

# Leopold I is Crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Frankfurt am Main on August 1, 1658 (c. 1693)

## Abstract

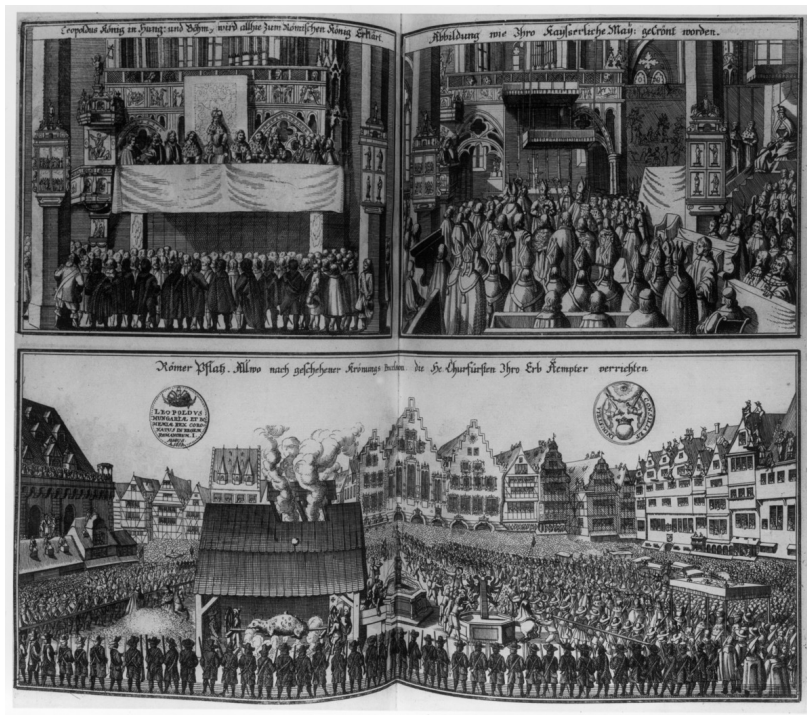
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In 1658, after a 15-month interregnum, Leopold I (r. 1658-1705), the second son of Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand III (r. 1637-57), succeeded his father as Holy Roman Emperor. In domestic politics, the well-educated and artistically inclined ruler pursued a policy based on Catholic Counter-Reformation, the expansion of his core dominions, and the centralization and streamlining of the administration. Leopold's foreign policy focused on reasserting Habsburg power in the Empire after the devastating Thirty Years War, expelling the invading Ottomans from Austria and Hungary, and fighting a prolonged battle against the expansionary initiatives of France's King Louis XIV (r. 1661-1715), which culminated in the War of the Spanish Succession from 1701 to 1714.

The image below shows the imperial coronation festivities in and around Frankfurt's "Römer." Frankfurt had been the site of the coronation banquets of the German kings since 1147. Starting in 1562, the coronation banquets of the Holy Roman emperors were held there as well. The two scenes comprising the top half of this engraving take place inside the "Römer," Frankfurt's historic city hall. The scene on the left shows the imperial proclamation. The caption reads: "Leopold King of Hungary and Bohemia is here declared Roman King" ["Leopoldus König in Hung: und Böhm., wird allhie zum Römischen König erklärt"]. The scene on the right shows the coronation itself. The caption reads: "Depiction of how His Imperial Majesty was crowned" ["Abbildung wie Ihro Kaijserliche Maij: gecrönt worden"]. The bottom half of the engraving shows Römer Square after the procession and before the accompanying feast (note the large ox roasting on a spit in the smokehouse in the foreground). The caption reads: "Römer Square, where the Electors carry out Their hereditary offices after the Coronation Procession took place" ["Römer Platz, Allwo nach geschehener Krönungs Procession. Die He. Churfürsten Ihro Erb Äempter verrichten"]. The "Römer," a complex of three step-gabled Gothic buildings, can be seen in the background (center).

## Source

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Source: Copperplate engraving from vol. 8 of *Theatrum Europaeum*, edited by the Swiss artists Matthäus (Mathias) Merian the Elder (1593-1650) and the Younger (1621-87), c. 1693.

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