

Dissemination of Christianity from Rome to Briton in Medieval Ages

Abstract:

Christianity is the biggest religion of the world. It spread after the death of Jesus by the teachings of his disciples in Roman Empire. Even till the end the end of fourth century C.E. it became the official religion of the Roman Empire replaced other religions that were following under Roman rule. In Medieval ages most of the reminder Europe accept Christianity. During early medieval ages church became the most influential institute of the Europe. Catholic Church was more effective even in politics. Pope was considered an authoritative institute in itself. But at the end of late medieval era, people were more conscious, they want to get rid of feudalism and religious authority. In the age of Renaissance people were much impressed by the Roman and Greek philosophy, and the humanist movement had widely spread in England, Germany and Italy. So, Martin Luther gave new dimensions to people as well as to Catholic Church. Consequently Christianity divided into two sects Catholic and Protestant.

Key Words: Christianity, Briton, Catholic, Innocent III, Gregory, Church, Scholasticism, Abelard, Peter Lombard, St. Thomas.

Introduction:

Religion is an Important element of spiritual life. Around the world over the centuries, much has been said and written, and many ideas are described about religion, its meanings, its relevance and contribution to humanity. In the West particularly, sizable tomes have been composed, speculating upon the nature and historical background of one of the main characters of western religions⁴, Jesus Christ. Subjects of Christianity and its legendry founders are very important to the Western mind and culture, and increasingly to the rest of the world as well. In this article we will discuss, how Christianity disseminated in earlier epoch and became an official religion of the Rome, even prevailed from Rome to Briton? How religion became an essential part of life in medieval period? How Catholic Church was emerged as a central institute in Briton? What was the role of theologian? And how Catholic Church gradually declined and even Christianity divided into different sects?

Christianity first rose as Jewish sect in the mid of the 1st century in Middle East and quickly disseminated in Armenia(Armenia was first kingdom of

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⁴ Acharya. S/D. M Murdoke, The Origins of Christianity and the Quest for Historical Jesus Christ, Stoller House Publishing, p. 01

the World that accept the Christianity as it's national religion) and even through out the Roman Empire and beyond countries. By the end of 4th Century C.E . it became the official religion of the Roman Empire replaced other religions that were following under Roman rule. In Middle ages most of the reminder Europe accept Christianity, and Christian minorities were existed in North Africa, Ethiopia, and in some parts of India, following the age of discovery, through missionaries and colonization it spread to the America, Australia an the rest of the world.

The Spread of Christianity in earlier period:

Interestingly, the Christianity began as a minor sect of Judaism, at a time when great pressures were crowding upon the Jewish people, concomitant with the supremacy of Rome. The chief sources for the history of the earliest Christian communities are acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul.⁵ The Jewish religion was strongly nationalistic but nevertheless enjoyed certain benefits under Roman law, a fact of some importance in the formative period of Christianity. At first the teaching of Christ, called the world by believers, were given to Jews only, but it proved inevitable that the Gentiles should be included in the missionary work and be converted. This inclusion was heated question in the middle of the first century A.D., resolved unsatisfactorily in the minds of many “ Jewish -Christians” by the greatest of early Missionaries” Saul or St Paul⁶. This group believed that Christ, by example of his teachings and through resurrection, had brought a new vision and spoke as an equal to God. As converts to Christianity increased, the religion spread. A missionary is someone who does religious work in foreign lands. Paul was actually fervently rooted in the Jewish faith, he was called Saul of Tarsus and even witnessed the persecution of Christians. He changed his name to paul, The Apostle to the Gentles, Gentile means a Christian as opposed to a Jew⁷, and started journey for the preaching of Old Law or the Law of Moses, should be replaced by faith in Christ. He believed a person can live a life of kindness and joy, Ultimately being saved and reaching heaven.⁸

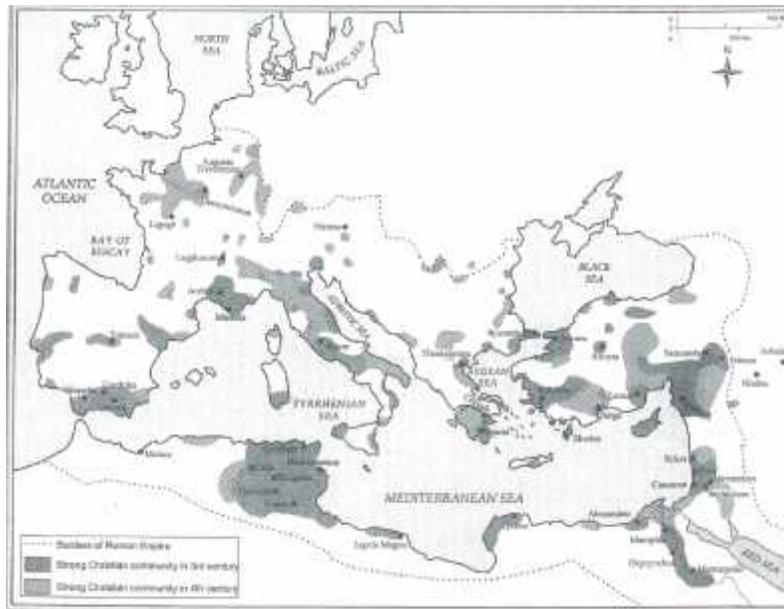
Resultantly, there had been arose a great tension among the Jews and Christians. Some Jews wanted to preserve Jewish ways within Christianity. Ultimately, Paul succeeded in separating the two religions and spreading the Christian faith. But this success was hard won. At first, Christianity was declared illegal by the Romans, and for 300 years Christians suffered persecution. Around 64 C.E, both Paul and the chief apostle, Peter, were martyred at the hands of the Roman emperor, Nero. It was not until the early 4th century that Christianity was legalized by Constantine the Great.

⁵ William R. Cook. Ronald B. Herzman, *The Medieval World view: An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 1983, p.40

⁶ Methew Bunson, *A Dictionary of the Roman Empire*, Oxford University Pres, New York, Oxford, 1991, p. 84

⁷ Johannes Schade, , *The Encyclopedia of World Religions*, Foreign Media Books,(2006), ISBN, 978 1 60136 000 7.

⁸ William R. Cook. Ronald B. Herzman, *The Medieval World view: An Introduction*, p. 41



The Spread of Christianity 200 A. D-300

By 300 CE, Christianity became the accepted religion of Rome, spreading throughout the empire. But the influence of Roman Empire was broken by the Barbarian invasions. During the period of invasion the Anglo Saxons had been entirely Pagan.. They Ignored or bypassed the forms of Roman Society and their ignorance of Christianity was even more complete. Through the sixth century Bishops and Monks among the Briton migrated westward to sustain the Church in Wales and Ireland. Here they retained monastic forms with an emphasis on the ascetic and the lonely life looking to ideals that had come from the end that were only in time superseded by the diocesan, centralized forms advocated by the Roman Papacy⁹.

The development of Church offices:

In the earlier Christian community in Jerusalem, according to acts of the Apostles, it handled all work of the community, from preaching to presiding at liturgical ceremonies to caring for the goods held in common. As the community grew a certain specialization soon became necessary¹⁰. With the passage of time the Christian community developed in cities around the Mediterranean, the problem within community became acute, especially differences of opinion about who Jesus was and how to follow him faithfully. For the solution of this problem, the principle of apostolic succession, which was already being formulated by the end of the first century, was the generally accepted solution simply, apostolic succession means that the authority that Christ conferred upon the apostles is passed on to properly chosen successors---that is Christ established offices rather

⁹ Albert Toker, *A history of English Civilization*, Harp& row, Publishers, New York, London, 1972, P. 47

¹⁰ William R. Cook & Ronald B. Herzman, *The Medieval World View*, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 42

than merely giving authority to individuals.¹¹The Bishops of Rome (from the fifth century usually called the Pope, from Latin word meaning “Father”) claimed primacy over the other Bishops. Because it was believed that Peter established and headed the Christian community there. Besides this, naturally Christians were looking to Rome, since it was the political center of the world.¹² Sometimes other Bishops would ask advice from the bishop of Rome because of the prestige of his office as the leading bishop of the empire.¹³

The role of Saints in Christian World-view:

In the earlier era of Christianity many learned men, “Fathers of the Church,” explained and defended Church teachings. Saint Jerome, Saint Ambrose and saint Augustine profoundly influenced the course of Christianity in the West.

Saint Jerome (340-420 A.D.) promoted and spread of monasticism, he translated the Old and New testaments from Hebrew and Greek into Latin.¹⁴ Jerom’s text, the common or Vulgate, version of the Bible became the official edition of the Bible for the Western Church.¹⁵ Saint Ambrose (340-397 A.D.) Bishop of Milan, Italy, instructed the clergy to deal humanely with the poor. Ambrose sought to defend the autonomy of the Church against the power of the state. His dictum that “the emperor is within the church not above it” became a cardinal principle of medieval church.¹⁶

The most important Christian theoretician in the late Roman Empire was saint Augustine (354-430 A.D.),¹⁷ Bishop of Hippo in North Africa and Author of *The City of God*. In this book Augustine expressed that the worldly city could never be the central concern of the Christians, A true Christian is a citizen of heavenly city that could not be pillaged by ungodly barbarians but would endure forever.¹⁸For Augustine the highest good was not of this world but consisted of eternal life with God. His distinction between this higher world of perfection and the lower world of corruption remained influential through the middle ages.¹⁹

Augustine repudiated the distinguishing feature of classical humanism, the autonomy of reason. For him ultimate wisdom could not be achieved through rational thought alone; reason had to be guided by faith. With out faith philosophy had no validity if it did not accept as absolutely true the existence of God and authority of his revelation. Augustine upheld the primacy of faith. But he did not necessarily regarded reason as an enemy of faith and he did not call for an end to rational speculation. What he denied of the classical view that reason alone could attain wisdom. The wisdom that Augustine sought was Christian wisdom, God’s

¹¹ Marvin Perry, *Western Civilization: A Brief History*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1993, p. 128

¹² *The Medieval World View*, p. 43

¹³ *Ibid...*p.44

¹⁴ *Western Civilization: A Brief History*, p. 132

¹⁵ *The Medieval World View*, p. 62

¹⁶ Butler, Walsh, Micheal,(ed), *Lives of the Saints*, New York, Harper Colliner Publishers, 1991, p. 407

¹⁷ Saint Augustine---Philosophical Anthropology, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford, Retrieved 23 March 2011.

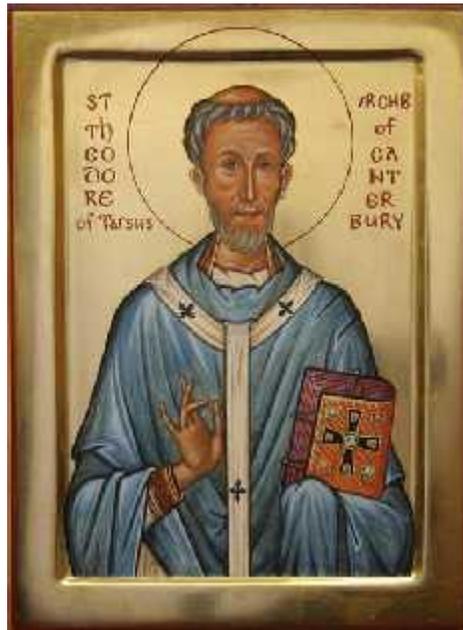
¹⁸ *The Medieval World View*, p. 65

¹⁹ David S. Noss, John B. Noss, *A History of the World's religions*, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1990, P. 482

revelation to humanity.²⁰ He adapted the classical intellectual tradition to the requirements of Christian revelation. It cannot be said that the Roman Catholic church adopted all of the Augustinian theology. There were so many other influences, but the protestant reformation was a return to Augustine just as much as it was return to Paul and Jesus. With this this context Roman Catholic church entered in Britain.

The Christian Church in England:

As Europe gradually emerged from the destruction of the Roman Empire, the church became one of the mainstays of civilization²¹. Through the activities of missionaries the roots of Christianity took more secure till the end of eight century in North. Theodore of Tarsus²², who was sent to Britain as Archbishop of Canterbury, he governed on English Church for twenty one years During this time religious houses continuously spread, their number attesting to the attraction of the monastic ideal, of communal living and the sharing of hardship.



St. Theodore of Tarsus

Theodore widely refused to interfere, avoiding any direct clash, but encouraging greater discipline through the benedictine rule, which enlarged the authority of the abbots and restricted monks and nuns to the rule of one monastery or one convent. Sometimes the two were grouped together as double religious houses, over the Church as a whole, however he enforced the power of bishops, and so defining their dioceses that they ceased to be synonymous with Saxon

²⁰ *Western Civilization: A Brief History*, p. 133

²¹ Robert A. Guiseppi, *History of Christianity*, London, 1992, p. 80

²² He was Arch Bishop of Canterbury from 668-690 A.D. He is known as the best reformer of the English Church as well as the founder of Canterbury school. (Farmer, David Hugh, *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, oxford University Press, (fifth ed), 2004, p. 496, ISBN: 978-0-19-860949-0)

kingdoms. This definition was fundamental for the development of the church., it reduced the inequalities in the power of some bishops and made them more manageable by the see of canterbury. He coerced bishops into attending regular synods where canons were prepared and issued, asserting the discipline that bishops could enforce over their clergy and making the English Church more uniform, thus reducing the tendency to individualism and variety in Irish Church.

These Synods became a more regular feature by which the Church was governed; they looked to the diocese as the unit of administration and to the secular clergy as instruments of Parish work, the Parish which slowly was a means by which a bishop could extend his rule into remote areas of his diocese; and it was a division of land that land owners could establish around the chapel, retaining the right to appoint resident priests and to fix the endowment themselves, though once appointed the priest must obey the bishop of his diocese. So the way of Theodore was encouraged and continued by his colleagues and successors. In Italy it was more developed; books and manuscripts were deposited in monastic libraries; skilled craftsmen were brought from Rome and more delicate work as done in glass and stone, so that through the liturgy, through religious sculpture and architecture, through the study of common theological treatises, the church in England were brought more directly into touch with the European.²³

The church had to accommodate itself to the social order, neither rejecting nor dominating it, but moulding accepting and living with many of the sources of difference and strife in Anglo Saxon society. Bishops were nominated by the King, served the king in Royal offices and sat as judges in royal courts. They maintained a vital interest in legal and social affairs. At another level the parish clergy were frequently married with families to keep and with son succeeding to father, intimately involved in the village life about them. Only in the twelfth century under the influence of Gregorian reform movement from France and Italy, would many of these conditions be seriously questioned.

The role of Christianity in Government institutions:

The Catholic church is a mystery in the strict theological sense of the word. Its existence is not ultimately in term of human design and action, its total ideas are not explainable is not discoverable by sheer philosophical and historical research. The existence of Church hangs on a sovereignly free Devine choice, where God gave to men this particular form for their religious life. And the idea of the church---what its intimately is....is it possessed by the secret of God alone, when the Roman Catholic says, 'I believe in the one, holy Catholic and apostolic Church. He has believe because has indeed evidence in the order of philosophical truth and historical fact sufficient to let him know with certainty that his act of faith is reasonable.

The Roman catholic Church entered in middle ages with a head who was a temporal sovereign quite equal in political and financial position to some or the secular sovereigns of the west. The pope's territorial ambitions were bolstered by an extra ordinary forgery that was circulated at this time and won widespread acceptance as genuine. Known as the *Donation of Constantine*. This forgery

²³ Albert Tucker, *A History of British Civilization*, P.51

represented Constantine as granting to the pops not only spiritual supremacy over the whole Church but also temporal dominion over Rome, Italy and in other “provinces, places and cities of the regions.” Not until the middle of the fifteen century was the forgery successfully discredited. In any case the Kings and chieftains of the West, on their part, were willing to ceded the spiritual supremacy of the Roman pontiff, but they were equally sure that the pope ought not to introduce himself into their purely temporal affairs²⁴.

Hence arose vexing conflicts between the Poses and secular powers. Such Churchman as were elevated to high office at the behest or by the appointment of the kings and princes were often easy going and worldly minded. Some of them had even bought and paid for their appointment---A practice called simony²⁵. They were prone to their Churchly honor as personal prerogative, to take with as they liked, and further they were from Rome the more this was the case. In Northern Areas specially in Germany, Bishops even married and passed their bishoprics on to their sons, in complete disregard of the rule laid down long before by pope Leo I that all the clergy, even to the subdeacons, should be celibate. Again norther Bishops frequently complaisant toward, and sanctioned, easy divorce among kings and princes when political marriages proved unsatisfactory. In another direction, conflicts arose between canon law (the law of Church drawn from the decrees of council, synods and popes) and the civil law of various states was strong, the canon law was often violated in the administration of Parishes and monasteries.

Pope Gregory (1015-1085):

In 1073 A.D Hildebrand became pope by the name of Gregory VII at that time in Germany Henry IV ascended the throne. Gregory ordered Henry to confirm to the decree that bishops received their staff of office from the pope and not from the emperor, and he changed the married Bishops of Germany to give up their wives.²⁶ But Henry IV was to prove a formidable opponent. He definitely appointed a cleric of his own choice to the bishopric of Milan, then under his control, gregory called him to task, henry held a council with his nobles and rejected the authority of the pope Gregory.²⁷ But Gregory replied with a decree falling like a thunderbolt upon Henry, excommunicating him and releasing his subject in Germany and Italy from their oaths of alliance to him. Though Henry sent to pope a fierce letter calling him “now no pope, but a false monk”, and telling him to’ come down, to be damned through all eternity” he was merely blustering. In great trouble Henry crossed the Alp, and followed the pope to a castle at Canossa, then Gregory considered what to do him, finally the pope utterly avenged, admitted Henry to an audience and released him from his excommunication.²⁸ Although it’s a great triumph, but just after three years later Henry and Pope were in front of each other as their contests when they reached on inconclusive stage they both dead, and their successors Henry V and Pope Calixtus

²⁴ David S. Noss, John B. Noss, *A History of the World's religions*, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1990, P. 490

²⁵ Albert Toker, *A history of the English Civilization*, P. 87

²⁶ Rebecca, Fraser, *The Story of Briton: From the Romans to the Present: A narrative History*, New York, London, 2005, p. 103

²⁷ Kenneth O. Morgan, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain*, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 116

²⁸ Rebecca, Fraser, *The Story of Briton: From the Romans to the Present: A narrative History*, p. 104

It came to a compromise, Bishops everywhere and in all cases were to be chosen by the Church in accordance with canon law, yet before their consecration, the German Bishops were to appear before the emperor to be invested by the touch of the royal scepter with the temporal possession of their sees. In other words, all new German bishops were to be acceptable to the emperor. Furthermore, it was agreed that bishops should be celibate. Hildebrand's reforms had in great part been achieved²⁹.

Pope Innocent III (1161-1216):

Pope Innocent III was more powerful than Gregory. He became pope a hundred years later than Gregory. Innocent entered in his office when Papal had reached a new height, largely due to his predecessor's effective discipline of Henry II of England.

Innocent III was conceded on his accession, to be without qualification the spiritual superior of every terrestrial sovereign, he acted on the principle that he was the first among his peers in the temporal sphere also. When Germany was torn between rival claimants to the throne he crowned one of them. Otto III (980-1002) the emperor of the Roman Empire had some clashes with the pope Innocent, he put a rival in the field and with the help of the King of France established him on the imperial throne, thus he proved his power that he could make and unmake kings. In Spain the Pope first assumed control of Aragon and then granted it back as a fief to its king, Peter. He imposed a similar status upon the rebellious English. Richard, King John, tried to force his candidate for Archbishop on the see of Canterbury, and the Pope placed in England under an interdict, to last until Stephen Langton, his choice should be made Archbishop.³⁰ When King John resisted, the Pope excommunicated him, declared his throne vacant, and proclaimed a crusade against him. John capitulated but was not restored to grace until he acknowledged his kingdom to be fief to the papacy from which a thousand marks were due annually to the Pope as a feudal tax.³¹ So within the Church itself Innocent III became the undisputed head of the whole ecclesiastical domain. All disagreements of the higher clergy were ordered to be referred to him and his decisions were final. He reserved the right to move the bishops about among their sees. He forced through the fourth Lateran Council (1215), the acceptance of the dogma of transubstantiation and the rule that the good standing of Catholic was conditioned upon periodic confession, absolution, and communion. The Papacy had reached its all time height of spiritual and temporal power

Scholastic Approaches in Christianity:

Since the time of Charlemagne³² the Cathedrals and monasteries had devoted more and more attention to the schools they had founded for boys and men. Scholasticism was the brainchild of these medieval schools. It quite naturally concerned itself with the logic of Charlemagne.³³ After its first tentative

²⁹ *ibid*...

³⁰ *Ibid*.....p. 158

³¹ Kenneth O. Morgan, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain*, p. 130

³² See for detail: Francois L. Ganshof, *Charlemagne, Chicago Journals, Speculum*, Vol, 24, No. 4 (1949), pp. 520-528, www.jstore.org/stable/2854638 (15-02-2016)

³³ *The history of the World Religion*, p. 495

emergence in the time of Charlemagne, it became with time more responsible. Its dialectical method was applied at last to the really great problem of theology: how to reconcile reason and revelation--a problem that becomes in one direction the problem of the reconciliation of science and religion and, in other, that of the reconciliation of philosophy (reason) and theology (faith).³⁴

basically the story of the emergence of Scholasticism in high medieval ages indicates the Greek and Arabic philosophy and Christianity faith as well.³⁵

The "Scholastic" is derived from the Greek word which means 'ease'. The scholastic is therefore, the man of leisure, who freed from the cares and the worries of providing for his material needs, can devote himself in tranquil detachment to the pursuit of wisdom. The word assumed various meanings in later, Latin until in the middle ages. It meant any one engaged in a teaching capacity, and as philosophy figured on the curriculum of medieval schools, the name "Scholastic" philosophy or "Scholasticism" arose.³⁶ **Peter Abelard**³⁷(1079-1142) was the most important thinker who paved the way for scholasticism. He was active in around Paris in the first half in the twelfth century, Probably the first Western European who consciously sought to forge a career as an intellectual (rather than being merely a cleric who taught on the side or school teacher who had no goal of adding to knowledge),³⁸ Abelard was so adept at logic and theology that even as a student he easily outshone the experts of his day who had the misfortune to be his teachers.³⁹

³⁴ Ibid.....

³⁵ Lerner, Meacham, Burns, *Western Civilizations*, New York, London, 1941, p. 342

³⁶ Felix Hope, *Scholasticism, Journal of Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press on the behalf of Royal Institute of Philosophy, Voll 11, No 44, (1936), p. 446. www.orgjstore/stable/3746766 (14-02-2016).

³⁷ Abelard was born near Nantes in 1079 A.D. He came from a stock of Breton nobles. Even he was not yet twenty, he became a student under William of Champeaux at the cathedral school of Notre Dame, Paris. After many intellectual vicissitudes, he was nominated Canon and elected to the chair at Notre Dame (Francis Nelson, Peter Abelard (1097-1142), *The American Journal of Economic and Sociology*, Inc, Vol, 1, No, 4, July, 1942, p. 450 (www.orgjstor/stable/3483389.) 02-05-2016

³⁸ John Marebon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*, Cambridge, University Press, 1997. (Review) Richard Gaskin, Cambridge University Press on behalf of Royal Institute of Philosophy, Vol, 73, No 284, April, 1998, p. 322. (www.orgjstor/stable/3752085) 02.05-2016

³⁹ Ibid.....



Peter Abelard(1079-1142)

Abelard's greatest contributions to the development of scholasticism were made in his *Sic et Non* (yes or no) and in a number of original theological works. In the *Sic et Non* Abelard prepared the way for the scholastic method by gathering a collection of statements from the Church fathers that spoke for both sides of 150 theological questions. It was once thought that the brash Abelard did this in order to embarrass Authority. But the contrary is true. What Abelard really hoped to do was begin a process of Careful study where by it could be shown that the Bible was infallible and that other authorities, despite any appearances to the contrary really agreed with each other. Later scholastics would follow his method of studying theology by raising fundamental questions and arraying the answers that had been put forth in authoritative texts. Abelard did not propose any solutions of his own in the *Sic et Non*, but he did start to do this in his original theological writings.⁴⁰ In these he proposed to treat theology like a science by studying it as comprehensively as possible and by applying to it the tools of logic, of which he was master. He did not even shrink from applying logic to the mystery of the Trinity, one of the excesses for which he was condemned. Thus he was one of the first to try to harmonize religion with rationalism and was in this capacity a herald of the Scholastic outlook.⁴¹

After Abelard two further two steps were taken to prepare for mature scholasticism. One was the writing of the *Book of Sentences*.⁴² between 1155-1157 by Abelard's student **Peter Lombard (1095-1160)**. He raised all the most fundamental theological questions in rigorously consequential order, adduced answers from the Bible and Christian authorities on both sides of each question, and then proposed judgments on every case. By the thirteenth century Peter

⁴⁰ Lerner, Meacham, Burns, *Western Civilizations*, p. 344

⁴¹ Lauge, Olaf Neilson, *Theology and Philosophy in Twelfth Century*, Leiden, E.J Brill, 1982, p. 214

⁴² Joseph Rockaby, *Scholasticism*, 1908, p. 23

Lombard's work became a standard text.⁴³ Once formal school of theology were established in the Universities. All aspirants to the doctorate were required to study and comment upon it; not surprisingly, theologians also followed its organizational procedures in their own writings. Thus the full Scholastic method was born.

The other basic step in the development of Scholasticism was the reacquisition of classical philosophy that occurred after about 1140 A.D. Abelard would probably have been glad to have drawn upon the thought of the Greeks, but he could not because few Greek works were yet available in translations. Later theologians, however, could avail themselves fully of the Greeks, knowledge, above all the works of Aristotle and his Arabic commentators. By around 1250 A.D. Aristotle's authority in purely philosophical matters became so great that he was referred to as "the philosopher" pure and simple. Scholastics of the mid thirteenth century accordingly adhered to Peter Lombard's organizational method, but added the consideration of Greek and Arabic philosophical authorities to that of purely Christian theological ones.

Thomas Aquinas: Reason and Revelation (1225-1274) was leading scholastic theologian of the University of Paris. He was committed to the principle that faith could be defended by reason. He believed that natural knowledge and the study of the universe were legitimate ways of approaching theological wisdom because 'nature' complements 'grace'. By this he meant to say that because the God created natural world. He can be approached through its terms even though ultimately certainty about the highest truths its terms even it through the supernatural revelation of the Bible.⁴⁴ He harmonized Greek philosophy with Christian theology. In his teaching career he indulged in few controversies and worked quietly on his two great summaries of theology: *The Summa Contra* and the much larger *Summa theologiae* in these he hoped to set down all that could be said about the faith and firmest of foundations.



St. Thomas Aquinas (15th Century)

⁴³ Rosemann, Philip W, *Peter Lombard: Great Medieval Thinker Series*, New York, Oxford University Press. 2004. (Review) Kevin Medigar, *The Journal of Religion*, University of Chicago Press, Vol 86, No. 02, p.332. www.jstore.org/stable/10.1086/504769 (16-02-2016)

⁴⁴ *Western Civilizations*, p. 345

In his Summaries he admitted that there are “certain mysteries” of faith such as the doctrine of Trinity and Incarnation, that cannot be approached by the unaided human intellect: on the other hand he subjects all the theological questions to philosophical inquiry. He relied heavily on the work of Aristotle,⁴⁵ But he was no means merely, “Aristotelian Baptized”. Instead he fully subordinated Aristotelianism to basic Christian principles and thereby created his own original philosophical and theological system, Although mostly Scholars were disagree about how far this system diverges from the earlier Christians thought of St. Augustine. but Aquinas put it on higher value in the mater of human reason, on human life in this world, and on the abilities of humans to participate in their on salvation. The influence of his thought was more directly, philosophy in the modern Roman Catholic is supposed to be taught according to the Thomistic method, doctrine and principles.

With the achievement of St. Thomas Aquinas in the middle of thirteenth century, Western medieval thought reached its pinnacle. Not coincidentally, other aspects of medieval civilization were reaching their pinnacles at the same time. France was enjoying its ripest period of peace and prosperity under the rule of St. Louis⁴⁶ the university of Paris was defining its basic organizational forms and the greatest french Gothic Cathedral were being built. Some ardent admirers of medieval culture have fixed on these accomplishments to call the thirteenth “greatest of centuries.”⁴⁷ but it is a fact that such kind of judgments is a mater of taste.

The Decline of the Papacy in the Fourteenth Century:

The Papacy could not to maintain itself on that high authority and power that had been reached during the thirteenth century. There were many factors that led to its decline.

Remitting papal pressure at the top only accentuated the divisive effect of a new sense of Nationalism rising among the different European people from below. France and England Particularly, were able to move toward independence. Indeed the Holy Roman Empire (Now neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire) broke up into a collection of loosely united petty kingdoms. When this happened, France began to wield a more powerful influence than Italy. There was an Immediate clash of interests. The French Clergy forced to take sides, began to distinguish between the spiritual and temporal authority of the Pope and often sided with the King of France in disputes involving temporal meters the French Clergy, When Pope Boniface VIII(1294-1303) and Flip the fair fell out, the letter did an epochal thing, a demonstration both of the force of rising nationalism and of the stirring of democracy in Western Europe.⁴⁸ Actually Boniface⁴⁹ asserted upon

⁴⁵ Rayan Thomas F, Thomas Aquinas As Reader of the Psalms: Studies of spirituality and Theology, Noter Dem, 2000, (Reviewed) Micheal Cameron, The Journal of religion, University of Chicago Press, Vol. 83, no.1, 2003, P. 138. www.jstore.org/stable/1205462 (18-02-2016)

⁴⁶ <http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/LOUIS.HTM>. (18-02-2016)

⁴⁷ Mary T. Clark, (ed) *An Aquinas Reader*, New York. 1972. P. 35

⁴⁸ David S. Noss, John B. Noss, *A history of the World's Religions*, p. 501.

⁴⁹ He was born in 1235A.D and became a pope in 1294 AD. He was the younger son of Loffer, A descendant of a noble family, originally Spanish but long time lived in Italy. Through his mother

ridiculous profess over all temporal rulers and explained “We declare, we say, define and , pronounce that for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pope is altogether necessary for salvation.⁵⁰ This attempt to bring him to heel only led Philip to call another session of the states Generals, during which holy father was defiantly arraigned as a criminal, a heretic and immoral, and an appeal was issued for a general council of the churches to put him on trial. Because neither side would yield, the Pope, a spiritual authority without military power, at length suffered the indignity of imprisonment by some of Philips armed supporters it was so harmful for nationalism however, Many rulers were irritate and they provoked violent reaction against these arrogance claims of Papal. So many religious and secular people were fed up by the authority of Pope and his pride as well as the corruption of church. The people had strong wish either the reforms of the Roman church or the complete throw of it.⁵¹

Secondly, In this era feudalism was declined, the spirit of nationalism and loyalty was increased among people towards the secular rulers. While the demand of super-national loyalty from Roman Catholic Church was not in nationalism. The rigid enforcement of doctrine and practice, particularly by the way of Inquisition, stirred up opposition and dissent.thirdly, to maintain the status of church and it’s hierarchy, the sort of means was much irritating to the common people. The most notorious source was the selling of indulgences, which was the penance of paying of money to shorten one’s time of suffering in purgatory. The most important was the succession of French Pope followed (1305-77). Fearing violence in Italy, they retired to “Babylonish Captivity”⁵² at Avignon, where the power of the King of France over them was so unlimited that rival popes were elsewhere put in the field(1378-1417), thus to the great damage of Papal prestige producing that its known as the great Schism. Thenceforth France and England became increasingly independent. The Papal power ended. In the great chorus of liberated voices that was rising, the pope s were no longer to able to command.

Beneficial effects of the Papal Monarchy:

After Boniface VIII’s death the papacy became virtually a pawn of French temporal authority for most of the fourteenth century. But the emergence and success of the papal monarchy in the high middle ages had several beneficial effects during the course of that period. One was the international rule of the

he was connected with a house, which had already given three illustrious son to the Church, Innocent III, Gregory IX, and Alexander IV.(Catholic Encyclopedia, Pope Boniface VIII, 1917)

⁵⁰ Jack L. Arnold, Church History: *The Height and decline of the Papacy(1070-1517) Medieval Church History*, IHM Magazine Online, Vol, 1, No, 33 October 11-17 1999.

⁵¹ Lerner,& Meacham & Burns, *Western Civilizations*, New York, London, Vol. 1 1941, p.222

⁵² In Jewish history during this period the Jews were captive in Babylon in ancient Kingdom . The ere of 1307-77 belong to the period of Avignon Papacy, seven successive popes were resided in Avignon during this relevant era. Then it was existed in the kingdom of Arles, part of the Holy Roman Empire, and now in today’s France. ((ed),Micheal Jones, *The New Cambridge medieval History: C. 1300-1415*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 653). This situation created by the conflict between the Papacy and the French crown.

From this very strife situation between Philip IV and Pope Boniface VIII and after the death of Benedict XI in 1305 A.D Clement was elected as the Pope . He preferred to stay in France and in 1309 A.D he shifted his court to the Papal enclave Avignon, it was existed there till next sixty seven years. The pope’s absence from Rome is called by the name of Babylonian Captivity” of the papacy. (Alistair Mason & Hugh pyper, *The Oxford companion to Christian thought*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p.227

Papacy over the church enhanced international communications and uniformity of religious practices. Another was that the Papal cultivation of canon law led to a growing respect for law of all sorts and often helped protect the causes of otherwise defenseless subjects like widows and orphans. The pope also managed to achieve some success in their campaigns to eliminate the sale of church offices and to raise the morals of the clergy. By centralizing appointments they made it easier for worthy candidates who had no locally influential relatives to gain advancement.⁵³ there was of course corruption in the Papal government too, but in an age of entrenched localism the triumph of an international force was mainly beneficial. Finally, as we will see later, the growth of the Papal monarchy helped bring vitality to popular religion and helped support the revival of learning.

The Movement Toward individualism, Freedom and Reforms.

The new Briton society proved that the period of disintegration are often fertile ground for change and new developments. Out of dissolution of medieval civilization gave a rebirth of culture that many historians have labeled the Renaissance. It was a period of transition that witnessed a continuation of the economic, political and the social trends that had begun in the high middle ages. It was also a movement in which artists and intellectuals proclaimed a new vision of human kind and raised fundamental questions about the value and importance of the individuals. The Renaissance raised new questions about medieval traditions. In advocating a return to the early sources of Christianity, and criticized current religious practice, that humanists raised fundamental issues about the Catholic Church, which was still an important institution. In the sixteenth century, the intellectual revolution of the fifteenth century gave way to the religious renaissance, that touched the life of the people including the masses, in new and profound ways. When the monk Martin Luther entered the public scene and he introduced new dimensions to the people for their religious life.

During the Crusades and specially after the fall of Constantinople in fifteenth century many Scholars came into Italy with the literary masterpieces of the ancient Greeks in the original tongue, So there started that revival of classical learning known as the Renaissance. Poets and tale-tellers such as Petrarch and Bocaccio were the literary masters who joined the the great Renaissance painters and sculptors in popularizing the humanist out look w3ith its ever fresh delight in human beings and nature.⁵⁴ Even the Popes got much inspirations from Art and learnings and all, and even they forgot their duties which they owed to the Christian World as holy fathers.

This situation was inspiring for the common people because the world was rapidly expanding and enlarging its views.⁵⁵ There were a lot of events such as Crusades, the discovery of Marco polo, Columbus, and Magellan and others were enough conveyed to them, and their lives were quickly getting changed by the rise of commercial towns independent of Lords and princes. The common people began to criticize many recently established practices of the Church,

⁵³ Lerner, Meacham, Burns, *Western Civilizations*, p. 323

⁵⁴ Oscar Budal, *The Poet as Philosopher: Petrarch and the formation of Renaissance Consciousness, Modern Philosophy* : Chicago Journals, University of Chicago press, Vol. 79, No. 2 (1981). P.188. www.jstore.org/stable/437341 (08 February 2016).

⁵⁵ *History of the Religious World*, p. 501.

specially those involving fund raising. For instance, the sale of indulgences, was based on the claim that the pope had access to the treasury of superfluous merits accumulated by the saints and that he had unlimited dispensation of these credits. Indulgences were sold in the form of documents transferring credits to the purchaser's spiritual account. Other practices which drew criticism were obligatory confession, and Papal taxation in the form of money fees for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and all appointments to office in the church, and for hundreds of other transactions. Moreover the common started to learn for themselves. They developed a thought that they although they could not be the masters the classics of antiquity, but they became curious about the Bible.

The common people's criticism of the Church and their hunger for scripture reached more intense forms in northern Europe than elsewhere, and there aroused the English priest John Wyclif to condemn Papal taxation as greed and the doctrine of transubstantiation as unscriptural and to send his Lollard priests among the people of England to teach them the leveling doctrines of the Bible directly from the translations out of the Vulgate into the English tongue. Wyclif influenced by John Huss in Bohemia to led a popular religious revolt of such proportions that the council of Constance in 1415 A.D condemned Huss to be burned at the stake. A quite unrelated reform later in the fifteenth century was led by the Dominican monk Savonarola in the city of Florence, which after a brief triumph over the lives and spirits of the entire citizenry, procured for Savonarola finally only his own death by hanging.

In vain the Church at large attempted , through the cooperation of Bishops, Kings emperors, and by the councils called at Constance and at Basel in the first half of the fifteenth century to introduced needed reforms in Church life and administration. The only reform they seemed able to effect was the healing of the scandalous Papal schism, an accomplishment brought about by forcing the rival Popes from office and then restoring a single pontiff to the see of Rome. Otherwise the situation remained fundamentally unaltered and provocative of greater upheavals to come. Further this research paper will open the new horizons of research in the respect of the Catholic Christians in early modern era and why Christianity divided into Catholic and protestants sects.

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