

**ENGLAND AND THE EMPIRE, 1216-1272 :
ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS DURING THE
REIGN OF HENRY III**

Björn Weiler

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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by

Björn Weiler

October 1998



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Abstract

This thesis charts the development of the political and diplomatic relations between England and the Holy Roman, Medieval or German Empire during the reign of Henry III of England, 1216-1272. This will be done before the wider background of contemporary European politics. Therefore, relations between the two realms have been viewed in the context of events and developments such as the papal-imperial conflict, the Mongol invasions, and the crusades. The actions of either Henry III or his Imperial counterpart cannot be understood without this background in mind, and without a comparison to the actions and undertakings of their contemporaries. As a result, it emerges that Henry III's policies towards the Holy Roman Empire did not differ greatly from those of other rulers, such as Louis IX of France or Ferdinand of Castile, and that in his case, as in theirs, the immediate pressing needs of Henry's own kingdom formed and moulded the direction of his relations with the rulers of the Empire. As far as the Emperor was concerned, on the other hand, England was perceived to be a potential source of fiscal and diplomatic support, but was not considered worth any risks. At the same time, the dangers and challenges facing both rulers also forced them over and over again to confront each other's needs and ambitions.

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Finally, those should be thanked who made made this undertaking possible in the first place, and to whom this thesis is dedicated: *meine Eltern*.

Abbreviations

<i>AfD</i>	Archiv für Diplomatik und Urkundenforschung
<i>AI</i>	Eduard Winkelmann (ed.), <i>Acta Imperii inedita saeculi XIII et</i>
<i>XIV:</i>	<i>Urkunden und Briefe zur Geschichte des Kaiserreiches und des</i> <i>Königreichs Sizilien</i> , 2 vols., (Innsbruck, 1880-85).
<i>AM</i>	<i>Annales Monastici</i> , ed. H.R. Luard, 5 vols., <i>RS</i> (London, 1864-9)
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Insitute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BN</i>	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
<i>CChR, 1226-57</i>	<i>Calendar of Charter Rolls</i>
<i>CLR</i>	<i>Calendar of Liberate Rolls</i>
<i>CM</i>	Matthew Paris, <i>Chronica Maiora</i> , ed. H.R. Luard, 7 vols., <i>RS</i> (London, 1872-74)
col.	column
<i>Constitutiones</i>	<i>Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum</i> , vol. II, 1198-1272, ed. Ludwig Weiland, <i>MGH Leges IV</i> (Hanover, 1896)
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Close Rolls</i>
<i>DA</i>	<i>Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters</i>
<i>DD</i>	Pierre Chaplais (ed.), <i>Diplomatic Documents preserved in the</i> <i>Public Record Office 1101-1272</i> (London, 1964)
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>Epistolae</i>	<i>Epistolae Saeculi XIII e Regestis Pontificum Romanorum</i> <i>Selectae</i> , ed. Carl Rodenberg, <i>MGH Epistolae</i> , 3 vols., (Berlin, 1883-1894)
<i>FS</i>	<i>Festschrift</i>
<i>Foedera</i>	Thomas Rymer (ed.), <i>Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et</i> <i>cujuscunq̄ue generis Acta Publica</i> . new edn., vol. I,1, ed. A. Clark and F. Holbrooke (London, 1816).
<i>HB</i>	Alphonse Huillard-Breholles,(ed.), <i>Historia Diplomatica</i> <i>Friderici Secundi.</i> , 7 vols., (Paris, 1852-1861)
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
<i>Layettes</i>	Henri-Francois Laborde and Alexandre Teulet (ed.), <i>Layettes du Tresor de Chartes</i> , 4 vols (Paris, 1863-1909).
m.	membrane

- MGH *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
- SS *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*
- sep. ed.* *In usu Scholarum separatim editi*
- vern. ling.* *Qui vernacula lingua usi sunt*
- MIÖG *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische
Geschichtsforschung*
- NA *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche
Geschichtsforschung*
- nr. number
- PRO Public Record Office
- Registres... *Registres et lettres des Papes du XIIIe siècle*
Les Registres de Gregoire IX, 4 vols.,
(Paris, 1896-1955)
Les Registres d'Innocent IV, 4 vols.,
(Paris, 1884-1921)
Les Registres d'Alexandre IV, 3 vols.,
(Paris, 1895-1959)
Les Registres de Clement IV, 2 vols.,
(Paris, 1893-45)
Les Registres d'Urbain IV, 4 vols.
(Paris, 1899-1954)
- RHGF *Receuil des Histoire de la Gaule et France*
- RI Johann Friedrich Böhmer, Eduard Winkelmann, Julius Ficker
(ed.), *Regesta Imperii: Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter
Philipp, Otto IV., Friedrich II., Heinrich (VII)., Conrad IV.,
Heinrich Raspe, Wilhelm und Richard, 1198-1272, 3 vols.,*
(Innsbruck, 1881-1901).
- RIS *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, Nova Series.*
- RLC *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum in Turri Londinensi Asservati, ed.*
T. Duffus Hardy, 2 vols., (London, 1833-4).
- Roger of Wendover *Rogeri de Wendover Chronica sive Flores Historiarum, ed.*
H.O. Coxe, 5 vols., *English Historical Society* (London, 1841-4).
- Royal Letters Walter W. Shirley (ed.), *Royal and other Historical Letters
illustrative of the Reign of Henry III, 2 vols., RS ,*
(London, 1862-66).
- RS *Rolls Series*
- SRH *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*
- TNA Edmund Martene and Ursinus Durand (ed.), *Thesaurus Novus
Anecdotorum, vols. I&II., (Paris, 1717, repr. New York, 1968)).*

- TR* Pierre Chaplais (ed.), *Treaty Rolls 1234-1325* (London, 1955).
- UB* *Urkundenbuch*
- VSM* Edmund Martene and Ursinus Durand (ed.), *Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum, Historicorum, Dogmaticorum, Moraliū Amplissima Collectio*, vol. I, (Paris, 1724; repr. Westmead, 1969,).

Note on Names and Terminology

Names are normally given in their modern English equivalent, that is Henry for Heinrich or Henri, Frederick for Friedrich, Cologne for Köln, etc.

Some of the terminology involved will cause difficulties. The Dukes of Brunswick will be referred to as such throughout this thesis, although they were not formally given their ducal title until 1235, and Henry III's brother will frequently be described as Richard of Cornwall, or Earl Richard, despite the fact that he did not receive his earldom until 1225. Considering that these were the names under which they are commonly known, and in order to avoid confusion, this seemed the best possible option.

The term 'Imperial' presents similar problems. The German term *Reich* normally refers to the German and North Italian parts of the Empire, but sometimes also to Imperial Burgundy, or only to Germany. In this thesis it will normally refer to the Empire as a whole, unless it is used in a specifically German context, such as during Richard of Cornwall's reign in Germany, or to describe a specific group or institution, such as the Imperial princes (*Reichsfürsten*), who were normally German.

Germany in The High Middle Ages.



Introduction

During the fifty-six years of Henry III's reign England underwent dramatic changes. When the young King succeeded to the throne in 1216, England was still reeling from the onslaught of civil war and foreign invasion. Henry's reign stood under his father's shadow. Magna Carta, symbolic of the conflicts besetting King John, haunted his government, making a frequent re-appearance during the political crises of Henry's reign.¹ More importantly, the recovery of those lands lost by his father continued to dominate relations with Europe. John had lost Normandy, Anjou and Maine to the King of France in 1204. His grandiose schemes to recover these lands came to an end at the battle of Bouvines in 1214, when the combined forces of Emperor Otto IV and the King of England suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Philip Augustus of France. This defeat, in turn, contributed to no small degree to John's problems at home. From his accession in 1216 onwards, Henry thus found himself confronted with the consequences of his father's failure: a rebellious baronage and an inheritance deprived of some of its most ancient and prestigious elements.

By the time of Henry's death, in 1272, England was again, albeit slowly, recovering from internal unrest. In 1265, at Lewes, a group of barons under the leadership of Simon de Montfort had been defeated by a royalist force. However, this was merely the final stage of a struggle which had been dominating most of Henry III's reign. The King had only reluctantly agreed to confirm Magna Carta, and consistently failed to adhere to it. In fact, the observance of the Great Charter soon became a political bargaining tool. In 1253, for instance, Henry's brother Richard had tried to solicit further taxes from the assembled barons and clergy in exchange for a promise that henceforth Magna Carta would be abided by. The King's refusal to receive the counsel of his subjects, his eagerness to exploit his juridical rights for the administration of patronage, and for bettering his continuing financial malaise, feature highly in the complaints against his government. His patronage of foreign relatives, most notably the Savoyards and Lusignans, did little to ease already existing tensions. In 1258, this culminated in moves by a group of barons, under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, to expel the Lusignans from court. This was combined with demands for the reform of royal government, and Henry III was forced to surrender control of some of the key posts in his administration to the barons. What had initially begun as a court intrigue soon developed a dynamic of its own and engulfed not only Henry III's domestic rule, but also his foreign projects and ambitions.

These domestic setbacks were aggravated by a lack of success abroad. Henry never managed to recover his father's lands. In fact, in 1225, he suffered yet another defeat, when the new King of France, Louis VIII, occupied Poitou. Campaigns to win

¹ Its significance for the early years of Henry's reign has been assessed by Robert C. Stacey, *Politics, Policy and Finance under Henry III* (Oxford, 1987), 1-44.

back the county failed in 1230/1 and 1242/3. Nonetheless, efforts continued to undo these losses, and the need to find allies abroad soon dominated Henry's diplomacy. How he pursued this aim, the setbacks he encountered, how he had to modify and change his plans will be a central aspect of this investigation. It will also become clear that, by about 1250, hopes for a military reconquest of lands once held by Henry and his family had been abandoned, and that new spheres of influence were sought, most notably in the Mediterranean.

Throughout these years, the Empire featured highly in English diplomacy. Henry III never abandoned the hope of repeating his father's system of alliances, when Emperor Otto IV and King John had fought side by side against Philip Augustus of France. More importantly, even if he made little progress in his dealings with the Emperor, Frederick II, himself, many of his vassals had no scruples joining or supporting Henry. The King of England achieved some memorable successes. In 1235, for instance, his sister Isabella married Frederick II, and in 1257, his brother Richard was chosen as Emperor-elect. Relations with the Empire thus present an ideal opportunity to study the development of English diplomacy in the thirteenth century. Unlike France, the Empire was not at the centre of English ambitions. Unlike Scotland, it did not find itself exposed to hostile overtures from Henry III, and, unlike the rulers of Castile, no territorial interests overlapped which could trigger belligerent exchanges. It mattered mainly as a potential recruiting ground for allies and supporters. At the same time, few medieval institutions are as suitable as the Empire to exemplify the way Henry III's 'European strategy' developed and changed during the course of his reign.² For the very nature of the medieval Empire demands that it and its relations are considered within as wide a framework as possible.

The Medieval or Holy Roman Empire defies definition. Although frequently referred to as the German Empire, and although Germany formed its political and economic core, its lands and territories encompassed the borders of the modern Netherlands, Belgium, eastern and southern France, Germany, the Czech republic, Austria, Switzerland, Luxemburg, Liechtenstein and most of Italy. Among the languages spoken were various dialects of German, French, Provençal, Italian, and Czech. To varying degrees, all these lands played their part in Imperial affairs. Imperial politics cannot be understood without taking into account the communes of Northern Italy, and Imperial relations with France were often influenced by the affairs of Imperial Burgundy, those lands which stretch from francophone Switzerland to the Rhone and from there to the Mediterranean.

Originally, the German princes were those who mattered most to Henry III and his father. The alliance formed in preparation for John's campaign of 1214 included the Archbishop of Cologne and the Duke of Brabant, as well as Emperor Otto IV's

² This follows Michael Clanchy, *England and its Rulers, 1066-1272* (London, 1983), 230-40.

relatives in Saxony and along the Rhineland. Provence and Languedoc were of little concern, and few contacts were made with the towns of Italy. This was as much a reflection of the English court's strategic needs - to attack France from two sides - as of the politics of contemporary Germany. The campaign of 1214 had aimed not only at undoing the Capetians' recent successes in France, but also at settling the internal problems of the Empire. Both the French and the English court had had their German champions. Philip Augustus assisted Frederick of Sicily, a new claimant to the Imperial throne, while John sided with Emperor Otto IV.³ In order to understand the significance this was going to have for Henry III's actions, it will be necessary to discuss the historical background leading up to the events of 1214, as well as some of the elementary structures of Imperial politics and government.

The divisions in Germany evident in the build-up to the battle of Bouvines are sometimes referred to as the Welf-Hohenstaufen conflict, after the two families at its centre. The Welfs originated in Swabia, had come to prominence in Bavaria and expanded into the North and North-East of modern Germany during the twelfth century, when they inherited the duchy of Saxony. Their fortunes declined, however, with the fall of Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, who was deprived of his Imperial fiefs in 1180. The Welf lands were reduced to the areas around Brunswick and Lüneburg, encompassing the later electorate of Hanover. To undo the damage suffered then, and to reclaim their status as one of the most prominent Imperial dynasties, remained amongst the aims of Henry the Lion's descendants. He himself went into exile at the court of his father-in-law, Henry II of England, from where he continued to interfere in the politics and affairs of the Empire. In 1198, his family achieved a first major success. That year, the death of Emperor Henry VI triggered a division among the German princes, and led to the elevation of two rival kings. One was Philip of Swabia, a Hohenstaufen, the other Otto of Lüneburg, Count of Poitou and formerly Earl of York, Henry the Lion's second son.⁴ He had been reared at the English court, and was among the possible candidates for the succession of Richard the Lionheart.⁵ When Philip was murdered in 1208, Otto was crowned Emperor by Pope Innocent III. The Welfs' restoration to power seemed complete. However, in 1210 Otto attacked Sicily, the inheritance of Philip's nephew, Frederick of Hohenstaufen, and a papal fief, and was therefore excommunicated. This forced Pope Innocent III to look for another champion, and led to the candidacy of Frederick of Sicily for the Imperial throne. Otto's defeat at Bouvines marked the beginning of his

³ The connection between the Kings of England and Otto's family went back several years, to the marriage between Henry the Lion and Margaret, daughter of Henry II of England: Jens Ahlers, *Die Welfen und die englischen Könige* (Hildesheim, 1987).

⁴ For the most recent study of Otto's career: Bernd Ulrich Hucker, *Kaiser Otto IV.* (Hanover, 1990).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-3, 16-8.

end.⁶ He was unable to stem Frederick's progress into Germany, and died, largely confined to his domains around Brunswick, in 1218.⁷ Initially, at least, the support which Otto IV had received from the English court was to cause considerable problems for Henry III in his dealings with the victorious Frederick II.

The Hohenstaufens, too, had their power-base in Swabia, having been awarded the ducal title in the eleventh century by Emperor Henry IV. From 1138 to 1198 three members of the family - Conrad III, Frederick I Barbarossa and Henry VI - occupied the Imperial throne. By 1184, however, a new opportunity had presented itself.⁸ That year Emperor Frederick Barbarossa arranged a marriage between his son, the future Henry VI, and a sister of King William II of Sicily. At the time, this had primarily been a matter of settling the simmering conflict between the Normans and the Empire, and of depriving the papacy and its Lombard allies of potential supporters. However, when William died without any direct male heirs, his sister claimed the Sicilian throne. Suddenly new possibilities opened themselves, and it looked as if the Hohenstaufen could seize the Normans' inheritance in Southern Italy and combine it with their imperial possessions in the north. Emperor Henry VI entered Sicily, where his son, Frederick, was born in 1194. This acquisition was to prove both the peak of the Hohenstaufens' influence in Europe, and their undoing. When Henry VI died in 1197, a new Emperor had to be chosen. However, the infant Frederick was ignored, and the papacy tried to ensure that no Hohenstaufen was to succeed Henry VI. Holding both the Imperial lands of Northern Italy and the main-land territories of the Kingdom of Sicily, the Hohenstaufens posed a serious threat to the papal lands around Rome, endangering the political independence of the Holy See. That the Kingdom of Sicily, or *regno*, was a fief held from the Pope, mattered little. In practice, papal overlordship made itself rarely felt, and, unless backed up by military force, remained largely a legal fiction. As Innocent III himself was to experience, the *curia's* influence in the kingdom of Sicily increased or diminished with its military presence. Moreover, in the past the rulers of Sicily had all too often proved themselves to be a blessing as much as a curse. Although they could be counted upon to defend the pope against his German and Roman foes, the Norman rulers had proven themselves to be equally unwilling to let slip by an opportunity to expand their power into papal lands. In fact, even the title of King of Sicily had originally been the reluctant concession of an incarcerated pope. With this history in mind, and considering the equally volatile relations between the Holy See and the Hohenstaufen, a separation of the Imperial lands in northern Italy from the family's inheritance in the South and Sicily may have seemed an opportunity as well as a necessity. The papacy's success in pressing

⁶ Gerd Baaken, 'Der deutsche Thronstreit auf dem IV. Laterankonzil', in: Klaus Herbers, Hans Henning Kortüm and Carlo Servatius (ed.), *Ex ipsis rerum documentis: Beiträge zur Mediävistik. FS Harald Zimmermann* (Sigmaringen, 1991), 509-21.

⁷ Hucker, *Otto IV.*, 303-30.

⁸ Peter Csendes, *Heinrich VI.* (Darmstadt, 1993) for the following.

through the election and coronation of Otto IV was short-lived. In the end, although with some reluctance, and mostly for lacking a potent alternative, Innocent III had to abandon what he had gained in Sicily to preserve what he had won in the Empire, and declare his support for Frederick II. However, the young king's elevation was not the end of the matter. Efforts to ensure a formal separation of the Empire from Sicily formed a corner-stone of papal diplomacy for the next century and beyond.

Another major player in Imperial politics and in relations with England has to be considered: the Archbishop of Cologne. After the fall of Henry the Lion, the see had been awarded the duchy of Westphalia, that is the south-western parts of the former duchy of Saxony, roughly identical with the modern *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia (the area surrounding Bonn), but stretching into Lower Saxony. The archbishops controlled much of the Rhineland and their wealth and political clout made them formidable players in English relations with Germany. In 1198, for instance, they had been instrumental in securing the election of Otto IV, and had taken an active role in arranging the alliance between the Emperor and King John.⁹ In fact, even most of the diplomatic contacts were arranged either directly by the archbishops, or by nobles and emissaries who had strong connections with the Rhenish prelates. They continued doing so until well into the reign of Frederick II, often in spite of and contrary to the Emperor's declared plans and intentions. At the same time, their role has often been grossly exaggerated, and they assumed the role of a continuously available *deus ex machina*, there to explain whatever historians thought should have happened, or what they could not otherwise explain.¹⁰ Both their role as the leading ecclesiastical princes of Germany, as well as the ruler of a city at the centre of one of Europe's most wide-ranging and active trade networks predestined the prelates to play an important part in Germany's dealings with other realms. At the same time, their influence was open to fluctuations. In the case of Henry III, for instance, it diminished once the marriage between the king's sister and Frederick II had been arranged in 1235. During the remainder of his reign they were never to recover the standing and influence they had exercised before then. Consequently, although the significant role played by the archbishops of Cologne should not be ignored, it would be equally wrong to write a history of Anglo-Imperial relations based solely on contacts between England and Cologne. Other, equally important partners have to be taken into account as well.

All this is connected to some important structural differences between England and the Empire. Whereas Henry III and his father had little difficulty controlling the

⁹ Hugo Stehkämper, 'England und die Stadt Köln als Wahlmacher Ottos IV. (1198)', *Mitteilungen aus dem Stadtarchiv Köln* ix (1971), 213-44; Sonja Zöller, *Kaiser, Kaufmann und die Macht des Geldes. Gerhard Unmazed von Köln als Finanzier der Reichspolitik und der 'Gute Gerhard' des Rudolf von Ems* (Munich, 1993).

¹⁰ Such an approach has most recently been taken by Joseph Huffman, *Comparative History and the Anglo-German Connection: Cologne and Anglo-German Relations during the Central Middle Ages (1066-1307)* (Ph. D., UCLA 1991), *passim*.

movements of their clergy and nobles abroad (Scotland, Wales and Ireland presenting - for various reasons - a slightly different picture), no such control could be exercised by the Emperor. The prelates and nobles of Germany, Burgundy and Italy pursued their ambitions and contacts with a large degree of autonomy. The Counts of Toulouse and Provence, for instance, frequently endangered relations with France by their actions,¹¹ and, as we will see, the Archbishops of Cologne could pursue projects which had long been abandoned by the Imperial court, and which ran contrary to the Emperor's interests. This, in turn, leads to two further points requiring consideration here. First, a coverage of English relations with the medieval Empire cannot concentrate on the Emperor or a particular prince alone, but has to aim at taking into account the entirety of contacts and partners. Secondly, this seeming anomaly in the organisation of political contacts with foreign powers in the medieval Empire has given rise to a debate whether it is possible at all to use terms such as 'foreign' policy in a medieval context.¹²

Most doubts concerning the applicability of the term 'foreign relations' have been voiced by German mediaevalists.¹³ It may be possible, however, that their perception has been coloured by the specific conditions of the Mediaeval Empire. These, however, were not necessarily typical for the rest of Europe. England, for instance, provides an example for the opposite extreme.¹⁴ Leaving aside the special cases of Wales, Ireland and Scotland, the English Kings had established a sufficiently well developed machinery to control and direct their relations with neighbouring rulers. No English magnate had the freedom, power and opportunity of following Henry the Lion's example and searching for allies and partners abroad, independently of the King. William the Marshal had to ask for permission before he could enter into separate negotiations with Philip Augustus concerning his lands in France, despite the fact that he was one of the regents for the infant Henry III. One of the reasons for this particular development was the specific conditions created in England. Compared to the Empire, it was small, fitting several times into the territories presided over by the Emperor. As such, it was easier to control and govern. Furthermore, the administrative apparatus developed by the Norman and Angevine Kings gave them an unprecedented control over their kingdom. An Emperor, on the other hand, had to

¹¹ Walter Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten im Dienste der Westmächte*, 2 vols., (Utrecht, 1924-31), 80-2, 105-7; note that Kienast has to be handled with great care, as he all too often distorts evidence to prove his underlying assumption that the German princes were inherently corrupt, and that the 'Western powers' were 'out to get' the Empire. He later produced a revised version: *Deutschland und Frankreich in der Kaiserzeit (900-1270): Weltkaiser und Einzelkönige*, 3 vols., (Stuttgart, 1975).

¹² A short survey has been given by Dieter Berg, *Deutschland und seine Nachbarn 1200-1500* (Munich, 1997), 47-57; and a very detailed discussion in his *England und der Kontinent: Studien zur auswärtigen Politik der anglo-normannischen Könige im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert* (Bochum, 1987), 7-23.

¹³ Kienast, *Deutschland*, passim.

¹⁴ France may provide an interesting example for a less strict separation of royal and baronial authority. In 1235, the Count of Ponthieu could negotiate with Henry III, independent of his King. At the same time, attempts by Hugh de Lusignan to form an English alliance were viewed as treacherous and punished accordingly. The degree of noble autonomy reflected that of royal control.

accommodate and balance different customs and rights. He could not press the same rights and claims in the Imperial cities of Germany and the communes of Lombardy, the King of Bohemia had to be treated differently from the Duke of Limburg. This, in turn, made it more difficult to control the Empire as a whole, and left individual princes a greater degree of autonomy in pursuing their own aims. This did not mean that an Emperor was bereft of authority. In 1242, for instance, some of the nobles in Imperial Burgundy still felt that they needed permission from Emperor Frederick II before they dared to attack the Capetians. However, an Emperor lacked the administrative apparatus available to the English King, and had to strive continuously to make his authority felt and accepted. If he failed or if he was prevented from doing so, princely authority increased. This forms part of the background against which English relations with the Empire have to be understood. Contacting the Emperor alone was not enough. His subjects and vassals were of equal importance, and the latter frequently proved more amenable to English overtures than the former.

These differences between English magnates and Imperial princes were also rooted in their very different functions within their respective realms. The Holy Roman Empire was an elective monarchy, that is, rulers were elected by a group or groups of princes. The exact composition of that princely elite was unclear and often debated. A college of seven electors, consisting of the Archbishops of Cologne, Trier and Mainz, the King of Bohemia, the Duke of Saxony, the Count Palatine of the Rhineland and the Margraves of Brandenburg, was first mentioned in the context of the Double Election of 1257.¹⁵ We may assume, though, that movements towards an electoral college had existed for some time. A King being elected by his princes was a concept not entirely alien to England. In 1135, for instance, the magnates chose between Mathilda and King Stephen, and Henry I and King John had ensured some kind of token 'electoral' consensus before they assumed the throne. However, this remained the exception, rather than the rule. Normally, a son succeeded his father.

In the Empire, structures developed differently. The succession was decided by a vote among the princes. In practice, this frequently meant that they elected an Emperor's son. Frederick Barbarossa, Henry VI and Frederick II had ensured the election of their sons as successors during their life-time. Only when an Emperor died without male issue, or in politically fraught circumstances, such as in 1198, did they exercise their electoral rights independently. Nonetheless, the princes' standing in relation to the monarch was greater than that of the English magnates. At the same time, the effect this had on Imperial politics is easily exaggerated. The Emperor did not face a united front of hostile princes, continuously emphasising their superior status

¹⁵ This has been one of the most hotly debated issues in medieval German history, with a literature too numerous to be listed here in its entirety. The classic account is that of Heinrich Mitteis, *Die deutsche Königswahl: ihre Rechtsgrundlagen bis zur Goldenen Bulle*, 2nd ed. (Brünn, Munich, Vienna, 1944); in the context of the Double Election also useful: Wolfgang Giese, 'Der Reichstag vom 8. September 1256 und die Entstehung des Alleinstimmrechts der Kurfürsten', *DA* xl (1984), 562-90.

and stubbornly refusing to comply with his demands. In fact, most princes desired the exercise of stable authority as much as their English counterparts. However, the degree to which they were willing to submit varied, as did the degree to which they were expected to submit.

The electoral nature of Imperial Kingship was not the only limitation on an Emperor's authority. Once a ruler had been elected and crowned, he assumed the title of King of the Romans. To become Emperor, he had to be crowned by the Pope in Rome. For most of the eleventh and twelfth century this was a formality. However, from Innocent III onwards, the papacy began to employ this second stage to press its claims. As the Pope had to choose an Emperor, he had to decide on the suitability or idoneity of the candidate. In practice, this was primarily an instrument to force guarantees for the integrity and defence of papal lands and rights. In part, this may have been a response to the Hohenstaufens' recently assumed control over Sicily. To ensure the separation of Empire and *regno* was a recurrent feature in negotiations. Frederick II, for instance, had to promise that the Empire would pass out of Sicilian hands after his death, and in 1254, some of the conditions for the enfeoffment of prince Edmund of England with Sicily aimed specifically at avoiding a future union of the two realms. Moreover, an Imperial coronation also conveyed solemn obligations, most notably the duty to defend and assist the *curia* in its wider aims and ambitions.¹⁶ In the thirteenth century, this frequently meant that the Emperor was intrinsically linked to the hopes and ambitions of the Holy See. Imperial cannot be separated from papal politics, and those form an important element of any coverage of the Empire's relations with another realm or ruler.

Nonetheless, although the specific structures and conditions of the Empire may to a large extent explain the doubts voiced by German medievalists, the problem remains that, so far, terms like 'foreign relations' and 'foreign policy' have been used without much discussion as to what they might signify in a medieval context. To what extent do medieval political entities confine to the modern definition of diplomacy as depending on a centralised authority which conducted relations with foreign realms or rulers? Was there a concept of 'foreign'? If so, to what extent would this correspond to modern definitions of 'nation' or nationality?

For once, the above definition was created to describe a system of alliances and treaties which only began to come into place and assume the place of standard regular framework for relations between states from the Peace of Westphalia of 1648

¹⁶ For these concepts as such: J. A. Watt, 'Spiritual and temporal powers', in: J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350-c. 1450* (Cambridge, 1988), 367-423; his 'The theory of papal monarchy in the thirteenth century: the contribution of the canonists', *Traditio* xx (1964), 178-317; Alfons Stickler, 'Imperator vicarius papae: Die Lehren der französisch-deutschen Dekretistenschule im 12. und beginnenden 13. Jahrhunderts über die Beziehungen zwischen Papst und Kaiser', *MIÖG* lxii (1954), 165-212; and for a discussion of the intellectual foundations: Alan Cottrell, 'Auctoritas and potestas: a reevaluation of the correspondence of Gelasius I on Papal-Imperial relations', *Medieval Studies* lv (1993), 95-109.

onwards. As such, it is certainly inapplicable as far as the Middle Ages are concerned. Nonetheless, some of its elements and structures, if redefined, can be a helpful tool in analysing contacts between rulers and realms in medieval Europe. Let us begin with the most basic assumption in the context of this investigation: that of 'foreign-ness'. Certainly, 'foreign', in the sense of constituting a separate political entity, was still open to definition. Edward I and William Wallace, for instance, held very different views as to how 'foreign' Scotland was from England, and many English magnates administering their estates in Wales and Ireland may not necessarily have considered that to constitute anything like 'foreign relations'. At the same time, from the mid-twelfth century at the latest, western European kingdoms began to form an identity which, if still fluid, realised the existence of 'foreign' political entities, and acted accordingly. At the same time, these differences were not as stringent and coherent as we are accustomed to nowadays, but they remained fluid and subject to change. Nor would it be appropriate to view the medieval concept of 'foreign' along lines similar to that of 'nation'. Although ethnic and linguistic differences began to emerge as a defining factor in the legal, religious and political conflicts of the thirteenth century, the idea of a unity between 'nation' and 'realm' would be anachronistic.¹⁷ The example of the medieval Empire has already been cited. However, in England, too, the English 'nation' meant less than the realm ruled over by the English king. The latter, for instance, included Gascony as well as Ireland and Wales. In short, we are dealing with a phenomenon that shifts shape so frequently that, although its existence may be beyond doubt, it still defies definition. The most pragmatic solution to this problem might therefore be to consider those realms as 'foreign', and as such subject to 'foreign policy', which were perceived as lying outside the borders of a specific realm. In practice this means that, for instance, most English magnates may have had their doubts about Wales, but few would have disputed that Castile, France (with the role of Poitou or Normandy undergoing important changes in the course of the thirteenth century) or Flanders constituted foreign lands. This may fall short of the modern idea that only unified, sovereign and well-defined states could pursue foreign relations, but it coincides with and reflects the ambiguity of the medieval evidence.¹⁸

Nonetheless, although the concept of foreign political entities was probably understood by the average medieval magnate, the question remains whether it is safe to speak of anything like 'foreign policy' or even 'diplomacy'. Again, this remains a matter of perspective and of definition. We will look in vain for a White Paper on Henry III's foreign affairs. Official pronouncements of long-term diplomatic strategies would have been grossly anachronistic. So, how is the term 'policy' to be understood? In the context of this investigation it will be used as the aims and ambitions

¹⁷ Some of these problems have been discussed by: Gabrielle Spiegel, 'Defence of the realm: evolution of a Capetian propaganda slogan', *JMH* iii (1977), 115-33.

¹⁸ Berg, *Deutschland*, 52.

underlying the dealings the English court had with foreign powers. This included formal treaties and alliances, as well as trading contacts or preparations for undertakings such as the crusades of 1227, 1239 and Henry III's own campaign, declared in 1250. In addition, matters such as the King's dealings with his foreign relatives will be considered, the patronage which they petitioned for and the support they received. For we have to remember that the borders between the King's private and the realm's affairs were still fluid. After all, it was not until the Napoleonic wars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that this differentiation began to be abandoned in theory as well as practice. We should therefore not be surprised if Henry III's patronage of his Savoyards relatives will be treated as part of his general involvement in the affairs of the medieval Empire. At the same time, we have to avoid equating these two areas of the King's policy. Relatives could be used to pursue certain aims and ambitions, but, in particular in England, they were just as frequently viewed as separate from the realm's 'public' affairs. This is a differentiation which we will frequently encounter with regard to Henry III's patronage of his Lusignan half-brothers or his wife's Savoyard uncles. It played an important part in the determining the course of the so-called Sicilian Business, Henry III's attempt to make his son Edmund King of Sicily from 1254 onwards, and it is implied in the reasoning the English magnates employed in objecting to the King's 1242/3 campaign in Poitou. Once again, although a dividing line existed, it tended to shift in reference to the internal problems of England. In fact, one may want to argue that one of the problems Henry III faced was that he remained unable to make his private ambitions be understood as being one with the perceived needs of his kingdom. With these qualifications in mind it will be possible to speak of something like a 'foreign policy', that is long-term plans which aimed at achieving particular ends, and the co-ordinated exercise of measures aimed at realising that goal, and which did so in relation to territories other than the one presided over by a ruler other than the one whose actions will be analysed.¹⁹ More specifically, we could define the aims of a medieval ruler's foreign relations as the need to secure one's borders and to keep one's enemies in check.²⁰ This will allow us to include all the possessions of a king or ruler, such as, in Henry III's case, Gascony or Poitou, as well as England, while still taking into account different political structures and conditions in these various domains. Moreover, with this definition trying to differentiate between 'personal' or 'public' ambitions will become unnecessary.

All this has various implications for this study. To understand the reasons why English relations with the Empire took the course they did, the structures, objectives and pressures defining Imperial policy have to be taken into account. An approach

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 53. See also the discussion in James der Derian, *On Diplomacy: a genealogy of Western estrangement* (Oxford, 1987), 68-87, who similarly rejects the idea that concepts of diplomacy and 'foreign' relations did not exist in pre-modern Europe.

which centres on Germany alone leaves out many of the most important developments during the reigns of Frederick II and his successors. Imperial Burgundy played a significant role, as did Northern Italy and, later, Bohemia. Similarly, concentrating solely on the Emperor or on one particular prince, ignores the other agents of Imperial policy, and the range and complexity of its aims. Nor are the internal pressures of Imperial politics the only issues which have to be dealt with. Wide-ranging as his domains may have been, Frederick II had concerns outside the Empire. These included relations with rulers of the eastern Mediterranean, most notably Cyprus and the Holy Land. The close proximity of Imperial and papal politics also make it necessary to consider wider issues such as the crusades, the Mongol threat, as well as, to a lesser degree, the fight against heresy. In one way or another these issues conditioned the Emperor's response to English overtures, and they informed the actions and undertakings of his princes. English relations with the Empire form part of a wider picture, which must not be ignored or left aside.

All this puts us of course in danger of losing sight of intricacies and fine detail which a more narrowly focused investigation might bring to the foreground. Much of what will be said over the following pages will deal only cursorily with such important matters as Henry III's administration of England, Frederick II's efforts at establishing stronger imperial control over Germany, culminating in the 1235 *Mainzer Reichslandfrieden*, or the niceties of relations between Castile and Aragon. Other matters, too, had to be left out, and have been or will be dealt with separately. Nonetheless, the advantages of this wider approach seem to outweigh its possible shortcomings. For once, it will be possible to see the inter-connections and interdependence of European politics which otherwise is too easily overlooked. We actually see how the same issue or movement concerned England, as well as Germany, France, the Spanish kingdoms or the Christian lands in *Outremer*, and how this shaped the interaction between them. This also opens up a dimension previously ignored in the political history of medieval Europe. We will actually begin to see a complex net of mutual interests, of contradictory needs and desires and of pressures and forces which shaped and directed medieval political intercourse. Although much of this will take the form of sketching and outlining a complex problem, this will nonetheless provide the basis on which further and in their scope more limited studies could be built. In fact, by doing so this investigation does no more than follow Immanuel Kant's postulate for the application of human reason in scientific work: that the detailed investigation of individual problems and the effort to find generalisations and basic systematic rules ought to complement rather than hinder each other.

There also remains a need for a broader survey of Anglo-Imperial relations which views them before the wider background of contemporary European politics.

For once, apart from a thesis published at Breslau in 1883,²¹ no monograph exists to chart the topic in the thirteenth century. And that concentrates largely on the period between 1235 and 1268, and does so from an 'Imperialist' perspective, i.e. aiming to justify Frederick II, and fails to analyse either the broader background or the earlier history of Anglo-German contacts. Fritz Trautz's magisterial work on Anglo-German relations concentrates on the fourteenth century, and contains only a small and cursory outline of events prior to that.²² Most of what we have in English are two virtually identical articles by Benjamin Arnold,²³ charting on less than fifteen pages how relations developed over 400 years. We thus would be severely disappointed if we expected much detailed analysis. In addition, Joseph P. Huffman's research gives a detailed outline of English relations with Cologne, but it fails to take into account any of the wider English, German or European context, and all too often limits itself to repeating what older generations of historians have pronounced on the subject. Even on a more immediately local level Jens Ahler's research on the Welfs and England stops in 1235, a perfectly appropriate date from his perspective, but unfortunate from ours.²⁴ Amongst the other players, the Duke of Brabant and his dealings with England have been given some, although not much coverage.²⁵ There is thus room for a history of Anglo-Imperial relations during a time when contacts between the two kingdoms reached an unprecedented degree of interdependence.

Moreover, there also is the need for a political history of relations between the two realms. Political history in general and diplomatic history in particular have fared rather badly over the last fifty years. To a large extent this is understandable. Much of this kind of history had been dominated by a perception of the Middle Ages which had aimed primarily at justifying the states and systems found in place by the nineteenth century. As a result, it frequently has an unpleasant taste of national pre-destination to it.²⁶ Furthermore, it was pursued to the exclusion of other areas of medieval life and thought, and only gave a myopically distorted picture of the Middle Ages. Not unsurprisingly, therefore, what is often called political history has remained a comparatively barren field over the last generation or two. However, as a result, we now often find ourselves in the awkward situation of pursuing research which aims to distance itself from what is called the history of political events, while at the same time relying on that very *histoire evenementielle* for its own immediate frame of reference.

²¹ Felix Wissowa, *Politische Beziehungen zwischen England und Deutschland bis zum Untergang der Staufer* (Bresslau, 1889).

²² Fritz Trautz, *Die Könige von England und das Reich, 1272-1348* (Heidelberg, 1961).

²³ Benjamin Arnold, 'Germany and England', in: Nigel Saul (ed.), *England in Europe 1066-1453* (London, 1994), 76-87; the same, 'England and Germany, 1050-1350', in: Michael Jones and Malcolm Vale (ed.), *England and Her Neighbours, 1066-1453: essays in honour of Pierre Chaplais* (London, 1989), 43-52.

²⁴ Jens Ahlers, *Die Welfen und die englischen Könige 1165-1235* (Hildesheim, 1987).

²⁵ Jean de Sturler, *Les relations politiques et les échanges commerciaux entre le duche de Brabant et l'Angleterre au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1936).

²⁶ For the concept as a whole: Frantisek Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit: Überlieferung im Mittelalter und in den Vorstellungen vom Mittelalter* (Cologne and Vienna, 1975).

For, as much as we may dislike political history, it were nonetheless the actions and undertakings of kings and rulers which created the conditions within which others – be they merchants, scholars, farmers or artists – acted. It is this very framework, however, for which we all too frequently rely on dated and often wrong interpretations of medieval Europe's political history. That, though, is too important an aspect of medieval society and culture to be put aside lightly. We have to remember that earlier generations of historians had abandoned the idea of a history of political events not because their forefathers had reached definite and final conclusions, but because they had ignored other, equally relevant fields of research. Ignoring the history of political events would therefore mean that, rather than amending, we repeat their mistakes.

Furthermore, not only the subject matter of this work, but also its presentation will be slightly old-fashioned. Most of the following pages contain what is effectively a political narrative. This is done largely with two things in mind: the reader's comfort in perusing this text, and the requirements and needs of the subject-matter. For it remains the aim of this thesis to trace and investigate the changing parameters within which Henry III and his court acted, and to place them in relation to the needs and ambitions of his partners and opponents. In short, this is a history of events. As such, its narrative structure is formed by the very matter, i.e. the events, it seeks to describe and analyse. Only thus will it be possible to work out the subtle changes and modifications which occurred across the various levels of activity treated in this thesis, while avoiding a teleological and deterministic interpretation of events. Over the following pages, individual chapters will therefore normally consist of three sections. A general outline of the affairs of the Empire, and a survey of Henry III's relations with France and of the opportunities or challenges he faced at home, will be followed by an analysis of his dealings with the Empire. Thus, it is hoped, the broader European context will become more clearly visible, while at the same time it will emerge how actions abroad were formed and conditioned by a mixture of external objectives and internal pressures. At the same time, a certain degree of selectivity could not be avoided. The following does not aim at listing each and every encounter either Henry III or his various partners ever had with outside rulers or movements. Any such undertaking would be futile and little more than a listing of dates and names. Over the following pages, our focus will follow that of Henry III. When the emphasis of his dealings lay with the Empire, we will concentrate on the Emperor. Once Henry III and his family became involved in the affairs of what was the Hohenstaufens' Empire, our focus will shift towards the objects of their respective ambitions. In the case of Henry this will be the Empire in Sicily, and in Richard of Cornwall's that in the Rhineland. In the past, the focus has normally been on the rulers of Germany and their expectations of the kings of England. As subsequent chapters will show, this ignores some of the more intriguing and impressive aspects of Henry III's reign and government. Moreover, it seemed a challenging task to show that, even in thirteenth century, the

rulers of England were still an integral part of a wider European community of princes and rulers.

Once again, however, it may be necessary to point out that this is not a study of Henry III's foreign relation in their entirety. We will deal only with a faction of the contacts which the King of England had with foreign rulers, and we will concentrate on the lands of the medieval Empire. Thus, any reader of these pages will look in vain for a detailed coverage of Henry III's relations with Flanders, for instance. Not only was Flanders firmly under Capetian control ever since Count Ferrand had been captured at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214, but Henry III also forged closer ties with those who could have given him what he wanted more easily, efficiently and willingly than the Counts of Flanders: the Emperor and his allies. When this changed, from about 1250 onwards, Henry's objectives had begun to change as well, and the recovery of his inheritance was increasingly replaced by the preparations for his crusade or the wish to expand his own family's influence into the Mediterranean. In this context, trying to get involved in the affairs of Flanders would have been futile, unhelpful and ultimately dangerous. Not only was the county torn apart by civil war, but Henry's involvement would have alienated the one figure he needed more than anyone else in order to pursue his ambitions in the South: Louis IX of France.

One last methodological aspect of this thesis needs to be addressed: the use of sources. For the following, we will rely mostly on chronicles, letters and the contents of the English royal archives. Unfortunately, nothing comparable to the Public Record Office survives for the rulers of the medieval Empire. What remains are isolated charters and documents, letters penned down by monastic scribes trying to put together formulaic collections for their own use, bits and pieces surviving in cartularies or the archives of recipients. This leads to a occasionally awkward situation. For instance, we only know of some of the contacts between Frederick II and the King of Castile during the 1240s, because Castilian envoys passed through Gascony during Henry's presence there, and so they were recorded by English administrators. In fact, the wealth and sheer variety of English governmental records allows us to trace missions and undertakings of which very little is recorded elsewhere. We have accounts for the expenses of envoys to and from the royal court, provisions of wine and horses, falcons and ships. At the same time, much of this is superficial. All too often we do know that a mission was sent, we even know who participated, and we may know about the gifts and presents made on the occasion, but we do not always know what matters were or had been treated. With a teasing degree of frequency, the records simply state that relevant information would be conveyed separately or even orally. In such cases, we will have to reach a plausible conclusion mostly from circumstantial evidence, and it is then that chronicles become of major importance. Especially in thirteenth century England, some contemporary historians were exceptionally well informed. Sometimes, this allows us to glimpse how certain events

were interpreted by a court and this in turn makes it possible to speculate about the wider purpose of some of these missions. At the same time one has to beware of a positivist approach which takes sources unquestioningly at face-value. As often and frequently as possible we will have to ask what the background and what the intention of a writer had been. Unfortunately, to do this for all the roughly 85 chronicles used for this investigation would far exceed its scope. At the same time, what this investigation is looking for are political facts. A writer's or a group of writers' personal stance, their *Weltbild* and conception of history will play only a subordinate role in what follows, and will be dealt with only inasmuch as they are of relevance to the subject of this analysis. Interesting as such questions are, they fall outwith the scope of this project.

What follows will tell the story of a King of England and his dealings with the rulers of the medieval Empire. It tries to show how this was embedded within a wider European framework, and will ask persistently and repeatedly how the King of England's policies echoed and formed this background.

Chapter I

Diverging Goals

(1216-1231)

In July 1214 two armies met at Bouvines in north-east France.¹ The resulting battle shaped Europe for a generation to come. Emperor Otto IV lost his throne, and found himself replaced by an upstart prince from Sicily, the future Frederick II.² King John of England was forced to abandon his efforts at reconquering Normandy, Anjou and Maine which he had lost to Philip Augustus of France in 1204. Moreover, he soon faced a rebellion in England, to no small degree exacerbated by his handling of baronial demands, and even found prince Louis of France leading an expeditionary force across the Channel.³ The inheritance he bequeathed his infant son in 1216 was, thus, weakened, disputed and fragile.⁴ The main beneficiaries of Bouvines were the Capetian kings of France, finding themselves elevated to the leading ranks of European politics, a position which they managed not only to maintain, but also to extend.⁵

The relations of John's successor, Henry III, with the rulers of continental Europe have to be considered within this context. To regain the lands lost by his father remained among his and his regents' overriding ambitions. However, when Louis VIII succeeded his father to the French throne in 1224, he sought to emulate Philip Augustus's expansion of Capetian territories, and did so by attacking both the Plantagenets, and his neighbours south of the Loire. Frederick II, on the other hand, had to establish his authority in Germany, a country alien to him, while still faced with opposition in Sicily. These diverging aims defined the direction of English diplomacy. The young King and those leading his government faced no easy task. They presided over a kingdom but slowly recovering from civil war and foreign invasions. However, Henry III and his government showed an astonishing resilience in their efforts to undo what they perceived as unjust, and to reclaim what they maintained to be rightly theirs. It was in the context of these undertakings that Germany began to play a major part in English diplomacy, and it is to this background that we must now turn.

I.1 England and France

¹ Georg Duby, *Der Sonntag von Bouvines, 27. Juli 1214*, trans. G. Osterwald (Berlin, 1988), for a somewhat peculiar narrative.

² Theo Holzapfel, *Papst Innozenz III., Philipp II. August, König von Frankreich und die englisch-welfische Verbindung 1198-1216* (Frankfurt/Main, 1991), 306-8; John W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: foundations of French royal power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley et al, 1986), 332-42.

³ James C. Holt, *Magna Carta*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 1992), 188-266; Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London, 1994), 225-37, 249-56.

⁴ David Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London, 1990), 5-238.

⁵ Hiestand, Rudolf, 'Von Bouvines nach Segni', *Francia* xxii/1 (1995), 59-78; Joachim Ehlers, 'Die französische Monarchie im 13. Jahrhundert', in: Egon Boshof and Franz Reiner Erkens (ed.), *Rudolf von Habsburg: eine Königsherrschaft zwischen Tradition und Wandel* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1993), 165-84.

It had taken two years of intermittent warfare and increasing papal pressure before Louis withdrew from England.⁶ In 1220 Philip Augustus agreed to a truce for four years.⁷ Henry III's regents immediately set out to restore royal government, and to ensure a peaceful settlement with those willing to accept the new regime. Foreign affairs were dealt with, Gascony and Poitou secured, matters of ecclesiastical hierarchy were treated. The promise of a new start was made when, in 1220, the King was crowned for a second time, acknowledged now, too, by those who in 1216 had sided with prince Louis.⁸ England looked set for a slow, but persistent recovery. However, in 1223 fate struck again, and Philip Augustus died. Initially, this seems to have caused a surge of optimism at the English court, in the - mistaken - belief that now was the opportunity to claim back the young king's inheritance. The Archbishop of Canterbury was sent to France to demand a return of Normandy,⁹ while Henry requested support from Honorius III,¹⁰ and Pandulf, the former legate.¹¹ However, this optimism was ill-founded. Not only did Philip's successor, Louis VIII, refuse to comply with English demands, but he posed an even greater threat than his father.

In spring 1224 an English embassy was sent to Paris, to negotiate an extension of the truce which had been agreed in 1220.¹² The King of France, however, seized the opportunity, and gathered troops.¹³ In June, while the English court, still not suspicious of Louis' moves, concentrated its resources on the siege of Bedford castle,¹⁴ the attack on Poitou began. Deprived of English support, the county succumbed quickly, and by August La Rochelle, the key fortress in the county, had fallen. Even Gascony, the sole remaining territory on French soil under Plantagenet control, was in danger. This was to be a momentous event in the history of English relations with the continent. From then until the Treaty of Paris (1259), the recovery of lands lost in 1204 and 1225 dominated Henry's actions. The rulers of Flanders, Germany, Spain and Languedoc found themselves repeatedly at the centre of English overtures to enter, support or join alliances against the Capetian kings of France.

The events immediately after the loss of Poitou may serve as an example. Once news of Louis' successful attack had reached England, papal support was enlisted, and a search for potential allies began. In August 1224 Honorius III wrote to Louis VIII,

⁶ Pietro Pressutti (ed.), *Regesta Honorii Papae III* (Rome, 1889), nrs. 1000-1; M. Tyson (ed.), 'The Annals of Southwark and Merton', *Surrey Archaeological Collections* xxvi (1925), 24-57, at 50; Carpenter, *The Minority*, 27-44, 176-9; Nicholas Vincent, *Peter des Roches: an alien in English politics 1205-1238* (Cambridge, 1996), 135-41, 163-5.

⁷ *DD*, nr. 67.

⁸ Carpenter, *Minority*, 200-3; Richard Eales, 'The political setting of the Becket translation of 1220', *Studies in Church History* xxx (1993), 127-39, at 130-9.

⁹ *Chronica Johannis de Oxenidis*, ed. Henry Ellis, *RS* (London, 1859), 148.

¹⁰ *DD*, nr. 139.

¹¹ F.M. Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward: the community of the realm in the thirteenth century* (Oxford, 1947), 170.

¹² *CPR 1216-1225*, 484.

¹³ Carpenter, *Minority*, 370-5 for this and the following.

¹⁴ *Gervasii Cantuariensis Gesta Regum Continuata*, in: *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, 2 vols., *RS* (London, 1879-80), II, 113.

reprimanding him for his actions, and demanded an immediate truce.¹⁵ Similar exhortations were issued in February and during the summer of 1225.¹⁶ Even Frederick II was called to Henry's aid.¹⁷ The King of France, however, refused to comply.¹⁸ By December 1224 it became clear how little hope there was that Louis would surrender his gains voluntarily. The Dunstable annalist describes how Louis VIII's representatives at the papal *curia* declared that not only would their King hold on to the lands already seized, but that he would also conquer England. The English court is said to have taken this threat so seriously that sea-towns were fortified and hostages demanded from the Cinque Ports.¹⁹ This picture is confirmed by other sources. In late December 1224, English proctors at the *curia* sent a report, detailing how French envoys had declared that King Louis VIII would instantly cross over to England, should the Pope decide against him. They also brought other, worrying news: the papal legate in France was planning to arrange a marriage alliance between the Empire and France.²⁰

Henry III's court prepared for action. A mission, led by Walter Mauclerk, Bishop of Carlisle, was sent to Germany to arrange a marriage alliance between Henry III's sister and Frederick II's son, thus undermining French efforts at forging closer links with the Empire. In addition, attempt were made to form a coalition of all those who had been wronged by the Capetians. The fear with which Henry's court faced Louis VIII is underlined by its odd choice of allies. In August 1225, for instance, Henry III wrote to Count Raymond of Toulouse, emphasising that both his ancestors and Raymond's had been persecuted and robbed by the French crown. Therefore, they should work together and stand firm against the Capetian threat. The moment was well chosen, as Raymond had just begun to recover ground lost during the Albigensian Crusade,²¹ while Louis VIII was exerting all his influence to receive papal permission to lead yet another campaign against him.²² The Count was still suffering from the losses inflicted by Simon de Montfort, while facing the prospect of yet more attacks on his domains. Henry III seems to have been aware of the dangers close proximity to Raymond could pose, and strict precautions were taken to keep the pact secret.²³ This proved a wise move when the Count was excommunicated the following year,²⁴ while Henry III received a stern warning from Honorius III that he would face similar punishment should he persist in his dealings with Raymond.²⁵ However, this was not the only peculiar choice made by the young King's regents. A curious letter from Henry III to the Count of Flanders survives,

¹⁵ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, n. 18.

¹⁶ Pressutti, *Regesta*, I, nr. 5575; *Epistolae*, I, nr. 267.

¹⁷ *DD*, nr. 162.

¹⁸ Leopold Delisle (ed.), *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France* xix (Paris, 1880), 760.

¹⁹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 92-3.

²⁰ *DD*, nr. 153.

²¹ Jonathan Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade* (London, 1978), 214-6.

²² Joseph R. Strayer, *The Albigensian Crusades: with a new Epilogue by Carol Lansing* (Ann Arbor, 1992), 123-6.

²³ *Foedera*, I, 179.

²⁴ Roger of Wendover, iv, 124.

²⁵ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, nr. 22.

in which the King suggested that they should join forces against their common foes, probably referring to the Capetians.²⁶ This was a peculiar suggestion, as the Count of Flanders, Ferrand of Portugal, was still in French captivity, where he had been since 1214. However, also in 1225, a 'false Baldwin' made his appearance.²⁷ His supporters maintained that he was Count Baldwin, first Latin Emperor of Constantinople, who had been missing since 1205. Should this pretender have been the addressee of Henry's letter - which seems the most plausible explanation - this would illustrate not only the often desperate measures the English court found itself forced to take, it also sheds new light on the English mission to Germany, negotiating with the Archbishop of Cologne. After all, the Archbishop played an important, though murky, role in the affairs of the pretender, being amongst those approached by 'Baldwin' when he began to look for allies.²⁸

However, the German marriage did not materialise, nor did the restoration of 'Baldwin' have any lasting success. The rulers of Languedoc and Imperial Burgundy, on the other hand, continued to play an important role. In May 1226, an alliance was concluded with the Count of Toulouse.²⁹ In the meantime, though, Louis VIII had begun to lead a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Languedoc, thus enjoying papal protection which made any successful English initiative unlikely.³⁰ Consequently, Henry's court sued for peace.³¹ In 1226 events took yet another turn: Louis VIII died.³² When this coincided with a revolt amongst the French nobility,³³ Henry III instantly entered into negotiations with the rebels.³⁴ Furthermore, Ferrand of Flanders, recently released from captivity, received confirmation of his English fiefs,³⁵ suggesting that he was to be part of an imminent campaign. An opportunity had presented itself to reclaim by force what diplomacy had failed to win: the recognition of Henry's claims to Normandy and Poitou. However, plans for a campaign had to be abandoned when his most important ally, Hugh de Lusignan, decided to abandon the English cause. The King had to send his younger brother, Richard, to conclude a truce for two more years. In 1228, when the truce came up for renewal, the English court had little chance but to comply with the papal pressure it found itself exposed to, and agreed to extend it by another year.³⁶

By November 1228 a new opportunity presented itself. Raymond of Toulouse wrote to Henry III, and insisted that their agreement of 1225 be fulfilled.³⁷ He was not

²⁶ *Foedera*, I, 177.

²⁷ Robert Lee Wolff, 'Baldwin of Flanders and Hainault, first Latin Emperor of Constantinople: his life, death and resurrection, 1172-1225', *Speculum* xxvii (1952), 281-322, at 294-9 for the following.

²⁸ *Alberti Stadensis Chronica*, MGH SS xvi, 358; *Chronica Regia Coloniensis, Continuatio IV*, MGH SS sep. ed. (Hanover, 1880), 255..

²⁹ *CPR 1225-32*, 78.

³⁰ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, nr. 22.

³¹ *CPR 1225-32*, 24, 74-5.

³² *Annales Marbacenses*, MGH SS 17, 175.

³³ Roger of Wendoveriv, IV, 135.

³⁴ Jean Richard, *Saint Louis: roi d'une France fèodale, soutien de la Terre Sainte*. (Paris, 1983), 40-4 and Stacey, *Politics*, 166.

³⁵ *Foedera*, I, 187.

³⁶ *CPR 1225-32*, 213-4; *Layettes*, II, nr. 1970.

³⁷ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 279; *CR 1227-31*, 233.

alone. During the Christmas court at Oxford in 1228, the Archbishop of Bordeaux arrived, speaking on behalf of the aristocracy in Gascony, Aquitaine and Poitou.³⁸ Independently, nobles from Normandy sent representatives, and asked for Henry's support. Suddenly, the English court found the support within France it had been lacking for so long. However, sensitive to papal demands, a good reason had to be found before war could be declared. After some sabre-rattling in March, when Henry complained about recent infringements on the truce,³⁹ *pro forma* negotiations began. The stakes, however, had been raised. A document survives, in which Henry III outlined the demands to be made by his proctors in France.⁴⁰ He proposed three possible solutions. First, the King of England would receive back all his lands, except for Normandy. There, his holdings were to be limited to one or two dioceses which, however, could be surrendered, if need be. Alternatively, a French prince could marry Henry's sister Isabella, who was to receive Normandy and Anjou as her dowry. Finally, Henry III offered to buy back his lands. If accepted, Louis' government would have surrendered lands which had been held successfully for nearly 25 years, despite the numerous English attempts at undoing the result of 1204. The terms put forth would have been acceptable only if Henry had been able to inflict a decisive defeat on his French opponent. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Queen Blanche, the regent, decided to call his bluff, and rejected English demands. Henry took his time, and did not set out for France until Easter 1230.⁴¹ The ensuing campaign was inglorious. Henry's troops proceeded amidst much joy, but to little effect. In the end, all he was able to show for his efforts was the continuing homage of the Count of Brittany.⁴² Queen Blanche's regime was stronger than before, and it took twelve more years before another campaign to Poitou was mooted.

What may appear to be no more than a sheer endless list of failed campaigns and botched battles, nonetheless reveals a number of important issues. We learn not only of the political pre-occupations of Henry's court, but also of its methods and approach. English diplomacy was dominated by a desire to recover the lands lost in 1204 and 1224. To win the necessary military or diplomatic backing to press these claims was its main objective. To this purpose, the papacy was called upon, as were the rulers of Languedoc, Imperial Burgundy, Flanders and Germany. It is important to note the chronology of events. Although truces were frequently declared, they were viewed as an opportunity to prepare for war, not as a step towards peace. Prolongations of such agreements were forced upon Henry III, rather than sought by him. The approaching expiry date of a truce normally coincided with renewed diplomatic efforts to press Plantagenet claims, with Louis VIII's death in 1226 and the years immediately prior to the 1230 campaign as the most important dates. As will become clear, these were also the years in which English relations with Germany peaked.

³⁸ Roger of Wendover, IV, 79-80 for this and the following.

³⁹ *CR 1227-31*, 234.

⁴⁰ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 288.

⁴¹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 125; Roger of Wendover, IV, 208-9; Stacey, *Politics*, 173.

⁴² Roger of Wendover, IV, 204-5; Stacey, *Politics*, 170-2.

I.2 Frederick II, the Papacy and the Crusade

England was the least of Frederick's worries. Once he had established his authority in Sicily and Germany, more pressing matters had to be dealt with.⁴³ Foremost amongst these were his planned campaign to the Holy Land, and the subjugation of his restive Lombard subjects. Germany, by comparison, posed little danger. After Bouvines, Emperor Otto IV found himself deprived of support and friends, and led a shadowy existence until his death in 1218. By 1220 Frederick had safely established himself, and was crowned Emperor by Honorius III.⁴⁴ This also coincided with a dynastic decision which was to have considerable impact on Anglo-Imperial relations. Otto IV, originally the Pope's champion, had been abandoned once he began to lay claims to Sicily, thus threatening to encircle the papal state in central Italy. Having rid itself of Otto, the *curia* soon found that its championing of Frederick II had in fact exacerbated the problem. The young Hohenstaufen was still King of Sicily, as well as King of the Romans, and on his way to becoming Emperor. In fact, Innocent had created the very conditions which he had sought to avoid by supporting Otto IV against his Hohenstaufen rival. A solution had to be found, and a compromise was agreed. When Frederick II was crowned Emperor in 1220, he promised to make his son, Henry (VII), King of the Romans,⁴⁵ to be left in Germany under the supervision of Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne and the Bishop of Speyer. In theory, the Hohenstaufen domains had thus been split between Germany, where a future Emperor was reared, and Sicily, with Frederick's claims to Imperial authority to be weakened once Henry (VII) assumed proper control over his realm.

One of the first initiatives taken by Frederick after his coronation as Emperor was to ensure continuing friendly relations with the Capetians. In November 1223 Louis and Frederick II concluded the treaty of Catania. The main clause of the document stipulated that neither Louis nor Frederick would assist rebels or those who waged war against either of them, but it also made specific reference to Henry III: the Emperor was not to enter upon an alliance with the King of England or his heirs, nor would he allow anyone in his power to do so.⁴⁶ To keep his word, Frederick insisted that his son's regents, too, sign the agreement.⁴⁷ This was to cause considerable friction between the regents and the Emperor, and an opportunity, willingly to be seized upon by the English court. In the meantime, however, Louis was free to seize what was left of Plantagenet lands in France, and would not have to fear a repeat of the Anglo-German alliance of 1209-1214. Although, at first sight, Frederick gained very little himself, his decision paid off

⁴³ The best coverage of Frederick's early years is provided by Wolfgang Stürner, *Friedrich II. Teil I: Die Königsherrschaft in Sizilien und Deutschland 1194-1220* (Darmstadt, 1992), 212-53; also useful: David Abulafia, *Frederick II: a medieval Emperor* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 103-31.

⁴⁴ For the general background of their relations: Raoul Manselli, 'Onorio III e Federico II (revisione d'un giudizio ?)', *Studi Romani* xi (1963), 142-59.

⁴⁵ *Constitutiones*, nr. 70.

⁴⁶ *VSM*, I, 1183-4.

⁴⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 290.

eventually. In August 1227, a similar agreement was concluded with the regents of Louis VIII's successor, the infant Louis IX.⁴⁸ Shortly afterwards, Frederick was excommunicated, and faced not only a papal invasion of Sicily, but also attempts at establishing an anti-King in Germany. However, no French support was forthcoming, thus depriving any potential rebel of much needed military, financial or political assistance.

The most important issue in Imperial politics during these years, and the one which ultimately led to Frederick's excommunication, was the crusade.⁴⁹ In 1215 Frederick had bound himself to lead and equip a new expedition to the Holy Land. Initially, the papacy had ignored his vow, but during the 1220s declining fortunes in the East forced a change of policy, and Frederick was repeatedly urged to hasten his departure for Jerusalem.⁵⁰ By 1223 the Fifth Crusade had come to a disastrous end, when the Christians were forced out of their recently seized stronghold at Damietta. Their defeat was largely blamed on the inactivity of the Emperor, and the inability of both Frederick and Honorius III to settle remaining points of conflict.⁵¹ It would be wrong, however, to blame the Emperor alone for his continuing delays. He did indeed face political problems which very frequently left him little option but to prevaricate. His crusading plans during the 1220s may serve as an example. By April 1223 the Pope announced to various European princes that Frederick had promised to lead a new expedition by the summer of 1225.⁵² However, as the date of departure approached, it became obvious that there was little probability of the Emperor being able to muster a sufficiently strong contingent to lead it to Palestine.⁵³ In May/June 1225, Frederick opened negotiations with Honorius. A final agreement was not reached until August, and it contained some of the most severe clauses of any crusading contract.⁵⁴ Frederick would be excommunicated should he not set sail for the Holy Land by August 1227, while detailed provisions were made for the number of ships and the funds he had to provide.⁵⁵ To add a further incentive, he married Yolanda/Isabella, heiress of the kingdom of Jerusalem.⁵⁶ He thus had an interest in the affairs of Palestine based not only on his crusading vow, but also on his territorial interest. Failing to set out again, Frederick would have incurred not only the opprobrium normally associated with a crusader who did not fulfil his vow, but also, and even worse, that of a King who failed to defend his kingdom.

⁴⁸ Ibid., nr. 115.

⁴⁹ Rudolf Hiestand, 'Friedrich II. und der Kreuzzug.', in: Arnulf Esch and Norbert Kamp (ed.), *Friedrich II: Tagung des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom im Gedenkjahr 1994*, (Tübingen, 1996), 128-49; Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 132-64.

⁵⁰ Ursula Schwerin, *Die Aufrufe der Päpste zur Befreiung des Heiligen Landes von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgang Innozenz IV: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der kurialen Kreuzzugspropaganda und der päpstlichen Epistolographie*, (Berlin, 1937), 107-8.

⁵¹ James Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade. 1213-1221* (Philadelphia, 1986), 196.

⁵² *Epistolae*, I, nr. 225.

⁵³ Ibid., I, nr. 230.

⁵⁴ *Ryccardi de San Germano Cronica*, MGH SS xix, 344-5.

⁵⁵ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 102-3.

⁵⁶ Most elaborate account: *Chronicon St Martini Turonensi*, MGH SS xxvi, 471-2.

There is little doubt as to the significance the crusade assumed in Frederick's actions. He busied himself with equipping, providing and preparing for his campaign and those of others.⁵⁷ Equally, Frederick's relations with his neighbours were overshadowed by the needs of his planned expedition. In 1224, for instance, King Waldemar of Denmark had been captured, thus providing an opportunity to reclaim lands in north Germany now under Danish rule. However, overriding objections put forth by Henry (VII)'s regents, the Emperor ensured Waldemar's release, provided he would attend Frederick's crusade.⁵⁸ Similarly, when a peace agreement was reached with the Lombard communes in January 1227,⁵⁹ the Emperor was content with their promise of providing 400 knights for his expedition.⁶⁰ The needs of the crusade remained paramount, and the Emperor refused to employ resources which were better be used for the liberation of the Holy Land.

Similar considerations guided Frederick's involvement in Anglo-French affairs, where he acted in close co-operation with the *curia*. This was born out of inclination as much as necessity. Honorius III left little doubt as to the connection between a successful crusade and peace in Europe. This was made explicit in a letter to Philip Augustus from April 1223: as a secular vassal would lose his honour and rights if he did not defend his lord's possessions against his enemies, so should all Christians take up arms against the heathen. However, to lead such a campaign successfully, the Christians had to observe peace amongst themselves. Therefore, Philip was to seek an understanding with Henry III.⁶¹ About a week later, similar words were addressed to the King of England.⁶² With their petty squabble, Henry and Philip endangered the far more important project of freeing the Christians in Palestine. These concerns were shared by Frederick II. In March 1224, he wrote to Honorius III, and complained of the manifold problems he faced.⁶³ Chief amongst these was that few of the great men of England and France seemed willing to further the affairs of the Cross, unless peace were first arranged between their rulers. This was swiftly taken up by the *curia*. On 4 April, Louis was asked to enter on a firm and permanent truce with Henry. The request was repeated in August 1224. The King of France was to prolong his truce with England, if not out of reverence for Honorius, then out of respect for the planned campaign in North Africa.⁶⁴ Similarly, in February 1225, instead of fighting against the King of England, Louis was exhorted to help Frederick II.⁶⁵ At best, the continuing wars between England and France were considered to be a nuisance, at worst they endangered the precarious state of Christendom in Palestine. It

⁵⁷ Hiestand, 'Friedrich II. und der Kreuzzug', 133-8.

⁵⁸ *Constitutiones*, nr. 101.

⁵⁹ Interesting, for the cross-connection with England: *English Episcopal Acta IX: Winchester 1205-1238*, ed. Nicholas Vincent (Oxford, 1994), nr. 47.

⁶⁰ *Constitutiones*., nr. 111.

⁶¹ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 220. The terminology followed an established pattern, Schwerin, *Die Aufrufe*, 39-45.

⁶² *Epistolae*, I, nr. 225.

⁶³ *AI*, I, nr. 261; this was repeated in March 1225: *DD*, nr. 162.

⁶⁴ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, nr. 18.

⁶⁵ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 267.

was in Frederick's best interest to avoid being drawn into their conflict. Even without that, he faced problems enough already.

The Emperor's hardest and ultimately fatal struggle also sprang from his crusading plans. Foremost amongst the preparations for any crusader were efforts at resolving disputes and feuds, ensuring the safety of lands and possessions in the crusader's absence, or the continuation of his dynastic line. By 1220, Frederick's son was safely established as King of the Romans, and internal opposition in Sicily had largely been overcome.⁶⁶ His attention, thus, turned to Italy, where his recent efforts to manifest Imperial rights and privileges had run into difficulties. To deal with these matters, as well as the planned expedition to the Holy Land, he called a diet to Cremona in 1225.⁶⁷ However, relations between Frederick and the north Italian communes in particular had been uneasy for some time. Whereas Frederick insisted on a literal interpretation of the 1183 treaty of Constance,⁶⁸ which had settled the Lombard Wars of Frederick Barbarossa, some towns insisted that, as Imperial rights had not been exercised, they had lapsed. Frederick did little to allay their fears. He made no secret of his hostility towards towns and communes. In June 1226, for instance, the commune recently formed at Cambrai had been outlawed, and in October, communes were banned throughout Imperial Burgundy.⁶⁹ In November, the Rhenish league of cities was dissolved by Henry (VII).⁷⁰ Lombardy, it may have seemed, was next. The diet at Cremona had been designed as a major stepping stone towards Frederick's crusade - Henry (VII) was to attend with a major contingent of German princes, and Italian support was to be mustered. However, the very presence of German troops, and the fact that the settlement of Imperial affairs was to be among the points of the agenda, caused unease amongst some communes. It is therefore not surprising that, prior to the diet, the Lombard League was refounded. Alarming, even moderately pro-Imperial towns such as Mantua were now amongst the allies of Milan. The communes prevented Henry (VII) from attending by blocking the Alpine passes. What followed has often been seen as an indication of how Frederick used his crusading status primarily to serve his political ends. In June the Lombard cities were excommunicated for obstructing the business of the Holy Land by a group of German prelates,⁷¹ and in July the Emperor outlawed Milan and its allies for betraying the Holy Church and the Catholic Faith.⁷² It would be mistaken, though, to view this as yet

⁶⁶ Jean-Marie Martin, 'L'administration du Royaume entre Normands et Souabes', in: Theo Kölzer (ed.), *Die Staufer im Süden: Sizilien und das Reich* (Sigmaringen, 1996), 113-40, at 135-7; Donald Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge, 1992), 315-26.

⁶⁷ van Cleve, *Frederick II*, 179.

⁶⁸ Giovanni Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: structures of political rule*, trans. Rosalind Brown Jensen (Cambridge, 1989), 215-6; Robert L. Benson, 'Political renovatio: two models from Roman Antiquity', in: Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (ed.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), 339-86, at 364-6; Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 154-63 for the following.

⁶⁹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 108. See also, for a general account of the history of communes in Provence (up until the rule of Charles of Anjou) Knut Schulz, "Denn sie lieben die Freiheit so sehr..." *Kommunale Aufstände und Entstehung des europäischen Bürgertums im Hochmittelalter* (Darmstadt, 1992), 247-274.

⁷⁰ *Constitutiones*, nr. 294. Friedrich Knöpp, *Die Stellung Friedrichs II. und seiner beiden Söhne zu den deutschen Städten* (Berlin, 1928), 36-8.

⁷¹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 105.

⁷² *Ibid.*, nr. 107; Kluger, *Hochmeister Herrmann von Salza*, 66 for a good secondary account.

another attempt at cynically manipulating the planned crusade. Frederick could ill afford to alienate Honorius III yet again. In fact, it seems that the planned meeting at Cremona had been intended to be little more than a formality, designed to whip up support for the Emperor's imminent departure. Nor was Frederick in a strong enough military position to press his claims.⁷³ Had the meeting at Cremona been intended to mark the opening of a campaign against the Lombard communes, it was not only ill-timed, but also ill-equipped. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Frederick asked the Pope to mediate,⁷⁴ and negotiations began in October, with a final agreement reached by March 1227.⁷⁵ Frederick was left with no excuse. His opponents agreed to safeguard his claims and possessions, and to send troops for his crusade.⁷⁶ No conceivable reason remained to delay his expedition to the Holy Land yet again. In fact, if Frederick failed to make true his promises again, it could only be a sign of his insincerity and infidelity.

This certainly was the attitude taken by Honorius' successor, Gregory IX. The Emperor left for Palestine in August 1227.⁷⁷ However, three days into the journey, he was taken ill, and returned. To the Pope this was yet another false excuse, and in September the Emperor was excommunicated. In the end, Frederick decided on a high-risk strategy, and, by June 1228, set sail for Palestine regardless.⁷⁸ A military conquest of Jerusalem, however, had to be ruled out. The illness which had struck the Emperor also decimated his entourage, and the situation in the Holy Land, with the nobles and military orders split in their attitude to Frederick's campaign, remained volatile. Consequently, diplomatic means had to be considered. Al-Kamil, the sultan of Egypt, had been eager to recruit troops against his rival in Damascus, and had made friendly overtures towards the Christians.⁷⁹ Even before Frederick's departure, a regular exchange of envoys had taken place, thus preparing the ground for negotiations. In February 1229, an agreement was reached, awarding the Christians control over Jerusalem and a ten-year truce.⁸⁰ Although it had been achieved by highly unorthodox means, Frederick could claim that he had achieved more than previous campaigns led by the papacy, and did not hesitate to utilise his success when he returned to Sicily.⁸¹ Gregory IX found it increasingly difficult to keep up a united front against the man who could claim to have freed Jerusalem, and by 1231 Frederick's excommunication was ended.

I.3 England and Germany

⁷³ *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, MGH SS 18, 469 for Frederick's unsuccessful encounter with Faventia.

⁷⁴ *Annales Cremonenses*, MGH SS 18, 807.

⁷⁵ *Rychardus de San Germano*, MGH SS 19, 346; *Annales Placentini Guelfi*, MGH SS 18, 442-3.

⁷⁶ *Constitutiones*, nr. 114.

⁷⁷ Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, 7th ed., (Stuttgart, 1989), 205-10.

⁷⁸ *Annales de Margan*, AM I, 36.

⁷⁹ Richard, *The Latin Kingdom*, 232.

⁸⁰ *Annales Marbacenses*, MGH SS 17, 176; *Constitutiones*, nr. 120 for text of agreement.

⁸¹ *Annales Marbacenses*, MGH SS 17, 176.

Henry III's regents realised that Frederick had little inclination to support Henry III against Philip Augustus or Louis VIII. The Imperial court, thus, played a subordinate role in English diplomacy. Most contacts with the Empire were arranged via Henry (VII) and Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne, or the Dukes of Brabant, Brunswick and Austria, as well as the King of Bohemia. Similarly, the timing of English embassies is relevant. They increased in frequency during the aftermath of Louis' attack on Poitou in 1224/5, in 1227, when Frederick's imminent crusade, Henry (VII)'s coming of age and the princely rebellion against the regency of Queen Blanche combined, and in 1229/30, during the Emperor's excommunication. Henry's regents knew that the only hope to resurrect the old alliance against France rested with the government of Germany. In this hope, however, they were repeatedly disappointed. Frederick would not let the separation of his domains be more than a formality, and continued to dominate German affairs.

Bouvines did not end relations between England and the Empire.⁸² Regular contacts were maintained with Otto IV's half-brother, the (titular) Duke of Saxony,⁸³ while new links were established with princes such as the Duke of Austria.⁸⁴ The German regency, too, continued to be in communication with the English court.⁸⁵ The initiative appears to have frequently been taken by the Henry (VII)'s government, and was often related to matters of mutual concern. In 1223, for instance, shortly after the Treaty of Catania had been ratified,⁸⁶ a group of envoys arrived, led by Bernard of Horstmar and Arnold of Gymnich.⁸⁷ Their mission was probably concerned with that recent agreement, as Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne, head of the regency council,⁸⁸

⁸² Fred Cazel (ed.), *Roll of Divers Accounts for the Early year of the Reign of Henry III* (London, 1982), 34.
⁸³ *DD*, nr. 28.

⁸⁴ *Foedera*, 166. The envoy has been identified as Master Bernard, provost of St Bartholomew's in Friesach, chaplain of duke Leopold VI. Erich Zöllner, 'Das Projekt einer babenbergischen Heirat König Heinrichs III. von England', *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* cxxv (1966), 54-75, at 58.

⁸⁵ *RLC*, I, 471. Although the messenger, Conrad, provost of Speyer, was listed as 'envoy of the Emperor', this is misleading. The Bishop of Speyer was, next to the Archbishop of Cologne, a leading member of the regency for Henry (VII), having previously been Imperial chancellor: Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 6; Friedrich Bienemann, *Conrad von Scharfenberg: Bischof von Speier und Metz und kaiserlicher Hofkanzler 1200-1224* (Strasbourg, 1886), passim. Similarly, Conrad is regularly attested as being in the Bishop's presence, ranking amongst his closest confidantes: Franz Xaver Remling (ed.), *UB zur Geschichte der Bischöfe zu Speyer*, 2 vols., (Mainz, 1852-4), I, nr. 139. This included both the early years, spent in the Emperor's entourage: *RI*, nrs. 982, 1038, as well as the young king's regency: *RI*, nrs. 3865, 3694, and his early government, *RI*, nr. 4108, where he remained after the Bishop's death: *RI*, nr. 4106. Conrad, thus, was an envoy of the regency, rather than the Emperor; also, in summer 1222, *RLC*, I, 506, an otherwise unidentified Brother Hamo was sent to England; one may assume that the abbot of St. Augustine at Canterbury was also dealing at least with some matters of diplomatic importance when, in May 1223, he received a safe-conduct to go on pilgrimage to Cologne: *CPR 1216-1225*, 372.

⁸⁶ *VSM*, I, 1183-4.

⁸⁷ *RLC*, I, 578. Bernard, a member of Engelbert of Cologne's inner circle, having been among Richard the Lionheart's companions during the king's captivity, had also assumed a leading role in Otto IV's negotiations with King John: Julius Ficker, *Engelbert der Heilige: Erzbischof von Köln und Reichsverweser*. (Cologne, 1853; reprint Aalen, 1985), 137-9; also his 'Herr Bernhard von Horstmar', *Zeitschrift für vaterländische Geschichte und Alterthumskunde*, iv (1853), 291-306. Bernard thus represented a link with an older tradition of Anglo-Imperial relations. Arnold, on the other hand, had been amongst Frederick's earliest supporters, *RI*, nr. 822, and continued to enjoy strong links with the Imperial court. Although mostly active in the area around Aachen, Erich Meuthen (ed.), *Aachener Urkunden 1101-1250*, (Bonn, 1972), nr. 251; Lacomblet, II, nr. 99, he also appears on the witness lists for some of Frederick's Italian charters in 1222/3: *RI*, nrs. 1423, 1435, 1459.

continued to oppose closer relations with France.⁸⁹ It also opened preparations for one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by the English regency: a double-marriage between Henry III's sister Isabella and Henry (VII), and between Henry III and one of the Duke of Austria's daughters.⁹⁰

The earliest evidence for the project coincides with alarming news from the *curia*. In December 1224, as already mentioned, Louis VIII's proctors had threatened an invasion of England. On 3 January 1225, an English embassy, led by Walter Mauclerk, Bishop of Carlisle, was announced to Engelbert of Cologne and the Duke of Austria.⁹¹ Although the two were connected, Walter's mission had been in the planning for some time. When he arrived in Cologne, he already found one of his clerics waiting for him, as well as Henry de Zudendorp, one of the Archbishop's *ministeriales*, and scion of a family with a commendable record in Anglo-Imperial diplomacy.⁹² It would, therefore, be safe to assume that Walter's mission had been preceded by preliminary negotiations. It may even have been amongst the issues discussed in July 1224, when Richard de Zudendorp was in England.⁹³ Much of what we know about the ensuing negotiations is based on a letter by Walter to Henry III from early February 1225.⁹⁴ When Walter first met the Archbishop, Engelbert pointed out that the English King was not the only one who wanted to have Henry (VII) as an in-law: recently 45,000 marks had been offered if he married a Bohemian princess, not to speak of proposals made by the King of Hungary. It should also be remembered that Louis VIII, too, was pressing for a marriage alliance.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, the Archbishop remained optimistic, and had already taken steps to ensure the Emperor's consent. As far as the Austrian marriage was concerned, however, progress was less smooth. In March, Henry de Cornhill, the chancellor of London and Henry's envoy to Austria, gave an account of his many tribulations. He hardly managed to reach the duchy alive. In fact, he would rather be sent to Acre, than have to spend any a more time with the Austrians, whom he described as a 'furious people, lacking both in modesty and reason'. As far as his dealings with the Duke were concerned, his offer had

⁸⁸ Engelbert has triggered a relatively rich literature on his life. Most recently: Josef Lothmann, *Erzbischof Engelbert I. von Köln (1216-1225): Graf von Berg, Erzbischof und Herzog, Reichsverweser* (Cologne, 1993); also: Bernd Fischer, 'Engelbert von Berg (1185-1225), Kirchenfürst und Staatsmann.', *Zeitschrift des Bergischen Geschichtsvereins* xciv (1989-90), 1-47.

⁸⁹ Kienast, *Deutschland*, III, 587-9.

⁹⁰ For a more detailed coverage, Zöllner, 'Das Projekt', passim; Huffman, *Comparative History*, 286-302; Björn Weiler 'Henry III's Plans for a German Marriage (1225) and Their Context', *TCE* vii (1997), 173-88, parts of which have been abridged for this chapter.

⁹¹ *CPR 1216-1225*, 558.

⁹² Joseph Huffman, 'Prosopography and the Anglo-Imperial connection: a Cologne *ministerialis* family and its English relations', *Medieval Prosopography* xi (1990), 53-134, 59, 63. They also held lands in England: *CChR 1226-57*, 215. On 24 November 1235 Richard de Swinesthorp, identified as one of the Zudendorps by Huffman, received confirmation of a grant by the Duke of Lorraine of the town of Laxfeld in the honour of Eye. However, at the time these lands were held by Richard earl of Cornwall: *CChR 1226-57*, 129 (4.2.1231) and 139 (10.8.1231).

⁹³ *RI*, nr. 10923. This was followed by frequent exchanges of envoys: an English envoy was sent to Germany in July, and in October and December German messengers arrived in England: *RLC*, I, 465, 471, 483, 495.

⁹⁴ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 213.

⁹⁵ *DD*, nr. 153. Also, for the context, Falko Neiningner, *Konrad von Urach: Zähringer, Zisterzienser, Kardinallegat*. (Paderborn, 1994), 203-272.

been received coldly.⁹⁶ The reasons for this unexpected change of attitude - after all, the proposal had first been made by the Duke himself -⁹⁷ are illuminated by the *Chronica Reinhardsbrunnensis*. According to this later source, Henry (VII) had been supposed to marry a Bohemian princess. As the couple were too closely related, the Duke was to take care of the princess, while a papal dispensation was to be secured. However, the Duke secretly sent his own messengers, and asked for papal dispensation on behalf of his daughter. These envoys are said to have been dispatched by early March, at about the time when the English mission arrived.⁹⁸ Duke Leopold is known to have been at the Imperial court, and later Bernard of Horstmar, who had been despatched to the Emperor by Engelbert,⁹⁹ referred to the role which the Duke played in the negotiations for the planned marriage. It is possible that the Duke was already planning to arrange a match between his own daughter and Henry (VII). Under these circumstances, the presence of English envoys may have been viewed as a cumbersome hindrance, and would explain the coldness with which the chancellor of London found himself received. This did not bode well for the project as a whole. Walter stayed in Cologne, increasingly frustrated and eager to return,¹⁰⁰ while the Archbishop and Bernard of Horstmar assured Henry's court that matters were progressing well, and that a (positive) decision was imminent.¹⁰¹ Walter was still at Cologne in July,¹⁰² and it was not until August that he was allowed to set out for England.¹⁰³ By that time it must have become clear that the project was unlikely to succeed. Any hope that the marriage might yet be salvaged was shattered when Engelbert was murdered on 7 November 1225.¹⁰⁴ On 18 November Henry (VII) married Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Austria,¹⁰⁵ and the following year the German King, too, ratified the Treaty of Catania.¹⁰⁶ Not for the last time, Henry III's efforts had been frustrated.

The episode as a whole, however, reveals a series of underlying structures which continued to dominate exchanges between England and Germany. Foremost amongst these were the political considerations of Henry III and his regents. That Walter's negotiations dealt as much with the loss of Poitou as with the King's marriage had never been a secret. When the Bishop of Carlisle first met Engelbert, he opened their conversation with a request to prevent a Franco-Imperial alliance, and he ended his account of the meeting by reporting that the Archbishop had been optimistic about Henry's

⁹⁶ *DD*, nr. 163.

⁹⁷ Zöllner, 'Das Projekt', 58-9.

⁹⁸ *Chronica Reinhardsbrunnensis*, *MGH SS* xxx, 607.

⁹⁹ *Royal Letters*, I, no. 213.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, I, nr. 217; *DD*, nr. 172.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, nrs. 188-9.

¹⁰² Leonhard Ennen and Gottfried Eckertz (ed.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Köln*, 6 vols., (Cologne, 1860-79), II, nr. 87.

¹⁰³ The letter has been dated 17 August in *Foedera*, I, 190, and 27 August *HB*, II, 851.

¹⁰⁴ *Annales Elwangenses*, *MGH SS* x, 20.

¹⁰⁵ *Burchardi et Cuonradi Urspergensis Chronicon: Continuatio*, *MGH SS* xxiii, 381; *Annales Schefflarienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 338.

¹⁰⁶ *Constitutiones*, nr. 290 (11.6.1226).

chances of recovering his lost inheritance - a reference to Normandy, Anjou and Poitou.¹⁰⁷ A marriage between Isabella Plantagenet and Frederick II's only son would have strengthened Henry III's position against Louis VIII. If war broke out, Louis would have been forced to divide his troops between two enemies. In itself, this was a rather conservative choice of strategy. Something similar had been attempted by King John in the aftermath of the loss of Normandy, when he had allied himself with Emperor Otto IV. As such, Walter's embassy may symbolise the conservatism prevalent at Henry's court. After all, those who in the past had brokered the deal with the Welfs, were now those who sought to utilise the victorious Hohenstaufen in the recovery of Henry's lost possessions. The personnel, as well as the means, of Henry's early diplomacy were the same as they had been in the reign of his father. The successful conclusion of Walter's mission would have eased the way for a recovery of the King's continental inheritance. Even if Henry III abstained from military action against France, the political advantages to be gained from such a union would have put him in a strong bargaining position. Thus, even if the chances for success looked increasingly slim, the potential prize to be gained was well worth holding out for.

Similarly, the English court tried to exploit the rifts between the German regency and the Emperor, and it did so at a well-chosen moment in time. Engelbert had little reason to support Louis VIII. In the early thirteenth century, the French crown expanded its territory not only westwards, against the Plantagenets, but also eastwards, into Imperial Burgundy and the Maas region, the latter an area where the see of Cologne had long-standing claims.¹⁰⁸ A marriage between Henry (VII) and a Plantagenet princess could well have been perceived as a ploy to counter French influence in that region. Engelbert's murky role in the affairs of the 'false' Baldwin seem to justify this interpretation: he was seen as someone willing and able to assist those who opposed the Capetians. Other reasons, though, have to be taken into account as well: Cologne's traditionally strong trading links with England had come under increasing competition from other German towns,¹⁰⁹ and closer political ties with England arranged via Cologne might thus have been viewed as a way of countering increasing competition from places like Lübeck, Hamburg and Bremen, or the domains of the Duke of Brabant.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, Engelbert's championing of an Anglo-German alliance could be viewed as an attempt by the regency council to escape the increasing domination of its affairs by the Emperor.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 213.

¹⁰⁸ Wolfgang Stürner, 'Der Staufer Heinrich (VII): Lebensstationen eines gescheiterten Königs.', *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte* liii (1993), 13-33, at 21 for the increasing hostility; Hugo Stehkämper, 'Der Bischof und Territorialfürst (12. und 13. Jahrhundert)', in: Peter Berglar/Odilo Engels (ed.), *Der Bischof in seiner Zeit: Bischofstypus und Bischofsideal im Spiegel der Kölner Kirche. Festschrift Joseph Kardinal Höffner* (Cologne, 1986), 95-184, at 133-8 for Cologne's territorial interests.

¹⁰⁹ This is elaborated in more detail by Huffman, *Comparative History*, pp. 438-463.

¹¹⁰ Natalie Fryde, 'Deutsche Englandkaufleute in frühhansischer Zeit', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* xcvi (1979), 1-14, at 6.

¹¹¹ Werner Goetz, 'Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Herrschens aus der Ferne in Deutschland und Reichsitalien (1152-1220)', Kölzer (ed.), *Die Staufer im Süden*, 93-112, at 97-9, for some of the problems in governing Germany.

Although in theory Frederick had handed over the affairs of Germany to his son, in practice he continued to dictate the young king's actions.¹¹² When Henry (VII) came of age, this led to renewed conflicts between father and son, but even during his minority, tensions occurred, as exemplified by the events surrounding Waldemar of Denmark's imprisonment and release.¹¹³ Engelbert's insistence on pursuing the project of an Anglo-German marriage, and his efforts to block attempts at forcing Henry (VII) into Frederick's system of pro-French treaties, may thus have been an attempt to assert the independence of the regency council against the Emperor. Henry's court could not have chosen a better moment, either. Henry (VII) had reached a marriageable age, while his father was under considerable pressure to complete his crusading preparations. Traditionally, these included the continuation of a crusader's dynastic line.¹¹⁴ Similar considerations were to play an important role in England: Richard of Cornwall, Henry III's younger brother, was not allowed to leave England while the King remained without heir,¹¹⁵ and Henry III was to include his son's marriage amongst the preparation for his crusade in 1254. Walter was thus sent when the Emperor could be expected to have other things on his mind than meddling in the affairs of Germany, having to face an increasingly irate Pope about postponing an expedition to Palestine yet again, and at a time when he would be eager to marry off his son.

However, the very same reasons also caused the failure of Henry's plans. His court may have suspected as much. After all, although negotiations in Germany were frequent and wide-ranging, no evidence survives for an English mission contacting Frederick himself. By accepting the overtures of either Louis or Henry, Frederick would have risked being perceived as supporting one against the other. This would have posed dangers not only for Frederick's crusade, but also to his authority in Germany. Taking sides could have exposed the Emperor to the danger of repeating the events of 1198, when Philip Augustus and King John had tried to utilise the German Double Election by supporting rival candidates. Neither Otto IV nor Frederick would initially have stood much of a chance without the backing they received from their English or French supporters. This was no mere speculation. When Henry (VII) rebelled against his father in 1234/5, he tried to secure supporters, amongst others, by suggesting a marriage alliance with the Capetians.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, alienating Louis VIII would have gained Frederick little. Although relations with Louis were less cordial than they had been with Philip Augustus,¹¹⁷ Henry III, 'an impecunious minor', as Louis' envoys allegedly had put it, had nothing to offer in exchange. Neither could have contributed either to the Emperor's crusading preparations, or to a strengthening of his and his family's position in Germany.

¹¹² Werner Goetz, 'Friedrich II. und Deutschland', Klaus Friedland, Werner Goetz, Wolfgang J. Müller (ed.), *Politik, Wirtschaft und Kunst des staufischen Lübeck* (Lübeck, 1976), 5-38, at 20-6.

¹¹³ Stürmer, 'Der Staufer Heinrich (VII).', 21.

¹¹⁴ Csendes, *Heinrich VI*, 58-73, 171-8 for the examples of Frederick Barbarossa and Henry VI.

¹¹⁵ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 419.

¹¹⁶ *Annales Marbacenses*, MGH SS xvii, 176.

¹¹⁷ *Layettes*, II, nr. 1716.

Frederick saw no reason for wasting his sparse resources on supporting Henry III against his old friends and patrons. This was a lesson, however, which the English court was slow to learn.

In 1227, an Imperial marriage was on the agenda again. This time, however, circumstances seemed more promising. Frederick was expected to leave for Palestine at any moment, while Henry (VII) was at last taking personal control of his kingdom. Once again, the initiative appears to have been taken by the Archbishop of Cologne. Although the Duke of Bavaria had taken over as regent after Engelbert's murder,¹¹⁸ the prelate's successor continued to dominate exchanges. This is borne out by the appearance of such familiar figures as the Zudendorps or Conrad of Speyer amongst Imperial envoys, but even stretched into previously uncharted territory.¹¹⁹ Both Henry III and his German contacts looked to the Rhenish prelates for guidance and advice. Whoever wanted to enter into close relations with England had to ensure the services of the Archbishop. Count Arnold of Hückeswagen, the envoy who was to negotiate a planned marriage between Henry III and a Bohemian princess in June 1227, may serve as an example.¹²⁰ Although he played an important role at the Bohemian court,¹²¹ it is also worth noting that his family originated from the Lower Rhineland which had brought them into close contact with the see of Cologne.¹²² His father appears on the witness-lists of Adolph of Cologne in 1205, while Arnold himself witnessed a grant by Engelbert to the abbey of Altenberg, made at some point between 1218 and 1225.¹²³ Arnold's son and heir, in turn, joined the chapter of St Gereon at Cologne.¹²⁴ It seems, therefore, safe to assume that Arnold had been selected both because of his eminent position at the Bohemian court, and because he had close links with Cologne. Even in distant Prague, it had become clear that relations with England were more likely to succeed, if the Rhenish prelates lent their support. The Archbishop's role is also underlined when Henry III asked him specifically for his advice about how to proceed in his marriage negotiations.¹²⁵ Even if Engelbert had failed to assert his independence from Frederick, he had certainly enshrined his dominant role in relations with England.

Although negotiations about the planned marriage had been conducted for some time, prior to Arnold's arrival,¹²⁶ Henry was to remain without a spouse. After leaving

¹¹⁸ *Burchardi et Cuonradi Urspergensis Chronicon: Continuatio*, MGH SS xxiii, 381.

¹¹⁹ *CLR* 1226-40, 15, 17; Gerard de Colonia.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹²¹ He begins to be attested on a regular basis, either in grants by King Wenceslaus or by his brother, the margrave of Moravia, between 1234 and 1238, often as first or second amongst the witnesses, which may suggest some importance: Karl Jaromir Erben (ed.), *Regesta Diplomatica nec non Epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae 600-1253* (Prague, 1854), nrs. 833, 862, 873, 889, 923, 932, Appendix nr. 9.

¹²² Heinz Stöob, 'Bruno von Olmütz, das mährische Städtenetz und die europäische Politik von 1245 bis 1281.', in his (ed.), *Die mittelalterliche Städtebildung im südöstlichen Europa* (Cologne/Vienna, 1977), 90-129, 101 n.34. I am grateful to Dieter Wojtecki (Universität Münster), who provided me with a photocopy of this reference. The connection with Cologne has been overlooked by Huffman, *Comparative History*, 303.

¹²³ Lacomblet, *UB Mittelrheinische Territorien*, II, nrs. 15, 128.

¹²⁴ P. Joerres, *UB des Stiftes St Gereon zu Köln*, (Bonn, 1893), nrs. 121, 156.

¹²⁵ *Foedera*, I, 185.

¹²⁶ *RI*, nr. 10970; *RLC*, II, 126.

England in June 1227,¹²⁷ one of the Count's envoys returned in February 1228,¹²⁸ while Arnold himself came back in April,¹²⁹ to be joined by another messenger later that summer.¹³⁰ In June 1228 letters were sent to the King and Queen of Bohemia, in which Henry III referred to a report he had received from their envoy. However, several questions had arisen which he wanted to discuss with Arnold, and the King and Queen.¹³¹ Arnold left in November,¹³² and did not return until 1233.¹³³ Once again, the reasons for this may be connected to the wider context of political contacts with Germany. After all, in 1227 Henry III seemed set to obtain what he had failed to achieve before: a marriage, as well as a political alliance with the Empire.

In April, he wrote to Henry (VII), the Duke of Bavaria and the Archbishop of Cologne, acknowledging the mission of Conrad of Speyer, and the offer of a confederation with the Empire.¹³⁴ It seems that the initiative had been taken by the German court. In his letter to the young King, Henry III referred to the proposal as having first been made by Conrad of Speyer, while the Duke of Bavaria was assured of the king's gratitude for his promise to ensure the alliance's conclusion. Once again, though, the King was to be disappointed. In September 1227, Henry III announced to the prelates and princes of the Empire assembling at Antwerp that he would send a high-ranking embassy, including the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of Norwich and Coventry, as well as the earls of Gloucester, Pembroke and Albemarle to conclude the planned alliance.¹³⁵ However, no further record survives, either for the planned meeting or the proposed confederation.

As in 1225, these negotiations failed for the very reason which had given rise to hopes for their successful conclusion. As far as the English court was concerned, they formed part of attempts at utilising the troubled situation in France for a recovery of Henry's lands. Louis IX, an infant whose government was controlled by his mother, faced serious unrest amongst the barons of France, coinciding with plans for an English invasion. After all, the Count of Toulouse, as well as leading members of the French nobility, had been in contact with the English court. Even if Henry (VII)'s government would not participate in an attack on France, friendly relations with Germany would have isolated Louis IX politically and militarily. Furthermore, with Frederick set to sail for the Holy Land by mid-summer, it seemed plausible that Henry (VII) would be able to act more freely, unfettered by his father's continuing interference. The Emperor would have been too busy fighting pagans to meddle in the affairs of Germany. It seems plausible that motives on the German side were similar to those in 1225: an attempt to assert Henry

¹²⁷ *CLR* 1226-40, 36.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹³¹ *CR* 1227-31, 107-8.

¹³² *CLR* 1226-40, 110.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 235: five marks to two envoys from the countess of Hügeswagen.

¹³⁴ *Foedera*, I, 185; *HB*, III, 322.

¹³⁵ *CPR* 1225-32, 161-2.

(VII)'s independence, as well as the need to strengthen Cologne's position not only within Germany, but also in economic relations with England. However, these circumstances were also to bring by the failure of these negotiations. Frederick's imminent departure certainly offered the opportunity for Henry (VII) to act more independently. By September 1227, however, when the proposed meeting was to take place at Antwerp, the Emperor had just returned to Sicily, and was soon to be excommunicated by the Pope. Under these circumstances, Frederick not only continued to dominate German affairs, it had also become politically inopportune to alienate the Capetians. As the immediate future was to show, the last thing Frederick II needed was French support for a hostile papacy. Equally, Gregory IX warned Henry III that he would not tolerate an attack on France. The *curia* was willing to mediate, but it would not permit open war. The Pope said as much when he wrote to Louis IX and Henry III in May 1227. Louis was encouraged to do justice to the King of England,¹³⁶ while Henry was warned that the King of France was under the Pope's special protection.¹³⁷ This had the desired effect: in June, Henry suggested a continuation of their truce to Louis IX.¹³⁸ The King of England found himself disappointed, not because of his government's incompetence, but because of circumstances and developments well beyond his control.

Frederick's excommunication threw English diplomacy into turmoil. Henry III tried to avoid being drawn into the papal-Imperial conflict, without alienating either party. The closest evidence for active English involvement is presented by a letter sent to the Sultan of Damascus, in which the Muslim ruler was requested to set free Christian prisoners.¹³⁹ Apart from this, which was by no means unusual, Henry preferred to mediate. In February 1228 he wrote to Gregory and Frederick, warning that the enemy of Mankind was jeopardising the crusade by sowing discord between Frederick and the Church.¹⁴⁰ Henry III implored the Pope to consider that it would be impossible to lead a crusade without the Emperor. Therefore, Frederick should be taken back into the Church.¹⁴¹ In July, after the Emperor had departed for the Holy Land, Henry exhorted him to make his peace with the papacy, and to petition humbly to be taken back into the Christian fold.¹⁴² However, neither Pope nor Emperor would allow the English court to remain neutral.

As soon as Frederick had left for Palestine in 1228, Gregory IX declared him deprived of the Sicilian throne, and sent an army against the *regno*, led by the Emperor's estranged father-in-law, Jean de Brienne, and manned mostly by the Lombard

¹³⁶ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 86.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, nr. 95.

¹³⁸ *CPR 1225-32*, 213-4.

¹³⁹ *CR 1227-31*, 94.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 93-4. This was probably in response to an Imperial embassy which had arrived the day before: *CLR 1226-40*, 69.

¹⁴¹ *CR 1227-1231*, 93.

¹⁴² *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 272. The day before, on 14 July, Reiner de Insula, the Emperor's envoy, had been promised 100 shillings: *CLR 1226-40*, 91. This implies continuing contacts.

communes.¹⁴³ However, to sustain momentum it soon became necessary to solicit additional funds. Gregory IX, therefore, quickly began to muster the Church's resources, requesting subsidies from across Christendom.¹⁴⁴ In France, for instance, the clergy had to hand over the Tenth originally collected for Louis VIII's Albigensian crusade.¹⁴⁵ In 1229, it was England's turn.¹⁴⁶ In April, the collection of a tenth on all the goods of the clergy began, 'for the sustenance of the war against Frederick, Emperor of the Romans.'¹⁴⁷ That proved insufficient.¹⁴⁸ For 29 April 1229 a meeting was called to Westminster, where the papal chaplain overseeing the taxation tried to whip up support. The clergy agreed reluctantly to contribute, but the laity refused. It would be mistaken, though, to view this as a token of sympathy for Frederick. The objections raised were directed not at the purpose to which these funds were raised, but against an additional burden of taxation, so soon after the subsidies granted in 1225.¹⁴⁹ Also, agreeing to a lay subsidy for papal campaigns may have been viewed as setting a dangerous precedent. Nor was Henry III willing to send troops. No record survives for English knights fighting alongside papal armies against the Emperor in Southern Italy. Equally, Frederick's propaganda fell on deaf ears in England. Not that he did not try: complaining of the injustice inflicted upon him by the Holy See, the Emperor drew parallels between his sufferings and those of King John. After Innocent III had encouraged the barons to take up arms against their ruler, he then forced John to take back his kingdom as a papal fief.¹⁵⁰ Henry III, too, his argument ran, was a victim of papal greed. Therefore, the King of England should assist the Emperor. Henry, though, was not to be swayed.

Gregory's actions were not confined to sending troops against Sicily. Efforts were undertaken to undermine the Emperor's support in Germany,¹⁵¹ although they met with little success.¹⁵² A legate was sent to Germany whose mission has frequently been associated with attempts at replacing Henry (VII) with Otto of Lüneburg, heir to the Welf's claims.¹⁵³ Traditionally, it has been assumed that Henry III played a major part in these proceedings.¹⁵⁴ This interpretation rests on a series of letters written by the King on

¹⁴³ *Annales Scheftlarienses maiores*, MGH SS xvii, 339; *Johannis de Oxenedis*, 159; Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, II, 381, testifying to the interest taken in England.

¹⁴⁴ William E. Lunt, *Financial Relations of the Papacy with England to 1328*, 2 vols., (Cambridge/Mass., 1939), 191.

¹⁴⁵ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM, III, 114.

¹⁴⁶ *Annals of Winchester*, AM, II, 85, s.a. 1228.

¹⁴⁷ *Annals of Tewkesbury*, AM, I, 73; *Annals of Southwark*, ed. T.M. Tyson, 56; *Annals of Dunstable*, AM, III, 114-5.

¹⁴⁸ Roger of Wendover, IV, 125-6 for the following.

¹⁴⁹ Fred A. Cazel, 'The Fifteenth of 1225', *BIHR* xxiv (1867), 67-79.

¹⁵⁰ *CM*, III, 152-3.

¹⁵¹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 113.

¹⁵² John B. Freed, *The Friars and German Society in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge/Mass., 1977), 140; *Annales Scheftlarienses maiores*, MGH SS xvii, 339.

¹⁵³ *Annales Colonienses Maximi*, MGH SS xvii, 842; *Chronica Alberici Trium Fontium*, MGH SS xxiii, 926; *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 6151.

¹⁵⁴ Eduard Winkelmann, 'Die Legation des Kardinallegaten Otto von S. Nicolaus in Deutschland, 1229-31', *MIÖG* xi (1890), 28-40; August Michels, *Leben Ottos des Kindes, ersten Herzogs von Braunschweig und Lüneburg* (Einbeck, 1891), 17-30; Trautz, *Die Könige von England und das Reich*, 104; Ahlers, *Die Welfen und die englischen Könige*, 263-5; Huffmann, *Comparative History*, 275; Karl Augustin Frech, 'Ein Plan zur Absetzung Heinrichs (VII.) - Die gescheiterte Legation Kardinals Otto in Deutschland 1229-1231', in: Sönke

behalf of his German relative. On 6 March 1229, Henry III wrote to Otto,¹⁵⁵ probably in response to an embassy he had recently received from Brunswick.¹⁵⁶ The King expressed his joy at hearing of Otto's recently obtained liberty, and went on to elaborate on their similar fortunes: Otto had been prevented from claiming his rights, and Henry from obtaining his inheritance. However, Henry promised to recover for both of them what was rightly theirs, thus elevating Otto to a status similar to his own. The latter may also refer to yet another marriage project pursued by the English court, as Henry declared that he would not enter into a marriage alliance with the Duke of Anhalt, whose relatives had shown themselves to be Otto's enemies. Furthermore, the young Welf was requested to send envoys by Pentecost so that Henry III could enter into further communication. Most recently, attention has been drawn to the phrase:

‘Scire etiam vos volumus quod prompti sumus et semper parati ad quecumque commodum vestrum respiciunt et honorem, **quem a nostro non reputamus alienum**’.

This passage has been interpreted as indicating plans to elevate Otto to quasi-royal status, thus suggesting that the King of England was part of papal plans at promoting the young Welf as King in Henry (VII)'s stead.¹⁵⁷ Some credence has been given to this argument by the steps Henry III was to take next. After receiving an envoy from Otto,¹⁵⁸ the King wrote to Gregory IX in April 1229.¹⁵⁹ Thanking the Pope for his support in freeing Otto from captivity, he then requested that the young Welf, who was praised for his piety and undoubted loyalty to the Holy See, be recommended to the Imperial princes. This, it has been argued, suggests that Henry III was taking the initiative in promoting Otto's presumed candidacy.¹⁶⁰

However, the phrasing of Henry III's letters is vague and inconclusive, and easily allows for a different interpretation. More importantly, the King of England lacked a motive. Henry (VII) had displayed considerable eagerness to form an alliance with England, and had thus given little reason for Henry III to wish for his instant demise. Turning to Henry III's letters, the question remains what he referred to when writing about Otto's 'recent captivity' and the rights he had been denied. Otto the Child, as he is commonly known, was the surviving son of Emperor Otto IV,¹⁶¹ and sole heir to the remaining Welf domains in Germany. However, in 1227, he had been captured in battle, and was not to be released until 1229, and even then only after considerable pressure from

Lorenz and Ulrich Schmid (ed.), *Von Schwaben bis Jerusalem: Facetten staufischer Geschichte* (Sigmaringen, 1995), 89-116.

¹⁵⁵ *CR* 1227-31, 233.

¹⁵⁶ Brother William de Hospitali of Lüneburg and brother Waremac who received 100 marks on 5 March: *CLR* 1226-40, 121.

¹⁵⁷ Frech, 'Ein Plan', 100.

¹⁵⁸ *CPR* 1225-32, 243; *CLR* 1226-40, 123.

¹⁵⁹ *CR* 1227-31, 234-5.

¹⁶⁰ Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 50, who implies that Henry III forced Otto to declare his candidacy.

¹⁶¹ Egon Boshof, 'Entstehung des Herzogtums Braunschweig-Lüneburg', in: Wolf-Dieter Mohrmann (ed.), *Heinrich der Löwe* (Göttingen, 1980), 249-74, at 265-7 for the following.

Gregory IX. By then, Otto faced strenuous opposition to his ducal title and to his rights to several lands he claimed as his inheritance. This forms part of the context within which Henry III's efforts have to be considered. The King of England had promised to assist the young prince in asserting his rights and inheritance, and so he did. Otto may have turned to his English cousin because of the strong links between the English court and Henry (VII)'s government. That Henry III turned to the *curia* may have been based on the assumption that Gregory's influence with the German princes was indeed as far-reaching as proclaimed. Moreover, the main challenger to Otto's claims continued to be the Archbishop of Bremen. Thus, the Pope would have been the appropriate addressee of any intervention on the Welf's behalf. Finally, when Frederick initiated the process which led to the restoration of Otto's rights and title in September 1234, the phraseology used was similar to that employed by Henry III.¹⁶² That Henry III was willing to assist his cousin in reclaiming his inheritance is an explanation, at least as likely as the possibility that the English court was meddling in German affairs yet again. In addition, Otto's restoration to his ducal lands and title would have added yet another influential name to Henry's burgeoning list of allies in the Empire.

Otto himself rejected any suggestion of leading papal forces against the Hohenstaufen. However, he continued to remain in close contact with Henry III. He sent envoys to England in September 1229,¹⁶³ and arrived himself in July 1230.¹⁶⁴ He certainly was not treated as a prospective fellow-royal. When he arrived, Henry was campaigning in France, and so Otto had to stay in London,¹⁶⁵ where, as one chronicler puts it, his great length and height provided an amusing spectacle for the masses.¹⁶⁶ Henry did not hasten his return, and Otto was forced to wait until October before he met the King. His visit's most palpable result were trading privileges.¹⁶⁷ Otto's primary concern was probably to utilise Henry's extensive contacts in Germany, taking up the promise made of supporting him in recovering his rights and inheritance. One may also speculate whether he may have aimed at reclaiming some of the lands once held by Otto IV.¹⁶⁸ Considering that Emperor Otto had once started out as count of Poitou, the timing of the young Welf's visit, coinciding with Henry III's Poitevin campaign, may be suggestive. Should this have been the case, no record survives, not the least so, because Henry's expedition failed to achieve its aim. All this seems an explanation at least as likely as consultations concerning Otto's prospective resurrection of Welf royal claims.

There is little indication that Henry III actively promoted Otto's candidacy amongst his German contacts. No reference to his affairs was made in dealings with the King of

¹⁶² *Constitutiones*, nr. 186.

¹⁶³ *CLR 1226-40*, 143.

¹⁶⁴ *CR 1227-31*, 366.

¹⁶⁵ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 125.

¹⁶⁶ Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, II, 385.

¹⁶⁷ *CPR 1225-32*, 415.

¹⁶⁸ Ahlers, *Die Welfen*, 169-78; Hucker, *Otto IV.*, 13-21; Robert Favreau, 'Otto von Braunschweig und Aquitanien', *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit. Herrschaft und Repräsentation der Welfen 1125-1235*, Exhibition Catalogue, 3 vols., (Munich, 1995), II, 369-76.

Bohemia or the Archbishop of Cologne. In fact, the English court was quite willing to let slip by opportunities for mustering support, as illustrated by its dealings with the Duke of Brabant. Despite regular contacts, the issue of the Duke's English fiefs overshadowed relations between Brabant and England.¹⁶⁹ As the Duke had sided with Philip Augustus after Bouvines, he had been deprived of the honour of Eye, his main possession across the Channel. In the early 1220s efforts were made to improve relations with England. A series of letters from the Duke¹⁷⁰ and Engelbert of Cologne¹⁷¹ survive, written at some point between 1216 and 1224, petitioning the English court to restore the Duke's lands. On 6 October 1229, however, Hubert de Burgh received Eye in safe-keeping for the Duke's heirs.¹⁷² This was probably based on some misinformation, as Duke Henry did not die until 1235. This grant seems to have caused some unease at the ducal court, as a safe-conduct from December 1229 survives for the Duke and his son on coming to England.¹⁷³ Whether this visit was completed remains doubtful, the only indication being a trading privilege granted in February 1230 at the Duke's instigation, which did not necessarily require his presence at the English court.¹⁷⁴ In itself, the grant only confirmed privileges already made out in October 1229.¹⁷⁵ The Duke's visit would have provided an opportunity to extend relations with Germany, and to utilise them on Otto's behalf. However, the surviving evidence does not suggest that either Otto's candidacy or the general situation in Germany had been given any consideration.

However, some evidence exists for a pause in contacts between England and Henry (VII)'s government. Several messengers from Frederick II or his son are listed between February and July 1228,¹⁷⁶ but then diplomatic exchanges paused until February 1230.¹⁷⁷ At the same time, this need not necessarily be a sign of growing hostility. During these months papal efforts to undermine Frederick's regime were at their most intensive, while the English court was primarily concerned with finding allies for the imminent campaign in France, an undertaking to which the Hohenstaufen seemed unlikely to be able to contribute. Henry (VII) would have been unable to give what Henry III really wanted: military or diplomatic backing. Finally, the question has to be considered what possible interest Henry III could have had in undermining the Hohenstaufen in Germany. After all, Henry (VII) had shown great eagerness to forge closer links with England. That these plans failed repeatedly was less the young king's fault than his father's. Henry (VII) was more likely to prove a reliable ally than a reluctant anti-King who lacked both the military basis and the political support necessary to make true his claims. More importantly, the situation gave an uncomfortable echo of the events after the death of

¹⁶⁹ George Smets, *Henri I duc de Brabant 1190-1235* (Brussels, 1908), 199-201.

¹⁷⁰ *DD*, nrs. 151, 152, 158.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, nr. 157.

¹⁷² *CChR 1216-1272*, 101.

¹⁷³ *CPR 1225-32*, 323.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 328.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 268-9, 277.

¹⁷⁶ *CLR 1226-40*, 68, 69, 91.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 169; Gerard de Colonia.

Henry VI, when Richard had allowed himself to be dragged into the quagmire of Imperial politics, an involvement for which his brother and Henry III had paid a heavy price. On balance, explanations for Henry III's intercession on Otto's behalf, other than sinister plottings at the English court, can easily be found.

Although Henry III did not achieve what he had hoped for - an alliance with Germany - the years from 1225 to 1231 were not wasted. The English court had won new and influential allies in Imperial politics: the King of Bohemia, the Rhenish Bishops, the Duke of Brabant and the (future) Duke of Brunswick. In Germany support for an English alliance grew. Already in 1224/5, Frederick had encountered opposition from the German regency concerning ratification of the treaty of Catania. Prospects for a time when Emperor and Pope would be reconciled again looked promising. The defining feature of English diplomacy during these years was its conservatism, both in the strategy pursued and in the choice of allies. Although an alliance with Germany would not necessarily lead to military support, the active search for such an agreement very much resembled English policy from about 1209 onwards. This is not surprising, considering that both Henry's regency council and the government of his early years were dominated by seasoned ministers and officials from his father's days.¹⁷⁸ Hubert de Burgh and, to a lesser extent, Peter des Roches, had dominated John's relations with continental Europe, and they continued to do so under his son. At the same time, they did not simply re-enact what they had done in the past. The English court, too, had learned from past mistakes. After all, Henry's regents were still trying to repair the damage done by the Plantagenets' support for the Welfs. They knew that they had little enough to expect from Frederick II himself, and so they looked to his son, and to the government of Germany. The general direction of their actions remained the same, that is they tried to forge an alliance with the Empire against France. The means, however, were markedly different. Instead of supporting rival kings, the English regents tried to marry the King and his family into the royal and princely nobility of the Empire. In itself, this marked a remarkable shift if not in the direction, so in the instruments of English diplomacy on the continent. Equally worth noting is the continuing domination of relations between the two countries by the Archbishops of Cologne. Henry (VII), the Duke of Brabant and the King of Bohemia found it necessary to ensure the prelate's support when dealing with England, with equal reliance being shown by Henry III. This, too, resembles the diplomacy of King John's reign. It would be mistaken, though, to view this as blind conservatism, reluctant to face the realities posed by Frederick II's success. Henry and his regents were well aware that they could only hope to forge closer ties with the Empire by side-stepping the Emperor. They tried to do exactly that by exploiting the differences between Frederick and his son's government. That this strategy failed repeatedly was due to the fact that they

¹⁷⁸ Fred A. Cazal, 'Intertwined Careers: Hubert de Burgh and Peter des Roches', *Haskins Society Journal* I (1989), 173-81.

underestimated the weight Frederick still carried in German affairs, but also, and more importantly, due to the pressures the Emperor found himself exposed to. Foremost amongst these must be numbered his planned crusade, and increasing tensions with the Holy See. It remained to be seen, whether this would change, once Frederick II had returned and once the struggle between Pope and Emperor had been decided.

Chapter II

Marriage Politics and the Crusade

(1231-5)

When Frederick II returned to Sicily in 1229, the papal campaign against him quickly collapsed.¹ By April 1230 negotiations had begun for a peace with the Lombard communes.² Simultaneously, Pope and Emperor treated about a revocation of Frederick's excommunication, with a final agreement reached in the Treaty of San Germano by 1231.³ This initiated a period of concord between Gregory and Frederick. As far England was concerned, Henry (VII) diminished in significance. Frederick controlled his son's affairs in Germany more tightly, and left him little room to pursue an independent policy. Moreover, beset by domestic problems and notoriously short of funds, Henry III was in no position to challenge his Capetian adversaries, and had to settle for a series of unsatisfactory truces instead. The close proximity between German and English politics prior to Frederick's crusade ceased to exist, and Henry III's efforts at drawing the Empire into a closer alliance against Louis IX seemed doomed. However, in 1234 English fortunes took a sudden turn for the better: Frederick announced that he wanted to marry Isabella Plantagenet. This laid not only the foundations for relations between England and the Empire during the remainder of Frederick's reign, it also revealed some of the underlying structures of the affairs and politics of Latin Christendom during these years.

II.1 Emperor and Pope

A new spirit of concord prevailed in papal-Imperial relations, most clearly visible in dealings with the commune at Rome, the Lombard towns and the affairs of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Viewed in the light of later events, notably Frederick's second excommunication in 1239, these years lend themselves to an interpretation which sees them as a prelude at best, or at worst as indicative of papal double-dealing.⁴ Neither interpretation does justice to what happened. Gregory and Frederick had not suddenly become friends. They were tied together by common necessity. The Emperor needed papal support to subdue his many foes, foremost amongst them the Italian communes. Similarly, Gregory viewed Frederick's success of 1229 as merely preliminary, a breathing period, allowing for the spiritual, political and logistic preparation of a new campaign to the Holy Land. This, more than anything else, brought Pope and Emperor together. No campaign could be successful unless it was supported and assisted by the ruler of Latin

¹ *Chronica Johannis de Oxenedis*, 159, 160; *Willelmi Chronica Andrensis*, MGH SS xxiv, 770, s. a. 1230; Rudolf Hiestand, 'Jerusalem et Sicilie rex - Zur Titulatur Friedrichs II', *DA* lii (1996), 181-9, at 184-5.

² *Constitutiones*, nr. 125.

³ *Ibid.*, nrs. 126-149. Kluger, *Hochmeister*, 141-61 for a more detailed secondary account.

⁴ Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 290-320; Thomas Curtis van Cleve, *The Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen: Immurator Mundi* (Oxford, 1972), 231-3.

Palestine. That this concord broke down eventually is something which we, blessed with hindsight, can judge to have been inevitable. The situation may not have appeared the same to contemporaries, and the events of 1231-5 ought to be considered with this qualification in mind.⁵

The crusade remained at the centre of papal diplomacy. The precarious state of the Holy Land continued to be stressed. In April 1231, for instance, Henry III was admonished to make peace with France, as the King of Persia was planning to destroy the Christian faith in Africa,⁶ with a similar request made to Louis IX in May 1233.⁷ The connection between peace in Europe and the success of a future crusade was stressed once more in spring 1234: a new crusade was soon to be launched. However, its success depended upon peace being established among the Christian rulers of Europe.⁸ This formed part of wider preparations for the new campaign. Amongst the measures taken were renewed efforts at pacifying Christendom, as well as attempts at restoring a state of orthodox spirituality. After all, it was during the early 1230s that Gregory commissioned his *Decretales*, a canon law collection which remained in use until the early twentieth century, and that he began to formalise the legal procedures for the interrogation and prosecution of suspected heretics, later to be known as inquisition. This was no mere coincidence.⁹ An armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem could be successful only if the combatants were true Christians, untainted by heterodoxy or idolatry.¹⁰ Even a union of the Greek and Latin Churches was attempted.¹¹ In many ways, this was little more than following, to the letter and step by step, the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council. Then, too, the institutional and spiritual renewal of Latin Christendom, the battling of heretics and schismatics, had been perceived as leading towards the ultimate goal of an armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Nor were Gregory's references to the affairs of the Holy Land idle talk: in September 1234 the Pope called for a new crusade to start once Frederick's truce had expired, and by November the preaching of the Cross had begun in Ireland,

⁵ This has been elaborated in my 'Frederick II, Gregory IX and the liberation of the Holy Land, 1230-9', *Studies in Church History* (forthcoming 1999), on which parts of this chapter are based.

⁶ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 438. The historical context of this remains unclear. In seizing the Ayyubid inheritance, al-Kamil faced a challenge from the Khwarizim who had been able to seize most of Iran: Mayer, *Kreuzzüge*, 226. In 1230, they were defeated by al-Kamil and the Rumseljuks. This, in turn, paved the way for the coup de grace to the Khwarizim regime in the Persian Gulf: R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: the Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193-1260* (Albany, 1977), 214-220. As al-Kamil returned to Damascus about a month before the Pope's letter was sent it may well be that a distorted version of these events had reached Rome.

⁷ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, nr. 31.

⁸ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 1801-2.

⁹ Kurt-Viktor Selge, 'Die Ketzerpolitik Friedrichs II.', in: Joseph Fleckenstein (ed.), *Probleme um Friedrich II* (Sigmaringen, 1974), 309-44, at 332-7 for Frederick's policies; *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 2099-2102, 2121, 2127

¹⁰ The religious connotations and the required preparations for a crusade have found little attention with most historians. For a good survey in the context of early twelfth century campaigns cf. Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131* (Cambridge, 1997), 7-22; Marcus Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade* (Oxford, 1994).

¹¹ John Doran, 'Rites and wrongs: the Latin mission to Nicaea, 1234', *Studies in Church History* xxxii (1996), 131-44.

France, Germany and Lombardy.¹² Having a period of nearly five years elapsed between the calling of a crusade and its eventual departure was not at all unusual. Time was needed to muster the necessary financial and military resources, to allow for the recruitment of troops, the collection of funds, the settlement of legal and political disputes. Once again Gregory did little more than follow the precedent established by Innocent III.

Gregory's and Frederick's preparations also included efforts at fostering stronger links with the Muslim rulers of North Africa. On 20 April 1231, the Emperor concluded a truce with Yahya Abu Zakaria of Tunisia.¹³ They agreed to release prisoners, and to make amends for damages inflicted by pirates. The problem of Muslim corsairs also involved the Pope. In August 1231 Gregory IX requested al-Kamil's support in freeing merchants from Ancona.¹⁴ In addition, efforts were undertaken to win or convert potential allies. In February 1233, for instance, the Sultan of Damascus was requested to allow various mendicants to preach the Gospel, and to accept Christianity.¹⁵ In May, similar petitions were directed towards the Caliph of Baghdad and the Sultan of Morocco.¹⁶ For March 1235, an embassy from the Sultan of Iconium is reported as visiting Rome, discussing the possibility of an alliance, and conveying the Sultan's promise to assist the Christians in recovering all lands they had lost under Saladin.¹⁷ These efforts also included attempts at converting the people east of the river Wolga, and initiated the earliest contacts with the Mongols.¹⁸ The success of Frederick's strategy in 1229, in itself by no means entirely unprecedented, set an example which was willingly taken up by the *curia*.¹⁹

Emperor and Pope shared a mutual interest in the Holy Land. Ever since Urban IV, the *curia* had taken a lively interest in ensuring that the holy places of Christendom remained under the rule of the faithful. In Frederick's case, the liberation of Jerusalem had given him considerable weight and authority. It had helped to end his excommunication, as we will see it had strengthened his hands in dealing with the *curia* about other points of conflict, and it had added not inconsiderably to his prestige within Latin Christendom. After all, he was the man who had achieved what successive campaigns for the last fifty years had failed to obtain: a deal which returned Jerusalem to Christian control and which

¹² *Epistolae*, I, nrs. 605-6; Maurice Sheehy (ed.), *Pontificia Hibernica. Medieval Papal Chancery Documents Concerning Ireland 640-1261*, 2 vols., (Dublin, 1962-5), nr. 214; *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 2204-9; the *Annales of Dunstable*, AM, III, 142, refer to the beginning of crusade preaching in England s. a. 1235; CM, III, 288.

¹³ *Constitutiones*, nr. 153.

¹⁴ Reinhold Röhrich (ed.), *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani (1097-1291)*, 2 vols., (Oeniponti, 1893-1904; reprint New York, n. d.), I, nr. 1025.

¹⁵ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 512.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, nrs. 527-8.

¹⁷ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 2473.

¹⁸ Heinrich Dörrie, 'Drei Texte zur Geschichte der Ungarn und Mongolen', *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (Philosophisch-Historische Klasse)* 1956, 125-202, at 151-62. Most missionary contacts have been viewed with regard to what they reported about the Mongols, while the contacts with the Middle East have often been overlooked; Jean Richard, *La Papauté et les missions d'Orient au moyen age (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* (Rome, 1977), 37-41. Cf also: Karl Ernst Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste zu islamischen und mongolischen Herrschern im 13. Jahrhundert anhand ihres Briefwechsels* (Vatican, 1981), nrs. 1-3, 5 for earlier contacts.

¹⁹ Note the Imperial embassy sent by Frederick to the Muslim rulers of the Middle East in 1235: *Extraits du Collier de Perles*, in *Receuil des Historiens des croisades: Historiens Orientaux*, ii (Paris, 1880), 196.

allowed time to prepare for a campaign to cement and expand on his own achievements. This, in turn, gave the Emperor greater liberty in dealing with his remaining opponents. However, Frederick's position was under threat from two sides: not only was the truce he had arranged in 1229 preliminary, but he also faced opposition from the nobles of *Outremer*. There, the underlying problem was Frederick's inability to accept the limitations of royal authority in Palestine, and the limits of his own claims to the title of King of Jerusalem.²⁰ He had inherited the title via his wife, Yolanda/Isabella.²¹ In theory, it was to be passed on to their son Conrad, but Frederick remained unwilling to comply. In fact, during the Emperor's life-time, Conrad was never addressed as King, but only as heir to the kingdom of Jerusalem.²² This was combined with Frederick's inability to acknowledge that in the Holy Land, unlike in Sicily or Germany, the monarch was ruler *primus inter pares*.²³ For instance, he refused to accept the role traditionally exercised by the nobility of Palestine in appointing a regent, and sent his Sicilian marshal, Richard Filangieri, instead. The Emperor showed scant regard for the sensitivities and expectations of his subjects in Palestine. In 1229, for example, the lands which had been won back by the truce with al-Kamil were not returned to their former owners, but to the Teutonic Knights,²⁴ a relatively *parvenu* order with little standing in the society of Christian Syria.²⁵ This was in spite of protestations made by the barons of *Outremer*. Frederick thus alienated some of the kingdom's most important families. In particular the Ibelin lords of Beirut soon became a focal point for those opposing the Hohenstaufen regime.²⁶ A crusade could be utilised to overcome such resistance. After all, when Gregory came to support Frederick against the rebels, he did so because they impeded the planned crusade. More importantly, a successful campaign would have given the Emperor the prestige, the lands and the manpower to isolate his opponents. In addition, the Emperor was no

²⁰ For a contemporary, hostile account: *Les Gestes de Chiprois*, ed. Gaston Raynaud *Publications de la société de l'Orient Latin: Série historique*, v, (Geneva, 1887), 76-83, 83-99, 105, 112-46; *Continuation de Guillaume de Tyre dite du Manuscrit de Rothelin*, in: *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Occidentaux*, ii (Paris, 1859), 526. For a good secondary discussion of the sources: Geoffrey N. Bromiley, 'Philip of Novara's account of the wars between Frederick II of Hohenstaufen and the Ibelins', *JMH* iii (1977), 325-38.; see also: Peter W. Edbury, *John of Ibelin and the kingdom of Jerusalem* (Woodbridge, 1997), 41-57.

²¹ Hans Eberhard Mayer, 'Kaiserrecht und Heiliges Land', in: H. Fuhrmann, H. E. Mayer and K. Wriedt (ed.), *Aus Reichsgeschichte und nordischer Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1972), 193-208, at 195 for this and the following.

²² Hiestand, '*Ierusalem et Sicilie rex*', 181.

²³ Joshua Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European colonialism in the Middle Ages* (London, 1972), 102.

²⁴ Anonymous, 'Quatre pièces relatives à l'Ordre Teutonique en orient', *Archive des l'Orient Latin*, ii (1884), pp. 164-9, nr. 3.

²⁵ Dieter Wojtecki, 'Der Deutsche Orden unter Friedrich II.', in: Fleckenstein, *Probleme um Friedrich II.*, 187-224, at 187-8 for some of the Emperor's plans in the Mediterranean. J. C. Riley-Smith, 'The Templars and the Teutonic Knights in Cilician Armenia', in: T. S. R. Boase (ed.), *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia* (Edinburgh, 1978), 92-117, at 111-5 for the same and for their general role in Imperial politics in the Near East. Also: Peter Hilsch, 'Der Deutsche Ritterorden im südlichen Libanon: zur Topographie der Kreuzfahrerherrschaften Sidon und Beirut', *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* xcvi (1980), 174-89, and Walter Hubatsch, 'Der deutsche Orden und die Reichslehnschaft über Cypern', *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (Philologisch-Historische Klasse)* 1955, 245-306, at 251-79.

²⁶ Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 175-80, 190-4.

ordinary crusader. Unlike Richard the Lionheart he could not be content with a passing appearance in Syria. He was the kingdom's ruler and as such bound to maintain and expand its lands and territories. An isolated success would not do. Frederick was probably aware that the Pope's support depended not only on his successful recovery of Jerusalem, but also on his continuing defence and expansion of Christian lands in Syria.²⁷ As such, the new crusade was an obligation, a duty and a necessity.²⁸

Gregory left no doubt as to who he supported.²⁹ In 1231 Frederick sent troops under the command of his marshal, Richard Filangieri, against Jean de Ibelin and his allies. This was greeted with applause by Gregory. In August 1231, he wrote to Frederick who, for the first time, was addressed as King of Jerusalem (in itself a major concession on the Pope's part), and promised his full support.³⁰ In June 1232, Gregory reprimanded the patriarch of Jerusalem for disregarding papal orders and for supporting the rebellion against Frederick.³¹ In July the military orders and the Church of *Outremer* were ordered to fight against those who disobeyed the Emperor.³² Once peace had been restored, the *curia* went to great lengths to lend Frederick its backing and even those who, only a few years before, had been able to count at least on the Pope's tacit consent in their rebellion against the excommunicate Hohenstaufen, now found themselves a most formidable alliance of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. However, after initial successes, Richard was defeated, and the Ibelins gained control over most of the kingdom. Gregory, though, continued to support Frederick. In August 1234, for instance, he admonished Jean de Ibelin to make amends for the insults he had done to the Emperor, or to seek papal arbitration.³³ Gregory made clear whose claims he considered to be the better. This could not have come as much of a surprise. After all, Frederick would have been unable to muster much authority, unless he had firmly subdued the kingdom which was to be defended by an imminent campaign. If civil strife continued to weaken the defences of Latin Christendom, the events of the Third Crusade had shown, even the biggest and best-equipped expedition could achieve little. As we will see it was only when Frederick failed to win a decisive victory, and when his continuing conflict with the Ibelins and their allies

²⁷ Prawer, *Latin Kingdom*, 108, for a more critical view.

²⁸ It would be wrong, though, to view Frederick's involvement in purely pragmatic terms: Hans Martin Schaller, 'Die Frömmigkeit Kaiser Friedrichs II.', in: *Das Staunen der Welt. Kaiser Friedrich II. von Hohenstaufen, 1194-1250, Schriften zur staufischen Geschichte und Kunst*, xv, (Göppingen, 1996), 128-51; also: James M. Powell, 'Frederick II and the Church: a revisionist view', *Catholic Historical Review* xlviii (1962), 487-97; the same, 'Frederick II and the Church in the kingdom of Sicily 1220-1224', *Church History* xxx (1961); Helmut Beumann, 'Friedrich II. und die heilige Elisabeth: zum Besuch des Kaisers in Marburg am 1. Mai 1236', in: *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürsinn-Dienerin-Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 151-66, reprinted in his, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze 1966-1986*, ed. Jürgen Petersohn and Roderich Schmidt (Sigmaringen, 1987), 411-26; Jürgen Petersohn, 'Kaisertum und Kultakt in der Stauferzeit', in: Jürgen Petersohn (ed.), *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1994), 101-47, at 115-8, 133-8.

²⁹ Mayer, *Kreuzzüge*, 224-5 for most of the following.

³⁰ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 450.

³¹ *Ibid.*, I, nrs. 467-8. Reinhold Röbricht, *Geschichte des Königreichs Jerusalem (1100-1291)* (Innsbruck, 1898), 797-828

³² *Epistolae*, I, nr. 477.

³³ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 2045.

began to threaten the planned crusade itself, that Gregory ceased lending his unquestioning support to Frederick. It was then, too, that he began to urge compromise and arbitration.

A similar spirit of co-operation prevailed in Frederick's and Gregory's dealings with the Lombard communes. However, the *curia*'s support was less unconditional than it had been in the Holy Land. Gregory urged peace and compromise, rather than condemning those who resisted Frederick. Nonetheless, this marked a momentous shift in papal attitudes. In fact, when announcing his reconciliation with the Emperor, the Pope found it necessary to assure the communes that this was not a betrayal of his Lombard allies.³⁴ Gregory was soon forced to arbitrate. During 1231 Italian communes and their representatives had been summoned to a number of meetings,³⁵ which were to culminate in a diet at Ravenna. Although Frederick emphasised that this had been planned with the Pope's advice, the list of participants and the diet's agenda caused unease.³⁶ Frederick's son was to attend with a contingent of Germany princes, and the meeting's objective was the 'establishment of peace and prosperity in Italy'. The presence of German troops and an agenda whose phrasing echoed the justification of the very Imperial claims which the Lombard League had sought to refute did little to assure the communes of Frederick's good intentions. Far from achieving its objective, the planned diet initiated a new period of war. The towns blocked the Alpine passes and prevented Henry (VII) from attending.³⁷ In the end, Frederick was forced to seek papal mediation. Negotiations began in March 1232, but a final agreement was not reached until October 1233.³⁸ It is worth noting that, as in the truce of 1227, one of the clauses stipulated that the League provide 50 knights for the Emperor's use in the Holy Land.³⁹ The document did not solve the problems between Emperor and communes. At best, it provided a compromise, a temporary agreement which barely managed to patch over the fundamental disagreements between Emperor and Lombards. However this was not what mattered. Viewed in the context of papal crusading policy, the treaty of 1233 was a small step towards the pacification of Christendom. None of the initiatives taken by the Pope during these years aimed at a permanent settlement of conflicts and rivalries. All the *curia* expected was that hostilities would cease long enough for the planned crusade to get under way.

Nor should we be surprised at Gregory's rather different handling of the opposition to Frederick II in Italy and Christian Syria. No Pope could have afforded to alienate the Lombards. Their political, economic and military weight was too important an asset to be dispensed with easily. The communes had provided the Pope with the necessary financial and military backing to lead his wars against Frederick during the Emperor's absence and their traditional wariness of any attempt at establishing firm

³⁴ *Constitutiones*, nr. 149.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, nrs. 151-2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, nr. 155.

³⁷ van Cleve, *Emperor*, 361.

³⁸ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 161-9, 176-82; Kluger, *Hochmeister*, 168-9.

³⁹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 182.

Imperial control was one of the fundamental safeguards for the continuing political independence of the Holy See. No Emperor would be able to treat a Roman pontiff as Henry IV and his predecessors had done, while the Pope would be able to count on easy support from the towns and communes of northern Italy. Naturally, this caused problems for Gregory IX, too. He could not and probably did not want to support open rebellion against the Emperor, as this would have tied up resources and funds needed for a much greater undertaking. However, neither could he abandon his old allies and support the Emperor in all his demands against the Lombards. Consequently, the *curia* was forced to perform a precarious balancing act, alienating neither its traditional friends and allies, while remaining on good terms with the Emperor whose backing was needed not only for far-flung expeditions to North Africa, but also for equally pressing problems closer at home.

It would be wrong to perceive the Pope as a friend of communal government *per se*. Gregory was equally stern in his condemnation of communes once they interfered with his own authority. A good example is provided by the government of Rome.⁴⁰ After various efforts at finding a compromise balancing the Pope's claims to sovereignty within Rome and the citizens' demands for self-government, a final break occurred in 1234. The citizens maintained that all the papacy's possessions were part of the dominions of the city of Rome, and as such had to be under communal control. This was unacceptable to Gregory, and preparations began to solve the problem by force. In October and November the *curia* started to muster troops in Germany for a campaign against the Romans, to be led by the Emperor.⁴¹ In December, the Churches of France, Castile and Aragon were asked for support,⁴² as was the clergy of England.⁴³ English chroniclers emphasise the prominent role of Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, during the campaign.⁴⁴ The reasons for Peter's involvement will be dealt with in greater detail at a later stage.⁴⁵ Suffice it to say here that his involvement was not a sign of warming relations between the English court and the Emperor, but the result of Peter's fluctuating political fortunes which by then, and not for the first time, had driven him into exile.⁴⁶ However, what this episode does illustrate is the degree to which Pope and Emperor collaborated, and the extent to which they depended on each other's support. Frederick needed Gregory in order to overcome the opposition he faced in Palestine, and in order to settle his affairs in

⁴⁰ Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter: vom V. bis XVI. Jahrhundert*, New edition prepared by Waldemar Kampf, 3 vols., (Basle, 1954), II, 359-369; Peter Partner, *The Lands of St Peter: the papal State in the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1972), 249-54; Matthias Thumser, 'Friedrich II. und der römische Adel', in: Esch and Kamp (ed.), *Friedrich II*, 425-38, at 431-3, as basis for the following.

⁴¹ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 2146, 2224-2256, 2259-2280, 2291-2; *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 30.

⁴² *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 2344-2373.

⁴³ *Annals of Tewkesbury*, AM, I, 94; CM, III, 288.

⁴⁴ *Annals of Southwark*, MGH SS xxvii 432; *Annals of Tewkesbury*, AM, I, 95; *Annals of Dunstable*, AM, III, 142. However, Matthew Paris names the count of Toulouse as leader of the papal armies: CM III, 304.

⁴⁵ II, 3.

⁴⁶ Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, 470-2.

Lombardy. The Pope, on the other hand, was unable to overcome the political challenges he faced in his own domains without external help, primarily that of the Emperor. It was upon this interdependence that their concord was based.

This point will be illustrated with two more examples, that is the Emperor's relations with his son, and the affairs of Languedoc. Frederick's involvement in Gregory's war against the Romans was cut short by his son's rebellion.⁴⁷ Since Henry's failure to attend the diet at Ravenna, relations between father and son had cooled. In April 1232, during a meeting at Aquileia, the King was forced to perform an oath of loyalty to the Emperor. To make his humiliation complete, the German princes were authorised to rebel against him, should he show any sign of disobedience in future. Furthermore, Henry (VII) had to petition Gregory to be excommunicated should he ever again oppose his father's decisions.⁴⁸ This left Henry no room for manoeuvre. Many of the Imperial princes began to utilise this rift between father and son, and appealed to the Imperial court as a sure means of overturning the young King's decisions. By 1234 Henry was driven into rebellion. Frederick showed no hesitation, and in July 1234 he asked Gregory IX to excommunicate his son. In response, Henry (VII) started negotiations with the Lombard League and concluded a treaty of mutual friendship and support.⁴⁹ The young King had reached the point of no return. In spring 1235 the Emperor entered Germany, while Gregory IX threatened excommunication to those still assisting the rebels.⁵⁰ Henry's support crumbled, and in July 1235, at Wimpfen, he was forced to surrender, was imprisoned and exiled to Apulia.⁵¹ The compromise agreed in 1220, awarding Frederick control over the Empire, on condition that his son ruled Germany, had failed, not the least because Frederick was unwilling to cede authority in deed as well as name.

Finally, the Emperor's involvement in Languedoc ought to be considered. Like Lombardy and the Holy Land, Imperial Burgundy found itself at the centre of Frederick's attention. As soon as peace had been arranged with Gregory IX, the Emperor stated his claims: in March 1232 feuds were banned across Provence, and efforts were undertaken to recover Imperial lands.⁵² Similarly, in November 1232, Frederick sent orders that those who held Imperial fiefs meet him with troops the following spring.⁵³ The full weight of Imperial authority was to be felt. In September 1234, the Count of Toulouse received a confirmation of his fiefs and was granted the margraviate of Provence.⁵⁴ In this, Frederick followed a petition made by the King of France to the Pope.⁵⁵ Frederick's influence in the region is also evident in the presence of both the Counts of Toulouse and

⁴⁷ Stürner, 'Der Staufer', 26-30 for the following.

⁴⁸ *Constitutiones*, nr. 170.

⁴⁹ *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, MGH SS xviii, 810; *Annales Bergomates*, MGH SS xviii, 497; *Constitutiones*, nrs. 325-8.

⁵⁰ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 2445-6.

⁵¹ *Annales Scheftlarienses Maiores*, MGH SS xvii, 340.

⁵² *Constitutiones*, nrs. 159-60.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, nr. 175.

⁵⁴ *Layettes II*, nr. 2309.

⁵⁵ *Epistolae*, I, nrs. 577, 625-6.

Provence at a diet at Hagenau in late 1235.⁵⁶ They led the largest contingent of Burgundian nobles attending a meeting outside Arles since the days of Frederick Barbarossa. Their attendance was a major achievement in itself, as in the past the ongoing feud between the Counts had thwarted all efforts at peacemaking.⁵⁷ The Emperor used his new found influence and status to manifest his claims even in regions which for the pervious generation or two had only seen little, and mostly nominal, exercise of Imperial rule and lordship.

A pattern should become in all this, in Frederick's dealings with the barons of the Holy Land, as much as in his relations with the communes of Northern Italy or the lords and nobles of Burgundy. Nor were these efforts confined to the lands listed above alone. In Germany the Emperor, too, aimed at establishing a basis for firmer royal control than it had existed before. In 1235 a diet issued what was to become known as the *Mainzer Reichslandfrieden*. The document aimed at listing and manifesting the responsibilities and rights of the Emperor in his German homelands. Although this entailed a final surrender of those privileges which in the past had been either given to or taken over by towns, princes and prelates, it also aimed at strengthening the monarch's position by underlining his role as the final arbitrator of legal disputes and conflicts. In fact, this aspect of the 1235 *Reichslandfrieden* was to become one of the basic constitutional documents of the Holy roman Empire, used and referred to until the Empire's demise in 1806.

Although Frederick's actions do form part of what could be described as preparing Christendom for a new campaign to Palestine, they also aimed at extending, manifesting and strengthening his authority in all those lands which nominally fell under the Empire's control. However, the question remains whether the two were as mutually exclusive to him as they might seem to us. Unless proper control had been established over his various domains, Frederick would be unable to lend the planned expedition his full support. In many ways, his actions are reminiscent of Frederick Barbarossa's preparations for the Third Crusade. At the time, these entailed a temporary pacification of Italy, the establishment of a general peace in Germany, and further expansion into Burgundy.⁵⁸ Similarly, the ruthlessness with which Henry VI had established his claims over Sicily was part of his crusading preparations, as well as stating his claims to be William II's true successor.⁵⁹ That Frederick II, unlike his predecessor, continues to be viewed as a Macchiavellian plotter, exploiting the religious credulity of his contemporaries, owes much to later papal propaganda.⁶⁰ However, if compared to his father's and grandfather's undertakings, the main difference appears to be that Frederick II did not die before the

⁵⁶ Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 34.

⁵⁷ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 2427.

⁵⁸ Rudolf Hiestand, 'Precipua tocius christianissimi columpna - Barbarossa und der Kreuzzug', in: Alfred Haverkamp (ed.), *Friedrich Barbarossa. Handlungsspielräume und Wirkungswesen des staufischen Kaisers* (Sigmaringen, 1992), 51-108, at 52-8.

⁵⁹ Csendes, *Heinrich VI.*, 144-58, 179-88. For a comparative perspective: Rudolf Hiestand, 'Kingship and crusade in twelfth-century Germany', in: Alfred Haverkamp and Hanna Vollrath (ed.), *England and Germany in the High Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1996), 236-265, at 253-61.

⁶⁰ Schaller, 'Die Frömmigkeit', 128-9.

crusade got under way or before it reached its goal. If this hypothesis is accepted, we also see Frederick II emerge no longer exclusively as the sage law-giver and proto-renaissance prince, the enlightened absolutist, finally brought down by his own anachronism, but well and truly as a medieval monarch who lived, thought and acted within the same parameters as his contemporaries, who shared and followed a common set of beliefs and precepts for action and royal government. Part of this *Weltbild* was, and was to remain for a long time, the defence of Christian lands in Syria. This certainly was not the Emperor's sole motivation, but it was an aspect of his acts which, so far, has all too frequently been overlooked and which gives a more plausible explanation of his undertakings than many previous approaches have done.

Where did this leave Henry III? Where did he fit into the greater scheme of things? Was there any hope that he might succeed in achieving what he had failed so notably to obtain before, that is an alliance with the Empire and, ultimately, the recovery of his paternal inheritance in France? Henry (VII), had been politically isolated. At best the King of England may have hoped that Frederick's interest in the affairs of Imperial Burgundy might lead to a rapprochement. After all, Languedoc had been an area which had come under increasing domination by the Capetians, often, and especially during Louis VIII's reign, at the Emperor's expense. Moreover, by granting Raymond of Toulouse the margraviate of Provence, Frederick was rewarding one of the English King's most loyal allies. However, should Henry have entertained such hopes, he was to be disappointed. Louis IX and Frederick II acted in unison. The grant awarded to Raymond-of Toulouse co-incided with similar petitions made by the King of France whose brother, one day, was to inherit the county.⁶¹ The Emperor's primary objective was to establish a firmer grip on the affairs of Imperial Burgundy, and he had little reason to fear Capetian influence in the region. Frederick also made sure that his renewed interest in the kingdom of Arles was accompanied by efforts to strengthen his ties with Louis, and in May 1232 the treaty of Catania was confirmed once more.⁶² Louis IX continued to be one of the pillars of Frederick's diplomacy in Europe.

II.2 Henry III and Louis IX

The recovery of Poitou, Anjou and Normandy remained an ambition of Henry III's. However, he was unable to embark on a major campaign in France, and had to settle for a series of truces instead. This was as much the result of political unrest he faced in England, as of persistent papal pressure. In April 1231, shortly after an understanding had been reached with Frederick II, Gregory IX wrote to Henry III and urged him either to make peace with Louis IX or to prolong the existing truce.⁶³ Similar exhortations were

⁶¹ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 4782-92.

⁶² *Constitutiones*, nr. 174. This time Henry (VII) was in no position to delay ratification of the agreement: *Ibid.*, nr. 313.

⁶³ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 438.

sent to the King of France in May 1233.⁶⁴ The Pope even involved himself directly in negotiations: in 1233 the Archbishops of Paris and Sens, as well as the Bishops of Salisbury and Winchester, received papal letters to facilitate an agreement. They were to urge if not a lasting peace, so at least a temporary agreement which eased continuing tensions between the royal houses of England and France. This was probably part of the papacy's peacemaking efforts in preparation for the 1239 crusade, a connection underlined by another papal missive from February 1234: the Holy Land depended on peace among the Christian princes. Therefore Louis and Henry should come to terms.⁶⁵ This initiated a period of protracted negotiations, plagued by the continuing distrust with which the two rulers eyed each other.⁶⁶ Henry III found himself facing a papal attitude not dissimilar to the one Frederick II encountered in Lombardy. A conflict which, judging by past precedent, was not amenable to a quick and peaceful solution, or where such a settlement could be achieved only through a prolonged and costly military campaign, was to be considered as keeping occupied financial and military resources which were much more urgently needed in settling the affairs of the Holy Land. For the past generation Henry III, his father and his regents had aimed to undo the losses incurred in 1204, but they had failed repeatedly. Moreover, a military manifestation of his claims would have entailed attacking the realm of a minor whose family had shown itself to be one of the great pillars of papal policy in the past. A truce, however much it was a preliminary measure, a settlement which hid rather than solved the underlying conflict, was preferable to yet another prolonged and with all likelihood inconclusive war.

Henry III, however, left no doubt that any agreement was to be only temporary in nature.⁶⁷ While negotiations for a peace continued, preparations began for military action. In April 1234, troops had been mustered to assist the Count of Brittany in a rebellion against the King of France.⁶⁸ However, Henry III was deserted by his allies as quickly as he had won them: in September the Count submitted to Louis IX.⁶⁹ Similarly, in August 1234, Henry's stepfather, Hugh de Lusignan, Count de la Marche, once among the pillars of English diplomacy, agreed on a settlement with Louis IX.⁷⁰ The King of France promised not to enter a truce unless the Count's claims against the King of England concerning the island of St Oleron had been settled. This was to prove a major stumbling block,⁷¹ and a final agreement was not reached until late July 1235.⁷² The truce was to be valid for five years from mid-August, and was to include the Count of Toulouse as well as the Kings of England and France. A complicated system was set up to arbitrate

⁶⁴ *Royal Letters*, I, Appendix V, nr. 31.

⁶⁵ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 1801-2.

⁶⁶ Henry III, for instance, repeatedly stressed that he complied reluctantly, and only because of the pressure exercised by the *curia*: *CR 1231-4*, 559.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 559-60.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 558.

⁶⁹ Powicke, *King Henry III*, 184.

⁷⁰ *Layettes*, II, nr. 2307.

⁷¹ *CR 1234-7*, 160-1; *TR*, nr. 65; *CPR 1232-47*, 110.

⁷² *DD*, nr. 239; *CR 1234-7*, 192.

violations of the peace, foreshadowing the arrangements of the treaty of Paris (1259). Even then, the truce was not fully ratified until early 1236.⁷³ The truce of 1235 was to form the basis for future agreements between the two rulers for almost a generation. At the time, however, it was considered not a blue-print for peace, but merely as a means of postponing the final showdown over Henry's inheritance.

The English court continued to look for allies in France. Most importantly, plans were made for a marriage between Henry III and the Count of Ponthieu's heiress and daughter.⁷⁴ After consultations with the *curia*,⁷⁵ as well as the regents of Louis IX and Queen Blanche,⁷⁶ the King's intentions were made public in April 1235.⁷⁷ Soon after, Henry's almoner was sent to Ponthieu, probably in order to finalise arrangements.⁷⁸ By early summer, however, problems occurred. According to Matthew Paris, the marriage failed, amongst other reasons, because of the opposition it encountered from Louis IX's court.⁷⁹ The prospect of an English King acquiring the strategically important county of Ponthieu must have caused some unease.⁸⁰ At the same time, it seems that Henry III was playing a double game. Although he and Count Simon of Ponthieu had entered into a legally binding agreement, the King also contacted Count Amadeus of Savoy.⁸¹ Henry explained that he had been prevented from marrying the Count's niece, daughter of the Count of Provence, because he had already exchanged vows concerning another bride. In the meantime, however, Henry had heard of an impediment to their proposed marriage. Amadeus was therefore asked to ensure that his niece would not marry someone else. The recently discovered impediment probably referred to the King and Simon's daughter being related within the canonically prohibited degrees of consanguinity. However, negotiations to secure a papal dispensation had begun well before Henry announced his intentions, and strenuous efforts had to be made by the English court to counteract the ongoing process at the *curia*. On the very day the above letter was sent to Amadeus of Savoy, Henry III contacted his proctors in Rome and ordered them not to pursue the matter any further.⁸² In July the King's agents were informed that the council had decided to postpone the planned marriage. Therefore, they were ordered not to breathe a word about it to any living soul.⁸³ However, by August the *curia's* support had been enlisted,⁸⁴ and in early

⁷³ *Foedera*, I, 221; *CR 1234-7*, 158.

⁷⁴ Margaret Howell, *Eleanor of Provence: queenship in thirteenth-century England* (Oxford, 1998), 10-11 for much of the following.

⁷⁵ *TR*, nr. 5. Henry announced a mission headed by William of Kilkenny and Robert Surecote, mysteriously defined as dealing with urgent matters on which the Pope's counsel was needed. Presumably, this included the planned marriage.

⁷⁶ *CPR 1232-7*, 94.

⁷⁷ *TR*, nr. 61.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, nr. 64.

⁷⁹ *CM*, III, 327-8.

⁸⁰ Stacey, *Politics*, 180.

⁸¹ *TR*, nr. 70.

⁸² *Ibid.*, nr. 72.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, nr. 75.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, nrs. 76-8. However, it is worth noting that Henry's betrothal to the daughter of Simon of Ponthieu was not finally nullified by the *curia* until August 1252: *Foedera*, I, 284.

October Henry wrote to the Count of Provence, announcing envoys to draft a proper marriage treaty.⁸⁵ By Christmas, he was married.⁸⁶

We will probably never know for certain why Henry III changed his mind. However, there is little doubt that it was he who decided to abandon the heiress of Ponthieu. Matthew Paris may have reflected anxieties at the French court as to the possible consequences of English control over Ponthieu. However, proceedings at the *curia* seem to have progressed well, and should Louis IX have made serious objections, there would have been no need to order Henry's proctors to act in such a secretive manner. Louis' veto would have been reason enough in itself. It is equally difficult to see the advantages of a Provençal marriage. Not only did Henry risk alienating his traditional ally in Languedoc, the Count of Toulouse, he also got very little in exchange. His marriage portion was never formally settled,⁸⁷ and his wife would have been only one claimant amongst several to her father's inheritance. At best, Henry may have hoped to offset Capetian influence at the eastern flanks of Gascony, or maybe, as has been suggested, exchange any lands he might receive for territories in Normandy or Poitou.⁸⁸ He may have reacted to Louis IX's marriage with another of the Count's daughters in 1234. Be this as it may, these dealings underline the extent to which Henry refused to give up hope for a future role in France. He may have been forced into a truce, but this did not mean the end of his claims or ambitions.

Prospective marriages were not the only means by which Henry III tried to strengthen his influence along the borders of France. He continued to maintain friendly relations with the Count of Toulouse. Parallel to negotiations with the Count of Provence, an envoy from Raymond VII of Toulouse arrived in England in October 1235. Henry's response to the Count seems sufficiently conspiratorial to assume that possible moves against Louis IX had been amongst the issues discussed: Henry's envoy would convey the King's answer verbally, as the roads were too dangerous to commit anything to writing.⁸⁹ How effective such an alliance would have been remains open to doubts. Raymond's heiress had married Alphonse of Poitiers in 1234, making Louis' brother the prospective heir of Toulouse. At the same time, as later events would show, Raymond was far from willing to accept this as inevitable. He made repeated efforts to extricate himself from Capetian control, and continued to pose problems to Louis' authority in the region until his death in 1245. Little evidence survives for other contacts. The Count of Guines came to England,⁹⁰ and the Countess of Flanders was requested to repay a loan of £50 made by King John to the citizens of Ghent.⁹¹ Neither case constitutes a major

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, nr. 84.

⁸⁶ *CR 1234-7*, 339; Howell, *Eleanor*, 12-21 for a more detailed account.

⁸⁷ Henry was willing to compromise to a considerable degree. His proctors were to negotiate the marriage treaty, were ordered to settle for anything between 5,000 and 25,000 marks: *TR*, nrs. 24-5.

⁸⁸ Stacey, *Politics*, 180-1.

⁸⁹ *CPR 1232-47*, 129.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 86, 94, 97.

⁹¹ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 397.

diplomatic initiative, but they illustrate the difficulties facing Henry III in his quest for allies. Not only did Louis IX expand his influence into areas traditionally among the pillars of English anti-Capetian diplomacy, he also strengthened his hold on dependent rulers, such as the Countess of Flanders. Under these circumstances the King of England had little option but to sue for peace.

However, diplomatic setbacks were not the only reason for a lack of military initiative on Henry III's part. England was beset by political difficulties, and during 1233-4 the King faced the most serious rebellion of magnates since Magna Carta.⁹² These troubles originated in the King's refusal to grant Richard Marshall access to all of his inheritance. After repeated attempts at mediation had failed, war broke out. The Marshal soon formed an alliance with Llewelyn of Wales and the King of Scotland, thus threatening Henry both along England's western and northern borders, and in the south-east. Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, at the time in charge of the King's government, had lost support by his treatment of Hubert de Burgh. His defeated rival had been deprived of his fiefs and grants and had been put on trial on trumped up charges of conspiracy and treason.⁹³ Even the Pope complained about his treatment by the Bishop of Winchester. By spring 1234 Henry III also encountered strenuous opposition from the English Church, with plans to excommunicate him should he not make peace with the Earl Marshal. Aggravated by his continuing financial malaise, Henry remained unable to respond to the raids of the Marshal and his allies. Not until the King led attacks on Richard's Irish estates did a change for the better occur. Even then, however, Henry's finances did not allow for sustained military action. In 1234, a compromise peace was reluctantly agreed upon, Peter des Roches was sent into exile, and only the Marshal's sudden death spared Henry III further humiliation. Under these circumstances, the King was in no position to embark upon adventures abroad. We should, therefore, not be surprised, if English relations with Germany during these years do not rival those between 1225 and 1229 either in frequency or in intensity. The king of England was unable to do what in the past had all too often instigated his interest in the medieval Empire, its princes and rulers: a military campaign to reclaim his inheritance. Moreover, as we have seen, the political situation in Germany gave the English court little hope of achieving its goals. It had failed to do so under far more auspicious circumstances than it would encounter now.

⁹² Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, 375-9, 399, 417-434 for the following. Some of the issues involved have been discussed by Bertie Wilkinson, 'The council and the crisis of 1233-4', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* xxvii (1942-3), 384-93. For a most recent account: John Maddicott, 'A multitude of nobles: knights in the early parliaments of Henry III', *TCE* vii (1997) (forthcoming January 1999).

⁹³ David Carpenter, 'The Fall of Hubert de Burgh', in: his *The Reign of Henry III* (London, 1996), 45-60.

II.3 Frederick II and Henry III

After Frederick's return from crusade all hopes that his predicaments might be used to Henry III's advantage had been dashed. Henry (VII) was in no position to counteract his father, and the Pope had little interest in alienating his new and potent friend. It would be mistaken, though, to assume that contacts had come to a complete stand-still. In January 1231, for instance, the Bishop of Cambrai received guarantees for his safety on coming to England,⁹⁴ and in 1232 the Duke of Limburg visited the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury.⁹⁵ The latter's visit also indicates continuing relations with Cologne, as the Duke remained amongst the Archbishop's most trusted allies. A similar impression is given by a grant of trading privileges to the merchants of Cologne from April 1231.⁹⁶ Unlike earlier grants of a similar kind, this time the rights were awarded for an unspecified length of time. This may have been a reflection of the Archbishop's former good services. Amongst the other agents of English relations with the Empire, the Duke of Brunswick played only a subordinate role. Envoys from the ducal court are recorded as being in England in August 1231 and July 1233.⁹⁷ However, no evidence survives to illuminate the purpose of their mission. Apart from these, some familiar names appear, like that of the Count of Hückeswagen, whose wife had sent envoys to the English court in 1233.⁹⁸ This may have been related to earlier proceedings concerning a Bohemian marriage. These, however, had long been abandoned, and the most likely explanation is that the Count's messengers may have conveyed news of Henry (VII)'s alleged plans to divorce his wife, and to marry Agnes of Bohemia instead.⁹⁹ The Duke of Brabant, on the other hand, played no part at all, and in February 1231 Henry's brother Richard was granted the Duke's English lands.¹⁰⁰ Although contacts continued, their scale and frequency bear little resemblance to the years before 1231.

Henry (VII)'s loss in significance coincided with a surge of English interest in Frederick II. Previously, the King's court had largely ignored the Emperor and had concentrated on the German regents instead. However, the political changes occurring in Germany required a new approach. In November 1232 a messenger from Thomas of Acerra, Count of Apulia, arrived in England.¹⁰¹ This may indicate high-ranking contacts, as Thomas was among the Emperor's most trusted advisors. He had been involved in the diplomatic preparations for Frederick's crusade, when he negotiated with al-Kamil in

⁹⁴ *CR 1227-31*, 466. A Simon de Cambrai is referred to in October 1231 as customary recipient of the King's alms: R. Allen Brown (ed.), *Memoranda Rolls 16-17 Henry III preserved in the Public Record Office* (London, 1991), nr. 206. However, I have not been able to establish any further connection.

⁹⁵ *Foedera*, I, 205.

⁹⁶ *CPR 1225-32*, 431.

⁹⁷ *CR 1227-31*, 545; *CLR 1226-40*, 224.

⁹⁸ *CLR 1226-40*, 235.

⁹⁹ *Casum S. Galli Continuatio III*, *MGH SS* ii, 180; *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 43.

¹⁰⁰ *CChR*, 29.

¹⁰¹ *CLR 1226-40*, 189.

preparation for the Emperor's expedition, and was later to play a significant role in the administration of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.¹⁰² However, no evidence survives to illuminate the background of this mission. Nor was this the only contact. In March 1233, Henry III complied with a petition from the Emperor and promised £30 to assist Lando, nephew of the Archbishop of Messina, in his studies at Paris.¹⁰³ It would be reading too much into the sources, though, to view this as indicating 'that the Emperor was now considered a diplomatic channel for English interests.'¹⁰⁴ What these visits certainly did indicate, however, was the eminent role played by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, in English politics.

After losing out against his rival Hubert de Burgh in 1225, the Bishop had left for the Holy Land, where he had come to prominence in the Emperor's crusade. He accompanied Frederick on entering Jerusalem, and some, mostly English chroniclers, list him among the leaders of the expedition.¹⁰⁵ Returning to Europe with the Emperor, Peter was involved in negotiations with Gregory IX during 1230-1. The *Annals of Tewkesbury* probably exaggerate when they state that the Bishop pacified Frederick and Gregory,¹⁰⁶ but independent evidence survives to link Peter with the proceedings. In August 1230, he was one of the envoys confirming the demands made by the cardinal of Santa Sabina, the Pope's negotiator, to the Emperor.¹⁰⁷ This earlier involvement in Imperial politics may explain the contacts established with the Imperial court during the early 1230s. The Count of Apulia probably met Peter during Frederick's crusade, while the Archbishop of Messina most likely dealt with Peter in the course of the negotiations of 1229-31.¹⁰⁸ This impression is also strengthened by the kind of petitions Henry's government received, such as that on Lando's behalf. The embassies reaching England certainly point to personal ties.¹⁰⁹ No treaties were discussed or alliances planned. Nonetheless, the possibility that Peter's good standing with the Emperor might be used to Henry III's advantage should not be ruled out. The fact that Henry (VII) solicited French rather than English support during his rebellion may be a case in point.¹¹⁰ Peter was certainly adept at calling in favours from old friends. Matthew Paris, for instance, reports that in 1233 he had asked the Emperor's support in the planned election of John Blund as Archbishop of

¹⁰² Powell, *Anatomy*, 199; E. Blochet, 'Relations diplomatiques des Hohenstaufen avec Les Sultans d'Égypte', *Revue Historique*, lxxx (1902), pp. 51-64.

¹⁰³ *CR 1231-4*, 303. Little is known about Lando himself, but Lando's uncle, the Archbishop, had been foremost amongst Frederick's advisors, while also being close to Honorius III and Gregory IX: Norbert Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie im staufischen Königreich Sizilien*, 4 vols., (Munich, 1973-82), 926-30.

¹⁰⁴ Huffman, *Comparative History*, 311.

¹⁰⁵ Keith R. Giles, 'Two English Bishops in the Holy Land', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* xxxi (1987), 46-57; Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, 229-58; Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), 99; *Annals of Margam, AM*, I, 37; *Annals of Dunstable, AM*, III, 126-7; *Willelmi Chronica Andrensis, MGH SS* xxiv, 768; *Epistolae*, I, nr. 384.

¹⁰⁶ *Annals of Tewkesbury, AM*, I, 76.

¹⁰⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 141.

¹⁰⁸ Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, 929.

¹⁰⁹ Peter des Roches and Frederick II also shared in their patronage of Henry de Avranches: Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, 246-7; Eduard Winkelmann, 'Reisefrüchte aus Italien und anderes zur deutsch-italienischen Geschichte', *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte* xviii (1878), 469-92, at 482-92.

¹¹⁰ *Annales Marbacenses, MGH SS* xvii, 176.

Canterbury.¹¹¹ Similarly, Gregory IX helped, assisted and defended the Bishop of Winchester when his position became increasingly untenable, due to the vigorous opposition he began to encounter from the kingdom's magnates and prelates. Closer ties were certainly forged, but the question remains whether this would have been the case without Peter's involvement.

However, even the Bishop of Winchester's prominent role did not prepare Henry III for what was yet to come. In November 1234, after negotiations which may have been under way since September,¹¹² Frederick II officially announced his intention to marry Isabella Plantagenet, the King's sister.¹¹³ An embassy led by Peter de Vinea, Frederick's trusted councillor, was sent to arrange the details. If possible, he was to be joined by the Archbishop of Cologne. The Emperor was very specific in what he had to offer: he would take Isabella as his lawful wife, and would keep her with all the honour appertaining to an Empress. She would be given the Mazara valley and the honour of Mount San Angelo, as other Queens of Sicily had had it.¹¹⁴ In exchange, Frederick was to receive a dowry of 30,000 marks. By mid-December, Peter had reached England.¹¹⁵ However, he was travelling alone. Henry of Mühlenark, the new Archbishop of Cologne, played no part in the negotiations. At best the fact that he had been intended to accompany the Emperor's emissary may have been an acknowledgement of the weight he once carried in dealings with England.¹¹⁶ Negotiations proceeded quickly, and in late February 1235 Henry III announced his sister's imminent marriage.¹¹⁷ At last, and wholly unexpectedly, the King of England received what he had been working for with so much effort and so little success since 1225: an alliance with the Empire.

In late spring 1235 an embassy led by Duke Henry of Brabant, acting as Frederick's proxy, arrived in England to escort the King's sister to Germany.¹¹⁸ The Duke was accompanied by the Archbishop of Cologne,¹¹⁹ and two high-ranking Teutonic Knights.¹²⁰ Isabella's imminent departure provided an opportunity to reward

¹¹¹ *CM*, III, 243; Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, 365-71 concerning the election and Peter's role.

¹¹² PRO E372-78 m. 13.

¹¹³ HB IV, 503-6.

¹¹⁴ The same lands had been promised to Henry II's daughter Joanna when she married William II of Sicily in 1177: *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, ed. William Stubbs, *RS*, 4 vols., (London, 1868-71), II, 94-8. I am grateful to Ellen Godfrey for this reference. For the wider background in general and for Isabella Plantagenet in particular: Wolfgang Kowalski, *Die deutschen Königinnen und Kaiserinnen von Konrad III. bis zum Ende des Interregnums* (Weimar, 1913), 31-4.

¹¹⁵ *Foedera*, I, 221.

¹¹⁶ Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, 76-7 and Huffman, *Comparative History*, 312, for a contrary view.

¹¹⁷ *Foedera*, I, 224-5; *TR*, nrs. 1, 4. Amongst those addressed was the Archbishop of Cologne. His involvement was, however, limited to this and to escorting Isabella back to England. Neither Frederick II nor Henry III called upon his services again during these negotiations.

¹¹⁸ *TR*, nr. 19.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, nr. 20.

¹²⁰ *CM*, III, 320. This would put them into a similar position as during Frederick's wedding with his first wife, Constance of Aragon, whom the order's grand-master, Hermann of Salza, had escorted to Sicily: James Powell, 'Frederick II, the Hohenstaufens and the Teutonic Order in the Kingdom of Sicily', in: Malcolm Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders: fighting for the faith and caring for the sick* (Aldershot, 1994) 236-44. The only member of their embassy which could be identified was Giles Bertaud or Berthaut, scion of a noble Brabantine family in the area around Mecheln: Hans Koeppen, 'Die englische Rente für den deutschen Orden', in: *FS Hermann Heimpel* (Göttingen, 1972), 402-21, at 404-5.

old friends and to seek new allies. On 24 April the Teutonic Knights were promised an annual rent of 40 marks.¹²¹ Most importantly, on 7 May the Duke of Brabant was promised that, should he or his son return within a month from Michaelmas 1235, or by Easter 1236, they would receive the honour of Eye.¹²² The Duke was promised the settlement of an old grievance, thus providing an opportunity to forge closer links with a ruler strategically positioned to the eastern borders of France. Henry seems to have had great hopes for this alliance. In October, after news of the Duke's death had reached England, Henry assured the Duke's son that Eye could still be his.¹²³ To underline the sincerity of his intentions, Richard de Zudendorp received confirmation of a grant which Duke Henry I once had made concerning the town of Laxfeld.¹²⁴ To emphasise that this might be the dawn of a new era in relations between England and Brabant, various trading privileges were issued to the Duke's merchants,¹²⁵ while one of his clerks was promised an annual payment of ten marks from the Exchequer.¹²⁶ The Duke of Brabant was thus considered to be about to re-enter the fold of loyal allies and potential supporters. However, old friends, too were rewarded for their services. A number of trading privileges were issued for the citizens of Cologne, but few grants were made comparable to the privileges received in 1231.¹²⁷ Although old friends were not forgotten, new opportunities were eagerly seized.

Frederick's choice of emissaries reflected the tradition of English contacts with Germany. Although Peter de Vinea led the negotiations, Isabella's escort consisted of the Archbishop of Cologne and the Duke of Brabant. Only the Duke of Brunswick was conspicuous by his absence. However, this was not a sign of cooling relations or of the Duke's lessening significance. Rather, Otto of Lüneburg was about to be granted what he and his family had been fighting for ever since the fall of Henry the Lion in 1184: to be taken back into the ranks of the Imperial nobility.¹²⁸ Not only had Henry lost his duchies of Bavaria and Saxony, he had also been deprived of his ducal titles.¹²⁹ To undo this loss in rank had remained among the major concern of Henry the Lion's descendants.¹³⁰ After his wedding at Worms in June/July 1235,¹³¹ Frederick proceeded towards Mainz, where he presided over the diet which witnessed the final reconciliation between Hohenstaufen and Welfs. Since September 1234, a commission had been investigating Otto's claims to

¹²¹ *CChR*, 200; full text in Koeppen, 'Die englische Rente', at 413-4.

¹²² *CPR 1232-47*, 103.

¹²³ *TR*, nr. 83.

¹²⁴ *CChR*, 215.

¹²⁵ *CPR 1232-47*, 103, 108.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

¹²⁸ *Annales Marbacenses*, *MGH SS xvii*, 177.

¹²⁹ Karl Jordan, *Heinrich der Löwe. Eine Biographie*, (Munich, 1979), 202-8; Stefan Weinfurter, 'Die Entmachtung Heinrichs des Löwen', in: *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit*, 180-9.

¹³⁰ Boshof, 'Die Entstehung', 264-6.

¹³¹ The exact date of Isabella's marriage remains obscure. Matthew Paris dates the wedding to 20 July: *CM III*, 324. The *Annals of Tewkesbury* give a time around the feast of St Barnabas (c. 11 June): *Annales of Tewkesbury*, *AM*, I, 98, and the *Annals of Worms* 15 July: *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS xvii*, 44. This latter date is indirectly confirmed by a letter from the Bishop of Hildesheim to the Pope: *HB*, IV, 730.

the Welf inheritance.¹³² In August 1235, he was granted the lands of his uncle, and was made Duke of Brunswick.¹³³ This was as much a reward for Otto's loyalty during the Emperor's excommunication and Henry (VII)'s rebellion, as yet another step towards pacifying the Emperor's homelands as well as his domains in Burgundy and Italy.

The way the union of 1235 had been brought about did not lack a certain revealing irony. For years Henry had been trying to forge closer ties with the Empire Throughout, the best means of reaching his goal had been by side-stepping Frederick II himself, and by turning to his son and the German princes instead. Nonetheless, over and over again it was the Emperor's unwillingness to involve himself in the rivalry between Plantagenets and Capetians which had Henry's schemes caused to falter. Then, just as Henry (VII), the main hope the English court still had of achieving closer links with the Hohenstaufen, was about to be deprived of his royal title, Frederick performed a *volte face* and announced his intention of marrying a Plantagenet princess. In many ways this is illustrative of the tight reins with which he governed Germany, and of the new strength of position he had obtained since his return from the Holy Land and since his excommunication had been revoked. Henry (VII)'s inability to gain control of his own affairs certainly had contributed to his rebellion against his father, and it was the success of his crusade which allowed Frederick II to disregard at least some of the worries his marriage was to cause to his old Capetian friends. Nonetheless, the abruptness with which he changed direction requires some further analysis. What exactly had been his reason to marry Isabella Plantagenet ?

It seems that the English court had been surprised by Frederick's abandonment of his traditional, wary stance towards closer links with England. There was no bargaining over the conditions he had made concerning Isabella's marriage portion, and no attempt at receiving further guarantees of political collaboration. The prize on offer was probably too valuable to risk it by putting forth demands. Nonetheless, Henry and his court knew exactly what they expected to gain from this alliance. Ever since Peter de Viney had arrived in England, hopes abounded that the proposed marriage might be used against Louis IX. In December 1234 Henry wrote to Frederick II, expressing his hope that the Emperor would assist him in obtaining his honour and advantage.¹³⁴ In the past this had been the phrase commonly used to denote the King's claims to his inheritance in France. Probably in February 1235, a similar letter was sent to the Cardinal of St Praxedis: with the Emperor's help it would now be possible to recover Henry's rights.¹³⁵ This expectation is also contained in the account of the *Annals of Dunstable*: the Emperor had promised to assist Henry in the acquisition and defence of his rights.¹³⁶ This certainly

¹³² Boshof, 'Die Entstehung', 269.

¹³³ *Constitutiones*, nr. 197.

¹³⁴ *Foedera*, I, 221.

¹³⁵ *TR*, nr. 14.

¹³⁶ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM, III, 142.

expressed the prevalent attitude amongst those close to the King. The marriage was viewed as a stepping stone towards a military recovery of Anjou, Poitou and Normandy.

The Emperor's motivation is more difficult to ascertain. After all, he must have been aware of English expectations that his marriage could be utilised against Louis IX. At the same time, no evidence survives to suggest that he was about to abandon his Capetian allies.¹³⁷ In fact, the Emperor took great care to assure Louis that his marriage would not mean an end to their friendship. In April 1235, informing the King of France of the planned wedding, Frederick declared that he was to continue his alliance with the Capetians, and suggested that he and Louis IX meet in the near future.¹³⁸ Gregory IX, too, assured the King of France that no harm was to come from this union.¹³⁹ Furthermore, attempts were made to settle the Anglo-French conflict. In a letter, probably written in June 1235, Henry III referred to a suggested meeting between the rulers of England, Germany and France.¹⁴⁰ This can be linked to the planned conference at Vaucouleurs which was to settle the conflict between England and France.¹⁴¹ Although the three rulers never met, the fact remains that Frederick was aware of the implications his marriage might have for relations with France, and that a settlement of the differences between Henry III and Louis IX formed part of its diplomatic background.

However, this still does not explain why Frederick was willing to enter into a union which, despite his best efforts, was viewed as a potential threat by the Capetians. A number of explanations have been put forth, none of them entirely convincing. To give a few examples: the marriage was interpreted as aiming at putting an end to the old conflict between Welfs and Hohenstaufen.¹⁴² However, by 1235 the Welfs' loyalty was beyond doubt, and Frederick II had initiated moves for a final settlement well before negotiations with England began.¹⁴³ It has even been suggested that the union was to prevent Henry (VII) from receiving English subsidies,¹⁴⁴ but: Henry had approached the Capetians, not England for support. Fritz Trautz suggests that it may have been an attempt at linking Frederick to a ruler of proven loyalty to the Holy See.¹⁴⁵ However, in 1234, Henry III had faced excommunication, not the Emperor. Although this does not mean that none of these reasons may have played their part in Frederick's or the *curia's* deliberations, it seems that other, equally important reasons have so far been overlooked.¹⁴⁶ To reach a

¹³⁷ For a different view: Wand, 'Die Englandpolitik', 87; Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 67-74.

¹³⁸ HB, IV,1, 539-40.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, IV,1, 538-9.

¹⁴⁰ *Royal Letters*, I, nr. 393.

¹⁴¹ Cf. III. 3.

¹⁴² Ernst Kantorowicz, *Frederick II*, transl. E. O. Lorimer (London, 1931), 406; and (in a rare incident of agreeing with Kantorowicz), Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 242.

¹⁴³ Boshof, 'Die Entstehung', 269-274.

¹⁴⁴ Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 75.

¹⁴⁵ Trautz, *Die Könige*, 104.

¹⁴⁶ Other examples include Frederick's assumed need of an heir, as Henry (VII) was to be dispossessed: Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 237; Trautz, *Die Könige*, 104. However, Henry (VII) already had two sons of his own, thus making these worries obsolete: Hansmartin Decker-Hauff, 'Das Staufische Haus', *Die Zeit der Stauer: Geschichte-Kunst-Kultur*, Exhibition Catalogue, 5 vols., (Stuttgart, 1977-9), III, 339-374, 364. Furthermore, from about 1234 a curious document survives, in which Frederick posthumously legitimises

better understanding of events, the wider European political and diplomatic context ought to be considered. Most importantly, Gregory IX's role in the proceedings should be taken into account.

Neither the Emperor nor Henry III left any doubt about the Pope's involvement. When Frederick II first announced his intentions, he described himself as acting 'ad tractatum et ordinationem karissimi patris nostri domini Gregorii'.¹⁴⁷ This was repeated in the Emperor's letter to Louis IX from April 1235: during a meeting the previous summer, the Pope had suggested Isabella as Frederick's wife.¹⁴⁸ He was not exaggerating. Gregory took an active role during the negotiations. In December 1234, for instance, he wrote to Henry III and announced that Frederick was to ask for Isabella as his wife.¹⁴⁹ A similar point was made in the marriage contract publicised on 27 February: upon the Pope's advice, Isabella had been given in marriage to Frederick II.¹⁵⁰ When the King of England wrote to the cardinal of St Praxedis the same month, this was repeated: as suggested by the Pope, the King's sister had been given in marriage to the Emperor.¹⁵¹ Gregory IX was the driving force behind the agreement. Taking into account his repeated exhortations to Louis IX and Henry III to arrange peace, it seems unlikely that he had intended the marriage to be the opening shot in a war against Louis IX. This is underlined by a letter from Pope Gregory to Louis IX from September 1234, after the marriage between Frederick and Isabella had first been mooted: not to impede the business of the Holy Land, peace ought to be made with Henry III.¹⁵² Why then did he, and why did Frederick favour an English marriage?

It may be worth considering overall papal policy during these years. As pointed out earlier, a crusade to the Holy Land remained at the centre of papal concerns, and the pacification of Christendom was an integral part of its preparations. England and France were not the only subjects of papal arbitration. In January 1235, for instance, Gregory IX had urged the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Carlisle to arrange a peace with Scotland.¹⁵³ Peace was to be established across Christendom, in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Palestine. As we have seen, not all of the Pope's efforts aimed at a permanent settlement of conflicts. In fact, it appears that the *curia* would have seen its aims fulfilled, if peace lasted long enough for the campaign to get under way. Nor were papal actions always guided by realism or political pragmatism. With this *proviso* in mind, Gregory's support for the Anglo-German marriage seems less surprising. If nothing else,

his children from Bianca Lancia whom he appears to have married after the death of Yolanda/Isabella, but who must have died 1233/4. *ibid.*, 359.

¹⁴⁷ HB, IV, 503.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, IV, 539-40.

¹⁴⁹ *Foedera*, I, 220.

¹⁵⁰ *TR*, nr. 1.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, nr. 14. The point was repeated in a letter from Henry III to Gregory IX from April 1235: *Foedera*, I, 225-6.

¹⁵² *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 2180.

¹⁵³ *Foedera*, I, 214-5.

the Hohenstaufen were linked to the Plantagenets, while still being firmly tied to the Capetians. Potentially, this could mean forging a formidable alliance which could be utilised for the purposes of the Holy Land. Even if this might have been overly optimistic, the Emperor's influence with Henry III and Louis IX could nonetheless be sued to broker if not a permanent, so at least a temporary settlement of the rivalry between Capetians and Plantagenets which had beset so many past expeditions to the Holy Land. As we will see, this was not entirely unrealistic. More importantly, it makes Gregory's involvement appear little different from earlier initiatives by the *curia* which, too, had aimed at using the politics of marriage to settle conflicts, to cement or form alliances.¹⁵⁴

However, where does this leave the Emperor ? The affairs of the Holy Land certainly played their part in Frederick's deliberations. Even if he himself did not intend to participate in the planned campaign, he had considerable interest in the Holy Land. In addition, the English alliance also brought other much needed gains.¹⁵⁵ The financial advantages to be had out of the marriage were considerable, and Frederick left little doubt that he needed the money. The payment of Isabella's dowry was to dominate exchanges between England and Germany over the following years. He needed funds to finance his campaigns in Italy and Palestine, to reward his followers and allies. Similarly, the marriage gave Frederick additional standing within Latin Christendom, with some important consequences. In 1238, for instance, English troops fought alongside the Emperor's against the Lombard League, and when Henry III's younger brother went on crusade in 1239, he acted in close co-operation with Frederick, performing a semi-official role on the Emperor's behalf in Palestine. However, should the Emperor have hoped that this would put English requests for further assistance against France at rest, he was to be disappointed. This dichotomy of expectations continued to define and form relations between the two rulers. The marriage between Frederick II and Isabella Plantagenet gave Gregory IX the hope that peace could be arranged in time for his planned crusade, Henry III the expectation that Frederick's support could be won against the Capetians, while the Emperor gained much needed funds, troops and prestige.

¹⁵⁴ For the interplay of peace and marriage diplomacy: Constance M. Rousseau, 'A papal matchmaker: principle and pragmatism during Innocent III's pontificate', *JMH* xxiv (1998), 259-71.

¹⁵⁵ Trautz, *Die Könige*, 105.

Chapter III

'*confederati sumus (...) contra omnes homines*'¹
(1236-9)

Isabella's marriage initiated a new period of concord in Anglo-Imperial relations. In fact, the years between her marriage and Frederick's excommunication in 1239 stand out for the frequency and intimacy of relations between the two rulers. The English court took great pride in its close relationship with the Empire, and stressed the newly established family connection between Emperor and King.² Peter de Vinea's continuing presence in England showed its influence in the increasingly flowery style of Henry III's foreign correspondence.³ In 1236, Henry de Aeys, the Imperial chamberlain,⁴ was in England, probably in connection with the trial against the Jews of Fulda for accusations of ritual murder. At the time, Frederick had been recruiting Jewish converts from across Christendom as expert witnesses, and in his response Henry III referred to *neophytes* he was sending to Germany.⁵ In addition, Henry III and Frederick seem to have embarked on an animated exchange concerning falconry.⁶ Furthermore, although with a certain degree of apprehension,⁷ Walter of Odra was granted permission to journey to Ireland for the collection of Isabella's dowry.⁸ In 1238, at Frederick's instigation, a clerk of Reggio was promised a

¹ Henry III in a letter to Gregory IX probably dating from January 1237, outlining his relationship with Frederick: *TR*, nr. 48.

² In 1236, for example, Walter of Odra was referred to as 'clerk and envoy of the King's brother Frederick': *CPR 1232-47*, 146.

³ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, 'Petrus de Vinea in England', *MIÖG* li (1937), 43-88, at 58-9. However, the influence exercised by the papal chancery should also be noted: Geoffrey Barraclough, 'The English royal chancery and the papal chancery in the reign of Henry III', *MIÖG* lxxii (1954), 365-78.

⁴ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 418. Henry is referred to as *imperialis aulae marescallus*. However, this poses problems of identification. Julius Ficker, in his 'Die Reichshofbeamten der staufischen Periode', *Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Klasse der (k. k.) Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien* xl (1862), 447-549, at 466, suggested as the 'de Aquis' were usually chamberlains, not marshals, this must refer to Henry of Pappenheim. However, it is equally likely that an English scribe had been making a mistake. Henry of Aachen (Aeys being the Anglo-Norman word for Aachen) was a prominent figure at Frederick II's court, involved in negotiations with France, *RI*, nr. 1986, and later prothonotary: Ennen/Eckertz, *Quellen*, II, nr. 222. Even more importantly, he was related to the advocate and the provost of Aachen who, earlier on in Henry III's reign, had been on diplomatic missions to England: Erich Meuthen (ed.), *Aachener Urkunden 1101-1250*, (Bonn, 1972), nrs. 8, 254. This also made him a close relative of Henry (VII) and a half-cousin of Frederick II's first wife, Constance of Aragon: Erich Meuthen, 'Die Aachener Pröpste bis zum Ende der Stauferzeit', *Zeitschrift des Aachener Geschichtsvereins* lxxviii (1966-7), 5-95, at 60-84. He, thus, seems a more likely candidate for such a high-profile mission. However, just to make things really confusing, in December 1237, a 'Gerardus de Aquis tricamerarius noster' was announced as the Emperor's envoy to crusaders from France: *HB*, V, 141.

⁵ An account of the affair is given by *Annales Erphordenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 31. Friedrich Battenberg, *Herrschaft und Verfahren: politische Prozesse im mittelalterlichen römisch-deutschen Reich* (Darmstadt, 1996), 30-33.

⁶ English records point to an unusually large number of visits by Imperial falconers to England and vice versa. *CPR 1232-47*, 139; *CR 1234-7*, 296; this exchange continued until the late 1240s, *CR 1247-51*, 88 [20. 9. 1248].

⁷ *CR 1234-7*, 368.

⁸ *CPR 1232-47*, 146. The need to pay Isabella's dowry led to attempts to win additional finances from the King's Irish subjects, *CR 1234-7*, 509-10, 571-4. Walter of Odra and Giles Bertaud of the Teutonic Knights had been sent specifically to collect outstanding debts: *TR* nr. 55; Felix

benefice.⁹ This was more than what was common in exchanges between medieval rulers. Even the animated contacts during Henry (VII)'s regency bear little comparison with these years. It must have seemed as if the fulfilment of Henry's wishes was imminent.

However, it was the Emperor who now stood at the centre of exchanges. The German regents, acting on behalf of his second son, Conrad IV, who was formally elected king in 1237, played only a subordinate role. This is illustrated by the envoys sent to England. Many of those who had played such an important role in Anglo-Imperial relations in the 1220s, such as the Archbishops of Cologne, disappear from the records. Most embassies were led by Frederick's officials, in marked contrast to the period before 1229.¹⁰ Frederick's proctors were drawn from among the inner circle of his administration. Walter of Odra may serve as an example.¹¹ In May 1236 he travelled to Ireland,¹² in 1237 he returned to collect the final instalment of Isabella's dowry.¹³ Since 1236 Walter had been Frederick's chaplain. He was one of the Emperor's foremost diplomats and, next to Peter de Vinea and Thaddäus de Suessa, chief advisors. His presence therefore testifies to the significance now attached to relations with England by the Emperor himself. Naturally, the collection of Isabella's dowry was a task best entrusted to reliable aids and confidantes, but it also points to the fact that Frederick may have been expecting more than merely an increase in funds to spring from his improved standing with the court of Henry III. A similar picture as to the rank and significance of Imperial envoys is borne out by the other emissaries sent. These included the chamberlain Henry of Aachen who visited England in 1236,¹⁴ and in January 1239.¹⁵ Another member of his family, the advocate of Aachen, is recorded in June 1236.¹⁶ Later that year a Hugh de Castello Novo, probably a medium-ranking in Frederick's Sicilian administration, is mentioned as the Frederick's messenger.¹⁷ The Germans who used to dominate contacts between the

Liebermann, 'Zur Geschichte Friedrichs II. und Richards von Cornwall', *NA* xiii (1888), 217-222, at 217-8 for the Irish connection.

⁹ *CPR* 1232-47, 219.

¹⁰ With the exception of 1237, when Gerard de Zuydendorp was in England: *CLR* 1225-40, 263. It is unclear though whether he attended on a diplomatic mission, or to trade.

¹¹ Kemp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, I, 128-132; Heinz Hartmann, 'Die Urkunden Konrads IV.', *AfD* xviii (1944), 38-163, at 134-47; Gunther Wolf, 'Anfänge ständigen Gesandtschaftswesens schon zur Zeit Kaiser Friedrichs II.?', *AfD* xli (1991), 147-53 for his diplomatic career.

¹² *CPR* 1232-47, 145, 146.

¹³ *TR*, nrs. 53-5; *CLR* 1225-40, 265, 268, 269, 275, 276, 278; *CPR* 1232-47, 188; *CR* 1234-7, 466.

¹⁴ *Foedera*, I, 224.

¹⁵ *CLR* 1226-40, 359.

¹⁶ *HB*, IV, 884-5. William, the advocate of Aachen, Henry's brother: Meuthen, *Aachener Urkunden*, nr. 122, where, 15. 6. 1237, Henry of Aachen, Imperial *camerarius* and brother of the advocate, buys lands.

¹⁷ *CR* 1234-7, 301. Who exactly he was remains obscure. In 1255, however, Innocent IV mentioned Hugh de Castronovo in a letter outlining the actions to be taken against Manfred and Frederick Lancia in Sicily: *AI*, II, nr. 1044. The envoy 'Hugh' mentioned in 1237 may have been the same person: *CLR* 1226-40, 250.

two countries were increasingly replaced by men drawn from among the Emperor's Sicilian subjects.

III.1 Imperial diplomacy

Nonetheless, his marriage had begotten Frederick problems as well as opportunities. Foremost amongst the former ranged the impact this would have on his relations with Louis IX, and it is therefore not surprising to see that he stepped up his efforts to broker a more permanent settlement between Louis IX and Henry III. To this purpose, he called for a meeting between himself, Henry III and Louis IX at Vaucouleurs, on the borders between France and the Empire, in 1236. Matthew Paris vaguely describes the meeting as designed to deal 'de negotiis arduis, tam imperium quam alia regna contigentibus'.¹⁸ What this meant is elaborated in a letter by Henry III to Frederick, in which he thanks the Emperor for his efforts to ensure peace between Capetians and Plantagenets.¹⁹ However, in early January 1236, Henry III declared that he would not participate in the meeting, and gave his reasons.²⁰ He himself was too busy, while the barons were reluctant to let his brother Richard go, unless sufficient guarantees could be given for his safety. In February, the Emperor's invitation was finally rejected.²¹ The barons, Henry explained, had refused to give Richard permission to leave. Also, as campaigns in Scotland, Wales and Ireland were imminent, his presence could not be spared. Matthew Paris elaborates on this: as Richard was the King's heir, and as nobody knew whether the King's wife would bear children, he should not be exposed to the vagaries and dangers of a meeting with Louis IX.²² The King of England was seeking, and was given, an excuse from having to embark on a meeting which, with all likelihood, was going to end in the surrender of part or all of his inheritance. Using the truce forced upon him in 1234 to muster the troops and allies, the means and men necessary to obtain what he believed to be his by force may have seemed a more appropriate option. At the same time, we should not dismiss the reasoning employed by the King too easily. For, as will become clear, the crisis of the early 1230s continued to plague his reign in England, and began to have repercussions beyond the borders of his own kingdom as well.

Another attempt was made in 1237. In April, Henry announced to the Emperor that Richard and other English nobles would attend the meeting at Vaucouleurs.²³ However, the second conference, too, failed to materialise. The fullest account is given by Matthew Paris.²⁴ Richard was to be accompanied by the Archbishop of York

¹⁸ *CM*, III, 393.

¹⁹ *TR*, nr. 53.

²⁰ *TR* nr. 93; Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II,1, 226-8.

²¹ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 419.

²² *CM*, III, 340.

²³ *TR*, nr. 53.

²⁴ *CM*, III, 393-4.

and other prelates and nobles. Some unease had been caused by the fact that the King of France had been amassing large forces near Vaucouleurs, but the party decided to set out nonetheless. However when they reached Dover they were met by Imperial envoys who brought news that the meeting had been postponed by another year.²⁵ In this instance, Matthew's report is confirmed by another source. In the late thirteenth century, William de Nangis described the planned meeting and its subsequent failure.²⁶ Just before the meeting, Louis' younger brother Robert had married a daughter of the Duke of Brabant. As this was to be followed by Robert's enfeoffment with the county of Artois, many nobles had decided to attend such a festive occasion.²⁷ The Emperor, however, seeing that Louis was accompanied by so many armed men, cancelled the meeting. According to William, this was a sign of God's good will towards the King, as it was suspected that the Emperor had evil designs on the kingdom of France. This statement may have been influenced by Frederick's later reputation and the author's declared desire to promote his hero's sanctity. Put into a wider context, a slightly different interpretation emerges. It seems unlikely that Frederick entertained designs against the French crown, and to what extent the troops accompanying Louis played any part in the failure of the meeting remains unclear. In fact, in a letter dated to 1237, the Emperor expresses his delight that he and Louis were now relatives,²⁸ probably referring to Robert of Artois' marriage (his wife was the grand-daughter of Frederick's uncle, Philip of Swabia).²⁹ However, Frederick faced political difficulties in Germany and Italy which may have required a postponement, and which were probably amongst the affairs of the Empire referred to by Matthew Paris in his account of the failed meeting in 1236. Most important amongst these troubles were the affairs of Lombardy, and Frederick's worsening relations with the papacy.

Since 1235, Gregory IX had been trying to arrange a truce between the Emperor and the Lombard League.³⁰ This put him in an increasingly difficult position, as Frederick II's demands for a heavy fine and the excommunication of all those who refused to make peace met with equally stubborn resistance by the Lombards. At this point the Pope could ill afford to alienate either party. The communes had proved themselves to be reliable allies and even the affairs of the Holy Land would not have justified their full abandonment. Furthermore, we should not ignore the fact that even the Pope's earlier efforts at mediating between communes and

²⁵ Imperial envoys, Walter of Ocre and Giles Bertaud, are known to have been at the royal court between 17 June and 6 July 1237. However, they were mostly concerned with collecting outstanding debts for Isabella's dowry. *CLR* 1226-40, 275, 276, 278; *CPR* 1232-47, 188; *CR* 1234-7, 466; *TR*, nrs. 54-5.

²⁶ William de Nangis, *Gesta Sanctae Memoriae Ludovici Regis Franciae*, *RHGF* xx (Paris, 1840), 309-465, at 424-6.

²⁷ William's version of events is confirmed by the *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, *RHGF* xxi, (Paris, 1855), 494-630, at 591.

²⁸ *AI*, II, nr. 26.

²⁹ *RI*, nr. 2267.

³⁰ Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 291-305.

Emperor had aroused suspicions in Lombardy. Equally, Frederick's help was essential in order to provide permanent Christian control over Palestine. In the end, Gregory had little option but to continue pressing the case for a peaceful settlement, and to repeat the setbacks he had suffered so far.³¹ Consequently, he tried to arrange for a series of meetings between Frederick II's proctors and those of the rebelling towns.³² In many ways, this was a race against time, and increasingly placed Gregory in a situation in which a stance of disinterested neutrality became more and more difficult to maintain. The Emperor had intended to lead a campaign to northern Italy in 1236, but postponed it at the Pope's instigation.³³ A planned meeting at Viterbo failed when Frederick's representatives left before the proctors of Milan and its allies arrived. In June, another effort was made, but when Frederick was forced to intervene in the wars against the deposed Duke of Austria, this caused another delay.³⁴ Once he returned to Italy, new efforts were undertaken to find a peaceful settlement; and in April and May 1237 a number of high-ranking Imperial officials were sent to the Pope, *pro facto Lombardie*.³⁵ However, Frederick's patience began to wear thin. While proceedings continued at the *curia* efforts were made to find a military solution to the Lombard problem. The Emperor's cards looked good. During 1235/6 he had taken control of several towns - Bergamo, Verona,³⁶ Vicenza³⁷ and Padua all accepted his rule in 1236.³⁸ Milan and its allies thus looked increasingly isolated, and their position against Frederick harder to maintain. If peace could not be arranged by diplomatic means, it certainly could be achieved by victory in battle.³⁹ Milan's hope thus centred increasingly on the prospect of a break between Pope and Emperor. This certainly was what was to happen in the long-term. In the meantime, though, Frederick achieved a sudden, unexpected but decisive victory against his Lombard foes. Accompanied by troops from Cremona and other allies, Frederick intercepted a party led by the Milanese at Cortenuova in 1237.⁴⁰ This resulted in one of the worst defeats in Milan's history. Its *podesta* was captured and executed, and the *carraccio*, the symbol of communal identity, first dragged through the streets of Cremona, and then sent to Rome as a trophy. Frederick saw the opportunity to establish his authority in Lombardy, firmly and without protracted negotiations. In July 1238 he rejected a papal offer to mediate, as he could not accept anything but the Lombards' unconditional

³¹ *Epistolae*, I, nrs. 691-2.

³² Kluger, *Hochmeister*, 172-7 for a good secondary account.

³³ HB, IV, 876.

³⁴ For a background account of the campaign: Friedrich Hausmann, 'Kaiser Friedrich II. und Österreich', in: Fleckenstein, *Probleme um Friedrich II.*, 225-308, at 245-64; Karl Brunner, 'Zum Prozeß gegen Herzog Friedrich II. von 1236', *MIÖG* lxxviii (1970), 260-73.

³⁵ Ryccardus de S Germano, *Chronica*, *MGH SS* xix, 374; *Epistolae*, I, 707.

³⁶ *Annales Bergomates*, *MGH SS* xviii, 810.

³⁷ *Annales Mantuani*, *MGH SS* xviii, 21; *Annales Parisii*, *MGH SS* xix, 10.

³⁸ *Annales Scheftlarienses Maiores*, *MGH SS* xvii, 340. Also, with regard to the specific case of Perugia: John P. Grundman, *The Popolo at Perugia, 1139-1309* (Perugia, 1992), 81-3.

³⁹ *Rolandini Patavini Cronica*, *RIS* VIII, 1, 48.

⁴⁰ *Annales Bergomates*, *MGH SS* xviii, 810.

surrender.⁴¹ The League had lost its gamble. Taking these events into account, Matthew's statement that the second meeting at Vaucouleurs had been postponed at the Emperor's instigation seems credible. Events in Lombardy demanded his immediate attention. At stake was not only his control over the Imperial towns in northern Italy, but also his relationship with the *curia*.

The fact that Frederick's toughened stance after Cortenuova had little immediate impact on his standing with the *curia* does not mean that we should ignore, or that the Emperor had been unaware of the strain his attitude put on papal-Imperial relations. In fact, events in Lombardy point to the fragility of the papal-Imperial concord. In September 1236 the Emperor criticised Gregory: while he was asking for ecclesiastical censures against the Lombard rebels, all he got in response were complaints about his alleged maltreatment of the Sicilian Church.⁴² Earlier on the same year, Gregory had accused Frederick of various transgressions against the Church, to which the Emperor responded by listing what he considered the injustices committed by the Holy See.⁴³ Frederick's confidence in the Pope's neutrality was certainly not increased when Bishop James of Praeneste, a staunch supporter of the League, was appointed papal legate in Italy. In a letter probably dating from February 1237, the Emperor announced that he was sending Herman of Salza as his envoy, despite the doings of Bishop James. However, Herman was to deal only with Gregory himself.⁴⁴ The spirit of co-operation which had guided the actions of Emperor and Pope since 1231 began to wear thin.

Simultaneously, papal and Imperial interests began to conflict in Provence. In April 1236, Gregory IX ordered the Count of Toulouse to go to the Holy Land for five years if he wanted to avert his excommunication.⁴⁵ In May, he requested Louis IX's help against the Count.⁴⁶ Gregory did so at a time when Frederick II was aiming to expand and strengthen his authority over Languedoc. From 1238 the conflict began to escalate. In August Gregory IX ordered the citizens of Avignon not to ally themselves with the Count of Toulouse against the Count of Provence, or to support the Imperial seneschal who was suspected of harbouring heretics.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the communes of Arles and Marseilles were ordered to fight Frederick's seneschal,⁴⁸ as was the Count of Provence.⁴⁹ Gregory considered the fight against Catharism more important than Frederick's claims to Imperial overlordship in Languedoc. His actions were not unlike those of Innocent III or Honorius III in the same region. Both had begun to exercise quasi-Imperial authority in the area. At that time, however, Frederick had

⁴¹ *AI*, I, nr. 351.

⁴² *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 3361.

⁴³ *Epistolae*, I, nrs. 695-701.

⁴⁴ *AI*, II, nr. 25.

⁴⁵ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 688.

⁴⁶ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 3138; this request was repeated the following year: *Epistolae*, II, nr. 706.

⁴⁷ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nr. 3802-3.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, nr. 3804-5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, nr. 3806.

neither shown interest in nor had he been able to manifest his claims over Toulouse and Provence. In the meantime circumstances had changed and what once had been permissible was now likely to cause offence. Gregory's actions were the more dangerous, as the Count of Toulouse was Frederick's most reliable ally in the area.⁵⁰ Frederick, however, decided to disregard papal interference, and continued to state his claims. In January 1238, he granted a series of privileges to the citizens of Avignon.⁵¹ In June he complained to Gregory about the appointment of James de Praeneste as legate in Provence, declaring that the legate would not work for the unity of the faith, but was rather suited to sow dissent and unrest.⁵² However, the affair also shows that Pope and Emperor were still capable of settling their conflicts peacefully. The legate was ordered to absolve the Count of Toulouse from all ecclesiastical censures,⁵³ and Frederick decreed that his edicts against heresy be promulgated in the kingdom of Arles.⁵⁴ Their relationship was not yet doomed to fail.

A similar example is provided by Frederick's difficulties in the Holy Land. One of the Emperor's major conflicts had been with the commune of Acre, which refused to accept Frederick's baillie, Richard Filangieri. In 1236, with Gregory's help, a compromise had been arranged.⁵⁵ As long as the planned project of a crusade remained likely, co-operation continued. However, that very project soon began to divide Gregory and Frederick. The Pope had been planning another expedition to Palestine to begin in 1238.⁵⁶ The Emperor, though, insisted that his truce should be observed, and the campaign should not start until 1239. In November 1237 Gregory announced to Frederick that the crusaders were to set sail by June 1238.⁵⁷ Simultaneously, he addressed prominent ecclesiastical circles in Sicily and asked them to persuade the Emperor to support his crusading plans.⁵⁸ Frederick, however, refused to comply, and announced that he was sending one of his officials to the crusaders assembling in France, explaining his reasons why he would ask them to postpone their expedition.⁵⁹ By 7 December, he could announce to the Pope that the crusaders had agreed not to begin their campaign until the truce had expired.⁶⁰ In the end, Gregory complied. However, Frederick was never to participate in the expedition. In March 1239 he was excommunicated for a second time. The ensuing

⁵⁰ *CM*, III, 491.

⁵¹ *HB*, V, 158-60.

⁵² *AI*, I, nr. 349.

⁵³ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 731.

⁵⁴ *AI*, I, nr. 351.

⁵⁵ *HB*, IV, 808. A later, dubious source, relates that Gregory IX then authorised the military orders and the Italian communities in Genoa to assist the citizens of Acre: Riley-Smith, *The Feudal Nobility*, 207.

⁵⁶ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 688.

⁵⁷ *HB*, V, 126-8.

⁵⁸ *Epistolae*, I, nrs. 714-5.

⁵⁹ *HB*, V, 140-2.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, V, 139-40.

wars left little room for an adventure like the one he had undertaken in 1228. It was left to a number of French and English nobles to sustain Christian crusading efforts.

These differences over the affairs of Burgundy, Italy and the Holy Land illustrate the underlying difficulties in the relations between Pope and Emperor. Gregory had been willing to help and assist Frederick.⁶¹ However, there were limits to the Pope's co-operation. If Frederick harboured heretics or if he flatly rejected papal efforts at pacifying Lombardy, this could not be accepted. Equally, Frederick claimed, and probably meant, that his actions were little more than finally putting an end to the very problems which in the had hampered his freedom of action in the past. The battle of Cortenuova had presented the opportunity to solve the Lombard problem once and for all, while he was also on his way to establish effective Imperial authority in Burgundy. To him, Gregory's complaints may indeed have been difficult to understand. At the same time, to see relations between Frederick and Gregory as drifting unavoidably towards the excommunication of 1239 would be a mistake. There was still room for compromise. Gregory was willing to give in when his actions in Provence aroused Frederick's suspicions, and he eventually complied with the Emperor's wishes concerning the starting date of the new crusade.

Frederick seems to have been aware that he was risking collision with the *curia*, and therefore mustered support from across Christendom. It is safe to assume that the intended meetings at Vaucouleurs had originally intended to form part of these wider diplomatic efforts. In July 1236, for instance, King Bela of Hungary wrote to Gregory IX and asked him not to support the Lombards, as this would damage both the Church and the Christian princes.⁶² He probably acted at Frederick's instigation. This certainly was the case with Henry III. In June 1236, emphasising his friendship with Frederick, he asked the Pope not to support the Lombard rebels against their lord, the Emperor.⁶³ According to Matthew Paris, similar requests were made in 1238.⁶⁴ Furthermore, Henry announced to Frederick that he had sent Baldwin de Vere and Bartholomew Pecche to further the Emperor's cause at the *curia*.⁶⁵ It thus seems that the planned conference had been part of a more wide-ranging drive at enlisting the support of the Emperor's fellow-monarchs. In the case of Henry III, this went beyond moral and diplomatic support. Matthew Paris reports how, in 1238, a contingent of English troops under the leadership of Henry de Trumbleville, seneschal of Gascony, was sent to Italy. Henry brought not only knights, but also funds.⁶⁶ In February

⁶¹ Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 301.

⁶² Alphonse Huillard-Brehouilles, 'Examen des Chartes de l'Eglise Romaine contenues dans les rouleaux de Cluny', *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Imperiale* 21. 2 (1865), nr. 34. Quoted after Kluger, *Hochmeister*, 174 n. 67.

⁶³ *TR*, nrs. 39, 43-5.

⁶⁴ *CM*, III, 485. It is also worth noting that Simon de Montfort, at the *curia* to seek papal dispensation for his marriage with Henry III's sister, first contacted the Imperial court before proceeding towards Rome: *ibid.*, III, 487.

⁶⁵ *HB*, IV, 884-5.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 485-6, 491-2.

1238, he received £73 from the Exchequer 'pro auxilio sororii regis imperatoris Alemannorum',⁶⁷ and in February 1239 Florentine merchants received 1000 marks that they had lent to the elect of Valence 'for the expedition of the King's affairs in Italy when he was there in the Emperor's army'.⁶⁸ In many ways the campaign of 1238 marked the apex of Frederick's standing within Latin Christendom. Also participating was Baldwin de Guines, one of the great mercenary leaders of his time.⁶⁹ The King of Hungary had been ordered to provide troops.⁷⁰ Moreover, some later sources report that the Sultan of Egypt and Vatatzes, Emperor of Nicaea, had sent contingents,⁷¹ and Flemish and Spanish knights fought on Frederick's side.⁷² In many ways this testifies to the success of Frederick's diplomacy. The Emperor could justly claim to act in unison with the secular leaders of Latin Christendom.

Frederick's campaigns in Lombardy also explain another dominant feature in his relations with England: the collection of Isabella's marriage portion. By the thirteenth century Imperial campaigns in Italy were less based on feudal levies, than on the hiring of mercenaries, greatly increasing the costs of warfare.⁷³ Moreover, military action alone was not enough. Allies had to be won and rewarded. The payment of specified sums of money became a feature of increasing regularity in the treaties between medieval rulers, and they also featured in the alliances between Frederick and several German princes and Italian towns. Under these circumstances, 30,000 marks were a prize which could not be set aside easily, and we should not be surprised to see that most of the surviving evidence for contacts between the Imperial and the English court is concerned with Isabella's dowry. This appears to have caused some embarrassment to the King of England. In June 1236 Henry III asked for a postponement.⁷⁴ However, he seems to have had little success as, in August, he requested Gregory IX's help in extracting sufficient funds from his Irish subjects.⁷⁵ In late April 1237 Henry put all financial transactions on hold, until 10,000 marks owed to Frederick for the previous Easter term had been paid.⁷⁶ He even had to allow Frederick's proctors to oversee the collection of funds in Ireland. In fact, the financial difficulties the King of England faced during these years led to an important concession. In January 1237 Henry III at last confirmed Magna Carta.⁷⁷ In exchange,

⁶⁷ *CR* 1237-42, 30.

⁶⁸ *CLR* 1226-40, 365.

⁶⁹ Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 85.

⁷⁰ *Constitutiones*, nr. 206.

⁷¹ *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, *MGH SS* xviii, 479. However, this statement could have been influenced by later events, as Frederick's improper relations with Greeks and Saracens formed part of the standard set of accusations levelled against him in 1239 and after 1245.

⁷² *RI*, nr. 2375a, for a general discussion of the sources.

⁷³ For a general discussion, although mostly centring on Frederick Barbarossa's reign, Karl-Friedrich Krieger, 'Obligatory military service and the use of mercenaries in Imperial military campaigns under the Hohenstaufen Emperors', in: Haverkamp and Vollrath, *England and Germany*, 151-70.

⁷⁴ *TR*, nr. 40.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, nr. 101.

⁷⁶ *CLR* 1225-40, 265; *TR*, nr. 55.

⁷⁷ Holt, *Magna Carta*, 394-5.

he managed to extricate the funds to pay his outstanding debts to Frederick.⁷⁸ The King of England assisted and supported his brother-in-law. He sent troops and money, and he pleaded on his behalf at the *curia*. By doing so, he acted in unison with most of the secular leaders of Western Christendom. Although this also marked a considerable improvement in relations with Frederick, we should not deduce from this that Henry assumed a special position in Frederick's estimation. He was certainly courted, and contacts between the two monarchs became more frequent and intimate, but there is little to distinguish between the way Henry III was treated and how other potential allies fared at Frederick's hand. The Emperor certainly saw his marriage pay the dividends he may have expected, but the question remains to what extent Henry III had come any closer to achieving his aim of a close alliance with the Emperor and against the King of France.

III.2 English ambitions

Although a truce had been agreed in 1235, the English court seems to have hoped that Frederick would join a campaign against the Capetians. In 1236, for instance, Matthew Paris reports that Frederick had requested Richard of Cornwall to come to Vaucouleurs to fight the French.⁷⁹ Considering Matthew's close links with the royal court this may well have been a reflection of the hopes entertained by the King and his government. Henry III certainly continued his efforts to forge closer ties with potential allies against Louis IX. However, he met with various setbacks. In 1237 Robert of Artois married a daughter of the Duke of Brabant,⁸⁰ and another of Louis IX's brothers the heiress of Toulouse.⁸¹ The Duke and Raymond of St Gilles had been at the centre of English diplomacy since Henry's minority. The Duke's French marriage also sealed English efforts at drawing him into a web of English allies on the eastern borders of the Capetian kingdom. Although Raymond had probably had little choice of escaping his daughter's marriage with Alfons of Poitiers, this also indicated that, in the foreseeable future, Toulouse was to pass into Capetian hands, weakening Henry's position even further.

Nonetheless, it was not all gloom for the King of England. To some extent he was able to compensate for his losses by making new friends. In January 1236 the marriage between Eleanor of Provence, daughter of Count Raymond Berengar, and Henry III was celebrated at Westminster.⁸² This brought Henry III into close contact with the Counts of Savoy, an important family in Northern Italy and Imperial Burgundy, with widespread interests across Europe. To some extent this may have

⁷⁸ Maurice Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1961), 73-5, 97-9.

⁷⁹ *CM*, III, 340.

⁸⁰ William de Nangis, *Gesta*, 524.

⁸¹ *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, RHGF 21, 691.

⁸² *Annals of Burton*, AM, I, 253; *Annals of Waverley*, AM, II, 316.

been an attempt to counter recent French successes.⁸³ After all, Louis IX had married Margarete of Provence, Henry III's sister-in-law, in 1234. More importantly, through this union Henry III gained the advice of a family which was more aware of the structures and under-currents of European politics than anyone at the English court.⁸⁴ At the same time, we should beware of exaggerating the significance these new links might have. This is illustrated by the marriage between the Countess of Flanders and Thomas of Savoy in 1237.⁸⁵ According to a late-thirteenth-century French source, this had been brought about through pressure from Louis IX. The Countess' chosen spouse had originally been Simon de Montfort. However, the fealty he owed to the King of England made him an unsuitable candidate, and so the Countess had to settle for Thomas of Savoy instead.⁸⁶ Whether the original marriage project had been brokered by Henry III remains unclear, despite the obvious political advantages it might have entailed. At the same time, it seems unlikely that Louis would have favoured Thomas over Simon had he been perceived as a stalwart of English interests. He was Louis' uncle by marriage as much as Henry's. At best, the King of England may have hoped that Thomas would show a greater degree of independence from the French crown than his wife had previously done.

Some of the King's new relatives assumed high positions within the royal administration. Prominent amongst these was William of Savoy, the elect of Valence.⁸⁷ During the 1238 campaign against the Lombards he had been one of the leaders of the English contingent.⁸⁸ However, his untimely death in 1239 meant that his military leadership and political skills had little influence on the further development of relations between England and the Empire.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, his career can help to illustrate both the opportunities and the dangers Henry's Savoyard connection carried with it. This is best exemplified by the events surrounding the schism of Liège.⁹⁰ In 1238 the chapter split over the election of a new Bishop, with factions centring around Otto, the provost of Aachen, and William of Savoy. The political situation in the area at the time is important. It has been suggested that Thomas, the new Count of Flanders, could have had a hand in this election, as he and

⁸³ Eugene L. Cox, *The Eagles of Savoy: the house of Savoy in the thirteenth century* (Princeton, 1974), 44.

⁸⁴ Stacey, *Politics*, 182.

⁸⁵ *Annales Laubienses*, MGH SS iv, 26; *Annales Aquicintini*, MGH SS xvi, 504.

⁸⁶ *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, RHGF xxi, 619.

⁸⁷ For his ecclesiastical career, although with some inaccuracies: Jules Chevalier, *Quarante années de l'histoire des évêques de Valence au moyen âge: Guillaume et Philippe de Savoie (1226 à 1267)* (Paris, 1889), 3-41; for relations with the Savoyards in general: cf. references in Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*.

⁸⁸ *CM*, III, 485-6, 491-2.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, III, 623.

⁹⁰ For a detailed analysis of events, Peter Thorau, 'Territorialpolitik und fürstlicher Ehrgeiz am Niederrhein zur Zeit Kaiser Friedrichs II. und König Konrads IV.: das Lütticher Schisma von 1238', in: Klaus Herbers, Hans Henning Kortüm and Carlo Servatius (ed.), *Ex ipsis rerum documentis: Beiträge zur Mediävistik. FS H. Zimmermann* (Sigmaringen, 1991), 523-46, passim.

the late Bishop had been close allies.⁹¹ More interestingly, the nearby Bishop of Cambrai, Wido of Laon, had once been chancellor of the university of Paris, and could thus be viewed as a pillar of French influence in the region.⁹² Powicke suggests that William's election had been a compensation for Henry's failure to install his uncle in the see of Winchester.⁹³ Having a faithful relative controlling an area of key strategic importance just across the Channel, and bordering France, had obvious advantages. This assumption is however, open to two major criticisms. First, there is little evidence to suggest Henry III's involvement. The closest we have is a letter from Otto, provost of Aachen, written on behalf of a clerk of the Duke of Brabant, Henry de Rumenham. Henry was urged to grant the clerk what he had long been promised. At best, this implies that the King of England was not viewed as someone hostile to Otto's candidacy. Otherwise the provost would have been a most unsuitable choice for intercessor. In addition we should not forget that he had been one of Frederick's envoys to England, as had other members of his family. Even Matthew Paris, someone who would not normally let pass an opportunity to comment on the King's patronage of his foreign favourites, records no involvement.⁹⁴ More importantly, as Otto was the candidate supported by Frederick II, it seems unlikely that Henry III would have willingly opposed the Emperor. After all, this would have meant throwing away any benefits he may have gained from sending troops and money assist Frederick in his Italian campaigns. Nonetheless, this underlines the ambiguous role played by the King's Savoyard relatives. Henry's Provençal marriage certainly opened up new channels of influence, he gained the expertise and advice of a family with unrivalled connections across Europe. At the same time, this also meant that he was drawn into conflicts and rivalries which stood in direct opposition to what he was hoping to achieve. More than before, he was forced to perform a precarious balancing act between the various factions, ambitions and goals of those close to him and his undertakings.

Henry III's unwillingness to challenge the Emperor is further illustrated by the affair of Peter Saracenus. In June 1238 Gregory IX had written to Frederick, and demanded the immediate release of Peter Saracenus, whom he described as an envoy from the King of England, unlawfully imprisoned by the Emperor.⁹⁵ In July, Frederick responded and declared that Peter would not be freed, as he had been trying to sow discord between the Emperor, the Pope and the King of England.⁹⁶ No evidence survives which could illuminate the nature of Peter's alleged crimes. However, there is little doubt as to his close relations with England. Peter, descendant

⁹¹ Cox, *Eagles*, 70.

⁹² Kienast, *Die deutschen Fürsten*, II, 124.

⁹³ Powicke, *Henry III*, 270-1.

⁹⁴ In 1239, for instance, Matthew was to blame the outbreak of a war between the counts of Toulouse and Provence on Thomas of Flanders: *CM IV*, 19-24.

⁹⁵ *Epistolae*, I, 730.

⁹⁶ *AI*, I, nr. 351.

of a noble Roman family which had numbered Innocent III's seneschal amongst its members,⁹⁷ had been employed as Henry III's proctor at the *curia* since the days of Honorius III.⁹⁸ Only in March 1238 the King had written to Gregory IX about business which Peter was to conduct on his behalf.⁹⁹ Peter and his family also received lavish rewards from the royal court. Peter himself was awarded an annual fee of £40,¹⁰⁰ his son John held a benefice in Norfolk,¹⁰¹ and his son Peter another in the diocese of Bath.¹⁰² Henry III, however, does not appear to have been overly concerned about his proctor's imprisonment. To my knowledge no evidence survives to suggest any efforts at helping Peter. The only reference to the affair is made by Matthew Paris, who takes a dim view of Peter's character, accusing him of trying to dupe the King of England into paying his ransom.¹⁰³ The *Annals of Dunstable* only mention the capture of Peter and his son John, and their release within a year.¹⁰⁴ No letters to the Emperor survive, no envoys were sent. This seems unusual, but it may serve to illustrate Henry's unwillingness to alienate Frederick. As little as William of Valence had been able to count on the King's support in pursuing his ambitions in Liège, so Peter was not able to expect much help from his English employer. In the end this did little to help Frederick's affairs: among the reasons given for his excommunication in 1239 was Peter's imprisonment.¹⁰⁵

In general, English diplomacy during these years was reactive. No major initiatives emanated from Henry's court. He confined himself to complying with the Emperor's wishes and demands, assisting him in Lombardy, and lending him his support with the papacy. Henry may have realised that there was little hope that Frederick would involve himself in major projects as long as he had not satisfactorily dealt with the Lombards and the Holy Land. In this respect, these years differ little from the pattern which had become evident ever since Frederick's return from the Holy Land. Nonetheless, some subtle changes can be observed, and in other areas the structure of Anglo-German relations underwent a transformation which was to remain in place until the Emperor's death in 1250. Henry III's old allies, the Dukes of Brunswick and Brabant or the Archbishop of Cologne, make only a scarce appearance. Although they were not abandoned, they did not receive the same degree of attention as they had done previously. The King and his court concentrated their efforts on the Emperor. In the past he had thwarted Henry's efforts, and it was clear that he alone could give the King of England the support and assistance he required. Frederick's marriage to Isabella Plantagenet had opened up the prospect that this was

⁹⁷ Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, II, 597.

⁹⁸ *TR*, nr. 30-33; *DD*, mrs. 25, 121, 182-3, 190, 192, 203; *CPR 1232-47*, 147.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹⁰⁰ *CLR 1226-40*, 281, 287, 315, 371, 416.

¹⁰¹ *CPR 1232-47*, 190. Further grants in *CR 1234-7*, 68, 145, 235, 257, 439.

¹⁰² *CPR 1232-47*, 412.

¹⁰³ *CM*, III, 526.

¹⁰⁴ *Annals of Dunstable, AM*, III, 148.

¹⁰⁵ *CM*, III, 558-9.

now within reach, and there was no need any longer to rely on those who in the past had been used to circumvent or obstruct Frederick's policies. The degree of support which the Emperor now received from the King of England certainly superseded anything that had been given since the beginning of Henry's reign. Nonetheless, this only placed the King in the same rank of most other European monarchs. It remained to be seen whether, at some point in the future, Frederick would be willing and able to return Henry's favours in kind.

Chapter IV
The Snake and the Dragon¹
(1239-45)

In March 1239 Gregory IX excommunicated Frederick II.² The Emperor responded by drawing on the contacts and allies he had won since his return from crusade. He requested military support, tried to form political alliances, sought to resist papal propaganda and to hinder Gregory's preparations for war. In the case of England this meant that Henry III found himself pushed between the Emperor and the Holy See. He was unwilling and unable to challenge the Pope directly. At the same time, the King relied on Frederick's support for his brother's crusade in Palestine, and he had not yet given up hopes for a military recovery of Poitou and Normandy. Frederick, in turn, became even more reluctant to challenge Louis IX.³ Once again, events interfered with his plans and ambitions. Just when it seemed as if Frederick would at last be able to lend Henry the support he so eagerly expected, the Emperor found himself facing a challenge which, this time, was far more serious than it had been ten years earlier. The degree of Gregory's hostility as well as the range of his initiatives did not allow for a repeat of the coup Frederick had landed in 1229. It is within this context that Henry III will have to be considered, his aims and ambitions. However far from worsening,⁴ relations with the Emperor remained steady. At the same time, it would be mistaken to view this as being based solely on the loyalty of the King of England and his perennial hopes for the Hohenstaufens' support against Louis IX. Although such reasoning should not be dismissed too easily, we will also see that the King of England's attitude towards the papal-Imperial conflict differed little from that of his contemporaries.

IV.1 Searching for allies - the political background

Immediately after pronouncing Frederick's excommunication, the Pope is said to have begun a search for candidates to replace him as Emperor. Matthew Paris gives his version of a papal letter allegedly addressed to Louis IX. Gregory stated that the need had arisen to find a suitable man to replace Frederick, therefore Robert of Artois, the King's brother, should be made Emperor. However, the proposal was rejected.⁵ A similar story is given by an annalist from Cologne, writing around 1260. James of Praeneste was sent to the King of France and other rulers to offer the kingdom of the

¹ A comment allegedly made by Innocent IV, referring to Henry III's complaints about the actions of papal commissioners in England: '. . . contrito enim vel pacificato dracone [i. e. Frederick II], cito serpentuli [i. e. Henry III] conculcabuntur': *CM*, IV, 423.

² *Ibid.*, III, 533-6.

³ Berg, 'Imperium und Regna', 34-5.

⁴ Arnold, 'Germany and England', 83.

⁵ *CM*, III, 624-7.

Romans. However, Louis IX refused.⁶ A late-thirteenth-century French source mentions on the occasion of the death of the King of Denmark that his son had been offered the Imperial crown after Louis IX had refused it.⁷ It is difficult to decide to what extent these reports were based on the events after 1245, when Innocent IV did indeed invite various European princes to replace the Hohenstaufen in Germany and Sicily.⁸ In the case of the French chronicler, it also has to be taken into account that he was writing shortly after Philip III's failed candidacy for the Imperial throne in 1273.⁹ The surviving documentary evidence records a papal mission to France, but remains inconclusive as to its purpose. On 21 October 1239 the Pope wrote to Louis IX and his mother, Blanche of Castile, informing them of the many dangers besetting the Church. Gregory praised Louis for his interest in the affairs of the Holy Land, but then continued to state that it would be even more meritorious would he fight those, like Frederick II, who attack the Church from within.¹⁰ Blanche was told that Bishop James de Praeneste was to be sent as papal legate to France, and was petitioned to give him all the advice and assistance necessary to fight the Emperor.¹¹ However, little mention was made of any attempts at replacing Frederick II. That James de Praeneste was sent as papal legate to all the princes is also mentioned by Richard of San Germano, a notary and chronicler from Sicily, who dates the beginning of his mission to October 1239,¹² and by William de Nangis, who, however, describes his mission simply as promulgating the Emperor's excommunication.¹³ Even when taking into account that this episode may have been coloured by the writers' knowledge of later events, the anecdote helps to exemplify the pressures Frederick found himself exposed to. Gregory did not stop at condemning the Emperor, but aimed at inflicting the worst possible political damage.

He soon carried the struggle into all of Frederick's domains. Unlike the Emperor's first excommunication in 1227, the second had at least some impact on Germany. The Archbishop of Mainz, recently appointed guardian for Frederick's infant son Conrad IV, assumed leadership of the anti-Imperial forces.¹⁴ The newly elected Archbishop of Cologne, Conrad of Hochstaden,¹⁵ too, was forced into the

⁶ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V*, MGH SS xxii, 531.

⁷ *Annales Alberici Trium Fontium*, RHGF xxi, 625.

⁸ It should be noted that Matthew did not start writing the parts his chronicle dealing with events after 1236 until after 1246. Hans-Eberhard Hilpert, *Kaiser- und Papstbriefe in den Chronica Maiora des Matthaeus Paris* (Stuttgart, 1981), 30-2.

⁹ Jakob Schwalm (ed.), *Constitutiones et acta publica Imperatorum et regum, 1273-1298*, MGH Leges iv, 3 (Hanover, 1904-6), nr. 618.

¹⁰ *Layettes*, II, nr. 2835.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, nr. 2836.

¹² *Ryccardus de S Germano*, MGH SS xix, 378.

¹³ William de Nangis, *Gesta*, RHGF xx, 330.

¹⁴ Goetz, 'Friedrich II. und Deutschland', 30.

¹⁵ Maria Kettering, 'Die Territorialpolitik des Kölner Erzbischofs Konrad von Hochstaden (1238-1261)', *Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins* xxvi (1951), 1-84, for the wider background.

anti-Imperial camp.¹⁶ By 1240, however, most of this opposition seems to have been overcome. In May of that year, the German bishops and princes wrote to Pope and Emperor, urging them to make peace.¹⁷ They also announced an embassy led by the master of the Teutonic Knights, Herman of Salza, a reliable ally of the Emperor, to press for negotiations.¹⁸ By 1241, the situation had changed again. That year, the Archbishop of Mainz led troops against Frederick's partisans,¹⁹ and in 1244, while dealings continued between Pope and Emperor, he travelled his diocese to whip up support against Frederick.²⁰ However, it was not until after Frederick's deposition in 1245, that these efforts began to cause the Hohenstaufen serious problems. Although a number of prelates opposed Frederick, the majority of secular princes remained loyal. For instance, the Archbishop of Mainz's successor as guardian for Conrad was Henry Raspe, Landgrave of Thuringia, who did not desert the Emperor's cause until 1246, when he was elected anti-King.

In the kingdom of Burgundy, however, the Pope soon found willing allies. In September 1239, Frederick opened proceedings against Raymond Berengar of Provence. He was accused of allying himself with the Emperor's foes in the city of Arles and of expelling Frederick's vicar in Arles and Vienne.²¹ This was followed by attempts to forge an alliance against him, including the Count of Toulouse,²² and Avignon, which was ordered to wage war on Raymond.²³ Initially, this alliance proved successful. In December, Raymond of Toulouse was awarded lands seized from the Count of Provence,²⁴ and in August 1240 a candidate supported by the Count was recognised as their *podesta* by the commune of Avignon.²⁵ Furthermore, the King of France was asked for help against the Count of Provence.²⁶ Raymond Berengar, in turn, was quick to realise the potential of a closer alliance with the papacy, and in November 1239 he promised to support the Pope against Frederick in Lombardy, Italy or Apulia.²⁷ This papal connection is also referred to by a late thirteenth century French source. In response to unrest caused by heretics in Provence, Bishop James of Praeneste had called a council where it was decided that a French army should be used to fight the opponents of Raymond Berengar.²⁸ Louis'

¹⁶ Matthias Werner, 'Prälatenschulden und hohe Politik im 13. Jahrhundert', in: Hanna Vollrath and Stefan Weinfurter (ed.), *Köln: Stadt und Bistum im Reich des Mittelalters. FS Odilo Engels* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1993), 511-70, passim, and at 545-551 for Conrad.

¹⁷ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 225, 228, 229 for the prelates, 226, 227, 230-232 for the secular princes.

¹⁸ *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 33.

¹⁹ *Annales Zwifaltenses Maiores*, MGH SS x, 60; *Annales Sancti Truberti*, MGH SS xvii, 294; *CM*, IV 188.

²⁰ *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 34.

²¹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 222.

²² *Ibid.*, V, 403-4.

²³ *HB*, V, 404-6.

²⁴ *Layettes*, II, nr. 2842.

²⁵ *HB*, V, 1022-3.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 406-7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, V, 488-9.

²⁸ *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, RHGF xxi, 628.

involvement soon put an end to Imperial successes.²⁹ Early in 1241, the Count of Toulouse had to succumb to the needs of self-preservation and declared that he would help and assist the Church against the Emperor.³⁰ This did not mean the end of his relations with Frederick. After the election of Innocent IV, he was one of the Emperor's proctors in negotiating with the new Pope.³¹ By that time, the Counts of Toulouse and Provence had also overcome their divisions and fought alongside Henry III against Louis IX.³² At the time, however, this presented a serious setback to Frederick. One of his most reliable agents in Languedoc had been forced to submit to papal pressure, while the King of France used his power not to assist the Emperor and his claims, but those of Gregory IX and his supporters.

Another area in which Gregory IX made progress against the Emperor was the Holy Land.³³ In 1243 Conrad, Frederick's son with Isabella/Yolanda, came of age, and was supposed to take over the government of his realm. However, the Emperor refused to acknowledge this, and continued to dominate the affairs of Jerusalem. The *baillie*, for instance, appointed by Conrad was Thomas Count of Acerra, a Sicilian aristocrat closely associated with the Emperor. However, Frederick's control over the kingdom had been severely weakened. The authority of the Imperial *baillie* was increasingly confined to Tyre, which, too, was lost to the rebels in 1243. Gregory lent those opposing Frederick his full support. Papal mandates were sent to the military orders, the Italian communities in Acre, and to Genoa, exhorting them to fight Frederick. When the rebels decided to appoint their own *baillie* rather than accepting Conrad IV's nominee, their decision to elect the Queen of Cyprus was confirmed by the Holy See.³⁴ Effectively, although Conrad continued to issue edicts and to appoint officials for the Latin Kingdom until his death in 1254,³⁵ this put an end to Hohenstaufen rule in Palestine. Gregory IX had thus seriously weakened Frederick's position in Burgundy and the Holy Land. Inroads had been made into Germany, and a number of Italian communes had been won back from the Emperor.³⁶

The *curia* also managed to prevent a series of potentially disastrous alliances. Most important amongst these were plans for a marriage between Conrad IV and a Capetian princess, and between Frederick II and the heiress of Austria. Neither

²⁹ Pierre Belperon, *La Croisade contre Les Albigeois et l'Union du Languedoc a la France (1209-1249)* (Paris, 1967), 427-31.

³⁰ HB, V, 1101-2.

³¹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 248.

³² CM, IV, 190.

³³ The following is based on the account given by Riley-Smith, *The Feudal Nobility*, 207-13.

³⁴ *Andrae Danduli ducis Venetiarum Chronica per extensum descripta*, ed. Ester Pastorello, *RIS* 12,I (Bologna, 1925-40), 301; for the cross-connections between Cyprus and the Holy Land: Jean Richard, 'Pairie d'Orient latin: les quattres baronnies des royaimes de Jèrusalem et de Chypre', *Revue Historique de droit Francais et etranger* (1950), 67-88, repr. in his *Orient et Occident au Moyen Age: contacts et relations (XIIe-XVe s.)* (London, 1976).

³⁵ Mayer, *Die Kanzlei der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, (Hanover, 1996), 366-67 mentions that Walter of Ocre held the title 'chancellor of Jerusalem' until 1259. Also: Heinz Hartmann, 'Die Urkunden Konrads IV.', *AfD* xviii (1944), 38-163, at 135.

³⁶ *Cronica di Antonio Godi Vicentino*, ed. Giovanni Soranzo, *RIS* 8,II (Citta di Castello, 1908), 13.

undertaking seems to have proceeded beyond a preliminary stage. In June 1243 Walter of Odra was sent to France to arrange a marriage between Frederick's son Conrad IV and a daughter of Louis IX, but no further evidence survives concerning the progress of negotiations.³⁷ Had the project been successful, it would have greatly strengthened Frederick's hand in ongoing negotiations with Innocent IV. As we will see, Henry III remained unwilling to commit himself, while the rulers of Eastern Europe urged the two rivals to reach a settlement so, as their resources be more profitably spent on combating the Mongols. Should Louis have abandoned his stance of precarious neutrality, the pressure on Gregory IX and Innocent IV to end Frederick's excommunication would have become well nigh irresistible. The project also underlines the King of France's key role in the papal-Imperial conflict. Both Innocent and Frederick looked to him for support and acceptance. Frederick's hopes for an Austrian marriage did not proceed much further.³⁸ Deliberations to turn the duchy into a kingdom, promulgated in June 1245, were probably connected to his marital plans,³⁹ and were mooted at about the same time when the Emperor's proctors opened negotiations with the Duke. If this was to sway the Babenbergs into supporting his endeavours, the Frederick was to be disappointed. His excommunication and - by then - imminent deposition had their desired effect. If Matthew Paris is to be believed, the prospective spouse was so horrified at the idea of being married to a persistent apostate that she steadfastly refused to consent.⁴⁰ A similar connection is made by a later Italian chronicler, who describes the project as faltering after Innocent had informed the Duke of Frederick's ongoing contumacy.⁴¹ Other projects met with equally poor success. Amongst these were plans for a Provençal marriage, also in 1245, which we will deal with further below.⁴² However, it was not all doom. In 1242, the Emperor married off one of his illegitimate daughters to Vatatzes, the Greek Emperor of Nicaea.⁴³ This provided Frederick with an important ally on the eastern flank of Venice, one of the leading supporters of both the *curia* and the Lombard League.⁴⁴ More importantly, he managed to arrange a truce between Baldwin of Constantinople and Vatatzes.⁴⁵ As this provided a much needed breathing period for the beleaguered

³⁷ HB, VI, 95-8.

³⁸ Hausmann, 'Friedrich II und Österreich', 268-74.

³⁹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 261.

⁴⁰ CM, IV, 474-5.

⁴¹ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, MGH SS xviii, 217.

⁴² Chapter V.

⁴³ CM, IV, 299, 357; Srelian Brezeanu, 'Notice sur les rapports de Frédéric II de Hohenstaufen avec Jean III Vatatzès', *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Europeennes*, xii (1974), 583-5; C. Marinesco, 'Du nouveau sur Constance de Hohenstaufen, impératrice de Nicée', *Byzantion* i (1924), 451-9.

⁴⁴ For instance, the *podesta* of Milan, captured and executed in 1237, was the doge of Venice's son: *Andrae Danduli*, 296. Also, in 1231, the doge of Venice had allied himself with Frederick's estranged father-in-law, Jean de Brienne, leader of the papal forces which had previously attacked Sicily: G. L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas (ed.), *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Rechtsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, 3 vols., (Vienna, 1856-7), II, nr. 277; H. Chone, *Die Beziehungen Kaiser Friedrichs II. zu den Seestädten Venedig, Pisa, Genua* (Berlin, 1902).

⁴⁵ Benjamin Hendrickx, *Regestes des Empereurs Latins de Constantinople (1204-1261/72)* (Thessalonike, 1988), nr. 212.

Latin Empire, it may not come as a surprise that Emperor Baldwin was amongst those arguing most persistently in favour of lifting Frederick's excommunication.⁴⁶ we thus see the Emperor suffer a series of grave setbacks, and in danger of political and diplomatic isolation. Lacking a symbolic gesture of comparable impact to the liberation of Jerusalem, he found it increasingly difficult to counter the *curia's* diplomatic offensive.

Frederick soon realised the dangers posed by papal propaganda, and quickly tried to counteract it.⁴⁷ From the beginning, the Imperial chancery churned out pamphlets which tried to reject and disqualify accusations levied against Frederick. Thanks to the efforts of Matthew Paris, most of the letters addressed to the English court survive. One such extant epistle is the one sent to Richard of Cornwall in late April 1239.⁴⁸ Frederick's excommunication was declared to be a rejection of God and justice.⁴⁹ While the Emperor was willing to prove the orthodoxy of his beliefs, the Pope refused to listen to him.⁵⁰ In fact, claimed Frederick, as Gregory was allying himself with the Lombards who were known harbourers of heresy, he himself had become a heretic and friend of heretics.⁵¹ In a letter to the citizens of Rome from April 1239, also surviving in Matthew Paris, these charges were elaborated further. Frederick called the Pope a blasphemer who falsely accused others of blasphemy.⁵² Simultaneously, letters were addressed to rulers across Europe, giving point by point responses to the Emperor's alleged crimes.⁵³ These were often combined with specific requests. In October 1239, for instance, the barons of England were petitioned to prevent papal legates from collecting funds against Frederick.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the Emperor demonstrated his own orthodoxy by doing publicly what he had been accused of not doing. Instances include the privileges for the Hospitallers in the kingdom of Arles - one of the points in Gregory's bull of excommunication had been the Emperor's persecution of the military orders.⁵⁵ Similarly, Imperial support was

⁴⁶ *CM*, IV, 371, 431, 447.

⁴⁷ Frederick's response has been analysed by Helene Wieruszowski, *Vom Imperium zum nationalen Königtum: Vergleichende Studien über die publizistischen Kämpfe Kaiser Friedrichs II. und König Philips des Schönen mit der Kurie* (Munich/Berlin, 1933), and need not be repeated here. Also Karl Hampe, 'Über die Flugschriften zum Lyoner Konzil von 1245', *Historische Vierteljahresschrift* xi (1908), 297-313; Hans Martin Schaller, 'Die Antwort Gregors IX. auf Petrus de Vineia I,1', *DA* xi (1955), 140-65; the same, 'Das letzte Rundschreiben Gregors IX. gegen Friedrich II.', in: Peter Classen (ed.), *FS Percy Ernst Schramm*, 2 vols., (Wiesbaden, 1964), 309-21.

⁴⁸ *CM*, III, 575-589.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, III, 576.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, III, 579.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, III, 585.

⁵² *Ibid.*, III, 547.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, III, 590. For a broad overview of the techniques and typology of medieval propaganda: Robert Brentano, 'Western Civilization: the Middle Ages', in: Harold D. Lasswell, Daniel Lerner and Hans Speier (ed.), *Propaganda and Communication in World History*, 3 vols., (Honolulu, 1974), i, 552-95.

⁵⁴ *HB*, V, 467-9.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 323-6. Relevant for the use which both Emperor and Pope made of the military orders in general: Marie Louise Bulst-Thiele, 'Templer in königlichen und päpstlichen Diensten' in: Peter Classen and Peter Seibert (ed.), *FS Percy Ernst Schramm*, 2 vols., (Wiesbaden, 1964), 289-308. For the possible background to the Pope's complaints and the orders' role in the struggle between the two:

promised to those preparing for crusades in the Holy Land, while the Pope was blamed for the Emperor's inability to attend, as Gregory was wont to invade the kingdoms of absentee crusaders.⁵⁶ Not Frederick, but Gregory endangered Christendom. Similar arguments were used during the Mongol attacks on Eastern Europe in 1241/2,⁵⁷ and after the fall of Jerusalem to Khwarizim Turks in 1244.⁵⁸ Frederick thus emphasised the need for a peaceful settlement with Gregory, and shifted the blame for the ongoing conflict onto the Holy See. Also, letters from those who could testify to Frederick's orthodoxy were used and distributed. Matthew Paris recounts how Walter of Ocre tried to convince the English clergy in 1244 not to send funds to the Pope by reading out letters from the Latin Emperor of Constantinople and the Count of Toulouse, testifying to the Emperor's orthodoxy and his devotion for the Church.⁵⁹ A fourth form of response were letters which outlined to various rulers how successful Frederick's campaigns in Italy were, like the one sent to Ferdinand of Castile in September 1240, in which he gave an account of his recent victories.⁶⁰ These efforts served a variety of purposes. They allowed Frederick to claim the orthodoxy of his beliefs, they turned Gregory's and Innocent's propaganda against those who had designed it, and they emphasised that papal claims of the Emperor's imminent demise were premature. This may have been considered a necessary step towards enlisting the support of Frederick's fellow-monarchs. For, unless other rulers intervened on his behalf with the *curia*, the Pope was unlikely to agree to a peaceful settlement. The conflict, thus, soon involved Europe, from England and Scotland to the Spanish peninsula and the Balkans. This was the background against which English relations with the Empire have to be considered.

IV.2 The European Response

It seems as if contemporaries believed that Frederick's excommunication was only temporary and that the underlying conflict could be resolved quickly. If Matthew Paris is to be believed, the quest for a settlement involved the upper echelons of the papal administration. In late 1239, a papal legate is said to have urged a truce with Frederick, and a general council to be held the following Easter.⁶¹ A similar account is given by the *Annals of Dunstable*: the patriarch of Jerusalem had been working to

A.J. Forey, 'The military orders and Holy War against Christians in the thirteenth century', *EHR* civ (1989), 1-24.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 359-62, 396-8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, V, 1139-43 [to the senate of Rome], 1143-5 [to the King of Hungary]; *CM*, IV, 112-9 [to Henry III].

⁵⁸ *CM*, III, 300-5.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 371.

⁶⁰ *HB*, V, 1047. Also, the letter to Henry III from May 1241, recounting not only the successful capture of the prelates, but also that of Faenza: *CM*, IV, 126.

⁶¹ *CM*, IV, 59.

ensure peace, but without success. However, at the instigation of John de Columbna, a peace proposal had been accepted, and a general council was convened.⁶² John broke with the Pope in 1241 over his reluctance to negotiate with Frederick, and is said to have urged Frederick to come to Rome.⁶³ Documentary evidence survives for the proposed truce. However, in September 1240 Frederick II rejected the idea as a ploy, designed to give the Lombards a respite before they began to wage war on him again. Instead, the Emperor raised the stakes and declared his willingness to negotiate for a proper peace, but refused to include the Lombards in any such arrangement.⁶⁴ He must have been aware that this demand was unlikely to be accepted by Gregory IX and his followers. Similarly, the general council never convened. Frederick viewed it as yet another attempt to further war, not peace.⁶⁵ He warned the prelates planning to participate that they would be viewed as enemies of the Empire and dealt with accordingly.⁶⁶ In the end the Imperial fleet, together with that of Pisa, intercepted those sailing to Rome, and imprisoned them.⁶⁷ Although this was to endanger Frederick's relations with Louis IX, the most immediate danger had been averted. At the same time, as far as intransigence was concerned, and the unwillingness to compromise, the Emperor did not stay far behind his papal foe.

Diplomatic efforts to restore peace between Frederick and Gregory won an added sense of urgency in 1241, when some German princes tried to organise a crusade against the Mongols.⁶⁸ Duke Frederick of Austria and Styria, under the threat of an imminent invasion, had written to the Kings of Spain, England and France and asked them to come in person to fight the Mongols.⁶⁹ He also seems to have approached the Pope. Gregory responded by expressing his commiserations concerning the Duke's recent misfortunes, but only gave an evasive answer as to the prospect of peace with Frederick: the Emperor would be taken back into the Church once he submitted and complied with its demands.⁷⁰ The King of Hungary, the main victim of the Mongol onslaught, was equally unsuccessful. Frederick stated that he would be unable to help as long as the Pope waged war on him,⁷¹ and Gregory gave him the same response he had given Duke Frederick.⁷² In fact, the Mongol invasion soon began to feature in anti-Imperial propaganda. Matthew Paris, for instance,

⁶² *Annals of Dunstable, AM*, III, 154-5.

⁶³ Ryccardus de S Germano, *Cronica, MGH SS* xix, 381.

⁶⁴ *CM*, IV, 65-8.

⁶⁵ *HB*, V, 1075-77.

⁶⁶ *CM*, IV, 68-71.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 120-5.

⁶⁸ *Continuatio Garstensis, MGH SS* ix, 597; Peter Jackson, 'The crusade against the Mongols (1241)', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* xlii (1991), 1-18, passim. For the wider background: David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford, 1986), 175-98.

⁶⁹ *HB*, V, 1216-8.

⁷⁰ *Epistolae*, I, nr. 823.

⁷¹ *HB*, V, 1143-5. See also: Z.J. Kosztolnyik, *Hungary in the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1996), 151-216; for the impact this had on contemporary attitudes in Hungary: *Rogerii Carmen Miserabile*, ed. Ladislaus Juhász, *SRH* ii (Budapest, 1938), 543-88; *Planctus destructionis regni Hungariae per Tartaros*, ed. Ladislaus Juhász, *ibid.*, 589-98.

⁷² *Epistolae*, I, nr. 826.

reports rumours that it had in fact been the Emperor who had called the Tartars to assist him in fighting the Pope.⁷³ Far from uniting the forces of Latin Christendom against a common foe, the Mongol attacks were used to exacerbate existing differences.

Gregory's death in 1241 gave rise to hopes that the conflict might at last be resolved peacefully. In a letter to Henry III, Frederick wrote that, as the man who had brought disunity and war to Christendom had died, the prospect of peace had arisen. Once a new Pope had been chosen, the Emperor expected to be once again accepted as the faithful son and protector of the Church.⁷⁴ However, when Innocent IV was elected in June 1243,⁷⁵ he immediately confirmed Frederick's excommunication.⁷⁶ The Emperor, though, remained undeterred, and sent proctors to the *curia* to sue for peace nonetheless.⁷⁷ The same year Frederick also addressed letters to the Emperor of Constantinople,⁷⁸ Louis IX,⁷⁹ the Duke of Brabant⁸⁰ and other rulers,⁸¹ assuring them that, with the new Pope, peace could be arranged. Again, Frederick proved more optimistic than Innocent. In August 1243 the Pope declared that it was impossible that Frederick's envoys would be allowed into his presence, as they had intercourse with excommunicates, and were thus themselves excommunicates.⁸² Moreover, the *podestas* of Treviso and Faventia, leading exponents of the Lombard League, were assured that Innocent would not enter into a peace with the Emperor, unless they agreed and were part of it.⁸³ The Pope would have been aware that these conditions were unlikely to be accepted by Frederick. Nonetheless, negotiations continued.⁸⁴ In March 1244 demands for the Emperor's submission to the Pope were made public. The conditions were stringent and their acceptance by the Emperor testifies to the desperation with which Frederick was searching for peace. For instance, he had to take back into his favour all those who had rebelled against him, and had to accept a papal judgement on how the Lombard question was to be dealt with. Furthermore,

⁷³ *CM*, IV, 119-20. For a curious response to these accusations, probably emanating from Frederick's court: Charles Burnett, 'An apocryphal letter from the Arabic philosopher al-Kindi to Theodore, Frederick II's astrologer, concerning Gog and Magog, the enclosed nations, and the scourge of the Mongols', *Viator* xv (1984), 151-67, at 155-7.

⁷⁴ *HB*, V, 1165-7.

⁷⁵ Invaluable for the events leading up to his election: Karl Hampe, 'Ein ungedruckter Bericht über das Konklave von 1241 im römischen Septizonium', *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 1913, 1-34.

⁷⁶ *CM*, IV, 256.

⁷⁷ *Ryccardus de S Germano, MGH SS* xix, 384. *Constitutiones*, nr. 239. For a secondary coverage: Carl Rodenberg, 'Die Friedensverhandlungen zwischen Friedrich II. und Innocenz IV., 1243-1244', in: *Festgabe für Gerold Meyer von Knonau* (Zürich, 1913), 165-204.

⁷⁸ *HB*, VI, 90-2.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, VI, 95-8.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, VI, 98-9.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, VI, 93-5; James Ross Sweeney, 'Unbekannte Briefe Kaiser Friedrichs II. im Codex Indianensis der Werke Senecas', *DA* xlv (1989), 83-108, nr. 1.

⁸² *Constitutiones*, nr. 241.

⁸³ *Registres Innocent IV*, nrs. 127, 136, 158.

⁸⁴ August Folz, *Kaiser Friedrich II. und Papst Innocenz IV. : ihr Kampf in den Jahren 1244 und 1245* (Strasbourg, 1905), *passim*, for a slightly old-fashioned, but detailed account of these negotiations and the history of events immediately prior to the council of Lyon.

although Frederick had to forgive all acts committed since the outbreak of hostilities by his enemies, the Pope would decide what amendments the Emperor had to make for crimes and outrages committed by himself and his partisans.⁸⁵ Effectively, this put him at Innocent's mercy. Despite that, Frederick seems to have accepted these conditions, as evident in his letters to Conrad⁸⁶ and to Henry III of England.⁸⁷ By June, however, dealings had reached a dead end.⁸⁸ Innocent left Rome, and went first to Citta di Castello and then to Sutri. It seems as if Frederick had begun to lose patience. He declared that he would not comply with the conditions proffered by Innocent's proctors, unless he first received letters of absolution.⁸⁹ In the meantime, Genoa offered the Pope its support should he decide to escape Imperial pressure.⁹⁰ This Innocent accepted, and fled first to Genoa and then Lyon,⁹¹ creating a diplomatic disaster for Frederick. After a year of negotiating and the publicly declared willingness of Innocent IV to take him back into the Church, the Pope had been forced to flee Rome secretly and put himself at the mercy of the Genoese and the King of France. Matthew Paris is our most outspoken source for the events of these years. Although he wrote well after the events he is describing, it is nonetheless obvious how he was trying to cope with the conflicting accounts of Frederick and his actions. All too frequently he was willing to blame papal propaganda, the *curia's* greed and corruption for the Emperor's undertakings. At other times, however, he took a wary stance towards the Hohenstaufen. In Frederick's case this was largely limited to refusing to his imperial titles after his deposition in 1245. Nonetheless, even he found it impossible to understand or excuse the failure of negotiations in 1244, and described the Emperor's actions as motivated by hubris and greed.⁹² To him it was Frederick's unwillingness to show humility which had prolonged the conflict, with all the disastrous consequences it entailed.⁹³ We may assume that he was not alone in his interpretation of events.

Much has been made of Louis IX and his arbitration attempts. He has been contrasted favourably to his brother Charles of Anjou, and has been described as a pillar of righteousness and decency.⁹⁴ However, a major difficulty in assessing the role of Louis IX is that the main near-contemporary source for his involvement was Matthew Paris, who frequently used the King of France to contrast him favourably with his own monarch. Under the year 1240, for instance, he recounts how Louis IX refused to allow the funds collected in France to be brought to Rome. This is

⁸⁵ *Constitutiones*, nr. 245.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, nr. 249.

⁸⁷ *CM*, IV, 332-6.

⁸⁸ *Chronicon marchiae Tarvisinae et Lombardiae*, ed. Luigi A. Botteglia, *RIS* 8, III (Citta di Castello, 1914-6), 16-7.

⁸⁹ *CM*, IV, 354-6.

⁹⁰ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, *MGH SS* xviii, 212-3.

⁹¹ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V*, *MGH SS* xxii, 538-9.

⁹² *CM*, IV, 357.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, iv, 269.

⁹⁴ Kienast, *Deutschland*, 611-3.

immediately followed by complaints of Henry III's unwillingness to take a similar stance.⁹⁵ Another difficulty in using Matthew is that he frequently confuses events. This is exemplified by his version of Louis' alleged reply when Gregory IX offered the Imperial throne to Robert of Artois. The King refused to take action against Frederick, unless his guilt had first been proven before a general council. Also, Louis allegedly continued, he would send envoys to Frederick to test his religious beliefs. These found the Emperor shocked at allegations of heresy, and were convinced of his catholic beliefs.⁹⁶ This is largely a conflation of several events. In March 1239 Frederick suggested to the cardinals that he would be willing to let the differences between him and the Pope be decided before a general council.⁹⁷ Furthermore, in June, the Emperor had sent two bishops to the cardinals, probably to assert the propriety of his actions.⁹⁸ A French source reports that Louis IX had been sending envoys to Pope and Emperor to urge for peace,⁹⁹ and Matthew himself describes how a commission of four bishops, sent by the Pope to the Emperor, became convinced of his innocence and orthodoxy.¹⁰⁰ These events seem to form the various components of the anecdote told by Matthew. We have to keep these twin factors in mind when dealing with the King of France. The St Albans chronicler often got confused by the amount of material he had the opportunity to sift through, and he did so with a purpose which, all too often, was to criticise the actions of Henry III.

However, Matthew is not entirely wrong in stressing Louis' reluctance to get involved in the papal-Imperial conflict.¹⁰¹ Louis IX himself emphasised his neutrality when he asked Frederick II to set free the prelates he had imprisoned in 1241. Louis stated that he had strenuously resisted papal attempts to use the resources of his kingdom against Frederick. However, should the Emperor not desist from detaining French prelates, it might be necessary to reconsider his position.¹⁰² There is no evidence for funds or troops being sent against the Emperor. At the same time, it was not until after he had taken the cross in 1244, that the King began to work actively towards a settlement between Frederick and the Pope.¹⁰³ However, Louis did provide ships for the prelates to attend the council of Lyon,¹⁰⁴ and he tried to utilise the conflict to further his own ends in Languedoc. During the wars between the Counts of Provence and Toulouse, for instance, Louis could use the inability of either Frederick or Gregory to pursue an active policy in Languedoc. The Emperor had to ask him for

⁹⁵ *CM*, IV, 59-60, for Louis IX' reaction, and 60-61 for the comparison with Henry III.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 624-6.

⁹⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 214.

⁹⁸ *Ryccardus de S Germano*, *MGH SS* xix, 377.

⁹⁹ *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, *RHGF* xxi, 623.

¹⁰⁰ *CM*, III, 551.

¹⁰¹ This may not have been unusual. For the difficulties encountered by papal propaganda: G. A. Loud, 'The case of the missing martyrs: Frederick II's war with the Church, 1239-1250', *Studies in Church History* xxx (1993), 141-52.

¹⁰² *HB*, VI, 18-20.

¹⁰³ *Epistolae*, II, nr. 45.

¹⁰⁴ William de Nangis, *Gesta*, *RHG* xx, 331.

support against the Count of Provence, while the papal legate relied on him to attack the Count of Toulouse. This provided a willingly seized opportunity to expand Capetian influence in the region. The King of France used the conflict to favour his own and his dynasty's ambitions. As we have seen, the Count of Toulouse, all too frequently part of conspiracies and confederations directed against the French crown found that even being an imperial vassal did not protect him against the Capetians. However, Louis was not alone in doing so. In September 1239, for instance, the King of Castile had announced to the Pope that he was sending his heir to the Emperor to press his claims to the duchy of Swabia, which he claimed as the inheritance of his deceased wife, a daughter of Philipp of Swabia.¹⁰⁵ He also assured Gregory that this was no abandonment of traditional Castilian loyalty towards the Holy See. In fact, should the Emperor not comply with his demands, Castilian knights would join the papal armies.¹⁰⁶ The King and his son eventually switched sides when, in 1245, Innocent IV declared that he would grant the Infante of Castile all the help he needed, if he could prove his claims.¹⁰⁷ After nearly six years of unsuccessful attempts at mediating, the rulers of Latin Christendom began to accept a continuation of the conflict both as inevitable, and as an opportunity to further their own aims and ambitions. It is worth noting the similarities in the reasoning employed by Ferdinand and Louis IX. The King of Castile kept a precarious balance, but he also saw an opportunity to manifest a rather weak and distant claim which, under more stable circumstances, it would have been impossible to pursue. Louis IX, on the other hand, used the very prominence of his position which truly could tip the balance between Frederick and the *curia* to solicit grants and concessions from both parties. The biggest prize he was to gain was the inheritance of Provence. The conflict thus did provide opportunities as well as challenges. Both Pope and Emperor were in a position in which they were hard pressed to grant favours to those whose allegiance they were trying to win. To some, like the Duke of Austria and the King of Hungary, this proved a disaster. To others, like Louis IX it provided a welcome opportunity to enrich themselves. The question which we will have to address next is as to how Henry III fares in comparison with his contemporaries.

¹⁰⁵ Francesco Giunta, 'Federico II e Ferdinando III di Castiglia', in: Philip Grierson and John Ward Perkins (ed.), *Studies in Italian Medieval History, Papers of the British School at Rome* xxiv (NS xi), (Rome, 1956), 137-41.

¹⁰⁶ HB, V, 545-6.

¹⁰⁷ *Epistolae*, II, nr. 180; HB, VI, 340-2.

IV.3 English Involvement

Right from the start, Henry III and his subjects became embroiled in the rivalry between Pope and Emperor. A chronicle from Cologne reports how Gregory sent a legate to England almost immediately after the Emperor's excommunication. His mission was to muster the financial resources of the English Church for the war against Frederick.¹⁰⁸ The legate's doings became a continuing cause of complaint with Matthew Paris.¹⁰⁹ Other sources, too, commented on the 'thesaurus non modicus' which the legate collected.¹¹⁰ The *Annals of Dunstable* list the sums forthcoming from the diocese of Lincoln: £100 from the dean and chapter, 20 marks from Dunstable itself, and 600 marks from the Bishop of Lincoln and his secular clergy.¹¹¹ However, the cardinal did not stop at collecting funds. The consecration of St Paul's,¹¹² for instance, was used to propagate the Emperor's excommunication.¹¹³ It also seems that the legate was touring various religious houses, probably to oversee the collection of funds, but also to spread the reasons for the Pope's excommunication of Frederick. Matthew Paris, for example, reports that shortly before leaving England, the legate excommunicated the Emperor at St Albans.¹¹⁴ This exemplifies yet another feature of the propaganda which we have encountered before, that is each side's attempt to disseminate its version of the conflict as far and as widely as possible. However, Otto soon encountered difficulties. The English Church remained reluctant to pay. When he demanded that the indigenous clergy should follow the example of foreign beneficiaries and grant a Fifth, this met with protest. During a council at Reading, the prelates refused to comply, and declared that they had to consult the lower clergy first.¹¹⁵ Matthew Paris uses this to paint a highly uncomplimentary picture of the King. When the nobles of England protested against papal extortions, the King refused to act,¹¹⁶ and when the abbots came to complain about the activities of a papal money-collector, he threatened to imprison those who resisted papal demands.¹¹⁷ Even when taking into account that Matthew may have exaggerated the degree of the King's compliance with papal demands, his unwillingness to confront the *curia* seems nonetheless remarkable.

¹⁰⁸ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V Colonienses*, MGH SS xxii, 521. On his mission also: Dorothy M. Williamson, 'Some aspects of the legation of Cardinal Otto in England, 1237-41', *EHR* lxiv (1949), 145-73, dealing with it mostly in an English context; also Lunt, *Financial Relations*, 197-205.

¹⁰⁹ *CM*, IV, 4-5, 9-11, 15, 35-38, 43 (s. a. 1240).

¹¹⁰ *Annals of Winchester*, AM, II, 88.

¹¹¹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 154.

¹¹² *De antiquis legibus: cronica maiorum et vicecomitum Londoniarum*, ed. Thomas Stapleton, *Camden Series*, (London, 1846), 8.

¹¹³ *CM*, III, 545.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 568-9.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 9-10.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 11.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 36.

Matters were further complicated by Frederick's efforts to woo Henry III and his barons. In October 1239 the Emperor wrote to the nobility of England. He complained of the injustice done to him by Gregory, and invoked the solidarity of the English barons. His struggle was not merely a matter between Pope and Emperor, he claimed, but concerned all princes, magnates and barons. Frederick complained that his excommunication was made public in England, and exhorted the barons to move the King to assist his brother and fellow-prince.¹¹⁸ Similar requests were put forth in 1240. Matthew Paris reports that two Imperial envoys had been sent to Henry III. They carried letters from Frederick, requesting that his excommunication not be made public in England, that the papal money-collectors be expelled and that the funds collected not be handed over. The King allegedly responded that he could not resist the Pope's demand, as he was the Pope's vassal and ally. However, Henry wrote to Gregory IX to arrange a peace, although without success, and he advised the legate to leave the country quickly and quietly.¹¹⁹ Parts of Matthew's story are confirmed by other sources. In February 1240, a Hugh Chabet, envoy of the Emperor, is recorded as receiving gifts and assistance for his journey homewards.¹²⁰ As far as the arbitration attempt is concerned, an entry in the 1241 *Liberate Roll* may be of relevance, in which a merchant from Florence received 300 marks to be handed over to the King's envoys soon to arrive 'at the court of Rome and that of the Emperor'.¹²¹ This would imply an attempt at mediating between the two hostile forces. The legate is known to have left England in December 1240.¹²² Whether this was triggered by Henry's gentle persuasion remains, however, uncertain. Most sources put his departure in the context of the planned council at Rome.¹²³ The funds collected in England remained important. Matthew Paris reports that Walter of Ocre met Henry III in 1241. Just before he arrived, the money collectors had left England. Walter eventually convinced the King that the papal agents ought to be detained should they return. Immediately afterwards, he left for France. In Italy he caught up with the Pope's agents and captured them.¹²⁴ Walter is attested as leaving England in October

¹¹⁸ HB, V, 467-9.

¹¹⁹ CM, IV, 4-5.

¹²⁰ CLR 1226-40, 448, 450; CR 1237-42, 172; Robert C. Stacey (ed.), *Receipt and Issue Rolls for the Twenty-Sixth Year of the Reign of King Henry III, 1241-2* (London, 1992), 85. He was also referred to in Frederick's letter to the English barons: HB, V, 468; and is mentioned by Matthew Paris as an Imperial envoy: CM, IV, 19. Apart from that he remains an obscure figure who appears to have been a medium-ranking official in the government of Sicily: in a document issued after 1 September 1247, Ugo Chamboctus is mentioned as being one of a group of people responsible for the castle at Bari: AI, I, nr. 918; and in January of that year Ugo Capasino was ordered to investigate a quarrel between abbeys of San Filippo de Fragula and St Marie de Maniaci: *ibid.*, I, nr. 391.

¹²¹ CLR 1240-5, 81; This the more so, as this mission followed within days of the departure of Walter of Ocre; also: Stacey, *Receipt and Issue Rolls*, 82.

¹²² CLR 1240-5, 17 for the provisions concerning his departure.

¹²³ *Annales Cambriae*, ed. J. W. abIthel, RS, (London, 1860), 83.

¹²⁴ CM, IV, 160-2; F. Nicholai de ordine fratrum praedicatorum *Annales*, ed. Thomas Hog, *English Historical Society*, (London, 1845), 226.

1241,¹²⁵ where he seems to have been since about May or June,¹²⁶ but no other evidence survives to corroborate the picture presented by the St Alban's chronicler. Confusing as this episode may be, it helps to underline the wavering attitude of Henry III and his court. They were unwilling openly to oppose the Holy See, and they were equally reluctant to antagonise the Emperor. At the same time it highlights how both Frederick and Gregory IX employed similar means of propaganda. Walter of Ocre's mission followed almost immediately on that of Cardinal Otto, and we may speculate whether he also followed a similar itinerary through England, spreading the Emperor's message and refuting the claims of Gregory's emissary.

Henry III's compliance with papal demands obviously worried Frederick. However, in many respects the King's attitude was not much different from that of Louis IX. He tried to avoid getting involved, and he hedged his bets. Henry, not unlike the Capetians, supported the planned council, and even sent his own envoys to accompany English prelates planning to attend it.¹²⁷ This could not have come as a surprise. To urge a peaceful settlement of the papal-Imperial conflict was an entirely different matter from publicly resisting and opposing the head of Latin Christendom. Frederick overestimated his own position when he assumed that the Kings of England and France would disregard the papacy so far as to associate themselves openly with the Emperor instead.¹²⁸ To criticise Henry III for lending his limited support to the Pope does not take into account the significance of the Holy See. The religious connection is too obvious to consider it in any detail. In addition, Henry III owed his throne and his kingdom to the support and assistance he had received from the *curia* during his minority. Henry may thus have felt a moral as well as a political obligation towards the Holy See. The King's reaction to papal requests for money is, therefore, not a good example to study his general attitude towards Frederick II.¹²⁹

It was only with Innocent IV's pontificate that marked a change in English attitudes towards the papacy can be observed. In 1244 the Pope asked for further contributions from the English clergy for his campaigns against Frederick. This met with stubborn resistance. The prelates decided that they could not grant funds to be used against the Emperor, because he had not yet been found guilty of heresy by a general council of the Church.¹³⁰ However, as with earlier, similar efforts undertaken in 1228-9, it would be mistaken to deduct from this that this implied a fundamental

¹²⁵ *CLR* 1240-5, 79, 80.

¹²⁶ Stacey, *Receipt and Issue Rolls*, 81.

¹²⁷ *CM*, IV, 125.

¹²⁸ This reflects on an older German discussion as to the extent of Imperial authority over other European Kingdoms. For some of the most recent discussions: Othmar Hageneder, 'Weltherschaft im Mittelalter', *MIÖG* xciii (1986), 267-78; Dieter Berg, 'Imperium und Regna. Beiträge zur Entwicklung der deutsch-englischen Beziehungen im Rahmen der auswärtigen Politik der römischen Kaiser und deutschen Könige im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert', in: Peter Moraw (ed.), '*Bündnissysteme*' und '*Außenpolitik*' im späten Mittelalter, *Beiheft der Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* v, (Berlin, 1987), 13-27.

¹²⁹ Huffman, *Comparative History*, 347, for an opposing view.

¹³⁰ *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 265.

hostility towards the *curia's* policies, or even open sympathies for the Emperor. Rather, the reluctance of the English clergy was an indication of their unease about yet more financial demands from the papacy. Nonetheless, Frederick II quickly managed to exploit dissatisfaction in England. During a meeting at London, intended to deal with papal requests for additional aids, Walter of Ocre was present. The very fact that an Imperial envoy was allowed to speak at a meeting, also attended by the Pope's emissary, points to a minor diplomatic victory for Frederick. According to Matthew Paris, Walter implored the assembled prelates not to support the papacy. Letters from the Count of Toulouse and the Latin Emperor of Constantinople were read out to testify to Frederick's good behaviour. Furthermore, should the King heed the Emperor's advice, the annual tribute to Rome would be abolished, and all the other complaints against the Holy See would be dealt with.¹³¹ It is difficult to differentiate between what may have been Walter's mission and what was a reflection of Matthew's own complaints and grievances. Frederick may well have played on increasing disillusionment with what many perceived to be the greed and avarice of the Roman pontiffs. At the same time, these were also the themes which ran through most of Matthew's chronicle, and which he tried to press home repeatedly and forcefully, often putting his own complaints in the mouths of others.¹³² We thus have to be careful in how much of this account we attribute to Matthew Paris, and how much to the Emperor's envoy. As far as the surviving administrative evidence is concerned, Walter seems to have come to England repeatedly between January¹³³ and November 1244.¹³⁴ It remains unclear whether he stayed there for the whole of the time, as in May another envoy from the Emperor arrived.¹³⁵ However, what we can be sure about is that Walter was to state, defend and press Frederick's case, and that he did so with some success. Henry III took a more active diplomatic role. Despite the scarce evidence, one may assume that the possibility of a truce was among the issues discussed by Nicholas de Bolevill, who was sent to the Imperial court in November 1244.¹³⁶ In March 1245, Frederick referred to letters he had recently received from Henry III,¹³⁷ and in June the King of England requested that Innocent IV delay proceedings at Lyon, until Henry's envoys had returned from the Emperor.¹³⁸ For the first time, the King was actively involved in negotiations. This may have been less

¹³¹ *CM*, IV, 371-2.

¹³² For a short survey of the techniques and methods employed; Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, passim; Björn Weiler, 'Matthew Paris, Richard of Cornwall's candidacy for the German throne, and the Sicilian Business', *Journal of Medieval History* (forthcoming).

¹³³ *CLR* 1240-5, 209.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 275, 277.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 232. The envoy is listed as Emery, i. e. Amaury, which is a name too common to allow for a precise identification.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 278. The fact that this happened two days after arrangements had been made to provide for Walter de Ocre's return journey could imply that Nicholas was to accompany him on his way back to the Imperial court.

¹³⁷ *HB*, VI, 267-8.

¹³⁸ *CR* 1242-7, 356.

than expected by Frederick, but it was as far as Henry was able to go without alienating Innocent. Henry III was unlikely ever to take up arms against the Pope. However, he had good reason to oblige the Emperor whose support, assistance and friendship was still deemed necessary for the fulfilment of the King's ambitions and projects in Europe. At the same time, this conforms to the wider European picture outlined above. Most rulers remained unwilling to side openly with one particular side, but largely remained at the sidelines, and confined themselves to urging moderation and compromise.

This picture is also confirmed by two more events which merit closer consideration: The crusade of Henry's brother Richard, and the ill-fated Poitevin campaign of 1242/3. From an early stage, Richard of Cornwall had been embroiled in the squabble over the date and direction of a new crusade. While Gregory IX wanted to redirect the campaign towards Constantinople,¹³⁹ Frederick insisted that it assist the Christians in Palestine. As early as February 1238, the Emperor had written to Richard and repeated his arguments for a delay of the expedition until 1239.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, he asked him to pass through Sicily on his way, and promised his help and advice. In November, Gregory wrote to Richard of Cornwall, Louis IX and Henry III, exhorting them to channel their resources towards the Latin Empire of Constantinople, rather than the Holy Land.¹⁴¹ Furthermore, letters were addressed to the legate in England, asking him to induce Richard to campaign in Greece.¹⁴² However, although the King of England was to give some support to the Latin Emperor,¹⁴³ none of the English crusaders were willing to comply with the Pope's wishes. If Matthew Paris is to be believed, Richard continued to encounter papal resistance to his campaign once he reached the continent. While at Arles he met the papal legate who ordered him to delay his departure. Richard, however, decided to proceed, and left for Palestine from Marseilles, nominally under Imperial control.¹⁴⁴ The St Albans chronicler also states that Richard was sending envoys to Frederick in Sicily. It may be significant that one envoy, Robert de Twenge, had come to notoriety as an anti-papist during the 1231 rebellion against foreigners in England.¹⁴⁵ However, it would be mistaken to conclude from this that Richard was fundamentally hostile to the papacy. Rather, it showed an increasing independence in the crusading movement from the direction and leadership of the papal *curia*. Gregory IX's crusading policies very much conformed to the structural pattern outlined by Innocent

¹³⁹ Richard Spence, 'Gregory IX's attempted expeditions to the Latin Empire of Constantinople: the crusade for the union of the Greek churches', *JMH* v (1979), 163-76; Peter Segl, "Stabit Constantinopoli." Inquisition und päpstliche Orientpolitik unter Gregor IX.', *DA* xxxii (1976), 209-20, for the plans and their background.

¹⁴⁰ *CM*, III, 471-2.

¹⁴¹ *Registres Gregoire IX*, nrs. 4605, 4607-8.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, nr. 4609.

¹⁴³ In May 1238, £500 were promised to Baldwin or 'Flemencus, his knight': *CPR 1232-47*, 217.

¹⁴⁴ *CM*, IV, 11, 46-7.

¹⁴⁵ Thus, Denholm-Young, *Richard*, 42.

III, in particular the idea of an actual papal leadership during the campaign, rather than one that was limit to calling and organising it. By contrast, Richard was very much part of the tradition of secular crusaders and their often wilful disregard for the needs and wishes of the *curia*. We also have to take into account the role of the papal legate during the Fifth Crusade and its subsequent failure, to understand that Richard's actions were based on precedent, rather than on any open or veiled hostility towards the *curia's* policies.

Richard's exploits in Palestine need not concern us here.¹⁴⁶ However, he continued to act in unison with the Emperor.¹⁴⁷ His main achievement was to conclude the negotiations, initiated by Theobald of Champagne, for another truce with the Sultan of Egypt,¹⁴⁸ rather than entering an alliance with Damascus, as propagated by the Emperor's opponents in Palestine.¹⁴⁹ In fact, in a letter from 1245, Frederick referred to Richard as having signed the treaty on his behalf.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, his negotiations occurred while Egyptian envoys are known to have been in Sicily.¹⁵¹ Richard worked in close co-operation with the Emperor, as illustrated in the distribution of lands regained through the truce. Ascalon, for instance, was handed over to the Imperial *baillie*, rather than to the council or those who previously controlled the town.¹⁵² The Earl of Cornwall's role should not be exaggerated. However, he was willing (and eager) to co-operate with Frederick and continued to view him as the rightful ruler of Jerusalem, even if this meant setting aside papal objections to close relations with the excommunicate Emperor. In this respect, his attitude was no different from that of Louis IX who, for instance, still accepted the Emperor's claims, at least *pro forma*, when leading his campaign to North Africa in 1248.

In this context a curious letter, probably written in 1241, may be of interest.¹⁵³ There, the leaders of the anti-Imperial opposition suggest that Simon de Montfort rather than the Emperor's candidate act as regent for the infant Conrad IV. We should be beware, though, to read too much into this passage. Simon had also been assisted and helped by Frederick: while he went to *Outremer*, his wife stayed

¹⁴⁶ For a detailed coverage, Sidney Painter, 'The crusade of Theobald of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall', in: Robert Lee Wolff and Harry W. Hazard (ed.), *The Later Crusades, 1189-1311*, Kenneth M. Setton (ed.), *A History of the Crusades*, vol. II, (Madison, 1969), 463-86; Peter Jackson, 'The crusades of 1239-41 and their aftermath', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1 (1987), 32-60; Hugo Koch, *Richard von Cornwall: Erster Theil, 1209-57* (Strasbourg, 1887), 50-3. For a contemporary account: *Les Gestes des Chiprois*, 122-4.

¹⁴⁷ Jackson, 'The crusades', 35-6.

¹⁴⁸ *Annals of Waverley*, AM II, 328.

¹⁴⁹ Marie-Louise Bulst-Thiele, 'Zur Geschichte der Ritterorden und des Königreichs Jerusalem im 13. Jahrhundert bis zur Schlacht bei La Forbie', *DA* xxii (1966), 197-226, at 202.

¹⁵⁰ HB, VI, 239. It can, of course, not be excluded that this was done to show his devotion to the cause of the Holy Land as a means of getting his excommunication and deposition revoked.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, V, 433.

¹⁵² Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, 207-8.

¹⁵³ Reinhold Röhrich, 'Acte de soumission des barons du royaume de Jérusalem à Frédéric II (7 mai 1231)', *Archives de L'Orient Latin*, ii (1881), 402-3; for the letter's context: Peter Jackson, 'The End of Hohenstaufen Rule in Syria', *BIHR* lix (1986), 20-36, *passim*.

behind as the Emperor's guest.¹⁵⁴ However, one of his cousins also happened to be the lord of Tyre.¹⁵⁵ In addition, he descended from an illustrious line of crusaders, and untainted either by the rivalries of the Palestine nobility or any previous siding with the Emperor, he may have been a non-partisan candidate acceptable to both parties. Moreover, he was the leader of the next major crusading contingent arriving in Palestine, probably the most important argument in his favour.¹⁵⁶ The letter also indicates the difficult situation the anti-Imperial camp faced in Palestine. During the summer of 1241, Richard Filangieri had begun to make ground and almost captured the rebellious town of Acre.¹⁵⁷ It would go too far, though, to try and deduce from this any opinion as to where the English court stood during the papal-Imperial struggle. Not only had Simon been forced into exile before his crusade,¹⁵⁸ his career in *Outremer* was also more the result of the immediate political circumstances surrounding his arrival in the Holy Land, rather than any underlying political or diplomatic efforts undertaken by the English Court.

On his return from Palestine, Richard was involved in an attempt to arbitrate between Frederick and Gregory. In a rather boastful letter on his exploits in Syria, the Earl also referred to his visit at the papal *curia* where he tried to negotiate a settlement between Frederick and Gregory.¹⁵⁹ Although Richard's account gives no details of his meetings with the Emperor, Matthew Paris elaborates on the letter. For once, there is little reason to doubt his version of events, as Richard formed one of the major sources for the chronicler.¹⁶⁰ Having granted the Earl several days to recover from his journey, Frederick asked him to deal with Gregory IX. However, he achieved little, as the Pope remained unwilling to give up his position that Frederick's excommunication could only be revoked if he submitted unconditionally to papal judgement. After having spent another two months in the Emperor's presence, 'quasi filius cum patre', Richard returned to England.¹⁶¹ The Earl's actions in Palestine and his arbitration attempts reveal an aspect of English diplomacy far more favourable towards Frederick, than the question of English payments to the papacy would imply. They thus underline the degree to which English policy during these years followed a pattern similar to that of other European monarchs (Ferdinand of Castile, Louis IX and Baldwin of Constantinople may be quoted as examples), and that it certainly was not hostile to the Emperor. Rather, like them, Henry III was reluctant to challenge papal authority directly, but was willing to arbitrate, while trying to utilise Frederick's predicaments for his own purposes.

¹⁵⁴ *CM*, IV, 7, 44-5.

¹⁵⁵ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 30.

¹⁵⁶ It was not unusual for visiting crusaders to be asked to negotiate between the warring factions of *Outremer*. Although centring on Western rulers, nonetheless helpful: Mayer, 'Kaiserrecht', 196-208.

¹⁵⁷ Riley-Smith, *Feudal Nobility*, 208.

¹⁵⁸ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 29.

¹⁵⁹ *CM*, IV, 144.

¹⁶⁰ Hilpert, *Kaiser- und Papstbriefe*, 114-9.

¹⁶¹ *CM*, IV, 144-8.

This latter point is best understood in the context of Henry's unsuccessful invasion of Poitou in 1242/3. Since 1239, the French court had formally begun to manifest its claims to those lands formerly held by the Plantagenets. In addition, the King's remaining territories began to pose difficulties. In 1241 the seneschal of Gascony came to England, and is said to have stated that, unless the King appear in person, he would lose the duchy, too.¹⁶² This referred both to increasing unrest in the region, and to moves by Louis IX to edge further towards Gascony. The same year Louis' brother was formally enfeoffed with Poitou, which was followed by an invasion of the lands of Henry's stepfather, the Count of La Marche.¹⁶³ Furthermore, the King of France began to move on Saintes and other places bordering Gascony.¹⁶⁴ This triggered immediate diplomatic activity at the English court. In 1242 an agreement was drawn up between the Count of Toulouse and Henry in which they promised each other mutual assistance against their enemies.¹⁶⁵ In itself, this was a major success for Henry III, and the result of efforts at peace-making he had undertaken some years before.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, allies were sought on the eastern borders of France, including the Count of Geneva.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, Peter of Savoy was sent to Imperial Burgundy,¹⁶⁸ while another envoy was accredited to Theobald of Champagne and the King's Savoyard relatives.¹⁶⁹ According to Matthew Paris, the Kings of Aragon and Castile were considered by the English Court, although with some apprehension in the latter's case,¹⁷⁰ as was the King of Portugal.¹⁷¹ Henry thus aimed at a wide-ranging alliance, covering the eastern and southern flanks of Capetian France. While these diplomatic preparations were under way, a parliament was called to meet in London in late January 1242.¹⁷² There, however, the King encountered resistance. Many nobles claimed that, as the truce renewed in 1240 had another three years to run, no action should be taken, and it was declared that no aid would be granted to the King. Henry III, though, was unwilling to let slip by this opportunity. Parliament was dissolved and the King proceeded towards Poitou regardless.¹⁷³

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, IV, 15.

¹⁶³ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 157.

¹⁶⁴ *The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough*, previously edited as *the Chronicle of Walter of Hemingford or Hemingburgh*, ed. H. Rothwell, *Camden Society*, (London, 1957), 177.

¹⁶⁵ William de Nangis, *Historia Albigensium*, RHGF xix, 193-225, xx, 764-76, at xx, 768-9. Also *CPR 1232-47*, 319.

¹⁶⁶ *Layettes*, nr. 415.

¹⁶⁷ *CPR 1232-47*, 306.

¹⁶⁸ *Foedera*, I, 242.

¹⁶⁹ *CPR 1232-47*, 433.

¹⁷⁰ *CM*, IV, 204. Henry tried to win over the King of Castile: *CR 1237-42*, 529; although no active involvement is recorded.

¹⁷¹ *CLR 1240-5*, 155.

¹⁷² Stacey, *Politics*, 184.

¹⁷³ *CM*, IV, 181-4.

The progress of his campaign need not concern us here.¹⁷⁴ After initial successes,¹⁷⁵ it ended in inglorious retreat.¹⁷⁶ Louis IX quickly overcame the threat posed by the Count of Provence, and forced him, as well as the Count of La Marche, back into the Capetian fold. The Emperor's role during the campaign merits special consideration. An Imperial envoy, Aymar de Gumpeis, left England in May 1242, just before Henry set out on campaign.¹⁷⁷ Frederick soon found himself the object of persistent overtures by Henry III. In June, Peter of Bordeaux and Bartholomew Pecche were sent to 'Italy and Apulia'.¹⁷⁸ It seems that their mission was in part a response to the earlier embassy of the Emperor - in one copy of their letter of accreditation they are referred to as dealing with 'certain articles sometime treated of by the envoys of the Emperor'.¹⁷⁹ At the same time, their brief went beyond that - a second copy of their accreditation describes their mission as

'to enter into a treaty between the Emperor and him [Henry III] of peace and truce, war and concord against all men, conventions made on the King's part with the church of Rome excepted'.¹⁸⁰

That this was directed against France is made clear by a separate letter which Henry sent to Frederick in September. He complained of the betrayal he had suffered from the Count of Provence, and requested that the Emperor punish his vassal. Furthermore, Henry stated, he knew of many in Burgundy who would be willing to assist him, if the Emperor allowed them to do so.¹⁸¹ However, Henry did not confine himself to sending letters and emissaries. The King of England employed the full range of his political and diplomatic contacts. Also in September, the Count of Toulouse met the Emperor at Melfi, and we may assume that English requests for help were among the issues discussed.¹⁸² In June, just two days after Bartholomew Pecche's and Peter of Bordeaux's mission had been announced to Frederick, Peter de Vinea was promised £40 worth of lands in England, 'in consideration of his services and deserts'.¹⁸³ This was the more interesting, as Peter had received his annual fief of 40 marks as recently as May.¹⁸⁴ The King curried the favour of those who in the past had benefited from his largesse. At the time Peter was still amongst the Emperor's most trusted advisors. Negotiations continued until 1243. In January, Henry III wrote to the Emperor once more. Having made a treaty of alliance with the Count of

¹⁷⁴ For more detailed accounts: Charles Bèmont, 'La Campagne de Poitou 1242-1243', *Annales du Midi* v (1893), 289-314; Stacey, *Politics*, 171-200.

¹⁷⁵ *CR* 1237-42, 407-8, 497-8.

¹⁷⁶ For a detailed, although unfavourable account, *CM*, IV, 188-92, 197-9, 202-26, 230-1.

¹⁷⁷ *CLR* 1240-5, 134.

¹⁷⁸ *CPR* 1232-47, 308.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 309.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 309. This mandate was confirmed and reissued in July 1242: *Ibid.*, 311.

¹⁸¹ *CR* 1237-42, 530-2.

¹⁸² Ryccardus de S Germano, *Cronica*, *MGH SS* xix, 383.

¹⁸³ *CPR* 1232-47, 309.

¹⁸⁴ *CLR* 1240-5, 128.

Toulouse, the King requested that Frederick give his counsel, and asked him 'to recall to his memory the last words of I. his wife, the King's sister, and fulfil them in deed'.¹⁸⁵ Once again, Henry tried to utilise old contacts. In a separate mandate Peter de Vinea was requested 'to lay these letters and the King's request before the Emperor and to be diligent in advancing the King's cause'.¹⁸⁶ Simultaneously, separate envoys were accredited to Frederick,¹⁸⁷ while some Imperial messengers, already in England,¹⁸⁸ were asked to advance 'the matter' with the Emperor, and to keep the English court informed about their progress.¹⁸⁹ The King of England was serious in his intentions, and he aimed at utilising his close contacts with the Emperor and his court to best effect. It is worth noting how he tried to use various levels of argument. He promised his help and assistance (except if directed against the Pope), played on emotions by referring to the unspecified last requests of the deceased Empress, while freeing the Emperor initially of any personal involvement, as his men in Burgundy were ready to fight, waiting only for his permission, and he used those who were traditionally close to Frederick, such as the Count of Toulouse and Peter de Vinea, to argue in his favour. No stone was left unturned.

However, all these efforts came to nothing. Frederick did not abandon his French allies.¹⁹⁰ Attacking the Capetians would have gained Frederick little. He was still hoping to end his excommunication. That, however, depended on the attitude of the new Pope, and it would have been unwise to alienate Louis IX even further after the imprisonment of his prelates and envoys.¹⁹¹ Moreover, he was faced with a deteriorating situation in Palestine, which could only be remedied by a concerted European effort, which included the King of France. However, Henry III's actions should not be dismissed easily. Although the Emperor faced a situation which made it difficult for him to side with his English relatives, from Henry's perspective the time seems to have come to reap the rewards of his earlier support for Frederick. We have to remember that in 1242 the conflict between Frederick and the papacy seemed at its end.¹⁹² Gregory IX had died, and whoever was to be his successor was considered likely to receive the Emperor back into the Church, restoring the concord which had been prevalent during most of the 1230s. Henry III's expectations that now, at last, he would be able to profit from his marriage alliance with Frederick, does reflect these hopes.

The 1242/3 campaign was significant in other ways, too. Kienast is exaggerating when he describes its outcome as sealing Plantagenet attempts at

¹⁸⁵ *CPR 1232-47*, 399. Empress Isabella had died in 1241: *Rolandini Patavini Chronicon in factis et facta marchiae Trivixane*, ed. Antonio Bonardi, *RIS*, VIII,1 (Citta di Castello, 1903-8), 75

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 399.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 357.

¹⁸⁸ *CLR 1240-5*, 169.

¹⁸⁹ *CPR1232-47*, 399.

¹⁹⁰ Kienast, *Fürsten*, 105.

¹⁹¹ *HB*, VI, 18-20.

¹⁹² Thumser, 'Friedrich II.', 436-7.

recovering their lost possessions in France.¹⁹³ However, the wide-ranging contacts and alliances sought in preparing for Henry's expedition opened up a new sphere of influence: the Mediterranean. In fact, the most durable outcome of Henry's sojourn in France were closer contacts with the rulers of the Hispanic peninsula, and the marriage between Richard of Cornwall and Sanchia of Provence early in 1243.¹⁹⁴ The project continued.

Between 1239 and 1245, far from worsening, English relations with Frederick II moved along accustomed lines. The Emperor sought to solicit support against his foes, while Henry III was seeking to utilise his German contacts against Louis IX. The main channel of communication with the Empire remained Frederick II. Furthermore it is worth noting that Henry avoided associating himself with those, like the Archbishop of Cologne, hostile to Frederick. The Imperial princes played a negligible role in Henry's relations with the Emperor. Amongst those recorded was a messenger from the Duke of Brunswick,¹⁹⁵ and Henry de Rumenham, a Brabantine clerk.¹⁹⁶ The Duke of Brabant makes an indirect appearance during the Poitevin campaign. The war was partly conducted by raiding the ships of enemy merchants.¹⁹⁷ This, in turn, required the issue of safe-conducts for 'friendly' vessels.¹⁹⁸ Amongst those issued in 1242, merchants from Brabant feature highly.¹⁹⁹ In a mandate from August 1242, a number of Brabantine merchants are referred to by name, and it is stated that the Duke of Brabant had sent letters guaranteeing similar safe-conducts to English merchants in his lands.²⁰⁰ Apart from this, no evidence survives for direct contacts. It is a matter of speculation whether Bartholomew of Hoveden, sent to Denmark and Saxony in 1240 to collect goshawks, was also on a diplomatic mission.²⁰¹ An exception was a messenger from Conrad IV, recorded in late 1241, whose mission was probably connected to efforts at soliciting personal support from Henry against the Mongols.²⁰² Apart from this, contacts with the Empire were arranged via and centred around Frederick II. There was little difference between Henry III's attitude towards Frederick and that of other rulers. Frederick could rely on the King of England's diplomatic support, as long as he did not expect him to challenge the Pope directly. Henry III in turn continued to view Frederick as a

¹⁹³ Kienast, *Fürsten*, 106.

¹⁹⁴ *Annals of Waverley*, AM II, 330.

¹⁹⁵ *CLR* 1240-5, 55.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁹⁷ *CPR* 1232-47, 309.

¹⁹⁸ *CR* 1237-42, 462, naming Flanders, Brabant, Denmark, Norway and Gotland.

¹⁹⁹ *CPR* 1232-47, 302, listing various merchants as being 'of the power' of the Emperor and the Duke of Brabant.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 302.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 240.

²⁰² *CLR* 1240-5, 93. The messenger's name was Hubert, which is too common to allow for a reliable identification.

potential ally, likely to come to his assistance, once peace had been restored with whoever was to succeed Gregory IX to the see of St Peter.

Chapter V
Doom
(1245-50)

In 1245, during a general council at Lyon, at the borders between France and the Empire, Pope Innocent IV solemnly declared Frederick II to be deposed, and stripped of his dignities as Emperor, King of Sicily and King-regent of Jerusalem. Papal efforts to put this deposition into practice dominated European politics for another twenty years. Its immediate impact changed the balance of power in western Europe, and accelerated the Capetians' rise to prominence. The ensuing war of propaganda soon embroiled the rest of Christendom, forcing rulers and princes to reconsider their policies, and witnessed a rapid change of loyalties. In the case of England, although the King avoided associating himself with the anti-Kings Henry Raspe and William of Holland, this coincided with a widening of contacts in Germany and Italy. After ten years during which Frederick III had dominated exchanges with the Empire, others came to the fore once more. In addition, Henry suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks. The Count of Provence died in 1245, and his lands fell to Louis IX's younger brother, Charles of Anjou, in 1246. Finally, the disputed inheritance of Flanders threw the county into turmoil and brought most of it under French domination. Henry III had thus been deprived of the main pillars of his anti-Capetian diplomacy. New allies had to be sought and new policies formed.

V.1 Frederick and his foes

A detailed account of the proceedings at Lyon is given by Matthew Paris. Although the council is mostly associated with the deposition of Frederick II and of Sancho II of Portugal, it was also a forum to discuss the many concerns facing Christendom. Most prominent amongst these was the planning and financing of a new crusade.¹ In 1244, the Khwarizim Turks had sacked Jerusalem and disastrously beaten the Christian forces in Palestine,² while Hungary was still recovering from the Mongol attacks, living in perpetual fear of a renewed onslaught.³ Christendom still smarted from its defeats and searched for ways to remedy an increasingly threatening situation. Other issues were dealt with, too. The English bishops, for instance, used the opportunity to press for the canonisation of Edmund Rich, the former Archbishop

¹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM III, 167; *CM*, IV, 456-62; Norman P. Tanner, et al. (ed. & transl.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils. Volume I: Nicaea I to Lateran IV* (Bologna, London and Washington D.C., 1972 and 1990), 295-301. For the general problem on sources for Lyons I: W.E. Lunt, 'The sources for the First Council of Lyon', *EHR* xxxiii (1918), 72-8.

² *Annales Pragenses I*, *MGH SS* ix, 171; *Annales Neresheimenses*, *MGH SS* x, 23; for a Muslim account: U. and M. C. Lyons with J. S. C. Riley-Smith (ed.), *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders: selections from the Tarikh al-Duwal wa'l-Muluk of Ibn al-Furat*, 2 vols., (Cambridge, 1971), II, pp. 3-4. Many thanks to Angus Stewart for digging up this reference.

³ *CM*, IV, 430-1.

of Canterbury,⁴ and to present a list of gravamina concerning papal demands.⁵ They also attended, as Henry III put it to Frederick, to broker an understanding with the Pope.⁶ Apart from the prelates, Ralph FitzNicholas, William Cantilupe, Philip Basset and the Earl of Norfolk were present as the King's proctors.⁷ The council opened in July, attended, according to one chronicler, by 250 prelates,⁸ mostly from France.⁹

The situation of the Christian Diaspora dominated proceedings.¹⁰ The Patriarch of Constantinople began by outlining the manifold difficulties facing Latin Christendom in Greece. This was followed by the Bishop of Beirut, who gave an account of the problems besetting the Church in *Outremer*. Next came Innocent IV's summary of the state of the Roman Church. It had many enemies, he claimed, most dangerous amongst whom, however, worse even than the Tartars and Saracens, was the Emperor. This led to detailed accusations concerning Frederick's various misdemeanours, and his proctors' equally swift rebuttal. Eventually, the Emperor's agents managed to secure a respite to consult with their lord. It seems, however, that Frederick saw little chance for a peaceful settlement. He therefore denied the judicial basis of the council. His proctors declared that the Pope's only purpose in convening the council had been to destroy the Emperor, acting both as accuser and as judge.¹¹ It cannot have come as much of a surprise when Innocent rejected their reasoning, and solemnly declared Frederick deprived of his offices.¹²

Henry III's attitude towards Frederick during the council has been described as hostile, symbolised by the presence of English proctors.¹³ However, to expect the King of England not to send his agents to attend the council ignores the political difficulties he faced at home. While many of the prelates present were concerned with papal demands for money,¹⁴ Henry III faced the far more serious threat of English prelates complaining directly to the Pope about his government of the Church. In June 1245, for instance, those prelates setting out for Lyon had to swear 'not to attempt anything against the King's crown and dignity'.¹⁵ Furthermore, one of the issues discussed at the council was the proposed canonisation of Edmund Rich, strenuously opposed by Henry.¹⁶ The synod was, therefore, dealing with issues which directly

⁴ *Annals of Bermondsey*, AM III, 460; *Annals of Worcester*, AM IV, 434.

⁵ *CM*, IV, 440-5.

⁶ *CR* 1242-7, 356.

⁷ *CPR* 1232-47, 463; *Nicholas de Trivetii Annales*, 234.

⁸ *Annales Erphordenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 34. 140 according to *CM*, IV, 432.

⁹ *Annales Scheftlarienses Maiores*, *MGH SS* xvii, 342

¹⁰ The following is mostly based on *CM*, IV, 430-40.

¹¹ The Emperor's deposition has been discussed with its implication to canon law by Friedrich Kempf, 'Die Absetzung Friedrichs II. im Lichte der Kanonistik', Fleckenstein (ed.), *Probleme um Friedrich II.*, 345-60.

¹² *CM*, IV, 456; *Annales Scheftlarienses Maiores*, *MGH SS* xvii, 342.

¹³ Huffman, *Comparative History*, 346 as the most recent writer.

¹⁴ Powicke, *Henry III*, 282-3. *Councils and Synods with other Documents relating to the English Church*, Part II, 1, 1205-65, ed. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney (Oxford, 1964), 391-5.

¹⁵ *CPR* 1232-47, 463.

¹⁶ Matthew Paris, *The Life of St Edmund*, ed. C. H. Lawrence (Stroud, 1996), 95, 97.

concerned the King and required the presence of his proctors. Moreover, Henry could not intercede on the Emperor's behalf, or press for a peaceful settlement, unless he was represented by his agents. Finally, we should not forget that, although a settlement of the papal-Imperial dispute was amongst the issues to be discussed, neither Frederick nor most of the attending clergy seem to have expected the Emperor's deposition.

A similar picture emerges from other sources. Henry III was trying to arbitrate between Frederick and Gregory.¹⁷ This is borne out by the authorisation he gave to his representatives, 'to treat peace between the church of Rome and the Emperor'.¹⁸ Matthew Paris gives a detailed account of their role during the proceedings. When Frederick's proctor, Thaddäus de Suessa, requested two weeks to consult with the Emperor, it was on the insistence of French and English bishops that Innocent granted a respite.¹⁹ After Frederick's refusal to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the synod, the English were those arguing most fervently in his favour.²⁰ Finally, when Frederick's deposition was announced, the English proctors argued in favour of his offspring, as the sons could not be punished for the sins of their fathers.²¹ Although Matthew may have exaggerated the degree to which English and French prelates led the opposition to Innocent's unrelenting stance, the general picture seems convincing. Henry III had little to gain were the Emperor succeeded by a Capetian prince, or by someone who had to rely even more on French support than Frederick did already. It must have seemed unlikely that the Hohenstaufen could easily be expelled from Germany, when Gregory had failed so badly even in Lombardy. Whoever was to challenge Frederick in his homeland would require strong support from outside Germany. As far as Louis IX was concerned, he had taken the Cross in 1244, and needed the Emperor for the planning of his campaign.²² Even on a merely pragmatic basis, the Kings of England and France thus had reason enough to press for a settlement and to meliorate the sentence against Frederick as far as possible.

Matthew's statement as to the Emperor's children is revealing. The son born of Isabella and called Henry (after Henry II), was only one of three legitimate male children begotten by Frederick. The Emperor played upon any expectations the English King might have had as to the future role of his nephew. In 1247, he wrote to Henry III, announcing that his nephew was to be made vicar of Sicily, and, as part of a settlement with Innocent IV, was to be baptised by the Pope.²³ In addition, the boy wrote to his uncle, apologising that he had not been in contact earlier, but promised to

¹⁷ *CR* 1242-7, 356.

¹⁸ *CPR* 1232-47, 463.

¹⁹ *CM*, IV, 437.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 437.

²¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 439.

²² Joinville, *The Life of St Louis*, in M. R. B. Shaw (transl.), *Joinville & Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades* (Harmondsworth, 1963), 190-1.

²³ *HB*, VI, 502-3.

do so now that he was of sufficient age and power.²⁴ Henry's elevation is confirmed by an entry in the registry of Frederick II, where the boy and his council received letters to be made public throughout Sicily.²⁵ Matthew probably exaggerates when he describes the young Henry as having been honoured and singled out before all others by Frederick.²⁶ The Emperor's testament, however, lists him as heir should Conrad, Frederick's son with Yolanda/Isabella, die without children. Moreover, he was to receive either the kingdom of Burgundy or that of Jerusalem.²⁷ Although these were the weakest link in the Hohenstaufens' Empire - comparable neither in political clout nor in resources to either Sicily or Germany and northern Italy - Henry III's nephew was nonetheless ensured to play a significant role in the affairs of the Empire. Moreover, by holding Burgundy, becoming the feudal overlord over the Counts of Provence and Toulouse, the young boy would have been in a prominent enough position to be potentially of use to his uncle, the King of England. Henry III had been trying to play on the Emperor's emotions when asking for help in Poitou, and Frederick did likewise, by using Isabella's only son to enlist English backing against the Pope.

A passage in the Emperor's letter, referring to the boy's imminent baptism by Innocent IV, also shows that even after his deposition hopes for a peaceful settlement had not been abandoned. This latter point is worth further consideration. In April 1246 two cardinals had been sent to Sicily, authorised to relax the Emperor's sentence of excommunication.²⁸ However, by the end of May, the Pope wrote 'to the whole of Christendom' that Frederick's purgation had been found insincere and insufficient. Nonetheless, he was invited to come to Lyon to clear himself in person.²⁹ Maybe even to the Pope's surprise, Frederick decided to take up the offer. After the death of Henry Raspe that year³⁰ he is said to have intended to settle his difficulties with Innocent in person, and proceeded through Lombardy towards the Alps.³¹ A letter by Archbishop Boniface of Canterbury to Peter of Savoy illuminates the background, and reveals the pressures which forced Innocent to offer a compromise. Louis IX had complained of papal extortions, a renewed invasion of Hungary by the Mongols seemed imminent, and the college of cardinals was divided as to which policy to pursue towards Frederick.³² We may assume that it had been in the context of this visit that Frederick had intended to have his son baptised.³³ However, when the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, VI, 504.

²⁵ *AI*, I, nr. 919.

²⁶ *CM*, V, 99.

²⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 274.

²⁸ *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 1976.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, nr. 1988.

³⁰ *Annales Erphordenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 35.

³¹ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, *MGH SS* xviii, 221.

³² *CM*, *Liber Addimentorum*, *CM*, VII, 131-3.

³³ Unfortunately, I have not been able to work out why Henry was still unbaptised at the age of eight. The obvious explanation may have been that the Emperor was adamant that his conflict could soon be settled, and that his son's baptism was to symbolise this reconciliation. For the delayed baptism of

Emperor reached Turin in the spring of 1247, he heard that Parma had fallen to his enemies, and was forced to return.³⁴ Only luck saved Innocent IV from having to encounter his foe in person. In fact, in a letter to the cardinals remaining in Rome, Innocent described the desertion of Parma as a sign of God's benevolence towards his cause.³⁵ However, this was not the end of Imperial attempts to make peace. It seems that Henry III participated in these efforts. In June 1247, Robert de Anketil was dispatched to the papal court 'for a second time', and was to be accompanied by various messengers from the Emperor.³⁶ This may imply concerted efforts by both the King of England and his brother-in-law. Matthew refers to another attempt made by Frederick in 1248.³⁷ The following year, after the death of one of Frederick's illegitimate sons, yet another embassy was sent to the Pope.³⁸ This, too, met with little success: in April 1249, the papal legate in Italy was assured that no peace would be made with Frederick.³⁹ The last arbitration attempt is recorded for 1250.⁴⁰ Innocent proved as unrelenting as his predecessor.

After Frederick's deposition, renewed efforts were made to replace him as Emperor and King.⁴¹ Within a year of the synod's dissolution, Conrad IV's former guardian, Landgrave Henry Raspe of Thuringia, was elected King of the Romans.⁴² Innocent IV not only provided him with crusading indulgences,⁴³ but also with copious funds.⁴⁴ However, the Landgrave's untimely death in 1247,⁴⁵ meant that he had little impact on German politics. In fact, the Hohenstaufen managed to strengthen their grip on Germany when Conrad IV married a daughter of the Duke of Bavaria in

the offspring of nobles and Emperors, although drawing on much earlier examples: Julia Smith, 'Religion and lay society', in: Rosamund McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, volume II: c. 700 - c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995), 654-80, at 657.

³⁴ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V, MGH SS xxii*, 541.

³⁵ *AI*, II, nr. 1040.

³⁶ *CLR* 145-51, 127.

³⁷ *CM*, V, 22-3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 70-1.

³⁹ *Epistolae*, II, nr. 681, xxii.

⁴⁰ *CM*, V, 99-100.

⁴¹ A dated, but still valid account of the situation in Germany is given by Manfred Stimming, 'Kaiser Friedrich II. und der Abfall der deutschen Fürsten', *HZ* cxx (1919), 210-49. On Henry, although generally disappointing, Gabriele Käser, 'Papst Innocenz IV. und der deutsche Gegenkönig Heinrich Raspe', in: Winfrid Müller, Wolfgang J. Smolka and Helmut Zedelmaier (ed.), *Universität und Bildung. FS Laetitia Boehm* (Munich, 1991), 25-31; J. Kempf, *Geschichte des deutschen Reiches während des grossen Interregnums, 1245-1273* (Würzburg, 1893), 14-40. For the propaganda employed: Karl Hampe, 'Über die Flugschriften zum Lyoner Konzil von 1245', *Historische Vierteljahresschrift* xi (1908), 297-313; Peter Herde, 'Ein Pamphlet der päpstlichen Kurie gegen Kaiser Friedrich II. von 1245/46', *DA* xxiii (1967), 468-538; Hans Martin Schaller, 'Die Antwort Gregors IX. auf Petrus de Vineia I,1, "Collegerunt pontifices"', *DA* xi (1954/5), 140-165; the same, 'Eine kuriale Breifsammlung des 13. Jahrhunderts mit unbekanntenen Briefen Friedrichs II. (Trier, Stadtbibliothek Cod. 859/1097)', *DA* xviii (1962), 171-213.

⁴² *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V, MGH SS xxii*, 540-1 for the most detailed account of Henry's short reign.

⁴³ *Annales Ensдорfenses, MGH SS x*, 5; *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 1993.

⁴⁴ *Annales Veterocellenses, MGH SS xvi*, 431.

⁴⁵ *Annales Erphordenses, MGH SS xvi*, 35; *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V, MGH SS xxii*, 541.

1246.⁴⁶ It was during the months after Henry Raspe's death that Frederick pursued once more the hope that he might be able to settle his conflict with Innocent peacefully. In this he was to be disappointed when, by September 1247, the Pope ordered the German princes to elect yet another anti-King, Count William of Holland.⁴⁷ The new anti-King's wide-ranging family connections made him a more formidable challenge. Amongst others, he numbered the Duke of Brabant and the Bishop of Liège amongst his in-laws.⁴⁸ In 1248, to the surprise of Conrad IV and his supporters, William laid siege to Aachen,⁴⁹ and after several months,⁵⁰ entered the town and was crowned King of the Romans.⁵¹ Initially, the anti-King's victory was of symbolic rather than strategic importance. The resting-place of Charlemagne and the traditional venue for the coronation of Emperor-elects had fallen to the Pope's partisans. Nonetheless, despite William's defeat by Conrad the following year,⁵² this proved to be a turning point in his fortunes.⁵³ Conrad IV remained confined mostly to the south of Germany, and in 1251, he abandoned his lands north of the Alps altogether and left for Sicily.

Innocent pursued a similar policy in the Holy Land. In 1246, the new King of Cyprus took over his mother's role as hereditary regent of Jerusalem, and appointed his own *baillie* in opposition to the Emperor's candidate.⁵⁴ The following year, Innocent granted a request that the kingdom of Cyprus, nominally held as a fief from the Empire, would instead be held from the Pope.⁵⁵ With war waging in Italy and the threat posed by successive anti-kings, Frederick could do little to prop up his or his son's regime in Palestine. Instead, he had to be content with emphasising his rightful claims to Jerusalem, and did so by taking an active role in the preparations for Louis IX's crusade. In September 1245 Frederick wrote to the nobles of France, announcing that he had asked Louis to intercede on his behalf with Innocent IV. He also offered that either he or his son Conrad would personally lead a crusade in Palestine, once peace had been arranged with the Pope.⁵⁶ A similar letter was then addressed to the

⁴⁶ *Annales Augustani Minores*, MGH SS x, 9.

⁴⁷ *Continuatio Laurentii de Leodio Gesta*, MGH SS x, 525; *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 35 (our main narrative source for the events of his reign); *Hermannii Altahensis Annales*, MGH SS xvii, 394.

⁴⁸ *CM*, IV, 624-5.

⁴⁹ *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 35-6.

⁵⁰ *Gesta abbatum Trudonensium Continuatio II*, MGH SS x, 396.

⁵¹ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V*, MGH SS xxii, 542-3; *CM*, V, 17, 25-7.

⁵² *CM*, V, 90.

⁵³ As far as papal support for William is concerned, also significant: Burkhard Keilmann, 'Papast Innocenz IV. und die Kirche von Worms - Anmerkungen zur päpstlichen Personalpolitik am Beginn des Interregnums', *Archiv für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* xl (1988), 43-66, especially 44-6, 48-54. For the military aspect helpful: Karl E. Demandt, 'Der Endkampf des staufischen Kaiserhauses im Rhein-Main-Gebiet', *Hessisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte* vii (1957), 102-64; Kempf, *Interregnum*, 90-178; Otto Hintze, *Das Königtum Wilhelms von Holland* (Leipzig, 1885).

⁵⁴ *Andrae Danduli*, 301. For the political and family ties connection the nobilities of Cyprus and the Holy Land: Richard, 'Pairie d'Orient latin', *passim*.

⁵⁵ *HB*, VI, 506-7.

⁵⁶ *Constitutiones*, nr. 264.

whole of Christendom.⁵⁷ The same promise had originally been made by Thaddäus de Suessa at the council of Lyon, although without success.⁵⁸ In 1246 the Emperor went a step further: he would spend the rest of his life in Palestine, if the Pope agreed to revoke his excommunication and deposition.⁵⁹ Frederick tried to show the sincerity of his promises. In November officials in Sicily were ordered to provide Louis with horses, arms, victuals and whatever else he might need, and to let him and his familiars pass the *regno* without interference and molestation.⁶⁰ To have the King of France set out to the Holy Land via Sicily would have been a major diplomatic victory. However, Louis was aware of these implications, and set out from Marseilles, by then under his brother's control, instead. He continued to avoid taking sides. In early 1247, Louis promised that he would not act in a way which would prejudice Conrad IV's or anyone else's rights.⁶¹ This fell short of guaranteeing Hohenstaufen claims in *Outremer*, or of recognising the Pope's deposition of Frederick and his sons in 1245. This was repeated in 1248. Louis responded to the Emperor's request that any lands reconquered by him would be handed over to Conrad, by stating that he would not act to the prejudice of either Conrad IV or any other Christian. He also promised that he would not consent to victuals being given to the Emperor's enemies, but continued that he would be unable to control or enforce this.⁶² This was probably all Frederick could have hoped for. Louis, too, found himself in a difficult situation. He could not afford to alienate either the Emperor, on whose support he depended for a successful campaign in Palestine, or the Pope and his allies in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The necessity to have Frederick involved in any planning for a crusade, and his willingness to lead the Christian forces in Palestine was repeatedly urged in Imperial manifestos. Under 1246, Matthew Paris gives the text of a letter, allegedly written by the Sultan of Egypt in response to papal attempts at concluding a truce. In this the Sultan stated that he would not enter such an agreement unless the Emperor was part of it. Matthew goes on to state that Innocent accused Frederick of fabricating that letter.⁶³ Frederick certainly tried to emphasise how willing he was to fight the

⁵⁷ *Layettes*, II, nr. 3380.

⁵⁸ *CM*, IV, 433.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 523-4.

⁶⁰ *HB*, VI, 465-6, 466-7.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, VI, 500-2.

⁶² *VSM*, 1299-1301.

⁶³ *CM*, IV, 566-8. Interestingly, Ibn al-Furat, although a much later source, also refers to the ways in which Frederick tried to utilise his contacts amongst the Muslim to further 'Frankish' aims. He states that Frederick had secured Louis IX's release after the disaster at Damietta and on his way back to France: Loyns and Riley-Smith, *Ayyubids*, II, 37. This causes chronological difficulties, as Frederick was dead by the time Louis left for France. However, elements of Frederick's propaganda are also found in Muslim accounts and thus add colour to the Emperor's claims. Similarly, Joinville reports how his Muslim captor rejoiced at hearing that he was Frederick's distant cousin, how he was accordingly treated with great honours: Joinville, *Life of St Louis*, 245. For a recent discussion of Frederick's alleged patronage of Muslims: James M. Powell, 'Frederick II and the Muslims: the making of an historiographical tradition', in: Larry J. Simon (ed.), *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages: studies in Honour of Robert I. Burns, S. J.* (Leiden, 1995), 261-9. For political relations: E. Blochet, 'Les relations diplomatiques des Hohenstaufen avec les sultans d'Égypte', *Revue Historique* lxxx (1902), 51-64; P.M. Holt, 'The treatises of the early Mamluk sultans with the

Muslims, and how only the Pope's unholy machinations prevented him from doing so. In August 1248, the King of England was informed of how the Emperor's efforts to come to the support of beleaguered Christendom had been thwarted by Innocent.⁶⁴ Similar complaints were directed to Louis IX in early spring 1249. Frederick particularly complained about the mendicants who, rather than converting the Muslims, sowed dissension amongst the Christians.⁶⁵ Similarly, Blanche, the Queen-regent of France was informed of how the Pope's actions prevented Frederick from coming to Louis' assistance.⁶⁶ That Frederick was not alone in thinking that the Pope's reluctance to negotiate jeopardised the state of Christendom, is reported by Matthew Paris. In 1246 Cardinal John of Toledo, an English Cistercian,⁶⁷ is said to have complained to Innocent IV that the Church was beset by many foes, amongst whom he numbered the Tartars, the Saracens and the Greeks. Therefore, the Pope should take up the offers made by the Emperor, and negotiate for peace.⁶⁸ Frederick's offers to lead a crusade were the best way in which to ensure his reconciliation with the Church, and to enlist the diplomatic support needed to force Innocent into negotiations. What better way of showing his orthodoxy and subservience to the Holy See, than by surrendering his worldly glory and setting out to fight the infidel ?

V.2 The ascendancy of Capetian France

Despite Henry III's efforts at Lyons, it was Louis IX who was at the centre of most peace proposals put forth between 1245 and 1250. At around Christmas 1245 Innocent IV and the King of France met at Cluny. If Matthew Paris is to be believed, Frederick seized the opportunity, and sent messengers to Louis, putting forth his proposal that he would go to the Holy Land, once he and his sons had been accepted back into the Church.⁶⁹ That Frederick had been in touch with Louis is confirmed by the fragment of a letter, probably dating from February 1246, in which the Emperor outlined the manifold tribulations he had suffered from the papacy.⁷⁰ However, this is the only evidence for contacts between France and the Empire in early 1246. Later that

Frankish states', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* xliii (1980), 67-76. For the propagandistic uses of the Hohenstaufens' relations with the Muslims: Christoph T. Maier, 'Crusade and rhetoric against the Muslim colony of Lucera: Eudes de Chateauroux's *Sermones de Rebellione Sarracenorum Lucherie in Apulie*', *JMH* xxi (1995), 343-85. For an overview on Muslim sources about the Hohenstaufen in the thirteenth century: H. L. Gottschalk, 'Der Untergang der Hohenstaufen', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* liii (1957), 267-82.

⁶⁴ HB, VI, 644-6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, 710-3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, VI, 746-8.

⁶⁷ For his biography and prophetic works: Hermann Grauert, 'Meister Johann von Toledo', *Sitzungsberichte der königlich-bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1901, 113-325, at 113-65 for the historical John.

⁶⁸ CM, IV, 578-9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 523-4.

⁷⁰ HB, VI, 389-90.

year, on the other hand, both the Pope and Frederick wrote to Louis. Referring to an embassy the King of France had sent to negotiate between them, Innocent declared that he was willing to grant Frederick the opportunity to prove his devotion to the Church.⁷¹ This effort met with little success, and in December Frederick complained to the King of France how his petitions had been refused by the *curia*.⁷² In 1248 another attempt was made. When setting out on crusade, Louis dispatched envoys to Innocent asking him to revoke Frederick's excommunication, as the Emperor would then be able to join him on a campaign in Palestine.⁷³ After the capture of Damietta, Louis is said to have been so moved by the help received from the Emperor, that he made yet another attempt to convince Innocent that peace ought to be made with the Hohenstaufen.⁷⁴ Once again, this met with no success.⁷⁵ In the winter of 1249, Frederick wrote to Blanche of Castile. He declared that he would assist her son Louis in the Holy Land, if only the Pope would allow him back into the Church. He also referred to an embassy he had received from Alfons of Poitou.⁷⁶ This has to be viewed in the context of efforts undertaken by Louis' brothers after the disaster at Damietta, when they approached Innocent in order to convince him to make peace with Frederick. As they met with the by now common poor success, they turned to Henry III, who then decided to take the cross himself in 1250.⁷⁷ As the leader of the biggest crusading expedition at the time, the King of France had a natural interest in settling the remaining conflicts in Europe, be they with England,⁷⁸ or between Innocent IV and the Emperor.⁷⁹ We should, therefore, not be surprised at finding him repeatedly courted by Frederick II.

The Emperor did not stop at trying to involve Louis in peace negotiations. Already in 1246, mention was made of a Franco-Imperial alliance. The offer was referred to by the King of France early in 1247. He wrote to Frederick and stated that he had made secret communications concerning the matter to the Emperor's messenger who would confer them orally.⁸⁰ However, what form this alliance was supposed to take remains obscure. It is doubtful whether Frederick's expectations were realistic. The best Louis could do was to insist that the Pope take the Emperor back into the Church, but he could not and would not enter into projects and alliances going beyond that. His expedition to the Holy Land took priority. This is underlined by Louis' general policies concerning the papal-Imperial conflict. In 1247, when Frederick approached Lyon, Innocent IV could count on military protection from the King of

⁷¹ *Epistolae* II, nr. 257.

⁷² HB, VI, 472.

⁷³ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, MGH SS xviii, 225; CM, V, 22.

⁷⁴ CM, V, 70.

⁷⁵ HB, VI, 710-3.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, VI, 746-8.

⁷⁷ CM, V, 175, 188-9.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 23.

⁷⁹ William C. Jordan, *Louis IX and the challenge of the crusades: a study in rulership* (Princeton, 1979), 25-30.

⁸⁰ HB, VI, 500-2.

France.⁸¹ Equally, Louis does not appear to have hindered French knights fighting against the Emperor in Germany, although this may have been a question of whether he had the ability to control them or not.⁸² Similarly, grateful as he was, the King of France tried not to be too closely associated with Frederick II. He refused to be involved in the squabbles amongst the inhabitants of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and he refused the offer of setting sail from Sicily. The King of France refused to take sides and increasingly found himself in a position in which he was half forced, but also eager to act as an arbitrator of the balance of power between the two rivals. He would not commit himself to the forced overthrow of either of them, but continued to urge instead for a peaceful settlement. In many ways, we thus find Louis adopting a stance not unlike that of Innocent III, Honorius III or Gregory IX in preparation for their crusades.

The years between 1245 and 1250 also witnessed Louis laying the foundations for France's ascendancy in Europe. He did so not by failing to capture Jerusalem or to reconcile Pope and Emperor, but by an expansion of his family's lands and influence. This, in turn, had important repercussions for Henry III's role on the contemporary political stage. The Capetians' most important acquisition was that of Provence. In August 1245, the Count of Provence died, leaving his youngest and still unmarried daughter Beatrice as his heiress.⁸³ This resulted in a mushrooming of politically motivated suitors, including Raymond of Toulouse, the Emperor, the King of Aragon, and Charles of Anjou. In 1245 Raymond of Toulouse had begun to court Beatrice. However, as they were too closely related, papal dispensation was needed.⁸⁴ Innocent complied, and appointed a commissioner to investigate matters further.⁸⁵ Frederick II sent the Imperial fleet to cruise along the coast of Provence, to emphasise that his son, too, was in need of a wife.⁸⁶ The Emperor also contacted the Infante of Castile concerning Provence.⁸⁷ Another candidate is said to have been a son of the King of Aragon who was beginning to attack Provence.⁸⁸ All this came to an end when, quite unexpectedly, Charles of Anjou married Beatrice in January 1246.

The Provençal inheritance was dealt with when King and Pope met at Cluny in September 1245. What exactly happened there remains obscure. Matthew Paris viewed the council as designed to solve the papal-Imperial conflict,⁸⁹ whereas

⁸¹ In a letter to the cardinals remaining at Rome, Innocent mentions that the King had promised to provide troops for the protection of the Church, if necessary: *AI*, II, nr. 1040. In June, Innocent thanked Louis for his offer to help the Church militarily: *HB*, VI, 544-7. This implies that *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, *MGH SS* xviii, 221, was mistaken in describing the march as having been instigated by Louis IX.

⁸² *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 4060.

⁸³ *CM*, IV, 545-6.

⁸⁴ William de Nangis, *Historia*, *RHGF* xx, 770.

⁸⁵ *Layettes*, II, nr. 3382.

⁸⁶ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, *MGH SS* xviii, 218-9.

⁸⁷ *AI*, II, nr. 47.

⁸⁸ William de Nangis, *Gesta*, *RHGF* xx, 454.

⁸⁹ *CM*, IV, 484.

Guillaume de Nangis, in line with the purpose of his work, described it as having been motivated by the King's pious desire to meet the Pope.⁹⁰ In a minute analysis, Baaken has shown how the Provençal question was used by Innocent to woo Louis IX.⁹¹ Assuming a role as the young girl's guardian, Innocent promised his support in obtaining the county for the Capetians, rather than allowing the young woman to marry someone potentially hostile to French interests in the region. In exchange, the Pope may have hoped to win a more ardent ally in Louis IX. Matters developed quickly. On 28 December, Charles of Anjou received papal dispensation for his marriage, and on 31 January the union was celebrated at Aix.⁹² Simultaneously, troops were dispatched to the county.⁹³ Although Louis never declared himself openly against Frederick, Charles of Anjou complied with papal claims and never did homage for his county to Frederick II. At the same time, the union caused new difficulties. In April 1244 Count Raymond had pawned several castles to Henry III of England, in exchange for a loan of 4000 marks sterling.⁹⁴ After the county had passed to the Capetians, the King of England demanded control over these lands, or a repayment. The issue began to feature in negotiations between Henry III and Louis in 1246,⁹⁵ involved the dispatch of English envoys to Languedoc,⁹⁶ and even went - unsuccessfully - before the papal court.⁹⁷ To Louis, his control over Provence meant an end to the recurrent threat of unrest emanating from his southern borders. More importantly, the marriage severely limited Henry III's ability to wage war on France. It also shows how the King of France was able to utilise the conflict between Frederick and Innocent for his and his house's advancement.

Provence and Toulouse, though, were not the only areas in which the King of England suffered diplomatic setbacks. Also in 1247, Hugh de Lusignan the elder, Count of La Marche, died. This deprived Henry of yet another traditional pillar in his anti-French diplomacy. In Flanders, too, the Capetians managed to cement their position.⁹⁸ In 1212 Countess Margaret had married Burchard de Avesnes, who, however, at the time, had been in Holy Orders. The union brought two children, John and Baldwin, but was later annulled. Her second marriage to Walter de Dampierre was also annulled, as the spouses were too closely related. After the Countess' death in 1244,⁹⁹ the succession dispute began. Both the Avesnes and the Dampierre children

⁹⁰ William de Nangis, *Gesta, RHGF* xx, 352-4.

⁹¹ Gerhard Baaken, 'Die Verhandlungen von Cluny (1245) und der Kampf Innocenz' IV gegen Friedrich II.', *DA I* (1994), 531-79, at 532-59.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 557.

⁹³ *CM*, IV, 545-6.

⁹⁴ Fernand Benoit, *Recueil des actes des Comtes de Provence appartenant a la maison de Barcelone*, 2 vols., (Monaco, 1925), II, nr. 373.

⁹⁵ *CM*, IV, 506.

⁹⁶ *CLR 1245-51*, 13.

⁹⁷ *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 1967.

⁹⁸ The following is based on Henry S. Lucas, 'John de Avesnes and Richard of Cornwall', *Speculum* xxiii (1948), 81-101; David Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (London, 1992), 150-69.

⁹⁹ *Annales Marchianenses, MGH SS* xvi, 616.

demanded that they succeed to the counties of Flanders and Hainault. This became embroiled in the papal-Imperial conflict, with Jean de Avesnes requesting help from Frederick, and his half-brothers relying on Louis IX and Innocent IV. A compromise was suggested in 1246, granting the county of Hainault to John de Avesnes, and Flanders to William de Dampierre, but this found little acceptance with the warring brothers. Nonetheless, the Dampierres maintained their control over most of Flanders. With their reliance on Capetian support they were unlikely to join any future campaigns against France.

Louis's successes provide the background for some of the contacts Henry III continued to have with the continent. In December 1246 for instance, Joan of Flanders complained to Henry that he was harbouring those who had plotted many evils against her.¹⁰⁰ In April 1250, John de Avesnes received a safe-conduct on coming to England.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the same year messengers of the commune of Marseilles, at the time involved in an ongoing rebellion against Charles of Anjou,¹⁰² were received in England.¹⁰³ While on crusade, Louis had to ask the Pope several times to explain to Henry III what an un-Christian thing it would be to attack absent crusaders.¹⁰⁴ This sheds doubt on the assumption that Henry had abandoned his plans and projects in France. If nothing else, although we do not know to what extent these contacts were based on the initiative of the English Court, the fact remains that Henry was still perceived as someone likely to provide help and assistance against the Capetians. This, in turn, underlines the wisdom in Louis's IX's decision to take control of Provence and Toulouse.

V.3 England and her friends

As during the pontificate of Gregory IX, the war against Frederick soon led to demands for aids from England. In 1246 papal agents arrived and collected 6000 marks.¹⁰⁵ Once again, the Pope did not stop at asking for money. In 1247 Innocent IV sent legates across Europe to preach the Cross against Frederick.¹⁰⁶ This continued until the Emperor's death,¹⁰⁷ and was combined with further requests for financial help.¹⁰⁸ Payments to fund the Pope's campaigns in Germany and Italy were only one of many points of complaints. In 1246, the English abbots had protested

¹⁰⁰ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 442 [but printed between letters nr. 448 and 450].

¹⁰¹ *CPR 1247-58*, 62.

¹⁰² Peter Herde, *Karl I. von Anjou* (Stuttgart, 1978), 32; Jean Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou: power, kingship and state-making in thirteenth-century Europe* (London, 1998), 46-8; Schulz, *Denn sie liebten*, 271.

¹⁰³ *CLR 1245-51*, 314.

¹⁰⁴ *CM*, V, 23, 26, 346.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 577.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 612; *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 3002.

¹⁰⁷ *Registres Innocent IV*, nrs. 4265, 4269.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, nr. 2997. In a letter to the aristocracy of England, with similar letters addressed to the archbishops of Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, Gascony, Spain, Burgundy, Provence.

about papal provisions of benefices in England, which often deprived the resident monks of their livelihood.¹⁰⁹ In 1245, if Matthew Paris is to be believed, the nobles estimated that annual payments to Rome amounted to 60,000 marks.¹¹⁰ This seems to have given rise to considerable unease with papal demands, as may be implied by the orders Archbishop Boniface allegedly received from Innocent in September 1249, that even those who secretly spoke in favour of the Emperor were to be excommunicated.¹¹¹ It would be mistaken to read this as an indication of English support for Frederick. As before, the point of conflict was not opposition to the Pope's policies, but to his financial demands.

Innocent's efforts to extract funds and troops from England also led to several Imperial missions being dispatched to Henry's court. In July 1246, Frederick sent two envoys,¹¹² carrying with them a letter to the nobles of England, presenting his case. His excommunication had been unjust, and he promised to help Christendom against its many foes, if only the Pope would make peace with him.¹¹³ At about the same time Walter of Ocre wrote to Henry III, giving an account of recent successes in Italy and Germany.¹¹⁴ However, once again Henry had been reluctant to resist papal demands, and Frederick continued to complain.¹¹⁵ Later that year, probably in an attempt to press his master's case in person, Walter visited England.¹¹⁶ In August 1248, the Emperor was once again complaining to Henry III how his efforts at making his peace with Innocent had been thwarted by the Pope's insistence on supporting and assisting the Lombards.¹¹⁷ Imperial missions continued to be received. In July and November 1246,¹¹⁸ June 1247,¹¹⁹ and January 1250,¹²⁰ Imperial envoys are recorded being in England, not counting visits by Walter of Ocre and various letters addressed to Henry III from the Imperial court.¹²¹ The King, however, despite trying to avoid any real commitments, still emphasised his friendly relations with the Emperor. In 1248, for instance, Henry ordered his falconer to present Frederick with four select birds.¹²² The dilemma in which the King of England found himself now, was the same as it had been in 1239, aggravated by his increasingly difficult situation with regard to France.

¹⁰⁹ *CM*, IV, 532.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 419. The issue as a whole is dealt with by Powicke, *Henry III*, 276-82.

¹¹¹ *CM Liber Addimtorum*, *CM*, VI, 171-4.

¹¹² *CLR 1245-51*, 68. No names are given. One envoy is described as a 'knight', the other as a 'footman'.

¹¹³ *CM*, IV, 538-44.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 575-7.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 577-8.

¹¹⁶ *CLR 1245-51*, 94, 95; *CPR 1232-47*, 493.

¹¹⁷ *HB*, VI, 644-6.

¹¹⁸ *CLR 1245-51*, 68, 95.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 271.

¹²¹ The last payment of his and Peter de Vinea's annual fief is recorded in 1248. By then, it had also been extended to Peter nephew John de Capua: *CPR 1247-58*, 26.

¹²² *CR 1247-51*, 88.

This is underlined by Henry's relations with Germany. The Archbishop of Cologne, the driving force behind the elections of Henry Raspe and William of Holland, remained conspicuously absent from English records.¹²³ Only an indirect reference is made in December 1248, when the bailiffs of Yarmouth were ordered to set free merchants from Cologne and Brabant whom they had unlawfully arrested.¹²⁴ However, after the council of Lyon, Henry's court involved itself to a degree, unprecedented since 1235, in the affairs of Germany. Such old acquaintances as the Duke of Brunswick and the ruler of Brabant feature more frequently and regularly in English records. At the same time, as with Henry's expanding contacts in Italy, it remains difficult to draw a line between what might have constituted a change in policy, and more mundane matters such as family relations, and the King's need to reward friends and followers.

The renewed English interest in the Duke of Brunswick, for instance, shows that contacts with Germany should not be viewed in exclusively political terms. In April 1245, Francis de Bren was sent as the King's envoy to Brunswick,¹²⁵ which resulted in a ducal embassy to England shortly afterwards.¹²⁶ Although no further exchange of envoys is reported until 1248, Henry, listed as the archdeacon of Bremen, appeared regularly to collect his annual fee.¹²⁷ Although Bremen was not within the Duke's domains, it was surrounded by his lands and remained under his influence. One may assume that the archdeacon would have delivered any important messages exchanged between the two partners. It was not until August 1250 that another envoy from the Duke arrived in England.¹²⁸ To what extent these exchanges were concerned with 'high' politics is difficult to ascertain. However, other matters, too, seem to have played an important role. In June 1248, for instance, Jordan of Brunswick was authorised, with the consent of Richard of Cornwall,

'to bring from beyond seas to England at the King's expenses all persons who know anything of mintage and exchange of money, to do what belongs to their several duties in the kingdom'.¹²⁹

¹²³ A point left unexplained by Huffman, *Comparative History*, 351.

¹²⁴ *CLR 1247-51*, 130.

¹²⁵ *CLR 1245-51*, 43.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 46, 48, 53; *CR 1242-7*, 421. Already by 5 June, Francis was sent to the Duke of Brabant: *CLR 1245-51*, 57.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 26, 99, 165. This Henry is difficult to identify. In April 1247, Henry 'son of Vologard, consul of Bremen' received a papal mandate that he was to be granted a prebend in the diocese or commune of Bremen: *Epistolae*, II, nr. 328. D. R. Ehmck and W. v. Bingen, *Bremisches UB*, vol. 1 (Bremen, 1873), list only two archdeans named Henry, one Henry of Tossem, appearing around 1259/60, and another from c. 1280. However, the first Henry, before being made dean of Bremen had been a canon there and archdeacon of Hadeln. Neither candidate thus fits chronologically. However, in March 1246, a Henry of Tossem, without being given a title, witnesses a grant by the Archbishop of Bremen to the abbey of Oberholz: *Ibid.*, I, nr. 233.

¹²⁸ *CLR 1245-51*, 302; *CR 1247-51*, 316.

¹²⁹ *CLR 1245-51*, 194; also *CPR 1247-58*, 21.

This refers to the Earl of Cornwall's recently assumed control over the coinage in 1247, one of the greatest projects of mint-reform undertaken in the Middle Ages.¹³⁰ In June, it had been agreed that the Earl was to share the profits from the Mint and the exchange of money with the King, after an initial loan of 10,000 marks had been repaid.¹³¹ Considering that, since the days of Henry the Lion, the Dukes had exercised control over the once rich silver mines at Goslar, and taking into account their traditionally good relations with England, they seemed an obvious choice for foreign expertise. Furthermore, although Goslar had long ceased to produce silver, it still produced Goslar, and the legal and technical framework developed there remained a standard across Europe, adopted, amongst others, by the King of Bohemia at around that time.¹³² The duke of Brunswick also seemed a wise choice, as further contacts with the Archbishops of Cologne might have caused serious political embarrassment. The Welfs, on the other hand, avoided being drawn into the political turmoil embroiling Germany at the time, leaving little doubt as to their loyalty to the Emperor, without alienating papal forces either.

The timing of the first mission to Brunswick in over fifteen years is also important. Within four weeks of having been sent to the North of Germany, Francis de Bren was announced as the King's envoy to the Duke of Brabant.¹³³ This initiated a phase of intense diplomatic activity. By August 1247, messengers of the Duke left England.¹³⁴ This was followed in October by another English mission to Brabant.¹³⁵ In August of the following year, two of the Duke's knights were sent as the King's messengers.¹³⁶ One of them, Walter de la Hast, is recorded once more in May 1249.¹³⁷ The reasons for this suddenly reawakening interest in the Duke may have been twofold. In November 1245 reference was made in a mandate for the King's treasurer to 'militibus et aliis de partibus transmarinis et comiti Flandr'.¹³⁸ This probably refers to foreign mercenaries hired for recent campaigns in Scotland¹³⁹ and Poitou. In this context, troops from Brabant may also have been hired: In 1252, for instance, when returning to Gascony, Simon de Montfort is said to have been offered troops by the Duke.¹⁴⁰ More important, though, were the plans for a marriage between the King's eldest son, Edward, and one of the Duke's daughters. The only account of these plans is given by Matthew Paris. In 1247, he wrote, John Maunsel

¹³⁰ Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, 58-67 for a detailed account. Natalie M. Fryde, 'Silver recoinage and royal policy in England, 1180-1250', in: E. van Cauwenberghe and F. Irsigler (ed.), *Münzprägung-Geldumlauf und Wechselkurse - Minting, Monetary Circulation and Exchange Rates* (Trier, 1984), 11-9 for a comparative overview.

¹³¹ *CPR* 1232-47, 503, 505, 511.

¹³² Peter Spufford, *Money and its use in medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1988), 111, 119.

¹³³ *CLR* 1245-51, 57.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 149: Prior John of Newburgh.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 236.

¹³⁸ *CR* 1242-7, 372.

¹³⁹ *CM*, IV, 379-80.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, V, 210.

was sent to Brabant to arrange the proposed union. However, for reasons which remain obscure, the project failed.¹⁴¹ The mission to the Duke of Brunswick thus coincided with major diplomatic efforts being undertaken in Germany.

In the context of Henry III's relations with Frederick, the Dukes' political affiliation is worth considering. This may also help to illuminate the 'obscure reasons' cited by the St Albans chronicler. Initially, Duke Henry III of Brabant had remained loyal to Frederick. In 1243 he had been amongst those to whom the Emperor expressed his great optimism that the election of Innocent IV would herald the end of his excommunication.¹⁴² In July or August 1246 Walter of Odra referred to the Duke of Lotharingia (i.e. Brabant) as having been present at the Imperial court.¹⁴³ At the same time, his family connections put Henry into a difficult position. One of his daughters was married to Otto of Bavaria, thus making him Conrad IV's grandfather-in-law, while another had been married to Henry Raspe, Frederick II's first anti-King.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, Henry Raspe's successor, William of Holland, was a distant relation.¹⁴⁵ He therefore soon became embroiled in the papal-Imperial conflict. In 1246 the Duke was amongst those who were exhorted by the Pope to elect Henry Raspe as anti-King.¹⁴⁶ However, that in itself does not mean that he had been a supporter of Henry's candidacy. Similar letters had been addressed to the Dukes of Brunswick, Bavaria and Saxony, as well as the Margraves of Meissen and Brandenburg. None of them were known to be ardent supporters of the anti-King. In fact, around Pentecost 1247 Duke Henry had been one of those the Emperor had called upon in preparations for his planned journey to Lyon.¹⁴⁷ Later that year, however, he is listed, together with the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, Trier and Bremen as having elected William of Holland King of the Romans.¹⁴⁸ When exactly he changed sides is unclear. An early indication may have been a privilege from April 1247, in which Innocent IV granted one of the Duke's messengers the rights of legitimate birth, despite his illegitimate descent.¹⁴⁹ Within a couple of months, Duke Henry led William's troops. In August 1247, the papal legate in Germany was ordered to waive canonical restrictions concerning the marriage plans of several of the Duke's knights, as they had taken the cross against Frederick.¹⁵⁰ In November the Duke himself was granted remission of his sins for fighting the Emperor.¹⁵¹ The failure of

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 623-4.

¹⁴² *HB*, VI, 98-9.

¹⁴³ *CM*, IV, 577.

¹⁴⁴ *Chronicon Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium, RHGF* xxi, 629.

¹⁴⁵ *Gesta abbatum Trudonensium, Continuatio III, MGH SS* x, 395-6: *nepos ex sorore Henrici secundi ducis Brabancie*. This may refer to him being the nephew of Duke Henry III's uncle-in-law; for previous relations between Holland and the Empire: Klaus van Eickels, 'Die Grafen von Holland und das Reich im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert', *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter* lx (1996), 65-87.

¹⁴⁶ *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 1970.

¹⁴⁷ *Chronica Regia Coloniensis Continuatio S Pantaleonis V, MGH SS* xxii, 541.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 541-2.

¹⁴⁹ *Epistolae*, II, nr. 314.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, II, nr. 425.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, II, nr. 470.

English negotiations with Brabant thus coincided with the Duke assuming a leading role in William of Holland's government.

Whether this episode was an attempt by Henry III to forge closer relations with the opposition to Frederick remains doubtful. The continuing strong links with Frederick, as well as the lack of any official contacts with William's government even after the Emperor's death in 1250, would undermine such a hypothesis. It is probably safe to assume that Henry III's primary interest was in links with the duchy of Brabant, both for commercial reasons, and in the context of his ambitions on the continent. Henry's court was certainly aware of the Duke's role in Germany. Matthew Paris, for instance, lists him as a possible candidate to succeed Henry Raspe.¹⁵² However, should these marriage plans have aimed at closer links with William's government, the Duke seems an odd choice, especially if the Archbishop of Cologne's role is taken into account. He, more than anyone else, could have arranged and secured contacts. In fact, we may assume that the links between Duke Henry and King William may have been among the very reasons for the project's ultimate failure. Like Louis IX, the King of England remained unwilling to commit himself firmly to either the Pope's or the Emperor's cause. He was willing to press the case for negotiations, and he refused to let his men fight against his erstwhile brother-in-law. In addition, although Frederick did not receive the degree of support he may have expected, he could rest assured that neither would his enemies be able to count on English backing.

A similar picture emerges when looking at the English court's involvement in Italian affairs. There, however, the problem is to differentiate between Henry III's efforts to reward his relatives, and wider political aims. In January 1246 Count Amadeus of Savoy did homage to Henry III for the castles and towns of Susa, Avigliana, St Maurice-on-the-Isère, and Bard,¹⁵³ in exchange for an annual payment of £1000.¹⁵⁴ The deal had been brokered by Peter de Aigueblanche, Bishop of Hereford, who tried to warm the King's heart towards the arrangement by stating that the Count would wage war on any of the King's enemies, and that Henry III should make as many friends and subjects as possible to confound his foes.¹⁵⁵ These lands certainly would have been of strategic significance with regard to any action being undertaken, for instance, in Provence. Furthermore, as Cox has pointed out, there was a long tradition of English rights and privileges in the area.¹⁵⁶ It seems, though, that Fritz Trautz is right in interpreting the episode as being primarily a reward for the Savoyards, without excluding the possibility that they could later to be utilised

¹⁵² However, he does so s. a. 1251: *CM*, V, 201.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, IV, 550.

¹⁵⁴ *CPR 1232-47*, 469.

¹⁵⁵ *DD*, nr. 254.

¹⁵⁶ Cox, *Eagles*, 151. Earlier in the thirteenth century, at Bard, Hugh de Bard had taken the place as a fief from the English court, and the English court paid a fee to the Emperor to receive permission to do so. However, Cox gives no sources for this statement.

elsewhere in Europe.¹⁵⁷ Difficult as it may often be to draw a clear distinguishing line between family relations and 'high' politics, in this particular case the patronage of the King's relatives was probably the overriding motivations, rather than any direct involvement in the affairs of Italy, or even political ambitions on the King's side. Nonetheless, this grant does pose questions as to the state of Henry III's relations with Frederick II.

The English court certainly had its qualms concerning the violation of Imperial rights. After all, Henry III received lands which were nominally under the Emperor's jurisdiction. Matthew Paris, for instance, states that the Count had been able to receive these lands from Henry without prejudice to Imperial claims, 'cum nihil praeter aquas et transitus teneat de imperio'.¹⁵⁸ If nothing else, this implies that some consideration had been given to Frederick's possible reaction. Henry III was indeed treading dangerous ground. After all, the Savoyards were split amongst Peter of Savoy, the Archbishop-elect of Lyon, and thus a member of Innocent IV's inner circle, and Amadeus, who for some time had been prevaricating between Emperor and Pope. In 1244, for instance, he had ignored Frederick's orders, and had ensured that Innocent could safely pass through his lands to Lyon.¹⁵⁹ In 1247, however, he tried to utilise the Emperor's reliance on his services for the advancement of his own interests, and joined the camp of Frederick's supporters. When the Emperor proceeded towards Lyon, the Count refused to let him pass through his territories, unless he first received certain grants which he had for a long time claimed to be his.¹⁶⁰ This led to a series of prolonged negotiations, conducted by Walter de Ocre. First results were made public in April 1247. Amadeus' daughter Beatrice was to marry Manfred Lancia, the Emperor's illegitimate son.¹⁶¹ A little over two weeks later, this was confirmed by Frederick himself, who also promised to restore to Amadeus the castles he demanded.¹⁶² The grant thus formed part of the wider preparations Frederick had undertaken for his planned march on Lyon. The Counts of Savoy continued to play an important role in Imperial politics. In November 1248, for example, the Count's brother, Thomas, received various towns and castles,¹⁶³ including Turin,¹⁶⁴ and was made Imperial Vicar upwards from Pavia.¹⁶⁵ Frederick also appointed Thomas and Amadeus as his proctors in arranging peace with Innocent IV.¹⁶⁶ Unlike the Duke of Brabant, the Counts of Savoy were and remained loyal to the Emperor.

¹⁵⁷ Trautz, *Die Könige*, 106-8.

¹⁵⁸ *CM*, IV, 550.

¹⁵⁹ *Chronicon Marchiae Tarvisinae et Lombardiae*, ed. Luigi A. Botteggi, *RIS* VIII, 3 (Citta di Castello, 1914-6), 17.

¹⁶⁰ *Bartholomaei Scribae Annales*, *MGH SS* xviii, 221.

¹⁶¹ *HB*, VI, 526-8.

¹⁶² Julius Ficker (ed.), *Forschungen zur Reichs-und Rechtsgeschichte Italiens*, 4 vols., (Innsbruck, 1868-74), IV, nr. 405.

¹⁶³ *AI*, I, nrs. 407-9, 411-3.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, I, nr. 410.

¹⁶⁵ *HB*, VI, 658.

¹⁶⁶ *Constitutiones*, nr. 271.

Henry III, although unwilling to challenge Innocent IV openly, was nonetheless willing to support and assist some of Frederick's most loyal lieutenants. It is worth emphasising that this seems to have followed an attitude similar to that in dealings with the Dukes of Brunswick and Brabant. Even when no formal alliance was amongst the issues under consideration, those who either remained neutral in the conflict between Innocent or Frederick, or those who sided with Frederick, were far more likely to be contacted by the English court, than those who actively supported the Pope. The Duke of Brunswick, rather than the Archbishop of Cologne was approached to provide the expertise for Henry's monetary reforms. Count Amadeus of Savoy received a major grant just when he had proven his loyalty towards the Emperor, while at the same time preventing a course of action which could have led to the Pope's captivity or death. The Duke of Brabant's marriage proposals came to nothing, just as the Duke was assuming a leading role in the movement against the Hohenstaufen. Henry III did not abandon his old friend, the Emperor.

That many of these diplomatic initiatives fell into the period after 1245 may have been mere coincidence. In the Duke of Brunswick's case, for instance, contacts coincided with the need to make good the financial losses incurred during the Poitevin campaign, after a parliament in 1247 had refused to grant Henry an aid. The Savoyards may have offered an opportunity to make good the damages done by Louis's acquisition of Provence. However, it is also worth noting that these contacts were undertaken at a time when Henry's policies in France ran into increasing difficulties, and when the Hohenstaufen began to lose their grip on the affairs of Germany and Northern Italy. Like others, Henry was trying to further his own goals, and he became ready to fill the vacuum which was slowly beginning to spread.

The years between 1245 and 1250 also saw a widening of English relations with the Hispanic peninsula. It may well be possible that these were, at least in part, an attempt to compensate for the allies Henry had lost in Languedoc and Flanders. Embassies to and from Aragon are recorded in February, May and June 1246, May 1248 and May 1249,¹⁶⁷ to and from Castile in May and August 1246, April 1247 and May 1249.¹⁶⁸ Many of these contacts were high-ranking, including the Infantes of Castile and Aragon. As so often, little evidence survives to allow further investigations of what exactly these missions had aimed at. However, one may assume that they were related to the events in Portugal, where, after King Sancho II's deposition in 1245, civil war waged. That soon began to involve other rulers on the peninsula, divided roughly into those allied with Louis IX and those who sought other partners.¹⁶⁹ Also, the King of Aragon had had a significant part in the struggles

¹⁶⁷ *CLR 1245-51*, 26, 27, 177, 236.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 73, 75, 117, 119, 120, 123, 232.

¹⁶⁹ Edward Peters, *The Shadow King: rex inutilis in medieval law and literature, 751-1327* (New Haven, 1970), 135-69; Jose Mattoso, 'A crise de 1245', in: his *Portugal medieval: novas*

concerning the inheritance of Provence, and, as we will see, the rulers of Castile began to play an important role in the affairs of Gascony.

Henry III's Hispanic connections also brought him in close, but indirect contact with Frederick II. In late 1242, for instance, while the King was in Poitou, safe-conducts had been issued for a Castilian envoy bringing horses to Frederick's court, and for an Imperial envoy escorting a rouncey to Italy.¹⁷⁰ Contacts between Castile and the Empire had been frequent, despite a temporary cooling of relations after Frederick's deposition. In 1245/6, Alfonso (the future IX), Infante of Castile, had sent an envoy to the Imperial court, dealing, amongst others, with the Provencal inheritance,¹⁷¹ and in the summer of 1250, the King of Castile formed part of Frederick's wider diplomatic efforts to ensure his reconciliation with Innocent, prior to a campaign in the Holy Land.¹⁷² Although it is unclear to what extent Henry himself was involved in these contacts, they help to illustrate the wider range of his diplomatic activities after 1245, and they conform to the pattern of contacts primarily with those who were not openly opposed to Frederick.

Although Henry's role was less prominent than that of Louis IX, Frederick could still rely on his former brother-in-law to help and assist him in his efforts for a reconciliation with Innocent IV. The King of England was willing to press the case for negotiations, he continued to accept Frederick as Emperor, but he remained reluctant to side openly against Innocent IV. Frederick's dependence on the King of France must have caused much disappointment. Furthermore, the deaths of the Counts of Toulouse and Provence, and the passing of Languedoc under Capetian control forced the King of England to look for new allies. This may have informed his reactivated relations with the Dukes of Brabant and Brunswick, his acquisition of lands along the Alpine passes, and regular exchanges with the kings of Aragon and Castile. Old alliances collapsed, and new friends were sought. For Henry III, as for most other rulers, these years were a period of transition. New horizons lay ahead.

interpretações (Lisbon, 1992), 57-76. Many thanks to Iona McCleery for tracing and translating this reference.

¹⁷⁰ *CPR* 1232-47, 330, 350, 398.

¹⁷¹ *AI*, II, nr. 47.

¹⁷² *HB*, VI, 769-71.

Chapter VI
Intermezzo
(1250-4)

1250 marked a watershed in European politics. In December, Frederick II died, leaving Sicily and the Empire to his son Conrad. Louis IX's inglorious crusade to Damietta did little to harm his standing with the *curia*, but it posed considerable difficulties to Henry III. Bereft of a potential ally in the Empire, with many of his old friends and supporters dead, plans for a reconquest of his inheritance seemed finally doomed to fail. In these circumstances, a new opportunity offered itself, which was eagerly seized by Henry III. In March 1250 he declared his intention to lead a crusade to the Holy Land. This came to dominate his actions over the following years and was never really abandoned. Neither his acceptance of the crown of Sicily on behalf of his younger son in 1254, nor the baronial uprising of 1258 put an end to his crusading ambitions. Preparations for this campaign included efforts to settle relations with France, and brought the English court into closer contact with the rulers of the Mediterranean. Contacts with Germany and the Empire underwent a fundamental change. At last, the rulers of Germany were willing to offer the English King what he had always been hoping for: support against France. William of Holland looked to Henry III when he needed allies to fight his Capetian foes in Flanders, but Henry was now too pre-occupied with his planned expedition to Palestine. William's overtures were perceived as a nuisance and potentially embarrassing. Circumstances had changed.

VI.1 The King's Crusade

In March 1250 Henry III took the Cross.¹ Although he never fulfilled his vow, diplomatic and financial preparations for his campaign dominated the years up to 1254.² Despite the great care taken in preparing the campaign, which was to set sail by June 1256,³ it has frequently been criticised as the shallow promise of a fickle King⁴ who was soon to abandon the liberation of the Holy Land for a preposterous claim to the throne of Sicily. This interpretation, however, ignores the extent to which the Sicilian Business initially formed part of the King's crusading venture. Moreover, the surviving evidence leaves little doubt as to sincerity of Henry's intentions.⁵ It was not

¹ *CM*, V, 101-2.

² Generally, cf. Alan Forey, 'The crusading vows of the English King Henry III', *Durham University Journal* lxx (1973), 229-247; and, putting the episode in a wider context, Simon Lloyd, 'King Henry III, the Crusade and the Mediterranean', in: Jones and Vale (ed.), *England and her Neighbours*, 97-119.

³ *CR* 1251-3, 201-2, 214.

⁴ This point in particular was much lamented by Matthew Paris, who viewed the King's vow as yet another attempt at extortion and oppression: *CM*, V, 101.

⁵ Lloyd, 'Henry III', 110-2.

until the English court realised the extent of problems facing it in its conquest of Sicily that the King requested a commutation of his vow from fighting the Muslims in Palestine to fighting the Hohenstaufen in Sicily.

Henry's preparations were thorough and wide-ranging. Great care was taken to put the campaign on firm financial footing, and to ensure its logistics and infrastructure. Early contacts were made with the prelates of the Holy Land, the Kings of Cyprus and Armenia, the prince of Antioch and other Palestine nobles, the Italian communes of Genoa, Pisa and Venice, and the military orders.⁶ The Kings of Cyprus effectively controlled what was left of the Latin kingdom, and the Kings of Armenia, although increasingly pushed in an uncomfortable position between the Mongols and the Mamluks, remained amongst the few Christian rulers still holding out against the Muslims. The Italian sea ports were needed for the shipment of regular supplies and naval protection.⁷ Only the military orders had the infrastructure and military experience needed to maintain a sustained military effort in the Holy Land. They, thus, found themselves amongst the earliest of Henry's contacts.⁸ The King left little doubt as to the sincerity of his intentions. He was eager to avoid the disasters which had beset crusades in the past, such as insufficient supplies or fraught relations with the Christians of *Outremer*.

Henry's diplomatic efforts were not confined to the provisioning of ships and the recruitment of troops. Guaranteeing the infrastructure of a campaign was only one amongst many tasks. Of equal importance was the need to safeguard the integrity of the realm during the King's absence. In Henry's case this meant that a solution had to be found to his conflict with the Capetians. Not only would he need their support to leave from Marseilles, as he had intended,⁹ but he also had to make sure that neither the King of France nor his brothers would capitalise on Henry's absence and interfere in Gascony. Consequently, within a week of assuming the Cross, the English court sent envoys to France to arrange a truce 'usque ad terminum sexdecim annorum, vel usque ad ulteriorem terminum'.¹⁰ However, this soon proved a more difficult undertaking than expected.¹¹ A deep-seated distrust continued to vex relations between England and France, with Gascony at the centre of dissension. In 1252 and 1253, for instance, Henry complained to Queen Blanche and Alfons of Poitiers that the French Crown was supporting rebels in Gascony.¹² At the time, the English King was facing serious discord amongst the Gascon barons, which was to result in the rebellion of 1253/4. However, Henry was also unwilling to let slip by an opportunity

⁶ *CPR 1247-58*, 158.

⁷ *Foedera*, I, 285.

⁸ *CPR 1247-58*, 158.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹⁰ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 463.

¹¹ *CPR 1247-58*, 307.

¹² *CR 1251-3*, 187-8, 442.

to press his claims to Poitou and Normandy. In 1252, asked by Louis IX to hasten his departure for Palestine, the King of England responded that he would do so, once Louis had restored Plantagenet rights in France.¹³ The English court saw the necessity of arranging peace with Louis IX, but this did not mean that the opportunity to settle an old grievance was easily abandoned. Settling the King's affairs with France therefore soon proved to be the most difficult part of his crusading preparations.

Nonetheless, Henry remained consistent in his efforts, and turned down numerous opportunities for alliances against France. At the same time, his court was still viewed as a potential source of help for those opposing the Capetians. In August 1251, for instance, just before Charles of Anjou embarked on a lengthy siege of Marseilles, the commune's messenger was received.¹⁴ Although this may have been connected to the planned crusade which, after all, was to depart from Marseilles, the timing seems suspicious. Similarly, while in Gascony, Henry III met an envoy of John de Avesnes, the claimant to the county of Flanders and foe of Louis' ally, the Countess Joan.¹⁵ It remains unclear, though, whether these were contacts actively encouraged by the English court, or whether the initiative was taken by those who were struggling to hold out against the Capetians. Should they have hoped for military support, they were certainly disappointed. No troops or funds were sent to those rebelling against Charles of Anjou, or the Countess of Flanders. In fact, Henry went to great lengths to accommodate not only Louis IX, but also his brothers. In November 1253 for example, over £7,000 were paid in damages to the Count of Toulouse's men who had been wronged by some of Henry's Gascon subjects.¹⁶ In May 1254 hectic diplomatic efforts were undertaken to find a peaceful solution for recent infringements of the truce.¹⁷ The necessity to settle the conflict diplomatically remained paramount. But Louis IX was not the only ruler with whom peaceful relations had to be established. The King of Navarre, for example, agreed to a truce concerning Gascony.¹⁸ This proved an added benefit when he was later called upon to provide troops for Henry's campaign against Gaston de Bearn and the Gascon rebels.¹⁹ In Britain, the King of England managed to put relations with Scotland onto a firmer basis, when, in 1251, Alexander III of Scotland married Henry's daughter Margaret.²⁰ This put an end to edgy relations which in the past had all too frequently required resources which were now needed in the Holy Land.

¹³ *CPR 1247-58*, 157, 158. Matthew Paris reports that Louis was willing to comply, but failed due to opposition by the French nobility: *CM*, V, 280-1.

¹⁴ *CLR 1245-51*, 364.

¹⁵ *CR 1253-4*, 261.

¹⁶ *CPR 1247-58*, 244, 251.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 292. By then Henry had already accepted Sicily for his son. However, as will be shown in chapter VII, this was initially pursued parallel to, rather than instead of a crusade. At best, the need to reach Sicily made a peace with France even more of a necessity than it had been already.

¹⁸ *CPR 1247-58*, 123.

¹⁹ *CR 1253-4*, 288.

²⁰ *CM*, V, 266-7.

The King of England also found himself involved with those whose support was either to be enlisted for his campaign, or who tried to enlist Henry's for theirs. In 1251 Ferdinand of Castile sent envoys to England, who were to convince Henry to fight in Spain rather than Palestine.²¹ Ferdinand had recently captured Seville and was now trying to establish his control over a territory he lacked the manpower and funds to defend effectively, unless further inroads were made into Muslim territory. In 1253/4, during negotiations with Ferdinand's successor Alfonso X, a Castilian-led campaign in North Africa was mooted, and Henry's support was requested. This may also hold the key to understanding increasing contacts with Norway.²² Although there is no definite indication that these were directly related to Henry's planned crusade, it is worth noting that King Haakon of Norway was soon to conclude an alliance with Alfonso concerning the planned expedition to North Africa.²³ Besides plans for the King's own campaign, other crusaders were received and supported by Henry's court, as, for instance, the Frisian crusaders stranded at Winchelsea in 1254.²⁴ English diplomacy in preparation for the King's departure was both wide-ranging and, initially, successful.

Soon, however, difficulties abounded. Foremost amongst them was the situation in Gascony, where a restive population continued to resist attempts at establishing effective royal control.²⁵ The events in the province also serve to highlight the extent to which Mediterranean rulers began to dominate English affairs on the continent. In 1253 a change of governor coincided with a rebellion under the leadership of Gaston de Bearn.²⁶ When looking for support, the rebels found a favourable reception with the new King of Castile, Alfonso X, who viewed this as a welcome opportunity to state his claims to Gascony. To support his claims Alfonso produced a charter, allegedly issued by Henry II and confirmed by Richard and John, which granted the duchy to the King of Castile.²⁷ Warned that the province would be lost unless he

²¹ *CM*, V, 231-2; the Bishop of Morocco, a prominent member of the Castilian court, is attested as being in England in March 1251: *CLR* 1245-51, 339. He eventually left by early July: *Ibid.*, 363, 364. He was again in England in late 1252: *Ibid.* 1251-60, 79. In 1254, he was one of Alfonso's envoys in ratifying the Treaty of Burgos: *DD*, nr. 270.

²² In 1252, the King's falconer was sent to Norway: *CPR* 1247-58, 157. This was complemented by the gift of a new crown: *CR* 1251-3, 151, 265. In 1253, the King of the Isle of Man received permission from Henry to travel to Norway: *CR* 1251-3, 338.

²³ Bruce Gelsinger, 'A thirteenth-century Castilian-Norwegian alliance', *Medievalia et Humanistica* NS x (1981), 55-80. Some of his conclusions have recently been challenged by Martin Kaufhold, 'Norwegen, das Papsttum und Europa im 13. Jahrhundert: Mechanismen der Integration', *HZ* cclxv (1997), 309-42. For the plan as a whole, also Joseph O'Callaghan, *The Learned King: the reign of Alfonso X of Castile* (Philadelphia, 1993), 163-80.

²⁴ *CR* 1253-4, 130.

²⁵ For the problems facing Henry in Gascony, most recently, Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 106-24; older, but still valuable, Powicke, *Henry III*, 208-58, and Frank B. Marsh, *English rule in Gascony 1199-1259 with special reference to the towns* (Ann Arbor, 1912), 111-51.

²⁶ *CM*, V, 368.

²⁷ *CM*, V, 365-6. This had already caused problems during Henry III's coronation in 1220: Eales, 'The political context', *passim*, and Carpenter, *The Minority*, 200-3.

hurried to France, the King of England left for Gascony by early August 1253.²⁸ After initial successes, Henry's progress stalled at La Reole in November.²⁹ Simultaneously, negotiations began with Alfonso.³⁰ From then on, the chronology becomes confusing. It was not until February the following year that Henry made his negotiations public in England.³¹ Even then, he still requested troops and support.³² It has been suggested that this may have been an attempt to elicit funds from a baronage which had proved reluctant to grant the King the financial aid he needed.³³ The threat of a foreign invasion, may thus have been a welcome opportunity to press the case for stronger financial support, and could explain why these negotiations had been kept secret. However, although Henry painted a vivid picture of the threat posed by the Christian and Muslim forces which Alfonso was mustering, and which were said to threaten England as well as Gascony,³⁴ a parliament meeting in January 1254 refused to accept the King's demands.³⁵ Even the offer made by Richard of Cornwall, the King's regent, that Magna Carta was to be re-confirmed and obeyed, had little effect.³⁶ The fact that, at the time, Henry had accumulated a treasure of 28,000 marks, sheds doubts on his claims of penury, and may have contributed to his barons' reluctance to agree to any extra taxation.³⁷ The fact that most of the King's treasure had probably been intended for the planned campaign would have carried little weight with a parliament which became increasingly distrustful of Henry's financial management. In the end, however, no troops were needed, as a peace agreement was reached by March 1254.³⁸ Alfonso surrendered his claims to Gascony,³⁹ and ceased to support Gaston and his fellow-rebels.⁴⁰ To symbolise their new concord, Henry III's eldest son, Edward, was to marry the King of Castile's sister.⁴¹ In addition the King of England promised to support for Alfonso's planned crusade in North Africa.⁴² Gascony had been secured and pacified. More importantly, the links with rulers of the Iberian peninsula were strengthened.⁴³ In fact, next to a more friendly

²⁸ *CM* V 378-9, 381, 383.

²⁹ *Annals of Waverley*, *AM* II, 346; *Annals of Tewkesbury*, *AM* I, 154.

³⁰ *CM*, V, 396-400. For a somewhat odd interpretation of the role of Henry's chief negotiator, Joseph Baylen, 'John Maunsell and the Castilian treaty of 1254: a study of the clerical diplomat', *Traditio* xvii (1961), 482-491.

³¹ *CM*, VI, *Lib. Add.* 284-6.

³² *CR* 1253-4, 115-6.

³³ Powicke, *Henry III*, 235.

³⁴ *CR* 1253-4, 109; *CPR* 1247-58, 362.

³⁵ *CM*, V, 423-5, 440-1, 447.

³⁶ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 499.

³⁷ David Carpenter, 'The Gold treasure of Henry III', *Thirteenth Century England* i (1983), 61-88, at 65.

³⁸ *CPR* 1247-58, 279-80, 281.

³⁹ *DD*, nr. 270.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, nr. 273.

⁴¹ *CPR* 1247-58, 312, 351.

⁴² *CR* 1253-4, 316. Henry asks for papal permission to transfer his campaign to North Africa [18. 9. 1254].

standing with the court of Louis IX, this extension of English interests remained the most important feature of English diplomacy during these years.

The King's interests in the Mediterranean soon began to expand. While in Gascony, the crown of Sicily was accepted on behalf of prince Edmund.⁴⁴ It seems, though, as if Henry had little idea of the complications this would involve, and it would certainly be mistaken to view his acceptance of the Apulian throne as putting an end to his crusading plans. No doubt was left about the King's priorities. For instance, immediately after Henry had accepted the Sicilian throne, renewed efforts were made towards the completion of Westminster abbey before the King 'takes his journey to the Holy Land.'⁴⁵ Simultaneously, preparations for the King's campaign in Palestine were hastened and further funds and aids requested from the papal court.⁴⁶ Initially, the Sicilian Business was thus little more than a sub-plot to the planned conquest of Jerusalem.

In many ways, Edward's Castilian marriage formed part of a much wider picture. Ensuring the continuation of one's dynastic line was a traditional feature of crusading policy. Just as Henry (VII) had found himself the subject of a number of proposals in 1225, immediately prior to his father's campaign, so did Edward during the years immediately following Henry's taking of the Cross. In another parallel, Edward became a much-courted prospective spouse just as the end of his minority was imminent.⁴⁷ Suitors included Alfonso of Castile, as well as the King of Aragon and the Duke of Brabant. In the end it was the threat posed to Gascony which ensured the success of the Castilian proposal. However, this does not mean that the other proposals had been doomed from the start. Nor were political problems the only difficulties besetting Jaime of Aragon or Henry of Brabant. Just as important were financial problems. In October 1251, for instance, Henry claimed that any delay in negotiations concerning the Aragonese proposal was not his fault, as he had already written to the King explaining how much money he expected to receive.⁴⁸ Little evidence survives to illuminate this passage further. However, considering the habitual penury of the Catalan kingdom in the thirteenth century,⁴⁹ the King of Aragon's ability or inability to pay Henry III the sums he demanded may have been as important a factor in determining the ultimate failure of these marriage plans as was Alfonso's interference in Gascony. Also in 1251 the Duke of Brabant was asked to

⁴³ Generally, also, Anthony Goodman, 'England and Iberia in the Middle Ages', in: Jones and Vale (ed.), *England and her Neighbours*, 73-96, at 75-77.

⁴⁴ *Foedera*, I, 301.

⁴⁵ *CPR 1247-58*, 279-80, 281.

⁴⁶ Also Lloyd, 'Henry III', 112-3.

⁴⁷ Edward was born in 1239: Felix Liebermann, 'The Annals of Lewes Priory', *EHR* xvii (1902), 83-89, at 88.

⁴⁸ *CR 1247-51*, 566-7. This seems a valid reason, considering the habitual penury of the Aragonese Kings in the mid-thirteenth century:

⁴⁹ J. N. Hillgarth, *The Problem of the Catalan Mediterranean Empire 1229-1337* (London, 1975), 5.

wait until Easter 1252 before his marriage proposals could be dealt with. Once more, financial matters were said to pose the biggest problem.⁵⁰ It is interesting to observe a reversal of roles which was probably incidental, but which remains symbolic nonetheless. The very Henry III who had gone to great pains to seek an alliance with the German princes, who had put no resistance to Frederick II's financial demands when the Emperor courted Isabella, who did not even want to settle for a dowry when he himself married, put financial considerations at a very prominent place where the marriage of his own son was concerned. Naturally, this may have been connected to the very reasons which, two decades earlier, had led to Frederick II's courtship of Isabella: a need for financial as well as military support in pursuing his various projects, most notably the crusade. However, this also shows how Henry's priorities had changed. The rivalry between the Kings of Aragon and Castile posed the danger of drawing the King of England into yet another conflict, and of driving Alfonso into the arms of Louis IX, having the whole of Gascony surrounded by the Capetians and their allies. A Brabantine marriage, too, would have pushed Henry into siding with those whose company he had recently begun to avoid: the Avesnes brothers and those on the look-out for allies against the Countess of Flanders and her Capetian allies. Although the hope that Henry, one way or another, might be able to regain his lost inheritance had not yet been abandoned, a military recover was no longer an option. Had the King been in any doubt about this, his experiences during the Gascon campaign must have made this clear to him. It now remains to be seen how these shifting parameters influenced English relations with Germany and the Empire.

VI.2 England, Germany and the Empire

In Germany, Frederick's death marked William's ascendancy and Conrad's demise. William of Holland soon won support even from within the Hohenstaufen's traditional heartland, and he gained recognition abroad. In 1251, for instance, Duke John of Burgundy did homage for Lausanne and Besancon.⁵¹ This alliance soon increased in significance when one of the Duke's daughters married into the Duke of Brabant's family in 1253,⁵² and his son into that of the burgraves of Nuremberg in 1255.⁵³ Not only did this strengthen William's position at the eastern borders of the Empire, he also gained control over Nuremberg, once a centre of Hohenstaufen power.⁵⁴ The erstwhile anti-King had thus successfully filled the vacuum left by

⁵⁰ *CR* 1247-51, 527.

⁵¹ *Layettes*, III, nr. 3935.

⁵² *Annales Parchenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 607.

⁵³ *Layettes*, III, nr. 4186.

⁵⁴ For a general outline of the history of the town in the thirteenth century cf. Gerd Pfeiffer, 'Der Aufstieg der Reichsstadt Nürnberg im 13. Jahrhundert', *Mitteilungen des Vereins für die Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* xlv (1953), 14-24; Josef Kraus, 'Die Stadt Nürnberg in ihren Beziehungen zur Römischen Kurie während des Mittelalters', *Mitteilungen des Vereins für die Geschichte der Stadt*

Frederick II's death. His triumph was completed in 1252, when William celebrated his marriage with one of the Duke of Brunswick's daughters, thus gaining ground in the distant North of Germany. More importantly, he decided to repeat his election as King of the Romans. This time, his elevation was confirmed by those who in the past had either ignored or opposed his royal status.⁵⁵ Only Duke Louis of Bavaria, the father of Conrad IV's pregnant wife,⁵⁶ remained hostile. However, when Louis murdered his wife in 1253,⁵⁷ he was left ostracised and without real political clout. Not only had those who in the past remained aloof from the ongoing conflict joined William's camp, but his opponents were left as political and moral pariahs. William had at last secured control of Germany, with his authority and power largely unchallenged.

He quickly decided to use this for a campaign against the Countess of Flanders. In July 1253 an army, led by Baldwin de Avesnes, inflicted a disastrous defeat on the combined forces of Flanders and France.⁵⁸ The Dampierre brothers were captured, as were the Counts of Bar and Guines.⁵⁹ The triumph was, however, short-lived. Soon after the battle Countess Margaret offered Hainault to Charles of Anjou,⁶⁰ and agreed to pay the cost of fighting William. In early 1254 Charles conquered Hainault without encountering much resistance. William had to give way to Capetian pressure. Louis IX, asked to arbitrate between the various parties, decreed that both the Dampierre and the Avesnes brothers had to take their lands as fiefs from the Count of Anjou, thus giving a Capetian prince control over what was once Imperial territory. However, the Avesnes brothers remained reluctant to accept a compromise which fell well short of what they claimed to be rightfully theirs, and efforts to undo the results of the 1254 campaign remained at the heart of William's diplomacy.⁶¹

Conrad IV soon realised that he had little chance of securing his position north of the Alps, and left for Sicily in 1251.⁶² He was quickly recognised by most Apulian towns and nobles. In addition, negotiations began with Innocent IV to put an end to the young King's excommunication.⁶³ If Matthew Paris is to be believed, these

Nürnberg xli (1950), 1-153, at 3. Also, *Die Zeit der Staufer*, Exhibition Catalogue, 5 vols., (Stuttgart, 1977-9), vol. IV, maps 5,7,9.

⁵⁵ *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 38-9. The legal basis has been discussed in Heinrich Mitteis, *Die deutsche Königswahl: ihre Rechtsgrundlagen bis zur Goldenen Bulle*, 2nd edition (Brünn, Vienna, 1944), 185-193.

⁵⁶ *Annales Hermanni Altahenses*, MGH SS xvii, 395 for the birth of Conradin on 25 March 1252.

⁵⁷ *Annales Saxonici*, MGH SS xvi, 431.

⁵⁸ *Annales Marchianenses*, MGH SS xvi, 616; *Annales Neresheimenses*, MGH SS 10, 24.

⁵⁹ *Annales Erphordenses*, MGH SS xvi, 39-40. The most detailed contemporary account is given by Matthew Paris: *CM Lib. Add.*, *CM*, VI, 252-5; also *ibid.*, V, 392, 437.

⁶⁰ Herde, *Karl I.*, 35-6 for this and the following.

⁶¹ In particular, Lucas, 'John de Avesnes', *passim*.

⁶² *Annales Ianuenses*, MGH SS xviii, 230. For a somewhat old-fashioned account of Conrad's time in Italy, Georg Zeller, *König Konrad IV. in Italien, 1252-1254* (Bremen, 1907). Also, more readable, Steven Runciman, *The Sicilian Vespers. a history of the mediterranean world in the thirteenth century* (Cambridge, 1958), 26-38. Odilo Engels, *Die Staufer* 6th edition (Stuttgart, 1994), 187-191 for a survey of more recent research.

⁶³ Carl Rodenberg, *Innocenz IV und das Königreich Sicilien, 1245 - 1254* (Halle, 1892), 113-26.

included plans for a marriage between Henry, Frederick II's son by his marriage with Isabella Plantagenet, and a papal niece.⁶⁴ However, the Pope had left little doubt as to his intentions. Innocent was unwilling to consider the possibility of acknowledging the rights of any Hohenstaufen claimant. As soon as news of Frederick's death had reached the *curia*, the preaching of a crusade against Conrad began.⁶⁵ Similarly, the Sicilian aristocracy was exhorted not to adhere to any of Frederick's sons.⁶⁶ While Conrad was attacked in Italy, measures were taken to undermine his German base even further. In 1253 William was asked to enforce an earlier decision which deprived Conrad of the duchy of Swabia,⁶⁷ and the Duke of Brabant was promised that the Church would never enter into peace with its enemies, as long as Conrad 'qui se pro imperatore gerebat in Alemannia regali honori remaneat decoratus'.⁶⁸ There was little hope that the papal-Hohenstaufen conflict could be resolved by peaceful means.

It was only after much pressure from Louis IX and after a series of papal defeats that Innocent began to consider negotiating with Conrad.⁶⁹ The Hohenstaufen was granted a respite to allow him to prove his orthodoxy, as a step towards proper negotiations.⁷⁰ In the end, the young King's deposition and excommunication were confirmed. However, Innocent was spared having to enforce his decrees, as Conrad died in May 1254.⁷¹ This left the Pope free to pursue his aims in Sicily. He triumphantly entered Naples, where he stayed until his death in November 1254.⁷² At the time, it seemed as if Innocent had achieved what he and Gregory had been fighting for since 1239. The Hohenstaufen were defeated and the papacy took, at last, control of Sicily. Amongst Frederick's heirs, only Conradin, a two year old safely confined to the Duke of Bavaria's lands, and Manfred, Frederick's illegitimate offspring, were left to pursue the family's claims. In Germany, William of Holland was at the height of his power, and in Sicily, Henry III, a loyal son of the Church, was to establish a new dynasty.

English contacts with Germany during these years continued, but remained marginal. Henry had little use for those who wanted him to fight the French. Relations were confined to the Dukes of Brabant and Brunswick, and contacts with William or Conrad remained indirect and few. As so often, evidence survives for various missions from the Empire, but their purpose remains a matter of conjecture. It is safe

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, V, 274-5. He continues to explain that the project failed because the Imperial nobles were unwilling to countenance such a slight on the dignity of the Imperial dynasty. This was probably a veiled attack on Henry III, rather than an apt reflection of reality.

⁶⁵ *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 5032.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, nr. 5339.

⁶⁷ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 186.

⁶⁸ *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 6397.

⁶⁹ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 255.

⁷⁰ For a list of accusations *CM, Lib. Add.*, *CM*, VI, 298-304. Also *CM*, V, 448-9 for a short summary.

⁷¹ *Annales Scheftlarienses Minores*, *MGH SS* xvii, 344.

⁷² *Chronicon Marchiae Tarvisinae*, *RIS* 8,III, 24.

to assume, though, that William's need for allies remained at the centre of German relations with England. Although there is little indication of any close links, some evidence suggests that contacts with some of the traditional addressees of English diplomacy were maintained. In April 1252 and in May 1253, for instance, Master Geoffrey, a clerk of the Duke of Brunswick, received a fee at the Exchequer.⁷³ This could imply a regularity of contacts between the ducal court and that of Henry III. Geoffrey may also have brought news of William's recent successes in Germany, including his marriage with one of the Duke's daughters. Other messengers were sent as well. In December 1252 a knight from Brunswick was in England,⁷⁴ where he seems to have stayed until early January 1253.⁷⁵ That a certain degree of cordiality prevailed in relations with the Welf Duke of Brunswick is implied by the fact that this embassy was given robes 'sicut valletis regis'.⁷⁶ These months also witnessed the built-up to William's campaign in Flanders, and this mission may, thus, have been concerned with attempts at winning military and diplomatic backing from Henry III. However, other matters may have been dealt with as well, as was probably the case when the Duke's knight visited the English court again in September 1253.⁷⁷ Then, his sojourn may have been connected to the matter of various North German merchants imprisoned in July.⁷⁸ This would explain why he contacted the regents in England, rather than the King in Gascony. This suggests that, despite cooling relations with the court of William himself, contacts continued with those who had traditionally been at the centre of English diplomacy in Germany. However, should they have hoped that their traditional links could induce Henry to challenge Louis IX, they were disappointed.

A similar experience was to be had by the Duke of Brabant. He continued his prominent role in Imperial affairs after the Emperor's death. In early 1251 the Duke was asked to lead yet another crusade against Conrad,⁷⁹ and he was one of William's most important allies during the 1253 campaign in Flanders.⁸⁰ At the same time, closer links with England continued. When returning to Gascony in 1252, Simon de Montfort was offered troops by the Duke.⁸¹ Furthermore, the project of a Brabantine marriage for Edward of England was dealt with again.⁸² Little is known about the

⁷³ *CLR 1251-60*, 43-4, 128.

⁷⁴ *CR 1251-3*, 296.

⁷⁵ *CLR 1251-60*, 97.

⁷⁶ *CR 1251-3*, 296. Unfortunately, Frederique Lachaud, 'Liveries of robes in England, c. 1200 - c. 1300', *EHR* cxi (1996), 279-98, does not cover the use of liveries and robes in diplomatic relations.

⁷⁷ *CPR 1247-58*, 222.

⁷⁸ *CR 1251-3*, 494, 495.

⁷⁹ *CM*, V, 260.

⁸⁰ *Ibid. Lib. Add.*, *CM*, VI, 253.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, V, 210.

⁸² *CR 1247-51*, 527.

progress of negotiations, and any hope for success was shattered with the Castilian union of 1254.

In an interesting parallel to relations before 1235, contacts with Germany were arranged *via* the Imperial aristocracy, rather than the King himself. The closest to an official exchange with William of Holland was the request made by Henry III in spring 1253, that Bern and other places, currently held by the Counts of Kiburg, be returned to Peter of Savoy.⁸³ At the time, Thomas of Savoy was performing a precarious balancing act. Matthew reports that he had been involved in arranging a truce between the Hohenstaufen and Innocent IV in 1252.⁸⁴ In February 1254 it was at the Count's instigation that Conrad had been granted a respite before a formal trial would be opened against him.⁸⁵ By the time of Conrad's death, however, the Count was firmly siding with the papal forces: on 30 May 1254 Innocent IV ordered William of Holland to grant Thomas possession of a castle between Asti and Alexandria.⁸⁶ Henry's intercession on Peter's behalf, though, was probably related to the king's patronage of his Savoyard relatives,⁸⁷ rather than to an involvement in German affairs. Also, the role the Counts played in Henry's crusade planning has to be considered. In June 1253, for instance, Henry appointed John de Amblyone, the dean of Monte St Andrea in Savoy, and papal chaplain, as his proctor at the *curia*, 'to sue and obtain graces and indulgences for the subsidy of the Holy Land'.⁸⁸ Although John was later to play an important role in the Sicilian Business,⁸⁹ his earlier involvement was primarily concerned with the planning of the King's crusade. He provided an important link between the English court, the papal *curia* and the counts of Savoy. Similarly, Henry's intercession on Peter's behalf was connected to the crusade. After all, Peter remained one of the most important recruits the King had been able to muster.⁹⁰ The King may thus have tried to use whatever standing he had in Germany to further the case of his supporters and relatives. To read more into this anecdote would be mistaken. In fact, mostly due to economic reasons, relations between the William and Henry deteriorated quickly. In November and December 1254 mandates were issued to arrest merchants from Holland and Zeeland, as English merchants imprisoned there had not yet had their goods restored, despite William's promises.⁹¹ Furthermore, also in December 1254, the homage done by Joan of Flanders for an annual fee of 500 marks was

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 457.

⁸⁴ *CM*, V, 301.

⁸⁵ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 255.

⁸⁶ Pierina Fontana (ed.), *Documenti sulle Relazioni tra la casa di Savoia e la Sancta Sede nel Medio Evo (1066-1268)* (Turin, 1939), nr. 157.

⁸⁷ On their interests in the region, Cox, *Eagles*, 201-4.

⁸⁸ *CPR 1247-58*, 197.

⁸⁹ In March 1254, Innocent IV informed Count Thomas that John had brought news that Henry III had accepted Sicily on behalf of Edmund: Fontana, *Documenti*, nr. 158.

⁹⁰ *CPR 1247-58*, 188.

⁹¹ *CR 1254-6*, 3, 13; it should be noted, however, that, in October 1255, the mission of Prior John of Newburgh was described as addressed to the 'King of Germany': *CLR 1251-60*, 244.

acknowledged.⁹² At the time, Henry III was Louis IX's guest in Paris, and her homage may thus have been connected to this visit.⁹³ Not only was Henry reluctant to support William against the Capetians and their allies, he also forged stronger links with those hostile to the German King.

Conrad IV did not fare better. Until he got involved in the Sicilian Business, Henry stayed clear of the conflict between Hohenstaufen and papalists in Italy. The main source for relations between the two rulers is Matthew Paris. In the context of the Sicilian Business he mentioned that Conrad had thanked Richard of Cornwall for rejecting the papal offer of the Apulian throne.⁹⁴ Interestingly enough, an embassy from Conrad is recorded as being in England by March 1253,⁹⁵ only a few months after Richard had been offered the crown of Sicily. More importantly, the same day Conrad's envoy was attested, Henry III sent one of his officials to Apulia.⁹⁶ Moreover, Matthew states that Richard, still hesitant about accepting the crown, consulted Conrad about the affairs of Sicily.⁹⁷ Whether the English mission was in fact, as suggested by the St Albans chronicler, to consult Conrad on how best to overthrow his regime, remains a matter of speculation. It may, however, have been concerned with discussing recent events in general, and may have been connected to events surrounding the King of England's nephew, Henry. After all, one of the alleged reasons for Richard's refusal of the crown was that this would deprive Henry of his inheritance.⁹⁸ Little is known of Henry apart from his death in 1253/4.⁹⁹ Even that was soon used in propaganda against Conrad. A Genoese source mentions that Conrad had strangled his brother Henry after returning to Sicily.¹⁰⁰ This was rejected by Matthew Paris who reported that Conrad loved his brother above everyone else.¹⁰¹ In fact, he blamed those rumours on the papacy who was trying to sow discord between the King of England and his Apulian in-laws.¹⁰² He goes on to blame Innocent for the young boy's death. After the Sicilian nobles had heard of Richard being offered their realm, they conspired against the boy.¹⁰³ To what extent this is a reliable interpretation of events remains doubtful. Almost any event described from 1254 onwards was used by Matthew to illustrate either the King's incompetence and

⁹² *CPR* 1247-58, 387.

⁹³ *Annals of Burton*, AM I, 329.

⁹⁴ *CM*, V, 361.

⁹⁵ *CLR* 1251-60, 114.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁹⁷ *CM*, V, 361

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 347.

⁹⁹ *RI*, nr. 4616c.

¹⁰⁰ *Annales Ianuenses*, *MGH SS* xviii, 230.

¹⁰¹ *CM*, V, 448. In this he gives an almost verbatim echo of Conrad IV's letter from early 1254, in which he excuses the long delay in bringing this news, as his own grief had overwhelmed him so much: *Foedera*, I, 302.

¹⁰² *CM*, V, 460.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, V, 432.

oppression, or the Pope's immorality and ruthlessness.¹⁰⁴ Nonetheless, should Henry's or Richard's involvement have constituted a threat to the young boy, this could explain the English mission from March 1253. However, the English court stayed clear of involving itself in the Italian wars. Any involvement in these affairs was not actively sought, but was encouraged by Innocent IV and, to a lesser extent, Conrad IV.

Between 1250 and 1254, Henry III had been primarily occupied with organising and preparing his crusade to the Holy Land. In this context, he strove to improve relations with France. At the same time, the need to secure and defend what was left of his continental inheritance led to a strengthening of already existing ties with the Hispanic peninsula. Under these circumstances, the English court had little interest in the affairs of Germany. Contacts with the Empire were with or in the interest of the King's favourites and relatives, and remained subordinate to the King's affairs and aspirations in the Mediterranean.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, 1958), 146-7; Karl Schnith, *England in einer sich wandelnden Welt (1189-1259): Studien zu Roger Wendover und Matthäus Paris* (Stuttgart, 1974), 152; Weiler, 'Matthew Paris'.

Chapter VII
The Sicilian Business
(1254-63)

After Frederick II's death in 1250, attempts began to replace the Hohenstaufen dynasty in Sicily as well as Germany.¹ The *regno* was offered unsuccessfully to Richard of Cornwall and Charles of Anjou, before Henry III accepted it on behalf of his youngest son Edmund, ten years old at the time, in 1254.² Although neither the King nor his son ever reached Italy, the affairs of Apulia came to dominate English politics. Already existing ties with the Mediterranean were strengthened, and renewed impetus was given to Henry's attempts at securing a permanent settlement with France. After all, the island could only be reached if Louis and his brothers were willing to let an English army pass through their lands. When these negotiations ran into difficulties, alternative routes had to be found. This led to renewed contacts with Germany, culminating in the election of Henry's brother Richard as King of the Romans in 1257. The *negotium Sicilie* soon changed the course of English politics and diplomacy, with serious repercussions not only for Henry's relations with the continent, but also included his domestic affairs. In 1258, at Oxford, he was forced to hand over the reins of government to a baronial council. Many of the complaints made on that occasion were linked to or originated in his acceptance of the Sicilian throne.

VII.1 Negotiations and promises

The English court had always been the papacy's favourite to replace the Hohenstaufen in Sicily.³ Matthew Paris refers to overtures being made as early as 1250, in the context of Richard of Cornwall's visit to Lyon.⁴ The earliest documentary evidence survives from August 1252, when Innocent IV contacted Henry III, offering the *regno* to Earl Richard.⁵ Little else is known about the ensuing negotiations. By November, a papal notary, Albert of Parma, who was later to deal with Charles and Henry, is reported as being in England,⁶ and by January 1253 Henry thanked the

¹ It should be noted, however, that the *Annales Breves Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 76, put the first offer of the Sicilian crown, to Charles of Anjou, in 1248. Alois Wachtel, 'Die sizilische Thronkandidatur des Prinzen Edmund von England', DA iv (1940), 98-178, at 100-103.

² *Annales Cestrienses*, ed. R. C. Christie, *The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire* xiv (1887), 62.

³ Henri Marc-Bonnet, 'Richard de Cornouailles et la couronne de Sicile', in: *Melanges d'Histoire du Moyen Age a Louis Halphen* (Paris, 1951), 483-489; Gerhard Baaken, *Ius Imperii ad regnum: Königreich Sizilien, Imperium Romanum und Römisches Papsttum vom Tode Kaiser Heinrichs VI. bis zu den Verzichtserklärungen Rudolfs von Habsburg* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1993), 387-95; Wachtel, 'Die Kandidatur', 98-106; Rodenberg, *Innozenz IV*, 27-30 for secondary accounts.

⁴ CM, V, 347, claiming that the story had been told to him by the Earl himself.

⁵ *Foedera*, I, 284.

⁶ CM, V, 346.

Pope for the offer of Sicily.⁷ However, dealings with the Earl made little progress,⁸ and by June 1253 negotiations began with Charles of Anjou.⁹ In the end Charles, too, found that other areas in Europe offered easier and more promising prospects.¹⁰ In the autumn of 1253 he accepted the county of Hainault from Margaret of Flanders, and began his campaign against William of Holland and the Avesnes brothers.

In December 1253 Albert received papal authorisation to submit the conditions for an enfeoffment with Sicily to Henry III.¹¹ What exactly Innocent IV's terms had been we do not know. However, they are unlikely to have been different from those submitted to Charles of Anjou.¹² The Pope's demands aimed at guaranteeing the safety of papal lands and the separation of Imperial territories from the kingdom of Sicily. For instance, Charles had to promise that, in case he or his successors should only beget an heiress, she would never marry an Emperor or the son of an Emperor, or anyone likely to become Emperor. Innocent IV viewed the establishment of a new dynasty in Sicily as an opportunity to end the stranglehold into which the union between Sicily and the Empire under the Hohenstaufen had brought the papal state. In addition, the Count of Anjou was requested to pay 1,000 ounces of gold on accepting the kingdom, 10,000 towards the rebuilding of Benevento, a papal enclave in Apulia, an annual tribute of 2,000 ounces, and to provide 50 knights in the service of the papacy. Once more, these terms aimed at underlining the status of the Sicilian Kings as vassals of the Holy See. All in all, papal demands were neither unreasonable nor excessive. What mattered most to Innocent IV at this point was to rid himself of his Hohenstaufen foes, and to ensure that the problems which had beset relations between Sicily and the *curia* in the past be resolved.

Henry and his court saw little difficulty in agreeing to these terms, and by early March 1254 Albert confirmed Edmund as King of Sicily.¹³ It seems, though, as if Henry III had underestimated the speed with which Innocent IV expected him to act. Already in May, when confirming Edmund's enfeoffment, he urged the King to prompt his son's departure for Sicily.¹⁴ To enable him to do so, the Pope promised to

⁷ *CR 1251-3*, 449.

⁸ According to Matthew Paris, this was the case because Innocent had refused to grant Richard the securities he had demanded, thus triggering the Earl's alleged comment that the papal offer was like an offer to buy the moon, and then being told 'Go and get it': *CM*, V, 457. However, Matthew reports this as a remark allegedly made by Albert to Innocent, allegedly referring to an earlier conversation with Richard. More importantly, the St Albans chronicler mentions the episode in the context of Henry III's acceptance of the offer, and thus writing under the impression of later events, contrasting Richard favourably with his brother. The Earl's alleged comment was thus intended as a criticism of Henry III and has to be handled with great caution.

⁹ *Registres Innocent IV*, nrs. 6806, 6818.

¹⁰ On Charles' negotiations with the Holy See in the context of his relations with the papacy in general, Henri-Marc-Bonnet, 'Le Saint-siège et Charles d'Anjou sous Innocent IV et Alexandre IV', *Revue Historique* cc (1948), 38-65, at 49-62.

¹¹ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 446, in an account given by Albert concerning his negotiations with Henry III.

¹² *Registres Innocent IV*, nr. 6819. Baaken, *Ius Imperii*, 392-5 for a more detailed discussion.

¹³ *Foedera*, I, 297.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 301. This was repeated a week later, when Innocent exhorted Henry to avoid unnecessary expenses to hasten his departure for Sicily: *Ibid.*, 302.

pay 100,000 *livres tournouis* towards Henry's expenses, granted an extension of the period during which a tenth for the planned crusade could be collected, as well as a commutation of the King's vow from freeing Jerusalem to conquering Apulia.¹⁵ Innocent, thus, gave all the assistance he could. Henry, however, found himself beset by problems. His attempts at soliciting funds from his English subjects had failed, Gascony had not yet been pacified,¹⁶ and he had to see through his son Edward's Castilian marriage.¹⁷ More importantly, relations with France remained to be settled.¹⁸ Under these circumstances it was unlikely that he would set out for Sicily soon. Nonetheless, preparations began. These included, amongst others, the appointment of Thomas of Savoy as prince of Capua.¹⁹ Thomas had served Frederick II as Imperial Vicar, and he had been involved in negotiations between Conrad IV and Innocent, thus possessing an unrivalled knowledge of Italian affairs. In October 1254, the Archbishop of Embrun and the Bishop of Hereford were announced as royal envoys to the citizens of Sicily.²⁰ If Henry saw himself unable to come to Sicily soon or in person, he at least took steps to assert his and his son's authority. Innocent himself, now resident at Naples, managed to win important allies. Most important amongst these was Berthold margrave of Hohenburg.²¹ He had been Manfred's guardian and was appointed regent of Sicily by Conrad IV.²² This ensured that Edmund's regime would have the support of some of the most high-ranking and experienced members of Conrad's administration.²³ Other recruits included men like Richard Filangieri, once Frederick's governor in Palestine,²⁴ Richard de Montenero, formerly grand justiciar of Sicily, and Peter Ruffus, marshal and governor of Calabria.²⁵ During the early months of the project, neither Henry III nor Innocent IV seem to have had any doubt concerning the likelihood of the project's eventual success, despite the progress made by Manfred during the autumn and early winter of

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 301, 303, 304.

¹⁶ *CPR 1247-58*, 364.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 312.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 311.

¹⁹ *Foedera*, I, 308.

²⁰ *CPR 1247-58*, 344.

²¹ *Foedera*, I, 311.

²² Manfred Doeberl, 'Berthold von Hohenburg', *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* xii (1892), 201-278 for this and the following. For Berthold's literary output, Friedrich Neumann, 'Der Markgraf von Hohenburg', *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* lxxxvi (1955/6), 119-60.

²³ Amongst the more interesting coincidences in the later development of the Sicilian Business is the appearance of Iohannes Saracenus, nephew of Henry III's erstwhile proctor at the *curia*, Petrus Saracenus, as Archbishop of Bari from 1259 onwards: Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, 596-601.

²⁴ *RI*, nr. 4644c. Interestingly enough, Walter of Ocre, elect of Capua and once regular recipient of an English rent, remained amongst Manfred's partisans: Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, 132.

²⁵ Rodenberg, *Innoenz IV.*, 177 n. 4, 186.

1254.²⁶ By the time of Innocent's death in December it must have seemed as if Edmund's arrival in Sicily was only a matter of time.²⁷

At this stage, the *negotium Sicilie* was still very much part of Henry's crusading plans. To him, the two projects existed side by side.²⁸ As early as 1253, when Henry III first acknowledged the offer of Sicily to his brother, he also requested that crusade preaching be extended beyond Britain.²⁹ As much as the prospect of ruling Sicily must have pleased him, the affairs of the Holy Land still had priority. Even after Henry's involvement in Apulia, planning for his crusade continued.³⁰ In fact, the Pope's offer of commuting Henry's vow from a crusade in Palestine to one against Manfred was not taken up.³¹ Rather, the King requested to be allowed to campaign with Alfonso in North Africa instead.³² It seems, thus, that the planned campaign against the Muslims and the imminent conquest of Sicily existed side by side. In fact, as Alexander IV was to point out to Henry III in 1255, the kingdom of Apulia would be an ideal base from which to set out for a conquest of the Holy Land.³³ This was an apt reflection of past experiences. Most crusades which avoided taking the land-route to Palestine had proceeded either via Marseilles or Sicily.³⁴ Later in the thirteenth century, Charles of Anjou was to use the *regno's* geographical position and naval expertise not only to further his ambitions in Greece, but also to press his claims to the crown of Jerusalem.³⁵ In many ways the *negotium Sicilie* was a logical extension of already existing ties with the Mediterranean. Moreover, the English court must have been aware of papal negotiations with Charles of Anjou. Although strenuous efforts were made to settle relations with France, they met with repeated setbacks. Preventing an expansion of Capetian power not only into Languedoc and Flanders, but also into Italy may, thus, have been amongst the reasons for Henry III's acceptance of Innocent's offer.³⁶ In the context of English relations with the continent, the Plantagenets' involvement in Sicily was a reasonable course of action.

²⁶ *RI*, nrs. 4644a-p, also 4645 for negotiations concerning a possible truce with papacy.

²⁷ Note, however, Innocent's warning from November 1254 that, unless the King move speedily, a certain, unspecified but urgent business would have to be dealt with by someone else: *Foedera*, I, 312. The question remains, though, to what degree this was an attempt to hasten Henry's departure.

²⁸ Lloyd, 'Henry III', 110-119.

²⁹ *CR 1251-3*, 448, 449.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 369.

³¹ *Foedera*, I, 304. On crusades against Manfred and Conradin: Norman Housley, *The Italian Crusades: the Papal-Angevin alliance and the Crusades against Christian lay powers, 1254-1343* (Oxford, 1982, repr. 1986), 222-31.

³² *Foedera*, I, 308. For Alfonso's crusading plans, which were not limited to North Africa alone: Robert Lee Wolff, 'Mortgage and Redemption of an Emperor's son: Castile and the Latin Empire of Constantinople', *Speculum* xxix (1954), 45-84.

³³ *Registres Alexander IV*, nr. 1543.

³⁴ Helene Wieruszowski, 'The Norman kingdom of Sicily and the crusades', her, *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy* (Rome, 1971), 1-50, for the twelfth century.

³⁵ Dunbabin, *Charles I. of Anjou*, 225-8.

³⁶ Clanchy, *England*, 135-140.

Only after Innocent's death did difficulties begin.³⁷ His successor, Alexander IV, at first strove to resolve the conflict with Manfred peacefully. Negotiations continued until March 1255.³⁸ Once these faltered,³⁹ renewed efforts were made to hasten Henry III's departure for Italy. In March Alexander refused the King's request to commute his vow from crusading in Palestine to a campaign in North Africa, but later offered to commute the vow towards a campaign in Sicily instead.⁴⁰ Also, he confirmed Edmund's enfeoffment with Sicily, but insisted on a new set of conditions.⁴¹ Most of these were a clarification of the demands made by Innocent.⁴² For instance, Edmund was banned from ever standing for election as Emperor. Obligations towards the papacy were extended. The military service owed to the *curia*, for instance, was increased from 50 to 300 knights. These new terms probably reflected the need for a stronger military basis in upholding papal claims in central Italy. During the early 1250s the papacy had repeatedly been faced by rebellions and internal warfare in its domains, and the lack of military strength must have been bitterly felt. Measures were taken to ensure that Henry would honour his promises. Most importantly, either Henry III himself or a suitably provisioned proctor would have to be in Sicily by October 1256. In the meantime, the Pope alone could decide upon the granting of lands and privileges in the *regno*. By making Edmund's exercise of some of the most important regal rights dependant upon his arrival in Sicily, the Pope may have hoped that this would provide the necessary incentive for the English court to hasten its preparations. It was also a reflection of the difficult situation in which Alexander found himself after Manfred's recent successes. Furthermore, Innocent's promise of paying 100,000 *livres tournouis* was withdrawn. Instead, Henry had to pay the expenses incurred by the papacy to the extent of 135,541 marks. This latter point has been viewed as revealing the preposterous nature of the whole project.⁴³ However, this fails to take into account the specific circumstances under which Henry III and Alexander IV acted. These conditions aimed not at emasculating the King of England financially, but at forcing him to attend to the affairs of Sicily, and to do so soon. In the meantime, the necessary finances had to be secured to maintain the loyalty of those recently won for the papal cause, and to continue military efforts at overthrowing Manfred's regime. The Pope's demands had been born out of necessity, not greed or avarice.

By spring 1255 Manfred had won control over most of Sicily, and began his siege of Brindisi.⁴⁴ In April, a papal army, under the leadership of Ottaviano Ubaldini

³⁷ Frank Tenckhoff, *Papst Alexander IV.* (Paderborn, 1907), 24-75 for much of the following.

³⁸ *Epistolae*, III, nrs. 380, 382, *Foedera*, I I, 315.

³⁹ *RI*, nr. 8966.

⁴⁰ *Foedera*, I, 316, 319.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 316-8.

⁴² Baaken, *Ius Imperii*, 397-8.

⁴³ Tenckhoff, *Alexander IV.*, 39, Wachtel, 'Die sizilische Thronkandidatur', 113-4.

⁴⁴ *RI*, nrs. 4650d&e.

was disastrously beaten.⁴⁵ Alexander IV found himself in a situation in which he required military help, and quickly. He could not accept Henry's continuing prevarications. Furthermore, although he made stringent demands on the king's purse, he also gave Henry III whatever assistance he could. Not only did he permit the King of England to commute his vow towards a campaign against Manfred, he also gave permission that the crusading moneys already collected be used for Sicily instead. In addition, the papal grant of a Twentieth from the Scottish Church was extended by another three years.⁴⁶ Moreover, other crusaders, such as the King of Norway, were requested to commute their vows from the Holy Land to Sicily.⁴⁷ The demands made of Henry III were manifold,⁴⁸ but the sums requested were not impossible to muster. Sicily was renowned for its riches.⁴⁹ Although not too much credence should be given to the sums listed, Matthew Paris' version of Frederick's testament is nonetheless impressive. In all, the sums promised to various beneficiaries amounted to 120,000 ounces of gold.⁵⁰ Nor should English resources be underestimated. Effectively, the money needed was little more than the ransom for Richard Lionheart in 1196,⁵¹ and could have been collected had it been possible to apply similar means of extra taxation. Even without that, by 1259, nearly half of the required sums had been paid.⁵² Had the reluctance of Henry's English subjects to pay for the King's plans been overcome, and in combination with Edmund's anticipated Sicilian revenues, 135,000 marks seem a less incredible sum. In their contemporary context, Alexander's conditions were reasonable, designed to solve the most urgent problems facing papal forces in Sicily, and to induce Henry III to keep his promises.

It seemed as if the *curia's* demands had achieved their desired success. In October 1255 the Bishop of Bologna arrived and officially confirmed Edmund as King of Sicily.⁵³ Preparations were made for military action. A visit by Arnold, count of Guines, once amongst the great mercenary leaders of his time, may point in that direction.⁵⁴ This certainly was the case with Henry of Castile, Alfonso X's younger

⁴⁵ Albert Hauß, *Kardinal Oktavian Ubaldini: ein Staatsmann des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Heidelberg, 1913), 53-82 for his role under Alexander IV in general, and 57-61 for this campaign. Good, but extremely partisan account in *CM*, V, 497-500.

⁴⁶ *Foedera*, I, 322.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 320.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 319.

⁴⁹ Paul Kehr, 'Das Briefbuch des Thomas von Gaëta, Justitiars Friedrichs II.', *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* viii (1905), 1-76, nr. 10 for a complaint about extortions. Folker Reichert, 'Der Sizilische Staat Friedrichs II. in Wahrnehmung und Urteil der Zeitgenossen', *HZ* ccliii (1991), 21-50, disappointingly only deals with the governance of Sicily in the context of Kantorowicz's obsolete theory of early enlightened absolutism being practised by Frederick. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom*, 339-41 for Frederick's use of the kingdom's financial resources in his struggles with the papacy.

⁵⁰ *CM*, V, 216.

⁵¹ Heinrich Fichtenau, 'Akkon, Zypern und das Lösegeld für Richard Löwenherz', *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* cxxv (1966), 11-32 for that episode and its context.

⁵² Lunt, *Financial Relations*, 290.

⁵³ *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 348-9.

⁵⁴ *Foedera*, I, 332.

brother, who arrived in England to lead a campaign to Sicily.⁵⁵ In addition, diplomatic contacts were made. These included negotiations with the King of France for an English army to pass through his domains.⁵⁶ Also contacted were members of leading families in Rome, such as Matthew Annibaldi, the pro-consul of Rome,⁵⁷ and with potential allies in Italy, such as Milan.⁵⁸ Henry III and his court thus worked hard to broaden their basis of support. At the same time, new difficulties arose. Thomas of Savoy, recently enthroned as prince of Capua, and one of the main pillars of English diplomacy in Italy, was captured by the citizens of Asti.⁵⁹ Thus, Henry found himself deprived one of his most able and experienced allies. This, and the French court's reluctance to see an English army pass through Capetian territory caused yet another delay.

To make matters worse, Alexander IV lost patience. He repeatedly complained of the King's slackness, and Henry was blamed for the many disasters besetting Christendom in Italy.⁶⁰ This was more than mere rhetoric.⁶¹ Since the breakdown of negotiations in April 1255, Manfred had steadily expanded his authority towards central Italy.⁶² Naples offered its submission, and by June he effectively controlled the Terra di Lavoro, immediately to the south-west of the papal state.⁶³ Moreover, Conradin confirmed Manfred as his captain and governor of Sicily, thus thwarting papal attempts at splitting the Hohenstaufen camp.⁶⁴ In addition, several towns within the papal state rebelled against the *curia*. In Rome itself, Brancaleone, a staunch supporter of Frederick II and his sons and recently re-instated as senator, allied himself with Manfred.⁶⁵ Alexander IV thus found himself in a situation in which he required military and financial assistance, and naturally looked to England. By September additional grants were made to alleviate the King's financial difficulties,⁶⁶ and the Bishop of Worcester was ordered to ensure that Henry III declare a definite date for his arrival in Sicily.⁶⁷ The Pope needed help, and he needed it soon.

⁵⁵ *CM*, V, 575-6; *CR* 1254-6, 368; *CPR* 1247-58, 567.

⁵⁶ *CM*, V, 515-6.

⁵⁷ *CPR* 1247-58, 414, 453; Matthias Thumser, *Rom und der römische Adel in der späten Stauferzeit* (Tübingen, 1995), 28-42.

⁵⁸ *CLR* 1251-60, 321.

⁵⁹ Cox, *Eagles*, 250-264 for a -sometimes faulty- account. Boniface of Canterbury was sent to Italy to ensure his brother's release: *CM*, V, 564-5; and Henry III requested help from Alexander IV against the citizens of Asti and Charles of Anjou who continued to lend them his support: *DD*, nr. 281; on Charles' support for Asti, Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, 77-9.

⁶⁰ *Foedera*, I, 342.

⁶¹ *RI*, nrs. 13958, 13974.

⁶² Waley, *Papal States*, 149-62.

⁶³ *RI*, nr. 4655e.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, nr. 4772. In January 1255, Alexander had promised Conradin's grandmother to elevate him even further, which has been interpreted as referring to attempts at using him against Manfred in Sicily: *Ibid.*, nr. 8972.

⁶⁵ *CM*, V, 662, 699. Brancaleone had fought in Frederick II's armies and remained a staunch partisan of the Staufens. After being expelled in 1255, he was brought back to Rome soon after: Waley, *Papal State*, 157, 160.

⁶⁶ *Foedera*, I, 345.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 347.

Henry III, however, found himself unable to comply. His petitions for funds had been refused by the barons and clergy, and the King was forced to ask for an amelioration of terms, as he explained to Alexander in 1256:

‘Nec enim credimus quod hodie princeps aliquid regnat in terris qui ita subito tantam pecuniam posset habere ad manum.’⁶⁸

Not only would he have to repay papal debts, he was also required to fund the costs of conquest. Henry viewed these demands as impossible to meet, and asked for better conditions. These were granted in October 1256.⁶⁹ However, the King still seemed optimistic about fulfilling his obligations.⁷⁰ It would be mistaken to view Henry’s complaints about his financial hardship as the beginning of the end of his Sicilian ambitions. Alexander IV was in a desperate situation, and it may have been possible that the English court tried to utilise this to alleviate some of the pressures to which it found itself exposed. As such, the King’s complaints may have been less a sign of royal frustration, than of bargaining.

This certainly is the impression given by the course of events in 1257. Far from sending an expedition to the Mediterranean, as promised the year before, Henry continued to play for time. In January he wrote to the cardinal of St Maria in Via Lata that, due to the opposition he had encountered at a recent parliament, he could not currently pursue the affairs of Apulia. He also blamed his difficulties on the harshness of the conditions he had been forced to agree to, and asked for an alleviation.⁷¹ By April, Master Rustand was ordered not to collect any more funds for the Sicilian Business, ‘as the King is not sure whether the business of Sicily ought to proceed or not’.⁷² In June, the Archbishop of Tarentaise, Simon de Montfort, Peter of Savoy and John Maunsel were sent as proctors to the *curia*.⁷³ They brought with them detailed instructions. They were to ask either for a papal legate to arrange the desired peace with Louis IX, to make a composition with the Church, to ask for an amelioration of conditions, to renounce the said realm or to continue as before.⁷⁴ At the same time, Henry declared his willingness to pursue the conquest of Sicily, once peace with France had been agreed. If Henry III was considering reneging on his promises, he was insincere. While indicating to Alexander that it was possible for Henry to simply give up on Apulia, he continued contacts with Italy. A letter by Philip of Ravenna, a papal legate in Italy, implies that negotiations had been conducted with Venice.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ *CR 1254-6*, 404-6.

⁶⁹ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 445. This was later confirmed, with a separate mandate to the Archbishop of Messina: *Papal Letters*, 338.

⁷⁰ *CR 1254-6*, 404-6.

⁷¹ *DD*, nr. 287.

⁷² *CPR 1247-58*, 566.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 565.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 567.

⁷⁵ *DD*, nr. 289.

Furthermore, the King repeatedly promised to send a captain to Sicily and to do so soon.⁷⁶ Finally, when announcing Richard's election to the *curia*, Henry expressed his hopes that the Earl would deal with the affair of Sicily in person, presumably while he would be in Rome to be crowned Emperor.⁷⁷ The impression thus emerges that Henry III was still planning to conquer his son's realm, but that he saw both an opportunity and a need to ameliorate the conditions under which the kingdom had been offered. Alexander IV, however, remained reluctant to comply, and insisted on the fulfilment of the conditions agreed upon in 1255. His situation was made more difficult too, when, in May 1257, Brindisi, one of the last papal outposts in Apulia, was captured by Manfred.⁷⁸ More than ever before, drastic and decisive action was needed.

This was to become a recurrent pattern. In early 1258, for instance, Herlot, a papal notary, was sent to England.⁷⁹ He was authorised to excommunicate the King and his barons, should they not settle their outstanding debts towards the Holy See.⁸⁰ Henry was successful in his attempts to fight off the worst effects of Herlot's mission, and received an extension for his departure until the autumn.⁸¹ In the meantime, the English court left little doubt about its intentions. The citizens of Teano were assured that the King would soon set sail, as was John of Ebulo, while matters concerning the Muslim colony at Lucera were discussed with Count Thomas of Acerra.⁸² Even the Provisions of Oxford, which in the past have so often been described as sounding the death bell for Edmund's Sicilian career,⁸³ had little immediate impact. Writing to Alexander IV, Henry declared that his barons had agreed to support him in Sicily, once the state of the realm had been reformed. He also used the opportunity to request a further mitigation of terms.⁸⁴ Henry did not blame his inability to make true his promises on the barons until 1261,⁸⁵ when he complained that the barons had broken their promise of assisting him in pursuing the affairs of Sicily and Apulia.⁸⁶ To what extent these accusations were justified remains open to debate. It has to be taken account that Henry's grievances were presented to the Pope in an attempt to win papal absolution from the promises made in 1258. Initially, though, as will be shown below, there was little reason to suspect baronial sabotage of the King's Mediterranean

⁷⁶ *CPR 1247-58*, 592.

⁷⁷ *DD*, nr. 287.

⁷⁸ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 469.

⁷⁹ *Annals of Burton, AM*, I, 409.

⁸⁰ *Annals of Dunstable, AM*, III, 208.

⁸¹ *CR 1256-9*, 320, 321-2.

⁸² *Annals of Burton, AM*, I, 398-401.

⁸³ R. F. Trehame, *The Baronial plan for Reform, 1258-63* (Manchester, 1932), 50.

⁸⁴ *CR 1256-9*, 325-6.

⁸⁵ Powicke, *Henry III*, 148-50.

⁸⁶ Huw Ridgway, 'King Henry III's grievances against the council in 1261: a new version and a letter describing political events', *BIHR* lxi (1988), 227-42, at 239. Other, though later, versions in R. F. Trehame and E. J. Sanders (ed.), *Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion, 1258-67* (Oxford, 1973), 211-9, and E. F. Jacob, 'Complaints of Henry III against the Baronial council in 1261', *EHR* xli (1926), 564-71.

ambitions. In fact, although Alexander IV initially declared that he was to absolve Henry III from all his promises concerning Sicily,⁸⁷ dealings continued as usual.⁸⁸ The conclusion of the Treaty of Paris in 1259 was announced as an important step towards an invasion of Sicily,⁸⁹ knights from Apulia were received,⁹⁰ and negotiations continued with the papal court.⁹¹ Various prelates and nobles in the kingdom were contacted,⁹² and even in 1262 funds were still handed out to loyal supporters,⁹³ while Edmund restated his claim to Urban IV.⁹⁴ By that point, however, negotiations with Manfred had broken down, and the Pope decided to solve the Hohenstaufen problem once and for all.⁹⁵ Therefore, negotiations began with Charles of Anjou,⁹⁶ and in July 1263 the Archbishop of Cosenza⁹⁷ was sent to England to free Henry III from any promise he had taken regarding the *regno*.⁹⁸ Soon after, Charles of Anjou was enthroned as King of Sicily, and quickly found himself confronted by problems similar to those which had beset Henry III.⁹⁹ However, unlike the King of England he was not dependant on the good-will of Louis IX or that of a restive baronage. Also, by being present in Italy, he exercised greater freedom of action and eventually managed to complete what Henry and Edmund had set out to do: to drive the Hohenstaufens from Sicily.

The *negotium Sicilie* was an ambitious project. At the same time, it was no more foolhardy or vainglorious than the attempted conquest of England by the Duke of Normandy in 1066, or that of France by a King of England in 1337. Henry made considerable progress in preparing the ground for his expedition diplomatically. He arranged a permanent settlement with France, and he ensured his brother's election as King of the Romans. Ultimately, the Sicilian Business foundered because of Henry's failure to win support at home, and this is the point to which we should therefore turn next.

⁸⁷ *CM, Lib. Add., CM, VI, 410-6.*

⁸⁸ *PRO SC 1/63.*

⁸⁹ *CPR 1258-66, 52.*

⁹⁰ *CLR 1251-60, 461, 483.*

⁹¹ *CPR 1258-66, 37, 51.*

⁹² *CR 1259-61, 265-6.*

⁹³ *Papal Letters, 382.*

⁹⁴ *CR 1261-4, 113.*

⁹⁵ Beverley Berg, 'Manfred of Sicily and Urban IV: negotiations of 1262', *Medieval Studies* lv (1993), 111-136, for the most recent secondary coverage of these negotiations. The interest still taken by the English court is also evident in a letter by Henry's proctor, Roger Lovel, concerning recent events from February 1262: *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 569.

⁹⁶ Wachtel, 'Sizilische Thronkandidatur', 167-70.

⁹⁷ Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, 849-53.

⁹⁸ *Epistolae*, III, nrs. 552-3.

⁹⁹ Dunbabin, *Charles I.*, 131-5; Herde, *Karl I.*, 41-67.

VII.2 Sicily and England

The English court soon realised that finances were its biggest problem.¹⁰⁰ Although Henry increased his efforts at soliciting aids from his subjects, recent experiences, such as during the Gascon campaign, must have alerted him to the difficulties this would pose. Nonetheless, for April 1255 a parliament was called to Westminster.¹⁰¹ Henry III requested an aid and the levy of a long-forgotten tallage, *horngelth*. However, when the barons demanded reforms of the realm in exchange, the meeting was postponed.¹⁰² Consequently, more drastic measures had to be taken. During a separate meeting at Reading, Henry asked the prelates to affix their seals to a blank charter.¹⁰³ Soon after, the Bishop of Hereford and Robert Walerand were sent to the *curia*. Presenting the charters to Alexander IV, they suggested that this could be used to force a contribution from the prelates. The names of creditors and the sums 'owed' were inserted, and the bishops and abbots threatened with excommunication should they refuse to pay.¹⁰⁴ The amounts demanded were considerable. St Albans was asked to contribute £400,¹⁰⁵ the Bishop of Hereford himself 4,000 marks,¹⁰⁶ and Oseney 200 marks.¹⁰⁷ Matters were further aggravated by the actions of Rostand, a papal notary. Calling the English abbots and bishops to a meeting at London in October, he confronted the prelates with his demands. Dissenters were threatened by both King and Pope, who, according to Matthew Paris, acted 'like shepherd and wolf allying to destroy the flock'.¹⁰⁸ The episcopacy was further alienated by the fact that the English Church already contributed to the King's planned crusade.¹⁰⁹ In early 1256, however, new demands were made, including a tenth, the usufruct of vacant benefices, an universal obligation to pay up 150,000 marks worth of loans, half of the income from non-resident benefices, and the goods of those dying intestate.¹¹⁰ Both magnates and prelates objected.¹¹¹ Nonetheless, some progress was made. According to Matthew Paris, the barons declared their willingness to co-operate, once the King had confirmed Magna Carta.¹¹² It seems that Henry's subjects were trying to use his predicaments to press for concessions. This resulted in some progress. During the Easter parliament 1257, the prelates agreed to a one-off aid of 52,000 marks, in

¹⁰⁰ Lunt, *Financial Relations*, 263-90.

¹⁰¹ *CM*, V, 493.

¹⁰² *Annals of Burton*, AM, I, 336.

¹⁰³ *Annals of Oseney*, AM IV, 109-10.

¹⁰⁴ *CM*, V, 510-3.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 525.

¹⁰⁶ *CR 1254-6*, 392.

¹⁰⁷ *Annals of Oseney*, AM IV, 110.

¹⁰⁸ *CM*, V, 532.

¹⁰⁹ *CR 1254-6*, 380-1.

¹¹⁰ *Annals of Oseney*, AM, IV, 114-5. Also *Foedera*, I, 344-6.

¹¹¹ *Annals of Dunstable*, AMIII, 200.

¹¹² *CM*, V, 540-1.

exchange for the King's promise that he would upkeep and observe Magna Carta.¹¹³ It needed two years of repeated meetings, and considerable papal pressure, before the barons and clergy were willing to contribute. This could only hinder preparations for an invasion of Sicily. In particular amongst the prelates who had to bear the brunt of obligations and contributions, hostility was ripe. In 1256, for instance, Henry had to command the barons of Dover to prevent any cleric from leaving the country for Rome, unless they had first sworn to undertake nothing to the detriment of the Sicilian affair.¹¹⁴ Similarly, little enthusiasm could be incited amongst the barons. Alexander's offer that crusading vows could be fulfilled by joining the King's campaign against Manfred met with only a lukewarm reception.¹¹⁵ In fact, the only case of a major noble receiving papal dispensation was Maurice FitzGerald, Henry's former Justiciar in Ireland.¹¹⁶ If Henry was enthusiastic about his prospects in Sicily, his subjects were not.

Their reluctance to support their King, however, was neither as unanimous as Matthew suggests, nor directed primarily against the *negotium Sicilie*. The affairs of Apulia were a symptom, not the cause of Henry's fraught relations with his subjects, and money was only one amongst many grievances. This is exemplified by the complaints put before the King between 1256 and 1258.¹¹⁷ Amongst them were the destruction and impoverishment of England by itinerant judges and various prises and oppressions, as well as the King's and the kingdom's poverty. Some of these complaints were familiar. In 1254, for instance, during the Gascon campaign, an aid had been refused, because, the barons claimed, the whole realm was beset by exactions, from which respite was needed.¹¹⁸ More important were complaints concerning the King's administration of justice, a point which was made whenever the observance of Magna Carta was requested. The criticism allegedly made by Richard of Cornwall points in a similar direction: the Sicilian Business had been embarked upon without his or the barons' counsel.¹¹⁹ That the King was to be guided and bound by his barons' advice was an essential demand of both Magna Carta and the Provisions.¹²⁰ The complaints against the *negotium Sicilie* thus formed part of a wider and more general dissatisfaction with the way Henry III governed England. At the same time, it has to be taken into account that most chronicles were written after

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, V, 623-4.

¹¹⁴ *CR 1254-6*, 395.

¹¹⁵ *CM*, V, 521-2.

¹¹⁶ *Papal Letters*, 329.

¹¹⁷ The *Annals of Dunstable*, *AM*, III, 200, give a short summary of these points under 1256. A more extended version is given by the *Annals of Burton*, *AM* I, 387-8, under the same year. There, however, reference is made to the absence of Richard of Cornwall, probably referring to his election as King of the Romans, which would put proceedings into 1257. Matthew Paris, writing closest to the events, lists them under 1258: *CM*, V, 680-1.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 440.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, V, 621.

¹²⁰ *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 446-53.

1258, and may thus have been coloured by later events. This throws some doubt on the narrative sources for much of the earlier discontent. Accounts like the one given by the *Annals of Burton* that, in 1255, the barons had demanded that Justiciar, chancellor and treasurer be elected by the magnates,¹²¹ seem suspiciously close to the demands of the Oxford parliament.¹²² Much of what we know about these years has been written with the benefit of hindsight, and may present events in the knowledge of things yet to come.

One should also beware of putting too much trust in reports of universal opposition towards the Sicilian Business. Even Matthew Paris, amongst the most persistent critics of the King's plans, has to admit that no unified opposition could be put up against his proposals. In 1255, for instance, he blames divisions amongst the episcopate on the fact that most bishops were either the King's appointees or his relatives.¹²³ It is true, though, that a number of prelates assisted Henry. In October 1256 the Abbot of Westminster and the elect of Salisbury are said to have acted as Henry's proctors in Rome.¹²⁴ The Abbot of Westminster, interestingly, had to perform an oath that he would not undertake anything detrimental to his community while at the *curia*, probably in connection with business he had to conduct concerning Sicily.¹²⁵ Similarly, Henry could count on a number of his barons, such as the Earls of Leicester, Gloucester and Warenne. Even Richard of Cornwall, despite some apprehension, came round to assist the King in his project.¹²⁶ By the autumn of 1256 at the latest, his support must have become evident. After all, Richard was willing to embark on a venture not dissimilar to his brother's, and negotiated for his election as King of the Romans. Although opposition to the Sicilian Business existed, it was divided, with a considerable number of prelates and magnates in support of the King.

The most fervent criticism Richard is said to have made was directed at the King's decision to embark on the Sicilian affair without his barons' counsel. Henry certainly did not call a parliament or a larger assembly of magnates to discuss proceedings, and he relied heavily on his foreign relatives and court officials for advice. In November 1255, for instance, the witnesses to a memorandum that all provisions concerning Sicily had been made with the King's assent and in his council, included the Bishop of Hereford, the Bishop-elect of Winchester, Godfrey de Lusignan, the Earls of Hereford and Warwick, John Maunsel, Philip Lovel, Ralph

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, *AM*, I, 336.

¹²² Note, however, David Carpenter, 'Chancellor Ralph de Neville and plans for political reform', *Thirteenth Century England* ii (1985), 69-80, for the tradition of baronial grievances.

¹²³ *CM*, V, 527.

¹²⁴ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 445.

¹²⁵ *Foedera*, I, 344.

¹²⁶ He was absent from the Easter 1255 parliament; *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 502. This is not quite the same as Matthew Paris's account that the Earl had remained neutral during proceedings: *CM*, V, 514. Later that year, when asked for a loan by the Pope, he refused, as he could not disseize a superior, and his brother was equally unsuccessful: *Ibid.*, V, 520-1, 524. It would be mistaken, though, to view this as a sign of hostility. By October, the Earl had already lent his brother nearly 25,000 marks: Denholm-Young, *Richard*, 159-60.

FitzNicholas, and Henry de Bathonia.¹²⁷ Pierre der Aigueblanche, Bishop of Hereford, was prominent in the administration of the King's Sicilian affairs, and was, like William de Valence, the elect of Winchester, and Godfrey de Lusignan one of the King's half-brothers.¹²⁸ The Earls of Gloucester and Warwick were the only representatives of the English magnates, with Richard de Clare soon to take a more active role in the King's affairs. John Maunsel was one of Henry's most trusted advisors and the closest he had to a chief-diplomat, while Philip Lovel was Henry's treasurer. Ralph FitzNicholas had been of some importance in the 1235 marriage negotiations.¹²⁹ The council, on this occasion, thus included a (small) number of barons, but mostly the King's relatives and officials. A similar pattern can be observed with regard to those who later came to be involved in the Sicilian Business. These included, at various stages, Peter of Savoy,¹³⁰ Peter Chaceporc,¹³¹ Robert Walerand, the chancellor Henry de Wengham¹³², and Simon de Montfort.¹³³ Most of these were either the King's officials, or, like Simon de Montfort, Peter of Savoy and Peter Chaceporc, were foreign lords who also held lands in England. This may have been appropriate inasmuch as those were the people who could provide either the expertise or the loyalty necessary to prepare a project like the conquest of Sicily.¹³⁴ However, this fell short of the broad consultation envisaged by Magna Carta, and it did little to help an undertaking which could only be achieved with the whole-hearted support of the King's subjects.

The Sicilian Business was to assume considerable importance for the political development of England. Although it would be mistaken to blame the Provisions of Oxford solely on the King's Mediterranean ambitions, they remain amongst the contributing factors. David Carpenter has argued convincingly that one reason for events during the Oxford parliament was increasing exasperation with the King's Lusignan relatives.¹³⁵ The leaders of the reform movement, as well as some of the clauses in the Provisions were concerned with the King's patronage of his half-brothers, and may have been aimed at preventing their reinstatement. However, this still does not explain why action was taken in 1258, rather than at any other time. We also have to take into account that during spring and summer 1258 England was beset

¹²⁷ *CR* 1254-6, 240.

¹²⁸ *CR* 1256-9, 462-3. On the King's patronage of his Lusignan relatives, Huw Ridgeway, 'Foreign favourites and Henry III's problems of patronage, 1247-58', *EHR* civ (1989), 590-610, and his 'William de Valence and his familiares, 1247-72', *BIHR* lxxv (1992), 239-57. For the older view of the problem, Harold S. Snellgrove, *The Lusignans in England* (Albuquerque, 1947), passim.

¹²⁹ He accompanied the King's sister Isabella to Germany: *CM*, III, 320.

¹³⁰ *CR* 1254-6, 194-5.

¹³¹ *CPR* 1247-58, 344.

¹³² *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 508.

¹³³ *CPR* 1247-58, 567.

¹³⁴ Powicke, *King Henry III*, 257.

¹³⁵ David Carpenter, 'What happened in 1258?', in: John Gillingham and James C. Holt (ed.), *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J. O. Prestwich* (Woodbridge, 1984), 61-88.

by famine, war and the threat of interdict.¹³⁶ The two parliaments called that year, first at Westminster and then at Oxford, were primarily concerned with averting the King's excommunication. In March, Herlot, a papal notary, had arrived from the *curia*, demanding that Henry pay his outstanding debts, and set sail to Sicily soon.¹³⁷ How serious that threat was remains a matter of conjecture. The King himself certainly seems to have viewed it with some apprehension. Matthew Paris reports that Simon Passelewe was sent to various abbeys to ensure additional funds to meet the legate's demands.¹³⁸ In combination with Henry III's failure to keep his repeated promises of observing Magna Carta, his obstruction of justice in favour of his Lusignan half-brothers, and the political disasters threatening England as a result of this, may have contributed to a feeling that urgent measures had to be taken. The more so, as Herlot's demand were made at a time when England was plagued by famine.¹³⁹ Conditions were serious enough to make Richard of Cornwall send provisions from Germany.¹⁴⁰ Under these circumstances, additional financial demands could have aroused little enthusiasm. More importantly, the instability of relations with Scotland, and a rebellion in Wales threatened the realm.¹⁴¹ An insurrection led by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd since 1256 had left English control in shambles. Several campaigns had ended either in defeat or equally inglorious stalemate. We have to keep in mind that one of the points on the agenda of the 1258 Oxford Parliament had been to muster troops for a Welsh campaign. Combined with increasing tensions between the Lusignans and other members of the King's inner circle, it was only a matter of time before these problems combined. Although complaints about Sicily formed part of the grievances brought forth in 1258, the primary target had not been the Sicilian Business itself, but the King's disregard for Magna Carta, his financial demands, his patronage of the Lusignans, and his failure in Wales. The baronial rebellion put an end to the Sicilian Business, but its demise was accidental rather than intentional. However, it was not all doom for Henry III. His diplomatic preparations were amongst the most successful projects of his reign, and laid the foundation both for the ultimate recovery of royal authority in 1265, and for his and his family's continuing role in Europe.

VII.3 The European Connection

¹³⁶ Clanchy, *England*, 263.

¹³⁷ *Annals of Dunstable*, AM, III, 208-9.

¹³⁸ *CM*, V, 682-8.

¹³⁹ *Chronica Buriensis, 1212-1301*, ed. Antonia Gransden (London, 1964), 22; H. M. Cam and E. F. Jacob, 'Notes on an English Cluniac Chronicle', *EHR* xliv (1929), 94-104, at 100.

¹⁴⁰ *CM*, V, 673.

¹⁴¹ Liebermann, 'Annals of Lewes Priory', 89. R. R. Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, 1987; reprinted as *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415*, Oxford, 1991), 309-11 for the following.

When, in 1258, the English barons gave their reasons for opposing the Sicilian Business, they criticised, amongst other things, the fact that Henry would have to pass through hostile lands, i.e. France, to reach Italy.¹⁴² This was a pessimistic, but apt reflection of realities. Despite his best efforts, Henry III remained unable to reach a permanent settlement with Louis IX. The existing truce was subject to repeated infringements, requiring hectic diplomatic activity to patch over still fragile relations.¹⁴³ However, without at least tacit support from France, an English invasion of Sicily was unlikely to proceed. Henry III was well aware of this. Two days after Alexander's confirmation of Edmund's elevation as King of Sicily, Simon de Montfort and Peter of Savoy had been sent to France to prolong the truce.¹⁴⁴ This continued earlier efforts, undertaken by the King himself,¹⁴⁵ and remained at the heart of English diplomacy over the following years.¹⁴⁶ In fact, the unsettled state of affairs with France was frequently cited as the reason for a delay in the King's departure for Sicily.¹⁴⁷ English relations with the Capetians were of concern not only to the papacy and the English court, but also to other rulers. Alfonso of Castile, for instance, sent envoys to facilitate a peace agreement.¹⁴⁸ To him peace between Henry and Louis must have been an essential precondition for further action in North Africa. However, all these efforts came to nothing. For 1256, the *Chronica Maiora* report a *parliamentum* at Paris. Representing Henry III, John Maunsel requested a safe-conduct for an English army to pass through France on its way to Sicily. However, the St Albans chronicler continued, the petition was refused.¹⁴⁹ That the English envoy also pressed for a restitution of Normandy and Anjou will have done little to assuage French suspicions as to the hostile intents underlying Henry's diplomacy in the Mediterranean.¹⁵⁰ English fears as to the effect this might have on the Sicilian Business are highlighted by a letter from Henry III to his proctor at the *curia* in spring 1256. He warned of French conspiracies, which, if successful, could jeopardise the Sicilian Business.¹⁵¹ Relations between the two countries were still beset by mutual distrust.

¹⁴² *Annals of Burton, AM*, I, 387.

¹⁴³ *CR 1254-6*, 412, 424.

¹⁴⁴ *CPR 1247-58*, 411.

¹⁴⁵ In late 1254, Henry III had been Louis' guest in Paris. The *Annals of Burton* described the meeting as aimed at symbolising the newly found concord between the two kings: *AM*, I, 329.

¹⁴⁶ *CM*, V, 515-6.

¹⁴⁷ *CR 1256-9*, 136-7; During a parliament at London in 1258, called to solicit funds for the Sicilian business, it was agreed that the King would receive support from the barons, were he willing to allow their counsel and guidance. The need for peaceful relations with France also featured highly amongst the demands of the barons: *CM*, V, 680-1.

¹⁴⁸ *CR 1254-6*, 194-5.

¹⁴⁹ *CM*, V, 547-8.

¹⁵⁰ Although this may have been an attempt by Matthew to make the Sicilian business appear even more ludicrous and preposterous, he may reflect Louis' anxiety that English success would be used to place France between two hostile countries: *CM*, V, 516. After all, without Henry III abandoning his claims to Normandy and Poitou, the King of France would be threatened not only from the North, via Gascony, but would also have seen his ability to manoeuvre in the Mediterranean severely limited.

¹⁵¹ *CR 1254-6*, 408.

Partly in response to his lack of success in France, Henry III tried to strengthen links with William of Holland. Once the Sicilian venture had been embarked upon, missions to and from the Empire increased in frequency. In February 1255, Jean de Avesnes sent two envoys to the English court.¹⁵² One of his agents was still in England by June,¹⁵³ and was joined by another messenger in October.¹⁵⁴ In November, the Dukes of Luxembourg and Limburg came to England.¹⁵⁵ The English court was, thus, contacted by some of the foremost members of William's entourage. This time, however, it seems as if German overtures were returned. In August 1255, for the first time in almost ten years, Henry III sent an envoy to Germany,¹⁵⁶ which was followed, in October, by the mission of Prior John of Newburgh.¹⁵⁷ The exact purpose of these embassies remains obscure. It would seem plausible, though, to assume that the affairs of Sicily featured in negotiations. After William's death, for instance, one of the reasons given for English involvement in German affairs was that only a King favourably disposed to English interests, and unswayed by pressure from France, could safeguard success in Sicily.¹⁵⁸ Another consideration may have been the need to isolate the Hohenstaufen in Sicily from those in the Empire. It is hard to think of an outcome which could have been more harmful to Henry's Mediterranean ambition than the election of Conradin as King of the Romans and Emperor-to-be. There is no reason to doubt that similar deliberations had guided these earlier contacts.¹⁵⁹ However, any hope that these dealings would result in a swift arrangement, were shattered when William was killed in January 1256.¹⁶⁰

Henry III immediately set out to influence the imminent election of a new King.¹⁶¹ In the end, William was to be succeeded by Richard of Cornwall, a fact which has influenced most studies of English involvement in Germany over the following months.¹⁶² Initially, though, the Earl had not even been amongst the

¹⁵² *DD*, nr. 277.

¹⁵³ *CLR 1251-60*, 228.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 253. Both had been amongst William's leading supporters. Matthew Paris lists the Duke of Limburg amongst the 'magnates Coloniae' supporting William during the 1253 battle at Walcheren: *CM, Lib. Add.*, *CM*, VI, 252-5. This may, thus, have been a first indication of improving relations with Cologne.

¹⁵⁶ *CLR 1251-60*, 238.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 245. Matthew Paris refers to the prior of Newburgh as his source for his description of the conflict between Margaret of Flanders and the Avesnes brothers: *CM*, V, 437.

¹⁵⁸ *CR 1254-6*, 408-9.

¹⁵⁹ *CM*, V, 493.

¹⁶⁰ *Gesta Abbatum Trudonensium Continuatio III*, *MGH SS* x, 399.

¹⁶¹ For a somewhat dated coverage which, however, highlights the connection with the Sicilian Business, Wachtel, 'Die sizilische Thronkandidatur', 149-65.

¹⁶² C. C. Bayley, 'The diplomatic preliminaries of the Double Election of 1257 in Germany', *EHR* lxii (1947), 457-483 who wrongly associates a mission from Jean in January with early news of William's death, and sees this as the starting point of English attempts at supporting Richard's candidacy. Much of this was based on Thomas Wykes' account, written thirty years after events, and presenting a foreshortened perspective on events: Wykes, *AM*, IV, 112-5.

candidates.¹⁶³ It was not until after the candidacies of the Count of Henneberg,¹⁶⁴ Margrave Otto of Brandenburg,¹⁶⁵ and the King of Bohemia had failed, that Richard entered the field.¹⁶⁶ He was a last resort, with the earliest evidence for his candidacy surviving from late November 1256.¹⁶⁷ Until then, the English court had been content with trying to influence the outcome of the election, rather than supporting a particular candidate. A first step was taken in February, when William Bonquer was accredited as Henry III's envoy to the *curia*.¹⁶⁸ In March and April he received a commission, ordering him to request papal support in ensuring that no one be elected King of the Romans who would pose a threat to the Sicilian Business.¹⁶⁹ To achieve this, Alexander IV was to send a legate to Germany. The connection with the *negotium Sicilie* was further emphasised by the King's promise to pay his remaining debts, and either to go himself or to send a representative to Apulia soon. However, that would be impossible, unless favourable conditions had first been created. The Pope, though, was reluctant to comply. All he was willing to do was to write to the Archbishop of Mainz in July that no Hohenstaufen was to be elected King of the Romans.¹⁷⁰ The English court, thus, had to take measures into its own hands. In June 1256 Robert Walerand and Richard de Clare were sent 'to all the princes of Almain', who were asked to listen carefully to the message they were to convey.¹⁷¹ It would be mistaken to view this as an early indication of Richard's candidacy.¹⁷² At the time, their main concern was with the Sicilian Business. Robert Walerand, the King's steward, was generally considered to be amongst the driving forces behind the Sicilian Business,¹⁷³ and Richard de Clare, the Earl of Gloucester, was amongst the King's most trusted advisors, and repeatedly involved in the affairs of the *regno*.¹⁷⁴ At this point, the English court was primarily concerned with ensuring the necessary diplomatic contacts for a successful crossing to Sicily. Any German prince would do, as long as he was not hostile to English ambitions. To achieve this, Henry did not confine himself merely to sending envoys. John de Avesnes became a regular and richly rewarded visitor to the English court. In April, John received part of his annual fee of now £200.¹⁷⁵ The

¹⁶³ Manfred Groten 'Konrad von Hochstaden und die Wahl Richards von Cornwall', in: Vollrath and Weinfurter (ed.), *FS Odilo Engels*, 483-510 for a detailed and meticulous analysis of the various schemes put forth between January and November, when the first declarations for Richard was made.

¹⁶⁴ Johannes Siebert, 'Graf Hermann von Henneberg als Bewerber um die deutsche Königskrone', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* lvii (1932), 215-223.

¹⁶⁵ *Chronica principum Saxoniae Ampliata*, MGH SS xxx, I, 30.

¹⁶⁶ Groten, 'Konrad von Hochstaden', 491.

¹⁶⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 379.

¹⁶⁸ *CPR* 1247-58, 462.

¹⁶⁹ *CR* 1254-6, 408-9.

¹⁷⁰ *RI*, nrs. 4289a, 9068.

¹⁷¹ *CPR* 1247-58, 481.

¹⁷² Groten, 'Konrad von Hochstaden', *passim*.

¹⁷³ *CM*, V, 511, 521; *CPR* 1247-58, 344.

¹⁷⁴ *CLR* 1251-60, 455-6.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 279; *CPR* 1247-58, 461.

fee was collected by his brother Baldwin, and by John de Castello.¹⁷⁶ The latter seems to have returned by the end of June, shortly after the English mission had been announced to Germany.¹⁷⁷ Henry's court was trying to ensure the support and assistance of those once close to the deceased King to further its interests in the election of William's successor. That it ignored traditional allies, such as the Duke of Brunswick, may be connected to the fact that they were not amongst the electors, as was probably known in England.¹⁷⁸ Henry's primary concern in his dealings with Germany was to safeguard his Apulian ambitions.¹⁷⁹ In 1256 de Clare's and Walerand's main objective had been not to obtain yet another apanage for a Plantagenet prince, but to ensure what Louis IX had refused to grant, i.e. unhindered access to Sicily.¹⁸⁰

After all these missions failed, more decisive action had to be taken. In November 1256 the Count Palatine of the Rhineland and Duke of Bavaria, and in December the Archbishop of Cologne promised to elect Richard of Cornwall King of the Romans, with the Archbishop of Mainz following suit later.¹⁸¹ Henry soon tried to utilise his brother's election for the affairs of Apulia. During the Christmas parliament at Westminster in 1256, Richard's elevation was used in an attempt to woo the English barons.¹⁸² While the parliament was in session, envoys from Germany arrived,¹⁸³ bringing news that Richard had been elected King of the Romans.¹⁸⁴ When offered the crown, the Earl gave the required display of humility,¹⁸⁵ and

¹⁷⁶ *CLR 1251-60*, 280.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 307; *CPR 1247-58*, 413.

¹⁷⁸ Matthew Paris gives a list of electors, which he had noted down during a conversation with Henry III, including the Archbishops of Cologne, Mainz and Trier, the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatine of the Rhineland, the Dukes of Austria, Swabia and Bavaria, Poland, Carinthia, Lotharingia, Brabant, the Landgrave of Thuringia and the Margraves of Meissen and Brandenburg, and an unidentifiable Duke of Melain (Meulan according to Luard), and a margrave de Miche (Metz, according to Luard): *CM*, V, 604.

¹⁷⁹ In 1258, for instance, members of the college of cardinals were informed that with Richard's election and coronation Henry's arrival was imminent: *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 516.

¹⁸⁰ This caused, of course, problems, one of the promises made by Richard's proctors having been that he would safeguard Conradin's rights in Sicily: *Constitutiones*, nr. 381. The question remains, though, whether Richard intended to keep his promise. The Apulian connection may also be underlined by the fact that one of the witnesses for the agreement between Richard's proctors and Conradin's guardian, the Count Palatine, was a "Kertefordus de Apulia": *ibid.*, nr. 379.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, nrs. 377-80, 383. For the wider background of the promises made then and once Richard reached Germany, Roswitha Reisinger, *Die römisch-deutschen Könige und ihre Wähler 1198-1273* (Aalen, 1977), 71-84.

¹⁸² *CM*, V, 601-3 for a description of events at Westminster, based on an account the author had received from the Bishop of Bangor. Hans-Eberhard Hilpert 'Richard of Cornwall's Candidature for the German Throne and the Christmas 1256 Parliament at Westminster', *JMH* vi (1980), 195-8 for a secondary account. *Annals of Dunstable, AM*, III, 200 for baronial opposition to the *negotium Sicilie*.

¹⁸³ *CLR 1251-60*, 347: John de Avesnes and Count Walram of Jülich.

¹⁸⁴ However, at the parliament, reference was not made to earlier negotiations, but to the Earl's election. Considering the circumstances of the source testimony, this difference might be academic. Hilpert, 'Richard of Cornwall's Candidature', *passim*, for the controversy.

¹⁸⁵ The phrasology used by Matthew Paris is similar to the one employed as a literary technique and identified as topos of 'fake humility' by Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1948, repr. 1993), 93-5. The action itself seems close to the display of reluctance required from prelates before taking up office: *The Life of St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, by Eadmer, transl. R. W. Southern, (Oxford, 1962), 64-5; Decima L. Douie and Hugh

refused. Eventually, he was swayed by advice which was directed as much at him as at the assembled nobles and clergy. He was exhorted not to follow the example of Robert Curthose, who had refused the crown of Jerusalem. For this act of pride God punished him, and he was pursued by misfortunes ever after. The moral conveyed by this counsel was that refusing to seize honours and dignities once they had been offered was a sin against the will of God. Richard had been singled out by divine favour, and it would be presumptuous to act contrary to His will.¹⁸⁶ If this was true for the Earl of Cornwall becoming King of the Romans, it must have been true also for Henry's son becoming King of Sicily. Henry continued to exploit the parallel. A parliament was called to coincide with the Earl's departure for Germany,¹⁸⁷ and was combined with Edmund's formal coronation as King of Sicily.¹⁸⁸ Richard, too, continued to support his brother's projects. Once in Germany, he wrote to the prince Edward,¹⁸⁹ the Archbishop of Messina,¹⁹⁰ the mayor and citizens of London,¹⁹¹ and the Bishop of Lincoln,¹⁹² extolling his great successes, his warm reception, and the ease with which he overcame those opposing him. As these letters were found in various chronicles, they probably had been intended for a wider circulation. They painted a glorious picture of English successes abroad and may have been aimed not only at calming fears concerning the risks of the Sicilian Business, but also at inciting much needed enthusiasm. More importantly, they conveyed the message that opposition could easily be overcome, without much military effort, once a King appeared abroad.

The Earl of Cornwall's success in the Empire also initiated swift progress in relations with France. Even before Richard had left for Germany, contacts with Louis IX were renewed.¹⁹³ This eventually resulted in a meeting between English, French and German proctors at Cambrai in November 1258,¹⁹⁴ laying the foundations for

Farmer (eds. and trans.), *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis: the Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, 2 vols., (London, 1961), I, 35 In the context of twelfth century Canterbury this has been discussed by Michael Staunton, 'Eadmer's *Vita Anselmi*: a reinterpretation, *JMH* xxiii (1997), 1-14, at 4-5; Marylou Ruud, "'Unworthy servants": the rhetoric of resignation at Canterbury, 1070-1170', *Journal of Religious History* xxii (1998), 1-13.

¹⁸⁶ Matthew Paris certainly was aware of the implications this would have for the Sicilian business. Consequently, he emphasises the close familiarity between the English and the Germans, the fact that Richard had many friends in the Empire, and that he was chosen by the people: *CM*, V, 603. All of which were points which he criticised the King for not possessing in his conquest of Sicily: *Ibid.*, 457-9.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, V, 621-3.

¹⁸⁸ *John of Wallingford*, *MGH SS* xxviii, 510.

¹⁸⁹ *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 392-4.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 391-2.

¹⁹¹ *De Antiquis Legibus*, 26-9.

¹⁹² Liebermann, 'Zur Geschichte', 220.

¹⁹³ *CPR* 1247-58, 549.

¹⁹⁴ *CM*, V, 720-1; *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 461.

what was to become the treaty of Paris.¹⁹⁵ The final agreement set to rest the ancient conflict over Normandy, Anjou and Poitou, with Henry surrendering his claims, and doing homage for Gascony. This paved the way for English ambitions in the Mediterranean. One clause stipulated that Louis IX was to assist Henry III either with 500 knights for two years or with 1,000 for one.¹⁹⁶ In a separate document, evoking the tone and spirit of the Treaty of Catania between Frederick II and Philip Augustus, Richard suggested an alliance of mutual support and assistance.¹⁹⁷ This, at last, paved the way diplomatically for Henry's planned conquest of Apulia. It would be mistaken, however, to view the document as an act of disinterested generosity on Louis' part. Although he had gained acceptance of Capetian rule in what had once been Henry III's inheritance, he was now faced with the prospect of Plantagenet rule in Germany and Sicily. Moreover, Richard was on his way to being crowned Emperor and looked set to establish his authority across the Empire.¹⁹⁸ The Treaty of Paris was as much an acknowledgement by Henry III that there was little hope of ever regaining Normandy or Poitou, as it was an attempt by Louis IX to avoid being placed between two hostile neighbours.¹⁹⁹ At the same time, it symbolises the shift in English attentions, away from the remnants of the Angevin Empire towards the new opportunities offering themselves in the Mediterranean.

Richard's election, however, had repercussions not only for English relations with France, but also for those with Iberia. After all, the Earl of Cornwall was not the only one to be elected King of the Romans. For in April 1257 the Archbishop of Trier, acting on behalf of the King of Bohemia, the Duke of Saxony and the Margraves of Brandenburg, had chosen Alfonso X of Castile.²⁰⁰ Even earlier, in June 1256, Alfonso of Castile's proctors had agreed with the commune of Pisa that they elect him Emperor.²⁰¹ Whether the English court was aware of this remains an open question. Matthew Paris, for one, pleads ignorance and accuses the German envoys to England of having kept Alfonso's candidacy secret.²⁰² Although Alfonso later complained that

¹⁹⁵ Pierre Chaplais, 'The making of the Treaty of Paris and the royal style', *EHR* lxxvii (1952), 235-253; Powicke, *King Henry III*, 247-52; I. J. Sanders, 'The texts of the Treaty of Paris, 1259', *EHR* lxxvi (1951), 81-97.

¹⁹⁶ This seems to have been part of negotiations from an early stage. Cf. Henry's letter to Alexander IV from 30 July 1258, *CR* 1256-9, 325-6.

¹⁹⁷ *AI*, nr. 564.

¹⁹⁸ Barbiche, *Les Actes Pontificaux* (Vatican, 1975), nr. 1001.

¹⁹⁹ This formed, of course, part of his crusading preparations. A similar settlement of a long-standing territorial dispute had been achieved in 1258 with Aragon in the treaty of Corbeil: *Layettes*, nrs. 4439-4400, 4411-2, 4433-5; Jordan, *Louis IX*, 199-200. For the place of the Treaty of Paris in the diplomacy of Henry III and his successors up to the beginning of the Hundred Years War: G.P. Cuttino, *English medieval Diplomacy* (Bloomington, 1985), 54-83.

²⁰⁰ *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 59. They were later to be joined by the King of Bohemia, who, however, was also negotiating with Richard: cf. chapter VIII.

²⁰¹ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 392-5. The best account remains Arnold Busson, *Die Doppelwahl des Jahres 1257 und das römische Kaiserthum Alfons X von Castilien* (Münster, 1866); this also forms the basis for Cayetano J. Socarras, *Alfonso X of Castile: a study on imperialistic frustration* (Barcelona, 1976); for a modern account: O'Callaghan, *The Learned King*, 198-213.

²⁰² *CM*, V, 657.

Richard had ignored the earlier Castilian negotiations, he stayed clear of accusing Henry of thwarting his Imperial ambitions.²⁰³ At the same time, throughout 1256, envoys had been sent to or received from Castile,²⁰⁴ and in late January 1257, English envoys were sent to Spain, Gascony, Germany and Gotland.²⁰⁵ As this happened so shortly after Richard's election, one may assume that it was amongst the issues discussed. However, there is little indication that this may have been an attempt to assuage Alfonso. In late January 1257, Henry III thanked the Bishop of Hereford for his efforts in arranging a treaty with Alfonso, and mentioned, more in passing, Richard's election.²⁰⁶ Henry even provided a vessel for a Castilian envoy to Norway.²⁰⁷ Simultaneously, negotiations continued for the planned African Crusade, with Henry renewing his solemn promise to support the King of Castile with troops, ships and funds.²⁰⁸ There were, thus, sufficiently regular contacts to assume that the English court may have heard of Alfonso's ambitions. However, it has to be taken into account that Alfonso himself did not publicise his new found dignity. He did not begin to issue grants for Germany until September 1257,²⁰⁹ and his contacts in the Empire were initially confined to Pisa and Marseilles.²¹⁰ Furthermore, Alfonso may have had good reason to keep his ambitions secret from the English court. The treaty with Pisa guaranteed the commune's rights in Sicily, should Alfonso, his son or their representative conquer the *regno*.²¹¹ To what extent this reflected Castilian intentions remains unclear. Alfonso had little to gain from alienating Henry. Pisa, on the other hand, continued to pose a threat. In 1258 several of his Sicilian subjects warned Edmund that Genoa and Pisa were conspiring to conquer the island.²¹² Should Henry III have been aware of this, it may have given added urgency to English diplomacy in Germany, and may hold the key to understand Henry's seeming disregard for his Castilian ally.

At the same time, the King of England tried to avoid being drawn into the internal squabbles of Spain. Several offers made by Alfonso's estranged father-in-law, Jaime of Aragon, were turned down. Relations between the two rulers were far from cordial.²¹³ They repeatedly clashed over Navarre and Murcia, and eyed each other's moves suspiciously. The conflict at various points threatened to involve both Capetians

²⁰³ CR 1256-9, 314-5; CR 1258-61, 167; CR 1261-4, 172-3.

²⁰⁴ CLR 1251-60, 280; CR 1254-6, 313, 318.

²⁰⁵ CR 1256-9, 26; CPR 1247-58, 539.

²⁰⁶ CR 1256-9, 118-20.

²⁰⁷ CR 1254-6, 360.

²⁰⁸ *Foedera*, I, 343; CR 1254-6, 389-391.

²⁰⁹ RI, nr. 5489; Ingo Schwab, 'Kanzlei und Urkundenwesen König Alfons' X. von Kastilien für das Reich', *AfD* xxxii (1986), 569-616.

²¹⁰ Johann Friedrich Böhmer (ed.), *Acta Imperii Selecta: Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaise 928-1398, mit einem Anhang von Reichssachen* (Innsbruck, 1870), nr. 678.

²¹¹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 394. Also Lloyd, 'Henry III', 114 n. 88.

²¹² *DD*, nr. 301.

²¹³ O'Callaghan, *The Learned King*, 152-157; Thomas N. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown*, 67-8; Ludwig Vones, *Geschichte der Iberischen Halbinsel im Mittelalter (711-1480): Reiche - Kronen - Regionen* (Sigmaringen, 1993), 131-2.

and Plantagenets. In early 1255, for instance, Alfonso asked Henry that his Gascon subjects assist him against his Aragonese foe.²¹⁴ Although there is no record of Henry complying, he also refused to enter into an alliance with Jaime against Castile. In December 1255 Henry thanked the King of Aragon for his offer of an alliance, and promised to send an envoy by next Pentecost.²¹⁵ Little seems to have come out of this, and the King of England remained reluctant to abandon Alfonso. In fact, in April 1256 Henry III suggested yet another marriage to Alfonso, this time between Alfonso's brother and one of Henry's daughters.²¹⁶ In June 1257, after Richard's election had brought into the open his conflict with Alfonso, another Aragonese embassy was received. However, Henry III insisted that he was not willing to break any of the clauses agreed upon in his truce with Alfonso.²¹⁷ Even after Castilian claims to the Empire had caused a cooling of relations,²¹⁸ Henry saw little reason to abandon his alliance with Alfonso. This was done probably not only with an eye on Gascony,²¹⁹ but also on the danger Castilian hostility might pose to English projects in the Mediterranean.

In many ways, the Sicilian Business further developed an already existing trend in English diplomacy: its re-orientation towards the South. This did not stop at creating a permanent settlement with France or safe-guarding relations with Castile. The necessity to protect English claims in Apulia led to a quest for allies.²²⁰ In June 1256, for instance, a clerk from the Queen of Cyprus arrived in England.²²¹ Negotiations soon centred around a planned double-marriage between Edmund and Queen Plaisance, and between Henry's daughter Beatrice and the infant King of Cyprus.²²² It seems that the project had been supported by at least some members of the *curia*.²²³ An alliance with Cyprus would have been profitable, not only for Henry's affairs in the Mediterranean, but also for his crusade. Not only had the island's rulers been regents of Jerusalem since 1242, they also were to provide the basis for most of the crusading ventures undertaken in the later Middle Ages.²²⁴ Their geographical position made them one of the most formidable Christian outposts in the Levant. If successful, the Plantagenets would thus not only have ruled Cyprus, but also most of the Eastern Mediterranean.²²⁵ In many ways, this was not dissimilar to

²¹⁴ *DD*, nr. 280.

²¹⁵ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 504.

²¹⁶ *Foedera*, I, 340.

²¹⁷ *CR 1254-6*, 135-6.

²¹⁸ *John of Wallingford*, *MGH SS* xxviii, 511.

²¹⁹ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 138.

²²⁰ These have been elaborated in greater detail than possible here by Lloyd, 'Henry III', 113-6.

²²¹ *CLR 1251-60*, 319; *Foedera*, I, 341.

²²² *CR 1254-6*, 445-6.

²²³ Lloyd, 'Henry III', 115 n. 91.

²²⁴ Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191-1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 75-100 for a detailed account.

²²⁵ Lloyd, 'Henry III', 115, is, however, going too far in assuming that Edmund could actually have exercised the regency on behalf of his intended step-son cum brother-in-law (quite apart from the canonical implications this might have had). He himself was only ten years old at the time.

Frederick II's policies²²⁶ or to Charles of Anjou's actions after he had seized the *regno*.²²⁷ However, the marriage failed to materialise. At the same time, it had been only one amongst several projects. Also in 1256, the Archbishop of Tarentaise and Master Rustand received plenary powers to arrange a marriage for Edmund.²²⁸ Support from within the college of cardinals was enlisted. That these marriage plans were directed at the *regno* itself is implied by the presence of an Apulian knight in England at the time.²²⁹ Who exactly this prospective spouse was is revealed in a letter by Master Rustand to Henry III, in which he repeated the advice of an unnamed cardinal, that a marriage between Edmund and one of Manfred's daughters could salvage Henry III's prospects.²³⁰ It seems unlikely that Alexander IV would have supported such plans, and this may have been one of the reasons why the marriage was never finalised. Nonetheless, the episode helps to illustrate both the divisions within the papal *curia* at the time, and that many still thought Henry capable of providing the leadership necessary to replace Manfred as King of Sicily.²³¹

Henry's court had shown both imagination and pragmatism in pursuing its ambitions. In many ways, the *negotium Sicilie* continued trends which had been visible since the early 1240s, and brought to a culmination English efforts at finding a new sphere of influence, away from Normandy and Poitou towards the Mediterranean, *Outremer* and Iberia. Its impact proved momentous. It brought the King's brother onto the German throne and found a settlement for relations with France which, despite some unease, was to last until 1337. When the Sicilian Business failed, it did so, not because Henry III and his council had been unable to build up the necessary support abroad, but because they had been unable to convince those who really mattered, that is the King's English subjects.

²²⁶ David Jacoby, 'La dimensione Imperiale Oltremare: Federico II, Cipro e il regno di Gerusalemme', Maria Stella Calo Mariani and Raffaella Cassano (ed.), *Federico II. Immagine e Potere* (Bari, 1995), 31-5.

²²⁷ Dunbabin, *Charles I.*, 114-26.

²²⁸ *DD*, nr. 282.

²²⁹ *CR 1254-6*, 313.

²³⁰ *DD*, nr. 283.

²³¹ Manfred himself seems to have been worried about this. In March 1256, the Bishop of Rochester warned that Assassins were being dispatched to England from Apulia: *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 508. The problem is also discussed by Hans Martin Schaller, 'König Manfred und die Assassinen', *DA* xxi (1965), 173-93.

Chapter VIII
The Reign of King Richard
(1257-72)

In January 1257 Richard of Cornwall was elected King of the Romans. In many ways Henry III had thus at last found a ruler of Germany sympathetic to English interests. However, circumstances had changed. The conquest of Normandy or Poitou was no longer an option. The establishment of a cadet branch of Plantagenets in the Mediterranean had taken precedence. This turned out a blessing for Richard. After peace had been arranged with France in 1259, the Earl was free to seek his coronation as Emperor from the Pope without having to worry about French support for rival candidates. Alfonso X was marginalised, while the surviving Hohenstaufen were unable to pose much of a challenge.

At the same time, despite his best efforts, Richard remained an English magnate. This, too, was to prove a blessing, as well as a curse. His wealth and status had enabled him to pursue his candidacy, but, in the end, the baronial rebellion in England was to put an end to his Imperial ambitions, not Conradin or the Ghibellines. Despite the political turmoil he encountered at home, in Germany Richard remained unchallenged. In fact, he even managed to win over most of those who had initially sided with Alfonso. His policies and administration laid the foundations upon which his successor, Rudolf of Habsburg, was to build.

VIII.1 Securing the Throne (1257-9)¹

Richard was no newcomer to Imperial politics. He had been appointed to represent Henry III at Vaucouleurs in 1236/7,² and unsuccessfully tried to mediate between Frederick and Gregory IX in 1241.³ Both Emperor and Pope had looked to him for support.⁴ However, the Earl rejected their overtures, as well as papal offers to make him King of Sicily.⁵ But developments in southern Italy and his brother's needs made him change his mind in 1256/7. Henry III required an ally who would safeguard not only English interests in the Mediterranean, but also ensure the safe passage of troops to Sicily. In addition, personal motivations should not be excluded. Matthew Paris, although not always an unprejudiced observer, reported that the Pope had offered Sicily to Richard in 1252, knowing that the Earl 'laboured insatiably, like someone suffering from dropsy, to acquire riches and temporal dignities'.⁶ When, in

¹ The best secondary coverage of Richard's early reign remains Johann Ferdinand Bappert, *Richard von Cornwall seit seiner Wahl zum deutschen König, 1258-1272* (Bonn, 1905), 3-36.

² *CM*, III, 393.

³ *Ibid.*, III, 471-2; IV, 145-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 569-75, 577-8; V, 111-2, 117-8, 201.

⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 346-7, 457.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 346-7.

1250, Richard was approached about the Latin Empire of Constantinople, this was done with the knowledge of his 'greed and ambition'. Richard was called upon not only because of his great wealth, but also because of his abundant vanity.⁷ Becoming King of the Romans was a first step towards being made Emperor, and Richard may have seen this as a fulfilment of his quest for glory and power.

As far as his German supporters were concerned, Richard could offer what none of the other claimants could - a career untainted by the internal squabbles and rivalries of German politics. In addition, unlike Alfonso of Castile, he was not tied up by the affairs of a realm he had to govern already. Moreover, as a candidate who had shown his support for Frederick II, while at the same time avoiding being drawn into the papal-Imperial conflict, Richard could present himself as a non-partisan ruler. He was not yet another anti-Hohenstaufen King. This may explain the support he received from the Count Palatine. At the same time, this offered Louis an opportunity to end the political isolation into which he had been brought by his wife's execution.⁸ The symbolism of having Conradin's guardian and effective leader of the Hohenstaufen in Germany on his side, should not be underestimated. In the case of Archbishop Conrad of Cologne, the underlying motivation was probably the chance to re-assert his once dominant position in Germany. From 1255 onwards, he and William had repeatedly clashed over policy, culminating in a bungled attempt at assassinating the King and a papal legate in 1255.⁹ By the time of Richard's election, the prelate was still under excommunication, and one of the promises Richard had to make was that he would exert his influence with the *curia* to restore peace between legate and Archbishop. Thus, the Earl's election may have been viewed as a solution to many of the problems previously besetting German politics, while at the same time ensuring his electors' return to power and influence.

Richard's approach was markedly different from his brother's, as he took great care to ensure a sufficiently strong basis of support. This can partly be explained by a political system fundamentally different from the one Henry encountered in Sicily. No candidate had emerged as clear front-runner to fill the vacuum left by William, and there was no feudal overlord who could simply confer the kingdom on whoever he favoured.¹⁰ Richard had to ensure that at least some Imperial princes were willing to elect him before he could put forth his claims. This had been achieved in November 1256, when Jean de Avesnes and the Bishop of Cambrai, acting as Richard's proctors, concluded a treaty with Louis, Count Palatine of the Rhineland and Duke of Bavaria. In exchange for 12,000 marks Louis would support Richard's candidacy for the German throne. Richard had to promise that he would not hinder the claims of Frederick II's grandson Conradin to the kingdoms of Sicily and Jerusalem or to the

⁷ *Ibid.*, V, 112.

⁸ Redlich, 'Wiener Briefsammlung', nr. 4.

⁹ *RI*, nr. 5213a.

¹⁰ This point was also pressed by Matthew Paris: *CM*, V, 601-3.

duchy of Swabia.¹¹ In December Conrad of Hochstaden, Archbishop of Cologne, too, agreed to vote for Richard. He was promised 8000 marks and a decisive role in the new government.¹² The Archbishop of Mainz, at that point held captive by the Duke of Brunswick, was to be paid another 8000 marks if he declared himself for Richard.¹³ Thus, the Earl could rightly claim to be supported by three of the most powerful and influential princes of the Empire. More importantly, unlike Alfonso, whose claims rested on his proclamation by Pisa and Marseilles, the Earl was to be elected by princes 'in whose power it was to elect the King of the Romans', as a later phrase runs.¹⁴

The fact that Richard paid considerable sums of money to his supporters has often been commented upon.¹⁵ However, offering financial rewards to one's supporters was not at all unusual in the context of thirteenth century Germany. Richard's generosity pales in comparison with that of later candidates: in 1292, the electors of Mainz and Cologne received 20,000 and 25,000 marks respectively, in 1298, 40,000 marks were paid to the elector of Bohemia.¹⁶ Even Frederick II had paved his way to Germany with money, and Rudolf of Habsburg was to pawn Imperial lands and cities to reward his supporters.¹⁷ All that was unusual about Richard's candidature was that his agreements had been put into writing, a procedure made necessary by his being, unlike his predecessors, an absent candidate who had to negotiate through proctors.

In addition to securing a basis of support, soundings were taken as to the situation in Germany. In January 1257 the Earl of Gloucester, acting on Richard's behalf, travelled to the Rhineland.¹⁸ Even then Richard did not cross to Germany. He waited until the Easter parliament, when the Archbishop of Cologne arrived in England to report the Earl's election.¹⁹ Only then were preparations made for his departure. Ships were requisitioned,²⁰ Richard appointed proctors during his absence²¹ and a formal treaty of friendship was concluded between the newly elected King of the

¹¹ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 379-380.

¹² *Ibid.*, nr. 383.

¹³ *Wykes*, *AM*, IV, 113.

¹⁴ For the early development of the doctrine of the seven Electors: Wolfgang Giese, 'Der Reichstag vom 8. September 1256 und die Entstehung des Alleinstimmrechts der Kurfürsten', *DA* xl (1984), 562-90; also Mitteis, *Deutsche Königswahl*, 194-203.

¹⁵ *Emonis et Menkonis Werumensium Chronica*, *MGH SS* xxiii, 546; *Balduini Ninovensium Chronicon*, *MGH SS* xxv, 544; *Catalogus Archiepiscoporum Coloniensium*, *MGH SS* xxiv, 356; *Annales Hamburgenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 383-4.

¹⁶ Hugo Stehkämper, 'Geld bei deutschen Königswahlen des 13 Jahrhunderts', in: J. Schneider (ed.), *Wirtschaftskräfte und Wirtschaftswege: FS Hermann Kellenbenz*, 4 vols., (Stuttgart, 1978), I, 83-115, at 92, 96, 106.

¹⁷ Oswald Redlich, 'Die Anfänge König Rudolfs I.', *MIÖG* x (1889), 341-418, at 413 n. 2.

¹⁸ *Constitutiones*, nr. 386. *CM*, V, 604, 622; *CR* 1256-9, 124.

¹⁹ *CM*, V, 624-6; *DD.*, nr. 297; *CR* 1256-9, 53; *CPR* 1247-58, 548.

²⁰ *CR* 1256-9, 45; *CLR* 1251-60, 22-3.

²¹ *CR* 1256-9, 127-8.

Romans and his brother.²² In the meantime, sufficient funds had been secured²³ and Richard was freed of some of his feudal obligations.²⁴ The Earl's preparations were circumspect and wide-ranging. Not only did he ensure sufficient support in Germany, but also that he had enough funds to maintain it.

The Earl's entourage was kept deliberately small. The safe-conducts issued list no more than 50 names.²⁵ Furthermore, most of them were valid only until Michaelmas 1257. This takes the sting out of Matthew Paris's comment that Richard's English knights were sent home because the Germans did not want to be ruled by foreigners.²⁶ His visit was certainly not planned to be an invasion, which would have been neither desirable, nor necessary. Richard's progress through Germany had to be effortless in order to be successful. Excessive use of force would have helped neither the Earl nor his brother. After all, by the time of Richard's departure in early May, Alfonso's rival candidacy was known in England, as well as Germany and at the *curia*.²⁷ Therefore, Richard had to convince his brother's English subjects, those in Germany who were still undecided in their allegiance, and ultimately the Pope, with whom the decision rested who to crown Emperor, that he was the only legitimate claimant. Alfonso's pretension had to be unveiled as such, and the best way of doing so was by regarding them with ostentatious disregard. That this was a consideration is underlined by some of Richard's letters back home, as well as to the citizens of Rome and members of the *curia*, all of which emphasise the ease with which he found himself accepted all across Germany.²⁸ Similarly, this would explain statements as in Richard's letter to the Lord Edward, describing the Archbishop of Mainz's martial exploits. Richard's wish that England, too, might have such war-like prelates,²⁹ was less an expression of naiveté on his part,³⁰ than an illustration of the strength and power of his supporters.

This is not to say that Richard bluffed. He was too experienced to venture into Germany without assuring himself of reliable supporters. Well before his arrival, the Archbishop of Cologne had undertaken the siege of the town of Boppard, the most

²² *Ibid.*, 128.

²³ *CM*, V, 630.

²⁴ *CR 1256-9*, 127.

²⁵ Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, 90-2 for a detailed analysis; those accompanying him included his seneschal, Philip de Eye: PRO SC1/62, nr. 18.

²⁶ *CM*, V, 653; the comment was echoed by *John of Wallingford*, *MGH SS* xxviii, 511, and the *Annals of Dunstable*, *AM* III, 203. All these comments were related to English politics rather than German realities. The only German source disparagingly referring to Richard as a foreigner is a Life of the Archbishop of Trier, trying to defend the prelate's support for Alfonso: *Gesta Trevensum Continuata*, *MGH SS* xxiv, 412-3. The extent to which Alfonso and Richard may or may not have been considered as foreigners is elaborated by Armin Wolf, 'The family of dynasties in medieval Europe: dynasties, kingdoms and Tochterstämme', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* xii (1991), 281-322.

²⁷ *CM*, V, 657.

²⁸ Liebermann, 'Zur Geschichte', 220; Karl Hampe, 'Ungedruckte Briefe zur Geschichte König Richards von Cornwall aus der Sammlung Richards von Pofi', *NA* xxx (1905), 685-6.

²⁹ *Annals of Burton*, *AM*, I, 392-4.

³⁰ Huffman, *Comparative History*, 376.

stubborn of Richard's opponents. He did not lack arms and men when he needed them. The Earl relied on a mixture of symbolic gestures and force to press his claims. While those backing Richard were rewarded with grants – 'so long as they be of good behaviour'³¹ – troops were deployed against his enemies.³² The *Annales Wormatienses* give testimony to the effectiveness of this approach: while those opposing his regime were beset by plunder and warfare, those supporting him were rewarded with lavish grants and privileges.³³ Few of his opponents found it possible to resist for long. Oppenheim was taken after a short siege,³⁴ and by the end of 1258, most of Richard's opponents had surrendered: in July 1258 Worms³⁵ opened its gates, as did Speyer in October.³⁶ By the beginning of 1259, Richard had won control over the strategic, political and economic heartland of Germany. Despite his tendency to exaggerate, the Earl could rightly claim, as he did in October 1257 to the Bishop of Lincoln, that he controlled the Rhine all the way to the Alps.³⁷ At the same time, Richard was not blind to the difficulties facing him. As a look at the witness list of his early charters will reveal, most of his support originated in the Rhineland. A grant to Aachen, for instance, made on occasion of his coronation (17 May 1257), included the Archbishops of Mainz and Cologne, the Bishops of Cambrai, Maastricht, Münster, Paderborn, the elect of Liège, the Duke of Limburg, the Counts of Guelders, Holland, Kleve, Lützelburg, Jülich, Loos, Berg and Bar.³⁸ Noteworthy is the absence not only of those supporting Alfonso – the Archbishop of Trier, the Dukes of Saxony and Brabant, as well as the Margraves of Brandenburg – but also of those one would expect in Richard's entourage, such as the Duke of Brunswick or the Count Palatine. No princes from the North- or South-East were present. Many of those who did attend had been amongst William's supporters and followers, and almost all of them were active in the Lower Rhine region. Richard thus faced the task of expanding his authority beyond the immediate confines of the Rhineland and the area controlled by his close supporters.

Of equal importance was the necessity to prove that he was, indeed, a non-partisan choice for King. His early charters also list a number of Imperial knights and nobles once active in the service of Frederick II and his sons, such as the Bolandens,

³¹ CPR 1247-58, 553, in a privilege from 11 May 1257 to the citizens of Lübeck. Also: *Codex Diplomaticus Lubecensis. Lübeckisches UB*, 11 vols., (Lübeck, 1843-1905), I, nrs. 78, 80.

³² Liebermann, 'Zur Geschichte', 220.

³³ *Annales Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 59-60.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 60/62.

³⁶ Friedrich Battenberg (ed.), *Die Gerichtsstandsprivilegien der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 2 vols., (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1983), nr. 52.

³⁷ Liebermann, 'Zu Kaiser Friedrich II', 220.

³⁸ Theodor Joseph Lacomblet (ed.), *UB für die Geschichte des Niederrheins*, 4 vols., (Düsseldorf, 1880-8), II, nr. 438.

Münzenbergs and Dauns.³⁹ Moreover, the support Richard had initially received from the Count Palatine also gave him legitimacy in the eyes of those once loyal to the Hohenstaufen. This, in turn, may explain Richard's repeated assurances that he would not interfere with Conradin's claims to Sicily, Swabia and Jerusalem, a promise, incidentally, which he never honoured. It should thus not be understood as an indication of his hostility towards the Sicilian Business, but rather as an attempt at emphasising the non-partisan nature of his kingship.⁴⁰ Unlike any other claimant, he remained above the internal squabbles and feuds besetting Imperial politics. Richard thus faced a difficult situation. His symbolic reassurances to Conradin, and his lack of a major military entourage could only be a first step. He still had to convince his new subjects that he was not only claiming, but also capable of exercising royal authority.

Where possible Richard tried to ease the way towards acceptance of his authority. Worms, for instance, was offered 1,000 marks and the confirmation of its privileges when it surrendered.⁴¹ This proved to be the right choice. Richard was soon acknowledged even in the Hohenstaufen's heartland, with privileges surviving for Nuremberg in Franconia and the abbey of Maulbronn in Swabia.⁴² At the same time, once Richard had established his authority in an area, he exercised it fully. This is exemplified by the case of the abbey of St Gisela in Maastricht. His chancellor, Bishop Nicholas of Cambrai, was ordered to undertake everything necessary to safeguard the abbey's liberty and possessions.⁴³ Similarly, the Burggrave of Landskron, after having his claims to the Imperial castle of Landskron confirmed in 1257, was ordered to provide troops for the siege of Worms in 1258.⁴⁴ Accepting Richard as King also meant accepting that he would fully exercise his royal rights and privileges. Where feasible, the King also tried to expand Imperial territory. A number of privileges survive from Richard's reign, confirming or granting towns and abbeys Imperial privileges or taking them under Imperial protection.⁴⁵ This means that they were taken out of the control of local nobles or princes, and into that of the Empire, granting them not only an increase in status, but also in freedoms and liberties. Furthermore, Matthew Paris reports that Richard also tried to take back towns into his

³⁹ Ennen/Eckertz (ed.), *Quellen Köln*, II, nr. 372; Karl Bosl, *Die Reichsministerialitt der Salier und Staufer*, 2 vols., (Stuttgart, 1950-1), II, 371; Erwin Jacob, *Untersuchungen über Herkunft und Aufstieg des Reichsministerialengeschlechts Bolanden* (Gießen, 1936), 34-5.

⁴⁰ Initially, the promise had been re-confirmed by John Maunsel and the earl of Gloucester in January 1257: *Constitutiones*, nr. 386. However, it seems that the agreement was kept secret in England. Even Matthew Paris, normally well-informed about events which could be used to discredit the king's Sicilian ambitions, has no knowledge of this document.

⁴¹ *Annales Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 60/62.

⁴² *Nürnberger UB* (Nuremberg, 1959), nr. 374; *Wirtembergisches UB*, 11 vols., (Stuttgart, 1849-1913), V, nr. 1447.

⁴³ Johann Friedrich Böhmer, *Acta Imperii Selecta: Urkunden deutscher Könige und Kaiser 928-1398, mit einem Anhang von Reichssachen* (Innsbruck, 1870), nr. 378.

⁴⁴ Heinrich Beyer, Leopold Eltester and Adam Goerz (ed.), *UB zur Geschichte der mittelrheinischen Territorien*, 3 vols., (Koblenz, 1874), nrs. 1401, 1451.

⁴⁵ Eltester, Bauer, Goerz, *UB Mittelrheinische Territorien*, nr. 1402; Böhmer, *Acta Imperii Selecta*, nr. 382; Ferdinand Schmitz (ed.), *UB der Abtei Heisterbach* (Bonn, 1908), nr. 144.

protection which had been pawned by his predecessors.⁴⁶ Some circumstantial evidence survives to back these claims. In 1260, for example, Richard guaranteed to pay off the debt for which Hagenau had formerly been consigned as security.⁴⁷ Lacking a territorial basis in Germany, Richard had to rely on these Imperial enclaves to provide him with the necessary strength and support. By mid 1258, he had thus made sufficient inroads to claim at last that most of Germany had come to accept him.

At the same time, he must have been aware of the danger still posed by Castilian claims. Alfonso had to be entirely overcome before Richard could feel safe. Worms and Speyer, for instance, had only been willing to open their gates because the King of Castile had failed to come to Germany.⁴⁸ Theirs was not an isolated example. After William's death several towns had declared that they would only support a King who had been elected unanimously.⁴⁹ This was reflected in Richard's grants for Friedberg, Wetzlar and Frankfurt.⁵⁰ Not only were they promised never to be alienated from the Empire, but Richard also conceded that, should the Pope recognise another King, they were free to switch allegiance. Richard had won their support, but as long as a rival candidate remained around whom opponents could rally, the foundations of Richard's authority were dangerously weak.

This added urgency to Richard's efforts to be crowned Emperor by the Pope, thus winning final approval for his claims. However, before that could be achieved, relations with France had to be settled. Matthew Paris reports that Louis IX reacted to Richard's election by fortifying castles in Normandy.⁵¹ Furthermore, the St Albans chronicler continues, Louis decided to capture Richard's messengers and to undermine his support in Germany,⁵² fearing that otherwise war might be waged on France.⁵³ This also meant some support for Alfonso in Germany, although no direct link can be established.⁵⁴ Most of Alfonso's followers outside Italy were based along the Empire's western borders.⁵⁵ In September 1257, for instance, Albert de la Tour

⁴⁶ *CM*, V, 695-8.

⁴⁷ *RI*, nr. 5377.

⁴⁸ *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 59.

⁴⁹ *Hermann Altahenses Annales*, *MGH SS* xvii, 397; Arno Buschmann, 'Der Rheinische Bund von 1254-1257: Landfriede, Städte, Fürsten und Reichsverfassung im 13. Jahrhundert', in: Helmut Maurer (ed.), *Kommunale Bündnisse Oberitaliens und Oberdeutschlands im Vergleich* (Sigmaringen, 1987), 167-212, *passim*, for a good discussion of older literature. Also: K.L. Menzel, *Geschichte des Rheinischen Städtebundes im 13. Jahrhundert* (Hanover, 1871) for a slightly dated, but more detailed overview.

⁵⁰ Max Foltz (ed.), *UB der Stadt Friedberg: erster Band* (Marburg, 1904), nrs. 35-6, *RI*, nrs. 5318, 5322, 14809. Böhmer/Lau, *UB Frankfurt*, I, nr. 217.

⁵¹ *CM*, V, 626.

⁵² *Ibid.*, V, 605. In June 1257, Henry III granted the butler of France a safe-conduct through England, and expressed his hope that Louis IX would, similarly, allow those travelling to Richard to be allowed to cross France: *CR 1256-9*, 134. This may have been the basis for Matthew's anecdote.

⁵³ *CM*, V, 657.

⁵⁴ After all, Alfonso's claims rested on his election by the citizens of Marseilles who looked for allies against Charles of Anjou.

⁵⁵ Schwab, 'Urkunden', *passim*.

received Arles and Vienne.⁵⁶ More importantly, in October Alfonso appointed the Duke of Brabant as his Imperial vicar.⁵⁷ The Duke had already proved himself a reliable ally to Louis IX. Similarly, in September 1258 Alfonso received homage from the Duke of Burgundy,⁵⁸ and in November Count Guido of Flanders, who had established his claims with the help of Charles of Anjou, accepted Alfonso as King.⁵⁹ If nothing else, the King of Castile was perceived as someone championing Louis's cause. This, in turn, posed difficulties for Richard. To overcome his Castilian opponent in Germany, he needed recognition from the Pope, and his coronation as Emperor. That, however, was unlikely to be granted while his candidacy was viewed as a menace by the Capetians. Consequently, Richard had to ensure that Louis would discontinue his support for Alfonso, and this could only be achieved by showing that he did not plan to use his new found dignity against the Capetians.

Richard had to demonstrate his good intentions. He did so by trying to solve the still simmering conflict over the Flemish inheritance. Should John de Avesnes have hoped that his eminent role in Richard's affairs would lead to support for his claims in Flanders, he was to be disappointed. In September 1256, John had been forced to accept Louis' arbitration confirming his loss of Flanders and Namur,⁶⁰ and in November 1257 he and his brother Baldwin renewed their acceptance of this agreement.⁶¹ It is safe to assume that Richard had exerted some pressure on his allies to do so. In spring 1258 the Earl himself promised Countess Margaret that he would strive to revoke William's sentence which had deprived her of all Imperial fiefs, but did so under the condition that she would offer personal homage.⁶² However, this did not prevent Richard from confirming the Duke of Luxemburg in his recent conquest of Namur, claimed by Margaret of Flanders.⁶³ Nonetheless, the Earl stayed clear of openly assisting the Avesnes brothers in actions which would further alienate Louis IX.⁶⁴ Thus, the way was paved for negotiations with the King of France.

Henry III, too, had little interest in a renewed outbreak of hostilities, and stepped up his efforts at finding a permanent settlement almost immediately after Richard's coronation at Aachen.⁶⁵ This eventually resulted in a meeting between

⁵⁶ *RI*, nr. 5489.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, nr. 5493.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, nr. 5496-7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, nr. 5500.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, nrs. 11756-8.

⁶¹ *TNA*, I, 1092; *RI*, nrs. 11797, 11798.

⁶² *Ibid.*, nr. 5343; *BN Mèlanges de Colbert*, 378, 502. I am grateful to Dr. Ingo Schwab who provided me with his transcripts of this document, as well as of similar proceedings in 1260: *BN, Mèlanges Colbert*, 378, 503; and 1262: *BN Mèlanges Colbert*, 378, 504; and for his discussion on the role the 1258 document played in preparing the treaty of Paris.

⁶³ *Cam. Wampach, Urkunden- und Quellenbuch zur Geschichte der altluxemburgischen Territorien bis zur burgundischen Zeit*, 10 vols., (Luxemburg, 1935-55), III, nr. 250.

⁶⁴ Andre Joris, 'La visite a Huy de Richard de Cornouailles, roi des Romains (29 decembre 1258)', in: his *Villes. Affaires-Mentalites. Autour du pays mosun* (Brussels, 1993), 457-66, for the difficulties and problems facing Richard at the western borders of Germany.

⁶⁵ *Foedera*, 358.

English, French and German proctors at Cambrai in 1258, and ultimately the Treaty of Paris. Richard ratified the settlement as Earl of Cornwall, but also tried to emphasise his special status, and suggested that he and Louis IX enter a separate agreement. In the spirit of the treaty of Catania, the two rulers were to promise mutual support, friendship and assistance. To underline his position, Richard was not represented by his brother's proctors, but by his own Imperial prothonotary. Although no evidence survives that this proposed agreement was concluded, Richard had settled his relations with France, and could now more confidently approach the Pope.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Hampe, 'Ungedruckte Briefe', 673-90, at 685-6; *Annals of Burton*, AM I, 469-70.

VIII.2 Imperial ambitions and English rebels (1259-68)⁶⁷

Immediately after his coronation, Richard announced to the citizens of Rome that he wished to become Emperor.⁶⁸ He promised to restore jurisdictions and honours, expel rebels and ensure that law and justice be upheld. This was probably directed against the regime of Brancalione which had fallen foul of the papacy and had begun to collaborate with Manfred. Granting Richard his wish may have been viewed as likely to add impetus to the flagging campaign against Manfred and his Ghibelline allies. This could explain the favourable reception Richard found with various members of the papal *curia*. After all, by supporting Plantagenet candidates for both the Imperial throne and the crown of Sicily, the papacy would have created a situation it had striven so hard to remedy - the same dynasty ruling lands to the North and South of the papal states. It seems, though, that many believed the possible advantages to outweigh potential risks. Letters by a number of cardinals survive, either urging Richard to come to Rome quickly, or pressing Alexander IV to lend the Earl his support.⁶⁹ Richard, too, prepared to recruit supporters within Italy. Contacts were made with the patriarch of Aquileia,⁷⁰ Azzo of Este,⁷¹ Uberto Pallavicini,⁷² and Thomas of Savoy.⁷³ The Earl left little doubt as to his intentions, and, as in the case of his German election, he tried to prepare the ground politically and diplomatically before venturing south.

Initially, he met with some success.⁷⁴ In April 1259, Alexander IV promised to send a legate to Germany to exhort the princes to adhere to Richard.⁷⁵ A papal letter survives in which the Duke of Burgundy is admonished to assist Richard, King of the Romans *in imperatorem promovendo*.⁷⁶ This is the more interesting, as John had initially done homage to Alfonso. Similarly, the same year, the Archbishop of Cologne

⁶⁷ For a more detailed secondary coverage of negotiations before the *curia*, cf. Arnold Busson, *Die Doppelwahl des Jahres 1257 und das römische Königtum Alfons X. von Castilien: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des grossen Interregnums* (Münster, 1866), 46-58.

⁶⁸ Hampe, 'Briefe', 685-6. This echoes earlier attempts by the Romans to play a major role in the designation of a future Emperor, but was more likely an attempt to utilise the factions within Roman politics to further Richard's ambitions. For the general context: Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the fifth to the fourteenth century*, trans. Sheila Ann Ogilvie, (London, 1969), 90-7, 124-7.

⁶⁹ *AI*, I, nrs. 741-4.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, I, nr. 742.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, I, nr. 567.

⁷² *Ibid.*, II, nr. 82.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, nr. 562; *RI*, nr. 5342.

⁷⁴ For a detailed outline of events, H. Otto, 'Alexander IV. und der deutsche Thronstreit', *MIÖG* xix (1898), 75-91.

⁷⁵ *Annals of Burton*, *AM* I, 469-70; Herman Baerwald (ed.), *Das Baumgartner Formelbuch: eine Quelle zur Geschichte des XIII. Jahrhunderts vornehmlich der Zeiten Rudolfs von Habsburg* (Vienna, 1866), nr. 9. For Innocent's changing attitudes: H. Otto, 'Alexander IV. und der deutsche Thronstreit', *MIÖG* xix (1898), 75-91.

⁷⁶ Barbiche, *Les Actes Pontificaux*, nr. 1001. Also *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, 2 vols. (London, 1869), II, 427-8.

was praised for the support shown to Richard and exhorted to continue doing so.⁷⁷ In 1260 the Earl is said to have left for Germany to plan his coronation as Emperor.⁷⁸ A visit was certainly planned: in October 1259 Richard, 'going to the court of Rome on the affairs of himself, the King and the realm' had been allowed to tallage his manors and boroughs in England.⁷⁹ Similarly, in September 1260, Richard wrote to the citizens of Bologna to announce his imminent arrival.⁸⁰ This co-incided with hectic diplomatic activity aimed at France. Before the Earl's departure, envoys arrived from Louis IX,⁸¹ and contacts continued during Henry III's sojourn in Gascony later that year.⁸² Henry III even felt confident enough to ask Louis IX for money to repay a loan he had received from Richard.⁸³ Although this was part of the subsidy promised in the Treaty of Paris, the fact that the King of England could ask his Capetian counterpart to support the Earl's planned coronation as Emperor deserves attention, signifying both the changing nature of Anglo-French relations, and the importance of a peaceful settlement for Richard's Imperial projects. However, nothing was to come of the proposed journey. In mid-June, the Earl left for the continent,⁸⁴ but in October he unexpectedly returned, as the situation in England had begun to worsen.⁸⁵ During a parliament earlier that month, Henry of Almain, Richard's eldest son, had begun to act as Simon de Montfort's proctor, in opposition to Henry III. Various initially competing factions began to work together, pressing their claims against the King. Henry III's Justiciar was deposed, and a baronial candidate was elected instead. The situation was alarming enough to prompt Richard's immediate return. As was to be repeatedly the case, political developments in England interfered with the Earl's ambitions in Europe.

The full effects of Richard's continuing entanglement in English politics were not to be known until some years later. In the meantime, in spring 1261, he was elected senator of Rome,⁸⁶ and was urged by various cardinals to come quickly to receive his crown.⁸⁷ In April 1262, however, Urban IV declared a change in papal policy, and announced that he was unable to favour either him or Alfonso.⁸⁸ The Pope's decision had not been hasty or rushed. For some time, Richard's failure to

⁷⁷ Baerwald (ed.), *Baumgartner Formelbuch*, nr. 11.

⁷⁸ *Flores Historiarum*, II, 452.

⁷⁹ *CPR 1258-66*, 57.

⁸⁰ *RI*, nr. 5382.

⁸¹ *CPR 1258-66*, 119.

⁸² *CR 1259-61*, 167.

⁸³ *CPR 1258-66*, 74.

⁸⁴ *Flores*, II, 452.

⁸⁵ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 192-203, for the following.

⁸⁶ Liebermann, 'Zur Geschichte', 222; Frank R Lewis, 'The election of Richard of Cornwall as Senator of Rome in 1261', *EHR* li (1937), 657-662 for a good secondary treatment of the circumstances of his election, and the significance of the post of senator in the context of Roman politics at the time.

⁸⁷ Hampe, 'Ungedruckte Briefe', 687.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 689-90.

come to Rome had caused unease.⁸⁹ If a date can be fixed to pin down a change in attitude, it was probably the council held in 1261, dealing, amongst other things, with the German double election.⁹⁰ From then on, Pope Urban IV avoided committing himself. By August 1263 he officially declared that he remained unable to decide, and announced that both Alfonso and Richard were from now on to be addressed as elected Kings of the Romans.⁹¹ A thorough investigation of their claims began, which was never concluded. This was as much the result of a series of misfortunes - successive pontiffs had the habit of dying at inopportune moments - as of developments in England. In 1264, for instance, a decision had to be postponed because Richard, held captive by Simon de Montfort, was unable to authorise his proctors. Once this problem had been overcome, Urban IV died, just when he was ready to announce his decision.⁹² His successor, Clement IV, declared that he first had to consult the records. He gave 1 June 1269 as the date for his final decision, but died in November 1268. Although a new pontiff was elected in September 1271, he was not consecrated until late March 1272, just a few days before Richard's death. It would thus be mistaken to view Richard's failure in Rome as an indication of major weaknesses in Germany.

Similarly, the reasons which had led to Urban's change of mind were connected not so much to the affairs of Germany, as to the dangers besetting Henry III in particular, and Christendom in general. 1260/1 were years of crisis. Constantinople had fallen to the Greeks, a Mongol invasion was feared,⁹³ affairs in the Holy Land had taken yet another turn for the worse⁹⁴ and waves of flagellants swept across Northern Italy.⁹⁵ Manfred still ruled Sicily, and even began to widen his circle of contacts to include the Muslim rulers of Egypt.⁹⁶ Moreover, he also found support in the West.⁹⁷ What the papacy needed was strong and effective leadership. Whoever was to become Emperor had to be a formidable hammer of heathen and heretics. Furthermore, by the early 1260s, it had also become clear that Henry III would be unable to make good his promises with regard to Sicily, and Urban IV began to look for other potential champions against Manfred, eventually settling on Charles of Anjou. Thus, Urban's negotiating position was strengthened, and it may have become possible to drive a stronger bargain with whoever wanted to become Emperor. As will

⁸⁹ Ibid., 688; *DD*, nr. 340.

⁹⁰ *Alberti Milioli Chronicon*, *MGH SS* xxxi, 366.

⁹¹ *Epistolae*, III, nrs. 558, 561.

⁹² Ibid., III, 631, 653.

⁹³ Jean Richard, 'The Mongols and the Franks', *Journal of Asian History* iii (1969), 45-57; *Continuatio William of Newburgh*, 539.

⁹⁴ Peter Jackson, 'The Crisis in the Holy Land 1260', *EHR* xcv (1980), 481-513.

⁹⁵ Gary Dickson, 'The Flagellants of 1260 and the Crusades', *JMH* xv (1989), 227-67.

⁹⁶ Peter Holt (ed.), *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince: Abu'l-Fida', sultan of Hamah (672-732/1273-1331)* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 31-2.

⁹⁷ Berg, 'Manfred of Sicily and Urban IV', 111-36; *Epistolae* III, nr. 519; also, for the worries this caused in England with regard to the Sicilian Business: *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 569.

shortly be seen, the Earl of Cornwall was in no position to give Urban the military and political leadership he wanted.

Richard's success in Germany rested upon the revenues from his English estates. They allowed him to recruit and reward followers, hire troops and buy back or acquire Imperial lands. Any disturbance in England would thus have serious repercussions abroad. Richard's English links had enabled him to pursue his Imperial ambitions, but they also meant that he could not avoid involving himself in his brother's affairs. The events surrounding his return to Germany in 1259 may be cited as an example. While staying at St Omer, the Earl was met by envoys who demanded that he perform an oath to the Provisions of Oxford before returning to England.⁹⁸ To increase pressure, no ships were permitted to cross the Channel, and disobedience to these orders was made a capital offence.⁹⁹ Richard, however, refused to comply, unless he received a royal mandate to do otherwise.¹⁰⁰ The reasoning employed even before this encounter was revealing. In November 1258 the Earl's brother requested that he sign the Provisions.¹⁰¹ After all, Henry III declared, despite being King of the Romans, Richard remained a baron of England, and, as such, had to comply with its laws.¹⁰² The Earl's return had been far from smooth, and it did not bode well for things to come. Matthew Paris reports how the Earl's German entourage was bewildered by the treatment he received from his fellow-countrymen, and how they, consequently, disregarded his authority.¹⁰³ In this, he may have been exaggerating. However, the King of Romans continued to be hindered by the fact that he was also Earl of Cornwall.

By 1263, when Urban IV finally ended papal support for Richard, the situation had worsened considerably.¹⁰⁴ In June, the Bishop of Hereford had been dragged from his cathedral and incarcerated by Simon de Montfort's partisans. Soon after, the estates of Henry's seneschal were plundered, and baronial forces came to occupy much of the South-East. Even in the North, unrest was feared. The ensuing turmoil soon engulfed Richard. The Earl made several attempts at mediating between Simon and Henry.¹⁰⁵ Not only did his efforts meet with little success, he was also reprimanded for his failure by the Pope. In September, Urban IV ordered Richard to come to the King's defence. Harsh words were used: although the Earl had not procured, he nonetheless condoned the recent violence.¹⁰⁶ Although royal control was eventually restored, Richard's position was weakened. He had not given a

⁹⁸ *Annals of Burton, AM*, I, 461.

⁹⁹ *Wykes, AM*, IV, 121-2.

¹⁰⁰ *CPR 1258-66*, 10.

¹⁰¹ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 520.

¹⁰² *CR 1256-9*, 460.

¹⁰³ *CM*, V, 736-7.

¹⁰⁴ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 225-39 for the following.

¹⁰⁵ *Royal Letters*, II, nrs. 604-7.

¹⁰⁶ *Papal Letters*, 402.

performance which could have reassured the papacy that he was the right choice to lead Christianity against its many foes. His actions fell short of the whole-hearted military support the Pope had come to expect, and his attempts at negotiating failed. The events drastically underlined Richard's dependence on England with its increasingly volatile politics.

Furthermore, this was not the only poor performance given by Richard. When exhorting the Earl to come to his brother's assistance in 1263, Urban IV also referred to various German knights who had come to fight Henry III. A clue to their provenance may be given by a separate warning which Urban issued to the Archbishop of Cologne. The prelate was ordered to comply with any decision a recently dispatched papal legate would make regarding England.¹⁰⁷ Archbishop Engelbert II also posed the biggest challenge so far to Richard's authority in Germany, when he began to support Frederick II's grandson Conradin. In May 1262 Conradin held a diet at Ulm claiming the duchy of Swabia as his inheritance.¹⁰⁸ From then on events developed quickly: in early June, Urban IV thanked the King of Bohemia for giving warning about plans to elect Conradin as anti-King.¹⁰⁹ The situation was serious.¹¹⁰ Various nobles and towns in Swabia sided with Conradin giving him control over much of the area between St Gall and Augsburg.¹¹¹ More importantly, the Count Palatine came to his assistance. Richard reacted quickly, and set out for Germany in June. Lacking military resources,¹¹² he took to alliances and symbolic gestures instead. While Richard was at Aachen in August 1262, he confirmed King Ottokar of Bohemia in his – disputed – possession of Austria, thus demonstrating in whose power it was to grant or receive Imperial lands.¹¹³ The same day, a memorandum was issued listing the Imperial Insignia Richard had presented to St Mary's at Aachen.¹¹⁴ This emphasised Richard's position as properly crowned and consecrated King.¹¹⁵ Moreover, he scored a major success when he negotiated a truce between the Duke of Brabant and

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 396-8.

¹⁰⁸ *Notae Historia Sangallenses*, MGH SS i, 71.

¹⁰⁹ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 520.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, nr. 520; *Constitutiones*, nr. 403.

¹¹¹ *Notae Historia Sangallenses*, MGH SS i, 71; *RI*, nr. 4791; Helmut Maurer, 'Die Anfänge der Stadt Tiengen und das politische Kräftespiel am Hochrhein um die Mitte des 13 Jahrhunderts', *Alemannisches Jahrbuch* 1964/5, 119-158, at 141.

¹¹² *CR* 1261-4, 175-6. Henry III, writing from France, tells his brother that he cannot send the promised subsidies (30. 9. 1262).

¹¹³ Jindrich Sebanek and Sasa Duskova (ed.), *Codex diplomarius et epistolaris regni Bohemiae*, vol. V,1 (Prague, 1974), nr. 345.

¹¹⁴ Wilhelm Mummenhoff (ed.), *Regesten der Reichsstadt Aachen (einschließlich des Aachener Reiches und der Reichsabtei Burtscheid)*, 2 vols., (Bonn, 1937-1961), I, nr. 174; Albert Huyskens, 'Der Plan des Königs Richard von Cornwallis zur Niederlegung eines deutschen Krönungsschatzes in Aachen', *Annalen des Historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* cxv (1929), 180-204, at 202-4; the same, 'Noch einmal der Krönungsschatz Königs Richard von Cornwallis', *Annalen des Historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* 118 (1931), 136-43; also, although frequently unreliable: Armin di Miranda, *Richard von Cornwallis und sein Verhältnis zur Krönungsstadt Aachen* (Bonn, 1880).

¹¹⁵ The role and importance of the royal Insignia remains hotly debated. For a recent discussion of various arguments: Jürgen Petersohn, 'Über monarchische Insignien und ihre Funktion im mittelalterlichen Reich', *Historische Zeitschrift* cclxvi (1998), 47-96.

one of his local opponents.¹¹⁶ Thus, the last and most important of Alfonso's partisans had been won over. In October, Richard reached Alsace.¹¹⁷ Old supporters were won back¹¹⁸ and Conradin retreated.¹¹⁹ Even the Count Palatine was temporarily¹²⁰ brought to heel.¹²¹ Although no military encounter followed, this had been enough to thwart Conradin's ambitions, and he remained confined to parts of Swabia and the domains of the Duke of Bavaria. Although this may have sufficed to safeguard Richard's claims in Germany, it was not enough to win over the Pope. The episode also underlined Richard's continuing dependence on his brother: without Henry III, the Earl had little or no military muscle to flex. To Urban, prevarication may have seemed the best option.

In this, he was to be proved right. Despite his best efforts,¹²² Richard had to become embroiled in English affairs. In 1264, for instance, the Earl had been involved in negotiating the Mise of Amiens,¹²³ and he acted as regent during the King's absence in France the same year. However, all efforts at settling the conflict peacefully came to nothing. In May 1264, royalist and baronial forces clashed at Lewes, with the two Kings and their sons taken prisoner by Simon de Montfort.¹²⁴ This marked the nadir of Richard's relations with the *curia*.¹²⁵ What saved his kingship at the time was that Alfonso was in no better situation. Castile had recently been invaded by the Muslim rulers of North Africa, while Alfonso also faced considerable internal opposition.¹²⁶ In 1265 Clement IV wrote to the Archbishop of Seville, urging him to induce Alfonso to abandon his claim to the Imperial throne. Clement declared that he did not ask this because he preferred Richard; rather, a third and more powerful candidate was to be appointed in their stead.¹²⁷ However, the royal victory at Evesham in 1265 prevented Richard's imminent demise. He nonetheless remained weakened. In a letter, probably dating from the period between 1265 and 1268, he wrote to the brothers Philip and Werner of Falkenstein explaining that, due to his long absence in England during the recent war, he had been unable to

¹¹⁶ *RI*, nr. 14811e.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, nrs. 5409-5416.

¹¹⁸ Wilhelm Wiegand (ed.), *UB der Stadt Straßburg*, 2 vols., (Strasbourg, 1879-86), I, nr. 507; *RI*, nr. 5413.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, nr. 5408.

¹²⁰ By 1265 he was already siding with Conradin again, *Monumenta Boica* xxx (Munich, 1834), nr. 804.

¹²¹ *RI*, nr. 5402.

¹²² Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, 121-3.

¹²³ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 608.

¹²⁴ The course of events as seen from a baronial perspective, 'The Song against the King of Almain', Thomas Wright (ed.), *Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II*, Camden Society, (London, 1839; repr. with a new introduction by Peter Coss, Cambridge, 1996), 69-71.

¹²⁵ *Epistolae*, III, nr. 631.

¹²⁶ O'Callaghan, *The Learned King*, 182-94; Richard P. Kinkade, 'Alfonso X, Cantiga 235, and the Events of 1269-78', *Speculum* lxxvii (1992), 284-323 for continuing unrest.

¹²⁷ *TNA*, II, 137-8.

see to their wishes.¹²⁸ The following years were spent restoring what had been lost during the Earl's captivity, and settling relations between Henry III and the survivors of Evesham. However, Richard remained weakened in his Imperial ambitions. The Pope in Rome and his legates in Germany continued to ignore him. Little heed was paid to Richard's projects, affiliations and ambitions.¹²⁹ Thus, Richard's visit to Germany in 1268 was, probably, also undertaken with the aim of proving to the *curia* that he still marshalled the support and recognition necessary to become Emperor.

In this context, it remains necessary to differentiate between Richard's standing with the papacy, and his position in Germany. The *curia* was looking for someone to lead Christian forces against the Church's many foes. Whoever was to become Emperor had to drive Manfred from Sicily, the Muslims from Palestine, the Greeks from Greece and the Mongols from Europe. In comparison, being King of the Romans did not pose much of a challenge. All a successful candidate had was to make his presence felt. There is little doubt as to Richard's continuing ability to do so. As already demonstrated, despite lacking a strong military entourage in 1262, he had been able to overcome Conradin's support with relative ease. Similarly, in 1266, when rumours spread about the impending election of another anti-King,¹³⁰ it was not even necessary for Richard to appear in person. His captivity appears to have had limited impact. For instance, some charters survive, in which those issuing grants date their privileges as having been given 'regnante Romanorum rege Richardo', long after news of his defeat at Lewes must have reached Germany.¹³¹ In late June 1264, four weeks after the event, a peace was agreed between the Archbishop of Mainz and the Count Palatine, which still looked to Richard as the ultimate source of authority within the Empire.¹³² Only the Count Palatine and Duke of Bavaria, Conradin's sponsor and guardian, seems to have been willing to take advantage of Richard's prolonged absence. In 1267, for instance, he declared that, the Empire being vacant, he would act as Emperor in his lands.¹³³ Even he, however, came to recognise Richard again in 1269.¹³⁴ Although there was a decline in the frequency with which Richard issued charters during the 1260s, business still continued as usual. He retained the company of his Imperial chancellor, he was met and consulted by envoys from Germany.¹³⁵ Privileges were still issued and conflicts settled. Peter of Savoy received the Kiburg inheritance,¹³⁶ a settlement between the Duke of Luxemburg and the Countess of

¹²⁸ Böhmer, *Acta Imperii Selecta*, nr. 384.

¹²⁹ *RI*, nrs. 10617a-10624. Hans Ollendiek, *Die päpstlichen Legaten im deutschen Reichsgebiet von 1261 bis zum Ende des Interregnums* (Fribourg, 1976), 176-9.

¹³⁰ *Constitutiones*, nr. 406; *Epistolae*, III, nr. 657.

¹³¹ *Westfälisches UB*, 10 vols. (Münster, 1847-1977), IV, nr. 1035 [25. 6. 1265].

¹³² *Constitutiones*, nr. 442.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, nr. 464.

¹³⁴ *RI*, nr. 5455a.

¹³⁵ *AI I*, nr. 570; *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 550; *CPR 1258-66*, 496.

¹³⁶ *RI*, nrs. 5427-8; Cox, *Eagles*, 363-72 for the wider context.

Flanders was procured,¹³⁷ and Aachen was allowed to purchase royal bathing privileges.¹³⁸ Richard's prospects of becoming Emperor may have become bleak, but he still faced little serious opposition in Germany. This was the basis on which his triumphant visit of 1268/9 was to be built.

VIII.3 Triumph (1268-72)

By the time of Richard's fourth visit to Germany in August 1268, his opponents were either dead¹³⁹ or beset by domestic problems which left them little room to pursue their Imperial ambitions. Most princes initially hostile had come round to either requesting his help or quietly accepting him. Those still opposed to his regime lacked a focal point around which to rally. The Earl of Cornwall was thus free to exercise his authority. Coinciding with the final phase of papal deliberations on who was to become Emperor, the sojourn was designed as the apex of Richard's reign. As soon as he arrived, Richard underlined the breadth of his success. The inheritance of Brabant was settled, and first contacts were made with Italy.¹⁴⁰ However, the most significant manifestations of Richard's new freedom of action were his marriage to Beatrice of Falkenburg, and the diet of Worms of 1269.¹⁴¹

Beatrice was the daughter of an important lord in the Rhineland region.¹⁴² Renowned for her beauty, she also provided a link with a powerful family in Richard's heartland (her uncle being the Archbishop of Cologne). The political dimension is emphasised by Thomas Wykes: fighting the Germans' furious insanity, the Earl first tackled the manifold extortions forced upon travellers and merchants along the Rhine. Richard called a meeting to Worms, where these tolls were banned. For this he was widely praised by the Germans. Afterwards, foreseeing that this would tie him closer to his subjects, he married Beatrice of Falkenburg.¹⁴³ Richard thus not only forged dynastic links, but also exercised a King's most solemn duty: the upholding of peace and justice.¹⁴⁴ Much of this may have been aimed as much at his German subjects as

¹³⁷ Wampach, *UB altluxemburgische Territorien*, III, nrs. 472-3.

¹³⁸ Mummenhoff, *Regesten Reichsstadt Aachen*, I, nr. 213.

¹³⁹ Conradin had been executed at Naples in 1268. For his Italian campaign, *Bartholomaei de Neocastro Historia Siculi*, 7-10; for a somewhat old-fashioned secondary interpretation, Ferdinand Geldner, 'Konradin und das alte deutsche Königtum - Opfer der hohenstaufischen Italienpolitik', *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte* xxxii (1969), 495-524; August Nitschke, 'Konradin und Clemens IV.', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* xxxviii (1958), 268-77.

¹⁴⁰ *RI*, nr. 5454

¹⁴¹ *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 68.

¹⁴² Frank R Lewis, 'Beatrice of Falkenburg, the third wife of Richard of Cornwall', *EHR*, lii (1937), 279-282; *Annals of Oseney*, *AM IV*, 224.

¹⁴³ Wykes, *AM IV*, 222-5.

¹⁴⁴ For a detailed discussion of the topic, Timothy Reuter, 'Die Unsicherheit auf den Straßen im europäischen Früh- und Hochmittelalter: Täter, Opfer und ihre mittelalterlichen und modernen Betrachter', in: Johannes Fried (ed.), *Träger und Instrumentarien des Friedens im hohen und späten Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1996), 169-202.

at Clement IV who was due to announce his decision as to who was to be the next Emperor by June 1269. By marrying a German wife Richard emphasised his intention to be more than an absentee King, while the measures taken at Worms proved that this was more than wishful thinking.

The diet's pronouncements do not survive, but on 20 April Richard issued a decree referring to the meeting. He declared that, after having received complaints from the consuls of Worms about a toll called *Ungelt* (a duty levied on goods which were to be transported or traded), he had called a meeting, where the Archbishops of Mainz and Trier, the Bishops of Worms and Speyer, princes, magnates and counts had sworn not to extort the toll in future.¹⁴⁵ However, abolishing an unpopular tax was not the diet's only purpose. A general peace was declared, and all the nobles and magnates present swore to obey it.¹⁴⁶ Richard's promise to safeguard peace and trade was as important as the fact that he had been petitioned to do so. He remained the sole source of royal authority in Germany. Moreover, the diet of Worms put Richard in the tradition of Frederick II, inasmuch as it was the first attempt by a King since 1235 to establish a general peace, not just for a specific region, but across Germany as a whole. Although the Worms diet had been attended only by a limited number of clergy and nobles, mostly from the Lower Rhineland, Richard did not believe this to be sufficient. He ordered the citizens of Strasbourg to follow the example set by others, and abolish *Ungelt* within eight days. Otherwise, they could not be part of the general peace.¹⁴⁷ That the implicit use of force was no empty threat is illustrated by a letter from the Archbishop of Mainz to the citizens of Oppenheim from August 1269, when he ordered them to equip a warship to be used against disturbers of the peace agreed at Worms.¹⁴⁸ This final sojourn remained the highpoint of Richard's reign.

Once again, affairs in England forced him to return. The kingdom, only partially pacified after 1265, experienced continuing unrest. Pockets of resistance remained in the North,¹⁴⁹ and the royal court was torn by a feud between the Earl of Gloucester and the Lord Edward.¹⁵⁰ Richard was asked to arbitrate. After the conflict was laid to rest, Richard acted as one of Edward's proctors during his crusade,¹⁵¹ and in 1271, he acted as regent of England on his brother's behalf.¹⁵² There is no indication, though, that the Earl thought his absence from Germany to be permanent. Quite to the

¹⁴⁵ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 389-90.

¹⁴⁶ *Annales Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 68.

¹⁴⁷ *Constitutiones*, nr. 391. On the general role of peace agreements, and the local interests which came to play a role in their establishment: Claudia Rothhoff, 'Die Politische Rolle der Landfrieden zwischen Maas und Rhein von der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts bis zum Auslaufen des Bacharachener Landfriedens Ludwigs des Bayern' *Rheinische Vierteljahresschrift* xlv (1981), 75-111.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, nr. 446; Wilhelm Günther (ed.), *Codex Diplomaticus Rheno-Mosellanus: Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte der Rhein- und Mosellande, der Nahe- und Ahrgegend, und des Hundsrückens, des Meinfeldes und der Eifel*, 5 vols., (Koblenz, 1822-6), II, nr. 234.

¹⁴⁹ *CPR 1266-72*, 590-1, 596.

¹⁵⁰ *Annales of Winchester*, AM, II, 108; *Wykes*, AM, IV, 229, 231-2, 236.

¹⁵¹ *CPR 1266-72*, 468, 508, 509.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 592.

contrary: there was no slackening in issuing royal grants for Germany.¹⁵³ Moreover, the summer of 1271 saw renewed efforts by Henry III to repay debts owed to his brother.¹⁵⁴ In preceding years this had been an indication of the Earl's imminent departure. Also, in February 1271, Henry III urged his son to return. Amongst the reasons given was that Richard would soon be able to set sail for Rome to receive his coronation as Emperor.¹⁵⁵ The King of England was not alone in this belief. In a contract between the burggrave of Landskron and a local noblewoman from December 1270, reference is made to their undertaking having to be confirmed by King Richard, who was expected to arrive soon.¹⁵⁶ However, all these expectations came to nothing when Richard died in April 1272, an absentee, but a widely accepted King.

VIII.4 The Rule of King Richard

Richard thus encountered few problems in maintaining his claims. However, how successful he had been in exercising royal authority - could he actually make true his claims of being the ruler of Germany in deed as well as name?

Traditionally, any suggestion that Richard's reign may have been more than a mere interlude, and an unhappy one, too, would have been dismissed. His reign has been described as an embarrassment or at best as ineffectual.¹⁵⁷ This view has rarely been criticised,¹⁵⁸ but this is not the place to offer a detailed critique of its underlying assumptions.¹⁵⁹ However, to understand the impact of Richard's election and reign, some of the structural features of his rule must be considered.

A characteristic element of Richard's government was continuity. The staff of his chancery, as well as many of his officials, had been active under his predecessors. His chamberlain, for instance, was Philip of Falkenstein,¹⁶⁰ previously Conrad IV's steward, while his uncle had held the same post under Frederick II, with other

¹⁵³ *RI*, nrs. 5476-5483; *Monumenta Boica* xxx, nr. 823; Lacomblet, *UB Mittelrheinische Territorien*, II, nrs. 611, 618.

¹⁵⁴ *CLR* 1267-72, nrs. 1500-1; *CPR* 1266-72, 534, 543-4, 545-6.

¹⁵⁵ *CR* 1268-72, pp. 397-8.

¹⁵⁶ Theresia Zimmer, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Herrschaft Landskron an der Ahr*, 2 vols., (Bonn, 1966), I, nr. 101.

¹⁵⁷ Julius Kempf, *Geschichte des deutschen Reiches während des großen Interregnums* (Würzburg, 1893), 202-4; Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, 114; Alfred Haverkamp, *Aufbruch und Gestaltung Deutschland 1056-1273* (Munich, 1984), 231; Heinz Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte des Spätmittelalters 1250-1500* (Stuttgart, 1983), 22, 28; Johannes Leuschner, *Deutschland im späten Mittelalter* (Göttingen, 1981), 118. To name but a few examples.

¹⁵⁸ Georg Christian Gebauer, *Leben und denkwürdige Thaten Herrn Richards, Erwählten Römischen Kaisers, Grafens von Cornwall und Poitou* (Leipzig, 1744), 456-72; A. L. Poole, 'The Interregnum in Germany', *Cambridge Medieval History* vol. VI (Cambridge, 1929), 110-130, at 122; Hartmut Boockmann, *Stauferzeit und spätes Mittelalter Deutschland 1125-1517* (Berlin, 1987), 182-3; Fritz Trautz, 'Richard von Cornwall', *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Geschichte von Stadt und Kreis Kaiserslautern* vii (1969), 27-59, at 56-7. For the exceptions.

¹⁵⁹ I have disussed the issue in my, 'Image and reality in Richard of Cornwall's German career', *EHR* cxiii (1998), 1111-43, parts of which have been abridged for this section.

¹⁶⁰ *RI*, nr. 5301.

members of his family being prominent officials in William's government.¹⁶¹ Nicholas, Bishop of Cambrai, acted as chancellor (an office he had held under William of Holland), and John de Avesnes as seneschal.¹⁶² Both had been active in preparing Richard's election, with John also involved in organising William's relations with England.¹⁶³ Most significant, however, was the appearance of Arnold of Holland, provost of Wetzlar, in Richard's entourage. He had been prothonotary under William, and soon became Richard's chief diplomat. Amongst other things, he acted as Richard's proctor in negotiating the Treaty of Paris, and represented him at the *curia*.¹⁶⁴ He also accompanied the Earl to England, thus providing him with the necessary expertise needed for the King's business.¹⁶⁵ During one stay in England, for instance, affairs in Westphalia,¹⁶⁶ Burgundy,¹⁶⁷ and Prussia¹⁶⁸ were dealt with. A similar part was played by Conrad of Hochstaden, Archbishop of Cologne.¹⁶⁹ His influence is reflected in the appointment of Count Walram of Jülich, the prelate's trusted ally, as Richard's marshal.¹⁷⁰ Thus, from the beginning, Richard had been surrounded by men who would ensure a smooth transition for the new regime, and the continuity of effective Imperial government.

This becomes evident in the issues of Richard's chancery. His charters rarely went beyond the confirmation of earlier privileges. His first major grant was issued shortly after his coronation, on 22 May 1257 to the citizens of Aachen,¹⁷¹ and was an almost exact copy of an earlier grant by Frederick II. The nuns of Fischbeck had to provide documentary evidence for their privileges before they could be confirmed.¹⁷² In 1268, the abbey of St Gisela had its charters confirmed, as they had been under Richard's predecessors.¹⁷³ In the case of St Servatius at Maastricht, this meant going back to charters dating from the reign of Henry V (1106–1125).¹⁷⁴ It was exceptional, however, for Richard simply to copy earlier grants. More commonly, he rephrased or emphasised what he deemed necessary to confirm, putting forth alterations, limiting grants in geographical scope or to a certain period of time. This

¹⁶¹ Jacob, *Untersuchungen*, 32-5.

¹⁶² *CM*, V, 641; *RI*, nr. 5309. However, Denholm-Young, *Richard*, 93 n.1, citing Bappert, *Richard*, 11 n.3, who in turn cites Ficker, 'Die Reichshofbeamten', 482, 516-7, points out that no charter evidence survives to corroborate Matthew's statement, and that it was indeed Werner of Bolanden who acted as seneschal. Matthew may have been confused by the eminent role which Jean continued to play, and Jean's death in 1258 may further complicate matters.

¹⁶³ Lucas, 'John of Avesnes', *passim*.

¹⁶⁴ *AI*, I, nrs. 563-4; *RI*, nrs. 4885e, 5005, 5187, 5258; *Foedera*, 384.

¹⁶⁵ *CChR 1257-1300*, 24-5; *CR 1259-61*, 399; *CPR 1258-66*, 496.

¹⁶⁶ *UB Niederrhein*, II, nrs. 489, 509.; *AI*, I, nr. 570.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, I, nr. 568.

¹⁶⁸ *CPR 1258-66*, 148.

¹⁶⁹ *Constitutiones*, nr. 383.

¹⁷⁰ *RI*, nr. 5314.

¹⁷¹ *UB Niederrhein*, II, nr. 438.

¹⁷² *AI*, I, nr 572.

¹⁷³ Böhmer, *Acta Imperii Selecta*, nrs. 385-6.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, nrs 386-7.

was no different from the way his predecessors had issued and confirmed charters and privileges.¹⁷⁵

The preservation and, to some extent, enlargement of the royal domain remained the underlying principle of Richard's grants.¹⁷⁶ Little was given away that had not been lost already.¹⁷⁷ Historians have voiced much concern regarding, for example, Richard's privileges for the citizens of Cologne.¹⁷⁸ Following the grants given by William,¹⁷⁹ the Earl promised not to lead armed men into the city, except for his entourage who would be armed modestly; no diets were to be held, nor castles or fortifications built. This has been viewed as a sell-out of Imperial rights,¹⁸⁰ but by 1257 Cologne had already ceased to be a major venue for Imperial diets or sojourns. Conrad IV had been there only twice, Henry (VII) once, and even Frederick II just three times.¹⁸¹ Richard himself went three times. The exception was William of Holland who issued charters at Cologne on nine different occasions.¹⁸² Richard confined himself to confirming the status quo and he confirmed what could not be changed. New privileges were issued on a limited scale and with limited value. The Teutonic Knights, for example, were freed of all tolls for wine and other goods which they shipped along the Rhine. Even that, however, was little more than the extension of a grant by William, who had awarded them similar rights in the county of Holland.¹⁸³ The support which he thus gained cost him little.

Furthermore, strong efforts were made to establish efficient government. Before his first return to England in February 1259, Richard authorised the Archbishop of Cologne, Conrad of Hochstaden, to administer royal rights in the election of bishops.¹⁸⁴ He may have followed the example set by Frederick II, when the Archbishop of Cologne acted as regent for the infant Henry (VII), or Conrad's eminent role in the government of William. When relations with Conrad's successor deteriorated, a similar position seems to have been held by the Archbishop of Mainz.¹⁸⁵ Beyond that, Richard seems to have elaborated the institution of Imperial

¹⁷⁵ Bappert, *Richard von Cornwall*, 11.

¹⁷⁶ Johann Friedrich Böhmer/ Friedrich Lau (ed.), *Codex Diplomaticus Moenofrancofurtanus: UB der Reichsstadt Frankfurt*, 2 vols., (Frankfurt, 1901-5), I, nr. 217. Richard guaranteed that none of the Imperial cities in the Wetterau region would be alienated from the royal domain.

¹⁷⁷ Bappert, *Richard von Cornwall*, 13.

¹⁷⁸ Lacomblet, *UB Niederrhein*, II, nr. 438; Friedrich Battenberg (ed.), *Die Gerichtsstandsprivilegien der deutschen Könige und Kaiser bis zum Jahre 1451*, 2 vols., (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1983), I, nr. 51.

¹⁷⁹ *RI*, nr. 4980.

¹⁸⁰ Günther Rauch, *Die Bündnisse deutscher Herrscher mit Reichsangehörigen vom Regierungsantritt Friedrich Barbarossas bis zum Tod Rudolfs von Habsburg* (Aalen, 1966), 125.

¹⁸¹ Numbers based on royal itineraries as presented in *Zeit der Staufer*, Exhibition Catalogue, 5 vols. (Stuttgart 1977-9), III (maps).

¹⁸² Numbers based on entries in *RI*.

¹⁸³ *AI*, I, nr 560; *RI*, nr. 4897 (for William's grant). Similarly, a privilege for the abbey of Camp was limited to freedom from tolls at the Imperial toll station of Kaiserswerth: H. Cardauns, 'Fünf Kaiserurkunden', *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte* xii (1872), 453-6, nr. 4.

¹⁸⁴ *Annales Hamburgenses*, *MGH SS* xvi, 384; Heinrich Lathwesen and Brigitte Poschmann (ed.), *UB des Stiftes Fischbeck [Teil I: 955 - 1470]* (Rinteln, 1978), nr. 36

¹⁸⁵ *Constitutiones* nr. 446.

Vicars as introduced in Frederick II's *Reichslandfrieden* of 1235.¹⁸⁶ Various nobles were appointed to exercise authority on the King's behalf: Philip of Falkenstein was entrusted with the administration of the Wetterau region; Bishop Werner of Strasbourg was to oversee Alsace;¹⁸⁷ and Philip of Hohenfels took responsibility for the area surrounding Boppard and Werden.¹⁸⁸ For 1262 Herman of Geroltzeck was appointed *advocatus* by Richard along both banks of the Rhine from Basle to Wissembourg.¹⁸⁹ In 1261 the Count Palatine was ordered to take care of vacant Imperial fiefs, until the King returned.¹⁹⁰ It is difficult to determine how effective these measures were. Certainty can only be won by a detailed examination of their immediate, local context.¹⁹¹ However, it appears that Richard tried to ensure that even in his absence, reliable agents would act on his behalf. Moreover, he aimed at laying the foundations for effective control over the royal domain, foreshadowing many of the policies later pursued by Rudolf of Habsburg.

Richard became a much needed arbitrator, thus fulfilling one of the most important functions of a medieval monarch. His most notable involvement was in the war between the citizens of Strasbourg and their Bishop.¹⁹² The townspeople had allied with various nobles, including Rudolf of Habsburg, against the prelate over what they perceived as his tyranny. With Richard's support, a temporary agreement was reached.¹⁹³ Other instances of royal arbitration include his confirmation of a settlement between the chapter and townspeople of Cambrai in 1260,¹⁹⁴ and the negotiation of a peace between Worms and neighbouring nobles the same year.¹⁹⁵ In itself this was an indication of how he continued to be perceived as possessing not only the title, but also the authority of a King. As his reign progressed, Richard's confirmation of transactions between individual princes was regularly requested. When the town of Hameln was sold to the Bishop of Minden, his consent was sought.¹⁹⁶ At

¹⁸⁶ Karl-Friedrich Krieger, *Die Habsburger im Mittelalter: von Rudolf I bis Friedrich III* (Stuttgart, 1994), 34.

¹⁸⁷ After the demise of the bishop in 1262, the *scultetus* of Hagenau was entrusted with the office, until the new Bishop took it over again in 1270. H. Kaiser, 'Ein unbekanntes Mandat König Richards und die Anfänge der Landvogtei im Elsass', *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* xix (1903), 337-9.

¹⁸⁸ *Annales Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 60.

¹⁸⁹ *Bellum Waltherianum*, MGH SS xvii, 111.

¹⁹⁰ *Monumenta Boica*, xxx, nr. 802.

¹⁹¹ The problem posed by the traditional perception of Richard as a mere figurehead without effective control is exemplified by Alois Gerlich, 'Rheinische Kurfürsten und deutsches Königtum im Interregnum', in: *Geschichtliche Landeskunde* III,2 (FS Bärmann] (1967), 44-126, at 107. For the difficulties involved in reaching a reliable picture of the degree and extent of royal government in thirteenth century Germany: Fred Schwind, *Die Landvogtei in der Wetterau: Studien zu Herrschaft und Politik der staufischen und spätmittelalterlichen Könige* (Marburg, 1972), pp. 92-4.

¹⁹² *Bellum Waltherianum*, MGH SS xvii, 113; Johann Daniel Schoepflin (ed.), *Alsatia aevi Merovingici, Carolingici, Saxonici, Salici, Suevici Diplomatica*, 2 vols., (Mannheim, 1772), I, nr. 593.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, I, nrs. 613-4.

¹⁹⁴ *AI*, I, nrs. 559, 561, 569.

¹⁹⁵ H. Boos (ed.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Worms*, 3 vols., (Berlin, 1886-93), I, nrs. 288-9.

¹⁹⁶ Otto Meinardus (ed.), *UB des Stiftes und der Stadt Hameln bis zum Jahre 1407*, 2 vols., (Hanover, 1887-1903), I, nr. 51.

Worms, in 1268, he authorised the sale of lands amongst local nobles.¹⁹⁷ It was not unusual for Richard to be approached to invest abbots and bishops throughout Germany or to enfeoff lay princes. In June 1258 Richard granted the Imperial fees appertaining to his See to the Bishop of Ratzeburg in Mecklenburg.¹⁹⁸ In February 1272, the Bishop of Verdun was granted the Imperial lands and possessions held by his see.¹⁹⁹ In 1267 Richard dealt with the inheritance of Brabant. The Duke's first-born son suffered from recurrent fits of madness. Therefore, Richard had been petitioned that, under these circumstances, the Duke's second son be allowed to succeed. This was granted, on condition that the new Duke would later do personal homage to Richard.²⁰⁰ To petition a King for the confirmation of transactions and grants was not just a formality: he was still expected to offer protection and support. His subjects would not have approached Richard had they not felt he was capable of supporting them, and had they not considered him the rightful and proper King of the Romans.

Even those who were initially opposed to Richard's candidacy came to seek his support and recognition. The examples of Brabant and Flanders have already been mentioned. However, a similar case can be made for towns, which did not require him to change the laws of succession, or to revoke earlier royal mandates. After his coronation, for instance, Frankfurt had been reluctant to accept Richard.²⁰¹ In 1262, however, the same charter which granted the Dominicans in Frankfurt the privilege to collect timber from nearby Imperial woods, also contained instructions for the town's mayor to let them do so.²⁰² This implies that Richard had enough clout to press through his orders inside the city walls.²⁰³ A similar development can be observed with regard to the *Annales Wormatienses*, one of the few narrative sources who concern themselves with Richard beyond the event of his election. For 1257, a gleefully hostile account is given. Richard is considered to be an impostor and usurper – ‘*pro rege se gerebat*’.²⁰⁴ His activities in the Rhineland are described as those of a tyrant: his opponents were oppressed by continuous warfare, while his supporters received privileges and liberties. By the time of the Earl's entry into Worms, the chronicler's stance had softened.²⁰⁵ No more doubt is voiced concerning Richard's

¹⁹⁷ Ludwig Bauer (ed.), *Hessische Urkunden aus dem Grossherzoglich Hessischem Haus- und Staatsarchiv*, 6 vols., (Darmstadt, 1860-73), I, nr. 229.

¹⁹⁸ *Mecklenburgisches UB*, 25 vols., (Schwerin 1863-1977), II, 824.

¹⁹⁹ *RI*, nr. 5483.

²⁰⁰ *AI*, I, nr. 576.

²⁰¹ Böhmer/Lau (ed.), *UB Frankfurt*, I, nr. 216.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, I, nr. 242.

²⁰³ For the way in which Richard relied on the towns to combat his political opponents: Edith Ennen, ‘Erzbischof und Stadtgemeinde in Köln bis zur Schlacht von Worringen’, in: Franz Petri (ed.), *Bischofs- und Kathedralgeschichte des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne Vienna 1976), 27-46; reprinted in her *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Bonn, 1977), 388-404

²⁰⁴ *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 59-60.

²⁰⁵ Criticism, though, was still voiced: when Richard appointed the Bishop of Strasbourg as his proctor for Alsace, he did so ‘*plus ex favore quam ex iustitia*’: *Annales Wormatienses*, *MGH SS* xvii, 60.

legitimacy as King. *Richardus rex* entered Worms.²⁰⁶ In 1260, the King was involved in settling a conflict between the town and neighbouring *ministeriales*, and was addressed as *rex*.²⁰⁷ The Annals are the only German chronicle mentioning the diet of Worms in 1269. In comparison to Thomas Wykes' account of the same meeting, the entry in the *Annales* is sober and restrained. They only state that the much disliked *Ungelt* had been abolished by the King in the presence of various prelates and nobles, and that a general peace had been sworn. Nonetheless, the change in attitude remains clear.

If nothing else, Richard had won the recognition of those areas within the Empire which constituted its economic, political and administrative core. This is more than many other kings of the thirteenth century could claim – William of Holland, for instance, had to conquer Aachen before he could be crowned. Among his contemporaries, Richard was perceived to be the rightful King of the Romans. He was approached for the confirmation of land transactions, of grants and charters, about episcopal and abbatial elections, the succession in temporal fiefs, and was asked to arbitrate and lead negotiations. He extended the royal domain, aimed at safeguarding what was left of Imperial lands, and strove to uphold peace and justice in his realm.

VIII.5 England and Germany (1257-72)

Richard's career cannot be separated from his brother's Sicilian ambitions. After all, his candidacy for the German throne had initially been little more than a means to an end. It was to ensure that no ruler of Germany would hinder English ambitions in the Mediterranean. Ultimately, it proved more successful than his brother's Apulian venture. By 1265, it was the sole remnant of Henry III's once grandiose Mediterranean ambitions. As such, Richard's reign deserves a more detailed coverage. Nonetheless, the impact his career had on England, as well as its place within the wider context of Anglo-Imperial relations have yet to be considered.

Most English chroniclers took an ambiguous view of Richard's adventure. The *Annals of Burton*, for instance, listing the reasons given by the barons against the Sicilian Business, included Richard's absence amongst the evils besetting the realm. The kingdom was deprived of counsel, funds and men.²⁰⁸ Matthew Paris, too, viewed Richard's departure with unease. Although he gleefully reported the Earl's successes, he also complained that he was plundering England to satisfy the Germans'

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 60/62. In the MGH edition, two chronicles have been printed together. One a roughly annalistic history of the town, written continuously from c 1200, the other a history of the bishops, composed c. 1297. Wilhelm Wattenbach and Franz-Joseph Schmale, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter: Vom Tode Kaiser Heinrichs V bis zum Ende des Interregnums. Erster Band* (Darmstadt, 1976), 129-30.

²⁰⁷ *Annales Wormatienses*, MGH SS xvii, 65.

²⁰⁸ *Annals of Burton*, AM, I, 387.

greed.²⁰⁹ It is difficult to verify this from the surviving evidence. Although Henry III assisted Richard, he did not load him with riches. The grants made on his behalf did not strain the English royal purse. In fact, they fell well short of the efforts undertaken, for instance, in the context of the Sicilian Business. This can, of course, come as no surprise. For one, it helps to underline the priority still enjoyed by the planned conquest of Apulia. Beset by the papacy and facing the reluctance of his barons, Henry was, moreover, in no position to make generous grants. Secondly, when elected, Richard could already count himself amongst the richest men in Europe.²¹⁰ Matthew Paris is probably exaggerating when he estimates the Earl's treasure at £70,000.²¹¹ Nonetheless, the fact remains that the Earl needed little financial help from his brother. Most grants thus took the form of safe-guarding Richard's claims, or of awarding privileges which cost the King little. In 1257, for instance, Richard was freed of the customary feudal service in Wales,²¹² and in 1259 he received venison from the King's estates, and was allowed to tallage lands formerly part of the royal demesne.²¹³ It was not until 1260 that any major financial contributions were made, when Henry III considered pawning his insignia to repay a loan made by his brother.²¹⁴ Even after 1265, when financial grants were awarded on a more regular basis, they normally took the form of simply repaying accumulated debts more quickly.²¹⁵ The Earl himself received little direct support from his brother.²¹⁶ In fact, Richard was using his German resources to alleviate shortages in England. Under 1258, Matthew Paris reports that 50 ships with provisions were dispatched by the Earl to combat the famine threatening England.²¹⁷ Furthermore, some indication survives that, during the baronial wars, German mercenaries fought alongside Henry III and his brother.²¹⁸

As far as Richard's wise counsel was concerned, its absence seems not to have been missed too much. The Earl was frequently vilified for his hostile stance on the Provisions of Oxford. Several chroniclers blamed Richard for the movement's failure.²¹⁹ It was, in fact, the King who mostly relied on the Earl's advice. In 1260 he

²⁰⁹ *CM*, V, 629-30, 660-1. These comments were also taken up by John of Wallingford: England was deprived of money, weapons and food due to his foreign followers' avarice: *John de Wallingford, MGH SS* xxviii, 511. There may be some truth in this: In 1257, the *Annals of Dunstaple* report, due to an unexpected shortage of cash, Richard ordered his woods in England to be sold: *AM*, III, 206. However, this still does not constitute a subsidy from Henry III.

²¹⁰ Bappert, *Richard von Cornwall*, 3.

²¹¹ *CM*, V, 630.

²¹² *CPR* 1247-58, 571.

²¹³ *CPR* 1258-66, 57; *CR* 1256-9, 291.

²¹⁴ *CPR* 1258-66, 74.

²¹⁵ *CR* 1264-8, 463, 470-1. However, Richard also received wardships: *CR* 1268-72, 29; and receipts of judicial eyes in Cornwall: *CPR* 1266-72, 244.

²¹⁶ However, Henry was less reluctant to promise rewards to Richard's officials. Arnold of Holland, for instance, Richard's prothonotary, was granted 20 marks a year until he could be rewarded with a more well-endowed ecclesiastical office: *CPR* 1258-66, 141.

²¹⁷ *CM*, V, 673.

²¹⁸ Wright, *Political Songs*, 70.

²¹⁹ *Flores Historiarum*, II, 447; *Chronicon de Bello*, *MGH SS* xviii, 554.

was entrusted with the defence of the realm,²²⁰ and in 1264, Richard acted as Henry's regent in England.²²¹ Prior to the baronial take-over in 1258, English envoys to Germany were attested with some frequency.²²² The Earl himself inquired regularly about the King's affairs,²²³ and even during his absence, his officials solicited grants and privileges. In September 1257, for instance, a Roger de Stanes was pardoned for homicide, at the instance of the King of the Romans,²²⁴ and in 1258, at Richard's request, a London merchant was allowed to import wine.²²⁵ This implies that the Earl's proctors maintained a continuing presence at court. It also suggests an eagerness on Henry's part to consult and inform his brother about the affairs of England. During the Earl's absences in 1260, with Simon largely in control,²²⁶ and 1262, possibly due to the brevity of Richard's sojourn, no similar frequency of contacts can be established. When in England, Richard regularly witnessed Henry's grants,²²⁷ and was involved in averting the worst results of both the King's and Simon's intransigence. Due to the very nature of his kingship, Richard had little interest in exacerbating an already volatile situation. As a consequence, he spent most of his time in England arbitrating and negotiating, between Simon and Henry, between his son and the Kings' supporters, and between the Lord Edward and the Earl of Gloucester.²²⁸ Richard could not safely govern his kingdom while England was threatened by revolt. This, rather than any hidden sympathies for the reformers, predestined Richard, once again, for a role as mediator and go-between. When his efforts came to naught, he had little choice but to assist his brother, rather than Simon de Montfort and the barons. Contemporary (and modern) complaints about Richard's betrayal of the baronial cause fail to take into account the specific circumstances under which he acted.²²⁹ In this context, it may also be worth noting the emphasis Richard put on his difference in status. During his regency in 1264, the Earl dated even official English correspondence by his Imperial regnal years.²³⁰ The Earl of Cornwall remained involved in the affairs of England. His advice, however, was sought by the King, rather than Simon de Montfort and the reformers.

²²⁰ CR 1259-61, 285.

²²¹ PRO SC1/8, nr. 5.

²²² CR 1256-9, 58, 65, 405, 425; CLR 1267-72, nr. 2300A; CPR 1247-58, 606, 625.

²²³ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 528.

²²⁴ CPR 1247-58, 578.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 618.

²²⁶ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 192-203.

²²⁷ PRO C53/50, m. 3, C53/51, m. 3, C53/53, m. 4. Most of the witness lists have been calendared in the PRO. However, I have cross-checked a number of them for the purpose of this passage.

²²⁸ CPR 1258-66, 79; CR 1261-4, 126. David Carpenter, 'The Lord Edward's oath to help and counsel Simon de Montfort, 15 October 1259', *BIHR* lix (1985), 226-36. The problems between the earl of Gloucester and the Lord Edward continued, cf. Simon Lloyd, 'Gilbert de Clare, Richard of Cornwall and the Lord Edward's crusade', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* xxix (1985), 46-66.

²²⁹ Wright, *Political Songs*, 69-70.

²³⁰ PRO SC1/8, nrs. 5-6.

It comes as no surprise that most of Henry III's contacts with Germany were arranged via Richard of Cornwall. The Earl relied on his brother to provide the necessary backup in his attempts at winning support in Germany. Thus, the citizens of Lübeck were granted trading privileges 'as long as they be of good behaviour to the said Richard',²³¹ and those of Groningen received theirs during the Earl's lifetime,²³² while the merchants of Brabant were assured that they could trade safely in England, despite any contention that might exist with the Duke.²³³ The Earl's sojourns in Germany were often preceded by English grants to his Imperial subjects. Thus, in 1260, a day before Richard's second departure, Henry III confirmed the privileges of those Germans who owned the *Gildehalla Teutonicorum* in London.²³⁴ Similarly, in 1262 grants were made to several north German towns,²³⁵ just as safe-conducts were issued for the Earl's entourage.²³⁶ Although Henry was unable to provide generous military or financial help, he assisted his brother in rewarding those on whose support Richard depended in Germany. This may explain plans to marry Edmund Crouchback to one of the daughters of Guido of Flanders in 1261.²³⁷ After all, Guido had originally been amongst Alfonso's partisans, and Richard's promise to restore Countess Joan's claims to Imperial Flanders made only slow progress. Amongst those who were brought back into the range of English diplomacy by Richard's elevation was the Archbishop of Cologne. Notably absent from Henry's diplomacy in Germany since his consecration, Conrad of Hochstaden led the delegation which in 1257 came to escort Richard to Germany.²³⁸ This resulted in the knighting of various Cologne men by the King, and a number of grants being made to members of the Archbishop's entourage.²³⁹ Furthermore, as Cologne cathedral had been destroyed by fire in 1248, a mandate was issued for the Archbishop's commissioners to collect funding for the church's rebuilding in England.²⁴⁰ With that, however, Conrad's role ended. In March 1258, a merchant from Cologne, who had been sent at the Archbishop's behest, received two robes.²⁴¹ No evidence for further contacts survive. Relations between the English court and Germany were dominated by Richard's needs.

²³¹ *CPR 1247-58*, 553.

²³² *CChR1257-1300*, 10.

²³³ *CR 1256-9*, 56.

²³⁴ *CPR 1258-66*, 77. Note that this grant echoes the one made in 1235 on occasion of the marriage between Isabella and Frederick II (cf. chapter II).

²³⁵ Konstantin Höhlbaum (ed.), *Hansisches UB*, 10 vols., (Halle, 1876-1907), I, nrs. 575-6.

²³⁶ *CPR 1258-66*, 216, 218; *CR 1261-4*, 129.

²³⁷ *Royal Letters*, II, nr. 564. Similar reasons may have guided the marriage between Henry of Almain, Richard's eldest son, and Constane de Bearn: Robin Studd, 'The marriage of Henry of Almain and Constance of Bearn,' *Thirteenth Century England* iii (1989), 161-79.

²³⁸ *CM*, V, 627.

²³⁹ *DD*, nr. 297; *CR 1256-9*, 53; *CPR 1247-58*, 548.

²⁴⁰ *CPR 1247-58*, 591.

²⁴¹ *CR 1256-9*, 207.

At first sight, the Duke of Brunswick remained the sole exception from this rule. He was not present at the Earl's coronation, nor did he witness his charters or provide him with troops. He also stands out as the only German prince who continued to deal directly with the English royal court. At the same time, not too much should be read into this. The Duke's lack of involvement in Imperial affairs was not untypical. None of the north German princes took an active part in Imperial politics.²⁴² The Duke of Saxony and the Margraves of Brandenburg, for instance, did not even attend the meeting at which Alfonso was elected King, and had the Archbishop of Trier act as their proctor instead.²⁴³ Still, this does not explain why someone traditionally so close to Henry III and his court did not utilise this to further his own interests with his new King. Considering the general lack of sources it will probably be impossible to solve this puzzle for good. Nonetheless, the Duke's apathy does not necessarily indicate hostility to Richard. In fact, circumstantial evidence survives to suggest an early acceptance of Richard's authority. In 1260 the Duke was part of a *Landfrieden* covering parts of Westfalia.²⁴⁴ The participants agreed to seek royal consent and confirmation for their agreement. This was highly unusual for a mere local *Landfrieden*. No similar clause can be found in comparable agreements for Hainault (1200), Brixen (1226) or the *Pax Bavarica* (1244).²⁴⁵ By implication, the Duke was not opposed to accepting Richard as King. After all, he still found it necessary to solicit his agreement to this treaty. Furthermore, in 1270, Richard enfeoffed Duke Albrecht of Brunswick with lands recently sold by the Count of Dassel, but pertaining to the Empire.²⁴⁶ Even though the Duke was not required to do personal homage for his new lands, the fact remains that he considered it necessary and advisable to solicit Richard's confirmation.²⁴⁷ A formal declaration of fealty may not have been deemed necessary, as Duke and King had probably met on an earlier occasion. In 1262 Henry III had made a grant on the occasion of the Duke's marriage with a sister of the Margrave of Montferrat.²⁴⁸ The couple was expected in England by Easter 1263.²⁴⁹ When they eventually arrived in the autumn of 1266, they received lavish gifts, and initiated various grants for German merchants.²⁵⁰ Considering Henry III's close relationship with his brother during these years, it seems unlikely that he would have

²⁴² Hartmut Steinbach, *Die Reichsgewalt und Niederdeutschland in nachstaufischer Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1968), 50-66.

²⁴³ On the political ambitions of the Archbishop of Trier, useful for the background of his role: Rudolf Holbach, 'Die Regierungszeit des Trierer Erzbischofs Arnold (II.) von Isenburg: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte von Reich, Territorium und Kirche um die Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts', *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter* cxlvii (1983), 1-66.

²⁴⁴ Lacomblet, *UB Niederrhein*, II, nr. 489.

²⁴⁵ *Constitutiones*, nrs. 425-7.

²⁴⁶ H. Sudendorf (ed.), *UB zur Geschichte der Herzöge von Braunschweig und Lüneburg und ihrer Lande*, 11 vols., (Hanover, 1859-83), I, nrs. 70-1.

²⁴⁷ It seems that the initiative had been taken by the Duke. At least this would explain the presence of envoys from Brunswick at the English court in 1270: *CLR 1267-72*, nrs. 1272, 1312.

²⁴⁸ *CR 1261-4*, 170.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 176.

²⁵⁰ *CR 1264-8*, 263-4; *CPR 1266-72*, 5.

received and supported someone who was openly hostile to Richard. Within these parameters, relations with the Duke of Brunswick would thus fit into the already established pattern of diplomatic support for Richard meted out by his brother, the King of England. It was in this context, that English relations with Germany were organised during the years of Richard's reign. The aim was to assist and support the King's brother who, after all, had begun his career in Germany at the behest of Henry III.

Richard's reign in Germany showed him at his best. We can witness him drawing on his considerable abilities as a diplomat and negotiator.²⁵¹ Throughout his career he had preferred compromise and arbitration to battle, and this did not change after his election as King of the Romans.²⁵² For most of his reign Richard governed by arranging truces and settlements, and he won more supporters by negotiation than by war. This was complemented by an acute understanding of financial matters.²⁵³ His expeditions to Germany were always well prepared and well-funded. This enabled him to overcome the difficulties posed by his lack of an indigenous power base. He had no allodial lands in the Empire from which to draw troops or funds. Instead, Richard had to rely on his natural skills and abilities, and it is mostly to them that he owed whatever success he achieved.

²⁵¹ Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, 154.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 41, 47, 76 for examples.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 58-71.

*Conclusion*¹

Henry III's reign marked the closest proximity between England and the Continent yet. His aims and ambitions, his policy and diplomacy formed and were formed by the events which defined the history of thirteenth century Europe. His efforts to recover his lost inheritance at one point or another involved the Emperor, the King of Bohemia, the Dukes of Austria, Brabant and Brunswick, the Pope, the King of Castile, the Counts of Toulouse, Provence and Flanders. His lack of success was as frequently the result of his inability to deal with his barons at home, as of developments abroad which were beyond his control. It would be mistaken, though, to view him as simply incompetent. His diplomacy was informed by an acute understanding of the contemporary political scene. He knew when to act and who to enlist in his support.

This is well illustrated by his undertakings during the 1220s. Henry was aware that Frederick II would be unlikely to support those who in the past had opposed him and his family. Instead, old contacts were revived and alliances re-formed. English diplomacy centred on those who were most likely to assist the Plantagenets in their aims and ambitions, that is, the German regency council under Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne. Even after the prelate's murder, efforts were not abandoned. That these projects did not have the desired result was not Henry's fault. He as much as his German allies under-estimated the degree to which Frederick II still dominated German affairs, and few could have envisaged the political turmoil which would result from the Emperor's delayed crusade. At the time, the course of action pursued by Henry and his regents was not without its risks, but it also was the one most likely to achieve what the Plantagenets needed most: potent allies abroad.

A similar single-mindedness is apparent in events after 1235. In many ways, Frederick's marriage with Isabella had given Henry III what he always wanted: a formal alliance with the Imperial Court. Although his hopes that this could at one point be used against his Capetian foes failed to materialise, the King of England continued to help and assist, advise and counsel his new ally. English troops and English funds contributed in no small degree to Frederick's wars in Italy. English diplomacy aimed at easing the tensions which increasingly beset relations between Pope and Emperor. Nor did Henry III act on his own. He was joined by the King of Hungary and other rulers. As far as Germany was concerned, he now had achieved his objectives. Consequently those who in previous years had dominated exchanges with Germany diminished in significance. The Archbishops of Cologne, the Dukes of Brunswick and Brabant were overshadowed by Frederick II and his court.

¹ In this section footnotes have been kept to a minimum. Only information which is not also used in the main corpus of this thesis will be referenced.

This orientation did not change when Frederick was excommunicated again in 1239. This loyalty to the Emperor was, however, thrust upon Henry. No alternative existed but to assist his brother-in-law. At the same time, the King of England was forced into a difficult balancing act. He could alienate neither Frederick who remained his sole hope of support for a military recovery of Poitou and Normandy, nor the Pope. However, he did not cease in his efforts, and involved himself with more or less success in the negotiations and diplomatic efforts which dominated European politics during these years. This did not change after 1245 and the Emperor's deposition at Lyon. Henry III refused to acknowledge as rightful rulers those who at the Pope's command tried to expel Frederick and his family from Germany. No contact was made with the Archbishop of Cologne and those who sided with Frederick's enemies were soon abandoned by the English court. Once more, this was as much the result of loyalty as a necessity. Not only did it seem likely that peace might soon be established, but Frederick also promised to advance the King of England's nephew. The possibility of having Henry III's nephew controlling Arles and Burgundy more than anything else would have given him the means to make good the losses he had recently suffered at the hands of the Capetians.

The year 1250 marked a water-shed. Frederick II died, while Henry III, bereft of his old allies and friends was forced, for the time being, to abandon plans for a military recovery of his inheritance. Instead his policy veered towards the Mediterranean, elaborating and building on contacts and interests he had acquired over the previous decade. The first step in that direction was his taking of the Cross in 1250. In the midst of his preparations for that campaign, the opportunity presented itself to take hold of the crown of Sicily, too, thus beating the Capetians in the race to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of the Hohenstaufen. However, this soon proved to have momentous consequences. In the long run, Henry was forced to abandon his aim of fighting the Muslims. Rather, he was drawn in to the quagmire of the papal-Hohenstaufen conflict. Not only did he have to fight his old friend's sons and successors in Sicily, but his brother, Earl Richard of Cornwall, also seized control of Germany, with a good chance of being made Emperor.

These glorious prospects, however, faltered, when the financial consequences of the Sicilian Business, together with the King's ineptitude in England and his patronage of foreign relatives, erupted in a baronial take-over of government in 1258, and civil war in 1263. The Sicilian project had to be abandoned, and Richard's dreams of succeeding Frederick II as Emperor were destroyed by his involvement in English politics. What had begun as a glorious step towards ensuring the greatness and hegemony of the Plantagenet house ended in humiliation and defeat. However, such an outcome had been neither unavoidable nor was it entirely Henry's fault. His projects and ambitions still stand out as one of the most wide-ranging and imaginative policies pursued by a medieval ruler of England. As such, alone, they merit credit.

If we consider Henry's undertakings in conjunction with the problems and difficulties besetting Frederick II, we are able to sketch some of the main concerns of contemporary European politics, and we see how increasingly one power came to dominate Latin Christendom, at the expense of both England and the Empire. For neither the actions of Frederick nor those of Henry III can be understood without giving at least some consideration to the Capetian Kings of France. In Henry III's case, they mattered as the object of his political alliances, the enemy he could not fight on his own, and who required him, over and over again, to postpone his plans, to change his tactics and, in the end, even his strategy. Similarly, Frederick II depended heavily on the Capetians. Without their financial and military assistance he would have had little chance of assuming the throne. The rise of support he found in Germany coincided with a pouring forth of funds from France, and only Otto IV's crushing defeat at Bouvines gave him the military advantage he had been lacking until then. His political fortunes rested on the military and financial support he had received from Philip Augustus of France. It may therefore not come as a surprise that this was to dominate his attitude towards the Capetians. In 1223 and 1227 he agreed to ban anyone supporting the King of England against the King of France. Even Louis VIII's actions in Languedoc could not test his loyalty. To a large extent this was also a necessity. The fact that the regents of Louis IX had remained neutral had thwarted papal attempts at installing an anti-King during his first excommunication, and after 1239 he could rely on their continuing intercession on his behalf. More importantly, by alienating Louis IX, he would have faced the spectre of a papal candidate supported by the expanding fiscal and military power of the Capetian crown. As his own career had taught, the Capetians were too powerful an enemy for anyone who wanted to keep the throne of the Empire.

This also explains why Henry III and Richard of Cornwall, once they faced a situation similar to that encountered by Frederick II, adopted similar means. In the case of Henry III, the need to organise his crusade, and later to ship troops to Sicily initiated renewed efforts to find a permanent and lasting settlement of his claims in France. After all, immediately following his announcement that he was to go on crusade he sent envoys to the regents of France, and asked for a practically unlimited extension of the existing truce. He could not dream of leaving his realm for a prolonged period of time, or of acquiring new lands in the Mediterranean, while relations with France remained wary or even hostile. More important are the parallels between Richard and his Hohenstaufen predecessor. The Earl of Cornwall did indeed face a rival candidate who, at least initially had been able to count upon the indirect support of the King of France. However, unlike Frederick II, Richard could not draw on men whose loyalty to him and his family had been tested and formed over several generations. He lacked a native power basis or indigenous military support. He could therefore not afford a prolonged, expensive campaign in which he had to rely on the

untested loyalty of his new subjects. Even before he set out to assume his new throne, we thus find him negotiating with the King of France, and pressing for the settlement which was to result in the Treaty of Paris. In fact, he even suggested to enter an agreement not unlike the Treaty of Catania, concluded between Frederick II and Louis VIII fifty years earlier. Richard, too, was unable to maintain his hold on the German throne without assuring himself at least of the neutrality of Louis IX.

As we have seen, this had several consequences for Henry III's role in Europe. As much as he courted the Emperor, their aims were too divergent. The King of England expected Frederick to attack the very power on whose backing his own position and rule rested. This does not mean that Henry's initiatives were ill-advised or badly thought out. The events of 1225, when he had lost Poitou, showed how a ruthless French monarch could exploit close relations with the Emperor to the detriment of the Plantagenets. We should therefore also remember that avoiding even closer links between Hohenstaufen and Capetians was a goal as much worth pursuing as was an attempt to improve relations with Frederick II. The marriage negotiations of 1225, our best documented episode, may be cited as an example. Even if Henry ultimately failed in ensuring an Imperial marriage either for himself or his sister, he had at least thwarted the prospect of a marriage between Frederick's heir and a Capetian princess. Furthermore, we have to take into account that we view these events with hindsight. We know that Henry never achieved what he was hoping for, and it is easy to see long-term structural developments, which may not have been as evident to contemporaries. For instance, whenever Henry tried to increase his ties with the Emperor, he had good reason to hope that he might be able to achieve at least some success: in 1225, in 1227, in 1235 and in 1242/3. All too often events and developments outwith Henry's control thwarted his ambitions. He could not foresee that the Emperor was to be excommunicated in 1227 or that Innocent IV was to take an even more unrelenting stance towards the Emperor than Gregory IX had done. Failing to consider this means that we expose ourselves to the dangers of historical determinism. Events did not inevitably take a prescribed course towards a predestined end.

This leads us to a more detailed consideration of the ways and techniques in which Henry III and his Imperial counterpart organised their diplomatic relations. For one, we can notice a strong conservatism in the strategies pursued. Ever since Henry II in the twelfth century, the Emperor had formed part of a triangular system of alliances, being courted by the Kings of both England and France. During the reign of Richard I and John this culminated in efforts by the Angevins to decide the choice of Emperor. If successful this would have opened up the possibility of shifting the balance of power in Europe strongly in their favour, and we should therefore not be surprised that this ultimately led to Philip Augustus' support for the candidacy of the then Frederick of Sicily. As one may expect, the consequences this had for Henry III were disastrous. In

this respect, the loss of Poitou was the result of Richard the Lionheart's uninvited meddling in the affairs of the Empire. Nonetheless, as outlined above, there was no viable alternative to pursuing a policy of closer links with Germany. It also comes as no surprise that much of this was originally done by concentrating on the Imperial princes, rather than the Emperor himself. Men like Peter des Roches and Hubert de Burgh had played too prominent a part in the affairs of John and Otto IV to be easily accepted by Frederick II. This the more so, as England was clearly the weaker part which had very little to offer to the Hohenstaufen Emperor. This also means that the question as to what extent we can differentiate between Henry III's actions and those of his regents remains, in this context at least, largely superfluous. There simply was no room for changes of strategy. If Henry III wanted to prove himself, to show any independence of spirit, he had to find other areas.

It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the King himself was responsible for the course of action ultimately to be taken. Henry III did not act alone.² Moreover, unlike many of his undertakings at home, his foreign affairs were frequently the result of extensive deliberations. The King consulted his officials and nobles, and he acted only after having taken the advice of those whose experience he could trust. At the same time, what we have discussed with regard to the Sicilian Business does not form an isolated incident. The King was more willing to trust those who either had themselves profound experience of European politics, or those who held lands abroad and who possessed the necessary familiarity, the knowledge and expertise to guide him in his decision. In short, English magnates only played a subordinate role. For most of the period after 1239 this means that Henry relied on his Savoyard relatives. They frequently appear on the witness lists to his grants and mandates. In 1242/3 their wide-ranging contacts were used to build up the alliance immediately prior to Henry's planned attack on Poitou, Peter of Savoy planned an important part in preparing for the King's crusade, and his brothers assumed an eminent position in the planning and execution of the Sicilian Business. This was evident not only in their own involvement, but also that of their dependants and *familiares*. After all, Henry III's proctor, responsible both for securing papal support in his campaign to the Holy Land, and for treating about the offer of the throne of Sicily, was John de Amblyone, from a monastery in Savoy, a clerk of the Counts. Their expertise was thus as needed as it was welcome.

Nor was it unusual that 'foreign' proctors were employed to treat Henry's affairs. Other examples would include the Zudendorp family of Cologne, the Saraceni of Rome, or even Peter de Vinea in his dealings with the Emperor. The latter's case is also helpful in illustrating another aspect of the organisation and maintenance of

² For the personnel involved in English medieval diplomacy, though concentrating almost exclusively of the period between Edward I and the outbreak of the Hundred Years war: G.P. Cuttino, *English Diplomatic Administration, 1259-1339*, Second edition, (Oxford, 1971), 127-89.

diplomatic intercourse. As we have seen, Peter was a regular recipient of an English money-fief. This was not only a reward for his own services, or a sign of respect to his lord, the Emperor, but was also perceived as entailing further obligations. After all, Peter was one of the primary addressees at Frederick's court when Henry III tried to draw the Emperor into an alliance against Louis IX in 1242/3. We may assume that similar considerations may have guided the grants made to the Teutonic Knights, the clerks of the Duke of Brunswick or Henry de Rumenham from the court of the Duke of Brabant. At the same time, Peter remained to some extent an exception. Unlike the others mentioned, he was a fairly prominent figure, placed at the highest level of Imperial politics, a close advisor to the Emperor, and, as such, largely in a league of his own, closer in significance to the Counts of Savoy or Jean de Avesnes than the Zudendorp merchants of Cologne. This does, however, not necessarily mean that the latter's significance has been exaggerated. Their eminent role within the Archbishops' administration was beyond doubt, and they remained the main go-betweens in Anglo-German relations for most of the 1220s. In 1225, for instance, the Chancellor of London, writing of his visit to the Duke of Austria, maintained that without the Zudendorps' support he would not have reached the ducal court alive. The recipients of English fiefs could thus serve to support and assist in the planning and execution of diplomatic mission. Unfortunately, no evidence survives to illustrate whether Henry de Rumenham, for instance, had played a similar role in dealings with Brabant, and no letters survive from those who had been sent to the duke of Brunswick in 1247 to recruit miners and engineers. A third use ought to be considered. That is the provision of information and news. The King depended on merchants and travellers for reports. Although this does not always become explicit in the sources we have, due frequently to the very nature of the available record material, it may yet be implicit, for instance, in receiving men like Simon de Cambrai or the Duke of Limburg when he went on pilgrimage to Canterbury. In the absence of regular news bulletins men like these, pilgrims, merchants and officials passing through, were the men on whom a ruler had to rely to gauge important information.

As far as the regular staff of diplomatic intercourse was concerned, the picture becomes more confusing. We do not find ambassadors in the sense of men whose sole duty it was to represent a ruler's interests abroad, or who took up permanent residence at a foreign court. The undertakings of Richard of Cornwall's proctors in England after 1257 are clearly an exception, due mostly to the fact that he was not only an English magnate, but also the King of England's brother. Nonetheless, we can witness an increasing specialisation, certain figures who reappear again and again: In the Emperor's case this included the family of the advocate of Aachen and, most importantly, Walter of Ocre, and in Henry III's John Maunsell. From 1239 onwards it was Walter who increasingly dominated the Emperor's diplomatic initiatives. He was sent to the King of France to in the attempt to win Capetian support for a truce with the

curia, and he was in England, trying to counter the papacy's propaganda offensive, and aiming to convince the King and his barons not to send the funds Gregory requested. John, too, made a frequent appearance, at the French royal court, in negotiations with Alfonso of Castile or in the context of the Sicilian business. In both cases, however, this was only part of their wider remit within the King's or Emperor's administration. Walter as well as John were quite generally counsellors, with a variety of tasks. In Walter's case this included matters such as securing the Emperor's advance to Lyons in 1247, or brokering the marriage between Manfred Lancia and a Savoyard princess. He was sent to Germany to muster support on Frederick's behalf, and he filled an important role in the administration of Sicily. Finally, his official title was that of Chancellor of Jerusalem. Similarly, John had more than merely one job to do, exercising a judiciary as well as an administrative role. We thus have a system of amateur-diplomats, men who normally held other positions, and who might not necessarily be members of the royal or imperial bureaucracy, but who were frequently used for missions to foreign rulers. This does not mean that experience was not valued: in 1225, for instance, Walter Mauclerk was probably chosen exactly because he had significant experience, having been at the *curia* on King John's behalf, and the Zudendorps had mostly their past expertise to recommend themselves. But diplomacy remained just one amongst a number of tasks for the King's officials.

This has to be viewed within the context of yet another important aspect of diplomatic intercourse. For not all envoys were of equal rank, nor is what we find in official records the whole story. Important missions were often the subject of extensive preparations, of which very little survives in the extant records. Walter Mauclerk's mission, for instance, seems to have very suddenly, all we know is that he departed for Germany in February 1225. However, his letters as to his doings in Cologne mention that, when he arrived, he already found one of his clerks waiting for him, who had briefed the Zudendorps about the course of action which was to be taken. Furthermore, by the time he met Engelbert, emissaries had already been sent from Cologne to the Imperial court to pursue English affairs. This, though, is all we know about the preparations for Walter's embassy. We do not know who his clerk was, and no record survives for the date of his departure. We may assume, however, that this was not untypical. Important embassies, like those to Antwerp in 1227, Vaucouleurs in 1236 and 1237, or that to Germany in June 1256 were probably preceded by advance missions who prepared the ground for the high-ranking officials which were to head the embassy proper. This may have been particularly the case when high dignitaries such as the Earls of Cornwall or Gloucester or the Archbishop of York were involved. Nonetheless, this is an assumption which is based solely on its high degree of plausibility.

The financing of such diplomatic exchanges seems to have been largely a matter of the court who dispatched them, at least as far as England was concerned. In the case of

the Emperor or his princes no evidence remains which could illuminate the financial technicalities of diplomatic intercourse. Once more, the most detailed material survives for Walter Mauclerk's 1225 embassy. Although he and the chancellor of London frequently complained as to the great sums which they had to forward and their own continuing penury, funds were forthcoming on a regular basis. It is worth noting that many of these additional payments were procured via merchants commuting between England and Germany. This extensive use of trading contacts, evident already in the regular employment of the Zudendorps by both the English court and the Archbishop of Cologne, is thus further underlined. Nor was the 1225 mission an exception. For, as we have seen, from 1239 onwards some of the most important clues we have to English involvement in attempts at mediating between Pope and Emperor is via the payments procured by Florentine and other merchants. At the same time, it appears that not all rulers were as generous as Henry III in providing for their ambassadors. For we frequently find grants to Imperial and other envoys to provide them with funding, ranging from five to fifty marks, for their return journey. Naturally, this may form part of an exchange of gifts, expressing one partner's esteem for the other. This could also explain gifts such as that of robes 'like the King's valets wear them' to low-ranking foreign envoys, or cups and other silver artefacts. Giving splendid gifts was a matter of showing respect, and of impressing those one received with one's generosity, largesse and wealth.

This leads to the final point which we have to consider in the context of medieval diplomatic exchanges, that is what actually happened once an embassy arrived. The most detailed description of any such encounter is given in Walter Mauclerk's letter from Cologne. No epistle of similar detail survives for any of the other projects and negotiations discussed here. Once he arrived he met his cleric, but he was unable to meet the archbishop. Instead he had to remain and wait, until Engelbert returned from some important matters he had to attend to. Eventually, the prelate returned and was willing to meet his English colleague. However, their conference was not held in Cologne itself, at the episcopal palace or the cathedral, but in the abbey of Altenberg, just outside the city walls. Meeting Engelbert in front of one of the altars, the two prelates began their exchange. Even when allowing that Walter was not giving a detailed protocol, we still can see some of the behaviour and gestures involved. They began with an exchange of pleasantries, until the Bishop alluded to the purpose of his visit. Engelbert assured him that proper measures had already been taken to arrange the planned marriage, and a possible alliance. The Archbishop also pointed out the number of suitors asking for the hand of young Henry (VII), and the sums on offer for a successful marriage, but he was unwilling to venture any suggestion as to the amounts the King would have to offer in order to be successful. With this, their meeting was concluded. As little as this tells us, we can still see a language which is polite and works with allusions. How typical this was, however, remains a matter of conjecture.

Having considered the technicalities, the language and organisation of diplomatic intercourse, we should finally turn to Henry III. What do his relations with Germany tell us about his wider political plans, hopes and ambitions? Naturally, the subject of this thesis has been only a very small part of Henry's actions and undertakings, and any judgement as to his personality or general ability would thus have to be preliminary. However, we can see a King who presents a very different picture from the one we normally encounter in his domestic policies, but one who grappled with similar problems. As much as King John and Magna Carta dominated Henry's domestic affairs, so the loss of Normandy dominated his doings on the continent. As at home, so was he faced abroad with a situation which was none of his own doing, for which he could take no responsibility, and where very few courses of action were open to him. The one he chose in the end was conservative, but it was pursued both with sheer indefatigable optimism and an acute awareness of chances and opportunities. At the same time, Henry was not reckless, did not plunge into ill thought out schemes, and showed little bravado or liking for risky adventures. He may have admired Richard the Lionheart, but he did not share his uncle's reckless confidence in his own invincibility and undisputable superiority. As a consequence, however, he had to see his old friends and supporters one after another won over by Louis IX and the Capetians. Caution had not paid the rewards one may have expected. Similarly, whenever Henry took a chance, events outside his control had a habit of interfering, making his neatly thought out plans falter. In many ways the Sicilian Business was both a continuation of these earlier trends, as well as a new departure. It was an opportunity which suddenly presented itself, but which fitted into a wider political concept pursued, quite successfully, for some time. In the end Henry III failed, for the same reasons he had failed in 1242/3 and 1253, that is his inability and unwillingness to put his relations at home, with the barons and nobility of England onto a new footing. Whereas abroad, from about 1245 onwards, he had taken steps into a different direction, at home he continued to avoid addressing the issues and problems he had inherited from his father, pursuing a policy which was aware of King John's failure, but which was unwilling to depart from the very tenets which had brought by that failure. Henry III truly was his father's son.

Finally, it becomes clear that neither the actions of Henry III nor those of Frederick II can be viewed in isolation. Ignoring their wider, European context means to set aside the very factors which moulded the policies and ambitions of the English King and his Imperial counterpart. Only if this background is ignored do Henry's actions abroad appear as foolish and incompetent. Put in their wider context, they bespeak imagination, pragmatism and resolution. Historians of thirteenth-century England can ignore her European connection, but they do so at their own grave peril.

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