The Leopard

What is the relevance of:

The title?
Opening lines
Last paragraph – the stuffed remains of Bendico thrown out, resembling a Leopard as it falls.

Introduction to the Prince.

1 You might expect a Sicilian noble family to be olive-skinned, dark-haired, dark-eyed – the Salinas are not conspicuously Latin. Why not?

2 Don Fabrizio is the first of his family to become an accomplished astronomer. Why is this ironic? He has called his planetary discoveries Salina and Speedy. How do these names sum up his interests?

3 Why is it appropriate that he should be described as “Jove-like?”

4 The garden is splendidly appropriate – Why?

5 Why is the incident of the dead soldier’s discovery introduced? How significant is the reference to Kings and the idea they personify?

6 See how the chapter is constructed – the Rosary in the room full of heathen gods – the family among whom the Prince is so outstanding – the Prince’s escape into the garden whose accents remind him of the offensive odour of the soldier’s decomposing corpse, the soldier who died for a King, reminding the Prince of his King Ferdinand. Follow the structure through.

7 Who is/was the Galuttuomo. Why is King Ferdinand angered at Trancredi? Why does the Prince think of a Republic of Don Peppino Mazzini?

8 At dinner we are reminded that the Prince is the Leopard – when? Why?

9 The trip to Palermo after dinner allows the author to introduce Tancredi again – from what aspect? Why is the bougainvillaea compared to “swags of Episcopal silk”?

10 Why are we shown the vast number and variety of religious houses of Palermo?

11 Why does the author call the scent of orange blossoms “that Islamic perfume”?

12 Physical love and politics are placed side by side again. How different are the Prince’s thoughts as he leaves Mariannina from those of anticipation?
13 Scents are enormously important in this chapter. Collect examples. Does this continue throughout the novel?

14 The sign of the Cross is referred to humorously. In what connection?

15 Why has Trancredi come? What is the tricolour?

16 The estate office contains pictures. What do they show? What do they symbolise?

17 Why is the Prince reminded of King Ferdinand as he enters the office?

18 How are Don Ciccio Ferrara and Russo appropriate employees? The Prince doesn’t call them “employees”. What does he call them? Russo allows the Prince to contemplate the changes to come to Italy, Sicily especially. How?

19 The sun is the true ruler of Sicily – this point is made repeatedly. The Prince seems absolved up here in the observatory, rather than by his Confessor’s blessing. Compare this with his death.

20 Why does the Prince tell Concetta how useless the royal army’s muskets are?

21 After the Prince has drunk Trancredi’s health, the initials F D on his glass can no longer be seen. Why is this significant?

22 Malvica, the Prince’s brother –in-law, has fled Sicily and advised the Prince to do the same. Why does the Prince laugh?

23 Who are Galbaldi and Mazzini?

24 Garibaldi is like Vulcan and the Prince smiles, calling him “cuckold”. Why?

25 Why does the chapter end with the Rosary? How are its words appropriate here?

11 Donnafugata

1 What does this mean?

Three months have gone by. How has the political changed?

2 Note those greeting the Prince. What do they variously represent?
3 How are we reminded of the Leopard?

4 Marvellous humour of the welcoming Te Deum!

5 After the compulsory Te Deum at the Duomo, Don Fabrizio issues an invitation. How does this indicate the beginning of the decline of his privilege? Why?

6 Don Onofrio is an unusual employee. Why?

7 How are Don Cologero Sedera’s fortunes on the up and up? What does this mean?

8 Why does the author introduce the episode of the bath? What has Father Pirrone come to tell him?

9 What future does the Prince envisage for Tancredi and the new Italy together? How appropriate will Concetta be?

10 The first dinner at Donnafugata is to be memorable. Why? What importance has the food consumed at it?

11 Angelica is described in terms of food, almost. Why? What impact has she on The Prince, Trancredi, Concetta?

12 Why does Tancredi tell a rather unsuitable story about a wartime occupation of a convent? How does it affect Angelica, Concetta?

13 Bendico is like the stars? How?

14 Why is the visit to the Convent of the Holy Ghost special?

15 Before the first dinner, Don Fabrizio and Tancredi inspected the new (imported, foreign, German) peaches. Where do they finish up? Why is this ironic?

111 *The Troubles of Don Fabrizio.*

1 Why does the author use this simile about the sun in the opening paragraphs?

2 Why does the Prince regard himself as a prisoner in a situation evolving more rapidly than foreseen?

3 Does the Prince have any illusions about Tancredi?
4 How does Tancredi justify his decision to marry Angelica?

5 We return to the Prince’s hunting. Of what is he reminded by the landscape? Again a creature dies: what point does the author make?

6 What do the ants symbolise? Why do they cause the prince to think of the Plebiscite about Unification?

7 What forces and pressures were involved in the Plebiscite?

8 What “invisible funeral car” might the Prince be said to be following a she went to cast his vote?

9 Why did Don Ciccio vote NO at the Plebiscite? Why was the result given as a unanimous YES vote? Why was Don Ciccio angry?

10 What enigma concerned Don Fabrizio in all this?

11 Don Calogero’s family history is revealed to the Prince. What are the significant details? Why is Don Ciccio appalled at the thought of Tancredi’s marriage to Angelica?

12 In going down to meet Don Calogero, the Prince tries to imagine himself traditionally, as an imposing leopard going to tear apart a timid jackal. What ironic memory spoils the effect of this image?

13 What ingredients of the paragraph “The nobleman rose to his feet….English razors.” Contribute to the humour?

14 How is Don Calogero prepared to dower his daughter?

15 Is the Prince delighted to learn that Don Calogero's in the process of ennobling his family?

Love at Donnafugata

1 Closer relations between Don Calogero and Tancredi and the Prince show Don Calogero some surprising things. How does he alter, on consequence?

2 Identify the humour of the description of Angelica’s first visit as a bride-to-be.

3 How did Angelica regard Tancredi?

4 How have Tancredi and Count Caviaghi changed? Why?
Read the last part of the paragraph “Then he embraced her again….golden crops.” Compare this with the description of Angelica. “Angelica arrived at six…granaries of Settestoli.”

The St Martin’s summer is appropriate weather for the lovers’ delights. Why? Why is the Salina palace at Donnafugata appropriate for these lovers? How do Tancredi and Angelica spend their time?

What aspects of the palace’s history are revealed to them? How is the mood of desire created and sustained?

The central themes of the chapter seem summed up in the two rooms – the marble drawing room and the Saint-Duke’s balcony. What are those themes? How do the rooms reinforce them?

Why is it appropriate that only the church bell could save them from giving in to their desires for one another?

Why will Concetta not yield to Caviaghi’s entreaties?

Why does Chevalley visit the Prince?

What is the effect of Tancredi’s horror stories?

What is the significance of the family miniatures?

Why is the Prince uninterested in Chevalley’s offer?

Re read “Chevally was disturbed now…terrifying insularity of mind.” Why is Sicily not a “free part of a free State.”

What makes Don Calogero a better candidate for the Senate?

“The landscape lurched to and fro, irredeemable.” And “But they won’t succeed, because we are gods.” How are these two statements relevant?

**Father Pirrone Pays a Visit**

Enjoy the patriotic pictures on the cart of Father Pirrone back home!

What attitudes towards the new political situation are revealed in his discussions?

With his friends and neighbours?

How does Father Pirrone explain to Don Pietrino the difference between nobles and ordinary people? On what grounds does he see the nobles as superior?
5 Why has the author introduced the complication of Angelica’s marriage to her cousin Santino? What is the basis of the happy solution to her problem?

6 Is there much difference between Angelina and Angelica?

7 What is the point of including this chapter in a book titled “The Leopard”

VI A Ball

1 Why is the Ponteleone ball important to the Salina family?

2 How we (and the Salinas) are reminded that in the midst of life we are in death, on the way to the ball? Note that this is an important ingredient of this chapter.

3 The Asprompnte affair is referred to several times. What had Colonel Pallavicino to do with it? How did he do so well there?

4 Why are the Sederas described as “a rat escorting a rose”?

5 How has Angelica changed? What has she learnt to enable her to be accepted?

6 Don Fabrizio is less enraptured why? Why do the men regard him an eccentric? Why does she feel disgust?

7 The ballroom is beautiful. How are we made aware of this? How are we shocked about its survival?

8 Why does the Prince respond so strongly to Greuze’s picture?

9 Why does the Prince go to supper alone?

10 Are the cakes the only “Triumphs of Gluttony”?

11 Even a ball is an occasion for politics. Why? Why has Lampedusa described the ball?

12 Why does the chapter end with stars and planets, and the wagon of slaughtered bulls.

VII Death of a Prince
1 Why does the author use the image of the hour-glass?

2 Why is life (and its loss) referred to throughout this chapter in terms of water – waves, cascades, crashing of the sea etc.?

3 How is it that the Prince is dying in the Hotel Trinaria, instead of at home?

4 How have Tancredi and Angelica changed? Were their early hopes fulfilled?

5 What has happened to the rest of the family?

6 Collect images of death throughout the chapter.

7 How is Fabrizietto different from Tancredi?

8 Why does the Prince say: “The last Salina was himself. That fellow Garibaldi that bearded Vulcan had won after all.”?

9 So few happy memories remain for him – which?

10 Who is the young woman in the brown travelling dress? Why should she be female?

VII Relics

1 How have the Salina sisters grown old?

2 Why is there an inspection by the Cardinal Archbishop? Who is the Pope in 1910?

3 How has Angelica changed? What particularity occupies her attention at this time?

4 How does Signor Tassoni offend Concetta? What awful truth must she realise?

5 Why does Concetta have the stuffed carcass of Bendico thrown out? What does this symbolise?