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THE SOVEREIGN DYNASTY
PATERNO' - AYERBE - ARAGON
AND ITS DYNASTIC CHIVALRIC ORDERS

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THE HOUSE OF PATERNO'

Of the great Italian families which claim royal origin, few have the historical importance of the family of Paternò.

Our purpose is not to write its history and its genealogy, but to demonstrate its royal origin; the few notes which follow are however more than sufficient to give an understanding of its greatness.

The Paternò were Princes of Biscari, Sperlinga (1627), Manganelli, Val di Savoia e Castelforte (1633); Dukes of Carcaci (1723), Furnari (1643), Giampaolo, Palazzo (1687), Paternò, Pozzomauro e San Nicola; Marquises of Capizzi (1633), Casanova, Desera (1806), Manchi, Regiovanni, Roccaromana, San Giuliano (1662), Sessa, del Toscano; Counts of Montecupo (1772); Barons of Aliminusa, Aragona, Spedolotto Alzacuda, Baglia e Dogana di Milazzo, Baldi, Belmonte, Bicocca, Bidani, Biscari, Burgio, Capizzi, Castania e Saline di Nicosia, Cuba, Cuchara, Cugno, Donnafugata, Ficarazzi, Gallitano, Gatta, Graneri, Imbaccari e Mirabella, Intorrella, Manchi di Bilici, Mandrile, Manganelli di Catania, Marianopoli, Mercato di Toscanello, Metà dei Terraggi di Licata, Mirabella, Motta Camastra, Murgo, Nicchiara, Offio di Mastro Notaro della Corte Capitaniale di Catania, Oxina, Placabaiana, Poiura, Porta di Randazzo, Pollicarini, Pozzo di Gotto, Raddusa e Destri, Ramione, Ricalcaccia, Salamone, Salsetta, San Giuliano, San Giuseppe, Sant' Alessio, Scala, Schiso, Sciortavilla, Solazzi, Sparacogna, Spedalotto, Terza Parte della Dogana di Catania, Toscano; Lords of Baglio, Collabascia, Erbageria, Gallizzi, Mandrascate, Sciari, Sigona, del jus (*page 4*) luendi of Camopetro, etc. etc.; ascribed to the Nobility of Catania, Sorrento, Cotrone, Amalfi, Benevento, Palermo; decorated by the highest Orders of Knights; accepted into the Order of the Knights of Malta, for Justice, from 1597; illustrious thanks to hundreds of persons famous in arms, letters, religion, politics and magistrature; they became divided into many branches, some of which are still in existence today.

The founding member of the family was Michele de Ayerbe (or Ajerbe, Ayerbo, Ajerbo), Lord of Paternoi (or Paternoj), son of Giacomo or Jacopo de Ayerbe, Lord of Liso, Brancavilla, Valderassa and Paternoi and of his wife N. Moncada; Michele was the son of Pietro de Ayerbe, Infante d' Aragona, Lord of Ayerbe, and of his wife Filippa Accrociamuro, daughter of the Count of Celano. Pietro was the son of Giacomo (James) I of Aragon, the Conqueror, and of his third wife Duchess Teresa de Vidaure; brother of Giacomo or Jacopo was Peter, who by his wives Maria de Luna and Violante Lascaris Ventimiglia, of the stock of the Emperors of Byzantium, had just two daughters, Constance and Maria.

The sons of Michele de Ayerbe, Lord of Paternoi, were Garzia, who fathered Sancio, who in turn fathered Garzia, who was a priest who died in Rome, and Giovanni (John), married to Eleonora de Cavalleria, known as Giovanni the Elder, the common ancestor of all the branches still existing of the Paternò family. (Imhof, *Corpus Historiae Genealogicae Italiae et Hispaniae*, Nuremburg 1702, table VII, pages 12-13); (tab. 1 and 2).

The descendents of Michele d'Ayerbe, Lord of Paternoi, claimed their surname from the possession of the feud, as occurred in many other great families, Italian and otherwise: the Counts of Moriana, for example, assumed the name Savoy because they were the possessors of that region; the Corradi were called Gonzaga because they owned that place; the descendents of Bonifacio Count of Lucca, made rulers of Este in 981 by the Emperor Otto, took that name as their own; the Altavilla, the reigning dynasty of Sicily in the XII century, were so denominated because they possessed the city of Hauteville in Normandy; the same circumstance obtained also for the following families: Montalto, Montefeltro, Colloredo, Saluzzo, Collalto, Gravina, Montecuccoli, Celano, Bourbon, Montmorency, Armagnac, Chateaubriand, Béthune, Vendôme, Habsburg, Hohenzollern, Nassau, Trautmansdorff, Pappenheim, Windischgrätz, Lippe, de (page 5) Mérode, Aremberg, Ligne, Westerloo, Luxembourg, Borgia, Castelbisbal, Mendoza, Fonseca, Salamanca, Braganza, Tarragona, Avalos, Cordova, Vargas, Molina, Albuquerque, Lerma, Ossuna.

"Paternò: there were numerous baronies, amongst which Paternò near Catania, from which it took its name in the XII century" (Libro d'Oro della Nobiltà Italiana - The Golden Book of Italian Nobility, 1910 edition, page 354, entry Paternò).

"Paternò: the origins of Don Jaime el Conquistador (1239), King of Aragon, Valencia e Majorca and Teresa de Viduare the third and morganatic wife are to be so attributed". (Houses Formerly Sovereign of Italian States and National Families Derived from Them or from Their Foreign Branches, in "Rivista Araldica" -Heraldry Review, 1922, pp. 295-305, 343-346).

"Paternò: others yet claim that they are directly linked to the royal house of Aragon, whose founder member would have been the Infant Peter of Aragon, Lord of Ayerbe (son of James the Conqueror, king of Aragon, and da. Teresa de Viduare) who was taken to Sicily towards the middle of the XIV century, by one Giovanni/John, (whom they believe son of Michele, Lord of Paternoy, son of the aforementioned Peter), who was baron of Burgio, Murgo etc." (Spreti, Enciclopedia Storico-Nobiliare Italiana, vol. V, Milano 1932, page 196, entry: Paternò).

"Petrus de Aragonia, Jacobi I Regis Aragon. ex Theresia Vidauria f. Dom. de Aierbe. Uxor 1 Aldoncia de Cervara. 2 Philippa Accrocciamuro, N. Com. de Celano f. - Jacobus, Dom. de Liso, Brancavilla, Valderassa & Paternoi. Ux. Maria Sancia". (Imhof, Corpus Historiae Genealogicae Italiae et Hispaniae, Nuremburg 1702, table 13).

The Paternò coat of arms is "Or four bars gules a bend azure". (Spreti, op. cit. vol. V, page 195).

"Or four bars gules a bend azure over all". (Crollanza, Dizionario Storico Blasonico, vol. II, Pisa 1888, page 295).

"Or four bars gules a bend azure" (Libro d'Oro della Nobiltà Italiana, Roma 1910, page 354, entry Paternò).

"Or four bends gules crossed by a superimposed band" (Manucci, Nobiliario e Blasonario del Regno d'Italia, vol. III, page 308, entry Paternò).

It is worthy of note that the shield "Or four bends gules, is (*page 6*) the coat of arms of the Royal House of Aragon, and that the bend (which in some of the Paternò arms appears reduced to half its width (this feature is called in heraldry bendlet), was a sign of brisure, that is, it indicated a cadet branch of the family, as in fact the Paternò are with respect to the House of Aragon. The Savoy - Racconigi, an extinct cadet branch of the House of Savoy, carried in fact the shield "of Savoy, the bendlet over all"; and the Blantyre branch of the Stuarts had the shield "Silver a chequered band of the first and azure in three ranks, surmounted by a rose gules; the whole traversed by a spiked red band". (Crollanza, Enciclopedia Araldico-Cavalleresca, Pisa 1876-7, entries Banda, Brisura, Cotissa).

The Paternò shield is identical with that of the House of Aragon which reigned in the Balearics; they also used the shield of Aragon with the blue band or bendlet, indicating a cadet branch.

There is no doubt that the Paternoy castle and lands were possessed by don Miguel (son of Pietro, Lord of Ayerbe), because this is recorded in the "Annals" of the Kingdom of Aragon, by the Zurita (Tom. I, book IV, chapter 126); here is cited a passage from the Aragonese chronicles of Gerolamo Alonia, in which it is narrated that the acquisition took place in 1287. That a family "of the Paternoy" flourished in Aragon from the XIII century, and carried the shield "of Aragon (that is, Or four bars gules) with the blue band transverse" freely at the Courts of the Kings of Sicily and of Aragon, who would certainly not have tolerated the illegal use of their shield by those who had not the right, as is evident from the writings of the orator of Phillip II, the learned doctor Ferdinando Paternò, and from the works of Minutolo, "Il Granpriorato di Messina", book VIII, Abela, "Descrittione di Malta", book IV, Mugnos, "Theatro Genealogico". (Of the Regal and Aragonese Origin of the Paterno of Sicily, in the "Rivista Araldica" 1913, pages 330- 335).

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THE AYERBE FAMILY

The Ayerbe (Ayerbo, Ajerbe, Ajerbo) family of Aragon, descendents of James I King of Aragon, the Conqueror, and of the Duchess Teresa of Vidaure, his third wife, Infants of Aragon, Grandees of Spain "jure sanguinis", of noble rank in Italy in Naples in the Seggio di Porto, at Catanzaro, Cotrone, Stilo and Grotteria; they were admitted to the Order of Malta in 1546 and were decorated with the following titles: Prince of Cassano of Bari, by the marriage of Gaspare d'Ayerbe VI Marquis of Grotteria with Geronima de Curtis (of the family whose founders were the Focas Emperors of Byzantium); Duke of Alessano, 1637; Duke of Arigliano, 1687; Marquis of Grotteria, 1583; Count of Ayerbo, XIII century; Count of Brancaleone, XVI century; Count of Palizzi, XVI century; Count of Simari, 1575; Baron of Cestara, XV century; Lord of Acquarica, Agropoli, Alivero, Aquara, Artasso, Arver, Azner, Bagnen, Brancavilla, Burreto, Cabannas, Castiglione di Liest, Castignano, Castriosi, Gagliano, Genzia, Labenna, Liso, Luesia, Mileto, Montesano, Morrone, Olevano, Paternoi, Patù, Providente, Puglisi, Salignano, Simari, Valderassa. Their line terminated with Giuseppe d'Ayerbe of Aragon, Prince of (*page 8*) Cassano of Bari, Knight of the Order of the

Two Sicilies, Equerry of Joachim Murat, married to da. Teresa Serra of the Princes of Gerace, marriage dissolved in 1805, and subsequently to da. Maria of the Dukes of Riario Sforza, by whom he did not have children.

The Neapolitan branch died out in the second half of the XVI century, with the death of the Marquis Valente d'Ayerbe of Aragon, Grandee of Spain, whose only daughter was slain by her husband Paolo Pelliccioni, a famous bandit; their life history was written by Guerrazzi "Paolo Pelliccioni", (Milan 1864).

There is no doubt that the Ayerbe descend from the Royal House of Aragon; the most important Italian and foreign historians and genealogists are in agreement about this.

"From Royal Aragonese blood came the Ayerbo of Aragon, Borgia, Diascarlona, Orioles and Peralta families".

"Ayerbo of Aragon - originated with don Pietro Lord of Ayerbo, son of don James King of Aragon and of da. Teresa Gil de Paduare, Lady of Valencia. Don James was the father of don Pietro the Great". (Ex Royal Houses of Italian States and National Families Derived from Them or from Foreign Dynasties, in the "Rivista Araldica" 1922, pages 299 and 343).

"The Ayerbo family of Aragon. They originated in Spain; they came into the Kingdom with Alphonso I of Aragon; so says Lellis, that they are descended from the ancient kings of Aragon, and in particular from James King of that Kingdom, and as Royal stock the Knights of this family are honoured by a decree issued for the Collateral Council of the year 1688, which ordered thus: Quod Dux Alessani, et Princeps Cassani, ejusque descendentes nati, et nascituri gaudeant honoribus et praerogativis, quibus gavisi sunt, et gaudent in hoc Regno caeteri descendentes ex Regia Stirpe, presso lo Scrivano di Mandamento Anastasio". (Memorie Historiche di diverse famiglie nobili così napoletane, come forastiere, di Biagio Aldimari, Naples 1691, page 17).

"Historical records, particularly those of Aragon, show clearly that the Ayerbe family of Aragon of the Marquis of Grotteria has its origins amongst the ancient Kings of Aragon. Its first beginnings were thus from don James King of Aragon, who, obsessed with the beauty of da. Teresa Viduare, having taken her as his legitimate wife, had with her two sons, the one, don Pietro, to whom he gave the castle and made him lord of Ayerbe, the city in Aragon, with the name of don Pietro d'Ayerbe, and the other don James, whom he made Lord of Xerica in Valencia, being called don James of Xerica, both of them taking their surnames from the castles (*page 9*) and lordships which they received from their father the king, together with the royal coat of arms, assuming subsequently in addition the maternal coats of arms". (Descrittione del Regno di Napoli, by Scipione Mazzella, Naples 1601, page 548).

"Ayerbo of Aragon. This family originated in don Pietro Lord of Ayerbo offspring of don James King of Aragon and da, Teresa Gil de Viduara, Lady of Valencia. King James was obliged for reasons of state to marry D. Violante of Castille, by whom he had a son don Pietro King of Aragon, known as The Great. However he obtained from the Pontiff permission to legitimise his sons don Pietro Lord of Ayerbo and don Giacomo lord of Ixerice, or Ixerico, who was the originator of the family of that name. The Ayerbo Family came to the Kingdom

of Naples with King Alphonso I of Aragon, and having been declared of Royal Blood, enjoyed many privileges and were exempted from the payment of taxes". (Memorie delle Famiglie Nobili delle province meridionali di Italia, by Count Berardo Candida Gonzaga, vol. II, Naples 1875, page 5).

"Their coat of arms was azure with an inescutcheon or four bars gules (Aragon) surrounded by eight small silver shields, a band gules (Vidaure)".

" The Ayerbo used the arms of Aragon with the arms of the Viduara family, repeated eight times on the bordure". (Candida Gonzaga, op. cit. vol. II, page 7).

"Ajerbi of Aragon. Coat of arms: or four bars gules, the bordure azure charged with eight shields argent, a band gules" (Mango, Nobiliario di Sicilia, vol. I, Page 45).

"Ayerbo, of Naples. Originally from Spain, this family moved to Naples under Alphonso I of Aragon. They enjoyed important positions in the Seggio di Porto, at Catanzaro, at Cotrone, at Stilo and at Grotteria. They had the marquisate of Grotteria in 1583, the duchy of Alessano in 1637, the principality of Cassano of Bari in 1668. In addition they were lords of 28 other territories (Extinct). Arms: Or four bars gules, on a bordure of the second eight shields argent a band gules" (Crollanza, Dizionario Storico Blasonico, vol. I, page 74).

"Ajerbi of Aragon, of Sicily, princes of Cassano and marquises of Grotteria, Patrizi of Messina (Extinct). Arms: Or four bars gules, a bordure azure charged with eight shields argent, a band blue (alias: red)" Crollanza, op. cit. vol. I, page 15).

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THE ARAGON FAMILY

"Of the Royal Family of Aragon of the Kings of Spain.

The opinions of Authors are varied regarding the ancient origin of the Royal family of the kings of Aragon and, whilst all agree that it began with d'Ignico Arista first King of Aragon, I myself would wish to go further back and discover the predecessors of Ignico who were, as I found after much effort studying the Historia di Geronimo Paolo di Barcellona entitled (de Gothorum Rebus gestis Hispaniae) derived from Segerico King Gotho III of Spain and of his second son, whose son was Ricisnedo, who generated Abido and Pelajo, the aforementioned Abido was known as King of Sobrarbe, which is the region which is today called Navarra. He was succeeded by his son Teodefredo, and Ximen Ignico, who was Lord of Abarcuça, and of Bigorra, in which dominion he was followed by his son Garzi Igniques, in turn followed by his son Ximen Igniques father of Ignico Arista Lord of Abarcuça, and of Bigorra, previously known as Ignico Garzia. This young man, having a young man's exaggerated hatred for the name of Moor, was the first to descend from the Mountains to the plain of Navarra to take up arms against the Moors, and having a great following of Knights in 838, he fell on the Barbarians and made a great slaughter amongst them, and for his ardour was named Arista; observing his good fortune, and his glorious victories over the

Moors, including the defence of the Kingdoms of Leon and Castille, with one accord the Knights elected him King of Aragon and of Navarra, these two Kingdoms being united under one Crown until Ramiro son of Sanchio, with Queen Teuda his wife, (*page 11*) daughter of Count Gonzalo, nephew of King Ordoño of Leon conquered Garzia Igniques; he also instituted, among other things, that no King of Aragon could hold Court, and judge without the consensus of his principal Barons, Vassals, in things of War as in Peace, and that they should not be less than twelve in number. They were called Ricoshombres of the Kingdom.

Garzia Igniques took dominion of the Kingdom in 874 on the death of his father. He was a great warrior, and he continued the conquest against the Moors. He married da. Urracca only daughter and heiress of Don Fortun Ximes Count of Aragon, who in l'Historia di San Giovan de la Payme is called Enenga, and Zunita says, that she was the daughter of Endregoto Galindez son of Count Galindo Aznar with which marriage the country of Aragon was united with the Kingdom of Sobrarbe and Pamplona". (Mugnoz, Teatro della Nobilta del Mondo, Naples 1680, page 165 ff).

From here on the genealogy cited by Mugnoz agrees with that of succeeding generations, in later times verified by archive documents; apart from some doubt for the period preceding the X century, the remainder is certain, historically proven and confirmed.

According to more recent historians, however, the aforementioned Count Galindo Aznar would be the first in line of the family of the Kings of Aragon, derived from him by direct genealogical descent (not indirect - by the marriage of his granddaughter Enenga, daughter of his son Endregoto, with Garzia Igniques King of Aragon in 874 -as Mugnoz writes).

In 778 Charlemagne, having crossed the Pyrenees, conquered Pamplona and Navarre, but his army was defeated, during the return to France, at Roncevalle; "Navarre situated between the Pyrenees and the Ebro is a mountainous region which has always been inhabited by indigenous peoples which Pliny the Elder called Vacceesi or Vasseesi, and Strabo, with a greater following, called Vasconi" (L'Arte di verificare le date, part II, vol. VI, Venice 1834, page 123).

"He (Lupo di Vaifro) considered cutting off the retreat of the French; and uniting the Basques, the Asturians and the Saracens, he positioned them where the narrow passages of Navarre compel horsemen to dismount, where defence is impossible and attack disastrous. While the army, with the appearance of an enormous bronze serpent, clambered across the rugged rocks of the Pyrenees, on difficult paths also in the forest, (Roncevalle), the conspirators launched their assault on the rearguard and their loads, and favoured by the difficult terrain, killed Charlemagne's most valiant champions, amongst which (*page 12*) Orlando, Count of the frontier of Brittany, known to history only for this happening, ", though he was much celebrated in Turpin's story and in poems of the knights. The oral tradition and songs state that the great cleft in the Pyrenees below the tower of Marboré was produced by a blow from the Durendal or sword of Orlando; and as this shattered, he took his horn to recall the negligent Charlemagne and the traitor Ganellon of Magonza, and played it with such force that it shook the world" (Cantù, Storia Universale).

After the alliance which these peoples formed in 806 with Louis the Debonaire, son of Charlemagne who made him king of Aquitaine in 769, they formed once more friendly relations with the infidel and Louis sent against them Aznar or Asinerio, Count of Lower Gascony (he who Mugnoz believes was the father of Endregoto, father of Enenga wife of Garzia Igniques) and Ebbes, famous chieftains, to subdue the country; after a series of victories, the two of them were defeated in the Pyrenees, and made prisoner; Ebbes was sent as a hostage to the King of Cordoba, and Aznar, being of the same blood as his enemies, and greatly respected by them, was given his liberty; subsequently he directed the war against King Pepin II (son of Pepin I, who was the second son of Louis the Pious, who in turn was the third son of Charlemagne) who succeeded Louis the Debonair to the Throne of Aquitaine and was deposed by Charles the Bald (son of Louis the Pious), who was crowned King of Aquitaine in 848. However he was defeated and died a horrible death, as affirmed in the Annals of St. Bertin in 836. He was succeeded as Count of Lower Gascony by his brother Sanzio Sanzione, who continued the war against King Pepin II, and took possession of the lands which had formed the County of his ancestors; held in great esteem by the Navarrese, it seems that he was elected Count of this region also by the principal local feudalists, though it is not known in which year.

In 853, according to the Annals of Giovanni de Ferreras, he was succeeded by his son Garzia, who married the daughter of Mousa or Musa, a man of great power in the region, and as a result of a dispute with him, was killed in 857. He was succeeded by his son Garzia Ximenes, who initially had the title of Count of Gascony and Navarre, until he was acclaimed King of this region in 860; he died in 880, and was succeeded by his firstborn son Fortun, who in 905, having summoned the most important nobles and local feudalists to the Monastery of Leyre, to where he had retired, renounced the Throne in favour of his brother Sancio (*page 13*) Garzia, after reigning for twenty five years; he then became known as the Monk.

Sancio Garzia was the first great King of Navarre; he reoccupied Gascony in 906, defeated the infidel at Pamplona in 907, took many of their cities in succeeding years, and then retired as had his brother Fortun to the Monastery of Leyre, nominating as commander of the army and afterwards as his successor his son Garzia; Garzia fought with the King of Leon Ramiro II against the Moors, and died in 970, at a great age. He left three children: Urraca, wife of Guglielmo Sanzio Duke of Gascony, Sanzia, wife of Ordoño II King of Leon, and Sanzio, who succeeded him to the Throne. Sanzio was nicknamed "Abarca", "the man in gaiters" (this name is not so strange, because the Emperor Caius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, son of Germanicus and Agrippina, was himself called "Caligula" from caligae, military stockings, having been brought up amongst soldiers; and Lodbrok Raghenaer, a Viking King who died in 794, was known as "Hair trousers"); in 979, in an alliance with Garzia Count of Castille, he defeated the Saracens who were commanded by Orduan; in 990 he fought them again at Pamplona, driving them out of the country; he married Urraca, daughter of Sanzio Gonzales Count of Castille, and fathered Garzia II, who succeeded him.

Garzia II was known as "The Trembler" because when he went into battle, although he was a valiant man, he was affected by a nervous trembling. He was acclaimed King in 994; with the King of Leon and the King of Castille he defeated at Catalamazor in 998 the famous infidel general Almanzor or Ali Mansur; his wife Ximene or Chimene and his son Sanzio succeeded him in the year 1000.

Sancio III, called the Great, was the first to assume the title of Emperor; he incorporated in 1028 Castille into his kingdom of Navarre, after the death of the Count of Castille, whose daughter Munia Elvira he had married; in 1033 he negotiated a treaty with Bermudo III King of Leon, which involved his second son Ferdinand marrying da. Garzia sister of Bermudo, and elevating Castille to a Kingdom to be ruled by Ferdinand; he was assassinated in 1038, and divided the realm between his four sons, leaving Navarre to his firstborn Garzia, Castille to his second son Ferdinand, Aragon to Ramiro and the Counties of Sobrarbe and Ribagorza to Gonzales. With this division he weakened the powerful kingdom which he had founded with his whole life of wars and wise and astute treaties.

We will leave aside the genealogy of the other sons and follow (*page 14*) only that of Ramiro, King of Aragon with the name of Ramiro I, the progenitor of the Aragonese, and subsequently King of Spain. Elected King of Aragon in 1035 with the name of Ramiro I, in 1036 he married Gisberga, daughter of Bernardo Count of Carcassone and of Foix, later also Count of Bigorre, and of the Countess of Gersende; in the same year he reunited with Aragon the Counties of Sobrarbe and Ribagorza, because the people voted for this; in 1042, having made an alliance with the Moorish Kings of Saragossa, Huesca and Tudela, he invaded Navarre but was defeated; in 1063, whilst at war with the King of Saragossa, he was killed in the battle of Graos, and flayed alive, as is narrated in a French "Cronaca" of the XII century.

His son Sanzio succeeded him in 1063; as valiant as he, he attacked the Mohammedans in 1065, with a strong army reinforced by French troops commanded by the Duke of Aquitaine, by Ugo I Duke of Burgundy and by Ermengaldo III Count of Urgel; he laid siege to Balbastro and overcame it; in 1076 he took control of Navarre, which he united with Aragon; in 1080 he defeated the infidels a number of times; he died in 1094, hit by an arrow at the siege of Huesca. "By Felicia his first wife, daughter of Ilduino Count of Rouci, whom he married in 1063, (she died according to Zurita on the 14th of April 1096), he had three sons, don Pedro, don Alfonso and don Ramiro. Ramiro had entered the Benedictine Order in the monastery of San Pons de Thomieres. Sanzio Ramirez (Sancio di Ramiro) married again, in about 1096, Filippa, daughter of William IV, Count of Toulouse. She did not bear him any children. Some authors say that in Aragon he abolished the Gothic laws, substituting them with Roman ones". (Arte di verificare le date, Venice 1833, parte II, vol. VI, pages 160-161; consult this work also for preceding and successive dates).

Pedro, the firstborn of Sancio of Ramiro, also called Pedro Sanchez, was acclaimed King of Aragon on the field of battle after the death of his father; he continued the siege of Huesca; in 1095, in alliance with Centule Count of Bigorre, he took from the Moors the city of Exisa, where he founded a monastery in consequence of a vow made to St. Gerard, Abbot of Sauve-Majour in Guienne (Martenne, Thes. Anecd. T. I., col. 264-6); he defeated the Mohammedans allies of the King of Castille in 1096; he reconquered Balbastro in 1100; in one combat by his own hand he beheaded four Kings of the Moors, from which event derived the four heads seen in the ancient Aragon coat of arms; he died on the 28 of September 1104, having already lost his son don Pedro, whose mother was Ygnes or Agnese daughter of William IV Count of Poitiers and (*page 15*) Ildegarda of Burgundy (Cronaca del Maillezais); he was succeeded by his brother Alfonso.

Alfonso, King of Aragon with the name of Alfonso I, known as The Warrior, succeeded him in 1104; in 1109 he married Urraca, daughter of Alfonso VI King of Leon and Castille, widow of Raimondo of Burgundy, Count of Galicia; he

occupied these states on the death of his father-in-law; in 1111 he defeated at Campo d'Espina the partisans of his wife, previously repudiated; in 1114 he laid siege to Saragossa together with the Count du Perche, he took control of Tudela, and occupied Daroca and Saragossa in 1118; he was defeated in Castille, but had many victories over the Mohammedans; being childless, he bequeathed his Kingdoms to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and the Temple, but the testament was not legally valid, and on his death, which occurred in 1135 as a result of his anguish at being defeated by the infidel at Fraga the previous year, he was succeeded by his brother Ramiro.

Ramiro, third son of Sanzio Ramirez and brother of Alfonso The Warrior, was known as "The Monk" because when he became King he was in the Monastery of Thomieres; according to d'Orleans he had been Abbot of Sahagun, Bishop of Burgos, then of Pamplona and Balbastro; with the dispensation of Innocent II or more probably of his rival Anacletus II (the two Pontiffs, elected simultaneously, sought in every possible way to gain the support of Catholic Kings to consolidate their respective positions) he married Agnes daughter of William IX Duke of Aquitaine from which marriage he had an only daughter, Petronilla, in whose favour he abdicated in 1137; according to Richard of Cluny he also had a son, who died in Poitou, but this has not been proved. After his abdication he retired again to the monastery of Thomieres, where he died on the 16th of August 1147 (Gesta Com. Barcin. Roderic. Tolet.); according to other writers he died in the Monastery of S. Peter of Huesca; a year after his abdication he became Bishop of Tarragona on the death of the previous bishop Oldgario; subsequently he became Bishop of Tarragona and Barcelona (Prove di Marca Hispanica, no. 290); according to Zurita, on one of his diplomas his title was "King and Priest"; Rodrigo of Toledo wrote much in praise of him, and gave a great deal of information about his life (Arte di verificare le date, vol. VI, page 163-4).

His daughter Petronilla, who succeeded him in 1137, was declared queen at the age of two, under the guardianship of Ramon IV Berengar, Count of Barcelona, to whom her father had (*page 16*) betrothed her; Ramon took the title of Prince of Aragon, and married her in 1151; he then formed a treaty of alliance with the Kings of Castille and Navarre, achieved numerous victories against the Almohads, a Moorish dynasty founded in the XI century by Mohammed-Ibn-Tumert, which replaced the Almoravids and reigned with fourteen Princes over almost the whole of northern Africa and part of Spain from 1130 to 1269, and died on the 8th of August 1162 at San Dalmazzo near Genova, during a journey to Turin undertaken to participate in an assembly of monarchs convened by the Emperor Frederick I Hohenstaufen Barbarossa. He did not assume at any time the title of King, whilst his wife had always the title of Queen, as asserts William of Neubrige; his children were don Alfonso, who succeeded him on the throne of Aragon; don Pedro, known as Ramon Berengar; don Sancho and da. Ducia, wife of Sancho I King of Portugal; Queen Petronilla survived him by ten years, dying in Barcelona the 18th of October 1172.

Alfonso, King of Aragon in 1162, born in 1152, was King of Aragon at ten years of age; he inherited from his mother the Kingdom of Aragon, and from his father the County of Barcelona; in 1167 he took Provence from Raymond V Count of Toulouse and made his brother Pedro lord of it; in 1172 he inherited the County of Roussillon by the testament of Count Guinaldo II; he defeated and pursued the Almohads army as far as Xativa; he made an alliance with the King of Castille against the King of Navarre; in 1173 at Montferraud in Auvergne with King Henry II of England, by intercession of the English King he concluded a treaty with his enemy Raymond V of Toulouse and subsequently became a negotiator of peace between Raymond and the King of England, who had at this time

become enemies; in 1179 he once more moved war against Raymond V, for the pretensions he had on the County of Melgueil and the Castle of Albaron, possessed by the Count of Toulouse, and for the pretensions on the dominions of Rouergue and Gevaudan, property of Aragon, on the part of the Count of Toulouse; he died on the 25 of April 1196 (1234 Spanish style) at Perpignan; his first wife, Matilde daughter of Alfonso I King of Portugal, bore him no children and they separated; by his second wife, Sancha daughter of Alfonso VIII King of Castille, he had don Pedro, who succeeded him on the throne of Aragon; don Alfonso, who had part of Provence; don Ferdinand, a Cistercian monk and Abbot of Mont-Aragon; da. Costanza, wife of Emeric King of Hungary, and afterwards of Frederick II King of (*page 17*) Sicily; Eleonora, wife of Raymond IV Count of Toulouse; Sancha, wife of Raymond VII son of Raymond IV, and another of unknown name.

Pedro, who succeeded him on the throne of Aragon in 1196, married in 1204 Maria, the daughter and heiress of William Count of Montpellier; he was crowned, the first of the Kings of Aragon, on the 11th of November 1196, in Rome, by Innocent III; in 1212 he fought victoriously against the Mohammedans; in 1213 he made an alliance with the Count of Toulouse, and at Muret was defeated and killed by Simon de Montfort, because he began the battle without having waited for the arrival of the other allies, don Nuñez Sancho son of the Count of Rousillon and William de Moncada; his wife died in Rome (according to Vaisette) in 1215; in 1219, according to Ferreras. His only son was Jayme (James) who succeeded him in 1213 at the age of five years, being born at Montpellier on the first of February 1208.

James known as the Conqueror was the greatest King of the dynasty of Aragon, and one of history's greatest sovereigns; he was brought up by Simon de Montfort, the same man who had defeated his father in 1213; in 1214 he was recognised as legitimate sovereign by a Council of States held in Lerida; in 1221 he married Leonora, daughter of Alfonso King of Castille, but the marriage was annulled in 1229 by the Council of Lerida; his wife and son, Alfonso, retired to Castille; in 1229 he conquered Majorca in the Balearic Islands, and took prisoner the king with his three sons; in 1230 Abuscit King of Valencia left the throne, and retired with him in Aragon; in 1231 Sancho VII King of Navarre, being childless, nominated James I as his heir, against the interests of his own nephew Thibault of Champagne, in favour of whom three years later James I renounced his rights over Navarre; he then conquered Minorca, and gained the County of Urgel from Portugal; he conquered Valencia in 1237, after having allied himself with the great landowners of Languedoc, the Knights of the Temple and of St. John, and with the support of Gregory IX, with whose consensus he had, in 1233, proclaimed a Crusade against the Mohammedans of this region; in 1235 (on the 9th of September) he married Yolanda, daughter of Andrew King of Hungary, by whom he had nine children; in 1239, after some of his generals had violated the truce made with Zaan King of Valencia, he took advantage of the occasion to complete the conquest of the region; in 1246 he had the tongue cut out of Bengar Bishop of Gerona, accusing (*page 18*) him to have betrayed the secret of his Confession, and he was excommunicated by Innocent IV; in 1258 he made agreements with the King of France for the sovereignty of Catalonia and of Roussillon, which was recognised as his together with rights over Urgel, Besalù, Empurias, Cerdagna, Conflant, Gerona and Vic, in exchange for rights of the King of France recognised by James I over Carcassone, Carcassez, Rasez, Lauragais, Termenois, Béziers, Menervois, etc.; but it should be noted that the rights of the King of France over these places were already legitimate, whilst those claimed by James I were for the most part chimerical; in 1264, having made an alliance with Alfonso the Wise King of Castille, he fought against the

Moors, conquering Murcia and what remained of the Kingdom of Valencia; in 1269 he departed for the Holy Land, but was shipwrecked at Aigues-Mortes and returned to Aragon; in 1274 he participated at the opening at the Council of Lyons; in 1275 he convened at Lerida his Chiefs of Staff; in 1275 he was defeated by the Moors who had been expelled from Castille, but returned to beat them again and compel them to return to their own lands; in 1276 his army was defeated at Luchente by the Moors of Granada, and this pained him to the extent that he fell ill and, having taken the Cistercian habit, James died on the 25th of July 1276, after reigning for approximately sixty three years; he was buried in the Abbey of Poblet. His children, by Yolanda of Hungary, were don Pedro, who succeeded him to the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia; don Jayme who succeeded him with the title of King of the Balearics, Roussillon and Montpellier; Sancho Archbishop of Toledo; Yolanda wife of Alfonso X King of Castille; Isabella, married in 1262 to Philip the Bold, son and successor of St. Louis King of France; Costanza married to the Infant Emanuel of Castille; Sancha who travelled to the Holy Land in disguise and died in holiness; Maria, a nun, and Eleonora.

By his third wife Teresa de Vidaure, married clandestinely, (*Arte di verificare le date*, part II, vol. VI, pages 158/9,170/1/2), James I fathered don Jayme and don Pedro, to whom he gave the cities of Xerica and Ayerbe respectively; the two sons were the founders of the two Xerica of Aragon families (extinct in 1369; Jayme (Jacopo) had a son also called Jacopo, husband of Beatrice of Lauria, daughter of Grand Admiral Ruggero, and a daughter named Maria; of Jacopo was born another Jacopo, who died childless after marrying Maria, daughter of Charles II King of Naples, widow of Sancho King of Majorca; Pietro, Alfonso, Maria and Beatrice; of Pietro were born Beatrice, wife of Antonio of Aragon, natural son of (*page 19*) Louis King of Sicily, Sancho, Enrico and Giovanni, the last of the Xerica family of Aragon who died childless in 1369) and of the Ayerbo of Aragon, of which has been written previously.

James I the Conqueror had other children with Berengaria Fernandia or Fernandez; Berengaria, wife of Pietro of Revertera, Lord of Villafranca, and Pietro, Lord of the city of Hixar and progenitor of the Hixar family of Aragon, extinct in the XVII century with Raffaella, wife of Pietro of Aragon; Martino, third Count of Galve, who died childless; Geronima, wife of Roderigo Gomez de Silva, first Marquis of Eliseda; Maria Stefania, spinster; Isabella Margherita, Duchess and Lady of Hixar, Lezara and Aliaga, Countess of Belchit and Wolfogona, wife of Roderigo Sarmiento de Silva Villandrado, eighth Count of Salinas and Ribada, second Marquis of Alenquer, in 1622 (*Imhof, Corpus Historiae Genealogicae Italiae et Hispaniae*, Nuremburg 1702, *Stirps Regia Aragonica*).

James I had a further son by Aldoncia Antillonia: Ferdinando, made Lord of Castro and Pomar, died in 1225, was married to Aldoncia Ximenez de Urrea daughter of the Lord of Aranda. He had a son named Philip, Lord of Castro, married to Aldoncia, daughter and heiress of Raymond Lord of Peralta, who had an only daughter, Aldoncia, Lady of Castro and Peralta, wife of Philip of Saluzzo, son of the Marquis Tommaso.

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THE BALEARIC KINGDOM,

THE PATERNO' PRETENSION TO IT AND THEIR RIGHTS AS A
SOVEREIGN FAMILY

The Balearic (from Baleos or Balios, comrade of Hercules) Archipelago of Spain, in the Mediterranean, facing the coast of Valencia, is composed, apart from vast numbers of minor islands and islets some of which are uninhabited, of the islands of Majorca, Minorca and Cabrera, of the islands denominated Pityuse, or Ivisia or Ibiza and Formentera, and of the Presidios, off the north coast of Morocco, excluding the island of Ceuta; these constitute at present the region known as the Balearics, with an area of 5014 sq.km. and c. 330,000 inhabitants. (Grande Enciclopedia Sozegno, vol.II, pages 238-9, entry Baleari) (table 3).

The Balearic Islands, conquered in the distant past by the Carthaginians, then by the Romans under Consul Metello, again by the Vandals, the Greeks and the Arabs, were taken from these last by James I of Aragon, the Conqueror, in a war lasting from 1228 to 1235; he constituted them as kingdom in favour of Jayme, the second son of his second marriage (to Iolanda, daughter of Andrea King of Hungary) (Imhof, op. cit. table II, page 4); Jayme, the first king of this name, who died in 1312, was succeeded on the throne of the Balearics by his son Sancho, husband of Maria daughter of Charles II King of Naples. Sancho died childless and was succeeded by his younger brother Ferdinand, first married to Isabella daughter of Louis Prince of the Peloponnese and then to the cousin of the king of Cyprus. He was succeeded by his son Jayme II, who died in the recapture of Majorca in 1349. Jayme was followed by, as Prince Regent, his younger brother Ferdinand, who in turn was followed by his nephew (son of Jayme) Jayme III, who died childless in 1375, the kingdom having been taken from him in 1375 by Pedro IV of Aragon, who incorporated the Balearic Archipelago into the Aragon Crown; the only sister of Jayme III was Isabella, wife of Giovanni Paleologo Marquis of Monferrat. (Ludwig, Die Balearen, geschildert in Wort und Bild, Lipsia 1897; Jaun Dameto, La Historia general del Regno Balearico, Majorca, 1633).

The right of pretension to the Paternò Princes, last surviving branch of the Ayerbo of Aragon (itself the last branch of the House of Aragon, itself no longer extant) over the ancient Balearic kingdom, finds a juridical basis in the pontifical act which King James I the Conqueror obtained to legitimise his sons by (*page 21*) the Duchess Teresa de Vidaure, these being Pietro, Lord of Ayerbe, and Jacopo, Lord of Xerica. "He also obtained that, if the male line became extinct (it is extinct today) the successors to the kingdom in preference to the females would be the descendents of the sons of Donna Teresa Gil de Viduara" (Candida Gonzaga, op. cit. page 5).

The branch of Jacopo of Aragon, second son of James I the Conqueror and his second wife Iolanda, daughter of Andrea King of Hungary (his firstborn Pedro was king of Aragon, and his line too is now extinct - this Jayme of Aragon was nominated by his father King of Majorca of the Balearics - coming to an end with his great-grandson Jayme III, who died childless in 1375, and Isabella, wife of the marquis of Monferrat, the Paternò, blood relatives of the Aragon kings of the Balearics by reason of their common ancestor James I the Conqueror (the Aragon kings being direct descendents of James I and Iolanda of Hungary, and the Paternò direct descendants of Pietro of Ayerbe of Aragon, son of James I of Teresa de Vidaure), they can claim the right to pretend to the ancient Balearic kingdom not only by blood but also by the testament of James I, who declared that they were to succeed to the throne if direct branches of the House of Aragon should become extinct: "Duo ex illa (Teresa de Vidaure) Jacobus Rex sustulit filios, quos testamento legitimos declaravit, quorum ...Ajerbio oppido cum ejus quoque arce aliisque oppidis in Aragonum regno donavit, e a conditione ut

alterutri fine liberis decedenti superstes succederet; Jolantae reginae autem, filii sine prole decedentibus, illos ad regna vocari atque omnino foeminis etiam ex Jolanta natis praeferre voluit" (Bern. Gomez, de Vita Jacobi I R. Lib.X, XIV and X).

The Aragones Kings of the Balearics and the Paternò in fact used the same coat of arms, "Or four bars gules" (which is of Aragon), with the bend or bendlet of blue, indicating the cadet branch.

The direct descendance of the Paternò from Ayerbe and thus from Aragon confers also upon the Paternò, today the last representatives of the Sovereign House of Aragon, all the due rights of Fons Honorum and Jus Majestatis, recognised by international right due to the direct descendents of ancient Sovereign Houses: common rights recognised by many verdicts of the Italian Magistrature, also regarding other descendants of ancient Sovereign Houses, and consistent with the faculty of conferring or confirming noble titles (*page 22*) on the basis of the surname or predicates taken from the names of places at some time part of the Balearic kingdom; to concede and confirm coats of arms and mottos; to concede predicates and feudal representation; to decorate with the Knight Orders of the family dynasty; to modify the statutes, to create new ones and be legitimately considered, since the Aragon Balearics Kings did not suffer the "debellatio", that is, the total and passive renunciation for themselves and their heirs of the rights due to those who exercised Sovereignty Pretenders to this throne, were treated as Royalty; and recognition of the quality of "Princeps natus" or Royal Prince by birth. The pretension extends, for the actual extinction of all the branches of the House of Aragon, legitimate and not, to the Aragon Crown and to the Spanish Orders (the Aragones and of the Crown).

The so-called royal prerogative is a personal prerogative "jure sanguinis" which belongs only to the king or the Prince on the throne and is transmitted to his successors at the act of coronation and investiture, also when, for whatever reason, they do not possess territory, on condition though, as in fact happened to the Aragones Kings of the Balearics, that they have not accepted the afore mentioned "debellatio".

(For not having accepted the "debellatio" after the institutional referendum, Umberto of Savoy is even now, and his successors will be in perpetuity, Pretender to the Italian Throne; the same is true for the Hapsburgs, the Bourbons, the Romanoffs, still pretenders to the thrones of their Ancestors).

That the possession of the territory does not constitute the requisite to award a person noble rank or to exercise other rights and prerogatives by virtue of "jure sanguinis" from sovereign ancestors as proved by the customs of the ages, for apart from the aristocratic Republics of Genoa, Pisa and Venice and even today that of San Marino, no Republic or President thereof has ever conferred noble titles. These are prerogatives by virtue of the noble blood of those who have reigned or exercised sovereign powers, because even after the loss of the throne they retain in themselves with the attributes and special qualities, the rights and honours which they transmit to their successors in perpetuity.

Regarding the licit and legitimate use of the Honours of the Dynastic Orders of Collation and Jus Patronatus of the ancient Royal House of Paternò-Ayerbe-Aragon, last representatives and Heirs of the Kings of Aragon and of Balearics, (*page 23*) they, because they belong to an ancient Sovereign Family, are quite

distinct from those dealt with in the Law no. 178 of 3-3-51, on the Institution of the Order of Merit of the Republic and the discipline of the Independent Knightly Orders, qualification granted "by organisations, associations or individuals", not being, obviously, a House of Sovereign origin. The only obligation to be observed by those who have been decorated is to specify the name of the Order following the rank, to avoid causing confusion between the various Orders, national, of foreign States, of Malta and of the Holy Sepulchre.

The House of Paternò-Ayerbe-Aragon, because of its descent from the kings of Aragon and its legitimate pretension to the Balearic Crown, for its sovereign nature has also the right to confer nominations and positions to its diplomatic representatives in Italy and abroad.

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THE HOUSE OF PATERNO' CASTELLO GUTTADAURO PRINCES OF EMMANUEL

This branch of the Sicilian Paternò family, descendants of the Ayerbe of Aragon and last representatives and heirs of the Aragonese, is that to which Prince Francesco Mario II belongs, to whom this historical, heraldic and genealogical work is dedicated.

The coat of arms of this branch is (divided in four) per pale : I or four bars gules (Aragon) a bend azure (Paternò); II, azure a castle with three towers or (Castello); III, azure three bars or accompanied by six bezants, 3,2,1 between the bars and the sinister corner at the point (Spreti, op. cit. Vol. V page 195).

The Paternò Castello d'Emmanuel branch is a subdivision of that of the Paternò Princes of Biscari. The aforementioned Francesco Mario Paternò Castello, of the Princes of Biscari, of the Dukes of Carcaci, is in fact son of Roberto (elder brother of Ernesto, present Lieutenant-General of the Order of Malta), who was son of Francesco (*page 25*) Maria, of Gaetano, of Mario Giuseppe, of Giuseppe Vincenzo, who succeeded on the 26 of November 1781 to the paternal title of Duke of Carcaci.

The Guttadauro family, noble and very ancient, decorated with the title of Princes of Emmanuel, was extinguished in the Paternò Castello, which inherited the princely title on the predicate of Emmanuel; it too is of Spanish origin, and many writers retain that it also is descended from James I the Conqueror, which reinforces and doubles the rights of the Prince of Emmanuel Francesco Mario Paternò Castello dei Carcaci to the succession and the pretension to the Balearic kingdom, in preference to other branches of the Paternò, as they clearly recognise and confirm the Paterno of other branches. (Duke Francesco Paternò Castello di Carcaci, "L'Ordine del Collare, etc." Catania 1851 (table 4).

In consideration of and as a consequence of this, His Majesty Francesco II, King of the Two Sicilies and of Jerusalem, Duke of Parma, Piacenza and Castro, Grand Hereditary Prince of Tuscany, issued on the 16th of September 1860 at Gaeta a Decree, with which were recognised in the person of the maternal grandfather of the aforementioned Prince of Emmanuel, Don Mario Paterno Castellò e Guttadauro (son of don Giovanni Paternò Castello of the Dukes of Carcaci (table

5) and Eleonora Guttadauro, heir of the last Prince of Emmanuel (table 6), the rights of succession of the princely family Guttadauro, the Principality of the Val d'Emmanuel, the faculty of conceding noble titles on the surnames and predicates of the Balearic Islands, "once Royal Dominion of its ancestors", and over "the Paternò Palace", and the right to the "Hereditary Grand Mastership of the Dynastic Order of the Collar of St. Agatha Virgin and Martyr".

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ORDER OF THE COLLAR OF ST. AGATHA OF PATERNÒ

Originally called the Order of the Collar of Paternò, then of the Collar of St. Agatha Virgin Martyr, and subsequently the Order of St. Agatha of Paternò, it took its name from St. Agatha, a Sicilian virgin martyred with atrocious torture, rolled on live coals (in 251 according to some writers, in 232 according to others) for order of Consul Quintianus, during the persecutions of Decius (Cneius Messius Quintus Traianus Decius), Governor of Mesia under the reign of Philip, censor and leader of a fierce persecution of the Christians, the seventh, proclaimed Emperor by his soldiers in 249, killed during the second war against the Goths in 251); Patron of the Island of Malta and of the city of Catania, to which Nobility the Paternò ascribe for centuries, and to which, particularly in the past, they were devoted.

It is a dynastic order of Collation and the Patronage of the Paternò Castello Princes of Emmanuel, to which the Grand Magistracy was confirmed and recognised by the aforesaid king Francesco II of Bourbon, in a Decree issued in Gaeta on the 16th of September 1860.

It is divided in two categories: that of Justice, for the Nobles who can demonstrate noble descent on their paternal side for at least 400 years before their birth; and that of Grace for non-nobles. Both categories confer the ranks of Knight, Knight Officer, Commander, Grand Officer, Knight Grand Cross and Grand Collar. It was the subject of a work entitled "The Order of the Collar, Patrimony of the Serene Royal House of Paternò", written by don Francesco Paternò Castello, Duke of Carcaci, brother of the paternal and maternal great grandfathers of the present Grand Master Prince of Emmanuel, published in Catania in 1851 by the University Press (table 4).

The insignia consists of the Paternò coat of arms supported by two lions in gold, and laying on two ears of corn, these also being of gold.

The ribbon is of red with two lateral gold bands. The Justice category has the decoration with two swords crossing the coat of arms.

For Knight Officers, the coat of arms is surmounted by a small royal crown; Commanders have a larger royal crown; Grand Officers wear the aforementioned on a small star; a Knight Grand Cross on a larger star. The Grand Collar, limited to 25 recipients, and only for the Category of Justice, consists of a chain of two kinds of discs, one with the Trinacria alternating with one with the Balearic (Paternò) coat of arms; for the chain hangs the Paternò coat of arms with the swords and the ears of corn previously described, attached to a medallion depicting St. Agatha. This confers the rank and the style of Cousin of the Grand

Master and personal nobility, as is the case in the Order of the Holy Annunciation of the House of Savoy.

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ORDER OF THE ROYAL PATERNO' BALEARIC CROWN

The Order took its name from the Crown of Aragon, that is from the Royal Power which the House of Aragon of the branch of Jayme, second son of the second marriage of the King of Aragon and of the Balearics James I, the Conqueror, and Iolanda, daughter of Andrea King of Hungary, exercised on the Balearic archipelago until the death of Jayme III of Aragon, who died without direct descendents in 1375. In the same year the kingdom was taken by Pedro IV King of Aragon, who united the Balearics with the Kingdom of Aragon. The passage by force of the Balearic Crown to Pedro IV of Aragon, whose line is long extinct, and the testament of James I the Conqueror in favour of the Ayerbe family of Aragon, direct descendents of James and of Teresa de Vidaure, and the last representatives and heirs of the House of Aragon (who are also extinct with the surname of Ayerbe of Aragon, but are yet represented by the branch which acquired the name from the Lordship of Paternò) did not remove from legitimate heirs of Jayme III, the blood relatives Ayerbe of Aragon, actually represented by the Paternò, their rights of succession and pretension of this Throne, which Jayme III abandoned without suffering the "debellatio".

It is also the Order of jus patronato and advowson of the Old Sovereign House of Paternò (Paternò- Ayerbe-Aragon); the branch of the Paternò Castello Guttadauro, Princes of Emmanuel, exercises the Magistracy for the succession, apart from that of the Paternò-Ayerbe-Aragon, also from the Guttadauro, who are now also extinct.

The Order is divided into two categories, that of Justice and that of Grace; the first is reserved for those who can demonstrate noble descent on the paternal side for at least 200 years before their birth; the second for those who cannot claim noble rank, or can claim it only in more recent times.

Both of the Categories, of Justice and of Grace, confer the rank of Knight, Knight Officer, Commander, Grand Officer and Knight Grand Cross.

The insignia consists of an octagonal cross, enamelled in green, with in the centre the Paternò coat of arms, and with a siren (the symbol of the Balearics) between the two arms of the cross. The Justice Category is recognised by two crossed swords, superimposed on the coat of arms; these are absent in the medal of the category of Grace.

Knights wear the Cross without further elaboration; knight officers wear the Cross surmounted by a small royal crown; (Commanders), by a larger royal crown; for Grand Officers the medal is mounted on a star, whereas that of the Knight Grand Cross is mounted on a larger star. The ribbon is blue, red, gold, blue, red, gold, blue.