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Ankara Atatürk Lisesi Model United Nations

JCC

Joint Crisis Committee

AGENDA ITEM

Barrons' War

Under Secretary General
Mirata Deva

STUDY GUIDE

Overarching Diplomacy

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Letter from the Secretary General

Esteemed Participants,

I proudly welcome you all to the third edition of MUNAAL as the Secretary General of the conference. I am Taha Ersoy and I am an 11th-grader at the Ankara Atatürk High School.

It is a great honor for me to serve as the Secretary General of such a conference with an amazing organization and academic team. It has been a period of relentless efforts and sleepless nights for our team to finalize the preparations of MUNAAL'25 and make THE conference of the year possible.

The amount of trouble I personally have been through during the preparation phases of MUNAAL is unutterable and I would not be able to overcome the tough challenges we faced if not for our executive team and specifically our Director General, Eylül Koçak. She has been my greatest supporter through my best and worst, yet I can't imagine ever making MUNAAL'25 possible without her. She has been the backbone of the MUNAAL organization and with the joint efforts of our Directory General, Eylül, and her Deputy, Ecem, we managed to arrange a conference of the highest quality. I want to also thank my Deputy-Secretary General, Abrek, for being the best Deputy I could ever wish for.

We have selected a capable academic team and prepared eye-catching committees in order to exceed the conference to its limit. I would like thank our academic team; Dervişan Mehmet Savaş, Nur Mürsel, Ekin Dal, Edanur Altun, Ceylin Musalı, İpeksu Kaya, Ahmet Ozan Yılmaz, Mirata Deva, Atakan Duman, Çınar Mehmet Erduran and our Head of Crisis Görkem Can Coşkun. We have worked relentlessly to give you the best experience possible.

Sincerely,

Taha Ersoy

Secretary General of MUNAAL'25

Letter from the Under Secretary General

Esteemed Delegates,

I welcome you all to MUNAAL'25 and to Joint-Crisis-Committee. I am Mirata Deva, a third year Political Science and Public Administration student in Bilkent University. In this committee, war in Europe (France and England specifically) continues, as per the tradition. I believe and hope that you will enjoy this committee and conference overall.

The most important thing to understand the Medieval Europe is to know the feudal structure that shaped and governed those lands—as in our committee we are facing a feudal conflict as claims clash. Feudalism requires a vassal to show loyalty, pay taxes and supply levies to their overlord, and the sovereign in return, is responsible for protecting their vassal. John Lackland, as with his predecessors—other Norman kings of England, was a vassal of the French King, with respect to the Angevin possessions in continental Europe. The main conflict between House Plantagenet and House Capet rises from the Angevin possession in France. The barons, on the other hand, demand John Lackland to cease his tyranny, as he is responsible from his subjects wellbeing. Albeit, I urge you to read this guide to better understand the history behind these crucial conflicts that most certainly determined the future of both England and France for 500 to 1000 years. By reading the reasons behind these you may be able to find the roots of how feudal system was challenged and the Angevin Empire was destined to collapse as a result of mistakes and incompetent rule of its kings.

I also want to thank my dear friends Eylül Koçak and Taha Ersoy for inviting me to this conference and for all of their efforts, I hope they will see them pay off. In addition, I want to note that I am happy to be doing this committee, working together with one of the best, if not the best Head of Crisis, Görkem Can Coşkun.

I am excited and hope to see you all soon! You can contact with me without hesitation via my e-mail address: miratadeva2@gmail.com

Best regards,

Under-Secretary-General of the JCC,

Mirata Deva

Introduction to the Committee

1. Summary of the Agenda

Henry II of England and Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine's youngest son John Lackland or *Jean sans Terre*—there are disputed records but it is generally accepted that he was known as “Lackland” because he was not expected to inherit any significant land—became Henry's favourite son following the Revolt of 1173–1174 by Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry the Young King, Richard the Lionheart and Geoffrey, getting rewarded with the Lordship of Ireland and other fiefs. After the death of heir apparent Henry the Young King, Richard the Lionheart became the King of England following his father's death in 1189. While he was participating to the Third Crusade, John Lackland attempted a failed rebellion against his brother's officers, albeit he was not crowned king until his brother died in 1199.

As usual, the matter of succession to the English throne was disputed; the Norman law favoured John Lackland—who was supported by the most of the English and Norman nobility, and his mother Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine—as the only surviving son of Henry II, while the Angevin law favoured John's brother Geoffrey's son Arthur I of Brittany—who was supported by the nobles of Breton, Maine and Anjou, and King Philip II of France—as he was the only son of Henry II's elder son. In the year 1200 John and Philip II signed the Treaty of Le Goulet, acknowledging John's rightful succession to Richard the Lionheart as the heir of his possessions in France and Philip II's legitimate rights as the feudal overlord of these lands, and John giving up on his alliances. As John did not share Richard's wrathful militaristic nature, English chroniclers called him John Softsword. John's numerous failures in France and his incompetent rule, unsuccessful conquest attempts for the continental lands, which led to more loss of land, and heavy taxes caused him to lose the favour of his barons and allies; eventually leading to a rebellion. With the confrontation in 1215 he was forced to meet the demands of the barons and

rebels, signing the Magna Carta. When John broke his oath with the blessing of the Pope, the First Barons' War broke out, in which John died during the war, in year 1216.

2. Structure of the Joint-Crisis-Committee

The starting year of the committee is 1199. This JCC has three cabinets: The English Cabinet, The Barons' Cabinet and The French Cabinet. Technically both the English Cabinet and The Barons' Cabinet are the English side in the wars against France and recommended to work together. However, Barons may choose to rise against the King whenever they feel that they have gathered sufficient resources—keeping in mind that an insurrection against the King in the year 1200 would cause the complete annihilation of the rebels, as he would have a secure position or rebelling while the French is invading England might cause the subjugation of Kingdom completely to France. Whereas, it would be wiser to await the right time to swiftly march to victory. The English side will meet in the same committee, unless there is an open revolt, thus, until the start of a rebellion, all preparations must be made in secrecy by the Barons. If the King suspects the possibility of an uprising, he might take caution to suppress it, yet an untimely action without evidence of rebellion will most definitely backfire, worsening his position.

The Angevin Empire

1. Creation of the Angevin Dynasty (1002-1156)

In the year 1002 Anglo-Saxon king of England Æthelred the Unready married Emma of Normandy, who was the sister of Duke of Normandy Richard II. Their son Edward the Confessor succeeded to the English throne in 1042, after spending his life in exile in Normandy. After his death in 1066 without an heir, Duke William of Normandy, an illegitimate son of Duke Robert I of Normandy, claimed that he has been promised the English throne. Harthacnut, the predecessor of Edward the Confessor, made an agreement with Magnus the Good of Norway; if one of them died without an heir, the other's heir would inherit both the throne of Norway and England. Magnus the Good's half-brother and half-uncle, king of Norway Harald Hardrada claimed the English throne based on this agreement. However, Edward the Confessor was married with Eith the sister of Harold Godwinson the Earl of Wessex, who was crowned as the king of England by Ealdred the Archbishop of York. Thus, to inherit the English throne both Duke William of Normandy and Harold Hardrada of Norway set sail to England. Harold Godwinson managed to defeat Harald Hardrada and Tostig Godwinson at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, and marched south to stop the Norman invasion, where William successfully defeated him in the Battle of Hastings and, and was crowned as the King of England at Westminster Abbey in 1066.



William the Conqueror was at odds with his eldest son Robert Curthose, even though there was a period of reunion, it did not last long. William tried to disinherit him, yet instead he was persuaded to divide his dominions amongst his sons. He granted Robert Curthose the Duchy of Normandy and his second son William Rufus was granted the Kingdom of England, while his youngest son Henry inherited a certain amount of wealth for him to use to purchase land. In 1087 William the Conqueror died of his wounds, Robert and William Rufus agreed to be each other's heir, however the agreement failed as Robert was preferred by the nobility who held possessions

both in France and England, as he was seen as weak and easier to control—leading to failed Rebellion of 1088, which lacked Robert’s presence. In 1096 Robert joined the First Crusade, mortgaging his duchy to William Rufus for 10,000 marks in the meantime. In 1099 Robert left the Holy Lands and wintered in Southern Italy, where he married with Sybil with a big dowry to enable him to raise fund to buy back his duchy. William Rufus died in 1100, while Robert was still traveling and Henry managed to seize the English throne, getting crowned as Henry I. Robert gathered important barons around him and claimed the English crown on the basis of the agreement that was made in 1087, led an invasion against Henry in 1101, which ended with a failure and Robert renouncing his claims to the English throne with the Treaty of Alton. Robert’s conflicts with Henry continued until the year 1105, when Henry decided to invade Normandy, where Robert’s mismanagement resulted in civil disorder. Robert was defeated at the Battle of Tinchebray and imprisoned, while Henry claimed Normandy for the English crown.

Fulk IV was the Count of Anjou, claiming to rule over Touraine, Maine and Nantes, albeit he *de facto* ruled over only Touraine effectively. He married his son Fulk the Younger to heir of Maine, Ermengarde, and through a personal union, unifying the province with Anjou. From 1118 up until his death in 1128, Robert’s son William Clito rebelled against Henry for his claim to the English throne, nevertheless, he could not succeed. Henry was looking to establish an alliance with the County of



Anjou, and married his son and heir apparent to the English throne, William Ætheling to Fulk the Younger’s daughter Matilda of Anjou. Albeit, William Ætheling died in the White Ship disaster of 1120. Thus, Henry married his daughter Matilda to Fulk the Younger’s son and successor Geoffrey Plantagenet. This however created the problem of Matilda’s inheritance of the crown, as she had to be recognized as the queen regnant of the Kingdom of England for her to rule *suo jure*. In 1127 Anglo-Saxon and Norman barons recognized her as Henry’s heir in an oath. To secure Matilda’s

succession, she and Geoffrey Plantagenet wished to gain supporters in England and Normandy, yet Henry tried to prevent Matilda from gaining power against him, fearing nobles would prefer her rule over his and refused to hand out any castles to Matilda, confiscating the lands of the nobles who were suspected of supporting her; growing conflict drove nobles formerly supporting Henry towards Matilda.



In 1135, while Matilda was in Anjou, Stephen of Blois—William the Conqueror’s daughter Adela of Normandy’s son from Stephen Henry, therefore a cousin of Matilda—rushed from Boulogne to England after hearing Henry’s death, and was crowned as King of England. Geoffrey Plantagenet sent Matilda to Normandy to be recognized as the Duchess of Normandy, while he captured some forts in southern Normandy. Robert II of

Sablé in Anjou rebelled in the meantime, forcing Geoffrey to retreat, until his return in 1136—Normandy was sinking into disarray by then with infighting, as Stephen of Blois was not able to march there. Geoffrey found new allies such as Count of Vendôme and Duke of Aquitaine William X, however was wounded and forced to return to Anjou while at the head of an army. In 1137, Stephen of Blois arrived at Normandy, restoring order, yet lost the trust of his main supporter, Henry’s illegitimate son and Matilda’s half-brother Robert of Gloucester, who switched sides to support Matilda’s claim. In 1139 Matilda and Robert of Gloucester crossed to England while Geoffrey remained at Normandy, and in 1141 at the Battle of Lincoln, Stephen of Blois was captured. Nonetheless, Matilda faced defeats in England, while covering her retreat Robert of Gloucester was captured in Winchester, and Matilda was forced to free Stephen in return for Robert of Gloucester’s freedom. In 1142 Matilda asked for Geoffrey’s aid, however he refused as he had a growing interest for the possession of Normandy. In 1144, he anointed himself as the Duke of Normandy, and was officially recognized by Louis VII of France—a French King of House of Capet— while still refusing to aid Matilda. After a rebellion in Anjou, he dropped the

title of Duke of Normandy and installed his son, Henry Curtmantle (or Henry FitzEmpress), as the Duke in 1150, he was recognized by Louis VII in 1151, in return for land concessions.

Louis VII was angered by the treatment Giraud II of Montreuil-Berlay received after his rebellion, by Geoffrey and Henry Curtmantle, while Stephen of Blois was looking for a possibility to establish an alliance with Louis. Geoffrey died a few months later and Henry Curtmantle succeeded him as the Count of Anjou. However, Geoffrey was planning to leave Anjou to his younger son Geoffrey FitzEmpress. In 1152, Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine annulled their marriage under the pretext of consanguinity at the council of Beaugency. The annulment left Eleanor as the Duchess of Aquitaine and a vassal of Louis. She left for Poitiers, surviving an assassination attempt by Geoffrey FitzEmpress, *en route*, married Henry Curtmantle upon her arrival, making him *jure uxoris* Duke of Aquitaine and Gascony and Count of Poitou. Louis VII formed a coalition from Henry Curtmantle's enemies which included: his brother Geoffrey FitzEmpress, Stephen of Blois, Stephen's son Eustace who was married to Louis' sister Constance of France, Count of Champagne Henry the Liberal (who was William the Conqueror's daughter Adela of Normandy's eldest son Theobald the Great of Champagne's eldest son, and betrothed to Louis's daughter Marie of France) and Robert the Great of Dreux who was Louis' brother. In France Louis VII, Eustace, Henry of Champagne and Robert of Dreux attacked Normandy, while Capetian troops were attacking Aquitaine. Geoffrey FitzEmpress organized a revolt in Anjou, and Stephen of Blois was attacking Henry Curtmantle's loyalists in England, leading some Anglo-Saxon and Norman nobles switching sides.

Henry Curtmantle forced Geoffrey FitzEmpress to surrender after reaching Anjou, and then set sail for England in 1153. Meanwhile Louis VII fell ill and was forced to retreat from the conflict and Eustace died under mysterious circumstances. Stephen of Blois decided to end the conflict with the Treaty of Winchester, taking guarantee for his family's possession in England and France, and making Henry Curtmantle his heir—Matilda had refused the same agreement before. After

Stephen of Blois' death in 1154, Henry Curtmantle became the King of England as Henry II. He received a dispensation from Pope Adrian IV, releasing him of from his oath to cede Anjou to Geoffrey FitzEmpres, and offered his brother compensations, however he refused and rebelled against him in 1156, after getting crushed was left with annual pension. Louis VII did not intervene with the conflict as he received homage from Henry II for his possessions in France. Thus, the start of the Angevin Empire.

2. Rise of the Angevin Empire (1156-1199)

The Angevin Dynasty's name comes from the Latin for Anjou: *Andegavia*. It is the general consensus that Geoffrey Plantagenet's marriage to Matilda started the Angevin Dynasty, and Henry Curtmantle's ascension to the English throne effectively started the Angevin Empire. Even though Plantagenet was Geoffrey's nickname, thereon his descendants were known as the House of Plantagenet, thus making Henry II a part of the House of Plantagenet-Angevin, replacing the traditional House of Normandy his mother Matilda and other ancestors belonged to. Stephen of Blois had established the House of Blois; therefore, House of Normandy was non-existent at this point.

2.1. Rule of Henry II

Duke of Brittany Conan the Fat died in 1148, he had a son and a daughter; his son Hoël of Cornwall was from Matilda FitzRoy, an illegitimate daughter of Henry I. Conan the Fat disinherited Hoël of Cornwall, as the only remaining heir, Bertha of Cornouaille became the Duchess of Brittany, and Hoël of Cornwall was left with the County of Nantes. Bertha of Cornouaille ruled the duchy together with her husband Viscount of Porhoët



Odo. Nevertheless, Bertha of Cornouaille was married to the 1st Earl of Richmond Alan the Black, and had a son sired by him: Conan the Young. In 1156 peasants rebelled against Hoël of Cornwall

and installed Geoffrey FitzEmpress as the Count of Nantes, with Henry II's suggestion. Following the insurrection, Conan the Young invaded the duchy and took it from Odo, and in 1158, with Geoffrey FitzEmpress' death, Conan the Young seized the County of Nantes. Henry II threatened Conan the Young with his holdings in England as the Earl of Richmond, forcing him to submit, and to return Nantes back to Henry II; in return Henry II recognized him as the Duke, arranging his marriage to Scottish princess Margaret of Huntingdon. By 1166 it was understood that Conan the Young was unable to control the duchy; Henry II married Conan the Young's heir and daughter Constance to his son Geoffrey, and seized the duchy under Geoffrey's name, and by 1169 the duchy was under direct control of the Angevin Empire.

In 1149, Henry II had made an oath to the King of Scotland David mac Máel Choluim (David I), recognizing lands north of Newcastle as King of Scotland's possessions. Malcolm the Maiden succeeded his grandfather David I in 1153. In 1157, Malcolm the Maiden and Henry II met to discuss the Cumberland, Westmorland and Northumberland possessions, and Malcolm the Maiden, reminding Henry II his oath to David I, demanded these lands, however Henry II did not comply. Malcolm the Maiden did not insist, Huntingdon, which he inherited from his father was left to him, in return for homage paid to Henry II. William the Lion, younger brother of Malcolm the Maiden, had inherited the Earldom of Northumbria from his father, but lost it to Henry II in 1157.

The Capet-Plantagenet relations evolved into a different path after Henry II's ascension to the English throne. Henry II bought Vernon and Neuf-Marché back from Louis VII in 1154, and chancellor of England Thomas Becket was sent as an ambassador to Paris in 1158. As a result of negotiations, Louis VII's infant daughter Margaret of France (from his second marriage with Constance of Castile) was betrothed to Henry II's second son (eldest alive) and heir Henry the Young King in 1160, with the dowry of Norman Vexin, and Henry II received Moulins-la-Marche, Bonmoulins, Amboise and Fréteval back. Count Thierry of Flanders had taken place in the Louis

VII coalition against Henry II earlier, yet relations were re-established as a result of English wool trade via the ports of Flanders. In 1159 Stephen of Blois' other son William of Blois died without an heir, leaving the titles Count of Boulogne and Count of Mortain without a claimant. Henry II made Mortain a part of his Duchy of Normandy, and guaranteed County of Boulogne and William of Blois' sister Mary of Blois to Count Thierry of Flanders' second son Matthew, who abducted Mary of Blois and forced her to marriage. With this marriage and in 1163 the renewal of a former treaty between Henry I and Count of Flanders Robert the Crusader, Henry II got guarantee for Flanders' neutrality if war broke out between England and France, and Flanders were to provide Henry II with knights in return for money fief, an annual tribute.

City of Toulouse was the seat of the County of Toulouse, and during the time of Odo the Great, it was the centre of power for Duchy of Aquitaine, and Eleanor of Aquitaine's ancestors had been claiming the county. Nevertheless, neither Henry II or Eleanor of Aquitaine (from House of Poitiers, a Ramnulfid) was related with the Dukes of Aquitaine under Frankish kings. In 1159, Henry II marched from Poitiers with a large army and allies, however could not capture Toulouse proper, as his overlord Louis VII was in the defence force, and he did not wish to set an example for his own vassals. After capturing Cahors and castles in Garonne and Quercy, he returned in 1161, leaving his allies to continue the fight. William Longespee, Henry II's youngest brother, did not had any fiefs and Henry II intended to conquer Ireland, and give the Irish crown to him. Albeit, William Longespee died in 1164, without becoming the King of Ireland, yet Henry II continued him campaigns. In 1167, Henry II recognized Diarmait Mac Murchada as the Prince of Leinster, allowing him to use lands in England for recruitment against other kings in Ireland, which ended up being a very successful campaign. As a result, Henry II landed in Ireland in 1171, confronting the native kings of Ireland, forcing them to pay homage and recognise him as their overlord. Diarmait Mac Murchada died the same year, Henry II installed Normans to some important strongholds in Ireland and supported them in their conquests of Irish Kingdoms.

2.2. Conflicts Between Henry II and Louis VII

Louis VII had no male heir, and his second wife after Eleanor of Aquitaine, Constance of Castile died in 1160 in childbirth. With an urgent manner to secure an heir, Louis VII married Adèle of Blois (or of Champagne). Henry the Young King and Margaret of France was betrothed, yet with Henry II's pressures, in 1160 they married, and Henry II acquired the Norman Vexin as dowry, as it was declared. The marriage was a political move in hopes to prevent war between Louis VII and Henry II as Norman Vexin was a main source of dispute since Louis VII acquired it from Geoffrey Plantagenet in 1144. Louis VII's death without a male heir meant that Henry the Young King would be a strong candidate for the French throne. Henry II had the idea to crown Henry the Young King as early as 1162, procuring a papal bull from Pope Alexander III ordering Archbishop Roger of York to crown Young Henry whenever required, and the new Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket had been ordered to prepare for coronation. As the as the Archbishopric of Canterbury was now occupied, Henry II was dissuaded from using the papal bull—which upset Roger of York, who wrote to Papacy for confirmation of his rights to crown kings, delaying Henry II's plans for coronation. Albeit, Louis VII's son from Adèle of Blois, Philip Augustus, was born in 1165, ending the *détente*.

Thomas Becket was appointed as Lord Chancellor of England in 1155, and Henry II sent his son Henry the Young King to live in the household of Thomas Becket. In 1158 Thomas Becket was sent to Paris as the King's ambassador, and in 1162 he was nominated and elected as the Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry II and Thomas Becket started to fall apart when he resigned from chancellorship to favour and extend the rights of archbishoprics, leading to conflict on the jurisdiction of secular courts over English clergyman. Starting from 1163, Henry II tried to influence bishops against Thomas Becket, in Collegiate Church of Saint Peter at Westminster he sought for approval of the traditional rights of the crown



over the church, and in 1164 with the Constitutions of Clarendon, Thomas Becket was given the choice to recognize the King's right or face consequences. Thomas Becket seemed willing to agree, however refused to sign any documents, and Henry II summoned him to appear in front of a great council at Northampton Castle, to answer allegations of contempt of royal authority and malfeasance in the Chancellor's office. Thomas Becket escaped from the trial and fled across the English Channel. Henry II tried to pursue him with series of edicts, however Louis VII offered him sanctuary. Louis VII was known as *Rex Christianissimus*, and France was harbouring many escapee clergymen. Henry II's threat against the order forced him to return to Sens, and he threatened Henry II with excommunication and an interdict against him and the bishops of the kingdom. Pope Alexander III, even though he had sympathy towards Thomas Becket, was in favour of resolving the conflict with diplomatic approach, and sent papal legates in 1167 with authority to act as arbitrators. Same year, Henry II marched to Auvergne, and Bourges in 1170. In retaliation Louis VII raided the Norman Vexin, forcing Henry II to move north, while he marched on Bourges. With Henry II's involvement and provocations, Thomas Becket was murdered in 1170.

The Angevin Empire was not a coherent body as the name suggests, as it was a term coined later. The possessions of the Plantagenet kings were titles held personally, and Henry II wished to distribute his titles, as individual bodies, to his children. In 1170, during a campaign against Toulouse, Eleanor of England was promised to Alfonso VIII of Castile, with Gascony as dowry. Same year, Henry the Young King was crowned as the King of England, in the presence of English and Norman nobles—and bishops, while Thomas Becket had left with few supporters. Nonetheless, Margaret was not crowned together with Henry the Young King, either arrived too late from Normandy or was delayed on purpose in Caen, an insult to Louis VII. Enraged, Louis VII attacked Normandy, forcing Henry II to return to the duchy. Count Theobald the Good of Blois tried to mediate between them, leading Henry II and Louis VII hold series of meetings in Vendôme, La Ferté and Fréteval, end result being Louis VII finally calming. In 1172 Richard

Cœur de Lion (Richard the Lionheart or Richard I) became the Duke of Aquitaine. Henry the Young King and Margaret of France officially married the same year, and Henry the Young King was crowned King of England for the second time, together with Margaret of France, by the Archbishop of Rouen Rotrou. Following his coronation, in 1173, Henry the Young King, frustrated with having no funds or realm to rule *suo jure*, requested a part of his ancestral inheritance, England, Normandy or Anjou, from his father and was rejected.



Henry II decided to give three castles that should have gone to Henry the Young King, to his youngest son John Lackland, as a part of the marriage agreement between him and Count of Maurienne—John Lackland was to marry Count of Maurienne’s daughter. Many noblemen were supporting Henry the Young King to rebel against his father: his mother Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine was feuding with her husband, and other nobles were upset with Henry II’s possible involvement with Thomas Becket’s murder, as a result Henry II was left alienated in the Christian world. In 1173, Henry the Young King went to his father-in-law Louis VII’s court, followed by his younger brothers Richard Cœur de Lion and Geoffrey of Brittany. Eleanor of Aquitaine wanted to join him too, however she was captured on her way and held captive by Henry II. Henry the Young King and Louis VII created a wide alliance, starting a revolt. The alliance included: William the Lion who ascended to the Scottish throne following the death of Malcolm the Maiden in 1165, Count of Flanders Philip of Alsace, Count of Boulogne Matthew of Alsace and Count of Blois Theobald the Good. In April of the same year, Philip of Alsace and Matthew of Alsace invaded Normandy from east, while Louis VII and Henry the Young King invaded from south, followed by attacks from west by Bretons. Matthew of Alsace was killed, Bretons were routed with great losses, and Louis VII was defeated and forced out of Normandy. William the Lion’s invasions of Northumbria in 1173 was also a failure. Negotiations between Henry II and Henry the Young King was to no avail.

3rd Earl of Leicester Robert de Beaumont, was a supporter of Henry the Young King, and was leading the noblemen who rebelled in Normandy. He raised an army of Flemish mercenaries and crossed the English Channel to meet with other rebel barons in England, most notably 1st Earl of Norfolk Hugh Bigod. Robert de Beaumont was confronted by the English forces returning from Scotland, led by Richard de Lucy, and was defeated at Fornham. In the spring of 1174, William the Lion's brother, Earl of Huntingdon David of Scotland moved to take the leadership of rebel barons, notably 3rd Earl of Derby William de Ferrers, and marched south in an attempt to conquer northern England, burning the royal burgh of Nottingham, while Hugh Bigod burned Norwich. In July, Henry II returned from Normandy, and did penance for Thomas Becket's murder, who now many were calling a saint—after an act of divine providence for Henry II with a ceremony, William the Lion and his supporters were captured at the Battle of Alnwick by a small force, he was forced to sign the Treaty of Falaise, effectively giving the control of southern Scotland to Henry II—in its aftermath Henry II marched through rebel strongholds, forcing them to surrender, sweeping up the opposition in England. Henry II returned to Normandy, settling with the rebels and his sons—Henry II bought the County of La Marche, and requested French Vexin and Bourges to be given back, yet there was no invasion. As John Lackland was never a part of the rebellion, he became Henry II's favourite son, and he was appointed as the Lord of Ireland in 1177, and granted lands in England and across the Channel.

In 1180, Louis VII died and his son Philip Augustus was crowned as Philip II. Richard Cœur de Lion who had been ruling over Aquitaine since 1172 or 1175 was disliked in the duchy—his centralisation policies and his disrespect to Aquitaine traditions of inheritance, most notably an event in Angoulême in 1181, made him increasingly unpopular. In 1181, his brother Geoffrey had become the Duke of Brittany. In 1183, Henry the Young King joined a revolt to overthrow his brother Richard Cœur de Lion, led by the Viscount of Limoges and Geoffrey of Lusignan, intending to replace Richard Cœur de Lion with Henry the Young King—Philip II, Count

Raymond V of Toulouse and Duke Hugh III of Burgundy also joined the insurrection. Albeit, Henry the Young King died of fatal illness the same year. Richard Cœur de Lion, as the eldest surviving son, became Henry II's heir. Henry II ordained him to hand over the duchy to his younger brother John Lackland, however he refused. Henry II was preoccupied with Welsh princes challenging his authority, William the Lion demanding castles taken by the Treat of Falaise to be given back and Philip II was requesting the Norman Vexin. Therefore, Henry II decided to convince Richard Cœur de Lion to cede the duchy to his mother Eleanor of Aquitaine officially, while retaining *de facto* control.

Count Raymond V of Toulouse had taken back Cahors, and Henry II asked Richard Cœur de Lion to mount an expeditionary force to march and take the city back. Around that time, Geoffrey of Brittany had been conflicting with Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip II, and aimed to use this situation to his advantage. However, in 1186 Geoffrey of Brittany died in a tournament, and in 1187 Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip II became allies with each other. In 1188 Count Raymond V of Toulouse attacked again with the help of the Lusginans, who were the vassals of Richard Cœur de Lion. Philip II marched on Henry II in Normandy, acquiring holdings in Berry, later they negotiated peace. Henry II refused to make Richard Cœur de Lion his heir. Richard Cœur de Lion payed homage to Philip II for all of the Plantagenet lands, including ones held by his father, across the Channel, and they marched on Henry II again, together with the Bretons, while Aquitaine remained loyal. Le Mans and Tours was captured and Henry II was encircled at Chinon, and forced to surrender—paying tribute to Philip II and swearing an oath that all of his subjects in England and across the Channel would recognize Richard Cœur de Lion as his heir. Two days after learning that his only son that had never rebelled against him, John Lackland, joined his brother Henry II died—upon which Eleanor of Aquitaine was freed from captivity.

2.3. Rule of Richard I

Princes of Wales began marching on lands in Southern Wales that had been previously conquered by Henry II. Richard Cœur de Lion became the Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Anjou, and in 1189 he has been crowned as the King of England, Richard I. Richard Cœur de Lion demanded Philip II to seize Norman Vexin to him, yet the issue was resolved after he promised to marry Philip II's half-sister (from Louis VII's marriage with



Constance of Castile) Alys of France, and recognition of Auvergne as Philip II's *domaine royal*, breaking it up from Duchy of Aquitaine by withdrawing from Henry II's claim. He and William the Lion negotiated and revoked the Treaty of Falaise. Fulk the Younger, a former Count of Anjou, King of Jerusalem until 1143, was his grandfather, and the throne was now held by a usurper, Guy de Lusignan, kin to many of his vassals, and Guy de Lusignan's wife Sibylla, his cousin. Richard Cœur de Lion had taken the cross in 1187 as the Count of Poitou, and when Jerusalem fell to Saladin, Henry II and Philip II took the cross as well. However, the Third Crusade was delayed, until its start in 1189, led by Philip II and Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, to retake the Holy Lands. Before he left for crusade, Richard Cœur de Lion had suspected that Count Raymond V of Toulouse would act against him in Aquitaine, therefore he allied himself with King of Navarre Sancho Garcés the Wise, by marrying his daughter Berengaria of Navarre, at the same time hoping to get the Kingdom of Navarre as his fief.

To fund his participation to the crusade, Richard Cœur de Lion sold lands, titles and appointments to raise a huge sum. Raising his new army of crusaders, he spent the Saladin tithe levied by his father in 1188, raised additional taxes, and freed the William the Lion from the oath of subjection to him for 10,000 marks, appointees to the royal posts were forced to bid to maintain their title. William FitzRalph's appointment as the Seneschal of Normandy by Henry II was reconfirmed, Stephen of Tours was replaced with Payn de Rochefort as the Seneschal of Anjou and imprisoned

for mismanagement, Peter Bertin was appointed as the Seneschal of Poitou, and Helie de La Celle was made the Seneschal of Gascony. To buy his younger brother John Lackland's loyalty while he is busy with his expedition, he made John Lackland the Count of Mortain, married him to the wealthy Isabella of Gloucester, and gave him valuable estates in Lancaster and the counties of Cornwall, Derby, Devon, Dorset, Nottingham and Somerset. Richard Cœur de Lion did not give-up the control of key castles located in these counties to prevent John Lackland becoming the centre of authority. It was agreed that John Lackland would not return to England for three years, making it possible for Richard Cœur de Lion to successfully conclude his crusade and return back. The post of justiciar was left to Bishop of Durham Hugh de Pusiet and 3rd Earl of Essex William de Mandeville, while Bishop of Ely William Longchamp was made chancellor.

In 1190, Philip II and Richard Cœur de Lion arrived to Sicily. After the death of King William the Good of Sicily died, the King's cousin Tancred had usurped the throne, which belonged to the King's rightful heir and aunt, the second son of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa; Henry's wife, Constance. Richard Cœur de Lion's younger sister Joan of England was married to King William the Good of Sicily, and she had been imprisoned by Tancred, and not given the money she inherited from her husband. As Richard Cœur de Lion demanded her sister to be freed with her inheritance, she was freed but without the money. People of Messina revolted demanding the foreigners to leave, and Richard Cœur de Lion attacked Messina, captured, looted, burned, and established his base there—this created a tension between Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip II. Richard Cœur de Lion remained in Messina until in 1191 Tancred was forcibly agreed to sign a treaty—according to which Joan of England was to receive 20,000 ounces of gold to compensate her inheritance, Richard Cœur de Lion officially proclaimed his younger brother Geoffrey of Brittany's son Arthur as his heir. Tancred promised to marry one of his daughters to Arthur, when he came to age, and gave another 20,000 ounces of gold as pledge, which would be returned back to Tancred if Arthur did not marry one of his daughters. The tensions continued to rise between

Philip II and Richard Cœur de Lion as he was plotting with Tancred against Philip II. Philip II and Richard Cœur de Lion met to negotiate, and as Richard Cœur de Lion was to marry with Berengaria of Navarre over Alys of France, he and Philip II settled in Messina that he would pay Philip II an amount of 10,000 marks in compensation, to break the betrothal—and if he had two sons, they would both hold lands in France, under Philip II's over-lordship.

During Richard Cœur de Lion's journey to the Holy Lands after he left Sicily, Berengaria of Navarre and Joan of England was imprisoned by the ruler of Cyprus, Isaac Doukas Komnenos, after their ship anchored there during a storm—as Isaac Doukas Komnenos refused to release them, Richard Cœur de Lion conquered the island, and married with Berengaria of Navarre in Limassol, in 1191. Same year Richard Cœur de Lion landed at Acre with Guy of Lusignan who brought his troops to help him in Cyprus. Guy of Lusignan's wife and his father's cousin Queen of Jerusalem Sibylla had died during the siege of Acre the year before. Conrad of Montferrat, Sibylla of Jerusalem's half-sister Isabella's husband, was challenging Guy of Lusignan's claim to the throne of Jerusalem. Conrad of Montferrat was a war hero as his defence of Tyre had saved the Kingdom from collapse. Conrad of Montferrat was the cousin of Louis VII, and Philip II was therefore supporting his claims. Richard Cœur de Lion allied with Isabella's first husband, who she had been forcibly divorced from in 1190, Humphrey IV of Toron, who was loyal to Guy of Lusignan. Despite being sick, Richard Cœur de Lion aided the capture of Acre with his forces—inside the city, Conrad of Montferrat concluded the surrender and handing over of Acre to Saladin's forces. Duke of Austria Leopold the Virtuous was a cousin of Conrad of Montferrat, and Richard Cœur de Lion quarrelled with Leopold the Virtuous over the position in the Crusade and deposition of Isaac Doukas Komnenos, who was related to Leopold the Virtuous' Byzantine mother. Leopold the Virtuous was a vassal of the Holy Roman Empire, yet his standard was raised among the English and French standards, Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip II interpreted this as arrogance—Richard Cœur de Lion's man tore the standard of Leopold the Virtuous and threw it in the moat of

Acre, leading Leopold the Virtuous leaving the Crusade at once. Philip II left the Crusade as well, because of his poor health and disputes over the status of Cyprus with Richard Cœur de Lion—Philip II was demanding the half of the island, and the inheritance conflicts over Kingdom of Jerusalem. Philip II left his Muslim prisoners to Conrad of Montferrat before leaving, however Richard Cœur de Lion forced Conrad of Montferrat to hand the prisoner to him.

Back in England, William de Mandeville died shortly after his appointment, leading William Longchamp to become joint justiciar in his place, together with Hugh de Pusiet. Eleanor of Aquitaine convinced Richard Cœur de Lion to allow John Lackland into England in his absence. William Longchamp refused to work with Hugh de Pusiet, and became increasingly unpopular amongst the clergymen and nobility. John Lackland used this situation to his advantage, establishing his own royal court, creating himself a position as an alternative regent. William Longchamp and John Lackland confronted each other in armed conflict, and by 1191 John Lackland managed to capture the City of London—he made promises to the citizens of the city, in return for his recognition as the heir presumptive of Richard Cœur de Lion, whereas William Longchamp was isolated in the Tower of London. Richard Cœur de Lion sent Archbishop of Rouen Walter de Coutances to England, to restore the order, during which William Longchamp escaped England. John Lackland's strength was undermined by the popularity of Walter de Coutances and the news that Richard Cœur de Lion married with Berengaria of Navarre at Cyprus.

2.4. Conflicts Between Richard I and Philip II

As Philip II returned to France in late 1191, John Lackland tried to align with him, hoping to acquire lands held by Richard Cœur de Lion, mainly Normandy and Anjou, in exchange for his betrayal—Eleanor of Aquitaine convinced him not to do so. William Longchamp returned to England, claiming that he was done wrong with his removal from the office of justiciar. John Lackland agreed to act against William Longchamp, in return demanding the support of the royal administration and his re-recognition as the heir of Richard Cœur de Lion. As Richard Cœur de

Lion did not return from the Crusade, John Lackland claimed that his brother was either dead or lost. Richard Cœur de Lion, who had realised that he could not postpone his return to England any longer, he settled with Saladin, and left for England in 1192. Storms forced his ship to Corfu, to the lands of the Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelos—who was against Richard Cœur de Lion's annexation of former Byzantine territory, Cyprus. Richard Cœur de Lion disguised himself as a Knight Templar, and sailed from Corfu with his four men. However, his ship wrecked near Aquileia, forcing him to land route through Central Europe—to the land of his older sister (who died in 1189) Matilda of England's husband Henry the Lion, who was trying to take his Duchy of Saxony back. Albeit, near the Christmas of 1192, he was captured by Leopold the Virtuous near Vienna—Richard Cœur de Lion was accused of planning the murder of Conrad of Montferrat. In 1193, Richard Cœur de Lion was handed over to the Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI—who was angered by Richard Cœur de Lion's support for Henry the Lion, and recognition of Tancred in Sicily.

Same year, John Lackland, upon his summoning to Paris, negotiated an alliance with Philip II, paying homage for all of the Plantagenet lands in France (including the ones held by Richard Cœur de Lion), agreeing to cast his wife Isabella of Gloucester aside and marry Alys of France with Artois as her dowry, the Norman Vexin and the castle of Gisors was to be given to Philip II, in exchange for his support. John Lackland went back to England, revolted against Richard Cœur de Lion's justiciars and forces loyal to Richard Cœur de Lion and gathered by John Lackland clashed in England. Yet, the unknown truth was discovered—Richard Cœur de Lion was actually alive, and John Lackland was forced to agree to a truce as his forces were weak. Henry VI was keeping Richard Cœur de Lion for ransom, as he needed money to raise an army. Pope Celestine had excommunicated Leopold the Virtuous for the wrongful imprisonment of Richard Cœur de Lion, however, he was hesitant in excommunicating Henry VI. With the involvement of Philip II's

cousin and Bishop of Beauvais Philip of Dreux's involvement, Richard Cœur de Lion's condition in captivity worsened.

For his release, a deal was made between Richard Cœur de Lion and Henry VI in June, however while the negotiations were going on, the justicars were pushing John Lackland to the besieged castles of Tickhill and Windsor, and a deal was made forcing John Lackland to return his possessions, keeping Tickhill and Nottingham. Meanwhile, Aymer of Angoulême was claiming that he was holding the County of Angoulême as a direct vassal of Philip II, not as a vassal of the Duchy of Aquitaine—raiding Poitou until he was captured by local officers. Philip II marched on Normandy, captured Gisors and Neaufles, and the lords of Aumâle and Eu surrendered to him, while he failed to take Rouen. When Philip II heard that Richard Cœur de Lion was making a deal with Henry VI, he tried to consolidate his gains by forcing the justicars to sign a treaty in Mantes—John Lackland was given his lands in England and France back, Aymer of Angoulême was to be released without any charges, and Richard Cœur de Lion was to give four major castles to Philip II and pay for their garrisons as a compensation. In January 1194, John Lackland signed a new treaty with Philip II—nominally, he surrendered all of Normandy east of the Seine, with exceptions of Rouen and Tours, and the Castles of Touraine to Philip II. He agreed to give Vendôme to Louis of Blois, and Count Geoffrey of Perche was given Moulins and Bonsmoulins. The County of Angoulême was to be released from the Duchy of Aquitaine.

Eleanor of Aquitaine was trying to raise the amount of ransom demanded by Henry VI—150,000 marks. Leopold the Virtuous was also demanding Geoffrey of Brittany's daughter Eleanor the Fair Maid of Brittany to marry with his heir Frederick the Catholic. To raise the money, clergymen and laymen were taxed for a quarter of the value of their properties, churches' gold and silver were confiscated, scutage and carucage taxes were applied. Meanwhile, John Lackland and Philip II offered Henry VI an amount of 80,000 marks, if he were to agree to keep Richard Cœur de Lion imprisoned until the Michaelmas of 1194—which was refused by Henry VI. Richard Cœur de

Lion's ransom money was transferred by Henry VI's ambassadors at Richard Cœur de Lion's peril. In February 1194, Richard Cœur de Lion was released, and as Leopold the Virtuous suddenly died, under pressures from Pope Clementine, Frederick the Catholic abandoned marriage plans with Eleanor the Fair Maid of Brittany. As a part of the deal with Henry VI, Richard Cœur de Lion was to surrender the Kingdom of England to Henry VI, who would in return give the Kingdom back to Richard Cœur de Lion as a fief of the Holy Roman Empire, making Richard Cœur de Lion a vassal of Henry VI. Richard Cœur de Lion paid homage to Archbishop of Mainz Conrad of Wittelsbach, Archbishop of Cologne Conrad of Wittelsbach, Bishop of Liège, Duke of Brabant Henry the Courageous, Duke of Limburg Henry III, Count of Holland Dirk VII. Meanwhile, Philip II captured Évreux, Neubourg and Vaudreuil, and received homage from Richard Cœur de Lion's vassals Geoffrey de Rancon and Bernard of Brosse. Philip II *de facto* controlled all ports of Flanders, Boulogne and eastern Normandy, and he also inherited Amiens and Artois.

As Richard Cœur de Lion returned to England in March 1194, he appointed Hubert Walter as his justiciar and besieged Nottingham Castle who pledged loyalty to John Lackland—he then met with William the Lion and rejected his offer for purchasing Northumbria, and later he took over John Lackland's lordship over Ireland, replacing his justiciar. John Lackland's remaining forces surrendered, and he withdrew to Normandy, where he was found by Richard Cœur de Lion later that year. Albeit, before that, while Richard Cœur de Lion was crossing the Channel to England, John Lackland betrayed Philip II and murdered the garrison in Évreux, handing the town to Richard Cœur de Lion. By October, Count of Toulouse and Marquis of Provence Raymond VI joined to Richard Cœur de Lion, followed by Baldwin IV of Flanders, and Count of Boulogne Renaud de Dammartin. Baldwin IV of Flanders managed to invade Artois and Saint-Omer, while Richard Cœur de Lion campaigned in Berry, defeating Philip II at Gisors—a truce was accepted as Richard Cœur de Lion managed to re-take all of Normandy and additional gains in Aquitaine. Richard Cœur de Lion forgave John Lackland and named him his heir, yet removed all of his lands

except the ones in Ireland. Richard Cœur de Lion was crowned for the second time, a result of his captivity. In 1199 Richard Cœur de Lion faced with a revolt in Limousin and while suppressing it at Châlus-Chabrol in April, he was struck by a bolt and died of infection.

3. Fall of the Angevin Empire (1199-1217)

According to the general consensus in the literature, John Lackland's ascension to the throne is considered as the start of the fall of the Angevin Empire, by historians.

3.1. Feudalism and the Baronage Culture

It could be said that the history of England's baronage culture dates back to the Norman Conquest of William the Conqueror. Contrary to France, a more centralized royal government emerged as William the Conqueror settled the Normans across the land instead of specific regions and the state became more influential and powerful than before. "The emergence during the twelfth century of mechanisms such as the Exchequer, and of the Common Law during the reign of William the Conqueror's grandson, Henry II, gave administrative and legal shape to this state."¹ An important concept that should be looked into in order to understand how the events developed is 'feudalism'. There are different approaches to this concept. One of them, the legal-tenure approach, states that feudalism is a system of land/fief holding based on benefice. Therefore, a conditional tenure in which the vassals has some sort of duty and obedience to the king.

3.2. John Lackland's Ascension to the Throne

"The alliance of Richard and John had now lasted too long for Philip's satisfaction, and early in 1199 he set himself to break it. He began by making a truce with Richard. Then, when the Lion-heart, thinking himself safe for the moment in Normandy, was on his way to Poitou, 'that sower



of discord, the king of France, sent him word that his brother John, the count of Mortain, had given

¹ Stephen Morillo, "Barons' Wars (1215–1217, 1264–1267)," in *The Encyclopedia of War*, ed. Gordon Martel, 1st ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012), 1.

himself to him (Philip); and he offered to show him John's own letter proving the fact. O marvel! The king of England believed the king of France, and took to hating his brother John, insomuch that he caused him to be disseised of his lands on both sides of the sea. And when John asked the reason of this wrath and hatred, he was told what the king of France had sent word to his brother about him. Thereupon the count of Mortain sent two knights to represent him at the French king's court, and they offered to prove him innocent of this charge, or to defend him as the court should direct. But there was found no one in that court, neither the king nor any other man, who would receive the offered proof or defence. And thenceforth the king of England was on more familiar terms with his brother John, and less ready to believe what was told him by the king of France.' This story does not necessarily show either that Philip's accusation of John was false, or that it was true. Philip may have invented it with the hope of driving John to throw himself again into his arms; but it is perhaps more likely that the two were in collusion, and that the scene in the French Curia Regis was a piece of acting on both sides. However, this might be, by about the middle of March John had again left his brother 'because he kept him so short of money, and on account of some disputes which had arisen between them.' Suddenly, at the end of the month, the question of the Angevin succession was brought to a crisis by a cross-bowman who, at the siege of Châlus, on March 26, gave Richard his death-wound. That question had haunted Richard throughout his reign; his wishes respecting its solution had wavered more than once; now that it had to be faced, however, he faced it in what was, after all, the wisest as well as the most generous way. In the presence of as many of his subjects as could be gathered hastily round him, he devised all his realms to John, gave orders that on his own death John should be put in possession of all the royal castles and three-fourths of the royal treasure, and made the assembly swear fealty to John as his successor.

Richard died on April 6. On the 3rd there had been delivered at Rouen a letter from him appointing William the Marshal commandant of the castle and keeper of the treasure which it

contained. On the 10th—the eve of Palm Sunday—the news of the king’s death came, late at night, just as the Marshal was going to bed. He dressed again in haste and went to the palace of the archbishop, who marvelled at what could have brought him at such an hour, and when told, was, like William himself, overwhelmed with grief and consternation. What troubled them both was the thought of the future. William went straight to the point. ‘My lord, we must hasten to choose someone whom we may make king.’ ‘I think and believe,’ answered Archbishop Walter, ‘that according to right, we ought to make Arthur king.’ ‘To my thinking,’ said the Marshal, ‘that would be bad. Arthur is counselled by traitors; he is haughty and proud; and if we set him over us he will seek evil against us, for he loves not the people of this land. He shall not come here yet, by my advice. Look rather at Count John; my conscience and my knowledge point him out to me as the nearest heir to the land which was his father’s and his brother’s.’ ‘Marshal, is this really your desire?’ ‘Yea, my lord; for it is reason. Unquestionably, a son has a nearer claim to his father’s land than a grandson; it is right that he should have it.’ ‘So be it, then,’ said the archbishop; ‘but mark my words, Marshal; of nothing that ever you did in your life have you so much cause to repent as you will have of what you are now doing.’ ‘I thank you,’ answered William; ‘nevertheless, I deem that thus it should be.’

In the conversation thus reported by the Marshal’s confidential squire there are several noticeable points. The divergent views enunciated by the two speakers as to the respective legal claims of Arthur and of John illustrate the still uncertain condition of the rules of hereditary succession. It is, however, plain that the legal aspect of the case was but a minor matter in the eyes of both primate and Marshal. For them the important question was not which of Richard’s two possible heirs had the best legal right to his heritage, but which of the two was likely to make the least unsatisfactory sovereign. The outlook was in any case a gloomy one; the only choice was a choice of evils. Of the two evils, it was natural that Walter should regard John as the worst, if he thought of personal character alone. Everyone knew by this time what John was; the most impartial of contemporary

historians had already summed up his character in two words—'Nature's enemy,' a monster. What Arthur might become was as yet uncertain; the duke of Brittany was but twelve years old. Yet even at that age, the 'haughtiness and pride' ascribed to him by the Marshal are by no means unlikely to have shown themselves in a child whose father, Geoffrey, had been the evil genius of John's early life, and whose mother had for years set her second husband Earl Ralf of Chester, her brother-in-law King Richard, and her supreme overlord King Philip, all alike at defiance. Not so much in Arthur's character, however, as in his circumstances, lay the main ground of the Marshal's objection to him as a sovereign. From his cradle Arthur had been trained in hostility to the political system at the head of which the Norman primate now proposed to place him. His very name had been given him by his mother and her people in defiance of his grandfather King Henry, as a badge of Breton independence and insubordination to the rule of the Angevin and Norman house. From the hour of Henry's death in 1189, if not even from that of her son's birth in 1187, Constance of Brittany had governed her duchy and trained its infant heir as seemed good to herself and her people, till in 1196 she was at last entrapped and imprisoned in Normandy; and then the result of her capture was that her boy fell into the keeping of another guardian not a whit less 'traitorous,' from the Norman or Angevin point of view, than the patriotic Bretons who had surrounded him hitherto—the king of the French, at whose court he was kept for some time, sharing the education of Philip's own son. To confer the sovereignty of the Angevin dominions upon the boy Arthur would thus have been practically to lay it at the feet of Philip Augustus. The only chance of preserving the integrity of the Angevin empire was to put a man at its head, and a man to whom the maintenance of that integrity would be a matter of personal interest as well as of family pride. It was the consciousness of this that had made Richard abandon his momentary scheme of designating Arthur as his heir, and revert finally to John; and it was the same consciousness which made William the Marshal, with his eyes fully open to John's character, hold fast, in the teeth of the primate's warning, to his conviction that 'thus it should be.'

John, after his last parting from his brother, had made a characteristic political venture; he had sought to make friends with his boy-rival. It was in Brittany, at Arthur's court, that he received the news of Richard's death. He set off at once for Chinon; money was his first need, and the Angevin treasury was there. When he reached the place, on the Wednesday before Easter, April 14—three days after Richard's burial at Fontevraud—the castle and the treasure which it contained were at once given up to him by the commandant, Robert of Turnham, the seneschal of Anjou. The officers of the late king's household had hurried to meet his chosen heir, and now came to John demanding of him a solemn oath that he would carry into effect Richard's last wishes, and maintain the customs of the Angevin lands. He took the oath, and they then acknowledged him as their lord in Richard's stead.

The most venerated of English bishops then living, Hugh of Lincoln, had officiated at Richard's funeral and was still at Fontevraud. John sent an urgent request for his presence at Chinon, welcomed him there with a great show of attachment, and proposed that they should travel to England together. Hugh declined, but he consented to accompany John for a few days on his journey northward. They set out at once for Saumur, and stopped at Fontevraud to visit the tombs of Henry and Richard. When John knocked at the choir-door for admittance, however, he was told that the abbess was away, and no visitor might enter without her leave. He then asked Hugh to communicate to the sisters, in his name, a promise of benefactions to their house, and a request for their prayers. 'You know,' said Hugh, 'that I detest all falsehood; I will utter no promises in your name unless I am assured that they will be fulfilled.' John swore that he would more than fulfil them; and the bishop did what he had been asked to do. As they left the church, John drew forth an amulet which hung round his neck and showed it to his companion, saying it had been given to one of his forefathers with a promise from Heaven that whosoever of his race had it in his possession should never lose the fulness of his ancestral dominion. Hugh bade him trust 'not in that stone but in the Chief Corner Stone'; and turning round as they came out of the porch, over

which was sculptured a representation of the Last Judgement, he led him towards the group on the left of the Judge, and besought him to take heed of the perils attending the responsibility of a ruler during his brief time upon earth. John dragged his monitor across to the other group, saying, 'You should rather show me these, whose good example I purpose to follow!' During the three days of his journey in Hugh's company, indeed, his affectation of piety and humility was so exaggerated that it seems to have rather quickened than allayed Hugh's distrust of his good intentions. On Easter Day the mask was suddenly dropped. Bishop and count spent the festival (April 18) at Beaufort, probably as the guests of Richard's widow, Berengaria. John was said to have never communicated since he had been of an age to please himself in such matters; and now all Hugh's persuasions failed to bring him to the Holy Table. He did, however, attend the high mass on Easter Day, and at the offertory came up to Hugh—who was officiating—with some money in his hand; but instead of presenting the coins he stood looking at them and playing with them till Hugh asked him, 'Why do you stand staring thus?' 'I am staring at these gold pieces, and thinking that a few days ago, if I had had them, I should have put them not into your hands, but rather into my own purse; however, take them now.' The indignant bishop, 'blushing vehemently in John's stead,' drew back and bade him 'throw into the bason what he held, and begone.' John obeyed. Hugh then followed up his rebuke with a sermon on the characters of a good and of a bad prince, and the future reward of each. John, liking neither the matter of the sermon nor its length, thrice attempted to cut it short by a message that he wanted his dinner; Hugh only preached the longer and the more pointedly, and took his leave of John on the following day.

On that day John discovered that he was in a situation of imminent peril. While he had been travelling from the Breton border to Chinon and thence back to Beaufort, Philip had mastered the whole county of Evreux and overrun Maine as far as Le Mans; and a Breton force, with Constance and Arthur at its head, had marched straight upon Angers and won it without striking a blow. City and castle were surrendered at once by Thomas of Furnes, a nephew of the seneschal Robert of

Turnham; and on Easter Day a great assembly of barons of Anjou, Touraine and Maine, as well as of Brittany, gave in their adhesion to Arthur as their liege lord and Richard's lawful heir. The forces thus gathered in the Angevin capital, from which Beaufort was only fifteen miles distant, must have been more than sufficient to overwhelm John, whose suite was evidently a very small one. His only chance was to make for Normandy with all possible speed. Hurrying away from Beaufort on Easter Monday, he reached Le Mans the same night; its citizens received him coldly, its garrison refused to support him, and it was only by slipping away before daybreak on Tuesday that he escaped being caught between two fires. On that very morning April 20 the Bretons and their new allies entered Le Mans in triumph, and they were soon met there by the French king, to whom Arthur did homage for the counties of Anjou, Touraine and Maine.

Meanwhile, however, John had made his way to Rouen, and there he was safe. Richard on his death-bed had declared that the people of Rouen were the most loyal of all his subjects; they proved their loyalty to his memory by rallying round the successor whom he had chosen for himself, and all Normandy followed their example. 'By the election of the nobles and the acclamation of the citizens,' John was proclaimed duke of the Normans, and invested with the symbols of his dukedom in the metropolitan church on Low Sunday, April 25. The ducal crown—a circlet of gold, with gold roses round the top—was placed on his head by Archbishop Walter, and the new-made duke swore before the clergy and people, on the holy Gospels and the relics of saints, that he would maintain inviolate the rights of the Church, do justice, establish good laws, and put down evil customs. The archbishop then girded him with the sword of justice, and presented him with the lance which held among the insignia of a Norman duke the place that belongs to the sceptre among those of a king. A group of John's familiar friends stood close behind him, audibly mocking at the solemn rites. He chose the moment when the lance was put into his hands to turn round and join in their mockery; and, as he turned, the lance slipped from his careless grasp and fell to the ground.

In after years it was only natural that this incident should be recalled as an omen. The indecent levity which had caused the mishap was in itself ominous enough. Still, however, the Marshal and the Norman and English primates—for Hubert of Canterbury, too, was at Rouen, and fully in accord with the policy of William and Walter—clave to their forlorn hope and persevered in their thankless task. In obedience to John's orders, Hubert and William now returned to England to assist the justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, in securing the realm for him. John himself turned southward again to try whether it were possible, now that he had the strength of Normandy at his back, to win the Angevin lands before he went over sea. No sooner had the French and the Bretons withdrawn from Anjou than it was overrun with fire and sword by Richard's mercenaries, acting under the orders of their captain Mercadier and of Queen Eleanor, who had enlisted them in John's interests as soon as they had had time to march up from Châlus to the Angevin border. John despatched a body of troops to join them, while he proceeded in person to Le Mans. There he wrecked his vengeance to the full. City and castle fell into his hands; he razed the castle, pulled down the city walls, destroyed the houses capable of defence, and flung the chief citizens into captivity. But the danger in his rear was still too great to allow of his advance farther south. To throw the whole forces of Normandy upon the Angevin lands would have been to leave Normandy itself open to attack from two sides at once, and expose himself to have his own retreat cut off by a new junction between Philip and the Bretons. He could only venture to open negotiations with the barons of Anjou and of Aquitaine, endeavour to win them over by fair words and promises, and then leave his interests in the south to the care of his mother. Accompanied only by a few personal friends, he went back through Normandy to the sea; on May 25 he landed at Shoreham; on the 26th he reached London, and on the 27th—Ascension Day—he was crowned at Westminster.”²

² Kate Norgate, *John Lackland* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1902), 56–63.

3.3. Struggle for the Angevin Throne

Following Richard Cœur de Lion's death, John Lackland tried to seize the Angevin treasury at Chinon to take control. According to the Angevin tradition, John Lackland's nephew and his older brother Geoffrey of Brittany's son Duke Arthur of Brittany had a stronger claim to succeed Richard Cœur de Lion. Nobleman of Anjou, Maine and Touraine declared that they were favouring Arthur of Brittany, on 18 April 1199. Meanwhile, Philip II managed to take Évreux and the Norman Vexin, and Angers was taken by a Breton army. John Lackland was refused recognition and loyalty by Le Mans, forcing him to go to Normandy, being recognized as duke in Rouen on 25 April 1199, marched upon Le Mans, getting revenge on the people, and crossed the Channel. With William Marshall and Archbishop of Canterbury Hubert Walter's support he gained the loyalty of England, he was crowned on 27 May 1199 in Westminster Abbey. His mother—Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine's support gave him Aquitaine and Poitou, leaving Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Brittany as mutineers. John Lackland appointed Viscount of Thouars Aimeri as his seneschal in Anjou, to march to Tours and capture Arthur—who had failed. John Lackland was forced to cross the Channel once more to establish a truce with Philip II. Philip II was forced to accept this truce as 15 counts of France supported John Lackland, and Baldwin IV of Flanders paid homage to him.

What strengthened John Lackland's hand was getting the support of William des Roches, who Arthur of Brittany wanted to make the Angevin seneschal. William des Roches managed to bring Arthur of Brittany and his mother Constance



of Brittany to Le Mans as prisoners, on 22 September 1199. Albeit, Arthur of Brittany, Constance of Brittany and Aimeri of Thouars escaped captivity and got under Philip II's protection—Richard Cœur de Lion's previous allies in France: counts of Flanders, Blois and Perche left for the Holy Land. Despite these events, Philip II and John Lackland signed the Treaty of Le Goulet in May

1200, securing John Lackland succeeding his brother and ascending to the Angevin throne, making Arthur of Brittany once again his vassal, -Arthur was to have only Brittany and to hold it from John as duke of Normandy, not from Philip as king of France-³ him breaking his ties and alliances in Germany, accepting Philip II's gains in Normandy and ceding lands in Auvergne and Berry. Most importantly John Lackland was to accept Philip II as his overlord and sovereign, and pay him 20,000 marks. From June to August of 1200, John Lackland visited Anjou, Maine, Touraine, taking those who he found untrustworthy as prisoners—he also visited Aquitaine and received homage from Eleanor of Aquitaine's vassals, and returned to Poitiers. As a result of the feudo-vassalic system John was “King of England, Duke of Normandy and of Aquitaine and Count of Anjou (...) he was also ruler of Ireland and overlord of Wales and Brittany”⁴ making him the sovereign ruler of these lands.

3.4. John Lackland's Struggle

John Lackland's marriage with Isabelle of Gloucester was annulled, and he married with Count Aymer of Angoulême's heiress Isabella, on 24 August 1200. “John married Isabella, daughter and sole heir of the count of Angouleme. Strategically, in knitting together his southern dominions the match was a masterstroke.”⁵ In addition to Angoulême's strategic importance, the marriage was a great political success. Nevertheless, Isabella had been betrothed to Hugh of Lusignan—John Lackland seized La Marche from him. Hugh of Lusignan approached to Philip II asking for justice, and John Lackland was summoned to Philip II's court, yet he refused to comply—leading Philip II to confiscate John Lackland's possessions across the Channel, except for Normand, in April of 1202. Not stopping there, Philip II accepted Arthur of Brittany's homage and invaded John Lackland's tenure up to Arques, in May. Receiving his mother Eleanor of Aquitaine's message, John Lackland travelled from Le Mans to Mirebau, together with William des Roches,

³ David Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 264.

⁴ Brian Groom, *Northerners* (Manchester: Harper North, 2022), 96.

⁵ David Carpenter, 264.

on August of 1202. William des Roches, getting the promise from John Lackland that he was to be consulted on Arthur of Brittany's faith lead the attack. John Lackland managed to capture Arthur of Brittany and his sister Eleanor of Brittany, yet him not consulting with William des Roches caused Willaim des Roches and Aimeri of Thouars to besiege Angers in retaliation. During these events John's principles of kingship were another issue that has been debated and the rumours about how he treated the prisoners captured at Mirebeau probably vastly contributed to his loss of reputation and goodwill. John Lackland's cruelties such as "apparently ordering the murder of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. John had a penchant for starving prisoners to death, most notoriously the wife and son of William de Braose, a former loyalist who fell out of favour," his atrocities "broke taboos and shocked other nobles."⁶ There are different interpretations of Arthur's death as Groom claims that John ordered it and Carpenter claiming that John murdered him "in a drunken rage" but a certain thing is that "murder a great prince in this manner was shocking and unprecedented."⁷.

In the December of the year 1203 John Lackland left Normandy. On June 1204 Normandy, following the surrender of Arques, Rouen and Vernuil fell to Philip II, followed by Tours, Chinon and Loches on 1205. On 31 March 1204, Eleanor of Aquitaine died, leading counts of Poitou to do homage to Philip II. King Alfonso of Castile invaded Gascony, on behalf of the claim of John Lackland's sister Eleanor of England. Holding Normandy was seeming to be more important than Maine and Anjou because of a few different reasons one of them being "its revenues greater than the rest of the continental possessions put together."⁸ The total revenue of England and Normandy was estimated to be £48,000 yet it should be considered that there were logistic aspects as English treasure had to be transported across the Channel. During these events Philip seemingly holds the higher ground as "John lacked Richard's prestige and was unable to outbid Philip."⁹. Arthur's

⁶ Brian Groom, 98.

⁷ David Carpenter, 265.

⁸ David Carpenter, 264.

⁹ *Idib.*, 265.

mother and her husband, counts of Flanders and Boulogne and other Norman nobles, as John couldn't maintain most of the Richard's northern alliances, joined to Philip and the Emperor of Germany being busy with troubles inside his lands created the perfect environment for Philip's conquest and his resources for war was far more than of John's. Besides these, John made matters worse. He appointed a low-born and aggressive seneschal, William le Gros, to run the duchy (...) offended Anglo-Norman barons, (...) "For such things he was hated and betrayed by the barons of the land,' commented a Caen burgess."¹⁰ It could be seen that John Lackland's political incapability played a huge role during the loss of Normandy as he couldn't maintain his allies and offended his barons. John lost Normandy in 1204. This situation is often claimed to be "an initial step to eventual complete destruction of the Angevin empire, once one of the most formidable power of western Europe."¹¹ John Lackland's relationships with church was deterring because of a dispute over Archbishop of Canterbury in 1205. The archbishop was not elected as he wanted, thus, he seized the wealth of Canterbury and declared the complaints as traitors. Eventually he was excommunicated by Pope Innocent III. As a result, it's possible to say that King John was disgraced and he was losing more of his remained reputation. It is known that good relationships with the church in medieval times were extremely important as it provided legitimacy to the kings as followers of the religion and doing "the gods work." Besides the wealth and influence of Pope was a critical aspect especially for rulers who were in a state of war. Thus, it is possible to say that John Lackland losing the favour and support of Pope meant that he was no longer a legitimate king as he didn't share the same belief with the rest of his lords and they didn't owed him any loyalty.

On 1206 John Lackland crossed the Channel again, while Archbishop of Bordeaux Hélie de Malemort's resistance held King Alfonso of Castile's advance. By October, John Lackland managed to secure Aquitaine, and made a truce with Philip II. Philip II was preparing to invade

¹⁰ Idib., 265.

¹¹ Jan Maly, "The Invasion of Prince Louis of France to England, 1216–1217," *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations* 2 (2016): 8.

England in 1212, aiming to crown his son Louis Le Lion as the King of England. In a council held at Soissons in April 1213, he planned how the future of England and France would be determined. In May Earl of Salisbury William Longespée managed to stop the French invasion fleet in the Battle of Damme. In February 1214, John Lackland created another series of German alliances with the support of the Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV, and landed in La Rochelle. By June, John Lackland secured the support of the houses of Lusignan, Mauléon, and Thouars—he marched to Anjou and managed to capture Angers, yet was forced to retreat to La Rochelle as his Poitevin allies deserted him. On 27 July, his German alliance lost the Battle of Bouvines, resulting with William Longespée being taken as prisoner. On 18 September, John Lackland and Philip II signed the Truce of Chinon, which was supposed to last until the Easter of 1220—in October John Lackland returned to England.

John Lackland didn't maintain good relationships with the nobility and there were financial issues, as the defence of these land in Northern France was failing. Loss of Normandy and Anjou caused “exacerbated relations with the baronage, especially since many aristocratic families retained cross-Channel connections and interests.”¹². In an effort to fund the failing efforts to reconquer Angevin continental lands John tried to extract money and this need “drove him to arbitrary rule. He needlessly provoked other lords when he was strong and desperately tried to win back their support when he was weak. (...) After 1204, John took his court round England as he tried to amass treasure to win Normandy back. (...) Among John's audacious money-raising measures was the Thirteenth, a tax of about 7.5 per cent assessed on the income and goods of every man. He appointed new sheriffs to extract extra money from landowners. He exploited the royal forests by establishing forest eyres, or circuit courts, which imposed heavy fines (...) He imposed a crushingly high special tax on Jewish money-lenders. Policies that hit barons directly included an expansion of Richard's practice of charging baronial widows large sums to be allowed to stay

¹² Stephen Morillo, 1.

single or marry whom they wished. There were more scutages, or payments made in lieu of military service.”¹³ John Lackland imposed extraordinary and large amounts of taxes with the hopes of doing a re-conquest. These taxes directly affected the barons as well as the mob. In the north resistance and rising up against John was more widespread as they were affected far more by the taxes and more people were at the debt of the king. Besides, northern nobles were displaced from their positions as John tried to settle nobles that retreated from Normandy to the north, trying to create a more centralized government control. Especially barons at north was against to another campaign to the continental lands as the argued “that their tenure did not cover service across the Channel.”¹⁴ With the lack of support John’s campaign in 1214 failed.

3.5. Magna Carta Libertatum

In June 1215, John Lackland was forced to put his seal on the document called *Magna Carta Libertatum*, by his barons, in Runnymede. Barons declared that John Lackland’s tyranny was not to be tolerated any longer. After the document was signed, barons renewed their loyalty to John Lackland. The first clause of Magna Carta mentions that “the English church is to be free, and shall have its rights undiminished and its liberties unimpaired: and we wish it thus observed, which is evident from the fact that of our own free will before the quarrel between us and our barons began, we granted and confirmed by our charter freedom of elections,”¹⁵. It is possible to interpret that after John Lackland and Pope conflicted over the elections of Archbishop of Canterbury, this section was included in Magna Carta to ensure that religious activities and officials are not under control of the king, making sure that the king cannot use a religious office as a political tool. This clause briefly separates the state and religious affairs. Yet, it was obtained by Pope, thus, the Church of England is not to be separated from the Roman Church but will have its elections according to the free will of the people. Fourth clause of Magna Carta states “The guardian of the

¹³ Brian Groom, 97-99.

¹⁴ *Idib.*, 99.

¹⁵ J. C. Holt et al., *Magna Carta*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 379.

land of such an heir who is under age is not to take from the land more than the reasonable revenues, and reasonable customary dues and reasonable services, and that without destruction and waste of men or goods.”¹⁶. This statement gains more importance after King John’s death and his son succeeding him. As he was underage, he had a guardian/regent and this article made sure that the regent would rule fairly and just and guarantees that there will be no abuse of that power.

One of the most important article of Magna Carta goes as: “namely, that the barons are to choose any twenty-five barons of the realm they wish, who with all their might must observe, maintain and cause to be observed the peace and liberties which we have granted to them and confirmed by this our present charter”¹⁷. This article ensures that all of the other clauses of Magna Carta will be obeyed at and in a case where someone acts against them the “twenty-five chosen barons” will work together to solve the problem. It also creates a kind of “checks and balances system” in which the barons oversee the king and make sure he acts according to Magna Carta. Many historians interpret this situation as “the law has been put above the king,” yet, as the law is Magna Carta it means it is to be obeyed by the king as well, thus, the reforms and decisions of the barons. It might be said that these developments limit the king’s authority and power over the realm and divides it to the chosen twenty-five barons, which seems to act like a council. Magna Carta includes details about regulations on trade and economy, marriage and family life, justice system, peace and war with foreign countries, liberties and some rights and the security of the realm. It could be seen that justice system took a huge part in the agreement as it was said “to no one will we sell, to no one will we deny or delay right or justice.”¹⁸. Thus, it is possible to say that Magna Carta is not only a political agreement that limits the power of the king but rather a general reform movement that regulates the state and daily life of its people as well. It includes information about the peace talks with foreign kingdoms and also how the so called “quarrel” between the king and

¹⁶ Idib., 381.

¹⁷ Idib., 395.

¹⁸ Idib., 389.

the barons are solved. How Magna Carta refers to the marching of rebels' "Army of God" to London and forcing reforms as "a quarrel" shows that the barons wanted to show a picture of a united England and it somehow aims to legitimize them.

With the blessing from the Pope, John Lackland broke his oath to act accordingly with Magna Carta, as a result a rebellion broke and this led to the First Barons' War in 1215. Pope Innocent III was one of the strongest allies of John as after his excommunication in 1205, they have settled in 1213. The First Barons' War actually happened since "neither side stood behind their commitments. John issued the charter to gain time and may never have intended to abide by its detailed provisions. He asked Pope Innocent III to annul it, contrary to a promise in the security clause. The pope was happy to oblige."¹⁹. At the start of the war "John, backed by the powerful Angevin machine of governance, wielded much greater resources,"²⁰ and power managed to win a few victories against the rebel barons. Barons looked for help from the French King Philip and his heir Louis of France. King Philip didn't want to show his support to invasion of England by his son Louis as they have signed a peace treaty with John Lackland before and he didn't want to broke it.

3.6. Louis Le Lion's Invasion of England

The barons, assuming that John Lackland would not obey the terms of Magna Carta, offered the English throne to Philip II's son Louis Le Lion. Louis Le Lion accepted this offer and landed in Kent, with his 1,200 knights, on 21 May 1216. He managed to capture Rochester, London and Winchester. Remaining nobles loyal to John Lackland, including William Longespée, was deserting his side. In the east, by August, only Dover Lincoln and Windsor remained loyal to John Lackland. Alexander II of Scotland, King of the Scots, paid homage to Louis Le Lion in Canterbury. In September 1216, John Lackland launched his campaign to retake the lost lands; he marched from Cotswolds to relieve Windsor Castle which was under siege. Attacking to the east,

¹⁹ Brian Groom, 101.

²⁰ Stephen Morillo, 1.

to London-Cambridge, he managed to separate revolting parts of Lincolnshire and East Anglia, isolating them. In Bishop's Lynn, John Lackland caught the bloody flux, and died on 18 October 1216. Following John Lackland's death Louis Le Lion was defeated in Lincoln in May and at Sandwich in August and withdrew his claim to the English throne with the Treaty of Lambeth in September.

Further Reading

Video by "Brief History" on John Lackland:

<https://youtu.be/nFQ1x9vhxAU?si=26AkycrXCziH1oh4>

Video by "History Matters" on Magna Carta:

<https://youtu.be/tycBBN2f2j0?si=dhRnoQ5qhUoacuWf>

Video by "The People Profiles" on John Lackland:

https://youtu.be/wf_MuzBBUnE?si=ImnIoPB19Y4I-Ebn

Book by Kate Norgate called "John Lackland" from Macmillan and Co., published in 1902

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