The History of the

RENAISSANCE WORLD

Also by Susan Wise Bauer

The History of the Medieval World:
From the Conversion of Constantine to the First Crusade

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The History of the RENAISSANCE WORLD

From the Rediscovery of Aristotle
to the Conquest of Constantinople

SUSAN WISE BAUER

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For Daniel

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Preface

Not long after 1140 ad, the Italian scholar Gerard of Cremona traveled to the Spanish peninsula, hoping to find a rare copy of the thousand-year-old Greek astronomy text known as the Almagest.

His chances were better there than anywhere else in Europe. The southern half of the peninsula had been in Arab hands for centuries, and the ruling dynasties of Muslim Spain had brought with them thousands of classical texts, translated into Arabic but long lost to the vernacular languages of the West. The libraries of the city of Toledo, in the center of the peninsula, housed scores of these valuable volumes—and Toledo had now been recaptured by one of the Christian kingdoms of the north, meaning that Western scholars could visit it in relative safety.

Gerard found more than he bargained for: not just astronomy texts but classical and Arabic studies of dialectic, geometry, philosophy, and medicine; unknown monographs by Euclid, Galen, Ptolemy, and Aristotle; a whole treasury of knowledge. Overwhelmed, he settled into Toledo and set to work learning Arabic. "Regretting the poverty of the Latins in these things," one of his students wrote, "he learned the Arabic language in order to be able to translate. . . . To the end of his life he continued to transmit to the Latin world (as if to his own beloved heir) whatever books he thought finest, in many subjects, as accurately and as plainly as he could."[1]

Renaissance had begun.

This is not a history of "the Renaissance." Rather, it is a history of the *world* during the period that historians have often (although not universally) associated with a rebirth of interest in classical learning. As Gerard's story shows, this rebirth began much earlier than the fourteenth century.

One of the first Italians to give a name to the reawakened interest in Greek and Roman learning was the poet Petrarch, who announced early in the 1340s that poets and scholars were ready to lead the cities of Italy back to the glory days of Rome. Classical learning had declined, Petrarch insisted, into darkness and obscurity. Now was the time for that learning to be rediscovered: a rebirth, a *Renaissance*.

Petrarch was lobbying, in a polite and academic but very pointed way, for the distinction of official Roman Poet Laureate—in that day, something perhaps equivalent to the Man Booker Prize or the National Book Award, a public recognition that he was an intellectual whose words should be heeded. As part of his campaign, he was placing himself at the head of an already-existing phenomenon. Since before Gerard of Cremona, Western scholars, many of them Italian, had been working through Arabic libraries, reacquainting themselves with Greek and Roman thinkers. So much of this intellectual groundwork had been laid already that many modern historians now speak of a "Twelfth-Century Renaissance."

By 1340, in other words, renaissance was so far advanced that it had become visible. Historical eras are never recognizable when they begin; they can only be seen in hindsight. The Renaissance, as the following chapters will show, was rooted in the twelfth century. The twelfth century saw the real beginnings of the struggle between Church hierarchy and Aristotelian logic, a struggle which—reincarnated as a fight between scripture and science, creation and evolution—is still ongoing in the United States in 2013. The twelfth century saw the death of the Crusades, the rise of the Plantagenets, the dominance of the Japanese shoguns, *and* the journey of Islam into central Africa.

It was a century of renaissances, and that is where my story begins.

The last chapter of this history tells the story of the Ottoman attack on Constantinople in May of 1453, when the triumph of the Turks brought a final end to the Roman dream.

The cultural phenomenon known as the Italian Renaissance continued well after 1453; I do not go on, in this book, to chronicle some of its better-known accomplishments (the political philosophies of Machiavelli, the paintings of Michelangelo and Raphael, the inventions of da Vinci, the observations of Galileo). But in worldwide terms, by the time Constantinople fell, the Renaissance had begun to shade into new eras.

Like the Renaissance itself, those eras were not named by historians until much later. But the ground of the Reformation was seeded and had begun to sprout; the followers of the English scholar John Wycliffe and the Bohemian priest Jan Hus were already organizing against the authority of Rome. And the Age of Exploration was well under way. Twenty years earlier, the Portuguese captain Gil Eannes had finally pushed south past Cape Bojador. A decade after Eannes's boundary-breaking journey, Prince Henry of Portugal sponsored the first slave market in Europe: a closely orchestrated, carefully publicized event meant to whip up widespread enthusiasm for further explorations into Africa.

The Turkish overthrow of the Byzantine Empire was a world-changer. As the historian Caroline Finkel points out, even the Turks were unsettled by

Constantinople's fall; the Ottoman chronicler Tursun Bey, the only Turk to describe the final battle, calls it a "veritable precipitation and downpouring of calamities from the heavens, as decreed by God Himself." The transformation of Constantinople into Istanbul is an end and a beginning, an exclamation point and new paragraph in the punctuation of world events.

But the transition away from Renaissance and towards the next phase of human history is, perhaps, even more apparent in the events of the year before. The Italian pope Nicholas V had just issued a papal bull called *Dum Diversas.* In recognition of the expense and effort that the Portuguese had put into exploring the African coast, the Church gave official approval to the enslavement and sale of Africans by the Portuguese crown—a sanction confirmed again three years later in the charter *Romanus Pontifex.*

Wooing the allegiance and support of the powerful king of Portugal, the pope had transformed slavery into an institution that all Europeans could profit from without guilt. Historians do not normally speak of the Age of Enslavement, but in hindsight we can see that the decrees of the 1450s shaped the futures of three continents and began a whole new story.

Part One

RENAISSANCES

Chapter One

Logic and Compromise

Between 1100 and 1122,
the Holy Roman Emperor and the king of England both defy the pope,
and an archbishop makes use of Aristotle

The First Crusade had just ended—and with it, an age.

Eight hundred years after the Roman emperor Constantine led his army against his own people under the sign of the cross, Christian warriors crossed the Bosphorus Strait as a unified army of faith, roused by the supreme leader of the one Christian church to fight against Turks advancing from the east. No sooner had the Crusade succeeded than the victorious Christian knights sacrificed their allegiance to the one true faith and claimed another membership. They were, first and foremost, not sons of the church but sovereigns of their own private kingdoms.

Among the many meanings of what it meant to be *Christian*, one would govern the next four and a half centuries: to be a man of God meant *power*.

The ripples of the First Crusade spread out from Syria, in a widening circle that lapped both east and west.

In England, the wrong king inherited the throne. William II, king of the realm since 1087, was out hunting when his companion—an experienced hunter named Walter Tyrrell—drew his bow at a stag and instead hit the king. William collapsed onto the arrow and died on the spot. Rather than sticking around and explaining what had happened, Walter (according to the English historian William of Malmesbury) "leapt hastily on his horse, and with good help from his spurs got clean away. Nor indeed was there any pursuit." Instead, the rest of the hunting party, which included William II's younger brother Henry, went back to London and crowned Henry king of England. The date was August 5, 1100.[1]

In fact, Henry wasn't William's heir. The English throne should have gone to Henry's older brother Robert, Duke of Normandy, but he was still on his

way back from the First Crusade. Before he could claim his crown, Henry invaded Normandy.

The two brothers met in battle near the Norman village Tinchebray; the Duke of Normandy's army was defeated, and Robert was captured and imprisoned for the rest of his very long life. He died in his eighties, still under guard. As for Henry I, he took the title of Normandy for himself, becoming (like his father the Conqueror) both king of England and Duke of Normandy.

His reign, which had begun through force and usurpation, now took a turn towards law. As one of his very first acts, he issued a new declaration: the Charter of Liberties. The first article promised that the "holy church of God" would remain free from royal control, its lands from royal confiscation. But the remaining thirteen articles were all directed towards his people—particularly towards the barons of England.

The barons: the newborn aristocracy of England. William the Conqueror had rewarded his Norman knights by dividing the newly conquered land up into parcels and handing it out. The Anglo-Saxon nobles—the *thegns*, or "thanes"—had once been second only to the royal family in power and influence. The wars of the Conquest had already thinned their ranks. Now, those who had survived found themselves deprived of their lands, left with only tiny private holdings of their own.[2]

Unlike the thanes, the Norman barons did not consider themselves landowners, only land*holders*. William the Conqueror brought into England a new kind of kingship. As monarch, he claimed to own the entire kingdom: all English land, all Norman land, was the possession of the king. The barons were his "tenants in chief," and in return for their new estates, they owed the king a certain number of armed men for his use: the *servitium debitum*.[3]

This system was rooted in tenth-century Francia, where chaos and lawlessness had led the poor to serve their wealthier neighbors in exchange for protection. It became known as feudalism: an order in which service and payments (both money and crops) were exchanged for the right to live on, farm, hold a particular piece of land. In England, the feudal lords and their holdings were set down, by William the Conqueror's scribes, in a vast two-volume record known as the *Domesday Book*: a ridiculously ambitious attempt to record the condition and ownership of every piece of English land. Among the names of the feudal lords, barely one percent are Anglo-Saxon. The rest had come to England in William's service.*

These barons now owed the *servitium debitum* to Henry. But they remained fiercely protective of their own aristocratic privileges, and the Charter of Liberties assured them that the new king would not extort additional payments

*See Susan Wise Bauer, *The History of the Medieval World* (W. W. Norton, 2010), pp. 547ff.

from them, or prevent them from disposing of their own possessions as they wished.

It was an odd thing for a Norman-born king to limit his own powers—a recognition that twelfth-century England was at the beginning of a new era. But the Charter of Liberties was in reality a canny strengthening of Henry's hold on the throne. "Know that by the mercy of God," it began, "and by the common counsel of the barons of the whole kingdom of England, I have been crowned king." Henry was a usurper, crowned only with the support of the barons, and the Charter was designed to guard his power by keeping them on his side.

In fact, Henry intended to exercise as much authority as his people would allow. And, as soon became clear, more authority than the pope was inclined to grant him.

Like his predecessors, Pope Paschal II insisted on the papal right of *investiture*—the power to appoint bishops throughout Christendom. Investiture was no small matter. The bishop of a city had authority over all of its ecclesiastical resources—land, money, and men. He had as much power as any secular count or nobleman to build, collect revenue, hire private soldiers, and generally empire-build within the monarch's own land. But unlike a count or nobleman, a bishop could not marry and pass his estate to his son; each bishop's death presented another opportunity for either pope or king to jockey into place a loyalist who would put those massive (and ever-growing) resources at the disposal of his master. Henry, claiming his rights as God-ordained, God-appointed, God-approved monarch of England, refused to give up this privilege.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the English church, disagreed.

Anselm of Canterbury, approaching seventy at the time of the First Crusade, was an innovator, an intellectual maverick. He had been educated at Bec Abbey in Normandy, where the well-known teacher Lanfranc taught in a monastic school: a "famous centre of learning," says the twelfth-century English historian William of Malmesbury, "where pupils on all sides were puffing out their cheeks and spouting forth dialectic."[4]

Dialectic: the rules of systematic thinking and inquiry laid out by Aristotle. Such an education was new to the twelfth century. Most clerics knew very little of Aristotle; the only works of the great Greek available to them in Latin had been translated by the sixth-century Roman philosopher Boethius, who made it only through the texts on logic before he ran afoul of Theoderic the Ostrogoth and got himself beheaded.* Theoderic had merely intended to rid himself

*For the career of Theoderic the Ostrogoth, who became king of Italy in the last decade of the fifth century, see Bauer, *The History of the Medieval World*, pp. 143–149.

of a traitor. Instead, he rid the West of Aristotelian philosophy. No one else undertook the project, so for the next five hundred years, Aristotle was known to the scholar-monks of Europe only as a logician. And Aristotelian logic was not highly regarded by most churchmen. It promised the careful thinker a way to arrive at true conclusions that would apply, universally to the whole world, without making any reference to scripture. Aristotle offered the possibility of truth without God, of reason without faith.

Both the ninth-century Irish theologian Johannes Scotus Erigena and the eleventh-century teacher Berengar of Tours had already made use of Aristotelian categories to argue against the doctrine of *trans-substantio*: the assertion that the bread and wine of the Eucharist, while remaining the same in appearance, changed in *substance* into the body and blood of Christ.* Both men were roundly excoriated for daring to use Aristotle in the service of theology. Erigena, fumed the Bishop of Troyes, was a "master of error" who had dared to come to conclusions about "the truth of God . . . without the utterly faithful authority of the Holy Scripture," and Berengar of Tours found his writings condemned by a series of church councils, over his objections that he was, in fact, an entirely orthodox son of the Church.[5]

But Aristotle's ideas survived. Lanfranc, Anselm's teacher, had studied logic in Italy before entering Bec Abbey: "He brought the liberal arts from Italy to France . . . and gave them fresh polish with his intellect," William of Malmesbury tells us. Lanfranc taught his students at Bec to use dialectic as a tool for understanding revelation more clearly; and Anselm, studying beneath the master, found in Aristotelian logic a natural compatibility with his own ways of thinking.[6]

Anselm himself rose from student to teacher at Bec, and in those years he allowed the logic of Aristotle to penetrate further and further into his theology. He dared to ask why God should exist, in a day when no one asked such questions (an age, as G. R. Evans puts it, of "almost universal belief"); and he dared to search for answers using only reason. "I began to ask myself," Anselm wrote, in the preface to his *Proslogion*, "whether *one* argument might possibly be found, resting on no other argument for its proof, but sufficient in itself to prove that God truly exists, and that he is the supreme good."[7] *Resting on no other argument for its proof*: this was Aristotelian dialectic, applied to the most central beliefs of the Christian faith. Anselm, inheriting the benefits of several

*The Aristotelian distinction between essence and accident required a rethinking of the whole idea of transubstantiation; medieval theologians began to develop "a new sense of the implications of the rules derived from Aristotle's *Categories*, which recognizes that, although, by definition, accidents may alter (for that is the nature of accidents), the substance does not." Interested readers can find a fuller explanation in G. R. Evans, ed., *The Medieval Theologians* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), pp. 90ff.

generations of very cautious scholarship, had struck boldly out past the existing theological frontiers.*

He continued far into the unknown country, tackling not only the existence of God but also the particular Christian doctrines of incarnation and redemption, with reason alone. ("The following work," he writes, in the introduction to the 1098 *Why God Became Man*, ". . . ends by proving by necessary reasons—Christ being put out of sight, as if nothing had ever been known of him—that it is impossible for any man to be saved without him.")[8]

And as he did this, he continued to uphold, almost blindly, the right of the pope alone to appoint bishops.

Anselm spent his entire intellectual life on what must have felt like the edge of disaster: always willing to question what he had received, in faith that there was no tool of logic, no Greek syllogism, no Aristotelian category, that could shake truth. He must have feared, late at night in his rooms, that he was going too far; that one day the truth he held with all his might would indeed crumble in the face of his questions. But he continued to write and to reason.

And, perhaps to assure himself that he was still a good son of the Church, he remained, all of his life, the pope's man. In 1093, William the Conqueror's heir, William II, had nominated Anselm to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Anselm agreed to the appointment. But he refused to take the *pallium*, the cloak that symbolized his office, from William II's hand. Instead, he insisted that the cloak be placed on the altar so that he could then pick it up. According to the syllogism in his head, this meant that he had been appointed by the pope, not the king.[9]

Anselm's loyalty meant that he stood staunchly for the papal right of investiture. Eventually, he and Henry fell out so sharply over the issue that Anselm, afraid for his life, fled to Rome. While he took shelter there, Henry continued to demand his rights, Paschal II to refuse them. "It lies heavy on us that you seem to demand of us something that we can by no means grant," the pope wrote back to the king, ". . . You will say therefore, 'This is mine of right.' Not so, indeed for it belongs not to emperors or kings, but to God, it is His alone." He added, ominously, "In this matter, we would have you contemplate what you lose."[10]

Which was nothing less than salvation: Paschal II had the authority to excommunicate Henry, declaring him cut off from the Church, the sacra-

*Anselm's line of reasoning in the *Proslogion* is known as the "ontological argument" for the existence of God: he defines God, famously, as "that of which nothing greater can be conceived," and attempts to prove that God necessarily exists because we are able to conceive of him. A useful summary for the nonspecialist is found in Alvin Plantinga's *God and Other Minds: A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God* (Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 26ff.

ments, and their saving power. He could even place the entire country of England under an interdict. Churches would be closed, crucifixes draped with black cloth, the dead buried in unconsecrated ground—no Masses, no weddings, no bells. Interdict was a theological weapon of mass destruction, likely to make the king who had caused it grossly unpopular with his people.[11]

Henry I, involved in a serious war with rebellious barons in Normandy, finally decided that he couldn't fight both the pope and the Normans. In 1107, he agreed to a compromise; although only Paschal II could appoint English bishops, each bishop would have to go and pay homage to the king before he could take possession of the physical *place* in England where he would serve.

Although this still gave Henry some control over who ended up in bishoprics, Paschal II agreed, since it was clear that this was the biggest concession that the king was willing to make. But the pope saved some face by tacking onto the formal agreement, the "Concordat of London," a further provision. Bishops had to carry out the homage part only until the "rain of prayers" offered by the faithful softened Henry's heart and caused him to willingly abandon the practice.[12]

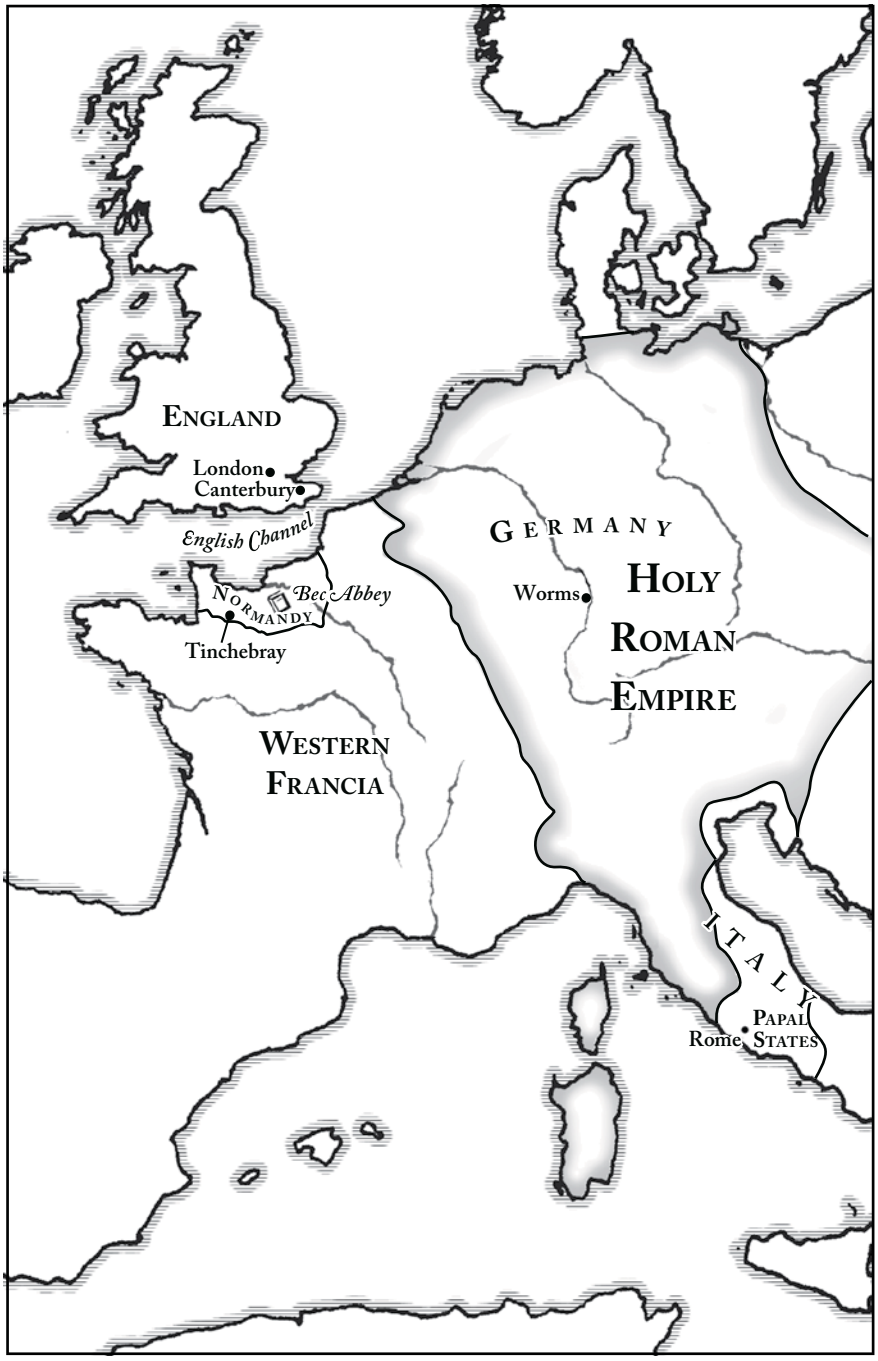
Henry agreed to the provision. Possibly he had less faith in the efficacy of the prayers than Paschal II.

This temporarily reconciled the pope and England, and Anselm returned to Canterbury, where he would serve just two more years before his death. But the struggle for supremacy was not over in England, merely in abeyance.

In 1105, the strong-minded Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV, abdicated. This left his nineteen-year-old son and co-ruler, Henry V, in sole control of the Holy Roman Empire: the uneasy collection, under a single crown, of German duchies and northern Italian cities.

It did not, however, make young Henry the emperor. Over the previous three centuries, an uneven tradition had emerged; the heir to the empire could assume power through the right of royal inheritance, but the actual title of Holy Roman Emperor was not awarded until the pope agreed to hold a coronation ceremony in Rome.

But once on the throne, Henry V showed himself to be just as strong-minded as his legendary father. He did not intend to trade power for papal recognition, and he was willing to delay his imperial coronation until the matter of investiture had been thoroughly discussed. He began to argue, with increasing heat, for the royal right to appoint clergy within the empire; and Paschal II, at first willing to make a few concessions to keep peace with the new ruler, continued to refuse.



1.1 England and the Holy Roman Empire

Henry V was a deep man, even at a young age, and he was playing a deep game. Looking around for his most natural ally, he settled on the king of England, still unsoftened by the rain of prayers directed his way. In 1110, he negotiated a betrothal between himself and the English king's nine-year-old daughter, Matilda, which brought him a very large dowry. Then, with Henry I's money, he assembled an army and marched down to the Papal States of Italy to bring the controversy to an end.

With a hostile army waiting just outside his borders, Paschal agreed to a compromise. Henry V would yield his right to appoint bishops, giving the pope the right to decide who would hold spiritual authority. But in return, Paschal would give back all of the lands, political perks, and privileges that had gotten entwined, over the centuries, with the bishoprics.

This neatly pulled apart the sacred and the secular privileges of investiture. The bishops of the empire might be under papal authority, but they would no longer control the vast tracts of land that had made them powerful. It was a victory for Henry, and Paschal knew it; he insisted on keeping the terms secret as long as possible.[13]

Henry V, still running on his fiancée's money, traveled to Rome in the early weeks of 1111, signed the agreement on the night of February 11, and then proceeded to St. Peter's the next morning to be crowned. At the beginning of the ceremony, the terms of the treaty were read out. This was an unwelcome surprise to most of the gathered bishops, who hadn't realized that the pope was willing to give away quite so many of their privileges. When the reading reached the central passage, the one that barred bishops (under sentence of excommunication) from profiting in any way from "cities, duchies, marks, counties, rights of coinage, rights of till, rights of market, militia, and castles of the kingdom," the bishops raised so much noise and protest that the reading stopped.[14]

In the face of such outcry, Paschal refused to hold to the terms. At once, Henry announced that, since Paschal wouldn't be able to carry out his side of the bargain, he, Henry, wouldn't give up the right of investiture. Paschal retorted that he wouldn't crown Henry emperor after all; at that point Henry ordered his men to take the pope into "protective custody" so that the bishops wouldn't harm their shepherd.

He hauled Paschal outside of Rome and kept him prisoner for two weeks, after which Paschal issued a new decree. "Your kingdom is connected in a singular way to the holy Roman church," it said. "Therefore . . . we concede to Your Love . . . that you confer investiture of crozier and ring on the bishops and abbots of your kingdom."[15]

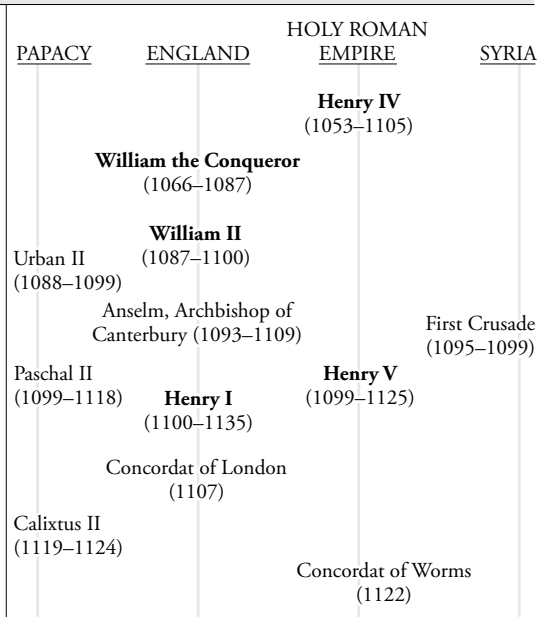
Henry then allowed Paschal to declare him Holy Roman Emperor, and turned for home. He had won the quarrel, but the extorted agreement was

widely unpopular with both the churchmen and the German aristocrats in his own kingdom who feared his growing power. He spent the next decade putting down territorial revolts in Germany, stretched thinner and thinner by the constant warfare.

Paschal's death, in 1118, gave him a chance to back down with dignity. In 1122, after a long series of negotiations at the German city of Worms, Henry V and the new pope Calixtus II finally came to terms. Henry V, at long last, agreed to renounce the right of investiture, and Calixtus II agreed that, in Germany only, newly appointed bishops would do homage to Henry V as king *before* their consecration, thus assuring that in the heartland of the emperor, loyalists alone would wear the bishop's miter.

The Concordat of Worms, like the Concordat of London, was a pragmatic solution: a brief document, five paragraphs outlining Henry's concessions, four listing the privileges Calixtus was yielding. It answered none of the theological questions and solved none of the underlying conflicts. The knot of secular and sacred power had not been untwisted. It had merely been hidden, temporarily, beneath a thin covering of apparent agreement.

TIMELINE 1


PAPACY
ENGLAND
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
SYRIA
Henry IV (1053–1105)
William the Conqueror (1066–1087)
William II (1087–1100)
Urban II (1088–1099)
Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109)
First Crusade (1095–1099)
Paschal II (1099–1118)
Henry V (1099–1125)
Henry I (1100–1135)
Concordat of London (1107)
Calixtus II (1119–1124)
Concordat of Worms (1122)

Chapter Two

The Crusader Enemy

Between 1100 and 1138,
the emperor of Constantinople and the Crusaders
fight against each other

Alexius Comnenus, the Christian emperor of Constantinople, had distrusted the Crusaders from the beginning.

As each German and Italian and Frankish nobleman arrived in Constantinople with his own private army, ready to cross over the Bosphorus Strait and face the enemy, Alexius had demanded a sacred oath. Whatever "cities, countries or forces he might in future subdue . . . he would hand over to the officer appointed by the emperor." They were, after all, there to fight for Christendom; and Alexius Comnenus was the ruler of Christendom in the east.[1]

Just as Alexius had feared, the chance to build private kingdoms in the Holy Land proved too tempting.

The first knight to bite the apple was the Norman soldier Bohemund, who had arrived in Constantinople at the start of the First Crusade and immediately became one of the foremost commanders of the Crusader armies. Spearheading the capture of the great city Antioch in 1098, Bohemund at once named himself its prince and flatly refused to honor his oath. ("Bohemund," remarked Alexius's daughter and biographer, Anna, "was by nature a liar.") By 1100, Antioch had been joined by two other Crusader kingdoms—the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the County of Edessa—and Bohemund himself was busy agitating the Christians of Asia Minor against Byzantium. By 1103, Bohemund was planning a direct attack against the walls of Constantinople itself.[2]

To mount this assault, Bohemund needed to recruit more soldiers. The most likely source for reinforcements was Italy; Bohemund's late father, Robert Guiscard, had conquered himself a kingdom in the south of Italy (the grandly named "Dukedom of Apulia and Calabria"), and Bohemund, who had been absent from Italy since heading out on crusade, had theoretically inherited its crown. Alexius knew this as well as Bohemund did, so Byzantine ships hovered

in the Mediterranean, waiting to intercept any Italy-bound ships from the principality of Antioch.

So Bohemund was forced to be sneaky. Anna Comnena tells us that he spread rumors everywhere:

> "Bohemond," it was said, "is dead." . . . When he perceived that the story had gone far enough, a wooden coffin was made and a bireme prepared. The coffin was placed on board and he, a still breathing "corpse," sailed away from Soudi, the port of Antioch, for Rome. . . . At each stop the barbarians tore out their hair and paraded their mourning. But inside Bohemond, stretched out at full length, was . . . alive, breathing air in and out through hidden holes. . . . [I]n order that the corpse might appear to be in a state of rare putrefaction, they strangled or cut the throat of a cock and put that in the coffin with him. By the fourth or fifth day at the most, the horrible stench was obvious to anyone who could smell. . . . Bohemond himself derived more pleasure than anyone from his imaginary misfortune.[3]

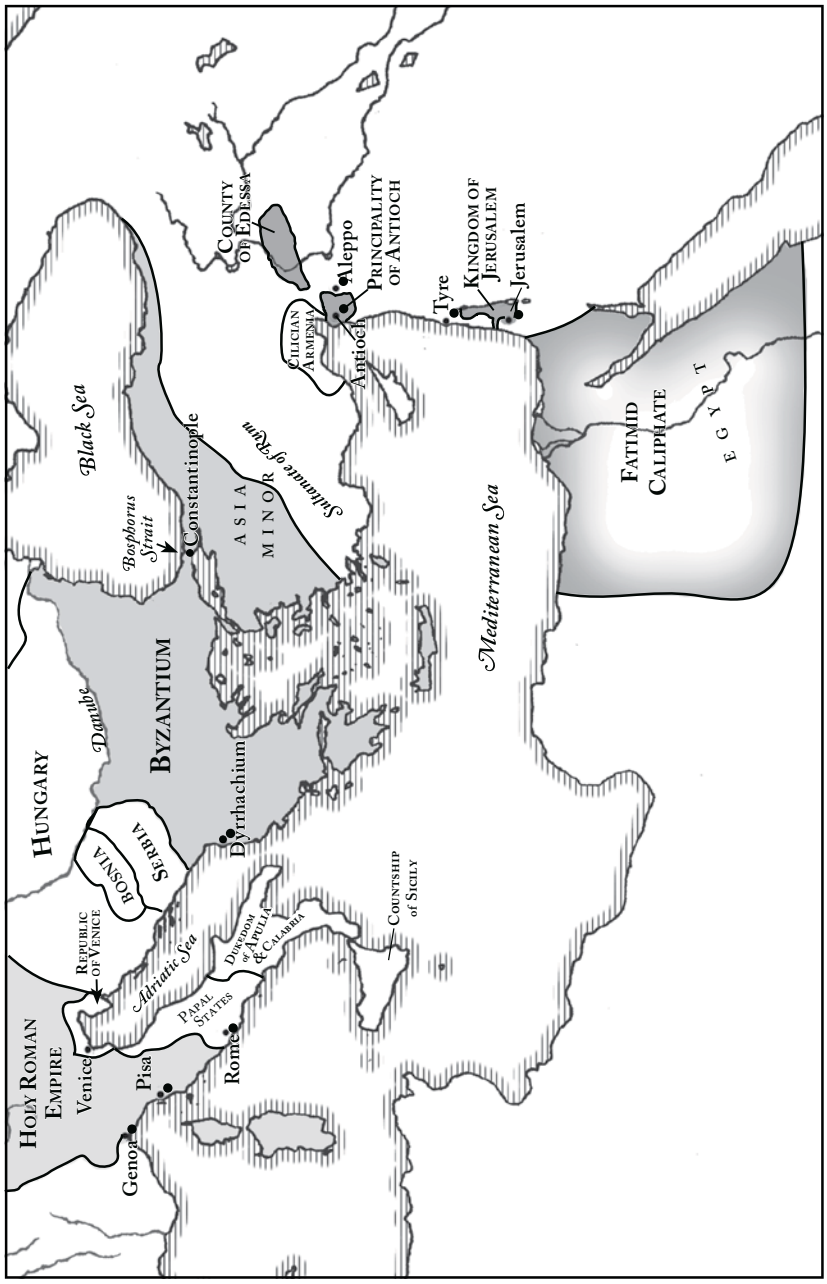
Bohemund was a rascal and an opportunist, but he almost always got what he wanted; when he arrived in Italy and staged a victorious resurrection, he was able to rouse great public enthusiasm for his fight against Byzantium. In fact, his conquest of Antioch in the east had given him hero stature back in Italy. People swarmed to see him, says one contemporary historian, "as if they were going to see Christ himself."[4]

Bohemund and his newly recruited army sailed confidently for the Byzantine borders in 1108. They were promptly defeated by a Byzantine army at Dyrrhachium, on the Greek coast. Bohemund's long run of good fortune had run out. He was forced to surrender, and although he held on to Antioch, he pledged to leave it to the emperor after his death.

But despite Bohemund's defeat, Crusader power in the east continued to expand at Alexius's expense. In 1109, the king of Jerusalem conquered Tripoli, which gave the Crusaders control of the entire coastline.* Two years later, Bohemund of Antioch died, but his heirs refused to hand Antioch over to Byzantine rule as promised. Alexius Comnenus, occupied with the Turks, did not try to reconquer the "impregnable" city of Antioch, but he never forgave the loss.

And there were new Christian threats to the emperor's power on the horizon, those originating in Italy.

*Tripoli retained its identity as a separate entity, but from now on was ruled by counts who paid homage to the king of Jerusalem; the first was Bertrand of Toulouse, 1109–1112. The king of Jerusalem also had authority over multiple smaller "lordships"; the thirteenth-century writer John of Ibelin says that the four most powerful of these were the Prince of Galilee, the Count of Jaffa and Ascalon, the Lord of Sidon, and the Lord of Oultrejordain. All of these titles were distinct, but firmly under Jerusalem's oversight.



2.1 The Lands of the Crusades

There was no "Italian kingdom." (Italy, remarked the Austrian statesman Metternich in 1814, was only a "geographical expression," a truth that applied to the twelfth century just as well.)[5] The north of the peninsula was ruled by the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V. The center was controlled by Pope Paschal II, head of the Christian Church in the west; the south, by Norman kings. Dotted along the coast were the "maritime republics," Italian cities that controlled coasts and harbors, and which (for all practical purposes) governed themselves. The three most powerful of these were Genoa and Pisa on the western coast, and Venice on the northern end of the Adriatic Sea.

All three had sent soldiers on crusade; all three were now allies of the Crusader kingdoms. Pisan and Venetian and Genoan ships aided the Crusader kings in their territorial struggles against Turks, supplying naval power and an ongoing supply chain to sieges and battles. In exchange, the Crusader kingdoms allowed merchants from the Italian cities to establish trading posts in the east where they carried on a growing trade in pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and saffron—and lived free from any government but their own.[6]

Before the First Crusade, when Constantinople and the western knights were still on the same side, Alexius Comnenus had made his own treaty with the maritime republics; in the very first year of his reign, 1081, he had given the Venetians their own quarter in Constantinople, complete with churches and the right to carry on trade tax-free. But as the Crusader kingdoms gained power, the maritime republics became increasingly willing to turn against the Christian emperor of Byzantium.[7]

In 1118, Alexius Comnenus died in Constantinople, slowly suffocated by growths in his lungs and esophagus. His oldest son succeeded him as John II. Among the immediate problems that he had to solve was the attitude of the Venetians, who had grown increasingly defiant to Byzantine authority. In an attempt to cut them down to size, John Comnenus canceled his father's 1081 treaty with Venice. This enraged the Venetians, and in retaliation Venetian ships began to pillage and raid the smaller islands of the empire.[8]

In the middle of this state of hostility, Venice increased its influence in the Crusader kingdoms. In 1123, a Venetian fleet helped the king of Jerusalem besiege the city of Tyre, still in the hands of the Fatimid caliphate, the Arab dynasty that had controlled Jerusalem and still ruled Egypt. The next year, the combined forces of Venice and Jerusalem brought Tyre down. In gratitude, the king of Jerusalem gave the Venetians even more privilege in Jerusalem: a street of their own, a church, a bakery, and exemption from *all* taxes, of all kinds.[9]

John Comnenus's actions were creating an even stronger Crusader-Venetian nexus; and, realizing that this would not go well for Constantinople, John backed away. In 1126, he reaffirmed all of Venice's privileges in Constantinople.

That temporarily relieved the quarrel between Venice and Byzantium. But

Venice had shown its own motivations clearly. The Crusaders had broken the unity of the cross for political power, the chance to build their own islands of political power in the east; the Venetians had broken it for the opportunity to build a commercial empire in the same lands.

Peace did not last long. In 1136, hostility between Byzantium and the Crusader kingdoms erupted once more.

The fuse was lit by the Prince of Antioch, still a thorn in the emperor's side. After Bohemund's death, regents had ruled Antioch in the name of his infant son. But now Bohemund II, aged twenty-eight, was in control of his own kingdom; and he wanted to extend his possessions by taking over the Christian kingdom of Cilician Armenia, just to his north.

He was not strong enough to attack directly, but like his father, Bohemund II was a schemer. He invited the kingdom's ruler, Leo I, to Antioch for a friendly chat, and then took him prisoner, demanding that he purchase his release by handing over the south of his country. Leo I agreed, was set free, and then immediately set about reconquering his lost lands.

The agitation attracted the attention of John Comnenus, who saw in it his own opportunity. Ignoring the Turkish Sultan of Rum, Constantinople's old enemy in Asia Minor, John invaded the distracted Christian kingdom of Cilicia and claimed its western territories as his own. At this, Leo and Bohemund dropped the quarrel with each other and united together against their common enemy. War between the Christian Crusaders and the Christian emperor in the east was now in the open.

It was a short war. When it became clear that Byzantine armies would make quick work of Cilicia, Bohemund II swapped sides again and agreed to swear allegiance to John Comnenus. This left the diminished Cilician army all alone, isolated in the remaining eastern territories of their shrinking country. Without much difficulty, Byzantine forces overran the diminished country entirely, captured Leo I and his family, and hauled them to prison in Constantinople.[10]

John Comnenus himself made a triumphal entry into Antioch, with Bohemund II riding gamely at his side, and claimed formal authority as its overlord. "Be of good cheer, O men who love Christ and those who are pilgrims and strangers because of Christ," wrote one of the court poets. "Do not fear any more murderous hands; the Emperor who loves Christ has put them in chains and broken to pieces the unjust sword."[11]

But those murderous hands had themselves been Christian, and while John Comnenus had been occupying himself against his Crusader enemies, the strength of the Turkish governor of Aleppo was building towards conquest of the Christian foe.

TIMELINE 2

PAPACY	ENGLAND	HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE	ITALY	SYRIA	BYZANTIUM	CILICIAN ARMENIA
		Henry IV (1053–1105)				
	William the Conqueror (1066–1087)		Robert Guiscard, duke (1072–1085)			
					Alexius Comnenus (1081–1118)	
Urban II (1088–1099)	**William II** (1087–1100)					
	Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109)			First Crusade (1095–1099) Principality of Antioch and County of Edessa (1098) **Bohemund I of Antioch** (1098–1111) Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)		
Paschal II (1099–1118)	**Henry I** (1100–1135)	**Henry V** (1099–1125)				
	Concordat of London (1107)					
				Conquest of Tripoli (1109)		
				Bohemund II of Antioch (1111–1130)		
Calixtus II (1119–1124)				**Baldwin II of Jerusalem** (1118–1131)	**John II Comnenus** (1118–1143)	
		Concordat of Worms (1122)				
				Conquest of Tyre (1124)		
						Leo I (1129–1137)

Chapter Three

Anarchy

Between 1120 and 1139,
the Count of Anjou becomes king of Jerusalem,
the Holy Roman Empress becomes Countess of Anjou,
and civil war wrecks England

For the last five years of his life, the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V was poised to become the most powerful monarch in the world.

Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England, had spent four years betrothed to Henry V. At thirteen she was finally sent to Mainz, where she married the twenty-eight-year-old emperor in a ceremony of "fitting splendour" (Henry of Huntingdon, writing in 1129, remarks that her father was forced to levy a special tax on the English in order to pay for it). Six years later, catastrophe struck at home. Her brother, William, a year her junior and the heir to the English throne, got drunk with friends and ordered a ship put out to sea for all of them. Steering while intoxicated was as dangerous then as it is now; William of Malmesbury says that it was "already night and pitch dark when those young hotheads, drunk as well as foolish, put out from the shore. The ship sped swifter than a feathered arrow, and . . . struck, through the carelessness of her besotted crew, a rock projecting from the surface not far from shore."[1]

Late November was not a good time to be wrecked in the English Channel, not even close to shore. All of the young men on the ship but one drowned; most of the bodies were never recovered.

The seventeen-year-old William was Henry's only legitimate son, Matilda his only daughter. William of Malmesbury says, in admiration, that Henry only indulged "in the embraces of the female sex . . . from love of begetting children and not to gratify his passions, for he thought it beneath his dignity to comply with extraneous gratification, unless the royal seed could fulfill its natural purpose." This was patriotic nonsense; Henry I still holds a record for siring more bastards than any other English king, but his legal unions were less fruitful. He married again immediately after William's death, hoping to father another son, but none came along. Matilda, wife of the emperor, became first in line to the throne of England; Henry V was now in line to

become king of England as well as king of Germany, king of Italy, and Holy Roman Emperor.[2]

But in his late thirties he grew suddenly and violently ill, probably with some form of cancer. He died in 1125, just before his fortieth birthday. Matilda had given birth to a stillborn child, sometime before her husband's death, but she had no living children; and with Henry V, the Salian dynasty of emperors came to an end. The aristocrats of Germany assembled to elect another emperor (eventually they settled on the Duke of Saxony, who became Lothair III), and Matilda went home.

Henry I of England, despairing of a son, set himself to shore up his daughter's claim to the English crown. Two years after her husband's death, he arranged a new marriage for her, to the fifteen-year-old Geoffrey the Handsome; Matilda, in a reversal of her earlier fortunes, was twenty-five.

The marriage was politically smart and personally disastrous.

Geoffrey was the son of the Count of Anjou, and Anjou was a keystone in the power structure of Western Francia. Western Francia, like Germany, was a fragment of Charlemagne's defunct eighth-century empire; unlike Germany, which had begun its journey towards a national identity under the guidance of Henry the Fowler in 919, Western Francia was a patchwork. Only the ring of territories right around Paris was known as *France*; the rest of Western Francia was governed by local noblemen, held loosely together by personal oaths of loyalty to the Capetian king.*

The Count of Anjou was one of these noblemen: loyal in theory to the French throne, but a king in his own lands in all but name. He had inherited a massive estate that bordered Henry I's Norman lands on one side, and the king of France's royal holdings on the other. His power was due largely to the efforts of his great-grandfather Fulk the Black, a psychotically warlike aristocrat who had burned his wife, in her wedding dress, at the stake for adultery; fought a vicious war against his own son and then forced the defeated youth to put on a bridle and saddle and crawl on the ground in humiliation; and pillaged and robbed the surrounding lands at will. Fearing a justly deserved hell, he had in his old age made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he was rumored to have bitten off a piece of stone from the Holy Sepulchre with his own teeth so that he would have a relic to bring home.[3]

The current Count of Anjou, Fulk V, was more moderate than his ancestor, but no less ambitious. The marriage of his young son to the future queen of England was good for Matilda, since it brought the resources of France's most powerful region to her aid. It would also make Fulk's grandchildren

*The Capetian dynasty ruled in Paris 987–1328; it was founded by Hugh Capet, grandson of Henry the Fowler. The Capetian king at the time of Matilda was Louis VI, nicknamed Louis the Fat (1108–1137).

into royalty. And it would give Anjou, in return, the protection of the English king.

Fulk V was in need of this protection for his son, because he was already planning to leave his home for another throne. In a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1120, he had befriended the king of Jerusalem, Baldwin II. Baldwin II had four daughters but no sons; he wanted to assure the succession of his oldest daughter, Melisande, to the throne of Jerusalem, and Fulk was a widower. As soon as he had arranged for the marriage of Geoffrey and Matilda, Fulk relinquished the title of Count of Anjou to his son and departed for Jerusalem. "Within a few days after his arrival in the kingdom," writes William of Tyre, who knew Fulk, "the king gave him his oldest daughter to wife." When Baldwin II died, in 1131, Fulk and Melisande were crowned king and queen of Jerusalem.[4]

Meanwhile, his son and new daughter-in-law had quarreled and separated.

Geoffrey had risen in the world, becoming count at a ridiculously young age; Matilda had sunk from empress to countess. Matilda, once married to the most powerful man in the west, had ruled Italy in her husband's absence; now she was tied to a teenager who had been knighted a bare week before the wedding. After a single year, she walked out on her child-groom and went home.

The cause of the quarrel is unknown (Simeon of Durham says that Geoffrey "repudiated" Matilda "without respect"), but eventually Matilda's father talked her into returning. The two must have worked out some way of coexisting; Matilda bore her young husband a son in 1133, when she was thirty-one and he was twenty, and then gave him two more in the next three years.[5]

In 1135, Henry I of England was in Normandy, his own land, visiting his daughter just across the border in Anjou. He had "delayed" his return to England, writes the English chronicler Henry of Huntingdon, "by reason of his great delight in his grandchildren." One day he returned from hunting and indulged himself in a dinner of lamprey eels: "of which he was fond," Huntingdon remarks, "though they always disagreed with him. . . . This repast bringing on ill humours, and violently exciting similar symptoms, caused a sudden and extreme disturbance, under which his aged frame sunk into a deathly torpor." He died on the first day of December, aged sixty-eight.[6]

Before Matilda could cross the Channel and claim her crown, the noblemen of England—resistant both to the notion of a queen and to the French influence that would undoubtedly accompany her—banded together and proclaimed Matilda's cousin Stephen, grandson of William the Conqueror, as king of England.

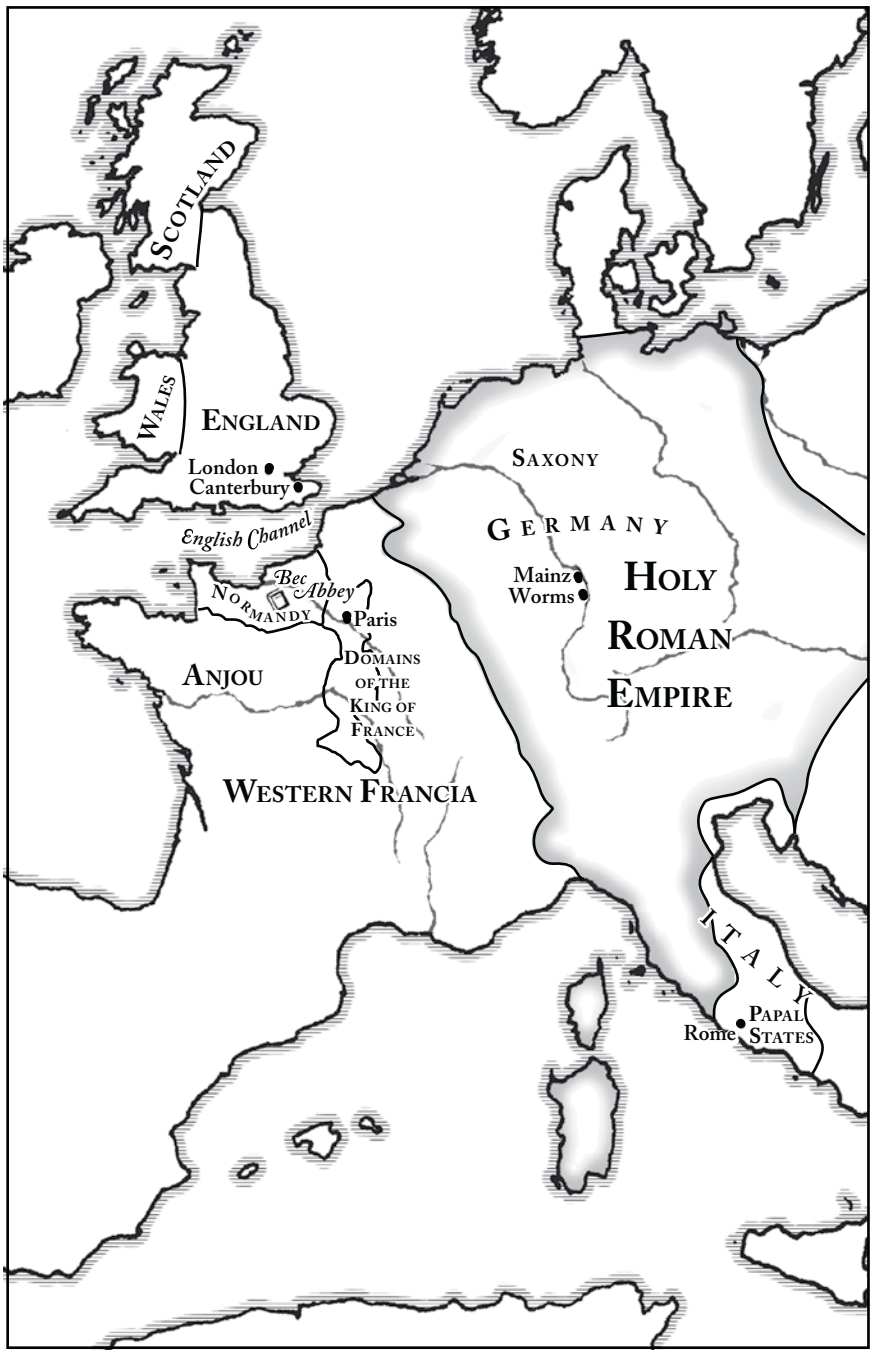
For a time, Stephen ruled unopposed. But over the first four years of his reign, he grew slowly more unpopular. He lost land to the Welsh; descendants of Romans and Irish and native Britons, the Welsh had formed a distinct king-

dom in the ninth century, had paid tribute to the English kings in the tenth, and had resisted the Norman influx in the eleventh. He struggled against the Scots, the Celts of the far north; the Scottish High King David I had sworn reluctant loyalty to Henry I but now repealed his alliance and marched into the north of England. Stephen drove back the Scottish invasion with startling ferocity (eleven thousand dead, says Henry of Huntingdon), arrested two powerful English bishops and confiscated their lands, and then fell out with the Archbishop of Canterbury. His reign disintegrated into calamity.[7]

In 1139, four years after Stephen's election, Matilda invaded England with troops from Anjou and Normandy. The armies of Matilda and Stephen laid the fields waste; neither king nor queen controlled the country, and the barons of England seized the opportunity to enrich themselves. "Every powerful man made his castles and held them," says the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

> Then both by night and day they seized those men whom they imagined had any wealth, common men and women, and put them in prison to get their gold and silver, and tortured them. . . . Wretched men starved with hunger; some who were once powerful men went on alms; some fled out of the land. . . . [T]he earth bore no corn because the land was all done for by such doings.[8]

This was the beginning of the Anarchy, a fifteen-year civil war that destroyed villages, killed thousands, wrecked the English countryside, and brought its people to despair: "And it was said openly," concludes the *Chronicle*, "that Christ and His saints slept."



3.1 England and France during the Anarchy

TIMELINE 3

PAPACY	SCOTLAND / ENGLAND	HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE	ITALY	WESTERN FRANCIA	SYRIA	BYZANTIUM	CILICIAN ARMENIA
		Henry IV (1053–1105)					
	William the Conqueror (1066–1087)			Robert Guiscard, duke (1072–1085)			
						Alexius Comnenus (1081–1118)	
Urban II (1088–1099)	**William II** (1087–1100)						
	Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109)				First Crusade (1095–1099) Principality of Antioch and County of Edessa (1098) **Bohemund I of Antioch** (1098–1111)		
Paschal II (1099–1118)	**Henry I** (1100–1135)	**Henry V** (1099–1125)			Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)		
	Concordat of London (1107)						
				Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)	Conquest of Tripoli (1109)		
					Bohemund II of Antioch (1111–1130)		
Calixtus II (1119–1124)					**Baldwin II of Jerusalem** (1118–1131)	**John II Comnenus** (1118–1143)	
		Concordat of Worms (1122)					
	David I (1124–1153)				Conquest of Tyre (1124)		
							Leo I (1129–1137)
					Fulk of Jerusalem (1131–1143) **Melisande of Jerusalem** (1131–1153)		
	Stephen (1135–1154)	**Lothair III** (1133–1137)					
	The Anarchy (1139–1154)						

Chapter Four

The Lost Homeland

Between 1127 and 1150,
the Song are exiled by the Jin,
the Dai Viet adopt the Mandate of Heaven,
and a Khmer king builds the biggest temple on earth

In 1127, the poet Li Qingzhao and her husband abandoned their home and fled from the advancing troops of the Jurchen. They traveled south with a cartful of rare manuscripts and antique bronzes, leaving behind them a lifetime's collection of books and art. Before they reached the southern city of Nanjing, where they would settle as refugees, the Jurchen burned their home to the ground. The Song dynasty, which had been ruling from the Yellow river valley since 960, was driven from its capital city of Kaifeng; the Song emperor Qinzong was hauled north and imprisoned until his death; the dominance of the Song over China was broken.[1]

"The long night passes slowly," Li Qingzhao wrote, wistfully, of her vanished home, "with few happy thoughts / Then I dream of the capital and see the road back to it. . . ." But she never followed the road; Kaifeng was lost forever.[2]

For the Song dynasty, the defeat was both unexpected and embarrassing. The Song were heirs of the four-thousand-year-old Chinese imperial tradition, holders of the ancient Mandate of Heaven, heirs of the legendary Yellow Emperor.* The invading Jurchen, on the other hand, had been nomads less than a generation before. They had begun to move towards a national identity only twelve years earlier, when the brilliant and ambitious Akuta, leader of the Wanyan clan, had adopted a Chinese dynastic name for himself (the "Jin Emperor")† and set his eyes on the conquest of the rich empire to his south.

*See Bauer, *The History of the Medieval World*, pp. 568ff.

†The Jin dynasty of the Jurchen (1115–1234) should not be confused with the earlier Jin dynasty that ruled China 265–420, or with the Later Jin Dynasty (936–947), which ruled during a period of division known as the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period. See Bauer, *The History of the Medieval World*, pp. 13–20 and 413–418.

To the Song, the Jurchen were still merely barbarians: "Our vast land now smells of goat and sheep," complained the poet Chen Liang, also driven south by the Jurchen. But despite the scorn the Song felt for the raw northerners, the Jurchen continued, inexorably, to advance. Gaozong, younger brother of the captured Song emperor, escaped south and proclaimed himself the next Song ruler; but he was forced to reestablish his court at Lin'an, on the far side of the Yangtze river, and even there he was constantly threatened by Jurchen raids. Jurchen horsemen pressed down farther and farther into the central plains, looting and burning the towns they passed. In 1129, Yangzhou fell to the invaders; in 1130, the Jurchen crossed the Yangtze and sacked Ningbo, on the southern coast.[3]

The emperor Song Gaozong, who had just turned twenty when Kaifeng fell, was forced to move from hiding place to hiding place. He grew so desperate that he sent an embassy to the Jurchen generals, offering to become their vassal if the raids would only stop: "I have no one to defend me," he wrote, "and no place to run."[4]

But the Jurchen did not want vassals. The Song scorn was not entirely undeserved; the Jurchen were mounted soldiers with no experience of running a state, no mechanism for administering a conquered country. They wanted to conquer China, not govern it as an occupied land.

So Song Gaozong's plea was rejected, and the battles continued. But this turned out to be the saving of the Song. As fighting dragged on, the northern warriors struggled with unfamiliar southern heat. The terrain, crosshatched with streams and canals, slowed their horses. They had no experience with water warfare, but they now faced the barrier of the Yangtze. The Jurchen troops, growing fatter with plunder and loot, were less inclined to ride hard and far. And the Song themselves, adjusting to their exile, were mounting an increasingly powerful resistance by ship.[5]

The Song, like the dynasties before them, had always supplemented land armies with sea power. More and more warcraft were built to patrol the Yangtze. The river, noted one Song official, was the new Great Wall against the barbarians. In 1132, the emperor authorized the creation of a new government agency, the Imperial Commissioner's Office for the Control and Organization of the Coastal Areas, to take charge of the fleet. The Song warships had now become the world's first permanent, standing, government-run navy.[6]

The navy tipped the struggle back towards the Song. For a decade, power teetered between the two sides, neither able to make much progress past the Yangtze. Slowly, the Song court began to accept the reality of its position: the north was, at least for the moment, lost. In 1141, the emperor Gaozong agreed to sign a peace treaty with the Jurchen. Thirteen years of war had given him no choice. He could no longer afford to mount endless expeditions into

the north; the cropland in the south was untilled, the farmers drafted into the army; the only other road for the Song ended in poverty and famine.

The Shaoxing treaty was a humiliation. It referred to the Jurchen as the "superior state" and the Song as an "insignificant fiefdom," and Gaozong was forced to accept the status of Jurchen vassal, complete with a hefty annual tribute. But it halted the fighting for two decades, and the shrunken Song, battered and shamed by the nomads, slowly began to build a new existence for itself.[7]

Far south of the Yellow river, a cluster of smaller kingdoms had grown up in the shadow of the giant.

The peoples of these southern lands were known to the Chinese simply as *Yueh*, a blanket name for all non-Chinese living below the Yangtze. A thousand years earlier, the most northern of these peoples had fallen under Chinese rule. Invaded by the armies of the Han dynasty, the lands around the Gulf of Tonkin became *Annam*, a Chinese province under the control of a Han governor.[8]

But in the tenth century, Annam had broken away from its Chinese overlords and claimed the right to rule itself: not as Annam, a Chinese province, but as Dai Viet, an independent kingdom ruled by the Ly dynasty of kings.

Border spats with the Song continued to trouble the northern provinces of Dai Viet. In 1076, one of these spats had escalated into full-scale war, culminating in a Song invasion. At the mouth of the Bach Dang river, the Song forces were repelled by the great general Ly Thuong Kiet. He celebrated his victory with the song *Nam Quoc Son Ho*, "Land of the Southern Kingdom":

> Over the peaks and rivers of the South reigns our emperor.
> Such is the destiny fixed forever on the Celestial Book.
> How dare the Enemy invade our land?
> Their foolish audacity will witness their bloody rout![9]

The verse, still remembered as Vietnam's first declaration of independence, was written in Chinese.

Ten centuries of Chinese domination had woven Chinese ways into the fabric of Dai Viet, and neither Song weakness nor Dai Viet independence could unpick it. The 1076 invasion ended with a border agreement between the two courts; it drew a line between China and Dai Viet, north of the Dai Viet capital Thang Long, that still exists today. But the border did not wall the Dai Viet away from the influence of the Song. The Ly kings, like their Chinese counterparts, were builders of Buddhist pagodas and benefactors of Buddhist monasteries. Chinese was still used in all court business; would-be officials still had to pass the Chinese civil service examination, based on the

4.1 The Kingdoms of China and Southeast Asia

teachings of Confucius. And even as the Song court fled from the cradle of ancient Chinese civilization, the Ly dynasty adopted the Mandate of Heaven as its own. Their kings were "Southern Emperors," ruling the "Southern Kingdoms" by virtue of their own, southern, celestial mandate; the mandate of the Song emperor ended north of Thang Long, and the powers of heaven protected the border between the two.[10]

Huddling at Kaifeng, beating off Jin raids, the Song could hardly push the point. For the next two centuries, the greatest threats to Dai Viet power would come from the south instead.

Two kingdoms lay below Dai Viet: Khmer and Champa, both shaped more by trade with India across the Bay of Bengal than by Chinese pressure from the north. The king of Khmer, Suryavarman II, had come to the throne in 1113 by fighting off his relatives. His reign continued, as it had begun, with war.

First he turned on his own kingdom. Under his predecessors, Khmer had begun to spiral down into anarchy and fragmentation; in a series of deadly internal battles, Suryavarman whipped his rebellious nobility into line. Then he turned his gaze outward. "He saw the kings of the other countries that he desired to subjugate," a contemporary chronicle notes, ". . . [and] he himself went into the countries of his enemies." It was his duty to subjugate the earth. Like his predecessors, Suryavarman followed the Hindu *Devaraja*, the god-king cult; as king of Khmer, he was an incarnation of the divine, one with the god. He was *Chakravartin*, ruler (on earth) of the universe.[11]

His first target was the coastal kingdom of Champa, immediately to his east. A series of raids into Champa created a high level of anxiety among the Sanskrit-speaking Cham; many of them fled north into Dai Viet, which gave them refuge. In 1128, Suryavarman used this as the pretext for a new offensive, this time directly against Dai Viet. He marched twenty thousand men into the country, and was unceremoniously driven back.[12]

Undaunted, he settled into a pattern of regular raids on his neighbors: sending armies in by land and fleets of warships around by water. But he made little headway against the Dai Viet. In Thang Long, a new king had just inherited the throne. His name was Ly Than Tong, and although he was only twelve, he was gifted with strong generals. Again and again, the Khmer forces were checked.

Champa was less fortunate. The Dai Viet had been forced, in opposition to the Song, to unite themselves; the Champa had not. In name, the country was governed by a king who ruled from the city of Vijaya, but in actuality it was an unstable confederation of local rulers, isolated from each other in a series of river valleys that ran from west to east, as likely to fight one another as to stand up to the Khmer bully.[13]

The Champa king, Jaya Indravarman III, had neither the army nor the

resources to keep Suryavarman out. In 1132, in desperation, he agreed to join with Suryavarman as an ally against the Dai Viet. But the united Champa-Khmer army too was stampeded by the Dai Viet.[14]

The Champa ruler Jaya Indravarman, who comes across in the contemporary chronicles as a mild and resourceless man with no idea of what to do next, decided that he'd picked the wrong side; he made peace overtures to the Dai Viet instead. The Khmer made their next foray into Dai Viet alone. Facing their armies, the Dai Viet general Do Anh Vu is said to have sniffed, "The soldiers of the Son of Heaven quell rebellion; they do not offer battle in contestation as equals." He then clobbered the Khmer once again.[15]

A less determined empire builder than Suryavarman would have given up. Instead, Suryavarman turned directly on Champa. In 1145, Khmer armies sacked the sacred temple city of My Son; the ineffective Jaya Indravarman disappeared from the historical record, never to be heard from again. Suryavarman added the north of Champa to his own kingdom and installed his brother-in-law as deputy ruler there.[16]

That was his last great victory. In 1150, yet another invasion of the Dai Viet failed, this time because the Khmer army was wiped out by fever as it crossed the mountains towards Thang Long. And by the end of 1150, Suryavarman too had vanished from the chronicles, his exact fate unknown. He left behind a war-exhausted country, thousands upon thousands of corpses, and the most magnificent tomb in Asia.

The Khmer capital city of Angkor, built shortly after 800 by Suryavarman's great predecessor Jayavarman II, had grown over four centuries into a vast, sophisticated metropolis. Unwalled and sprawling across swampy ground, Angkor covered perhaps 125 square miles, 320 square kilometers: larger than any other twelfth-century city, five times the size of modern Manhattan. A million people lived within its boundaries, depending on a vast network of canals and reservoirs for drinking water. The largest reservoir, the Western Baray, had been completed in the eleventh century; eight kilometers long and two wide, it held 70 million cubic meters of water, over 18 billion gallons, enough to supply the entire state of Florida for a week.[17]

Between military campaigns, Suryavarman had supervised the building, in Angkor, of the temple Angkor Wat: the size of a small city in its own right, covering nearly a square mile, only a little smaller than the entire medieval city of London. Angkor Wat was intended to be his final resting place. Surrounded by its own moat and defensive wall, the temple rose up in a series of concentric squares and craggy towers. It was a stone mountain, modeled after the mythical Mount Meru, center of the world of the Hindu gods. Carved bas-reliefs showed thousands of scenes of war, court life, religious ritual; scenes from Hindu epics, depictions of the afterlife with the righteous in bliss,

4.1 Central towers of Angkor Wat, Cambodia.
Credit: © Kevin R. Morris / Corbis

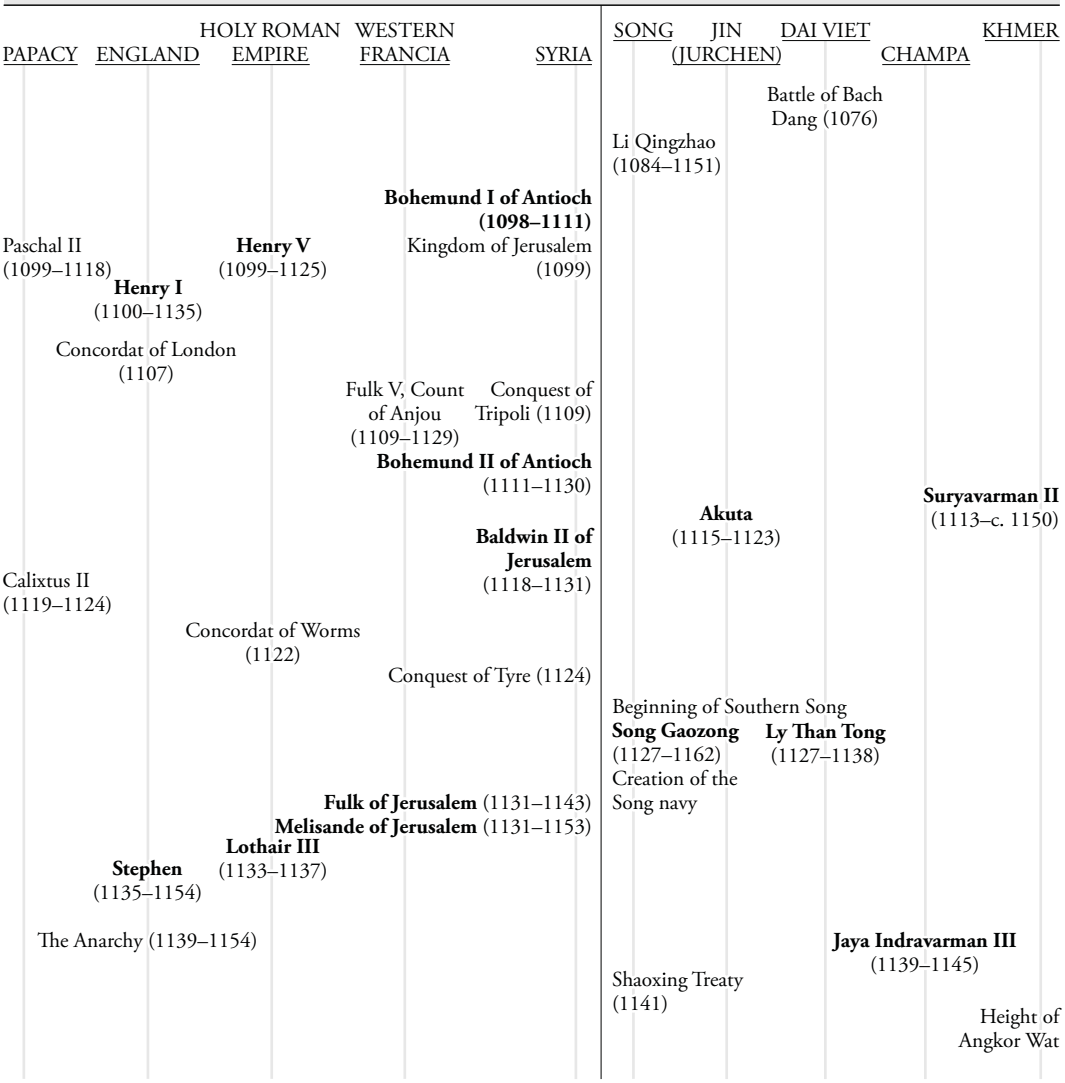
the rebellious crushed; a massive portrait of Suryavarman himself. Angkor Wat was dedicated to Vishnu, the god who dwelt within it. Suryavarman had been god on earth; now the temple of the god would become his tomb, so that he too would live in it forever.[18]

Angkor Wat had taken an almost unimaginable outlay of money and men. It was designed and built with extraordinary precision: laid out so that, at the beginning of the year, the sun would fall on the bas-relief scenes of the earth's creation, while closer to the year's end, it would light up scenes of apocalypse. Observation points for future eclipses of the sun and moon were calculated and built into the temple. Over two million stones, some weighing as much as eight tons, were brought to the temple from a quarry more than twenty miles away. Yet the entire temple was completed in thirty-five years; the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, 420 feet long and 226 high, took over a century.[19]

Khmer now boasted the most glorious temple complex in the world. But the country was drained by taxes, worn out by the demands of constant war and extravagant construction. Suryavarman's successors gave up his hard-conquered lands in Champa and retreated, drawing back within Khmer's old borders; the kingdom's new and extravagant beginning had almost immediately led to an end.

4.2 Angkor Wat bas-relief sculpture.
Credit: © John R. Jones; Papilio/Corbis

TIMELINE 4


PAPACY
ENGLAND
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
WESTERN FRANCIA
SYRIA
SONG
JIN (JURCHEN)
DAI VIET
CHAMPA
KHMER
Battle of Bach Dang (1076)
Li Qingzhao (1084–1151)
Bohemund I of Antioch (1098–1111)
Paschal II (1099–1118)
Henry V (1099–1125)
Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)
Henry I (1100–1135)
Concordat of London (1107)
Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)
Conquest of Tripoli (1109)
Bohemund II of Antioch (1111–1130)
Suryavarman II (1113–c. 1150)
Akuta (1115–1123)
Baldwin II of Jerusalem (1118–1131)
Calixtus II (1119–1124)
Concordat of Worms (1122)
Conquest of Tyre (1124)
Beginning of Southern Song
Song Gaozong (1127–1162)
Ly Than Tong (1127–1138)
Creation of the Song navy
Fulk of Jerusalem (1131–1143)
Melisande of Jerusalem (1131–1153)
Lothair III (1133–1137)
Stephen (1135–1154)
The Anarchy (1139–1154)
Jaya Indravarman III (1139–1145)
Shaoxing Treaty (1141)
Height of Angkor Wat

Chapter Five

Crusade Resurrected

Between 1128 and 1149,
the Muslims unify for successful jihad*,*
and in response the Christians declare a disastrous crusade

Far west of Angkor Wat, the Turkish governor of Aleppo was working his way towards *jihad*.

Zengi inherited the rule of Aleppo in 1128. He was forty-three years old, ambitious and energetic; tyrannical and aggressive, writes the Muslim historian 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani; so short-tempered, says another Islamic source, that he would crucify his men for offenses as small as stepping into the crops at the side of the road; an "ever-restless worm," says the Christian chronicler William of Tyre, "mightily puffed up by his successes."[1]

In theory, Zengi was the ally of the other Turkish kingdoms. The Turkish empire had been established by the great conqueror Malik Shah half a century earlier. At his death, it had fragmented almost at once. By the middle of the twelfth century, Turkish sultans ruled from Baghdad, Kirman, Syria, Khorasan, and Rum. A sixth Turkish kingdom, the Danishmends, had broken away from Rum. Independent governors, or *atabegs*, controlled Damascus and Aleppo.

The senior member of the most prominent Turkish clan, direct descendants of Malik Shah himself, kept the title "Great Seljuk" and claimed authority over all the rest. But this power was an illusion, the loyalty of the other Turkish rulers no more than lip service. Once the dust of the First Crusade had settled, the Muslim soldiers of Damascus and Aleppo were as likely to fight on the side of the Crusader kingdoms, against the other sultans, as to join together against the Christians.[2]

Zengi intended to expand his own power. At first, loyalty to his Muslim brethren did not figure in his plans. In 1130, he began to attack the outlying lands belonging to the Turkish-governed city of Damascus; in 1137, he launched a full-scale siege against the city itself.

Damascus, battered and weakened, nevertheless held out, and Zengi withdrew to reconsider his strategy. Then, in October of 1138, an earthquake

centered near Aleppo struck. The walls of the Crusader castle of Harim cracked; the Muslim fortress of Athareb collapsed, killing everyone inside; the ramparts and walls of Aleppo buckled. Houses fell, stones rained down on panicked crowds in the streets, the ground opened. Ibn al-Athir records that aftershocks—perhaps as many as eighty—went on for two weeks. Contemporary chroniclers estimate the death toll at a staggering 230,000 souls.[3]

Earthquakes near Aleppo, which sat on a fault, were not uncommon; in fact, the entire Muslim world was seismically active. Muhammad's birth itself was said to have been accompanied by an earthquake that shook the entire world, and Sura 99 of the Qur'an is dedicated to their place in the divine order:

> When the earth convulses in its shock
> and the earth unloads its burdens
> . . . that day, humanity will go out
> separately, to be shown their works . . .[4]

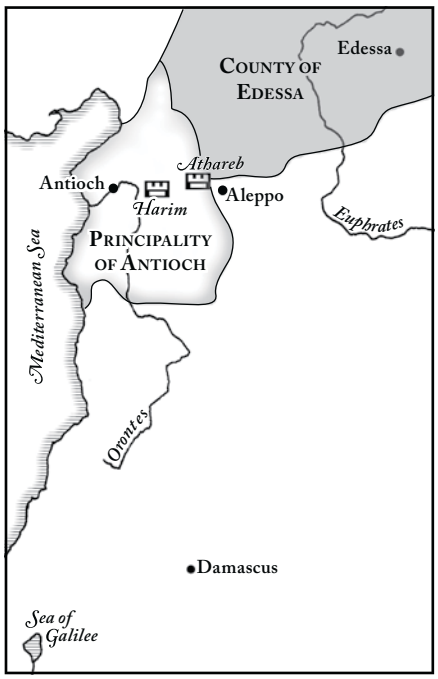
For the Muslims who suffered through them, earthquakes were not random geological events; a tremor was a signal, or a judgment, or a promise.

And after the Aleppo earthquake, the rhetoric of holy war began to cloud around Zengi, transforming his personal ambitions into an advance for the faith. "God did not see . . . anyone more capable of command . . . stronger of purpose or more penetrating . . . ," wrote Ibn al-Athir. "The morale of the Infidels was weakened, and they realized that something they had not reckoned on had come to their lands."[5]

When Zengi's campaigns resumed, he turned his energies against the Christians. By 1144, he was powerful enough to lay siege to the Crusader city of Edessa. No Christian army came to Edessa's aid. The king of Jerusalem (Fulk, the former count of Anjou) had been killed in a fall from his horse the year before, leaving Jerusalem in the hands of a powerless child. The Byzantine emperor John Comnenus had just died of a lingering hunting wound, and his son and heir, Manuel, was occupied with putting down the usual plots and revolts that accompanied the passing of the Byzantine crown. And Raymond, the Prince of Antioch (a Frankish nobleman who had claimed the title by marrying, at the age of twenty-two, the ten-year-old daughter of Bohemund II), refused to send help to his brother Crusader simply because he and Edessa's king were on terms of "insatiable hatred."[6]

In just four short weeks, Edessa fell. The attackers "put to the sword all whom they encountered," man, woman, and child; many who escaped the sword were crushed as they attempted to flee into the last safe citadel.[7]

With the fall of Edessa, the language of *jihad*—of right and just struggle



5.1 Aleppo and the Crusader Kingdoms

against an unrighteous enemy—ramped sharply upwards. Zengi, who now took for the first time a royal title, became known by a whole series of honorifics: *the ornament of Islam, the help of the believer, God-helped king*. "He will turn tomorrow towards Jerusalem!" wrote the poet Ibn Munir, summing up the hopes of the faithful.[8]

In the west, the news of Edessa's fall inspired a new crusade.

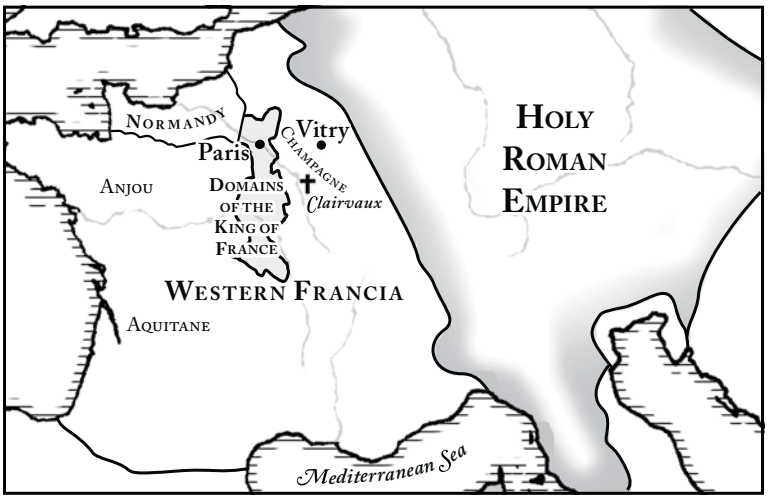
The call itself came from Pope Eugenius III, in the papal decree (or "bull") *Quantum praedecessores*, and it was designed to recall past glories. "How much our predecessors, the Roman pontiffs, did labour for the liberation of the Eastern Church!" it began, and continued on to repeat the same promises as the first call to crusade. Those who went east to get Edessa back would receive remission of sins, forgiveness of earthly debts, and eternal glory.[9]

By now, the First Crusade had become legendary. As the historian Thomas Madden puts it, "an entire generation of Europeans had been born and raised on the epic stories of the First Crusade. . . . There was scarcely a Christian knight who did not . . . long for the opportunity to imitate them." At long last, imitation was possible; the knights who had grown up on tales of Christian heroism could rise above the squabbles and political maneuverings of the last forty years and join their heroes.[10]

Eugenius III, unable to leave Rome (which was in one of its semiregular states of ferment and chaos), handed over the preaching of the Crusade to one Bernard, abbot of the monastery at Clairvaux: a senior churchman, "venerable in life and character," the contemporary historian Otto of Freising tells us, "conspicuous in his religious order, endowed with wisdom and a knowledge of letters, renowned for signs and wonders." Bernard, himself a Frank, traveled through Western Francia, recruiting knights to the cause.[11]

He also recruited the French king. Louis VII, of the Capetian dynasty, had inherited the throne in Paris at the age of seventeen. Now only twenty-five, he already suffered from a heavy conscience. Four years earlier, fighting against the rebellious Count of Champagne, Louis had attacked the town of Vitry.

The townspeople had fled into Vitry's wooden church, and without waiting for the king's orders, Louis's officers had set it on fire. Everyone inside—hundreds of unarmed men, women, and children—died. Louis, barely out of his teens, stood helplessly by and listened to the screams from inside. Now, he welcomed the chance to do penance.[12]

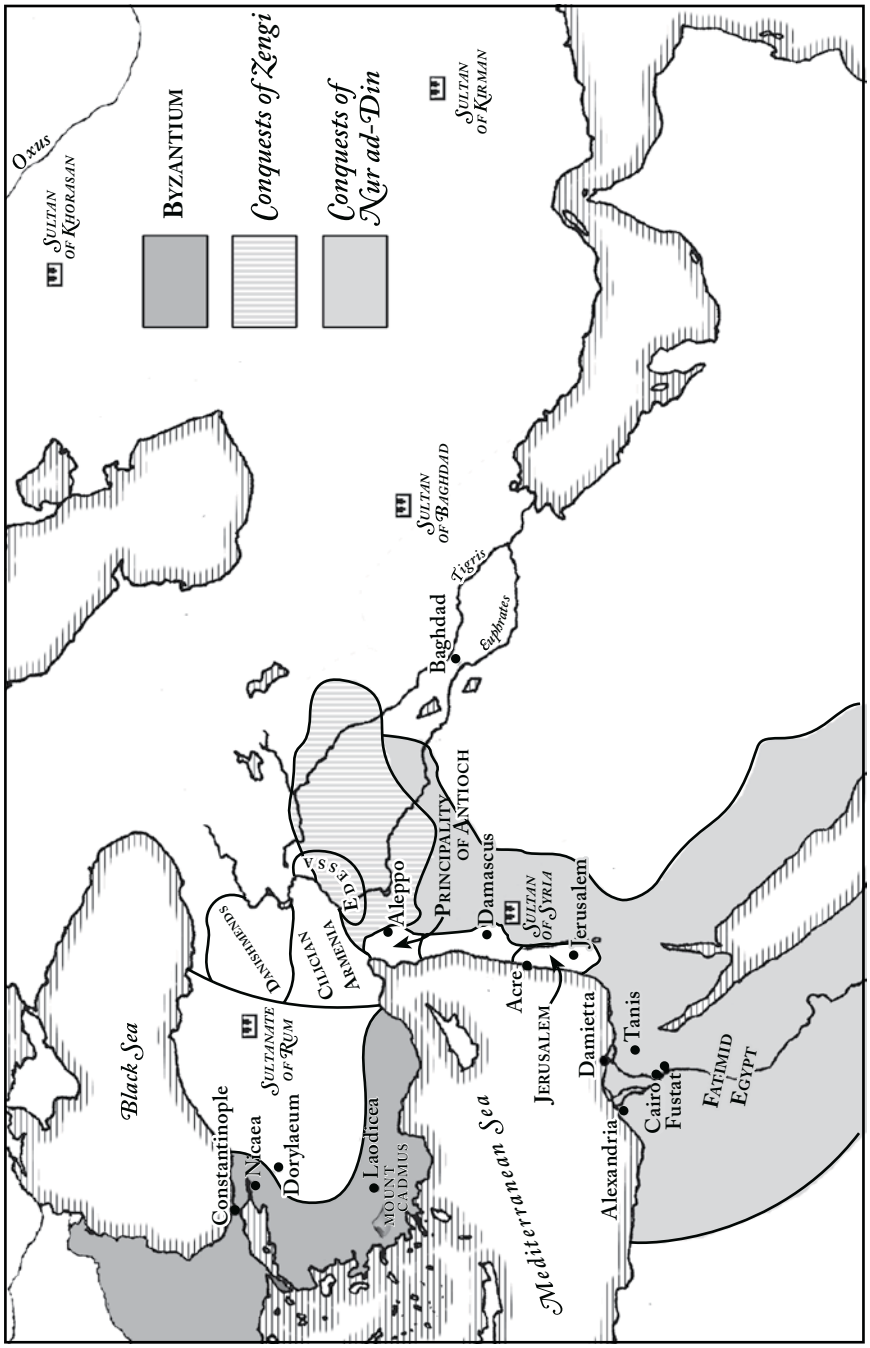


5.2 Kingdom of Louis VII

In March of 1146, he announced that he intended to go on crusade and that his wife Eleanor, daughter of the powerful Duke of Aquitaine, would accompany him to the Holy Land. Eleanor, only thirteen when she had been married to Louis, was now in her early twenties. Despite seven years of marriage, she had conceived just twice, and her sole living child was a daughter; probably she hoped that the pilgrimage would put her in better standing with God, who might then grant her a male heir to the French throne.[13]

Blame for her infrequent pregnancies likely lay elsewhere. Louis VII had been educated for the priesthood, not the crown. The death of his older brother had unexpectedly catapulted him out of the cloisters and onto the throne, and that early schooling had left its mark. A life in the Church was a life without women; Louis had been taught that sex had the potential to deprive man of judgment and distort his view of God. Even with a lawful spouse, too-enthusiastic lovemaking could be considered sin. Overindulgence in the pleasures of the marriage bed, theologians warned, could "cripple superior masculine reasoning faculties."[14]

In the twelfth-century French church, virgins stood at the top of the moral hierarchy; and, thrown back into a world where he was expected to father children, Louis seems to have attended to his marital duties with some



5.3 Conquests of Zengi and Nur ad-Din

reluctance. It was an attitude that would, very shortly, have international repercussions.

By the time Louis and Eleanor arrived at Constantinople, in 1147, Zengi was dead: stabbed to death in September of 1146 by one of his own slaves, as he slept. Zengi's son Nur ad-Din had taken up his father's sword, and Edessa still remained in Muslim hands.

The armies of the Second Crusade were savagely battered before they ever got near their goal. Louis's ally, the German king Conrad III (successor of Lothair III, but still uncrowned by the pope), had beaten him to the east. But instead of waiting for the French forces, Conrad's men had set out for Antioch and been nearly wiped out by a Turkish force at Dorylaeum. "Of seventy thousand mailed knights and many companies of foot soldiers, countless in number," says William of Tyre, "barely a tenth part escaped." The survivors retreated to Nicaea and waited for the French. But Conrad III himself had been badly wounded, and when Louis arrived at the rendezvous point, Conrad was still unable to fight.[15]

The injured German king returned to Constantinople for nursing; and Louis VII took command of the combined French and German army and marched along the coast, making his way slowly towards Edessa. He had even worse fortune. In January of 1148, after two months of hard slogging, the French Crusaders were strung out and separated, marching past Mount Cadmus near Laodicea, when a Turkish army descended on them. Louis VII himself escaped, climbing up out of the gorge he was in by clutching on to the roots of trees. But his men were lost: "Our army," writes William of Tyre, "was reduced to a very few. . . . That day the glorious reputation of the Franks was lost . . . their valor . . . crushed to earth."[16]

The survivors limped and straggled their way to Antioch, which was ruled by Eleanor's uncle Raymond of Poitiers, and took refuge there. They were too few to even attempt the siege of Edessa. Yet to return home in humiliation was unthinkable, particularly for Louis VII, who would ultimately have borne the blame for the defeat. Raymond suggested an assault on nearby Aleppo instead; it was smaller, less fortified, and also happened to be the headquarters of Nur ad-Din himself. Louis VII shrugged off the suggestion. He wanted to march on towards Jerusalem and gain at least remission of his sins for his trouble in coming east.

Raymond then chose a fatal strategy: he decided to work on his young niece and convince her to bring her husband around to his way of thinking. Eleanor was quickly persuaded, and immediately began to lobby Louis on Raymond's behalf.

Whether this was political shrewdness on her part, or something more

convoluted, will never be known. Certainly most of the Crusaders in Antioch thought that Raymond had seduced his niece; he was only in his early thirties at the time and (according to William of Tyre) "very tall . . . handsome far beyond all the kings and princes of the world . . . a charming and elegant prince." William adds, mournfully, "He was seldom lucky"; and so it would prove.[17]

Subjected to unceasing pressure from both his wife and his host, Louis VII obstinately refused to even consider an attack on Aleppo. Finally, Eleanor announced that if Louis refused to follow Raymond's plan, she would ask Pope Eugenius III for an annulment; after all, she and Louis were third cousins (as were most European monarchs, if you climbed far enough back into the family tree). This threat undoubtedly had less to do with Aleppo than with Louis's inadequacies as a husband. Eleanor was famously rumored to have complained that she thought she'd married a king, but ended up with a monk instead.

Infuriated, Louis VII removed his wife from Antioch by force and hauled her down the coast to Jerusalem. There, he completed his pilgrimage; and she, not having any choice, accompanied him to the holy sites. Afterwards, he took her with him back up to Acre. Conrad III, recovered from his wounds, had arrived with reinforcements, and a great council of Crusader princes and warriors had been called to determine the next move in the Crusade. (Raymond of Antioch was noticeably absent.)[18]

After a lengthy debate, the Crusaders decided to attack Damascus, which was under the control of Nur ad-Din's father-in-law. The siege began on July 24, 1148, and was over in five days. Nur ad-Din sent troops to relieve the city, and the Crusaders were so clearly outarmed that they hastily withdrew. Conrad III made a pass through Constantinople, on his way home, to firm up his friendship with the Byzantine emperor Manuel Comnenus; the other Crusaders dispersed.

But despite pleas from his officials back in Paris, Louis VII lingered in Jerusalem until Easter of 1149. He was reluctant to take his wife home, where she could carry out her threat of annulment. Finally, broke and unable to delay the inevitable, he and Eleanor started home, by sea—on different ships.

Once the last Crusaders were gone, Nur ad-Din invaded Antioch. Raymond and his army marched out to drive them back. In the battle that followed, the unlucky Raymond was killed. Nur ad-Din, says William of Tyre, ordered Raymond's head cut off, and had it sent to Baghdad as a trophy; according to rumor, sealed in a silver case.[19]

The Second Crusade had come to an embarrassing end. Bernard of Clairvaux, who had preached with such fervor that God was with the Crusaders, blamed the Crusaders for their lack of both holiness and resolve: "The Lord,"

he wrote afterwards, "provoked by our sins . . . neither spared his people nor his own name. . . . How could they advance, [since] they were continually turning back whenever they set out?" But whatever the reason for the failure, the result was disastrous; afterwards, William of Tyre notes with regret, "fewer people, and those less fervent in spirit, undertook this pilgrimage thereafter." The crusading impulse, already aging and infirm, had been dealt a deadly blow.[20]

TIMELINE 5

SONG	JIN (JURCHEN)	DAI VIET	CHAMPA KHMER	BYZANTIUM PAPACY	TURKISH KINGDOMS	HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE	WESTERN FRANCIA	SYRIA
		Battle of Bach Dang (1076)			**Malik Shah** (1072–1092)			
Li Qingzhao (1084–1151)				**Alexius Comnenus** (1081–1118)				
								Bohemund I of Antioch (1098–1111)
				Paschal II (1099–1118)		**Henry V** (1099–1125)		Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)
							Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)	Conquest of Tripoli (1109)
								Bohemund II of Antioch (1111–1130)
	Akuta (1115–1123)		**Suryavarman II** (1113–c. 1150)	**John Comnenus** (1118–1143)				**Baldwin II of Jerusalem** (1118–1131)
				Calixtus II (1119–1124)				
						Concordat of Worms (1122)		
								Conquest of Tyre (1124)
Beginning of Southern Song **Song Gaozong** (1127–1162) Creation of the Song navy		**Ly Than Tong** (1127–1138)						
					Zengi (1128–1146)			
							Fulk of Jerusalem (1131–1143)	
							Melisande of Jerusalem (1131–1153)	
							Lothair III (1133–1137)	
								Raymond of Antioch (1136–1149)
					Aleppo Earthquake (1138)		**Louis VII** (1137–1180)	
			Jaya Indravarman III (1139–1145)			**Conrad III** (1138–1152)		
Shaoxing Treaty (1141)								
			Height of Angkor Wat	**Manuel Comnenus** (1143–1180)	Fall of Edessa (1144)			**Baldwin III of Jerusalem** (1143–1153)
				Eugenius III (1145–1153)	**Nur ad–Din** (1146–1174)		Second Crusade (1145–1149)	

Chapter Six

Reconquista and Rediscovery

Between 1134 and 1146,
Christian kings, Almoravid warriors, and Almohad caliphs
battle on the Spanish peninsula,
while more and more Arabic books reach the west

In 1134, the Spanish king Alfonso the Battler died after a lifetime on the battlefield.

He had drawn the four Christian kingdoms of Spain—Aragon and Navarre, León and Castile—together under the joined crowns of himself and his wife Urraca. But the south of the Spanish peninsula had never been under his control. For over four hundred years, Muslim dynasties had ruled there instead.

Nearly five decades earlier, a North African sect known as the Almoravids had crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into the Spanish peninsula. Within three years, the south of Spain was under Almoravid rule. The Christian kingdoms of the north fought back against the invaders, turning the center of the peninsula into a much contested battlefront. Their resistance gained energy when a church council at Toulouse, in 1118, gave the fight the status of *crusade*. Instead of traveling east, western noblemen with their private armies could now take the shorter journey west and earn the same spiritual rewards. Military orders—monks with swords—shouldered the task as well.*

But the battlefield was large, and the enemy determined. In the east, crusades were measured in years. The crusade in Spain, the Reconquista, continued for centuries.

By 1134, Almoravid power in Spain had weakened. The Almoravid ruler Ali ibn Yusuf, ruling from North Africa, was more concerned with African territories than with his trans-Mediterranean lands. Meanwhile, Christian strength had grown. Alfonso the Battler, earning his nickname, had pushed the Almoravid front back, and back, and back. For Alfonso, Spain was not

*A more detailed account is found in Bauer, *The History of the Medieval World*, pp. 664–666.

merely a political realm. It was a sacred space where Christianity carried on its undying fight against evil. And so, when he died, he left his kingdom to the Knights Templar, the Hospitallers, and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre: three of the military orders established to nurture holy warriors.

His people ignored the bizarre will. The four kingdoms split apart: León and Castile under his stepson Alfonso VII,* Aragon under Alfonso the Battler's brother Ramiro II (a monk who gave up his vows in order to be king, finding the two incompatible). Navarre, which had been under Aragonese control for nearly sixty years, threw its support behind Garcia Ramirez, a grandson of the legendary Christian warrior El Cid; he would rule an newly independent Navarre for sixteen years, earning himself the title of "the Restorer."

The separation of the once-united kingdoms could have provided the Almoravids with an opportunity to retake some of the lost land, but rot was spreading farther and farther into their realm. A new challenge to Almoravid power had arisen in Africa itself. A North African prophet named Ibn Tumart, a devout Muslim who had left his homeland to study his faith in Baghdad, had returned with a revelation: the end of time was near, and Ibn Tumart had been called to purify the practice of Islam and to unite its followers in dedication to Islamic law.

At twenty-eight, he was blazingly charismatic, persuasive, and driven. The thirteenth-century historian al-Marrakushi says that on the journey back to North Africa, he preached so unceasingly to the sailors on the ship where he had bought passage that they threw him into the sea (he swam along in the wake until they had second thoughts and hauled him back on board). Before his premature death in 1130, he had managed to gain an enormous following: the *al-muwahhidun*, or Almohads, the Unified Ones.[1]

One of Ibn Tumart's followers, the soldier al-Mu'min, built on his theological groundwork and transformed the religious movement into one of conquest. By 1134, the Almohads had begun to push into the Almoravid land in North Africa. In Almohad eyes, the Almoravids were the enemy as much as the Christians farther north: Muslim but unpurified, corrupt lawbreakers.

Fighting on two fronts, the Almoravids soon found themselves overmatched on both.

On the Spanish peninsula, the Christian front had advanced to the south of Toledo. Toledo itself, hotly contested, was so dangerous a place that Alfonso VII made a nobleman he particularly distrusted its governor, a hopeful move

*León-Castile had been held by Urraca since 1109; although it was part of the united realm of Alfonso VI, the couple was deeply estranged. When Urraca died in 1126, Alfonso VII (her son with her first husband, Raymond of Burgundy) took her place, still under the overarching authority of his stepfather, Alfonso the Battler.

since the previous governors of Toledo had all been killed in battle. The nearby castle of Oreja was an Almoravid base of operations, and in the spring of 1139, Alfonso VII laid siege to it: "The castle was very strong," says the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, the official chronicle of Alfonso's reign, "and was well fortified with all kinds of weapons and crossbows. Nevertheless, the emperor ordered his engineers to build siege towers and many engines with which to attack the castle, [and] he ordered sentries to be placed along the riverbank in order that he might destroy them by thirst."[2]

An Almoravid army arrived from Marrakesh to help beat Alfonso VII back. But the siege dragged on, until messengers hurried down from Oreja to Marrakesh to ask for further reinforcements. They were, says the *Chronica*, "confounded, for events were not turning out as they had wished," and they got no joy from Marrakesh; informed that no more reinforcements were available, they were forced to return to Oreja with the message that they "should not harbour any hope and that they should surrender the castle to the emperor."[3]

Oreja surrendered in October. It was a major victory for Alfonso VII, who now set his eyes on Córdoba and Seville. Meanwhile, the Almoravids had suffered an even more serious defeat farther west. Alfonso VII's cousin Afonso Henriques, who governed the Leonese province known as Portugal, had been carrying on the fight south of his own land. In July, he had won his first major victory against Almoravid armies: the Battle of Ourique, fought on a hilltop not far from the coast.

Few contemporary details of the battle survive; it may have been little more than a large-scale raid into Almoravid-held territory.* But Afonso Henriques, cheered on by his men, declared himself king of Portugal immediately afterwards. This made him, in theory, independent of his royal cousin, and turned Portugal into a kingdom in its own right.

Alfonso VII refused to recognize the title, but he did not immediately invade the rebellious province; he was too busy. By 1144, his army was approaching Córdoba and Seville. The *Chronica* tells us that they

> destroyed all the vines, olive groves and fig trees. They cut down and set alight all the orchards, set fire to their towns, villages and hamlets, and sent up in flames many of their castles. They took their men, women and children captive, and seized a great booty of horses, mares, camels, mules,

*In the years afterward, Ourique loomed larger and larger in Portuguese eyes: the number of Almoravid troops killed increased, the Portuguese valor expanded, and the victory swelled, until by the sixteenth century Afonso Henriques had defeated five Muslim kings after seeing, Constantine-like, a vision of Christ promising victory over the pagans. None of these details, however, are contemporary.

asses, oxen, cows and every kind of beast, gold and silver, all the valuables which were in their homes. . . . All the kingdom . . . was destroyed.[4]

The devastating victories placed Spain even more firmly in Christian hands.

6.1 The Spanish Peninsula, 1144

Around that same year, the Italian scholar Gerard of Cremona traveled to the Spanish peninsula, hoping to find in the libraries of Toledo a copy of the second-century Greek astronomy text known as the *Almagest*.

He was not the first Western thinker to make the journey. A century and half earlier, the future Pope Sylvester II had traveled to a monastery near the Muslim-Christian border; there, he learned to use the numbering system of the Arabs, discovered by them in their forays into India. Unlike the cumbersome Roman system, these numbers (generally now known as Hindu-Arabic numerals) relied on place for their value. ("The Indians have a most subtle talent," marveled the monk Vigila, later in the tenth century, "this is clear in the 9 figures with which they are able to designate each and every degree of each order.") He had been followed by a whole parade of Europeans and the occasional Englishman: among them Robert of Ketton and Hermann of Carinthia, who first translated the entire Qur'an into Latin, and Plato of Tivoli, who did the same with Arabic texts on astronomy and mathematics.[5]

Now, with Gerard of Cremona, the rediscovery of Arabic texts surged forward. In Toledo, Gerard discovered a treasure trove of books he had never known existed. Among the books he unearthed in the dusty unused stacks of the Toledo libraries were a handful that had been translated from Greek into Arabic, but had never before been read in the Latin-speaking West: the *Physics* of Aristotle, containing the philosophical explorations of being that the Aristotelian texts on logic did not touch; the *Elements* of Euclid; the *Secrets* of the great Greek physician Galen.

"Seeing the abundance of books in Arabic on every subject," one of his

students later wrote, "he learned the Arabic language in order to be able to translate. . . . [T]o the end of his life, he continued to transmit to the Latin world (as if to his own beloved heir) whatever books he thought finest, in many subjects, as accurately and as plainly as he could." By the time of his death, some thirty years later, Gerard had translated at least seventy-one major works on dialectic, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, and medicine. A wall between the past and the present had been broken down, and more and more thinkers would step over the rubble into a new way of thinking.[6]

6.1 Early thirteenth-century Arabic mansucript, showing Aristotle teaching Turkish astronomers.
Credit: Bridgeman-Giraudon / Art Resource, NY

TIMELINE 6

BYZANTIUM / PAPACY	TURKISH KINGDOMS	HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE	WESTERN FRANCIA	SYRIA	SPANISH KINGDOMS	ALMORAVIDS	ALMOHADS
				Bohemund I of Antioch (1098–1111)			
Paschal II (1099–1118)		**Henry V** (1099–1125)		Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)			
					Alfonso the Battler of Aragon-Navarre (1104–1134)	**Ali ibn Yusuf** (1106–1142)	
			Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)	Conquest of Tripoli (1109)	Urraca of León-Castile (1109–1126 as subject queen)		
				Bohemund II of Antioch (1111–1130)			
John Comnenus (1118–1143)				**Baldwin II of Jerusalem** (1118–1131)	Council of Toulouse (1118)		Ibn Tumart (1118–1130)
Calixtus II (1119–1124)							
		Concordat of Worms (1122)					
				Conquest of Tyre (1124)			
					Alfonso VII of León-Castile (1126–1134 as subject king)		
	Zengi (1127–1146)						
							al-Mu'min (1130–1163)
		Fulk of Jerusalem (1131–1143)					
		Melisande of Jerusalem (1131–1153)					
		Lothair III (1133–1137)			**Alfonso VII of León-Castile** (1134–1157)	**Ramiro II of Aragon** (1134–1157)	**Garcia Ramirez of Navarre** (1134–1150)
			Raymond of Antioch (1136–1149)				
	Aleppo Earthquake (1138)		**Louis VII** (1137–1180)				
		Conrad III (1138–1152)					
					Battle of Ourique (1139)	**Afonso Henriques Ourique of Portugal** (1139–1185)	
Manuel Comnenus (1143–1180)	Fall of Edessa (1144)	**Baldwin III of Jerusalem** (1143–1153)			Gerard of Cremona arrives in Toledo (c. 1144)		
Eugenius III (1145–1153)			Second Crusade (1145–1149)				
	Nur ad–Din (1146–1174)						

Chapter Seven

Questions of Authority

Between 1135 and 1160,
Peter Abelard shows the power of Aristotelian logic,
and systematic theology is born

Sometime around 1135, the theologian Peter Abelard put the final touches on his latest project: the *Theologia Scholarium*, a treatise on the nature of God.

He had been polishing and revising the *Theologia* for fourteen years, ever since the first version of the book had been condemned as dangerous error. Back then, Abelard had been forced by a church council in Soissons to throw his book into a bonfire with his own hands. Now he hoped to defend his orthodoxy.

Instead, he would find himself facing yet another church council; and this time, the punishment would be more extreme.

For over forty years, Abelard had lived and breathed language. He had spent his teens studying the works of Aristotle in Paris and sharpening his skill with words: "I preferred the weapons of dialectic to all other teachings of philosophy," Abelard wrote, of his own early years, "and armed with these I chose the conflicts of disputation instead of the trophies of war." In 1102, still only in his early twenties, he set up his own school in the French town of Melun. He taught and wrote, debated and argued; and his fame as a master of logic grew. By 1114, he had become master of the cathedral school at Notre Dame, the most prestigious in Western Francia.[1]

Only one thing had ever distracted Peter Abelard from words: Heloise, the beautiful niece of the Parisian priest Fulbert. In a calculated act of seduction, Abelard rented a room from Heloise's uncle and offered to tutor Heloise in order to work off his rent. "And so, with our lessons as a pretext," he tells us, "we abandoned ourselves entirely to love. Her studies allowed us to withdraw in private, as love desired. . . . My hands strayed oftener to her bosom than to the pages . . . [and] our desires left no stage of lovemaking untried."[2]

The inevitable happened; Heloise became pregnant, and Abelard took her to stay with his sister in Brittany until the baby was born.

Fulbert, who up until then had been remarkably blind to the affair, flew into a rage. Abelard apologized, groveled, reassured, and generally did his best to make amends to his powerful landlord, but the most straightforward solution—marriage—was not on the cards. The master of a cathedral school was, by definition, a churchman; celibacy was increasingly the rule for churchmen, and marriage would cut Abelard's career off at the roots.

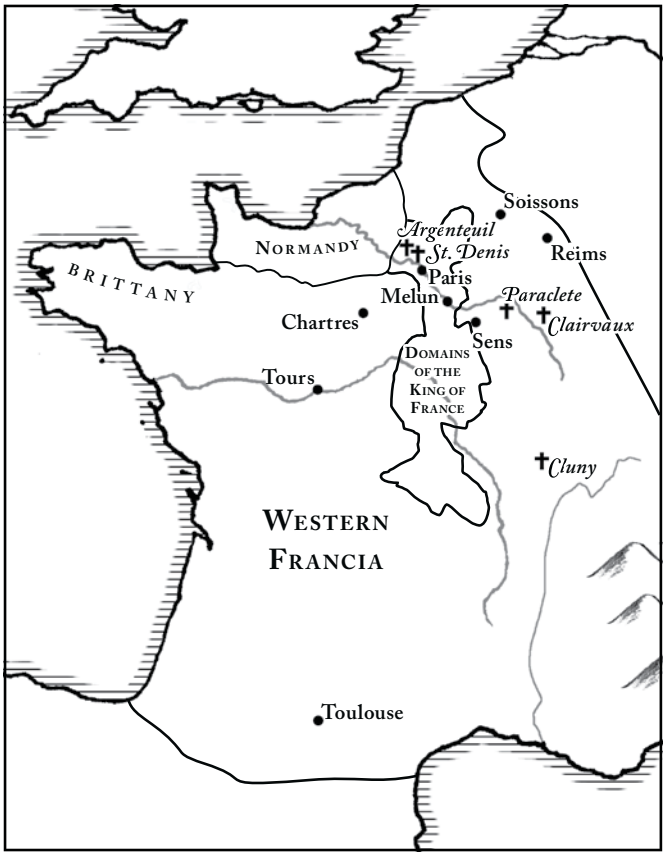
Unable to appease the powerful Fulbert, Abelard finally proposed a solution. He would marry Heloise, but the marriage would remain secret so that his prospects at the school would not be blighted; Heloise would come back to her home in Paris, and Abelard would find lodging elsewhere. Fulbert agreed, but when Heloise—leaving her baby son in the care of Abelard's family—returned to live in her uncle's house, Fulbert made her life a misery. "In his exasperation," Abelard records, "Fulbert heaped abuse on her. . . . As soon as I discovered this I removed her to a convent of nuns . . . near Paris."

The convent was a way station, a place for Heloise to remain safe while Abelard could figure out his next move; but convents were the traditional refuge of wives whose husbands had repudiated them, and Fulbert used the move as an excuse to take revenge. He sent hired thugs to Abelard's lodgings in the middle of the night. They pinned the schoolmaster down, and castrated him. "Next morning," Abelard writes, "the whole city gathered before my house, and . . . tormented me with their unbearable weeping and wailing."[3]

Probably the real crowd was smaller than in Abelard's recollections, but he was a popular teacher, and the attack was a nine-day wonder. When the fuss had died down, both Abelard and Heloise entered monastic orders, he in the abbey of St. Denis near Paris, she taking orders at the convent of Argenteuil, some twenty-five miles away. Over the next two decades they saw each other perhaps twice; but they wrote letters constantly, their marriage held together only by words.

At St. Denis, Abelard continued to study and teach, applying Greek logic to the doctrines of the Church. The first version of his *Theologia* argued that Plato's philosophy of a "world soul" was actually a reference to the Holy Spirit; that through logic, any man could grasp the essence of the Trinity; that scripture was *involucrum*, inherently difficult and figurative, "fruitfully obscure" in a way that forced readers to use reason and dialectic as they wrestled with the meaning.[4]

None of this was intended to destroy the faith. Like Anselm, Peter Abelard believed that truth would withstand Aristotle's methods. But this alarmed his more traditionally minded brethren. When they accused him of endangering the doctrines of the Church, he offered to explain why his conclusions were true: "We take no account of rational explanation," one opponent retorted, "nor of your interpretation in such matters; we recognize only the words of authority."[5]



7.1 Peter Abelard's France

In 1121, a church council at Soissons, attended by a papal legate, ordered Abelard to throw his *Theologia* into the fire. He obeyed, but he did not change his views on the value of reason and logic. For the next twenty years, Abelard wrote and taught, defending his orthodoxy even while he criticized the church's reliance on too-simple truth. He revised the *Theologia* twice, coming up with its final form in 1135; he assembled a whole collection of quotations from the church fathers that contradicted each other into a work called *Sic et Non* (Yes and No); he wrote a series of dialogues about ethics between a Christian, a Jew, and a character called the Ancient Philosopher; the *Collationes*, in which the Ancient Philosopher shows a clear understanding of the Highest Good—despite having only natural law to guide him.[6]

He was often accused of heterodoxy, potentially dangerous departures from orthodox, accepted understandings of the Christian faith. At least once, he was briefly imprisoned. But the help of powerful patrons, and the enthusiasm of his many students, kept him from out-and-out condemnation by the

Church—until 1141, when the revision of the *Theologia* drew the attention of none other than Bernard of Clairvaux: venerable in character, conspicuous for learning, evangelist for the Second Crusade.

The two men were polar opposites: Abelard determined to bring faith and logic together, Bernard holding the authority of the Church above all. "He had an abhorrence of teachers who put their trust in worldly wisdom and clung too much to human argument," Otto of Freising explains. When, in 1140, a local monk sent Bernard a letter highlighting Abelard's most recent doctrinal explorations, Bernard agreed that the matter required investigation.[7]

He asked Abelard to come and explain himself; Abelard instead appealed to the Bishop of Sens, and then to the pope. Probably he believed that his own skill in argumentation would help him to triumph. But it was exactly this skill that frightened his traditionalist opponents: "Peter Abelard," wrote Bernard, in his own appeal to the pope, "believes he can comprehend by human reason all that is God."[8]

To give Abelard a pass was to accept the categories of Aristotle; and accepting Aristotelian thought might well throw into doubt the entire authority structure of the Christian church. In 1141, the papal court agreed with Bernard. Abelard was to be imprisoned and condemned to perpetual silence. The sentence doomed him to pass the rest of his life without words: confined in a monastery, forbidden to speak, making his wants known only with signs.

In the eyes of his followers, the silencing of Abelard was a tacit acknowledgement that Aristotelian thought was both powerful and true. "The high priests and Pharisees convened an assembly," wrote his student Berengar of Poitiers, using a New Testament metaphor for Bernard and the papal court, "and said: What should we do, since this man speaks of many wonderful things? If we let him go on like this, all will believe him." But for Bernard of Clairvaux, authority had been properly reasserted; the old truths preserved, the old verities reaffirmed.[9]

The penalty was never actually enforced. Abelard, who had been suffering already from the illness that would kill him, took shelter at the monastery of Cluny and was in the middle of writing a lengthy self-defense when he died. The abbot of Cluny, known as Peter the Venerable, exercised the authority given to him "in virtue of [his] office" and declared Abelard absolved of all his sins. He sent Abelard's coffin to Heloise, now abbess of the Paraclete convent.

She buried him there; and when she also died, some twenty years later, she was buried beside him.[10]

Bernard of Clairvaux had no idea that he was fighting a rearguard action.

Already, at the cathedral school of Chartres, the accomplished master Bernard of Chartres was at the height of his teaching career, making his students

thoroughly familiar with the works of Plato and Aristotle as foundation for their ongoing education in Christian doctrine. "Bernard would bend every effort to bring his students to imitate [the poets and orators] they were hearing," writes John of Salisbury, who studied at Chartres. "In some cases he would rely on exhortation, in others . . . flogging. . . . [He] used to compare us to puny dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants. He pointed out that we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature."[11]

In Italy, a legal scholar named Gratian was already applying logic to the Church's own proceeedings. He was creating a vast collection of Church law, putting together ecclesiastical pronouncements that contradicted each other, and then using dialectic to resolve the inconsistencies. His masterwork, the *Concordance of Discordant Canons*, became a core text of the Catholic church tradition (and remained part of Church law until 1918). But it was a triumph for ancient philosophy; useful though it was, the *Concordance* was a rationalization of spiritual decisions. It brought order by treating Church authority as a simple human system.[12]

And in Paris, the cleric Peter Lombard was already hard at work, lecturing and writing, developing a system of theology that would become his most famous book: the *Sentences*. Lombard, twenty years younger than Abelard, had come to the cathedral school of Reims in 1136, bearing a fulsome letter of recommendation from none other than Bernard of Clairvaux. By 1145, Peter Lombard was teaching at the school of Notre Dame in Paris; fifteen years later, the *Sentences* were being read in every cathedral school of note.[13]

"A most excellent work," wrote Lombard's contemporary Alberic of Trois Fontaines; "sane doctrine, commended by all," commented the historian William of Tyre, who studied with Lombard for six years. The *Sentences* were the first major attempt by a Western theologian to link every Christian doctrine together into a coherent, logical whole. Using scripture and the Church fathers side by side, applying logic and dialectic to resolve contrary opinions, Peter Lombard created theological categories: Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology (the study of Christ, of salvation, of the Church, of the Last Things). The *Sentences* provided not just a scheme for organizing theology but also a methodology: discussion, debate, systematization.

This was undoubtedly not what Bernard of Clairvaux had intended for his protégé. "The faith of the pious believes," Bernard had written, in his condemnation of Abelard. "It does not discuss." But Lombard's work had given birth to the new discipline of systematic theology. In the next century, the *Sentences* would become the classic text for students of divine matters, shaping an entire generation of the Church with the exact tools that Bernard had feared.[14]

TIMELINE 7

SPANISH KINGDOMS	ALMORAVIDS	ALMOHADS	WESTERN FRANCIA	PAPACY
Alfonso the Battler of Aragon-Navarre (1104–1134)	**Ali ibn Yusuf** (1106–1142)			
Urraca of León-Castile (1109–1126 as subject queen)			Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)	
			Peter Abelard becomes master at Notre Dame (1114)	
Council of Toulouse (1118)		Ibn Tumart (1118–1130)		Calixtus II (1119–1124)
			Abelard's works burned at Soissons (1121)	
Alfonso VII of León-Castile (1126–1134 as subject king)				Honorius II (1124–1130)
		al-Mu'min (1130–1163)		Innocent II (1130–1143)
Alfonso VII of León-Castile (1134–1157) **Ramiro II of Aragon** (1134–1157) **Garcia Ramirez of Navarre** (1134–1150)			*Theologia Scholarium* of Abelard (1135)	
			Louis VII (1137–1180)	
Battle of Ourique (1139) **Afonso Henriques Ourique of Portugal** (1139–1185)				
			Abelard condemned (1141)	
Gerard of Cremona arrives in Toledo (c. 1144)			Peter Lombard teaches at Notre Dame (1145)	Eugenius III (1145–1153)

Chapter Eight

The New Song

Between 1141 and 1165,
the Song adjust to exile,
while the Jin struggle to rule an empire

In the twenty years since the Shaoxing Treaty, Emperor Gaozong of the Song had gained little power: no additional lands, no towns recaptured from the Jin, no treaties made with other countries. His court, now established at Lin'an, was vexed by problems that could not be solved.*

For one, his older brother Song Qinzong, taken captive in 1127 and deported to the north, was still alive and in Jin hands. His existence meant that Song Gaozong's authority could easily be emptied of power; the Jin could always play their trump card, send Song Qinzong back home and fatally disrupt the Song chain of command.

In addition, the court was divided about what to do next. Many of Song Gaozong's advisors agitated for an all-out assault on the north; others recommended peace and prudence; most were heavily critical of the actions taken by the Song emperors, Gaozong's own predecessors, just before the loss of Kaifeng.

Song Gaozong found a path through this complicated landscape by prioritizing one thing above all else: the security and stability of the imperial court. He refused to provoke the Jin. He was conservative, and he was conciliatory, and he was careful; and as a result, he lived to the unlikely age of eighty.

But his policies changed the Song. The new world of the Southern Song was one in which they did not fight, but philosophized; painted and wrote poetry, rather than agitating; traded, rather than fought; looked inward, rather than outward towards the rest of the world. The Southern Song flourished without victory.[1]

The inward focus produced a boom inside the Song borders. Markets and fairs grew up in the countryside. Paper money, used for the first time a century

*Lin'an was renamed Hangzhou after the Mongol invasion of 1276; many later accounts use this name for the Southern Song years as well.

before, circulated widely. Satin weave, with its smooth surface, was manufactured in cities to the south; in fact, the name *satin* is a French corruption of the word *zaituni*, used by merchants from Baghdad as the name of Quanzhou, the Southern Song city where satin manufacturing was centered. Farming grew more systematic, as Song intellectuals bent their attention to ways of increasing crops; Chen Fu's *Agricultural Treatise*, completed around 1149, laid out astonishingly effective rules for land utilization, crop rotation, and systematic fertilization. The Emperor Gaozong rebuilt a series of official kilns for firing the lovely celadon porcelain of the Song, on the outskirts of Lin'an; they were duplicates of the official kilns at Kaifeng, now lost.[2]

Painting and poetry flourished at the court of Gaozong, in part because Gaozong banned, in 1144, the writing of any private, non-state-sponsored histories of the past. This was intended to cut off criticism over the way his dynasty had handled the Jin invasion, but it halted only criticism written in prose. Painting and poetry soon became the safest, and clearest, way to dissent.[3]

"The good sword under the recluse's pillow / Clangs faintly all night long," wrote Lu Yu, who hoped to see the Song invade and reclaim the north:

> It longs to serve in distant expeditions,
> I fetch wine and pour a libation to the sword:
> A great treasure should remain obscure;
> There are those who know your worth,
> When the time comes they will use you.
> You have have ample scope in your scabbard,
> Why voice your complaints?[4]

Landscapes were safe to paint. And so blossoming plums, once the symbol of spring and new hopes, came to symbolize the southern willingness to go into exile, the misfortune and melancholy of the displaced.

Philosophers coped with the loss of the north in another way; instead of protesting, they searched for a new kind of peace with the status quo.

Traditional Confucianism had directed its followers towards the orderly performance of duties and rituals as the path to virtue: "It is by the rules of propriety that the character is established," Confucius himself was reported to have said. Confucian academies taught the rules of order, the duties of each man in his place and station, the importance of ceremony. They had long been used to train and prepare state officials, and as a tool for statecraft, Confucianism had never progressed very far in tackling more abstract ideas.*

*See Bauer, *The History of the Ancient World*, pp. 494–498.

8.1 Ink Plum Blossoms*, by Wang Yansou of the Song dynasty.*
Credit: © Smithsonian, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Now the philosopher Zhu Xi began to transform Confucianism from a tool of the impotent state into a philosophy for every man. He brought to Confucianism a consideration of ultimate reality; he taught and spoke of the relationship between the *essence* of material things (the *li*) and their physical existence (the *qi*). *Li* in itself does not have form that can be touched; *qi* gives shape to *li*, but at the same time obscures it. The essence, the *li*, of every human being is essentially good; that goodness shines through when the *qi* is refined, polished, brought to the place where it is transparent. And that polishing and refinement is achieved not by faithful service to the government but through private contemplation and individual education: in Zhu Xi's own phrases, "quiet sitting" and "pursuing inquiry and study."[5]

"Start with an open mind," the sage told a student who was struggling to find the truth, "then read one theory. Read one view before reading another. After you have read them again and again, what is right and wrong, useful and useless, will become apparent of itself." Far to the west, Peter Abelard was making the same argument for dialectical inquiry: "No theory is so false," he wrote, in the *Collationes*, "that it does not contain some element of truth; no dispute is so trivial that it does not possess something that can be learned." Abelard's argument was sired by Aristotle, born of an intellectual preoccupation; Zhu Xi's, produced by more political factors. Neo-Confucianism was an adaptation of the state religion to a time when the state was frozen in place; and it spread throughout the Southern Song, becoming, perhaps, the dominant way in which the Song now understood the world.[6]

Meanwhile, the Jin were also adapting to their new condition. Jurchen tribal ways, best suited to wandering warriors, were less than useful in running a massive complicated state filled with conquered peoples and ancient cities. To keep their new empire together, the Jin modeled themselves, more and more, on the defeated enemy to the south.

In 1149, one of Akuta's grandsons led a palace revolt against the reigning Jin

emperor (an unpopular drunkard growing increasingly paranoid and vicious) and seized the throne for himself. The Jin chronicles refuse to grant him an imperial name; he remains known, simply, as Prince Hailing.

Hailing was a lover of Song culture: a student of the Song lyric poems known as *ci*, an aspiring poet himself, an enthusiastic tea drinker and chess player. As soon as power was in his hands, he abolished the old honorary titles still held by the heads of the Jurchen clans, and began the decadelong process of moving the capital of the Jin out of the far northern city of Shang-ching, centered in the old Jurchen homeland, down into the cradle of ancient China: to the old city of Yanjing, which he renamed Zhongdu, the "Central Capital." He wrapped up the move by leveling the old Jurchen tribal headquarters in Shang-ching, wiping out the past.[7]

Remaking the Jin government in the image of the Song was not enough; he wanted not merely to be *like* the Song but to possess them. In 1159, with the move to Zhongdu almost complete, he began to prepare for a massive invasion: lining up half a million horses, drafting both Jurchen and Chinese into new regiments, assembling a fleet of barges to use as warships on the Yangtze. Anyone who criticized his plans, or questioned the wisdom of the invasion, was murdered.[8]

The invasion began in September of 1161 and was one-sided almost from the first battle. Hailing's patched-together sea force was outmanned and outfought by the Song navy, with its fleet of small fast attack ships and massive (up to 360 feet in length), iron-hulled, paddle-wheel war galleys, propelled by the leg power of scores of Song seamen. The Song terrified the opposition by hurling "thunderclap bombs," gunpowder and metal pellets encased in a paper and bamboo envelope, onto the Jin boats, where they exploded in a shower of projectiles and flame.[9]

After a particularly unsuccessful encounter on the Yangtze near Nanjing, in early December, Hailing withdrew to plan a new assault. But his sweeping changes, his brutal repression of dissenters, and his incompetence as an admiral were too much; his own generals murdered him, in camp, on December 15. His cousin Shizong took control of the Jin and immediately opened peace talks with the Song.[10]

But the invasion had strengthened the prowar faction at the Song court; and instead of making peace, Gaozong finally agreed to step down in favor of his adopted son Xiaozong. Xiaozong, then thirty-five, made reluctant preparations for war, and in 1163 the Song counterattack began. But as the Song divisions began to cross over into Jin territory, the new Jin ruler sent a hundred thousand men in response, and the Song were immediately driven back.

It was increasingly clear, even to the war-minded, that neither empire

8.1 The Song and Jin at Peace

would make headway against the other. In 1165, the two emperors signed the Longxing Peace Accord, setting the border between the nations at the Huai river.[11]

The uneasy truce would last for decades; but regret lingered. "In death I know well enough all things end in emptiness," wrote Lu Yu, on his deathbed,

> still I grieve that I never saw the
> Nine Provinces made one.
> On the day the king's armies
> march north to take the
> heartland,
> at the family sacrifice don't
> forget to let your father
> know.[12]

TIMELINE 8

WESTERN FRANCIA	PAPACY	SONG	JIN	DAI VIET	CHAMPA	KHMER
Peter Abelard becomes master at Notre Dame (1114)			**Akuta** (1115–1123)			**Suryavarman II** (1113–c. 1150)
	Calixtus II (1119–1124)					
Abelard's works burned at Soissons (1121)						
	Honorius II (1124–1130)					
		Beginning of Southern Song **Song Gaozong** (1127–1162)		**Ly Than Tong** (1127–1138)		
	Innocent II (1130–1143)	Creation of the Song navy				
Theologia Scholarium of Abelard (1135)						
Louis VII (1137–1180)						
					Jaya Indravarman III (1139–1145)	
Abelard condemned (1141)		Shaoxing Treaty (1141)				Height of Angkor Wat
Peter Lombard teaches at Notre Dame (1145)	Eugenius III (1145–1153)					
		Chen Fu, *Agricultural Treatise* (1149)	**Prince Hailing** (1149–1161)			
		Song Xiaozong (1162–1189)				
		Longxing Peace Accord (1165)				

Chapter Nine

The Heiji Disturbance

Between 1142 and 1159,
the emperors of Japan battle with the Fujiwara clan for power,
and the Taira and Minamoto join the fight

In 1142, a three-year-old boy was crowned emperor of Japan.

His name was Konoe, and no one expected him to actually *rule*; two retired emperors were already battling over that privilege. In fact, Japan was suffering from an embarrassment of emperors.

By the eleventh century, members of the ambitious and powerful Fujiwara clan had dug themselves firmly into top positions in the Japanese government. Generation after generation, imperial princes had married Fujiwara brides. Fujiwara ministers of state, usually close male relations of the reigning empress, dominated weak or young rulers. Emperor after emperor was crowned and then retreated behind the scenes to pursue poetry and luxurious living, political ceremony and religious ritual.*

In 1068, the emperor Go-Sanjo—a younger half brother, unexpectedly crowned after the premature death of his older sibling—had broken the pattern.

Unlike the string of emperors who came before, Go-Sanjo did not have a Fujiwara mother. And resentment of the Fujiwara ministers—who had, more often than not, ruled Japan as though the entire country were a private estate intended for their pleasure—had been gathering for decades. "Emperor Go-Sanjo's reign came at the time of a sharp turn into the Final Age," explains the thirteenth-century Japanese history known as the *Gukansho*. "[He] had come to think and feel that people would no longer be at peace . . . if Regents

*In 884, the Fujiwara official Mototsune invented for himself the post of *kampaku*, or "civil dictator." The *kampaku* had as much authority over a grown emperor as a regent, or *sessho*, had over a child ruler. By the twelfth century, the titles *sessho* and *kampaku* seem to have often been used interchangeably, but the highest post in government—with authority over the throne itself—was almost always held by a Fujiwara official. See, for example, Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), pp. 48ff.

and Chancellors continued to dominate the state, and if Emperors concerned themselves only with that which was elegant."[1]

The Fujiwara clan was not the only threat to Japan's peace. Over the previous century, noble families throughout the large central island of Honshu had been building private power. Both the Minamoto clan in the northeast and the Taira to the southwest had accumulated personal armies, granting land to local soldiers in exchange for military service: these warriors, bound by ties of loyalty to their landlords, were the *samurai*.*

By the time of Go-Sanjo's coronation, local samurai militias had grown to rival any force that could be mustered by the emperor's decree. And another host of warriors could join the game at any moment. Since the tenth century, the wealthy Buddhist monasteries in the cities of Kyoto and Nara had suffered from the attacks of local warlords looking to fill their pockets. In reaction, the monasteries had begun to recruit monks from the ranks of Japanese mercenaries and convicted criminals: the *sohei*, or warrior monks, chosen for the monastic life solely because they were good with their weapons.[2]

This was a potent mix of sword-happy men, and the emperor Go-Sanjo had to proceed carefully with his reforms. He started out by establishing a brand-new government department, called the Records Office, that required all landholders to register proof that they owned their land; this was supposed to quell the Fujiwara tendency to use public land for the recruitment of private soldiers. (The *Gukansho* remarks that the "entire country" had begun to seem like the estate of the Fujiwara chancellor.) He promoted a score of Minamoto officials into higher positions at court. And he did his best to organize a line of succession that would place sons of non-Fujiwara mothers on the throne. His own empress, mother of his oldest son, Imperial Prince Shirakawa, was Fujiwara, but from a much less notable branch of the family; his second son was the child of one of his lesser wives, a Minamoto daughter.[3]

Go-Sanjo remained on the throne only four years and then abdicated, aged thirty-nine. He had no intention of giving up his influence, though. He married Shirakawa to a Minamoto bride, supervised his coronation at age twenty-one, and then pushed through the appointment of his second son, the child with no Fujiwara connections, as Imperial Prince and heir. Then he remained

*Stephen Turnbull provides a useful definition: "The actual definition of a samurai changed considerably throughout his history, so the reader is recommended to see the samurai initially as a high-ranking warrior in service to a master. To think of a samurai as a Japanese knight is a helpful analogy." See *The Samurai: A Military History* (1977), pp. ix and following.

behind the scenes, advising his sons and thwarting all attempts of the Fujiwara chancellor to control them.*

He was able to do this for only a few months, dying unexpectedly before his fortieth birthday. But the sharp turn he had given to Japan's power structure survived. Shirakawa followed in his father's footsteps, refusing to obey his chancellor and favoring Minamoto and Taira courtiers over the Fujiwara. And like his father, he abdicated at the height of his power, handing over the throne at age thirty-three and taking monastic vows. But he continued to rule actively from his monastery, exercising as much control over his young successors—first his son Horikawa and then his grandson Toba—as the Fujiwara regents had once done. It was said by his subjects that there were only three things the retired emperor could not control: the floods of the wild Kamo river, the troublesome warrior monks who lived on Mount Hiei, and the throw of the dice.[4]

9.1 Japan under the Cloistered Emperors

This was the beginning of a two-hundred-year tradition of Cloistered Emperors, during which emperors abdicated at the height of their powers, leaving the throne to child heirs, and then went on ruling from behind the scenes. Everyone knew who was in charge: "After Shirakawa's abdication," says the *Gukansho*, "the state was governed for a long time by Retired Emperors."[5]

It was not an entirely impractical system. The Cloistered Emperor regime neatly divided time-consuming ritual duties (ceremonially important but politically pointless) from the equally time-consuming duties of actual governance. The sovereign on the throne took care of the first; the ruler in the monastery, the second. It also preserved an appearance of cooperation between the emperor-in-name and his Fuji-

*Shirakawa's younger brother died before he could take the throne, and Shirakawa's own son became heir; he inherited the throne in 1087 as Emperor Horikawa. Because Horikawa was the son of a Minamoto mother, though, Go-Sanjo's intentions were carried out. Horikawa died in 1107 at the young age of twenty-eight, before he was able to abdicate in favor of his young son Toba; so when Toba was coronated, Shirakawa continued to serve as Cloistered Emperor.

wara advisor, while the actual power struggle between king and Fujiwara clan went on, more or less, in private.

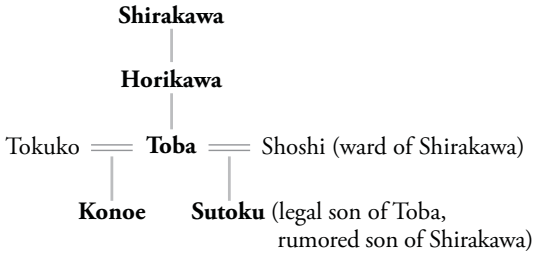
But the Cloistered Emperor system also, inevitably, multiplied the battles for power within the royal family itself.

When the three-year-old Emperor Konoe was crowned in 1142, the imperial household was already filled with crackling hostilities.

Those hostilities had unfolded over three generations. Back in 1107, the emperor of Japan had been four-year-old Toba; the Cloistered Emperor, wielding the real power from the traditional monastery, was Toba's imperious and long-lived grandfather Shirakawa. When Toba reached his teens, Shirakawa arranged for him to marry the beautiful teenaged Shoshi—his own adopted ward. Court gossip said that Shoshi was much more than Shirakawa's ward. When Shoshi gave birth to a son and heir in 1119, the baby was generally assumed to be Shirakawa's, even though Toba claimed the child as his own.[6]

The rumors got an imperial stamp of approval in 1123, when Shirakawa forced Toba to abdicate in favor of the four-year-old boy, who now became Emperor Sutoku. This relegated Toba, still just twenty-three, to a completely powerless position; he was now a Cloistered Emperor, but he was junior to his vigorous grandfather and inferior to his crowned son. Toba simmered in impotent resentment until Shirakawa finally died in 1129.

Once able to assume the real power of a Cloistered Emperor, Toba allowed his son-in-name to stay on the throne. But in 1139, Toba's favorite wife, Tokuko, finally gave birth to a son—Konoe, his *actual* flesh and blood. Three years later, Toba forced Sutoku to abdicate in Konoe's favor—just as he himself had been forced to abdicate in Sutoku's favor, twenty years before.



9.1 Family line of Konoe and Sutoku.

This put Sutoku in exactly the same position Toba had occupied, all those years: junior Cloistered Emperor, powerless, resentful. Given the various hatreds and ambitions flying around the court, it is perhaps surprising that Konoe lasted thirteen years before someone slipped poison into his food.

At Konoe's death, in 1155, Toba proposed that his next son (barring Sutoku, of course) become the new emperor; Sutoku objected, proposing either himself or his own oldest son as the logical candidate. Toba, who had more soldiers, won the argument; his son Go-Shirakawa ("Shirakawa the Second") became the new emperor, and peace briefly descended on the royal house. "While Toba was alive," the *Gukansho* tells us, "no rebellions or wars broke out."[7]

But Toba died barely a year later. Before his funeral had even ended, the courtiers, clan leaders, and samurai were lining up behind the rival brothers, Go-Shirakawa and Sutoku had commandeered two different royal palaces to use as their respective headquarters, and the capital city was preparing for war.

The sides did not break neatly along clan lines. Taira and Minamoto clan members could be found in both armies, as could Fujiwara officials. Sutoku's right-hand commander was the Minamoto clan leader Tameyoshi, accompanied by his son Tametomo. In *The Tale of Hogen*, an account of the struggle written in the early fourteenth century, Tametomo is a superhero, more than seven feet tall: "Born to archery, he had a bow arm that was some six inches longer than the arm with which he held his horse's reins . . . [and he used] a bow that was more than eight and a half feet in length." Tametomo's skill was restricted, though, by the presence of his brother Yoshitomo on the other side; Yoshitomo had been one of the first courtiers to declare himself a supporter of Go-Shirakawa, and had put four hundred hand-chosen samurai warriors at the emperor's disposal.[8]

The two sides finally met in battle on the night of July 29, 1156, in a brief and violent clash known afterwards as the Hogen Incident.* Tametomo picked off a number of warriors on the opposing side, but his brother Yoshitomo had the brilliant idea of sending an arsonist in to set Sutoko's headquarters on fire. As the Cloistered Emperor's men scrambled away from the flames, Go-Shirakawa's archers took them down, one at a time. "Those who were afraid of the arrows and terrified by the flames even jumped into the wells in large numbers," the *Tale of Hogen* says, "and of these, too, the bottom ones in a short time had drowned, those in the middle had been crushed to death by their fellows, and those on top had been burned up by the flames themselves."

Sutoku's forces were scattered, and the Cloistered Emperor himself was arrested and exiled. Yoshitomo had his own father put to death—a cold-blooded and vicious decision that, says the *Gukansho*, caused "some commotion around the country." Tametomo was allowed to live, but the sinews of his arms were cut so that he could no longer use a bow.[9]

*Both the Hogen Incident and the Heiji Disturbance, three years later, were named after the eras in which they occurred. In Japan, a new era was often declared when a new emperor was crowned (the Hogen Era began with the coronation of Go-Shirakawa; the Heiji Era began with Emperor Nijo), but a catastrophe, triumph, or new discovery might also be marked with a new era name.

Minamoto Yoshitomo considered himself the architect of Emperor Go-Shirakawa's victory, but when the normal business of government resumed, a Taira clan member named Kiyomori (who had joined the emperor's cause *after* Yoshitomo) managed to gain a higher position at court, and the emperor's apparent favor. Before long, Yoshitomo and Kiyomori were at odds; and the hostility between them was fanned by a Fujiwara clansman named Nobuyori, who himself felt unappreciated by the emperor. "Having noted rivalry between Minamoto Yoshitomo and Taira Kiyomori," the *Gukansho* explains, "and having assumed that the victor in a war between them would seize control of the state, he allied himself with Minamoto Yoshitomo . . . and began immediately to plot a rebellion."[10]

The inevitable fight—the Heiji Disturbance—broke out in 1159.

Go-Shirakawa had just abdicated in favor of his teenaged son, who became the emperor Nijo; Yoshitomo and Nobuyori waited until their Taira rival Kiyomori left the capital city Kyoto on a pilgrimage of devotion to Kumano, a sacred site nearly 175 miles of mountainous road away. When he was well away, five hundred Minamoto samurai surrounded the palace of the Cloistered Emperor Go-Shirakawa, took him prisoner, and set his palace on fire. Others kidnapped the young emperor.

9.2 Detail from the Heiji Scroll*: Burning of the Sanjo palace.*
Credit: Werner Forman / Art Resource, NY

Their intention was to force both rulers into declaring the absent Taira Kiyomori an enemy of the state, thus throwing the entire Taira clan into disfavor. But Kiyomori, getting word of the coup, came thundering back into Kyoto at the head of a thousand hastily gathered samurai, all loyal to the

Taira cause. The conspirators were quickly overwhelmed. Young Emperor Nijo was rescued; the Cloistered Emperor escaped; and the troops of Minamoto Yoshitomo and Fujiwara Nobuyori, falling like leaves, finally scattered in the face of the Taira attack.

Nobuyori was taken prisoner, and Kiyomori ordered him taken to a nearby riverbed and beheaded. Yoshitomo managed to escape, during the battle, and fled barefoot to the south with his faithful retainer Masakiyo. But when it became clear that capture and execution was inevitable, he asked Masakiyo to behead him. Masakiyo reluctantly obeyed and then killed himself. When the pursuers caught up to the two corpses, they took Yoshitomo's head back to Kyoto and hung it in a tree beside the imperial prison.[11]

In the aftermath of the Heiji Disturbance, Taira Kiyomori executed or exiled almost every important member of both rival clans. In the span of twenty years, the power of the Fujiwara had collapsed. Now the Taira clan was rising; but the Cloistered Emperor still controlled the palace, and the other clans waited their chance for revenge.

TIMELINE 9

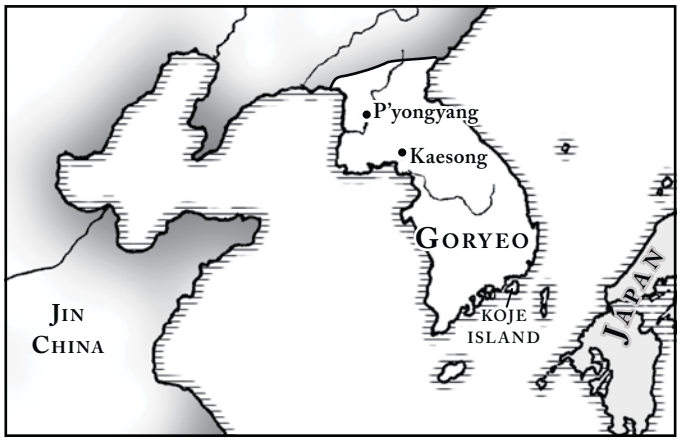
WESTERN FRANCIA	PAPACY	SONG	JIN	DAI VIET	JAPAN
					Go-Sanjo (1068–1073)
					Shirakawa (1073–1087)
				Battle of Bach Dang (1076)	
		Li Qingzhao (1084–1151)			
					Horikawa (1087–1107)
					Toba (1107–1123)
Fulk V, Count of Anjou (1109–1129)					
Peter Abelard becomes master at Notre Dame (1114)			**Akuta** (1115–1123)		
	Calixtus II (1119–1124)				
Abelard's works burned at Soissons (1121)					
					Sutoku (1123–1142)
	Honorius II (1124–1130)				
		Beginning of Southern Song **Song Gaozong** (1127–1162)		**Ly Than Tong** (1127–1138)	
	Innocent II (1130–1143)	Creation of the Song navy			
Theologia Scholarium of Abelard (1135)					
Louis VII (1137–1180)					
Abelard condemned (1141)		Shaoxing Treaty (1141)			
					Konoe (1142–1155)
Peter Lombard teaches at Notre Dame (1145)	Eugenius III (1145–1153)				
		Chen Fu, *Agricultural Treatise* (1149)	**Prince Hailing** (1149–1161)		
					Go-Shirakawa (1155–1158) Hogen Incident (1156)
					Nijo (1158–1165) Heiji Disturbance (1159)
		Song Xiaozong (1162–1189)			
		Longxing Peace Accord (1165)			

Chapter Ten

Death of an Army

On the Korean peninsula between 1146 and 1197,
the king scorns the army,
the army overthrows the king,
and both army and king submit to private power

On the peninsula east of China and west of Japan, a single king ruled over a single people. For over two centuries, Goryeo had been united under the same dynasty. Its people spoke the same language, worshipped in the same Buddhist temples, followed the same laws.*



10.1 Goryeo

*There are two major systems for rendering Korean names into the Roman alphabet. The older system, McCune-Reischauer Romanization, uses phonetic symbols; the second, Revised Romanization, tries to represent Korean sounds with combinations of vowels and consonants. Some names, such as *Injong*, are the same in both systems, but where the transliterations differ (the name of Injong's oldest son is *Uijong* in Revised Romanization, *Üijong* in McCune-Reischauer), I have chosen for simplicity's sake to use Revised Romanization. Revised Romanization is the current official system of South Korea, although North Korea continues to use a slightly altered version of McCune-Reischauer.