

# The Guelphs And Ghibellines



G u e l f o

# Guelphs and Ghibellines



Historical sources in medieval Italy  
1096-1158 - 1158-1216 - 1216-1268



# Guelphs and Ghibellines



**T**HE Guelphs and Ghibellines were factions supporting, respectively, the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor in central and northern Italy during the 12th and 13th centuries [...] The struggle for power between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire had arisen with the Investiture Conflict which began in 1075 and ended with the Concordat of Worms in 1122, but the division between Guelphs and Ghibellines in Italy persisted to the 15th century.

Ghibellines were the imperial party, while the Guelphs supported the Pope. Broadly speaking, Guelphs tended to come from wealthy mercantile families, whereas Ghibellines were predominantly those whose wealth was based on agricultural estates.

It must be noted that contemporaries did not use the terms Guelphs and Ghibellines [...] with the names "church party" and "imperial party" preferred in some areas.

The division between Guelphs and Ghibellines was especially important in Florence [...] By 1300 Florence was divided into the Black Guelphs and the White Guelphs. The Blacks continued to support the Papacy, while the Whites were opposed to Papal influence, specifically the influence of Pope Boniface VIII.

During the 12th and 13th centuries, armies of the Ghibelline communes usually adopted the war banner of the Holy Roman Empire—white cross on a red field—as their own. Guelph armies usually reversed the colours—red cross on white.

## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

The House of Welf (historically rendered in English, Guelf or Guelph) is a European dynasty that has included many German and British monarchs from the 11th to 20th century.

In 1692 the head of the cadet Calenberg line was raised to the status of an imperial elector, and became known as the Elector of Hanover. His son, Georg Ludwig, inherited the British throne in 1714 as a result of the Act of Settlement 1701. Members of the Welf dynasty continued to rule Great Britain until the death of Queen Victoria in 1901; in Britain they were known as the House of Hanover.

### House of Hanover



**Above The Royal Palace at Hanover**

The House of Hanover (the Hanoverians) is a German royal dynasty which has ruled the Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg (German: Braunschweig-Lüneburg), the Kingdom of Hanover and the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Kingdom of Ireland. It succeeded the House of Stuart as monarchs of Great Britain and Ireland in 1714 and held that office until the death of Victoria in 1901. They are sometimes referred to as the House of Brunswick and Lüneburg, Hanover line. The House of Hanover is a younger branch of the House of Welf, which in turn is the senior branch of the House of Este.

Queen Victoria was the granddaughter of George III, and was an ancestor of most major European royal houses. She arranged marriages for her

children and grandchildren across the continent, tying Europe together; this earned her the nickname "the grandmother of Europe". She was the last British monarch of the House of Hanover; her son King Edward VII belonged to the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, the line of his father, Prince Albert. Since Victoria could not inherit the German kingdom and duchies under Salic law, those possessions passed to the next eligible male heir, her uncle Ernest Augustus I of Hanover, the Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale—the fifth son of George III.



**The current head of the House of Hanover is Ernst August V, Prince of Hanover.**

### House of Este

The House of Este is a European princely dynasty. It is split into two branches; the elder is known as the House of Welf-

Este or House of Welf, the younger, as the House of Fulc-Este or later simply as the House of Este.

After the peace ending the Napoleonic wars reshaped Europe ushering in the Modern era, the Electorate of Hanover (duchy of Brunswick and Lüneburg — held in a personal union by the king of Great Britain, George III) was dissolved by treaty acknowledged by all signatories and its lands were enlarged with the state promoted to the Kingdom of Hanover, Hanover. The new kingdom existed from 1815–1866, but passed from being a personal union of the male British rulers in 1837 to an uncle under salic laws of inheritance (Queen Victoria, being female, was unable to inherit). The House of Este hence gave Great Britain and the United Kingdom the "Hanoverian monarchs" (1714–1901).



## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

The origins of the family, probably of Frankish nobility, date back to the time of Charlemagne in the early 9th century when they settled in Lombardy.

### The Franks



The Franks (Latin: Franci or gens Francorum) were a West Germanic tribal confederation first attested in the third century as living north and east of the Lower Rhine River. From the third to fifth centuries some Franks raided Roman territory while other Franks joined the Roman troops in Gaul. Only the Salian Franks formed a kingdom on Roman-held soil that was acknowledged by the Romans after 357.

The Salian political elite would be one of the most active forces in spreading Christianity over Western Europe.

Many in the East used the term "Franks" to describe or refer to Western Europeans and Roman Catholic Christians in general.

### Salic Law

Salic law (Lat. Lex Salica) was a body of traditional law codified for governing the Salian Franks in the early Middle Ages during the reign of King Clovis I in the 6th century. Although Salic Law reflects very ancient usage and practices, the Lex Salica likely was first compiled only sometime between 507 and 511.

Salic law has had a formative influence on the tradition of statute law that has extended since then to modern times in Central Europe, especially in the German states, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, parts of Italy, Austria and Hungary, Romania, and the Balkans.

## The Guelphs and Ghibellines



The Salic Law codified inheritance, crime, and murder. In a kingdom with many ethnic groups, each expected to be governed under its own law.

The detailed laws established damages to be paid and fines levied in recompense of injuries to persons and damage to goods, e.g., slaves, theft, and unprovoked insults. One-third of the fine paid court costs. Judicial interpretation was by a jury of peers. These laws and their interpretations grant insight to Frankish society; Salic Law establishes that an individual person is legally unprotected by law if he or she does not belong to a family.

## REMINDER ... reality check;

Guelph = supporter of the Pope

Guelph =



House of Guelph = House of Hanover

House of Hanover = **Ruler of Great Britain and Ireland 1714 - 1901**

Established by the Act of Settlement 1701

Dissolved by the Congress of Vienna 1815

The offerings of pilgrims, the revenues of vacant benefice; the contributions of Peter's Pence, the fortunes of the Cardinals; the tributes of dependent States, the plunder of Jews and heretics, and what not, called for skilful and experienced administration.

## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

Throughout the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, Florentine merchants competed with those of Siena, Lucca, and other cities for the control of the Papal treasure. The term "Campsoreo Papa" was first appropriated by the Siennese, although they belonged to the Ghibelline party.

The victory of Montaperti,—which made the Ghibellines masters of Tuscany, with the exception of Lucca,—led however to their humiliation in another direction. In 1260 Pope Alexander IV. excommunicated the Siennese, and decreed that no debts should be paid them until they had made peace with the Church. This excommunication became effective after the Siennese had ravaged Radicofani—a fief of the Papal See.'

The ingrained dislike of the Curia, however, to changes of any kind prevailed to secure to the Siennese bankers their privileges with respect to the Holy See. As late as 1263 Siennese were still acting as Papal agents in England, Flanders, and elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>



### Siena

Siena prospered as a city-state, becoming a major centre of money lending and an important player in the wool trade. It was governed at first directly by its bishop, but episcopal power declined during the 12th century.

In 1404 the Visconti were expelled and a government of Ten Priors established, in alliance with Florence against King Ladislas of Naples.



## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

With the election of the Sienese Pius II as Pope, the Piccolomini and other noble families were allowed to return to the government, but after his death the control returned into popular hands. In 1472 the Republic founded the Monte dei Paschi, a bank that is still active today and is the oldest surviving bank in the world.



### **Monte dei Paschi**

Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena S.p.A. (MPS) is the oldest surviving bank in the world. Founded in 1472 by the Magistrate of the city state of Siena, Italy, as a mount of piety, it has been operating ever since.

### **Mount of Piety**

A mount of piety was an institutional pawnbroker run as a charity in Europe from the later Middle Ages times to the 20th century.

The people in need would then be able to come to the Monte di Pietà and give an item of value in exchange for a monetary loan. The term of the loan would last the course of a year and would only be worth about two-thirds of the borrower's item value. A pre-determined interest rate would be applied to the loan and these profits were used to pay the expenses of operating the Monte di Pietà.

## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

If the item was believed to be the legal property of the borrower two assistants called scrivani collected the pawn from the borrower. After examining and recording details about the condition of the object, it would then be passed to assessors who would evaluate the item's value. The massaro would then make three copies of a numbered receipt that identified the owner's name, the type of object being pawned, the condition of the object, the object's value, the amount of the loan and the date. Generally, the loan would not exceed two thirds of the object's value. The three receipts would be given to the owner or borrower, another would be kept in the massaro's record book and one receipt would be attached to the item. The monetary funds would then be supplied by the cashier to the borrower. This employee had the duty of keeping their own records of the money collected, loaned and the interest on each loan. If a borrower wanted to regain his pawned item, he would have to return the receipt to the massaro. The cashier would then calculate the interest that was earned on the item and the borrower would have to pay the interest in order to redeem their pawn. This interest collection provided one of the sources of revenue for the daily functions, operations, and salaries of the Monte di Pietà.



The Monte di Pietà accumulated capital from members of the patrician class, middle class, corporate groups, guilds, fines resulting from lawsuits and Communed ordered resources. While some monetary deposits were voluntary, some people had no choice in funding the capital for the "monte". For example, Monna Margherita da Poppi of 1497 gave 40 lire to the Monte di Pietà as part of her sentence in a legal matter. The Monte

## The Guelphs and Ghibellines

di Pietà was in charge of keeping this money from her until she was married. In this case, the organization of the Monte di Pietà was a dowry fund which became popular during the mid-sixteenth century. More revenues for the “monte” were acquired from the state through ordered fines.

Before the Monte di Pietà actually operated, a group of "eight men assembled to draw up the statutes" of the Florentine monte di pietà on April 15, 1496. The eight who gathered were Niccolò de' Nobili, Piero de' Lenzi, Bernardo de' Segni, Niccolò de' Nero, Piero de' Guicciardini, Giacomo de' Salviati, Antonio di Sasso di Sasso and Diacopo Mannucci. It was the members of the patrician class that dominated the prestigious and well-pied positions of decision making concerning the Monte di Pietà. Since the purpose of the Monte di Pietà was to combat usury, there were clear guidelines regarding the operations of the organization. For example, the employees had to ensure that all items that were exchanged were free, and therefore the legal property of the person pawning it. Also there were guidelines regarding the kind of items that were permitted, and the amount a person could borrow, both in terms of time and quantity. For example, holy items and unfinished goods such as pieces of cloth were not accepted as pawns for loans.



**Above: Order of The Guelphs - Germany**

# The End

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