

environment had begun to create a thirst for knowledge, and though Aquinas was able to merge Christianity and philosophy together, there still was a burning desire to know more about the physical world (Bunnin and Jiyuan 2004). Some individuals began to take the search for truth even deeper and began to question why the physical Church, in particular the Pope, had the right to tell them how to act.

The Crusades created a blot on the church during this Medieval Period by its unholy acts of needless bloodshed and senseless loss of many lives, such as in the Children's Crusade; but would also help usher in the Renaissance, as well as have an economic impact because of trade (Lalou and Mottahedeh, 2001). One of the key religious events occurring in the Middle Ages was the Crusades, with the first Crusade beginning in 1095 AD and the last and eighth one beginning in 1270 AD (Salembier, 1912). The Crusades were initiated by the Roman Catholic Church, with the Pope the driving force behind these military campaigns. The Church itself was not involved in the military action, but was able to rally the Kings and Nobles of Europe to pick up the banner for this "noble" cause. These military campaigns were an attempt by medieval Christianity to take the holy lands back from the Muslims. The Catholic Church felt a passion to return the Holy cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem back to Christianity and away from those barbaric Muslim hordes. The First Crusade was the only one that achieved any measure of success at all (Babcock, 2011). Although Jerusalem was recaptured, it resulted in a bloodbath that set the tone for the remainder of the Crusades. The Muslims did retake Jerusalem and the remainder of the Crusades launched could not manage to duplicate the success of the first (Whalen, 2009). The medieval citizens blindly followed the Pope, which gives us a hint of the Church's influence on the people's lives and also how they looked to the Pope for leadership and guidance. The Crusades were not successful in the achievement of their objectives, but did have some unintended tremendous effects on the European Continent just the same.

Many of the early Greek and Roman writings had been lost in all of the changes occurring within the Church and this Medieval culture. The Arabic Muslims scholars had not only preserved these writings, they had translated these works of Greek antiquity—works of science and astronomy and philosophy—into Arabic (Whalen, 2009). As the Christian military began to return from the Middle East to its homeland, they brought many of these writings with them. The Arabic Muslims unknowingly had helped to lay the foundation for the Renaissance and created a conduit for knowledge to progress to the European Continent. The exposure of Europeans to the spices and textiles they found in the Middle East also led to a desire for trade routes for these spices, as well as dyes and textiles (Babcock, 2011). This free trade that was developing in the southern part of the European Continent would also have a social, economic impact upon the culture. Lots of money was changing hands in the development of Middle East commodities, and with that would come the development of the merchant class or what might be later known as the middle class. Perhaps one of the most unanticipated results of the Crusades was in the area of politics between the church and state. The Pope did not control an army to fight the Crusades, so he had to use the secular political powers to fight and fund his wars (Whalen, 2009). After centuries of these Crusades being called for by the Pope, the