

feated his rivals, and was proclaimed king. To improve the defenses of the northwestern frontier he radically reorganized the March of Ivrea, retaining Ivrea itself under his own control, and splitting the remainder into three separate marches, which he granted to members of the region's three leading families. Marquis Oberto received southern Piedmont and Liguria, Marquis Aleramo the eastern region centering on Monferrato, while the newly-created March of Turin was awarded to a certain Arduin, nicknamed "the Smooth-Faced". Under Arduin the territory around Turin and the Alpine passes now re-emerged as a separate territorial entity, formally constituted as a frontier March. These four great dynasties, Berengar of Ivrea's Anscarid lineage, the Obertenghi of southern Piedmont and Liguria, the Aleramids of Monferrato, and the Arduinids of Turin, would dominate Piedmont for generations to come, and would give birth to the great feudal dynasties that ruled the region in the middle ages.

From the first, Berengar of Ivrea's position as king of Italy was threatened by Otto I, who had established himself as the unchallenged ruler of Germany. Otto laid claim to the title of emperor in succession to the defunct Carolingians, and was eager to assert his authority over the lesser sovereigns, whom he treated as his vassals. In 962 he marched into Italy, overthrew Berengar, and had himself crowned emperor by the pope at Rome. This date marks the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire, the self-styled successor to the revived Roman empire of Charlemagne, which in its turn had claimed to revive the empire of the Caesars. The basis of Otto I's power however was not to be found in Italy, but in the support of the great feudal princes of Germany. The Empire's center of gravity lay north of the Alps, with the Kingdom of Italy forming its southern appendage, vital above all for its symbolic importance. To legitimize their rule, the emperors would always travel to Rome for the coronation ceremony, without which they could not truly call themselves emperors. As with the Carolingian dynasty, the moral and ideological support of the Church was an essential underpinning for imperial authority. And like the Carolingians, the Ottonian emperors used their superior military power to dominate the Kingdom of Italy, seeking to bend its territorial magnates to their will.

#### 6. *Arduin, Marquis of Turin, and his Lineage.*

Among these territorial potentates Marquis Arduin of Turin figured prominently. He had risen from obscure beginnings: his forebears were