Sonderdruck aus:

Patterns of Episcopal Power
Bishops in Tenth and Eleventh Century
Western Europe

Strukturen bischöflicher Herrschaftsgewalt
im westlichen Europa des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts

Herausgegeben von / edited by
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De Gruyter

2011

ISBN 978-3-11-026202-5
e-ISBN 978-3-11-026203-2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

Strukturen bischöflicher Herrschaftsgewalt im westlichen Europa des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts = Patterns of Episcopal power.

p. cm. -- (Prinz-Albert-Forschungen ; Bd. 6 = Prince Albert research publications ; v.6)
German and English.

Edited by Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Wassenhoven.

Proceedings of a workshop held in Apr. 2009 at the University of Bayreuth and of a session of the International Medieval Congress held in July 2009 in Leeds, England.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-3-11-026202-5

1. Episcopacy--History--Congresses. 2. Church and state--Europe--History--Congresses.
 3. Church history--Middle Ages, 600-1500--Congresses. I. Körntgen, Ludger. II. Wassenhoven, Dominik. III. International Medieval Congress (2009 : Leeds, England)
- BV670.3.S77 2011
262'.1209409021--dc23

2011024265

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation
in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten
sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

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Satz: Dominik Waßenhoven

Druck: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen

∞ Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

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Swaying Bishops and the Succession of Kings*

The succession of a king was often a crucial situation for a monarchy, especially when there was no son to follow his father on the throne, or when the son was still very young. In such times, the noblemen had an important role to play, since they elected the king who himself – in case there was no heir to the throne – originated from the circle of the magnates. As the bishops could not claim the kingship for themselves, but nevertheless were in a strong position during the regencies of the late Ottonian and early Salian kings,¹ this paper tries to investigate if they swayed the noblemen who were to decide on the new king – lay magnates as well as clerics – or if they were more like trees swaying in the wind. This will be done by addressing their actions throughout two successions of the Eastern Frankish kingdom, namely that of 983/4, when Otto III finally followed his father on the throne, and that of 1024, when Conrad II succeeded.

984

At the death of Emperor Otto II in December 983 the situation was, in fact, clear: his son, Otto III, had been elected king by an assembly at Verona in the early summer of 983.² The archbishops John of Ravenna and Willigis of Mainz crowned him on Christmas 983 at Aachen, shortly before the news of Otto II's death reached the assembled company.³ Thus the throne was not, strictly speaking, vacant, but obviously the three-year-old child could not rule on his own – someone had to be responsible for the government. From

* I would like to express my appreciation to Theo Riches who read through this paper and made numerous suggestions.

1 For a summary of research on the Ottonian "Reichskirche" see Rudolf Schieffer, *Der geschichtliche Ort der ottonisch-salischen Reichskirchenpolitik* (Nordrhein-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Geisteswissenschaften. Vorträge G 352), Opladen 1998, and now also Steffen Patzold, *Episcopus. Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Mittelalter-Forschungen 25), Ostfildern 2008, pp. 18–24.

2 *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, ed. Robert Holtzmann (MGH SSrG N. S. 9), Berlin 1935, repr. Munich 1996, III, ch. 24, p. 128; cf. *Regesta Imperii II: Sächsisches Haus 919–1024*, vol. 2: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Otto II. 955 (973)–983*, ed. Johann Friedrich Böhmer, red. Hanns Leo Mikoletzky, Vienna, Cologne and Graz 1950, nos. 891b–913.

3 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), III, ch. 26, p. 130.

very early on it seems, Duke Henry of Bavaria, who was later known as “the Quarrelsome” or “the Wrangler”, came into consideration for this task.

Henry was a nephew of Otto the Great and a cousin of Otto II.⁴ He became duke of Bavaria as a child, but as he led a conspiracy against his cousin (in 973), he was finally (in 976) disposed from his office and handed over to Bishop Folkmar of Utrecht, who kept him in prison. Shortly after Otto II’s death, Henry was liberated and travelled together with his guard, Folkmar, to Cologne where Archbishop Warin committed the young king to him. Thietmar of Merseburg, whose chronicle is one of the main sources, calls him a rightful guardian (“patronus legalis”) in this context.⁵ This legitimacy is doubted by other sources. The *Annales Quedlinburgenses* state that Henry pretended to defend the affairs of the royal child according to the right of kin,⁶ adding that he penetrated into Cologne and detained Otto there. Similarly, Richer of Saint-Remi asserts that Henry forcibly captured the under-age Otto.⁷ These depictions, however, seem to be written in the knowledge of Henry failing in the end and consequently are biased.

Thietmar continues that Henry journeyed on to Saxony, more precisely to Magdeburg where he wanted to celebrate Palm Sunday – this had probably been a custom of the Ottonian kings.⁸ Henry had invited all the noblemen of the environs in order to negotiate about becoming king.⁹ If we follow Thietmar’s account, the ambitions to govern had speedily turned into a striving for the kingship. However, the sources are not very clear concerning the question whether Henry actually wanted to be sole king, or if he just tried to get a participation in rulership, a kind of co-rulership. I will come back to this point later.

In any case Henry found followers. One of his supporters was Giseler,

4 For Henry, see Hubertus Seibert, *Bavvarica regna gubernans. Heinrich der Zänker und das Herzogtum Bayern (955–995)*, in: *Von Sachsen bis Jerusalem. Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel der Zeit. Festschrift für Wolfgang Giese zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Hubertus Seibert and Gertrud Thoma, Munich 2004, pp. 123–142 and, especially concerning the events of 984, Franz-Reiner Erkens, ... *more Grecorum conregnantem instituere vultis?* Zur Legitimation der Regentschaft Heinrichs des Zänkers im Thronstreit von 984, in: *FMST* 27 (1993), pp. 273–289.

5 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 1, p. 132.

6 *Die Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. Martina Giese (MGH SSrG 72), Hanover 2004, pp. 470–471, s. a. 984: “Heinricus [...] simulans se primo ob ius propinquitatis partibus regis infantis fidelissime patrocinaturum regem tenuit [...]”.

7 Richer of Saint-Remi, *Historiae*, ed. Hartmut Hoffmann (MGH SS 38), Hanover 2000, III, ch. 97, p. 223.

8 Hans-Jürgen Rieckenberg, *Königsstraße und Königsgut in liudolfingischer und früh-salischer Zeit (919–1056)*, in: *Archiv für Urkundenforschung* 17 (1942), pp. 32–154, at pp. 43–44. Cf. *Regesta Imperii II: Sächsisches Haus 919–1024*, vol. 3: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Otto III.*, ed. Johann Friedrich Böhmer, red. Mathilde Uhlirz, Vienna, Cologne and Graz 1956, no. 956s1.

9 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 1, p. 132.

the archbishop of Magdeburg. This can be inferred from the fact that Henry celebrated Palm Sunday at Giselher's episcopal see which he could not have done if the archbishop would not at least approve of him. Apart from that, the sources do not tell us much about Giselher. Thietmar does not mention him too often, since Giselher was at least jointly responsible for the abolition of the Merseburg bishopric.¹⁰ This see was later restored, and Thietmar held it from 1009 until his death in 1018. Because of Giselher's participation in its abolition, Thietmar does not speak very well of him.

Be that as it may, Giselher probably went along with Henry to Quedlinburg to celebrate Easter – again at a location where it had been a custom of the Ottonian kings to perform this important holiday.¹¹ Here Henry was proclaimed king by his followers.¹² It is not sure whether Giselher followed this ceremonial. He does not occur in the sources until June 984, when he conducted negotiations for Henry with Otto's supporters – and thus in a situation where it became clear that Henry could not reach his aim any longer.¹³ In February 985 at the latest Giselher had honoured the governance of Otto's mother and grandmother, the empresses Theophanu and Adelheid, and in this regard he obtained a confirmation of the rights and possessions of his bishopric.¹⁴

The reasons for Giselher's action – his backing of Henry and his lasting adherence – can only be presumed due to the lack of sources. It can possibly be seen in connection with an uprising of Slavs in the summer of 983.¹⁵ Giselher could have taken Henry for a politically and militarily experienced man who could secure the eastern border by means of battle. The child Otto, on the other hand, was a bigger factor of uncertainty. But later, the same tense situation at the eastern border of the Reich also facilitated the reconciliation between Giselher on the one side and Otto, Adelheid and Theophanu on the other, since eventually Giselher was needed to defend his bishopric against

10 Clemens Brodtkorb, "Bistum Merseburg", in: *Die Bistümer des Heiligen Römischen Reiches von ihren Anfängen bis zur Säkularisation*, ed. Erwin Gatz, Freiburg im Breisgau 2003, pp. 238–248, at pp. 238–240; Gerd Althoff, *Magdeburg – Halberstadt – Merseburg. Bischöfliche Repräsentation und Interessenvertretung im ottonischen Sachsen*, in: *Herrschaftsrepräsentation im ottonischen Sachsen*, ed. Gerd Althoff and Ernst Schubert (Vorträge und Forschungen 46), Sigmaringen 1998, pp. 267–293; Robert Holtzmann, *Die Aufhebung und Wiederherstellung des Bistums Merseburg. Ein Beitrag zur Kritik Thietmars*, in: *Sachsen und Anhalt 2* (1926), pp. 35–75.

11 Rieckenberg (note 8), p. 47; Erkens (note 4), p. 280 with note 67. Cf. *Annales Quedlinburgenses* (note 6), pp. 46–47.

12 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 2, p. 132: "Hac in festivitate idem a suis publice rex appellatur laudibusque divinis attollitur."

13 *Ibid.*, IV, ch. 7, p. 138.

14 *Die Urkunden Ottos III.*, ed. Theodor Sickel (MGH DD, *Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* 2, 2), Hanover 1893, repr. Hanover 1997, p. 406–407, no. 10; cf. *Regesta Imperii* II/3 (note 8), no. 967.

15 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, chs. 11–13, pp. 144–148.

the rebellious Slavs.

Turning back to the assembly of Magdeburg on Palm Sunday, it can be recognized that some of the attendant noblemen were reluctant to proclaim Henry king. Thietmar does not name them, but he describes their hesitation: they argued that they had already rendered homage to Otto III and therefore had to obtain his permission first.¹⁶ Otto was a crowned king, and even if he still was very young, his kingship could not be denied. Moreover, the acceptance of Henry's plans was derogated by the departure of some of the noblemen. Thietmar says that they secretly deliberated on counteractions.¹⁷

There were also some bishops who confronted Henry, and they were in a crucial position. One of them was Adalbero of Rheims of whom we know pleasingly much. This is due to an important source, namely the collection of letters by Gerbert d'Aurillac, the later pope Sylvester II. This collection comprises more than 200 of Gerbert's letters. He wrote some of them in his own name, but a considerable part for various issuers. Gerbert was Adalbero's secretary and wrote more than 50 letters in his name.¹⁸

Unfortunately, the letters do not always reveal everything; especially the more important political concerns were often not marked down, but communicated orally to the bearer. Gerbert wrote for instance to Archbishop Willigis of Mainz:¹⁹

Many things we do not trust to letters but do entrust to messengers, just as [now] my father Adalbero, archbishop of Reims, faithful to you in all respects, has entrusted to his intimate friend, this Abbot Ayrard, much information about the condition and peace of the kingdoms that you should keep to yourself.

We do not learn, however, which information the bearer had for Willigis. Another problem of this letter collection is that it does not include date specifications. Therefore, it is not always possible to place the writings in

16 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 1, p. 132: "Huic consilio maxima pars procerum hoc dolo consensit, quod licenciam a domino suimet rege, cui iuraverat, prius peteret postque secunda novo regi serviret."

17 Ibid.: "Quidam autem ob eius indignationem digressi, occultis meditantur astutiis, qualiter hoc numquam fieret."

18 See Weigle's introduction to his edition: Gerbert d'Aurillac, *Die Briefsammlung Gerberts von Reims*, ed. Fritz Weigle (MGH Epistolae: Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit 2), Weimar 1966, repr. Munich 1988, pp. 3–4.

19 Ibid., pp. 61–62, no. 34: "Multa cartis non credimus, quę legatis committimus, ut huic abbati Ayrardo sibi intimo pater meus Adalbero Remorum archiepiscopus vobis per omnia fidus multa commisit de statu et pace regnorum vobiscum habenda." English translation: *The letters of Gerbert. With his papal privileges as Sylvester II*, trans., with an introd. Harriet Pratt Lattin (*Records of civilization, sources and studies* 60), New York 1961, p. 83, no. 42.

their proper historical context.²⁰

One of the letters with a contended date reports on a meeting of the kings of West Francia, Lothar and his son Louis, with Henry.²¹ This meeting should have taken place at Breisach on the right bank of the Upper Rhine, on 1 February. The year is not mentioned in the letter, but 984 fits better than the otherwise mentioned dating to 985, because Adalbero terms Henry as “*rei publicae hostis*” (enemy of the empire).²² At the end of 984 or beginning of 985 Henry had already abandoned his plans to become king or to gain a share in the kingdom’s rule. Thus, it can be taken for granted that the letter was written by the end of January 984.²³ It would then prove the speed and determination of Henry’s actions. But it would also show that opposition emerged equally early – long before the gathering at Magdeburg mentioned by Thietmar. For in this letter, Adalbero advises Bishop Notker of Liège to keep his promise that he had carried out to Otto III. That refers to the election of 983 in Verona in which Notker participated.²⁴ Furthermore, Adalbero writes that he is aware of Henry’s plans.

As we have already seen, Henry went to Saxony and failed to appear at the meeting with the West Frankish kings at Breisach.²⁵ Shortly afterwards, Adalbero and Gerbert might have tried to persuade them to support Otto. Gerbert wrote – probably in February 984 – to a woman called Imiza, one of Theophanu’s court ladies:²⁶

20 The most comprehensive attempt was presented by Mathilde Uhlirz, *Untersuchungen über Inhalt und Datierung der Briefe Gerberts von Aurillac, Papst Sylvesters II. Forschungen und Vorarbeiten zu den Jahrbüchern und Regesten Kaiser Ottos III. 3. Teil* (Schriftenreihe der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2), Göttingen 1957. For a tabular overview see Gerbert d’Aurillac, *Correspondance*, vol. 1: *Lettres 1 à 129*, ed., trans. and comm. Pierre Riché and Jean-Pierre Callu (Les classiques de l’histoire de France au moyen âge 35), Paris 1993, pp. XXXV–XXXVII; cf. the editorial notes to the letters in Gerbert d’Aurillac (note 18).

21 *Ibid.*, p. 67, no. 39.

22 *Ibid.*

23 Some scholars pronounce themselves against this dating, for example Robert Parisot, *Les origines de la Haute-Lorraine et sa première maison ducal (959–1033)*, Paris 1909, pp. 501–514; Rudolf Kohlenberger, *Die Vorgänge des Thronstreits während der Unmündigkeit Ottos III. 983–985*, Kallmünz 1931, pp. 84–88. Cf. Gerbert d’Aurillac (note 18), p. 67, note 1.

24 *Die Urkunden Ottos II.*, ed. Theodor Sickel (MGH DD, *Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* 2, 1), Hanover 1888, repr. Hanover 1999, p. 365, no. 308. cf. *Regesta Imperii* II/2 (note 2), nos. 909, 891b.

25 Richer of Saint-Remi (note 7), III, ch. 98, pp. 223–224; cf. *Regesta Imperii* II/3 (note 8), no. 956f1.

26 Gerbert d’Aurillac (note 18), p. 45, no. 22: “*Dominam meam Theuphanu imperatricem meo nomine convenite. Reges Francorum filio suo favere dicite nichilque aliud conari nisi tyrannide Heinrici velle regem se facere volentis sub nomine advocacionis destruere.*” English translation: Letters of Gerbert, ed. Lattin (note 19), pp. 67–68, no. 30.

Approach my Lady Theophanu in my name to inform her that the kings of the French are well disposed towards her son [Otto III], and that she should attempt nothing but the destruction of Henry's tyrannical scheme, for he desires to make himself king under the pretext of guardianship.

The text of this letter is somewhat different in another manuscript, saying that it was not Theophanu who should try to disrupt Henry's plans, but the kings of West Francia.²⁷ But whichever reading one prefers, we hear that the West Frankish kings were up to be supportive of Otto. In March – that is about the time when Henry tried to convince the Saxon noblemen of his proposition – Adalbero wrote a letter to Archbishop Willigis of Mainz, reporting Lothar's and Louis' backing of Otto which was about to be affirmed by mutual agreement.²⁸ Additionally, one of Gerbert's letters contains the information that Adalbero considered Lothar as Otto's guardian. Lothar agreed to this suggestion, although we do not know if he accepted that it would be limited to Otto's custody or if he thereby wanted to get hold of Lotharingia.²⁹ In any case, this suggestion was not so unrealistic, because Lothar was as closely related to Otto as Henry the Quarrelsome, since he was the son of Gerberga, a daughter of king Henry I, and therewith a cousin of Otto II.

There is a reference to the mentioned agreement between the Lotharingian noblemen in Gerbert's collection, namely in two letters proving a fierce controversy between Duke Charles of Lower Lotharingia, the brother of king Lothar, and Bishop Dietrich of Metz.³⁰ The backgrounds remain untold, but the letters reveal that some noblemen had sworn an oath at an altar dedicated to St John. It is also clear that Bishop Notker of Liège was present on this occasion. It is unclear, however, whether this oath had been sworn to support

27 In the later copies of the letter collection written in the 16th and 17th centuries, but based on earlier manuscripts which are not extant, the text reads "nihilque eos" rather than "nichilque". For the manuscripts see Weigle's introduction to his edition: Gerbert d'Aurillac (note 18), esp. pp. 8–16.

28 Ibid., p. 50, no. 27: "Denique reges nostros [sc. Lotharium et Ludovicum] ad auxilium eius [sc. Ottonis] promovimus, utriusque partis pactum, si placet, communi consensu in sempiternum stabiliemus [...]."

29 Cf. Carlrichard Brühl, *Deutschland – Frankreich. Die Geburt zweier Völker*, Cologne and Vienna 1990, p. 576: "Lothar von Westfranken [...] sah die einzigartige Möglichkeit gekommen [...], sich doch noch in den Besitz Lothringens setzen zu können, wobei ihm die Frage, wer in Ostfranken die Nachfolge Ottos II. antrat, höchst gleichgültig war."

30 Gerbert d'Aurillac (note 18), pp. 54–60, nos. 31 and 32. Concerning Dietrich, see Michel Parisse, Thierry I^{er}, évêque de Metz (965–984), in: *Les cahiers lorrains* 1965, pp. 110–117; cf. Egon Boshof, *Das Erzstift Trier und seine Stellung zu Königtum und Papsttum im ausgehenden 10. Jahrhundert. Der Pontifikat des Theoderich* (Studien und Vorarbeiten zur Germania Pontificia 4), Cologne and Vienna 1972, pp. 23–24.

Otto III or aimed at a different concern dating back several years.³¹

Dietrich's behaviour is remarkable anyhow. He is known for having close relations with the Liudolfings. Otto I arranged his elevation to the bishopric of Metz in 965, and afterwards Dietrich was one of the king's counsellors, witnessing several of his charters. In 972, the bishop belonged to the legation receiving the Byzantine princess Theophanu before she married Otto II. During the reign of the latter, Dietrich's close connection to the court remained intact. He participated in the campaign in southern Italy (982) and assumed custody over empress Theophanu and the child Otto while Otto II fought the battle of Capo Colonne (near Cotrone). In the following year, Dietrich was one of the noblemen who elected Otto III king at an assembly in Verona,³² although this does not necessarily demonstrate his loyalty.³³

It is therefore – at least at first sight – astounding that Dietrich is to be found among Henry's supporters. Alpertus of Metz offers an explanation for Dietrich's behaviour. In his *vita* of which only a fragment about the bishop's latter years has survived, he reports on an episode that is supposed to have taken place right after Otto II's defeat in southern Italy. When Theophanu heard about the outcome of the battle, she is said to have praised her Greek landmen to the skies and at the same time to have dishonoured Otto's attitude with infamous words.³⁴ Otto was not defeated, however, by "Greeks", that is by a Byzantine army, but by Muslims, more precisely by the Emirate of Sicily.³⁵ Alpertus, writing at the beginning of the eleventh century, may

31 Uhlirz declares herself in favour of a meeting in February 984 at which the oath "ante beati Johannis aram" was sworn: Uhlirz (note 20), pp. 25–30; Mathilde Uhlirz, *Jahrbücher des Deutschen Reichs unter Otto II. und Otto III.*, vol. 2: Otto III. 983–1002 (*Jahrbücher der Deutschen Geschichte*), Berlin 1954, p. 29; *Regesta Imperii II/3* (note 8), no. 956n1. Cf. in contrast Weigle's comment in his edition, Gerbert d'Aurillac (note 18), p. 55, note 5, and Kohlenberger (note 23), pp. 29–31.

32 *Regesta Imperii II/2* (note 2), nos. 891b, 899, 907, 909.

33 Thilo Offergeld, *Reges pueri. Das Königtum Minderjähriger im frühen Mittelalter* (*Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 50), Hanover 2001, pp. 655–657, argues that the election of Otto III did not underline the strong position of Otto II, but was rather a concession to the noblemen who kept Otto III as a pledge. Offergeld writes (p. 656): "Offensichtlich sollte genau das etabliert werden, was der Kaiser noch 980 [...] hatte vermeiden wollen: eine deutsche Nebenregierung unter Kontrolle der Fürsten mit dem Kindkönig Otto als rechtlich-symbolischem Mittelpunkt."

34 Alpertus of Metz, *Fragmentum de Deoderico primo episcopo Mettensi*, in: *Gebeurtenissen van deze tijd en Een fragment over bisschop Diederik I van Metz*, ed. and trans., with an introd. Hans van Rij, Amsterdam 1980, pp. 108–120, at p. 110: "Quo rumore ad aures regine Theuphanu perlato, quę ab imperatore Rohsan relicta fuerat, statim procaci locutione, ut fert levitas mulierum, conterrales suos – erat enim de Grecia – ad cęlum extollere exitumque adversi prelii cum summo probro ad derogationem imperatoris intorquere, qui tanta frequenter virtute laudatus, a suis tam facile sit superatus." Cf. Parisse (note 30), pp. 113–114.

35 Abū l-Qāsim ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan, the emir of Sicily, died in this battle. See Horst Enzensberger, "Capo Colonne, Schlacht v.", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2 (1983),

have been unaware of this fact, or he confused the parties, since Otto only narrowly escaped with the unexpected help of a Byzantine ship.³⁶ In the end, it will presumably not be possible to determine whether Alpertus' narration of Theophanu's reaction has a veritable core or if it only answers the purpose to deliver a reason for Dietrich's attitude.³⁷

Other sources reveal an alternative explanation. Thietmar reports that Dietrich's corruption and greed were well-known – albeit the chronicler gives this information in connection with the abolition of the Merseburg bishopric. In the aforementioned combative letter, Charles of Lower Lotharingia also accused Dietrich of having hoped for profit when he turned away from Otto III, and he phrased his accusation in a drastic manner:³⁸

If Judas, who betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, is considered an apostle, then you who, hoping for a reward – a scandalous reward – have deprived your lord, the hereditary king, of his kingdom may be considered a bishop.

But, again, this statement is not made by a non-committed observer and thus has to be pondered cautiously. On the other hand, even Alpertus tells us that Henry offered ample endowments to the bishop of Metz.³⁹ In trying to justify Dietrich's attitude, Alpertus even seems to argue against criticism of prosperity and cupidity.⁴⁰ It will be impossible to ultimately clarify why Dietrich in spite of his close link to the Ottonian dynasty was supportive of Henry's claim to the throne. It is also infeasible to track a potential agreement with Otto and his guardians after Henry had abandoned his plan, since Dietrich died on 7 September 984.

Gerbert's collection of letters tells us that Archbishop Egbert of Trier also supported Henry. Adalbero wrote a letter to Egbert, probably in February or

col. 1484.

36 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), III, chs. 20–23, pp. 122–130.

37 Alpertus of Metz (note 34), p. 114: “[...] memor regine improperii adversus cesarem prolati secum volvere cepit, qualiter illi sub occasione filii regnandi iura subtraheret.” Cf. *Regesta Imperii* II/3 (note 8), nos. 956s and 956o1.

38 Gerbert d'Aurillac (note 18), p. 58, no. 32: “Si iudas apostolus, qui dominum suum XXX prodidit argenteis, et tu episcopus, qui dominum tuum regem, heredem regni regno privasti spe famosissimi questus.” English translation: *Letters of Gerbert*, ed. Lattin (note 19), p. 80, no. 40.

39 Alpertus of Metz (note 34), p. 116: “Multis largitionibus datis facile eos ad suam [sc. Heinricem] sententiam perduxit.” Cf. Uhlirz (note 31), pp. 15–16.

40 Alpertus of Metz (note 34), p. 118: “Multi namque non a se ipsis, sed ex aliorum beneficiis vel etiam rapinis locupletes et clari effecti; Deodericus vero longe aliter, generositate parentum et excellentia maiorum, ex innata quoque copia magna prediorum clarissimus habetur.”

March 984, in which he asks:⁴¹

Are there so few kings created that you wish to put a new one ahead of the son of your lord? Because, by chance, he is Greek, as you contend, you wish to institute a coruler according to the custom of the Greeks?

This section proves that Egbert spoke in favour of Henry. But apparently he had an arrangement in mind that this article has not yet touched upon. Adalbero writes of a “conregnans more Grecorum”, in other words a share in kingship as it was customary in Byzantium. The Eastern Frankish Reich was not unfamiliar with co-rulers either, but they were always sons of incumbent kings, mostly emperors. Otto the Great, for instance, elevated his six-year-old son, Otto II, already in 961 to co-ruler. Thus, the boy was not only his father’s heir to the throne, but also an effectual king who could execute power and who counted the years of his reign from this point on. In political respects, however, the son was certainly subordinated.⁴² In 983 at Verona, Otto III himself was made co-ruler probably in a similar way, even if he of course did not act as king in person in the months to come. The co-rulership of Greek origin, in contrast, seems to have meant something different. In Byzantium, several elevations of co-emperors are known in the tenth century, in which the underage ruler was assisted by an emperor who was capable of acting and ruling. Thus, there was an heir to the throne and a factual main ruler.⁴³

In the letter to Notker mentioned earlier – probably dating to the end of January 984 – Adalbero already spoke of a co-rulership:⁴⁴

We know the ambitious plans of Henry [...] and we are not ignorant of their ultimate aim. Do not make a sharer of the kingdom one whom you will be unable to drive out, once he is admitted.

Henry’s opponents around Adalbero were aware of the danger that such an elevation as co-ruler could imply – or as it is worded here: as “sharer of the kingdom” (“consors regni”). What also emerges from these lines is that Egbert, and possibly Notker too, maybe argued for a co-rulership of Henry. Regrettably, the rest of the correspondance between Adalbero and Egbert contains nothing to illuminate the question of how Egbert acted in the course

41 Gerbert d’Aurillac (note 18), pp. 48–49, no. 26: “Paucine creati sunt reges, quia novum filio domini vestri praeponere vultis? Forte quia Grecus est, ut dicitis, more Grecorum conregnantem instituere vultis?” English translation: Letters of Gerbert, ed. Lattin (note 19), p. 71, no. 34.

42 Offergeld (note 33), p. 652.

43 Ibid., p. 677; Erkens (note 4), pp. 282–286.

44 Gerbert d’Aurillac (note 18), p. 68, no. 39: “Novimus Henrici alta consilia, Francorum impetum, sed quem finem habeant, non ignoramus. Ne consortem regni facias, quem semel admissum repellere nequeas.” English translation: Letters of Gerbert, ed. Lattin (note 19), p. 62, no. 24.

of events. He is in any case not one of Henry's most persistent supporters, as has been occasionally stated.⁴⁵ Egbert rather seems to have contained himself. This is reinforced by the fact that Henry was proclaimed king at the Easter celebrations at Quedlinburg, but he was not consecrated on this occasion, although the archbishops Egbert of Trier or Warin of Cologne would have come into question for this task.

A similar reluctance can be stated for Willigis of Mainz who had crowned Otto III on Christmas 983 at Aachen.⁴⁶ He acted as a vehement advocate for Otto only after Henry's ambitions became apparent, and even then he initially restricted himself to sending observers to Saxony in order to learn more about the situation.⁴⁷ He apparently avoided a forthright encounter with Henry that could have forced him to make a decision. His dilatoriness is further verified by a letter that Adalbero wrote to him.⁴⁸ Therein, the archbishop of Rheims notifies his colleague that he took Otto's part, and recommended to him that he speak for the young king as well. Willigis probably received this letter in March 984, and he might have thereupon come into action – maybe he was (also) mobilised by other news of Henry's approach. In either case, he seems to have contacted the empresses Theophanu and Adelheid, Otto's mother and grandmother, who had remained in Italy, and asked them to come northwards.⁴⁹ In the middle of May, when Henry, Willigis as well as Duke Conrad of Swabia and other noblemen met in Bürstadt near Worms,⁵⁰ it was certain that the empresses would be in Eastern Francia by June. In Bürstadt, Henry had to oblige himself to deliver Otto III to his mother Theophanu. Maybe he still did not disavow his ambitions, but apparently the strength of his followers was not great enough to induce a decision by means of warfare.⁵¹ At any rate, Henry kept his promise and committed Otto to Theophanu at the end of June.⁵² Thus, the succession controversy was virtually over, even if Henry now tried to get back the Bavarian duchy. He finally succeeded,

45 Uhlirz (note 20), p. 51; cf. Franz-Reiner Erkens, *In tota cunctis gratissimus aula?* Egbert von Trier als Reichsbischof, in: Egbert, Erzbischof von Trier 977–993. Gedenkschrift der Diözese Trier zum 1000. Todestag, 2 vols., vol. 2: Aufsätze, ed. Franz J. Ronig (Trierer Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst des Trierer Landes und seiner Nachbargebiete. Beiheft 18,2), Trier 1993, pp. 37–52, at p. 44.

46 For the following, cf. Kohlenberger (note 23), p. 11.

47 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 2, pp. 132–133; cf. Offergeld (note 33), p. 669.

48 Gerbert d'Aurillac (note 18), pp. 49–50, no. 27.

49 Regesta Imperii II/3 (note 8), nos. 956c2, 956e2.

50 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 4, pp. 134–136; cf. Regesta Imperii II/3 (note 8), no. 956e2.

51 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 4, p. 136, says that Henry feared future combats.

52 Annales Quedlinburgenses (note 6), pp. 472–473, s. a. 984; Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 8, p. 140; cf. Regesta Imperii II/3 (note 8), no. 956q2.

although this conflict lasted one more year, until a solution was found and Henry definitively accepted Otto's kingship.⁵³

1024

In 1024, the situation was different from that of 984. Henry II had no children, and when he died, an eligible candidate had to be found as his successor. There exists a quite detailed account written by Wipo, the biographer of Conrad II, on this situation. Wipo wrote his *Gesta Chuonradi* in the 1040s and dedicated it to Conrad's son and successor, Henry III.⁵⁴ Thus, he had a close connection to the Salian court and might have had valuable information at his disposal. Admittedly, we do not know if he witnessed the beginning of Conrad's rule. Some inconsistencies in his narrative indicate that he did not always follow the royal court, as he concedes in the dedication letter which he presented to Henry III. He excuses this fact by referring to frequent illnesses.⁵⁵

Wipo's account begins with a depiction of the troubled times after Henry II had died on 13 July 1024.⁵⁶

In a short time after the death of the Emperor, the commonwealth, so to speak, desolate through the loss of its father, began to stagger. From this happening all the best men had fear and anxiety that the Empire was in danger, but the worst prayed that this were so. Divine Providence, however, gave the anchors of the Church into the charge of bishops and such steersmen as were needed at that time to take command in guiding the fatherland without jettison into the harbor of quiet.

So, according to Wipo, the churchmen in particular were a support in these times. For this reason the chronicler afterwards lists the most important bishops of the kingdom, adds one or two sentences about each of them, but

53 Annales Quedlinburgenses (note 6), pp. 474–475, s. a. 985; Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 8, p. 140; cf. Regesta Imperii II/3 (note 8), no. 969l.

54 See Bresslau's introduction to his edition: Wiponis Opera. – Die Werke Wipos, ed. Harry Bresslau, 3rd ed. (MGH SSrG [61]), Hanover and Leipzig 1915, repr. Hanover 1993, pp. XV–XXI.

55 Wipo, *Gesta Chuonradi II. imperatoris*, in: Bresslau (note 54), pp. 1–62, *Epistola ad regem Heinricum Chuonradi imperatoris filium*, p. 3: "[...] quoniam, cum plurimum tempus infirmavi, non potui in capella senioris mei Chuonradi frequenter adesse." Cf. Tilmann Struve, "Wipo", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 9 (1998), cols. 243–244.

56 Wipo (note 55), ch. 1, p. 9: "Post imperatoris obitum res publica amisso patre tamquam desolata in brevi vacillare coepit. Unde cuique optimo metus et sollicitudo, pessimis autem in voto imperium periclitari erat. Verum divina providentia anchoras ecclesiae commisit viris pontificalibus et his gubernatoribus, quales ad ducendam patriam sine iactura in portum quietis eo tempore superesse oportebat." English translation: *Imperial lives and letters of the eleventh century*, ed. Robert L. Benson, trans. Theodor E. Mommsen and Karl F. Morrison (Records of civilization, sources and studies 67), New York and London 1962, repr. New York 2000, pp. 57–58.

does not depict their attitudes towards possible aspirants or their actions prior to the election meeting. After enumerating the lay noblemen in a much shorter manner, Wipo describes how the election was prepared:⁵⁷

The above-mentioned bishops and dukes and the other powerful persons, thinking that in no other way could they avoid the threatening peril better or more quickly, strove with the greatest resourcefulness and with memorable industry to the end that the commonwealth might totter no longer without a ruler. The expedient of letters and envoys made it possible to weigh private counsels and the opinions of individuals as to the man to whom each would consent, to whom he would object, or whom he wanted for his lord; nor was it done in vain. For it is the part of foresight to prepare within for that which is needed without; [...].

This account is of a quite general substance, and thus it is safe to conclude that Wipo apparently was not informed in detail about these affairs. He does not mention any individual by name who could have participated in the negotiations before the election. He does not give any hints about possible aspirants. Implicitly, he explains his ignorance with the fact that these negotiations happened in secret which might be true to a certain degree.

This vague kind of presentation is continued when it comes to the election meeting itself. Wipo does not mention time and place of the assembly, but only says it took place between Mainz and Worms, adding the strange side remark that he leaves it to the topographers to determine the location's precise situation.⁵⁸ The chronicle of Hermann of Reichenau tells us that the assembly met at Kamba on the right bank of the Rhine, about 20 kilometres south of Mainz.⁵⁹ A letter from abbot Bern of Reichenau to an Italian bishop knows of the date: the election took place on 4 September, approximately six weeks after Henry II's death.⁶⁰ Obviously, Wipo did not have in mind a precise

57 Wipo (note 55), ch. 1, p. 13: "Supra memorati episcopi et duces caeterique potentes haud aliter periculum minitans melius aut citius evadere rati summa ope et industria memorabili nitebantur, ne res publica diutius sine regente nutaret. Privata consilia et animos singulorum, cui quisquam consentiret, cui dissentiret aut quem sibi dominum optaret, epistolarum et legatorum commoditas conferebat, neque it in vanum. Nam providentiae est interius praeparare, quo foris indiges [...]." English translation: Mommsen and Morrison (note 56), p. 60.

58 Wipo (note 55), ch. 2, p. 14: "[...] sed de vocabulo et situ loci plenius discere topographis relinquo, [...]."

59 Hermann of Reichenau, *Chronicon*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz (MGH SS 5), Hanover 1844, pp. 67–133, p. 120, s. a. 1024.

60 Bern of Reichenau, *Die Briefe des Abtes Bern von Reichenau*, ed. Franz-Josef Schmale (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg. Reihe A: Quellen 6), Stuttgart 1961, p. 36–37, no. 10. Cf. *Regesta Imperii III: Salisches Haus 1024–1125. Part 1: 1024–1056, 1. Abteilung: Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter Konrad II. 1024–1039*, ed. Johann Friedrich Böhrer, red. Heinrich Appelt, Vienna, Cologne and Graz 1951, no. k.

report of the events, but an idealised account of a royal election which was carried out by all noblemen of the Reich. The chronicler keeps going on in this vague manner:⁶¹

When, in this fashion, a long disputation took place as to who ought to rule; and when age – too immature or, on the other hand, too greatly advanced – rejected one, untested valor, another; and a proven state of insolence, some others, few were chosen among many, and from the few two only were singled out.

Again: no names. In fact, we only learn that there were more than two candidates who were seriously considered. The two candidates that were finally “proposed” were Conrad the Elder and Conrad the Younger, as Wipo names them. They both were grandsons of Duke Otto of Carinthia and thereby cousins. Wipo now lets Conrad the Elder, the later king Conrad II, deliver a long speech in which he suggests to Conrad the Younger that the one who is not elected should accept the other candidate. The younger cousin agreed to this proposal, and thereupon Archbishop Aribio of Mainz was the first to deliver his vote for Conrad the Elder. He was followed by the other archbishops and bishops, and Conrad the Younger kept his word and respected the election of Conrad the Elder.⁶²

Even if Wipo sought to give the account of a unanimous election, we still learn from him that Conrad the Younger also had support, namely from Archbishop Pilgrim of Cologne, Duke Frederick of Upper Lotharingia and some other noblemen from Lotharingia. They departed, as Wipo phrases it, “belligerent [...] on the younger Cuono’s account”.⁶³ The chronicler does not have more to say about these noblemen, except that they soon honoured the new king. After that, Wipo depicts the consecration and coronation of Conrad which was performed by Archbishop Aribio of Mainz on 8 September at his episcopal see.⁶⁴

Fortunately, Wipo’s account can be supplemented in some respects. An important source in this regard is the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, the “Deeds of the Bishops of Cambrai”.⁶⁵ This text was commissioned by Bishop

61 Wipo (note 55), ch. 2, p. 15: “Eo modo cum diu certaretur, quis regnare deberet, cumque alium aetas vel nimis immatura vel ultra modum provecta, alium virtus inexplorata, quosdam insolentiae causa manifesta recusaret: inter multos pauci electi sunt, et de paucis admodum duo sequestrati sunt [...]” English translation: Mommsen and Morrison (note 56), p. 61.

62 Wipo (note 55), ch. 2, p. 15.

63 Ibid., ch. 2, p. 18: “Quamquam archiepiscopus Coloniensis et dux Fridericus cum aliis quibusdam Liutharingis causa iunioris Chuononis [...] impacati discederent [...]”. English translation: Mommsen and Morrison (note 56), p. 65.

64 Wipo (note 55), ch. 3, pp. 20–24.

65 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, ed. Ludwig Conrad Bethmann (MGH SS 7), Hanover 1846, pp. 402–489.

Gerard I of Cambrai and written by an anonymous writer about 1024/5 for the most part. The relevant section, though, resides in book III which “features a number of later interpolations whose chronology and dating are by no means fully clarified”, as Theo Riches has pointed out.⁶⁶ The paragraph that is of interest here (III:50) was probably drawn up between 1025 and 1030, and therewith shortly after the events, but possibly only as late as in the 1050s.⁶⁷ In this paragraph, the *Gesta* reports that Gozelo, the duke of Lower Lotharingia, did not want to accept the election. Instead, he prompted the bishops of Lotharingia to promise him by oath not to honour Conrad the Elder without his permission.⁶⁸ Some of the lay noblemen of Lotharingia also joined this *coniuratio*.⁶⁹ Wipo’s account is thereby insofar confirmed in that some of the noblemen of Lotharingia disagreed with the election of Conrad the Elder.

I would like to take a closer look at this *coniuratio*. It is not clear which bishops participated. The *Gesta* tells us that “*episcopos[...] Coloniae, Noviomagi, Virduni, Traiecti, Leodii allucutus, sacramentum a singulis accepit.*” If the genitive of the mentioned cities relates to “*episcopos*”, the oath would have been made by the bishops of Cologne, Nijmegen, Verdun, Utrecht and Liège. The problem is that Nijmegen never had been a bishopric. Thus, it has been considered that “*Noviomagus*” means Noyon (“*Noviomensis*”).⁷⁰ But the bishop of Noyon in West Francia had not much to do with the election of the Eastern Frankish king, so that this identification is rather unlikely. Another possibility is that the mentioned cities were not the sees of the partaking bishops, but the places where Gozelo met them. This is encouraged by the wording that he accepted the oaths separately (“*a singulis*”). But then again it

66 Theo M. Riches, *Episcopal Historiography as Archive. Some Reflections on the Autograph Manuscript of the Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (MS Den Haag KB 75 F 15), in: *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 10 (2007), pp. 7–46, at pp. 17–23.

67 Chapter III:48 must have been written between 1030 and 1035, chapter III:49 not before 1051. However, there are good arguments that some chapters were interpolated after book III was written, and thus chapter III:50 is most probably from the period 1025/1030. See *ibid.*, pp. 20–22 for details; cf. Erik van Mingroot, *Kritisch onderzoek omtrent de datering van de Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, in: *Revue Belge de Philologie et d’Histoire/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 53 (1975), pp. 281–332.

68 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (note 65), III, ch. 50, p. 485.

69 *Ibid.*: “*Hoc idem dux Theodericus comesque Haynocensium Raginerius cum sibi complicibus sacramento firmaverunt.*” Duke Dietrich of Upper Lotharingia was the father of the Frederick mentioned by Wipo. Frederick was duke alongside his father since 1019. See Michel Parisse, “Friedrich, Hzg. v. Oberlothringen”, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 4 (1989), cols. 951–952.

70 Hermann Pabst, *Frankreich und Konrad der Zweite in den Jahren 1024 und 1025*, in: *Forschungen zur Deutschen Geschichte* 5 (1865), pp. 337–368, p. 354 with note 2; cf. *Regesta Imperii* III/1 (note 60), no. s.

is questionable which bishops he should have met in Nijmegen *and* Utrecht.

Even if we do not know exactly by whom of the bishops the oath was made, it is clear that Pilgrim of Cologne soon left the opposition. This can be seen in the coronation of Conrad's wife Gisela who was not crowned until 21 September. The delay itself is not remarkable or uncommon,⁷¹ but Wipo states that the delay happened because of some envious people.⁷² It would be illuminating to know the reasons; Wipo, however, held back this information, if he knew it at all. Interestingly, Gisela was not crowned by Aribio, but by Pilgrim. Wipo says that the archbishop of Cologne asked for it as an atonement for his earlier sin.⁷³ But Aribio might have had objections that we do not know of. They are stated explicitly nowhere in the sources, but the archbishop of Mainz took a firm stand concerning the so called "Hammerstein marriage" and even confronted pope Benedict VIII.⁷⁴ In 1023, Benedict forbade Aribio to use his pallium.⁷⁵ Conrad II and his wife Gisela were as closely related as Otto of Hammerstein and his wife Irmingard of Verdun.⁷⁶ Thus, Aribio might have assessed Conrad and Gisela as too closely related, and therefore refused to crown Gisela. There is a problem with this interpretation, however. If their close relationship was the reason for Aribio to refuse Gisela's coronation, then why did he crown Conrad?⁷⁷ This question

71 Henry II's wife Kunigunde, for instance, was crowned six weeks after her husband; see *Regesta Imperii II: Sächsisches Haus 919–1024*, vol. 4: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Heinrich II. 1002–1024*, ed. Johann Friedrich Böhrer, red. Theodor Graff, Vienna, Cologne and Graz 1971, nos. 1483yy and 1496a; cf. Herwig Wolfram, *Konrad II. 990–1039. Kaiser dreier Reiche*, Munich 2000, p. 65.

72 Wipo (note 55), ch. 4, p. 25: "Haec quorundam hominum invidia [...] per aliquot dies a consecratione sua impediabatur."

73 *Ibid.*, ch. 2, p. 20: "et archiepiscopus Pilegrinus quasi pro emendatione prioris culpae impetrabat a rege, ut sibi liceret in ecclesia Coloniensi reginam consecrare." Cf. Hermann of Reichenau (note 59), s. a. 1024, p. 120: "[...] habito apud villam Kambam principum conventu, senior Counradus rex promotus, et ab Aribone archiepiscopo Moguntiacy unctus est 6. Idus Septembr. [sic] Nec multo post uxor eius Gisela a Pilgrino archiepiscopo Coloniae regina nihilominus benedicta 11. Kal. Octobr. [sic]"

74 Siegfried Reicke, *Der Hammersteinsche Ehehandel im Lichte der mittelalterlichen Herrschaftsordnung*, in: *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 38 (1974), pp. 203–224; Dorothea von Kessler, *Der Eheprozess Ottos und Irmingards von Hammerstein. Studie zur Geschichte des katholischen Ehrechts im Mittelalter* (Historische Studien 157), Berlin 1923, repr. Vaduz 1965, p. 66; cf. Alois Gerlich, "Hammersteiner Ehe", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 4 (1989), col. 1892.

75 Reicke (note 74), p. 221; Kessler (note 74), pp. 53–54.

76 Reicke (note 74), p. 222; Norbert Bischoff, *Über die Chronologie der Kaiserin Gisela und über die Verweigerung ihrer Krönung durch Aribio von Mainz*, in: *MIÖG* 58 (1950), pp. 285–309, at p. 303; Kessler (note 74), p. 66.

77 Egon Boshof, *Köln, Mainz, Trier – Die Auseinandersetzung um die Spitzenstellung im deutschen Episkopat in ottonisch-salischer Zeit*, in: *Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins* 49 (1978), pp. 19–48, p. 36, note 56: "Es bleibt freilich eine Crux der Forschung, erklären zu müssen, warum sich Aribio zur Krönung Konrads, den

must be left unanswered for the moment, and it might remain unanswered by future research.

After Pilgrim joined the king's party, the other bishops of Lotharingia apparently soon honoured Conrad II as well. At least the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* reports that the people of Lotharingia sang ridiculous songs about the bishops since they were the first to break their oath not to accept Conrad.⁷⁸

From the *Gesta* we also learn that Gerard of Cambrai had a kind of wait-and-see attitude. He had not joined any agreement and also kept away from the king. He only sent messengers to Conrad II.⁷⁹ The diocesan chronicle of Cambrai continues that Gerard honoured the king on Christmas the following year in Aachen, joined by Duke Dietrich of Upper Lotharingia (Frederick's father) and Gozelo of Lower Lotharingia, who accepted the king on this occasion as well.⁸⁰ Thus the opposition of the noblemen (or at least some of the noblemen) of Lotharingia, which in 1025 was supported by Conrad the Younger and Duke Ernst II of Swabia, a stepson of king Conrad, had come to an end. Gerard of Cambrai was the last of the bishops from Lotharingia to honour king Conrad. This could mean that he remained on the sidelines as the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* delineates it – or that he stood not closer to the opposition than his biographer wanted it to look like. In the absence of further sources, this cannot be conclusively clarified.

der Vorwurf unkanonischer Ehe doch auch traf, bereit fand." Cf. Bischoff (note 76), p. 304. On this topic, see now also Karl Ubl, *Inzestverbot und Gesetzgebung. Die Konstruktion eines Verbrechens (300–1100)* (Millenium-Studien 20), Berlin and New York 2008, pp. 442–445.

78 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (note 65), III, ch. 50, p. 485: "Quod episcopi primi infregerunt, qui se primos dederunt, canticumque populi malum facti sunt." Cf. Wolfram (note 71), pp. 75–76 and p. 380, note 47.

79 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (note 65), III, ch. 50, p. 485: "His omnibus pacationibus non accesserat dominus episcopus, sed conabatur eos ad pacis redigere gratiam, postquam cognovit eorum minus bene sanam sententiam. Interim suspendit suum a regis praesentia gradum, ne ipsis fieret scandalum offensionis; directis tamen officiose legatis, macula se exuit suspicionis." Heinrich Sproemberg, Gerhard I., Bischof von Cambrai (1002–1061[sic]), in: Heinrich Sproemberg, *Mittelalter und demokratische Geschichtsschreibung. Ausgewählte Abhandlungen*, ed. Manfred Unger (Forschungen zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte 18), Berlin 1971, pp. 103–118, at p. 116, dismisses this statement: "Wenn auch die Bischofschronik betont, daß Gerhard sich absichtlich zurückgehalten habe, so ist dies schon wegen seiner Familienbeziehungen wenig wahrscheinlich." Cf. Theodor Schieffer, *Ein deutscher Bischof des 11. Jahrhunderts: Gerhard I. von Cambrai (1012–1051)*, in: DA 1 (1937), pp. 323–360, at pp. 345–346.

80 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (note 65), III, ch. 50, p. 485: "Ducibus tandem post annum et fere medium ad pacem flexis, cum eis ad Aquas Grani palatii ivit, seque deditioni regis libens obtulit." Cf. *Fundatio monasterii Brunwilarensis*, ed. Rudolf Köpke (MGH SS 11), Hanover 1854, repr. Hanover 1994, pp. 396–408, ch. 10, p. 401. See also *Regesta Imperii* III/1 (note 60), no. 48a.

I will add some information about the remaining bishops of Lotharingia of whom nothing detailed is reported, though. Poppo, the archbishop of Trier, was a brother of Duke Ernst I of Swabia.⁸¹ Ernst was the first husband of Gisela who later married Conrad II and died in 1015 as a result of a hunting accident. Poppo was the custodian of the son of Ernst and Gisela, Ernst II. But there is nothing that could be suggestive of Poppo having supported his protégé's stepfather, Conrad II.⁸² Dietrich II of Metz appears as intervener in one of Conrad II's charters which was issued on 23 September 1024 at Aachen.⁸³ It has to be assumed, in consequence, that Dietrich at least attended Gisela's coronation three days before and that he was among Conrad's supporters at the latest from this point, maybe influenced by the behaviour of Archbishop Pilgrim of Cologne. Regarding the bishop of Toul in Upper Lotharingia, Hermann, nothing is known in connection with Conrad's accession to power. On balance it can be concluded that the Lotharingian opposition of the years 1024/5 was accomplished mainly by lay magnates.

The role of the bishops

The reasons why a bishop favoured one candidate can only be determined in rare cases. We have just too few meaningful sources. Therefore, the task can only be to find out how the bishops acted, and to deduce possible patterns of behaviour as well as commonalities and differences. But even this task is somewhat difficult to complete, since we do not know how some of the bishops acted. I will nevertheless single out some issues worthwhile considering.

It is of course absolutely necessary to include the bishop's concrete situation in the analysis. For Giselher of Magdeburg, for instance, the location of his bishopric at the eastern border in connection with the uprising of the Slavs in the summer of 983 might have played an important role for his decision to back Henry, and not the child Otto.

It is striking that in 984 as well as in 1024 the archbishops of Cologne at least in the first instance supported the candidate who later did not become

81 Johannes Jacobi, *Erzbischof Poppo von Trier (1016–1047)*, in: *Archiv für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* 16 (1961), pp. 9–26, at p. 10; cf. Wolfgang Schmid, *Poppo von Babenberg († 1047). Erzbischof von Trier – Förderer des hl. Simeon – Schutzpatron der Habsburger*, Trier 1998, p. 126.

82 See Jacobi (note 81), p. 24: "Poppo hielt sich neutral [...]." Jacobi adds that both seem to have had an extremely humble spiritual bond: "[...] ein Schluß auf äußerst geringe geistige Bindung beider dürfte nach allem nicht von der Hand zu weisen sein." Cf. also Friedrich Lesser, *Erzbischof Poppo von Trier (1016–1047). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Episkopates vor Ausbruch des Investiturstreites*, Leipzig 1888, pp. 61 and 67–69, whose interpretations should be handled with caution.

83 *Die Urkunden Konrads II. Mit Nachträgen zu den Urkunden Heinrichs II.*, ed. Harry Bresslau (MGH DD, *Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* 4), Hanover 1909, repr. Hanover 2001, p. 6, no. 5; *Regesta Imperii* III/1 (note 60), no. 5.

king. This is not indisputable in the case of Warin of Cologne, but the fact that he delivered Otto III to Henry indicates that he was at least not averse to supporting him. Pilgrim's departure from the election meeting in 1024 leaves no doubt in respect of his attitude towards Conrad, although only two weeks later he seized the opportunity to crown Conrad's wife Gisela and thereby had a small success in the conflict with the archbishop of Mainz concerning the question who should be responsible for the coronation of the king. In 1002 – that may be added at this point – the archbishop of Cologne, Heribert, also pronounced himself not in favour of the later king, Henry II, but for his opponent, Duke Hermann of Swabia.⁸⁴ Does that mean we have a pattern here? It is indeed likewise striking that the other noblemen of Lotharingia also tended to the losing candidate. Is there some kind of coherence? It would lead too far to elaborate on the difficult and eventful history of Lotharingia in the tenth and eleventh centuries now,⁸⁵ but for the support of one candidate a bishop's own interests and that of his diocese as well as his personal relations to him or his family seem to have been more important in the end than belonging to Lotharingia. An opposition (which in itself is a term from the later king's point of view) of the whole of Lotharingia cannot be deduced in 984 nor in 1024, and even less in 1002.

The analysis of the bishops of Lotharingia makes it also evident how much our picture is shaped by the sources, and by the lack of sources.⁸⁶ For 1024 we have some general remarks by Wipo, saying that several noblemen of Lotharingia had declared themselves against Conrad II. This is complemented by some ambiguous information from the diocesan chronicle of Cambrai. For the succession crisis of 984, on the other hand, we have the letter collection of Gerbert d'Aurillac, including several letters which highlight the attitudes and motivations of the bishops in question, although partly the context is missing. If we were to rely on Thietmar's chronicle solely, we would have much less knowledge of the bishops of Lotharingia.

Gerbert's letter collection provides ample information about the most emphatic and energetic proponent of the imperial party in 984. This seems to

84 Thietmar of Merseburg (note 2), IV, ch. 50, p. 188, IV, ch. 53, p. 192, V, ch. 20, p. 245; Adalbold of Utrecht, *De Vita Heinrici II imperatoris* van bisschop Adelbold van Utrecht, trans., with an introd. Hans van Rij, in: *Nederlandse Historische Bronnen* 3 (1983), ed. Hans van Rij, ch. 12, p. 58.

85 Parisot (note 23), esp. pp. 331–338 and 409–426; Walter Mohr, *Geschichte des Herzogtums Lothringen*, 4 vols., vol. 1: *Geschichte des Herzogtums Groß-Lothringen* (900–1048), Saarbrücken 1974, esp. pp. 74–76.

86 Cf. Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages c. 800–1056* (Longman history of Germany), London 1991, p. 187: "The contrast with 1002 may also reflect differences between the principal narrative sources: Thietmar of Merseburg offers much revealing detail about 1002 and was not himself an unqualified admirer of the successful candidate, whereas Wipo, the biographer of Conrad II, was writing a panegyric of his hero."

have been Adalbero, the archbishop of Rheims. This is somewhat astonishing at first sight, since Adalbero was chancellor of the West Frankish king. His connection to the Eastern Franks is caused by his descent.⁸⁷ Adalbero originated from a family of counts from Lotharingia and was educated at the abbey of Gorze near Metz. His brother Frederick, who had died in 978, had been duke of Upper Lotharingia,⁸⁸ his brother Gotfrey was count of Verdun.⁸⁹ This explains his proximity to Lotharingia and thus to Eastern Francia, but it does not account for his support for Otto III. Equally important could be the role of his secretary, Gerbert d'Aurillac, who was an intimate of the empress Theophanu, and who could have exerted some influence on Adalbero.

But apart from his familial background, Adalbero could have campaigned for Otto unconditionally, just *because* he was bishop in West Francia. The reason is that if Henry had succeeded, Adalbero would not have had to fear direct consequences. This assumption might have had some importance, although it was certainly not solely decisive. And Adalbero's support for Otto was not absolutely without risk for himself, as other noblemen in West Francia also took a stand concerning the succession in the Eastern Frankish kingdom and thereby could indirectly raise conflicts.⁹⁰

There certainly was a risk for the bishops of Eastern Francia to support the "wrong" candidate. That could be the reason for the temporising and hesitant behaviour of some bishops. As we have seen, even Willigis, who had crowned Otto III, pronounced himself for Otto distinctly only when Henry said that he would like to be king himself – or at least to participate in the rulership. Willigis was more or less forced to make a decision. Perhaps he wanted to keep options as long as possible. For this reason he may not have wanted to meet the candidate directly. This cannot be said with certainty for Willigis, but such a behaviour is confirmed for Gerard of Cambrai. He kept away from Conrad II, as is explicitly stated by the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*. The reason that is given for this is: *ne ipsis fieret scandalum offensionis*.⁹¹ So Gerard wanted to obviate the anger of the king ("scandalum") that could arise from an offence ("offensio"). It was important for Gerard, and also for Conrad, to save face. That is the reason why Gerard did not attend on Conrad,

87 The bishops' family relationships are of course an important aspect, although they could not be dealt with in detail here.

88 Michel Parisse, "Friedrich I., Hzg. v. Oberlothringen", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 4 (1989), col. 951; Parisot (note 23), p. 318; cf. Mohr (note 85), p. 49.

89 Michel Parisse, "Gottfried d. Ä., Gf. v. Verdun", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 4 (1989), cols. 1601–1602.

90 Adalbero backed Hugo Capet who was the most powerful nobleman of Western Francia. The archbishop crowned Hugo king after Louis V's death in 987. Hugo's antagonist Charles of Lower Lotharingia, Louis V's uncle, also asserted a claim to the throne. See Brühl (note 29), pp. 583–600.

91 *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (note 65), III, ch. 50, p. 485.

but only sent messengers.⁹² Again, we do not know which messages he sent. This proves, however, as we have already seen in Gerbert's letters, that the spoken word and the visible gesture – in other words: verbal and symbolic communication – were more significant than written documents.⁹³

If one backed the “wrong”, and thus the finally losing candidate, one could at worst fall from the future king's grace and would have few chances for the rest of his rule to obtain his goodwill or to gain his assistance, for example in disputes with other noblemen. This is of course also true for lay noblemen – in fact, their risk might have been even greater, because they could lose their duchy or county, whereas a bishop could not be dismissed from his office.

In conclusion, I would like to present some preliminary results. (1) The bishops did not act as a group. They were also not in opposition to the lay magnates. This is not a very surprising deduction since the bishops were interwoven with the nobility through family ties. These interrelations which could only be touched upon in this paper are nevertheless important for the behaviour of (at least some of) the bishops. (2) Bishops did not act as a regional unity. Although the Lotharingians seem to have done so at first sight, not all Lotharingian bishops opposed the new king, and some left the opposition quickly. This is confirmed when looking at other regions where information of joint actions are lacking entirely. (3) Bishops acted and intervened in succession disputes, even if some of them did so in a very cautious way. The intervention of bishops seems to be obvious, but it is reasonable to ask why the bishops were involved in the election of a king at all, since this is no duty which is inherent in their office. It is not possible to address this question in one sentence, but Steffen Patzold could show that the bishops by the beginning of the 10th century had a significant position which he depicts not as “episcopacy between kingdom and nobility”, as it was common in recent research, but as “episcopacy besides kingdom and nobility, between God and the people.”⁹⁴ Further research is needed to prove whether the bishops' position in late Ottonian and early Salian society was like this. This can be done by studying their behaviour and the contemporaries' view on bishops in a more extensive way. Only then will we learn whether bishops were effective actors during a succession controversy or were just swaying

92 As Theo Riches pointed out to me, Gerard's reluctance might have been due to the circumstances on the local and regional level which left him politically isolated at the time of Conrad II's succession.

93 Steffen Patzold, ... inter pagensium nostrorum gladios vivimus. Zu den “Spielregeln” der Konfliktführung in Niederlothringen zur Zeit der Ottonen und frühen Salier, in: ZRG, Germ. Abt. 118 (2001), pp. 58–99, analysed the “rules” for conflicts in Lower Lotharingia during the later tenth and early eleventh centuries, especially focussing on the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*.

94 Patzold (note 1), p. 526: “Im Wissen der hohen und späten Karolingerzeit bildeten die Bischöfe nicht einen ‚Reichsepiskopat zwischen Königtum und Adel‘, sondern einen ‚Reichsepiskopat neben Königtum und Adel, zwischen Gott und den Menschen‘.”

like trees in the wind. And only then will it be possible to determine their rank compared to king and nobility.

Abkürzungsverzeichnis/List of Abbreviations

AKG	Archiv für Kulturgeschichte
ASC	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition, general eds. David Dumville and Simon Keynes, Cambridge 1983ff.
ASE	Anglo-Saxon England
DA	Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters
EHR	English Historical Review
EME	Early Medieval Europe
FMST	Frühmittelalterliche Studien
GWU	Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht
HJb	Historisches Jahrbuch
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
DD	Diplomata
SS	Scriptores (in Folio)
SSrG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi
SSrG N. S.	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova Series
MIÖG	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung
N. F.	Neue Folge
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (http://www.oxforddnb.com)
QFIAB	Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken
S	Peter H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters. An Annotated List and Bibliography (Royal Historical Society Guides and handbooks 8), London 1968. A revised, updated, and expanded version can be found at http://www.esawyer.org.uk .
ZBLG	Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte
ZfG	Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft
ZRG	Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte
Germ. Abt.	Germanistische Abteilung
Kan. Abt.	Kanonistische Abteilung