CHAPTER 10

The parchment imperialists: texts, scribes, and the medieval western Empire, c.1250–c.1440

LEN SCALES

'The dear Holy Roman Empire, whatever holds it together?', sings a reveller in Auerbach's Cellar in part one of *Faust*, which Goethe completed in 1806, the year of the Empire's extinction. For the late Middle Ages, it is a question with which historians continue to grapple; one which has elicited various theories, but no certainty.[1] On one matter at least, however, a well-established and durable consensus does exist: whatever it may have been, it can have had little to do with bureaucracy.[2] Of no period does this appear truer than of the late Middle Ages. The medieval Roman Empire was at no time an intensively-governed polity. Even in the heyday of its power, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the institutions of the Empire's government reached thinly and very unevenly across its vast geographic extent. About their working and their efficacy a great deal is obscure.[3] Much always depended upon the monarch's personal presence. However, in the two centuries between the end of the Hohenstaufen dynasty in the mid-thirteenth century and the long Habsburg ascendancy which begins in the fifteenth, such administrative structures as existed for the Empire appear actually to wither and contract. Relatively little in the way of new institutions emerged to take their place. And yet, despite all this, hold together the Empire largely did, albeit with some erosion, including the loss of significant territorial fragments, at the margins. Explaining why this should have been raises important questions, both about the character of

the medieval Reich *as* an empire and about the role of administration in extended pre-modern realms more generally.

<center>I</center>

The imperial character of the late-medieval Empire was expressed most explicitly in its fundamental doctrines, in its accustomed titles, and in the views of history held by its literate partisans. An empire—in Latin, *imperium*; in German, less straightforwardly, *rîche*—was what documents issued in its ruler's name consistently pronounced it to be.[4] To lawyers, chroniclers, poets and their audiences, it was the direct continuator of the Roman empire of the Caesars. By the late Middle Ages, this principle, reinforced by an imperialist reading of a number of familiar biblical passages, had long provided a foundation for highly ambitious claims. Among these was the insistence that, as the temporal counterpart of the pope, the Empire's ruler should move on a similarly universal stage and enjoy a primacy (although this was seldom precisely defined) over other Christian monarchs.[5] How literally such claims were understood and how seriously they were taken, even among the Empire's adherents, let alone neighbours and rivals, should not be overestimated.[6] At the same time, they cannot be altogether dismissed, since their repetition, even in times of the Empire's visible weakness, pertained to the public style of its rulers. Doctrine, and doctrinal controversy, surrounded and defined the medieval Empire to an unusual degree. This element of distinctiveness helps to account for the particular role taken by written acts in its late-medieval life.

The Reich must also, however, be understood—and understood *as* an empire—by locating it in space. Enumerating its component lands makes clear that, although geographically large, the Empire had limits just like any other medieval realm (see fig. 10.1).

[Fig. 10.1. The Reich in the time of Charles IV, *c.*1378]

This was plain enough to late-medieval observers who, a handful of uncertain borderlands apart, could distinguish without difficulty between 'places under the Roman Empire' and those that were not.[7] The political community supported by these far-flung territories was a composite one. Its original core, corresponding to the eastern portion of the Carolingian patrimony, north of the Alps and east of the Rhine, had emerged out of the fragmentation of Charlemagne's empire during the course of the ninth century. In the tenth and eleventh, under rulers from the Ottonian (Saxon) and Salian (Franconian) dynasties, this kingdom of largely Germanic speech became joined together with blocs of territory in Italy and Burgundy. Each of these came likewise to be understood as a distinct kingdom, with its own crown.[8] The same period also saw the addition of Lotharingia, west of the Rhine, with its mixed Germanic and Romance-speaking populations. The entry of the western Slavs into Christendom, meanwhile, had paved the way for the incorporation, over time, of further ethnic and political groupings along the Empire's eastern marches in the north. The title of emperor itself was acquired by means of coronation in Rome, customarily (although, as the late Middle Ages were to prove, not necessarily) at the hands of the pope.[9] Prior to that, however, the Empire's ruler was normally crowned king at Charlemagne's old capital of Aachen.[10] In the late Middle Ages, a majority among these mainly German-speaking 'kings of the Romans' (L. *reges Romanorum*) had to settle for this northern coronation alone (see fig. 10.2).[11]

[Fig. 10.2. Rulers of the empire (1211–1439)]

Such, then, was the Empire—or, as it was termed in its own official acts, the Roman Empire, or the Holy Empire, or (from the thirteenth century ever more frequently) the Holy Roman Empire:[12] an idea, and a body of historic titles; but also a large, loosely-structured, polycentric political formation, multi-ethnic in composition but largely Germanic as regards

the origin and culture of its rulers and their servants. In these respects, it does indeed appear as an 'empire', of a type recognisable in other historical periods and societies. Beyond its German 'metropolis'-zone lay extended 'peripheries': Italy, Burgundy, and the eastern marchlands, within which by the late Middle Ages the kingdom of Bohemia was the most distinct and prestigious element.[13] These regions were no mere extensions of the German core, but constitutionally, culturally and geographically separate. The southern lands in particular were also unmistakably *subordinate*, in constitutional practice and historical memory: they were where the Empire's German-speaking ruler, and his mostly German-speaking followers, *went*—although over time less often—in order to exercise rule. The Romance-speaking peripheries of the Reich supplied none of its medieval rulers—although for a significant portion of the later Middle Ages the Empire's monarch wore the Bohemian crown.

By the late Middle Ages, the age of the Empire's expansion lay far in the past: there had been little substantive and lasting growth since the early decades of the eleventh century. Parcels of territory nevertheless continued to be added here and there, mainly as a fortuitous concomitant to dynastic acquisition strategies. And yet, despite the exhortation to the monarch, embedded in the German-vernacular form of his documentary title, to be an 'augmentor of the Reich', the late Middle Ages brought no discernible 'imperialism of intent', still less an 'imperialism of result'.[14] At most, kings and emperors strove, with mixed success, to hold what they had, while encasing their public appearances within a luxuriating, legitimising imperialism of performance.[15] While spectacle has historically been central to many forms of imperial rule, in the late-medieval Reich an extended theatre of majesty evolved less in order to underpin the power of rule than as a means of negotiating some of its more visible limitations.[16]

In the thirteenth century, the principle of dynastic succession, according to which, in practice at least, the imperial throne had been filled for much of the Empire's previous post-Carolingian history, had ended with the deaths of the last legitimate rulers from the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Henceforth, the monarch was chosen by an exclusive group of seven princes, the electors, whose constitutional status and powers were to receive definitive expression in the Golden Bull of 1356.[17] Into the second half of the fifteenth century, the death of the reigning monarch would now almost always bring a break in continuity, as a new prince, with his own established servants and his own geographic powerbase, ascended the throne. For significant periods, moreover, the Empire's rule was contested by rival candidates, of different dynasties. The implications of these facts for any elements of bureaucracy serving the monarchy will already be plain.

II

Such elements were in any case very limited. Regional and local institutions of government amenable to oversight by the monarch and his court were meagre and unevenly distributed within the Empire, the means of their operation and supervision uncertain. The cadre of *ministeriales* (legally-unfree military retainers), with whose aid the emperors of the central Middle Ages had sought to exercise a measure of control over local resources, were assimilated after the end of the Hohenstaufen era into the ranks of the lower nobility.[18] They found successors of a kind in the regional 'advocates' (G. *Landvögte*), established under the Habsburg Rudolf I, to recover and administer the depleted imperial fisc (G. *Reichsgut*).[19] But of the specific functions which these figures, drawn from the middling regional nobility, performed in the Empire's service, relatively little is known. It is not certain whether they even had a common, defined round of duties, and there is little indication of how, and how successfully, they were called to account. Characteristically, their regional distribution was

uneven, and was confined to the territories north of the Alps. Under Charles IV, there are clear indications that the network of imperial 'advocates' was breaking down.[20]

It is possible that historians have been led by the fewness of the records to underestimate both the extent and the efficacy of the monarchy's access to local resources in the post-Staufer period. Chance documentary survivals seem to indicate more complex and durable local infrastructures than was once thought, and a widely-acknowledged expectation that the king's local ministers would answer for their acts.[21] But while the meagreness and unevenness of documentary survivals in this field may have various explanations, merely the fact that so little was retained—even where a good deal more must once have been written down—invites conclusions about the character of imperial administration.[22] These can hardly be optimistic, and it does not seem difficult to explain why the Empire's resource base contracted so rapidly and irrevocably after the Staufer.

Significantly, rather more is known about the arrangements which late-medieval rulers made to administer the large dynastic blocs which they were engaged in assembling within the frontiers of the Reich. It was here, and not in the management of imperial resources, that new developments are more often to be discerned. No monarch was more active in the field than Charles IV. The *Landbook of the Mark Brandenburg*, compiled for the north-eastern principality which the emperor acquired for his dynasty in the early 1370s, is a detailed land survey, unparalleled in the administration of the contemporary Reich.[23] The cohesive (albeit, as it turned out, short-lived) territorial agglomeration which Charles constructed in the 1350s and 1360s in the Upper Palatinate, between Franconia and the Bohemian frontier, illustrates how new lands might be managed. Although constitutionally a limb of the Bohemian crown, 'the emperor's lordship in Bavaria' was administered separately from the other Luxemburg territories, by a hierarchical structure of accountable officials, some of them local men, others appointed from the Bohemian court in Prague.[24] Yet

Charles's reign brought no comparable creativity in administering what remained of the Empire's own material base, or in governing its far-flung provinces.[25] The emperor's fabled literacy, learning and wisdom in judgement were not applied in any significant degree to the institutional reform of the Reich: the Golden Bull, for all its constitutional importance, had little to say about material matters of government.[26]

The rule of the Roman kings and emperors was located predominantly at their court. But the imperial court was, in European comparison, at most times a modest affair. Its size and capacity for growth were limited in part by its largely itinerant character. Even an emperor such as Charles IV, who developed his dynastic capital of Prague as a residential centre and a stage for the spectacle of monarchy, still travelled tirelessly throughout much of his reign. According to one calculation, Charles made in total more than 1,200 stays at 438 different locations, within a zone extending from Rome to Lübeck and from Paris to Kraków.[27] It is true that almost every late-medieval monarch had his favoured sites, where a disproportionate amount of his reign was spent. Such places might also be home to valued bodies of specialists and experts—as was Heidelberg under Rupert of the Palatinate, where the family seat of the Rhenish counts palatine included a university (founded in 1386).[28] It is also true that the proportion of their reigns which kings and emperors spent at residential centres tended to become greater over the course of the late Middle Ages. It is even the case that, with the development of metropolitan sites, certain offices of imperial government proved able to put down at least shallow and short-lived roots—with the most salient location for such growth being Caroline Prague.[29] Nevertheless, at no time did there develop an institution comparable to the English Exchequer, with firm geographic fixity regardless of the king's movements.[30]

An obvious obstacle to any such development was the strongly discontinuous character of the late-medieval imperial monarchy itself. Within a period of well over two

hundred years, between the end of the Hohenstaufen and the late fifteenth century, son succeeded father on the throne just once.[31] Particularly if a reign ended abruptly, or with the monarch in distant parts, a breach in government was likely to result. When Henry VII died in Italy in 1312, many of his documents remained there, never to return north of the Alps.[32] Such discontinuity was heightened by the circumstances of controversy and division in which the crown more than once changed hands. Of the scribes who had loyally served the excommunicate Ludwig the Bavarian, almost none put their pens at the disposal of his papally-backed supplanter, Charles IV.[33] Rupert of the Palatinate tried in vain to gain possession of the chancery registers of his predecessor, Wenceslas, who following his deposition by the princes in 1400 continued to insist that he was the rightful king.[34] Not only Wenceslas's chancery books but those of Charles IV proved beyond the reach of Sigismund, probably in consequence of the social and religious upheavals in his family's Bohemian powerbase.[35]

It is little wonder, then, that imperial administration in the late Middle Ages appears locked into a downward spiral of narrowing possibility. One measure of this is provided by the Empire's shrinking material base. Without durable instruments for their oversight and receipt, imperial revenues fell steadily. There is evidence (albeit uncertain and problematic) indicating that annual yields from the fisc may have declined from over 100,000 gulden in the early fourteenth century to roughly 17,500 under Rupert and perhaps just 13,000 under his successor, Sigismund. Such sums were dwarfed by the incomes of the German territorial princes, to say nothing of those of other European monarchs.[36] While periodic efforts were made to recoup losses, the impulse to grant and to pledge proved stronger, with the result that the fourteenth century in particular saw what proved to be an irreversible dissipation of the Empire's properties. By the time of Frederick III's accession in 1440, there was nothing left to pawn.[37] Partial compensation was provided by the extension, in the same period, of the

dynastic patrimonies of the kings and emperors, and their exploitation as resources of rule. No monarch built more avidly in this way than Charles IV, just as none pledged more liberally.[38] Nevertheless, the Empire's ruler now appeared to contemporaries at times as a threadbare figure. Rudolf I, according to one generally well-informed chronicler, could offer nothing beyond pious evasiveness when asked to name the keeper of his fiscal chamber.[39]

Under these circumstances, the limitations of imperial government were naturally more apparent to contemporaries—and have been more readily discernible by modern observers—than its capabilities. Those limitations are starkly apparent in the sphere of justice, the fundamental and defining activity of medieval monarchy. The 'curial court' (G. *Hofgericht*), established by Frederick II to receive appeals from the Empire's subjects, was hamstrung by being tied to the peripatetic court, and by the exemptions from its jurisdiction enjoyed by the princes, and increasingly also by towns.[40] Even at its height, the level of business handled by the *Hofgericht* was hardly impressive. Under Charles IV, it appears that the court was hearing no more than eight to ten cases per year.[41] The late Middle Ages also saw the keeping of the public peace (G. *Landfriede*), for which Frederick II had in 1235 made general provision, pass increasingly out of the monarch's hands and into those of the regional and local powers. The attempt made under Wenceslas, to divide the Empire's German lands into regional peace-keeping 'circles' under imperial authority, proved short-lived.[42] The fact that emperors for a time lent their backing even to a judicial instrument as arbitrary and obscure as the Westphalian 'free courts' (G. *Veme*) is evidence of the smallness of their scope for effectual reform.[43]

Developments were just as sluggish and fitful in other areas of government. The Empire's late-medieval rulers had no powers of general taxation, and no forum for convening representatives of the political community in order to seek such powers. While assemblies did meet periodically under the headship of the monarch (and increasingly, indeed, without him),

before the late fifteenth century these were limited in scope and highly variable in composition.[44] Regular taxation (when this had not been alienated) was confined to the imperial towns and the Jews, with the towns in particular putting up strong resistance to the attempts which their rulers occasionally made to increase the yield.[45] Extraordinary levies and fines, judicial dues and fees for the issue and confirmation of diplomas afforded some additional sustenance.[46] But only in the face of the Hussite emergency in the third decade of the fifteenth century were means sought, at first largely unsuccessfully, to extend the tax base.[47] There was no standing military force at the ruler's disposal, and his capacity to require service from the Empire's subjects was highly limited. Before the campaigns against the Hussites, there does not seem even to have existed a full record of the military services owed to the Empire.[48] The German communities from which the manpower for imperial armies was principally drawn showed a marked reluctance to support their rulers' more extended military campaigns, 'over the mountains', into Italy. When the contingent from Mainz returned from King Rupert's short and inglorious expedition to the south, the town informed the king that it was no longer willing to send its men into Lombardy—to 'such a far-off land'.[49] It is easy to understand why the Empire's late-medieval rulers, in contrast to their European neighbours, generally avoided major military commitments. They were in no position to act the part of imperial conquerors, despite the efforts of contemporary writers and artists, in traditional style, to paint them in that role.[50]

III

The fundamental administrative institution for the late-medieval Reich was the chancery. This was a court institution and its servants were court servants: their allegiance was to the person of the monarch, not to abstract notions of 'state' or public duty. The emergence of the chancery as a body distinct from the court chapel was still a fairly recent development in the

thirteenth century, and the chancery can easily be ascribed firmer substance than the meagre evidence warrants.[51] It is best understood—particularly under the earliest post-Staufer kings—less as a settled bureau than as a pool of literate, beneficed clerks of fairly fluid composition and fluctuating size. In all this it exemplifies the archaic qualities of late-medieval imperial government generally, within which document culture still showed few traces of the processes of internal differentiation and specialisation evident elsewhere.

Within the chancery, there seems to have existed at most an informal allocation of duties between different notaries.[52] There was no subdivision into separate offices for different imperial territories. Not until the reign of the Habsburg Frederick III (1440–93) did the monarch's dynastic lands become the responsibility of a separate staff of clerks, largely distinct from those engaged with imperial affairs.[53] Only those writings which related to the business of the curial court (G. *Hofgericht*) were consistently kept apart, written by specialist scribes and issued under their own seal.[54] The signs are that procedures long remained informal, with written instructions for the guidance of those writing in the monarch's name limited or non-existent.[55] There is no certain indication of any registration of outgoing documents before the reign of Henry VII; and not until the time of Rupert of the Palatinate, a century later, do registers survive in substantial number.[56] Registration during the fourteenth century was partial and haphazard, and may have been abandoned altogether for a time under Ludwig the Bavarian.[57]

The central administrative body of the late-medieval Reich therefore displays little conformity to the principles of ~~weberian~~ Weberian 'legal-rational' bureaucracy.[58] Far from ~~insisting that its servants~~ being obliged to fit their behaviour to an office defined by abstract rules, the more senior among ~~them~~ the Empire's servants in particular enjoyed considerable freedom to define the character and scope of their office for themselves.[59] There was accordingly no single, fixed way of being chancellor. Some chancellors involved themselves

extensively in the daily business of document-production, while others did not.[60] Johann von Neumarkt, the long-serving head of Charles IV's writing office, devoted himself to wide-ranging literary, cultural and intellectual pursuits at court, about which much more is known than about his administrative duties.[61] The vice-chancellors who served under some, though not all, monarchs also varied markedly in their functions.[62] Even protonotaries might be much more than just chief scribes, while some did not perform that role at all.[63] The clerks who served under them were likewise involved in a wide array of tasks, beyond the drafting and writing-up of documents—among them fiscal accounting and service as envoys. There is no trace of a body of regulations defining the extent of these roles, and nothing to suggest that they constituted clearly-delineated offices.[64] Appointment and advancement were governed by kinship, patronage and regional connections, rather than merit or open competition.[65]

When backed by the monarch, a chancellor's initiative power could be great: Raban von Helmstatt is credited with assembling largely from scratch the body of scribes which served Rupert of the Palatinate, drawing on his own extensive contacts.[66] But the initiatives of leading clerks might also run in more wayward channels. Ludwig the Bavarian accused his protonotary Ulrich Wild of acting without authorisation and against the king's interests, in drawing up a manifesto associating Ludwig's cause with that of the Franciscan opponents of the Avignon papacy.[67] Means of control capable of preventing unwelcome freelancing were lacking. The literate servants of the king might also on occasion answer to other masters, with the influence of the electors, above all the three Rhineland archbishops, particularly to the fore. Archbishop Gerhard of Mainz was able to ensure that one of his own close associates was appointed as protonotary under Adolf of Nassau, whom Gerhard had played an instrumental part in raising to the throne.[68] The archbishop, whose honorific rank of imperial arch-chancellor for Germany reinforced and legitimised his political domination over the new king, asserted a power of veto over specific chancery appointments.[69]

The quantity of writings produced by imperial scribes appears distinctly modest, particularly when compared with the output of governmental acts from the Empire's late-medieval neighbours. Recent estimates of the total number of documents issued in the monarch's name in the busy thirty-two-year reign of Charles IV have proposed a figure between nine and ten thousand.[70] This is certainly not a negligible tally, and it is higher than those attained under his predecessors. Yet already more than half a century earlier the somewhat shorter tenure of King Philip IV of France (r. 1285–1314) had yielded more than 15,000 royal letters.[71] The most prolific contemporary bureaucracies put Charles's output in the shade. Under Pope John XXII (1316—1324), the papal chancery issued on average 3,646 letters each year, while in 1324 the English king's clerks sealed nearly three-and-a-half thousand standardised writs in a single (admittedly exceptional) *month*.[72]

No less revealing is the character of the writings most often issued under the imperial seal. At least among surviving and known documents, it is diplomas granting or confirming favours and privileges that continued into the late Middle Ages to take the dominant share, as they had in earlier centuries.[73] New documentary instruments of this sort characteristically reflected the aspirations of recipients more than central initiative.[74] It is true that other kinds of writing—such as letters and mandates directed at important political actors, such as the imperial towns—were probably issued in greater quantity than we can now know;[75] but the over-all picture remains a traditional one. Typically, documents were addressed to individuals or to relatively small groups. Even perhaps the most famous constitutional text in the Empire's entire history, Charles IV's Golden Bull, is best understood, in its origins at least, as a privilege, issued as just seven originals (two of them retrospective), for individuals and communities directly touched by its provisions.[76] Conceding and legitimising came more easily than did commanding or forbidding. Only very rarely did the written acts of the Reich aspire to speak to audiences across its length and breadth.[77] Documents under the imperial

seal were bespoke, individualised texts, not items of mass production—a fact which does much to explain their comparatively modest numbers.[78] Routine and repetition, the hallmarks of modern bureaucratic method, are little in evidence.[79] Standardised instruments along the lines of the English writ are no more to be found than are the networks of local royal officials which would have been necessary for their implementation.[80] It is no surprise, therefore, that the Empire's administration never became the subject of literary celebration, in the manner found in England as early as the twelfth century in the *Dialogue of the exchequer*.[81]

Even such documents as were produced covered the Empire's vast territories very unevenly. Of the known output of Charles IV's chancery, no less than thirty-eight per cent was addressed to individuals and groups located in just three fairly compact German-speaking regions with traditionally close ties to the monarchy: Franconia, the middle Rhine, and Swabia.[82] By contrast, the entire northern third of Germany, together with the Empire's largely Romance-speaking western borderlands (comprising in total around half of the territories of the Reich north of the Alps), received just fifteen per cent. For the greatest princely territories, different rules applied. Dealings with the Habsburg lands, whose princes never travelled to imperial assemblies, had something of the character of relations with a foreign power, conducted by means of envoys sent out from the imperial court.[83] Under Charles IV (who was father-in-law to the reigning duke of Austria), only three per cent of imperial documents, and none of an intrusive or mandatory kind, were dispatched to this extensive zone.[84] With growing distance from the court, grants of title and privileges were apt to loom increasingly large among the chancery's output. In northern Italy by the mid-fourteenth century the main role of imperial government had become the granting, in return for substantial payments, of legal titles to legitimise the power of those who ruled within their regions already.[85]

The men who drafted and wrote up these documents came disproportionately from a limited number of mainly German-speaking territories. Typically, these were again the old imperial heartlands around the Main, the middle and upper Rhine, and in the German south-west, along with the dynastic powerbase of the reigning monarch. From Rudolf I's reign, all surviving *Hofgericht* documents are in Swabian dialect.[86] Ludwig IV's scribes came, like their master, from the German south, particularly from the Wittelsbach lands in Upper Bavaria, as well as from Ludwig's favoured urban support-bases, Augsburg and Nuremberg.[87] Charles IV's chancery was staffed with a mix of recruits from the northern core lands of the Reich and from the vast eastern domains of the house of Luxemburg, especially Moravia and Silesia.[88] When the monarch came from a princely dynasty with an established territorial chancery, as did Charles, this typically provided a kernel around which an imperial writing office took shape.[89] Only when the new king lacked a family scriptorium, as did the count-king William of Holland, was a body of scribes of necessity brought together from more diverse sources.[90] Those who wrote in the Empire's name tended on the whole to display a princely-dynastic, not imperial, orientation at the reigning monarch's death. Most of the personnel from Ludwig IV's chancery found new homes in Bavarian ducal service, while a majority of King Rupert's clerks went on to write for his successor in the Rhineland Palatinate.[91]

The number of those employed to produce imperial documents was also notably modest—strikingly so under the earliest post-Staufer kings. Harry Bresslau was able to identify just eight notaries, along with two chancellors and three protonotaries, from the whole of Rudolf I's eighteen-year reign.[92] Six clerks can be ascribed to William of Holland as king, though to these must be added further, shorter-term manpower.[93] The size of the body of scribes serving the monarch is difficult to gauge, since even among those active at court over a long period, some wrote documents only occasionally or untypically, among other

tasks.[94] Numbers of clerks might fluctuate sharply within a single reign.[95] Yet even the highest figures look low beside the chancery of the fourteenth-century English kings (discussed by Peter Crooks, below), with its hierarchically-graded staff of over a hundred at any one time.[96] The beneficiaries of imperial diplomas not uncommonly took a hand, alongside chancery staff, in their drafting. In some instances, although less often after the thirteenth century, they were clearly the creators of the finished and binding document, to which imperial servants can have done little beyond affix a seal.[97]

The distinctly meagre resources of late-medieval imperial administration appear peculiarly ill-matched to the task of governing a vast Empire which was both multi-ethnic and multi-lingual. Even under the Staufer, it appeared as, to say the least, paradoxical to many that Italy and southern Gaul, with their ancient literate cultures, were under the rule of monarchs drawn from regions where the cultivation of letters was generally less advanced.[98] In the application of writing to government, imperial centre had little indeed to teach imperial periphery. By the late Middle Ages, a perceived cultural chasm was troubling thoughtful Germans too. Writing in the mid-fourteenth century, Konrad von Megenberg regretted what he claimed was a German custom, of mocking literate knights as 'book-eaters', and trusting to physical strength alone.[99] Around the same time, the importance (but implicitly also the difficulty) of fostering verbal and textual communications in the Empire's highest affairs was acknowledged by that most literate of emperors, Charles IV. His Golden Bull stipulated (although to no effect) that the German-speaking sons of the temporal electors, from their seventh year, were to receive instruction in Italian and 'Slavic' (Czech), as well as Latin.[100]

Yet during this same late-medieval period, the Empire's German-speaking core, from which its servants were overwhelmingly drawn, seems in the matter of governmental literacy to turn inward upon itself. The only vernacular language in regular use in the late-medieval imperial chancery was German. It had first appeared under the later Staufer, and its

application then gathered pace under the count-kings of the second half of the thirteenth century—middling noblemen, whose own documentary milieu was increasingly a vernacular one.[101] By the time of Wenceslas a century later, a clear majority of chancery documents was in German.[102] Yet few comparable linguistic accommodations were made for the Empire's large non-German populations. There had been French-language documents bearing the imperial seal already under William of Holland, and there were more, although never many, under Charles IV.[103] The reign of Wenceslas saw the isolated use of Czech.[104] The imperial chancery is not, however, known to have drawn up documents in Occitan, or in an Italian dialect. The inhabitants of Lombardy, Tuscany and the kingdom of Arles had to make do with Latin for such communications as occasionally came their way.

In light of all this it would appear that what held the late-medieval Reich together was a relative *absence* of bureaucracy. The cohesion, it is true, was far from total. Territories were lost in Italy, in Arles, and, to a lesser extent, along the western margins of the northern *regnum*, with the French crown the greatest beneficiary.[105] But given the limited means available to kings and emperors for their defence, it is the modesty of the Empire's territorial contraction that is chiefly remarkable. The explanation must lie at least in part with the lightness of the hand of imperial government upon outlying provinces. Coercive intervention south of the Alps in the style of the Staufer, while it long remained a potent symbol and memory, had ceased by the middle of the fourteenth century to be a fact of political life.[106] Local and regional elites were left extensive scope to act largely unconstrained, albeit often under a mantle of imperial legitimacy that had been dearly purchased. An Empire from whose 'centre' so little was routinely to be expected or feared made among the provincial powers few intractable enemies.

IV

However, to concentrate only upon the benefits which flowed from what the Empire did not or could not do is insufficient. There are a number of reasons why the importance of documents and their makers within the political culture of the late-medieval Reich needs to be taken seriously. Most straightforwardly, while the absolute numbers of writings produced under the monarch's seal cannot stand comparison with late-medieval Europe's more prolific bureaucracies, they do nevertheless increase very considerably, even in spite of the major disruptions to which imperial administration was periodically subject. The total of more than 4,800 documents traceable from the ten-year reign of King Rupert represents a roughly six-fold increase on the tally for Albert I, produced over a comparable period just a century before.[107] The upward trajectory was to continue: from Maximilian I's reign, at the end of the fifteenth century, more than 100,000 chancery writings are known.[108]

If the Reich witnessed no late-medieval administrative revolution, growth of a more gradual kind did occur. Although the chancery remained small in comparative terms, its staff increased significantly over the course of the period. Only three scribal hands have been linked to the brief anti-Staufer kingship of the Thuringian Henry Raspe—and one of those probably belonged to a notary borrowed from a cardinal's entourage.[109] But by 1444, whence comes the earliest precise record, fourteen beds were needed in Frankfurt to accommodate Frederick III's chancery staff, even without his *Hofgericht* scribes.[110] Established practices changed to facilitate growth. In the fourteenth century, it became the norm to appoint as chancellor a bishop, whose diocesan clergy thereby became available as literate servants to the monarch, as also did ecclesiastical livings to support officials.[111] Accompanying the extension of manpower and the growth of documentary production, there gradually developed more scrupulous methods for recording the chancery's output. Registration of outgoing writings became not only more regular but more elaborate. Under Wenceslas, Latin and vernacular diplomas began to be registered separately.[112] The reign of his successor,

Rupert, saw the employment of separate chancery books for imperial and territorial affairs, as well as for documents addressing a range of specific matters.[113]

A growing closeness in the court's relations with urban society—symptomatic of the late-medieval 'knitting-together' (G. *Verdichtung*) of German society more generally—found reflection in the chancery as in other spheres.[114] Under Charles IV and Wenceslas, an interrelated group of Bohemian, Moravian and Silesian patrician kindreds supplied successive chancellors over a sixty-year period. These men were clerics, but in 1433, with the appointment of Kaspar Schlick, a layman of burgher stock attained the office.[115] Starting in the fourteenth century, the sons of rich urban families also gained growing responsibility for fiscal affairs at court.[116] The capacity for institutional change and new growth, moreover, was not altogether stifled. By the start of the fifteenth century, the patent inadequacies of the *Hofgericht*, due particularly to the proliferation of exemptions, had stimulated a desire for new judicial solutions. Reflecting this, the personal justice of the monarch (from which none could be exempt) gradually attained more institutional form, as a 'chamber court' (G. *Kammergericht*), the rise of which had by mid-century completely eclipsed the older forum.[117]

But to look only for traces of the bureaucratic growth familiar from modernisation narratives of the rise of 'the state' elsewhere in Europe is perhaps in any case to mistake the significance of documents and their makers in the late-medieval Reich. For the importance of both, although considerable and growing, did not lie only in strictly administrative spheres. Writings in the monarch's name carried an ideological charge which, potentially, pervaded every detail.[118] Documents did not need to be abundant in order to matter; and the late Middle Ages were famously a time of notable documents. The history of the Empire, like that of the papacy which it often appears to shadow, can be—indeed, once used to be—written through a succession of resonantly-named public acts: the 1235 Peace of Mainz, *Licet iuris*, *Fidem*

catholicam, the Golden Bull, the *Reformatio Friderici*, and so on. Although texts of this sort, ideological in content and general in their significance, were few in number and quite untypical of the mass of imperial writings, the studies of earlier generations of constitutional historians have made them famous. And that fame has a degree of justification, since some of them at least attracted significant notice and comment at the time of their appearance. Even when the initial reception was muted, the general significance of such a document might attain recognition with the passage of time, as was the case with the Golden Bull, widely copied and disseminated (albeit almost solely within Germany) during the century-and-a-half after its issue.[119] The Golden Bull illustrates how, in an age with a prodigious and growing appetite for reproducing texts of all kinds, an imperial document too, once its importance had been duly acknowledged, might be disseminated by widespread copying, independently of the chancery.

However, the Empire's rulers themselves also grew increasingly alert to the power of documents, particularly their ideological potential, paying heightened attention to their production and communicative capacity. The commissioning by Wenceslas of a sumptuous illustrated manuscript of his father's Golden Bull seems to have been a response to his deposition by the princes in 1400. By this means he was able graphically to place himself at the centre of those constitutional processes by which legitimate kings were made—and kings made legitimate.[120] The paraphernalia of document-making, pictorial as well as scribal, became the subject of purposeful manipulation. Fourteenth-century emperors, most notably Ludwig the Bavarian, introduced new elements into their great seals, in order to magnify their titles to rule.[121] Sigismund employed one of the finest goldsmiths of his day, a master perhaps linked with the French royal court, to cut the matrix for his imperial seal.[122] The external appearance of the documents themselves, and particularly of solemn privileges, came in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to be treated as a matter of foremost importance.[123] With

time, moreover, the means were attained of matching aspiration with achievement. If William of Holland's clerks had struggled to create anything beyond the most workaday charters, the magnificent illustrated diplomas issued in the name of Ludwig the Bavarian, less than a century later, attest to the availability of scribal resources of a quite different order.[124]

Although most imperial documents were created for highly specific addressees, there was an important, if very small, minority in which the king or emperor and his advisors sought to excite a more general awareness. Ludwig the Bavarian had his mandate *Fidem catholicam* (1338) posted up on church doors, notably in the city of Frankfurt.[125] There are signs, in the form of chronicle reports of its contents, that the emperor's efforts thus to attain widespread notice for his case against the papacy achieved some success.[126] The potential audience for public outbursts of monarchical self-justification may have been greater than first appearances suggest. As Ernst Schubert has pointed out, a lengthy imperial mandate, displayed in a public place, would have been impressive even to those unable to read its text.[127] Report (if doubtless not always wholly accurate) of its contents would quickly have begun to circulate. There are signs that Ludwig's court gave serious thought to the problem of communications, particularly with audiences in the north. The archbishop of Salzburg is to be found lamenting to the pope that when the emperor's partisans publicly denounce the pontiff in Latin, translators are on hand to render their words instantly into German.[128]

If the documentary culture of the Reich remained in some ways comparatively limited, and was certainly relatively unobtrusive in the lives of most of those who stood under the Empire's rule, it was not in all respects unsophisticated. That the chancery, particularly from Ludwig IV's reign onward, was no marginal body is indicated by the quality of those who filled its most prominent roles. Its leading personnel came to represent for the monarch a reservoir of literate expertise whose value extended well beyond the strictly bureaucratic. By the early fifteenth century, doctors and licentiates of the two laws had come to dominate the

leading posts.[129] Such men were far from being mere stay-at-home clerks, but were well-connected and widely-travelled diplomats and counsellors, richly experienced in the Europe of their day. Increasingly, they were attaining to the characteristics of a careerist corps, moving easily between the higher reaches of ecclesiastical and secular government, and united particularly by bonds forged in a common early experience of university studies.[130] The foremost literate servants of the Reich did not obviously stand behind their counterparts in document-rich England in their cultivation and wide horizons.[131]

The more extended and informal networks of learned expertise which the imperial court was able to tap, at least on specific occasions, were no less significant. The Empire's particular territorial form and extent, its historical and doctrinal foundations, and its unique relationship with the Catholic church and papacy had all tended to draw its rulers into fundamental conflicts of ideas and principles. These had formed a significant element in the history of the Reich since the eleventh century, with protracted controversy continuing well into the fourteenth and its resonances still discernible for long thereafter.[132] At all times, these disputes had been fought out by textual, no less than political and military, means. As a consequence, writers and thinkers of the stature of William of Ockham and Marsilius of Padua gravitated to the late-medieval imperial court.[133] The rulers of the Reich were able on occasion to profit from learned outside advice of rare distinction. It perhaps reflects his judgement on the limitations of the Empire's literate culture that the duke of Austria, Rudolf IV, in the late 1350s felt able to confect the audacious bundle of forgeries known as the *Privilegium maius*, replete with purported charters of Caesar and Nero. However, if Rudolf had hoped thereby to establish ancient foundations for Austrian ambitions within the Reich, he had reckoned without the forensic skills of Petrarch, to whom Charles IV passed the documents, and who duly subjected them to his withering humanist scorn.[134] Being a neo-

Roman emperor could unlock sources of specialist literate expertise not available to every European prince of the day.

What the rulers of the Reich most conspicuously lacked, in the eyes of contemporaries and evidently their own, were, at least for substantial parts of the late-medieval period, the resources not of 'modern' administration so much as traditional legitimacy. However, administrative institutions and personnel seemed in some degree able to supply resources of this second kind, and were evidently valued for that reason.[135] Where the Empire's rulers often appeared particularly deficient was in the security of title which came from a sense of unproblematic continuity.[136] Yet the literate servants of the monarch were better able to embody such continuity than may at first appear, and their capacity in this respect grew over the course of the period.

Actual continuities of imperial service became increasingly conspicuous, reflecting in part the development of a more stable alternation of the crown, between just three rich princely dynasties—Wittelsbach, Luxemburg and Habsburg—during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. An outstanding, though untypical, example is provided by Wenceslas's succession to the throne of Charles IV. This was accompanied by the transfer of a significant portion of the aged emperor's corps of literate servants to his son.[137] More common, however, was for the higher-ranking officers to remain in place between reigns. These were the figures whom rulers would most have wished to retain, not only for their expertise, but for the legitimising continuity of distinguished service which they embodied. Their consolidation into an elite of interconnected, high-ranking graduate specialists made such men—in contrast to lesser clerks, with their local roots and territorial ties—more likely to prolong their service under an incoming monarch. By the fifteenth century, therefore, important administrators were staying on, or even shifting allegiance to serve a new king, in a way that had previously been rare. Johannes Kirchen, a leading *Hofgericht* notary under Wenceslas, went on to act as

protonotary to both Rupert and Sigismund.[138] Kaspar Schlick served as chancellor under three monarchs—Sigismund, Albert II and Frederick III—and his contemporary, the chamberlain Konrad von Weinsberg, was able to show a similar record of high office under successive rulers.[139]

Sites of administrative memory, such as they were, were cherished, precisely on account of the ties which they offered to remote, legitimising pasts. Speyer ceased to be an imperial mausoleum after the early fourteenth century; yet the old Salian power-base retained a surprising degree of importance to the Empire's administration, continuing into the fifteenth century to provide a disproportionate number of bishop-chancellors and other senior figures.[140] This is unlikely to be coincidence. Document culture, and those who sustained it, had particular benefits to offer the insecure and sometimes weak rulers of the late-medieval Reich. In securing the service of a chancery scribe who had previously written for the Staufer Henry (VII), William of Holland tapped a tradition extending back to the emperor and Sicilian king Henry VI (r. 1190-97), under whom that scribe's own mentor had trained.[141] Documents themselves, with their routine, traditional formulations, constructed unbroken pasts for times of confusion and rapid change.[142] When William of Holland, in a diploma for the Frisians, refers in passing to Charlemagne as 'our predecessor', the effect is at once banal and audacious: a formulaic statement of the obvious *and* a resonant title for an otherwise dangerously under-entitled king.[143] No pretender to the throne, however wild and marginal, could afford to forgo the visible and accustomed legitimacy which documents conferred. It was a strong argument in the hands of the imposter who briefly 'reigned' on the lower Rhine in the 1280s, in the guise of a returned or resurrected Frederick II, that he was able to produce letters in the dead emperor's name, authenticated with a plausible imitation of his seal.[144]

v

At least when judged by the actions and achievements of its rulers, the Reich was among the least imperialistic, as well as least bureaucratic, of the realms of late-medieval Europe. It did not order its far-flung provinces within centralising structures like the kingdom of France, or expand with the startling speed of Valois Burgundy. Instead it contracted somewhat, although outright disintegration never looked likely. Its rulers showed neither the venturesome spirit of the Iberian kings in seeking new lands, nor the English monarchy's ready recourse to military solutions. Any talk of a late-medieval 'imperialist dynamic', such as others displayed, would be quite out of place.[145] Nevertheless, the Empire's government did not altogether stagnate. The two centuries after the fall of the Staufer brought modest and piecemeal steps towards greater administrative sophistication, although the effects of these were largely confined to the old-established core lands of the Reich, in central and southern Germany. Relations between government and society became more complex and more intimate—but again, mainly in regions where they had traditionally been close. The change primarily reflected developments in society, not government. A more thoroughgoing reform and extension of imperial institutions was to be instituted at the close of the fifteenth century.[146] For this, the relatively limited nature of the imperial bureaucracy proved an advantage. Reform was not constrained by the existence of elaborate cadres of rule-bound, conservative mandarins (however constrained it may have been in other ways). The proliferation or perpetuation of bureaucracy is no more a necessary symptom of an empire's health than limited institutions reliably indicate its impending collapse. The late-medieval Reich, with all its shortcomings, fared notably less badly in difficult times than did its depleted and crisis-stricken counterpart in Byzantium.[147] When disaster finally came, in 1453, it was the proverbially bureaucratic eastern, not the western, Roman empire that was swept away.[148]

While the explanations for the Empire's long survival are many and complex, they must be sought partly in what it could not do—and in the late Middle Ages did not aspire to do. The cities of northern Italy, which under the Staufer had joined together in military alliance against the emperors, now mostly free of the molestation of German armies, directed their concerns elsewhere.[149] Relations between imperial 'core' and 'periphery', insofar as these terms are illuminating, were in the late Middle Ages less fraught—because less close—in the Reich than in other European empires. That the imperial court should have aspired to police the personal and cultural interactions of its German-speaking agents with the inhabitants of Lombardy or Arles in the manner of the English in Ireland was more than just unattainable: it was unthinkable.[150] The Reich had no aspiration, and made no attempt, to re-shape the customs of provincial society as other empires have historically sought to do.[151] That, surely, is not the least among the reasons for its long endurance.

To a degree, the Empire's literate servants did what bureaucrats do: contributed, through their existence and their actions, to the public myth of their masters' power and effectiveness. But this was a less feasible venture in the Reich than in some other realms, and had less certain results. It would have been impossible—in contrast, for example, to medieval English imperialism—for the Empire's rulers and their German clerks to have postured as the bearers of literate civilization to under-developed barbarians in the provinces.[152] Instead, charges of unlettered barbarism, when they were heard, mostly flowed in an opposite direction. Yet the Empire's scribes too were servants of a myth—and a more potent and venerable one than was available to most medieval imperialists. The trouble with texts is that, by their existence, they tempt us to reach unfavourable judgements upon those places where they appear to be relatively less present.[153] But, as recent studies of the political culture of the late-medieval Reich have insisted, texts did not stand alone, but were joined to other communicative media within a 'polyphonic concert for the staging of rulership'.[154]

Nevertheless, their role remained a fundamental one, since the medieval Roman *imperium* found its deepest legitimation in authoritative ancient texts, not least the Bible itself. Words had particular importance for the Empire's rulers, and that importance grew rather than diminished in the late Middle Ages, for monarchs whose claims to the throne often appeared contestable and called for defence. Important too, therefore, were the clerks responsible for finding, framing and disseminating those words.

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[1] For the 'stabilizing, underlying consensus', or 'political concert', which allowed the Reich to function even without the concentration or institutionalisation of power, see Peter Moraw, 'Wesenszüge der "Regierung" und "Verwaltung" des deutschen Königs im Reich (ca. 1350–1450)', in Werner Paravicini and Karl Ferdinand Werner (eds.), *Histoire comparée de l'administration (IVe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Munich: Artemis, 1980), p. 150; Peter Moraw, 'Vom Raumgefüge einer spätmittelalterlichen Königsherrschaft: Karl IV. im nordalpinischen Reich', in Michael Lindner, Eckhard Müller-Mertens and Olaf B. Rader (eds.), *Kaiser, Reich und Region: Studien und Texte aus der Arbeit an den Constitutiones des 14. Jahrhunderts und zur Geschichte der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (Berlin: Akademie, 1997), pp. 68, 71.

[2] For the primacy of informal, non-bureaucratic, and thus submerged, structures over visible administrative hierarchies in explaining the monarchy's functioning and capabilities, see Peter Moraw, 'Räte und Kanzlei', in Ferdinand Seibt (ed.), *Kaiser Karl IV.: Staatsmann und Mäzen* (Munich: Prestel, 1978), p. 286; Peter Moraw, 'Die Verwaltung des Königtums und des Reiches und ihre Rahmenbedingungen', in Kurt G.A. Jeserich, Hans Pohl and Georg-Christoph von Unruh (eds.), *Deutsche Verwaltungsgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), pp. 25–6.

[3] For the difficulty of even ascribing reliable dates to the meagre documentation bearing upon the Empire's material resources in the high Middle Ages, see Benjamin Arnold, *Power and property in medieval Germany: economic and social change, c.900–1300* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), ch. 3.

[4] Eckhard Müller-Mertens, 'Imperium und Regnum im Verhältnis zwischen Wormser Konkordat und Goldener Bulle: Analyse und neue Sicht im Lichte der Konstitutionen', *HZ* 284 (2007), 561–95; Peter Moraw, 'Reich (Das späte Mittelalter)', in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhard Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. V (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1984), pp. 446–56.

[5] For some of the more ambitious claims made on the Empire's behalf, see Friedrich Baethgen, 'Zur Geschichte der Weltherrschaftsidee im späteren Mittelalter', in Peter Classen and Peter Scheibert (eds.), *Festschrift Percy Ernst Schramm*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1964), vol. I, pp. 189–203; Othmar Hageneder, 'Weltherrschaft im Mittelalter', *MIöG* 93 (1985), 257–78.

[6] For its relative unimportance to French dealings with the Empire, see Karl-Ferdinand Werner, 'Das hochmittelalterliche Imperium im politischen Bewußtsein Frankreichs (10.–12. Jahrhundert)', *HZ* 200 (1965), 2–60. The dangers of reading high-medieval imperial rhetoric too literally were exposed by Karl Leyser, 'Frederick Barbarossa, Henry II and the hand of St James', in Leyser, *Medieval Germany and its neighbours, 900–1250* (London: Hambledon Press, 1982), pp. 215–40. The medieval Reich, moreover, was only one heir to the western imperial tradition: see Chris Jones, *Eclipse of Empire: perceptions of the Western Empire and its rulers in late-medieval France* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

[7] For the evidence, see Len Scales, *The shaping of German identity: authority and crisis, 1245–1414* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), ch. 5.

[8] For the Empire's territorial growth, see Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the early Middle Ages, 800–1050* (London: Longman, 1991).

[9] The history of imperial expeditions to Rome is traced in Bernd Schneidmüller, *Die Kaiser des Mittelalters: von Karl dem Großen bis Maximilian I.* (Munich: Beck, 2006).

[10] For the Aachen coronation, see Mario Kramp (ed.), *Krönungen: Könige in Aachen—Geschichte und Mythos*, 2 vols (Mainz: Zabern, 1999).

[11] For a list of the kings of the Romans and emperors who ruled in the period with which this essay is concerned, see figure 10.1.

[12] For the development of titles, see Jörg Schwarz, *Herrscher- und Reichstitel bei Kaisertum und Papsttum im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna: Böhlau, 2003); Hermann Weisert, 'Der Reichstitel bis 1806', *AfD* 40 (1994), 441–513.

[13] For the applicability of the metropolis–periphery model to the medieval Reich, see Susan Reynolds, 'Empires: a problem of comparative history', *Historical Research* 79 (2006), 152.

[14] For the titles and their meanings, see Olaf B. Rader, 'Zwischen Friedberg und Eco: die Interpretation von Urkundentexten Karls IV. oder Vom Gang durch die Säle der Erkenntnis', in Lindner, Müller-Mertens and Rader (eds.), *Kaiser, Reich und Region*, pp. 250–1. For 'imperialism of intent' etc., see Crooks, 'State of the union', 7, citing P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British imperialism, 1688–2000*, 2nd edn (Harlow: Longman, 2002), p. 54.

[15] For the performative elements in late-medieval imperial doctrine and rule, see Bernd Schneidmüller, 'Inszenierungen und Rituele des spätmittelalterlichen Reichs: die Goldene Bulle von 1356 in westeuropäischen Vergleichen', in Ulrike Hohensee, Mathias Lawo, Michael Lindner, Michael Menzel and Olaf B. Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle: Politik—Wahrnehmung—Rezeption*, 2 vols (Berlin: Akademie, 2009), vol. I, pp. 261–97; Gerrit Jasper Schenk, *Zeremoniell und Politik: Herrschereinzüge im spätmittelalterlichen Reich* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna: Böhlau, 2003); Martin Bauch, *Divina favente clemencia: Auserwählung, Frömmigkeit und Heilsvermittlung in der Herrschaftspraxis Kaiser Karls IV.* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna: Böhlau, 2015).

[16] Ritual had always played an especially important role in the post-Carolingian Reich, where unities and continuities were constituted above all at great set-piece occasions: see Gerd Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale: Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003). For some of the particular factors shaping late-medieval rituals for the Empire's rulers, see Gerald Schwedler, *Herrschertreffen des Spätmittelalters: Formen—Rituale—Wirkungen* (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2008), esp. pp. 37–72, 297–329.

[17] The fundamental study remains Karl Zeumer, *Die Goldene Bulle Kaiser Karls IV.* (Weimar: H. Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1908); but see now also Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*. For the electors and the development of monarchical government in Germany, see

John Gillingham, 'Elective kingship and the unity of medieval Germany', *German History* 9 (1991), 124-35.

[18] For *ministeriales*, see Karl Bosl, *Die Reichsministerialität der Salier und Staufer: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des hochmittelalterlichen deutschen Volkes, Staates und Reiches*, 2 vols. (*MGH Schriften*, vol. X, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–1); Benjamin Arnold, *German knighthood, 1050–1300* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985).

[19] Hans Georg Hofacker, *Die schwäbischen Reichslandvogteien im späten Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1980). For the *Reichsgut* and its late-medieval custodianship, see Ernst Schubert, *König und Reich: Studien zur spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1979), pp. 151–71; Andreas Christoph Schlunck, *Königsmacht und Krongut: die Machtgrundlagen des deutschen Königtums im 13. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1988).

[20] Heinz Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte des Spätmittelalters 1250–1500* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983), pp. 254–5.

[21] For the surviving records, see Mark Mersiowsky, 'Römisches Königtum und Rechnungslegung im 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhundert', *DA* 64 (2008), 550–3; Eberhard Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire in the middle ages', in Richard Bonney (ed.), *The rise of the fiscal state in Europe, c.1200–1815* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), p. 253. For the scrutiny of local agents, see Mersiowsky, 'Römisches Königtum', 574–6.

[22] For evidence of the routine discarding of records, see Mersiowsky, 'Römisches Königtum', 564, 576.

[23] *Das Landbuch der Mark Brandenburg*, ed. Johannes Schultze (Berlin: Gsellius, 1940); and see Hans Patze, 'Die Herrschaftspraxis der deutschen Landesherren während des späten Mittelalters', in Paravicini and Werner (eds.), *Histoire comparée de l'administration*, p. 365.

[24] Heribert Sturm, 'Des Kaisers Land in Bayern', in Seibt (ed.), *Kaiser Karl IV.*, pp. 208–12; Jiří Fajt, 'Die Oberpfalz—ein neues Land jenseits des böhmischen Waldes', in Jiří Fajt (ed.), *Karl IV., Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden: Kunst und Repräsentation des Hauses Luxemburg 1310–1437* (Munich and Berlin: Deutsche Kunstverlag, 2006), pp. 326–35. For the closeness of their administration, see *Das*

'Böhmische Salbüchlein' Kaiser Karls IV. über die nördliche Oberpfalz 1366–68, ed. Fritz Schnelbögl (Munich and Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1973).

[25] For positive but hardly transformative changes introduced in the chancery under Charles—the application to documents of scribal authentication-marks, and the employment for the first time of multiple protonotaries—see Moraw, 'Räte und Kanzlei', p. 291.

[26] Recent studies have tended to take a positive view of the 'rationality' and the westward-facing quality of Caroline government. Thus: Jiří Fajt and Robert Suckale, 'Der Kreis der Räte', in Fajt (ed.), *Karl IV., Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden*, esp. p. 181; and on Charles himself, Eva Schlotheuber, 'Die Rolle des Rechts in der Herrschaftsauffassung Kaiser Karls IV.', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, pp. 141–68. However, the fact remains that the Luxemburger was no great innovator in the administration of the Reich: thus Hans Patze, 'Karl IV. Kaiser im Spätmittelalter', *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 116 (1980), esp. 65.

[27] Winfried Eberhard, 'Herrschaft und Raum: zum Itinerar Karls IV.', in Seibt (ed.), *Kaiser Karl IV.*, p. 102. For the role of Prague, see Peter Moraw, 'Zur Mittelpunktsfunktion Prags im Zeitalter Karls IV.', in Klaus-Detlev Grothusen and Klaus Zernack (eds.), *Europa slavica, Europa orientalis: Festschrift für Herbert Ludat zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1980), pp. 445–89; Paul Crossley and Zoë Opačič, 'Prag: die Krone des böhmischen Königtums', in Fajt (ed.), *Karl IV. Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden*, pp. 197–235.

[28] See Ernst Schubert, 'Probleme der Königsherrschaft im spätmittelalterlichen Reich: das Beispiel Ruprechts von der Pfalz (1400–1410)', in Rudolf Schneider (ed.), *Das spätmittelalterliche Königtum im europäischen Vergleich* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1987), pp. 135–84.

[29] Peter Moraw, 'Kaiser Karl IV. 1378–1978: Ertrag und Konsequenzen eines Gedenkjahres', in Rainer Christoph Schwinges and Herbert Ludat (eds.), *Politik, Gesellschaft, Geschichtsschreibung: Gießener Festgabe für František Graus zum 60. Geburtstag* (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1982), p. 250. The most notable example of such transitory institutional growth is provided by Dietrich von Portitz, honorific Bohemian chancellor, who has been described as Charles IV's 'finance minister'. Dietrich presided for a time over his own separate chancery in Prague, with a competence extending

to both the Reich and Bohemia and, while it lasted, permanently based in the capital. See Moraw, 'Zur Mittelpunktsfunktion Prags', pp. 469–73.

[30] W.L. Warren, *The governance of Norman and Angevin England 1086–1272* (London: Arnold, 1987), esp. pp. 73–6. For the exchequer as exemplifying precocious Weberian modernity, see Clancy, *Memory*, p. 66.

[31] See generally Peter Moraw, 'Gedanken zur politischen Kontinuität im deutschen Spätmittelalter', in Mitarbeiter des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte (eds.), *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. September 1971*, 3 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), vol. II, pp. 45–60.

[32] Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 249.

[33] One did so very briefly at the start of Charles's reign, a second only after an interval of many years: Peter Moser, *Das Kanzleipersonal Kaiser Ludwigs des Bayern in den Jahren 1330–1347* (Munich: Arbeo-Gesellschaft, 1985), pp. 274–5.

[34] Peter Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal König Ruprechts', *AfD* 15 (1969), 451–2.

[35] Gerhard Seeliger, 'Die Registerführung am deutschen Königshof bis 1493', *MIöG* Eränzungsband 3 (1890/94), 246.

[36] For the figures, see Karl-Friedrich Krieger, *König, Reich und Reichsreform im Spätmittelalter* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1992), p. 34. At the end of the fifteenth century the annual revenues of the richest among the electors were estimated at between 60,000 gulden (Mainz, Palatinate) and 80,000 gulden (Cologne); elsewhere, by contrast, those of the republic of Venice amounted to over a million gulden: Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire', pp. 251, 260–1.

[37] Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire', p. 255.

[38] Nearly a third of all medieval pledges of imperial property were thus contracted under Charles IV alone: Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire', p. 254.

[39] *Chronicon Colmariense*, ed. Philipp Jaffé, in *MGH Scriptores*, vol. XVII (Hannover: Hahn, 1861), p. 246. For the recurrent motif of Rudolf I's poverty, see Erich Kleinschmidt, *Herrscherdarstellung: Zur Disposition mittelalterlichen Aussageverhaltens untersucht an Texten über Rudolf I. von*

Habsburg (Bern and Munich: Francke, 1974), pp. 229–30. As H.S. Offler long ago observed, 'Material from which to write a continuous financial history of the late medieval Empire does not survive': 'Aspects of government in the late medieval Empire', in J.R. Hale, J.R.L. Highfield and B. Smalley (eds.), *Europe in the late Middle Ages* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), p. 227.

[40] Winfried Trusen, *Anfänge des gelehrten Rechts in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1962), pp. 179–81; and see generally Otto Franklin, *Das Reichshofgericht im Mittelalter: Geschichte—Verfassung—Verfahren—Rechtsprechung*, vol. I (Weimar: Böhlau, 1867).

[41] Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte*, pp. 251–2. As Thomas observes, this figure can be contrasted with the 921 known documents from the Paris *Parlement* for the year 1348 alone.

[42] Heinz Angermeier, *Königtum und Landfriede im deutschen Spätmittelalter* (Munich: Beck, 1966), pp. 278–97.

[43] See generally Theodor Lindner, *Die Veme* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1896).

[44] Krieger, *König, Reich und Reichsreform*, pp. 47–8, 112–13; Gabriele Annas, *Hoftag—Gemeiner Tag—Reichstag: Studien zur strukturellen Entwicklung deutscher Reichsversammlungen des späten Mittelalters (1349–1471)*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).

[45] Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire', p. 255. For the resistance which Rudolf I encountered in attempting to extend urban taxation during the 1280s, see Thomas M. Martin, *Die Städtepolitik Rudolfs von Habsburg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), p. 159. Charles IV's success in augmenting his income from the towns during the 1370s was also characteristically short-lived and had significant negative repercussions for the monarchy: Ferdinand Seibt, *Karl IV.: ein Kaiser in Europa 1346 bis 1378* (Munich: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1978), pp. 332–5.

[46] Isenmann, 'The Holy Roman Empire', pp. 257–8.

[47] Ibid., p. 265; Steven W. Rowan, 'Imperial taxes and German politics in the fifteenth century: an outline', *Central European History* 13 (1980), 203–17.

[48] Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 417.

[49] *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, vol. V (*Deutsche Reichstagsakten under König Ruprecht, zweite Abth., 1401–1405*), ed. Julius Weizsäcker (Gotha: Perthes, 1885), no. 206, p. 267 (13 March 1402).

[50] For this, see Len E. Scales, '*Germen militiae*: war and German identity in the later Middle Ages', *P&P* 180 (2003), 41–82.

[51] For a warning against the anachronistic use of term and concept, see Hans-Walter Klewitz, 'Cancellaria: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des geistlichen Hofdienstes', *Deutsches Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters* 1 (1937), 44–79. For an overview of the late-medieval imperial chancery, citing older literature, see Arnd Reitemeier, *Aussenpolitik im Spätmittelalter: die diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen dem Reich und England 1377-1422* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999), pp. 82-104.

[52] Helmut Bansa, *Studien zur Kanzlei Kaiser Ludwigs des Bayern vom Tag der Wahl bis zur Rückkehr aus Italien (1314–1329)* (Kallmünz: Lassleben, 1968), p. 104; Moser, *Das Kanzleipersonal*, pp. 268–74; and see also S. Herzberg-Fränkel, 'Geschichte der deutschen Reichskanzlei 1246–1308', *MIöG* Ergänzungsband 1 (1885), 280–4.

[53] Paul-Joachim Heinig, 'Zur Kanzleipraxis unter Kaiser Friedrich III. (1440–1493)', *AfD* 31 (1985), 388–9.

[54] Theodor Lindner, *Das Urkundenwesen Karls IV. und seiner Nachfolger (1346–1437)* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1882), p. 26.

[55] The most knowledgeable modern student of the chancery of the Luxemburg rulers has concluded that as late as the second half of the fourteenth century no such written ordinances existed: Ivan Hlaváček, 'Studien zur Diplomatik König Wenzels (IV.)', *MIöG* 69 (1961), 294.

[56] The early evidence is surveyed by Seeliger, 'Die Registerführung', 224–31. From Rupert's reign there survive 14 volumes of registers: 10 originals and 4 near-contemporary copies. There must originally have been more, in particular, further special registers: ibid., p. 263. For comparative dates for the introduction of registration in various European chanceries, see John Watts, *The making of polities: Europe, 1300–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), p. 240.

[57] Bansa, *Studien*, p. 300.

[58] Weber, *FMW*, ch. 8; and see also Eugene Kamenka, *Bureaucracy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp. 82–3.

[59] See the comments of Moraw, 'Zur Mittelpunktsfunktion Prags', p. 469.

[60] The chancery activities both of Charles IV's chancellors and of those of his son Wenceslas have left little trace in the records: Ivan Hlaváček, 'Die Geschichte der Kanzlei König Wenzels IV. und ihre Beamten in den Jahren 1376–1419', *Historica* 5 (1963), 13.

[61] For Johann's literary activities, which encompassed works in both German and Latin, see Werner Höver, 'Johann von Neumarkt', in Kurt Ruh (ed.), *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, vol. IV (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983), cols. 686–95.

[62] Dieter Hägermann, *Studien zum Urkundenwesen Wilhelms von Holland: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Königsurkunde im 13. Jahrhundert* (*AfD*, Beiheft 2, Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1977), pp. 33–4; Franz-Reiner Erkens, 'Über Kanzlei und Kanzler König Sigismunds: zum Kontinuitätsproblem in der deutschen Königskanzlei unter dem letzten Luxemburger', *AfD* 33 (1987), 436.

[63] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 500–3.

[64] Bansa, *Studien*, p. 105. For the character of office in modern bureaucracy, see Gerth and Wright Mills (ed. and trans.), *From Max Weber*, pp. 196–8.

[65] Moraw, 'Die Verwaltung', p. 28. For the several regional client-groups identifiable within Charles IV's chancery, see Moraw, 'Räte und Kanzlei', p. 291.

[66] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 528. Raban was also responsible for the unusually sophisticated system of registration established under Rupert: ibid., p. 453.

[67] Bansa, *Studien*, p. 242.

[68] Vincenz Samenek, *Neue Beiträge zu den Regesten König Adolfs* (Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Philosophisch-historische Klasse 214, Vienna and Leipzig: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1932), pp. 7–8.

[69] Specifically, he sought, with some success, to prevent Adolf from having recourse to Heinrich von Klingenberg, Rudolf I's protonotary and vice-chancellor: ibid., pp. 9–10. Charles IV recognized his great-uncle, Archbishop Balduin of Trier, as enjoying the power to appoint and remove chancellors, protonotaries and notaries, and confirmed the same powers to Balduin's successor at Trier. In spite of

this, however, Charles accepted in practice no limitation upon his own control of appointments: Lindner, *Das Urkundenwesen*, pp. 14–15.

[70] Mathias Lawo, 'Sprachen der Macht—Sprache als Macht: Urkundensprachen im Reich des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, p. 535.

[71] Clanchy, *Memory*, p. 61.

[72] R. W. Southern, *Western society and the church in the middle ages* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 109; D. A. Carpenter, 'The English royal chancery in the thirteenth century', in Fiano & Guth, *Écrit*, pp. 34–5. For further discussion of medieval English record-production, see Crooks, below, pp. ++.

[73] Peter Moraw, 'Grundzüge der Kanzleigeschichte Kaiser Karls IV. (1346–1378)', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 12 (1985), 22. For the solemn diploma as the characteristic imperial document, see Timothy Reuter, 'Mandate, privilege, court judgement: techniques of rulership in the age of Frederick Barbarossa', in Reuter, *MPMM*, pp. 413–31. That the output of the imperial chancery retained into the fifteenth century its highly traditional aspect is underlined by a current project to create a full record of Sigismund's documentary output. For its first fruits, see *Regesta Imperii XI: Regesten Kaiser Sigismunds (1410-1437): Die Urkunden und Briefe aus den Archiven und Bibliotheken Mährens und Tschechisch-Schlesiens*, ed. Petr Elbel (Vienna: Böhlau, 2012).

[74] Thus the growing popularity in the fifteenth century of grants of armorials: Andreas Zajic and Petr Elbel, 'Wappenmarkt und Marktwappen: diplomatische und personengeschichtliche Überlegungen zum Wappenbrief König Sigismunds für Mohelno aus der Zeit des Konstanzer Konzils', in Karel Hruza and Alexandra Kaar (eds.), *Kaiser Sigismund (1368-1437): zur Herrschaftspraxis eines europäischen Monarchen* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2012), pp. 301-64.

[75] For evidence supporting this conclusion, see Michael Lindner, 'Es war an der Zeit: die Goldene Bulle in der politischen Praxis Kaiser Karls IV.', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, pp. 93–4, 97.

[76] For the recipients, see ibid., pp. 101–12.

[77] Peter Moraw, concentrating on Germany, has suggested that less than one per cent of the documents issued in the name of Charles IV was concerned with affairs which can be termed *gesamtdeutsch* (translatable here as 'touching the whole of the Empire's German-speaking core'): Moraw, 'Vom Raumgefüge', p. 79.

[78] See Hlaváček, 'Studien', 294.

[79] Moraw, 'Grundzüge', 22.

[80] For the proliferation of writs, see Clanchy, *Memory*, pp. 58, 67.

[81] For administrative literature as a characteristically English contribution to twelfth-century learning, see R. W. Southern, *Medieval humanism and other studies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), p. 176.

[82] For what follows, see Moraw, 'Vom Raumgefüge', pp. 70, 75.

[83] Ibid., pp. 72–3.

[84] Moraw, 'Grundzüge', 23.

[85] An outstanding instance is Wenceslas's bestowal upon Giangaleazzo Visconti of the heritable titles of duke of Milan and count of Pavia, in return for a payment of 100,000 gulden (Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte*, pp. 332–3).

[86] Hanns Wohlgemuth, *Das Urkundenwesen des deutschen Reichshofgerichts, 1273–1378: eine kanzleigeschichtliche Studie* (Quellen und Forschungen zur höchsten Gerichtsbarkeit im alten Reich, vol. I, Cologne and Graz: Böhlau, 1973), p. 34.

[87] Moser, *Das Kanzleipersonal*, pp. 273–4.

[88] Taking Charles's reign as a whole, 44 per cent of his chancery staff came from the German heartlands of his itinerary and 33 per cent from his dynastic territories (Moraw, 'Grundzüge', 38).

[89] Ibid., p. 33. Even when a princely writing office already existed, however, its importance as a basis for imperial administration was not in every case equally great. Thus, while King Rupert's chancery certainly drew upon established Palatinate servants, the greater number was recruited from elsewhere following Rupert's elevation to the throne (Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal, 510).

[90] Hägermann, *Studien*, p. 22.

[91] Moser, *Das Kanzleipersonal* , pp. 275–6; Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 520. Such behaviour contrasts with what Weber regarded as the essence of modern bureaucratic loyalty, namely that it 'is devoted to impersonal and functional purposes' (Weber, *FMW*, p. 199).

[92] Harry Bresslau, *Handbuch der Urkundenlehre für Deutschland und Italien*, 3 vols., 2nd edn (Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1912–1931), vol. I, p. 570.

[93] Hägermann, *Studien*, p. 40.

[94] See Bansa, *Studien*, pp. 106–7.

[95] For Charles IV's long reign, see Thomas, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 250.

[96] Carpenter, 'The English royal chancery', in Fiano & Guth, *Écrit*, p. 35.

[97] Of the 507 known documents from the reign in Germany of Frederick II's son Henry (VII), 1220–1235, only 128 are identifiable as chancery products (Paul Zinsmaier, 'Studien zu den Urkunden Heinrichs (VII.) und Konrads IV.', *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 100 (1952), 447–8, 556–7). However, not all the reigns of this period show a predominant reliance on outsiders. Of William of Holland's known documents, a good 80 per cent are thought to be the work of scribes writing for the king (Hägermann, *Studien*, p. 363). For rare instances of diplomas still written by their beneficiaries under Wenceslas (and the more common practice of their involvement in drafting), see Hlaváček, 'Studien', esp. 326–7.

[98] For French and Italian representations of Germans, see Scales, '*Germen militiae*', esp. 71. For the vibrant document culture in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy, and the resulting demand for paper, see Peter Spufford, *Power and Profit: the Merchant in Medieval Europe* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002), pp. 255–7.

[99] See Sabine Krüger, 'Das Rittertum in den Schriften des Konrad von Megenberg', in Josef Fleckenstein (ed.), *Herrschaft und Stand: Untersuchungen zu Sozialgeschichte im 13. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), p. 303.

[100] *Die Goldene Bulle Kaiser Karls IV. vom Jahre 1356*, ed. Wolfgang D. Fritz, *MGH Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui*, vol. XI (Weimar: Böhlaus Nachf., 1972), cap. 31, p. 90.

[101] Max Vancsa, *Das erste Auftreten der deutschen Sprache in den Urkunden* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1895), p. 10.

[102] Ivan Hlaváček, *Das Urkunden- und Kanzleiwesen des böhmischen und römischen Königs Wenzel (IV.) 1376–1419* (*MGH Schriften*, vol. XXIII, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1970), p. 88.

[103] Lawo, 'Sprachen der Macht', pp. 521, 535.

[104] Hlaváček, *Das Urkunden- und Kanzleiwesen*, p. 91.

[105] For an outline, see Scales, *Shaping of German identity*, ch. 5.

[106] This lightness of touch might be contrasted with the 'big-government' tradition which the Hohenstaufen inherited in the south from the Norman kings of Sicily. Much admired by some modern students of the period, Sicilian kingship had a well-established track-record of provoking rebellions among its much-burdened subjects. Already a fact of life under the Norman kings, these continued under Frederick II, provoking a dismally familiar pattern of heavy-handed royal reprisals, culminating in Frederick's mass expulsion of the island's Muslim population (and its enslavement under his Angevin successors): see David Abulafia, 'The Italian other: Greeks, Muslims, and Jews', in David Abulafia (ed.), *Italy in the central Middle Ages, 1000–1300* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), pp. 215–36. For the memory, and the pictorial re-enactment, of imperial triumph south of the Alps, see the picture-chronicle of Henry VII's expedition to Rome, commissioned *c.*1340 by his brother, Archbishop Balduin of Trier: Michel Margue, Michel Pauly and Wolfgang Schmid (eds.), *Der Weg zur Kaiserkrone: der Romzug Heinrichs VII. in der Darstellung Erzbischof Balduins von Trier* (Trier: Kliomedia, 2009).

[107] Lawo, 'Sprachen der Macht', pp. 524–5; Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 439.

[108] Peter Moraw, *Von offener Verfassung zu gestalteter Verdichtung: das Reich im späten Mittelalter* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1985), p. 172.

[109] Dieter Hägermann, 'Studien zum Urkundenwesen König Heinrich Raspes (1246/47)', *DA* 36 (1980), esp. 501, 508, 509, 542–3. Henry's other two identifiable scribes had already written for him as landgrave of Thuringia.

[110] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 520 n. 64.

[111] Ibid., p. 466.

[112] Seeliger, 'Die Registerführung', 245.

[113] Ibid., pp. 254–61.

[114] See Peter Moraw, 'Monarchie und Bürgertum', in Seibt (ed.), *Kaiser Karl IV.*, pp. 43–63; and for *Verdichtung*, Moraw, *Von offener Verfassung*, pp. 15–27.

[115] Moraw, 'Wesenszüge', p. 157; and for Kaspar Schlick: Erkens, 'Über Kanzlei', 449; Franz Fuchs, 'Schlick, Kaspar', in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. XXIII (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2006), pp. 77–8.

[116] Moraw, 'Zur Mittelpunktsfunktion Prags', p. 480.

[117] Trusen, *Anfänge*, pp. 190–208; Franklin, *Das Reichshofgericht*, part V.

[118] Graphically illustrated in the chronicler Salimbene de Adam's anecdote claiming that Frederick II had punished with the loss of his thumb a notary who misspelt the emperor's name: *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, ed. and trans. Joseph L. Baird, Giuseppe Baglivi and John Robert Kane (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1986), p. 352. Salimbene is a biased witness, but the intensely ideological character of Frederick's documents is emphasized in Olaf B. Rader, *Friedrich II.: der Sizilianer auf dem Kaiserthron*, 4th revised edn (Munich: Beck, 2012), pp. 161-76.

[119] 173 copies of the Golden Bull are known from the late Middle Ages, with the highpoint for copying falling in the period 1435–75: see Marie-Luise Heckmann, 'Zeitnahe Wahrnehmung und internationale Ausstrahlung: die Goldene Bulle Karls IV. im ausgehenden Mittelalter mit einem Ausblick auf die frühe Neuzeit', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. II, pp. 934, 938 (and map of dissemination at p. 935).

[120] Claudia Garnier, 'Die Ordnung des Reiches: die Position des Herrschers in der Goldenen Bulle in der Wahrnehmung bis 1400', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, pp. 227–9.

[121] Robert Suckale, 'Die Hofkunst im 14. Jahrhundert', in Matthias Puhle and Claus-Peter Hasse (eds.), *Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation 962 bis 1806: von Otto dem Grossen bis zum*

Ausgang des Mittelalters, 2 vols. (Dresden: Sandstein, 2006), vol. I, p. 326; Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch, 'Zeichen des Reiches im 14. und frühen 15. Jahrhundert', in ibid., p. 338.

[122] Ernő Marosi, 'Reformatio Sigismundi: künstlerische und politische Repräsentation am Hof Sigismunds von Luxemburg', in Imre Takács (ed.), *Sigismundus Rex et Imperator: Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437* (Mainz: Zabern, 2006), pp. 25–7.

[123] The diplomas of Charles IV were in their visual qualities the successors to those of the Ottonians, Salians and Staufer: Rader, 'Zwischen Friedberg und Eco', pp. 287–8. As an example of imperial privileges created for visual effect, see the five solemn confirmations issued in 1361 in favour of the church of Freising: ibid., pp. 278–80. Heinrich Koller has emphasized the exceptional care with which documents in Sigismund's name were produced: Heinrich Koller, 'Sigismund', in Helmut Beumann (ed.) *Kaisergestalten des Mittelalters* (Munich: Beck, 1984), p. 287.

[124] For the difficulty which William's scribes experienced in producing appropriately impressive documents, see Hägermann, *Studien*, pp. 208–9; and for Ludwig's illustrated diplomas, Robert Suckale, *Die Hofkunst Kaiser Ludwigs des Bayern* (Munich: Hirmer, 1993), pp. 36–9.

[125] Ernst Schubert, 'Ludwig der Bayer im Widerstreit der öffentlichen Meinung seiner Zeit', in Hermann Nehlsen and Hans-Georg Hermann (eds.), *Kaiser Ludwig der Bayer: Konflikte, Weichenstellungen und Wahrnehmung seiner Herrschaft* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002), p. 178.

[126] For the evidence, see Jean-Marie Moeglin, 'Das Erbe Ludwigs des Bayern', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, p. 23.

[127] Schubert, 'Ludwig der Bayer', p. 178.

[128] *MGH Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum*, vol. V, ed. Jakob Schwalm (Hannover and Leipzig: Hahn, 1909–13), no. 973, p. 811.

[129] Trusen, *Anfänge*, ch. 11.

[130] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal, 458, 485, 503. An outstanding example is the Paris-, Heidelberg- and Bologna-educated jurist Job Vener, who placed his learning at the service not only of King Rupert but of Rupert's successor in the Palatinate, Count Palatine Ludwig III, and of the church of Speyer. He also played a significant part in the Council of Constance. See Herman Heimpel, *Die*

Vener von Gmünd und Straßburg, 1162–1447, 3 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), esp. vol. I, pp. 159–328.

[131] For England, see T. F. Tout, 'Literature and learning in the English civil service in the fourteenth century', *Speculum* 4 (1929), 365–89; and see Crooks, below, p. ++.

[132] See generally: Wilhelm Kölmel, *Regimen Christianum: Weg und Ergebnisse des Gewaltenverhältnisses und des Gewaltenverständnisses (8. bis 14. Jahrhundert)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1970); Helmut G. Walther, *Imperiales Königtum: Konziliarismus und Volkssouveränität* (Munich: Fink, 1976).

[133] Dick E. H. De Boer, 'Ludwig the Bavarian and the scholars', in Jan W. Drijvers and Alasdair A. MacDonald (eds.), *Centres of learning: learning and location in pre-modern Europe and the Near East* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 229–44.

[134] Alphons Lhotsky, *Privilegium Maius: die Geschichte einer Urkunde* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1957). For Petrarch's letter (misdated to 1355), see Peter Burke, *The renaissance sense of the past* (London: Arnold, 1969), pp. 50–4.

[135] For the chancery as a source of legitimacy, see Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 434; Erkens, 'Über Kanzlei', 432–3.

[136] For the quest for legitimacy in the form of continuity, see Peter Moraw, 'Gedanken zur politischen Kontinuität', p. 51.

[137] Hlaváček, 'Die Geschichte', 12. Wenceslas's chancery was always smaller than his father's, however.

[138] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 488–97.

[139] Fuchs, 'Schlick', p. 78; E. Schubert, 'Konrad von Weinsberg', in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. V (Munich and Zürich: Artemis, 1991), col. 1366.

[140] Moraw, 'Kanzlei und Kanzleipersonal', 454–6. For the basis of Speyer's status, see Caspar Ehlers, *Metropolis Germaniae: Studien zur Bedeutung Speyers für das Königtum (751–1250)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996).

[141] Hägermann, *Studien*, p. 223. For thirteenth-century continuities in the service of chancery scribes, see also Herzberg-Fränkel, 'Geschichte', 287–8.

[142] For the legitimising power of documentary titles, see Wolfgang Eggert, 'Bemerkungen zur Intitulatio in den Urkunden Karls IV.', in Lindner, Müller-Mertens and Rader (eds.), *Kaiser, Reich und Region*, pp. 295–311.

[143] *Die Urkunden Heinrich Raspes und Wilhelms von Holland*, ed. Dieter Hägermann and Jaap G. Kruisheer, *MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae*, vol. XVIII (Hannover: Hahn, 1989, 2006), no. 48, pp. 82–4 (3 Nov. 1248).

[144] *Vita Henrici archiepiscopi altera*, ed. Georg Waitz, in *MGH Scriptores*, vol. XXIV (Hannover: Hahn, 1879), p. 462. On this figure, see generally Tilman Struve, 'Die falschen Friedriche und die Friedenssehnsucht des Volkes im späten Mittelalter', in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter: internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16.–19. September 1986* (*MGH Schriften*, vol. XXXIII.i, Hannover: Hahn, 1988), pp. 317–37.

[145] Thus Crooks, 'State of the union', 40, referring to English imperialism. Anthony Pagden, *Peoples and Empires* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001), p. 53, moves directly from Charlemagne to the sixteenth-century Habsburg, Charles V, on the grounds that the latter 'briefly transformed [the Empire] from a merely German affair [requiring no discussion in a comparative history of empires] back into a true *imperium*'. Pagden does less than justice to the enduring imperial qualities of the late-medieval Reich (for which, see above); but the emphasis on the lack of all expansionist momentum is appropriate enough. For the medieval Reich in relation to other empires, see also Reynolds, 'Empires'.

[146] Heinz Angermeier, *Die Reichsreform 1410–1555: die Staatsproblematik Deutschlands zwischen Mittelalter und Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 1984).

[147] Charles IV's reign is favourably compared with those of contemporary eastern emperors by Franz Tinnefeld, 'Mehrer des Reiches oder Verwalter des Niederganges: ein Vergleich kaiserlicher Macht zur Zeit Karls IV. im Abendland und in Byzanz', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. II, pp. 619–37.

[148] Although bureaucracy can also, of course, provide an element of resilience in an empire, as in earlier centuries was the case with Byzantium: see above, introduction, p. ++; and Haldon, pp. ++.

[149] On the high-medieval opposition to the emperors, see now Gianluca Raccagni, *The Lombard league, 1167–1225* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010).

[150] For the latter, see Robin Frame, 'Exporting state and nation: being English in medieval Ireland', in Scales & Zimmer, *Power*, pp. 143–65.

[151] For such ventures as a form of imperial behaviour, see Kamenka, *Bureaucracy*, p. 51.

[152] On this see John Gillingham, 'The beginnings of English imperialism', in Wong & Sayer, *British state*, pp. 138–156.

[153] See Brian Stock, *The implications of literacy: written language and models of interpretation in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1983), pp. 30–1.

[154] Wolfgang Schmid, 'Vom Rheinland nach Böhmen: Studien zur Reliquienpolitik Kaiser Karls IV.', in Hohensee, Lawo, Lindner, Menzel and Rader (eds.), *Die Goldene Bulle*, vol. I, p. 464.