I have always been fascinated by history, of my own history, and that of my family, which I discovered could be traced from the Hohenstaufen Dynasty. Through studying different periods of history from medieval to early modern through to the present day I have gained an understanding into some of the crucial developments that have determined what course our future would take.

Salvatore Ferdinando Antonio Caputo

Other publications of Dr. Salvatore Ferdinando Antonio Caputo:

- The Hohenstaufen Dynasty (2013)
- Who is noble included in the Almanach de Gotha - Goliardica Editrice s.r.l, Trieste (2013)
- The Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen - Goliardica Editrice s.r.l, Trieste (2013)
- Corrado I principe d’Antiochia Della Casa di Sveva (Ramo Caputo) - Edizioni Italo Svevo, Trieste (2012)
- The Legitimacy of Non Reigning Royal Families - Edizioni Italo Svevo, Trieste (2012)
- Creation of Order of Chivalry (2012)
- TOTAL CONSCIOUS SELF - Meditation and Visualization (2003)
A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

I am not an Historian, and I do not abide by the rules of academic History writing, if there are any. Coming from an aristocrat family, I have grown up in the fascination of the European Medieval History, concerning mainly because of family ancestors’ heritage, the Hohenstaufen Dynasty, I have consulted many books of the things written as facts and events as reported by historians and by the most authoritative modern biographers of Frederick II Hohenstaufen. There are, of course, some historians that contradict other authoritative biographers by showing why of their inconsistencies. Hence, historians and modern authoritative biographers judge their finding according to their history knowledge but so many times assuming events and or dates and times to their modern understanding although not in every case positioning themselves in the minds and customs to that ancient life.

I have written several books and included, also, various genealogy trees found in old history records, my writings are merely my implied opinion, my consequential thinking and elaboration on those facts and events. I believe it is a perfectly justifiable to consider events and documented behavioral patterns of a subject and inductively profile the character, culture, feelings and human dimensions of the individual. We do this all the time in politics, business, and social relationships so I see no reason why we should be prevented from doing so with important prime movers of the past.

My prerogative of the paperwork is the history of the Hohenstaufen’s dynasty, its occurrences, but in particular of Frederick II the Holy Roman Emperor.

Who was this Frederick character and why does he deserve a chapter all to himself. Frederick was a remarkable man, well in advance of his times. His abilities, accomplishments and attitudes astonished his contemporaries and earned him the name of Stupor mundi, "The Wonder of the World." For some historians, however, he is more significant for the possible role he may have played - admittedly at a considerable distance in time - in shaping important aspects of twentieth-century Europe.

He was raised in Sicily and lived most of his life in Puglia, his mother, Constance, being the daughter of Roger II of Sicily. His empire was frequently at war with the Papal States, so it is unsurprising that he was excommunicated twice and often vilified in chronicles of the time. Pope Gregory IX went so far as to call him the Antichrist. After his death the idea of his second coming where he would rule a 1000-year Reich took hold, possibly in part because of this.
Frederick II was patron of the Sicilian School of poetry. His royal court in Palermo, from around 1220 to his death, saw the first use of a literary form of an Italo-Romance language, Sicilian. The poetry that emanated from the school predates the use of the Tuscan idiom as the preferred lingua franca of the Italian peninsula by at least a century. The school and its poetry were well known to Dante and his peers and had a significant influence on the literary form of what was eventually to become the modern Italian.

Unlike most Holy Roman emperors, Frederick spent little of his life in Germany. After his coronation in 1220, he remained either in the Kingdom of Sicily or on Crusade until 1236, when he made his last journey to Germany. (At this time, the Kingdom of Sicily, with its capital at Palermo, extended onto the Italian mainland to include most of southern Italy.) He returned to Italy in 1237 and stayed there for the remaining thirteen years of his life, represented in Germany by his son Conrad.

A further example of how much Frederick differed from his contemporaries was the conduct of his Crusade in the Holy Land. Outside Jerusalem, with the power to take it, he parlayed five months with the Ayyubid Sultan of Egypt al-Kamil about the surrender of the city. The Sultan summoned him into Jerusalem and entertained him in the most lavish fashion. When the muezzin, out of consideration for Frederick, failed to make the morning call to prayer, the emperor declared: "I stayed overnight in Jerusalem, in order to overhear the prayer call of the Muslims and their worthy God". The Saracens had a good opinion of him, so it was no surprise that after five months Jerusalem was handed over to him, taking advantage of the war difficulties of al-Kamil. The fact that this was regarded in the Arab as in the Christian world as high treason did not matter to him. As the Patriarch of Jerusalem refused to crown him king, he set the crown on his own head.
PREFACE
The Medieval Period of History

The Middle Ages is a period in European history which, along with its adjective ‘Medieval’, was first referred to by Italian scholars and academics of the late fifteenth century. They were basically stating that the society in which they now lived was significantly more civilized and advanced in many ways, than that which had existed during the previous thousand years. This may have been true within certain elite sections of Italian society which had begun to emulate the art and philosophy of ancient Greece, but generally in Italy and Europe overall no all-pervading change had occurred.

Historians since that time have, however, used the terms 'middle ages' and medieval as a convenient way to refer to that general period in European history.

Early scholars gave the name "Dark Ages" to the period in Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. During this period, barbarian Goths, Vandals, and Huns swept down on Europe from the north and east. They destroyed many fine buildings and works of art that had existed during Roman times. During the Dark Ages, knowledge survived only in monasteries, and there were very few schools. Many of the old arts and crafts were lost.

The eastern Roman Empire was not conquered by the barbarians. There, the arts still flourished. People were still thinking and making fine works of art in other parts of the world. In China and India, great civilizations grew and spread. In the 1000s, Europe began to slowly recover from its artistic darkness. The lost knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans was found again. There was a new interest in learning, and the richer life of the Middle Ages began.

The concept that a new age had commenced across Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, along with its laws and control of society, may be quite a valid one. However the idea that something revolutionary happened relating to philosophy, art, literature, science, religion and civilization generally etc. at a certain date in the fifteenth century has much less foundation.

Nevertheless, historians since the fifteenth century have put forward various convenient but arbitrary events and dates to contain this period.

The Beginning of the Middle Ages

476 AD regarded as the end of rule across Europe by the Roman Empire. Being the date which
Although Roman control of many parts of Europe had ceased several years previously due to rebellions and uprisings; in fact the Roman armies finally left Britain almost sixty years prior to that date.

By the year 1000, things began to change. The Vikings and Magyars converted to Christianity and their raids ceased. The Caliphate of Cordoba disintegrated into several warring states, and the Saracen raiders were virtually driven from the sea. The feudal aristocracy, that order of fighting land holders, had fulfilled its function and successfully defended Europe. There was now no justification for the prestige and privilege it enjoyed nor for its control of so much wealth. In the following centuries, the aristocracy diminished in size and evolved into hereditary nobility.

All of these influences combined in an elaborate and artificial code of behavior known as chivalry. This code governed almost every aspect of aristocratic life -- hunting, hawking, jousting, playing games, telling stories, singing songs, making love, social ceremony, terms of address, and virtually everything else. Learning this code was the labor of a lifetime, and the children of the aristocracy began to do so at the age of five.

The chivalric skills of the aristocracy contributed little of nothing to society. Nevertheless, the aristocracy, monarchs, church, and intellectuals convinced most people that chivalry was the highest expression of secular conduct.

In addition, they held that only those of "gentle birth" were capable of the emotions and comportment required by chivalric society.

The vassals had to adapt to court life, to capture the favor of the king, in essence, to become court favorites, to have a chance of marrying an heiress, gaining an estate, and perhaps rising into the class of supremacies. This meant that hunting, the nobles' favorite sport, was turned into an art form by the addition of elaborate terminology, rules, and ceremonial ways of basic things. Women were also more important in the court than outside it, and the courtier had to be able to charm these women by being able to tell stories, sing songs, play games, and flirt. All of these activities developed their own language and elaborate rules of behavior. A courtier was often the product of constant training and education between the ages of seven and sixteen.

Mary had been venerated for centuries, but her figure began to change from Mary, Mother of God to that of Mary, Queen of Heaven, and was offered as a substitute for the real women whose praises the troubadours had been writing and their jongleurs singing. She received the name of "Or Lady," and a frenzy of cathedral-building in her name ensued.
Symbolism of Arms

The clergy began to participate in and influence the ceremonies of knighthood, elaborating them and endowing them with mystic and spiritual symbolism.

All of these elaborate codes of behavior slowly grew more organized. Under the influence of the clergy, many acts were treated as allegory or symbols with a deeper spiritual meaning. The Romance of the Rose is basically a manual of how to seduce and be seduced in a "genteel" way, but it was soon interpreted as an allegory of the soul's striving to achieve salvation.

The Church took an active role in the transformation of the feudal aristocracy. As Europe gradually emerged from the destruction of the Roman Empire, the church became one of the mainstays of civilization. During the pontificate of Gregory I the Great (590-604), the medieval papacy began to assert its authority. Gregory's achievement was to go beyond the claim of papal primacy in the church by beginning to establish the temporal power of the papacy.

Below the level of the papacy, however, a spiritual revival had taken place. The 12th century, perhaps more than any other, was an age of faith in the sense that all men, good or bad, pious or worldly, were fundamentally believers, and religious causes and interests (crusades, monastic foundations, building churches, and assisting education and charities) made up much of the life of the literate and administrative classes. Lay religion was, as never before or since, permeated with monastic ideals. Prodigious numbers of the populace became monks, knights (members of military-religious orders), laborers (lay brothers), and lay people who followed monastic rules, and the favorite lay devotions were short versions of monastic offices. Almost every church--whether cathedral, monastic, parochial, or private--was built or rebuilt between 1050 and 1200. Almost all baronial families founded a monastery, and townspeople not only paid for their cathedrals but often supplied materials and labor.

The monarchs supported a code of conduct and status in which they were clearly superior and which would make the aristocracy dependent upon them, and often took a leading role in the development of this code. Royal masters of ceremonies defined and wrote down how one was supposed to act, and enforced such behavior in their role of organizing court activities. The royal heralds took up the job of maintaining the genealogical records by which a person had to prove his claim to noble status, and they developed the elaborate practice of heraldry or blazonry as signs for nobles to display in proof of their noble descent.

The monarchs set high standards of dress and conduct, sponsored expensive tournaments, established non-fighting orders of knighthood (Orders of the Golden Fleece, Bath, Garter, Santiago, Aviz, etc.). They also kept the game going by
favoring the most "courtly" with heiresses. Games do not go on long unless there are winners.

The feudal aristocracy in the year 1100 had been a fighting order of land-owners, defending local territories and maintaining law and order within them. Their position and prestige depended upon their accomplishments, and their ranks were open to anyone of sufficient ability.

By about 1200, the feudal aristocracy has lost its pre-eminence in land-ownership, wealth, display, fighting, legal administration, and advisory capacities. The aristocracy began to split into two groups: the great lords, about one percent of the aristocracy and the rest. The aristocracy no longer performed a function and needed a new justification for its privileges and status.

By 1250, the feudal aristocracy had ceased to exist and had been replaced by hereditary nobility who performed little service to society at large and claimed their privileges and status by right of birth.

The End of the Middle Ages

1453 The capture of Constantinople by the Turks
1453 The end of the Hundred Years' War between the English and the French,
1492 The Muslims' being ejected from Spain
1492 The discovery of America by Columbus.
1517 The Protestant Reformation starting

These, plus various other dates ranging from the early fifteenth century to the mid seventeenth century, have been stated as being the end of the medieval period; including those relating to Christianity or monarchies.

Although in some languages the Middle Ages are labeled in the singular it is difficult to think of the era as anything other than ages plural. This is in part because of the numerous subjects encompassed by this long period of time, and in part because of the chronological sub-eras within the era.

Generally, the medieval era is divided into three periods: the Early Middle Ages, the High Middle Ages, and the Late Middle Ages. Like the Middle Ages itself, each of these three periods lacks hard and fast parameters.

We are here concerned on Frederick II who is the protagonist; he is the primary figure of this literature in the Feudalism Era. The Feudalism Era is the period of time that seems to typify the Middle Ages best. Usually beginning with the 11th
century, some scholars end it in 1300 and others extend it for as much as another 150 years. Even limiting it to a mere 300 years, the High Middle Ages saw such significant events as Norman conquests in Britain and Sicily, the earlier Crusades, the Investiture Controversy and the signing of the Magna Carta. By the end of the 11th century, nearly every corner of Europe had become Christianized (with the notable exception of much of Spain), and the Papacy, long established as a political force, was in constant struggle with some secular governments and alliance with others.

This period is often what we think of when someone mentions "medieval culture." It is sometimes referred to as the "flowering" of medieval society, thanks to an intellectual renaissance in the 12th century, such notable philosophers as Pierre Abelard and Thomas Aquinas, and the establishment of such Universities as those in Paris, Oxford and Bologna. There was an explosion of stone castle-building, and the construction of some of the most magnificent cathedrals in Europe.

In terms of material culture and political structure, the High Middle Ages saw medievalism at its peak. What we call feudalism today was firmly established in Britain and parts of Europe; trade in luxury items as well as staples flourished; towns were granted charters of privilege and even established anew by feudal lords with alacrity; and a well-fed population was beginning to burgeon. By the end of the thirteenth century, Europe was at an economic and cultural height, perched at the verge of a downturn.

On the Hohenstaufen Dynasty, following the death of Henry V, the last of the Salian kings, the dukes refused to elect his nephew because they feared that he might restore royal power. Instead, they elected a noble connected to the Saxon noble family Welf (often written as Guelf). This choice inflamed the Hohenstaufen family of Swabia, which also had a claim to the throne. Although a Hohenstaufen became king in 1138, the dynastic feud with the Welfs continued. The feud became international in nature when the Welfs sided with the papacy and its allies, most notably the cities of northern Italy, against the imperial ambitions of the Hohenstaufen Dynasty.

The founder of the greatness of the house of Hohenstaufen was one Frederick, a knight of Swabia, who served the unhappy Emperor, Henry IV. In return for a rare and unswerving loyalty, Henry bestowed upon Frederick the hand of his daughter Agnes, with the Duchy of Swabia as her dower. Frederick built himself a new abode high on the hill of Staufen, and hence the family took the name of Hohenstaufen. The next generation of the house, which consisted of two sons, Frederick and Conrad, served their uncle, the Emperor Henry V, and on his death in 1125 inherited all his ancestral possessions, including a deadly enmity with the house of Guelf. Thirteen years later, Conrad the Hohenstaufen and Henry the Guelf
appeared as rival candidates for the Imperial Crown. Conrad succeeded in gaining the suffrages of the Electors and was crowned by the Pope’s Legate at Aix-la-Chapelle (1138).

The Emperor Frederick II, *Puer Apuliae* or “Son of Puglia, as one of the most extraordinary personages in history. He has found many biographers among Continental writers. Muratori, Giannone, Von Raumer, and Hofler have described his remarkable career either with national pride or with stern condemnation. But until Dean Milman wrote his history of Latin Christianity, a few lines in Gibbon and a few pages of Hallam contained all the information which could be obtained respecting him by the reader. Since the Dean wrote, information from other sources has been obtained, which we now propose to bring before you. We see this remarkable man only indistinctly through the mists of calumny and prejudice. On account of his long contest with the popes, he has been assailed by Roman Catholic writers with vituperative epithets.

The cruelty and merciless behavior of Frederick was partially consistent with the culture of the Middle Ages and mainly due to the perversion of the Papacy: not only did Innocent IV excommunicate and depose Frederick on inconsistent and false accusations, but he incessantly organised plots to have him assassinated. Innocent invested huge amounts of money in this policy in order to get on his side the people whom Frederick trusted. The frustration pushed Frederick's reactions to the limit and possibly beyond. Frederick eventually lost his battle against the Papacy and his image reached us tarnished by the description and libels of the "victor". The Pope was so successful in the defamation process that the common belief at the time associated Frederick with Satan and with the biblical Anti-Christ.

We cannot doubt that the unholy lives of the Popes, the injustice with which he was assailed by them, affected unfavorably his belief in the fundamental truths of Christianity. We deny that he was a monster of wickedness. Even bitter Romanists are obliged to admit that as a man of genius, a poet, a legislator, and a warrior, he was very far above all his contemporaries.

The Popes fall heavily to this illustrious monarch. They were determined to crush Frederic and all the descendants of the great House of Hohenstaufen.

For some time fortune alternately smiled and frowned on Frederick in Italy, built, after completing all his preparations for a decisive battle, he died at Florentine in Apulia, and was buried at Palermo. In German legend he continued to live as the emperor fated to return and reform both Church and State. In more recent times, however, he has had to yield his place in popular legend to Frederick Barbarossa, a figure more in harmony with German sentiment.
Manfred, the son of Frederick, who had all his father's good qualities without his father's faults, “gentle and fair and comely of aspect,” was slain in defending his nephew's inheritance from Charles of Anjou, to whom the Pope had offered it. Conradin, the grandson of Frederick, the last of the race, having been taken prisoner by Charles of Anjou, in an expedition the object of which was to recover his kingdom of Sicily and Naples, was doomed, perhaps with the approval and in accordance with the suggestion of Pope Clement, to be executed as a felon and a rebel on a public scaffold in Naples.

In the sphere of politics, Frederick was the occasion for the restructuring of the traditional alliances of Western Europe. The papacy found itself forced to abandon its old alliance with the Holy Roman Empire and to entrust itself to the support of the kings of France. During their long struggle, Frederick weakened the papacy by fomented civil war among the nobles of the Papal States. This danger from their own subjects drove the papacy deeper into the arms of the French and so set the stage for the problems of the Avignon Papacy of 1305-1373 and of the Great Schism that followed. One might rationalize that Frederick started the Church down the path that was to lead, two and a half centuries later, to the Protestant Reformation.

Frederick II was considered singular among the European Christian monarchs of the Middle Ages. This was observed even in his own time, although many of his contemporaries, because of his lifelong interest in Islam, saw in him "the Hammer of Christianity", or at the very least a dissenter from Christendom. Many modern medievalists view this as false, holding that Frederick understood himself as a Christian monarch in the sense of a Byzantine emperor, thus as God's Viceroy on earth. Other scholars view him as holding all religion in contempt, citing his rationalism and penchant for blasphemy. Whatever his personal feelings toward religion, certainly submission to the pope did not enter into the matter. This was in line with the Hohenstaufen Kaiseridee, the ideology claiming the Holy Roman Emperor to be the legitimate successor to the Roman emperors.

He was known in his own time as Stupor mundi ("wonder of the world"), and was said to speak nine languages and be literate in seven (at a time when some monarchs and nobles were not literate at all). By contemporary standards, Frederick was a ruler very much ahead of his time, being an avid patron of science and the arts.
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The term "Germanic" originated in classical times, when groups of tribes were referred to using this term by Roman authors. For them, the term was not necessarily based upon language, but rather referred to tribal groups and alliances that were considered less civilized, and more physically hardened, than the Celtic Gauls living in the region of modern France. Tribes referred to as Germanic in that period lived generally to the north and east of the Gauls.

As early as the time of Alexander the Great, in the fourth century B.C., there is mention of German tribes around the Baltic Sea, in what is now Scandinavia. Moving southward and eastward, they reached the Rhine about 200 B.C. and soon afterward pushed on into northeastern Gaul. In 102-101 B.C. the tribe of the Teutones (also called Teutonic, Suebi or Gothic in older literature) invaded Illyria, Gaul, and Italy, but was defeated by the Roman general Marius. In his Commentaries Julius Caesar tells of his encounters with certain Germanic tribes in his Gallic Wars.

At various times in Roman history the Romans were concerned with different German tribes and by the beginning of the Christian era, Roman dominion had been firmly established in Germany. In 9 A.D., however, when Emperor Augustus attempted to force Roman customs upon the German people, they rebelled under the leadership of Arminius and completely destroyed the Roman armies under General Varus. Never again did the Romans establish themselves in Germany, and in the early centuries of the Christian era they were often forced to defend themselves against the invasion of powerful German tribes.

The Roman historian Tacitus, writing about A.D. 100, gives in his Germania a valuable and interesting account of the customs and lives of the early Germans. Although they were all of German blood, speaking a common language and living under identical institutions, they were divided into many tribes. The early tribal names mentioned by the Romans have little historical significance; the better-known groupings of later times were confederations of tribes, such as the Alemanni, Franks, Vandals, Burgundians, Angles, Saxons, Lombards, and Goths.
The Germans lived in a land of fen and forest, dwelling in small villages of wattle huts and practicing a rude form of agriculture. Most of the people were free peasants, but above them was the class of nobles and below were the serfs and the slaves. A rudimentary form of representation prevailed in the village council and in the county assembly and court; in time of war the assembled tribesmen chose their military chieftain. During the later years of the Roman Empire the tribes bordering on the frontier became civilized and Christianized. To a considerable degree these Germans also became Romanized, learning and adopting Roman building and farming methods and copying in many instances the Roman way of life.

In modern times the term has also occasionally been used to refer to ethnic groups who claim ancestral and cultural connections to the ancient Germanic peoples, and speak a Germanic language. Within this context, the Germanic peoples are the Scandinavians (Norwegians, Swedish, Danish, Icelanders, and Faroese), Germans, Austrians, Alemannic Swiss, Liechtensteiners, Luxembourgers, the Dutch, Flemings, Afrikaners, Frisians, English and others who still speak languages derived from the ancestral Germanic dialects.

**The Wanderings of the German Nations**

Late in the second century A.D., violent warfare among the German tribes led to increasing pressure on the Roman frontier. Many thousands of German colonists entered the empire, and great numbers of the barbaric tribesmen took service in the Roman legions, some rising to posts of command. Germans and Romans also intermarried, and the cultures of the two peoples were intermingled.

This peaceful penetration ended with the invasion of Europe by the Asiatic Huns about 375. The Visigoths (West Goths), driven from their homes by the invaders, gained permission from Rome to settle south of the Danube; then followed in 378 the Battle of Adrianople in which the refugees defeated and killed the Roman emperor Valens. Later the Visigoths under Alaric invaded Italy, and in 410 they captured Rome. Eventually, the Visigoths settled in Spain and southern France. The Romans were no longer able to hold back the barbarians, who quickly swept over the doomed empire. The Vandals wandered into North Africa; the Burgundians slipped into southeastern Gaul; Angles, Jutes, and Saxons crossed the sea into Britain; the Ostrogoths (East Goths) conquered Italy as well as the upper Danube region; the Franks spread out into northwestern Gaul; and, in 568, the Lombards subjugated northern Italy.
Alaric I

At the collapse of the Roman Empire in Europe, different new nations were organized, and then started what historians called "medieval" period, or "Middle Ages", which stretches roughly from the fifth century until the fifteenth century. It was a period of strong influence of the Catholic Church; so, life in general and people customs were very marked by this influence.

The Roman Empire was destroyed by invasions of Germanic peoples, whom they called "barbarians"; they saw an advantage in the weakened situation of the empire to besiege their cities and easily conquer their domains. Alaric I, king of Visigoths, plundered and occupied Rome in 410, causing the final collapse of the Roman Empire. It was the first time that Rome had been taken by a foreign army in 800 years. Although the Western Roman Empire was already well into decline, the sack of Rome sent shockwaves throughout the world and signaled too many that the Western Roman Empire was on its last legs. Alaric served as a commander of Gothic troops in the Roman army. After the death of the emperor Theodosius I in 395, he left the Roman military and was elected king of the Visigoths. He then promptly fabricated an excuse and attacked the Eastern Roman Empire. He was repulsed before reaching Constantinople but he ravaged a large portion of Greece as a consolation prize.

Alaric twice invaded Italy but was defeated both times. However, his third invasion worked like a charm. Riccardo Cigola wrote about what happened, "The Visigothic laid siege to Rome (408) until the Senate granted him another subsidy and assistance in his negotiations with Honorius. Honorius remained intransigent, however, and in 409 Alaric again surrounded Rome. He lifted his blockade after proclaiming Attalus as Western emperor. Attalus appointed him magister utriusque militiae ("master of both services") but refused to allow him to send an army into Africa. Negotiations with Honorius broke down, and Alaric deposed Attalus in the summer of 410, besieging Rome for the third time. Allies within the capital opened the gates for him on August 24, and for three days his troops occupied the city, untouched by a foreign enemy for nearly 800 years. The emotions about ruined Rome were partly expressed in the City of God by St Augustin."

Alaric did not survive his triumph over Rome long. While contemplating an invasion of Roman Africa, he died. It was still 410 A.D. and he had not survived the year he sacked Rome. His death was rumored to have been caused by a fever but
many Christians attributed the death to God's vengeance. Although the Visigoths plundered Rome, they treated its inhabitants humanely and burned only a few buildings. Having abandoned a plan to occupy Sicily and North Africa after the destruction of his fleet in a storm, Alaric died as the Visigoths were marching northward.

Despite his ultimate failure at establishing some kind of Gothic regime of his own, Alaric left a huge mark on his age. Principally, he had exhausted the Roman resistance in the West, and opened the way for the German Vandals and Suebi to invade Gaul and Spain. It was his marauding of Rome that also caused the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain—leaving that land vulnerable to the invading Picts to the North and the Saxons to the East.

Alaric was succeeded in the command of the Gothic army by his brother-in-law, Ataulf, who married Honorius' sister Galla Placidia three years later.

The Roman Empire had lived on, after the fall of Rome in 476, with its capital at Constantinople; but west of the Balkans its territory was occupied by the several German kingdoms, which were virtually independent. Eventually these Germans merged with their subject peoples, becoming Italians, Spaniards, French, and English, and their history became the history of their new homelands. In general, Roman culture gave way to German culture, bringing the Dark Ages to Europe. Farming, trade, political organization, and urban society declined, as a relatively primitive civilization replaced one that was more advanced. Even generations removed from barbarian tribal life, and, although Roman influences did not die, the more backward order prevailed.

**Costumes of Germanic people**

Since the time of Alaric's invasion to Italy, costumes of Germanic people started to be popular throughout Europe. At the end of the V century, the Franks of the Merovingian Dynasty occupied almost the entire continent, being succeeded by the Carolingian Dynasty, which begins with the Holy Roman German Empire. All these kings looked long-haired and bearded. When, in the 5th century, appear the first Merovingian kingdoms, their kings wore a long and flowing hair, parted in the center, and those who were under their authority, shorter. It was at that time the hairstyle, which little by little replaced the clean shaven polite Roman hairstyle. Merovingians imposed the style of their original people, creating a real hierarchy according to hair length. One way to avoid that some descendant (son or nephew) sought access to the throne, was to cut their hair. That was a complete disqualification. Monks of the Catholic Church, who at that time already started to get important influence in those countries, wore a tonsure, what is a round bald spot on the top of the head; the tonsure is a sign of submission to a superior authority. When those Merovingian kings wanted to get rid of some undesirable
relative with pretensions to the throne, they "tonsured" and sent him to a monastery. Chlodio V, a Merovingian king, (390-450, approximately) was precisely nicknamed "le chevelu" ("long hair"), because he wore his hair longer than his predecessors.

Germans gave great importance to hair. Even they had military and social hierarchies based on how long the hair was. They tied their hair in the top of their heads to create a high knot which made them seem taller and scarier in the battles. For them, the worst humiliation was to lose the hair. Hair was a symbol of power and authority. Slaves and war prisoners were utterly shorn. A shorn head was a sign of total submission.

Near the 10th century, the Catholic Church began issuing edicts against the length of men's hair, and the need to cover with veils the women's heads. In 1073, the Pope Gregory VII banned the use of beard and moustaches among the clergy, and clergymen, then, started to give instructions to the population recommending shaving their beards in order to be a good Christian. It was obviously a way to look different of other cults. In 1096 the Archbishop of Rouen announced that men who wore beards would be excommunicated from the Church. A similar ecclesiastic decree was promulgated in Venice in 1102. The British king Henry I accepted in 1130 to cut his hair and his beard, under the pressure of the Church. Since then, and until the 15th century, it was rare to see beards in men. Haircuts were used no longer than the nape and all the faces were clean shaven. Images of William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy and later king of England, are depicted only with moustaches, though among the Normans the uses of beards were very important to separate mature males from youths. From the 11th century on, was very popular the "pageboy hairstyle ", which was a haircut with a bang on the forehead and the hair curved over the ears up to the neck. In the famous Bayeux tapestry, a 224 feet long embroidered cloth, made in Normandy, France, in the 11th century, which tells the story of the British Islands' conquest by the Norman French, are depicted images showing how the men used the hair at that time.

**Empire under the Franks**
While the other Germans migrated, the Franks merely expanded from their old homeland into northwestern Gaul, which they invaded in 481. By 486 the ambitious Frankish chief Clovis had defeated the Romans in Gaul and had set up his court in the old city of Paris. The Frankish kingdom expanded in all directions, conquering the Burgundians, Alemanni, Thuringians, and Bavarians and ending Visigoth power in southern Gaul. From the time of Clovis to the Treaty of Verdun in 843 the history of Germany is identical with that of France.

Clovis was the son of Childeric I, a Merovingian king of the Salian Franks, and Basina, Queen of Thuringia. He succeeded his father in 481, at the age of fifteen. He
is considered the founder of the Merovingian dynasty, which ruled the Franks for the next two centuries.

Numerous small Frankish kingdoms existed during the 5th century. The Salian Franks were one of two Frankish tribes that occupied the area west of the lower Rhine known as Toxandria, between the Meuse and Scheldt (in what is now the Netherlands and Belgium). Their power base began to the southwest around Tournai, capital of the kingdom, along the modern frontier between France and Belgium.

Childeric I, Clovis' father, became king of the Salian Franks in 457 upon the death of his father, Merovech, ruling over lands he had received as a foederatus of the Romans. In 463 he fought in conjunction with Aegidius, the magister militum of northern Gaul, to defeat the Visigoths in Orléans. Childeric died in 481 and was buried in Tournai; Clovis succeeded him as king.

Under Clovis, the Salian Franks came to dominate their neighbours, initially aided by the association with Aegidius. Historians believe that Childeric and Clovis were both commanders of the Roman military in the Province of Belgica Secunda and were subordinate to the magister militum.

Conquests of Clovis between 481 and 511

Clovis turned against the Roman commanders, however, defeating the Gallo-Roman ruler, and son of Aegidius, Syagrius in the Battle of Soissons (486), considered the end of Western Roman rule outside of Italy. Clovis then had the Frankish king Chararic imprisoned and executed. A few years later, he killed Ragnachar, the Frankish king of Cambrai, along with his brothers. Another victory followed in 491 over a small group of Thuringians to the east. By this time Clovis had conquered all the Frankish kingdoms to the west of the River Maas, except for the Ripuarian Franks. He secured an alliance with the Ostrogoths through the marriage of his sister Audofleda to their king, Theodoric the Great. With the help of the other Frankish sub-kings, he narrowly defeated the Alamanni in the Battle of Tolbiac in 496. He made Paris his capital and established an abbey dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul on the south bank of the Seine.

Clovis became the first king of all Franks in 509, after he had conquered Cologne.

Under Clovis, the first codification of the Salian Frank law took place. The Roman Law was written with the assistance of Gallo-Romans to reflect the Salic legal
tradition and Christianity, while containing much from Roman tradition. The Roman Law lists various crimes as well as the fines associated with them.

Clovis I is traditionally said to have died on 27 November 511; however, the Liber Pontificalis suggests that he was still alive in 513. After his death, Clovis was laid to rest in the Abbey of St Genevieve in Paris. His remains were relocated to Saint Denis Basilica in the mid- to late-18th century.

When Clovis died, his kingdom was partitioned among his four sons, Theuderic, Chlodomer, Childebert, and Clotaire. This partition created the new political units of the Kingdoms of Rheims, Orléans, Paris and Soissons, and inaugurated a tradition that would lead to disunity lasting, with brief interruptions, until the end of the Merovingian dynasty in 751.

**Charlemagne**
Charlemagne was also known as: Charles I, Charles the Great (in French, Charlemagne; in German, Karl der Grosse; in Latin, Carolus Magnus)

Charlemagne's titles included: King of the Franks, King of the Lombards; also generally considered the first Holy Roman Emperor.

Charlemagne was the grandson of Charles Martel and the son of Pippin III. When Pippin died, the kingdom was divided between Charlemagne and his brother Carloman. King Charlemagne proved himself a capable leader from early on, but his brother was less so, and there was some friction between them until Carloman's death in 771.

Once King, Charlemagne had sole rule of the government of Francia, he expanded his territory through conquest. He conquered the Lombards in northern Italy, acquired Bavaria, and campaigned in Spain and Hungary.

Charlemagne used harsh measures in subduing the Saxons and virtually exterminating the Avars. Though he had essentially amassed an empire, he did not style himself "emperor," but called himself the King of the Franks and Lombards.

King Charlemagne was an able administrator, and he delegated authority over his conquered provinces to Frankish nobles. At the same time, he recognized the diverse ethnic groups he had brought together under his dominion, and allowed each to retain its own local laws.
To ensure justice, Charlemagne had these laws set down in writing and strictly enforced. He also issued capitularies that applied to all citizens. Charlemagne kept an eye on events in his empire through the use of missi dominici, representatives who acted with his authority.

Though never able to master reading and writing himself, Charlemagne was an enthusiastic patron of learning. He attracted noted scholars to his court, including Alcuin, who became his private tutor, and Einhard, who would be his biographer.

Charlemagne reformed the palace school and set up monastic schools throughout the empire. The monasteries he sponsored preserved and copied ancient books. The flowering of learning under Charlemagne's patronage has come to be known as the "Carolingian Renaissance."

In 800, Charlemagne came to the aid of Pope Leo III, who had been attacked in the streets of Rome. He went to Rome to restore order and, after Leo purged himself of the charges against him, he was unexpectedly crowned emperor. Charlemagne wasn't pleased with this development, because it established the precedent of papal ascendancy over secular leadership, but though he still often referred to himself as a king he now also styled himself "Emperor," as well.

There is some disagreement as to whether or not Charlemagne was really the first Holy Roman Emperor. Although he did not use any title that directly translates as such, he did use the title imperator Romanum ("emperor of Rome") and in some correspondence styled himself deo coronatus ("Crowned by God"), as per his coronation by the pope. This appears to be enough for most scholars to allow Charlemagne's hold on the title to stand, especially since Otto I, whose reign is generally considered to be the true beginning of the Holy Roman Empire, never used the title either.

The territory Charlemagne governed is not considered the Holy Roman Empire but is instead named the Carolingian Empire after him. It would later form the basis of the territory scholars would call the Holy Roman Empire, although that term (in Latin, sacrum Romanum imperium) was also seldom in use during the Middle Ages, and never used at all until the mid-thirteenth century.

All pedantry aside, Charlemagne's achievements stand among the most significant of the early Middle Ages, and although the empire he built would not long outlast his son Louis I, his consolidation of lands marked a watershed in the development of Europe.

Today Charlemagne is regarded not only as the founding father of both French and German monarchies, but also as the father of Europe: his empire united most of
Western Europe for the first time since the Romans, and the Carolingian renaissance encouraged the formation of a common European identity.

**Charlemagne died in January, 814.**

After the death in 814, of Charlemagne his great empire disintegrated. The Treaty of Verdun divided the empire among the three sons of Louis the Pious, Charlemagne's son and successor. The western kingdom grew into modern France; and the middle kingdom, including modern Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Alsace-Lorraine, northern Italy, and part of Switzerland, became a battleground and a buffer state. The eastern kingdom, which developed into modern Germany, went to Louis the German, the son of Louis the Pious. Louis reigned until 876 and made some advancement toward national unity. The son of Louis, Charles the Fat, succeeded for a time in uniting the three kingdoms - France, Italy, and Germany, but as he was unable to defend his empire against the Northmen the nobles deposed him and elected his nephew, Arnulf, in his stead (887).

**Roman Empire and German Feudalism**

On the death of Louis the Child, the last of the Carolingian dynasty (the line of Charlemagne), the kingship became elective. The first king, Conrad I (911-18), Duke of Franconia, could neither unite feudal Germany nor defend it from the attack of the Magyars of Hungary. The most powerful of the nobles, Henry of Saxony, succeeded Conrad in 919 as Henry I, first of the Saxon line and considered to be the creator of the German Empire; he united the dukedoms under his rule, built fortresses, reformed the military system, defeated the Hungarians, and instituted many internal reforms. The royal power was greatly increased under his son and successor, Otto I (936-73), who was surnamed the Great. Otto restricted the power of the nobles, making himself complete master in his own kingdom; he defeated the Hungarians on the Lech in 955; in 961 he acquired the crown of the Lombards, thus imposing his dominion over Italy; and in 962 he was crowned emperor in Rome by Pope John XII, thus founding the Holy Roman Empire, which existed until 1806.

The political consequences of the intimate union of Church and State which was thus established were unfortunate for Germany; in pursuing the pretension of world dominion, in attempting to subjugate rebellious Italy, and in carrying on the long struggle between Church and State, the emperors dissipated their power and lost control of Germany, which became increasingly feudal as the other nations of western Europe became centralized states.

When the Saxon dynasty became extinct in 1024, the election fell on the Duke of Franconia, who reigned as Conrad II (1024 – 39), founding the Franconian, or Salian, dynasty, which continued in power until 1125. The early monarchs of this
line were strong rulers; in Germany they held their own against the feudal lords, and in Italy they dominated the Papacy.

**Empire against the Papacy**

The struggle between emperor and pope was based on the papal theory that, since the pope held supremacy over the Church and the Church held supremacy over the State, all rulers should be the pope's vassals. The emperor, on the other hand, maintained that the nobles who elected him conferred his authority upon him and that he should control Episcopal appointments in his realm. In 1076 Pope Gregory VII stirred up a revolt in Saxony in order to break the power of Henry IV (1056 – 1106) and in 1077 he forced the Emperor, in order to preserve his throne, to present himself as a penitent before the Pope at Canossa. The continuing State-Church controversy led to renew civil war in Germany, and Henry himself died a fugitive in his own land. He was succeeded by his son, Henry V (1106 – 25), the last king of the Franconian line.

Finally, during the reign of Henry V, a compromise settlement of the controversy was reached in the Concordat of Worms (1122). This concordat decreed that henceforth the pope or his legate should have the right to fill bishops' and abbots' sees in the presence of the emperor or his representative. The emperor, however, retained the right to invest a bishop or abbot with the regalia of his office, and the symbols of temporal authority were to be bestowed before those of spiritual authority.

**Medieval German contradiction**

Medieval German is a bit of a contradiction. The Country of Germany as we know it today is a modern invention coming out of the 19 Century state of Prussia. In the medieval period the area of modern Germany was a myriad of feuding Cities, Principalities, Kingdoms, Republics and Episcopal dioceses. These all theoretically fell under the authority of the King of Germany, a hereditary monarch. He in turn, under the authority of the Holy Roman Emperor. The reality was the King of Germany could be and on occasion was deposed by the princes of Germany and replaced by their choice. The same is also true for the Holy Roman Emperor; he was also open to disposition and replacement by the Electors.

The Holy Roman Empire was an elective monarchy and primarily for these reason never developed a strong centralized government. The Electoral College of the Holy Roman Empire was comprised of seven German Princes. These seven comprised of four lay Princes, the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatine of Rhine, the Margrave of Brandenburg, and the Duke of Saxony and three princes of the Church, the archbishops of Mainz, Triers, and Cologne. These Electors primary interest was preventing a strong leader becoming Emperor who would stamp his authority over the Empire and potentially create a hereditary succession. Most Holy Roman
Emperors never managed to assert their authority as they were frequently embroiled in their own hereditary lands problems. Even those Emperors who managed to focus their attention on the concerns of the Empire found themselves defeated by the Imperial Diet (parliament) who possessed a stranglehold over monetary matters.

For most of its history, Germany was not a unified state but a loose association of territorial states that together made up the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”. It was a long time until the founding of the German Reich in 1871.

The term “deutsch” first surfaced in the 8th century. It referred to the language spoken in the eastern part of the Franconian realm, and meant “as the people speak” – as opposed to Latin, the language of scholars. After Charlemagne’s death in 814 the Franconian realm disintegrated, primarily along the linguistic divide between early Medieval French and Old High German. A feeling of belonging together emerged only gradually among the inhabitants of the eastern areas. “Germany” ought to be where “German” was spoken. Whereas the western border was established at an early date, settlement of the East did not come to a halt until the 14th century. The resulting contact between and intermingling of the German and Slavonic populations persisted until World War II.

In hindsight, the ascension to the throne of King Conrad I in 911 marked the transition from the East Franconian to a German empire. Yet due to Conrad’s origins, his title was officially “King of Franconia”, and later “Roman King”. As of the 11th century, the German empire itself was called “Roman Empire”, as of the 13th century “Holy Roman Empire” and in the 15th century the words “of the German Nation” were added. In this empire, the high nobility elected the King. With a few exceptions, the King was related to his predecessor. The Medieval Empire had no capital city; the monarchy constantly moved from one city to the next. And there were no imperial taxes; the king drew his sustenance from “imperial estates” which he administered in trust. The King was perceived as a ruler bound by the laws of the people as handed down across time and subject to the approval of the great nobles of the realm, and yet he held the power to pass laws, decide on taxation, as well as over the courts and the army, added to which he was head of the Church. He was also the uppermost authority as regards the protection of peace. Otto I had himself crowned Kaiser in 962 in Rome.
THE HOHENSTAUFEN DYNASTY, 1138-1254

This imperial status, which was likewise exercised by Otto’s successors, amounted in theory to dominance over the entire Occident. There was, however, a very great divide between theory and practice. Because the Kings always had to make their way to Rome to be crowned Emperor, they also paid careful attention to ensuring they wielded some form of power in Italy as well. It was Henry IV who no longer allowed the clear supremacy of the Kaiser over the Papacy. A quarrel over the investiture of bishops ended with him doing penance to Pope Gregory VII in 1077 in Canossa, from which time onward the Pope and the Kaiser were equal-ranking powers. Despite an external show of power in the ensuing Staufen dynasty, territorial fragmentation ensued, and the ecclesiastical and temporal princes became semi-sovereign territorial rulers. Whereas nation states were emerging in other western European countries, the forces in Germany tended to be disintegrative. Herein lays one of the reasons why down through the centuries Germany was considered a “belated nation”.

The second of the Hohenstaufen rulers, Frederick I (r. 1152-90), also known as Frederick Barbarossa because of his red beard, struggled throughout his reign to restore the power and prestige of the German monarchy, but he had little success. Because the German dukes had grown stronger both during and after the Investiture Contest and because royal access to the resources of the church in Germany was much reduced, Frederick was forced to go to Italy to find the finances needed to restore the king’s power in Germany. He was soon crowned emperor in Italy, but decades of warfare on the peninsula yielded scant results. The papacy and the prosperous city-states of northern Italy were traditional enemies, but the fear of imperial domination caused them to join ranks to fight
Frederick. Under the skilled leadership of Pope Alexander III, the alliance suffered many defeats but ultimately was able to deny the emperor a complete victory in Italy. Frederick returned to Germany old and embittered. He had vanquished one notable opponent and member of the Welf family, Saxony's Henry the Lion, but his hopes of restoring the power and prestige of his family and the monarchy seemed unlikely to be met by the end of his life.

During Frederick's long stays in Italy, the German princes became stronger and began a successful colonization of Slavic lands. Offers of reduced taxes and manorial duties enticed many Germans to settle in the east as the area's original inhabitants were killed or driven away. Because of this colonization, the empire increased in size and came to include Pomerania, Silesia, Bohemia, and Moravia. A quickening economic life in Germany increased the number of towns and gave them greater importance. It was also during this period that castles and courts replaced monasteries as centers of culture. Growing out of this courtly culture, German medieval literature reached its peak in lyrical love poetry, the Minnesang, and in narrative epic poems such as Tristan, Parzival, and the Nibelungenlied.

Frederick died in 1190 while on a crusade and was succeeded by his son, Henry VI (r. 1190-97), born in Nijmegen (The Netherlands), Henry was the second son of the emperor Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor and Beatrix of Burgundy, and was crowned King of the Romans at Bamberg in June 1169, at the age of four. After having taken the reins of the Empire from his father, who had gone on the Crusade, in 1189–1190 he suppressed a revolt by Henry the Lion, former duke of Saxony and Bavaria and relative of Frederick.

Constance of Sicily was betrothed to Henry in 1184, and they were married on 27 January 1186 in Milan. Constance was the sole legitimate heir of William II of Sicily, and, after the latter's death in November 1189, Henry had the opportunity of adding the Sicilian crown to the imperial one, as his father had died crossing the Saleph River in Cilicia, now part of Turkey 10 June 1190.

In April 1191, in Rome, Henry and Constance were crowned Emperor and Empress by Pope Celestine III. The crown of Sicily, however, was harder to gain, as the barons of southern Italy had chosen a grandson of Roger II, Tancred, count of Lecce, as their king. Henry began his work besieging Naples, but he had to return
to Germany (where Henry the Lion had revolted again) after his army had been heavily hit by an epidemic.

Constance, who stayed behind in the palace at Salerno, was betrayed by the Salernitans, handed over to Tancred, and only released on the intervention of Celestine III, who in return recognized Tancred as King of Sicily.

Henry failed to make royal and imperial succession hereditary, but in 1196 he succeeded in gaining a pledge that his infant son Frederick would receive the German crown. Faced with difficulties in Italy and confident that he would realize his wishes in Germany at a later date, Henry returned to the south, where it appeared he might unify the peninsula under the Hohenstaufen name. After a series of military victories, however, he died of natural causes in Sicily in 1197.

Henry had a stroke of fortune when Leopold V, Duke of Austria, gave him his prisoner, King Richard I of England, whom he kept in Trifels Castle. Ignoring his excommunication by Pope Celestine III for imprisoning a former crusader, Henry held Richard for a ransom of 150,000 silver marks. Henry was granted free passage in Northern Italy, signing with the Italian communes a treaty in January 1194. The following April he also reached a settlement with Henry the Lion. In February Tancred died, leaving as heir a young boy, William III.

Henry met little resistance and entered Palermo, capital city of the Kingdom of Sicily, on 20 November, and was crowned on 25 December. He is also said to have had the young William blinded and castrated, while many Sicilian nobles were burned alive. Some, however, like the Siculo-Greek Eugene of Palermo, transitioned into the new Hohenstaufen government with ease.

At that point, Henry was the most powerful monarch in the Mediterranean and Europe, since the Kingdom of Sicily added to his personal and Imperial revenues an income without parallel in Europe. Henry felt strong enough to send home the Pisan and Genoese ships without giving their governments the promised concessions in Southern Italy, and even received tribute from the Byzantine Empire. In 1194 his son, Frederick, the future emperor and king of Sicily and Jerusalem, was born. Henry secured his position in Italy, naming his friend Conrad of Urslingen as Duke of Spoleto and giving the Marche to Markward von Annweiler.

His next aim was to make the imperial crown hereditary. At the Diet of Würzburg, held in April 1196, he managed to convince the majority of the princes to vote for his proposal, but in the following one at Erfurt (October 1196) he did not achieve the same favorable result.
In 1197 the tyrannical power of the foreign King in Italy spurred a revolt, especially in southern Sicily, which his German soldiers suppressed mercilessly. In the same year Henry prepared for a Crusade, but, on 28 September, he died of malaria in Messina, although it is also widely believed that he was poisoned.

His son Frederick II was to inherit both the Kingdom of Sicily and the Imperial crown.

Henry was fluent in Latin and, according to Alberic of Troisfontaines, was "distinguished by gifts of knowledge, wreathed in flowers of eloquence, and learned in canon and Roman law". He was a patron of poets and poetry, and he almost certainly composed the song "Kaiser Heinrich", now among the Weingarten Song Manuscripts.

According to his rank and with Imperial Eagle, regalia, and a scroll, he is the first and foremost to be portrayed in the famous Codex Manesse, a fourteenth century manuscript showing 140 reputed poets (see Minnesänger1), and at least three poems are attributed to a young and romantically minded Henry VI. In one of those he describes a romance which makes him forget all his earthly power, and neither riches nor royal dignity can outweigh his yearning for that lady (ê ich mich ir verzige, ich verzige mich ê der krône – before I give her up, I’d rather give up the crown).

Because the election of the three-year-old Frederick to be German king appeared likely to make orderly rule difficult, the boy’s uncle, Philip, was chosen to serve in his place. Other factions elected a Welf candidate, Otto IV, as counter king, and a long civil war began. Philip was murdered by Otto IV in 1208. Otto IV in turn was killed by the French at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214. Frederick returned to Germany in 1212 from Sicily, where he had grown up, and became king in 1215. As Frederick II (r. 1215-50), he spent little time in Germany because his main concerns lay in Italy. Frederick made significant concessions to the German nobles, such as those put forth in an imperial statute of 1232, which made princes virtually independent rulers within their territories. The clergy also became more powerful. Although Frederick was one of the most energetic, imaginative, and capable rulers of the Middle Ages, he did nothing to draw the disparate forces in Germany together. His legacy was thus that local rulers had more authority after his reign than before it.

1 Minnesang was the tradition of lyric and song writing in Germany which flourished in the 12th century and continued into the 14th century. People who wrote and performed Minnesang are known as Minnesingers (German: Minnesänger). The name derives from the word minne, Middle High German for love which was their main subject, and an individual song was a minnelied. The Minnesänger were similar to the Provençal troubadours and northern French trouvères; they wrote love poetry in the courtly love tradition in Middle High German in the High Middle Ages.
By the time of Frederick's death in 1250, there was little centralized power in Germany. The Great Interregnum (1256-73), a period of anarchy in which there was no emperor and German princes vied for individual advantage, followed the death of Frederick's son Conrad IV in 1254. In this short period, the German nobility managed to strip many powers away from the already diminished monarchy. Rather than establish sovereign states, however, many nobles tended to look after their families. Their many heirs created more and smaller estates. A largely free class of officials also formed, many of whom eventually acquired hereditary rights to administrative and legal offices. These trends compounded political fragmentation within Germany.
Our protagonist, Frederick II von Hohenstaufen, was a descendant of the last Normans king of Sicily through a female line: his mother Constance of Sicily. Consequently briefly commenting on history of the Normans is considered to be of a high importance for the reader with the aim of identify better the connection of the most scientific monarch of the thirteenth century, and probably the most intellectually distinguished ruler of the Middle Ages, following in the footsteps of his inquisitive grandfather, Roger II, who filled the Sicilian court with scientists and men of letters. Frederick II was King of Sicily, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and King of Jerusalem - all actual dominions he ruled. But the greatest title attributed to him was Stupor Mundi, Wonder of the World.

His Crusade to the Holy Land was undertaken without spilling a drop of blood, much to the chagrin of the Pope, who had already excommunicated him. He ruled more of Europe than any of his contemporaries, plus part of Palestine and a piece of northern Africa.

As a child, Frederick probably had more access to science and philosophy than any other young man in Europe or the Mediterranean world. He was taught the precepts of the three great faiths of his realm by believers - monks, rabbis, imams - and probably understood classical philosophical concepts like the differences between Idealism and Materialism. Given the close ties between the Norman kingdoms of Sicily and England, he was probably familiar with the ontological arguments of Anselm of Canterbury.

The Normans' ephemeral Kingdom of Sicily proved that religious tolerance was possible and that a multiethnic society could embrace diverse philosophies without destroying itself from within. By 1200, however, one could discern a general if subtle trend towards Christianization of the Muslims and latinization of the Greeks. What is important is that Frederick was exposed to these religions and also took an interest in Sicily's Jews. Nominally Catholic, Frederick was a scientist as much as a humanist.
Like his Norman grandfather’s court, Frederick’s boasted competent botanists, zoologists and astronomers. The gardens of the Genoardo, the vast royal park, included an extensive zoo, and astronomical observation was possible from the royal palace’s Pisan Tower, where the dwarf planet Ceres was first observed using more modern equipment six centuries later.

The Normans, or men from the north, were the people who gave their name to Normandy, a region in northern France. They were descended from North Germanic, Norse, and Viking conquerors of the territory and the native population of Germanic Frankish and Gallo-Roman stock. Their identity emerged initially in the first half of the 10th century, and gradually evolved over succeeding centuries.

They played a major political, military, and cultural role in medieval Europe and even the Near East. They were famed for their martial spirit and eventually for their Christian piety. They quickly adopted the Romance language of the land they settled, their dialect becoming known as Norman or Norman-French, an important literary language. The Duchy of Normandy, which they formed by treaty with the French crown, was one of the great fiefs of medieval France. The Normans are renowned both for their culture, such as their unique Romanesque architecture, and their musical traditions, as well as for their military accomplishments and innovations. Norman adventurers established a kingdom in Sicily and southern Italy by conquest, and a Norman expedition on behalf of their duke, William the Conqueror, led to the Norman Conquest of England. Norman influence spread from these new centers to the Crusader States in the Near East when Bohemond I established the Principality of Antioch in the First Crusade, and also to Scotland and Wales in Great Britain, and to Ireland.

11th century Benedictine monk and historian, Geoffrey Malaterra, characterised the Normans thus:

“Specially marked by cunning, despising their own inheritance in the hope of winning a greater, eager after both gain and dominion, given to imitation of all kinds, holding a certain mean between lavishness and greediness that is, perhaps uniting, as they certainly did, these two seemingly opposite qualities. Their chief men were especially lavish through their desire of good report. They were, moreover, a race skillful in flattery, given to the study of eloquence, so that the very boys were orators, a race altogether unbridled unless held firmly down by the yoke of justice. They were enduring of toil, hunger, and cold whenever fortune laid it on them, given to hunting and hawking, delighting in the pleasure of horses, and of all the weapons and garb of war.

Their quick adaptability expressed itself in the shrewd Norman willingness to take on local men of talent, to marry the high-born local women; confidently
illiterate Norman masters used the literate clerks of the church for their own purposes.”

Anna Komnene, the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, described the Norman prince Bohemund I:

“Now Bohemund was such as, to put it briefly, had never before been seen in the land of the Romans, be he either of the barbarians or of the Greeks (for he was a marvel for the eyes to behold, and his reputation was terrifying). Let me describe the barbarian’s appearance more particularly – he was so tall in stature that he overtopped the tallest by nearly one cubit, narrow in the waist and loins, with broad shoulders and a deep chest and powerful arms. And in the whole build of the body he was neither too slender nor overweighed with flesh, but perfectly proportioned and, one might say, built in conformity with the canon of Polycleitus... His skin all over his body was very white, and in his face the white was tempered with red. His hair was yellowish, but did not hang down to his waist like that of the other barbarians; for the man was not inordinately vain of his hair, but had it cut short to the ears. Whether his beard was reddish, or any other color I cannot say, for the razor had passed over it very closely and left a surface smoother than chalk... His blue eyes indicated both a high spirit and dignity; and his nose and nostrils breathed in the air freely; his chest corresponded to his nostrils and by his nostrils... the breadth of his chest. For by his nostrils nature had given free passage for the high spirit which bubbled up from his heart. A certain charm hung about this man but was partly marred by a general air of the horrible... He was so made in mind and body that both courage and passion reared their crests within him and both inclined to war. His wit was manifold and crafty and able to find a way of escape in every emergency. In conversation he was well informed, and the answers he gave were quite irrefutable. This man who was of such a size and such a character was inferior to the Emperor alone in fortune and eloquence and in other gifts of nature.”

The Duchy of Normandy began in 911 as a fief established in the former kingdom of Neustria by the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte between King Charles III of West Francia and Rollo, leader of the Norse. The treaty granted Rollo and his soldiers all the land between the river Epte and the sea, corresponding to the northern part of present day Upper Normandy down to the Seine, but the Duchy would eventually extend west beyond the Seine. The territory was roughly equivalent to the old church province of Rouen and reproduced the Roman administrative structure of Gallia Lugdunensis II (part of the former Gallia Lugdunensis). At first its population did not differ from Picardy or the neighboring Paris region, considered as "Frankish". Viking settlers had begun arriving in the 880s, however, divided between colonies in the east (Roumois and pays de Caux around the low Seine
valley) and in the west (Cotentin Peninsula), separated by traditional pagii, where the population remained about the same with almost no foreign settlers. The Viking contingents who raided, and ultimately settled Normandy and some parts of the Atlantic coast, included Danes, Norwegians, Hiberno-Norse, Orkney Vikings, as well as Anglo-Danes from the English Danelaw, under Viking control.

In the course of the 10th century, the initial destructive incursions of Norse war bands into the rivers of France evolved into permanent encampments that included women and chattel. The pagan culture was substituted by the Christian faith and Gallo-Romance language of the local people. The small groups of Vikings that settled there adopted the language and culture of the French majority into their own customs to create a unique "Norman" culture. The Norman language was forged by the adoption of the indigenous oïl language by a Norse-speaking ruling class, and it developed into the regional language which survives today.

The Normans adopted the growing feudal doctrines of the rest of northern France and worked them into a functional hierarchical system in Normandy and in England. The Norman warrior class was new and different from the old French aristocracy, most of whom could trace their families back to the Franks of Carolingian times. Most knights remained poor and land-hungry; by 1066, Normandy had been exporting fighting horsemen for more than a generation. Knighthood before the time of the Crusades held little social status, simply indicating a professional warrior wealthy enough to own a war horse. Many Normans of France and Britain would eventually serve as avid Crusaders.

The Normans in Italy 1000 AD - 1194 AD

This region, at the center of the Mediterranean, was well known to the Phoenicians in ancient times, which had many of their trading posts on the coasts but never bothered to explore the hinterland. It became a Greek Colony (with the significant name of Magna Graecia), and later a Carthaginian stronghold, to be incorporated as a Roman Province. In about 500AD, it was conquered and ruled by the Arabs, later becoming a Province of the Eastern Roman Empire, invaded by the Goths and Vandals, and finally a Norman Duchy at the turn of the first Millennium.
The story of how the Normans came to Southern Italy and Sicily is an interesting one. At the end of the ninth century, they had arrived at the northern part of France where the River Seine flows into the Channel. They were pirates and looters - violent, reckless and cunning. After a few decades, in 911, their Chief Rollo was strong enough to negotiate a land grant from the Frankish King Charles III (the Weak!), who was trying to contain them from expanding into the rest of France. The Scandinavians (Danes) became Norsemen and Normans and then French and, in fact, never trespassed across the boundaries of the Region granted to them. But they were a special kind of people: restless, very prolific, strong and had a natural gene for wandering. Physically well built, fighters, sailors, riders, they became Christians and started to speak French. To follow their natural gene and the Christian mores they started exploring the routes to Jerusalem, combining the duties of the Faith with their character, and on the route to Jerusalem they discovered the Apulia, Capua, Naples, Benevento and Sicily. They loved the climate and found ways to own the land by fighting as mercenaries for the Lombards against the Byzantine "Catapans" and Lords and then for the Byzantine Lords against the Lombards, eventually pushing out both parties and gaining control. After their first appearance at the turn of the Millennium by the year 1100, they were solidly established as Counts and Dukes of Apulia and Sicily, the most famous and powerful of them being the sons of the Hauteville family coming from the small village of Hauteville La Guichard. The two brothers Robert Guiscard and Roger I were the most important members of the Hauteville Dynasty. One became the Duke of Apulia and the other the Count of Sicily.

Robert invading Sicily with Roger, the brothers captured Messina (1061) with comparable ease: Roger's men landed unsighted during the night and surprised the Saracen army in the morning. The Guiscard's troops landed unopposed and found Messina abandoned. Guiscard immediately fortified Messina and allied himself with Ibn at-Timnah, one of the rival emirs of Sicily, against Ibn al-Hawas, another emir. The armies of Guiscard, his brother, and his Moslem friend marched into central Sicily by way of Rometta, which had remained loyal to al-Timnah. They passed through Frazzanò and the pianura di Maniace, where George Maniakes and the first Hautevilles distinguished themselves twenty-one years prior. Guiscard assaulted the town of Centuripe, but their resistance was strong, and he moved on.
Paternò fell and he brought his army to Enna (then Castrogiovanni), a formidable fortress. The Saracens sallied forth and were defeated, but Enna itself did not fall. Guiscard turned back, leaving a fortress at San Marco d'Alunzio, named after his first stronghold in Calabria. He returned to Apulia with Sichelgaita for Christmas.

He returned in 1064, but bypassed Enna taking straight for Palermo. However, his campsite was infested with tarantulas and had to be abandoned. The campaign was unsuccessful this time, though a later campaign, in 1072, saw Palermo fall and for the rest of Sicily it was only then a matter of time. As a result of his Sicilian campaign he was referred to a "Black Shirt Robert" Throughout the campaign he wore elegant clothing with imported dyes which ran together resulting in black clothing.

Robert Guiscard was the sixth son of Tancred of Hauteville and eldest by his second wife Fressenda. According to the Byzantine historian Anna Comnena, he left Normandy with only five mounted riders and thirty followers on foot. Upon arriving in Langobardia in 1047, he became the chief of a roving robber-band. Anna Comnena also leaves a physical description of Guiscard:

“This Robert was Norman by birth, of obscure origins, with an overbearing character and a thoroughly villainous mind; he was a brave fighter, very cunning in his assaults on the wealth and power of great men; in achieving his aims absolutely inexorable, diverting criticism by incontrovertible argument. He was a man of immense stature, surpassing even the biggest men; he had a ruddy complexion, fair hair, broad shoulders, eyes that all but shot out sparks of fire. In a well-built man one looks for breadth here and slimness there; in him all was admirably well-proportioned and elegant… Homer remarked of Achilles that when he shouted his hearers had the impression of a multitude in uproar, but Robert’s bellow, so they say, put tens of thousands to flight”

Roger I married Adelaide of Savona and their son **Roger II was crowned King of Sicily in 1130.** Roger II at the death of Robert Guiscard unified under his crown the Duchy of Apulia and founded the Kingdom of Italy. Roger II d'Hauteville married Beatrice of Rethel as a second wife, their daughter Constance d'Hauteville, born in 1154 after Roger's death, married in 1186 Henry VI Hohenstaufen the son of Frederick Barbarossa and future Emperor of Germany. The marriage is said to have been the diplomatic achievement of Frederick Barbarossa. Henry VI and Constance were crowned Emperor and
Empress of the Holy Roman Empire in Rome on April 15th, 1191 by Pope Celestin III. In 1189, on the death of her nephew William II d'Hauteville, the Good Constance claimed the Sicilian Throne, but the Sicilians supported her illegitimate nephew Tancred, Count of Lecce. Tancred of Lecce, the last illegitimate King of Sicily, died on Christmas Day in 1194, while Henry VI (the son of Barbarossa) was moving to Sicily with his army to claim the throne that rightfully belonged to his wife Constance. At Christmas 1194, Henry was crowned King of Italy as the husband of Constance d'Hauteville, legitimate heiress to the throne of Roger II d'Hauteville.
THE CRUSADES

The crusades were a series of military expeditions promoted by the papacy during the Middle Ages, initially aimed at taking the Holy Land for Christendom. The concept of a crusade was developed in the eleventh century partially as a result of organised Christian forces fighting Muslims in Sicily and Spain. The Holy Land had been in the hands of the Muslims since 638, and it was against them that the crusades were, at least nominally, directed. Expansionism along with desire for adventure, conquest and plunder seem to have been at least as influential in attracting Christians to the cause as any desire to restore Christ's supposed patrimony.

The main crusades spanned more than two centuries (1096-1300 CE). These extended military raids stemmed from changes had taken place outside Europe before the time of the Crusades, most notably the growth and expansion of Islam. Christian holy wars such as these bear a striking resemblance to the Moslem practice of the jihad, which by then had become a very successful Islamic institution. By translating the notion of a "holy warrior" into Christian terms, medieval popes created the crusader, a "knight of Christ." and new religious orders composed of fighting monks most notably the Knights Hospitaller and Knights Templar.

Popes who promoted the Crusades used their authority to muster an army, appoint its military leaders, and send it on its mission. (Part of the reason for the failure of the crusades was bishops acting as field commanders and choosing the wrong military targets, the wrong battles, and the wrong military maneuvers).

These Church-sponsored wars brought some benefit to Medieval Europe. For instance, crusading allowed westerners to take advantage of the much richer East for the first time since the days of ancient Rome. It served as an outlet for Europe's youth and aggression as population exploded during the High Middle Ages (1050-1300 CE). Sending young men off to fight in a holy cause temporarily stifled the internal wars that had afflicted the West since the collapse of Roman government. That a few of the early Crusading skirmishes produced victories helped Europeans regain a sense of self-confidence, after centuries of losing on nearly every front,
they temporarily turned the tables on their military and cultural superiors to the east.

The Church regarded crusaders as military pilgrims. They took vows and were rewarded with privileges of protection for their property at home. Any legal proceedings against them were suspended. Another major inducement was the offer of indulgences for the remission of sin. Knights were especially attracted by what were effectively Get-Out-Of-Hell-Free cards allowing them to commit any sins throughout the rest of their lives without incurring liability in this or the next world.

During the Crusades the Western Church developed new types of holy warrior. These were military monks such as the Knights Hospitaller and Knights Templar. They were literally both soldiers and monks, and took vows for both callings, fulfilling their holy duties by killing God's enemies.

Underlying the crusaders' excursions was the impulse to migrate and conquer, the same drive that had long before pushed their Indo-European forebears out of their homeland and across Eurasia, and that had also motivated the Vikings.

Not since the days of ancient Rome had westerners found many viable opportunities to expand their horizons, not just militarily but also economically, culturally and politically. Crusading gave them a glimpse of the larger world that lay beyond their frontiers. This taste of the globe sparked in them a curiosity about life beyond Europe, which, in turn, helped to lay the groundwork for the colonial period to follow. In fact, one can argue that the Crusades of the twelfth century, not Columbus' expeditions three centuries later, mark the real onset of Western expansionism, arguably the single most significant development of the last millennium. The crusaders, modern Europe's first colonists of a sort, headed east, not west.

Nine crusades are generally recognized, although there were many others. Many of them collapsed before they got out of Christendom. Some, such as the Children's Crusade, are now disowned as crusades. Others were directed not against Muslims but fellow Christians in Europe, the Church at Constantinople, Christian emperors and kings, sects who rejected the Roman Church, even powerful Italian families hostile to the pope of the day.

The Crusades were tied to the Investiture Controversy, the struggle for power between the rising authority of the Pope and the traditional ruling political system of the day. From the papal perspective, the kings of Europe had long intruded upon the sacred right of the Pope to run his own business (i.e., to choose the men who constituted the Church's administration). In calling the First Crusade, Urban II
shifted the theatre of action in this conflict to an arena where medieval kings had traditionally controlled the battlefield. Urban usurped the prerogative of secular rulers to declare an enemy and muster troops for battle.

**Truce of God**

By reinterpreting the Truce of God as a warrant for Europeans to kill Moslems and not each other, he also sought to embarrass secular leaders for all their intra-European wars which were now presented as "unchristian," in spite of that fact that the Church had for century’s sanctioned European-upon European carnage. For centuries to come the increasing claims of the papacy, generally bolstered by forgeries from the papal chancery, would unsettle secular rulers just as much as Orthodox Christians and Western scholars.

A majority of Christian Europeans saw Urban's call to arms as a means of salvation and a way of ridding the world of infidels. That, to them, referred not only to the Moslems but also the Jews in Europe, many of whom were slaughtered before the knights of the First Crusade set off in search of the Holy Lands. After all, good Christians couldn't send their men off to fight one infidel and abandon the homeland to another. With this early attempt at genocide, the crusaders surged out of Europe, spreading mayhem wherever they went.

The First Crusade had been planned by Pope Urban II and more than 200 bishops at the Council of Clermont. It was preached by Urban between 1095 and 1099. He assured his listeners that God himself wanted them to encourage men of all ranks, rich and poor, to go and exterminate Muslims. He said that Christ commanded it. Even robbers, he said, should now become soldiers of Christ. Assured that God wanted them to participate in a holy war, masses pressed forward to take the crusaders' oath. They looked forward to a guaranteed place in Heaven for themselves and to an assured victory for
their divinely endorsed army. The pope did not appoint a secular military supreme commander, only a spiritual one, the Bishop of Le Puy. Initial expeditions were led by two churchmen, Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless. Peter was a monk from Amiens, whose credentials were a letter written by God and delivered to him by Jesus.

He assured his followers that death in the Crusades provided an automatic passport to Heaven.

Urban II: Letter of Instruction to the Crusaders, December 1095: “Urban, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to all the faithful, both princes and subjects, waiting in Flanders; greeting, apostolic grace, and blessing.

Your brotherhood, we believe, has long since learned from many accounts that a barbaric fury has deplorably afflicted a laid waste the churches of God in the regions of the Orient. More than this, blasphemous to say, it has even grasped in intolerable servitude its churches and the Holy City of Christ, glorified by His passion and resurrection. Grieving with pious concern at this calamity, we visited the regions of Gaul and devoted ourselves largely to urging the princes of the land and their subjects to free the churches of the East. We solemnly enjoined upon them at the council of Auvergne (the accomplishment of) such an undertaking, as a preparation for the remission of all their sins. And we have constituted our most beloved son, Adhemar, Bishop of Puy, leader of this expedition and undertaking in our stead, so that those who, perchance, may wish to undertake this journey should comply with his commands, as if they were our own, and submit fully to his loosing or bindings, as far as shall seem to belong to such an office. If, moreover, there are any of your people whom God has inspired to this vow, let them know that he (Adhemar) will set out with the aid of God on the day of the Assumption of the Blessed Mary, and that they can then attach themselves to his following.”

Born Odo of Lagery in 1042, Urban was a protégé of the great reformer Pope Gregory VII. Like Gregory, he made internal reform his main focus, railing against simony (the selling of church offices) and other clerical abuses prevalent during the Middle Ages. Urban showed himself to be an adept and powerful cleric, and when he was elected pope in 1088, he applied his statecraft to weakening support for his rivals, notably Clement III. On November 27, 1095, Pope Urban II makes perhaps the most influential speech of the Middle Ages, giving rise to the Crusades by calling all Christians in Europe to war against Muslims in order to reclaim the Holy Land, with a cry of "Deus vult!" or "God wills it!"

Sieges were laid to a series of Muslim cities. Crusaders had little respect for their enemies and enjoyed catapulting the severed heads of fallen Moslem warriors into
besieged cities. After a victory near Antioch, crusaders brought severed heads back to the besieged city. Hundreds of these heads were shot into the city, and hundreds more impaled on stakes in front of the city walls. A crusader bishop called it a joyful spectacle for the people of God. When Muslims crept out of the city at night to bury their dead the Christians left them alone. Then in the morning the Christians returned, and dug up the corpses to steal gold and silver ornaments.

When the crusaders took Antioch in 1098 they slaughtered the inhabitants. Later the Christians were in turn besieged by Muslim reinforcements. The crusaders broke out, putting the Muslim army to flight and capturing their women. The chronicler Fulcher of Chartres was proud to record that on this occasion nothing evil (i.e. sexual) had happened, although the women had been murdered in their tents, pierced through the belly by lances. Time and time again Muslims who surrendered were killed or sold into slavery. This treatment was applied to combatants and citizens alike: women, children, the old, the infirm and anyone and everyone. At Albara the population was totally extirpated, the town then being resettled with Christians, and the mosque converted into a church. Often, the Christians offered to spare those who capitulated, but it was an unwise Muslim who accepted such a promise. A popular technique was to promise protection to all who took refuge in a particular building within the besieged city. Then after the battle, the Christians had an easy time: the men could be massacred and the women and children sold into slavery without having to carry out searches. Clerics justified this by claiming that Christians were not bound by promises made to infidels, even if sworn in the name of God. At Maarat an-Numan the pattern was repeated. The slaughter continued for three days, both Christian and Muslim accounts agreeing on the main points, although each has its own details. The Christian account describes how the Muslims' bodies were dismembered. Some were cut open to find hidden treasure, while others were cut up to eat. The Muslim account mentions that over 100,000 were killed.

When the crusaders captured Jerusalem on the 14th July 1099, they massacred the inhabitants, Jews and Muslims alike, men, women and children. The killing continued all night and into the next day. Jews who took refuge in their synagogue were burned alive. Muslims sought refuge in the al-Aqsa mosque under the protection of a Christian banner. In the morning crusaders forced an entry and massacred them all, 70,000 according to an Arab historian, including a large number of scholars. The Temple of Solomon was so full of blood that it came up to the horses' bridles. The chronicler Raymond of Aguilers described it as a just
and wonderful judgment of God. Even before the killing was over the crusaders went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre "rejoicing and weeping for joy" to thank God for his assistance. Muslim prisoners were decapitated, shot with arrows, forced to jump from high towers, or burned. Some were tortured first. Neither was this an isolated incident. It was wholly typical. When the crusaders took Caesarea in 1101, many citizens fled to the Great Mosque and begged the Christians for mercy. At the end of the butchery the floor was a lake of blood. In the whole city only a few girls and infants survived. Soon afterwards, there was a similar massacre at Beirut. Such barbarity shocked the Eastern world and left an impression of the Christian West that has still not been forgotten in the third millennium.

Urban died in 1099, two weeks after the fall of Jerusalem but before news of the Christian victory made it back to Europe. His was the first of seven major military campaigns fought over the next two centuries known as the Crusades, the bloody repercussions of which are still felt today. Urban was beatified by the Roman Catholic Church in 1881.
GERMAN CRUSADES

The Crusade of 1197 (also known as the Crusade of Henry VI or the German Crusade of 1197 German: Deutscher Kreuzzug) was a crusade launched by the Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI in response to the partway victory of his father Frederick I Barbarossa’s crusade in 1190, and thus is also known as the "Emperor's Crusade." The Crusade ended abruptly, after the fall of Sidon and Beirut. Henry VI died of a fever in Messina in October 1197, with many higher-ranking nobles returning to Germany to protect their interests in the next imperial election. The remaining nobles in the Crusade captured Sidon and Beirut before returning to Germany.

Background
After the failure of the Second Crusade, Nur ad-Din Zangi had control of Damascus and a unified Syria.

Eager to expand his power, Nur ad-Din set his sights on the Fatimid dynasty of Egypt. In 1163, Nur ad-Din's most trusted general, Shirkuh set out on a military expedition to the Nile. Accompanying the general was his young nephew, Saladin.

With Shirkuh's troops camped outside of Cairo, Egypt's sultan, Shawar called on King Amalric I of Jerusalem for assistance. In response, Amalric sent an army into Egypt and attacked Shirkuh's troops at Bilbeis in 1164.

In an attempt to divert Crusader attention from Egypt, Nur ad-Din attacked Antioch, resulting in a massacre of Christian soldiers and the capture of several Crusader leaders, including Bohemond III, Prince of Antioch. Nur ad-Din sent the scalps of the Christian defenders to Egypt for Shirkuh to proudly display at Bilbeis for Amalric's soldiers to see. This action prompted both Amalric and Shirkuh to lead their armies out of Egypt.

In 1167, Nur ad-Din once again sent Shirkuh to conquer the Fatimids in Egypt. Shawar also opted to once again call upon Amalric for the defence of his territory. The combined Egyptian-Christian forces pursued Shirkuh until he retreated to Alexandria.
Amalric then breached his alliance with Shawar by turning his forces on Egypt and besieging the city of Bilbeis. Shawar pleaded with his former enemy, Nur ad-Din to save him from Amalric's treachery. Lacking the resources to maintain a prolonged siege of Cairo against the combined forces of Nur ad-Din and Shawar, Amalric retreated. This new alliance gave Nur ad-Din rule over virtually all of Syria and Egypt.

**Saladin's troops, French manuscript of 1337.**

Shawar was executed for his alliances with the Christian forces, and Shirkuh succeeded him as vizier of Egypt. In 1169, Shirkuh died unexpectedly after only weeks of rule. Shirkuh's successor was his nephew, Salah ad-Din Yusuf, commonly known as Saladin. Nur ad-Din died in 1174, leaving the new empire to his 11-year old son, As-Salih. It was decided that the only man competent enough to uphold the jihad against the Franks was Saladin, who became sultan of both Egypt and Syria, and the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty.

Amalric also died in 1174, leaving Jerusalem to his 13-year old son, Baldwin IV. Although Baldwin suffered from leprosy, he was an effective and active military commander, defeating Saladin at the battle of Montgisard in 1177, with support from Raynald of Châtillon, who had been released from prison in 1176. Later, he forged an agreement with Saladin to allow free trade between Muslim and Christian territories.

Raynald also raided caravans throughout the region. He expanded his piracy to the Red Sea by sending galleys not only to raid ships, but to assault the city of Mecca itself. These acts enraged the Muslim world, giving Raynald a reputation as the most hated man in the Middle East.

Baldwin IV died in 1185 and the kingdom was left to his nephew Baldwin V, whom he had crowned as co-king in 1183. Raymond III of Tripoli again served as regent. The following year, Baldwin V died before his ninth birthday, and his mother Princess Sybilla, sister of Baldwin IV, crowned herself queen and her husband, Guy of Lusignan, king.
It was at this time that Raynald, once again, raided a rich caravan and had its travelers thrown in prison. Saladin demanded that the prisoners and their cargo be released. The newly crowned King Guy appealed to Raynald to give in to Saladin's demands, but Raynald refused to follow the king's orders.

**Siege of the Kingdom of Jerusalem**

It was this final act of outrage by Raynald which gave Saladin the opportunity he needed to take the offensive against the kingdom. He laid siege to the city of Tiberias in 1187. Raymond advised patience, but King Guy, acting on advice from Raynald, marched his army to the Horns of Hattin outside of Tiberias.

The Frankish army, thirsty and demoralized, was destroyed in the ensuing battle. King Guy and Raynald were brought to Saladin's tent, where Guy was offered a goblet of water because of his great thirst. Guy took a drink and then passed the goblet to Raynald. Saladin would not be forced to protect the treacherous Raynald by allowing him to drink, as it was custom that if you were offered a drink, your life was safe. When Raynald accepted the drink, Saladin told his interpreter, "say to the King: 'it is you who have given him to drink'". Afterwards, Saladin beheaded Raynald for past betrayals. Saladin honored tradition with King Guy; Guy was sent to Damascus and eventually ransomed to his people, one of the few captive crusaders to avoid execution.

By the end of the year, Saladin had taken Acre and Jerusalem. Pope Urban III is said to have collapsed and died upon hearing the news. However, at the time of his death, the news of the fall of Jerusalem could not yet have reached him, although he knew of the battle of Hattin and the fall of Acre.

The new pope, Gregory VIII proclaimed that the capture of Jerusalem was punishment for the sins of Christians across Europe. The cry went up for a new crusade to the Holy Land. With the news of Saladin's offensive began to filter into Italy, Germany, France, and England, the papacy undertook to direct and stimulate the emotions aroused. Gregory VIII sent Henry, cardinal-bishop of Albano, with papal letters, despite his ignorance of French and German, into France and the Rhinelands.

That the Lord would have permitted his church to suffer so horribly at the hands of infidel enemies could be explained, in papal eyes, only by the overpowering sins of the faithful. A successful crusade therefore could be undertaken only by those who had corrected their “sins by voluntary chastisement” and turned “through penitence and works of piety to the Lord ... To those who with contrite heart and humbled spirit undertake the labor of this journey, and depart in sorrow for their
sins and in the true faith, we promise full pardon for their offenses and eternal life”. A pilgrimage to be made by penitents was to avoid all show. Let them not go “in expensive clothes or with dogs or birds or other things which seem rather to supply delight and wantonness than to serve necessary uses. Let them go rather with modest equipment and dress, in which they seem to be doing penance rather than to be striving after vain glory”. The cardinal himself in summoning the German lay and ecclesiastical nobility to attend Barbarossa’s “court of Christ” at Mainz on March 27, 1188, reiterated the papal injunctions. “We think that all of you, after all idleness, all curiosity, and temporal glory have been put aside, should be enjoined to try to be present at the court of Jesus Christ with becoming seriousness and modesty. Let all be so inflamed by the fire of love and obedience to exalt the Christian name that dress and deportment confess the faith which our tongue professes”.

By this time the German aristocracy had been aroused. The response to the preaching of the cardinal-legate’s representatives at the diet of Strasbourg in December of the previous year had not been notable until supplemented by bishop Henry of Strasbourg’s more adequate rhetoric. Meanwhile, moreover, the ‘elegant eloquence’ of bishop Godfrey of Wurzburg had led to a numerous response when the pressure of public opinion had reached the point where “no one in all Germany was considered of any manly steadfastness at all, who was seen without the saving sign, and who would not join the comradeship of the crusaders”.

**Barbarossa Hohenstaufen “The third Crusade”**

The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa responded to the call immediately. He took up the Cross at Mainz Cathedral on March 27, 1188 and was the first to set out for the Holy Land in May 1189 with an army of about 100,000
men, including 20,000 knights. An army of 2,000 men from the Hungarian prince Géza, the younger brother of the king Béla III of Hungary also went with Barbarossa to the Holy Land.

The Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelus made a secret alliance with Saladin to impede Frederick's progress in exchange for his empire's safety. Barbarossa had no aggressive intentions against Byzantium, as Isaac had every reason to know from his conduct. Indeed the German emperor, bent upon a crusade to the east and not upon a hazardous political adventure, went out of his way, in the face of what appeared to be outrageous provocation and at great cost to the crusading army, to deal coolly with the impossible demands of his imperial colleague. Even if Isaac's fear of German aggression had been well founded, it was madness to stimulate rather than attempt to divert it, at a moment when Frederick was in direct touch with the Serbian and Bulgarian rebels. No Byzantine army could resist the German army if the petty diplomatic trickery of a despot failed to scare the untutored western barbarians into submission. It was irresponsible and callous to turn his subjects over to plunder and finally to an occupation. Indeed in provoking his own people, and in arousing the hatred and contempt of the German empire, and, moreover, in offending the aroused crusading spirit of the west, Isaac was preparing, in ways it is difficult to measure, doom for his state.

The Sultanate of Rum promised Frederick safety through Anatolia. Meanwhile, in the absence of a settlement, the German army decided to set up winter quarters in Adrianople, and to continue the war against the Byzantines by an occupation of Thrace up to the very walls of Constantinople. Indeed, in the weeks preceding his letter home (November 16) Frederick surrendered to the demands of the war party in the army, led by duke Berthold of Dalmatia, demanding an attack on Constantinople. Yet he seemed to think that Isaac might come to his senses and make possible, for the spring of 1190, a passage of the straits. Frederick was certainly well aware of the difficulties of an attack upon Constantinople. The death of William II of Norman Italy and Sicily, as we saw in an earlier chapter, would make it unlikely that help could come from that quarter for a long time. Venice, an ally of Isaac, could be counted on for nothing more than neutrality. The rivalry between Genoa and Pisa could hardly be quieted by a projected attack on Constantinople by the Germans. It was not to be expected that the papacy would launch a campaign against the Byzantines in the west, merely because Barbarossa and Henry VI wanted it. And if, despite these difficulties, it should come to an attack upon Constantinople, and this was to be successful, it would be difficult to prevent the crusade from stopping here. Frederick preferred to get on with the crusade. An attack on Constantinople, for him at least, was a last resort after all else had failed.
On June 10, 1190, the mountainous approach across the Taurus range to the valley of the “Saleph” river (Calycadnus) was very difficult, and to avoid it Frederick, following the advice of local guides, sought a more circuitous and also difficult route. He arrived at the stream while the main army was still straggling over the mountain passes “in the summer sun and the boiling heat”. “He tried” Ansbert says, “to swim the channel of the Saleph river, a very rapid one” in order to cool himself off and “to detour the jagged mountains ... In spite of everyone’s attempt to dissuade him, he entered the water and, submerged in a whirlpool, he who had often avoided great dangers miserably perished”. When “other nobles near him hastened to help him they were too late ... They then took him out and brought him to the bank. Everyone was upset by his death and struck with such violent grief that some ended their lives with him, but others in despair and as it were seeing that God had no care of them, renounced the Christian faith and went over to the heathen. The death of such a prince warranted the lamentation and immoderate grief which took possession of everyone’s heart”.

After this, much of his army returned to Germany, in anticipation of the upcoming Imperial election. His son Frederick of Swabia led the remaining 5,000 men to Antioch. There, the emperor's body was boiled to remove the flesh, which was interred in the Church of St. Peter; his bones were put in a bag to continue the crusade. In Antioch, however, the German army was further reduced by fever. Young Frederick had to ask the assistance of his kinsman Conrad of Montferrat to lead him safely to Acre, by way of Tyre, where his father's bones were buried.

The death of the emperor turned the German crusade into something like a funeral procession, breaking its spirit and its unity. A western army, the news of whose approach had terrified Saladin and which together with powerful English and French armies, was calculated to break his power, was now rendered progressively impotent. From the day it had set out from Regensburg until after the victory at Iconium it had lost something like sixty thousand men. If Duke Frederick, its newly elected leader, could have preserved the morale and unity of those who were left, it still might have made its mark upon the east. As it was, a few left immediately for home from Cilician ports. The rest of the army divided into three groups, one going from Tarsus to Tripoli by sea, a second with Duke Frederick to Antioch by sea, and a third overland to Antioch. Frederick reached Antioch on June 11 and was joined by the land force, which had lost many men. Here “after such great labors, lack of food, and torments of hunger, they wanted to rest and recoup themselves”, when plague struck them. It carried away bishops Godfrey of Wurzburg and Martin of Meissen, margrave Hermann of Baden, burggrave Burkhard of Magdeburg, counts Florent of Holland, Poppo of Henneberg, and Wilbrand of Hallermund, and the advocate Frederick of Berg. Duke Frederick, tempted by a career of conquest in northern Syria, did not start for Acre until late August. He moved first down the
coast to Tripoli and from Tripoli to Tyre, where count Adolf of Holstein took ship for Germany to defend his lands against Henry the Lion. Early in October Frederick arrived at Acre.

When the news of his father Barbarossa’s death reached him, Henry VI was already faced with the problem of conquering his wife Constance’s inheritance, the Norman kingdom of southern Italy and Sicily. His first effort failed before Naples. By 1195 his second effort, financed by Richard’s ransom, had succeeded. Meanwhile the birth of a son Frederick in at Iesi opened to him the prospect of transforming the German empire into a hereditary monarchy similar to the monarchies of the west. In exchange for papal support of this important step Henry was ready to offer his personal leadership of a crusade. These plans, however, were thwarted by the opposition of archbishop Adolf of Cologne, and the ultimate refusal of the papacy to consider the coronation of his son Frederick. Henry knew only too well how difficult it would be to reconcile the inhabitants of the Norman kingdom to their new German master, or to render the papacy content with German possession of a kingdom which had long been a papal. Now that the truce in the east with Saladin had expired, a successful crusade might accomplish many desirable ends, even without Henry’s personal direction. It would strengthen the position of the emperor among the German nobility, lay and ecclesiastical. It would enhance the dignity of the empire in Europe. It might restore the relations of papacy and empire to some kind of harmony, and this might, in turn, facilitate the pacification of the newly acquired Norman kingdom of Sicily. Thus, if carefully prepared and managed, the resumption of his father's effort to restore the kingdom of Jerusalem would almost certainly contribute to the solidification of the German empire.

The Third Crusade had been expected to be the most glorious triumph that German arms had ever achieved. The indomitable red bearded Hohenstaufen, Friedrich Barbarossa, had brought his imperial army intact across the Balkans and Asia Minor--where the Second Crusade had come to grief, had smashed the Turkish forces that blocked the land route east from Constantinople for a century, and had crossed the difficult Cilician mountain passes leading into the Syria, whence his army could pass easily into the Holy Land. There he was expected to lead the combined armies of the Holy Roman Empire, France, and England to recover the lost ports, thereby opening the way for trade and reinforcements, after which he would lead the Christian forces on to
the liberation of Jerusalem. Instead, he drowned in a small mountain stream. His vassals dispersed, some hurrying back to Germany because their presence was required at the election of the German king (Friedrich’s son Heinrich VI), others because they anticipated a civil war in which they might lose their lands to the Welfs or win their lands. Only a few great nobles and prelates honored their vows by continuing their journey on to Acre, then besieged by crusader armies from France and England which were suffering terrible agonies from heat and disease. For the newly arrived Germans the psychological torment may have been worse than the physical. Richard the Lionheart, the English king who was winning immortal fame at Acre, hated those Hohenstaufen vassals who had driven his Welf brother-in-law, Heinrich the Lion, into exile a few years before, and he missed few opportunities to insult or humiliate them. Richard recovered Acre but little more. The French king, Phillip Augustus, went home, angry at his repeated insults, and most Germans left, too, determined to get revenge on him at the first opportunity. The German nobles and prelates, both those who had served at Acre and those who had run home, were bitterly disappointed with the outcome of their great expedition. Reflecting back on the high hopes with which they had set out, they felt they had been betrayed by everyone—by the English, by the Byzantines, by the Welfs, and by one another. They had but one worthwhile accomplishment to show for all their suffering, so they thought later: the foundation of the Teutonic Order.

The Teutonic Order

Postponing any announcement of his personal leadership of the crusade until it was clear that circumstances would permit of his goings Henry VI received the cross privately from bishop John of Sutri in Easter week of 1195. This was followed in the diet at Bari on Easter day with a public imperial summons to the crusade. At about the same time Henry announced his own special contribution to the expedition. He was ready to supply a force of three thousand paid mounted troops, half knights and half squires, for the duration of a year. This meant that to the German knights who followed their lords from beyond the Alps would be given a hard central core of mercenary troops under imperial officers. In June Henry left for Germany to promote the recruitment of the German nobility. There soon followed papal legates to inaugurate the preaching of the crusade. By early August pope Celestine III called
upon the German clergy to preach the new crusade. Yet Henry’s own illness postponed the organization of the movement, and it was, accordingly, not until the fall and early winter that the growing enthusiasm could be organized in formal meetings of the princes.

Before leaving Italy for Germany Henry had made his first demarche upon Constantinople preliminary to the organization of the crusading army. It was quite evidently meant to forestall any Byzantine attempts to interfere with the organization of the crusade, and to inform Isaac moreover that the Byzantine empire was expected to contribute to rather than obstruct the expedition. As the new king of the former Norman kingdom of southern Italy and Sicily, Henry demanded the “return” of the Balkan territory which king William II had formerly conquered, from Durazzo (Dyrrachium) to Thessalonica. He demanded compensation for damages suffered by his father Barbarossa while in Byzantine territory en route to Palestine. He asked, moreover, that a Byzantine fleet support his own crusade to Palestine. Before negotiations over these demands could be completed, the incompetent Isaac had been deposed and blinded by his brother Alexius III (April 8, 1195).

Henry maintained the pressure upon Constantinople by demanding from Alexius III Angelus tribute sufficient to pay for the mercenary troops he had promised to contribute to the crusading army. The original sum demanded (five thousand gold pounds) was reduced after negotiation to one thousand six hundred talents, and Alexius was obliged to institute a very unpopular special tax, the “Alamanikon”) or “German levy”, to meet the demand. From this levy Constantinople escaped only at the death of the German emperor. Even before this, Henry had arranged for the marriage of Irene, the daughter of the blinded Isaac, to his brother Philip of Swabia (May 25, 1197). She was the widow of Roger, the son of Tancred of Lecce, who had been the last Norman king of the Italian south. Henry had found her in Palermo after his ruthless crushing of the 1194 revolt. It was rumored in the west that Isaac had agreed to accept the pair as his heirs to the Byzantine throne. In any case, the man who was browbeating Alexius III into support of a western crusading venture had now, like Robert Guiscard and William II before him, acquired a Byzantine pretender, and could pose as the defender of the rights of Isaac’s children. The setting was thus prepared for the later intervention of Philip of Swabia in the counsels of the leaders of the Fourth Crusade.

**Death of Emperor Henry VI**

They began to arrive in southern Italy just as a serious revolt against Henry’s hard regime in the south was gathering momentum. Some thought they had been called south to quell the unrest, and indeed some did help to quell it. But though Henry abandoned all thought of leading the crusade personally, he did not allow his
critical political position to interfere with its progress. From March 1197 onwards, ships laden with German crusaders were leaving southern ports. By August the contingent from the Rhinelands and Saxony led by Henry of Brunswick and the archbishop of Bremen arrived in Messina with forty-four ships, after having stopped in Norway, England, and Portugal. These, together with those German princes and imperial troops who had not yet sailed, left Messina for Acre in early September under the command of the imperial chancellor Conrad of Querfurt and Henry of Kalden. Arnold of Lübeck estimates their number at sixty thousand, including four hundred burghers from Lübeck. Henry's fifteen hundred knights with their attendants, and his fifteen hundred squires formed a nucleus of six thousand men. On September 22 the main German fleet arrived in Acre. A part of the fleet under the chancellor stopped at Cyprus to crown Aimery of Lusignan and receive his homage.

On September 28, 1197, one of Henry’s frequent fevers caused his death at Messina. Confirmation of the news of Henry VI's death led immediately to the defection of the imperial chancellor, Conrad of Querfurt, and before the end of the summer of 1198 most of the principal German nobles had left for home to protect their interests in the raging civil war. Indeed, on July 1, 1198, a truce was made with al-Adil, who abandoned Beirut to the kingdom. The archbishop of Mainz, before his departure early in 1198, crowned Prince Leon II as the first Roupenid king of Armenia.

The Foundation of the Teutonic Order of Saint Mary Hospital in Jerusalem

The establishment of the Teutonic Order was an act of desperation, desperation based not on a lack of knights, but on a lack of medical care. The crusading army besieging Acre in 1190 had been more than decimated by illness. The soldiers from northern Europe were not accustomed to the heat, the water, or the food and their sanitary conditions were completely unsatisfactory. Unable to bury the dead properly, they threw the bodies into the moat opposite the Accursed Tower with the rubble they were using to fill it, and the stink hung over the camp like a fog. Once taken by fever, the soldiers died like flies, their agony made worse by the
innumerable insects that buzzed around them or swarmed over their bodies. The regular hospital units, particularly the Knights of Saint John (better known as the Hospitallers), were overburdened and, moreover, favored their own nationals, the French and English. The Germans were left to their own devices.

Seeing that the situation was intolerable and would last indefinitely— the siege showed no sign of ending soon, and no monarch was coming east to demand that his subjects be better cared for by the established hospitals—a number of middle class crusaders from Bremen and Lübeck decided to found a hospital order that would care for the German sick. This initiative was warmly seconded by the most prominent of the German nobles, Duke Friedrich of Hohenstaufen. He wrote to his brother, the Emperor Henry VI, and also won the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Hospitallers, and the Templars over to the idea. They recommended to Pope Celestine that he approve the new monastic order, and he did so. The brothers were to do hospital work like the Hospitallers and to live under the Templar rule. The new foundation was to be named the Order of the Hospital of St. Mary of the Germans in Jerusalem. The name given the new Order implied a connection with an older establishment, one now practically defunct, but in fact there seems to have been no direct relationship. The members of the new Order avoided this tie, lest they fall under the control of the Hospitallers, who held supervisory rights over the older German hospital. Nevertheless, they do not seem to have discouraged visitors and crusaders from believing that their Order had a more ancient lineage. Everyone valued tradition and antiquity. Since many religious houses indulged in pious frauds to assert a claim to a more illustrious foundation, it is easy to understand that this new hospital Order would be tempted to do the same.

On November 19th, in the year 1190 and with the capture of Acre, the founders of the hospital were given a permanent site in the city. Pope Clement III confirmed this body as the "fratrum Theutonicorum ecclesiae S. Mariae Hiersolymitanae" by the Bull Quotiens postulatur of February 6, 1191 and, within a few years, the Order had developed as a Religious Military institution comparable to the Hospitallers and Templars, although initially subordinate to the Master of the Hospital. This subordination was confirmed in the Bull Dilecti filii of Pope Gregory IX of January 12, 1240 addressed to the "fratres hospitalis S. Mariae Theutonicorum in Accon". The distinct German character of this new Hospitaller Order and the protection given to it by the Emperor and German rulers enabled it to gradually assert a de facto independence from the Order of Saint John. The first Imperial grant came from Otto IV who gave the Order his protection on May 10, 1213 and this was followed almost immediately by a further confirmation by Frederick II on September 5, 1214. These Imperial confirmations each treated the Teutonic knights as independent from the Hospitallers. By the middle of the fourteenth century this independence was acknowledged by the Holy See.
In 1197, when the next German crusading army came to the Holy Land, it found the hospital flourishing and rendering invaluable service to its fellow-countrymen. Not only did the brothers care for the ill, but they provided hostels for the new arrivals, and money and food for those whose resources had become exhausted, or who had been robbed, or who had lost everything in battle. A significant contingent of the new army came from Bremen. Those crusaders lavished gifts upon the hospital they had helped to establish. As the visitors observed the relatively large number of brothers who had been trained as knights but who had been converted to a religious life while on crusade, they concluded that the Order could take on military duties similar to those of the Templars and Hospitallers.

The narrow strip of land that formed the crusader kingdom in the Holy Land was protected by a string of castles, but those castles were only weakly garrisoned. Many crusaders feared that a sudden Turkish onslaught might overrun them before relief could be brought from Europe. The knights who could support themselves on fiefs were far too few for effective defense, and the Italian merchants (the only significant middle-class residents committed to the western Church) were fully occupied by the need to patrol the sea lanes against Moslem piracy or blockade and the responsibility of garrisoning the seaports. Consequently, the defense of the country had come to be the duty of the crusading orders, the Templars and the Hospitallers, who had a formidable reputation as cruel and relentless warriors but whose numbers were insufficient to the task. Moreover, the two orders quarreled with one another to the detriment of the crusade. The Germans who came to Acre in 1197 decided that their hospital order could be of great help in garrisoning the frontier castles; therefore, they requested Pope Celestine III to reincorporate it as a military order. He agreed, issuing a new charter in 1198.

The Order's presence across mediaeval Europe enabled it to play a significant role in local political events. Despite the limitation of membership to the German nobility, the spread of German rule into Italy, notably in Sicily under Henry VI and Frederick II Barbarossa, led to the establishment of the Order's convents in places far distant from Germany. Sicily had been ruled by Saracens until the arrival of the Norman conquerors under the Hauteville family but the collapse of this dynasty led to their replacement by the German Hohenstaufens. The first Teutonic hospital, of Saint Thomas, was confirmed by the Emperor Henry VI in 1197 and, in the same year, the Emperor and Empress granted the knights their
request for possession of the Church of Santa Trinità in Palermo. Examination of grants of Sicilian properties to the three great crusader Orders in the period 1190-1220 indicates that the Teutonic knights were greater beneficiaries of imperial favor than either the Templars or Hospitallers. Furthermore, when Frederick II attained his majority he secured them the support of Pope Honorius III, who granted them numerous privileges confirming their equality with the other two great Crusader bodies. The Teutonic knights had first established themselves in Eastern Europe in 1211 after King Andrew of Hungary invited the knights to establish an outpost on the border of Transylvania. The warlike Cumans, who were also plaguing the Byzantine Empire to the south, were a constant threat and the Hungarians hoped that the knights would provide a buttress against their attacks. King Andrew granted them considerable autonomy over the lands they captured with a mission to Christianize the inhabitants, but their demands for effective independence proved unacceptable and they were ordered to leave in 1225.
The names "Guelph" and "Ghibelline" appear to have originated in Germany, in the rivalry between the house of Welf (Dukes of Bavaria, supporters of the Papal Party) and the house of Hohenstaufen (Dukes of Swabia, supporters of the Holy Roman emperors), whose ancestral castle was Waiblingen in Franconia. Agnes, daughter of Henry IV and sister of Henry V, married Duke Frederick of Swabia. "Welf" and "Waiblingen" were first used as rallying cries at the battle of Weinsberg (1140), where Frederick's son, Emperor Conrad III (1138-1152), defeated Welf, the brother of the rebellious Duke of Bavaria, Henry the Proud.

Welf Dynasty of German nobles and rulers who were the chief rivals of the Hohenstaufens in Italy and central Europe in the Middle Ages and who later included the Hanoverian Welfs, who, with the accession of George I to the British throne, became rulers of Great Britain.

The origin of the “Elder House” of Welf is a matter of controversy, since Welf in the Carolingian period seems to have been rather widespread as a baptismal name. The first clearly discernible ancestor of the dynasty is the Count Welf who had possessions in Bavaria in the first quarter of the 9th century and whose daughters Judith and Emma married, respectively, the Frankish emperor Louis I the Pious and the East Frankish king Louis the German. The best analyses of the evidence trace the Burgundian and the Swabian Welfs to two nephews of Judith and Emma, namely Conrad (d. c. 876) and the so-numbered Welf I (d. before 876). Conrad’s son Rudolf (d. 911 or 912) became king of Burgundy in 888, and this kingdom
remained with his descendants until 1032. Welf II (d. 1030), who was probably of the fifth generation from Welf I, had so strong a position in southern Germany that he and his son Welf III could occasionally defy the German kings.

Welf III was invested as duke of Carinthia in 1047, but died in 1055. His German possessions then passed to his nephew Welf IV (d. 1107), whose father was Alberto Azzo II of the House of Este. Welf IV began the “Younger House” of Welf.

**Welf IV** became duke of Bavaria as Welf I, in 1070. He abandoned his alliance with the Holy Roman emperor Henry IV to become an important supporter of the papal party in Italy. His 17-year-old son, Welf V (later Welf II of Bavaria), married the 43-year-old countess Matilda of Tuscany in 1089; the marriage ended in separation. The elder Welf thereupon appealed to Henry IV for help against Matilda. Henry attacked Matilda’s castle in Nogara, south of Verona, but abandoned the siege when Matilda’s army counterattacked. The Este family tried, in Welf V’s name, to claim Matilda’s lands after her death but were unsuccessful.

The Duchy of Bavaria passed, in 1156, to Henry the Lion, who held it until his downfall in 1180. Bavaria and Saxony, with great inheritances by marriages, made the Welfs the most potent rivals of the Hohenstaufen kings and emperors.

The German king and Holy Roman emperor Otto IV was a son of Henry the Lion. The Welf kingship collapsed with him; but the tradition of Welf hostility to the Hohenstaufen emperors led to the Italian use of a form of the name for a supporter of the papacy against the emperor. Reconciliation between Welfs and Hohenstaufens was achieved in 1235, when the emperor Frederick II enfeoffed Otto IV’s grandson, Otto the Child (d. 1252) with the duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg, a shrunken remnant of what his ancestors had held in Saxony.

In later times the Hanoverian Welfs attained the status of electors of the Holy Roman Empire (1692), kings of Great Britain (1714), and kings of Hanover (1814). The Russian emperor Ivan VI was a Welf of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel through his father.

The British sovereignty of the Welfs ended with Victoria. The descendants of her uncle Ernest Augustus lost Hanover in the Seven Weeks’ War of 1866. They ought to have inherited Brunswick (-Wolfenbüttel) in 1884, but because they refused to acknowledge their loss of right to Hanover, the duke of Cumberland Ernest Augustus (1845–1923) was prevented from taking possession. After the marriage of his son Ernest Augustus (1887–1953) to Victoria Louise, daughter of the German
emperor William II, they reigned over Brunswick alone until in the revolution after World War I they were forced to abdicate.

Conrad’s nephew and successor, Frederick I "Barbarossa" (1152-1190), attempted to reassert the imperial authority over the Italian cities, and to exercise supremacy over the papacy itself. He recognized an antipope, Victor, in opposition to the legitimate sovereign pontiff, Alexander III (1159), and destroyed Milan (1162), but was signally defeated by the forces of the Lombard League at the battle of Legnano (1176) and compelled to agree to the peace of Constance (1183), by which the liberties of the Italian communes were secured. The mutual jealousies of the Italian cities themselves, however, prevented the treaty from having permanent results for the independence and unity of the nation.

After the death of Frederick's son and successor, Henry VI (1197), a struggle ensued in Germany and in Italy between the rival claimants for the Empire: Henry's brother, Philip of Swabia (d. 1208), and Otho of Bavaria. According to the more probable theory, it was then that the names of the factions were introduced into Italy. "Guelfo" and "Ghibellino" being the Italian forms of "Welf" and "Waiblingen". The princes of the house of Hohenstaufen being the constant opponents of the papacy, "Guelph" and "Ghibelline" were taken to denote adherents of Church and Empire, respectively. The popes having favoured and fostered the growth of the communes, the Guelphs were in the main the republican, commercial, burgher party; the Ghibellines represented the old feudal aristocracy of Italy. For the most part the latter were descended from Teutonic families planted in the peninsula by the Germanic invasions (of the past), and they naturally looked to the emperors as their protectors against the growing power and pretensions of the cities. It is, however, clear that these names were merely adopted to designate parties that, in one form or another, had existed from the end of the eleventh century.

In the endeavor to realize the precise signification of these terms, one must consider the local politics and the special conditions of each individual state and town. Thus, in Florence, a family quarrel between the Buondelmonti and the Amidei, in 1215, led traditionally to the introduction of "Guelph" and "Ghibelline" to mark off the two parties that henceforth kept the city divided; but the factions themselves had virtually existed since the death of the great Countess Mathilda of Tuscany (1115), a hundred years before, had left the republic at liberty to work out its own destinies.

The rivalry of city against city was also, in many cases, a more potent inducement for one to declare itself Guelph and another Ghibelline, than any specially papal or imperial proclivities on the part of its citizens. Pavia was Ghibelline, because Milan was Guelph. Florence being the head of the Guelph league in Tuscany, Lucca was Guelph because it needed Florentine protection; Siena was Ghibelline, because it
sought the support of the emperor against the Florentines and against the rebellious nobles of its own territory; Pisa was Ghibelline, partly from hostility to Florence, partly from the hope of rivalling with imperial aid the maritime glories of Genoa. In many cities a Guelph faction and a Ghibelline faction alternately got the upper hand, drove out its adversaries, destroyed their houses and confiscated their possessions. Venice, which had aided Alexander III against Frederick I, owed no allegiance to the Western empire, and naturally stood apart.

One of the last acts of Frederick I had been to secure the marriage of his son Henry with Constance, aunt and heiress of William the Good, the last of the Norman kings of Naples and Sicily. The son of this marriage, Frederick II (b. 1194), thus inherited this South Italian kingdom, hitherto a bulwark against the imperial Germanic power in Italy, and was defended in his possession of it against the Emperor Otto by Pope Innocent III, to whose charge he had been left as a ward by his mother. On the death of Otto (1218), Frederick became emperor, and was crowned in Rome by Honorius III (1220).

The danger, to the papacy and to Italy alike, of the union of Naples and Sicily (a vassal kingdom of the Holy See) with the empire, was obvious; and Frederick, when elected King of the Romans, had sworn not to unite the southern kingdom with the German crown. His neglect of this pledge, together with the misunderstandings concerning his crusade, speedily brought about a fresh conflict between the Empire and the Church. The prolonged struggle carried on by the successors of Honorius, from Gregory IX to Clement IV, against the last Swabian princes, mingled with the worst excesses of the Italian factions on either side, is the central and most typical phase of the Guelph and Ghibelline story. From 1227, when first excommunicated by Gregory IX, to the end of his life, Frederick had to battle incessantly with the popes, the second Lombard League, and the Guelph party in general throughout Italy.

The Genoese fleet, conveying the French cardinals and prelates to a council summoned at Rome, was destroyed by the Pisans at the battle of Meloria (1241); and Gregory's successor, Innocent IV, was compelled to take refuge in France (1245). The atrocious tyrant, Ezzelino da Romano, raised up a bloody despotism in Verona and Padua; the Guelph nobles were temporarily expelled from Florence; but Frederick's favourite son, King Enzio of Sardinia, was defeated and captured by the Bolognese (1249), and the strenuous opposition of the Italians proved too much for the imperial power.

After the death of Frederick (1250), it seemed as if his illegitimate son, Manfred, King of Naples and Sicily (1254-1266), himself practically an Italian, was about to unite all Italy into a Ghibelline, anti-papal monarchy. Although in the north the Ghibelline supremacy was checked by the victory of the Marquis Azzo d'Este over
Ezzelino at Cassano on the Adda (1259), in Tuscany even Florence was lost to the Guelph cause by the sanguinary battle of Montaperti (4 Sept., 1260), celebrated in Dante's poem. Urban IV then offered Manfred's crown to Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis of France. Charles came to Italy, and by the great victory of Benevento (26 Feb., 1266), at which Manfred was killed, established a French dynasty upon the throne of Naples and Sicily. The defeat of Frederick's grandson, Conradin, at the battle of Tagliacozzo (1268) followed by his judicial murder at Naples by the command of Charles, marks the end of the struggle and the overthrow of the German imperial power in Italy for two and a half centuries.

Thus the struggle ended in the complete triumph of the Guelphs. Florence, once more free and democratic, had established a special organization within the republic, known as the Parte Guelfa, to maintain Guelph principles and chastise supposed Ghibellines. Siena, hitherto the stronghold of Ghibellinism in Tuscany, became Guelph after the battle of Colle di Valdelsa (1269). The pontificate of the saintly and pacific Gregory X (1271-1276) tended to dissociate the Church from the Guelph party, which now began to look more to the royal house of France. Although they lost Sicily by the "Vespers of Palermo" (1282), the Angevin kings of Naples remained the chief power in Italy, and the natural leaders of the Guelphs, with whose aid they had won their crown.

Adherence to Ghibelline principles was still maintained by the republics of Pisa and Arezzo, the Della Scala family at Verona, and a few petty despots here and there in Romagna and elsewhere. No great ideals of any kind were by this time at stake. As Dante declares in the "Paradiso" (canto vi), one party opposed to the imperial eagle the golden lilies, and the other appropriated the eagle to a faction, "so that it is hard to see which sinneth most". The intervention of Boniface VIII in the politics of Tuscany, when the predominant Guelphs of Florence split into two new factions, was the cause of Dante's exile (1301), and drove him for a while into the ranks of the Ghibellines.

The next pope, Benedict XI (1303-1304), made earnest attempts to reconcile all parties; but the "Babylonian Captivity" of his successors at Avignon augmented the divisions of Italy. From the death of Frederick II (1250) to the election of Henry VII (1308), the imperial throne was regarded by the Italians as vacant. Henry himself was a chivalrous and high minded idealist, who hated the very names of Guelph and Ghibelline; his expedition to Italy (1310-1313) roused much temporary enthusiasm (reflected in the poetry of Dante and Cino da Pistoia), but he was successfully resisted by King Robert of Naples and the Florentines. After his death, imperial vicars made themselves masters of various cities. Uguccione della Faggiuola (d. 1320), for a brief while lord of Pisa "in marvellous glory", defeated the allied forces of Naples and Florence at the battle of Montecatini (29 Aug., 1315), a
famous Guelph overthrow that has left its traces in the popular poetry of the fourteenth century.

Cangrande della Scala (d. 1339), Dante's friend and patron, upheld the Ghibelline cause with magnanimity in eastern Lombardy; while Matteo Visconti (d. 1322) established a permanent dynasty in Milan, which became a sort of Ghibelline counterbalance to the power of the Angevin Neapolitans in the south. Castruccio Interminelli (d. 1328), a soldier of fortune who became Duke of Lucca, attempted the like in central Italy; but his signory perished with him. Something of the old Guelph and Ghibelline spirit revived during the struggle between Ludwig of Bavaria and Pope John XXII; Ludwig set up an antipope, and was crowned in Rome by a representative of the Roman people, but his conduct disgusted his own partisans. In the poetry of Fazio degli Uberti (d. after 1368), a new Ghibellinism makes itself heard: Rome declares that Italy can only enjoy peace when united beneath the scepter of one Italian king.

(Above picture: Cangrande della Scala at the age of eighteen married Giovanna of Swabia, daughter of Corrado Caputo of Antioch, and great granddaughter of Frederick II Hohenstaufen, Costanza, her sister, married, some time back, Bartolomeo della Scala)

Before the return of the popes from Avignon, "Guelph" and "Ghibelline" had lost all real significance. Men called themselves Guelph or Ghibelline, and even fought furiously under those names, simply because their forbears had adhered to one or other of the factions. In a city which had been officially Guelph in the past, any minority opposed to the government of the day, or obnoxious to the party in power, would be branded as "Ghibelline". Thus, in 1364, we find it enacted by the Republic of Florence that anyone who appeals to the pope or his legate or the cardinals shall be declared a Ghibelline. "There are no more wicked nor more mad folk under the vault of heaven than the Guelphs and Ghibellines", says St. Bernardino of Siena in 1427. He gives an appalling picture of the atrocities still perpetrated, even by women, under these names, albeit by that time the primitive signification of the terms had been lost, and declares that the mere professing to belong to either party is in itself a mortal sin. As party catch-words they survived, still attended with bloody consequences, until the coming to Italy of Charles V (1529) finally re-established the imperial power, and opened a new epoch in the relations of pope and emperor.

J. A. Symonds thus describes the constituents of the two parties: "The Guelph party meant the burghers of the consular Communes, the men of industry and commerce, the upholders of civil liberty, the friends of democratic expansion. The Ghibelline party included the naturalized nobles, the men of arms and idleness, the
advocates of feudalism, the politicians who regarded constitutional progress with disfavor. That the banner of the church floated over the one camp, while the standard of the empire rallied to itself the hostile party, was a matter of comparatively superficial moment." In another passage the same writer thus describes the sharp and universal division between Guelph and Ghibelline: "Ghibellines wore the feathers in their caps upon one side, Guelphs upon the other. Ghibellines cut fruit at table crosswise, Guelphs straight down. .. Ghibellines drank out of smooth and Guelphs out of chased goblets. Ghibellines wore white and Guelphs red roses."

It is interesting to note that while Dante was a Ghibelline, Petrarch was a Guelph.

**Holy Roman Emperors - The Welf and Hohenstaufen Dynasties (1056 - 1254)**
Constance de Hauteville was a royal personage: a queen and the daughter, wife, cousin, aunt and mother of kings. Yet not until her fortieth year did she assert herself in a truly regal manner.

Her father was King Roger II of Sicily, in the direct line from the first Norman conquerors of Sicily and southern Italy. These were the Hauteville, sons of Constance's great-grandfather, Tancred de Hauteville. They came down from their native Normandy in the eleventh century to seek their fortunes in the turbulent politics of southern Italy, and founded a dynasty that ruled in Sicily for 200 years.

Constance, a tall, fair-haired princess, was brought up in sunny Mediterranean climes. She reluctantly left her elegant palace in Palermo at thirty-two for a political marriage to twenty-one year old Henry VI (the cruel) of Germany, son of Frederick Barbarossa, Holy Roman Emperor. She tried to become a good German queen. Living in the shadow of her flamboyant husband, she dutifully accompanied him on his travels about Germany, but it was a loveless marriage. Scorned for being childless, nostalgic for her homeland, she set out with Henry in the winter 1194 on his expedition to conquer the southern kingdom for Germany in her name; she was the legitimate heir to Sicily after the death of her cousin William II. Long after everybody had given up hope of an heir, she became pregnant during the journey. She halted at the small Italian town of Jesi when her time was at hand. She knew there'd be doubts if she was really the mother of the child, in view of her age (forty) and her long years of being "The Barren Queen."

Constance was following her husband for his second expedition in Italy where he came to claim the Kingdom of Italy from the last illegitimate king of the Hauteville Dynasty, Tancred Count of Lecce. Henry VI was granted the loyalty of Naples, a city that he had sieged with no success on his previous expedition, and proceeded to Salerno to take revenge on the Salernitans to whom he had entrusted Constance at the end of his 1191 expedition and who delivered her to Tancred, his enemy.
Celestin III had convinced Tancred to return the Empress to Henry via Rome, but on the way from Naples to Rome the heavily escorted party was by a group of Imperial Knights: Constance was quick to put herself under their protection. The escorting Cardinals protested, to no avail, and she then went back to Germany. But that did not save the Salernitans from Henry's revenge, which was carried out in full observance of the customs of the time, against "traitors": the city was heavily pillaged, the walls demolished all the properties and treasures of the Salernitans were confiscated. The Salernitans were left devastated, as an example for any other city fostering treacherous ideas.

**Jesi, Frederick birth place**

Henry VI was already in Palermo and Constance was following him at a more relaxed pace, due to her advanced pregnancy. When the party arrived in Jesi the Empress had to stop to deliver the baby.

In the 24th day of December, in the year 1194, treachery and vengeance were abroad in the land of Sicily. Henry the Emperor had given fair promises to the wife, the children and the followers of the usurper Tancred, and enticed them into his power. There followed a mockery of judgment and a bloody assize. The boy William, the usurper's son, was deprived of his manhood by mutilation, blinded with hot irons, and sent with his mother and sisters to a dungeon in the Alps. The prelates and barons who had fallen into the snare of the fowler were tortured, burnt, buried alive, or more mercifully hanged. On the same day that the Emperor was enjoying this barbarous revenge a man-child was born to him in Jesi, a town of Apulia.

In anticipation, therefore, of the calumnies which might arise, she gave as much publicity to the actual entrance of the child into the world as decency and her Imperial dignity would allow. This, however, was not sufficient to silence lying tongues, and the rumor was spread that the Empress had passed the age of child-bearing and that the son of a butcher of Jesi had been brought into her bed and passed off as her own child. Unwilling to allow her son Frederick to be burdened with the weight of this slander, the Imperial mother laid aside her pride and, before an audience of Italian matrons, underwent a humiliating ordeal to prove that she was still capable of the honors of maternity. Her brave conduct
was rewarded by the virtual suppression of the calumny, though once or twice it was raised from its obscurity by the more hysterical of Frederick's enemies. In order to avoid any insinuation the delivery was held in public under a large marquise tent, erected in the main square of Jesi so that everybody could see that it was actually the Empress delivering the legitimate royal heir. This happened on December 26th 1194 while Henry VI was crowned in Palermo on December 25th 1194.

Henry VI, at first, seems to accept the choice of his wife to name the child of Constantine, in the summer of 1196; the child was elected King of the Romans by the German princes at the Diet of Frankfurt. Some months later, when the time of the baptismal ceremony, held in Assisi, respecting the priority of the family home in Salic law enforcement, the future ruler name was baptized "in cumulande auspiciam probitatis" by Frederick Roger Constantine with the names of his two grandfathers (Frederick Barbarossa Hohenstaufen and Roger II d'Hauteville), "to indicate this in the future guidance of the German princes and grandson of Frederick Barbarossa," Roger "to emphasize the legitimate claim to the crown of the Kingdom of Sicily as a descendant of Roger II of Sicily and "Constantine" to ally with the Church of Rome in the Middle Ages indicated the source of his own earthly authority. That was the second and last time that Henry VI saw his son.

Henry VI died in 1196 when Frederick was only two years old and Constance died in 1198 when he was four. The young Frederick was crowned King of Sicily, before her death, in 1198 and left by the wise mother under the tutorship of the Pope Innocent III. Notwithstanding her wisdom, Constance could not cope with the rapaciousness of the German barons headed by Markward von Anweiler, whom she hated, and with the conspiracies of the Roman clerics. Nevertheless, she managed to arrange things in such a way that the young Frederick survived and escaped the many plots to kill him, organized by the barons and by other claimants to the title of German Emperor Otto von Braunschweig, Philip von Schwaben.

**Pope Innocent III**

The present holder of that dignity, Innocent III, was the most vigorous character who had occupied the Chair of St. Peter since the days of Hildebrand. He raised the power of the Papacy to a height that it had never before attained and never afterwards excelled. Before his death in 1216 he had secured the complete vassalage of the King of Aragon; he had gained a signal triumph over the proud Philip Augustus of France and compelled him, after a protracted excommunication, to reinstate his divorced wife; he had become the over-lord of the crafty John of England, and
although the sturdy patriotism of the English barons saved that coun-try from
becoming a mere fief of the Papacy, she con-tinued for sixty years to be the
treasure-house of Rome, and was drained of her wealth to provide the Popes with
the resources for their struggle with the Emperors.

Innocent, therefore, seemed a powerful protector for the young Frederick, and he
was perfectly willing, in his capacity as the father of orphans, to take the child
under his protection. His motives, however, were very far from disinterested, and
he seized the opportunity offered by the friendless position of the child and his
mother to drive a very hard bargain with Constance. He revived a baseless claim
which the Papacy had long made to the overlordship of Sicily and Apulia, and
granted them back to the Empress and her son as his vassals. The lands are thus
detailed in Innocent’s letter: “The Kingdom of Sicily, the Duchy of Apulia and
Principality of Capua, with all its appurtenances, Naples, Salerno and Amalfi, with
their appurtenances, Marcia and the other lands be-yond Marcia, to which the
Royal pair have a right”.

A Legate was sent to receive the oath of fealty and homage from the new vassals of
Rome. They were further required to pay a yearly tribute, and this was to be
supplemented, during Frederick’s minority, by a pay-ment of 30,000 golden tarins
and whatever the Pope might expend in the defense of the Kingdom. The Crown
was to surrender its claim to the nomination of bishops, who were henceforth to
have the right to appeal from the King to Rome. Lastly, the clergy were to be judged
by their own courts in all cases except high treason.

The protection bought at so heavy a price was soon urgently needed. Constance
died at the end of 1198 and bequeathed the four-year-old orphan to the
guardianship of Innocent. The Pope wrote a letter of consolation to his young ward,
wherein he said: “God has not spared the rod; he has taken away your father and
mother: yet He has given you a worthier father, His Vicar, and a better mother, the
Church”. In days to come, the Church, as Milman remarks, was to act rather as the
stepmother than the mother of Frederick.

For three years after the death of Constance the confusion in the Kingdom was so
great that Frederick was without a home. One chronicle tells us that he was passed
about between the houses of the burghers of Palermo, staying a week at one, a
month at another, according to the means of his hosts. It was in one of these houses
that he was visited by a strange and prophetic dream that seemed to foreshadow
his future struggles with Rome. He was heard one night to cry out loudly in his
sleep: “I cannot! I cannot!” and when he was questioned the next morning, he
replied: “I seemed to be eating all the bells in the world, and I saw one great bell,
which I tried to swallow, but it seemed to kill me; and on that account I cried out”.
Meanwhile Innocent was not idle in Frederick's cause, which, through his overlordship, had now become largely his own. The first enemy to be subdued was Markwald, who had followed Henry from Germany into the South, and had afterwards, with many other German barons, betrayed an active reluctance to leave these fair lands, which afforded so tempting a prey to the adventurer. On the death of Constance he had claimed the regency of Sicily and gathered around his banner all the German intruders. Innocent excommunicated him and his robbers in vain. The Saracens of the mountains allied themselves with Markwald in the cause of anarchy, and the Pope was compelled to send an army into Sicily. In 1200 the two forces met before the walls of Palermo, from which the child Frederick was an anxious spectator of the bloody battle that ensued. Victory fell to the Pope's general and was followed by a further success. Two years later the death of Markwald freed Frederick from one of his enemies.

**Frederick Childhood**

The young Frederick was now installed in the royal palace of Palermo and his private education commenced. The Archbishop of Taranto and the notary John of Trajetto were entrusted with the general supervision of his studies. Legends abound of his childhood in Palermo, then a city of stupendous gardens and beautiful Norman Arab architecture. He learned social survival but also respect for various peoples and religions (Christian, Muslim, Jewish), acquiring a good knowledge of Arabic, Greek, Latin, Italian, Sicilian, German and Norman French. In Palermo, the stories tell us, Frederick could listen and learn from returning sailors and merchants of exotic foreign lands and customs to the south and east. He could learn from scholars, philosophers, historians, artisans, chroniclers, astrologers and animal trainers (there was a large zoo of "foreign" beasts), and he cultivated a passion for falconry, about which he wrote a guide.

The Kingdom of Sicily was practically abandoned to the greediness of the German/Sicilian barons and the Roman clergy. Frederick grew up in a very freeway receiving some basic education from unknown masters (Gregorio da Galgano, Guglielmo Francesco), but he was mainly educated by the streets of Palermo and by himself. His preferred reading was the history of Imperial Rome. He was fluent in Arabic, Latin, Greek, vulgar Italian, French, Jewish and German.

The young King had now a royal palace for home and servants around him, but in other respects his position was still unhappy. He was king only in name, and was desperately poor; he was surrounded by intrigue; his person was the objective of every ambitious adventurer who sought to assume the title of Regent; his dominions were devastated by anarchy. It would be tedious to relate all the conflicts which raged throughout Sicily and Southern Italy for several years; but some idea of the miserable state of affairs by which the child was surrounded may
be gathered from this quaint and pathetic letter which he addressed to the Kings of Europe in his tenth or eleventh year:

"To all the Kings of the world, and to all the Princes of the universe, from the innocent boy, King of Sicily, called Frederick; greeting in God’s name.

"Assemble yourselves, ye nations; draw nigh, ye kings; hasten hither, ye princes, and see if any sorrow be Ike unto my sorrow! My parents died ere I could know their caresses; I did not deserve to see their faces; and I, like a gentle lamb among wolves, fell into slavish dependence upon men of various tribes and tongues. I, the offspring of so august a union, was handed over to servants of all sorts, who presumed to draw lots for my garments and for my royal person. Germans, Tuscans, Sicilians, barbarians, conspired to worry me. My daily bread, my drink, my freedom, are all measured out to me in scanty proportion. No king am I; I am ruled in-stead of ruling; I beg favours instead of granting them. My subjects are silly and quarrelsome. Since, therefore, my Redeemer liveth, and can raise me out of such a pool of misery, again and again I beseech you, O ye princes of the earth, to aid me to withstand slaves, to set free the son of Caesar, to raise up the Crown of my kingdom, and to gather together again the scattered people! Unless you avenge me, you yourselves will fall into like dangers”.

Physically fit, not too tall and of handsome proportions, with auburn hair and blue eyes, he was agile and swift, good with the bow and with the sword: a dangerous training partner because he was often carried away by the passion of the fight. Frederick grew up spoiled by the citizens of Palermo who were impressed by the natural authority that the young boy showed.

Fredrick first marriage
By 1208, however, a measure of peace was restored to the unhappy Kingdom, and the Pope determined to secure a matrimonial alliance for his ward. Frederick had narrowly escaped the bonds of wedlock when only eight years old. Innocent had attempted to gain for him the hand of a sister of the Pedro (Peter) King of Aragon, but the negotiations were prolonged for several years, until finally the proposed bride died. Her elder sister was then chosen in her place, and in 1208 Innocent wrote to Pedro urging him to delay the match no longer. “Your sister”, ran the Papal missive, “will have a noble husband, the offspring of Emperors and Kings; he is of royal blood both by father and mother. He is endowed with virtues beyond his years; he is passing from the gate of boyhood into years of discretion at a quicker pace than usual, whence we may expect the happiest results. His Kingdom is rich and noble; it is the navel and harbor of other realms; it will be of advantage to Aragon, and it is especially beloved by us, being the peculiar possession of the successor of St. Peter”.
The proposed match was one that is curious enough to modern eyes. The boy Frederick was only fourteen and a half years of age. The lady, Constance, was at any rate ten years his senior and was a widow. She had married the King of Hungary and borne him a child when her second husband was only nine.

The Pope first prearranged Frederick’s marriage with Sancha of Aragon. In fact, he ended up by marrying Constance of Aragon, Sancha's sister. This marriage main reason was the promise of an endowment of 500 Spanish knights whom he badly needed to bring his Kingdom under his control after the chaotic years of the regency.

Frederick immediately clashed with Innocent III on the issue of the election of the Sicilian Bishops trying to reclaim the privilege that the illegitimate Norman king Tancred had yielded just two years before. He lost this first confrontation, but gave a clear sign of what was to be his policy toward the Papacy for the rest of his life. In the spring of 1209 he undertook a journey through the Island to punish the rebels and to show, beyond any doubt, who was in control. In his own words: "The sons of the rebellion, those who hated peace, have been dealt with and they now are on their knees under my yoke." In August 1209 the bride arrived in Palermo with the 500 knights: they did not resist the heat and the water and most of them died, probably of dysentery, in the course of only a few days. Also, the brother of Constance (Alphonse Count of Provence) was taken ill and succumbed. The expedition on the continent to secure the rest of the Kingdom (Apulia, Naples and Calabria) had to be postponed. A plot of the Sicilian Barons to kill him was unveiled and the head of the plot captured and dealt with: traitors were blinded with a hot blade stuck into their eyes. It was also a good opportunity to confiscate all the properties of the unfaithful to the advantage of the crown.

The improvement of his prospects, the dignity of matrimony and the change from childhood to adolescence now made Frederick yearn for a little more independence and power. The new Queen, moreover, was apparently a lady of considerable spirit and encouraged her husband in his increasing dislike of the Pope's too officious overlordship, which was very much in evidence at the Sicilian Court. Soon after his marriage we hear of the first acts of rebellion on the part of Frederick against his guardian’s authority. The bishopric of Palermo became vacant, and the Canons for some reason betrayed a great reluctance to proceed to the election of a successor. Frederick urged them to fulfill their duty and, as they still delayed, commanded them to elect his own nominee. The Canons refused and appealed to the Pope,
whereupon the young King flew into a royal passion and banished them from the Kingdom. This act called forth a strong letter of rebuke from Innocent. “We are amazed”, he wrote, “at the conduct of your advisers. Do not usurp our office in things spiritual; be content with the temporal power which you hold from us. Beware of the doom of Uzzah and Uzziah; lay not hands upon the Ark! It is quite a mistake on your part to think that we conferred to your mother that privilege concerning appeals to Rome by the Sicilian Clergy, of which you speak; we refused it on her sending ambassadors to us. Do you persevere in your reverence to Rome and recall the Canons”.

We do not know whether Frederick yielded to the demand of Innocent, but next year he again displeased the Pope. Queen Constance urged him to dismiss the Chancellor of the Kingdom, who had been appointed by Innocent and betrayed too great an anxiety for self-aggrandizement. He was accordingly banished from the Court and another letter of admonishment was the result. “As you are now past the age of childhood”, wrote Innocent, “You should put away childish things. . . . The Bishop of Catania, Chancellor of the Realm, has been your guardian hitherto and has undergone many tears and sorrows on your behalf. But now, forgetful of his services, you take no notice of him. . . . Recall the Chancellor forthwith and take his advice henceforth; let no one assails him, or we shall take it as an outrage done to ourselves”. Frederick, however, refused to obey these haughty commands, and the Chancellor was not recalled.

**Otto of Brunswick Conflict with Philip of Swabia**

Early in the year 1212 the young Frederick, who was now seventeen, was presented by his wife with a son. The infant was named Henry and was crowned at Palermo as joint ruler of the Kingdom with his father. Frederick’s position was now daily improving and his authority was respected throughout Sicily, if not on the mainland. He was able to reward faithful followers with grants of various kinds. The Church in Sicily and Apulia was specially favored. The Teutonic Order of Knights, which had been formed shortly after the death of Barbarossa to succor the sick and wounded German crusaders and pilgrims, received various lands and privileges.

Some few weeks after the birth of Frederick’s son a summons came from Germany which was to effect a rapid and considerable change in his fortunes. On the death of the Emperor Henry VI, and the election which ensued, the infant son of that
Emperor had been entirely ignored as a possible claimant to the throne, in spite of an oath which had been sworn to Henry by many of the Electors.

Otto IV of Brunswick (1175 – May 19, 1218) was one of two rival kings of the Holy Roman Empire from 1198 on, sole king from 1208 on, and emperor from 1209 on. The only king of the Welf dynasty, he incurred the wrath of Pope Innocent III and was excommunicated in 1215.

Otto was the third son of Henry the Lion, Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, and Matilda Plantagenet. His exact birthplace is not given by any original source.

He grew up in England in the care of his grandfather King Henry II. Otto became a friend of Richard I of England, who attempted to make him Earl of York in 1190, and, through marriage with Margaret, king of Scotland. Both attempts failed, and so in 1196, he was made Count of Poitou. He participated in the war against France on the side of Richard.

After the death of Emperor Henry VI, the majority of the princes of the Empire, situated in the south, elected Henry’s brother, Philip, Duke of Swabia, king in March 1198, after receiving money and promises from Philip in exchange for their support. Those princes opposed to the Staufen dynasty also decided, on the initiative of Richard of England, to elect instead a member of the House of Welf. Otto's elder brother, Henry, was on a crusade at the time, and so the choice fell to Otto. Otto, soon recognized over the north-west and the lower Rhine region, was elected king by his partisans in Cologne on June 9, 1198. Otto took control of Aachen, the place of coronation, and was crowned by Adolf, Archbishop of Cologne, on July 12, 1198. This was of great symbolic importance, since the Archbishop of Cologne alone could crown the King of the Romans. Nevertheless, the coronation was done with fake regalia, because the actual materials were in the hands of the Staufen.

Philip of Swabia (German: Philipp von Schwaben; August 1177 – 21 June 1208) was a prince of the House of Hohenstaufen. He was elector Bishop of Würzburg in 1190 and 1191, Margrave of Tuscany from 1195 to 1197, Duke of Swabia from 1196 to 1208, and King of the Germans from 1198 to 1208. He was the first King of the Germans to be assassinated.

(Philip of Swabia Hohenstaufen, German king 1198 - 1208, portrait, drawing after sculpture, Regensburg)

Philip was the fifth and youngest son of Emperor Frederick I and Beatrice I, Countess of Burgundy,
daughter of Renaud III, count of Burgundy, and brother of the emperor Henry VI. He entered the clergy, was made provost of Aix la Chapelle, and in 1190 or 1191 was chosen bishop of Würzburg. Having accompanied his brother Henry to Italy in 1191, Philip forsook his ecclesiastical calling and, travelling again to Italy, was made duke of Tuscany in 1195 and received an extensive grant of lands. In his retinue in Italy was the Minnesinger Bernger von Horheim.

In 1196 Philip became duke of Swabia, on the death of his brother Conrad; and in May 1197 he married the Dowager Queen of Sicily, Irene Angelina, daughter of the Byzantine emperor Isaac II and widow of King Roger III of Sicily, a lady who is described by Walther von der Vogelweide as "the rose without a thorn, the dove without guile".

Philip enjoyed his brother's confidence to a very great extent, and appears to have been designated as guardian of the Henry's young son Frederick, afterwards the emperor Frederick II, in case of his father's early death. In 1197 he had set out to fetch Frederick from Sicily for his coronation as King of the Germans when he heard of the emperor's death and returned at once to Germany. He appears to have desired to protect the interests of his nephew and to quell the disorder which arose on Henry's death, but was overtaken by events. The hostility to the kingship of a child was growing, and after Philip had been chosen as defender of the empire during Frederick's minority he consented to his own election. He was elected German king at Mühlhausen on 8 March 1198 and was crowned at Mainz on 8 September of the same year.

The papacy meanwhile, under Innocent III, determined to prevent the continued unification of Sicily and the Holy Roman Empire under one monarch seized the opportunity to extend its influence. Therefore, Innocent III favored Otto, whose family had always been opposed to the house of Hohenstaufen. Otto himself also seemed willing to grant any demands that Innocent would make. The confusion in the Empire allowed Innocent to drive out the imperial feudal lords from Ancona, Spoleto and Perugia, who had been installed by Emperor Henry VI. At the same time, Innocent encouraged the cities in Tuscany to form a league, called the League of San Genesio against Imperial interests in Italy, and they placed themselves under Innocent's protection. In 1201, Innocent announced that he recognized Otto as the only legitimate king. In return, Otto promised to support the pope's interests in Italy. Otto also had the support of Ottokar I, the king of Bohemia, who although at first siding with Philip of Swabia, eventually threw in his lot with Otto. Otto's cause was further strengthened by the support of the Danish king, Valdemar II. But Philip achieved a great deal of success in the civil war that followed, allowing him in 1204 to be again crowned king, this time by the archbishop of Cologne.
A civil war immediately broke out between the two rival claimants and raged with extraordinary violence for twelve years. It was an age of cruelty, and the mutual hatred of Hohenstaufen and Guelf found expression in the most barbarous reprisals, in which neither age nor sex was spared. A young nun who fell into the hands of some Guelf soldiers was stripped naked, smeared with honey, rolled in feathers and paraded through the streets on horseback with her face to the tail. These same soldiers were then captured by Philip’s supporters and bailed in hot water for punishment. The Abbot of Gall seized six of the principal burghers of Arbon and cut off their feet, in revenge for a similar mutilation inflicted on one of his servants, whose only offence was that he had been found stealing fuel in a forest. These are merely instances of the savagery with which the war was pursued.

Otto's election pulled the empire into the conflict between England and France, since Philip had allied himself with the French king, Philip II, and Otto was supported at first by Richard I, and after his death in 1199, by his brother John.

In the following years, Otto's situation worsened because after England's defeat by France he lost England's financial support. Many of his allies changed sides to Philip, including his brother Henry. Otto was defeated and wounded in battle by Philip on July 27, 1206, near Wassenberg, and as a consequence also lost the support of the pope, who began to favor the apparent winner in the conflict. Otto was forced to retire to his possessions near Braunschweig, leaving Philip virtually uncontested as German king.

**The Murder of Phillip of Swabia**

Pope Innocent III forced the two warring parties into negotiations at Cologne, and in exchange for renouncing his claim to the throne; Philip promised Otto the hand of his daughter Beatrix in marriage, together with the Duchy of Swabia and an enormous dowry if he would but give up his claim to the crown. Otto, however, would have none of them. "Death alone shall make me give up the crown," he said. Otto refused, and as the civil war was again about to recommence.

But Philip was a brave and kindly man, and his people grew to love him. So one by one Otto's friends fell away from him, until at length it became plain that his cause was lost. Even the Pope forsook him, and made peace with Philip. The end of the strife seemed near.

(Philip of Swabia depicted in a medieval manuscript, about 1200)

Philip was murdered on June 8; 1208.
Otto, already known for his unstable character, fell into a rage when he learned of the dissolution of his betrothal to Gertrude of Silesia by her father, Duke Henry I the Bearded of Lower Silesia. Henry was apparently informed of the Wittelsbach's cruel tendencies and in an act of concern for his young daughter decided to terminate the marriage agreement. Otto proceeded to blame Philip, without grounds, for another spurned marriage alliance (the first being to Philip's own daughter, Beatrice) and swore revenge on the German King, culminating in the murder at Bamberg. Philip was there for a wedding resting in his palace at Bamberg. His Niece married the brother of the bishop. A loud knock was heard at the door. Immediately after it was thrown rudely open, and Count Otto of Wittelsbach strode into the room, drawn sword in hand.

Otto of Wittelsbach was a wild young noble, famed for his lawless and insolent deeds. He was forever at strife with his neighbors, and he rode about the country with a rope at his girdle ready to hang anyone who roused his wrath. Once in a weak moment Philip had promised him his daughter in marriage, but finding him so wild and passionate he had withdrawn his promise. For that Otto had never forgiven the King.

Now as Philip saw this fiery young Count stride into the room with drawn sword in hand, he raised himself on his elbow. "Put up your sword," he said sternly; "this is no place to use it."

Passionately the Count sprang forward. "It is the place to punish your treachery," he cried. And with a quick lunge of the sword he pierced the King in the throat. With a cry Philip rose, staggered forward a few steps, and fell lifeless to the ground. Only two men were with the King, a bishop and his chamberlain. The bishop fled in terror, the chamberlain, drawn sword in hand, sprang upon the murderer; but, with a second sword stroke, Otto wounded him also, so that he felt helpless to the ground. Then he fled from the room, sprang upon his horse, and galloped madly away.

For some time the murderer wandered about, fleeing from place to place, hunted and hounded by all. No town would receive him; in neither castle nor cottage could he find refuge. Otto was hunted for almost half a year. The Bishop of Bamberg
meanwhile had to flee to Hungary, where his sister was queen. He was accused of a plot to murder the king and could only come back after several years of exile.

(Above right picture: King Philip of Swabia killed by County Otto VIII of Wittelsbach in Bamberg, Scarpelli, Tancredi (1866-1937) / Private Collection / © Look and Learn / The Bridgeman Art Library)

**Queen Irene Angelina, Philip's wife**

Irene Angelina (c.1181–1208) was the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Isaac II Angelos by his first wife, Herina.

In 1193 she married Roger III of Sicily, but he died on 24 December 1193. Irene was captured in the German invasion of Sicily on 29 December 1194 and was married on 25 May 1197 to Philip of Swabia. In Germany, she was renamed Maria.

Her father, who had been deposed in 1195, urged her to get Philip's support for his reinstatement; her brother, Alexius, subsequently spent some time at Philip's court during the preparations for the Fourth Crusade. She thus had an early influence on the eventual diversion of the Crusade to Constantinople in 1204.

Philip and Irene had four daughters:

Beatrice of Hohenstaufen (1198–1212), married Otto IV, Holy Roman Emperor, died without issue.

Kunigunde of Hohenstaufen (1200–1248), married King Wenceslaus I, King of Bohemia, by whom she had issue.

Marie of Hohenstaufen (3 April 1201 – 29 March 1235), married Henry II, Duke of Brabant, by whom she had issue.

Elisabeth of Hohenstaufen (1203–1235), married King Ferdinand III of Castile, by whom she had issue.

And two sons (called Reinald and Frederick) who died in infancy.

After the murder of her husband on 21 June 1208, Irene - who was pregnant by that time - retired to the Hohenstaufen Castle. There, two months later on 27 August, she gave birth to a daughter (called Beatrice Postuma); but both mother
and child died shortly afterwards. She was buried in the family mausoleum in the Staufen proprietary monastery of Lorch Abbey, along with her daughter and sons. Her grave, now destroyed, cannot be reconstructed today.

**Otto reconcile with Pope Innocent**

After Philip's death, Otto made amends with the Staufen party and became engaged to Philip's daughter Beatrix. In an election in Frankfurt on November 11, 1208, he gained the support of all the electoral princes, one of his key promises being he would not make hereditary claims to the imperial crown on behalf of any children he might father. Now fully reconciled with Innocent, Otto made preparations to be crowned Holy Roman Emperor. To secure Innocent's support, he promised to restore to the Papal States all territory that it had possessed under Louis the Pious, including the March of Ancona, the Duchy of Spoleto, the former Exarchate of Ravenna, and the Pentapolis. Travelling down via Verona, Modena and Bologna, he eventually arrived at Milan where he received the Iron Crown of Lombardy and the title of King of Italy in 1208. He was met at Viterbo by Pope Innocent, and was taken to St. Peter's Basilica where he was crowned emperor by Pope Innocent on October 21, 1209, before rioting broke out in Rome, forcing Otto to abandon the city.

If the Pope exulted at the defeat of the Hohenstaufen party, he soon found that the Guelf Emperor was to prove just as refractory as any of the Hohenstaufens had been. Otto had taken various vows of obedience to Innocent at his Coronation, and immediately commenced to break them. Among other engagements he had promised to work no harm to the Pope's ward, Frederick. In 1210, however, he led an army into the young King's Italian dominions, and was joined by several turbulent nobles. Within a year he had conquered the greater part of the mainland and was threatening Frederick in Sicily, when he was summoned back to Germany by the news of a sudden reversal of his fortunes in that country. The flouted Pope had excommunicated him for his broken vows, and the Hohenstaufen party, reinforced by many of Otto's former supporters whom he had alienated by his arrogance or by his excommunication, had again taken the field.

The Princes of the Empire now bethought themselves of the neglected scion of the house of Hohenstaufen, the grandson of their old Lord, Barbarossa, and the son of their former Emperor Henry. They had had their fill of anarchy and civil war and thought with regret of the days when the Emperors of that house had made Germany strong and glorious. “The Child of Sicily”, as he was called in Germany, must now be nearing manhood, and rumor spoke of the high qualities that promised to develop with advancing years. Accordingly the Princes gathered themselves together. The Archbishop of Mayence, the Prelates of Magdeburg and Treves, the King of Bohemia, the Landgrave of Thuringia, and the Dukes of Austria
and Bavaria, all these high dignitaries assembled at Nuremberg in the October of 1211. On December 5, 1212, Frederick was elected king for a second time by a majority of the princes.

The German Princes denied their support to Otto and elected as "Emperor" the young Sicilian Hohenstaufen. The legendary charm of the Dynasty, the idea that a young far away and weak Emperor might have been better than a strong and close one, the support of the King of England and of France contributed to change the hearts of the German Princes.

The document they drew up to record this resolution is interesting for two reasons—it gives the Germans' own conception of the Holy Roman Empire, and it voices the reports which had reached Germany of the character of their future Emperor.

"God Almighty, seeing by Adam's fall that mankind would abuse free will, and would become involved in the nets of contention, set up the Holy Roman Empire that its Lord, like I God upon earth, might rule kings and nations and maintain peace and justice. After the Greek Emperors ceased to do their duty, Holy Mother Church and the Roman Senate and people, recalling the said Empire, transplanted its root into mighty Germany that this dominion might be propped up by our stately princes, our vigorous knights, and our most brave warriors. The Empire without a head is like a ship in a storm without a master pilot. Heresies are springing up and the universal Church is being harassed. Bees are scattered when they lose their queen; so kingdoms, if unrestrained by a bit, go to ruin. The sun is eclipsed; the world needs an Emperor to check disorders. The nations have cried aloud to God, who has awaked from sleep and bethought him of the Empire. He has inspired us, the Princes of Germany who have the right of election, to draw nigh to the throne and to meet together in one place, as is our duty. We have been each of us examined as to his will; we have invoked the Holy Ghost and gone through all the customary rites; we have all in common turned our eyes to the illustrious lord, the King of Germany and Sicily, the Duke of Swabia, as being worthy of the honor. Though young in years, he is old in character; though his person is not full grown, his mind has been by Nature wonderfully endowed; he exceeds the com­mon measure of his equals; he is blest with virtues before his day, as becomes one of the true blood of that august stock, the Caesars of Germany, who have been unsparing of their treasures and persons, in order to increase the honor and might of the Empire and the happiness of their loyal subjects".

So ran the manifesto of the Imperial Electors. No time was lost in carrying it into effect. A deputy was sent to the Ghibelline towns of Italy to prepare them for the coming of their new Lord. Anselm von Justingen journeyed to Rome and gained the assent of the Pope and the citizens to Frederick's elevation. He then made his
way to Sicily and the Court of Palermo. There he spoke the message of the Electors and invited Frederick to leave his Kingdom of Sicily and assume the dignity and crown of his Imperial forefathers.

Otto returned to Germany to deal with the situation, hopeful to salvage something from the looming disaster. He found most of the German princes and bishops had turned against him, and that Frederick, who had made his way up the Italian peninsula, had avoided Otto’s men who were guarding the passes through the Alps and had arrived at Constance. Otto soon discovered that after Beatrix died in the summer of 1212, and Frederick arrived in Germany with his army in September 1212, most of the former Staufen supporters deserted Otto for Frederick, forcing Otto to withdraw to Cologne.

Otto was still in control of a powerful army and of the title of German King. The attempt to conquer the Italian Kingdom was not something the Pope liked and he reconsidered the trust he had given to Otto at the beginning of the campaign, to the point where he decided to excommunicate him. Frederick, in a matter of a few weeks, swung from total destitution back to the top of his fortunes. To accept the nomination of the German Princes he had to go to Germany: in the very kingdom of his enemy across a territory in control of hostile cities, with no army and with only an escort of his Saracen Guard and of the Bishop of Palermo Berardo di Castacca, who was to remain his lifelong friend. Frederick was 16 years old when he went to Germany to accept the Imperial nomination and to reclaim the Kingdom of his father Henry VI. A sequence of lucky circumstances and accidents, his personal charm, and his "Norman" self-confidence allowed him to defeat Otto practically without even a battle, and to be welcomed as King of Germany and Emperor of the Roman Empire by the German Princes, Cities, Clerics and people. Ten years after his election by the German Princes, Frederick was crowned Emperor of the Romans by the Pope Honorius III in 1220, when he was 26 years old, and from that year on he fought against the Papacy until his death in 1250.

Death of Otto of Wittelsbach
When the emperor Henry V. recognized Count Otto V as count palatine in Bavaria. His son, Count Otto VI., who succeeded his father in 1155, accompanied the German king, Frederick I., to Italy in 1154, where he distinguished himself by his courage, and later rendered valuable assistance to Frederick in Germany. When Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony and Bavaria, was placed under the imperial ban in 1180, Otto's services were rewarded by the investiture of the dukedom of Bavaria at Altenburg. Since the time of Otto I Bavaria has been ruled by the Wittelsbachs.

Otto died at Pfullendorf in 1183, and was succeeded in the duchy by his son, Louis I. (1174-1231), but the dignity of count palatine in Bavaria passed to his brother Otto, whose son Otto, Count of Wittelsbach who on 8 June 1208, out of rage,
murdered Philip of Swabia brother to Emperor Henry VI, and successor in Germany. Henry of Kalden received permission from Pope Innocent III to track down and kill Otto to avenge his master's death. Granted, Henry killed Otto at Oberndorf, on the Danube, near Regensburg, and cut off his head. He then joined the side of the newly crowned Emperor Otto IV, whose closest advisor he became, molding an aggressive Sicilian policy. After the December 1212 coronation of Henry VI's son Frederick, however, the marshal returned to the Hohenstaufen fold.

Henry of Kalden or Henry Testa of Bappenheim was a ministerialis in the service of the German kings Henry VI, Philip, Otto IV, and Frederick II.

He served Henry as marshal while the latter was yet just King of the Romans in his campaign of 1189–1190 to capture the Sicilian kingdom as his right by marriage to Constance. Henry of Kalden invaded the Abruzzi, sacking Amiterno and Chieti before joining up with Roger, Count of Andria, and Richard, Count of Carinola, and entered Apulia. After several plundering expeditions, they took Corneto, but their rival, Tancred of Lecce, holed up in fortified Ariano. Intense summer heat and supply shortages caused the Germans under Henry of Kalden to leave the siege early, returning to Germany.

As marshal of the empire, Henry of Kalden was one of the leaders of the Third Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa.

In 1194, when Henry VI finally subdued the peninsula and could invade Sicily, his marshal was with him. Henry of Kalden was sent to Catania, where he defeated a large resistance army, and sacked the city and took captive its bishop.

**Re-Organisation of the Kingdom of Sicily and Italy**

Frederick inherited a Kingdom that (after the great Norman King Roger II, his grandfather) was practically dismantled by the weakness of the two Williams and Tancred, of his successors and by the arrogance of the "barons". The last of the Norman kings, Tancred Count of Lecce, had no legitimate claim to the throne, but nevertheless tried to reorganize the unity of the Kingdom. He died before this was accomplished and after him, Frederick's father, the German King and Emperor Henry VI, took over until his death in 1196. Constance d'Hauteville managed to have Frederick crowned King of Italy and left him to the tutorship of Pope Innocent III before dying in 1198.

From 1198 to 1210 the Sicilian Kingdom was practically left in total chaos: local lords and the accomplices of Markward von Anweiler the "lord" of Palermo, bishops and clerics ruled the land on a strictly personal whim. When Frederick came of age and resumed command (1210 age 14) he re-organised the Kingdom cancelling all the rights and privileges granted by anybody (Pope, Bishops, and
Kings) over the last thirty years. All the titles had to be returned to the Crown to be re-assessed. Very few were confirmed and any resistance was treated as treason and consistently dealt with. The consolidation of Frederick's control over Sicily took place in three years from 1221 to 1223.

Under the Norman rule, Sicily was possibly the richest European Region with strong agricultural produce (wheat) that was exported throughout Europe. The other local commodity was salt. Frederick was able to bring the trade of wheat and salt under the control of the Crown, exacting taxes and duties that made him one of the richest Kings in Europe. The Italian Kingdom was the financial lifeline for his European policy and specifically for the economic support of the "political" title of Emperor.

In his actions Frederick was assisted and supported by Berardo di Castacca Bishop of Palermo and later excommunicated by Pope Innocent IV for his loyalty to Frederick and by Pier della Vigna the jurist who headed his Chancery. Pier della Vigna was arrested and punished for treason in 1249: an event that has remained obscure and scarcely documented. Frederick did not want any publicity on this tragedy: Pier della Vigna had been his closest friend and assistant for a lifetime. Some contemporary chronicles blame the treason on Innocent IV, who is said to have paid Pier della Vigna an incredible amount of money to organize the assassination of the Emperor.

The great achievement of Frederick as King of Italy was the administrative organization of the Kingdom: justice was swift and efficient, taxes and a flawless bureaucracy collected fees. The King ruled through "Vicari" and "Giustizieri" that were located in all the main cities. The administration of Justice was considered a sacred duty of the King by Frederick and managed accordingly.

Frederick was constantly informed and updated on whatever happened in Europe by a rigorously organized intelligence.

His Chancery was an example of efficiency: wherever the King might be, the Chancery was capable of sending hundreds of messengers everyday with orders, instructions, decrees, personal messages to the whole Empire from Northern Germany to Sicily and to the other Kingdoms of Europe and the Near East (France, England, Spain, Constantinople, Tunis, and Jerusalem). The messages were in Latin, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, French and German: Frederick had perfect control of Latin, Greek, Arabic and Hebrew but he also managed to speak and understand many other languages spoken in the Mediterranean Basin at the time (French was probably his juvenile language, spoken by Constance, and German was the language spoken by his Father's entourage). The Latin prose of Pier della Vigna and the elegance of his diplomatic messages were a mirror of Frederick's sophisticated
culture. He was demanding and precise and demanded the highest standards from all his assistants and clerks: Sloppiness was punished with great severity. (The story goes that a calligrapher who misspelled his name had his thumb cut off to prevent him from future similar blunders!)

**Pier della Vigna (1190 Capua - 1249 San Miniato)**

As Frederick II’s chancellor and one of the most powerful statesmen of his time, PIER DELLA VIGNA was also an important literary figure, one of the poets of the “Sicilian school” of lyric poetry, a group responsible for the first court poetry in the Italian vernacular. His apparent suicide inspired Dante to immortalize him in Canto XIII of the Inferno. Pier was born in Capua. His family was apparently connected with the judicial system, but was of modest means, so that Pier had to make sacrifices to study law at the University of Bologna. In 1220, the archbishop of Palermo introduced him to the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II, and shortly thereafter Pier joined Frederick’s court at Naples as a notary.

Once at the court, Pier became one of the emperor’s most trusted advisers. He became a judge in 1225 and “protonotary” of Sicily in 1246, and ultimately Frederick’s chancellor in 1249. During the intervening years he was sent on a number of delicate diplomatic missions for the emperor. In 1230 he signed the Treaty of Ceprano, which ended a period of hostilities between Frederick and Pope Gregory IX. In 1231, he also was deeply involved in the composition of the Constitutions of Melfi—a law code that centralized imperial power in Sicily and served as the kingdom’s fundamental law code until Napoleonic times. At Frederick’s court Pier also became acquainted with fellow notary and poet Giacomo Da Lentino, and with him was instrumental in adopting the style and themes of the Provençal TROUBADOURS into Italian vernacular poetry. Three of his canzoni, one sonnet, and part of a tenzone (It takes the form of a debate in which each voice defends a position on a topic relating to love or ethics) with Giacomo are extant. All display the influence of the troubadours’ courtly love tradition. Pier’s official letters are also an important literary achievement: Written in an eloquent Latin, the letters are one of the most important primary documents for historians studying Frederick’s reign.

Shortly after Pier’s elevation to chancellor, he was accused of treason—apparently on trumped-up charges lodged by rival courtiers jealous of his influence with the emperor. Convicted and condemned by Frederick, Pier was dragged in chains
through the towns of Tuscany as an example to traitors, and ultimately blinded with a red-hot iron. He may have died under torture, but was widely held to have committed suicide in April 1249. He is best remembered as Dante portrayed him: Speaking in the form of a tree in the wood of suicides, the shade of Pier della Vigna proclaims his undying loyalty to Frederick II.

The Court was always close to the Emperor/King and followed him on every journey. There has never been a "capital" city even though Palermo was Frederick's hometown: he was always on the move, and wherever he went the "Camera Imperialis" would be set up and organized for operation within a few hours. The Organisation of the Chancery must have been spectacular, even by present days standards: all the important documents had to be issued in different languages and several copies had to be made to inform different parties simultaneously.

One of his most important acts as King of Italy was the Foundation of the University in Naples (which still has the name of the Emperor: Universita' di Napoli Federico II). Frederick did not want to depend on "foreign" Institutions for expertise and was particularly suspicious of the Studium Bononiae (University of Bologna).

**The title of "Emperor of the Romans"

The title of "Emperor" of the Roman Empire had been conceived by Charlemagne three centuries before Frederick. The "Emperor of the Romans", in Charlemagne vision, was the ideal heir of the past Roman Empire: the lands he had unified under the Frankish Empire and over which he ruled, were Italy, Germany, and France (from Hungary to the Pyrenees). Charlemagne was Lord of a vast territory that he ruled directly or through his Vassals. After his death, the Carolingian Empire was split among his three sons (Italy, France and Germany) and by Frederick's time the situation was even more complicated with other smaller realms (Burgundy, Bohemia, Normandy, Sicily) and with many more interfering feudal authorities, all seeking some autonomy and independence (Dukes, Counts, Bishops). The title of "Emperors of the Romans" became a formal title with no substantial secular power attached: the Popes continued to crown "Emperors" because they thought that this gave them some authority and because they obtained protection and favors from the "crowned" Emperors. The ruling Kings sought the title because it was a high honor to have it, even if it actually was an "empty box". The interpretation of that title was different according to the various moments in history and according to the interpreter.

Frederick's interpretation, thanks to his lay skepticism and Norman pragmatism, had an extraordinary foresight and a commanding political vision: he tried to make of the "Empire" the Universal Planetary Global Institution. His way of understanding the role was pragmatic, cynical and magnificent.
He played the role as if he were utterly conscious of being the legitimate heir to the title of Roman Emperor, and that his right was God given. He behaved and judged any different opinion accordingly: as blasphemy and rebellion against the will of God. He coolly used the Medieval "Fear of God" for his own agenda which was to found a "Universal Planetary Global Institution" above kingdoms and nations which were to keep their secular power and cultural identity, but would belong to the superior set of scopes of the Empire.

In order to build up the ideological value of the title he was very generous with any material advantages. The generosity of Frederick was without limits; equally unlimited was the severity with which he judged and punished any attempt to diminish it or, God forbid, any rebellion.

The heretics were rebels because they did not acknowledge the God that had given him the title and the Imperial responsibility. Political rebels were treated with the same drastic justice since they were "blasphemous": An attack against the Emperor was an attack against God who had granted the title. Laesa majestate was a crime against God not against the person of the Emperor. Thus death was the only possible punishment and there was no lenience.

But let us not make any mistake about Frederick's religion or piety: On account of his pragmatic attitude he promoted his specific planetary vision with the concept of "God given right" much more consistent and understandable to the Medieval culture that was the reality of the time.

Frederick enjoyed a personal charm, better described as psychological magnetism: his presence had a stunning effect on everybody. But he cultivated the image with skill and professionalism. The Imperial Court (Camera Imperialis) was a legendary assortment of Philosophers, Scientists, Mathematicians, Poets, and Jurists. But there were also Saracen belly dancers, a Saracen harem, his elite Saracen guards, animals from all the parts of the known world (Elephants, Lions, Tigers, Eagles, and Bears). When he entered cities and towns he would head a colorful procession of all the Camera Imperialis. When he entered as a conqueror, the kings and lords he had won followed in chains. The people were stunned by these awesome displays.

In his private political encounters and talks he had a specific attitude that disconcerted his parties: he would stare in silence at the person in front of him with steady, unblinking eyes as if he were delving into their soul.

**Papacy controversy**

Frederick's vision was bound to clash with that of the Papacy. The Popes considered the "Roman Empire" as the "Holy Roman Empire: the secular arm of
the Pope. The Pope was the only representative of God on Earth with total suzerainty. The Emperor was the "servant" of the Pope in administering this power. Frederick could not avoid being "anointed" by the Pope because, through this, he gained his "medieval" authority and credibility, but thereafter he was not prepared to play a subservient role. In this respect, he was very cynical and applied Norman pragmatism, cleverly combined with Sicilian cunning and German forcefulness. Later in his life, totally frustrated by the criminal behavior of the Popes (Innocent IV in particular), he completely abandoned the cover of respect and courtesy, a cover that Piero Della Vigna mastered so well in the early Latin documents of the Chancery.

The first clash between Frederick and Innocent III occurred during the very first year after Innocent deposed his tutorship - on the right to nominate bishops in Sicily. Tancred had yielded this right while seeking legitimization of his title. Of course, Frederick lost. The subsequent matter of dispute was the Crusade: The Pope wanted Frederick to embark in a Crusade against the Sultan of Egypt Al-Kamil to conquer Jerusalem. Frederick had many reasons to delay: he wanted to have a secure political situation in Italy before leaving the country and badly needed time to organize his administration. He did not trust the Pope, whom he suspected (with good reasons as it turned out) would have taken advantage of his absence to organize a rebellion against him. So while he was publicly committing himself to the Crusade, his real intentions were clearly shown by his delaying tactics. Frederick had another reason, probably more deeply compelling, to delay the Crusade: the Sultan Al-Kamil was his good friend; they shared a very affectionate mutual esteem and would have done anything to avoid a confrontation, least of all a war.

Neither the papacy nor the towns of the North approved of Frederick's designs. The towns formed an alliance known as the Lombard League - the region of northern Italy in which many of these cities were situated was known as Lombardy. The papacy offered its support, excommunicated Frederick (yet again!) and called upon other monarchs to join in a war against him. Frederick, in turn, issued a series of papers that advocated reducing the Church to apostolic poverty.

The complex struggle ended with Frederick's death in 1250. The papacy continued to work against the Hohenstaufens, and the family was eventually destroyed, with its last member, a young lad, being publicly beheaded in the public square of Salerno. In 1266, the papacy introduced a French dynasty into the kingdom of Two Sicilies and supported its establishment. Two Sicilies had been a political football for so long, however, that it should come as no surprise to find that it remained so. The Sicilians did not like their French overlords and so, with the support and promised alliance of the king of Aragon (in Spain), began plotting their overthrow/
In 1282, the Sicilians rebelled against the French in a bloody uprising known as the Sicilian Vespers, and the Aragonese took over the kingdom. Aragonese monarchs continued to rule the region until the 18th century.

**Frederick Crusade**

At the time he was elected King of the Romans, Frederick promised to go on crusade. He continually delayed, however, and, in spite of his renewal of this vow at his coronation as the King of Germany, he did not travel to Egypt with the armies of the Fifth Crusade in 1217. He sent forces to Egypt under the command of Louis I, Duke of Bavaria, but constant expectation of his arrival caused papal legate Pelagius to reject Ayyubid sultan Al-Kamil's offer to restore the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem to the crusaders in exchange for their withdrawal from Egypt and caused the Crusade to continually stall in anticipation of his ever-delayed arrival. The crusade ended in failure with the loss of Damietta in 1221. Frederick was blamed by both Pope Honorius III and the general Christian populace for this calamitous defeat.

In 1225, after agreeing with Pope Honorius to launch a Crusade not after 1227, Frederick summoned an imperial Diet at Cremona, the main pro-imperial city in Lombardy: the main arguments would be the struggle against heresy, the organization of the crusade and, above all, the restoration of the imperial power in northern Italy, which had been long usurped by the numerous communes there. These responded with the reformation of the Lombard League, which had already defeated his grandfather Frederick Barbarossa in the 12th century, and again Milan was chosen as the league's leader. The diet was cancelled, and the situation was set only through a compromise found by Honorius between Frederick and the League. During his sojourn in northern Italy, Frederick also invested the Teutonic Order.
with the territories in what would become East Prussia, starting what was later called the Northern Crusade.

The Fifth Crusade probably failed owing to the lack of effective leadership. As Pope Honorius III wrote to Frederick II, they shared responsibility for the failure, but the remedy lay in a new expedition. Frederick's treaty with the pope at San Germano in 1225 set out a plan for this crusade. The emperor agreed to leave for the East by the end of August 1227 or face excommunication. He would also marry Isabella II, the heiress to the throne of Jerusalem through her mother Maria, the late wife of John of Brienne. The pope believed the marriage would bind Frederick more closely to the crusade, while Frederick, already emperor and king of Sicily, gained another kingdom. John reluctantly surrendered his claim to the kingship.

Problems of stability within the empire delayed Frederick's departure on crusade. It was not until 1225, when, by proxy, Frederick had married Yolanda of Jerusalem, heiress to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, that his departure seemed assured. Frederick immediately saw to it that his new father-in-law John of Brienne, the current king of Jerusalem, was dispossessed and his rights transferred to the emperor. In August 1227, Frederick set out for the Holy Land from Brindisi, but was forced to return when he was struck down by an epidemic that had broken out. Even the master of the Teutonic Knights, Hermann of Salza, recommended that he return to the mainland to recuperate. On 29 September 1227, Frederick was excommunicated by Pope Gregory IX for failing to honor his crusading pledge.

The new pope, Gregory IX, who had succeeded Honorius in March 1227, was determined to exercise papal authority over the emperor and excommunicated him at once. This meant Frederick was forbidden to crusade, but he was committed to going to the East and to his interests as king of Jerusalem. Success in the East was, he believed, the course most likely to restore him to papal favor. To prepare the ground he had already opened negotiations with the sultan al-Kamil, who was keen to avoid another conflict that would further disrupt his ambitions in Syria and the northern Levant.

On 28th June 1228 Frederick set sail once more with about forty ships. The pope regarded that action as a provocation, since, as an excommunicate, Frederick was technically not capable of conducting a Crusade, and excommunicated the emperor a second time. In September he landed in Acre, joining those who had reached the East exactly a year earlier. The death of his brother and rival al-Muazzam had removed the main obstacle to al-Kamil's Syrian ambitions, but the presence of Frederick put them in jeopardy. Frederick moved with all the forces he could muster from
Acre to Jaffa, clearly signaling his intention to attack Jerusalem itself, which was not fortified. Al-Kamil quickly offered terms and Frederick had little choice but to accept them. Under the treaty of Jaffa of 1229 Frederick gained Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, some other sites, and a pilgrim route to Jaffa. Jerusalem would remain unfortified, while the Muslims kept control of the Temple area with its mosques. There was to be a ten-year truce.

(Above picture: Frederick II, left, meets Al-Kamil, right).

Frederick quickly went to Jerusalem to affirm himself as king, although a coronation by a priest was impossible since Frederick was still an excommunicate. The crusade ended in a truce and in Frederick's coronation as King of Jerusalem on 18 March 1229, although this was technically improper. Frederick's wife Yolanda, the heiress, had died, leaving their infant son Conrad as rightful king. There is also disagreement as to whether the coronation was a coronation at all, as a letter written by Frederick to Henry III of England suggests that the crown he placed on his own head was in fact the imperial crown of the Romans.

Shortly afterward, Frederick learned that the pope had invaded the kingdom of Sicily. Frederick returned to Acre and on 1st May 1229 left for the West, leaving imperial officials to try to impose his rule on the kingdom's Frankish barons. The results of Frederick II's crusade make it clear that it was really the continuation of the Fifth Crusade. He was aware that the treaty of Jaffa gave the crusaders somewhat less than al-Kamil had offered during the earlier crusade, but it still meant that the Holy Sepulcher was in Christian hands for the first time in forty years.

In any case, Gerald of Lausanne, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, did not attend the ceremony, indeed, the next day the Bishop of Caesarea arrived to place the city under interdict on the patriarch's orders. Frederick's further attempts to rule over the Kingdom of Jerusalem were met by resistance on the part of the barons, led by John of Ibelin, Lord of Beirut. In the mid-1230s, Frederick's viceroy was forced to leave Acre, and in 1244, following a siege, Jerusalem itself was lost again to a new Muslim offensive.

Whilst Frederick seems bloodless recovery of Jerusalem for the cross brought him great prestige in some European circles, his decision to complete the crusade while excommunicated provoked Church hostility. Although in 1230 the Pope lifted Frederick's excommunication at the Treaty of San Germano, this decision was taken for a variety of reasons related to the political situation in Europe. Of Frederick's crusade, Philip of Novara, a chronicler of the period, said "The emperor left Acre (after the conclusion of the truce); hated, cursed, and vilified. "Overall this crusade, arguably the first successful one since the First Crusade, was adversely
affected by the manner in which Frederick carried out negotiations without the support of the church. He left behind a kingdom in the Levant torn between his agents and the local nobility, a civil war known as the War of the Lombards.

The truce provided by the treaty of Jaffa offered the opportunity for both sides to pursue their interests in relative security until the treaty expired in 1239. After defeating the papal invasion of his Sicilian kingdom, the emperor Frederick II embarked on a period of cooperation with Pope Gregory IX that was to last for most of this time. Frederick's wife Isabella had died in childbirth in 1228 and he acted as regent for their son Conrad, the new king of Jerusalem. He remained in the West, leaving the administration of the kingdom to imperial officials who acted as baillis (deputies) for Conrad.

When the excommunicated Frederick finally went to Jerusalem (1228-29) he peacefully signed a treaty with the Sultan that granted access to the Holy City for the Christian Pilgrims: Innocent thought that a treaty with the "infidel" was most dishonorable and refused to revoke the excommunication.

The confrontation between Frederick and the Papacy continued until Frederick's death. The Popes (Gregory IX and Innocent IV) were well aware that the clash was not on menial matters (crusades, territorial claims, bishoprics etc.) but was a life or death situation. Frederick wanted a Secular Empire, free and independent from religious interference by the Pope: a claim that the Papacy could not even entertain.

The battle was first fought on diplomatic grounds and the exchanges between the Emperor and the Popes (Gregory IX and later Innocent IV) were one of the main tasks of Frederick's Chancery. Frederick showed remarkable self-restraint because he needed to have the excommunication lifted to carry out his political "Imperial" or European agenda. Gregory IX died without lifting the excommunication and Frederick had high hopes of Innocent IV whose election he had supported in the long conclave. Frederick was wrong: Innocent IV was his worst foe and tried everything to destroy the Emperor: assassination plots, poisoning, defamation, and finally the "deposition" in Lyon 1245. The life of Frederick after 1237 (his last military victory at Cortenuova against the Heretic/rebellious City of Milan and the League of northern Italian cities allied with the Pope) is a long sequel of tragedies, plots, betrayals and losses. The defeat at Victoria (near Parma) in 1248 was complete and irreparable but Frederick did not give up. He remained indomitable and fought to the end, always organizing his realm, his Court, his "menageries", his farms, his falcons.
The war against the Pope and Henry VII's revolt

During Frederick's stay in the Holy Land, his regent, Rainald of Spoleto, had attacked the Marche and the Duchy of Spoleto. Gregory IX recruited an army under John of Brienne and, in 1229, invaded southern Italy. His troops overcame an initial resistance at Montecassino, and reached Apulia. Frederick arrived at Brindisi in June 1229. He quickly recovered the lost territories and trialled the rebel barons, but avoided crossing the boundaries with the Papal States. The war was solved by the Treaty of San Germano in the summer of 1230; the emperor personally met Gregory IX at Anagni, making some concessions to the church in Sicily. He also issued the Constitutions of Melfi (August 1231), as an attempt to solve the political and administrative problems of the country, which had dramatically been shown by the recent war.

While he may have temporarily made his peace with the pope, Frederick found the German princes another matter. Frederick's son Henry VII (who was born 1211 in Sicily, son of Frederick's first wife Constance of Aragon) had caused their discontent with an aggressive policy against their privileges. This forced Henry to a complete capitulation, and the Statutum in favorem principum ("Statutes in favor of the princes"), issued at Worms, deprived the emperor of much of his sovereignty in Germany. Frederick summoned Henry to a meeting, which was held at Aquileia in 1232. Henry confirmed his submission, but Frederick was anyway compelled to confirm the Statutum at Cividale soon afterwards.
The situation for Frederick was problematic also in Lombardy, after all the emperor's attempts to restore the imperial authority in Lombardy with the help of Gregory IX (at the time, ousted from Rome by a revolt) turned to nothing in 1233. In the meantime Henry in Germany had returned to an anti-princes policy, against his father's will: Frederick thus obtained his excommunication from Gregory IX (July 1234). Henry tried to muster an opposition in Germany and asked the Lombard cities to block the Alpine passes. In May 1235, Frederick went to Germany, having no army with him: as soon as July, he was however able to force his son to renounce to the crown and all his lands, at Worms, and then imprisoned him.

Henry was kept prisoner in various places in Apulia. His seclusion may have been dictated as much by his health as by his rebelliousness: analysis of his skeleton in 1998–1999 has shown that he was suffering from advanced leprosy in his last years. This was perhaps the real cause which prevented the Emperor from forgiving him.

Possibly on 12 February 1242, Henry died near to Martirano after a fall from his horse when he was moved there from Nicastro. Some chroniclers report that it had been an attempted suicide. His father had him buried with royal honors in the cathedral of Cosenza, in an antique Roman sarcophagus.

Among the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, Henry is numbered only in parentheses, as he did not exercise the sole kingship. He is not to be confused with the later Emperor Henry VII of the House of Luxembourg.

In Germany the Hohenstaufen and the Guelphs reconciled in the same year. Otto the Child, the grandson of Henry the Lion, deposed as Duke of Bavaria and Saxony in 1180, conveyed the allodial Guelphic possessions to Frederick, who in return invested Otto with the same lands and additional former imperial possessions as the newly established Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, ending the unclear status of the German Guelphs, who were left without title and rank after 1180.

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2 Allodial title constitutes ownership of real property (land, buildings and fixtures) that is independent of any superior landlord. Historically, allodial title was sometimes used to distinguish ownership of land without feudal duties from ownership by feudal tenure which restricted alienation and burdened land with the tenurial rights of a landholder's overlord or sovereign.
The basic assumption of Frederick's scientific "credo" was that you could only believe in what you could see with your own eyes. An "experimental" manifesto that anticipated the so-called "scientific" method postulated by Galileo three hundred years later - an assumption that sounded (and actually was) an ominous challenge to the Church that commanded belief as an act of faith.

Frederick loved science, nature, the arts, poetry and philosophy. He was also a skilled hunter and valiant soldier. From childhood, Frederick II had a curious spirit and sharp mind. He loved science, nature, the arts, poetry and philosophy. His gifts led his kingdom to a victory during the Crusade, but also a period of cultural and scientific development – he formed the Salerno school of medicine. He also made advances in agriculture and livestock management. Southern Italy did not experience a period of growth like this one for many centuries to come.

Frederick II, patron of the arts and a cultured man, was known by his contemporaries for his lifestyle, defined by many sources as “dissolute.” He loved both food and women, and it is said that his imperial dining table was filled with broth of almonds, rice and spices. Various authors also suggest that the Emperor even enjoyed experimenting in the kitchen himself. It seems that although he was a lover of luxury and ostentation, Frederick favored quality over quantity, like a true gourmet and unlike many of his friends.
Frederick II loved to invite his court, a mix of Greek, Latin, Arab and Jewish cultures, to his various homes and castles throughout Italy. His favorite was Castel del Monte in Apulia. He also loved to go hunting. His passion for hunting actually led to a tragic event, which lowered his spirits and led to his premature death. In 1248, Frederick was involved with the siege of Parma. He built a wooden city for himself and his troupes outside the Parma’s walls, and named it “Vittoria.”

Frederick was a curious and skeptical man: he believed only in things he saw with his own eyes, and first-hand experience was the only thing he trusted. What others told him could not necessarily be trusted to be true. His curiosity and restlessness were a typical Norman trait.

There many documents of his scientific curiosity: quite famous are his talks with Leonardo Pisano (the original name of Leonardo Fibonacci) the mathematician who brought to Europe the Arab numerical notations and taught the Italian merchants the fundamental mathematical operations that they allowed to solve. Frederick had in his Court astronomers, philosophers and astrologers of whom he asked very sophisticated questions, ranging from anatomy to ethics, the relationship between body and soul, the essence of elements and agricultural practices. His correspondence on scientific matters with the Arab world was intense and viewed with great suspicion by the Italian Catholic culture.

Frederick himself was a well-informed zoologist, with personal documentation on animal husbandry and basic veterinarian practice.

By his decrees, the professional corporations were founded in the Italian Kingdom and in 1240 he issued an Imperial Decree authorizing dissection for scientific purposes: he decreed the study of anatomy a compulsory discipline for the students of medicine in Naples.

Frederick loved exotic animals in general: his menagerie, with which he impressed the cold cities of Northern Italy and Europe, included hounds, giraffes, cheetahs, lynxes, leopards, exotic birds and an elephant.

He was also alleged to have carried out a number of experiments on people. These experiments were recorded by the monk Salimbene di Adam (who despised Frederick) in his Chronicles. Amongst the experiments included shutting a prisoner up in a cask to see if the soul could be observed escaping though a hole in the cask when the prisoner died; feeding two prisoners, sending one out to hunt and the other to bed and then have them disemboweled to see which had digested their meal better; imprisoning children without any contact to see if they would develop a natural language.
In the Language deprivation experiment young infants were raised without human interaction in an attempt to determine if there was a natural language that they might demonstrate once their voices matured. It is claimed he was seeking to discover what language would have been imparted unto Adam and Eve by God. In his Chronicles Salimbene wrote that Frederick bade "foster-mothers and nurses to suckle and bathe and wash the children, but in no ways to prattle or speak with them; for he would have learnt whether they would speak the Hebrew language (which had been the first), or Greek, or Latin, or Arabic, or perchance the tongue of their parents of whom they had been born. But he labored in vain, for the children could not live without clapping of the hands, and gestures, and gladness of countenance, and blandishments."

Frederick was also interested in the stars, and his court was host to many astrologers and astronomers, including Michael Scot and Guido Bonatti. He often sent letters to the leading scholars of the time (not only in Europe) asking for solutions to questions of science, mathematics and physics.

**De Arte Venandi cum Avibus**

De Arte Venandi cum Avibus, literally "On The Art of Hunting with Birds", is a Latin treatise on ornithology and Falconry written in the 1240s by Frederick II, and dedicated to his son Manfred.

Frederick II was familiar with Aristotle's treatises on animals in Latin translation: Liber Animalum, a translation by Michael Scot, from the Arabic translation Kitāb al-Hayawān. He was also familiar with De Scientia Venandi per Aves, a treatise by the Arab falconer Moamyn, it was translated into Latin at his court by Master Theodore of Antioch, and much copied.

It is notable that Frederick II mainly confides in his own observations and experiments: he experimented with eggs to see if they would hatch only by the warmth of the sun; he tried to find out if birds used their sense of smell while hunting by covering the eyes of vultures. The author keeps to his intention, formulated in the preface, to describe the things as they are ("que sunt, sicut sunt"). It is a scientific book, approaching the subject from Aristotle, whom he likes to contradict. At the same time it is a scholastic book, minute and almost mechanical in its divisions and subdivisions.

The original manuscript of Frederick II was lost in 1248 at the siege of Parma. Manuscripts of De arte venandi cum avibus exist in a two-book version

The most famous copy of this treatise is an illuminated manuscript commissioned by his son Manfred, a two-column parchment codex of 111 folios now in the Vatican Library in the Bibliotheca Palatina. The manuscript belongs to the two book version and is illustrated with brilliantly colored, extraordinarily lifelike, accurate and minute images of birds, their attendants, and the instruments of the art. This manuscript contains additions made by Manfred, which are all clearly marked in the beginning by notations such as "Rex", "Rex Manfredus" or "addidit Rex".

The first translation of this work was in French and commissioned around 1300 by Jean II, lord of Dampierre, and the first translation into English (of the six-book version) was by Casey A. Wood and F. Marjorie Fyfe, as The Art of Falconry by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (Stanford University Press) 1943. The first printed edition of the Latin manuscript (the two-book version) was by Velser, Augsburg, 1596.

In the words of the historian C.H. Haskins:

“It is a scientific book, approaching the subject from Aristotle but based closely on observation and experiment throughout, Divisivus et Inquisitivus, in the words of the preface, it is at the same time a scholastic book, minute and almost mechanical in its divisions and subdivisions. It is also a rigidly practical book, written by a falconer for falconers and condensing a long experience into systematic form for the use of others”.

spent more than 30 years gathering information and experiences to write this master work of falconry: De Arte Venandi cum avibus (The Art of Falconry). The erudite emperor considered all previous literature in this area poor and insufficient. Frederick's work is transmitted in Codex ms. pal. lat. 1071, preserved in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. This 2-column 111 folio parchment manuscript is the most famous and best known of all the works of Frederick II because of its incredibly beautiful illustrations. The marginalia has 170 human figures, more than 900 species of birds, 12 horses and 36 other animals plus all the paraphenalia needed for falconry.
In 1224 he founded the University of Naples, the world's oldest state university: now called Università Federico II, it remained the sole athenaeum of Southern Italy for centuries.

Fredrick II had precise objectives when he founded the university in Naples: first, to train administrative and skilled bureaucratic professionals for the "curia regis" (the kingdom's ministries and governing apparatus), also it was necessary to prepare lawyers and judges who would help the sovereign to draft laws and administer justice. Secondly, he wanted to facilitate the cultural development of promising young students and scholars, avoiding any unnecessary and expensive trips abroad (by creating a State University, emperor Frederick avoided having young students during his reign complete their training at the University of Bologna, which was in a city that was hostile to the imperial power).

The University of Naples was arguably the first to be formed from scratch by a higher authority, and one not based upon an already-existing private school. Although its claim to be the first state-sponsored university can be challenged by Palencia (which was founded by the Castilian monarch c.1212), Naples certainly was the first chartered one.

The artificiality of its creation posed great difficulties in attracting students (Thomas Aquinas was one of the few who came in these early years). The university's early years were further complicated by the long existence, in nearby Salerno, of Europe's most prestigious medical faculty, the Schola Medica Salernitana. The fledgling faculty of medicine at Naples had little hope to compete with it, and in 1231, the right of examination was surrendered to Salerno. The establishment of new faculties of theology and law under papal sponsorship in Rome in 1245 further drained Naples of students, as Rome was a more attractive location. In an effort to revitalize the dwindling university, in 1253, all the remaining schools of the university of Naples moved to Salerno, in the hope of creating a single viable university for the south.[6] But that experiment failed and the university (minus medicine) moved back to Naples in 1258 (in some readings, Naples was "refounded" in 1258 by Manfred Hohenstaufen, as by this time there were hardly any students left). The Angevin reforms after 1266 and the subsequent decline of Salerno gave the University of Naples a new lease on life and put it on a stable, sustainable track.
The human dimension of Frederick

In order to reach and describe the inner personality and the character of Frederick, very thorough research should be carried out reading the accounts of contemporary chronicles and historians. Consultation of the "original" sources, correspondence, notes, and anecdotes should help in "profiling" Frederick as a man. From his behavior in the various dire circumstances of his life, a lot can be inferred through subjective intuition: from a historical methodology point of view, this is absolutely blasphemous. Another "source" is the monuments he built: the castles, fortresses, and walls. Frederick was a man in control of whatever went on in his domains: house, kingdom, cities, empire, chancery, harem, falconry, stables. The way he understood control was direct and first hand: with his own eyes he wanted to see and almost certainly that is what he did. Thus, it is a fair assumption that he dictated the design of his buildings in a very precise way.

When he was twelve years old he was defined "coarse" "rude" and "vulgar": that was probably the way the courtly culture perceived the boy who was educated on the streets of Palermo. Innocent III said of him that he stood solidly on his legs. At 14 he stormed Sicily with a few loyal knights and brought to order the rebellious Barons after 10 years of anarchy. In order to restore his authority at the age of fifteen he invalidated all the privileges, titles and lordships granted in the previous thirty years by the Norman Kings in Sicily.

He married when he was 15, a lady 10 years his senior, and when he was 20 he composed poems such as this one:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Secondo mia credenza} \\
\text{Non e' Donna che sia} \\
\text{Alta, si bella, pare.} \\
\text{Ne' c'agia insegnamento} \\
\text{'nver voi, donna sovrana.} \\
\text{La vostra ciera umana} \\
\text{Mi da conforto e facemi alegrare;} \\
\text{S'eo pregia - vi posso, donna mia.} \\
\text{Piu' conto mi ne tegno tuttavia.}
\end{align*}
\]
I believe
No lady can be so beautiful
and gentle as you are
sovereign lady.
Your lovely face
Gives me joy and cheer;
And I cannot resist
To praise you, lady of mine.

His poetry may not be original or new, but his handling of the beautiful language was delicate. This is another poem attributed to the hand of Frederick on returning from the Crusade, where he clearly did not only fight the infidels:

Alas, I did not think that separation
From my lady would seem so hard.
Ever since I went away it has seemed that I must die,
Remembering her sweet companionship.
Never have I endured the anguish I felt when I was on the ship.
And now I believe that I will surely die if
I do not return to her soon
Happy song, go to the flower of Syria,
To her who holds my heart in prison.
Ask that most loving lady, in her courtesy,
To remember her servant, who shall suffer from love
Until he has done all she wills him to do.
And beseech her, in her goodness,
To deign to remain loyal to me.

Messengers rode all day, sailed the seas, and risked their lives to bring this message back to the heartbroken "flower of Syria".

All through his life, Frederick gave grandiose parties which were the opportunity for political contacts, cultural exchanges, diplomatic encounters, banquets, dances and poetic challenges: the joy of living was a trait of the Hohenstaufen character. The lovely Saracen dancers entertained him and his guests: he blatantly kept and showed them to provoke the bigotry of the "papists". Some of his decisions were untenable bets: he was always ready to put everything at stake. The decision to go to Germany in 1211 against Otto von Braunschweig was almost suicidal. He was 17 at the time and, had he made the wrong choice, his life would have been miserable.

His ruling principle was Aristotelian "necessity". The highest value was "justice". The most horrible sin "treason".
Nothing would stop him from a hunting program: falconry was a noble art. He wrote in the first chapter of the "De Arte Venandi": "Although it is true that birds of prey display an inborn antipathy to the presence and company of mankind". Since he loved falcons he probably identified himself with their attitude towards mankind.

And this is another revealing passage:

*Here it may again be claimed that, since many nobles and but few of the lower rank learn and carefully pursue this art, one may properly conclude that it is intrinsically an aristocratic sport.*

Among the buildings and monuments he built, the jewel is Castel del Monte and it is worth analyzing it for clues to Frederick's inner values.

A perfect geometric layout, based on the octagon with an octagonal tower at each corner and an octagonal central courtyard. The windows on the outer walls are small gothic "serlian windows". The main and only entrance door is under a huge classical "typanum" and protected by a lower gothic overhang. The rooms at both levels are the octagonal sectors: no different layout for any interior space. The court at the center of the Castle is open to the sky: the contrast between the heavy outer walls protected by towers and the open sky is remarkable and meaningful. The original décor of the rooms was extremely rich with marble and mosaics, which are now lost after centuries of neglect and looting. In the Castle Frederick collected all the precious statues he could find of the classic Imperial Roman Era. The solid, hostile and impenetrable walls contained a sophisticated array of precious items.

His playful mood with peers and friends would shift to cruel sarcasm with foes and enemies. His punishments were pitiless. Traitors were blinded with a hot iron stuck into their eyes; beheading or hanging was considered merciful executions. The mutilated live bodies were carried through the cities as an example for others who fostered betrayal in their hearts. He was allegedly betrayed by his best friend, Pier della Vigna, who accepted money from Innocent IV to have him assassinated and he was betrayed by his son Henry VII, King of Germany, who tried to fight against him in association with the League of Lombard Cities. Frederick wrote that the betrayal of his own son Henry broke his heart as a father, but he could not forget
that he was the Emperor. Henry spent the rest of his life in prison and during a transfer from one prison to another he managed to jump with his horse into a ravine. Pier della Vigna was blinded and managed to kill himself smashing his head against a wall of the jail.

The cruelty and merciless behavior of Frederick was partially consistent with the culture of the Middle Ages and mainly due to the perversion of the Papacy: not only did Innocent IV excommunicate and depose Frederick on inconsistent and false accusations, but he incessantly organised plots to have him assassinated. Innocent invested huge amounts of money in this policy in order to get on his side the people whom Frederick trusted. The frustration pushed Frederick's reactions to the limit and possibly beyond. Frederick eventually lost his battle against the Papacy and his image reached us tarnished by the description and libels of the "victor". The Pope was so successful in the defamation process that the common belief at the time associated Frederick with Satan and with the biblical Anti-Christ.

The Hammer and Anvil
When the Emperor Henry VI Hohenstaufen died in 1197, he was survived by his widow and young son, Frederick. Frederick presented Innocent III with something of a problem. The papacy had long pursued policies aimed at preventing the same power from controlling both Germany and the South of Italy, the latter being called the Kingdom of Two Sicilies. The danger, as the papacy saw it, was that the pope would be between the Hammer (Germany) and the Anvil (Two Sicilies) and could be crushed at any time. Even if the secular power did not enter the Papal States, the threat alone would be sufficient to make it impossible for the Church to continue to pursue the role of being the independent moral arbiter of European affairs. The problem with Frederick was that he was heir to Two Sicilies and was a leading candidate of the powerful Hohenstaufen family to inherit his father's imperial dignity. The pope considered it essential to contain this danger.

The first step was innocuous enough. Innocent III took the young Frederick as his ward and turned him over to be educated by some of the first-rate minds in the papal court. The situation in German was confused. Local nobles had seized upon the absence of any imperial authority as an opportunity to settle old scores and to advance their power and wealth as much as possible. In many ways, however, this was simply a matter of jockeying for a favorable position to assume the emperorship, which was still more or less an elective position. Two main candidates soon emerged, one of who was a Hohenstaufen. Innocent was not eager to promote the cause of a Hohenstaufen. Previous emperors of the family had attempted to establish a central power in Germany and to take control of the nominally imperial cities of the North of Italy. The wealth of these cities was substantial, and whoever had control of them could expect to be able to pay for
massive armies whenever he chose. But the cities were close to the Papal States, and the popes were reluctant to allow the German emperors to establish a base of power so close to them.

So it was that Innocent set the power of the Church against the Hohenstaufens and threw his support to Otto of Brunswick. He managed to promote an alliance between Otto and his cousin, King John of England. The civil war that ensued kept the Germans busy for some time. In 1209, however, Otto of Brunswick won out and was declared emperor. He soon set out for the North of Italy and, after subduing the major cities there, entered the Papal States. Innocent quickly had Frederick crowned and concluded an alliance with King Philip of France to aid the Church and Frederick against the "usurper" Otto. In the battle of Bouvines (in modern Belgium) in 1215, an allied army of French and Hohenstaufen supporters defeated the English and adherents of Otto of Brunswick. Otto died, and Frederick was not only king of Two Sicilies but undisputed ruler of the Holy Roman Empire. Innocent III had managed to turn the potential threat of the Hammer and Anvil into a real danger.

Innocent III thought that he had made certain that this situation would be only temporary. Before supporting Frederick's elevation as emperor, Innocent had required that he promise to relinquish Two Sicilies and to undertake a crusade to liberate Jerusalem. But the best-laid plans even of popes may go astray. Innocent died in 1216, before Frederick could be required to fulfill either of those promises.

**Frederick's Policies**

He adopted his father's policy of making Italy the center of his power, and was interested in Germany only because it guaranteed to him his title to Upper and Central Italy. On the other hand, he could not arrest the dissolution of the empire hastened by the failure of his predecessor Otto IV. The possessions of the empire and those of his own Hohenstaufen family, by means of which Frederick I had sought to build up his power, were plundered. Frederick's sole desire was for peace in Germany, even if to secure this he had to make the greatest sacrifices; and for this reason, he granted to the ecclesiastical and temporal lords a series of privileges, which subsequently developed into the independent sovereignty of these princes. This emperor's policy was entirely dominated by the idea that without Sicily the possession of Italy would always be insecure, and that a king of Italy could not maintain himself without being at the same time emperor. This policy was naturally antagonistic to the papacy. The popes, isolated as they were in Central Italy, felt themselves compelled to prevent the union of Southern Italy with the empire. Frederick recognized this fact, and for several years strove to maintain peace by extreme concessions. Innocent III had chosen Frederick to be his instrument for the destruction of the Guelph, Otto IV. In return for Innocent's
support, Frederick had been obliged to make promises to the pope at Eger (12 July, 1215), which would put an end to the undue influence of the civil power over the German bishops. The emancipation of the Church from the royal power dates from this time. The cause of Frederick’s concessions to the Church lay not in his religious convictions but in his political aims.

Frederick had also been obliged to acknowledge the pope as his overlord in Sicily, thus abandoning his father's cherished hopes of uniting Sicily with the imperial crown of Germany, though the attempts of the pope to entirely nullify this "personal union" were far from successful. Italian affairs continued to be the hinge on which turned the papal policy towards the emperor, for the popes in their efforts to sustain their traditional supremacy could not allow the emperor a controlling influence in Italy. The conflict between the two powers strangely influenced the Crusades. Frederick had been forced to pledge himself to take part in a new crusade, for which inadequate preparations had been made by the pope, and the Council of Lateran (1215) fixed 1 June, 1216, as the time for beginning the crusade.

Frederick got Innocent’s successor to crown him emperor without having to promise to give up Two Sicilies. He then gave away imperial power to the German nobles, ensuring that the German empire would be racked by internal dissension and would remain leaderless as long as he was emperor. He intended to base his power in Italy and his actions made that clear. He had been raised in the cosmopolitan city of Palermo and, at least according to legend, had spent much of his time as a child on the docks of that city. One may suppose that he gained a vision of a Mediterranean empire from listening to the talk of sailors and merchants.

The condition of Germany, however, did not permit the absence of the emperor. At Frankfort in April, 1220, the Germany diet passed regulations concerning the Roman expedition and the crusade. After Frederick’s young son Henry had been chosen king, and Engelbert, the powerful Archbishop of Cologne, named vice-regent, Frederick set out for Italy. He was crowned emperor at Rome (22 Nov., 1220), and renewed his vow to take the cross, promising to begin the campaign in the following year. By a severe edict against heretics, he placed the secular power at the service of the Church, and thus appeared to have arrived at a complete understanding with the pope. Even when he failed to keep his promise to start the crusade in the following year, the friendly relations of pope and emperor remained unaltered. For this, the peace-loving pope deserved the chief credit, though Frederick also strove to avoid a breach by his loyal policy towards the Holy See. Both Pope and emperor, however, saw that this peace was maintained only by skillful diplomacy, and that it was constantly imperiled by their conflicting interests.
Frederick and the Crusade

It was perhaps in pursuit of extending his Mediterranean claims that he married the heiress to the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, the rulers of which had recent been driven from the Holy Land by the able Muslim leader, Saladin. Frederick now had a reason to keep his promise of undertaking a Crusade but he had delayed too long in doing so. Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) undertook to force Frederick into compliance with the policies of the Church. He excommunicated Frederick for not having kept his crusading vow and, Frederick launched the Sixth Crusade, condemned him for having ignored the rule that excommunicates could not become crusaders.

This seemed not to have bothered Frederick very much. As soon as he arrived in the Levant, he undertook negotiations with local Muslim and concluded a ten-year treaty with some quite favorable terms. He was to control Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and other centers of Christian worship and was to be recognized as king of Jerusalem. The city itself would enjoy religious toleration for Muslims, Christians and Jews. Although the treaty was not a permanent commitment on either side, but Frederick appeared to have thought that there would be no difficulty in renewing it and quite willingly crowned himself King of Jerusalem in 1229. The invasion of Two Sicilies by papal and allied troops left him little time to enjoy his new dignity. He hurried back from the Holy Land to repair his fortunes in Italy.

If the pope had been furious at Frederick's undertaking the Crusade against his command, he was doubly so considering the added prestige that Frederick's success had gained him. The pope may also have apprehensive as to what use Frederick might make of his control of Jerusalem, the most holy place of Christendom and the seat of the venerated patriarch of Jerusalem. He immediately rejected the treaty, excommunicated Frederick once again and took the remarkable step of placing Jerusalem under interdict.

Frederick and Italy

The military matter was settled rather quickly. By 1230, Frederick had defeated Gregory and his allies and the struggle between Frederick and the papacy settled down to a war of words, each advanced complex legal arguments in support of their rights in the dispute. Meanwhile, Frederick went to Germany and abdicated virtually all imperial authority in those lands. He then began organizing the kingdom of Two Sicilies into a modern centralized state. He eliminated all aspects of feudal organization and directed the writing and promulgation of the
Constitutions of Melfi. This was a remarkable document, one of the earliest written constitutions and unusually liberal for the day. The Constitutions established uniform system of laws to be observed throughout the realm. They established a standard form local government, declared that taxes would be fair and fairly administered, and ensured that Two Sicilies would welcome trade and commerce. Perhaps most remarkable, The Constitutions provided for representative assemblies decades before the birth of the Parliament of England.

Meanwhile, the war of words between Frederick and the papacy continued. The popes had something of an advantage in that they were able to call upon the faculty of law at the University of Bologna for assistance in formulating their arguments. Recognizing the value of such a resource, Frederick established and endowed the University of Naples, the first clearly secular university in the West. Moreover, he took care that its faculty included Christians, Muslims and Jews, and that all of these languages would be taught, together with the laws and literature of these cultures. Equally remarkable considering the times was Frederick's edict ordering religious toleration for Christians, Muslims and Jews throughout his realm. At the same time, however, he announced his intention of establishing his control over the former imperial cities of the North of Italy and making them another province of what he intended to be the kingdom of Italy.

Frederick and the Teutonic Order

One of such earthly state knighthoods is the Teutonic Order, founded a bare century after the Templars, which devoted its powers solely to the terrestrial state.

The feeling for spiritual knighthood was almost extinct in the East, when at the turn of the twelfth-thirteenth century in Acre the nursing community of the German Knights of St. Mary bound themselves into a third spiritual Order beside the Templars. The Templars were mainly French, and the Knights of St. John were largely English and Italian. Pope Innocent III gave to the Teutonic Knights the Rule of the Templars, whom they were to emulate in everything spiritual and knightly as they were to emulate the Knights of St. John in care for the poor and the sick. The Order was to be strictly national; only knights of German birth were to enter it.

When Frederick II came to Germany the Teutonic Order was still an insignificant body. Henry VI had turned his attention to them while he was planning the
Crusade, but, in spite of many benefactions, the confusion that followed his death hampered this purely German movement in its development.

The Church and older rivals looked at it with no friendly eye, and its real prosperity began with Frederick II. After he had taken his crusading vow a definite opportunity presented itself for the employment of the Teutonic Knights, and Frederick at once got into touch with them. Numerous gifts in this and the ensuing years bear witness to Frederick's determination to strengthen the Order by every means in his power. He even granted its members privileges which encroached on his own imperial rights, or which robbed him of considerable royal revenues. He was here even more open-handed than towards the princes. He had at first primarily the Crusade in view, but beyond the needs of the moment Frederick sought to enlist their enthusiasm and their strength for other tasks. He created out of them a little corps d*elite, free from feudal fetters and extraneous influences whether of temporal or spiritual lords, independent, reliable, unconditionally loyal to himself a small body, but one immediately at the service of the Empire as sword and weapon, and in spiritual matters subject to the Pope alone. To increase the authority of the Order in Church affairs Frederick applied personally to the Pope, with the result that the notaries in the papal Chancery were busy night and day preparing nothing but charters for the hitherto sorely neglected Order of Teutonic Knights.

Frederick always showed a great affection for the Teutonic Knights. He encouraged and assisted young noblemen like the three Hohenlohe brothers who were seeking admission to the Order; just as later he did his best to dissuade young noblemen from joining the Mendicant Orders. In the early days especially, when he wanted probity and trustworthiness, he turned to the Teutonic Knights: whether to oversee the building of his ships or to carry important dispatches. In the Holy Land he hardly employed any others, and in later years he entrusted the administration of Alsace to Berthold of Tannenrode, one of the brethren, and even placed the German regent for a while to a large extent under the influence of the Teutonic Knights, so that a chronicler was not unjustified in exclaiming that the whole Empire is ruled according to the counsels of the Order. He was overstating the case of course, but it is remarkable how much attention Frederick devoted to attaching the Order to himself. One of the first privileges accorded to them was that the Grand Master of the day, whoever he might be, when attending court, should form part of the royal household and belong to the familia (family), while his escort also should enjoy the hospitality of the court. Further, two brethren of the Order were to be in permanent attendance on the royal person. The Spanish king Alfonso VIII had shown similar favors to the Order of Calatrava, but this only goes to show that these knightly orders, in proportion as they became national institutions, tended to become “courtly”; It is common knowledge that the knightly orders of the late
Middle Ages, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, were purely court affairs, and preserved an aristocratic form of life that had perished elsewhere.

Frederick liked to attribute to the earlier Hohenstaufen, indeed to Barbarossa himself, the founding of the Teutonic Order, so as to lend age and dignity to the institution. He also liked to talk of it as his own creation. It was in fact the work of his own hands, his and the first great Grand Master’s: Hermann of Salza. For over twenty years Hermann of Salza was always to be met in Frederick’s court and camp, his most trusted counselor, his most valued intimate, not in virtue of his office as Master, but on account of personal qualities which made him practically indispensable.

There is something almost tragic in this great man’s fate. For Hermann of Salza had two masters; he had sworn an oath of fealty to both Pope and Emperor, and every conflict between them exposed him to an intolerable strain. So we see him, bent on keeping faith with both, flying hither and thither from court to Curia and from Curia to court, again and again during those years of incessant quarrelling seeking to keep or to restore the peace. He once described his life work as “to strive for the honor of Church and Empire”; and when the breach between the two powers became final and complete, life became for him impossible.

On Palm Sunday 1239 Frederick II was excommunicated forever, and on the same day the great Grand Master, Hermann of Salza, breathed his last.

It was so comprehensive that whatever the Order did was done under the special aegis of the Emperor and was covered by imperial privilege. It is expressly laid down in this document that “all gifts and conquests are to be the free property of the Order, which is to exercise full territorial rights and be responsible to none. The Grand Master is to enjoy all the privileges that pertain to a prince of the Empire, including all royal privileges, and the Order shall be hi Prussia free from all imperial taxes, burdens and services”; Thus Frederick permitted the Order to found an autonomous State, owning no territorial master save the Order itself, “to be an integral part of the monarchy of the Empire”; as the Charter says. This position of the Order was assured not only by earlier privileges granted under the immediate The Order of the Cistercians and the Order of the Teutonic

Knights were the two most weighty allies that Frederick won during his German years; nothing else approaches them in importance. The power of the German towns was still slight; moreover, the princely towns and the episcopal towns were
wholly outside his influence, and privileges which he granted now and then to one or another Cambrai and Basel for instance might have to be revoked if the imperial princes so decided. For the body of princes were swift to resent any encroachment and acted together as one man to resist any interference with their rights. Only the Swabian towns and those immediately under the Empire were under Frederick's care, and here he bestirred himself to improve communications, to secure safe convoy for the merchants throughout the Roman Empire, and to protect the highways against robbers, measures which were much appreciated protection of the Empire, but by a most remarkable attitude taken up by Frederick.

Frederick's wives
Frederick II had five wives: the first three were imposed by reasons of state well represented by the popes, while sincerely loved the last with whom he lived a relationship shrouded in mystery, subtended between history and legend. In fact, the wives of Frederick were useful only to provide some legitimate heir to the House of Swabia, in addition to the more numerous illegitimate, but none of them were able to play a political role appreciable, crushed by her husband's personality always closed in the golden palace of the Court:

Constance of Aragon

Constance of Aragon (1179 – 23 June 1222) was an Aragonese Infanta who was by marriage firstly Queen consort of Hungary, and secondly Queen consort of Germany and Sicily and Holy Roman Empress. She was regent of Sicily from 1212–1220. She was the second child and eldest daughter of the nine children of Alfonso II of Aragon and Sancha of Castile.

Her father died in 1196 and Constance's fate was decided by the new King, her brother Peter II. Peter arranged her marriage with King Emeric of Hungary, and the nineteen-year-old Constance left Aragon for Hungary. The wedding took place in 1198. The next year (1199), the Queen gave birth to a son, called Ladislaus.

When King Emeric was dying, he crowned his son Ladislaus co-ruler on 26 August 1204. The King wanted to secure his succession and had his brother Andrew promise to protect the child and help him govern the Kingdom of Hungary until reaching adulthood. Emeric died three months later, on 30 November.

Ladislaus succeeded him as King while Andrew became his Regent. Andrew soon took over all regal authority while Ladislaus and Constance were little more than his prisoners. Constance managed to escape to Vienna with Ladislaus.
The two found refuge in the court of Leopold VI, Duke of Austria, but Ladislaus would soon die (7 May 1205). The former Regent and now King Andrew II of Hungary took the body of his nephew and buried him in the Royal Crypt of Székesfehérvár. Duke Leopold sent Constance back to Aragon.

When Constance returned to Aragon, she took up residence with her mother, Queen Sancha, in the Abbey of Nuestra Senora, at Sijena; Sancha had founded the abbey after her husband's death, and now lived there in retirement. Constance spent the next five years in the abbey with her mother, until her fate, again, was changed by her brother.

Pedro II wanted to be on good terms with Pope Innocent III, since he wanted an annulment of his marriage with Maria of Montpellier, and needed the blessing of the Pope. The Pope solicited the hand of the Dowager Queen of Hungary for his pupil, the young King Frederick I of Sicily. The Aragonese King accepted the proposal; Constance left her mother and the abbey of Nuestra Senora and began her trip to Sicily (1208). She never returned to Aragon or saw her mother again. Sancha died shortly after the departure of her daughter.

Constance and Frederick were married in the Sicilian city of Messina on 15 August 1209. In the ceremony, she was crowned Queen of Sicily. By this time, Constance was thirty years old and her new husband, Fredrick Hohenstaufen who was only fifteen. The wedding was almost forced by Pope Innocent III, who had exercised over him the protection required by his mother, Constance of Hauteville, the point of death. With this initiative, the pope intended to assist the young dolphin and recalcitrant of the House of Swabia a very religious woman, reliable, much older than him, able to direct it in the way of obedience to the Roman authorities: How wrong he was.

On 9 December 1212, Frederick was crowned King of Germany in opposition to Otto IV, Holy Roman Emperor. During the absence of her husband, Constance stayed in Sicily as regent of the Kingdom until 1220.

At first Frederick controlled Southern Germany but Otto IV was effectively deposed on 5 July 1215. This time Constance was crowned German Queen with her husband.

Pope Honorius III crowned Frederick Holy Roman Emperor on 22 November 1220. Constance was crowned Holy Roman Empress while their son Henry became the new King of Germany. She died of malaria less than two years later in Catania and was buried in the Cathedral of Palermo, in a Roman sarcophagus with a beautiful oriental tiara.

Children with Frederick II:
Henry VII Born in 1211, in Sicily

When Frederick sought the crown of Germany, he had his son crowned King of Sicily in February 1212 by Pope Innocent III, since an agreement between Frederick and the Pope stated that the kingdoms of Germany and Sicily should not be united under one ruler. For this, the regency of the Kingdom went to his mother and not to his father.

However, after the death of the Pope in 1216, Frederick called his son to Germany and again assumed the title of King of Sicily in 1217. Henry's mother remained as regent in Sicily, now on behalf of her husband, until 1220.

In Germany, Frederick II entrusted him with the Duchy of Swabia. After the end of the Zähringen line in 1219 Henry also received the title of Rector of Burgundy, though that title disappeared again when Henry was elected king. Henry VII was crowned when he was eleven on 18 May 1222 in Aachen. During his minority Germany and Swabia were governed by regents until Henry took over the government in 1228. His support of the middle classes against their bishops irritated the princes who extorted in 1231 a large number of measures from him, protecting them against the growing power of the cities and extending their power over their own territories. Such a kind of privilege, be it not so far going, was granted by Frederick II to the prelates at the occasion of the election of Henry in 1220. In May 1232 he confirmed the Statutem in favorem principum of Henry which de facto legitimized the independence of the German princes. Not long after, Henry tried to hamper imperial power and in September 1234 he rebelled against the emperor. He was joined by the Lombard League which resisted the restoration after 1231 of imperial power in Lombardy by Frederick II. The revolt collapsed when Frederick II came to Germany in the spring of 1235. In July Henry was deposed and taken prisoner by Frederick II. At the same time he decided to declare an Imperial war against the Lombards and defeated the Lombard army on 27 November 1237 near Cortenuova.

Henry was never rehabilitated. After seven years of imprisonment he died on February 12, 1242 when he was transported from his prison in Nicastro to another one in the vicinity of Cosenza (Calabria). He was 31 then.

Probably because he had been fallen in disgrace there are but a few objects preserved referring to him. The erasing of the memory of this rebel is felt until the present day. The so-called Rider of Bamberg for example, of which can be demonstrated by portraits on seals to be Henry VII, is supposed to be any prince
but he. Instead king Stephen of Hungary, Emperor Henry II (1012-’25 (!)) and Emperor Frederick II are proposed.

**Jolanda of Brienne**

After the death of Constance (1222) Frederick, on the advice of Herman Von Stalza in 1225, in the Cathedral of Brindisi, just thirteen years old he married the Jolanda of Brienne, daughter of Giovanni, and titular of the crown of Jerusalem, in which Frederick aspired.

(Marriage of Yolanda with Emperor Fredrick II in Brindisi)

Isabella II (1212 – 25 April 1228) also known as Yolande of Brienne, was born in Andria, Italy, the only child of Maria of Montferrat, Queen of Jerusalem, and John of Brienne. Maria was the daughter of Queen Isabella I of Jerusalem by her second husband Conrad I, and heiress, on her mother's death, of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Maria died shortly after giving birth to her in 1212, possibly by puerperal fever. Because of this, Isabella II was proclaimed Queen of Jerusalem when she was only a few days old. Because her father John did not have a direct claim on the throne, he ruled as regent.

Frederick II, King of Germany and Sicily, had involved himself broadly in the Fifth Crusade, sending troops from Germany, but he failed to accompany the army directly, despite the encouragement of the Popes Honorius III and later Gregory IX, as he needed to consolidate his position in Germany and Italy before embarking on a crusade. However, Frederick again promised to go on a Crusade after his coronation as Holy Roman Emperor in 1220 by Honorius III.

During a meeting between John of Brienne, the Pope Honorius III and Frederick II in the city of Ferentino in 1223, Yolande's fate was decided: Frederick accepted to finally go to the Crusade, but only as the legitimate King of Jerusalem, and this was only possible if he agreed to take the young Queen Isabella II as his wife (by this time, Frederick was a widower). This was planned by the Pope, who hoped by this bond to attach the Emperor firmly to the Sixth Crusade. The betrothal was confirmed, but the Emperor still delayed his departure until August 1225, when he and Isabella were married by proxy in the City of Acre. Days after, Isabella II was crowned as Queen of Jerusalem.
The now crowned Queen was sent to Italy and married in person to Frederick II in the cathedral of Brindisi, on 9 November 1225. In the ceremony, he declared himself King Frederick of Jerusalem. Immediately Frederick II saw to it that his new father-in-law John of Brienne, the current Regent of Jerusalem, was dispossessed and his rights transferred to him. Despite his new capacity as King of Jerusalem, Frederick II continued to take his time in setting off, and in 1227, he was excommunicated by Pope Gregory IX for failing to honor his crusading pledge.

Yolande, in fact, was the daughter of the catholic Giovanni (John of Brienne), a brave crusader who would have inherited the crown of Jerusalem, a title of little value but useful asset for the success of the new expedition. Frederick also aspired to claim the title again, but for reasons somewhat different: he considered the crown crucial to conclude the enterprise with a diplomatic agreement, demonstrating that it was possible to affirm their faith peacefully, without bloodshed. Jolanda was then 13 years, was immature, ugly, little height to appear next to a thirty-age educated emperor. On the first night of marriage, Frederick found a way to console himself: and he did it with her cousin's wife, Anais, a lady in about twenty years old, busty, uninhibited. Became aware of the regrettable fact, Giovanni di Brienne (1155-27 March 1237, was a French nobleman who became King of Jerusalem by marriage, and ruled the Latin Empire of Constantinople as regent) turned to the pope who was careful not to disturb Federico and avoided the scandal merely by compensate the disappointed father with a lucrative position at the Roman Court.

After the wedding, Isabella was kept in seclusion by her husband. She spent her time in Frederick’s harem in Palermo. In November 1226, she gave birth to her first child, a daughter (referred to by some sources as Margaret); the baby died in August 1227. Frederick finally sailed from Brindisi on 8 September 1227 for Jerusalem but fell ill at Otranto, where Louis IV, Landgrave of Thuringia, had been put ashore. Frederick postponed the journey while he recovered. In the meantime Isabella died after giving birth to her second child, a son, Conrad, in Andria, Bari, on 25 April 1228 she was only sixteen. She is buried in Andria Cathedral. Frederick finally embarked to Jerusalem on 28 June.

Although he crowned himself as King of Jerusalem in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on 18 March 1229, he ruled as regent on behalf of his son, settling a truce with the Muslims in 1229 during the Sixth Crusade.

Children:
• Margareta (November 1226 – August 1227).
• **Conrad IV** (25 April 1228 – 21 May 1254). Conrad IV'" (25 April 1228 – 21 was king of Jerusalem+ (as "Conrad II"; 1228–1254), of Germany+ (1237–1254), and of Sicily (as "Conrad I"; 1250–1254).

Born in Andria, Conrad was the second but only surviving child of Frederick and Isabella II, who died while giving birth to him. He was also the grandson of Emperor Henry VI through his father and great-grandson of Emperor Frederick I. Conrad lived in Italy until 1235, when he first visited Germany. During this period his kingdom of Jerusalem, ruled by his father as regent through proxies, was racked by the War of the Lombards until Conrad declared his majority and his father's regency lost its validity.

When Frederick II deposed his eldest son, Conrad's rebellious older brother Henry, in 1237 had Conrad elected King of the Romans in diet in Vienna. This title presumed a future as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Archbishop Siegfried III of Mainz acted as German regent until 1242, when Frederick chose Henry Raspe, Landgrave of Thuringia, and Wenceslaus I of Bohemia, to assume this function. Conrad intervened directly in German politics from around 1240.

However, when Pope Innocent IV imposed a papal ban on Frederick in 1245 and declared Conrad deposed, Henry Raspe supported the pope and was in turn elected as anti-king of Germany on 22 May 1246. Henry Raspe defeated Conrad in the battle of Nidda in August 1246, but died several months later. He was succeeded as anti-king by William of Holland.

Also in 1246, Conrad married Elisabeth of Bavaria, a daughter of Otto II Wittelsbach, Duke of Bavaria. They had a son, Conradin, in 1252. In 1250 Conrad settled momentarily the situation in Germany by defeating William of Holland and his Rhenish allies.

When Frederick II died in the same year, he passed Sicily and Germany, as well as the title of Jerusalem, to Conrad, but the struggle with the pope continued. Having been defeated by William in 1251, Conrad decided to invade Italy in the hope to regain the rich reign of his father, and where his brother Manfred acted as vicar. In January 1252 he invaded Apulia with a Venetian fleet and successfully managed to restrain Manfred and to exercise control of the country. In October 1253 his troops conquered Naples.

Conrad was however not able to subdue the pope's supporters and the pope in turn offered Sicily to Edmund Crouchback, son of Henry III of England+ (1253). Conrad was excommunicated in 1254 and died of malaria in the same year at Lavello in Basilicata. Manfred first, and later his infant son Conradin, continued the struggle with the Papacy, although unsuccessfully.
Conrad's widow Elisabeth married secondly Meinhard II, Count of Tirol, who in 1286 became Duke of Carinthia.

With Conrad's death in 1254 began the "Interregnum", during which no ruler managed to gain undisputed control of Germany. It would only be ended with the election of Rudolph of Habsburg as King of the Romans in 1273.

Isabella of England

Isabella of England, also called Elizabeth (1214 – 1 December 1241) was an English princess and, by marriage, Holy Roman Empress, German Queen, and Queen consort of Sicily. She was the fourth child but second daughter of King John of England and Isabella of Angoulême.

At a friendly meeting at Rieti, Pope Gregory IX suggested to Emperor Frederick II that he marry Princess Isabella, a sister of Henry III of England. At first Frederick II was concerned to lose his French allies; but when he realized that an English marriage would end English support for his opponents, he agreed. The betrothal was formalized in London in February 1235.

The beautiful Isabella was about twenty-one years old when she set out to marry the twice-widowed Emperor Frederick II, who was forty. On her way through Cologne, she delighted the local women when she removed the traditionally worn veil so that they could see her face.

The marriage between Isabella and Frederick took place in Worms Cathedral on 15 or 20 July 1235; in the ceremony, she was also crowned Holy Roman Empress, Queen of Germany and Sicily. Her dowry was 30,000 marks of silver (a considerable sum at the time) and she was granted the castle of Monte Sant'Angelo by her husband upon her marriage.

However, as soon as she was married she was introduced to the secluded harem life attended by black eunuchs. Their marriage had been a political match, and she was allowed to keep only two of her English women-attendants, Margaret Biset, who probably had been her nurse, and her maid Kathrein; the others were sent home.

Isabella lived in retirement at Noventa Padovana where her husband regularly visited her. When her brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, returned from the crusades, he was allowed to visit her, although Isabella was not allowed to be present at the official reception. While the imperial court resided at Foggia, Isabella
gave birth to her last child and died. She is buried beside Frederick’s previous wife, Queen Isabella II of Jerusalem, in Andria Cathedral, near Bari.

Children:
- Jordan (born during the Spring of 1236, failed to survive the year); this child was given the baptismal name Jordanus as he was baptized with water brought for that purpose from the Jordan river;
- Agnes (b and d. 1237).
- Henry Otto (18 February 1238 – May 1253), named after Henry III of England, his uncle; appointed Governor of Sicily and promised to become King of Jerusalem after his father died, but he, too, died within three years and was never crowned. Betrothed to many of Pope Innocent IV’s nieces, but never married to any.
- Frederick (1239/1240 – died young)
- Margaret (1 December 1241 – 8 August 1270), married Albert, Landgrave of Thuringia, later Margrave of Meissen

Matilde Maria (Beatrice) of Antioch of the Hautville.
Maria of Antioch (died after 10 December 1307), daughter of Prince Bohemond IV of Antioch and his second wife Melisende de Lusignan, was the pretender to the throne of Jerusalem from 1269 to 1277. By her mother, she was the granddaughter of Queen Isabella I of Jerusalem, and her fourth husband, King Amalric II of Jerusalem.

Marriage of Mathilde with the Emperor Fredrick II, Bartolomeo da Neocastro (History, cit., P. 21) and Pirro (See A. Pirro, Sicilia, cit., Pp. 25-35) says that the mother of Frederick is legitimate wife of the Emperor.

Marriage of Maria Matilde with the Emperor Fredrick II, Bartolomeo da Neocastro (History, cit., P. 21) and Pirro (See A. Pirro, Sicilia, cit., Pp. 25-35) says that the mother of Frederick is legitimate wife of the Emperor. According to these testimonies Frederick of Antioch should be considered legitimate child of the Emperor and fourth wife. In the testament of Frederick II, Frederick of Antioch, vicar general of Tuscany. It is listed as "Count of Alba" (BF, 3635, BFW, 13624b, Ernst Kantorowicz, Frederick II emperor p. 746).

The Thomas Tusci Gesta Imperatorum et Pontificum refers to the mother of "Fredericus qui de Antiochia" as "Antiocha dicta". The primary source which specifies her name has not yet been identified. The Historia Sicula of Bartolomeo di Neocastro³ names "Beatrix filia principis Antiochie" as the fourth wife of

³ Bartholomaeus of Neocastro (ca 1240 - post-1293) was a Sicilian jurist, and author of a chronicle called the Historia Sicula, which covers the years from 1250 to 1293
"dominus Fridericus secundus...Romanorum...imperator". Zurita, presumably basing himself on the same source, also names “Beatriz...hija del Principe de Antioch” as the mother of “Federico de Antochia”.

The princess of Antioch would have lived in Italy with the Emperor, in the years 1222-1225, together with a public and stable enough to be called "uxor" by some sources. Bartolomeo da Neocastro lists five "uxores" (a wife, spouse, consort) Frederick II. Among the first wife Constance of Aragon (1209-1222) and the second or Jolanda Isabella of Jerusalem (1225-1228) there is a gap (1222-1225): in this period was born Frederick of Antioch, at the same so there is a gap between the second and third wife Isabella of England (1235-1241): born in that emptiness Manfredi (1232), King of Italy and step brother to Frederick of Antioch, whose mother Bianca Lancia is called "fifth uxor." The hypothesis is: the first three wives "regular", then married women "in extremis", when were about to die (GP Carosi, op. Cit., Pp. 24-25).

Prior to 1268, the principal Pretender to the throne of Jerusalem was Conrado, a great-grandson of Isabella I of Jerusalem. He was executed in 1268 by Charles of Anjou, who had by papal authority seized Conrado's rightful Kingdom of Sicily. At the time of his death, Mary was the only living grandchild of Queen Isabella; this allowed her to claim the throne of Jerusalem on the basis of proximity in blood to the Kings of Jerusalem (in feudal successions, proximity - a form of seniority - was a strong claim). The Haute Cour of Jerusalem passed over her claim, however, and instead chose Hugh III of Cyprus - a great grandson of Queen Isabella - as the next ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Maria then went to Rome and proposed the sale of her rights to Charles of Anjou; with papal blessing and confirmation, these were sold to Charles in 1277. Charles then took the title King of Jerusalem, and conquered Acre, holding it until 1285. Thereafter, the claim to the Kingdom of Jerusalem frequently changed hands, being passed down by testament or conquest rather than by direct inheritance.

Children:

- **Frederick of Antioch** (1221–1256). Ruled as King of Tuscany from 1246 to 1250, and King of Antioch (1247). He took part in the wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines in northern Italy, and in the war over the Kingdom of Sicily following his father's death (1250) then with Manfred. Meriggi p. 36.
Contemporary anti-imperial propaganda alleged that Frederick was the product of the emperor's liaison with a Muslim woman in Palestine, but it is almost certain that the child was born in southern Italy, where he spent his youth. Like most of his father's illegitimate children, Frederick was probably born during the period when his father was unmarried (1222–24). At least one illegitimate half-brother of Frederick's shared his name, Frederick of Pettorano, born about eleven years earlier.

Between 1236 and 1245, Frederick married Margherita Conti di Poli. As their eldest son, Corrado Caputo of Antioch, was married to Beatrice Lancia in 1258, it is probable that he was born around 1240 and that his parents' marriage pre-dates that. Margherita was the daughter of a Roman nobleman, Giovanni Conti, lord of Poli and at various times a senator of Rome. Besides Poli, he held allodial and feudal land at Anticoli Corrado, Arsoli, Camerata Nuova, Guadagnolo, Roviano and Saracinesco. Giovanni was among Frederick II's followers in Rome in 1229–30, and was rewarded with the county of Albe, which was nearer his other properties, in exchange for that of Fondi. Through his marriage Frederick came to possess important castles and rights along the Via Valeria, an ancient route connecting the Kingdom of Sicily and the Papal States.

Although Frederick has been ascribed up to eight children, only two, perhaps three, can be identified from primary documents. His son, Corrado (Conrad), was alive as late as 1301. His daughter Philippa, born around 1242, married Manfredi Maletta, the grand chamberlain of Manfredi Lancia, in 1258. She was imprisoned by Charles of Anjou and died in prison in 1273. Maria, wife of Barnabò Malaspina, was also his daughter.

By February 1252, Frederick had joined his half-brother and father's heir, Conrad IV, in southern Italy. At a meet of the court in Foggia, Conrad confirmed Frederick's possession of the county of Albe and conferred on him those of Celano and Loreto Aprutino. Together Albe and Celano had once formed the county of the Marsi. Neither of these new acquisitions, however, were in Conrad's hands at the time. In 1247, Pope Innocent had restored Count Thomas of Celano and his son Roger to the lands the emperor had confiscated from them, and after the latter's death in 1250 they re-occupied them. Loreto Aprutino had been bestowed by the emperor on Count Thomas II of Aquino, but the latter went over to the Guelf side after Pope Innocent confirmed his possessions in June 1251. At Foggia, Conrad declared Loreto forfeit and transferred it to Frederick. Beginning in the summer of 1252, Frederick, with the help of Gualtiero di Manoppello, re-conquered the
counties of Loreto and Celano. The castle of Loreto was the last fortress to fall (1253).

Conrad increasingly distrusted Frederick because of the latter's strong connections to the Lancia family: his son was married to Beatrice, whose father Galvano was long associated with Frederick in Tuscany. In 1253, perhaps fearing a Lancia coup to seize the Kingdom of Sicily, Conrad stripped his illegitimate half-brother Manfredi Lancia of all his fiefs save the Principality of Taranto.

In July 1254, Pope Innocent summoned Manfredi, Frederick and the Count of Hohenberg to a council at Anagni. On 8 September the pope excommunicated them for not handing over Sicily to papal officers and confiscated their fiefs. In September a treaty was signed giving the Pope authority in Apulia, but in October, while accompanying Innocent into his new domains, Manfredi and Frederick escaped. With the aid of the local Saracen settlers they took control of Lucera on 2 November. On 12 November, Innocent, referring to Frederick as "our faithful man" (fidelis noster), restored to him the counties of Albe, Celano and Loreto. It is possible that Frederick had entered into negotiations with the pope on his own initiative, but it is more likely that Innocent intended to coax him away from Manfredi, as he had already successfully done with Galvano.

After the death of Innocent and the election of Alexander IV in 1255, Frederick rejoined Manfredi in the south. He fought against the papal troops led by Ottaviano degli Ubaldini and the Count of Hohenberg, Berthold, now gone over to the papal side. In August he joined the siege of Foggia. An epidemic swept the camps of both armies in late 1255 or early 1256 and Frederick was among the victims. He was almost certainly dead when Manfredi held court at Barletta in February and handed out rewards to the men who had helped him re-conquer the kingdom.

Although he was never formally installed as King of Tuscany, several documents pertaining to the Tuscan communes refer to him as "lord king" (dominus rex), "Lord Frederick, son of the emperor, and King" (dominus Federighus filius domini imperatoris et rex) or "King Frederick" (re Federigo).
Frederick of Antioch is the only Emperor Frederick II’s son to be buried in the Palermo’s Cathedral. Frederick’s sarcophagus in the Cathedral of Palermo (left) and a frontal reproduction of the same (right).

Bianca Lancia

Bianca d'Agliano (also called Beatrice and Blanche), an Italian noblewoman. Born 1200/1210 in Agliano Terme. Bianca Lancia, the family of the Counts of Loreto, was the only woman who truly conquered the difficult heart of Frederick. The two met in 1225, a few months after the ill-fated marriage with Jolanda of Brienne was a mutual love at first sight. Not being able to tie the lawful marriage, the two maintained a clandestine affair but far from secret, so that it had three children:

- Constance (1230–1307), who married the Emperor of Nicea, John Vatatzes, and thereupon her name changed to Anna.
- **Manfredi** (1232–1266), King of Sicily who succeeded his father as ruler of Sicily (initially as regent, before usurping the throne for himself).
- Violante (1233–1264), who married Richard Sanseverino, Count of Caserta

According to a legend that has been handed down from father Bonaventure Lama and recovery from the historic Pantaleo, during the pregnancy of Manfred, Frederick's mistress kept locked in a tower of the castle of Gioia del Colle.

Bianca lived most of her life in the Castle of Boro, the ancestral residence of the Lancia family. She met Frederick II, who was then married to Yolande of
Jerusalem, in 1225 at Agliano, near Asti. Thenceforth, it is said, the two maintained a romantic relationship.

According to some historians, Bianca was the only true love of Frederick's life; others consider this a romantic exaggeration. It was certainly beneficial to the interests of the Lancia family, who were favored by the Emperor with political posts in Italy (Manfredo III was appointed Imperial Vicar of the Holy Roman Empire's northern Italian territories and Podesta of Alessandria, Milan and Chieri; Galvano became Imperial Vicar of Tuscany, Podesta of Padova, Prince of Salerno, Count of Fondi and Grand Marshal of Sicily; and Frederick was appointed Count of Squillace and Viceroy of Apulia). Nonetheless, the relationship of Bianca and Frederick was the longest to all the affairs of the Emperor.

After the death of Isabella of England, Frederick's third wife, in 1241, he endowed Bianca with the castle of Monte Sant'Angelo, located in the cities of Vieste and Siponto. By the terms of the will of William II of Sicily, the castle was the traditional dower of the Sicilian queens consort.

Matthew of Paris relates the story of a marriage in articulo mortis (on her deathbed) between them when Bianca was dying, but this marriage was never recognized by the Church. Nevertheless, Bianca's children were apparently regarded by Frederick as legitimate, evidenced by his daughter Constance's marriage to the Nicaen Emperor, and his own will, in which he appointed Manfred as Prince of Taranto and Regent of Sicily.

The Chronicle of Salimbene di Adam, and also Matthew of Paris claimed that a "confirmatio matrimonii in articulo mortis" ("marriage ceremony in the moments of death") took place between Bianca and Frederick when she was dying (1233/1234). Bianca, apparently, desired the marriage for the salvation of her soul and the safety of their children's future. This marriage however was not deemed canonical by the Church, perhaps due to the fact that Frederick and Bianca's children were all born out of wedlock.

Bianca died either in the castle of Gioia del Colle

The Castle of Lagopesole was a hunting lodge, attended by the Emperor Frederick II to practice his favorite sport or hunting with the falcon. In this picture, visible inside the castle of Lagopesole, is depicted Bianca Lancia.

Frederick II illegitimate children
Frederick II had several relationships outside of marriage, from which sprang his many illegitimate children. He knew them all, making them breed at court and
giving them tasks and titles of nobility, but the identity of the mothers do not always known.

Mistresses and illegitimate issue

✔ **Unknown name, Sicilian Countess.** According to Medlands, she was the first known mistress of Frederick II, by this time King of Sicily. Her exact parentage is unknown, but the *Thomas Tusci Gesta Imperatorum et Pontificum* stated she was a nobili comitissa quo in regno Sicilie erat heres.

✔ **Frederick of Pettorana** born in Sicily between 1212 and 1213, who fled to Spain with his wife and children in 1240, but both his children died there at the age of two and one.

✔ **Adelheid (Adelaide) of Urslingen** (c. 1184 – c. 1222). Her relationship with Frederick II took place during the time he stayed in Germany (between 1215 and 1220). According to some sources, she was related to the Hohenburg family under the name *Alayta of Vohburg* (it: Alayta di Marano); but the most accepted theory stated she was the daughter of Conrad of Urslingen, Count of Assisi and Duke of Spoleto.

Son: Enzio (Heinz) Von Hohenstaufen King Of Sardinia (1215–1272)

Enzo (or Enzio) was an illegitimate son of Emperor Frederick II, who appointed him King of Sardinia in 1238. He played a major role in the wars between Guelphs and Ghibellines in northern Italy, and was captured by his enemies in 1249. He remained imprisoned in Bologna until his death.

(Picture: King Enzo imprisoned in Bologna, from a medieval manuscript)

He had a pleasant personality and a strong physical resemblance to his father. He fought in the wars between his father, the pope, and the Northern Italian communes.

When Ubaldo of Gallura died in 1238, the Doria family of Genoa, in order to secure the Giudicato of Logudoro from Pisan domination, convinced the emperor to marry Enzo to Ubaldo’s widow, Adelasia of Torres. By marrying her, Enzo would accede to half of the island of Sardinia jure uxoris. He was created a knight in Cremona and granted the title "King of Sardinia". He travelled to the island to marry Adelasia in October that year.
In July 1239, he was assigned as imperial vicar general in Lombardy, as well as General-Legate in Romagna, and left Sardinia never to return. In 1241, he took part in the capture of a papal fleet at Giglio Island in the Tyrrhenian Sea. His first successful move as military leader was the reconquest of Jesi, in the Marche, which was Frederick's birthplace. Later he was captured in a skirmish against the Milanese at Gorgonzola, but soon released. In 1245 or 1246 his marriage was annulled. In 1247, he took part in the unsuccessful siege of Parma.

He continued to fight the Guelph Lombards, assaulting the Guelphs of Reggio and conducting an assault in the surroundings of Parma.

During a campaign to support the Ghibelline cities of Modena and Cremona against Guelph Bologna, he was defeated and captured on 26 May 1249 at the Battle of Fossalta. Enzo was thenceforth kept prisoner in Bologna, in the palace that came to bear his name. Every attempt to escape or to rescue him failed, and he died in prison in 1272: after the murder of Conrado in 1268 who was the last of the Hohenstaufen.

Enzo shared the father's passion for falconry, and was thus nicknamed Falconello ("little falcon"). He was the dedicatee of a French translation of a hunting treatise by Yatrib. Like his brother Manfred, he presumably grew fond of poetry at Frederick's court: during his long imprisonment Enzo wrote several poems, and his pitiful fate was itself a source of inspiration for several poets.

The powerful Bentivoglio family of Bologna and Ferrara claimed descent from him.

- Unknown name, from the family of the Dukes of Spoleto. This relationship is only exposed in Medlands. Other sources (including Medlands) also stated Catarina was a full sister of Enzio and, in consequence, also daughter of Adelaide of Urslingen.

Daughter:

- Caterina da Marano (1216/18 – 1272), who married firstly with NN and secondly with Giacomo del Carretto, marquis of Noli and Finale.

- **Manna**, sister of the Archbishop of Messina.

- **Son: Richard of Chieti** (or Riccardo di Teate) 1225 – 26 May 1249. Conte di Chieti. Captain General of Tuscany, podestà of Florence, Vicar General of the March of Ancona, the Duchy of Spoleto and the Romagna. Matthew Paris records the death in 1249 of "alius Fretherici filius naturalis in Apulia" directly after his report of the capture of Enzio.
King of Sardinia, specifying that he died "eodemque tempore", i.e. when Enzio was captured

Berardo Castagna, or Castacca (XII century - Palermo, September 8, 1252) was an Italian Catholic archbishop and political, of the Norman-Swabian, a close friend and faithful of Frederick II of Swabia. At the Swabian king remained faithful all his life, until the point of death, when, according to the Chronicle of Matthew Paris, offer spiritual consolation to the dying emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Berardo, along with Hermann of Salza, was the closest and trusted adviser of the sovereign: the two, both close to the Catholic Church, played an important and uninterrupted diplomatic work to facilitate the relaxation of strained relations between Frederick II and the Apostolic See.

There are various traditions and archival chronicle in which it is handed down his name, welcomed by scholars in different forms: de Costaca (Ferdinando Ughelli), de Castaca (according to Rocco Pirri), de Costa (Francesco Lombardi and Konrad Eubel) and de Castanea, according to the exegesis of certain documents investigated by Norbert Kamp in 1975

Of noble family origins, Abruzzo and pro-empire, Berardo came into contact with the milieu of the court of the Kingdom of Sicily as an exponent in the wake of Walter of Pagliara, which at the Swabian court of Henry VI of Hohenstaufen was Chief Registrar at least since March 1195 and a member and, since October of that same year, a member of the board of familiare regis.

His granddaughter Manna entertained a relationship with Frederick II, from which, in 1224-1225, was born a son of the sovereign: Richard of Chieti (or Riccardo di Teate) who was vicar general of the Marche and Spoleto.

The town of Chieti, previously known as Teate, is located in Abruzzo south of Pescara and lay within the Lombard duchy of Spoleto. Amatus records that the Norman Robert Conte di Loritello attacked "the March of Chieti", dated to the 1080s, and gave part to "his brother Tasso". The Norman conquest of the area was completed in spring 1140 when Roger of Sicily Duke of Apulia (son of Roger I King of Sicily), together with his brother Alphonse, captured Abruzzo. No record has yet been found of a Norman count of Chieti having been appointed at that time. Records have been found of a succession of conti (counts) di Chieti, appointed by Emperor Friedrich II and his successors. Charles I King of Sicily [Anjou-Capet] appointed one of his supporters Renaud de Courtenay as conte (count) di Chieti in 1369 as a reward for his part in the conquest of the kingdom.

✓ Richina (Ruthina) of Beilstein-Wolfsöden (c. 1205–1236). According to Medlands (who take the information from Europäische Stammtafeln), she
was the wife of Count Gottfried of Löwenstein and daughter of some Count Berthold of Beilstein by his wife Adelaide of Bonfeld.

✓ **Margaret (Margherita) of Swabia** (1230–1298), was the daughter of Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor and his mistress Richina (Ruthina) of Beilstein-Wolfsöden. Married Thomas of Aquino, count of Acerra.

Thomas of Aquino. Originally from Lombardy, the family made its first historical appearance in 887. Since the end of the tenth century they had owned the castle of Roccasecca. An earlier branch of the family held the county of Aquino until 1137; it was that branch of that Thomas got his surname, not from the town of Aquino, which was not his birthplace. Another branch later inherited the county of Acerra, whose titleholder in 1221 was the first Thomas Aquinas; he possessed a viceroy’s power over the southern part of the Italian peninsula. A follower of Emperor Frederick II since 1210, he was named by the latter “judge” of the “Tillage Land” (Terra di Lavoro), his region in 1220, and that role he was under the jurisdiction of the count of Acerra.

✓ **Selvaggia** (1223–1244), married Ezzelino III da Romano

It believes that Selvaggia was born in 1221/1223 and died in 1244 in Verona, where in 1238 he married Ezzelino III da Romano, was the daughter of a woman belonging supposedly to the family Lancia.

Ezzelino III da Romano (April 25, 1194 – October 7, 1259) was an Italian feudal lord in the March of Treviso (the modern Veneto) who was a close ally of the emperor Frederick II and ruled Verona, Vicenza and Padua for almost two decades. He became infamous as a cruel tyrant though much of his sinister reputation may be due to the propaganda of his many enemies.

Ezzelino was son of Ezzelino II da Romano, ruler of Bassano, and Adelaide degli Alberti di Mangona, who came from a family of counts in Tuscany. At the age of four years he was sent as a hostage to Verona. Nothing else is known about his childhood or education. In 1213 he took part in the siege of the castle of Este, which belonged to his father's archenemy, marquis Azzo VI of Este, who died in 1212, and later to his son Aldobrandino. According to the chronicler Rolandino of Padua, the young Ezzelino already showed a keen interest in siegecraft and acquired a hatred of the Este which would last his entire life.

In 1249, after Selvaggia's death, he married Beatrice di Buontraverso.
In 1254, four years after Frederick II's death, he was excommunicated by Pope Innocent IV, who also launched a crusade against him. He reconciled with his brother and allied with other seignors of the Veneto and Lombardy, attacking Padua, which resisted, and Brescia, which was instead sacked after an easy victory of his German knights over the crusade army.

In 1258 he launched a broad Ghibelline offensive in Lombardy and Veneto along with Oberto Pallavicino of Cremona. In 1259 he assaulted the castle of Priola, near Vicenza, and had all the defenders mutilated. After a failed attempt to assault Milan itself, he was wounded by an arrow in the course of the Battle of Cassano d'Adda. He had to retreat but was captured near Bergamo.

Children of Selvaggia and Ezzelino III da Romano:

- Blanchefleur (1226–1279), Dominican nun in Montargis, France.
- Gerhard (died after 1255).

Dead of Frederick

Neither the papacy nor the towns of the North approved of Frederick's designs. The towns formed an alliance known as the Lombard League - the region of northern Italy in which many of these cities were situated was known as Lombardy. The papacy offered its support, excommunicated Frederick and called upon other monarchs to join in a war against him. Frederick, in turn, issued a series of papers that advocated reducing the Church to apostolic poverty.

The complex struggle ended with Frederick's death. The papacy continued to work against the Hohenstaufens, and the family was eventually destroyed, with its last member, a young lad, being publicly beheaded in the public square of Salerno. In 1266, the papacy introduced a French dynasty into the kingdom of Two Sicilies and supported its establishment. Two Sicilies had been a political football for so long, however, that it should come as no surprise to find that it remained so. The Sicilians did not like their French overlords and so, with the support and promised alliance of the king of Aragon (in Spain), began plotting their overthrow.

In 1282, the Sicilians rebelled against the French in a bloody uprising known as the Sicilian Vespers, and the Aragonese took over the kingdom. Aragonese monarchs continued to rule the region until the 18th century.

After years of conflict, frenetic activity and constant travels, Frederick II died in December 13, 1250 from an intestinal infection at Castel Fiorentino in Apulia, the land of his birth. His sons, Enzio died in 1272 prisoner of the city of Bologna, Manfred and Conrad, died in battle, Frederick IV of Antiochia died in battle, Conradi was executed in Naples by the Angevin. Within 22 years from Frederick's
death, all his heirs were eliminated by the ruthless Popes and the Dynasty of the Hohenstaufen brought to its end. With them the dream of a state, free from religious interference also ended: a loss that meant innumerable tragedies for Europe and for the Western World, the consequences of which we are still suffering.

He died just before his fifty-sixth birthday and was interred in the cathedral of his favorite city, Palermo, where he rests today next to his mother, father and wife.

Historians used to see Frederick as a Renaissance prince born before his time, or even as the first truly modern man. Writers more recently have preferred to view him in the context of his own day. There is no doubt, however, that he astounded his contemporaries, who called him stupor mundi, ‘wonder of the world’. Such was the impact he made that many people could not believe he had really died. Stories sprang up that he had gone to the depths of Etna or a mountain in Germany where he was biding his time to return, reform the Church and re-establish the good order of the pax Romana of old. In reality his policy virtually died with him. His claim as *Caesar Augustus, Imperator Romanorum*, to pre-eminence over all the princes of Europe was fatally out of date.

He was called by his contemporaries "Stupor Mundi" (Wonder of the World). He was the first "lay" monarch of Europe. How he was able to accomplish so much is still a matter for "wonder".

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**CATHEDRAL OF PALERMO, SICILY – ITALY**

![Tomb of Emperor Erick VI, father of Frederick II](image1)

![Tomb of Empress Constance of Hauteville, mother of Frederick II](image2)

![Tomb of Emperor Frederick II](image3)
Hohenstaufen Genealogy

Casa di Hohenstaufen

Federico di Bürren (Breuro) — 1094, sposò Lidigarda, figlia del duca Otto I di Svevia


V. FRANCONIA

Federico II di Hohenstaufen detto il Guercio (1090-1147), duca di Svevia (1105) sposò:
1. Giuditta (1126), figlia di Enrico IX il Nero
2. Agnese di Sarbricken

Federico IX il Nero, duca di Baviera (1126)

V. GUELFI

Corrado II (1093-1152), duca di Franconia (1115-1152), re d'Italia (1128-1152), re di Germania (1138-1152), Imperatore (1134-1152), sposò nel 1134 Gertrude di Sulzbach

Enrico (1137-1150), re (associato) dei Romani

Federico IV (1145-1167), duca di Rothenburg, duca di Svevia (1152), sposò Gertrude (1196), figlia del duca Enrico di Brunswick, senza discendenza.

Julia (1135-1191), sposò nel 1150 Luigi II Langravio di Turingia (1172)

Gertrude (1110-1191), sposò nel 1125 a 1130, Ermanno di Stahelsk conte palatino di Lorena.

Federico Barbarossa (III) I (1122-1190), duca di Svevia (1147), re di Germania (1152-1190), Imperatore (1152-1190), re d'Italia (1155-1190) sposò:
1. Nel 1147 Adelaide di Vohburg, divorziato nel 1153.
2. Nel 1156 Beatrice di Borgogna

Federico V (1164-1191), duca di Svevia

Enrico VI il Severo (1165-1197), re dei Romani (1169), re d'Italia (1186), re di Gerusalemme (1190-1197), Imperatore (1190-1197), re di Sicilia (Enrico I, 1194-1197), sposò nel 1180, Costanza d'Altavilla (1198).

Federico II (1194-1250), re di Sicilia (Federico I, 1198), re dei Romani (1195), Imperatore (1220-1250), re di Gerusalemme (1229), sposò:
1. Nel 1210 Costanza d'Aragona (1220)
2. Nel 1225 Isabella di Newcastle (Isabella di Brienne) (1228)
3. Nel 1235 Isabella o Elisabetta d'Inghilterra (1241), numerosi figli.

Berta (1123-1195), sposò Matteo I, duca di Lorena.

Corrado (1135-1195), conte palatino del Regno (1156), sposò nel 1159, Emilia (1197), figlia del conte Bartolo I di Hanneberg discendenza estinta alla prima generazione.

Filippo (1178-1208), vescovo di Wurzburg (1190), marchese di Toscana (1194), duca di Svevia (1196-1208), re di Germania (1198-1208), sposò nel 1197, Irene Angelica (1208).

Marina (1201-1235), sposò nel 1219, Ferdinando III, re di Castiglia e León (1252)

Beatrice (1198-1212), sposò nel 1212, Ottone IV, duca di Brunswick, re di Germania e imperatore (1218).

Ottone (1167-1200), conte palatino di Borgogna, sposò nel 1192, Elisa (1231), figlia del conte Tiziano V di Blois.

Cunegonda (1200-1228), sposò nel 1221, Venceslao I, re di Boemia (1253).

Beatrice (1198-1212), sposò nel 1208, Ottone I, duca di Merano (1231).

Beatrice (1174-1181)

Maria (1201-1235), sposò nel 1215, Enrico II, duca di Brandeburgo (1248).

Figli di Federico II
Federico II

Enrico VI (1211-1242), duca di Svevia (1216), re di Germania (1220-1222), sposò nel 1225, Margherita d'Asburgo (+1267)

Corrado IV (1228-1254), Imperatore designato (1250-1254), re di Sicilia (Corrado I, 1250-1254), re titolare di Gerusalemme (Corrado II), sposò nel 1246, Elisabetta di Raviera (+1273)

Margherita (1237-1270), sposò nel 1256, Alberto Langravio di Meissen (+1315)

Enrico (1238-1253), governatore di Sicilia.

V. Wettin

Corradino o Corrado V di Hohenstaufen (1252-1268), re titolare di Sicilia, Corrado II, 1254-1258), re titolare di Gerusalemme (Corrado III, 1254-1268)

Maddalena
Costanza
Enrico
Elena
sposò nel 1272, Guelfo della Gherardesca.

Costanza (+1313), sposò nel 1244, Giovanni III, duca Vatazze, Imperatore d'Oriente (+1254)

Manfredi (nato da Bianca Lancia), (1252-1266), principe di Taranto (1240), re di Sicilia (1258-1266), sposò nel 1247, 1. Beatrice di Savoia. 2. nel 1259, Elena Angelo.

Sebaggia (+1244), sposò nel 1238, Ezzelino da Romano.

Margherita (+1297) sposò nel 1247, Tommaso d'Aquino, conte di Acera.

Federico d'Antiochia (Caputo), (1229-1258), principe d'Antiochia, sposò Margherita Poli.

Caterina, sposò nel 1246, 1247, Giacomo Del Carretto.

Violante (+1264)

Corrado d'Antiochia (Caputo), (1240-1315?), sposò Beatrice Lancia.

Filippa d'Antiochia (1245)

Federico IV d'Antiochia (1273)

Bartolomeo I d'Antiochia (1270)

Figli: Alfonso (+1291), James (re a Aragona), Federico re di Sicilia (+1227), e familiari ai Caputo (Corrado d'Antiochia) e Caputo ebbero cariche importanti nel regno di Sicilia dopo i Vespri Siciliani, ebbero cariche in Napoli, Narni, Imola e altre città.
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Philip of Swabia married Irene Angelina, daughter of Isaac II Angelus on 25 May 1197. Their four daughters were:

Beatrice of Hohenstaufen (1198–1212), married Otto IV, Holy Roman Emperor

Cunigunde of Hohenstaufen (1200–1248), married King Wenceslaus I, King of Bohemia
Marie of Hohenstaufen (1201–1235), married Henry II, Duke of Brabant
Elisabeth of Hohenstaufen (1203–1235), married King Ferdinand III of Castile
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