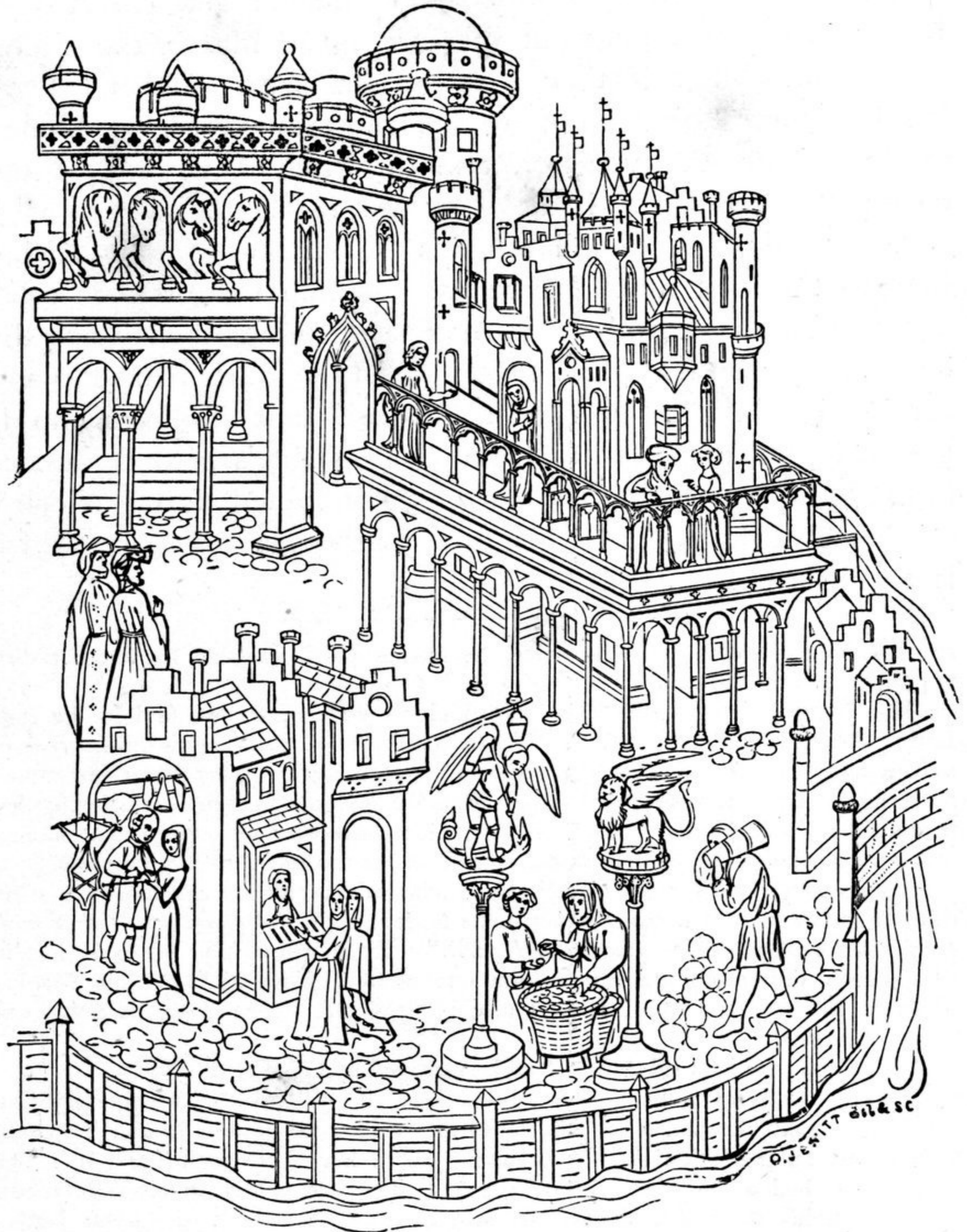


19. The Papal interregnum was the longest known, at least since the dark ages. Those two years passed, and yet



The Piazzetta at Venice. (From the Bodleian MS. of Polo.)

the Cardinals at Viterbo had come to no agreement. The brothers were unwilling to let the Great Kaan think them faithless, and perhaps they hankered after the virgin field of speculation that they had discovered; so they started again for the East, taking young Mark with them. At Acre they took counsel with an eminent churchman, TEDALDO (or Tebaldo) VISCONTI, Arch-

Second  
Journey of  
the Polo  
Brothers,  
accompanied  
by Marco.