



Pippin (Pepin) III

715-768 A.D. Known as "Pippin the Short." Merovingian ruler over the west half of France, passed down by his father, Charles Martel, Pippin had himself declared king, instituting a new line of kings called the Carolingians. He is noted for his defeat of the Lombards.



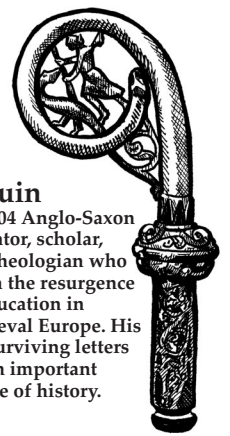
Charlemagne

742-814 A.D. King of the Franks and the first emperor of Western Europe after the fall of Rome. Also known as "Charles the Great," he organized beginnings of the Holy Roman Empire, and ushered in a period of immense social reform that came to be known as the Carolingian Renaissance.



Emperor Leo III

717-741 A.D. Byzantine emperor who instituted Iconoclasm in 726, ordering all religious icons in the Byzantine Empire destroyed.



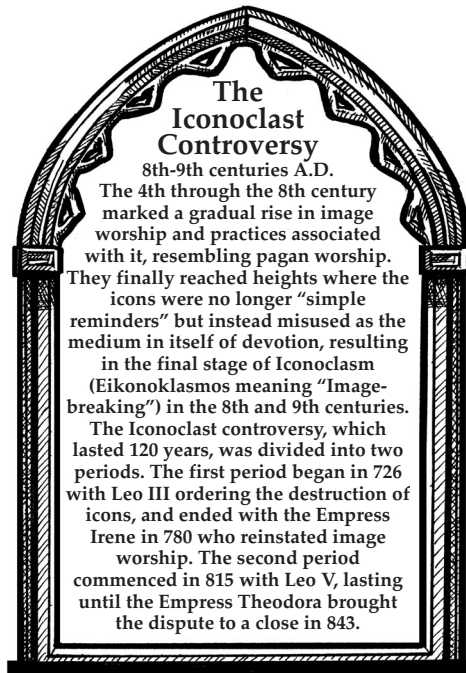
Alcuin

735-804 Anglo-Saxon educator, scholar, and theologian who led in the resurgence of education in medieval Europe. His 300 surviving letters are an important source of history.



Harun al-Rashid

763-809 A.D. Caliph of Baghdad noted for his involvement in the Muslim holy war leading the Eastern caliphate against the Byzantines, and for making Baghdad the center of Arabic culture.



The Iconoclast Controversy

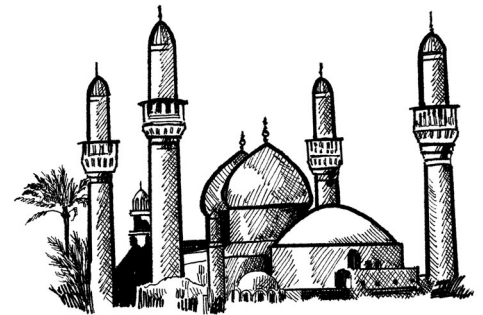
8th-9th centuries A.D.

The 4th through the 8th century marked a gradual rise in image worship and practices associated with it, resembling pagan worship. They finally reached heights where the icons were no longer "simple reminders" but instead misused as the medium in itself of devotion, resulting in the final stage of Iconoclasm (Eikonoklasmos meaning "Image-breaking") in the 8th and 9th centuries. The Iconoclast controversy, which lasted 120 years, was divided into two periods. The first period began in 726 with Leo III ordering the destruction of icons, and ended with the Empress Irene in 780 who reinstated image worship. The second period commenced in 815 with Leo V, lasting until the Empress Theodora brought the dispute to a close in 843.



Viking Invasions

793-c. 1020 A.D. Vikings swept into western Europe over the course of 300 years, whether terrorizing and pillaging towns, subduing and settling in areas, or intended as acts of conquest. The first recorded raid was on the famous monastery at Lindisfarne, alarming all Christians and unleashing a wave of Viking attacks.



al-Mansur

712-775 A.D. Arab caliph who founded Baghdad as the capital city of the Abbasid Empire.



John Damascene

676-749 A.D. Ambassador of the Christians to the court of the Muslim caliph. Traditions tell that Germanus laid plans against him, forging an accusatory letter proving John's betrayal of the caliph. The caliph commanded John's writing hand chopped off, but the Virgin Mary appeared, attaching the hand back on. Author of *The Fountain of Wisdom*, among other works defending the orthodox faith.



Charles Martel

688-741 A.D. Frankish ruler of Austrasia and grandfather of Charlemagne. Known as "The Hammer," he halted Arab invasions, defeating the Spanish Muslims at the Battle of Tours, and began re-establishing the Franks as the rulers of Gaul.



Abbasid Dynasty

750-1258 A.D. Named for al-Abbas, uncle of the prophet Mohammed, an Arabic dynasty that expanded the Muslim empire, its capital being Baghdad.