Writers and Re-Writers of First Millennium History

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Society for Interdisciplinary Studies

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This is essentially a revised and expanded version of an article entitled 'The Writings of the Historians of the Roman and Early Medieval Periods and their Relevance to the Chronology of the First Millennium AD', published in five instalments in *Chronology & Catastrophism Review* 2015:3, pp. 23-35; 2016:1, pp. 11-19; 2016:2, pp. 28-35; 2016:3, pp. 24-32; 2017:1, pp. 19-28. It also includes a chapter on an additional topic (the Popes of Rome), plus appendices and indexes.

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Front Cover Illustrations. Top left: Arch of Constantine, Rome. Top right: Hagia Sophia, Istanbul (originally Cathedral of St Sophia, Constantinople); Bottom left: Córdoba, Spain, viewed over the Roman Bridge crossing the Guadalquivir River. Bottom right: Royal Anglo-Saxon burial mound at Sutton Hoo, East Anglia.

All photographs in this book were taken by the author or by his wife, Jan Palmer.

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Chapter 1: Preliminary Considerations

1.1 Introduction

There is a long tradition of challenging conventional views about the chronology of the *ancient* world. In 1728, Isaac Newton argued, in his Introduction to *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*, that Eratosthenes, in the 3rd century BC, followed by Apollodorus a century later and then others, had given impossibly high generation times in interpreting genealogical lists supposedly linking rulers of the Classical Period of Greece to ones of the Mycenaean Period, which had ended around the time of the Trojan War. In Newton's revised scheme, using, as his base-point, the conquest of the Achaemenid Persians by Alexander the Great in 331 BC, he dated the fall of Troy to 904 BC, almost 300 years later than the date indicated by Eratosthenes, and the one generally supposed by scholars of the present day. The current justification for a date in the twelfth century BC was provided by William Flinders Petrie around the end of the 19th century. Petrie demonstrated linkages between Mycenaean pottery and pottery of the New Kingdom of Egypt, so was able to date the Mycenean Period on the basis of the conventional chronology of Egypt, believed to have been firmly established. This resulted in the insertion into Greek history of a Dark Age several centuries long, for which there was little or no direct evidence.

This Dark Age concept was challenged at the time by the archaeologist, Cecil Torr, but Petrie's argument prevailed. Half a century later, Immanuel Velikovsky, a Russian-born psychoanalyst living in America, wrote a best-selling book, *Ages in Chaos: From Exodus to King Akhnaton*, which argued that the New Kingdom of Egypt should be dated around 500 year later than generally supposed, but Egyptologists were unimpressed. Two more *Ages in Chaos* volumes appeared in the late 1970s, stimulating consideration of Velikovsky's ideas by a new generation of readers, which resulted in the publication of many articles and some books in support of chronological revisions, including ones by authors with qualifications in ancient history and archaeology. However, most were proposing models which were at variance with that of Velikovsky, some arguing for a smaller contraction of Egyptian history and a few advocating a greater contraction. In 2002, the Society for Interdisciplinary Studies held an international conference entitled *Ages Still in Chaos* in London to bring together supporters of the various chronologies to discuss the current situation, and, since I, a scientist with a deep interest in history, was known to be sympathetic towards ideas for revising chronology, without having a commitment to any particular scheme, I was invited to present an introduction, giving an impartial, overall perspective. This was subsequently included in the conference proceedings, published as an issue of the Society's journal, *Chronology and Catastrophism Review* (*C&C Review*), in 2003, with a full-page table which compared details of eleven different schemes for the chronology of Ancient Egypt. Discussion on these and other schemes continued in the two decades following the conference, with most of them, considered in isolation, appearing plausible. However, there can, of course, only be one correct chronology. It was evident that, in some cases, authors were presenting evidence which appeared to support their theory, whilst disregarding problematical evidence which would have been difficult for them to explain away. In 2013 I wrote a three-part article for *C&C Review* giving an impartial summary of what ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian sources, carved in rock or written on papyrus or parchment, actually said, and then assessed how the conventional chronology and three representative alternative chronologies fared, when judged against the content of the sources. This analysis ended in 332 BC, with the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great [1].

That was the event where the orthodox chronology and all the major alternative chronologies of the ancient world came together. There was general agreement that Alexander the Great conquered Egypt 332 years before the year we call AD 1, or, to put it another way, 332 years before the 44th regnal year of Octavian/Augustus Caesar [2]. Yet, even so, there were many who questionned whether Alexander's conquest of Egypt took place 2332 years before the year we call AD 2001, these people finding reasons to think that AD chronology may have been artificially extended.

Challenges to the conventional chronology of the Christian era had been formulated mainly on the basis of unorthodox interpretations of the findings of archaeologists, astronomical retro-calculations and/or statistical analysis. Apart from the identification of perceived gaps or anomalies, historical sources had been largely disregarded by the challengers, on the grounds that they were often incomplete and may be presenting incorrect information, either because of innocent confusion or deliberate falsification. In a series of articles in *C&C Review*, beginning in 2015, I addressed the situation from the opposite perspective, the surviving historical sources. The current work, as acknowledged on the title-page, is a significantly revised, expanded and updated development of those articles.

As with the previous articles, limitations of space in this current work (despite its extended format) make it impossible to give sufficiently detailed consideration to the full range of evidence to be able to come to firm conclusions about the viability or otherwise of any particular model. Instead, as before, the focus will be on what

the historical sources actually say, and the extent to which the historical evidence supports each of the various chronological models (orthodox and unorthodox) under consideration. Where a model appears to be incompatible with the historical evidence, the possibility of this evidence being unintentionally misleading or having been deliberately falsified will be considered, with an assessment the degree of plausibility of possible explanations.

Chapter 1 introduces the individual chronological models for the period under consideration and also the dating systems used during the course of it. It then examines suggestions that a false chronology may have been created by early Christians, as well as the theory that the AD system we use today is different from that introduced by Dionysius Exiguus. Chapter 2 provides a detailed summary of what the sources say about the chronology of the Roman/Byzantine Empire whilst Chapter 3 similarly summarises information given in the sources about the chronology of what may be termed Barbarian Europe, and Chapter 4 considers the popes of Rome in similar fashion. In all chapters, there are discussions of issues arising.

1.2 Revisionist and Conventional Chronologies

During the 1990s, in Germany, author and publisher Heribert Illig produced a model for shortening the first millennium AD, which became known as the "Phantom Time Hypothesis". According to Illig, the history we now associate with the period between August 614 and September 911, for which (in the view of Illig) very little archaeological evidence has been found, is completely fictional [3]. A book in English in support of this concept, written by Emmet Scott, was published in 2014. Illig had suggested that Emperor Otto III, in collusion with Pope Silvester II, may have moved the calendar forward by three centuries to associate his reign with the start of the second millennium AD. Scott commented that this change could have passed unnoticed "because of the general ignorance of history among the population, and by the confusion that reigned throughout Europe regarding calendars and dates" [4].

In Britain, Steve Mitchell, an amateur archaeologist, rejected Illig's hypothesis, but considered it possible that the history of the first millennium had been artificially extended for a shorter period at an earlier time. In 2008, he argued that the English monk Bede, who was the first to use the AD system of Dionysius Exiguus for historical purposes in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (completed, according to the author, in AD 731) may have made an error with the date which has resulted in a corresponding error in the AD system we use today. Mitchell raised two particular concerns. One was that it appeared from Bede's history that almost nothing of note had happened in England between the reigns of the Roman emperors, Marcian and Maurice, whose accession dates, according to Bede, were AD 449 and AD 582, a span of 133 years. The other was that Early Medieval documents were often dated simply to the year in the current 15-year indiction cycle (introduced for taxation purposes during the reign of Constantine the Great). Putting these two factors together, it was quite possible that Bede had over-estimated the timescale of this period by one or more indiction cycles. Mitchell subsequently went beyond this and, on the basis of perceived historical and archaeological gaps, began to develop arguments that the 250-year-long Early Anglo-Saxon Period (which encompassed the reigns of Marcian and Maurice) may have been artificially extended by up to 200 years [5].

An extension of a similar length, but at a time even later than that supposed by Illig, was proposed by Zoltán Hunnivari, forming what he termed the "Hungarian Calendar". On the basis of retro-calculations of eclipses and other astronomical phenomena, Hunnivari claimed that AD 960 was the same year as AD 1160 and almost two centuries of history have been fabricated to fill the space between these dates. According to Hunnivari, writing in *From Harun Al-Rashid up to the Times of Saladin*, the revision to the Christian Calendar was made by Pope Innocent III in AD 1016, with that year becoming AD 1206 at a stroke. Hunnivari wrote (p. 87), "The resetting of the calendar did not cause any difficulties since the Christian calendar before was used in only a very narrow circle of the Western Church" [6].

Returning to Germany, Gunnar Heinsohn, a social scientist at the University of Bremen, had, for many years, provided staunch support for Illig's hypothesis but, in 2013, he produced a new theory which argued for a much greater shortening of the first millennium. In Heinsohn's view, the artificial stretching of the first millennium was not a consequence of the deliberate invention of false histories but of the chaos caused by a major catastrophic event. Evidence of this was then wrongly interpreted to indicate a number of local events taking place at different times. According to Heinsohn, relatively minor events which are believed to have occurred in different parts of Europe during the 230s, 530s and 930s were manifestations of a single huge event which brought an end to civilised life throughout Europe. In this scenario, the activities of the emperors regarded as ruling from Rome between AD 1-230 and ones ruling from further east between AD 290-520, as well as the activities of rulers in northern and northeastern Europe between AD 701 and AD 930 (including the Carolingian Franks), were all taking place at the same time. This triplication of the history of a single 230-year period would in itself result in a false extension of the timescale amounting to 460 years, and, considering the situation as a whole, around 700 years of history, from the 3rd to the 10th centuries, would already have been completed before the date when it was supposed to have started. Working back from present dates, Emperor Augustus would have been on the throne in

AD 700 so, from that point of history to the end of the Early Medieval Period in Western Europe, in AD 1000, there would have been a period of just 300 years, not 1,000 years, as generally supposed [7].

Gunnar Heinsohn in 2012

A model which has received much support in Russia and eastern Europe, the "New Chronology" of Anatoly Fomenko and colleagues (notably Gleb Nosovsky), is even more radical than Heinsohn's theory, bringing into question not only every aspect of the history of the Early Medieval period as generally understood but also the whole of ancient history as we know it. According to Fomenko, all of this history was fabricated in the 16th and 17th centuries AD, initially by Joseph Justus Scaliger and subsequently by Dionysius Petavius and others. Generally, it was based on people and events from the first half of the second millennium AD, and often made use of these more than once. Fomenko claimed to have been able to demonstrate this by statistical analysis. In Fomenko's view, Byzantine history from 830-1143 was a copy of that from 1143-1453, and was also the same as English history from 1040-1327. Byzantine history from 378-630 was similarly a duplicate of English history from 640-1040, both being reflections of the same Late Medieval origin. The history of Ancient Greece was derived from that of the history of Greece from the 11th to the 16th centuries, whilst Cambyses of Achaemenid Persia was the medieval Charles of Naples, Darius I was Frederick of Sicily and Xerxes was Duke Walther of Brienne. Brutus of Troy, after whom Britain was named (according to Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth), was the same person as the Brutus who founded the Roman Republic and the Brutus who conspired to assassinate Julius Caesar, and was a contemporary of the 13th century Mongol ruler, Genghis Khan. The Old Testament was based on events in Europe between the 11th-17th centuries, with Constantinople being called Jerusalem. The kings of Israel parallel the western Roman emperors from 306-476 and also the Roman coronations of the Holy Roman Empire in the 10th-13th centuries, all being phantom reflections of the Habsburgs. The kings of Judah, also phantom reflections of the Habsburgs, parallel the eastern Roman emperors from 306-700 as well as the German coronations of the Holy Roman Empire in the 10th-13th centuries. According to Fomenko, King Solomon may have been the same person as Moses, Pompey (the rival of Julius Caesar), Diocletian, Justinian I, Constantine VII and Suleiman the Magnificent. His temple still stands as the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople [8].

This may seem highly speculative, but Fomenko is a reputable statistician and he claimed that his conclusions were supported by statistical analysis. However, his case was undoubtedly weakened by the fact that he considered it justifiable to adjust the data, e.g. by arbitrarily rearranging a sequence of kings, before subjecting it to analysis [9]. His comments about the influence of Scaliger on today's conventional chronology were also vastly overstated. Scaliger was the first to assemble a comprehensive chronology of the ancient world, incorporating Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian and Jewish history as well as Greek and Roman, but he initiated a process rather than delivered a finished product. Fomenko quoted the 20th century chronologist Elias Bickerman commenting on the limitations of the work of chronologists from before his own time but, apparently misunderstanding what Bickerman was saying, followed the quotation with the words, "Hence it would be correct to call the modern consensual chronology of the Classical period and the Middle Ages the Scaliger-Petavius version". In fact, the modern consensual chronology of the Middle Ages owes much to the work of later scholars, for example, Bruno Krusch (1857-1940), a member of the Central Directorate of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH), who allocated dates on the basis of an exhaustive study of surviving histories, chronicles, biographies, letters and charters (as well as identifying forgeries), carried out throughout most of his working life. Even so, this was only part of a process, for not all of Krusch's conclusions are currently accepted, and work of a similar nature is still ongoing, to refine the precise details of the conventional chronology [10].

Without making any assumptions about the validity of any particular model, we shall aim to carry out an objective examination of the written evidence. It would be impossible here to follow Krusch's example and try to take into

account all surviving documents, so let us focus on the histories and chronicles which have been transmitted to us and, disregarding claims made about them in orthodox and unorthodox secondary sources, allow them to speak for themselves. What do they tell us about the chronology of the period we regard as the first millennium AD? However, before we can begin to address that question, there is an important aspect we need to consider.

1.3 Dating Systems

An Abundance of Systems

Bede wrote that Marcian became emperor in AD 449 [11], but he could not have found that date in any of his sources, because, according to all the available evidence, Bede was starting a new tradition by using the AD system to date historical events. How might the accession of Marcian have been dated in the sources available to Bede, and on what basis would he have converted such dates into ones in the AD system? On the evidence of the surviving sources, numerous dating systems were used during the period we are considering, some of which had originated earlier, during the latter part of the first millennium BC. Abbreviations we shall be employing in connection with these systems are given in Table I.

Table 1: Abbreviations Used in this Work for some Dating Systems

AD	*Anno Domini* Years from Christ's birth	Introduced by Dionysius Exiguus in Rome
AM	*Anno Mundi* Years from Creation	Many different schemes used – see below
AM (AE)	*Alexandrian Era* – An AM system	Introduced by Annianos of Alexandria
AM (BE)	*Byzantine Era* – An AM system	Became the main Byzantine dating system
AM (B)	AM system devised by Bede	Used only in Bede's chronicle
AM (CP)	AM system of the *Chronicon Paschale*	Used only in the *CP*, written in Constantinople
AM (E)	AM system devised by Eusebius	Widely used in Western Europe
AM (H)	AM system devised by Hillel ben Yehuda	Hebrew system widely used in Jewish communities
AM (IS)	AM system devised by Isidore of Seville	Used only in Spain
AP	*Anno Passione* Years from the Crucifixion	Introduced by Prosper of Aquitaine
AUC	*ab urbe condita* Years of Rome	Introduced by Terentius Varro

Almost halfway through the first millennium BC, the people of some Greek cities had begun dating events by reference to the name of the chief magistrate in office in their city at the time, these being appointed on an annual basis. The magistrates of Athens were called archons and lists of chief archons were preserved. Herodotus wrote that Xerxes and his invading Persian army reached the vicinity of Athens during the archonship of Calliades. Several centuries later, a system based on the 4-year cycle of Olympiads began to become popular since, unlike systems based on sequences of local magistrates, it could be understood and used throughout Greece. Initially, it seems that several different Olympiad dating systems were in use, but the one counting from the year when Coroebus of Elis was said to have won the main event, the *stadion*, was the one which prevailed. Whether its starting point was the very first Olympiad or, as seems more likely, the first where the winners' names were recorded, and whether Coroebus was the victor in the year supposed or in some other year, are questions which will probably never be answered [12]. However, that has no bearing on the fact that this particular Olympiad dating system, following its widespread adoption in Greece in around the second century BC, continued to be used by Greek historians for about another 800 years. Diodorus of Sicily and Dionysius of Halicarnassus used it in the first century BC, linking it to the archon system to date past events. So, for example, Diodorus dated the attack on Athens by Xerxes to Olympiad 75:1 (i.e. the year of the 75th Olympiad) and the archonship of Calliades; the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great to Olympiad 112:1 and the archonship of Niceratus; and the beginning of Julius Caesar's war against the Gauls to Olympiad 180:1 and the archonship of Herodes, when Ptolemy, known as the "New Dionysius" (i.e. Ptolemy XII Auletes), was king of Egypt. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, written several centuries after the time of Diodorus, similarly dated Alexander's conquest of Egypt to Olympiad 112:1, going on to date the beginning of the imperial reign of Augustus, when he changed his name from Octavian, to Olympiad 187:2, before finishing with the death of Emperor Valens in Olympiad 289:3. Not long after that, the Romans banned the Greeks from holding any more Olympics, but some historians still carried on using the Olympiad dating system, even though the games were no longer taking place. In the chronicle of Hydatius and in what has become known as the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*, both of which followed on from the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, the accession of Emperor Marcian was dated to around the year of the 308th Olympiad.

Later still, the *Chronicon Paschale* equated the first year of Emperor Justinian I with Olympiad 327:1; the first year of Maurice with Olympiad 340:4; and the first year of Heraclius with Olympiad 347:4 [13].

The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, which was the chronological appendix to the chronicle of Eusebius translated from Koine Greek to Latin and continued by St Jerome, also dated events by reference to regnal years of kings and by years from the supposed birth of Abraham, which had been determined by Eusebius from information in the Septuagint translation into Koine of the Hebrew Bible (the Christian Old Testament). The same dating systems were retained in the chronicle of Hydatius and the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*. After that, although the new dating system introduced by Eusebius continued to be used, it was presented in a different guise. According to his calculations, Abraham had been born 3184 years after the creation of the world, so "years from Abraham" could be converted into "years of the world", i.e. *Anno Mundi* (AM), simply by adding 3184. To avoid confusion, all dates in the system devised by Eusebius will be presented here in the AM form, with "E" inserted in brackets to distinguish this system from other AM systems. To give some examples, the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated Alexander's conquest of Egypt to AM (E) 4869; the first year of Augustus as emperor to AM (E) 5170; and the death of Valens to AM (E) 5579. According to the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*, Marcian succeeded Theodosius II in AM (E) 5654; whilst the chronicle of Victor of Tunnuna dated the death of Justinian I to AM (E) 5766; and John of Biclaro, writing in Spain, dated the end of his chronicle, in the 8th year of Emperor Maurice and the 4th year of the Visigoth king, Reccared, to AM (E) 5791. In Gaul, Gregory of Tours began the main part of his book, *The History of the Franks*, with the death of St Martin in the 2nd year of joint-emperors Honorius and Arcadius, which he dated to AM (E) 5596, and ended it during the reign of Maurice, in the 33rd year of Guntram king of Burgundy, dating this to AM (E) 5792, 21 years after his own consecration as bishop of Tours. The *Chronicle of Fredegar* recorded events in Francia after the completion of Gregory's *History*, and the first continuation of this finished in the year said to be 63 years before the end of the millennium, shortly after Charles (Martel) had driven back a Moorish invasion from Spain led by Abd ar-Rahman. That is generally taken to indicate a date of AM (E) 5937, which would be consistent with information provided about the reign-lengths of Frankish kings from the conclusion of Gregory's *History* to this point [14].

Many sources focusing on the Roman Empire, including the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, similarly dated events according to regnal years of rulers and recorded their reign-lengths. The long-enduring system dating events to the year of Diocletian emerged from this. Diocletian, who brought stability to the Roman Empire after a series of civil wars, was the first emperor to be born in the east and he spent most of his life there, appointing others to govern the west. In Egypt, events continued to be dated from the first regnal year of Diocletian, even after the end of his reign. Thus, despite the fact that Diocletian had persecuted Christians, the Christians in Alexandria used this system to date the years in their Easter Tables, which gave future calendar-dates for Easter Sunday determined on the basis of a 19-year lunar cycle. The Diocletian Era system, subsequently renamed the "Era of Martyrs" by Christians (the first attested use of this being in year 359 of the Era), is still used by the Coptic Church in Egypt today. The chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor, which consisted of 528 yearly entries, began with the first year of Diocletian. Although the Diocletian Era dating system was not a major feature of this chronicle, Theophanes noted that Anastasius I came to the throne in the 207th year of Diocletian and was succeeded by Justin I in the 234th year of Diocletian. John of Nikiu, writing in Egypt, noted the death of Emperor Heraclius in the 357th year of Diocletian. According to the *Chronicon Paschale*, the first regnal year of Diocletian, from which the years in the Easter Tables were reckoned, corresponded to the consulship of Diocletian (his 2nd) and Aristobalus [15].

Dating by reference to the consuls appointed for a particular year was the traditional system of the Romans. The historical sources say that, after the expulsion of the last king, Tarquinius Superbus (Tarquin the Proud), and the setting up of the Republic, Junius Brutus and Tarquinius Collatinus were appointed as the first consuls, sharing most of the powers of a king for a twelve-month term, like their successors. Annual consuls continued to be appointed long after the establishment of the Empire, although by this time their function was only a ceremonial one. The sources consistently stated that Octavian, who had risen to power following the death of Julius Caesar, changed his name to Augustus and effectively became emperor in the year of his 7th consulship and the 3rd of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. Augustus erected a marble monument (now known as the *Fasti Capitolini*) in the area of the Forum in Rome giving lists (*fasti)* of important information about Roman history, including a list of consuls going back to earliest times, compiled by Marcus Terentius Varro. Much of this has survived on fragments of the monument, which show the list was subsequently extended up to the year before the death of Augustus. Two other extensions of versions of Varro's list of consuls are known, one of these forming part of the *Chronography of 354*, compiled in Rome during the reign of Constantius II, and the other produced in Spain and discovered bound to an edition of the chronicle of Hydatius. For that reason, it is often referred to as the *Hydatius fasti (*although some call it the *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, even though it has no association with Constantinople). There are doubts about the accuracy of the earlier part of Varro's list because it is inconsistent with the accounts of Diodorus and Livy. However, for the period following the consulship of Marcus Valerius Corvus and Quintus Appuleius Pansa, 273 years before the consulship when Octavian became Augustus, there is nothing in other sources to raise questions about the Varronian chronology. Similarly, the consular pairs listed in the

Chronography of 354 and the *Hydatius fasti* for the 380 years from the time Octavian assumed imperial authority to the compilation of the first of these sources are generally consistent with each other and with other evidence from the same period, including consular information inscribed on stone [16].

From the last consular year mentioned in the *Chronography of 354* to the end of the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle in what was stated to be the 6th consulship of Valens and the 2nd of Valentinian the Younger, the *Hydatius fasti* gave 24 years, with generally consistent details being given in the chronicles of Prosper of Aquitaine and Cassiodorus, as well as the *Chronicon Paschale*. From that point until the end of Prosper's chronicle in the consulship of Valentinian III (for the 8th time) with Anthemius, this source, together with the chronicles of Cassiodorus and Marcellinus Comes (Count Marcellinus), the *Chronicon Paschale* and the *Hydatius fasti*, gave 76 years, with very similar details. For example, all four chronicles noted the accession of Marcian in the consulship of Valentinian III (for the 7th time) and Avienus. After the end of this period, the *Chronicon Paschale* and the chronicles of Marcellinus Comes (with its continuations) and Marius of Avenches all gave 86 years to the final consulship of a commoner, that of Basilius, in the reign of Justinian I (a total of 843 years after the consulship of Corvus and Pansa, and 570 years after Augustus assumed imperial powers). After that, the role of consul was incorporated into the duties of the emperor [17].

Another Roman dating system was *ab urbe condita* (AUC), i.e. years from the foundation of the city. However, it was acknowledged during the first century BC that the precise date of the foundation of Rome remained unknown. Varro placed it in towards the end of Olympiad 6:3 and Dionysius of Halicarnassus suggested it was in Olympiad 7:1. Livy sometimes placed it in the same year as Dionysius and sometimes in the following year. Moreover, Dionysius pointed out that significantly different dates for the event had been given by earlier historians with, for example, Timaeus of Sicily writing that Rome was founded 38 years before the first Olympiad. As far as we know, there was no evidential basis for choosing between the alternatives, but Varro's scheme became the official one of the Roman Empire. Only after that did AUC become a dating system, with AUC 1 being essentially the same as Olympiad 6:4, but, even then, it was largely used to mark important anniversaries. The histories of Aurelius Victor, Eutropius and Orosius, as well as the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle (which was said to have ended in AUC 1131), all noted that AUC 1000 was celebrated during the short reign of Marcus Julius Philippus, and coins have survived which marked that event. The only histories which made significant use of AUC dating, in conjunction with consular dates, were ones by two near-contemporaries but otherwise very different individuals: Eutropius, a pagan who provided administrative support for Julian and other emperors in Constantinople; and Orosius, a Spanish Christian priest and theologian. Eutropius dated the assassination of Julius Caesar to AUC 709, the accession of emperor Nerva to AUC 850 and the death of Emperor Jovian, the last event recorded in his history, to AUC 1119. Orosius dated the first year of Octavian to AUC 710, the accession of Nerva to AUC 846, and he placed the succession of Jovian to Valentinian in the year AUC 1118, with the death of Valens following in AUC 1132. Orosius ended his history during the reign of Honorius, and he dated the accession of Honorius and his brother Arcadius to AUC 1149. Centuries later, the AUC system was still occasionaly used, in association with others, to date important events. So, for example, Frutolf of Michelsberg, reported that Henry II became king of Germany in AUC 1752 and AD 1001 [18].

In the *Hydatius fasti*, produced in Spain, consulships from the latter part of the reign of Augustus onwards were sometimes dated, generally at ten-year intervals, by reference to the corresponding year in the long-lasting Spanish Era system, whose origin is uncertain. Hydatius likewise gave Spanish Era dates at regular intervals in the margin of his chronicle, and also a few in the main body of the work, writing, for example, that in the 15th year of Honorius, which was Spanish Era 447, the Alans, Vandals and Sueves entered Spanish territory, and the Visigoths under Alaric sacked Rome. Similarly, John of Biclaro wrote that he was ending his chronicle in the 8th year of Maurice, which was Spanish Era 630. Isidore of Seville used this system more generally in his *History of the Goths*, completed during the reign of Heraclius. He wrote, for example, that: in the 12th year before the start of the Spanish Era, the Goths offered to support Pompey in his civil war against Julius Caesar; in Era 369, in the 26th year of Constantine the Great, the Goths fought against the Romans in the Balkans region; in Era 416, Valens died fighting against the Goths in Thrace; in Era 447, Alaric sacked Rome; in Era 453, Athaulf led the Goths (more precisely, the Visigoths) into Gaul and then into Spain; in Era 490, the first year of Emperor Marcian, Thorismund became king of the Goths; in Era 569, the 6th year of Emperor Justinian I, Theudis became king in Spain; in Era 624, the 3rd year of Emperor Maurice, Reccared succeeded his father Leovigild as king of the Goths; and in Era 659, the 10th year of Emperor Heraclius, Suinthila came to the throne. A continuation of this history was provided in the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, written more than a century later by an anonymous Christian living in a part of Spain which by this time was under Moorish control. According to this chronicle: Suinthila, who became king in Spanish Era 659, went on to reign for 10 years; in Era 685, during the reign of Emperor Constans II, Reccesuinth became king of the Goths; in Era 749, when Justinian II was emperor, the Moors sailed over from North Africa and seized southern and central Spain; and in Era 769, during the reign of Emperor Leo III, Abd ar-Rahman assumed power and led an army into Frankish territory, but was defeated by Charles (Martel). The *Mozarabic Chronicle* ended in year 792 of the Spanish Era, when Constantine V was emperor. Another source, known as the *Chronicle of Alfonso*

III, was written in Asturias in northern Spain when the Moors were controlling the region to the south. This chronicle began with the death of the Visigoth king, Reccesuith, and the accession of Wamba in Spanish Era 710. It paralleled the events described in the *Mozarabic Chronicle* up to the Moorish conquest of southern Spain but then concentrated on events in the part of the country which remained Christian. Roderic, regarded as the last Visigoth king, was killed during the conquest and Pelayo was appointed king of the Spanish Christians, ruling for 19 years until his death in Era 775. The chronicle ended with the accession of Alfonso III in year 904 of the Spanish Era. This dating system continued to be used in Spain for several more centuries. So, for example, the *Chronicle of Rodrigo* noted the death of Rodrigo Díaz (better known to us as El Cid) in Era 1137 [19].

Another regional system was the Antiochene Era, often supposed to have marked the entry into Antioch by Julius Caesar after liberating it from Pompey, but now considered more likely, as indicated in the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, to have owed its origin to the victory of Caesar over Pompey in the previous year. The chronicler John Malalas, who was born in Antioch and moved to Constantinople during the reign of Justinian I, wrote that Marcian reigned from year 499 in the Antiochene Era, Zeno from Era 523, and Anastasius I from Era 539 [20].

The long-enduring Seleucid Era dating system, known to some as the Greek Era, the Syrian Era or the Era of Alexander, also originated in this region. Its starting-point was the victory by Seleucus, a former general of Alexander the Great, over his rival Antigonus, which led to the institution of the Seleucid dynasty, reigning over Syria, Mesopotamia and much of Asia Minor. Diodorus dated this victory by Seleucus to the year of the 117th Olympiad, when Polemon was archon of Athens. It is apparent that some communities, but not all, moved the starting date of the Era forward by about six months to coincide with the beginning of the Babylonian civil year, which can lead to some slight uncertainty about the precise correspondence of Seleucid dates with ones in other systems. The system was used in Seleucid chronicles and king-lists, and continued to be employed in and around Syria well into the Christian period. For example, a document preserved from the Council of Chalcedon (in Asia Minor), convened by Emperor Marcian, noted that the Council of Nicaea took place during the consulship of Paulinus and Julian and year 636 in the Era of Alexander. The *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, completed during the reign of Maurice, similarly gave Era of Alexander (i.e. Seleucid) dates, saying, for instance, that Justinian I died in year 876 of this system, having ruled for 39 years and that, following Justin II and Tiberius II, Maurice came to the throne in year 893. Several centuries later, Michael the Syrian wrote a chronicle which ended shortly after the death of the Saracen leader, Saladin, in Damascus in year 1505 of the Syrian (i.e. Seleucid) Era. Near the beginning of the chronicle, Michael had explained that the start of the reign of Seleucus, 12 years after the death of Alexander the Great, marked the inception of dating according to the Syrian Era. During the course of the chronicle, Michael noted, for example, that: the 44th year of Augustus occurred in year 315 of the Syrian Era; Diocletian came to the throne in Syrian Era 594; Constantine the Great began his reign in Era 673; the 6th regnal year of Marcian was in Era 769; Justin I ascended the throne in Era 832; Tiberius II (the predecessor of Maurice) became emperor in Era 886; the 10th regnal year of Constans II fell in Era 966; Michael II was succeeded by Theophilos in Era 1140; and Constantine IX came to the throne in Syrian Era 1361 [21].

Since the Jewish homeland formed part of the Seleucid Empire, it was natural that Jewish writers made use of the Seleucid Era dating system. So, accounts of the Maccabean rebellion and related events were dated in this way in the *Books of the Maccabees* and by Flavius Josephus. For example, Josephus dated the sack of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes to Seleucid Era 145, during the period of the 153rd Olympiad. Usage of the Seleucid system continued long after the Diaspora following the destruction by Titus of the second Jerusalem temple, and was often referred to as the Era of Contracts in Jewish communities. The Jewish scholar known as Moses Maimonides, who lived in Córdoba, Spain, during the fifteenth century of the Seleucid Era (according to his own testimony), dated the destruction of the second temple to Seleucid Era 379. This dating system was still being used in our own time by the Yemeni Jews [22].

According to tradition, the Jewish (or Hebrew) Calendar generally employed today, linked to an AM dating system, was introduced by Rabbi Hillel ben Yehuda in Seleucid Era 670, but no evidence has survived of its use for several centuries after that date. Here, when using this system, we shall insert "H" in brackets after AM to avoid confusion. The year AD 2000 corresponded to AM (H) 5760/5761. Maimonides was instrumental in bringing about a change to this system, particularly in Europe. He noted that the year in which he was writing, Seleucid Era 1489, was AM (H) 4938 and was also 1109 years after the destruction of the second temple [23].

The chronicle of Isidore of Seville, compiled during the reign of Heraclius, used a world era system which was very similar to that of Eusebius, but assumed a slightly younger world. In Table 2 are some examples of what Isidore gave as the first regnal year for some Roman rulers. Another world era system was devised in England by Bede a century later, to date a chronicle he incorporated into his major work, *The Reckoning of Time,* completed in the 9th year of Leo III. The basis of this system was Jerome's translation into Latin of the Hebrew Bible, which gave a significantly shorter timescale back to Adam than the Septuagint translation used by Eusebius. Examples of Bede's dates for the first regnal years of Roman emperors are given in Table 2 [24].

Whereas the world era systems popular amongst Christians in western Europe were ones which followed the example of Eusebius and attempted to date the creation of the world by counting back on the basis of timescales given in the Bible, eastern Christians preferred systems which dated the world's origin by linking interpretations of passages in the scriptures to astronomical cycles. An example of the latter was the dating system used (together with Olympiad and consular dates) in the *Chronicon Paschale,* compiled in Constantinople at about the same time as Isidore was writing his chronicle in Spain. At a later time in Constantinople, during the reign of Nikephoros I, George Synkellos used the Alexandrian Era ("AE") dating system in his chronicle, attributing this to Annianos, a monk who had lived in Alexandria four centuries earlier. Although beginning with Adam, as in the *Chronicon Paschale* and the chronicles of Isidore and Bede, Synkellos started the more systematic part of his chronicle with the seizure of power by Julius Caesar in AM (AE) 5434 and continued for 343 more years to the accession of Diocletian in AM (AE) 5776. According to this account, Octavian first rose to power in AM (AE) 5458. Ill-health prevented Synkellos carrying out any more work on his chronicle, so he persuaded Theophanes the Confessor to write a continuation. Theophanes, using the same dating system, began in the year after the last entry of Synkellos, in AM (AE) 5777, and continued until his own time, with the seizure of the imperial throne from Michael I by Leo V in AM (AE) 6305. Other examples of dates given by Theophanes, as well as corresponding ones by Isidore, Bede and in the *Chronicon Paschale*, are found in Table 2. On occasions during the course of his chronicle, Theophanes pointed out the relationship between dates in the system he was using and in the alternative Byzantine Era ("BE") one (which he called the "Roman" system, since the Byzantines often referred to themselves as Romans), noting, for example, that the year AM (AE) 5983, when Zeno died and Anastasius I became emperor, corresponded to AM (BE) 5999, and that AM (AE) 6232 corresponded to AM (BE) 6248 [25].

Table 2: AM Dates of First Regnal Years of Some Roman Emperors, according to Isidore of Seville, Bede, Theophanes and the *Chronicon Paschale*

	Isidore	Bede	*Chron. Paschale*	Theophanes
Octavian	AM (IS) 5155	AM (B) 3911	AM (CP) 5465	
Diocletian	AM (IS) 5482	AM (B) 4239	AM (CP) 5793	AM (AE) 5777
Marcian	AM (IS) 5650	AM (B) 4404	AM (CP) 5959	AM (AE) 5943
Maurice	AM (IS) 5783	AM (B) 4537	AM (CP) 6091	AM (AE) 6075
Heraclius	AM (IS) 5812	AM (B) 4566	AM (CP) 6119	AM (AE) 6102
Leo III		AM (B) 4672		AM (AE) 6209

In overall terms, Theophanes said he had written a chronography of 528 years from the first year of Diocletian to the 2nd year of Michael, the date of which could be regarded as either AM (AE) 6305 or AM (BE) 6321. Subsequent histories and chronicles written in Constantinople generally used the latter system, which became the official dating system of the Byzantine Empire. It was used in a compendium from several sources, known as the *Theophanes Continuatus*, to date, for example, the succession from Constantine VII to his son Romanos II to AM (BE) 6469. Leo the Deacon, writing of events in his own time, dated that same transition to AM (BE) 6467 and he went on to date the accession of Basil II, following the death of John I, to AM (BE) 6485. Several reigns later, John Skylitzes wrote a "synopsis of histories" which began with the reign of Michael I and dated, for example, the accession of Romanos II to AM (BE) 6468; that of Basil II to AM (BE) 6484; the succession from Michael V to Constantine IX to AM (BE) 6550; and that from Empress Theodora to Michael VI to AM (BE) 6564. Later, Anna Komnene, in a biography of her father, Alexios I, dated his accession following the abdication of Nikephoros III to AM (BE) 6589. We could continue in similar incremental fashion looking, for example, at the writings of Niketas Choniates, but we shall leave that until the postscript to Chapter 2. For now, let us, instead, jump forward to the capture of Constantinople by the Muslims. This was dated by the Byzantines to AM (BE) 6961 and by their Venetian allies to AD 1453. The Byzantine Era dating system remained the official one of Russia until, as part of the reforms of Peter the Great, the calendar changed from AM (BE) 7208 to AD 1700 on 1st January. Although no longer in general use in the Eastern Orthodox Church, it still forms the basis of the traditional Orthodox calendar. The year AD 2000 corresponded to AM (BE) 7508/7509. An aspect of the Era of Alexandria system has also survived to the present day, in Ethiopia. An essential feature of this system was the supposition that Jesus Christ had been conceived in AM (AE) 5500 and born in the following year (as made clear in the chronicles of Synkellos and Theophanes). AM (AE) 5501 became known to Christians in the region where the Alexandrian system originated as the first year in the Era of Grace and, in Ethiopia, year 2000 in the Era of Grace was celebrated during AD 2007 [26].

Returning to our consideration of western Europe, Prosper of Aquitaine compiled (during the reign of Marcian) a chronicle which, for the last 428 annual entries, dated events according to the consuls appointed for the year and also according to his *Anno Passione* (AP) system, i.e. years from the supposed Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Prosper dated, for example, the first regnal years of Diocletian, Valens and Marcian to AP 258, AP 338 and AP 423, respectively, and ended his chronicle in AP 428. Prosper's contemporary, Victorius of Aquitaine, used the same AP system to date entries in his set of Easter Tables, produced at the request of Archdeacon (later Pope) Hilarus, to remove the west's dependence on tables produced in Alexandria. Victorius had evidently realised that the Alexandrian method gave rise to a 532-year cycle of Easter dates (Bede subsequently explained this as a natural consequence of a 19-year lunar cycle linked to the 28-year cycle of days of the week in the Julian calendar) so he provided a full 532-year cycle of dates starting in AP 1 and ending in AP 532, which Victorius indicated to be the 18th year after the consulship of Basilius. In the regions where the Victorian tables became widely used, particularly in Gaul, his dates became associated with historical events and, after the end of the first cycle, a new one commenced, this also being used to date historical events. So, for example, the termination of the first continuation of the *Chronicle of Fredegar* which, as we have seen, was dated by implication to AM (E) 5937, was also dated, more explicitly, to the 177th year in the second cycle of Victorius, i.e. to AP 708 [27].

Allocating AD Dates

The multiplicity of dating systems undoubtedly produced a complex situation but, although the ancient historians may not have had the technical advantages available to us, they must have had essentially the same genes, so should have had a similar capacity to cope with complex situations. As we have seen, at least some of them demonstrated their familiarity with several dating systems. Furthermore, throughout the period of the Late Roman Republic and the Early Roman Empire, two major dating systems had operated side by side: Olympiad dating, which was favoured by Greek historians; and consular dating, favoured by Romans. The influential chronicle of Eusebius, written in Greek, linked each annual entry to a regnal year, but also indicated Olympiad and Era of Abraham dates at regular intervals. After the death of Eusebius, the continuation of his chronicle, written in Latin by Jerome, did the same.

Jerome ended by bringing the two main systems together, dating the death of Emperor Valens to Olympiad 289:3, AUC 1131, Era of Abraham 2395 (i.e. AM (E) 5579) and the consulship of Valens & Valentinian II (Valens for the 6th time and Valentinian for the 2nd). As was stated explicitly, the chronicles of Marcellinus Comes and Hydatius and the first *Gallic Chronicle* were each designed to follow on from the Eusebius-Jerome Chronicle. All gave regnal-year dates for each annual entry but, in addition, Marcellinus named the consuls for each year, whilst the *Gallic Chronicle* indicated Olympiad and Era of Abraham dates at regular intervals, as did Hydatius, together with Spanish Era dates, making evident the relationship between the different systems. Marcellinus dated the year following the last in the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to the consulship of Ausonius & Olybrius in the 7th year of the indiction cycle, and Hydatius and the *Gallic Chronicle* both gave it as Olympiad 289:4 and Abraham 2396, with Hydatius indicating that it was also Spanish Era 417. The ongoing chronicle of Prosper dated the consulship of Ausonius & Olybrius, in the year following the death of Valens, to AP 352. So, on the basis of linkages such as these and others, fitting together in consistent fashion, a date in one system could be converted to a date in another, without making any assumptions whatsoever. Furthermore, that also applied to the AD model of Dionysius Exiguus, since similar linkages existed. The Dionysian AD dating system was introduced in the first instance for use in Easter tables because, although the tables of Victorius, published in AP 430, were still widely used in the west, it had become apparent to discerning scholars that their compiler's understanding of the Alexandrian methodology was flawed and he had made mistakes in his calculations. These rarely affected the outcome, but the situation was unsatisfactory. The 95-year set of tables (comprising five 19-year lunar cycles) commissioned by Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, were still available for use but, when these were getting close to their termination date, Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk living in Rome, with a high reputation as a scholar (as recorded by his contemporary, Cassiodorus), was asked to produce a continuation of them. He went further, pointing out, in his 95-year continuation, that he had labelled each annual entry with an *Anno Domini* (AD) date relating to the birth of Jesus Christ, rather than continuing with the Diocletian Era system used by Cyril, considering it inappropriate to carry on commemorating the years of a persecutor of Christians. Dionysius noted that the current year, identified by the consulship of Probus Junior in indiction 3 and the 241st year of Diocletian, would correspond to AD 525 in his system. The first entry in his new set of tables was for AD 532 and continued on from the final entry in Cyril's tables, dated to the 247th year of Diocletian [28].

As noted previously, the first person to use the AD system to date historical events was Bede, and his example was soon followed by others, in England and also in the regions of Europe under Frankish control. Many examples of the widespread use of AD dates in Frankish chronicles from shortly after the time of Bede will be given in Chapter 3.

In the chronicle of Marcellinus Comes and its continuations, 162 successive consular years were specified up to that of the last consul, Basilius, and on only one occasion was a Probus named as consul in the 3rd year of an

indiction cycle, the partner of this particular Probus being Philoxenus (the former being consul for the west, the latter for the east). The *Chronicon Paschale* similarly placed the consulship of Probus and Philoxenus in indiction 3, and also noted that the regnal years of Diocletian in Easter Tables were determined from the consular year of Diocletian (for the 2nd time) and Aristobalus. Linking the chronicle of Marcellinus to the *Hydatius fasti*, it can be seen that the consulship of Probus and Philoxenus was the 241st since that of Diocletian (II) and Aristobulus. Thus, AD 525 in the system of Dionysius can be linked to the sequence of consulships, and from there to other dating systems. Although Victorius finished compiling his tables in the consulship of Constantinus and Rufus, which he linked to AP 430, the names of the consuls for subsequent years had been inserted as annotations in some surviving versions, identifying Probus and Philoxenes as the consuls for AP 498. In the entry for AP 505, Victorius gave 11th April as the date for Easter Sunday, which matched the conclusion of Dionysius for AD 532. Similarly, for the next three years in each system, AP 506-508 and AD 533-535, identical dates were given for Easter Sunday - 27th March, 16th April and 8th April, respectively - establishing a clear linkage between the dating systems of Victorius and Dionysius. It also follows that the consular year corresponding to the first regnal year of Diocletian was AD 285 in the Dionysian system, and the *Hydatius fasti* associated this same consulship with Spanish Era 322. More directly, Julian of Toledo dated the completion of a treatise to AD 686 and Spanish Era 724 [29].

By establishing linkages between dating systems in ways such as this, it can be deduced that the consulship of Probus and Philoxenes in the 3rd year of an indiction cycle corresponds not only to AD 525 in the Dionysian system but to all the dates listed in Table 3. Thus a date in any of these systems can be translated into the corresponding date in the Dionysian AD system, without having to make any assumptions.

Table 3: Dionysian AD and Other Dates Corresponding to the Consulship of Probus and Philoxenes

Diocletian Era 241	AP 498	AD 525	Spanish Era 563
Antiochene Era 573/4	Seleucid Era 836	AUC 1278/9	Olympiad 325:4/326:1
AM (B) 4478	AM (IS) 5722	AM (E) 5725	AM (AE) 6017/8
AM (BE) 6033/4	AM (CP) 6034/5		

With the exception of some of the AM dates, Table 3 was compiled entirely from information in sources written before the time of Bede. The question of whether there is any reason to doubt that the AD system of Dionysius was the same as that subsequently popularised by Bede will be considered in the next section.

1.4 History and Religion

Several revisionists have suggested that a false chronology of the first millennium has been created by writers following a religious (i.e. Christian) agenda rather than a historical one. Let us begin our examination of that claim by considering the timescale from Augustus to Diocletian indicated in two Christian and two non-Christian sources compiled less than a century after the time of Diocletian. The pagan historians were Eutropius and Aurelius Victor, both of whom were imperial bureaucrats, and the Christian sources were the *Chronography of 354* and the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle. According to Fomenko, Eusebius "most probably" lived in the 15th century but many surviving writings by and about Eusebius identify him as a scholar who served as bishop of Caesarea during the reign of Constantine the Great. In the chronicle, Jerome noted that all the entries up to the 20th year of Constantine had been written by Eusebius, at which point he (Jerome) had taken over. A surviving Syriac version of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius was dated by the translator to Seleucid Era 773 (AD 462). Regardless of this, all four of the sources gave the same sequence of emperors, with very similar reign-lengths, between Augustus and Diocletian. The individual reign-lengths were also consistent with ones given by pagan historians such as Suetonius, Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Herodian, who had died before Diocletian came to the throne. If we make the missing reign-length of Aurelian in the account by Aurelius Victor 5 years and that of Titus in the *Chronography* 2 years, as in most other accounts, the timescale between the reigns of Augustus and Diocletian obtained by adding together the reign-lengths of the intervening emperors in all four of our sources is 271 years, to within a year or so. That is entirely in line with consular dating, since the consulship of Diocletian (for the 2nd time) and Aristobulus, generally regarded as corresponding to the first regnal year of Diocletian, was, according to the *fasti*, 271 years later than that of Pompeius and Appuleius, when Augustus was said to have died. None of the pagan sources mentioned Jesus, but the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the Nativity to the 42nd year of Augustus in Olympiad 194:3, AM (E) 5199 (i.e. 2 BC), and the *Chronography* placed it in the consulship of Caesar and Paullus (AD 1), which corresponds to the 44th year of Augustus [30].

The only reasonable conclusion which can be drawn from the surviving sources about the process involved is that Eusebius and the compiler of the *Chronography of 354*, like Christian historians from later times, accepted timescales from Augustus to Diocletian and beyond derived from secular sources and then noted the point in the

historical sequence of emperors where they believed Jesus to have been born. That was done on the basis of a statement in the gospel of *Luke* that Jesus began his ministry when he was aged about 30 in the 15th year of Emperor Tiberius. Most, like Eusebius, took this to mean that Jesus was exactly 30 years old at the time, which would have placed the Nativity in either year 41 or year 42 of Augustus, but some (such as the compiler of the *Chronography*) clearly considered it to be a rough estimate which allowed some flexibility. So, for example, the author of the *Chronicon Paschale* placed the events surrounding the birth of Jesus in years 41 and 42 of Augustus, AM (CP) 5506/5507 (4/3 BC); Orosius dated the Nativity to the 42nd year of Augustus, AUC 752 (2 BC); Cassiodorus to the 41st year of Augustus in the consulship of Lentulus and Messalla (3 BC); Epiphanius of Salamis to the 42nd year of Augustus in the consulship of the emperor (for the 13th time) and Silvanus (2 BC); Malalas to the 42nd year of Augustus in Antiochene Era 42 (2 BC); Bede to the 42nd year of Augustus in AM (B) 3952 (2 BC); George Kedrenos to the 42nd year of Augustus in AM (BE) 5507 (3/2 BC); Panodorus of Alexandria (as reported by George Synkellos) to the 44th year of Augustus in AM (AE) 5493 (1 BC/AD 1); and Prosper to the 44th year of Augustus, in the 28th year before AP 1 (AD 1) [31]. It is clearly apparent, after conversion to the AD system, that a very narrow range of dates for individual regnal years of Augustus and a broader range of dates for the Nativity were given by Christian historians over a long period of time, from Eusebius and the compiler of the *Chronography of 354*, who believed they were living around three centuries after the death of Augustus and produced chronologies virtually identical to those of their near contemporaries, the last of the pagan historians, through to Kedrenos, who considered himself to be writing around seven centuries later.

As we have seen, there was general agreement between pagans and early Christians about secular chronology. The slight discrepancies between different historians can easily be explained by uncertainties about whether the first regnal year of an individual ruler was regarded as having started at his accession or at the beginning of the next calendar year and the fact that different calendar years began at different points in the solar year. In contrast, it is well-documented in surviving sources that, starting around the 3rd century after the presumed birth of Jesus Christ, there were fierce debates between Christians about biblical timescales. Some took their lead from the synoptic gospels (*Matthew, Mark* and *Luke)*, which appeared to indicate that Jesus had been crucified within a year of beginning his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius, whilst others, initially in the east, gave priority to an interpretation of the gospel of *John* which suggested that the Crucifixion had been three years later, in the 18th year of Tiberius. Many Christians linked the *Genesis* account of the creation of the world in six days to a statement in *II Peter*, echoing *Psalm* 90, equating 1,000 years to a day, to mean the world as they knew it would end 6,000 years after its creation, and some, particularly in the east, interpreted a verse in *1 John* to mean that Jesus had been conceived at the eleventh hour of a twelve hour period, which would correspond to the 5500th year of the 6000-year duration of the world [32].

Following that principle, Julius Africanus ("A") wrote a chronicle in which the Nativity was dated to AM (A) 5501. Only fragments of the chronicle have survived but, according to Synkellos, it ended in the 3rd year of Emperor Elagabalus in AM (A) 5723, Olympiad 250:1 and the consulship of Sabinianus and Seleucus (AD 221). On that basis, AM (A) 5501 would have corresponded to 2 BC. The regnal year of Augustus at this time was not stated, but Synkellos noted that Africanus had dated the Crucifixion to AM (A) 5531 and (erroneously, in his opinion) supported the short synoptic chronology, which would link the Nativity to the 42nd year of Augustus. Hence the indications are that Africanus accepted the secular timescale, identified the point within it when he believed Jesus had been born, and in consequence regarded this as the 5501st year of the world [33].

A very different approach was taken by Synkellos. He was committed to the Alexandrian Era dating system, introduced by Annianos of Alexandria two centuries after the time of Africanus, and to the belief that Jesus had been born in AM (AE) 5501. As Synkellos explained, Annianos had come to his conclusions entirely on the basis of biblical sources and astronomical observations (for which Alexandria was famous). Synkellos criticised Christian writers such as Eusebius and Panodorus (a contemporary of Annianos) for their willingness to accept information from the works of pagan historians. Tracing back lunar cycles from his own time, and assuming that the Crucifixion had taken place on a Friday on the day following the Passover (a lunar festival), as indicated in the synoptic gospels, rather than on the actual day of the Passover, as was inferred in *John*, Annianos came to the conclusion that it had occurred 243 years before the accession of Diocletian. Next, on the basis of the long chronology of the gospel of *John*, he deduced the time of the birth of Jesus and made this AM (AE) 5501 (AD 8/9), with the Crucifixion taking place in AM (AE) 5534 and the first year of Diocletian being AM (AE) 5777. Then, with a perspective which was the reverse of previous Christian historians, Synkellos dated the 43rd year of Augustus to fit in with his conclusions about the Nativity. The consequence was that Synkellos gave 262 years between the reigns of Augustus and Diocletian, whereas, as we have seen, other sources, pagan and Christian, consistently gave around 271 years for this period. Synkellos gave slightly shorter reign-lengths than other sources for emperors in the 74-year period after Augustus, so the reign-lengths and overall timescale he gave from the accession of Nerva in AM (AE) 5589 on to Diocletian were in line with the rest. Thus, although the reversal of the normal priorities in the formulation of the Annianos/Synkellos chronology resulted in it being out-of-step with other sources, the discrepancy amounted to less than a decade and only affected timescales before the reign of

Nerva. Five centuries after Annianos, Abbo of Fleury used a similar approach, but with different interpretaions of the gospel accounts, and concluded that the birth of Jesus, in the 42nd year of Augustus, had been around 30 years earlier than supposed by Annianos. The chronicle of Marianus Scotus, a follower of Abbo of Fleury, accordingly gave a longer timescale than other sources for the period from the 42nd year of Augustus to the reign of Diocletian (whereas Synkellos had give a shorter one), but thereafter, as we shall see, the timescale of Marianus was generally in line with other sources [34].

There is nothing in the early sources to suggest any interest in establishing a timescale from the birth of Christ. The first known mention of such a timescale came at the very end of the chronicle of Victor of Tunnuna, when it was noted that the work had been completed in the first year of Justin II, 567 years after the Nativity in AM (E) 5199. Dionysius Exiguus introduced his AD system solely to date entries in his Easter tables, considering it necessary to find an alternative to the previous system linked to the reign of a pagan emperor. Why he chose the precise system he did is far from clear, because he must have been aware that most historians of his time considered the Nativity to have been earlier than the year he called AD 1. There is no evidence of any arguments arising from this – it seems it was just regarded as an appropriate dating system, not a statement of belief in a particular Christian chronology. Bede, in *The Reckoning of Time*, which was an extremely unfluential work (as is apparent from the fact that, of the surviving manuscripts, around fifty are considered to have been written within a century of its completion), spent most of the book extolling the virtues of the Dionysian Easter tables and he computed a full 532-year cycle of Easter dates in exactly the same style as Dionysius and from the same starting point, AD 532. However, Bede also included a chronicle in which the Nativity was dated in line with the chronology of Eusebius. As Bonnie Blackburn and Leofranc Holford-Strevens commented in *The Oxford Companion to the Year*, "Although Bede the computist equates Dionysius' Incarnation year with AD 1, Bede the chronicler had set the Incarnation in 2 BC" [35].

Even though it may be difficult to understand from a modern perspective, one of the major obsessions with Christians during this period was in trying to ensure that Easter was always celebrated on the "correct" day. After much debate, it became widely accepted that Easter should be the first Sunday following the first full moon on or after 21st March (subject to some restrictions), and that Easter dates could best be determined in advance by making use of a 19-year lunar cycle. However, problems still remained, because the traditional Roman rules governing permissible dates were different from the Alexandrian ones. Some in the west, including Dionysius Exiguus, considered it desirable that all Christians celebrated Easter at the same time, and Dionysius used the Alexandrian rules in his computations, deriving Easter dates for the period consisting of five 19-year cycles from AD 532 to 626. These tables, together with a prologue and explanatory material, have been preserved. Also surviving is a prologue (dated AD 616) to a continuation of the tables from AD 627 to 721, but the tables themselves have been lost. Nevertheless, it is known from other sources that computations using the Dionysian principles were being made in Italy, Spain and Ireland during this period. A set of Dionysian Easter tables, taken from Ireland to Echternach in Luxembourg by St Willibrord of Northumbria when Bede was still young, originally covered the 19-year period from AD 684 to 702, and were subsequently extended in stages to AD 797. Bede produced his 532-year "perpetual" table in time for the start of the third 95-year Dionysian cycle in AD 722. Since the tables of Dionysius incorporated a 15-year indiction cycle and a 19-year lunar cycle, which would only return to their original relationship every 285 years, Mitchell's suggestion that Bede may inadvertently have added or deleted one or more indiction cycles when he produced his supposed continuation seems unlikely, because the ongoing relationship between years in the indiction cycle and years in the lunar cycle has been maintained in perfectly smooth fashion [36]. There is a great deal of other evidence to support that view.

Information about the Easter controversies shows that no single system can be considered in isolation. In correspondence between Pope Leo I, Emperor Marcian and Bishop Proterius of Alexandria, it was stated that the Easter tables of Theophilus of Alexandria gave, for example, an Easter date of 24th April for Diocletian Era 171, in indiction 8. Leo objected to that date since it was beyond the traditional Roman limit of 21st April. Prosper noted in the entry in his chronicle for the consular year of Valentinian III (for the 8th time) and Anthemius, AP 428, that Easter was celebrated on 24th April, despite the protestations of Pope Leo, because of the stubborn insistence of the bishop of Alexandria. Previously, Prosper had equated AP 406 with AM (E) 4634 so, on that basis, AP 428 would correspond to AM (E) 5656 (although, with the system as generally applied, it would be 5655). Similarly, because of the links noted above between the AP system and the Dionysian AD system, AP 428 corresponds to AD 455. The tables of Victorius gave the date for Easter in AP 428 as 17th April, with 24th April as the Greek alternative [37]. It can be seen that the dates in these various systems are consistent, to within a year.

Moving forward to the time of Bede, when the Dionysian system began to challenge the dominance of the Victorian one in Francia, a Frankish computist equated AD 721 with year 162 in the second cycle of Victorius, i.e. AP 694. Not long afterwards, another Frankish computistical work similarly equated AD 743 with AP 716. A few decades later, a set of Easter tables produced in Cologne consisted of double-dated entries covering the period AD 798/AM (E) 5998 to AD 911/AM (E) 6111. Another set of Dionysian Easter tables prepared at Autun during

the 9th century (MS Leiden Scaliger 28), which covered the period from AD 1 to AD 1006, gave AM dates as well as AD dates up to AD 789/AM (E) 5990, using the minority tradition, apparently started by Prosper, of having Eusebian AM dates one year higher than in the more common tradition. Later, Frutolf of Michelsberg equated AD 1001 and AUC 1752 whilst the *Chronicle of Alfonso X* equated AD 1283 with Spanish Era 1321. In Egypt, the Copts continued to use Diocletian Era dating (renamed the Era of Martyrs), and it was regarded as being year 1716 in this system when AD 2000 began. It is evident that the relationships between these six dating systems were essentially the same after the time of Bede as they were in the time of Dionysius. The Easter tables of Bede bridged this period and, since there is a cycle in Easter dates, those he gave for the period from AD 532 to 1063 would also apply to the period from 1 BC to AD 531, indicating an Easter date of 24th April for AD 455, consistent with the tables of Theophilus and the relationship between the AD and Diocletian Era systems specified by Dionysius [38]. All of this indicates a continuity in the use of the Dionysian system up to and well beyond the time of Bede. The only other possible explanation would be that a disruption in the AD system in Bede's time (or any other) had been accompanied by precisely corresponding disruptions in the AP, AM (E) and Diocletian Era systems, as well as others, such as the Spanish Era, AM (AE) and AM (BE) systems, and also the Seleucid Era system used in Syria and Asia Minor and by Jewish communities elsewhere, which seems highly improbable.

The apparent continuity of the Dionysian AD system up to and beyond the time of Bede can be tested in straightforward fashion, since the rival systems of Dionysius and Victorius operated side-by-side in different regions of Western Europe for several centuries. As noted above, the year of the first entry in the tables of Dionysius, AD 532, corresponded to AP 505, and both Dionysius and Victorius gave an Easter date of 11th April in that year. For the remainder of the 95-year period to AD 626/AP 599, the sequence of Easter dates given by Dionysius, which was exactly the same as that provided by Bede, matched the sequence given by Victorius, except that in five instances (AP 523, 550, 570, 590 and 594) the matching dates of Victorius were alternatives written in the margin rather than ones in the main part of his table (as with his entry for AP 428, mentioned above). For the next 95-year period, from AD 627/AP 600 to AD 721/AP 694, the sequence of Easter dates given by Bede was, with one exception, identical to that given by Victorius, except that in six instances (AP 614, 618, 648, 692, 685 and 690), the matching dates of Victorius were ones indicated in the margin as alternatives. The one instance when there was no match, not even as an alternative, was in AD 672/AP 645, when Bede identified 25th April as Easter Sunday but Victorius said 18th April. Although, on those occasions when different Easter dates were indicated by the Alexandrian and Roman rules, Victorius generally favoured the former (whilst noting the "Greek" date as an alternative) whereas Bede explicitly followed Dionysius by favouring the latter, there can be no reason whatsoever to doubt that Bede and Victorius were covering the same period in these two successive 95-year sequences. After this, Bede and Victorius then continued with another lengthy matching sequence, beginning with an Easter date of 12th April in AD 722/AP 695 [39]. There is absolutely nothing here to suggest any discontinuity in the Dionysian AD system. The content of the surviving sources is entirely consistent with the general belief that the AD dates given by Bede were Dionysian ones.

1.5 Comments on Topics Considered in Chapter 1

A large number of dating systems were employed during the Late Roman and Early Medieval periods, many remaining in use for several centuries and some even longer. Historians of the time sometimes used more than one system or provided information enabling linkages to be made between different systems. Hence, dates in one system can easily be translated into dates in another (including the AD system).

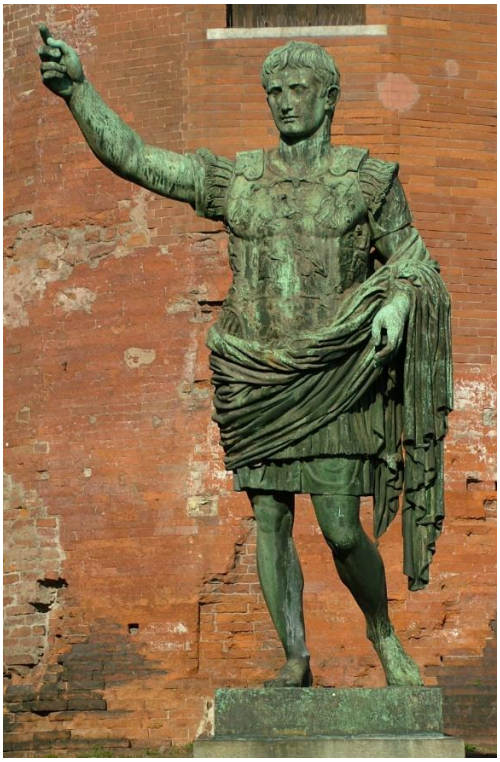
Some revisionists have suggested that a false chronology has been created by writers following a Christian agenda. However, the evidence from surviving sources indicates that Christian historians generally attempted to formulate a biblical chronology around the established framework of secular chronology. Two exceptions to this general rule are known, but the resulting distortions were of a minor nature and had no lasting influence. There is no evidence that early Christians considered it important to establish a precise timescale from the birth of Jesus Christ. In contrast, there have been many bitter arguments about when Easter should be celebrated in a particular year. Analysis of the surviving evidence relating to the determination of Easter dates has provided no support for the notion that there may have been a discontinuity in the transmission to later generations of the AD system introduced by Dionysius Exiguus, giving rise to a chronological anomaly. All the indications are that the relationships between dates in the AD and other dating systems have remained constant throughout.

Making use of the conversion factors between different dating systems derived from the sources themselves, the second, third and fourth chapters of this work will consider information provided by the surviving sources about the history and chronology of several regions of Europe during what is generally regarded as the first millennium AD. The implications of this for the conventional chronology of the period and for each of the revisionist schemes mentioned above will be discussed.

Chapter 2: Roman and Byzantine Emperors

2.1 Roman Emperors

2.1.1 The Early Roman Empire, from Augustus to Septimius Severus



Statue of Augustus at the Palatine Gate, Turin

Statue of Septimius Severus in the British Museum

Sections of the period from the reign of Octavian/Augustus, the first Roman emperor, to that of Septimius Severus, were covered in surviving reports written during the course of it by Suetonius, Tacitus and Plutarch. The whole period was covered by Cassius Dio, who lived during and soon after the reign of Septimius, although the latter part of his history has survived only in the form of epitomes. It was also covered by historians such as Eusebius, Eutropius and Aurelius Victor, who, according to their own surviving accounts, lived three centuries after the death of Octavian/Augustus; and by Orosius, Prosper of Aquitaine and the anonymous author of an epitome of the lives of the early Roman emperors (sometimes erroneously associated with Aurelius Victor), who lived up to a century later. Subsequent historians, sometimes explicitly, used these various accounts as sources [40].

Suetonius, Plutarch, Cassius Dio and Eutropius all wrote that Octavian first came to power, initially in partnership with Antony and Lepidus, during the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa (43 BC), in the aftermath of the murder of Julius Caesar. Eutropius said this assassination had taken place in about AUC 709 (45 BC) and Orosius noted that Octavian had been named as Caesar's heir in AUC 710 (44 BC), in accordance with the terms of his will. The first year of Octavian was dated by the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to Olympiad 184:2, AM (E) 5158; by Isidore to AM (IS) 5155; and by Bede to AM (B) 3911; all these dates corresponding to 43 BC. The *Chronicon Paschale* placed it in AM (CP) 5465, two years earlier than the other sources [41].

The sources consistently stated that Octavian/Augustus ruled in total for a little over 56 years, and was sole ruler for 44 years after defeating Antony at Actium. Early in the latter period, he became emperor (see section 1.3) and, from Rome, Augustus reigned over an empire which covered all of Europe west of the Rhine and south of the Danube, as well as Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt and North Africa. He founded the Julio-Claudian dynasty of five emperors, although not one of them was the biological son of his predecessor. Augustus had no sons and he had exiled his only surviving grandson from Rome, so he was succeeded by his step-son (and adopted son), Tiberius, who had served him well as a military commander. However, since Tiberius was in his mid-fifties when he came to the throne, he relied on Germanicus, his nephew (and adopted son) to lead his military campaigns. Germanicus was his intended successor, but he died in Antioch, having been sent to Syria by Tiberius to sort out problems in

the east. A few years later, Tiberius went to live on Capri, leaving the city of Rome under the brutal control of the Praetorian Prefect, Aelius Sejanus, but Sejanus was eventually assassinated. When Tiberius died on Capri, after reigning for 23 years, he was succeeded by Gaius, nicknamed Caligula, the son of Germanicus. The new emperor's extravagance, cruelty and depravity soon caused serious concern and he was murdered by his own guards less than four years after his accession [42].

Cassius Dio wrote that Caligula was killed when Sentius was consul (AD 41). The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the first year of his successor, Claudius, the younger brother of Germanicus, to Olympiad 205:1, AM (E) 5241 (AD 41), whilst Prosper gave it as AP 15 (AD 42) and Orosius as AUC 795 (AD 42). Aurelius Victor wrote that AUC 800 (AD 47) was celebrated in the 6th year of Claudius, and Tacitus and Cassius Dio associated it with the 4th consulship of Claudius and the 3rd of Vitellius (AD 47) [43].

Claudius reigned for about 14 years, during which time the boundaries of the Roman Empire expanded. For the first time, a signifcant part of Britain was brought under Roman control, and Claudius himself visited the island after the initial conquest had been achieved by his generals. After his death, Claudius was succeeded by his step-son (and adopted son), Nero, who went on to reign for a similar period of time. In the latter part of his reign, Nero became increasingly unpopular, as he gained a reputation for extravagance, depravity and the abuse of power. Although his generals suppressed a revolt in Britain led by Boudicca, established Pontus as a Roman Province and forced the Parthians to agree a treaty, Nero was not involved in any of the campaigns and these military successes failed to change the growing impression that the emperor's main interest was the pursuit of pleasure. Matters came to a head after major parts Rome were destroyed in a great fire, for which Nero was blamed. Servius Galba, the elderly governor of northeastern Spain, agreed to lead a rebellion and, as news of this reached Rome, Nero was deserted by his former supporters and he committed suicide, bringing the Julio-Claudian dynasty to an end. Galba then became emperor, but reigned for only 8 months before being killed by Marcus Otho, who seized the throne. As noted by Tacitus and Plutarch, Galba died during his own second consulship, when his partner was Vinius (AD 69). During the same year, Otho committed suicide after 3 months on the throne, when his army was defeated by that of Aulus Vitellius, but the attempt by Vitellius to seize power was no more successful than that of his two predecessors. Flavius Vespasian, the commander of the Roman army in Judaea (who had risen to fame as a prominent figure in the Roman invasion of Britain during the reign of Claudius), was declared emperor by his troops, and he moved to Egypt, leaving his son, Titus, to continue the campaign in Judaea, whilst troops under the command of Antonius Primus marched on Rome. Vitellius was deposed by Primus in the 8th month of his reign and Vespasian, still in Egypt, was appointed emperor without delay. According to Tacitus, this was still in the same consular year as the one in which Galba died. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle similarly dated the accession of Vespasian to Olympiad 212:1, AM (E) 5269 (AD 69) and Prosper to AP 42 (AD 69). As reported by Tacitus, Cassius Dio, Suetonius and Orosius, and, in an eye-witness account, by the Romano-Jewish scholar, Flavius Josephus, Jerusalem soon fell to Titus and the city was destroyed. According to the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle and to Josephus, this occurred in the 2nd year of Vespasian. The medieval Jewish scholar, Maimonides, dated the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus to Seleucid Era 379 (AD 68) [44].

Vespasian was the first of the three emperors of the Flavian dynasty, the final one, Domitian, being the younger brother of Titus. Vespasian reigned for about 10 years, Titus for 2 and Domitian for 15. During the reign of Vespasian, his general, Agricola (father-in-law of the historian, Tacitus) extended the area of Britain under Roman control. At home, Vespasian set about re-building Rome after the destruction caused by the great fire and the civil wars and, as part of this process, he began the construction of a large amphitheatre (now known as the Colosseum) in the centre of the city. Titus, the first son to succeed his biological father as Roman emperor, soon completed the building of the Colosseum and he showed compassion and generosity in helping the victims of a catastrophic eruption of Vesuvius and another large fire in Rome. However, his promising reign was cut short when he died of a fever at the age of 41. When Domitian, who was suspected by some of having been responsible for his brother's death, became emperor, he immediately began ruling in a more autocratic fashion than his predecessors, cutting back the already-limited powers of the Senate. Nevertheless, he also embarked on a new building programme, particularly in those areas of Rome damaged by the most recent fire, claiming personal credit for the developments. He could also be seen to be extending the boundaries of territory under Roman control with, for example, Agricola winning over parts of Caledonia (Scotland). Thus, Domitian was popular with many section of the Roman public and with the army, but his increasingly dictatorial behaviour, paranoia and cruelty made life difficult for those who had to work with him on a regular basis. Eventually, he was assassinated by court officials, in the 45th year of his life, and his elderly advisor, Marcus Nerva, was swiftly declared emperor. According to Cassius Dio and Eutropius, this was during the consulship of Gaius Valens and Antistius Vetus (AD 96). Eutropius dated the first year of Nerva to AUC 850 (AD 97), Orosius (often slightly out-of-line with everyone else, but not in any consistent way) to AUC 846 (AD 93) and Prosper to AP 71 (AD 98). The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle gave it as Olympiad 219:1, AM (E) 5297 (AD 97) [45].

With a view to the future, Nerva adopted Ulpius Trajan, an impressive young officer born into an Italian family which had settled in Spain. When Nerva died less than two years later, Trajan became emperor and extended the boundaries of the Roman Empire further than ever before. Most notably, he brought gold-rich Dacia under Roman control, and his war against the Parthian Empire ended with the Roman annexation of Armenia and Mesopotamia. After 20 years on the imperial throne, Trajan died childless and his cousin Aelius Hadrian, who claimed to have been nominated by Trajan as his successor, became emperor, reigning for 22 years. Hadrian visited the troops in various provinces, to seek their views about the situation in their area, which led him to conclude that some of the expansions achieved by Trajan and Domitian were unsustainable. He gave away most of the new territories in the east, making the Euphrates the boundary of Roman territory, and set about building a great defensive wall of stone across Britain, well south of the border with Caledonia. On his death, Hadrian was succeeded by his adopted son, Antoninus Pius, whose first consulship after becoming emperor was with Bruttius Praesens (AD 139). Aurelius Victor noted that AUC 900 (AD 147) was celebrated during the reign of Antoninus, and Orosius dated his accession to AUC 888 (AD 135). The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle reported that Antoninus became emperor in Olympiad 229:1, AM (E) 5337 (AD 137) and Prosper gave it as AP 111 (AD 138). Throughout his 23-year reign, Antinonus Pius saw his main duty as maintaining the empire in the form he received it, but one intiative he took was to send his troops back into Caledonia, where they built a turf wall to help defend the most northerly position they reached [46].

Antoninus was succeeded by his adopted sons, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, who reigned together as joint-emperors for about 8 years until the death of the latter, after fighting against the Parthians. Marcus Aurelius then ruled alone for another 11 years, spending much of that period in command of a long military campaign in the Danube region, where, in breaks between battles, he carried out his routine business and also wrote (in Greek) a philosophical work which became known as his *Meditations*. From the reign of Trajan up to this point, the Romans had enjoyed a period of stability and prosperity. However, when Aurelius Commodus followed his father, Marcus Aurelius, onto the throne, the situation soon changed. Commodus was initially popular, but later in his reign he began to lose contact with reality, identifying himself with the god, Hercules, and devoting most of his time to taking part in gladiatorial combats. After he had occupied the throne for about 12 years, he was murdered and the elderly urban prefect of Rome, Publius Pertinax, was appointed emperor. Within a few months, Pertinax, a stern disciplinarian, was also killed and Didius Julianus bought the vacant throne from the murderers. Cassius Dio and Cassiodorus both dated the brief reign of Pertinax to the consular year of Pompeius Falco (AD 193) whereas the *Chronicon Paschale* dated it to AM (CP) 5699 (AD 190) [47].

Julianus came under immediate threat as the throne was claimed by much more powerful figures, particularly Septimius Severus, governor of the middle Danube region. As the army of Severus approached Rome, the Senate ordered Julianus to be executed and Severus was appointed emperor. According to Cassius Dio and Cassiodorus, the consuls in the first year of Severus were the emperor himself and Clodius Albinus (AD 194). This year was dated by the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to Olympiad 243:2, AM (E) 5394 (AD 194); by Prosper to AP 166 (AD 193); by Orosius to AUC 944 (AD 191); by Isidore to AM (IS) 5390 (AD 193); by Bede to AM (B) 4147 (AD 194); and by Synkellos to AM (AE) 5685 (AD 193/4) [48].

After overcoming other claimants, including Clodius Albinus (whose power base was in Gaul and Britain) and Pescennius Niger (in Syria), Septimius Severus established himself as undisputed Roman emperor, going on to reign for 18 years and founding the Severan dynasty. He was an extremely active emperor, campaigning and carrying out building projects in North Africa (where he was born), Asia and northwestern Europe, eventually dying in York, after ruling for 18 years. According to the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, Septimius died in Olympiad 247:1, AM (E) 5409 (AD 209) and Orosius dated his death similarly to AUC 962 (AD 209) [49].

2.1.2 Emperors from Septimius Severus to Maurice

Historians who, according to surviving evidence, were writing during the period between the reigns of Septimius Severus and Maurice included Cassius Dio, Herodian, Eusebius, Jerome, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Orosius, Prosper, Hydatius, Marcellinus Comes, Cassiodorus, Zosimus, Victor of Tunnuna, John of Biclaro and John Malalas, as well as the anonymous authors of the *Epitome of the Caesars* and the *Historia Augusta* (the latter being a collection of biographies in which historical details were blended with fanciful stories). The history by Herodian, a contemporary of Cassius Dio, covered the period from the death of Marcus Aurelius to the accession of Gordian III and, in his Introduction, Herodian commented on the disproportionately high number of emperors who had reigned during that 60-year period compared to the situation during the previous 200 years, back to Augustus. Septimius Severus had restored stability after a succession of assassinations and civil wars but, after his death, chaos soon returned [50].

According to the sources, this was a time when the empire's resources were being stretched by having to resist regular incursions by Germanic tribes into Roman territory in the north and similarly by the Parthians in the east, but some of the Severan dynasty's problems were self-inflicted. Septimius bequeathed the empire to his sons,

Antoninus, known as Caracalla, and Geta, to be shared between them, but Geta was killed by Caracalla less than a year later. Caracalla claimed he had acted in self-defence, but thereafter the Romans viewed him with suspicion and, despite military victories in Germany and building impressive public baths in Rome, he was never secure on the throne. In the 7th year of his reign, whilst on a campaign against the Parthians, Caracalla was murdered in a plot organised by Macrinus, the Praetorian Prefect, who was then proclaimed emperor by the military. Although Macrinus was not of senatorial rank, which hitherto had been regarded as a requirement for becoming emperor, the Senate confirmed his appointment. However, Macrinus soon fell out of favour, after giving a large bribe to the Parthians to secure peace, and then changing the pay structure of the army to help pay for it. The Severans took advantage of the situation to persuade some elements of the army to depose Macrinus, so that Caracalla's teenage half-cousin, Antoninus, known as Elagabalus (because as a boy he had served as a priest to the Syrian god of that name) could take the throne. The plot was successful and Macrinus was killed after reigning for just a year, during his consulship with Oclatinius Adventus (AD 218), but the new emperor soon began to offend the people of Rome. Not only did he try to replace Jupiter by Elagabalus as the main god in the pantheon, but he became involved in a series of sexual scandals with both men and women. After he had reigned for 3 or 4 years, Elagabalus was murdered by members of the Praetorian Guard, who threw his body into the Tiber and raised his cousin Alexander, at that time the consular partner of the emperor (AD 222), to the imperial throne. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the death of Elagabalus and accession of Alexander to Olympiad 250:2, AM (E) 5422 (AD 222), Orosius to AUC 974 (AD 221) and Prosper similarly to AP 194 (AD 221). Alexander became popular for halting an advance by the Sassanids, who had recently replaced the Parthians as the rulers of Persia, and went on to reign for about 13 years. Cassius Dio ended his history by noting that he had recorded events up to his own second consulship (AD 229), during the reign of Alexander [51].

Alexander, the last of the Severan emperors, died in the north, trying to prevent German tribesmen crossing the Rhine into Roman territory. In a similar fashion to Macrinus, he lost the support of his army by paying money to the enemy and reducing the pay and bonuses available to his own troops. They transferred their allegiance to Maximinus Thrax, a Thracian soldier who had worked his way up through the ranks, proclaiming him emperor and executing Alexander. Maximinus led a series of successful campaigns, but at a huge financial cost, so questions started to be raised as to whether the situation was sustainable. That led to the "year of six emperors", which formed the final section in the history by Herodian. At the start of that year, Maximinus, who had never set foot in Rome, was campaigning in the Danube region. A revolt against his rule broke out in North Africa, where an elderly patrician, Marcus Antonius Gordianus claimed the throne, together with his son (these being known to us as Gordian I and Gordian II) but, during a swift counter-revolt, Gordian I hanged himself and Gordian II was murdered. However, the Roman Senate had already recognised the Gordians as joint-emperors so, fearing retribution from Maximinus, the Senators then appointed two distinguished former consuls, Clodius Pupienus and Caecilius Balbinus, as co-emperors. That proved to be unpopular with the Roman people, who called for them to be replaced by a member of the Gordian family. Meanwhile, Maximinus, heading south with his army, encountered troops led by Pupienus near Aquilieia and he was killed, after reigning for 3 years. Pupienus and Balbinus then quarrelled over which of them should haver seniority, resulting in both of them being murdered by the Praetorian Guard, who went on to proclaim the 13-year-old son of the sister of Gordian II Emperor Gordian III. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the death of Maximinus to Olympiad 254:2, AM (E) 5438 (AD 238) and Prosper to AP 210 (AD 237), with Orosius dating the accession of Gordian III to AUC 991 (AD 238). According to Gunnar Heinsohn's theory (see section 1.2), Rome was totally destroyed by a major cataclysm close to the time of Alexander's death, but there is no indication of that in any surviving source. Although Herodian recorded that, after a small earthquake, a fire broke out which destroyed many of the buildings in Rome during the reign of Commodus, his history contained no reference to any subsequent event causing damage to the city. Not only was there no mention in any source of a huge natural catastrophe completely overwhelming Rome near the end of Alexander's reign (or at any other time), there were specific references to activities taking place in the city during the following reigns. For example, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Orosius and the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle all recorded that events took place in Rome to celebrate AUC 1000 (AD 247) during the 5-year reign of Philip (Marcus Philippus), born in Syria, who, when Praetorian Prefect, seized the throne from Gordian III. Cassiodorus equated the first regnal year of Philip with his consulship partnering Titianus (AD 245), whilst the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, Prosper, Orosius and Synkellos dated it, respectively, to Olympiad 256:1, AM (E) 5445 (AD 245); AP 218 (AD 245); AUC 997 (AD 244); and AM (AE) 5737 (AD 245/6) [52].

The surviving sources name 14 emperors reigning over Rome between Philip (who reigned in partnership with his son, Philip II) and Diocletian, consistently giving the same sequence and the same reign-lengths, adding up to a total of around 35 years. The turnover began when Emperor Philip sent Trajan Decius to be governor of the troublesome provinces of Pannonia and adjacent Moesia, close to the Balkans, where the Goths were causing problems for the Romans. However, after taking effective action against the Goths, Decius was persuaded by his troops to set himself up as emperor. They marched on Rome, killing Philip and his son on the way. Decius was the first Roman emperor to have been born in the Balkans region, but by no means the last. Not long after

becoming emperor, Decius led another campaign against the Goths and was killed in battle, after reigning for around 2 years. Trebonianus Gallus, an Italian who was governor of Upper Moesia at this time, was then proclaimed emperor by the army. Gallus promptly made a peace treaty with the Goths, which involved the payment to them of an annual tribute to stay east of the Danube. That proved unpopular to the Roman people, and Aemilius Aemilianus, his successor as governor of Upper Moesia, refused to pay the tribute, so the Goths crossed the Danube once again. Aemilianus raised an army and drove them back, after which he was declared emperor by his troops. Gallus led his own army north to secure his throne, but when he reached Interamna (Termi), messengers arrived to say that Aemilianus and a large number of soldiers had already crossed into Italy. The fearful troops of Gallus then mutinied and murdered him, no more than 2 years after he had become emperor. Aemilianus survived him by barely 3 months, for he was killed by his troops near Spoleto when they heard that Licinius Valerian, entrusted by Gallus to raise forces for a campaign along the Upper Danube, had declared himself emperor. Valerian, a former consul, from an old Roman family, was then welcomed in Rome and ascended the imperial throne with his son Gallienus as co-emperor. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the accession of Valerian to Olympiad 258:3, AM (E) 5455 (AD 255), Orosius to AUC 1010 (AD 257) and Prosper to AP 227 (AD 254). Leaving Gallienus to attend to matters in the west, Valerian embarked on a campaign against the Sassanids, led by Shapur I. Valerian was eventually captured, and he died in humiliating fashion, leaving his son as sole emperor. Gallienus had achieved early successes against the German tribes, but by this time the tide had turned, and he seemed unable, as well as unwilling, to do anything about it. An alternative Roman Empire was set up in Gaul, with a line of rulers consisting of Postumus, Laelianus, Marius, Victorinus and finally Tetricus. Gallienus was eventually killed during a campaign against the Goths, but his killers were some of his own troops, not the enemy. He had reigned in total for about 15 years [53].

Gallienus was succeeded as emperor by Claudius II, from the region of Pannonia. Claudius soon headed towards the Balkans to finish off the campaign against the Goths started by Gallienus. He won a significant victory and was awarded the title “Gothicus Maximus”. The Goths soon began to fight back, but the onset of plague stopped their advance. However, Claudius then died of the same disease, having reigned for abour 2 years. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Quintillus, who almost immediately took his own life when it became clear he lacked the support of the army. That left Lucius Aurelian, a Pannonian, who was one of the most effective military commanders of the time, as the obvious choice to succeed him as the next emperor. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle indicated that Aurelian became emperor in Olympiad 262:3, AM (E) 5471 (AD 271) and Prosper similarly as AP 244 (AD 271), whereas Orosius gave it as AUC 1027 (AD 274). Aurelian soon began to regain territories that had been taken away from Rome. After driving back incursions of tribesmen from the north, he marched east and conquered the city of Palmyra, whose queen, Zenobia, had gained control of much of the region between Egypt and Asia Minor. Next he headed for Western Europe, where he brought to an end the independent Roman Empire in Gaul. After initiating the construction of a stronger defensive wall for Rome, Aurelian headed back east, this time to fight the Sassanids, but was murdered while preparing to cross the Bosporus, having reigned for around 5 years. Aurelian was succeeded as emperor by Marcus Tacitus, a former consul, whose first task was to travel to Asia Minor, where mercenaries from northern tribes assembled by Aurelian for his campaign against the Sassanids had gone on the rampage. Tacitus won a victory over them but, on the way home, he died in Cappodocia, having been emperor for just six months. His successor, his half-brother Florianus, the Praetorian Prefect, lasted only half that time. No sooner had he been appointed than Aurelius Probus, a military man from Pannonia who had served with Aurelian, and was now governor of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Phoenicia, was declared emperor in that region. Florianus hastened to confront him, and had the larger army, but before a battle could take place he was murdered near Tarsus by some of his own troops. Probus then headed for Rome, where he was confirmed as emperor. By this time, the Alamanni and other Germanic tribes, including the Franks, Vandals and Burgundians, were once again ravaging Gaul and the Rhineland, and similar incursions were being made into Pannonia and Moesia. Probus took action to restore the Roman frontiers in these regions, and planted vineyards in the areas he had recovered, to encourage re-settlement by citizens of the empire. However, Probus then lost the support of his own troops, and was murdered by some of them close to his birth-place in Pannonia, having reigned for approximately 6 years. Aurelius Carus, an experienced and well-respected military commander from Gaul then became emperor. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated his accession to Olympiad 265:3, AM (E) 5483 (AD 283), Prosper to AP 255 (AD 282) and Orosius to AUC 1039 (AD 286). Carus made his eldest son Carinus co-emperor and, leaving him to take care of the west, particularly Gaul, which was under attack once again from across the Rhine, Carus headed east with his youngest son Numerian on a campaign against the Sassanids. He won a victory against them in Mesopotamia but was subsequently killed, apparently by a lightning bolt, on the banks of the Tigris. Numerian then took command but, incapacitated by a serious eye infection, he decided that the campaign had already served its purpose and ordered his troops to withdraw. However, he was murdered on the return journey, and Valerius Diocletian from Dalmatia, commander of the bodyguard, was acclaimed emperor by the troops. Back in the west, Carinus had achieved some significant military successes, but he had become unpopular because of his cruelty and sexual excesses. Hearing that Diocletian was marching west to establish himself on the throne, Carinus led his army east to confront him. They joined battle on the banks of

the Margus River in Moesia, where Carinus was murdered by some of his own troops and Diocletian became undisputed emperor. Carus and his sons had reigned for around 2 years [54].

The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the accession of Diocletian to Olympiad 266:1, AM (E) 5485 (AD 285), Prosper to AP 207 (AD 284), Orosius to AUC 1041 (AD 288), Cassiodorus to the consulship of Diocletian with Maximian (AD 287), Isidore to AM (IS) 5482 (AD 285), the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 5793 (AD 283/4) and Synkellos to AM (AE) 5776 (AD 283/4). Bede, in *The Reckoning of Time*, gave it as AM (B) 4238 (AD 285), and in his *Ecclesiastical History* he dated it to AD 286. Diocletian brought internal stability to the empire but, with the boundaries of the Empire under threat from the Sassanid Persians in the east and from Goths and other tribes in the north, he realised that a new imperial structure was required. Establishing his own capital at Nicomedia in Asia Minor, he appointed Maximian Herculius to govern the west of the empire from Milan, giving him the status of a full emperor (*Augustus*). Subsequently, Diocletian appointed Flavius Constantius to govern the northwest from Trier (on the Moselle), and Gaius Galerius to govern the northeast from Thessalonica, giving each the status of junior emperor (*Caesar*). All four of these emperors came from the Balkans region. When Diocletian became seriously ill, after reigning for 20 years, he took the unusual step of abdicating, after persuading Maximian to do the same. Constantius and Galerius were raised to the status of *Augustus* but, soon afterwards, while campaigning against rebels in Britain, Constantius died in York. His army immediately acclaimed his son, Constantine, as *Augustus*. However, Galerius promoted the junior emperor, Flavius Severus, to *Augustus*, with Constantine replacing him as *Caesar*. Everything was then thrown into confusion when Maxentius, the son of Maximian, rose up in Rome and, with the support of the Praetorian Guard, claimed the title of *Augustus*. Severus marched south to deal with this situation, but was defeated and killed, leaving the whole of Italy under the control of Maxentius. Valerius Licinius succeeded Severus as the western *Augustus*, but he based himself in the Balkans. When Galerius died, the eastern part of the empire was divided between Licinius and Maximinus Daia. Taking advantage of this, Constantine then led his army into Italy. He was welcomed in Milan and continued on to Rome, the stronghold of Maxentius, where he won a great victory. Maxentius drowned in the Tiber as he attempted to escape. Thus Constantine established firm control over the western part of the empire and, following the death of Maximinus Daia, Licinius established similar control over the eastern part. The two agreed to maintain the *status quo*, but war eventually broke out, with Licinius being defeated and executed, leaving Constantine as the undisputed ruler of a united empire. After considering several locations for his capital, he decided to build a new city on the ancient site of Byzantium, near the entrance to the Black Sea, calling the city Constantinople. Constantine, known as "the Great", reigned for a little over 30 years, counting from the death of his father, Constantius. He left his empire to be shared between his three sons, Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans I, and also some other relatives, who were quickly eliminated [55].

Constantine, the eldest son, took northwestern Europe as his territory, Constans received Italy, North Africa and part of the Balkans region, and Constantius became ruler of the eastern territories from Constantinople. However, Constantine soon began to lay claim to some of the regions allocated to Constans. He invaded Italy but was defeated and killed near Aquileia, leaving Constans in control of the whole western empire. Sometime later, units of the imperial guard became disaffected with Constans and set up a general, Flavius Magnentius, to replace him as emperor. Constans fled toward the Pyrenees but was overtaken and killed. Magnentius subsequently fought against Constantius but was defeated, committing suicide to avoid capture, so Constantius became sole emperor. Constantius was a Christian and, following a doctrinal dispute, the *Book of Pontiffs* (a series of short biographies of popes updated intermittently by the Church of Rome), recorded (together with other sources) that he sent Liberius, the 37th pope, into exile. Constantius went on to reign for about 24 years in total, following the death of Constantine I [56].

Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Jerome and Ammianus Marcellinus were writing their accounts during this period and occasionally included some personal observations. So, Aurelius Victor, whose history was brought to an end after the death of Magnentius, noted the coincidence that the 1,000th anniversary of the founding of Rome had been celebrated during the reign of Philip and the 1,100th anniversary arrived when one of the consuls was named Philip (Flavius Philippus, AD 348), adding that the customary festivities had not taken place on the latter occasion, because of a declining interest in the city of Rome. Orosius indicated that AUC 1100 fell during the period when Constantius and Constans were joint emperors. Consistent with this, Prosper and the *Chronicon Paschale* both placed the death of Constans in the consular year following Philip's, the former dating it to AP 322 (AD 349) and the latter to AM (CP) 5858 (AD 348/9), whereas Cassiodorus placed it in the consulship of Sergius and Nigrinianus (AD 350). According to the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, Constans died in Olympiad 282:2, AM (E) 5550 (AD 350). Several of these sources indicated that Constantius went on to reign for about 12 more years after the death of his brother [57].

Not long after the death of Magnentius, Constantius appointed a pagan, Flavius Julian, as *Caesar*, to take responsibility for the western empire. Julian's military victories led to him being acclaimed *Augustus* by his troops, when Constantius was campaigning against the Persians. Constantius headed back to confront Julian, but was

taken ill on the way and died, after naming Julian as his successor. According to the contemporary account of Ammianus, the first consular year after the death of Constantius was that of Mamertinus and Nevitta (AD 362). Cassiodorus and the *Chronicon Paschale* gave this as the first year of Julian, whereas Prosper associated Julian's first year with the previous consulship. After less than three years on the throne, Julian, the last pagan emperor, was killed fighting against the Sassanid Persians [58].

Flavius Jovian was hastily made emperor by the campaigning army and agreed a peace with the Persians on humiliating terms. On the way home, he was found dead in his bed. He had reigned for just 8 months. Ammianus noted that Jovian, during his brief reign, had entered into a consulship with his son, Varronian (AD 364). In the final entry of his "brief history", Eutropius dated the death of Jovian, in that same consular year, to AUC 1119 (AD 366). Also during the consulship of Jovian and Varronian, according to Ammianus and several other sources, including Cassiodorus, Flavius Valentinian, another general from the Balkans region, was selected as the next emperor. He chose to reign from Milan, and appointed his brother, Valens, as co-emperor to take care of affairs in the east. Orosius dated the first year of Valentinian and Valens to AUC 1118 (AD 365); the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to Olympiad 286:1, AM (E) 5565 (AD 365); Prosper to AP 337 (AD 364); the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 5873 (AD 363/4); Isidore of Seville to AM (IS) 5562 (AD 365); Bede to AM (B) 4318 (AD 365); and Theophanes to AM (AE) 5857 (AD 365/6) [59].

When Valentinian died, his sons, Gratian and Valentinian II, took shared responsibility for the west. Valens remained in power in the east but, after he had reigned for 14 years in total, Valens was killed in a battle against the Goths. Bede dated the death of Valens to AD 377. The history by Ammianus Marcellinus and the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle both ended after the death of Valens, the final entry in the chronicle being dated to Olympiad 289:3, AM (E) 5579 (AD 379), also said to be AUC 1131 (AD 378) [60].

Flavius Theodosius, a powerful Spanish-born general, was appointed to succeed Valens in the east. The Hydatius chronicle and the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*, both of which were presented as continuations of the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, and used the same dating systems, began with the first year of Theodosius, dating this to Olympiad 289:3, AM (E) 5579 (AD 379). The chronicle of Marcellinus Comes also began with the first year of Theodosius, dating it to the consulship of Ausonius and Olybrius (AD 379), as did the *Hydatius fasti*. Prosper similarly dated the first year of Theodosius to the consulship of Ausonius and Olybrius, AP 352 (AD 379) and Bede to AM (B) 4332 (AD 379). After the deaths of Gratian and then Valentinian II, Theodosius became the last person to be in effective control of the entire Roman Empire. When he died after reigning for about 16 years in total, the empire was formally divided between his two sons, Arcadius in the east and Honorius in the west [61].

After reigning in Constantinople for 13 years, Arcadius died and was succeeded as eastern emperor by his son, Theodosius II. In the west, Honorius, who chose to make Ravenna his capital, proved to be a weak ruler and was never secure on the throne. He also found it increasingly difficult to control the European tribes. According to statements by Hydatius, Prosper, Isidore, Cassiodorus, Marcellinus, Orosius, Theophanes, the *Gallic Chronicle of 452* and the *Chronicon Paschale*, giving a variety of dates, the city of Rome was sacked by the Goths in Olympiad 297:1, 297:2 or 297:3; AM (E) 5610 or 5611; AM (CP) 5919; AM (AE) 5903; AP 383; AUC 1164; Spanish Era 447; the 8th consulship of Honorius and the 3rd of Theodosius II; the 9th consulship of Honorius and the 4th of Theodosius II; or the consulship of Varanes. All these various dates correspond to the years AD 409, 410 or 411. Bede dated the sack of Rome by the Goths to AD 409 [62].

Honorius eventually died in Ravenna after being western emperor for almost 30 years. He was succeeded by Valentinian III, the son of his half-sister. In the east, Theodosius II, after a reign of over 40 years, died at a time when Constantinople was being threatened by Attila the Hun. A strong emperor was required and Marcian, a former military commander, was appointed. Bede, as noted in section 1.2 of this work, wrote that Marcian became emperor in AD 449. Prosper, Marcellinus, Cassiodorus and the *Chronicon Paschale* all noted the accession of Marcian during the 7th consular year of Valentinian III and the only one of Avienus (AD 450), Prosper dating this to AP 423 (AD 450) and the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 5959 (AD 449/50). Hydatius wrote that Marcian came to the throne in Olympiad 307:3 (AD 451), Malalas said he had been crowned during Antiochene Era 499 (AD 450/1) and Theophanes dated his accession to AM (AE) 5942 (AD 449/50). According to Isidore, the first regnal year of Marcian corresponded to AM (IS) 5649 and to Spanish Era 490 (AD 452). Thus it can be seen that Bede, writing in Northumbria, gave a date for the accession of Marcian consistent with ones given by writers from Gaul, Constantinople, Italy, Antioch and Spain, all but one of whom (the exception being Theophanes) had lived before Bede's time. Here, as with the accessions of Diocletian, Valens and Theodosius I, we see that, contrary to Steve Mitchell's suggestions, the evidence from the surviving sources indicates that Bede did not invent his own chronology but gave dates in line with those of previous historians [63].

Although Marcian was successful in stabilising the eastern empire, the western empire began its final disintegration during his reign. An invasion of Italy by Attila was unsuccessful but Valentinian III was then assassinated. This prompted the Vandals to sack the city of Rome. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, the

plundering of Rome by the Vandals in the reign of Marcian occurred during the pontificate of Leo I (Leo the Great), the 47th pope. The same key details about the sack of the city by the Vandals were given by Prosper in the final entry of his chronicle, which was dated to the 8th consulship of Valentinian and that of Anthemius, AP 428 (AD 455). The *Gallic Chronicle of 452* had already been completed by this time and the chronicle of Hydatius came to an end soon afterwards. Explicit continuations of the chronicle of Prosper were provided in the chronicles by Victor of Tunnuna and Marius of Avenches. These discarded Prosper's AP dating system, relying, as with the chronicles of Marcellinus and Cassiodorus, on consular dating [64].

After the murder of Valentinian, sources identify no fewer than nine western emperors reigning in a period of twenty years. The last of these, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by Odoacer, leader of a confederation of German tribes who had settled in northern Italy. Following this, Odoacer was set up in Ravenna as ruler of Italy, marking the end of the Western Roman Empire. Cassiodorus, Marcellinus, Victor and Marius all dated this to the consulship of Basiliscus and Armatus (AD 476) [65].

In the east, Marcian died after a reign of 7 years and the army placed Leo I on the throne. Leo reigned for 17 years and was succeeded by Leo II, his grandson, who was still a boy. When Leo II died after a few months, the boy's father, Zeno, son-in-law of Leo I, became emperor and similarly ruled for 17 years, albeit with a short disruption when he was deposed (by Basiliscus) and then restored. Zeno's widow selected Anastasius, a palace official, as the next emperor and then married him. Malalas dated the death of Zeno to Antiochene Era 539 (AD 490/91). The first year of Anastasius was dated by Isidore to AM (IS) 5688 (AD 491); by Theophanes to AM (AE) 5984 (AD 491/2); and by the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 6001 (AD 491/2). Cassiodorus reported that, in the second year of Anastasius, when Albinus was consul (AD 493), Theodoric the Goth killed Odoacer in Ravenna. That left his people, the Ostrogoths, in control of Italy, apart from the more southerly regions [66].

After the 17-year reign of Anastasius I, Justin I, a Thracian who had risen through the ranks of the army, was made emperor. The chronicle of Cassiodorus ended in the first year of Justin, dated to the consulship of Eutharicus Cillica and the new emperor (AD 519), five years after Cassiodorus himself had served as consul. In the 9th year of his reign, Justin appointed his energetic and popular young nephew, Justinian, as *Caesar*. When Justin died a few months later, Justinian became emperor. According to Malalas, Evagrius and the *Chronicon Paschale*, this was in Antiochene Era 575 (AD 526/7) and the consulship of Mavortius (AD 527). The *Chronicon Paschale* dated the first year of Justinian to AM (CP) 6037 (AD 527/8); Isidore to AM (IS) 5723 and Spanish Era 564 (AD 526); Theophanes to AM (AE) 6020 (AD 527/8); and Bede to AM (B) 4481 (AD 528) [67].

Justinian, subsequently known as "Justinian the Great", quickly began attempts to restore the Roman Empire to something like its former glory. His army prevented the westward expansion of the empire of the Sassanid Persians and destroyed the Vandal kingdom in North Africa as well as the Ostrogoth kingdom in Italy. The various campaigns were described by the historian Procopius, who was present on many of them as secretary to the military commander, Belisarius, including the first campaign against the Ostrogoths, mentioned in the entry for the 60th pope, Silverius, in the *Book of Pontiffs*. These campaigns and other events were also reported in the chronicle of Malalas, which continued to the end of Justinian's reign, as did the chronicle of Victor of Tunnuna. The reign of Justinian, according to all the sources, lasted almost 40 years [68].

Despite his military successes, it seems evident from the historical accounts that Justinian's ambitions to re-establish a wider empire were frustrated by a series of damaging natural catastrophes. Malalas reported that, in the 7th year of Justin, a major earthquake had devastated Antioch, with 250,000 people being killed. Reconstruction of the city began but then, just after the start of the reign of Justinian, history repeated itself, with the death toll being even greater on this occasion. In the consulship of Orestes and Lampadius (AD 530), a great comet appeared in the sky, causing much consternation, and this was followed by widespread earthquakes. A few years later, an earthquake struck Constantinople, and this was followed by another in Antioch. Procopius wrote that, when he was in Sicily with Belisarius in the 10th year of Justinian, the Sun was like the Moon, giving out no heat for the whole year. Cassiodorus, in an undated letter, described the same phenomenon in northern Italy, and Michael the Syrian referred to observations of it in the east, giving a date of Seleucid Era 848 (AD 537) in the 11th year of Justinian. Malalas noted that, in the 15th year of Justinian, the 5th indiction (AD 541/2), a great plague arose in Egypt. Procopius, John of Ephesus and the continuator of Marcellinus Comes described how this soon reached Constantinople and other parts of the empire, causing an enormous loss of life. Malalas reported further earthquakes in the region, some causing considerable damage. In particular, there was one in the region of Palestine in the following 14th indiction (AD 550/1) which generated a tsunami. Very similar details were also given by Theophanes [69].

According to Heinsohn's theory, there was a global catastrophe at this time which was the same event as one supposedly three centuries earlier, causing the terminal collapse of the Roman Empire. Although the surviving historical sources show clear evidence of a crisis on both occasions, there is little similarity between the two crises, and no reason to think that either resulted in the complete collapse of a civilisation. The chronicle of Victor of

Tunnuna ended with the death of Justinian, but the chronicle of John of Biclaro began with an explicit statement that it was a continuation of Victor's chronicle, starting in the first year of Justinian's successor, his nephew, Justin II. Since Justinian had incorporated the role of consul into that of emperor, John headed each annual entry with a regnal year. John of Ephesus and Evagrius Scholasticus similarly described events on a contemporary basis during the reigns of Justin II and the next emperor, Tiberius II, and they wrote at considerable length about the manoeuvrings of different political and religious factions in Constantinople, of arrangements made to ensure smooth imperial succession, and of military successes won by general Maurice against the Persians. Maurice married the daughter of Tiberius and, at about the same time, succeeded his father-in-law as emperor. According to John of Ephesus, Maurice came to the throne in Seleucid Era 893 (AD 582), 17 years after the death of Justinian I in the 39th year of his reign. Subsequently, Bede, as noted in section 1.2, wrote that Maurice became emperor in AD 582. Isidore dated the first year of Maurice to AM (IS) 5780 (AD 583) and Spanish Era 622 (AD 584); the *Chronicon Paschale* dated it to AM (CP) 6092 (AD 582/3); and Theophanes to AM (AE) 6075 (AD 582/3) [70].

2.1.3 Discussion: What the Sources indicate about the Chronology of Emperors from Augustus to Maurice

From the details given above, it will be apparent that the surviving sources give consistent dates, to within a small number of years, for all the emperors who reigned between Augustus and Maurice. Since numerous dating systems were employed, that statement relies of course on conversions between these systems. However, as the relationships between different systems can be seen to have remained unchanged throughout the periods of overlap (as demonstrated, with particular regard to the AD system, in sections 1.3 and 1.4 of this work), the interconversion of dates from one system to another must surely be considered to be a straightforward process. To remove any residual doubt, let us compare the timescale between the same two points in the writings of individual authors. Bede, as we have seen, indicated in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* that there had been 133 years between the accessions of Marcian and Maurice as emperor (in AD 449 and AD 582 respectively). Similarly, in his chronicle, he gave the first year of Marcian as AM (B) 4404 and the first year of Maurice as AM (B) 4537, a difference of 133 years. A century before Bede, Isidore of Seville dated this same period as running from AM (IS) 5649 to 5780 (a timescale of 131 years) and elsewhere as from Spanish Era 490 to 622 (a timescale of 132 years). During the time of Isidore, the *Chronicon Paschale*, compiled in Constantinople, gave the corresponding dates as AM (CP) 5960 and 6092, indicating a timescale of 132 years. Theophanes, writing in the same city two centuries later, also gave a timescale of 132 years for this period, from AM (AE) 5943 to 6075 [71].

As noted previously, Steve Mitchell has argued that the AD system we use today was devised by Bede, who may have made significant errors in his estimate of previous timescales because of the dearth of historical evidence in England from the bleak period when he (Bede) wrote of plague being followed by famine, invasions and civil wars, before the arrival of Christian missionaries during the reign of Maurice. These errors could have persisted in the chronologies accepted by subsequent generations [72]. That was a pertinent suggestion because, even today, few details are known about the Early Anglo-Saxon Period in England, and Bede did play a very significant role in promoting the use of the AD dating system in Western Europe. However, Bede was explicitly promoting the AD system devised by Dionysius Exiguus, who had provided linkages to other dating systems, and, as we saw in section 1.4 of this work, these relationships with other systems remained the same for the scheme promoted by Bede, ruling out the possibility of a transmission error. In similar fashion, our analysis here of chronological data in the surviving sources relating to the reigns from Augustus to Maurice shows a high degree of consistency throughout (to within a small number of years), with no indication that Bede or anyone else introduced a significant error which subsequently became incorporated into chronologies produced by later writers.

Likewise, the surviving historical sources provide no support for Gunnar Heinsohn's proposal (in partnership with Jan Beaufort) that the line of emperors from Augustus to Alexander Severus reigned from Rome during the same period when the line from Diocletian to Anastasius I reigned in the east [73]. The *Chronography of 354*, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, the anonymous *Epitome of the Caesars*, Orosius, Prosper, Cassiodorus, John Malalas, the *Gallic Chronicle of 551*, Isidore, the *Chronicon Paschale*, Bede and Synkellos all place Diocletian, the supposed contemporary of Augustus, around half a century after Alexander Severus, with no source giving a different impression. Furthermore, Eusebius and Aurelius Victor, according to their own testimonies, were writing during the reigns of Constantine I and his son Constantius I, so how could they have given details of the reigns of the Severan emperors, as they did, if these ruled more than a century after the death of Constantius, as supposed by Heinsohn? It is also very difficult to reconcile the details given in the sources about individual emperors with the Heinsohn model. For example, the accounts consistently say that Septimius Severus reigned from Rome over a huge empire which stretched from the Atlantic coast to the boundary with Persia, whereas, at the time of his supposed contemporary, Zeno, the western empire had collapsed and northern and central Italy were said to be under the control of the Goths. There was to be no recovery because, although Justinian brought the Italian kingdom of the Goths to an end, the Lombards soon crossed into Italy from the northeast and took over the territories previously controlled by the Goths.

The Cathedral of St Sophia, built under the supervision of Emperor Justinian I, was the seat of the Patriarch of Constantinople throughout the period of the Byzantine Empire. After the conquest of the city by the Muslims, it became the Hagia Sophia mosque, with added minarets.

2.2. Byzantine Emperors

2.2.1 Emperors from Maurice to Constantine VIII

By the start of the reign of Maurice, the Empire had, according to the historical sources, become confined to the east and had a single capital, Constantinople, the former Byzantium. Hence, historians from the present day often refer to it, from around this time onwards, as the Byzantine Empire. Nevertheless, although the first language of the emperors was now Greek, rather than Latin, and they were generally called "Greek Emperors" in western sources, they continued to regard themselves as "Roman Emperors", with Byzantium/Constantinople sometimes being termed "New Rome" by eastern writers. Regardless of terminology, the empire Maurice inherited was under serious threat from the Sassanid Persians to the east and Slavs and Avars to the north. The population of the empire had been reduced considerably by the "plague of Justinian", so Maurice's immediate predecessors had been forced to make financial payments to help secure the empire's borders, or possibly expand them, and Maurice followed the same policy. For example, he commissioned the Merovingian Franks to drive the Lombards out of Italy, but this initiative was unsuccessful. Furthermore, the extravagance of Tiberius II had left the empire almost devoid of financial resources, so Maurice found himself in a very difficult position. A detailed history of the reign of Maurice, in eight books, was written by Theophylact Simocatta during the reign of Heraclius. Maurice attempted to cope with the empire's financial problems by making major cuts in the funding of the army. This provoked revolts amongst the troops and, in the 20th year of Maurice's reign, an army officer named Phocas took advantage of the unrest and seized power, having Maurice and his entire family executed [74].

After eight years on the throne, Phocas was defeated and killed by another officer, Heraclius, who, with popular support, became the new emperor. The first year of Heraclius was dated by the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 6120 (AD 610/1); by Isidore to AM (IS) 5809 (AD 612) and Spanish Era 649 (AD 611); by the *Mozarabic Chronicle* similarly to Spanish Era 649 (AD 611); by Bede to AM (B) 4566 (AD 613); and by Theophanes to AM (AE) 6102 (AD 610/1) [75].

The most detailed accounts of events over the next two centuries were provided by Theophanes, in his chronicle, and Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople, in his *Short History* (the latter indicating reign-lengths but not giving dates). It is also appropriate at this point to introduce the chronicle of Marianus Scotus, an Irish monk who lived in Germany four centuries after the reign of Heraclius (according to his own testimony). As noted in section 1.4, Marianus followed Abbo of Fleury in believing (on the basis of a linkage between gospel accounts and astronomical cycles) that Jesus Christ had been born more than twenty years before AD 1 and he devised his own "gospel truth" year (VA) dating system for his chronicle (although he gave corresponding AD dates in the right-hand margin). The chronicle of Gervase of Canterbury began with the coronation of King Henry I of England, which Gervase said had taken place in AD 1100 in the system of Dionysius and VA 1122 in the alternative system of Marianus Scotus. Marianus, in his own chronicle, dated the accession of Marcian to VA 472 (AD 450); Justinian I to VA 548 (AD 526); Maurice to VA 604 (AD 582); and Heraclius to VA 633 (AD 611) [76].

Early in the reign of Heraclius, according to the sources, the Sassanid Persians under King Khosrau II were taking over territories to the west at an alarming rate. Jerusalem was one of the cities which fell to them, this capture being dated by Isidore to AM (IS) 5813 (AD 616); by the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 6123 (AD 613/4); and by Theophanes to AM (AE) 6106 (AD 613/4) [77].

According to the theory of Heribert Illig (see section 1.2), the fall of Jerusalem to the Persians in *c.* AD 615 marked the beginning of a 297-year period of phantom history. In an article in English by Hans-Ulrich Niemitz, a supporter of Illig, it was suggested this may have been fabricated by scholars working under the direction of the Holy Roman Emperor, Otto III, and the celebrated scholar, Gerbert of Aurillac (who became Pope Silvester II), almost a century after the end of the phantom period, to make it appear that Otto had been on the throne in the year AD 1000. Alternatively, the instigator may have been the Byzantine emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenitus (Constantine the Purple-Born), a scholar with an interest in history, who is known to have commissioned a huge historical work. However, this was *Excerpts from the Histories*, some of which has survived, consisting simply of quotations from historians from Herodotus onwards, arranged on a thematic basis. Constantine Porphyrogenitus is generally believed to have reigned as Constantine VII during the first half of the 10th century AD whereas, in Illig's scenario, he actually came to the throne soon after the Persians seized Jerusalem, but the succession of fictitious emperors inserted into the historical accounts made it appear that he had lived long after this event. Bede, whose *Eclesiastical History of the English People* was said to have been written in England in AD 731, the author of the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, apparently written in Spain in Spanish Era 792 (AD 754) and Theophanes, who seemingly concluded his chronicle in Constantinople in AM (AE) 6305 (AD 812/3), would be "phantom historians" in Illig's scenario, their works fabricated as part of the conspiracy, indicating the immense scale of the supposed plot [78]. Was such a conspiracy feasible, then or at any other time?

For the present we will simply note Illig's claim that a 297-year phantom period began at the point we have now reached, and carry on summarising key information presented in the surviving sources. These say that Heraclius eventually decided to counter-attack and won a significant victory over Khosrau. However, in Arabia, the Saracens, led by Muhammad, were emerging as a new power in the region, giving rise to the Age of Hijri (AH) calendar which dated events in lunar years of 354 days from the departure of Muhammad from Mecca (AH 1 corresponding to AD 622/3). Despite the death of Muhammad, the Saracens went on to seize control of Egypt, Syria and much of Persia before Heraclius died. He had reigned for slightly more than 30 years. John of Nikiu gave a description of these events from the perspective of a Christian bishop in Egypt, dating the death of Heraclius to the 357th year of Diocletian (AD 641). Bede dated it to AM (B) 4591 (AD 638); Theophanes to AM (AE) 6132 (AD 639/40); the *Mozarabic Chronicle* to Spanish Era 678 (AD 640); and Marianus to VA 660 (AD 638) [79].

Before Heraclius died, according to the sources, his second wife, Martina, persuaded him to agree to leave the empire to be shared equally between his two sons (by different mothers), with Martina having the status of empress. Suspicious of Martina, the people placed the full authority in the hands of the eldest son, Constantine III, but he died after just a few months, enabling Martina to claim the throne on behalf of Constantine's half-brother (and her own son), Heraclonas. There was considerable unrest and, as the belief that Constantine had been poisoned began to spread, Heraclonas and his mother were mutilated and sent into exile, with Constantine's young son, Constans II, being placed on the throne. Meanwhile, the Saracens continued to strengthen their hold over territories adjacent to the Eastern Mediterranean, depriving the Byzantines of valuable revenue, and they also expanded west from Egypt along the coastal regions of North Africa. Constans, in his 13th year, belatedly launched a naval attack on the Saracens but suffered a humiliating defeat. Michael the Syrian dated this to Seleucid Era 966 (AD 655) and AH 37 (AD 657/8). Seven years later, fearful for his own safety, Constans left Constantinople to live in Sicily. That failed to save him from his enemies, for he was assassinated in a bath-house in Syracuse in his 27th year, as reported by Theophanes, Bede and also the entry in the *Book of Pontiffs* for the 78th pope, Vitalian, who was said to have entertained Constans in Rome a few years earlier. Constans was succeeded by his son, Constantine IV, who had to face a sustained siege of Constantinople by the Saracens during his reign, but the city withstood it. Constantine was emperor for 17 years and was succeeded by his son, Justinian II, the last representative of the Heraclian dynasty. According to Marianus Scotus, Justinian II became emperor in VA 707 (AD 685). Theophanes dated the first year of his reign to AM (AE) 6178 (AD 685/6); Bede to AM (B) 4640 (AD 687); and the *Mozarabic Chronicle* to Spanish Era 726 (AD 688) and AH 70 (AD 689/90) [80].

Justinian had lofty ambitions for the empire, but his despotic manner alienated his subjects and, after 10 years on the throne, he was forced into exile. Six emperors then occupied the throne during the next 22 years, including Justinian himself, who re-established himself with military support from Bulgars and Slavs, but was then murdered when it became apparent that he had not learned any lessons from his previous experiences. Justinian's assassination was noted in the entry in the *Book of Pontiffs* for the 90th pope, Constantine. The situation was eventually stabilised when the powerful Leo III (known as Leo the Isaurian, because he came from the Isaurian region of northwestern Syria) established himself as emperor. Marianus Scotus dated this to VA 739 (AD 717). Theophanes gave the first year of Leo's reign as AM (AE) 6209 (AD 716/7); Bede as AM (B) 4672 (AD 719); and the *Mozarabic Chronicle* as Spanish Era 758 (AD 720) and AH 100 (AD 718/9) [81].

The Saracens once again laid siege to Constantinople, but were driven away by Leo, with the help of Bulgarian allies. Later in his reign, Leo caused an enormous division of opinion in Constantinople when he ordered the destruction of all religious images. In the west, entries in the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded the unsuccessful efforts of

the 91st and 92nd popes, Gregory II and Gregory III, to persuade Leo to change his iconoclastic policy. Leo, the founder of a dynasty which reigned in Constantinople for 85 years, died of dropsy after ruling for 24 years. He was succeeded by his son, Constantine V. According to Marianus Scotus, Constantine V became emperor in VA 763 (AD 741). Theophanes dated his first year to AM (AE) 6233 (AD 740/1) and the *Mozarabic Chronicle* dated it to Spanish Era 783 (AD 745) and AH 127 (AD 744/5) [82].

Bede finished writing his chronicle early in the reign of Leo III. It seems clear from the various sources that, at this time, the eastern emperors were still regarded as important figures in both religious and secular spheres, even in the west, where they could no longer exercise any real authority. The Byzantine Empire was now restricted to Eastern Europe south of the Danube, Asia Minor and southern Italy. However, even this purely notional status given in the west to the Byzantine emperors faded when a Frankish empire began to rise (as will be discussed in Chapter 3). Bede, as far as we know, was the last westerner to write a chronicle in which events were presented under the headings of the reigns of individual eastern emperors. Histories and chronicles continued to be written in the west, but these concentrated on events in the region and included only very occasional references to Byzantine emperors, usually when there had been some contact between east and west. More general information about the history of the Byzantine empire from this time onwards comes almost entirely from eastern sources – in the case of the Isaurian dynasty, mainly from the chronicle of Theophanes; the *Short History* by Nikephoros; another work by Nikephoros, a chronicle known mainly in the form of a Latin translation by Anastasius the Librarian; and the *Compendium of History* by George Kedrenos, written two centuries after the others. The sequences of emperors (together with their reign-lengths) presented in these four sources are generally consistent.

According to the sources, Constantine V reigned for slightly more than 34 years and was succeeded by his son, Leo IV, who died after just 5 years on the throne. Leo's young son, Constantine VI, then became emperor, with his mother, Irene (an Athenian), as regent. During this period, the iconoclast legislation introduced by Leo III was repealed, as noted by Theophanes, and also the entry in the *Book of Pontiffs* for the 97th pope, Hadrian I, who was identified by Theophanes as the bishop of Rome at the time. After 10 years of joint-rule, Constantine became sole ruler, but Irene retained the title of empress. Open warfare developed between the two of them and, after 7 years, troops loyal to Irene captured Constantine and blinded him. Following this, Irene ruled alone. Theophanes dated her first regnal year to AM (AE) 6290 (AD 797/8) [83].

Five years later, Irene was sent into exile as a result of a plot engineered by her minister of public finances, who succeeded her as Emperor Nikephoros I. After 9 years on the throne, Nikephoros led a campaign into Bulgaria, where he was killed in an ambush. The imperial crown passed to his son, Staurakios, but he had been seriously wounded in the same ambush. Soon afterwards, Michael Rangabe, the brother-in-law of Staurakios, was declared emperor. In the second year of his reign, Michael I, faring badly in a battle against the Bulgars near Adrianople, allowed the patrician Leo to take command of the troops while he returned to Constantinople. In the aftermath, Michael was forced to abdicate and become a monk, enabling Leo to be made emperor. Theophanes dated this year, the final one in his chronicle, to AM (AE) 6305 and AM (BE) 6321, both corresponding to AD 812/3, noting that this was the 528th year after the first year of Diocletian [84].

The Anastasius translation of the chronicle of Nikephoros continued for a further 52-year period, the final section of this being a continuation added by the translator. Three new works were also compiled within two centuries of the end of the chronicle of Theophanes to serve as continuations of this for a further one-and-a-half centuries, although none of them maintained the system of annals, i.e. year-by-year entries, used by Theophanes. The work known as the *Theophanes Continuatus* was a series of substantial biographies of successive emperors, written by several authors (as can be seen by changes of style), and the single-author chronicles of Symeon Magister (possibly the same person as Symeon the Logothete) and the monk, George Hamartolos, followed the same pattern, in more succinct fashion. A century later, John Skylitzes wrote a *Synopsis of History* from the end of the reign of Nikephoros I to his own time and, shortly afterwards, George Kedrenos wrote a *Compendium of History* going back to Adam, using Skylitzes as a major source for more recent events. All of these sources gave much the same details for the emperors in the period we are now considering. Also, Michael the Syrian, a Christian writing a century after Skylitzes and Kedrenos, mainly about historical events in his own Muslim-dominated region, regularly noted the succession of the Byzantine emperors to the west.

According to the various sources, Leo V, known as the Armenian, reigned for a little more than 7 years after deposing Michael I, before being assassinated and succeeded as emperor by another army commander, Michael II, who had been born in Amorium in Phrygia and founded the Phrygian dynasty of emperors. After reigning for almost 10 years, Michael was succeeded by his son, Theophilos. Michael the Syrian wrote that Theophilos became emperor in Seleucid Era 1140 (AD 829) [85].

Theophilos occupied the throne for about 12 years and was succeeded by his young son, Michael III, who reigned with his mother Theodora for 24 years, then alone for 11 years (during which time Anastasius brought his work to an end) and finally in partnership with his adopted son, Basil I (known as Basil the Macedonian) for slightly

more than a year. The *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Emperor Michael, son of Theophilos, sent gifts to the church in Rome during both the 106th and 107th pontificates, those of Benedict III and Nicholas, and that, around the end of the latter pontificate, Michael was succeeded by Basil. According to the *Theophanes Continuatus*, Michael died in AM (BE) 6376 (AD 867/8). Basil, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty, then ruled alone for 19 years, after which Leo VI reigned for almost 26 years. Leo was regarded as a member of the same dynasty although his parentage was uncertain (his mother, Eudocia was the wife of Basil I and the mistress of Michael III). When Leo died, the throne was shared between his brother, Alexander, and his infant son, Constantine VII (Constantine Porphyrogenitus), but Alexander died just over a year later, leaving Constantine as the sole emperor, with his mother Zoe becoming regent. However, after seven years, a disastrous defeat against the Bulgars enabled Romanos Lekapenos, an Armenian naval commander, to seize imperial power as Romanos I, with young Constantine being relegated to the status of junior emperor. The *Theophanes Continuatus* dated the beginning of the 26-year reign of Romanos to AM (BE) 6428 (AD 919/20) [86].

When Romanos was reaching the end of his reign, his sons feared he intended to bequeath the empire to Constantine rather than to them, so they kidnapped him and forced him to become a monk. The plot failed, because the people of Constantinople seized the sons and placed them in the same monastery as their father, after which Constantine VII was re-appointed sole ruler and reigned for a further 15 years. The individual reign-lengths given by Symeon, Hamartolos, Skylitzes and Kedrenos indicate a timescale of 150 years, to within a year or so, for the period from the accession of Leo V to the death of Constantine VII. The *Theophanes Continuatus* dated the death of Constantine VII to AM (BE) 6469 (AD 960/1) whilst Skyltizes and Kedrenos dated it one year earlier in AM (BE) 6468 [87].

Reaching the reign of Constantine VII has, according to Illig and his followers, brought us out of three centuries of "phantom time" into "real history". However, according to Zoltán Hunnivari, "real history" breaks off at the end of the reign of Constantine VII, when we enter a phantom period lasting almost two centuries. In Hunnivari's view, the rulers generally considered to have reigned between the years we call AD 960 and AD 1160 were either inventions or ones who lived at other times [88].

Returning to our consideration of the historical sources, The *History* by Leo the Deacon began with the death of Constantine VII, this being dated to AM (BE) 6467 (AD 958/9). Leo's *History* gives a contemporary account, in detail, of events over the next 17 years, generally consistent with the accounts by Skylitzes and Kedrenos. Constantine VII was succeeded by his son. Romanos II, but Romanos died after less than 4 years on the throne, leaving the empire in the nominal care of his infant sons, Basil II and Constantine VIII. Nikephoros Phocas, an army commander from Cappodocia, quickly seized power and reigned as Nikephoros II until he was murdered in his 7th year by John Tzimiskes, who became Emperor John I, with Basil and Constantine as junior co-emperors. Leo, Skylitzes and Kedrenos all dated this to AM (BE) 6478 (AD 969/70). The death of John 6 years later, dated by Leo and Skyitzes to AM (BE) 6485 (AD 976/7), left Basil II as senior emperor [89].

Leo's *History* ended at that point, and the chronicles of Symeon and Hamartolos, as well as the *Theophanes Continuatus*, had finished more than a decade earlier, but the accounts by Skylitzes and Kedrenos continued. Basil II was also the subject of the first of a series of biographies of fourteen successive emperors written by Michael Psellus, who generally recorded reign-lengths but gave no dates. Early in his reign, Basil faced revolts led by Anatolian nobles, particularly Bardas Phocas, the nephew of Nikephoros II. To counter this, Basil made an alliance with the Russian prince, Vladimir of Kiev, which involved Vladimir being baptised as a Christian and marrying Basil's sister, Anna. The *Russian Primary Chronicle*, whose compilation was completed, according to the final section, in AM (BE) 6624 (AD 1115/6), gave a detailed account of the events surrounding the baptism of Vladimir and his marriage to Anna in the entry for AM (BE) 6496 (AD 987/8). Basil, like his predecessors for several centuries, had also faced problems from the Bulgars, but Skylitzes reported that he forced them into becoming his subjects in AM (BE) 6527 (AD 1018/9). According to Skylitzes, Kedrenos and Psellus, Basil II reigned for slightly more than 50 years from the death of John I before his brother, Constantine VIII, succeeded him for a brief reign. Skylitzes and Kedrenos dated the death of Basil II to AM (BE) 6534 (AD 1025/6) [90].

2.2.2 Postscript: Emperors of Constantinople from Constantine VIII to Baldwin I

We have now followed the ancient sources in continuous fashion through a period which, according to the timescales indicated in the sources themselves, amounted to well over a thousand years from the assassination of Julius Caesar to the reign of Constantine VIII, and have seen that surviving sources give a date for the accession of Constantine VIII which corresponds to AD 1025. It would meet our main requirements to stop at this point but, since we have entered the supposed period of "phantom time" proposed by Hunnivari, let us continue until after its end, to the time of Pope Innocent III who, according to Hunnivari, was responsible for advancing the AD calendar by 190 years.

The accounts by Skylitzes and Kedrenos covered eight more reigns after Constantine VIII, the details being generally consistent with those in the corresponding biographies by Psellus, and in the *History* by Michael

Attaleiates, which started during this period. The elderly Constantine ruled for slightly less than three years. Romanos III Agyros succeeded him as emperor, after agreeing to marry Constantine's daughter Zoe. When Romanos died, after reigning for 5½ years, Zoe married her lover, who became Emperor Michael IV and ruled for 7 years before dying in December, AM (BE) 6550 (AD 1041). Zoe was heir to the throne, but she had adopted her husband's nephew, Michael Kalaphates, as her son, and he became Emperor Michael V. However Michael wanted sole power, so he soon sent Zoe into exile and took various other arbitrary actions. The people of Constantinople revolted, and Zoe was recalled to the city, to rule in partnership with her sister Theodora, whilst Michael was blinded and sent into a monastery, after reigning for just four months. The partnership of sisters was not a success, so Zoe married a former lover, Constantine Monomachos, and he was crowned as Emperor Constantine IX less than two months after Michael V was deposed. Twelve years later, when Constantine was dying and Zoe already dead, leaving Theodora as heir to the throne, there was an unsuccessful plot to establish Nikephoros, the governor of Bulgaria, as the next emperor. When Theodora succeeded to the throne, she took her revenge on those who had been plotting against her, and also dismissed many who had held high office under Constantine, including Isaac Komnenos, replacing them with people of her own choosing. However, she soon became seriously ill and died towards the end of August in AM (BE) 6564, indiction 9 (AD 1056). Before her death, she had nominated the elderly patrician, Michael Stratiotikos, as her successor, and he became Emperor Michael VI. However, Michael soon lost the confidence of the people, leading to a military revolt led by Isaac Komnenos. As the rebel army advanced on Constantinople, Emperor Michael resigned on the last day of August in indiction 10 (AD 1057), and Isaac was crowned as Emperor Isaac I Komnenos on the following day [91].

Psellus and Attaleiates went on to note that Isaac reigned for a little over two years and, as arranged, he was succeeded by Constantine X Doukas, who ruled for 7½ years. Constantine was succeeded by his wife Eudocia, who soon married Romanos Diogenes, and he became Emperor Romanos IV in January of indiction 6 (AD 1068). At this time, the Seljuk Turks were making incursions into imperial territory in Anatolia. Romanos fought two indecisive campaigns against them, the second ending, according to Attaleiates, in indiction 8, AM (BE) 6578 (AD 1070), but then, in his third campaign against the Turks, he was defeated in battle at Manzikert and taken prisoner. After making an agreement with the Turkish commander, he was set free, but the Doukas family hatched a plot, which involved Psellus himself, to oppose Romanos and give the imperial sceptre to Michael Doukas. Romanos was defeated, wounded and blinded, after less than four years as emperor, and sent to a monastery where he soon died, leaving Michael VII Doukas as undisputed emperor. The account by Psellus ended soon afterwards. Attaleiates, nearing the end of his *History***,** reported that Michael, after reigning for 6½ years, was forced to abdicate in favour of Nikephoros Botaneiates, who became Emperor Nikephoros III in March of indiction 1 (AD 1078). Attaleiates continued his account for just two more years, noting that the emperor was facing challenges from several rebels, including Alexios Komnenos, the nephew of Isaac I. The reign of Nikephoros proved to be a relatively short one, for an alliance of the Doukas and Komnenos families forced him to abdicate, to allow Alexios Komnenos to become Emperor Alexios I. Anna Komnene, in *The Alexiad*, a biography of her father, the emperor, wrote that Nikephoros abdicated in April of indiction 4, AM (BE) 6589 (AD 1081), and went on to give many details of his long reign in the 15-book work. In book 10, she reported that a group of Latin (i.e. western) nobles, including Bohemond of Taranto, assembled in Constantinople on their way to Jerusalem to fight the Saracens (in the First Crusade). After giving a lengthy account of the Crusade in subsequent books, and telling how Bohemond tried to establish a realm in the region, which brought him into conflict with her father, she recorded, towards the end of book 13, that Bohemond and Alexios signed a treaty of peace in September, indiction 2, AM (BE) 6617 (AD 1108). As we shall see in Chapter 3, details of this account, including chronological ones, are consistent with accounts presented in western sources. Also consistent with the dates given in *The Alexiad*, an entry in the *Russian Primary Chronicle* for AM (BE) 6612 (AD 1104) recorded an arranged marriage between the daughter of Prince Volodar Rostislavich and the son of Emperor Alexios. The historian known simply as Doukas, writing almost four centuries later, during the reign the final Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI, said that Alexios reigned for 37 years and 4 months, 295 years after Empress Irene. Niketas Choniates, writing in the preface to his *History*, less than a century after the event, noted the death of Alexios in his 38th regnal year. This work and the *History* by John Kinnamos then covered the lengthy and generally successful reigns of the son and grandson of Alexios, John II and Manuel I. Choniates and Kinnamos described how John II drove back the Seljuk Turks, expanding the area under the control of the Byzantines, and both, as well as Doukas, said he reigned for approximately 25 years. Consistent with that, Michael the Syrian dated the death of John II to Seleucid Era 1455 (AD 1144). His son, Manuel I, also proved to be a strong and much-respected emperor. However, towards the end of his reign, he suffered a defeat by the Seljuks at Myriokephalon, which ended Byzantine hopes of being able to regain control of the whole of Anatolia in the foreseeable future. The *History* by Kinnamos terminated at that point, but Choniates went on to report that Manuel I reigned for almost 38 years, consistent with the figures given by Doukas and Michael the Syrian, which would take us past the end of Hunnivari's "phantom time" period. The *History* by Choniates continued for six more reigns, all of them relatively brief, as infighting between members of the extended royal family brought the Byzantine Empire into a downward spiral. Manuel I was succeeded by his only son, Alexios II, but he was only eleven-years-old when he was made emperor and, when he was murdered three

years later (a figure consistent with that given by Doukas), the throne was seized by Andronikos I Komnenos, whose father, Isaac, was a younger brother of John II. Andronikos began a reign of terror and, two years later, he was taken prisoner, mutilated and executed, with Isaac II Angelos, whose father had married the youngest daughter of Alexios I, becoming emperor. Isaac soon found himself having to fight a series of wars against the Bulgarians and eventually, when he was absent from the city on a campaign, his elder brother seized the throne as Emperor Alexios III Angelos. Isaac, after being emperor for almost 10 years (a figure once again consistent with that given by Doukas), was blinded, to make him ineligible for a return to the throne. However, Isaac's son, Alexios, was not disqualified, and he offered a large financial inducement to Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, who had been elected to lead the Fourth Crusade, called by Pope Innocent III, to make a diversion to Constantinople and establish him as Emperor Alexios IV Angelos. So, Montferrat led an army of Crusaders and Venetians towards Constantinople, causing Alexios III to flee, in the 9th year of his reign. In the chaos which followed, Isaac died and Alexios IV was murdered. Another nobleman was raised up as Emperor Alexios V Doukas, known as Mourtzouphlos, but the Crusaders and Venetians drove him away and seized control of Constaninople. This, according to Choniates and Doukas, was in the spring of AM (BE) 6712 (AD 1204). Choniates went on to say that, following the wishes of Montferrat, Baldwin of Flanders was then crowned as the first "Latin Emperor" of Constantinople. An eyewitness account of the fall of Constantinople was also written by a crusader, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, who similarly dated the coronation of Baldwin to AD 1204 [92].

So, having followed the historical accounts of the emperors for a further two centuries, past the end of Hunnivari's supposed "phantom period" to the time of Pope Innocent III, who, according to Hunnivari, had advanced the Christian Calendar by 190 years, we have, just as in our investigation of the previous one-thousand years, found that the different sources present a coherent and consistent picture of historical events relating to chronology.

2.3 Overall Summary of the Timescale from Augustus to Constantine VIII

The table below provides a summary of information given in the surviving sources about the timescale between year 1 of specified emperors, all generally regarded as reigning (in whole or in part) within the first millennium AD, beginning with the first year of Octavian/Augustus shortly after the death of Julius Caesar, and following the eastern line when there were separate eastern and western emperors. The end point in each row becomes the starting point for the next, the groupings being selected on the basis of when individual chronicles/histories began or ended, thus allowing the most complete use of the data available. The sources, giving the earliest ones first, are: Suetonius (S); Cassius Dio (CD); the *Chronography of 354* (CG); Aurelius Victor (AV); Eutropius (E); the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle (E-J); the anonymous *Epitome of the Caesars* (EC); Orosius (O); Hydatius (H); the *Gallic Chronicle of 452* (GC); Sozomen (SZ); Prosper (P); the linked Prosper/Marius chronicles (P-J); Victor of Tunnuna (V); the linked Victor/John of Biclaro chronicles (V-J); Marcellinus Comes (MC); Cassiodorus (C); Evagrius Scholasticus (ES); John of Ephesus (JE); John Malalas (JM); Isidore of Seville (IS); the *Chronicon Paschale* (CP); Bede's chronicle (B); the *Mozarabic Chronicle* (M); Nikephoros (N); George Synkellos (GS); Theophanes (T); Anastasius the Librarian (AL); the *Theophanes Continuatus* (TC), George Hamartolos (GH); Symeon Magister (SM); Leo the Deacon (LD); John Skylitzes (JS); George Kedrenos (GK); Marianus Scotus (MS); Michael Psellus (MP); and Michael the Syrian (SY).

Augustus to Claudius: 83 (S); 83 (CD); 83 (CG); 83 (E); 83 (E-J); 83 (EC); 85 (O); 83 (C); 83 (IS); 83 (B).
Claudius to Nerva: 55 (S); 56 (CD); 56 (AV); 56 (E); 56 (E-J); 55 (EC); 51 (O); 52 (P); 56 (C); 55 (IS); 56 (B).
Nerva to S.Severus: 97 (CD); 96 (E); 96 (E-J); 99 (EC); 98 (O); 99 (P); 97 (C); 96 (IS); 96 (CP) 97 (B); 99 (GS)
S. Severus to Diocletian: 97 (CG); 93 (E-J); 91 (EC); 97 (O); 93 (P); 94 (C); 93 (IS); 94 (CP); 92 (B); 91 (GS).
Diocletian to Valens: 79 (E-J); 77 (O); 79 (P); 77 (C); 81 (IS); 79 (CP); 79 (B); 80 (T); 83 (MS).
Valens to Arcadius: 30 (EC); 31 (O); 32 (SZ); 31 (P); 31 (C); 32 (IS); 30 (CP); 32 (B); 30 (T); 33 (MS).
Arcadius to Marcian: 57 (H); 59 (G); 55 (P); 55 (C); 55 (MC); 55 (IS); 56 (CP); 54 (B); 56 (T); 55 (MS).
Marcian to Justinian I: 77 (MC); 77 (V); 77 (P-M); 76 (JM); 76 (IS); 77 (CP); 77 (B); 77 (T); 76 (MS).
Justinian I to Maurice: 56 (V-J); 59 (ES); 56 (JE); 57 (IS); 55 (CP); 56 (B); 55 (T); 56 (MS).
Maurice to Heraclius: 29 (IS); 28 (CP); 29 (B); 27 (T); 28 (AL); 28 (GK); 29 (MS).
Heraclius to Tiberius III: 87 (B); 89 (M); 87 (N); 89 (T); 89 (AL); 89 (GK); 87 (MS).
Tiberius III to Leo III: 19 (B); 20 (M), 17 (N) 18 (T); 22 (AL) 19 (GK); 19 (MS).
Leo III to Constantine V: 24 (M); 24 (N); 24 (T); 25 (AL) 24 (GK); 24 (MS); 24 (SY).
Constantine V to Constantine VI: 40 (T); 40 (GK); 44 (SY).
Constantine VI to Leo V: 33 (T); 33 (AL); 30 (GK).
Leo V to Basil I: 55 (TC); 57 (GH); 55 (SM); 55 (JS).
Basil I to Romanos II: 93 (TC); 94 (GH); 94 (SM); 92 (JS).
Romanos II to Basil II: 18 (LD); 18 (JS); 18 (GK).
Basil II to Constantine VIII: 50 (JS); 50 (GK); 52 (MP).

It can be seen that: (a) the figures in each row are consistent, to within a small number of years; and (b) the summation of typical figures in each row indicates a timescale of around 1070 years from the first year of Octavian/Augustus to that of Constantine VIII. Consistent with that, the *Compendium of History* by George Kedrenos, which covered the whole of that period, dated the birth of Jesus Christ in the 42nd year of Augustus to AM (BE) 5507 and the death of Basil II to AM (BE) 6534, indicating a timescale of 1068 years from the first year of Augustus to the accession of Constantine VIII [93].

2.4 Discussion of Topics Considered in Chapter 2

The dates and timescales given in the surviving sources have been reported in straightforward fashion, and the conversion of dates in the various systems used to the Dionysian AD system has been entirely on the basis of linkages provided by the ancient sources. No assumptions whatsoever have been made arising from modern beliefs about chronology – the sources have been allowed to speak for themselves – and the inescapable fact is that what they say is entirely consistent with the conventional chronology of the first millennium AD, to within a small number of years. For example, the *Oxford History of the Roman World* dates the beginning of the reign of Octavian/Augustus to 43 BC and the accession of Constantine VIII to AD 1025, a time-interval of 1068 years, in line with the data in the table given above [94].

Whereas schemes for the chronology of Ancient Egypt or that of Ancient Mesopotamia have to be pieced together from a limited number of surviving sources, often of a fragmentary nature, with a measure of interpretation being required, the surviving historical sources which provide information about the chronology of the period under consideration here, taken together, present a coherent and consistent account, with no need for interpretation. Nevertheless, is it possible that, as some have suggested, the chronology presented, consistent though it undoubtedly is, may be incorrect, because of some systematic error or deliberate falsification? Since the surviving sources giving detailed accounts of the history of the Byzantine Empire were all written in Constantinople, the possibility of a controlled insertion of phantom centuries into Byzantine history might seem a realistic proposition. Hence, despite the absence of a plausible motive, the possibility that the instigator was Constantine Porphyrogenitus, as suggested by Illig, might seem plausible. However, as we have seen, the *Book of Pontiffs*, compiled in stages in Rome during the first millennium AD, referred to emperors who were considered by Illig to be fictitious. Any conspiracy to fabricate history must therefore have extended well beyond the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire, as was fully appreciated by Illig himself. Hence his alternative theory involving both Otto III and Pope Silvester II. However, that then raises the question as to whether there is any reason to suppose that these two could have organised a successful conspiracy throughout Western Europe and, in addition, extended it to Constantinople. Silvester was pope, so governed Rome like a monarch, but otherwise had only limited authority in Western Europe and no authority at all in Constantinople, where a pope was simply regarded as the bishop of Rome. It was the role of ecumenical councils, not popes, to make decisions concerning doctrines and practices intended to be binding on Christians in both western and eastern regions. As for Otto, he was Holy Roman Emperor, but what influence did that give him beyond the boundaries of his empire (which, as will be seen in Chapter 3, consisted essentially of Germany and Italy)? In support of Illig, Hans-Ulrich Niemitz pointed out that, according to the sources, Otto III was related (through his mother) to the Byzantine emperor, John I [95]. However, by the time Otto became emperor, John I had been dead for many years and the Byzantine emperor was Basil II, who was unrelated to John, so it seems unlikely that Otto could have had any influence over Basil.

In the case of Hunnivari's version of a phantom time hypothesis (with a phantom period whose length was stated at different times to be 200, 198 or 190 years), Hunnivari suggested that Lothar of Segni was misled by Muslim historians who had extended their own history by taking parallel dynasties to be sequential ones and, when Lothar became Pope Innocent III, he moved the calendar forward by 190 years from AD 1016 to 1206 [96]. Again, how could scholars throughout Western Europe and the Byzantine Empire have then been persuaded to follow suit, without leaving any indication that there had been a debate about the matter?

On the basis of our investigation so far, it is clear that there are great difficulties in reconciling any of the unorthodox theories under consideration with the evidence provided by the surviving historical sources. Although claims have been made that, either because of confusion or deliberate deception, the sources present a false picture of history, these claims are speculative and lack plausible detail. However, our investigation is far from complete. The history of the Roman Empire, as recorded by the surviving sources, effectively became the history of southeastern Europe following the collapse of the Empire in the west, becoming known as the Byzantine Empire. To be able to give proper consideration to the questions which have been raised about the associated chronology, we also need to take into account what surviving sources said about the histories of various regions of Western Europe during the same period. That will be done in Chapters 3 and 4 of this work. Will we find gaps, inconsistencies or other evidence that cast an entirely different light on the situation?

Chapter 3: Rulers of Barbarian Europe

3.1 Early Barbarian Europe

3.1.1 The Rise of the Goths, Vandals and Franks

Late Roman ivory panel, now in the British Museum

The term "barbarian" was coined by the ancient Greeks to refer to foreigners, i.e. people who spoke a language other than Greek. Although it was a term of disparagement, implying that barbarians were less cultured than the Greeks, there was no suggestion that barbarians were entirely lacking in culture. The Achaemenid Persians, for example, were called barbarians by the Greeks. The Romans eventually took over the term, regarding people who were unwilling to become assimilated into the Roman Empire and accept the Roman way of life as barbarians. During the early part of the Roman Empire, the term was increasingly used in connection with the Germanic tribes such as the Alamanni, Franks and Burgundians, who lived east of the Rhine, and other Germanic tribes such the Goths, Gepids and Vandals, who lived to the southeast of these, in the regions north of the Danube [97].

Cassiodorus, a senior administrator to the Ostrogoths (i.e. eastern Goths) who ruled Italy at the time when Justin I and Justinian I reigned in Constantinople, wrote an extensive *History of the Goths*. Not long afterwards, Jordanes, an administrator in Constantinople, who was of Ostrogoth ancestry, produced an abridgment of Cassiodorus' massive work, blending it with material of his own. As the original history by Cassiodorus has been lost, it is uncertain which parts of the surviving work were derived from Cassiodorus and which are entirely by Jordanes. At around the same time, Procopius gave lengthy historical introductions to his accounts of the campaigns of the Byzantine commander, Belisarius, against the Vandals and Ostrogoths. Less than a century later, Isidore, bishop of Seville in the Visigoth (i.e. western Goth) kingdom in Spain, whose mother was a Visigoth, wrote a history of the kingdom in which he lived [98]. Individual events involving the Goths were also mentioned in other sources.

According to the various sources, soon after the fall of the Severan dynasty, the Goths, who were then occupying land north and west of the Black Sea, began making incursions into Roman territories to the south and southwest. During the joint reign of Valerian and his son Gallienus, the Goths invaded Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Pannonia and Dalmatia. They held the western territories of Pannonia and Dalmatia for almost fifteen years, threatening an invasion of Italy, until they were defeated by Claudius II, who drove them north across the Danube and became known as Claudius Gothicus. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the victory of Claudius over the Goths to Olympiad 262:2, AM (E) 5470 (AD 270) [99].

Nevertheless, the Goths continued to make incursions into Roman territory from across the Danube. Constantine the Great eventually put a stop to this by inflicting a major defeat on the Goths and then getting them to agree a treaty which restored the territory of the empire in that region. The Goths also agreed to provide troops for the Roman army, in return for payments. Isidore dated the victory of Constantine over the Goths to Spanish Era 369 (AD 331); the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to Olympiad 277:4, AM (E) 5532 (AD 332) [100].

The relative stability of this situation was disturbed when Huns and Alans arrived from the east and began to seize land from the Goths. Large numbers of Goths were forced across the Danube and these sent a request to Emperor Valens to be allowed to settle on land in Thrace, promising they would live in peace with the Romans and become Christians. Valens agreed and sent out missionaries to convert the Goths (and some other barbarian tribes) to Christianity, although, since he belonged to the Arian sect (which rejected the concept of the Holy Trinity and was considered by orthodox Catholic Christians to be little better than paganism), their conversion was to

Arianism. Regardless of that, the Goth colonists in Thrace soon began to believe they were being deprived of essential resources by the Romans, so war broke out. During the subsequent fighting, Valens was killed in a battle at Adrianople. Isidore dated this event to Spanish Era 416 (AD 378); the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle to Olympiad 289:2, AM (E) 5578 (AD 378); Orosius to AUC 1132 (AD 379); Prosper to AP 351 (AD 378); Bede to AM (B) 4332 (AD 379); and Theophanes to AM (AE) 5870 (AD 378/9) [101].

Afterwards, Athanaric, one of the leaders of the Goths, arranged a treaty of friendship with Theodosius I, the successor of Valens, and travelled to Constantinople to formalise an agreement with the new emperor. Although Athanaric died soon after arrival, his companions were impressed by Theodosius and a pact was made, placing the Goths under the dominion of the Romans. Once more stability appeared to have been established, but the situation quickly changed after the death of Theodosius, when the empire was divided between his sons, Arcadius and Honorius. Bede dated this transition to AD 394; Hydatius and the *Gallic Chronicle of 452* (a modern title, indicating the presumed AD date of its completion) both dated it to Olympiad 293:3, AM (E) 5595 (AD 395); Isidore and Hydatius to Spanish Era 433 (AD 395); Orosius to AUC 1149 (AD 396); Prosper, Cassiodorus, Marcellinus Comes and the *Chronicon Paschale* to the consular year of Olybrius and Probinus (AD 395); Prosper to AP 368 (AD 395); the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 5904 (AD 394/5); and Theophanes to AM (AE) 5887 (AD 394/5) [102].

Soon after the beginning of the joint-reign of Arcadius and Honorius, the Visigoths renounced the treaty which made them (and other Goths) subjects of Rome, and they appointed Alaric as their king. Alaric then linked with Radagaisus, leader of another group of Goths, to plan action against the Romans. Several attacks took place and then, just over ten years after the death of Theodosius (according to Isidore and the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*), Radagaisus lauched a major invasion into Italy, but was eventually defeated and killed by the Roman general, Flavius Stilicho. However, to achieve this success, Roman troops had been moved away from the Rhine frontier, where, to the east, numerous tribes were competing for limited resources. In AD 407, as noted by Bede (generally consistent with other sources), Alans, Vandals and Sueves crossed the Rhine heading west, prompting widespread rebellions against the rule of the western emperor, Honorius. The Roman troops stationed in Britain left to provide support to the various factions (or create new ones), and never returned. A trooper named Constantine was set up in Britain as Emperor Constantine III and then moved to Gaul to establish his claim to the throne. Meanwhile, Alaric entered Rome and made Priscus Attalus emperor, as an alternative to Honorius in Ravenna, but soon changed his mind and deprived Attalus of power. The Visigoths went on to sack the city (as noted in section 2.1.2) and then, loaded with plunder, Alaric headed into southern Italy, taking with him Gallia Placidia, the sister of Honorius. Within a few months, Alaric died of natural causes and was succeeded as king of the Visigoths by his brother-in-law Athaulf, who married Placidia. During this period, the Alans, Vandals and Sueves had been fighting against Constantine for control of Gaul and had then continued on into Spain (arriving in Era 447, i.e. AD 409, according to Hydatius), where Constantine's son, Constans, was attempting to rule on behalf of his father. Soon afterwards, Constantine's general, Gerontius, rebelled and killed Constans, after which he set up a relative, Maximus, to take power in Spain. Constantine himself was then defeated and captured at Arles by Flavius Constantius, the military commander-in-chief of Honorius, who also went on to eliminate the threat to Honorius from Gerontius and Maximus. Nevertheless, the situation in Western Europe continued to become ever more complex, with another Germanic tribe, the Burgundians, taking land in Gaul on the west bank of the Rhine, and Athaulf leading the Visigoths from Italy to the southwest part of Gaul, where they settled in the Narbonne region. Threatened by Constantius, Athaulf then crossed the Pyrenees into Spain but, on arriving in Barcelona, he was killed by one of his own men. Hydatius and the *Gallic Chronicle of 452* dated the death of Athaulf to Olympiad 298:4, AM (E) 5616 (AD 416); Prosper to AP 388 (AD 415); Orosius to AUC 1168 (AD 415); and Isidore and Hydatius to Spanish Era 454 (AD 416) [103].

Athaulf's successor, Sigeric, was soon murdered, because of his eagerness to make peace with the Romans, after which the Visigoths appointed the more warlike Wallia as king. However, desperately short of food supplies, Wallia soon entered into an agreement which made him a vassal of Honorius, and also required him to hand over Gallia Placidia, who went on to marry Constantius. By this time, the Sueves had settled in the northwestern corner of the Iberian Peninsula, with the Alans and Vandals occupying the coastal regions to the south of them. At the request of Rome, Wallia attacked the Alans and Vandals, inflicting such slaughter on the former that the remnants subjected themselves to the rule of the Vandal king, Gunderic. Constantius rewarded the Visigoths by extending the territory they were allowed to control back across the Pyrenees into southwestern Gaul. According to Prosper, this was in AP 392 (AD 419). Another campaign against the Vandals soon followed [104].

Constantius was subsequently appointed co-emperor by Honorius (becoming Constantius III) but died soon afterwards, and then Honorius also succumbed to an illness. With the encouragement of some military factions, the throne of the western empire was claimed by a senior official named John, until Valentinian III, the young son of Constantius and Gallia Placidia, established himself as the successor of Honorius, with the support of Theodosius II, the eastern emperor. Prosper dated the first year of Valentinian III to AP 398 (AD 425); Hydatius

similarly dated it to Olympiad 301:1 (AD 425); and Cassiodorus, Marcellinus and the *Chronicon Paschale* likewise equated it with the consulship of Theodosius II (for the 11th time) with Valentinian (AD 425) [105].

Not long afterwards, Gunderic, king of the Vandals, died. He was succeeded by his half-brother, Gaiseric, who decided to leave Spain and sail with all his subjects to North Africa. Prosper dated this crossing to AP 400 (AD 427); Hydatius to Olympiad 302:1 (AD 429); and Cassiodorus and the *Chronicon Paschale* to the consulship of Hierius and Ardabur (AD 427). Gaiseric swiftly took over large amounts of Roman territory in North Africa and also, since he was bringing his Arian religion with him, his arrival caused much consternation to the Catholic churches in the region. Peace terms were eventually agreed (in AP 408 according to Prosper, i.e. AD 435), which left Gaiseric in control of the western part of North Africa [106].

Meanwhile, Valentinian appointed Flavius Aëtius as his military commander for Gaul, even though Aëtius had initially supported John before changing sides. By this time, several tribes of Franks had begun to settle in northeastern Gaul, and one of the first actions of Aëtius was to take back from them some Roman territory west of the Rhine. Several years later, Aëtius, now elevated to the status of commander-in-chief, took similar strong action against troublesome Burgundian settlers, inflicting heavy losses on them, but subsequently agreed peace terms with the survivors and allowed them to settle in eastern Gaul, close to the Alps. This region subsequently became known as Burgundy. At about the same time, according to the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*, large numbers of Saxons moved into Britain, slightly earlier than indicated in the corresponding account by Bede [107].

Aëtius faced particular problems from the Visigoths, because King Theoderic, Wallia's successor, broke the treaty with the Romans and seized many cities adjacent to his territory. The Visigoths even attempted to capture the major Roman cities of Arles and Narbonne, but were driven away from Arles by Aëtius whilst Litorius, his second-in-command, came to the rescue of Narbonne. Later, however, Litorius rashly engaged the Visigoths in battle and was killed. Peace was eventually re-established between the Romans and the Visigoths, and this alliance proved vital when Attila led his army of Huns into Gaul, leaving a trail of destruction behind him as he headed towards Spain. Aëtius and Theoderic were waiting, and they engaged the Huns in battle on the Catalaunian Fields near Troyes. According to Jordanes, Attila's army included Ostrogoths (led by Valamir and his brothers Thiudimer and Vidimer) and Gepids, both having become subjects of the Huns, whilst amongst the auxiliaries fighting against Attila were Franks and Burgundians. During the battle, Theoderic was killed, but the Visigoths continued fighting under the command of his son, Thorismund, until the Huns were driven back and forced to retreat into Italy. They attacked several Italian cities but, afflicted by hunger and disease, as well as being aware of the approach of an army sent by the eastern emperor, Marcian, the Huns headed for home across the Danube. Attila died on the way, Prosper dating his death to AP 426, Hydatius to Olympiad 308:1 and Cassiodorus and Victor to the consulship of Opilio and Vincomalus, all corresponding to AD 453, whilst Marcellinus placed it in the following year. Attila's sons then began to fight amongst themselves, completing the disintegration of Hunnic power [108].

Several subject-tribes soon broke away from the Huns and began to battle against each other for territory. Rather than take part in this struggle for land, the Ostrogoths approached Marcian for a treaty, and were eventually given a homeland in Pannonia, south of the Danube, with Valamir becoming their king. As a hostage for peace, Theodoric, the young son of Thiudimer, was sent to Constantinople, arriving at the court of Leo I (the successor of Marcian) as a 7-year-old boy and remaining there throughout his childhood. Theodoric created a good impression and became familiar with the Roman way of life, although he retained his Arian religion [109].

In North Africa, the peace treaty between the Romans and the Vandals had soon broken down, as Gaiseric advanced to seize the city of Carthage and make it his capital. He then invaded Sicily and threatened Italy, but Valentinian was able to prevent a further advance, and also ensure the resumption of corn supplies from North Africa, by making another treaty, in which he promised that Eudocia, his daughter by his wife Eudoxia, would marry Gaiseric's eldest son, Huneric, when she reached marriageable age. With peace having been re-established with the Vandals and the Visigoths, and the threat from the Huns having ended following the death of Attila, Valentinian was in a secure position. However, he was resentful of the fact that the real power was held by Aëtius, so the emperor was easily persuaded to join in a plot involving Petronius Maximus, a senator, to murder Aëtius in the royal palace in Ravenna. After this act had been carried out, Maximus had hoped he would replace Aëtius as the power behind the throne but, when it became clear that Valentinian had no wish for this to happen, Maximus arranged for the emperor to be assassinated in Rome and then seized the crown. Prosper dated the death of Valentinian to AP 428, Hydatius to Olympiad 308:3 and Cassiodorus, Marcellinus, Prosper, Victor and the *Chronicon Paschale* to the consulship of the emperor (for the 8th time) and Anthemius, all corresponding to AD 455. Maximus married the empress Eudoxia against her will, and he also forced her daughter Eudocia to marry his son Palladius. That prompted the Vandals to move with speed towards Rome. Maximus tried to escape but, as he did so, he was murdered by the Romans. The Vandals went on to sack the city and then leave with their plunder, taking with them Eudocia (to complete the previously-agreed marriage to Huneric) as well as Eudoxia and her other daughter, Placidia, who were subsequently released to travel to Constantinople [110].

Contemporary accounts of events in this period were written by Hydatius, in the latter part of his chronicle; Priscus of Panium, in his *History* (only fragments of which have survived); and Sidonius Apollinaris, in his panegyrics and letters. These and later sources record that Maximus was followed as western emperor by Eparchius Avitus (the father-in-law of Sidonius), a Gallo-Roman aristocrat from Clermont who had been the military commander-in-chief of Maximus. Avitus had been visiting the Visogoths when Maximus died and he was acclaimed as the new emperor in Toulouse by Theoderic II, who had succeeded his brother Thorismund on the Visigoth throne. As Avitus marched towards Rome, accompanied by Theoderic and a Visigoth army, he was also acclaimed emperor in Arles. At this time, the senior military commanders in Italy were Julius Valerius Majorian and Flavius Ricimer, the former coming from the Roman military aristocracy whereas the latter's mother was the daughter of Wallia the Visigoth, his father a Sueve ruler and his sister was married to the Burgundian king, Gundioc. However, despite their different backgrounds, Majorian and Ricimer had a close relationship, having served together as officers under Aëtius. Ricimer's ancestry ruled him out of contention for the imperial throne and, although Majorian could have staked a claim, it would have been futile to have opposed Avitus, in view of the strength of the military force accompanying him. Soon after becoming emperor, Avitis supported the Visigoths in a successful attack on the Sueves. By this time, the Vandal threat to Italy had resumed, but Ricimer won a naval victory over them and was then appointed military commander-in-chief. Despite these military successes, the Romano-Italians never accepted Avitus, and nor did Emperor Marcian. When the Visigoths became involved in a protracted campaign against the Sueves, Majorian and Ricimer saw an opportunity to strike against Avitus. He was deposed after reigning for just one year, with Majorian being nominated to succeed him as western emperor [111].

Majorian waited until his appointment had been approved by the new eastern emperor, Leo I, before taking the throne. Initially, his dominion consisted of little more than Italy and Dalmatia, because Gaul and Spain had rebelled following the overthrow of Avitus. His immediate priority was to repel Vandal attacks on Italy and build up the country's defences, but he then turned his attention to regaining the lost provinces. Majorian drove the Visigoths back into their allocated territory but then, having demonstrated his strength, he adopted a conciliatory approach. With their support, he constructed a fleet in Spain to attack the Vandals, but suffered a humiliating defeat. On his arrival back in Italy, Majorian was taken prisoner by Ricimer and subsequently executed [112].

Ricimer, now establishing himself as a kingmaker, placed an elderly senator, Libius Severus, on the imperial throne. Majorian's military commander in Gaul, Aegidius, rebelled and created an independent Roman rump state north of the Loire, with its capital at Soissons. Severus appointed his own military commander for Gaul, Agrippinus, whose only recorded action was to hand Narbonne over to Theoderic II to gain his support. As a consequence, Frederic, brother of Theoderic, led a Visigoth force in an attack on Aegidius but was defeated and killed in a battle at Orléans. When Aegidius died in the following year, his son, Syagrius, succeeded him as provider of the last remnant of Roman rule in northern and central Gaul [113].

When Severus died after three years as western emperor, Leo, concerned about the situation in the west, proposed that Severus should be succeeded by Marcian's son-in-law, Anthemius. An alternative proposal had been put forward by Gaiseric the Vandal, who argued the case for Olybrius, husband of Placidia, the daughter of Valentinian III (and sister of Eudocia, the daughter-in-law of Gaiseric), but Leo insisted on his own choice and warned Gaiseric to stop attacking Italy. To overcome Ricimer's reluctance, Anthemius offered him his daughter, Alypia, in marriage. Hydatius dated the accession of Anthemius to Olympiad 311:2 (AD 466); Theophanes to AM (AE) 5957 (AD 464/5); whilst Cassiodorus, Marcellinus, Victor, Marius of Avenches and the *Chronicon Paschale* all placed it in the consulship of Pusaeus and John (AD 467). Not long afterwards, Leo and Anthemius mounted a large combined operation against the Vandals in North Africa. This began well, but then went disastrously wrong. After that, Anthemius turned his attention to subduing the Visigoths (now ruled by Theoderic's brother, Euric), who were expanding the territory under their control in both Spain and Gaul. (According to Isidore and Hydatius, Euric became king in Spanish Era 504, i.e. AD 466.) At the instigation of Anthemius, the Bretons, under Riothamus, attacked the Visigoths, but they were defeated and Riothamus fled to seek sanctuary with the Burgundians, who were allies of the Romans. Then, when Anthemius sent his son Anthemiolus and some top generals to Arles to take direct action against the Visigoths, Euric crossed the Rhône to meet them, killed all the commanders and won a great victory. After that, Anthemius became increasingly unpopular in Italy, giving Ricimer the opportunity to challenge him in a civil war, supported by his nephew Gundobad, son of the Burgundian king, Gundioc. Athemius was eventually defeated and killed, having reigned for five years [114].

Ricimer then appointed Olybrius as western emperor, but both died soon afterwards and the situation in Italy became chaotic. Gundobad succeeded Ricimer as military commander-in-chief and he placed Glycerius, one of his officers, on the throne. However, soon afterwards, Gundobad left for Burgundy, following the death of his father. In the east, Zeno had just become emperor and he sent troops to dethrone Glycerius and replace him with his own nominee, Julius Nepos. The latter then appointed a Germanic tribesman, Orestes, as his military commander-in-chief, but that was a fatal error because, a year later, Orestes deposed Nepos and made his own son, Romulus Augustulus, western emperor. When Augustulus had occupied the throne for an even shorter period

of time than Nepos, another Germanic tribesman, Odoacer, leading an army consisting of men from several tribes, killed Orestes and took Augustulus captive. Odoacer was established as king of Italy, bringing to an end the line of western emperors, just four years after the death of Anthemius [115].

Meanwhile, as indicated in the sources, Franks had begun to rise to prominence in northern Gaul. Gregory, bishop of Tours, in his *History of the Franks*, written during the reign of Emperor Maurice, quoted from the works (now lost) of the earlier historians, Sulpicius Alexander and Renatus Frigeridus, about the strength of the many Frankish tribes east of the Rhine, and the fact that Franks occasionally made incursions to the west. We noted earlier reports that some tribes of Franks had attempted to settle west of the Rhine before the time of Aëtius. Gregory noted that one such tribe was led by Clodio, who expelled the Romans from the town of Cambrai (in what is now northeastern France) and settled there for a while before occupying the country up to the Somme. Clodio had a descendent named Merovich, whose son and successor, Childeric, fought a successful battle at Orléans. Since this occurred at a time when Aegidius was said to have had a good relationship with the Franks, there could be an indication that Childeric had been an ally of Aegidius when he routed the Visigoths at Orléans and killed the king's brother, Frederic, but Gregory made no explicit statement to that effect [116].

Childeric was succeeded by his son Clovis who, in the 5th year of his reign (as reported by Gregory), formed an alliance with Ragnachar, leader of another group of Franks, and defeated Syagrius, son of Aegidius, near Soissons. Syagrius fled to Toulouse to seek protection from the Visigoth king, Alaric II (who, according to Isidore, had succeeded his father Euric in Spanish Era 521, i.e. AD 483). Clovis went in pursuit and forced Alaric to hand Syagrius over to him. The Roman enclave around Soissons was soon wiped out, leaving the Franks in complete control of the region. Clovis, who had recently converted from paganism to Catholicism, then set about bringing all the Frankish tribes in Gaul together, by force or persuasion, to form a single nation under his authority and, subsequently, that of his successors. This dynasty became known as Merovingian, named after Merovech, the grandfather of Clovis [117].

In the Vandal kingdom of North Africa, by this time, Gaiseric had been succeeded by his son, Huneric, who, in turn, was succeeded by his nephew, Gunthamund, and then Gunthamund's brother, Thrasamund [118].

In Pannonia, Theodoric, the Ostrogoth boy who had been raised at the court of Leo I in Constantinople, became king of the Ostrogoths while still a young man, following the deaths of his uncle Valamir and father Thiudimer. He subsequently responded to a call from Emperor Zeno to fight against enemies of the empire, with the status of military commander, and then served a term as consul (in AD 484). Nevertheless, when Theodoric returned home, Zeno feared the consequences of having an ambitious and energetic young king ruling in congested space so close to Constantinople. At the same time, Zeno was concerned about the situation in Italy, where, according to an agreement, Odoacer was ruling on behalf of the emperor, but there were increasing doubts about whether he could be trusted to accept his subordinate status for much longer. The solution which presented itself, apparently attractive to both Zeno and Theodoric, was for the Ostrogoths to remove Odoacer from power and transfer their kingdom into Italy, which duly occurred. According to Cassiodorus and Marius of Avenches, Theodoric entered Italy in the consulship of Eusebius and Probinus (AD 489) and took the throne after killing Odoacer four years later. He reigned over Italy from Ravenna for 33 years, becoming known as Theodoric the Great [119].

As reported by Jordanes, Theodoric put a great deal of effort into arranging dynastic marriages. He wedded Audofleda, sister of Clovis, and sent his own sister, Amalafrida, to marry Thrasamund the Vandal. He also arranged the marriage of his daughter Thiudigotha to the Visigoth king, Alaric II, and that of another daughter, Ostrogotha, to Sigismund, son of Gundobad of Burgundy. Surviving documents from this period include correspondence of Clovis and also the *variae epistolae*, letters written by Cassiodorus, including more than three hundred in his capacity as senior administrator to the Ostrogoth kings, those in the first five books being written on behalf of Theodoric to recipients such as Clovis, Alaric II. Gundobad, Thrasamund and Emperor Anastasius, the successor of Zeno [120].

3.1.2 From Theodoric the Great and Clovis to Reccared and Guntram

According to the sources, the linkages which Theodoric the Great created between the various "barbarian" royal families following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire failed to bring peace and harmony to the region. Civil war soon broke out in Burgundy, which was split between Gundobad and Godigisel, the sons of Gundioc. Godigisel formed an alliance with Clovis and they defeated Gundobad in a battle near Dijon, forcing him to flee to Avignon, but he returned and attacked Godigisel's city of Vienne, going on to kill his brother and take control of the whole of Burgundy. Marius of Avenches dated these events to the consulship of Patricius and Hypatius (AD 500). Later, Clovis launched an assault on the Visigoths and killed Alaric II in a battle at Vouillé near Poitiers, after which he seized Toulouse. As reported by Isidore, Alaric's successor was Gesalic, his son by a concubine, whose reign began in Spanish Era 544 (AD 506) [121].

Gregory of Tours presented the victory of Clovis over Alaric as a triumph of Catholic Christianity over Arianism, and added that Emperor Anastasius conferred a consulate (presumably of an honorary nature) on Clovis shortly

after his victory over Alaric. Clovis eventually died in Paris (which he had established as his capital) having reigned in total for 30 years since the death of his father. Gregory noted that Clovis died 112 years after St Martin, the third bishop of Tours. Elsewhere, Gregory had dated the death of St Martin to the second year of the joint-reign of Honorius and Arcadius in AM (E) 5596 (AD 396), so this would indicate that Clovis died in AM (E) 5708 (AD 508) [122].

The kingdom of Clovis was divided equally between his four sons, Chlothar I, Chlodomer, Childebert I and Theuderic I. To the southwest, Gesalic, after four disastrous years on the Visigoth throne, was deposed and killed by troops under the command of Ebba, a general of Theodoric the Great. Theodoric then extended the area under his authority by reigning over the Visigoths on behalf of his young grandson, Amalric, the son of Alaric II and Thiudigotha. As reported by Isidore, that arrangement began in Spanish Era 549 (AD 511). Not long afterwards (in the consulship of Peter, according to Marius of Avenches, i.e. AD 516), Gundobad died and his son Sigismund succeeded him as king of Burgundy. A few years later, the Frankish king, Chlodomer, invaded Burgundy and killed Sigismund, but was unable to prevent the escape of Sigismund's brother Godomar, who succeeded him as king and returned with an army. A battle was fought at Vézeronce during which Chlodomer was lured into a trap and decapitated. Marius dated the death of Sigismund to the consulship of Maximus (AD 523), and that of Chlodomer to the following year [123].

Then, as recorded by Marius, Theodoric the Great died in Ravenna when Olybrius was consul (AD 526). Having no son, Theodoric was succeeded by his young grandson Athalaric, whose mother, Theodoric's daughter Amalasuntha, acted as regent. In North Africa by this time, Hilderic, the son of Huneric and Eudocia, had become king of the Vandals after Thrasamund. Both Amalasuntha and Hilderic attempted to maintain a good relationship with the emperors in Constantinople, despite the fact that many powerful figures in their nations were pressing for a more hostile approach. Cassiodorus was still carrying out his administrative duties for the Ostrogoth rulers, and wrote letters on behalf of Athalaric and Amalasuntha to recipients who included Hilderic, Emperors Justin I and Justinian I and a pope named John. It was noted in the *Book of Pontiffs* that the 58th pope, John II, was a contemporary of Justinian and Athalaric [124].

After the death of Theodoric, Amalric became king of the Visigoths in his own right. Isidore dated the start of his reign to Spanish Era 564 (AD 526). A few years later, when the Frankish king, Childebert, received messages that his sister Clotild, who was married to Amalric, was being ill-treated for refusing to convert to Arianism. Childebert set off to rescue Clotild and defeated Amalric in battle. When Amalric tried to escape, he was murdered by one of his own men, after which Theudis was made king. Isidore said that this was in Spanish Era 569 (AD 531). During his reign, the Franks invaded Spain and ravaged the province of Tarraconensis. In the same period, Childebert, together with his brother Chlothar, invaded Burgundy and drove Godomar from the country. From that year, which, according to Marius was the consulship of Justinian (for the 4th time) and Paulinus (AD 534), Burgundy belonged to the Franks [125].

Meanwhile, the Vandal king, Hilderic, a Catholic Christian like his mother Eudocia, daughter of Valentinian III, had been deposed in the seventh year of his reign by his cousin Gelimer, a staunch Arian and enemy of the Roman Empire. Justinian responded by sending a large army under the command of Belisarius to North Africa. Gelimer was eventually defeated at Tricamarum (near Carthage) and the Vandal kingdom destroyed, after which North Africa once again became a Roman province. Marius and the continuator of the chronicle of Marcellinus Comes both dated the fall of the Vandals to the consulship of Justinian (for the 4th time) and Paulinus (AD 534); Theophanes similarly gave it as AM (AE) 6026 (AD 534/5) [126].

In Italy, Athalaric had died before coming to maturity and queen Amalasuntha, fearful for her own safety, invited her elderly cousin, Theodahad, to share the throne with her, thinking he would protect her. However, Theodahad soon sent her into exile and then had her murdered. That prompted Justinian to order Belisarius, fresh from his triumph over the Vandals, to invade Italy from North Africa and bring the country under his control. The Ostrogoth army reacted by deposing Theodahad and appointing its leader, Witiges, as king. Witiges then married Matasuntha, the daughter of Amalasuntha, to give some legitimacy to his kingship. However, Witiges and Matasuntha were soon captured by Belisarius and taken as prisoners to Constantinople. According to Marius and the continuator of the chronicle of Marcellinus, Witiges arrived in Constantinople in the year when Justin (son of Germanus) was consul (AD 540). Fighting continued, but Justinian's army under the command of Narses brought the Ostrogoth kingdom to an end by defeating and killing King Totila. According to Marius, that was in the 12th year after the consulship of Basilius, i.e. in AD 553; Theophanes dated it to AM (AE) 6044 (AD 551/2). The last remnants of Ostrogoth resistance crumbled with the death of Teia a year after that of Totila [127].

As for the Visigoths during this period, Isidore recorded that Theudis was succeeded by Theudigisel, followed by Agila. The next king was Athanagild, who came to the throne in Spanish Era 592 (AD 554) and reigned for 14 years. Meanwhile in Francia, according to Gregory, Theuderic I, the ruler of the eastern kingdom, died in the 23rd year of his reign and was succeeded by his son, Theudebert I. Theudebert was paid by Emperor Justinian to fight

against the Ostrogoths in Italy, but proved an unreliable ally, changing sides as it suited him. He was taken ill and died in the 14th year of his reign, 37 years after the death of Clovis. His son, Theudebald, succeeded him but died 7 years later, at which point Chlothar I took over his kingdom. Similarly, when Childebert I died, his kingdom was seized by Chlothar, who thus became the ruler of the whole of Francia, until his death in the 51st year of his reign. Marius noted that Theudebert, Theudebald, Childebert and Chlothar died 7, 14, 17 and 20 years respectively after the consulship of Basilius (the last before Justinian assimilated the role of consul into the duties of the emperor), these dates corresponding AD 548, AD 555, AD 558 and AD 561 [128].

Chlothar's kingdom was divided between his four surviving sons: Charibert I took the northwestern region (later known as Neustria) with Paris as his capital; Sigibert I received the northeastern region (subsequently called Austrasia), initially taking Reims as his capital but later moving east to Metz; Chilperic ruled the region between these from Soissons; and Guntram became king of Burgundy. However, Charibert soon died, which resulted in boundaries being re-drawn, with Chilperic ruling over a re-formed Neustria from Soissons, whilst Paris became the shared property of all the Frankish kings. At around this time, Sigibert married Brunhild, the daughter of the Visigoth king, Athanagild. When Athanagild died, as reported by Isidore, Gregory and also John of Biclaro, the Visigoth throne passed to Liuva I, who appointed his brother Leogivild as co-ruler. On Liuva's death, Leovigild became sole ruler of the Visigoths, this occurring in Spanish Era 606 (AD 568), according to Isidore [129].

Alboin, king of the Lombards (or Langobards), a Germanic tribe which had migrated south and settled in Pannonia, saw that the rich country of Italy had been left poorly defended after the collapse of the Ostrogoths, and he set off with his people to occupy it. Marius dated this invasion to the 3rd year of Justin II, which was the 28th year after the consulship of Basilius (AD 569). The events which followed were described in detail in the *History of the Lombards* by Paul the Deacon, whose life overlapped with the time-span of his unfinished work (see Appendix 2). Consistent with other sources, Paul wrote that Alboin, after establishing Pavia as the Lombard capital, was murdered about three years into the invasion. A duke named Cleph then seized power, but was soon killed, after which the dukes of the various Lombard cities operated in an uncoordinated fashion, attacking other parts of Italy and staging raids into Gaul. Then, 15 years after the Lombards entered Italy, Authari, son of Cleph, was made king, at around the time Maurice became emperor in Constantinople [130].

In Francia, civil wars were becoming a regular occurrence, with alliances being formed and broken. Significant roles were played by Sigibert's wife, Brunhild, and Chilperic's wife, Fredegund. Brunhild was the daughter of the Visigoth king, Athanagild, whereas Fredegund had originally been the servant of Chilperic's first wife, Audovera, and had schemed to get Chilperic to divorce Audovera, with a view to replacing her as queen. Instead, however, Chilperic married Galswintha, Brunhild's sister, but Fredegund soon achieved her ambition, after arranging for Galswintha to be murdered. That was the start of a longstanding enmity between Brunhild and Fredegund. Encouraged by Brunhild, Sigibert fought a successful campaign against Chilperic but, before it could be brought to completion, he was murdered by assassins working for Fredegund. Gregory dated this to AM (E) 5774 (AD 574); Marius to the 10th year of Justin II, 35 years after the consulship of Basilius (AD 576). Childebert II, the son of Sigibert and Brunhild, succeeded his father as king [131].

Gregory, who had given a detailed account of events over the 66-year period from the death of Clovis to that of Sigibert, then went into even greater detail in reporting, on a year-by-year basis, the tumultuous 16-year period in Gaul which followed Sigibert's murder. However, to maintain balance, only a tiny fraction of this detail will be given here. A fuller, though still far from comprehensive, summary is provided in Appendix 1.

In Spain, the Visigoths had recently been losing territory, but King Leovigild reversed that trend and made Toledo his capital. His son, Hermenegild, married Ingund, daughter of Sigibert. Ingund was put under pressure to convert to Arianism but, instead, her husband became a Catholic. Hermenegild then led a revolt against his father, which ended when Leovigild trapped him within the city of Seville, a centre of Catholicism. Hermenegild tried to escape, but was captured and subsequently killed. When Leovigild died, his other son, Reccared, was made king, Isidore dating his accession to Spanish Era 624 (AD 586), in the 3rd year of Emperor Maurice. In the first year of his reign, Reccared converted to the Catholic faith and made Catholicism the official religion of the Visigoth kingdom. At about the same time, Duke Desiderius, a Frank who had once been Chilperic's military commander, attacked Carcassonne but was beaten and killed by the Visigoths. Two years later, Guntram sent a large army under the command of Boso into the Carcassonne region, and again the Visigoths inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Franks [132].

Meanwhile, in the 9th year of Childebert II (according to Gregory, which would be AM (E) 5784, i.e. AD 584, in his chronology), Chilperic had been murdered at Chelles, near Paris. His only surviving son, an infant, succeeded him on the throne as Chlothar II, under the protection of Guntram. In the same year, Childebert, having been paid by Emperor Maurice to drive the Lombards out of Italy, crossed the Alps but returned when the Lombards agreed to pay tribute to him. Over the next few years, Fredegund made several unsuccessful attempts to assassinate Childebert and Brunhild, whilst, in Italy, Authari continued to extend the area of Italy under the control of the

Lombards. He also married Theodelinda, daughter of a Bavarian duke. Although a Catholic, Theodelinda impressed the Arian Lombards with her wisdom and, when Authari died after reigning for 6 years, she was invited to remain queen and nominate Authari's successor. She chose Agilulf, duke of Turin, and, after their marriage and Agilulf's conversion to Catholicism, Theodelinda and the new king pursued a policy of peace with their neighbours throughout most of their 25-year reign. Amongst the surviving letters of the 66th pope, Gregory the Great, are ones to Agilulf and Theodelinda (and also, it may be noted, to Maurice, Childebert, Childebert's mother Brunhild and Reccared the Visigoth). The same pope dispatched St Augustine and others to convert the English to Christianity, in the year Bede gave as AD 596 [133].

At the end of his *History of the Franks*, Gregory wrote that he completed the work in his 21st year as bishop of Tours, which was the 33rd regnal year of Guntram, the 19th year of Childebert II, the fifth year of the papacy of Gregory the Great and the 197th year from the death of St Martin of Tours. Also, since he had said earlier that Maurice came to the throne in the 8th year of Childebert, this would indicate that the book was completed in the 11th regnal year of the emperor. The author identified the year as AM (E) 5792 (AD 592) [134].

3.1.3 Discussion: What the Sources indicate about the Chronology of Early Barbarian Europe

Gregory, the 19th bishop of Tours, indicated that he completed his major work in the 11th year of Maurice in AM (E) 5792 (AD 592), and he also wrote that St Martin, the third bishop of Tours, died in the 2nd year of the joint rule of Honorius and Arcadius in AM (E) 5596 (AD 396). Isidore of Seville wrote that Reccared was crowned king of the Visigoths in the 3rd year of Maurice in Spanish Era 624 (AD 586), and that Alaric the Visigoth sacked Rome in the 15th year of emperors Honorius and Arcadius in Spanish Era 447 (AD 409). Bede wrote that Maurice came to the throne in AD 582, and that Honorius and Arcadius began their joint reign in AD 394, with Alaric sacking Rome in AD 409. According to Theophanes, the first regnal year of Maurice was AM (AE) 6075 (AD 582/3) and that of Arcadius AM (AE) 5887 (AD 394/5), with the sack of Rome by Alaric in AM (AE) 5903 (AD 410/1). The *Chronicon Paschale* dated the first regnal year of Maurice to AM (CP) 6092 (AD 582/3) and the first regnal year of Arcadius to AM (CP) 5904 (AD 394/5). All of these dates are consistent with each to within a year or so, showing once again that, as we saw in section 2.1.2, the suggestion from Steve Mitchell that Bede may have been out of line with other historians, particularly earlier ones, cannot be sustained.

Mitchell's notion arose from the fact that Bede, although giving details of the kings of Kent, Mercia, Northumbria, the East Angles, the East Saxons and the West Saxons over a period of 135 years from the arrival of St Augustine in England up to his own time, gave very few details of English history for the period supposedly of similar length prior to the arrival of St Augustine, which could have been an indication that it was much shorter than Bede supposed. However, Bede described this period as a dire one characterised by plague followed by famine, invasions, civil wars and a breakdown of social order, which could explain why few historical details were transmitted to him. Furthermore, if this "historical gap" indicated a fundamental error in the generally accepted chronology of the first millennium, it should have been found everywhere, because evidence of an overall chronological anomaly is unlikely to be restricted to a single location. As we have seen, it is evident that there is no "historical gap" corresponding to the English one in surviving accounts of regional history from Spain and Gaul. The book by Gregory of Tours, which terminates towards the end of this period, contains more than 150,000 words (in English translation) about the history of Gaul between the reigns of Honorius and Maurice. It is fair to say that no source, taken in isolation, should be assumed to be authentic, but what possible motive could there be for writing a fictitious history in such detail? In any case, key details, including ones relating to chronology, are consistent with all other surviving sources from Spain and Gaul.

As well as being incompatible with Mitchell's theory, it will also be apparent that the accounts of Goth and Frankish history, like the historical accounts of the Roman emperors we considered in Chapter 2, provide no support for the theory of Gunnar Heinsohn, which maintains that the lines of emperors from Augustus to Alexander Severus and from Diocletian to Anastasius operated in parallel, the former in the west and the latter in the east, with both lines being brought to an end by the same global catastrophe. There is no mention of a civilisation-ending natural catastrophe in any account, and no indication whatsoever of any overlap in time between the two lines of emperors.

3.2 Late Barbarian Europe

3.2.1 From Reccared and Guntram to Charlemagne

The periods covered by this section and the following one, taken together, span four centuries in the view of conventional scholars, but only one century according to the "Phantom Time Hypothesis" of Heribert Illig. This, as we saw in section 1.2, maintains that the supposed history of the period from AD 614 to AD 911 is a complete invention, designed to provide a false extension of the time which had elapsed since the reign of Augustus. Bearing this in mind, let us, without any prior assumptions, continue to examine the information relating to chronology provided by surviving historical sources.

As noted above, Gregory of Tours brought his *History of the Franks* to an end in the 33rd year of Guntram, king of Burgundy, and the 19th year of Guntram's nephew, Childebert II, king of Austrasia, which Gregory dated to AM (E) 5792 (AD 592). The main source for the next stage of Frankish history is the chronicle of Fredegar (a name of convenience, since the authorship is uncertain). This was a compilation of information about past events from other sources, including the *History of the Franks*, together with an original section (generally known as either Book 4 or the 6th chronicle) covering a 58-year period starting with the 24th year of Guntram (which, on the basis of the link provided by Gregory between regnal years of Guntram and dates in the AM system of Eusebius, corresponds to AM (E) 5783 (AD 583). The focus on events in Burgundy suggests that Fredegar's chronicle was a product of that kingdom. The first few entries, which overlapped with the *History of the Franks*, were generally consistent with Gregory's account, but gave some additional pieces of information. Thus, Fredegar recorded that, in the 31st year of Guntram, Agilulf became king of the Lombards. Fredegar went on to record that Guntram died in the 33rd year of his reign, when Childebert became king of Burgundy as well as Austrasia. Childebert died four years after succeeding to Guntram's throne, his eldest son Theudebert II becoming king of Austrasia and his other son Theuderic II king of Burgundy. Hence if, as indicated by Fredegar, Guntram died in the year in which Gregory finished writing the *History of the Franks,* and Childebert lived for four more years, then, following Gregory's chronology, Childebert would have died and been succeeded by his sons in AM (E) 5796 (AD 596), to within a year. Theudebert soon rebelled against the efforts of his grandmother Brunhild to control him and he exiled her from Austrasia. She then concentrated on influencing Theuderic, convincing him that Theudebert, as well as Chlothar II of Neustria, was his enemy [135].

In the 7th regnal year of Theuderic, as noted by Fredegar, Phocas murdered Maurice on his return from Persia and succeeded him as emperor. Meanwhile, in Spain, as recorded by Isidore of Seville in his *History of the Goths*, the Visigoth king, Reccared, died in the 17th year of Emperor Maurice, in Spanish Era 639 (AD 601) and was succeeded by his son, Liuva II. However, two years later, Witteric seized the throne and went on to reign for 7 years. Fredegar reported that, in the 12th year of the reigns of Theudebert and Theuderic, Witteric, angered by Brunhild's scheming, tried to form an alliance with Chlothar and Agilulf the Lombard to depose Theuderic, but the plot came to nothing. Isidore went on to write that Witteric was murdered in Era 648 (AD 610) while eating a meal and Gundemar became king of the Visigoths for two years. Sisebut, a powerful military commander, then came to the throne and reigned for 8½ years (which, we may note, takes us over the threshold into Illig's "phantom time"). Sisebut was succeeded by his son, Reccared II, for a very brief period, and then, as reported by Isidore, Suinthila, who had been one of Sisebut's generals, then became king of the Visigoths in the 10th year of Emperor Heraclius, Era 659 (AD 621). Suinthila won control of all the Roman cities remaining in Spain and also defeated the Basques, becoming the first Visgoth king to reign over the entire Iberian Peninsula. On that positive note, Isidore ended his *History*. The *Mozarabic Chronicle*, written 150 years later, gave a similar account of the reigns of Sisebut, Reccared II and Suinthila, but went on to add that Suinthila, after reigning for 10 years, was deposed by Sisenand in Era 669 (AD 631). Sisenand was king of the Visigoths for 5 years and organised a synod of bishops (including Isidore of Seville) at Toledo, as did his successor, Chinthila, who ruled for 6 years. Tulga then received the kingship of the Visigoths in the 29th year of Heraclius, Era 678 (AD 640) [136].

Returning to Fredegar, he reported that, in the 17th year of his reign, Theuderic defeated his brother in battle and became king of both Austrasia and Burgundy. A year later, Theuderic set out against Chlothar, but died of dysentery on the way. Fearful that Brunhild would try to rule Austrasia and Burgundy through Theuderic's young son, Sigibert II, powerful Austrasian nobles led by Pippin of Landen and Arnulf of Metz invited Chlothar to lead an army into their country. After securing the agreement of Warnacher, who had been Theuderic's mayor of the palace (*major-domo*) at the time of his death, Chlothar did so, captured Brunhild and Sigibert, and executed both of them. Thus, Chlothar became ruler of all the Franks in his 30th year as king of Neustria (which, continuing the chronology of Gregory of Tours, corresponded to AM (E) 5813, i.e. AD 613). Four years later, Agilulf sent a delegation to request that the annual tribute to Austrasia and Burgundy, paid since the beginning of the reign of his predecessor, Authari, should be discontinued, in return for substantial gifts to Warnacher, Chuc and Gundeland, the mayors of Burgundy, Austrasia and Neustria, respectively, and a much larger gift to Chlothar. That was agreed. In the 39th year of Chlothar's reign (corresponding to AM (E) 5822, i.e. AD 622), he agreed to his son Dagobert I becoming king of Austrasia, but retained Burgundy as part of his own kingdom. When Dagobert became king, his main advisors were Pippin of Landen, who was made mayor of Austrasia, and Arnulf, bishop of Metz. It was noted by Fredegar that, in the following year, Adaloald, who had succeeded his father Agilulf as king of the Lombards, was deposed by Arioald. Paul the Deacon reported that, after taking the throne from Adaloald, Arioald went on to reign for 12 years. According to Fredegar, Dagobert, who had become king of all the Franks following the death of Chlothar in his 45th regnal year, helped Sisenand seize the throne of the Visgoths, for which he was well rewarded. In AD 633, as related by Bede, Edwin of Northumbria and his son Osfrid were killed fighting against the forces of Penda of Mercia at Hatfield in Yorkshire, after which Osfrid's young son Yffi was sent to Gaul by his mother to be brought up under the protection of Dagobert [137].

Bede, in his *Eclesiastical History of the English People*, gave details of the rulers of the numerous Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England from the arrival of the Christian missionaries sent by Pope Gregory the Great to his final entry in AD 731. Similar details, also employing the AD system and continuing long after that date, were given in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, believed to have been compiled in the first instance in southern England in the second half of the ninth century AD, using earlier sources, and then updated at several centres on a regular basis. It would be well beyond the scope of this work to consider the sequence of rulers in each of the kingdoms, but both Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* noted that there were periods when one particular ruler held the status of *bretwalda*, i.e. "Britain-ruler", indicating that he was overlord of his contemporary Anglo-Saxon kings. The third *bretwalda*, according to Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, was Aethelbert I of Kent. Augustine and the other missionaries sent by Pope Gregory landed in Kent in AD 597, when Aethelbert was king. Although he was a pagan, his wife Bertha, a member of the Frankish royal family (consistent with the comment by Gregory of Tours that a daughter of Charibert I married and went to live in Kent), was a Christian, so Aethelbert helped Augustine to establish himself as bishop in Canterbury, eventually becoming a convert. According to the sources, Aethelbert died in AD 616. The next *bretwalda* was Raedwald of the East Angles (the people famous for the ship-burial at Sutton Hoo, which might have been that of Raedwald himself). The fifth *bretwalda* was Edwin of Northumbria, who, as noted above, died in battle in AD 633, fighting against Penda of Mercia who, despite Edwin's status, remained fiercely independent and also resisted conversion to Christianity. After Edwin's death, Northumbria split apart but was then brought together again by Oswald, who became the next *bretwalda*. Oswald died in AD 642 in similar fashion to Edwin, fighting against Penda. He was succeeded as *bretwalda* by his younger brother Oswy, who killed Penda in AD 655 and lived until AD 670 [138].

Reconstruction of Royal Anglo-Saxon Ship-Burial at Sutton Hoo

Returning to the account of Frankish history by Fredegar, he reported that Dagobert died in the 16th year of his reign at his villa near Paris. His young son, Clovis II, became king of Neustro-Burgundy, with his mother Nanthild as regent. Dagobert's elder son, Sigibert III, who had been given authority over Austrasia in his father's 11th year, was confirmed as king of that country. It was agreed that Dagobert's treasure would be shared between Nanthild, Clovis and Sigibert, and Pippin was sent to ensure that Sigibert received his fair share. Fredegar noted that Pippin died in the following year. He also recorded that, in the 3rd year of Clovis (which would correspond to AM (E) 5841, i.e. AD 641, on the basis of the timescale since the end of Gregory's *History)*, Constans II became emperor in Constantinople, and that, at about the same time, Chindasuinth seized the throne of the Visigoths from Tulga. Consistent with that, the *Mozarabic Chronicle* dated the accession of Chindasuinth to Spanish Era 680 (AD 642), also noting that, by this time, the Saracens had conquered large parts of North Africa. In Italy, Rothari succeeded Arioald as the Lombard king. Paul reported that Rothari re-established Arianism as the Lombard religion and, soon after the start of his 16-year reign, introduced a code of laws, in the 77th year after the arrival of the Lombards in Italy. That would be in about AD 646, counting from the date given by Marius for the invasion [139].

Fredegar's chronicle ended in the 10th year of Sigibert III and the 4th year of Clovis II, corresponding to AM (E) 5842 (AD 642), the final entry noting the murder of Otto, the mayor of Austrasia, at the instigation of Grimoald, son of Pippin. Grimoald then succeeded Otto as mayor. In the same year, Erchinoald (mayor of Neustria) and Flaochad (mayor of Burgundy) attacked Willebad, an enemy of the latter. Willebad was killed, but Flaochad died soon afterwards. There were several continuations to the chronicle of Fredegar, the first being an adaptation of the closing chapters of the Neustrian *Book of the History of the Franks*, followed by a few original sections. This continuation recorded the death of Clovis in the 18th year of his reign, corresponding to AM (E) 5856 (AD 656), and the succession of his son, Chlothar III. However, it was evident that, by this time, the Merovingian kings were becoming peripheral figures in the events taking place. The real power was held and exercised by their mayors.

The Neustrian mayor, Erchinoald, died soon after Clovis, and was succeeded by Ebroin. Bede noted that, in AD 668, Vitalian (the 78th pope) sent Theodore and Hadrian on a mission to Britain, and they were given a permit to travel through Gaul by mayor Ebroin. The Neustrians eventually rebelled against Ebroin, removing him from office and also deposing Theuderic III, who had succeeded his brother Chlothar as king. Wulfoald, now the mayor of Austrasia, came to Neustria with Theuderic's brother, Childeric II, the Austrasian ruler, and established him as king of all the Franks. However, Childeric's frivolous nature quickly led to his murder by the Neustrians. After Wulfoald had fled back to Austrasia, Theuderic was restored to the Neustrian throne and Leudesius, the son of Erchinoald, was appointed mayor, but Ebroin soon seized back his old position. When Wulfoald died a few years later, Pippin of Héristal (whose maternal grandfather was Pippin of Landen; and paternal grandfather Arnulf of Metz), became mayor of Austrasia [140].

Another source which now becomes relevant is *The Earlier Annals of Metz*. As might be inferred from the title, it was written more than a century after the earliest entries and used AD dating throughout (this system having become popular in Francia during the 8th century AD because of Bede's work, resulting in its utilisation in the *Royal Frankish Annals*, compiled in several stages, and also in terser but perhaps more independent annals produced in monasteries, such as the *Moselle Annals* and the *Annals of Lorsch*), but the key details and timescales are generally consistent with sources written much closer to the events described (such as the latter part of the *Book of the History of the Franks* and the continations of Fredegar's chronicle, which overlap with the earlier sections of the *Earlier Annals of Metz*). The various sources reported that, after Pippin became mayor of Austrasia, he went to war with Ebroin, during the course of which the latter was killed by one of his own countrymen. Waratto succeeded him as mayor, but his position was usurped by his son Ghislemar, who then died in an attack on an Austrasian stronghold. Although Waratto was reinstated, he died soon afterward, and Berchar was installed as the Neustrian mayor. According to the *Earlier Annals of Metz*, this was in AD 689 [141].

In the following year, the Neustrian army, with Berchar and Theuderic at its head, invaded Austrasia and fought against Pippin's army at Tertry, in the Picardy region. The Neustrians were forced to flee, and Pippin followed Theuderic to Paris, where a peace treaty was signed. This made Theuderic the nominal king of all the Franks (the kingship of Austrasia having fallen vacant), and Pippin the mayor of both Neustro-Burgundy and Austrasia. The control clearly lay with Pippin, who began calling himself "Duke and Prince of the Franks". Bede referred to Pippin as "the most illustrious Duke of the Franks" and noted that, in AD 696, he arranged for Willibrord to travel to Rome, where he was consecrated by Sergius (the 86th pope) as archbishop of the Frisian nation. By this time, King Theuderic had died (in AD 693, according to the *Earlier Annals of Metz*) and, whilst kings of the Merovingian dynasty continued to be appointed, they had little more than a ceremonial function (although that included accompanying the mayor at the head of an army on campaign). Eventually, as reported by the *Earlier Annals of Metz*, Pippin succumbed to a short illness in AD 714. The same date for Pippin's death was given in the *Annals of Lorsch* (*Annales laureshamenses*) and a number of other annals compiled in Austrasian monasteries around half-a-century after this event [142].

Meanwhile, in Spain, the *Mozarabic Chronicle* reported that the combined reigns of Chindasuinth and his son Reccesuinth amounted to 30 years. The same source, as well as the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the history by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, then recorded the decline of the Visigoths and the increasing threat to them from the Saracens over the next five reigns, those of Wamba, Ervig, Egica, Witza and Roderic. The *Mozarabic Chronicle* noted that Wamba became king in Spanish Era 712 (AD 674), Ervig in Era 718 (AD 680), Egica in Era 726 (AD 688), Witza in Era 736 (AD 698) and Roderic in Era 749 (AD 711), going on to say that plague, famine and poor leadership added to the problems for the Visigoths during the period of their reigns, with the other two sources giving similar dates, and making similar comments about the growing unrest. According to the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, the Moors crossed from Africa in Era 749 (AD 711), during the reign of Emperor Justinian II and, helped by civil strife, brought about the defeat (and death) of Roderic in the following year. The date of the invasion was also said to be the 92nd year of the Arabs, i.e. AH 92 (AD 710/1). The *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the history by Rodrigo dated the final conquest of the Visigoth kingdom by the Moors to Era 752 (AD 714). These sources also noted that, as the Moors took control of southern Spain (which became known as Al-Andalus, or Andalucia), Pelayo began to establish a kingdom of Asturias in the north. As reported by the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, Pelayo died in Era 775 (AD 737) and was succeeded by his son, Favila, who was killed by a bear two years later. Alfonso was then elected king and, by his prowess on the battlefield, expanded the area under the control of Asturias. After his death in Era 795 (AD 757), his son, Fruela, succeeded him on the throne. Fruela proved to be a strong, determined king and won many victories, but he also created many enemies. He was killed by his own men in Era 806 (AD 768) and his cousin, Aurelio, was chosen to succeed him. When Aurelio died in Era 811 (AD 773), Adosinda, the daughter of Alfonso, married Silo, who was then made king, reigning for 9 years. Alfonso II, son of Fruela, was then raised to the throne, in Era 821 (AD 783), but he was usurped by his uncle, Mauregato, who reigned for 6 years until his death in Era 826 (AD 788). Vermudo, the uncle of the exiled Alfonso II, was then elected king but, after three years on the throne, he voluntarily stood down to allow his nephew to resume

his reign, which he did with great success for 52 more years, establishing Oviedo as his capital and winning significant victories over the Moors. Rodrigo gave a similar account, but with slightly lower dates [143].

View of Córdoba, Spain, looking towards the magnificent Mezquita, now the city's Cathedral, but constructed by the Umayyad's as a Muslim mosque on the site of a Visigoth church.

In Italy, Paul described events throughout a period of nine reigns following Rothari, after which Aripert II became king of the Lombards. According to reign-lengths and other time-intervals indicated by Paul, Aripert took the throne around 138 years after the invasion of Italy, i.e. in *c.* AD 707, counting from the date given by Marius. There had been frequent struggles for power in the Lombardian kingdom between Arians and Catholics but, up to this time, the Roman territories under the control of the papacy had been left to operate largely without interference. According to both Paul and the *Book of Pontiffs*, Aripert himself had tried to remain on good terms with the popes, but Gisulf, the Lombardian duke of Beneventum, seized several of the Roman cities and took many prisoners. John VI, the 87th pope, eventually paid handsomely for the release of the cities and the captives. Lengths of papacies and the intervals between them given in the *Book of Pontiffs* indicate a period of 97 years between the death of Gregory the Great (who wrote to the Lombardian king. Agilulf) and the ordination of John VI, which is consistent with the timescale given by Paul. After the problems caused by Gisulf, Aripert agreed to restore to the papacy some lands in the Cottian Alps which had long been held by the Lombards [144].

Back in Francia, Pippin's relatively sudden death led to an unstable situation. His two sons by his wife Plectrude were already dead and, although Pippin had an illegitimate son, Charles, Plectrude managed to get her young grandson, Theudoald, appointed as mayor of Neustro-Burgundy and Austrasia. That prompted a conspiracy amongst some Neustrian nobles to assassinate Theudoald in the Forest of Compiègne and, although he escaped, he died soon afterwards. The Neustrians then appointed Raganfred as mayor, and raided into Austrasia as far as the Meuse. Charles, who was being kept captive by Plectrude, managed to escape, providing the Austrasian people with a potential leader, and he soon became mayor. In AD 717 (according to the *Earlier Annals of Metz*), Charles defeated a Neustrian army headed by Raganfred and King Chilperic II in the region of Cambrai, and went on to establish himself as the effective ruler of all the Franks (albeit without the status of king) [145].

Soon afterwards, the Moors began making incursions into Gaul from Spain. In AD 721 (according to the *Annals of Lorsch* and other monastic annals) a raid into the region of Toulouse was driven back by Eudo, duke of Aquitaine. Then Abd ar-Rahman led an army across the Garonne, but was defeated by Charles in a battle near Poitiers. Several Austrasian annals dated this to AD 732; consistent with that, the *Mozarabic Chronicle* placed it soon after the assumption of power by Abd ar-Rahman in Spanish Era 769 (AD 731). The final entry in the first continuation of Fredegar's chronicle recorded the death of Eudo of Aquitaine, with a coda noting that the work was concluded in the 177th year in the cycle of Victorius (AP 708, corresponding to AD 736) and also, by implication, AM (E) 5937 (AD 737). The *Earlier Annals of Metz* dated the death of Eudo to AD 735 [146].

The second continuation of Fredegar, commissioned by Count Chilibrand, the half-brother of Charles, reported another Moorish invasion of Francia, which reached Avignon before being driven back in ferocious fashion. This, dated to AD 737 by the *Earlier Annals of Metz* and other annals, led to the victor becoming known as Charles Martel, i.e. Charles the Hammer. According to Paul, Liutprand, who became king of the Lombards shortly after the death of Aripert II and reigned for 32 years, through the reigns of emperors Philippicus, Anastasius II, Theodosius III and Leo III, formed a close relationship with Charles and assisted him in this campaign. As noted

in various Frankish chronicles, including the *Annals of Lorsch* and the first entry in the *Royal Frankish Annals*, Charles died in AD 741 [147].

After the death of Charles Martel, his eldest son, Carloman, became mayor of Austrasia, and his younger son, Pippin (known as Pippin the Short) was appointed mayor of Neustro-Burgundy. Carloman issued a capitulary in AD 742 (the first known official use of AD dating), recording the decrees of the "German Council" presided over by Boniface, in his capacity as head of the Austrasian church. A similar capitulary, dated to AD 744, was subsequently issued in Neustro-Burgundy by Pippin. Soon afterwards, Carloman became a monk, leaving Pippin as the mayor of all the Frankish territories. In AD 749 (according to the *Royal Frankish Annals*), consultations took place with Zacharias (the 93rd pope) as to whether Pippin should be given the status of king and, with his approval (saying that the title of king should be held by the person who held royal power, not one who did not), Pippin was soon crowned by Boniface as king of the Franks, after Childeric III, the last Merovingian king, had been deposed and sent to become a monk. That was the start of the Carolingian dynasty, named after Pippin's father Charles ("Carolus" in Latin) [148].

In Italy, Liutprand, the last Lombard king mentioned in the account by Paul the Deacon, had died, but continuations associated with Cassino and Rome reported that, after two brief reigns, Aistulf came to the throne and began to threaten the papacy. Various sources noted that Stephen II, the 94th pope, crossed the Alps to ask Pippin to protect the rights of the papacy and, when he agreed, formally confirmed his appointment as king. Pippin soon led an army into Italy (in AD 755 according to the *Royal Frankish Annals* but a year later in some other sources) and forced Aistulf into an agreement. Soon afterwards, Aistulf died and was succeeded by Desiderius. At about this time, Pippin sent a mission of friendship to Emperor Constantine V in Constantinople, who responded amicably, sending him the gift of an organ. When Pippin eventually met his death (in AD 768, as reported in the sources), his kingdom was split between his sons, Charles and Carloman, but the latter soon died, leaving Charles (later known as Charlemagne, i.e. Charles the Great) as the king of all the Franks. After fire destroyed his palace at Worms, Charles made Aachen his capital [149].

As well as the chronicles covering the period, two biographies of Charles have survived: one by a friend, Einhard; and the other written later by a monk, Notker. These and the annals recorded the success Charles achieved, despite prolonged opposition, particularly from the Saxons, in extending his kingdom east of the Rhine. While the Saxon Wars were still in progress, the various sources also reported that Hadrian (the 97th pope) sent an emissary to Charles to ask for help against the Lombards, who were oppressing the papacy once again. Eventually, after much fighting, Pavia fell to the Franks and Desiderius was taken prisoner, bringing to an end the kingdom of the Lombards. The Frankish sources dated this to AD 774, the *Moselle Annals* adding that the Lombard kingdom had lasted 214 years. The Roman continuation of Paul's history gave the date as AD 773 and said that it was 206 years from the Lombard invasion of Italy (which took place during the reign of Alboin). After the death of Hadrian, Leo III became pope, summation of time-intervals given in the *Book of Pontiffs* indicating that his ordination came 191 years after the death of Gregory the Great. During the pontificate of Leo (in AD 799, as reported in the *Royal Frankish Annals*), he was attacked, blinded and had his tongue cut out, but survived. Charles, now the king of Italy as well as Francia, came to Rome to act as Leo's protector. According to Frankish sources and the Roman continuation of Paul, Charles was crowned emperor (*Augustus*) by Leo on Christmas Day (which, to the Franks, was also New Years Day), AD 801. Consistent with that, Theophanes dated the coronation of Charles as emperor to AM (AE) 6293 (AD 800/1) [150].

3.2.2 From Charlemagne to Otto III and Robert II

As noted by both Frankish and Byzantine writers, the elevation to imperial status of Charles (known after his death as Charlemagne) resulted in an envoy being sent from Empress Irene in Constantinople to agree a treaty of peace. According to Theophanes, the possibility of a marriage between Charles and Irene, to unite the two empires, was being considered, but the Byzantine throne was then seized by Nikephoros I. A few years later, Nikephoros sent a delegation to Charles to propose a treaty, and Charles responded by sending envoys of his own to Constantinople. Theophanes, as part of the last entry in his chronicle, reported their arrival in AM (AE) 6305 (AD 812/3), by which time Michael I had succeeded Nikephoros as emperor. Envoys from Michael were promptly dispatched to Francia with a message expressing Michael's agreement with the proposals made by Nikephoros but, as noted in the *Royal Frankish Annals*, they arrived to find that the Frankish emperor was now dead. According to this source, Charles died in AD 814 and was succeeded by his only surviving adult son, Louis I (known as Louis the Pious). Soon afterwards, further envoys arrived in Aachen with the news that Leo V had become emperor in Constantinople in place of Michael. The peace terms were eventually ratified by Louis and Leo [151].

Consistent with the *Royal Frankish Annals*, the *Chronicle of Adémar of Chabannes* (in central France) dated the death of Charles to AD 814, whilst the *Chronicle of Regino of Prüm* (in Lorraine) gave it as AD 813. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* noted the beginning of Charles' reign in AD 769 and his death in AD 812. The *Chronicle of Marianus Scotus* (introduced in section 2.2.1) dated the death of Charles Martel to VA 763 (AD 741), the

accession of Charles the Great to VA 790 (AD 768) and the latter's death to VA 835 (AD 813). The *Grand Chronicles of France*, compiled several centuries later, dated the death of Charles the Great to AD 814 [152].

Early in his reign, as noted in the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the *History* of Nithard, Louis I divided his empire into a number of kingdoms, to be ruled by his three sons, under his overall authority. Pippin was given Aquitaine (which, in Merovingian times, although nominally part of Francia, had been an independent dukedom); Louis took Bavaria; and Lothar, his eldest son, assumed control of the remainder, apart from Italy, which had been ruled by his nephew Bernard since the reign of Charles the Great. Louis I confirmed his nephew in this role, but Bernard soon rebelled and was killed, leaving Italy under the direct control of the emperor. After much friction and some complications, including the death of Pippin and the birth of another son of Louis, Charles (subsequently known as Charles the Bald), a re-distribution of territory between the emperor's sons took place in AD 838 (according to the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the annals of St Bertin and Fulda). Lothar, the junior emperor, took control of an area corresponding roughly to western Austrasia, Burgundy and Provence, as well as Italy; Charles the Bald governed the region to the west, incorporating Neustria and Aquitaine; and Louis was given the extensive territories the Franks now held east of the Rhine (so becoming known as Louis the German). Despite increasing friction, this situation was maintained until the death of Louis, the emperor, which was dated by the chronicles of Regino and Adémar and the annals of St Bertin, Fulda and Xanten, as well as the *Grand Chronicles of France*, to AD 840 and, similarly, by Marianus Scotus to VA 862 (AD 840) [153].

In the previous year, according to the *Annals of St Bertin*, Louis had received envoys from the Byzantine emperor, Theophilos. Before then, in AD 836, Northmen (Vikings), pagans from Scandinavia, had devastated Frisia and Dorestad, and subsequently ravaged Nantes, before moving on to attack the coast of Aquitaine. In AD 845, they even sailed up the Seine to Paris, laying waste everything on either side of the river. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III* noted the first attacks by the Northmen on the northern coast of Spain in Spanish Era 881 (AD 843), early in the reign of of Ramiro I, king of Asturias. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* recorded an attack by the Vikings on Sheppey in AD 832. The Vikings continued to cause havoc in England over the following years and, in AD 855, they settled in Sheppey over the winter. In the same year, Aethelwulf, king of Wessex, travelled to Rome and on his return journey, as also noted in the *Annals of St Bertin*, he married Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Aethelwulf had become king of Wessex in AD 836, following the death of his father, Egbert, who had been the 8th *bretwalda*. Between Oswy, the 7th *bretwalda*, and Egbert, the 8th, the most powerful Anglo-Saxon kings had generally been Mercian ones (by this time, all Christians), but apparently none of them were given *bretwalda* status. Amongst these were Aethelbald (the grandson of Penda's brother), Offa (said to have built a great dyke from sea to sea to separate Mercia from Wales) and Coenwulf, who reigned throughout the period from AD 716 to AD 819, apart from gaps of a few months between reigns, when others briefly occupied the throne. When Egbert became king if Wessex in AD 800, his predecessor's widow, Eadburh, the daughter of Offa, was reported to have fled to Francia to seek protection from Charlemagne. Egbert went on to conquer Mercia, and all other realms south of the Humber, in AD 827, so his son inherited a powerful kingdom. When Aethelwulf died in AD 858, Judith married Aethelbald, his son by a previous marriage. After the death of Aethelbald, Judith returned to Francia but, in AD 862, she eloped with Count Baldwin I of Flanders, to the dismay of Charles the Bald, who persuaded his bishops to excommunicate Baldwin. However, Pope Nicholas I (the 107th pontiff) decided that Baldwin could lawfully marry Judith, and Charles accepted the pope's decision. Meanwhile, the Vikings continued with their raids on England and Francia and, as reported in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Rollo led a raiding-army into northwestern Francia in AD 876 and remained there, as leader of a community of settlers, until his death half-a-century later [154].

Replica of a Viking ship, Stockolm, Sweden

Replica of a Viking boat, Birka, Sweden

In northern Spain, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* reported that, in Era 881 (AD 843), Ramiro I was elected king of Asturias following the end of the long reign of Alfonso II. This source went on to report that Ramiro's son, Ordoño I, succeeded him as king of Asturias in Era 888 (AD 850), and it ended with Ordoño's son, Alfonso III, becoming king of Asturias in Era 904 (AD 866). According to other sources, Alfonso III was young when he came to the throne and was immediately challenged by a count named Fruela. After defeating Fruela, Alfonso went on to have a long and glorious reign but, towards the end, had to face a rebellion from his sons [155].

Meanwhile, in Francia, following the death of Louis I, various chronicles recorded, from different perspectives, a series of civil wars between his sons, often in harsh environmental conditions, which began to pull the Carolingian empire apart. Lothar, who succeeded Louis as emperor, claimed ownership of the whole of Francia. His brothers rebelled and, after three years of inconclusive fighting, a meeting took place at Verdun in AD 843, at which it was eventually agreed that Lothar could keep the title of emperor, but the territories held by the other surviving sons of Louis I would become, in effect, independent kingdoms, i.e. Charles the Bald would rule West Francia, Emperor Lothar would retain Middle Francia and Louis the German would rule East Francia. Soon afterwards, Lothar's son and heir, Louis, was consecrated as king of Italy by Sergius II (the 104th pope). Louis eventually became Emperor Louis II on the death of his father which, according to several Frankish sources, was in AD 855. Marianus similarly gave it as VA 877 (AD 855) [156].

On the succession of Louis II as emperor, control of Middle Francia was split between his two brothers, Lothar II receiving the northern half (which subsequently became known as Lotharingia), and the remainder granted to Charles the Child, who thus became king of Provence. Around 15 years later, in AD 869, according to the *Annals of St Bertin*, Basil I, who had just become sole ruler in Constantinople after murdering Michael III, sent troops to help Louis fight against the Saracens, who were invading Italy. The Byzantine historian, Skylitzes, gave an account consistent with that. As reported in the annals of St Bertin, Fulda and St Vaast, Louis II died in AD 875. Regino placed it in the previous year, and Marianus similarly dated it to VA 896 (AD 874). Various sources went on to say that Charles the Bald then established himself as emperor by the use of force [157].

However, Charles died not long afterwards (in AD 877, according to the annals of St Bertin and Fulda). He was succeeded as king of the western Franks by his son Louis (known as Louis the Stammerer), the position of emperor being left vacant. Louis the German also died soon after Louis II, his kingdom being split between his three sons, Carloman, Louis and Charles. Louis, in addition, became king of Italy after the death of Charles the Bald, but he soon became incapacitated and abdicated, leaving his territories to his brother Charles (known as Charles the Fat), who was then crowned emperor by John VIII (the 109th pope). Not long afterwards, Charles became sole king of the eastern Franks, when Carloman died, and then, in AD 884 (according to Regino) he also inherited the throne of the western Franks, following the unrelated deaths of Louis the Stammerer and his two sons. However, three years later, Charles was removed from power by forces involving Arnulf of Carinthia, son of Carloman, and he died early in the following year. The death of Charles the Fat was dated by Regino and the *Annals of Fulda* to AD 888; the *Annals of St Vaast* dated his dethronement to AD 887 and Marianus gave it as VA 909 (AD 887) [158].

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* reported that Charles became king of the western Franks in AD 885 and died in AD 887. At this time, King Alfred of Wessex (subsequently known as Alfred the Great) was leading English resistance against the invading Vikings. Alfred was the youngest son of Aethewulf, who died in AD 858, and he came to the throne in AD 871, following the short reigns of his three brothers, Aethelbald, Aethelbert and Aethelred. Alfred went on to become ruler of all England, apart from the regions controlled by the Scandinavians, before his death in AD 901. He was succeeded by his son, Edward, who, with his allies, was able to establish control over the whole of England south of the Humber in AD 917. Edward's son Aethelstan, who succeeded him in AD 925, extended his kingdom further north, resulting in a counter-attack by an alliance of Vikings and Scots, which was defeated in a battle near Brunanburh in AD 937. However, following Aethelstan's death in AD 941, the Vikings once again began to present a serious threat to the Anglo-Saxons, during the brief reigns of Edmund (half-brother of Aethelstan), Eadred (brother of Edmund), Eadwig (son of Edmund), Edgar (brother of Eadwig) and Edward II (son of Edgar). That was the situation when young Aethelred II succeeded his half-brother, Edward II, as king of the Anglo-Saxons in AD 979. He became known as "Aethelred the Unready", the Anglo-Saxon meaning of that term being "Aethelred the Poorly-Advised". Damaging Viking raids were launched into Devon and Cornwall in AD 981; and on London and into Dorset in the following year. The attacks began to escalate in AD 987 and then, after a major assault on Malden and other places in AD 991, Aethelred accepted advice to pay financial inducements to the Vikings, to enable him to retain his kingdom. The payments satisfied Olaf of Norway, but only served to encourage Swein ("Forkbeard") of Denmark, who retained ambitions to become ruler of England [159].

Meanwhile, in Christian northern Spain, as noted in surviving sources, the death of Alfonso III resulted in his kingdom being divided between his three sons. The eldest, Garcia, became king of León; Ordoño became king of Galicia; and Fruela took the title, king of Asturias, reigning from Oviedo. This led to a long period of factional conflict. Rodrigo Jiménez described a sequence of nine Leónese kings who ruled between the close of the 46-year reign of Alfonso III to the end of the reign of Vermudo II, giving reign-lengths which added up to 96 years. These

kings of León were Garcia I, Ordoño II, Fruela II, Alfonso IV, Ramiro II, Ordoño III, Sancho I, Ramiro III and Vermudo II. Garcia I was succeeded by his brother, Ordoño II, and then by his other brother, Fruela II, who was briefly king of the reunited kingdom of Alfonso III. After Fruela's death, this kingdom fragmented once more. Alfonso IV, the son of Ordoño II, became king of León, and he also retained control of Asturias, but was unable to prevent Galicia splitting away. Alfonso was succeeded by Ramiro II, another son of Ordoño II, who was succeeded in turn by his own son, Ordoño III. The next king of León (and Asturias), Sancho I, was the brother of Ordoño III, with Sancho's son, Ramiro III, then succeeding him on the throne. Ramiro III was usurped by Ordoño III's son, Vermudo II, who was already king of Galicia. Hence the kingdom of Alfonso III was once again reunited, with Vermudo II ruling over it (albeit insecurely) from León. The *History of Silos*, thought to have been taking its information for this period from the lost *Chronicle of Sampiro*, dated the accession to the Leónese throne of Garcia I to Era 948 (AD 910); Ordoño II to Era 951 (AD 913); Fruela II to Era 962 (AD 924); Alfonso IV to Era 963 (AD 925); Ramiro II to Era 969 (AD 931); Ordoño II to Era 988 (AD 950); Sancho I to Era 993 (AD 955); and Ramiro III to Era 1005 (AD 967). Ramiro III was said to have reigned for 16 years before Vermudo II took the throne. According to the *History of Silos* and the *Chronicle of the Kings of León* (attributed to Bishop Pelayo of Oviedo), Vermudo II was succeeded by his son, Alfonso V, in Spanish Era 1037 (AD 999), with Alfonso going on to reign for about 26 years before being killed in a battle against the Moors [160].

Back in Francia, after the dethronement of Charles the Fat, Rudolf, son of Conrad of Auxerre, succeeded in establishing himself as King Rudolf I of Burgundy, re-created as a kingship by splitting off part of the kingdom of Provence. More significantly, at around the same time, the western Franks made Odo, son of Robert of Anjou, their king. Then, in AD 898 (according to Regino), Odo died and was succeeded as king of West Francia by Charles, known as Charles the Simple, the posthumous son of Louis the Stammerer. Charles also went on to become king of Lotharingia. Elsewhere, Arnulf succeeded Charles the Fat as king of East Francia, king of Italy and, eventually, emperor. As noted by Liudprand of Cremona, Leo VI reigned as emperor in Constantinople at that time. In the west, according to the *Annals of Fulda*, Emperor Arnulf died in AD 900. Regino dated Arnulf's death to AD 899, and Marianus gave it as VA 921 (AD 899). Arnulf's young son, known as Louis the Child, then became king of East Francia, with Berengar of Friuli, together with Lambert of Spoleto, seizing power in Italy. After the death of Lambert, Berengar ruled alone [161].

Sources for subsequent events in Italy and East Francia (now becoming known as Germany) include the *Deeds of the Saxons* by Widukind of Corvey; the *Book of Recent Deeds* by Arnulf of Milan; *Retribution* by Liudprand of Cremona; an ecclesiastical history by Adam of Bremen; and the chronicles of Adalbert of Magdeburg (continuing on from Regino), Flodoard of Reims, Thietmar of Merseburg, Herman of Reichenau and Lambert of Hersfeld. According to these (and other) sources, Louis the Child was succeeded by Conrad I, duke of Franconia, who was a Frank but not a Carolingian. Adam dated this transition to the second year of Archbishop Hoger, whose predecessor died in AD 907. More directly, Adalbert and Herman dated it to AD 911; Lambert to AD 912; and Marianus to VA 933 (AD 911). Conrad in turn was succeeded as king by Henry I (known as Henry the Fowler), duke of Saxony, who was considered to be the only person capable of preventing the region fragmenting into independent dukedoms.This was in AD 919, according to Adalbert, Herman and Lambert. When Henry died, in the 16th year of his reign, his successor on the German throne was his son Otto I, who was married to Eadgyth (Edith), daughter of the English king, Edward (son of Alfred the Great). Adam, Thietmar, Adalbert, Flodoard, Herman and Lambert all noted that Henry died in AD 936, with Marianus similarly giving it as VA 958 (AD 936). Meanwhile, in Italy, Berengar had been followed as king by Rudolph of Burgundy, but he was soon driven from the country, enabling Hugh of Provence to seize the Italian throne (in AD 925, according to Arnulf). Liudprand of Cremona, writing about events within his own lifetime, reported that Hugh attempted to form an alliance with Romanos, who had risen from humble origins to become co-emperor of the east with Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, the son of Leo VI, and effectively held supreme power. Despite this, Hugh was eventually ousted in favour of his son, Lothar and, after Lothar's death, Berengar II (grandson of Berengar I), from Ivrea, became king of Italy, ruling with his own son, Adalbert. As Eadgyth had died several years previously, King Otto married Lothar's widow, Adelaide. That caused great concern to Crown-Prince Liudolf, the son of Otto and Eadgyth, about his position, particularly when Adelaide gave birth to a son. Liudolf led a rebellion against his father and, although they were eventually reconciled, Liudolf died of a fever not long afterwards. Flodoard, Adalbert, Herman and Lambert all dated the death of Liudolf to AD 957 and Marianus gave it as VA 977 (AD 955) [162].

Berengar and Adalbert were behaving like tyrants in Italy and had seized the Papal States, so Otto was sent an invitation to invade the country, to protect the interests of the papacy. Some justification for an invasion was provided by the fact that Otto was now married to Adelaide, the widow of King Lothar. Otto soon established his control over Italy, and was subsequently anointed emperor by Pope John XII (and regarded, retrospectively, as the first Holy Roman Emperor). Thietmar dated this to AD 961; Adalbert of Magdeburg, Flodoard, Herman and Lambert to AD 962; and Marianus to VA 983 (AD 961). However, the situation suddenly changed when Otto asked Pope John (whose birth-name was Octavian) to acknowledge him as his overlord, and the pope refused. As well as being John, the 133rd pope, Octavian, from an aristocratic Roman family, was also the political leader of

the Romans, holding the title, "patrician", and, whilst he had welcomed the actions of Otto in freeing Rome from the control of tyrants from northern Italy, he had no wish for the control to pass to a ruler from Germany, so he began conspiring with Berengar against the emperor. Otto convenend a council of German and Italian bishops and accused the pope of various evil deeds, while Octavian responded by saying he would excommunicate anyone who tried to strip him of the papacy. Despite such threats, the bishops agreed to depose the pope. That was reported by German and Italian sources, and also noted by Skylitzes, who placed the event around the time when Emperor Constantine VII died, which he dated to AM (BE) 6468 (AD 959/60). While arguments were still taking place about the validity of the decision, Octavian died. Rome was split into pro- and anti-Otto factions but, although there were many Romans at that time who believed that popes should be chosen and influenced by them, not by an emperor from Germany, most of these soon acknowledged they lacked the power to challenge Otto. Hence, after two more popes (one an anti-pope) had come and gone, they went along with his wishes, and Pope John XIII was elected and ordained unopposed. According to Flodoard (in the penultimate year of his *Annals*) and Adalbert, this was in AD 965, whilst Herman dated it to AD 966 [163].

Thietmar reported that Otto eventually died in the 38th year of his reign, with Adam of Bremen giving it as the 39th year. Otto's death was dated by Lambert of Hersfeld and Herman of Reichenau to AD 973 and similarly by Marianus to VA 995 (AD 973). He was succeeded by Otto II, his oldest surviving son by Adelaide, born in AD 955. To ensure that the succession proceeded smoothly, Otto I had arranged for Otto II to be elected joint-ruler of Germany in AD 961 and ordained by Pope John XIII as junior emperor in AD 967 (the final event reported in the chronicle by Adalbert of Magdebeburg who, according to Lambert, died in AD 981). Otto the elder had also arranged for his son to marry a Byzantine princess, Theophanu (niece of Emperor John I), after lengthy discussions about a dynastic marriage, during which Liudprand of Cremona was sent as an envoy to Constantinople during the reign of Nikephoros II. Despite this preparation, the 18-year-old Otto's authority was immediately challenged by his cousin, Duke Henry II of Bavaria, and the dispute soon escalated into open rebellion. That encouraged Roman nobles, led by Crescentius, to depose (and murder) Pope Benedict VI and replace him with a pope who would be independent of Otto, this being Pope Boniface VII. However, the pro-emperor faction then gained the upper hand, resulting in Boniface VII being exiled to Constantinople and Benedict VII becoming pope. Meanwhile, Otto II was in the process of suppressing the rebellion in Germany and, when this was complete, he headed south and established his control over Rome. Later, he embarked on a campaign to try to take southern Italy from the Byzantines and Sicily from the Saracens but, during the course of this campaign, he died. The reign of Otto II lasted just 10 years, according to Adam, Marianus and various other authors. Thietmar, Lambert and Herman dated his death to AD 983 [164].

Otto III, the three-year-old son of Otto II and Theophanu, then became king of Germany. However, Duke Henry II of Bavaria, who had been imprisoned after his unsuccessful rebellion against Otto II, but released on the death of the emperor, promptly seized the infant Otto III and once again claimed the throne for himself. Eventually he was persuaded to hand the young king back to his mother and swear allegiance to him. Theophanu was appointed regent for her son and served until her death (in AD 991, according to Herman, Lambert and the annals of Quedlinburg and Hildesheim), after which Otto's grandmother, Adelaide, took over the role. Meanwhile, in Rome, Crescentius the Younger (son of the man responsible for the murder of Pope Benedict VI) had become patrician and he set about trying to bring the papacy under his control. After Otto had reached the age of maturity, the *Annals of Hildesheim* reported that, in AD 995, Pope John XV sent a legate to Germany to ask the king to come to Italy and take action against the tyrant (presumed to be Crescentius) but, when Otto arrived in Rome, he found that Pope John had died. Otto then secured the appointment of his own cousin, Bruno, to succeed him as the 142nd pope (thus, according to the historical sources, becoming the first pope to have been born outside Italy since the 96th pope, Stephen III, a Sicilian). Bruno took Gregory V as his papal name, and one of his first acts was to crown Otto as emperor and king of Italy, in the 13th year of his reign as king of Germany. Lambert and the Quedlinburg, Hildesheim, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals all dated the coronation of Otto III to AD 996, whilst Herman gave it as AD 997. Afterwards, Otto returned to Germany, after securing a promise of good conduct from Crescentius but, a few months later, as described in particular in the *Annals of Quedlinburg*, Crescentius drove Pope Gregory out of Rome and proclaimed the bishop of Piacenza, John Philagathos of Calabria, to be Pope John XVI. When Otto returned with an army in the following year, Crescentius barricaded himself in the Castel San't Angelo, but he was subsequently taken prisoner and executed. John Philagathos attempted to flee but was captured, mutilated and then publically humiliated. That removed the opposition to Pope Gregory, but he died not long afterwards (in AD 999, according to the Quedlinburg, Hildesheim, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals, or AD 1000, according to Herman). He was succeeded as pope by the Archbishop of Ravenna, a French scholar known as Gerbert of Aurillac, who became Pope Silvester II. Otto then headed north, visiting Poland before returning to Germany and then to Rome, the city he wanted to make the capital of his empire. That plan was not welcomed in Germany, and Thietmar reported that a number of dukes and counts conspired against Otto, often with the knowledge of bishops. It was no more popular in Rome, where a supposed friend laid a trap for him, but he managed to escape. In those circumstances, it was no longer safe for Otto to remain in Rome, so he left, intending to return in force but, while

he was staying in the fortress of Paterno, north of Rome, he was taken ill and died, at the age of 21. Adam wrote that Otto III reigned for 18 years and died in AD 1001, the same date also being indicated by Frutolf of Michelsberg. Otto's death was dated by Herman, Lambert and the Quedlinburg, Hildesheim, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals to AD 1002; and by Marianus similarly to VA 1024 (AD 1002) [165].

Returning to the situation in West Francia, Northmen continued to ravage Brittany during the reign of Charles the Simple, but an agreement was reached which resulted in a community led by Rollo being given territory in the region subsequently known as Normandy. Conversion to Christianity soon followed. Then, in AD 921 in Adalbert's account, but a year later according to Flodoard, Robert, the brother of Odo, became king of the western Franks. Charles, who still ruled Lotharingia, responded by attacking Robert and killing him. Despite that, Charles was defeated and later taken captive. Raoul, the son-in-law of Robert, succeeded him on the throne of West Francia and, not long afterwards, Henry the Fowler, established German dominance over Lotharingia [166].

Louis, the son of Charles the Simple, fled to England, the land of his mother Eadgyfu (sister of Eadgyth, the first wife of Otto I). Then, when Raoul (also known as Rudolph) died, he was recalled to rule over West Francia as Louis IV. Flodoard dated this to AD 936. A key figure in the return of Louis was Hugh, the son of Robert I. During the reign of Raoul, Hugh had established himself as the most powerful nobleman in West Francia, becoming known as Hugh the Great, but it seems he preferred the role of "power behind the throne" to that of king. After the coronation of Louis, Hugh took the title, Duke of the Franks, and he also married Hedwige of Saxony, daughter of Henry the Fowler. During the reign of Louis IV, William Longsword, son of Rollo, was murdered, and the king agreed to William's son, Richard, succeeding him as leader of the Normans. Louis died in AD 954 or 955, as reported, respectively, by Flodoard and John of Worcester (whose chronicle was formerly attributed Florence of Worcester), and he was succeeded by his young son Lothar, after Hugh had given his approval [167].

Flodoard (and also Adalbert) ended their accounts during Lothar's lengthy reign, but Richer of Reims and Adémar of Chabannes noted that Lothar was succeeded by his son, Louis V, the last Carolingian king. After the death of Louis V, Hugh Capet, the son of Hugh the Great (and grandson of both Robert I and Henry the Fowler), was made king of West Francia (or France, as it was becoming known), his accession being dated by Hugh of Fleury, in his *Modern Acts of the Frankish Kings*, to AD 987, and by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, in his chronicle, to AD 988. Charles of Lorraine, the younger brother of Lothar, rebelled against King Hugh, attempting to regain the kingship for the Carolingians, and he seized the city of Reims. Charles was subsequently captured and imprisoned, leaving Hugh (the founder of the Capetian dynasty) secure upon the throne. However, Hugh believed that Arnulf, the archbishop of Reims, who was the uncle of Charles, had conspired with his nephew, so he removed him from his archbishopric and appointed Gerbert of Aurillac to replace him. That caused uproar, for many bishops believed that King Hugh had exceeded his authority in dismissing Arnulf from his post. Richer of Reims, in his *Histories*, gave a detailed account of subsequent events. A synod of French bishops confirmed the actions taken by King Hugh, but Pope John XV asked them to reconsider their decision. The arguments continued and, eventually, Pope John sent a papal legate to bring the affair to a just conclusion. The outcome was that Hugh's actions were declared illegal and the appointment of Gerbert null and void. Nevertheless, as noted by Richer in the very last section of his *Histories*, it was only after Robert II had succeeded his father, Hugh, as king of France, and Gregory V had succeeded John as pope, that Arnulf returned to his post as archbishop of Reims, while Gerbert left France and soon became archbishop of Ravenna. It can be inferred from the chronicle of Adémar of Chabannes that the reign of Robert II extended beyond AD 1010. More explicitly, Hugh of Fleury wrote that Robert came to the throne in AD 995 and reigned for 34 years, whilst Alberic of Trois-Fontaines said that Robert reigned for 35 years, his first regnal year being AD 997 [168].

3.2.3 Postscript: from Otto III and Robert II to Otto IV and Philip II

Here, as in Chapter 2, we shall follow on seamlessly from the above to a point beyond the end of Hunnivari's postulated "phantom period" (AD 960-1160), examining what the surviving sources say about unfolding events in Western Europe, including England, up to the papacy of Innocent III, a key period in Hunnivari's scenario.

Hugh of Fleury noted that King Robert II of France died in AD 1032 and was succeeded by his son Henry, who was succeeded in turn by his son Philip in AD 1059. Philip died in AD 1108 and was succeeded by his son Louis (known as Louis VI, or Louis the Fat). The same sequence was also given by Henry of Huntingdon, who noted that the line of Hugh Capet on the French throne followed, in direct father-to-son fashion, through Robert II, Henry I and Philip I, to Louis VI, who was king of France at the time he was writing (*c.* AD 1130). Alberic of Trois-Fontaines similarly wrote, in his chronicle, that Henry succeeded his father, Robert II, in AD 1031; Philip succeeded his father, Henry, in AD 1060; and Louis VI succeeded his father, Philip, in AD 1108. Continuing on, Alberic recorded that Louis VII became king of France in AD 1135; Philip II (known as Philip Augustus) in AD 1180; Louis VIII in AD 1223; and Louis IX in 1226, each of these succeeding his father on the throne. All the details given above from works by Hugh of Fleury and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines are generally consistent with information provided in other French sources, including the *Grand Chronicles of France*, a series of reign-by-reign chronicles first compiled by the monks of Saint-Denis during the reign of Louis IX (subsequently known as

St Louis), covering the period from earliest times to the death of Philip II in AD 1223, and later extended to cover subsequent reigns. The dates are also generally consistent with ones given in English, Norman, Spanish and German sources. For example, the *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile*, written in northwestern Spain, noted that Louis VIII had succeeded his father, Philip, on the French throne in Era 1261 (AD 1223). Amongst the English sources is a compilation by Roger of Wendover, entitled *Flowers of History*, and another work with the same title, once attributed to Matthew of Westminster, but now believed to have been produced by a succession of compilers. Furthermore, just as English, Norman, Spanish and German sources gave details of significant events in France, so French sources gave details of important events elsewhere. For example, after reporting some events which took place in France in AD 1201, during the reign of Philip II, the compilers of the *Grand Chronicles of France* then went on to describe the civil strife in Constantinople at this time, which resulted in the siege and capture of the city by the Crusaders, and the installation of Baldwin of Flanders as Emperor of Constantinople (events also reported in the *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* [169].

In northwestern Spain, according to the *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* and the *Chronicle of the Kings of León* (supported by other sources), the situation was very different from that in France, where an unbroken linear sequence of father-to-son successions operated throughout this period. After reigning for ten years, Vermudo III, the son and successor of Alfonso V as king of León, was murdered in Spanish Era 1060 (AD 1022) and replaced on the throne by his brother-in-law, Ferdinand I, Count of Castile. During Ferdinand's reign and afterwards, Christian factions regularly fought against each other, and also against the Moors to the south, who were similarly split by factional rivalry. Ferdinand slaughtered many Moors, but he also fought and killed his brother, King Garcia III of Navarre, in the Battle of Atapuerca in Era 1095 (AD 1057). After Ferdinand's death in Era 1103 (AD 1065), his kingdom was divided between his three sons: one became King Alfonso VI of León; another King Sancho II of Castile; and the third King Garcia I of Galicia and Portugal. Sancho soon seized Alfonso's kingdom and ruled it for six years but, after his death, Alfonso was able to bring all three kingdoms under his control. Alfonso achieved many victories over the Moors in the south, but the situation changed when the Almoravids, who had established their authority over much of North Africa, crossed the Mediterranean and brought under their control much of Andalucia (which, by this time had fragmented into a number of independent states). In Era 1124 (AD 1086), Alfonso fought against the Almoravids, led by Emir Yusuf, at Sagrajas and suffered heavy losses. That led Alfonso to turn to Rodrigo Diaz, a renowned Castilian military commander who had once fought for Sancho II against Alfonso and was now living in exile in the east, helping the Moors of Zaragossa in their conflicts against the Christians of Aragon and Catalonia (and becoming known to the Moors as El Cid). These Moors, like Alfonso, were now being threatened by the Almoravids, so were happy to form an alliance against the invaders. As reported in the *History of Rodrigo*, a great battle took place in Era 1132 (AD 1094) for control over Valencia, in which Rodrigo defeated the Almoravids. He held the city until his death in Era 1137 (AD 1099), but the Christians abandoned it soon afterwards. Alfonso VI, as reported in the *Chronicle of the Kings of León*, eventually died in the 44th year of his reign, in Era 1147 (AD 1109) [170].

Alfonso VI was succeeded by his daughter Urraca who, according to the *Chronicle of Emperor Alfonso*, reigned for almost 17 years and died in Era 1164 (AD 1126). Alfonso VII, the 19-year-old son of Urraca and Raymond, duke of Burgundy, then came to the throne. Alfonso established the supremacy of León-Castile over the eastern kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre and, in Era 1173 (AD 1135), he was crowned Emperor of Spain. However, a few years later, he was unable to prevent Portugal, a county of León, establishing itself as an independent country. Alfonso was more successful against the Almoravids and advanced as far south as Córdoba in Era 1182 (AD 1144), but the situation became more complex as another Moorish group, the Almohads, gained control of North Africa and began to cross the Mediterranean to seize Almoravid territory in Spain [171].

As reported by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada in his *History of Spain*, Alfonso VII, on his death, left his kingdom to be divided between his two sons, Sancho III becoming king of Castile and Ferdinand II king of León. Sancho took the throne in Era 1197 (AD 1159) and reigned for just one year before he was succeeded by his son, Alfonso VIII, in Era 1198 (AD 1160). Alfonso was just an infant when he came to the throne, during a period of conflict between Castile and León, but he eventually grew to be a powerful ruler, who was determined to destroy Almohad power in southern Spain. However, he was defeated by the Almohads in the battle of Alarcos in Era 1233 (AD 1195). Despite this setback, Alfonso, together with Peter II of Aragon, Sancho VII of Navarre and others, defeated the Almohads in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in Era 1250 (AD 1212), undermining their power in Spain. According to Rodrigo, Alfonso VIII died after reigning for 53 years, in Era 1252 (AD 1214), and he was succeeded by his son, Henry, whose mother, Eleanor, was the daughter of Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine. A similar account of these events, including the death of Alfonso VIII in the same year, Era 1252, was given in *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile*. This source also noted that Henry's sister, Blanca, was married to Louis, the eldest son of Philip II of France. According to both the *Grand Chronicles of France* and Roger of Wendover's *Flowers of History*, this marriage took place in AD 1200, when the bride's uncle, John, was King of England [172].

Meanwhile, as reported by Rodrigo, Ferdinand II of León died in Era 1228 (AD 1190), after reigning for 31 years. Alfonso IX then succeeded his father as king. In an attempt to improve relations between León and Castile, Alfonso married the eldest daughter of Alfonso VIII, Berengaria, who had previously been engaged to Conrad, the son of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I. Alfonso IX and Berengaria had several children, but Pope Innocent III declared their marriage to be invalid, because of their close blood-relationship, and forced them to separate. However, when Alfonso died in Era 1268 (AD 1230), he was succeeded by Ferdinand III, his son by Berengaria, who had already become ruler of Castile following the death of King Henry. Thus the kingdoms of León and Castile were united once again. The *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* gave no date for the death of Alfonso IX, but placed it shortly after an intervention by Ferdinand III in an Almohad civil war in Era 1264 (AD 1226), a visit to Spain by an envoy of Pope Gregory IX (which the author of the *Latin Chronicle*, abandoning the Spanish Era system, dated to AD 1228), and a victory by King Jaime I of Aragón over the Moors of Mallorca in AD 1229. Like Rodrigo, the *First General Chronicle of Spain* dated the death of Ferdinand II of León to Era 1228 and the death of Alfonso IX to Era 1268, also dating the latter to AD 1230 [173].

In Germany, various sources reported that Otto III left no heir, so the succession was disputed. Henry, Otto's second-cousin (and son of Duke Henry II of Bavaria, who had attempted to usurp both Otto II and Otto III) eventually established himself as Henry II, king of Germany (often confusingly referred to as "king of the Romans"), but Arduin of Ivrea, a descendant of Berengar II, was chosen to succeed Otto III as king of Italy, while Crescentius III, son of Crescentius the Younger, held power in Rome. After the death of Pope Silvester II in AD 1003 (as reported in the *Saxon Annals)* or AD 1005 (as stated by Herman of Reichenau), the practice of appointing Italian-born popes resumed. Henry crossed the Alps and was crowned king of Italy in AD 1004 but, after his return to Germany, Arduin remained in effective control of the Italian kingdom, until Henry made a more determined invasion of Italy and was crowned emperor in Rome by Pope Benedict VIII in AD 1014, as reported by Thietmar, Herman and the *Saxon Annals*. Like Otto III, Henry died childless, bringing the Ottonian dynasty to an end. Lambert and Herman dated this to AD 1024. Conrad II, a Franconian count, was then elected king of Germany and soon acquired the crown of Italy. He was crowned emperor in AD 1027 (according to Lambert, Herman and Arnulf of Milan) and died in AD 1039 (as reported by Herman, Lambert and the *Saxon Annals*). He was succeeded by his son, Henry III, who reigned for 18 years. On Henry's death (in AD 1056, as reported by Lambert, Berthold of Reichenau and Frutolf of Michelsberg), he was succeeded as king of Germany, king of Italy and king of Burgundy by Henry IV, his young son. In AD 1084 (according to Frutolf, Bernold of St Blasien and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*), Henry IV was crowned emperor by Clement III, an antipope, following the expulsion of Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) after a series of disputes with Henry in which Alexios I, emperor in Constantinople, became involved. (Note also that the *Chronicle of the Kings of León* reported communications between Pope Gregory VII and King Alfonso VI in Spanish Era 1114, i.e. AD 1076.) Continuations of Frutolf's chronicle and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* reported that Henry V seized the throne from his father, Henry IV, in AD 1106, was crowned emperor in AD 1111, and died in AD 1124 or 1125, whilst Ekkehard of Aura, consistent with accounts in English sources, wrote that Emperor Henry V married Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England, in AD 1114. In line with the dates given above, Marianus Scotus noted the accessions of Conrad II in VA 1046 (AD 1024), Henry III in VA 1061 (AD 1039) and Henry IV in VA 1078 (AD 1056). A continuation recorded that Henry became emperor in VA 1106 (AD 1084) and was usurped by Henry V in VA 1128 (AD 1106) [174].

Emperor Henry V died without leaving any surviving children of legitimate descent, bringing the Franconian (or Salian) dynasty to an end. A Saxon duke, Lothar of Supplinburg, was elected to succeed Henry as king of Germany and king of Italy. According to the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Chronicle of John of Viktring*, Lothar came to the throne in AD 1125, became emperor in around AD 1133 and died in AD 1138. According to the *Grand Chronicles of France*, Lothar was crowned as emperor by Pope Innocent II (birth-name Gregory). Lothar had no sons, so, after his death, the succession once again became an issue, with Conrad, whose mother was a daughter of Henry IV and his father a Swabian duke, emerging as a strong candidate. Conrad, who had opposed the election of Lothar and had since established himself as king of Italy, was soon elected as the king of Germany. However, that decision continued to be challenged by others, particularly relatives of Lothar, and Conrad never became emperor. Nevertheless, he was appointed co-leader, with Louis VII of France, of the Second Crusade, which, according to the *Grand Chronicles of France*, set off in AD 1147 for Constantinople, where Manuel Komnenos was emperor. As reported by the chronicles of Cologne and Usperg, Conrad died in AD 1152 (or, in the account by Otto of Freising, in AD 1154) and he was succeeded by Frederick, duke of Swabia, known as Red-Beard (*Barbarossa* or *Rotbart*). According to these sources, and also Giovanni Villani, in his *Florentine Chronicle*, as well as Otto of St Blasien, Frederick was crowned emperor by Pope Hadrian IV in around AD 1155. He was the first to be called Holy Roman Emperor, and was one of the most powerful, mounting several successful campaigns into northern and central Italy. Long after his coronation, with a view to expanding the empire, Frederick arranged a marriage between his son Henry and Constance, heiress to the kingdom of Sicily. A few years later, Frederick died after falling off his horse into the Saleph River in southern Anatolia, on his way to fight in the Third Crusade, called by Pope Gregory VIII to recover Jerusalem from the control of the Saracen

leader, Saladin. At the time of his death, as noted by Villani and Otto of St Blasien, Frederick I had reigned for 37 or 38 years. The *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg*, the *Chronicle of Otto of St Blasien* and Roger of Wendover, in *The Flowers of History*, dated the death of Frederick to AD 1190 [175].

Frederick was succeeded by his son, Henry VI, as king of Germany and king of Italy. Soon afterwards, in AD 1190, according to Otto of St Blasien, and AD 1191, according to the chronicles of Cologne and Usperg, Henry was crowned emperor by Pope Celestine III. A few years later, he was also crowned king of Sicily, but then, in AD 1197 (according to Otto of St Blasien) or AD 1198 (as reported in the chronicles of Cologne and Usperg), Emperor Henry VI died, when his only son, Frederick, was still an infant. Frederick was crowned king of Sicily, with his mother, Constance, as regent, but a power struggle began in Germany, with both Otto of Brunswick (grandson of Henry II of England) and Philip of Swabia, brother of Henry VI, being declared king. Eventually, after the murder of Philip, Otto prevailed and was crowned Emperor Otto IV by Pope Innocent III in AD 1209 (as noted by the chronicles of Cologne and Usperg and by Roger of Wendover). However, Otto soon fell out of favour and was excommunicated by Pope Innocent in the following year, whilst Frederick began to grow in strength and power. The *Chronicle of Usperg* reported that, after the death of Otto IV in AD 1218, Frederick was elected emperor in the following year and crowned Emperor Frederick II by Pope Honorius III in AD 1220 [176].

In Normandy, Duke Richard I was succeeded by his son, Richard II. This transition was dated by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* to AD 994 but Roger of Wendover placed it two years later. In AD 1002, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, the history by Henry of Huntingdon and the chronicle by John of Worcester (formerly attributed to Florence of Worcester), Emma (also known as Aelgyfu), daughter of Richard I of Normandy, came to England to marry King Aethelred ("the Unready"), whose father, Edgar, was the grandson of King Edward (father of Eadgyfu) and great-grandson of Alfred the Great. These sources, and also Roger, Adémar and Adam of Bremen, told how, over the following period, Swein, king of Denmark, and Cnut, his son and successor, made a determined attempt to conquer England. Eventually, after Aethelred died in AD 1016, Cnut became king of England as well as Denmark, and married Aethelred's widow, Emma. When Cnut died after ruling England for twenty years, his sons contested the succession. After their deaths, Edward (known as "the Confessor"), the son of Aethelred and Emma, was made king of England. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, John of Worcester and Roger of Wendover, this was in AD 1042 [177].

Characteistic timber-framed buildings in a typical Angle-Saxon village re-created at West Stow, Suffolk

King Edward soon married Edith, daughter of Godwin, earl of Wessex, but they had no children. Meanwhile, in the 8th year of Cnut, as reported by Henry of Huntingdon, Richard II had been succeeded as duke of Normandy by his son, Richard III, for a few months, and then by his brother Robert I. When Robert died 8 years later, his young son, William, became duke. William went on to claim the status as heir to the English throne, since both he and Edward were direct descendants of Richard I of Normandy. However, when Edward died after reigning for 24 years, the English nobles immediately gave the throne to Harold, who had succeeded his father, Godwin, as earl of Wessex. William sailed across the Channel and defeated Harold's army, taking the English throne and becoming known as William the Conqueror. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Henry of Huntingdon, John of Worcester and Roger of Wendover, as well as William of Newburgh, Walter of Guisborough, Frutolf of Michelsberg, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines and the *Saxon Annals*, all dated William's victory to AD 1066; Marianus Scotus gave it as VA 1089 (AD 1067) [178].

The six English sources mentioned above, together with Hugh of Fleury and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, then followed the same timescale to the death of William in AD 1087 (which followed an attack on King Philip I of France). William's successor as king of England was his younger son, William II (known as William Rufus), with his eldest son becoming Duke Robert II of Normandy. Afterwards, English and French sources alike reported an invasion of Normandy by William Rufus, resulting in Philip of France becoming involved and the invasion being repelled. Roger of Wendover and others also provided a chronological link to the east at this time, recording that,

after Pope Urban II had initiated the First Crusade in AD 1095 or 1096, Bohemond of Taranto, one of the leaders of the Crusade, attempted to establish himself as the prince of Antioch, which led to conflict with Emperor Alexios I of Constantinople. As noted in section 2.2.2, Anna Komnene, the emperor's daughter, reported that a treaty was eventually agreed between Alexios and Bohemond in AM (BE) 6617 (AD 1108). Roger dated this treaty to about AD 1109 [179].

After the Battle of Hastings, William and his Norman successors began building castles of stone throughout England, such as those as Barnard Castle (left) and Warkworth (right), both in Northumberland.

In England, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Henry of Huntingdon, John of Worcester, Roger of Wendover, William of Newburgh and Walter of Guisborough, as well as Gervase of Canterbury, noted that William was killed by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest, all these, and also Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, dating the accession to the English throne of his younger brother, Henry I, to AD 1100 (John and Gervase also giving it as VA 1122). King Henry went on to defeat Duke Robert and gain control of Normandy in AD 1106, and, according to all the sources, Henry eventually died in AD 1135, leaving no legitimate male heir. Stephen, a grandson of William the Conqueror, then moved swiftly to claim the English throne, ousting Matilda, who was the daughter of Henry I and had been the wife of Emperor Henry V until his death ten years previously. Stephen's accession was the start of a prolonged period of civil war. The chronicle of John of Worcester ended during Stephen's reign and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and Henry of Huntingdon's history terminated at its conclusion (dated by the sources to AD 1154), when Henry II, son of Matilda, became king. The accounts of Roger, William, Walter and Gervase carried on to record the death of Henry II and the succession by his son, Richard I, in AD 1189, this same date also being given in the *Grand Chronicles of France*. After the death of Emperor Frederick I in the early stages of the Third Crusade, King Richard and Philip II of France vowed to bring Jerusalem back into the hands of the Christians. They conquered Acre in AD 1191 but Philip then returned to France, leaving Richard to carry on without him. Richard achieved successes against Saladin in AD 1192, but failed to take Jerusalem from him. However, before returning home, Richard negotiated a 3-year truce, during which period Christian pilgrims could have free access to Jerusalem. According to Roger, Saladin died in AD 1193, whilst Michael the Syrian, in one of the last entries in his chronicle, dated Saladin's death to Seleucid Era 1515 (AD 1194). As reported in English, French and German sources, King Richard, on his return journey, was taken prisoner by Leopold of Austria and handed over to Emperor Henry VI, who held him until a substantial ransom was paid. The history by William of Newburgh came to an end during the reign of King Richard, but the accounts by Roger of Wendover, Walter of Guisborough, Gervase of Canterbury and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines continued, noting the transition from Richard I to his brother, John (both of them uncles of Emperor Otto IV, the successor of Henry VI), in AD 1199 (this being the last entry in Gervase's chronicle). The *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* dated the death of King Richard to AD 1198 [180].

A few years later, according to Roger of Wendover, Walter of Guisborough and other sources (including the second work entitled *Flowers of History*, mentioned above, and also the *Grand Chronicles of France*), Pope Innocent III attempted to bring about peace between John and Philip II of France, who were fighting for control over Normandy. Subsequently, a dispute arose between Pope Innocent and John about whether the latter had the authority to enforce his own choice in the appointment of a new archbishop of Canterbury but, after being excommunicated, John eventually accepted the pope's ruling. Following this, in AD 1215, John had a dispute with a group of barons who forced him to agree to a Great Charter (*Magna Carta*) introducing political and fiscal reforms but, afterwards, John appealed to Pope Innocent, who annulled the agreement and excommunicated the barons responsible for it. The rebel barons then invited Louis, son of King Philip II, to invade England and join with them in overthrowing the rule of John. The invasion was unsuccessful, but John died in AD 1216, according to the same sources and also Alberic of Trois-Fontaines and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, a few months after the death of Pope Innocent III [181].


Amongst the castles built by the Crusaders were Al-Kerak (left) in Jordan and Yilanlikale Castle (right) in Cilicia.

3.2.4 Discussion of Topics Considered in Chapter 3

Thus, the information from the surviving sources regarding the chronology of the rulers of Barbarian Europe presented in Chapter 3 can be seen to be entirely consistent with that presented in Chapter 2, which was concerned with the Roman/Byzantine Emperors. As in Chapter 2, we have allowed the surviving historical sources to speak for themselves, without making assumptions or interpretations, and it is apparent that, taken as a whole, they present a continuous, coherent account of history which is consistent throughout, to within a small number of years, with the conventional chronology. In contrast, they provide no support of any significance whatsoever for any of the revised chronologies we are considering. We have already noted that conclusion, in relation to Early Barbarian Europe, in section 3.1.3, and we have not found the situation to be any different in our subsequent considerations of Late Barbarian Europe.

No obvious discontinuities can be see when we move in and out of Heribert Illig's "phantom time" period, whereas clear discontinuities are *created* if the supposed phantom periods are deleted. In northern Europe, deletion of this period from the accounts given in the sources would result in a sudden switch from a situation where the whole of Francia was ruled by the Merovingian king, Clothar II, to one where Francia (by this time having been extended eastwards across the Rhine) was split between two Carolingian kings, Charles the Simple in the west and Louis the Child (at the very end of his reign) in the east. Similarly, in Spain, there would be an instant transition from a situation where the Visigoth king, Sisebut, ruled over most of Spain to one where the sons of Alfonso III of Asturias reigned in the northwest and Sancho I of Pamplona in the northeast, with the rest of Spain being largely under the control of Moors.

Exactly the same considerations apply to Zoltán Hunnivari's similar but shorter phantom time hypothesis. With regard to Germany, deletion of the phantom period would result in a sudden shift from a situation where Otto I of the Ottonian dynasty was king to one where Frederick I of the Hohenstaufen-Welf dynasty was not only king but also emperor. To the west, the equivalent switch would also involve a change in name of the kingdom, with Lothar IV, the young Carolingian king of West Francia, suddenly being replaced by Louis VII, the mature Capetian king of France.

In "Charlemagne's Correct Place in History" [7], Gunnar Heinsohn proposed that the Carolingian rulers were client-kings of the Roman emperors from Marcus Aurelius to Alexander Severus, but the historical sources consistently place the Carolingian kings long after the time of these emperors. Similarly, Heinsohn suggested that Theudebert I and other Merovingian kings reigned after the Carolingian dynasty had been brought to an end by his postulated global catastrophe, but the sources consistently place the Merovingians *before* the Carolingians. Furthermore, although there are good reasons for thinking that severe environmental conditions played a part in the decline of the Carolingians after the death of Charlemagne, there is no indication whatsoever in the sources to indicate the occurrence of a dynasty-ending catastrophic event during this period.

However, our investigation is still incomplete. In both Chapters 2 and 3, our focus began in Rome and then transferred elsewhere (to the east in Chapter 2 and to the northwest in Chapter 3). In Chapter 4, we shall remain focused on Rome throughout, and examine what the surviving sources say about the popes, throughout the period with which we are concerned. That will also enable us to give more detailed consideration to significant events mentioned only briefly in Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 4: The Popes of Rome

4.1 From the Early Popes to Gregory the Great

4.1.1 The Early Popes

To early Christians, the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were of no lesser importance than the emperors, so lists began to be compiled of sequences of incumbents in each of these bishoprics, and indeed in others (see for example section 3.1.3). Here in Chapter 4 we shall just consider what the surviving historical sources say about the bishops of Rome, or, as we would now call them, the popes [182].

Eusebius, writing during the reign of Emperor Constantine I, gave the same sequence for the early popes as that given almost 150 years previously by Irenaeus in his *Against Heresies*, written near the end of the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius and during the papacy of Eleuther. Irenaeus, who was born in Smyrna and became bishop of Lyons, wrote that, after the deaths of the apostles Peter and Paul in the persecutions during the reign of Emperor Nero, Linus, who was mentioned in Paul's second letter to Timothy, was appointed as the first bishop of Rome, and he was succeeded by Anacletus, Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, Xystus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter and then Eleuther. Eusebius, in the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, dated the ordination of Linus to Olympiad 211:4, AM (E) 5268 (AD 68) and said that he was bishop of Rome for 11 years. After Linus came Cletus, also called Anacletus, for 12 years, Clement for 9 years, Evaristus for 9 years, Alexander for 10 years, Xystus for 10 years, Telesphorus for 11 years, Hyginus for 4 years, Pius for 15 years, Anicetus for 10 years, Soter for 8 years and Eleuther for 15 years, ending in Olympiad 242:4, AM (E) 5392 (AD 192), with Victor succeeding him [183].

A slightly different sequence of bishops of Rome over this period, believed to have been derived from a lost work by Hippolytus of Rome, a contemporary of Emperor Caracalla, was given in the compilation known today as the *Chronography of 354* (see section 1.4), produced in Rome during the reign of Emperor Constantius II. This named the apostle Peter as the first bishop of Rome rather than Linus, took Cletus and Anacletus to be two separate bishops, not variant names for the same one, and moved Clement forward in the sequence to be the successor of Linus. The *Chronography* said that Peter had been bishop of Rome for 25 years and then Linus for 12 years, beginning in the consulship of Saturninus and Scipio (AD 56). Clement then served as bishop of Rome for 10 years, Cletus for 6 years, Anacletus for 13 years, Evaristus for 14 years, Alexander for 11 years, Xystus for 10 years, Telesphorus for 11 years and Hyginus for 12 years. There are gaps in the text during the next few entries, but it can be seen that Pius was said to have served for 20 years, Soter for 9 years and, after Soter, came a bishop whose term ended in the consulship of Paternus and Bradua (AD 185), with Victor succeeding him [184].

This is an appropriate point to introduce (or rather re-introduce, since it has been mentioned in previous chapters) the *Liber Pontificalis,* i.e. *Book of Pontiffs*, a series of papal biographies, extended at irregular intervals, which will provide the spine for our discussions throughout most of this chapter. There is evidence to suggest that the first edition of the *Book of Pontiffs* was compiled almost two centuries after the *Chronography of 354*, around the time of Theodoric the Great. The anonymous authors of the individual biographies clearly had access to some of the files in the Lateran Palace (believed to have been donated by Emperor Constantine to be the papal residence and administration centre). The earlier ones must also have been familiar with the *Chronography of 354*, since details from it, including consular dates, were reproduced in the *Book of Pontiffs* in almost exact fashion. The sequence, as in the *Chronography*, starts with the apostle Peter, followed by Linus, but then splits Cletus and Anacletus, with Clement sandwiched between them. After that, the *Book of Pontiffs* follows the sequence given in the *Chronography* (where this can be discerned) up to its end. For the period after Hyginus, where there are breaks in the *Chronography* account, the *Book of Pontiffs* gives the sequence as Pius, Anicetus, Eleuther (his papacy ending in the consulship of Paternus and Bradua, AD 185) and Victor. The *Book of Pontiffs* also numbers the popes in sequence, as does Eusebius, but since the former, unlike the latter, includes the apostle Peter, and regards Cletus and Anacletus as separate individuals, its numbers for the 25 popes after Anacletus are consistently two higher than those given by Eusebius [185]. None of the bishops of Rome were mentioned by pagan historians, so these provide no information which can resolve conflicts in details provided by the Christian writers.

The lacunae in the surviving text of the *Chronography of 354* continue for a little longer, for there is no mention of Zephyrinus who, according to Eusebius and the *Book of Pontiffs*, was the pope who succeeded Victor. However, that is where the lacunae ended, because the next entry in the *Chronography* recorded that Calixtus became pope in the time of Emperors Macrinus and Elagabalus, when Adventus and Antoninus (Elagabalus) were consuls (AD 218), which was consistent with information given in the *Book of Pontiffs* for Victor's successor. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle dated the ordination of Calixtus to Olympiad 249:4, AM (E) 5420 (AD 220). According to the *Book of Pontiffs* and the *Chronography*, Urban succeeded Calixtus, and held the pontificate during the reign of Alexander Severus, from the consulate of Maximus and Aelianus (AD 223) to that of Agricola and Clementinus (AD 230). Urban's successor was Pontian, whose papacy also fell during the reign of Alexander Severus, beginning in the consular year of Pompeianus and Paelignianus (AD 231). He was exiled to Sardinia during the

consulate of Severus and Quintianus (AD 235), and died in the same year. Anteros was appointed to replace him, but he only lived for another year, dying during the consulship of Maximinus and Africanus (AD 236). Fabian then became pope, serving through the reigns of Maximinus, Gordian and Philip, before his martyrdom in the consular year of Decius (for the 2nd time) and Gratus (AD 250). The same sequence was given by the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, but with dates up to three years later [186].

The list of popes given in the *Book of Pontiffs* and the *Chronography of 354* then continued with Cornelius, who held the Apostolic See briefly until his death during the consulate of Gallus and Volusianus (AD 252). His successor, Lucius, had a similarly short term as pope, from the end of the reign of Gallus to the beginning of that of Valerian with Gallienus. Stephen then held the pontificate until the consulship of Valerian (for the 3rd time) and Gallienus (for the 2nd) (AD 255). He was succeeded by Xystus II, who was pope from the consular year of Maximus and Glabrio (AD 256) to that of Tuscus and Bassus (AD 258). (Note that the sources simply said "Xystus", not "Xystus II", but since we are following a sequence in which there has already been a "Xystus", it is legitimate, for reasons of clarity, to add a number to a name, and we shall follow that practice throughout this chapter.) Dionysius was then elected to the papacy, the sixth pope to have held office in a period of about 8 years, but he served until the consulship of Claudius and Paternus (AD 269). His successor was Felix, who held the See from the reign of Claudius to that of Aurelian, dying in the consulate of Aurelian (for the 2nd time) and Capitolinus (AD 274). Eutychian then took over, until the consular year of Carus (for the 2nd time) with Carinus (AD 283). He was succeeded by Gaius, who served as pope for 12 years, dying during the consulate of Diocletian (for the 6th time) with Constantius (for the 2nd) (AD 296). That sequence was consistent with details given in the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, as were the dates (to within a year) for the popes from Fabian to the start of the pontificate of Xystus II. However, the chronicle gave Xystus a much longer term of office than the other two sources, which resulted in the dates it gave for the next few popes being seven or more years higher, but this large differential had disappeared by the end of the period. According to the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle, Gaius became pope in Olympiad 265:2, AM (E) 5482 (AD 282), and served for 15 years [187].

The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that all the popes from Zephyrinus to Gaius were born in Rome, apart from Anteros and Xystus, who were Greeks, Gaius, who was a Dalmatian, and Eutychian, who was born in Tuscia. The ancestry of Dionysius, who had been a monk, could not be traced. According to the same source, Calixtus, Pontian, Anteros, Fabian, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephen, Xystus, Felix, Eutychian, Gaius and perhaps Urban were all martyred [188].

Therefore, although there are variations in the terms served by individual popes, the overall sequence and timescale given by the *Book of Pontiffs*, the *Chronography of 354* and the Eusebius-Jerome chronicle for the popes from Zephyrinus to Gaius are very similar. As with the emperors, there is nothing in what the sources say about the succession of popes during this period to provide any support for Gunnar Heinsohn's theory (outlined in section 2.1.2) of a major historical/chronological dislocation following the reign of Elagabalus.

There is also nothing in surviving historical sources to contradict the generally-held belief that, although, from the reign of Diocletian onwards, the Empire was no longer governed from Rome, the city continued to function, contrary to what was suggested by Heinsohn. Above all, the sources give a clear indication that the popes, the bishops of Rome, still lived and worked there. According to the *Book of Pontiffs* and the *Chronography of 354*, Gaius had been succeeded as pope by Marcellinus, who held the Apostolic See until the consulate of Diocletian (for the 9th time) and Maximian (for the 8th) (AD 304). At around that time there was a persecution of Christians, and the episcopate ceased to operate for a period of 7½ years. Then, during the time of Maxentius, Marcellus was pope for 1 year 6 months, Eusebius for 4 months and Miltiades for 3 years 6 months, up to the consulship of Volusianus and Annianus (AD 314), when Constantine was in control of Rome and the persecutions ended. Silvester succeeded Miltiades as pope, and held the See for over twenty years, into the consular year of Constantius and Albinus (AD 335). Silvester's biography was one of the longest in the *Book of Pontiffs*, noting that he had convened the Council of Nicaea, and describing in great detail his work in building and adorning churches in Rome. After Silvester, Mark was pontiff for 8 months, before being succeeded by Julius in the consulate of Felicianus and Titianus (AD 337). The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that Eusebius was born in Greece and Miltiades in Africa, with all the others being born in Rome, and that Marcellinus and Marcellus were martyred [189].

The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle agreed with the *Book of Pontiffs* and the *Chronography of 354* in saying that Marcellinus succeeded Gaius as pope, and that around the time of the end of his papacy there was a sustained campaign of persecution against the Christians, dating the start of this campaign to the 19th year of Diocletian, AM (E) 5504 (AD 304), Era of Antioch 350 (AD 301/2). Omitting any mention of the papacy of Marcellus (resulting in a further discrepancy between the numbering system of Eusebius compared to that of the *Book of Pontiffs*, with the numbers given to subsequent popes in the Eusebius-Jerome being three lower than corresponding numbers in the *Book of Pontiffs*), this chronicle stated that Eusebius (obviously not the author of the chronicle) and then Miltiades became pope in the 20th year of Diocletian, with Silvester succeeding Miltiades in the 4th year of Constantine, AM (E) 5510 (AD 310). The persecutions against the Christians were brought to an

end by Constantine in AM (E) 5514 (AD 314). Mark, followed by Julius, became pope in the 25th year of Constantine, AM (E) 5531 (AD 331) [190].

The *Chronography of 354* stated that Liberius succeeded Julius as pope in the consulate of Constantius II (for the 5th time) with Constantius Gallus (AD 352). That was the final entry in this particular list of popes and, since it ended with pope Liberius, it is sometimes referred to as the "Liberian catalogue". The *Book of Pontiffs* said that Liberius, who was born in Rome, was sent into exile by Emperor Constantius for refusing to accept the Arian doctrine. Before leaving, Liberius ordained a priest named Felix to replace him as bishop. Later, Felix identified two priests as having Arian sympathies and excommunicated them. They complained to Emperor Constantius, asking him to recall Liberius from exile, so he could share in a single communion, apart from rebaptism. Liberius agreed to the terms and, after 3 years in exile, returned to Rome. However, his concession to Constantius was unpopular and, for a time, he was not able to enter the city. Eventually, Constantius re-instated him as pope, and he went on to serve for another 6 years, whilst Felix retired to his small estate. Felix was given a separate entry in the *Book of Pontiffs*, as Felix II, but that may have been because the compilers confused him with someone else called Felix, who was martyred. Liberius was succeeded as pope by Damasus who, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, was a Spaniard, who went on to serve for over 18 years. The Eusebius-Jerome chronicle noted that Liberius was pope from the 12th year of Constantius, AM (E) 5549 (AD 349), to the 2nd year of Valentinian and Valens, AM (E) 5566 (AD 366), when he was succeeded by Damasus [191].

4.1.2 Popes of Rome from Damasus to Gregory the Great

As we continue with our investigation of the timeline of the popes of Rome, it is convenient to follow a single narrative source, the *Book of Pontiffs* (mentioned previously), whilst noting relevant information from other historical accounts. The *Book of Pontiffs* gives an entry for each pope, in chronological order, giving the precise length of the papacy and also the duration of the vacancy between one papacy and the next.

In section 4.1.1, we followed a sequence of popes and arrived at Damasus, who, according to the *Book of Pontiffs* was the 39th pope. As we noted, that was on the assumption that the apostle Peter, not Linus, was the first pope, and that Cletus and Anacletus were different popes, not alternative names for the same individual. Neither of these assumptions were accepted by Eusebius but, for convenience, and since we have no way of knowing for certain the precise details of the succession of popes, we shall use the *Book of Pontiffs* numbering system throughout the remainder of this chapter. Regardless of that detail, Damasus was said to have served for 18 years 3 months, starting towards the end of the reign of Constantius II. The next pope listed in the *Book of Pontiffs* was Siricius, who was said to have held the Apostolic See for 15 years. According to Hydatius, Siricius became pope in the 9th year of Theodosius I, which he dated to Olympiad 291:3, AM (E) 5588, Spanish Era 425 (AD 387/8). Prosper of Aquitaine said that Siricius succeeded Damasus in the consular year of Richomer and Clearchus, AP 357 (AD 384), whereas Marcellinus Comes placed it a year earlier, in the consulship of Merobaudes and Saturninus [192].

As reported in the *Book of Pontiffs*, the next pope after Siricius was Anastasius. Prosper said that Siricius was ordained in the consulate of Honorius (for the 4th time) with Eutychian, AP 371 (AD 398), and Marcellinus Comes gives the same consular year. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Anastasius served for 3 years and was succeeded by Innocent. Hydatius said that Innocent became pope in the 7th year of Arcadius and Honorius, Olympiad 295:2, AM (E) 5602, Era 439 (AD 401/2). Prosper gave it as the consular year of Arcadius and Honorius (both for the 5th time), AP 375 (AD 402) and Marcellinus Comes agreed that it was in that consular year. As reported by the *Book of Pontiffs*, Innocent held the Apostolic See for 15 years 2 months, after which Zosimus became pope. Prosper said that Zosimus became pope in the consular year of Theodosius (for the 7th time) and Palladius, AP 389 (AD 416), whilst Marcellinus Comes gave it as the consular year of Honorius (for the 11th time) and Constantius (for the 2nd) (AD 417). The *Book of Pontiffs* stated that Zosimus was pope for 1 year 3 months, and his successor was Boniface, said to have been the 43rd pope [193].

For the period covered by the *Chronography of 354*, the *Book of Pontiffs* had recorded the consular date given in that work for each change of pope. However, following its end in the middle of the 4th century, the *Book of Pontiffs* simply noted the timescale of each individual papacy for the next century and a half. Having arrived at the papacy of Boniface I in the early 5th century, let us now reach forward to the next occasion when a consular date was given in an entry in the *Book of Pontiffs*.

According to this work, the length of time from the ordination of Boniface to that of Hormisdas, determined on the basis of summation of pontifical periods and vacancies, was 95 years (to the nearest year). Amongst the information provided in the entry for Hormisdas is that he became pope in the year when Senator was sole consul, which corresponds to AD 514. On that basis, therefore, Boniface would have become pope in AD 419. In line with that, Prosper wrote that Boniface became pope when Monoxius and Plinta were consuls, in AP 392 (AD 419), whilst Marcellinus Comes said that Boniface's ordination was just one year later, during the consulship of Theodosius II (for the 9th time) and Constantius (for the 3rd time). Theophanes, dating events according to the Alexandrian Era, noted the ordination of Boniface as pope in AM (AE) 5913 (AD 420/1). As related in the *Book*

of Pontiffs, Boniface and Eulalius were both proclaimed pope on the same day by different factions in Rome. Emperor Honorius consulted with Valentinian (the future Valentinian III) and ordered both men to leave the city. They did so, but Eulalius then returned in defiance of the imperial order, after which Boniface was confirmed as pope. He went on to serve for four years in total (all pontifical periods being given in this summary to the nearest year, except where otherwise stated) [194].

The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to say that Boniface was succeeded by Celestine. Consistent with that, Prosper said that Celestine became pope when Marinianus and Asclepiotatus were consuls, in AP 396 (AD 423); Marcellinus Comes similarly said that Celestine's ordination was in the consular year of Marinianus and Asclepiodatus, adding that it was indiction 6; whilst Hydatius wrote that it was in Olympiad 301:3, AM (E) 5627, Era 464 (AD 426/7), two years after the death of Honorius in the 30th year of his reign. Theophanes gave the year when Celestine became pope as AM (AE) 5917 (AD 424/5). According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Celestine held the Holy See for 9 years, during which time he issued many decrees, including one that, before mass, the 150 psalms of David should be performed antiphonally by everyone. Bede, in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, told us that Celestine sent Palladius to be the first bishop to the Christian Irish in AD 430 [195].

On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, the next pope, Xystus III, would have been ordained in AD 432. Prosper said that Xystus became pope when Aëtius and Valerius were consuls, in AP 405 (AD 432); Marcellinus Comes gave the same consular year, adding that it was indiction 15; Hydatius had Xystus becoming pope in Olympiad 303:3, AM (E) 5635, Era 472 (AD 434/5); and Theophanes said it was in AM (AE) 5927 (AD 434/5). The *Book of Pontiffs* continued by saying that, in the second year of his papacy, Xystus was arraigned on a charge by someone called Bassus, but was cleared by a synod of bishops. Emperor Valentinian III and his mother, Placidia, then issued a writ condemning Bassus and transferring all his goods and estates to the Catholic Church. Xystus was pope for 8 years, on which basis the next pope, Leo I (subsequently known as Leo the Great) would have been appointed in AD 440. Generally consistent with that, Prosper wrote that Leo became pope when Valentinian (for the 5th time) and Anatolius were consuls, in AP 413 (AD 440); and Marcellinus Comes gave the same consular year, which he said was indiction 8. Theophanes said that the first year of the papacy of Leo was AM (AE) 5935 (AD 442/3). The *Book of Pontiffs* reported that Leo was pope for 21 years, during which time Marcian became emperor in the east, and Rome was sacked by the Vandals and threatened by the Huns. Leo went in person to talk to Attila, the king of the Huns, and the Huns then withdrew from Italy. During his papacy, Leo became aware of the spread of two heresies, the Nestorian and the Eutychian. (Nestorius maintained that Christ had been born human and was subsequently imbued with a divine nature; Eutyches maintained that Christ was born with human and divine natures, combined into a single nature; the orthodox belief was that, from birth, Christ had *two* natures, human and divine.) Becoming frustrated in his attempts to combat the heresies, particularly the Euthychian one, Leo wrote to Emperor Marcian about the problem. A synod of bishops was convened at Chalcedon to consider a statement of the orthodox faith which had been written by Leo. (This document, known as the Tome, was dated the Ides of June in the consulship of Asturius and Protogenes (AD 449), and sent to Flavius, Patriarch of Constantinople, late in the reign of Emperor Theodosius II.) At the synod of Chalcedon, Marcian (the new emperor) and his wife, Pulcheria, affirmed their own belief in the orthodox faith, and Nestorius and Eutyches were condemned. The *Book of Pontiffs* account continues by referring to the numerous letters on the Christian faith written by Pope Leo, copies of which were safely preserved in the archives. These have survived to the present day, and include one (dated June in the consulship of Adelfius, AD 451) sending his apologies for not being able to attend the synod of Chalcedon in person, and another, dated March in the consulship of Opilio (AD 453) formally giving his assent to the decisions made at the synod. References to these events are also included in the chronicles of Prosper, Marcellinus Comes, Hydatius, Victor of Tunnuna and Theophanes, as well as the *Chronicon Paschale*, the dates being consistent with those given above. Thus, for example, Hydatius mentioned that Leo wrote to Flavius about the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies in Olympiad 307:3, AM (E) 5651, Era 488 (AD 450/1). The *Chronicon Paschale* stated that the synod of Chalcedon took place during the consulship of Sphoracius and Herculanus (AD 452). Theophanes said that it began in October of indiction 5 in AM (AE) 5944 (AD 451), 14 months after the accession of Marcian [196].

All of the popes mentioned above, from Boniface I to Leo I (said to have been the 47th pope), were Italians. Hilarus, a Sardinian, then became pope. In line with the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, Marcellinus Comes said Hilarus was consecrated during the consulship of Dagalaiphus and Severinus, indiction 14 (AD 461), whilst Hydatius noted that his ordination was in the year following the celebrations of Spanish Era 500 (i.e. in AD 463), and Theophanes dated it to AM (AE) 5956 (AD 463/4). The *Book of Pontiffs* account stated that Hilarus was pope for 6 years, during which time he confirmed the outcomes of the three synods of Nicaea, Ephesus and Chalcedon, as well as the Tome of Leo, and issued a decree on church matters during the consulship of Basiliscus and Hermenericus (AD 465). Simplicius, an Italian, was the next pope. Marcellinus Comes gave the year of his consecration as the consulship of Pusaeus and John, indiction 5 (AD 467), whereas Hydatius said it was Olympiad 312:2, AM (E) 5670 (AD 470), and Theophanes stated that Simplicius became pope in AM (AE) 5962 (AD 469/70). The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that, during the papacy of Simplicius, a report came from Acacius, bishop of

Constantinople, claiming that Peter of Alexandria was a Eutychian heretic. Simplicius examined the evidence and condemned Peter, but granted him time for repentance. The account also said that, when Simplicius died, he had been pope for 15 years. The next pontiff, Felix III, would therefore have been ordained in AD 482, on the basis of the *Book of Pontiffs* timescale. Consistent with that, Marcellinus Comes said that Felix became pope during the consulship of Trocundes and Severinus, indiction 5 (AD 482), whereas Theophanes gave the date as AM (AE) 5976 (AD 483/4). According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Felix, an Italian, held the Apostolic See for 9 years, and was pope when Odoacer and then Theodoric were kings of Italy. During his papacy, a report came from the Greek Church to say that Acacius had re-instated Peter as bishop of Alexandria. After seeking advice, Felix condemned Acacius as well as Peter. A letter then arrived from emperor Zeno, saying that Acacius had repented and should be re-instated. Felix sent two bishops, Misenus and Vitalis, to Constantinople to investigate. They found in favour of Acacius, but it subsequently emerged that they had taken a bribe, so they were excommunicated. After Felix, Gelasius, who was born in Africa, was then pope for 5 years, in the time of King Theodoric. Theophanes gives the date of his consecration as AM (AE) 5985 (AD 492/3). The *Book of Pontiffs* account continued by saying that bishop Misenus repented, and was restored to his church by Gelasius, but Acacius and Peter persisted with their sinful ways in Constantinople. Once again they were condemned, but given time to repent. After Gelasius, Anastasius, another Italian, became pope. Acording to Marcellinus Comes, that was during the consulship of Paulinus and Scytha, indiction 7 (AD 498), and Theophanes gave the date as AM (AE) 5990 (AD 497/8). The *Book of Pontiffs* said that Anastasius held the Apostolic See for 2 years, during which time a deacon of Thesalonica named Photinus conspired to re-instate Acacius, but his attempt failed. On the death of Pope Anastasius, Symmachus, a Sardinian, was elevated to the papacy, during the reigns of Theodoric and Emperor Anastasius. Marcellinus Comes dated the ordination of Symmachus to the year when Patricius and Hypatius were consuls, indiction 8 (AD 500). The *Book of Pontiffs* told how Symmachus and Laurence were both ordained as pope, by rival factions, on the same day. The issue was taken to Ravenna, for King Theodoric to adjudicate. He ruled that the papacy should go to the person who was ordained first, and had the largest following. Those appointed to investigate the situation in the light of that ruling found in favour of Symmachus, so he was confirmed as prelate. Despite several attempts by his opponents to have him removed from office, Symmachus, said to have been the 53rd pope, served for 16 years [197].

That brings us to Hormisdas who, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, became pope in the year corresponding to AD 514 (as noted above). In line with that, Theophanes gave the date of his consecration as AM (AE) 6006 (AD 513/4), whilst Marcellinus Comes said that Hormisdas became pope during the consulship of Florentius and Anthemius, indiction 8 (AD 515), which involves a discrepancy of just one year. The *Book of Pontiffs* continued by saying that Hormisdas died in the year when Flavius Symmachus and Boethius were consuls (AD 522), having held office for 9 years. During his time as pope, it was recorded that a jewelled diadem had been received from Clovis, king of the Franks, as a gift to the papacy. On the advice of King Theodoric, Hormisdas sent a group of bishops to Emperor Anastasius in Constantinople, in an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the problems concerning Acacius and Peter. Anastasius, it seemed, was sympathetic towards the Eutychian heresy, and attempted to bribe the bishops, but they resisted. Not long afterwards, Anastasius died and was succeeded as emperor by Justin I, whose religious views were strictly orthodox. Theoderic encouraged Hormisdas to send further envoys, to try to improve relations with Constantinople, and he made a gift of some silver candlesticks for the church of St Peter [198].

Following the death of Hormisdas, the *Book of Pontiffs* then reported that the next pope, John I, was consecrated in the year of the consulship of Maximus (AD 523) and died when Olybrius was consul (AD 526), holding the Holy See for 3 years during the time of Theodoric and Emperor Justin I. The continuator of Marcellinus Comes' chronicle said that John became pope in the consulship of Philoxenus and Probus, indiction 3 (AD 525), whereas Theophanes gave the date as AM (AE) 6016 (AD 523/4). The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to relate how Pope John, appreciating the orthodoxy of Emperor Justin I, made an attempt to encourage him to remove the Arian, Theodoric, from the Italian throne. When Theodoric heard of that, he had John put into prison, where he soon died. Felix IV then became pope during the consulship of Maburtius (AD 527). Consistent with that, Theophanes said that Felix was ordained in AM (AE) 6019 (AD 526/7). According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Felix had an uneventful papacy. He held the Holy See for 4 years, during which time Athalaric succeeded Theodoric as king of Italy, and died during the consulship of Lambadius and Orestes (AD 530) [199].

Boniface II then became pope. According to Theophanes, this was in AM (AE) 6023 (AD 530/1). The *Book of Pontiffs* reported that Boniface was ordained in rivalry to Dioscorus, who died 28 days later. Boniface made himself unpopular by his continued antagonism towards the followers of Dioscorus, and also by his attempts to appoint his own successor. He died after serving for 2 years. John II (who was not Boniface's chosen successor) was then elected pope. Theophanes dated his ordination to AM (AE) 6025 (AD 532/3). The *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that John served for 2 years, in the time of Athalaric and Emperor Justinian I. During that period, the emperor made gifts of gold and silver objects to the church of St Peter. Following the death of John II, Agapetus became pope. The continuator of Marcellinus Comes said that he was consecrated in the year when Belisarius

was consul, indiction 13 (AD 535), and, similarly, Theophanes stated that it was in AM (AE) 6028 (AD 535/6), whereas Victor of Tunnuna gave the date as the consulship of Johannes (AD 538). According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Agapetus then held the See for almost a year, during which time he went to Constantinople at the request of king Theodahad, to try to placate Justinian, who was infuriated that Theodahad had killed Queen Amalasuntha, the daughter of King Theodoric. Agapetus was well-received, but died while he was in Constantinople. All of these popes, from Hormisdas to Agapetus, were born in Italy, as indeed were the next 14 popes [200].

According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, there were almost exactly 22 years between the ordination of Hormisdas and that of Agapetus' successor, Silverius (the 60th pope), who would therefore, following the timescale of this compilation, have become pope in AD 536. Theophanes dated this event to AM (AE) 6029 (AD 536/7), whilst Victor of Tunnuna wrote that Silverius was consecrated during the consulship of Basilius (AD 541). The *Book of Pontiffs* reported that, during the short papacy of Silverius, Theodahad died and was succeeded as king of Italy by Witiges, who went to Ravenna and forcibly took Amalasuntha's daughter as his wife. Justinian sent the patrician Belisarius with an army to free Italy of the Goths, and a great war took place. Belisarius took Rome, but the city was then besieged by Witiges. However, the Goths were eventually driven back to Ravenna [201].

According to the sources, this signalled the beginning of a time of difficulty for the papacy. During the occupation by the Ostrogoths, and particularly during the long reign of Theodoric the Great, the papacy had been allowed to continue its activities without undue interference (except when Pope John I had tried to bring about the overthrow of Theodoric). Despite the fact that the Ostrogoth kings were Arians, they generally seemed to work with the popes in a spirit of mutual respect. Now Justinian and, even more so, Empress Theodora, wanted to be able to control the actions of the popes. The *Book of Pontiffs* reported that, although Pope Silverius had a courteous meeting in Rome with Belisarius in indiction 15 (AD 537), he soon afterwards fell out of favour with Theodora, because of his reluctance to comply with her request to reverse a decision of his predecessor, Agapetus, and re-instate the patriarch Anthimus to office. (Anthimus had been removed because of his adherence to monophysitism, the belief, put forward by Eutyches during the papacy of Leo I, that Christ did not have separate human and divine natures, as supposed in orthodox circles, but a single nature.) So, with the empress pulling the strings, Silverius was accused of conspiring with the Goths and deposed by archdeacon Vigilius, who was appointed pope in his place [202].

On the basis of the available evidence, it is believed that the first edition of the *Book of Pontiffs* contained the lives of popes up to and including Felix IV, and was completed soon after Felix's death, with a second edition following quickly on the heels of the first, stopping part-way through the papacy of Silverius. Given the climate of fear then created by Justinian and Theodora, soon to be followed (as noted in Chapters 2 and 3) by the persistent threat of Rome falling to the Lombards, and by outbreaks of plague and famine in Italy, it is perhaps not surprising that the next edition of the *Book of Pontiffs* was not produced until almost a century later, perhaps during the papacy of Honorius. As would be expected in these circumstances, the material written to finish off the entry for Silverius, and also to constitute the next few entries, all written long after the events being described, differed from earlier and later entries in being less consistent with details given in other surviving sources [203].

In the *Book of Pontiffs* account, it was said that Silverius held the Apostolic See for 1 year 5 months, which is generally, but not precisely, consistent with the information provided by Theophanes, Victor of Tunnuna and other sources. We cannot be certain about the exact dates within this brief period when Silverius was, in quick succession, appointed and deposed, abdicated and died, or when Vigilius was established as his successor, but, of course, an uncertainty of no more than a few months falls a long way short of providing meaningful support for claims of phantom centuries [204].

Moving forward. Vigilius, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, went on to be pope for 17 years 6 months, whilst Theophanes indicated a pontificate of 18 years and Victor of Tunnuna one of 16 years. During this period, Witiges was captured and then handed over to Justinian in Constantinople. The Goths later attempted a revival under Baduila, known as Totila, at a time when there was a great famine in Italy, but the rebellion was crushed by Justinian's general, Narses, and Totila was killed. Meanwhile, Theodora had been putting pressure on Vigilius to re-instate Anthimus. However, the pope decided to abide by the decision of Agapetus, subsequently confirmed by Silverius. Eventually, at the instigation of Theodora, Vigilius was arrested and taken to Constantinople where, refusing to change his mind, he was detained for several years. During this period, archdeacon Pelagius acted as his representative in Rome. After the final defeat of the Goths, the Romans asked Narses to petition Justinian for the return of Vigilius. Justinian eventually gave way, and Vigilius sailed towards Rome, but died on the way, at Syracuse, in Sicily. On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, that would have been in AD 555 [205].

The *Book of Pontiffs* account continued by stating that archdeacon Pelagius succeeded Vigilius (becoming Pope Pelagius I). Up to this point, the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs* had remained generally consistent, to within a year, with that from other sources. However, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Pelagius was pope for 11 years 10 months, whereas other sources said that Pelagius held the Apostolic See for much less than that period. Victor of

Tunnuna and Theophanes, for example, both gave the length of his papacy as 5 years. Possibly the larger figure included time when Pelagius was the *de facto* pope, during the long absence of Vigilius in Constantinople. Regardless of the cause, attributing this lengthy term of office to Pelagius, after the death of Vigilius, might have added a spurious 5 or 6 years to the "dead-reckoning" chronology of the *Book of Pontiffs*. However, even if that was the case, it was still an anomaly of only a few years, not several centuries, and one which could easily be explained [206].

After the entry for Pelagius I, the *Book of Pontiffs* returned to the situation where the indicated lengths of papacies were in line with information from other sources. The next pope, after the death of Pelagius, was John III. According to Theophanes, he was consecrated in AM (AE) 6054 (AD 561/2). The *Book of Pontiffs* reported that John held the Apostolic See for 13 years, during which time Narses defeated a Frankish army, led by Buccelin, which was oppressing Italy. Later, angered by a petition from the Romans to Emperor Justin II and Empress Sophia to remove him from office as prefect of Italy, Narses encouraged the Lombards to invade the country. John III was eventually succeeded as pope by Benedict I. According to the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs* (now possibly inflated by about 6 years because of the error concerning the papacy of Pelagius I, as discussed above), that would have been in AD 581. John of Biclaro (whose chronicle followed on from that of Victor of Tunnuna) said that Benedict became pope in the 5th year of Leovigild, king of the Visigoths, which Isidore dated to Spanish Era 612 (AD 574). The *Book of Pontiffs* continued by saying that Benedict served for 4 years. During this period, there was a severe famine in Italy, prompting the emperor to arrange for ships laden with corn to be sent to Rome from Egypt. To add to the problems for the Italians, the Lombards spread through the country, capturing many cities. In the time of the next pope, Pelagius II, who held the Apostolic See for 10 years, Rome itself was besieged by the Lombards. On the basis of the *Book of Pontiffs* timescale, Pelagius II would have become pope in AD 586. John of Biclaro dated his ordination to the 8th year of Leovigild which, via the link to Isidore, corresponded to Spanish Era 615 (AD 577), and he added that Pelagius served for 11 years [207].

And so we come to Pope Gregory I, known as Gregory the Great, who, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, was the 66th pope and held the Holy See for 13 years 6 months. The *Book of Pontiffs* gave a total of 60 years and 6 months between the ordinations of Silverius and Gregory I, which would place the latter towards the end of AD 596. However, we have reason to think it possible that, because of the confusion in the *Book of Pontiffs* about the terms of office served by Pope Silverius and Pope Pelagius I (particularly the latter), that date should perhaps be around 6 years earlier. As it happens, there is much documentary evidence from the time of Gregory I which can help us decide whether an ordination date of AD 590 or one of AD 596 is the more likely. In particular, we have copies of many letters written by Gregory when he was pope, including a number that were dated by reference to the 15-year indiction cycle. In isolation, that tells us nothing about the AD date but, if we can link it to an approximate date, a precise date can be inferred (provided we take into account the fact that indiction years began in September), since Dionysius Exiguus associated Easter in AD 525 with indication 3. Amongst the earliest letters of Pope Gregory were ones dated to the 9th year of Emperor Maurice and others dated indiction 9. Some later letters from Gregory combined the regnal year of Maurice, the year of his consulship and the indiction year, examples of these being letters to Augustine, Mellitus and Aethelbert (king of Kent), quoted by Bede in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, the first letter to Augustine being dated July in the 14th year of Maurice, the 13th year after his consulship, indiction 14. Another example is a letter to Virgilius, bishop of Arles, dated June in the 19th year of Maurice, the 18th year after his consulship, indiction 4. One of the last letters written by Gregory was to the emperor Phocas, and dated June, indiction 6. Of the two alternative dates we are considering for the ordination of Gregory, AD 590 was indiction 8 and AD 596 indiction 14, so the first alternative is strongly suggested by the evidence of the indiction years used in the dating of the correspondence, the letters written in indiction 9 (the 9th year of Maurice) being from the year after his ordination, and the letter to Phocas being written in AD 603 (indiction 6). That would also be consistent with the date given by Bede for the accession of Maurice (AD 582). If Gregory was ordained in AD 590 and, as stated in the *Book of Pontiffs*, served for 13 years and 6 months, dying on 12th March, then he must have died in AD 604, the year after he wrote to Phocas. Consistent with that, some editions of the *Book of Pontiffs* (although not the one in the widely-used Lucca manuscript) add the information that Gregory died in indiction 7. Also consistent with these dates (to within a year or two), the *History of the Franks* by Gregory of Tours gave the start of the papacy of Gregory as the 15th year of Childebert II (and the 7th of Maurice), which, following Gregory's timescale linked to the AM (E) dates he gave for key events, corresponds to AD 588. Bede, in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, said that Gregory became pope in the 10th year of Maurice and died in AD 605. That is consistent with the entry for AD 785 in the *Annals of Lorsch*, which noted that this year was the 180th after the death of Gregory. The information given in the *History of the Franks*, *History of the Lombards*, *Annals of Lorsch* and Bede's *History*, although not being precisely in agreement, is nevertheless much closer to the notion that Gregory's papacy covered the period AD 590-604 than to the AD 596-610 alternative. John of Biclaro said that Gregory became pope in the first year of Reccared (the son of Leovigild), the 5th of Maurice, and presided in office for 15 years. On the basis of the dates given by Isidore, the first year of Reccared would have been Spanish Era 625 (AD 587), so if Gregory became

pope in that year and served for 15 years as John said, he would have died in AD 603. Thus, although there is some slight variation, all these sources dated the death of Pope Gregory to within a year (or two at the most) of AD 604, with only the *Book of Pontiffs* being out-of-step, by indicating a date of AD 610. There is a strong indication that the compiler of the *Book of Pontiffs* overlooked the fact that there had been a period of 5-6 years when Vigilius and Pelagius I were carrying out the duties of pope at the same time, but in different places [208].

Consistent with what was reported by Paul the Deacon in *The History of the Lombards*, the *Book of Pontiffs* noted that, after Gregory replaced Pelagius as pontiff, imperial forces regained control of cities that had been lost to the Lombards in the territories between Rome and Ravenna. It said nothing about Gregory's attempts to establish good relations between the Lombards and the Romans (mentioned by Paul the Deacon), but a surviving letter from Gregory to the Lombard king, Agilulf, thanks him for agreeing to a treaty, and another to Theodelinda, wife of Agilulf, thanks her for her efforts in helping to establish peace in the region. As to events elsewhere, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that, during Gregory's pontificate, Mellitus, Augustine and John were sent as missionaries to the English nation (Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History* dating this to AD 596, which is a further indication that Gregory must have been ordained as pope several years before that date) [209].

From the above, it is apparent that, although there may uncertainties about the precise dates for certain popes, the overall timescale of the papacy from Damasus, who was pope during the reign of Emperor Theodosius I, to Pope Gregory the Great in the reign of Emperor Maurice, is entirely consistent with the timescales for the same period indicated in histories of the Visigoths and the Franks, as well as the Roman Emperors themselves.

4.1.3 Discussion: the Chronology of the Period from the Earliest Popes to Gregory the Great

Absolutely nothing in what the surviving historical sources say about the popes up to and including Gregory the Great provides any meaningful support for Gunnar Heinsohn's theory that the period conventionally dated as running from AD 1 to AD 230 was a duplicate of that running from AD 290 to AD 520, the confusion arising because of a major catastrophic event which occurred shortly after the end of this duplicate period. The *Book of Pontiffs* gives details of 66 consecutive pontificates from that of St Peter, said to have been martyred in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero, to that of Gregory the Great, who died in Rome during the reign of Emperor Phocas, without any mention of a major catastrophic event having occurred during this period.

The first component of Heinsohn's duplicate period (actually a triplicate period, but only two of its components are relevant here) would have ended around the time of the pontificate of Pontius, who, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, was the 19th pope, and served during the reign of Alexander Severus. Although information about the earliest popes came largely from unverifiable Christian tradition, one major Christian writer, Ireneaeus, was active during the second half of this period, being a contemporary of Eleuther (said by the *Book of Pontiffs* to have been the 14th pope) and Emperor Marcus Aurelius, who, like Alexander Severus, reigned from Rome. According to Heinsohn, other Roman emperors were reigning in Constantinople throughout most of this period, but there is no mention of any of them, or of Constantinople, in the entries in the *Book of Pontiffs* for the first 19 popes.

The second component of Heinsohn's duplicate period would have included the popes from Gaius, the 29th pope, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, who was killed during the persecutions of Emperor Diocletian, to Hormisdas, said by the *Book of Pontiffs* to have been the 54th pope, living during the time of King Theodoric and Emperor Anastasius. Eusebius, Jerome, Prosper of Aquitaine, Hydatius and the compiler of the *Chronography of 354* were amongst the historians active during this period. These gave details of the popes from Gaius to Hormisdas generally in line with ones in the *Book of Pontiffs*, all of these sources consistently referring to them as "bishops of Rome", and mentioned emperors from Diocletian to Anastasius, none of whom reigned from Rome, in association with them, yet said absolutely nothing about any interaction of these popes with emperors from Augustus to Alexander Severus who, according to Heinsohn, lived in Rome during this same period. It is true that Constantinople was sometimes referred to as "New Rome", but details given in the historical sources leave not the slightest doubt that the authors were placing the activities of the popes from Gaius to Hormisdas, exactly like those up to and including Pontian, in Rome, Italy. There were frequent mentions of the popes living in the Lateran Palace and participating in activities in St Peter's Basilica, as well as other well-known churches in Rome, and also references to roads with familiar Roman names, as well as the River Tiber. Descriptions of events away from the city similarly made it clear that the home of the popes was south of Tuscany and the Alps, but north of Sicily and a long way from Constantinople. In addition to the written evidence, archaeological evidence supports the belief that many popes, from at least Leo I onwards (Leo being the 47th pope, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*) were buried in Old St Peter's Basilica (whose construction began during the reign of Constantine the Great), but their remains were subsequently transferred to the current St Peter's Basilica when the old basilica was demolished to make way for the new one during the 15th and 16th centuries, with many of the tombs being destroyed in the process [210]. This destruction made it impossible to assign precise dates to the burials of many individual popes, but the fact that most popes were buried in Rome seems to be beyond question. There is no reason to think that some or all of the popes from St Peter to Pontian were duplicates of the popes from Gaius to Hormisdas, because

the names and other details are completely different and, in any case, that scenario would require Gaius to have been the Christian bishop of Rome before the arrival of St Peter and, moreover, before Jesus Christ began his ministry in Judaea. The notion that there may have been two separate lines of Christian bishops in Rome for more than two centuries, without any historian (including ones who were living at the time) being aware of it, seems no more plausible and, if the popes from Gaius to Hormisdas were *not* living in Rome, then where *were* they living? Heinsohn and his supporters need to find a plausible scenario to satisfy the evidence summarised above.

Similarly, whilst Steve Mitchell's theory that Bede had grossly over-estimated the timescale from the accession of Emperor Marcian to that of Emperor Maurice, in saying that it was 133 years, may have been perfectly plausible if the evidence from England was considered in isolation, has once again been shown to be invalidated by taking into account evidence from elsewhere. As we have seen above, the Council of Chalcedon was convened at the request of Pope Leo I during the consulship of Asturius and Protogenes (AD 449) and presided over by the new emperor, Marcian, in the following year, whilst a variety of evidence indicates that Gregory the Great became pope shortly before the 9th year of Emperor Maurice in the year corresponding to AD 604, generally consistent with the timescale indicated by Bede.

4.2 Popes from Gregory the Great to Silvester II

4.2.1 Popes from Gregory the Great to Leo III

The Roman Pantheon, built during the reign of Emperor Hadrian and converted by Pope Boniface IV, with the approval of Emperor Phocas, into the Church of St Mary and the Martyrs

In view of what has been presented previously (in section 4.1.2), the surviving historical sources, taken as a whole, provide strong justification for continuing our account of *Book of Pontiffs* entries on the understanding that Pope Gregory I (Gregory the Great) died in AD 604, to within a year. The *Book of Pontiffs* goes on to give a total of 74 years from the death of Gregory I (the 66th pope) to the ordination of Agatho (the 81st), which would therefore have taken place in AD 678. Looking at the individual pontiffs in that sequence, the first after Gregory was Sabinian, who was pope for 1½ years, during which there was a famine in Rome, and peace was made with the Lombard people. Boniface III then held the office for almost a year, obtaining an agreement from Emperor Phocas that St Peter's, not the church of Constantinople, should be regarded as the head of all churches. Boniface IV succeeded Boniface III, and was pope for nearly 7 years, which would take us into the period of Illig's three phantom centuries. During the pontificate of Boniface IV, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, there was a serious famine, plague and floods in Italy, and, regarding ecclesiastical matters, the pope secured permission from Phocas to convert the Roman Pantheon into a church (St Mary and the Martyrs). Bede, in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, wrote that Mellitus, bishop of London, whilst on visit to Rome, sat in with a council of Italian bishops convened by Pope Boniface in February in the 8th year of Phocas, AD 610, to discuss regulations for monastic life and discipline. After Boniface IV, as reported by the *Book of Pontiffs*, Deusdedit then became pope and held the Apostolic See for 3 years. In his time, the patrician and imperial chamberlain, Eleutherius, was sent from Constantinople to Ravenna and Naples to deal with some rebels and, in the course of doing so, he came to Rome and was well-received by Deusdedit. Shortly afterwards, there was a major earthquake (in indiction 6, corresponding to AD 618) followed by an epidemic. After Deusdedit, Boniface V then became pope. According to the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs* (re-set at the death of Gregory I, as discussed above), that would have occurred in AD 618. Bede dated the ordination of Boniface V to AD 619. The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to report that Boniface was pope for 5 years. During this period, Eleutherius, who had been sent to crush a rebellion against the emperor, became a rebel himself. He claimed the title of king and headed for Rome, but was intercepted by soldiers from Ravenna and killed. Boniface was succeeded by Honorius, who held the See for 13 years, putting a great deal of effort into building new churches, as well as renovating St Peter's. According to Bede, Honorius wrote to warn the Irish against being in error in computing the dates of Easter, and he also sent a letter to his

namesake, Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, this being dated to June in the 24th year of Emperor Heraclius, the 7th indiction, AD 634. The *Book of Pontiffs* said that, when Pope Honorius died, Severinus was elected as the next pope, but there was a delay of over a year before he was ordained. During that period, the Lateran Episcopium was plundered by the patrician Isaac, the governor of the imperial territories in Italy, who sent a portion of the stolen wealth to Emperor Heraclius in Constantinople. After his delayed ordination, Severinus went on to serve as pope for 2 months, and was succeeded by John IV, who carried out good works during his 2-year term of office. (As recounted by Bede, John also advised the Irish as to the correct way to determine Easter, and warned them against a revival of the Pelagian heresy.) John, who was from Dalmatia, ended a sequence of twenty Italian-born popes [211].

Theodore, a Greek, then became pope, holding the Apostolic See for 6½ years. He, like his successors, had to contend with the fact that influential leaders of the Eastern Church had become believers in a development of monophysitism, the doctrine of monothelitism (i.e. that Christ had only a single will, in contrast to the orthodox doctrine that Christ had two wills, one human and one divine). Paul, bishop of Constantinople, like his predecessors Sergius and Pyrrhus, and also Cyrus, bishop of Alexandria, were advocates of this view. The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that Pyrrhus, former bishop of Constantinople, came to Rome from Africa during the papacy of Theodore and renounced his previous belief in monothelitism, but then changed his mind. Theodore therefore condemned him under the bond of an anathema. After this, Theodore wrote to Bishop Paul in Constantinople, admonishing him and asking him to correct his falsehood and return to the orthodox faith of the Catholic Church. However, that failed to have any effect, so Paul was excommunicated [212].

Theodore then died (in the year which, following the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs* from the death of Gregory I, would have been AD 647), and Martin, an Italian, became pope, going on to serve for 6 years. His immediate duty seemed clear – he had to eliminate monothelitism, and he began to plan a way of achieving this. Theophanes wrote in his chronicle, in the entry for AM (AE) 6141 (AD 649/50), the 8th year of emperor Constans II, that Martin the pope convened a synod at Rome against the monothelites. Largely consistent with that, Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History* quoted from a letter concerned with the ongoing controversy about the single or dual nature of Christ, which referred to decisions made at a council in Rome chaired by pope Martin in the 9th year of Emperor Constantine (i.e. Constans), indiction 8 (corresponding to AD 650). However, convening a synod to address the problem of monothelitism was in itself a dangerous act, because Emperor Constans, fearful that the controversy would put further strains on an empire that already seemed close to collapse (particularly because of the threat from the Saracens), had issued a *typus* banning any discussion of that particular subject. This *typus* infuriated many Christians, including the hierarchy of the Roman church, because, as the *Book of Pontiffs* pointed out, it implied that the two doctrines were of equal value, not that one was right and the other wrong. So the synod went ahead, and the views of Cyrus, Sergius, Pyrrhus and Paul were condemned by the 105 bishops who attended. Constans sent the patrician Olympius to be governor of the Italian territories, with instructions to enforce the *typus* by isolating Pope Martin from the rest of the Roman church, using the threat of military intervention if necessary. However, not even that resulted in a schism – pope, bishops and clergy all remained united on the issue. Even an attempt to kill Martin came to nothing, leading Olympius to conclude that God was protecting Martin, so he went off to fight the Muslims in Sicily, and eventually died of a disease. Emperor Constans then appointed another governor, Theodore (surnamed Calliopas), ordering him to have Martin arrested and brought to Constantinople. That duly happened, but Martin still refused to agree to the *typus*. He was exiled to Chersona, where he died not long afterwards [213].

Eugene I, the new pope, who was another Italian, avoided taking any public stance on monothelitism, but he could not avoid being drawn into the controversy. Peter, the new bishop of Constantinople, sent, as was the custom, a synodic letter to Rome, but used vague and obscure expressions in it, to avoid giving his personal views on monothelitism. When the contents were read out in the basilica of St Mary Major, the congregation and clergy were so incensed that they would not let Pope Eugene leave until he had agreed to reject the letter. Before the emperor (who had other problems to deal with) took any action over the matter, Eugene died, after less than 3 years in office. He was succeeded as pope by Vitalian, who held the See for 14½ years. During the papacy of Vitalian, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Emperor Constans travelled along the coast from Constantinople to Athens and then came to Italy, reaching Benevento and then Naples in indiction 6 (corresponding to AD 663). In the same year, he came to Rome with his army and had friendly meetings with Pope Vitalian, presenting gifts for St Peter's. However, after saying farewell to the pontiff, he stayed in Rome for a further 12 days, whilst his army stripped the city of its bronze decorations and roof-tiles, dispatching them to Constantinople together with other valuable materials. Constans himself then returned to Naples and, in the following year, moved on to Sicily, where he set up his court in Syracuse, introducing brutal taxes to extort money from the people of Calabria, Sicily, Africa and Sardinia, and stripping everything of value from the churches. Eventually, in July of indiction 12 (corresponding to AD 669), Constans was murdered in his bath. The chronicle of Theophanes, in the entry for AM (AE) 6160 (AD 668/9), similarly recorded that Constans was assassinated at this time, "in the Syracusan bath-house called Daphne". Amongst the reasons given by Theophanes for the fact that Constans had become so

hated, even by the people of Constantinople, was his capture and exile of Pope Martin, and also his torture and exile of other opponents of monothelitism, especially Maximus the confessor and his followers. Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, did not mention the death of Constans or the exile of Pope Martin, but he referred to Pope Vitalian, saying that Theodore was consecrated bishop by Vitalian in Rome on 26 March AD 668 and then sent to Britain to fill the vacant position of archbishop of Canterbury [214].

The *Book of Pontiffs* continued by saying that, after the death of Vitalian, Adeodatus became pope, and held the Apostolic See for 4 years. During that time, Mezezius, who was in Sicily with the imperial army, rebelled and declared himself king, but his head, separated from the rest of his body, was soon on its way to Constantinople. Soon afterwards, the Saracens conquered Syracuse, and sent to Alexandria much of the booty that had been accumulated by Constans. Donus (an Italian, like his four predecessors) succeeded Adeotatus as pope, serving for 1½ years. Soon after his election, a bright star appeared in the sky for 3 months and, when it disappeared, a "very great mortality ensued from the east". Some surviving versions of the *Book of Pontiffs* say that Donus became pope 95½ years after the ordination of Gregory the Great, which is consistent, to within a year, with the sequence of papacies and vacant intervals noted in the work [215].

And so we come to Pope Agatho, a monk from Sicily, who served for 2½ years. As noted above, if the succession of pontifical periods and vacancies recorded in the *Book of Pontiffs* from the time of the death of Pope Gregory I are correct, Agatho would have been ordained in AD 678, and that is in line with other evidence. No sooner had Agatho assumed office than he received a mandate signed by Emperor Constantine IV (and his brothers Heraclius and Tiberius, who had imperial titles but no power) requesting and urging the pope to send representatives to Constantinople to try to achieve unity between the eastern and western churches. In fact this mandate had been sent to Agatho's predecessor, Donus, who was now dead, but Agatho took it upon himself to implement it. However, first there was a need to carry out some preparatory work. Possibly in connection with this, Bede, in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, mentioned that the venerable John was sent by Agatho to England with the decisions made at Martin's synod, to ascertain the views of the English and report back to him. John was present at the synod of Hatfield which, according to Bede, was held in AD 680. Coincidentally, Wilfrid, bishop of Northumbria, had set off for Rome to ask the pope to intervene in a dispute that had resulted in him being expelled from his bishopric. Bede says that Agatho found in Wilfrid's favour, and then asked him to join with 125 other western bishops in a synod summoned to combat monothelitism. Bede merely added that Wilfrid expressed appropriate views before returning home, and that the synod confirmed Agatho's decision that he was a worthy bishop, but clearly this synod was a stage in an important process. The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to mention that a party of bishops, deacons, priests and monks was sent by Agatho to Constantinople, arriving there on 10 November, indiction 9 (corresponding to AD 680). After various ceremonials, the main proceedings began on 22 November in the basilica of Trullus within the royal palace, in the presence of the emperor. A synodal letter from Agatho was read out, making the point that the views being expressed by him were fully supported by 125 western bishops. Discussions went on for several months but, eventually, on 25 February of the following year (AD 681), George, the current bishop of Constantinople, made clear his support for the orthodox position, leaving Macarius, bishop of Antioch, and a few of his supporters, isolated as advocates of monothelitism. This small group was sent into exile, with Theophanes, abbot of Baias, being ordained as the new bishop of Antioch. A better-known Theophanes, the writer of the chronicle, said in the entry for AM (AE) 6172 (AD 680/1), "In this year the 6th holy ecumenical council of 289 bishops and fathers was convened in Constantinople, in accordance with the decision of the pious Emperor Constantine". Strangely, as part of a panegyric about the virtues of Constantine IV, he gave the details of the proceedings in the entry for the previous year, but these were entirely consistent with what was said in the *Book of Pontiffs* [216].

After the death of Agatho, around the time of the end of the ecumenical council, the *Book of Pontiffs* stated that Leo II, another Sicilian, became pope, occupying the Apostolic See for slightly less than 1 year. His term was followed by a series of similarly-short pontifical periods, until the papacy of Sergius. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, there were just 9 years and 5 months between the ordination of Agatho and that of Sergius, placing the latter event towards the end of AD 687. During the short papacy of Leo II, the church of Ravenna was restored to the Apostolic See of St Peter's, after a long period when it had tried to orientate itself towards the east. Following Leo, Benedict II, an Italian, held the See for 10 months, during which time the emperor conceded that the person elected to the Apostolic See should become pontiff immediately, without requiring confirmation from Constantinople. John V, a Syrian, was then pope for almost 2 years. During this period, Justinian II became emperor, on the death of his father in September of indiction 14 (corresponding to AD 685). Consistent with that, Theophanes said that Justinian II came to the throne in AM (AE) 6177 (AD 685/6). The *Book of Pontiffs* then noted that Conan, born in Sicily but of Thracian descent, succeeded John V and was pope for 11 months. During the election, the imperial army had supported one senior priest and the clergy another, until Conan's name was put forward as a compromise candidate. After Conan was consecrated, Justinian wrote to assure him that he would abide by all the agreements made at the 6th ecumenical council "undefiled and unshaken for ever" [217].

Following the death of Conan, Sergius, a Syrian, emerged as pope in a similar fashion to his predecessor, after a hostile dispute between the supporters of two rival candidates had reached deadlock. Sergius then held the Apostolic See for almost 14 years. According to Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Cadwalla of the West Saxons travelled to Rome to be baptised by Sergius in AD 689, and then, in AD 696, Sergius consecrated Willibrord (Clement) as archbishop of the Frisian nation (an event also mentioned in the *Book of Pontiffs*). Willibrord himself, in a note dated AD 728 (which was inserted into his calendar at the Abbey of Echternach in what is now Luxembourg) said he was ordained by Sergius in AD 695. The account of the papacy of Sergius in the *Book of Pontiffs* highlighted a controversy arising from the aftermath of a decision of Justinian II to convene a council in Constantinople. No precise details were given, but this must have been the "quinisext council", so-called because its purpose was to complete unfinished business from the 5th ecumenical council (convened by Justinian I when Pope Vigilius was a captive in Constantinople) and the 6th ecumenical council (convened by Constantine IV, as mentioned above), in addressing issues of church governance and discipline. There was no re-opening of the doctrinal issues considered previously. The first canon of the quinisext council states explicitly, "We agree to guard untouched the faith of the 6th holy synod". Similarly, as noted previously, Justinian had written to Conan, the predecessor of Sergius, to say that he would abide by the decisions made at the 6th ecumenical council. Consistent with that, Theophanes wrote in his chronicle that those who said that it was not until four years after the accession of Justininan (corresponding to AD 690/1, the supposed time of the quinisext council) that the enactments expressed by the members of the 6th council became authoritative were vainly and foolishly speaking nonsense. Nevertheless, aspects of the agreements made at the quinisext council about church governance and discipline were clearly controversial. The *Book of Pontiffs* said that the decisions made by the council, signed by the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch (Paul, Peter and George, respectively), were sent to Rome to be signed and confirmed by Sergius, but when he saw what had been decided, Sergius concluded that the west had been duped, for certain chapters which went outside the usages of the church had been annexed to the acts. He refused to sign, or to agree to accept, the canons. Justinian sent imperial troops to arrest Sergius and bring him to Constantinople, but the Roman people turned out in large numbers to defend the pope, and the soldiers were reluctant to carry out their orders. Zacharias, the officer sent to carry out the arrest was in fear of his life, and fled, so Sergius remained free. Co-incidentally, Justinian was then deposed as emperor (by Leontius, in AM (AE) 6187 (AD 695/6), according to Theophanes), and no further attempt was made to arrest the pope. Sergius eventually died in the reign of Emperor Tiberius III [218].

John VI, a Greek, was then pope for 3 years. On the basis of the *Book of Pontiffs* timescale from Gregory the Great, John would have been ordained in AD 701. During his papacy, Theophylact, governor of the imperial territories in Italy, came from Sicily to visit Rome. Crowds gathered to give him a hostile reception, but the pope intervened personally to avoid the situation getting out of control. Then Gisulf, duke of Benevento, travelled through Campania towards Rome, causing much burning and devastation. While he was building an encampment at Horrea, near Rome, Pope John sent representatives out with gifts, and also money to ransom all the captives Gisulf had taken, so he returned home with his army [219].

John VII, another Greek, was the next pope, serving for 2½ years. During his papacy, Aripert II, king of the Lombards, formally agreed to restore to the legal ownership of the Apostolic See the patrimony of the Cottian Alps. Also, the deposed emperor, Justinian II, emerged from his exile in the Crimea and, after travelling through Bulgaria to Constantinople, successfully re-claimed his empire. Leontius (who had deposed Justinian) and Tiberius III (who in turn had deposed Leontius) were both publically executed (in AM (AE) 6198 (AD 706/7), according to Theophanes). One of Justinian's first acts on regaining the throne was to send to Rome the document which Pope Sergius had refused to sign, asking John to make clear to him which of the terms he was prepared to ratify, and those which he found unacceptable. John, in a state of terror, returned the document without any emendations at all. He died soon afterwards, in October of indiction 6 (corresponding to AD 707). His successor, Sisinnius, a Syrian, served for only 20 days before dying suddenly, after which Constantine, another Syrian, became pope. Constantine held the Apostolic See for 7 years. He ordained Felix as archbishop of Ravenna, but Felix then refused to give the usual undertakings to the pope, wishing to have independence of action. Similarly, it seems that the people of Ravenna were trying at this time to become more independent of Constantinople. Such presumptuousness infuriated Justinian, who sent the Sicilian army to punish the leaders of the rebels. Felix was blinded and sent into exile. Afterwards, Justinian sent Pope Constantine a mandate, asking him to travel to Constantinople. The *Book of Pontiffs* gave no reason for this, but it is generally thought that the aim was reach agreement on the ratification of decisions reached at the quinisext council. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Constantine left Rome in October of indiction 9 (AD 710) and reached Constantinople in the following year. Justinian made a great public display of affection and respect for Constantine, and asked the pontiff to pray for his sins. Eventually, he renewed all the church's privileges and gave Constantine leave to return home. He arrived back in Rome in October of indiction 10 (AD 711), amidst much rejoicing. However, 3 months later came the news that Justinian had been assassinated and Philippicus, an advocate of monothelitism, was now emperor. According to Theophanes, this occurred in AM (AE) 6203 (AD 711/2). For the Romans, the only positive aspect

was that Felix, having repented, was restored to his position as archbishop of Ravenna, accepting the authority of Constantine as pope. Then word came from Sicily that Philippicus had been deposed, the new emperor being Anastasius II, who had orthodox religious views. Anastasius soon issued a mandate which proclaimed the orthodox faith and acknowledged the outcomes of the 6th ecumenical council. Constantine died during this reign and was succeeded as pope by Gregory II, an Italian. The earliest *Book of Pontiffs* entry for Constantine did not give a precise date for his death, but a later revision said it was in April of indiction 13 (AD 715) [220].

According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, there was a period of 36 years and 10 months from the ordination of Agatho to that of Gregory II. As we have seen, it is likely that Agatho became pope in AD 678 so, on that basis (and consistent with other evidence), Gregory's term of office would have begun in AD 715. The *Book of Pontiffs* said he went on to serve for almost 16 years. Near the start of that period, Emperor Anastasius II sent a fleet of ships to attack the Saracens in Alexandria, but some of them split off and returned to Constantinople, where the troops they were carrying deposed Anastasius (who entered a monastery) and placed Theodosius III on the imperial throne. Theophanes in his chronicle dated that event to AM (AE) 6207 (AD 714/5). The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to say that as soon as Theodosius III entered Constantinople, he restored a monument knocked down by Philippicus on which the six holy synods were depicted. Paul the Deacon suggested it was Anastasius who had restored the monument but, regardless, it seemed at the time (as noted in the *Book of Pontiffs*) that Christian orthodoxy had finally triumphed. The Saracens then besieged Constantinople for 2 years, but eventually, when Leo III had become emperor (forcing Theodosius, who subsequently became a cleric, to hand over power to him), hunger and disease forced them to retreat (as Theophanes described in his entry for AM (AE) 6209, i.e. AD 716/7, the first year of Leo's reign). By this time, the Moors had entered Spain, and they then attempted to move into Gaul, but were driven back by Franks led, in the first instance, by Eudo, Duke of Aquitaine [221].

In another part of Western Europe, the *Book of Pontiffs* said that, through Bishop Boniface, Pope Gregory II preached the message of salvation in Germany. Gregory's interactions with Boniface are well known from Willibald's *Life of Boniface* and, more directly, from their correspondence. Willibald said that Boniface (originally Winfrid of Wessex) had gone as a young man to be a missionary to the Frisians, but his work had been frustrated because the country was in turmoil as a result of a dispute between King Radbod and Charles Martel, the leader of the Franks. Boniface returned home to England, but wished to resume his work in the German region when circumstances were suitable, and went to Rome to ask for the pope's approval. Gregory gave it and formally wrote to Boniface in May in the 3rd year of Emperor Leo III, indiction 2 (AD 719) to entrust him with a roving mission to the heathen in Germany. Three years later, Boniface sent a messenger to Rome to report on his progress, and he was then summoned to a meeting with the pontiff. After receiving Boniface's profession of faith, Gregory announced that he intended to make him a bishop (albeit one without a specific diocese), the ordination taking place not long afterwards. Bishop Boniface duly signed an oath of loyalty to the church and the pope in November of the 6th year of Leo III, indiction 6 (AD 722). So Boniface set off for Germany, being well-received by Liutprand, king of the Lombards, on the way. In the meantime, Gregory wrote letters to tell the German people that he had invested Boniface with Episcopal authority, and also sent one to Charles Martel commending Boniface, and requesting the Frankish leader to help Boniface with his work in Germany. As a consequence, Charles sent out multiple copies of a letter saying that he had taken Boniface into his protection. A few years later, Boniface wrote to ask Gregory for guidance on aspects of his work, and Gregory responded in December in the 10th year of Leo III, indiction 10 (AD 726) [222].

However, Gregory's main preoccupations had been with events in Italy and Constantinople. Early in his papacy, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Gregory persuaded Liutprand, king of the Lombards, to confirm the restoration of the patrimony of the Cottian Alps. The Lombards were giving the impression they wanted peace, but they then seized the Castrum of Cumae (which controlled the only remaining land route between Rome and Naples). Gregory urged and advised the Lombards to hand it back, and offered gifts to help in the process, but they were intransigent. As a result, Gregory felt he had no choice but to resort to force, and he devised a plan by which John, duke of Naples, could lead his troops and take the Castrum under cover of darkness. This surprise attack proved successful, but the pope nevertheless paid the ransom he had previously offered, to bring the matter to a successful conclusion. The Lombards then seized the Castrum of Narni from the duchy of Rome, and went on to besiege Ravenna and capture its port, Classis. However, these were all attacks on imperial territories, and the current emperor, the strong-armed Syrian, Leo III, was being seen increasingly as the main enemy, by both the papacy and the Lombards. Leo wanted to introduce more troops to tighten his grip on Italy, and get the Italians to pay for the privilege, by heavy taxation and stripping the churches of their wealth. The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that, because of Gregory's efforts to resist these measures, plans were made to kill him and substitute a more compliant pontiff. Firstly, Marinus, who held the duchy of Rome, was ordered to encourage a group of conspirators to assassinate Gregory, but they could find no opportunity, and Marinus had to leave Rome because of his arthritis. Paul was then installed as governor of the imperial territories with orders to ensure that the would-be assassins completed their task, but the conspiracy was revealed and the plotters killed or otherwise rendered harmless. Paul tried again, assembling a larger group of men from Ravenna and elsewhere, and sending them to murder Gregory, but Romans

and Lombards stood side-by-side at the Milvian bridge and prevented them getting close to the pontiff. Gregory had survived, but the relationship between the emperor and the Roman church soon deteriorated further. Leo revealed himself to be an iconoclast, and set in motion a process that would require all images, whether of God or saints, to be destroyed. Theophanes dated this action to AM (AE) 6217 (AD 724/5), and added that Pope Gregory then stopped the payment of all tribute from Italy and wrote a letter to Leo saying that it was not proper for the emperor to command the introduction of innovations in the ancient doctrines of the church. The *Book of Pontiffs* said that, although opinion was divided in Ravenna, there was wholehearted support for Gregory's stance against Leo throughout the other imperial territories in Italy. Paul, the governor, was killed, and when Duke Exhilaratus tried to incite the people of Campania to get rid of the pontiff, he and his son were also killed. The emperor then sent the patrician, Eutychius, with orders to succeed where Paul and others had failed. Eutychius tried to bribe some Lombard dukes, as well as King Liutprand, to side with the emperor against the pontiff, but was told firmly that the Romans and the Lombards were bound together like brothers in the tie of faith. Nevertheless, when the Lombards seized the hill-town of Sutri from imperial control, Gregory urged them to hand it back. Eventually Liutprand presented it to the papacy, calling it a "donation", although in fact Gregory had handed over many "gifts" to enable the transfer to take place. The three-way relationship between the papacy, the Lombards and the empire remained a complex one. The *Book of Pontiffs* then went on to say that Constantinople too was in turmoil at this time, with many people trying to prevent the removal of images from the churches, some of these protestors suffering execution or mutilation. Germanus, the patriarch of Constantinople, refused to give his assent to the ban on icons, so was removed from his post by Leo and replaced by Anastasius, who was more willing to support the emperor. Theophanes dated this replacement of patriarchs to AM (AE) 6221 (AD 729/30). In Rome, Gregory remained beyond the reach of Leo, but was approaching the end of his life. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, he died in February in indiction 14 (AD 731) [223].

Gregory II was succeeded by Gregory III, a Syrian like the emperor, but with a different character, being described by the *Book of Pontiffs* as "gentle". On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, he would have become pope in AD 731. Gregory held the See for almost 11 years, during the reign of Leo III and into that of Constantine V. The entry about him in the *Book of Pontiffs* concentrated largely on his work in building and renovating churches. Other matters were only briefly touched upon, and were mainly concerned with events in Italy during the early part of his papacy. On his accession, Gregory wrote to inform Constantinople that he was now pope (the last pontiff, it is believed, to have done so), and with this routine letter he also included a warning, along the lines of the one sent by his predecessor, about the need to move away from the error of the iconoclast doctrine. However the bearer, a priest called George, was too frightened to hand over the warning letter, as he admitted on his return. He was sent back with it, but the letter was taken from him when he reached Sicily. So, Gregory held a synod in Rome, attended by 93 bishops including, significantly, Archbishop John V of Ravenna, at which it was agreed that anyone who advocated or practised the iconoclast doctrine should be excommunicated. Constantine, an officer of the church, was sent to Constantinople with reports from this synod, but again they were held back before reaching their destination. Letters in favour of the retention of images were dispatched from all parts of Italy, but failed to get beyond Sicily, their bearers being detained for lengthy periods and sent back with "outrageous dishonour". Eventually, Gregory sent a stern letter (to Emperor Leo, his son Constantine, and Patriarch Anastasius) urging the restoration of the orthodox faith which, although not stated explicitly in the *Book of Pontiffs*, effectively said that Italy would split from Constantinople unless that happened. The consequences were noted by Theophanes in his report for AM (AE) 6224 (AD 732/3). Emperor Leo, furious with the pope and at the defection of Italy, armed a great expedition and sent it against the pope and the Italians, but was put to shame when the fleet reached the Adriatic Sea. After that, Leo tried to extract even more tribute from the people of Sicily and Calabria (the only significant parts of Italy still under his control) [224].

The missionary work of Boniface in Germany was not mentioned in the *Book of Pontiffs* entry for Gregory III, but it is known from Willibald's account that, when he became pope, Boniface sent representatives to Rome to have discussions with him. Gregory, it soon transpired, was impressed with Boniface's work and wished it to continue. Indeed, he raised Boniface to the rank of archbishop, with jurisdiction over the German region, and gave him the authority to consecrate bishops. This was formally expressed in a letter which, together with the pallium, was carried back to Boniface by his representatives. Several years later, Boniface travelled to Rome for an extended visit, centred around discussions with Gregory. By this time Boniface was hoping to be able to settle down and spend more time in prayer and meditation, but Gregory wanted him to continue to move from area to area, depending on where he was most needed at the time. This was made clear in a letter to Boniface written in October of the 23rd year of Leo, indiction 8 (AD 739). In this letter, Gregory also asked Boniface to attend a forthcoming Council on the banks of the Danube, to act as his representative, vested with Apostolic authority. So Boniface returned to Germany, being accommodated on the way by King Liutprand, as on the previous occasion [225].

Gregory's interactions with the Lombards were introduced in his entry in the *Book of Pontiffs*, and then developed in the entry for his successor, Zacharias, to set the scene for the latter's own dealings with them. Problems arose

for the papacy when Transamund II, the Lombard duke of Spoleto, began to besiege the Castrum of Gallese, in the duchy of Rome. Gregory was so concerned about this (because its capture by the Lombards would give them control of the road between Rome and Ravenna) that he bribed Transamund to leave it alone. He then entered into an alliance with both Spoleto and Benevento. That infuriated Liutprand, who attacked Transamund and forced him to seek refuge in the city of Rome. Stephen, the duke of Rome, refused to hand Transamund over to Liutprand, so the Lombard king blockaded the city and also seized the cities of Amelia, Orte, Bomarzo and Blera from the Roman duchy. Gregory sent messages to Charles Martel, asking him for help against the Lombard threat. (Gregory's final letter, and a response from Charles which avoided any commitment, were the earliest of a series of exchanges between popes and Frankish rulers copied into a manuscript of the *Codex Carolinus* prepared, on the instruction of Charles Martel's grandson, Charlemagne, in AD 791). No Frankish troops arrived in Italy. Nevertheless, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Liutprand returned to his palace in Pavia in August of indiction 8 (AD 739). This was around the time when, as recorded in Frankish chronicles, Charles Martel was fighting against the Moors in Provence, a short campaign in which Paul of Deacon said that Liutprand responded to Charles Martel's request to provide support. Regardless of what precisely happened between Charles, Liutprand and Gregory at this time, the *Book of Pontiffs* said that Transamund, in alliance with the army of the Roman duchy, then emerged and recovered the cities of Spoleto that had been taken over by Liutprand. However, at this point, with Transamund having failed to restore to the Roman duchy the four cities that had been captured by Liutprand, and with the Lombard king preparing his counter-attack, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Gregory died, in November of indiction 10 (AD 741) [226].

Zacharias, a Greek, then became pope, serving for just over 10 years. Following the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, he would have been ordained in AD 741. As noted in the previous section, Boniface wrote to congratulate him on his appointment, referring to the fact that Carloman, son of Charles Martel, was now ruler of the eastern Franks, and Zacharias responded in April of the 2nd year of Constantine V, indiction 11 (AD 743). The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that, when Zacharias became pope, he sent messengers carrying letters of good faith to the church in Constantinople and to Emperor Constantine V. However, when they arrived in the imperial city, the pope's representatives found that, as soon as the emperor had left Constantinople to fight the Muslims, a usurper, Artabastus, had seized the throne. That situation was soon to change, for Constantine returned with his army and plucked out the eyes of Artabastus and his sons, sending their supporters into exile. According to Theophanes, Constantine became emperor in AM (AE) 6233 (AD 741/2), and was usurped by Artabastus in the same year, but recovered his throne and blinded Artabastus two years later. The *Book of Pontiffs* account continued by recording that Constantine then sought out the papal envoy and pardoned him (presumably for having succumbed to pressure to recognise Artabastus), as well as agreeing to the donation of two estates in central Italy to the Apostolic See [227].

After his ordination, Zacharias was quick to address the problem of the Lombards, sending an embassy to Liutprand to try to persuade him to return the four cities to the Roman duchy, and he agreed to do so. Then, when Liutprand moved against Transamund, Zacharias took a different line from that of his predecessor, and persuaded the army of the duchy of Rome to support the king. Transamund had little choice but to surrender to Luitprand. However, Liutprand showed no readiness to restore the four cities to the Romans, so Zacharias set off to confront him in Spoleto, where he was staying. Zacharias was escorted into the duchy, and received by the king in the city of Terni. The pope asked him to cease his hostile campaigns, and eventually he confirmed the return of the four cities with a written donation. He also returned other land seized from the duchy of Rome, including territory around Sutri, and agreed a 20-year peace treaty with the duchy. Zacharias then travelled to the various cities with representatives of Liutprand, and each was formally handed over to him. That process was accomplished in indiction 10 (AD 741/2). However, no sooner had Liutprand agreed peace with the duchy of Rome, than he began to ravage the province of Ravenna. Eutychius the governor and John the archbishop sought assistance from the pope, so Zacharias sent ambassadors to Liutprand, asking him to return seized territory, including the Castrum of Césena, to Ravenna. Even though gifts were offered, Liutprand remained unmoved. Hence, Zacharias left Duke Stephen to look after Rome (which implies that, by this time, the pope had become the effective ruler of the Roman duchy) and travelled to Pavia for a face-to-face meeting with Liutprand. At Liutprand's invitation, Zacharias celebrated mass at St Peter's basilica in that city, and negotiations started on the following day. Eventually, the Lombard king agreed to restore to Ravenna everything that had been seized from them, except for part of the Castrum of Césena, and Zacharias returned to Rome. Soon afterwards, word came that Liutprand had died and been replaced as king of the Lombards by his nephew Hildeprand and then, to the joy of the Romans and the Ravennates (who viewed the nephew and the uncle as being similarly ill-intentioned towards them), the Lombards quickly deposed Hildeprand and elected Ratchis, duke of Fruili, as their new king. Ratchis renewed the agreements made by Liutprand and Italy was at peace for a few years, but then the Lombards began to blockade Perrugia (a city on the military road from Rome to Ravenna, also lying between Spoleto and the Lombard territories in the northwest). Once again Zacharias, loaded with "gifts", set out on his travels, and persuaded Ratchis to return to the path of peace. However, immediately afterwards (no explanation being offered by the *Book of Pontiffs*),

Ratchis retired to a monastery. Similarly, at around the same time, Carloman (who, with his brother Pippin, was co-leader of the Franks) came to Rome to receive clerical status from Zacharias, after which he entered St Benedict's monastery at Monte Cassino. A few years later, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Zacharias died in March of indiction 5 (AD 752). Consistent with that (to within a year), several sets of annals compiled in Frankish monasteries reported that Zacharias died in AD 751 [228].

A priest called Stephen was elected to succeed Zacharias, but he died two days later, before he could be ordained, and has no separate entry in the *Book of Pontiffs*. The next pope is therefore regarded as Stephen II, who held the See for 5 years. On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, Stephen would have become pope in AD 752. After a lengthy period in which the popes had been almost exclusively Italian or Sicilian in origin, the sequence of ten pontiffs from John V to Zacharias included 5 Syrians, 3 Greeks and a Sicilian of Thracian ancestry but, with Stephen II, the earlier pattern was restored. In fact, with just a single exception (Stephen III, a Sicilian), the fifteen popes listed after Zacharias, i.e. from Stephen II to Hadrian II, which is where the continuous 108-pope sequence in the *Book of Pontiffs* terminated, were all of Roman origin. An apparent attempt to restore a significant eastern perspective to the Apostolic See had come to an end [229].

The *Book of Pontiffs* entry for Stephen II made it clear that, from the beginning, the pope's main temporal priority was to protect Rome from the threat of the Lombards, under their aggressive king Aistulf, the brother and successor of Ratchis. Perhaps because of its narrow focus on Rome, the *Book of Pontiffs* made no explicit mention of the fact that, by this time, as known from other sources, Aistulf had brought Spoleto and Benevento back firmly under the Lombardian crown, and had conquered Ravenna and many of the cities in the corridor between Ravenna and Rome. Nevertheless, the account clearly indicated that the duchy of Rome now stood isolated, in its attempts to withstand the attacks of the Lombards. Three months after Stephen's ordination, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*, he sent his brother Paul and other representatives to Aistulf, to try to negotiate an end to the "great persecution" of Rome and its subordinate cities by the Lombards. Apparently softened by the generous gifts brought by the Romans, Aistulf signed a peace treaty, binding for a period of 40 years. He kept his word for only four months, before renewing his attacks on Rome, making clear his intention to take over the whole of the province and extract a heavy tribute of a golden solidus a year from every inhabitant. At Stephen's request, the abbots of the monasteries of St Vincent and St Benedict (both in Benevento, and so subject indirectly to the Lombard king) tried to persuade Aistulf to abide by the terms of the peace treaty he had signed, but to no effect. Stephen then received an envoy from Constantinople, who was carrying a mandate urging Aistulf to restore to the empire all the lands he had seized. The pope arranged for his brother Paul to accompany the imperial envoy to Ravenna, where Aistulf was staying, but it was a wasted journey. When the envoy returned to Constantinople, he carried with him a letter from Stephen asking the emperor to deliver the city of Rome and all of the province of Italy from the Lombards. Meanwhile, Aistulf continued his campaign against the Romans, threatening to kill the entire population of the ancient city unless they submitted to his control. The walled towns in the duchy were similarly harassed, and the castellum of Céccano actually taken over by the Lombards. Stephen realised that his various attempts to persuade or bribe Aistulf to take the path of peace were getting nowhere, and there seemed little likelihood of meaningful help coming from Constantinople, so he followed the example of Gregory III and turned to the Franks as possible protectors of Rome. Stephen sent a message carried by a pilgrim asking Pippin, king of the Franks, to send envoys to meet with him, and these duly arrived (one of them being Duke Autchar, Pippin's brother-in-law), with assurances of support for the papacy. Shortly afterwards, envoys from Constantinople also reached Rome, and gave Stephen an imperial mandate to make another attempt to restore Ravenna and other cities to the emperor. After securing promises of safe passage for all concerned, Stephen and the various envoys left Rome for Pavia in October of indiction 7 (AD 753). As they approached the Lombard capital, messengers from Aistulf came to advise Stephen not to raise the issue of the restoration of Ravenna and other cities to the empire, but the pope responded that he would not be intimidated in this way. Nevertheless, when Stephen arrived in Pavia, his arguments, tears and gifts all failed to move Aistulf [230].

So Stephen took his leave of the king and, accompanied by various bishops, deacons and other clergymen, headed across the Alps towards Gaul. When they reached the monastery of St Maurice in Agaune (in Switzerland), they were met by Duke Rothard and Abbot Fulrad (of Saint-Denis), who had been sent by Pippin to escort the pope to him at Ponthion, east of Paris. As they drew close to Ponthion, Pippin's son, Charles (the future Charlemagne) rode out to greet them. Pippin received Stephen warmly and, after listening in tears to his appeals for help for the Apostolic See and for the restoration of the imperial territories that had been seized by the Lombards, he swore an oath to do all that the pope had asked. It was now early January so, at Pippin's suggestion, Stephen continued travelling westwards to Paris, to spend the remainder of the winter at the monastery of Saint-Denis. There he confirmed Pippin and his two sons as kings of the Franks. When spring arrived, Pippin travelled to his palace at Quierzy to consult with his nobles about what action to take against the Lombards, and was eventually joined by Stephen, who had been taken seriously ill in Paris, but was now recovering. Also present was Carloman, Pippin's brother, who had become a monk based in Lombardian Benevento, and was now seemingly on a mission to try to dissuade the Franks from taking sides in the disputes raging in Italy. However, Pippin marginalised his brother,

who died soon afterwards (in Vienne). Thus Pippin, with the full support of his nobles, sent envoys to Aistulf, asking him to comply with all that the pope had asked. Aistulf refused, so Pippin dispatched his army towards Pavia. Even when confronted with the reality of Frankish troops fighting against him, Aistulf remained stubborn, despite being given opportunities to back down, but was soon obliged to surrender. At this point Aistulf agreed to comply with the demands made (on Stephen's behalf) by the Franks, and swore an oath to that effect, supported by the handing over of hostages. Following the wishes of Stephen, who wanted no more Christian blood to be spilt, Pippin accepted Aistulf's word, and returned home with his army. However, Aistulf had perjured himself, and took no action towards resolving the conflict. So Pippin led his army to Italy once again. In the meantime, imperial envoys arrived in Rome, and were informed of the current situation. They sailed to Marseilles and were able to meet up with Pippin in the Alpine regions. Once more they urged him to get Aistulf to restore Ravenna and other former imperial territories to Constantinople, and assured him that he would receive many wonderful gifts if he could accomplish that task. However, Pippin responded by saying that these territories could not be alienated in any way from the Apostolic See, and should be under the control of the pontiff. No amount of bribery would persuade him otherwise and, with that, he gave the imperial envoys leave to return to Constantinople. As before, Pippin then besieged Pavia, and forced Aistulf to surrender. On this occasion, in addition to getting the Lombard king to renew his oaths, Pippin arranged for Abbot Fulrad to visit each of the cities captured from the empire by the Lombards, and receive the keys to the gates, as well a number of hostages. Formal control of these cities was then transferred to the Apostolic See [231].

Not long afterwards, Aistulf was killed in a hunting accident. The Lombards then split into two factions, one wishing Ratchis, the brother of Aistulf, to return as king, and the other supporting the cause of Desiderius (duke of Istria and Tuscany). Stephen, Pippin and Fulrad were suspicious of Ratchis, because of previous history and family connections, and encouraged by the compliant attitude being shown by Desiderius. Hence they were happy when the Lombards agreed that Desiderius should be their next king. Shortly after the accession of Desiderius, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Pope Stephen died in April of indiction 10 (AD 757). Consistent with that, various Frankish monastery annals reported that Stephen died in AD 757 [232].

Stephen was succeeded by his brother, Paul, who held the Apostolic See for just over 10 years. Following the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, Paul would have been ordained in AD 757. Despite the length of his pontificate, Paul's biography in the *Book of Pontiffs* was brief, and dealt exclusively with church matters. There was no mention in it of his dealings with the Lombards or the Franks, and the only reference to Constantinople was a remark that Paul wrote several letters to Constantine V, urging him to restore the veneration of holy images. Nevertheless, other sources provide information about political events during this period. For example, copies of letters from Paul to Pippin incorporated into the AD 791 manuscript of the *Codex Carolinis* complain that, despite the commitments made by Aistulf and Desiderius, none of the imperial cities captured by the Lombards had, in any meaningful way, been transferred to Roman control and, furthermore, Desiderius was attempting to form an alliance with the emperor in Constantinople [233].

When Paul was close to death, Toto, Duke of Nepi, came to Rome with a band of armed men, aiming to establish his brother, Constantine, as the next pontiff. Constantine was a layman, so Toto's first act was to force George, bishop of Palestrina, to make him a cleric. On the following day, Constantine entered the Lateran palace and was consecrated deacon, after which he made everyone swear allegiance to him. Soon afterwards, following the death of Paul (which occurred in AD 767, according to the *Royal Frankish Annals* and several Frankish monastery annals, Constantine was ordained as pope. With Rome now firmly in the hands of Constantine and Toto (who became duke of Rome), a leading cleric, the *primicerius* Christopher, asked and received permission to leave the city with his son, Sergius, who held the lower rank of *secundicerius*, so they could become monks in Spoleto. However, rather than entering the monastery, Christopher and Sergius approached Theodosius, duke of Spoleto, with a request for him to take them to the Lombard king, Desiderius, in Pavia. There they conspired with Desiderius to free the Roman church from the control which Constantine and his brother had established by unconstitutional means. In due course, in late July in indiction 8 (AD 768), after Constantine had been pope for about a year, Sergius and a Lombard priest, Waldipert, accompanied by armed Lombardians from the cities of Rieti and Forcona, as well as the duchy of Spoleto, arrived unexpectedly before Rome at twilight and seized the Salarian Bridge. On the following day they crossed the Milvian Bridge and went past St Peter's Gate to St Pancras' Gate, which was opened from the inside by some kinsmen of Sergius, so they were able to enter the city. Toto, with a number of men, including his brother, Passibus, and the officers Demetrius and Gratiosus, rushed to the scene. Racipert, a renowned Lombardian warrior, confronted Toto, but was overcome by him. The other Lombardians were about to flee when Demetrius and Gratiosus (a relative of Sergius), who were standing behind Toto, thrust their lances into his back and killed him. Passibus then fled to the Lateran palace to tell his other brother, Constantine, what had happened, and the two men shut themselves inside St Caesarius' oratory, hoping they would be safe there. However, judges from the city's militia soon arrived, and Passibus and Constantine were ejected from the oratory and placed in confinement. The Lombardian cleric, Waldipert, apparently without the knowledge of Sergius, then assembled a group of Romans and took them to the monastery of St Vitus, where they

acclaimed a priest named Philip as pope and installed him in the Lateran palace. However, shortly afterwards, Christopher arrived in Rome and demanded his eviction. Gratiosus and some others did as Christopher asked, and Philip returned meekly to his monastery. Christopher then organised an appropriate process for the appointment of a new pope, and a priest called Stephen was elected unanimously. Constantine was formally deposed, and Stephen III ordained in his place. The Roman people then made a written confession, read out in St Peter's church, that they had sinned in accepting the unholy ordination of Constantine. Gratiosus, who had been made duke after the death of Toto, took some armed men to the Cella Nova monastery where Constantine was being confined, forced him out into the street and gouged out his eyes. Meanwhile, Waldipert was accused of plotting with Theodosius, duke of Spoleto, to murder Christopher and other leading Romans, so that the city could be betrayed to Desiderius. Waldipert tried to take refuge in a church but was forcibly evicted. His eyes were put out, his tongue cut off, and he died shortly afterwards from his injuries [234].

So Stephen III began his 3½-year pontificate towards the end of a period of turmoil, one year and one month after the death of Pope Paul. On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, Stephen would have been ordained in AD 768. Consistent with that, Theophanes said that Stephen became pope in AM (AE) 6259 (AD 767/8). (Note that, after a period of over 200 years, during which Theophanes's references to popes were very few, and often of a garbled nature, indicating his almost complete lack of knowledge of what had been happening in the west over that time-interval, he resumed regular mention of them at this point.) The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to note that, in an attempt to prevent problems such as those caused by Toto and his brother Constantine happening again, Stephen dispatched Sergius to Gaul to ask King Pippin to send to Rome a number of bishops who were well-versed in scripture and canon law, to take part in a council concerning the proper procedure for the election of a pope. It transpired that Pippin had recently died, but Sergius was warmly received by his sons, Charlemagne (as he was to become known) and Carloman, who shared their father's kingdom between them, and they agreed to send 12 appropriate bishops to Rome. These bishops arrived in April of indiction 7 (AD 769) and, together with a number of Italian bishops, formed a council presided over by Stephen. Constantine, now eyeless, was brought before the members and, although at first he tried to justify his actions, he eventually acknowledged that his election as pope had been invalid, and begged for pardon and mercy. The council then confirmed that no layman, or indeed anyone in holy orders, could be considered for election to the papacy until they had risen through the separate grades, spending a specified amount of time (or more) at each grade. Having dealt in this way with matters issues concerned with the election of popes, the council then turned to the issue of iconoclasm. It confirmed that the veneration of sacred images should continue, and deplored the actions taken in the east to remove such images from churches [235].

When this council was over, Stephen, urged on by Christopher and Sergius, began writing to Charlemagne and Carloman about the issue of the territories that the Lombards had still not handed over to papal control. Seeing Christopher and Sergius as anti-Lombard influences on Stephen, Desiderius set out to eliminate them. He announced his intention to travel to Rome to pray at St Peter's, whilst privately recruiting the chamberlain, Paul, surnamed Afiarta, to plot against Christopher and Sergius. A chaotic situation ensued, with armed supporters of Christopher and Sergius attempting to confront Desiderius and his army on the streets of Rome, and Stephen attempting to maintain peace. After a while, the Roman people turned against Christopher and Sergius and, with their supporters deserting them, they were taken prisoner by the Lombards and brought before the pope, who ordered them to become monks. However, Paul Afiarta and some accomplices snatched them from St Peter's and took them to the city gate, where their eyes were gouged out, Christopher dying from his injuries and the blind Sergius subsequently being assassinated in his prison cell on the orders of Afiarta. The *Book of Pontiffs* presented this outcome as being solely due to the malevolence of Desiderius and his Lombards, but it is clear from correspondence between Stephen and Charlemagne preserved in the *Codex Carolinus* that, by this time, the pope was siding with Desiderius against Christopher and Sergius. Even if he had no direct involvement in their deaths, Stephen took no action against the perpetrator, his chamberlain, Afiarta, who in fact became the most influential advisor to him throughout the remainder of his period as pope [236].

Stephen's successor was Hadrian I, an aristocratic Roman who held the Apostolic See for almost 24 years. On the basis of the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs*, Hadrian would have become pope in AD 772. Theophanes gave a slightly different date, saying that Hadrian was ordained in AM (AE) 6262 (AD 770/1). From the start, as recorded in the *Book of Pontiffs*, Hadrian signalled his authority and fresh outlook by recalling a number of judges who had been sent into exile by Afiarta as Stephen was dying, as well as securing the release of others who had been imprisoned because of the machinations of the chamberlain. Desiderius promptly sent envoys, including Theodosius, duke of Spoleto, to Hadrian to say that he wanted to be linked to him in a bond of charity. Hadrian's response was that he wished to be at peace with all Christians, including Desiderius, and would abide by the peace treaties signed between Romans, Franks and Lombards. However, he asked how he could trust Desiderius, who had broken promises given to previous popes about restoring territories seized by the Lombards, and had been the instigator of the plot to gouge out the eyes of the church dignitaries, Christopher and Sergius. The envoys swore an oath that Desiderius intended to hand over to the Apostolic See those territories that had not so far been restored,

and they then returned home, followed by envoys (including Afiarta) sent by Hadrian to Desiderius to arrange details for the territorial transfers [237].

No sooner had Hadrian's envoys left Rome than word arrived that Desiderius had seized back the two territories previously restored, Ferrara and Faenza, and was also threatening the city of Ravenna. Hadrian immediately sent a messenger with a letter to Desiderius, urging him to comply with his previous promises, and the oath taken by his envoys. The response was that, before Desiderius would hand over any territories to Hadrian, the pope would have to travel to Pavia to discuss the matter face-to-face with the Lombard king. This was viewed with suspicion in Rome, because of recent events. Carloman, whose sympathies were with the Lombards rather than with Rome, had died, leaving the Frankish kingdom solely under the control of Charlemagne, who was much more sympathetic towards the papacy and distrustful of the Lombards. Carloman's widow had fled, with her two sons and duke Autchar, to take refuge with Desiderius. It now seemed that an attempt was being made to lure Hadrian to Pavia, to put him in a position where he could be manoeuvred into anointing the sons of Carloman as the legitimate joint-rulers of their father's half of the Frankish kingdom, apparently to serve as clients of Desiderius. So, Hadrian stayed in Rome, writing again to Desiderius to ask him to honour the agreements that he had already made. While his envoys were still in Pavia, Hadrian began an investigation into the deaths of Christopher and Sergius, and found Afiarta guilty, in his absence. Some of the other conspirators freely admitted their involvement, and were exiled to Constantinople. The bodies of Christopher and Sergius were then reburied, with honour, in St Peter's. Hadrian was fearful that Afiarta might return to Desiderius and cause further mischief if he heard about these events on his journey home, so he arranged with Leo, archbishop of Ravenna, for him to be arrested as he passed through that region. Afiarta was subsequently put on public trial in Ravenna, and confessed his guilt. Hadrian planned to send Afiarta into exile in Constantinople, and wrote to Constantine V to ask for imperial mercy for him. In the meantime, while the details of his exile were being arranged, Hadrian asked Leo to ensure that Afiarta remained safe in his care. Leo, however, was aware that the Lombards had recently captured the son of Maurice, duke of Venice (which was still part of the empire), and was concerned that, as soon as Afiarta reached Constantinople, the emperor would try to arrange an exchange of prisoners with Desiderius. Hence, Leo ignored Hadrian's request and had Afiarta put to death [238].

Desiderius became increasingly aggressive, seizing from papal control a number of additional cities, including Senigallia, Urbino, Iesi, Gubbio and Blera, and even launching attacks close to Rome itself. Hadrian wrote letters and sent envoys to Desiderius, urging him to repent of his wickedness and restore to the Apostolic See all the territory that rightfully belonged to it, but the Lombard king was unmoved. However, he sent envoys to Hadrian, asking him once again to come and discuss the situation with him. Hadrian's response was that he would gladly meet with Desiderius in Pavia or anywhere else, but only after the territories had been returned. Desiderius then threatened to come with his army and put the city of Rome under constraint. Like his predecessors, Hadrian decided to ask for help from the Franks in his hour of need, but Lombard troops controlled all the land routes between Rome and Gaul, so his message was sent by sea. In the meantime, Desiderius, having failed to get Hadrian to come to Pavia to anoint Carloman's sons as kings, decided to try to get that accomplished in Rome, so, accompanied by Carloman's widow and sons, and also Duke Autchar, he headed south with his army. When he was approaching Rome, Desiderius sent envoys on ahead, to announce his arrival. However, Hadrian made it clear, once again, that he would not meet with the Lombard king until he had restored to the Apostolic See those territories he had recently seized, and those that had been the subject of previous agreements. Desiderius took no notice of this reply and continued his march on Rome. The people of this city, supplemented by others arriving from elsewhere, assembled in the streets, bearing arms, to resist the Lombards should the need arise. Hadrian had the doors of St Peter's closed and re-enforced to deter entry. He then sent three bishops to Desiderius, to tell him that the pope had drawn up a written letter of anathema, and if the Lombard king tried to force an entry into St Peter's, it would be at the cost of his own soul. That had the desired effect, for Desiderius turned round immediately and went back to Pavia. Nevertheless, he remained intransigent about the territories [239].

Soon afterwards, envoys from Charlemagne arrived in Rome, asking if Desiderius had fulfilled his obligations to the Apostolic See, as he had assured the Frankish king that all the stolen cities had been returned. On hearing that this was untrue, they visited Desiderius on their way home, and exhorted him to keep his promises, but their pleas fell on deaf ears. When they reached Francia, Charlemagne sent them back to Pavia to repeat their entreaties, and also to offer gifts amounting 14,000 gold solidi as an inducement, but not even this had any effect on Desiderius. Charlemagne therefore prepared his armies for an invasion of Lombardy. He sent some of his troops to occupy the mountain passes and then went with his main force to the region of Mount Cenis, on the Frankish side of the barriers. Meanwhile, Desiderius was preparing his defences on the other side. Charlemagne sent envoys through to Desiderius to repeat the exhortation and offer made previously, but the Lombard king proved to be as inflexible as before. However, the Lombardian army then suddenly retreated to Pavia, where Desiderius began organising the strengthening of the defences. His son, Adalgis continued on to Verona, the strongest of the Lombard cities, taking with him Carloman's widow, her sons and Autchar, whilst other Lombardians returned to their own cities. Cracks began to appear in Lombard unity, for the people of the duchy of Spoleto as a whole took an oath to serve

St Peter and the Roman church, electing a man named Hildeprand to serve as their duke, under the overall leadership of the pope. Fermo, Ancona and Osimo (all dependencies of Spoleto), as well as Castellum Felicitatis (in Lombard Tuscany), then followed suit [240].

The Frankish army swept into Italy after the retreating Lombards and swiftly surrounded Pavia. It was apparent that the city would not fall without a lengthy siege, so Charlemagne immediately sent for his wife, Hildigard, and sons to join him in northern Italy. In the meantime, leaving most of his army around Pavia, he travelled on to Verona, where Carloman's widow, her sons and Autchar freely surrendered, and travelled back with him to Pavia. Charlemagne then dispatched squadrons of his army against other Lombard bases, capturing various cities beyond the Po and bringing that area under his control [241].

Six months later, Pavia was still holding out and Easter was approaching, so Charlemagne decided to celebrate the festival in Rome. He set out with a number of bishops and other dignitaries, and arrived in the vicinity of Rome on Holy Saturday. Hadrian was not aware that Charlemagne was coming, but when he heard that he was approaching Rome, he quickly sent out all the judges to welcome him. Later, Hadrian dispatched groups of dignitaries carrying standards and holy crosses, and children bearing branches of palm and olive, to greet the king of the Franks. When Charlemagne saw the standards and crosses, he dismounted from his horse and walked the rest of the way to St Peter's with the judges. There he and Hadrian greeted each other warmly, the start of several days of celebration, and exchanges of compliments and oaths of friendship between king and pope. On the Wednesday after Easter, Hadrian and Charlemagne discussed the political situation, the latter confirming that he would ensure those Lombard-held territories that his father, Pippin, had agreed should be transferred to the control of the Apostolic See (the Hadrian entry in the *Book of Pontiffs* giving a greatly exaggerated account of the extent of these territories) would indeed be handed over. Charlemagne then returned to Pavia. Eventually, weakened by disease and the attacks of the Franks, the inhabitants, including Desiderius, surrendered. Soon afterwards, the entire Lombard kingdom had fallen under Charlemagne's control, and he assumed the title, "King of the Franks and the Lombards". With the power of the Lombards destroyed, Charlemagne returned to Francia, taking Desiderius and his wife with him. The *Book of Pontiffs* gave no date for the end of the Lombard kingdom in Italy but, according to the chronicle of Theophanes, it was in AM (AE) 6267 (AD 774/5), the 6th year of Pope Hadrian [242].

With the Lombard threat removed, the *Book of Pontiffs* account went on to concentrate on Hadrian's work in building and renovating churches. However, it recorded that Hadrian sent Peter, the archpriest of the Holy Roman Church, and Peter, the abbot of the monastery of St Saba called Cella Nova, to Emperor Constantine VI and his mother, the empress Irene, to encourage them to break from the iconoclasm of previous regimes in Constantinople and place sacred images in churches. This approach was welcomed, and at a council of 350 bishops held in Nicaea, a resolution affirming the setting up of venerable images was agreed. According to Theophanes, the two Peters were sent by Hadrian to Constantinople (at the request of Irene) in AM (AE) 6277 (AD 784/5), and the council of Nicaea at which the doctrine of iconoclasm was overthrown took place in AM (AE) 6280 (AD 787/8). The *Book of Pontiffs* went on to note that in the 20th year of Hadrian, in December of indiction 15 (AD 791), the Tiber burst its banks and caused great flooding in an around Rome. Hadrian organised for food to be transported by boat to those living on the Via Lata, who were surrounded by water. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Hadrian died late in the December of indiction 4 (AD 795) [243].

He was succeeded by Leo III, who was pope for 20 years and 6 months. The *Annals of Lorsch* similarly reported that Hadrian died in AD 795, whereas the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the *Moselle Annals* placed the event in the following year. Theophanes said that Leo became pope in AM (AE) 6289 (AD 796/7). Although elected unanimously, the low-born Leo soon fell out of favour with a group of nobles (including relatives of Hadrian), who formulated a plot to get rid of him. As related in the *Book of Pontiffs*, when Leo was on his way to celebrate the Litany at the church of St Laurence, he was met by the *primicerius* Paschal (Hadrian's nephew), after which the treasurer Campulus engaged Leo's attention in apparently friendly conversation. Thus distracted, Leo failed to see a group of armed men waiting in ambush in front of the monastery of St Silvester until they jumped out and began to attack him, helped by Paschal and Campulus. They blinded Leo and cut out his tongue, and then dragged him into the monastery church and placed him in front of the altar, where he was beaten with clubs until he was half dead. The plotters then kept him under guard at the monastery but, fearing that he might be rescued, his whereabouts being known, they moved him by night to the monastery of St Erasmus, where he was kept in strict confinement. According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Leo then regained his sight and grew a new tongue, but those miraculous events are not mentioned in any other source. Regardless of that, Albinus the chamberlain and others found out where he was being held and came to rescue him, taking him to St Peter's. The plotters were furious, and destroyed the house of Albinus. Fearing that the pope would not be safe, even in St Peter's, Duke Winichis of Spoleto took him to his duchy. Then, accompanied by bishops, priests, clerics and leading men from various Roman cities, Leo set out to visit Charlemagne (at the latter's request) [244].

Charlemagne sent out Hildebald, the archbishop of Cologne, and Count Ascheric, to meet Leo, and later dispatched his son Pippin and other counts to escort the pope to where he was staying (in Paderborn). The two men greeted each other warmly, and Leo was treated as an honoured guest at the king's court. Hearing where Leo was, the plotters made formal charges against him and sent these to Charlemagne. Meanwhile, archbishops, bishops and other dignitaries were assembling and, on the advice of Charlemagne, these agreed that Leo should return to Rome, and the Apostolic See, with great honour. So Leo was escorted back to Rome and resumed his duties amidst great rejoicing. The envoys who had accompanied Leo back to Rome, who included Archbishop Hildebrand, Archbishop Arn (of Salzburg), various bishops and Counts Helmgoth, Rottecar and Gremar, then began questioning Paschal, Campulus and their followers about the charges they had made against the pontiff. Later, Charlemagne himself arrived in Rome, and he gathered together all the archbishops, bishops and abbots, in the presence of prominent Franks and Romans, to discuss these charges. The church elders took the view that it was not for them to judge the head of the Apostolic See – rather it should be the other way round. Leo responded that he was prepared to follow the precedents set by his predecessors to clear his name. So, they all re-assembled in St Peter's. There, Leo embraced the four gospels and then swore on oath that the charges made against him were false. The archbishops, bishops and all the assembled clergy then performed a litany and gave praise to God [245].

Afterwards, on Christmas Day, they all gathered together once more in St Peter's. Leo placed a crown on the head of Charlemagne, and the Romans cried out, "To Charles, pious Augustus crowned by God, great and pacific Emperor, life and victory!" Thus Charlemagne was established as Roman Emperor. According to Theophanes, that coronation took place on Christmas Day in AM (AE) 6293 (AD 800/1), which, as we have previously noted (section 3.2.1), is consistent with the accounts given in the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the *Annals of Lorsch* [246].

Section of the Carolingian walls of Florence, constructed after Florence, previously a city of Lombardy, had become part of the Carolingian Empire.

The remainder of the account in the *Book of Pontiffs* of the papacy of Leo III concentrated on the pope's work in renovating churches. One example concerned the extensive repairs to the church of St Paul, necessitated by damage caused by an earthquake in April of indication 9 (AD 801). After giving many more examples, the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that Leo died in June of the following indiction 9 (AD 816). The *Royal Frankish Annals* similarly noted that Leo died in May AD 816, in the 21st year of his pontificate [247].

According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, there was a period of 101 years and 2 months from the ordination of Pope Gregory II to the death of Pope Leo III, on the basis of the lengths of papacies and vacancies. If, as we have supposed on the basis of the surviving historical sources, Gregory II became pope in AD 715, the timescale given by the *Book of Pontiffs* would indicate that Leo died in AD 816, consistent with the indiction year given in the same source. That date, like the one for the accession of Gregory II, is in accord with a variety of evidence.

So, we have followed the narrative of the *Book of Pontiffs* from the ordination of Pope Boniface I to the death of Pope Leo III, a period of around 400 years according to the lengths of papacies and interim vacancies given by that source. In all of that time, the only significant discrepancy between the timescale given by the *Book of Pontiffs* and that inferred from other sources is the additional period of around six years in total given by the *Book of Pontiffs* to the combined pontificates of Silverius, Vigilius and Pelagius I. That apparent error in the *Book of Pontiffs* is understandable, given that the entries for these popes are known to have been written long after the event, and there was obvious scope for confusion, because Vigilius may have become pope shortly before the death of his predecessor, Silverius, and then, according to various sources, Pelagius served as acting-pope in Rome

for several years prior to his ordination, due to the exile of his predecessor, Vigilius. After making adjustments for that single anomalous period, the timescale of the *Book of Pontiffs* from Boniface I to Leo III remains consistent, to within a year or so, with timescales given by other sources. Kings of the Goths, Lombards and Franks, as well as of emperors of Rome and Constantinople, are mentioned in the *Book of Pontiffs* at appropriate times, in regard to what would be expected on the basis of sources dealing with specific lines of rulers. The tradition of updating the *Book of Pontiffs* on a regular basis was maintained until the papacy of Hadrian II, the 108th pope in the sequence, who we shall come to later. Let us now continue from the point we reached above.

4.2.2 Popes from Leo III to Silvester II

Following the death of Leo III in what, according to the sources, was AD 816, Stephen IV, a Roman of noble ancestry, occupied the Holy See for 7 months, during which time he met Emperor Louis I in Reims. According to the *Royal Frankish Annals*, the purpose of the visit was to crown the Emperor and establish a good relationship with him. However, three months after returning to Rome, Stephen died, in January AD 817 [248].

After Stephen's death, as reported in the *Book of Pontiffs*, Paschal I, who was also of Roman origin, became pope for slightly more than 7 years, dying in January of indiction 1 (AD 823). The *Royal Frankish Annals* noted that Paschal was ordained without receiving approval from Emperor Louis and wrote to apologise, saying that his ordination had to be carried out swiftly to quell unrest in Rome. In AD 823, he invited the emperor's son, Lothar, to come to Rome and be crowned co-emperor and king of Italy. However, subsequently, actions taken by Lothar after the coronation split the Romans into pro- and anti-Frank factions. When the two leaders of the pro-Frank faction were murdered, Paschal was suspected of being involved in the plot, but he swore an oath as to his innocence. Paschal was then taken ill and died soon afterwards [249].

The *Book of Pontiffs* entry for the next pope, Eugene II, is brief and incomplete. Some surviving versions gave no figure for the length of his pontificate, whereas others indicated a period of about 4 years, as did the Montecassino Catalogue. The *Royal Frankish Annals* said that Eugene became pope in AD 824, and he was soon visited by Lothar to make clear that he, on behalf of his father Louis I, would have to be involved in the making of any binding decisions. It then noted the death of Eugene in AD 827 and the consecration of his successor Valentine, who was pope for barely a month. The *Book of Pontiffs* gave it as 40 days [250].

After the death of Valentine, as reported by the *Book of Pontiffs*, Gregory IV, from a noble Roman family, held the papacy for 16 years. The *Royal Frankish Annals* noted that, after Gregory's election, his ordination was deferred until representatives of Emperor Louis had travelled to Rome to satisfy themselves that his appointment would be a suitable one. Not long afterwards, as recorded in the *Annals of St Bertin*, Louis and his sons began to fall out with each other, and much of Gregory's papacy was spent trying to mediate between the warring factions, before and after the death of Louis in AD 840. According to this source, Gregory died in AD 844; the *Annals of Fulda* dated Gregory's death to the previous year [251].

Sergius II, another Roman, was then pope for 3 years. The *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that, after Emperor Lothar heard of his accession, he sent his son Louis and Drogo, archbishop of Metz, to Rome. Various Frankish counts travelled with them, and carried out many atrocities as they passed through Italy. Sergius received Louis warmly, and anointed him king of Italy. The Franks then asked Sergius to agree to all the Romans taking an oath of loyalty to Louis. Sergius replied that he would agree to them taking an oath of loyalty to Emperor Lothar, but not to his son Louis. Soon afterward, Sergius received a message from Corsica warning him that a large Saracen fleet was heading towards Rome. In August of indication 9 (AD 846), the Saracens landed at Ostia, and began attacking the basilica of St Peter and other churches outside the city walls, but the surviving account in the *Book of Pontiffs* breaks off at that point. The *Annals of St Bertin* account for AD 846 reported that, as well as Danish pirates gaining control of most of Frisia, a party of Saracens and Moors travelled along the Tiber to Rome and ransacked St Peter's basilica before moving further inland, where they were destroyed by troops sent by Emperor Lothar. According to the same source, Pope Sergius died in AD 847 [252].

After the death of Sergius, as reported in the *Book of Pontiffs*, Leo IV, also of Roman origin, was pope for 8 years 3 months. It was recorded that he assembled a synod in Rome in the 5th year of the joint imperial rule of Lothar and his son Louis, and the 7th year of his own pontificate, in December of indiction 2 (AD 853). However, most of the lengthy entry in the *Book of Pontiffs* gave detailed descriptions of the work carried out by Leo in restoring St Peter's and other churches following the destruction and plundering carried out by the Saracens. In fear of further attacks from the Saracens, he also built a great defensive wall around the basilica and linked this to the walls of the city. The *Annals of St Bertin* dated the construction of these fortifications to AD 851 and went on to record the death of Pope Leo, and also Emperor Lothar, in AD 855, at a time when the Northmen were creating havoc in northern Gaul [253].

According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, Leo's successor, Benedict III, who was of Roman origin, was pope for 2 years 6 months. After he had been elected but not yet consecrated, Frankish envoys pressed for Anastasius, a cardinal priest who had been deposed and anathematized during the pontificate of Leo, to be made pope. Despite threats

and shows of force, the Roman clergy and people went ahead and ordained Benedict. During his pontificate, he continued with the restoration of churches vandalised by the Saracens, as well as others damaged by a major flood of the Tiber, which had occurred soon after his ordination. Also during Benedict's term of office, the Byzantine Emperor, Michael III, son of Theophilus, sent gifts to St Peter the Apostle, and a Saxon king (known from other sources to be Aethelwulf), who had visited Rome for prayers, also presented gifts. The *Annals of St Bertin* noted that, in AD 856, Aethelwulf of Wessex passed through Gaul on his way home from Rome, and recorded the death of Pope Benedict (and of Aethelwulf) in AD 858 [254].

The *Book of Pontiffs* noted that, after Benedict's death, Nicholas I, born into a distinguished Roman family, was pope for 9 years 2 months, dying during the month of November in indiction 1 (AD 867). Emperor Louis II had left Rome not long before Pope Benedict died, and returned when news of his death reached him, supposedly to pay his respects, but clearly to influence the election of his successor. Nicholas was selected, but, according to the *Annals of St Bertin*, that was more through the presence and favour of the Emperor than through election by clergy. Nevertheless, although Nicholas worked closely with Emperor Louis, and put much effort into trying to resolve disputes between the various Frankish rulers, he proved to be anything but a puppet. Relatively young and vigorous, he attempted to exercise authority over all Christians, be they kings, bishops, emperors or patriarchs. During his papacy, Emperor Michael III again sent gifts to St Peter the Apostle. However, relations with the Byzantine Empire turned sour when Michael dismissed Ignatius, the patriarch of Constantinople, replacing him with the lay scholar, Photius, contrary to ecclesiastical law. Nicholas excommunicated Photius and sent envoys to Constantinople with apostolic letters urging the reinstatement of Ignatius, but they were prevented from travelling beyond Bulgaria, apparently on the orders of Emperor Michael. It was noted that Michael then suffered a miserable death, leaving his co-emperor Basil I as sole emperor. Closer to home, Nicholas took steps to reinstate Rothad as bishop of Soissons, after he had been illegally deposed by Hincmar, archbishop of Reims. When King Lothar II, son of Emperor Lothar, attempted to divorce his wife Theutberga, on the basis of claims of incest, so that he could marry Waldrada, and had received approval to go ahead with the divorce from a synod of bishops in his own country and from papal envoys sent to check the validity of the decision, Nicholas was suspicious and set up a new synod in Rome so that the matter could be re-examined. It emerged that the claims of incest were untrue, that witnesses had lied and that bishops and papal envoys had been bribed, so Nicholas blocked the divorce and ordered that action should be taken against those who had committed wrongdoings. All three of these cases, as well as being reported in the *Book of Pontiffs*, were mentioned in entries for AD 862-865 in the *Annals of St Bertin*. The same source recorded the death of Nicholas in AD 867, whilst the *Chronicle of Regino of Prüm* dated it to AD 868 [255].

According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, the election of a successor to Pope Nicholas was protracted, with Emperor Louis being closely involved. Eventually, just over a month after the death of Nicholas, Hadrian II, who was descended from the families of two previous popes (Stephen IV and Sergius II), became pope in December of indiction 1 (AD 867), in the 19th year of Louis. Hadrian had been asked to be a candidate in the elections following the deaths of both Leo IV and Benedict III, but made excuses. This time, for whatever reason, having been married before taking holy orders and then serving as a priest for 25 years, he allowed himself to be elected. During the 5-year papacy of Hadrian, there was much coming and going of envoys between the pope in Rome and Emperor Basil in Constantinople, because both wished to restore good relations. The main stumbling block was removed when, at the 8th Ecumenical Council in Constantinople (dated by the *Annals of St Bertin* to AD 872), Patriarch Photius was anathematized and deposed, with Ignatius returning to his former position (as noted by Skylitzes). However, Hadrian was unsuccessful in his attempt to retain Rome's ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Bulgaria. In the west, Hadrian stood firm against strenuous attempts by Hincmar to change the measure established by Nicholas that bishops who felt they had been treated unfairly by their archbishop had the right to appeal to the pope, but he conceded Lothar II the right to be admitted to communion once again, subject to certain conditions. According to the *Annals of St Bertin*, Hadrian died in AD 872, whereas Regino of Prüm dated Hadrian's death to AD 871 [256].

Hadrian's biography, the last of the consecutive sequence of papal biographies in the *Book of Pontiffs*, was followed by an addendum which noted that the next popes were John VIII for 10 years and then Marinus I for 1 year 4 months. Finally came an unfinished biography of Pope Stephen V, which began by noting that another Hadrian (Hadrian III) had been pope between Marinus and Stephen, when Charles the Fat was emperor [257].

The *Annals of St Bertin* and the *Annals of Xanten* reported that Archdeacon John succeeded Hadrian II in AD 872 (becoming Pope John VIII), with Regino of Prüm placing the transition from Hadrian to John a year earlier. Immediately afterwards, Regino noted that Adalgis, duke of Benevento, encouraged by the Byzantines, raised a challenge to Emperor Louis. In the following year, Pope John absolved Louis from an oath he had taken, freeing him to respond to the challenge of Adalgis. As a further indication of the Byzantines seeking to influence events within Louis' empire, the *Annals of Fulda* reported that, in AD 872, envoys from Emperor Basil brought letters and gifts to King Louis (the German). Two years later, King Louis had a meeting with Emperor Louis and Pope John near Verona and then, in the following year, Emperor Louis died with no obvious successor, leaving the

empire in an even more unstable state than previously. Pope John eventually crowned Charles the Bald, the youngest son of Emperor Louis I, as emperor, in what Regino and the *Annals of Fulda* gave as AD 875, but the *Annals of St Bertin* said was the first day of AD 876 and the *Annals of St Vaast* also dated it to AD 876. The way this coronation was reported in the various chronicles gave a clear indication that the Frankish Empire had split into irreconcilable factions. The *Annals of St Bertin* reported that, just before the coronation, Charles made an offering of many precious gifts to St Peter, which was normal practise, but both Regino and the *Annals of Fulda* said bluntly that Charles had become emperor by bribing the pope and the Roman people. Fragmentation continued as Louis the German died in AD 876, with his eastern kingdom being divided between his three sons, Louis the Younger, Carloman and Charles the Fat. Emperor Charles the Bald then died in the following year, and his son, Louis the Stammerer, was crowned king of West Francia at Compiègne by archbishop Hincmar of Reims. Following the death of Charles the Bald, Carloman laid claim to the throne of Italy, and received support from Lambert, margrave of Spoleto, and Adalbert, margrave of Tuscany. In AD 878, according to the *Annals of Fulda*, but a year earlier according to the *Annals of St Vaast*, Lambert and Adalbert led an army into Rome, placed Pope John under guard, and forced the leading Romans to affirm their allegiance to Carloman. Afterwards, John moved the treasures from the basilica of St Peter into the Lateran, covered the altar with sackcloth and closed the doors of the church. He then sailed to West Francia, where he stayed for almost a year. While he was in West Francia, as reported in the *Annals of St Bertin*, John convened a synod at Troyes, where the bishops gave their assent to the actions of the pope in excommunicating Lambert and Adalbert, and also Formosus, bishop of Porto, and the *nomenclator* Gregory, on the grounds that they had plundered ecclesiastical property. John then confirmed the appointment of Louis the Stammerer as king of East Francia. A few years later, after Louis the Stammerer and Carloman had both died, and Louis the Younger was incapacitated by illness, Regino and the *Annals of St Bertin* both reported that Pope John crowned Charles the Fat emperor in Rome in AD 881. According to one surviving version of the *Annals of Fulda*, Pope John died in AD 882, but, according to another, John's papacy ended in the following year, when he was murdered [258].

Both versions of *The Annals of Fulda* said that John was succeeded as pope by Marinus, and raised questions about whether Marinus satisfied the requirements to be pope. This source said nothing more about Marinus, going on to report that Pope Hadrian III, on his way to Francia for a meeting with Emperor Charles the Fat in AD 885, died shortly after crossing the River Po [259].

The unfinished biography of Stephen V in the *Book of Pontiffs* recorded that he was from a noble family and, after succeeding Hadrian III, he was pope for 4 years 7 months. Stephen became pope at a time of great famine and also, when he had been ordained, it was found there had been a great deal of looting from the churches in Rome following the death of his predecessor, so he used his personal wealth to help those suffering from hunger, to re-equip the churches and also to ransom captives taken during Saracen raids. However, almost all of the incomplete biography consisted of providing details of Stephen's pastoral work and the gifts he presented to Rome's churches. Even the stated figure for the length of his papacy is of doubtful value, because it is inconsistent with surviving manuscripts such as the Montecassino Catalogue and Parisinus 5140, which provide lists of popes with their tenures, and these consistently gave Stephen V a tenure of about 6 years. The *Annals of Fulda* noted that Charles the Fat was angry because Stephen had been elected and ordained without any consultation with the emperor, and attempted to depose him, but was unable to do so. Nevertheless, in AD 886, Emperor Charles visited Italy at the pope's request and constructive discussions took place. In particular, Stephen agreed to the emperor's request that bishops whose dioceses had been overrun by the heathen could be transferred to other vacant sees, which under existing rules could not be done. Then, in AD 890, Charles the Fat having died in the meantime, Stephen asked Arnulf, king of East Francia, to rescue the Italian kingdom from the actions of evil Christians and the threat of pagans. Arnulf responded that he would like to have been able to do so, but he had too many problems in his own country at that time. There are just these few brief mentions of Pope Stephen in the Frankish chronicles. Information about his life has come largely from his surviving letters and other documents, and from those of Bishop Formosus, which may be found in the *Patrologia Latina*. Thus we are told that Formosus exercised his right to participate in Stephen's ordination, his excommunication by John VIII having been rescinded, and that Photius similarly, despite his excommunication by Pope Nicholas I, became patriarch of Constantinople once again. It also seems apparent that, in an attempt to address the problems in Italy and further afield, Pope Stephen allied himself with Guy, duke of Spoleto, and crowned him king of Italy and then emperor [260].

Around 175 years after the time of Pope Stephen V (according to his own account), Herman of Reichenau (also known as Hermannus Augiensis, i.e. Herman the Cripple) wrote a "world chronicle", with annual entries from AD 3 to the end of the chronicle in AD 1054 (when the author died), giving details of key events involving popes, kings and emperors. Herman numbered the papacies in identical fashion to the *Book of Pontiffs* from the 40th pope (Siricius, in the entry for AD 384) onwards, with, for example, Gregory I being identified as the 66th pope (in the entry for AD 592) and Constantine the 90th pope (in the entry for AD 708). For the period we have just been considering. Herman wrote that Charlemagne died in AD 814 and Stephen IV succeeded Leo III as pope two years later, going on to serve for 7 months. In AD 817, Paschal became pope for 7 years and, in AD 823, he

crowned Lothar I king of Italy. Eugene II succeeded Paschal for 3 years, after which Valentine served as pope for 40 days and then Gregory IV for 16 years. During Gregory's papacy, in AD 840, Emperor Louis I died. Sergius II succeeded Gregory as pope in AD 842, serving for 3 years, and then Leo IV held the papacy for 9 years 3 months. Emperor Lothar I died in AD 855 and, in the following year, Benedict III succeeded Leo as pope, going on to serve for 2 years. In AD 858, Nicholas was appointed to the Holy See, and served for 9 years. Hadrian II succeeded Nicholas as pope in AD 868, and he held the papacy for 5 years. In AD 873, John VIII became pope, and, three years later, Emperor Louis II died. Pope John died in AD 883, after serving for 10 years, and he was succeeded by Marinus, for 1 year 6 months. Hadrian III became the pope in AD 885, serving for 1 year 4 months, before Stephen V held the papacy, as the 112th pope (in agreement with the *Book of Pontiffs*), for 6 years. In AD 888, Emperor Charles the Fat died, and Arnulf became king of East Francia [261].

The same period was covered in the chronicle by Marianus Scotus (see section 2.2.1), written a few decades after that by Herman. Marianus noted that Charlemagne died in VA 835 (AD 813), and was succeeded by his son Louis I. Pope Leo III died in AV 838 (AD 816), his successor in the Holy See being Stephen IV. Paschal I then became pope in VA 842 (AD 820), Eugene II in VA 846 (AD 824), Valentine in VA 849 (AD 827) and Gregory IV in VA 853 (AD 831). Emperor Louis passed away in VA 862 (AD 840), being succeeded by his son Lothar. In Rome, Sergius II became pope in VA 866 (AD 844), and then Leo IV in VA 875 (AD 853). Emperor Lothar died in VA 877 (AD 855), and was succeeded by his son Louis II. According to Marianus, Benedict III was made pope in VA 879 (AD 857), Nicholas I in VA 885 (AD 863), Hadrian II in VA 892 (AD 870), and John VIII in VA 894 (AD 872), with Emperor Louis II dying two years later. In VA 907 (AD 885), Marinus I succeeded John as pope, and, two years later, Emperor Charles the Fat died and Arnulf became king of East Francia. In the following year, Hadrian III was elected to the papacy. Stephen V then succeeded Hadrian in VA 915 (AD 893) [262].

It is evident that there is good agreement between the chronological details presented by Herman of Reichenau and those given in the *Book of Pontiffs*. It can also be seen that the sequence of popes given by Marianus Scotus is similarly consistent with the information presented in the final entries in the *Book of Pontiffs*, even though there are some variations in the period of their tenures, resulting in fluctuations of a few years in the dates given by Marianus when compared to those indicated in the *Book of Pontiffs*, particularly in the latter part of the period, from the death of John VIII to the ordination of Stephen V.

The discrepancies were relatively small, but an even closer agreement with the details given in Herman's chronicle, and in the *Book of Pontiffs*, was given around a century-and-a–half later by Roger of Wendover, in his *Flowers of History*. In Roger's account, Stephen IV became pope in AD 817 and Stephen V in AD 885 [263].

The unfinished biography of Pope Stephen V marked the end of the long-running process of extending the *Book of Pontiffs*. However, one surviving manuscript (MS C^4, or Parisinus 5140), which ended the series of biographies with the unfinished one of Hadrian II (the 108th pope), also included a catalogue giving the sequence of popes, with tenures, in which Stephen (the 112th pope), with a recorded tenure of 6 years, was followed by thirty more popes before reaching Silvester, also known as Gerbert, the 143rd pope. It should also be mentioned that, during the 12th century, in a monastery near Reims, Petrus Guillermi wrote a series of short biographies of popes from John VIII to Honorius II. These were included, under the title, "The *Liber Pontificalis* of Pierre-Guillaume", in Louis Duchesne's two-volume work on the *Book of Pontiffs*, published in 1892 [264]. However, it is known that the content, in the main, was copied from various other sources, so, although remaining a "historical source", these biographies cannot be regarded as a straightforward continuation of the original *Book of Pontiffs*. In going forward, we shall take into account what was said in these and other biographies written during the medieval period, but our main focus will be on information given in annals, chronicles and histories. First of all, since we saw in the previous three paragraphs that Herman of Reichenau, Marianus Scotus and Roger of Wendover, although living much later than the popes whose more contemporary biographies constituted the final entries in the original *Book of Pontiffs*, had written accounts generally consistent with the content of these biographies, as well as those of contemporary annals, let us now examine what they reported about the sequence of popes and of Frankish (and post-Frankish) rulers after Pope Stephen V and King/Emperor Arnulf.

It will be seen that the accounts by Herman, Marianus and Roger, as well as those by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines and Adam of Bremen, soon take us smoothly through AD 911, the year when, according to Illig's theory, three phantom centuries came to an end and there was a return to genuine history. For Illig's theory to be correct, all the historical details summarised here, from early in section 4.2.1 to this point halfway through section 4.2.2, must be fabrications, yet no discontinuities are apparent, either at the beginning or the end of "phantom time". We shall also soon reach AD 960, the year which, according to Hunnivari, marks the start of two phantom centuries. But let us continue our account of what the sources say.

Adam of Bremen, in his *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, noted that Adalgar succeeded Rimbert as archbishop in AD 888 and received the pastoral staff from King Arnulf. He went on to say that Pope Formosus died in Adalgar's 9th year, two years before the death of Arnulf. Herman, in his chronicle, recorded that Formosus

became the 113th pope in AD 892 and served for 4 years and 7 months. Boniface VI was then pope for 15 days, Stephen VI for 1 year, Romanus for 4 months and Theodore II for 20 days, before John IX was ordained as the 118th pope in AD 897 and served for 2 years. In AD 899, the year when Emperor Arnulf died, Benedict IV became pope and served for 3 years and 5 months. Leo V then held the papacy for 2 months and Christopher for 4 months, before Sergius III became the 122nd pope, in AD 905, and served for 7 years 4 months. During his papacy, in AD 911, Louis the Child, king of East Francia, died and was succeeded by Conrad I. Anastasius II became pope in AD 912, serving for 2 years 2 months, and he was followed in rapid succession by Lando for 5 months and Leo VI for 2 months before John X became the 126th pope in AD 915 and held the papacy for 14 years 2 months. King Conrad died in AD 918 and Henry I succeeded him as king of East Francia (now becoming known as Germany) in the following year. Stephen VII was ordained as the 127th pope in AD 929, serving for 2 years 1 month, and he was followed by John XI, for 4 years and then Leo VII, for 3 years 6 months. During the pontificate of Leo VII, Henry I died and was succeeded as king of Germany by his son, Otto I, in AD 936. Two years later, in AD 938, the 130th pope, Stephen VIII, was ordained and he went on to serve for 3 years 4 months. Marinus II succeeded Stephen in AD 942, going on to serve for 3 years 6 months. He was followed by Agapetus II for 10 years and then, in AD 955, by the 173rd pope, John XII, also called Octavian, who went on to hold the papacy for 8 years 4 months. During that period, in AD 962, Otto I was crowned emperor by Pope John [265].

Marianus noted that Formosus succeeded Stephen as pope in VA 918 (AD 896). In the following year, Boniface VI succeeded Formosus as pope, but survived for only 15 days, his successor being Stephen VI. Emperor Arnulf died in VA 921 (AD 899), and was succeeded as king of the Eastern Franks by Louis the Child. In the same year, Romanus was pope for 4 months and Theodore II for 20 days, before John IX became pope, holding the office for two years. In VA 925 (AD 903), Benedict IV became pope, and he was succeeded briefly by Leo V and Christopher before Sergius III took office for 7 years and 3 months. In VA 933 (AD 911), Conrad I became king after the death of Louis, and Henry I came to the throne in VA 940 (AD 918). Sergius was succeeded as pope by Anastasius III in VA 936 (AD 914) and then Lando in VA 938 (AD 916). Lando's pontificate was brief, but John X was then pope for more than 14 years. John was succeeded by Leo VI, who occupied the papal throne for only 7 months, after which Stephen VII became pope for just over two years, followed by John XI. In VA 958 (AD 936), Otto I succeeded Henry as king and, in the same year, Leo VII became pope in succession to John. Leo's pontificate lasted 3 years and 6 months, and his successors, Stephen VIII and Marinus II served for similar periods. In VA 968 (AD 946), Agapetus II became pope, serving for over 10 years, before John XII succeeded him in VA 978 (AD 956). King Otto I was made emperor in VA 983 (AD 961) [266].

Generally consistent with the details given by Herman and Marianus, Roger of Wendover indicated, for example, that Formosus became pope in AD 895 for 3 years 6 months; Sergius III in AD 905 for 7 years; Anastasius III in AD 911 for 2 years 2 months; John X in AD 915 for 4 years 2 months; John XI in AD 931 for 4 years; Stephen VIII in AD 939 for 3 years 4 months; Agapetus II in AD 946 for 10 years 6 months; and John XII in AD 956 for 7 years. In France, Roger's contemporary, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, noted that Formosus became pope in AD 896 for 5 years 6 months; Sergius III in AD 907 for 7 years; Anastasius III in AD 915 for 2 years 2 months; John X in AD 918 for 13 years 2 months; John XI in AD 931 for 4 years 10 months; Stephen VIII in AD 940 for 3 years 4 months; Agapetus II in AD 948 for 10 years 6 months; and John XII in AD 958 for 7 years [267]. Although there are variations in specific details, the different sources present accounts of the sequence of events which are generally similar.

For this period, the sequence of papacies listed in Parisinus 5140 from the 113th pope onwards, taken to be a continuation of the sequence of 112 papacies contained in the *Book of Pontiffs*, is as follows: Formosus for 5 years 6 months; Boniface VI for 15 days; Stephen VI for 1 year 3 months; Romanus for 4 months; Theodore II for 20 days; John IX for 2 years; Benedict IV for 1 year 5 months; Leo V for 67 days; Christopher for 4 months; Sergius III for 7 years 3 months; Anastasius III for 2 years; Lando for 6 months; John X for 14 years 2 months; Leo VI for 8 months; Stephen VII for 2 years 1 month; John XI for 4 years; Leo VII for 3 years 6 months; Stephen VIII for 4 years 3 months; Marinus II for 3 years 6 months; Agapetus for 10 years 7 months; and John XII, son of Alberic, for 9 years 3 months. The final part of the Montecassino Catalogue also covers the first half of this period, giving a sequence: Formosus for 4 years 6 months; Boniface VI for 15 days; Stephen VI for 1 year 2 months; Romanus 3 months; Theodore II for 1 month 15 days; John IX for 2 years; Benedict IV for 3 years 10 months; Leo V for 2 months; Christopher for 6 months; Sergius III for 7 years; Anastasius III for 2 years; and Lando. Similar details are also given in the series of biographies by Petrus Guillermi [268].

There are some discrepancies, most although not all of them trivial but, in general terms, the sources considered above are consistent with each other, and with information from other sources, of which chronicles and histories are just a part. For example, there are often surviving letters or other contemporary documents, as well as recensions or summaries of biographies dating from later in the medieval period. Here, however, let us just refer to some relevant passages from chronicles and histories, most of them written soon after the events described. The *Annals of Fulda*, generally consistent with the account given by Regino and also Liudprand of Cremona, said that,

in AD 893, Pope Formosus sent envoys to Arnulf, King of East Francia, asking him to come and free the kingdom of Italy from the control of evil tyrants, particularly Guy of Spoleto. Arnulf invaded Italy in the following year, but the outcome was inconclusive. Guy of Spoleto died in that same year, but his son, Lambert, claimed the Italian throne. A year later, Formosus once again begged Arnulf to come to Rome. He led an army into Italy in AD 896 and, on this occasion, he was able to win control of Rome. Arnulf was then crowned emperor by the pope. Formosus died later in the same year, and he was succeeded as pope by Boniface VI, who survived for barely two weeks. Stephen VI then became pope, and one of his first acts was to exhume the body of Formosus. Stephen had the papacy of Formosus declared invalid, and he then re-buried him outside the area reserved for the graves of popes [269].

Adam of Bremen, in his *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, wrote that Archbishop Adalgar died in AD 907. His successor, Hoger, received the pallium from Pope Sergius III and the pastoral staff from Louis the Child, king of East Francia. Hoger died in AD 915. His successor held the see for barely a year, and Unni then received the pallium from Pope John X and the pastoral staff from King Conrad (the successor of Louis the Child) [270].

Flodoard of Reims reported that, in AD 922, when King Charles the Simple of West Francia laid waste Lotharingia, Pope John X ordained Richarius as bishop of Tongres. A year later, Pope John sent the pallium to Seulfus, archbishop of Reims. In AD 928, Pope John was held in custody by Guy, marquis of Tuscany, who was the brother of King Hugh of Italy. While he was imprisoned, Marozia, Guy's wife, successfully schemed to have John X removed from the papacy, and he was later murdered. In AD 933, envoys returning to Reims from Rome reported that Pope John XI, the son of Marozia, was similarly being held in custody by his brother, Alberic of Spoleto, who held the title, "patrician of the Romans". Flodoard subsequently reported that John XI died in AD 936 and was succeeded as pope by Leo VII. Adam of Bremen recorded that, after Archbishop Unni died in AD 936, his successor, Adaldag, received the pallium from Pope Leo VII and the pastoral staff from King Otto I, in the first year of his reign. Adaldag served as archbishop for 53 years [271].

According to Flodoard, Pope Stephen VIII sent a letter to all inhabitants of Francia and Burgundy in AD 942, saying that anyone who refused to accept Louis IV as king would be excommunicated. Later, in AD 946, Flodoard reported that Pope Marinus II had died and the new pope was Agapetus II. In AD 948, Pope Agapetus attempted to intervene in a dispute between Archbishops Hugh and Artoldus and in another between King Louis and Count Hugh (Hugh the Great) but little progress was made, so King Otto became involved. Pope Agapetus convened a synod in Rome in AD 949, which confirmed support for Archbishop Artoldus and excommunicated Count Hugh for as long as he was unable to give satisfaction to King Louis. In Germany, Adam reported that Pope Agapetus restored some privileges to Archbishop Adaldag [272].

In AD 954, as reported by Flodoard, Alberic, the patrician of the Romans died, and was succeeded by his son, Octavian. In the same year, Pope Agapetus died, and Octavian, who was a cleric, was ordained as pope. Flodoard continued to refer to Pope Octavian, whereas Adalbert of Magdeburg, who, like Flodoard, was a contemporary of Octavian, wrote that he had taken John XII as his papal name. Flodoard's confusion is understandable because, as well as the fact that the chronicler was elderly and living far from Rome, Octavian retained his birth name for continuing activities in his alternative role as the political leader of the Romans. Also, it was more than four centuries since the *Book of Pontiffs* had recorded a pope adopting a name which was different from the one by which he had previously been known (this being when Bishop Mercurius became Pope John II, rather than retain the name of a pagan god). From his perspective in Reims, Flodoard reported that, in AD 962, King Otto went to Rome in an amicable manner and was elevated to the status of emperor, whilst, in the same year, the issue of whether Hugh should be restored as archbishop of Reims was again discussed by a council of bishops and, with no agreement being reached, the decision was left in the hands of the pope. Envoys from Pope John pointed out that Hugh had already been excommunicated by the pope and more than one synod of bishops, so Odelricus was elected to be the new archbishop of Reims, with the agreement of King Lothar (son and successor of Louis IV). As is apparent from the writings of Liudprand of Cremona, another contemporary of Octavian, and the later assessments by Arnulf of Milan, the issue of who should have authority over the archbishopric of Reims would not have been a major concern of people in Italy or Germany. Berengar II of Ivrea, together with his son, Adalbert, had seized control of the Papal States, so Pope John requested help from King Otto I of Germany. After Otto had driven away Berengar and Otto, and entered Rome, various sources, including Adalbert of Magdeburg, wrote that Pope John had then crowned Otto emperor in AD 962 (consistent with the date given by Flodoard). However, Otto then asked Octavian to acknowledge him as his overlord, which he refused to do, and began to conspire with Adalbert, the son of Berengar, against Otto. The emperor then invaded Italy once more, causing Octavian to flee. Otto convened a council of German and Italian bishops and, accusing Octavian of all kind of evil acts, summoned him to appear and defend himself. Octavian responded by saying that, in his capacity as pope, he would excommunicate anyone who attempted to remove him from the papacy. Nevertheless, the council agreed that he should be deposed, and appointed Leo VII to replace him. However, many bishops still supported Octavian and

argued that Leo's appointment as pope was uncanonical. As the arguments raged, Octavian died. According to Liudprand, this was while he was having a sexual liaison with a married woman. Whatever the circumstances of Octavian's death, his supporters then appointed Benedict V to be his successor as pope. Adalbert of Magdeburg wrote that Octavian died in AD 964 and that Otto deposed Pope Benedict in AD 965, but Pope Leo died in the same year and the bishop of Narni was elected to succeed him as Pope John XIII. Flodoard gave a slightly different version of events, but agreed that John XIII became pope in AD 965. Roger similarly dated the beginning of the pontificate of John XIII to AD 965, whilst Herman placed it in the following year and Alberic gave it as AD 967 [273].

Moving forward from the papacy of John XII, manuscript Parisinus 5140 indicated that Leo VIII was pope for 1 year; Benedict V for 10 days; John XIII for 6 years 10 months; Benedict VI for 1 year 6 months; Benedict VII for 20 years 8 months; John XIV for 6 months; Boniface VII for 1 year; John XV for 1 year; Gregory V for 3 years; and, finally, Silvester, also called Gerbert, for an unspecified period. Another surviving manuscript covering the same period is the Catalogue of Santa Maria in Trastavere. According to this, Benedict V was pope for 2 months; Leo VIII for 1 year 4 months; John XIII for 7 years 11 months; Benedict VI for 1 year 6 months; Domnus for 1 month; Boniface VII for 1 month; Benedict VII for 7 years 6 months; John XIV for 8 months; another John (sometimes referred to as John XIVb) for 4 months; John XV for 10 years 7 months; Gregory V for 1 year 5 months; John XVI for 10 months; and Silvester II for 4 years 1 month [274].

It is evident from these two catalogues, and other sources, that this period continued as it had begun, with confusion and a rapid turnover of popes (not all of them necessarily consecrated), as different factions conspired, murdered and fought to install their own candidates in the papacy. In the aftermath of the death of Octavian/John XII, the sources indicate (as we have seen) that there were two popes (or a pope and an anti-pope), supported by different factions. Leo VIII and Benedict V had both been born in Rome, but Leo was the candidate of Emperor Otto and those Italians who supported him, whereas Benedict was favoured by those Italians who opposed Otto. Faced by the power of Otto, Benedict was forced to resign, and even Otto's opponents then accepted Leo as pope, but he died (perhaps murdered) soon afterwards (in AD 965 or shortly afterwards, according to the sources). It seems clear from the accounts by Adalbert of Magdeburg and Adam of Bremen that the Romans understood that the next pope would have to be acceptable to Otto, but many hoped that a candidate could be found who would be acceptable to *both* factions. After much discussion (in which Liudprand of Cremona, author of a relevant surviving source, played a prominent role), Pope John XIII was ordained, and his appointment was generally welcomed. However, the situation soon changed as Pope John's arrogant approach made him many enemies. He was seized by a group led by Peter (the prefect of Rome) and a Campanian nobleman named Rofred, taken out of the city and placed in confinement in Campania. Nevertheless, as Otto returned to Italy in the following year (AD 966, according to Adalbert), the terrified Romans released John and allowed him to resume his duties as pope. Otto spent Christmas in Rome and, early in AD 967, sentenced thirteen Romans who had been involved in taking the pope prisoner to be executed by hanging. He then convened a synod in Ravenna and, following that, he sent a message to invite his son, Otto II, to come to Italy to spend Christmas with Pope John and himself. When the younger Otto arrived in Rome, he was crowned co-emperor (*Caesar* to his father's *Augustus*) by the pope. The *Chronicle of Thietmar of Merseburg*, the *Annals of Hildesheim* and the *Annals of Lambert (*or *Lampert) of Hersfeld* similarly recorded that Otto II was crowned co-emperor by Pope John in AD 967 [275].

The *Chronicle of Adalbert of Magdeburg* came to an end with the coronation of Otto II, and none of the other aforementioned chronicles or annals referred to any further events during the papacy of John XIII. However, Herman of Reichenau dated the death of John XIII to AD 972, and there is much surviving evidence to support that statement, particularly in the form of decrees and letters, as reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina*. Thirty-three letters of John XIII have survived, spread throughout the period of his pontificate. Amongst the last of his letters is one dated to April in the 11th imperial year of Otto I and the 5th imperial year of Otto II, indiction 15 (AD 972) and another dated to April in indiction 15, the 972nd year from the Incarnation of the Lord. His epitaph, inscribed on stone, says that he died after serving for seven years, in September, AD 972 [276].

At this time, it seems clear from the surviving sources that, although many Romans were unhappy with the situation, they acknowledged that the power was held by Otto, so they went along with his proposal to ordain Benedict, a Roman of German descent, as Pope Benedict VI. However, Otto died in the following year, leaving his 18-year-old son, Otto II, as king and emperor. The young Otto's authority was immediately challenged by his cousin, Duke Henry of Bavaria, and the dispute soon escalated into open rebellion. That encouraged Roman nobles, led by Crescentius, the brother of Pope John XIII, to seek to replace Benedict with a pope who would be independent of Otto. Benedict was seized and imprisoned in the Castel Sant'Angelo and a Roman named Franco, son of Ferrucius, was set up as Pope Boniface VII. Rome was in turmoil, and details of what happened in the city during the next two decades remain sketchy. The *Annals of Hildesheim* and the *Annals of Lambert of Hersfeld* noted the death of Otto I in AD 973, the death of Otto II in AD 983 and the death of Theophanu, the widow of Otto II (and the niece of Emperor John I Tzimiskes of Byzantium) in AD 991, also recording the deaths of German

bishops and archbishops, with the names of their successors, throughout this period, but without making a single reference to a pope. One of the archbishops referred to was Adalbert of Magdeburg (whose chronicle we have mentioned on several occasions), said to have died in AD 981. Thietmar of Merseburg also wrote about Adalbert, saying that he became archbishop of Magdeburg in AD 970 and died 12 years later, shortly after Otto II, in his 6th imperial year, had departed for Italy. Thietmar went on to say there was a dispute about who should succeed Adalbert, and one of the candidates, Giselher, sought the help of Pope Benedict VII. That was Thietmar's only mention of a pope during the two decades we are currently considering [277].

Of the later writers, Marianus Scotus noted the succession from Nikephoros II to John I in Constantinople in VA 991 (AD 969) and, in the west, the deaths of Otto I, Otto II and Otto III in VA 995 (AD 973), VA 1006 (AD 984) and VA 1024 (AD 1002) respectively, and made several references during this period to bishops and abbots, but not one to any pope after John XIII. However, Herman of Reichenau, whose account so far, as we have seen, was generally consistent with the available evidence, gave the following details regarding John XIII's successors: Benedict VI, the 137th pope, succeeded John XIII in AD 972 and served for 1 year 10 months; then, after the death of Otto I in AD 973, Pope Benedict was taken by Crescentius, son of Theodora, to the Castel Sant'Angelo, where he was strangled. An attempt was made to replace him with Boniface, son of Ferrucius but, a month later, he was expelled from Rome to Constantinople. Benedict VII, the 138th pope, was ordained in AD 974 and remained in office for 9 years. Towards the end of his papacy, in AD 973, Otto II died. In AD 974, Otto III, the infant son of Otto II, succeeded his father (as king but not emperor) and, in the same year, Benedict VII was succeeded by John XIV, the 139th pope. However, Boniface then returned from Constantinople and, after serving as pope for 8 months, John XIV was imprisoned in the Castel Sant'Angelo, after which Boniface, son of Ferrucius, was ordained as Boniface VII, the 140th pope. In AD 985, Boniface died after 11 months in office, and John XV was ordained as the 141st pope in the following year. During the period of 10 years 7 months when John XV was pope, Theophanu, the mother of Otto III, died in AD 991. Adam of Bremen noted that Lievizo, who became archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen following the death of Adaldag in AD 988, received the pallium from Pope John XV and the pastoral staff from Otto III. Turning to the account by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, he dated the start of the reign of Emperor John I in Constantinople to AD 971 and he noted the death of Otto I in AD 974, adding that, in the same year, Benedict VI became pope for 1 year 6 months. In AD 997, Domnus became pope for 1 year 6 months, followed by Boniface VII, who served for 1 year 1 month. Benedict VII was made pope in AD 978 and he remained in office for 9 years 6 months. During his pontificate, in AD 984, Otto III succeeded Otto II. John XIV was made pope in AD 987, serving for 9 months, and then, in AD 988, the first regnal year of Hugh Capet in France, John XV became pope for 6 years 7 months. Roger of Wendover wrote that, in AD 974, the year in which Otto II succeeded Otto I, Domnus became pope for 1 year 6 months, and then later, in AD 984, when Otto III succeeded Otto II, he noted that John XIV became pope for 9 months, his successor being John XV, who served for 9 years. Also of relevance are the *Saxon Annals*, which were compiled in the first half of the 12th century. For the period currently under consideration, the *Saxon Annals* recorded that Benedict VI became pope in AD 973, serving for 1 year 6 months. Domnus was ordained as pope in AD 974, similarly serving for 1 year 6 months. In AD 975, Boniface VI became pope for 1 year 1 month and then, in the following year, Benedict VII was ordained to the Holy See, and held office for 9 years 6 months. John XIV succeeded Benedict in AD 983, serving for 9 months, and John XV became pope in AD 986, for 10 years 7 months [278].

The Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome, originally constructed as the Mausoleum of Emperor Hadrian.

The evidence from Rome, scant though it may be, is generally consistent with these accounts. There is evidence of Benedict VI serving briefly after John XIII, but, contrary to what was indicated by Alberic, Roger and the *Saxon Annals*, as well as several catalogues, no evidence has been found of a pope named Domnus at this or any

other time. In fact, Domnus is taken to be a title, not a name, being a contraction of "Dominus", i.e. "Lord", so the supposed papacy of Domnus could simply be a duplication of that of Benedict VI. In contrast, Benedict VII left clear indications of his existence. Twenty-eight of his letters, privileges and papal bulls are reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina*, the earliest dated to January in the 8th imperial year of Otto II, indiction 3 (AD 975) and one of the last dated to March in his 9th year as pope and the 16th imperial year of Otto II, indiction 11 (AD 983). His epitaph, carved in stone, says that he died after completing 9 years as pope, in indiction 12 (AD 983/4). There is one surviving letter from his successor, John XIV (who, before becoming pope, had been Peter Canepanova, the bishop of Padua), but no evidence to suggest that the "Pope John XIVb" indicated in some catalogues had ever existed. The confusion may have been caused by John XIV having remained alive in Castel Sant'Angelo for a few months after Boniface VII succeeded him as pope, or the fact that a cardinal named John challenged the legitimacy of Boniface [279].

Surviving sources indicate that Pope John XV tried to steer a course between the demands of Crescentius the Younger (also known as Crescentius Numentanus), the most powerful noble in Rome at the time, holding the title of "patrician", and (until her death) Empress Theophanu, who was regent for her young son, Otto III. It is evident that John XV was much better known to the outside world than any of his recent predecessors. Seventeen letters and privileges issued by him are reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina.* One of the earliest was dated to January, indiction 15, "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ 987", whilst one of the latest was dated to March, in the 8th year of his papacy, indiction 7 (AD 994). Between these was one dated AD 991, indiction 4, which confirmed the details of a peace treaty he had helped to negotiate between Aethelred (the Unready), king of England, and Richard, duke of Normandy. Before then, in AD 989, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles,* Sigeric was ordained as archbishop of Canterbury and travelled to Rome for his pallium. Sigeric wrote a brief report of his visit, which has survived, and, in this, the archbishop noted that he had arrived in Rome just over four years after the ordination of Pope John XV. He also included a list of popes from John X to John XV, and the churches in Rome with which they had been associated before being elevated to the papacy, saying that John X had been pope for 14 years 3 months, Leo VI for 8 months, Stephen VII for 3 years, John XI for 7 years, Leo VII for 4 years, Stephen VIII for 3 years 8 months, Marinus II for 4 years 1 month, Agapetus II for 9 years 8 months, John XII for 7 years, Leo VIII for 1 year 6 months, John XIII for 7 years, Benedict VI for 1 year 6 months, Boniface VII for 60 days before being expelled, Benedict VII for 7 years and 6 months and Peter (John XIV) for 1 year 9 months, after which Boniface, on his return from exile, was pope for another 9 months before the ordination of John XV. As had happened in the time of Pope John XII, there was a major dispute in France during the papacy of John XV about who should be archbishop of Reims. Much of book IV of the *History* by Richer of Reims was devoted to the twists and turns of this later dispute, in which the pope became involved. It all started when Hugh Capet, having established himself as king of France, thus bringing to an end the Carolingian line of kings, sought to ease tension by securing the appointment of Arnulf, the illegitimate son of one of the Carolingian kings, Lothar, to fill the vacant position of archbishop of Reims. Soon afterwards, Arnulf's uncle, Charles of Lorraine, who was campaigning to reclaim the throne for the Carolingians, seized control of Reims. Hugh believed that Charles had been assisted by his nephew, and wrote to Pope John to ask for his help in removing Arnulf from his post, but then, without waiting for a reply, he initiated the process of deposing and replacing Arnulf. The man elected as the new archbishop of Reims was Gerbert of Aurillac, who had been a monk at the monastery of St Gerald at Aurillac (hence the name by which he became known) before being invited to Spain to study mathematics and Muslim culture, going on to establish a high reputation as a scholar and a teacher (Otto II being one of his pupils). However, many believed that the change of archbishops had been unlawful and Arnulf appealed to the pope for re-instatement. Pope John asked the French bishops to reconsider their previous decision, but the wrangling continued. Richer's *Histories* was dedicated to Archbishop Gerbert, and he presented his account accordingly, but the papal legate, sent by John to bring the affair to a just conclusion, concluded in favour of Arnulf. Nevertheless, although Gerbert's position at Reims was now untenable, Arnulf was not re-instated at that time. As noted by Richer in the very last section of his *Histories,* it was only after Robert II had succeeded his father, Hugh, as king of France, and Gregory V had succeeded John XV as pope, that Arnulf returned to his post as archbishop of Reims, whilst Gerbert travelled to join Otto III and soon became archbishop of Ravenna. Hugh of Fleury dated the accession of King Robert II to AD 995. The *Annals of Quedlinburg,* the *Saxon Annals,* the *Annals of Hildesheim* and the *Annals of Niederaltaich (Annales Altahenses Maiores),* as well as Roger of Wendover, dated the death of John XV and the ordination of Pope Gregory V to AD 996, whereas Alberic of Trois-Fontaines wrote that Bruno became Pope Gregory V in AD 995 and Herman of Reichenau placed the succession from John to Gregory in AD 997 [280].

The *Annals of Hildesheim* reported that, in AD 995, Pope John had sent legates to King Otto, inviting him to come to Italy and take action against a "tyrant". The *Annals of Niederaltaich,* in the entry for the following year, identified the tyrant as Crescentius. However, at that time, Otto was fully occupied in negotiating peace between the Saxons and the Slavs and, when he eventually arrived in Rome, he found that Pope John had died. Otto then secured the appointment of his cousin Bruno, son of the duke of Carinthia, as the 142nd pope, the first not to have

been born in Italy since the 96th pope, the Sicilian Stephen III. Bruno adopted Gregory V as his papal name, and one of his first acts was to crown Otto III as emperor. Thietmar wrote that this was in Otto's 15th year, and the 13th year of his reign. The Quedlinburg, Hildesheim, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals all dated the coronation of Otto III to AD 996, whilst Hermann gave it as AD 997. After the coronation, emperor and pope jointly convened a council of bishops at which it was formally decided to re-instate Arnulf as archbishop of Reims. Otto then returned to Germany, after securing a promise of good conduct from Crescentius, but several months later, in AD 998 (according to several annals and chronicles), Crescentius drove Pope Gregory out of Rome and proclaimed the bishop of Piacenza, John of Calabria, to be Pope John XVI. Calabria, in southern Italy, was then part of the Byzantine Empire and John, surnamed Philagathos, was of Greek descent. He had also once been chaplain to Empress Theophanu. Pope Gregory set up a new base in Pavia and, while waiting for Otto III to return with an army, he convened a synod, which instructed King Robert II to set aside his wife, Bertha, because she was a close blood-relative. In the following year, when Otto made his attack on Rome, Crescentius barricaded himself in the Castel Sant'Angelo while John attempted to flee. He was captured, mutilated and then publicly humiliated. Otto's troops then stormed the Castel Sant'Angelo and took Crescentius prisoner. He was executed on the walls of the Castel. That removed the opposition to Pope Gregory, but he died not long afterwards. According to the Quedlinburg, Hildesheim, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals, Gregory died, and was succeeded as pope by Gerbert of Aurillac (who took Silvester II as his papal name) in AD 999, but Hermann placed the transition in AD 1000, and both Alberic of Trois-Fontaines and Roger of Wendover wrote that Gerbert/Silvester became pope in AD 998. Twenty-two letters, bulls and privileges produced by Gregory V are reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina*. In one of the earliest, dated to May in the 1st year of his pontificate, indiction 9 (AD 996), he labelled Gerbert as an intruder for accepting the appointment of archbishop of Reims. In April in his 2nd year, and the 2nd imperial year of Otto, indiction 11 (AD 998), he wrote a letter to Gerbert, who at this time was archbishop of Ravenna, and a month later, in May of his 3rd year and the 2nd imperial year of Otto, indiction 11 (AD 998) he issued a papal bull announcing the re-instatement of Arnulf as archbishop of Reims. The last papal document bearing his name was dated to January, indiction 12 (AD 999) [281].

It is evident from the sources that Otto III was planning to reform his empire, basing it on enlightened Christianity, and he saw the scholarly Gerbert as someone who could help him achieve his aim. Gerbert's papal name, Silvester II, may have been an indication of that, because Silvester I had been pope throughout most of the reign of Emperor Constantine I. However, Otto's immediate concern was the north, where he addressed some problems in Germany and then travelled east to ensure the continuation of alliances there. He was well-received by Duke Boleslav of Poland and approved the coronation of Vijk as Stephen I, the first Christian king of Hungary. Later, after visiting the tomb of Charlemagne in Aachen, he returned to Rome. It was his intention to establish Rome as the capital of his empire, and to re-introduce some ancient Roman traditions. That plan was not welcomed in Germany, and Thietmar reported that a number of dukes and counts conspired against him, often with the knowledge of bishops. It was no more popular in Rome, where a supposed friend of the emperor named Gregory (generally thought to be Gregory of Tusculum) laid a trap for him, but he managed to escape. It was no longer safe for Otto to remain in Rome, so he left, intending to return in force but, while he was staying in the fortress of Paterno (65 km north of Rome), he was taken ill and died, before he had reached his 22nd birthday. The chronicle of Herman, like the Hildesheim, Lambert, Quedlinburg, Weissenburg, Niederaltaich and Saxon annals, dated the death of Otto III to AD 1002. Henry, duke of Bavaria, succeeded Otto as king of Germany, but Arduin of Ivrea was chosen to succeed Otto as king of Italy, whilst Crescentius III, son of Crescentius the Younger, seized power in Rome and claimed the title of "patrician". Gerbert/Silvester continued as pope, although in a much more restricted role than previously. The *Saxon Chronicles* said that Gerbert served as pope for 4 years 1 month altogether, dying in AD 1003, and Herman indicated that he served for 5 years and died in AD 1005, but Gerbert's death went unmentioned in other German annals and chronicles. There seems no reason to doubt that his successor as pope, John Sicco, was selected by Crescentius. Thietmar described Crescentius as the destroyer of the Apostolic See [282].

4.2.3 Discussion: The Chronology of the First Millennium, according to accounts of the Popes

Once again we have examined, without any prior assumptions, what the surviving sources say about the history of a particular group of people, in this case the popes of Rome, over a period of many centuries, and found that the sources, taken as a whole, present a consistent, coherent picture of continuity from the time of Emperor Nero to that of Emperor Otto III. As we have noted, no surviving historical source dating from before the time of Emperor Marcus Aurelius mentions the popes, and retrospective accounts of the earliest popes contain significant inconsistencies. However, that is understandable, and not in itself grounds for supposing the existence of a chronological anomaly. Similarly, the fact that we have only sketchy historical details of the popes who held office, often very briefly, during a period of two decades during the reigns of Otto II and Otto III, when Rome was riven by civil strife, cannot be said with any justification to be an indication of an overall chronological problem, and certainly not of one spanning several centuries. The fact is that the historical accounts of the popes of Rome, like those of the Roman/Byzantine Emperors and the events in Barbarian Europe, provide no evidence of a catastrophic and long-lasting destruction of Rome at around AD 230, 520 or 930 (or any other time), nor of

any triplication of history between AD 1-230, 290-520 and 701-930, as supposed by Gunnar Heinsohn. Similarly, there is no evidence of an artificial extension of history between the reigns of Marcian and Maurice, as proposed by Steve Mitchell, or of an invented history between AD 614 and AD 911, as envisaged by Heribert Illig.

In our discussion in section 4.1.3, it was noted that details of the popes given in the *Book of Pontiffs* and other surviving historical sources were incompatible with Mitchell's theory and also with the first two components of Heinsohn's proposed triplicate-period scenario. From the details of the pontificates summarised in sections 4.2.1-4.2.2, it will be apparent that introducing the third component of the triplicate-period scenario raises even greater difficulties for Heinsohn's theory. Since the third component covers the period conventionally dated from AD 701 to AD 930, it must have been the time of the pontificates from John VI (the 87th pope, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*) to Stephen VII (the 127th pope). According to the historical sources, all of these popes were based in Rome, like those of the first component (popes 1-19) and the second (popes 29-54). So, we have three sequences of popes, all apparently operating in the same city over the same period of time. There are no repeated sequences of names or actions, so no basis for thinking there had been a triplication of one particular sequence of popes. Can there be a plausible explanation, consistent with Heinsohn's theory? When Heinsohn was considering the Roman emperors, he gave the sequence from Augustus to Alexander Severus as the emperors reigning in Rome during the first component of his triplicate-period scenario, and he had the sequence from Diocletian to Anastasius reigning in the east during the second component, at the same time as the first sequence. It is well-established that these two sequences of emperors reigned from different places (although not that they were contemporaries) so there was at least some plausible basis for this aspect of Heinsohn's theory. However, a plausible basis of this nature was less discernible when we came to consider the popes in the first and second components of the triplicate-period scenario (as discussed in section 4.1.3), and the problems increase when the third component is also brought into the picture. As before, the sources occasionally linked popes to emperors in Constantinople, but these were not the same emperors of Constantinople who were linked to the popes in the second component. The linkages of the popes in the second component were to Diocletian (who reigned from Croatia) and then to the sequence from Constantine I to Anastasius I (all of whom reigned in Constantinople), whereas the linkages of the popes in the third component were to a sequence of Constantinople-based emperors starting with Tiberius III. For example, the *Book of Pontiffs* associated Pope John VII (the 88th pope) with Emperor Tiberius III and Emperor Justinian II (in his second reign); Gregory II (the 91st pope) with emperors Anastasius II, Theodosius III, Leo III and Constantine V); Hadrian I (the 97th pope) with Empress Irene and Emperor Constantine VI); Benedict III (the 106th pope) with Emperor Michael III, the son of Emperor Theophilos; and Hadrian II (the 108th pope) with Emperor Basil I [283]. That raises another issue, for Heinsohn had associated the third component of his triplicate-period scenario solely with events in northeastern Europe, without mentioning the emperors in Constantinople. Where did these fit into the picture? If Heinsohn wishes his theory to be given serious attention, it is surely reasonable to expect him to provide more plausible, detailed arguments relating to the surviving historical sources than he did in his defining articles [7].

Regarding Heribert Illig's claim that an invented history has been created to fill a non-existent period between AD 614 to AD 911, i.e. the period between the pontificate of Boniface IV (the 69th pope, according to the *Book of Pontiffs*) and that of Anastasius III (the 123rd pope), it should be pointed out that the lives of some of the popes believed to have lived at this time are the best-documented of all the popes from the Roman and Early Medieval periods. For example, the entries in the *Book of Pontiffs* for the 97th pope, Hadrian I, and the 98th pope, Leo III, taken together, are longer than the entire entries for the first 90 popes combined. Events during the pontificates of Hadrian I and Leo III are also covered in detail in the *Royal Frankish Annals* and in the biography of Charlemagne by Einhard, and briefly recorded in the annals of Lorsch, Quedlinburg, Lambert, Weissenburg and Hildesheim, as well as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and other sources [284]. Other types of historical evidence has also survived from this period, including correspondence. So, for example, in addition to the *Book of Pontiffs* entry for the 91st pope, Gregory II, which was longer than any of the previous 90 entries and mentioned his involvement in the missionary activities of Bishop Boniface (subsequently St Boniface) to the German nation, together with the related biography of Boniface by Willibald of Mainz, letters between bishop and pope have been preserved in the collected correspondence of St Boniface [285]. On what basis can all of this, and much else besides, be dismissed as an invented history?

4.2.4 Postscript: Popes from Silvester II to Honorius III

As in previous chapters, let us now continue our account up to and beyond the end of the 200-year phantom period envisaged by Zoltán Hunnivari. Since we have reached the century in which Herman of Reichenau lived and died, we shall use his chronicle and its continuation, by Berthold of Reichenau, as the spine for our considerations of chronology over the next 80 years [286]. According to Herman, King Henry II of Germany crossed the Alps in AD 1004 and had himself crowned as king of Italy, but, as noted by Arnulf of Milan, he never ventured south of the Po and soon returned to Germany [287]. At that time, with the papacy having once again fallen under the control of the Crescentius family, the popes reverted to having a limited role, with little personal influence, particularly on international affairs, so there were very few mentions of them in contemporary chronicles.

Herman wrote that, after Gerbert's death, the 144th pope, John XVII (called John XVI by Herman, who chose not to assign a regnal number to John Philagathos) was ordained in AD 1005 and served for one year. Alberic of Trois-Fontaines dated the ordination of John, surnamed Sicco, to AD 1002 and said that he was pope for just a single month. The *Saxon Annals* reported that John XVII became pope in AD 1003 and served for 5 months. The "biography" of John Sicco by Petrus Guillermi consisted of a single sentence, simply noting that he was pope for 5 months and 25 days [288].

In AD 1005, as reported by Herman, John Fassano was ordained as the 145th pope, John XVIII (John XVII according to Herman). Alberic of Trois-Fontaines dated his ordination to AD 1002, and said he was pope for 5 years. Roger of Wendover and the *Saxon Annals* similarly said that John Fassano was pope for 5 years, but dated his ordination to AD 1004 [289].

The *Saxon Annals* reported the death of John Fassano in 1009, adding that he was succeeded by Sergius IV, who served as pope for 2 years 9 months. Roger gave exactly the same details for the papacy of Sergius, whilst Alberic gave the same duration, but placed the pontificate two years earlier. The surname of the new pope was Buccaporci (literally "pig's snout"). Adam of Bremen noted that Sergius was pope during the last days of archbishop Lievizo. According to Thietmar, both John Fassano and Sergius were hoping that King Henry would intervene to enable them to carry out their role in line with tradition, but that was being prevented by his enemies. However, the situation changed with the death of Crescentius shortly before that of Pope Sergius, although not in a straightforward fashion [290].

Two candidates presented themselves as successors to Sergius: Gregory, with support from the Roman nobility; and Theophylact, son of the Count of Tusculum, supported by Tusculum nobles. Both claimed they had been fairly elected, but Gregory was driven from Rome by Theophylact's supporters and, as reported by Thietmar, he travelled to Germany to present his case to King Henry, who agreed to consider the details and make a decision. That turned out to be in favour of Theophylact, who took the papal name of Benedict VIII. Herman noted that Benedict VIII, succeeding Sergius, became the 147th pope in AD 1013, adding that this was the year of his own birth, and that Benedict went on to serve as pope for almost 12 years. Alberic agreed with those details concerning Benedict's pontificate, and Roger and the *Saxon Annals s*imilarly said that Benedict was pope for 12 years, but dated his ordination to AD 1012. Herman and Thietmar went on to report that Henry was crowned emperor by Pope Benedict in Rome in AD 1014 (a year later than the date given by Frutolf of Michelsberg), and Herman noted that Benedict accepted Henry's invitation to come to Bamberg in AD 1020 for the dedication of the church of St Stephen (again a year later than the date given by Frutolf). Adam of Bremen recorded that Unwan succeeded Lievizo as archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen in AD 1013, receiving the pallium from Pope Benedict and the pastoral staff from Emperor Henry [291].

In AD 1024, according to Herman, Benedict died and was succeeded by his brother, who became the 148th pope. He took the papal name John XIX (given by Herman as John XVIII), and went on to serve for almost 9 years. Alberic and Roger both wrote that John was ordained in AD 1023 and was pope for 9 years 9 months. After a gap of over 50 years (according to his own timescale), Marianus resumed mentioning the popes at this point, saying that Benedict died in VA 1046 (AD 1024) and was succeeded by John. Herman noted that Emperor Henry died in the same year as Pope Benedict VIII and, as he had no children, several claimants to the throne emerged. Eventually, a Franconian count known as Conrad the Elder was elected king of Germany and then, in AD 1027, he was crowned Emperor Conrad II by Pope John in Rome. Arnulf of Milan similarly wrote that Conrad II was crowned emperor by Pope John in AD 1027. Adam of Bremen reported that, after the death of Unwan in AD 1029, Lievizo, nephew of the previous Lievizo, became archbishop, receiving the pallium from Pope John XIX and the pastoral staff from "Caesar" Conrad [292].

As reported by Herman, Pope John died in AD 1033 and was succeeded by Theophylact, the 149th pope, who took the name Benedict IX and reigned for more than 12 years. Adam noted that Hermann succeeded Lievizo as archbishop after the latter had served for a little less than 4 years, and Alebrand succeeded Hermann 3 years later, both Hermann and Alebrand receiving the pallium from Pope Benedict. Then, when Alebrand died in AD 1043, his successor, Adalbert, received the pallium from legates of Benedict. Alberic wrote that Benedict was pope for 14 years, beginning in AD 1033, and Roger gave the same duration, but placed the pontificate one year later. Benedict IX was the nephew of his respected predecessor but, according to Herman, he was unworthy to be pope, because of the nature of his character and his deeds. Eventually, in AD 1044, the Romans drove Benedict from the Holy See, accusing him of many crimes, and Silvester III was installed as his replacement. Benedict then excommunicated Silvester and, with the help of his supporters, succeeded in reclaiming the office of pope. However, soon afterwards, Benedict apparently resigned and appointed as his successor a Roman priest, John Gratian, who adopted the papal name Gregory VI. Roger wrote that Silvester was pope for 56 days in AD 1046 and, after that, Gregory was pope for 2 years. Yet, we know from other sources that, at this time, Silvester III continued to maintain that he was the true pope, and the position of Benedict IX was unclear. Herman, and also Lambert (or Lampert) of Hersfeld, wrote that Henry III, who had become king of Germany after the death of his

father, Conrad II, in AD 1039, travelled to Italy in AD 1046 to investigate the situation. He concluded that Benedict, Silvester and Gregory should all be deprived of the papal staff. Then, with the consent of Romans and others, he nominated Bishop Suidger of Bamberg to take over as supreme pontiff. So, at the beginning of the year AD 1047, Suidger was consecrated as the 151st pope, Clement II. Marianus dated the start of the pontificate of Clement II to VA 1068 (AD 1046). Soon after becoming pope, Clement crowned Henry III as emperor. Between the 143rd pope, the Frenchman, Silvester II, and the 151st, the Saxon, Clement II, every pope had been born in the vicinity of Rome [293].

Alberic and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* reported that Pope Clement II served for just 9 months, in AD 1046, and was succeeded by Damasus II, who died soon afterwards. Roger gave much the same information, but placed the events in AD 1048, whilst Marianus dated them to VA 1069 (AD 1047). All said that Leo IX then became pope, Roger adding that he served for 5 years and two months. According to Herman, Pope Clement died in AD 1047, 9 months after his appointment. In the following year, King Henry nominated Bishop Poppo of Brixen as the next pontiff. He was ordained in Rome as the 152nd pope, Damasus II, but died a few days later. In AD 1049, Bishop Bruno of Toul was nominated by Henry to succeed Damasus, and, after receiving an enthusiastic welcome in Rome, he was ordained as the 153rd pope, taking the name Leo IX. Very similar details were given by Lambert. We may also note that the papacy of Leo IX was the starting point of another series of papal biographies included in Duchesne's two-volume work on the *Book of Pontiffs*. This series was written by Cardinal Boso, towards the end of the 12th century. Details of the papacy of Leo IX were given in a work by Bishop Bonizo of Sutri, written in the latter part of the 11th century, and a contemporary biography of Leo IX, of uncertain authorship, has also survived [294].

According to Herman and Lambert, the energetic new pope, Leo IX, soon convened a number of synods, with a view to carrying out reforms to eliminate practices within the church which he considered to be unacceptable. He also set about making the papacy more international and politically-independent, appointing churchmen of proven ability from outside Italy to papal posts, and proposing an exchange of ownership between papal lands in Germany and some imperial territories in Italy. In addition, Leo began military campaigns in the regions surrounding Rome, to deal with potential threats to the city by getting the princes to swear oaths of loyalty to himself and to the emperor. There was a particular problem in southern Italy where many Normans had settled and were causing difficulties for both the Italian and Greek populations living there. Leo led an army against the Normans and there was some fierce fighting, resulting in the pope being besieged in Benevento for a time. When he eventually returned to Rome, Leo was in poor health and he died soon afterwards, in AD 1054. According to Adam of Bremen, Pope Leo died in the 12th year of Archbishop Adalbert [295].

Herman of Reichenau died in the same year and, in his continuation of Herman's chronicle, Berthold of Reichenau noted that Emperor Henry nominated Bishop Gebhard of Eichstätt to succeed Leo. Early in the following year, AD 1055, Gebhard was consecrated in Rome as the 154th pope and took the name Victor II. Lambert and Frutolf similarly wrote that Gebhard succeeded Leo as pope. Bernold of St Blasien wrote in his chronicle that Pope Victor was ordained in AD 1054 and reigned for 3 years, whilst Roger and Alberic said that Victor was pope for 2 years, beginning in AD 1055. Consistent with that, Marianus wrote that Victor became pope in VA 1077 (AD 1055), whereas the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* placed it a year earlier. Shortly after Victor was consecrated, according to Lambert, papal envoys, including Frederick, brother of Duke Godfrey of Lotharingia, returned from Constantinople, where there had been a general appreciation of the need for political cooperation between Rome and Constantinople, but they reported having had a major dispute with the patriarch and the emperor about whether the pope was head of the Eastern as well as the Western Church. Berthold wrote that Emperor Henry sent Bishop Oddo as an envoy to Constantinople, where he found that the emperor had died and been replaced by a woman (inferred from other sources to have been Theodora). In AD 1056, as reported by Bernold, Pope Victor sent Archdeacon Hildebrand to assemble a synod in Tours to investigate the Berengarian heresy, and in the same year, according to Berthold, Emperor Henry summoned the pope to meet with him in Germany. While he was there, the emperor died, and he was buried by Pope Victor at the church of St Mary in Speyer. Henry's seven-year old son had already been made king by his father, so he was now entrusted to rule over Germany, as King Henry IV, with his mother, Agnes, as regent [296].

In AD 1057, as reported by Berthold, Bernold, Lambert, Frutolf and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, Pope Victor II died and was succeeded, as the 155th pope (according to Berthold), by Frederick, the brother of Duke Godfrey, who took the name Stephen IX. Roger and Alberic wrote that Stephen became pope in AD 1058 and served for just 9 months. Marianus similarly dated the consecration of Stephen to VA 1080 (AD 1058). Berthold, Bernold and Lambert recorded that Pope Stephen IX died in AD 1057 and the papal chair was then occupied, without election or ordination, by a man who took the name Benedict, but he was expelled after about 7 months by Duke Godfrey. Likewise, Roger and Alberic noted that Benedict succeeded Stephen and was pope for a similar short period. After Benedict's removal, Berthold, Bernold and Lambert said that Gerard, bishop of Florence, was consecrated as Pope Nicholas II in AD 1058. Consistent with that, Marianus wrote that Nicholas became pope in

VA 1080 (AD 1058). Berthold, regarding Nicholas as the legal successor to Stephen, identified him as the 156th pope, and both he and Bernold wrote that Nicholas served until he died in AD 1061, whereas Lambert dated his death to AD 1063. Roger and Alberic both wrote that Nicholas became pope in AD 1060, Roger saying it was for 2 years and Alberic for 2 years 6 months [297].

Berthold, Bernold and Lambert reported that, after the death of Pope Nicholas, a papal election took place in Rome, with Anselm, bishop of Lucca, a prominent advocate of reform, being elected pope and taking the name Alexander II. However, shortly afterwards, in Basel, an assembly convened by the regent, Empress Agnes, elected an opponent of reform, Cadalus, bishop of Parma, as pope and he took the name Honorius II, before advancing on Rome with troops in an attempt to seize the papacy. Meanwhile, back in Germany, Agnes was suspected of having an improper relationship with her advisor, Bishop Henry of Augsburg, and a party led by Anno, archbishop of Cologne seized the young king, Henry IV, from her control. Nevertheless, the conflict between Alexander and Honorius continued until, at a synod in Mantua, archbishop Anno declared Alexander to be the rightful pope. Berthold and Lambert dated this to AD 1064; Roger to AD 1067. Roger also noted that Pope Alexander had sanctioned William's invasion of England in AD 1066, and that, in AD 1072, he initiated the debate which resulted in the decision that the archbishop of Canterbury had seniority over the archbishop of York. According to Marianus, Alexander served as pope for 10 years. Adam of Bremen, recording the death of Archbishop Adalbert in AD 1072, towards the end of his historical account, noted that this was in the 11th year of Pope Alexander and the 17th year of Henry IV as king of the Germans. Throughout his pontificate, as reported in the German sources, and the account by Bonizo of Sutri, Pope Alexander continued to carry out programmes of reform, supported by Archdeacon Hildebrand [298].

The consistent picture presented in the historical sources was that, when Pope Alexander died, Archdeacon Hildebrand was immediately and unanimously acclaimed in Rome as his successor. Although Hildebrand expressed his reluctance to become pontiff, he was soon ordained as Pope Gregory VII, without any consultation with King Henry IV taking place. According to Berthold, Gregory was the 158th pope. Berthold, Bernold, Lambert and Alberic dated Gregory's ordination to AD 1073, with Frutold, Roger and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* placing it in the following year. Marianus wrote that Hildebrand became pope in VA 1095 (AD 1073). Bernold, Roger and Alberic all said that Gregory went on to be pope for 12 years 1 month [299].

In addition to the late-12th century biography by Cardinal Boso, earlier accounts of Gregory's papacy were written by Bonizo of Sutri and Paul of Bernried. From these and other surviving sources, it seems clear that, like his predecessor, Gregory's aim was to maintain and extend the reforms introduced by Pope Leo IX. This policy resulted in frequent conflicts with Henry IV, a particular cause of friction being the issue of whether it was the right of the monarch or the pope to make investitures, i.e. appointments of bishops or abbots of royal monasteries within the king's realm. Related to this was the issue of simony, the practice (widespread at the time) of selling for profit things of a spiritual nature, including ecclesiastical appointments. Early in Gregory's pontificate, as noted in various sources, the pope excommunicated a number of churchmen found guilty of simony, and King Henry assured papal legates in Nuremberg that Gregory could rely on his support. At that time, Henry was facing a major rebellion by the Saxons but, later in the same year, he won a decisive military victory over them and then began to challenge the pope's actions, in the first instance regarding a long-running problem in Milan. During the papacy of Alexander II, Godfrey, archbishop of Milan, had been dismissed from his post for simony and Atto was sent from Rome to replace him, but the people of Milan refused to accept the replacement, wanting Godfrey to remain as archbishop. Having been asked to consider the matter, Pope Gregory confirmed the appointment of Atto, but King Henry tried to prevent him taking up his post and, with Godfrey now dead, he nominated his own chaplain, Tedaldo, to be archbishop of Milan. Both king and pope issued formal threats against the other. According to Berthold, Lambert and Arnulf, this was in AD 1075. The situation continued to deteriorate, with Gregory excommunicating Henry and the king making a formal announcement that Gregory was no longer pope. Berthold, Bernold, Lambert and Frutolf dated the excommunication of King Henry to AD 1076; Roger gave it as AD 1077 [300].

As reported in detail in the contemporary German sources, the excommunication of King Henry stimulated further revolts against his rule. Feeling vulnerable once again, Henry set off on a long walk to Canossa, in northern Italy, a region controlled by a prominent supporter of Gregory, Countess Matilda of Tuscany, to meet the pope in person and express his repentance. After lengthy discussions, Gregory withdrew Henry's excommunication, but that failed to suppress the rebellions in Germany, and Rudolf of Swabia was set up as a rival king. The relationship between Henry and Gregory deteriorated once again, with the excommunication order being renewed and Gregory expressing support for Rudolf, prompting Henry to orchestrate the election as anti-pope of Wibert, archbishop of Ravenna, who had also been excommunicated by Gregory. After Rudolf had been mortally wounded in battle, effectively ending the revolt (even though Herman of Salm claimed the throne in succession to Rudolf), Henry advanced on Rome to install Clement III as pope by force. With Gregory barricaded in the Castel Sant'Angelo, Henry arranged for Wibert to be consecrated as Pope Clement III in AD 1084, and Henry was then in turn crowned

emperor by Wibert. Gregory summoned help from Robert Guiscard, the Norman duke of Apulia, and he succeeded in liberating Gregory, but the behaviour of his troops alienated the Romans, so Gregory was expelled from the city and travelled south with the returning Normans. He died in Salerno in the following year [301].

Several of the sources to which we have been referring came to an end during the pontificate of Gregory VII. The history by Arnulf of Milan was brought to a close during the Rudolf rebellion; the final year covered in the annals of Lambert of Hersfeld was AD 1077; that in the chronicle by Berthold of Reichenau was AD 1080; and the chronicle by Marianus Scotus ended in the year he gave as 1104 in the "gospel truth" system (corresponding to AD 1082). Roger of Wendover, writing 150 years later, noted that Marianus had brought his chronicle to a close in AD 1082 and expressed his personal view that, on the basis of astronomical cycles, Marianus had been justified in using a dating system based on the date of the birth of Jesus Christ being over twenty years earlier than supposed in the AD system introduced by Dionysius Exiguus [302].

According to Bernold, Frutolf, Alberic, the *Saxon Annals* and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, Pope Gregory VII died in AD 1085. At that time, control over Rome was fluctuating between the supporters and opponents of the anti-pope, Wibert of Ravenna, and there was some delay before the cardinals opposing Wibert decided on a successor to Gregory. After consulting with the Normans of southern Italy and the powerful Countess Matilda of Tuscany (also known as Matilda of Canossa), who had supported Pope Gregory, they chose Cardinal Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino, but he was in failing health and much persuasion was required before he was elected as Pope Victor III. Bernold, in his contemporary account, said that Victor eventually entered Rome to be consecrated in St Peter's in May 1087, and he returned to Monte Cassino soon afterwards. Victor's main action as pope was to confirm the measures taken by Gregory, including the excommunications of Henry and Wibert. He died only a few months after his consecration [303].

Victor's successor was Bishop Odo of Ostia, who took the papal name Urban II. Bernold wrote that Urban became pope in AD 1088, with Alberic giving the date as AD 1087 and Roger as AD 1089. As Rome was still split between supporters and opponents of Wibert, Urban spent much of the earlier period of his pontificate in southern Italy and in France, the country of his birth, where he threatened to confirm a local excommunication action against King Philip I, unless he set aside his wife, Bertrade of Montfort, whose first husband was still living, as was the first wife of Philip, Bertha of Holland. During this period, Pope Urban convened several synods, where measures introduced by Pope Gregory, including the excommunications of Henry and Wibert, were again confirmed, but there were still many who supported Henry and Wibert. Roger of Wendover reported that, in England in AD 1094, Anselm, the archbishop of Canterbury, shocked King William II when he told him he regarded Urban rather than Wibert as the true pope, and the king, taking much the same stance as Henry, then went on to make it clear that he expected his bishops to give their allegiance to him, not to an independent pope. When Anselm asked permission to visit Urban in Rome, King William said that, if he did so, he should never return to England. Anselm went ahead with his planned visit and then lived in exile in Lyons until the king died. Meanwhile, there were continuing rebellions in Germany against Emperor Henry, led by the anti-king, Herman of Salm, and by Ekbert, margrave of Meissen, but these achieved little. After the deaths of Herman and Ekbert, Countess Matilda married Welf, the young duke of Bavaria, to formalise another alliance against Henry but, again, this was largely unsuccessful until Conrad, the son and heir of Henry, joined the rebellion. As reported by Bernold and Frutolf, this was in AD 1093. The balance of power shifted, particularly after Conrad took an oath of fidelity to the pope, and Urban promised to help Conrad become king and emperor. Urban was able to establish himself in the Apostolic See and by AD 1098, according to Bernold, Wibert and his followers were largely confined to the region of Ravenna. Nevertheless, Urban continued to convene synods in various locations, including one in Piacenza in Lombardy in AD 1095, during which a legation from Emperor Alexios I of Constantinople arrived to plead for support to prevent the city being conquered by the Turks. Later in the same year, at the Council of Clermont, as reported in detail by Roger, Pope Urban gained agreement for a series of reformist proposals and then preached a sermon in which he called for Christians to take arms and travel eastwards, to defend Constantinople and also bring Jerusalem back into Christian hands. This resulted in what became known as the First Crusade. Frutolf, Alberic, Roger, John of Worcester, the *Saxon Annals* and the *Imperial Chronicle* all stated that Jerusalem fell to the Crusaders in AD 1099, around the time when Pope Urban died. Not long afterwards, Baldwin of Boulogne (and later of Edessa) was crowned as King Baldwin I of Jerusalem [304].

As reported in the sources, the death of Urban was quickly followed by the consecration in Rome of Ranierius, a monk of the Cluniac order (like Urban), as Pope Paschal II. Bernold, Frutolf, John, the *Saxon Annals*, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Imperial Chronicle* dated this transition to AD 1099. Roger and Alberic gave it as the following year, Roger adding that Paschal went on to serve as pontiff for 18 years. According to Bernold, in the entry for the penultimate year of his chronicle, he was the 163rd pope. This papal transition was not the only major change taking place, for Wibert/Clement, the anti-pope, died at around the same time as Urban. Frutolf, John and the *Imperial Chronicle* dated the death of Wibert to AD 1100, whilst the *Saxon Annals* placed it in the previous year. Even more significantly, Frutolf and the *Saxon Annals* reported that, in AD 1099, Emperor Henry

disinherited his rebellious son, Conrad, and had Conrad's younger brother crowned as King Henry V of Germany, an event dated by the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* to AD 1098 and by Roger to AD 1100. Conrad died soon afterwards, in AD 1101, according to Alberic, the *Saxon Annals*, the *Imperial Chronicle* and a continuation of Frutolf's chronicle (which ended in AD 1100). Roger also reported that, following the death of King William II of England in AD 1100, his successor, Henry I, invited Anselm, the archbishop of Canterbury, to return from exile [305].

During the pontificate of Paschal II, several anti-popes were raised up by groups who had supported Wibert, but none of these lasted very long. The final one of these took as his papal name Silvester IV but, as reported by Ekkehard of Aura, he was soon driven out of Rome by hostile crowds in AD 1106. Nevertheless, the schism between emperor and pope on the issue of investitures remained, as did a similar schism between the king of England and the pope, despite the new king, Henry I, having welcomed Archbishop Anselm back to Canterbury. Roger of Wendover and John of Worcester both reported increasing friction between Anselm and Henry on the question of investitures, until a compromise agreement was reached at an assembly in London in AD 1107. Meanwhile, as recorded in the German sources, King Henry V rebelled against his father, the emperor, early in AD 1105, expressing obedience to Pope Paschal and going on to form alliances with the leading nobles of Swabia, East Francia and Saxony. At the end of this year and the beginning of the next, a Council of the whole German kingdom took place at Mainz, during which Henry IV was persuaded to abdicate in favour of his son. Henry IV was held under guard in Cologne, but managed to escape and, with his supporters, make an attempt to regain his kingdom. He won a victory over his son in a battle at the crossing of the River Maas at Visé, but died at Liège soon afterwards. The German sources said that Henry IV died in AD 1106, whereas Alberic dated his death to the following year. In AD 1111, according to the German sources (although John of Worcester gave it as AD 1110), Henry V came to Rome to be crowned as emperor by Pope Paschal, but a major dispute broke out, leading to violence, when Henry asked Paschal to concede some investiture rights to him. However, the coronation eventually took place. There were to be more disputes between emperor and pope during the remainder of Paschal's pontificate [306].

Paschal was succeeded by John of Gaeta, a monk from Monte Cassino, who became Pope Gelasius II. The *Saxon Annals*, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, a continuation of Frutolf's chronicle, Roger and John all dated this transition to AD 1118, whilst Alberic placed it in the previous year. Emperor Henry initially expressed support for Gelasius but then advanced on Rome to install Maurice Burdinus, bishop of Braga, as Pope Gregory VIII. Gelasius escaped from Rome before Henry arrived and travelled to France, where he convened a synod at Vienne, but then died at the Abbey of Cluny, in the year after his papacy began. Guy of Burgundy was elected to succeed Gelasius, as Pope Calixtus II, and he soon entered into discussions with Emperor Henry, who was now anxious to bring the long-running investiture controversy to a peaceful end. Calixtus received an enthusiastic welcome into Rome, after which Gregory was expelled and forced to enter a monastery. According to Roger, John and Frutolf's continuator, this was in AD 1121. This continuator, together with Alberic, the *Saxon Annals* and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* noted that, in AD 1122 (at Worms), Calixtus and Emperor Henry reached a compromise agreement about investitures. Afterwards, the pope assembled the First Lateral Council in Rome, to confirm the concordat of Worms [307].

The continuation of Frutolf's chronicle, the *Saxon Annals*, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and John of Worcester all recorded the death of Pope Calixtus in AD 1124. Lambert, his successor, became Pope Honorius II. Then, in the following year, AD 1125 (according to Alberic, John, the *Saxon Annals*, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and Frutolf's continuator, but a year later in Roger's account), Emperor Henry V died. He left no legitimate children, and had nominated Frederick, duke of Swabia, as his heir, but it was Lothar of Supplinburg, duke of Saxony, who was elected to succeed him as king of Germany. The *Chronicle of Usperg* began in the first regnal year of Lothar, dating this to AD 1126 [308].

John of Worcester reported that a major synod took place at Westminster in AD 1125, presided over by John of Crema, the legate of Pope Honorius. This synod did not address the recurring issue of whether the archbishop of York was subordinate to the archbishop of Canterbury so, afterwards, William, archbishop of Canterbury, travelled to Rome, where he was assured by Pope Honorius that he was head of the church in England and Scotland. Pope Honorius died in AD 1130, according to Alberic, Roger, the *Saxon Annals*, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Chronicle of Usperg* [309].

As reported in the sources, there was then a long-running dispute over the papacy between candidates from two rival Roman families. Soon after the death of Pope Honorius, one group of cardinals ordained a cardinal named Gregory as Pope Innocent II, but another group then ordained a cardinal named Peter as Pope Anacletus II. Anacletus had the greater support amongst the Romans, so Innocent left the city and travelled to France, to visit the influential Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux. This led to meetings with King Lothar II of Germany, King Henry I of England and King Louis VI of France, all of whom were impressed by Innocent, as were the bishops and clergy he met. Eventually, Lothar, accompanied by Innocent, led an army to Rome, to establish Innocent as pope and to

have himself crowned as emperor. However, Anacletus had strong support south of the Alps, particular from the powerful Norman ruler, Roger, king of Sicily, who had become the leader of all the Normans in southern Italy. Lothar and Innocent were in Rome long enough for the latter to crown the former as emperor in AD 1133 (around four years before Lothar's death, and the accession of Conrad III as king of Germany), but they then were forced to return north. Only after the death of Anacletus was Innocent able to become established as pope in Rome, which, according to the *Chronicle of Usperg*, was in AD 1137. Records of the Second Lateran Council, held in Rome in AD 1139, show that it was presided over by Pope Innocent II. Roger of Wendover and the anonymous *Flowers of History* stated that Pope Innocent II died in AD 1142; the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Chronicle of Usperg* gave the date of his death as AD 1143; whilst Alberic said that he died in AD 1144 [310].

After that, Roger, Alberic, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Upsberg* and the anonymous *Flowers of History* all reported a series of papal transitions from Innocent II to Celestine II to Lucius II to Eugene III within a two-year period, although giving some small variations in actual dates. Eugene III was then said to have gone on to be pope for slightly more than 8 years [311].

At the time when Bernard of Pisa, a Cistercian monk who had been a pupil of Bernard of Clairvaux, was consecrated as Pope Eugene III, there was much civil unrest in Rome. It was said that his predecessor, Pope Lucius II, had been killed by a stone thrown during a riot. Revolutionary fervour was being whipped up by Arnold of Brescia, who was arguing that Rome should return to having a secular government, with the church's authority being limited to spiritual matters. The situation was such that Eugene chose to spend much of his pontificate in other parts of Italy and in France. While he was in France, the Turks conquered the Christian state of Edessa which had been established during the First Crusade. Eugene called for a Second Crusade to bring it back into Christian hands, and troops set off under the joint command of King Louis VII of France and King Conrad III of Germany, but the Second Crusade was a failure. On his return to Italy, Eugene died in Tivoli and was succeeded by the elderly dean of the Cardinals, who became Pope Anastasius IV. Alberic, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Chronicle of Otto of St Blasien* dated this transition to AD 1153 whilst Roger and the anonymous *Flowers of History* placed it in the previous year [312].

Citadel of Edessa (Sanliurfa. Turkey)

Pope Anastasius IV quickly gained a reputation as a peacemaker. Otto of Freising noted how he had come to terms with King Frederick I of Germany (the successor of Conrad III) over a contested appointment to the see of Magdeburg and, similarly, Roger of Wendover recorded how Anastasius had helped to resolve an argument about the appointment of a new archbishop of York. However, he was pope for only about a year before he died and was succeeded, after a unanimous vote, by an Englishman, Cardinal Bishop Nicholas of Albano, who became Pope Hadrian IV. This was in AD 1154, according to Alberic, Roger, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Flowers of History*, but Otto of St Blasien dated it to AD 1153 [313].

A detailed contemporary biography of Pope Hadrian, written by Cardinal Boso, is included in Duchesne's work on the *Book of Pontiffs*, and another contemporary account of Hadrian's papacy was written by Otto of Freising and his continuator. According to Otto, Hadrian was determined from the time of his consecration to stop Arnold of Brescia from inciting the Roman people to acts of violence against the church's interests. With the help of Frederick I, who had fought his way down through northern Italy to Rome, intending to continue on and attack the Normans of southern Italy and Sicily, Arnold was taken prisoner, put on trial for sedition and executed. Soon afterwards, Hadrian crowned Frederick emperor. However, these acts provoked the Romans into armed rebellion, which Frederick suppressed with a great loss of life, before changing his plans and returning north. After that, the relationship between Hadrian and Frederick deteriorated, prompting the pope to make an alliance with King William I of Sicily (the son and successor of Roger). Meanwhile, in AD 1155, according to Roger of Wendover, Pope Hadrian gave approval for Henry II, the newly-crowned king of England, to invade Ireland and subdue its people. Alberic, Roger, Villani, the *Chronicle of Usperg*, the *Chronicle of Otto of St Blasien* and the *Flowers of*

History all stated that Pope Hadrian IV died in AD 1159, whereas the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* gave AD 1161 as the year of his death [314].

According to Hunnivari, the events reported as having occurred during the two-centuries up to this point (i.e. all those mentioned in our summarised accounts from the middle of section 4.2.2 onwards, and more besides) were fabrications, for AD 1160 was the same year as AD 960.

Continuing, it was reported in the surviving sources that Roland of Siena was elected to succeed Hadrian, becoming Pope Alexander III (said by Otto of St Blasien to have been the 171st pope). Cardinal Boso, a contemporary of Alexander, wrote a comprehensive biography of him (even more detailed than his biography of Hadrian IV), and the first part of Alexander's pontificate was covered by another contemporary, Rahewin, the continuator of Otto of Freising. Relevant details were also provided by William of Newburgh and Villani of Florence. Alexander's papacy was challenged from the start, for, no sooner had he been elected and consecrated by a group of cardinals, another group of cardinals elected Cardinal-Bishop Octavian as Hadrian's successor, and ordained him as Pope Victor IV. By this time, the growing power of Emperor Frederick I was becoming evident, for he was already in effective control of parts of northern Italy, so the rival popes both asked for his support. Frederick selected Victor as his preferred pope and, at a synod in Pavia in AD 1160, he pressurised German and Italian bishops into confirming that decision and anathematising Victor's rival. Alexander, by now having secured the protection of King William of Sicily, responded by excommunicating both Victor and Frederick. The emperor then asked King Louis VII and King Henry II to recognise Victor as the true pope, but both prevaricated. Alexander eventually sailed to France and settled there. In AD 1163, he presided over the Council of Tours, where it was agreed that the Albigensian heretics should be deprived of all their possessions, and, afterwards, he supported Thomas à Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, in his disputes with King Henry II (although that failed to prevent the subsequent murder of the archbishop). Octavian/Victor died in AD 1164, but Alexander's situation remained unchanged, for Emperor Frederick recognised Guido of Crema as Paschal III, Victor's successor as pope, and later, after the death of Guido/Paschal, he similarly recognised John of Struma as Pope Calixtus III. Alexander eventually sailed back to southern Italy, where he was still recognised as pope by King William, and he also now had firm support from the kings of France and England, leaving Frederick unexpectedly isolated. The emperor then suffered some military set-backs in northern Italy, causing him to reassess the situation. In AD 1177, Frederick met Alexander in Venice and formally transferred his allegiance from John/Calixtus to him, so bringing to an end the schism. Pope Alexander returned to Rome where, in AD 1179, he presided over the Third Lateran Council, and he died in AD 1181, according to Alberic, Roger, William of Newburgh, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Flowers of History*. Otto of St Blasien dated Alexander's death to AD 1182 and the *Chronicle of Usperg* to AD 1183 [315].

Alexander's successor as pope was Hubald, bishop of Ostia, who took the name Lucius III. As reported in the sources, various groups of Saracens joined together under the leadership of Saladin during the pontificate of Pope Lucius and began to threaten Jerusalem. To make matters worse for the people of the city, their current king, Baldwin V, was just a sickly young boy. Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, travelled west to try to find an appropriate person to lead his city's resistance to Saladin and, after visiting Pope Lucius, who provided him with a letter of support for his mission, he had meetings with both King Philip II of France and King Henry II of England. He asked each of them if they would consider becoming king of Jerusalem, and prevent the city from being conquered by the Saracens. However, at that time, both Philip and Henry were more concerned with their disputes with each other, which were bringing their two countries close to war. Soon afterwards, Pope Lucius died. Otto of St Blasien dated his death to AD 1183; the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Flowers of History* to AD 1185; the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and Roger of Wendover to AD 1186; and Alberic and William of Newburgh to AD 1187 [316].

After the death of Lucius, Hubert, bishop of Milan, was elected to succeed him and consecrated as Pope Urban III. He had not been pope for long when Jerusalem fell to the Saracens, and Urban died soon after news of this reached Europe. It was widely believed that the shock of this event contributed to his death. According to Otto of St Blasien, Alberic, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Flowers of History*, Pope Urban died in AD 1187; Roger dated his death to the previous year [317].

Urban's successor was Albert of Morra, who became Pope Gregory VIII. One of his first acts was to issue a papal bull which attributed the fall of Jerusalem to the sins of Christians and, in effect, then called for a Third Crusade to drive the Saracens from the city. Shortly afterwards, according to the sources, he died, after having been pope for only two months, and was succeeded by Paul, cardinal-bishop of Palestrina, who took Clement III as his papal name. Pope Clement followed the example of his predecessor in calling for a Third Crusade and, although many armed groups were already heading towards the Holy Land, Clement sent Henry, bishop of Alba, as his legate to Emperor Frederick to persuade him to lead an army to reconquer Jerusalem. Frederick began to make plans to participate in the Crusade, as did Henry II of England and Philip II of France, following a meeting with another papal legate, William, bishop of Tyre. Frederick was the first to set off, while Henry and Philip continued to have

sporadic outbursts of armed conflict with each other, with Henry's son, Richard, allying himself with Philip against his father. Despite this rebellion, Richard soon became King Richard I of England, following his father's death. Before reaching the Holy Land, Frederick was killed in an accident in Asia Minor, shortly before Philip and Richard embarked from France with their joint-armies. Not long afterwards, Pope Clement died. According to Roger, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne*, the *Chronicle of Usperg* and the *Flowers of History*, this was in AD 1191. Otto of St Blasien dated the death of Pope Clement to AD 1190 and Alberic to AD 1192 [318].

Clement was succeeded by Hyacynth, cardinal-deacon of Santa Maria in Cosmedin in Rome, who became Pope Celestine III (said by Otto of St Blasien to have been the 175th pope). According to Villani, King Henry VI, the son and successor of Frederick I, after sorting out matters in Germany following his father's death, travelled to Rome for a meeting with Pope Clement, only to find out on arrival that Clement was now dead and Celestine had been elected to succeed him. Henry was able to attend the new pope's consecration and, a few days later, was crowned emperor by Celestine. Villani dated this event to AD 1192. Meanwhile, in the Holy Land, Philip II and Richard I had conquered the city of Acre, but for various reasons, including arguments with Richard, Philip then returned to France. Richard stayed to try to liberate Jerusalem, but eventually had to settle for a negotiated agreement which gave Christian pilgrims limited rights of access to the city. On his return journey, Richard was taken prisoner by Leopold of Austria and handed over to Emperor Henry VI, who placed him in captivity, after which Pope Celestine played a part in trying to secure his release. Celestine also tried to secure the release of Constance, wife of Emperor Henry and a contender for the Sicilian crown, who had been seized by her nephew Tancred (the successor to William as king of Sicily), whilst English sources recorded Celestine's involvement in the affairs of Canterbury and York. Pope Celestine III died in AD 1198, according to Alberic, Roger, Otto of St Blasien, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Flowers of History*, whereas the *Chronicle of Usperg* dated Celestine's death to the following year [319].

The sources all stated that Lothar of Segni was elected to succeed Celestine as Pope Innocent III. A very detailed account of the first half of his pontificate, written by an anonymous author, has survived in *The Deeds of Pope Innocent III*. As reported in this source, and others, Emperor Henry had seized control of Sicily following the death of Tancred, and had himself crowned as king, with his wife, Constance, as co-ruler. However, Henry had died three months before the death of Pope Celestine III, when his only son, Frederick, was still an infant. On becoming pope, Innocent crowned Frederick as king of Sicily, with his mother as regent, whilst, to the north, Otto of Brunswick (who was also earl of York, as his mother was the sister of King Richard I) contested the vacant German throne with Philip of Swabia. Pope Innocent made a formal announcement saying that he recognised Otto as the king of Germany and would excommunicate anyone who failed to acknowledge him, after which Otto was crowned in Mainz, but conflicts between the rival supporters of Otto and Philip continued. There were also frequent conflicts between Richard I and the French king, Philip II, so Innocent sent out a legate to them and, presented with a threat of ecclesiastical penalties, they agreed a five-year truce. Innocent had called for a Fourth Crusade and wanted the nations of Europe to give single-minded support to this. His strategy was that the key to re-conquering Jerusalem was to conquer Egypt first, but this was set aside when the leaders of the Crusade were persuaded by Alexios Angelos, son of the deposed Byzantine Emperor, Isaac II Angelos, to divert to Constantinople and place him on the throne as Alexios IV. The eventual outcome was the fall of Constantinople and the enthroning of one of the Crusaders as Emperor Baldwin I. Back in Europe, Richard I of England had died and was succeeded as king of England by his brother, John, who soon became involved in a war with Philip II for control over Normandy. Innocent sent the abbot of Casamari to try to establish peace between the two kings. Then, in AD 1205, Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury, died, which led to a major dispute between King John and the pope. Some of the clergy at Canterbury, fearing that John would force an unsatisfactory new archbishop on them, quickly elected Reginald, their sub-prior, to succeed Hubert, but John refused to confirm this appointment, naming John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, as the new archbishop. When Pope Innocent was asked to decide between the two, he rejected both and appointed Stephen Langton instead. John refused to accept the pope's candidate, which resulted in England being placed under an interdict and, subsequently, the king being excommunicated, but he remained defiant for years. During this period, Philip of Swabia was murdered, leaving John's nephew, Otto, unchallenged as king of Germany. Innocent crowned Otto as Holy Roman Emperor in AD 1209 but, in the following year, the new emperor began to break promises he had made about being subservient to the pope, so Innocent excommunicated him and his power rapidly waned. After this, Pope Innocent initiated the Albigensian Crusade, calling for action to be taken to eliminate the Cathar heresy in southwestern France. King John of England eventually abased himself before the pope and begged for forgiveness. Innocent then supported John after he had been forced by rebel barons into agreeing the terms of the Magna Carta in AD 1215, ruling that the enforced agreement was null-and-void, and excommunicating those responsible for it. In the same year, Pope Innocent convened the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome [320]. Pope Innocent III died in AD 1216, according to Alberic, the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* and the *Chronicle of Usperg*, with Roger and the *Flowers of History* dating his death to the following year. He was succeeded by Cardinal Cencio, who served as Pope Honorius III for 10 years 8 months [321].

Chapter 5: Overall Conclusions

The information presented above, in each chapter of this work, has all been taken from the surviving historical sources. It is clear that these provide no reason to suppose that the history of what we call the first millennium AD was written down for the first time during the subsequent millennium. Instead, all the indications are that it accumulated in incremental fashion, with accounts by historians of events close to their time providing source material for later historians, and also a starting point for the next phase of an ongoing process. Without any question, the information summarised in Chapter 3 of the work reinforces the interim conclusions reached in section 2.4. Dates and timescales given in these narrative sources, relating to Roman/Byzantine emperors and also events in "barbarian" Europe, unambiguously support the orthodox chronology, to within a small number of years. Similarly, the dates and timescales given in the surviving sources relating to the popes of Rome, summarised in Chapter 4, consistently support the orthodox chronology, to within a year or two. Of course, it was these sources, together with numerous surviving letters and legal documents, such as charters, which formed the basis of the orthodox chronology of the first millennium, but the consistency of the chronological details provided by them will undoubtedly surprise many people, since it is very different from what has been claimed by advocates of unorthodox chronologies for this period. Nevertheless, that does not prove the orthodox chronology to be correct. However, we have given serious consideration to alternative views in this work, and all can be seen to face major problems in reconciling novel theories with surviving historical evince, taken as a whole.

Steve Mitchell argued that the scant details of English history given by Bede for the supposed 133-year period between the accessions (in Constantinople) of emperors Marcian and Maurice indicated this timescale had been greatly exaggerated, but Bede had described it as a time of plague and civil war in England, suggesting that this explained the dearth of historical accounts, whilst various European sources, giving detailed histories of their own regions, confirmed Bede's timescale between these emperors. They also provided other timescales, e.g. for the Spanish Visigoth kings from Theoderic I to Leovigild, as recorded in the *History of the Goths* by Isidore of Seville, and the Roman pontiffs from the 47th pope, Leo I, to the 65th, Pelagius II (the predecessor of Gregory the Great), as given in the *Book of Pontiffs*, which were entirely consistent with the chronology indicated by Bede and other writers from the Early Medieval Period [322].

Gunnar Heinsohn accepted the authenticity of the surviving sources, but maintained that they presented a confused account of history. In his view, the periods which supposedly occurred between AD 1 and 230, AD 290 and 520, and AD 701 and 930, were identical, each being brought to an end by the same global catastrophe, this catastrophic event being responsible for causing confusion in the minds of subsequent writers of history [323]. However, it seems self-evident that it could not have caused confusion in the minds of those who had already written their historical accounts before the supposed global catastrophe occurred, and there are good reasons for thinking, on the basis of their own writings and those of their contemporaries, that many were describing events up to the time in which they were living, during one or other of the three 230-year periods, regardless of the issue of whether these three apparently different periods were actually the same. Hence, there seems no obvious basis for dismissing the accounts of such authors as being confused. So, what did they say? Authors active during the first of these periods (such as Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio and Herodian), taken together, indicated that, from start to finish, pagan emperors ruling from Rome had dominion over Italy, Spain, Gaul, England, Dalmatia, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa. In contrast, authors active during the second period (such as Eusebius, Jerome, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Orosius, Prosper and Cassiodorus), although presenting such a picture for the past, did not do so for the present. As the period progressed, the situation they described was increasingly one of Christian emperors ruling, from Constantinople and Milan or Ravenna, an empire divided into eastern and western parts. The western empire eventually came to an end as the Visigoths and Franks took control of most of Spain and Gaul, the Vandals established a kingdom in North Africa and the Ostrogoths conquered most of Italy. Authors active during the third period included Bede, Nikephoros, Theophanes, Fredegar, Paul the Deacon, Regino of Prüm and the compilers of the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, the *Annals of Lorsch*, the *Royal Frankish Annals*, the *Annals of St Bertin*, the *Annals of Fulda* and the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*. Taking these and other relevant sources as a whole, they told, in unambiguous fashion, of Christian emperors in Constantinople whose rule on the mainland remained limited to territories in Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor and southern Italy. Elsewhere, during this period, Muslims controlled Syria, North Africa and southern and central Spain, a Christian kingdom was maintained in Asturias in northern Spain, and Franks dominated Gaul and extended into Germany, whilst Lombards ruled most of Italy until defeated by the Franks. None of this is compatible with Heinsohn's theory, and none of these periods were said by any surviving source to have been brought to an end by a major catastrophe. His notion that Rome was completely destroyed by the catastrophic event is similarly unsupported by the accounts of the popes, which give no indication of any period when the city was uninhabited or unable to function normally, except briefly as a result of war or political action.

To illuminate the problems, let us examine one particular reign, that of Septimius Severus. As we noted in section 2.1.3, the surviving sources consistently say that Septimius Severus reigned from Rome over an enormous empire

which stretched from Spain to Persia, whereas, equally consistently, sources say that, at the time when Zeno was emperor in Constantinople, there was no longer a Roman empire in the west, and much of Italy was under the control of barbarians. Yet, in Heinsohn's scheme, Septimius Severus was reigning in the west at the same time as Zeno was reigning in the east. A key historical source is Herodian, whose historical work, said by the author to be about events which had taken place within his own lifetime, ended 17 years after the death of Septimius Severus, without the occurrence of any natural catastrophes being reported during that final period. Consistent with other sources, Herodian wrote that the Libyan-born Severus, after being made emperor in Rome, led an army towards Syria, where a rival, Pescennius Niger, had been set up as emperor by his supporters. Much fighting took place in Asia Minor, where Niger's troops attempted to halt the advance of Severus, but in vain. Severus was eventually able to cross the Taurus Mountains and confront his enemy. Although Niger offered stout resistance, he was ultimately defeated and killed. Severus then led his army further east into Persia, where he won several victories over the Parthians, before returning to Rome. His next campaign was in Gaul, where he defeated another rival, Clodius Albinus, and secured his position as emperor, afterwards carrying out many prestigious building projects. None of the sources covering the eastern campaign of Severus mentioned Zeno or any other eastern emperor (other than Niger); conversely, Marcellinus Comes, writing in Constantinople not long after the time of Zeno, whose reign he covered, never mentioned Severus (or Niger). According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, the 50th pope, Felix III, served during the reign of Emperor Zeno, from the time of King Odoacer to that of King Theodoric, but again there was no mention of Severus. Herodian and other sources noted that the final campaign of Severus was in Britain, during which the emperor died at York. In the triplicate period theory of Heinsohn, that campaign would have taken place around AD 900, so, if the theory is correct, Bede, who dated the completion of his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* to AD 731, could not have been aware of it. Yet, in that same work, Bede wrote that Severus became emperor in AD 189 and died at York after reigning for 17 years. Similarly, in his chronicle in *The Reckoning of Time*, Bede dated the final year of Severus to AM (B) 4163 (AD 210) and also dated the final year of Zeno to AM (B) 4444 (AD 491). The surviving sources clearly provide no support for Heinsohn's theory and, furthermore, archaeological evidence has shown that the accounts of the reign of Septimius Severus given in the sources are credible. For example, there is abundant evidence in Rome and Leptis Magna (in Libya) of buildings and monuments from his reign, including a triumphal arch in the Roman Forum celebrating his victories over the Parthians; also, archaeological findings consistent with the accounts of his activities have been found in Britain; and a bridge across the Cendere River in Eastern Turkey incorporates inscriptions in praise of Severus and his family [324].

Arch of Septimius Severus, Rome

Severan Bridge over the Cendere River, Eastern Turkey

Heribert Illig accepted the authenticity and reliability of the surviving sources up to AD 614, but maintained that a phantom period of 297 years had been inserted into history at that point. However, the removal of this from the accounts given by the sources gives rise to significant dislocations, as we discussed in section 3.2.4. To give another example, if we remove the supposed phantom centuries from the sources, we jump straight from a period when there had yet to be any mention of the Saracens to one where they were in firm control of Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Africa and southern Spain. Furthermore, dates in the Muslim Hijri calendar are consistent with the conventional chronology. AD 2020 corresponds to AH 1441/2 in this calendar and, as noted previously, Muhammad left Mecca in AH 1 (AD 622/3) and the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, said to have been written in Moorish Spain in AH 136 (AD 753/4), dated the arrival of the Moors to AH 92 (AD 710/1).

Works of history apparently written during the "phantom centuries" included: in England, Bede's chronicle in *The Reckoning of Time* (giving dates in his AM system), his *Ecclesiastical History* (using AD dates) and sections of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (also using AD dates); in Germany, the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the chronicles/annals of Lorsch, Moselle, Fulda and Xanten (all using AD dates); in France, the chronicles/annals of St Bertin, St Vaast and Regino of Prüm (all using AD dates); in southern Spain, the *Mozarabic Chronicle* (using both Spanish Era and Hijri dates); in northern Spain, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* (using Spanish Era dates); in

northern Italy, the *History of the Lombards* by Paul the Deacon; in Rome, the entries in the *Book of Pontiffs* from the 69th pope, Boniface IV, to the 122nd, Sergius III); and in Contantinople, the chronicles of Theophanes (which used Alexandrian Era dates – n.b. not Era of Alexander (i.e. Seleucid Era) dates, linked to Alexander the Great and his immediate successors, as supposed by Scott, apparently quoting Illig) and Nikephoros (who used regnal-year dating). If Illig's hypothesis is correct, then all of these works, and others, must be later forgeries. Illig suggested that Emperor Otto III, aided by Pope Silvester II (formerly Gerbert of Aurillac), might have been the driving force behind this, but, even if there had been such a conspiracy, it seems highly unlikely that it could have been led by Otto and Silvester. As we have seen, Otto only ruled over Germany and parts of Italy and, facing rebellions in Germany and having been driven out of Rome, he died at the age of 21. Silvester's short pontificate overlapped only briefly with the reign of Otto and, during the latter part of his period as pope, Rome and the papacy were under the control of Crescentius the Younger [325].

Zoltán Hunnivari and Anatoly Fomenko have, like Illig, argued for the existence of phantom periods. That of Hunnivari covered two centuries from AD 960, which corresponds to the period in Byzantine history from the reign of Emperor Romanos II (son of Emperor Constantine VII) to that of Emperor Manuel I (grandson of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos); in European history, from the reign of Otto I (when he was king of Germany but not emperor) to that of Frederick I (when he was both king of Germany and emperor); and in papal history from the pontificate of the 130th pope, John XII, who crowned Otto I as emperor, to the time when the 169th pope, Hadrian IV, died and Emperor Frederick I played an active role in the disputes over his successor. It also, for example, corresponds to the period in English history from King Edgar (father of Aethelred the Unready) to Henry II, indicating a sudden transition from an England ruled by a Saxon, Edgar, at a time when Danish raiding parties posed a constant threat, to one ruled by a Norman, Henry II, when no Danish threat was apparent from the surviving sources. Historical accounts seemingly written during Hunnivari's "phantom period" included: in England, the history by Henry of Huntingdon, the chronicle by John of Worcester and the major part of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*; in Germany, the works by Lambert of Hersfeld, Herman of Reichenau, Thietmar of Merseburg, Otto of Freising and Adam of Bremen; in France, those by Richer of Reims, Adémar of Chabannes and Hugh of Fleury; in northern Italy, that by Arnulf of Milan; in northern Spain, the *History of Silos*, the *History of Rodrigo*, the *Chronicle of the Kings of León* and the *Chronicle of Emperor Alfonso*; and, in Constantinople, the works by John Skylitzes, Michael Attaleiates and Anna Komnene. Each of these gave dates in the AD system, apart from the sources from Spain, where the Spanish Era dating system was used, and those from Constantinople, which gave dates in the Byzantine Era system. In similar fashion to the situation with Illig's scenario, if Hunnivari's theory is correct, then all of these works, and others (including the chronicle of Marianus Scotus, written in Germany, but using the "gospel truth" dating system), must have been forgeries from more recent times [326].

This would have required a conspiracy of immense scope and sophistication, as we can see if we examine the proposal made by Hunnivari concerning Lothar of Segni, who became Pope Innocent III. As previously noted, Hunnivari suggested that Lothar/Innocent actually lived in the 11th century AD, two centuries earlier than generally supposed, and, during his papacy, he arbitrarily moved the Christian calendar forward by 190 years so that the current year, AD 1016, became AD 1206. If we remind ourselves of relevant details given in the surviving historical sources, we noted that Geoffrey of Villehardoin, who claimed to have been a participant in the Fourth Crusade, called by Pope Innocent III, reported that he and his fellow-crusaders set sail from Venice in AD 1202. Diverting to Constantinople, they conquered the city, resulting in Baldwin of Flanders, one of the crusaders, being crowned emperor in AD 1204. Consistent with that, an apparently eye-witness account by Niketas Choniates, a resident of Constantinople, dated the coronation of Baldwin to the spring of AM (BE) 6712 (AD 1204). In Spain, Rodrigo Jiménez, apparently writing about an event within his own lifetime, reported that King Alfonso IX of León, who had come to the throne in Spanish Era 1228 (AD 1190), married Berengaria, the daughter of the king of Castile, in an attempt to improve relations between the two kingdoms. However, after Berengaria had given birth to several children by Alfonso, Pope Innocent III declared their marriage to be invalid, because of a close blood-relationship. In addition, various sources from England, France and Germany reported key events during the papacy of Pope Innocent III, Taken together, they said, for example, that, after King John had succeeded Richard I as king of England in AD 1198 or 1199, Pope Innocent III attempted to bring about a peace between John and Phillip II of France. Later, Pope Innocent crowned Otto IV emperor in AD 1209 and, in AD 1215, he annulled the "magna carta" that John had been forced to accept by rebellious barons. It was also recorded that both Pope Innocent and King John died in AD 1216. Concerning the situation two centuries earlier, Herman of Reichenau wrote that the 147th pope, Benedict VIII, was elected in AD 1013 and served as pope for almost 12 years. Herman added that AD 1013 was the year of his own birth. There is no mention in any surviving source of a Pope Innocent serving at around this time [327]. How could dates be advanced by around two centuries in three different dating systems, across regions from Spain to Constantinople, and the space created in the calendars filled with false histories, without leaving any evidence of a disruption?

Fomenko went even further than Hunnivari and Illig and maintained that virtually the entire history of the first millennium was fabricated within the past 500 years. For example, he has argued that British history was

"extended arbitrarily" in the 16th and 17th centuries, the extensions based largely on Early Medieval Byzantine history, itself largely an invention based on events in the Late Medieval Period. According to Fomenko and his colleagues, English history of the period from AD 640-1040, from the reign of Cenwalh of Wessex to King Cnut of England (generally believed to have died in AD 1035), was essentially a duplicate of supposed Byzantine history from AD 378-830, from the reign of Emperor Theodosius I to that of Constantine VI (who died in AD 797, according to conventional historians). Formenko's arguments for the existence of duplicate rulers were based largely on sequences and reign-lengths. In the case of English kings, he wrote that his second main source for these was the corpus of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, but his first main source was simply a set of chronological tables compiled by J. Blair and published in 1808/9. Furthermore, Fomenko openly acknowledged that, where the data did not appear to support his case, he believed he was justified in making adjustments to it. For example, he was convinced that King Egbert of Wessex was a duplicate of Emperor Justinian I, both being powerful kings who had lengthy reigns, but, according to his sources, Egbert was succeeded by Aethelwulf for 19 years, Aethelbald for 3 years and Aethelbert for 6 years, whereas Justinian had been succeeded by Justin II for 13 years, Tiberius II for 4 years and Maurice for 20 years. Hence Fomenko claimed that the order of the Wessex kings after Egbert should have been Aethelbert for 6 years, Aethelbald for 3 years and Aethelwulf for 19 years, going on to suggest that the English writers had been confused by the fact that all three names began with "Aethel". Similarly, before the reign of Aethelred II (the Unready), the presumed duplicate of Emperor Constantine V in Fomenko's scheme, the sources said that Edgar had reigned for 16 years and then Edward II (Edward the Martyr) for 3 years, whereas Leo III, the immediate predecessor of Constantine V, had reigned for 24 years, so Fomenko suggested that Edgar and Edward were the same person, their names being very similar [328].

If we extend the analysis to consider historical details given in the sources, rather than simply king-lists and reign-lengths, the claims of Fomenko and his colleagues that the kings of Wessex were duplicates of Byzantine emperors can be seen to be at marked variance with the historical evidence. To start with Aethelwulf, mentioned in the previous paragraph, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and other English sources recorded that he was the son of King Egbert and the father of Aethelbald, Aethelbert, Aethelred and Alfred. Thus, if, as Fomenko supposed, the regnal sequence in Wessex was Egbert, Aethelbert, Aethelbald, Aethelwulf, Aethelred and Alfred, to match the sequence of their Byzantine duplicates, Justinian I, Justin II, Tiberius II, Maurice, Phocas and Heraclius, then two of Aethelwulf's sons must have preceded him on the throne of Wessex, with two more following him, a most implausible situation. Also, whilst, according to the sources, these Wessex kings represented three generations of the same lineage, Justin II, the nephew of Justinian I, was the only one of these Byzantine emperors who had a blood-relationship with his predecessor. Furthermore, both Phocas and Heraclius came to the throne after killing their predecessors, whereas there was no suggestion in the English sources that any of these kings of Wessex were responsible for the deaths of those who came before them. In addition, it is evident from the sources that, although the Byzantine emperors during the period under consideration were not always successful in their overseas campaigns, they never became subservient to any foreign ruler. In contrast, according to English sources, Cenwalh was driven from Wessex by Penda for a few years early in his reign, whilst subsequently, according to both Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, he became subservient to Oswy of Northumbria, who killed Penda and became *bretwalda*. Yet Theodosius I, regarded by Fomenko as the duplicate of Cenwalh, was regarded as one of the most powerful rulers of Constantinople, right up to his death. Later, Bede reported in his *Ecclesiastical Hiistory* that, in the year in which he was writing, all the English kings south of the Humber were subject to Aethelbald of Mercia. One of these kings was Aethelheard of Wessex, the supposed duplicate in Fomenko's scheme of Emperor Leo I, yet there is no evidence that Leo I was ever subservient to any other ruler. It should also be noted that, according to the sources, Constantine VI, the final Byzantine emperor in the period under consideration, was a member of the Isaurian dynasty which had reigned in Constantinople for over half-a-century, whereas his supposed English duplicate, Cnut, was not a Wessex noble or even an Anglo-Saxon, but a Dane who gained the throne of England by force of arms. However, Fomenko and his colleagues focused on the reign-lengths given in the sources, paying very little attention to the historical context in which they were presented [329].

The various revisionists mentioned above generally dismissed the historical evidence as unreliable and based the claims for their theories mainly on, for example, their own interpretations of geological and archaeological findings, statistical analysis of manipulated data and astronomical retro-calculations. It is beyond the scope of this work to assess their arguments, but it should be pointed out, for instance, that Hunnivari claimed support from astronomy for his theory, whereas Scott has argued that astronomy provides "virtually conclusive proof" of Illig's model, whilst conventional scholars maintain that astronomical retro-calculations confirm the orthodox chronology. Clearly, the details of each of the arguments, including the assumptions involved, need to be examined carefully. More generally, it should be apparent than almost any argument can seem plausible if only evidence which can be made to appear to support it is presented. A convincing case presented by one author can look very different when another author brings additional information into consideration. Hence, anyone who wishes to carry out an assessment of any of these theories is advised to read works by a number of authors

expressing a range of views [330]. Here, the main priority has been to summarise, as objectively as possible, the relevant historical evidence.

The information summarised in the first four chapters of the present work shows that there can be no valid justification for disregarding the evidence of the surviving historical sources. Although most of these are copies of earlier versions, it is still apparent that different forms of Latin and Greek, and also other unique stylistic features, were used in writings originating in different periods. This can be seen, for example, in the oldest surviving manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (the *Winchester Manuscript*, now held by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge). This document consists of a series of sections, written in different hands and styles, with the earliest section ending in AD 891 and the final entry dated to AD 1070. Some works are known from only a small number of surviving manuscripts (the *Chronicon Paschale*, for example, has essentially been transmitted to us in a single 10th-century manuscript, now in the Vatican), whereas others have survived in large numbers. There are, for example, more than 100 surviving manuscripts of Bede's *The Reckoning of Time*, around half of which were written within a century of the work's completion [331]

Because of the high degree of consistency of the information provided by the various surviving sources, a scribal error or deliberate amendment in a single source can stand out very clearly. Similarly, forgeries may be indicated by the style not being appropriate for the period in which the original document was supposedly written. The general agreement in the remaining sources (the vast majority!) about the sequences, dates and timescales of rulers in all parts of Europe, from Spain to Byzantium, and popes in Rome, whilst viewing the events taking place from a diverse range of perspectives and giving some differences of detail, provides a framework for the conventional chronology of the first millennium. Yet, Heinsohn has argued that, although the surviving sources may be authentic, they provide a false picture of what really happened. However, to sustain that argument, a plausible and detailed explanation is required as to how a comprehensive but almost totally incorrect view of relatively recent history came to be established. Similarly, if, as suggested by Illig, Hunnivari and Fomenko, many (or, in Fomenko's case, perhaps even all) of the surviving sources were forgeries, plausible and detailed arguments need to be provided to explain how and why there could have been a conspiracy to support a false chronology, which involved the co-ordinated writing of documents in convincing fashion throughout an area encompassing Spain, France, England, Germany, Italy, Constantinople and regions under Muslim control. Furthermore, if dates were arbitrarily advanced by several centuries, at a time when many monasteries were independent centres of learning, is there a credible explanation as to why no surviving document contains any mention of such a major event, or evidence of any non-compliance? The view expressed by Hunnivari and Scott (mentioned near the beginning of this work), that AD dates could have been advanced by several centuries by an emperor or a pope with hardly anyone noticing, is clearly unsustainable, given the number of AD-dated histories, annals and chronicles being produced from the 8th century onwards (more than thirty of which have been referred to here). In any case, a shift of this nature would have had to be implemented in co-ordinated fashion in *all* dating systems, since the relationships between them never changed (see section 1.3). Is it conceivable that this could have happened without leaving any evidence of a major controversy? As we have seen, decisions by popes and emperors were frequently challenged, but there are no indications in the surviving sources of any controversy about chronology, just as there are no indications of any discontinuity in the events being described or any anomalous leap in the dates being allocated.

None of this *proves* that the conventional chronology of the first millennium AD is correct, but it is an undeniable fact that the surviving historical sources, taken as a whole, provide overwhelming support for the conventional chronology (generally giving variations in dates for specific events of no more than a year or two), but no support for any of the alternative chronologies we have been considering. For any one of these alternative chronologies to have any credibility, its supporters need to be able to provide a detailed plausible explanation as to why it appears to be incompatible with the evidence of the surviving historical sources.

It should also be remembered that, although in this work we have have concentrated on historical information presented in narrative sources, a large amount of historical information has also survived in other forms, such as letters, charters and other legal documents. The association of styles of writing with dates and sometimes named kings, above or below all the mundane details relating to each particular situation and locality, is generally consistent with the information relating to chronology found in chronicles and histories [332]. This also requires a plausible explanation from those advocating alternative chronologies.

Whatever the theory being proposed, or evidence from other disciplines produced in support of it, the historical evidence cannot be ignored.

Appendix 1

Summary (with annotations) of the Account given by Gregory of Tours in *The History of the Franks* of the Reigns of Frankish Kings from Clovis to Guntram

The Reign of Clovis

According to Gregory, Clovis, at the age of 15, succeeded his father, Childeric, as king of a group of Franks living in northern Gaul. Five years later, Clovis formed an alliance with his relative, Ragnachar, king of another group of Franks living in the same region, and attacked Soissons, where Syagrius, son of Aegidius, was trying to maintain the last vestiges of a Roman presence in Gaul. The army of Syagrius was annihilated, and Syagrius himself fled to seek refuge with the Visigoth king, Alaric II, in Toulouse. Clovis then advanced to the south and forced Alaric to hand over Syagrius, whom he subsequently killed. Thus the region between the Somme and the Loire fell under the control of the Franks. Clovis, like most of the Franks of his day, was a pagan, and his troops plundered the Christian churches around Soissons. Further military victories followed and, in the 10th year of his reign, Clovis crossed the Rhine and invaded Thuringia [333].

By this time, Clovis had fathered a son, Theuderic, by a concubine, but was still without a wife. So, when an envoy returned from Burgundy (in southeast Gaul), and mentioned seeing there an elegant and intelligent princess called Clotild, Clovis decided to ask for her hand in marriage. Clotild was the daughter of Chilperic who together, with his brothers Gundobad, Gundomar and Godigisel, had split the Burgundian kingdom between them on the death of their father, Gundioc, a relative of Athanaric the Visigoth. Gundobad had recently murdered Chilperic, and held the fate of the victim's daughter in his hands, but, fearful of Clovis, he allowed him to take Clotild as his wife. Chilperic had raised Clotild as a Catholic, having renounced the Arianism of his father and brothers, and she attempted to convert Clovis to Catholicism, but he resisted her efforts. However, he agreed to her requests that their children could be baptised into the Catholic faith. They subsequently had four sons, Ingomer (who died in infancy), Chlodomer, Childebert and Chlothar, and a daughter, Clotild, who subsequently married Amalaric the king of the Visigoths. Gregory also recorded that Audofleda, the sister of Clovis, married the Ostrogoth, Theodoric the Great, king of Italy [334].

In the 15th year of his reign, Clovis won an unexpected victory over the Alamanni after calling upon the name of Christ at a crucial point in the battle. In consequence, and with further encouragement from his wife, Clotild, he was baptised as a Catholic by Remigius, bishop of Reims [335]. (Correspondence between Clovis and Romigius has been preserved, as has a letter to Clovis from Avitus, bishop of Vienne, which refers to his conversion [336].)

Godigisel, who then shared the Burgundian kingdom with his brother Gundobad (Godigisel ruling from Vienne and Gundobad from Lyons) made overtures to Clovis about a possible alliance, saying he would pay a tribute to the Frankish king if he would help him defeat Gundobad and unify the kingdom under his own rule. Clovis and Godigisel subsequently defeated Gundobad in battle near Dijon, and Clovis pursued him to Avignon, where he took refuge. Gundobad sent out an envoy, Aridius, who pointed out to Clovis that Avignon was too well-fortified to fall to the Franks without a lengthy siege, so proposed an arrangement by which the Franks would go home, in return for the payment of a substantial tribute by Gundobad. Clovis agreed, and took his army out of Burgundy. Gundobad soon recovered his strength, and marched his army against Godigiel, besieging him in the city of Vienne. Eventually he broke in and killed his brother, together with one of his bishops, in an Arian church. Gundobad thus became king of the whole of Burgundy [337]. (Marius of Avenches said that these events took place in the year when Patricius and Hypatius were consuls, which corresponds to AD 500 [338].) According to Gregory, Gundobad then became a convert to Catholicism, but kept that a secret from his subjects [339].

Following his own conversion, Clovis became angry that Arian Visigoths occupied part of Gaul in the southwest. (Theodoric the Great, in letters preserved in the *variae epistolae* of Cassiodorus, tried to persuade Clovis to avoid conflict with the Visigoth king, Alaric II, and *vice versa* [340], but to no effect.) Gregory reported that Clovis confronted the Visigoth army near Poitiers. Alaric was killed during the ensuing battle, and the Visigoths were driven back into their Spanish territories, leaving the Franks in control of cities such as Toulouse and Angoulême. (Isidore dated these events to Spanish Era 544, corresponding to AD 506 [341].) Shortly afterwards, Clovis received a letter from the emperor in the east, Anastasius, conferring on him a consulship. Clad in a purple tunic and the military mantle, Clovis crowned himself with a diadem in the church of St Martin in Tours. He then travelled to Paris, where he established the seat of his government [342].

Gregory went on to tell how Clovis put a great deal of effort into defeating the other Frankish kings who held parts of northern Gaul and areas in the vicinity of the Rhine. He persuaded Chloderic, son of king Sigibert, who ruled in Cologne, to murder his father and, when that had been accomplished, Clovis arranged for Chloderic to be killed. Thus Clovis assimilated Sigibert's kingdom into his own. He then marched west and overcame King Chararic and his son, symbolically removing their royal status by cutting their hair short, and ordering them to

become priests. When he subsequently heard that they were growing their hair long again, he had their heads cut off. After that, he took possession of Chararic's kingdom. Clovis then advanced on Cambrai, to confront his relative, Ragnachar. When Ragnachar saw the strength of Clovis's forces, he and his brother Ricchar attempted to slip away, but were captured by their own men and brought before Clovis, who killed them both with an axe. Clovis then ordered the death of another brother, Rignomer, in Le Mans, and he also killed other Frankish kings who he saw as potential rivals. In each case, Clovis took over their kingdoms, and their treasure. Thus he became king of all the Franks, and, by the time of his death, his kingdom stretched throughout Gaul. According to Gregory, Clovis died at the age of 45, in Paris, in the 11th year of the episcopate of Licinius, bishop of Tours, and 112 years after the death of St Martin of Tours. Earlier in his book, Gregory had dated the death of St Martin to the 2nd year of the joint-reign of Emperors Honorius and Arcadius in AM (E) 5596 (AD 396), so it follows that he was dating the death of Clovis to AM (E) 5708 (AD 508) [343].

Chlothar I, Chlodomer, Childebert I and Theuderic I

When Clovis died, his kingdom (which eventually became known as Francia) was divided between his four sons, Chlothar I, Chlodomer, Childebert I and their half-brother, Theuderic I. (Chlothar was to rule northern Francia from Soissons, but he also received territory in Aquitaine. Childebert was to rule the northwest from Paris, and Theuderic the northeast from Reims, whilst Chlodomer received a kingdom in the south, with Orléans as its capital.) The whole region was constantly in turmoil. Gregory told us that Theuderic was soon enticed by Hermanfrid, who ruled half of Thuringia (east of Francia), to help him depose his brother Baderic, who ruled the other half, on the promise that, if this plot was successful, Baderic's kingdom would be divided equally between Hermanfrid and Theuderic. Baderic was indeed killed during the joint invasion of his territory, but Hermanfrid failed to keep his promise to Theuderic. Meanwhile, Queen Clotild called her sons together and urged them to invade Burgundy, to avenge the murder of her father, Chilperic, by Gundobad, whose son, Sigismund, was now king [344]. (Marius of Avenches said that Sigismund became king when Peter was consul, which corresponds to AD 516 [345].)

Sigismund (a devout Catholic) had founded the monastery of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune shortly before acceding to the throne. He had married a daughter of Theodoric the Great, the Ostrogoth king of Italy (whose kingdom stretched to the Burgundian border), but she died after giving him a son, Sigeric. Sigismund's second wife poisoned his mind against Sigeric, and he had him garrotted, after which he was filled with remorse and retired for a time to his monastery at Agaune. However, when the Franks invaded Burgundy, at the promptings of Clotild, Sigismund, accompanied by his brother, Godomer (an Arian), led the Burgundian army against them, but was defeated. Sigismund was captured by Chlodomer when trying to flee to the monastery at Agaune, but Godomer managed to escape. When the Franks returned home, Chlodomer took Sigismund back to Orléans as his prisoner. Godomer then rallied his troops and won back his family's control of Burgundy. So, Chlodomer made plans to invade Burgundy once more, and he also decided to kill Sigismund. Avitus, the abbot of Saint-Mesmin de Micy (and a friend of Sigismund, as can be seen from surviving correspondence between the two men), appealed for a peaceful resolution to the situation, saying that bloodshed would lead to further bloodshed, but Chlodomer refused to listen. He murdered Sigismund, together with his wife and children, and then, accompanied by Theuderic, marched against the Burgundian army, encountering it at Vézeronce near Vienne. Once more the Burgundians took flight, pursued by the headstrong Chlodomer, who became isolated from his own troops and was lured into a trap by the retreating enemy. Chlodomer's head was severed from his shoulders and placed on a stake, so the Frankish army could see it. Nevertheless, despite the death of Chlodomer, the Franks continued to drive the Burgundians back although, when they eventually considered they had won a decisive victory and withdrew, Godomer once again returned and won back his kingdom [346]. (Marius said that Sigismund was captured by by Chlodomer during the consulship of Maximus, in indiction 1, i.e. AD 523, and that Chlodomer was killed when Justin and Opilio were consuls, in indiction 2, i.e. AD 524 [347].)

Following Chlodomer's death, his three young sons were put in the care of Queen Clotild in Paris. Childebert became concerned that she was lavishing too much attention on them, possibly indicating a preparation for kingship. He sent a message to his brother Chlothar, suggesting that he came with him to Paris to resolve the situation. When they arrived, they sent a messenger to Clotild, asking her if she would be willing to send the princes into a monastery, as an alternative to them being killed. Her response was that she would sooner see them dead, rather than with short hair. So, the two kings entered the rooms where the boys were staying, and Chlothar stabbed the eldest, Theudovald, to death. The second boy, Gunthar, held on to Childebert and pleaded for mercy. Childebert was moved by his pleas, but Chlothar pointed out that the plot had been Childebert's idea, and threatened to kill his brother unless he let go of the boy. So, Childebert pushed Gunthar away, allowing Chlothar to murder him. The third boy, Chlodovald, escaped, protected by his guards. He had no wish for kingship, and cut his hair short with his own hands, before becoming a priest. Childebert and Chlothar then divided Chlodomer's lands between them [348].

Theuderic was still angry about Hermanfrid's broken promise to split Baderic's lands between them, so he made an alliance with his half-brother Chlothar to invade Thuringia, promising him a share of the booty if the venture was successful. Theuderic's son, Theudebert, who had previously repelled a Danish invasion of his father's kingdom, also took part in the attack on Hermanfrid. The Thuringian army waited behind a series of concealed pits, which disrupted the first charge of the Frankish cavalry, but eventually the Franks gained the upper hand. Hermanfrid fled and many of his troops were massacred, leaving the Franks in control of Thuringia. Before leaving the country, Theuderic tried to murder Chlothar, concealing some armed men behind a screen in the courtyard of his house, and then asking his half-brother to come and speak with him. However, the feet of the ambushers were visible under the bottom of the screen, so Chlothar realised what was happening, and made sure he kept his bodyguard around him as he went in to talk with Theuderic. Chlothar eventually returned home with his share of the booty, which included Hermanfrid's niece, Radegund. Chlothar married Radegund, but she later opted for a religious life, and built a nunnery for herself. When Theuderic returned home, he asked Hermanfrid to come and visit him, giving an assurance of safe conduct. When Hermanfrid arrived, Theuderic showered him with presents. However, when the two were chatting on the walls of Zülpich, Hermanfrid suddenly fell to his death. It was generally believed that Theuderic had pushed him [349].

Soon afterwards, Childebert received a message from his sister Clotild, the wife of the Visigoth king, Amalric, saying she was being appallingly treated because of her insistence on retaining her Catholic faith. Childebert set out to help her, the strength of his army causing Amalric to flee. The Visigoth king made plans to escape by boat, but first went to Barcelona to pick up treasure he had stored there. His own soldiers blocked his path and, as he tried to take refuge in a church, one of them killed him. Childebert set off back to Paris, his capital, with his sister and much plunder, but Clotild died on the journey, and was buried in Paris alongside her father, Clovis [350]. (According to Isidore, Amalric was killed in Barcelona by one of his own men in Era 569, i.e. AD 531 [351].)

Childebert and Chlothar then invaded Burgundy. They besieged Autun and forced king Godomer to flee, never to return, leaving the Franks in control of the whole country [352]. (According to Marius, this occurred in the consulship of Justinian (for the 4th time) and Paulinus, indiction 12, which corresponds to AD 534 {353].)

Theuderic had refused to help Childebert and Chlothar invade Burgandy because he had other business to take care of. He had become increasingly aware that the people of Clermont-Ferrand were unhappy that he had been given control of their region, in addition to his own kingdom. When a rumour spread that Theuderic had been killed in Thuringia, Childebert had been invited to take over his responsibilities in Clermont, and Theuderic's safe return was not greeted with enthusiasm. Now, he marched south to teach the people of the region a lesson. After causing much devastation, he returned home, leaving a garrison under the control of one of his relatives, Sigivald. After that, Theuderic made a treaty with Childebert, in which each promised not to attack the territory of the other [354].

Following the death of Clovis, the Visigoths regained much of the territory he had taken from them south of the Clermont region, so Theuderic now sent his son Theudebert to try to win it back. Theudebert went as far as Béziers, capturing and plundering the fortresses of Dio and Cabrières. Meanwhile, in Clermont itself, Theuderic killed Sigivald, who, with his friends, had been carrying out a long series of thefts, assaults and murders. Theuderic sent a message to Theudebert, asking him to do away with Sigivald's son, who was serving with him, but Theudebert allowed him to escape. Another message then arrived, saying that Theuderic was seriously ill. Theudebert headed home but, before he arrived, Theuderic died, in the 23rd year of his reign. Childebert and Chlothar joined forces against Theudebert, to try to claim Theuderic's kingdom for themselves. However, Theudebert paid them to leave him alone and, with the help of his loyal nobles, was able to establish himself on his father's throne (as Theudebert I). He proved to be a just king, regaining, even in Clermont-Ferrand, the support his father had forfeited. When Childebert realised that Theudebert was secure upon the throne, he sent an embassy to Theudebert to say that, as he had no sons of his own, he would like to adopt him. When Theudebert visited him, Childebert showered him with presents. Afterwards, Childebert and Theudebert made a joint attack on Chlothar, but it came to nothing, and they sued for peace [355].

Childebert and Chlothar then attacked Spain and besieged Zaragoza, where the inhabitants carried the tunic of St Vincent the Martyr as a banner. The Franks were forced to withdraw, but took with them much booty (including the tunic of St Vincent). At around the same time, Theudebert invaded Italy, and also captured much booty. However, his army was stricken by a series of epidemics, and he was forced to return home [356]. (According to Marius, this invasion took place when Apion was consul, indiction 2, i.e. in AD 539 [357].

Gregory went on to report that, in the 14th year of his reign, Theudebert became seriously ill and died, 37 years after the death of Clovis. According to the timescale given by Gregory from that dateable event, the death of Theudebert would have been in AM (E) 5745 (AD 545). Theudebert was succeeded by his son, Theudebald [358]. (Marius said this happened in the 7th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, indiction 11, which corresponds to AD 548 [359].)

During the reign of Theudebald, Gregory reported that Emperor Justinian marched into Spain, against the unpopular Visigoth king, Agila, and captured several cities. Agila was succeeded by Athanagild, who was able to regain some, but not all, of the cities taken by the imperial army [360]. (According to Isidore, Athanagild succeeded Agila in Era 592, i.e. AD 554 [361].)

During the reign of Theudebald, Justinian was also in conflict with Frankish troops, under the command of Buccelin, in Italy after the fall of the Ostrogoth kingdom. Gregory noted that Buccelin was killed when his troops were routed by Justinian's general, Narses. Shortly afterwards, Theudebald suffered a stroke and died, in the 7th year of his reign, after which Chlothar took over his kingdom [362]. (Marius placed the deaths of both Buccelin and Theudebald in the 14th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, in indiction 3, i.e. AD 555 [363].)

Continuing with Gregory's account, Chlothar faced an immediate problem to the east, when the Saxons revolted. Chlothar mobilized his army and killed many of them, and then ravaged much of Thuringia, for the Thuringians had given support to the Saxons. When he returned home, Chlothar appointed Eufronius as the 18th bishop of Tours (Gregory himself eventually becoming the 19th). Meanwhile, Chlothar had been having problems with his son, Chramn. He sent him to Clermont-Ferrand, where he fell in with a group of dissolute people, and caused much resentment by his offensive behaviour. Chramn then moved to Poitiers, where the situation repeated itself. His evil friends persuaded him to approach Childebert, with a view to betraying his father, and he and Childebert began to plot together. Chlothar sent two of his other sons, Charibert and Guntram, to deal with Chramn, who by now had moved to the Limousin. Being unsatisfied by Chramn's responses to what they had to say, Charibert and Guntram proposed that the issues should be settled by battle. However, when the lines were drawn up, Chramn sent a message to his brothers to say (falsely) that their father had been killed fighting against the Saxons, causing them to head back home in great concern [364].

Chramn then went to Paris, to ally himself even more closely to Childebert and cause trouble for his father. Childbert stirred up the Saxons, causing them to invade Chlothar's extended kingdom as far as the city of Deutz, causing great havoc. Believing that Chlothar had been killed fighting the Saxons, Childebert marched into the district around Reims and tried to occupy as much of it as he could, thinking that it was his for the taking. However, he soon found out that, after repelling the Saxons, Chlothar had returned safely to Soissons, his capital city, so Childebert went back to Paris. There he was taken ill and died, being buried in the church of Saint-Vincent (now Saint-Germain-des-Prés), which he had built to house the tunic of the martyr. Chlothar quickly took over his kingdom and his treasury, so was now ruler of all the Franks [365]. (According to Marius, Childebert died in the 17th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, in indiction 6, i.e. AD 558 [366].)

Gregory proceeded by saying that, after the death of Childebert, Chlothar had a meeting with Chramn, but realised that he still could not be trusted. Chramn went to Brittany, where he had many supporters, and raised an army. Chlothar marched into Brittany to confront his son, and crushed his forces, taking Chramn prisoner. He was locked in a poor man's hut with his wife and daughters, and the hut was burned down over their heads, killing everyone inside [367].

In the 51st year of his reign, Chlothar went on a pilgrimage to Tours, visiting the tomb of St Martin. Soon afterwards he was taken ill while hunting in the forest of Cuise, and died of a fever. His four surviving sons took his body back to Soissons, and buried it in the church of St Medard, which Chlothar himself had built [368]. According to the timescale provided by Gregory from the death of St Martin, the 51st and last year of the reign of Chlothar would have corresponded to AM 5759 (AD 559). (Marius wrote that Chlothar died in the 20th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, in indiction 9, i.e. AD 561 [369].)

Chilperic I, Guntram, Sigibert I and Charibert I

Gregory continued his *History* by noting that Chilperic acted quickly to try to gain the advantage over the other sons of Chlothar following their father's death. He seized the dead king's treasure from his villa at Berny, and bribed influential Frankish nobles to give him their support. However, the other three joined forces against Chilperic, who was their half-brother, and forced him to agree to a reasonably fair division of wealth and power. Charibert I became ruler of the western kingdom, with Paris as his capital city; Guntram became ruler of an enlarged kingdom of Burgundy, with Orléans as his capital; Sigibert I assumed control of the northeastern kingdom, with Reims as his capital (although he subsequently re-located to Metz), and he also received the geographically-separate region of the Auvergne around Clermont-Ferrand and former Ostrogoth territory in Provence, south of Burgundy; whilst Chilperic I became ruler of the northern region (between the kingdoms of Chilperic and Sigibert), with Soissons as his capital city [370].

Gregory reported that, soon afterwards, the Huns (or to be more precise the Avars, who were relatives of the Huns) attacked Gaul. Sigibert marched his army against them and put them to flight. While this was happening, Chilperic attacked Reims and captured a number of cities in the territory allocated to Sigibert. That resulted in civil war between the two of them. When Sigibert returned from fighting the Avars, he immediately occupied the city of

Soissons. He captured Theudebert, the son of Chilperic, and sent him into exile. Sigibert then fought against Chilperic and recovered the cities stolen from him. A year later, he let Theudebert return from exile, after getting him to swear on oath that he would never fight against Sigibert again [371].

Guntram and Charibert were intemperate in their relationships with women, both having a succession of wives and mistresses, of which very few were of noble birth or bearing. Gregory noted that Charibert's first wife was called Ingoberg, and they had a daughter who subsequently married the son of the king of Kent and went to live there [372]. (Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, told us more about this daughter, Adelberg, who was known as Bertha in England. She was the wife of Ethelbert who, according to Bede, became king of Kent in AD 560 - although some have suggested that was when Ethelbert was born - and died in AD 616, 21 years after being converted to Christianity by Augustine. Bede remarked that Ethelbert had been receptive to conversion because Bertha had been brought up as a Christian in the Frankish court, and had remained a Christian after her marriage, bringing Bishop Liudhard with her from Gaul as her personal advisor [373].)

According to Gregory, Ingoberg's marriage to Charibert was a short one: he dismissed her because of her jealousy over his love for two sisters, Marcovefa and Merofled, who were servants of Ingoberg, and the daughters of a wool-worker. After that, Ingoberg settled into a religious lifestyle. In her place, Charibert married Merofled, but then took another woman, Theudechild, the daughter of a shepherd. Soon afterwards, he married Marcovefa, even though he was already married to her sister. For that, he was excommunicated by Germanus, bishop of Paris. Charibert's dissolute behaviour soon took its toll, for he died, after which his kingdom was split between his three brothers. It was agreed that the city of Paris would be common territory, and none of them would enter it without the permission of the others. At around the time of Charibert's death, according to Gregory, Emperor Justinian died in Constantinople and was succeeded by Justin. Soon after that, Alboin the Lombard, who had married Clothsind, the sister of Charibert, Guntram and Sigibert, led his entire nation into Italy [374]. (Marius of Avenches dated the death of Justinian to the 25th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, indiction 14, i.e. AD 566, and the invasion of Italy by Alboin three years later [375].)

Sigibert was distressed at seeing his brothers take unsuitable wives, so he was determined to be different. Hearing of the elegance, beauty and wisdom of Brunhild, daughter of the Visigoth king, Athanagild, he sent messengers loaded with gifts to Spain, to ask for her hand in marriage. Athanagild agreed to this, and sent Brunhild to Francia with a large dowry. To add to a situation that seemed full of promise, Brunhild, although an Arian by upbringing, readily agreed to convert to Catholicism [376].

Gregory continued his account by saying that these events then stimulated Chilperic to ask for the hand of Galswinth, the elder sister of Brunhild, even though he already had several wives. He promised to dismiss all the others, if he was allowed to marry Galswinth. Athanagild accepted his assurances and, as with Brunhild, sent his daughter off with a large dowry. Galswinth became a Catholic, married Chilperic, and all seemed well. However, Chilperic remained under the influence of Fredegund, one of his previous wives, and soon tired of the constant complaints of Galswinth about the insulting and demeaning treatment she was receiving in his court. In the end, he arranged for her to be garrotted by a servant, and soon afterwards found her dead in bed. Although he wept genuine tears for Galswinth, he was soon sleeping with Fredegund once again [377].

Outbreaks of conflict between the northwestern and northeastern kingdoms over the next few decades were frequent, with the disputes often being fuelled by personal animosity between Brunhild and Fredegund (whom Brunhild blamed for the death of her sister, Galswinth). By this time, Guntram had repented of the intemperate lifestyle he had once enjoyed, and spent much of his time in prayer, fasting and charitable works. Nevertheless, that did not prevent Burgundy becoming fully involved in the civil wars that brought chaos to the country, with alignments often changing.

Gregory noted that, in Spain, when Athanagild died, Leovigild inherited part of his territory (the remainder being held by his brother, Liuva). Then Liuva died, and the kingdom of Leovigild was extended. When Leovigild's wife died, he married Gosuintha, widow of Athanagild and mother of Brunhild. He had two sons by his first wife, one of whom, Hermenegild, married Ingund, the daughter of Sigibert [378]. (Isidore dated the death of Athanagild to Era 605, i.e. AD 567 [379].)

Far to the northeast, the Avars once again invaded Frankish territory, and this time defeated Sigibert in battle. However, he was able to bribe their leader, the Khan, into accepting a peace treaty, and this proved to be a lasting one. After neutralising the Avar menace, Sigibert set his mind on seizing Arles from Guntram, and his troops, led by Firminus and Audovarius, succeeding in doing so. In response, Guntram sent out troops under the command of the patrician Celsus to invade Sigibert's territory in Provence, and they captured the city of Avignon. In the end, after further fighting, Arles was restored to Guntram, and Avignon to Sigibert [380].

Gregory recorded that, in Italy, the Lombards had robbed many churches and brought many people under their dominion since entering the country. By this time, King Alboin's wife, Chlothsind, had died, and he married

again, on this occasion to the daughter of a king he had recently killed. His new wife could not forgive Alboin for murdering her father, and conspired with a servant to poison him. After bringing about Alboin's death in this way, the two conspirators tried to escape, but were captured and killed. Not long afterwards, the Lombards invaded Gaul, and were met by an army led by the patrician Amatus, who had succeeded Celsus. Amatus was forced to flee, and was killed, together with many other Burgundians. Laden with booty, the Lombards then returned to Italy. A later Lombard attack on Gaul reached as far as Plan de Fazi, near the town of Embrun in Provence. This time Eunius, surnamed Mummolus, who succeeded his father Peonius as count of Auxerre and Amatus as patrician of Burgundy, inflicted a heavy defeat on the Lombardians and drove the survivors back to Italy. Saxons who had accompanied the Lombards into Italy then ventured into Gaul, pitching their camp near Riez in Provence. When they began seizing booty from nearby towns, Mummolus attacked and would have destroyed them had they not sued for peace, giving presents to Mummolus and abandoning their booty. The Saxons asked for permission to go back to Italy to collect their wives, children and movable possessions and then to return to Gaul, where they would swear an oath of fealty to Sigibert on their way to settle in the area from which they had originally emigrated, and that was agreed. However, as they re-entered Gaul and headed for Avignon, where they would cross the Rhône, they seized the harvest from the fields, leaving nothing for those who had grown the crops. Mummolus once again intervened, and only after the Saxons had recompensed those whose crops they had stolen did he allow them to make their crossing of the river [381].

Soon afterwards, various groups of Lombards made incursions into Gaul. Amo led his men through Embrun and camped near Avignon, whereas Zaban pitched his tents near Valence, and Rodin set up his headquarters near Grenoble. All captured towns and plundered the countryside on their way. Mummolus raised an army and went to attack Rodin, who was besieging Grenoble. Rodin was wounded by a spear and, with the remnants of his troops, headed towards Valence to join forces with Zaban. Together they pillaged the neighbourhood and then withdrew to Embrun, where Mummolus marshalled his army against them. The Lombards were cut to pieces, and Zaban and Rodin fled back to Italy, where they received a harsh reception from the local inhabitants as they they passed through various regions. Hearing of the victory of Mummolus over Zaban and Rodin, Amo ordered his army to retreat, but their flight was made difficult by deep snow in the mountain passes. They were forced to leave their booty behind, and Amo finally arrived back in Italy with only a small escort [382].

In Francia, not long after the death of Charibert, Chilperic invaded Tours and Poitiers, which had been given to Sigibert as part of the re-distribution of land. Sigibert and Guntram agreed to ask Mummolus to restore these cities to their rightful owners. Mummolus approached Tours, drove out Clovis, the son of Chilperic, and made the people swear an oath of allegiance to Sigibert. Then he entered Poitiers, and forced the inhabitants to swear a similar oath of fealty [383].

A dispute then arose between Sigibert and Guntram. The latter convened a council of bishops in Paris to adjudicate between them but, according to Gregory, neither of the kings would take the advice offered by the bishops, so the civil war became increasingly bitter. The next development was that Chilperic sent his son Theudebert to attack Tours, Poitiers and other cities south of the Loire, despite the fact that Theudebert had sworn an oath that he would never again take arms against Sigibert. At Poitiers, Theudebert defeated forces led by Sigibert's military commander, Duke Gundovald, and went on to slaughter many of the local inhabitants. He then burnt much of the district around Tours and invaded the Limousin region, which he ravaged and sacked, plundering churches and killing the clergy [384].

Sigibert began making plans to mobilise tribes from across the Rhine to fight Chilperic. When Chilperic heard about this, he approached Guntram and they agreed a treaty that neither of them would allow the other to come to harm. When Sigibert marched towards Chilperic, he could find no ford to allow his forces to cross the Seine, so he sent a messenger to ask Guntram to allow his army to pass through his territory so that it could cross the river. If Guntram would not agree, Sigibert threatened to direct his army to attack him. Guntram was too frightened to refuse Sigibert's request, even though that meant breaking the treaty he had recently made with Chilperic. Realising he was getting no help from Guntram, Chilperic retreated and set up camp at the village of Havelu, near Chartres. Sigibert soon approached and challenged Chilperic to let the two armies meet in battle, but Chilperic chose to sue for peace, offering to hand back the cities which Theudebert had seized. Sigibert was willing to settle for peace if suitable terms could be agreed but, while negotiations were taking place, elements of his army were still burning and plundering the region between Paris and Chartres. He tried to stop this happening, but found it particularly difficult to control the savagery of the people he had brought from across the Rhine. Sigibert had to kill some of them before discipline was restored. A peace treaty was then signed and he was able to return home [385].

Just a year later, according to Gregory, Chilperic engineered another treaty with Guntram, in which they agreed to make peace together, in order to be able to attack Sigibert. Chilperic then raised an army and marched as far as Reims, ravaging the countryside on the way. Sigibert felt obliged to summon the tribes from across the Rhine to fight for him once again. He advanced to Paris, and ordered the inhabitants of Châteaudun and Tours to march

against Theudebert. They were reluctant to do so, until Sigibert sent dukes Godisel and Guntram Boso to take command. When they attacked Theudebert's army, most of his troops deserted him. Theudebert fought on with those remaining, but was soon killed and buried in Châteaudun. Chilperic realised that, once again, King Guntram was doing nothing to help him, so he retreated with his wife, Fredegund, and his remaining sons to Tournai. Meanwhile, Sigibert's wife, Brunhild, and their sons joined him in Paris. There, envoys came to him from Franks who had once been subjects of Childebert and were now under the rule of Chilperic, saying they wished to appoint Sigibert as their king. Encouraged by this, Sigibert sent troops to besiege Chilperic in Tournai, planning to follow them as soon as he could. Before he left, Bishop Germanus advised him that it would be in his best interests to try to make peace with Chilperic, but he refused to listen, since it seemed that he was on the verge of victory. As he approached the royal villa of Vitry, some of Chilperic's troops raised him on a shield and elected him as their king. Then, as told by Gregory, two men who had been suborned by Queen Fredegund approached Sigibert and, without warning, stabbed him with knives smeared with poison. Shortly afterwards, Chilperic, waiting in trepidation within the walls of Tournai for a major assault by his enemy's troops, was told by a messenger that Sigibert was dead and the crisis was over. Chilperic came out of the city with his wife and sons, and buried his brother's body in the village of Lambres. Later, Sigibert was re-buried by the side of Chlothar I in the church of St Medard in Soissons [386].

Gregory recorded that Sigibert died when he was 40 years of age, in the 14th year of his reign. This was in AM (E) 5774 (AD 574), 29 years after the death of Theudebert I and 66 years after the death of Clovis [387]. (Marius dated the death of Sigibert to the 10th year of the consulship of Emperor Justin II, in indiction 9 (AD 576) [388].)

Chilperic I, Guntram and Childebert II

Gregory continued by reporting that, when the news of Sigibert's death reached Paris, Duke Gundovald escaped with Sigibert's young son, Childebert, thus saving him from certain death. Even though he was only five years old, Childebert was proclaimed king (as Childebert II) in succession to his father. Chilperic quickly reached Paris and seized Sigibert's distraught widow, Brunhild, taking possession of her treasure, which she had brought with her, and banishing her to Rouen. Chilperic sent troops to Poitiers under the leadership of his son Merovech, who succeeded in bringing the city under his control. Then, disregarding orders, Merovech marched on Tours, seizing that city also for his father. After that, on the pretext of visiting his mother Audovera, Merovech went to Rouen and took Brunhild as his wife. Chilperic was furious about that and raced to Rouen where, hearing of his approach, Merovech and Brunhild had taken sanctuary in the church of St Martin. Chilperic pretended to be kindly disposed towards them, and swore a solemn oath that he would do nothing to separate them. When they came out, he kissed them, and they had a meal together. Then Chilperic returned to Soissons, taking Merovech with him [389].

While Chilperic had been away, some troops assembled in Champagne and attacked Soissons, forcing Fredegund and Clovis, the son of Chilperic, to flee. Chilperic soon routed the besieging army, but began to harbour the suspicion that Merovech had instigated the attack. Although this was untrue (the instigator was in fact a man called Godin, who had a personal grudge against Chilperic), Merovech was placed under guard. Chilperic then sent Merovech's brother Clovis to Tours, where he assembled an army and marched through Poitiers into western Aquitaine, as far as Saintes, which he occupied. Concerned about Chilperic's expansion into territory formerly belonging to Sigibert, Guntram dispatched an army westwards under his military commander, Mummolus. In the Limoges region southeast of Poitiers, Mummolus encountered troops led by Chilperic's military commander, Desiderius, and routed them. Mummolus then returned home to Burgundy through the Clermont-Ferrand region, which was laid waste by some of his army [390].

In the meantime, Merovech had been tonsured, ordained as a priest and sent off to the monastery of Anille at Le Mans. Duke Guntram Boso, who by this time was living in sanctuary in St Martin's church in Tours (for fear of his life, because of the general belief that he had killed Chilperic's son, Theudebert) sent Merovech a message to suggest he joined him in the same sanctuary. Merovech's arrival in Tours brought him into direct contact with Gregory, author of the *History of the Franks*, who had recently been appointed bishop of the city. Gregory wrote in his historical account that Chilperic threatened to set the whole countryside around Tours alight unless he (Gregory) expelled Merovech from his church, but he refused. Merovech seemed safe for the time being, but Guntram Boso was actually in the pay of Queen Fredegund. She was secretly pleased that he had killed Theudebert (who had the same mother as Merovech, Audovera), because that increased the chances of one of her own sons succeeding Chilperic as king. Now she sent a message asking him to encourage Merovech to leave his sanctuary, so that he too could be killed. Thinking that assassins were already in place outside, Guntram Boso persuaded Merovech to accompany him on a short horse-ride, but the ride took place without incident [391].

From the death of Sigibert onwards, Gregory's *History* consisted of increasingly lengthy year-by-year reports of contemporary events, of which the following paragraphs give just a brief summary of some key developments. Furthermore, since each annual report is associated with a numbered regnal year of Childebert II and/or Guntram,

and since Gregory went on to associate the 19th regnal year of Childebert and the 33rd regnal year of Guntram with AM (E) 5792 (AD 592) [392], we can use that as a basis for deducing Gregory's dates for the other regnal years.

Gregory reported that, in the 2nd year of Childebert II, which in his chronology would have been AM (E) 5775 (AD 575), Chilperic raised an army and began to advance on Tours. Merovech did not want to be the cause of any damage to the church of St Martin, so he decided to leave and head for Childebert's kingdom, where Brunhild was now living (in the hope of being made regent for her young son, but Childebert's nobles were wary of allowing her too much influence over policy decisions). Passing through the region around Auxerre, Merovech was captured by Herpo, one of King Guntram's officials, but managed to escape and find sanctuary in the church of St Germanus. Meanwhile, Chilperic's troops devastated the area around Tours, and then Chilperic launched an attack on the region of Champagne, thinking that Merovech might be hiding there. After two months in the church of St Germanus, Merovech slipped out and reached the boundary of Childebert's kingdom, but was refused entry. Rumours spread that Merovech was now trying to return to Tours, so Chilperic had the church of St Martin closely guarded. Merovech was actually hiding in the area of Reims at this time. His presence became known to the people of Thérouanne, who told him that, if he joined them, they would throw off their allegiance to Chilperic and accept him as king. Merovech selected a band of his most valiant followers and hurried towards them, but they had prepared an ambush, and surrounded Merovech in a country house. Some suspected Guntram Boso of being involved in this plot. Keeping Merovech a prisoner inside, the plotters sent a messenger to inform Chilperic of the situation. Knowing that he could expect no mercy from his father, Merovech asked his servant Gailen to kill him with his sword, which he did [393]. (Marius of Avenches wrote that Merovech died in the 12th year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 11, i.e. AD 578 [394].)

Gregory (consistent with entries in the chronicle of Marius) noted that, by this time, Chlothar and Chlodomer, the two sons of King Guntram, had both died of dysentery. That prompted Guntram to arrange a meeting with Childebert II and his advisors at a place called the Stone Bridge (in the district of Vosges), where Guntram said that, because he was now childless, he wished to regard Childebert as his son, and vowed to remain at peace with his country. Childebert's advisors made corresponding promises about maintaining peace with Burgundy. A joint message was then sent to Chilperic, asking him to restore all the lands he had seized or prepare himself for battle. Chilperic took no notice, concentrating on building amphitheatres in Soissons and Paris to keep his subjects entertained [395].

Continuing his account, Gregory noted that, in the 3rd year of Childbert, which, according to his timescale corresponds to AM (E) 5776 (AD 576), Chilperic assembled an army to march into Brittany against Waroch, count of the Bretons. Waroch attacked the Saxons of Bayeux, who formed part of Chilperic's army, and killed many of them. A few days later, he agreed a treaty with Chilperic's commanders, saying that he would be faithful to Chilperic, pay an annual tribute, and re-build Vannes, on the understanding that he would be allowed to keep command of that city and the surrounding area [396].

Gregory then reported that, in the 4th year of Childebert, which was the 18th year of Guntram and Chilperic, and, by inference, AM (E) 5777 (AD 577), Waroch broke his word and attacked the region around Rennes belonging to Chilperic, causing great devastation. Duke Beppolen was sent to cause similar havoc in Brittany, but that only served to inflame the Bretons. They attacked Rennes once again, and also Nantes, ravaging the fields and stripping the vineyards of grapes. Bishop Felix was able to get the Bretons to agree to make good the damage, but they failed to carry out their promises [397].

During the same year, a Council was held at Chalon-sur-Sâone in Burgundy, at which bishops Salonius and Sagittarius, who had been causing trouble for many years, were finally stripped of their bishoprics [398]. (Marius said this event took place in the 13th year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 12, i.e. AD 579. Both Marius and Gregory went on to say that, later in the same year, Emperor Justin died and was succeeded by Tiberius [399].)

In the 5th year of Childebert, which, according to Gregory's timescale, was AM (E) 5778 (AD 578), Gregory reported that, when Ingund, the daughter of King Sigibert, arrived in Spain to marry Hermenegild, Queen Gosuintha, the wife of Leovigild (and step-mother of Hermenegild) had tried to persuade her to become an Arian, but she had refused. Furthermore, after the marriage, when Hermenegild was given a city of his own to govern, Ingund succeeded in converting him to Catholicism. As a result, Gosuintha began to maltreat Ingund, whilst Leovigild plotted against Hermenegild. That drove Hermenegild to seek an alliance with the forces of Emperor Tiberius, who were occupying parts of Spain. Leaving his wife under their protection, he went out with his army to fight his father. Hermenegild had expected imperial troops to join him, but that failed to happen. He was also relying on support from Miro, king of Galicia, but Leovigild surrounded Miro's forces and forced him to swear an oath of loyalty. Miro died soon afterwards. According to Gregory, Hermenegild's army was defeated by the forces of Leovigild in a battle around the fortress of Osser, near Seville, and Hermenegild was forced to flee, taking sanctuary in a nearby church. Leovigild sent Hermenegild's younger brother, Reccared, to him to say that if he went back to his father and asked for forgiveness, he would not be harmed or humiliated. However, breaking

his word, Leovigild stripped Hermenegild of all his fine clothes and sent him into exile, subsequently arranging for him to be murdered, whilst Ingund remained in the custody of the imperial troops. Gregory noted that, during the period when the fighting between Leovigild and Hermenegild was taking place, Ansovald and Domigisel were in Spain as ambassadors of Chilperic, trying to arrange details of a dowry for the marriage of Reccared to Rigunth, the daughter of Chilperic and Fredegund. Not surprisingly, in the circumstances, little progress was made in these discussions [400]. (John of Biclaro and Isidore of Seville also recorded some of these events [401].)

In the same year, the Rhône and other rivers overflowed their banks, causing much damage, and soon afterwards, as related by Gregory, the whole of Gaul was infected with dysentery. Chilperic fell ill, but recovered. Chlodobert and Dagobert, his two young sons by Fredegund, were less fortunate, and soon succumbed to the disease at Berny. Austrechild, Guntram's queen, was another victim of the epidemic. After mourning for the death of her sons, Fredegund persuaded her husband to send Clovis, the last remaining son of Chilperic and Audovera, to Berny, in the hope that he too would become infected, but he remained in good health. Clovis then went to join Chilperic in Paris, where he was heard to boast that, with all his brothers and half-brothers now dead, he would inherit the entire kingdom. Seizing on that foolish remark, Fredegund convinced Chilperic that Clovis had made use of magic arts to bring about the death of Chlodobert and Dagobert. Clovis was brought before Chilperic just as he was about to set out for the hunt on his estate at Chelles. Chilperic had him stripped of his weapons, dressed in rags and manacled, and then left him with Fredegund. She interrogated Clovis, without getting him to admit any responsibility for the death of her sons, and then had him taken to the Noisy-le-Grand estate, where he was stabbed to death. Fredegund told Chilperic that Clovis had killed himself, and he accepted her account. The household of Clovis was then broken up, his sister Basina being sent into a nunnery and his mother Audovera murdered. The treasurer of Clovis escaped to Bourges, but was brought back by Chuppa, Chilperic's master of stables, and handed over to Fredegund. She tortured and imprisoned him, but he was released following an intervention by Bishop Gregory. Later, Duke Berulf and Count Eunomius spread a rumour that Bishop Gregory was conspiring to invite King Guntram to take over Tours. He was put on trial but found to be innocent [402].

In the 6th year of Childebert, which was AM (E) 5779 (AD 579) according to Gregory's timescale, Childebert broke his agreement with Guntram and allied himself with Chilperic. At around the same time, Mummolus left the service of Guntram and travelled south, with his wife and children, to set up home in the city of Avignon, which was in Childebert's territory. Gregory continued by saying that envoys sent by Chilperic to Tiberius were unable to land at Marseilles (on the boundary between Burgundy and Provence) on their return journey, because of the state of war between Guntram and Chilperic, so they had to continue to Agde in Septimania, the part of Gallia Narbonensis which was held by the Visigoths. Soon afterwards, Bishop Gregory visited Chilperic at his manor at Nogent-sur-Marne, and was shown gifts brought back from Constantinople by the envoys. While Chilperic was still at Nogent-sur-Marne, notables from Childebert's court led by Egidius, bishop of Reims, arrived to discuss the details of a peace treaty between Childebert and Chilperic, and make plans to deprive Guntram of his kingdom. Chilperic assured them that, now he no longer had any sons of his own, he would regard Childebert as his heir. Childebert's ambassadors reported back to him, and the treaty was confirmed [403]. (According to Marius of Avenches, in the final entry of his chronicle, Mummulos came to Avignon in the 2nd year of the consulship of Tiberius II, in indiction 14, i.e. AD 581 [404].)

A power struggle was still taking place in Childebert's kingdom between Queen Brunhild, the regent, and a group of aristocrats, led by Ursio and Berthefried, who wanted to constrain the authority of the monarchy. After much harassment, Lupus, Duke of Champagne, a supporter of Brunhild, was confronted by an army led by Usio and Bethelfried, who wanted to kill him. Brunhild placed herself between the opposing forces and ordered Ursio and Berthefried to stop their action. Ursio responded that Brunhild may have regal power when her husband was on the throne, but now that Sigibert was dead, they and not she controlled the kingdom. After further boasts and threats, Ursio and Berthefried withdrew their army. However, the harassment of Lupus continued, so he took refuge with Guntram, waiting for Childebert to come of age [405].

Later in the same year, in Marseilles, Governor Dynamius, who supported Guntram, arrested Bishop Theodore and ex-governor Jovinus, as they were setting out to visit Childebert. Theodore was thrown into prison, and various charges were made against him, but he was later released. At around the same time, Childebert sent envoys to Guntram, asking him to return the half of Marseilles which had been given to him on the death of Sigibert. Guntram refused, and blocked the roads between Provence and the main part of Childebert's kingdom. When Childebert heard of this, he dispatched Duke Gundulf to Marseilles. To avoid attempting to pass through Burgundy, Gundulf travelled via Tours, where he stayed for several days with Gregory. When he reached Marseilles, Theodore came out to meet him, but Dynamius then closed the gates and refused both of them entry into the city. However, a group of important citizens then aligned themselves with Gundulf and Theodore and, since Dynamius had been cut off from his troops in the confusion, he was forced to allow the return of the bishop to his see, and to confirm that at least half of the city belonged to Childebert. Gundulf then returned home, but Dynamius ignored the promises he had made to him, and sent envoys to Guntram, blaming Theodore for

everything that had happened, and saying that Burgundy could never hope to retain hold of the half of the city that rightfully belonged to it unless the bishop was expelled. Guntram was incensed, and ordered Theodore to be bound and brought before him. However, once again, he could not be found guilty of any charge, so had to be released. This incident resulted in an escalation of the bad feeling between Guntram and Childebert, and they formally broke off the alliance that had previously been made between them. Hearing of this, Chilperic summoned Duke Desiderius and ordered him to make a savage attack on Guntram's possessions in Aquitaine. He defeated an army led by Duke Ragnovald and seized Périgueux, after which he also captured Agen and other cities in the region. Hearing that the men of Bourges (in Burgundy) were planning to invade the region of Tours, Duke Berulf led an army in that direction and devastated the area around Yzeures and Barrou. Duke Bladast marched an army into Gascony, but was heavily defeated [406].

In the 7th year of Childebert, by inference AM (E) 5780 (AD 580), Chilperic posted guards on the bridge over the river Orge, near Paris, to try to prevent the passage of infiltrators from Burgundy. However, Asclepius, a former duke, knew about the guards and killed all of them in a night attack. In response, Chilperic ordered an attack on Guntram's kingdom, but was persuaded to change his plan and, instead, send envoys to demand suitable reparation. Guntram agreed to the terms, and asked for Chilperic's friendship. Later in the year, there was great rejoicing in Chilperic's kingdom when Fredegund presented the king with a son, Theuderic. At about the same time, a pretender, Gundovald, arrived in Marseilles from Constantinople. Gundovald claimed to be a son of Chlothar I, and had presented himself as such in Gaul many years previously, having let his hair grow long in the royal fashion. Chlothar denied that he was Gundovald's father, and cut his hair, but Gundovald let it grow long once again. This time it was Sigibert who ordered the hair to be cut short, and he imprisoned Gundovald in Cologne. However, he escaped to join Narses in Italy, and then made his way to Constantinople. Now Gundovald was back in Gaul, again with long hair. In Marseilles, Bishop Theodore received him and provided horses for him to travel to Avignon to see Duke Mummolus. Theodore was then arrested by Guntram Boso, on the charge that he had assisted an imperial agent, even though he was able to produce a letter showing that Gundovald had been invited to come by a group of prominent Frankish nobles. Theodore was tried before King Guntram and found not guilty, but he was still retained in custody. While this was going on, Gundovald had withdrawn to a Mediterranean island, to await the outcome. Taking advantage of his absence, Guntram Boso and one of King Guntram's dukes seized his treasure, and made off with it to Clermont-Ferrand, where they shared it between them [407].

In the 8th year of Childebert and the 22nd year of Guntram and Chilperic, according to Gregory, which, following Gregory's timescale, corresponds to AM (E) 5781 (AD 581), Emperor Tiberius died and Maurice, his son-in-law, succeeded him [408]. (According to Bede, Maurice became emperor in AD 582; Isidore dated his first regnal year to AM (IS) 5780 (AD 583) and the *Chronicon Paschale* to AM (CP) 6092 (AD 582/3) [409].)

During the same year, Guntram Boso paid a visit to Childebert and then, on his return home, he was arrested by King Guntram, who accused him of having a major involvement in the plot to invite Gundovald to Gaul, being the person who had actually visited Constantinople to persuade the pretender to come. Although this allegation was true, as Gundovald subsequently confirmed, Guntram Boso protested his innocence, and pointed out that the man Gundovald had headed for when he arrived in Gaul was King Guntram's former military commander, Mummolus. He asked the king to free him, so he could go to Avignon and bring Mummolus back to clear his name. So, leaving his young son behind as surety, Guntram Boso set off for Avignon with some troops provided by the king. On his arrival, Mummolus stood on the city wall on one side of the river Rhône and shouted to Guntram Boso on the opposite bank that they should meet in the middle of the river, which, although fast-flowing, was relatively shallow, so Guntram Boso could tell him what was in his mind. Guntram Boso responded that he would prefer to come over to the other side, because there were some matters that he wanted to discuss in private, so he and some of his men began to cross the river. He was unaware that Mummolus had dug some deep pits in the river-bed, as a trap for invaders whose heavy mail shirts would make it impossible for them to swim, and Guntram Boso would have drowned had he not been able to hold on to a lance extended by one of the men accompanying him. When Guntram Boso returned to the safety of the river-bank, he and Mummolus hurled insults at each other, and then he began to lay siege to the city. When Childebert heard about this, he was furious, because all this was being done without his permission, so he sent Gundulf to lift the siege. Meanwhile, Chilperic broke the agreement he had made with his brothers after the death of Charibert by entering the city of Paris without obtaining the approval of his fellow Frankish kings. During the time Chilperic and his entourage stayed in Paris, his son Theuderic was baptised by Ragnemod, the bishop of the city [410].

Later, Chilperic was visited by ambassadors from Childebert, these being led by Egidius, bishop of Reims. Egidius assured Chilperic that Childebert wished to maintain peaceful relations with him whereas, in contrast, he could never be at peace with Guntram, as long as he continued to hold part of Marseilles, and also give refuge to fugitives from his kingdom. Chilperic responded that Guntram was guilty of many crimes, and went on to claim that the Burgundian king was implicated in the death of Childebert's father, Sigibert. Hearing this, Egidius proposed that

Chilperic and Childebert should join forces to ensure that Guntram was punished for all that he had done. That was quickly agreed. Chilperic then ordered Berulf to march into the Bourges area, with men of Tours, Poitiers, Angers and Nantes, whilst Desiderius and Bladast attacked the same region from the other side. A battle took place near Melun, with huge losses on both sides and then, following orders from Chilperic, his troops advanced on Bourges itself, ravaging and destroying everything in their path. Guntram led his army towards them, in defence of his kingdom, and inflicted great destruction on the opposing forces. On the following day, messengers hurried backwards and forwards between Guntram and Chilperic, and peace was agreed, with each king returning home. However, Chilperic was unable to prevent his men plundering as they retreated, with much booty being removed from Bourges, and Tours being devastated by the men led by Desiderius and Bladast. For much of this period, Childebert and his army had remained in their camp, and when he tried to mobilise his troops in support of Chilperic, the lower ranks rebelled, telling him not to listen to Egidius and other advisors, who were causing so many problems for his kingdom. Hearing the outcry against him, Egidius fled and shut himself up within the walls of Reims. [411]

In the following year, the 9th of Childebert, which corresponded to AM (E) 5782 (AD 582) in Gregory's timescale, King Guntram, of his own volition, restored the second half of Marseilles to his nephew. Thus, peace was restored between Childebert and Guntram. Shortly afterwards, ambassadors arrived from Spain, telling Chilperic that the details for the marriage between his daughter Rigunth and Reccared, son of Leovigild, had finally been settled, so it could now go ahead. Chilperic set off from Paris to Soissons but, on the journey, his infant son Theuderic died of dysentery, so he returned to Paris to bury him. Leovigild then sent an envoy bearing gifts to Chilperic, apparently to encourage him to thwart any plans his nephew Childebert might have for an invasion of Spain, in revenge for what had happened to his sister Ingund. On his way to see Chilperic, the envoy stayed with Gregory at Tours [412].

When Chilperic heard that Guntram and Childebert had made peace with each other, and now proposed to win back the cities he had seized from them, his immediate response was to withdraw to Cambrai with his treasure. He also sent messengers to his counts and dukes, asking them to strengthen the fortifications of their cities, and be prepared to defend them stoutly should Guntram and Childebert attack. At this time, another son, Chlothar, was born to Chilperic and Fredegund. Chilperic was afraid that if the child appeared in public, some harm might befall him, so he gave orders for him to be brought up in the manor of Vitry [413].

As it happened, Childebert's attention was elsewhere, for Emperor Maurice had sent him fifty thousand gold solidi to drive the Lombards out of Italy. Childebert marched against them but, instead of armed resistance, the Lombards sent him presents and promised to be his faithful subjects. Satisfied with this outcome, Childebert returned to Gaul. Maurice was furious and asked for his money back, but Childebert ignored this request, judging that there was no likelihood of Gaul being attacked by imperial forces [414].

A large number of Visigoth envoys then arrived in Gaul, to complete the transactions required before the marriage of Rigunth to Reccared could take place, so Chilperic was obliged to take up residence in Paris once again to do all that was necessary. He rounded up large numbers of serfs from various royal estates to be transported to Spain, where they would be expected to serve Rigunth, giving no thought to the distress caused by the arbitrary splitting up of families. He then handed his daughter over to the Visigoth envoys, together with her immense dowry, to which Fredegund added a vast weight of gold and silver, as well as fine clothes, from her own personal possessions. Frankish nobles also gave expensive presents, including precious objects and horses. Eventually Rigunth set off for Spain, accompanied by the Visigoth envoys, together with a large escort of armed Franks, to deal with anyone who might try to ambush the procession. However, on the first night out of Paris, fifty of her escort absconded with a hundred of the best horses, their golden bridles, and two great salvers, taking them to Childebert. From then on, there was a steady stream of people slipping away from the party, carrying with them whatever they could lay their hands on. Those who continued seized crops and livestock from the fields without recompense to the farmers, for Chilperic had made no provision from the public purse. So, the wedding procession left desolation in its wake [415].

Meanwhile, back in Paris, Chilperic was spending most of his time hunting on his estate at Chelles. One day, he arrived back from the hunt at twilight, and was just alighting from his horse when an unknown assailant stepped forward and stabbed him twice. Thus Chilperic died, in the 23rd year of his reign. No-one at Chelles seemed to know what to do, so Mallulf, bishop of Senlis, who had spent the previous three days in a tent, waiting in vain for an audience with Chilperic, took responsibility for the king's body. He prepared it for burial, sang hymns throughout the night and then carried it by boat to the church of St Vincent in Paris, where he buried it close to the tomb of Childebert I [416].

Guntram, Childebert II and Chlothar II

Soon afterwards, Queen Fredegund arrived in Paris, collected together that part of her treasure she had secreted within the city walls and sought sanctuary within the cathedral, where she was given protection by Bishop Ragnemod. The remainder of Chilperic's treasure, left behind at Chelles, was quickly seized by treasury officials and taken to Childebert, who was then in Meaux. Listening to her advisors, Fredegund then invited Guntram to come and take control of Chilperic's kingdom, as protector of herself and her four-month-old son, Chlothar. In response, Guntram immediately moved to Paris. Childebert attempted to follow suit, but was refused entry into the city by its inhabitants. Childebert sent envoys to Guntram, to demand his right of access to Paris, but this merely led to an exchange of insults about broken promises on each side. Guntram sent Childebert's envoys away, with a clear statement of his position. In his view, Childebert's uncle, Chilperic, had clearly forfeited his (and his descendants) rights to a share of Paris, by entering the city in the previous year without obtaining the agreements required by the pact made after the death of Charibert. Similarly, Childebert's father, Sigibert, had forfeited his own rights to a share of Paris, and those of his son, by entering the city on his way to a final confrontation with Chilperic. Divine judgement had been made on both Sigibert and Chilperic for these acts, because each of them had been killed soon afterwards. Guntram therefore maintained that Paris, and indeed the whole of the former kingdom of Charibert, should now belong to him by rights, and he alone would determine what happened to it in the future [417].

Childebert's envoys departed carrying that message, shortly before another group arrived to demand that Guntram should hand Fredegund over to Childebert, who was claiming that Fredegund was responsible for the murders of his aunt Galswinth, his father Sigibert, his uncle Chilperic and his cousins Clovis and Merovech. Guntram replied that he would convene an assembly to consider the demands made by the two groups of envoys [418].

At this time, Duke Ansovald and other nobles rallied in support of Chilperic's four-month-old son, whom they hailed as King Chlothar II. From all the cities that had owed allegiance to Chilperic, they obtained oaths of allegiance to Chlothar and to Guntram, his protector. Guntram helped by returning to their rightful owners possessions that had been wrongly seized by Chilperic and his cronies. Also, on the advice of Ragnemod, speaking on behalf of forty-five bishops from Chilperic's former kingdom, but contrary to the wishes of Fredegund, Guntram confirmed an action by the inhabitants of Rouen, who had recalled their popular bishop, Praetextatus, from the exile imposed on him by Chilperic. Nevertheless, Guntram felt unsafe in Paris, and never moved around without an armed escort. One day in church, just as mass was about to begin, Guntram addressed the congregation and asked them to allow him to rule for at least another three years, as adoptive father of both Chlothar and Childebert, to try to prevent the country falling back into chaos. His words were well-received [419].

Meanwhile, Rigunth had reached Toulouse, on her way to Spain with her treasure, when word reached Duke Desiderius that Chilperic had been assassinated. Gathering together some of his most formidable warriors, he entered Toulouse and seized the treasure from Rigunth. Leaving her to stay in St Mary's church with just a meagre allowance, he headed to Avignon to join up with Mummolus, his former enemy, who was now his ally. By this time, Gundovald the pretender had rejoined Mummolus in Avignon. Soon, accompanied by Desiderius and Mummolus, Gundovald set off for the Limoges district where, at Brives-la-Gaillarde, he was raised up as king on a shield [420].

Shortly afterwards, Guntram sent his counts to take over the cities which had been allocated to Sigibert after the death of Charibert. The people of Tours and Poitiers wanted to stay with Sigibert's son, Childebert, but Guntram mobilised the men of Bourges, who began creating havoc around Tours. That persuaded the inhabitants of the city to give their allegiance to Guntram, for the time being. Duke Geraric sent them a message from Poitiers, urging them to remain with Childebert, but was advised by return to accept the reality of the situation, as it was at that particular time. When troops recruited by Guntram's officers in the area of Tours began to approach Poitiers from one side, and the men of Bourges from the other, the people of the city sent messages to say that they were prepared to abide by whatever decision was reached at the forthcoming conference to address the disputes between Guntram and Childebert, but they were told in no uncertain terms that they had to give their allegiance to Guntram immediately or they would lose everything they had. Having little alternative, they followed the example of the inhabitants of Tours. In fact, the conference, when it took place, achieved nothing constructive [421].

Later, Guntram ordered Fredegund to be confined to the manor of Rueil, in the Rouen area, under the care of Bishop Melanius. The chief nobles of Chilperic's former kingdom then all swore an oath of allegiance to Chlothar II, pointedly omitting any reference to Fredegund. The queen felt she had lost most of her power, unlike the hated Brunhild, who still exercised a significant amount of influence over Childebert, even though he was now king in his own right, and also had other powerful advisors. She sent a cleric of her household to gain Brunhild's confidence and then assassinate her. However, Childebert's subjects became suspicion of the cleric, who, under torture, confessed the true nature of his mission. He was then sent back to Fredegund, who cut off his hands and feet for having failed to accomplish his task [422].

Guntram then went to Chalon-sur-Saône, where he began to concern himself with finding out who had murdered Chilperic. Fredegund was claiming that the person behind the assassination was Childebert's treasurer, Eberulf, whom she now hated because he had turned down her invitation to come and live with her after the king's death. Guntram took her accusation seriously, and swore to bring Eberulf to justice. When Eberulf heard about this, in Tours where he was now living, he sought sanctuary in the church of St Martin. Men from Orléans and Blois were then sent by Guntram to keep guard on the church but, fifteen days later, they went home, loaded with booty. Eberulf's house was ransacked, for which Eberulf blamed Bishop Gregory, even though he categorically denied any involvement. Regardless of that, Eberulf continued to live as a refugee in the church of St Martin, where he and his numerous staff regularly insulted Gregory and carried out sacrilegious acts [423].

The 10th year of Childebert (which was the 24th year of Guntram), corresponding to AM (E) 5783 (AD 583), proved to be as eventful as the previous year. Gregory recorded that the people of Poitiers soon broke their oath of allegiance to Guntram, so once again he sent a force, including men from Orléans and Bourges, to get them to change their minds. Maroveus, the bishop of Poitiers, gave the envoys a hostile reception, so Guntram's troops went on a rampage of looting, burning and killing in the region around the city. They then went and did the same around Tours, even though the Tourangeux had kept to their word. Further attacks on Poitiers eventually forced the inhabitants to swear loyalty to Guntram once again, but they did so with the greatest reluctance [424].

To the southwest, Gundovald was trying to build up a position of strength, asking those cities that had once owed allegiance to Sigibert to swear loyalty now to Childebert, and those cities that had belonged to Guntram or Chilperic to swear loyalty now to himself. He received an oath of allegiance in Angoulême, and then went to Toulouse via Périgueux. The people of Toulouse prepared to resist Gundovald but, when they saw the size of his army, they allowed him to enter the city. Gundovald told Magnulf, the bishop of Toulouse, that he was the son of Chlothar I and would shortly go to Paris to take over his share of the kingdom and establish his government. Magnulf mocked him, causing Mummolus and Desiderius to kick and punch the bishop, bind him with a rope and banish him from the city. They then seized his possessions, and those of the church too. Waddo, count of Saintes, who had been major-domo to Princess Rigunth, joined in with what Mummolus and Desiderius were doing. Most of the others who had set out from Paris with Rigunth had now long-since dispersed [425].

The Burgundian troops who had been occupying Poitiers then left the city in pursuit of Gundovald. Many of the inhabitants of Tours followed them, hoping to join in the plunder. However, they were ambushed by the Burgundians, with the survivors being left to return home, stripped of everything they had. At this point, the contingent of Tourangeux who had enlisted in Guntram's army decided to desert. The rest of the army advanced as far as the river Dordogne, and waited there for news of Gundovald. As they soon heard, Gundovald had Mummolus, Desiderius and Waddo with him. In addition, his allies included Duke Bladast and also Bishop Sagittarius, who had been stripped of his bishopric at the council of Chalon-sur-Saône six years earlier, but had now been promised the bishopric of Toulouse following the departure of Magnulf [426].

Gundovald, now in Bordeaux, where he had the support of Bishop Bertram, sent out two messengers, carrying letters to his supporters. One of these messengers, the abbot of Cahors, was captured by Guntram's men. He was taken before the king, beaten and thrown into prison. Gundovald then sent two messengers to Guntram. They carried consecrated wands which, according to Frankish custom, meant that they should be allowed to deliver their message and return with the response, without being molested. However, on their way, they spoke freely to people they met about the purpose of their mission, which was to tell Guntram that unless he gave Gundovald that portion of Chothar's kingdom which was his due, he would lead an army to attack him. Thus the messengers were brought before Guntram in chains. When he stretched them on the rack, they told him that Rigunth's treasure was now in the hands of Gundovald, and that Rigunth herself had been exiled along with Bishop Magnulf. They also said that Gundovald had been asked to claim the kingship by Childebert's nobles, Guntram Boso having travelled to Constantinople to invite him to come to Gaul [427].

Guntram then had the messengers flogged and thrown into prison, after which he summoned Childebert to come and join him. Following a visit to the prison, when the messengers repeated their statements in the presence of Childebert, Guntram warned his nephew not to trust certain of his advisors, and in particular to avoid any contact with Bishop Egidius. He similarly advised Childebert to distance himself from his mother, Brunhild. Guntram also assured Childebert that he was his sole heir, and would inherit the whole of his kingdom after his death. Later, when they appeared together at a feast, Guntram addressed his assembled warriors and told them that Childebert was now a grown man so, whatever their previous feelings towards him, they should now regard him as the king that he had now become in reality as well as name. Thus peace was restored between Guntram and Childebert. When the time came for Childebert to return home, Guntram promised to restore to him everything that had once been held by his father, Sigibert [428].

By this time, Guntram's army had begun marching towards Gundovald. When the pretender heard about this, he crossed the Garonne into Gascony and made for Comminges. Although Desiderius had now deserted him, he was

still accompanied by Mummolus, Bladast, Waddo and Sagittarius. Guntram's army, under the command of Leudegisel, caught up with them at Comminges and began to besiege the city. Some of the attackers began to shout insults at Gundovald, who appeared at the top of the main gate to respond. Gundovald maintained that he was the son of Chlothar I, and had come to Gaul at the invitation of Guntram Boso, acting on behalf of a group of Frankish nobles. He went on to request a meeting with his brother Guntram or, alternatively, that he should be allowed to return in peace to Constantinople. His words were treated with derision, and the siege continued. One of Gundovald's supporters, Chariulf, owned a number of store-houses and granaries inside the city walls, so there was no immediate threat of a food shortage. However, by the fifteenth day of the siege, when Leudegisel began assembling machines to create a breach in Comminges' defences, it began to seem likely that he would soon capture the city. Bladast set fire to the church-house and, during the subsequent confusion, was able to escape and seek refuge in St Martin's church in Tours (where he met Bishop Gregory, who persuaded Guntram to pardon him). The remainder of Gundovald's supporters were still offering strong resistance to the attackers, so a message was sent in secret to Mummolus, asking him what purpose there could possibly be in persisting with actions that would inevitably result in his death. Mummolus responded that he was continuing to fight against Leudegisel's forces because there seemed to be no alternative. However, he would stop immediately if he could be assured that this would result in his life being spared. After the messengers had returned to their camp, Mummolus, Sagittarius, Chariulf and Waddo met together and agreed that they would hand Gundovald over to his enemies, in return for their own lives, if such a deal could be made. When the messengers came back, they swore a solemn oath that, if Gundovald was handed over to Guntram's forces, Mummolus, Sagittarius, Chariulf and Waddo would then be received in peace. If it subsequently transpired that Guntram was unwilling to pardon them, they would be allowed to escape and seek sanctuary in a nearby church. Mummolus, Sagittarius and Waddo then went to see Gundovald, telling him that they had received assurances from those besieging the city that they would escort him in safety to Guntram, and that no harm would come to him if he agreed to form an alliance with his brother. Gundovald suspected that he was being tricked, but allowed himself to be taken through the city gates and handed over to Ullo, count of Bourges, and Boso (not to be confused with the Duke Guntram Boso). As his companions hastily retreated and closed the gates behind them, Gundovald knew for certain that he had been betrayed. He was killed on the spot, his hair torn out, and his body left unburied [429].

On the following day, when the gates were opened to let the army in, all the common people, including the priests, were murdered, and the city burned to the ground. Leudegisel then returned to his camp, taking Mummolus, Sagittarius, Chariulf and Waddo with him. He sent a secret message to Guntram, asking what should be done with them, and received the reply that they should be put to death. Not knowing that, but fearful of their lives, Chariulf and Waddo tried to slip away. Rumours soon began to circulate that they had been killed in the process. When these reached Mummolus, he put on his full armour and went to confront to Leudegisel in his hut, reminding him of the promise of safe conduct. Leudegisel made an excuse to go outside, and ordered the hut to be surrounded by armed men. Mummolus resisted their attempts to break into the hut, but eventually, when he tried to come out, he was run through with lances from all sides and killed. Seeing this, Sagittarius tried to escape into the forest, raising his hood in an attempt to avoid being recognised. However, someone drew a sword and cut off his head, and the hood with it [430].

Leudegisel then returned to Guntram, taking with him all the treasure, including that of Gundovald, recovered from Comminges. Guntram distributed it among the poor and the churches. In addition, the widow of Mummolus revealed under questioning that he had hoarded a large treasure in Avignon. This was seized and divided between Childebert and Guntram, the latter again giving most of his share to the poor. Despite rumours to the contrary, both Chariulf and Waddo had succeeded in escaping from the Comminges region. Waddo fled to Queen Brunhild, who received him graciously, whereas Chariulf sought refuge in St Martin's church. Desiderius, who had deserted Gundovald before his ill-fated move to Comminges, initially found security for himself and his possessions within his own walled encampments. Later, accompanied by Antestius, Aredius (the abbot of Limoges) and a number of bishops, Desiderius went to see Guntram. Initially, Guntram was reluctant to receive him, but he allowed himself to be persuaded by the entreaties of the bishops, and took Desiderius into his favour [431].

Meanwhile, Chuppa had been sent by Fredegund into the Toulouse area, possibly (as some suspected) to find Gundovald and entice him to come to her. Gundovald, of course, was no longer there, but Chuppa found Princess Rigunth and brought her back to her mother [432].

Later that year, Guntram was invited to come to Paris, to participate in the baptism of Chlothar II. On his way from Chalon, he stopped at Orléans, to celebrate the feast of St Martin. There, at the formal dinner, Guntram told the guests (who included Gregory) that he considered Childebert to have the makings of a great king, although in the past he had been ill-served by his advisors. The Burgundian king also said that he was now certain that his brother Chilperic had been murdered by the group of nobles who had invited Gundovald to come to Gaul. He made it clear that, in his view, Bishop Theodore of Avignon had been involved in this plot [433].

When Guntram reached Paris, there were no signs of Chlothar, and no indications that he was on his way to the city. That seemed to confirm Guntram's suspicions that Chlothar was not the son of his brother, for otherwise there should have been no reluctance to allow him to see the infant king. When Fredegund heard of Guntram's doubts, she sent him a statement sworn on oath by three hundred nobles and three bishops from Chilperic's former kingdom, saying that Chilperic was the boy's father. Thus reassured, Guntram returned to Chalon, but Chlothar had still not been baptised. To strengthen his influence in the kingdom previously ruled by Chilperic, Guntram appointed Theodulf to be count of Angers. Theodulf entered the city, but was then driven out by the townsfolk, led by Domigisel. However, with the help of Duke Sigulf, Theodulf was eventually able to establish himself in the position given to him by Guntram [434].

By this time, the whole of Marseilles had been restored to Childebert so, hearing of Guntram's suspicions about Bishop Theodore, Childebert sent Duke Rathar to the city to investigate the matter. Disregarding Childebert's instructions, Rathar dispatched Theodore to Guntram, to be sentenced by a council of bishops due to take place at Mâcon, and then pillaged the possessions of the church. Immediately afterwards, an epidemic broke out, with Rathar's son dying, and Rathar himself bcoming seriously ill. Theodore was subsequently restored to his bishopric by a decision made at the council of Mâcon, and he was given an enthusiastic welcome when he returned to Avignon [435].

Childebert was being pressed by Emperor Maurice in Constantinople to return the money he had been given to drive the Lombards out of Italy, so, to justify keeping it, he dispatched an army over the Alps. Soon afterwards, Childebert held a meeting with his leaders on his estate at Breslingen. Brunhild wanted to send troops to Africa, where, according to recent reports, her daughter Ingund was still being held by imperial troops, but the nobles were unsympathetic to her proposal. A case was then brought against Guntram Boso, who was accused of sending some men to open a tomb in a church near Metz and steal precious objects which had been buried with the body. Guntram Boso gave no reply to the questions he was asked about the matter, and then quietly slipped away. In consequence, all the property he held in Clermont-Ferrand was confiscated. Wandalen, Childebert's tutor, died at around this time. He was not replaced, because Brunhild wanted to have charge of her son [436].

Berulf had recently been appointed as duke of Tours and Poitiers, but on his way to take up his appointment he was taken prisoner by Duke Rauching. Berulf's house was then searched by Rauching's men, who found some of Sigibert's treasure hidden inside. They took this to Childebert, who concluded that it had been stolen by Berulf and his associate, Arnegisel, and the king decreed that their heads should be cut off. Their lives were spared following an intervention by Gregory, but Childebert made Ennodius duke of Tours and Poitiers in place of Berulf [437].

News that Ingund had died in Africa re-ignited the anger felt by the Franks about the way she had been treated by the Visigoths. The Franks also regarded Septimania, the Visigoth-controlled western region of the former Roman province of Gallia Narbonensis, as being part of Gaul, and they wished to bring it within their boundaries. So, Guntram decided to send an army to capture Septimania for the Franks, and then to advance into Spain. As the troops were about to depart, a letter from the Visigoth king Leovigild to Fredegund was intercepted and the contents made known to Guntram (who quickly passed them on to Childebert). The letter supposedly urged Fredegund to murder Childebert and Brunhild as quickly as possible, and to pay Guntram whatever was required to bring about peace between Francia and Spain. Leovigild promised to supply the funds necessary to enable this to happen. Fredegund was then asked to reward Amelius (bishop of Bigorra) and Leuba (mother-in-law of Duke Bladast) for arranging access for his envoys to her. Fredegund immediately armed two clerics with poisoned daggers and sent them to assassinate Childebert and Brunhild. However, Duke Rauching was able to apprehend them, and they confessed their guilt. Their hands, ears and noses were cut off, after which they were put to death [438].

Guntram then sent a large army to march on Septimania. It was followed by men from beyond the Saône, Rhône and Seine, who ravaged the regions they passed through, destroying crops and herds, seizing booty, stripping the churches and killing the local inhabitants, including priests and bishops. When they reached Septimania, similar atrocities were carried out in the region of Nimes by men of Bourges, Saintes, Périgueux, Angoulême and other cities from within Guntram's own kingdom. The Burgundian army was, however, unable to force an entry into Nimes itself, or to a number of other well-fortified towns. When they arrived at Carcassonne, the citizens opened the gates to let them in, but a quarrel immediately broke out so they marched out again. Terentiolus, count of Limoges, was struck on the head by a stone thrown from the walls and killed. His body was seized by the local people, and his head cut off. Guntram's army then panicked, and began to head for home, abandoning much of what they had seized during their march. The Visigoths ambushed them on several occasions, killing many and stealing their goods. After that, the people of the Toulouse region, who had suffered badly during the army's advance, now took their revenge during its retreat. Furthermore, the destruction of crops during the outward journey meant that the retreating troops could find nothing to eat, so many died of starvation [439].

When the remnants of Guntram's army arrived home, the king was furious about what had happened, causing the principal officers to seek refuge at the church of St Symphorian in Autun. Guntram visited the church to celebrate the feast-day of the saint, and told the army leaders that he wanted them to explain their actions on some future occasion. He then made critical comments about them to a group of bishops and nobles. They responded that the army officers could not be blamed for the behaviour of their troops, for the entire population was steeped in evil, and everyone did as they wished, regardless of orders. There was no respect for anyone in authority, including the king himself. At that moment a messenger arrived to say that Reccared, the son of King Leovigild, had led an army out of Spain, capturing the castle of Cabaret, ravaging the countryside around Toulouse and then moving on to attack the castle of Beaucaire on the Rhône, near Arles. He had now based himself within the walls of Nimes, from where he could threaten Provence. Guntram responded by making Leudegisel army commander in place of Calumniosus, and posting more than four thousand men as frontier guards. In addition, Nicetius, duke of Clermont, came with a force to patrol the border [440].

Fredegund was still living in Rouen, and having frequent disagreements with Bishop Praetextatus. When she told him that the time would soon come when he would be sent back into exile, he responded by advising her to set aside her boastful pride, so she might gain eternal life, and be able to raise Chlothar to manhood. That made Fredegund angrier than ever. On Easter Sunday, Praetextatus was stabbed by an assassin in his church. After the severely wounded bishop had been placed on a bed in his cell, Fredegund, accompanied by Beppolen and Ansovald, came and urged him to let her personal doctors tend to him. Praetextatus declined, saying that his time had come, but added that Fredegund would forever be accursed, because God would avenge his blood upon her head. The queen left, and Praetextatus died soon afterwards. One of the Frankish leaders of the town went to see Fredegund, telling her that she had been the cause of much evil in the world, but nothing she had done was worse that ordering a bishop to be murdered. As he made to leave, Fredegund invited him to have a meal with her. He refused, but accepted a drink offered to him. It was immediately obvious that the drink was poisoned, so he told his companions to flee and tried to follow them, but soon fell dead to the ground. Leudovald, bishop of Bayeux, ordered that that all the churches in Rouen should be closed until the murderer was brought to justice. He apprehended certain individuals, who confessed under torture that Fredegund had been the instigator of the crimes. However, she denied it, so no action could be taken against her. Guntram then sent three bishops to confer with the men who were bringing up Chlothar. These guardians said that they were determined to exact vengeance for the two murders, but maintained that it was a local matter, and no concern of Guntram. The bishops responded that, unless the murderer was quickly brought to book, Guntram would come marching to them with his army. Some time later, it was announced that a son had been born to Childebert. He was baptised by Magneric, bishop of Trier, and given the name Theudebert [441].

In the 11th year of Childebert's reign, which was the 25th year of Guntram (and, following Gregory's timescale, was AM (E) 5784, corresponding to AD 584), Gregory reported that envoys came from Spain to sue for peace. They returned home without being given a definite answer. Reccared once again advanced into Gaul and took booty from the Franks [442].

Responding to the widespread rumours that she was responsible for the murder of Praetextatus, Fredegund accused one of her servants of being the killer, and handed him over to the dead bishop's nephew. Under torture, the man admitted his guilt, saying that he had been given money by Fredegund, Melanius and the archdeacon of Rouen to carry out the deed. On hearing this, the nephew of Praetextatus cut him to pieces with his sword. Fredegund then appointed Melanius to succeed Praetextatus as bishop of Rouen [443].

Beppolen, who felt that he had never been satisfactorily rewarded for the service he had given to Fredegund over a period of many years, went to see Guntram, who appointed him duke of a number of cities that belonged to Chlothar. Beppolen and his retinue travelled to the first of these cities, Rennes, but the people refused to receive him. He then went to Angers, where he and his followers seized whatever they could lay their hands on, and destroyed many crops. This brought Beppolen into conflict with Domigisel, but eventually the two made peace. In Angers, Beppolen was feasting with a group of people when the roof of the building fell in, and many people were seriously injured. At about this time, Fredegund sequestered many of Beppolen's possessions in her son's kingdom. Beppolen then returned to Rennes, intending to bring the people under the jurisdiction of Guntram. He left his son in the city while he left to attend to other business, whereupon the citizens attacked and killed the boy, together with a number of nobles [444].

In the 12th year of Childebert, corresponding to AM (E) 5785 (AD 585), Gregory said that Fredegund sent envoys to Guntram in the name of her son. They presented their petition, received their reply and retired to their lodgings. On the following morning, as the king set off for communion, one of the envoys was apprehended, fully armed, in a corner of the oratory. On interrogation, the man confessed that he had been sent to kill Guntram. He was mutilated and thrown into prison. The other envoys denied any knowledge of the plot and, although they were not believed, they were allowed to retain their freedom, but banished from Guntram's realm [445].

At around this time, Guntram gave the town of Albi back to Childebert. Desiderius, who was now living in Albi, became fearful, because he had once inflicted a defeat on Childebert's father, Sigibert. Desiderius therefore moved, with his wife and all his property, to Toulouse. He then raised an army, in order to attack the Visigoths. Together with count Austrovald, he made for the region of Carcassonne, and forced the Visigoth army to retreat towards Spain. As the Visigoths fled, Desiderius, accompanied by just a handful of men, entered the city of Carcassonne, but was ambushed and killed by a group of inhabitants lurking inside the walls. Austrovald was subsequently appointed duke of Aquitaine in his place [446].

Soon afterwards, King Leovigild died, and his son, Reccared, succeeded him as ruler of the Visigoths [447]. (According to Isidore of Seville, this transition took place in Era 624 (AD 586), in the third year of Emperor Maurice, whilst John of Biclaro dated it to the fourth year of Emperor Maurice [448].)

After becoming king, Reccared consulted with his step-mother Gosuintha about the desirability of having a treaty of peace and mutual support between the Visigoths and the Franks, and then sent envoys to Guntram and Childebert. Those sent to Guntram were turned back at Mâcon, which angered Reccared greatly, and he ordered that no-one from Guntram's kingdom should be allowed to enter any of the cities of Septimania. In contrast, those envoys sent to Childebert were well-received, peace was made, and the envoys returned home loaded with presents. In the same year, another son was born to Childebert. He was baptised by Veranus, bishop of Cavaillon, and named Theuderic [449].

Soon afterwards, Duke Ennodius, who already had responsibility for both Tours and Poitiers, succeeded in being awarded responsibility for Aire and Lescar as well. The counts of Tours and Poitiers went to Childebert and persuaded him to deprive Ennodius of his responsibility for their towns. His responsibility for the other two towns was then also withdrawn. At around the same time, the Gascons made a sortie into Aquitaine from their mountain strongolds, and caused considerable damage. Duke Austrovald organised several expeditions against them, but these were ineffective [450].

Not long after the birth of Theuderic, Guntram Boso began to visit Childebert's bishops and nobles, one after the other, in an attempt to seek forgiveness for his previous actions and be allowed to resume his place at Childebert's court. Brunhild loathed him because, in the years before Childebert had reached manhood, he regularly insulted her, and encouraged her enemies to behave towards her in a hostile fashion. Childebert decided it was now time to avenge the wrongs done to his mother, and ordered that Guntram Boso be pursued and killed. Being alerted to this, Guntram Boso sought sanctuary in Verdun cathedral, hoping that bishop Ageric would intercede with Childebert on his behalf. When he did so, Childebert found it hard to refuse the bishop his request, but said that Guntram Boso must make his appeal to him in person, and then go to see Guntram. Childebert would then accept whatever decision his uncle made. Guntram Boso duly came and threw himself at Childebert's feet, begging for forgiveness for the sins he had committed against the king, his mother, and the people of the realm. Childebert then placed him in Ageric's care, until the time came for him to appear before Guntram [451].

Rauching then conspired with the leading men of Chlothar's kingdom to assassinate Childebert. When Childebert was dead, Rauching would be given command of Champagne, and put in charge of Theudebert, whilst Ursio and Berthefried would seize Theuderic and take control of the rest of the kingdom, making sure that Guntram did not intervene. They were determined to humiliate Brunhild, as they had done in the years following the death of Sigibert. The plan was that Rauching would seek an audience with Childebert, and kill him personally. However, Guntram became aware of what was intended, and sent a warning to his nephew. Childebert summoned Rauching to come and see him and, as he was waiting outside, sent men to sequester all of his property. Rauching was then invited in and, after a discussion of various matters, he was asked to withdraw. As he was leaving, the two guards on the door grabbed his legs and pulled him to the ground. Other men then rushed up and hacked at Rauching's head with their swords, until his brain was exposed. His body was stripped naked, thrown out of a window, and then dispatched for burial. One of Rauching's servants raced off to tell Rauching's wife what had happened. He gave her the message whilst she was riding down a street in Soissons, bedecked with fine jewelry. She immediately threw away all her ornaments, and sought sanctuary in the church of St Medard. Those sent to confiscate Rauching's property found more in his coffers than would have been expected in the public treasury of the king. It was all taken back to Childebert for him to inspect. Magnovald was sent to replace Rauching as duke [452].

In the expectation that Rauching had already carried out his plan to assassinate Childebert, Ursio and Berthefried raised an army and began to march. Then, when they heard what had actually happened, they collected together their supporters and possessions inside a strong-point on the Woëvre, near Ursio's estate. Brunhild, who had stood sponsor to Berthefried's daughter at her baptism, sent a message to him to break with Ursio before it was too late. However, Berthefried responded that only death could sever the link between himself and Ursio [453].

At this point, Guntram sent a message to Childebert to say that they should address the issue of Guntram Boso without delay. Taking his mother (Brunhild), sister (Chlodosind) and wife (Faileuba) with him, Childebert set off at once to meet with his uncle. Magneric, bishop of Trier, was also present at the meeting, as of course was the

object of the enquiry. Ageric, who had stood surety for Guntram Boso, was not there, because it had been agreed that the accused man should be required to defend himself. In the event, the two kings concurred in their judgement, which was that Guntram Boso was guilty on a number of counts, and should be put to death. Once again, Guntram Boso managed to slip away, and headed for Magneric's lodgings. He pleaded with Magneric to protect him, but then added that if he was going to die, then the bishop would die too, and drew his sword. Magneric asked Guntram Boso to release him, so he could go and argue his case, but he refused. Outside, King Guntram was getting increasingly angry about the fact that the doors remained locked, so he ordered that the lodgings should be set alight. He said, dismissively, that if the bishop was unable to come out, he and Guntram Boso would go up in smoke together. However, Magneric's clergy burst down the door and dragged the bishop out. Surrounded by flames, Guntram Boso had no choice but to follow. As he came through the door, he was struck on the head by a javelin. He tried to draw his sword, but was then hit by lance after lance. There were so many protruding from his body that he could not fall to the ground. As with Rauching, it was found after his death that he had amassed a great fortune, which was then placed in the public treasury [454].

Guntram and Childebert, together with the three queens, then signed a detailed treaty (the "Treaty of Andelot"). This treaty (reproduced in full in Gregory's book) made clear which cities belonged to which ruler, and indicated how any disputes between them should be settled. On this same occasion, Dynamius and Lupus rejoined the service of Childebert, and had an audience with him. Childebert and his party then left Guntram in joy and amity, and returned home [455].

Afterwards, Childebert sent an army, led by Godigisel, the son-in-law of Lupus, to attack the stronghold of Ursio and Berthefried. On the way, some of the conscripted men burned and looted every property they passed which belonged to Ursio or Berthefried. When they arrived at their destination, they found it impossible to drive Ursio, Berthefried and some of their supporters out of a church, so they set fire to it. Ursio came out fighting, and killed many of Godigisel's men, but was wounded in the thigh and eventually slain. At this point, Godigisel shouted to his troops that, in view of the death of Ursio, who he saw as the main enemy, Berthefried could keep his life if he surrendered. The soldiers then turned their attention to looting goods from the church, allowing Berthefried to escape and seek refuge in the church-house in Verdun. Having been told that Berthefried had fled from the country, Childebert was furious and said he would hold Godigisel responsible. Hearing of Childebert's anger, Godigisel re-formed his troops and surrounded the church-house. Bishop Ageric refused to hand Berthefried over to Godigisel, so some of his soldiers climbed on to the roof of the church-house, tore off some of the tiles, and threw building materials down onto the people inside, killing Berthefried and three of his men [456].

Egidius, who was suspected of being involved in the plot with Rauching, Ursio and Berthefried, went to Childebert to sue for peace, and his pleas were accepted. Egidius also made his peace with Lupus, who had been dismissed from the dukedom of Champagne at his instigation. This did not please Guntram, because Lupus had assured him he would never come to terms with Egidius. Meanwhile, Guntram had ordered Baddo to appear before him, on the charge of being involved in the earlier conspiracy to murder him. He said he would release Baddo if Fredegund or anyone of good repute would come forward, in Chalon or Paris, to establish his innocence. No-one came forward to represent Fredegund but, eventually, after correspondence with Leudovald, bishop of Bayeux, Guntram released Baddo [457].

At around this time, Reccared called a meeting of Spanish bishops and announced his conversion from Arianism, bringing together the two sects in Spain. Reccared then sent envoys to Guntram and Childebert, to repeat his previous message of friendship, and also to suggest the possibility of a marriage between himself and Chlodosind, the sister of Childebert. He swore that he was not in any way inculpated in Ingund's death. Nevertheless, as before, Guntram turned the envoys away, saying that he was unable to trust people who had treated his neice so badly. Again, as on the previous occasion, the envoys received a much friendlier welcome in Childebert's kingdom. Even though Childebert had apparently already promised envoys from Lombardy that Chlodosind could marry their king, both he and Brunhild said they would happily agree to her marrying Reccared. However, they added that the marriage could only go ahead if it also received the approval of Guntram. The envoys then returned home [458].

In Brittany, Waroch was still causing trouble, ignoring previous agreements that he would not attack Frankish property in the Nantes region. Guntram ordered an army to be raised, and sent a messenger on ahead to parley with the Bretons, who gave assurances that they would make amends for the wrongs they had done. Envoys were therefore dispatched to make another formal agreement with Waroch. These envoys included Namatius, bishop of Orléans, Bertram, bishop of Le Mans, and notable figures from the kingdoms of both Guntram and Chlothar. The Bretons swore allegiance to the two kings, promised that they would never again attack the cities in question, and agreed to pay one thousand gold solidi in compensation for the damage they had caused. The envoys then returned home, apart from Namatius, who went to visit an estate on the outskirts of Nantes which had been seized from his relatives by the Bretons, and was now back in his family's possession. He was soon taken ill and headed for home, but died as he was passing through Angers. It did not take long for Waroch to break his word, harvesting

grapes from vineyards near Nantes and sending the wine back to Vannes. Guntram was furious, but took no immediate action [459].

In the 13th year of Childebert's reign and the 27th year of Guntram (which, following Gregory's timescale, would have been AM (E) 5786, corresponding to AD 586), Gregory recorded that he was just setting out to visit King Childebert when, together with Felix, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, he was summoned by Guntram to come to him at Chalon-sur-Saône. On arrival, Guntram told them that he was upset because Childebert had already broken the promises he made by signing the Treaty of Andalot. In particular, he had not handed over to Guntram his share of the town of Senlis, nor returned to him men of his kingdom who had been acting against his interests. Gregory assured him that Childebert had no intention of contravening any of the provisions. If Guntram wished to proceeed to a partition of Senlis, it could be done immediately. Similarly, if Guntram gave to Gregory the names of those Burgundians he wished to be returned to him, he was certain that Childebert would arrange for this to be done without delay. Without responding to what Gregory had said, Guntram asked him to read out the treaty aloud for the benefit of everyone present (at which point Gregory provided the full text of the treaty in his *History*). Guntram said he would abide by every word, and expected Childebert to do likewise. He then turned to Felix and asked him abruptly if it was true that he had managed to bring about warm, friendly relations between Brunhild and Fredegund. Felix denied it, and said that the relationship between the two queens was the same as it had always been, i.e. one of mutual enmity. Gregory then asked why Guntram treated Fredegund's envoys more sympathetically than those of Brunhild. Guntram responded that he did this because it would ultimately prove to be in the best interests of Childebert, adding that it could hardly be because of genuine friendship towards a woman who had sent assassins to murder him on more than one occasion [460].

Felix then turned the conversation towards the subject of Reccared's request for the hand of Chlodosind, pointing out that the Visigoth king was strenuously denying any involvement in the events leading to the death of Ingund, and urged that Guntram should give his consent to the marriage taking place. Guntram said that he would do so if he could be satisfied that Childebert was totally committed to abiding by the terms of the Treaty of Andalot. Felix then pointed out that Childebert was anxious for Guntram's help in driving the Lombards out of Italy, so that the country could be divided between the Franks and the empire based in Constantinople. Guntram replied that he would never send troops to Italy, because of the epidemic raging in that country. Gregory then said that Childebert was keen to hold a meeting of all the bishops in his realm, since there were many matters, none of them of a doctrinal nature, which needed to be settled. Guntram agreed with the general principle, adding that there had been a decline in personal morality which needed to be discussed. He continued by saying that it was important to ascertain how bishop Praetextatus came to be struck down in his own cathedral, and also to determine the truth or otherwise of accusations of licentiousness made against certain bishops. Guntram, Felix and Gregory then proceeded to the cathedral, to celebrate the feast of the resurrection. When mass was over, they dined together, in a happy and positive atmosphere. Guntram once again made the point that, if he seemed to be giving small favours to Chlothar, it was to avoid a growing feeling of resentment building up amongst the former subjects of Chilperic, so Childebert had no reason to take offence about these gifts. Guntram then bade farewell to Gregory and Felix, exhorting them to continue to give Childebert such counsel as would make his life easier [461].

During the same year, Ageric, who constantly blamed himself for the deaths of Guntram Boso and Berthefried, became seriously ill and died. He was succeeded as bishop of Verdun by Charimer. Similarly, Virgilius, the abbot of Autun, became bishop of Arles, following the death of Licerius. Later, the Bretons once again stole the wine-harvest from around Nantes and Rennes. Also, Childebert sent an envoy to the emperor in Constantinople to say that he would do what he had failed to do before, which was to drive the Lombards from Italy. He dispatched an army over the Alps, but the Lombards cut his troops to pieces [462].

In the 14th year of Childebert, corresponding to AM (E) 5787 (AD 587), Gregory recorded the death of Ingoberg, the former wife of Charibert, who had spent most of her adult life in religious activities. Soon afterwards, Brunhild sent Ebregisel to Spain, carrying a large salver made out of gold and precious gems, and two basins decorated with gold and jewels. It was suggested to Guntram that this was part of a plot to assassinate him, so Guntram had Ebregisel arrested by Duke Ebrachar as he passed through Paris. Ebregisel was then brought before him in Burgundy. Ebregisel maintained that the gifts were intended for King Reccared, whom Brunhild hoped would marry her daughter Chlodosind. Guntram accepted this explanation, and allowed Ebregisel to continue on his journey. Around Easter time, Childebert raised an army and made ready to set out with it to Italy. Hearing of this, the Lombards sent envoys to sue for peace. Taking the advice of Guntram, Childebert stopped the planned invasion [463].

Afterwards, Guntram raised an army to attack Septimania. He sent Duke Austrovald on ahead to extract an oath of allegiance from the people of Carcassonne, and then dispatched Boso, his military commander, and Antestius to take control of the other cities. Boso behaved in a most arrogant way. He reprimanded Austrovald for having entered Carcassonne without waiting for him to arrive, and then marched his own troops, consisting of men from Saintes, Périgueux, Bordeux, Agen and Toulouse, towards the city. The Visigoths came to hear of this advance,

and laid a trap for him. Boso pitched his camp by a small river, after which he settled down to his supper, eating and drinking more than was sensible. At this point, the Visigoths chose to attack, catching the Franks off their guard. As they rose to their feet and began to resist, the Visigoths pretended to run away. Boso and his troops chased after them, and fell into the ambush prepared for them. Nearly five thousand Franks were killed, and two thousand taken prisoner [464].

When Guntram was told of this terrible defeat, he was extremely angry, and reacted by banning the passage of Childbert's subjects through his kingdom. This was because he maintained that Childebert's keenness to form an alliance with Reccared had encouraged the Visigoths to think they could hold onto Septimania, thus thwarting Guntram's ambition to bring the whole of the former Gallia Narbonensis (comprising Septimania and Provence) under Frankish control. Guntram also saw other grounds for thinking that Childebert was working against him. In particular, he had heard that Childebert was sending his son Theudebert to Soissons. The reason for this, in fact, was that some of the prominent citizens of Soissons had visited Childebert in Strasbourg and told him that if he were to send one of his sons to live amongst them, they would serve him and defend his lands in the surrounding area. However, the suspicious Guntram said that Theudebert would not be travelling to Soissons unless he intended to go on to enter Paris and deprive Guntram of his kingdom. Guntram convened a council of bishops in November to consider these matters. They found Brunhild and Childebert innocent of the charges made against them, so Guntram re-opened the roads between Childebert's kingdom and Burgundy [465].

In the same year, a rich woman named Beretrude died, leaving most of her wealth to her daughter. Count Waddo made a complaint that some of his horses had been stolen by the daughter's husband, and attempted to seize a villa near Poitiers, inherited from Beretrude, in recompense. A fight ensued, during which Waddo struck the bailiff of the estate on the head with a knife, and killed him. The bailiff's son hurled a javelin, which hit Waddo in the stomach and stuck out behind his back. As he fell to the ground, others from the estate began to stone him. Thus the eventful life of Waddo came to an end [466].

The return of Rigunth to live with her mother Fredegund was not working out well. Rigunth, as the daughter of a king, considered herself superior to her low-born mother, whereas Fredegund was constantly complaining about her daughter's promiscuous behaviour. They were always arguing. One day, Fredegund opened a large chest full of jewels and precious ornaments which had belonged to Chilperic, and gave some to her daughter, who remained there waiting for more. When this process had been repeated a number of times, Fredegund suddenly told Rigunth that she could take whatever she wanted. As she reached inside, Fredegund slammed the lid down on her neck, and leant on it with all her might. Had it not been for the fact that a servant girl in the room began to scream, causing the attendants waiting outside to come rushing in, Rigunth would undoubtedly have died [467].

Queen Faileuba had another child, who died almost immediately. As she was recovering from childbirth, Faileuba was made aware of a plot against Brunhild and herself. Septimima, nurse to the royal children, was to persuade Childebert to exile his mother, leave his wife and marry another woman, enabling the conspirators to be able to influence the king's future actions. If Childebert proved resistant to Septimima's words, he would be killed, Brunhild and Faileuba banished, and the conspirators take over the government of the country in the name of Childebert's young sons. Faileuba's informant said that the plotters included Sunnegisil, the count of Childebert's stables; Gallomagnus, the referendary; and Droctulf, who had been deputed to help Sepimima raise the royal children, and was her lover. Under torture, Septimima and Droctulf confessed their guilt, and confirmed that Sunnegisil and Gallomagnus were involved in the plot. Septimima's face was disfigured with red-hot irons and she was sent to work in a mill in the country estate of Marlenheim, whilst Droctulf's ears were cut off and he was made to labour in the vineyards. Sunnegisil and Gallomagnus were stripped of all the property they had been given for life by the king, and sent into exile. However, on the intervention of Guntram, they were allowed to return [468].

In the 15th year of Childebert's reign, which was the 29th year of Guntram (and corresponded to AM (E) 5788, i.e. AD 588), Gregory recorded that there had recently been a great epidemic in Rome, Pope Pelagius II being amongst the first to die. The deacon Gregory was then unanimously elected to replace him. Emperor Maurice, whose son had been baptised by the pope-elect in Constantinople, confirmed his appointment with enthusiasm [469]. (It is known from Pope Gregory's surviving letters that, early in his papacy, he wrote to Bishop Leander of Seville to express his joy at Reccared's conversion to Catholicism. He also wrote to Virgilius, bishop of Arles, and Theodore, bishop of Marseilles, both of whom were mentioned in *The History of the Franks* [470].)

During the same year, Bishop Gregory reported that Grippo arrived back in Francia, after having been sent by Childebert on a mission to Emperor Maurice in Constantinople. Grippo, together with his fellow-envoys, Bodegisel, the son of Mummolen from Soissons, and Evantius, the son of Dynamius from Arles, had first sailed to imperial territory in North Africa, waiting in Carthage for permission to complete their journey to Constantinople. In Carthage, a servant of Evantius stole a valuable object from the hand of a shopkeeper and fled. He was traced to the place where he and the envoys were staying, but refused to give the object back, which

resulted in a series of arguments taking place over the next few days, these becoming increasingly acrimonious. Eventually, the servant drew his sword and killed the shopkeeper, but said nothing to his master about what had happened. Thus, Grippo, Evantius and Bodogisel were taken by complete surprise when a squad of soldiers sent by the prefect of Carthage arrived at their lodgings, accompanied by an armed mob. The officer in charge called for everyone inside to lay down their arms and come out, and gave assurances that no-one would be hurt if they did as they were asked, but such was the pandemonium in the street that Evantius and Bodogisel were killed as they emerged. Grippo seized his weapons and went out to face the mob, asking for an explanation for what had happened, and pointing out that he and the two men who had just been murdered were on their way to see the emperor on a mission of peace. Hearing that, the soldiers and the mob all melted away. The prefect of Carthage quickly came round to see Grippo, expressing regret for what had occurred, and arranging for him to be taken to Maurice with the minimum of delay. The emperor was greatly distressed about the way the envoys had been treated, and promised that those responsible for the deaths of Evantius and Bodigisel would be punished. He also said he would agree to any other suggestion that Childebert might put forward. Then, loaded with presents, Grippo set off home [471].

Grippo's report of his meeting with Emperor Maurice stimulated Childebert to mount another invasion of Italy, ordering twenty dukes to raise armies and march against the Lombards. Duke Audovald, supported by Duke Wintrio, raised a contingent in Champagne and advanced through the region of Metz, where his troops caused great destruction, killing, burning and looting. Contingents of men from other parts of Childebert's kingdom behaved similarly, causing much devastation within their own country. Only when they crossed the border into Italy did they turn their attention towards the enemy. Once over the border, Audovald turned to the right with six other dukes, and advanced as far as Milan. Duke Olo was foolish enough to approach Bellinzona, a stronghold belonging to Milan. There he was struck in the chest by a javelin and killed. Those of his men who were plundering the countryside for supplies were cut down by the Lombards. The Franks learned that the Lombards were encamped at the other side of a narrow but very deep stream flowing out of Lake Lugano. A few of the Franks managed to cross and engage with the Lombards, but by the time the main army got to the other side, the Lombards had marched away and disappeared. After the Franks returned to the camp, an envoy from the emperor arrived, saying that support troops would join them in three days time. The Franks waited six days, as agreed, but no support troops appeared [472].

Cedinus, with thirteen other dukes, turned left on entering Italy. He captured five strong-points and took oaths of allegiance in the districts that had once been held by Sigibert. At this point, his army was stricken by dysentery, and many died. The wind then changed and the temperature dropped a little, making the troops feel much better. They wandered around Italy for three months, but inflicted no losses on the enemy, who had shut themselves up in strongly-fortified places. The king himself remained safe inside the walls of Pavia. They then returned home, by which time supplies were so short they had to sell weapons and clothes to buy food. Afterwards, the Lombard king, Authari, sent peace envoys to Guntram, asking why the Franks continued to attack the Lombards, when they had not broken the oaths they had made. Guntram received the renewed offer of peace graciously, and sent the envoys on to Childebert. However, while they were still there, other envoys arrived to say that Authari was now dead. Nevertheless, they bought the same protestations of peace as the previous envoys. Childebert agreed in principle to a truce, but said that he would announce at a later date what his detailed plans were. After that, Maurice sent twenty bound men to Childebert, saying that these were the ones who had murdered the envoys, Evantius and Bodigisel. He said that Childebert could execute the men, or alternatively they could be exchanged back for a ransom of three hundred gold solidi each. Either way, that should be an end to the matter. Childebert was sceptical about these being the right men, for they could simply have been twenty slaves randomly selected to suit Maurice's purposes. Grippo, who was present, said he did not recognise any of them. He thought that, if he was allowed to return to Carthage, he might be able to identify the real murderers of Evantius and Bodigisel. Childebert therefore refused to accept the twenty men, and decided to send another envoy to Maurice [473].

Meanwhile, the Bretons were once again ravaging the countryside around Nantes and Rennes. Guntram put Ebrachar and Beppolen in charge of an army, and ordered them to march against the Bretons. A bitter quarrel arose between the two leaders, enlivening the march by their frequent exchanges of insults. Wherever the troops went, they burnt, slew and sacked. After they had demolished houses and built bridges to cross the Oust, a priest came to Beppolen and offered to lead him to Waroch and all the Breton army, assembled in one place. To complicate matters, Fredegund, who hated Beppolen because of his defection from her service, persuaded the Saxons of Bayeux to cut their hair and dress in the Breton fashion, and march in support of Waroch. For two days, Beppolen fought against the Bretons and the Saxons whilst Ebrachar withdrew the greater part of the army, awaiting news of the hoped-for death of Beppolen. On the third day, Beppolen was wounded, but fought on until Waroch made a concerted attack and killed him. Waroch had managed to trap Beppolen's troops between marshes, so more died in the bogs than in battle. Ebrachar then advanced to Vannes, where Bishop Regalis sent out his clergy to meet him, carrying crosses, to lead Ebrachar into the town. It was rumoured that Waroch had filled ships with precious objects and other possessions, to take them to safety on an offshore island, but everything had been

lost in a severe storm. Be that as it may, Waroch then came to Ebrachar to sue for peace, making the same promises as before. This time he handed his own nephew over as hostage, so Ebrachar was satisfied and headed for home with his troops. They reached a difficult river-crossing, where the strongest men were able to wade across, but many others were left stranded. Waroch immediately broke his promise of peace and ordered his son Canao to take the stragglers prisoner, killing those who resisted. Some were quickly set free by Waroch's wife, but the rest remained captive. Ebrachar and those troops who had crossed the river continued on their way. They decided to return by a different route from the one they had used on the way out, to avoid reprisals for the atrocities they had committed. Even so, they were attacked and humiliated near Angers. When they reached home, some of the soldiers went to Guntram and alleged that Ebrachar had been bribed by Waroch to lead the troops to disaster. Guntram reproached Ebrachar angrily, and ordered him away [474].

At around this time, Chlothar became seriously ill. It was thought that he would die, but he recovered. When his life was in the balance, Fredegund carried out some good actions, apparently in the hope that this would influence the outcome. These included donating a large sum of money to the church of St Martin, and getting Waroch to release the remaining prisoners [475].

Meanwhile, Sunnegisil, after being recalled from exile, was being repeatedly tortured by Childebert to see if he could provide any more information of importance. As well as confessing that he had planned to murder Childebert, he also said that Egidius was implicated in the assassination plot devised by Rauching, Ursio and Berthefried. Childebert ordered every bishop in his realm to come to Metz, to participate in a trial of Egidius for this and other alleged crimes. Firstly, Egidius was accused of having conspired with Chilperic, being rewarded by gifts of crown lands in the cities seized by him. Egidius acknowledged that he had indeed been friendly with Chilperic, but insisted that he had been acting in Childebert's best interests throughout, and had done nothing without the approval of him and his officials. As evidence of that, he produced the deeds of conveyence of the estates in question, which bore the signature of Otto, who had been Childebert's referendary at the time. Childebert denied all knowledge of the matter and Otto, who was present, examined the deeds and declared his supposed signature to be a forgery. Two-way correspondence between Chilperic and Egidius was then produced which, although not phrased in specific terms, clearly implied a plot to murder both Brunhild and Childebert. Egidius denied that he was the author of the letters bearing his name, but one of his staff, who had kept draft copies of his letters, gave evidence that the sentiments expressed were indeed those of Egidius. Copies of agreements between Chilperic and Childebert were then produced, in which it was stated that the two kings would unite to defeat Guntram and share his territory between them, but Childebert said that he had not given his consent to any such course of action. He then accused Egidius of being responsible for the civil war between Guntram and Chilperic, in which many people had died. Papers showing this to be the case had now been found. Epiphanius, abbot of the church of St Remigius, then gave evidence that Egidius had received two thousand gold solidi and other gifts to encourage him to maintain his partnership with Chilperic. Some of those who had gone with Egidius to visit Chilperic also appeared in court, saying that, although they could not testify to what had been discussed in the long private meetings between the bishop and the king, the brutal invasions of Guntram's territory by Chilperic's men followed soon afterwards. Egidius denied the implication of this, but Abbot Epiphanius returned to the court, named the man who had passed on the gold solidi from Chilperic to Egidius, and gave details of the plot by which, which the approval of the bishop, subjects of Chilperic would invade Burgundy and murder Guntram. By now the guilt of Egidius was apparent to all, so he confessed and placed himself at the mercy of the court. He was taken to Strasbourg, stripped of his priesthood and condemned to exile. He was succeeded as bishop of Reims by Romulf, the son of Duke Lupus. Epiphanius, who had known of the plots, but had said nothing about them until now, was deposed from his position of abbot. A vast amount of gold and silver was discovered in the coffers of Egidius, which was handed over to the royal treasury [476].

In the 16th year of Childebert's reign, and the 30th year of Guntram's, corresponding to AM (E) 5789 (AD 589), Gregory related how Fredegund invited Guntram to come to Paris for the long-delayed baptism of Chlothar. Guntram would receive the boy from the baptismal font. Guntram sent some of his bishops ahead of him, and then made his way to his country estate of Rueil, just outside Paris. There, he had Chlothar brought to him, and made arrangements for the baptism to be carried out in the nearby village of Nanterre. Messengers from Childebert then arrived, accusing Guntram of breaking his agreement with their king by confirming Chlothar's right to the royal throne. Guntram denied that he was breaking any agreement with Childebert. He was, by request, simply receiving from the font his brother's son, which was something that no Christian could refuse to do. He assured Childebert that, as long as he upheld the agreement they had made, he would do the same, complying with every small detail. Following the ceremony, many gifts were exchanged between Guntram and the representatives of Chlothar, after which Guntram returned home to Chalon-sur-Saône [477].

The remaining chapters of *The History of the Franks* were largely concerned with ecclesiastical matters.

Appendix 2

Summary (with annotations) of the Account given by Paul the Deacon in his *History of the Lombards* of the Reigns of Lombard Kings from Alboin to Liutprand

Introduction

The main surviving historical account of the Lombards (a contraction of Langobards, i.e. long-beards) was written by Paul the Deacon, himself of Lombard descent, who was tutor to Adelperga, daughter of Desiderius (the last king of the Lombards) and wife of Arichis II, duke of the Lombard province of Benevento, southeast of Rome. Paul later spent time in the court of Charlemagne, where he tutored the Frankish king's daughter, Rotrud, in Greek, before ending his life in the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino in Benevento. He wrote several works, the final one being the *History of the Lombards*. His sources for the earlier chapters of this included an anonymous work, *Origin of the People of the Lombards*, and a lost history by Secundus of Trent. *History of the Lombards* was unfinished when Paul died, his account having reached the death of King Liutprand, a few reigns before the accession of Desiderius [478].

Paul began his *History* with a brief account of the activities of the Lombards when they were one of many barbarian tribes in the region north of the Danube, but then went on to report that, under their ninth king, Audoin, they crossed the Danube to settle in Pannonia. This brought the Lombards into conflict with the aggressive Gepids. In the war which followed, Alboin, son of Audoin and his wife Rodelinda, showed impressive courage and initiative. Paul noted that, at this time, Emperor Justinian was ruling in Constantinople and had built the Hagia Sophia church, whilst his general, Belisarius, had won great victories over the Persians, Vandals and Goths. In Rome, Cassiodorus was a prominent figure, whilst Dionysius had computed a reckoning of Easter dates [479].

Lombard Kings from Alboin to Authari

Paul continued his account by reporting that, when Audoin died, he was succeeded by his son, Alboin, who, soon afterwards, married Chlothsind, the daughter of the Frankish king, Chlothar I. Then, aided by the Avars, relatives of the Huns, Alboin conquered the Gepids and killed their leader, Cunimund. Alboin subsequently married Cunimund's daughter, Rosamund, following the death of his first wife, Chlothsind. Alboin then sent troops to aid Narses, the successor of Belisarius, in his battles against the Goths, which resulted in the overthrow of Totila, the king of the Goths. Narses also defeated and killed Duke Buccelin, who had been left behind in Italy to pursue the aims of an abortive invasion by the Frankish king, Theudebert. At around this time, Emperor Justinian died and was succeeded by Justin II. Subsequently, in view of the vacuum resulting from the overthrow of the Gothic kingdom in northern Italy and the consequent withdrawal of imperial troops, Alboin led his nation south to take over the region, leaving Pannonia in the hands of his allies, the Avars. According to Paul, the Lombards left Pannonia for Italy 568 years after the incarnation of Jesus Christ [480]. (Marius of Avenches dated the death of Emperor Justinian to the 25th year of the post-consulship of Basilius, indiction 14, i.e. AD 566; the recall of Narses from Italy, after he had dealt with Totila and Buccelin, to the 2nd year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 1, i.e. AD 568; and the departure of Alboin and the Lombards from Pannonia to the 3rd year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 2, i.e. AD 569 [481].)

After leading the Lombard people, accompanied by others, from Pannonia, Alboin took possession of Italy down to Tuscany, establishing a capital at Pavia (which was called Ticinum by the Lombards), and a system of rule through a network of dukes. The emperor in Constantinople retained control of little more than the cities of Ravenna and Rome, and some fortified settlements. However, three years and six months after the invasion, Alboin's wife, Rosamund, conspired with Helmechis, his armour-bearer, to kill the Lombard king in Verona [482]. (Marius dated the murder of Alboin to the 6th year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 5, i.e. AD 572 [483].)

Continuing his account, Paul wrote that Helmechis married Alboin's widow, Rosamund, and attempted to usurp the Lombard throne. However, the coup failed to receive significant support, so Rosamund sent a message to Longinus, the imperial prefect of Ravenna, asking him to send a ship to bring them together. Rosamund and Helmechis soon arrived in Ravenna, together with Albsuinda, the young daughter of Alboin and Chlothsind. In Ravenna, Longinus quickly persuaded Rosamund to marry him, after murdering Helmechis. She succeeded in getting Helmechis to drink poison from a cup, but he quickly realised what what was happening and forced Rosamund to drink the remainder of the poison, so the two died together. Albsuinda was then sent to the emperor in Constantinople, whislt, in Pavia, a noble named Cleph was installed as king, by common consent [484]. (Marius wrote that Duke Cleph was appointed king of the Lombards in the 7th year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 6, i.e. AD 573 [485].)

Cleph took a strong line against prominent supporters of the empire, killing some and driving others out of Italy. However, when he and his wife, Masane, had reigned for eighteen months, Cleph was assassinated by one of his servants [486]. (Marius dated his death to the 8th year of the consulship of Justin II, indiction 7, i.e. AD 574 [487].)

As reported by Paul, there was a 10-year inter-regnum, when power was held by a group of around thirty dukes. Prominent amongst these were Zaban of Pavia, Wallaris of Bergamo, Alichis of Brescia and Euin of Trent. This was a particularly violent and chaotic period in Italy, with cities being sacked and churches despoiled. Some dukes attacked Gaul (as also noted by Gregory of Tours), killing the patrician Amatus, who had been sent by King Guntram to intercept them, and they returned to Italy loaded with booty. However, a second incursion was less successful, and the Lombards were routed by the patrician Eunius, also known as Mummolus. The Franks then invaded the territory of the duke of Trent, but were driven back. Subsequently, the Frankish king Sigibert was murdered, because of the treachery of his brother, Chilperic. Sigibert was succeeded by his son, Childebert. These events all took place when Justin II was emperor in Constantinople, but Justin died after reigning for 11 years. His successor, Tiberius, died a few years later and Maurice then became emperor [488]. (Marius dated the death of Emperor Justin II to the 13th year of his consulship, indiction 12, i.e. AD 579. The *Chronicon Paschale* dated the final year of Justin to AM (CP) 6087, indiction 12, i.e. AD 578/9; and the final year of Tiberius to AM (CP) 6091, indiction 15, i.e. AD 581/2 [489].)

When they had been under the power of the dukes for 10 years, the Lombards decided, by common consent, to appoint Authari, son of Cleph, as their king. (If we start with the date given by Marius of Avenches for the Lombardian invasion of Italy and then follow the subsequent timescale given by Paul, Authari would have come to the throne in AD 584. Note that all linkages between Paul's timescale and AD dates in this Appendix will be made on the same basis.) Early in Authari's reign, Emperor Maurice sent ambassadors to King Childebert with 50,000 solidi, for him to attack the Lombards and drive them from Italy. Childbert duly led an army into Italy, but when Lombard messengers offered gifts to Childebert, he accepted then and returned home. Hearing of this, Maurice asked for the return of the solidi, but Childbert ignored the request. Realising he had nothing to fear from the Franks, Authari then attacked the city of Brescello on the River Po, where a rebel duke named Droctulft (a Sueve by descent) had fled from the Lombards and joined with supporters of the empire. Authari took Brescello and destroyed its walls but, by then, Droctulft had escaped to Ravenna. Authari then agreed a three-year peace with Smaragdus, who had replaced Longinus as prefect of Ravenna. Despite that, Droctulft, with the help of some imperial soldiers, continued to cause problems for Authari, and he drove the Lombards from Classis, Ravenna's port. Meanwhile, the Franks were in conflict with the Visigoths in Spain, because Ingund, the sister of King Childebert, had been sent to marry Hermenegild, the son of King Leovigild, who was an Arian. Together with Leander, the bishop of Seville, Ingund persuaded Hermenegild to convert to Catholicism. Leovigild's hostile reaction resulted in the death of Hermenegild, causing Ingund to flee with her young son and be taken by imperial troops to Sicily. The boy was then sent to the emperor in Constantinople, his mother remaining on Sicily where she died, although reports reaching the Franks led to the belief that both had been taken to Constantinople. At around the same time, flooding of the Tiber resulted in a serious epidemic in Rome, causing the death of Pope Pelagius II. He was succeeded by Gregory (the Great), who subsequently sent Augustine and others as missionaries to Britain [490].

As reported by Paul, Authari, seeking to secure a good relationship with the Franks, sent an embassy with a proposal of a marriage between the Lombard king and a sister of Childebert. That was accepted by Childebert, but ambassadors then arrived from Spain, saying that the Visigoth nation had now been converted to Catholicism, so he promised the same sister in marriage again, preferring her to marry a Catholic rather than an Arian like Authari. (Isidore of Seville, brother of Bishop Leander, dated the Visigoth conversion to Era 624, i.e. AD 586 [491]). Childebert, believing that his other sister, Ingund was in Constantinople, then sent an embassy to Emperor Maurice, saying that he would now carry out his promise to invade Lombardy. He did so, but was driven back by Authari's army. Authari then married Theodelinda, daughter of Garibald, a Bavarian duke. Soon afterwards, Grippo, an envoy of Childbert, returned from Constantinople, saying how well he had been received by Maurice. In view of that, Childebert agreed to escalate his actions against the Lombards, and drive them out of Italy. He duly invaded Lombardy, with a larger army than before, and won several military victories, but his army was then stricken by dysentery and had to return home. After the departure of the Franks, Authari set about extending his kingdom further south, progressing through Spoleto to Benevento, where he was able to establish a new duchy, before continuing as far as Reggio. Zotto was appointed as the first duke of Benevento. Making another attempt to seek peace with the Franks, Authari sent an embassy to Guntram, who was willing to agree, but directed the embassy to his nephew, Childebert, for a final decision. While the envoys were still in Gaul, Authari died at Pavia, apparently poisoned, after reigning for six years, so another messenger was dispatched to Childebert with this news, and a further request for peace. Childebert's response was that he would give peace at a future time. According to Paul's timescale, Authari died 21 years after the Lombards entered Italy [492].

Lombard Kings from Agilulf to Grimuald

Paul continued his account by saying that Authari's widow, Theodelinda, was so respected by the Lombards that they wanted her to remain as queen, inviting her to identify someone suitable to be the next king. After consulting with her nobles, she chose Agilulf (also known as Ago), duke of Turin. They married soon afterwards, and then Agilulf was formally appointed king in Milan. One of his first acts as king was to send Agnellus, bishop of Trent, to Gaul to seek the release of captives who had been seized by the Franks during their raids on the towns of Trent. After an intervention by Queen Brunhild, a number of freed captives returned home with him. Euin, duke of Trent, was also sent on a successful mission to Gaul, returning after a peace had been agreed. Queen Theodelinda, a devout Catholic in a predominantly Arian country, then began to help restore churches and livelihoods of churchmen damaged during previous reigns, and her Arian husband supported her. However, when Romanus the exarch (i.e. governor of Ravenna and other imperial possessions in Italy) seized back from the Lombards a number of cities, including Sutri, Amelia and Perugia, lying between Rome and Ravenna, Agilulf attempted to regain Perugia, and killed Maurisio, a Lombard duke who had provided assistance to Romanus. After the fall of Perugia to Agilulf, Pope Gregory feared he would then go on to attack Rome, but he returned home to Pavia. Theodelinda urged her husband to establish peace, and he agreed a treaty with Callinicus, who had succeeded Romanus as exarch. Agilulf also agreed a peace with the Khagan (i.e. king) of the Avars, as well as a perpetual peace with the Franks. By this time, King Childebert had been fatally poisoned at the age of 25 and, with King Guntram also having died, royal authority over their two kingdoms was taken by Queen Brunhild, on behalf of her two young grandchildren, Theudebert and Theuderic. The content of letters from Pope Gregory to both Agililf and Theodelinda, thanking them for thir efforts in securing peace in the region, has survived, being included in the collected correspondence of Gregory and also reproduced in *History of the Lombards*. Paul went on note that Callinicus soon broke the peace by seizing Agilulf's daughter and her husband from Parma, taking them to Ravenna, and then he recorded the birth of a son, Adaloald, to Agilulf and Theodelinda, in the palace of Monza. At around the same time, following the death of Zotto, Agilulf sent Arachis to succeed him as duke of Benevento. Soon afterwards, Emperor Maurice, after reigning for 21 years, was murdered by Phocas [493] (The *Chronicon Paschale* dated the final year of Maurice to AM (CP) 6111, indiction 5, i.e. AD 602/3 [494].)

Adaloald, the newborn son of Agilulf and Theodelinda, was baptised as a Catholic in the church of St John in Monza, and he was received from the font by Secundus of Trent. Afterwards, since his daughter was still captive in Ravenna, Agilulf besieged Cremona, with the aid of Avar troops sent to him by the Khagan, and razed the city to the ground. He also assaulted Mantua in similar fashion, but allowed the soldiers defending it to return to Ravenna. A peace was then made with Smaragdus, who had taken over from Callinicus, and Agililf's daughter was released, but she died soon afterwards in childbirth. In the same year, in Gaul, Theudebert and Theuderic fought against their uncle, Chlothar. Then, in the 2nd year of Emperor Phocas, Pope Gregory died and was succeeded by Sabinian. In the following year, in Milan (a centre of Catholicism), Agilulf's infant son, Adaloald, was annointed as associate king, and was also betrothed to the daughter of King Thedeubert, to cement a perpetual peace between the Lombards and the Franks. Agilulf then made a peace for one-year, later extended to three-years, with Smaragdus, receiving 12,000 solidi, and sent his secretary to Constantinople to begin direct negotiations with Emperor Phocas, which resulted in the agreement of a one-year peace, and imperial gifts being sent to Agilulf. Phocas also agreed to a request from Pope Boniface, the successor of Sabinian, to make it clear that the Apostolic See in Rome was the head of all. However, after reigning for 8 years, Phocas was killed in a rebellion and Heraclius became emperor [495]. (The *Chronicon Paschale* dated the final year of Phocas to AM (CP) 6119, indiction 13, i.e. AD 609/10; Theophanes similarly dated it to AM (AE) 6101, indiction 13, i.e. AD 609/10 [496].)

Continuing his account, Paul reported that the Avars then staged a large-scale invasion of Venetia. Gisulf, duke of Fruila, attempted to resist the Avars with all the men he could muster, but the Lombards were greatly outnumbered and Gisulf was killed, together with most of his troops. The survivers, with accompanying women and children, including Gisulf's widow, Romilda, took refuge in Cividale, the fortress of Fruila. However, Romilda sent a message to the Khagan, saying that, if he agreed to marry her, she would arrange for the gates of the fortress to be opened, so the Avars could enter. The Khagan responded positively, the gates were opened and the Avars stormed into the fortress, killing the men and rounding up the women and children to carry away as captives. Romilda remained behind for one night, as if in marriage, but on the following day the Khagan humiliated and then executed her. Agilulf renewed peace agreements with the emperor and with the Franks, but the Slavs then invaded Istria and caused great devastation. Secundus of Trent died soon afterwards and, at around the same time, King Theudebert was killed. Gunduald, duke of Asti, the brother of Queen Theodelinda, also died at this time, struck by an arrow in mysterious circumstances. King Agilulf himself then died, after reigning for 25 years, Agilulf's young son, Adaloald, then reigned with his mother for another 10 years, during which many churches were restored, but he was deposed after becoming insane. According to Paul's timescale, this was 56

years after the Lombards entered Italy, indicating (on the basis mentioned above) that Adaloald would have lost the kingship in around AD 625 [497].

Paul reported that the Lombards then gave the kingship to Ariold, and noted that, at around this time, St Columbanus founded the monastery of Bobbio in the Cottian Alps, not far from Pavia. Arioald restored Arianism as the official religion of the kingdom, and went on to rule for 12 years. He was succeeded by another Arian, Rothari of the House of Arodus. According to Paul, Rothari, depite being an Arian, was a brave, strong and just ruler, who drew up a code of law (dating this to the 77th year after the Lombard invasion of Italy), and he captured a number of cities in northern Italy that had remained loyal to Constantinople, including some in the northwest coastal strip and others (including Oderzo) in the lower valley of the Po, north of Ravenna. In an attempted fight-back, imperial forces engaged the Lombard army on the Panaro River near Modena, but were heavily defeated, losing 8,000 men. During the reign of Rothari, Arichis, who had been duke of Benevento for 50 years, died and was succeeded by his eldest son, Aio. A year afterwards, Aio was killed when Slavs invaded his dukedom, and he was succeeded by his brother, Radoald, who died five years later. Radoald's younger brother, Grimuald, then became duke, and he went on to govern the dukedom for 25 years. King Rothari, after ruling the Lombards for 16 years and 4 months, died and was succeeded by his son, Rodoald (in about AD 653, following Paul's timescale, linked to Marius' date). Meanwhile, Emperor Heraclius had died in Constantinople, and his son, Heraclonas, then reigned with his mother for two years. After the death of Heraclonas, his brother, Constantine was emperor for 6 months, and then Constantine's son, Constantine (Constans II), reigned for 28 years [498]. (Theophanes dated the final year of Heraclius to AM (AE) 6132, indiction 14, i.e. AD 640/1; and the first year of Constans to AM (AE) 6134, indiction 1, i.e. AD 642/3 [499].)

According to Paul, Rodoald, after reigning for 5 years, was murdered by a man whose wife he had defiled. Aripert, son of Gundoald, who had been the brother of Queen Theodelinda, then took the throne of the Lombards. One of the first acts of King Aripert, a Catholic, was to establish a richly-decorated sanctuary of our Lord and Saviour outside the western gate of Pavia. He reigned for 9 years and, since he had made his two youthful sons, Godepert and Perctarit, his joint heirs, they duly inherited his kingdom when he died (in around AD 667, on the basis of Paul's timescale linked to Marius' date). Godepert was an Arian, and made Pavia his capital, whereas Perctarit was a Catholic, and based himself in Milan. Evil men immediately began to stir up trouble and a civil war seemed imminent, so Godepert sent Garibald, duke of Turin, to Grimuald, duke of Benevento, requesting his support. However, at the instigation of Garibald, Grimuald set about seizing the throne for himself. After establishing his son, Romuald, as duke of Benevento, Grimuald murdered Godepert and caused Perctarit to flee from the country, to seek protection from the Khagan of the Avars. Perctarit left behing his wife, Rodelinda, and a young son named Cunincpert, both of whom were exiled by Grimuald in Benevento. Godopert also left a young son, Raginpert, who had been carried away by his father's followers, to be brought up in secret, but that seemed of little significance. Grimuald had already usurped all of Godopert's power, and he soon legitimised his position as king by marrying Aripert's daughter. Garibald, the instigator of the plot to murder Godepert, did not live to benefit from his treachery, for he was assassinated by a dwarf who had been in the service of Godepert. At around this time, as reported by Paul, an army of Franks made an incursion into Italy, and Emperor Constans staged an invasion of Benevento, where the resistance was led by Duke Romuald. Hearing that Romuald had summoned help from his father, Grimuald, the emperor aborted the invasion. After leaving Benevento, Constans visited Rome, where, as also reported in the *Book of Pontiffs*, he presented gifts to Pope Vitalian, but stripped bronze decorations from the city's buildings and dispatched them back towards Constantinople. Constans then travelled via Naples to Sicily, where he was murdered in his bath. Constans was succeeded as emperor by his son, Constantine IV [500]. (Theophanes dated the final year of Constans to AM (AE) 6160, indiction 12, i.e. AD 668/9 [501].)

Paul continued his account by noting that, after the death of Constans, the Saracens, who had recently spread through Egypt, suddenly invaded Sicily and returned to Alexandria with much booty, including the gold stolen from Rome by the late emperor. Meanwhile, King Grimuald, who had set off to help his son, returned to Pavia when he learned that Benevento was now safe. There he gave one of his daughters in marriage to Transamund of Capua, who had helped him acquire his kingdom, and made him duke of Spoleto. When Grumuald had left for Benevento, he entrusted his palace in Pavia to Lupus, duke of Fruili, but Lupus had behaved arrogantly, thinking that Grimuald would never return. When the king did come back, Lupus slipped away to Cividale and began to rebel against Grimuald. Not wishing to stir up another civil war among the Lombards, Grimuald sent a message to the Khagan, requesting him to deal with Lupus, which he did. The Avars conquered Cividale and killed Lupus, but then began to devastate the surrounding region. Grimuald asked the Khagan to stop the destruction, but he refused, so Grimuald was forced to send a large army against the Avars. Seeing the strength of Grimuald's forces, the Khagan returned with his whole army back to his own kingdom. After the death of Lupus, Grimuald took the duke's daughter, Theuderada, and married her to his own son Romuald, duke of Benevento. They subsequently had three sons, Grimuald, Gisulf and Arichis. Grimuald also took his revenge on the citizens of Forlimpopoli, who had attacked him when he was on his way to Benevento. He launched a surprise attack on the city on Easter Sunday, when baptisms were taking place, and caused great destruction. Grimuald then agreed a treaty of lasting

peace with the Franks. At that time, his brother Perctarit was living in the country of the Franks so, fearing the power of Grimuald, he left Gaul and set sail for Britain. However, the situation changed suddenly when Grimuald died from a ruptured artery. He had been sole ruler of the Lombards for 9 years (so, calculating on the same basis as previously, he would have died in around AD 674, 105 years after the invasion of Italy) [502].

Lombard Kings from Garibald to Liutprand

As reported by Paul, Grimuald's young son, Garibald, was then appointed king of the Lombards. However, when it became known that Perctarit was returning home, Garibald was deposed by royal officials and driven away from his former kingdom. Perctarit was installed in Pavia as the new king in the 3rd month after the death of Grimuald, and he immediately gave orders for his wife and son to be brought back from Benevento. Perctarit and his wife were both pious Catholics, as they soon demonstrated. King Perctarit built a well-endowed new convent dedicated to his Lord and Deliverer on the side of the river Ticino, close to a spot where he had managed to evade being captured by Grimuald's men, whilst Queen Rodelinda built a magnificent church to the Holy Mother of God just ouside the walls of Pavia. After Perctarit had ruled alone for 7 years, he then took his son Cunincpert as his consort in government and they ruled jointly for the next 10 years. When Perctarit died, the throne was immediately usurped by an Arian rebel, Alahis, the duke of Trent and Brescia, who imprisoned Cunincpert on an island in Lake Como. However, Alahis was soon revealed to be tyrant, so Cunincpert was able to escape and raise an army against Alahis, quickly defeating his enemy and regaining his throne [503].

While these events were taking place, Paul noted that, elsewhere in Italy, Romuald, duke of Benevento, had raised a large army and gone on to attack and capture Taranto and Brindisi, adding these to the extensive region now under his control. Romuald then died, after being duke for 16 years, and he was succeeded by his son, Grimuald. Three years later, Grimuald died, and his younger brother, Gisulf, became duke of Benevento. Gisulf, who was married to Winiperga and had a son named Romuald, ruled over Benevento for 17 years. In Africa, the Saracens continued their expansion, conquering Carthage. Meanwhile, in Constantinople, following the death of Emperor Constantine IV, his son became Emperor Justinian II. Ten years later, Leo (Leontius) seized the imperial throne and sent Justinian into exile in Pontus. Three years after that, there was another rebellion and Tiberius III became emperor [504]. (Theophanes dated the last year of Constantine IV to AM (AE) 6178, i.e. AD 685/6; and the first year of Tiberius (Apsimarus) to AM (AE) 6191, i.e. AD 699/700 [505].)

Returning to his account of the reign of King Cunincpert, Paul noted that he was visited by the Anglo-Saxon king, Cedoal (Cadwalla), who was on his way to Rome to be baptised by Pope Sergius. (Bede dated this baptism to AD 689 [506].) Paul then noted that, by this time, the kings of the Franks had degenerated and kingly power was now held and wielded by the stewards of their palaces. The Lombard king, Cunincpert, in contrast, retained the traditional status and authority of a king. In the field of Coronate where he had waged war against Alahis, Cunincpert built a monastery in honour of the holy martyr George. When Cunincpert died, he was given a ceremonial burial in the church of our Lord the Saviour in Pavia, which his grandfather Aripert had built. His reign, from the death of his father to his own death, covered a 12-year period [507]. (On that basis, maintaining the same methodology as before, Cunincpert would have died in around AD 703, 134 years after the invasion of Italy.)

Cunincpert was succeeded by his son, Liutpert, who was a minor, so his tutor, Ansprand, duke of Asti, was appointed regent. The throne was usurped 8 months later by Raginpert, duke of Turin, who was the son of the former king Godepert, but Raginpert died in the same year. Although Liutpert was restored to the throne, he was soon taken prisoner by Raginpert's son, who declared himself King Aripert II. Ansprand retreated behind fortifications on the island of Commacina, but Aripert, after murdering Liutpert in his bath, mounted an attack on Cammacina. Ansprand fled to seek refuge with the duke of Bavaria. During this period, Gisulf, duke of Benevento, devastated Calabria and began to threaten Rome, but was bribed by Pope John to return home. A few years later, Aripert agreed to restore land in the Cottian Alps to the rightful ownership of the papacy [508]. (According to the *Book of Pontiffs*, the pope who bribed Duke Gisulf was John VI, and the agreement with Aripert was reached during the papacy of John VII [509].)

Paul noted that, around this time, Transamund, the duke of Spoleto, died and was succeeded as duke by his son, Faroald, who governed in partnership with Transamund's brother, Wachilapus. Also, in Constantinople, Justinian II regained his throne from Tiberius, with the help of the Bulgarians. Leo and Tiberius were executed. However, six years later, there was another rebellion against Justinian and he was killed. Philippicus then became emperor, but 18 months later the throne was usurped by Anastasius II [510]. (Theophanes dated the last year of Tiberius to AM (AE) 6197, i.e. AD 705/6; and the first year of Anastasius (Artemius) to AM (AE) 6206, i.e. AD 714/5 [511].)

Paul then reported that, after 9 years in exile, Ansprand returned with a strong army and defeated Aripert, who was drowned trying to make his escape. Ansprand thus became king of the Lombards, but died after just 3 months on the throne, being succeeded by his son, Liutprand. At around the same time, Emperor Anastasius II sent his

fleet to attack the Saracens in Alexandria. His army followed a different agenda to the emperor's, and deposed Anastasius in favour of Theodosius III (this being dated by Theophanes to AM (AE) 6207, i.e. AD 714/5 [512]). In Italy, early in the reign of Liutprand, Gisulf, duke of Benevento, died and was succeeded by his son, Romuald II. At around the same time, Rothari, a blood relative of Liutprand, made an attempt to kill the king, but the plot failed. In Constantinople, in contrast, Theodosius ruled for only one year before being deposed, with Leo III becoming emperor in his place. (Theophanes dated the seizing of the imperial throne by Leo to AM (AE) 6209, i.e. AD 716/7 [513].) Emperor Leo soon caused major problems to the Church in Rome by ordering the destruction of all images of the saints, which the pope (identified by the *Book of Pontiffs* as Gregory II [514]) refused to implement. Leo also instructed Paul, the exarch, to send men from Ravenna to kill the pope, but the Lombards fought to prevent that happening. Liutprand, who had already besieged the imperial city of Ravenna and captured its port, Classis, went on to take Sutri and some other hill-towns in Latium, but eventually restored some of them to the emperor. At around this time, Romuald II, duke of Benevento, married Gumperga, Liutprand's niece, and they had a son, Gisulf. Also, Ratchis, having being appointed by Liutprand as duke of Fruili, invaded the country of the Slavs [515].

Meanwhile, Pippin, the ruler of the Franks, had died (in AD 714, according to the *Earlier Annals of Metz* [516]) and was succeeded by his son, Charles (who later became known as Charles Martel, i.e. Charles the Hammer). Paul reported that King Liutprand formed a strong alliance with Charles, and agreed to be an honorary father to his son, Pippin. By this time, the Saracens had besieged Constantinople, spread across Africa, taken control of Sardinia (thus threatening Italy), invaded Spain and begun to make incursions from Spain into Gaul. An early attack on Gaul (said by the *Mozarabic Chronicle* to have begun in Era 769, i.e. AD 731 [517]) was repulsed by Charles and his Frankish troops. Then, when a subsequent incursion occurred, Charles requested (and received) assistance from the Lombards in driving the Saracens back into Spain. At around this time, in Italy, Transamund II, who had succeeded his father, Faroald as duke of Spoleto, rebelled against King Liutprand but was defeated. Hilderic was appointed duke in his place, but Transamund subsequently regained his dukedom by force. There was similar turmoil in Benevento. When Duke Romuald II died, after governing for 26 years, his son and heir, Gisulf II, was still an infant, so attempts were made to usurp the dukedom. Liutprand intervened and installed his own nephew, Gregory, as duke. Soon afterwards, Liutprand became seriously ill and, in the expectation that he would die, the Lombards appointed another of his nephews, Hildeprand, as king, but Liutprand staged a full recovery and continued to reign, with Hildeprand as his partner in government. Seven years later, Gregory died and the dukedom of Benevento was then usurped by Godescalc. Liutprand led an army south to deal with the problems in both Spoleto and Benevento, but was confronted by a Spoletan army reinforced by imperial troops. It was only after much fierce fighting that Liutprand was able to proceed and drive Transamund from Spoleto, appointing yet another of his own nephews, Agiprand, to replace him as duke, and then to drive Godescalc from Benevento. This allowed Gisulf, who was now of age, to take up his rightful ducal position [518].

Soon after this, as reported by Paul, King Liutprand died, after reigning for 31 years and 7 months [519]. According to the timescale provided by Paul, the death of Liutprand occurred 176 years after the Lombard invasion of Italy, indicating a date of around AD 745.

Postscript

The "Cassino continuation" of Paul's *History of the Lombards* said that Hildeprand, who had been co-ruler for 8 years with Liutprand, reigned for a further 7 months after Liutprand's death. Ratchis (duke of Fruili) then became king. During the reign of Ratchis, as also reported by the *Book of Pontiffs*, the king began to besiege Perugia, but was then persuaded by Pope Zacharias to follow the path of peace. After Ratchis had reigned for 4 years and 9 months, his brother, Aistulf, took the throne and began to threaten Rome and harass the Roman citizens. The "Cassino continuation", as well as the *Book of Pontiffs* and the *Royal Frankish Annals*, noted that Pope Stephen II travelled to Gaul to ask Pippin (the son of Charles Martel) to defend Rome against the Lombards and, after he had agreed, the pope formally annointed Pippin as king of the Franks. The "Cassino continuation" said that Aistulf died after reigning over the Lombards for 7 years and 5 months. These reign-lengths, following on from Paul's timescale, suggest that Aistulf died 189 years after the invasion of Italy, which, on the basis of the link we have been using, indicate a date of around AD 758. The *Royal Frankish Annals* dated the death of Aistulf to AD 756. After the death of Aistulf, Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards, came to the throne and ruled for 18 years, until he was conquered by the Franks under Charles the Great (i.e. Charlemagne) in alliance with Pope Hadrian I. According to the timescale provided by Paul and the "Cassino continuation", the death of Desiderus (and the end of the Lombard kingdom) occurred 207 years after the invasion of Italy, indicating a date of around AD 774. The "Roman continuation" of Paul's *History of the Lombards* gave an AD date, 773, for the end of the Lombard kingdom in Italy, saying that this was 206 years after their invasion of the country. The *Moselle Annals* and the *Royal Frankish Annals* both gave a date of AD 774 [520].

Notes and References

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2. The figure quoted takes the reign of Augustus, initially shared with Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony) and Marcus Lepidus, to have begun in the year following the death of Julius Caesar, when Augustus was known as Octavian.
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59. *AMRE* [56], XXV-XXVI; *ARH* [18], X, 17-18; *ERE* [40]; *COC* [17], p. 152; *COP* [17], p. 457; *HATP* [18], VII, 31-32; *COJ* [13], pp. 325-326; *CPAD* [5], pp. 42-46; *COI* [24], §§ 345-348; *TROT* [24], pp. 214-215; *COTC* [15], 83-85; *SEH* [55], VI, 3-6; *TEH* [55], IV, 1-4; *SSEH* [55], III, 22-26; *ZNH* [51], III.
60. *EHEP* [5], I, 9; *AMRE* [56], XXVI-XXXI; *ERE* [40]; *COP* [17], pp. 457-460; *HATP* [18], VII, 32-33; *CPAD* [5], pp. 454-49; *SEH* [55], VI, 6-40; *TEH* [55], IV, 5-33; *SSEH* [55], IV; *ZNH* [51], IV; *COJ* [13], pp. 326-332.
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62. *GC* [13], pp. 646-655; *COH* [13], pp. 14-18; *CHCC* [13], pp. 79-81; *COMC* [17], pp. 59-70; *COM* [17], pp. 6-10; *COP* [17], pp. 463-466; *COC* [17], pp. 154-155; *HATP* [18], VII, 36-40; *COTC* [15], p. 126; *EHEP* [5], I, 11; *SEH* [55], VIII-IX; *TEH* [55], V, 26-39; *SSEH* [55], VI-VII; *ZNH* [51], V-VI; *CPAD* [5], pp. 55-62; Isidore, *History of the Goths (HOG)*, in *CCEMS* [14], pp. 86-88; *FRMG* [14], pp. 64, 79-82, 86; Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History (ESEH)*, *ECFAT* [13], I. 1-22.
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113. *COH* [13], pp. 32-34; *CHCC* [13], pp. 115-117; *COC* [17], p. 158; *COM* [17], pp. 23-24; *COV* [14], p. 187; *AAV* [64], p. 127; *COMA* [65], p. 232; *GC* [13], p. 664; *HOG* [62], p. 94; *HOF* [14], II, 11, 18, 27; *FRMG* [14], 96-97, 99, 101.
114. *COH* [13], pp. 34-35; *CHCC* [13], pp. 119-121; *COC* [17], p. 156; *COM* [17], pp. 24-25; *COV* [14], pp. 187-188; *AAV* [64], pp. 138-139; *COMA* [65], p. 233; *GC* [13], p. 664; *CPAD* [5], pp. 89-90; *COTC* [15], pp. 177-184; *HOG* [62], pp. 94-95; *ODG* [65], XLV (237-239); *PHW* [68], III, 6; *CJM* [20], pp. 201, 206-207; Priscus, in *FCH* [108], p. 341-342, 361-367, 373; Priscus, in *FHP* [108], pp. 136-137, 157-161, 170; *SPL* [111], Poem 2, pp. 5-57; *FRMG* [14], pp. 97-99, 101.
115. *COC* [17], p. 158; *COM* [17], pp. 25-27; *COV* [14], p. 188; *AAV* [64], p. 139; *COMA* [65], p. 233; *COTC* [15], pp. 184-186; *ODG* [65], XLV-XLVI (241-243); *PHW* [68], III, 7; Priscus, in *FCH* [108], pp. 373-375; Priscus, in *FHP* [108], pp. 170-171; Malchus, in *FHP* [108], pp. 403, 419-421; *CJM* [20], p. 207; *FRMG* [14], pp. 101-102.
116. *HOF* [14]; I, 9-12, 18; *AAV* [64], p. 142.
117. *HOF* [14], II, 27-31, 40-42; *HOG* [62], p. 95.
118. *PHW* [68], III, 7-8; *COTC* [15], pp. 286-287; *COM* [17], pp. 28-29; *AAV* [64], p. 146; Malchus, in *FCH* [108], pp. 425-427.
119. *ODG* [65], LIII-LVII (272-295); *PHW* [68], V, 1; Priscus, in *FCH* [108], p. 371; Priscus, in *FHP* [108], p. 164; *CJM* [20], pp. 212-213; *COTC* [15], p. 201; Malchus, in *FCH* [108], pp. 419-423, 427-453; *COC* [17], p. 159; *COMA* [65], pp. 233, 235; *COM* [17], pp. 28-30; *AAV* [64], pp. 143-144; *FRMG* [14], pp. 102-103.
120. *ODG* [65], LVII-LVIII (295-299); *HOF* [14], III, 31; *PHW* [68], V, 12; Cassiodorus, *Variae*, *MGHS* [13], AA 12, pp. 6-171; *FRMG* [14], pp. 259-271.
121. *HOF* [14], II, 32-33, 35-37; *HOG* [62], pp. 95-96; *GC* [13], pp. 665-666; *AAV* [64], p. 148; *COMA* [65], p. 234; *PHW* [68], V, 12; *FRMG* [14], pp. 99, 102. For a more detailed account of the period covered in this section, see Appendix 1.
122. *HOF* [14], I, 48; II, 35-38, 43; X, 31.
123. *HOF* [14], III, 1, 5-6; *HOG* [62], pp. 96-97; *AAV* [64], p. 150; *COMA* [65], pp. 234-235; *ODG* [65], LVIII (302); *PHW* [68], V, 12; *FRMG* [14], pp. 102-103.
124. *PHW* [68], III, 8-9; V, 2; *COMA* [65], p. 235; *Variae* [120], pp. 228-321; *ODG* [65], LIX (304); *CJM* [20], p. 248; *COTC* [15], p. 287; *BOP* [56], p. 52; *FRMG* [14], p. 103.
125. *HOG* [62], pp. 97-98; *ODG* [65], LVIII (302); *HOF* [14], III, 10-11; *AAV* [64], p. 158; *COMA* [65], p. 235; *PHW* [68], V, 13; *FRMG* [14], p. 103.
126. *PHW* [68], III, 9 – IV, 3; *COTC* [15], pp. 286-296; *COM* [17], pp. 44-45; *COMA* [65], p. 235; *CJM* [20], p. 269; *FRMG* [14], p. 103.
127. *PHW* [68], V, 1-29; VI, 1-30; VII, 1-40; VIII, 21-35; *COTC* [15], pp. 299, 332-333; *ODG* [65], LIX-LX (305-314); *COM* [17], pp. 48-49; *COMA* [65], pp. 235-236; *CJM* [20], pp. 285, 290, 293; *FRMG* [14], p. 104.
128. *HOG* [62], pp. 99-100; *HOF* [14], III, 21-30, 32, 36-37; IV, 8-9, 20-21; *PHW* [68], V, 5, 13; VI, 12; *COMA* [65], pp. 236-237; *FRMG* [14], pp. 104-105.
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131. *HOF* [14], IV, 27-30, 45-51; *COMA* [65], p. 239; *HOL* [130], III, 10; *FRMG* [14], p. 108.
132. *HOG* [62], pp. 101-103; *COJB* [70], pp. 60-76; *HOF* [14], IV, 38; V, 13, 38; VIII, 45-46; IX, 31; *HOL* [130], III, 21.
133. *HOF* [14], VI, 33, 42, 45-46; VII, 5-7, 20; VIII, 29; X, 18; *HOL* [130], III, 17-20, 27-35; IV, 1-41; *COJB* [70], p. 70; *Epistles of St Gregory the Great (EGG)*, V, 20, 30, 40, 55; VI, 51, 53, 59; IX, 42, 43, 61, 122, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3602.htm; *EHEP* [5], I, 23-34; *HOL* [130], III, 25; *BOP* [56], p. 61.
134. *HOF* [14], I, 48; VI, 25, 30; X, 31; *HOG* [62], pp. 86-87, 102; *EHEP* [5], I, 10, 11, 23; *COTC* [15], pp. 113, 126, 374; *CPAD* [5], pp. 49, 54, 139.
135. *COF* [14], pp. 4-11; *HOF* [14], X, 31; *HOL* [130], IV, 11; *EGG* [133], V, 54, 55; VI, 5, 6, 16, 50.
136. *COF* [14], pp. 14-15; *HOG* [62], pp. 104-107; *MOZC* [75], pp. 115-118.
137. *COF* [14], pp.11-56, 61-62; *HOL* [130], IV, 13, 26, 28-30, 41-42; *EGG* [133], V, 20, 30, 40; VI, 58, 59, 65; VII, 6, 33; IX, 11, 109, 110, 116, 117; *EHEP* [5], II, 20.

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294. *CATF* [153], p. 788; *RCC* [174], p. 36; *COMS* [76], p. 557; *RWFH1* [169], p. 307; *COHR* [165], pp. 83-85; *AOLH* [169], pp. 57-58; *CIC* [18], p. 99; *PREC* [284], pp. 187-190; *LPD* [250], pp. 273-276, 354-356; *LOP* [182], V, 270-297.
295. *COHR* [165], pp. 86-98; *AOLH* [169], pp. 58-62; *CIC* [18], pp. 99-102; *SAXA* [165], pp. 688-689; *BRD* [162], III, 3; *HAHB* [162], III, 33 (p. 141); *PREC* [284], pp. 97-157, 190-193; *LPD* [250], pp. 273-276, 354-356; *LOP* [182], VI, pp. 19-182.
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About The Society

The SIS is a non-profitmaking organisation registered as an educational charity under the UK Charities Act. It is a UK-based society with worldwide membership which includes laymen and academics alike and, with its publications and meetings, brings together people from a wide range of backgrounds and beliefs. Further information about these publications and meetings can be found at the Society's web-site: www.sis-group.org.uk.

The SIS was formed in 1975 (following preliminary meetings in 1974) in response to a growing interest in the controversial works of catastrophists, notably Immanuel Velikovsky, published during the previous 25 years. Velikovsky argued that myths and other ancient sources contain records of cosmic catastrophes in Earth's history and, on this basis, suggested that conventional views of cosmology, geology and ancient history required reconsideration. In cosmology, he proposed that electromagnetism played a much larger role than in the orthodox scheme and, in ancient history, he argued that orthodox chronology should be severely shortened, eliminating 'dark ages'.

The SIS provided a forum for debating these proposals and also enabled prompt consideration to be given to the ideas of later catastrophists and revisionists. So, for example, the catastrophist model of Victor Clube and Bill Napier was introduced at an SIS meeting prior to the publication of their first book, *The Cosmic Serpent.* Alfred de Grazia similarly gave presentations at SIS meetings before the publication of his *Chaos and Creation*; as did Mike Baillie in advance of his *From Exodus to Arthur*; and Wal Thornhill prior to the publication of his *Thunderbolts of the Gods* and *The Electric Universe* (both co-authored with David Talbott). Regarding chronology, the Society held a residential conference to discuss issues and subsequently, for example, communications to SIS members by Peter James, David Rohl and Bernard Newgrosh were followed by publication of their respective books, *Centuries of Darkness, A Test of Time* and *Chronology at the Crossroads*.

The SIS has regular spring and autumn meetings, with invited speakers. Videos of some recent presentations can be viewed at the Society's web-site The SIS publishes three journal-issues per year. It is the oldest and most up-to-date organisation researching and publishing articles on cosmic catastrophes and on revisions of ancient and medieval chronology.