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What was the Investiture Controversy a Controversy About?

Emma Knight

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Abstract

What was the Investiture Controversy a Controversy About?

The Investiture Controversy between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV of Germany presents us with a wide variety of issues that are not immediately discernable at first sight. It is not simply about the gift of investitures by lay persons with which it is concerned, nor the issues of simony and clerical marriage which provided the sole troubles for eleventh and twelfth century relations between the papacy and secular leaders. The Investiture Controversy was representative of the division, conflict and blurring of borders between the two realms of *sacerdotium* and *regnum*; 'Church' and 'State'.

This thesis will aim to provide a contextualisation and chronology of events that; firstly, will describe the early Church and the relations which were formed with state institutions and imperial leaders. Secondly, it will look at events that led to the degradation of the papacy and wider Church and therefore brought about the reform movement. Thirdly, it will analyse how these factors brought *regnum* and *sacerdotium* into direct and somewhat inevitable conflict and competition with one another.

This thesis will aim to demonstrate that the Investiture Controversy was primarily a clash originating from fifth century ideas which were put into practice and developed by an eleventh century papacy. The doctrine that was developed contained a theocratic notion of government and one that consequently, clearly exalted the spiritual order above the secular powers. When the papacy from Gregory VII onward is often discussed, terms such as 'papal monarchy' are repeatedly applied; implicit in this is the notion that particular pontiffs were attempting to extend the realm of sacerdotal power to that also of the temporal sphere. If this assertion is made with any degree of surprise then a misunderstanding of the Christian tradition has been made.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Investiture Controversy presents us with a wide variety of issues that are not immediately discernable at first sight. It is not simply about the gift of investitures by lay persons with which we are concerned, nor the issues of simony and clerical marriage which provided the sole troubles for eleventh and twelfth century relations between the papacy and secular, imperial leaders. The given name of the disagreements between Pope Gregory VII (*pont.* 1073-85) and Emperor Henry IV of Germany (*imp.* 1065-1106: minority 1056-65), the 'Investiture Controversy' or 'Investiture Contest', is misleading in encouraging one to believe that the argument was specifically about investiture. The investiture of clerical officers by members of the laity was one of the issues over which Gregory and Henry clashed, but it was certainly not the only one; the events surrounding the Investiture Controversy are of a much more complex and all-encompassing nature than this. One is left with the distinct feeling that the combined issues of lay investiture, clerical marriage and simony were, perhaps more than anything else, representative of a more underlying assertion of power, from both sides. They culminated to illustrate the divisions between what are often termed *sacerdotium* and *regnum* or *imperium*; 'Church' and 'State'. The Investiture Controversy was representative of the division, conflict and blurring of borders between the two realms. It highlighted their interdependence and mutual reliance as well as their differing interests and aims. Imperial ambitions brought into question the Gelasian formula upon which the Church asserted its supremacy within the spiritual sphere. Similarly, actions taken by Gregory VII, such as the excommunication of Henry IV, challenged the emperor's primacy within the temporal political sphere.

The problem of the relationship of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* is one that dates back many centuries prior to the Investiture Controversy and takes



shape in the Augustinian-Gelasian formula¹ of the two separate spheres inhabited by the two powers. Difficulties between the two re-emerged as a result of the level of corruption that grew up within the Church in earnest from the ninth century onwards, in part due to the practices against which Gregory railed. The papacy regarded many of these problems as derivative of what they perceived as the growing involvement of the laity, especially imperial interests, with clerical life. As will be demonstrated, therefore, the controversy had more varied causes, outcomes and implications than simply the issue of investiture.

Resultantly it is perhaps most appropriate to begin by looking at the context within which Gregory VII's views concerning the roles and relationship of the pope and emperor emerged. The Empire that existed in the mid-eleventh century was one that had experienced a traumatic few centuries. It had been rejuvenated under the Carolingian monarchy, specifically during the reigns of Pepin and Charlemagne, but later disintegrated to a position of near collapse. Throughout the ninth, tenth and first half of the eleventh centuries, corruption was rife among the laity, lower clerical ranks, episcopacies and even the papacy, reaching quite extraordinary extremes under popes such as Stephen VI, Sergius VI, John XII, Boniface VIII and Benedict IX. Gregory's primary aim was therefore to end corruption (in his mind epitomised by the three elements of clerical marriage, simony and lay investiture) through building upon the reforms which as a cardinal during Leo IX's pontificate he had helped to formulate.

Gregory was provided with ample theological justification for his ultimate belief that even in matters of state, where they became of concern to the papacy, the emperor was subordinate to the judgement of

¹ Term attributable to R. W. Dyson, *Normative Theories of Society and Government in Five Medieval Thinkers*, (Lampeter, 2003), p. 86.

the pope. However, when Christian doctrine is more thoroughly analysed it is shown to provide somewhat contradictory and ambiguous evidence for Gregory's arguments. Christian doctrine had largely been passed on through the writings of St Augustine, however, as shall be illustrated, Augustine's meaning, mainly for these purposes in *De civitate Dei*, was often misinterpreted, deliberately or otherwise, by subsequent papalist writers. Nonetheless, even returning to the Bible, it is self-evident how differing viewpoints can be supported due to the often contradictory nature of the text, particularly when comments are taken out of context and filled with an altered meaning. For example, Jesus' gift of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter and with them the power to bind and loose, applicable both to this world and the next, is often used to support claims of papal supremacy as Peter was the first to occupy the see of Rome. Matthew 16:18-19 was invoked as evidence of these claims.² However, supporters of imperial authority often took this to mean that Jesus was speaking to Peter as a representative of mankind rather than giving him alone the power. 'The ecclesiology of the Carolingian period and of the tenth century had usually interpreted the biblical texts recording Christ's commission to Peter – Matt. 16:18-19, Luke 22:32 and John 21:15-7 – as signifying the creation of the 'priestly order': the power of binding and loosing granted to Peter was granted through him to all bishops (*Petrus initum episcopatus*).'³ Robinson then contrasts this with the way in which the concept is altered under Pope Gregory VII, drawing upon 'the 'Roman tradition' of Petrine primacy'⁴ as expressed by Pope Leo I and Pope Gregory I and formulated in the

² "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

³ I. S. Robinson, *Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest: The Polemical Literature of the Late Eleventh Century*, (Manchester, 1978), p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

forged *Constantium Constantini*, the 'Donation of Constantine'. Through this, it is easy to see how the notion of a 'papal monarchy' came about, although the extent to which this term can be applied to the pontificate of Gregory VII is questionable. One thing that becomes immediately clear is that in many situations, then, as now, it is of no concern what text or spoken word was actually intended to mean, but merely how it could be interpreted.

The famous conversion of Constantine on the Milvian Bridge in 312 and Theodosius I's series of decrees subsequent to 391 outlawing pagan practices, henceforth making Christianity the official religion of the empire, ensured that *imperium* and *sacerdotium* became, in many respects, impossible to completely divide. Many authors of the time discussed the role of a Christian emperor, by and large concluding that although a Christian emperor was definitely preferable to a pagan one, but due to their involvement in the secular world, even they can never be ideal. Augustine's primary purpose in writing *De civitate Dei* was to account for the sack of Rome by Alaric and the Visigoths, countering the assertions that it occurred because Rome had turned away from her pagan gods who had brought her success, in favour of the Christian God. Instead, Augustine explained the very notion of a temporal state in terms of human sin, resulting from the Fall, which occurred because of man's pride and wrongly ordered souls, choosing self-love over love of God. The state is therefore both a punishment and remedy for sin and hence even a Christian emperor can only be imperfect, as indeed is all of mankind. Augustine's discussion of the *civitas Dei* and *civitas terrena* (the 'city of God' or 'heavenly city' and the 'earthly city') led many to believe that he was discussing Church and State respectively and hence that he was extolling the virtues of the institutional Church over those of the secular State apparatus. This was however a misconception as Augustine believed that there was no element of this earthly life, the institutional

Church included, that was without sin. It is perhaps easy to see why, due to ambiguities in his language, Augustine was repeatedly misunderstood to be talking about the institutional Church and State in passages such as this:

Two cities, then, have been created by two loves: that is, the earthly by love of self extending even to the contempt of God, and the heavenly by love of God extending to the contempt of self. The one, therefore, glories in itself, the other in the Lord; the one seeks glory from men, the other finds its highest glory in God, the Witness of our conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, 'Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.' In the Earthly City, princes are as much mastered by the lust for mastery as the nations which they subdue are by them; in the Heavenly, all serve one another in charity, rulers by their counsel and subjects by their obedience. The one city loves its own strength as displayed in its mighty men; the other says to its God, 'I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.'"⁵

It may be the case that this was apparent in medieval times too, but that papal polemicists chose deliberately to misinterpret Augustine's intended meaning to add weight to their argument. It is thus that members of the earthly Church may also be reprobate; members of the Earthly City,⁶ and conversely, as Augustine's conception of the City of God extends throughout time, it is possible for people who lived in pre-Christian times (and so could not have been members of the earthly Church) to be members of the Heavenly City.⁷ Nevertheless, for those born after Christ's coming on Earth, membership of the earthly Church was essential for the possibility of salvation. As Henry Chadwick asserts, 'There can be no clear frontiers between church and world, the old

⁵ Augustine, *De civitas Dei*, R. W. Dyson (ed. and trans.), (Cambridge, 1998), Book XIV, Chapter 28, p. 632.

⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, Bk 1, Chp 35, pp. 48-9; Bk XVIII, Chp 49, pp. 896-7.

⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, Bk XVIII, Chp 47, pp. 893-4.

opposition especially clear to African ecclesiological language of 'inside' and 'outside' has lost its applicability. The conflict between sin and holiness cuts into the substance of all human groups, the Church not excluded.⁸

Chadwick does, however, also illustrate the way in which the Church could be, and often was, equated with the Heavenly City.

The empire, and any secular society, is neutrally 'open' to both 'cities'; the Church is not, but is, in some profound sense, sacramentally identical with the eschatological community of the redeemed. Here and now it contains many who shall not be with her at the end; but the essential continuity between the Church 'as it is now' with the Church 'as it will be' creates an asymmetry between Church and Empire in the way the language of the two 'cities' applies to them. The Church is the City of God here and now in a sense which no state or group is the earthly City."⁹

Augustine certainly believed that all power was derived from God: this entailed that bad pagan rulers, as well as good Christian ones, had the authority of God in their rulership.¹⁰ It is as a result of this that Augustine believed that rebellion against the State could not be justified as it was tantamount to revolting against the power of God.¹¹ However, it is evident that Augustine believed that the best type of ruler was a Christian one, who would be subservient to the Church's requests, such

⁸ H. Chadwick, 'Christian Doctrine', *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350 – c. 1450*, J. H. Burns (ed.), (Cambridge, 1988), p. 13.

⁹ H. Chadwick, 'Christian Doctrine', p. 13.

¹⁰ 'All the other things of this life, be they great or small, such as the world itself, light, air, earth, water, fruits, the soul and body of man himself, sensation, mind, life; all these things he bestows upon good and evil men alike. And among these things is imperial sway also, of whatever scope, which He dispenses according to His plan for the government of the ages.' Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, Bk V, Chp 26, p. 235.

¹¹ Cf. *Ibid*, Bk V, Chp 21, pp. 227-8.

as Theodosius' submission to Ambrose.¹² Similarly, "When you act," he [Augustine] once wrote to a high African official, 'it is the Church that acts, for whose sake and not as whose son you act.' He regarded religious coercion primarily as a function not of the civil authorities, but of the Church. Through Christian rulers it is the Church that 'uses power'.¹³ In his discussion of the happiness of Christian emperors, Augustine asserted:

we say that they are happy if they rule justly; if they are not lifted up by the talk of those who accord them sublime honours or pay their respects with an excessive humility, but remember that they are only men; if they make their power the handmaid of His majesty by using it to spread His worship to the greatest possible extent; if they fear, love and worship God; if they love that kingdom which they are not afraid to share with others more than their own; if they are slow to punish and swift to pardon; if they resort to punishment only when it is necessary to the government and defence of the commonwealth, and never to gratify their own enmity; ... if they do all these things not out of craving for empty glory, but from love of eternal felicity; and if, for their sins, they do not neglect to offer to their true God the sacrifices of humility and contrition and prayer.¹⁴

The phrase here taken out of context by later authors was that urging kings to 'make their power the handmaid of His majesty', which was

¹² 'And what could be more marvellous than the religious humility of Theodosius when he punished the abominable and grave crime of the Thessalonians? For, at the intercession of the bishops he had promised to treat their office leniently; but he was then compelled to take vengeance on the people by the tumult of certain persons close to him. Then, however, coerced by the discipline of the Church, he did penance with such humility that the people, as they prayed for him, were more ready to weep when they saw the imperial majesty thus brought low than they were to fear it was angered by their sin.' *Ibid.*, Bk V, Chp 26, p. 235. This chapter is entitled: *Of the faith and godliness of Theodosius Augustus*.

¹³ R. A. Markus, 'The Latin Fathers', *Cambridge History*, Burns (ed.), p. 115.

¹⁴ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, Bk V, Chp 24, p. 232.

often interpreted as meaning that secular power should be subordinate to the sacerdotal; in terms of the two swords question, that the State wields the secular sword at the behest of the Church rather than independently of spiritual affairs or upon its own initiative. Proverbs 21:1 could similarly be read in this light: 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it withsoever he will.' Although the language of 'two swords' was barely to figure explicitly in the literature of the Investiture Controversy and was not fully elucidated as a concept until the mid-twelfth century,¹⁵ it is one which would have been familiar due to biblical imagery such as Luke 22:38 which stated, 'And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.' 'Just as the New Testament *auctoritas* Romans 13, 1-7 defined the functions of the king, so Luke 22, 38 – 'Lord, here are two swords' – defined the relations of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*: the image of the two swords, secular and spiritual became a political theory.'¹⁶

'The classic interpretation of the two swords as the material sword of secular coercion and the spiritual sword of excommunication appears in the papal letters of the ninth century. Before the investiture controversy the image of the two swords was intended to suggest harmonious co-operation.'¹⁷ As we shall presently see though, this was all to change, with imperial supporters claiming that Gregory VII had upset the balance of power by seizing the secular sword and papalists counter-claiming that it was the pope's to take and Henry who was instead acting in an aggressive manner. Pro-Henrician authors questioned the legitimacy of the papalist claim to authority over both swords.

Many voices in the cause of the reform struggles of the eleventh century declared that the two swords signified two separate spheres or species

¹⁵ See below, pp. 121-3.

¹⁶ I. S. Robinson, 'Church and Papacy', *Cambridge History*, Burns (ed.), p. 302.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

of rulership, spiritual and temporal, both sanctioned by God; for the priesthood to appropriate both swords was to destroy a duality that was supported by a biblical allegory and, in effect also, to reduce two swords to one.¹⁸

After all, Jesus had condemned Peter's use of a sword against a servant of the High Priest in the garden of Gethsemane at the time of his arrest.¹⁹ Although there was little question that the material sword should be wielded by the secular powers, what was in doubt was the extent of the ecclesiastical right to command the material sword as well as to wield the spiritual sword. It is clear that in practice the principle of duality does not ultimately work and the two spheres, quite naturally, overlap. It was thus that Gelasius felt the need to elaborate on the Augustinian formula, which he did most prominently in a letter to Emperor Anastasius, dissuading him from interfering in doctrinal matters, asserting that the secular powers should not concern themselves with sacerdotal affairs.²⁰

Implicitly although Gelasius clearly believes the two powers to be separate, he, ultimately, does not believe them to be equal because at the last, the spiritual power is responsible for the salvation of the temporal; the spiritual authority must answer directly to God, the temporal to this

¹⁸ D. E. Luscombe and G. R. Evans, 'The Twelfth-Century Renaissance', *Cambridge History Burns* (ed.), pp. 318-19.

¹⁹ Matt. 26:51-52: 'And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.'

John 18:10-11: 'Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?'

²⁰ Quoted at pp. 16-17 below; Gelasius' Twelfth Letter, *Famuli vestrae pietatis*, in Dyson, *Five Normative Theories*, pp. 85-6.

world. Gelasius strongly advocated the primacy of the Roman see and was the first pope to whom a reference as 'Vicar of Christ' was recorded.²¹ Despite the retention of the notion of duality in Gelasius' writings, they are also peppered with the distinct indication that if a choice between the authority of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* were to be made it would be the *regnum* that would have to concede a subordinate role.

As opposed to the keys of Heaven, given to St Peter or other ecclesiastical symbols, the sword receives biblical references in both a spiritual and secular sense; an ambiguity exploited by both papal and imperial authors. Similarly, although it is often Pauline phrases that are used by imperialists to support their case and those of St Peter used by the papalists, this does not necessarily hold true. Additionally, much of St Augustine's doctrine of original sin was derived from St Paul's account of the Fall.

Paul commanded the Ephesians:

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.²²

Paul also stated that Christians should settle their own affairs rather than turning to secular magistrates.

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall

²¹ At the Roman synod of 13 May 495), J. N. D. Kelly, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), p. 48.

²² Eph. 6: 13-17.

judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.²³

Though these may be expected to be Petrine claims rather than the words of St Paul, the same can be said of some of St Peter's commands, which sound more Pauline in character, such as:

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.²⁴

These aid us by illustrating some of the scriptural tensions that were prevalent and easily transmitted into ecclesiastical and secular arguments.

Papalists used the Gelasian formula to assert the primacy of the Church in all areas,²⁵ not just those of spiritual concern. Imperial supporters argued vehemently against this interpretation, claiming that it usurped the rightful power of the *regnum*. Perhaps the most returned to text in this context is Romans 13:1-7, which, despite its familiarity, it is perhaps worth quoting verbatim:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a

²³ I Cor. 6:1-6. See also Matt. 18:15-17.

²⁴ 1 Pet. 2:13-17.

²⁵ Although especially the Roman see.

terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for if he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

The relevance of this text is self-evident and provides us with a clear theological basis for political obligation and obedience. According to this interpretation, any rebellion against the 'powers that be,' would also be a rebellion against God. This resultantly brings into question the rights which a pope has over an emperor and poses challenges to the legitimacy of Gregory VII's excommunication and deposition of Henry IV as it provided an incitement to rebel to Henry's subjects; whether or not this was Gregory's chief motivation is another matter entirely.

We shall now turn to a contextualisation and chronology of events that; firstly, will describe the early Church and the manner in which relations were formulated between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* up to the fall of Charlemagne's empire. Secondly, it will look at events that led to the degradation of the Church and hence in turn brought about the reform movement. Thirdly, and somewhat inevitably, it will be analysed how this brought *regnum* and *sacerdotium* into direct conflict and competition with one another.

Chapter 2: The power and degradation of the papacy, 150-1045.

The see of Rome took on the persona of Peter and Peter's inheritance of the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the power to bind and loose in this world, the decisions of which will remain binding in the next. It was around this framework that the authority of the papal see was asserted. In fact the papal see was very slow to develop; it had taken shape by the mid-150s under Anicetus (thought to be the tenth pope)¹ due to the proliferation of views and doctrines within the Church and hence there was a need for stricter authority, tighter discipline and adherence to one unified set of ideas. The persecutions that Christians suffered resulted from the perceived threat that talk of another kingdom, one far greater than the Roman Empire, could pose. Christianity also provided a useful scapegoat for explaining how the Goths managed to overcome the great Roman Empire. Emperors could with ease argue that the traditional pagan gods of Rome, which had thus far protected the city and her empire and allowed her to flourish, were angry at their rejection and replacement with the Christian God and were resultantly removing their protection from, and exacting their punishment upon, Rome and her citizens. However, instead of demolishing the Church's authority and strength, martyrdom increased it further and in some respects brought the Church the unity it needed in a manner it had been previously unable to do. With an increasingly unified Church, amongst other things it became much easier to identify which viewpoints and concepts were 'orthodox' and which 'heretical'.

It was by no means completely accepted that the status of Peter's successor in the form of the pope had the authoritative status that he had

¹ E. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*, (London, 2001), p. 13.

undoubtedly gained by the eleventh century as Duffy asserts, "Christ had indeed founded the Church on Peter, but all the Apostles and all bishops shared fully in the one indivisible apostolic power."² This was particularly emphasised by Cyprian of Carthage in the third century in his treatise on the *Unity of the Catholic Church* which he had rewritten in light of disagreements with Pope Stephen I over the rebaptism of schismatics, as Cyprian commented "none of us sets himself up as a bishop of bishops or exercises the power of a tyrant to force his colleagues into obedience."³ Resultantly, "with the confrontation between Stephen and Cyprian, the divisive potential of papal claims became clear."⁴

Upon Constantine's conversion he sought to unify the Church as he saw the potential of this unity as the cornerstone of his empire. Quite simply; with a unified Church his subjects would be more obedient to his diktats, especially if his control over the Church was considerable. For example, Constantine presided over some of the sessions at the Council of Nicaea where the Arian schism was condemned. Clashes between the papacy and empire were quick to come, they did not, however, have the same significance as those of eleventh century and beyond. This was primarily due to the fact that at this time, although the pope did wield a form of power himself, especially if supported by the populace at large,⁵ the pope was essentially dependent upon the emperor for a large degree of his power and authority; without the emperor and his support, the pope would not be able to act effectively.

² Duffy, *Saints and Sinners.*, p. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵ For example, Pope Felix, installed by Emperor Constantius after Liberius' exile had to be withdrawn and Liberius reinstated due to protests by the Roman people.

Ambrose was one of the early popes who did show considerable power and strength of character in the face of imperial demands. His reluctance to give way to imperial pressure is given its classic form in Ambrose's excommunication of Emperor Theodosius I in 390 for his ordering of a massacre at Thessalonica following the murder of an imperial official. Much was later made of Theodosius' obvious and sincere repentance, with Augustine using his example of how a good Christian ruler should act.⁶ In *De Dignitate Sacerdotali*, later drawn upon by Gregory VII,⁷ Ambrose commented:

Brothers, the episcopal honour and dignity cannot possibly be equated to any comparisons. If your comparison is to the lustre of kings and the diadem of princes, it will be far lower than if you compare the metal of lead to the lustre of gold; indeed, when you may see the necks of princes bowed down to the knees of priests and in that they kiss their right hands, they believe themselves to be fortified by their prayers.⁸

And also, there is 'nothing in this world more pre-eminent than priests, and nothing to be found more exalted than bishops.'⁹

Leo the Great (*pont.* 440-61) created a strong conception of papal primacy. He clearly believed that the authority of Peter was representative of that of Christ and hence to remain a part of the Church, was to be obeyed at all costs.¹⁰ The pope was therefore a direct symbol of Christ's power on earth and to defy the pope was to defy Christ. The pope resultantly acted as a living mediator between this life and the next, particularly when participating in one of the sacraments, which helps to explain the severity

⁶ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, Bk V, Chp 26, pp. 233-36.

⁷ Cowdrey, H. E. J. (ed. and trans.), *The Register of Pope Gregory VII 1073-1085*, (Oxford, 2002), p. 391.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

¹⁰ Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, p. 43.

of the punishment of excommunication and, in particular, the implications that this would have for authority of a secular ruler.

In the late fifth century the Acacian schism occurred between East and West, with the former under the spiritual leadership of Acacius as Patriarch of Constantinople holding the belief that Christ has only one nature and the latter that Christ possesses two natures; divine and human. The Emperor Zeno supported the Eastern Monophysite claims rather than supporting Pope Felix III (*pont.* 483-492) and so had the effect of increasing papal suspicion towards the imperial rulers. Gelasius I (*pont.* 492-496) was Felix's successor and had a profound and lasting effect upon the image of the papacy and papal relation with the secular powers. Gelasius saw himself as a loyal Roman citizen but simultaneously refused to bow to the Emperor Anastasius II and to use the same kind of language and deference that the majority of his predecessors had done. It is clear to see that the notion of the papacy as had been conceived of by Constantine was very different from that which had evolved by the late fifth century. For Constantine, the imperial powers were undoubtedly entitled to concern themselves with the Church's affairs because all matters of concern to the unity and strength of the empire lay within the emperor's remit. Conversely, for Gelasius, there were some things over which the imperial secular powers could not preside. The Church was primarily concerned with the care of souls; it was interested in the next world rather than the temporal world. Resultantly, the affairs of the Church were the Church's alone because the care of souls included that of the emperor. Gelasius clearly set out his reasoning for why the secular powers should limit their activity and interference to within the secular realm alone. This is perhaps most clearly set forth in Gelasius' *Twelfth Letter to Anastasius II*:

There are two orders, O August Emperor, by which this world is principally ruled: the consecrated authority of the pontiffs, and royal

power [*auctoritas sacrata pontificum, et regalis potestas*]. But the burden laid upon the priests in this matter is the heavier, for it they who are to render on account of the Divine judgement even for the kings of men. Know, O most clement Son, that although you take precedence over the human race in dignity, nonetheless you bend your neck in submission to those who preside over things Divine, and look to them for the means of your salvation. In partaking of heavenly sacraments, when they are properly dispensed, you acknowledge that you ought to be subject to the order of religion rather than ruling it...For if the ministers of religion acknowledging that you rule, insofar as it pertains to the keeping of public discipline, has been given to you by Divine disposition, obey your laws, lest they seem to obstruct the proper course of worldly affairs: with what good will, I pray, ought you to obey those who have been charged with the dispensation of the holy mysteries?¹¹

In his *Fourth Tractate* Gelasius refers to the priest-kings who existed prior to the coming of Christ, such as Melchizedek¹²:

But after the coming of the Truth [i.e. of Christ], Who was Himself both true King and true Pontiff, no subsequent emperor has taken the title of pontiff, and no pontiff had laid claim to royal dignity...For Christ, mindful of human frailty, has...separated both offices according to the different functions and dignity proper to each, wishing that His people should be preserved by a healthy humility, and not again ensnared by human pride; so that Christian emperors should now have need of the Pontiffs for their eternal life, and the pontiffs should make use of [uterentur] the resources of the imperial government for the direction of temporal things: to the end that spiritual activity might be removed from carnal distractions, and that the soldier of the Lord might not be at all entangled in secular business.¹³

Gelasius' mention of Melchizedek and why there have been no priest-kings since the coming of Christ is worth bearing in mind with regard to

¹¹ Dyson, *Five Normative Theories*, pp. 85-6.

¹² Gen. 14:18.

¹³ Tractatus 4:11 in Dyson, *Five Normative Theories*, p.85.

Salian arguments in the eleventh century which appeared keen upon resurrecting the notion of the priest-king and drew upon such examples as Melchizedek for support. Additionally, the language used in Gelasius' *Fourth Tractate* is both precise and yet subtle in indicating that the dignity of the ecclesiastical sphere is greater than that of the temporal. There is, quite literally, a world of difference between pontiffs making 'use of the resources of the imperial government for the direction of temporal things' and Christian emperors who 'should now have need of the pontiffs for their eternal life'. The implicit difference between the quality of these two functions, and by extension, their holders, is self-evident. Gelasius, in the manner of St Augustine, emphasises the separateness of the two powers; although there are subsequent, and in some cases significant, blips in the relations between the papacy and the empire, it does not become a substantial issue until the eleventh century. When papacy and empire do come into conflict, the illogical nature of the statements made by both Augustine and Gelasius becomes clear. The realms of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* can never be separate from one another. It is in this context that the embedded assertions of Gelasius and Augustine that the sacerdotal powers contribute a higher form of power than those belonging to the temporal realm, really take on their fullest significance.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the sack of Rome in 410 by the Goths and the looting of the city by Gaiseric the Vandal in 455, it remained up to the Byzantine Emperors to take up the mantle of Constantine, and this some did with vigour. For example, Justinian who, similar to Gelasian dualism, believed that there were two powers but he turned them on their head from Gelasius' model and envisaged a substantial and pre-eminent role for the emperor in the government of Church affairs. 'To the Emperor belonged the care of all the churches, to make and unmake bishops, to decide the bounds of orthodoxy. The Emperor, not the Pope, was God's vicar on earth, and to him belonged the title *kosmocrator*, Lord

of the world, ruling over one empire, one law, one church.'¹⁴ The gulf between East and West grew as this interpretation was broadly accepted by the Eastern bishops whilst in the West the conception of papal primacy increased.

Both Pope Gelasius and Pope Gregory the Great recognised the authority of the emperor in temporal matters. The difference between East and West lies more in that the Byzantine world did not think of itself as two 'societies', sacred and secular, but as a single society in harmony with the emperor as the earthly counterpart of the divine Monarch. The balance of this theory could be seriously upset by State domination of the Church; the more dualistic Western theory could produce ecclesiastical domination over lay society.¹⁵

Gregory the Great (*pont.* 590-604), despite demonstrating a disposition of concord towards the Emperor, was particularly keen to emphasise the importance of the see of Rome. In a letter of 595 to the Emperor Maurice, Pope Gregory stated that, 'the care of the whole Church had been committed to the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles. Behold he received the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to him was given the power of binding and loosing, to him the care and principate of the whole Church was committed.'¹⁶

Perhaps the most significant turn in events occurred during the papacy of Zachary I (*pont.* 741-752). Childeric III, king of the Merovingians was a weak leader who was essentially governed by the Mayor of the Palace, Pepin; a position which had often before been held by someone who wielded actual but not ceremonial power, for example, Pepin's father, Charles. Pepin asked Pope Zachary whether he thought it was fitting that the man who holds ceremonial and formal power but does not use it

¹⁴ Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, p. 58.

¹⁵ H. Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 166.

¹⁶ Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, pp. 59-60.

should retain it and the title of king which goes with it, or should power and the kingship be transferred to the man who in actual fact wields power. The Pope's reply permitted the deposition of Childeric and the election of Pepin to the kingship; Pepin was anointed and crowned by Zachary in 751. Pepin was anointed and crowned for a second time by Zachary's successor, Pope Stephen II (*pont.* 752-757) to whom he made a *Donation*, promising to protect, and at this time also to recover and return, Rome. Pepin and Stephen enjoyed a favourable relationship, however, through the *Donations* of both Pepin and Constantine, Pope Stephen's power grew considerably relative to that of Pepin. The forged *Constantium Constantini* is thought to have been written around this time, perhaps in response to the question over where the justification came from for Pepin's gift of Ravenna, Emilia, Pentapolis and Rome to Pope Stephen after he had freed them from Lombard.

Although the immediate aftermath of Pepin's *Donation* was one of disarray for the papal state, with Pope Paul I and Pope Stephen III being challenged respectively by the antipopes Constantine and Philip, this was to alter once Pepin's son, Charlemagne, acceded to the throne.¹⁷ Charlemagne (*imp.* 768-814) enjoyed a very close relationship with Pope Hadrian I (*pont.* 772-795). Charlemagne took his role as Rome's protector seriously but so too did he respond to the affairs of the papal state; the title 'patrician of the Romans' was not for Charlemagne a symbolic one. His dealings in Ravenna made Hadrian uneasy because what Charlemagne clearly saw as his right and beneficial assistance, Pope Hadrian saw as interference in a realm which did not concern him. Charlemagne regarded himself as the defender of the Church and as such, when the second Council of Nicaea was convened he thought it only correct that he weigh in and expressed strong views on the iconoclasm of the East.

¹⁷ Kelly, *Dictionary of Popes*, pp. 92-5.

When Pope Leo III (*pont.* 795-816) replaced Hadrian I upon his death, Charlemagne's position in relation to the sacerdotal power was strengthened. Leo was not universally popular and was attacked in 799, forcing him to flee to Charlemagne's protection. Charges were brought against Leo, including those of perjury and adultery. This caused something of a quandary for Charlemagne because he was, in essence, being asked to form judgement pertaining to the innocence or guilt of a correctly elected sitting Pope and such a judgement, whatever Charlemagne concluded, would go against the principle that no earthly power should be permitted to judge the apostolic see. Pope Leo was safely returned to Rome and Charlemagne journeyed to the city a year later. The council over which Charlemagne presided in this matter was charged to look at the accusations made against the Pope, but without directly sitting in judgement over him; a somewhat tenuous distinction. Leo fully submitted to the council and it found in his favour after Leo had solemnly pronounced his innocence. The fact that, what was in essence a judgement upon pope was allowed to occur gave substance to a close adviser of Charlemagne, Alcuin's pronouncement that: "'Our Lord Jesus Christ has set you up as the ruler of Christian people, in power more excellent than the pope or the emperor of Constantinople, in wisdom more distinguished, in the dignity of your rule more sublime. On you alone depends the whole safety of the churches of Christ.'"¹⁸ Nonetheless, Alcuin had been amongst those who had reminded Charlemagne that he was not permitted to sit in judgement over the papal see. Two days after the council concluded its proceedings, on 25 December 800, subsequent to celebrating Mass, Leo placed a crown upon Charlemagne's head and declared him to be 'Emperor of the Romans'. Despite later protestations from Charlemagne, it was clearly a pre-arranged and staged event,

¹⁸ R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, (London, 1970), p. 32.

however, it was by no means entirely to Charlemagne's benefit and certainly not to that of his successors in several instances.

In crowning Charlemagne, Pope Leo was reasserting his status through the symbolism of a pope crowning and, therefore in some senses, creating an emperor, which would not have been lost on him. Nonetheless, the Pope was placing the sole secular power in the hands of the Western Emperor and consequently, rejecting his Eastern counterpart, making the split between East and West even more decisive. The papacy henceforth increasingly looked westward; to the Frankish kingdom, to christianised Spain once the 're-conquest' of Spain from the Moors had begun,¹⁹ and to the growing Norman kingdom which came to include England.²⁰ What is clear from all this is that drawing upon the *Constantium Constantini*, in the pronouncement of Charlemagne to be Emperor of the Romans, relations between pope and emperor were made more complicated, muddying further the already opaque waters, and bringing the secular and ecclesiastical realms into a more certain collision course. Through this act, the emperor could claim primacy over all Roman affairs by using his title, including those of the Church, but similarly, the pope could declare supremacy by being able to depose, in the case of Pope Zachary and King Childeric III, and crown, in the instance of Pope Leo III and the Emperor Charlemagne, whomsoever they chose. This ambiguity came to haunt both the imperial forces and the papacy in later centuries.

¹⁹ The 're-conquest' was not complete until 1492 when Granada fell to the Christian forces and Spain was reunited as a Christian country through the marriage and rule of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (1479-1516).

²⁰ Incidentally, first evangelised by Gregory the Great where much of his ecclesiastical thought was to triumph at the Synod of Whitby in 664 (cf. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*).

Charlemagne's successor, Louis the Pious (*imp.* 814-40), intervened less frequently or severely and under Paschal I (*pont.* 817-24) the papacy managed to pull back some of its lost ground temporarily; Eugenius II (*pont.* 824-37) and Sergius II (*pont.* 844-47) were, however, not as steadfast in ensuring the retention of these gains. Charlemagne's empire was already in decline; none of his successors lived up to Charlemagne's promise. Similarly, in the papal sphere, Pope Nicholas I (*pont.* 858-67) was probably the final pope prior to the eleventh century to act as heir to such popes as 'the Greats'; Leo I, Gelasius I and Gregory I. His view of the papal office concurred with theirs and it was thus that Nicholas refused to accept Lothair II of Lorraine's putting aside of his lawful wife, Theutberga, and subsequent marriage to his concubine. Lothair was brother to Emperor Louis II (*imp.* 855-77) who laid siege to Rome but Nicholas refused to capitulate. Lothair was resultantly compelled to accept the Pope's decree.²¹ Pope John VIII (*pont.* 872-82) crowned three emperors in close succession; Charles the Bald (*imp.* 875-77), Louis the Stammerer (*imp.* 878-9) and Charles the Fat (*imp.* 881-887); none of whom were in any way remarkable and who died in quick succession.²² Charlemagne's empire came to a complete standstill in 887 when Charles the Fat was deposed and died the following year.

A brief look at the late ninth century and tenth century papacy will clearly indicate why in the early to mid-eleventh century the reform movement was necessary and grew accordingly. Between 882 and 1012 no fewer than five popes were murdered with two probable others and three antipopes; John XII (*pont.* 872-82) poisoned and clubbed to death; Hadrian III (*pont.* 884-5) may have been murdered; Stephen VI (*pont.* 896-

²¹ This decree, however, effectively became null and void under Pope Hadrian II (*pont.* 867-72).

²² Pope John VIII also has the dubious honour of being the first pope to have been recognised to have been assassinated. (Kelly, *Dictionary of Popes*, p. 111)

7) strangled whilst in prison; Leo V (*pont.* 903) deposed after one month by a member of his clergy, Christopher (antipope 903), both of whom were murdered in prison, most probably at the command of Leo's successor, Sergius III (*pont.* 904-11); John X (*pont.* 914-928) suffocated in prison but even so still managed to outlive his successor Leo VIII (*pont.* 928); Stephen VIII (*pont.* 939-42) was imprisoned, mutilated and died from his injuries; John XIV (*pont.* 983-84) was imprisoned and probably murdered, he either starved to death or was poisoned; John XVI (antipope 947-8) was horrifically mutilated but despite having no eyes, nose, lips, tongue or hands, survived for another three years, and finally; Sergius IV (*pont.* 1009-1012), a Crescentian stooge, was most likely murdered by the Tusculani family. For much of this time, the fate of the papacy was held in the hands of Rome's ruling families, primarily the Crescentii, the Tusculani and the Theophylacts. Papal candidates would vary according to which family happened to be dominant at the time, but the type of pope altered little; weak, often power-hungry and devoid of the moral standards expected of the apostolic see. A few examples will serve to illustrate this.

Pope Stephen VI (*pont.* 896-7) had his predecessor Formosus (*pont.* 891-896) exhumed nine months after his death, dressed up in pontifical robes and tried for perjury with a young deacon answering the questions for him. After being found guilty Formosus had the three fingers of his right hand which were used to give blessings hacked off and his body was thrown into the Tiber before being eventually recovered and buried by a monk and then later retrieved by a subsequent pope. Stephen VI did not last much longer; the Roman people were up in arms about these incidents (Formosus was allegedly a substantial promoter of the ascetic life) and Pope Stephen was deposed, imprisoned and strangled shortly after. Boniface VI, who was pope for less than a month (April 896) in-between Formosus and Stephen VI, was no shining example of morality

either; he had been degraded twice by John VIII (*pont.* 872-82), on the second of these occasions it was whilst he was a priest, for immorality and he had never had his status restored.

The case of popes from Sergius III (*pont.* 904-11) until John XI (*pont.* 931-35) is an interesting and intertwined one. To begin with Sergius III, soon after becoming pope, he had both Leo V and antipope Christopher strangled. Sergius had strong connections with the family of Theophylact (d. c. 920) who controlled the finances of the Roman see and also the militia; in essence, the family governed Rome. Sergius reputedly had a son with Theophylact and Senatrix Theodora's daughter, Marioza. Anastasius III (*pont.* 911-13) and Lando (*pont.* 913-14) are portrayed as little more than puppets of the Theophylact family and embarked upon few initiatives of their own. John X (*pont.* 914-28 deposed) was a stronger leader, but within the context of Theophylact domination rather than working against it; he may or may not have been a former lover of Theodora. John did, however, distance himself after a time from all the Roman noble families and it was this that led to Marioza and her husband, Guido, Marquis of Tuscany, to organise a rebellion against Pope John, leading to his deposition, imprisonment and murder. Leo VI lasted only six months as pope in 928, he was all but elected by Marioza and was entirely dependent upon her patronage; the same is true for his successor, Stephen VII (*pont.* 928-31). John XI (*pont.* 931-35) was the son of Marioza and was most probably fathered by Pope Sergius III; unsurprisingly, John was designed to and did succeed in being a tool of power for Marioza. After her second husband died, she married Hugh of Provence, King of Italy, who was brother-in-law to Marioza, but despite her marriage being uncanonical, her son, Pope John, officiated anyway. All was not harmonious though as there was suspicion over having Hugh of Provence as a foreign ruler and this was exacerbated by another of Marioza's sons and John's half-brother, Alberic II.

Alberic imprisoned Marioza and John, declared himself as governor of Rome and eventually let his brother out of prison and kept him under house arrest instead. The following four pontiffs (Leo VII (*pont.* 946-9), Stephen VIII (*pont.* 939-42), Marinus II (*pont.* 942-6), Agapitus II (*pont.* 946-55) were all in debt to Alberic for their promotions. On his death bed, Alberic uncanonically forced Agapitus to concur, along with the rest of the Roman clergy and nobility that his own son, Octavian, would succeed Agapitus as pope. This occurred just as Alberic commanded and Octavian became Pope John XII at the age of eighteen. From 958 to 960 John experienced political difficulties in Rome and sought the help of Otto I, King of Germany, hoping to induce him to do so by simultaneously offering the imperial crown. Otto was anointed and crowned early in 962 and with his coronation, the Holy Roman Empire was reinstated. Due to difficulties which arose between Pope and Emperor, a synod over which Otto presided deposed John and installed Leo VII (*pont.* 963-5),²³ John found that he had considerable support, however, and so fought his way back. It was rumoured from the outset that John had turned the Lateran Palace into a brothel, it was perhaps no surprise, therefore, when he allegedly died of a stroke aged only twenty-five whilst in bed with a married woman.

Boniface VII who was both antipope in 974 and pope in 984-85 was set up by the Crescentii family. When antipope he was aware of a move to restore the former Pope Benedict VI (*pont.* 973-4) and so had him strangled

²³ Leo VII had, in fact, risen from the status of layman to pope in the space of a single day; it was far from usual for a pope to ascend to the apostolic see with such rapid succession but that the process was speeded up somewhat was not unprecedented; John XIX (*pont.* 1024-32) was to repeat the procedure and St Ambrose had made the leap over the course of a week, although he at least experienced the process a day at a time and took place in the face of popular acclaim, and, it is asserted, unwillingly.

by a priest to prevent his restoration. Boniface was excommunicated as the Crescentii family consented to Pope Benedict VII's (*pont.* 974-83) accession instead. Boniface managed to re-ascend the papal throne in 984 by having the unpopular John XIV (*pont.* 983-4) deposed, imprisoned and murdered. Pope John XIX (*pont.* 1024-32), like Leo VIII, also made the jump from layman to pope in a day and apparently bribed his way to the papal office. He was clearly not respected by the new Emperor, Conrad II (*imp.* 1024-39) as he refused to swear to protect Rome in the same way his Ottonian forefathers had done. Pope John XIX's successor, Benedict IX (*pont.* 1032-44; 1045; 1047-8) was also a layman upon his election, he was the son of the head of the Tusculan family and the electorate was bribed to accept him. His three periods out of office were due to an insurrection due to his unpopularity, the Crescenti family instituting their own Pope, Silvester III and as a result of Benedict's own sale of the office to his godfather, John Gratian (Gregory VI, *pont.* 1045-6).

To decide which out of all these popes had the greatest moral failings and was most influential in bringing the apostolic see to the depths of degradation which it reached, would be a lengthy and unnecessary job. What is important is that by the mid-eleventh century, the papacy, the head of the Church in this world, was about as far as it could get from the vision of the Early Church Fathers. It is clear to see why much of this was blamed upon the dealings of the ecclesiastical sphere with the secular sphere. To a large degree, the see of Rome had been entirely at the beck and call of the secular powers; the leading Roman nobility had vied amongst themselves to have their candidate elected pope. Of course, in this context the word 'elected' is a little meaningless; 'elections' of this kind usually took place through bribery or force. A reasonable proportion of those who acceded to the papal see had little or no interest in the spiritual life; politics and power, or perhaps more correctly, power-

politics, was the name of the game. The growth and influence of the reform movement was an inevitable and necessary turn of events.

Chapter 3: 'Secular Church' and Monastic reform: The House of Cluny, Peter Damian and Cardinal Humbert

What can broadly be defined as 'the Reform Movement' was by no means a united movement with regard to its aims, objectives and actions. In general terms, three points can be seen to it. The first is reform with a wholly secular driving force, primarily that of Henry II and Henry III, and shall not be dealt with in this chapter.¹ This is not to dismiss the role of the early Salian rulers within the movement for reform. As Ullmann highlights, it was they who began the movement, 'whatever "reform" the post-Leonine popes carried out or tried to carry out, was largely conditioned by the previous imperial reform measures.'² The second is what can be referred to as 'secular church reform' and would include the reforms advocated by the papacy and papal advisers. It is labelled as 'secular' because it concerned the connections between the Church and the world. The third contributory element to reform was the growth and rejuvenation of monasticism; the most celebrated example being that of Abbot Hugh's sixty-year reign over the House of Cluny and his relationship and influence with both Gregory VII and Henry IV. One also cannot adequately look at eleventh century reform without analysing the role of St Peter Damian, a former prior of Fonte Avellana who, despite his protestations and constant desire to return to within the monastery walls, was made Cardinal-bishop of Ostia by Stephen IX, and that of Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida, originally a monk of Moyenmoutier. Humbert and Damian's views differed sharply over the issue of the re-ordination of priests who had been ordained by simoniacal bishops but whose own promotion had not involved simony. Despite

¹ See pp. 46-7, 53-4, 63.

² W. Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, (London, 1955), p. 262.

their divergence of opinion both men were influential figures, especially in the papacy of Leo IX.

Cluny was founded in 910 by William, duke of Aquitaine. From its inception the order held reformist principles, inaugurating a stricter and renewed form of the Benedictine life. It was through its Foundation Charter that Cluny, and in turn later its dependencies also, gained its unique status. Decrees enacted by Pope Gregory V and Pope John XIX³ rendered Cluny free from interference, be it lay, episcopal or, theoretically at least, papal. Through this, 'A bond of mutual and increasing dependence, service, and sympathy had been established between the Cluniacs and the Papacy, which was henceforth normally to be decisive for their relationship.'⁴ Nonetheless, Cluny still subsequently had occasion to rely at times upon the assistance of both lay lords and the papacy. The Charter created a special relationship between the papacy and Cluny in that Cluny's direct dependence for her liberty was upon St Peter and, therefore, his heir, which adherence to the theory of papal primacy promulgated. Interestingly, the motivation for creating this relationship from the point of view of the pontificate was more based at this time, in limiting the power of the episcopacy than that of the laity. Certain bishops in particular, posed a threat to the pope's authority, the papacy became thoroughly embroiled in the struggle between numerous bishops of Orleans and the monks of Fleury. For the papacy, this particular struggle became not just about the duty which they owed to monastic protection, but also the validity of the claims of papal primacy against episcopal rights. This pattern was reiterated in 1079 when Cluny and the church of Mâcon came into conflict. Monastic freedom, in general, had been in Carolingian times, guaranteed above all by the royal power,

³ The full exemption became active in 1024. Cf. H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Cluniacs and the Gregorian Reform* (Oxford, 1970), p. 34.

⁴ Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, p. 43,

but as Emperors became weaker and this power receded, lay lords and princes tended to predominate. This influence was not always a beneficial one and, towards the end of the ninth century reached a point whereby,

there began a widespread revulsion against the *dominium* which laymen exercised, as a result of the Proprietary Church System, over both the monastic and secular orders of the Church. The clergy had for long emphasized the duties, rather than the rights, of the king, with regard to the churches that he protected. Now that lesser lords were advancing their position, the clergy were the better able to promote a movement against lay dominion.⁵

It was as a result of this reaction that protection from lay powers was increasingly sought by monasteries from the see of Rome. In times of need of protection, monasteries looked to the papacy in the first instance and only to royal power as a secondary measure.⁶ It would, therefore, be a mistake to mark this development as one related to the Gregorian Reforms, but instead substantially predates them. As Cowdrey makes explicit in relation to Cluny,

It already provided the quintessential example of 'libertas', as an utter freedom from temporal subjection under immediate papal defence, which was a ready-made pattern for the Gregorians to adopt in their own struggle for the freedom of the Church from temporal domination. Thanks in no small measure to papal action on its behalf, the first factor in the articulation of Cluny's liberty – the guaranteeing of its freedom from external claims upon it in temporal matters, and especially of its immunity – was, by 1032, fully and clearly established.⁷

Despite the potential for Cluny to have become a way for the papacy to deliver its message throughout the empire, this would be to seriously

⁵ Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, p. 12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.15.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

underestimate the role that Cluny in and of itself played: '...in the first third of the eleventh century Cluny decisively emerged as a focal point about which the aspirations of the monastic order for freedom from all kinds of external authority began uniquely to gather.'⁸ The reforms of Cluny did, however, provide more than just a focal point for the aspirations of monastic reform, but also for the secular church reforms that Pope Gregory VII envisaged. The monastic order supplied a very good example for Gregory of what he wanted to achieve within the wider Church. The highly hierarchical and centralised structure of Cluny was a model for what Gregory wished to create.

Although there was certainly a great depth of mutual respect between Abbot Hugh and Gregory VII, Cowdrey is most probably accurate in arguing that the closeness of this relationship is often overplayed. Most literature is in agreement that Gregory was never a monk at Cluny, although subsequent to his time spent with Gregory VI in exile, he may have spent up to a year there, but it nonetheless appears unlikely that if Hildebrand and Hugh even met any lasting bonds were formed. It is coincidental that Gregory and Hugh had similar reforming aims, although it should be borne in mind that their notions of how they envisaged these changes taking place, and the effect which they would have, were quite radically different. Gregory was grounded, to a large extent, in making improvements within the Church in this world. He saw his mission as that of reforming the 'secular church' and was inspired by ideas of Christianising 'barbarian nations' and regaining Jerusalem. Gregory would have been clearly disappointed with having to give up his desire to launch the First Crusade.⁹ This could not have been more different from Hugh's view of the world. Hugh sought reform from within the monastic walls, and that its influence would

⁸ Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, p. 43.

⁹ *Reg.* 2.31, pp. 122-4.

encourage others to the monastic life; his motivation was not to act within the wider world, it was to encourage a return to the Benedictine monastic life. The potential for tension between Hugh and Gregory is seen in such examples as Hugh's response to King Philip I of France's letter to him, asking whether it would be legitimate for him to end his earthly life within the walls of a monastery. Hugh's response was to strongly urge him to do so but Gregory condemned this action in the case of Duke Hugh of Burgundy in a manner which indicated he felt that to encourage a ruler to abandon his subjects was irresponsible. 'Behold! those who seem to fear or to love God flee from the battle of Christ, disregard the salvation of their brothers, and as though loving only themselves seek quiet.'¹⁰ This is illustrative of Gregory's adherence to the importance of spiritual action within the secular world. 'The shepherds flee as do the dogs that defend the flocks; wolves and robbers invade Christ's sheep while no one challenges them. You have taken or received the duke into the quiet of Cluny – and you have brought it about that a hundred thousand Christians lack a guardian!'¹¹

Monastic reform reached the attention of the secular Church both through its growing influence at large and through, amongst other sources, advisers close to the papal see who had formerly been monks, in both Italy and France. St Peter Damian is perhaps the most notable example of the mid-eleventh century. In his case, it is hence unsurprising that his gravest concern was that of clerical unchastity; he saw the purity of Holy Orders as paramount and believed that if one could not face temptation and remain pure in body, then one could certainly not remain clean in spirit, after all, as Jesus demonstrated, to be tempted is not to sin; sin is only committed through the consummation of temptation. It is thus that clerical chastity is the primary theme of many of Damian's

¹⁰ *Reg.* 6.17, p. 299.

¹¹ *Reg.* 6.17, p. 299.

surviving letters.¹² Nonetheless, he did also make considerable comment upon the issue of simony, although he had less specifically to say about lay investiture but did write more generally about the relationship of the spiritual and earthly powers, with particular reference to the transitory nature of this world and all which it contains, including earthly glory.

It is in his *Liber gratissimus*¹³ that Damian's clearest elucidation of his opposition to the reordination of those who had been ordained by simoniacal bishops appears, and it was over this issue that he and Cardinal Humbert differed most dramatically. Humbert, in fact, wrote *Adversus Simoniacos* as a response to *Liber gratissimus*. Damian draws upon the example of baptism, 'since one who is baptized even by a heretic is not to be rebaptized, I see no reason why one who is promoted by a so-called simonist should be either deposed or reordained.'¹⁴ In fact, as any attempt at rebaptism would be considered both unlawful and sinful, so would reordination. In essence, the 'sacrament does not depend upon the merits of the minister or the recipient, but upon the rite ordained within the Church on the invocation of the name of God.'¹⁵ Damian makes an interesting connection in this respect between the ordination of kings and priests. He draws upon the example of King Saul¹⁶ and explains that although some kings and priests have been worthy of condemnation their anointing cannot be withdrawn, 'so also Saul, even after he was deposed from the heights of royal office by the

¹² Cf. O. Blum, (trans.), *The Fathers of the Church: Medieval Continuation: The Letters of Peter Damian*, Volumes 1-3, (Washington D.C., 1989, 1990, 1992) *Letter 61*, Vol. 3, pp. 3-13, and most particularly, *Letter 31*, Vol. 2, pp. 3-53, otherwise known as 'The Book of Gomorrah'.

¹³ *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, pp. 111-214.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁶ Cf. 1 Sam. 24:7; 26:9.

command of God, was nevertheless still called the anointed of the Lord right up to his death.¹⁷

Peter Damian writes of the followers of Gehazi¹⁸ 'who appears as the teacher of the sellers'¹⁹ and of Simon²⁰ 'the original of the buyers',

if their ordination is properly Catholic, even though they approach unworthily, they full receive the holy office of the priesthood. For the power of the Holy Spirit is the same, both when his grace is sold and when it is given freely. Nor does the power of God lose its proper effectiveness because of transactions that flow from human perverseness. Obviously, our Savior himself, just as he was sold that pestiferous sum of money was already bulging the purse of the traitor, restored the ear of the servant Malchus even as he fell into the hands of his persecutors.²¹

Peter Damian's concern with this issue is also a practical one. He is only too aware of the prevalence of simony and the little that was done to counteract it prior, as he sees it, to the time of the Emperor Henry III, Pope Clement II and Pope Leo IX. It is thus that Damian saw the proposal to reordain those ordained by simonists as an unrealistic aim and one that could result in more damage than good. If the premise that deacons, priests or bishops ordained or enthroned by a simonist were invalid then a two-fold problem may be created. Firstly, in episcopal terms, it would invalidate a bishop's acts, including further ordinations. Secondly, in the interim, prior to reordinations, the Church would find itself with a severe shortage of priests available to say Mass and deliver the sacraments. Quite frankly, the Church would have run the risk of

¹⁷ *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, p. 136.

¹⁸ 2 Kings 5:20-27.

¹⁹ *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, p. 122.

²⁰ Acts 8: 9-24.

²¹ *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, p. 122.

finding itself in disarray. As Damian expresses, the situation within the Church until very recently had been that whereby,

the poison of simonist heresy spread its deadly influence throughout the kingdoms of the west, so that what was everywhere accepted as licit was never judged to be subject to condign punishment, and what was thought proper virtually by all, was held to be the rule, as if it were decreed by law.²²

Damian illustrated his deep concern over simony early in his surviving letters. His initial reaction to John Gratian's promotion to the papacy, prior to discovering that he had bought it from his godson, had been a positive one as he viewed him to be a holy man who would do much to dispel the evils of simony and nicolaitism. Damian even said in a letter to Gregory VI of 1045,

Therefore, "let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice,"²³ and let holy church exult that she has recovered her ancient charter of liberties. May the head of the poisonous, deceptive servant now be crushed, let trafficking in this wicked business be ended, let the counterfeiting Simon now quit his minting of money in the Church, and in the present absence of his circumspect master, may Gehazi carry away no clandestine gift.²⁴

Peter Damian also had some useful insights regarding the specific importance of the Roman See, clearly believing that the influence of the papal see was far-reaching in extremis, arguing that, 'unless the Roman See returns to its former integrity, the whole world will remain forever in its fallen state.'²⁵ He discussed the 'principle of renewal'²⁶ which was

²² *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, pp. 180-1.

²³ 1 Chr. 16:31.

²⁴ *Letter 13*, Vol. 1, p. 131.

²⁵ *Letter 11*, Vol. 1, p. 125.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

necessary for reform of the Roman See and by extension, the Church at large. When sent as a papal legate to Milan, Damian found himself having to defend the Roman Church to the Church of St Ambrose which had a very strong sense of independence. In his exposition, Damian commented on Jesus' gift of the keys of the kingdom and the power to bind and loose to Peter stating that

It was no ordinary and earthly utterance, but the Word by whom heaven and earth were made, and through whom finally the elements of all things were structured, who founded the Roman Church. Clearly it enjoys his privilege and is supported by his authority. And so, without doubt, whoever deprives any church of its rights commits an injustice; but if one attempts to deny the Roman Church the privilege granted it by the head of all the churches himself, he doubtless falls into heresy; and while the former may be called an unjust man, the latter must be labeled a heretic.²⁷

One of the most interesting features of Peter Damian's writings is his thoughtful reflections on the role and importance of the temporal powers. Good Christian rulership was clearly something valued very highly indeed by Damian. Amongst others, he praised highly Henry III,²⁸ Theodosius I,²⁹ Otto III,³⁰ and Constantine.³¹ In particular, he lavished praise upon Henry III, arguing that, 'After God, certainly, it was he [previous sentence: 'the glorious renown of the great king Henry'] who rescued us from the mouth of the insatiable dragon; it was he who used the sword of divine power to cut off all the heads of the multicephalous hydra of the simoniacal heresy.'³² Damian continued, to compare Henry

²⁷ *Letter 65*, Vol. 3, p. 27.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. *Letters 20* (Vol. 1, pp. 194-6) and *Letter 40* (Vol. 2, pp. 111-214).

²⁹ Cf. *Letter 67*, Vol. 3, pp. 76-7.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 78.

³¹ Cf. *Letter 40*, Vol. 2, p. 208.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 206.

to both King David and his defeat of Goliath³³ and also to Constantine's condemnation of and victory over Arius and his followers.³⁴

In another letter he also made reference to the glory of Henry III and again likened him by association with David in saying, "Let the heavens therefore be glad, let earth rejoice"³⁵ that Christ is recognized as truly reigning through his king and that the golden age of David is restored just as the world is coming to an end.³⁶ Nevertheless, Damian was also quick to emphasise the lowliness of earthly power and the subservient role which it should rightly play.³⁷ He reiterated that it is not just our possessions that we cannot take to the grave with us. 'Like smoke, earthly honors and dignities return to nothing the higher they rise, and none of the things of this world can escape the world's destruction at the end of time.'³⁸ In the context of worldly degradation, Peter Damian praised the monastic life and in a letter to Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino, he wrote that wicked people do not deserve a good ruler, drawing upon the writings of the prophet Hosea³⁹ and hence the monks of Monte Cassino should be grateful to God that they 'were chosen to live apart from the world in which it is obviously difficult for anyone to be saved.'⁴⁰ Despite Damian's obvious despair at the world he still saw a relevant and potent role for good, strong, effective Christian rulership:

within the *imperium* and the *sacerdotium* we must distinguish functions that are proper to each, so that the king may employ secular arms, while the bishop should buckle on the sword of the spirit, which is the word

³³ Letter 40, Vol. 2, p. 208.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³⁵ Ps. 96:11.

³⁶ Letter 20, Vol. 1, p. 195.

³⁷ Cf. e.g. Letters 2, 12, 20, 23, 65, 67, 86, 87, 89.

³⁸ Letter 12, Vol. 1, p. 127.

³⁹ Hos. 13:10-11.

⁴⁰ Letter 86, Vol. 3, p. 256.

of God.⁴¹ For Paul says of the secular prince,⁴² "It is not for nothing that he holds the power of the sword, for he is God's agent of punishment, for retribution of the offender."⁴³

Before we leave Peter Damian there are two more of his letters that are worthy of attention. In the first (*Letter 69*) Damian drew upon Isaiah's discussion of gifts⁴⁴ in defining what he perceived to be the three types of gift, 'namely, a gift of the hand, a gift of service, and a gift of the tongue. Obviously, a gift of the hand is money; a gift of service is the obedience required by vassalage; a gift of the tongue is flattering approbation.'⁴⁵ He perceived that both a gift of the hand and of the tongue are contained in that of service, therefore vassalage is the worst state possible

For in the case of those who sell a church, if they are prompted by avarice, it suffices to consider its value in money; but if they are conceited, often only flattery will be accepted as a substitute for paying the price. But those who surrender themselves to earthly princes for the sake of acquiring preferment must be both lavish with their money and not forget to ingratiate themselves with their patrons by fondling them with fawning compliments.⁴⁶

It is thus that Damian highlighted succinctly the inherent potential for problems with lay investiture. For clerics to achieve their position, there is an underlying assumption of service rendered, in all likelihood in the

⁴¹ Cf. Eph. 6:17.

⁴² Rom. 13:4.

⁴³ *Letter 87*, Vol. 3, p. 305.

⁴⁴ Cf. Isa. 33:15-16: 'He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given to him; his waters shall be sure.'

⁴⁵ *Letter 69*, Vol. 3, pp. 89-90.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 91.

form of vassalage. It is thus that promotions from within the royal court were a frequent occurrence. It is nonetheless important to note that Peter Damian accepted the practice of lay investiture, but urged the royal powers to exercise their judgements wisely, according to holy precepts rather than those of personal gain.

Princes also, and all others in charge of ecclesiastical appointments, should be especially careful not to grant holy places at their own whim or pleasure without taking divine justice into consideration, so that to their own confusion, they do not violate the precepts of God's law and the statutes of the sacred canons.⁴⁷

The final letter (*Letter 89*) to which we shall turn is that which was written in 1062 to the antipope Honorius II. In it Peter Damian wrote a dialogue presented as a dress rehearsal for the Council of Augsburg,⁴⁸ between a fictional Attorney for the Roman Church and Imperial Counsel regarding their respective claims. Although it was specifically directed to the case between Alexander II and the antipope Honorius II, it also looked more broadly at the issues concerning *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. Damian began by acknowledging certain rights of kings and emperors but also put forth a very clear account of papal primacy, 'But only he who granted the blessed custodian of the keys of eternal life the powers of earthly and heavenly dominion, founded on the Roman Church and built it on the rock of faith⁴⁹ that would soon emerge.'⁵⁰ It is through this primacy that Damian made the distinction between a man who commits an 'injustice' against a church and one who does so against the Roman Church; 'while the former may be called an unjust man, the latter must surely be labeled

⁴⁷ *Letter 69*, Vol. 3, p. 96.

⁴⁸ *Letter 89*, Vol. 3, p. 336. Council of Augsburg, October 1062.

⁴⁹ Cf. Matt. 16:18-19.

⁵⁰ *Letter 89*, Vol. 3, p. 337.

as a heretic.⁵¹ An argument is then conducted about the rightful role which an emperor was to play in papal elections. The imperial position is put forward that without the assent of the emperor, a pope cannot properly be called a pope. For the case of the Church though, Damian draws upon the *Constantium Constantini* whereby it is alleged that Constantine moved the empire and royal power to Byzantium (to the city that was to become Constantinople) because

“where the chief bishop and head of the Christian religion was stationed by the celestial emperor, it is not proper for the earthly emperor there to have power.”⁵² Did you not just hear that the earthly emperor has no power over the Roman Church? How is it unlawful, therefore, to elect a bishop without its consent, since he has no authority?⁵³

Peter Damian drew upon God’s putting down of Saul as king and the raising up of David in terms of the inadequacy that Cadalus would have shown as pope,⁵⁴ however, this model is suggestive of the putting down and raising up of kings on a more general level. In the case of David and Saul, God acted through Samuel. This certainly begs questions of later enactments regarding Gregory VII, Henry IV and Rudolf of Swabia; should it be regarded as legitimate for a pope to judge a king? Damian clearly saw the sacerdotal power as superior in dignity to that of the royal, and saw the relationship between the two as both maternal and paternal. He stated that, ‘the Roman Church, in a much more noble and sublime way than any natural mother, is the mother of the emperor. The latter, indeed, gives him birth, that by his descent from her he might return to

⁵¹ Letter 89, Vol. 3, p. 337.

⁵² *Constantium Constantini*, c.18.94f.

⁵³ Letter 89, Vol. 3, p. 341.

⁵⁴ ‘Saul, who had previously been good, became evil; but this man, namely Cadalus, who beforehand had certainly been evil, like the devil became daily more evil still.’ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

dust; the former, however, bore him that he might surely become coheir of Christ to rule forever.⁵⁵ At the close of the dialogue, the Imperial counsel capitulates to the attorney for the Roman Church, but all this, in essence, achieves is that it reiterates the false and contrived nature of this type of dialogue, in exactly the same manner as Socrates' victories in the Platonic dialogues.

In the conclusion to this letter, Peter Damian put forward his clearest opinion of the right relationship between the two powers which acknowledged their separate spheres, the overlap between these spheres and, along Augustinian-Gelasian lines, the ultimate supremacy in dignity that the *sacerdotium* is owed.

Thus, as these two, the empire and the priesthood, by divine dispensation are united in one mediator between God and men, so may these two exalted persons be joined together in such harmony that, by a certain bond of mutual love, we may behold the emperor in the Roman pontiff and the Roman pontiff in the emperor, reserving to the pope, however, the dignity no other may possess. Likewise, should the situation arise, the pope should be able to use civil law to control offenders, and the emperor with his bishops should be permitted to adjudicate matters where the welfare of souls is involved, but under the authority of the sacred canons. The former, as a father, should always enjoy paramount dignity by reason of his paternal rights; the latter, as his unique and special son, should rest securely in his loving embrace.⁵⁶

Unlike Peter Damian, Humbert saw all the evils of the Church encapsulated in lay investiture and his emphasis was upon simony rather than nicolaitism. Humbert argued that the whole order of the Church had been turned on its head, 'The secular power is first in choosing and

⁵⁵ *Letter 89*, Vol. 3, p. 343.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

confirming; the consent of the nobles, people, and clergy and then finally the decision of the metropolitan come afterwards whether they are willing or not.⁵⁷

Humbert drew upon the symbolism of the crosier and ring given to a bishop upon his consecration and the inappropriateness of these being bestowed by a member of the laity; the crosier as a symbol of pastoral care and the ring as a symbol of the heavenly mysteries, of Christ's marriage to the church.⁵⁸ 'Anyone, then, who appoints a man with these two symbols undoubtedly claims all rights of pastoral care for himself in so presuming.'⁵⁹ Humbert was similarly more outspoken in his direct discussion of the relationship of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, complaining of the way in which the Church is often judged by its outward, earthly successes and that resultantly the state of affairs was such that public perception was 'sometimes preferring the secular power to the priestly like sun to moon, sometimes setting them together like two suns, sometimes – but this is very rare – by the one title of son subordinating the secular power like a son to a father.'⁶⁰ He continues, to make an organic comparison of the two dignities by saying that,

in the existing church, the priesthood is analogous to the soul and the kingship to the body, for they cleave to one another and need one another and each in turn demands services and renders them one to another. It follows from this that, just as the soul excels the body and commands it, so too the priestly dignity excels the royal or, we may say, the heavenly dignity the earthly. Thus, that all things may be in due order and not in disarray the priesthood, like a soul, may advise what is to be done. The kingship in turn, like a head, excels all members of the body and leads them where they should go; for just as kings should

⁵⁷ Humbert, *Adversus simoniacos*, MGH, *LdL.i.*, p. 205.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

follow churchmen so also layfolk should follow their kings for the good of church and country.⁶¹

Just as the soul rightly orders, directs and commands the body in its best interests, so does the church over the kingship.

Humbert's attack upon lay investiture was a radical one and the first of its kind, drawing into doubt the whole notion of kingship and royal theocracy as perceived by the Salian monarchy. 'The sacred character of kingship was ignored, and for Humbert the king was a layman pure and simple.'⁶² He accused secular monarchs of trying to take for themselves that which they had no right to take and it was thus that the whole procedure concerning the appointment of bishops should be overturned. For Humbert, 'The proprietary church system and concomitant lay investiture are but manifestations of one and the same principle of order.... Lay ideology as such is made the chief target of Humbert's constructive criticism.'⁶³ Resultantly, a monarch did not have much intrinsic value and certainly the notion of a *Rex-Sacerdos* was an invalid one.

The Christian world was to him indeed an "*ecclesiae*," the "*corpus Christi*" became manifest, concrete and tangible. "Our emperor" is Christ. Consequently, the Gelasian "*mundus*" is exchanged by Humbert for the *ecclesia*, and the lay ruler is part of this *ecclesiae*, by virtue of his being a Christian.⁶⁴

The king's primary function is, therefore, to protect and assist the church. If a king does not fulfil this function then he has no role at all. Without

⁶¹ Humbert, *Adversus simoniacos*, p. 225.

⁶² G. Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society at the time of the Investiture Contest*, R. F. Bennett, (trans.), (Oxford, 1970), p. 109.

⁶³ Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, p. 266.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

sinful conduct 'there would be no need for a power whose sole *raison d'être* is the physical suppression of this kind of conduct, for by fulfilling its function allotted or assigned to him, the prince protects the whole corporate body of Christians.'⁶⁵ As Gerd Tellenbach highlights, Humbert's criticisms in *Adversus simoniacos* had no similar comparisons in 1058; they provided a radical departure from current literature, but seemingly not current thought given that less than a year later the Papal Election Decree was formulated.⁶⁶

Although the direct relationship between Cluny and Pope Gregory VII is often over-played, the influence of monastic reform upon 'secular church reform' was undoubtedly great. Almost all of the key figures in the papal reform were of a monastic background: Peter Damian, Cardinal Humbert, Pope Stephen IX (former abbot of Monte Cassino), Pope Nicholas II, Pope Gregory VII, Pope Victor III (Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino), Pope Urban II and Pope Paschal II.

⁶⁵ Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, pp. 270-1.

⁶⁶ Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society*, pp. 110-11.

Chapter 4: Secular reform and the early 'Reform Papacy'

The revival and strengthening of monasticism and adherence to the ascetic life clearly had a profound impact upon the general movement for reform. Another contributory factor was, somewhat ironically considering its consequences, the imperial power itself.

Through the *Ottonian Privilege*, Otto I (*imp.* 962-73) strengthened his links with the papacy and reasserted the rights and obligations of the emperor and its entitlements of the papal state by confirming the pronouncements of the *Constantium Constantini* and also the *Donation* of Pepin. As part of this privilege, 'the imperial power included the right of ensuring that papal elections were justly and canonically carried out – ensuring in fact that no election was made contrary to the emperor's wishes.'¹ The *Ottonian Privilege* was made at a time when the papacy would have no real quarrel with it; the apostolic see lacked power and operated at the whim of the Crescentii, Tusculani and Theophylact families; the emperor's choice was viewed by clerics as preferable, by and large, to that of the leading Roman nobility, not least because of the manner in which the growth of monasticism in Germany had in some part an effect on the German King, the Holy Roman Emperor. However, the papacy did become uneasy with the proximity of the imperial power to Rome's own jurisdiction and so distanced themselves although this in itself proved unnecessary when Otto II (*imp.* 973-83) died, leaving the Empire under the regency of his wife in lieu of his three-year-old son; the Roman nobility wasted no time in reasserting its own authority.

Otto III (*imp.* 996-1002) strongly echoed his grandfather's thoughts on the correct relationship between papacy and empire. 'For Otto, the Pope was

¹ Southern, *Western Society*, pp. 99-100.

a junior partner, the chaplain of empire, whose first duty was conformity to the will of the Lord's anointed.² It is unsurprising, therefore, that he had his second cousin elevated to the papacy, Pope Gregory V (*pont.* 996-9), who was the first German pope. More surprising, however, was that Gregory tried to assert a not inconsiderable degree of independence from Otto since reform was once of his major preoccupations. Pope Gregory did, in fact, excommunicate King Robert II of France for marrying his cousin and refusing to renounce her.³ Otto, correctly as it turned out, purported the *Constantium Constantini* to be a forgery. This contributed to his belief that 'The Emperor was not the creation of the papacy; rather, the papacy was an instrument in the hand of the Emperor.'⁴

The growing influence of monastic houses like Cluny can be seen by such examples as, upon the death of Pope Gregory V, Otto III took the advice of Abbot Odilo of Cluny in appointing Silvester II (*pont.* 999-1002) as pope. Nonetheless,

The idea of an Ottonian protectorate over the Roman Church was given its clearest expression in the diploma which Otto III issued for Silvester II, the pope whom he had 'elected...ordained and created'. In this diploma of 1001 the emperor dismissed the *Donation of Constantine* as a fabrication and 'from our own liberality we give to St Peter that which is ours, not what is his,' the eight counties of the Pentapolis.⁵

Silvester was a keen reformer, attacking simony, nepotism, clerical marriage and concubinage, yet simultaneously working in concord with Otto. Upon Otto's death, the Crescentii family took control of Rome once again, under John II Crescentius who prevented John XVII (*pont.* May-Nov 1003), John XVIII (*pont.* 1003-9) and Sergius IV (*pont.* 1009-12) from

² Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, p. 107.

³ Kelly, *Dictionary of Popes*, p. 135.

⁴ Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, p. 107.

⁵ Robinson, 'Church and Papacy', p. 297.

receiving Henry II in Rome. Sergius IV and John II Crescentius both died, most likely murdered, within a week of one another and Sergius was replaced with Benedict VII (*pont.* 1012-24), formerly named Theophylact from the Tusculan House. Benedict crowned Henry II (*imp.* 1002-24) as Emperor in 1014 and together they legislated against simony at a synod at Ravenna which was followed up by the synod of Pavia in 1022, banning clerical marriage and concubinage. It is of note that it was Henry II who was the driving force behind these reforms rather than Benedict. Benedict's successor was his younger brother, John XIX (*pont.* 1024-32) whose appointment reputedly involved substantial bribery. Conrad II (*imp.* 1024-39) was crowned by Pope John, but the Emperor had little regard for him and so generally disregarded him, recognising the Pope as an instrument of the Tusculani, nonetheless finding him compliant, but his successor, Benedict IX (*pont.* 1032-45), less so.

We turn now to Emperor Henry III (*imp.* 1039-56) who marked something of a watershed within the imperial movement for reform. Although Henry reportedly had a reasonable relationship at the outset with Benedict IX, he became increasingly disgusted with the contempt with which the papal see was treated, not least by some of the popes, but also by the Roman nobility. A Tusculan pope (Benedict IX) was replaced by a Crescentian one (Silvester III, *pont.* 1045) who was in turn to be replaced by his predecessor after less than four months. Benedict then decided to get married and so sold the papacy to his godfather, who, despite having committed the sin of simony, was the only one of the three who was truly suitable for the papal dignity.

John Gratian (Pope Gregory VI) was a keen reformer and it appears clear that by purchasing the papal office he had hoped to end the depravity that had become associated with it. Henry III travelled to Rome in 1046,

but refused to receive his crown from a man tainted by simony. It was this that caused Henry to call the synod of Sutri at which Benedict IX, Silvester III and Gregory VI were all deposed. Subsequently, Gregory VI went into exile and was accompanied by Hildebrand. Henry presided over the synod and so did what even Charlemagne balked at a little and that was to not only sit in judgement over the current pope but two of his predecessors also, thereby violating the precedent that the pope can be judged by no one.

Henry III ensured the election of Suidger, Bishop of Bamberg to be Pope Clement II (*pont.* 1046-7) and he crowned Henry and his wife Agnes. Henry went on to ensure that no future pope could be installed without the emperor's express permission. Although Henry III was concerned about maintaining the calibre of future pontiffs, the tool could evidently have been used to different ends by a less principled emperor. Clement and Henry worked effectively together over the issue of reform. Clement quickly condemned simony but the momentum of his campaign slowed somewhat after its initial burst of enthusiasm. He died after only nine months in office⁶ and was replaced by Damasus II who was pope for one month in the summer of 1048.

We come now to the pope who, with the exception of Gregory VII, had the most impact upon the reforms of the eleventh century and beyond; Pope Leo IX (*pont.* 1048-54). Leo had the combination of both reforming ideals and the drive to see them through. Amongst his close advisers were Humbert (later Cardinal of Silva Candida), Hugh Candidus, Frederick of Liège (Abbot of Monte Cassino and later Pope Stephen IX) and Hildebrand, relying also on the counsel of Peter Damian and Abbot Hugh of Cluny. Leo launched his campaign less than two months after being made pontiff at a synod held in Rome in which he initiated

⁶ And when Clement was exhumed in the 1940s, he showed signs of lead poisoning.

legislation against simony and clerical unchastity. He struck at the heart of simony by deposing a number of simoniacal bishops and by re-ordaining large numbers of clergy who had received ordination from simoniacal bishops without having themselves engaged in simony. In 1048 Leo held synods at Pavia, Rheims and Mainz, in 1050 at Vercelli, Siponto, Salerno and Rome, 1051 and 1053 at Rome and also in 1053 at Mantua and Bari.

Aside from simony and clerical unchastity, Pope Leo's other concerns included Berengar of Tours' teaching of consubstantiation as opposed to the accepted form that transubstantiation occurs within the Eucharist. Leo also promulgated the proper election of bishops and abbots as well as arguing strongly for the primacy of Rome and the papal see. Of the synods that Leo IX held, the most quoted is that at Rheims in 1049. He travelled there to consecrate a new church of St Remigius

Having placed the bones of St Remigius on the high altar, he [Leo] demanded that the bishops and abbots present [there were no French bishops present as King Henry I of France had anticipated a denunciation of this kind and so did not allow them to attend] declare individually whether they had paid money for their office. He evidently knew his men: the guilty majority were shamed into silence.⁷

Leo was, nonetheless, merciful to those who confessed; it would perhaps not be difficult to accept that in a climate where the currency for gaining office was a literal one, otherwise good priests and bishops found themselves falling into sin through simony and hence those bishops who made a full confession were pardoned and restored. Pope Leo had a clear vision of the damage that lay involvement, through simony, lay investiture and clerical marriage, wrought upon clerical life and it was from lay interference that he wished to relieve the sacerdotal realm and

⁷ Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, pp. 114-5.

return it to a status of renewed purity distinguishable from the rest of the fallen world.

Victor II (*pont.* 1055-57), although the favoured candidate of Henry III rather than the curia upon the death of Leo IX, continued with the reforms begun by his predecessor. A joint synod was held at Florence by pope and emperor in 1055 which condemned simony, clerical unchastity and the transference of Church property to other causes and uses. By this time Hildebrand was papal legate in France, charged with issuing pronouncements made at synods or otherwise by the pope and reporting back about the state of clerical life in France. The curia at the time of Stephen IX's election (*pont.* 1057-59) made use of the papal see's advances and the strengthening of its independence since the pontificate of Leo IX with the combined effect of only having an imperial regency to contend with. Resultantly, neither the counsel nor approval of the imperial family was sought as Henry III had set out only eleven years previously, prior to Stephen's election. It did perhaps make the decision somewhat easier that if help were required, Stephen's brother was Godfrey, Duke of Lorraine.

Pope Stephen had been active in reform prior to ascending to the papal see since he had been the Abbot of Monte Cassino. He showed these reforming tendencies once in office by promoting Peter Damian to Cardinal bishop of Ostia, he appointed Humbert as Chancellor and Hildebrand was recalled from France to become one of Stephen's chief advisers. During this time Hildebrand was given a key role which was later to sharpen the conflict between himself as pope and Henry IV over appointments to the see of Milan. Hildebrand was sent to Milan during Stephen's pontificate to look into the Patavine reformist movement in that region, as the Patavines radically opposed both simony and clerical marriage, but did so in a revolutionary manner. Clearly in the Roman

context, the Tusculans at least were not entirely out of the picture because after Stephen's death they managed to enthrone the antipope Benedict X (1058-9) for nine months since Stephen IX had ordered that a new pope should not be chosen before Hildebrand, who was at the German court at this time, returned to Rome.

When Hildebrand returned, with the acquiescence of the Duke of Lorraine and of the German court, Nicholas II (*pont.* 1058-61) was installed as pope. Nicholas also had reforming values and he promoted Hildebrand to the position of Archdeacon of Rome. Hildebrand, Peter Damian and Humbert of Silva Candida all had a profound impact upon the papacy of Nicholas II. Pope Nicholas' greatest lasting effect was the election decree of 1059. The spirit of the decree dictated that the pope should be chosen by the cardinals before the remaining clergy and then the people assented to their decision (which it was tacitly implied that they always would) and the emperor could at this stage also give royal assent. It was recognised that the situation would have to be exceptional for royal approval to be withheld and if the power were misused then the imperial privilege would be lost. The synod not only produced this momentous piece of legislation but also promulgated the first outright condemnation of lay investiture as well as reiterating previous decrees concerning clerical unchastity and simony. Nicholas made a formal alliance with the Normans; this gave the papacy an extended suzerainty but additionally gave a potential military ally other than the emperor. It was a policy supported strongly by Hildebrand and used to his advantage when he needed as pope to turn to the Norman duke, Robert Guiscard to defeat the forces of Henry IV. In making this bold move, Nicholas incurred the wrath of many of the German bishops, some of whom declared his acts invalid shortly before his death. As had occurred since the time of Leo, Nicholas continued to strengthen the legatine

system which was a useful and powerful tool for spreading the message of reform throughout the empire.

Alexander II (*pont.* 1061-73) was also elected at the proposal of Hildebrand and he was elected in accordance with the decree of 1059. Due to a lack of consultation, the imperial court, currently under the regency of the Empress-mother, Agnes, set up the antipope Honorius III (1061-64) to challenge him. False charges were brought against Alexander who was forced to repudiate them in a council over which he was presiding at Mantua; he was cleared of the charges and the German court disowned Honorius. Meanwhile Pope Alexander had continued to reiterate Pope Nicholas' decrees. Alexander also gave his support, probably at the suggestion of Hildebrand, to the Norman duke, William, in his efforts against Harold Godwinson, King of England. Hildebrand in particular noticed the reforming zeal of William and saw him as a potential ally. It was Alexander's pontificate that saw the beginnings of real division between the papacy and the imperial powers. Henry IV's minority came to a close in 1065 and he came into conflict with Pope Alexander over the desire to divorce his wife in 1068 (a battle which the pope won) and a more serious difficulty three years later concerning the excommunication of five of his advisers for simony over the see of Milan. This issue was to remain a salient one throughout relations between Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV; one of Gregory's key demands was that Henry relinquish the bad advice that he had been given and submit to holy men with moral advice instead. This dispute was still raging upon Alexander's death and so an immediate point of conflict was created between Alexander's successor Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV of Germany.

To 1073 we shall shortly return but firstly I wish to look at the inheritance that Henry IV was left and the conduct of his regency government. The

notion of the king as *rex et sacerdos*, a priest-king, was passed down from the Carolingians to the Ottonian monarchs⁸ and from them, transmitted to the Salians. All drew upon the biblical examples of David, Solomon and Melchizedek⁹ who were simultaneously kings and had priestly functions. Otto I believed that 'He was at once *rex et sacerdos*, like Melchizedek and also like Christ...kings became canons of cathedrals and abbots of monasteries and not merely in a titular way. To the question whether the king was a layman or a cleric the answer was often that he was a cleric.'¹⁰ In examples of writings and prayers from Charlemagne's time, such as *Prospice*¹¹ it was indicated that royal power was directly

⁸ 'The Ottonians' kingdom was a direct heir of the Carolingian Empire and its image was constructed by men steeped in Carolingian traditions.' J. Nelson, 'Kingship and Empire', *Cambridge History*, Burns (ed.), p. 242.

⁹ Also, interestingly, in later centuries (i.e. from 13th century onward, but most famously brought into the public psyche by Handel's *Zadok the Priest* composed for the coronation of King George II and Queen Caroline in 1727) David and Solomon were also made reference to in the coronation services of English monarchs. However, the reminder that was made was one which would fall upon the ecclesiastical side of the argument. The lyrics of *Zadok the Priest* ('Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon king, And all the people rejoiced, And said, 'God Save the King! Long Live the King! May the King live forever! Hallelujah! Amen.'') although clearly designed to glorify the majesty of the monarch being crowned, also served as a reminder of 2 Samuel 12 in which Nathan the Prophet severely rebuked David for, having made the wife of Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba, pregnant, then sending her husband to war in order for him to be killed and to take Bathsheba as his own wife. Nathan does not hold back in his criticism of David and so the use of his name in a coronation ceremony would provide a subtle reminder as to the role of the sacerdotal powers in keeping the royal power in check and providing moral guidance. It is also a reminder that no earthly power is higher than God's moral laws and if an attempt is made to act in such a manner, shall be rightly condemned both in this life and the next.

¹⁰ D. E. Luscombe, 'Introduction: The Formation of Political Thought in the West', *Cambridge History*, Burns (ed.), p. 167.

¹¹ 'Grant him, Omnipotent God, to be a most mighty protector of the fatherland, and a comforter of churches and holy monasteries with the greatest piety of royal munificence, and to be the mightiest of kings, triumphing over his enemies so as to crush rebels and

transmitted from the divine; it provided a very literal take on Romans 13; that all power is derived from God.¹² It was not difficult, therefore, for a monarch to see the direct role and benefit for him in terms of ensuring the preservation of the Christian faith and especially the Christian faith in this particular, very hierarchical and authoritative format. If the unity of the Church was maintained then the king had a constant factor to aid the justification of his power.

Put simply, without the Christian faith, the claim of the Divine Right of Kings, the assertion that all power comes from God, would be meaningless. Resultantly, the emperor felt compelled, for the sanctity of his own position if nothing else, to ensure the maintenance of Church unity throughout the empire and thus become further embroiled in affairs which were in terms of content, although not necessarily effect, entirely belonging to the sacerdotal sphere. The emperor's dependence upon ecclesiastical unity, order and authority meant that he saw for himself a role in protecting these things and hence could assert the validity of his involvement in matters of schism, heresy, canon law and doctrine if he chose to do so. One point of note was that through the assertion that kings gain their power from God, the indication left was that the king is resultantly dependent upon God's mediation, the priests and their temporal head; the supreme pontiff. This can certainly give the implication that *regnum* is dependent upon *sacerdotium* for the transference and mediation of this God-given power.¹³ It is within this context that 'It has often been argued that just as the kingdom of Germany was politically undermined by the Investiture Contest because

heathen nations; and he may be very terrible to his enemies with the utmost strength of royal potency.' Nelson, 'Kingship and Empire', p. 218. *Prospice* was incorporated into the language of the royal coronation.

¹² Nelson, 'Kingship and Empire', pp. 217-8.

¹³ Robinson, 'Church and Papacy', p. 246.

kings could no longer control the German Church, so the Gregorians' desacralisation of kingship destroyed the ideological foundations of royal theocracy.¹⁴ Nonetheless, a monarch could still fall back on Romans 13 and this is illustrative once again that both *regnum* and *sacerdotium* could find arguments to support their cause in Scripture, the Early Church Fathers and subsequent writings (be them real or forged).

The idea of sacral kingship was certainly one adhered to by Henry III. In many respects, Henry III should be listed amongst the great reformers for he allowed and encouraged the church, in particular monastic, reforms to grow and flourish. Nevertheless, he perceived the emperor's role to be one correctly directing these reforms. He rejected the theory promulgated by Pope Sylvester I (*pont.* 313-335), which made its way into canon law, that no pope should be judged; Henry obviously felt that it was an emperor and patrician's duty to hold jurisdiction over the papal see if it appeared in need of guidance. Henry took the title 'patrician of the Romans' and his understanding of the office had a significant effect upon how he dealt with the papacy. The same was true of Henry IV but with an outcome which was somewhat different to that of his father's reign. 'Through all the vicissitudes of his reign Henry IV was sustained by a belief in his divine ordination to the kingship. It was he 'whom, although unworthy, God ordained even from his childhood to be king and every day shows He has ordained him'.¹⁵ It was from this belief in his authority from the divine that, any political calculations aside, Henry IV most genuinely refused to give up his right to invest archbishops and bishops with ring and staff as he also numbered amongst God's anointed. It is clear that 'during the reign of Henry III the imperial authority had

¹⁴ Robinson, 'Church and Papacy', p. 246.

¹⁵ I. S. Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106*, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 14. cf. Henry IV, *Letter 17*, in T. Mommsen and K. Morrison, *Imperial Lives and Letters of the Eleventh Century*, (London, 1962), pp. 162-5.

been on the side of reform, and that, while there may have been some question as to the propriety of some of the actions which had been taken in promoting reform, on the whole the reforming party recognised his sincerity, and was grateful for his energy.¹⁶

However, upon Henry III's death in 1056 the situation was to change radically and certainly was not aided by the machinations of the regency government. Initially Agnes, the empress-mother, acted as regent and alterations quickly became apparent. The administration lacked the potency that it had had under her husband, not evident more than in the fact that the German court was not consulted over the appointments of Stephen IX, Benedict X and Nicholas II and hence had lost the role within papal elections that Henry III had set up and envisaged the continuation of; the imperial government did not try and impose its own candidate upon proceedings. Upon the election of Alexander II, Cadalus was set up as antipope Honorius and supported by the imperial court for a time at least. Henry IV was kidnapped in 1062 by a conspiracy led by Anno of Cologne and involving Ekbert I of Brunswick and Otto of Nordheim. Over the next three years those who also exerted influence upon imperial policy were Adalbert of Bremen and Burchard II of Halberstadt. Anno of Cologne was primarily preoccupied with promoting his family and the church of Cologne and was keen to co-operate with the papacy and hence aided in the destruction of the antipope's cause. Henry IV was clearly not content with the policies that Anno pursued as, upon his coming of age in 1065 at the age of fifteen, Henry rejected the counsel of Anno for that of Adalbert, and Agnes also regained favour at court.

The regency government had done much, in one way or another, to undermine the young king's position. But perhaps more than that it

¹⁶ R.W. and A.J. Carlyle, *A History of Mediaeval Political Thought in the West*, (Edinburgh, 1909-36), Vol. IV, p. 61.

heavily influenced his choice of advisers. Throughout his young life Henry had been treated as a political pawn by many within the ranks of the powerful nobility and clergy in Germany and so was distrustful of a great number of those who offered advice. Resultantly, Henry struck out his own path when he may have been wiser to take the advice of others. When invited by Alexander II to Rome for his imperial coronation, consternation was raised when Henry delayed the expedition. Alexander was keen for Henry to be crowned as this would remove once for all the threat of Cadalus, as the king would thenceforth be committed to Alexander's papacy. Even at this early stage Henry received a profound warning from Peter Damian, who wrote to him pleading with Henry to "stop [his] ears against evil counsellors as against the hissing of poisonous snakes' and to fulfil his duty as protector of the Roman Church by making war on Cadalus. This reminder of the special function of the emperor elect was accompanied by a threat. 'If [a king] fails in his duty to God and the Church, he will be held in contempt by his subjects'.¹⁷ One of the 'evil counsellors' to whom Peter Damian was referring was Adalbert who tried to steer imperial policy away from dealings with the papacy as the papacy was encompassed by his rival Anno's sphere of knowledge and influence rather than his own. In 1066 Henry married Bertha and Anno returned also to his counsel but no single adviser was to play a dominant role any longer. Henry also failed to come to the pope's aid when requested, as a result of an attack by Norman prince, Richard of Capua, later that year.

When Henry sought a divorce from his queen the matter was referred to a synod first at Worms and then Frankfurt. It was opposed by Archbishop Siegfried of Mainz and was referred to the Pope who did not give his consent and so Henry abandoned his quest. This provides a notable indication of the growing power of the reform papacy. On very

¹⁷ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 107, cf. Peter Damian, Letter 120.

few occasions since the rule of 'the Great' popes would such an outcome have been possible. Previously it was emperors dictating ecclesiastical policy to the pontiffs rather than the papacy making pronouncements over the marital dealings of kings and emperors. Alexander refused to crown Henry as emperor if he continued with his expressed wish to divorce Queen Bertha. Although Henry did submit to the pope's demands, this incident was employed as a useful tool subsequently by the Gregorians who sought to sully Henry's reputation, painting a picture of a highly unprincipled and immoral man.¹⁸

Contrary to the view put forth by the Gregorian polemicists, many of Henry's candidates for bishoprics were devout men, admittedly loyal to the royal cause, but moral nonetheless. They were, however, imposed from above rather than given popular acclaim by clergy and people. When accusations of simony were thrust at Henry, matters became more complicated as whether he was guilty or not largely depended upon the definition used for simony. If simony was confined to discussions of money changing hands, then Henry was probably innocent of this charge, however, 'the term 'simony' expanded its meaning in the later eleventh century, as reformers intensified their campaign to free the Church from every kind of secular influence.'¹⁹ This would also have included the traditional and symbolic exchanging of gifts between king and prelate. There are, nonetheless, suggestions that Henry drew upon the wealth of the churches to help support his government.

The issue that brought Alexander and Henry into direct conflict was that of the succession of the archiepiscopacy of Milan. Upon the death of Archbishop Guido Henry supported the cause of Godfrey and invested

¹⁸ Conveniently ignoring the fact that the later-to-become anti-king, Rudolf of Swabia, had sought a divorce from Bertha's sister at the same time.

¹⁹ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 120.

him with the archbishopric in 1072. Pope Alexander, on the other hand, had consecrated Atto, the choice of the clergy and the Patarene movement in Milan. It was Henry's refusal to accept Atto as the rightful archbishop and reject Godfrey that led Alexander to excommunicate five of Henry's advisers whom he felt were most responsible for Henry's obstinacy. It is also possible that,

Alexander's disciplinary measure of 1073 was inspired not only by the case of Milan, but also by other irregularities that had come to light in the imperial Church. Henry's admission that his 'servants and familiars' may have practised simony perhaps suggested to the pope that the reform of the imperial Church could most readily be achieved by a purge of royal advisers.²⁰

Upon the death of Alexander II in 1073, Hildebrand ascended to the Holy See as Pope Gregory VII (named after Gregory the Great, although also Hildebrand had been close to Gregory VI in his exile) and approval from the imperial court was not sought. From the outset, relations between Gregory and Henry were unfavourable.

²⁰ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 125.

Chapter 5: Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV of Germany

'Under the line of German popes the Papacy learned to borrow the strength of the Imperial system under which it had grown to power. So strengthened, the Papacy aimed at independence.'¹ It was in this context that Gregory took on the imperial powers. He strongly believed not only in the Church's independence, but also in its fundamental supremacy over the state and secular powers. The conflict which arose between Gregory and Henry was, therefore, inevitable. For all the differences from his father, Henry IV did maintain Henry III's vision of the emperor as Roman patrician. Consequently, Henry IV saw the right of investiture to be central to his role; his right to make decisions in the best interests of the 'Imperial Church' in appointments to bishoprics and archbishoprics. Of course, the conflict went deeper than this and had at its heart the struggle for the power of supremacy. In fact, the 'Investiture Contest' as a struggle primarily concerning the right of lay investiture did not begin until after Gregory's death. The conflict between Gregory and Henry struck much closer to the heart of relations between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. For the meantime, however, it is worth looking at Henry and Gregory's first battle; that over the archiepiscopacy of Milan, to see how future relations were to be shaped.

As many of his later changes in attitude and action also demonstrate, much of Henry's policy towards Gregory was dictated by problems within the German kingdom, specifically by a series of revolts in Saxony. Due to difficulties in Saxony and hence a need to concentrate on domestic affairs, Henry renounced his support of Godfrey and was prepared to accept Atto as archbishop. As Henry accepted in his letter of August 1073, 'we ask for the church of Milan, which through our fault is in error,

¹ A. H Mathew, *The Life and Times of Hildebrand: Pope Gregory VII*, (London, 1910), p. vi.

that it may be canonically set right by your apostolic censure; and thereafter we ask that the judgement of your authority may move on to the correction of other things.’² However, in 1075 the Saxon rebels surrendered to Henry at Speier and Atto died; these circumstances combined caused Henry to reassert what he saw as his imperial right to impose his own choice of candidate upon Milan and so elected Tedald. Henry took the campaign forward aggressively and instructed his advisers to invest the bishops of Fermo and Spoleto as well. ‘The new principles of the reformed Papacy and its new material strength were thus simultaneously challenged by the conventional prerogative of the German king; the challenge was vigorously accepted and the two powers came into bitter conflict.’³

Gregory held his first synod in March 1074 at which he strongly condemned simony and clerical marriage but stopped short of doing so over the issue of lay investiture. Gregory made use of the legatine system in the way his immediate predecessors had done and stamped down hard upon clerical marriage and simony throughout the empire. Gregory had also been enthusiastic about the idea of launching a crusade to the Holy Land to drive out the Saracens, which he himself proposed to lead and during this period of cordial relations with Henry, requested that he take care of the empire and Church whilst Gregory was to be away. Of course, this project did not take place under Gregory’s pontificate and shows the idealist in Gregory.⁴ When Henry chose Tedald to be archbishop of Milan, Gregory strictly forbade it but Henry ignored him

² *Reg.* 1.29a, p. 35.

³ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, p. 39.

⁴ The First Crusade was waged by the Eastern Emperor Alexis I and in 1095 Pope Urban II gave a speech at the Council of Clermont urging the support of the West to the cause of defeating the infidels. Jerusalem was conquered in July 1099.

and it was this act that weighed heavily in the pope's decision to excommunicate Henry in 1076.

Gregory set forth a clear exposition of the reasons behind Henry's excommunication in the fourteenth letter of his *Epistolae Vagantes*. He recognised that in excommunicating the king and 'emperor-to-be' he had 'seized the spiritual sword' but gave substantial justification for so doing, '...we summoned to do penance some of his courtiers, by whose counsels and devices he had polluted with the simoniac heresy the bishoprics and the many monasteries in which, for a price, wolves had been established instead of shepherds.'⁵ Gregory saw the elimination of simony as one of, if not the, most important mission of his pontificate and saw the actions of Henry as a considerable contribution to this problem. Nonetheless, Gregory did not write-off Henry; in Henry's more penitent moments Gregory was ready to receive him as an aide to the cause of Church reform; at these times, Gregory was also ready to consider Henry's imperial coronation. However, once fortunes were brighter in Saxony and Henry had reneged on his penitence Gregory could come to no other judgement or decision about him than that he should be 'separated from the Church and share the company of the excommunicates with whom he had chosen to have his part rather than with Christ.'⁶ But if Henry were prepared to amend his life,

we called, and we still call, God to witness how greatly we would rejoice for his salvation and honour, and with how much love we would embrace him in the bosom of holy church as one whom, being set as a prince over the people and having the rule of a most far-flung kingdom, it behoves to be the upholder of catholic peace and righteousness.⁷

⁵ H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, (Oxford, 1972) 14, p. 35.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

The three reasons, therefore, for Henry's excommunication were, firstly, that he continued to communicate with men who had been excommunicated for the simoniac heresy; secondly, he would not perform penitence for his own guilty deeds and; thirdly, 'because he had not feared to rend the body of Christ, that is, the unity of holy church'⁸. He had, in other words, caused a schism in the Milanese church and rendered damage to others; he was, therefore, treated as any other schismatic would have been and was excommunicated. One of Gregory's greatest qualms in relation to Henry was that his behaviour was not that which befitted either king or emperor. Gregory would have adhered to the Augustinian notion of a good Christian ruler and it was not a pattern that Henry followed. This in itself would have caused problems at the very least for the German Church and so Gregory felt that it was part of his duty and responsibility to set Henry on a straight path.

Eventually Gregory came round to the view, with significant persuasion from the German princes, that if Henry could not be restored to the righteous path then he should be replaced by another. It should perhaps be mentioned that Gregory did not at this time seem entirely at ease with this course of action and it is questionable whether it was ever one which he whole heartedly supported. Gregory set forth twenty-seven propositions, *Dictatus Papae*, concerning papal authority⁹ which although undated, enter Gregory's Register during Lent 1075. Of particular relevance to his clashes with Henry, which although at this moment at a lull in proceedings, were his pronouncements that the pope 'alone can use imperial insignia'; that the pope 'is permitted to depose emperors'; that the pope's 'sentence be judged by no one' and; that the supreme pontiff 'can absolve subjects from fealty to the wicked'. It appears unlikely that Gregory made any statement about lay investiture

⁸ *Epistolae Vagantes* 14, pp. 39, 41.

⁹ *Reg.* 2.55a., pp. 149-50.

specifically at his 1075 synod despite the writings of some commentators.¹⁰ If any mention were made of lay investiture, a prohibition upon it most probably stopped short of becoming a decree although it does later appear as though Gregory rebuked Henry for investing Gerald II of Cambrai, Huzman of Speyer and Henry of Aquileia despite the fact that they were all invested prior to the first surviving decree of November 1078.¹¹ This reaction may, however, have been in relation instead to Henry's continued interference in ecclesiastical affairs despite his ongoing dealings with excommunicates and throughout his own brief period of excommunication.

Henry IV's interventions in ecclesiastical affairs were somewhat different to those of his father, although in some respects motivated by the same concerns. Henry III's episcopal appointments tended to be of a higher calibre than that of his son's. Henry III was genuinely and deeply concerned with Church reform. He wanted to eradicate simony but did not, however, see lay involvement as the central force of evil, quite the reverse in fact. In particular, Henry III saw his involvement in the procedures of investiture as a crucial one and also as his traditional right which he was not willing to forfeit. On this latter point, the rights of the imperial power, Henry IV fully upheld his father's policies, but he was not, however, so concerned with carrying on with the reforms, as he did not see them as being in his best interest and it was for this reason that Henry was treated very differently by the reform papacy than his father had been; in the meantime, the papacy had also grown in strength and independence. Nevertheless, Gregory held a deep respect for certain secular rulers. For example, although he extensively criticised Henry IV of Germany and Philip I of France, he reserved, on the whole, praise for William I of England. William's policies were not in contradiction to

¹⁰ i.e. Arnulf of Milan.

¹¹ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p.p. 136-7.

Gregory's aims, instead they generally complemented them and encouraged religious reform in England. Gregory viewed William, therefore, as much closer to Augustine's definition of a good Christian ruler. William's power within the Church and in deciding the affairs of the church was considerable,

William was in fact an active and co-ordinating agent in promoting the reforms throughout the Church in his conjoint realm. He assumed responsibility for the welfare of the Church throughout all his dominion, and he claimed also full authority as king in directing its affairs. The ecclesiastical authority exercised by William both in Normandy and England was pervasive.¹²

This indicates that Gregory VII's opposition was not to regal power *per se*, but to the misuse of regal power. Gregory's greatest resistance occurred where the State's actions made it difficult to lead a truly religious life and also prohibited people from acting in obedience with the dictates of the papal see. Although power was of issue, it was power with an end rather than the unlimited accumulation of power for its own sake. For example, William I stated, 'I have not sworn, nor will I swear, fealty, which was never sworn by any of my predecessors to yours.' It has been suggested that:

A cause for especial favour with which William I was regarded by Gregory VII is to be found in the dying king's utterance, that he was free from the guilt of simony, and had always preferred ecclesiastics of good character to bishops. Such freedom from the "plague" of simony was rare among rulers of that period, and thus William retained the favour of Gregory, though the Conqueror maintained his independence, created bishops and abbots at his will, and was lord absolute over his ecclesiastical as over his feudal liegemen.¹³

¹² David C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, (London, 1964), p. 335.

¹³ Mathew, *Life and Times*, p. 48. See also H. R. Loyn, *The Norman Conquest*, (London, 1982), pp. 166-7

This presents us with a picture that shows that Gregory VII's opposition to Henry IV was not as cynically-based as some accounts indicate; that it was in fact founded upon a genuine concern over the moral degradation of the Church under the protectorate of Henry IV in both Germany and the Empire. The relationship between Gregory and William was a unique one and was most probably influenced by the similarly unusual concord between the King of England and his Archbishop of Canterbury; Lanfranc. As Loyn notes:

For various reasons, therefore, the crisis of the Investiture Contest was delayed in England. Not until the early twelfth century did the struggle between church and state for effective control break out, to be settled by compromise. In the meantime the English church, secular and regular, was reformed along authoritative, traditional lines by the most fruitful co-operative effort of king and archbishop known to English history.¹⁴

One must, however, consider the possibility that due to the peculiar independence that England maintained from the rest of Europe, if Gregory had been concerned by the lack of deference shown by William I, there would have been little that he could have done about it.¹⁵ This was not the case with Henry IV, whose enemies were numerous and hence supporters for the papal cause were readily found. Nonetheless, Gregory's motives appeared, by and large, genuine in their desire for returning the papacy and Christian faith on a wider scale to greater purity. After all, of William, Gregory commented:

¹⁴ Loyn, *Norman Conquest*, p. 167.

¹⁵ For example, 'It was between 1076 and 1080 that Gregory VII advanced through Canossa to the peak of his political power. And it was precisely during these same years that, as has been seen, William suffered his greatest reverses....It was in fact between 1079 and 1081 that the issues between the pope and the king became formidably acute.' Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 338. This, consequently, suggests that Gregory was a consummate politician; knowing not to provoke more than one potential conflict at any one time.

“Although in certain matters the king of the English does not comfort himself as devoutly as might be wished, nevertheless he has neither destroyed nor sold the churches of God; he has taken pains to govern his subjects in peace and justice; he has refused his assent to anything detrimental to the Apostolic See, even when solicited by certain enemies of the cross of Christ; he has compelled priests on oath to put away their wives and the laity to forward the titles they were withholding from us. In all these respects he has shown himself more worthy of approbation and honour than other kings...”¹⁶

‘Henry’s intervention in Italian ecclesiastical affairs was interpreted by Gregory VII as a breach of the ‘peace’ of empire and papacy. It provoked the papal ultimatum of 8 December 1075, which in turn precipitated the conflict of 1076.’¹⁷ In response to Gregory’s sentence of excommunication, Henry felt powerful enough at this time to summon the Council of Worms, the primary purpose of which was to discredit Gregory. The assertion that Gregory was never rightfully pope was expounded through arguments that the election was invalid and that Gregory’s subsequent actions were not befitting those of a pontiff. Henry accused Gregory of assaulting the Church in Germany and attacking its bishops without just cause. The council decided in favour of Henry’s complaints but its real driving force was Henry and his advisers rather than the

¹⁶ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p.341. That these relations were unusual, on both sides, however, can be seen by the fact that ‘William never ceased to foster the reforms that were the special concern of the papacy....How much controversy was in fact avoided can be guessed by a comparison between the Anglo-Norman kingdom and the rest of western Europe. The papal decree against lay-investiture which was published in Rome in 1074 did not enter England before the end of the eleventh century, despite the fact that every bishop appointed in Normandy and England between 1070 and 1087, except only Ernest and Gandulf of Rochester, received his pastoral staff from the king. There was never an ‘investiture contest’ in the Anglo-Norman kingdom during the reign of William the Conqueror.” *Ibid.*, p. 342.

¹⁷ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 140.

bishops. Twenty-six bishops in all renounced Hildebrand¹⁸ with the accusations

You delight in a great name rather than in a good one, and with unheard-of self-exaltation, like a standard bearer of schism, you distend all the limbs of the Church which before your times led a quiet and tranquil life, according to the admonition of the Apostle. Finally, the flame of discord, which you stirred up through terrible factions in the Roman Church, you spread with raging madness through all the churches of Italy, Germany, Gaul and Spain.¹⁹

The bishops, having propounded their reasons and commented that all were given the legacy of Peter in the form of the power to bind and loose rather than just the pope and his delegates, concluded by saying, 'we declare that in the future we shall observe no longer the obedience which we have not promised to you. And since none of us, as you have publicly declared, has hitherto been a bishop to you, you also will now be pope to none of us.'²⁰

Both pope and emperor must share the blame for the excommunication and call to abdication. Henry had shown his obstinacy in refusing to cease communication with his advisers whom Alexander II had excommunicated. As shown by Gregory's earlier letters, if the king had made his peace with Gregory he would have allowed him to invest such

¹⁸ Siegfried, archbishop of Mainz, Udo of Trier, Willaim of Utrecht, Herman of Metz, Henry of Liège, Richard of Verdun, Bido of Toul, Hozeman of Speier, Burchard of Halberstadt, Werner of Strassburg, Burchard of Basel, Otto of Constance, Adalbero of Würzburg, Rupert of Bamberg, Otto of Regensburg, Egilbert of Freising, Ulrich of Eichstätt, Frederick of Münster, Eilbert of Minden, Hezilo of Hildesheim, Benno of Osnabrück, Eppo of Naumberg, Imadus of Paderborn, Tiedo of Brandenburg, Burchard of Lausanne and Bruno of Verona. Cf. Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, p. 147-9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

individuals as Anselm, the bishop-elect of Lucca.²¹ Nonetheless it is arguable that Gregory's excommunication of Henry was a slight over-reaction because of the implications which it left. Even without a formal sentence of deposition, excommunication from the Church was, to all intents and purposes, equal to that, because subjects who saw their spiritual life as taking precedence over their temporal life would obey their Church rather than their king. In other words, the king's enemies could ignore the king's decrees, considering them null and void, as they were delivered by an excommunicate. Excommunication had the effect of dissolving the fealty of the king's subjects and so in many respects, depriving the king of kingship.

Gregory's principle was that it was his right as Pope, as successor to St Peter, to depose kings, while Henry withstood such an assumption, as an unheard-of novelty in Christendom, with all his energy. He himself was permeated with the idea that in temporal matters he was independent of the Pope, and subject to God alone.²²

Henry continued with his campaign calling for Gregory's excommunication throughout the rest of 1076. Eastertide of that year helped to set the pattern for the years to come and the way in which the polemical writings were to be used. Henry held an Easter Mass at Utrecht in rejection of Gregory's anathema of him. 'The king staged a 'crown-wearing', one of the rituals of power that, like coronation were designed to dramatise the Ottonian-Salian idea of the monarch as 'the Vicar of God'...to the accompaniment of the royal *laudes* hymns celebrating the majesty of Christ and of the king, who exercised His

²¹ i.e. *Reg.* 1.21, p. 24, in which Gregory asked Anselm 'that you withhold yourself from investiture with your bishopric by the hand of the king until he has made satisfaction to God for his communing with excommunicated persons, and thus he can, with matters set in order, have peace with ourself.'

²² Mathew, *Life and Times*, p. 107.

authority on earth.²³ Regrettably for Henry, the symbolic effect of the Mass was negated by the destruction of the cathedral of St Peter in Utrecht after it was hit by lightning and also Bishop William, who had celebrated the Mass, died unexpectedly one month later. Henry's critics chose to represent these unfortunate events as a divine sign of the condemnation of Henry. The first royal polemics appeared at this time as Henry saw the necessity of winning over the support of, in particular, the German clergy and secular princes so as to strengthen his position and discourage a second Saxon uprising. These polemical writings were also in response to Gregory's aggressive call to rebellion against the king at his Lenten synod,²⁴ accusing him of the very serious crime of 'separating himself from your [Peter's] church in an attempt to rend it asunder, on your [Peter's] behalf I bind him with the chain of anathema.'²⁵ Henry's counter-claims were just as explosive, referring to 'the monk Hildebrand, so-called pope' who 'presides in the Apostolic See not with the care of a pastor but with the violence of a usurper and from the throne of peace dissolves the bond of the one catholic peace.'²⁶ In this same letter, Henry made one of his clearest expositions on how he conceived the correct relations between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* and how he believed that Gregory had turned on its head the order as instituted by God. To quote

²³ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 149.

²⁴ *Reg.* 3.6, p. 181; 3.10, pp. 187-90: 'And by you [Peter's] grace, the power has been given to me from God of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth. Therefore, fortified by this confidence, for the honour and defence of you church, on behalf of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through your power and authority. I deny to King Henry, son of the Emperor Henry, who has risen up with unheard-of pride against your church, the government of the entire kingdom of the Germans and of Italy, and I absolve all Christians from the bond of any oath that they have taken, or shall take, to him; and I forbid anyone to serve him as king.' *Reg.* 3.6., p. 181.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

²⁶ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, Letter 13, p. 152.

at length from a letter of Henry IV written by his primary *dictator*, Gottschalk of Aachen:

...without God's knowledge he has usurped for himself the kingship and the priesthood. In this deed he held in contempt the pious ordination of God, which especially commanded these two – namely, kingship and the priesthood – should remain, not as one entity but as two. In his Passion, the Savior Himself meant the figurative sufficiency of the two swords to be understood in this way: When it was said to Him, "Lord, behold there are two swords here," He answered, "It is enough," signifying by this sufficient duality, that the spiritual and the carnal swords are to be used in the Church and that by them every hurtful thing is to be cut off. That is to say, He was teaching that every man is constrained by the priestly sword to obey the king as the representative of God but by the kingly sword both to repel enemies of Christ outside and to obey the priesthood within. So in charity the province of one extends into the other, as long as neither the kingship is deprived of honor by the priesthood nor the priesthood is deprived of honor by the kingship. You yourself have found out, if you have wanted to discover it, how the Hildebrandine madness has confounded this ordinance of God; for in his judgment, no one may be a priest unless he begs that [honor] from his arrogance. He has also striven to deprive me of the kingship, me whom God has called to the kingship (God, however, has not called him to the priesthood) – since he saw that I wished to hold my royal power from God and not from him and since he himself had not constituted me as king.²⁷

The Council of Mainz occurred in June when the accusations against Gregory were reiterated, although already cracks were beginning to form in the façade of the council's unity. Gregory began to consider the notion of the election of a new king²⁸ but events took a different turn as Henry's enemies had increased in number, or perhaps more correctly, had seen

²⁷ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, Letter 13, p. 153.

²⁸ *Reg.* 4.2, p. 209: 'Let them ponder [all those who say it is not right to excommunicate the king] why Pope Zacharias deposed the king of the Franks and absolved all the Frankish people from the bond of the oath that they had taken to him.'

their chance at a point of weakness for Henry. Henry led an army into Saxony, but was unsuccessful and was forced to retreat which weakened his position still further. It was this that led Henry to make the Promise of Oppenheim (*Prommissio Oppenheimensis*) to Gregory, in which he swore to renew obedience to the Holy See and to undertake penance for the 'rather serious schemes which I am supposed to have against that same See.'²⁹ This language still appears strained though³⁰ and with the benefit of hindsight, it is obvious that Henry made the Promise only because he felt backed into a corner and fearful for his own power at this time; he could not afford to be at odds with the pope if he did not wish to forfeit his crown.

Henry journeyed to Speyer to live as a penitent and was visited by his godfather, Abbot Hugh of Cluny, who then went on to meet with Gregory. At the Diet of Tribur it was decided by the German princes that Henry had to be free of the sentence of excommunication within a year or else he would be king no longer. The princes used Henry's feud with the pope to their own advantage; they did not wish for Henry to fulfil the terms of the *Prommissio Oppenheimensis* nor to rid himself from the anathema of excommunication, what the princes truly desired was to be free from their oath of allegiance to him and to have papal support in the election of a new king.

Although some of Henry's former decisions may have been rash, his move to intercept Gregory on his way to a council at Augsburg at which Henry would receive judgement, was perhaps his cleverest.

An excommunicated king, who was also rejected by his subjects, was at a double disadvantage; had the Pope gone to Germany, and there a national synod judged the king, the victory of the Church would have

²⁹ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, p. 154.

³⁰ 'which I am supposed to have' is certainly not an admission of guilt.

been complete. But at Canossa Gregory had to choose between his duty as a priest and his policy as a Pope.³¹

The story of Canossa is a famous one; Henry was forced to wait by Gregory for three days outside the castle walls, dressed in the garb of a penitent and barefoot in the snow. Gregory granted Henry absolution and somewhat remarkably, the oath which Henry gave at Canossa was left in very broad terms, without demanding that Henry retract much of what has been said and done in the past year and no mention, also, was made of lay investiture.³² Although this appears the very high point of papal power, as subsequent events were to illustrate, this power was far from unqualified and events at Canossa ultimately proved to be a greater triumph for Henry than for Gregory. 'Henry's mood of penitence soon passed away, but what he had gained – a political advantage – was left behind.'³³ Gregory, on the other hand, lost support as he was no longer proving to be as useful to the princes as they had hoped. With at least a semblance of temporary peace and concord between pope and king, the princes knew that they needed to find another way of undermining Henry's power and kingship. Gregory had relished his role as the arbiter between king and princes but this role had been bestowed by the princes when they had need of him and when they expected his support; there was henceforth less discussion of Gregory's journey to Germany to judge between the rival claims as he was deemed to be no longer central to their plans.

No sooner had the news of the absolution at Canossa reached the princes, than they prepared to set up a king in opposition to Henry. They had welcomed the king's excommunication with joy and they were proportionately disgusted with his rehabilitation. They had failed

³¹ J. P. Whitney, *Hildebrandine Essays*, (Cambridge, 1932), p. 37.

³² *Reg.* 4.12a, p. 222-3.

³³ Whitney, *Hildebrandine Essays*, p. 38.

in making the Pope their tool to overthrow Henry, and they now prepared to discard and even act counter to the Holy See.³⁴

By events at Canossa, Gregory was in fact forced into making a decision and absolution that he would have far rather waited until at a synod in Germany to pronounce upon. Nonetheless, Henry's position initially, at least, was a weak one as Gregory had restored him to communion but not to the kingship.³⁵ Although Henry's enemies still considered themselves absolved from their oaths of fealty, Henry clearly saw his restoration to communion and to the kingship as one and the same. In fact, it was more the case that Henry believed that he had only been withdrawn from communion and not the kingship also, because Henry had never accepted his deposition as he did not believe that Gregory, as pope, had the authority to judge and depose him. Resultantly, Canossa was not seen by the Henrician party as the total submission of *regnum* to *sacerdotium* as the Gregorians viewed it.

In March 1077 an assembly was held at Forchheim at which the German princes in opposition to Henry declared Rudolf of Swabia as king after formally deposing Henry. Although papal legates were at Forchheim, they did not act in concurrence with Gregory's wishes as Gregory certainly did not desire the division of Germany which, in essence, is what this decision made inevitable; he still hoped to preside over synod deciding between Henry and Rudolf's rival claims. Henry continued to assert what he saw as his royal rights: 'He was no more willing to have his case judged by the proposed assembly of princes than he was to submit his cause to the council envisaged by Gregory VII. Henry's purpose in the years 1077-80 was to suppress a rebellion rather than to participate in a debate about the kingship.'³⁶ Some of Gregory's political

³⁴ Mathew, *Life and Times*, p. 138.

³⁵ *Reg.* 7.14a, p. 343, see pp. 73-4 below.

³⁶ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 177.

calculations in the aftermath of Canossa and Forchheim were based upon the realisation that to push forward his reform programme he required not only a compliant king but also a relatively powerful one. This helps to explain why Gregory had dealings with Rudolf of Swabia but did not with subsequent anti-kings, as none of them posed a credible threat to Henry.

Gregory's first recorded decree against lay investiture came at his autumn synod of 1078 stating that

Since we know that in many parts investitures of churches take place by lay persons against the decrees of the holy fathers, and that from this many disturbances arise in the church, through which the Christian religion is trampled underfoot, we have decreed that none of the clergy may receive investiture of a bishopric, abbey, or church from the hand of an emperor or king or any lay person, man or woman. If he shall so presume, he should recognize that the investiture in question is by apostolic authority null and that he is subject to excommunication until he makes proper satisfaction.³⁷

The language puts the emphasis upon the individual receiving investiture rather than the one performing the ceremony, nevertheless, the decree is still one prohibiting the practice of lay investiture, just promulgated in a manner designed not to provoke a direct clash with Henry. The decree did, however, alter the issue from one, for Gregory, concerning Henry's right of investiture whilst still receiving advice from excommunicated advisers, to one concerning the right of royal investiture in and of itself, regardless of Henry's conduct. It should also be borne in mind that through prohibiting lay investiture, it was not just reform that Gregory wanted to promulgate, but also papal control. Gregory disliked the level of independence enjoyed by the episcopate and hoped that this decree would help to curb it.

³⁷ *Reg. 6.5b*, p. 283.

Whatever Henry's reaction to the decree was, he felt under no compulsion to obey it and within a month had invested the archbishops of both Cologne and Trier. To his credit though, throughout 1078 and indeed prior to that, Gregory had made a number of conciliatory moves toward Henry and avoided direct confrontation. Henry, on the other hand, acted purely according to what his political fortunes allowed. After Henry's direct breach of Gregory's prohibition of lay investiture, it is not surprising that Gregory felt the necessity of excommunicating Henry for the second time, at his Lenten synod of 1080. At this synod Gregory declared a second decree prohibiting lay investiture, and this decree was worded much more strongly than the one of November 1078, also placing emphasis upon the investor as well as the investee:

if any emperor, king, duke, marquis, count or any other secular power or person whatsoever shall presume to give the investiture of bishoprics or of any ecclesiastical dignity, he should know that he is bound by the chain of the same sentence [excommunication]. In addition too, unless he should repent and restore proper liberty to the church, he should feel the retribution of divine punishment in this present life as well as in his own body as in other things, so that the spirit may be saved at the coming of the Lord.³⁸

By implication, therefore, after the abolition of lay investiture, Gregory saw it as appropriate that the pope play the role in episcopal elections previously played by the secular monarch. Gregory makes a definitive statement of condemnation against Henry; he details the 'conspiracy with many bishops' that the king had made, and despite Henry's penitence and absolution at Canossa, Gregory emphasises that, 'I restored him solely to communion; however, I did not restore him to the kingdom from which I had deposed him in a Roman synod [1076], nor did I command that the fealty of all who had sworn to him, from which I

³⁸ *Reg.* 7.14a, p. 340.

absolved them all in the same synod, should be observed toward him.³⁹ With this statement, Gregory made clear that he saw events at Canossa as fulfilling his priestly duty to a penitent seeking absolution and that restoring Henry to communion was an individual and personal event rather than a political one; Henry made no distinction between the two. At the synod, Gregory also officially recognised Rudolf of Swabia as king for the first time, although made the point that the bishops and princes had 'elected for themselves' Rudolf. 'For even as Henry is justly cast out from the royal dignity for his pride, disobedience, and falseness, so the power and dignity of the kingdom are granted to Rudolf for his humility, obedience and truth.'⁴⁰ In so declaring, Gregory may have been making a political calculation in believing that Rudolf could triumph over Henry.

At the close of Gregory's record of the 1078 Lent synod, he makes one of his clearest expositions on his perception of the relative merits of the secular and ecclesiastical powers. Invoking the pope's power to bind and loose, Gregory sets forth that he has the power to 'take away from and grant to each one according to his merits empires, kingdoms, principalities, churches, marches, counties, and the possessions of all men.'⁴¹ Gregory illustrates the papal claims by arguing 'For if you judge spiritual things, should it be believed that you can do concerning secular things? And if you will judge the angels who rule over all proud princes, what can you do concerning their servants?'⁴² Henry's response to the Lenten synod was to widen his propaganda campaign to include Italy⁴³ as most of the Italian bishops retained their loyalty to Henry as they were not pleased by the encroachments that Gregory had made into their

³⁹ *Reg. 7.14a*, p. 343.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁴³ Petrus Crassus, *The Defence of King Henry*, *MGH LdL.i.*, pp. 432-53.

episcopal rights. The German bishops, on the other hand, who had tended to be reform-minded, disliked Henry's incursions into their episcopacies and so welcomed the Gregorian party and supported the anti-king. Prior to Gregory's Lent synod of 1080, Henry sent messengers to the Pope stating that if Gregory would excommunicate Rudolf, Henry would show obedience to Gregory, but if he refused to do so then Henry would set up his own pope.⁴⁴ Such a demand was evidently unacceptable for Gregory but does not appear to have been his primary motivation in excommunicating Henry at this synod. It seems more likely that Gregory simply reached a point at which he felt that he could offer Henry no more chances as since lifting Henry's sentence of excommunication at Canossa, the king had continually thrown back at him the conciliatory gestures made by Gregory.

In passing sentence upon Henry, Gregory was thus renewing a sentence of excommunication from which he had absolved Henry at Canossa but under which he now recognized Henry already to have placed himself again by his own disobedience; as for Henry's deposition from kingship and forfeiture of the oaths of his subjects, Gregory was reiterating sentences under which he had been placed in 1076 and from which he had never become free.⁴⁵

In so doing, Gregory declared Rudolf to be the rightful king of the Germans. This move has often been thought of as a political one on Gregory's part. Rudolf's forces were strong in battle and not only did Rudolf appear as though he might achieve military success against Henry, but he seemingly provided a model of good obedient Christian kingship in Gregory's eyes, with emphasis upon obedience. However, this is perhaps to do Gregory a disservice as with Rudolf as king, Gregory would have been better placed to enact his vision for reform because, as

⁴⁴ H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII 1073-1085*, (Oxford, 1998), p. 195.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

Robinson illustrates, it was clear by this stage that Henry would never willingly relinquish the grip of royal power over the Church.⁴⁶

In response to this Henry convened the Synod of Brixen, the pronouncements of which echoed those made at the Synod of Worms. It emphasised the unity of action amongst its attendees in their condemnation of 'the false monk, Hildebrand'. The synodal decree certainly did not hold back in its condemnation of Gregory, amongst other things, accusing him of devoting 'himself more than laymen to obscene theatrical shows; publicly for the sake of filthy lucre, to attend to the tables of the money changers on the porch of those who do business.'⁴⁷ As Robinson describes, according to the decree, 'the pope was guilty of simony, ambition, violent intrusion into the apostolic see contrary to the Papal Election Decree of 1059, heresy, necromancy and poisoning four of his predecessors.'⁴⁸ Henry threw Gregory's accusations back at him stating that, 'He it was who subverted ecclesiastical order, who threw the rule of the Christian empire into turmoil, who plotted death of body and soul for the catholic and pacific King, who defended a king who was a breaker of vows and a traitor, who sowed discord amongst those in concord'.⁴⁹

The decree was an exercise in propaganda more than a real demand that expected a response. It issued a request, which Gregory was clearly not going to adhere to, for Gregory to abdicate, and threatened deposition if he did not do so; what the synod did not do was to depose the Pope. There was clearly reticence on the part of the bishops and possibly also some of Henry's advisers to pronounce a definitive judgement upon the

⁴⁶ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 194.

⁴⁷ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, p. 157.

⁴⁸ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 198.

⁴⁹ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, p. 159.

Pope. 'As in 1076, so in 1080 there was a danger that Henry had reached beyond his resources and beyond the limits of what his bishops and other followers would, in the long run support.'⁵⁰

The other major event of the synod was the election of Wibert,⁵¹ Archbishop of Ravenna,⁵² as the new pope, so becoming antipope Clement III. Although a negative picture is often painted of the antipope, he was himself a supporter of the reform of the clergy, but after his election at the Synod of Brixen, had little opportunity to demonstrate his reforming credentials. Henry was swiftly drawn back into events in Saxony and so the antipope was left to do battle alone with Gregory for the time being. Gregory used military means to try to expel Wibert from Ravenna and when that failed, he asked the bishops and clergy of that place to appoint a successor to the archsee as he declared Wibert deposed. In the end, the Pope appointed his own successor but unfortunately for Gregory, the clergy and people of Ravenna showed a preference for Wibert.

Meanwhile in Germany, Rudolf was killed at the Battle on the Elster and so Gregory's prediction at his Lenten synod, that Henry would suffer death or deposition imminently, as a sign of God's vengeance, came to haunt him as it was the anti-king who lost his life. Even though Henry lost the battle, the greater victory went to him and it was portrayed as a moral victory by Henrician supporters and polemicists. Henry then turned his attention back to his struggles with the Pope and commenced his first expedition into Italy in 1081. 'Henry's primary concern according to the manifesto of 1081, was to be crowned emperor. The

⁵⁰ Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, p. 204.

⁵¹ It depends on the translation as to whether he is referred to as Wibert or Guibert.

⁵² A position which he in fact owed to Henry and was obtained during Alexander II's pontificate.

resolution of his dispute with the papacy was a secondary matter.⁵³ But, without the acquiescence of the Romans, this proved impossible and resultantly Henry's tools of propaganda became centred upon Rome.

At this time also, Gregory produced his most extensive justification, in a letter to Bishop Hermann of Metz, of the excommunication of Henry in the light of the schism into which the Church was thrown through a combination of the acts of both Henry and Gregory. After quoting Matthew 16:18-19, Gregory asked

Are kings here excepted, or are they not the sheep that the Son of God has committed to blessed Peter? Who, I ask, considers himself in this universal concession of binding and loosing to be excluded from the power of Peter, unless perhaps that unhappy man who, being unwilling to bear the yoke of the number of Christ's sheep?⁵⁴

Gregory explained that the Roman Church was declared to be the universal Church, both mother and head, and resultantly all judgements concerning the business of the Church should be referred to her; appeal cannot be made against the universal Church's judgements, 'and that her judgements neither should, nor can be realised or rejected by anyone.'

Gregory continued by quoting 'the blessed Pope Gelasius,' in which he set forth the primacy of the Roman Church, and Pope Julius in saying of the inheritor of Peter's power to bind and loose, 'For he has the power granted by a special privilege to open and to close the gates of the heavenly kingdom to whom he will. Therefore is the one to whom the power is given of opening and closing heaven not allowed to judge concerning the earth?' He also drew upon his namesake, Pope Gregory

⁵³ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 213.

⁵⁴ *Reg.* 8.21; all subsequent quotes up to footnote 55 (on p. 81) are taken from *Reg.* 8.21, pp. 387-395.

the Great, arguing that he 'ruled that kings who shall presume to transgress the decrees of the apostolic see fall from their office,' with the words, 'Now if any king, priest, judge, and secular person who knows the text of this enactment of ours shall venture to proceed against it, let him forfeit his office with its power and honour and let him know that for the offence that he has committed he is guilty by a divine judgement'. Through Gregory the Great's threat of deposition and excommunication for a single misdeed, Gregory VII was provided with good justification for deposing and excommunicating Henry. Gregory asserted, 'should not a dignity invented by men who were ignorant of God not be subject to that dignity which the providence of Almighty God has devised for his own honour and mercifully given to the world?'

The pope's Augustinian tendencies can be recognised in his discussion of man and the world. He referred to the devil as 'the prince of the world and sees greed, treachery, rapine, murder and pride to be methods by and for which kings and other secular lords set themselves up over their equals.' Gregory praised the Emperor Constantine for his greatness in not presuming to pass judgement upon the thought and acts of the bishops present at the Nicene synod and deferring his own judgement to theirs in matters ecclesiastical. The example of Pope Innocent I's excommunication of the Emperor Arcadius for his part in allowing St John Chrysostom to be driven from his see, is mentioned by Gregory, as is the deposition of King Childeric III by Pope Zachary, 'not so much for his iniquities as for the reason that he was not useful for so great a power, and substituted in place of him Pippin the father of the Emperor Charlemagne and absolved all the Franks from the oath of fealty that they had taken to him.' Gregory also mentioned the excommunication of Theodosius by Ambrose who, 'In his writings, too, he shows that gold is not as much more precious than lead as the sacerdotal dignity is higher than the royal power.' Gregory asserted that in terms of the Church, an

exorcist has more power than any lay person, a king included, and exorcists ranked extremely low in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

In addition, Gregory made plain the point that a king, as any other member of the laity, depends upon the priestly dignity for his eternal salvation, 'Moreover, every Christian king who comes to his end, in order that he may escape the prison of hell, in order that he may proceed from darkness into light, in order that he may appear in the Judgement of God loosed from the bonds of sins, seeks as a suppliant and pitiably the help of a priest'. He simultaneously explained that a king could do nothing so important for any individual as a priest could as whilst a king is concerned with the things of this world, a priest is concerned with the eternal salvation of the world to come. Even the emperors that Gregory had praise for he believed had a limited value and one lesser than ecclesiastical because however pious they may have been, their jurisdiction only dealt with the concerns of this world. 'Behold! holy church does, indeed, praise and venerate Constantine of pious memory, Theodosius, Honorius, Charles and Louis, – lovers of righteousness, propagators of religion, and defenders of churches; she does not, however, declare that they have been bright with so great a glory of miracles.'

On the whole, Gregory's view of kings and emperors was a highly negative one and although having previously praised the honour of Henry III, he made no mention of him in this particular letter,

the kings and princes of the earth, enticed by vain glory just as has been suggested prefer to spiritual things those things that are their own, while religious pontiffs, despising vain glory, set the things that are God's before carnal things?...Being excessively given over to earthly deeds, the former set no value upon spiritual things; diligently

mediating upon heavenly things, the latter despise things that are earthly.

Gregory's letter to Bishop Hermann contains a wealth of material that was to become much more common in the religious and political commentary and rhetoric of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for example, 'Let them [kings and emperors] not seek to subject or to subdue holy church to themselves like a handmaid, but before all else let them be concerned duly to honour her eyes, that is the priest of the Lord, by acknowledging them as masters and fathers.' This letter effectively declares that in contrast to the priestly dignity, it is the kingship which is in fact not appointed by the divine.⁵⁵ Kingship is treated by Gregory VII, very much as Augustine did, as a necessary evil to deal with the worst excesses of the fallen world; Gregory also regarded it as factor which contributed to these excesses as he argued that pride was frequently to be found in its highest levels amongst those who set themselves up as kings and rulers over their fellow man. 'It is founded upon human wickedness and diabolic suggestion, in ambition and intolerable presumption; kingship, moreover, is a usurpation of the natural rights of quality among all men.'⁵⁶

This letter provided Gregory's most definitive exposition of his views concerning the correct relations of church and state. It is also his most radical pronouncement upon the subject and marks a divergence from his previously mild and conciliatory language. Until the second excommunication of Henry, in 1080, Gregory was clearly ready to make a full and comprehensive peace with Henry and to his credit, was prepared to do so in the face of numerous rejections and deceptions suffered at the hands of Henry. Nonetheless, peace and concord would have had have

⁵⁵ *Reg.* 8.21.

⁵⁶ Mathew, *Life and Times*, p. 203.

to have been ultimately negotiated on Gregory's terms and hence Henry would have had his authority compromised in a manner perceived to be unacceptable by the inheritor of Henry III's throne. Although father and son differed in many respects, they did not do so upon the notion of how the Salian kingship should operate and the authority which it should rightfully wield.

1082 saw Henry's second expedition into Italy and he appealed fervently to the people of Rome to accept his claims. He pointed to the fidelity and love shown by them to his grandfather and father, arguing that this had been subverted by Hildebrand.⁵⁷ Henry evidently realised by this stage that there was no turning back as far as Gregory was concerned; even if he had desired it, which especially due to the death of Rudolf he would not have done, a second Canossa would no longer have been possible. It is thus that Henry decided to burn his bridges altogether and

For the first time Henrician polemic dealt directly with the principal Gregorian canon law weapon: the claim that the pope cannot be judged. Henry's early attacks on Gregory VII had evaded this claim: at the Council of Worms (1076) by calling for the pope's abdication; at the Council of Brixen (1080) by declaring him an intruder and therefore no pope. The 1082 manifesto, however, took issue with Hildebrand's statement 'that he must be judged by no one'.⁵⁸

Resultantly, Henry proposed that Gregory's claims to the papacy should be judged by a council, at which he clearly perceived that he should be the final arbiter. Because of Henry's advances toward Rome, Gregory could not hold a Lenten synod in 1082. He also struggled financially to resist Henry as the Roman clergy would not allow Gregory to mortgage any church properties or possessions to pay for his defence of the Roman

⁵⁷ Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, p. 219; Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, Letter 17, pp. 162-5.

⁵⁸ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 216.

see⁵⁹ against Wibert of Ravenna, because they viewed the action as having a secular rather than holy purpose. This is illustrative of the success that Henry's propaganda was having, both in terms of resonating with the clergy and people of Rome (despite, at this time, their ultimate continued loyalty to Gregory) and of directing the opposition of Gregory's supporters primarily away from himself and onto Wibert.⁶⁰ Through this latter aspect, Henry therefore still left open the possibility, however slight, of imperial coronation by Gregory if a reconciliation were made, although by now, Henry could only have envisaged the possibility of reconciliation on his own terms and would have required considerable, if not complete, capitulation by Gregory.

By 1083-4, Henry knew for certain that his ultimate ambition, that of imperial coronation, would never occur at the hands of Gregory and so sought in practice, rather than just words, to set up Archbishop Wibert of Ravenna as Pope Clement III. Henry succeeded in entering Rome in March 1084 and managed to gain the Lateran Palace and install Wibert there, forcing Gregory to retreat to the Castel Sant'Angelo. Subsequently, Henry was consecrated and crowned at St Peter's by Clement as *imperator* and *patricius*.⁶¹ Henry and Clement resided in the Lateran for some seven weeks before Robert Guiscard, duke of Apulia and Calabria, and his Norman army captured and sacked the city prior to setting about the reclamation of other papal lands. Henry retreated northward now that Clement had fulfilled his primary purpose in Henry's coronation, and Clement held Tivoli against Guiscard's forces. When Guiscard travelled south from Rome in July 1084, Gregory accompanied him for fear of remaining in Rome without Guiscard's presence and protection. Clement succeeded in celebrating Christmas back at Rome before again being

⁵⁹Robinson, *Henry IV*, pp. 220-1; Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, pp. 220-1.

⁶⁰ Cowdrey, *ibid.*, p. 221.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

driven out of the Lateran by Gregorian supporters and was forced back to Ravenna. 'Rome became in effect *terra nullis*; not until 1094 would either a pope or an anti-pope establish himself there for any considerable time.'⁶² Gregory still persisted in his campaign against Henry and his antipope by renewing his sentence against them and publicising it widely. Gregory, however, relied upon Robert Guiscard for his return to Rome, but Guiscard was more concerned with success against the Byzantines.

Henry, on the other hand, returned to Germany in triumphant fashion, for despite having been driven out of Rome he returned to his homeland as Rome's conqueror, emperor and patrician; his major Saxon rival, Otto of Nordheim had died; and the anti-king who had replaced Rudolf, Hermann of Salm, was weak. 'Therefore, in a weary land torn by feuds and wasted by devastation, Henry now seemed to many, at least for a time, to promise the surest hope of the peace for which they ardently yearned.'⁶³ Henry held a synod at Mainz, with legates sent from Clement III, at which a central tenet was that of emperor and (anti)pope working together harmoniously for peace and concord, drawing comparison with the manner in which Gregory had failed to do so.

Henry's position upon the death of Gregory VII was one of strength and ascendancy. In the memorandum reportedly recording Gregory's final testament, when asked about what should be done regarding excommunicates, Gregory responded by saying that, 'I absolve and bless all whomsoever who undoubtedly believe me to have this spiritual power on behalf of St Peter the apostle.'⁶⁴ Even of Henry and Wibert, he replied that they should not be delivered from excommunication, 'unless perchance they shall come to you according as it seems best to you to

⁶² Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, p. 231.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁶⁴ Appendix 3, *Reg.*, p. 488.

make due and canonical satisfaction',⁶⁵ Therefore, even upon his deathbed Gregory discharged his pastoral duty to those whom he had fought against for the entirety of his pontificate and who resulted in his death in exile at Salerno rather than in glory at Rome; as his final words on 25 May 1085 reportedly expressed, 'I have loved righteousness and I have hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile.'⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Appendix 3, *Reg.*, p. 488.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 488.

Chapter 6: The Polemical Literature of the Investiture Contest

The conflict between Gregory and Henry was of importance for an additional reason also; a departure from traditional norms occurred in terms of the polemical literature that was produced and distributed by both parties, some officially sanctioned and some emerging as part of a broader offshoot of the controversy. It differed from the correspondence between Henry and Gregory, although much of this was also written by their respective polemicists,¹ in that it often dealt more generally and directly with the issue of the rival claims to the supremacy of the secular and spiritual powers. In that sense, it encapsulated the essential debate between Gregory and Henry.

The 'Anonymous of York' was probably the most radical of the royalist polemicists. He emphasised the importance of the right of royal unction, arguing from this that

Therefore kings receive in their consecration the power to rule this church, that they may rule it and strengthen it in judgement and justice and administer it in accordance with the discipline of the Christian law; for they reign in the church, which is the kingdom of God, and reign together with Christ, in order that they may rule, protect and defend it. To reign is to rule the subjects well and to serve God with fear.²

The Anonymous recognised Pope Gelasius' division of the two powers and the right to rule in the Church possessed by the episcopal order. He provided, however, a different interpretation of Gelasius' words, turning

¹ As Robinson asserts, 'The first decade of the history of the polemical literature of the Investiture Contest is dominated by the circulation of the letters of Gregory VII.' I. S. Robinson, 'The Dissemination of the Letters of Pope Gregory VII,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 34 (1983), p. 193.

² *Tractatus Eboracenses*, MGH LdL.iii., p. 663.

them on their head by arguing that what Gelasius meant in saying that *this world* is ruled by two powers; priestly and royal,

he means the holy church, which is a sojourner in this world. In this world, then, the priestly authority and the royal power hold the principate of sacred government. Some seek to divide the principate in this fashion, saying that the priesthood has the principate of ruling souls, the king that of ruling bodies, as if souls could be ruled without bodies and bodies without souls, which cannot be done by any means.³

The Anonymous held that in Christ the royal power was the stronger element than the priestly through relating the royal power more to divinity and the priestly to humanity and arguing that divinity was predominant over humanity in Christ.⁴ The Anonymous also tackled the issue of the investiture of a bishop with the pastoral staff. 'I think that he [the king] does not confer the order or right of priesthood, but what pertains to his own right and to the rule of worldly things, namely the lordship and guardianship of the things of the church'.⁵ The Anonymous drew support for this from the temporal lordship that a bishop commanded through the possession of land, hence making imperative their loyalty and adherence to the king and law of the land. When in 1110-11, negotiations were made, although a satisfactory conclusion was never reached, between Paschal II and Henry V, Paschal made the suggestion that the king could renounce his right to investiture if the lands accrued by the Church since the time of Charlemagne were returned to the king, thus negating the problem of the secular lordship of bishops. This was not, however, a line of thinking pursued by the Anonymous author of the York *Tractates*. The York Anonymous asserted instead that the king

³*Tractatus Eboracenses*, p. 663.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 667.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 667.

is not to be called a layman, for he is the anointed of the Lord, a God through grace, the supreme ruler, lord over his brothers, worthy to be adored by all men, chief and highest prelate. It is not to be said that he is inferior to the bishop because the bishop consecrates him, for it often happens that lesser men consecrate a greater, inferiors their superior, as when the cardinals consecrate a pope or suffragan bishops a metropolitan. This can be so because they are not the authors of the consecration but ministers. God makes the sacrament efficacious; they administer it.⁶

The Anonymous of York also took issue with the concept of the primacy of Rome,

According to him, there was no such thing as primacy in the primitive Church, and Christ had said nothing of it. Christ gave all the Apostles equal power; the bishop of Rome can claim no more control over the Archbishop of Rouen than Peter possessed over the other Apostles – indeed, he can really only claim the authority Peter exercised over himself.⁷

The logical conclusion of this is that every bishop is the successor of Peter, not just the one occupying the see of Rome, and resultantly their appeal is to God alone, not to the Pope as His intermediary. 'The assertion that one church is superior to another makes two churches out of one, that is to say, divides the one indivisible Church.'⁸

The attitude of the Anonymous of York was more radical than most of the polemicists writing at the time of the Investiture Controversy; most other authors tended to demonstrate a greater adherence to the dualism of the sacerdotal and secular spheres and the relative balance between their powers and jurisdictions.

⁶ *Tractatus Eboracenses*, p. 679 .

⁷ Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society*, p. 146.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.146.

The anonymous author of *De Unitate Ecclesiae Conservanda*, for example, concentrated upon the issue of whether it was lawful for a pope to depose a king. He analysed the precedent of Pope Zachary, Pope Stephen, Pippin and Childeric and objected to Gregory VII's use of this case in supporting the argument that a king could be deposed at a pope's say-so.⁹ Interestingly, he too appeals to Gelasius in support of his arguments,¹⁰ asserting the necessity of the two powers, and the subversion of this principle by Gregory's attempt to claim the secular power for himself as well. 'Since God himself has thus arranged things and has instituted these two, the royal power and the sacred authority of priests, by which this world is chiefly ruled, who can attempt to go against this except one who resists the ordinance of God?'¹¹ The author also makes reference to Hildebrand's use of the example of St Ambrose's excommunication of Theodosius; he saw the difference between Ambrose's actions and those of Gregory over the excommunication of Henry, as that by the excommunication of Theodosius, Ambrose 'did not divide the church; rather he taught that we should render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.'¹² The difference that the author perceived between this case and that of Gregory is that Ambrose was healing a rift whereas Gregory was creating schism, 'propagating a schism by which princes and nobles of the realm are separated from the companionship and service of their emperor.'¹³

In contrast to the Anonymous of York, Manegold of Lautenbach, who was writing to refute the *epistola* of Wenrich of Trier, heavily supported

⁹ Cf. *Reg.* 8.21a, pp. 387-345; 7.14a, pp. 340-44.

¹⁰ *Liber de unitate ecclesiae conservanda*, MGH *LdL*.ii., pp. 186-7.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

the importance of the Roman see and consequently felt that excommunication and deposition was only fitting for Henry for judging the supreme pontiff, who was to be without human judgement, and for threatening the unity of the Roman Church as a result.

As for the king himself, the author and fomenter of so much evil, the holy council decreed that the apostolic sword be unsheathed to cut him off from the body of the whole church and that, bound by the bond of anathema, he be deprived of the royal dignity. It absolved from their oaths all those who had sworn oaths to him and forbade anyone to save him as king, for it was fitting that he who had presumed to annul and trample under foot the honour divinely conferred on St Peter by special privilege should himself lose the honour that he seemed to possess, and that he who disdained to obey as a Christian should be judged unworthy to rule over Christians.¹⁴

In some respects, it was *because* of the importance that Manegold ascribed to the royal dignity that he believed Gregory had the right and duty to depose Henry because a wise, just and pious man should be king, 'for the people do not exalt him above themselves so as to concede to him an unlimited power of tyrannising over them, but rather to defend them against the tyranny and wickedness of others.'¹⁵ If a ruler breaks the compact made with his people, 'reason justly considers that he has absolved the people from their duty of submission to him since he himself first broke the bond of mutual fidelity by which he was bound to them and they to him.'¹⁶ Nevertheless, Manegold and other papal polemicists rarely made a consistent effort to secularise the kingship and resultantly the Henricians and Gregorians held some notions of kingship in common but drew different conclusions as to the implications which this had upon the extent to which the pope can depose a king. 'The idea

¹⁴ Maneoldi, *Ab Gebehardum Liber*, MGH LdL.i., p. 358.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 391-2.

of the king as the *typus Christi* appeared in the polemic of Manegold not, of course, in celebration of the authority of Henry IV but as a reminder of the duties of the papal anti-king.¹⁷ It is thus that the notion of co-operation with a pious Christian ruler remained present throughout the reformist polemic. In 1103 Henrician polemicist Sigebert of Gembloux appealed to Pope Paschal II to:

lay aside the spirit of presumption and carefully consider with his advisers how popes obtained the Roman see from the time of St Sylvester to that of Hildebrand; how many unheard-of crimes were committed out of ambition for that see and how they were checked by kings and emperors, and false popes condemned and deposed. Imperial *virtus* was worth more than the excommunication of Hildebrand, Odo and Paschal.¹⁸

Peter Damian had similarly seen the worth in having a good, and strong, Christian monarch, such as Henry III had been. Gregory VII clearly took the issue of Christian kingship seriously also, as when discussions took place regarding a successor to Rudolf of Swabia, Gregory wrote, 'unless [the new anti-king] is as obedient and humbly devoted and useful to holy Church as a Christian king ought to be, and as we hoped of Rudolf, beyond doubt holy Church will not only not favour him but will oppose him.'¹⁹

Bonizo of Sutri wrote upon the topic of Christian kingship and saw secular rulers as sometimes beneficial to the Church's liberty and sometimes destructive of it dependent upon the nature of the ruler. "Those princes of the Roman Empire who feared God and were obedient

¹⁷ I. S. Robinson, *Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest: The Polemical Literature of the Late Eleventh Century*, (Manchester, 1978) p. 117.

¹⁸ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 117; cf. Sigebert, *Leodicensium epistola adversus Paschalem papam*, MGH LdL.ii, pp. 459-60.

¹⁹ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 119; Reg. 9.3, p. 403.

to the counsels of their bishops and above all obeyed the Roman bishop, protecting the churches and honouring the priests, while they lived, governed the *respublica* in complete peace.”²⁰ Amongst these, Bonizo included Theodosius, Honorius, Charlemagne, Louis the Pious, Otto I and Henry II. ‘The figure of the Christian king as protector of the faith and possibly as martyr, therefore, remained an essential feature of reforming ideology.’²¹ It is thus that a considerable number of papal polemicists still believed in the virtue of the king wielding one of the two swords, but as later writers, such as Bernard of Clairvaux,²² asserted, the king was to wield this sword in defence of and at the behest of the Church. ‘Bonizo saw that Henry IV used his sword against the Catholic Church itself, that is, against the party of Gregory VII: he had therefore failed in his office and fallen into heresy.’²³ Conversely, Henricians such as Sigebert believed that Henry had used the sword legitimately as it was Gregory who was causing schism within the Church.²⁴ ‘This was the crux of the debate about the regnum in the polemic of the Investiture Contest: not what was its function, for on that question the polemicist of the two parties were more or less agreed; but whether rebellion against the regnum was ever justified.’²⁵

One of Manegold’s primary purposes in his polemical writings was to assert that rebellion was justified. He argued that the office and the holder of the office were divisible and that as the office itself should be given all due honour, its holder must be worthy of it, resultantly, if the office-holder was not properly dispensing his duty then he should rightly

²⁰ Wido of Ferrara, *De scismate Hildebrandi*, MGH *LdL.i.*, p. 575.

²¹ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 120.

²² See pp. 119-20 below.

²³ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 120; cf. Wido, *De scismate Hildebrandi*, p. 620.

²⁴ Cf. Robinson, *ibid.*, p. 121 and *Leodicensium epistola adversus Paschalem papam*, MGH *LdL.ii.*, pp. 459, 462.

²⁵ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 121.

be deposed. As Isidore of Seville had described it in his *Etymologiae*, 'You will be a king if you act out rightly (*recte*); if you do not so act, you will be no king.'²⁶ In the justification of rebellion, 'The Saxon rebels' solution to the problem of an unsatisfactory king appears in the *Liber ad Gebhardum* side by side with the papal party's solution to the same problem, providing an interesting instance of the tendency of the arguments of the Saxon rebellion to be absorbed into the polemic of the papal party, and especially into the polemic of the 'South German Gregorians'.²⁷

Honorius Augustodunensis, in his *Summa Gloria*, argued that royal power was derived through the priesthood. He asserted that the demonstration of the priesthood's superiority in dignity to the kingship was evident through the comparison made between Abel and Cain, 'who prefigured the two orders'.²⁸ 'The Lord Jesus Christ, true king and priest according to the order of Melchisedech, established laws and rights for His bride the church, and for her governance instituted not a kingship but a priesthood.'²⁹ It was only upon the *Donation* of Constantine that, according to Honorius, this altered. The implication was that kings were to be obeyed so long as they fulfilled and upheld their duty and function with regard to the Church. Obedience, however, was not required if they failed to do so. Honorius echoed Cardinal Humbert's organic analogy in saying, 'inasmuch as the soul, which gives life to the body is nobler than the body, and as spiritual things, which justify secular things, are of greater dignity than secular things, so the priesthood is of greater dignity than the kingship, which it establishes and ordains.'³⁰

²⁶ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance*, p. 133.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁸ Honorius Augustodunensis, *Summa Gloria*, MGH LdL.iii, p. 65.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Ivo of Chartres suggested a solution to the problem of investiture in a letter of 1097 to Archbishop Hugh of Lyons. Ivo was writing specifically with regards to the case of Archbishop Daimbert of Sens and his investiture by the hand of King Philip I to which Archbishop Hugh had vehemently objected. Ivo argued that, 'It does not seem that kings are prohibited by apostolic authority from installing in bishoprics after canonical election has been held.'³¹ He continued, to assert, 'Why should it matter whether this installation is accomplished by hand or by gesture, by word or by staff, when the kings do not intend to bestow anything spiritual but only to add their assent to the petition of the people, or to confer on the persons elected the ecclesiastical estates and other worldly goods which the churches receive through the munificence of kings.'³² Ivo is, nonetheless, concerned that simony, or otherwise improper election, is fiercely condemned, but appears to believe that this be best achieved if the two powers worked together. Ivo clearly demonstrated a great respect for the Church, but indicated that he thought it at fault in the division between the kingship and the priesthood, without whose 'harmonious cooperation there can be no sound and secure conduct of human affairs.'³³ In essence, although in agreement with much of Gregory's reforming programme, Ivo believed that Gregory's attack upon lay investiture and particularly upon Henry IV was misdirected as, contrary to an individual like Humbert, Ivo did not hold lay investiture to be one of the Church's greatest evils. Ivo commented that the mockers of the papacy could justifiably say: "'You strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You pay tithes on mint and anise and cummin but leave undone the weightier matters of the law.'"³⁴ Although an eminent bishop, Ivo

³¹ Ivo of Chartres, *Epistolae ad litem investiturarum spectantes*, MGH LdL.ii, p. 644.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 645.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 646.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 646; cf. Matt. 23:23-24.

evidently saw some value in the monarchical cause; nonetheless, his remarks were dismissed by Pope Urban II in 1097.

Moderate royalist Hugh of Fleury was prepared to compromise further. In *Tractatus de Regia Potestate*³⁵ he expressed that a king should invest a bishop with the secular items pertaining to his role but not with ring and staff, as they are concerned with his ecclesiastical function. 'The care of souls through the ring or staff,'³⁶ he ought to receive from the Archbishop, 'so that this kind of business may be carried through without dispute and the privilege of his authority may be maintained by both earthly and spiritual powers.'³⁷ Hugh also emphasised that the king had a duty to respect the wishes of the people and hence must approve their choice, so long as he was not of reprehensible character, but if he was, then the king similarly had a duty to resist his election, as did the people. By the secular and spiritual symbols of a bishop being divided up and only being invested by the appropriate person, Luke 20:25 would be rendered correct. Hugh was quick to illustrate as well that the kingdom about which Christ talked³⁸ was not one of this temporal world but, 'was a kingdom of holy souls...as Christ witnessed at the time of his passion when he said to Pilate, 'My kingdom is not of this world'.³⁹ For, as the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy,⁴⁰ 'No one serving as God's soldier entangles himself in worldly affairs.'⁴¹

³⁵ Written between 1102 and 1104.

³⁶ *Leodicensium*, MGH *LdL.ii*, p. 472.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 472.

³⁸ Cf. e.g. Luke 22:27.

³⁹ John 18:36.

⁴⁰ 2 Tim. 24

⁴¹ Hugonis monachi Floriacensis, *Tractatus de regia potestate et sacerdotali dignitate*, MGH *LdL.ii*, p. 472.

Chapter 7: Post-Gregorian reform; the Controversy over Investiture and its conclusion

The chronological picture shall now be completed by returning to events subsequent to the death of Pope Gregory VII in May 1085. Victor III (*pont.* 1086-87), formerly Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, succeeded Gregory in the papacy but was forced to leave Rome after his election but prior to his consecration as a result of rioting. He returned to Monte Cassino and spent most of his short pontificate there as Clement II's troops held Rome. Despite Henry's attempt at the synod held at Mainz in 1085 to impose unity upon the imperial Church, he was forced to retreat, as he still lacked the support in Saxony which he required, before returning with an army in January 1086. It was not until 1089 that Henry achieved ultimate success in the pacification of Saxony, but at the cost of never again returning to the region.

Pope Urban II (*pont.* 1088-99) succeeded Victor III and was very much of the Gregorian mindset, having been a monk of Cluny and then prior under Abbot Hugh. Odo, cardinal-bishop of Ostia, as Urban had been formerly named, had been one of those favoured for the papacy by Gregory¹ and also by Victor and had been a fierce and effective critic of Henry IV and Clement III. Urban's first battle was with Clement, who proved a difficult rival due to the considerable support which he held. Urban drove Clement from Rome in 1089, but did not gain control of the Lateran himself until 1094 and the Castel Sant'Angelo in 1098.² Urban's approach appeared from the outset to be a more pragmatic one than that of Gregory, 'Urban did not place the same emphasis on the prohibition of investiture that Gregory VII had done after 1078. He was more

¹ Cf. Appendix 3, *Reg.*, p. 446.

² U.-R. Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century*, (Philadelphia, 1988), pp. 135-6.

concerned with ending the schism in the Church, defeating the challenge of the antipope Clement III and reconstructing the obedience of the reform papacy.³ Henry's eyes were fixed once again upon Rome and he launched a third campaign into Italy in 1090 but after making initial good progress, suffered a substantial defeat, ironically enough, at Canossa, as the north-Italian states asserted their independence.⁴

Henry's problems were exacerbated by the betrayal of his eldest son, Conrad, with some conclusions⁵ being drawn that Conrad rebelled against his father because he disagreed with him over the issue of papal authority and the liberty of the church.⁶ This may have been the case, or greater political calculation may have been involved, but either way, it proved a significant blow to Henry, not least to morale. Urban II saw the potential of having Conrad replace his father as king and envisaged a relationship by which emperor and pope could work together, put down Clement and instil harmony through the empire. It was around this time that Urban for the first time began to seriously consider the notion of an anti-king. This concept 'prompted the reappearance of the issue of lay investiture on the papal reforming agenda after an absence of six years.'⁷ This familial betrayal was added to by Henry's second wife, Empress Eupraxia-Adelaide,⁸ who also sided against her husband in 1094.

As an issue, lay investiture had barely been mentioned until the Council of Clermont in 1095. This Council is most famous for Urban's speech making a call for and, in essence from the western perspective, launching

³ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 278.

⁴ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 136.

⁵ i.e. Ekkehard of Aura.

⁶ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 288.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁸ This translation, Robinson, *ibid.*, p. 289; other translations include Praxedis or Adelheid, cf. Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 136.



the First Crusade, but also, his attack upon lay investiture was in some respects, more far-reaching than that of Gregory. The prohibition which he made, 'was not only of investiture but also of performance of homage to the secular ruler by bishops and abbots,'⁹ due to the threat to the freedom of the church that these presented. In this sense, Urban picked up on Peter Damian's theme of the dangers of vassalage and the manner in which this was the prime evil infecting the Church.

Lay investiture and homage, firstly, transformed a clerk or a monk into a feudal vassal, contaminating him with the sins of the secular world and, secondly declared that the church and its property with which he was invested constituted a feudal benefice, held entirely at the pleasure of the secular ruler.¹⁰

Nevertheless, Urban's overriding concern remained the issue of schism within the Church as he was aware that it was not uncommon, both in Germany and Italy, for bishoprics and other ecclesiastical dignities, to have two challengers claiming that the see or dignity belonged to them, one who was supported by the imperial party, the other by the papalists. 'Under such conditions intraecclesiastical problems accumulated rapidly. These proved particularly thorny: reconciliations with the church, encounters with excommunicated persons, and the validity of sacraments conferred by schismatics.'¹¹ As Blumenthal highlights, however, part of the difficulty at this time was the manner in which the division between the imperial party and the papal supporters had become entrenched, meant that it was hard to understand what 'schism' and 'heresy' meant and to whom, if anyone, these terms applied. Schism, from the Greek *schisma*, meaning rent or division, applies to a disturbance within ecclesiastical unity, caused by a specific act of an individual or the

⁹ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 279.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹¹ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 137.

breaking away of a faction. Heresy, from the Greek *hairesis* meaning choosing to depart from the truth and in this sense applying to the holding of an invalid opinion, that runs counter to accepted church doctrine. It is often found that the former involves the latter. The problem in the late-eleventh century was that the use of these words were in no way actually related to the crimes to which they supposedly referred; they were used more in a sense of superiority between the two sides, ultimately both of whom (although admittedly to varying degrees of concern) were in favour of eliminating simony and nicolaitism from the Church. It is for this reason that the issue of investiture became the sticking point because whilst the papal reformers saw lay investiture as being inextricably linked with nicolaitism and more particularly simony, the royal power was reluctant, and ultimately unwilling, to give up a right which they also saw as central to their notion of kingship.

The Council of Piacenza, held in 1095, resolved the debate which had occurred approximately half a century earlier between Humbert of Silva Candida and Peter Damian. It was decided that clergy whose ordination was performed by a simonist although they were non-simoniacal themselves was valid so long as they were not aware of the simony that had been committed by their consecrator. The Council of Piacenza looked to call an amnesty, and hence from Urban's position, draw more of Clement's supporters away as the amnesty had an expiry date and would only be offered once. Even once the issue of investiture had become of greater relevance to Urban II, it was never all-consuming: 'He regarded his struggle against Henry IV not as an 'Investiture Contest' but as a defensive war against a schismatic emperor and his antipope. For their part, the emperor and his advisers seem to have been equally unaware of being participants in an 'Investiture Contest'.¹² It seems somewhat strange that Urban II had greater success in achieving

¹² Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 279.

Gregorian aims than did Gregory VII. Urban's pontificate ended in the western conquest of Jerusalem (although probably without his knowledge), achieved primarily through the French crusaders.

Paschal II (*pont.* 1099-1118), Urban II's successor, was aided by Clement II's death in 1100 close to the beginning of his pontificate. This could have provided an excellent opportunity for the new pope and old king to reach a peace and, although Henry showed no interest in supporting any of Clement's successors as antipope,¹³ he was unsuccessful in reconciliation attempts with the papacy. Henry's lack of communication with the antipopes may have been more through political calculation than for any other reason as there had been times at which Henry appeared to consider dropping his support for Clement III. This consideration was abandoned after the imperial coronation because had Clement's validity as pope been called into question by the Henrician party, then Henry's consecration as emperor would also have been in doubt. Henry had no such ties to Clement's successors and clearly saw his fortunes better served independent of them. 'Henry's failure to achieve this reconciliation was the decisive factor in the disintegration of his authority in the years 1105-6.'¹⁴ Henry did, to his credit, attempt reconciliation with the papacy, as Henry wrote to Abbot Hugh of Cluny,

we declare to Your serenity that as far as God may give us the power, we desire to work in every way for the reparation of ecclesiastical affairs which (alas) have gone to ruin in our time through our sins. Now, we also wish to labor and to acquiesce in the sound counsels of all good men, if we can in this way gather the things which have been scattered and bring together in the bond of union the opening made by the wedge of schism. Thus, we wish to recompense with a renewal of

¹³ Theoderic of Albano (1100-1), Albert of Silva Candida (1102) and Maginulf of Sant'Angelo (1105-11)

¹⁴ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 304.

peace and justice the ruin of the Church, which we have brought about.¹⁵

Although very little is known about Paschal's direct response to Henry's change of heart, there is record of him having praised Robert II of Flanders for his successes against the imperial party.¹⁶

At the Lent synod of 1102, Paschal renewed the sentence of excommunication against Henry and reiterated Urban II's double pronouncement against lay investiture and homage. The synod made clear to the imperial party that for Henry to be reconciled to the papacy, he would have to renounce lay investiture but this was the one point that Henry remained still unwilling to concede. Throughout his reign, Henry had become more involved in Church reform in Germany; his appointments to episcopacies became of an increasingly high calibre and he used his powers more and more to protect churches from the worst ravages of secular degradation.

While insisting that lay investiture was sanctioned by 'secular and canon law,' the emperor during the final years of his reign both strove to preserve the rights and property of the churches over which he ruled and reiterated his desire to 'reconcile kingship and priesthood.' Henry IV, that is, sought to reconstruct the ecclesiastical regime of his father.¹⁷

It was at this time that the 'Investiture Controversy' truly became a controversy primarily concerning the right of lay investiture. Up until the pontificate of Paschal II and the death of Clement III, the investiture controversy had been more a power struggle between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. Although the issue of investiture encapsulated the core of the struggle for supremacy, the debate was no longer specifically about

¹⁵ Mommsen and Morrison, *Imperial Lives*, Letter 31, p. 177.

¹⁶ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 311.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

scoring political points, but was about the opposing claims of pope and king surrounding an issue of canon law and where the boundaries to the sacerdotal and secular spheres and their respective powers were to be located. It brought into sharp focus the inadequacy for the eleventh and twelfth centuries of the Augustinian-Gelasian notion of the two separate spheres which had sufficed for the early days of *respublica Christiana* whereby the Church was reliant upon the authority of the state and valued interventions such as Constantine's at the Council of Nicaea. The state similarly found the unity of the Christian faith a useful tool in holding together a crumbling empire. By the eleventh century, this usefulness was well and truly spent and the two spheres had become rivals to one another's power; it is thus that the issue of supremacy arose.

Henry IV was determined to retain the practice of investiture, which Paschal II declared to be 'the root of simoniacal wickedness'. The conflict of empire and papacy had at last become truly an 'Investiture Contest', a conflict concerned principally with the rights of the monarch in the appointment of prelates, which was to continue for sixteen years after the death of Henry IV.¹⁸

Henry's beloved younger son, Henry V, who had been crowned in 1099, ensuring the succession of the empire to him,¹⁹ also rebelled against his father and turned toward the reform papacy for support. Paschal released Henry V from his oath to his father, made at his coronation, that he would not interfere with state affairs unless explicitly asked to do so by Henry IV.²⁰ In his negotiations with Henry V, Paschal made no mention of the relinquishing of the right of investiture, which did not appear at this time to be a condition for Paschal's support. This was

¹⁸ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 312.

¹⁹ Although as events had it, Conrad died prior to Henry IV's death anyway, it is thought in 1101.

²⁰ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 167.

fortunate for Henry V, as he showed a similar reluctance to that of his father at the prospect of relinquishing the royal right of investiture. Nonetheless, concord over this issue was not lasting; future events illustrated that,

The leaders of the Gregorian party considered it more important to assist the young king to overthrow his father's regime than to ensure his adhesion to the programme of the reform papacy. The 'Investiture Contest' between Henry V and the reform papacy was consequently postponed until after the defeat and death of Emperor Henry IV.²¹

Henry V showed many more characteristics similar to those of Henry IV as a young king than his older brother Conrad had done; whereas Conrad's adherence to the reform papacy appeared at least in some measure genuine, Henry V was clearly only interested in Paschal's support to help aid him overthrow his father. Henry IV continued to make appeals to the papacy, as well as to Abbot Hugh to intercede on his behalf and attempted to achieve absolution at the assembly of Ingelheim in December 1105; he was unsuccessful in all these attempts. Henry IV died at Liège in August 1106, accepting Henry V as king and requesting to be buried in the Cathedral of Speyer, which had retained a strong ancestral significance for him throughout his life.²²

After the death of Henry IV, conflict between Paschal and Henry V became more inevitable, as neither pope nor king had to create the illusion any longer that their position toward lay investiture was a flexible one. This attitude was heightened for Paschal in particular since both the French and English monarchs had agreed to concessions.²³ A

²¹ Robinson, *Henry IV*, p. 328.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 343.

²³ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 168.

brief look at the compromises made in France and England may aid our understanding.

In England, the concordant relationship that had existed between monarch and Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of King William I and Lanfranc was not to last between Anselm (1093-1109) and both William Rufus (1087-1100) and Henry I (1100-35). England had not been in direct contact with the papacy since at least 1083 and when Anselm requested a visit to Rome in 1095 to seek the *pallium* from Pope Urban II, a direct conflict was created with William Rufus. The king insisted that Anselm's first loyalty be to him, above the pope.²⁴ Agreement was reached in the end between William and the papal legate as Urban was eager to gain official recognition from the English monarch which resulted in Anselm receiving the *pallium* in Canterbury, but he drew the line at receiving it from the hand of the king. Problems between the king and archbishop re-emerged in 1097 as Anselm repeatedly requested permission to go to Rome; William II issued an ultimatum, the outcome of which was Anselm's resignation and journey to Rome, from which he did not return until after the king's death. Henry I was considerably reliant upon Anselm's support for his succession but difficulties were caused due to the hardening of Anselm's resolve concerning investiture and homage. Anselm returned to Rome in 1103 and Henry experienced similar problems to those which Henry IV of Germany had faced at the beginning of his reign in having bad advisers; in this case the advice was to continue with the practice of investiture and resulted in the king being threatened with excommunication. In 1105, compromise was reached between Henry and Anselm; Henry was prepared to give up his right to investiture with ring and staff, but not to that of homage. Seemingly, Henry astutely grasped the difference between temporalities and spiritualities, something which many of his contemporaries failed to do

²⁴ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 156.

so. Anselm negotiated this compromise with Paschal and it was publicised in 1107.²⁵

Paschal also reached a settlement with the French kings, Philip I (1060-1108) and Louis VI (1108-37). Despite Gregory VII's continued opposition to King Philip, he never enacted his threat of excommunication against him. Investiture in France became a secondary issue during the pontificate of Urban II when in 1092 Philip abandoned his wife, the queen, in favour of Bertrada of Montfort. This was a cause for contention amongst the French bishops and one that saw Bishop Ivo of Chartres imprisoned due to his opposition. The king was excommunicated by Hugh of Lyons and this was confirmed by Urban in 1095. Philip was absolved in the same year when he promised to give up Bertrada, but he did not keep this promise and so he fell speedily under anathema again. Philip was once more reconciled to the papacy under Paschal II, after he had fulfilled his earlier promise. In 1106, Paschal journeyed to France and met King Philip and his son and co-ruler, Louis VI. At this meeting at Saint Denis a compromise was reached that, to all intents and purposes, allowed the French kings to continue with their current practices.

Why investiture proved an intractable problem for Germany and not for England and France does not have an easy answer. By and large, the English monarchs had proved to be more perceptive in their handling of papal relations. It also helped that many of the Norman reforms fitted in with the reforming ideas of the papacy. A genuine compromise was struck between Pope Paschal II and King Henry I, whereby each succeeded in achieving the aim most important to them. It ought to be recognised that investiture had a different and heightened significance in Germany than in England. England was much closer to obtaining a

²⁵ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, pp. 158-9.

feudal structure and homage was thus adequate, and as Henry I illustrated, essential, but investiture was not strictly necessary. On the other hand, Germany was a more disparate nation which lacked the obedience and obligation compelled by a feudal structure and oath. Therefore, investiture and the tools of government employed by the Ottonians and Salians were still of immeasurable value; as of yet, there was no conceivable replacement.

Paschal was prepared to reach a compromise with Henry V at Châlons in 1107, but neither pope nor emperor would entirely concede their claims over investiture. Resultantly, in 1110, Paschal pronounced 'decrees prohibiting not only investiture with churches or ecclesiastical dignities (recipient, consecrator, and the layman giving investiture were all subject to excommunication) but also the conveyance of ecclesiastical property.'²⁶ As Blumenthal also explains, no mention was made of homage, but this was most probably in the light of compromises made with King Henry I of England. Henry V hoped to achieve imperial coronation and so set off for Rome in the same year. Paschal and Henry met at Sutri to negotiate, but bearing in mind the impasse which they were at, in the knowledge that,

The king would not give up his right to appoint bishops because they were feudal lords exercising secular jurisdiction over the lands that they held from the king. The pope would not acknowledge this royal right of appointment because bishops were ministers of God wielding a special authority that was not derived from any lay ruler.²⁷

Henry reputedly agreed to give up the imperial right to transference of ring and staff. 'In return, the pontiff would instruct the German bishops to return to the king *regalia* (rights and property) that pertained by

²⁶ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, pp. 168-9.

²⁷ B. Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300*, (London, 1988) p. 85.

inalienable right to the Empire but which had been transferred to the churches since the time of Charlemagne.'²⁸ Henry V was due to be crowned on 12 February 1111, but the coronation did not take place as agreement broke down on the day; consequently, Henry imprisoned Paschal, his cardinals, some other clergy and Roman nobles present. Agreement could not ultimately be reached as a result of the compromises made at Paschal's instigation, but neither cardinals nor German bishops (in agreement for once) could possibly concede. Paschal's suggestion had been Franciscan in outlook, despite being seventy years prior to St Francis' birth, as he believed that solution may be found in the return of Church lands in Germany to the royal power so that bishops would live on tithes and hence not shoulder any of the burden, or temptation, of government and would therefore give the king no further cause to be involved in ecclesiastical elections and appointments. Investiture by the king prior to consecration, Paschal believed, caused

both the wickedness of simoniacal heresy and, at times, so great an ambition has prevailed that the episcopal sees were invaded without any election.... And so, most beloved son, King Henry – now through our office, by the grace of God, emperor of the Romans – we decree that those royal appurtenances are to be given back to thee and to thy kingdom which manifestly belonged to that kingdom in the time of Charles, Louis, and of thy other predecessors.²⁹

Paschal evidently believed that this would return the bishops to a purer state not just through abstinence from the vassalage and opportunity for simony offered by lay investiture, but also by a return to their duties resulting from the freeing of a burden. 'For it is fitting that the bishops, freed from secular cares, should take care of their people, and not any

²⁸ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 169.

²⁹ Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, p. 89.

longer be absent from their churches. For, according to the apostle Paul, let them watch being about to render account, as it were, for the souls of these [their people].³⁰

It was through imprisonment that Henry V succeeded in exhorting from Paschal the *pravilegium* of Ponte Mammolo which gave to Henry the retention of the right of investiture with ring and staff prior to consecration whilst also permitting his imperial coronation and a promise that Paschal would never excommunicate him.³¹ This grant, however, was rescinded a year later due to the duress that Paschal had been under when he had made the promise and the strong opposition that Paschal evidently received from the reform party, notably Bruno of Segni, Geoffrey of Vendôme and Archbishop Josserand of Lyon who stated that the concessions made by Paschal concerning lay investiture were heretical.³² After Paschal's withdrawal of the *Pravilegium*, Henry was not excommunicated but significant pressure was put upon Paschal to do so.³³ Paschal, therefore, faced dissent from within the Church, with murmurs of heresy abounding, but Henry was, by 1115, also having difficulties in maintaining a united front within the German kingdom as the Saxons were rebelling once again.

Paschal's initial solution to the problem of vassalage and simony through lay investiture was an interesting one, and more so given that it came prior to the Franciscans. It was in many respects, a logical method of dealing with the problem, because, lay investiture aside, bishops having temporal functions, for example, in terms of property, still contributed to

³⁰ Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, p. 90.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 90; Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p. 170.

³² Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, (Oxford, 1989) p. 160.

³³ i.e. by Archbishop Guy of Vienne, later Pope Calixtus II.

the secularisation of the Church and still offered the same temptations as those provided by lay investiture.

Paschal came to realize this; Gregory never did so. The difference between them illustrates vividly how the overt issue of church and state that arose during the investiture contest was related to the still more fundamental problem of defining the right relationship between spiritual office and material property.³⁴

An answer to this question seemed to depend upon the world view assumed. A view which held the superiority of the dignity of the sacerdotal sphere may believe that the Church was better placed in terms of knowledge and understanding through heightened moral standards to deal with and dispense temporalities; both property and power. An alternative take, still upholding the superior dignity of the *sacerdotium*, 'maintained that the church's superiority had to be based on a real repudiation of the worldly power and wealth that secular princes sought for themselves.'³⁵ This latter view was held by Paschal II and was more widely promulgated in the writings of St Bernard of Clairvaux. Paschal died in 1118 in what was a very tense Rome and his successor, Gelasius II (*pont.* 1118-19) had a brief and unhappy pontificate which included the excommunication of Henry.

Pope Calixtus II (*pont.* 1119-24), formerly Archbishop Guy of Vienne, had been a staunch critic of Paschal's capitulation to Henry's demands of 1111, although did himself make initial conciliatory gestures toward Henry after having ascended to the see of Rome. Henry responded likewise, and met with papal envoys, William of Champeaux and Abbot Pons of Cluny, in Strasbourg.³⁶ Henry was persuaded into renouncing his claim

³⁴ Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, p. 87.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³⁶ Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, p. 170.

to investiture but when a meeting was due to occur between pope and emperor the papal party wished to reword some of the terms of the treaty but Henry refused. Skirmishes continued between Henry and the Saxons, but a peace was concluded between the princes of both parties at the diet of Würzburg in September 1121, but with the condition dictated by former chancellor to Henry, turned papal legate, Adalbert of Mainz, that Henry make peace with Calixtus. The major papal representatives who came to Germany to negotiate with Henry were Cardinal Lambert of Ostia (later Pope Honorius II, *pont.* 1124-30) and Cardinal deacon Gregory (later Pope Innocent II, *pont.* 1130-43). A synod at Mainz was convoked, but Henry remained at Worms where documents were exchanged outside the city walls between the two sides. Henry renounced, 'All investiture through ring and staff; and do agree that in all churches throughout my kingdom and empire there shall be canonical elections and free consecration'.³⁷ The king was permitted to invest candidates with the *regalia* in the form of a sceptre, prior to consecration, although in Italy, this could only be enacted after consecration had taken place. In return, Calixtus conceded that within Germany the king could be present at the elections for bishoprics and abbacies and that in elections which were disputed, the king could intervene, taking advice from his bishops. Prelates also had to observe the law in relation to the secular ruler, but the remit of the 'legal obligations' remained undefined. 'A true peace' was granted each to the other in both documents. The agreement did not satisfy papal radicals such as Gerhoh of Reichersburg due to the concessions made by Calixtus which 'offended Gregorian principles',³⁸ but peace was seen as of paramount importance.

Despite its shortcomings, 'the 'temporary' settlement of Worms succeeded in restoring peace between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* in the

³⁷ Tierney, *Crisis of Church*, p. 91.

³⁸ Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, p.172.

Empire and thus freeing the two powers from antiquated concepts with their increasingly anachronistic restrictions.’³⁹ The deaths of Pope Calixtus II and Emperor Henry V in 1024 and 1025 respectively marked an end to a tumultuous period within imperial and papal relations. Successive popes were no longer explicitly ‘Gregorian’ in their outlook, their concerns had moved on; similarly German emperors, for a time at least, were no longer antagonistic towards the papacy. A concordant alliance existed between empire and papacy until conflict emerged once again when royal power was reasserted upon the ascendance of Frederick Barbarossa to the German throne and Henry II to the English throne in 1152 and 1154 respectively. The nature of the pontiff had begun to change as popes no longer hailed specifically from Benedictine or Cluniac backgrounds and the Cistercians gained exposure through Bernard of Clairvaux’s advocacy. Conflict between functions arose with papal elections at Rome, both after the death of Calixtus and again in 1130; the latter schism between supporters of Innocent II and Anacletus II lasting for eight years, which was only resolved by the death of Anacletus.⁴⁰ Events subsequent to the Concordat of Worms illustrated that although it was regarded as a betrayal, like that of Paschal II in 1111, by the old Gregorian party, a new, more pragmatic yet still reformist, papacy was developing. Morris argues that, ‘the events of the next thirty years [after Worms] confirmed the claim of Calixtus II to have won a victory for the church.’⁴¹ This is demonstrated by the pacification of the kingdom of Germany and England toward the papacy, whereas to Gregorian ideals and reforms they had been recalcitrant and hostile. This more flexible papacy understood the value of compromise. Alongside an altered papacy there was also a change in the character of the German monarchy when Lothar of Saxony (1125-37), a member of the Gregorian

³⁹ Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, p.173.

⁴⁰ Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, pp. 183-4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

party and enemy of Henry V, became king; his successor, Conrad of Hohenstaufen (1138-52) was also sympathetic toward papal policy. During the early reign of Lothar, it was not unheard-of for the king or his representative not to be present at the election of a bishop. Lothar raised the issue of investiture in 1131 and 1133 and reasserted his right to invest prior to consecration.⁴² Although the king undoubtedly had less control over appointments, he nevertheless maintained a close relationship with the German Church. This was not the case with imperial relations in Italy where in general, 'The whole approach of the curia towards secular powers radiated a new confidence.'⁴³ This confidence extended beyond the confines of Italy and both Innocent II and Eugenius III (*pont.* 1145-53) had 'confirmed' and 'approved' monarchs (Stephen of England and Frederick Barbarossa respectively).

The pragmatism of the post-Gregorian papacy achieved considerable success in asserting itself over the secular rulers of Europe. The formulation of Gregorian concepts had an irrevocable influence upon the early twelfth century. Urban II, Paschal II and Calixtus II all followed in Gregory's mode of thought, but perhaps showed more inclination for compromise as the intensity of the Investiture Controversy faded, despite the fact that the contest had become more specifically related to lay investiture after the death of Gregory VII. This further supports the argument that the Investiture Controversy was not primarily a controversy concerning the issue of lay investiture.

⁴² Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, p. 186.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

Chapter 8: Conclusion – What was the Investiture Controversy a Controversy about?

The Gregorian reforms were the logical outcome of the reforms begun during the pontificate of Leo IX which Gregory himself had an impact upon. The reforms of Gregory's papacy were then, and are often still now, characterised as a radical change in the direction of papal policy and break in tradition. In some respects this interpretation is an accurate one. Reform of the nature and on the scale of that under Pope Leo IX had not really been seen since that of Pope Gregory the Great. For this level of alteration and assertion to be seen in papal policy, therefore, did provide a significant departure from what had become the expected norms of papal action. On the other hand, the writings of many reformist authors such as Peter Damian and Gregory VII himself, can be taken seriously in terms of their discussions of 'renewal'.

The Gregorian reforms were an attempt to return the Church to a state of purity which it had previously possessed. The reforms were, according to this interpretation, concurrent with Christian tradition and it was the last five hundred years that had provided the break instead. When the papacy from Gregory VII onward is often discussed, terms such as 'papal monarchy' are sometimes applied; implicit in this is the notion that particular pontiffs were attempting to extend the realm of sacerdotal power to that also of the temporal. If this assertion is made with any degree of surprise then a misunderstanding of the Christian tradition has been made.

If one is to analyse Matthew 22:21, where Jesus is asked about paying taxes to Caesar, He is questioned as to whose image is represented on the tribute penny. 'They [the Pharisees] say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them. Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are

Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.' As in much that Jesus said, a double meaning is to be found. The Pharisees had been trying to trick Jesus into revealing His revolutionary tendencies so that they could go to the Roman authorities and accuse Him of inciting others to rebel against them. Jesus' answer, therefore, disappointed them as it did not aid them in building a case against Him. However, in rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, Jesus was not just talking about financial remuneration; in fact, His choice of words had echoes of the revolutionary Judas Maccabeus. Rendering to Caesar that which was due to him would be to render the penalties due to him as well as taxes. Imperial taxation was a theological issue, just as Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection was a political one. Through Jesus' death He was rendering by His blood that which was owed to Tiberius Caesar as a result of His own rejection of an imperial empire here on earth. Jesus was simultaneously rendering to God what He owed to Him, through the sacrifice of His life and redemption of mankind.

Evidently, therefore, the Kingdom of God stood in opposition to any earthly kingdom; they made claims and promises of a similar nature. On a Roman coin, Caesar's face would be found on one side and on the other the god of peace: the message was clear, render what is due to Caesar and peace on earth will be secured. However, this peace was an unsure one; it was open to challenge, threat and ultimately destruction by the very fact that it was a temporal peace and can, by necessity, only be a temporary peace as a result. The claims of the peace of the Kingdom of God, on the other hand, lack this doubt; the Kingdom of God provides a sure, certain and everlasting promise of peace. The two contentions, therefore, stood in direct opposition to one another.¹

¹ For the above discussion see Bishop Tom Wright of Durham, comments made at Compline, Durham Cathedral, 22/03/05.

It should be remembered that the Christian call is not just one concerning the next world, as Jesus' teachings clearly illustrated; the resurrection was not about an other-worldly afterlife, Jesus was resurrected upon this earth. The Church has resultantly always possessed a strong sense of its secular mission here and now. As a consequence part of the Church's role, and particularly that of its leaders, was to denounce secular government and rulers where they thought they were acting immorally and hence endangering the spiritual health of their subjects. It becomes obvious through this that the supremacy of the sacerdotal sphere to that of the temporal was, and is, implicit in the Church's mission.

What had been lost between the seventh century and mid-eleventh century was the notion of Christianity as a radical doctrine, which, in reality is what it had been from its inception. Resultantly, Leo IX and Gregory VII, despite making a considerable departure from what papal government had become, were not that radical *per se*; they were merely returning the Church to its biblical roots and those which had been promulgated and enacted by the Early Church Fathers and papacy. In the interim, the Church had lost its way and sense of mission; it was in a mess, due at least in part, to increased secular involvement, primarily through the dealings of the major families of Rome, the Crescentii, the Tusculani and the Theophylact. Although it is entirely plausible to see Gregory VII as radical, this radicalism was natural rather than unusual to Christianity; the Gregorian reforms truly encapsulated the spirit of renewal within the Church.

What, then, was the Investiture Controversy about? Although from 1078 the issue of lay investiture was a recurrent one, it was not, ultimately, the primary concern of pope or emperor and did not become so until 1105. It is undeniable that the question concerning lay investiture was a significant one but its crucial importance lay in what it illustrated more

broadly about the relations between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. What it brought to the forefront was twofold; firstly that through its renewal the papacy and spirit of reform within the Church, the relation of the two powers, as set forth by Augustine and Gelasius and the inherent supremacy which both believed that the spiritual realm possessed, was reasserted. Secondly, as by the eleventh century both Church and State were strong institutions without the other, the inherent contradiction and impracticality of the Augustinian-Gelasian formulation of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* became apparent. It was thus that the amicable, if at times tenuous, balance between the two powers was lost and a renegotiation sought in favour of the church. For more than five centuries the secular powers, be they Byzantine, Roman or German, had undeniably had supremacy in terms of authority and power over the Church within the spiritual realm. This had not been the vision of the Early Church Fathers and so Gregory VII was, in essence, carrying on where Gregory the Great had left off in 604. In seeking to restore unity, concord and purity within the Church and Christian society, Gregory was attempting to return members of that society to their correct roles. 'When therefore everyone acts according to the function allotted to him, there will come about what Gregory VII calls *Concordia* entailing *pax* within the *ecclesia*.'² With substantial lay interference in ecclesiastical affairs, *discordia* was instead established and it was this that Gregory aimed to right.

The ban upon lay investiture concerned the assertion of papal control in a more general sense as well. If a ruler no longer had any control over the investiture of bishoprics, the role played in the election or appointment of bishops would pass to the papacy. It was through this centralisation of control that under Gregory VII, the power of the episcopacy had begun to be curbed. 'Centralization of the ecclesiastical government and the enforcement of strict obedience on the part of the bishops, was the

² W. Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, (London, 1955) p. 273.

answer to the problem of effective papal control of the *sacerdotium*.³ In this respect, the form of papal government initiated under Gregory VII can be described as monarchical. The analogy should not be stretched too far though and there is a level of inaccuracy in the presumption with which some 'modern commentators have seen a whole system of papal sovereignty in Gregory's position and an implicit caesaropapism in Henry's.' It is perhaps more accurate to recognise that, 'such concepts were far from the minds of the contestants. They did not think of themselves as making systems for the future but as defending specific powers which were part of a system already long established; their eyes were bent on the past.'⁴ Gregory VII's eyes were focused upon the glorious pontificates of Leo I and Gregory I, and Henry's upon the power exerted by his father, the Ottonian monarchs and those of the early Carolingian period, epitomised by the Emperor Charlemagne.

Nonetheless, monarchical tendencies were discernible in Gregory's actions as he had set out in *Dictatus Papae*,⁵ the pope alone could use imperial insignia, illustrating that he was the head of *societas Christiana*.⁶ The crown which was worn by the pope was of no liturgical significance⁷ and in the twelfth century, papal coronation, in addition to consecration, became the norm rather than the exception.⁸ The papal court increased in size and had what amounted to feudal vassals attached to it.⁹ The pope increasingly personified the *sacerdos regalis* and acted accordingly.¹⁰ The pontificate of Gregory VII certainly had a lasting impact in this manner

³ Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, p. 297.

⁴ E. Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, Vol. 2, (New York, 1974), p. 512.

⁵ *Reg. 2.55a*, pp. 149-50.

⁶ Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, p. 297.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

and although he did not extend monarchical papal government to the same extent as Pope Innocent III, papal government under Gregory provided a precursor and solid foundation for Innocent III to build upon. As Ewart Lewis expresses, the process can be viewed as a spiral, from, 'the expansion of the theory of spiritual power on which Gregory had acted,' to that which was, 'best exemplified in the theory and practice of Innocent III,' which in turn led to the, 'development of the theory of direct papal power in temporals, which is associated particularly with Innocent IV and the decretalists of the later thirteenth century'.¹¹

The polemical literature produced throughout the Investiture Controversy also marked a watershed within the methodology of the promulgation of ideas within political thought. The polemicists saw the conflict often as one regarding the rival claims of pope and emperor in terms of the pope's ability to judge and depose an emperor and the ability of an emperor to judge and depose a pope. This new wave of pamphleteering went beyond the specifically Gregorian and Henrician arguments. The papalist and imperial authors derived many of their arguments and based their rival claims upon the Gelasian dualism of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. It was, in fact, the royalists who adhered more to the two power theory since, 'The old ideas of Christian order had not been formally rejected, but on occasions the Gregorian party was eroding it by the way the Petrine primacy was now affirmed.'¹² The Petrine commission was of the utmost importance for papal primacy and it was in this sense that Gregory VII truly was the heir of both Leo I and Gregory I.

It was in part through Jesus' commission to Peter that Gregory asserted the authority of *sacerdotium* over *regnum*. 'Gregory did not claim that the

¹¹ Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, p. 523.

¹² Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, p. 133.

church had any authority over the empire as such. He accepted the Gelasian theory of the mutual independence of the two coordinate powers. His originality consisted in the extreme practical conclusions that he drew from premises already familiar and generally unquestioned.¹³ Gregory used the Petrine power of binding and loosing to justify the deposition of Henry. Through the extension of this, kings were, therefore, to be seen as subject to papal power and judgement. If the greater dignity of the sacerdotal power were accepted then the logical conclusion was that which Gregory reached, 'and found in the spiritual power itself a potentially illimitable authority to do anything whatever that was necessary for the fulfilment of its ends.'¹⁴ The Augustinian-Gelasian premises on which Gregory based his thought were not in themselves radical, but they had never before been applied with the rigour that Gregory demonstrated. As Gregory wrote to King William I of England,

we believe it not to be hidden from your wisdom that Almighty God has allotted to this world as its governing authorities the apostolic and royal dignities which are more excellent than all others. For just as to make manifest the beauty of the world at different times to bodily eyes he has set in place as luminaries the sun and moon which are more conspicuous than all others.¹⁵

Gregory did not believe this principle in abstraction, nor is the reader left in any doubt as to which power is the sun and hence which takes precedence over the moon. It is this premise that Gregory sought to move from the realm of thought and discussion to that of practice.

In a similar manner to that of Augustine, Gregory saw at work in the world the forces of good and evil, one derivative from God and the other

¹³ Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, p. 510.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 510.

¹⁵ *Reg.* 7.25, p. 357.

from men. In this respect the king, as head of the temporal world, was symbolic of matter and so not of intrinsic value. A king was only of value if he were serving the church; 'The king functions – just as much as the "temporal" does – as a means to an end.'¹⁶ Resultant from the importance that Gregory placed upon rendering the balance of good over evil in the world was his divergence from monastic ideas. It was at this point that the monastic and papal reformers parted company because as the papal reformers believed that the effect of their work was most required in terms of *respublica Christiana* as a whole entity, the monastic reformers conversely believed that their mission was to withdraw from the secular world, its temptations, corruption and evil and the only extent of their secular interaction would be to encourage others to join them within the redemptive hope of the monastery walls. Gregory's policy was consequently very significant because as Gerd Tellenbach puts it, 'Gregory stands at the greatest – from the spiritual point of view perhaps the only – turning-point in the history of Catholic Christendom; in his time the policy of converting the world gained once for all the upper hand over the policy of withdrawing from it.'¹⁷

A particular reason for the inadequacy of the Gelasian formula by the time of the eleventh century is that, in his writings, Pope Gelasius had discussed 'the world', but after the fall of the Roman Empire 'the world' effectively became Christendom, resultantly, 'priests and kings could be construed as two powers within the single community of the church.'¹⁸ The two spheres were no longer distinguishable from one another. 'It was fundamentally not a problem of church *versus* state, as modern language too glibly puts it, but rifts within a single *respublica Christiana*.'¹⁹

¹⁶ Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, p. 287.

¹⁷ Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society*, p. 164.

¹⁸ Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, Vol. 2, p. 508.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 506.

It is important, therefore, that the controversy be regarded as it was in medieval times of one between the kingship and priesthood rather than church and state. The controversy over *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, 'was essentially a controversy over the best structure of authority within a single society.'²⁰

The policies shaped and followed by Leo IX, Gregory VII, Urban II and Paschal II, in particular, and the polemicists who wrote throughout the Investiture Controversy, paved the way for such thinkers as Bernard of Clairvaux and John of Salisbury. St Bernard possessed considerable influence in the mid-twelfth century and was among the first to write explicitly using the biblical language of the 'two swords' in a political context. Around 1150, Bernard wrote to Pope Eugenius III after the failure of the Second Crusade and while a new expedition was being planned to rescue the Eastern Church. In this letter St Bernard stated,

In this second passion of Christ we must draw these two swords that were drawn during the first passion. And who is there to draw them but you? *Both of Peter's swords must be drawn whenever necessary; the one by his command, the other by his hand.* It seems that Peter was not to use one of these swords, for he was told 'put up thy sword into the scabbard'. *Although they both belonged to him, they were not both to be drawn by his hand.* I believe that the time has come for both swords to be drawn in defence of the Eastern church. You hold the position of Peter, and you ought also to have his zeal. What could we think of one who held the primacy but neglected the responsibility?²¹

To Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, Bernard decried that, 'The hearts of princes are untouched. In vain they carry the sword.'²² The two

²⁰ Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, Vol. 2, p. 557.

²¹ B. S. James, *The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux*, (Stroud, 1998), p. 471; my italics.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 473.

swords appear again throughout St Bernard's *De Consideratione*, and in Book IV he very clearly illustrated the Church's command of both swords.

Both swords, that is, the spiritual and the material, belong to the Church; however, the latter is to be drawn for the Church and the former by the Church. The spiritual sword should be drawn by the hand of the priest; the material sword by the hand of the knight, but clearly at the bidding of the priest and at the command of the emperor.²³

John of Salisbury is another mid-twelfth century author of interest to the discussion of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, writing his *Policraticus* in the 1150s. John followed in Cardinal Humbert's footsteps by providing an analogy of the body politic through the means of a description of the workings of a human body. He viewed the priesthood as providing the soul of the body, which directs all else,

just as the soul has rulership of the whole body so those who are called prefects of religion direct the whole body....The position of the head in the republic is occupied, however, by a prince subject only to God and to those who act in His place on earth, inasmuch as in the human body is stimulated and ruled by the soul.²⁴

John illustrated a clear understanding and agreement with the principles of the reform papacy regarding the use of the two swords. He made plain that the biblical interpretation of the use of the one sword by the Church and one at the behest of the Church resulted from a need to retain the purity of the Church. In this sense, the secular powers were necessary because of the existence of evil and so were required to put down, with force, the enemies of the Church, whilst the Church combated them with the word of God.

²³ A. H. Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux; between cult and history*, (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 151.

²⁴ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, (ed. and trans. C. J. Nederman), (Cambridge, 1990), Bk. V, Chp. 2, p. 67.

This sword is therefore accepted by the prince from the hand of the Church, although it still does not itself possess the bloody sword entirely. For while it has this sword, yet it is used by the hand of the prince, upon whom is conferred the power of bodily coercion, reserving spiritual authority for the papacy. The prince is therefore a sort of minister of the priests and one who exercises those features of the sacred duties that seem an indignity in the hands of priests.²⁵

The Investiture Controversy brought to the fore issues concerning the broader relations of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, which led to the formulation of arguments such these. It was evidently the papal polemicists who won the ultimate war of words and their longevity was to be found in the writings of authors like Bernard of Clairvaux and John of Salisbury.

The Investiture Controversy ultimately was sparked by the strengthening of the papacy under the Ottonian and Salian emperors. The papal see had reached such depths of degradation throughout the ninth and tenth centuries that a movement for reform was inevitable and the monasteries were the obvious choice for the re-birth of ideas of renewal due to their temporal and spiritual distance from the power-politics of Rome. The 'Gregorian Reforms' were genuinely motivated by a desire to eradicate clerical marriage, simony and lay investiture, but they all fitted into a broader picture. They epitomised what Gregory saw as what had become the wrongly-ordered nature of the *respublica Christiana*. What Gregory sought above all, was to return Christian society to a balance whereby good predominated over evil, God predominated over man and the redemption of the empire's citizens was made easier.

²⁵ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Bk. IV, Chp. 3, p. 32.

It was in this manner that Gregory adhered to the notion of the two powers as Augustine and Gelasius had characterised them, as both of importance, but ultimately unequal.

Augustine is well aware that the dualism which he postulates is not, and cannot be, a dualism of separate but equal partners. It is what we may call an asymmetrical dualism. When Christian belief meets Platonist metaphysics, as it so characteristically does in Augustine's mind, the result is an account of the material or temporal order as being in its very nature placed beneath the spiritual.²⁶

The same is rendered true of Gregory. Through his very conception of the temporal, fallen world, it must be placed as secondary to the spiritual realm.

The Investiture Controversy was primarily a clash originating from fifth century ideas which were put into practice and developed by an eleventh century papacy. The doctrine that was developed contained a theocratic notion of government and one that consequently, clearly exalted the spiritual order above the secular powers.

²⁶ Dyson, *Normative Theories*, pp. 56-7.

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