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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jonathan Riley-Smith and David Luscombe

THE recovery in July 1099 of the city of Jerusalem by crusaders after four and a half centuries of Muslim rule was the strongest indication yet of a shift in the balance of power from the eastern Mediterranean region to the west. The Balkans and the Levant were in no state to take advantage of beneficial economic forces which were just as much at work in them as in western Europe. The Byzantine empire had been gravely damaged by the occupation of most of Asia Minor by nomadic Turks, although, in a situation reminiscent of the barbarian incursions of the third century, rebellious 'Roman' generals had to a large extent brought this on themselves by inviting the Turks in as mercenaries. The empire had no more than a shadow of a presence in central Greece and the Balkans and it suffered from the fact that it had never had great trading or industrial sectors which could have helped to compensate for its territorial losses: Constantinople had been at best a great consumer city. Profitable commercial centres needed to be on trade routes rather than at the end of them and when he encouraged Venetian and Pisan merchants to come to Constantinople the emperor Alexios I may have been trying to create the vital extra overseas leg that an international market of this kind would need.

Syria and Palestine had been devastated in the wars between the Shi'ite Fatimids in Cairo and the Sunni Seljuq Turks ruling on behalf of the 'Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad. The Muslim Near East had fallen into even deeper disarray just before the arrival of the First Crusade. In 1092 the greatest figure in Seljuq history, the vizier Nizam al-Mulk, the power behind the sultans for over thirty years, was murdered. A month later the sultan, Malikshah, died in suspicious circumstances, as did his wife, his grandson and other powerful figures. The 'Abbasid caliph, al-Muqtadi, himself expired in 1094. The Seljuq sultanate disintegrated into localities in which pretenders and members of the family fought each other for power. In 1094 the Fatimid caliph, al-Mustansir, who had ruled in Cairo for fifty-eight years and had fiercely resisted the Seljuqs,

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also died; so did his vizier, Badr al-Jamali. The First Crusade swept, therefore, into a region in which there was a vacuum of power.

Western Europe may not have been a cosy place in which to live, but conditions there were infinitely better. With no significant outside threat the developments in education and administration described in the first part of this volume could proceed apace. The engine for change was provided by the Latin church, the only institution with a truly transcontinental role. Its transformation into an advanced governmental machine was partly a consequence of initiatives taken by the centre in a climate of opinion, secular as well as religious, which was in its favour. They proved to be astonishingly ambitious, although they did not at first comprise a detailed programme, since none of the main actors had a clear idea where they were going. These men wanted simply to restore the whole church to what they believed had been its pristine purity and were determined to use the central organs of ecclesiastical government to bring this about. Over the course of the next three centuries, in one of the most revolutionary periods in the history of the church, the papacy, insisting on its independent authoritative voice and reinforcing this with institutional controls, was able to loosen the framework of pre-existing doctrinal authority, provided above all by the decisions of the first seven (or eight) general councils. It would be going too far to assert that it was now free-wheeling – indeed it always assured anyone who would listen of its devotion to precedent, previous councils and scripture – but its pre-eminence and the respect with which its voice was generally heard meant that it could oversee doctrinal adaptation and development. Between 1123 and 1312 it summoned no less than seven new general councils while the judgements streaming from the papal curia meant that the standard codification of canon law, Gratian's *Decretum*, had to be regularly updated with supplementary works. Authority for Latins, therefore, came to be not static, but continually developing, and Catholic doctrine came to be characterized by a succession of pronouncements on faith and morals, each claiming, of course, to be only expressing what had been in the mind of the church from the start.

Ambition alone would not have been enough, of course, to transform the role of the popes from a relatively passive to a consistently proactive one. It cannot be said often enough that advances in government depend as much on the governed as the governors. Few rulers have proved themselves to be so foolish as to establish elaborate machinery with nothing to do; central offices have emerged in response to the creation of business. In the middle ages this was on the whole generated from below as subjects sought arbitration or judgement, but nobody would seek a judicial decision from a court impractically distant from his or her home or from one whose procedures were perceived to be uncertain. The church already had an apparatus of public courts, each

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within a reasonable distance of every baptized Christian. These were the courts of the bishops, which is one of the reasons why control over the episcopate became such an issue in the eleventh century. The papacy's encouragement of the scholarship needed if the law – canon law – applicable everywhere by these courts was to be clarified and systematized created the conditions for ordinary Christians to seek judgement in them.

The process of change began with the arrival in Rome after the election of Pope Leo IX in 1049 of a group of radical reformers, under the influence of a movement which had been growing in monastic circles for half a century. The papacy, powered by an intense moral seriousness, placed itself in the forefront of change for almost the only time in its history, risking its own prestige in the process. Its radicalism was of a historical kind, based in its eyes on precedent and past authority, and it seems to have been barely conscious of the consequences of some of its initiatives, but no one can question the energy and intransigence with which it pursued its goals: it challenged the Byzantine empire and the patriarchate of Constantinople; it tried to establish free papal elections; it revived ancient half-forgotten legislation on clerical celibacy, episcopal schools and legations; it claimed lordship over important regions of western Europe; it developed the unprecedented notion of penitential warfare and invented crusading; and it set out to submit all episcopal hierarchies, including those in the eastern patriarchates, to the see of Peter. In a remarkably short time the sacramental and penitential theology of the Latin church was transformed, much of it in ways that directly affected ordinary Christians such as the geographical location of purgatory and the establishment of universal rules for canonization and for the verification of relics.

The way that the reformers' trains of thought could lead them in directions far from that originally intended is illustrated by the election decree of 1059. This established that thenceforward papal elections were to be free. The cardinal bishops should first confer about the candidate and then summon the cardinal clergy. The remaining Roman clergy and people should assent to the choice. The king of Germany, the heir to the empire, was to have 'due honour'. In effect the papacy was renouncing its traditional protector, in the name of the freedom, to which it was so committed, of the church from lay patronage. The reformers were inclined to ignore the many benefits that customary lay patronage had brought – not least the reform of their own institution by the emperor – but it would be wrong to suppose that they rejected protection in principle. On the contrary, they ardently desired it, since they knew that the church could not fulfil its functions efficiently without a strong secular arm assuring the order and security which was needed. That was why the election decree was ambiguously worded, why the policy enunciated in it was not consistently applied and why even two centuries later there remained an

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ambivalence in the relationship between church and state. But while to the eleventh-century reformers the prime justification of rulership and the chief duty given it by God was the protection of the church, a protector should know his place and should never try to interfere or control. They were convinced that lay patronage had got out of hand, to the point at which it was, in their eyes, wrong in itself.

Their boldness can only be appreciated in the context of the uneasy relationship between Rome and its own bishops which had been a constant in papal history. The city was now barely recognizable as a former imperial capital. Fields and marshes took up much of the space within the ancient walls. Scattered among them were the tower-houses of the Roman nobles, whom the popes feared most of all, because it was in the nature of things that these men would try to dominate their local bishopric. Everyone knew, or thought they knew, that periods of papal degradation had coincided with those times when the nobles had had the upper hand. That is why the popes had sought assistance from Byzantine, Carolingian, Ottonian and Salian emperors. By renouncing imperial protection, which is what the reformers in Rome were effectively doing, they were exposing the papacy to real danger. A century and a half later Pope Innocent III, who was himself a member of a Roman noble family, thought he had found a solution in the exploitation of the papal patrimony – so that as a powerful prince himself the pope could dominate the local magnates – but in the interim popes were often exiled from their see and forced to look for defenders who had the advantage, in their eyes, of being too weak to threaten them: south Italian Normans, *fideles beati Petri* and so on. Nothing demonstrates the force of the papacy's commitment to its reform programme so much as its option for insecurity, but the extent of its achievement can be measured by comparing what was at the disposal of Innocent III around 1200 with the shadowy rights of his predecessors two centuries before.

The energy of the reformers can easily be demonstrated by taking a half-hour's drive through the countryside of western Europe today and counting the sites where a church was built in the central middle ages. The resources committed to the construction of major stone edifices in almost every village – if that is what a miserable collection of huts could be called – almost passes comprehension. There had been no building programme on this scale since the Roman empire, but to a society which appreciated display it demonstrated the standing of the church and its influence. This was coming to be felt everywhere, even in warfare, that most political of all activities, which was not only sacralized in the crusades, but also ritualized at every level. In the heartlands of Latin Europe, where the concern was, often against the odds, for a more efficient government, the church provided at the same time a model and a hindrance in that its insistence on the management of its own affairs limited the influence

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that kings and magnates could have over an important institution on which they had relied in their administration. A theme of the period is the forms of resistance rulers employed, from waging war in late eleventh-century Italy to fomenting schism or demanding a redrawing of the boundaries between secular and ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the twelfth century.

Wherever in western Europe an apparatus of courts was still recognizably under a ruler's control and was staffed by officials answerable in some degree to him centralization was possible. In England the Normans took care not to dismantle the system they found there, although, as elsewhere, it coexisted with local jurisdictions and with courts Christian. King Henry II's introduction of the possessory assizes is an example of the importance of having accessible courts and easily understandable procedures working in tandem; the result, in the aftermath of a period of disorder, was a stream of cases flowing into royal courts and a consequent growth in royal authority. Historians of medieval England take pride in what they consider to be a precociously advanced system of government with a wealth of records, but England was not unique. The Norman kingdom of Sicily, divided between the island, which following its conquest in the eleventh century was firmly in the hands of its ruler, and the mainland, where a number of individual principalities had grown up, was an example of experimentation in government every bit as impressive as that in England. In both cases, however, rulership worked well because the country concerned was relatively small geographically.

Size was always an important factor. The western empire, which in the year 1000 had looked somewhat similar to England in governmental terms, had begun to disintegrate by 1100. In Germany this was to lead to the rise of the principalities and in northern Italy to the communes. The empire suffered from a succession of civil wars, but it is arguable that it was simply too big to be effectively administered as a whole once the expectations of its subjects had grown beyond a certain level. It is noticeable that none of its constituent parts challenged the theory of its existence; all of them found a way of managing their own affairs within a framework which they nevertheless succeeded in emasculating. France, another country too large for effective centralized control, had already fragmented and in the early eleventh century this led to intolerable levels of internal disorder. The situation had improved by 1100, but for almost a century thereafter parts of the kingdom suffered intermittently from internal warfare, often because the princes were trying to reduce their own territories to order. The steps taken around 1200 by King Philip II to raise his profile by advancing royal authority into lordships which had already been reconsolidated were, however, made harder than they need have been, because one magnate, the king of England, had accumulated far more land than was healthy for the kingdom as a whole.

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Centralization is not everything and where an apparatus of jurisdiction had fragmented or decayed it was not possible to rebuild it, which is why the empire under Frederick Barbarossa and the crown of France under a succession of Capetian kings had to make use of other means to enlarge the scope of royal authority. In both Germany and France the rulers exploited feudal relationships, since these at least provided them with services of various kinds and a legal framework for loyalty and obedience, but over time the consequences were to be completely different, because in Germany the fragmentation came to be reinforced, whereas in France the crown was eventually going to triumph. Before 1200 these processes were only in their early stages and, without agreeing entirely with the communitarian theories which have been argued recently, it is certainly the case that feudal lordship was not yet the force it was to be by the end of the thirteenth century.

Indeed if there was one issue that was at the forefront of the minds of landowners in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries it was not lordship and the possession of tenancies, which are characteristic of feudal holdings, but family. Blood relationships, which endured, of course, as a major political factor into modern times, provided western Europe with another kind of internal unity. The most significant difference between them and association by lordship was that whereas lordship tended to operate in the localities they were cosmopolitan, as families searched further afield for suitable spouses, partly in response to the very strict rules of consanguinity which the church was trying to impose. Rotrou of Perche, the count of Mortagne on the frontiers of Normandy around 1100, for example, was related to the kings of Aragón through his aunt and to the viscount of Turenne in Limousin through the marriage of his sister. At about the same time the daughters of Count William Tête Hardi of Burgundy were married to the duke of Burgundy and the counts of Flanders, Savoy and Bar-le-Duc. And one of William's sons was married to the heiress of Castile. International bonds of kinship straggled, like Cistercian filiations, from Britain and Scandinavia to the Levant, binding westerners together culturally.

Dynastic relationships had strong effects on the periphery. Recent research on the settlers in Syria and Palestine has shown how closely they were in touch with their relations in the west. The families thrown into prominence there were often not of the highest rank. The Monthérys, the first clan to exploit the crusading movement, must have been predisposed in some way to respond to the earliest calls to crusade since so many members took part. Two Monthérys were among the first settlers in the Levant, and one of them was independently related to the greatest figures there and was talented enough to be rewarded by them with lordship. He in turn patronized other relations, including new arrivals. Members of the family were, therefore, well placed when they were provided with an opportunity to seize the crown in 1118. And the characteristic

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way that the instinct for cooperation and mutual assistance would bring a whole kindred-group, or a substantial part of it, into line behind an initiative is demonstrated by the attempts by relations, in the west as well as in the east, to respond to needs of their colonial cousins through visits to Palestine, through the use of whatever influence they had at home or through settlement themselves. The path taken by the Monthérys was to be followed a few decades later by the Lusignans and in the thirteenth century by the Briennes. Crusading was so dependent on the reactions of committed European kin-groups that it could be manipulated by them relatively easily.

Western government was marked everywhere by experimentation and innovation. This was particularly the case in the new settlements in which characteristic features of frontier administration, marcher lordships, gave their holders freedom to experiment. In Spain and in the Levant western conquerors were faced by the absorption of large numbers of indigenous of other religions and evolved measures to cope with them, most being variations on existing Muslim *dhimmi* regulations for subject peoples. But a feature before 1200 was that on many frontiers the papacy had much less influence than in the heartlands, in spite of the facts that the Levantine colonies had been created out of the papal crusading movement, Spain was a region on which it had concentrated much of its effort in the eleventh century and the king of Sicily was a papal vassal. The nature of the conquest, the accession of rulers who had not been in the forefront of reform and the poor quality of the clergy who had accompanied the First Crusade were responsible for a patriarchate of Jerusalem which comprised possibly the most backward and unreformed collection of provinces in Latin Christendom. In Spain and Sicily the church fell into the pockets of the kings. The reason for its relative weakness seems to have been that it had not yet evolved instruments to cope with the imposition of Latin Christianity in regions which had not known it. So on the frontiers, at a time when it was trumpeting its freedom from lay influence, it was still as dependent on secular power as it had been in the days of Charlemagne and the Ottonian emperors.

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CHAPTER 2

THE PAPACY, 1024–1122

Uta-Renate Blumenthal

INTRODUCTION

General

The author of a chapter on the history of the papacy from 1024 to 1122 confronts the unusual task of giving in a few pages an account of both the *Adelspapsttum* and of the popes of the Gregorian reform period. No greater contrast could be imagined, one might think. After the clean-sweep of Sutri and Rome in 1046, when ecclesiastical councils under the guidance of Emperor Henry III cleared the way for the first of the northern newcomers, Pope Clement II (1046–7), a fundamentally altered papacy is supposed to have arisen from the ashes of a papacy dominated by the corrupt local Roman nobility. And, indeed, profound changes occurred in the second half of the eleventh century, although with regard less to the papacy itself as an institution than to its relationship with the churches of the empire (Germany, Italy and, at times, Burgundy), the Normans of Italy, the principalities and kingdom of France and the Byzantine patriarchate. Because of the Conquest and the special relationship between the papacy and the English kings from William I to Henry I, England stood somewhat apart in this reordering, as did Spain on account of the *Reconquista*.¹ It involved the successful realization of the papal primacy. This was not limited to the secular realm, but also deeply affected relationships within the church. The history of these changes can be found in an earlier chapter as well as in many handbooks and will only be sketched very briefly here.² The present chapter will emphasize the administrative underpinning that allowed a strengthened papacy to emerge at the end of the twelfth century under Innocent III (1198–1216) as the single most influential political and spiritual institution of Latin Christendom. It will cover the initial stages of this development, since they

¹ Cowdrey (1972) and (1989); Fornasari (1989); Garcia y Garcia (1989); Erdmann (1935).

² *NCMH*, iv, Part 1, ch. 9.

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unfolded precisely in the period from c. 1012 to 1123 and form a continuous theme.

The tenth-century background

The popes of the tenth and early eleventh centuries never renounced the proud papal traditions represented in the more recent past by Nicholas I (858–67) and John VIII (872–82). But because the ties between the pope and the Frankish rulers, which had helped to shift the focus of the papacy from Byzantium to northern Europe in the eighth century, had weakened considerably during the break-up of the Carolingian empire and the effectiveness of the popes had declined, the papacy of the tenth century came to depend increasingly on local Roman and Italian factions. Near-anarchy north and south of the Alps greatly constricted the papal vision as well as the papal sphere of action. Not even the revival of the western imperial tradition by the Ottonian rulers in 962 could break the vicious cycle which threatened to make the papacy permanently a merely local force. The affair of Pope Formosus (891–6) shows vividly that it was even an advantage for the church, when with Sergius III (904–11) one of the several rival factions in Rome gained the definite ascendancy over the others. Formosus had been bishop before his election, and canon law forbade the translation of bishops to other sees, since they were considered married to their churches of ordination. The opponents of Formosus, therefore, possessed an excellent weapon. At the infamous synod of 896/7, Pope Stephen VII had the decaying corpse of Formosus dressed in papal regalia, deprived him of his rank and finally had the mutilated corpse cast into the Tiber. For almost two decades afterwards it was hotly debated whether or not Formosus had been pope legally and whether or not, therefore, his ordinations had been and remained valid. Writings supporting Formosus are vivid illustrations of the confusion and violence reigning in Rome at the time, and incidentally provided some of the most potent arguments in the eleventh-century quarrel over the validity of simoniacal ordination between Peter Damian and Humbert of Silva Candida.

The success of Sergius III, since 897 the anti-Formosan candidate for the papacy, was primarily due to the support of his cause by Theophylact. Theophylact and his direct heirs dominated Rome until 963, when the Crescentians and eventually the Tusculans succeeded to his role. Under the *princeps* Alberic II (932–955), grandson of Theophylact, Rome enjoyed the greatest degree of security and tranquillity in the entire century. Alberic completely dominated the papacy, but his rule also brought monastic reforms to Rome. They were inspired and personally guided by Abbot Odo of Cluny. Alberic's son, Octavian, not only continued to rule temporal Rome, but also became pope under the name of John XII (955–64). Not until 1012 was Crescentian control over the

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papacy to be broken. The Tusculan party succeeded in replacing the Roman branch of the Crescentians in May of that year, when within a week both Pope Sergius IV (1009–12) and the patrician John had died. Gregory, elevated to the papacy by the Crescentian party, was defeated and replaced by the Tusculan Theophylact as Benedict VIII.

The Tusculan popes

Benedict VIII (1012–24)

In contrast to the Crescentians, who had largely relied on the entrenchment of their own dynasty and their supporters in the duchy of Rome as secular magnates and landowners – often at the expense of the temporal property of the Roman church – the Tusculans used their secular power and successes to shore up the standing of the papacy among the Roman nobility. The position of patrician, so important to Crescentian rule, remained vacant. Benedict VIII, in particular, fought successfully to restore to the Roman church some of the properties that had been alienated through long-term emphyteusis to lay magnates. At the same time the pontiff also lent his support to monasteries such as Farfa south of Rome in reclaiming alienated property. The synod of Pavia of 1022, celebrated jointly by Benedict and Emperor Henry II, betrays the same spirit, although an element of moral reform of the clergy was also present and should not be underestimated.³ Successful restitutions of rights and property to the apostolic see were none the less negligible, if the abject poverty of the papacy in the mid-eleventh century provides an acceptable measure. In the long run, therefore, other aspects of Benedict's reign were better suited to shore up and preserve traditional papal rights as they had evolved in the Carolingian period. Benedict's cooperation with the emperor and his need for a military alliance brought about a visit to Henry II at Bamberg in 1020. On this occasion the pope received an imperial privilege which repeated with a few additions the *Ottonianum*, which had confirmed the papal lands granted in earlier Frankish donations. The document, known as the *Henricianum*, played a subsidiary but nevertheless important role in conjunction with the Donation of Constantine in documenting papal sovereignty and the geographical extent of the papal states for centuries to come.

The cooperation between pope and emperor also shaped other aspects of papal policy far beyond the reigns of the Tusculan popes themselves. Among them are administrative changes with regard to the chancery, as well as the seemingly innocuous introduction of the *filioque* clause. A synod gathered

³ *MGH Constitutiones*, 1, no. 34, pp. 70–7; cf. Capitani (1966), Pavia 1046. The fight for the restitution of ecclesiastical property might itself constitute reform, cf. García y García (1989), p. 246.