# **Eight Charismatic Men and Women Who Shaped the Middle Ages**

The Middle Ages was a time of great change and upheaval. It was a time of wars and plagues, of famine and disease. But it was also a time of great innovation and creativity. And it was a time when some of the most charismatic and influential people in history lived and worked.



Medieval Lives: Eight Charismatic Men and Women of

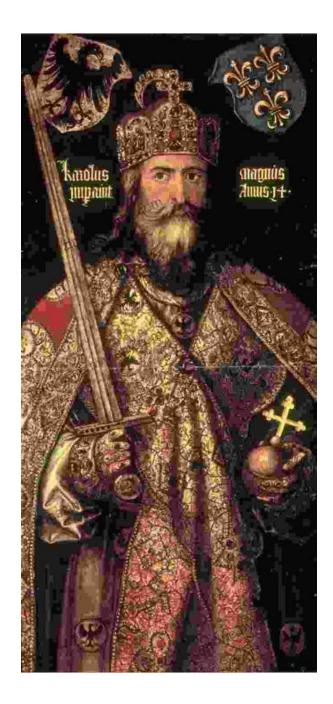
the Middle Ages by Norman F. Cantor

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In this article, we will meet eight of these extraordinary individuals. We will learn about their lives, their achievements, and their enduring legacies.

#### 1. Charlemagne



Charlemagne was King of the Franks from 768 to 814 and Holy Roman Emperor from 800 to 814. He was one of the most powerful and influential rulers in European history.

Charlemagne was a skilled military leader and a wise statesman. He expanded the Frankish kingdom to include much of Western Europe. He

also reformed the government and the church, and he promoted education and culture.

Charlemagne's legacy is still felt today. He is considered the father of Europe, and his empire laid the foundation for the modern nation-states of Europe.

### 2. Eleanor of Aquitaine

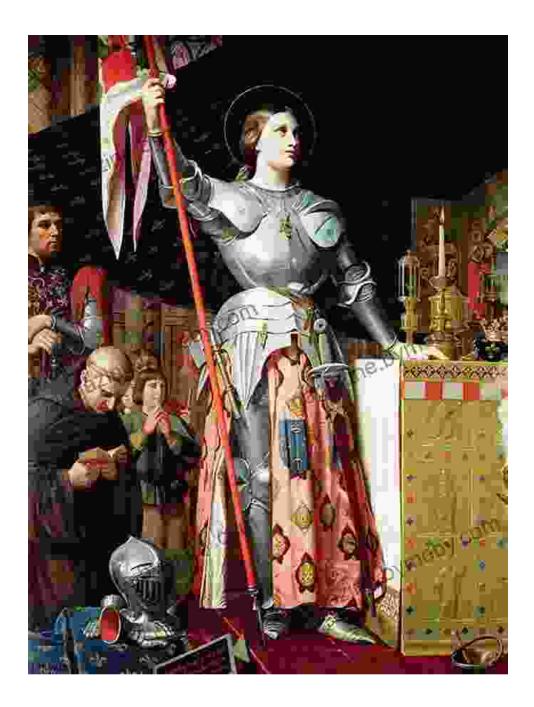


Eleanor of Aquitaine was Queen of France from 1137 to 1152 and Queen of England from 1154 to 1189. She was one of the most powerful and influential women in the Middle Ages.

Eleanor was a beautiful and intelligent woman. She was also a skilled politician and a patron of the arts. She founded the Court of Love, which was a center of learning and culture.

Eleanor's legacy is still felt today. She is considered one of the most important figures in the history of women's rights.

# 3. Joan of Arc



Joan of Arc was a French military leader who led the French army to victory at the Battle of Orleans in 1429. She was captured by the English and burned at the stake in 1431.

Joan of Arc was a devout Catholic who believed that she was chosen by God to lead the French army to victory. She was a brave and charismatic leader, and her troops were inspired by her faith. Joan of Arc's legacy is still felt today. She is considered a national heroine in France, and she is venerated as a saint by the Catholic Church.

#### 4. Thomas Aquinas

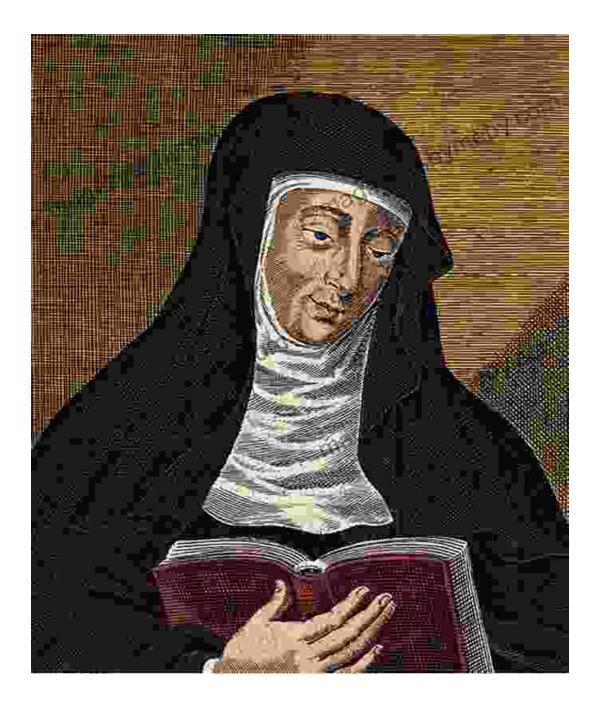


Thomas Aquinas was an Italian philosopher and theologian who lived in the 13th century. He is considered one of the greatest philosophers of all time.

Thomas Aquinas was a brilliant scholar who wrote extensively on philosophy, theology, and science. He is best known for his Summa Theologica, which is a comprehensive work of theology that presents a systematic exposition of the Catholic faith.

Thomas Aquinas's legacy is still felt today. He is considered one of the most important figures in the history of Western thought.

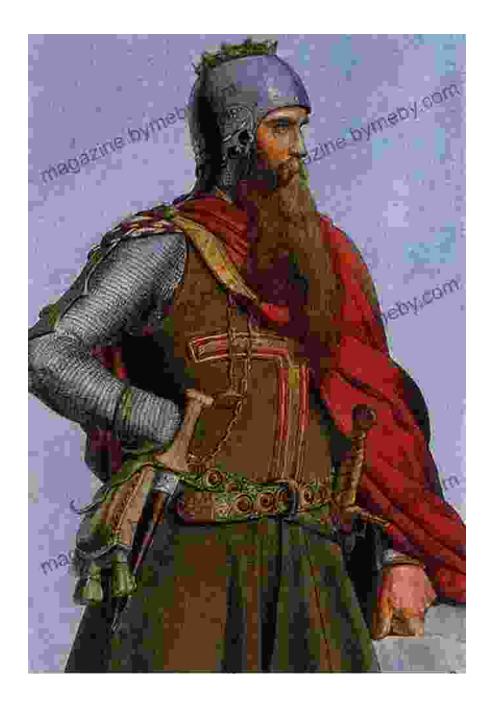
# 5. Hildegard of Bingen



Hildegard of Bingen was a German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, mystic, visionary, and polymath. She lived in the 12th century.

Hildegard of Bingen was a remarkable woman who made significant contributions to a wide range of fields. She was a gifted writer and composer, and she wrote extensively on theology, medicine, and natural history. She was also a visionary and mystic, and she experienced a number of visions that she recorded in her writings.

Hildegard of Bingen's legacy is still felt today. She is considered one of the most important figures in the history of women's spirituality.



#### 6. Frederick Barbarossa

Frederick Barbarossa was Holy Roman Emperor from 1155 to 1190. He was one of the most powerful and influential emperors in the Middle Ages.

Frederick Barbarossa was a skilled military leader and a wise statesman. He expanded the Holy Roman Empire and strengthened the imperial authority. He also founded a number of cities and universities.

Frederick Barbarossa's legacy is still felt today. He is considered one of the most important figures in the history of Germany.

### 7. Saladin



Saladin was Sultan of Egypt and Syria from 1171 to 1193. He was one of the most successful Muslim leaders in history.

Saladin was a skilled military leader and a wise statesman. He defeated the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin in 1187, and he recaptured Jerusalem from the Christians.

Saladin was also a generous and tolerant ruler. He allowed Christians and Jews to live in peace in his kingdom. He is considered one of the greatest Muslim leaders in history.

# 8. Edward I of England



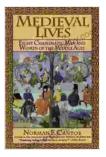
Edward I of England, also known as Edward Longshanks, was King of England from 1272 to 1307. He was one of the most successful and influential kings in English history.

Edward I was a skilled military leader and a wise statesman. He conquered Wales and Scotland, and he reformed the English government and law. He

is also known for his role in the Crusades.

Edward I's legacy is still felt today. He is considered one of the greatest kings in English history.

These eight individuals were just a few of the many charismatic and influential people who lived and worked in the Middle Ages. Their lives and achievements helped to shape the course of history, and their legacies continue to inspire us today.



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