, which was thoroughly eradicated by later Christianity, so that only a few fragments of the literary samples of this Gnosis have remained.
  - What do people really know today about the Gnosis, of which they say in their ignorance that our anthroposophy is a warmed-over version? Even if this were true, such people would not be able to know about it, for they are familiar only with those parts of the Gnosis that are found in the critical, Occidental-Christian texts dealing with the Gnosis. They know the quotes from Gnostic texts left behind by the opponents of the Gnosis. There is hardly anything left of the Gnosis except what could be described by the following comparison. Imagine that Herr von Gleich would be successful in rooting out the whole of anthroposophical literature and nothing would remain except his quotations.



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- Then, later on, somebody would attempt to reconstruct anthroposophy based on these quotes; then, it would be about the same procedure in the West as that which was applied to the Gnosis. Therefore, if people say that modern anthroposophy imitates the Gnosis, they would not know it even if it were the case, because they are unfamiliar with the Gnosis, knowing of it only through its opponents.
  - So, particularly in Athens, a school of wisdom existed well into the fourth century, and indeed even longer, that endeavored to bring the ancient etheric astronomy into harmony with Christianity. The last remnants of this view — man's entering from higher worlds through the planetary sphere into the earth sphere — still illuminate the writings of Origen; they even shine through the texts of the Greek Church Fathers. Everywhere one can see it shimmer through. It shines through particularly in the writings of Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and the Areopagite.

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- This Dionysius left behind a teaching that was a pure synthesis of the etheric astronomy and the element dwelling in Christianity. He taught that the forces localized, as it were, astronomically and cosmically in the sun entered into the earth sphere in Christ through the man Jesus of Nazareth and that thereby a certain previously nonexistent relationship came into being between the earth and all the higher hierarchies, the hierarchies of the Angels, of Wisdom, the hierarchies of the Thrones and the Seraphim, and so on. It was a penetration of this teaching of the hierarchies with etheric astronomy that could be found in the original Dionysius the Areopagite.

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- Then, in the sixth century, the attempt was made to obliterate the traces even of the more ancient teachings by Dionysius the Areopagite. They were altered in such a way that they now represented merely an abstract teaching of the spirit. In the form in which the teaching of Dionysius the Areopagite has come down to us, it is a spiritual teaching that no longer has much to do with etheric astronomy. This is the reason he is then called the “Pseudo-Dionysius.” In this manner, the decline of the teaching of wisdom was brought about. On the one hand, the teachings of Dionysius were distorted; on the other hand, the truly alive teaching in Athens that had tried to unite etheric astronomy with Christianity was eradicated. Finally, in regard to the cultic aspect, the Mithras worship was exterminated.



# Hibernian Mysteries Foresaw

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- Not indeed in this earth-world but transported into another world, was the pupil of the Hibernian Mysteries brought to this experience. Hence the Jupiter-existence was present to him, not of course, in physical earth-reality, but in a picture.
- The mystery of the shining of light, of the shining of soul-light, soul-physical heat, began to shine, arose for the pupil. Thus he was transported into that future when the earth will be changed into the Venus-planet, into the future Venus-planet.
- In the Vulcan-planet the Word spreads itself out. Everything in the Vulcan-planet is speaking living Being. Word sounds to Word. Word explains itself by Word. Word speaks to Word. Word learns to understand Word. Man feels himself as the World-understanding Word, as the Word-world understanding Word.