

**Thomas Kohl (Hg.), Konflikt und Wandel um 1100. Europa im Zeitalter von Feudalgesellschaft und Investiturstreit, Berlin, Boston (De Gruyter Oldenbourg) 2020, VI–238 S., 2 s/w Abb., 2 s/w Tab. (Europa im Mittelalter. Abhandlungen und Beiträge zur historischen Komparatistik, 36), ISBN 978-3-11-068064-5, EUR 89,95.**

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This volume contains published versions of papers presented at the Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen during a three-day conference (30 October–1 November 2014) entitled »Konflikt und Wandel um 1100. Europa im Zeitalter von *mutation féodale* und Investiturstreit«. The academic historians came from universities of Tübingen, Hamburg, Münster, Munich, Mainz, Zurich, Milan, Turin, Aix-en-Provence, and Sheffield including the conference's opening speaker (Steffen Patzold) and its concluding commentator (Ludger Körntgen). The conference was engendered by a fundamental historiographical observation: all western European national historiographies agree that the mid-11th through the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century represents a great age of European transformation (*Wandel*), yet this epoch-making transformation has been framed in German-speaking scholarship by the Investiture Conflict (or Struggle, or Contest, or Dispute), whereas it has been framed in France by conflicts produced by a *mutation féodale* (Feudal Revolution), and has been framed in northern Italy by conflicts generated during a Communal Revolution. Now these national paradigms have all been challenged in recent decades, yet their durability has been questioned here by using a novel approach: a call for a comparative European vision that incorporates them all rather than excludes any based on national boundaries (intellectual as well as geographical).

All this taken on board, the conference's original title even more than its published version makes clear that the Investiture Conflict remains here as the convening point of reference (as was Tübingen), with comparative ventures made into France and Italy. Whereas the paradigms of feudal revolution and communal revolution remain rather subdued and taken as understood, the Investiture Conflict is foregrounded from the start with an outstanding historiographical essay by Claudia Zey relating the latest scholarly controversies about this historical controversy. Unlike the conference however, the readers of the present volume do not have the framing comments of Patzold and Körntgen, and feudal revolution is replaced with a more static *Feudalgesellschaft* whose conflicts center on ecclesiastical rather than lordship authorities.



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Thomas Kohl does double duty and admirably so in providing both a lucid introduction to the volume as well as adeptly modeling the volume's approach and historiographical interweaving of national metanarratives in an article of his own. In the article Kohl relativizes the German Empire-centric vision of the Investiture Conflict by demonstrating the divergence of political meaning regarding excommunication in the Empire and in the French kingdom. Unlike thunderous papal decrees of excommunication in the German and Italian kingdoms of the Empire replete with a deposition from political office (and thus with the inherent opportunity for rebellion), episcopal decrees of excommunication placed on French princes (i. e. dukes and counts) never carried with them a disqualification to rule. Indeed, even explicit bans on contact with excommunicates were quite widely ignored in France. Thus, excommunicated princes (the counts of Anjou chief among them) continued to govern unencumbered by their ecclesiastical censure, and the resulting ambiguity preserved a negotiating space for intermediaries to affect both conflict resolution and spiritual restoration without rending the political order asunder.

Other articles also relativize the German metanarrative of the Investiture Conflict through studying local conflicts operating underneath public conflicts between papacy and monarchy. Tobie Walter's investigation of the Upper Rhine region reveals how, in contrast to the French kingdom, the ecclesiastical taboo against contact with excommunicates inflicted profound damage to traditional methods of mediation and conflict resolution. Hence local disputes over appointments to priories in Basel, Alsace, and the Black Forest regions were transformed into foxholes in the investiture battle between papacy and emperor and proved more protracted and devastating than before.

Christoph Paulus' article discovers evidence in the Augsburg annals for a deep anxiety about the lost »order« of society. Its author, a cathedral canon, wrote in the midst of a deeply disruptive episcopal schism between city and cathedral chapter, complete with annual imperial military incursions. Yet this anxiety over lost »order« was always local in focus rather than understanding the episcopal schism as a test case for the right order in the world between popes and monarchs.

Similarly, Christoph Dartmann reveals that the chronicle of the Milanese priest Landulf the Younger (»Historia Mediolensis«) used the history of the Investiture Conflict merely as a backdrop for his own local conflict over his lost claim to a Milan church (which, ironically, he had inherited from his uncle). In fact, Landulf the Younger's capacity to appeal to every form of legal authority (diocesan, municipal, papal, imperial) tells us much more about the collapse of episcopal authority in Milan in this period than anything about the grand struggle between popes and German monarchs. In this context, one is left to wonder where the archbishops of Milan were in Landulf's narrative, as they make no appearance in Dartmann's analysis.



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Finally, Jean-Hervé Foulons' study of a reform-minded new abbatial installation liturgy in Normandy further emphasizes the local nature of investiture conflicts. Used from ca. 1080 onward the new pontifical, which had come from imperial Burgundian territory during Emperor Henry III, contained stronger sacerdotal and sacramental terminology for abbots than the traditional pontifical text. This new hierophantic emphasis was clearly designed to strengthen the jurisdictional role of the bishop over abbots, by virtue of their priestly leadership status.

It will not surprise anyone, therefore, that disputes between bishops and monasteries over the election and installation of abbots grew rapidly from the 1080s into the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. It turns out then that investiture controversies in Normandy during the Investiture Conflict era arose not between partisan sides in the larger (and distant) papal-imperial struggle, but rather between local ecclesiastics with monastic autonomy at stake – and this was not autonomy from counts and dukes, but rather autonomy from bishops.

Most of this volume's several studies of local ecclesiastical conflicts during the Investiture Conflict highlight contemporary dynamics, but two articles broaden this temporal scope to include the sometimes strikingly re-written memory of past investiture conflicts. Denis Drumm deciphers a well-managed account of conflict in the great reform abbey of Hirsau's »Annales«. Its author Johannes Trithemius willfully exaggerated and downright manufactured portions of this chronicle while maintaining a core narrative of events documented elsewhere. In this vein, the abbey's sources are virtually silent about an early 12<sup>th</sup>-century conflict occurring well before Hirsau embraced Cluniac reform ideals, which has made the abbey the pinnacle of Investiture Conflict era reform movements in modern German-language scholarship.

But in fact, it was this very early 12<sup>th</sup>-century conflict that led to the monks' subsequent intensive reflection on the future direction of their community. Hirsau abbot Gebhard, a solid administrator if uninspiring spiritual leader, inexplicably chose to join Henry V in his rebellion against his own father Henry IV. Gebhard even guarded the captured Henry IV, and the young king rewarded him with appointments as abbot of Lorsch and bishop of Speyer (while still retaining his abbacy at Hirsau). This set Hirsau abbey into a multi-year uproar in which most monks rejected Gebhard's episcopal appointment. Eventually conditions were such that Gebhard had to withdraw as bishop and he later died in exile while still the titular head of Hirsau.

Only in this light can we see why the Gebhard's predecessor William was suddenly raised venerated with a »Vita« that proclaimed him as the patron saint of Hirsau abbey. The »Vita« claims Abbot William drew up a reforming Cluniac charter for the abbey and at great risk to himself traveled to Rome to obtain papal approbation, all of which is total fabrication as a surviving charter of independence granted by the count of Calw makes clear.



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In this instance, a local investiture conflict (between abbot and monks, not between *ecclesia* and *imperium*) was transformed into an ersatz founding myth for the reformed monastery. As Drumm rightly concludes, »Dies alles hat wenig mit dem Investiturstreit, sondern mehr damit zu tun, mit welchen Prozessen innerhalb einer monastischen Institution auf eine aufkommende Sinnkrise und eine unsichere Zukunft reagiert wurde« (p. 88).

The second local investiture conflict which resulted in a fabricated memory of events is brilliantly deduced by Katrin Getschmann in her study of the well-endowed and regionally influential women's cloister of San Sisto in Piacenza during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. In this case, Pope Paschal II's decree of protection over the cloister and its new abbot Oddo forged a past in which Countess Matilda of Tuscany was inserted as the agent requesting the replacement of the nuns with a community of monks from the French reformed Cluniac cloister of La Chaise-Dieu. In fact, Pope Paschal II had moved after Matilda's death to transform the women's abbey, hitherto sympathetic to imperial interests, with a male cloister having a pro-papal sympathy.

Of course the actual justification given for the removal of the nuns was the standard trope that their moral integrity was in decline and that they had badly squandered the abbey's resources, neither of which was true. Indeed, the abbess Febrona and her community proved to be tenacious opponents against their removal and held on in the abbey much longer than has hitherto been understood. Ultimately, power politics and economic interests defined this conflict, not the direct ideological and polemical conflicts between Pope Paschal II (himself once a monk at Cluny in his youth) and Henry V.

The northern Italian historiographical paradigm of Communal Revolution receives attention in the articles by Nicoangelo D'Acunto and Alessio Fiore, but not by local case studies. D'Acunto provides a historiographical survey of the dearth (until recently) of Italian local studies which engage either the paradigms of Feudal Revolution or Investiture Conflict, since neither has been considered relevant to the predominant paradigm of Communal Revolution. Yet he argues that the Investiture Conflict in fact marked a change in the nature of urban self-confidence and patriotism as expressed in a kind of civic religion infused with the impulse of autonomy from both Rome and the German emperor. Though episcopal elections were the disputes of popes and emperors, the bishops themselves were still in a position to influence the social and political developments in their cities.

In the final result, however, the Investiture Conflict weakened imperial authority in the Lombard cities and thereby played a crucial historical role in enabling the emergence of the communes as »total institutions«. All in all, not a revelatory discovery but still the article provides a clear-eyed and intentional effort to link the Italian paradigm of Communal Revolution to the Investiture



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Conflict. The French feudal paradigm is not, however, equally engaged.

Fiore's article also takes a historiographical approach rather than providing a local case study, and builds on D'Acunto's thesis. He makes the case that the political system of imperial Italy (*Regnum Italiae*) was fundamentally changed during the era of the Investiture Conflict – most notably at the level of counties and marches. It is striking to note that in spite of his troubled reign, Henry IV was actually successful in dismantling traditional Carolingian political structures in northern Italy. Yet his rebel son Henry V's equally troubled reign thereafter proved quite unsuccessful in establishing new political and administrative structures to replace them. The ultimate result: seigneurial authority emerged in the countryside while communes emerged as autonomous actors in urban centers.

The well-organized though loose Carolingian polity of delegated authority was therefore replaced not with a successful imperial alliance of urban and rural lords to offset bishops and dukes. Rather, it was replaced by weakened imperial power precisely because of the autonomy achieved by urban communes and rural castellan lords. Chronic local warfare during the Investiture Conflict era moved this dynamic rapidly forward. Ironically then, imperial policy of dislocating traditional power structures in the Italian Kingdom facilitated the fragmentation and localization of political authority not the establishment of direct imperial authority, which was now only one among several competing political authorities in the region. As the intermediate powers were removed, Salian political policy and civil wars yielded the same results in both the Italian as well as in the German kingdom. Fiore concludes by observing that this ultimately failed Salian policy still proved as a strategic template for Lothar III and, more significantly, for the Hohenstaufen emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

Finally, the article by Charles West documents an important connection that is rarely if ever even imagined in the voluminous scholarship published to date on the Investiture Conflict. He makes a persuasive case that the core ideals of the Lotharingian reformers regarding papal primacy were originally forged during the 1054 Great Schism conflict and then transmitted from Rome to Lotharingia in manuscript collections obtained through ecclesiastical connections with reformers in Rome (perhaps even from the Lotharingian Humbert of Silva Candida, or Moyennoutier as West speculates). These manuscript texts were then drawn upon during investiture conflicts between St. Laurentius of Liège and Brussels and its bishop Otbert and between St. Arnulf of Metz and its once and future abbot and then bishop Walo. In both conflicts the Roman texts affirming papal primacy used originally in the Great Schism were now employed as a canon law path of appeal to assure autonomy from episcopal intervention.

West has therefore shown that Gregorian Reform ideas were transmitted through networks with mediators who kept these

Mittelalter – Moyen Âge (500–1500)

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ideas vital despite the regular setbacks popes encountered during efforts at sustaining the Gregorian Reform movement beyond the Investiture Struggle. The challenge that remains is to identify similar and more networks and mediators outside the Lotharingian reform network and therein evidence of similar textual transmission to further support this innovative thesis.

As a whole, this collection of articles hangs together better than most publications of this kind. Yet the linchpin remains the Investiture Conflict, a German national historiographical paradigm for epoch-shaping *Wandel*. Readers keen on interrogating this paradigm with comparative evidence from local case studies in France and northern Italy will be quite satisfied indeed. Others seeking similar historiographical interrogation of the French national paradigm of *mutation féodale* (or *Feudalgesellschaft* more broadly) will be disappointed, and those seeking the same for the northern Italian national paradigm of Communal Revolution will only find broad observations rather than any case studies.

And it must be said, given that the title of the book contains the noun *Europa* and that the introduction makes such a persuasive case for a truly European perspective on these three national historiographical paradigms, it remains typical that medieval England is nowhere to be found, nor is any region of Iberia let alone the Low Countries or Scandinavia in the mix as well. Perhaps linguistic limitations account for this (apart from England), but irrespective of this possibility the volume indicates that national intellectual challenges still prevent a true European history reaching beyond national (and nationalist) limitations. To be even-handed here, the same is true in reverse for Anglophone scholarship.



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