21. The Eastern Mediterranean

XVIII
THE AFTERMATH OF THE CRUSADES

The revival of the crusade as an international movement in the fourteenth century had ended with the disaster of Nicopolis in 1396; the massacre of the flower of the western chivalry by the Turks in Bulgaria had disheartened the princes of Europe in their intermittent struggle for the deliverance of the east.[1] Moreover, the internal conditions of European nations, both political and religious, had already become less and less favorable for united action under the banner of the cross. Nevertheless, in the face of imminent danger during the fifteenth century, some measure of defense had to be undertaken to arrest Ottoman progress. The Orthodox principalities of the Balkans were overrun by the irresistible Turkish armies, and the kingdom of Hungary was increasingly becoming the bulwark of European Christendom. Though western Europe would send occasional reinforcements to the east, the people of east Central Europe and the Balkans had to shoulder the main burden of the mortal strife against the Turks. Thus in the fifteenth century, two movements ran in parallel lines—both heroic and both hopeless: the Hungarian crusade and the defense of Constantinople. In the meantime, desperate attempts were made to convert the Greeks to Catholicism and thus rouse the monarchs of the west to save the tottering Byzantine empire from final downfall. But all this was futile, for western assistance to the east remained insignificant and relatively ineffective.

Apart from the papal curia, the court of Burgundy became the chief center of crusading propaganda after the tragedy of Nicopolis, in which Burgundian nobles were the principal victims. While they wanted to avenge themselves for past humiliation at the hands of the Turks, most enthusiasts for the cause turned their eyes from the thrones of Europe to the duke of Burgundy as the richest prince in Europe who might lead a successful crusade. Philip the Good aspired

1. See above, chapter I.

to that honor, but, to avoid another calamity, he preferred to proceed with greater caution than before and gauge the strength and methods of his enemy in order to deal with him effectively. Accordingly, his choice fell upon Gilbert of Lannoy to visit the east and record his observations on its condition for the use of his benefactor. Lannoy was not a complete stranger to the east. In 1401, as a young man, he had undertaken a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the train of John of Warchin, a noble of Hainault. The pilgrims then visited the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai and the ancient Coptic churches in Old Cairo; they returned, after nearly two years' peregrinations in the Near East, by way of Constantinople, Rhodes, Cyprus, and Turkey. Lannoy was therefore singularly fitted for the mission with which the duke entrusted him; the kings of England and France also approved of the proposed voyage. He remained in the east from 1420 to 1423 and collected a great mass of original information on the countries beyond the sea, describing his journey and registering his observations and experiences in a work entitled *Voyages et ambassades.*[2] Lannoy's route to the east is interesting and instructive. Traveling overland through Germany, Prussia, Poland, and Russia to the Genoese colony of Kaffa in the Crimea, he sailed on the Black Sea to Constantinople, where he made his first contact with emperor Manuel II Palaeologus. Then he crossed the Mediterranean by way of Cyprus and Crete to the city of Alexandria, whence he traveled to Rosetta and sailed up the Nile to Cairo. From the capital of Egypt, he repeated the pilgrimage to the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai, and further visited the ancient Coptic monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul in the eastern desert by the Red Sea. Finally he returned home by way of Damietta, Rhodes, and Venice.

The rest of Lannoy's work contains much descriptive material of the highest importance for the fifteenth-century traveler, the pilgrim, and the crusader. His account of Alexandria with its two harbors, its hostels, walls, and fortifications, and its numerous internal organizations and local government provides a fine specimen of the author's treatment of his subject-matter. He reports the existence of large beautiful hostels for the Venetians, Genoese, and Catalans, and mentions that the smaller dormitories of the merchants of Ancona, Naples, Palermo, Marseilles, and Constantinople were relatively empty at the time of his sojourn in Alexandria. He further gives a detailed statement about the Mamluks and their numbers, status, and

2. Ed. Charles Potvin in *Oeuvres* . . . (Louvain, 1878).

methods of recruitment and the countries of their origin. He devotes much attention to their military education, their tactics and strategy, war ruses, and implements of war. He was struck by the centralization of authority throughout Syria and Egypt in the hands of the sultan of "Babylon," though that title was not hereditary. Lannoy's description of the river Nile with its periodic inundation is illuminating, and his notes on the land of Prester John to the south are interesting. He says that the sultan does not allow Christians to go to India by way of Upper Egypt and the Red Sea for fear that they may contact Prester John and persuade him to deflect the course of the Nile from Egypt.

The particulars on the roads and towns of the Holy Land are very much in the nature of a travel guide, which Lannoy compiled mainly for the benefit of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, he assured the European Christians that the holy city is not invulnerable, with its low walls and poor castles. Turkey is represented in his work by some reflections on the position of Gallipoli. This peninsula is employed by the Turkish armies as a landing place and a strong military base in Europe. It should be wrested from Ottoman hands in order to serve as a strategic point for intercepting the passage of Turkish soldiers into Greece.

Lannoy's attention was devoted primarily to Egypt and the Holy Land, though he did not overlook Turkey altogether. This position is clearly reversed in the work of Bertrandon of La Broquière, who also acted for the duke of Burgundy in his eastern embassy of 1432–1439. He left Venice on a pilgrim ship and landed at Jaffa after touching several seaports in the Morea as well as the islands of Corfu, Rhodes, and Cyprus. Then he went to Jerusalem and, like his predecessor Lannoy, paid a hurried visit to St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai. Unlike him, however, Bertrandon did not take the western road to Egypt, but preferred to retrace his steps to the Holy Land and proceed north toward Cilicia and Anatolia. While in Damascus, he met the renowned French merchant adventurer Jacques Coeur, as well as a Genoese from Kaffa commissioned by sultan Barsbey of Egypt to purchase more slaves for his Mamluk ranks. After wandering through Asia Minor, he ultimately reached the Turkish capital Brusa, a great emporium noted in particular for its trade in Christian slaves. There he spent ten days as a guest in the Florentine hostel, which enabled him to carry out at his leisure his work of reconnaissance among the Turks. Then he crossed the Bosporus to the city of Constantinople, which he found in a lamen-

table condition, with an impotent emperor (John VIII) who was tributary to the sultan. He left Byzantium in the company of a Milanese ambassador to the Grand Turk, Benedict Folco of Forli, and both went together to see Murad II at Adrianople.

Bertrandon's wanderings in Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia revealed that the Balkans were completely under the Ottoman yoke except Constantinople, which was a doomed city. He makes the poignant remark that the Turks were more friendly towards the Latins than were the Greeks. Further, he gives a useful account of the Turkish armies and their armor as well as their administrative and military systems. On the whole, the information embodied in Bertrandon's work *Le Voyage d'outremer*[3] ranks high among the contemporary sources for the political, social, economic, and military conditions of the Turks in the fifteenth century. After his final return to Burgundy by the land route across Europe, he reported on his mission to duke Philip, then at the abbey of Pothières in the Côte d'Or. He presented his august master with a set of oriental robes and a Latin rendering of the Koran (Qur'ān) made by the chaplain of the Venetian consul at Damascus. The duke accepted the robes, but passed the Koran to his learned consultant, bishop John Germain, chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

At a later date, in the year 1452, only a few months before the final collapse of Byzantium, duke Philip commanded the same John Germain to submit his recommendations on the subject of the crusade to Charles VII of France. These the bishop formulated in *Le Discours du voyage d'oultremer,*[4] which proved to be of great interest in spite of the fact that it was derived mainly from the written accounts of others at his disposal. On reviewing the state of Europe and the rest of the world, he found that though many countries remained within the pale of Christian governance, Islam still ruled supreme in Granada, Africa, and the Holy Land. Moreover, Moslem forces were still expanding in many other areas. The Latin kingdom of Cyprus had become tributary to Egypt, and in the last decade the Mamluk sultan had started to send his naval armament against the island of Rhodes. In eastern Europe, the Turks had seized the Balkans and begun their ruthless attacks on Hungary. Nevertheless, the situation was not utterly without hope. When weighed more closely, the balance of current events in the Orient and the Occident

3. Ed. Charles Schéfer in *Recueil de voyages . . . depuis le XIIIe jusqu'à la fin du XIVe siècle,* XII (Paris, 1892).

4. Ed. Schéfer in *Revue de l'Orient latin,* III (1895), 303–342.

tended to be more favorable to the Christians than to the Moslems, if only they would set their hearts on the enterprise. Despite all their might, the Mamluks were divided among themselves, and some of their greater emirs were in discord with the sultan. The lord of Damascus had even allied himself with Timur against his own suzerain in Cairo. On the Turkish side, Germain found that the Ottoman hold on the Balkans was still precarious, though their raids had been carried farther into Hungary. The great gulf which had separated the eastern and western Christians had been temporarily bridged by Eugenius IV at the Council of Ferrara-Florence in 1438–1439.[5] The time was now ripe, he felt, for united action between Orthodox and Catholic, while there was no real love between the Turk and the Egyptian in the Islamic empire. The Florentine accord would bring with it 200,000 combatants from Cilician Armenia and 50,000 from Georgia for the aid of the crusading host, in addition to other reinforcements from the empires of Constantinople and Trebizond, from the "Jacobites of Ethiopia," Russia, and "Prester John of India." The Discourse ended with an exhortation to the king of France, whom Germain implored to follow in the steps of Godfrey of Bouillon and the great St. Louis. But the king was in the throes of the last phase of the Hundred Years' War, and the expulsion of the English from France left him no time and means to be devoted to an uncertain cause in the distant east.

In the meantime, another propagandist of a different type emerged in the person of Manuel Piloti, a Latin native of Crete, who had spent thirty-five years in the east and witnessed some of the most stirring events in the Islamic wars in the Levant. In 1396 he had seen the two hundred slaves presented by Bayazid I to sultan Barkuk of Egypt from among the captives of the battle of Nicopolis, and records that they had to abjure their faith. Then he had watched the downfall of Cyprus and the captivity of king Janus with six thousand men and women of position in 1426.[6] Piloti was moved by these and other catastrophes to espouse the cause of the defense of the oppressed Christian principalities in the eastern Mediterranean. He wanted to put his long experience in the realm of the Moslems at the disposal of the Latins of the west to ensure a successful crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land. Accordingly, he composed a treatise entitled *De modo, progressu, ordine ac diligenti providentia habendis in passagio*

5. See above, p. 94, and Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge, 1959).

6. See above, p. 374, and Sir George Hill, *A History of Cyprus,* II (Cambridge, 1948), 485.

Christianorum pro conquesta Terrae Sanctae,[7] to be submitted to pope Eugenius IV. In this work, Piloti resuscitated the idea that a permanent conquest of the Holy Land should begin by the invasion of Egypt. Without seizing Alexandria and Cairo in the first instance, all Latin victories in Syria and Palestine would remain empty. The task of winning Egypt would be made easier by the depopulation of Alexandria and by the customary practice of the sultan, who butchered his emirs on the least suspicion of treachery. The author then outlined the Mamluk power and methods of war for the benefit of the crusader. Unlike most propagandists, he repudiated the crusade as an act of vindictiveness aimed at the extermination of the Moslems. The victorious leaders of Christendom, on the contrary, should treat their new subjects with love and leniency in order to win them over to Christianity. In this respect, his work recalls the thesis of earlier propagandists like Peter the Venerable in the twelfth century and Raymond Lull toward the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth. A propagandist document of considerable weight, the *De modo* must also be regarded as a worthy complement to Marino Sanudo Torsello's *Secreta fidelium crucis* (1321)[8] as a source for the history of medieval commerce in the Levant.

While propagandists were thus busy discussing the possibilities of an eastern reconquest, the Ottomans proceeded firmly with the task of consolidating their territorial gains in Europe; their troops were already mustered in the environs of Constantinople. The situation became critical for the isolated city; and in the summer of 1397 Manuel II Palaeologus dispatched his ambassador Theodore Cantacuzenus to implore Charles VI for immediate help. After some procrastination, the French king consented to contribute 400 knights, 400 squires, and a number of archers under the command of marshal Boucicault; the expedition started from Aigues-Mortes on June 26, 1399. Arriving at the island of Chios, the French squadron awaited in vain a promised reinforcement from Venice and from the Knights of Rhodes, and had to sail alone through the hazardous waters of the Dardanelles and Sea of Marmara to Constantinople. Perhaps the only achievement of the French was in helping to raise the maritime blockade of the capital. Otherwise, Boucicault realized the hopelessness of the position and decided to retrace his steps to

7. Ed. Baron de Reiffenberg, *Monument pour servir à l'histoire de Namur . . .*, IV (Brussels, 1846), 312–419.

8. See above, p. 10.

the west, with emperor Manuel, in December of the same year to beg for more substantial relief. The marshal of France left behind him John of Châteaumorand with a hundred knights. During his "mendicant pilgrimage" to the west, the emperor was well received at Venice, Paris, and London.[9] He was given generous promises but failed to secure any concrete result. Relief finally came from an unexpected direction when Timur defeated the Ottomans in the memorable battle of Ankara on July 28, 1402, and carried Bayazid into captivity. This stunning event postponed the fate of the tottering Greek empire for half a century; as soon as the news reached Manuel, he hastened back to his metropolis in order to readjust his policy and cope with the fresh circumstances.

Although the moment was most propitious for a *passagium generale,* the west was not sufficiently responsive to a call for united action on a large scale and thus lost its only possible chance for saving the empire. Even when the indefatigable Boucicault decided to resume fighting in the east after his appointment by Charles VI as governor of Genoa, his campaign was deflected from European Turkey. First, he found it expedient to defend the interests of his commune in Cyprus, where the Genoese colony of Famagusta was beleaguered by king Janus from the land side and by Catalan galleys from the sea. He succeeded in relieving the city, and a treaty of peace was signed between Genoa and Cyprus in July 1403.[10] Next, as soon as he regained his liberty of action, he headed for Alexandria, but its impregnable fortifications proved to be too strong for his modest contingent. So he sailed to the Syrian coast, where he stormed and pillaged the towns of Tripoli and Beirut, but attempted in vain to seize Sidon and Latakia. Finally, he was forced to retire to Famagusta, always pursued by the Venetian galleys, which betrayed his movements to the Moslems; it appears that most of the booty which he collected in Beirut consisted of Venetian merchandise. His campaign led in the end to the outbreak of open warfare between Venice and Genoa. After heavy fighting at Modon in October 1403, Boucicault returned to Genoa without ever reaching Constantinople, and the burden of the defense of the empire and of eastern Europe fell again on the Hungarians and the impotent Greeks.

With the regeneration of Ottoman power under Murad II (1421–1451), the Turks resumed their pressure on the imperial city, and the emperors renewed their efforts at the papal curia for a crusade. The

9. On all this, see above, chapter III.

10. See above, pp. 370–371.

pontiff seized the opportunity to insist on the conversion of the Greeks to Roman obedience. The Greek delegation, headed by emperor John VIII and patriarch Joseph II, was received with honor by pope Eugenius IV and his cardinals at Ferrara in March 1438. Prolonged discussions took place between the two parties, who moved to Florence on February 26, 1439. The Greeks were at a disadvantage, and eventually John VIII and Joseph II (before his death on June 10), together with a multitude of eastern Orthodox prelates, gave way to the Latins in regard to doctrinal differences and to the primacy of Rome, "saving the privileges and rights of the eastern patriarchs." The bull "Laetentur coeli" of July 6, 1439, was the official proclamation whereby Constantinople was reconciled to the Roman see. In return, Eugenius signed a treaty in which he agreed to reinforce the defense of Byzantium with two galleys and three hundred men annually, and to increase his contribution to twenty galleys for six months or ten for a year in case of imminent danger. He further promised to promote the cause of holy war at the courts of Europe. But the unionist movement was evidently a matter of diplomacy and not of faith, and as such, it was foredoomed. Neither was the pope able to carry out his promises and reanimate the crusading spirit among Catholic princes, nor were the Greeks able to forgive and forget the sins of the Latins in the Fourth Crusade and after. Finally, the Greek patriarchs Philotheus of Alexandria, Dorotheus of Antioch, and Joachim of Jerusalem allegedly condemned the Ferrara-Florence compromise and accused their colleague in Constantinople of heresy; their resolutions were supposedly issued in a common encyclical in 1443.[11]

In spite of the hopelessness of the situation in western Europe for the crusade, the reign of Murad II brought Ottoman rule in the Balkans almost to the edge of disaster. This was due mainly to the heroic career of John Hunyadi, the regent of Hungary and voivode of Transylvania, who led the Hungarian crusade with varying fortunes against the Turks. In 1438, Murad had already crossed the Danube and invaded Transylvania as far as the gates of the strong town of Hermannstadt (now Sibiu). Meanwhile, his westerly irruption into Serbia was arrested before Belgrade. At this moment Hunyadi appeared on the scene and succeeded in forming a coalition with two other outstanding eastern leaders: king Vladislav III of Poland

11. Doubt has been cast on the authenticity of this condemnation by Joseph Gill, "The Condemnation of the Council of Florence by the Three Oriental Patriarchs in 1443," *Personalities of the Council of Florence, and other Essays* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 213–221. On the council in general see above, pp. 92–95, and Gill, *The Council of Florence.*

(1434–1444), who also became king (László IV) of Hungary in 1440, and George Brankovich, despot of Serbia (1427–1456). At the beginning, each of the three coalition members conducted hostilities against the Turks separately within his own realm and according to his means. In 1442, Murad attempted another invasion of Transylvania, and was again beaten at Hermannstadt. The Turks are said to have left behind them 20,000 slain in the field of battle. In his fury, the sultan made a third attempt which met with the same fate, and Hunyadi seized 5,000 Ottoman prisoners and 200 standards. Hitherto on the defensive, the voivode was encouraged by the arrival of Latin crusaders under cardinal Julian Cesarini in 1443 to take the offensive south of the Danube. Both king Vladislav and prince George Brankovich joined the crusade, and John Hunyadi, advancing into Serbia, was able to rout the Turks at Nish and pursue them until he made his triumphant entry into Sofia. The Albanians, who were Murad's sworn vassals, were emboldened by these successes and rejected Turkish suzerainty in order to help their coreligionists under their local leader George Castriota, better known as Scanderbeg. Murad, concerned about his European frontiers and at war with Karaman in Anatolia, negotiated an agreement at Adrianople in June 1444 which was ratified by Vladislav and Hunyadi at Szeged in July. By its terms, George Brankovich was reinstated in Serbia, the sultan paid 60,000 ducats as a ransom for one of his sons-in-law, and a ten-year truce was declared (but not kept). Immediately afterward, Murad decided to abdicate and retire to Anatolia.

Cardinal Cesarini protested in vain against the conclusion of the treaty, more especially as the news from the west assured him that reinforcements from France and elsewhere were underway. A fresh embassy from emperor John VIII arrived at Chalon-sur-Saône to implore Philip the Good for help. The duke responded by equipping a flotilla of four galleys under the command of Geoffrey of Thoisy and Martin Alphonse, whom he ordered to sail to Constantinople immediately. On their way east, they assisted the Hospitallers in warding off the Egyptian attack of 1444 on Rhodes. Pope Eugenius IV also sent a similar fleet for the same purpose under the command of his nephew Francis Condulmer. Meanwhile, cardinal Cesarini persuaded Vladislav and Hunyadi to break the truce, alleging that a treaty concluded with an infidel was void and could not bind Christians. He further promised Hunyadi the crown of Bulgaria after its deliverance from the Ottoman yoke. In the end, the treaty was actually broken when the crusaders overran Bulgaria and besieged the important coastal town of Varna by land and by sea (November

1444). The Christian leaders had been counting on the old sultan's abdication and the dispersal of his troops in Asia Minor. A great victory was within sight when Murad unexpectedly emerged from his retreat at the head of 40,000 men, whom the Genoese had transported to the shores of Europe for a substantial price. At first the fighting dragged on and the issue remained in the balance. Then the death of the king of Hungary and that of the apostolic legate deprived the crusade of two of its leaders, and Hunyadi was left alone in an exposed position to face the rising tide of the Turks. On November 10, he had no choice but to take to flight to save the remnant of his troops from extermination.[12]

In the following year, Murad's victorious armies resumed their ravaging campaigns in the Balkans and the Morea. Only the valiant Albanian mountaineer Scanderbeg stood up in defiance to the invader. The sultan himself marched against the dauntless rebel in 1447 without avail. The Albanian opposition on the one hand, and the threatening attacks to which Constantinople was steadily subjected on the other, decided Hunyadi to renew hostilities with the enemy. In 1448, the Hungarian regent crossed the Danube at the Iron Gate with 24,000 men and invaded Serbia. He found Murad waiting for him with a much larger army. The two adversaries met again on the field of Kossovo, with the odds definitely against Hunyadi. Not only was the number of the Turkish hordes far too great for the Christians, but Hunyadi's followers included 10,000 Wallachians whose loyalty to Hungary had always been doubtful. Moreover, Hunyadi imprudently overlooked the desirability of concerted action with Scanderbeg and his indomitable Albanians. In the second battle of Kossovo the Hungarians fought heroically, and the German and Bohemian infantry in the center used the fearful new hand-guns, but neither valor nor even gunpowder and missiles availed against the immense Ottoman battalions. The janissaries in the Turkish center and the timariot cavalry on the wings also proved their intrepidity. The ruthless fray was sustained for three days without interruption (October 17–19, 1448). As soon as the ammunition of the Christians was exhausted, the Turks began to mow them down, and Hunyadi's losses were irreparable. Perhaps a quarter of the Turks were slain, but Murad won the day and repelled the last serious attempt to save Byzantium.

12. A chapter on the crusade of Varna, and events leading up to it, is planned for volume V of this work, in preparation. On the preliminaries see G. Ostrogorsky, "The Palaeologi," *Cambridge Medieval History*, IV-1 (1966), 381–384.

With the failure of the Hungarian crusade, the imperial city was virtually abandoned to its fate.[13] Even the ruling class within its walls recognized in some way or other the suzerainty of the sultans. When John VIII died in 1448, his brothers Constantine and Demetrius disputed the succession to the imperial throne; the sultan approved the selection of Constantine Dragases as emperor. On Murad's death in 1451, his son and successor Mehmed II (1451–1481) was destined to obliterate the last traces of the eastern Roman empire within the next two years.

The downfall of Constantinople, long foreseen by its contemporaries, was deferred by the Turks only until they had completed all their preparations. On the Byzantine side, the position of the city was worse than ever. It was impoverished and depopulated. Whole districts were in ruins, and the population in those latter days was estimated at 45,000–50,000. The walls built by Theodosius II, and constantly repaired, nevertheless betrayed signs of old age and debility in several places. The emperor became unpopular with his subjects since he, like his immediate predecessors, declared union with the Roman see in the church of Hagia Sophia, in the hope that the west might come to his relief. The fury of the Greeks found a strong leader in the person of their future patriarch Gennadius, alias George Scholarius, a monk of the convent of the Pantocrator. Certain members of the community, like Lucas Notaras, a high dignitary and admiral of the fleet, went so far as to say that they would rather see the Turkish turban than the papal tiara in Constantinople. Constantine's army of defense could not have exceeded 8,000 for the whole length of the immense walls. Of these, the *Chronicon maius,* falsely attributed to the Greek chronicler Sphrantzes, tells us, 4,973 were Byzantine soldiers, while the rest were Genoese and foreign volunteers and mercenaries. Their war materiel was continuously depleted without hope of any substantial help from outside.

On the Turkish side, the picture was totally different. Although Mehmed II was only nineteen on his accession to the throne, he had already gained considerable experience in both civil and military administration during his father's reign. Since 1444, he had either ruled alone or shared the affairs of state with the old sultan. It was obvious from the beginning that he had set his mind wholly on the capture of Constantinople. To ensure a free passage for his troops from Asia to Europe, he constructed in 1452 a great fortress (Rumeli

13. On the last years of Constantinople see above, pp. 101–103, and Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople, 1453* (Cambridge, 1965).

Hisar) on the European shore and at the narrowest point of the Bosporus facing an older one (Anadolu Hisar) previously founded by sultan Bayazid. Then he concentrated on investing the city with all his might. It is difficult to estimate with precision the number of his forces marshaled outside the walls, given as 160,000 or more men; we must assume that reinforcements continued to pour in from Anatolia to replace the dead and the wounded after the beginning of fighting. The sultan was conscious that nothing could be done without a maritime blockade to complete the siege circle from the sea. For this purpose, he collected 140 ships including twelve great galleys. But we must not exaggerate the strength of the nascent Turkish sea power, and we must remember that that fleet was shut out of the Golden Horn by the famous chain until a late stage in the ensuing assaults. Still more important was Mehmed's stress on the importance of the artillery and the use of gunpowder. He hired Christian renegades to manufacture the finest cannon of the age for him. One of them, a Hungarian named Urban, foundered seventy pieces including a giant super-bombard capable of casting balls of stone weighing 800 pounds. It was drawn from Adrianople to the siege by sixty oxen in forty-two days. However, it turned out to be a failure as it exploded and killed its maker when it was fired. Other more successful pieces comprised eleven cannon casting 500-pound stone balls, and over fifty of smaller caliber casting 200-pound stone balls. Undoubtedly, Ottoman artillery was a decisive factor in paving the way for storming the city of Constantine.

In Europe, two propagandists spoke out for a *passagium generale,* with little or no effect. John Germain, on behalf of the duke of Burgundy, read his famous "Discourse on the Crusade" to Charles VII in 1452, and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, then bishop of Siena, representing emperor Frederick III, delivered an eloquent oration on the same subject before the pope and the cardinals. Both were dismissed with only promises. This was time not for negotiations, but for immediate action. When six Venetian merchant galleys arrived in the Bosporus from Candia, they were requisitioned for the defense, and the republic of St. Mark could but register its approval. Gabriel Trevisan, the Venetian commander, and his mariners were thus employed by the Byzantine emperor, and this represents the only real contribution from Venice. When the commune received the still more alarming news of the position in the east during February 1453, the senate issued orders to James Loredan to lead five more galleys for the relief of the city. The fleet arrived in the waters of Negroponte one day after the fall of Constantinople. Perhaps the

most serious reinforcement was that which voluntarily came from the island of Chios under a member of the Giustiniani families named John William Longo, thitherto known as a pirate in the Archipelago. He arrived with seven hundred men at Constantinople on January 29, 1453, and the emperor readily accepted his services and promised him the island of Lesbos.

The last great siege of Byzantium was officially inaugurated on April 6. The Turkish direct attacks and the heavy bombardment of the walls took a serious turn from April 11. Then on April 20, three Genoese galleys with men and munitions from pope Nicholas V succeeded in forcing their way into the Golden Horn. This prompted Mehmed II to devise an unprecedented war ruse to occupy the Golden Horn and deprive the city of its sole outlet to the Genoese colony of Pera. On April 22, his men rolled seventy light ships overland from the Bosporus behind Pera and Galata to the inner harbor of the Golden Horn. This gigantic engineering feat commenced at dawn, by the use of greased planks on the road and sheer manpower. Havoc ensued among the Christian mariners when they suddenly discovered the Turks in their midst. Taken unawares, these Christians took to flight, and the siege was extended to all the sea walls. Continuous bombardment was concentrated on a land sector that appeared to be weak, between the gate of Adrianople (Edirnekapî) and the civil gate of St. Romanus (Topkapî). A breach in one of the lateral towers of the latter gate was valiantly defended and somewhat repaired, but the remaining debris filled the moat and provided the Turks with a direct bridge across to the city walls.

Intermittent sallies and unremitting bombardment were unexpectedly suspended on May 28. Like the calm which precedes the storm, this ominous tranquillity proved to be the prelude to the end. At midnight of May 28–29 a sudden mass assault was launched on the walls by land and sea. Mehmed II's aim was to dissipate the defense on all sides to screen his greater concentration on the most vulnerable northwestern point, where the wall was extensively dilapidated; the plan worked. To make matters worse, Giustiniani was wounded and withdrew from the walls. Later, he and his men deserted the city and took to the sea. This demoralized the Greeks at a most critical moment, for it was during these maneuvers that a janissary detachment filtered into the city enceinte through the undefended Circus gate (Kerkoporta) exactly at dawn and surprised the imperial formations from the rear at the gate of St. Romanus. Constantine Dragases drew his sword and joined in the last fighting to die an honorable death, and his body was lost in the increasing

pile of those who fell in the fray. Resistance soon ceased and the sack of the city commenced, to last for three full and fearful days. The depleted population was either massacred or reduced to slavery. Late in the afternoon of May 29, Mehmed II made his triumphant entry through the gate of St. Romanus and went straight to say his prayers in the converted mosque of Aya Sofia. An old empire had passed out of the picture, and a new one came into being. Constantinople, hitherto a declining city, received fresh vigor and gradually rose to the status of the greater cities of Europe. When Selim I annexed Egypt in 1517, Cairo sank into a secondary position, and Constantinople, now called Istanbul, became the metropolis of the Islamic world.[14]

The fall of Constantinople in 1453, like the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 and of Acre in 1291, was received with great bitterness by the bewildered west. Constantine Dragases' brother Thomas, who had ruled the Morea, ultimately took refuge in Rome in 1461, bringing with him the head of St. Andrew the Apostle. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, renowned for his crusading zeal, had become pope as Pius II, and he undertook to lead a crusade. On June 18, 1464, he took the cross himself at St. Peter's in order to set an example to all the Catholic monarchs of the west, who displayed utter indifference to the crusading cause. Even duke Philip, who had sworn to follow the pontiff with 6,000 men, asked for a year's respite and blamed Louis XI, perhaps rightly, for the change in his attitude. A dying man, Pius II was determined to inaugurate the expedition nevertheless. He actually set out, but died on August 14 at Ancona, to be buried with his project at the Vatican. His successor, Paul II (1464–1471), apparently diverted the crusading funds to Venice and Hungary for use in their wars with the Turks.

Nevertheless, the idea of the crusade continued to haunt the imagination of western princes until the seventeenth century. Henry V of England, on his deathbed in 1422, had made a solemn vow to undertake the holy war on his return to health. Joan of Arc in the same period had dreamt of a similar enterprise, but the circumstances of the Hundred Years' War had made the realization of her project an impossibility. During the pontificate of Innocent VIII (1484–1492), the flight of Bayazid II's brother and rival Jem to the west resuscitated plans for war against the Turks and for inciting rebellion among the supporters of the refugee, but this, too, came to nothing. The reconquest of Jerusalem was discussed in 1515 by pope Leo X and king Francis I of France, but their project went no further. Emperor

14. On the Ottoman conquest of Egypt see above, pp. 511–512.

Charles V (1519–1556) later espoused the cause; he demonstrated his pious intentions by granting the island of Malta in 1530 to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem after their expulsion from Rhodes, and by the descent of his forces on Tunis in 1535, on Algiers in 1541, and on Mahdia in 1550 for the suppression of the activities of the Barbary corsairs. As a result, his antagonist, Francis I, adopted an opposite policy by allying himself in 1536 with sultan Suleiman I "the Magnificent" (1520–1566) to secure his maritime assistance against the emperor. Viewed from another angle this Franco-Turkish treaty may be regarded as the beginning of the supremacy of French influence in the Levant, characteristic of modern times, and as a landmark in the development of the "capitulations" in the Ottoman empire.

The anti-Turkish policy was, however, prolonged in Spain by Philip II (1556–1598), who delegated his half-brother, Don John of Austria, to command the Spanish fleet and join the Venetians in their naval struggle against the Turks in the Levant. The combined armada numbered 208 against 250 Ottoman galleys when the memorable battle of Lepanto was fought between them on October 7, 1571. Eighty Turkish galleys foundered, 130 were captured, and 40 managed to escape within the short span of three hours. Though Turkish naval expansion in the Mediterranean was seriously curtailed after Lepanto, the Christians' dissensions prevented them from reaping the full benefit of their great victory. The Spaniards wanted to direct the fleet toward North Africa, while the Venetians hoped to retake Cyprus. In the end, Venice came to terms with the Turks by relinquishing Cyprus to its fate and even by paying a heavy indemnity of 300,000 ducats to the sultan in March 1573. Don John descended alone on Tunisia in the same year, and was expelled from it in 1574. Peace pourparlers between Spain and Turkey were begun in 1581 and completed in 1585.

By land, the Turkish conquests and Christian defeats continued until the seventeenth century. When George Castriota (Scanderbeg) died in 1468, Albania was conquered and assimilated into the Ottoman empire. In 1521, Belgrade succumbed; in 1522 Rhodes was captured. Still more staggering was the rout of the Hungarians in the battle of Mohács on August 29–30, 1526. King Louis of Hungary was killed in the field, and his death precipitated the fall of his kingdom. Then the first siege of Vienna occurred in September 1529 and was raised on October 16. This was only the forerunner of repeated assaults on the Austrian capital, and the Turkish tide would not definitively recede until the failure of the siege of 1683, when

John Sobieski, king of Poland, saved the city from imminent destruction.

In the Levant, there was little or no activity aimed specifically at the deliverance of Jerusalem, although numerous European leaders kept proclaiming new projects for this purpose. It may be surprising to know that people like Cardinal Richelieu (1585–1642) and Father Joseph (1577–1638), the famous French diplomat, found time to ruminate on the salvation of the Holy Land. Perhaps the only person of the time who not only entertained this idea but actually did some preliminary work toward its realization was Ferdinand I de' Medici, grand duke of Tuscany, who managed to land in Cyprus and make contact with some discontented Asian chieftains for joint action against sultan Ahmed I (1603–1617). These attempts in the years 1607–1608 had no positive result, and Ferdinand himself died on February 7, 1609. A propagandist document of the same year, composed by an Italian priest residing in Cairo, John Dominelli, describes a fresh plan for an effective campaign against the Turks to save "the most Holy Sepulcher and the holy places of Jerusalem." [15] The writer argues that the sultan was involved in war on several fronts in Europe and Asia, his men suffered from disaffection, and the Christians under the Turkish yoke were ready for insurrection, while the garrisons in Egypt and the Holy Land were depleted. The times were, on the whole, most suitable for a successful campaign against the Ottomans, but Father Dominelli was oblivious of the circumstances in Europe which had rendered the crusade an anachronistic dream.

It becomes evident from the march of events that the most enduring result of the crusades was the vehement reaction of the Islamic polity to the continued aggression of western Christendom against Moslem territory for three centuries. The momentum gained by the Moslem powers while defending their own ground ultimately swung the pendulum in the opposite direction, and the assailed became the assailant; the outlying Christian states in the Levant became an easy prey to inroads from Egypt and Turkey. This movement, which has been described as the "counter-crusade," was, indeed, a counterfoil to the crusade in almost every aspect of its history. Just as there was propaganda in Europe for holy war, there was also propaganda among the peoples of Islam for the repulsion of Christian incursions. Expeditions conducted under the banner of the cross gave rise to

15. See N. Iorga, "Un Projet relatif à la conquête de Jérusalem, 1609," *Revue de l'Orient latin*, II (1894), 183–189.

anti-crusades from the Islamic states. Both were not merely armed struggles, but also conflicts of faith and of ideals. Both aimed at the deliverance of the Holy Land from the yoke of an "infidel" usurper. Both started with words of conviction in the form of propaganda, and ended in a mortal struggle for supremacy.

The history of the counter-crusade offers the scholar immense opportunities for original research.[16] Its literature compares miserably with the gigantic output on the crusades, despite the comparability of the two great movements. As a matter of fact, the counter-crusade had begun at the time of the Second Crusade with the rise of the house of Zengi at Mosul during the twelfth century. Then it had become a serious menace in Saladin's reign, with the fall of Jerusalem in 1187. Finally, the thirteenth century had seen the total eclipse of Latin dominion on the Asian mainland in 1291. Afterward, the Moslem battalions become an irresistible force in annihilating the eastern Christian principalities within their reach. This offensive outlived the Middle Ages and reached its zenith with the Turks in the sixteenth century.

The great mass of Moslem propagandist treatises, mostly unpublished, may be divided into three categories, all working up to the same ultimate aim of evoking lively interest in the Holy Land and of urging the community of the faithful to take arms in its defense. The first category comprises the books of pilgrimages (*kutub az-ziyārāt*), whose authors elaborate the thesis that pilgrimage, one of the pillars of Islam, is not confined to Mecca and Medina. Good Moslems are also expected to visit the tombs of the earlier prophets of the two other monotheistic religions, Judaism and Christianity. Mohammed did not denounce either; what Islam discredited was the alleged interpolations or elements of corruption by subsequent generations in the original holy texts. All Moslems were therefore bound by their religion to keep these shrines from being polluted by the "infidel" crusader.

The second category includes the books of virtues (*kutub al-faḍā'il*). A considerable number of tracts were written to enumerate the virtues of the Holy Land and of all the Islamic countries in such persuasive style as to inflame the zeal of the faithful against Christian aggression. Some of these books are devoted to such key towns of the Islamic empire as Aleppo, Alexandria, Cairo, and Damascus.

The third category, which is by far the most important, consists of books on holy war (*kutub al-jihād*), which may be further subdivided

16. On the counter-crusade and its literature see E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la croisade* (Paris, 1968).

into two sections or sets of treatises. One set deals with the principle of Moslem holy warfare, which well-nigh attained the status of a sixth pillar of the faith. This placed all able-bodied Moslems under the obligation of fighting non-Moslems until the whole world became converted or subdued to Islam. Apart from a multitude of tracts specially written on this subject, all authors in the field of Islamic jurisprudence (*al-fiqh*) devote considerable parts of their study to a full discussion of the tenets of holy war. The other set of treatises speaks of the more practical issues of the eastern art of war. Some authors tackle the equestrian art, others describe the implements of war and their usage, and still others discuss the technique of fighting and the order of battle. These books are intended for the initiation of the ranks as well as the edification of the generals who led the Moslem forces. The size of this literature leaves no room for doubt as to the existence of an elaborate system of war which helps to account for the brilliant victories of the Islamic armies in both Asia and Europe.[17]

The outcome of these varied exhortations and expositions was a regular anti-crusading movement from Egypt and Turkey, the two great Islamic powers in the Levant. The Egyptian counter-crusade chose Cilician Armenia as its primary target; its conquest was accomplished during the sultanate of al-Ashraf Sha'bān (1363–1376). After a bitter struggle, the emir of Aleppo stormed the Armenian capital Sis in 1375, and left it in ruins after leveling its fortifications to the ground and seizing the last of the kings of Armenia, Leon VI of the house of Lusignan, who was carried in chains to the citadel of Cairo. After seven years of imprisonment, Leon was released on payment of a heavy ransom by Venice and the papacy, to spend the remainder of his years wandering in Europe until his death, childless, in Paris in 1393.[18]

The next Egyptian counter-crusade was undertaken by sultan Barsbey's fleet against the Latin kingdom of Cyprus. The Mamluks could not forget the sack of Alexandria by Peter I de Lusignan in 1365, and they were determined to avenge themselves on the island kingdom. After assembling and fitting out suitable galleys for the enterprise, they launched naval expeditions to Cyprus in the years 1424, 1425, and 1426. The Cypriote army was routed and king Janus was seized in the battle of Khirokitia on July 7, 1426. Nicosia was

17. For examples of the first two categories of Moslem propagandist literature see section V of the bibliography of Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (pp. 545–546); on the third category see section IV (pp. 544–545).

18. See above, p. 489. A chapter on the later rulers of Cilician Armenia is planned for volume V of this work, in preparation.

pillaged, and the king and his retinue were, like Leon VI, led in chains to the Cairo citadel. In the following year, they managed to regain their freedom through the intercession of the Genoese and Venetian consuls on payment of a ransom of 200,000 ducats and an annual tribute of 5,000 ducats. The king was, furthermore, constrained to swear an oath of fealty to the sultan; Cyprus thus became tributary to Egypt.[19]

The downfall of Cyprus whetted the appetite of the Mamluks to purge the waters of the Levant of all traces of Latin domination. Accordingly, the next stage of their counter-crusade was directed against the Knights Hospitaller stationed in Rhodes.[20] They mounted three naval campaigns against the island fortress in 1440, 1443, and 1444. Here they confronted a defense stiffer than that of Cyprus. The Knights of St. John formed a regular standing body of chivalry under one leadership ready for any emergency at any time. Moreover, they had developed an elaborate system of espionage covering many countries, including Egypt, and were therefore forewarned of the details of the coming Mamluk attacks on them. The Egyptians used Syria and southern Anatolia as bases to revictual their fleet before attacking Rhodes, assisted by some of the Turkish emirs of Asia Minor. Nevertheless, they failed to achieve their aim. Though they occupied the knights' little isolated island of Castellorizzo off the southern Anatolian coast, the main stronghold of Rhodes remained intact. The third campaign ended in disaster. The Mamluks lost 300 killed and 500 wounded, while most of the Christian renegades who accompanied the Moslem army deserted the Egyptians and fled to the other side; the survivors raised the siege of Rhodes and returned to Egypt just in time to escape the austerity of winter. The fate of the island was therefore deferred until 1522, when Suleiman I expelled the order during the reign of the grand master Philip Villiers de l'Isle Adam. When emperor Charles V granted them Malta in 1530, they established there a small buffer state against the Ottomans and the Barbary corsairs. They distinguished themselves in the fighting which took place between May 19 and September 12, 1565, under the grand master John of La Valette.

The expulsion of the Hospitallers from Rhodes was but a minor chapter in the story of the Moslem counter-crusade from Turkey. When the Ottomans swept over the Balkans and into east Central Europe, they were, in a sense, anti-crusading. They had fought and routed the crusaders at Nicopolis in 1396, and at Varna in 1444.

19. See above, pp. 373–375.
20. See above, chapter IX.

Their victorious career had reached a peak in the capture of Constantinople in 1453. The downfall of the Mamluks in Syria and Egypt in 1517 had transferred all Islamic authority in the Levant to Istanbul. Turkish aggrandizement in the west was arrested only at Belgrade in 1456, outside the gates of Vienna in 1529, and in the waters of Lepanto in 1571. It was only then that the counter-crusade came to a standstill, and men's minds turned to the new "eastern question" instead of the old cause of the crusade.

The ascendancy of Turkey on the one hand, and the downfall of Egypt on the other, led to the deflection of the eastern trade from the great emporia of the Mamluk empire. In fact, the exchange of trade between east and west, which had received its greatest stimulus from the movement of the crusade, suffered its severest blow from the Ottomanization of the Near East. The immediate result of this position was a new burst of energy in search of India and Cathay by way of the ocean rather than the Mediterranean. In 1486, Bartholomew Díaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope; in 1492, Vasco da Gama reaped the fruit of his predecessor's achievement by reaching the shores of India. In 1492, also, Christopher Columbus discovered a whole new world in his attempt to reach Cathay by the western sea route. Thus new vistas and immense possibilities were opened up by the age of discoveries, and crusading ideas were all but drowned out in the tumult of imminent changes and the dawn of a modern era.