

bishops with imperial notaries was very slim and often questionable. She also drew attention to inconsistencies in Huschner's reasoning: sometimes he presumes that a bishop's pontificate should overlap with the period of activity of the relevant scribe, while at others he employs the reverse logic, concluding that the bishop is likely to have given up notarial service upon his appointment. Given this approach, Huschner's findings are hard to falsify<sup>13</sup>.

The longest and most critical response came from Hartmut Hoffmann, who wrote a stinging 46-page article on the „Huschner thesis“ in the present journal. The main basis for Hoffmann's criticism was Huschner's palaeographical identifications: with one exception, Hoffmann deemed these mistaken or unproven. He also expressed grave doubts as to whether bishops were involved in charter production on any scale in the tenth and eleventh centuries, even calling into question Fichtenau's earlier identification of Willigis C with Pilgrim of Passau<sup>14</sup>. Less wide-ranging, but no less noteworthy, were the objections raised by Sébastien Barret in his 2003 study of Cluny's relations with the Ottonians. Here Barret expressed concerns about Huschner's identification of the imperial notary Heribert D with Odilo of Cluny, pointing to important differences between the former's dating conventions and those employed at Cluny. Heribert D may have been an Italian associate of the abbot, but he was probably not Odilo himself<sup>15</sup>.

While one might have hoped that such controversy would generate further interest, it seems to have had the reverse effect: scholars have been left scratching their heads, uncertain whether to run with Huschner's exciting new findings or to pass over them in judicious silence. Huschner himself promised to return to Hoffmann's criticisms, but no dedicated response has followed, and the debate has been left in limbo<sup>16</sup>. A common response has been compromise: to cite Huschner's

---

13) Brigitte MERTA, Rezension von HUSCHNER, *Transalpine Kommunikation*, in: MIÖG 113 (2005) p. 403–409.

14) Hartmut HOFFMANN, *Notare, Kanzler und Bischöfe am ottonischen Hof*, in: DA 61 (2005) p. 435–480.

15) Sébastien BARRET, *Cluny et les Ottoniens*, in: Ottone III e Romualdo di Ravenna: impero, monasteri e santi asceti (2003) p. 179–213, at p. 196–199.

16) HUSCHNER, *Ottomische Kanzlei* (as n. 10) p. 370 n. 67. See most recently Wolfgang HUSCHNER, *Stand und Perspektiven der Historischen Grundwissenschaften. Kaiser- und Königsurkunden*, in: AfD 66 (2020) p. 357–388, esp. p. 366–374, standing by his earlier arguments, though acknowledging: „[ü]ber vorgeschlagene Identifizierungen bestimmter Personen mit Diplomschreibern kann man sicher diskutieren“ (p. 373).