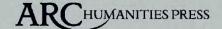


# THE POLITICAL MESSAGE OF THE SHRINE OF ST. HERIBERT OF COLOGNE

CHURCH AND EMPIRE AFTER THE INVESTITURE CONTEST

by

**CAROLYN M. CARTY** 





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CAROLYN M. CARTY



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In loving memory
of
Tom
(1945–2020)
who shared the journey
every step of the way



Heribert Shrine as displayed in the Church of St. Heribert, Cologne-Deutz (photo by the author).



#### **PREFACE**

MY FIRST INTEREST in the Heribert Shrine arose from the fact that two of its roof medallions depicted dream scenes, the focus of my doctoral research. With that focus in mind, in 1988 I went to the Church of St. Heribert in Deutz to see the Heribert Shrine, where on my arrival I unbelievably found on display just the shrine's interior wooden box containing Heribert's remains. From an art-historical point of view, that in no way measured up to the long-awaited experience of seeing a glorious golden bejewelled shrine with its twelve enamel medallions depicting the important events of Heribert's life. Greatly disappointed but still in the hope of seeing the shrine, I next went to the Diocesan Museum in Cologne, where the shrine had been sent to await examination and restoration. However, there, on meeting Martin Seidler, who was overseeing its restoration, I was told that the shrine was in pieces and thus impossible to be seen.

Then in 1999 I went back to Deutz to see and photograph the then restored shrine, only to encounter another challenge. No longer at eye level in the centre aisle, the shrine was now enclosed in a Plexiglas box set atop high pillars, themselves on a platform, thus making the exquisitely restored shrine basically impossible to see in detail (see photo opposite). Frustrated, I found my only hope of getting a better view was, with the aid of my husband, dragging over as quietly as possible in the empty church the nearby organ bench. Camera in hand, I climbed onto the bench to view the first side of the shrine from my new vantage point. Despite the Plexiglas barrier, the shrine's stunning gilded and enamelled surfaces and glimmering crystals and gems gleamed in the interplay of light. However, the higher-up enamel medallions positioned on the shrine's gable roof angled away from the vertical barrier of the shrine's enclosure. Telling the first part of the story of Heribert's life, they were the primary focus of my investigation, and though somewhat seeable, they were definitely not going to be suitably photographable from outside the box. As I stood on the bench trying to take in as much as I could of the ones on the first side of the shrine, my eyes were overcome by my ears as I heard a door open, followed by footsteps. As a man walked toward us, I feared the worse. It was the sacristan, who, on hearing my reason for a closer perspective, instead of chastising me, to my amazement graciously brought me a small ladder so I could try to take my photographs. Nevertheless, even with this aid, the medallions remained too difficult to photograph since I still could not get above them or avoid the reflections the Plexiglas created. When I finished my futile endeavour, the affable sacristan gave us a tour of the sacristy where, in a sort of consolation, I did get to see objects at least associated with Heribert, two beautiful tenth- and twelfth-century cloths found in the inner shrine with his remains and a tenth- and early eleventhcentury walrus-tooth tau staff, one of its faces carved with an image of the crucifixion and the other with an enthroned Christ in majesty in a mandorla. Leaving the church, we profusely thanked the sacristan for his generosity, and while I knew that my photographs would be less than satisfactory, I had at least gotten to see the shrine in the "flesh," albeit in a rather unconventional manner.

Afterwards, with the mellowing of disappointment and the distance of hindsight, reflecting on the decision of the church to display the shrine in this manner, I came to the realization that it wasn't simply a matter of security that the shrine in all its marvellous details was beyond the realm of the viewer. It was the contents in the wooden box within it, which I had eschewed over a decade earlier, that superseded by far for the Church and its faithful the sumptuous shrine that surrounded them. That box, its material lacking ostentation, stood metonymically for its content: the humble saint within who had devoted his life to the poor. The finished shrine was then a perfect example of a symbiotic relationship of form and function, its church-like shape and its luminous beauty recalling the Heavenly Jerusalem, appealing not just to the eye but also to the mind and the soul of today's believers who would see in the overall picture a fitting and splendid tribute to a saint on whom they could model their lives. As a medievalist, I would have to content myself with holding onto the memory of having had the privilege, if only very briefly, of viewing the shrine up close and having the excellent but black-and-white photos I had purchased from the Rheinisches Bildarchiv in Cologne later that same day. Finally, now two decades later, because of the superb colour illustrations in Martin Seidler's book posthumously published in 2016, I, as well as others, can do vicariously what is no longer possible to do on site-examine the shrine in intimate detail, not just its outer portions but also its no longer seeable stripped-apart pieces from various angles and even their reverse. It has, in part, provided some compensation for what was missing in my earlier visits.

During the several years I have been working on the Heribert Shrine, I wish to thank the many non-art historians, too numerous to mention, who have patiently listened to my thoughts and musings and also offered helpful suggestions. However, above all, I especially owe the completion of this endeavour to my husband and colleague Thomas Haug, who accompanied me throughout the journey, unstintingly offering emotional support as well as applying his astute critical acumen to every iteration the manuscript underwent. I owe my tenacity to continue with this effort to its end to Ilene Forsyth, teacher, mentor, doctoral advisor, and friend, who taught me that when one door closes, with persistence and effort another will open, often leading to new and unexpected places. I also offer gratitude to the many colleagues and conference organizers along the route who also listened, encouraged, and offered advice: in particular Elizabeth del Alamo, who asked me to select the Heribert Shrine for a conference session paper on memory and the medieval tomb at the yearly International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan; to Steven Schoenig, SJ, who shared with me his extensive knowledge of the pallium, the liturgical vestment linking bishops and the papacy; and to Elizabeth Sears, who, in addition to inviting me to present papers on the shrine at the symposium honouring Ilene Forsyth at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and at the annual meeting of the Midwest Art History Society at the Detroit Institute of Arts, offered specific advice, information, and encouragement in pursuing this project to its final form. I am also greatly indebted to the peer reviewers who read the book's manuscript and offered many new and fruitful avenues to explore. I also thank Oakland Community College for granting me a year's sabbatical to pursue my work on the shrine as well as other areas of my research.



With regard to the illustrations within, I wish to thank: the Archdiocese of Cologne, in particular Dr. Martin Struck and Dr. Anna Pawlik for their efforts in my acquiring the colour illustrations of the Heribert Shrine and granting permission to use them; to Dr. Johanna Gummlich and Lena Pickartz of the Rheinisches Bildarchiv in Cologne for granting permission to publish their black-and white photographs of the Heribert Shrine; and to Eduardo Lamas Delgado of KIK-IRPA in Brussels for its permission to publish colour images of the Hadelin Shrine in Visé, Belgium. Lastly, I offer my most sincere gratitude to those at Arc Humanities Press, especially Simon Forde, director, and Tyler Cloherty, the acquisitions editor to whom my manuscript was assigned, and Ruth Kennedy, the production manager, who guided me through the final editing process, for their understanding and support and for their invaluable help, advice, and efforts in making this all finally come to fruition.

#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

BAV Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
MGH SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores
MGH SSrG	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi
PC	Pontificale Coloniense, Cologne, Cath. Lib., Cods. 139–140.

PL Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina





#### Introduction

#### THE ARGUMENT WITHIN ITS CONTEXT

WHEN IN 1122 the Concordat of Worms forged an agreement regarding the Investiture Contest which had been brought to a head with the standoff between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV at Canossa in 1077,<sup>1</sup> as Ludger Körntgen has convincingly shown in his article "Der Investiturstreit und das Verhältnis von Religion und Politik im Frühmittelalter" ("The Investiture Controversy and the Relationship between Religion and Politics in the Early Middle Ages"), these two moments in history should not be seen as definitive and epoch-changing moments in that relationship as has been traditionally maintained in the scholarship covering the period of this historical conflict.<sup>2</sup> This shift in point of view, supported by its fair share of polemical response to the various facets of the issue, would indicate that today's scholars, just like their medieval counterparts in the aftermath of the Concordat, are still grappling with an unsettling "can of Worms."

Given its historical prominence, the scholarly literature on the Investiture Contest, both specific and contextual, is vast. While certainly the subject has not been ignored by Anglophones,<sup>3</sup> understandably German scholars have been especially prolific; however, unfortunately, important books and articles on this subject by authors such as Gerd Althoff, Peter Classen, Horst Fuhrmann, Rudolf Schieffer, Hanna Vollrath, and Stefan Weinfurter have, for the most part, not been translated into English.<sup>4</sup>

I This episode will be discussed in its historical context later in the text. For two eleventh-century accounts, see Frutolf of Michelsberg in *Chronicles of the Investiture Contest*, 114, and Lampertus Hersfeldensis, *Lamperti Hersfeldensis Annales*, 289–98. Sverre Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order*, devotes chapters 4 and 5, pages 231–363, to an analysis of Lambert of Hersfeld's *Annales*, as well as to the anonymous *Vita Heinrici Quarti*, a translation of which appears in *Imperial Lives and Letters* as *The Life of Emperor Henry IV*, 101–37. For Henry's pledge at Canossa in 1077, see Gregory VII, Pope, *Register*, 4:12a, pp. 222–23, as well as *Imperial Lives and Letters*, 156; and for Henry's letters, *Imperial Lives and Letters*, 138–200. For a full account of the relations between Henry IV and Gregory VII that led to Canossa and its aftermath, see Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, 75–271. For a brief overview of events, see Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, chap. 3: "The Struggle with Henry IV," 53–73, which also provides relevant documents.

**<sup>2</sup>** Körntgen, "Investiturstreit." See also Körntgen, "Herrscherbild im Wandel," where he again takes up the concept of specific moments in time as causal factors as he questions whether a shift in the iconography of the ruler can be attributed to Staufer rule. (All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.) It should also be noted that this same period in history has various nomenclatures, among them: Investiture Contest, Investiture Controversy, Investiture Conflict, and Investiture Struggle, each useful given a specific context, emphasis, or point of view.

**<sup>3</sup>** See for example: Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*; Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*; Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*; and Miller, *Power and the Holy*. See also Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order*, as well as Folz, *Concept of Empire*, an early but important work translated from the French. For a very succinct overview of the major issues and events leading to the Concordat of Worms, see *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), s.vv. "Investiture Struggle." For a brief summation of the perspectives of each party in the controversy, see Brooke, "Thomas Becket," 126–28.

<sup>4</sup> For example: Althoff, "Amtsverständnis Gregors VII"; Classen, Gerhoch von Reichersberg; Fuhr-

(A recent corrective is a publication in English of fifteen essays by Althoff, eight of which first appeared in German and four of which are unpublished papers.)<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the more recent literature, the preponderance still in German, regarding the nature and impact of these events on subsequent history has taken a new interpretive shift requiring a dialogue with and a reassessment of the earlier literature.<sup>6</sup> Happily the overall current state of the debate is concisely and admirably discussed by Johanna Dale in the introduction to her book *Inauguration and Liturgical Kingship in the Long Twelfth Century: Male and Female Accession Rituals in England, France and the Empire.*<sup>7</sup>

Of course, the literature on this period of history and its impact is embedded within the larger scope of German historiography where views on the nature of medieval rulership itself have also been reassessed, taking into account the impact of nationalistic trends and historical events. In "Rewriting the History of the Holy Roman Empire," Len Scales and Joachim Whaley map out in detail these changes with respect to the medieval period, citing the work of Gerd Althoff, Knut Görich, John B. Freed, Bernd Schneidmüller, Timothy Reuter, Ludger Körntgen, and Johannes Fried, again noting the predominance of German scholars addressing these issues. 9

Among the major points of contention in this new interpretive shift is the narrow view that these two events, Canossa and the Concordat, taken together have led to a basic "desacralization" of monarchy and concomitantly to the beginning of the modern state, a view put forth in older scholarship based on the desire for "master narratives" and the usefulness of categorizing terms. However, while such rubrics and groupings may at first seem useful, in the end they only serve to highlight that there are no simple answers to complex problems set within the confines of delimiting events or of excised periods of time. What people at a particular time period saw when they looked at images, how they acted based on the contemporary beliefs they personally held, how they responded to current events, and how they reacted to what people around them did, thought, and said, are the very things that would have influenced their perception of the world around them. Unfortunately, despite our honest efforts we cannot see them in that same way but only vicariously, that is, second-hand. Therefore, we

mann, *Papst Gregor VII* (a compendium of Fuhrmann's articles from 1956 to 2003 on this subject); Schieffer, *Papst Gregor VII. Kirchenreform und Investiturstreit; Weg in eine weitere Welt*, ed. by Vollrath; and Weinfurter, *Canossa. Die Entzauberung der Welt*; as well as the work of Körntgen in n. 2 above.

**<sup>9</sup>** Scales and Whaley devote pp. 334–40 to "The Medieval Empire" and cite the specific relevant work of each of these authors in the notes on pp. 337–39.



**<sup>5</sup>** Althoff, Rules and Rituals.

**<sup>6</sup>** Among the newer perspectives related to an understanding and interpretation of the impact of the Investiture Controversy, a few relevant examples are: Suchan, Königsherrschaft im Streit; Fried, Veil of Memory; Stauferreich im Wandel; Erkens, Herrschersakralität im Mittelalter; Faszination der Papstgeschichte; Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History; Fried, Canossa: Entlarvung einer Legende; Canossa: Aspekte einer Wende; Brief und Kommunikation im Wandel; and Hehl, Gregor VII. und Heinrich IV. in Canossa 1077: Paenitentia—absolutio—honor.

**<sup>7</sup>** Dale, *Inauguration and Liturgical Kingship*, 1–25.

<sup>8</sup> Scales and Whaley, "Rewriting the History."

must be careful not to base our interpretations of their responses on comparisons to the responses of people of other times and other places, including our own, unless, of course, that is the purpose of the investigation. Gerd Althoff, for one, offers an illuminative example of this type of anachronistic analysis, an example of interest here insofar as its subject appears in two medallions of the Heribert Shrine, the focus of this study. In his extended discussion of Otto III's tenth-century idea of a *Renovatio imperii Romanorum*, Althoff artfully demonstrated how the application of modern modes of interpreting the past affected the meaning of and thus Otto's intentions for renewal and also called into question whether this long-held belief in Otto's desire for a *renovatio* was even an actual plan or merely a visionary construct.

In another instance Vedran Sulovsky has examined the concept of sacred rulership. In his article "The Concept of *sacrum imperium* in Historical Scholarship," Sulovsky aims "to survey the extant theories on its origin and meaning and show how 20th-century national discourse affected scholarly opinion." To that end, he divides those examining the concept into four groups "based on how much attention they paid to the immediate context of the phrase"—those working on the diplomata of the Holy Roman Empire, on the rhetorical context of *sacrum imperium*, on the political context of the term, and lastly on the late medieval and early modern use of the concept from 1250–1806. Despite his investigation into these areas and the scholarly arguments put forth by each, Sulovsky ultimately concludes: "*sacrum imperium* remains an unsolved puzzle in spite of a hundred years of research." As with many "niche" phrases, no doubt *sacrum imperium* will continue to remain elusive.

On the other hand, we are not totally defenceless, for we can use the tools of our specific "trades," choosing those that will give us insight and thus help us through careful analysis to envision what the specific world we are investigating may have been like for various levels of society. While not abandoning the difficult quest for answers, armed with the knowledge that no single repository of information exists, we might find limited, targeted approaches more fruitful. Even so, the study of just a single concept, a single event, or a single object has its problems, for it too can be viewed from a myriad of different angles, with reference to myriad kinds of sources (some of which not yet come to light), and studied by different disciplines with varying methodological approaches, all of which will yield different points of view. While no one person can be a "jack-of-all disciplines," the availability of one discipline's approach and its results can shed light on and inform the ways of another discipline's approach and thus enlarge the ways in which we view things. Even if some of these views will be dispelled over time, as noted above, in addition to sparking new conversations, their mere existence will engender new ideas providing new ways of seeing and understanding, or maybe even provoke a renovatio.

<sup>10</sup> Otto III appears in two investiture scenes of the Heribert Shrine: making Heribert his chancellor and investing Heribert with his regalia before his episcopal consecration, scenes to be discussed later in detail.

II Althoff, *Otto III*, 4–11 and 81–89.

<sup>12</sup> Sulovsky, "Concept of *sacrum imperium*." [Open access; no page numbers.]

#### 4 INTRODUCTION

All that being said, with regard to this period of ongoing struggle, my analysis here is a targeted and limited one. It will examine only the impact it had on the creators of the Heribert Shrine, that is, how during the time of the shrine's creation a ruler and his minions sought to use their political power for their own personal gains to the detriment of the Church and the Abbey of Deutz. Thus, while there will be a discussion of the historical causes most likely leading up to the creation of images and inscriptions on the shrine in terms of the climate in Germany that existed before and during the shrine's creation, the historical effects with regard to Church and secular relationships beyond those times are beyond the focus and purview of this analysis.

Despite the conflicts that had existed between the Church and the secular realms even before the Investiture Contest, the Concordat of Worms did not bring about a final resolution, for that relationship was then soon afterwards (and still is) being tested and responded to in specific places, in specific moments in time, in varying degrees, and with varied responses. Just such instances are worthy of examination for the light they may shed about this ongoing relationship. From that point of view, with respect to a specific place (Cologne-Deutz) with specific actors (Barbarossa with his minions and self-seekers in conflict with the Church) at a particular time (the second half of the twelfth century), the images and inscriptions on the Heribert Shrine can be seen as just one of those responses to a complex relationship of two entities predicated on belief structures and power, yet in several ways necessarily symbiotically joined. Herein, an analysis of the shrine, seen through the lens of the tenth- and eleventh-century Saint Heribert depicted on it, will show how iconography; liturgy; hagiographical, historical, and theological texts; and people, both secular and ecclesiastical, involved in events related to the shrine's conception and construction, all converge to present a commentary on this ongoing struggle between Church and Empire (Regnum et Sacerdotium/politics and religion), particularly during the reign of Frederick Barbarossa. However, before this argument can be presented, it is important to introduce the shrine itself, its pictorial content and that content's arrangement on the shrine, the shrine's relationship to other twelfth-century reliquary shrines of its type, and the shrine's overall place in art-historical commentary.

