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Abstract

This paper seeks to determine if Frederick I Barbarossa acted more as a warlord or a financial strategist during his reign with special attention put on the conduct of the Third Crusade. To begin, a brief overview of his rule in the 12th century is given. This is followed by an economic comparison of the Holy Roman Empire to the kingdoms of England and France. Lastly, the (financial) logistics of the Third Crusade are discussed. The goal of this paper is to invoke a sense that the rulers of the Middle Ages were capable of planning and executing these complex logistical journeys effectively, whilst maintaining/with the help of thriving economies.

Keywords: Medieval, Germany, Barbarossa, Crusade, Economy

Introduction

Before delving into the financial impact of Frederick Barbarossa on the Holy Roman Empire in the twelfth century, his rule is showcased. Frederick's rise to power began on March 4, 1152, with his coronation as king of Germany. To be elected, he had to bribe some of his electors, who were among the most powerful German lords at the times, such as Henry the Lion (1129 – 1195) and Welf VI (1115 – 1191).[1] While Henry the Lion received the kingdom of Bavaria; Welf VI was offered the duchy of Spoleto, the margraviate[2] of Etruria,[3] and the principality of Sardinia.[4] This method of securing loyalty and peace by transferring lands to his princes remained a useful tactic throughout Barbarossa's reign.

This policy was especially effective, as achieving peace became one of Frederick's principal goals within his broader political policy of *reformatio imperii*. The policy's main objective was "that the Roman Empire was to be restored to its former power and glory", which also included a renewal of the *Pax Romana*, an around 200-year period of peace in the Roman Empire from 27 BC to 180 AD. [5] Therefore, he saw it best fit not to rule from a capital or principal residence; instead, he "spent his reign in the saddle."[6] Additionally, he relied on his princely kinsmen and clerical advisors to administer and rule parts of his large empire, as they judged and kept order in Barbarossa's place.[7] Besides maintaining peace, the rule of third parties kept the empire running during the emperor's many absences.

Most of these absences came from Frederick's frequent campaigns to Italy, a total of five between 1154 and 1179. The aim of the first campaign, also called *Romzug*, was to be crowned as emperor by the pope – part of the *reformatio imperii* – which he achieved on June 18, 1155.[8] The second and third campaigns were aimed to squash rebellious uprisings of the Northern Italian cities, such as Milan, and integrate most of Northern Italy into the empire. Although he and his army faced strong resistance, he largely fulfilled his goals and was able to set up a German administration of Northern Italy in 1162.[9] During the fourth campaign, Barbarossa set his sights on Southern Italy, which was controlled by the kingdom of Sicily, but failed due to dwindling domestic support and mounting opposition in the North – which ultimately led to the establishment of the Lombard League around 1166.[10] The fifth and final military expedition was a last-ditch effort to overcome the Northern Italian cities and secure

[1] Henry the Lion was the duke of Saxony and a member of the House of Welf. Welf VI was an uncle of Barbarossa and a member of the House of Welf. See Joachim Ehlers, "Friedrich I. Barbarossa," in *Die deutschen Herrscher des Mittelalters: Historische Portraits von Heinrich I. bis Maximilian I*. (919-1519), ed. Bernd Schneidmüller and Stefan Weinfurter (München: Beck, 2003), 232.

[2] Territory ruled by a military commander, the Margrave, who was responsible for defending one of the border provinces of the Holy Roman Empire.

[3] Ehlers uses "Tuszien," which would mean the ancient region of the Etruscans named Etruria/Tyyhenia in Central Italy, but also could refer to the region of Tuscany.

[4] Ehlers, "Friedrich I. Barbarossa," 232.

[5] Karl Jordan, *Henry the Lion: A Biography*, (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1986), 42.

[6] John B. Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa: The Prince and The Myth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 89.

[7] Ibid., 90 – 91.

[8] Ibid., 149.

[9] Ibid., 292.

[10] Freed, *The Prince*, 338.

Barbarossa's rule over Northern Italy. It ended in disaster, as the imperial army was bested at the Battle of Legnano on May 29, 1176 by the forces of the Lombard League, which led to the Peace of Venice on July 22, 1177.[11] This treaty secured peace between the Kingdom of Sicily and the Lombard League for fifteen and six years respectively.[12]

After putting his internal affairs in order, mostly resolving quarrels with Henry the Lion, he spent the rest of the 1180s attempting to manifest the might of his own rule and the Third Crusade. For example, he organized a court in Mainz on May 10-11, 1184, which has been praised with the words: "no assembly of Frederick's predecessors could compare to Frederick's court in Mainz, which was renowned and famous throughout the entire Roman world."[13] Furthermore, he strengthened the bond with his former adversaries in Italy, which cumulated in a "tour of friendship" in 1185, during which he even declared an alliance with Milan.[14] These domestic and transnational endeavors came to a halt when Saladin captured Jerusalem on October 2, 1187 and the Third Crusade was launched by the papal bull *Audita Tremendi* authored by Pope Gregory VIII (1100 – 1187)[15] on October 29, 1187.[16] Barbarossa was the first of the Western rulers to leave for Jerusalem on May 10, 1189 after assembling an army at Regensburg.[17] He was also the only one to take the land route to the Levant, as King Philip II of France and the English king, Richard I, travelled by sea. The following details show how the Holy Roman Empire compared economically to its neighboring states/empires and how this crusade was managed financially by Frederick to give an insight into the economies of Western Europe and crusading in the late twelfth-century.

The Holy Roman Empire's Economy in Context

The Holy Roman Empire rarely draws any attention in the discussion of economic policies and the rise of financial instruments in the European Middle Ages. Instead, its neighboring kingdoms take the limelight, such as England and France. This is despite the fact that it was the largest empire in Western Europe by landmass spanning from the Low Countries in the north, to Rome in the south, and from Strasbourg in the west to Vienna in the east. Consequently, this section shows that the Holy Roman Empire was economically on par with its peers and gives an overview of the different financial and economic mechanics and policies at play.

Kingdom of England

England is widely considered to have been the most powerful of the European states in the twelfth century. Henry II (1133 – 1189), another red-haired ruler, was king of England and

[11] Ibid., 407.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 446 – 7.
[14] Ibid., 458 – 9.
[15] His papacy only lasted for 2 months from October 21 – December 17, 1187.
[16] Graham A. Loud, *The History of the Expedition Frederick and Related Texts* in Crusade Texts in Translation 19, (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 37 – 41.
[17] Loud, *The History of the Expedition Frederick*, 47.

his rule almost completely overlapped with Barbarossa's.[18] Henry changed the course of Europe by conquering Ireland and parts of France, instigating the murder of Thomas Becket in the Canterbury Cathedral and establishing the foundations of English common law and government.[19] Henry II also administered one of Europe's largest economies of the time. Since England was based on the manorial system, its largest revenue stream came "from the royal demesne as specified in fixed county-farm payments audited in the Exchequer and recorder in the pipe rolls."[20] The royal demesne or domain were lands owned and taxed directly by the king of England.[21] The Exchequer, sometimes referred to as treasury, was England's institution for collecting taxes and was founded by King Henry I at the beginning of the 12th century.[22] It used the pipe rolls, also referred to by the illustrious name of the Great Rolls of the Exchequer, to record "the yearly accounts of the sheriffs, who were the chief financial officers for individual counties."[23] Based on the pipe rolls and James Ramsay's *History of the Revenues of the Kings of England, 1066-1399*, the historian Nick Barratt has calculated the average annual state revenue of Henry II to be £18,000 with an annual revenue of £13,300 before 1165/6 and £20,400 for the years after that.[24] Barratt attributes this change to the Assize of Clarendon in 1166, which expanded the legal authority of judges and enabled Henry to gain more income from the prosecution of wealthier criminals, who had previously been immune from prosecution.[25] In addition, the act created the *cartae baronum*, a survey, similar to the Domesday Book commissioned by William the Conqueror the previous century, with the purpose of assessing the English landholdings, making it easier to tax the estates. The king's financial authority did not end at collecting taxes from manors; he was able to control the money supply through the royal mints and exchanges and had the "ability to authorize large-scale expenditure such as castle-building, withdraw money from circulation through taxation or overseas campaigns, and stimulate the local economy through the purchase of provisions, stock or victuals."[26] Henry II thus controlled extensive governmental institutions, such as the Exchequer, which formed a well-organized financial administration sufficient to support Henry II's ambitions, such as his conquests.

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[18] Nicholas Vincent, "Introduction: Henry II and the Historians," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, edited by Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 1.

[19] Vincent, "Introduction: Henry II and the Historians,"1 – 23.

[20] Nick Barratt, "Finance and the Economy in the Reign of Henry II," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, edited by Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 243 – 4. For a more in-depth explanation of manors see Michael M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society: An Economic History of Britain, 1100-1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 73 – 110.

[21] "Royal demesne," Miriam Webster, accessed March 29, 2022, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/royal+demesne.

[22] "Exchequer| British Government Department | Britannica," accessed March 29, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Exchequer.

[23] Pipe Rolls| British Government Department | Britannica," accessed March 29, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pipe-Rolls.

[24] Barratt, "Finance and the Economy in the Reign of Henry II," 249.

[25] Ibid., 251 – 3.

[26] Barratt, "Finance and the Economy in the Reign of Henry II," 243. See N. J. Mayhew, "Money and Prices in England from Henry II to Edward III," *The Agricultural History Review* 35, no. 2 (1987): 121 – 32 for a more in-depth look into prices, inflation, and money supply of Henry's reign.

Kingdom of France

King Louis VII (1120 – 1180) reigned over France for all but the last decade of Barbarossa's rule, when Phillip II Augustus (1165 – 1223) occupied the French throne.[27] Louis VII's rule was shaped by his failure in the Second Crusade, his conflict with Henry II, and his support of Pope Alexander III against Barbarossa's will.[28] The origin of Louis's dissension with Henry stemmed from the marriage of Louis' ex-queen Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122 – 1204) to Henry, which transferred large portions of French lands to his control, and Henry's ascension to the throne of England, making him France's most powerful vassal (since he was also the duke of Normandy).[29] France, like England, extracted its income primarily from its manorial system.[30] The historian John F. Benton convincingly discussed the annual revenue of the kingdom of France in *The Revenue of Louis VII* , citing several other historians and their calculations of France's state income. First, he notes that a certain Conan, provost of the cathedral of Lausanne and a contemporary to Philip Augustus, reported that Louis' annual revenue was an absurdly high sum of 228,000 livre parisis.[31] Benton notes that the pound sterling of England had contained twice as much silver as the livre parisis at the time, which would put Henry II's annual revenue only at 36,000 livre parisis to Louis VII's 228,000 at an exchange rate of 2:1.[32] This must have been an exaggeration, given that Henry II showed that he was able to mobilize and supply his armies more effectively than the French monarch by means of resource superiority.[33] Benton cites the historian Marcel Pecaut, who calculated that Louis VII had an annual revenue of 60,000 livre parisis.[34] Pecaut gives a detailed breakdown of income streams for around 20,000 livre parisis as seen in Fig. 1 and estimates that Louis received another 40,000 livre parisis from minting, tolls, agricultural procedures, feudal dues and exceptional taxes, such as those levied for Louis' crusades, which Pecaut could not exactly calculate.[35]

[27] Louis VII reigned from 1137 – 1180 and Philip II from 1180 – 1223.

[28] See Marcus Bull, "The Capetian Monarchy and the Early Crusade Movement: Hugh of Vermandois and Louis VII," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 40 (January 1, 1996), 26 and James Naus, "Louis VII and the Failure of Crusade," in *Constructing Kingship*, The Capetian Monarchs of France and the Early Crusades (Manchester University Press, 2016), 85, 102 and Jean Dunbabin, "Henry II and Louis VII," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, edited by Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 51.

[29] Naus, "Louis VII and the Failure of Crusade," 102 – 3.

[30] See Karine van der Beek, "The Effects of Political Fragmentation on Investments: A Case Study of Watermill Construction in Medieval Ponthieu, France," *Explorations in Economic History* 47, no. 4 (October 1, 2010), 4. A possible explanation to the findings: political fragmentation and competition, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2010.03.002.

[31] John F. Benton, "The Revenue of Louis VII," *Speculum* 42, no. 1 (1967), 84 – 5. https://doi.org/10.2307/2856101.

[32] See Ibid., Benton adds that in the 13th century the livre parisis was even weaker and was exchanged at a rate of 4:1 for the pound sterling, which still would mean that France had more than twice as large of an annual revenue than England.

[33] Dunbabin, "Henry II and Louis VII," 49.

[34] Benton, "The Revenue of Louis VII," 87.

[35] Ibid., 86 – 7.

Great estates	4,800
Towns	2,600
Paris	800
Medium and small landed property	1,100
Woods and forests	500
Fairs and markets	1,320
Market tolls and road and river tolls, etc.	2,750
Quitrents, etc.	200
Prévôts (High justice)	5,700
Ecclesiastical domain (*regalia*)	500
	20,270 l.p.

Fig. 1 in Benton, "The Revenue of Louis VII," 86.

Benton agrees with this figure, and if we take Benton's estimate for Henry II's annual income of £25,000 and a better exchange rate than 2:1[36], it is possible that Louis's and Henry's annual revenues were approximately equal, or that Henry, France's most powerful and wealthiest vassal, had slightly higher revenues than his lord. Nevertheless, Benton concluded that "the monarchy of Louis VII […] and France as a whole w[ere] in a position to resist foreign invasion."[37] Sources suggest that Louis's son was even wealthier and transformed the kingdom into an even stronger power in Europe.

Philip II, also called Philp Augustus, was king of France from 1180 – 1223. According to the military historian Jim Bradbury, he was a very capable and intelligent leader as he was able to consolidate all the warring parties under his rule to achieve extensive governing authority.[38] He strengthened and utilized his power for the sake of "reforming and streamlining royal administration, and therefore [increased] royal wealth and resources," which allowed him to secure the role of protector of his realm by building a better military apparatus.[39] He also supplemented the kingdom's income by expanding the number of churches affected by regalian rights and the capacities of the imperial court, and created extensive accounts of his fiscal activities.[40] Unlike Louis, Philip was not limited by financial hardship and relied on his economy to openly confront Henry in 1186.[41] The English king, who was in his late fifties by the time of

[36] It has been suggested that after 1158, English penny weight was harmonized with the French *deniers*, which were valued at half or a quarter of a penny. See Martin Allen, "Henry II and the English Coinage," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, edited by Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent, (Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 266.
[37] Benton, "The Revenue of Louis VII," 91.
[38] Jim Bradbury, *Philip Augustus: King of France, 1180-1223* (London; New York: Longman, 1998), 217.
[39] Bradbury, *Philip Augustus*, 246.
[40] John W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986),137-44, 166-75, 305-6. The regalian right was "the right claimed by a monarch to the estates, income and other dues of a vacant bishopric." See Christopher Corèdon, and Ann Williams, *A Dictionary of Medieval Terms and Phrases*, (Boydell & Brewer, 2004), 236, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt14brrmq.23.
[41] Dunbabin, "Henry II and Louis VII," 61 – 2.

Philip's ascension, was forced to concede large parts of his French territories to the young and ambitious king.

Holy Roman Empire

This section, corresponding to the empire, is split into two parts, with one covering the economy north of the alps, while the next takes a look at Barbarossa's holdings in Italy. A new development was that of the money economy, which the British medievalist and economic historian Michael Postan describes not as the rise of money, but as the increase in volume of monetary transactions.[42] This phenomenon can be observed by looking at the number of mints in Germany shortly before and during Frederick's reign. In the decades leading up to Frederick's election as king in 1152, there were only about a dozen mints.[43] By the end of his reign and into the reign of his son Henry VI, there were 215 mints, an increase of almost 180 percent. Frederick was the architect of this proliferation of mints, as he commanded the bishoprics to erect a mint, whenever it was suitable for the city, town, or the neighboring province.[44] In fact, most (106) of the 215 mints were operated by the clergy, while the rest were controlled by either German lords and princes (81) or Frederick himself (28).[45] The bishoprics' power over the mints was part of a broader imperial policy, which concerned episcopal cities. As part of this policy, Barbarossa granted these cities some of his imperial rights, such as royal jurisdiction, freedom to construct mills, and the permission to organize city markets at appropriate locations and times.[46] Because it was an agrarian economy, it was important to control the mills, which converted grain to bread, one of the primary victuals. Furthermore, the power of the emperor or the episcopal polity to establish markets was important, as it meant that they could control the fixed places of trade and directly influence imperial economic policy.[47]

Another factor affecting Frederick Barbarossa and the surrounding European economies was an increase in urbanization, and the foundation of *terrae imperii* in the Holy Roman Empire. The increase in the number of cities led to the expansion of the population and therefore a larger tax base. A cause for this increased urbanization in the Holy Roman Empire was Barbarossa's targeted economic intervention. For example, in 1180, he granted an arbitral award to the Archdiocese of Cologne described in Johannes Fried's article *Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland*.[48] The citizens of Cologne were in a dispute with their archbishop, Philip von Heinsberg,[49] who sought to regulate the right of construction on certain public spaces: the market and the towpath. Towpaths are trails running parallel to a river, from

[42] Michael M. Postan, "The Rise of a Money Economy," *The Economic History Review* 14, no. 2 (1944): 134. https://doi.org/10.2307/2590422.
[43] Karl J. Leyser, "Frederick Barbarossa and the Hohenstaufen Polity," *Viator* 19 (January 1, 1988): 154.
[44] Johannes Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 120 (1984): 204.
[45] Leyser, "Frederick Barbarossa and the Hohenstaufen Polity," 154.
[46] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 204.
[47] At Aachen, Frederick gave permission for two fairs to be held, which upped the total number of fairs in the region to ten or eleven, which were spread out throughout the year. (Very similar to Flanders) See Freed, *The Prince*, 373.
[48] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 205.
[49] This is the same Philip that rebelled against Barbarossa's plan to build a bridge across the Mosel.

which boats could be towed. Therefore, the issue had to be arbitrated by the emperor, who had to find an optimal solution by negotiating between the dynamic economic actors and the static *Hoheitsrecht*, or rights of the sovereign.[50] In this case, he ruled that the citizens were to keep their right of construction, in exchange for a one-time payment of 300 marks (~ £211.20) to the church, which were to be invested so as to yield a ten percent rate of return (how exactly that return rate is to be achieved is not further specified).[51] This policy benefited both the church and the citizens, which created incentives for the peasantry to consider moving into towns. Further, the creation of *terrae imperii* contributed to increased urbanization, as Barbarossa equipped these imperial lands with extensive infrastructure.

Fried claims that such arrangements, as the one made in Cologne, were the beginnings of the *Rentenkapitalismus* or rent capitalism. Rent capitalism is a theory proposed by the Austrian geographer Hans Bobek as a transitional step between the feudal agrarian economy and 'productive' capitalism, which sees the city as a predatory parasite extracting rents or payments from its rural surroundings.[52] Although presently, the theory is mostly utilized in the Middle Eastern context, it does seem to apply to Barbarossa's economic policy.[53] However, we must keep in mind that most "economic" decisions were also based on political considerations. The last chapter mentioned that Frederick enfeoffed his closest allies with territories in return for their support of his royal claim. Another example would be Frederick's enfeoffing Henry the Lion with Goslar, which was a rich town as it controlled the Rammelsberg silver mines, to further guarantee his support and the peace.[54]

To promote urbanization and the expansion of his imperial lands, which were beneficial for the empire and its finances as marketplaces and strong imperially controlled political entities, Barbarossa undertook measures to aid the merchant class. The merchants were essential to attract people, especially foreigners, to the markets of the cities and *terrae imperii* to generate revenue.[55] Furthermore, the merchants were the only ones able to supply Barbarossa's traveling court adequately, and thus sometimes received royal privileges from Frederick.[56] Fried also states that sometimes cities were founded for the sole purpose of securing the traveling court financially. One example of such a city is Gelnhausen, which was founded in 1170, and then registered on the travel itinerary of Barbarossa's court.[57]

Frederick seems to have had some understanding of financial liquidity and debt. He was the first German king to pawn off royal property for the sake of gaining liquid assets.[58] In

[50] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 206.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Hans Bobek, "Zum Konzept des Rentenkapitalismus," *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 65, no. 2 (1974): 73.
[53] See Eckart Ehlers, "Rentenkapitalismus und Stadtentwicklung im islamischen Orient: Beispiel: Iran," *Erdkunde* 32, no. 2 (1978): 124.
[54] Jordan, *Henry the Lion*, 43.
[55] Ibid., 222.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 223.
[58] Ibid., 202.

addition, he also gave out loans in exchange for collateral.[59] It is unclear, whether he profited from these interactions, as usury was a contested subject for Christians at the time. Although he certainly did not invent taking on debts, he was the German ruler who popularized it as financial tool.[60] For example, he wrote many letters to the Patriarch of Aquileia in 1177 asking him to take on Venetian loans in the name of the empire.[61]

Frederick Barbarossa was most easily able to extract resources continuously from his royal possessions and imperial churches.[62] He made use of his rights by requesting the payment of the *Servitien,* a tax on the imperial churches, more than any ruler before him and taxed, for example, the complete income of the Archdiocese of Mainz in 1184 including its newest harvest.[63] His greed seemed boundless, as he reinstated the *Jus Spolii*, or Right of Soil, which was the right to claim the property of deceased clergymen, as an additional income stream.[64] Naturally, his policies were not popular among the clergy, so much so that the abbot Heinrich von Lorsch decided to give away his entire estate of 306 marks (~ £215) in 1167, shortly before his death, in order to avoid it falling into the hands of Barbarossa. Fried argues that after a while, Frederick realized the damage he was causing and, in a few cases, such as with the Archdiocese of Cologne issued a 'tax refund,' for the sake of maintaining a sustainable source of income. Some other taxes he levied were in the form of customs and tolls, such as a toll in Frankfurt for incoming goods, as well as a toll of four pennies for every ship passing Neustadt and Aschaffenburg (but only for two weeks from 8th – 22nd August, around the Assumption of the Virgin (15th August)).[65] In addition to taxing the church heavily, Barbarossa also accused whole communities of Jews with invented crimes in order to extract fines from them. He also issued fines for not attending one of his courts, which totaled £100 for a prince and £10 for anyone else.[66] Freed cites Otto von Freising, who mentioned that Barbarossa levied similar fines on anyone who angered him. In an extreme case, the Archbishop Philip of Cologne had to pay a fine of 2,200 marks (~ £1,550) for double non-attendance and "for imposing a levy on the Jews in defiance of the emperor's command."[67] This is not to say that Barbarossa changed his sentiment towards the Jews: rather this was a fine for challenging imperial orders.

Thus, Frederick came up with many creative ways to increase the state's income in Germany. He often enforced existing laws, which his predecessors had let fall into abeyance, and, in the end, he probably created the wealthiest Holy Roman Empire up to date. Furthermore, he popularized lending and the use of debt as financial instruments, which would become important economic devices in the future.

[59] Ibid.
[60] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 203.
[61] Ulf Dirlmeier, "Friedrich Barbarossa – auch ein Wirtschaftspolitiker?," *Vorträge und Forschungen: Friedrich Barbarossa. Handlungsspielräume und Wirkungsweisen des staufischen Kaisers* 40 (1992): 510.
[62] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 202.
[63] Ibid., 200 – 201.
[64] Ibid., 201.
[65] Freed, *The Prince*, 370.
[66] Freed, *The Prince*, 94.
[67] Ibid., 472.

Barbarossa's Italian Economy

The *Instituta regalia et ministerial camerae regum Longobardorum* was the basis of the royal economic administration of Lombardy reaching back to Charlemagne and was still applied by the Ottonian dynasty of the tenth century and early eleventh century.[68] Unfortunately, the Palatinate of Pavia, which housed all documents of the centralized financial administration, was destroyed in 1024 and thereafter little evidence survives suggesting how Italy was administered financially by the emperors.

Although, Postan maintains that just the volume of money transactions increased, Carlrichard Brühl argues that with the increase in the number of documents from about 1150 a monetary economy started to develop.[69] This differs from Postan's definition, as it meant that more and more people used money to pay for things instead of bartering with natural goods, at least in Italy. Yet, payments by goods did not entirely disappear, as the *curie que pertinent ad mensam regis Romanorum* shows.[70] This document, commonly referred to as *Tafelgüterverzeichnis*, was the "draft of a letter sent by a canon of Aachen to someone of high rank in the king's entourage," and lists the payments of twenty-eight Lombardian imperial holdings, *Tafelgüter*, of which nine were money transactions (ranging from 200 (~ £140) to 2,000 Marks (~ £1,400)) and nineteen were transfers of goods.[71]

However, the economic fate of imperial Italy under Barbarossa was decided at the Diet of Roncaglia in November 1158. One of the key points was that the cities of Lombardy had to grant the imperial rights and belongings, so called regalia, to the emperor.[72] These rights included ownership and right to exercise dukedoms, marches, counties, consulates, mints, market tolls (*thelonea*), forage tax (*fodrum*), wagon tolls (*vectigalia*), gate tolls (*portus*), transit tolls (*pedatica*), mills, fisheries, bridges, all the use accruing from running water, and the payment of an annual tax, not only on the land, but also on their own persons.[73]

After the regalia were reinstated into Barbarossa's hands, he would sometimes waive these rents for an annual fee, the *fictum* or *pensio*.[74] The highest known *pensio* was paid by the city Piacenza, located between Parma and Milan, and amounted to £1,050.[75] *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa* state that Barbarossa's annual income increased by 30,000 talents thanks to these regained regalia.[76] Furthermore, the Diet released a report on how to levy taxes, which was derived from Roman law.[77] Although he gained a significant sum through the regalia,

[68] Carlrichard Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas in Italien," *Historische Zeitschrift* 213, no. 1 (August, 1971): 17.
[69] Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas in Italien," 18.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 19 – 20. and Leyser, "Frederick Barbarossa and the Hohenstaufen Polity," 157.
[72] Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas in Italien," 21 and See Ibid., 22 for a list of these regalia (in Latin).
[73] Otto von Freising and Rahewin, *The Deeds of Barbarossa*, trans. and ed. Charles C. Mierow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), Book IV, ch.7/vii, 238.
[74] Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas in Italien," 24.
[75] Ibid., 25.
[76] von Freising, *The Deeds of Barbarossa*, Book IV, ch.8/viii, 238.
[77] Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas in Italien," 23.

Barbarossa's highest income in Italy came from the *fodrum*.[78] The *fodrum* was a tax that was levied irregularly throughout imperial Italy. For example, Lombardy had to pay it every time the emperor arrived in the region. It was levied in the region around Verona whenever he was passing through. Ravenna paid the tax every two years and Matelica every three years.[79] Furthermore, the tax rate changed constantly and even differed between the various communes.[80] Therefore, we cannot determine how much the *fodrum* was worth at any given time, but have sufficient evidence to say that it must have been the largest imperial income stream in Italy. In some places, such as Milan, a *Steuerkataster*, a tax registry listing all taxable property, was established.[81] The *Steuerkataster* was an advanced financial device, perhaps comparable to a miniature version of the Domesday Book of William the Conqueror. Another important tax was the *hostanditiae*, which was less a tax and more a payment required to evade *Heeresfolge*, the participation in military campaigns.[82] The *hostanditiae* was often paid by the vassals belonging to the clergy, but also by some cities and lower vassals, who were able to free themselves from participation in a military campaign even though their feudal lord was required to participate in it.[83]

Barbarossa also raised funds in Italy through political action. When the cities of Milan and Crema rebelled against the emperor, the commune of Cremona requested the destruction of Crema. The commune paid the empire £11,000 in 1159 to fulfill this task.[84] Shortly after, Barbarossa successfully besieged Crema and it had to capitulate in early 1160. In addition to Cremona, the cities of Genoa and Pisa each paid the empire, in 1159 and 1164 respectively, to gain ownership rights over Sardinia.[85] However, Barbarossa did not always choose to increase the empire's funds. For example, in 1161 Frederick rejected the *hostanditiae* of the archbishop of Salzburg.[86] The German medievalist Knut Görich discusses this topic extensively in his article *Geld und "honor," Friederich Barbarossa in Italien,* in which he highlights the process through which the emperor decided between money and expanding the honor and might of the empire.[87] Fried's opinion on the matter was that Barbarossa "did not conduct politics in Italy to amass riches for us or our sons, but solely for the restoration of peace and expansion of the empire."[88]

As Gertrud Deibel already stated in 1932 in her article *Die Italienischen Einkünfte Friederich Barbarossas*, it is impossible to reconstruct the entire financial budget of the empire,

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[78] Ibid., 25. See also "Frederick I | Biography, Barbarossa, Crusades, & Facts | Britannica," accessed April 2, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Frederick-I-Holy-Roman-emperor.
[79] Gertrud Deibel, "Die italienischen Einkünfte Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas," *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher* (1932), 47.
[80] Deibel, "Die italienischen Einkünfte Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas," 48.
[81] Dirlmeier, "Friedrich Barbarossa – auch ein Wirtschaftspolitiker?," 509.
[82] Ibid., 49 and Brühl, "Die Finanzpolitik Friedrich Barbarossas In Italien," 26.
[83] Deibel, "Die italienischen Einkünfte Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas," 49.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Dirlmeier, "Friedrich Barbarossa – auch ein Wirtschaftspolitiker?," 509.
[86] Ibid., 510.
[87] Knut Görich, "Geld und 'honor.' Friedrich Barbarossa in Italien," *Vorträge und Forschungen: Formen und Funktionen öffentlicher Kommunikation im Mittelalter* 51 (2001): 177 – 200.
[88] Fried, "Die Wirtschaftspolitik Friederich Barbarossas in Deutschland," 196.

as sources are incomplete and more often than not cite the event of a payment but not its value.[89] All one can do is conclude that the empire had many methods for raising a substantial amount of money during Frederick's reign. Furthermore, Barbarossa took a great interest in his economic policy, so much so that he sometimes directly intervened as arbitrator or money lender. In addition, his financial devices, which included a *Steuerkataster*, interpretations of Roman law, fines, and political payments, were the most creative and progressive that the Holy Roman Empire had seen up until that point. And although the empire's financial budget cannot be traced fully, comparing the amounts Barbarossa received in fees and taxes to those paid in England and France suggest that the empire's economy was as great if not even greater than those of the other major European powers. Yet, the financial administration of the Empire under Barbarossa was not especially innovative: its *Steuerkataster*, for example, had been preceded by the Domesday Book, and the expansive debt market of the Italian city-states had anticipated its use of debt. However, the fact that Frederick Barbarossa was able to mesh and balance all these different financial tools to grow the empire's income is the most distinguishing factor of his financial administration.

Logistics of the Third Crusade

To prepare and execute the crusade, Barbarossa had to secure a safe route to the Levant and ensure sufficient monetary funds for the undertaking. He also had to rely on the governmental structure he left behind to govern over the empire in his abstinence. To safely guide his followers into the Holy Land, Barbarossa's abilities as state leader and diplomat were vital since he had to negotiate for safe passage and nourishment along the way with other rulers. Obviously, raising and supplying an army on a journey over multiple months required enormous funds, but as there were no banks and rarely any currency exchanges, the crusaders had to find ways to carry and spend their money during that journey.

The anonymous account *Historia Peregrinorum*, also known as the *History of the Pilgrims*, reveals some of the negotiations between the emperor and the Hungarians and Byzantines to secure a safe passage for his crusader army. The subjects of the deal between Barbarossa and King Béla III of Hungary were "the provision of markets, safe conduct along the way and a secure peace between the two of them."[90] The author of the account states that "[t]he King of Hungary responded speedily and favorably to the request of the emperor and pilgrims concerning this matter."[91] The negotiations with the envoy of Emperor Isaac II Angelos were more drawn out, as the Byzantines asked Barbarossa to send higher ranking envoys to Constantinople, "to receive fuller assurances from them [the envoys] there and to confirm the peace more fully."[92] Furthermore, the author of the *Historia Peregrinorum* records some of the clauses of the treaty between the two emperors. One of these clauses concerned itself with the provision of markets, which were made accessible depending on the availability of goods and the needs of the regions through which the crusaders were to cross.[93] Another clause specified

[89] Deibel, "Die italienischen Einkünfte Friederich Barbarossas," 21.
[90] Loud, *The History of the Expedition*, 144 – 5.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., 145.
[93] Loud, *The History of the Expedition of the Emperor Frederick*, 145.

that “the pilgrims might be allowed to take fruit from the trees, vegetables from gardens, wood to make fires provided houses were not damaged, and fodder and straw for the needs of their horses.”[94] Not only does this list show us some of the needs of Barbarossa’s army, it also reveals a low meat diet, when there was an absence of markets, and the extent to which the crusaders were allowed legally to ‘plunder.’ The German historian and diplomat Ekkehard Eickhoff provides a full list of agreements made between Isaac II and Frederick I on February 14, 1190.[95] This agreement was negotiated after Frederick’s army had already experienced extensive ambushes and harassment by the locals of the Byzantine empire and thus includes clauses such as “The East-Roman (byzantine) emperor waives all claims for the damages done to his provinces by the crusader army,” in order to not offend Frederick further. For transportation purposes, it was agreed that “[h]e [Isaac II Angelos] will provide enough ships for the crossing of the army at Gallipoli or between Sestos and Abydos. The exact number being 70 transportation vessels, 150 vehicles suitable for the transport of horses and 15 galleys, all with crew serving under the German emperor.” The following map shows the positions of Sestos and Abydos, as well as Adrianople, where Barbarossa was camping at the time of the deal.

Barbarossa’s Encampments in Nécropotame, *English: The Byzantine Empire on the Death of Emperor Basil II in (1025) in English*, uploaded May 20, 2008, trans. and modified from Image:Map_Byzantine_Empire_1025-de.svg. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Byzantine_Empire_1025-en.svg. Further modified by author of this article to highlight the cities that the agreement discusses.

To further ensure the safety of Barbarossa’s army during the crossing as well as on the journey through the Byzantine Empire, Isaac II “provide[d] a number of high-ranking hostages, of which six are members of the imperial family, six high-ranking court ministers and lofty citizens of the capital,” and ensured that “there should be a four-day march distance between

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ekkehard Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa Im Orient: Kreuzzug Und Tod Friedrichs I*, Istanbuler Mitteilungen 17 (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1977), 75 – 76.

the Byzantine army and the German army until the latter has left the East-Roman territories."[96] The latter clause was included not only for the sake of Frederick's safety, but also in order to contain the damage the Germans could cause within Isaac's empire. This treaty also states that "[o]n the marching route of the army, enough food should be provided. Should this not be the case, the army may help itself."[97] Thus, Frederick's envoys, who served as state functionaries, were very effective in reaching agreements with other rulers to guarantee Frederick's army safe passage. However, the reality did look different, as this *Deal of Constantinople* would not have needed to be struck if Isaac's people had not constantly engaged the crusades in the armed entanglements described by the authors of the *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris.* A letter to Leopold V (1157 – 1194), Duke of Austria (1174 – 1194), reveals Barbarossa's frustrations before the deal: "[t]ruly, because the burnt child dreads the fire, we can in the future have no confidence in the words and oaths of the Greeks," and he laments the "violat[ion] of all the oaths which are known to have been sworn by his chancellor at Nuremberg."[98] In another letter, this time sent to Barbarossa by Sibylla (~1159 – 1190), Queen of Jerusalem (1186 – 1190), in 1189, the queen discloses to Frederick that Isaac II is actively conspiring against the crusaders, as he had been bribed by "many presents very pleasing to the mortals" from "Saladin, the seducer and destroyer of the holy Name."[99] This explains the many raids on Barbarossa's army by the Byzantines and the reluctance of Isaac to honor his agreements with the Holy Roman Emperor. However, as we have seen in the case of the King of Hungary, most stages of the journey had been prearranged and took place without any issues.

However, how much did a crusade cost, who paid for it, and how was the money transported and spent along the route?[100] Unlike the kings of England and France, Frederick Barbarossa did not levy the Saladin tithe in 1188 to pay for the Third Crusade. The Saladin tithe was levied for three years and was a tax "based on income and movables […] and also [on] a tenth of the alms of those who died during the ten years following 24 June 1184."[101] Instead, Frederick Barbarossa relied on the income of his domains, other taxes and on his men, who were required to carry a certain amount of money with them to be eligible to participate in the crusade. One source was certainly the fine levied on those who did not or could not participate and thus did not fulfill their *Heeresfolge*. The exact amount that had to be carried by the crusaders is disputed. The Swiss historian and diplomat Rudolf Hiestand cites Otto of St. Blasien, who gave an amount of three silver marks per person; the *Annales Marbacenses*, which indicate that each Crusader had to bring enough money for two years; and the *History of the*

[96] Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa Im Orient*, 75 – 76.
[97] Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa Im Orient*, 75 – 76.
[98] Dana C. Munro, "Letters of the Crusaders," *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, Vol 1:4, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1896), 20-22.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Interestingly, when googling the 'cost of a crusade,' one of the first articles is by the *Workers*, the journal of the Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist, or CPBML, a very minor British political party, which argues that the enormous cost of the crusades "contributed to the defeat of the papal system," and draws analogies to the government expenditures for the war in Iraq. The cost of a crusade remains an understudied topic, however, and there is no clear answer to how much crusading cost, just assurances that it was a very expensive undertaking.
[101] Fred A. Cazel, "The Tax of 1185 in Aid of the Holy Land," *Speculum* 30, no. 3 (1955): 385, https://doi.org/10.2307/2848077.

Pilgrims, which says that Barbarossa's men were required to carry enough money for one year.[102] On the basis of the figure given by Otto of St. Blasien, Hiestand and Murray calculated the minimum daily financial needs of a crusader in Frederick's army as being 2/3 penny per day.[103] Murray makes further estimations based on the *Längeres Kölner Dienstrecht*, "a set of regulations from around 1165 governing the service of the ministerial knights of the archbishop of Cologne," and determines an expense of one mark per month per knight, which, when combined with the expenses of their entourages means that the Crusade cost around 81,000 – 90,000 marks (~ £57,024 – £63,360).[104]

This huge sum had to be transported over a distance of around 2,600 kilometers/1,615 miles, which required different forms of currency. Murray suggests that the crusaders carried most of their wealth in form of coin, due to its practicality. Pennies were lighter (604.8g for the three marks in pennies) than ingots (the other major type of currency) and "could have been carried in [a] leather or cloth bag by an unmounted crusader along with other burdens without difficulty."[105] To carry larger sums, such as those required by the knights, the army utilized ships, carts, and pack animals. One could also buy smaller amounts of goods with pennies and did not always have to chip off a certain weight of silver from ingots.[106] Murray estimates conservatively that the crusaders carried a total of around 6 million silver pennies with them. Apart from ingots and coins, Murray states that other objects may have also been transported, such as "jewellry and gold or silver plate," as they had "a high intrinsic value," ideal for the exchange or purchase of goods.[107]

The crusaders spent most of their money to buy food supplies at markets provided by the various rulers of the territory through which they were passing. These markets were places where local producers tried to fulfill the needs of the crusading army.[108] However, issues arose when discussing the prices for goods, as Barbarossa's army had a variety of different currencies, with the largest share being the Cologne mark, that had to be exchanged. The *Deal of Constantinople* included clauses to regulate the exchange rate, but also to set the prices so that they "shall not differ from those that are offered as if Emperor Isaac himself would march

[102] Rudolf Hiestand, "Die Kriegskasse Des Kaisers? Gedanken Zum „Barbarossa-Fund" Aus Historischer Sicht," *VSWG: Vierteljahrschrift Für Sozial- Und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 78, no. 2 (1991): 191. Otto von St. Blasien wrote chronicles spanning from 1146 – 1209. The *Annales Marbacenses*, also known as Marbach Annals, are chronicles spanning from 631 – 1238.

[103] See Hiestand, "Die Kriegskasse Des Kaisers?," 191, and Alan V. Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," in *In Laudem Hierosolymitani: Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z Kedar*, ed. Iris Shagrir, Ronnie Ellenblum and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate: 2007): 356 – 368.

[104] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 359 – 361. See Freed, *The Prince*, 481, who agrees with this estimate.

[105] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 363.

[106] Ibid. Most of the information pertaining to the monetary logistics of Barbarossa's crusade stem from the discovery of the Barbarossa Hoard, which is a hoard of coins and ingots that was buried by Barbarossa's men on their return journey to Germany and discovered between 1982 – 1985.

[107] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 364.

[108] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 364.

through it," to prevent usury.[109] While the army was in Hungary, the author of the *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris* notes that "[t]he Hungarian took considerable advantage of our men in one matter, the changing of money or silver, inasmuch as for two pennies of Cologne they gave as many as five of their own pennies, […] and for a penny of Regensburg or Krems they gave one Hungarian penny, which was barely worth one of Verona."[110] Food also became scarce on the latter parts of the Crusaders' journey, which meant that sometimes they were "obliged to pay 1 mark for a loaf [of bread]," which was "more than one hundred times what had been originally estimated as the necessary expenses for supplies for *one day*."[111] The scarcity of food and water proved to be a larger issue than a lack of money, as money was being resupplied from Germany and was obtained through plunder during successful sieges.[112] Nevertheless, figuring out how to transport the money was vital to making the crusade of Barbarossa "one of the best organized crusades of the twelfth century," according to Murray.[113]

Conclusion

The past sections gave us enough evidence to determine that Barbarossa was more so a financial strategist than a warlord. Although Barbarossa did pursue a plethora of military ventures, especially into Italy, his ability to logistically facilitate his campaigns stands out. First, he was able to build and maintain one of the strongest economies in Western Europe, which allowed him to pursue his manifold military expeditions. Second, at the time of the *Audita Tremendi*, he was the first to embark and as we have seen with enough preparation and planning to logistically as well as financially facilitate the long passage from the Holy Roman Empire to the Holy Land for his army. The key findings are that the Holy Roman Empire was able to hold its own economically, albeit without being at the forefront of developing new financial tools, and that the empire under Barbarossa easily possessed the capacities to execute a crusade, the most monumental endeavor a medieval state could undertake.

[109] Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa Im Orient*, 75 – 76. The exchange rate was harder to determine, as it was based on gold for higher denominations, a metal that the West did not use for their coins. See Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 365.
[110] Loud, *The Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa*, 58 – 59.
[111] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 366.
[112] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 367. For example, the siege of Ikonion yielded around 100,000 marks. See Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 367.
[113] Murray, "Finance and Logistics of the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa," 358.

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