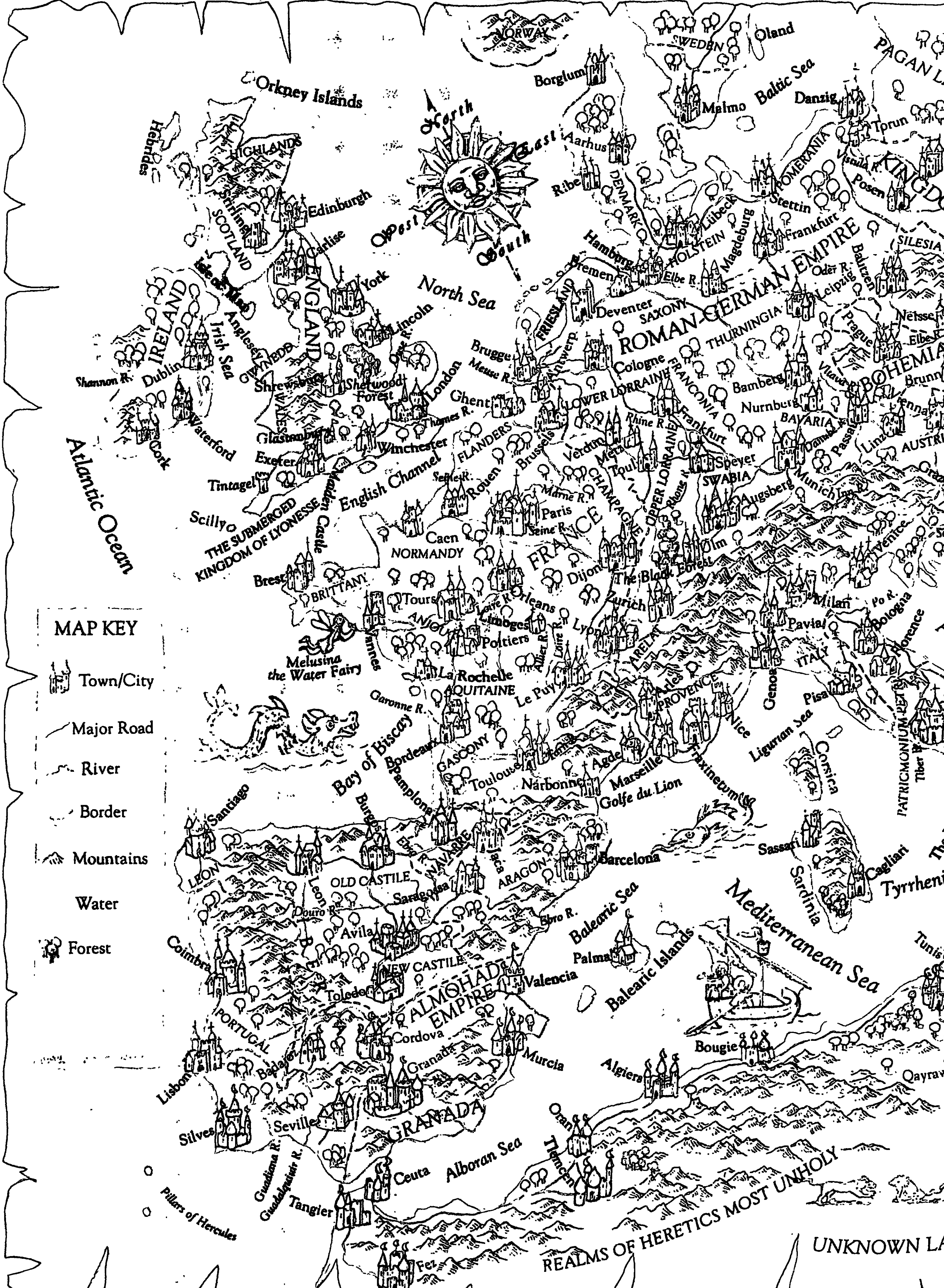
Mythic Europe

The Definitive European Sourcebook,
for ARS MAGICA™ 3rd Edition



NORWAY
SWEDEN
Oland
PAGAN LA
Borglum
Orkney Islands
Baltic Sea
Malmo
Danzig
Torun
North
East
West
South
Hebrides
HIGHLANDS
Aarhus
Ribe
DENMARK
POMERANIA
Vistula R.
KINGDO
Posen
Stirling
Edinburgh
SCOTLAND
Lübeck
Stettin
Frankfurt
Carlise
HOLSTEIN
Magdeburg
SILESIA
Hamburg
Bremen
Elbe R.
ROMAN-GERMAN EMPIRE
Oder R.
Bautzen
Leipzig
York
North Sea
ENGLAND
IRELAND
Irish Sea
Anglesey
Lincoln
FRIESLAND
Deventer
SAXONY
THURNINGIA
Prague
Neisse
Elbe R.
Antwerp
Cologne
BOHEMIA
Shannon R.
Dublin
GWYNEDD
Brugge
Meuse R.
Shrewsbury
Sherwood Forest
London
Ghent
LOWER LORRAINE
FRANCONIA
Bamberg
Brunn
Nurnberg
BAVARIA
WALES
Waterford
Thames R.
FLANDERS
Brussels
Rhine R.
Frankfurt
Passau
Linz
Atlantic Ocean
Cork
Glastonbury
Exeter
Winchester
Verdun
Metz
Toul
UPPER LORRAINE
Speyer
SWABIA
Augsberg
Munich
AUSTRI
Tintagel
English Channel
Seine R.
Rouen
Marne R.
CHAMPAGNE
Paris
Seine R.
Maiden Castle
Scilly
THE SUBMERGED KINGDOM OF LYONESSE
Caen
NORMANDY
FRANCE
Ulm
Venice
Brest
BRITTANY
Tours
Dijon
The Black Forest
Orleans
Loire R.
Zurich
Milan
Po R.
ANJOU
Limoges
Lyon
Pavia
Bologna
Florence
Vannes
Poitiers
Allier R.
Loire R.
ARELAT
ITALY
Melusina the Water Fairy
La Rochelle
AQUITAINE
Le Puy
Arles
PROVENCE
Genoa
Pisa
Garonne R.
Nice
Ligurian Sea
Bay of Biscay
Bordeaux
GASCONY
Nimes
Agde
Corsica
PATRICMONIUM PETRI
Tiber R.
Pamplona
Toulouse
Narbonne
Marseille
Fraxinetum
Golfe du Lion
Santiago
Burgos
NAVARRE
Jaca
Sassari
LEON
Ebro R.
ARAGON
Barcelona
Cagliari
OLD CASTILE
Saragossa
Leon
Sardinia
Tyrrheni
Douro R.
Ebro R.
Balearic Sea
Mediterranean Sea
Coimbra
Avila
Palma
Balearic Islands
Tunis
NEW CASTILE
ALMOHAD EMPIRE
Valencia
Toledo
PORTUGAL
Cordova
Bougie
Lisbon
Badajoz
Granada
Murcia
Algiers
Qayraw
Silves
Seville
GRANADA
Oran
Tlemcen
Alboran Sea
Guadiana R.
Guadalquivir R.
Ceuta
Pillars of Hercules
Tangier
REALMS OF HERETICS MOST UNHOLY
UNKNOWN LA
Fez
MAP KEY
Town/City
Major Road
River
Border
Mountains
Water
Forest


Mythic Europe
1220 A.D.
PAGAN LANDS
Kiev
Tana
Sea of Azov
BARBARIAN HORDES
Vladimir
Radom
Black Sea
Sinope
Trebizond
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
Budapest
Tisa R.
Siret R.
Belgrade
TRANSYLVANIA
Danube R.
Nish
Sofia
Morava R.
Drina R.
Constantinople
Adrianople
Sakarya R.
Amastris
Kizil R.
Nicaea
Brussa
PAGAN LANDS
KINGDOM OF ARMENIA MINOR
PRINCIPALITY OF ANTIOCH
Antioch
Damascus
BULGARIA
SERBIA
Ragusa
Thessalonica
Struma R.
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
Troy
Maeander R.
Smyrna
Famagusta
KINGDOM OF CYPRUS
THE HOLY LAND
EARLDOM OF TRIPOLI
Acre
Jerusalem
Vieste
Taranto
Brindisi
APULIA
Durazzo
Vijose R.
Nicopolis
Athens
Colossus of Rhodes
Rhodes
CALABARIA
The Sirens
Ionian Sea
ITHICA
Corinth
Mistra
Modon
Crete
Reggio
Syracuse
MALTA
Mediterranean Sea
Barce
Alexandria
Damietta
Cairo
Temples of Pagan Egypt
St. Catherine's Monastery
PAGAN LANDS
Nile R.
The Red Sea
Gulf of Sidra
GROUND SCALE (miles)
0
100
200
300
400

Mythic Europe

Terra Fabula

by Roderick Robertson
& Curtis Scott

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SPECIAL THANKS

Mark "Benedictine" **Rein•Hagen**, for coming home with that special 'do.

Aaron "Fonzie" **Voss**, for being the slick one among us.

Sam "Testosterone" **Chupp**, for being that minoxidil guy.

Richard "Come and Knock on Our Door" **Thomas**, for having too much time on his hands.

Chris "ÆGG on the Face" **McDonough**, for bringing a celebrity to the party.

Rob "Chuckles" **Hatch**, for adding a spritely air to the White Wolf office.

Stewart "Lefty" **Wieck**, for being 'Chuppasized'.

Andrew "Les is More" **Greenberg**, for bringing Cthulhu down upon Georgia.

Josh "Evisceration" **Timbrook**, for gore, gore, and a little bit of gore.

Wes "Survey Man" **Harris**, for learning what makes the cat-bruised tick.

René "Cotton Candy" **Lilly**, for wearing what most people eat at the circus.

Travis "You Can't Take the Boy Out of the Jungle" **Williams**, for being one of the Æfrikkan 10%.

Ken "Canada-bound" **Cliffe**, for doin' the do before vacation time.

William "The Mad Celt" **Hale**, for holding up production with his special thanks.

Bob "Save the Day" **Giadrosich**, for helping out at the last minute with art on **Deadly Legacy.**

Dedicated to my parents Blair and Janine Robertson, who put up with my Medievalisms Affectations.

Thanks to Hilary Ayer, who got me into this, Chris Beiting, who actually returned comments, and the **Ars Magica** Internet group. — Roderick Robertson

This book is dedicated to the memory of Curtis Scott, without whom Mythic Europe would not be as glorious as it is.

This supplement is designed for use with **Ars Magica**™ Third Edition, but can be used with the second edition with some adaptation.

Mythic Europe

OCEANVS · SEPTENTRIONALIS
OCCIDENTALIS · OCEANVS
EUROPA
ASIA
AFFRICA
OCEANVS · ORIENTALIS
OCCEANVS · HERIDIONAL

INTRODUCTION

Mythic Europe is a storytelling supplement designed for use with the **Ars Magica** Third Edition game. This supplement presents for your amusement, approval, and edification, a source on the official Mythic Europe setting of the game. Indeed, this book is an encyclopedic depiction of Mythic Europe from the late Twelfth throughout the Thirteenth Century, with an historic perspective ranging back to before Christ. After all, A.D. 1197 is the "official" **Ars Magica** Saga starting date, so this book concentrates on events at and around that year. Geographically the book spans from as far west as the wild Irish coast to as far east as the vast Russian expanse, and from as far north as the bitter Viking lands to as far south as the scorching plains of Africa.

Mythic Europe is designed for use by both players and Storyguides alike. The information presented in this source explains what your game world is like. That information is for the understanding and imagination of all involved in the game, for all players of **Ars Magica** have an involvement and say in world conditions and events, even if only through a single character. Thus, this is a book your whole Troupe will find invaluable.

If you're a player of **Ars Magica** any restriction a Storyguide may impose upon your reading of this book depends upon your role in the Troupe. If you are not a Storyguide yourself, or your character knows little of the world beyond the Covenant, the acting Storyguide may ask that you avoid reading about parts of Mythic Europe other than your own. That way, you may be little more initiated in the world than your character; the wonders your character encounters in the world are just as wondrous to you, for those encounters are new to both of you.

Those who, from their studies of history, already know the politics, geography, religion, and events of our medieval Europe may already know much of what is in this book. It's true that Mythic Europe is based on the Europe of seven centuries ago. However, considerable little-known or obscure information is also provided here that you may not already be aware of, and much legend-inspired history is made fact here as well. Thus, even if you know medieval history like the back of your hand, this book still has much to offer, and makes for an official world for the game.

This subject of history and its relativity is an integral theme of **Mythic Europe**, based on the medieval paradigm around which **Ars Magica** is designed. That is, much of what is presented here derives from the world as medieval folk believed it, in their fanciful minds, as opposed to the way we perceive it, in our empirical minds. Remember this idea if information enclosed seems skewed or unusual to you; it might not seem so to a person living in Thirteenth Century Europe.

Authors' Introduction

This book is meant to be a springboard for your imagination, not a history text. Anyone foolish enough to quote from it to teachers or patrons deserves the grade or criticism received. We have mixed history, legend, and a healthy dose of imagination in this work, hoping for a interesting mix of "real history" (whatever that means) and fantasy. The stories, rumors, and legends included in this source are here to spur your imagination, and should be used, modified, or ignored by you, a players, as you see fit.

If you do personal research into the medieval European world, the inventions and biases of this book become readily apparent. We do not apologize for differences between the history of real Europe and Mythic Europe, and you are welcome to use the results of your own research over the history provided here. After all, it's your game. Or, rather than implement "real" history over that provided here, you may contribute to this book's fantasy. That is, you may decide the fall of Jerusalem, for example, does not occur, and that no crusades take place; or that the Pope and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire never have any differences. The history of Mythic Europe is for you to decide, either accurately or fancifully. Even if you're inclined toward fantasy, which this book can be, your players may not know the difference between fantasy and fact until they pursue historical fact for themselves.

Personal Research

History is a fundamental element of this book, and Mythic Europe would not exist without a historical context upon which to base it. As stated above, you are welcome to research the medieval world and apply your findings to what is presented here. Certainly this sourcebook is thoroughly researched, and that research can be of assistance to you. To that end, an outline of books referenced is provided here. However, a strict bibliography is not provided. Rather, the books researched are explained for your edification.

First, conventional histories of Europe are a must. They offer detailed accounts of the politics of the time — who did what to whom, and when. Most basic histories name kings and emperors, as well as major nobles involved in various events and wars. As evidence of what can be learned from these basic historical accounts, lists of the kings, emperors, and popes of the period detailed by this book (the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries) are provided near its appendices. Furthermore, the history sections of this book's Chapters are examples of the rudimentary information you can glean from a conventional history text. These references are full of battles and kings, covering an area and period in broad strokes.

Second, check books on the history of the area(s) you are basing your Saga in (for you may base your Saga anywhere in Mythic Europe thanks to the information this book and genuine historical books provide). Books concentrating on one area offer a greater volume of information, with more precise detail, than can a book of general history. Indeed, a reference devoted to a specific area can go so far as to provide the names of minor nobles, and the extent of their lands. Specific area histories can also give you a strong feel for a land and its people. For instance, though serfs were common throughout Europe, serfs from different regions had different traditions, festivals, and ways of life from their foreign brethren. A general history book cannot provide such minute detail. Keep in mind that it's the small details that bring your Saga to life. If you have a wealth of knowledge on the peculiarities of a region, your Saga is made all the richer.

Third, where there are history books devoted to specific regions, there are also history books devoted to events and organizations. The Crusades, the Church, and specific battles and orders all provide insight into Europe, and provide character for your Saga. Maybe most important among these topic-specific books are those on folk lore. Such historical books establish the mind-set of specific Europeans, indicating how they perceive the world, and that mind-set may well determine how players' characters think and perceive. And, of course, let's not forget that books on folk lore can offer plenty of local color and story ideas. Many of this book's city-based story ideas came from historical folk tales.

Though studies into medieval history tell much about that world, we can't forget about geography. Medieval geography can be derived from many sources, both modern and contemporary. Modern travel books can provide you with the physical layout of prominent geographical features, like mountain ranges and other places like cities. However, you have to be careful about what information you use, as a lot has changed since the Middle Ages. Still, modern books devoted to travel often indicate where original medieval features and boundaries existed, to give the reader a sense of history and grandeur. This book's Chapter headings for geographical areas are in part derived from modern travel guides and maps.

Obviously historical atlases provide authentic and accurate physical descriptions of the medieval world. However, they can go much further than this. They sometimes depict the movement of medieval armies or illustrate how terrain influenced human thought at the time. Both types of information allow you to make reasonable guesses at what impact geography might have on your Saga, from the movements of the Crusades to the spread of monasticism. Keep in mind, though, that historical atlases and maps sometimes have to be used in conjunction with histories, as not all atlases explain the reasoning behind what they portray.

As you can see, there are many resources available to help you understand the medieval world, and hence your Saga. How involved in research you want to get is up to you and your Troupe. If you plan to have little to do with the world outside the Covenant, intensive research is probably a waste of time. Alternatively, a Troupe focusing on interaction between Covenant and society may want to research the area around the Covenant, and medieval Europe, in some detail.

If you plan to do much research into medieval Europe, it's suggested that you use several sources at the same time. These sources can be checked against each other, covering a single book's weak spots, but also assuring historical accuracy. (It's unfortunately true that historians are human so prone to biases in their accounts of the past.) Also make sure you've got different cultures' points of view on the past. An extreme example of how various cultures can depict the past differently is in regard to southern Italy. The region was settled by the Greeks and conquered by the Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Arabs, Byzantines, Normans, Germans and French. This mixture of races and thoughts produced a unique culture, one which a single book is not likely to fully capture.

RELIGIOUS DISCUSSION

This work contains a number of articles about or related to religion, most of which are based on the medieval Catholic Church. These articles are meant to explain the outward aspects of religion in Mythic Europe, which is a fantasy world closely related to but not the same as our own historical reality. While material on these religions has been written in an attempt to be nonjudgemental, this book is still based on history. It's well known that history is not fair to the religious or their convictions. Indeed, religions of the past sometimes proved corrupt, or were prejudiced against by others. In depicting the past, this book must sometimes depict these corruptions and prejudices to remain true to its subject matter. No offense is intended with this material, nor is this material a reflection of the attitudes or beliefs of the authors or publisher.

Roma

EARLY HISTORY OF MYTHIC EUROPE

CHAPTER ONE

Before we can get into a discussion of Mythic Europe and all its places and institutions, a background on Mythic Europe is necessary for the understanding of information yet to come. Obviously this background is brief and limited at best, but provides some insight into what developments have led to the conditions of Mythic Europe in the late Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, the period into which this source delves.

The residents of the past investigated by this Chapter are the Roman Empire, and Charlemagne, founder of the Holy Roman Empire. Both empires established the foundations for the Mythic Europe that developed after their passing.

The Roman Empire

The Roman Empire formed the basis of society and civilization in Mythic Europe. Though the glory days of the Empire are no longer, they determined means by which people could live together and prosper as one, instead of living as warring factions. The culture that the Roman Empire created lives on in the Thirteenth Century.

From its rise to its fall Rome saw much glory and hardship. Indeed, much of Rome's might arose from the power of its legions, against which few armies could long stand. It is within this empire that the predecessor of the much vaunted Order of Hermes existed. The Order of Mercury, as Rome's priests were known, rose and fell in power with their Empire, ultimately perishing along with their dominion.

THE RISE

The small Italian town of Rome initiated its influence over Mythic Europe by conquest, first rising to dominate its surrounding towns, and then the entire peninsula of Italy. The young Rome's natural supremacy in Mythic Europe became evident when even invaders could not hold her.

Though Rome was sacked by Gauls and conquered by the Etruscans at an early date, Rome rebelled against the King of the Etruscans, and ever after refused to be ruled by monarchs. Instead the Romans elected senators, who in turn selected consuls to run the government on a day-to-day basis. And, in times of war the consuls elected dictators, supreme commanders of the army. Under the consuls were numerous officers in charge of justice, markets and temples, and other public works. Indeed, the Romans rebelled against foreign occupation to control and govern themselves, leadership which would build the city an empire.

Continued wars abroad only heightened Rome's power and influence. The wars against Carthage, in the Third Century before Christ, forced Rome to adopt naval warfare, which opened up the entire Mediterranean basin to Roman legions. Furthermore, Julius Caesar conquered all of what is now France, and led expeditions into Britain.

Having gained so much power for Rome and himself, Caesar even led his victorious troops upon Rome itself, and declared himself Emperor — the first — but was murdered by

the Roman senate. In the power vacuum that followed Caesar, Rome was wracked by civil war, from which Octavian emerged the victor, taking the name Caesar Augustus after his grand uncle. By Augustus's time the Empire stretched from Spain to the eastern shores of the Black Sea, and from the north coasts of France to the Sahara Desert. To manage these vast lands, the Empire was divided into provinces, protected by the mighty Roman legions, whom few dared face.

Marking his power, Augustus and his fellow senators of Republican Rome dressed according to their position. To set them apart from the rabble they were adorned with togas, laced with purple stripes in the hem to designate rank. Purple was the color reserved for the togas of the senate because of the cost of its dyes, and therefore rarity. Soon after Augustus adopted the symbolic robe of his position, *"The Purple"* became a synonym for the rank of Emperor.

ROMAN RELIGION

The policy of Rome toward religion was one of tolerance. The early Romans worshipped a pantheon of gods headed by Jupiter, God of the Sky. As the Romans spread their influence they adopted the gods of the peoples they conquered, adding those gods to their pantheon, and allowing the temples of foreign gods to be built in Roman cities.

Indeed, the Cult of Mercury was adopted from the Greeks, who called their god Hermes. The Mercurians, followers of Hermes, were magicians who invested much time and energy in great rituals, aiding the Romans in their conquests and administration. And, from the Mercurians came one of the magic systems used by the current Order of Hermes.

In the province of Palestine, the birth and life of Jesus Christ initiated events which led first to the suppression of His followers, then to their acceptance. Ultimately, in the Fourth Century the religion of Christianity was made the sole religion of the Empire. Members of the Order of Hermes attribute the rise of Christianity with the decline of the Cult of Mercury, and with the eventual fall of the western Empire to Germanic barbarians.

However, before foreign invasion, the Empire knew peace for a time. The central provinces were free from attack, while the borders were patrolled by the legions. Roads linked all the provinces, and the Mediterranean was patrolled by Roman warships, allowing traders to sail without fear of pirates. The Empire also had one set of laws — Roman — and one official language — Latin. Order was so complete, in fact, that citizens could send messages across the Empire, knowing the letters would be received and understood at the far end. This calm period of Roman history became known as the *Pax Romana*, the Peace of Rome.

THE DECLINE

Though maintained for a time, peace could not be preserved in a vast empire full of intrigue. As it was with Caesar, successive lines of emperors ended in bloodshed. New dynasties assassinated their predecessors, ruled for a time, and succumbed to assassination in their turn. Eventually the Praetorian Guard, the elite palace troops and bodyguard of the Emperor, even began to choose the Emperor, and no man could ascend to the Purple, nor stay on the throne, without the backing of the Guard.

The death of Emperor Severus Alexander in A.D. 235 initiated the fall of the Empire, as the army elected Maximinus to the Purple, while the Senate elected an alternate series of emperors. The civil wars which ensued drew the legions away from the borders, allowing Germanic barbarians to invade the Empire. In fact, emperors soon took to paying the barbarians bribes to keep them from invading.

Ironically, these bribes only contributed to Rome's decline. The Empire came near to collapse from tax and currency manipulation, by which Emperors attempted to pay the staggering costs of the Empire. Poverty and unrest became such a problem that urban poor became dependent on daily doles of food, and were distracted from their problems by spectacles in the circus, free entertainments provided by rich patrons fearing riots. In the circus gladiators, slaves, and freemen fought to the death against each other and wild animals. Chariot races were staged. Captured barbarians were often pitted against gladiators. And, Christians and slaves were thrown to the lions. These bloody sports diverted the masses from rising against the government.

Though Rome was on the decline, attempts were made to restore it, particularly by those seeking to restore the old ways. The Senate's Emperor Diocletian rose to the Purple in 284, and divided the Empire into provinces and dioceses, sharing the title of Augustus with the Praetorian Guard's Maximian, each Emperor appointing his own successors. Diocletian attempted to reestablish the pagan Roman religion, closing Christian churches and forcing Christians to sacrifice to Roman gods. With Diocletian and Maximian's resignations in 305, the Empire was again plunged into civil war, and Constantine emerged as sole Emperor in 324.

Though efforts to restore the old ways were made, change continued with the passage of time. Constantine was visited by a Divine vision on the way to the Battle of Milvian Bridge, and restored the rights of Christians to practice their faith. Furthermore, in 325 he summoned all the bishops of Christendom to the city of Nicaea to resolve the then Arian heresy, which threatened to divide the Christian Church. The bishops issued the Nicene Creed, which declared the holiness of Christ and the triple unity of God. The bishops also established the form the Church would take. And, Constantine moved the capital of the Empire away from pagan Rome to the new Christian city of Constantinople. The Rome of old could never be restored.

Before he died in 337, Constantine divided the Empire among his sons, but civil war raged again. In the two years of Julian's reign, 361 to 363, Constantine's son attempted to squash the Christian influence his father had established in government, influence which had earned Constantine the name "the Apostate." Indeed, to undo his father's work Julian reopened pagan temples which Constantine had closed, tried to establish a pagan hierarchy of bishops to balance the Christian Church's, and attempted to formalize the pagan Roman religion.

Julian's religious efforts ultimately went unfinished, though. He instead decided to face the threat of the Persian Empire, a traditional enemy of Rome. He even marched his troops to the capital of Persia, but the summer heat made a siege impossible. And, on the way back to Constantinople, Julian was struck down by an arrow, his killer unseen and unpunished.

After the death of Julian, foreign relations only plunged the Roman Empire further into hardship. In 375 the Huns attacked the barbarian Goths, who fled to the west and south from their enemies, putting the Goths in contact with the Romans. Emperor Valentinian refused to shelter the Goths, and died shortly thereafter. His brother Valens overturned the decision, and invited the Goths to settle in Thrace, but eventually changed his mind and pushed the Goths back to the frontier. In outrage the Goths marched on Constantinople, and at the Battle of Adrianople in 378 defeated the army of the Empire. The Goths then raided Thessaly and Thrace, while in the west the barbarian Alemanni crossed the Rhine and raided Gaul. Thus, the Empire fell into chaos as three men claimed the Imperial throne: in the west Valentinian II and Maximus, and in the east Theodosius. Theodosius finally emerged as sole Emperor in 394, but died a year later.

In the vacuum of power left by Theodosius, barbarians again poured over the Roman frontier, left open by the withdrawal of legions to fight over the throne. The lands of Britannia and Gaul were therefore laid waste by invaders. Furthermore, Imperial officers and administrators fled from the barbarians, leaving the government in ruins. Thus, the Christian Church, led by the Bishop of Rome, assumed the reigns of power. (Theodosius had declared Christianity the official state religion, outlawing all other religions.)

Now in charge of the Empire, the Church was just as incapable of restoring order as were the emperors who preceded it. Continued barbarian invasions were the source of Rome's troubles. The west was overrun in 406 by the Vandals and Suevi, who crossed the Rhine in the middle of winter, laying waste to all of Gaul, and conquering Iberia. The Vandals continued on to north Africa, while the Suevi stayed in Iberia. Alaric the Visigoth, who had been plundering Thessaly and Thrace, marched on Rome, sacking it in 410. Alaric then conquered all of Italy and Sicily, but died suddenly 410 and was buried in the bed of the Busento river, which was diverted while the grave was dug. The Visigoths then tried to claim the throne of the west, but were only able to settle in Aquitaine as *Foederati*, or allied tribes. In 426 Gaeseric, King of the Vandals, seized the Roman fleet in Spain, and sailed to Carthage, which he took in 439.

The eastern Empire fell to barbarian invasions just as the west had. In the Danubian plains of Hungary, the Huns settled, raiding in all directions. The eastern Empire promised a yearly indemnity of money and cattle, but fell into arrears. Indeed, the invasion of Attila the Hun, who had crossed the Danube sacking towns and cities along the way, was only brought to an end when the Emperor met with him and promised a vast indemnity and pasturage rights to the Empire.

However, in 451 Attila led his horsemen west, crossing the Rhine and driving terrified Germans before him. Metz, Troyes and Orleans fell to the Hun, while a young woman named Genevieve prayed for the Hun to pass by the gates of Paris. Aetius, a noble who had visited the court of Attila and understood the Hunnish methods of warfare, hurried to Gaul where he rallied Burgundi, Franks, and Visigoths to defeat the Huns in a pitched battle, changing the course of the invaders' rampage.

In the following year Attila raided Italy, forcing the citizens of Aquilaeia to take refuge on the islands of the Rialto lagoon, which would become Venice. The Huns continued south, and Pope Leo I met Attila to negotiate the sparing of Rome. Attila died suddenly during the negotiations, and the Huns disappeared, journeying east beyond the Black Sea.

Back in the west, after rallying the Germanic tribes to defeat the invading Huns, Aetius made a bid for power of his own. Indeed, the German tribes even invaded England and Aetius was in a position to consolidate the west. However, the Roman Emperor Valentinian III recalled Aetius, and killed him with his own hands to preserve what Imperial power was left. Unfortunately, Rome had no remaining power, and without Aetrius to lead the German tribes, the fate of the west was

sealed. When the barbarian Gaeseric appeared off the coast of Italy, no force could stand up to him. He plundered Rome in 455, returning to Carthage with his booty. The eastern Empire dispatched a fleet in a vain effort to recapture Carthage, but the fleet was sunk by the Goths. The west was now lost to the Roman Empire, and the German tribes were given free reign of it.

The Church had not given up on the west, however, and missionaries preached to the Germanic tribes, gradually converting the Franks, Goths, Suevi and other tribes to Christianity. However, many of the missionaries were of the Arian or Adoptionist heresies, and the tribes they converted only became a threat to Orthodox Christians. Still, a common religion in the west was the factor required to quell fighting between the barbarians and remaining western Empire. Though the Germans had little use for Christian and Roman writings, the barbarians gradually became civilized under the influence of the Church.

Maybe out of anger for the past or intrinsic differences of Christian faith, the Byzantines never acknowledged the changed Germans, referring to the west as a land of savages and barbarians. In fact, the Byzantines continue to frown upon the west even in the present day, in the Thirteenth Century.

After the Fall

After the defeat of the western Roman Empire by Germanic tribes, the invaders were completely converted to Christianity and assumed the reigns of power where Rome once held them. When the Arabs invaded the west in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries, the formally pagan Germans took up the defense of the lost Empire. Indeed, their defense of the west assumed the aspects of a holy war, so complete was the German conversion.

The Arabs, united by their new religion of Islam, flowed across the north African coast. They became the invaders of an Empire that had already been invaded and conquered. The Arabs sacked the Vandal kingdom in the 690s, and invaded Spain in the 720s. But, the northward flow of Islam in the west was eventually halted by the Franks, led by Charles Martel, at the Battle of Poitiers in 732. The recovery of Muslim-held lands continues to this day. Indeed, the Roman Empire is still under siege, and is now the home of your Saga.

Charlemagne

Where the Roman Empire laid the basic foundation for society and civilization in Mythic Europe, Charlemagne built onto that foundation. His conquests, social reforms, and social institutions established that which is society in the Thirteenth Century. Charlemagne is primarily credited with initiating the feudal system of vassal and liege, which provided order in an otherwise hostile, feuding world. Understanding Charlemagne's accomplishment allows for an understanding of how Mythic Europe functions.

Military Successes

Born of the Germanic tribes in A.D. 742, Charles, to be known as "The Great," was the son of Pepin the Short, and grandson of Charles Martel, who defeated Moorish raiders at the battle of Poitiers in 732. Charles was declared King of the Franks, by his father, with his brother Carloman in 768. Carloman died three years later in 771, and Charles was named sole King in 773.

As King of his people, Charles was successful and prosperous, and expanded the borders of Frankish lands. In 773 he answered an appeal from Pope Hadrian II, who was being attacked by the Lombards in northern Italy. On the Pope's behalf Charles attacked and took Pavia, and a grateful Hadrian gave him the title of "Protector of the Church." In 778 Charles continued his conquests by leading an army across the Pyrenees into Spain, taking Pamplona and besieging Saragossa. Saragossa held out against Charles, however, aided by Muslim sorcerers and their djinn, who were able to counter every move of Frankish Magi, sent by Flambeau to aid Charlemagne. Charles also orchestrated other military campaigns, wars waged against the Saxons, Bavarians and Avars in Hungary.

Social Reform

To insure the strength of his armies, Charles made military service a condition to the ownership of land. According to this system each man was required to appear in equipment appropriate to his lands, at the call of his local count (from the Latin *comtes*, meaning companion). Small holdings required that one man be equipped in armor, with horse and weapons.

Charlemagne's Loss

The greatest and most fearsome of Charlemagne's champions were his twelve Peers, or Paladins. The greatest of these knights was Roland. The Peers were Charlemagne's pride, and most feared the warriors, but pride and treachery combined to destroy them.

Ganelon, one of the Peers, was jealous of the fame and fortune of Roland. Ganelon therefore contrived an ambush with the aid of the Moors, Charlemagne's enemies, to kill Roland. Roland and the other Peers, in the rearguard of the army, were trapped by Ganleon and the Moors in the pass of Roncevalles, north of Pamplona. Though they fought valiantly the entire rearguard was killed to a man. Though he could summon aid to his cause, Roland's pride would not let him blow his great horn, and when he did he summoned his King too late.

Charlemagne answered Roland's call and slew all the Moors on the field. He then went on to destroy the army and the Moors who staged the ambush. Ganelon was captured, and as punishment for his crimes, was tied to four spirited horses and pulled limb from limb.

Greater holdings required many men, armed and horsed. From these laws came the practice of granting Knight's Fees, the land required to support one fully armored knight.

To better facilitate its organization and collection of knights, Charlemagne's kingdom was divided into counties, each administered by a count, and either a bishop or an archbishop. Counties on the borders of the kingdom were known as marches, and counts there were given greater power than others, expected to deal with the threat of invasion.

Counts and bishops under Charlemagne were not autonomous, though, regardless of their county locations. Counts and bishops were subject to inspection by *Missi Dominici* ("Emissaries of the Master"), who had the power to bring a count or bishop before the King on charges of corruption, incompetence, and other like crimes.

The Church also oversaw much of the counties's administration, as few commoners were literate. To resolve this problem Charles called on all bishops and abbots to found schools to teach reading and writing to children, with no distinction made between the children of serfs and those of freemen. Charles also invited scholars to form schools of higher education, attracting learned people from Italy and England to his domain.

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

On Christmas Day, A.D. 800, while attending mass in Rome, Charles was crowned Emperor of the Romans by Pope Leo III, making him the first Emperor in the west since the fall of the Roman Empire. As Emperor, Charles sent numerous messages to the Byzantine Emperor, attempting to heal the breach between the two Empires, eastern and western. In 812 the eastern Emperor Michael I recognized Charles as co-Emperor, in return for recognition of Byzantine control of Venice and southern Italy. Unfortunately, further goodwill did not prevail, and the two Empires eventually drifted apart again.

AFTER CHARLEMAGNE

To preserve order and to protect his rule, Charles divided his Empire among his three legitimate sons in A.D. 806, making each a king of separate parts of the Empire. By 813, two of the three sons had died, leaving Louis as sole heir. Charles had Louis crowned Emperor in 813, and himself died in 814. Centuries later, in 1165, the Church elevated Charles to the state of the blessed, a step on the way to sainthood.

Louis the Pious, as he became known, succeeded Charlemagne to the Imperial throne in 814. Like his father, he divided his realm among his three sons — Pepin, Lothair and Louis — to be ruled as subservient kingdoms. However, civil war broke out between the Emperor and his sons when he gave his fourth son, Charles the Bald, a kingdom.

Pepin died in 838, and the Treaty of Verdun, signed in 843, gave Charles the Bald all of what is now France. King Louis the German received the eastern parts of the Empire, from Bavaria to Denmark. And, King Lothar was given a thin strip of land from Frisia to Italy, known as the "Bowling Alley," including the Imperial cities of Aix-la-Chappel and Rome.

Further wars followed the deaths of Louis's reigning sons. The treaties of Mersen, in 870, and the treaty of Ribemont, in 880, resolved these conflicts, defining the borders between a western kingdom (France) and an eastern kingdom (Germany). Burgundy was split, and became two autonomous kingdoms, later rejoined as a duchy. The treaty of Ribemont acknowledged the separation of France, Italy, and Germany, and though surviving kings and emperors fought over the realms' borders, the split was final. These borders are still in contention today, in the Thirteenth Century, when your Saga takes place.

SOCIETY

CHAPTER TWO

The society of Mythic Europe is based on only a few, simple institutions utilized in an effort to maintain social order and peace. Feudalism is one of the main social orders, though only has limited application, affecting those of rural existence. Though much of Mythic Europe is devoted to farm and field, there also arises the city, where none of the old ways apply, and social power is available to the person who can seize it, not simply to the person who holds land. Thus, the society of Mythic Europe is in part devoted to age-old tradition, and in part is in transition. A balance between the two is what maintains social order.

Feudalism

Originating in the reign of Charlemagne, feudalism forms the basis of Mythic Europe's society. It largely determines the three classes of folk — noble, clergy, and peasant — and preserves order where there would otherwise be chaos. Without the debt of service owed by a knight to the lord on whose land he lives, knights would fight among themselves for land, rather than cooperate to manage it. This social order established by feudalism also allows Mythic Europeans the opportunity to live their lives in moderate peace, devoting time to work, courtly grace, and prayer. Make no mistake, though. Wars are still fought, but more often between whole kingdoms than baronies or duchies.

Vassals and Homage

All nobles, from the youngest knight to king and emperor, are socially intertwined by mutual vows of support. All nobles, save kings or emperors who are the highest of knights, are subordinate to their lords, who in turn grant their lessers land in return for pledges of loyalty. The subordinate noble is known as the vassal, and the master the liege. Ideally a knight has only one liege, as the need to serve two lords is demanding at the best of times and treasonous at the worst. However, a knight can swear simple homage to two or more lords, managing lands from different barons or counts, but one is the knight's liege lord, to whom the vassal swears full homage and military support.

In the vassal-lord relationship the vassal pays homage to the liege, pledging to be the lord's servant. The vassal swears oaths of aid and council (military aid and advice), and promises loyalty. In return the liege gives the vassal a fief, usually a grant of land, but sometimes the revenue of a toll bridge or mine. The liege also swears to protect the vassal, both militarily and in court, and to be loyal in turn.

Furthermore, an oath of fealty is sworn by the vassal to the lord, of which a common clause requires that the vassal never attacks the liege. The oath of fealty may by required by the liege at any time, usually to reaffirm the vassal's legal obligations to the lord. A vassal may defy his lord (i.e., renounce his fealty) if the lord fails to support the vassal, or otherwise breaks the

oath to the vassal. In this situation, if a genuine breach of trust can be proven, the vassal keeps the fief of land granted by the former lord. By the same token, a liege can revoke a vassal's land if the vassal breaks their social contract.

KNIGHTLY HIERARCHY

In most countries there are two orders of nobles: the lower order, composed of knights who have no subordinates, and the higher order of titled nobles, including barons and other great land owners. All members of noble rank, even knights, have the benefits and protection of low justice, for themselves and their lands. Low justice is concerned with non-capital crimes (those not involving the death penalty; those not involving the murder of a noble, rape of a noble woman, treason, or heresy). Wielders of low justice may assign punishments up to the maiming of criminals — cutting off hands and ears, or blinding. Those who hold the right of low justice may not try other nobles, though, nor may they try any member of the clergy (who are protected by canon law). Most knights and lords wield low justice.

High justice is reserved for kings and emperors, though in some cases great nobles, such as dukes, have the privilege. High justice deals with capital crimes, and the right to try the crimes of nobles.

The knight is the lowest member of the nobility, and is granted by a lord a knight's fee (fief), which is enough land to support the knight and family. A usual knight's fee is a manor, consisting of a fortified house and lands farmed by peasants, serfs, or slaves. The early Frankish custom of dividing a knight's lands amongst all heirs is passed for the most part. Now lands normally go to an eldest son or other male relative (though sometimes they go to wives and eldest daughters). If a knight dies without heirs, lands are returned to the liege, who may give them to anyone else.

Aside from lowly knights who form the majority of the feudal contract, there are also household or bachelor (from *"bas chevalier,"* or low knight) knights, who live at the court of their liege, and form the lord's immediate retinue.

A baron is the next step up the ladder of nobility, and the first rank which truly has a say in the government of the realm. It is the barons of England who force King John to sign the Magna Carta, guaranteeing their rights under the law. A baron normally subinfeudates his holdings, granting knights' fees to his followers. Most barons have a primary castle which they use as their residence. Barons are the vassals of counts, dukes and kings, and comprise the lowest class of the titled nobility.

Counts receive their lands directly from the king or emperor, as do dukes. Of the two titles, a dukedom is more prestigious, even though a count may occasionally hold more lands. Many dukes hold the rights of high and low justice, and in France and Germany dukes can wield as much power as the king or emperor, as appropriate.

Resistance to Feudalism

Though feudalism creates social hierarchy among nobles, and thereby establishes some social order, not everyone benefits from the system, so there exist opponents to it. The peasants of Mythic Europe are at the bottom of the feudal social hierarchy, being owned, used and abused by the nobles of the land. Peasants, serfs, and slaves are therefore victims of society, able to eke out a meagre living, but having nothing to show for their hardship, especially in comparison to the wealth and comfort of many nobles and clergy.

It comes as no surprise, then, that there are those subversive activists in Mythic Europe who work to subvert the social order, seeking to achieve rights and freedoms for rural peasants. These activists are often declared outlaws by the nobility, and are hunted, but are not necessarily criminals. Indeed, their intentions may be entirely benevolent, and they may sympathize and cooperate with others who exist outside the feudal order, like the Magi of the Order of Hermes. Working with the Order, social activists can coerce peasants to leave their lands to find freedom in the Order's Covenants, and the activists themselves can find personal freedom acting as Magi's aids and assistants.

Such fraternization of social outsiders means danger for all concerned, however, particularly so for the Order of Hermes. For a Covenant to harbor a rebel against feudalism means to raise the ire of landlords who find themselves short of laborers.

Cities and Towns

Cities and towns are something of an aberration in the social world of Mythic Europe. They largely exist outside the rural order of feudalism and therefore offer rights and freedoms to their inhabitants that are unheard of elsewhere. Most lords and landholders therefore resent towns and cities; serfs can escape to urban centers and achieve independence there, and urban centers generate their own wealth, putting them beyond knightly influence. Rising from the feudal order, and acting as a wrench in the works of that order, towns and cities represent social change, and hint at a future in which the old ways are made obsolete.

The History of the City

Mythic Europe's towns and cities have their roots in the cities of Greece and Rome. However, outside the Mediterranean Basin the hundreds of years that have passed since the fall of Rome have blurred foreign countries' perspective on their urban heritage. In Italy and Greece, and Spain and the Byzantine Empire, are cities which can trace their history to before the birth of Christ. North of the Alps, however, in the old Roman provinces of Gaul and Britannia, many Roman cities were abandoned or shrank to mere villages, and forgot their origins. A few others, like London and Tours, prospered and became the nuclei for kingdoms, but achieved their own identity as independent centers, not descendents of Rome.

City Traits

All towns have some common elements, though certainly not all can be discussed here. Generally speaking Mythic Europe's towns are too large to be self-supporting, so must trade with the countryside for enough food to feed the masses. A merchant class is therefore necessary to provide goods and services, not only to the citizens of the city, but also to the countryside.

Cities also have certain inherent rights, particularly related to the freedom of citizens and trade. Indeed, while all cities and towns enjoy the same rights and guarantees, many share the same laws and customs as well. A few cities, such as Venice, are true city-states, free from the power of the nobility, while others are the personal fief of a noble lord. However, even if the fief of a lord, cities offer greater freedom and independence than offered on farm and field.

Although often divested from the feudal nobility, most cities and towns assume some of the trappings of the nobility, often to declare their position in society. These towns appoint themselves coats of arms, and strike seals with which to legalize documents. Town guilds are also given to ostentatious displays, competing with each other as nobles might in tournaments, but through parades, feasts and civic ceremonies.

The social status of all cities and many towns is also affirmed by being the seat of a bishopric or archbishopric. In large cities the Church often builds splendid cathedrals, not only to give glory to God, but to attract the devout (who spend their money in the city while visiting the cathedral). By finding a flock to preach to and earn money from in cities, the Church lends credibility to those cities, further protecting urban centers from the pressures and influence of the nobility.

Walls and gates are common to all cities, and are more than defensive. Walls and gates regulate the flow of traffic into and out of the city, allowing tolls to be easily collected. And, near city gates can be found inns and other amenities for travelers. Roads also lead from gates to squares, which represent the type of businesses that can be found in those parts of the city. One square may contain cloth and clothing stores, while another may be more of an urban administrative center.

Finally, people in all cities tend to live in areas appropriate to their lifestyles. Most live within walking distance of their workplace, if not actually inside their place of employment. And, a city always has a section devoted to foreigners, since the very existence of the city depends on trade. Some cities, especially ones with universities or church schools, or ones that are great trading centers, may have sizable foreign populations.

Offering freedom and independence to their inhabitants, and being centers for international relations, cities in Mythic Europe are more receptive to feudal outsiders than are rural

regions. Indeed, peasants who escape from the farm to live in a city for a year and a day are declared free. Furthermore, cities are places where the unusual is more readily accepted than it is in the countryside. Magi of the Order of Hermes can therefore anticipate a more hospitable response from city-goers than they can from country folk. However, Magi must keep in mind that even city folk are close-minded to some degree. Caution is always suggested no matter where a wizard travels.

Commune

Communes are towns or cities which have become self-governing, whether by peaceful charter or by military force. Communes are prevalent where the power of noble families is weak, especially in Flanders and northern Italy. A number of attributes are common to all communes, including the freedom of the citizen, the authority to levy tolls and regulate trade, and the assumption of all judicial functions.

Guilds

A guild is an association of free folk formed for a specific purpose, be it to control the production and selling of crafts, or merely to act as a social club for its members. All guilds share a number of features, including the swearing of oaths, rituals and feasts. The earliest guilds consisted of Germanic sacrificial feasts, which the Church found easier to modify to Christian precepts than abolish. At religious festivals, especially ones devoted to a guild's patron saint, guilds try to out-do each other with the magnificence of their displays. When displays are being prepared and presented there are even bouts of intra-guild intrigue and violence.

Typical Mythic European guilds provide most townsfolk with the only social activity they choose to participate in. Most members of a guild are likely to work at the same sort of job, live in the same area, and attend the same church as other guild members. The oaths a guild member swears and the rituals performed help strengthen the bond shared between fellow guild members.

Being closed and often secretive societies, guilds superficially seem akin to Covenants of the Order of Hermes. Both guilds and Covenants have secret meetings, require vows of their members, require members to work with and support each other, and pursue rivalries. To the uninitiated a Covenant might be mistaken for a guild, or a guild for a Covenant. After all, who knows what goes on behind closed guild doors. Some whisper of infernal activities. . .

Mills

Grain must be ground before it is fit to eat. Hand mills called querns may be used by peasants, but for the most part grain is milled in large water, wind, or beast-driven mills. A mill is sure sign of a manor, as large mills are owned almost exclusively by local lords.

All mills, from the hand held quern to the largest wind mill, have two parts in common. The first is the platform or stone, a flat surface upon which grain is placed. The other part is the millstone, a heavy round stone which rotates above the platform. In a quern, the millstone is lifted from a bowl, grain is poured in, and the millstone is turned by hand. In larger mills, grain is automatically fed through the millstone.

Querns are small (about a foot across), and require a tremendous amount of time and energy. Querns are mostly used for day-to-day milling, to make one loaf of bread, for instance. In most areas querns are illegal because they take work away from the local mill. The forecourt of the Bishop of Lincoln's palace is paved with querns confiscated from the Bishop's tenants. (Some of the Order of Hermes say the Baron's bitterness has even infused the querns with Perdo vis).

Animal driven mills are the simplest large-scale mills to build and operate (most gearing in wind and water mills is required to change the angle of force, rather than grind grain). Animal mills usually have one, two, or four animals in harness. The animals walk in a circle around the mill. The animals are usually entitled to spillage from the mill, which explains the folk saying, *"Do not bind the mouth of the ox that grinds the grain."*

Water mills come in two varieties, overshot and undershot. The similar names refer to the area of the water wheel which is hit by rushing water. Overshot wheels are water-fed from the top. Undershot wheels sit in the stream. Complex gearing changes the direction of spin, and allows the miller to stop the mill.

Wind mills were invented in the deserts of Egypt and Arabia, where water is scarce. They operate under the force of the wind, and thus require mechanisms to shift the sails to best catch the wind. The benefit of wind mills is obvious: they may be used if water is sparse, or if a local stream is not strong enough to work a water mill.

Water and wind power are also harnessed for other purposes, especially the fulling of cloth and the cracking of stones to get at the metal within. In the latter case, a series of hammers is activated by a revolving beam, with shims in place to lift the ends of the hammers. In the city of Graz, watermills power hammers which pound iron stock, producing sheets of iron for use in armor (though the odd murder is suspected to have occurred under the mechanical hammers).

The Count du Coucy has recently granted a monopoly on milling in his county to the operators of a mill on the banks of the Seine. The people of Coucy, who had often done their own milling with querns or animal-driven mills, are being forced to give up their millstones. This has caused increased unrest in the area. Even Cathar Believers have joined the side of the peasants, preaching rejection of the Count's decree. Unrest in the County may soon attract the attention of the Inquisition, which has been seeking an excuse to declare the area heretical. Conflict between locals and Inquisition forces may draw in locale Magi, as peasants ask local Covenants to intervene on their behalf. Of course, involvement in mundane affairs is strictly against the Code of Hermes.

Education

The primary source of education in Mythic Europe is the Church, which maintains a tradition of literacy and knowledge. However, independent universities also provide an education to those who can afford to pay for it. Given to the time and money involved, only the nobility and wealthy merchants can afford a university education.

The basic educational curriculum comprises the seven liberal arts, divided into the basic Trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic), and the more advanced Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). However, teachers have great leeway in the subjects they may emphasize or ignore.

Higher education is available from universities and the Church, and is comprised of the studies of law, medicine and theology. While it is not impossible to become a master of more than one subject, it is extremely rare.

Learned in the world and its higher arts, students, professors, and even scholastic clergy can be more receptive to the unorthodox than can the common Mythic European. Magi of the Order of Hermes may therefore seek aid and information among the educated, and those sought may require esoteric learning in return for their services. In fact, the open mind of a young student can make payment possible by indoctrination into the wizardly ways.

Banking

Arranging loans was once the exclusive domain of Jewish moneylenders. Christians are forbidden by the Church from charging interest on loans (charging interest on a loan is called usury, a sin in the eyes of the Church), and the nobility finds it beneath their dignity to haggle over rates of exchange and payment.

However, the growth of international trade creates the need to move large amounts of money from city to city without risking capture by brigands and robbers. In addition, rates of exchange in coin benefit only the coin-changer, who takes from one twentieth to one tenth of the value of the coins changed. Thus, banks, even Christian ones, have arisen.

A number of Italian families, already rich from trade, now provide the means whereby money can safely be transported long distances. They do so by establishing banks. A family sends a number of its members to a distant city with enough currency to open a branch of the family bank. When a merchant wishes to travel to that city, he gives a sum of money to the banking house in his home city. The bank then gives him a letter of credit, good for that same sum (minus fees for handling) when presented at the office of the bank in the foreign city. In this way, the traveler need not personally carry money.

Forging letters of credit is difficult, as banking houses each use codes to validate their letters. However, each house keeps spies in the offices of other houses. A clever and lucky house can bankrupt the competition with a few well placed forgeries.

The Florentine Del Toro family was destroyed in just this way. The Del Toro was a prosperous house, with banks in Champagne, Flanders, and England. However, the family's rival, the De Marco family, managed to place a spy in the Del Toro home branch (the spy married a Del Toro cousin, and was offered a business position).

The spy was eventually given charge of delivering the Del Toro family codes to the outlying branches of the bank. He somehow copied the codes out of the sealed book in which they were recorded, and the De Marcos, in a carefully timed strike, managed to bankrupt each Del Toro branch within a single week. They sent out several agents with forged letters of credit to exchange.

When the magnitude of the disaster became apparent the head of the Del Toros, Enrico, committed suicide by leaping from the top of his family tower. After the fall of the family, other banking houses have tightened their security, hiring guards and even Magi to safeguard their codebooks. Though little known, an unlucky De Marco agent once opened a spell-protected codebook, and was blinded by the spell contained in the volume. Evidence of the spell could mean trouble for the Magus who cast it, for sign of a Sigil might trace back to the wizard and incriminate her in mundane affairs.

Coinage

The silver penny, or denarius, is the standard coin of all Mythic European countries, by whatever name it is known. The value of the coin is contained in its metal. Thus, coins of a debased metal are worth less than those of pure silver. Coins are manufactured at about 240 to the pound. Some countries produce coins worth half or quarter pennies, but normal practice is to literally cut a penny in halves or quarters.

Silver is the common metal devoted to coins, though that silver is often debased by the addition of other metals. Some gold coins are minted for special occasions, or in countries familiar with the gold coinage of the Saracens. Indeed, many cities in Italy have begun minting gold currency since German Emperor Frederick II started minting the Augustale in Sicily. But, gold coins are still rare north of the Alps.

The minting of coins is a lucrative business because of the opportunity for fraud. By combining a lesser metal, such as copper, with silver or gold, more coins are produced for the same weight of silver. Such corrupt coins are said to be made of *"billon."* The English Sterling penny is the strongest and least devalued coin, due to royal control of English mints. Because of its value, the Sterling is used widely in Flanders, Germany, Scandinavia, and France. Mints are often given as fiefs to nobles or towns, with a share of the profits going to the king or a local noble.

Few know it, but Magi of Hermes pose the greatest threat to Mythic Europe's coinage system since Magi can use their magic to fabricate coins. In fact, their coins need not even exist permanently, disappearing into nothingness a short while after being passed. Abuse of magic in this way would cause terrible troubles for the Order, though, as not all Magi can resist torture and a Magus caught passing bad coins might implicate the entire Order. To get revenge against the Order for some punishment, a bitter Magus might also fabricate coins and set the Order up for cheating "God-fearing" folk.

Recently, coins of values greater than one penny, known as the Groat or 'greater' coin, have been struck. The value of the Groat depends on the devaluation of the penny, so that the Venetian Grossi is worth 24 denari, and the French Gros Tournai is worth only 12 denari. However, the French Denari is worth two of the Venetian. The Groat is usually minted at about 60 to the pound.

Hanseatic League

The Hanseatic League is a group of cities in northern Germany which regulate trade on the shores of the Baltic. The League trades the goods of the north, particularly furs, amber, wood, and fish, for fabric and manufactured goods from England, Flanders, and the west. Cologne and Lubeck are the leaders of the Hanse, and most coastal cities on the shore of the Baltic are members. Inland, Magdeburg and Cologne pass trade south and west. The members of the League band together and are able to ignore demands for money from the Emperor, and even impose their will on countries who refuse to trade with them.

The Teutonic order is a rival to the League, and several smaller leagues have formed inland to block the spread of the League south. The League has no formal membership, with cities and towns joining and leaving more or less at will. However, the League is constantly encouraging cities to join, as the greater an area trading through the League, the greater the potential profits available to member cities. Though no offers have yet been made, members of the League have heard of the Order of Hermes and plan to offer its Magi a place in the League.

Markets and Fairs

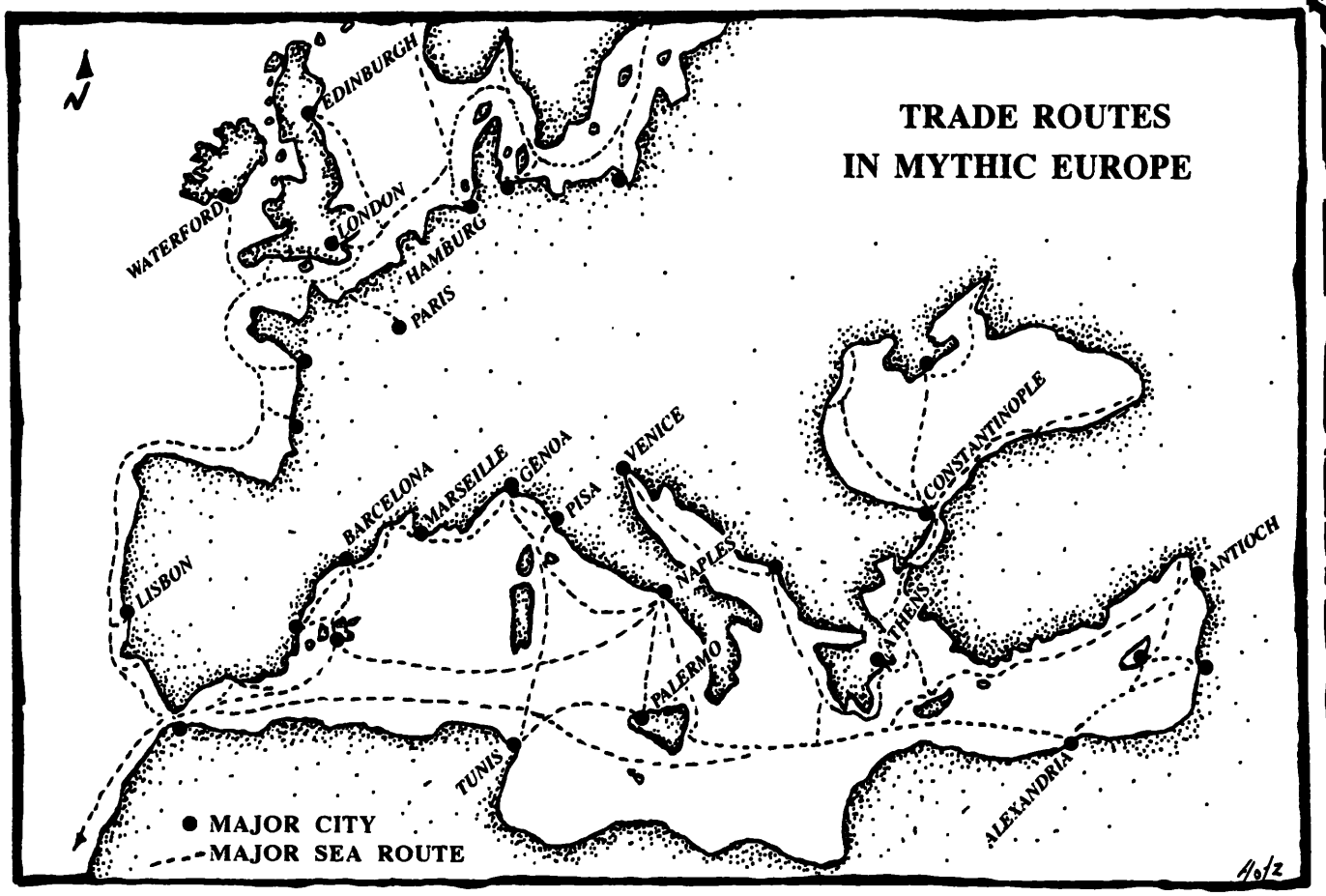
Markets and fairs are the mercantile gatherings of Mythic Europe. Throughout the land, farmers and traders gather at markets and fairs, buying and selling produce, farm goods, and the occasional city-made item. Along with traveling merchants, markets and fairs attract performing troupes, Pardoners, thieves, and Magi.

Markets are generally local, lasting no more than a few days. Towns are granted the right to host markets by their lord, who takes a percentage of all moneys exchanged. Because a license is required, most areas have only a few market towns. Markets are usually held in the fall, after the harvest.

Fairs originated as gatherings of local merchants on Church holidays, when merchants were assured the populace was in town for services. From these gatherings grew the great fairs, which attract merchants from all over Mythic Europe. While fairs of all sizes can be found, the largest are in the County of Champagne, where the local Count encourages their growth (for his own profit).

As a rule, the duration of a fair is determined by its size, with large fairs lasting longer and thereby attracting more business (and taxes). A small village fair may last one or two days, while the Champagne Fairs each last seven weeks. Some fairs attract a specific type of commodity — leather, wine, or horses, for example — while others offer wares of all kinds. Many merchants are attracted to the largest fairs while only tinkers or minor merchants might show up for a local fair. Merchants from Italy, Spain, England, and Germany gather at the Champagne Fairs.

Fairs attract many people aside from merchants. Food and drink vendors circulate amongst the crowd, or hawk their wares from booths. Traveling players and minstrels entertain crowds with passion plays, juggling, stilt-walking, fire-eating, and other shows. Cutpurses, whores, and other members of the criminal class mix with the crowd, looking for easy money. Pardoners offer remission for sins and sell "holy" relics (most of which are nothing but junk acquired on the road). The local lord and his family might also visit, and there may even be a tournament of honor. The bulk of this exotic throng, however, are peasants who clutch their purses, buy pretty ribbons, or simply admire the view. On occasion a Magus visits mundane fairs, in search of an esoteric item important to some strange



experiment or elixir. These unusual attendants are overlooked if in disguise, but attract much gossip and suspicion if recognized.

Champagne Fairs

The fairs in Champagne are the largest marketplaces in Mythic Europe. Started in the Twelfth Century by the Count of Champagne, the fairs attract wool merchants from England, cloth merchants from Flanders, traders in fur and wood from the Hanseatic League, Italian traders with goods and spices from the Orient, and Spanish merchants with finely crafted leather. It is said that anything is available at the fairs in Champagne, though some items may be more dear than others, and some only of value to particular customers.

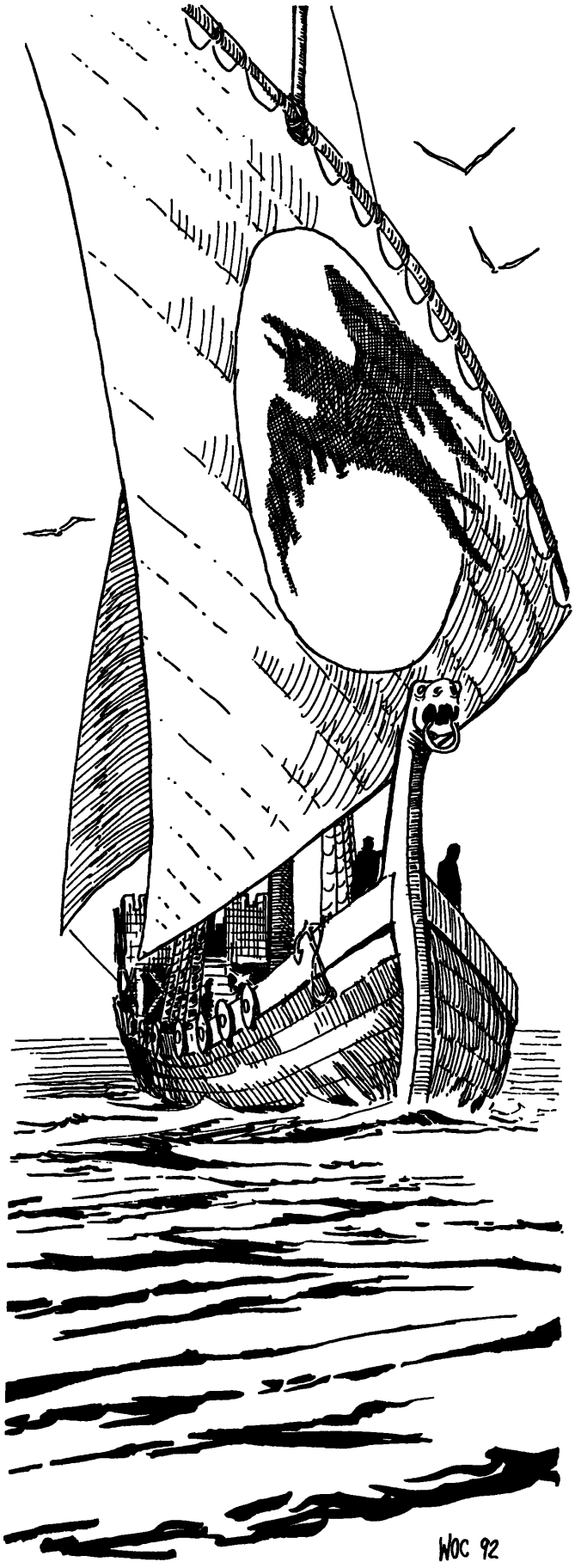
Six fairs are held each year, two each at Provins and Troyes, and one each at Lagny and Bar-sur-Aube. Each fair lasts seven weeks, with the first devoted to arrivals and receiving of merchandise, and the last to the settling of accounts. Italian merchant houses have made carrying large sums of money for fairs unnecessary, with banking houses in each city able to dispense funds to merchants with accounts.

The authority and prominence of the Champagne Fairs is such that travelers robbed on their way to a fair may appeal to the hosting city, which may not only recompense losses, but also pressure the province where travelers were robbed to improve patrols. The fairs' chief means of enforcing their demands is to deny trading rights to merchants from offending provinces.

Beside the mercantile business of the fairs, other, less open negotiations take place. Freelance spies and soldiers discreetly offer their services to the highest bidder, and many secret assignations are kept here. All the royal houses of Mythic Europe have their spies, disguised as honest merchants, traveling from fair to fair, sending messages back to their patrons. On occasion these spies attempt to eliminate their opposite number, arranging 'accidents' and 'bandits' on the road or in the numerous inns.

The real merchants of the Champagne Fairs long ago figured out who these spies are, and even know a new spy when an old one is replaced, or no longer attends the fairs. The antics of spies are watched by merchants with amusement, and merchants usually manage to make a good profit from spies, either on betting who will be killed, or by buying the goods a false merchant carries as his disguise.

Spies know enough not to attempt any overt acts, as they know not to unduly disrupt the peace of the Champagne Fairs. If a spy makes a commotion or mockery of a fair, the Count of Champagne denies the spy's country the right to trade at fairs in the future.



spies, while the D'Angelo of Pisa are ready to hire soldiers and go to war, such is the trade damage being caused by the Urballo wool. Several Magi who have bought Urballo wool have experienced severe magical shocks, enough to send one into Twilight

Roads and Bridges

The Romans in ancient times built roads to bind together their Empire, but with the fall of the Roman Empire the roads fell into neglect. In some countries, notably Italy and southern France, roads are maintained, but in others, like Germany, where the Romans never conquered, roads fade into the countryside.

With the revival of trade, new roads and bridges have been built, and trade passes along and over them in a never-ending stream. Roads and bridges are now the projects of local lords, who build them as a means to insure the collection of tolls, both to maintain the roads and to fill the lords' coffers.

While Roman roads were crafted and engineered with care and covered in stonework, modern roads are often simple tracks through the land, with brush cleared away from their sides. In England, the brush is cleared over the length of a bowshot from the road, so that brigands and thieves cannot easily waylay travelers. In other countries, where the King's writ does not run as strong, roads are much more dangerous.

When roads met rivers, the Romans built bridges to cross. Most lords no longer bother with such care, simply routing a road to a ford, which might or might not be marked with stakes to indicate deep water. Most bridges built since the fall of the Roman Empire are of wood, and rot after a few years, requiring frequent upkeep. Bridges are normally fortified, as they are often the only crossing on a river for miles in either direction. Some bridges even have small castles on either bank, and most have towers built on the bridge itself, with gates which can be closed.

Bridges are also a source of income; the toll from bridges can be given as a fief to knights and lords. One bridge can often serve as a knight's fee, equipping the knight for duty. In wartime, the knight is expected to stop an invading army, either by force or by burning the bridge, keeping the enemy from crossing the river. However, most knights refuse to so endanger their livelihood, and often lose their rights to a bridge when a lord learns of such dereliction of duty.

Special Messengers

The need to send messages from city to city extends through the upper levels of society, from kings, popes, town councils, universities and merchant houses. Special messengers are employed for this purpose, with great authority to act in the name of their principal.

Messengers are usually mounted, but except for the delivery of urgent messages, travel no faster than a walk, to conserve their horses. Messengers wear their employer's livery, and

carry a strong leather pouch or satchel embossed or embroidered with their employer's arms. If a messenger's patron is powerful enough, markings on a pouch can deter would-be thieves, or attract their attention.

Messengers are often put in charge of delivering money or persons to a destination. To this end they may hire guards, wagons, horses, pavilions, and anything else they require for the trip. A king or other employer may give a messenger money for the purposes of protection, or may repay a messenger for expenses. In either case, the messenger often carries large sums of money at the beginning of a trip. Robbers have been known to waylay messengers, but can expect the employer's troops to hunt them down. Robbing, waylaying, or even delaying a royal messenger can be viewed as treasonous.

The special privileges of messengers are dependent upon their employer. Royal messengers have the right to requisition horses to continue their journey in case of accident (though this right can be revoked if abused). Messengers of less exalted patrons must make do with what their purse can purchase. The Pope keeps a stable especially for his messengers, and Papal messengers receive free lodging (and nursing, if injured) in ecclesiastical buildings.

Royal messengers often have extraordinary rights in a king's name. The messenger eats in the king's hall when not on a mission, and is given one or more suits of clothing (with pairs of shoes or boots) each year. While on the road, a royal messenger is given a stipend for food and lodging. Horses may also be provided by the king, but more often the messenger owns a horse and is reimbursed for its death or injury. Old messengers may become horse buyers for a king, may assume the maintenance of a royal castle, or may oversee the lodging and ransom of noble prisoners. In any case, retired messengers who were valuable and loyal early in life are rewarded later in life. Some are even sent as ambassadors to wizards' Covenants.

Inns

Travelers on the roads of Mythic Europe need places to stay when overtaken by darkness or weariness. For noble travelers, accommodation can often be had at castles and manors, especially if a traveler is related to the local lord or lady. Vassals have an obligation to provide hospitality for their lord. The Church provides temporary lodging for travelers, but quite often the traveler is awakened at midnight for Matins (the beginning of the day).

For those who do not have noble influence, or do not wish to stay at a monastery, the need for shelter may be met by the many inns which dot roads. Inns are usually located in towns or cities, or at an easy day's journey from the last stop. Inns provide rooms for the well-to-do, with a bed big enough for four or five people, or offer accommodation in the common room. Prices vary depending on how far it is to other accommodations; the farther away from the city, the higher the price. All sorts of people may be found at an inn, from honest merchants and working men, to cutpurses, Pardoners, and outlaws.

The lone country inn can form the seed of a town, attracting other businesses related to travel, such as a blacksmith or stables. A tavern is often attached to the typical inn, providing food and drink. Merchants may also set up booths in the vicinity of such a stopover. Indeed, a church may even be built nearby, attracting more settlers. Within a decade or two, a new town may grow up.

"The Templar's Feast," an inn on the road from Dijon to Toul, is run by Jean-Jacques, a hardworking man. He, his wife, and three children have made a good living feeding and housing travelers, often rich merchants on their way from France to Flanders. Recently, the inn has become the headquarters of Eduard le Savage, an outlawed Norman knight. Le Savage has gathered many vicious soldiers to his side, preying on travelers within two days travel up and down the road. The Baron d'Auton recently lost two men in one of Eduard's raids, and has sworn vengeance on the knight and his men. The Count of Champagne has warned d'Auton that no harm must come to the inn or its owners, as the inn is an important stop for Italian merchants on their way to the fairs of Champagne. D'Auton is waiting for the opportunity to catch Eduard on the road, where the inn cannot hamper the Baron's actions.

Ships and Shipping

Given the troubles and time involved with travel overland, ships provide a secure and more timely method of travel. Many types of ships exist, mainly distinguished by whether they sail rivers or seas, and by which seas they frequent. River craft tend to be of shallow draft, and maneuvered by sails, oars, or poles. Smaller rivers carry proportionately smaller boats. Many river craft are simply log rafts which are poled down river and broken up upon destination.

On the Atlantic and Baltic coasts, ships based on Scandinavian craft dominate, being built for heavy seas. To help facilitate rough travel oceangoing ships also have a high freeboard to prevent swamping. The Norse are the best boat builders in Mythic Europe, capable of building craft supposedly able to sail across the Atlantic.

Mediterranean craft have a lower freeboard, and are generally built lighter than Atlantic vessels. Small Mediterranean ships tend to be of one or two masts, rigged with a lateen sail. Galleys also continue to be built here, based on models and theories handed down from the ancient Greeks and Romans. These ships are powered by slave oarsmen. Because of their low freeboard and construction, galleys cannot stand up to the waves of the Atlantic.

Ships depend on the skill of their navigators to make landfall. Navigators use a variety of instruments, as well as their own skill and experience to guide their way. The Vikings used a lodestone and sunstone to determine their location on the ocean, but now there exists the compass, which always points north. Astrology has also lent its wisdom and the astrolabe to the mariner, allowing a navigator to determine latitude. There is no way, however, to determine distances east or west when beyond sight of land. Even the poorest navigator knows dozens

of landmarks, because a bad sighting can doom an entire crew to a watery grave. Normal custom is to sail within sight of land for as much of a journey as possible, to insure the ship stays on course. During storms, however, prudent mariners sail out to sea rather than risk being caught between storm and shore.

Due to the uncertain nature of weather, no mariner can accurately tell how long a trip may last, but a reasonably accurate guess can be made based on the season. For instance, the simple journey from Dover to Calais, a mere 19 miles, might take a few hours with a good wind, or might involve a wait of several weeks for a wind change. However, an experienced mariner can tell the best time to make the crossing, as winds tend to come from a certain direction in specific parts of the year.

In battle, ships become veritable arsenals, particularly warships. Raised platforms called castles are built onto the bow and stern of some ships to provide positions from which archers may fire. Even trading vessels sometimes have these castles, as piracy is always a threat. Normal naval tactics call for ships to approach each other, crews firing bows, until other crewmen can grapple the other ship and board, sweeping the opposing deck of the enemy.

In their sea battles the Byzantines use a magical mixture called Greek Fire, which when lit cannot be extinguished by water. They place pumps on the decks of their galleys, and pump the Greek Fire onto the water. They then retreat and fire the mixture, to torch, redirect, or trap their opponents. The formula for Greek Fire is known only by a select few craftsmen in Constantinople, and they are forbidden to leave the city for any reason. The cities of Italy, especially Venice and Genoa, offer to make a prince of the person who gives them the secret of Greek Fire.

Time Keeping

The keeping of time, both during the day and during the year, is of great importance to the Church, which must calculate when prayers are said, devotions made, and festivals staged. The historians and clerks of Mythic Europe's kings and emperors must also record when battles, marriages, and decrees occur. And, the farmer needs to know when to plant and reap. All involve keeping some record of time.

An Ecclesiastical Day

Mattins	Midnight
Lauds	
Prime	Sunrise or Daybreak
Terce	
Sixte	Mid-day
Nones	
Vespers	
Compline	Sunset

Ecclesiastical Calendar

Day	Date
Epiphany	January 6
Candlemas	February 2
Lady Day	March 25
Easter	Between March 22 and April 25
Pentecost	Seven weeks after Easter
Lammas day	August 1
Assumption day	August 15
Holy Cross day	September 14
Michaelmas	September 29
All Saints day	November 1
Christmas	December 25

Years

Annual time is kept by means of calendars. The system largely in use in the west is that which Julius Caesar invented. It divides the year into twelve months, and each month into a varying number of days (though some months lost days due to political machinations of the Roman senate). Caesar's calendar was altered by Constantine who divided the months into seven-day weeks (an inheritance from the Jewish Sabbath, allowing rest on the seventh day).

Major events on the calendar (e.g., saints' days, Easter, and Christmas) act as reference points for the year, just as a king's reign is often used as a reference when referring to a year. The most famous king is, of course, Jesus Christ, and the Church dates years from the birth of Christ, Anno Domini (meaning "Year of our Lord"). However, clerks and chroniclers use the years of more mundane kings' reigns to mark dates (e.g., *"In the seventh year of the reign of Richard, King of England, Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou."*)

Magi of the Order of Hermes need to keep track of the passing year, and must mark days during it, to forecast special events and phases. If *vis* only appears on a single night of the year on a faerie mound, Magi need to know of the night's approach to harvest the *vis*. Passage of annual time also allows Magi to recognize potentially dangerous days, when Faerie, Infernal, or Divine power is particularly powerful.

The year starts on January 1, though the names of the months inherited from the Romans indicate that the year used to start in March. The change occurred in the Sixth Century and is the result of starting the year of Grace, year one, at Christmas. However, there are many other ways to calculate the start of the year, including Lady Day (March 25), or Easter (calculated from the time of the Vernal Equinox). Civil authorities also have their own methods of determining the beginning and duration of the year (for tax collection purposes). For example, the year of the English Exchequer runs from Michaelmas to Michaelmas (September 29).

DAYS

The counting of hours is of primary importance to monks in particular and churchmen in general, who must attend prayer at specified times during the day. The day, from sunrise to sunset, is divided into twelve hours, regardless of season, so that an hour in the winter is shorter than one in the summer. Indeed, prayers and offices change their hour depending on the season.

The day starts at Mattins (midnight), followed by Lauds (soon after Mattins), and then by Prime at daybreak in winter, or sunrise in summer. After Prime the day is divided into three hour units, with prayers at Terce, Sext (mid-day), Nones, Vespers, and Compline (sunset). At each interval, masses, lessons, or prayers are held. The seasonal hours change at Holy Cross day (September 14) and Easter.

The need to calculate time has led enterprising monks to invent ways to signal hours, from waterclocks to mechanical clocks which ring chimes to awaken the brothers. For traveling, portable sundials can be carried, with holes for the various months, into which the traveler inserts a peg and then orients to the north. However, these time pieces are difficult to use accurately as true north must be known.

The counting of hours in a day is also important to Magi, especially those involved in laboratory experimentation. If an experiment reaches a crucial phase at a particular time, a Magus needs to be able to measure the arrival of that time for the experiment to be a success. Otherwise, important time, effort, and, worst of all, *vis* could be lost.

Like enterprising monks, Magi also create clever devices for the telling of time. However, where monks' devices are based on mechanical parts, those of Magi can range into the supernatural. Woe to any Magus who's magic is interfered with by powers beyond his control. Prankish faeries and demons are particularly fond of interfering with the supernatural mechanics of Magi's time pieces.

Weights and Measures

Though no two countries ostensibly use the same system for weight, length, or volume, most measurements are based on natural things, whether body parts or grains, and are therefore of similar determination.

The inch is based on the width of the human thumb, and so we find lengths of similar size called the thumb in England, or the tomme in Scotland. The foot is twelve inches long. The ell, a measure of cloth, is two feet. The yard is measured as three feet, but according to legend, was introduced by King Henry I of England and is the length from his nose to his outstretched hand. The fathom is six feet or two yards, the length of a man's arms outstretched. The perch, named for the wooden pole with which it is measured, is about 16 1/2 feet long, and is used for measuring land. The furlong, or furrow's length, is 400 perches. The mile is 8 furlongs; the word itself comes to from the Latin Miles Pasuum, or 1000 paces. The league is the length a man can walk without resting, and measures 3 miles.

Large areas are measured according to the amount a man can plow in a morning (so are named the German morgen and English acre), or by how much land a specified amount of seed can cover (so is named the French setier). Because most fields are irregularly shaped, the amount of land covered by these measures is highly variable, being larger in clear land, and smaller in forests or rough terrain.

Weights are relatively easy to ascertain, as a balance is such a simple instrument of measurement. Grains of wheat or barley are often the smallest unit of weight, though the ancients used the carat, which is now set to be 3 barleycorns or 4 wheat grains. The ounce dates back to the Romans, and weighs about fifteen carats, though the English use the Troy ounce of about 16 carats. The mark originated in Germany, and weighs 8 ounces. The pound is often measured at 16 ounces, or a doublemark. Larger measures are most often specific for the material being weighed, but the hundredweight, or 100 pounds, is a common unit. Fractions or multiples of the hundredweight are common.

Volume is most often measured from weight. The pint is the basic unit, and a pint of water weighs a pound. Multiples of the pint are the quart (2 pints), gallon (8 pints), peck (2 gallons), and bushel (8 gallons). The peck and bushel are normally used for grain and other dry measure. Greater liquid measures include the hogshead (63 Gallons), the pipe (126 gallons), and the tun (252 gallons). The tun is used as a standard measure for the capacity of ships; each ship is said to be able to carry so many tuns, also known as the ship's tonnage.

Most countries have laws forbidding millers, grocers, or other merchants from giving short measure, so quite often a merchant errs on the side of the greater amount. From this custom comes the "Baker's Dozen," or thirteen of an item. Measurement of grain and flour often causes the greatest dispute, as they can be given in "heaped" or "straked" measure, either of which can vary weight by as much as a sixth of the whole.

On occasion a Magus's experiments rely on the purchase of ingredients from mundane merchants. Such Magi are advised to be careful about the weight of ingredients sold to them. When taken at a dealer's word, a weight which is false can lead to disaster for a Magus's experiment, and maybe Covenant if the experiment involves other dangerous elements.

THE CHURCH

CHAPTER THREE

The Church, that of Christianity, is one of the very foundations of Mythic Europe. Though internally divested and divided into individual parts with varying perspectives on God and the Scriptures, the Church is the unifying force of most Mythic European people and kingdoms. Indeed, the influence of the Church exceeds every political boundary and language barrier, making everyone from king to serf answerable to God, or his representative in the mortal realm, the Pope.

Of course, the Church is not the only religious institution of Mythic Europe. Different cultures have their own faiths, including those of the Jews, Muslims, and the few descendants of the ancient barbarians who still hold onto their pagan heritage. However, these faiths are barely tolerated or are treated with outright hostility — branded heretical — by many followers of the Church. Only the more enlightened followers of the Church understand that different faiths have different truths to teach. Many such minds can be found in the Order of Hermes.

Christianity

Christianity, the principal faith of Mythic Europe, relies on the belief that the one God exists in three beings: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The faith also claims that the redemption of the world is brought about by the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, the Son.

The Roman Empire first ignored, then persecuted, then accepted the faith of Christ. Emperor Constantine accepted the Christian faith and issued the Edict of Toleration in A.D. 312, and the Emperor Theodosius outlawed all other religions in 395. After Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, missionaries carried the teachings of Christ to people outside the Empire.

The Muslims overran Christian lands during the Seventh and Eighth Centuries, capturing three of the original five patriarchal cities. The two remaining cities, Rome and Constantinople, split over the leadership of the Church, with two major schisms, one in 837 and one in 1054. The Christian Church healed from the schism of 837, but in 1054 the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated each other, and the two have been separate ever since.

Orthodoxy of faith in the Christian Church is assured with the requirement that bishops be ordained in the presence of at least three other bishops of proven orthodoxy. Bishops may also ordain priests, who maintain the faith of the laity.

The Christian Church even has its own law, which covers cases of sin (as opposed to crime, cases of which are tried by mundane courts), and all cases concerning churches and clergy. Marriage, inheritance, and legitimacy are covered under Christian law, as are special protections for widows, orphans, and refugees. Canon law is binding on all baptized persons, from the lowliest serf to king and emperor.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church is the great religious organization of western Mythic Europe, holding sway from Ireland to Hungary and from Denmark to the southern tip of Italy. The Catholic Church and the eastern, or Orthodox, Church irrevocably parted in A.D. 1054, when the Pope and the Patriarch excommunicated each other.

The head of the Catholic Church is the Bishop of Rome, known as the Pope. Under the Pope the Catholic Church divides its lands into provinces, overseen by archbishops, and further into dioceses, ruled by bishops. Bishops and archbishops rule from cathedrals (from the Latin *"cathedra,"* meaning seat), which are generally found in cities.

Beneath bishops are individual parishes, each with its own church. The parish is managed by a rector. If the rector is not a resident of the parish, as is quite common, a local vicar is put in charge of the local by the bishop. Rectors and vicars hold their offices until death, retirement, or promotion, and though they can be removed for misconduct, they rarely are.

"Regular" clergy are members of orders, such as the Dominicans or Knights Templar, who live under rules imposed by the heads of their orders. The head of an order is only beholden to the Pope, and does not answer to the lesser authority of archbishop or king. Most regular clergy may hold or use communal property, but individually are sworn to vows of poverty. Members of an order may become bishops, but cannot become parish priests.

The "secular" clergy, those who tend the common folk, do not belong to orders, but have the task of the saving of the souls of the populace. They are appointed as parish priests under a rector, and may advance to any position in the Catholic Church hierarchy.

Just as the secular world is divided into nobility and peasants, so too is the Catholic Church. The bulk of clergy occupy low positions in the Church, and are genuinely concerned with the spiritual health of their parish or community. However, the higher offices of the Catholic Church are prizes normally given only to favorites of a bishop or the Pope. Some bishoprics have large incomes associated with them, and it is common for a priest to be given the proceeds of a parish or diocese without having to travel to it. The heads of religious orders also have many opportunities for embezzlement and corruption, as they control lands and moneys donated to the orders by penitent nobles.

Members of the clergy are not subject to the authority of temporal rulers, only to church law. A member of the clergy accused of crimes must be brought before superiors in the Church, who decide guilt or innocence according to canon law. All members of the clergy are sworn to celibacy, but this stricture is not always observed.

ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Orthodox Church is the eastern branch of the Christian Church. After the death of Christ and the preaching of his disciples, five cities became "Apostolic" sees, because their churches were founded directly by one of the apostles. These sees were Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. Constantinople was added to the list after the Roman capital moved there. These five cities constituted the leadership of the Christian Church, but the Bishop of Rome, claiming primacy because of the succession from St. Peter, rejected the authority of the other four cities. The fall of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria to the Muslim invaders left Constantinople and Rome as the last two Apostolic sees. The final break between east and west came in A.D. 1054, when the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated each other.

The head of the Orthodox Church is the Byzantine Emperor, who represents the whole of the Church. The Emperor appoints the Patriarch to oversee the business of the Orthodox Church. All high-ranked clergy are drawn from monasteries, and must be celibate (though rarely are). Local priests are chosen by their congregations, and are required to marry. Priests are presented to the local bishop for ordination.

The Orthodox Church is responsible for the conversion of the Serbians, Bulgarians, and Russians to the Christian faith. The faith imparted to these peoples, and that maintained by the Orthodox Church, involves images, called icons (though a failed attempt was made to abolish their use in the Ninth Century). Among these icons is the Blessed Virgin, the special patroness of the Orthodox faith, and of the city of Constantinople.

Pope

When Simon acknowledged Jesus as God's son, Jesus named him Peter, which means Rock, and said to him, *"On this rock I shall build my church."* Jesus also granted Peter the *"keys to the Kingdom of Heaven,"* and said, *"Whatever you shall bind on Earth will be considered bound in Heaven; whatever you loose on Earth will be considered loosed in Heaven."* After the crucifixion of Christ, Peter became the head of the Christian Church, and traveled among the Gentiles preaching the faith. He settled in Rome, and became its first Bishop. He was crucified by the Roman Emperor Nero, and buried under what is now the Cathedral of St. Peter. The Pope, as the Apostolic successor of St. Peter, holds the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, as head of the Catholic Church.

The Pope selects the cardinals, who are his chief advisors. In turn, upon the Pope's death, the cardinals choose his successor from among their number. The choice of Pope is often difficult and contentious, as cardinals have their own agendas and nationalistic sentiments. A poor choice for Pope is often made as a compromise, particularly when two or more factions cannot accept each other's candidate. The Roman mob and the German Emperor are often additional factions whose wishes cardinals must satisfy in their selection of Pope.

The Cathedral of St. John Lateran is the seat of the Pope, as the Bishop of Rome. Indeed, the Pope resides in the Lateran Palace, adjacent to the Cathedral. The office of Pope commands a huge staff, including the College of Cardinals, clergy for the maintenance of the Cathedral, and clerks to transcribe letters and Papal Bulls. Noble visitors and even legates from the eastern Empire can be found waiting for an audience with the Pope. The Lateran is the center of a maelstrom of politics, where schemes and intrigue are facts of life. From the choice of leader for the next Crusade against the Saracens, to the annulment of a royal marriage, to the ordination of a new bishop or cardinal, someone on the Pope's staff has an axe to grind, or a favorite to offer for advancement. Double- and triple-crosses are common, as staff members try to surpass one another in the Lateran hierarchy.

The Pope's decrees are called Bulls, from the ribbon which binds them. Bulls of excommunication or interdict are sealed with hempen twine, while other Bulls are sealed with silk ribbon.

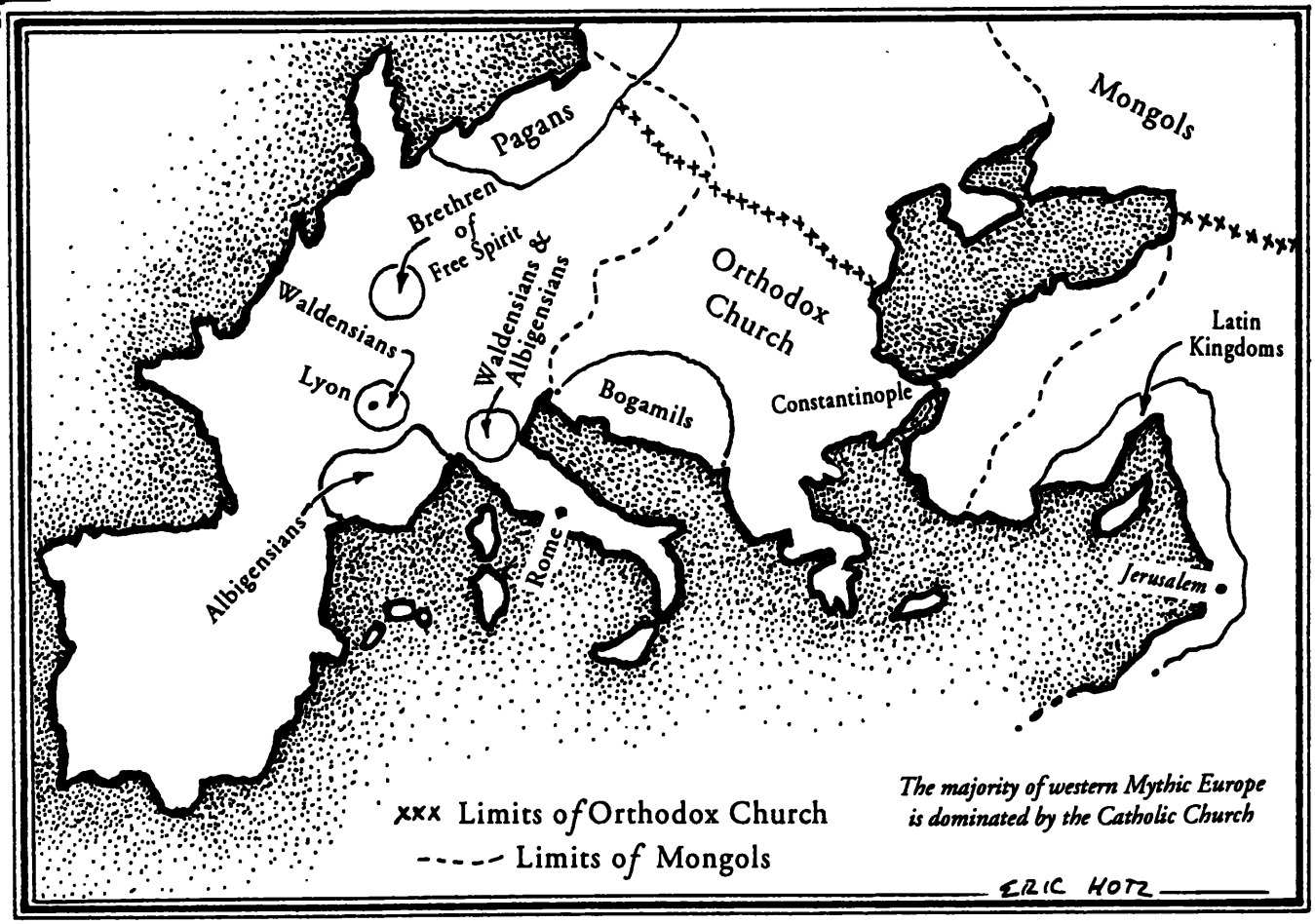
TRIALS OF THE PAPACY

Throughout its history the Papacy has faced problems concerning its leadership of the Christian Church. These trials have, in one way or another, made the Church and the Papacy what it is in the Thirteenth Century.

The first trial the Papacy faced was the breakup of the Christian world into two separate churches, the Catholic and the Orthodox or eastern Church. The position of the Papacy has always been that the primacy of the Church rests with the Successors of Peter, rather than in a council of five Apostolic sees. The other sees — Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem — all lay in what was the eastern Roman Empire. And, the idea of Apostolic succession, the inheritance of the sees from the apostles, which forms the very basis of the Papacy, was contrary to eastern Church thought. Thus, the two camps had very different perspectives on the structure of the Church and its faith, leading to their break in A.D. 1054, when Pope Leo IX and Patriarch Michael Cerularius excommunicated each other.

The superiority of state over Church has also posed an age-old threat to the Papacy. The subordination of Church to state was well advanced by the time of Charlemagne, who merely treated the Pope as the principal Bishop of the Empire. Furthermore, bishops of the Carolingian Empire collected taxes, acted as judges, and performed diplomatic missions for the state, becoming its agents.

Later on Mythic European nobles even appointed bishops and appropriated Church money for their own use, making the Church a tool of the laity. This abuse lasted until the election of Pope Gregory VII in 1073. Gregory claimed subordination of Church to state was wrong, and that state should serve Church. He presented a document called the Donation of Constantine, which was a grant of Imperial rights designed to transfer sole control of Italy from Holy Roman Emperor



Constantine to Pope Sylvester I. Pope Gregory also presented a list of claims about the Papacy, called the Dictatus Papae, which included the following:

That the Roman church was founded by God alone. That the Roman pontiff alone can with right be called Universal. That he alone can depose or reinstate bishops. That, in a council, his legate, even if a lower grade, is above all bishops, and can pass sentence of deposition against them. That, among other things, we ought not to remain in the same house with those excommunicated by him. That for him alone is it lawful, according to the needs of the time, to make new laws, to assemble together new congregations, to make an abbey of a canonry; and, on the other hand, to divide a rich bishopric and unite the poor ones. That it may be permitted to him to depose emperors. That he may be permitted to transfer bishops if need be. That he has power to ordain a clerk of any church he may wish. That no synod shall be called a general one without his order. That no chapter and no book shall be considered canonical without his authority. That a sentence passed by him may be retracted by no one; and that he himself, alone of all, may retract it. That he himself may be judged by no one. That no one shall dare to condemn one who appeals to the apostolic chair. That the Roman church has never erred; nor will it err to all eternity, the Scripture bearing witness. That the Roman pontiff, if he have been canonically ordained, is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter; St. Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, bearing witness, and many holy fathers agreeing with him. As is contained in the decrees of St. Symmachus the pope. That he may depose and reinstate bishops without assembling a synod. That he who is not at peace with the Roman church shall not be considered catholic. That he may absolve subjects from their fealty to wicked men.

These claims, and others, lay at the heart of the investiture controversy, and were opposed by most kings, especially by German Emperor Henry IV. Gregory excommunicated Henry, who retaliated by electing Pope Clement III and declaring Gregory deposed. The people and nobles of the Holy Roman Empire voted in favor of Gregory, so Henry, to save his throne, begged Gregory to lift the ban. Gregory kept Henry waiting in the snow for three days at the castle of Canossa before relenting and lifting the excommunication.

The power of the Papacy has also been endangered by mundane interference in the appointment of the Catholic Church's higher clergy. The question of kings and emperors electing bishops was discussed at length at the Council of Worms in 1122. It was there decided that kings may give a bishop temporal power, but only the Pope can grant spiritual power. The dispute over the appointment of bishops was important for it determined who would have say in the deployment of power in western Mythic Europe. After all, bishops were both churchmen and feudal landholders, owing service to both the Pope and their kings. By claiming authority in the appointment of bishops, the Pope seized control over much of Mythic Europe and the loyalty of those governing Mythic Europe.

A final threat to the Papacy was posed from within the Catholic Church itself. The conciliar movement, begun by Church scholars opposed to the claim that the Pope may be judged by no man, contended that the general council of churchmen had power over the Pope. That is, only the general Church was without error; its leader could be found at fault. This important movement continues even now, generating many letters, decrees, and Bulls to challenge the Pope's autonomy.

Sacraments

The sacraments are the seven rites of the Christian Church. They are paths to holiness, and must be performed by a priest or higher official in the Church.

Baptism introduces a child to the Church, and cleanses the soul of original sin. In most communities, a child is christened within a year of birth. Until baptism, the soul is stained by original sin, and may not go to Heaven upon death. Water is usually used as an outward sign of the cleansing of the spirit during baptism — the stain of sin is washed away.

Confirmation brings a person fully into the Church, and is performed after a child has been taught about the Church and Christ. The child professes faith, and promises to renounce evil.

The eucharist is the point in the Mass which commemorates the Last Supper of Christ. During the eucharist a priest approaches the altar, raises Cup, filled with wine, and Wafer. They become the Flesh and Blood of the Lord. Only the priest may drink of the wine, but the wafer is given to the congregation. The eucharist is the common bond of all Christians, and is the sacrament of their redemption by the death and resurrection of Christ.

Matrimony binds a man and woman in holy wedlock, which may not be dissolved save by special dispensation from the Pope. Marriage is for life. Marriage also symbolizes the union of Christ and his people.

Ordination may only be performed by a bishop or higher priest. It admits a person as a member of the clergy, allowing another to perform all the sacraments of their rank.

Absolution is the cleansing of the soul, and is granted by clergy after a person's sincere confession. A priest may assign tasks for a sinner to perform, based on the degree and amount of sin. Absolution only clears the soul of those sins confessed. Confession and absolution are usually performed before battle, so that a knight may go to God if killed. Absolution is also known as shriving.

The last of the sacraments, unction, also known as the last rites, cleanses the soul of a dying person so that his or her soul may enter Heaven after final judgment. Last rites are given after the final confession of a dying person. If there is no priest available the final unction may be given by a layman. For a priest to refuse to give last rites is to damn the would-be recipient's soul to Hell.

Saints and Sainthood

Saints are particularly holy men and women accepted into Heaven upon death (most people must spend time in Purgatory before entering Heaven). Because saints have entered Heaven, they are able to intercede for living people with God, so that God may forgive humanity's sins. This forgiveness is the basic theory behind indulgences and the transference of grace.

Saints may also be prayed to as individuals, and many are recognized for specific actions. For instance, St. Anthony, canonized in A.D. 1231, is the patron saint of travelers. Cities, countries, and guilds often have patron saints, some have more than one. The authenticity of some is even questioned, and secret orders operating in cities sometimes present demonic allies as saints, to undermine Christian faith.

Saints date from the earliest days of the Christian Church. All the apostles are saints, as are many missionaries and martyrs. Early saints were acclaimed by cults, which formed during the saints' lives or after their deaths. But, since 1171 only the Pope may officially canonize a saint. Not all saints (i.e., those of a local area) are recognized by the Church, so communities send representatives to the Lateran to offer proof of miracles and justification for the canonization of their local hero. Unfortunately, simple locals can be duped into believing a malicious Magus or demon is a divine servant, and petition for the being's canonization.

The lives of many early saints are not known, but parts played by more recently canonized saints in the progress of the Church is well known. Many recent saints (St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic, St. Clare of Assisi) have founded religious orders, while others, such as St. Anthony, are known for their teachings.

To canonize a saint, the Church must gather evidence of miracles performed during the person's lifetime or after death. One priest, the Devil's Advocate, tries to explain the miracles as part of the natural process, or the intervention of another saint. If the evidence given on behalf of the candidate outweighs the arguments of the Devil's Advocate, the Pope, in a special ceremony in the Lateran Church, declares the person a saint.

The Church has recently begun an investigation into the life of Alice de Montrevault, a supposed miracle-worker and holy woman in the city of Montrevault, France. During her life, Alice performed many witnessed miracles of healing and vision, including fainting upon the death of Pope Innocent III, days before word of his death had reached the town.

To properly understand Alice's role and her miracles, the Church needs investigators who can study her life and her miracles. There are rumors that Alice was in fact a servant of the Devil, or a Hermetic Magus in disguise. The Devil's Advocate on the case, Father Andre of the Dominicans, is seeking Magi who are willing to explain how miracles such as Alice's could be performed through the use of the "natural" process of magic. Such cooperation could be the first step

toward Church acceptance of Magi as a natural part of the world, or it could merely be a trick to cause members of the Order to expose themselves to Inquisitional examination.

SAINT MARY

St. Mary is the Madonna, the Blessed Virgin, the mother of Jesus. In the Orthodox Church she is known as Theotokos, the Mother of God. Canonized in A.D. 431 by the Council of Ephesus, Mary has always been venerated above all other saints. Her unique position as the Mother of Christ lends her a warmth and humanity other saints lack. At the Day of Judgment she is expected to intercede for sinners, and prayers to her are supposed to have great strength. The ideals of chivalry are in great part focused on the Madonna. Her following is greatest in southern France, and the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine was modeled on her virtues. The Aquitaine court still touts Mythic Europe's strongest veneration for the Blessed Virgin.

A group of knights in Bordeaux has recently begun a movement to form a new military order, the Knights of the Madonna. Supporters of the movement believe there are pagan, Muslim, and wizardly enemies in France, so petition the Pope to create a new Crusade against this "foe," a foe which is close to home.

Thus far the Pope has not formally recognized the Knights of the Madonna, nor has he taken action on their request for a crusade against Hermetic Magi. However, some Magi within the Order (particularly in the Normandy Tribunal) are pushing their brethren to take action before a crusade is declared. The leaders of the Normandy Tribunal feel the Knights of the Madonna must be stopped, but realize that no trace of their elimination may lead to the Order (such a mistake would only trigger the crusade the Magi are trying to prevent). Other Tribunals, with less reason to fear the Knights of the Madonna, warn Normandy Tribunal it will be held responsible for any violation of the Code that results from involvement in mundane affairs.

Seven Deadly Sins

The Christian world view identifies seven sins as particularly evil, given their terribly corrupting effect on the soul.

The sin of Pride causes a person to place himself or herself above others, and can lead to a sense of superiority over God. Lust blinds a person to devotion to God, leading the weak to seek pleasure and gratification. Envy makes a person resent what is had, desiring what another has instead of concentrating on personal piety. Anger leads one to commit atrocities, and to stray from Christ's teachings. Covetousness is the desire for another's possessions, leading a person away from the soul. (The contrast between Envy and Covetousness is that the covetous person does not resent what is had, but simply wants others' goods.) The Glutton seeks pleasure from food and drink, to the detriment of the soul. (Gluttony and Lust are usually bound.) Sloth makes one delinquent in prayer and attendance at Church.

Many demons are the personification of a Cardinal Sin, such as Lilith, the Demon of Lust. The Church keeps lists of demons encountered, along with their attributes and sins, in an effort to aid exorcists in their task of casting out Infernal influences from the faithful. Books of these demonic lists are sent to bishops and archbishops, who store them in the most secure vaults of the Church. Diabolists also keep such lists, to better summon and control known demons.

Excommunication and Interdict

When a sinner transgresses the laws of God and remains impenitent, the only recourse the Church has is to cast the sinner from the community of Christians. This act is known as excommunication (from the Latin "to put out of the community").

The excommunicate is not allowed the sacraments until he repents of his deeds and begs to return to the fellowship of Christians. No priest will perform the marriage of an excommunicate, and if a person dies excommunicate, he may not be buried in sanctified ground. However, his children can still be baptized, as the excommunicate's sin does not exclude descendents from Christian fellowship. However, those who give aid or succor to an excommunicate are themselves cast out. And, subjects of a ruler who becomes excommunicate are no longer bound by oaths sworn to that ruler.

Interdiction is a much more powerful form of excommunication, for it places an entire city or country under ban. Baptism is still performed, but the other sacraments are withheld from area's people. As interdiction places the soul of every man, woman and child in an area in peril, it usually invokes wholesale desertion from the offending cause which inspired the interdiction. The threat posed to the collective soul puts intense pressure on the ruler of the area to heal the breach with the Church.

Both excommunication and interdiction can and have been used as means to force the Church's political views on a person or country. Just the threat of excommunication is often sufficient to reform an offender.

Excommunication and interdict can also be subtly used by temporal rulers. King John of England quarreled with the Papacy over the selection of the Archbishop of York, causing the Pope to place all of England under interdict. Later, John's capitulation and his oaths of homage to the Pope saved his throne. As King Philip Augustus of France was simultaneously preparing an invasion of England, the Pope was quick to threaten Philip with interdiction if the invasion continued; England was now a fief of the Papacy.

Excommunication and interdiction are not often threats to the Order of Hermes as Magi and Covenants in the Order are usually outside the social order of Mythic Europe, so have their lives changed little by Christian ostracism. However, Covenants that operate under a socially acceptable facade, and suffer excommunication or interdiction because of some action or event, can ruin their station in society and endanger their existence as a Covenant. Such an ostracized Covenant becomes open to Inquisition.

Inquisition

The detection and abolition of heresy has long plagued the Christian Church. In A.D. 1231, Pope Gregory IX issues the Bull Excommunicamus, which establishes an Inquisition to locate and try heretics. Gregory IX assigns the task to the mendicant orders, particularly the Dominicans. In 1252, Pope Innocent IV legalizes the use of torture to gain a confession.

Inquisitional tribunals are established under two judges, appointed by the Pope. Evidence must be given by at least two witnesses, who remain anonymous. The suspect must give his evidence on oath. If a confession of heresy is made, the person may recant his heresy and be given a canonical pardon. If no confession is given, the heretic is given to the secular authorities for execution (normally by burning at the stake).

Since the founding of the Inquisition, some tribunals have developed a reputation for persecuting the innocent at the behest of the wealthy and powerful. Such tribunals accept only one result — execution — and naturally are feared by those subject to their decrees. The Inquisition has no power over cases of witchcraft, paganism or diabolism, unless heresy can be cited as an attendant condition.

In Agde, the Inquisitional tribunal has tortured hundreds of laymen accused of the heresies of Albigenses and Waldenses. The tribunal is led by the Benedictine monk Jean de Moissac. The Benedictine Abbey of St. Giles has also recently received many large bequests from the local nobility. Rumors in Narbonne have that the Inquisitional tribunal is pursuing the personal enemies of those who give them gifts, regardless of the accused's innocence or guilt.

The Bishop of Narbonne has formed a small party from the military orders to observe the activities of the tribunal to determine whether Jean de Moissac is acting within the restrictions of the Papal Bull and, more specifically, whether his tribunal should be terminated.

Indulgence

An indulgence grants a member of the Church remittance for sins through the grace of Christ and the saints. In theory, indulgences are given by the Church for exceptional service to the cause of Christianity. Such service includes going on Crusade, aiding the building of churches and cathedrals, and aiding the poor or elderly. In reality, grants of land or money to the Church also gain a sinner an indulgence, which leads to the wholesale buying of grace.

Pardoners are special agents of the Church, tasked with distributing indulgences. They are normally traveling priests, dispensing indulgences for a fee to sinners in the towns they visit. Pardoners are despised by town clergy, since pardoners take money which would otherwise go to the town church.

More enterprising Pardoners sometimes go to areas known for their heresy, hoping to make a fortune from those who realize their sin. A Pardoner visiting a German Hermetic Covenant is said to have made twelve sales of salvation in one night, the night of Allhallows Eve, 1198.

Pilgrimage

The idea of pilgrimage, to travel to the site of holy relics or places, stems from two ancient Christian ideas. The first is that all of life is a journey toward God. The second is that certain places or relics are foci for the Holy Spirit. Thus, to visit the shrine of a saint or a holy place is to move closer to God. A journey to the earthly city of Jerusalem is in essence a journey to the heavenly city of God.

Pilgrims are given privileges to aid them on their way. They may spend the night at religious establishments, are exempt from tolls or fees for the use of roads and bridges, and are protected by Church law from attack by other Christians. Any lord or knight foolish enough to attack a party of pilgrims risks excommunication by the Church. Even pilgrims to the Holy Land are sometimes protected from the attack of Saracens, though such protections are bought or are part of peace treaties

between crusaders and Saracen kings. The Templars and Hospitallers originated as guards for the pilgrimage routes through the Holy Land, and the Knights of Santiago, in Spain, were formed for the same purpose.

The donations brought by pilgrims, and the money they pay for accommodations, greatly enriches churches and cities visited on the pilgrimage trail. The three greatest shrines — places journeyed to on the trail — are the Holy City of Jerusalem, the city of Rome, and the Cathedral of St. James of Campostela in Santiago, Spain. Other less important shrines are Canterbury, site of the murder of St. Thomas a Becket; cities and towns in the Holy Land associated with the life of Christ; Mont St. Michel on the coast of Brittany; and many local shrines. Many cities and towns along the pilgrim trails have shrines to local saints as well.

Some enterprising Church leaders organize tours of shrines. So, for instance, a group of pilgrims from England on their way to Rome might visit shrines in St. Albans, outside of London; Canterbury; Mont St. Michel; Chartres; Tours; Le Puy; Arles; Marseille; Turin; and Rome. On their way back they might visit Naples, sail to Barcelona, walk across Spain to Santiago, and then finally return to England. Such a trip takes the better part of a year to complete. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land often take three or four years.

Monasticism

Monasticism has its roots in the early years of the Christian Church, when clergy felt the need to retreat from the world to contemplate the wonder of God. Two traditions of this isolated life were initiated, one of the solitary hermit, who retreats from contact with all others, the other of clergy who form communities, living by strict rules and observances. The word "monk" means alone, but is now used to designate a member of a monastic order.

Most orders base their rule (the set of requirements and actions allowed to a monk) on the Rule of St. Benedict, the most famous of the rules of the monastic orders. The Rule of Saint Benedict is based on the idea that a monk's day is to be encompassed by manual labor in the monastery garden, spiritual reading, and prayer. The monk also swears a number of vows, including some or all of obedience, stability, poverty, chastity, and humility.

The precedents set by the Benedictines eventually lost favor, though, when monks following the rules clearly abused them. For instance, where abbeys were supposed to be impoverished, many were extremely wealthy. Indeed, the Mythic European custom of leaving one's possessions to a monastery quickly made the monasteries rich, as that wealth was not often dispensed to the poor and needy. Rather, abbeys held huge tracts of land, with all the appropriate obligations and benefits. And, of course, this wealth encouraged sin, especially greed, gluttony, and improper conduct.

Dissatisfaction with the wealth and corruption of the Benedictines encouraged many monks to create their own rules. The greatest of these new orders is the Cistercian, named

after the monastery of Citeaux. Though many new orders arise in the Thirteenth Century, their proliferation is eventually halted by the Fourth Lateran Council, in A.D. 1215, which stipulates that founders of new orders must choose and follow one of the existing rules.

TYPES OF ORDERS

Most orders are of two types: contemplative (or monastic), and active (or mendicant). Contemplative orders attempt to reach an inner peace by retiring from the world, while active orders work among the populace for the good of the world. Members of contemplative orders are called monks and nuns, while those in mendicant orders are called friars and sisters.

Regardless of type, monasteries are often centers of learning, since monks value literacy among their skills. In fact, the Benedictine Rule (which is still one orders may follow) requires that part of the day be spent in reading, and a further part in copying, illuminating, or binding books.

Many of the mendicant orders adopt the custom of the third order, which allows a layman to benefit from association with an order without having to become a friar or sister. The third order is popular, as its members are regarded as clergy and can only be tried by canon law, making them exempt from secular authority. However, the order forbids the use of weapons except by special dispensation from the head of the order, making the third order less popular with the knightly class (though older knights sometimes join after retiring from military life).

Lesser sons of noble houses (or even unwanted heirs) are often consigned to monasteries by their parents, and nobles of pious demeanor often join willingly. While the vows of monastic orders are for life, the orders are known to make exceptions in the case of a noble house where the only living heir is a monk. However, the orders often refuse to release the monk, so that they may inherit the land. In this way many of the orders have grown very wealthy.

HERMETIC RELATIONS

Relations between monasteries and Magi of the Order of Hermes vary. Some orders (like the Dominicans and Beguines) view Magi as outside the Church, and therefore not worthy of trust. Others (such as the Conventual Franciscans and the Cistercian Order) have had more exposure to Magi, so view them more leniently. However, such generalizations cannot cover the varied reactions which Magi inspire from monks of all orders.

Regardless of relations between monasteries and Covenants, the two are essentially the same. Both are filled with people devoted to callings, be it to God or the Gift, and who isolate themselves from the world to pursue their devotion. Accordingly, good relations based on common philosophy might be expected between monasteries and Covenants. However, the insular nature of each small society makes internal corruption and incestuousness rife, and each society recognizes such evil in the other but not in itself.

AUGUSTINIAN CANONS

Augustinian canons live under the rule of St. Augustine and staff many cathedrals. The canons are a special case among monks as they are secular clergy living under the rule of the order. The Augustinian order is the equivalent of a guild for the staff of cathedrals, rather than a monastery or begging order. The canons maintain their cathedrals, leading services, hearing confession, and taking care of day-to-day operations. They also assist the local bishop by performing priestly functions for him, allowing him to administer to the diocese.

Augustinian canons are most influential in Rome, southern Germany, and Lorraine. In addition to staffing cathedrals, Augustinian houses tend to the sick and to pilgrims. Most Augustinian houses that are not cathedral chapters are small, numbering no more than a dozen canons and a prior.

AUSTIN FRIARS

Pope Alexander IV creates the Austin order in A.D. 1256 from a combination of several Italian orders, including the Orthodox Waldensians. The mendicant friars of this order live the Apostolic life in towns, doing good works. They are likely to be found caring for the sick and poor, or giving children the rudiments of education. Austin Friars are very active in the universities of Italy and Sicily, and at least one or two can be found at universities elsewhere in Mythic Europe. Austins often take teaching positions at universities, tending toward the subject of theology.

BEGUINES

The Beguines are a mendicant order of urban women, often wealthy, who minister to the poor and ill. They take no vows, but normally remain celibate. The Beguines are most prominent in the cities of Brabant, Flanders, and in the Rhineland, though a few Beguines can be found elsewhere, especially in the communes of Lombardy.

Local rulers, both secular and ecclesiastic, tend to look with disfavor on mendicant women, and many bishops have petitioned the Pope to force them into convents. However, the Beguines have not been formally recognized by the Pope, and are often associated with the Albigensians, though no charges of heresy have yet been leveled against them. The Beguines are perched on the fine line dividing heresy and acceptance, and individual bishops or inquisitors can rule for or against them.

There is a male counterpart to the Beguines, known as the Beghards.

Benedictines

The Rule of St. Benedict is the most famous of the rules of the monastic orders. It is based on the ideal that a monk's day is to be encompassed by manual labor, sometimes in the monastery garden, but more often in copying manuscripts; spiritual reading; and prayer. Benedictine monks swear obedience (their chief vow), stability (staying with the monastery), and conversion of morals. They also espouse poverty, chastity and humility, but rarely follow the first and only follow the other two as suits their needs. Finally, the Benedictine Rule assumes the majority of monks will not be ordained into priests, so few priests are resident at monasteries to perform the sacraments.

Each Benedictine monastery is self-contained and distinct from other monasteries. They are often located in untraveled areas, or in areas which are not heavily populated. However, the Rule of Saint Benedict provides a way for families to present children to a monastery to be raised as monks, so the monastery acts as a home for orphans and unwanted children, but also has brethren for the future.

Formed in the Sixth Century, the Benedictine order became very wealthy given land grants from secular rulers who wished to guarantee their way to Heaven. Most Benedictine abbeys now own vast tracts of land, and the monks and abbots live a grand life, acting much like temporal nobles, hunting and feasting. More recent orders are, for the most part, rejections of the Benedictine order, which stress a return to Apostolic poverty.

While many in the Church consider the Benedictines too worldly, their power has not been diminished by their corruption. They are a very wealthy order, and hold land in fief in most of Mythic Europe's kingdoms. However, the order's obedience to feudal overlords is much less than that of secular lords. Accordingly, more than one king has pressed the Lateran to force the Benedictines to give up their lands or be forced to accept the responsibilities which come with a fief. Thus far such efforts to pressure the Benedictines have come to naught.

In the farming district west of Munich lies the Benedictine monastery of Albrecht. The Prior of the monastery, Father Gunter, and his monks have been developing a reputation for hedonistic practices, a reputation far worse than any garnered by a Benedictine house. The monks are taking large donations of grain, coin, and service from the community. In return, they offer only recriminations and calls for increased piety.

In truth the monastery is plagued by the demon Fenzeral, who has taken the form of a young monk, Brother Anton. He has drawn the monks away from the sacraments, perverting their masses into diabolic services. The once-pious monks have one by one fallen either to temptation or to the claws of Fenzeral. Now, they are unredeemably proud and gluttonous, considering themselves deserving of the best the land has to offer, all in return for their lives of "piety" and "service to the Church."

Carmelites

The Carmelites are a mendicant monastic order, but one started from separate groups of hermits on the slopes of Mt. Carmel, in the Holy Land. The order flees the Muslims in A.D. 1238, and develops chapters throughout Mythic Europe. The majority of chapters may be found in Spain, England, Sicily, and Italy.

The Carmelites pattern themselves after the Dominicans in their aims and goals. They practice abstinence, silence, and fasting, living as hermits with a common church. Carmelite monasteries are likely to be found in the wilderness, or secluded behind town walls. The Carmelites do not encourage gifts of land or money, preferring to be given just enough land for them to farm for their own needs. In this way they hope to avoid the problems which plague the Benedictines and other wealthy orders.

Carthusians

The Carthusians embrace the life of the hermit. Each monk has a personal cell, wherein eating, sleeping, and prayer occur. But, all house members meet for holy offices in the monastery church. Lay brothers till the soil and provide labor needed to run the monastery. Unlike the Carmelites, the Carthusians actively seek land, which they often rent to surrounding communities in return for money or goods.

Cistercian Order

The Cistercian order is a contemplative monastic order founded by Robert, abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Molesme, who grew weary of the laxity of the Benedictines. His order, named after the first house in Citeaux, France, returned to strict observance of the Benedictine Rule.

The Cistercian order was expanded by St. Bernard, abbot of Clairveaux. St. Bernard rejected the customary donations of wealth which other orders supported themselves on. Instead, he turned to the charity of the many to support the Cistercians, avoiding the temptations of wealth which had marred the reputation of the Benedictines.

The Cistercian order provides for two kinds of monks: choir monks, many of whom are ordained priests who spend their time writing and illuminating books or performing other sedentary labor, and lay brothers, who till the fields and do manual labor in the monastery. The suborder of lay brothers invites non-nobles to lead the monastic life, which most other orders do not.

The Cistercians build their houses in secluded and solitary places to better resist worldly temptation. Unlike the Benedictines, the Cistercians do not rent their land to the local community, but farm their lands themselves.

Each Cistercian abbot is expected to journey to Citeaux once a year, to take part in the general chapter of the order. Some abbots are excused from this journey if their houses are

too far from Citeaux. In addition, each abbot must visit all the houses which his house has founded. In this way, the order regulates itself. Such is the wisdom of this plan that the Fourth Lateran Council, in A.D. 1215, requires all Christian orders to hold regular chapter meetings.

ORDER OF CLUNY

The Order of Cluny is a contemplative order which grew out of the Benedictine. The order places much more emphasis on learning and prayer than do the Benedictines, with lay brothers farming fields. While the intention of the founders was to escape the worldliness of the Benedictines, by A.D. 1150 the order had nearly equaled its parent in the accumulation of material goods.

Brethren of the Order of Cluny spend most of the day in offices (church ceremony), taking only enough time for meals and a few hours of sleep a night. Lay brothers farm the lands of the order, allowing the monks to spend their time at services.

DOMINICANS

Approved by Pope Honorius III in A.D. 1216, the Dominicans are a mendicant monastic order formed specifically to bring the Albigensians back to the Church by logic, teaching, and example. Scholasticism is important to the order, and many Dominicans may be found at universities, especially at Paris, Bologna, and Oxford. Even after the defeat of the Albigensians in the Crusade against them, the Dominicans continue to preach against heresy. In fact, many Dominican friars can be found in Serbia, the Rhineland, and Lombardy, hotbeds of continued heresy.

A Dominican friar at the University of Bologna has begun investigating reports of Magi in that city. While he has not yet gathered any firm evidence or witnesses, he is perilously close to exposing a Covenant there. Since the decree of the Papal Bull, which allows torture in Inquisitional interrogations, the discovery of a secret Covenant could collapse the entire Roman Tribunal in a wave of persecution. (No one expects a Magus to hold the identities of fellow Magi secret under torture, regardless of the Code.)

Amberitus, the leader of the Covenant, has thus far refused to leave the university, but other Covenants in the Roman Tribunal demand that the Covenant either be dissolved or the Dominican friar silenced.

ORDER OF FONTREVAULT

A contemplative monastic order based in France, the Order of Fontrevault is a double order, accepting both men and women, and housing them in double monasteries of monks and nuns, under the authority of a prioress. The order inspired the English order of Sempringham. The abbey of Fontrevault itself contains the tombs of Henry II, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and Richard the Lionheart.

FRANCISCANS

Francis of Assisi is an exuberant young man who lives a life of pleasure, but a vision of Christ changes his life. He gives away his money and fine clothes, and gives up the material life, spending his time taking care of the poor and sick, and repairing churches. His father disinherits him, claiming he is a madman, which affects Francis not at all.

As a layman Francis joins the Fifth Crusade in A.D. 1217, and performs his first miracle when he enters Damietta during the siege. Francis offers to walk through flames to prove the power of Christ, on the condition that the Sultan of Egypt leads his troops for the Christian cause if he emerges unscathed. The sultan refuses to allow the test, and has Francis escorted back to the Christian camp.

Francis is horrified by the following sack of Damietta in 1218, and renounces the life of worldly knights, preaching and practicing apostolic poverty instead. The Sultan of Damascus, sensing Francis's sanctity, gives him leave to travel freely throughout the Holy Land, and Francis's followers are given the right to tend Christian shrines now in Saracen hands.

Francis's observance of true apostolic poverty draws many followers to his cause, even though his religious views are somewhat variant to those of the Church. Pope Innocent III gives his approval to the contemplative Franciscan order and the Rule of Saint Francis in 1210. An important difference between Francis's movement, on the one hand, and that of the Albigensians and other Cathar heresies, on the other, is that Francis does not demand that the Church practice poverty, only that his followers do.

Before Francis's death, he also attempts to preach Christianity to Magi. While his intentions are good, and he does convince some Magi to become more devout in the faith of Christ, Francis is not generally welcomed. (Francis himself is so infused with faith that his mere presence acts as a Dominion Aura of 3. For a time, some Magi suspect Francis of being a renegade Magus with a strange Perdo Vim spell in place, a spell which diminishes the magical power of others.) In truth, most Magi do not convert, but relations between Francis and the Order of Hermes are always cordial.

The Rule of Saint Francis is very strict, and forbids any Franciscan monk from owning property. After Francis's death in 1226 some Franciscans try to ease the Rule of St. Francis. The result is a split between the Conventuals, who own property against the express wish of Saint Francis, and the Spirituals, who observe the Rule more literally.

Since Francis's death, the Conventual Franciscans have maintained good relations with the Covenants of Magi near their monasteries. The Spiritual Franciscans, on the other hand, view this tolerance as yet another sign that the Conventuals have drifted from the "true path" as laid out by Saint Francis.

HUMILIATI

The Humiliati are a mendicant monastic order drawn from the nobility of Italy and Lombardy. The Humiliati live the Apostolic life, administering to the poor and diseased. They live in double monasteries of monks and nuns, or as laymen and women. The Humiliati were forbidden to preach by the Third Lateran Council, in A.D. 1179, and were actually excommunicated by Lucius III. Innocent III re-organized the Humiliati into a triple order: celibate laity, married laity, and canons and sisters in double monasteries. The laity have the right to preach, as long as they only exhort the Christian life and do not speak on matters of theology.

The Humiliati have also developed a method of weaving extremely fine woolen cloth, nearly as thin as silk. Many Italian cities claim the Humiliati have demonic aid in their enterprise, and have begun a campaign to have the order declared a heresy.

POOR CLARES

The Poor Clares is a sister order to the Franciscans, founded by Clare of Assisi. She joins Francis of Assisi at the age of eighteen, much against the wishes of her family. Her sister Agnes joins her soon afterward. Their father sends twelve armed men to bring Agnes back, but Clare's prayers make her so heavy that the men are unable to budge her.

The Poor Clares follow a strict rule, enjoining absolute poverty, mortification of the flesh, and austerity. Pope Innocent III guarantees their absolute poverty, but Pope Gregory IX tries to make the order accept the ownership of property, and income from rent. However, Clare speaks with the Pope, and such is her conviction that Gregory also grants the right of absolute poverty to the order. However, a few houses of the order accept property, mirroring the split of the Franciscans. Those Poor Clares who accept the ownership of property are known as Urbanists.

PREMOSTRATENSIAN ORDER

A mendicant monastic order of reformed Augustinians, the Premonstratensians are greatly influenced by the Cistercian order. They stress preaching and pastoral work. The order started as a double order of monks and nuns, living in double monasteries of men and women. However, the presence of both sexes under one roof had predictable results, and separate monasteries and nunneries were established in the 1140s and 1150s. In A.D. 1198 the order dissolved the nunneries, and admits no more women, henceforth being composed solely of monks.

Each morning the brothers leave the monastery to beg and preach among the villages and towns which surround them. They also tend to the sick and poor, and often help farmers at their chores. In return, the surrounding populace gives the

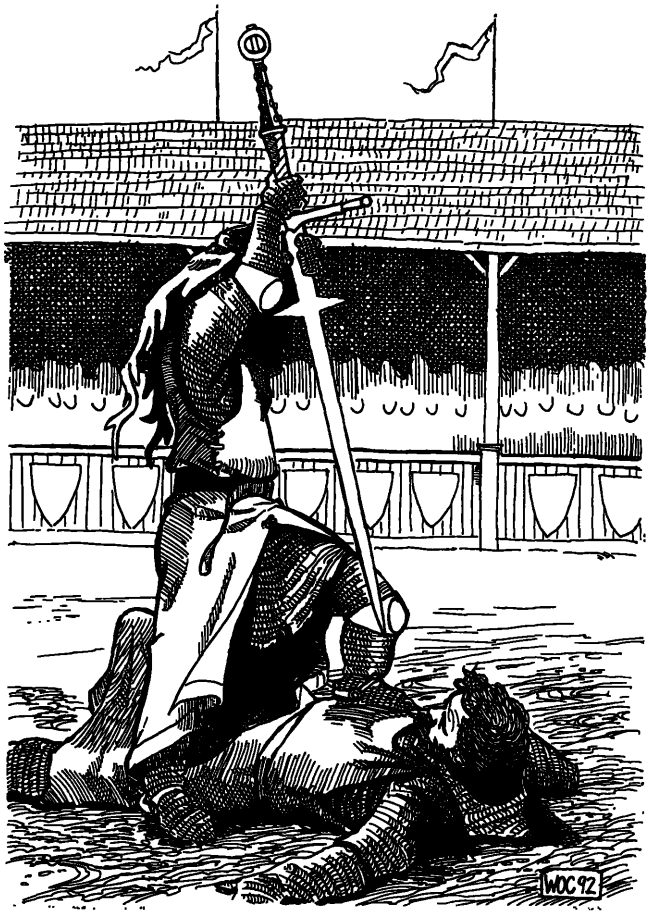
monastery part of the fruit of the field, in addition to food given to individual members of the order during the day. The order keeps a small portion of food for its own use, and distributes the rest at almshouses built into the outer wall of the monastery.

Military Orders

The military orders of the Catholic Church combine the monastic life with the life of a soldier. Members of the military orders are the soldiers of the Church, and are found where the Christian world borders the lands of Muslims or pagans. Members of these orders swear the normal monastic vows of poverty, humility, and obedience, but must also be proficient with weapons. These orders also stress military discipline. For example, no knight may charge on his own, but only at the order of his superior officer. All the military orders recruit their members from the aristocracy, though non-nobles also have their place in orders, as sergeants or footmen.

The three greatest of the Church's military orders are the Templars and Hospitallers in the Holy land, and the Teutonic order in the Baltic region. The Templars and Hospitallers recruit mainly in France, Italy, and England, while the Teutonic order recruits solely in Germany.

All the military orders are rich from gifts of land and money, and use this wealth to support their castles and garrisons on the frontier. In Spain the Reconquista (the requisition of Spain from the Muslims) is supported by numerous small orders, which fill the void left when the Templars and Hospitallers pulled out of the country, incapable of supporting garrisons in two widely separated areas of the world. The Spanish orders recruit wherever they can, but the great majority of their members come from the Spanish kingdoms (and the Order of Hermes).



TEMPLARS

Founded in A.D. 1115 by Hugh de Payans and eight companions as a guard for pilgrims in the Holy Land, the Templars were the first of the Christian military orders. They modified the Rule of the Cistercian order, and are affiliated with the Cistercians. Their sole allegiance, however, is to the Pope.

The war in the Holy Land is a Holy War for the Templars. The Templars swear vows of personal poverty and chastity. For religious reasons they also bathe very infrequently, a remarkable condition in the Holy Land, where Latins largely adopt the Muslim custom of bathing at least once a week. Templars also view the hardships of war, especially in the harsh climate of the Holy Land, as a spiritual exercise much like fasting or the wearing of a hair shirt. And, the knights are so devoted to their cause that they refuse to retreat, even against overwhelming odds.

King Baldwin II of Jerusalem gave the Templars a portion of the Temple of Solomon for their headquarters, from which they take their name. They also have lands in Mythic Europe, given to them by secular nobles, and retain the lands of their members, who are recruited from the noble class. This does not mean to say that all members of the order are nobility. The order accepts people from more humble backgrounds, who are ranked sergeants. The order even recruits chaplains, priests who accompany soldiers in the field, and who are given military training if they do not already have it.

The Templars do not act solely as religious warriors. They also act as bankers, holding money for crusaders and pilgrims. In fact, the wealth of the Templars has generated much jealousy among secular kings and princes, who lose both land and men to the order. Unfortunately, the order's wealth seems to have corrupted it. Rumors of demonic rites, Black Masses, and defilement of holy objects have started to circulate. The Pope has so far ignored these rumors, and a number of bishops and lords who have questioned the order's piety have mysteriously disappeared.

The Templars wear a white mantle with a red cross.

HOSPITALLERS

The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem (better known as the Hospitallers) originated as a Benedictine hospital for pilgrims, located near the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The Hospitallers grew quickly, and soon had a number of caravansaries and hospitals throughout the Holy Land. Because of the need to defend its holdings, and having received the gift of a number of castles, the order became a military order under the sole jurisdiction of the Pope, soon rivaling the Templars.

The Hospitallers, with their Templar rivals, defended the Holy Land against the Saracens, losing most of the order in A.D. 1187 at the battle of Hattin. The Saracen leader Saladin killed all knights of the Hospitallers and Templars that he captured, for fear of their military strength and unreasoning hatred of Islam. Still, the Hospitallers held onto their castles, and recruited more knights from their lands in France, England, and Germany.

Even after becoming a military order of the Church, the Hospitallers never gave up their hospital work, and members of the order often act as chirurgeons in the field, taking care of the wounded after battles.

Until 1259, the Hospitallers wear a black cloak or surcoat, with a white cross. In 1259 they adopt a red surcoat with a white cross on the left breast.

TEUTONIC ORDER

The Teutonic order began as a hospital founded by the Cistercian order, but in A.D. 1198 they became a military order based around Tripoli and Antioch. Because of the strong presence of the Templars and Hospitallers in Syria and the Holy Land, the Teutonic order deals with heresies elsewhere, particularly northern Mythic Europe, where it recruits its members from the German noble class.

In 1228 prince Conrad of Poland comes to an agreement with Herman of Salza, the order's Grand Master. The Polish prince gives land along the Baltic coast to the order, which uses it as a base for crusades against the pagans. In twenty years, the order conquers all of Prussia, which had resisted the Poles for hundreds of years. The order thus expands up the Baltic coast, and attempts to move inland toward Russia.

Moving into Russia, the Teutonic knights find new enemies to fight. In 1241 the Grand Master of the order, along with many knights, is killed fighting the Mongols at the battle of Leignitz. A year later the order suffers another major defeat at the hands of Alexander Nevsky, Prince of Novgorod, at the battle of Lake Peipus.

A military order associated with the Teutonic knights is that of the Brethren of the Sword, founded by the Bishop of Riga in 1204 to fight the pagans of Finland. By 1237 the Brothers are decimated, losing more than half their number in battles with the pagans. They eventually merge with the Teutonic order, but retain their own leadership under the Hochmeister of the Teutonic order.

The Teutonic knights are identified by a white cloak or surcoat with a black cross, while the Brethren wear a white cloak or surcoat with a red cross and sword.

SPANISH MILITARY ORDERS

The Christian reconquest of Spain from the Saracens demanded the same type of military order the Crusades had used in the Holy Land. However, neither the Templars nor the Hospitallers were willing to make great commitments in Spain. In their stead, a number of Spanish military orders were formed.

The greatest of these are the Knights of Calatrava. In 1157, the Templars abandoned the castle of Calatrava and a group of Navarrese knights and Cistercian monks took it over. The monks soon returned to their abbey, and the knights were recognized as a military order. The Knights of Calatrava wear a white surcoat with no insignia. Their armor is painted black.

Numerous other small Spanish and Portuguese orders exist, including the Knights of Santiago (and the Knights of San Thiago, their Portuguese branch); the knights of Alcantara, who operate in Portugal and Castile; the Brethren of Santa Maria, a Portuguese order which changes its name to the Knights of Aviz after capturing that town; the Knights of St. Julian, who operate mostly on the borders of Castile and Leon; and the Knights of Our Lady of Montjoie, who merge with the Knights of Calatrava in 1221.

Heresy

Heresy is what the Church considers an affront to the Church and it precepts, and the superiority of God. Heretics are usually people or movements branded as offenders of the Church, and are thus declared enemies of the Church. To be branded a heretic means to have almost all devout Christians in Mythic Europe opposed to you and your beliefs. And, to be branded a heretic often means having Christian authorities, like Inquisitors and military orders, directed against you.

Furthermore, Fundamental Christianity follows the tenets of the councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon, and the decrees of the Popes, but heretics question these antecedents. People branded heretics by the Church are typically critical of the wealth and pride of the Church, and like only a few of the Christian religious orders, usually demand poverty and humility of their number. In response to heresy the Church created the Holy Office of the Inquisition, and gives great power to Inquisitors, even allowing them to use torture in their search for opposition to the Church.

There are a number of heretical sects in the Catholic Church which espouse beliefs the Pope has declared heresy. The sects include the Adoptionists, the Brethren of the Free Spirit, the False Apostles, the Waldensians, and the Manicheans, who include the Cathars, Bogomils, and Albigensians

ADOPTIONIST HERESY

The Adoptionist Heresy maintains that Jesus was not the true Son of God, but was made so by adoption through the medium of baptism. The concept of adoptionism was most prevalent in the Eighth Century in Spain, but the topic is still one under theological discussion today.

ALBIGENSIAN HERESY

See Manicheanism

ARIANISM

Preached by Arius of Alexandria during the reign of Constantine the Great, the Arian heresy declared that the earthly body of Jesus Christ was merely the dwelling of the Word of God, rather than the Word incarnate. The heresy was suppressed in the Roman Empire, but spread widely among the Germanic tribes in outlying regions. The Goths were the first tribe to become Arian Christians, and they in turn sent missionaries to other tribes, so that new kingdoms built on the ruins of the Empire were ruled by Arian Christians. The heresy flourished during the years between the fall of the Empire and the rise of the Franks, during the capture of the north African coast by the Byzantines, and during the missionary work of Catholic priests in Spain.

BOGOMIL HERESY

See Manicheanism

BRETHREN OF THE FREE SPIRIT

In an attempt to reconcile the writings of Aristotle and Christian thinking, the Brethren of the Free Spirit believe in the superiority of the human will above all else, even God. The brethren are most prevalent in Swabia and the Rhineland.

They are declared heretics and excommunicate in A.D. 1235, but neither the nobles of the area, nor the Inquisition are able to eradicate them. The Brethren are welcome in many cities, though they must keep their presence a secret, as their hosts would share their excommunication.

The popes do not call a crusade on the Brethren, being involved in other crusades, and, later in the Thirteenth Century, fearing the damage another crusade like the Albigensian Crusade might cause. The German emperors of Mythic Europe have also proven reticent to move against the sect, as cities are likely to rise against any military effort to eradicate the heresy.

CATHAR HERESY

See Manicheanism

DONATIST HERESY

Preached by Bishop Donatus of Carthage in the early Fourth Century, the Donatist heresy proposed that sacraments performed by sinful priests were invalid. The Church, unwilling to undermine its rites based on the morals of its priests, declared Donatism a heresy rather than accept it as Church doctrine.

However, the poor were seduced by the idea — with the sacraments considered false, the Church lost its influence over people's morality — and the heresy flourished in north Africa. The emperors and the Church of the time both took measures to suppress the heresy, but the followers of Donatus still prowled the countryside, freeing slaves, robbing the rich, and sometimes murdering their victims. The Donatists were on their last legs when the Vandals invaded northern Africa. The Donatists rejoiced as the Orthodox priests were ejected from their churches by the Arians, and the heresy was renewed for a time. However, the heresy may finally have died out when the Arabs conquered north Africa in the 670s. Certainly no word has been heard from the Donatists since.

FALSE APOSTLES

A heretical group which lives a radical form of the Franciscan Apostolic life, the False Apostles are formed by Gerard Segerelli, a native of Parma who sells all his possessions in A.D. 1260 to travel and preach. His message includes penance and the Apostolic life for both his followers and the Church. His followers are condemned by Popes Honorius IV and Nicholas IV. Gerard himself is subject to the Inquisition, and burned at the stake in 1300.

MANICHEANIST HERESY

Manicheanism was an early heresy which tried to tie the Word of Christ to ancient Persian beliefs on the dualism of nature. Manicheanism is the predecessor of Catharism. In its most extreme form, the movement called for extreme austerity in diet, forbidding the eating of foods which were begotten sexually (only vegetables were allowed), and denying sex except for procreation. According to the movement's precepts extreme poverty was the only way to gain salvation, as worldly goods only tied one to the mundane world, keeping people from attaining spiritual enlightenment. Manicheanism spawned many heresies, including those of the Cathars, Bogomils and Albigensians.

Cathars

The Cathars are descendents of the Manicheaists, dualists who believe in the essential evil of the material world, which they say was created by the Devil. Cathars deny the role of God in creation, and also deny the humanity of Christ. Rejection of the material world includes abstinence from sex, especially for the procreation of children who would have to live in the material world. Apostolic poverty is part of the Cathars' creed, and they encourage all believers to rid themselves of material possessions.

Cathars refuse to pay homage to secular leaders and refuse to swear oaths. The Cathars first came to Mythic Europe through Bulgaria, where they influenced the Bogomils, and spread to Provençe, where they are known as Albigensians.

Bogomils

The Bogomils are the first Mythic European Cathars, based in Bulgaria and Serbia, but soon spread to Asia Minor and Provençe, where they influence the Albigensians. The Bulgarian Bogomils are crushed in A.D. 1211 by King Ivan II of Bulgaria, but many still live in Serbia.

Albigensians

The Albigensians are a sect of the Cathar heresy, and take their name from the town of Albi in southern France. They call themselves Believers, and their traveling teachers are known as

Perfecti. The Perfecti live by begging and preaching. The Albigensians preach Apostolic poverty, instructing Believers to give away land and money, living a life of poverty. They believe the accumulation of goods and land only focuses the owner on the material world, and only by divesting of worldly goods may a person achieve salvation. The Church, especially its rich Benedictine monasteries, is a natural target of Perfecti, who argue that priests need not live in luxury.

The Church tries to suppress the Albigensian heresy by preaching Catholicism, reminding the people of their original faith. However, the murder of Peter of Castlenau, a Papal Legate, prompts the Pope to declare a crusade against the heretics in A.D. 1208. Many knights from northern France join the crusade, as the lands of heretical nobles are transferred to the crusaders. The leader of the Crusade is Simon de Montfort, a Norman nobleman.

Many atrocities are committed by the crusaders, and the Crusade continues until the massacre of Montsegur in 1244. The Pope also creates the Holy Office of the Inquisition, which has the power to investigate and denounce heretics, killing many and torturing more for information.

Monophysite Heresy

This heresy was proposed by the Abbot Eutachyes in the 440s and stated that Jesus took no part of the human condition, but rather was completely divine. Numerous Church councils took place to decide the issue, and the Sees of Constantinople and Alexandria were the heads of the two opposing factions, for and against the proposition.

Though a heresy from fundamental Christianity, Monophysitism became the religion of Egypt and Syria, and suffered oppression by Constantinople. In response the Monophysites aided Islamic Arabs during their conquests of Egypt and Syria, welcoming them as liberators from the tyranny of Constantinople.

Rumors persist of Monophysite abbeys and churches deep in Egypt and Arabia, where heretics practice their religion safe from the authority of the Byzantine Patriarch or Emperor.

Nestorian Heresy

Nestor, Patriarch of Constantinople in A.D. 428, preached that Mary, mother of Jesus, was only the mother of the earthly body of the Savior, and thus was not worthy of worship. Nestor's opponents had him removed from the See of Constantinople, and finally exiled to the Libyan desert after years of see-saw battles within the Church.

Nestor's followers retreated to Syria, where they acquainted the Persians and later the Arabs with the works of Greek philosophers and scientists. Nestorians still flourish in the east, beyond the Holy Land.

Waldensians

The Waldensians were formed in A.D. 1172 by Waldo, a merchant of Lyon, who gave up his wealth and position to preach the Apostolic life. The Waldensians were examined by the Church's Third Lateran Council in 1179, and their lifestyle was approved, but they were forbidden to preach without permission from the Bishop of Lyon. The Bishop refused his permission, and ultimately was forced to excommunicate the Waldensians, expelling them from Lyon when they continued to preach in spite of the Church's ruling.

The Waldensians had many successes against the Cathar heresy, illustrating the faults of the Cathars and their beliefs, and reaffirming Catholic doctrine. However, the Waldensians' Scriptural teachings, in the language of the people, and their belief that Apostolic poverty and the acceptance of Christ were all that was necessary for salvation alarmed Church authorities. Accordingly, the Waldensian movement was declared a heresy by Papal Bull in 1184.

The persecution that follows the Church's decree, in the Thirteenth Century, does not daunt the Waldensians. They continue to teach and spread their doctrine to Lombardy, Spain, and Austria. The primary congregation of the Waldensians is drawn from those who work the land, as opposed to the Albigensians, who are largely supported by nobles.

Islam

Islam is not a heretical offshoot of the Christian faith, but is a faith in its own right, largely followed by natives of the Middle East and Africa. Being a unique religion, Islam is seen as pagan by the Christian Church.

Islamic Origins

Islam is a relatively new religion. Mohammed, its prophet, lived and preached in the Seventh Century, after Christ. The word Islam means surrender, and a Muslim is one who surrenders his soul to Allah, the one God. Islam has the same roots as Christianity and Judaism, but proposes that Mohammed is the last and most perfect prophet, revealing the word of Allah in the Koran, the sacred book of Islam. Muslims accept Christ as a prophet of God, but reject his holy nature, and find the Christian idea of a tripartite God as an unholy aberration which leads men astray from the path of righteousness.

Mohammed began his preaching in Mecca in the 610s. He fled to Medina in A.D. 622, from which event the Muslims reckon their calendar. In Medina Mohammed's movement grew, and he led expeditions against the idol-worshipping tribes of Arabia. Mohammed reentered Mecca in 630, and died in 632 in Jerusalem, where he is said to have ascended to Heaven from the hill where Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac. Mohammed's footprints at the time of his ascension are said to

be visible to the faithful, and the Muslims built the Dome of the Rock over the site of Mohammed's death, a site which has become the third greatest holy place of Islam.

Before his death Mohammed united the Arabian peninsula both politically and religiously, and Arabic became the language of Islam. The unification of the Arabic tribes allowed the caliphs, the successors of Mohammed, to wage war against the Byzantine and Persian empires. Indeed, between 632 and 656 the Muslims overran Damascus, Jerusalem, Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Persia. By 720, Islam had crossed the sands of the Sahara Desert, spread into northern Spain and southern France, and extended to Sind in the east.

The Muslims still occupy many of those lands in the Thirteenth Century.

RELIGIOUS INTERACTION

Muslims pray five time a day, kneeling and facing Mecca. They fast during the holy month of Rammadan, are expected to give alms to the poor, observe the Sabbath on Friday, and pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca at least once in their life.

The Muslims are tolerant of non-believers, allowing them to continue their worship. Indeed, in Spain, the Archbishop of Toledo was allowed to remain the primate of Spain, even though Toledo was in Muslim hands from the early Eighth Century until its recapture by forces of Castile in 1085. It's true that under the Muslims non-believers must pay special taxes, but have few other restrictions.

Unfortunately, Christians tend to be less tolerant of Islam and largely have unenlightened perspectives on the faith. Many Christians view Islam as a form of paganism, convinced that it calls for the worship of three false Gods: Mahomet, Apollyon, and Termagant. Christians also believe Saracens carry images of these gods before them into battle, and if defeated, curse and spit on the images. According to Christian understanding, the law of Mohomet and Termagant is inscribed in a book kept in Mecca, where the Muslims go every year to worship before a great black stone. And, Christians believe Muslim sorcerers summon demons, known as djinn or genies, which they command to do magical tasks. These false assumptions about Islam are in part what perpetuates wars against the Muslims.

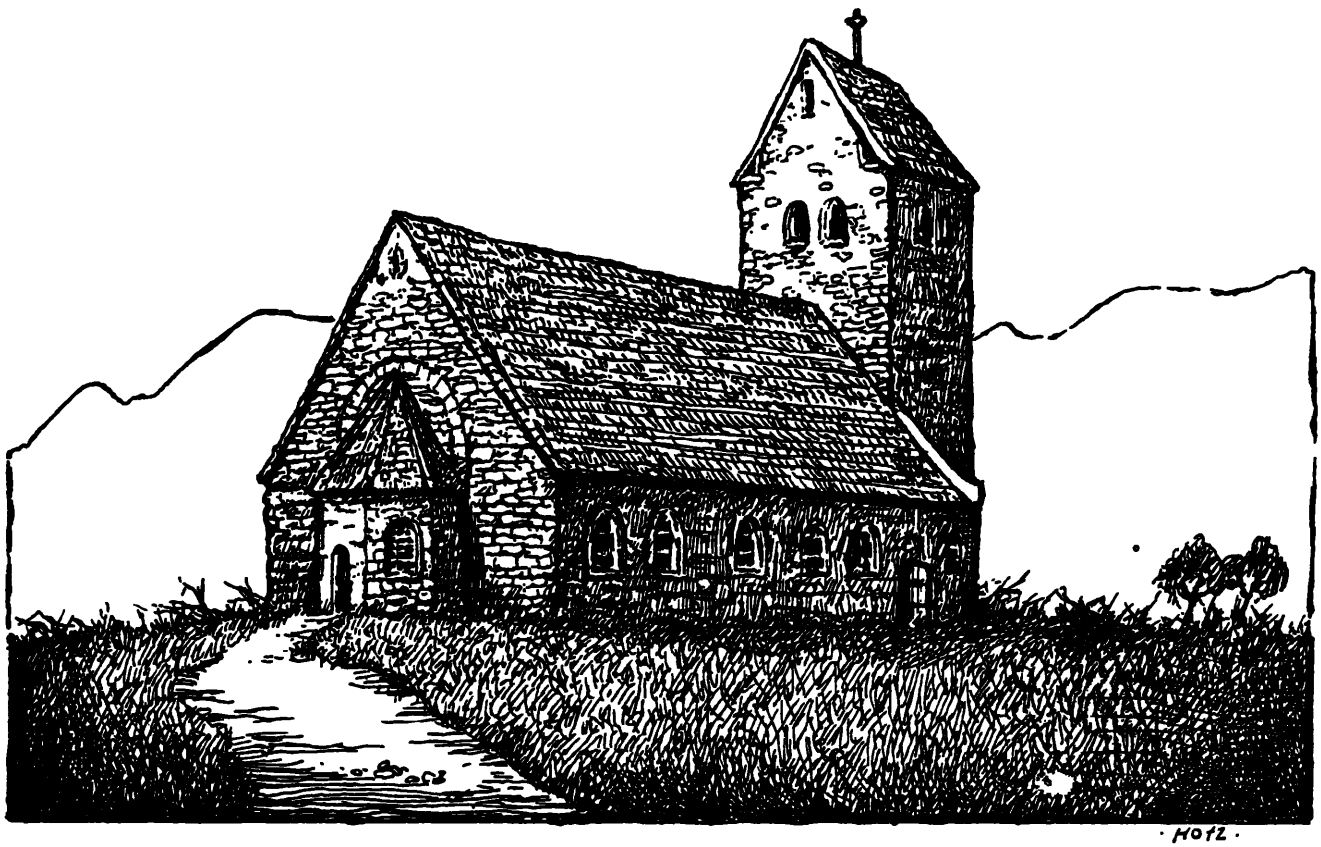
Judaism

From the Christian viewpoint, Judaism is a special category of religion, somewhere between a heresy and paganism, but certainly different from Christianity.

JEWISH RESPONSE

While the Church acknowledges the influence that Judaism has had on Christianity, the Church must condemn the self-named chosen people of God, who do not follow Jesus.

To the average Christian in Mythic Europe, Jews are the people who crucified God, a people who practice a strange religion, hidden from public view. Stories of the religious practices of the Jews include the sacrifice of infants and the



drinking of blood. To Mythic Europe's merchants, Jews are a source of loans and credit, but apply usury (interest) to loans, something forbidden to Christians.

As a result of their exclusiveness and extortionate business practices, Jews tend to be natural scapegoats, blamed for everything from missing children to droughts to famines. Riots in many cities are directed at the Jews, both to vent frustration and to nullify debts. Indeed, at one point the Jews of York, England, are besieged in the local castle by a crowd led by barons, barons heavily in debt. The Jews kill themselves rather than face the tortures and cruelties planned for them by the mob.

The Church's Lateran Council of A.D. 1179 forbade the charging of interest by Christian moneylenders, but allowed Jews to do so; Jews are not expected to go to Heaven by the Catholic Church. However, the Council did decreed that Jews may not have Christian servants, nor may Christians lodge with Jews. The Council of 1215 frees Christian debtors, especially crusaders, from interest on loans from Jews; excludes Jews from positions of authority; and stipulates that Jews need wear a badge of identification, either a yellow or scarlet cloth patch on their clothes.

Christian monarchs in Mythic Europe both support and abuse Jews. Kings protect and exploit God's chosen people, making them servants or wards of the crown, but also charging them heavy taxes. In 1290 King Edward I of England solves the "Jewish problem" by expelling them from his domains. Many flee to Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

The Jews are accepted by Muslims, just as Christians are accepted my Muslims, and the Jewish culture flourishes under the rule of Islam. Though required to pay special taxes because of their faith, Jews were allowed greater freedom under Islam than under Christianity, and many Jews become advisors to caliphs and other Muslim rulers.

Jewish Precepts

The Jewish tradition is one of learning and intellectual development, and Jews have always been connected to universities and schools in Muslim lands. Jews, free of the restraints placed on Christians about the dissection of the human body, have made medicine a special study. Universities in Spain and Sicily have in turn passed this knowledge to Christians. The Jews also keep Classic Greek and Roman texts alive, preserving knowledge otherwise lost in western Mythic Europe. This knowledge helps form the basis of the Rational Aura, a belief in facts rather than faith.

Paganism

By fault (or virtue, depending on perspective) of being different from Christianity, other religions are declared pagan by the leaders of the Christian Church. Being pagan, other religions are therefore the enemies of the Church, though tenuous relations can be established with some pagan faiths, like that of Judaism.

Before the death and resurrection of the Christian Lord, people believed in numerous gods (declared false by the Church), whether those gods were of the Greeks and Romans, or of the Vikings. However, the spread of the word of the true Lord has converted many of those once-pagan peoples, except for a few on the fringes of the Christian world, like the Prussians, and those who reject Christianity, like the Muslims. Those pagans continue to practice their ways today.

Though Christianity has overwhelmed the majority of pagan religions in Mythic Europe, many pagan festivals and locations persist within Church domain. In fact, many people continue to perform pagan ceremonies at the change of the seasons, or at harvest time. They do so out of superstition, for fear that the old gods might still exist beyond the veneer of Christianity. And, if those gods should still exist, the common person fears angering the gods, making existence all the more unbearable.

Some churchmen recognize the shadow of paganism in the various heresies which spring up in the countryside, and try to suppress pagan ceremonies and holidays. Other priests do not see peasant ceremonies as a threat to the Catholic Church. Rather, they use these ceremonies and holidays as times to preach on the universal nature of the Church. Some pagan traditions, from the old gods, have even been indoctrinated into the Christian faith, simply given new names. Indeed, the crucifix itself is an icon of faiths reaching back beyond Christianity. The adoption of these old traditions smooths the transition to Christianity, and appeases followers of old faiths who would otherwise resist the new "official" religion.

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THE CRUSADES

CHAPTER FOUR

The idea of a Holy War against the enemies of the Church is relatively new to Christians. The concept grew out of the reconquest of Spain and Sicily from pagan invaders, and was inspired by St. Augustine's concept of divinely inspired violence.

A crusade may only be called by the Pope. Many crusades are called primarily against Muslims, in the Holy Land and Spain, but also against the pagans in Poland and Prussia, against the Albigensian Heresy, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Anti-Pope Anacletus. All of these crusades are duly authorized, and the soldiers involved, while possibly overzealous, are for the most part devout.

The Crusades attract supporters from all levels of society, from kings and princes to journeymen and serfs. Many participants, especially in expeditions to the Holy Land, take pilgrimage vows, and are protected by the same laws as pilgrims. For their sacrifices crusaders are also given indulgences, a free remission of punishment due from sin.

Many crusaders also benefit materially from going on crusade, gaining lands and titles in conquered territories. However, material benefits are far outweighed by the spiritual benefits of serving Christ and the Church. A popular sentiment holds that it is miserly to refrain from crusading, as you should give your all to recover the property of Christ.

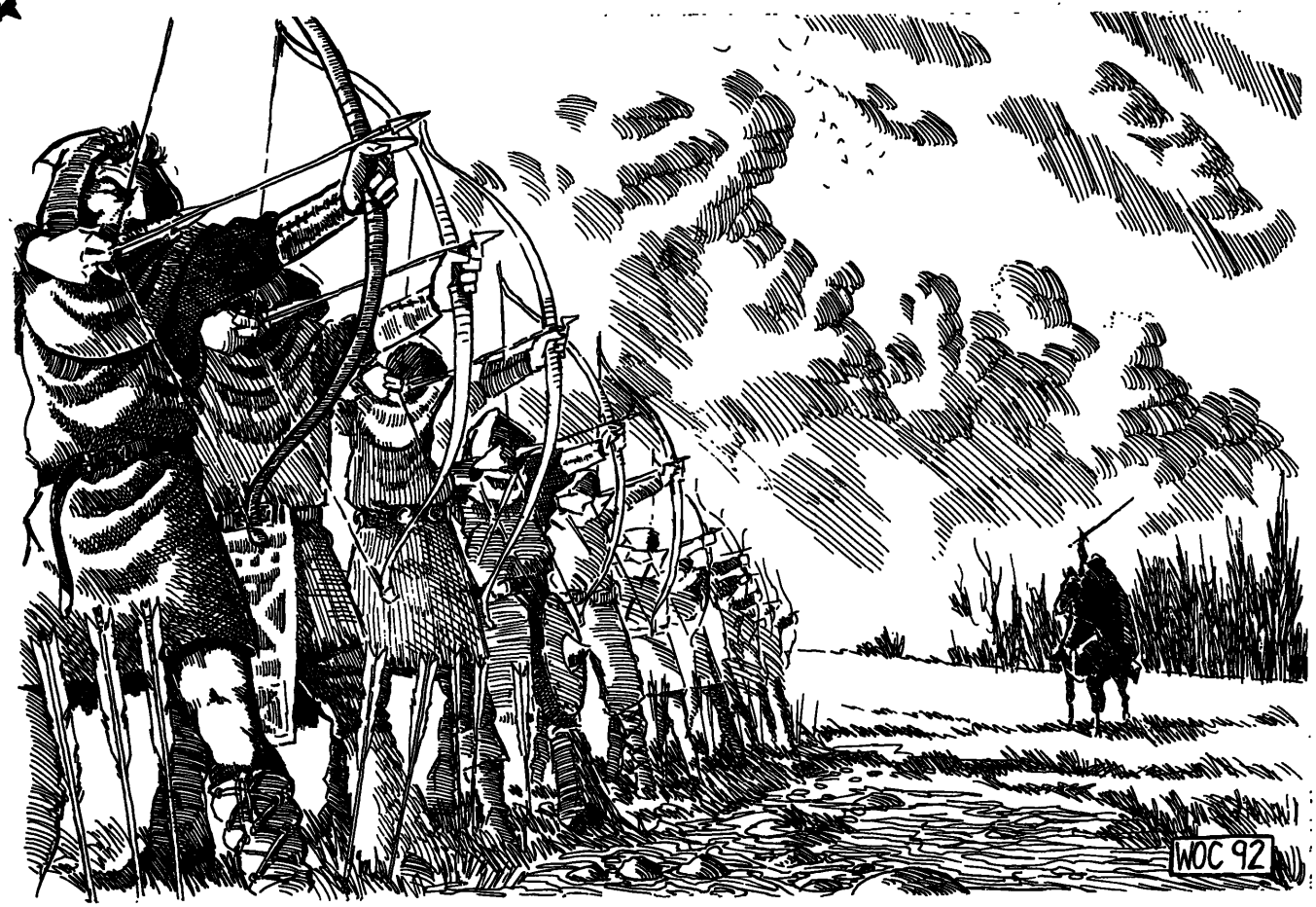
First Crusade

In A.D. 1071, the Seljuk Turks defeated the army of Byzantium at a small town named Manzikert, in Asia Minor. The Turks swept on to conquer most of the Empire in Asia Minor, and to wrest the Holy Land from the Saracens of Egypt.

Christians on pilgrimage to Jerusalem had long been protected from attack, deals having been made with the Saracens, but the Seljuks refused to honor the guarantees made by their predecessors, and raided and robbed many pilgrim caravans. Pope Gregory VII resolved, in 1074, to lead a united army of western princes to the Holy Land to retake the city of Christ, but was unable to bring his plans to fruitiion.

However, in 1095 Pope Urban II, at the Synod of Clermont, preached to the leaders of western Mythic Europe of a crusade to retake Jerusalem. It was agreed that an army would be sent to the Holy Land to retake Jerusalem and insure the safety of pilgrims. A white cross was the symbol of the crusaders.

Before the nobles could embark on their crusade, though, another force was sent in advance of them, but failed to affect the pagans in the Holy Land. A band of peasants, tens of thousands strong, marched from France to Byzantium, led by Peter the Hermit. This army of peasants supported itself by plundering the countryside on its way, but the Bulgars decimated the army before it even reached Byzantium. However, the Emperor hastily shipped the remaining peasants across to



Asia Minor to fight in the coming Holy War. Unfortunately, the peasants were wiped out by the Saracens before they even reached Jerusalem.

The nobles' armies, on the other hand, sailed and marched from Normandy, Flanders, southern France, and Sicily, led by their dukes and counts, and by the Bishop of Le Puy as the Papal Legate. The armies gathered before the gates of Nicaea, which they took by siege, then engaged the Turks at Dorylaeum, and decisively beat the pagans.

Numerous other cities and towns surrendered or were besieged as well, until the crusaders arrived before Jerusalem in 1099. There they settled in for a siege, which lasted several months. The crusaders used the Holy Lance, which they had found at Antioch, as their standard, parading around the city with it at the head of their army. Ultimately the walls of Jerusalem were stormed, and many inhabitants slaughtered. Saracens were killed by being shot or pushed off the walls, and a large number of Jews were herded into a synagogue which was then set afire. Indeed, the Tomb of the Holy Sepulcher ran thigh deep in blood.

After the First Crusade a number of Latin states were created in the Holy Land. The Kingdom of Jerusalem, the most important state, was held by Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the army of Flanders. Other states included the County of Edessa, the County of Tripoli, and the Principality of Antioch. The survival of these new lands was greatly aided by fighting between the Seljuk Turks and the Fatimid Empire of Egypt. Many knights stayed behind to protect their new lands, and various Christian military orders were organized at this time.

Second Crusade

The fall of the Latin kingdom of Edessa, founded after the First Crusade, to the forces of Islam in A.D. 1144 spread fear and dismay among the lords and princes of the other Holy Land kingdoms. The lords appealed to Pope Eugenius III for aid in the fight to preserve their lands. The Pope appointed Bernard of Clairveaux, a charismatic preacher, later to become St. Bernard, to preach the Crusade among the lords of Mythic Europe.

Bernard went to Louis VII of France, and enjoined him to lead the Crusade. In 1146, at Vezelay, with the French King by his side, Bernard preached the Crusade to assembled nobles, who joined en masse.

Bernard then proceeded to Germany, where he enlisted the Emperor Conrad III, and a multitude of German knights. Even before the German crusaders left their lands, though, they set upon Jews at the instigation of Peter, Abbot of Cluny, and Rodolphe, a French monk in Germany. For his part Louis levied heavy taxes on the Jews of France, but refrained from attacking them. The Germans, however, attacked the Jewish quarters of many cities, committing atrocities against all Jews. At Speyer, a Jewess was tortured on the rack to make her

convert to Christianity. At Mainz the crusaders chased a group of Jews into the house of the Bishop, and killed the Jews before the Bishop's eyes. Such violence was only a taste of that to come.

The Germans started their march to the Holy Land on Easter day, 1147. The French set out on Pentecost. The young Eleanor of Aquitaine even traveled with her husband Louis, accompanied by a number of noble-born ladies in waiting. Eleanor and her ladies formed a company of their own, and rode as Amazon warriors, with their breasts uncovered. The sight of these ladies amused the Byzantines, but the armored knights in the crusading army made more than one town's menfolk turn their gaze.

The French and Germans continued their assault and sacked many towns in Byzantium. Some nobles went so far as to urge their kings to take Constantinople. The kings did not, but seeds were sown which would lead to the sack of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade.

Though they began the Crusade separately, the Germans and French faced the same fate in the Holy War. The Germans insisted on following the trail of the First Crusade, but waterless wastes and Muslim raids slowed their advance. At Dorylaeum, where the army of the First Crusade won a magnificent victory, the Saracens fell upon the Germans and wreaked such havoc that scarcely one knight in ten remained.

The French, spurred on by false reports of a German victory, rushed towards Dorylaeum, but were stopped by the wastes and Saracens. The crusading armies retreated to the coast, where they attempted to book passage to Antioch. The sailing masters demanded heavy fees, though, so only kings, a few lords with their retainers, and ladies were able to escape to Antioch. The remainder of the armies were overtaken by the Saracens and slain to a man.

In the meantime, the monarchs and their few followers continued to Jerusalem, where King Baldwin III joined his men with the arrivals and marched against Damascus. Divided command, and dissension between kings as to who should rule a fallen Damascus robbed the siege of its purpose. When word arrived that a Muslim army was approaching to lift the siege, the Christian army virtually disintegrated, fleeing back to Jerusalem, Antioch, and Acre. Emperor Conrad returned to Germany a broken man. King Louis traveled the Holy Land for a year, making pilgrimage to the holy shrines. King Baldwin retired to Jerusalem and saw to his defenses. The Second Crusade had won nothing.

Third Crusade

In the forty years between the Second and Third Crusades, the Latins living in the Holy Land took on many aspects of the Muslims, especially in dress and manner. The two cultures mingled, much as Sicily and Spain had mingled, producing an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. Truces and pacts were made between the Saracens and Christians, but a few Christians, especially the orders of Templars and Hospitallers and the Prince of Antioch, repeatedly broke the peace.

Finally Reginald de Chatillon, Prince of Antioch, captured a caravan containing the sister of Saladin, Emir of Egypt and Syria. Saladin then led his troops in a Jihad (Arabic, "Holy War") against the Latin kingdoms. He defeated the Latin army at the battle of Hattin in A.D. 1187 and killed Reginald with his own hands. Furthermore, he captured Acre, and besieged Jerusalem, capturing it in twelve days. However, as evidence of his leniency, Saladin released soldiers captured at Hattin, but required of them an oath never again to bear arms against him. The soldiers were later absolved of their oaths by the Church.

In the meantime, William, Archbishop of Tyre, traveled to Italy, France, and Germany, telling of the fall of Jerusalem. Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of the Germans; Richard Lionheart, King of England; and Philip Augustus, King of France journeyed to the Holy Lands by separate routes. Frederick, lauded as the new Moses who would show the way to the Promised Land, drowned in a river in the Kingdom of Little Minor in 1190. The Germans elected to continue on, to besiege Acre, leaderless and but a small part of the army which had left Germany the year before.

Richard and Philip rendezvoused in Sicily, where King Tancred offended Richard. In turn Richard seized Messina and sold it back for 40,000 ounces of gold. Richard could then afford passage for his men to the Holy land. Unfortunately a number of Richard's ships were wrecked on the coast of Cyprus, and his men were abused by the islanders. To rectify matters Richard mad a quick conquest of the island in 1191, and gave it to Guy of Lusignan, the now homeless King of Jerusalem.

The French King Philip had preceded Richard, and had joined the Germans in their siege of Acre. The city surrendered a few weeks after Richard also arrived, with his men. It was then that Philip became ill with fever, and went home to France, leaving Richard as sole leader of the Crusade.

The campaign between Richard and Saladin was an unusual one. Where they might exchange blows one week, they exchanged courtesies the next. Numerous treaties and bargains were arranged between the two leaders, but most were broken, often by the Christians. Finally, Richard, ill and tired of the unending war, left for home.

As a consequence of his respect for the enemy, and the treacherousness of the Christians, Saladin, though a Saracen, came to be seen as the personification of Christian virtues. The Third Crusade attributed him with being gentle to the weak, merciful to the vanquished, generous to the poor, and faithful to his word. Ironic that a war initiated to eliminate pagans actually venerated them.

Fourth Crusade

The Third Crusade had saved Acre and Antioch, but left Jerusalem in Muslim hands. Pope Innocent III demanded another crusade, but the kings he preached to were less than eager. Philip of France had had enough of crusades and Emperor Frederick II was a boy of four. Richard of England replied: *"You advise me to dismiss my three daughters: pride,*

avarice and incontinence. I bequeath them to the most deserving, my pride to the Templars, my avarice to the monks of Citeaux, and my incontinence to the prelates."

Innocent persisted, however, and put forward a plan to attack Egypt, which would enable Italian fleets to sail the eastern Mediterranean unhindered by Saracens. Venice agreed to ship an army for 85,000 marks of silver and one-half the spoils of the campaign. But, Enrico Dandalo, Doge of Venice, had no intention of attacking Egypt, to which Venice imported timber, iron, and weapons in return for slaves, which were sold in Constantinople and other north African cities.

Now in the Thirteenth Century, while the crusaders haggle for passage to Egypt, the Doge enters into a secret agreement with the Egyptians to divert the Crusade. In 1202 the armies gather in Venice, led by Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, Count Baldwin of Flanders, Count Louis of Blois, and Simon de Montfort, who will lead the Albigensian Crusade.

The crusaders are able to raise 51,000 marks, short of the agreed price. Enrico Dandalo proposes to forgive the oversight if the crusaders capture the town of Zara, Hungary's port on the Adriatic. Pope Innocent threatens to excommunicate anyone who takes part in the attack, but is ignored. The army takes Zara in five days, dividing the spoils. The Pope carries out his threat, excommunicating the crusaders and the Venetians. The crusaders beg mercy of the Pope for their transgression. He grants it, but demands that they return the booty taken from Zara. The crusaders obey, but the Venetians ignore the Pope.

The Crusade then suffers another deviation from its intended course. Isaac II Angelus, Emperor of Byzantium, had been deposed, blinded, and imprisoned in 1195 by his brother, Alexius III. Isaac's son, also named Alexius, fled to Germany and then to Venice, where he became the guest of the Venetian Dandalo. In 1202 the younger Alexius approaches the crusaders, pledging to raise money and men to aid the crusaders, and to make the eastern Church subservient to Rome if the crusaders help restore his father to the throne. The Pope again threatens excommunication, this time against anyone who attacks Byzantium, but again his threats have little effect.

In 1202 the crusading army sets sails, in 480 Venetian ships, ready to plunder the richest city in the east. They land before Constantinople in 1203, after various delays en route. The invaders capture the city in the face of feeble opposition, and place Isaac back on the throne, crowning his son Alexius IV, after making sure Isaac abides by the agreements his son had made.

However, the people of the city, led by its priests, rebel against the conquerors. In the fighting that follows a fire is lit that ravages the city for eight days, burning a considerable portion of Constantinople to the ground. Furthermore, a prince of blood kills Alexius IV, reimprisons Isaac, and takes the throne as Alexius V Ducas. The crusaders retaliate by besieging the city, and when it surrenders after a month, loot it thoroughly, even stripping the churches of their plate and relics, which are later sold in the west.

The Venetians, who had been trading in Constantinople for centuries, take the finest goods, including four horses they once placed over the Piazza de San Marcos. After the looting and pillaging is over, the Latins chose Baldwin of Flanders to head the Empire of Romania, and the Byzantine territories are divided up among other western leaders. Venice also takes part of Constantinople, many of the Ionian islands, and a number of harbors in Greece. The Pope even accepts the return of the Orthodox branch of the Church to the Catholic fold, so lasting does the reunification of east and west seem to be.

Not all Byzantine nobles are defeated by the crusaders, though. A number of princes flee to the countryside, founding rival empires to match their lost one. The Empire of Trebizond flourishes along the coast of the Black Sea, under the rule of Alexius Comnenus. Michael Angelus founds the Despotate of Epirus. And, Theodore Lascaris founds the Empire of Nicaea, which eventually retakes Constantinople in 1261.

It must also be said that though most crusaders are lured by wealth and plunder from their original destination, a few actually continue on to the Holy Land. But, they are unable to accomplish much against the Saracens.

Children's Crusade

In A.D. 1212 two children, Nicholas, a German apprentice, and Stephen, a French shepherd, are said hear the voice of Christ calling them. Christ calls them to lead the children of Christendom to the Holy Land, to retake the Holy Sepulcher. Nicholas leads 30,000 children, mostly from the area around Cologne, on a journey across the Alps to Genoa, where merchants laugh at their requests to be taken to the Holy Land with no means of payment. Undaunted, Nicholas appeals to Pope Innocent III for aid, but even the Pope gently tells him to go home. Disconsolate, Nicholas leads many children back over the Alps, but several thousand remain in Genoa, becoming apprentices and seamen.

The Crusade led by Stephen comes to a more terrible end. He leads 20,000 children to Marseille, where he promises God will part the sea, allowing them to walk to Jerusalem. The sea refuses to part, but a number of merchants offer the children free passage to the Holy Land. Instead of taking them to Jerusalem, the merchants sail south to the coast of Africa, where they sell the children to the Muslims as slaves.

When German Emperor Frederick II hears of the atrocity he has all the merchants involved hanged for their crimes. The Pope excommunicates them as well, damning them to eternal torment. As a result of this scandal, the city of Marseille acquires an unsavory reputation, making honest merchants shun the city.

Fifth Crusade

Innocent III, horrified at the outcome of the Fourth Crusade, calls for a new crusade at the Church's Lateran Council of A.D. 1215. Innocent III again calls for the invasion of Egypt, giving the Christians a base from which to attack Jerusalem, and denying it to the Saracens.

In 1217 king Andrew of Hungary leads a combined force of Hungarians, Germans, and Bohemians south, attacking the city of Damietta. Francis of Assisi comes with the army, but is horrified by the slaughter when the crusaders take the city in 1218.

The Sultan of Egypt offers terms for peace, which include the return of the True Cross, lost when Saladin took Jerusalem, and the return of all Christian prisoners and slaves. Even though these terms would make the Crusade the most successful since the First, the crusaders demand a large indemnity, desiring money more than the return of the Holy Land.

The war therefore continues, with Saracens whittling away at Christian forces until the crusaders accept peace terms in 1221, returning Damietta to the Egyptians in exchange for the True Cross. The crusaders blame their diminished victory on the German Emperor Frederick II, who had taken crusading vows in 1215, but did not join the Crusade because of political difficulties in Italy.

Sixth Crusade

In A.D. 1228 Emperor Frederick II finally sets out on crusade, fulfilling the vow he made in 1215. Though he fulfills his commitment he is shunned by the Christians still in the Holy Land as he is still under excommunication (for not participating in the Fifth Crusade).

After fighting for part of a year Frederick sends messengers to the Sultan of Egypt, finally concluding a peace in 1229. The Sultan requests a truce for ten years and ten months. In return he relinquishes most coastal cities to the Christians, and all of Jerusalem, excluding the Dome of the Rock (though Christians are allowed inside the Dome of the Rock to pray at the site of Solomon's temple). Another term of the agreement is the release of all prisoners on both sides.

Christians in the Holy Land rejoice at the terms, but Pope Gregory IX declares the treaty an insult to Christendom, and refuses to ratify it. Frederick remains in the Holy Land for a few more years, and then departs for Germany.

After Frederick's departure the Christian nobility in the Holy Land seize Jerusalem, and ally with the Emir of Damascus against the Sultan of Egypt. In turn, the Sultan calls on the Turks, who capture Jerusalem in 1244, slaughtering thousands of inhabitants and enslaving thousands more. Pope Innocent IV, succeeding Gregory, calls for a crusade against Frederick, offering the same indulgences and privileges for the crusade as if the enemy is Muslim. However, most lords refuse to join a crusade against a Catholic monarch, the memory of the horrific Albigensian Crusade still fresh in their minds.

Seventh Crusade

Shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 1244 Louis IX of France organizes a crusade to attack Egypt. He also labors to heal the breach between Frederick II and Innocent IV, so that a united Mythic Europe might support the Crusade. Instead of forgiving Frederick, Innocent sends a messenger, Giovanni de Piano Carpini, to the Great Khan in Asia, offering an alliance to destroy the Muslims. The reply which comes back, several years later, is that Mythic Europe must first submit to Mongol rule.

In 1248 Louis sets out on the Crusade, accompanied by many of the great lords of France. The crusaders reached Damietta, besieging and taking the town quickly. However, the Nile floods rise, cutting off the city for half a year. Waiting out the floods, the nobles entertain themselves with feasts, tournaments, and debauchery, so that when the army leaves Damietta, it is undisciplined and slothful.

Not surprisingly, the Sultan of Egypt routes the French at the Battle of Mansura, capturing 10,000 Frenchmen, including the King, who is ill with the flux (dysentery). The Sultan lends his own physician to the King, who recovers in a month. The Sultan demands 500,000 livres ransom, but reduces his demand to 50,000 when the French King accepts the Sultans extravagant terms.

Louis pays half of the ransom, and is released on the promise that he will pay the other half. Instead Louis leads the remnants of his army to Acre, where they stay for four years. Louis also sends a messenger, William of Rubriquois, to the Great Khan, hoping for an alliance of his own, but William returns with a message similar to that of Giovanni de Piano Carpini. Louis returns to France in 1254.

After Louis leaves the Holy Land, factions which had been quiet during his stay resume their activities. In 1256 a war between Genoese and Venetians in the ports of the Holy Land erupts, eventually dragging all other factions into the conflict. Taking advantage of the chaos, Baybars, Sultan of Egypt, sweeps up the coast of the Holy Land, capturing many cities. In fact, Antioch is pillaged and burned so badly that it never recovers, fading into history after 1268.

Eighth Crusade

King Louis of France takes to the cross a second time in A.D. 1267, but the nobility of France refuses to support him. He therefore leads only a small army to Tunis, where he hopes to split the coast of North Africa, allowing Christians to attack both Morocco and Egypt. No sooner does the army land than Louis again falls ill of the flux, but this time dies. Ironically, much of his army dies as well, and his sons give up the Crusade and return to France.

This is the last Crusade against the Muslims of the Holy Land, though a few skirmishes are still staged. In 1291 a band of Christian adventurers in the Holy Land attacks a Muslim caravan. The Sultan of Egypt demands compensation, which is not paid. The Sultan then attacks Acre, the strongest Christian stronghold left in the Holy Land, taking it in only forty-three days. The Sultan allows his men their freedom of the town, and they massacre or enslave 60,000 prisoners. The remaining Christian cities of the Holy Land surrender or are captured soon afterwards, eliminating Latin occupation of the Holy Land for all time.

Albigensian Crusade

The heretical Albigensian religious sect, centered in the County of Toulouse, is a constant thorn in the side of the Church. The movement's followers preach Apostolic poverty in the Church, and that salvation is only available to those who have no worldly possessions. Paradoxically, the Albigensians are supported by great nobles, renowned for their extravagance. Even Count Raymond of Toulouse hosts Perfecti and believers, and is on the verge of joining the movement when Pope Innocent III initiates the chain of events which lead to the Albigensian Crusade.

The Pope's first reaction to the Albigensians is not a crusade, though. Rather, he sends the Cistercian order to Toulouse to reform the Albigensians. However, the Albigensians only gain support by using the Cistercians, contrasting their humility and poverty to the wealth and pomp of the monks. Thus, the Albigensians continue their so-called heretical faith.

Next, in 1205, the Pope appoints three legates — Peter of Castlenau, Raynarde de Certre, and Arnold-Amalric — to Toulouse. Their mission is to extirpate the heretics. The legates are empowered by the Pope to call on the King of France for aid, but are enjoined to use moderation. The legates excommunicate Count Raymond and put his lands under interdict. As a result local animosity toward the Church intensifies, until, in 1208, the hated Peter of Castlenau is murdered by one of the Count's knights. This events makes war an inevitability, and the Pope calls a crusade against the Albigensians.

At the time of heretical activity, King Philip II Augustus of France is involved in a war against the English, and has no time for a campaign in southern France. Nevertheless, many lords and knights, hungry for lands of the south and for absolution of sin, assemble at Lyon in 1209. This army, led by Simon de Montfort, takes southern city after city, ravaging and laying waste to the land.

In reaction to the Crusade King Peter II of Aragon, overlord of Foix and Beziers, protests to the Pope about the attacks on his lands, but his pleas are ignored. Consequently, Peter takes the field against the crusaders, leading his own army north. The Spanish and French armies clash at the battle of Muret in 1213, where Peter of Aragon is killed. Simon de Montfort is granted the titles of Count of Toulouse and Duke of Narbonne by the Pope in 1215.

After the death of Innocent III in 1216, King Philip takes his turn at crusading. He had promised to crusade against the Saracens in the Holy Land, but at the time has not fulfilled that vow. Instead, he crusades in his own lands. In the meantime the Albigensians rally and Toulouse rebels against de Montfort, who is killed in 1218 while trying to retake his lands. King Philip tries to take Toulouse as well, but returns north when his efforts fail.

Philip dies in 1223, and King Louis VIII takes to the field in 1226, defeating Provençe. The heretics still hold out in Toulouse, though, under Raymond VII, son of Raymond VI. Raymond VII continues the struggle of his faith, leading a league of southern lords against the northern armies. Unfortunately the southern league is defeated, and their lands ravaged once again.

The rebels finally yield, signing the Treaty of Paris in April 1229, bringing some peace to southern France. The fall of castle Montsegur, in 1244, is the last great event of the Crusade, wherein two hundred castle defenders are dragged from their retreats and burned by the Crusaders.

Though the Albigensian Crusade is ostensibly a victory for the Church, the cultures of Provençe and Aquitaine are destroyed by the struggle. No longer do the lands' unique troubadours sing of the courts of love. In fact, many cities, as cultural centers, are so badly damaged they never recover. The old noble families are also displaced. New lords, with northern ideas and allegiances, take control of the countryside, overwhelming the former character of the land.

Though he is loathe to admit it, the fury of the northern crusaders takes even the Pope by surprise. Not even he is able to control the knights once loosed, not even to save the culture of a land once occupied by genuinely devout Catholics.

Reconquista

The reconquest of Spain (from the Muslims who had captured parts of it in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries) started in the early Eleventh Century. The reclamation was initiated when the Omayyad Caliphate of Cordova dissolved into a group of small, mutually hostile Islamic kingdoms, known as Taifas. Each Taifa was based on a city, though some controlled no more than two or three towns. The Christian kingdoms of northern Spain, which were not much more politically advanced, had a number of strong kings who were able to take advantage of the disarray of the Moorish forces to capture the occupied territory and return it to Christian rule.

By A.D. 1090, the border between Muslim and Christian lands had been pushed down to a line from Coimbra to Toledo, then north to the southern border of Aragon. The most famous Christian of this period was not a king or great noble, but a knight named Rodrigo de Vivar, more commonly known by the name his Moorish enemies gave him, El Cid.

The Spanish Muslims were not without aid against the Christians and El Cid, though. In Africa, a fundamentalist sect of Muslims known as the Almoravids had established an empire stretching across the northern coast of Africa, east of Tangier almost to Barce. The kings of the Taifas begged the Almoravids to aid them against the Christians, which they did, twice defeating the Christian armies. The Almoravids soon grew just as decadent as the Taifas they supported, though, and lost their holdings in Africa to a new sect, the Almohads, who were even more fanatical than the Almoravids had been. The Almohads fought the Almoravids for southern Spain, finally uniting it in 1175.

The Thirteenth Century

Dynastic problems among the Christian kings in the Thirteenth Century keep them from unifying to expel the Moors from Spain, though some advances are made. The final stage of the reconquest begins in A.D. 1210, when Pope Innocent III declares a crusade against the Moors (partially to redirect marauding knights engaged in the Albigensian Crusade). In the Spanish Crusade Alfonso VIII of Castile leads a united Spanish army from Toledo, in 1212, and routes the Almohads at the battle of Los Navas de Tolosa. The Almohads never recover from the defeat, and their downfall becomes inevitable.

Though, further dynastic struggles in the Christian states allow the Muslims more time to recoup, they cannot resist further Christian attacks. The Almohad Empire breaks up into petty kingdoms in 1223, of which Cordova is the greatest. Castile captures Cordova in 1236, Seville in 1248, and Murcia in 1261. Meanwhile, Aragon captures the Balearic Isles in 1235, and Valencia in 1238. Portugal conquers the territory east of Silves, to the Guadiana river, where the forces of Castile move westward. This area between the two armies, the Algarve, is finally acknowledged as Portuguese territory in 1267. Only the Muslim kingdom of Granada holds out against the feuding Christian states.

Mongols

The latest in a long series of eastern steppe nomads, the Mongols appear in Thirteenth Century western Mythic Europe in A.D. 1222, when they come off the steppes and capture the city of Tana on the Black Sea.

The Mongols are a race of hardy horsemen, afraid of nothing and capable of hideous acts of cruelty, both as a people, and individually. The Mongols begin riding as soon as they can remain seated on a horse, and learn the use of the bow as soon as they can pull the string.

Led by their kings, known as khans, the Mongols capture town after town around the Black Sea in 1222 and 1223, then disappear back into the steppe until 1237, when they begin attacking cities in Russia. During their western invasion the Mongols defeat everyone in their path. They forge through to Poland, sacking Cracow, and defeating the combined armies of Teutonic knights, Poles, and German Imperial forces at the Battle of Leignitz. They continue with the sack of Olmutz, and pass through Hungary on their way back to the steppes. Once established in Russia, the Golden Horde, as the Mongols call themselves, take control of the government.

No one knows why the Mongols disappear from Mythic Europe in 1223, or why they turn back from further invasions in 1241. Speculation on the subject runs from the power of Christian prayer and miracle which drives off the heathens, to the summoning of demons which lay waste to the barbarians.


K. of Navarre
Kingdom of Aragon
Saragossa
Valencia
Lisbon
Cadiz
Seville

IBERIAN PENINSULA

CHAPTER FIVE

The Iberian peninsula is a roughly rectangular region which juts from the southwestern tip of Mythic Europe. Home to a mix of Muslim and Christian kingdoms and provinces, it is a land of contrasts, and a land of war.

Journeying to Iberia

Entering the Iberian peninsula from France, a traveler must first cross the forbidding Pyrenees, high craggy mountains rivaling the famous Alps. Approaching from the north, the mountains are steep and ominous, revealing few passes to the southern side. The Iberian slopes are gentler, with a number of north-south valleys which make the descent into Iberia much easier than the ascent from France. The mountains are also steeper in the east than the west, and most of the accessible passes are on the Atlantic side of the mountain range, near the city of Pamplona.

Travelers are advised that even the best passes are closed for many months of the year; winters in the Pyrenees are harsh, and passes quickly fill with snow. The most relenting time to travel is in late spring or early summer, as torrential rains make the western passes treacherous in late summer and fall. Should a late crossing be attempted, it might be best to use one of the few eastern passes, as the eastern mountains do not suffer as much from autumn rains.

Once across the Pyrenees, a traveler must navigate the gentler slopes of the Cantabrian Mountains. These mountains, which cover the northern half of the Christian kingdoms of Leon and Old Castile, and the Christian kingdoms of Navarre and Aragon, are comprised of gentle terraces in the north, and steep slopes in the south. These mountains are inhabited by the Vascones, known to the French as the Basques. These wild people have lived in these lands since before the time of Caesar, by farming, herding, and (some say) smuggling and performing magic.

The Cantabrians receive considerable rainfall throughout the year, and the climate is warm and humid. Mists are frequent, and it is said that this region receives more rain than all the rest of Iberia combined. Most rainfall comes from the Atlantic, so the southern slopes are much drier and hotter than the northern.

Entering Iberia

Most pilgrims traveling to Santiago de Campostela come south of the Cantabrians, traveling through the eastern passes to reach Burgos, then turning west through Leon before finally assaying the steeper slopes of northwestern Iberia. Their journey brings them along the northern edge of the Meseta, the vast high plain which dominates central Iberia. The Meseta extends north-south from Leon to the southern edge of New Castile, and from the west coast to the kingdom of Aragon. This broad flat region is very dry, with harsh winters (particularly in the north), and hot summers. There are few forests, and most vegetation is brushwood and scrub, some of which (the "*monte bajo*," or low woods) rise only a few feet above the plain.

The Meseta is divided into two major parts by the Central Sierras, an east-west line of low mountains which runs through the center of the plains north of Toledo. These mountains extend into Portugal in the west, and to the edge of New Castile in the east. There are many breaks in the range, however, so crossing these mountains is not difficult.

The Meseta was once under Muslim rule for over four centuries, and there are still traces of Muslim culture in every local village and town. Indeed, even the buildings show Muslim influence, with fluted roofs and bright patterns of tile. Many of the peoples of the region also maintain Muslim practices despite their purported conversion to Christianity, when crusaders liberated the land.

The southern edge of the Meseta is marked by the Sierra Morena, a mountain chain north of Cordova. These mountains run from Portugal eastward to end at the Mediterranean coast just north of Murcia. The Sierra Morena has many deep, narrow passes to the southern lands of Granada and the Almohad Empire.

On the far side of the Sierra Morena is Andalusia, a hot, dry region with mild winters, a region which extends across the Muslim nations: the Almohad Empire and the kingdom of Granada. Most of this area is a broad flat plain, much like the Meseta except at a lower altitude. However, the central portion of Andalusia is dominated by the Sierra Nevada, a steep, rocky mountain range. The Balearic Islands, which lie to the northeast of the Sierra Nevada, are also steep and rocky, but receive much more rainfall. The little rain that does fall in Andalusia flows through the Guadalquivir River to the sea.

Andalusia is under Muslim rule, and has been for centuries, although the kingdoms of Castile and Portugal are pressing for further gains in the area.

East of the Meseta lies the Levant, a narrow strip of land which runs from the mouth of the Ebro River to Cape Palos, south of Murcia. It is a sunny land with little rainfall, dominated by high rocky mountains and silt plains. What rain does fall comes in autumn and early winter. Days are very hot, but nights are cold, even in summer. The region supports many vineyards and olive trees, and there are many small fishing villages along the coast.

War

Iberia is at war. The Christian kingdoms are involved in a crusade to recapture all of Iberia from the Muslims, and to restore Iberia to Christian rule. This campaign, called the Reconquista, has been quite successful, and Iberia is now split fairly evenly between the two religious factions, with the Christians in the north and the Muslims in the south. The Christian kingdoms along the frontier continue their raids into Muslim territory, pressing against the weakening Almohad Empire. On the other hand, tensions are rising between the Christian kings north of the frontier.

The People

The people of Iberia are idealistic and generous, heroic and passionate. El Cid, the greatest knight who ever lived, embodies the strengths of these people. The Iberians combine the virtues of bravery and generosity with the paradoxical faults of pride, intolerance, and the refusal to submit to appropriate authority.

In relation to their denial of authority, many Christian folk who have lived under the Muslims fight the Reconquista, preferring their Muslim kings to honest Christian rule. Likewise, the Muslims themselves are not united. Some fight beside the Christians against the Muslim cause. In Iberia, a person's religion is no guarantee of loyalty.

Almohad Empire

The Almohad Empire is that of Muslim raiders who have invaded and settled in Iberia. The Empire's initial invasion attempts led to penetration into France, north of the Pyrenees mountains, but that expansion was thwarted. Afterward the Empire contented itself with occupying Spain for centuries.

History of the Empire

The invasion of Spain by the forces of Islam was instigated by King Roderic, the last Gothic King of Spain. He forced himself on the daughter of Count Julian, who had sent the girl to Roderic's court for an education. When Count Julian arrived

at Roderic's court to take his daughter back home, King Roderic, believing Julian did not know of his acts, asked Julian to send back some falcons for hunting. Julian, who was enraged at the way his daughter had been treated, replied that he would send back so many that Roderic could not believe his eyes.

Julian then negotiated with Musa, a noble of Africa, who sent his general, Tarik, and an army to Spain. The rock of Gibraltar still bears Tarik's name (*"Gebel Tariq"*, meaning Tarik's Mountain). Tarik and his small army of Arab, Persian, and Moorish troops easily defeating the army of King Roderic at the battle of Lake Janda in A.D. 711. And, part of Tarik's success derived from the help of Jews and other rebellious subjects under King Roderic.

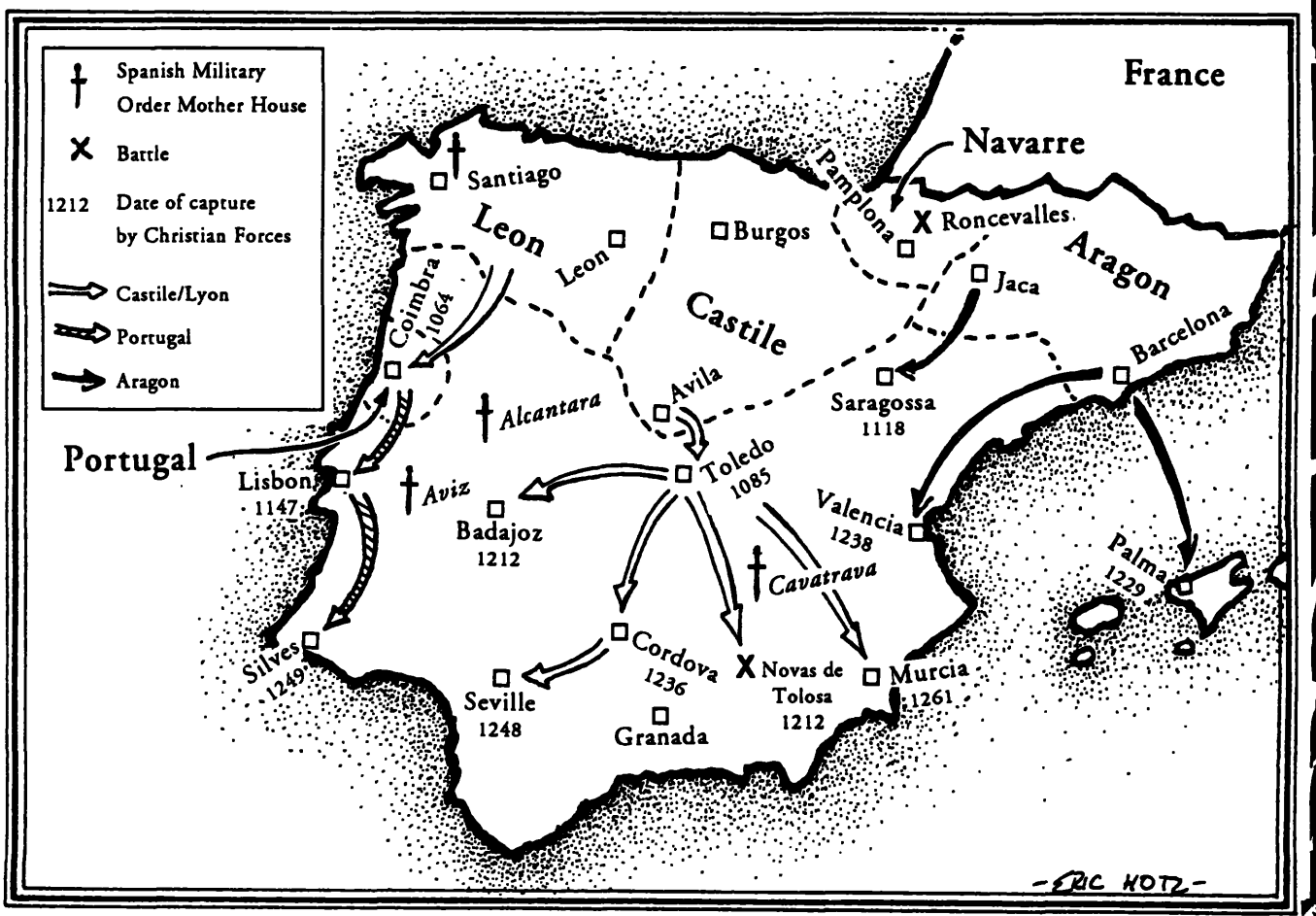
After his success in Spain, Tarik was recalled by Musa, however, and flogged for disobeying orders by advancing too far north. By 722, Tarik's Moors had conquered all of Spain up to the foot of the Pyrenees, except for a small area around Santiago where they were confounded by the tenacity of the natives and the supernatural aid of St. James. Regardless of this Christian holdout, the Muslim Empire had established itself in Iberia.

Defending the Empire

The invading Muslims soon found that ruling conquered lands was more difficult than overrunning them. Many Moorish princes revolted against their masters, and Christian uprisings kept the lands in a constant state of war. And, before long, the Muslim movement northward was brought to a halt. Raids across the Pyrenees brought in much booty, but were finally ended at the Battle of Poitiers (also known as the Battle of Tours) in A.D. 732, when King Charles Martel of France defeated a loot-laden Moorish army. In fact, all the towns north of the Pyrenees were reconquered, and a string of French castles was erected to guard the passes through the mountains.

Settling into the conquered Spain, Moorish forces lay tranquil under the rule of the Omayyad Caliphate. But, in 1031, a series of weak caliphs allowed Spain to fragment into Taifa (Arabic for party or group) kingdoms, each centered on one or two cities or towns. At the same time, the Christian kings of Castile, Leon, Aragon, and Navarre began the Reconquista, their reconquest of Spain. For once, the Muslims in Spain were on the defensive.

Native Muslim forces rallied to their allies' side in Spain, and daunted the Christian forces, but eventually lost power. In Africa, a new religious fervor arose among the Moors, who invaded Spain after the fall of Toledo in 1085. The Almoravid kings (from the Arabic *"Al-murabbitun,"* meaning warriors of the faith) were able to halt and even reverse the reconquests of the Christians, but were soon overcome by the easy living found in Andalusia. Weakened by their corruption, the Almoravids were in turn overthrown by the Almohads (*"Al-muwahhidun,"* meaning unitarian), another fierce puritan sect. It was thus that the Almohad Empire arose in already established Muslim lands.



Cultural Integration

As the Almohad Empire continues to reign in Iberia, the invaders and natives have become increasingly tolerant of each other, and have even intermingled. It is thus that a tenuous truce has evolved between conquerors and conquered.

The Spanish Moors also import many slaves for their service. Indeed, slaves are brought by Jewish merchants from Slavonia. The invaders also take Spanish wives. As a result of this cultural mix, within only a few generations of each invasion, very few pure-blooded Moors remain.

Religious tolerance also exists between the mixed cultures of the Almohad Empire. The Muslims allow Jews and Christians to worship unhindered. All that Muslims require is for non-Islamics to pay a tax for their beliefs.

Not only are the Muslims receptive to foreign religions, but some Christians are receptive of Islam (though not necessarily for virtuous reasons). A great many Christian Spaniards turned to Islam during and after the conquest. Those that embraced Islam during the conquest kept their lands, titles, and wealth, and were treated as brothers by the invaders. However, those who have become Muslim after the invasion, whether to avoid special taxes or for fear of mob violence, are looked down upon by the Moors. The Almohads are scornful of those who renounce their religion out of intimidation.

But, regardless of religious tolerance, political relations in the Empire are not always determined by religion. It is normal for Christian knights to serve in Muslim armies, even against other Christians. Conversely, it is normal to find Muslims in the armies of Christian kings. Intermarriage is common between the cultures, especially among the nobility, leading to armies of mixed culture.

Ultimately, the Almohad Empire's tolerance of divergent beliefs, whether they be Christian, Arab, Moor, or Jew, produces the most civilized culture in the world. Indeed, the cities of central and southern Spain, where the Almohad Empire reigns, are renowned for their beauty, elegance, and learning.

BADAJOZ

Badajoz is one of the greatest of the Almohad Empire's cities and Taifa kingdoms. Long a bastion of Muslim power, Badajoz has repelled attacks by Castile and Portugal for many years. The kingdom finally falls to Castile in A.D. 1212, after the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, when the Almoravid dynasty is crushed by a combined Castilian-Aragonese-Portuguese army. The Castilians march to Badajoz, a distance of nearly two hundred miles, in little over two weeks, before the news of the Almoravid defeat reaches the city.

Badajoz has long been a stronghold of Muslim sorcerers, but even they can not hold off the Castilian knights, who recruit magicians of their own. In the final days of the city's siege, the sky turns dark and booming voices are heard shouting back and

forth within the city's Tower of the Djinn. At the climax of a two day battle, the Tower of the Djinn explodes, killing many soldiers and all Muslim sorce0rers inside. The explosion scatters magical devices, and Magi may search for relics in the town. Searchers are spurred on by tales of the Wand of Al-Murhamet, a powerful artifact said to give its wielder the power of flight, and many advantages when dealing with djinn. Rumors of significant finds can bring Magi from the southern Hermetic Tribunals, and some pitched battles may be fought in the streets of Badajoz, between Magi of different Covenants.

CORDOVA

Fertilized by both Muslim science and European philosophy, Cordova is the acknowledged medical and scientific center of all Mythic Europe. Doctors and scholars from across the known world come to Cordova to study medicine, and to participate in scientific discussions. Cordova is also a city of artisans, and is a famed producer of jewelry and leatherwork.

Cordova is also a wealthy city, with over 700 mosques, most now converted to churches, and 900 public baths, in addition to many other fabulous public works. Most famous of these works is the great Mosque of Cordova, which houses the remains of Mohammed the Prophet, and is built on a scale seen nowhere else. The roof is supported by 800 pillars, while 4,000 silver lamps burn scented oil. The Library of Cordova is said to hold 400,000 volumes, including works written by ancient authors unknown to Christians.

Cordova was recaptured from Muslims by the Christian forces of Seville in A.D. 1078, when the Muslims attempted to reunite the Taifa kingdoms. The Almoravids recaptured the city themselves, but the army of Castile reclaims Cordova from the Muslims in 1236. The last sack of the city is attended by many Magi from Iberian Covenants, eager to claim the manuscripts of the city's many libraries. Invading Magi have to fight Moorish sorcerers, as well as Magi from other Covenants. Of course, these magical battles are fought before the backdrop of a Spanish assault.

GRANADA

Granada, ruled by Muslims, truly comes into its own after Seville is recaptured by Christian forces in A.D. 1248. Until then the ruling Nasrid dynasty manages to keep Christians out of the city with the help of Moorish sorcerers.

By the mid Thirteenth Century Granada is the last Muslim kingdom left on Spanish soil, and is perhaps the most beautiful city in Spain. Indeed, it is crowned by the magnificent palace of the Alhambra, a sprawling castle complex. The city also boasts a number of fabulous libraries. Its books accumulate as refugees — scholars, doctors and sorcerers — from other cities flee the attacking Christians.

Granada sues the Christians for peace and, for a short while after the fall of Seville and Cordova, becomes a tributary kingdom to Castile. However, Granada soon shakes off the Castilian influence.

Granada has its back to the sea, but its fate is not sealed until 1248. Civil wars and inter-Christian wars give the city time to strengthen, and the city is well-situated, being invulnerable to attack until the middle of the century.

MURCIA

A Taifa kingdom overrun by the army of Valencia, Murcia became a Muslim kingdom again for a short while during the Eleventh Century. The Muslim poet Ibn Ammar was told to conquer the city by the King of Cordova. Ibn Ammar did so with the help of traitors inside the gates, and soon declared himself King of Murcia.

In response to the invasion the King of Seville wrote a poetic protest of his new vassal's arrogance; Ibn Ammar replied in the same meter. The messages continued in this style until Ibn Ammar insulted the Queen of Cordova, which enraged the King. Ibn Ammar then raided north toward Valencia, but the same traitor who had opened Murcia's gates to Ammar now held them against him on his return, and Ammar was forced to journey to Saragossa.

Ammar was eventually captured on another raid, and his captor put him up for auction to all the princes of Spain, many of whom he had insulted or betrayed in one way or another. The King of Cordova bought Ammar, and paraded him around his domain in chains, then had him executed. However, Ammar's body was buried in the royal crypt.

Murcia is the last Muslim stronghold in Seville to be recaptured; for a time it is a tributary kingdom to Castile. Castile finally takes the city in A.D. 1261 after a revolt by the Muslims, which weakens the city's defenses. The city, cut off from Cordova by the Christian army, surrenders to the King of Castile, who grants free passage to those women who wish to leave, but demands that they take only what they can carry. The women carry their husbands on their backs, saving thousands of men from slaughter. The citizens of Murcia then attempt to enter Cordova, but are turned away from the city gates. The people then wander through Spain, not welcome in either Christian nor Muslim Spain. They travel in large groups, defending themselves from robbers and brigands.

SEVILLE

The capital of the Almohad Empire until the city's Christian recapture in A.D. 1248, Seville is a city of beauty and elegance, where the pursuit of art reaches a peak. The city's castles and palaces seem to arise from tales of faerie, with brilliant tiles and soaring towers. Nestled in the castles are exquisite gardens, smelling of flowering fruit trees, with secluded glades for lovers to meet. Even the water in the fountains is perfumed, lending fragrance to the air.

Ships laden with the products of the world sail up the Guadalquivir River, and it is said that anything, including bird's milk, may be had in Seville.

As a Taifa kingdom, Seville tried to unite the Muslim kingdoms of Andalusia. The city conquered Cordova in 1078, but infighting and pressure from the invading Christians prohibited further expansion. Seville was captured from the Muslim Almoravids by their invading brethren, the Almohads, in 1147, and in 1248 is taken by the forces of Castile.

SILVES

The Moorish city of Silves controlled the land known as the Algarve, a fruitful region in the extreme southwest of Spain. Renowned for its fruit and wine, the Algarve holds out against the Christians until A.D. 1249, when Silves is captured by Alfonso III of Portugal. There are no major changes made in the government of the city, although, as in all recaptured cities in Spain, a majority of the Muslim citizens depart. Most go to Granada, at the time the last Muslim territory in Spain.

The waters off Silves produce many fish for the fleets, but many sailors claim the waters are haunted. A number of sailors tell tales of sudden, thick fogs, in which thunderous sounds and flashes of light play. Some sailors claim to have seen the shapes of huge ships in the fog, shapes with lightning coming from their sides.

VALENCIA

Valencia is a major seaport in Spain, though not as important as Barcelona. Valencia is best known for its association with El Cid, who conquered the city in A.D. 1094, ruling there until his death in 1099. After the death of El Cid, the Muslim Almoravids took the city, ruling there until the Almohads drive them out in A.D. 1230. The army of Aragon recaptures Valencia in 1238. Valencia is the last city on the Spanish mainland to be taken by the kings of Aragon, who, after Castile takes Murcia and halts any further conquests to the south, turns their eye eastward to the Balearic Islands.

The sorcerers of Valencia are most famous for their control of a great number of djinn, which they use to bring rare fruit trees and grape vines to the city, planting them in great orchards and vineyards. The djinn are said to be commanded to care for the plants, which they do, even after the fall of the city to the Christians. The Archbishop of Toledo wants to exorcise the djinn, as they are considered allies of demons. However, the new Count of the city convinces the Archbishop to stay his bans, and within five years the Count is exporting oranges, pomegranates, and fine wine to all of Mythic Europe. The djinn do their work quietly, requiring no supervision nor food, a ready-made work force which comes free with the city.

Aragon

Formed from the eastern third of the old kingdom of Navarre, Aragon is bordered on the east by Catalonia, the old County of Barcelona.

Because it was hampered by a short frontier, Aragon made a little progress against the Muslims to the south in the Reconquista. However, in A.D. 1118 King Alfonso the Warrior captured Saragossa and raided as far south as Granada. His death in 1134 left the country in chaos. Alfonso's brother Ramiro was a monk, but he was finally released from his vows to ascend the throne. Ramiro only reigned three years, and his wife bore him a daughter, Petronilla. Ramiro married the infant to Raymond-Berenger IV of Toulouse, and promptly abdicated in favor of his war-like son-in-law.

Marriage of Count Raymond-Berenger III of Toulouse to the Aragon heiress also led to Aragon's nominal overlordship of the county of Provençe. When the Albigensian Crusade is called against Provençe and other regions of southern France, and northern French armies prove merciless to captured towns, King Peter II of Aragon marches north at the head of a Spanish army to protect his lands in Provençe. He meets the French army, led by Simon de Montfort, at the battle of Muret in A.D. 1213, and is killed, along with the flower of Aragonese chivalry.

Peter's son, James I, succeeds to the throne only by the intervention of Pope Innocent III, who orders him released by Simon de Montfort (de Montfort had captured James at the Battle of Muret). James spends the early part of his reign

insuring his hold on the crown, and in 1229 begins a campaign against the Muslim-held Balearic Isles, completing the conquest in 1235. He captures Valencia, El Cid's city, in 1238.

In 1282 the citizens of Palermo, Sicily, outraged by the mishandling of a Sicilian girl by French soldiers, begin a riot which eventually sweeps the French from Sicily. After abortive efforts at self-government, the citizens invite Peter III of Aragon to rule Sicily, preferring a Spanish king to a French one, or to their own partisan families. The mixture of Aragonese and Catalan blood makes for a highly independent people, with dress, language, and customs different from the rest of the Spanish kingdoms.

The artistic temperament of Aragon is much like that in Provençe and Aquitaine, with much original art and poetry. Militarily, southern France is more closely allied to Aragon than to any other Spanish kingdom. Aragon controls the majority of the passes through the Pyrenees, and has the only Christian ports on the Mediterranean coast of the Iberian peninsula.

BARCELONA

One of the last cities captured by the Moors, Barcelona was recaptured by Charlemagne. Charles the Great incorporated the city into the Spanish March, a strip of land on the southern slopes of the Pyrenees which buffered France from attacks by the Moors. As a result, Barcelona has always been closer to France than to the rest of Spain, and produces many poets in the manner of the French troubadours.

Barcelona is the chief seaport of Aragon and Spain, and receives shipments from all over the Mediterranean. Thus, it is a source of great wealth for the kingdom of Aragon. During the years of the conquest of the Balearic Islands (A.D. 1229-1235), Barcelona is the major port of embarkation for Aragonese troops. It remains the port used by colonists to the Balearics.

The citizens of Barcelona celebrate the sea every year with a festival in the spring. The Bishop of Barcelona leads all the priests of the city on a circuit of the walls, ending at the harbor, where boats are freshly painted and decorated with colored ropes and sails. The Bishop chooses a boat to ride in, a great honor for the owner, and the boats sail on the Mediterranean, lead by the Bishop's boat. Once the congregation has assembled about a mile from shore, crews sing songs honoring St. Mary and St. Marinus. The Bishop blesses all the ships, and blesses the sea. The sailors throw offerings onto the waves. Everyone returns to the city, where the Bishop celebrates a special Mass in the cathedral. The rest of the day is given to festivities and parades.

JACA

The capital of Old Navarre, Jaca became the principal city of the kingdom of Aragon when Sancho the Great split the kingdom in A.D. 1035. The lands around Jaca have long been peaceful, and the citizens have more to fear from Christian brigands than Muslim raiders. Jaca was the starting point of the Aragonese efforts to capture Saragossa, but languished after Saragossa was taken. Now the city is a way station for pilgrims from Barcelona and Narbonne on their way to St. James of Campostela. As such, prices in the city are dear, especially for food, mules, horses, and traveling gear. On the other hand, the city supports a thriving business in saints' relics, from the feathers of archangel wings to the bones of any saint you care to name. Pardoners also reside in the city, offering their services to pilgrims who have strayed from the path of righteousness during their journey.

PALMA

The Baeleric Islands consist of the three main islands of Majorca, Minorca, and Ibiza, and numerous small, uninhabited rocky islets. Founded by Ulysses, Palma is the capital of the Baeleric Islands, and boasts a marvelous harbor, surrounded by a wall built by the Romans. The islands have had a number of masters; the Romans, Carthaginians, Goths, Vandals, and Moors have each conquered the islands in turn.

In A.D. 1229 King James I of Aragon captures Palma, though the conquest of the islands takes the next six years. James builds the cathedral in Palma, replacing the dilapidated building which had fallen into a ruin during the five hundred years of Moorish occupation. The Baeleric Islands are made a kingdom and granted by James I of Aragon to his son, James I of Majorca, in 1276.

The people of the islands prove excellent slingers, a skill long lost to most armies of Mythic Europe. The slingers are said to be able to pluck grapes with their slingstones, and to crack helmets with rocks the size of a knucklebone. King James of Aragon experiments with slingers in his army, and by their accuracy and the force of their stones, is soon encouraged to add slingers to his force.

SARAGOSSA

The key city of north-central Spain, Saragossa was the object of the invasion by Charlemagne, chronicled in the "Song of Roland."

King Alfonso I of Aragon conquered Saragossa in A.D. 1118, after a heavy siege wherein twenty war engines were used by the Moorish rulers of the city. Many citizens died in the fighting, and many more starved themselves rather than surrender. The survivors only opened the gates of the town after a relief force was defeated by the Aragonese. The Muslim citizens were given a quarter of the city to live in, but many left to live among their own faith.

While once a city on the frontier between Christians and Moors, Saragossa is now firmly in peaceful Christian country. However, it still has a small Muslim population, tolerated by the King of Aragon.

The libraries of Saragossa were largely taken south by fleeing Muslims, and some were burned, but a few survived the capture of the city. The contents of surviving libraries were taken north to Paris, where they serve as the nucleus of the

University of Paris. Unfortunately, a large percentage of the salvaged manuscripts were lost in crossing the Pyrenees in 1120, when mules carrying them were captured by a Basque raiding party.

No one knows what happened to the captured manuscripts. The fear is that the Basques used them for their fires, though some whisper that a learned dragon in the mountains now possesses them.

Castile

The greatest of the Spanish kingdoms, Castile was given to Ferdinand I by his father, Sancho the Great of Navarre. Ferdinand conquered the city of Leon in A.D. 1037, displacing its rightful King, Bermudo III, and overran his brother's kingdom of Navarre in 1054. Ferdinand did not annex Navarre, though, preferring to keep taxing it instead, for his eyes looked south to the Moorish kingdoms of central and southern Spain. By the time he died, Ferdinand had expanded his borders as far south as the line drawn from Coimbra to Toledo, and had the Muslim kingdoms of Seville, Toledo, Saragossa, and Badajoz paying tribute. However, Castile was split on Ferdinand's death, and thus lost momentum against the Moors, while Ferdinand's children fought wars amongst themselves.

The eventual victor of Castile's civil war was Alfonso VI, King of Leon. Alfonso made the King of Seville pay double tribute to retain his throne, and captured Toledo when its ruler appealed to him for aid to regain that throne. Alfonso sent troops to the city, but then besieged and captured it in 1085, annexing it to Castile.

Alfonso also made all Muslim Taifa kingdoms to the south and east tributaries. Indeed, the military success of Alfonzo forced the Moors of Spain to appeal to the Almoravids of Africa, a fanatical Berber tribe, for help. The Almoravids defeated Alfonzo twice, but soon took over the Taifa kingdoms, spending their time capturing the cities of Muslim Spain rather than fighting the Christians.

It was Alfonso who exiled a poor knight, Rodrigo de Vivar, from his lands for attacking the King of Toledo in 1081. Unwittingly, Alfonso sent forth the one destined to become Spain's greatest hero, El Cid.

On Alfonso's death Castile divided into civil war again, with King Alfonso I of Aragon and Navarre; Queen Urraca of Castile; Teresa, the queen's sister; and Prince Alfonso of Castile, the queen's son, all fighting for the throne. Prince Alfonso finally managed to take the throne as Alfonso VII.

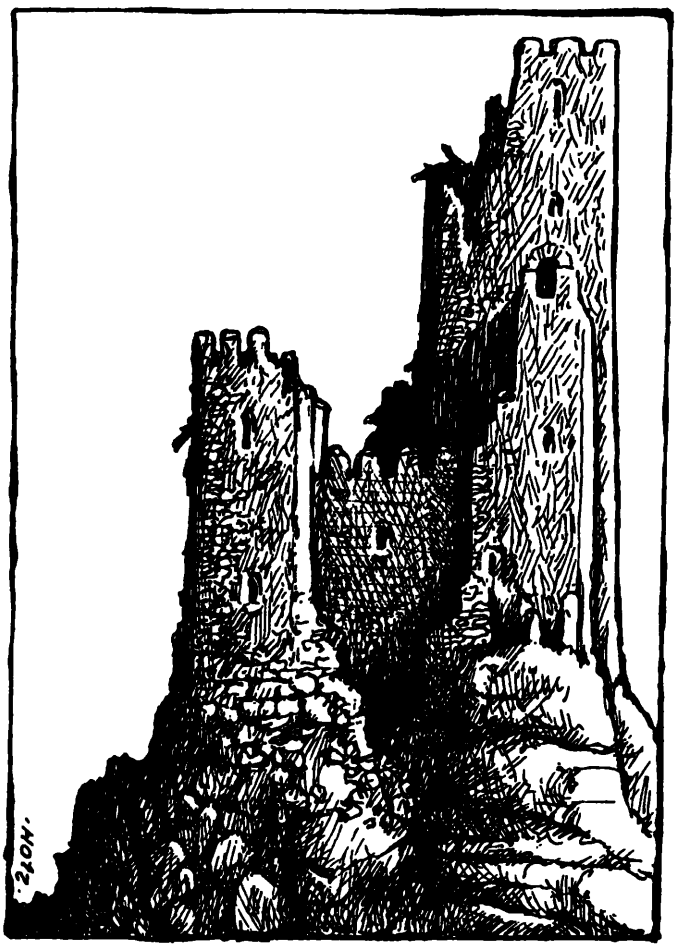
The kingdom of Castile can be roughly divided into three pieces: the old kingdom of Leon, Old Castile, and New Castile. The old kingdom of Leon, located around the cities of Leon and Santiago, is the oldest Christian portion of Spain. The Moors never conquered Leon because of the fierceness of its natives and the power of holy relics in Santiago. Old Castile, from Navarre to north of Toledo, was captured by Moors, but was retaken early in the Reconquista. The land is now held by strong Christian knights. New Castile, which extends from Toledo southward, is still a frontier, with raids from Moorish horsemen a constant threat to travelers and towns. Not surprisingly, the military might of Castile is concentrated in the south, where raids and invasions are a way of life.

Avila

Avila is a frontier city in Castile, the bastion of Christian power at the edge of Moorish lands. Its grim battlements steep the city in the Spartan sentiment of war; even the cathedral is a fortress, incorporated into the city walls. Although the Reconquista has progressed beyond Avila, from the walls Moors can still occasionally be seen raiding nearby farms.

The army which captured Toledo from the Moors was formed at Avila, and it stands as a ready fortress should the tide of the Reconquista turn.

Built on a windswept, treeless plateau with lofty, snow-covered peaks rising in the near distance, Avila brings out the inner soul of a man. Many mystics and hermits can be found in the mountains surrounding Avila, living quiet lives of poverty and contemplation without the need for companionship.



BURGOS

The capital of Old Castile, Burgos is still a vital city, as all government business is conducted here. The city is filled with ambassadors, legates, and spies, all drawn to the center of the most aggressive Christian kingdom in Spain.

A few miles outside Burgos is the town of Vivar, home of the greatest hero of Spain, El Cid. Here pilgrims come to pay their respects to the most Christian of knights. A movement to have El Cid canonized began in A.D. 1092, and a number of knights would like to form a military order in El Cid's name. The Archbishop of Burgos has so far refused to pass the locals' requests on to the Pope, as he deems some of El Cid's deeds less than Christian. (The city's cathedral bears chronicles from the time of El Cid, along with messages and a box full of sand which El Cid gave as surety on a loan, claiming it was full of jewels.)

Just as the kingdom of Castile is oriented to war, so is Burgos. Despite its distance from Moorish lands, the city's garrison is ever-vigilant. Soldiers constantly walk the walls of the city, and mounted patrols sweep the country for several days' ride all around. All the Spanish military orders have chapter houses in Burgos, both to support and to spy on the plans of the King of Castile. The archbishops of Burgos are traditionally chosen for their militant stance, and many have been renowned warriors, leading the forces of the kingdom in the tradition of Charlemagne's Bishop Turpin, who died fighting at the pass of Roncevalles.

LEON

The city of Leon lies in the north-central part of the Iberian peninsula. Once the kingdom of Leon's capital, the city now languishes, forgotten except by pilgrims who pass through on their way to and from Santiago. Even the local Archbishop and the religious community are overshadowed by Santiago, resulting in less competent priests being assigned to Leon. As a result, the Archbishop of Leon is viewed as something of a joke by other Spanish bishops, and even by the Pope's Lateran Palace.

The city's inferior position has incensed more than one rising member of the Church hierarchy, whose path to cardinal is shunted to this lowly station. Some holders of local Church office have abandoned their vows, turning instead to hedonism and depravity. Some have even been suspected of diablerie. And, a few of these fallen bishops have met violent deaths at the hands of those who have suffered from their cruelty.

One infamous case sung by many troubadours involves a bishop of Leon who forced a noblewoman to accept his advances, in defiance of his vows of chastity. Upon being refused, the Bishop turned to diabolic ritual to enchant the noblewoman and her true love. Only through the power of their love for one another, and the grace of God, were the lovers able to escape Bishop's enchantment.

While the accuracy of this story is questionable, such sentiments are common in the region. Moreover, the corruption of the local bishopric has weakened the power of the Dominion in Leon. Thus, the people of Leon distrust those with magical abilities, as magic seems to have greater sway in their city than it does elsewhere.

Pillars of Hercules

These islands are said to be all that remains of Atlantis, the island kingdom first described by Plato. It is also said that the islands are the resting place of the most precious of Atlantis's possessions. The items are supposedly protected by such great magicks that they were not destroyed in the cataclysm which sank the rest of the kingdom far beneath the sea.

Few have ever landed on these islands and returned. Those that have returned have not spoken of what they saw. The islands are perpetually shrouded by a mystical fog, and some Magi suspect the islands bear *regio*, much like those of some faerie forests on the continent. A favorite source of rivalry among apprentices in the Order of Hermes is in being the first to find and return safely from the Pillars of Hercules. Of course, the young are often foolish.

SANTIAGO

Santiago, the second largest city of the kingdom of Leon, lies in the northwestern corner of Spain. It was never overrun by the Muslims; the ferocity of its defenders, bolstered by the sanctity of the bones of St. James the Greater, made this corner of Spain particularly unattractive to the Moors. It is said that St. James himself, mounted on a white charger and brandishing a silver sword, was seen over many battlefields, heartening the Christians and terrifying the Moors.

The Cathedral of St. James Campostela in Santiago is the third great pilgrimage site (after Jerusalem and Rome) of the Christian world. Tens of thousands of pilgrims visit each year, making Santiago and neighboring cities rich with pilgrim donations. Inside the cathedral is a statue of St. James, which when touched is said to confer good luck and health on the pilgrim. The cockle shell is the symbol of the pilgrimage to Santiago.

TOLEDO

Toledo was the capital of the early Christian kingdom of Spain. Although overrun by the Moors in A.D. 712, the Moorish policy of religious tolerance allowed the Archbishop of Toledo to remain the chief Bishop of Spain. Toledo was recaptured by Castilian forces from Avila in 1085 after a two year siege. The Muslim inhabitants mostly fled the city, but a large Jewish population remains.

Toledo is now the forward base for the continuation of the Reconquista. Raids from Toledo into Moorish lands seek more than discomfiting the heathens, however; attacks are cattle raids on a huge scale, with thousands of head of cattle and horses driven from Muslim lands to Toledo, where they are sold

to the rest of Spain. The lands between Toledo and Cordova remain barren, except for bands of raiders and thieves. Little traffic passes between the two cities. Merchants prefer the longer but safer route through Badajoz, Seville, and Granada. On that route, though they may lose money to tolls and bribes, merchants at least preserve their lives.

The University of Toledo is renowned for its study of medicine, science, and magic. Gerbert of Aurillac, later Pope Sylvester II, studied here, and took with him when he left a brazen head, which could calculate any mathematical equation and foretell the future. The head has long since been lost; many scholars believe it is hidden in the vaults of the Pope's Lateran Palace, perhaps guiding the destiny of the Church.

Navarre

Navarre is the only Spanish kingdom which has no room to grow, as it is bordered on the west by Castile, and on the east and south by Aragon. Because of its unfortunate location, Navarre is a poor, small country. During the reign of Sancho the Great (A.D. 1000-1035), Navarre conquered Castile and Leon, but Sancho divided the kingdom among his sons, giving his eldest son, Garcia, the kingdom of Navarre, his second eldest, Ferdinand, the kingdom of Castile, and his last son, Ramiro, the kingdom of Aragon. King Ferdinand of Castile overthrew Garcia in 1054, but did not annex the kingdom, instead taking tribute and using it to fund his expeditions to the south. Navarre has not played a significant role in Spain since.

PAMPLONA

The capital city of the kingdom of Navarre, Pamplona stands at the southern end of the pass of Roncevalles, where the Muslim horde overpowered Roland and the twelve Peers of France, as chronicled in "The Song of Roland."

Pamplona itself caters to the pilgrim trade, and has a number of minor shrines. During the month of July it celebrates the Fiera de San Fermin, when bulls are let loose through the city streets. It is considered a sign of great bravery to touch the bulls during the run. However, doing do is extremely dangerous and many people are killed or maimed each year.

Portugal

Originally formed as a county of Leon, Portugal was declared a kingdom in A.D. 1139 by Alfonso I Henriques, who then spent the next four years defending his new kingdom from Leon as well as the Moors. After his kingship was recognized in 1143, Henriques concentrated on expanding his territory to the south, capturing Lisbon in 1147, with the help of English and German crusaders.

Portugal's lands south of the Tagus river were defended by the Templars, while the Cistercians were entrusted with lands to the north, to act for the King while he was at war. After the Templars pulled out of Spain in the 1150s, the military order of

the Brethren of Santa Maria took their place. The order changes its name in 1211 after capturing the town of Aviz, and is known afterwards as the Knights of Aviz.

Alfonso tried to capture Badajoz from the Muslims in 1170, but was repelled by an Almohad-Leonese coalition. However, the Reconquista is completed by Portugal when it captures the city of Silves in 1249, further expansion to the east halted by Castile's conquests of Badajoz and Seville.

COIMBRA

The capital city of Portugal from A.D. 1100 to 1255, Coimbra was recaptured from the Islamics by forces from Leon in 1064. As in most recaptured Moorish cities in Spain, the population of Coimbra largely fled south, but enough remained behind to create a cosmopolitan atmosphere. This atmosphere encouraged growth of the University of Coimbra, which is officially recognized by King Dinis in 1290. He grants the university the revenues of a number of manors to help defray its expenses.

The gentle climate of Coimbra always made it a favorite retreat for the kings of Portugal, even after the capital is moved to Lisbon. The Kings of Portugal maintain a number of small palaces in and around Coimbra, to which they come when given a chance.

One of the palaces, on a hill overlooking the city, is the site of a miraculous visitation. In 1220, the King is fighting in the south, and sends to Queen Maria in Coimbra for more money, with which to hire boats for a daring raid on Silves. The Queen ransacks the treasury, but to no avail. It seems a clerk of the Exchequer had recently left the King's employ, along with most of the readily portable wealth. The Queen prays to her namesake, St. Mary, and falls asleep in front of a shrine to St. Mary.

The Queen wakes from her sleep to see the figure of the Virgin Mary standing before her. The Queen is told to follow the figure, who leads the way to the lower levels of the palace, which had been built on the foundations of a Moorish palace. The figure indicates a place on the wall and vanishes. The next morning the Queen leads a number of workmen to the spot and tells them to break through the wall. Inside they find a chamber which had been built over, a chamber filled with treasure. The Queen sends some of the money to her husband, and uses the rest to build the Church of the Nightly Visitation, dedicated to St. Mary.

LISBON

This city, on the Tagus river, was founded by Ulysses during his ten year voyage home from the Trojan War. It was recaptured from the Moors in A.D. 1150 by Portuguese forces, with the aid of German and English crusaders.

Lisbon is the finest port in Portugal, due in large part to its natural harbor provided by the Tagus river. Lisbon is protected by miles of walls on its landward sides, and its Portuguese sailors have proven more than adequate at sea battle.

A hundred years after Lisbon's recapture from the Moors, Alfonso III moves his capital here as a gathering point for the capture of Silves. Ships from Lisbon sweep down the coast, supplying Portuguese soldiers who march inland. The ships blockade Silves, keeping reinforcements and supplies from the city's inhabitants.

The kings of Portugal have made the navy a principal part of their military force. Portugal controls most of the west coast of Spain. Only lands around Leon, and lands held by the Moorish kingdom of Granada, are not held by Portugal.

Furthermore, Portuguese merchants based in Lisbon have begun trade up the coast to France and England, but have not been able to gain any inroads to the towns of the Hanseatic League. In the Mediterranean, the Portuguese are able to trade with Aragon, and some cities on the coast of north Africa, but Italian cities keep them from more lucrative trade with the east.

El Cid

El Cid is the title of the great Spanish hero Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar. A penniless knight, Rodrigo was banished from the kingdom of Castile for attacking the Muslim King of Toledo, who was allied to Castile.

Rodrigo championed the Christian cause against the Moors. The title of Cid (from the Arabic "*Sayyid*", meaning lord) was given by his enemies, who recognized his heroic stature. Rodrigo led a few companions out of Castile, but in a few years he had assembled a large army. He fought the Moors, taking the spoils of battle and loot from towns to pay his men. Once, when out of funds, he sent a locked iron chest to the city of Burgos. He said the chest was full of treasure, and that he wished to use it to guarantee a loan. The citizens trusted him, and loaned him the money. He repaid the loan in good time, and did not request the return of the chest, which puzzled the citizens. They took the chest to the Archbishop of Burgos, who had the chest opened. El Cid had filled the chest with sand, having not so much as a penny to his name. Needless to say, he did not try the same trick twice.

El Cid conquered the kingdom of Valencia, and ruled it from A.D. 1094 until he died in 1099, fighting against a Moorish army besieging the city. El Cid's long struggle against the Moors is chronicled by the *Poema del Cid*, a lengthy *Chanson de Geste* often recited by Cantadores, special singers who ride in the front of the armies of Christian Spain, singing of the deeds of El Cid to hearten the troops.


Scotland
Ireland
Kells
Wales
England
Stamford BRIDGE
Gloucester
Caerleon
Caerwen
Durham
Bath
Clarendon
Hastings
London

BRITISH ISLES

CHAPTER SIX

The British Isles are a large archipelago northwest of continental Mythic Europe, dominated by two large islands, Britain and Ireland. These islands are isolated from the remainder of Mythic Europe by the English Channel and the Strait of Dover, both of which lie between England and France.

The island of Britain is the largest of the group, accounting for two-thirds of the total area of the archipelago. It is divided into several kingdoms, each of which has its own unique character.

Lands of England

The southeastern portion of Britain holds the kingdom of England, the largest and most prosperous of the kingdoms of Britain. England's north is dominated by the Pennines, a ridge of high, angular hills separated by deep, flat-bottomed valleys. The eastern Pennine slopes are low, and riddled with coal deposits. The western slopes, however, are steep and harsh. South of the Pennines lies Lowland England. This land is low and flat, rising to steep chalk cliffs at the southern edge of the island. The eastern edge of the island is marshy, particularly in the low zone between the Pennines and the cliffs of Dover.

The land of England is cool, with cold winters and warm summers. Rainfall is seasonal, with occasional periods, weeks or even months in length, with no rain whatsoever.

The English are the most commonly encountered Britons on the Mythic European continent. England's coastlines face Mythic Europe, and most European trade with Britain is managed through English ports. The English are fair of skin and hair and of medium build and height. They are independent, introspective, and proud, with a sense of their importance perhaps out of proportion to their influence in Mythic European affairs.

Tensions amongst English folk have risen since the death of King Richard Lionheart, who was killed besieging a castle in France. Richard's brother and successor, King John, is not well loved by the English people, and there may soon be rebellion against his rule.

Lands of Wales

East of England lies Wales, a broad mountainous peninsula in the southeast of Britain. Bordered on three sides by the sea, Wales has mild winters, moderate summers, and plenty of rain. In the high mountains, temperatures are much cooler, with extremely severe winters in the upper highlands.

The Welsh people are short, dark, and lively, primarily of Celtic stock, and are fiercely independent of their large English neighbor. The Welsh have their own language, and resent the accident of geography which places England, not Wales, in a prime location for trade with the rest of Mythic Europe.

Lands of Scotland

Caledonia, also known as the kingdom of Scotland, lies to the northern part of Britain. This kingdom, which runs from Carlisle northward, is divided into three southwest-northeast bands of terrain. Moving from south to north, one first encounters the Dales along the English border, a series of hills cut by numerous valleys. The border lands have heavy rains and cool climate. North of the Dales are the Lowlands, a damp, gray region of heather and moors. Beyond the lowlands lie the Scottish Highlands, a hilly land of fog-bound lakes (which the Scots call "lochs"). The slopes are more gentle in the east, but in the western highlands the Grampian Mountains are sharp and steep. Rainfall in this region is somewhat lighter than it is in the south, as it is dispersed by the high hillsides. However, the Highlands are the coldest region in the British Isles. But, despite its altitude and northern extent, Scotland is still much warmer than the Mythic European coastline directly to the east.

The Highland Scots are divided into a number of clans, each of which controls a portion of their grim, forbidding land. The clans are extended families, ruled only by their chiefs, disdaining the commands of the King of Scotland.

The highlanders are independent and stoic. They are profoundly religious people (it is said that Caledonia converted to Christianity first among all British people), warm, hospitable, and kindly. They are outstanding tale tellers, particularly with stories of ghosts and magic. The highlanders speak Gaelic, a language shared by their cousins across the Irish sea.

Lands of Ireland

The second largest island in the British Isles is Ireland. Ireland bears two extensive mountainous regions covering the northern and southern thirds of the land. The northern mountains cover the counties of Donegal and Mayo, while the southern mountains cover the counties of Kerry and Cork. The central land, between the mountain ranges, is a low-lying plain which holds the majority of the Irish population.

The island's climate is cool, wet, cloudy, and windy in winter. The climate is livable, but even a single year of unusual cold or heavy rain weakens crops and causes famine.

The Irish people are fierce; many consider them inhuman, a savage, slightly magical, faerie people. The Irish also intermarried with Viking settlers on the east coast. Most Irish or Irish-Vikings are fair of skin, with red or brown hair and slight builds.

Ireland was independent for many centuries. Not even the Romans invaded the island, and Viking raiders could only conquer small coastal areas, establishing port cities, leaving inlands alone. However, the east coast of Ireland fell to Norman adventurers a mere 40 years ago. Many of the Irish resent English rule (as the kings of Ireland are now subservient to English kings), but the English maintain sufficient troops in Irish cities to forestall rebellion.

Other Lands

The lesser islands of the British archipelago are sparsely inhabited, and share culture and climate with neighboring regions of Ireland or Britain. A number of the smaller islands are reputed to be occupied by faeries and sorcerers of various types.

England

The England of the late Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries has a long and glorious history. An understanding of that history is essential to an understanding of England in Mythic Europe.

HISTORY

Julius Caesar invaded Britain in the First Century before Christ. The Romans invaded in an effort to halt the flow of arms and warriors from Britain to the tribes on the Atlantic coast of Gaul, to whom the Britons were related. Indeed, Caesar invaded twice. The first invasion was inconclusive, but the second defeated a sizable force of Britons, from whom Caesar demanded hostages and annual tribute.

Ultimately, though, Caesar was too preoccupied with political advancement to worry about the Britons' refusal to pay tribute.

However, in the century after Christ, the Romans landed on the beaches of Britain in force, and soon conquered the country. They built many castles and forts, and in the north erected a series of walls to keep the savage Picts of Caledonia from raiding southward. The Roman legions left Britain in the early Fifth Century, and the lands were invaded almost immediately by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, Germanic tribes from the area around Denmark. The Anglo-Saxon invasions were halted for a time by King Arthur, of whom many stories are told. Arthur was eventually killed by his illegitimate son Mordred, and the Saxons poured into the country. The Anglo-Saxons eventually settled into seven kingdoms, the Saxons in Wessex, Sussex, and Essex, the Jutes in Kent, and the Angles in East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria.

Under the Romans, Christianity had been accepted in Britain, but the Saxons were a pagan people, worshipping fierce gods: Thunor and Wotan. The Saxons therefore pushed the worship of the 'White God' into the fringes of the islands: Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. There the Celtic Christian Church grew apart from the Pope in Rome in many ways. Still, the Celtic Church sent missionaries to the northern kingdoms at the same time that Pope Gregory the Great sent St. Augustine to the south, around the end of the Sixth Century. It was thus that the two Christian traditions slowly converted the pagan Angles and Saxons, until the Synod of Whitby in A.D. 663, when King Oswy of Northumbria chose the Roman Church over the Celtic.

That was not the extent of England's invaders, though. Danish Vikings began to raid English seaside towns and villages in the late Eighth Century, and in the middle of the Ninth Century raids turned to conquest. In fact, the Danes settled into the north of England, in an area known as the Danelaw. Six of the seven Saxon kingdoms were destroyed by the Vikings.

Only Wessex held out against the Viking invaders. Wessex was under King Alfred the Great, who built many forts and castles, and organized his army in two halves, so that one half could always be on duty, while the other farmed or fished. Alfred also built a fleet, to challenge the Vikings on the coasts and rivers. The Viking army caught Alfred off guard, though, forcing him to take refuge in the marshes of Somerset. Alfred rallied his troops, and in 878 the Saxons and Danes met at the battle of Edington, whereupon the Saxons won a total victory. As a result, the Viking leaders agreed to accept Christianity. (They were the first important Viking leaders to do so.) The Anglo-Saxons continued to press the Danes back, and eventually absorbed them into Anglo-Saxon culture.

A second series of Danish invasions started when the Viking crown passed to Ethelred the Unredy (Saxon for Bad or No Council) in 978. The Danish King sent waves of attackers against the Saxons, until, in 1016, King Canute of Denmark was accepted by the Saxon Witan (council) as the King of the England. The Danes had already embraced Christianity, so Canute ruled England respecting Saxon traditions. At the council of Oxford in 1018, Canute formally declared peace between the Saxons and the Danes of the Danelaw, and the united lands swore to uphold Christianity.

Canute's two sons ruled England in turn after he died in 1035, neither doing a remarkable job. The Witan chose Edward the Confessor, the exiled son of Ethelred, to be their next King. Edward had spent most of his life in Normandy, among his mother's people. And, on his ascension to the throne of England he welcomed Norman knights and counselors to his court. Edward was a weaker King than Canute, and under his reign the earls (Danish *"jarl,"* meaning count) began to rebel against the King and his Norman friends. The most powerful Earl was Godwin of Wessex, Edward's father-in-law. Godwin forced Edward to send home his Norman advisors. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury was obliged to leave. Godwin soon controlled the government, with Edward as a figurehead. Godwin's son, Harold Godwinson, took up the reins of government when his father died in 1053, and was publicly acknowledge by Edward as heir to the throne.

However, Edward's death in 1066 precipitated the advancement of three claims to the throne of England. Harold Godwinson was the acknowledged heir to Edward, but William the Bastard, Duke of Normandy, and Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, both felt that, due to family ties and promises made, they had more legitimate claims. Harald Hardrada invaded England first, landing in the north country. Harold Godwinson marshaled his troops and met Harald Hardrada at the battle of Stamford Bridge, where he bested the Norwegian. Within a day of winning the battle, Harold was on his way to the Channel coast, where William of Normandy had landed with

a force of Norman knights. The two forces clashed at the battle of Hastings, where Harold was killed by an arrow through the eye.

William, soon called the Conqueror, wasted no time in consolidating his victory. He declared that England belonged to the King, by right of conquest. William then parceled out plots of land to his followers, making sure no one received adjacent holdings, but rather that landholdings were scattered throughout England. In this manner he made sure no lord could challenge the power of the King, as was common in France.

William's conquest was uneasy, however. Fighting continued sporadically for a hundred years after his conquest, as Norman overlords were challenged by the older Saxon nobility. William died in 1087 while campaigning in France.

William Rufus was the Conqueror's acknowledged heir, in preference to his elder brother, Robert Curthose, who inherited the Duchy of Normandy. Rufus was a Godless man, and was much feared throughout his reign. He squeezed the barons for money, and ignored the dictates of the Church, granting or withholding bishoprics at his whim. Legend has it that he worshipped the Devil. Rufus was murdered while hunting; some claim pagans killed him to appease the land.

Henry I, brother of William Rufus, succeeded him, overthrowing the claim to the crown of his brother Robert. Henry healed the country of the tyranny that Rufus had imposed. Such was Henry's success in consolidating his power that no baron challenged his reign after his defeat of the house Belleme, a house of rapacious nobles who defied the power of Church and King. In restoring the old order Henry was forced to accede to the wishes of the Church regarding the investiture of bishops. So, while he might grant bishops temporal power, the Church granted them spiritual authority.

Henry's death prompted a crisis in both England and Normandy. Henry had married his daughter Mathilda, widow of the Emperor Henry V, to Count Geoffery of Anjou, sometime called Plantagenet after the sprig of Broom (*Planta Genesta*) he wore as his badge. The barons of England and Normandy refused to pay homage to the Count of Anjou.

Stephen, nephew of Henry, a popular, brave and religious lord, stepped forward to take the throne. Stephen's mother was a daughter of William the Conqueror, and his wife, Maud, was the niece of a Saxon lord. He was recognized as King by Pope Innocent II. Stephen was not a strong man, however, and the barons learned they could ignore his decrees with impunity. After 1138, Stephen's reign was plagued by rebellion and civil war. Stephen was captured at the battle of Lincoln in 1141, whereupon his wife Maud led the loyal barons. Finally a compromise was reached, whereby, after Stephen's death, Geoffrey's son Henry would inherit the throne. Henry succeeded Stephen with little fuss, as all sides were exhausted after sixteen years of warfare.

Henry II was a robust man, and an able king, but his reign was marred by the revolts of his sons; the murder of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury; and by the imprisonment of his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, for nine years. Eleanor married Henry after having her previous marriage to the dauphin Louis, later Louis VII of France, annulled. Henry and Eleanor had four sons, Henry (the Young King), Richard (Lionheart), Geoffery, and John. Henry the Young King was crowned during the reign of Henry II, but died in revolt against his father. Ultimately, Henry II died in 1189, leaving Richard the kingdom of England and the great duchies of Normandy and Aquitaine.

Richard spent only a few of his ten years as King in England, preferring to go on the Third Crusade and to defend his French possessions. Richard's absence from England gave Prince John a taste for ruling the country, so much so, that when Richard was captured by German Emperor Henry VI, John collected the ransom, but chose to spend it on himself.

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

John inherits the throne on Richard's death, though a rumor circulates that John murdered prince Arthur, son of his brother Geoffery, to gain the throne. However, John's lacklustre performance as King in the Thirteenth Century loses England the duchy of Normandy, and results in John's signing of the Magna Carta, a document which gives greater powers to the barons, lessening the power of the King.

John's death means the crowning of his young son, Henry III, under the Regency of William Marshall, a self-made nobleman who had grown to power under Henry II and Richard. Henry III's reign sees more loss of land to the French, and a civil war led by Earl Simon de Montfort.

Henry's son, Edward I, becomes King while on pilgrimage, and soon sets the affairs of the realm in order. He starts a war of conquest against Wales, building many great castles to hold the country. He also oversees the election of John Balliol as King of Scotland, but when Balliol refuses to support Edward in his war against France, Edward conquers Scotland, taking the Stone of Scone, a magical artifact used in the coronation of Scottish kings.

CARLISLE

An important border town named Luguvallium during the Roman occupation of Britain, Carlisle guarded the western end of Hadrian's Wall, a 73-mile long wall built during the Second Century after Christ. The wall was built to keep the savage Picts from raiding south into England, and formed the northern border of Roman territory in Britain.

King William Rufus walled Carlisle in 1092, and built a castle to protect the city. Carlisle became the northern border of England, though it fell to King David of Scotland for a short while. Local legend has it that King Arthur made Carlisle his home while ridding northern England of dragons, monsters, and faeries.

South of Carlisle is the stone circle known as Long Meg and her Daughters, a coven of witches turned to stone by the Scottish wizard Michael Scot. The stones are virtually uncountable, but it is said that if someone counts the stones twice, and comes out to the same number both times, the spell will be broken. The daughters stand in an oval 360 feet long by 300 feet wide. Long Meg herself stands outside the circle, and stands twelve feet tall.

EXETER

Exeter dates back before the Roman invasion of Britain. It was conquered by the Romans in the First Century after Christ, and the Romans walled the city, which was built on a plateau above the river Exe.

Exeter is the westernmost city in England, and controls the counties of Cornwall and Devon. Exeter was a flourishing port, and a terminus for Breton smugglers until a low dam is built across the river Exe in A.D. 1198, three miles downstream, barring passage to all ships. The net result is that smuggling activity moves to a point on the river half a mile from the dam. A sizeable town springs up on the spot, catering not only to smugglers, but to fisherman who used to ship from Exeter.

Outside of Exeter is the forbidding Dartmoor, a lonely land of bogs and granite hills, called Tors. Sudden fogs can appear at any time, and folk from Exeter claim the moor is haunted by numerous ghosts and evil fairies. Folk shun the moor after dark, fearing both the natural and supernatural.

GLASTONBURY

Glastonbury lies in a part of England full of strange occult sites. To the east the great stone circles of Stonehenge dominate Salisbury Plain, while rising above Glastonbury is Glastonbury Tor, an unnaturally steep hill topped by a stone tower. The hill has a labyrinth, known as the Walls of Troy, cut into the side of it. The monks of Glastonbury Abbey use a more direct path up the crest of the Tor, and dedicate the hills' the stone tower as a chapal to St. Michael.

Glastonbury Abbey was founded by Joseph of Arimathea, who buried Christ after the crucifixion. Joseph traveled throughout Mythic Europe after the Resurrection, finally dying in England at Glastonbury Abbey. Joseph carried with him the Holy Grail, the Chalice from which Christ drank at the Last Supper, and which caught His blood at the crucifixion.

It is said that Joseph planted his thornwood staff at Glastonbury (though others argue the staff was planted elsewhere), which miraculously sprouted, and flowers every year on Easter and Christmas. The flowering of the Glastonbury thorn is used by the monks of Glastonbury Abbey to date these two holy days, no matter what the Church in Rome determines them to be.

And, in 1190, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey claim to have found the single grave of King Arthur and Queen Guenevere. The grave was said to have been marked with a leaden cross buried in the soil, and inscribed with the legend: *"Here lies buried the renowned King Arthur in the Isle of Avalon."* The coffin supposedly contained the remains of a man who stood well over six feet tall, and the body of a golden-haired woman. The monks separated the bones, however, and reburied them in separate coffins under the floor of the abbey church, marking the tomb with the inscription, *"Here lies Arthur, the Once and Future King."* Whether the remains are genuinely those of Arthur and Guenevere is uncertain, though the abbey monks adamantly claim they are.

LINCOLN

Founded by retired Roman soldiers as Lindum Colonia, Lincoln has been fought over by the Saxons, Vikings, and Normans. It lies at the junction of two Roman roads, and its importance was recognized by William the Conqueror, who built Lincoln castle outside the town. As the Tower of London functions in that city, Lincoln's castle was not built for defense of the city, but to keep the city under the eye and hand of the King.

Lincoln is the second largest city in northern England and, in A.D. 1172, Bishop Remigius was commanded by William the Conqueror to build a cathedral of size proportionate to that of the lands the town ruled. Lincoln cathedral is the second largest in England, after York Minster. The cathedral has one of the four copies of the Magna Carta, the document signed by King John granting numerous privileges to English barons.

LONDON

Founded by the Romans, London was the first practical location for a bridge over the river Thames. The river is also wide and deep enough for ocean-going ships, making London an important city for trade. London is surrounded by suburbs, both to the north and east, and across the river to the south.

Although London has stood since Roman times, it remained a small town until the reign of the Saxon King Alfred the Great, who fortified the town in A.D. 886 against Viking raiders who plagued England. One of London's great strengths is the willingness of its tradesmen, especially its apprentices and journeymen, to rise in arms against a popular foe, be it king or foreigner.

When William the Conqueror took London, he strengthened the walls and built the Tower of London, not only to defend the city, but to keep the residents under the eye of the Warden of the Tower. Henry III remodeled the Tower, and added the beginnings of a zoo to it, with camels and other exotic animals. Henry also began rebuilding the Abbey of Westminster, in which church all kings since William have been crowned.

KINGDOM OF LYONESSE

Under the waves off the southern coast of Cornwall lies the Lost Kingdom of Lyonesse. Sometimes, in the middle of storms, the church bells of the kingdom's towns and cities can be heard. Local fishermen say that on certain days the water even becomes clear, allowing a view of the submerged land. However, no one can be found who has actually seen the kingdom, for fishermen fear crossing above the drowned lands on nights of significance to pagans (i.e., Allhallows Eve, May 1, and the equinoxes).

Legend says the kingdom was drowned in the reign of King Arthur, possibly when a knight broke one of the numerous strange customs of the land, or by the folly of its King. Whatever the nature of the crime, a great wave flooded the land, drowning its cities and towns. The Scilly Isles are all that is left of the kingdom, and Magi have thoroughly picked over those few remains.

Fishermen along both coasts of the Channel claim the sea above the kingdom is unusually rich in fish, and point at the drowned lands as the cause. Legends warn that if a mortal man ever returns to the kingdom, great calamities will follow, ranging from fish leaving the area, to the unleashing of fearsome sea monsters or demons.

MAIDEN CASTLE

Nothing remains of Maiden Castle but the outline of the walls and ditches which surround its hilltop location. Some legends say the castle was a focus of resistance to the Roman invasion of Britain, and that Roman soldiers massacred the defenders, selling their women and children as slaves in Rome. Another legend says the hill is an entrance to Faerieland. This

belief stems from a tale describing the adventures of a knight who slept on top of the hill on Midsummer Eve, and was spirited away by faeries for seven years and a day, returning to find his lands laid waste and his wife dead from grief.

Local peasants claim the hill is haunted, and on certain nights the clash of weapons can be heard here and ruddy lights are seen to shine into the sky. No one stays on the hill after dark, and no one plows the land around it. Magi who have investigated the hill have found nothing out of the ordinary on it, though some of their magically gifted companions describe a feeling of being watched.

Shrewsbury

Founded by the Romans in the Fifth Century after Christ, Shrewsbury remained a center of urban life even during the Saxon invasions and raids by the Welsh. The city was given to Roger de Montgomery after the battle of Hastings, and he built Shrewsbury castle in A.D. 1070. In the Thirteenth Century Shrewsbury remains a bastion against the Welsh, and is used by King Edward I as his headquarters during his subjugation of Wales in the 1270s and 80s.

In the hills surrounding Shrewsbury are the remains of many hill forts, built in ages past by the wild Britons who resisted Roman advances. Also surrounding Shrewsbury are several castles, built by the Marcher lords, those lords appointed to the defense of England against Welsh savages.

The Castle of Shrewsbury is haunted by the ghost of Margret la Belle, who loved a man in the force which besieged Shrewsbury Castle in 1158. Margret left a rope out for her lover to climb to her in the middle of the night, but he instead led an attacking force up the rope. Realizing what she had done, Margret killed her lover with his own sword, then jumped out of the tower to her death. The tower from which Margret jumped is known as Maiden's Tower, and it is said the ghost of Margret falls from the top whenever the castle is in danger of being attacked.

Tintagel

The place where King Arthur was conceived and born, Tintagel is a lonely, windswept castle high above the ocean. The wizard Merlin disguised Uther Pendragon as Duke Gorlois, so that he might sleep with Igraine, the Duke's wife. Uther did so, and begat Arthur, the greatest King of the Britons.

No one currently lives at Tintagel. Every knight who has held the castle has gone mad from the spirits which inhabit it. Some say these are the ghosts of Igraine and Gorlois, driven mad by the treachery of Uther.

Beneath the castle, a cave in the cliff leads inward to a grotto, which is said to have been used by Merlin. It is rumored that *vis*-rich items can be found in the cave, but no one has ever found Merlin's laboratory.

Winchester

Winchester was the capital seat of Alfred the Great, a Saxon King who led the fight against the Vikings in the Ninth Century. Alfred's tutor was St. Swithin, who was buried in a splendid tomb inside the cathedral of Winchester, against his express wishes. After the saint's burial it rained for forty days, until the body was moved to an outdoor, modest grave. The people of Winchester believe that if it rains on St. Swithin's day (July 15), forty days of rain will follow.

The Normans captured Winchester early in their invasion of England, and built Winchester Castle to keep the city under control. Winchester is a stop for pilgrims on their way to Canterbury, and the city's cathedral has a pilgrims' hall to accommodate travelers.

There is a "miz-maze," or labyrinth, cut into the turf on top of the local St. Catherine's hill. It is claimed that faeries can be seen treading the labyrinth's path on the pagan holidays of Samhain and Beltaine.

York

York is the second largest city in England, after London. It is also the seat of the Archbishop of York, the second churchman of the realm. York was founded by the Romans as Erboracum, and served as the capital of Roman Britain. The city was also the capital of the Danelaw, the area conquered by the Vikings in the Ninth Century after Christ. And, York was home to a cathedral school, founded in the 860s by Alcuin, who later founded a school at Charlemagne's Imperial city of Aix-la-Chappel.

During the Norman conquest of England, York was ravaged and destroyed by the Normans in their attempts to put down the numerous rebellions of the north. The city was rebuilt by the Normans soon afterward, and in A.D. 1190 an anti-Jewish riot resulted in the burning of one of the two wooden castles which had been built to watch over the city. The Archbishop of York had both castles rebuilt out of stone.

York controls all of northern England, both for Church and King. The Archbishop of York is a great noble of the realm, holding lands in fief to the English King.

Ireland

Ireland, an island off the western coast of Britain, has the distinction of never having been invaded by the Romans. Consequently, ancient forms of government continued there for much longer than in the rest of Mythic Europe.

Ireland remained a pagan country until St. Patrick arrived in A.D. 432 and began converting the tribes to Christianity. He performed many miracles, and challenged the druids to many contests, winning every one. By his miracles and pious way of life Patrick converted the entire island.

The early Church in Ireland did not conform to the Roman model of ecclesiastical power, concentrated in the hands of bishops. Rather, early Christian Ireland embraced monasticism, with monastic groups functioning as subkingdoms. The Irish Church also differed from Rome's in a number of areas, especially in its reckoning of the date of Easter.

Irish monks are accredited with keeping Classical knowledge alive in the west, even as that knowledge died in Gaul and Britain. Furthermore, Irish monks were renowned for their learning, and many traveled throughout Mythic Europe as missionaries. Others founded schools. Indeed, Alcuin was invited to the court of Charlemagne to start a school at Aix-la-Chappele for the Franks. The monks of Ireland also produced beautiful works of religious art, using gold and jewels from mines now lost.

Irish society was ruled by the *Ard-ri*, or High King, who was elected from one of the four kingdoms of Ireland: Ulster in the northeast, Munster in the southwest, Leinster in the southeast, and Connaught in the northwest. Each king ruled over subkings, who ruled clans or Tuaths. The High King was in theory selected from all male relatives, as far as second cousins, but politics and murder often decided who was King. In reality, the High King could only command those kings who decided to offer him loyalty.

The Vikings began raiding Ireland's rich monasteries in the Ninth Century, but soon settled along the coast in Dublin, Waterford, and Cork. From these cities the Vikings traded, raided, and ruled small landholdings. The Danes never ventured far into the countryside, though, preferring to stay close to the sea. Eventually they mixed with the Irish, and took on local customs, finding their place in Irish society as kings and subkings.

Around the year 1000 an *Ard-ri* arose in the southern half of Ireland who nearly succeeded in uniting all the kingdoms of the island. Brian Boru did so by taking hostages from all the kings and subkings, forcing them to obey his laws. His error was to restrict the Danes to their coastal enclaves, prompting a rebellion led by Sihtric of Dublin, who was aided by troops from the Orkneys and Leinster. The armies of the High King and rebels met at Clontarf, and most of the leaders of both sides, including Brian Boru, were killed. Sihtric retreated to Dublin, but many Danes took to their ships, leaving Ireland forever. After Brian Boru the High Kingship never again ruled over a united Ireland.

In fact, a new, foreign leader arose in Ireland. In 1166 Dermot MacMurrough, King of Leinster, was exiled by Rory O'Conner, the High King of the time. Dermot appealed to Henry II of England to restore his throne, and Henry allowed Richard Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, to gather an army to aid Dermot. Dermot regained his kingdom in 1167 with English help, but wished for the High Kingship. Strongbow married Eva, daughter of Dermot, and continued his campaign, capturing Waterford and Dublin. When Dermot died in 1171, Strongbow declared himself Dermot's heir, and entitled to the kingdom of Leinster. The Leinstermen revolted, and Rory O'Conner besieged Strongbow in Dublin. At the same time, Henry II became suspicious of Strongbow's plans and landed in Waterford to oversee the conquest for himself. The Irish kings, including Rory O'Conner, acknowledged Henry as their overlord, and the Papal Legate held a synod at Cashel to bring the Irish Church in line with the Papacy.

Henry granted much land in Ireland to his Anglo-Norman barons, who wasted no time consolidating their lands with castles and forts. In 1177 Henry gave Ireland to his son, John, to rule. However, John proved extremely unpopular with both the barons and Irish kings, and had to be recalled. Thus, the Irish remained as divided as they had before the English invasion.

In Thirteen Century Ireland petty wars and raids continue in defiance of the English, who have retreated to the Pale, a small area of Ireland protected by a line of castles.

CORK

It was St. Finbarr who founded a monastery at Cork, in the marshes of southern Ireland in the Seventh Century. The monastery was plundered many times by the Vikings, who eventually settled to trade with the Irish clans of the interior. Cork remained a Danish port until A.D. 1150, when Dermot McCarthy, lord of Desmond, expelled the Vikings. The city then remained in Irish hands until the forces of Henry II of England conquered it in 1172. Under Henry, Cork, along with Waterford and Dublin, was declared a royal city, only responsible to the King of England.

Cork, as the southernmost city of the Norman Irish holdings, must be continually on the alert for raiding parties from the 'wild' Irish. The Irish, by tradition, do not fight pitched battles or sieges, but rather raid roads and towns, carrying off cattle and goods. Traders prefer to sail to Cork from other Irish cities, as raids often close the roads to Waterford.

DUBLIN

Dublin remains Ireland's foremost city and port, status it has enjoyed since the time of the Vikings. Dublin was founded by Norse raiders in the Ninth Century as a base for both raids and colonization. It was captured in A.D. 1170 by Richard Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, who was invited to Ireland by King Dermot MacMorrough of Leinster to aid the King in his fight with Rory O'Conner, High King of Connaught. Dublin became the capital of the Norman-conquered portion of Ireland, which soon stretched down the east coast of Ireland as far as Cork.

Strongbow began a cathedral on the site of Christ Church, built in 1038 by King Sihtric. In 1191 John Commyn, Archbishop of Dublin, began construction of St. Patrick's Cathedral outside the walls of the city, in direct rivalry with Christ Church. The Archbishop was forced to build walls around his cathedral to protect it against attacks by 'wild' Irishmen, who still raid even into the heart of Norman Ireland.

WATERFORD

Like Cork and Dublin, Waterford was founded by the Danes in the Ninth Century, and was a base for raids and colonization. Waterford was captured by Richard Strongbow in A.D. 1170. There he married Eva, daughter of King Dermot MacMorrough, his ally and host.

King Henry II landed at Waterford in 1171 to keep an eye on his vassal, and to see that Strongbow did not make himself too powerful with Irish conquests. Henry declared Waterford a royal town, directly controlled by the King of England.

The citizens of Waterford rebel against their Norman lord in 1213, and the city is looted by the enraged English Baron. After its most recent defeat by the British, the city becomes an armed camp, and no Norman ventures out of the castle alone. Rather, Normans always travel with at least two companions.

Scotland

Inhabited by savage Picts ("painted," or "tattooed people"), Scotland was known as Caledonia by the Romans, who built walls to keep the Picts from raiding into the south. With the Germanic invasions, after the fall of the Roman Empire, the Picts were attacked on all sides. From Ireland came a tribe known as the Scots, who settled on the seacoasts of the west. Vikings settled in the Orkney, Shetland, and Hebrides islands. And, Britons settled in the lowlands of the west, and Angles in the lowlands of the east.

Surrounded, the Picts retreated into the Highlands, a land of moors, peaks, and valleys, cut by the Great Glen, a series of lakes reaching through the highlands from Ben Nevis in the southwest, to Moray Firth in the northeast. However, Viking raids weakened the Picts, so that in A.D. 884 Kenneth I MacAlpin, King of the Scots, managed to conquer the Picts, permanently uniting the two nations. The land thereby became known as Scotland, though the Scots and Picts continued to call it by the name Alban.

The Scottish kings made it a policy to expand their borders south of the Highland line, and in 954 the Scottish King Indulf captured Edinburgh, a stronghold of the Angles. Furthermore, Malcolm II conquered the kingdom of Lothian in 1018, merging its Britons with the Scots and Picts. And, Viking invasions in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries forced thousands of Anglo-Saxons north into Scottish lands. It was thus that King Duncan I merged all four peoples into the kingdom of Scotland in 1034.

Even in a unified Scotland there was not peace, though. King Duncan was killed by his general, Macbeth, who claimed the right of kingship through his relation to Malcolm II. Prior to that time the inheritance of the Scottish throne was based on descent of the female line. Thus, the crown passed from Malcolm II to his sister's son, not his own son. Ultimately, Macbeth was killed by Malcolm III, aided by the English Earl

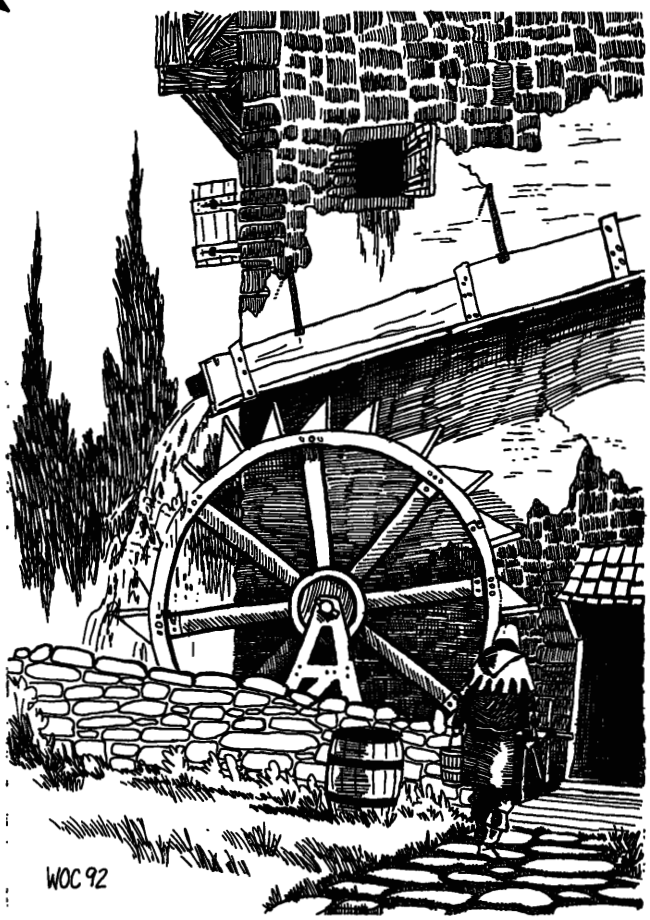
of Northumbria. From that time forward, the Scottish kingship passed from father to son, though a rival kingship continued sporadically among the northern Picts for two centuries.

Before killing Macbeth, Malcolm had been sent to the English court of Edward the Confessor, and brought many English nobles back home with him. With this support Malcolm attempted to push the southern border further into England, but was repulsed by William the Conqueror, who had captured England in 1066.

Malcolm's arrival also brought religious change in Scotland. His wife Margeret, sister of Edgar Atheling, introduced a civilizing influence in the Scottish court. Indeed, she invited merchants and churchmen of the Roman Church north to Scotland. (Although the Scots had been converted by Christian missionaries from Ireland in the Sixth Century, they still held onto Celtic faith.)

When he came to power, Malcolm's brother, Donald Bane, briefly resisted the Anglicization that Malcolm had introduced to Scotland. However, King William Rufus of England sent Edgar Atheling to Scotland in 1097, placing the English noble on the Scottish throne.

With foreign leadership, many changes were made in Scotland. Edgar made Edinburgh the capital of the kingdom. After Edgar, Alexander I oversaw the division of Scotland into ecclesiastical dioceses, and after him David I introduced numerous Norman noble families into the Scottish court. Furthermore, the traditional Scottish mormaers were retitled earls,



and the clan system of government was replaced by tenantry under barons. The Pictish and Scottish methods of inheritance and government were therefore replaced with Anglo-Norman institutions. Even the Benedictine and Cistercian Christian orders moved to Scotland in great numbers, attracted by the open-handedness of King David.

Though changes were made south of the Highlands, the ancient systems of society were maintained in the north. That meant clan rule and paganism persisted. The kingdom of Scotland, while claiming the Highlands, actually ignored the north country, focusing instead on the fertile lowlands. Still, Stirling Castle was built to keep the Highlanders from invading the south. Before long, "the kingdom of Scotland" referred to the south alone, while in the north the Picts, Scots, and Norse declared their own kings and fought their own wars.

Having failed once, King David of Scotland was anxious to expand southward into England. His renewed efforts were largely defeated in 1138, at the Battle of the Standard. But, he did manage to obtain a number of earldoms in England for his heirs, though his grandson was forced to turn them over to the English by King Henry II.

Eventually the northern regions of Scotland fell to the southern kings, though. The Scottish kings made efforts to overcome the barbarians to the north, but the Highlanders rebelled time and time again. The Highlanders were supported by the Norwegian King, who had been granted suzerainty over the western Isles by King Edgar. However, Alexander II and Alexander III managed to defeat the Norwegian fleets and armies who fought to defend the Highlanders, bringing all of Scotland under the authority of the Scottish crown.

After Scotland was united, William the Lion attempted once more to move the border southward into England. William was captured at the Battle of Alnwick by Henry II, in 1174, and was forced to pay homage on behalf of Scotland to the English King Henry. From the resulting treaty came an English claim to the lands of Scotland. The Scottish Church was therefore separated from the Archdiocese of York in 1192 by Pope Celestine III, who made the Scottish Church subject only to the Papacy. And, the Scots and English kings were united by the marriages of Alexander II to Henry III's sister Joan, and Alexander III to Henry's daughter Margeret.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Alexander III dies without heirs in A.D. 1286, and his only descendant is his granddaughter Margeret, known as the Maid of Norway. She is sent for by the Scottish nobility. Her father, King Eric of Norway, makes an arrangement with King Edward of England regarding her marriage to Edward's son, Edward of Carnaervon. However, Margeret dies on the voyage to Scotland in 1290. Scotland is left without an heir.

Without a chosen leader, the nobility of Scotland begin fighting for the throne. They finally appeal to King Edward of England to decide between the thirteen major claimants to the throne, mostly of Norman extraction. The deliberation lasts from 1291 to 1292, with the three closest competitors all descended from the daughters of the dead Earl of Huntingdon, William the Lion's brother. John Balliol and Robert Bruce are nearly equal in the their claims, while John Hastings can only hope to have the kingdom divided into three parts. The court, consisting of people chosen by the claimants and Edward, finally rules in favor of John Balliol, who is crowned by and swears homage to Edward in 1292.

Though he gains his position through Edward, John Balliol resents the interpretation which Edward puts on their relationship. Accordingly, in 1295, he refuses to attend Edward in Edward's war against France, instead making an alliance with Philip the Fair of France. In retaliation Edward comes north with a large force, captures John, and forces the surrender of Scotland to the English crown.

To insure that he holds the Scottish throne, Edward carries off the Stone of Scone, also known as the Stone of Destiny, which is traditionally used in the coronation ceremony of the kings of Scotland. Edward also leaves three English nobles in charge of Scotland and returns to England.

Regardless of the Stone of Scone's loss, the Scots rise under the leadership of William Wallace, a brilliant tactician and rebel leader. At the Battle of Stirling Bridge he destroys the main part of the English army in Scotland, but the English appeal to Edward to save them. Edward hurries back to Scotland in 1298, where at the Battle of Falkirk the Scots first beat back English knights with their pike formations, but then die in droves when Welsh longbowmen in Edward's army shoot into

packed formations. Though the Scots are set back at Falkirk, the war in Scotland continues, with the Scots, led by Wallace, ambushing and waylaying the English, avoiding mass battles.

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh was founded by King Edwin of Northumberland in the Seventh Century, and is captured by King Edward of England in A.D. 1296. Whereas the Scotsman William Wallace drives the English out of the area surrounding Stirling, the English remain in Edinburgh, safe in Edinburgh Castle.

The castle is built on a rocky crag above the city. A mile from the castle is Holyrood Abbey, built by King David I on the site of a miracle that saved his life. He and a party of nobles and churchmen were out hunting when a wounded stag nearly gored the King, but was turned away by a cross interposed by a monk.

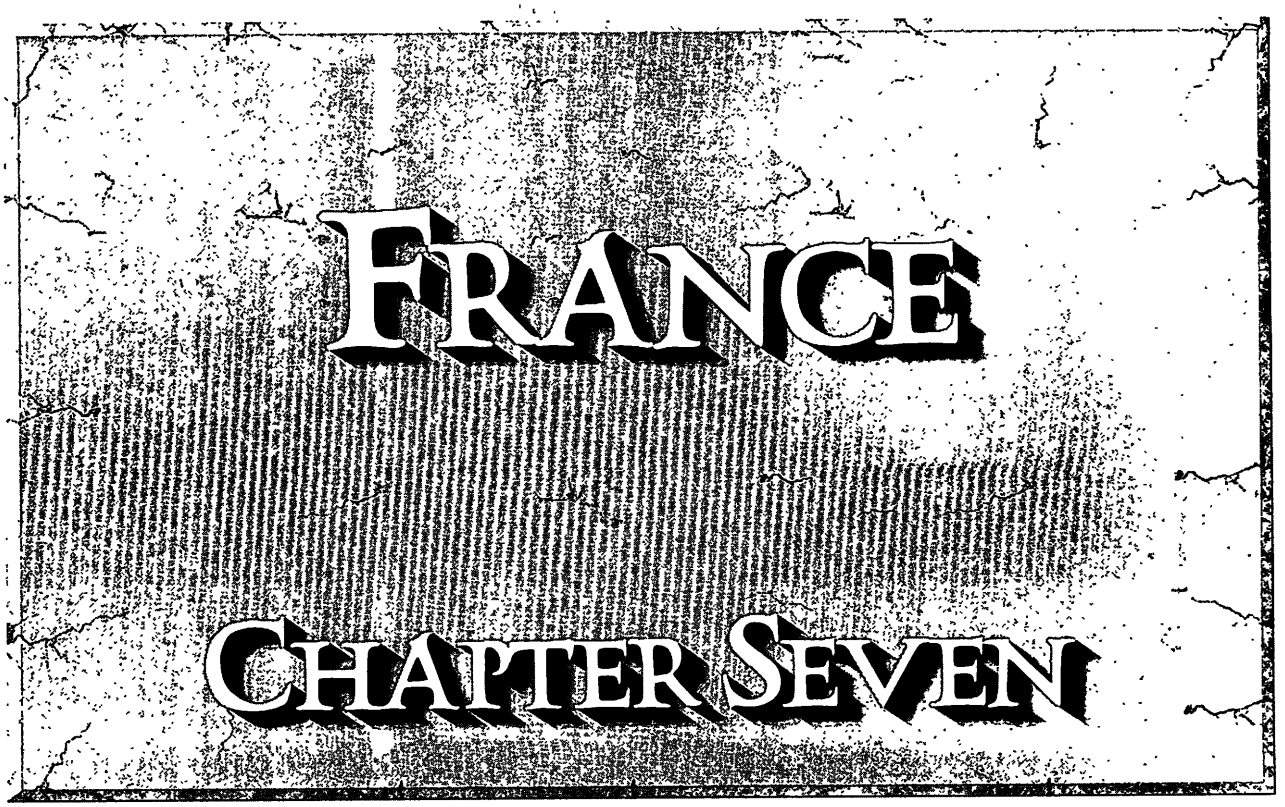
There are three wells with miraculous powers close to Edinburgh. St. Anthony's Well, beneath the looming hill known as Arthur's Seat, heals those who drink from it. St. Bernard's Well is sulfurous and gives one a good appetite for breakfast. And, on the ridge known as Liberton ("Lepertown") is St. Catherine's Balm Well, the oily surface of which brings relief to those suffering from skin ailments.

STIRLING

Stirling Castle, built in A.D. 1107 by King Alexander I of Scotland, guards the Kingdom of Scotland from the savage clansmen of the Highlands. Stirling is taken by troops of the English Edward in 1296, but William Wallace brings the castle under siege in 1297, and defeats the Earl of Surrey at the battle of Stirling Bridge. In fact, Wallace sweeps the English out of the area. However, in 1298 Edward I leads a force of soldiers, including several thousand Welsh longbowmen, and captures the Scottish Wallace at the battle of Falkirk.

A few miles to the south and west of Stirling Castle lies St. Corbet's Well. The well is blessed by the saint so that whomever drinks of it on the first of May, before the sun rises, will not die in the coming year.


Cambria
Brittany
Anjou
Vanille



France forms a Mythic European land bridge between the Holy Roman Empire and the kingdoms of Iberia and England, and a natural link between the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the North Sea. France is divided into a number of distinct geographic regions, each with its own terrain and culture.

France is bounded to the east by mountains: the Alps, the Jura, and the Ardennes. Except for the narrow Pyrenees, which separate France from Iberia, in all other directions France is bound by the sea.

The southern portion of France, from the Rhone River east to the Loire, is a high mountainous region which abuts the Alps. Rather than consisting of the high, steep peaks which characterize the Italian Alps, the French mountain lands consist of high, rough ground dotted with tall, conical mountains. These mountains have much of the aspects of Italian volcanoes, but are covered with grasses and trees and have not erupted in human memory. This mountainous region of France gradually lowers and becomes less rocky in the highlands below.

The weather in the French central highland varies widely. On the western slopes, the weather is tempered by winds from the Mediterranean, which travel up the Rhone Valley to provide rain and warm wind. Similarly, the western and northern slopes receive considerable rainfall, although they are subject to temperature variations being farther from the sea. The central highlands, however, receive almost no rainfall; winds are sharp, winters are bitter, and even in summer the region is cool.

West of the central highlands are the fertile lowlands of the Aquitaine. The eastern half of this huge lowland region has the most fertile, even farmland in France, with rolling foothills and rugged soil. Eastern Aquitaine is one of the main farming regions of France, its fertility comparable to that of the famous Po Valley in Italy. The western coastline, however, is the Landes region, a desolate sandy plain, marshy with summer rains and covered with blowing dunes in winter. The northern Aquitaine is not as fertile as the east, with softer soils and poor drainage (although not so poor as in the Landes region), but some farming still occurs here.

The climate of the Aquitaine varies with proximity to the sea. The western coastal region has even, seasonal temperatures, mild winters, and pleasant summers. With travel inland temperature variations get wider, and winters get colder, more severe, and more enduring. Summers inland are very hot.

The southern boundary of the Aquitaine is marked by the stony, high slopes of the Pyrenees Mountains. Beyond them lies Iberia. To the north, the Aquitaine ends at the hills of Brittany. These hills cover the northwestern corner of France; the provinces of Brittany and Normandy. The range begins with low, stony hills, rising to mountains in the central portions of the region. Beyond the mountains, highlands persist all the way to the sea. There is some farming and sheep herding in the highlands, which benefit from the Atlantic influence of mild weather and considerable rainfall.

East of Normandy and north of the central highlands lies the northern lowlands. These extend east all the way to the Ardennes and the Vosges, and north through Flanders. The land declines slowly from the mountains, until, at Flanders, it drops smoothly below sea level into the marshy plains of the Low Countries. The land is generally flat, with rolling hills in the east, and is France's primary farming zone (in extent, at least, as farmers of the Aquitaine contend their land is more fertile).

Between France's south-central highlands and the Alps, at the southern end of the Rhone River, lie the small lowland provinces of Provençe and Languedoc. Trapped between the high Alps (for Provençe) or Pyrenees (for Languedoc) and the central highlands, these narrow provinces are watered by runoff from the mountain systems. The provinces are therefore fertile (although not so much as the Aquitaine), and blessed with a warm and beautiful climate. However, the region is somewhat isolated from the rest of France, and people here are more independent than in the remainder of the country.

France is one of the major political powers of Mythic Europe, along with the Italian city-states and the Holy Roman Empire. Its people are proud. Some in Mythic Europe say too proud. The French are also independently minded, and have been less inclined than the people of other lands to accept the word of the Pope on religious matters. Their defiance of the Pope has led to several outbreaks of heretical thought in the land, and more than one religious movement, begun in the rural regions of France, has been outlawed by the Church.

In the Thirteenth Century, with the rise of the Albigensians, there is talk of a crusade against France. Other nations view the idea with mixed feelings. On the one hand, they would like to capture some of France's valuable lands for themselves (and the Church, of course). But, they fear that once a crusade is declared against a Christian kingdom, others may occur.

French History

It was Viking and, to a lesser extent, Magyar raids which forced the nobles of Charlemagne's Western Kingdom (which would become France) to consolidate their power. In fact, they had to do so because they could not rely on Imperial or royal aid given the speed at which the raiders struck. Eventually the enjoined nobles took to calling themselves dukes, and soon split the kingdom into nearly autonomous duchies and counties (based on the counties of Charlemagne). Ironically, though, the independent nobles fought each other as much as they fought the raiders.

A series of weak kings only exacerbated the decline of the Empire's Western Kingdom. The monarchs preferred to pay raiders to stay away from royal holdings around Paris and Orleans than to risk battle with a numerically smaller foe. In A.D. 911 King Charles the Simple put an end to Viking raids, but at the expense of his kingdom. He gave the Duchy of Normandy to Rollo, a Viking leader who had already seized the land. Rollo converted to Christianity, and kept his new land free of Viking raids, but ruled it as a Dane, not a lord of the Empire.

Compromises with the Vikings could not end all the kingdom's invasion problems, though. Along the Mediterranean coast, Muslim attackers from Cossura and north Africa raided freely, establishing the kingdom of Fraxinetum after sacking that city.

In 987 the French King Louis V died without heirs, and the nobles elected Hugh Capet to the throne. The first four Capetian kings carried the title of King, but in reality only ruled crown lands, with no influence over dukes and counts. Indeed, the dukes and counts were so independent of the King's law that William, Duke of Normandy, successfully invaded England on his own. However, the Conqueror only created problems for both his successors and the French King, for while he held Normandy in fief from the French King, William held England as an autonomous kingdom. The resulting struggle between French and English kings continues into the Thirteenth Century.

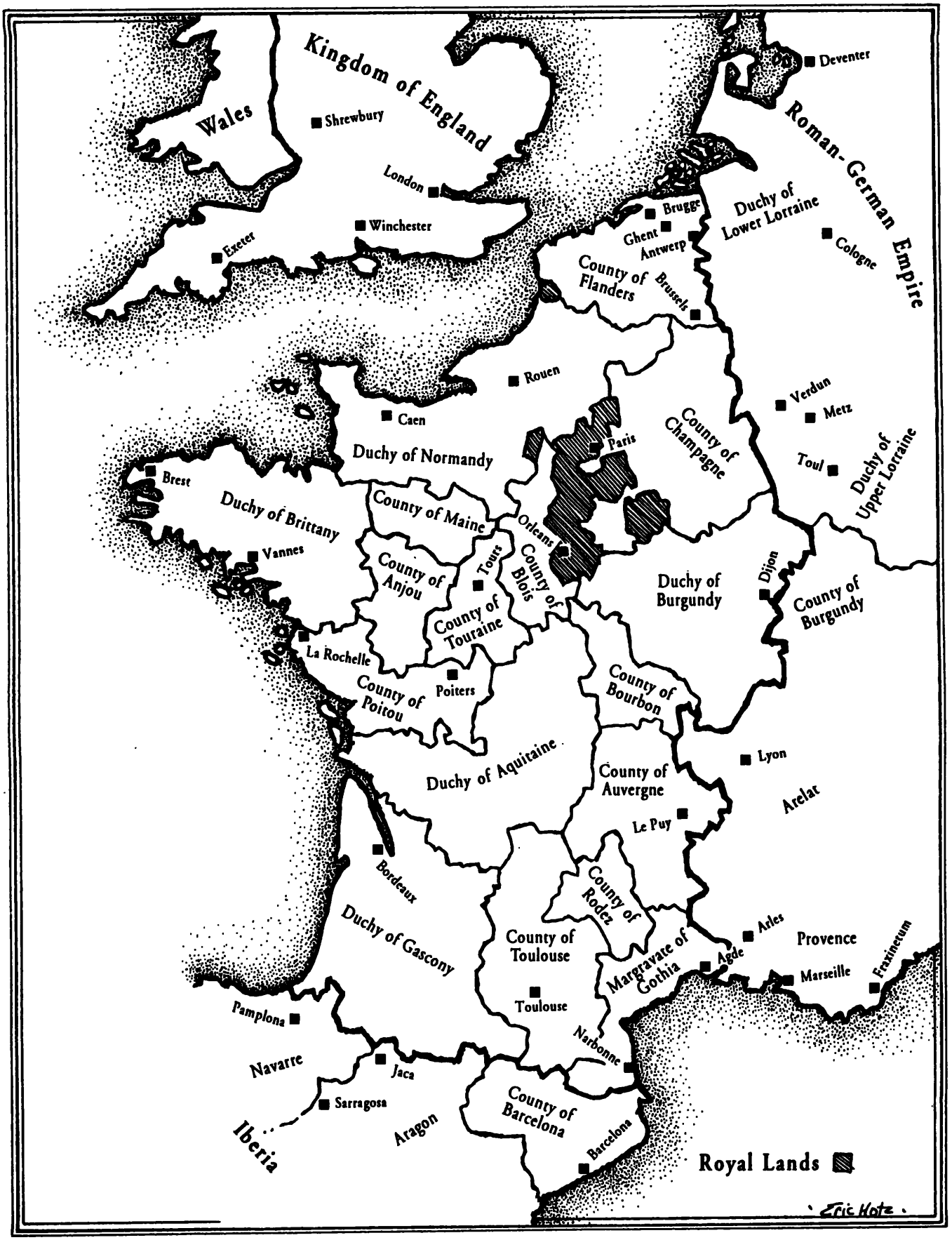
After generations of noble defiance of the throne, Louis VI the Fat became King in 1108, determined that a strong hand was necessary to control the nobles. With the aid of the Church, he subjugated the unruly nobles. Louis also established requirements for the investiture of abbots and bishops, and established many monasteries.

However, sense of France as a kingdom rather than a region only began with the First Crusade, in which the French took pride in themselves as a nation rather than district. Unfortunately, the Second Crusade initiated several disasters for King Louis VII, undermining French nationalist confidence. Louis left for the Holy Land with not only his army, but his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine and her ladies in waiting, who rode bare-breasted in the manner of Amazon warriors. In Louis's absence the country was ruled by Abbot Suger of St. Denis, who levied a direct tax on all Frenchmen to support the Crusade. The Crusade was therefore unpopular and endangered the King's influence and power.

Disasters continued when Louis divorced Eleanor in 1152. She then married Henry, Duke of Normandy and Brittany, and Count of Anjou, Maine and Poitiers. Henry thus inherited the Kingdom of England in 1154, as Henry II. So, in Henry II, Louis now faced a state larger than France, a state which controlled nearly the entire Atlantic coast of the region.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

French glory is only restored by the French King Philip II Augustus. The ties of feudal allegiance under the King are stretched nearly to the breaking point, but Philip uses revolts by the English King Henry's sons to regain many continental lands held by the English kings. In A.D. 1202 Philip declares John of England deposed of all his lands taken from the French crown. And, to hold these lands, Philip resists a combined army of English and Germans at the battle of Bouvines in 1214.


Kingdom of England
Wales
Shrewbury
London
Winchester
Exeter
Deventer
Roman-German Empire
Duchy of Lower Lorraine
Cologne
Brugge
Ghent
Antwerp
County of Flanders
Brussels
Rouen
Caen
Duchy of Normandy
Paris
County of Champagne
Verdun
Metz
Toul
Duchy of Upper Lorraine
Brest
Duchy of Brittany
Vannes
County of Maine
Orleans
County of Anjou
Tours
County of Blois
County of Touraine
Duchy of Burgundy
Dijon
County of Burgundy
La Rochelle
County of Poitou
Poiters
County of Bourbon
Duchy of Aquitaine
Lyon
Arelat
County of Auvergne
Le Puy
Bordeaux
County of Rodez
Duchy of Gascony
County of Toulouse
Toulouse
Margravate of Gothia
Agde
Arles
Provence
Marseille
Fraxinetum
Pamplona
Narbonne
Navarre
Jaca
Sarragosa
Aragon
Iberia
County of Barcelona
Barcelona
Royal Lands
Eric Hotz

In southern France, the rise of the Albigensian heresy in Toulouse leads to the sending of Papal legates to preach against the heretics in 1205. The murder of legate Peter of Castlenau by a knight of the County of Toulouse in 1208 leads the Pope to call a crusade against the Albigensians.

King Philip Augustus is busy contending with John at the time, but allows knights and lords to join the Crusade. In 1209 an army assembles at Lyon, led by Simon de Montfort, an Anglo-Norman knight, perhaps the best leader in the west at the time. The crusaders attack the counties of southern France, capturing city after city, looting and pillaging.

In 1213 the King of Aragon crosses the Pyrenees to protect his lands of Foix and Beziers, but is killed at the battle of Muret. Simon de Montfort is granted the lands of Narbonne and Toulouse, but the city of Toulouse rebels, led by Raymond VII, son of the Count of Toulouse. Simon himself is killed besieging the city, and King Philip takes the field, but also fails to take the city.

Philip dies in 1223, and Raymond leads a coalition of southern lords against Queen Blanche, regent of the young Louis VIII. The league is defeated, though, and Raymond signs the treaty of Paris in 1229, which cedes much of his land to the crown. The remainder of Raymond's land goes to his daughter Joanna, until her death in 1271, when it also reverts to the crown.

After the Albigensian Crusade and the consolidation of reclaimed lands, the reign of Philip IV the Fair sees a considerable increase in power and wealth compared to the reigns of previous kings. Philip establishes a royal treasury, and instead of demanding traditional military service of his vassals, requires payment of *scutage* (Latin for "shield tax") by nobles. Thus, the King's coffers are filled to fund wars, and the King is able to keep an army in the field longer than forty days, which was an obligation of the old feudal, military service.

In the Thirteenth Century French order is also finally established with the English. In the north, the Peace of Paris, in 1259, makes English King Henry III give up Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Poitiers, and pay feudal obligations for Guyenne (Aquitaine). Thus, France regains many territories lost for years to the English.

FRENCH PEOPLE

The population of France is diverse in origin and by region, with German, Frankish, Italian, Breton, and Norman folk either mixed or in their distinct duchies and counties. Indeed, France is divided into seven main provinces: the Duchies of Aquitaine, Burgundy, and Normandy; and the Counties of Anjou, Champagne, Flanders, and Toulouse. The great lords of these lands act with royal prerogative, minting coins, levying taxes, and making war. In the Thirteenth Century, however, the French King has increasing power over dukes and counts.

Agde

Once a small seaport serving a Roman legionary camp, Agde has quietly spent the intervening centuries basking in the sun and watching the world go by.

The city boasts a modest arena, which local knights use for their tournaments. In A.D. 1200 the Count of Toulouse hosts a tournament where his knights dress as Roman soldiers, while visiting knights take the part of barbarian Germans. Several pitched battles are held in the arena, with blunted weapons. Several injuries and deaths also occur, but everyone involved agrees the spectacle is a welcome change from ordinary tournaments. Feasts during the tournaments are served by "Vestal Virgins," local ladies who dress in provocative and revealing dresses.

However, Agde's liberal and luxuriant lifestyle changes with the declaration of the Crusade against the Albigensians. Jean de Moissac, a Dominican friar, comes to town preaching the Crusade. Jean is actually an Inquisitor, charged with finding and destroying the heresy.

Jean's methods provoke the citizens to complain to the Bishop of Narbonne. Jean de Moissac and the Abbey of St. Giles make considerable money from the confiscation of heretics' property. They are given large grants of land and money by landholders who hold land adjacent to that of "heretics." It is these landholders who end up owning lands after heresy trials.

Antwerp

The name Antwerp dates back to the earliest days of the city, when a giant lived in the river Schelde, and cut off the hands of ship captains who refused to pay his toll. The giant would then throw the severed hands into the river. Sir Giullio, a descendent of Julius Caesar and a knight of renown, fought the giant and killed it, taking its head to the French King as proof of his might. For his deed the knight was granted the land where the two fought, and the knight founded a city, naming it Antwerpen, meaning Thrown Hand.

Antwerp has always been a seaport, but has also always been eclipsed by surrounding cities with better harbors, especially Brugge. The burghers of Antwerp claim the tidal wave that gave Brugge its harbor in A.D. 1134 was the work of the Devil, punishing Antwerp for its pride and prosperity. Many citizens of Antwerp hold to this opinion, or a related one, which states the tidal wave was created by a band of sorcerers working for the council of Brugge. Some rumors tell of deals made between the burghers of Antwerp and a nearby Covenant, for a similar "natural" accident to happen in Antwerp.

Arles

The major features of Arles are its amphitheater and arena, both dating back to the days of the Romans. Each structure can hold the entire population of the city, and they are often used for public demonstrations. The Archbishop of Arles holds sunrise service in the amphitheater on Easter, timing his service so that, at the moment in the Mass when he elevates the host and wine, the rising sun strikes the chalice.

Even the Romans were not able to permanently bridge the Rhone at Arles. A stone bridge has recently been built, but not without tragedy. The western tower of the bridge collapsed during construction, killing a dozen workers and maiming a number more. The tower could not be reconstructed until the Archbishop blessed the platform. Witnesses claim that, when the platform was blessed, a black cloud flew out of the foundation and a great wailing was heard. It is known that the Archbishop's hair turned snow-white soon after. The citizens say a demon had taken up residence in the river after a massacre during Roman times, feeding on the souls of pagans who had been killed and dumped into the water. It is believed the demon caused all bridges to fail after his residence, until exorcised by the Archbishop.

Bordeaux

The capital of the Bordelaise, one of the finest wine-growing regions in France, Bordeaux ships wine primarily to the English port of London.

The Archbishop of Bordeaux holds much power over the surrounding country, because of the marriage of Louis VII to Eleanor of Aquitaine. Louis VI, then King of France, gave up any sovereignty over the Archbishop of Bordeaux, then Geoffery du Lauroux, for the Archbishop's support of the marriage. As a result, Geoffery claimed to hold the land as an ecclesiastical Count, and ruled the Bordelaise as a secular lord. Later, John Lackland, King of England, put Aquitaine into the keeping of Archbishop Helie de Malmort, who held the Duchy as a fief from the English King. De Malmort was able to keep Aquitaine within the English realm by a combination of diplomacy, force of arms, and the threat of Church displeasure.

Brest

Brest boasts one of the finest natural harbors in all of Mythic Europe. The city's position on the peninsula of Brittany allows its sailors to fare both the Bay of Biscay and the English Channel.

The tides in the Bay of Biscay are so fierce that the shock of waves hitting rocks on the beach can be felt up to twenty miles inland. The land around Brest is harsh, and barely able to support crops, so the natural inclination of the men of Brest is to take to the sea.

The sailors of Brest warn of dangers inland, where the wind howls over the craggy peaks of the peninsula. The Bretons fear not only the spirits, ghosts, and faeries of the area, but also dislike the imposition of laws levied by inland dukes. The Bretons left Britain during the Anglo-Saxon invasions, settling in Brittany (Little Britain) to get away from "foreigners." The dukes of Brittany are viewed by the Bretons in much the same way as the Bretons viewed the Anglo-Saxons.

Brugge

Brugge was a small town in Flanders until A.D. 1134, when a great tidal wave changed the Zwyn estuary into a gulf of the North Sea. After 1134, Brugge became the greatest port of Flanders, granting many tax immunities and trading privileges to merchants. These incentives attract merchants from all over Mythic Europe, even in the Thirteenth Century. Other cities in Flanders have made appeals to the Church to investigate the unnatural flood of 1134, which they claim was conjured by the Devil or sorcerers. The Church looked into the matter in 1159, and was satisfied that the tidal wave was an act of God, with no diabolic influence.

Brugge is the westernmost member of the Hanseatic League, and deals largely with France and Britain. While not as large as Ghent, Brugge is one of the richest cities in Flanders, and its citizens like to display their wealth. The citizens of Brugge, especially the burghers' wives, wear expensive furs and fabrics, embroidered with silk threads and gems. The Count of Flanders has issued many proclamations against wearing ostentatious garments, but the burghers ignore the decrees, paying fines to display their finery.

Brussels

Brussels is nominally the capital of the Duchy of Brabant, but maintains itself as an independent city, allying itself with other towns of Flanders. Brussels rebelled against its lord, the Duke of Brabant, in A.D. 1194, and declared itself a free commune. The Duke attempts to recover the city in 1201, but the burghers of the city, with the help of other cities of Flanders, defeat the Duke, forcing him to accept the city's independence.

Gudule, a maiden of Brussels, fought the Devil in 1146. The Devil had lured many prominent burghers into worshipping Him, and the burghers began dabbling in magic, held Black Masses, and attempted to murder the Duke by diabolic means.

Gudule, daughter of one of the burghers, followed her father to one of the Black Masses, and when the Devil appeared she broke out in fervent prayer. The Devil instructed the girl's father to kill her, but the vision of his daughter broke his heart, and the man died. The Devil then attempted to frightened the girl, and when that failed He attempted to seduce her with visions of jewels and gold. Through it all Gudule persisted in her prayer, finally driving the Devil away with her piety. The remaining burghers fled the church and threw themselves on the mercy of the Bishop, pleading for forgiveness.

Gudule dies in 1215, and is canonized in 1218. A cathedral to St. Gudule and St. Michael is begun on the site of the church where Gudule chased the Devil away.

Caen

The beloved city of William the Conqueror, Caen was his capital while still only Duke of Normandy, and he visited it often after his conquest of England in A.D. 1066.

Caen was the recipient of a substantial penance which William paid, for marrying his cousin Matilda of Flanders. To account for his sin William was instructed by the Bishop of Caen to construct an abbey and a convent, The Abbey aux Hommes and the Abbey Aux Dames, and to build four hospitals.

Caen remains in English hands until it is lost to the French during the reign of English King John. The people of Caen are devoutly loyal to their Duke. The events of 1204, when Normandy is conquered by the French, is hard on Caen, for it must hold out against French invaders for several months and does. However, once French King Philip Augustus appoints William of Touraine as Duke of Normandy, the people of Caen resume a normal life, loyal to their new Duke.

Dijon

Duke Robert I of Burgundy made Dijon his capital in A.D. 1051, and it remains the capital of Burgundy into the Thirteenth Century.

In 1137 an accusation of witchcraft against a number of Jews in the city ignited a week-long riot, which ended when a number of fires broke out and burned the majority of the city to the ground. Duke Hugues II rebuilt the city and circled it with walls.

Jews are now forbidden inside the city, and a special office of the Bishop of Dijon remains vigilant for suspected Jews, witches, and sorcerers. The Inquisition is requested to examine the city in 1207, and remains afterward. The population of the city lives in fear of the Church, as do people fear their neighbors, never knowing when they may be turned over to one of the two Church courts by avaricious or jealous citizens.

Fraxinetum

The city of Fraxinetum was founded by pirates from the island of Cossura, and is a pirate base and hazard to all shipping from Sicily to Spain. Located at the end of a rocky headland, Fraxinetum is secure from attack by land, and its fleet protects it by sea. The pirates claim as their own all waters from Italy and Sicily to the Pillars of Hercules. No country has yet had the courage to beard these pirates in their lair, though numerous protests have been made to the Duke of Burgundy, in whose territory Fraxinetum lies.

Anything can be had in Fraxinetum for a price, though its captains prefer not to travel east of Italy. The pirates are paid a heavy ransom by port cities and towns along the coast to prevent raids on ships entering or leaving those ports, and to preserve cities from harm.

Thibaut One-Leg claims to be King of Fraxinetum, and leads the pirates. He lost his leg in a raid on Rome itself, a raid which was repulsed by the Romans. On his return to Fraxinetum, Thibaut declared the pirate city off-limits to all members of the Church, throwing a number of missionary Dominican friars into the harbor. The Archbishop of Arles has petitioned the Pope to call a crusade against Fraxinetum, claiming the city has forsaken the word of Christ, thus removing itself from the Christian community.

Ghent

Ghent is the largest city in Flanders, and one of the wealthiest in Mythic Europe. Its wealth comes from its wool trade with England, and from the cloth it makes with that wool. Because of its size, and the crossing of trade routes in Flanders, Ghent is a major center of Mythic European trade, and all major Italian banking families have offices here.

The burghers of Ghent consider themselves independent of the Count of Flanders, though he does not agree. No blood has been spilt over the issue, but tensions between lord and burghers are always high. The burghers of Ghent have begun approaching other Flemish cities with the idea of forming the League of Flanders, based on the Lombard and Hanseatic Leagues. The proposed League would protect member cities, and allow free travel and trade for League members in all cities

of the League. Negotiations have been kept secret, as neither the Count of Flanders nor the Hanseatic League would be happy to hear of the new organization.

La Rochelle

Located on a high hill adjacent to a fine harbor, La Rochelle has never fallen to siege. The city was part of Eleanor of Aquitaine's heritage, and became an English possession in A.D. 1154 when she became Queen of England.

La Rochelle suffered a number of sieges during the wars between the English Henry II and his sons, and again when Philip II Augustus of France retakes French territory from King John. Ultimately, the city surrenders to the French in 1224, throwing out its English lords (the populace was enraged with the lords when they held a horse race through the middle of the city the year before, running down men and women who got in their way. A dozen nobles took part in the race, and twenty-five citizens were injured or killed by the horses).

The mariners of La Rochelle are known for their bravery, daring the storms of the Bay of Biscay to catch their fish, or to smuggle wine to the port of Exeter in England, bypassing royal tariffs in London. Many people also cross the English Channel in smugglers' ships, be they exiled English nobles returning to foment rebellion, or people fleeing England one step ahead of the King's soldiers. As much as a quarter of La Rochelle's fishermen are willing to thumb their noses at the English King.

Le Puy

The land surrounding the city of Le Puy abounds with rocky spires, great up-thrusting needles of rock. It is also a major gathering point for pilgrims to the southern shrines, in part based on a tradition started in the Tenth Century by the Bishop of Le Puy, who led two hundred monks on a pilgrimage to Santiago.

The chapel of St. Michel d'Aiguilhe (St. Michel on the Needle) is built atop one of the rocky spires which surround Le Puy, on the site of a former temple of Mercury. The chapel boasts a statue of the Virgin, given to the church by St. Louis after his failed crusade to Egypt in A.D. 1254. The statue has miraculous powers, such that even the Moors of Granada, in Spain, venerate it. The church is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and is a focal point of her cult.

The Truce of God was also established in Le Puy. In the year 900, the Bishop of Le Puy called together the nobles of his diocese and preached to them of the sanctity of life. He tried to persuade them to take an oath *"To observe the peace, not to plunder the property of the Church or the poor, and to restore what they had already taken."* When the barons refused, the Bishop sent a force of armed men to surround them and force them to take the oath under penalty of death. From this event came the Truce of God, which protects widows, orphans and the poor, prohibits fighting on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, as well as on All Saints' Day and religious holidays, and lists conditions under which a war may be considered "just." The Truce of God is generally ignored by nobles, but many churchmen have been able to stop or contain battles by using the Truce as justification for threats of excommunication.

Limoge

A pilgrimage center second to the major centers of Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago, Limoge attracts mostly Frenchmen to its shrines, which are dedicated to St. Martial, who converted the area of central France to Christianity.

Legend has it that Martial was the boy who provided the bread when Jesus performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Martial traveled to the Roman province of Gaul, and preached the word of Christ among the Romans and Gauls. He was martyred by the Roman governor of Limoge, and buried in an unmarked grave.

The cathedral chapter of Limoge believes they find Martial's body when excavation begins for the new cathedral in A.D. 1245. The body is that of a man dressed in Roman-style clothes, but the body has not decayed over the years. The body is placed in the old cathedral until a suitable reliquary can be constructed, but it disappears one night. The cathedral chapter offers rewards, both money and remission of sins, to the person who returns the body to the cathedral. For the thieves the chapter promises excommunication and the fires of Hell.

Limoge and surrounding towns are famous for their brilliant, enameled metalwork, which the craftsmen of Limoge have perfected. Limoge enamelware is taken to the Champagne Fairs, and is eagerly purchased by all traders. Many monarchs, including the kings of France, England, and Aragon, and the German Emperor, have commissioned pieces of enamelwork for their insignias. The religious enamelwork pieces of Jean Plieu have an unnatural beauty, as if his scenes of the saints are created by angels. Magi who have seen Plieu's work claim it has suppressed their magic, as if empowered like a Christian relic. The Archbishop of Tours has begun an investigation into Jean's work, to determine if there are supernatural influences at work.

Marseille

Marseille is the oldest city in France, founded by the ancient city of Athens when the surrounding territory was populated by savage Gauls. The Romans conquered the city, but it remained a center of Greek culture throughout the Roman era. After the fall of Rome, Marseille was conquered by barbarian tribes, but they soon became civilized under the influence of the city.

Marseille has always been a major seaport, supplying Greek traders with a place to sell their wares, and Roman legions with a harbor from which to launch raids against the Gauls. Even during the darkest period following the fall of Rome, ships arrived and departed from Marseille from both eastern and western ports.

The merchants of Marseille have a prominent part to play in the Children's Crusade of A.D. 1212. They promise passage to the Holy Land, but instead sell thousands of children to slave markets in Alexandria. The bad blood generated by this sale of innocents makes Marseille a port shunned by honest merchants. As a result, the sailors of Marseille turn to smuggling and sometimes outright piracy to supplement their income. They now have no qualms about selling slaves to the Saracens, and dockside taverns are perhaps the most dangerous places in the city.

Melusina the Water Fairy

In the city of Poitiers stands the Castle of Lusignan, the creation of the water faerie, Melusina, for her husband Raymond, Count de la Foret. When Melusina married Raymond, she warned that he must not disturbed her on Saturdays, so that she might have the whole day to herself. After a long and happy marriage, the Count was one day goaded by his son-in-law to observe Melusina at her Saturday bath. He saw that she had a fish's tail where her legs should be. When confronted by the Count, Melusina fled the castle, leaving two children still in the cradle. Melusina's last words were that she would appear above the castle whenever one of her family was to die. After all of her family had died, she began to herald the death of the King of France, appearing in the highest tower of the castle, clad in a white dress marked with blood.

Narbonne

This seacoast city handles a moderate amount of trade, mostly from coastal traders serving the route between Marseille and Valencia. Numerous small fishing boats fill the harbor. The city walls date back to the age of the Romans, when the colony of Narbonenses was founded. Narbonne was overrun by the Arabs during their expansion north of the Pyrenees, but was recaptured by the Pepin the Short, father of Charlemagne.

The atmosphere of the city, like most of the south coast of France, is relaxed, and the citizens do not like the rabble-rousing of the Inquisition. The Archbishop of Narbonne has his hands full with the Cathars, Inquisition, and foreign knights eager to fight the heretics. He must keep order, but tensions between these factions threatens to tear his city apart. In addition, numerous complaints have come in of a Inquisitor in the city of Agde who seems to have overstepped his authority. The Archbishop is in failing health, and many say he does not have long to live. Before he dies, he would like to resolve at least one of the problems facing his city.

Orleans

A city even before the time of the Romans, Orleans was captured by Julius Caesar during his conquest of Gaul, and remained in Roman hands until the fall of the Roman Empire. The city withstood the attacks of Attila the Hun, but Clovis, King of the Franks, captured it in the Sixth Century after Christ. The city then became part of the crown lands, and served as the nucleus of the French state during the reign of the early Capetian kings.

Orleans is the center of an area renowned for witchcraft, sorcery, and heresy. In A.D. 1022 a number of Manicheanist heretics were burned at the stake, and in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries two archbishops and a duke, in addition to uncounted numbers of peasants and knights, were killed by sorcerers burning wax effigies. It is rumored that Church officials on the Archbishop's own staff are involved in sorcery and worship of the Devil. Inquisitors sent to the city have also been killed by the sorcerers, and the Archbishop has asked the Pope to send a veritable army of Inquisitors and exorcists, and knights from holy orders to guard honest churchmen.

Paris

Paris is an ancient city, founded by Paris, Prince of Troy, after the Trojan War. When the Romans invaded Gaul under Julius Caesar, they discovered Paris, which they named Lutetia, though they called the inhabitants Parisii.

During the Roman era, a temple to Mercury was erected on the heights of the Mount of Mercury, later known as Montmartre. The name of the mountain was changed in the Third Century,

when St. Denis, who preached against idolaters, was beheaded on the slopes of the mountain. St. Denis picked up his own severed head, washed it in a fountain, and walked to the site of what would be his resting place, seven miles north of Paris.

An abbey was built on the site of Denis's burial, and became the most important holy place in France. St. Denis became the patron saint of France, but the patron of Paris is St. Genevieve, who, through prayer, kept Attila the Hun from the gates of the city. She died soon afterward, but numerous miracles were attributed to her since her death, including the rescue of three young children from a burning building. The Church made Genevieve a saint in A.D. 475, legitimizing the cult which had flourished in Paris since her death.

The Vikings sacked Paris in 845, sailing up the Seine in their shallow-draft ships. The city was assaulted many times in the years that followed, until King Charles the Simple granted the lands of Normandy to the Viking King Rollo in 911.

Hugh Capet made Paris the capital of his realm in 987, and it has grown in importance since then. One of the major influences on the growth of Paris has been the cathedral school, which in 1200 is recognized as a university by King Philip Augustus. The university is famous throughout Mythic Europe as the center of theology north of the Alps.

Many urban projects are also started or completed by Philip Augustus, including the palace of the Louvre, the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris, and the paving of major streets. Another famous site, the Abbey of St. Denis, is the burial place of the kings of France since Clovis, and contains the Oriflamme, the sacred flag of France, carried into battle by the kings of France since Charlemagne.

Paris does not have a direct connection to the sea because the Seine is too shallow to allow deep-draft ships passage so far inland. Instead, ships on the sea stop at Rouen and unload their cargo onto shallower river boats, which continue to Paris. Goods from Paris reverse the routine.

Poitiers

Poitiers is the main city of the County of Poitiers, known for its wines which are exported over much of Mythic Europe. Poitiers represents a point of moderation in the social differences between northern and southern France, able to appreciate the cultural contributions of southerners, and the government of the north. Poitiers was part of the lands of Henry II of England, and many battles were fought in the County during the rebellions of Henry's sons. Battles are also fought in the area when King Philip Augustus regains formerly French territories held by English kings.

The city of Poitiers also marks the geographic extent of the Moorish invasions into Mythic Europe. At Poitiers Charles Martel, King of the French, smashed the Moorish army with the help of the young Magus Flambeau, in A.D. 732, driving the Moors back, eventually over the Pyrenees into Spain.

A few miles outside Poitiers is the Castle of Lusignan, where a faerie foresees the death of the King of France.

The Count of Poitiers hosts a special tournament every five years, wherein knights from all over Mythic Europe are invited to join. The contests include melee and jousting, but also include contests in the arts of love. The ladies of the court, emulating the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine, judge the knights on their conduct in the events, which are sometimes announced, sometimes secret. Contests of singing or writing poetry might be announced, while a secret contest might test how a knight behaves in the presence of a beautiful woman, or with an accusation of cowardice.

At the end of the tournament, the three knights judged most romantic are awarded silk scarves decorated with hearts. The three knights judged most chivalrous are awarded scarves decorated with lions. And, the three knights judged for their fighting prowess are awarded swords decorated with eagles. These knights are also invited to join orders of knighthood befitting their awards: the Order of Knights of the Heart, the Lion, or the Eagle.

Members of each order are expected to show in their daily life and speech the qualities for which the order stands. The masters of the orders are women of the court of Poitiers, and may dismiss knights for failing to uphold the virtues of their orders. No one has yet won knighthood in all three orders, though there are a number of knights of two orders.

Rouen

Rouen is the capital of the Duchy of Normandy, and was Richard the Lionheart's favorite city. When Richard was imprisoned by German Emperor Henry IV, the cathedral of Rouen sold all its treasures to aid in his ransom. On Richard's release he endowed the cathedral with a number of fiefs in the local area. At his death, Richard bequeathed his heart to the cathedral, where it is kept in a jeweled reliquary.

Rouen also serves as the port for Paris, as deep-draft vessels may not proceed up the Seine given to its shallow bottom. Cargo is transshipped here to shallow river boats, which then proceed to Paris. This transshipment offers a prime opportunity for thieves to make off with parts of cargo, so the guard around the docks is extremely heavy.

Toulouse

Founded by the Romans as a vacation spot in the gentle climate of Provençe, Toulouse was ravaged many times by Germanic tribes which flooded into the area after the fall of the western Roman Empire. The city was even captured by Muslim invaders from Spain in A.D. 725, who were forced out of the country by Charles Martel and his successors. The Muslim presence gave Toulouse an appreciation for the gentler arts of poetry and music, though, and planted the seed for the flowering of the gentle courts of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries.

The Counts of Toulouse share in their subjects' love of romance and poetry, and are patrons of the arts, encouraging troubadours and free-thinkers. This tolerance is sorely tested by the Church's response to the Albigensian heresy. Count Raymond VI of Toulouse, and many of the nobles of the County, support the Cathar Perfecti, giving them shelter in towns, cities, and castles. The Pope's legates, Peter of Castlenau and Arnold-Almric, lay Raymond's lands under interdict and excommunicate him for his support of the heretics, and for his refusal to fight the heresy.

The Count yields to this pressure, but the 1208 murder of Peter of Castlenau by one of the Count's knights sparks the war which the nobility of the north want, giving them an excuse to invade the south, fighting more for land and booty than for the Church. Count Raymond takes the field against the northern crusaders, but is dispossessed by Simon de Montfort, the leader of the crusaders. Toulouse is then given to Simon, but the city revolts against him in 1218, and he is killed during the siege to retake the city.

Raymond VII, the popular son of Raymond VI, is able to take the city from Amaury, son of Simon de Montfort, and to defend it against King Louis of France. In fact, Raymond joins a rebellion against Queen Blanche of France, but shares in its defeat; the County and city of Toulouse are ravaged. The culture of southern France never recovers; Toulouse is savaged so badly that its artistic culture dies.

On the death of Raymond's daughter the city and County are passed to the crown. The city is then held for the King by Baron Guilleme de Belvoir, a noble from Champagne.

Tours

Tours is a pilgrimage site of shrines to St. Martin, who established the first monastery in France, and was named Archbishop of Tours. He never truly relished being Archbishop, preferring to live among monks, but pursued his duties with devotion. Martin preached to the pagans and destroyed their temples. Three times his life was threatened by pagan lords wishing to rid themselves of his preaching, but each time his life was saved by a pure white hart, which died in his place. St. Martin is a patron saint of France, and the Archbishop of Tours is the primate of the Church of France.

Tours was part of the English possession under kings Henry II, Richard, and John, but is recaptured by the French in A.D. 1204, when the city delivers itself from the grip of the English.

The citizens free themselves from the English when the Archbishop preaches in the city's cathedral on Easter day, 1204. He says St. Martin has come to him in a dream, telling him that King Philip Augustus is beloved of God and rightful master of the city. The Archbishop leads the populace to the local English castle, where they demand the surrender of the English garrison. The garrison laughs at the townspeople, but one blow of the Bishop's crosier shivers the gates of the castle and the crowd pours in, overwhelming the English knights.

After the city is taken the inhabitants send messengers to King Philip, urging him to make all haste to the city, which is threatened by barons friendly to the English. The French army arrives in time to beat the English forces back from the walls, where they had begun besieging the city. King Philip then celebrates Mass in the cathedral, the first French king to do so in fifty years.

Vannes

Vannes is nominally the capital of the Duchy of Brittany, but its inhabitants prefer that their Duke would never visit. All Bretons are independence-minded, and prefer to be left alone by the French and English. The passing of Brittany between the English and French crowns has not concerned the populace, who farm the land and fish the sea as their ancestors did for hundreds of years.

Not far outside Vannes are the standing stones at Carnac, a collection of thousands of monoliths laid out in rows, stretching for miles. Local legend has it that these stones are all that is left of an army which was turned to stone while pursuing a powerful wizard. What army the soldiers belonged to has long been forgotten, though some say it was a Roman army pursuing a druid. Others claim it was a French army pursuing Merlin. The locals warn that on specific nights of the year the stones come to life and perform military maneuvers. Travelers should beware on these nights, for the stone soldiers rush back to their former positions at the first cock crow, crushing anyone in their path.

NORTHERN MYTHIC EUROPE

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Empire of the Romans, sometimes known as the Roman-German Empire but more often as the Holy Roman Empire, is the largest single nation in Mythic Europe. Stretching across central Mythic Europe, the Empire extends from the eastern edge of France to the kingdoms of Poland and Germany, and from the Baltic Sea south to the Alps.

From the south, the first thing encountered by a traveler in the Empire is the treacherous Alps. These mountains are the highest in Mythic Europe, with some peaks exceeding 15,000 feet. The western Alps are the steepest, consisting of precipitous cliffs and high peaks, with few passes cutting through sharp, narrow valleys which wind their way nearly parallel to the run of the mountain range. The eastern Alps are lower, although still often over 10,000 feet in altitude, with terraced slopes and wider valleys which provide more opportunity to pass through the range.

The upper slopes of the Alps are covered with pine forests, particularly on the northern side. The mid-slopes and surrounding lands are covered by gravel plains with poor soil, suitable only for producing barley, oats, and other feed grains. The mid-slopes of the Alps support many cattle, which thrive on the wild grasses that grow in the gravel plains. These plains run out to the Danube River and the city of Ulm.

Beyond the gravel plains of the alpine foreland lie the central uplands of the Empire. This hilly land is covered with rolling, forested hills, granite massifs, and volcanic flows. It is a very fertile region, home to the great Black Forest and the famous Upper Rhine Valley. The central uplands get considerable rain and snow throughout the year.

The uplands persist over much of the central Empire. Only in the north do they cease, to be replaced by the German Lowlands. These lowlands are primarily tidal flats, marshes, and bogs. Inhabited areas (particularly in the west) must be protected from the sea by dikes. To the east, the lands rise slowly, becoming hilly meadows at the lowlands' easternmost extent. However, even in the east these lands are far lower and flatter than anywhere in the uplands.

The Empire also envelops the kingdom of Bohemia, a mountain-surrounded region containing a central basin. The mountains of Bohemia are wooded and steep, with few peaks over 4,000 feet. Bohemia is a subject nation to the Empire, but retains some political independence. Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa attempted several times to undermine the Piemysl dynasty, which rules Bohemia through political manipulation. Frederick's subversive attempts included an effort to remove the Bishop of Prague (a member of the Piemysl family) from authority in A.D. 1187, but the Piemysl family survives. Tensions have eased between the Piemysl family and the Emperor since Frederick I's death.

The eastern frontier of the Empire is divided into a series of marches to protect the Empire from the nomads of eastern Mythic Europe. The people of these marches are slowly

pressing the Empire's borders to the south and east. As a result, tensions are rising on borders shared with Poland and Hungary.

The Empire of the Romans is ruled by the Hapsburg dynasty. The Hapsburg emperors are currently struggling with Papist forces to determine whether the Emperor or the Pope shall be the temporal leader of Christendom. The outcome of the struggle is still in doubt, but the the struggle has drawn the emperors' attention away from Imperial matters. The Empire is suffering as a result. While few in the country openly complain about neglect, the signs of that neglect — crumbling roads, poverty, and misery — are everywhere.

And, while the Empire is the largest and most militarily powerful country in Mythic Europe, it is not the wealthiest. The Empire lacks a seaport on the Mediterranean, so is left out of the burgeoning sea trade, which is the backbone of Italian and French wealth.

Empire (German) History

The Eastern Kingdom of the Roman Empire, soon known as Germany, was at an early age assailed by Viking raiders from the north, and by Magyars from Hungary. Local rulers, not able to rely on Imperial aid, soon developed their own armies for defense, amending Carolingian laws requiring armed men to rally to their counts. With increased local power, the great nobles of the Eastern Kingdom soon assumed the titles of dukes (from the Latin *dux*, meaning leader), and became virtually autonomous of Imperial rule.

The death of Emperor Louis the Child in A.D. 911 gave eastern dukes a chance at partial control of the Imperial title. The dukes and the Empire's archbishops claimed sole authority in choice of the new Emperor, setting a precedent of ascension which is preserved even in the Thirteenth Century.

The electing council was eventually reduced to seven: the Dukes of Saxony and Bavaria, Count Palatinate, Margrave of Brandenberg, and the Archbishops of Cologne, Mainz, and Trier. These Electors selected, and still select, a new Emperor by simple majority vote. Even in the Thirteenth Century the Electors are very powerful, as prospective emperors must win their favor. Strong Imperial candidates are able to impose their will on the Electors, while weak would-be emperors are powerless before the great lords. Occasionally the Electors, who choose the Emperor, and the Pope, who crowns him, disagree on a candidate. At such an impasse the Empire is ruled by an uncrowned monarch.

Otto I the Great became King of Germany, and therefore Emperor, at age 24, and set to work on laying the foundations for the Empire's future. Early is his career he discovered and put down a rebellion, forgiving his brother Henry who had been part of the uprising. Otto also dispensed duchies to his followers, assuring himself support from the important nobles of his realm. And, he consolidated the kingdom with the help

of the Church, but kept the Empire only loosely affiliated with the Pope, as Otto, instead of the Pope, invested bishops and archbishops with their sees.

Otto also expanded his realm. On the urgings of his bishops Otto attacked the pagan Wends on the east side of the Elbe river. He conquered their lands, but was unable to convert them. Furthermore, he compelled the Dukes of Poland and Bohemia, and the King of Denmark, to accept his overlordship. And, in 948 Otto invaded Italy. After a number of campaigns, Otto added northern Italy, including Rome, to his Empire. With the addition of Rome Otto changed the name of the Empire, declaring that he no longer ruled the Roman Empire of the West, but the Holy Roman Empire. To insure the succession of the title, Otto had his son crowned Emperor Otto II.

Otto I died in 973 and was succeeded by his son, who spent his reign trying to add southern Italy to the Empire's lands, but died in the attempt. His son, crowned Otto III, succeeded to the throne at the age of three, with his grandmother Adelaide and mother Theophano as Regents. Otto III started to rule in his own name by 996, at the age of sixteen, with Gerbert of Aurillac as one of his chief advisors. Otto III's great ambition was to move his capital to Rome, and to unite all of Christendom under the leadership of the Emperor and Pope. The Roman citizens resisted his efforts, though, establishing a Roman republic, which Otto quickly suppressed. Eventually Otto had Gerbert elevated to the Papacy in 999 as Sylvester II, but was unable to realize his dream of uniting Christendom.

Following kings of Germany attempted to strengthen Imperial authority, but with mixed success. Henry II attempted to add Poland to the Empire, battling Boleslav Chrobry, with inconclusive results. By the terms of the Peace of Bautzen in 1018, Poland remained independent, but held a number of lands as Imperial fiefs. Henry II also made several forays into Italy, keeping the Byzantines in southern Italy from advancing up the peninsula.

Conrad II lost territory to the Danes and Hungarians, but gained back the fiefs held by Poland. He also gave in to German dukes' demands that their fiefs be made inalienable and hereditary, undermining the Emperor's power. Regardless of his weaknesses, Conrad II's greatest act was to add the kingdom of Arelat (Burgundy) to the Empire in 1033, securing important passes over the Alps and cementing connections to Imperial Italy. Ultimately, Conrad was defeated by the cities of Lombardy in 1038, and the city of Milan captured his coach, banners and other symbols. Conrad therefore lost the throne in disgrace.

In his turn, Emperor Henry III subjugated Hungary and Bohemia, making them Imperial fiefs. He also removed a number of archbishops from their sees, and eliminated much of Italian archbishop's influence in choosing the Pope. Henry also divided the Duchy of Lorraine, creating Upper Lorraine from the Duchy's southern regions.

Henry IV was crowned Emperor at the age of four, and was six when his father, Henry III died in 1056. Henry's mother and two archbishops acted as Regents, until the boy was declared of age in 1065 at the age of fifteen.

The papacy of Henry IV's time was hostile, and his nobles were anxious to increase their own power, that which was stripped by Henry III. Henry IV's youth and inexperience led him to believe in the absolute power of the monarchy, and he was soon in contention with most of the powerful dukes and counts of his realm.

To undermine Henry's power, Pope Gregory VII issued the Bull Dictatus Papae in 1075, which forbade the investiture of bishops and abbots by secular rulers. Secular appointment had been a royal prerogative since before the time of Charlemagne. The struggle that followed, known as the Investiture Controversy, lasted long after the death of the two principals. During the contest Henry was deposed by Pope Gregory when he refused to acknowledge the Bull. Henry replied by calling a synod of German and Lombard bishops, who declared Gregory deposed on the grounds that he had exceeded his rightful powers. Gregory finally proved the victor in the battle of wills, keeping his seat against the Emperor. Henry surrendered to the Pope's will at Canossa, a castle in the Alps. However, the Pope only absolved Henry after Henry spent three days barefoot in the snow outside the gates of the castle.

After making peace with the Pope, Henry sped back to Germany to deal with dukes who had rebelled during his excommunication. Unfortunately the dukes deposed Henry and elected Rudolf of Saxony as King. Henry fought the dukes and the Anti-King, but was again deposed and excommunicated by the Pope. Henry responded by deposing Gregory, and elected Clement III, known as the Anti-Pope. A series of battles thereby began in Italy, with Henry supported financially by Emperor Alexius Comnenus of Byzantium, and Gregory by Robert Guiscard, the Norman King of Naples.

The sack of Rome by Robert in 1084 disillusioned the Italians, who tried to protect Pope Gregory against the duplicitous Norman. Robert took Gregory and much of the college of cardinals into his domains, where Gregory died in 1085. The cardinals elected a series of Popes in Naples, protected by Robert, while Henry IV's Clement held Rome, protected by the Emperor. The kings of Europe declared their support for the Emperor or Papacy by choosing to obey one Pope or the other.

In the meantime, Henry returned to Germany where he put down another rebellion (except, that is, in Bavaria, where the powerful Welf family held power). The First Crusade, called by Pope Urban II in 1095, took many needed troops from all sides in the rebellion, but did not stop the civil wars in Germany.

To aid their cause, Germany's nobility elected Henry's second son, also called Henry, as Emperor. Henry V joined the rebellious dukes and captured his father, though Henry IV managed to escape. To regain his throne Henry IV led an army against his son, defeating him in 1106. Fatefully, Henry IV died the same year, worn out by his struggles. As a final insult to the

former Emperor, Pope Paschal II refused to grant Henry a Christian burial, claiming he had died excommunicate. But, the people of Liege defied the Pope and the King of Germany, giving Henry a Christian burial in their cathedral.

Henry V, once he became sole King of Germany, found that his father's enemies now turned against him, and he fought the same battles his father had. Pope Paschal II refused to crown Henry V Emperor unless he swore to abide by Church rulings on lay investiture. Henry seized the Pope and the Curia, the Pope's advisors, keeping them imprisoned for two months. The Pope finally crowned Henry Emperor in 1111, without any mention of investiture. Thus, Henry hurried back to Germany, where he faced another civil war with his dukes.

The Concordat of Worms in 1122 brought a compromise solution to the investiture contest in Germany. The Emperor was given the right to be present at the election of high Church officials, to intervene in disputed elections, and to invest the official with the lay scepter, accepting his fealty and homage. In return the Church was guaranteed canonical elections, and investment of bishops with official spiritual power, symbolized by the ring and crosier.

The death of Henry V without heirs in 1125 allowed the Electors to make their choice from among all the dukes of the realm. The two main contenders were the Duke of Swabia, Frederick Hohenstauffen, and the Duke of Saxony, Lothar of Supplinburg, the latter an elderly and childless man. The Electors chose Lothar to be King Lothar III, thus creating another civil war as Frederick rebelled time and again to claim the throne. However, Lothar managed to expand the German frontiers to the east; conquering but not converting the pagan Wends; making Bohemia, Poland, and Denmark pay homage; and putting his own candidate on the throne of Hungary.

Lothar died in 1137, leaving his son-in-law Henry the Proud as the most powerful man in Germany: Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, head of the house of Welf, and owner of great estates in Germany and Italy. However, the Electors, fearing the power of Henry, instead elected Conrad III of Hohenstauffen, who was weaker and thus easier to control. Conrad started his reign by taking both dukedoms from Henry, starting the Welf-Weibelung feud against Henry, which spread throughout Germany and Italy. Henry reconquered Saxony, and was ready to invade Bavaria when he died, leaving his ten year old son, Henry the Lion, as heir to the feud. Henry the Lion was granted Saxony by treaty, but renewed the struggle for Bavaria.

Bringing a brief respite to the civil war, Conrad led the forces of the Empire in the Second Crusade in 1147. Returning to the Empire, Conrad also found new enemies to engage. He looked to Italy for new lands, and became embroiled in the factionalism and fighting of Roger II of Sicily. Pope Eugenius III appealed for Conrad's aid against Arnold of Brescia, a preacher of apostolic poverty and the disendowment of all Church lands. Indeed, Arnold had led a revolt in Rome, and encouraged the growth of communes in the Papal States. Ultimately Conrad failed to aid the Pope, or to diminish Henry the Lion, and died in 1152, leaving Germany immersed in civil war.

Conrad's cousin Frederick, Duke of Swabia, seemed to be the man to heal Germany's wounds. Frederick was elected nearly unanimously by the Electors, who were weary of constant civil war. The Italians named Frederick "Barbarossa," after his red beard. Frederick resolved the feud between Henry the Lion and his family by granting his uncle, Welf IV, the Margravate of Tuscany and the Duchy of Spoleto. In return his cousin Henry the Lion received the Duchy of Saxony. And, Duke Jasomirgott had his Margravate of Austria raised to a Duchy in recompense for lost Saxony.

In Italy Arnold of Brescia, the popular heretical leader, had forced Pope Eugenius III from Rome, and led the Romans in forming a Roman republic. To resolve the situation, Frederick and the Papal successor, Adrian, came to an understanding. Frederick would capture Arnold and subjugate Rome in return for the Imperial crown. Adrian then placed Rome under interdict at the beginning of the Holy Week, motivating Romans to exile Arnold, who was in turn captured by Frederick. Arnold was thus tried, hanged, and burned as a heretic, his ashes flung into the Tiber.

Though a deal had been made with Frederick, the people of the Roman republic would not recognize it. The Romans refused to open the gates of the city to Frederick, so the Imperial coronation was held in the fortress of St. Peter. To protect themselves the Romans attacked the Imperial forces across the Tiber, but were thrown back with great losses. However, Frederick could not consolidate his victory but had to hurry back to Germany as his army had contracted malaria.

At the Diet of Roncaglia, in 1158, Frederick asked the lawyers of Bologna, who were decidedly Imperialist, to define the rights of the Emperor in the kingdom of Italy. The lawyers responded that the Emperor was supreme in the kingdom, with the right to appoint clergy, and to totally control the judicial and monetary processes of Italian cities. They also gave the Emperor the right to place consuls in all cities, and the right to place a podesta, or governor, in each city. The Papacy and the communes of Lombardy were less than thrilled with the answer, and years of warfare ensued.

The death of Pope Adrian in 1159 prompted two opposing Popes to be appointed. The Papal cardinals elected Alexander III, while the Imperials elected Victor IV. Frederick forced the acceptance of Victor, and Alexander fled to France in 1162.

To continue fighting the Emperor, the cities of Lombardy banded together in 1167, forming the Lombard League. The cities vowed to support each other against the Emperor until their rights were restored. Frederick returned to Italy in 1174, besieging cities of the Lombard League. A short-lived peace was established in 1175 between the Emperor, the Pope, and the League, but hostilities broke out again the next year. In retaliation, the Lombard League fielded an army to fight Frederick, and at the battle of Legnano the League defeated the Imperial troops. It was believed that Frederick was killed in the fighting, until he reappeared in Pavia, alone. In 1177 Pope Alexander mediated a six year truce, known as the Peace of Venice, between the League and Frederick. Negotiations were held in Venice, which was the only city both sides could agree

upon. At the end of the six years, in 1183, the Peace of Constance was signed by all parties, granting a number of important rights to the League.

Henry the Lion, who had been in semi-constant rebellion throughout the reign of Frederick, was brought to trial in 1178 on numerous charges of breaking the peace. He refused to attend the proceedings and was placed under Imperial ban. A second judicial conference stripped him of the Duchies of Bavaria and Saxony. The lands were broken up and distributed to a number of parties. Finally, Henry surrendered to Imperial justice in 1181, after two years of warfare. He was given the estates of Luneberg and Brunswick, and was exiled to England.

Emperor Frederick died in 1190, drowning in a river in the Holy Land while on the Third Crusade. His successor, Henry VI, came to Rome to be crowned Emperor, and claimed the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples by right of inheritance through his wife. Henry then conquered Sicily and Naples, surrounding the Papal States with Imperial lands.

Henry also managed to capture King Richard of England in 1192, as Richard was returning home from the Third Crusade. Henry kept Richard prisoner and demanded a ransom of 150,000 marks, which was twice the annual revenue of the entire realm of England. The English and Norman people collected the ransom, against the efforts of Prince John of England and King Philip Augustus of France. The two Kings wanted to keep Richard away from home, and even bribed Henry VI to keep Richard prisoner.

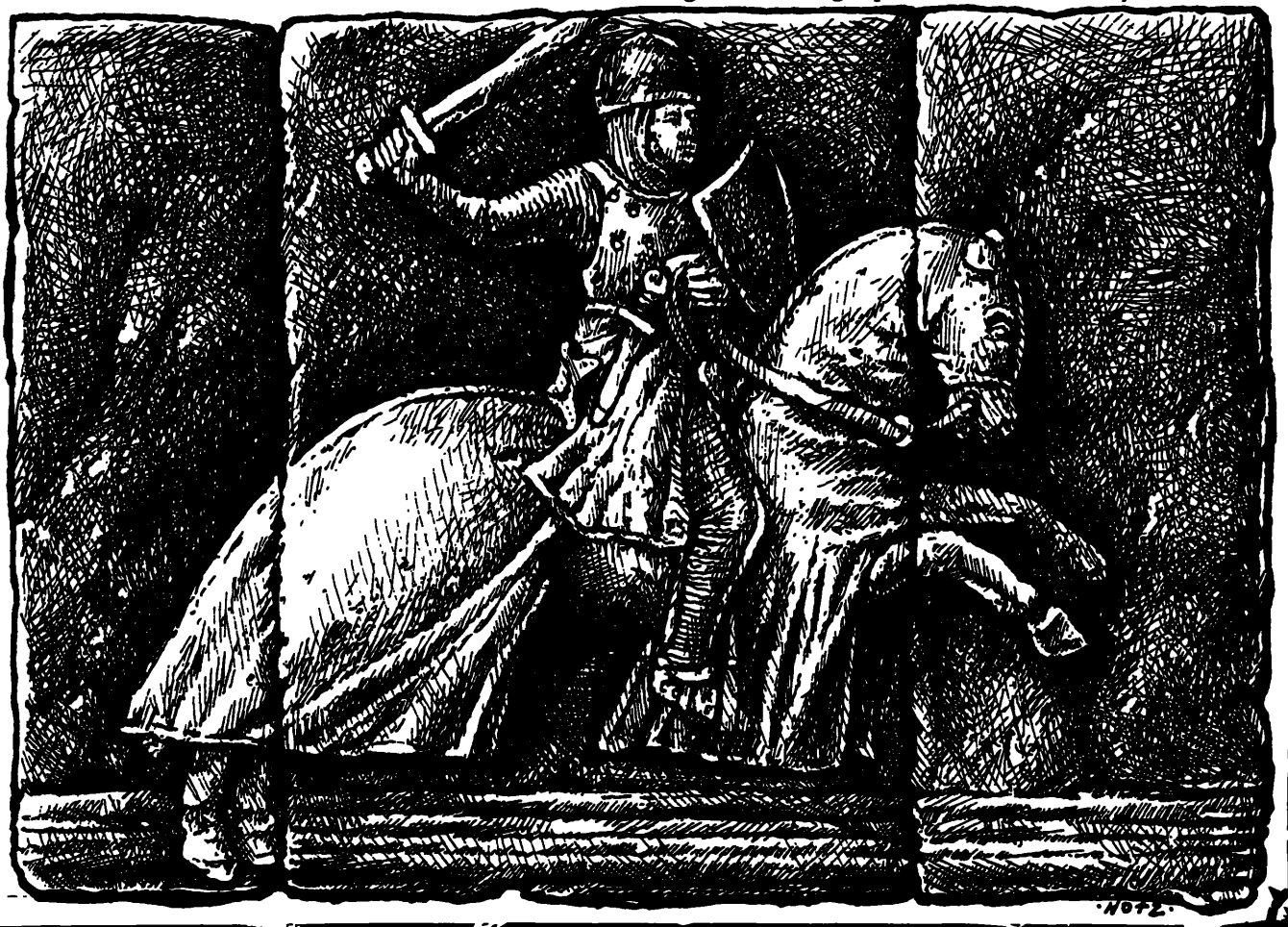
Thirteenth Century

In A.D. 1197 Henry dies, and the Empire again faces civil war as Otto of Brunswick and Philip of Swabia fight for the crown. Innocent III becomes Pope in 1198, and supports Otto, crowning him Emperor Otto IV, in return for the Capitulation of Neusse, which delineates Papal lands and denies Imperial authority within those bounds.

Frederick II takes the throne of Germany in 1210. Frederick lends King John of England his support against King Philip of France, who defeats the coalition at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214. Frederick is crowned Emperor in 1220, and in 1226 promises to lead a crusade to the Holy Land. He leads his troops to join the Fifth Crusade in 1227, but has to turn back because of illness in the ranks. For failure to join the Crusade he is excommunicated by Pope Gregory IX. However, Frederick leads the Sixth Crusade in 1228, but is shunned by Christian lords in the Holy Land because of his excommunication.

Regardless of his poor welcome in the Holy Land, Frederick is victorious over the Saracens and receives excellent peace terms from them. However, the Pope refuses to ratify the terms. Frederick finally receives absolution in 1230, but, in 1239, is again excommunicated. In 1244 he is deposed and declared a heretic by the Council of Lyon for his tolerance of Muslim and Jewish thought.

Frederick is not daunted by his exile. Indeed, he continues to lead military campaigns in Italy, defeating a second Lombard League, and forcing Pope Innocent IV to flee to Lyon. There the



Pope again declares Frederick deposed and heretical, laying all lands loyal to him under interdict and excommunicating his followers.

The Pope then oversees the election of Henry Raspe as Emperor, and William of Holland after Henry's death. The Pope even calls a crusade against Frederick, granting all privileges and rights normally granted to crusaders in the Holy Land to those who take the cross against Frederick. Frederick responds by issuing the Reform Manifesto, wherein he accuses the Church of worldliness, and confiscates the treasures of churches to finance his war. He even recruits Saracen warriors and uses them to execute hostages when towns rebel against him. By this time Frederick grows so infamous that even his own doctor tries to poison him. However, it takes the capture of Frederick's son to break the man's spirit.

In the Holy Land, King Louis VII of France tries to mediate the dispute between the Pope and Emperor, so that Frederick might lead the Germans to aid the Seventh Crusade. But, Frederick is struck mortally ill. He also begs forgiveness from the Church, which Pope Innocent gives. Frederick thus gives up the worldly life, and joins the Cistercian order, living the rest of his in an Italian monastery. Frederick dies in 1250. People whisper that devils come up from Hell to bear his soul through the pit of Mt. Etna, on the way to eternal damnation.

In his will Frederick leaves the Empire to his son Conrad IV, who had been crowned by the Germans in 1237. Frederick's illegitimate son Manfred is also given the regency of Italy. Pope Innocent IV immediately begins to scheme to recover the cities of Italy, and to replace Conrad with the Anti-King William of Holland. However the Italian cities want neither Pope nor Emperor for their master, and neither faction makes much headway against the communes. The Pope excommunicates Conrad, who dies in 1254 on the way back to Germany.

Later on Germany faces the Great Interregnum, in which Richard of Cornwall and Alfonso X of Castile both claim right to the German throne. Neither is formally crowned, and the dukes, counts and others nobles of Germany take advantage of the void of royal authority to make war on their neighbors. The kingdom sinks into total chaos.

By 1273 the Electors and Pope Gregory X are anxious to end internal disputes. As their Imperial candidate the Electors choose the elderly Rudolf of Hapsburg, who is generally respected. Rudolf's first act is to apply to the Pope for his acceptance, which is given. He then deals with the demands of the King of Bohemia, who claims right to be an Elector. Rudolf has the support of the Pope, who lays Bohemia under interdict, along with the great nobles of Germany. As a result, King Ottokar of Bohemia is relieved of his German conquests and made to pay homage for Bohemia. He rebels again in 1278, but is defeated and killed by the Germans at the battle of Marchfield. Rudolf then abandons claims to Italian cities, and placates the Pope by admitting the superiority of the Church over the Empire.

Initially the house of Hapsburg is not one of the great houses of the Empire, but Rudolf gives lands seized from Ottokar to his sons, raising the Hapsburg family to that of a great house. Rudolf also declares general peace in the kingdom, and enforces it with armed might when necessary.

The death of Rudolf in 1291 gives Electors the chance to elect a weaker monarch. They choose Adolf of Nassau, whose reign is threatened by the expansionist policies of Philip the Fair of France. The entire western border of Germany is thus threatened by the French. A stronger emperor is clearly needed, and Albert of Hapsburg, son of Rudolf, supported by a majority of the Electors, leads an army against Adolf. Adolf is defeated in 1298, whereupon Albert is declared King. Albert spends the two years before the close of the century putting down rebellions in the west.

AUGSBURG

Founded before Christ by the Roman Emperor Augustus, Augsburg underwent a series of attacks and sacks during the fall of the Roman Empire. But, the city emerged once again under the reign of Charlemagne, who reestablished trade routes between Italy and Germany. The lands surrounding Augsburg have therefore been heavily influenced by Italy. And, a number of heresies have sprung up there, including that of the Brethren of Free Spirits, founded in 1262 in an attempt to reconcile Catholic teachings and the writings of Aristotle, brought north by students from the universities of Italy. Given the significance of local heresies, the Inquisition is very active in the area of Augsburg, one of the few areas in the Holy Roman Empire to be visited by the Holy Office.

In an effort to contest the southward advance of the Hanseatic League, Augsburg, Ulm, and Nurnberg form a league to control trade from Italy. The league has so far held, but political and mercantile differences between the three cities threaten to tear it apart. Augsburg is the nominal head of the league, and the city's merchants are the most progressive thinkers in the league. These merchants are coming to the realization that their future lies to the south, with the rich cities of Italy, and with those cities' universities and ties to the Holy Land and Constantinople.

BAMBERG

Bamberg was founded to be a base for conversion of the Slavs of Thuringia in the time of Charlemagne. Emperor Henry II and Pope Clement II are buried in the city's Kaiserdom (cathedral), completed in A.D. 1232.

Many Jews lived in the city until the start of the First Crusade, when a number of German knights, urged on by a French monk, killed all the Jews they could lay their hands on. A number of Jews took refuge in their temple, and the knights burned it down, killing all within. After the massacre Bamberg's Bishop expelled all Jews from the city to preserve the city from further riots.

Bamberg is a center of beer brewing and drinking, with a dozen large breweries and many small ones. One brewery, the Beirhaus, has been brewing beer for at least seven hundred years, since before the city was founded. Legend purports the Beirhaus was attacked by one of the generals of Attila the Hun. The brewery opened its gates to the invading Huns, who promptly drank themselves into oblivion. The brewers sent the heads of the general and his leading men to Attila, warning the invader of their magical powers, and threatening complete destruction of his men if they should again try to attack the brewery. Some people claim the brewery actually houses a band of sorcerers, possibly even druids from before the time of the Romans.

BAUTZEN

Built by German traders to control trade between Vienna and Poland in the late Tenth Century, Bautzen lies at the borders of Poland, Bohemia, and the Holy Roman Empire. The city was fought over many times until the treaty of Bautzen in A.D. 1018 granted the March of Miesse, including Bautzen, to King Boleslav of Poland as an Imperial fief. The lands reverted to the Emperor on the death of Boleslav.

The Teutonic knights have a large commandery in Bautzen, where they keep Prussian and Pomeranian slaves before shipping them south to Constantinople. Agents of the Hanseatic League have approached the burghers of Bautzen with invitations to join the League, but the Teutonic knights forbid the city to join the League. Some say the Hochmeister of the Teutonics is afraid the League will take the slave trade, one of their greatest sources of income, from the knights.

BREMEN

Bremen is a growing commercial city. Its civic pride and wealth are evident in its cathedral and government buildings, in some cases still being built. The city's guilds are also rich, and hold several festivals and parades each year. The guilds even field units for the city militia, who maintain the peace and lead the city's efforts at war.

Inspired by the independence of the cities of Flanders and the Hansa towns of Lubeck and Hamburg, Bremen has rebelled more than once against its lord, the Duke of Saxony. Each time the citizens' rebellion has been crushed, though. There are persistent rumors that Bremen will join the Hanseatic League, but until it gains its freedom from the Duke this is unlikely.

The cathedral of Bremen is built on the site of the first wooden chapel, built in A.D. 787. One of the crypts of the cathedral has the power to preserve the bodies of the dead. No reason can be given for this miraculous effect, but it has become custom to keep the bodies of strangers who die in the city in the crypt, where they remain for a time until family appears to claim them.

BRUNN

Silver and copper in the mountains above what is now Brunn prompted Bohemian miners to establish the city around A.D. 950. The town provides silver for coinage and ornamentation to Bohemia and the Empire. Brunn was attacked twice by the Hungarians, in 1102 and 1111, and was part of Poland between 1103 and 1129. Merchants from Linz and Vienna now settle in Brunn, to get better prices on the precious metals.

When Attila the Hun spread his invasion west, Brunn was spared from attack by the invaders, who were fresh from victories over Poland and Olmutz. The citizens gave credit for their salvation to Maria of Brunn, a young girl who prayed unceasingly in front of the city gates for two weeks, from the time it was known the invaders were coming. The barbarians miraculously turned back, and as the news was joyously heralded through the city, Maria died, a smile on her face. She was interred in the cathedral, and petitions have gone to Rome to have her declared a saint.

COLOGNE

Cologne is located in a strategic position on the trade routes from the Holy Roman Empire to Flanders, and from Italy to northern German cities. It is the largest and richest city in Germany, and its citizens are well aware of that fact.

In A.D. 1248, the city starts construction of a cathedral meant to dwarf all previous cathedrals. Work on the cathedral is expected to last well into the next century. When the cathedral is completed its towers will soar 400 feet into the air, and the nave will be 500 feet long.

The neighborhood of Cologne is home to the Brethren of the Free Spirit, a mystical heretical group which believes in the dominance of the human spirit over all of nature and God. The Inquisition is active in the area, but has yet to eradicate the heresy. Local secular lords secretly support the Brethren, as the idea of the secular having superiority over the spiritual suits their views in the debate between Church and state.

The bishops of Cologne have been spiritual and military leaders. The current Bishop of Cologne is one of the Electors of the Empire. In 1167 Bishop Rainald of Cologne led an army against the Italians, looting Milan of relics of the Three Kings who visited the Christ Child. These relics are now kept in Cologne's old cathedral, waiting for the completion of the new cathedral so that they may be housed in surroundings worthy of their sanctity.

DANZIG

Founded in the Eleventh Century by merchants from Lubeck, Danzig resisted efforts by Teutonic knights to take the city by political means. And, the Bishop of Danzig sent an angry message to the Pope when the knights threatened to take the city by storm. Now, the knights are allowed in the city only in small groups, and the Bishop has given them land outside the walls for their commandery.

Danzig joined the Hanseatic League, partly for added insurance against the threatening military order. For their part, the knights bide their time and petition the Pope for rights in the city. They hope to be able to place a Bishop in the city who is sympathetic to their cause. Until the knights have free passage through the city, their home city of Thorn remains cut off from the Baltic.

DEVENTER

Founded in A.D. 1167 by the Duke of Lower Lorraine as a base from which to control Frisian pirates and smugglers, Deventer is a military camp in the midst of salt marshes.

An effort is being made to drain the marshes, which involves building dikes around the city to keep tides from flooding the streets. Deep channels have also been cut to both drain the land and to connect Deventer with the Ijsselmeer, a great shallow inland sea. The boats of the Ijsselmeer are flat-bottomed, powered by sails and oars.

The pirates of Frisia, against whom Deventer is determined, raid both on land and on sea, attacking coastal traders sailing from Hanseatic ports to Flanders and England. The campaign to control the pirates is at a virtual standstill, as the boatmen used by the Duke's troops are, or are related to, the pirates they are trying to catch. In fact, city troops and pirates have almost made a game out of their situation, with little blood lost on either side, even in the rare cases that pirates are actually found. When discovered the pirates usually surrender, are taken back to the city, fined, and released.

However, the Duke has recently sent one of his trusted men, Baron Helmut von Steissel, a veteran of the crusades and Polish wars, to take over the city with the task of eradicating the pirates. Von Steissel is contemptuous of current city troops, and appeals for more veterans to bolster his forces. He vows to hang any captured pirates, a statement sure to end peaceful relations between the city and the pirates.

FRANKFURT OM MAINE

A way station between the cities of Italy and Flanders, Frankfurt on the Maine owes its position to the revival of Mythic European trade. It hosts a trade fair, and all the Italian banking families maintain houses there. Frankfurt, like Champagne, is quick to defend traders on their way to or from the city, even going so far as to attack nobles who place extravagant tolls on roads and bridges.

Frankfurt has ignored much of the strife of the Empire. Its citizens' disdain for Imperial trappings is evident in their treatment of Frederick Barbarossa's palace, which they have turned over to Dutch cloth merchants for use as a warehouse.

FRANKFURT OM DER ODER

The result of a mad Count's whim, Frankfurt is built between A.D. 1253 and 1257 as a model city, where each person is supposed to have a job, and to know his or her place in relation to every other citizen. Margrave Freidrich of Lusatia funds the entire project, hiring workmen, buying materials, and inviting peasants from his lands, as well as merchants from nearby cities to settle the new town. For the first three or four years, the experiment works, but the Margrave's money runs out in 1261, and the city soon attracts less than honest folk who see the lack of guards and watch as an opportunity to enrich themselves.

The new, less than scrupulous inhabitants create gates in the bridges over the Oder, and demand tolls from ships which pass by. Parties of rogues also raid the countryside, retreating behind city walls when patrols are in the area. Both the Emperor and the Hanseatic League are fed up with the deeds of the people of Frankfurt, and are banded together to silence the city. Plans are being laid for a combined river and land assault, and recruiting for the expedition has begun.

GRAZ

Graz is known for its arms and armor, which it sells all over eastern Mythic Europe. High grade iron ore was discovered in the mountains of the Asturian Alps in the Ninth Century after Christ, and by the Tenth Century ironworks dotted the mountains and river valleys near the city.

The ironworks of Graz are commonly located along mountain streams, and use waterwheels to crush ore and to pound out sheets of iron. Some smiths are experimenting with making

armor from plate iron, but as yet have not produced a working model. Weapons made in Graz are normally of good quality, though not highly ornamented. However, the armories of Graz can equip several thousand warriors at a moment's notice, and the ironworks can produce hundreds of swords or thousands of spears a month.

Rumor tells of an insane smith who works on a lonely mountain peak near Graz. The smith is reputed to be several hundred years old, and produces enchanted swords, which are able to cut the best iron or steel armor. But, each of the smith's swords is also said to carry a curse; that they eventually kill their owners. The smith produces only one of these swords every twenty years, and comes to Graz in disguise, where he sells the sword to an unsuspecting customer.

HAMBURG

Hamburg, along with Lubeck, was one of the founding cities of the Hanseatic League, the powerful coalition of northern cities which regulates trade in Germany and along the Baltic coast. Hamburg is governed by its merchants, who own the land and buildings where trade occurs. Hamburg boasts a good harbor, inland on the Elbe, which allows trading vessels a sheltered refuge from the storms of the North Sea.

Every year the guilds of Hamburg celebrate the founding of the city and, for three months before parade day in late July, the guilds work on extravagant floats and entries. The guildmasters gather on the morning of July 25th to judge the entries. The winning guild leads the parade, and gets fed first at the feast which is held that night.

LEIPZIG

Surrounded by silver mines, Leipzig is the site of a large mint, owned by the Emperor, but leased to the city. This mint produces much of the silver coinage of the Empire, and has done so for several centuries. Leipzig was founded in A.D. 1087, and the mint was established soon after, in 1093. Originally, the coins from the Leipzig mint were renowned for their purity, but the passing years have seen the debasing of the silver pennies, until Leipzig pennies have perhaps one-half the amount of silver of English pennies, and are worth two to one in comparison. The existence of the mint has protected the city from attack, as Imperial troops are quickly sent to guard mint and city at the least sign of trouble. A garrison of Imperial troops resides in the city's castle, built in 1103, which overlooks the mint.

LINZ

Founded by the Romans as Lentia, Linz was a major way station on the salt route between the eastern Alps and Bohemia. During the fall of the Roman Empire, it remained a flourishing city, due in a large part to the salt trade. The importance of this trade was not lost on even the most barbaric of kings, all of whom demanded and received huge amounts of salt in tribute.

The city retains many vestiges of its heritage, including temples to pagan gods, now used as store houses, residences, or in one case, a church.

A number of libraries exist in Linz, spared the normal looting and pillaging which was the lot of other cities. However, these libraries are guarded and hidden, and it is rumored that at least one contains texts and accounts of rites from the pagan temples. The Bishop of Linz, a dogged enemy of heretics and other non-believers, has invited the Inquisition to Linz in an attempt to uncover these libraries, which he plans to add to his own impressive collection.

LUBECK

Lubeck is the Empire's largest and most important port on the Baltic, receiving shipments of timber, fur, and amber from Scandinavia and the pagan Wends. Long a trading port for ships on the Baltic, Lubeck joined forces with Hamburg to form the Hanseatic League. Lubeck is built on a number of shallow islands, and is surrounded by canals, which give it the nickname, "Venice of the Baltic."

Lubeck is formally recognized by the Emperor as a free city, and owes fealty to no one. The city boasts a powerful navy, allowing it to blockade the harbors of cities which hinder the passage of ships in the League. A council of merchants runs the city, and civil decisions are made based on trade costs and impacts.

The city also sends agents to other cities to gather information about the amount and type of trade they conduct. These agents also gather information that would be useful in convincing other cities to join the Hanseatic League. Once a suitable amount of information has been gathered, the agents quietly seek out the powerful traders and merchants of a city and detail the benefits which joining the League would bring. If the merchants balk, information gathered can be used to change their minds.

LYON

Founded by the Romans as Lugdinium, Lyon weathered the fall of Rome and the rise of the Frankish kingdoms, managing to stay on the winning side in wars and raids which swept Mythic Europe. The city became part of the Holy Roman Empire in A.D. 1033, and remains part of the kingdom of Burgundy.

Two Church councils are called in Lyon, the first, held in 1245 by Pope Innocent IV, excommunicates Emperor Frederick II and calls for a crusade against the Holy Roman Empire.

The second council is called by Pope Gregory X in 1274, to resolve a number of questions facing the Church. Among other things, the second council recognizes the Christian Carmelite Order and the Order of Austin Friars, oversees the election of Rudolf of Habsburg to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, and accepts the pledge of faith of Michael Palaeologus, Emperor of Byzantium. The pledge, which might reunite the

Catholic and Orthodox Churches under the leadership of the Pope, is resisted by Orthodox clergy, and is finally rejected in 1281 by Pope Martin IV.

Lyon is also the center of the Waldesian heresy. The Church maintains several Inquisitors in Lyon and its surrounding towns, ferreting out heretics. As in the area of Narbonne and Agde, a number of the Inquisitors are willing to persecute specific people, pointed out by jealous or covetous neighbors.

MAGDEBURG

Organized as a border city and base from which to convert pagan Slavs in the Ninth Century, Magdeburg performed its duties well, becoming the Archbishopric in charge of the conversion of Bohemia (A.D. 935), and Poland (966). As the frontier moved eastward, away from the city, Magdeburg developed into a major trading center, eventually joining the Hanseatic League in 1208.

Magdeburg has thus become the center of another conversion movement, spreading the power of the Hanseatic League to the south, attempting to control trade in Bamberg and Nurnberg. Nurnberg has so far resisted the efforts of Magdeburg, and has even started a trade league (the League of Augsburg) in direct competition with the Hanseatic League. The leading merchants of Magdeburg are frustrated at every turn by their counterparts in Nurnberg, and there are plans underway to hire assassins from Verdun to eliminate some of the merchants' more stubborn opponents.

METZ

Founded by the Romans, Metz was an early center of Christianity in northern Mythic Europe. The city suffered from Germanic invasions, but by the Sixth Century after Christ was the seat of Frankish kings. Indeed, Metz was a favorite city of Charlemagne, and his wife and two of his children are buried in the Abbey of Saint Arnoult.

In A.D. 1134 the citizens of Metz rebelled against their lord, and secured the status of a free city. Metz is therefore the capital of a small republic, populated by towns and villages within a day's walk of the city. The Duke of Upper Lorraine, the nominal overlord of the republic, has plans to bring the city back under his suzerainty, but his plans for a military campaign have been brought to a halt for the time being. The Italian banking families have refused to lend him money for the undertaking, until he repays them money he borrowed for an ill-conceived bid to win the throne of the Empire. Until that time, the Duke must make do with sending agents into Metz to foment unrest.

All agents the Duke has sent so far have been foiled by the Warden of the city, Johannes Kusten, who has taken the business of spying and revealing spies to new heights. It is said that he has agents in all the cities of the Hanseatic League and Lateran Palace, and that he has copies of the code books for all banks operating in northern Mythic Europe.

MUNICH

Henry the Lion, head of the Welf family, built Munich in A.D. 1158 to be the capital of Bavaria and his base against the Hohenstauffen Emperors (his rivals for the throne). The citizens retain the belligerent attitude which Henry the Lion instilled in them, and the city is often violently outspoken against the Emperor.

In 1285, rumors of ritual murders by Jews in the city spark numerous anti-Jewish riots. Fearing both the mobs and the Church, 180 Jews flee to the sanctuary of their temple, which the crowd burns with the Jews inside. The fire spreads to adjoining buildings, and by the time it is finally extinguished almost a third of the city lies in ruins. Munich's few remaining Jews leave the city for the Holy Land, preferring to live under the rule of Muslims than to stay in Germany.

NEISSE

Founded as a Benedictine monastery in A.D. 875, Neisse developed a flourishing glass industry, producing nearly clear glass for windows, and later developing colored glass for the windows of cathedrals.

Like many of the cities in its vicinity, Neisse was traded between German and Polish overlords until the Treaty of Bautzen, which gave the Polish King Boleslav suzerainty of the border areas, but as a fief held from the German Emperor. The border lands, including Neisse, were reclaimed by Germany on the death of Boleslav.

Neisse was the scene of a number of Jewish massacres during the First and Second Crusades, with even monks joining in the looting and murder. The Bishop of Neisse seized the local monastery and associated lands after the Second Crusade, granting the revenue of the glassworks to a fund for Jews in perpetuity.

The city is also sacked in the Mongol invasion of 1241, but is quickly rebuilt with the aid of German merchants, eager to take over the lucrative glass trade.

NICE

Colonized by Greek traders from Marseille, Nice was taken by the Romans who built an arena, is still used by local knights for their tournaments.

Nice fell to the barbarian hordes during the fall of the Roman Empire and Cossuran pirates captured the city in the early Eighth Century, using it as a base to raid inland areas. The Franks, under Charles Martel, also took the city by storm in A.D. 739, slaughtering the pirates and their families.

Although the city was looted quite thoroughly by Frankish soldiers, rumors persist of great troves of treasure buried or hidden in the city. One theory holds that the great Pirate's Tower is built on a foundation of solid gold. Every few years the city is gripped by treasure fever as small troves are discovered in basements or walls. In 1201 a trove is found between the

walls of two houses. After the discovery citizens nearly tear the city apart looking for more treasure, and several people are killed when they refuse to allow treasure seekers into their houses.

NURNBERG

Nurnberg was founded as a monastery by Benedictine monks in the Ninth Century, and the monastery has grown rich on grants of land from nobles wishing to purchase redemption through monks' prayers.

The city of Nurnberg grew up around the monastery, which is now in the center of the town, surrounded by high walls. The city is administered by the monks, who were granted the city by Emperor Otto II on his deathbed. The monastery produces a wine made from pears, but the city's main industries are linen and wood crafts. Nurnberg carpenters have made all the looms of the city, and have traveled to many other cities and countries to craft looms and spinning machines for the production of cloth.

The monks of Nurnberg, fearing the effects the Hanseatic League would have on their business, proposed a trade alliance with Ulm and Augsburg, known as the League of Augsburg. The monks now use the Empire's network of monasteries to keep track of developments in league cities. The monks are dismayed by dissension in Ulm. To protect themselves from a rebellious Ulm, the monks assemble evidence which implicates leading citizens of Ulm of harboring heretics. If the situation in Ulm worsens, the monks plan to present their evidence to the Bishop and the Pope.

One of the monks' number, Johannes of Silesia, is an Inquisitor in southern France. The clergy plan to recall him just before they present their case against Ulm, so that he will already be in the area, available for duty in Ulm when the Inquisition is called to the city.

OLMUTZ

Founded as a monastery in the Ninth Century, Olmutz was raised by the Pope to a bishopric in A.D. 975. Olmutz resisted numerous attacks by the Poles, Magyars, and Imperial forces. It was traded between Poland and Bohemia in treaties, but never falls to an enemy army until 1241, when the Mongols, fresh from their sack of Cracow and defeat of Imperial forces, storms the walls and puts the city to the sword. The city is quickly rebuilt after the Mongols leave, and even grows in the years following.

The monks of Olmutz produce wine, even though the climate is generally too cold for grapevines to flourish. The monks attribute their good fortune to St. Methodius, the missionary to Slovania, who performed a miracle in which he produced wine from beer presented to him by pagan Moravians. The tribe to which Methodius was preaching was converted by the miracle, and they invited Benedictine monks to farm the valley.

Most of the wine produced by the monks is used in the services of the cathedral of Olmutz, or is drunk by the monks themselves. A small amount (about two tunes per year) is sold to Rome for use by the Pope. The monks' wine is said to enhance the piety of those who drink a sip of it, but turns bitter and foul if drunk to excess. Olmutz's wine is often used by the Church to cure monks and priests of alcoholism; the bitter taste drives off a monk's desire for any drink.

PRAGUE

Prague has been the capital of Bohemia since the Ninth Century, when the Przemysl family dominated the surrounding tribes and built a castle to consolidate their lands. In A.D. 973 the Pope made Prague a bishopric, under the jurisdiction of Mainz in Germany. Prague was briefly held by Poland in 1102, under Boreslav the Great, but freed itself after a year. It was attacked twice by the Hungarians, in 1107 and 1112.

The area around Prague produces low-grade iron and glassware, which is inferior to glass from Italy or the east, but is eagerly sought after in northern cities.

In the 1140s German merchants settled in Prague and were welcomed by the city but taxed by the crown. In 1176 the merchants staged a blockade of the city, forcing concessions from the crown.

Travelers around Prague tell tale of a cursed crossroads at which the Devil draws out the evil of those who pass. Indeed, many travelers claim to have met their evil doppelgangers after passing through the crossroads, and many captured criminals blame their crimes on evil doubles, said to sprout up from the roads.

SPEYER

Speyer was founded during the reign of Charlemagne, and a large Jewish population soon moved into the city, occupying much of its northern area. It was a Jewish academy for teaching Jewish leaders (known as Rabbis) that attracted Jews from all over the Empire.

In the First Crusade a French monk preached that crusaders should begin their holy mission by eliminating the Jews and other unbelievers of the Empire, before attacking Saracens in the Holy Land. A number of German barons and knights took the monk's words to heart, attacking Jews in many German cities.

In Speyer the soldiers dragged eleven Jews into the cathedral, demanding that they accept baptism. When the Jews refused, the knights killed them in front of the altar. Riots erupted all over the city as Christians killed and robbed Jews. A number of Jews fled to the protection of the Bishop, who not only kept them safe, but executed a number of knights involved in the murders at the cathedral.

By A.D. 1286 most of the Jewish population has left Speyer to live in the Holy Land, under the rule of the Muslims, who, they figure, are more tolerant than the citizens of Speyer.

STETTIN

Founded in A.D. 1180 to bring Christianity to the pagans of Pomerania, Stettin built and maintains strong defenses, which the citizens find necessary against the raids of pagan tribesmen.

The Bishop of Stettin has even requested magical assistance from the Order of Hermes as the Pomeranians are aided by wizards from the Order of Odin. In the past Houses Flambeau and Tytalus sent a dozen Magi north to form a crusading Covenant. However, internal dissension between Covenant members Ignibus Impervious of Flambeau (the Bishop's brother) and Wilhelm of Prague of House Tytalus caused the Covenant's breakup within two years. The Covenant buildings were left to the elements, and for a while were a base for pagan sorcerers. The pagan sorcerers were finally killed in a pitched battle, in which half a hundred men were frozen to death, mauled by trolls, or driven insane by the witches.

Though primarily a military institution, Stettin is also used by the Germans as a trading port.

TORUN

Torun is a city wholly owned by the Teutonic order, founded by the order in A.D. 1231 as a harbor and base for the conversion of pagans in Prussia. The administration of the town is entirely in the hands of the order. Merchants are welcome but there is little chance of a popular uprising or a commune being established. Torun is also a depot for the transportation of Prussian slaves, which are taken to Constantinople and sold. The slave yards on the south side of the city are heavily guarded, both to keep slaves in and to keep citizens from freeing them.

TOUL

Ruled by the Duke of Upper Lorraine, Toul has resisted both the arms and the money of the Count of Champagne, remaining fiercely loyal to its Duke. Taken by the French in A.D. 1189, the citizens revolted within the year, slaughtering the foreign garrison.

Toul's cathedral of St. Michael boasts three hundred pairs of golden spurs, taken from French knights. The Guild of Butchers won great honor in the fight against the French, storming the castle and hacking the banner of Champagne from the tower walls. A great celebration is held in the city every year on July 26th, in honor of the storming of the citadel.

ULM

Ulm is a city of weavers, surrounded by fields of flax. The linen produced at Ulm is used for clothing throughout the Holy Roman Empire, and its production is the city's main industry.

Ulm was founded in the Tenth Century, when it was found that the climate of the surrounding area was ideal for the cultivation of flax. The city has never been attacked and its walls are low and not well maintained.

Ulm is the junior partner in the League of Augsburg, which was formed by Augsburg, Ulm, and Nurnberg to control trade from Italy to the cities of the Empire. The burghers of Ulm wish their fathers had not been so quick to join the league, as the sale of linen is also handled by the league, which represents a major loss of profit for Ulm. Many merchant meetings have been held in recent months about whether to remain in the league, to join the Hanseatic League, or for the city to strike off on its own.

The city is full of intrigue as representatives and spies from Italy, Augsburg, Nurnberg, and the Hansa attempt to sway the burghers to their side. A number of citizens make a tidy profit from negotiations and from selling information, true or false, to one or all sides.

VERDUN

The Treaty of Verdun, signed in A.D. 843, divided the Empire of Charlemagne among the Emperor's three grandsons. Verdun itself was granted to Lothair as part of the Middle Kingdom. After the death of Lothair, Verdun was allocated first to the Western Kingdom (France) by the treaty of Mersen, in 870, then to the Eastern Kingdom (the Holy Roman Empire) by the treaty of Ribemont in 880. Verdun has remained in the possession of the east since then, remaining a border city,

where French and German is spoken equally, and where intrigues between the great princes of France, Germany, Burgundy, the two Lorraines, and Flanders are played out.

Verdun is the northern capital for spies and assassins. Being told that *"A man from Verdun is looking for you"* is a warning in surrounding lands. The Warden of the city of Metz makes it clear, in no uncertain terms, that murders in his city are not tolerated. The last time someone commissioned a murder in Metz, the Warden sent back the bodies of the assassin and his employer in several small sacks, addressed to the citizens of Verdun. Since that time Metz has been declared off-limits by the assassins and spies of Verdun. None agree to a mission in Metz.

VIENNA

While Vienna is primarily a German city, it has always looked down the Danube to the south and east, the direction from which most attackers come. Vienna started as a frontier fortress for Roman legions and swiftly grew fat on trade which still passes both north-south and east-west. The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius died in Vienna in A.D. 180, but his sepulcher has been lost over the intervening centuries.

Vienna was chartered as a German Imperial city in 1137, and became the capital of the Duchy of Austria in 1156. Vienna was used as a staging point for German knights going on Crusade to the Holy Land. In 1251 Ottokar of Bohemia captures the city, making it his capital; he then defeats the besieging forces of Emperor Rudolf I in 1278. Vienna remains in Bohemian hands.

Vienna is the center of music in Germany and eastern Mythic Europe, attracting minnesingers much as the court of Aquitaine attracts troubadours. The city boasts a number of theaters and buildings specifically devoted to music, and citizens eagerly await the next composition of the most popular minnesinger of the moment.

ZURICH

This city, high in the Alps, is the personification of Swiss independence. It is granted the title of Imperial free city in A.D. 1218, releasing it from fealty to the Duke of Burgundy.

Zurich's importance grew as St. Gothard Pass, which lies just outside the city, was used by the Hohenstauffen Emperors as a road to Italy. Merchants soon started using the pass as well, adding to the coffers of the city.

Attempts by German Emperors to control the Swiss cantons (counties) have led the Swiss to band together, much like the towns of Flanders or the Hanseatic League have. The citizens of Zurich are willing to put their lives on the line to preserve the freedom of their city. The city therefore promises to remain a headache for the German Emperor, as cantons resist Imperial edicts with ever increasing fervor.

Denmark

The inhabitants of Denmark have always ben warriors. During the age of Viking raids, the Danes made England and France their hunting grounds, while the Swedes attacked Russia and Poland, and the Norwegians sailed to Scotland and Ireland. The Danes settled in England in an area known as the Danelaw, and received *danegeld*, or ransom, to keep them from ravaging the lands of the Angles and Saxons. It was King Gorm who conquered the jarls (earls) and united Denmark, while his son, Harald Bluetooth, converted the pagan Danes to Christianity by fire and sword.

In A.D. 1002 King Ethelred the Unredy of England murdered the Danes in his service, including the sister of King Svein of Denmark. Svein thus became the mortal enemy of Ethelred, and attacked England for ten years, attacks against which the English had no defense. Svein finally chased Ethelred to Normandy in 1013, and took over the country, but suddenly died in 1014.

On their father's death, Svein's son Harald II took the crown of Denmark, while his other son, Canute, sailed to England to assume the throne there. Harald died in 1019, whereupon Canute sailed to Denmark, uniting the two kingdoms of Denmark and England once again. Canute conquered Norway in 1028, but the kingdom revolts against Denmark in 1234.

Canute's death in 1035 left his son Hardicanute with a rebellion in Norway, while his other son Harold Harefoot was crowned by the English. Hardicanute invaded England in 1040, and his brother died of mysterious circumstances just as Hardicanute's fleet appeared off the coast. Hardicanute therefore ruled both England and Denmark, but with an iron fist and was hated in both countries. Hardicanute's death in 1042 allowed the English to return to their own kings, while Denmark was plunged into civil war.

After Hardicanute, Denmark floundered for more than a century while the jarls fought the king and each other. That was the case until the reign of King Valdemer, who seized the crown through battle and murder. He reorganized the government, encouraged trade, and swept the seas and islands of the pirates that infested them. Valdemer's minister, Absalon, Archbishop of Lund, made many of the King's accomplishments possible, and founded the city of Copenhagen ("Market-haven") in 1167 for traders traveling from the south. Even the Danish Church flourished under Valdemer and Absalon, and Denmark slowly grew into feudalism. Indeed, non-noble peasants became tenant farmers, while a new class of knights grew to provide the army of the realm with a ready source of manpower. And the peasants, instead of providing soldiery, were taxed instead.

Thirteenth Century

The Danish kings take advantage of Henry the Lion and the civil wars in the Holy Roman Empire to expand to the south and east along the Baltic coast. However, their effort to control the Baltic is foiled at the Battle of Bornhovede in 1227, when Valdemer II is captured by Imperial forces.

Trade also improves in Thirteenth Century Denmark. This commercial growth arises as the population of the kingdom clears forests and settles islands instead of staging raids like the Vikings of the past. Monetary concerns become so important in Denmark that the Church and nobility begin to limit the power of the King, especially in the levying of taxes on land. And, these trade concerns lead to more political ones. In 1282 Danish nobles force King Eric V to sign a charter promising to summon a council of nobles once a year, and not to punish without due process of law. So emphatic are the nobility in their demands that Eric is murdered in 1286 when he reneges on the charter. Learning from his predecessor's error, Eric VI realizes it is in his best interests to abide by the charter, and rules wisely thereafter.

AARHUSE

Aarhuse was made a bishopric in A.D. 950, and was a base from which Frankish missionaries spread the word of God to the Danes. In 985 King Svein Forkbeard granted the cathedral of Aarhuse jurisdiction over the city.

For a short while priests from Aarhuse rode the waves with the sea raiders, but the Bishop declared the murder and pillage of fellow Christians to be against the law of God and man. The matter was tested in 1003, when Thorkeld Strongjaw led a force of five ships raiding along the coast of France, returning laden with plunder. The Bishop forbade the raiders to land, and declared them excommunicate and outlawed. The prospect of that much treasure, possessed by one whose fate had been determined by the Church, was too much to resist for sailors up and down the coast. Thorkeld was attacked numerous times, losing all but one ship, and losing all his treasure. He returned to Aarhuse and begged forgiveness of the Bishop. It was granted, but Thorkeld was commanded to join the Benedictine order. He did so, and lived out his days in a monastery.

The citizens of Aarhuse continue to follow the lead of their Bishop, who is the overlord of the city. Aarhuse still produces great sailors, but they have joined the Hanseatic League, and no longer plunder the coasts of France and England as their forefathers did.

BORGLUM

When the families who lived in the village of Borglum resisted the religious conversion of the kingdom under Svein Forkbeard in A.D. 987, the King had the entire region swept by his troops, killing every person found, from the youngest child to the eldest grandmother. Forkbeard then resettled the area with southern Swedes and constructed a church, the dedication of which he personally oversaw.

Borglum is now one of the most loyal towns of the kingdom, supporting the King with money and warriors. The city is also one of the most fervent in its faith. The people of Borglum are required to search their city for heretics and pagans, a duty passed from generation to generation.

A church is built into each gate of the city. Visitors are only allowed in at specified times and must attend Mass before proceeding into the city. Horses and livestock are not allowed in the city; stables and stockyards are provided outside the walls.

MALMO

Founded in A.D. 1203 by Hanseatic shippers, Malmo begins as a quiet village with a moderately good harbor. The League, needing a safe port in which to trade with the southern Swedes, buys the land on which the town stands, and imports masons and laborers from Germany to undertake the construction.

The town's church, built of wood, burns to the ground during its dedication ceremony in 1207. Rebuilt of stone, the church develops great cracks in its walls, making it unsafe for services. An old man comes forward then and declares the church is haunted by a draug, an undead creature over whose tomb the church is built. Christian ceremonies to exorcise or lay the draug to rest prove futile. Eventually, in 1246, the building is abandoned and a new church is constructed a safe distance from the old one.

RIBE

Established as a bishopric in A.D. 948 by King Harold Bluetooth, Ribe is a center of Danish trade, peopled by fearless descendents of Viking raiders. The seamen of Ribe boast they are afraid of neither storm nor tide, not even the terrible tides which sweep from the Atlantic to the Baltic.

Ribe has maintained its distance from the Hanseatic League, and its people travel where they wish. As the city has its own ships, a blockade by the League means little. In 1205 a blockade is attempted by Hamburg, against the advice of the League. The sailors of Ribe show that their veneer of civilization, lent by Christianity, is thin. They reveal that beneath their Christianity lies the Viking and the berserk. In a two hour battle the fierce Danes sink or capture all but one of the blockading ships. The Bishop of Ribe has to personally intervene to prevent the sacrifice of captured sailors.

Though the country of Ribe is Christian, the surrounding lands belong to the wizards of the Order of Odin, who keep Magi of the Order of Hermes at bay.

Kingdom of Poland
Kingdom of Hungary
Kingdom of Novgorod
Russia
Golden Horde
Georgia

EASTERN MYTHIC EUROPE
CHAPTER NINE

The easternmost portions of Mythic Europe are divided into three major countries: Poland, Hungary, and Serbia. These lands are less civilized than those to their west, never having fallen under the control of the Roman Empire, even in ancient times. Eastern lands are home to a nomadic people who raid civilized lands for food and gold; few civilized folk travel these wild lands.

Lands of Poland

Poland is the northernmost nation of the east. It extends from the Carpathian Mountains northward almost to the Baltic, although the Empire of the Romans (Germany) has taken the seaport of Danzig on the Oder. The lands of Poland are primarily sharp, with north-south valleys that are quite low, and of many rivers. In the southern portion of the country the land rises in a series of barren plateaus, with no trees and few crops.

Poland's southern highlands are dotted with small castles, built to defend the Poles from the depredations of their Hungarian and Bohemian neighbors. Poland has often been a battleground, with invaders entering from the west, south, and east. The people are therefore grim and used to the trials of war. They are dark, of medium height, with broad chests, dark straight hair, and muscular shoulders. The Polish people also have a reputation for being slow to grasp new ideas, but their creativity in defending their land (and occasionally raiding the Holy Roman Empire) belies this characterization.

Beyond Poland lies the Ural Mountains and the Russian Steppe. This treeless grassland is home to pagan barbarians who have been trickling into Europe since Roman times. Polish defenses are split between warding off the advances of the Roman Empire and stopping or diverting the westward flow of barbarians from the steppe.

Lands of Hungary

The kingdom of Hungary is a lowland surrounded by mountains. The northern and eastern borders of the land are formed by the Carpathians, a steep mountain range slightly lower than the Alps. The Carpathians are heavily forested, and have many passes which allow travel to the north and east. The southeastern border of the country is formed by the Transylvanian Alps, an Alps-like range with flat-topped plateaus and terraces which contrast its sharp, high peaks. The Transylvanian Alps are more barren than the Carpathians, with few trees and high winds.

Within this crescent of mountain ranges lie the lowlands of Hungary, known as the Carpathian basin. The northwestern corner of the region is the Little Alfold, a swampy flatland. South of the Little Alfold lie the rolling hills of Transdanubia, while to the east lies the Great Alfold, a larger tableland. East of the Great Alfold is the Transylvanian basin, a fertile, clay

flatland which slopes up to the foothills of the Transylvanian Alps. The land here gets little rainfall, and is generally watered by runoff from surrounding mountain ranges.

The people of Hungary are the Magyars, a fierce mountain people. The leaders of Hungary are all warriors in their own right. The Magyars are known for disliking the Roman-German Empire; one Imperial ambassador, upon refusing to remove his hat for the Hungarian lord he was visiting on a diplomatic mission, was returned to the Empire with his hat nailed to his head. The Magyars are characteristically short and stocky, excellent riders, and physically strong. Their customs, however, are seen as barbaric by much of the rest of Mythic Europe, despite the Magyars' supposed Christian conversion.

Lands of Serbia

Serbia is a smaller nation, primarily occupying the Croatian hill lands (which lie south of the Transdanubian Hills) and the nearby Dinaric mountain ranges. The land of Serbia is isolated and harsh, with icy winters and gray, dry summers. As in the Hungarian lowlands, Serbia receives little rainfall or wind, sheltered as it is by the mountain ranges of the region.

The Serbs are divided into many clans and tribes. Each clan is led by a zupan, or headman, who acts as the tribe's leader. The zupan is elected by the clan, and serves at the pleasure of the people. In recent years, however, the zupani have become more powerful, and it is now rare to see a zupan deposed. Serbia is ruled from Zeta, a small town in central Serbia. The Prince of Zeta holds his crown as a vassal of the Byzantines, but since the fall of Constantinople has ruled as an independent king.

Hungary

The plains of the Danube, open to the east and the west, have provided invasion routes into Mythic Europe from the time the steppe nomads first came from the east. The early history of Hungary begins with nomadic conquerors settling, only to fall prey to the next nomads to arrive. The Ostrogoths, Huns, and Avars all settled on the broad plains, displacing previous residents.

In the Ninth Century after Christ, the Magyars under Arpad first raided, then settled in Hungary, using it as a base from which to raid to the west and south. They raided as far as France and Spain. In A.D. 906 they conquered the kingdom of Moravia (now part of Bohemia), but in 955 were defeated at the battle of Lechfield, outside Augsburg, by the German Emperor Otto I. Arpad's grandson, Geza, promoted a policy of settlement, and became a Christian, encouraging his subjects to do likewise. His son, St. Stephen, established the Christian sovereignty of Hungary and was crowned with a crown sent by Pope Sylvester II. Stephen also established the Archbishopric of Esztergrom, and invited Benedictine monks to settle in Hungary.

Between the death of St. Stephen in 1038 and the coronation of Ladislas I in 1077, Hungary underwent dynastic struggles, heathen uprisings, and attacks from neighbors. Ladislas proved to be a capable monarch, and a foe of paganism. His nephew, Kalman I, conquered Croatia, and converted it to Roman Catholicism. Hungary also continued to be a thorn in the side of Byzantium, which managed to finally put King Bela on the Hungarian throne in 1173. Bela was sympathetic to the east rather than the west. King Bela still had ties to the west, however. He married Marguerite of France, and invited the Premonstrantian and Cistercian orders to establish monasteries in his territory.

Thirteenth Century

In A.D. 1222, King Andrew II is forced by Hungarian nobles to sign a document known as the Golden Bull, which, much like the Magna Carta of England, guarantees certain rights and privileges to the nobles. The Golden Bull protects the higher nobility and clergy from certain taxes, arrest, and from confiscation of property. Furthermore, the Golden Bull gives barons unrestricted power over knights and serfs, and allows uncompenstated military service, but only in Hungary. Military service outside of Hungary must be paid for by the King. Finally, the national assembly is given the right to voice grievances and to legally resist the King.

The downfall of the Hungarian kingdom comes with the Mongol invasion of 1241, which depopulates the country, and is followed by the migration of pagan Cumans. The influx of the Cumans leads to the eventual rise to the Hungarian throne of Ladislas IV "The Cuman," who favors his mother's people and is murdered in 1290 by nobles who wish to return the throne to the "Hungarian" line.

BELGRADE

Founded by the Romans as Singidunum, Belgrade guarded a bridge over the Danube river, the northern border of the eastern German Empire. Attila the Hun took and sacked the city in A.D. 441, burning it to the ground. Belgrade lay ruined for several hundred years, until rebuilt in the Tenth Century by the Magyars, a nomadic steppe people who settled in Hungary.

Belgrade, with its bridges over the Danube, became the point of contention between the Hungarians, Serbians, Croatians, and Bulgarians. Hungary finally annexed Croatia, including the city of Belgrade and much land south of the Danube, securing the city for itself.

Belgrade is taken again by the Mongols in 1241, and its bridges are thrown down, since the Mongols can swim their steppe ponies across the Danube while their opponents are dependent on bridges. The Mongols leave Hungary mysteriously. Some say demons appear before them during a raid in the territory south of Belgrade, others that their leader dies in the east, and they leave for his funeral. Regardless of the truth

behind the Mongols' disappearance, Belgrade is almost immediately recolonized by the Hungarians and they rebuild the city's bridges and walls.

BRATISLAVA

Bratislava is renowned for its horses and cattle, and is one of the major suppliers of the cattle fair in Nish every year. Founded by the Magyars in the Tenth Century at a fordable stretch of the Danube river, Bratislava soon attracted Viennese merchants. The merchants erected three bridges over the Danube, one for carts, one for horses, and one for foot traffic. City walls were also erected by order of St. Stephen, King of Hungary, in A.D. 1024.

A fourth bridge was begun in 1176, but lack of funds left the bridge incomplete; a gap of fifty feet separates the two spans. Both spans are now covered in shops, taverns, and houses. The north span is reputedly the worst part of the city. Indeed, one tavern keeper is accused of running a white slavery ring, knocking out unsuspecting travelers and lowering them to boats waiting below, who sell them down the river in Constantinople, or to Saracens and Mongols across the Black Sea.

BUDAPEST

Budapest is actually two cities, Buda and Pest, separated by the Danube river. The combined city was the focus of the last pagan uprisings in Hungary, in A.D. 1045. In fact, Gellart, Bishop of Budapest, was killed by pagans as the leader of the Church in Hungary. King Andrew I of Hungary put down the rebellion, which had been caused by the submission of King Peter to the Holy Roman Emperor in 1045. Gellart suspected Byzantine influence in the uprising.

Andrew I had to put down another uprising in Budapest when Janus, son of the leader of the previous rising, tried to take the city in 1061. After this last revolt, Andrew I made the practice of paganism punishable by beheading.

King Bela IV invites the Inquisition to the city in 1265, when a number of pagan cultists are found practicing rites outside the city. The Inquisitor, Baroslav of Nish, finds no other evidence of paganism, but does find followers of the Bogomil heresy in the city. He dispatches messengers to Rome to detail his findings, but the messengers are waylaid on the road and never arrive at their destination. Baroslav himself is then targeted for assassination by an extremist faction of heretics, and flees the city to save his life.

ESZTERGROM

Also known as Gran, Esztergrom is the site of an aborted attempt to create an autonomous Hungarian Church, free of both Rome and Byzantium. The Archbishopric of Esztergrom was founded in A.D. 1001, but the Hungarian Church soon died out, and Hungary joined the Catholic Church.

Esztergrom is attacked by Mongols in 1243, and sacked after a two month siege. The siege might last much longer, as the city is well stocked against enemies, but a bitter cold storm freezes wells inside the city, forcing the inhabitants to surrender. Such a storm is clearly unnatural, and the Archbishop calls for a hunt of sorcerers and witches inside the city. The hunt is interrupted when the Mongols sack the city. The raiders do not remain long in city, vacating Esztergrom almost as soon as they finish burning most of it to the ground. The citizens then have too much on their minds with the rebuilding to continue the witch hunt, though the Church does not forget the hunt.

NISH

Settled by soldiers of the Roman legion in the century after the birth of Christ, Nish has a greatly variable population. During the winter and spring, the city is practically deserted. But, during the late summer and fall it fills with hundreds of thousands of cattle, and swaggering Hungarian herders who drive their cattle off the fertile Danubian plain, into Nish. Once in the city cattle are sold to merchants from all over eastern Mythic Europe.

Taverns in Nish stay open all night, and festivals and parties continue almost nonstop as herders spend their pay on drink, women, and food. Tavern keepers and merchants are both blessed and cursed by this influx of trade. When they are paid, they are paid well, but they are often not paid, or worse, their establishments are broken up or torched by drunken horsemen.

The festival of St. Luke, in early October, marks the end of the cattle season in Nish. The herders form a long parade, and, following the Bishop of Nish, ride the walls of the city, blessing the four cardinal points of the compass. A horse race is also held, the winner traditionally giving his horse to the Church of St. Luke, receiving an engraved sword in return.

SPLALATO

Founded by the Romans during their wars against the Greeks, Splalato functioned as a port and supply depot for the Roman fleet of the Adriatic. Even after the Roman Empire divided into East and West, Splalato retained its western culture and language.

The rise of Venice at the head of the Adriatic forced the citizens of Splalato to choose between Crouton or Venetian masters. They chose to ally with Venice, who's influence soon dominated the city. During the Fourth Crusade in A.D. 1204 and because of its alliance, Splalato is spared the fate of Zara, an independent city north on the coast, which is attacked and taken by crusaders at the instigation of Venice.

The shipwrights of Splalato build sturdy, though, to the untutored eye, unimaginative ships. However, for the right price, hidden holds and rooms can be built into a Splalato ship, holds and rooms which can pass all but the most rigorous inspection. These ships are used by smugglers who wish to pose as honest merchants, sailing into any harbor in the Mediterranean, as opposed to those who sail to deserted beaches at the dead of night. The use of secret holds is only known to a few shipmasters, who carefully choose who to pass the secret on to. In fact, the shipmasters of Splalato are very secretive, and have been known to murder those who talk of their ships to the wrong ears.

ZARA

The little port city of Zara, on the Adriatic, was one of the causes of the fall of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade. Originally a fishing village, in the late Twelfth Century it entered into the Mediterranean trade, shipping goods from the Holy Land and Egypt into Hungary, cutting into the profits of Venetian traders. The leaders of Venice watched with dismay as the little town blossomed into a trading city, with the potential of dominating the Adriatic.

In A.D. 1204, crusaders bound for Egypt are unable to pay the 85,000 marks demanded by Venice for transport. Enrico Dandalo, Doge (Duke) of Venice, negotiates a deal with the crusaders. He offers to postpone due payment of the 85,000 marks until after the crusaders conquer Egypt, if they do him the favor of conquering Zara. The crusaders agree to this sidetrip, even though Zara is a Christian city. They take Zara in a few days, plundering and looting unmercifully. A hunt for

accused sorcerers also takes place after the walls fall, for many crusaders are mysteriously taken ill during the siege. The Pope excommunicates the crusaders, who plead for forgiveness.

Poland

The Poles are a Slavic people, related to the Pomeranians, Bohemians, Croatians, and Serbs. In A.D. 963, their Prince Mieszko I, fearful of German advances to the east, converted to Christianity and gave his land and people to the Pope, receiving them back to be ruled in the name of the Pope. The Polish conversion halted the advance of the Germans, who found themselves attacking their spiritual lord.

Boleslav I, Mieszko's son, conquered Pomerania and annexed Cracow, fought three wars with the German Emperor Henry II, and declared himself King of Poland in 1025, mere months before his death. His son, Mieszko II, faced attacks by both the Russians and Germans, and lost many of his father's conquests in the west. Casamir I the Restorer regained much of Mieszko's losses, and attempted to unite the five Polish tribes, but the effort was mostly futile, the tribes resisting reforms forced on them by the King. Much time, effort and energy was therefore wasted on petty wars between the tribes, and on the Russians, Bohemians Hungarians, and Germans.

After the Restorer, Boleslav II Wrymouth expanded Polish borders to the north and west, fought a prolonged civil war with his brother, and kept Poland safe from its enemies. He also led Christianizing efforts among the Poles of Pomerania, but made little headway against paganism there. Unfortunately, Boleslav divided the country among his four sons on his death in 1079, weakening the authority of the crown, and leading to anarchy as major landholders declared themselves independent. The neighboring kingdoms all took advantage of the situation, aiding one prince against his brothers, or nobles against their prince, all the while taking land, castles, and cities.

In the ensuing civil wars, German merchants and settlers came east, establishing cities and forts in Poland. Some princes managed to unite Poland and declare themselves King, but were soon overthrown. At least one step was taken to unify the country, when King Leszek I attracted western monks and ecclesiastics to oversee the Church, resulting in a cleanup of the Polish Church, which had gone its own way since Boleslav I.

Thirteenth Century

By the Thirteenth Century the entire coast of the Baltic, from the east bank of the Vistula, is still inhabited by pagan tribes who refuse to be converted to Christianity. Personal pride leads many Polish kings and princes to attempt to convert the heathens, but the terrain, as much as religious obstinance, defeats them.

Still, conversion attempts continue. Germans from Lubeck establish the city of Riga in A.D. 1201, and found the Brethren of the Sword to crusade against the surrounding tribes. In 1228 Prince Conrad comes to an agreement with Herman of Salza, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, who has led his order from the Holy Land. The Polish Prince gives land to the order, which uses it as a base for crusades against the tribes. In fifty years, the order conquers all of Prussia, which had formerly resisted the Poles. However, the Teutonic order, subject only to the Pope and not the Polish King, becomes a problem for the King. Thus, indignities performed by the order can only be appealed to the Pope — a long journey for a decision likely to be made in favor of the order.

Cracow

Capital of the Principality of Lesser, or Little, Poland, Cracow was annexed to Poland in A.D. 1014 by King Boleslav the Great. The Dukes of Lesser Cracow used the city as their capital, and invited German merchants into the city to provide German arms and goods.

Cracow is sacked and burned by the Mongols in 1241, and lays desolate for several years. It is rebuilt with the help of German merchants, who demand and receive several trade concessions with the city, including the running of fairs in Lesser Poland. Lead, copper, iron, and fossil salt are found in the hills around Cracow, and are traded to the Germans for luxury items, arms, and cloth.

The fairs of Cracow are held in a great field outside of the city. They are staged in the early fall, before the snows come. German merchants bring arms and armor to the fairs, along with cloth and manufactured objects. The city takes a holiday for the two weeks that the fairs last, and celebrations and festivals are scattered throughout the weeks. The Duke traditionally provides beer and meat for the city on the two Sundays of the fairs.

Gneizno

Founded in the Tenth Century by Polish tribes, Gneizno slowly grew to a great city as the power of Polish kings grew. The city became an archbishopric in A.D. 1000, and St. Adalbert of Prague was canonized at the dedication ceremony. The Archbishop of Gneizno has authority over Posen and Danzig, and nominally over Thorn. However, the Teutonic order, which controls the city and the Bishop, is answerable to the Pope alone, and ignores the commands of the Archbishop.

The current Archbishop, Bratislav of Leczyca, swears to drive the Teutonic order from Poland, and has agents watching the knights for any acts which he can use in letters to the Pope to request the order's removal. The Bishop of Posen has defied the Archbishop, though, siding with the Hochmeister (Grand Master) of the order. Thus, the Bishop of Posen forces Bratislav to consider religious sanctions, including excommunication and interdict against Bishop and city.

Lublin

Settled in the Ninth Century by pagan Slavs, Lublin enjoyed trade with the city of Vladimir to the east and Posen and Gneizno to the west. Lublin was converted to Christianity by

missionaries from Posen around A.D. 1000. However, Lublin is still largely pagan, with a thin veneer of Christianity disguising its pagan rituals. Indeed, the people of Lublin and the surrounding regions celebrate the birth of Christ by raising up a fir tree, decorated with gold chains and glass ornaments. They then circle the tree singing hymns in praise of the Father. The Bishop of Lublin allows these pagan ceremonies, as the surrounding country is still full of half-pagan tribes, who would rebel if Christianity was forced on them.

Lublin is sacked by the Mongols of the Golden Horde in 1241, but is soon rebuilt with German help. Lublin is the easternmost Christian city, though trade runs to Vladimir now carry missionaries to the Khan of the Golden Horde. The Khan has not as yet been converted, but surrounds himself with priests of many religions. Mongol soldiers can occasionally be seen in Lublin, crowds parting before them in awe and terror.

POSEN

The first Bishopric in Poland, Posen was established in the Eighth Century as a stronghold of the Piast dynasty. Mieszko Piast was baptized in A.D. 966 in Posen, and the Pope granted the city the Bishopric in recognition of Piast's baptism.

Posen is used as a base by Teutonic knights until their city of Torun is built in 1231. Thereafter the order treats the city as a valued ally, and still maintains good relations with it. A major commandery is built inside the walls of Posen, and the commandery is involved in the sale of pagan slaves to Constantinople. The Archbishop of Gneizno threatens Celestine, Bishop of Posen, with excommunication if he allows the trade to continue, but the Bishop appeals to the Hochmeister (commander) of the order, Otto of Bremen, who intercedes for him with the Pope.

By this defiance, the Bishop of Posen creates a schism in the Polish Church, weakening the authority of the Archbishop of Gneizno. The Hochmeister, who offered his services to the Bishop in the first place, is pleased with the way the religious community splits, as his own authority is thereby strengthened.

RADOM

Founded in A.D. 1215 by German merchants, Radom deals mostly in grain and cattle. The peasants of the city and its lands sell their cattle and grain at inflated prices, which the merchants of Radom compensate for by charging higher prices for goods imported from Germany. This inflation has made Radom a financially turbulent area, as local dukes try to control prices only to be overruled by both peasants and merchants.

Tensions in Radom are raised further by German settlers, who insult Polish peasants in the surrounding areas with sneers and airs. Not surprisingly, bad feelings abound on both sides.

Radom is burned by the Mongols in 1241, and rebuilt by the Germans two years later. The price wars continue, however, and a number of merchants import German peasants to farm fields, providing basic food for the German community. If the experiment works, more Germans may come to Poland to raise cattle and grain for the merchants, undermining Polish profits. The local Duke has told the merchants that more German peasants are unwelcome. The situation is currently at a standoff.

RUSSIA

The principalities of Russia are located at the beginning of a boundless sea of grass, the steppes, which stretches all the way to fabled Cathay. The steppes are home to fierce nomads, of which the Mongols are but the latest wave. Huns, Magyars, Bulgars, and Mongols all rode off the steppes and into the history of Mythic Europe.

Northern Russia is divided into sixty-four principalities, founded by Viking traders seeking the markets of Mickleburg (Constantinople), by following the great rivers south. The trading posts they founded grew into cities, and the cities became the nuclei of the principalities.

The Prince of Kiev is acknowledged by most other Russian princes as the first among equals. At his death in A.D. 1054 the then Grand Prince of Kiev, Yaroslav, divided the principalities among his sons, the eldest inheriting Kiev, the others assigned principalities based on their birth. A system was then set up whereby a prince would move from a lesser to a greater principality upon the death of a senior prince. The system is still used in the Thirteenth Century. Princes were and are responsible to the council of nobles, and to the popular assembly. The Church also became responsible for administration and law, and now holds a near monopoly on literacy. Only a few Russian traders and nobles bother to learn or read. Finally, under the new system of administration, the keeping of slaves was accepted, and fell under the jurisdiction of the Church.

Between the death of Grand Prince Yaroslav and the Mongol invasions in 1224, there were eighty-three civil wars, 293 princes in sixty-four principalities, and sixteen wars by Russian princes against foes outside the country. By 1113 the poverty caused by war, unemployment, high interest rates, and chronic exploitation by the nobles had reached its peak in Kiev. The peasants and townsfolk rose in revolt, killing nobles, moneylenders, and churchmen, and took over the government for a short time. The remaining nobles called on Prince Monomakh of Pereyaslaval to become the Grand Prince of Kiev, over his protestations. Once he held the throne, he cut the

rate of interest on loans, reduced the authority of employers over the employed, and restricted the selling of bankrupt debtors into slavery. The nobles screamed the new Grand Prince overstepped his bounds, while the poor complained he did not do enough.

Given the country's internal turmoil, the Russian martial spirit was not up to the task of defending the Motherland. This was true even in 1096, when raids by Bulgars in the south enslaved entire villages. Kiev itself was sacked in 1169 by a rival prince. And, the rise of the Italian trade cities in the Mediterranean cut off trade which had sustained Russia.

Thirteenth Century

The final blow is delivered to Russia by the Mongols, who sack and burn most major cities, enslaving thousands of peasants, and replacing ruling nobles with khans.

The Mongols come up from the south in the 1220s, attacking the Cuman tribes along the shores of the Black Sea. The Cumans, hereditary enemies of the principalities, ask the Russians for aid, saying *"The Mongols have taken our lands today, tomorrow they will take yours."* Several princes lead their troops south and join with the Cumans, but the combined armies are defeated by the Mongols near the sea of Azov.

The Mongols then retreat back to the steppes, only to return in A.D. 1237 under Batu Khan, who has an army of 500,000 ferocious horsemen. The Mongols sweep through the principalities like wildfire through dry grass, burning cities and pillaging as they come. Kiev is sacked in 1238, and when the monk Giavanno de Piano Carpini sees the ruined town in 1244, he describes it as *"two hundred cottages surrounded by fields of skulls."* The Mongols then pass to the west, overrunning Poland and Hungary, and returning to Russia where they stay, calling themselves the Golden Horde. Russian nobles are allowed to keep their lands, but at the cost of a crushing tribute and sometimes yearly visits to the Khan of the Golden Horde, or even to the Great Khan in Mongolia.

The Mongols, knowing that they cannot hold the land against the Russians and all outside threat, make alliances with Constantinople, and protect the lives and property of the Orthodox Church. Thus, to gain a level of security, thousands of Russians join the ranks of Orthodox monks, and others give generously to the Church, which becomes wealthy amid the general squalor of Russian towns.

KIEV

Kiev was founded by Viking traders, who discovered the markets of Constantinople by following Russian rivers southward. Kiev was a trading post and fort, providing protection

and markets for Norse merchants. From these humble beginnings grew a large city, which became the capital of the premier principality in Russia.

In A.D. 1113, the peasants threw off the rule of the nobles and seized the city, protesting chronic unemployment and debt caused by decades of warfare. The nobles of Kiev called upon Prince Monomakh of Pereyaslaval to become the Grand Prince of Kiev, which he reluctantly did. Once in power Monomakh made sweeping reforms, which satisfied neither the nobles, who saw them as too strict, nor the poor, who saw them as too slack. Prince Monomakh died after twelve years of trying to mend the problems of Kiev and the rest of Russia.

The Prince of Suzdalia, another Russian principality, sacked the city in 1169, selling thousands of its citizens as slaves. Kiev has barely recovered from the attack when, in 1237, the Mongols come off the steppes and burn the city to the ground, again enslaving the people of Kiev. Once regarded as the *"Mother of Russian cities,"* Kiev is now a sad little town; barely two hundred cottages make up the center of town, and the fields for miles around are filled with skulls and bones.

VLADIMIR

Founded by King Vladimir I in A.D. 987, Vladimir was the seat of the Prince of Vladimir, who was nominally subservient to the Prince of Kiev.

Vladimir trades grain and timber to Poland for goods from the west. The city is sacked by the Mongols in 1240, and remains under the rule of the Golden Horde, who allow trade to continue, taking the best items for themselves. Outside the city is a pile of skulls, deteriorating in the Russian weather. These are the skulls of the defenders of Vladimir, who resisted the Mongols for three weeks. When the city fell, the defenders were killed and their heads stacked as a reminder and warning to the people of Vladimir. Now, no word of revolt is heard in the streets, where the most important citizen makes way for the lowliest soldier of the Golden Horde. Visitors to the city are encouraged to leave as soon as possible, for the Mongols are suspicious of foreigners, and are known to slaughter merchants on a whim.

Serbia

A part of the Roman Empire since the Second Century before Christ, Serbia was known as Illyricum (along the coast) and Dacia (inland). The mountains of the interior provided many rebels and revolutionaries with secure bases and hiding places from which to try to overthrow the yoke of Rome. In A.D. 1151 Stephen Nemanja managed to unite the tribes inhabiting the highlands and threw off the control of Byzantium.

Nemanja's son, also named Stephen, is attracted to the west and the Papacy. In return for granting rights to western clergy, Stephen II is accorded royal status in 1217 by Pope Honorius III. However, the clergy of the country are still predominantly Orthodox, so Stephen is crowned a second time by his brother, St. Stava, according to Orthodox rites.

With Papal authority, Serbia's noble class forms itself along the lines of the west, and formerly free peasants are reduced to serfs tied to the land and bought, sold, or traded with it. Unfortunately, Serbia has only one true city and port to which serfs may escape, the city of Ragussa, which is an independent city-state, much like the northern Italian cities. In 1221 Ragussa appeals to Venice for protection against the Despot of Epirus, allowing Venice to gain influence over the city and Serbia. One of the major goals of the King of Serbia is to gain control of Ragussa.

Serbia also falls under the influence of Bulgaria during the reigns of Radoslav and Vladislav, and is overrun by Mongols in 1241. Uros I reestablishes peace in Serbia, and encourages trade, resulting in increased growth both politically and financially. Uros II begins a campaign of expansion into Bulgaria, and in response is offered Simone, the daughter of Emperor Andronicus II.

Serbia is one of the few states still expanding its borders, and under Uros II, may prove to be a successor to Byzantium in the Balkans.

RAGUSSA

Founded by the Greeks long before the birth of Christ, Ragussa is currently the only port in the kingdom of Serbia. The city retains the culture and language of the Romans, who conquered it early in their history. And, fought over constantly by Bulgarians, Italians, Normans, and Byzantines, Ragussa declared itself an independent city in A.D. 1158, allied to Serbia but paying neither fealty nor tribute.

The kings of Serbia dare not upset this important city, as they are dependent on the goods brought to the port. In 1221, to prevent an attack by the Despot of Epirus, Ragussa appeals to Venice, which is delighted to send troops and ships. In return the Venetians demand to be declared the city's overlord. The move is resisted strongly by many of the city's common people, but the merchants of Ragussa see this as their only chance for survival, as Venice would surely conquer them if they refuse.

A solid core of the citizenry still hold ill will toward their Venetian masters, and plot to restore the commune of Ragussa.

To this end, they have been in correspondence with the Holy Roman Emperor, urging him to attack Venice. They figure that with Venice occupied by the forces of the Empire, Ragussa can free itself.


Savoy
Genoa
Milan
Mantua
Ferrara
Modena
Lucca
Florence
Siena
Papal States
Rome
Corsica
Sardinia
Kingdom of Naples
Sicily

The boot-shaped Italian peninsula, which extends from the central southern edge of Mythic Europe into the Mediterranean Sea, is a study in contrasts. Birthplace of the Roman Empire, and united by a common language and culture, Italy remains divided into a number of squabbling city-states. Italy is also easily divided into two major regions: north and south. The north of the country is possessed of some of the best farmland and the most powerful trading cities in Mythic Europe, while the country's southern regions are financially and agriculturally poor.

Lands of Northern Italy

Northern Italy extends from the Alps south to encompass Genoa, Venice, Pisa, Milan, and the Patrimonium Petri (the Papal States). The northern lands of Italy comprise the fertile lowlands of the Po Valley and alpine pastures.

The northern boundary of Italy is set by the Alps, an east-west mountain range which runs in a broad arc from Genoa to Venice. The steep slopes of the Alps allow few mountain passes, but there are still sufficient passes known to support all trade between Italy and the rest of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Po Valley receives ample rainfall in summer, and soil there is as fertile as anywhere in Mythic Europe. It is said that farmers of the Po Valley are the true backbone of Italian trading cities' strength and wealth. Any who have seen the wheat-covered hills of Tuscany agree. In winter, however, the region is buried in snow, which sometimes gets as deep as six feet.

The alpine pastures of the north lie in the southern foothills of the Alps. While the area has limited land for crops, farmers in the region have taken to terracing the mountainsides, creating long flat strips of arable farmland which run across the mountains. In addition to the grains which dominate the Po Valley, the pastures of the alpine region support some vineyards and fruit orchards, as well as large herds of grazing cattle. And, like the Po Valley, the alpine region suffers from terrible winters. Unfortunately, its summers are also drier than those in the lowlands.

The cities of northern Italy are major forces in Mythic European trade, with trading outposts from England to the Black Sea. While ostensibly under the control of the Holy Roman Empire, Italian cities are independent, and jockey with one another for control of vital trade routes and trading partners.

Italy, especially northern Italy, flourishes under the influence of trade between Mythic Europe and the Holy Land. Italian traders ply the Mediterranean with goods from the Holy Land, keeping a portion of every shipment for themselves, and another for the Church's tithe. Northern Italy's interest in profit has attracted the attention of even the Pope, and the Papal States are no less mercantile than their more "secular" neighbors.

Lands of Southern Italy

Southern Italy encompasses the entire kingdom of Sicily, from the southern border of the Papal States to the tip of the Italian peninsula, and out to the island of Sicily. The region is dominated by the Apennines, a narrow, rugged mountain range which runs almost the length of the Italian peninsula. The rocky Apennines dominate the landscape, limiting the amount of flat arable land available for crops and blocking rainfall from the Adriatic Sea. Such lack of rainfall makes southern Italy's crops poor and its production limited. There are a number of vineyards in southern Italy, as well as tree crops of olives, fruits, carobs, and almonds, but the huge wheat fields of northern Italy cannot be found here. On the other hand, southern Italy suffers only mild winters, as its snowstorms are tempered by the warm waters of the Mediterranean.

Despite its poor growing conditions, southern Italy has many people. The region has been inhabited by civilized folk for nearly 1,500 years, and the people of southern Italy show greater propensity for having children than those of any other nation. Those born in France, England, or Spain often marvel at how many people can be found in the villages and towns of southern Italy, and at how close the villages are to one another. Traveling Italians, on the other hand, view less populous places as barely civilized wilderlands.

South of the Apennines, the lands of Italy are dominated by the Sicilian highlands, a lower and less rocky mountainous region. There are a number of cities at the edge of these highlands, such as Reggio, Brindisi, and Syracuse, which survive as seaports and trade the limited agricultural products of the region across the Mediterranean.

Southern Italy also has several volcanoes, most notably Mount Vesuvius, outside of Naples. While Vesuvius itself has not erupted since ancient times, other lesser volcanoes have erupted, spreading smoke, fire, and ash over large areas. Once the lava from these small volcanoes cools, however, farmers rush to covered regions, as volcanic soil is the most fertile in all of Italy.

Italian People

The people of northern Italy are sophisticated, clever, hard-working, and avaricious. Mercantilism dominates, and it is said that you can trust a Venetian trader in anything except business. Southern Italians have a reputation for stoicism, honesty, and an unbending will, but are considered dull by their more cosmopolitan, northern neighbors.

Northern Italian History

Italy is divided politically into two main sections: Imperial Italy in the north, including the Papal States and the kingdom of Naples in the south, which is often associated with Sicily (for a while the two were referred to as the Two Sicilies).

With the death of Charlemagne and the division of the Empire, Italy, to as far south as Rome, was left in the control of succeeding Emperors. Rome itself was left in the control of the Pope. Other lands, stretching across Italy and up the east coast nearly to Venice, were also controlled by the Pope (that is, they belonged to the Papal States).

South of Rome the country was controlled by a patchwork of Byzantines, Lombards, and Saracens, who also controlled Sicily. After the death of Emperor Charles III in A.D. 888 a number of Italian kings fought over the kingdom and forced the Popes to crown them Emperor, a standing which was largely ignored by the Germans and French. Contributing to the unrest, Magyars raiding from the Hungarian plains pillaged the cities of northern Italy, even attacking Rome in 937.

Furthermore, between 951 and 962 Otto I the Great of Germany spent many years in Italy fighting that country's King Berengar and several Popes, who alternatively pleaded for help from and deposed the Emperor. In his turn, Otto II spent most of his reign attempting to add southern Italy to the German Empire, a move resisted by the Popes, until the Empire finally surrounded the Papal States.

Otto III attempted to move his capital to Rome, but the citizens refused. Instead, they established a Roman republic, which was quickly suppressed by Otto. Otto then oversaw the


Pagans
Poland
Gniezno
Lublin
Posen
Radom
Stettin
Duchy of Pomerania
Lübeck
County of Holstein
Friesland
Deventer
Bremen
Hamburg
Frankfurt
Duchy of Saxony
Land Graviate of Thuringia
Leipzig
Duchy of Silesia
Bautzen
Neisse
Olmutz
Cracow
Kingdom of Bohemia
Prague
Brunn
Cologne
Duchy of Lower Lorraine
Frankfurt
Nurnberg
Bamberg
Duchy of Franconia
Metz
Toul
Duchy of Upper Lorraine
Passau
Austria
Linz
Vienna
Bratislava
Duchy of Swabia
Speyer
Augsberg
Munich
Duchy of Bavaria
Styria
Graz
Kingdom of France
Kingdom of Arelat
Zurich
Ulm
Kingdom of Hungary
Venice
Kingdom of Italy
Milan
Pavia
Genoa
Bologna
Zara
Splalato
Florence
Pisa
Marseille
Provence
Nice
Frazinetum
Patrimonium Petri
Ragusa
Kingdom of Serbia
Rome
Vieste
Naples
Brindisi
Taranto
Salerno
Sassari
Cagliari
Reggio
Palermo
Syracuse
- Eric Holz -

elevation of his teacher and advisor, Gerbert of Aurillac, to Pope Sylvester II, and the two continued their attempt at the reunification of Christendom. Fatefully, Otto fell in love with the wife of a rebel he had executed, and she poisoned him in 1002. The nobles of Italy thus chose Arduin of Ivrea as their King, but he was defeated by the German Emperor Henry II, and deposed in 1015.

In 1075 Pope Gregory VII issued the Dictatus Papae and sparked the investiture contest, a fight over the right to invest higher church officials (bishops and abbots) with spiritual and secular authority. Gregory contended that only the Church could invest officials, going against hundreds of years of Mythic European tradition. By opposing the Church and its bid for power, German Emperor Henry IV bore the brunt of the contest. He was deposed and twice excommunicated by the Pope, but oversaw the deposition of the Pope, and arranged the election of his own Pope, Clement III.

In retaliation Gregory called the Norman lords of southern Italy to his aid. He had to endure three long years of siege in the Castle Sant' Angelo before Robert Guiscard drove the Emperor off in 1084. Robert's men then sacked Rome, which alienated the Romans from both the Normans and the Pope. Robert retreated to southern Italy, taking Gregory with him and installing him at Salerno, where Gregory died in 1085. The college of cardinals followed Gregory to Salerno, where they elected Urban II to oppose Clement III, who remained in Rome.

In 1085 the Emperor of Byzantium, Alexius, granted trading privileges to Venice for their help in defeating Robert Guiscard's plan for conquering Byzantium. These trade privileges included exemption from taxes, as well as a Venetian quarter in Constantinople. With these advantages Venice soon grew to be a financial world power, outstripping Genoa and Pisa, who soon demanded the same concessions from Byzantium. Giving up so many trade privileges, Byzantine merchants were eventually put in a difficult position. They had to pay the taxes and berthing fees Venice and other cities were not, so could not compete with the Italian cities. This inequality would cause further difficulties for Byzantium at a later date.

In 1097 the Italian fleets of Genoa and Pisa contributed to the First Crusade, shipping knights, arms, and supplies to the Holy Land. Italian engineers from Genoese also helped in the capture of Jerusalem in 1099. Venice joined the Crusade in 1100, assisting in the siege of Haifa. As a result of their contributions Genoa, Pisa, and Venice obtained trading rights in all ports of the Holy Land, a very profitable arrangement for the Italians. For their aid the Venetians were also given suzerainty over a quarter of the city of Sidon. Trade rights established by the Italians in the Holy Land became the model for all those to follow.

Though the First Crusade created an alliance between the Pope and Emperor, the death of Matilda of Tuscany in 1115 renewed the conflict between them. Matilda had bequeathed her considerable lands to both the Church and the Emperor, who then fought over them. In the chaos generated by the dispute, many cities threw off both powers' claims and formed communes, refusing fealty to either Emperor or Pope. Since that time neither the Pope nor the Emperor has managed to achieve success in controlling the whole of northern Italy, and its cities play the two powers against each other. These cities also eventually adopted the Guelph-Ghibelline feud, though they do not use those names until the time of Frederick II (circa 1220).

In 1123 the Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus refused to renew the Golden Bull, Venice's charter in the eastern Empire. In retaliation, Venice began to raid the Adriatic ports and Ionian islands of the Empire. Peace was restored between Venice and Byzantium when Roger II of Sicily began to make raids of his own against Byzantium. The alliance was short-lived, however, and Venice resumed her attacks.

The Romans also took to fighting, and rebelled once more in 1143, forming a commune, ruling their city through a senate. The heretical Arnold of Brescia came to the city in 1146, preaching against the wealth of the Church and Papacy in particular. As a result Pope Eugenius III was forced out of Rome, and spent the rest of his reign in exile.

The cardinals then elected Nicholas Breakspear, an English Bishop, to the Papacy as Adrian IV. He resolved to regain the city of Rome, held by Arnold and the senate. The Roman mobs, rioting at the election of an Englishman to the Papal throne, attacked and seriously injured an elderly and well-respected cardinal. Adrian was thus prompted to lay the entire city under interdict during Holy Week, depriving the city of its normal influx of pilgrims for religious festivals, a source of income which had never failed the city. Given the choice of autonomy or wealth, the mercantile Romans expelled Arnold, who fled to Sicily. Adrian lifted the ban on the city once Arnold had left.

To restore order in Rome and reinstate the power of the Papacy, Adrian called on the military aid of Frederick Barbarossa, inviting the German to take the city. Frederick captured Arnold of Brescia, turning him over to Papal authorities, who burned him at the stake and threw his ashes into the Tiber. However, the Romans refused to allow Frederick into their city, so his Imperial coronation was held in the fortress of St. Peter. In the meantime the Romans attacked Imperial forces across the Tiber, and were thrown back with great losses. Frederick then hurried back to Germany as his army had contracted Malaria, but he had taken the Imperial crown.

At the Diet of Roncaglia in 1158 Frederick asked the lawyers of Bologna, who were decidedly Imperialist, to define the rights of the Emperor in the kingdom of Italy. The lawyers returned that the Emperor was supreme in the kingdom, with the right to appoint clergy, and to control the judicial and monetary processes of the country's cities. The lawyers also gave the Emperor the right to place consuls in all cities, and the right to place a podesta, or governor, in each city. The communes of Lombardy and the Papacy rejected the ruling, and years of warfare ensued.

The death of Pope Adrian in 1159 prompted two opposing Popes to be appointed in his place. The Papal cardinals elected Alexander III while the Imperials elected Victor IV. Frederick

forced the acceptance of Victor, and Alexander fled to France in 1162. On Victor's death in 1164, a series of Anti-Popes were forced on the citizens of Rome.

In the meantime the cities of Lombardy banded together in 1167, forming the Lombard League, and vowed to support each other against the Emperor until their rights were restored. Frederick returned to Italy to fight the League, and at the battle of Legnano in 1176 the League defeated Imperial troops. It was believed that Frederick was killed in the fighting, until he reappeared alone in Pavia. In 1177 Pope Alexander mediated a six year truce between the League and Frederick. The negotiations were held in Venice, which was the only city both sides could agree upon. In 1183 the Peace of Constance was signed by all parties, granting a number of important rights to the League. Interestingly, most cities maintained the post of Podesta, which Frederick had instituted, electing individuals from outside the city who had no alliances to any feuds within the city.

By 1172 troubles had again arisen between Byzantium and Venice. The Byzantine Emperor Manual I ordered the seizure of all Venetian persons and property in Constantinople. The Venetians responded by sending an expedition to Constantinople, but it was defeated by the Byzantines. On the expedition's return to Venice the populace mobbed and killed the Doge for his failure. Fortunately friendly relations between Byzantium and Venice were renewed in 1175.

In 1190 Emperor Frederick of Germany died, and his successor, Henry VI, came to Rome to be crowned Emperor. Henry claimed the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples by right of inheritance through his wife, Constance. He then proceeded to conquer southern Italy, but refused to acknowledge feudal obligations to the Pope, the nominal overload of Naples and Sicily. In 1197 Henry died, and his orphaned son Frederick inherited the crown of Sicily and Naples. The young Frederick was placed under the care of the Pope, but the Empire again faced civil war as Otto of Brunswick and Philip of Swabia fought for the crown. Innocent III became Pope in 1198, and supported Otto, in return for the Capitulation of Neusse, which delineated Papal lands, and denied any Imperial authority within those bounds.

The Capitulation of Neusse also established order in Lombardy. The cities had polarized around Imperial and Papal parties, both of which claimed authority. Indeed, towers and fortresses soon sprung up in the cities, as families found the need to protect themselves from feuds. The factions inside the cities fought bloody battles, with alliances shifting back and forth. It was through the Capitulation of Neusse that Innocent regained control of the Papal States, and soon many of the cities of northern Italy renounced their allegiance to the Emperor, swearing new oaths to Papal legates.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

In A.D. 1204 the Fourth Crusade, which is to attack Egypt, is diverted by Doge Enrico Dandalo of Venice, who offers to cover part of the ferrying charges of the army if it attacks the Hungarian port of Zara. The crusaders do so, and then agree to attack Constantinople. Pope Innocent excommunicates all those who take part in the attack on Zara, relenting when they plead for mercy. Rumors of the attack on Constantinople make the Pope again threaten excommunication for anyone who takes part, but the Pope's threats are ignored. The capture of Constantinople in 1204 at first horrifies Innocent, but he soon looks on it as a long-sought opportunity to reunite the Catholic and Orthodox Churches under the leadership of Rome.

Otto IV breaks the Treaty of Neusse in 1209, and Innocent excommunicates him in 1212. Frederick II takes the throne on the Pope's insistence, but is made to swear not to join the kingdoms of southern Italy to the Empire. Instead Frederick names his young son Henry King of Naples, putting Henry into the Pope's care. Numerous other oaths are also required of Frederick before the Pope allows him to take the crown of the Empire, including observance of most of the provisions of the treaty of Neusse, and the promise to take up the cross for the Holy Land.

Frederick, supported by funds from the Pope, leaves Italy to battle Otto IV, but Otto, allied to King John of England, is defeated by King Philip Augustus of France, so resistance to Frederick collapses. Frederick then has the Electors crown his son Henry King of Germany, while Frederick becomes Regent of Sicily, for Henry. However, barons and Saracens in Naples and Sicily rebel in 1221, requiring Frederick's presence in southern Italy. Then Pope Honorius, wishing for Frederick to aid the Christians in the Holy Land, persuades Frederick to marry the heiress of Jerusalem, and Frederick adds King of Jerusalem to his titles. But, in 1227, Frederick's army is reduced by a plague which breaks out before he can embark for the Holy Land. Accordingly, Pope Gregory IX loses all patience with the Emperor and excommunicates him.

However, Frederick leaves on crusade in 1228 while still excommunicated, and Gregory releases his vassals from their vows against the former Emperor. Frederick returns to Italy and reconquers his lands, signing the Treaty of San Germano in 1230.

Back in Europe, Frederick II continues to lead military campaigns in Italy, defeating a second Lombard League, and forcing Pope Innocent IV to flee to Lyon. There the Pope declares Frederick deposed and a heretic, laying all lands loyal to him under interdict and excommunicating his followers. The Pope also calls a crusade against Frederick, granting all privileges and rights normally granted to crusaders in the Holy Land to those who take the cross against the Emperor. Frederick responds by issuing the Reform Manifesto, wherein he accuses the Church of worldliness and confiscates the treasures of the Church to finance his war.

In the Holy Land King Louis VII of France tries to mediate the dispute between the Pope and Emperor, so that Frederick might lead the Germans to aid the Seventh Crusade. But, Frederick is struck mortally ill. Before death he begs forgiveness of the Pope, and forgiveness is offered. Making peace with the Pope, Frederick gives up the worldly life, and joins the Cistercian order, living out the rest of his life in an Italian

monastery. He dies in 1250, and people whisper that devils come up from Hell to bear his soul through the pit of Mt. Etna to eternal damnation beyond.

In his will Frederick leaves his son, Conrad IV, the Empire, and his illegitimate son, Manfred, the Regency of Italy. The Italians revolt against Manfred almost immediately, welcoming Papal legates to replace the Imperial. Pope Innocent IV returns to Italy from Lyon, and makes Naples the headquarters of his efforts to annex the cities of southern Italy. His plans to annex the north are foiled by northern Italian cities, which prefer independence to either Pope or Emperor. Indeed, the Imperial nobles Ezzelino and Uberto Pallavicino are godless brothers who hold several Italian cities in fealty to the Emperor. They have no respect for God or the Church, refuse the Pope's bids for power in their cities, and allow heresy to grow rampant under their jurisdiction.

In 1254 Emperor Conrad leads an invasion of Italy, recapturing much of the country for the Empire, but dies of Malaria in 1254 before the consolidation of his conquests. Manfred then assumes the leadership of Imperial forces, routing a Papal army. When Innocent hears news of the defeat he dies in despair. After Innocent, Pope Alexander IV organizes a crusade against the rebellious Pallavicinos, capturing both brothers and torturing them to death along with their families. The entirety of northern Italy thus falls into chaos. Meanwhile, in the south of Italy, Regent Manfred leads a life of hunting, singing, and playing. He defeats another Papal army in 1260.

Pope Urban IV, no longer able to rely on the Emperor for protection from the south, turns to the French, offering the kingdom of the Two Sicilies to Louis IX. Louis declines the honor, but allows Charles of Anjou to accept the kingdom as a fief from the Pope in 1264. Charles leads 30,000 troops into Italy, defeating the army of Manfred. In response Manfred leads one final, desperate charge into the French force, dying rather than submit. In turn, Emperor Conrad's son, also named Conrad, a boy of fifteen, leads an army of Germans against the French in 1265, but is captured and publicly beheaded in the market square of Naples in 1268.

In the years that follow the northern cities of Italy continue to play the Pope against the Emperor, maintaining their independence from both parties by adroit political maneuvering. Instead of fighting Pope or Emperor, the Italian cities fight each other, hiring mercenaries to wage their battles for them. The Conditierri, as the mercenaries come to be called, take delight in ravaging defenseless villages and towns, but rarely fight true battles. Instead, they maneuver the opposing armies into retiring or surrendering before lives are lost. In this manner northern Italy tears itself to pieces while the rest of the world looks on in horror and amusement.

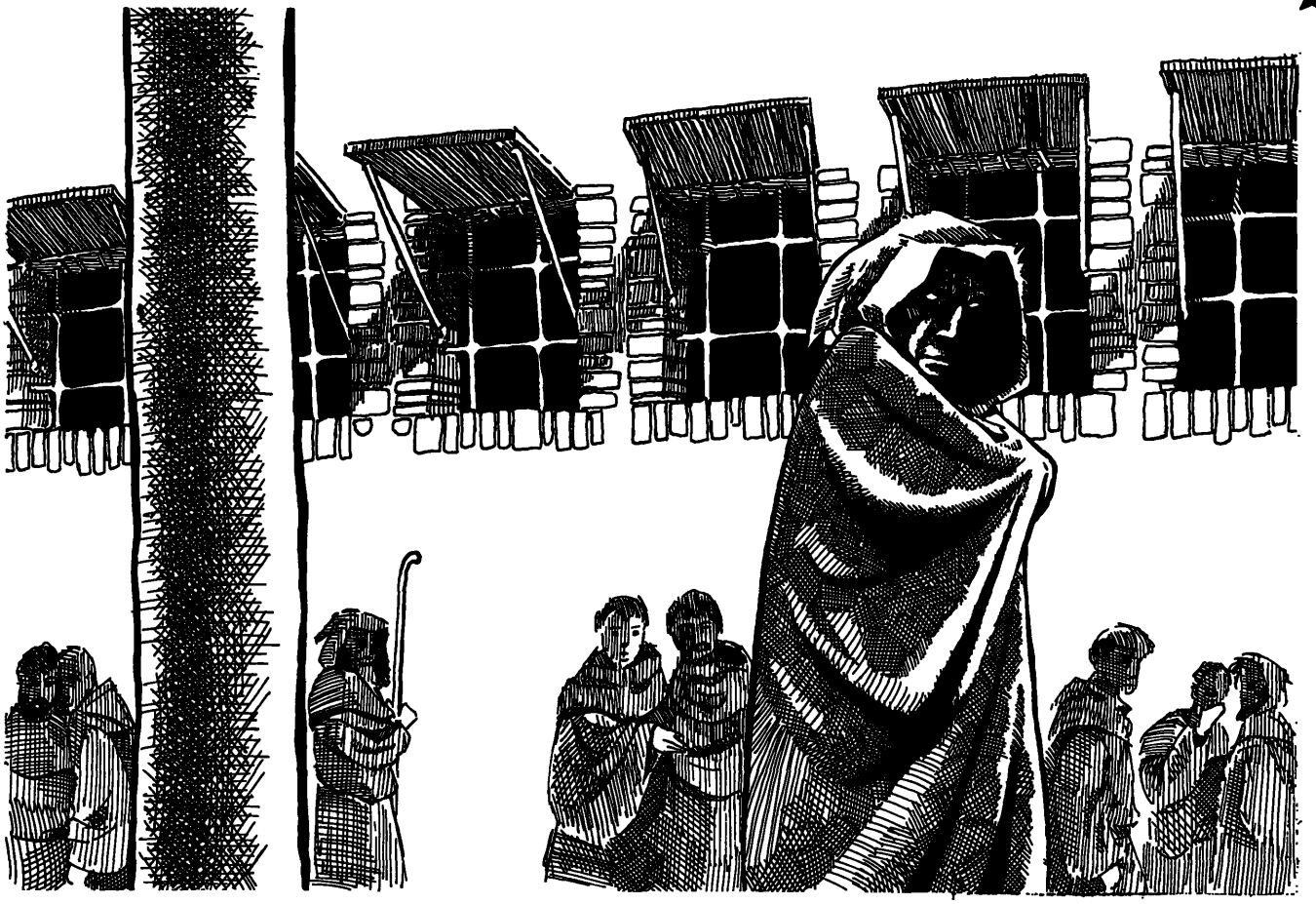
Southern Italian History

By the early Eleventh Century southern Italy was a patchwork of states, with the Byzantine Empire, Lombards, and independent cities all fighting for supremacy. Knightly adventurers traveled from city to city, fighting first for one faction, then another. In A.D. 1016 a band of Norman pilgrims agreed to recruit their countrymen to fight for one of the petty nobles of southern Italy, and the trickle of adventurers into southern Italy increased tenfold as Normans, eager for land, took passage for the peninsula. Pope Leo IX, seeing the atrocities performed by the Normans, attempted to form a league of cities allied with the Byzantine Empire to expel the Norman lords, but negotiations with the Byzantines broke down in theological controversy. After the Norman victory of Civitate in 1053, where Pope Leo was captured, the Normans proceeded to conquer the lands of southern Italy in a concerted effort to form a new kingdom.

The greatest of the Norman knightly invaders was Robert Guiscard ("the Cunning"), who carved out the County of Apulia, and split Calabria with his brother Richard. Political necessity forced Pope Nicholas II to recognize the conquests of the brothers in 1059, as their armies were the only military might in Italy able to protect the Papacy from the schemes of the German emperors. Nicholas therefore enfeoffed Robert with the Duchies of Apulia, Calabria, and the Island of Sicily, which was in Saracen hands. Richard was awarded the Principality of Capua. By this action, the Pope legalized the conquests of the brothers, and gained their support. The two brothers spent many years suppressing revolts in their new duchies. Robert was able to expel the Byzantines from Italy in 1071, and a third brother, Roger, began the slow conquest of Sicily in 1060, taking the title Count Roger I of Sicily. Robert was eventually excommunicated by Pope Gregory VII in 1074 for the capture of Papal cities, but he continued his conquests. In 1080 he reconciled with the Pope, and renewed his vows of fealty.

Pope Gregory renewed alliances with Robert because he needed the Norman's aid against the armies of Emperor Henry IV, which were besieging Rome. However, Robert did not come to the Pope's assistance right away. Instead he attacked the Byzantine Empire in an attempt to claim the eastern Empire for himself. He returned to Italy in 1084, sacking Rome in his attempt to bring Henry to battle. Robert took the Pope and the Curia under his protection and housed them in Salerno while the Anti-Pope Clement III held Rome. Robert then attempted to renew his Byzantine conquests, but died in 1085 at the age of seventy. When his turn in power came, Robert's son Roger watched in dismay while the lands of his father were conquered or rebelled, and in his reign, Roger's son William lost all but the Duchy of Apulia.

The Norman Roger I, Robert's brother, spent thirty years conquering Sicily, taking Messina in 1060, Palermo in 1072, and Malta in 1091. The government of Sicily was a mixture of



Saracens, Byzantines, and Normans, while Roger I's army consisted of Norman knights with Saracen troops. Roger tolerated Muslim and Jewish religious observances, and supported the universities and libraries of Sicily. Roger died in 1101, and his widow acted as Regent for his sons Simon and Roger II, until Roger II was able to take control of the government in 1105. Roger II was a statesman of the first rank and a brave warrior. By 1129 he had conquered his cousin William's holdings in Apulia, left vacant at William's death in 1125.

The schism in the Church between Pope Innocent II and the Anti-Pope Anacletus gave Roger II a chance to increase his power. His support of Anacletus won him a rise in rank to King of Sicily. However, the Pope had no intention of allowing a strong, undivided state in southern Italy, fearing such a state could dominate Rome as much or more than the Emperor already did. To use Roger against the Emperor was the only recourse for the Pope, who attempted to keep Italian political and military power in check.

The strife between the Pope and Anti-Pope continued, and several times Roger was forced to expel lords appointed to his lands by the Pope. Pope Innocent II led an expedition against Roger in 1139, but was captured by Roger's son, and was compelled to confirm Roger's kingship before he was released. Roger's control of important ports on Sicily and in Italy made the cities of Pisa and Genoa support rebels against the king with money and arms. However, Roger was able to continue his conquests even with rebellions at home, and between 1134 and his death in 1154 he conquered part of the north African coast.

During the Second Crusade Roger also plundered the city of Thebes in Greece, capturing a number of silk workers, bringing the silk industry to Sicily. Roger also allowed the various cultures of Sicily — Saracens, Jews, Greeks, and Normans — to practice their religions freely, and opened the government to all races, searching for competence rather than pedigree. Under Roger the kingdom of Sicily was the richest and most cultured for a generation, and paved the way for the opulent court of Frederick II.

Roger II's death in 1154 was followed by the reign of William the Bad, who retired to the luxuries of his harem and court, leaving the governance of the realm to the Grand Admiral, a man thoroughly hated by Sicilian nobles. Many revolutions and rebellions marked the reign of William, and Frederick Barbarossa invaded northern Italy, threatening to turn against the south as well. However, William showed the blood of his Norman forbears in 1155 and 56, when he quelled the rebels in Sicily, then routed a Byzantine army which was aiding rebels in Apulia. But, William's African holdings were overrun by the Almohads, and by 1160 the Sicilians were thrown out of Africa. Finally, William preserved his position in southern Italy by aiding the Pope against the aggressions of Frederick Barbarossa, in return for control over the Church in Sicily.

William's death in 1166 led to the crowning of his son William II, called the Good, to distinguish him from his father. His reign was renowned for internal peace, and William II helped moderate the Peace of Venice between Pope Alexander

III and Frederick Barbarossa. He also continued conquests against the Byzantine Empire, but was soundly defeated in 1185. He died childless that year, while preparing to lead a third crusade against the Saracens in the Holy Land.

To assume control of southern Italy, Tancred of Lecce was elected by the nobles. Tancred's first official function was to buy his country back from King Richard of England. Richard had become annoyed at the treatment he received on his way to the Holy Land and captured Sicily. He dealt with the expected revolts with a heavy hand, and defeated a German invasion of Naples in 1191. Tancred died in 1194, leaving only a young son to hold the crown against the ambitions of the Germans.

Henry VI of Germany finally claimed the throne of Sicily by his marriage to Constance, an aunt of William II. Henry allied with Genoa and Pisa, who loaned him ships, and were eager to reduce their mutual rival. Henry captured Palermo in 1194, and was crowned King of Sicily. Henry died in 1197, leaving his three year old son Frederick, who was crowned King of Sicily in 1198. Pope Innocent III was given the boy to raise and educate, but Frederick was largely ignored by his Papal guardians, and spent his youth in poverty, running through the streets of Palermo. As a young man, Frederick learned to ride and fight, and grew to love hunting. He never lost the tolerance of his childhood, and acquired knowledge of Greek, Arabic, and the philosophy of many religions.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Pope Innocent III, needing a foil against the ambitions of Otto IV, turns to Frederick, whom he crowns Emperor in A.D. 1212. In return Frederick pledges to protect the Papacy, and never to join Sicily or Naples to his Empire. Furthermore, Frederick is forced to give up his Sicilian kingdom, and to name his young son Henry as King of Sicily, under a regent appointed by Innocent. Frederick then goes north into Germany and suppresses rebellions, aided by the defeat of Otto at the hands of Philip Augustus of France, at the Battle of Bouvines.

However, Frederick misses the lands of southern Italy and, leaving the government of the Empire to regents, returns to Sicily, trading places with his son who is then crowned King of the Romans by the German Electors. This reversal of realms is contrary to the Mythic European vision of Innocent, but Innocent dies in 1216, and his successor, Honorius III, is not of the same mettle, so does not depose Frederick.

Frederick is punished by the Papacy at a later date, though. Frederick had promised to lead a crusade to the Holy Land, but his army contracts a plague in 1227, forcing it to return to Italy. Frederick is excommunicated by Pope Gregory for his failure, but in 1228 leads a Crusade to the Holy Land, where he amazes the Saracens by being able to understand their speech and culture.

While Frederick is in Syria, Pope Gregory absolves his vassals of their oaths to the Emperor, and prepares to conquer southern Italy. Frederick's regents invade the Papal states, but are defeated. The Pope, in turn, sends an army into Sicily and monks spread the rumor that Frederick is dead. Soon Sicily and Naples are in the hands of Papal troops. Frederick therefore returns from the Holy Land in haste, and recaptures all his cities with hardly a fight. At the border of the Papal States he sends an emissary to the Pope, requesting forgiveness for his transgressions against the Pope's recent conquests. Forgiveness is granted.

Frederick spends much of his time in southern Italy restoring order. Captured Muslim warriors from the Sicilian hills become the best and most loyal part of his armies. Frederick also comes to rely on lawyers, trained at his university in Salerno, for his government. His court at Salerno and Foggia becomes renowned for the level of culture enjoyed there, as well as for the court's harem and veritable army of Muslim slaves, to attend to the needs of courtiers. Furthermore, Frederick welcomes Arabic and Jewish scholars to Italy, debating their subjects with them until late in the evening. In truth, Frederick adopts many trappings of the lost Roman Emperors, minting coins with his own likeness, and elevating himself to near godhood in the minds of his people.

Frederick's ultimate goal is to join all of Italy to the German Empire, and to make Rome the political, as well as spiritual, capital of the Christian world. In 1226 he invites all the cities of Italy to the Diet of Cremona. However, Lombard cities, fearing for their independence, refuse to send delegates, and the Pope forbids any Papal cities to attend.

Ironically, Frederick's efforts toward unification work in one sense, when powers in Italy turn against him. The Lombards cause trouble again by founding the second Lombard League. Frederick is also forced to deal with northern Italy for a number of years. And, the Pope joins the battle against the Emperor, excommunicating him once more in 1239.

Fortunately, southern Italy does not suffer the results of attacks on Frederick. The battlefields are in northern Italy, leaving Naples and Sicily to bask in the pleasures of the court, only defending themselves from infrequent attacks.

In retaliation, after the Second Council of Lyon in 1245, which renews Frederick's excommunication, Frederick issues his own "Reform Manifesto." It accuses the Papacy and Church of worldliness and self-indulgence. Frederick therefore confiscates the treasures of churches in southern Italy, using them to finance his war against the north. During this period Frederick also brutally puts down rebellions, using Muslim soldiers to execute hostages; Muslims are impervious to pleas for mercy in Christ's name.

Frederick's attacks to the north win him several victories. In 1250 his generals win a number of important cities back from rebels, and Louis IX of France, captured by Saracens during the Seventh Crusade, offers to mediate between the Pope and Emperor. At that point Frederick contracts dysentery and reverses his previous stand against the Church to save his soul before death. He therefore begs for absolution, which is granted, and joins the Cistercian order, dying in December of 1250.

Frederick's illegitimate son Manfred is made Regent of Italy and Sicily, but most Italian towns rebel, and welcome Papal legates. Furthermore, the Pope captures Naples and uses it as his base against Sicily and southern Italy, capturing city after city. Manfred turns things around, though, when Emperor Conrad IV leads a German army south to fight the Pope's forces, and dies of Malaria in 1254. Manfred takes charge of the Imperial army, defeating Papal troops in December of that year.

Unfortunately, after Manfred's victory, southern Italy devolves into chaos, with Imperial, Papal, and independent armies fighting each other. Finally, Pope Urban IV offers the crown of Sicily and Naples to King Louis IX of France, who allows his brother, Charles of Anjou, to take the Italian crown. Charles leads French troops to Italy, where he defeats Manfred and his Germans. A succeeding Emperor, Conradin, son of Conrad IV, leads one last German invasion into southern Italy, but is defeated and captured. In 1268 he is publicly beheaded in Naples, putting an end to the German claim to southern Italy.

After the Germans are defeated, Charles of Anjou moves his capital to Naples, inviting French nobles and churchmen to the country. He rules so badly, though, that the southern Italian people long for the resurrection of Frederick, and the Pope mourns the day offered the crown to the French. Finally, in 1282 Palermo, a French soldier becomes overly familiar with a young Sicilian bride, sparking a riot which sweeps through all of Sicily. Known as the Sicilian Vespers, the riots lead to open rebellion, and the French are expelled from the island.

Charles vows to lay the entire island to waste and ruin, and Pope Martin IV excommunicates all Sicilians. Looking for aid against the French, the Sicilians offer their crown to King Pedro III of Aragon, who lands with Spanish troops in 1282. Charles tries to recapture the island, but his ships are sunk by the larger Spanish fleet, and some French ships, attempting the Straits of Messina, are destroyed by the Sirens.

In the end Charles dies of frustration in 1285. His successors thereafter struggle in vain to rejoin Sicily to Naples.

Bologna

A small city in the center of Italy, Bologna is chiefly known for its university. Founded in A.D. 1200, the university specializes in the study of law, and also has a school of medicine. The fame of the university attracts students from as far away as Hungary, Poland, and England.

Lawyers from Bologna were invited by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa to take part in the Diet of Roncaglia in 1158. Therein Barbarossa asked them to define the rights of the Emperor in the kingdom of Italy. The lawyers, after much deliberation, returned the opinion that the Emperor was supreme within the kingdom, with the right to appoint Imperial consuls in cities, appoint bishops and abbots, and to dispense justice. This pronouncement did not sit well with the other cities of Italy, who continued to rebel against Frederick.

The University of Bologna is reputedly the site of a Hermetic Covenant led by House Jerbiton. Rumors persist that the Covenant includes some of the university's faculty and students, but meets in secret, as the local Archbishop is hostile to both the University (which he sees as teaching godless ways) and Magi (for practicing those ways).

Brindisi

Brindisi is often the last Christian town that pilgrims see on their way to the Holy Land. Even though Templars and Hospitallers guard the roads on the way to and in the Holy Land, and soldiers guard the Empire's roads, brigands infest the land around Brindisi, as do bands of Saracen marauders. A sea voyage is still the safest way to travel to Brindisi.

Perhaps the biggest event in Brindisi's history was the embarkation of French and Italian knights during the First Crusade. The knights sailed across the Adriatic to Durrazo, where they continued on their way to the Holy Land. The ship owners who ferried the crusaders spent their fees building mansions in the hills surrounding Brindisi. The city itself is little more than a number of shops and inns supporting the pilgrim trade and the harbor.

Caligari

Founded by Phoenician sailors and colonized by Cartheginians, Caligari was taken by the Romans two hundred years before Christ. The island of Sardinia, where Caligari is located, was overrun by the Vandals in the Fifth Century and by the Muslims in the Ninth. Sardinia resisted Frankish invaders, though the Franks managed to wrest Corsica from the Muslims. Genoa and Pisa then fought over the island for two hundred years, until the Pisans take and fortify Cagliari in A.D. 1200, building the cathedral in the center of town.

Scattered throughout the island are curious structures known as Nuraghi, made of undressed stones laid in a cone shape, without mortar. The structures have stood for thousands of years, and the islanders claim they are the remains of people who lived on the island before the earliest settlers came from across the sea.

Magi in the Roman Tribunal fight over the privilege of combing the Nuraghi for *vis*, which can sometimes be found embedded in the structures' walls or floors. In addition, rare items, presumably from from the original inhabitants of the island, can be found among the Nuraghi. Seekers claim that from the form of the items the inhabitants were related to the Egyptians and the people of Malta.

Those who have found the need of him also know of a mundane learned in the states of human sleep. Indeed, he is said to be able to control those who sleep, commanding them to his will. Whether this person is friend or foe to the Order of Hermes is unknown, though he has studied alongside specialists of Imágonem and Mentem magic (albeit some less scrupulous ones).

Florence

A rich and prosperous Italian city, Florence relies on a flourishing textile industry and banking houses for its power. Political power within the city is concentrated in the guilds and merchants, with the supreme magistrate (the Podesta) recruited from outside the city to insure impartiality. As in most cities in northern Italy, Florence's politics follow Guelph-Ghibelline lines. The Donati family represents the old nobility. Its members are strong supporters of the most radical Guelph faction, the Blacks.

As a center for trade and communication, Florence attracts Magi with an interest in the affairs of the world. The Blacks, while strong in their Christian faith, are willing to deal with Magi, occasionally involving visiting Magi in their political intrigues. The Blacks have been known to threaten to hand Magi over to the Church for interrogation should Magi refuse their aid.

Pressure from the Blacks puts Magi in a difficult position. The Peripheral Code forbids Magi from serving a temporal power, but thus far incidents involving Magi have been infrequent enough to avoid Tribunal attention. Some Magi have proposed instructing the feuding factions that their intrigues will not be tolerated, but only a Tribunal meeting can decide to take such action.

Genoa

The sea port of Genoa has been a center of trade throughout its long history. It began as a prominent Roman port, and kept its prosperity throughout the Germanic invasions. In A.D. 936, the city was raided by Saracens, an outrage not soon forgotten. In 1007, Genoa allied herself with Pisa in order to attack the Saracens, who had established themselves in Sardinia. Although the attack against the Saracens was a success, the division of Sardinia between Genoa and Pisa led to the first war between the two cities. The resulting rivalry with Pisa has become one of the defining forces in Genoa's history.

Genoa profited greatly from the crusades. Genoese engineers were responsible for building the great siege engines used in the conquest of Jerusalem in the First Crusade. And, Genoa gained self-governing trade colonies throughout the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. This trade with the Holy Land provided the city with immense wealth, even after the fall of the Latin kingdom.

Throughout Italy's many Pope-Emperor conflicts Genoa attempted to appear neutral, but finally declared its anti-Imperialist inclinations after Emperor Henry IV reneged on agreements with the city in 1194. Pisa's strong support of Imperial power helped the growth of anti-Imperial sentiment in Genoa.

The Genoese support the Empire of Nicaea after the fall of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade. In return they are granted trading rights in the Black Sea and the eastern Empire

after Michael VII takes back the Empire from its Latin rulers. Genoa also manages to keep Venice out of the Black Sea, which depresses the fortunes of that city.

The Genoese rivalry with Pisa continues until 1284, when both cities put forth their naval might at the great battle of Meloria, off the Tuscan coast. Genoa is victorious, destroying most of the Pisan fleet, and taking almost 11,000 Pisan prisoners. Additionally, Genoa finally gains control over Corsica and most of Sardinia.

Malta

Located in a strategic position between Sicily and the north African coast, Malta has been fought over by every nation which uses the Mediterranean. Greeks, Phoenicians, Cartheginians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Cossuran pirates, Saracens, and Normans have all taken the island, only to lose it to the next invader. But, beneath the thin veneer which each culture has imposed on the island lies a much older culture, unique to the island.

Natives of the island are tall, dark people, with gray eyes and black hair. Neither Christianity nor Islam have made inroads into the lives of the natives. They still worship in hidden cave temples, far from any town or village. Any attempt by the Church to enter or harm these temples has ended in disaster for the Christians. One expedition became lost in the night and fell over a cliff. Another party was found babbling of demons and gods, fairies and monsters. Their hair had turned stark white and they had aged by decades in less than a week.

Magi investigating the island have found huge amounts of *vis* in its rocks, but have not been able to remove any of it. Talismans and amulets have also been observed on the natives, who seem immune to Hermetic magic. Indeed, magic cast against them has been known to rebound at the caster, sometimes doublefold. Many Magi, especially of House Verditius, have cast covetous eyes at the island and its treasures, but as yet no one has managed to bring back the smallest amulet or even one pawn of *vis*.

Milan

Milan was founded be Celts around the Third Century before Christ and captured by Rome soon after. The city gained in prominence after the collapse of the Empire. Though Milan suffered attacks by numerous Germanic invaders, and the Lombards made nearby Pavia their capital, Milan became an important center of trade, and surpassed Pavia as the foremost city of the plains of Lombardy.

Many battles have been fought between the cities of Lombardy since the early Twelfth Century. Milan, being the richest and most powerful city of the region, is always at the center of these conflicts. Around A.D. 1100, Milan started subjugating its smaller neighbors. During the invasions of Frederick Barbarossa in the 1160s, Milan's forces were defeated by the Emperor, and in 1162, destroyed. In truth Frederick was helped in his conquest by many of Milan's Lombard enemies. Still, Milan was rebuilt in 1167 with assistance from the Lombard League. Milan remained a center of anti-Imperial sentiment, and even aids Henry, one of the sons of Frederick II, to rise up against his father. In 1237 Milanese forces are defeated by Frederick II at Cortenuova.

Naples

The city of Naples sits below the crown of Vesuvius, a volcano well known for its powerful eruptions. On the far side of Vesuvius the peasants say there are towns buried by some unknown cataclysm before the birth of Christ.

Naples itself is a pleasant city, well served by the sea, and home to many seafarers, who bring riches from all over the Mediterranean world. The trade of Naples has nowhere near the volume of Venice, Genoa, or Pisa, but the strong governments of southern Italy insure that northern cities do not molest Neapolitans.

The Normans conquered Naples in A.D. 1057, defeating the Saracens who had driven out the Byzantines. Robert Guiscard used Naples as his base to subjugate southern Italy. The Emperor Frederick II founds a university in Naples in 1224 to supply his court with trained administrators. Charles of Anjou also moves the capital of the kingdom of Sicily and Naples to Naples, which helps prompt the revolt in Sicily known as the Sicilian Vespers.

Palermo

Palermo is the chief seaport of Sicily, and sailors from all over the world can be found here, from swarthy Moors to towering Varangians. Palermo's main rival is the city of Syracuse, which faces the Levant while Palermo faces Mythic Europe.

The cosmopolitan flavor of Palermo is a product of its history. It has been controlled by the Romans, Saracens, Byzantines, Normans, and the Holy Roman Empire. When they held Palermo the Normans built many splendid churches, and the fusion of Norman and Saracen architecture has spread to many other parts of the island and onto the mainland.

Before Charles of Anjou moves the capital in 1268, the court of Palermo is heralded as one of the most learned in Mythic Europe, where Greek, Latin, and Muslim scholars come to share ideas. The Norman kings of Sicily encourage this trade of knowledge, and take advantage of the opportunity to amass a huge library of scholarly works in all languages.

Pavia

Founded by an Italian tribe called the Papirii, Pavia was taken from its founders by Rome about two centuries before the birth of Christ. Near the end of the Sixth Century Pavia became the Lombard capital. The city's reign lasted until A.D. 774, when the city fell to Charlemagne, bringing to an end two hundred years of Lombard rule over Italy.

Pavia is well known for its long-standing feud with Milan. The cities (which lie only about twenty miles apart) have been bitter rivals since Roman times, and have fought numerous wars. In the early Twelfth Century, Pavia began to expand its influence by subjugating its less powerful neighbors, and by supporting many of the towns and cities which fought against Milan (which was also subjugating its neighbors). During the invasions of Frederick Barbarossa, Pavia sided with the Emperor against Milan, and participated in the defeat and destruction of Milan in 1162. In 1164 Pavia was rewarded for its support by receiving an Imperial grant of privileges, which officially gave citizens the right to choose their own consuls. Pavia has remained a loyal Imperialist city, even refusing to join the Lombard League, and is strongly influenced by the Ghibellines.

Pavia is known for its many tall towers, which have been built within the city by prominent families. There are about one hundred towers looking over the town. Each tower is owned by one family, which retreats within when feuds and street fighting, which characterize Pavian politics, get too intense.

Pisa

Pisa, like its rival Genoa, has a long tradition of maritime trade. It was involved in trade in Roman times, and by the Eleventh Century was the more prosperous and ambitious of the two western maritime trade powers. In A.D. 1005, Pisa was raided by Saracens, and joined with Genoa in an attack on the Saracens in Sardinia. Though Pisa had provided the majority of the ships and men, Genoa demanded an equal share of the spoils. This led to the first of a long series of wars between the two cities.

Pisa has had strong Ghibelline traditions since the time of Otto II. In 1081, Emperor Henry IV granted Pisa a charter officially recognizing the rights of the Pisan commune. Pisa's support of Imperial power in Italy has lasted throughout the invasions of Frederick Barbarossa, Frederick II, and beyond, with only occasional lapses. Pisa supports and aids the German Emperor on numerous occasions.

Constant hostility between Pisa and Genoa continues throughout the Thirteenth Century, finally reaching a climax at the battle of Meloria. Pisa is soundly defeated, and to make matters worse, many of Pisa's other rivals (Lucca, Florence, Pistoia, Prato, and Volterra) form an alliance bent on her complete destruction. Only by submitting to the Guelph tyrant, Ugolino della Gherardesca, is Pisa saved. Ugolino rules for only a few years before the Ghibellines once more gain control. They imprison Ugolino and his family in 1288, and throw the key to the dungeon into the Arno River on orders of the Archbishop.

Reggio

Located on the "toe" of Italy, opposite Sicily, Reggio has a problem which has persisted since ancient times. Perfectly situated on the route between Italy and Sicily, the straits on which Reggio stands are guarded by the fierce Sirens, who lure the crews of ships to their death by the power of song. When the Norman Roger I attempted to conquer Sicily he sent his first ships from Reggio. The ensuing disaster forced him to postpone the invasion for half a year.

As a result of the Sirens' menace, Reggio is a listless city. Numerous expeditions have attempted to rid the area of the Sirens, but none have succeeded, and few have returned. The city offers a reward to the person who can defeat the Sirens, that reward being the leadership and fealty of the city.

Only a few fishermen dare the straits of Messina, on which Reggio stands. As a result the citizens' Friday and Lent dinners consist of a long stringy noodle made from wheat flour.

Rome

Rome is the spiritual center of the Holy Roman Empire. The city lost its place of honor as the capital of the Empire several centuries ago when it was sacked by the Visigoths and Vandals. However, the city again rose to prominence under Charlemagne, and has ever since been the site of the coronation of German emperors.

Rome is the home of the premier bishopric of the Church. Since St. Peter the Apostle, the Bishop of Rome (known as the Pope, or Father) has been head of the Church and the Holy Father of all true believers. An Easter or Christmas Mass brings thousands of people to St. Peter's Basilica to hear the Holy Father officiate, and the holy sites of the Lateran, the Papal Enclave, bring thousands of pilgrims every year.

The German Emperor is obligated to defend Rome against its enemies, so tensions between Emperor and Pope cause unrest in the city. Such tensions rose greatly during the Twelfth Century, when Pope Alexander III was exiled from Rome by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. However, Barbarossa recognized the peril to his immortal soul, and sued for forgiveness in A.D. 1177. Since then the Pope has been the overlord of the city, although the city is ruled as a commune by its citizens.

Roman politics often involves riots and murder. Factionalism is rife, with guilds, major families, foreigners, and Church groups all adding their voices to the clamor of the throng. Everyone in the city is a member of a faction, and sometimes more than one. Double-dealings are common. Factions even influence the choice of Popes, sometimes violently, so the Lateran Palace is well fortified.

The common folk of the city live in great slums, some of which date back to the time of Caesar. The great temples and shrines are in ruins, and pieces of ancient stonework now lie within the walls of other houses. Under the city lie catacombs dating back before the birth of Christ, including the hiding places of Christians persecuted by early emperors. The Roman wealthy live in fortified houses, castles, or entirely outside the city.

Foreigners are common in Rome. The offices of the Church bring many supplicants as well as envoys from kings and princes. St. Peter's tomb makes Rome a major pilgrimage center, as do the many relics donated to the Church. There is a cathedral school in Rome, drawing theological students from all over Italy. Most students use their time in Rome to make connections in the Papal organization, which they then use to gain choice assignments in the Church after completing their courses of study.

Salerno

This city, located a day's journey south of Naples, is the location of the oldest university in Mythic Europe. The university specializes in medicine, and is a crossroads of Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Jewish culture. This combination of cultures enhances scholastic atmosphere, encouraging the mingling of ideas. However, the Church disapproves of medical study, as the desecration of corpses is against Church law. A number of doctors have come under suspicion of graverobbing for the purpose of dissection. If suspicions are true, scholars can be accused of desecration and heresy, and if found guilty, are liable to be burnt at the stake.

Salerno was part of the Norman kingdom of Naples, and became home to Pope Gregory VII after Robert Guiscard rescued him from Emperor Henry IV in A.D. 1080. Robert defended succeeding Popes until they returned to Rome, after the death of the Anti-Pope Sylvester IV in 1111. The city enjoyed increased trade while the Popes held court in the city, and the return of the Papacy to Rome resulted in a depression in Salerno.

Sassari

The inhabitants of Sassari claim their city predates the Phoenician settlement of Cagliari, at the southern part of the island. There is evidence to support this claim, as city walls are built of immense blocks of stone laid without mortar, much like the Nuraghi (conical houses) which litter the island. Indeed, many of the buildings in the city are Nuraghi, and the remainder are built in many styles, but only one is built with mortar to hold its stones together. Any building erected using mortar has fallen within a year, and during construction bricks and stones also fall, often killing workmen. Only Sassari's cathedral stands with mortar. The churchmen attribute the relics of St. Barbara, patron saint of stonemasons, with the continued existence of the cathedral. If the relics are ever removed the cathedral will surely fall.

Sirens

The strait between Sicily and Italy has been plagued by the Sirens since before the Trojan War. These faerie women lure sailors to their deaths with the beauty of song. Ulysses was able to pass them by plugging the ears of his crew with wax. He left his own ears open, tied himself to the mast of his ship, and was nearly driven mad by the Sirens' song. In fact, he was the last man to hear the Sirens' song and live. Others have tried the same trick and have either gone insane or torn through their bonds and jumped into the sea to reach the Sirens.

In A.D. 1057, the Sirens played a major part in delaying the Norman reconquest of Sicily. The Norman Roger I's fleet was offered information which led to an undefended portion of the Sicilian coast, where the invaders could make their beachhead. In truth, the guide who offered the information served the Saracen nobility of Sicily. He led the Norman fleet directly to the Sirens, sacrificing himself to stop the Norman invasion.

The straits of the Sirens are avoided by all mariners in the area. Thus, few ships now fall to their haunting songs. However, a few adventurous souls dare the straits each year, as the straits provide a quick route between Italian and Sicilian ports. The wealth and weapons of many lost ships litter the coastline. The city of Reggio promises a reward to any person who manages to drive off or kill the Sirens. Though many attempts have been made no one has yet claimed the prize.

Sola Volcano

This volcano island was known to the Romans as the home of Vulcan, the god of smiths and volcanoes. Rumors of Vulcan's workshop, deep within the island, and rumors of mystical treasures within the shop attract more than a few Magi. While no one has ever found these halls (or at least no one has come forward to say so), the island is a source of Ignem *vis*, offering up to four rooks a year. However, the dangers inherent in gathering the *vis* are greater than the rewards. Only the greatest of Ignem Magi can withstand the heat of the inner chambers, where the *vis* collects in shiny black lumps. The volcano is also closely watched by the Covenants of the Roman Tribunal, especially Verdi, the Domus Magnus of House Verditius.

Syracuse

The second port of Sicily, Syracuse has had a long history of magic, from the time that Archimedes burned an invading Roman fleet with the focused light of the sun. The magical theories of Archimedes, which are based on scientific observation and the four elements, have been lost, but every few years young Magi arrive in Syracuse in an attempt to find his works, rumored to be hidden in the city.

The history of Syracuse is a succession of invasions. Physical evidence of such can be found in the city's Roman amphitheater, which is larger than the one in Athens; and in the Cathedral of Syracuse, which is built on the site of a pagan

temple to Athena. (In fact, pillars from the pagan temple are embedded in the cathedral's walls.) The city's architecture is also a fusion of Saracen and Norman styles. Indeed, Syracuse looks as if buildings from half the civilized world have been wrenched from their rightful places and placed in the city. But, the total effect is pleasing as the eye is able to move easily from building to building, without growing weary of a monotonous style.

Taranto

Founded by the Spartans three hundred years before Christ, Taranto has been invaded and conquered numerous times, first by the Romans, followed by the Ostrogoths, Byzantines, Lombards, Arabs, Saracens, and finally by the Normans in A.D. 1063. This history of invasion has resigned the city's populace to their current state. They are willing to put up with almost any indignity from their rulers, since those rulers will surely be replaced soon anyway.

When the Normans invaded southern Italy in the 1060s the Saracen navy had been based in Taranto. Count Robert Guiscard made a special effort to capture the town and the ships, but the Saracens burned those ships which could not sail away. As all the city's shipwrights had gone with the fleeing Muslims, no one remained to rebuild the fleet. In a fury, Robert sacked all the mosques of the city, burned priceless rugs and hangings, and sold all the Muslims he could find into slavery.

An attempt by Taranto to rebuild the fleet in 1150 was stopped by the Venetians, who sailed into the harbor at night and burned the ships and shipyards, escaping virtually unharmed. Since that time, the city has remained under the close eye of the dukes of Apulia, whether Norman, German, or French. The harbor was finally rebuilt in 1173, and a flourishing fishing fleet now departs every night to bring in the fish which forms a large part of the city's diet.

Venice

Founded by refugees fleeing Attila the Hun, Venice was built on a series of low sandy islands. The inhabitants of the islands traded salt and fish for grain and meat. Trade was thus a necessity from the very earliest time, so it is no wonder that Venice has grown to be the largest trading center in Italy.

Venice remained under Byzantine rule even while Germanic kingdoms grew and died on the mainland. The marshes surrounding Venice were the best protection against conquest. Continued attachment to the east gave Venice both constant trade with the eastern Mediterranean, and also the political and mercantile experience needed to run a trading empire. In return, goods from Constantinople and the east were sold in northern Italy, stimulating trade among the towns and cities there.

As a necessity of trade Venice's ships swept the Adriatic Sea free of pirates. Thus, it was only natural that Venice became the predominant sea power of the eastern Mediterranean, especially with the decline of the Byzantine Empire.

In A.D. 1204 Enrico Dandalo, Doge of Venice, subverts the Fourth Crusade, sending the crusaders against the walls of Constantinople in an attempt to wrest control of the eastern Mediterranean from the Byzantines. The crusaders capture Constantinople and found the Latin Empire.

To the Venetians, money matters more than political or religious orientation; Venetians trade with Christians and Muslims alike. Venice has extensive trade with the entire Mediterranean. However, Venice is not able to trade in the Black Sea anymore, as it was excluded from trade with the restored Byzantine Empire after Michael Palaeologus recaptured Constantinople with the help of the Genoese. Thus, Venice must now compete with Genoa and Pisa for trade in the east.

Vieste

Vieste is located on the "spur" of the "boot" of Italy, and is held by Viscount Theobaldo di Vieste, a noted tyrant and diabolist. The city is dominated by Castle Vieste, and rumors of atrocities committed on its inhabitants circulate throughout central Italy.

The Church has been ineffective in its attempts to bring the area's people under protection, as the knights of Castle Vieste kill any priest they come across. The Archbishop of Benevento has petitioned the Knights Templar to eradicate the Viscount, and plans are under way for an invasion of his lands. However, the Viscount has made alliances with Venice, allowing Venetian ships free access to his harbor, and the Venetians are prepared to help their ally in his time of need.


Golden Horde
Tana
Tarnovo
Varna
Ohrid
Tesselonki
Plovdiv
Edirne
Arta
Athens
Bursa
Kizil Ahmadli
Trabazon
Emp. of Trebizond
Karaman
Konya
Izmir
Sis
Aleppo
Antioch

EASTERN EMPIRES

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The land once known as the Byzantine Empire was the home of the eastern Orthodox Church, the second great Christian faith of the world. The Patriarch of Constantinople, leader of the Orthodox Church, was as powerful in the east as the Pope is in the west. The Emperor of Constantinople held his throne in direct descent from the Roman emperors themselves.

Unfortunately, events of the Thirteenth Century disrupt Byzantine life, and change the character of this eastern region, perhaps forever. In A.D. 1206 western crusaders conquer Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, and apportion its land to the Norman conquerors and their Venetian backers. The region now consists of several nations, each vying for control of the old Empire, but none strong enough to take it.

The Latin Empire, which now rules Constantinople, is an uneasy alliance of Normans and Italians. However, the Latins control the Bosphorus, the narrow strait where it is easiest to cross the mouth of the Black Sea. The Bosphorus is the gateway between Mythic Europe and the Levant, and the Latins' greatest strength is their control of this crucial crossing point.

The boundaries of the Latin Empire encompass the city of Brussa in Asia Minor, Constantinople itself, the land of Thessalonica, and the eastern portion of Greece. The northern coasts are low and flat with only marginally fertile lands. They receive warm summer rains from the Mediterranean and are generally well watered. The southern portions of Greece are extremely mountainous, with high, rocky peaks and little farmland. The weather in Greece is warm with mild winters. There are no rains at all in Greece during the summer, and only light rain or snow in winter, so the land is poorly watered.

The Latins' most strident opponent is the Empire of Nicaea, where the remnants of the eastern Byzantines are withdrawn. Once a weak government-in-exile, Nicaea has become a major force in Asia Minor. They have made alliances with the Turks and the Bulgars, and are waging a war of economic and military strategy to force the Latins out of Constantinople and back to Mythic Europe.

Nicaea is a land small in extent, really more of an appendage to the outside of the Latin Empire. The Nicaeans hold a few minor seaports on the Black Sea, and have done little to conquer territories to their east. What lands they do hold are on the fringe of the mountains of Asia Minor, lands which are worn out from centuries of farming.

Another player in the political battles of Asia Minor is the so-called "Empire" of Trebizond. This weak city-state is a lesser figure in the fate of the Latin Empire, but its politicians constantly attempt to play the Latins' enemies against one another, hoping for some political or financial advantage. It is said that Trebizond is negotiating with the Viennese of the Latin Empire to provide trading ports along the Black Sea.

Between Nicaea and Trebizond lie the pagan lands of the Seljuk Turks. These nomadic people are the first wave of the eastern barbarian hordes, and have infested much of Asia Minor. They rule the high, barren mountains which fill eastern

Asia Minor, and often raid Latins, Nicaeans, and the people of Trebizond alike. The land of the Turks is very dry with high mountains blocking any rainfall. Scrub grasses which survive here make adequate fare for Turkish horses, though.

On the other side of the Byzantines are two additional enemies of the Latins. The Bulgarian Empire is located in the mountainous areas of the Balkans, and to the north in the Wallachian plain. The Byzantines have only recently won their independence from Constantinople when the Latins conquer it, and the Bulgars are fighting to insure that the Latins do not conquer Bulgaria.

Bulgaria has a climate much like that of Hungary: little rain and mild weather. The Balkans (and the Transylvanian Alps to the north) protect the Wallachian plain from severe weather. The region is well watered by the Danube, however, as well as by runoff from the surrounding mountains. The land here, unlike much of the rest of the region, is extremely fertile, and the fields of Wallachia are filled with all manner of cool-weather crops.

The other major western opponent to the Latin Empire is the Despotate of Epirus. This Byzantine state was founded after the fall of Constantinople by Greek allies of the Empire of Nicaea, and occupies much of northwestern Greece. While the Despotate is still weak, it represents a considerable threat to the Latin Empire, as its borders abut those of Bulgaria, cutting the Latin Empire's connection to the remainder of Mythic Europe. The Despotate, like the Empire of Nicaea, is struggling to overthrow the Latins, and only a constant flow of supplies from Viennese ships through the Mediterranean keeps the Latin forces supplied.

Byzantine Empire

The fall of the western Roman Empire to Germanic tribes in the Fourth Century left Constantinople and the eastern Empire in dire straits. In the first place the eastern Roman Empire was surrounded by invaders. It was caught between the barbarians in the west, the Persians in the south and east, and the Huns in the north. The eastern Empire also faced threats from within. The people revolted against the oppression of the large landholders and the government's heavy tax burden, rioting in Antioch in A.D. 397 and Thessalonica in 390. In fact, the suppression of riots in Thessalonica cost 7,000 lives. And, the Christian Church was wracked by heresies and factionalism. Indeed, the Arians and other heresies found adherents in the many peoples of the east.

Theodosius II ascended the throne of the east in 408 at the age of seven. His sister Pulcharia took the young Emperor in hand, giving him manuscripts to read and illuminate, giving him an education fit for a monk but not an emperor. Pulcharia assumed the Regency in 414 at the age of sixteen, and ruled the Empire in Theodosius's name for thirty-three years. She and her two sisters gave themselves over to the life of Christian virgins. The palace was thus transformed into a monastery, to which only women and priests were admitted. In spite of their other-worldliness, the women ruled the Empire so well that the eastern Empire survived the downfall of the west, and enjoyed many years of relative peace. During that peace, in an effort to codify all the laws of the Empire, a special council of jurists was called in 429. The Theodosian Code was produced nine years later. The laws were accepted in both the east and in the remainder of the western Empire.

The Emperor Justinian came to the eastern throne in 527, and almost immediately faced a revolt by the citizens of Constantinople. General Belisarius put down the riots, known as the 'Nika' (Victory) rebellion after the cry of the revolutionaries, at a cost of 30,000 lives.

Emperor Justinian then called on Belisarius to reconquer the west from the German tribes. His first efforts resulted in the capture of Carthage and the north African coast from the Vandals. The African coast remained under Byzantine control until conquered again by the Arabs in the Seventh Century. Belisarius continued with his victories, conquering Sicily, then the Ostrogothic kingdom of Naples. He captured Naples by sending select troops through the city's aqueduct, allowing the intruders to open the gates to the rest of the army.

In turn the populace of Rome hailed Belisarius as a conqueror, and the clergy welcomed him as a force with which to oppose the Ostrogoths, who followed in the Arian heresy. However, Justinian began to suspect Belisarius of plotting for the throne, so reinforcements sent to Italy were led by officers hostile to the General. In spite of the Emperor's distrust, Belisarius managed to conquer most of Italy.

Justinian, thinking the threat in the west was then abated, called Belisarius east to attack Persia. In the absence of the eastern armies, the Goths took Rome in 549, then swept on to conquer the rest of the Italian peninsula and its surrounding islands. With Belisarius busy in the east, Justinian sent the eunuch Narses into Italy. Narses managed to drive the Goths from Italy, but the country was ruined by the eighteen years of the Gothic war. Rome had been besieged and looted, her population reduced from one million to perhaps 40,000. Half the citizens were actually supported by alms from the Papacy, and the decimation of the senatorial class eliminated the Senate as a government office.

In addition to his wars of reconquest, the eastern Emperor Justinian clarified and re-codified the laws of the Empire, which had become muddled since the time of the Theodosian Code. Ten jurists worked on the laws, and all other laws were declared null, except as included in the Justinian Code. The final form of the Code was published in Greek, marking the end of Latin as the official language of the eastern Empire. The Code also legalized Christianity of the Orthodox faith, making Nestorianism, Monophysite, and other heresies illegal. It acknowledged the leadership of the Pope in Rome, but stressed the supremacy of the Emperor over the Church. And, under the Code, the Bible was included in judicial trials; all parties involved in a case were made to swear the truth of their case on the Bible. Indeed, the Code covered all aspects of life, from the establishment of the Church to penalties for adultery and heresy.

Though the eastern Empire had won victories in other lands, the Empire's lands were eventually taken by more foreign invaders. A group of Huns crossed the Danube and raided cities in Thrace and Greece, advancing on Constantinople in 559. Justinian called once more on Belisarius, who was now old and feeble. Belisarius gathered 600 volunteers and went to meet the 7,000-man Hunnish army. He concealed a third of his force on one flank, and the hidden attacked the Huns as the remainder of the army waited in a defensive stance. The Huns fled before a single Greek fell, but the citizens of Constantinople complained that Belisarius had not brought back the heads of the Huns. Justinian listened to the populace rather than reasoned with them, and ordered Belisarius stripped of rank and possessions.

Emperor Justinian died in 565, becoming a heretic in his last years. In the end he believed the body of Christ was incorruptible, and that Christ had never been subject to the wants or needs of the flesh. The Church warned him that to die unrepentant was to spend all eternity in the fires of Hell, but Justinian never repented. Justinian was the last true Roman Emperor, who thought of the Empire as comprising both east and west. The emperors who followed let the west fend for itself, or attempted to conquer portions of it, but did not acknowledge the west as part of the Empire.

The heirs of Justinian could not stem the problems which beset the Empire. On Justinians death the treasury was empty, heretics and entire nations had been conquered but not pacified, and barbarians still waited outside Imperial borders. On the last count, the Avars in the north and the Persians in the east both made inroads into the Empire. Taking matters into his own hands, a centurion named Phocas overthrew the line of emperors, killing the sons of Emperor Maurice before his eyes, and then had the Emperor beheaded. The nobility of Constantinople appealed to the Governor of Egypt for aid against Phocas, and the Governor sent his son Heraclius to aid the city. Heraclius sailed a fleet to Constantinople in 610, captured Phocas, and displayed his corpse to the people. Heraclius was acclaimed as Emperor, and spent the rest of his life cleaning up the state.

However, Heraclius's reign was not without its hardships. The Persians captured Jerusalem and Egypt in 614, cutting off the major granary of the Empire, compelling Heraclius to reduce the daily dole which had for so long fed the citizens of Constantinople. To feed the people the Patriarch of Constantinople loaned the considerable wealth of the Church to the Emperor, to finance a holy war to reclaim the Holy Land. In six years of war Heraclius managed to recapture the Holy Land, and to scatter the Avar armies which threatened Constantinople. Heraclius's last years saw the fall of Syria and Egypt to the Arabs, who were fueled by their faith in the new religion of Islam. Indeed, the Arabs besieged Constantinople in the years 673 to 678, but were repulsed by Greek Fire, which burns even when doused with water.

As in the west, troubles arose in the east between Church and state, and in the way the Church delivered its "truths." Emperor Leo III became offended by the reverence with which icons (symbols of the saints and Christ) were worshipped by the common people. The people looked on images as the personification of God or a saint, rather than as mere representations. In 726 Leo assembled leading churchmen, and with their consent passed laws to remove images, from murals to icons, from all aspects of the Church. In response the peasantry revolted, supported by the lower levels of the Church. The Iconoclasts ("Image Breakers") were attacked by the peasantry, a rival Emperor was raised and had to be fought, and Pope Gregory II anathemized the Iconoclasts. Even the Patriarch of Constantinople eventually joined the revolution, seeking to separate the Church from the authority of the Emperor.

The new laws were only lightly enforced during Leo's reign, but his son Constantine V took a harsher stance against the worship of images. He ordered the mutilation of priests and monks who resisted the law, confiscated monasteries, and beheaded the Patriarch in 767. The Iconoclastic movement continued for another twelve years under the Emperors Leo IV and Constantine VI, until Empress Irene, acting as Regent to Constantine VI, called the Second Council of Nicaea. The Council established that the veneration of holy objects was an acceptable part of Christian life.

From the Tenth Century generations of emperors held the throne of Byzantium, some good, some bad. The Macedonian dynasty reigned in Byzantium from the ascension of Basil I until the death of the Empress Theodora in 1056. Basil II, son of Romanus II, served as co-Emperor with Nicephorus and John Tzimisces, and on John's death in 976 became sole Emperor.

He put down revolts among the armies, stopped the Saracens from gaining any more territory at the Empire's expense, and destroyed the power of the Bulgars. Indeed, in 1014 Basil won a great victory over the Bulgars and sent 14,000 prisoners back to their king, blinding all but one in a hundred, who still had one eye put out. The Bulgarian King died when his army returned, every hundred men led by a one-eyed man. Basil II died on the eve of putting to sea to reconquer Sicily from the Saracens.

The throne passed to Constantine VIII, who died with only three daughters to succeed him. His eldest daughter Zoe acted as Regent for four different Emperors, and with her sister Theodora ruled wisely. Zoe attacked corruption in the government and Church, stopped the practice of purchasing offices, and dispensed justice with an even hand. When Zoe died in 1050, Theodora retired to a convent, but was called back by the populace on the death of Emperor Constantine IX in 1055. Theodora ruled for another year, but died suddenly in 1056.

Palace administrators elected Michael VI in Theodora's stead, while the Byzantine army elected Isaac Comnenus. Isaac fought one battle with Michael, overthrowing him and compelling him to become a monk. Isaac was crowned Emperor in 1057. He retired after two years, leaving the throne to become a monk himself, and named Constantine Ducas his successor. Constantine ruled for eight years, dying in 1067, leaving his wife Eudocia as Regent for four years. She married and elevated Romanus IV to the throne, to lead armies against the onslaught of the Seljuk Turks. However, Romanus was defeated at the battle of Manzikert in 1071, and returned to Constantinople where he was deposed and blinded by Michael VII.

Toward the end of the Eleventh Century the Byzantine Empire was in trouble. The Seljuks took Jerusalem in 1076, and the Norman Robert Gusicard attacked Byzantine cities in Greece. Alexius Comnenus ascended the throne in 1081, and immediately began to take steps to save the Empire. In 1081 he issued the Golden Bull, giving Venice trading rights in Byzantine ports and offering them an area of Constantinople, all in return for the Venetians' aid against Gusicard. In 1095 Alexius appealed to the Pope for aid against the Seljuks, and offered a reunion of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, so that a united Christendom could reclaim the Holy Land. Alexius's appeal helped catalyze the lords of the west to join the First Crusade.

The Golden Bull of 1082 gave Venice duty-free rights to the ports of Byzantium in the Aegean and Black Seas, and gave the city part of Constantinople in which to work and live. By 1100 there were 10,000 Venetians in Constantinople, and they terrorized the rest of the city with brawls and murders. The cities of Genoa and Pisa demanded and received similar trade rights from the Empire, taking trade from Greek merchants and money from the Imperial treasury. Greek merchants understandably felt betrayed by their Emperor, and bad blood between the Italians and Greeks lay at the root of many problems to come.

The First Crusade, enabled by the unification of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, was preceded by a rag-tag army of peasants led by Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless. The peasants were fed and assisted by the people of Constantinople, but plundered the outskirts of the city, breaking into houses and churches in search of food and spoils. Emperor Alexius had the peasants ferried across the Bosphorus, and bade them wait for western lords who were on their way to the Crusade. The peasants refused to wait and advanced on Nicaea, where they perished under the arrows of the Saracens.

The western armies of the First Crusade were entertained for a while in Constantinople, where the leaders of the Crusade swore fealty to the eastern Emperor, and swore to return all former Byzantine cities which might be recaptured in the Holy Land. The western crusaders were joined by the Byzantine army, and the combined forces captured Nicaea in 1097. The Byzantine Emperor claimed the city, protecting it from western knights, who complained that the Emperor seemed to be in league with the Saracens.

The armies then continued on, the crusaders besieging Antioch, while Emperor Alexius captured the towns and villages of Asia Minor. Western fugitives from the siege of Antioch painted a picture of disaster, so Alexius gathered his army and prepared to defend his lands from the Saracens which the fleeing crusaders swore were at their heels. However, the crusaders in Antioch, who had actually captured the city, claimed Alexius had abandoned them, breaking his vows as feudal overlord. From that time on the crusaders retained the cities they captured from the Saracens, and created four feudal states: Jerusalem, Edessa, Tripolis, and Antioch.

Outraged, Alexius returned to Constantinople where he wrote bitter letters to the Pope. He also defended his western lands from Bohemund of Sicily, who followed in Robert Guiscard's footsteps and invaded the coast of Greece from Italy. Alexius died in 1118, and was succeeded by his son John II.

John II lived a life of simplicity and virtue, and led successful campaigns against the foes of Christendom, but died in 1143 from the scratch of one of his own poisoned arrows. John's son, Manuel I, reveled in battle and warfare, seeking out personal combat in the field. He surrounded himself with advisors from the west; French, Italians, and Germans all had a place at his court. Manuel also participated in western style tournaments, and married Mary of Antioch, a Latin princess.

Eventually, Manuel became preoccupied with regaining Italy for Byzantium, and spent a great deal of time and money on schemes and diplomacy. In 1171 he arrested all the Venetians in the Empire, confiscating their possessions. He made reparations to the Venetians in 1175, but the Venetians never forgot or forgave the injuries done them. Manuel also led campaigns against the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and against the Saracens in the Holy Land and Asia Minor. But, at the pass of Myriokephalon in 1176, the Byzantine army was decimated by the Seljuk Turks, and any hope of driving the Turks from Asia Minor was lost.

Manuel died in 1180 and was succeeded by his son Alexius II, who was only twelve. The Empress Mary of Antioch assumed the boy's Regency, supported by the many Latin nobles who had been granted high government posts under Manuel. However, the people of Constantinople rebelled against the Latin influence in court, welcoming Andronicus Comnenus as protector of the Emperor. Indeed, the Greeks slaughtered any Latins they could get their hands on, even breaking into hospitals to murder the sick and injured. Many Latins fled by ship, leaving the city and government in Greek hands. Thus, Andronicus first became co-Emperor with Alexius, then killed Alexius and seized the throne. Andronicus cleaned up the corruption that was rampant in the government, telling officials, *"You must choose between ceasing to cheat, or ceasing to live."* Many officials fled to the provinces, where they took up arms against the Emperor, who suppressed their many rebellions with great cruelty.

During the Byzantine Empire's unrest, nations on its borders took the opportunity to free themselves from the yoke of oppression. And, outside enemies of the Empire invaded its outlying districts. In 1185 the Normans of Sicily captured Thessalonica. As a result Emperor Andronicus was torn to pieces by the citizens of Constantinople, who chose Emperor Isaac II to replace him. The Normans were expelled from Thessaly, but the Imperial government returned to its previous corrupt ways. Thus, the Bulgarians revolted in 1186, led by Ivan and Peter Asen. Isaac was deposed and blinded by his Imperial brother, Alexius III.

Thirteenth Century

With the coming of the Thirteenth Century the Byzantine Empire continues to see unrest. Alexius III loses the Balkans to the Empire of Bulgaria, and in A.D. 1203 loses the city of Constantinople and his life to the lords of the Fourth Crusade.

The crusaders invade the eastern capital after plots of intrigue are staged by its former line of emperors. With his father's fall from the throne, Alexius, son of the deposed Isaac II, flees to the court of his brother-in-law, Philip of Swabia. There he meets and talks with Boniface of Montferrat, who becomes the leader of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. After the sack of Zara by the members of the Fourth Crusade, Alexius offers to cover the cost of transporting the crusaders, and to unite the Catholic and Orthodox Churches under the Pope, if the crusaders help place his father back on the throne of Byzantium.

The crusaders cross to Constantinople where they place Isaac II back on the throne with his son Alexius IV as co-Emperor. Alexius is not able to make good his promises to the westerners, so the Venetians and crusaders came to terms with each other. Alexius V removes both Isaac and Alexius IV in 1204, but is attacked by the Latins before he can consolidate his hold on the city. The Emperor, Patriarch, and many great nobles flee to outlying provinces as the Latins take the city and partition the Empire among themselves. For three days soldiers of the west sack the city, looting and burning. The Venetians manage to steal many great works of art, but the crusaders only vent their frustrations and lust.

Out of the western destruction of the Byzantine Empire emerges a number of states. The Empire itself is divided among the crusaders and Venetians. Baldwin of Flanders becomes the new Emperor of the Latin Empire of Romania, Greece is divided into the Principality of Achaea and the Duchy of Athens, and Thessaly becomes a kingdom. Venice takes most of the ports of the Empire as its share, along with three-eighths of the city of Constantinople. The new Patriarch is chosen from among the Venetian ecclesiastics.

Greek nobles who fled the Empire take advantage of its ruin to set up their own outlying states. Byzantine nobles so the same. Thus, several new empires are founded: the Empire of Trebizond by Alexius and David Comnenus, grandsons of Andronicus; the Empire of Nicaea, the new seat of Byzantine power, by Theodore I Lascaris; and the Despotate of Epirus by Michael I Angelus.

During the Empire's disorder the Latins quickly consolidate their gains, but make an enemy of Kaloyan I of Bulgaria. He invades Thrace and, at the Battle of Adrianople, captures Baldwin, Emperor of the Latin Empire. Kaloyan continues to ravage the lands of Thrace and Thessaly, until even the Greeks look to the Latins for aid. Ultimately Kaloyan kills Baldwin, and Henry of Flanders is made Emperor in 1206. Henry manages

to pacify the country, defeating Kaloyan and the Nicaean Empire. He also instigates a more humane government in Byzantium than had the rapacious Baldwin.

The Pope is at first horrified by the sack of Constantinople, but as the Latin Empire grows in power the Pope looks upon the consolidation of the west and east as a miracle. However, Papal legates are not able to join the two Churches together, and the people of the former Byzantine Empire rebel many times in favor of the Orthodox Church.

Though the Latin Empire is first strong and has control, it eventually begins losing its influence over the east, and finally falls. The Despot of Epirus makes the first gains against the Latins, capturing Albania and the Port of Durrazo in 1210. Theodore of Epirus also captures the kingdom of Thessalonica in 1223 and assumes the title of Emperor. However, the Bulgarians take Thessalonica in 1230 and, allied with the Empire of Nicaea, conquer Thrace.

One of the powers to rival the Latins is that of Nicaea, the new seat of Byzantine power. In the new Empire of Nicaea, the emperors prove popular with the Greeks, and soon much of Asia Minor is in the emperors' hands. In fact, the Empire is prosperous, especially with the rival Seljuks weakened by invasions of the Mongols. Thus, the Nicaean Emperor John III Vastazes is able to concentrate on the west. An alliance with Bulgaria gives Nicaea a foothold in Mythic Europe, and the Bulgarian kings of 1242 and 1246 allow John to conquer portions of Bulgarian territory. He also manages to capture Thessalonica in 1246, surrounding Constantinople with captured territory.

John's son, Theodore II, inherits the throne in 1254 and is able to hold off Bulgarian attacks, inciting civil war in Bulgaria. The internal war eliminates the ruling Bulgarian Asen family.

Theodore dies in 1258 and the nobility of the Nicaean Empire scrambles for the Regency of Theodore's son, John IV. The eventual victor is Michael VII Palaeologus, who appoints himself Emperor in 1259. He leads successful campaigns against the Latins, and gives trading concessions to Genoa for its aid in the fight. Thus, the Venetians of Constantinople are outmaneuvered by their rivals, and in 1261 Constantinople falls to the Nicaeans. With the fall of the city, the Byzantine Empire is essentially renewed, simply under a new government.

While the Latin Empire and Thessalonica fall to the Nicaeans, the Duchy of Athens and Achaea still hold out. However, the Nicaean Emperor manages to gain the area around Mistra in return for the release of some Latin nobles. The Duchy of Athens is given to Charles of Anjou, the King of Sicily, who attempts to pass off his invasions of Byzantine lands as a new crusade.

In 1274 Emperor Michael of Byzantium gives his submission to the Pope at the Second Council of Lyon, promising to join the two Churches under the leadership of Rome. However, no one believes the submission and Pope Martin IV denounces it in 1281. By now Nicaea's fall is imminent. The struggles against the west leave Asia Minor open to conquest by the Turks, and Nicaean lands are lost once again. By Michael's death in 1282 Bulgaria and Epirus remain independent, and Asia Minor is lost to the Muslims.

Emperor Michael is succeeded by his son Andronicus II, who is saved from the danger of Charles of Anjou by the revolt of the Sicilian Vespers. However, monks seize the governance of the Empire's Church, preferring that the Empire would die before a reconciliation with Rome would occur. Thus, the Nicaeans still hold some of the former Byzantine Empire, but not for long. In the east Turkish tribes are gathering under the banner of Osman, the charismatic leader of a small tribe. The Turks overrun Asia Minor on the collapse of the Seljuks and threaten Constantinople itself.

ADRIANOPLE

Adrianople now stands on the border of the Byzantine Empire, when once it was many days journey from the lands of the barbarians. The shrinking of the Empire's borders has forced Adrianople to adopt a defensive position, for it is all that stands between Constantinople and the warriors of the west.

Adrianople was the site of a great battle during the Fourth Century, when the Goths destroyed two thirds of the Byzantine army, including the Byzantine Emperor Valens and his royal bodyguard.

After the fall of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade, Adrianople is claimed by the Venetians, who hold the city independent of the Latin Emperor. Adrianople is the site of another battle in A.D. 1205, when Greek and Bulgarian armies crush an army of the Latin Empire, allowing the Greek states to gather their forces for the reconquest of Byzantium. Adrianople opens its gates to the army of Michael Palaeologus, overthrowing its Venetian masters in 1260.

AMASTRIS

This port handles much of the wine trade on the Black Sea, supplying Constantinople and the Latin kingdoms of Asia Minor.

After the fall of Constantinople in A.D. 1204, Amastris became part of the Nicaean Empire, serving as its port on the Black Sea. Amastris also exports rugs made in the interior of Asia Minor, which Genoese merchants carry back to Italy and Flanders.

Amastris is ruled by a council of wealthy merchants. The Genoese have managed to insert an agent into the council. The agent sponsors the Genoese as trading partners in the city, over Venetian traders who look to break Genoa's dominance on the Black Sea. The Venetians have many agents in the city, looking for a way to win a place on the council, but they have been successfully blocked by the Genoese.

ATHENS

This ancient Greek city was the leader of a coalition of city-states before Christ. The citizens defeated the Persian King Darius and his army on the field of Marathon, while the Athenian fleet sank Persian ships in the straits of Salamis. Athens sank into relative obscurity after its ancient glory, and took simply to building ships for the Roman, and later Byzantine, navy.

After the fall of Constantinople the Duchy of Athens is held in fief from the King of Thessalonica. The Orthodox priests of Athens flee to Epirus, to escape a forced conversion to Catholicism. The Duchy of Athens is reduced in size by the advances of Epirot and Nicaean forces, but the city and surrounding country are never conquered, and are still held by Latins.

The city may tout Christian devotion, but hints at the old ways persist. Among the city's Greek relics is the Acropolis, a steep-sided plateau topped by many temples to the pagan gods of Greece. The Archbishops of Greece converted many of the temples to churches and shrines, but rumor says many of the temples have hidden cellars leading into the Acropolis, and that worship of the pagan gods continues.

BRUSSA

The hills around Brussa support many thousands of hermits and monks, all retiring from the trials of the world to achieve inner peace and dedication to the Lord. Many of these hermits settle the slopes of Mt. Olympus and carve chapels and cells into the rock. The greatest of these is the Church of the Risen Christ, an entire church carved on the eastern slope, which catches the rays of the morning sun through an intricately carved window. Shadows cast on the floor are interpreted by the monks who inhabit the surrounding cells.

The interpreting monks send a message to the Emperor in A.D. 1200, warning him to beware the schemes of the Doge of Venice, but the Imperial staff laughs away the warning.

It is to Brussa that Michael Palaeologus comes in 1257, to see what the future holds for him. He comes away from the church and takes the crown of the Empire in 1258, reconquering Constantinople in 1261. He grants the Church of the Risen Christ the revenues of many estates taken from nobles who had aided the Latins.

CHERSON

Byzantium's only port on the northern coast of the Black Sea, Cherson is the main port for shipping grain from the Crimea to Constantinople.

Cherson is not overrun by the Mongols given its position on a strongly defended hill, with a natural harbor. Byzantine ships are able to keep the city supplied during a four month siege in the autumn of A.D. 1222; its capture might mean starvation in Byzantium.

Cherson's other export is gold, which washes down from the hills. The peasants place fleeces in the rivers, and the gold is captured in the wool. These golden fleeces inspired the legend of Jason and the Argonauts and their quest for the Golden Fleece. There is a cave near Cherson which locals claim is the very cave where Jason slew the Hydra, a great dragon with seven heads. To this day the surroundings of the cave can bear no life.

CONSTANTINOPLE

Founded in A.D. 324 and dedicated in 330 as Nova Roma, the name Constantinople was attached to the city, in the popular mind, during the reign of its founder, Constantine the Great. He founded the city as the Christian capital of the Roman Empire, opposite Rome. The site of the fishing village of Byzantium was chosen as its location on the Golden Horn, a natural bay in the Sea of Marmora, made for both a harbor and prime defensive location.

Within two centuries of its founding, Constantinople became the richest city in Christendom. Constantinople has a population in excess of one million, and has thousands of monasteries and churches, the greatest of which is Hagia Sophia, the Church of Holy Wisdom, built in 330 and called the most beautiful church in the world.

The Venetians, and later the Genoese and Pisans, were given sections of the city to live and work in return for aid against the Normans of southern Italy. In 1183 the people of Constantinople rioted against the Italians, massacring several thousand and forcing the rest from the city. The Venetians

never forgave the Byzantines, and in 1197 the Doge of Venice offered to pay the passage of the Fourth Crusade if the crusaders would take Constantinople.

The Latin crusaders take the city in 1204, briefly putting Laxius IV on the throne, before taking the city and the Empire for themselves. The city languishes under the Latins for fifty-seven years, and opens its gates to the armies of Michael VIII in 1261.

CORINTH

Even in ancient times Corinth was famous for its cloth, and it still supplies cloth to the eastern markets of Constantinople and the Holy Land.

The mount of Corinth, or Acrocorinth, rises from the center of the city and is topped by a castle, formerly the site of a temple to Aphrodite which was served by 1,000 temple prostitutes. It was the Apostle Paul who wrote letters to the Corinthians, rebuking them for their licentious ways.

Corinth was sacked by Norman soldiers in A.D. 1185, and becomes part of the Principality of Achaea after the fall of Constantinople. William of Moerbeke, installed as the Catholic Archbishop of Corinth, uses his time in the city to translate the works of Aristotle into Latin, giving scholars of the west the wisdom of ancient Greece.

Corinth's castle is held by the Baron of Corinth. His court resembles the earlier Temple of Aphrodite in many ways. The Archbishop needs the support of the Baron, so does not dare censure him for his harem, but is forming the opinion that more is happening in the castle than the Baron lets on. The Baron and his knights have stopped attending church services in the city, instead staying in the castle on Sundays, attending Mass in the chapel. The Archbishop plans to send a priest to the castle but has not yet found the right person.

The city has not been recaptured by the Byzantine Empire, and remains part of the Latin holdings of the Principality of Achaea. The Corinthians, for the most part Orthodox Christians, fret under the rule of the Archbishop and Latin nobles. A number of groups have arisen which work toward the eventual liberation of the city.

DURRAZO

Durrazo, or Dyrrachium, as it is known to the Greeks, plays a small but very important part in the history of the Fourth Crusade and the fall of Constantinople. Durrazo is a good port, and is easily accessible from the southern Italian port of Brindisi. When Robert Guiscard conquered lower Italy he soon cast his eyes on Durrazo which would allow him to control the Adriatic Sea, coincidentally allowing him to stop the ships of the nascent city of Venice. Robert captured Durrazo in A.D. 1081, and the Emperor of Byzantium, rightly fearing a Norman conquest from the west, sent messengers to Venice requesting the aid of the Venetian navy, the only fleet powerful enough to contend with Robert. As an inducement, the Emperor granted free trading rights to Venetian merchants, allowing them to use Byzantine ports, docks, and warehouses for free, which other merchants had to pay large fees to use.

The Venetians prepared an army and fleet to retake Durrazo, but before they could move a rebellion in Italy forced Robert to return there, eliminating the need for a naval assault. The Greeks reconquered Durazzo, but it is taken by the Venetians after the fall of Constantinople. The Despotate of Epirus quickly recaptures Durrazo in 1205, and the city rejoins the Empire in 1265.

ITHICA

Ithica is the home and kingdom of the legendary Wizard-King Ulysses, who crafted the ruse of the Trojan Horse. After the Trojan War, he wandered the Mediterranean Sea, cursed by Neptune. When he finally arrived home, he found numerous suitors for the hand of his wife, Penelope, as it was assumed he was dead. Penelope had kept the suitors waiting by weaving Ulysses's death shroud by day, unraveling it by night. Ulysses killed the suitors during a feast. Later in his life, when he felt death approaching, he carried an oar inland, vowing not to stop until the natives he met did not recognize the oar for what it was. Legends say he wandered far beyond Byzantium, until he finally found his resting place among the barbarians beyond the Black Sea.

The palace of Ulysses is long lost to time. However, some Magi and scholars still seek its ancient ruins, as it is said much of Ulysses's magical wealth still remains in his palace. Ulysses was also supposed to have taken many magical items from the sack of Troy, but if legends are to be believed he arrived at Ithica penniless and devoid of his Trojan gains.

MISTRA

Mistra served as the Byzantine capital of the Moera, or Peloponese. The city was one of the intellectual centers of the Byzantine Empire, being rich in schools.

The city is seized and burned to the ground in the Fourth Crusade of A.D. 1204, but is rebuilt in 1249 by Guilleme de Villehardouin. The city is retaken in 1263 by the Emperor Michael Palaeologus, and the Byzantines use it as a strongpoint in the reconquest of the Peloponese.

Though the city is rebuilt, much of it is still in ruins. Poorer citizens have made tent- and shanty-towns among burnt out buildings.

MODON

Modon is a small town on the coast of Greece until Venice seizes it in A.D. 1202 and builds a castle on the promontory. The castle attracts western merchants and soon grows into a thriving city. Modon and the nearby castle of Korone are known as the "Eyes of the Republic," and are the first Venetian footholds on the Greek mainland.

After the fall of Constantinople, Venice enlarges the city walls and encloses the bay, creating a fine harbor. The Venetians hold Modon and Korone free of any oath to the Principality of Achaea. Indeed, they charge ships of other cities huge fees to use the city's harbor; Modon's is one of the few ports on the west coast of Greece which can handle large ships.

NICAEA

Nicaea served as the meeting place for the Ecumenical Council of the Christian Church in A.D. 325. An important doctrinal decision was made here, called the Nicene Creed, which stated that Christ was of the same substance as God, the Father. The Council of Nicaea had been called because of problems brought on by the teachings of Arius of Alexandria, that Christ and God were two separate beings.

The Second Council of Nicaea was called in 786, and resolved the Iconoclastic controversy by declaring that icons were objects of veneration, not worship.

In 1086 Nicaea fell to the Seljuk Turks, who made the city their capital in Asia Minor. The First Crusade recaptured Nicaea in 1097, which surrendered to the Byzantine Emperor Alexius after he pledged the garrison would be spared. He kept the crusaders from sacking the city, which angered them, as Nicaea was a rich city.

Nicaea becomes capital of the Empire of Nicaea after the fall of Constantinople, and soon becomes the center of Imperial Byzantine bureaucracy. Accordingly, many different peoples can be found in its streets: Genoese merchants, Mongols, Latins, and Saracen soldiers and ambassadors. Even after Constantinople is reconquered in 1261, Nicaea retains its cosmopolitan air, and becomes a center of culture and government in Asia Minor.

Nicaean Empire

After the capture of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade, Theodore I Lascaris takes Nicaea as the seat of a new Byzantine Empire. The Empire of Nicaea initially bears the brunt of fighting from both the Latin Empire and the Seljuks of Rum. However, an alliance with the Bulgars manages to divert the fighting force of the Latin Empire, allowing Theodore to triumph at the battle of Adrianople in A.D. 1205. The borders between the Latin and Nicaean Empires are therefore fixed by treaty in 1214. But, by his death in 1222, Theodore is able to drive the Latins from most of Asia Minor, leaving them a thin strip of land opposite Constantinople. Part of Theodore's success comes from his ability to address the patriotism of the Byzantine people.

John III Vatatzes, Theodore's son-in-law, succeeds him and continues the reconquest of the Byzantine Empire. He recaptures the Aegean Islands from the Latins and Venice. An alliance with the Empire of Epirus, also known as the Empire of Bulgaria, also allows the capture of Thrace and the kingdom of Thessalonica from the Latins. However, relations between the Byzantine and Bulgarian Empires breaks down because of their divergent ambitions.

John, the Nicaean Emperor, holds his lands against combined attacks by the Latins, Bulgarians, and lastly the Cumans, a savage nomadic people from beyond the Black Sea. Fortunately the attacks of the Mongols so weakens the Seljuks that John is able to ignore them for the rest of his reign. The death of Kaliman I of Bulgaria allows John to seize southern Bulgaria, thus surrounding the Latin Empire and Constantinople with Byzantine holdings. John also reconquers Macedonia and Rhodes so that, by his death in 1254, most of the former Byzantine Empire is back in the hands of the Greeks.

Theodore II Lascaris, John's son, is an able but unbalanced ruler who is able to repel the attempt by the Bulgarian Emperor to retake his lost lands. Theodore II dies in 1258, leaving his throne in the hands of his seven year old son, John IV Lascaris. The political turmoil which results ends with the elevation of the popular General Michael VII Palaeologus, who soon usurps the title of Emperor.

Michael resists the combined attacks of the kingdom of Achaia and the Despotate of Epirus, crushing Epirus's hopes of ever retaking Constantinople. Baldwin II, Emperor of the Latin Empire, tries to conquer Nicaea but fails in the attempt. Michael Palaeologus therefore wins a diplomatic victory from the attack, and is able to use his new influence to sway Genoese merchants from their support of the Latin Empire. The

Genoese take the chance that Nicaea is able to take Constantinople, and the chance that Nicaea will remember the help given by Genoa. Constantinople falls in the summer of 1261, the Latins fleeing by sea. Michael VII Paleologus leads the troops of Nicaea into the city, reclaiming it for all time.

NIKOPOLIS

Nikopolis was established by the Roman Emperor Augustus to commemorate his victory over the navy of Marc Antony and Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. A splendid temple to Neptune was built, decorated with the prows of enemy ships.

The temple is destroyed by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade, along with most of the city. The invading soldiers become drunk with wine they plunder from the storehouses in the harbor, and an archery contest, using flaming arrows (so they can be seen in the night) sets the town aflame. Justice is served, however, as the soldiers who start the fire are trapped in a wooden tavern, and perish to a man.

The town lies vacant for twenty years, until A.D. 1235 when the Despot of Epirus captures the surrounding lands. The Despot settles a number of retired soldiers in the town, and rebuilds the walls. Nikopolis withstands a short siege by the Venetians in 1242, which is called off when the commander of the besiegers is killed by a lucky arrow shot from the walls.

COLOSSUS OF RHODES

Built centuries before Christ, the Colossus of Rhodes was an immense statue of the God Apollo, which straddled the entrance to the harbor of Rhodes. It was 120 feet high, with one foot on each side of the entrance. The statue was destroyed in a great storm and earthquake, leaving only its feet, each 16 feet long. The wreckage was dredged from the harbor mouth and used to rebuild the town. Even now numerous houses bear parts of the statue, including one whose facade is the face of Apollo.

SINOPE

An ancient city on the Black Sea, Sinope has withstood centuries of strife. Sinope was a major port not only for merchants dealing with the east, but also for Norse traders from as far away as Sweden and Denmark, who traveled down the Dneiper river to trade on the Black Sea and offer their swords to the Emperor.

Part of the Roman Empire since the century before Christ, the city remained in the eastern Empire even after the defeat of the Byzantine armies at the battle of Manzikert in A.D. 1071. The powerful Byzantine navy was able to keep Sinope supplied, allowing it to hold out against a long siege. After the capture of Constantinople in 1204 by the Fourth Crusade, Sinope remains loyal to the Lascarid Emperor in Nicaea. Though loyal to Nicaea, Sinope is surrounded by Muslim states and the invasions of the Mongols whittle down the lands which Sinope controls.

Merchants from Genoa have settled in Sinope, keeping out merchants from other Italian cities. The Governor of the city, however, has been bought by Venetian agents and has tried several times to have Venetians admitted to the city. The Genoese, who have effectively bought the chief traders of the city, have been fighting a losing battle over the issue, and Sinope may be the first city in the Black Sea to grant trading privileges to the Venetians.

SMYRNA

Founded by Greek traders in Persia, Smyrna passed from Greek to Roman to Byzantine control with little notice. However, after the battle of Manzikert, Saracens took the city and slew many of its leading citizens, who led a number of futile attempts at revolt.

The city then became the base for pirates who raided within sight of the walls of Constantinople. Protected from the Byzantines on the landward side by hordes of Seljuk Turks, Smyrnan pirates felt secure from attack. The soldiers of the First Crusade taught them otherwise, though, and took the city in A.D. 1099. In accordance with agreements with the Byzantine Empire, the crusaders returned the city to the Byzantines.

A little more than a hundred years later, after the Fourth Crusade conquers Constantinople, Theodore I Lascaris takes Smyrna as part of the Empire of Nicaea. The same seafaring blood which had made the pirates of Smyrna so feared now allows Theodore to control the coast of Asia Minor and to harass the Latins in Constantinople and Greece.

TANA

A small port on the sea of Azov, Tana is the western terminus of the silk road, which extends east to Cathay. At Tana, Mongol soldiers mingle with Byzantine and Italian merchants. Caravans from Cathay and Sind bring silk, gold, and spices, and take away metalwork and wool. Any traveler east beyond Tana is advised to hire guides and animals.

It is from Tana that Giovanni de Piano Carpini in A.D. 1237, and William of Rubriquois in 1253, start their separate journeys to preach the gospel to the Mongols. Both fail, and their accounts make clear that any large-scale conversion of the Mongols is impossible. The Mongols capture Tana in 1222, slaughtering a great number of its inhabitants. However, after the Mongols are stopped in their westward course by the Mamluks, they reopen the city to western merchants.

THESSALONICA

The city of Thessalonica has been Byzantium's gate to the lands of Greece and the Moera since the founding of Constantinople. It withstood the attacks of various barbarian tribes in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, victories which the citizens attribute to St. Demetrius, the patron saint of the city.

However, the city has fared less well since then. It was sacked in A.D. 904 by Leo of Tripoli, a renegade Christian who led an army of Saracens against the city, selling 22,000 citizens into slavery. It was again sacked in 1185 by Normans from the kingdom of Sicily, in retaliation for the massacre of Latins in Constantinople, in 1183.

After the fall of Constantinople, Thessalonica is given to Boniface of Montferrat, the leader of the Latin forces, who proclaims himself King of Thessalonica and holds overlordship over the Duchy of Athens and the Principality of Achaea.

Theodore Angelus, Despot of Epirus, takes the city in 1224 and the Empire of Nicaea takes the city and the kingdom in 1246. Thessalonica rebuilds itself slowly after occupation by the Latins, who take as much treasure and artwork as they can during their tenure.

TREBIZOND

A trading port on the Black Sea, Trebizond for many years exported colorful rugs from the interior regions of Asia Minor and Persia.

The city has an uneventful history until the fall of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade. The Empire of Trebizond was founded when the brothers Alexius and David Comnenus, grandsons of Emperor Andronicus I, flee to the city of Trebizond. Trebizond, surrounded by Mongols and Muslims, uses treaty and negotiation as major weapons in its Imperial policy. The Empire flourishes in the years A.D. 1204-61, at times placing itself under the protection of the Latin Empire, the Muslims, or the Mongols. However, the city always manages to survive as an independent state.

Trebizond is the western terminus of the spice road to Sind. Spices are so important a commodity that merchant houses from both Venice and Genoa have set up permanent residences in the city. Many easterners can be found in Trebizond, including members of a mysterious sect: eastern fire worshippers who claim to be descended from the three Wise Men who visited the Christ child in the manger of Bethlehem.

TROY

The Trojan War began when Paris, Prince of Troy, kidnapped Helen, wife of King Menelaus of Sparta. The Greeks retaliated by assaulting and besieging Troy, a siege which lasted ten years. Despite the heroism of both sides, the siege was stalemated until Ulysses, King of Ithica, devised the stratagem of the Trojan Horse.

Ulysses and his men built a huge wooden horse, with room in its belly for a hundred men. The Greeks left the horse on the beach in front of Troy and sailed away. They also left a herald, who explained to the Trojans that the Greeks had insulted the Gods with the war, so had left the horse as compensation to the Trojans. The Trojans pulled the horse into the city, destroying the city gates in the process. That night, after the Trojans had fallen into drunken sleep, Ulysses and his men crept forth from the horse and opened the remaining city gates to the Greeks,

who had returned under cover of night. Few Trojans escaped the slaughter, but one was Prince Aneas, who fled to the coast of Africa and founded Carthage.

The Seekers, members of the Order of Hermes who seek the origins of magic, have located the plain where Troy once stood, a ghost-haunted place on the coast of Asia Minor. Such is the number of lost spirits on the site that none have ever been to the place. Indeed, the plain is barren, and no one lives within seven leagues of it. Even out to sea the souls of drowned sailors haunt ships which approach.

One Magus lives on the outskirts of the haunted area, however, making a study of the various ghosts he has encountered. He has a collection of weapons and armor which he has found on the plain, and knows an astounding number of names of ghosts which haunt the area. Regardless of his knowledge, the Magus has never been to the site of the city, fearing for his health and sanity.

The knowledge of the site of Troy is generally withheld from the Order given the site's ghosts and the unknown effect they would have on a Magus. To the world outside of the Order, the myth of Troy is just that, a myth. Still, the plain in Asia Minor is known to be haunted and is avoided by everyone. A party of crusaders from the First Crusade, led by a number of priests, attempted to cross the plain, but no one has seen them since.

Bulgarian Empire

The area north of the border of the Byzantine Empire was settled by Bulgars during the Seventh Century after Christ. The Bulgars, or Ugri, were a nomadic steppe people, and their ferocity was so infamous that it spawned two words, used even in the west to denote beings of terror: the *"bogie man"* and *"ogre."*

The Byzantine army in the north had its hands full trying to cope with the Bulgar threat, but the Bulgars repeatedly penetrated into Imperial territory to loot and pillage. In A.D. 811 Khan (king) Krum decimated the Byzantine army led by Emperor Nicephorus in the Haemus mountains, and made a drinking goblet from the Emperor's skull. In 813 Krum sacked Adrianople, and attacked Constantinople itself, burning the suburbs of the city. His successor, Omurtag, concluded a thirty year peace treaty with Emperor Michael II.

In his turn, Khan Boris was baptized in the Orthodox manner in 865, and forced his people to accept Christianity. He abdicated in 888, and lived the remainder of his life as a monk. His second son, Simeon, took the title Tsar (meaning Caesar or Emperor) of the Bulgarians and Greeks, and defeated the Byzantines and Magyars, seizing Belgrade and Nish. However, the greater part of the Bulgarian territory was lost to the Byzantine Empire by Boris's son and then grandson, Peter and Boris II. Finally only western Bulgaria remained free of the Byzantines, and that territory was ruled by Tsar Samual, the son of a noble who had rebelled in 963. Samual managed to reconquer the territory of Simeon, but numerous attacks by the Byzantine army whittled away even his power.

The Byzantine Emperor Basil II eventually defeated the army of Bulgaria in 1014, and sent 14,000 blinded prisoners, led by one man in a hundred who had only his right eye plucked out, to Tsar Samual, who died at the sight of his army. Four years later all of Bulgaria was conquered by Basil, earning him the name "Bulgar-slayer." The Bulgarian lands remained an Imperial province for the next 170 years, but the practices of Imperial tax collectors, and the spread of the Bogomil heresy, made the land nearly worthless to the Empire.

In 1186 the brothers Peter and Ivan Asen led a revolt against Byzantine rule, and in 1201 the Byzantine Emperor Alexius III recognizes the fact that Bulgaria is in fact independent of Byzantium. As King of the new, independent state, Ivan expands his borders, taking Nish and Belgrade, and territory from Hungary, Serbia and the Byzantine Empire. He is crowned in 1204 by a legate of Pope Innocent III. Ivan also takes advantage of the confusion created by the fall of Constantinople, in the Fourth Crusade, to conquer lands to the south, defeating the Latin Empire at the battle of Adrianople in 1205.

After Adrianople the expansion of Bulgaria only continues, reclaiming lands on all borders. In the west the Bulgarians fight with the Despot of Epirus, and in the south with the Latin kingdoms. However, after the death of Ivan II in 1241 the Bulgarian Empire fragments into its component parts under the great nobles, and passes from the pages of history.

SOFIA

Founded by the Romans as a legion camp, Sofia was lost for a short time to the Bulgarian Empire after the battle of Adrianople in the Fourth Century, but was quickly regained by the Romans.

The Bulgars eventually settled in the area in the Seventh Century, and occupied Sofia. The city remained in Bulgarian hands, though it was forced to submit to Byzantium a number of times. The city was also the capital of the Bulgarian Empire, and was captured by both Hungarian and Byzantine armies. Though Sofia was never taken by storm, it was every time lost to the Bulgarians through treachery.

Given the many conquerors they have had, the citizens of Sofia are notorious for their rapid changes of loyalty. Once they let in the Hungarian army in one week, and helped the Bulgarians chase the Hungarians from the city the next.

Sofia is a major trading city, situated between the Byzantine Empire and the kingdom of Hungary. Cattle are driven by city folk in the late fall, bound for the markets of Constantinople. In truth, shopkeepers lock their stores and take a vacation in the country during the week or two that it takes drovers to leave the city. The stockyards outside the city, on the west side, are used for public ceremonies the remainder of the year, and are the gathering place of the Bulgarian army before major campaigns.


Marocco
Algeria
Egypt
Damascus
Jerusalem
Baghdad
Ctesiphon
Persia
Samarkand
Arabia
Medina

ISLAM

CHAPTER TWELVE

The lands of Islam are those possessed by the Muslims. Though the Muslims have conquered as far north into Mythic Europe as Spain, their primary territories lie in the Christian Holy Land and Africa (particularly north Africa, in terms of relations with Mythic Europe). Certainly the lands of Islam are primary in the determination of Mythic European history, culture, and politics, so an understanding of Islam and its people is essential to understanding Mythic Europe.

Holy Land

The region known as the Levant, or the Holy Land, is the goal and prize of the crusades. This land, where Jesus walked the earth, is the holiest land in Christendom, and the aim of the crusades is to free the land from domination by pagan Muslims.

The region of the Holy Land is hilly, but not mountainous, and dry. Winds prevail from the south and southeast, bringing little rain to this desert land. In the summer, the hot southerly wind becomes the sirocco, a blast of heat that feels as if drawn across the fires of Hell itself. There are few plants in the Holy Land, and primary crops are olives, cedar, and citrus fruit, all of which thrive in the harsh climate.

The native people of the region are primarily Muslims and Jews, although there is a growing population of Christians. The Muslims are divided into two major groups: the town dwellers (known as hadar or fellahin) and the nomads, called Bedouin. The Muslims are swarthy, with dark hair and small stature.

The Muslims of the Holy Land are polite, but taciturn. Indeed, it is rare to hear a Muslim say anything ill about another, but it is often difficult to learn the name of a Muslim you do not know well. The Muslims are also protective of their wives and families, rarely allowing strangers to even see them. And yet, some Christians who have traveled the Holy Lands alone or in small groups claim that Muslims are hospitable to all who visit them in peace. Finally, hospitable or not, the Muslims are fatalistic. They are willing to accept any hardship, no matter how terrible, believing such hardship is brought upon them by God.

The Christian lands of the Holy Land hug the shores of the Mediterranean; Christians are unwilling to travel further than necessary from the cooling influence of the sea. Northernmost of these lands is the Principality of Antioch, the strongest and most established of the Christian states in the Holy Land. Antioch is the first stop for pilgrims in the Holy Land, and for many Antioch is as close as some ever get to the holy city of Jerusalem.

South of Antioch is the Earldom of Tripoli, another Christian nation. Tripoli has been held since the First Crusade, but uprisings of Muslims and invasions from the south are common here, and the city is sometimes not secure for weeks at a time.

Beyond Tripoli lies the holy city of Jerusalem. It is in this place that Jesus performed many of His miracles, and it was here that He gave Himself to the Cross to redeem mankind from sin.

The Muslims now control Jerusalem, and the Christian King of Jerusalem (who holds the fealty of Tripoli and Antioch) rules in exile in Acre.

Bit by bit the kingdom of Jerusalem is falling back into Muslim hands. Even the forces of the Third Crusade were unable to reclaim Christian losses. By the Thirteenth Century the King of Jerusalem appeals for yet another Crusade, this one not to be distracted or deterred (a stinging reference to the Fourth Crusade's adventures in Byzantium) until Jerusalem is again in Christian hands.

Latin Kingdoms of the Holy Land

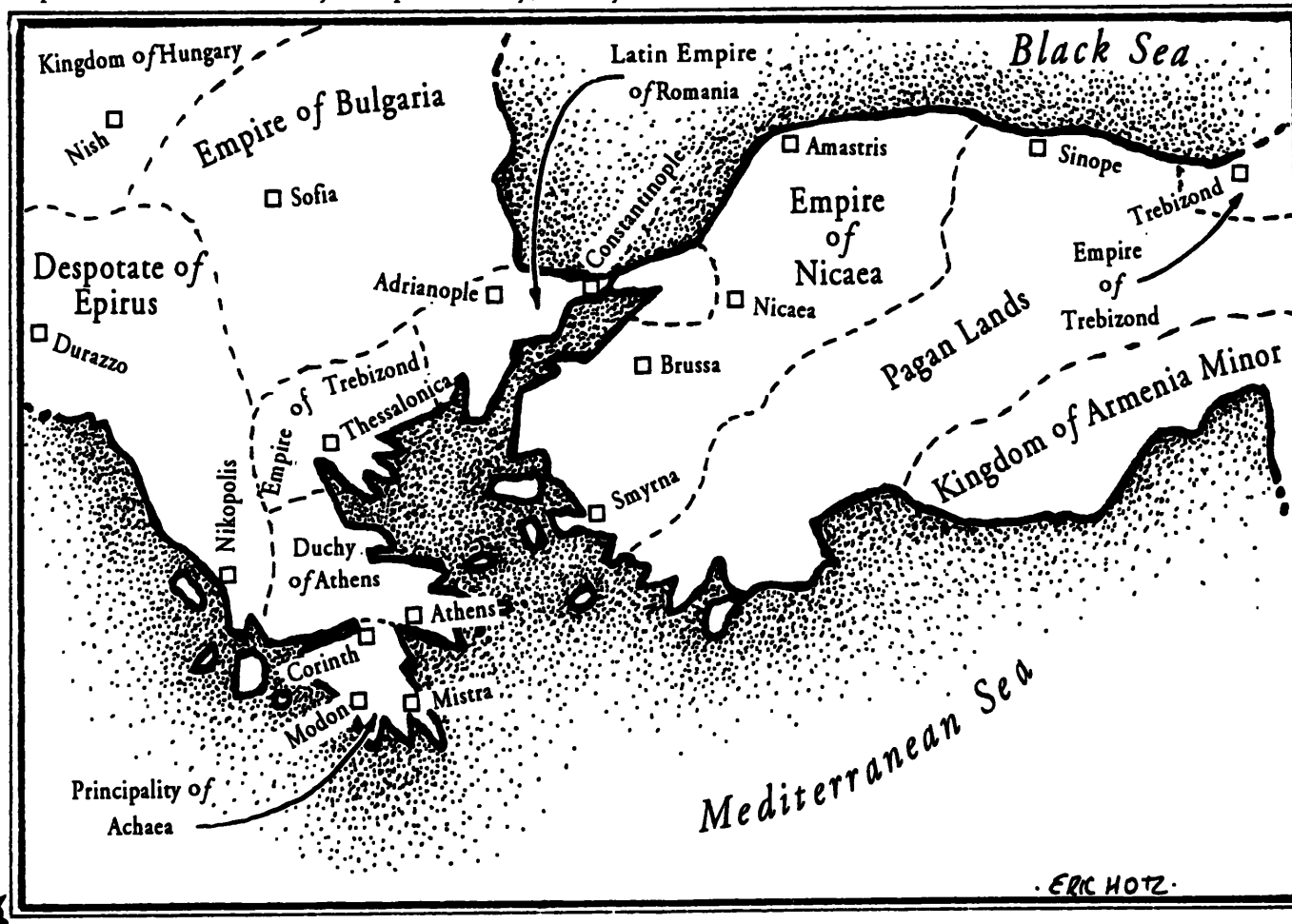
Established by the First Crusade, the kingdom of Jerusalem, the Principality of Antioch, the County of Tripoli, and the County of Edessa formed the Latin kingdoms in the Holy land. Though the crusaders had sworn oaths to return captured cities and lands to the Byzantine Empire, the retreat of the Byzantine Emperor Alexius after the capture of Antioch was declared grounds for nullification of oaths made by crusaders.

In fact, the leaders of the crusaders were quick to seize control of the Holy Land. The Norman crusader Baldwin, brother of Godfrey of Bouillon, took his men away from the main crusader army in A.D. 1008, capturing the city of Edessa. There he established the first Latin state, the County of Edessa. Bohemund of Taranto was elected Prince of Antioch after the capture of that city in 1098. Raymond of Toulouse captured Tripolis and formed the County of Tripolis. Finally, Godfrey of Bouillon was elected Protector of the Holy See, and after his death in 1100 Baldwin succeeded to the throne, styling himself King of Jerusalem.

The three lesser Christian states swore oaths of fealty to the King of Jerusalem, but acted as sovereigns in their own lands. They minted money, issued decrees, and made and broke treaties with the surrounding Muslims. It was the fall of the County of Edessa in 1144 that was grounds for the start of the Second Crusade, which failed miserably.

Troubles also brewed in the Latin Holy Land as they did in Mythic Europe, through intrigue against the throne. King Baldwin IV was a leper and his affliction caused much consternation among the nobles. His sister, Sibylla, was first married to Marquess William of Montferrat, and the couple produced an heir to the throne, Baldwin V. But, William was killed and Sibylla married Guy de Lusignan, a despised adventurer from France. In order to seize power, Baldwin V was hastily crowned, while his uncle still lived, with Raymond of Tripolis as Regent.

Baldwin IV did die in 1185, but his nephew only reigned for a year longer, dying himself in 1186. Following his stepson, Guy de Lusignan was elected King by lords from the west, newly arrived at the Holy Land and ready for battle. Guy led the army of the kingdom, accompanied by both the Order of Templars and by the Hospitallers, to resist the onslaught of Saladin. However, the Christian army met defeat at the battle of Hattin in 1187.



Guy was taken prisoner at the battle, but was released by Saladin. Jerusalem then surrendered to Saladin the same year, leaving the County of Tripolis and the Principality of Antioch alone to face the Muslims. Thus, Guy was a king without a kingdom, until Richard Lionheart gave him the island of Cyprus.

Fatefully, in the Thirteenth Century, Antioch falls to the Saracens in 1268, and Tripolis in 1289, Tripolis being the last remnant of Latin power in the east.

ACRE

The greatest port in the Holy Land, Acre was captured in the First Crusade in A.D. 1098 and was ceded to Venice as part of the price for transporting the crusaders.

Acre fell to the forces of Saladin in 1187 after the disastrous battle of Hattin, where the combined armies of the Latins were beaten by heat, thirst, and Saracen arrows. Saladin treated the captured city mildly, allowing grieving women and children to depart unmolested.

The Third Crusade captured the city once again in 1191, after a nineteen month siege, and soon after King Richard of England joined the besiegers. Richard also treated the city with mercy, allowing the Saracens to leave with what goods they could carry. The Saracens gave back the True Cross, which had been captured in the Seventh Century by the Muslims, recovered by the Byzantines, and lost again at the Battle of Hattin.

Acre falls for the last time in 1291, when the Sultan Khalil, enraged by the slaughter of a Muslim caravan by Christian knights, leads his forces against the city, at the time the last great Latin city in the Holy Land. The city falls after a siege of forty-three days and the inhabitants are slaughtered or sold into slavery.

ANTIOCH

An ancient city, Antioch was one of the five Apostolic Sees, the original bishoprics of the Christian Church. The city fell to the Muslims in the Seventh Century after the death of Christ, and was the focus of a major siege in the First Crusade. The crusaders besieged the city for eight months in A.D. 1097 and 1098. During the siege Christian knights, starving and dying of exposure, sucked the sweet juice of a cane, called *"sukkar"* by the Muslims. The crusaders took the city by treachery three days before a Muslim relief army arrived.

However, many of the crusaders, fearful that they could not stand before the coming Saracens, fled to Emperor Alexius, who had also retreated to protect his lands in Asia Minor, believing the Crusade lost. The remaining crusaders saw Alexius's act as one of cowardice. They declared that his failure to support the army freed them of the oath they swore, that they would return captured cities to the Byzantines.

The Saracen relief force surrounded Antioch, but a French priest found the Holy Lance, the spear which had pierced the side of Christ during the Crucifixion. The lance became a standard for the Christian army, and three saints — Maurice, Theodore, and George — aided the crusaders in battle, routing the Saracens.

After the Latins reclaimed the city it was granted to Bohemund of Tarentum, who was made Prince of Antioch. Antioch therefore became the first of the Latin states founded in the Holy Land. Bohemund nominally held the land in fief from the Byzantine Emperor Alexius, but declared his obligation nullified upon Alexius's retreat.

The Principality of Antioch survives until 1268, when the Sultan Baybars defeats the current Count's army and captures the city, putting Christians to the sword and burning the city to the ground, a fate from which it never recovers. Only those who claim defiance to Christianity, including Magi in the city, are spared.

DAMASCUS

Capital of Roman, and later Byzantine, Palestine, Damascus fell to the Arab hordes in the Seventh Century after Christ. The citizens were treated well by the conquerors; they were allowed to stay and keep their religion, or to leave with their possessions. In fact, the capture of Damascus became the Muslim model for the treatment of captured cities in Palestine.

The Saracens of the city were so tolerant of Christians that they allowed them to make pilgrimage to Damascus, as Damascus held the head of St. John the Baptist. The city also became the seat of the Caliph, the religious leader of Islam, in the Seventh Century, but lost the honor to Baghdad in the Eighth. Still, the city held over five hundred mosques, the most magnificent being the Great Mosque, built on the foundations of the cathedral of St. John the Baptist, which in turn had been built on the site of a temple to Jupiter.

Damascus withstood the armies of the Second Crusade, and was never recaptured by the Christians. However, the Mongols capture the city in A.D. 1258, laying waste to one of the greatest cities in the world. Even the land around Damascus loses its fertility after the Mongols strike. Some say wizards among the Mongols are responsible for the infertility of the land, though the Order of Hermes has no proof of such allegations.

FAMAGUSTA

The major urban center and port on the island of Rhodes, Famagusta is an ancient city, dating back to the days of the Trojan War. A goddess named Astarte was worshipped here, and a city oracle foretold the future. Ancient Famagusta was renowned for its shipyards, supplying the Byzantine Empire with ships until it fell to the Arabs in A.D. 644. The Arabs tried to use the shipyards to bolster their navy, but the native shipwrights used poor quality wood and nails, causing the ships to founder and sink.

Rhodes was conquered and reconquered many times during the five hundred years that followed. That is, until 1191, when Richard the Lionheart captured the island from the

Byzantine Emperor in retaliation for the mistreatment of his crusaders. Richard sold the island to the Knights Templar, who sold it to the King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan.

Guy and his successors model their governance of the island on the French system, granting fiefs and manors to knights. The greatest fief on the island is the County of Famagusta, which includes not only the city, but the shipyards and much of the surrounding countryside.

Famagusta carries on a lively trade with the cities of the Holy Land. Though the Italian cities, especially Venice and Genoa, wish to set up trading houses in Famagusta, each King of Cyprus has denied them that right, instead making them rent warehouse and dock space from the crown.

Rumors tell of ancient storehouses still buried under the city, storehouses that were lost during some forgotten invasion. In these lairs are supposed to lie the treasures of the ancient gods, and knowledge of their ways.

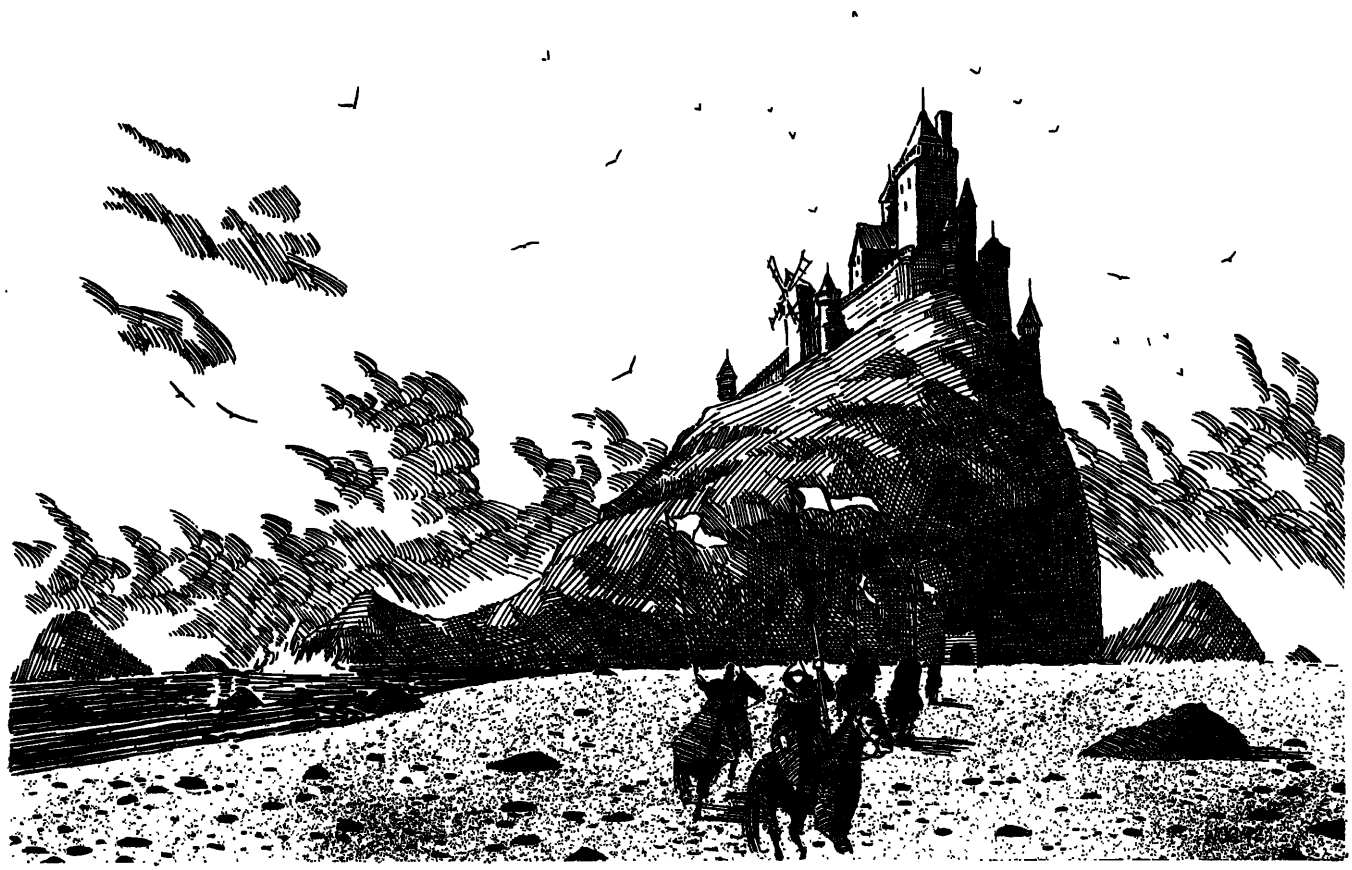
JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is the holiest of cities to both Jews and Christians. The city also ranks third in sanctity to Muslims, behind Mecca and Medina.

The Dome of the Rock (known as the Mosque of Omar to crusaders) covers the spot where Abraham was prevented from sacrificing Isaac, and where Moses received the Ark of the Covenant. Solomon and Herod also built the Temples of Jerusalem over the spot. Furthermore, Jerusalem was the first Apostolic See of the Christians, and housed the True Cross and the Holy Sepulcher, where Christ's body lay for three days. And, according to the Muslims, the Prophet Mohammed ascended to Heaven here. The truly devout are said to be able to see his footprints on the stone.

Jerusalem was captured by the Persians in A.D. 614, and the True Cross was sent to the Queen of Persia as a gift. Both the city and the Cross were retaken in 622 by the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, but the city surrendered to Caliph Omar in 637. After Omar's victory Christians were allowed to enter the city as pilgrims, but in 1009 the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was destroyed by the mad Caliph Al-Hakim, and in 1071 the city was captured by the Seljuk Turks, who refused to allow Christians entry, precipitating the First Crusade.

The crusaders laid siege to the city in 1099 and took it in forty days. The crusaders then slaughtered the inhabitants of the city with wanton cruelty, shooting whole groups full of arrows, and pushing others off walls and towers. Jews were also herded into synagogues and burned to death. It is said that knights rode through blood up to the bellies of their horses. At least 50,000 Jews and as many as 70,000 Saracens were killed in the city in a three week-long orgy of murder, looting, and burning. After the slaughter, Geoffery of Bouillon was chosen by the crusaders as the King of Jerusalem, a position he held for one year before dying.



During the Second Crusade, the remnants of French and German armies arrived in Jerusalem,led by the French King Louis and the German Emperor Conrad. Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem, joined his fellow monarchs, and they led their forces to Damascus, which resisted their siege. Ultimately, the Christian armies fled before a Muslim relief army, and Baldwin led his men back to Jerusalem to defend it from a supposed attack which never materialized.

However, Saladin conquered Jerusalem in 1187, after the Battle of Hattin, and treated the citizens with mercy. But, due to the miserliness of the Christian Hospitallers and Templars in not paying their ransom to the Muslims, thousands of poor citizens were sold into slavery. The fall of Jerusalem was a clarion call to the west, a call which was answered by King Richard Lionheart of England, Philip Augustus of France, and Frederick Barbarossa of the Holy Roman Empire. But, even the forces of these three great monarchs failed to retake Jerusalem, and it remains in Muslim hands.

North Africa

The lands of north Africa are among the most inhospitable ever known by living man. Biting sand, blistering heat, and the miserable blasts of sirocco winds are said to flay the flesh from a Christian.

The intolerable wastes of north Africa are occupied by swarthy, hardy Muslims, who are primarily nomadic Bedouins. The Bedouins of north Africa spend their entire lives in the desert. They use camels for their beasts of burden, their milk, and their meat. Their tents are marvels in their own right. Each is comprised of two chambers: the men's room, which is used for the reception of guests, and the women's room, where families are hidden and possessions stored. A Bedouin offers a visitor hospitality if that person is able to touch the Bedouin's tent pole. But, that same Bedouin slays any traveler he finds entering the women's quarters of his tent.

The eastern portion of north Africa is flat, with essentially no fertile ground. The only fertile region is the narrow band of the Nile River Valley which runs through the center of the kingdom of Egypt. This river floods annually, so the lands to either side are actually extremely fertile. Only a few miles from the river, however, no plants grow.

Egypt is one of the wealthiest and most powerful nations of the Muslim lands. Egyptian forces have been the primary opponents to the advance of Christians into the Holy Land, and are fierce warriors. It is also said the land of Egypt is covered with ancient monuments and statues; the sorcerers of Egypt are said to know marvelous magics, some of which do not function outside the magical Nile Valley.

The western area of north Africa is hillier than the east, but no more fertile. The region is part of the Almohad Empire, which extends eastward to the city of Cossura and to the western shore of the Bay of Sidra. (The Empire's northern extent can be found in Iberia.) The western part of north Africa has several cities along its coast, and grows increasingly mountainous as one travels further west.

Only in the westernmost regions of north Africa is there anything more than the occasional olive tree. In the far west, the Atlas Mountains (a range which rivals the Alps in height and stark beauty) trap Atlantic rains against the coast, near the city of Tangier. These rains create a relatively fertile zone, with mountain woodlands and other healthy foliage.

Alexandria

Founded by Alexander the Great, Alexandria was the provincial capital of Egypt during the country's Greek, Roman, and Byzantine occupations. Alexandria fell to the forces of Islam in A.D. 641, betrayed by rebellious Monophysite heretics.

The Great Library of Alexandria was famous as one of the greatest repositories of ancient thought, but was burned by the Arabs in 642, who declared that: *"If these writings agree with the Book of God, then they are worthless and need not be preserved, and if they do not they are pernicious and should be destroyed."* The dockyards of Alexandria then outfitted the Arab navies, and Alexandrine ships conquered the island of Cyprus in 649.

The political significance of Alexandria was overshadowed by the building of Cairo, which became the Arab capital in 975. While still a great city, Alexandria is no longer the center of learning, nor of political power, that it once was. However, it is still a great trading center, with a power to rival Genoa and Pisa, if not Venice. Trade between Venice and Alexandria is one of the major reasons Doge Enrico Dandalo of Venice leads crusaders from attacking Alexandria (their first target), to attacking Zara and Constantinople instead.

Algiers

Founded by the Romans in the century before Christ, Algiers declined into near vacancy after the fall of the Roman Empire. Indeed, the city was fought over by nomadic tribes, and sometimes raided by the Vandals from Spain. However, the advent of Islam in the Eighth Century saw a revival of the city which, for all the fighting which had taken place, was remarkably well preserved. The Muslims dredged the harbor, which had silted up over the preceding centuries, and used the port facilities for trade.

Algiers was raided many times by pirates from Bougie and Cossura, and the city appealed to the Byzantine Emperor in A.D. 1048 for ships and men to defend itself. The request was refused, but such was the terror of the citizens that they appealed to Robert Guiscard, even offering him the city if he would aid them. Robert was on the verge of accepting when opportunities in the east beckoned him. The citizens of Algiers finally surrendered to the pirates of Cossura, and theirs became another harbor from which to launch raids. The honest merchants of the city fled, leaving their goods and merchandise behind, wishing to have nothing to do with the new masters of the city.

BARCE

Founded in ancient times by the Greeks as Barka, Barce was conquered by the Romans in the century before Christ. It was again conquered by Islam around A.D. 642.

Barce was chosen by a mighty Saracen sorcerer, whose name has not been preserved, to be the site of a school for other sorcerers. It is said that no Christian has entered Barce and lived. Travelers who have seen the city say it is surrounded by iron walls, forty feet high with demonic faces on them. Rumors among the Christian seamen say the ships of Barce are manned by the dead bodies of Christians, who were sold as slaves to the college of sorcery. It is true that none of the ships of Barce have ever been captured in battle, scuttling themselves, or exploding in multi-colored flames before they can be boarded. Even the pirates of Cossura and Fraxinetum leave ships from Barce alone.

BOUGIE

Founded by sailors from the city of Carthage, Bougie possesses a fine harbor. It was conquered by pirates from the island of Cossura in the 480s, and accepted the word of the Prophet in A.D. 702. Bougie's sailors now scour the sea, raiding Christian and Muslim ships and cities equally. The coasts of France and Spain are the favorite targets of the pirates, who force captives to row their ships.

The mouth of the harbor of Bougie has too many entrances to be easily blockaded, as the navy of Tunis learned to its regret. A Tunisian admiral, vowing to rid the sea of the pirates after they captured and sold his wife and daughter, led his fleet to Bougie and set about capturing the pirates as they entered and exited the harbor. A number of pirates already in the harbor slipped out a hidden entrance and burned a great number of the blockading ships. They captured the Admiral and chained him to an oar on their largest ship, where he lived out the rest of his life rowing and being mocked by his captors.

CAIRO

Founded in A.D. 969 by the Muslims, Cairo became the capital of Egypt in 996. Travelers to Cairo talk of several wonders, such as canopies which shade the streets from the sun, and lamps which light the streets at night. The city has hundreds of mosques, and numerous schools for Muslim children to learn the faith of their fathers. It is said that all subjects are taught in Cairo, including wizardry and alchemy. Saladin founded several schools in Cairo during his reign, wishing to educate scholars to defeat the enemies of Islam. The sorcerers of Cairo protect the temples and monuments of Egypt from the eyes of the Order of Hermes, leading to much speculation on the contents of these temples, particularly among Magi of the west.

CEUTA

Founded as a legion camp and naval base by the Romans, Ceuta was ruled by the Byzantine Count Julian in the Eighth Century after Christ. Julian sent his daughter to the court of King Roderic of Spain for education, but Roderic seduced her. In retaliation Julian told Tarik, a Moorish noble, of the booty in Spain, instigating the invasion of that country. King Roderic was captured in the first battle of the invasion, spirited away by genies under the command of the Moors. He was brought before Julian, who laughed in his face when Roderic pleaded for mercy, saying *"These demons will show you the same mercy you showed my daughter."* Roderic's body was found several days later. The men who found it buried it where it lay, refusing to describe the manner in which Roderic died.

Tarik captured the city of Ceuta in A.D. 714, after his conquests in Spain. He rewarded Julian, who would not accept the word of the Prophet, by giving him a horse and sword, and sending him out into the desert. The city then became the terminus of trade routes which stretched across the Sahara to the nearly mythic city of Timbuktu. Ivory, furs of great cats, and slaves flowed north while swords, horses, and gold went south. Once an elephant was sent north, as an experiment in warfare, but none of the horses in the city could stand to be near it, panicking at its smell and trumpeting noises. Reluctantly, the governor of the city had the beast slaughtered and fed to the poor. Its great tusks can still be seen in the Mosque of the Elephant.

COSSURA

Known as "The Island of the Banished," Cossura was used as an open prison by the Romans. The Romans made sure no sailors were sent to the island, fearing a sea-borne revolt by the prisoners. After the fall of Rome the inhabitants mixed with barbarian invaders, and the islanders soon acquired boats and the knowledge to use them. By the Sixth Century after Christ, the islanders had developed a thriving pirate kingdom. The island was overrun by the onslaught of Islam, but the mixture of pirate and Muslim cultures produced the feared pirates of Cossura.

During the Ninth Century the pirates managed to conquer a portion of southern France, founding the pirate kingdom of Fraxinetum. Even the military genius of Charlemagne was unequal to the task of defeating the pirates of Fraxinetum, the city at the end of a rocky headland, defended by fierce corsairs (from the Latin "to run").

Cossuran pirates are renowned throughout the western Mediterranean for their daring raids, and the cry, *"Black Sails,"* makes even strong mariners look to their weapons. The pirates sail small vessels, and some sailors claim the pirates have the wind bound to their sails, for they can sail close to the wind, and have been seen proceeding under full sail on a calm sea. The Cossurans and the corsairs of Fraxinetum continue their

profitable alliance, even though the "King" of the pirates of Fraxinetum claims all waters of the western Mediterranean as his private domain.

DAMIETTA

A major port and naval center of the Byzantine Empire, second only to Alexandria in the southern Mediterranean, Damietta was taken by the Arabs in the Seventh Century. The Byzantines, fearful of growing Arabic naval power in the Ninth Century, sent a fleet to Damietta which succeeded in burning the docks and naval yards.

Damietta is also the focus of the Fifth Crusade, and falls in A.D. 1218 after a one year siege. St. Francis of Assisi is with the assaulting crusaders, passes into the city one night during the siege, and confronts the governor of the city. Assisi offers to walk through flames if the Governor promises to lead his troops in the Christian cause. The Governor refuses the test and has Francis escorted out of Damietta. The pillage of the city, when it falls, horrifies Francis, who returns to Italy disillusioned with the military mind. The final peace settlement of the Fifth Crusade returns Damietta to Egypt.

The Seventh Crusade, led by King Louis of France, also attacks and takes Damietta, but the Nile floods strand the crusaders in the city for half a year, where they spend their time feasting and drinking. When the flood waters recede the crusaders leave the city, but are in such poor condition they are easily beaten at the battle of Mansura. The Egyptians thus recapture the city. And, slave traders of the city profit from the thousands of French captives taken at Mansura. The Egyptians build the Mosque of the Franks, to commemorate the event and to give thanks to Allah.

TEMPLES OF PAGAN EGYPT

Clustered up and down the Nile, huge statues, temples, and pyramids are evidence of the mystical power of ancient Egyptian sorcerers. Guarded by enchanted animals and mummies, the structures remain stocked with items of great occult power, or so says rumor. The Saracens guard the sites from Magi of the Order of Hermes.

Recently, Magi studying the ancient records of the Order of Hermes have come across evidence of a storehouse of magical knowledge in a huge statue shaped like a human-headed lion, near the village of Giza. Though this statue has not yet been found, some within the Order are pressing for an expedition into Saracen lands to find the statue and bring its magical knowledge out for the Order. A number of Magi accompany the Fifth Crusade, hoping the crusaders accomplish their stated goal of capturing all Egypt. But, those Magi leave Egypt after the crusaders prove themselves incapable of concerted action. The Seventh Crusade attracts only two Magi in search of the statue, but the pair waste their time in Damietta, indulging in a Wizard War.

While no other official expeditions of Magi into Egypt are authorized, many in the Order know that the Covenant which possesses Egypt's secrets will gain tremendous status and power. Indeed, the Magus who leads such an expedition is likely to become the next Primus of his House.

FEZ

Founded by the Arab Prince Idris II in A.D. 808 to be his capital in the Maghreb (Morocco), Fez soon became noted for dyes, perfumes, and a type of rimless hat. The city was sacked in 992 by nomadic raiders from the Rif, a range of hills between Fez and Ceuta.

Jews and Christians are forbidden to enter the city, a law since the Almoravid Moors swept out of the south, taking the city in 1065. In 1276, Yakub II begins construction of White Fez, an extension of the city outside the standing walls. It is said that many mosques and schools are being built in the new city, but rumor does not say what the schools will teach.

ORAN

Founded by the Arabs in the Tenth Century, Oran is a port of reasonable size, at the terminus of a trade rout from Timbuktu, a city south of the Sahara desert.

Tired of being harassed by pirates from Cossura, Fraxinetum, and Bougie, the merchants of Oran hire a number of sorcerers who travel on the merchants' ships, protecting them from attack. The merchants grant the sorcerers a large percentage of the profits from the trips, such that the sorcerers are able to found a school of magical arts in Oran in A.D. 1214. The Sorcerers seem to specialize in controlling the elements of air and water, though they are also rumored to unleash demons on board some ships.

Sorcerers on board ships do not come out on deck while ships are in port, so no one can tell if a ship has a sorcerer or not. It is said that less than one-fifth of the ships from Oran actually carry sorcerers, but few pirates are willing to trust their lives to the odds.

QAYRAWAN

The city of Qayrawan was founded in A.D. 670 by an Arab general, who gathered his men there in preparation for attacking Tunis and Carthage. Qayrawan means "The Resting Place." The camp soon became a city, and the capital of the province of Ifriqya. Qayrawan governed north Africa and Spain until 756, when Idris I, the last member of the Ummayid dynasty, fled to Morocco and took over the government there.

In 960 a Jewish academy was founded in Qayrawan, teaching theology, philosophy, and medicine. One of its first professors was Isaac Israeli, the court physician, who wrote treatises which are currently used in the universities of Paris and Salerno.

The city's Mosque of Sidi Oqba was built of hundreds of columns gathered from the ruins of ancient Carthage, which had to be blessed by the Caliph to lay ghosts of slain Cartheginians to rest. The beauty of the Mosque makes it the fourth holy place of Islam, after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem.

ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

Lost in the Arabian desert, the monastery of St. Catherine is rumored to have resisted Muslim warriors and sorcerers. Legend says the monks of the monastery guard the clothes worn by Mary, Mother of God, at the Crucifixion, clothes stained with Christ's blood.

Another legend states that the head of Saint Catherine, a martyr in the Fourth Century, resides here. The head is said to have oracular power. Saint Catherine is known to have come to the aid of a number of women faced with death, and to women forced to defend castles or towns.

TANGIER

Founded by the Cartheginians as Tingis, Tangier was the Roman capital of the province of Mauritania. The Vandals and Goths both overran the city, the Vandals destroying so much of it that their name became synonymous with wanton destruction.

The city was later attacked by the Arabs in A.D. 660, but was not conquered until 701. Tangier is the premier port trading with Spain, and many smugglers have made it their home, evading both Moorish and Christian craft to bring wine to Morocco, where it is prohibited by order of the Prophet. The wine is traded to the south for the most part, though decadent citizens have been known to break the commandment of the Prophet. Smugglers caught with wine in their ships are flogged and blinded, and all their money and ships are confiscated.

TLEMCEN

The city of Tlemcen is in a favorable trading position, between the port of Oran and the trade routes to Timbuktu. However the city is caught between the contending forces of Fez and the Moroccans to the west, and the Nomads of the Sahara to the south and east.

Tlemcen was captured by the Arab General Oqba in A.D. 675 when it was just a collection of huts around a major oasis. The city grew in importance once Oran was built. For a short time, between 1236 and 1283, it is the capital of the kingdom of Tlemcen, but forces from Fez conquer the city, ending its brief political life.

A large percentage of the population of Tlemcen is descended from the Vandals, a Germanic tribe which conquered north Africa in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries. Under the Muslims, Vandal descendents are allowed to observe their

Christian faith. In truth, they are the last remnants of the Arian heresy, which flourished during the Vandal occupation of Africa.

TUNIS

Built close to the ruins of Carthage, Tunis was founded by Cossuran pirates who wished to secede from the rule of their king.

Tunis continues the trade of its founders, and is the most organized of the many pirate kingdoms in the Mediterranean. The Great Mosque of Tunis was built by French slaves, slaves who were captured in many raids along the coast of France in the 1150s.

Tunis declared independence from the Caliph of Baghdad in A.D. 801, and declared its own caliph. The caliphs of Tunis ruled much of the coast of Africa, their power growing in inverse proportion to the fanaticism of the Moors. Thus, Tunis's caliphs had periods of least power during the growth of the Almoravid and Almohad dynasties. But, the caliphs regained power as the dynasties grew decadent and slothful in Spain.

Tunis fights off the efforts of the Eighth Crusade in 1270. But, in 1292 Raymond Lully, a French priest, secretly crosses to Tunis and founds a small colony of Christians. He hopes the Christians will convert the city, and perhaps the entire coast.

ZAMA, BATTLE OF

The ancient city of Carthage is best known for its wars against Rome. At the peak of its attacks against Rome, Carthage sent its great General Hannibal across the Alps, with elephants, to attack Rome from the north. Hannibal spent many years in Italy fighting Roman legions, but was not able to conquer Rome.

After Hannibal's invasion attempt, the Romans counterattacked. The legions overcame the Cartheginian army at the battle of Zama, and Carthage fell soon after. Such was the Roman hatred for Carthage that not one stone in the city was left atop another. Indeed, the city's fields were salted to prevent plants from growing, and surviving Cartheginians were sold as slaves.

Now only rubble remains to show where a great city once stood. The ground is still twisted by the sheer number of deaths which occurred here. In fact, Moorish Covenants in the Iberian Tribunal claim the site is rife with Perdo and Córporem *vis*.

The ruins of Carthage are also reputed to be haunted. According to legend, the souls of Cartheginians slain during the Roman invasion still haunt the corpse of their city. Some travelers report seeing ghosts of Carthage's lost inhabitants still wandering about their city, as if the buildings were whole again. A few others whisper of an encounter with another kind of entity, a spectral creature three times the height of a man, wearing the armor of a Cartheginian soldier. The city is shunned by the Moors who now control the region.

New Carthage is built outside the area of the old city's devastation. Great walls are raised around the new city to prevent spirits and creatures which lurk in ancient Carthage from entering. At one time new Carthage was a city of great learning, and many Christian theologians studied or worked there. However, the city was captured in the Seventh Century by the forces of Islam and is now closely allied with Tunis.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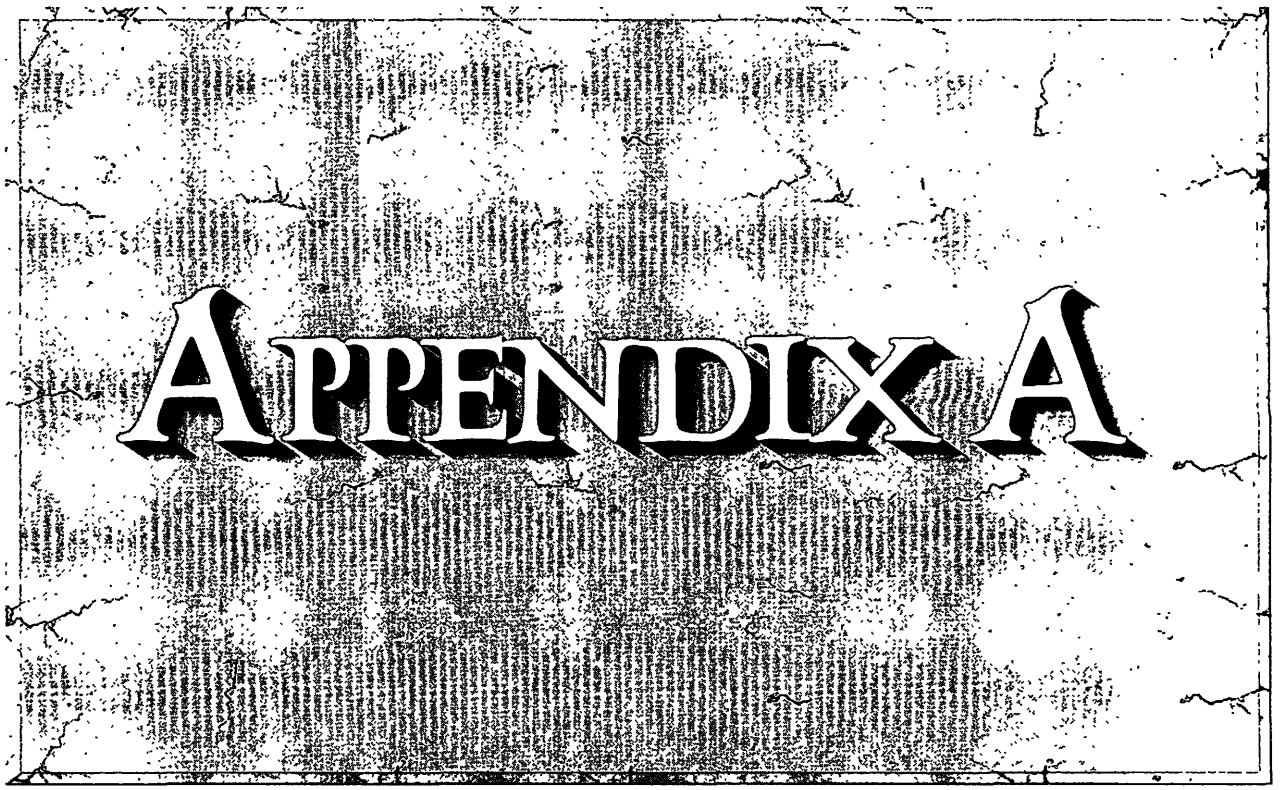

Roman Emperors from A.D. 284

	Crowned	Died
Diocletian	284	305
Maximian	286	305
Galerius	305	311
Constantius I	305	306
Maximian	306	308
Severus	306	307
Maxentius	306	312
Constantine I the Great	306	337
Licinius	307	324
Maximin Daza	308	313
Constantine II	337	340
Constantius II	337	361
Constans	337	350
Magnentius	350	353
Julian the Apostate	360	363
Jovian	363	364
Valentinian I	364	375 (West)
Valens	364	378 (East)
Gratian	375	383 (West)
Valentinian II	375	392 (West)
Theodosius I the Great	378	395 (East; West from 392)

East

	Crowned	Died
Honorius	395	423
Constantine III	407	411
Constantius III	421	421
John	423	425
Valentinian III	425	455
Petronius Maximus	455	455
Avitus	455	456
Majoran	457	461
Severus III	461	465
Anthemius	467	472
Olybrius	472	472
Glycerius	473	473
Julius Nepos	473	480
Romulus Augustulus	475	476

Roman Emperors continued

West

	Crowned	Died
Arcadius	395	408
Theodosius II	408	450
Marcian	450	457
Leo I	457	474
Leo II	474	474
Zeno	474	491
Basilicus	475	476

KINGS OF ARAGON

	Crowned	Died
Ramiro I	1035	1063
Sancho Ramirez	1063	1094
Peter I	1094	1104
Alfonso I	1104	1134
Ramiro III	1134-37	1147
Petronilla	1137-62	1172
Alfonso II	1162	1196
Peter II	1196	1213
James I The Conqueror	1213	1276
Peter III	1276	1285
Alfonso III	1285	1291
James II	1291	

KINGS OF BULGARIA

	Crowned	Died
Ivan Asen	1204	1207
Kaloyan	1207	1207
Boris	1207	1218
Ivan II	1218	1241
Constantine	1258	1277
Ivan III	1277	1280

KINGS OF CASTILE

	Crowned	Died
Ferdinand I	1033	1065
Sancho II	1065	1072
Alfonso VI	1072	1109
Urraca	1109	1126
Alfonso VII	1126	1157
Sancho III	1157	1158
Alfonso VIII	1158	1214
Henry I	1214	1217

Ferdinand III	1217	1252
Alfonso X	1252	1284

Byzantine Empire

	Crowned	Died
Justin I	518	527
Justinian	527	565
Justin II	565	578
Tiberius	578	582
Maurice	582	602
Phocas	602	610
Heraclius I	610	641
Constantine III	641	641
Heracleonis	641	641
Constans II	641	668
Constantine IV	668	685
Justinian II	685	695
Leontius	695	698
Tiberius III	698	705
Justinian II	705	711
Philippicus	711	713
Anastasius II	713	715
Theodosius III	715	717
Leo III	717	741
Constantine V	741	775
Leo IV	775	780
Constantine VI	780	797
Irene	797	802
Nicephorus I	802	811
Michael I	811	813
Leo V	813	820
Michael II	842	829
Theophilius	829	842
Michael III	842	867
Basil I	867	886
Leo VI	886	912
Alexander	912	913
Constantine VII	913	959
Romanus I	919	944
Romanus II	959	963
Nicephorus II	963	969
John I	969	976
Basil II	976	1025
Constantine VIII	1025	1028
Zoe	1028	1050
Romanus III	1028	1034
Michael IV	1034	1041
Michael V	1041	1042
Zoe and Theodora	1042	1042
Constantine IX	1042	1054
Theodora	1054	1056
Michael VI	1056	1057
Isaac I	1057	1059
Constantine X	1059	1067
Romanus IV	1067	1071
Michael VI	1071	1078
Nicepohorus III	1078	1081
Alexius I	1081	1118
John II	1118	1143
Manuel I	1143	1180
Alexius II	1180	1183
Andronicus I	1183	1185
Isaac II	1185	1195
Alexius III	1195	1203
Isaac II	1203	1204
Alexius IV	1203	1204
Alexius V	1204	1204

Latin Emperors

	Crowned	Died	
Baldwin I	1204	1205	
Henry	1205	1216	
Peter of Courtenay	1217	1217	
Yolande	1217	1219	
Robert of Courtenay	1221	1228	
Baldwin II	1228	1261	
John of Brienne	1231	1237	(co-Emperor)

Emperors at Nicaea

	Crowned	Died
Theodore I Lascaris	1206	1222
John III	1222	1254
Theodore II	1254	1258
John IV	1258	1261

Constantinople Regained

	Crowned	Died
Michael VIII	1261	1282
Andronicus II	1282	

Kings of Denmark

	Crowned	Died
Gorm	940	940
Harald I Bluetooth	940	986
Svein I	985	1014
Harald II	1014	1019
Canute	1019	1035
Hardicanute	1035	1042
Svein II	1047	1074
Harald III	1074	1080
Canute II	1080	1086
Olaf I	1086	1095
Erik I	1095	1103
Niels	1104	1134
Erik II	1134	1137
Magnus	1129	1134
Erik III	1137	1146
Olaf II	1140	1142
Svein III	1146	1157
Canute III	1146	1157
Valdemer I	1157	1182
Canute IV	1182	1202
Valdemer II	1202	1241
Erik IV	1241	1250
Abel	1250	1252
Christopher	1252	1259
Erik V	1259	1286
Erik VI	1286	

Kings of England

	Crowned	Died
Alfred the Great	877	899
Edward the Elder	899	925
Athelstan	925	939
Edmund	939	946
Edred	946	955
Eadwig	955	959
Edgar the Peaceable	959	975
Ethelred the Unready	975	1016
Edmund Ironsides	1016	1016
Canute of Denmark	1016	1035
Harold Harefoot	1035	1040
Hardicanute	1040	1042
Edward the Confessor	1042	1066
Harold Godwinson	1066	1066
William the Conqueror	1066	1087
William Rufus	1087	1100
Henry I	1100	1135
Stephen of Blois	1136	1154
Henry II	1154	1189
Richard Lionheart	1189	1199
John Lackland	1199	1216
Henry III	1216	1272
Edward I	1272	

Kings of France

	Crowned	Died
Hugh Capet	987	996
Robert II	996	1031
Henri I	1031	1060
Philip I	1060	1108
Louis VI	1108	1137
Louis VII	1137	1180
Philip II Augustus	1180	1223
Louis VIII	1223	1226
Louis IX	1226	1270
Philip III	1270	1285
Philip IV	1285	

Kings of Germany and Holy Roman Emperors

	Crowned	Died
Charlemagne	800	814
Louis the Pious	814	840
Lothar I	840	855
Louis II	855	875
Charles II the Bald	875	877
Charles III the Fat	881	887
Guy of Spoleto	891	894
Lambert of Spoleto	894	898
Arnulf of Carinthia	896	899
Louis III of Provence	901	905
Berengar I	915	924
Otto I the Great	962	973
Otto II	973	983
Otto III	983	1002
Henry II	1002	1024
Conrad II	1024	1039
Henry III	1039	1056
Henry IV	1056	1106
Rudolf of Swabia	1077	1080
Hermann of Salm	1081	1093

Conrad of Franconia	1093	1101	
Henry V	1106	1125	
Lothar III	1125	1137	
Conrad III	1138	1152	Never formally crowned
Frederick I Barbarossa	1152	1190	
Henry VI	1190	1197	
1. Philip of Swabia	1198	1208	Never formally crowned
2. Otto IV	1198	1218	
Frederick II	1212	1250	
Henry Raspe	1246	1247	Anti-King, never formally crowned
William of Holland	1247	1256	Anti-King, never formally crowned
Conrad IV	1250	1254	Never formally crowned
1. Richard of Cornwall	1257	1272	Never formally crowned
2. Alfonso X of Castile	1257	1273	Never formally crowned
Rudolf I of Hapsburg	1273	1291	Never formally crowned
Adolf of Nassau	1292	1298	Never formally crowned
Albert I of Hapsburg	1298		Never formally crowned

KINGS OF HUNGARY

	Crowned	Died
Geza	(972)	992 (Duke)
Stephen I	992	1038
Peter	1038	1041
Samual	1041	1044
Peter	1044	1046
Andrew I	1047	1060
Bela I	1060	1063
Salamon	1063	1074
Geza I	1074	1077
Ladislas I	1077	1095
Kalman	1095	1116
Stephen II	1116	1131
Bela II	1131	1141
Geza II	1141	1162
Stephen III	1161	1161
Ladislas II	1162	1163
Stephen IV	1164	1165
Stephen III	1163	1172
Bela III	1172	1196
Imre	1196	1204
Ladislas III	1204	1205
Andrew II	1205	1235
Bela IV	1235	1270
Stephen V	1270	1272
Ladislas IV	1272	1290
Andrew III	1290	

KINGS OF JERUSALEM

	Crowned	Died
Godfrey of Bouillon	1099	1100
Baldwin I	1100	1118
Baldwin II	1118	1131
Fulk, Ct. of Anjou	1131	1144
Baldwin III	1144	1163
Amaury I	1163	1174
Baldwin IV	1174	1185
Baldwin V	1183	1186
Guy de Lusignan	1186	1187

KINGS OF POLAND

	Crowned	Died
Boleslav I	1025	1025
Mieszko II	1025	1034
Casamir I	1034	1058
Boleslav II	1058	1079
Vladislav I	1079	1102
Boleslav III	1102	1138
Boleslav IV	1146	1173
Casamir II	1177	1194
Leszek I	1202	1227

KINGS OF PORTUGAL

	Crowned	Died
Alfonso I Henriques	1139	1185
Sancho I	1185	1211
Alfonso II	1211	1223
Sancho II	1223-1245	1246 (deposed)
Alfonso III	1279	
Dinis	1279	

KINGS OF SCOTLAND

	Crowned	Died
Kenneth I McAlpin	843	860
Donald I	860	863
Constantine I	863	877
Aedh	877	878
Eocha	878	889
Donald II	889	900

Kings of Scotland continued

Constantine II	900	943
Malcolm I	943	954
Indulf	954	962
Duff	962	967
Colin	967	971
Kenneth II	971	995
Constantine III	995	997
Kenneth III	997	1005
Malcolm II	1005	1034
Duncan I	1034	1040
MacBeth	1040	1057
Malcolm III	1057	1093
Donald Bane	1093	1094
Duncan II	1094	1094
Donald Bane	1094	1097
Edgar	1097	1107
Alexander I	1107	1124
David I	1124	1153
Malcolm IV	1153	1165
William the Lion	1165	1214
Alexander II	1214	1249
Alexander III	1249	1286
Margeret	1286	1290
John Balliol	1292	1296
Edward I of England	1296	

Kings of Serbia

	Crowned	Died
Stephen Nemanja	1151	1196
Stephen I	1196	1228
Radoslav	1228	1232
Vladislav	1232	1243
Uros I	1243	1276
Stephen Dragutin	1276	1282
Stephen Uros II	1282	

Appendix B

Popes from A.D. 767

	Crowned	Died
Constantine II	767	768
Stephen IV	768	772
Adrian I	772	795
Leo III	795	816
Stephen V	816	817
Paschal I	817	824
Eugenius II	824	827
Valentine	827	827
Gregory IV	828	844
Sergius II	844	847
Leo IV	847	855
Benedict III	855	858
Anastasius	855	855
Nicholas I	858	867
Adrian II	867	872
John VIII	872	882
Marinus I	882	884
Adrian III	884	885
Stephen VI	885	891
Formosus	891	896
Boniface VI	896	896
Stephen VII	896	897
Romanus	897	897
Theodore II	897	897
John IX	898	900
Benedict IV	900	903
Leo V	903	903
Christopher	903	903
Sergius III	904	911
Anastasius III	911	913
Lando	913	914
John X	914	928
Leo VI	928	928
Stephen VIII	929	931
John XI	931	935
Leo VII	936	939
Stephen IX	939	942

Marinus II	942	946
Agapitus II	946	955
John XII	955	964
Leo VIII	963	965
Benedict V	964	966
John XIII	965	972
Benedict VI	973	974
Boniface VII	974	974
Benedict VII	974	983
John XIV	983	984
Boniface VII	984	985
John XV	985	996
Gregory V	996	999
John XVI	997	998
Sylvester II	999	1003
John XVII	1003	1003
John XVIII	1004	1009
Sergius IV	1009	1012
Benedict VIII	1012	1024
John XIX	1024	1032
Benedioct IX	1032	1044
Sylvester III	1045	1045
Benedict IX	1045	1045
Gregory VI	1045	1046
Clement II	1046	1047
Benedict IX	1047	1048
Damasus II	1048	1048
Leo IX	1049	1054
Victor II	1055	1057
Stephen X	1057	1058
Nicholas II	1059	1061
Alexander II	1061	1073
Gregory VII	1073	1085
Clement III	1080	1100
Victor III	1087	1087
Urban II	1088	1099
Paschal II	1099	1118
Theodoric	1100	1100
Albert	1102	1102
Sylvester IV	1105	1111
Gelasius II	1118	1119
Gregory VIII	1118	1121
Calixtus II	1119	1124
Honorius II	1124	1130
Celestine II	1124	1124
Innocent II	1130	1143
Anacletus II	1130	1138
Victor IV	1138	1138
Celestine II	1143	1144
Lucius II	1144	1145
Eugene III	1145	1153
Anastasius IV	1153	1154
Hadrian IV	1154	1159
Alexander III	1159	1181
Lucius III	1181	1185
Urban III	1185	1187
Gregory VIII	1187	1187
Clement III	1187	1191
Celestine III	1191	1198
Innocent III	1198	1216
Honorius III	1216	1227
Gregory IX	1227	1241
Celestine IV	1241	1241
Innocent IV	1243	1254
Alexander IV	1254	1261
Urban IV	1261	1264
Clement IV	1265	1268
No Pope	1268	1271
Gregory X	1271	1276
Innocent V	1276	1276
Hadrian V	1276	1276
John XXI	1276	1276
Nicholas III	1277	1280
Martin IV	1281	1285
Honorius IV	1285	1287
Nicholas IV	1287	1292
Celestine V	1294	1294
Boniface VIII	1294	1303

OCCEANVS · SEPTENTRIONALIS
OCCEANVS · OCCIDENTALIS
EVROPA
ASIA
AFFRICA
OCCEANVS · ORIENTALIS
OCCEANVS · MERIDIONALIS