INTRODUCTION

Scholarship has long agreed that the reign of Frederick Barbarossa marks a high point in the medieval Holy Roman Empire, and a high point in its ideological self-presentation as precisely that – an empire that was both holy and Roman. However, these terms should not in fact be accepted straightforwardly, nor should we assume that the aura of 'holiness' arose in any centrally designed fashion. The current understanding of the dynamics around this topic, proposing what we can usefully call the *sacrum imperium* theory (meaning not only the presence of the specific phrase but also the wider ideological programme), coalesced in the mid-twentieth century, as we shall see later, but now requires quite considerable revision. That revision is what this book aims to achieve.

The starting point is the tripartite theory of the sacralisation of the Empire as proposed in 1952 by Friedrich Heer, who believed that Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Rainald of Dassel (imperial chancellor 1156–1159, archbishop of Cologne and archchancellor for Italy 1159–1167) worked together (1) to introduce *sacrum imperium* as the title of the Empire, but also (2) to translate the Three Kings, as the Biblical Magi are known, from Milan to Cologne, and (3) to make Charlemagne a saint. The formulation is by no means accidental, as it was based on the theories of the sacral nature of the medieval state as described by Percy Ernst Schramm and Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, whose works on sacral kingship are still dominant in the field, albeit agnosticism regarding their ideas is more common nowadays. The key change in Heer's work, however, was that he imbued the events he was describing with a Faustian character, that is, he saw that the German structures and accompanying domination of Europe were fundamentally broken after Barbarossa, while the European West, meaning England, France and Italy, was on the rise.

Heer's tripartite theory, favoured by historians, was quickly reinforced by a large number of art historical publications claiming to have discovered yet another piece of Frederick's *sacrum imperium* programme, most

1

commonly in Aachen, but also elsewhere. There was a brachiary of Saint Charlemagne, where Frederick Barbarossa imitated the Byzantine emperors, and a reliquary shrine of Saint Charlemagne, where the German kings and emperors sat enthroned and saintlike beneath the arcades usually reserved for apostles. A huge crown chandelier, which depicted the same emperor's entry into heaven, was hanging right above either of the two reliquaries, which were located in the mid-point of Aachen's Marienkirche (the church of Saint Mary). There was also a bust of Frederick Barbarossa, where the current emperor was at the same time depicted as both Charlemagne and Constantine the Great, and which has been described as the earliest portrait in European history. There was a series of Romanesque stained-glass windows in Strasbourg Cathedral depicting the Holy Roman emperors as holy successors to the kings of Israel. The list could be expanded with many other examples; however, conclusive proof was lacking for each and every item on it.

While these may seem abstruse matters to historians not working on political history, at its heart this is a fundamental problem of European history, and one of the core parts of the *Sonderweg* theory, which claims that Germany had a special historical path and role as opposed to the so-called normal cases of France and England. Because imperial power waned quickly from the death of Henry VI in 1197 onwards, having seemed only to grow until then, explanations for the same were sought in the long reign of Henry's imperial father, Frederick, who had been a part of the national mythology since the Middle Ages. Nostalgia for the Redbeard reached its peak in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the German Empire paid tribute to him in speeches and monuments, while Nazi Germany staged the single largest military operation in human history under Frederick's name: Operation Barbarossa. In the sacralisation of the emperor and the Empire that scholars proposed, Hitler and his company found their own inspiration for a Germany restored to its rightful place in Europe and the world by an almost deified leader, who would occasionally flaunt the insignia of the emperors of old. Unfortunately, medievalists let their opinions of the past be informed by Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, the two World Wars and even the terminology of this period when determining what had happened a millennium ago. Other countries' historians did the same, but in the German case, that led to an especially strong stigma about the past, which, in turn, froze some avenues of research for many decades. Chief among these was the German identity of the medieval German people, and how it related to the Holy Roman Empire, which is now remembered through the quip that it was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire.

Instead of confirming the commonly held ideas on the Hohenstaufen court and its relations to Aachen, I will demonstrate that these top-down

2

ideas of the past have obscured much (but not all) of the findings made in the past hundred or so years, and that important local elements and participation have been unwittingly downplayed time and time again, with the effect that many sources that deviate from the common pattern have been conceptually sidelined so that a more unified reading could be obtained. This book steps away from the (admittedly helpful) court- and ruled-focused lens systematised by Theodor Sickel, Harry Bresslau and their successors in the field of diplomatic, and returns to the complexity present in the sources. By doing so, I intend to return to the study of history *as it actually happened*, to quote the maxim of Leopold von Ranke, the most prominent exponent of the positivist school of history. Such principles, more consequently applied to the same material, will yield fundamentally different results.

The goal of the *Altmeister*, that is, the generations of Sickel, Bresslau, Waitz and others whose editorial work underpins much of medieval German history, was to understand the state through the functioning of the emperor and his court, of which the best evidenced component was the document-producing chancery. Simply put, they thought that the chancery was run on three levels: the honorific or top level represented by the archchaplains and archchancellors; the political or middle level occupied by the chancellors, capellars (an officer of the chapel during the High Middle Ages) and protonotaries; and the operative or bottom level, where one would find the notaries, scribes and chaplains. Furthermore, the chancery was seen as a part of the court chapel, so every member of the former was also a chaplain, while not every chaplain worked in the chancery. For the sake of establishing order in the documents they found, the *Altmeister* excluded transitory draftsmen and copyists from what they considered to be the court staff. They equally excluded the many courtiers, or visitors to the court, who did not otherwise read or write, from being considered a part of the production of documents. Moreover, the ruler's point of view has been presented as dominant in his documents, but also as entirely absent, for only the chancery staff would deal with the business of writing.

As exemplified by Joseph Fleckenstein's *magnum opus* on the chapel from Pepin the Short to Henry III (751–1056), and continued up to Barbarossa's accession in 1152 in works by Fleckenstein, Friedrich Hausmann and Wolfgang Petke, this imposing court chapel ran the Holy Roman Empire and comprised the core part of the state, the *Reichskirchensystem*, by and through which chaplains would be recruited from among the leading German (and sometimes Italian) families, and after a term in service they would ascend to provostships and bishoprics, through which they would, in turn, assist their own networks, but also

3

further the causes of the emperor and his court. Most recently, Wolfgang Huschner challenged the dominant view by introducing a classification of notaries and disputing the essence of the three-tiered chancery, but his numerous palaeographic and diplomatic blunders have significantly slowed the spread of his corrections to the Sickel–Bresslau view, especially beyond 1056, where he stopped.[1]

Very few scholars deal with diplomatic proper, and even fewer discuss the theoretical side, as Bresslau's handbook is still held to be the northern star in an otherwise dark night. Yet the teacher himself, having seen the great variety of diplomatic sources, was not nearly as rigid as his successors. While his work, as well as those of Fleckenstein and Huschner, will have to wait a bit longer for a thorough revision, this book offers a glimpse into the Hohenstaufen era that is based on a different point of view, where no public document of the period is considered only as a product of the monarch, his inner circle and their subaltern staff, but rather as a collaborative effort between the issuer and the recipient, and their advisers and literate courtiers. Through so doing, this book attempts to hold to account the core tenet that has grown out of those presuppositions, the so-called *sacrum imperium* theory, or the theory of Frederick Barbarossa's and Rainald of Dassel's resacralisation of the state. Only once that is out of the way, and scholars return to constructing a new and more complex model of the court, chapel and chancery, can larger questions be addressed with more certainty. In order to deal with this difficult scholarly situation, I will first present the reader with a short genealogy of the current theories on the sanctity of the state under Barbarossa's reign, as their provenance and history are not inconsequential to the shape and form they take today.

I.I THE *SACRUM IMPERIUM* THEORY

The titular protagonist of this book, Frederick Barbarossa, is a well-known medieval figure in scholarly historiography, and a lasting myth of the Middle Ages in German-speaking countries. And yet, almost no historians writing before the mid-twentieth century, even when they approach Frederick in adoration, mention a resacralisation of the state

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[1] J. Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige*, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1959–1966); J. Fleckenstein, 'Hofkapelle und Reichsepiskopat unter Heinrich IV.', in J. Fleckenstein (ed.), *Investiturstreit und Reichsverfassung* (Thorbecke, 1973), 117–140; F. Hausmann, *Reichskanzlei und Hofkapelle unter Heinrich V. und Konrad III.* (Stuttgart, 1956); W. Petke, *Kanzlei, Kapelle und königliche Kurie unter Lothar III. (1125–1137)* (Cologne, 1985); W. Huschner, *Transalpine Kommunikation im Mittelalter: Diplomatische, kulturelle und politische Wechselwirkungen zwischen Italien und dem nordalpinen Reich (9.-11. Jahrhundert)*, 3 vols (Hanover, 2003).

happening under him. The shift in perspective was gradual, and a number of scholars contributed to the construction of a new, more medieval than medieval, Frederick. Moreover, this was not a chance occurrence, but was clearly linked to the history of the German people, their states and changing worldviews. In essence, the medievalist's Barbarossa as we know him now is like a twelfth-century painting in which restorers from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century inserted a few of their own flights of fancy. Because of that, it is important to stress the parallel development of Germany and its favourite emperor – bar the saintly Charlemagne, who played a role in this, too.

The first traces of a vivid memory of Frederick Barbarossa in the modern period appear in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of the former Holy Roman Empire from Napoleon's domination in 1814–1815, when German nationalism and a desire for unification began manifesting itself. Barbarossa had become immensely popular in Germany through Friedrich Ludwig Georg von Raumer's *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihrer Zeit* (first edition 1823–1825, third and final edition 1857–1858), so that even Richard Wagner thought of writing a monumental cycle about the Hohenstaufen (called *Die Wibelungen* after the crucial Hohenstaufen dynasty castle of Waiblingen) before he chose to immortalise the Nibelungs.[2] Hans Prutz wrote the first scholarly biography of Frederick, who was now considered a great man, in 1871–1874, and Wilhelm von Giesebrecht completed his 1,800-page work on the subject in 1880–1895, the longest account of Frederick's life even now.[3] These two signalled the beginning of an intense period of research on every aspect of Frederick Barbarossa's person and rule. Scholars began actively searching for his presence in their sources, which mostly led to fortuitous discoveries. The adulatory approach never disappeared altogether, which led to the vast growth of a potentially Friderician corpus.

This period of research coincided not only with the Prussian-led unification of Germany (1866–1871), but also with the state-sponsored cult of Frederick Barbarossa, who was depicted as the medieval counterpart to the current emperor Wilhelm I (1861–1888), the aptly nicknamed *Barbablanca* (Whitebeard). An equestrian monument of Wilhelm (1890–1896) in the Kyffhäuser mountains comprises the Wilhelmine horseman on a tall pedestal, whereas Frederick's sleeping figure leans on its base. The message was clear: Barbablanca finished what Barbarossa started.[4]

[2] F. L. G. von Raumer, *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihrer Zeit*, 3rd edn, 6 vols (Leipzig, 1857–1858); R. Wagner, *Die Wibelungen. Weltgeschichte aus der Sage* (Leipzig, 1850).
[3] H. Prutz, *Kaiser Friedrich I.*, 3 vols (Danzig, 1871–1874); W. von Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit*, 6 vols (Leipzig, 1855–1895).
[4] K. Görich, *Friedrich Barbarossa: Eine Biographie* (Munich, 2011), 14–15.

5

The new emperor's *Reichskanzler*, Otto von Bismarck, soon sanctioned an archaeological expedition to Tyre, where the body of one of the emperor's most famous predecessors lay. The amateur team found nothing, and only managed to mix up the cathedral's stratigraphy before returning home ignominiously.[5] But Frederick's grip on the German imagination was not loosened.

From this point on, two scholarly trends would develop parallel to each other, which were later united into the current *sacrum imperium* theory. On the one hand, art historians searched for portraits of Barbarossa, and sought to interpret his ideological outlook based on the elements they identified. On the other hand, diplomatists were doing the same thing, but on the basis of the large corpus of Frederick's documents.

Friedrich Philippi's identification of the Cappenberg head, a reliquary that supposedly depicted Frederick Barbarossa as emperor, with Frederick Barbarossa in 1886 was one of the most significant steps in preparing the ground for the later idea of Frederick's *sacrum imperium* ideology.[6] The Cappenberg head soon became famous as the *Barbarossakopf* (Barbarossa's head), and it appeared on the covers of dozens of historical and art historical works on medieval Germany and the twelfth century.[7] In 1909, Max Kemmerich interpreted four works as portraits of Frederick, which shows how quickly the search for the real Frederick Barbarossa accelerated.[8] Hagen Keller used the Cappenberg head as an early example of the portrait as a genre (as opposed to an image of a person) in the High Middle Ages.[9] Erich Meyer saw the Cappenberg head and the *Barbarossaleuchter* (Barbarossa's chandelier) as parts of Frederick Barbarossa's imperial and knightly worldview already in 1946, but it was Herbert Grundmann's 1959 comparison of the Cappenberg head with Rahewin's description of Frederick that prepared the ground for the extravagant imperial interpretations of the following six decades.[10] Since the 1960s, scholars focused on investigating the head's memorial functions and supposed imperial political symbolism.[11] It was only in 2017 that

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[5] Görich, *Friedrich Barbarossa*, 649–651.

[6] F. Philippi, 'Die Cappenberger Porträtbüste Kaiser Friedrichs I.', *Zeitschrift für vaterländische Geschichte und Altertumskunde (Westfalen)*, 44 (1886), 150–161.

[7] K. Görich, 'Der Cappenberger Kopf – ein Barbarossakopf?', in K.-H. Rueß (ed.), *Friedrich Barbarossa* (Göppingen, 2017), 48–76, at 48–52.

[8] M. Kemmerich, *Die frühmittelalterliche Porträtplastik in Deutschland bis zum Ende des XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1909), 171–192.

[9] H. Keller, 'Die Entstehung des Bildnisses am Ende des Hochmittelalters', *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 3 (1939), 235.

[10] E. Meyer, *Bildnis und Kronleuchter Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas* (Berlin, 1946); H. Grundmann, *Der Cappenberger Barbarossakopf und die Anfänge des Stiftes Cappenberg* (Cologne, 1959).

[11] H. Fillitz, 'Der Cappenberger Barbarossakopf', *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 3rd ser., 14 (1963), 39–50; H. Appuhn, 'Beobachtungen und Versuche zum Bildnis Kaiser Friedrichs

Knut Görich showed that the evidence did not unequivocally support the Friderician identification, thus essentially disproving most scholarship on the object.[12]

The imperial interpretation of the Cappenberg head, however, had already deeply influenced the scholarship on the Barbarossaleuchter and the Karlsschrein. Ernst Günther Grimme believed that the former became a huge floating crown of Saint Charlemagne and that it also imitated the walls of Rome on Frederick's golden bull. The similarity, he argued, could be noticed only when the emperor was underneath it; for example, during his coronation.[13] Grimme, accepting the ambiguous identification of the Cappenberg head, applied the same principle to the Karlsschrein, and concluded that it depicted Frederick and Charlemagne as one person.[14] Recently scholars working on Aachen began questioning these conclusions, but the *sacrum imperium* narrative did not lose its traction, as can be seen in the work of Lisa Victoria Ciresi, who integrated the Aquensian reliquary shrines and the Colognese Dreikönigenschrein into a unified story of Hohenstaufen and Welf sacral kingship on the lower Rhine.[15] But while the artworks of the twelfth century proved to be fertile soil for the growth of the new theory, its central thesis had always been in the realm of diplomatic.

The importance of the phrase *sacrum imperium* was recognised already by the legal historian Karl Friedrich Eichhorn in 1812, though it became frequently used only in the 1860s.[16] The learned Theodor Sickel

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I. Barbarossa in Cappenberg', *Aachener Kunstblätter*, 44 (1973), 129–192; M. Hütt, *Aquamanilien: Gebrauch und Form: 'Quem lavat unda foris'* (Mainz, 1993), 138–222; W. C. Schneider, 'Die Kaiserapotheose Friedrich Barbarossas im "Cappenberger Kopf": ein Zeugnis staufischer Antikenerneuerung', *Castrum peregrini*, 44 (1995): 7–53; U. Nilgen, 'Staufische Bildpropaganda: Legitimation und Selbstverständnis im Wandel', in A. Wieczorek, B. Schneidmüller and S. Weinfurter (eds), *Die Staufer und Italien: Drei Innovationsregionen im mittelalterlichen Europa*, 1 (Stuttgart, 2010), 87–90; E. Balzer, 'Der Cappenberger Barbarossakopf: Vorgeschichte, Geschenkanlass und Funktionen', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 46 (2012), 241–299; C. Horch, '*Nach dem Bild des Kaisers:*' Funktionen und Bedeutungen des Cappenberger Barbarossakopfes (Cologne, 2013).

[12] Görich, 'Der Cappenberger Kopf – ein Barbarossakopf?'

[13] E. G. Grimme, *Der Dom zu Aachen: Architektur und Ausstattung* (Aachen, 1994), 146; E. G. Grimme, 'Das Bildprogramm des Aachener Karlsschreins', in H. Müllejans (ed.), *Karl der Große und sein Schrein in Aachen: Eine Festschrift* (Aachen, 1988), 124–135, at 133.

[14] E. G. Grimme, *Goldschmiedekunst im Mittelalter. Form und Bedeutung des Reliquiars von 800 bis 1500* (Cologne, 1972), 66.

[15] L. V. Ciresi, 'Manifestations of the holy as instruments of propaganda: The Cologne Dreikönigenschrein and the Aachen Karlsschrein and Marienschrein in late medieval ritual', unpublished PhD thesis, Rutgers University (2003).

[16] J. Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1864); K. Zeumer, *Heiliges römisches Reich deutscher Nation: eine Studie über den Reichstitel* (Weimar, 1910), 1–4, 30.

perceived it as one Romanising phrase among many,[17] and the supreme Monumentalist, Georg Waitz, saw in it a relic of the pagan Roman past.[18] But the quest for the sanctity of the Empire would be undertaken by other, now less well-known names. In 1897, Paul Scheffer-Boichorst, an expert in Hohenstaufen-era Germany from the late nineteenth century, mentioned in a footnote that the phrase *sacratissimum imperium* first appeared in January 1159, and he believed that this was the *sacrum imperium*'s first occurrence.[19] He died in 1902, but not before he requested of Karl Zeumer to continue his search. The latter reviewed the history of the title Holy Roman Empire in 1910. His conclusion was that *sacrum imperium*, the Latin phrase that would later be adopted as the imperial title and undergo further development, was introduced in Frederick's imperial chancery in late March 1157 in a letter/mandate to Bishop Otto of Freising. Zeumer added that Rainald of Dassel (chancellor 1156–1159, archbishop of Cologne 1159–1167), who caused a scandal at the Diet of Besançon in October 1157 when he interpreted a letter of Pope Hadrian IV (1154–1159) as an attempt to force the emperor to acknowledge the pope as his overlord, was the intellectual author of this phrase.[20]

Zeumer noted that *sacrum imperium* was the first sign of the new course of imperial politics that Rainald inaugurated, but in doing so he read the role of the twelfth-century chancellor as identical to the chancellor's role in his own times. Yet Zeumer was not thinking of just any chancellor: he was comparing Rainald to the orator Otto von Bismarck. On 14 May 1872, Bismarck delivered a speech on the relationship between the Catholic Church and the German state in the Reichstag. He criticised the pope's new policy as antithetical to all secular government, and proclaimed that the Germans would not go to Canossa – in body or in spirit.[21] This was not the opening act of the *Kulturkampf*, but it remained its most memorable moment. Rainald was the ideal candidate for a medieval Bismarck because he was seen not only as competent and efficient, but also as a decided opponent of papal authority who even

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[17] T. Sickel, 'Waitz, Georg, Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte. Sechster Band: = Die Deutsche Reichsvefassung von der Mitte des neunten bis zur Mitte des zwölften Jahrhunderts. Zweiter Band. Zweite Auflage bearbeitet von Gerhard Seeliger. Berlin. Weidmannsche Buchhandlung 1896. XIV, 625 S.' (Review), *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*, 163, 1 (1901), 387–390.

[18] G. Waitz, *Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte*, VI, *Die Deutsche Reichsvefassung von der Mitte des neunten bis zur Mitte des zwölften Jahrhunderts*, part 2, ed. G. Seeliger (Berlin, 1896), 154–155.

[19] P. Scheffer-Boichorst, 'Vezzano und Quattro Castella', in *Zur Geschichte des XII. und XIII. Jahrhunderts. Diplomatische Forschungen* (Berlin, 1897), 139, footnote 1.

[20] Zeumer, *Heiliges römisches Reich deutscher Nation*, 10–13.

[21] O. von Bismarck, *Die politischen Reden des Fürsten Bismarck*, V, *1871–1873*, ed. H. Kohl (Stuttgart, 1892–1905), 337–338.

elected his own (anti)papal candidate, Paschal III (1164–1168), after Antipope Victor IV (1159–1164) died in April 1164.

This connection between the rise of the German Empire and the nationalist line espoused by its medievalists can hardly be more obvious than in this case. Karl Zeumer, the discoverer of the chronology of the phrase *sacrum imperium*, was born in 1849 and died in 1914, so he reached adulthood just as Bismarck masterminded the unification of the German Empire in 1871. As a young political historian, he must have been aware of the 1866 pamphlet *Das preußische Reich deutscher Nation* ('The Prussian Empire of the German Nation')[22] and of the other new ideas of German statehood, which were often formulated as concepts inherited from the Holy Roman Empire. For example, Frederick Barbarossa's mythical return from the dead was presented as the symbol of the German nation that was now coming back to life. Heinrich Heine may have mocked this fable in his *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*, but even he had to concede that a restoration of Barbarossa's rule did not seem like a bad idea.[23] Naturally, Bismarck's 1872 Canossa speech explicitly referenced the Investiture Controversy, thus inviting comparisons between the past and the present.[24] Zeumer's ideas instantly became a part of the canon of German historiography, but it would take a few more steps before the current version of the theory was formulated.

Zeumer also noted his own debt to tradition, and more specifically, to Johann Heinrich Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon* (1731–1754), volume 31, where an anonymous contributor, who penned the article 'Reich', said that Frederick Barbarossa introduced *sacrum imperium* to oppose the Papacy, which obstructed him. He attributed this view to some unnamed scholars, and these have so far remained unidentified.[25] As Zedler was a very Protestant publisher, having edited the collected works of Martin Luther (1729–1734/1740) and dedicated his volumes to notable Protestant princes, one can appreciate that his anonymous contributors subscribed to a somewhat confessionally biased view of German history.[26] This also serves to underscore the point that Zeumer's identification of the twelfth-century emperor and chancellor duo with their recent counterparts was not coincidental, as it would have been relatively easy for

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[22] Anonymous, *Das preußische Reich deutscher Nation. Ein Beitrag zum Aufbau* (Brunswick, 1866).

[23] H. Heine, *Deutschland: Ein Wintermährchen* (Hamburg, 1844).

[24] O. von Bismarck, *Die politischen Reden*, 337–338.

[25] 'Reich', in C. G. Ludovici (ed.), *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschafften und Künste*, XXXI, *Rei-Ri* (Halle and Leipzig, 1742), 8–17, at 8–10.

[26] Martin Luther, *Des theuren Mannes Gottes, Martin Luthers sämtliche theils von ihm selbst deutsch verfertigte, theils aus dessen lateinischen ins Deutsche übersetzte Schrifften und Wercke welche aus allen vorhin ausgegangenen Sammlungen zusammen getragen*, ed. C. F. Börner, 12 vols (Leipzig, 1729–1740).

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another historian of his age to have come to the same conclusion, had he been informed by Zedler's view that *sacrum imperium* was an instrument used to counter papal claims. Thus, the early eighteenth-century Protestant point of view prepared the way for and informed Zeumer's identification of the past with the present. This revisionist view still forms the foundations upon which the whole theory of the (re)sacralisation of the state under Frederick Barbarossa is built. As I will show in this book, once that dogma is set aside, and the evidence considered on its own merit, a very different reality is brought to light.

The interwar period elaborated on Zeumer's views. In 1929, Alois Dempf wrote the sizeable *Sacrum imperium. Geschichts- und Staatsphilosophie des Mittelalters und der politischen Renaissance*, where he described what he felt was the essence of the sanctity of the Empire in the Middle Ages.[27] Dempf did not mention Frederick even once, but his work influenced Anton Mayer-Pfannholz to write his 1933 article *Die Wende von Canossa. Eine Studie zum Sacrum Imperium* about the meeting at Canossa as a turning point in the history of the Empire. He argued that Gregory VII (1073–1085) desacralised not only the emperor, but also the Empire itself, and that Frederick Barbarossa and Rainald of Dassel reforged the same sanctity, though not as a consequence of the royal unction, but as a result of the sanctity and inviolability of Roman law, and the connection between the Roman emperors of old and the German–Roman emperors of the present.[28]

Mayer-Pfannholz' article is also important in German medieval studies in general, because it offered a new, widely popular theory on the holy element of the Holy Roman Empire, which was deemed fundamental by scholars from the Empire's successor states. Unsurprisingly, Mayer-Pfannholz' views of the past bear some similarity to those of his more extreme contemporaries, even though he was certainly not a Nazi and was heckled by the regime. This can be explained as a part of the general German view that outsiders, such as the Papacy in the medieval period or the Allies in modern times, treated Germany unjustly. Moreover, just as Barbarossa restored the first empire to its former glory, and Wilhelm I created the second, a leader was sought now who would build a third empire in their stead. The connection can be easily proven.

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[27] A. Dempf, *Sacrum imperium. Geschichts- und Staatsphilosophie des Mittelalters und der politischen Renaissance*, 3rd edn (Munich, 1962).

[28] A. Mayer-Pfannholz, 'Die Wende von Canossa. Eine Studie zum Sacrum Imperium (1932)', in H. Kämpf (ed.), *Canossa als Wende. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur neueren Forschung* (Darmstadt, 1963), esp. 20–26. Originally published as A. Mayer-Pfannholz, 'Die Wende von Canossa. Eine Studie zum Sacrum Imperium', *Hochland*, 30 (1933), esp. 400–404.

The Nazis' use of the title of the Empire has attracted little scholarly attention, but it offers a revealing insight into their understanding of the past.[29] They rarely used the title of the old Empire in their publications, but it appeared when they discussed their utopian future state. The ideal German state, it appears, was still modelled on the Holy Roman Empire. In 1923, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck published the seminal *Das dritte Reich*, where he refused to recognise Weimar Germany as the *deutsches Reich deutscher Nation* ('German Empire of the German Nation').[30] In 1925, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* openly proclaimed that the goal of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) is to form *einen germanischen Staat deutscher Nation* ('a Germanic state of the German Nation').[31] The year 1943 even saw the publication of Erich Wildt's book *Das Heilige Germanische Reich deutscher Nation* ('The Holy Germanic Empire of the German Nation').[32] Victor Klemperer picked up on this exact term in his discussion of the language of Nazi Germany, *Lingua Tertii Imperii*. He remembers that same title appearing as the headline on the front page of a newspaper covering Hitler's visit to Rome in 1938, and that the general populace did not fail to observe that Hitler acted as a medieval Holy Roman emperor.[33] One can argue that by that point Hitler had effectively conquered not only Austria, but also the German Middle Ages. As the festive volume *Heilig – Römisch – Deutsch. Das Reich im mittelalterlichen Europa* published for the second centenary of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 shows, they have not been completely reconquered for scholarship yet, and lingering doubts about a too strong influence of Nazi scholarship and propaganda remain.[34] Much more prosaically, even the term *das dritte Reich* clearly delineates a view related to Zeumer's and Mayer-Pfannholz', as the second empire itself was thought to have restored Germany in much the same way Barbarossa had managed to do in the twelfth century.

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[29] H.-D. Loock, 'Zur "Großgermanischen Politik" des Dritten Reiches', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 8, 1 (1960), 37–63; R. A. Müller, *Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation. Anspruch und Bedeutung des Reichstitels in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Regensburg, 1990) 21–22; G. Hamza, 'Der Begriff "Drittes Reich" im deutschen juristischen, philosophischen und politischen Denken des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestinensis de Rolando Eötvös Nominatae. Sectio iuridica*, 54 (2013), 61–82.

[30] A. Moeller van den Bruck, *Das dritte Reich* (Berlin, 1923), 258.

[31] A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 851st–855th edn (Munich, 1943), 361–362.

[32] E. Wildt, *Das Heilige Germanische Reich deutscher Nation* (Oslo, 1943).

[33] V. Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich. LTI – Lingua Tertii Imperii. A Philologist's Notebook*, trans. M. Brady (London, 2013), 119.

[34] Especially G. Althoff, 'Die Deutschen und ihr mittelalterliches Reich', in B. Schneidmüller and S. Weinfurter (eds), *Heilig – Römisch – Deutsch. Das Reich im mittelalterlichen Europa* (Dresden, 2006), 119–132.

11

Building on such foundations, in 1952 Friedrich Heer's book *Die Tragödie des Heiligen Reiches* finally tipped the balance in favour of *sacrum imperium*. Heer expounded his theory that the failure of the twelfth-century Empire (though his examples are almost exclusively German) was due to the collapse of its ideological system, which was based on sacral kingship. He posited the existence of a unified approach to the sanctity of the state from the Carolingian (751–911) to the Hohenstaufen period (1138–1254), which was irreparably damaged by Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085), whose goal was to desacralise the Empire. Frederick Barbarossa and Rainald of Dassel strove to stem the tide that would dissipate imperial authority by resacralising the state and regaining the Empire's former pre-eminence. As noted at the start of this Introduction, Heer singled out three events as examples of this ideology of renovation: 1) the introduction of *sacrum imperium* in the chancery in 1157; 2) the translation of the Magi to Cologne in 1164; and 3) the canonisation of Saint Charlemagne in Aachen's Marienkirche in 1165.[35] Heer discussed many other elements of imperial sanctity, including the Cappenberg head, but most scholars mention only the earlier three.[36] Finally, Heer's book originally appeared without footnotes, and though he soon published a supplement containing only footnotes, it was obvious that he was reading sources in a more flexible manner than most.[37]

Heer's view is once again a good representative of its era: in 1945, Nazi Germany was defeated both materially and ideologically. Importantly, most of its territory was occupied by the Western Allies, who more or less represented the same powers that defeated Barbarossa, but also Wilhelm II. One could even extend this to Napoleon's subjugation of Germany, the formation of the French Empire and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. Thus, the idea of a German failure and a Western triumph crystallised under the weight of historical memory. One ought to stress that Heer, too, was not a Nazi, so these views can be considered typical for the German postwar experience, and not a relic of that political system.

But Heer did not simply unite and systematise the findings and views of Zeumer and Mayer-Pfannholz on the one side, and the art historical scholarship on the other. Rather, he understood the full implications of the research on the spirit of the Holy Roman Empire better than anyone, and he incorporated the finds from that third branch of historiography as well. This remains among the most elusive parts of medieval studies in

[35] F. Heer, *Die Tragödie des Heiligen Reiches*, 1 (Stuttgart, 1952–1953), 146–148, 246–259 *et passim*.
[36] Heer, *Die Tragödie des Heiligen Reiches*, 1, 96–98.
[37] Heer, *Die Tragödie des Heiligen Reiches*, 11.

general, and must be treated in some detail in order that we may under-
stand not only the holy and German elements of the *sacrum imperium*
theory, but also its recognisable Roman core.

In 1885, Max Pomtow defended his dissertation on the influence of
ancient Rome on Frederick Barbarossa's politics. He had identified the
mandate to Otto of Freising as the earliest imperial document to contain
sacrum imperium a whole twenty-five years before Zeumer, and Heer
would cite him on that exact point.[38] Pomtow went further and said
that Frederick was under the influence of Roman law, but not through its
more technical aspects. What Frederick imitated instead were the flam-
boyant Roman epithets of the emperor, especially those designating him
as a holy figure and his empire as a holy entity. Pomtow was also the first
to note that Conrad III already used the sacral epitheta to enhance his
documents and that the Germans must have learned their novel language
of authority through their Byzantine correspondence,[39] on which I will
elaborate in the forthcoming text.

Yet, because Pomtow did not pursue an academic career later on, his work
was rarely cited. His findings were injected into the bloodstream of German
and European academia through Fritz Kern's classic *Gottesgnadentum und
Widerstandsrecht im früheren Mittelalter. Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Monarchie*
(first edition in 1914, second German edition in 1954 prepared by Rudolf
Buchner).[40] An English translation of his work was published in 1939, but
without much of the critical apparatus, so what had been Pomtow's original
ideas were now perceived as a fundamental part of Kern's wide-reaching and
groundbreaking theoretical study of the Middle Ages.[41] Heer, who cites
Pomtow, Zeumer and Kern directly, also used Antonie Jost's 1930 disserta-
tion *Der Kaisergedanke in den Arengen der Urkunden Friedrichs I.*, where
Pomtow's ideas were further systematised.[42] Thus, while nineteenth-
century scholars had investigated both the German and Roman aspects of
Frederick Barbarossa's ideology and the vocabulary related to it, the better
documented *sacrum (Romanum) imperium* completely overshadowed the *impe-
rium/regnum Teutonicum* in academic investigations, particularly as the study of
sacral kingship took off.

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[38] M. Pomtow, 'Über den Einfluss der altrömischen Vorstellungen vom Staat auf die Politik Kaiser
Friedrichs I. und die Anschauungen seiner Zeit', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Halle
(1885), 31–32, 38–39, 60–66.

[39] Pomtow, 'Über den Einfluss', 31–32, 38–39, 60–66.

[40] F. Kern, *Gottesgnadentum und Widerstandsrecht im früheren Mittelalter. Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der
Monarchie* (Leipzig, 1914), 103, footnote 188, and most of the footnotes on pages 133–137.

[41] F. Kern, *Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages*, trans. S. B. Chrimes (Oxford, 1939), 64–67.

[42] Heer, *Die Tragödie des Heiligen Reiches*, 11, 63, referring to 1, 146; A. Jost, 'Der Kaisergedanke in
den Arengen der Urkunden Friedrichs I', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cologne (1930),
7–13, but esp. 8.

13

The major names of this tradition, Marc Bloch, Percy Ernst Schramm and Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, have been so widely influential in medieval studies and western historiography in general that their views are often treated as dogmas, particularly by those not working on sacral kingship. The former two did not propose a theory about *sacrum imperium*, but the last-mentioned, as previously noted, claimed that its appearance in 1157 constituted the solidification of the Empire into a *corpus mysticum* equal to the Church of Rome.[43] Yet in order to make such a statement, Kantorowicz had to ignore the Byzantine and Italian precedents for the sacral terminology of the state, or at least treat them as objective facts akin to natural occurrences, which had no other ideological meaning. His footnote shows that he read Kern, but not Pomtow or Heer, who had stayed closer to the source material and the context. Thus, the similar views held by many important figures in German medieval studies can all be linked together into a genealogical tree with Pomtow functioning as the founder of the view, Kern combining it with Zeumer's finds and propagating it. Heer and Kantorowicz then developed their own modified views.

Pomtow's investigation, which sparked off the whole process, falls within the period when Wilhelmine Germany was preparing its civil code (1873–1896/1900), which was the last phase of a long struggle that began in 1814, when the Heidelberger professor of law, Anton Friedrich Justus Thibaut, proposed the codification of German law, and his Berliner colleague, Friedrich Carl von Savigny, opposed it on the grounds that German jurisprudence was not yet up to the task and that the current dependence on Justinian's *Corpus iuris civilis* must be continued. The exact arguments shifted over time, but few were completely opposed to the project of codification, as Savigny was. This first draft was dominated by Bernhard Windscheid, an immensely influential pandectist, who claimed that Germany could either accept pure Roman law, or a modified form of the same, but that it could not do without it.[44] Otto von Gierke, an influential medievalist, published in 1889 his almost 600-page critique of the first version of the new civil code, denouncing the Windscheid-dominated proposal as utterly un-German, and essentially Romanist and doctrinaire.[45] Seen in this context, Pomtow's Romanisation of Barbarossa coincides all too perfectly with the development of the

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[43] E. H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), 197.

[44] S. Fernandes Fortunato, 'Vom römisch-gemeinen Recht zum Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuch', *Zeitschrift für das Juristische Studium*, 4 (2009), 327–338, at 327–332.

[45] O. Gierke, *Der Entwurf eines bürgerlichen Gesetzbuchs und das deutsche Recht*, 2nd edn (Leipzig, 1889), for example 579–582.

14

Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, the German civil code, under the Romanists. Thus, opinions could differ very widely, but the question of a German and/or Roman character were always close to the heart of the debate over how to shape the new German state, just as they had been in the Sybel–Ficker clash of 1859–1862. The first shot in that conflict was fired by Heinrich von Sybel, who worked in Munich at the time, but was a decided partisan of the Prussian state. He argued in a speech that was later printed that the medieval German emperors failed to expand the core of their nation because of their Italian adventures, which were always thwarted by a papal conspiracy. Julius Ficker, then professor in Innsbruck, replied in 1862 with his book *Das deutsche Kaiserreich in seinen universalen und nationalen Beziehungen*, where he noted that the nation state was neither the only possible, nor the only desirable outcome of political developments.[46] Roughly speaking, Sybel represented the Prussian and Protestant view, Ficker the Austrian and Catholic one.

If one were to draw a Venn diagram of medieval entities that included Roman law, *sacrum imperium* and the artworks related to Frederick Barbarossa, the central intersection would be Rainald, the chancellor who fanned the flames of the papal–imperial conflict, who translated the Three Kings to his metropolis, Cologne, and who elevated Charlemagne to sanctity on the authority of the antipope he had elected. Rainald had never been forgotten thanks to Rahewin of Freising's account of the events at Besançon in 1157, but it was Julius Ficker's 1850 dissertation on him that mythologised him. Ficker worked in Frankfurt, near the famous parliament from the Springtime of Nations 1848/1849, but he had studied history in Bonn, where he seems to have imbibed the Rheinland point of view, which was focused on the relevance of Cologne and its archbishops. But, living before Zeumer's era, he did not look at *sacrum imperium* as Rainald's plan. Instead, he claimed that Rainald was responsible for the *Trierer Stilübungen*, which he saw as a draft of Rainald's plan to establish a Trieran vicepapacy for Germany, similar to how Abbot Suger's forged Charlemagne charter raised the abbot of Saint-Denis to the head of the Church of France.[47] Rainald's role as Barbarossa's devious adviser was now canonical. Zeumer's theory that Rainald was critical for the introduction of *sacrum imperium* set the process in motion which unites most things related to the early Frederick to some uncanny plan of the archchancellor.

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[46] H. von Sybel, *Die Deutsche Nation und das Kaiserreich: Eine historisch-politische Abhandlung* (Düsseldorf, 1862); J. Ficker, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich in seinen universalen und nationalen Beziehungen* (Innsbruck, 1862).

[47] J. Ficker, *Reinald von Dassel, Reichskanzler und Erzbischof von Köln: 1156–1167* (Cologne, 1850), 8–10, 61–69, 95 and 128–131 for the Three Kings, and 18–20 for the *Trierer Stilübungen*.

15

Thus, in an odd twist of fate, just as the Aquensian-Colognese lobby raised Charlemagne to sanctity and acquired the bodies of the Three Kings for the Rhinelander metropolis in the mid-twelfth century, so did Ficker, a scion of the nearby University of Bonn, reintroduce these into the history of the Empire in the mid-nineteenth. In the end, Colognese geographic, demographic and cultural preponderance lasted through the centuries, and when the winds of German folk nationalism started blowing in the nineteenth century, it did not take long for Cologne, which used to be Germany's largest, richest and most developed city of the High Middle Ages, to be written into the foundations of imperial history by Ficker, who was enamoured of the period and the region. After that it was all too easy for scholars to fixate themselves on the emperor and archchancellor duo.

A new era in the study of the Hohenstaufen period began in the 1960s, when the *MGH* diplomatists, led by Heinrich Appelt, began publishing their studies and then editions of Frederick Barbarossa's documents. Their long watch ended in 1990, after the last volume appeared in publication, but they never could resolve the famous question of the meaning and provenance of *sacrum imperium*. Appelt gave Heer's thesis its canonical three-part form, relegating his other finds to a lesser rank.[48] Gottfried Koch's 1972 book, *Auf dem Wege zum Sacrum Imperium*, built on Heer's and Appelt's work, but it also offered the first complete ideological history of the Empire from 1056 to 1160. Koch agreed with Appelt's tripartite conception, though he had already found examples of *sacrum imperium* and *sanctum imperium* in various Carolingian, Ottonian and Salian sources.[49] Jürgen Petersohn struck the first blow to the *sacrum imperium* complex in 1994, when he discovered that *sacrum Romanum imperium* was an innovation that first appeared in the city of Rome, and only gradually spread to the imperial chancery.[50] Since then historians have begun noticing more and more Italian examples of *sacrum imperium* and other related terms, but a systematic analysis of sacral terminology in the twelfth-century imperial chancery remained a *desideratum* until now.[51] Outside of diplomatic,

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[48] R. M. Herkenrath, 'Reinald von Dassel als Verfasser und Schreiber von Kaiserurkunden', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 72 (1964), 34–62, at 40–42, 54–59; J. Riedmann, 'Studien über die Reichskanzlei unter Friedrich Barbarossa in den Jahren 1156–1166', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 75 (1967), 322–402, at 337, 389–390; H. Appelt, 'Die Kaiseridee Friedrich Barbarossas', *Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse*, 252, 4 (1967), 1–32.

[49] G. Koch, *Auf dem Wege zum Sacrum Imperium: Studien zur ideologischen Herrschaftsbegründung der deutschen Zentralgewalt im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1972).

[50] J. Petersohn, *Rom und der Reichstitel 'Sacrum Romanum imperium'* (Stuttgart, 1994).

[51] K. Görich, *Die Ehre Friedrich Barbarossas. Kommunikation, Konflikt und politisches Handeln im 12. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 2001), 473; H. Krieg, *Herrscherdarstellung in der Stauferzeit: Friedrich Barbarossa im Spiegel seiner Urkunden und der staufischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Ostfildern, 2003), 333–348;

scholars began compiling ever more intricate lists of artworks related to the purported programme, as I will discuss in the appropriate chapters.[52] Essentially, Heer's book was the turning point after which non-ideological interpretations became extinct in all branches of scholarship.

Whereas one may doubt that the scholarship specifically on *sacrum imperium* influenced the general interpretive schemes applied by scholars to the Middle Ages, a few examples should suffice to show how the essentialist Church vs State view of the Bismarckian period corrupted the views of medievalists working on topics other than Barbarossa. Among the best examples are Jan Pieper's recent claim that Charlemagne's throne in Aachen represents the *sacrum imperium*, or Carl Nordenfalk's idea, in the late 1980s, that Otto III's fresco cycle in the Marienkirche is a tribute to the *imperium sacrum Romanum*.[53] What started out as a theory about the resacralisation of the state under Frederick Barbarossa had by the end of the twentieth century become a part of the general understanding of the Holy Roman Empire, the Frankish Empire, and Aachen. These claims can only be properly countered at the Archimedean point of the argument: the imperial documents of the twelfth century.

I.2   BEYOND *SACRUM IMPERIUM*

On a theoretical level, Ludger Körntgen's *Königsherrschaft und Gottes Gnade. Zu Kontext und Funktion sakraler Vorstellungen in Historiographie und Bildzeugnissesn der ottonisch-frühsalischen Zeit*, published in 2001, represents the long-awaited challenge to almost all scholarship on sacral kingship going back to Kern, Schramm and Kantorowicz, and including their intellectual successors on both visual and textual material. Körntgen sifted through the immense bibliography on Ottonian images in liturgical manuscripts, carefully assessing each one before recognising not only

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J. Petersohn, *Kaisertum und Rom in spätsalischer und staufischer Zeit: Romidee und Rompolitik von Heinrich V. bis Friedrich II.* (Hanover, 2010); K.-M. Sprenger, 'Die Heiligkeit von Kaiser und Reich aus italienischer Sicht', in B. Schneidmüller et al. (eds), *Staufisches Kaisertum im 12. Jahrhundert. Konzepte – Netzwerke – Politische Praxis* (Regensburg, 2010), 175–204; F. Hartmann, 'Reale und ideale Bilder von Friedrich Barbarossa im kommunalen Italien', in K. Görich and R. Schmitz-Esser (eds), *BarbarossaBilder: Entstehungskontexte, Erwartungshorizonte, Verwendungszusammenhänge* (Regensburg, 2014), 46–59.

[52] For a more complete overview of recent scholarship, see V. Sulovsky, 'The Concept of *sacrum imperium* in Historical Scholarship', *History Compass*, 17, 8 (2019), 1–12.

[53] J. Pieper, 'Der Karlsthron im Architektursystem der Pfalzkapelle zu Aachen. Eine architektonische Miniatur', in J. Pieper and B. Schindler (eds), *Thron und Altar, Oktogon und Sechzehneck. Die Herrschaftsikonographie der karolingischen Pfalzkapelle zu Aachen* (Aachen, 2017), 47–124, at 123; C. Nordenfalk, 'Milano e l'arte ottoniana: problemi di fondo sinora poco osservati', in C. Bertelli (ed.), *Il millennio ambrosiano*, II, *La Città del vescovo dai Carolingi al Barbarossa* (Milan, 1988), 102–123, at 117.

17

the common patterns linking them together, but also those that set them apart from one another. His conclusion was that these objects were primarily carriers of liturgical, social and political meaning, though sometimes their exact function turned out to be inscrutable.[54] In 2014, Körntgen published an article dealing with the Hohenstaufen period, where he reiterated that something must have changed in society's approach to liturgical manuscripts for the late Salian and Hohenstaufen emperors to not have participated in this quite common Ottonian and early Salian practice.[55] His contribution is not only a milestone in research, but it also effectively forces scholars working on related topics to consider the actual functions and practices related to the objects studied.

While I will build on similar foundations as Körntgen, I intend to look at the material much more closely, and take its every aspect into consideration. Where he mostly summarily described his manuscripts as 'liturgical books', I will dive into the ocean of medieval liturgical procedures to elucidate the precise form, iconography, genre, inscriptions, phrasing, date, function, purpose, style, concept, political background and other matters related to the objects belonging to the so-called *sacrum imperium* programme. Only once all of these details are established can a full evaluation of the purported masterplan take place.[56]

There are several questions that I propose to answer in this book. The main question is whether the *sacrum imperium* programme ever existed. Owing to the complexity of the problem, I will answer this only after all the subordinate problems have been successfully resolved. In order to do so, I will divide the material scholars have collected into two unequal halves: in the first part, comprising Chapters 1 and 2, I will address *sacrum imperium* as a phrase used by the imperial chancery from 1125 to 1190, along with other sacral phrases applied to matters of state. I will show that the crucial term never appears where one would most want and expect it, while it does turn up just around the corner, or in odd places. This I will explain through a detailed comparison with the presence of Italian courtiers from particular cities and regions, which developed the novel Romanising phraseology. The imperial court's and chancery's view of the matter will be explored in various steps. The second part (Chapters 3–6)

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[54] L. Körntgen, *Königsherrschaft und Gottes Gnade. Zu Kontext und Funktion sakraler Vorstellungen in Historiographie und Bildzeugnissesn der ottonisch-frühsalischen Zeit* (Berlin, 2001).

[55] L. Körntgen, 'Herrscherbild im Wandel – Ein Neuansatz in staufischer Zeit?', in K. Görich and R. Schmitz-Esser (eds), *BarbarossaBilder: Entstehungskontexte, Erwartungshorizonte, Verwendungszusammenhänge* (Regensburg, 2014), 32–45.

[56] Elements of this deeper analysis will be pursued also in a later work, for want of space in the current volume.

contains significantly more documentary and other material, all of which is located in Aachen or has been considered related to the city. Therefore, I will tackle it in a chronological fashion, starting with Aachen's situation at the accession of Lothar III (1125–1137) and ending with the Karlsschrein's completion in 1215. My goal is not to write an exhaustive history of twelfth-century Aachen, but since so many Aquensian objects have been considered parts of the imperial programme, I will show in detail why this viewpoint is contrary to the evidence we have.

One final point needs to be addressed before we truly begin, namely how the spectre of German nationalism and the World Wars affected the scholarship on Barbarossa. I presented my diplomatist analysis of *sacrum imperium* for the first time in 2017. I was immediately confronted by a senior German scholar, who asked whether I really wanted to reopen the question of Hitlerism. It took me a moment to understand that the very topic I had chosen was not merely one favoured by the Nazis, but one which could still evoke that darkest of times after more than seventy years since the war. Similarly, when organising a conference on German influence in the Middle Ages, I would occasionally get a reply which could be succinctly expressed as 'Was 1945 not enough of an answer to that question?' As another German scholar noted, to open the question of German identity in the Middle Ages in postwar Germany would have killed one's career. This helps explain Appelt's silence on the more German aspects of Barbarossa's ideological outlook, and also his deliberate choice to de-Hitlerise the emperor whose name was now forever linked to the purging of eastern Europe during the Second World War. On the other hand, relatively few German scholars specialise in medieval Italy, and none of them wrote a biography of the Redbeard, apart from Opll's short book[57] – short at any rate for the standard of that emperor's biographies. This means that, paradoxically, Barbarossa has too long been too imperial, and not enough German, or Italian – or both.

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[57] Ferdinand Opll, *Friedrich Barbarossa* (Darmstadt, 1990).