

Achim Thomas Hack (Hg.), Die Ordines für die Weihe und Krönung des Königs und der Königin in Mailand/Ordines coronationis Mediolanensis, Wiesbaden (Harrassowitz Verlag) 2020, VIII–132 S. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui in usum scholarum separatim editi, 17), ISBN 978-3-447-11527-8, EUR 30,00.

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So far, only the ordines for the imperial coronation in Rome and for the kings and queens of France appeared in a modern edition¹. A comparison of the ceremonies as they were staged in different European countries is still wanting. Not only comparative research, but also diachronic research, which shows how these coronation ceremonies developed over time, is a desideratum². If we restrict ourselves to the Holy Roman Empire, a better understanding is needed of the differences and similarities between the coronation ceremonies in the German lands (mainly Aachen), the Lombard area (Pavia, Monza or Milan) and the final imperial coronation, which was staged in St. Peter in Rome. For instance, what prayers were selected for the different ceremonies, and what do the changes tell us about the different contexts of these public spectacles? With the current edition of the coronation ordines for the kings and queens of the Kingdom of Italy, we come a step closer to such research goals.

The introduction starts with an overview of the efforts made by previous German and Italian scholars who planned to edit the ordines for the coronation of kings and queens in Milan – with limited results. It does not address the historical coronations in the Lombard region³ or the *regnum Italicum* as a historical phenomenon but focuses on the manuscripts of the ordines and their history.

The edition, which takes a study of Reinhard Elze, the editor of the imperial coronation ordines, as starting point⁴, consists of six ordines. We find the earliest ordines (»I. Lombardische Ordines«)

¹ Reinhard Elze (ed.), *Die Ordines für die Weihe und Krönung des Kaisers und der Kaiserin*, Hannover 1960; Richard A. Jackson, *Ordines coronationis Franciae: Texts and ordines for the coronation of Frankish and French kings and queens in the middle ages*, Philadelphia 1995.

² Cf. János M Bak, *Coronations: Medieval and early modern monarchic ritual*, Berkeley 1990.

³ For this, see the concise overview in Reinhard Elze, *Ordines für die Königskrönung in Mailand*, in: *Cristianità ed Europa. Miscellanea Luigi Prosdocimi*, vol. 1, Rome 1994, p. 175–189 (here p. 176–177).

⁴ Elze, *Ordines für die Königskrönung in Mailand* (as in n. 3).



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for a coronation in the *regnum Italicum* in 11th- and 12th-century manuscripts. These early ordines consist predominantly of liturgical formulas (benedictions or prayers): the rubrics are limited to two or three words. In later centuries more rubrics were added – instructions and indications that regulated the recitation of the formulas and offer valuable insight into ritual practices. They make clear where and when the words were pronounced, for instance, »before the altar« and »when imposing the crown«, and (later) by whom. But we also find more extensive additions. In the 15th-century »Ordo of Sant’Ambrogio« (»III. Die Ordines von Sant’Ambrogio«), for instance, we find information about the preparations of the coronation. If a new king of the Romans (*rex Romanorum*) was about to descend into Italy for his coronation, the whole clergy of Milan assembled in the major church in order to decide on the right processional order (p. 84). That everyone knew and kept his or her assigned place during the adventus and coronation ceremonies was an important condition to prevent conflicts.

The second-oldest ordines are the so-called »Ordines of 1311« (»II. Ordines von 1311«) (Hack uses the plural, because he considers the ordo for the king and the queen as two ordines). Since *Heinricus* is named as the king to be crowned, the manuscript was made in the context of the coronation of Henry VII of Luxembourg and his wife Margarete of Brabant in the Basilica of Sant’Ambrogio on 6 January 1311. According to Hack, this did not mean that the ordo was also used for this coronation (p. 16). With this remark he touches upon an essential problem, namely, understanding the exact relation between an ordo, which has been handed over in a manuscript, and a historical coronation.

The manuscript in question, characterized as a *liber ad consecrandum regem et reginam*, can be considered a typical »coronation book« (»Krönungsbuch«, p. 18, also p. 28 and 44) – a source type that remains to be further explored: who commissioned this kind of books and to what purpose? One of the 14th-century possessors of the coronation book in question was Matteo II Visconti. In his time, the living knowledge about the last coronation in Milan had not yet faded away. Moreover, in 1327 the same manuscript was glossed in the context of the coronation of Ludwig the Bavarian: the »additions from the time of Ludwig« were carefully added to the manuscript. Someone apparently compared the ordo in the manuscript with an ordo produced at the time of Ludwig’s coronation, only 16 years later. In my eyes, therefore, this ordo gives decent insight into the ceremony as it was performed in 14th century Milan. These Lombard ordines were not so political and controversial as the ordines for the imperial coronation, which had both pope and emperor as protagonists and, from the 12th century onwards, started to contain elements that were meant to put the emperor in a subordinate position vis-à-vis the pope.

The third and fourth ordines edited here are contained in 15th-century manuscripts. The »Ordo of 1431« (»IV. Der Ordo von 1431«) – in singular this time, because it does not contain



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instructions for the coronation of a queen – is made in advance of the coronation of Sigismund of Luxembourg, who was crowned in Milan in 1431 without his wife. It proved to be the last medieval coronation in Milan and the last ever in the Sant’Ambrogio. A peculiarity of this ordo is that it used an imperial coronation ordo as an example.

The fifth ordo («V. Ein Bericht über die Krönung von 1530») is found in a beautifully executed Vatican manuscript made for Pope Clement VII, who crowned Charles V with the iron crown (or the *corona regni Lombardie*) in Bologna on 22 February 1530, two days before Charles was crowned emperor in the same city. The manuscript was made retrospectively between 1530 and 1534, and therefore is not properly considered an ordo, but, following Reinhard Elze, Hack presents the text as a *Bericht*.

Finally, as sixth ordo («VI. Ordo der ›Chronica Danielis de comitibus Angleriae«), Hack edits two passages from chronicles and one passage from a ceremonial diary that present the ordo or modus of a royal coronation in Milan. These texts show the dynamics of and interest in liturgical contents outside their original context. How should historians approach such »fictional« (p. 49) ordines in chronicles, which have a very different character than the other ordines of the edition? Thus, the edition implicitly problematizes the question what exactly constitutes an *ordo coronationis* and opens the way for more research and scholarly debate.



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