CONNECTING PEOPLE

SAINTS, RELICS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE EARLY MEDIEVAL WORLD

IN MEMORY OF JANNEKE RAAIJMAKERS

EDITED BY ALBRECHT DIEM,
MAYKE DE JONG AND
IRENE VAN RENSWOUDE

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in Memory of Janneke Raaijmakers
Eds. Albrecht Diem, Mayke de Jong, Irene van Renswoude

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The cover image of this book features a drawing of a feather. It was created by Janneke Raaijmakers as is the painting of a group of finches from Darwin's bird collection at the back of the book. We would like to thank her family, Jaap-Hein, Aafke and Magnus Vruggink, for their permission to publish Janneke's art.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction: Connecting People – A Tribute to Janneke Raaijmakers 7
Albrecht Diem, Irene van Renswoude, Mayke de Jong

Let us Keep in Touch: Relics, Letters and Gift Exchange in Late Antiquity 14
Janneke Raaijmakers, with Irene van Renswoude

PART 1: SAINTS 27

Avoiding the Miraculous in Isidore of Seville 28
Kati Ihnat

Reading Hagiography in Times of Reform: The Carolingian Legendary Montpellier, Bibl. Interuniversitaire de médecine, H 55 50
Gordon Blennemann

"Remembered, Blessed, and Praised". Immaterial Relics in Radbod of Utrecht's Miracle Story of St. Martin 72
Els Rose

Finding Founding Fathers. Balderik of Utrecht and the Propagation of Saints' Cults (c. 917-976) 93
Jelle Visser

PART 2: RELICS 121

Inscribing Sanctity. An Approach to Relic Inscriptions 122
Elisa Pallottini

Of Gold and Silk: On the Poem by Hincmar of Reims Embroidered by Alpais on the Cushion of St. Remi 139
Cécile Treffort

A Gift of Alms? Charlemagne and the Relics of Sens Cathedral 154
Julia M. H. Smith

Together in the Community of the Saints: Relic Collection and "Rememory" at the Abbey of Corbie 172
Anne E. Lester

Signed and Sealed: Determining the Authenticity of the Relics of St. Rombout in the Early Modern Period 195
Renée Schilling

PART 3: COMMUNITY 211

Saints – Warriors – Slaves – Disciples: Community and Agency in Sixth-century Monastic Rules from Gaul 212
Albrecht Diem

The Creation of Community through Epitaphs: The Case of Early Medieval Lyon 234
Ophelia Norris

Keep the Faith: Hope and Fear as Emotional Concepts in Carolingian Culture 254
Rutger Kramer

The Many Families of Aelred of Rievaulx 277
Barbara H. Rosenwein

PART 4: MEMORY 293

The Christian Past in Sixth-century Verona: Biblioteca capitolare Cod. XXII (20) 294
Rosamond McKitterick

The Shadow of Leovigild. Royal Power and Episcopal Deliberation in Early Medieval Iberia 315
Kay Boers

Constructing Canonical Authority. Gregory the Great and the Libellus Responsionum in the Early Middle Ages 332
Rob Meens

Writing as Jerome: On Paschasius Radbertus and his Sermon for Theodrada and Imma 350
Mayke de Jong

List of publications of Janneke Ellen Raaijmakers 369
List of abbreviations 371
Index 372

INTRODUCTION: CONNECTING PEOPLE – A TRIBUTE TO JANNEKE RAAIJMAKERS

ALBRECHT DIEM, IRENE VAN RENSWOUDE, MAYKE DE JONG

This book is a tribute to an exceptional scholar, dear friend, esteemed colleague and beloved mentor. Its title, *Connecting People*, has two meanings. It pertains to the content of this volume: most contributions explore how texts, manuscripts, relics, artefacts, reading practices, rituals, or modes of discipline connected people and created communities. Yet it also reflects one of Janneke's many virtues: she brought people together. Her genuine curiosity and excitement about her colleagues' and students' work, her collegiality, dedication to giving feedback, creativity and friendliness set a tone that fostered communication, the exchange of ideas and a spirit of collaboration, which permeates the chapters of this book.

Janneke Ellen Raaijmakers was born on June 28, 1973, as one of three daughters. She studied History at Utrecht University, specialising in Medieval History, and gained her MA ("doctoraal") in 1996. Janneke was an active member of both the History Department and the interdisciplinary course in Medieval Studies. She always looked younger than she was, and her modesty belied her accomplishments; her Medieval Latin was ferociously good, and her historical analysis sharp and to the point. Her skills made her an ideal candidate for various student assistantships. She completed her undergraduate with an MA-thesis on the ninth-century *Vita Alcuini.* It included a full translation of this exceedingly complicated text which some of us still use. It was clear that she had a real talent and should be given the opportunity to do doctoral research.

In 1997 Janneke applied for a funded PhD position slot at the University of Amsterdam, with a topic of her own choice, supervised by Piet Leupen. She took full advantage of this opportunity, which included a highly formative academic year, 1998/99, at the University of St. Andrews under the wing of Julia Smith. She also retained her many ties with Utrecht and continued working with her undergraduate supervisor, Mayke de Jong. On December 9, 2003 she defended a splendid thesis entitled *Sacred Time, Sacred Space. History and Identity at*

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the Monastery of Fulda (744-856) which in 2006 was awarded the Dr. Josef Leinweberpreis of the Theologische Fakultät of the University of Fulda (Germany).

After completing her PhD Janneke held a part-time teaching appointment while working on a major postdoctoral grant application. Thomas F. X. Noble, who profoundly admired her work, invited her to be a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Medieval Institute of Notre Dame University (USA) between August and December of 2004, where she started turning her PhD thesis into a book and developed new research plans. Supported by a Postdoctoral Grant of the NWO, the Dutch Research Organisation (2005-2010), she produced her acclaimed monograph, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda*, published by CUP in the Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and thought in 2012.

For years, Fulda in the Carolingian period had been the centre of Janneke's scholarly focus. She knew everything about this monastery and even spent a holiday walking the routes from the abbey to its dependencies to gain a better understanding of the landscape and the distances the monks had to travel. This exemplifies the thoroughness and hands-on approach with which she tackled every research venture in her career. She was not one for short-cuts. In 2010 she was appointed to a permanent position as Lecturer in Medieval History at Utrecht University, which not only allowed her to embark on new research projects but also to become a research supervisor and thus to have an impact on the next generation of scholars. Janneke was brilliant and fun. Working with her was a true pleasure, as many contributors to this volume can attest. Brimming with ideas and always ready to share a laugh, she was generous with her advice and support, particularly towards students and younger colleagues. But make no mistake, she was also a formidable presence. Anyone who sought her feedback on their writing knows that she possessed a sharp, incisive mind and had no patience for nonsense, vague prose, or poorly structured arguments. Her criticism, though, was always delivered gently but with unflinching honesty.

Janneke's study of the monastic community of Fulda established her international reputation. It also contains much that would later fuel her interest in the material aspects of the cult of saints. Today, in 2024, the study of material culture and its relationship to memory, identity, and community formation is a well-established field. Yet when Janneke published her monograph, object-oriented research was still emerging. In 2012, she secured a second major grant from NWO for a research project on relics and their contestation. It was an area of research that posed many challenges, especially in integrating written and material sources. *Mind over Matter: Debates about the Sanctity of Religious Objects, ca. 400-ca. 1200* broke new ground in the field, not least because it included the study of epigraphy. The grant covered not only Janneke's research time, but also funded a postdoc-epigrapher, Elisa Pallottini, and a PhD student-historian, Jelle Visser, who both contribute to this volume.

Janneke's decision to incorporate epigraphy among her sources was both novel and daring. Those advising her on her application doubted whether epigraphy could possibly reveal anything about debates on relics. However, Janneke trusted her instincts, and the pro-

ject's results proved her right: this approach turned out to be remarkably fruitful, and profoundly changed our understanding of the cult of relics and the medieval debates around it.

Another innovative method Janneke adopted during this phase of her career was the study of annotations in the margins and interlinear spaces of manuscripts. Janneke explored these spaces looking for traces of criticism or signs of approval that show how early medieval readers engaged with letters and treatises that discussed contested topics, such as relic veneration. She examined what we might call "graffiti on parchment": symbols and crosses incised by readers with a dry-point stylus.[1] These almost invisible marks revealed the interests of anonymous readers, showing what attracted their attention, what they found noteworthy, or what piqued their curiosity. Like the study of epigraphy, her investigation of annotations written in ink or scratched into parchment expanded the range of sources to study the cult of the saints, shedding new light on debates about relics.

Janneke's creativity, wit, and joy of learning are manifest in the titles she gave to her articles and public talks. Titles such as "I, Claudius: Self-Styling in Early Medieval Debate" leave a lasting impression, as does the title of a panel she organized at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, "The Abbot Strikes Back: Conflicts and Emotions in Monastic Communities." She advertised this panel with posters displayed all over the Leeds campus, featuring Jedi in monastic robes. At this annual congress (where Janneke was nick-named the "dancing queen") she threw her intellectual weight into formal and informal discussions.

Janneke's most recent research initiative centred on the significance of names and name-giving. In 2016, she received a Van Gogh Grant to undertake a research project in collaboration with colleagues from the *Centre d'Études Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale* (CÉSCM) at the University of Poitiers, with whom she had previously collaborated during the *Mind over Matter* project. The aim of this new project, EPINAME, was to explore the meaning of names and the practice of inscribing names in sacred spaces in the Middle Ages. The project team studied, for example, inscriptions in churches to identify both the relics of saints and the individuals who visited the cult sites. This research resulted in an edited volume, *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces: Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, published in 2023, two years after Janneke's death.[2]

This book is a tribute to Janneke's scholarly work, but we also want to highlight her artistic contributions. In the final years of her life, Janneke resumed drawing and painting, an activity she had always loved but to which she now dedicated more time. Some of her drawings and paintings were inspired by themes from her research, such as relics and the

[1] Janneke Raaijmakers, "Studying Jerome in a Carolingian monastery," in *The Annotated Book in the Early Middle Ages: Practices of Reading and Writing*, ed. Mariken Teeuwen and Irene van Renswoude (Turnhout: Brepols 2017), 621-646.

[2] Estele Ingrand-Varenne, Elisa Pallotini, and Janneke Raaijmakers, eds., *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces: Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 56 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023).

remembrance of the dead through the cherished objects they left behind. The cover image of this book features a drawing of a slightly ragged and bruised feather. We might interpret it as a quill for writing letters to distant friends, symbolizing the connection between people far apart. At the back of the book, there is a painting of a group of finches from Darwin's bird collection in the Natural History Museum in London. The tags on the finches' legs are reminiscent of relic labels.

CREATING COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING

This volume in Janneke's honour and memory creates a community, one of three generations of medieval historians: those who taught Janneke and had a major impact on her scholarly persona: Rosamond McKitterick, Mayke de Jong, Barbara Rosenwein, Julia Smith; her fellow students at the "Utrecht School": Albrecht Diem, Rutger Kramer, Rob Meens, Irene van Renswoude, Else Rose; scholars who became her peers and friends due to shared academic interests: Gordon Blennemann, Katie Ihnat, Anne Lester, Cécile Treffort; and the next generation, her students Kay Boers, Ophelia Norris, Elisa Pallottini, Renée Schilling, and Jelle Visser. One event that brings this community together is the annual *International Medieval Congress* in Leeds which Janneke attended for the last time in 2019, where she organized two sessions with presentations on her last project on *Names in Sacred Spaces*.

There are various ways to read the chapters in this volume. Each one naturally adds to the author's field and specialization, but they also form part of various dialogues, with different phases of Janneke's academic endeavours, building on her ideas and picking up threads that Janneke left unfinished, but also between the three scholarly generations represented in this volume. Since most contributors knew Janneke either as their student, as a fellow-student or as a teacher and mentor, and given the fact that Janneke was a dedicated teacher of undergraduate and graduate students, we want to highlight how the volume could be read by a graduate student of medieval history. We imagine it as a course reader for a graduate class on approaches and methods offering, in Janneke's own spirit of generosity, ideas and questions to be picked up and either elaborated further or carried into new contexts.

As a "course reader" our volume covers several overarching themes. First, most chapters revolve around various forms of engagement with the Latin of each text discussed in all its semantic, philological and rhetorical dimensions. It is no coincidence that Janneke's first academic work revolved around her own Dutch translation of the *Vita Alcuini*, a notoriously complicated text that even now has not been translated into English or German.[3]

[3] Janneke Raaijmakers, "Monnik zonder gelofte. De vita Alcuini in het licht van de Akense hervormingen (816-817)," unpublished MA-thesis (doctoraalscriptie), University of Utrecht, 1996). The only other available modern translation of the *Vita Alcuini* is provided in C. Veyrard-Cosme, *La Vita beati Alcuini (IXᵉ s.). Les inflexions d'un discours de sainteté. Introduction, édition et traduction annotée du texte d'après Reims, BM 1395 (K 784)* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 2017).

The contributions by Cécile Treffort, Ophelia Norris, Julia Smith, Elisa Pallottini and Renée Schilling build a bridge between textual studies and that of matter, focusing on texts on reliquaries, relic labels or on funerary inscriptions. Other contributions revolve around the various ways of studying texts in manuscripts rather than primarily relying on critical editions, as scholarship has done for generations. These show how one can work with manuscripts and that it is important to approach them with the entire repertoire of traditional auxiliary sciences. They also provide examples of how the study of manuscripts in their materiality, and of texts in their manuscript contexts, can enhance and alter our understanding of the past.

Gordon Blennemann takes the textual arrangements in a Carolingian legendary in Montpellier, Bibl. Interuniversitaire de médecine, H 55 as evidence of how a community of nuns establishes itself as a textual community. Rosamond McKitterick builds her exploration of the clerical community of Verona and their attempt to defend Christian orthodoxy around a codicological and palaeographical study and a study of the textual arrangements, textual variants and marginal annotations of manuscript Verona Biblioteca capitolare Cod. XXII (20). Julia Smith uses a palaeographical analysis of relic labels to confront a historical construct that gives Charlemagne a central role in the collective memory of the nunnery of Notre-Dame de Soissons with material evidence. Rob Meens traces the journey of Gregory the Great's *Libellus Responsionum* through its extant manuscripts to shed light on the construction of Pope Gregory the Great as witness of the legitimacy of diversity of Christian practice. All of these discussions exemplify the impossibility of pursuing cutting-edge questions without applying the traditional historical auxiliary sciences that Janneke mastered so well.

Several contributions to this volume may show a graduate student how many concepts and practices that have been taken for granted as foundational and largely stable elements of medieval society deserve to be historicized and problematized. Moreover, they show that these concepts and practices were intensely debated in the medieval world. Texts, especially products of réécriture and those entangled in intertextual networks, can productively be read as contributions to such debates. Evidently, this also applies to the overarching themes of this volume, that is, the agency and veneration of saints and the cult of relics. Kathie Ihnat fleshes out the differences between Gregory the Great's and Isidore's views on whether God still causes miracles through saints or whether they primarily serve as moral exemplars. The discussion of the agency of saints also manifests itself in Bishop Radbod of Utrecht's work on the *Miracle of Martin*. Els Rose analyses the question whether Martin needs to be present in his physical remains or in the gems of his narrated virtues in order to serve as a patron saint in ninth-century Utrecht.

Other contributions historicize different concepts and show how contested they were in medieval society: Barbara Rosenwein uses the various "families" of Aelred von Rievaulx – the kin, the court, the monastery and the "human family" – to show that family, familial emotions, and their emotional languages come in various shapes and forms. Her study can

be understood as a model teaching text on deconstructing families and on understanding emotional communities. Albrecht Diem uses sixth-century monastic rules to demonstrate not only that the disciplinary repertoire of monastic life was a matter for discussion, but even within the narrow realm of sixth-century Southern Gaul, the question of the very nature of monastic life and its pursuit of salvation was debated. Diem thus provides another model teaching text on how to give discipline a history and how to read texts against the grain. Rutger Kramer shows that hope and fear have a history by analyzing how the emotional community of the Carolingian court circles engaged with understandings of *spes*, *metus* and *timor* in the classical tradition and patristic theology. This teaches us about the archaeology of concepts. Readers may either be inspired to follow one of these traces, or to carry the practice of historicizing concepts and fleshing out medieval debates revolving around them in new directions.

Another overarching theme of the volume is that the medieval world evolves in a dynamic engagement with theological questions and the reception of patristic heritage which historians, however secular they may be, need to take into account if they want to understand the medieval world and, in particular, its political ramifications. Adoptionism and Homoian Christianity loom large in Katie Ihnat's and Kay Boers' chapters on Visigothic history. Mariology is a productive entry point into the dynamic relationship between the royal court and monastic intellectual circles. Ophelia Norris shows how the Christian perpetuation of the Roman patron-client system depends on an understanding of the post-mortem intercessory power of the Christian holy man.

CONNECTING SCHOLARS

Connecting people is the work of a scholarly community tied together by collaboration, friendship and genealogies of teachers and students. All of the contributors, moreover, interacted with Janneke as a friend and scholar. It is no wonder, therefore, that almost all contributions to this volume can be read in tandem. They revolve around the shared spaces, themes, same sets of sources or similar methodologies.

Both Els Rose and Jelle Visser, for example, tell a story about Utrecht and the cult of the saints in the diocese of Utrecht in the ninth and tenth centurys: Els Rose by analysing an individual work, Bishop Radbod's (d. 917) *Miracle of St. Martin* and Jelle Visser by exploring the intertextual and semantic connections between the *Lives* of the saints, allegedly brought to Utrecht by his successor Balderic (d. 975). Jelle Visser's chapter can be read alongside Gordon Blennemann's, for both analyse how textual arrangements in hagiographical corpora play a crucial role in creating communities. Their chapters can also be read as textual counterparts to Anne Lester's and Julia Smith's reconstructions of a *communitas sanctorum* that manifests itself in collections of relics. The latter two discuss how community is created by imagined ties to Charlemagne. Julia Smith does this for the cathedral of Sens; Anne Lester

for the monastery of Corbie. Both Anne Lester's and Mayke de Jong's chapters take us to Corbie and Soissons, one looking at its relic collections, and the other at the deep personal ties between Corbie's abbot Paschasius Radbertus and the nuns at Notre-Dame de Soissons. Mayke de Jong and Rutger Kramer investigate the forms of communication and the interpersonal relationships in the orbits of the Carolingian court and the Carolingian family. Both Rutger Kramer and Barbara Rosenwein study emotional communities: Carolingian court circles and the communities of the courtier, monk and theologian Aelred of Riveaulx. Katie Ihnat and Kay Boers take us to Visigothic Spain and the world of Isidore of Seville, showing how the long-winded road from Homoian to Nicene Christianity shaped notions of agency of saints but also anxieties of royal involvement in ecclesiastical politics. Kay Boers begins and ends his exploration at the Carolingian court as a place where politics and theology meet – the same world that is investigated by both Mayke de Jong and Rutger Kramer. Ophelia Norris and Els Rose discuss the question whether saints need to be present in order to fulfil their roles as patron and intercessor.

The contributions of Elisa Pallottini, Anne Lester and Renée Schilling can be read as a triptych on reliquaries and how they shaped the relationship between the individual or the community and the sacred stretching from sixth-century Agaune to 19th-century Mechelen. The chapters by Ophelia Norris, Cécile Treffort, and Elisa Pallottini, especially align with Janneke's research by focusing on material sources other than texts written on parchment. These chapters examine saints' cults and relic veneration through the study of inscriptions in stone, textile, and precious metals. All look at the inscribed text, written on the Purse of Theoderic, the sixth-century reliquary of Saint-Maurice, and the ninth-century cushion placed under the head of Saint Remigius. Both Cécile Treffort and Renée Schilling study the afterlife of relics and the cult of saints after the cataclysmic events of the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution.

The book opens with a chapter titled "Let us keep in touch," based on a plenary lecture Janneke delivered in Dublin on 18 October 2019 at the symposium *Relics in Medieval Ireland*. The paper was part of a larger study in which she intended to explore the interconnection between relics, letter exchange, and patterns of gift-giving in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Although Janneke never completed this study, the present chapter focuses on a well-developed portion of the research she presented during her Dublin lecture. It addresses the correspondence of Paulinus of Nola, in particular his letters to his friend Sulpicius Severus. Irene van Renswoude completed this contribution, drawing on Janneke's notes and instructions, and on their correspondence and conversations.

No chapter of this volume just stands by itself. All of them are parts of friendly conversations and expressions of love and gratitude for a scholar who in her short life left was an invaluable source of inspiration and left a deep impression on us through her erudition and intellectual playfulness but also her warmth and her ability to connect people.

LET US KEEP IN TOUCH: RELICS, LETTERS AND GIFT EXCHANGE IN LATE ANTIQUITY

JANNEKE RAAIJMAKERS, WITH IRENE VAN RENSWOUDE

ABSTRACT

This chapter is based on a plenary lecture delivered by Janneke Raaijmakers in Dublin on 18 October 2019 at the symposium *Relics in Medieval Ireland*. The paper was part of a larger study exploring the interconnection between relics, letter exchange, and patterns of gift-giving in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Although Janneke never completed her study of the correspondence of late antique and early medieval authors, the present chapter focuses on a well-developed portion of her research presented during her Dublin lecture. It addresses the correspondence of Paulinus of Nola, in particular his letters to his friend Sulpicius Severus. This chapter shows how a close study of the role of gift exchange in Paulinus' letters complicates our understanding of what exactly relics are. Irene van Renswoude completed this contribution, drawing on Janneke's notes and instructions, and on their correspondence, in which they discussed ideas and ongoing research.

KEYWORDS

Paulinus of Nola; Sulpicius Severus; friendship; relics; letters; gift exchange

Among the first distributers of relics in the Christian West were members of the elite who admired asceticism or practised it themselves. Sulpicius Severus, Paulinus of Nola, Ambrose of Milan, Victricius of Rouen, and Melania the Elder, to name but a few, valued the ascetic way of life and exchanged relics and gifts to cement the bonds of friendship. How can we account for this fascination with physical objects on the part of men, and

Connecting People. Saints, Relics, and Communities in the Early Medieval World, in Memory of Janneke Raaijmakers, ed. Albrecht Diem, Mayke de Jong, and Irene van Renswoude (Budapest: Trivent, 2025), pp. 14-26, DOI: 10.22618/TP.REN.20243.372.001

women, who struggled in their daily lives so intensely with physical needs and cravings? Some of the items they exchanged were at first glance not much to look at: fragments of the ashes of martyrs, plain cloaks, wooden platters, and loaves of bread. What use were temporal goods to those whose goals lay outside the material world, in the spiritual heights where God resided?

Letters are a valuable source for exploring these questions. They provide an illuminating context for understanding the growing popularity of relics and the exchange of gifts in late antique society. Studying the letter exchanges among the Christian elite can reveal how gifts of relics and simple items, often accompanying letters, became cherished symbols of Christian faith, fostering ties of friendship and unity within the Christian community. This chapter offers reflections on relics, letter exchange, and patterns of gift-giving as seen in the correspondence of Paulinus of Nola (354-431) with friends and acquaintances such as Vitricius of Rouen, Augustine, and especially his friend Sulpicius Severus.

Two key features emerge from reading these letters that demonstrate how relics, gifts, and letters were intertwined in the discourse of friendship. First, the language used to express friendship was also applied to relics and gifts that might not traditionally be considered as relics. Second, Christians attributed similar characteristics to letters and relics: like relics, letters brought an absent person into one's presence and, though just a part of a whole, they were perceived to embody the whole person.[1] As we shall see, the role of gift exchange in Paulinus' letters complicates our understanding of relics by adding new dimensions, indicating that the "cult of relics" had not yet crystallized at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century.

A. GIFTS AND LETTERS

In her inspiring study on Paulinus of Nola, Catherine Conybeare has convincingly argued that the exchange of letters was not just about the transfer of information between sender and receiver, but part of "a whole network of writers, bearers and recipients of letters, of the words and gifts exchanged both literally and spiritually, of written, oral and non-verbal communication."[2] The act of writing a letter, carrying the letter, reciting the letter, adding oral messages that were not written down, receiving the letter, and accepting accompanying gifts were all integral parts of the ceremonial process of epistolary exchange. In Late Antiquity, this exchange, originally a common practice among the senatorial elite, was adapted to Christian needs. Instead of exchanging valuable commodities that attested to the donor's

[1] On fragments representing the entire object, and relics embodying the whole person, see Patricia Cox Miller, "'Differential Networks': Relics and Other Fragments in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (1998): 113-138.

[2] Catherine Conybeare, *Paulinus Noster: Self and Symbols in the Letters of Paulinus of Nola*. Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 59.

status and wealth, the Christian elite exchanged items that appeared to have little material worth, reflecting the humility and modesty of the sender.

While Conybeare has focused on the spiritual meaning of communication between members of the Christian elite in the Latin West, this chapter will concentrate on the physical aspects of the epistolary traditions among Christians. Many letters were accompanied by gifts, ranging from small objects, such as bread, books and tunics to entire beams to build ships. These gifts played an important role in forging and sustaining relationships and in nurturing networks of patronage. The letters themselves were also material gifts, which brought the correspondents into each other's presence, bridging often long distances. In some cases, the writers had never met. Paulinus of Nola never encountered Augustine in real life, but through their letters they got to know each other and became friends. What bound them was the Christian ideal of *caritas* and a life dedicated to God. This was also the frame of reference within which they composed and shared their writings.

Although the meaning which Christian authors attributed to letters and their accompanying gifts was highly spiritual, these means of communication were themselves physical objects. The letters and gifts were given and received, moreover, in a very physical way. The sense of sight played an important role in describing and bringing about the ritual of exchange, and so did taste and smell.[3] The accompanying gifts were symbols of spiritual values, such as love, friendship and faith. Yet, the fact that they were sent in the first place, along with letters, shows the need for a physical counterpart to these spiritual ideals, at least among particular groups of Christians. The gifts evoked the presence and intention of the sender, and the corporeal senses played an important role in acknowledging and accepting the meaning of the gifts.

The following reflections on relics, letters and patterns of gift-giving do not pertain to what are usually called primary relics: the bones and corpses of the saints. Instead, they concern objects that were part of, or bordered on, the grey zone of what was later, under influence of religious reforms, defined as relic-hood. These include organic materials such as laurel leaves and bread, snippets of wood, textiles, drops of oil, or the filings of instruments with which martyrs had been tortured. Some modern scholars prefer to distinguish these objects from the bodily remains of the saints. However, to understand the meaning of relics, including the bodies of saints, it is important to include these objects of "relic-hood" in any discussion of relic veneration in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. What was considered a relic by Christians at the time varied among Christian communities, and may, in fact, be very different from how we now define relics.

These objects of "relic-hood", which, according to some, would rather be categorised as memorabilia or souvenirs, helped pave the way for the veneration of corporeal remains

[3] The engagement of the senses, especially the sense of touch, in letter and gift exchange will be further explored below.

which ran counter to the Roman and Jewish prohibition against moving and touching the dead. Although in Paulinus' time touching the dead was no longer a topic of much discussion, there was still a sense that some distance from corporeal relics had to be retained.[4] As Robert Wiśniewski has argued, there are very few examples of intentional close contact with corporeal relics before the sixth century, and even then, direct physical contact with bodily remains was frowned upon.[5] There was a preference for objects that had been in contact with the bodies of the saints, rather than for touching the bodily remains themselves. This preference may be partly explained by the fact that "contact relics" were more readily available and more accessible to a wider group of Christians, not just to the well-connected, wealthy elite. Yet, the frame of reference that gave meaning to these objects, and the language that expressed their significance, were closely connected to the ways Christians understood the value of the bodily remains of the holy dead.

B. BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

Paulinus of Nola belonged to an exclusive community of aristocrats who chose to live an ascetic life.[6] Born around 353 of an illustrious, senatorial family near Bordeaux, Paulinus gave up his career, property and luxurious way of life.[7] In 395 he settled in Nola, southern Italy, together with his wife Theresia. There they founded a community for ascetic devotees of the cult of St. Felix. As Conybeare observed, Paulinus was acquainted with "practically every important figure of the Christian Latin West in his time."[8] His network included Martin of Tours, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine, Jerome, Rufinus, Melania the Younger, and her husband and mother.[9] This network was above all a literary community, created and maintained by the exchange of texts as well as non-textual gifts. Among the writings they exchanged were books and letters, but also work-in-progress, which they committed to each other's scrutiny. In his letters to friends and kindred spirits, Paulinus never got tired of emphasizing their mutual bond, shared ideals and shared faith. Their friendship was enriched by love of God, he maintained, and without that love their friendship would be empty. In a letter to Victricius of Rouen, Paulinus wrote:

4 Robert Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 143.

5 Ibid., 142

6 Paulinus' family owned extensive properties in Aquitaine, Gallia Narbonensis, Fundi in Latium, Nola in Campania, and perhaps also in Spain. See Rudolf Carel Goldschmidt, *Paulinus' Churches at Nola. Texts, Translations and Commentary* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitg. Maatschappij, 1940), 3. Sulpicius and Paulinus converted to a life in seclusion between 394 and 398. See Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Western Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 63.

7 Dennis Trout, *Paulinus of Nola: Life, Letters and Poems* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 287.

8 Conybeare, *Paulinus Noster,* 11.

9 For a description of the full extent of Paulinus' network, see Conybeare, *Paulinus Noster*, 6-8.

> For even if the distance between our regions separates our bodies, we are nevertheless joined in the spirit of the Lord, in which we live and remain, which is spread everywhere, so that as members of one body we have one heart and one soul in one God.[10]

Time and again Paulinus stressed in his letters that they were all part of the same Christian community and members of God's body. Although Paulinus interpreted the bonds of *amicitia* in a spiritual, theological light, his framing of love and friendship also had a very physical component. *Amicitia* was inspired by real people, by their shared activities and concerns, and expressed in material objects. Paulinus' friendship with Sulpicius Severus, also a native of Aquitaine, is well-known, and can serve here as an example. Paulinus and Sulpicius were involved around the same time in large building projects in honour of the saints. While Paulinus built monumental complexes in honour of his patron saint Felix at Nola in Campania and at Fundi in Latium, Sulpicius built a complex of churches in Primuliacum, his rural estate in southern Aquitaine, to house the body of Clarus, a disciple of Martin of Tours. Sulpicius' and Paulinus' commitment to promoting the cult of the saints strengthened their bond. They shared drawings of buildings, descriptions of paintings and poetic lines, also called *tituli*, that were to be put on the walls. They sent each other gifts, including relics that might be housed in the newly built churches, but also objects for personal use. These exchanges affected their solidarity and common purpose, which was to serve Christ. It was not only the fact that Paulinus and Sulpicius were simultaneously involved in building projects to honour the saints that strengthened their sense of connection. Paulinus stressed that it was also important to write about these activities in their letters. Firstly, the act of writing (or dictating the words to a scribe) brought them into each other's presence:

> For in writing (*in dictando)*, while I think of you and am wholly with you, it is as if I am speaking to you in person, despite the long distance…[11]

The fact that this was a *topos* in letter-writing does not diminish the rhetorical efficacy of such declarations of intimacy. Secondly, the description of their building activities further strengthened their common purpose (*unanimitas nostra*):

> I have taken care to connect my basilicas with yours, just as they are united in the time of their construction and the fashion of their dedication, so I have also linked them in writing (*litteris conpaginare*), so that our union (*nostra coniunctio*), which is joined in hearts but separated by distance, might be represented in this way as well. Thus, these buildings, which we have constructed in the name of the Lord with the

[10] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 18, c. 1, ed. Wilhelm Hartel, rev. Margit Kamptner, *CSEL* 29 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 129: *nam etsi regionum interuallis corporaliter disparemur, spiritu tamen domini, in quo uiuimus et manemus, ubique effuso coniuncti sumus, ut unius corporis membra et cor unum et unam animam habentes in uno deo.*

[11] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 5, c. 20, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 38: *in dictando enim dum te cogito et totus in te sum, quasi apud praesentem longo interuallo loquar…*

> same spirit, although separated by different regions, may still be seen as sealed with a chain of letters (*epistolae serie*).[12]

The letters themselves thus had added value in this process. The act of simultaneously building was not enough, nor was the physical presence of the churches as witnesses to their common purpose, serving the Christians of Nola and Primuliacum. Their letters in which they described their efforts linked them together, both their souls and their projects. The choice of the word *series* is meaningful.[13] *Series* literally means "a chain of things fastened together." *Epistolae serie* suggests an unbroken link of correspondence, tying friends together.[14] The verb *conpaginare* is also an interesting choice, meaning "joining together", but with a strong literary connotation because it contains the root *pagina,* page or leaf. Through their correspondence, Paulinus and Sulpicius were bound together like leaves in a single book.

As mentioned above, the custom of sending gifts was established practice in antiquity, as was the ceremonial function of epistolary exchange. Dennis Trout has shown how this practice was reinterpreted within a Christian frame of reference by people like Paulinus.[15] They drastically changed the symbolism of gift-giving and brought it in line with the Christian vocation. Before his conversion to the ascetic life, Paulinus sent high-value birds and oysters to strengthen bonds of friendship and patronage. Later, he sent Sulpicius a tiny fragment of the True cross, simple Campanian bread, a wooden platter, and a tunic, all befitting the ascetic lifestyle. In return, Sulpicius sent him camel-hair cloaks.

C. A SECOND-HAND GIFT

Paulinus thought about his gifts carefully and expounded on their meaning in the accompanying letters. He sent Sulpicius the fragment of the cross "so that you may possess physically what you hold in spirit and bear with the strength of your vocation."[16] The bread, he explained, was a symbol of the humble diet of ascetics and the spiritual food of God's word, and the wooden platter a token of self-chosen poverty.[17] The tunic, "woven from the tender wool of lambs, pleasing to the touch" was a perfect match for Sulpicius' innocence, Paulinus wrote. It was particularly valuable, for it had been a gift to Paulinus of Melania the Elder,

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12 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 32, c. 10, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 285: *…basilicas nostras tuis, sicut et operis tempore et uoti genere coniunctae sunt, ita etiam litteris conpaginare curaui, ut in hoc quoque nostra coniunctio figuraretur, quae iungitur animis et distat locis; sic et ista, quae in nomine domini eodem spiritu laborata construximus, diuersis abiuncta regionibus, eiusdem tamen epistolae serie sibi tamquam consignata uisentur.*

13 This paragraph is an addition based on an email correspondence in September 2019.

14 Here, the singular "*epistula*" is used as a synecdoche to represent a collection of letters.

15 Trout, *Paulinus of Nola*, 208-214.

16 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 31, c. 2, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 269: *[misimus uobis donum in domino ligni salutaris], ut et corpore possideretis quam tenetis spiritu et propositu uirtute portatis.*

17 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 5, c. 21, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 38-39: *Panem Campanum de cellula nostra tibi pro eulogia misimus;* (…) *misimus testimonialem diuitiarum nostrarum scutellam buxeam.*

"famous amongst the holy women of God."[18] To Paulinus' mind this was a worthy gift for someone who shared the same ascetic ideals. The tunic was even more valuable because Paulinus had worn it first himself, leaving an imprint of himself on the garment, while at the same time snatching "a blessing (*benedictio*) from it as if it were already your garment, so that I could boast that I shared your clothing."[19] Through this second-hand gift, Paulinus "plucked before its time" (*praecerperem*) a blessing from Sulpicius, hoping he would wear the tunic, or at least touch it on arrival.

It is tempting to suggest that Paulinus treated Melania's tunic as a contact relic.[20] However, technically, only martyrs were considered to produce relics, not ascetics like Melania, holy though she was in Paulinus' eyes. Interpreting the tunic as a contact relic, furthermore, reflects our modern understanding of such objects rather than Paulinus' view of the agency of the cherished garment. For him, Melania's tunic was an object that connected distant friends through tactile engagement with a material item. It became a conduit for transferring a blessing from one friend to another.[21]

The bread, wooden platter and tunic were gifts that Paulinus intended for Sulpicius personally, as tokens of friendship and shared ideals, strengthening their mutual bond and admonishing both the giver and the receiver to persevere on the narrow path that they both had chosen. While Melania's tunic was intended for personal use, Paulinus suggested that the fragment of the cross would fit well with the ashes of the apostles and martyrs in one of Primuliacum's altars, though he would also understand it if Sulpicius wished to keep the fragment to himself for protection and healing. The gifts thus benefitted Sulpicius, the receiver, but they also brought spiritual advantage to Paulinus, the sender.

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18 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 29, c. 5, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 251: *nam uel hoc innocentiae tuae congruit, quod de tenero agnorum uellere contexta blanditur adtactibus;* (…) *de sanctae et inlustris in sanctis dei feminae Melani.*

19 Ibid.: *fateor tamen ausum me, ut eam quamuis ilico ut acceperam tibi destinatam meo tamen uestitu initiando praetererem, sciens magis me tibi hac iniuria praestiturum, quam si te intemerata nouitate illius honorassem,* ***simul ut mihi benedictionem quasi de tua iam ueste praecerperem, ut iactare possim uestimenti tui me esse participem****, qui propitio deo futuram usus tui tunicam, quasi fuisset, induerem.* (emphasis added).

20 Some modern scholars have tended to interpret Melania's tunic, or rather Paulinus' treatment of it, as a contact relic. See, for example, Trout, *Paulinus of Nola,* 242: "Presumably, this tunic assumed (…) the power of a contact relic." See also the research portal of the University of Oxford, online resource EO5101, where Melania's tunic is categorized as a contact relic (see under the heading "cult activities"). https://edu.nl/4yj39, last accessed July 22, 2024.

21 Paulinus does not indicate that he expects Melania's tunic to work miracles or effect healing, unlike the tunic discussed by Augustine, which was deposited at the memorial shrine of the proto-martyr Stephen. Augustine recounts how a deceased virgin was brought back to life when her body was wrapped in that tunic: Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XXII, c. 8, ed. Bernhard Dombart and Alfons Kalb, *CCSL* 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), l. 316. Augustine's miracle story shows that objects conforming to our notion of "contact relic" did exist in the early fifth century. In fact, such objects with healing properties, which were activated by touch, also feature in biblical stories; see Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics*, 124-125. However, this does not mean that in the late fourth and early fifth centuries the concept of a "contact relic" was clearly established, or that every object that had been in touch with (the remains of) a holy person was necessarily credited with healing powers or protective qualities.

Paulinus' suggestion that his friend might want to keep the splinter for personal use, for protection and healing, implies that he attributed talisman-like properties to this fragment of wood, which had been in contact with the body of Christ. Again, the term "contact relic" comes to mind, but Paulinus does not use words that could be translated as "relic" (*reliquiae* or *sanctuaria*) in reference to the fragment of the cross. Instead, he describes the splinter as a *benedictio*. Although *benedictio* is generally considered a synonym for *reliquiae*, in Paulinus' vocabulary, it refers to a blessing or a gift.[22]

Paulinus elaborated the theme of "snatching away a blessing beforehand" through the act of gift-giving also in other letters. Together with his wife Therasia, he sent a piece of bread to Augustine with the words: "We ask that you bless with your acceptance (*accipiendo benedicas*) the single loaf of bread, which we sent to your charity as a token of unanimity (*unanimitatis indicio*)."[23] The gift of bread was seen as a symbol of unity in faith, and accepting it transformed the bread into a blessing. Paulinus sent bread to several friends who were geographically distant. We can only imagine the condition of the bread upon arrival after such a long journey. In a letter to Sulpicius, Paulinus elaborated on this transformation from bread to blessing, using the term *eulogia* instead of *benedictio*; it was the virtuous way of life of the recipient that turned the bread into an *eulogia*.

> We have sent you Campanian bread from our own little monastery as a blessed offering (*eulogia*), relying solely on your merits in the Lord, so that we trust it will be brought to you full of grace. Although you are already satiated with richer morsels from the Lord's table, please deign to transform the bread received from sinners into a blessing (*eulogiam*) in the name of the Lord.[24]

Paulinus believed that gifts connected people and could bestow blessings on both the giver and the receiver. The condition for this connection to become real, turning the gift into a blessing for the giver as well, was "the merits in the Lord" of the receiver. This seems to imply that, conversely, the virtues of the *sender* made the gift a blessing for the receiver. However, Paulinus never stated this explicitly, for his humility prevented him from doing so. Instead, he belittled himself, framing himself as a sinner. Yet, we know that even in his own time, Paulinus was considered a shining example of conversion to an ascetic way of life. People sought his presence and eagerly requested his letters.

The gifts Paulinus and his correspondents exchanged were symbols of love, friendship, and shared ideals. Their significance was conveyed not only spiritually but also phys-

[22] John M. McCulloh, "The Cult of Relics in the Letters and 'Dialogues' of Pope Gregory the Great: a Lexographical Study," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 145-184, at 174, n. 117.

[23] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 4, c. 5, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 24: *panem unum, quem unanimitatis indicio misimus caritati tuae, rogamus accipiendo benedicas*.

[24] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 5, c. 21, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 38-39: *Panem Campanum de cellula nostra tibi pro eulogia misimus, tantum meritis in domino tuis freti, ut plena ad te perferendum sui gratia crederemus; tu licet uberioribus micis a domini mensa iam saturatus sis, dignare et a peccatoribus acceptum in nomine domini panem in eulogiam uertere.*

ically. Jerome provides a good example of the sensory aspect of gift-giving when he thanks Paulinus for a gift he received: "I gladly accept the cap you have sent me, small in texture but wide in affection, to keep an old man's head warm, and I am pleased both with the gift and the giver."[25]

D. LIVING GIFTS

The carrier of the letter also played an important role in conveying the deeper meaning of the accompanying gift. Paulinus described a courier sent by Sulpicius as a dedicated follower of Saints Martin and Clarus. According to Paulinus, this courier, named Victor, shared the same *formula* (shape, pattern or status) as the saints. Paulinus allowed Victor to wash his feet and anoint his limbs "so that I might at least taste a tiny drop from the sacred deeds of Martin." [26] At one point, Paulinus even sent a person as a gift.[27] In a letter to his acquaintance Macarius, a high-ranking Roman nobleman, he presented an old sailor named Valgius, who had been touched by Christ. Paulinus recounts in his letter to Macarius how the sailor had drifted around for 23 days on an abandoned ship during a storm. When he fell asleep, Christ, appearing in the guise of St. Felix, playfully woke him by tweaking his ear. Christ/Felix kept the old man company for the remainder of his journey. The language Paulinus uses in the letter is rich with evocative sensory expressions. He sent the sailor to Macarius as "a spiritual gift" (*xenium spiritale*) and encouraged him to envisage Valgius' body as a site of touch[28]:

> [Valgius is] the living earth on which we see imprinted the traces of the Lord's body, if with the eyes of faith and spiritual insight we thoroughly read what Christ's bosom and hands touched in him, if we frequently caress with our hands the white hair that often lay on the Lord's knee and grew warm in the Lord's embrace, if we repeatedly touch that earlap which heavenly fingers touched while the Lord played.[29]

[25] Jerome, *Ep.* 85, c. 6, ed. Isidorus Hilberg, *CSEL* 55 (Vienna/Leipzig: F. Tempski/G. Freytag, 1912), 138: *palliolum textura breue, caritate latissimum senili capiti confouendo libenter accepi et munere et muneris auctore laetatus.*

[26] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 23, c. 4, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 161: *ut minimam saltem guttulam de sacris Martini actibus delibarem.*

[27] Irene added the following passage after a conversation with Janneke about the significance of touch in transforming the practice of "keeping in touch" into a more tangible experience. The concluding passage of this chapter on the preservation of Paulinus' letters, preceding the conclusion, was also added later.

[28] Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 49, c. 14, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 401: …*quem ad unanimitatem tuam* (…) *ut xenium spiritale transmisi.*

[29] Ibid., 403: … *uiuente terra dominici corporis uidemus inpressa uestigia, si fidelibus oculis et acie spiritali quod in eo sinus Christi, quod manus contigit perlegamus, et canitiem, quae saepe super domini genu iacuit, saepe domini sinu tepuit, nostra manu saepe mulcentes et auriculum saepe palpantes, quam caelestes digiti domino iocante traxerunt.*

The old sailor's body was a living relic, which served as a point of contact with the body of Christ, if "read" properly.[30] The act of reading here consists in tracing the imprints on Valgius' body that reveal the touch of Christ. Paulinus confesses that he had touched Valgius' ear so frequently that he almost wore it away.[31] In fact, he would have liked to have cut off a part of that ear and kept it as a pledge (*pignora*), if it had not meant harming the man.[32] He asked his addressee to receive his gift in a spirit of charity, and to demonstrate to Valgius the love Macarius bore for Christ. Like Melania's tunic, the sailor's ear is a "second-hand gift" that was repeatedly touched by Paulinus before passing it on to the touch of the next recipient.[33]

Paulinus never collected his own letters for publication, as some of his contemporaries were wont to do. It appears he did not even keep copies of the letters he sent.[34] Instead, his letters were preserved by his friends and acquaintances who must have considered them worthy to be kept and collected. Paulinus discovered during his lifetime how much his correspondents valued his letters when he came across a register of his letters (*adnotatio epistolarum*) written on the back of a letter sent to him by a certain Sanctus.[35] Although he claimed not to have recognized the letters as his own, he took Sanctus's word for it that they were. "From this, I received greater proof of your affection," he wrote, "because I realized that I was known to you more than to myself."[36] For Paulinus, his letters were demonstrations of Christian love and friendship, but no more than that.[37] Allegedly, he did not attach any value to them as objects deserving to be kept and cherished. His friends, however, seem to have thought differently. When Paulinus died, those who were not able to see his body, "desired to touch at least his letters."[38] It would appear that Paulinus' letters had gained the status of material objects that were not only to be read but could be touched to get closer to a beloved friend no longer present.

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30 On Valgius as a living relic, see also Trout, *Paulinus of Nola*, 191, and Cynthia Hahn, "What Do Reliquaries Do for Relics?", *Numen* 57 (2010): 284-316, at 300-301.

31 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 49, c. 14, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 402: *nam tam adsidue aurem ipsius retractaui, ut paene detriuerim.*

32 Ibid.: *uoluissem quoque uel unius partem auris abscidere, nisi in illo uulneris quae mihi pignoris res fuisset.*

33 When Albrecht Diem read this chapter in draft, he remarked that Valgius was probably a slave, for one would not do this to a free man.

34 Dennis Trout, "The Letter Collection of Paulinus of Nola," in *Late Antique Letter Collections. A Critical Introduction and Reference Guide*, ed. Cristina Sogno, Bradley K. Storin, and Edward J. Walls (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 254-268, at 254. Trout also discusses Paulinus's letter to Sanctus, discussed below.

35 Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 41, c. 1, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 356: *Legimus in tergo epistolae* ***adnotationem epistolarum****, quas meas esse indicastis.*

36 Ibid.: *Unde maius accepi documentum caritatis vestrae, quia plus me vobis quam mihi notum esse perspexi.*

37 Trout, "The Letter Collection," 254.

38 Uranius, *De obitu sancti Paulini*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *PL* 53 (Paris: Migne, 1865), 859-66, at 864: [*Nam qui corporem eum videre non poterant,*] *saltem eius epistolas contingere cupiebant.* Uranius was a priest, probably from the community Nola, who reported on Paulinus' final days and death in a letter to Pacatus.

CONCLUSION

Modern literature on relic veneration puts much emphasis on the importance of the corporeal senses in gaining access to the holy powers of relics by being close to them, touching them, even consuming them.[39] Many bodies of the saints in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, however, were hidden in closed tombs, often underneath an altar, inaccessible to physical touch by Christian believers. The gifts described in this chapter were not. Were they perhaps the closest most Christians would ever come to the beneficial powers of God's grace, here as an expression of the unifying spirit that brought Christians all over the Mediterranean world together?

The "blessedness" of the gifts, blessing and pledges (*eulogia*, *benedictiones* and *pignora*) mentioned in Paulinus' correspondence was guaranteed by and depended on the pious merits of the sender and receiver, while material remains of the martyrs (*reliquiae* and *cineres*) were considered to be holy in themselves.[40] But martyrs' bones and ashes had also acquired their holiness through merits; the merits of the saints who at the moment of death had proven to be truly holy. Once one believed that the virtuous way of life of a good Christian could turn objects into blessings – blessings which in the eyes of later authors such as Gregory of Tours and Gregory the Great had healing power – then utmost signs of sanctity, such as the sacrifice of the martyrs or the holy deeds of Christians who at the moment of death had proven to be saints, could easily turn their remains into relics. Or, vice versa, belief in the healing and beneficial power of martyrs' ashes fed into the conviction that the merits of ascetics, who through a life of self-control, continence and abstinence also followed in Christ's footsteps, could turn their gifts into blessings.

What happened to those blessings once the owner had died? There is no indication in Paulinus' letters that he believed blessings or pledges (*eulogia*, *benedictiones* or *pignora)* transformed into relics at the moment of death, and it is in fact unlikely that Paulinus made such a sharp distinction between blessings and relics. We need to remember that Paulinus lived at a time when ascetics as well as martyrs, became accepted in Latin Christianity as powerful intermediaries with the divine. Paulinus contributed to this process with his work, amongst others his writing in honour of Felix, a confessor, not a martyr, and his praise for Martin

[39] On sensory experience in relation to relic cults, see Paul Brazinski and Allegra Fryxell, "The Smell of Relics: Authenticating Saintly Bones and the Role of Scent in the Sensory Experience of Medieval Christian Veneration," *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (2013), 1-15; Béatrice Caseau, "Christian Bodies, the Senses and Early Byzantine Christianity," in *Desire and Denial in Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Abingdon: Routledge, 1999), 101-109; Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics*, esp. chapter 7: "Touching relics."

[40] Paulinus speaks of *reliquiae* (relics) and *cineres* (ashes) in *Ep.* 31, c. 1, ed. Hartel/Kamptner, 267-268: … *de sacris sanctorum reliquiis benedictionem* (a blessing [or blessed object] of the sacred relics of the saints); …*si vel scripulum sacri cineris habuisseremus* (if I had even a small amount of sacred ash); *Ep.* 32, c. 7, p. 282: *sacros cineres de benedictis gloriosorum apostolorum aut martyrum reliquiis,* and in *Ep.* 32, c. 17, p. 292: *Verum hanc quoque basilicam de benedictis apostolorum et martyrum reliquiis sacri cineres* (…) *consecrabunt* (Indeed, they will consecrate this basilica also with the sacred ashes from the blessed relics of the apostles and martyrs).

of Tours, a bishop who tried to combine his episcopal responsibilities with a life of ascetic sacrifice. Late antique and early medieval authors explained the holy power of relics as a pledge, *pignora*, to the intermediary power of the saints at the moment of the Last Judgement. Through relics, Christians anticipated the beneficial powers of the saints at the End of times, just as Paulinus had snatched away a blessing from Sulpicius prior to his friend wearing the tunic that Paulinus had sent.

Paulinus' letters demonstrate that the discourse on relics was still in flux around 400. The concepts of "relic" and "contact relic" were not yet clearly defined, and there was no consistent vocabulary to distinguish gifts, pledges and blessings from relics. The words that most frequently occur in Paulinus' correspondence in referring to cherished or sanctified objects – *eulogiae*, *benedictiones*, and *pignora* – sometimes denote objects credited with protective or healing properties (for example, when they have been in contact with a martyr); at other times, they do not. One cannot differentiate between these categories by looking for specific terms, but only by studying the context. Although in later times, *eulogiae*, *benedictiones*, and *pignora* would become synonyms for relics of the saints, this is not yet the case in Paulinus' correspondence.[41] The nuances in Paulinus' vocabulary are relevant not because they point to inconsistencies or a lack of conceptual development in the discourse on relics, but because they reveal intimate connections between gifts, letters, bodily remains, blessings, and friendship. This can deepen our understanding of what we now refer to, with one generic term, as relics.

Paulinus' way of understanding his gifts and the Christian symbolism, which he used, most probably influenced the early medieval perception of relics. His letters played an important role in this process, as in them Paulinus explained how his gifts needed to be experienced and understood. As in the case of Paulinus' building projects that were closely connected to those of his friend Sulpicius, letters linked all these gifts together in a chain of Christian *caritas*. They were, moreover, themselves also pledges of a shared purpose and unanimity, and testimonies to a friendship that transcended distance.

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PART 1: SAINTS

AVOIDING THE MIRACULOUS IN ISIDORE OF SEVILLE

KATI IHNAT[1]

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to place the work of Isidore of Seville within wider late antique discussions concerning miracles performed by saints and their relics. Surveying Isidore's many works, it seeks to uncover his thinking around miracles and their place in determining sanctity. What emerges is an apparent discrepancy on the question of miracles between the work of Isidore and that of his two main sources, Gregory the Great and Augustine of Hippo. Isidore expresses far less enthusiasm for, and confidence in, miracles than either Gregory or Augustine. Isidore's reticence on the subject of miracles seems to jar with his wider pastoral concerns, but here I suggest that he was motivated by a suspicion of untrustworthy religious figures, a fear of schism in the Visigothic church, and an accompanying desire to promote interior Christian reform.

KEYWORDS

Isidore of Seville; Miracles; Saints; Visigothic Iberia; Gregory the Great; Dialogues

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Miracles were once thought of as fairly unproblematic and ubiquitous features of late antique Mediterranean Christianity.[2] After accounts emerged with "a geyser-like force" in the late fourth century that recounted the wonders performed in life and after death by martyrs and holy men alike, the acceptance of saintly miracles by growing numbers of Christians seemed all but inevitable.[3] Yet the idea that miracles were taken for granted, even on the cusp of the middle ages, has been increasingly called into question.[4] Already some decades ago, Marc van Uytfanghe assembled substantial evidence for doubt about the veracity of miracles in works from the late antique period.[5] More recently, Matthew Dal Santo has argued that the hagiographical writings of the sixth-century bishop of Rome, Gregory the Great, were written in response to Byzantine sceptics who questioned the miracle-working abilities of the saints.[6] Finally, an important project led by Janneke Raaijmakers, which sadly went unfinished, was underscoring the ongoing distrust expressed especially towards miraculous relics into the early and high middle ages.[7] The current contribution to this volume in her honour is inspired by this scholarship. It looks to the Iberian Peninsula, a

2 This followed a period in which miracles were thought to have ended with the apostolic age, an attitude of scepticism that shifted towards greater openness to miracles at the end of the fourth century. See Giselle de Nie, *Poetics of Wonder: Testimonies of the New Christian Miracles in the Late Antique Latin World* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011). The key event in this transition has been identified as the *inventio* by Ambrose of the martyrs Gervasius and Protasius in Milan in 386.

3 Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 71 and, more broadly, 75-77. See also the foundational study: Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80-101, and the responses to it in James Howard-Johnston and Paul Antony Hayward, eds., *The Cult of the Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). On miracles, see also Lellia Cracco Ruggini, "Miracolo nella cultura del tardo impero," in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IVe-XIIe siècles. Actes du Colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris (2-5 mai 1979)*, ed. Martin Heinzelmann (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981), 161-204; Janneke Raaijmakers, "I Claudius. Self-styling in early medieval debate," *Early Medieval Europe* 25 (2017): 70-84, at 83; Els Rose, "'Remembered, Blessed, and Praised'. Immaterial Relics in Radbod of Utrecht's Miracle Story of St. Martin," in this volume.

4 The possibility that there was scepticism around saints more generally has been raised by Collin Garbarino, "Augustine, Donatists and martyrdom," in *An Age of Saints? Power, Conflict and Dissent in Early Medieval Christianity*, ed. Peter Sarris, Matthew Dal Santo, and Phil Booth (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 49-61.

5 This already began with Marc van Uytfanghe, "La controverse biblique et patristique autour du miracle et ses repercussions sur l'hagiographie dans l'Antiquité tardive et le haut Moyen Âge latin," in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés*, ed. Heinzelmann, 205-233.

6 Matthew Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cults in the Age of Gregory the Great*. Oxford Studies in Byzantium (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); idem, "Gregory the Great and Eustratius of Constantinople: The Dialogues on the Miracles of the Italian Fathers as an Apology for the Cult of Saints," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 3 (2009): 421-457; idem, "The God-Protected Empire? Scepticism towards the Cult of Saints in Early Byzantium," in *An Age of Saints?* ed. Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth, 129-149.

7 NWO-funded Vidi project: "Mind over Matter: Debates about the Sanctity of Religious Objects, ca. 400-1200" (2012-2018). Although a catalogue for the related exhibition, *Relieken*, in the Catharijneconvent was published, further findings of the project went unpublished due to her illness.

site of important theological and pastoral development in the sixth and seventh centuries, to examine just how deeply belief (and doubts) about miracles were present there.[8]

The seventh-century *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* (*VSPE*) alerts us to the fact that questions about saintly miracles were being raised in late antique Iberia.[9] Its prologue begins as follows:

> No orthodox believer and above all no Catholic ought to disbelieve in the miracles which that most holy and famed bishop, Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, fired by the grace of the Comforting Spirit, set down in his books of *Dialogi*, writing them with a pen which told the truth: miracles which in olden times Almighty God thought it fit to work for the glory of His name through humble servants who were indeed pleasing to Him. Let no one's mind be troubled by this doubt: that these things appear to have happened in ancient times, and so perhaps not believe in them completely, thinking that this holy man of divine election, a tabernacle of the Holy Spirit, has obfuscated some points with empty and nebulous language. For through the authoritative words of the evangelists it is made clearer than the light of day to everyone that the Lord had always worked miracles and works them to this day (Mark 16:17-18).[10]

Two things emerge from this passage. First, we find clear evidence that Gregory's *Dialogi* were known in Iberia, and, additionally, a recognition of its apologetic nature. In Dal Santo's view, Gregory's *Dialogi* were written to defend the sanctity of a series of Italian holy men, among whom was Benedict of Nursia, in the face of Byzantine criticism.[11] Byzantine theologians were questioning the idea that the soul could act after death and before the Last Judgement; this was an issue central to the cult of the saints. If the souls of the saints lay dormant after their death, they would be incapable of acting either on earth or in heaven on behalf of supplicants. What was the point, therefore, of praying to them at all, of visiting their tombs, or of singing their praises on feast days? Gregory's fourth book of the *Dialogi* addresses

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8 This follows other scholarship on the diversity of late antique approaches to saints, e.g. Paula Hershkowitz, *Prudentius, Spain, and Late Antique Christianity: Poetry, Visual Culture, and the Cult of Martyrs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Bruria Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005); David G. Hunter, "Vigilantius of Calagurris and Victricius of Rouen: Ascetics, Relics, and Clerics in Late Roman Gaul," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7, no. 3 (1999): 401-429; Gillian Clark, "Victricius of Rouen: Praising the Saints," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7, no. 3 (1999): 365-399.

9 The *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* have been revealed as a complex source with multiple parts dating to different periods. See Roger Collins, "Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium and Religious Conflict in Visigothic Spain," *Revista Diálogos Mediterrânicos* 21 (2021): 36-58, arguing for a later date, and Graham Barrett, "Empire and the Politics of Factions: Mérida and Toledo Revisited," in *Rome, Byzantium and the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo*, ed. Damián Fernández, Molly Lester, and Jamie Wood (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2023), 277-316 for an earlier, seventh-century, date.

10 *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, ed. Antonio Maya, *CCSL* 116 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 3-5; trans. Andrew Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*. Translated Texts for Historians 26 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 45.

11 See n. 6 above.

this question directly, defending the ability of the soul to act immediately after death. This meant that saints could exercise special powers on behalf of those praying to them on earth. Throughout the text, Gregory also provided examples of miracles that saints performed, from foreseeing future events and changing the material world in life, to healing in death, as proof that they could act in the world. The *VSPE* demonstrates that Gregory's contemporaries in other parts of the Mediterranean were cognizant of his aims, and presumably also of the debates behind them.

The prologue of the *VSPE* further suggests that the discussions about sanctity to which Gregory's work responded not only were known, but also were taking place in Iberia. Gregory's work clearly found critics in Iberia, which could indicate similar kinds of doubt around saintly miracles on the peninsula to those that could be found in his Byzantine circles. The above passage reads as a reaction to those who believed that miracles no longer occurred, and who thought that Gregory was misleading his audience by making up stories about the wondrous actions of the saints. Inspired by Gregory's example, the anonymous author explained that his purpose was to record the miracles, performed in his own city of Mérida by martyrs and holy men, as further proof of Mark's statement that miracles did in fact continue to take place.[12] Although the *VSPE* does not reveal the possible theological arguments made by the sceptics in the way that Gregory's work does, we nevertheless find key indications of suspicion about the miracle-working abilities of the saints in Iberia similar to those identified in other parts of the Mediterranean.

Mention of doubt about saintly miracles in the *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* invites us to consider the wider Iberian context in which the text's author was writing. It seems natural to bring attention to one, if not the most, influential of Iberian authors: Isidore of Seville. There are a number of reasons why his ideas on the miraculous are worth examining beyond the short surveys that have so far appeared.[13] First of all, Isidore was well aware of the writings of Gregory the Great. Isidore's intellectual indebtedness to Gregory is evident in almost every one of his works, and Isidore has often been considered a primary means by which the patristic inheritance of authors such as Gregory was transmitted.[14] Gregory was also personally connected to Isidore's family, having befriended Isidore's older brother and predecessor as bishop of Seville, Leander, while both Gregory and Leander were at the court in Constantinople.[15] In addition to knowing Gregory's writings intimately, Isidore also

12 *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, *CCSL* 116, 5.

13 As recognized, if briefly, by Pierre Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), 129-132, 134-35, and Eleonora Dell'Elicine, "'Signum vel res?' La ponderación del milagro en la sociedad visigoda," *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales, Auxerre* 2 (2008): 1-29, at 3-4.

14 Jamie Wood, "A Family Affair: Leander, Isidore and the Legacy of Gregory the Great in Spain," in *Isidore of Seville and his Reception in the early Middle Ages: Transmitting and Transforming Knowledge*, ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 31-56.

15 Purificación Ubric Rabaneda, "Leander of Seville and his Influence on Isidore of Seville," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville.* Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 87, ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood

shared a similar pastoral project with the bishop of Rome.[16] Embracing the same monastic vision of Christian values, Isidore saw his role as implementing this vision in Visigothic society, whether through the composition of pedagogical works for educating clerics or legislating on Christian belief and practice in the Visigothic councils.[17] We might therefore expect to see a central place attributed to saints and their intercessory actions in Isidore's approach to the Christianisation of the Iberian population on a level comparable with Gregory's.

What we find instead, after surveying Isidore's extensive written corpus, is a distinct lack of engagement with the issue of sanctity and the role of the miraculous within it.[18] To begin with, we find no direct discussion of what constitutes sanctity and whether the performance of miracles was integral to it. This is apparent in the *Etymologiae*, Isidore's encyclopaedic discussion of the natural and supernatural worlds. The only relevant section concerns martyrs and defines them by the manner of their death.[19] Death in the name of the faith warranted special consideration for these individuals as witnesses to Christianity, although Isidore acknowledged that some individuals after the period of persecution might impose on their own bodies the suffering that elevated the martyrs. But to neither external nor internal martyrs is attributed the ability to channel the divine such that they are capable of producing miracles, in heaven or on earth. This is despite the fact that Isidore lifted the entire description from Gregory's *Dialogi*, a text in which miracles occupy a primary role as proof of sanctity.[20]

We likewise find no reference to miracle-working saints in Isidore's *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, his commentary on the rituals and structures of the church. In the section discussing why the feasts of the martyrs are celebrated, Isidore quoted extensively from Augustine's *Contra Faustum* and *De vera religione* to say that…

> The fathers of old consecrated the feasts of apostles or the solemnities in honour of martyrs to be celebrated in the sacramental act of veneration, either for the purpose of stirring up imitation, or so that we might be associated with their merits and helped by their prayers.[21]

(Leiden: Brill, 2019), 101-134; John R. C. Martyn, *Gregory and Leander: An Analysis of the Special Friendship between Pope Gregory the Great and Leander, Archbishop of Seville* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2013).

16 Molly Lester, "The Word as Lived: The Practice of Orthodoxy in Early Medieval Iberia, c. 500-711," PhD diss (Princeton University, 2017); Céline Martin, "Isidore of Seville's Theories and Practices of Pastoral Care and Church Organization," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Fear and Wood, 279-300.

17 Pedro Castillo Maldonado, "Living a Christian Life: Isidore of Seville on Monasticism, Teaching, and Learning," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Fear and Wood, 301-331.

18 Isidore's ambivalence on miracles was noted by Van Uytfanghe, "Controverse," 213, and Dell'Elicine, "Signum vel res," 3.

19 Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* VII.11.1, 4, ed. and trans. Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, Manuel-Antonio Marcos Casquero, and José Oroz Reta (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1982), 676. Translation from: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Stephen A. Barney (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 170.

20 Gregory, *Dialogi* IV, c. 3.26, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé and Paul Antin, *SC* 265 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1980), 567.

21 Isidore, *De ecclestiasticis officiis* I, c. 35 (34), ed. Christopher M. Lawson, *CCSL* 113 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989), 40; trans. Thomas Knoebel (New York: Newman Press, 2008), 57-58.

The sacramental act of veneration described here has several potential aims: promoting imitation of the saint being venerated; permitting congregants to connect themselves to the saints' virtues; and allowing the congregants to receive some kind of recompense by praying to the saints. Isidore thus raised the possibility that praying to the saints brings reward, which would suggest that Isidore (here via Augustine) agreed with Gregory on the post-mortem activity of saintly souls. Isidore's quotation of Augustine is vague, however, about the kind of intervention one could expect of these saintly souls. Was prayer to the saints meant to result in thaumaturgical acts on earth, or assistance in ushering souls into heaven? If the latter, was this assistance meant to take place immediately after death or at the Last Judgement? The nature of saintly intercession and whether this ever involved the miraculous, whether material or spiritual, is left ambiguous, even as Isidore sought to explain why the saints should be prayed to in the first place.

Isidore's source in the above text, Augustine, may come across as reticent on the question of the miraculous intercession of the saints, but actually Augustine's thought on the subject evolved significantly over his life time.[22] Early in his career, Augustine had described in *De vera religione* (387-391), the text cited by Isidore in the *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, that "those miracles [of the New Testament] are not permitted to continue into our times, lest the soul should ever seek visible things, and lest their customary occurrence should cause the human race to grow cold [in faith]."[23] Later in life, however, Augustine showed a marked change in attitude towards miracles:

> This statement of mine is indeed true: "miracles were not allowed to last until our times …" But what I said is not to be so interpreted that no miracles are believed to be performed in the name of Christ in the present time. For, when I wrote the book, I myself had already learned about the blind man having been restored to sight in Milan near the bodies of the martyrs of that very city, and about some other [mira-

[22] Described in Anne Fraïsse, "La théologie du miracle dans la *Cité de Dieu* et le témoignage du *De miraculis sancti Stephani*," in *Saint Augustin. La Numidie et la société de son temps*. Scripta Antiqua, ed. Serge Lancel, Stéphanie Guédon, and Louis Maurin (Pessac: Ausonius Éditions, 2005), 131-143; Serge Lancel, "Saint Augustin et le miracle," in *Les miracles de saint Etienne. Recherches sur le recueil pseudo-augustinien (BHL 7860-7861), avec édition critique, traduction et commentaire*, ed. Jean Meyers (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 69-77; Marianne Djuth, "Agustín sobre la metafísica de la creación y los milagros," *Augustinus* 63 (2018): 317-330; T. J. Van Bavel, "The cult of the martyrs in St. Augustine: Theology versus Popular Religion," in *Martyrium in multidisciplinary perspective. Memorial Louis Reekmans*, ed. Mathijs Lamberigts and Peter van Deun (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 351-361; Joan M. Petersen, *The Dialogues of Gregory the Great in their Late Antique Cultural Background* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 90-94; Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cults*, 24-26; McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 8-15; de Nie, *Poetics of Wonder*, 49-50 and 225-365, all based in some way on the foundational articles by D. P. de Vooght, "La Notion philosophique du miracle chez saint Augustin," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 10 (1938): 317-343; idem "Les miracles dans la vie de saint Augustin," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 11 (1939): 5-16; idem, "La théologie du miracle chez saint Augustin," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 11 (1939): 197-222.

[23] Augustine, *De vera religione*, c. 25.47, ed. K. D. Daur and J. Martin, *CCSL* 32 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), 216-217: *Cum enim ecclesia catholica per totum orbem diffusa atque fundata sit, nec miracula illa in nostra tempora durare permissa sunt, ne animus semper visibilia quaereret, et eorum consuetudine frigeresceret genus humanum.*

> cles], of which so many were happening even in those times, that we cannot know about all of them nor count those which we do know.[24]

Augustine's change of heart about miracles has been attributed to his observation of the thaumaturgical abilities of Stephen, whose relics were brought to Hippo in 416, and which Augustine expounded at some length in the *De civitate Dei* (426).[25] "Even today miracles are being performed in [Christ's] name, either through his sacraments or through the prayers and relics of his saints," he concluded in that text.[26] By the end of his life, Augustine had come to see miracles as proof of the saints' resurrection in heaven, though he continued to express some confusion about how they achieved intercession on earth.[27] Augustine therefore went from a position arguing that miracles were only necessary in situations where the spread of the faith demanded it, that is, during apostolic times, to one acknowledging that miracles went on being performed in his day.

Isidore showed no sign of awareness in the *De ecclesiasticis officiis* that Augustine had changed his mind when it came to miracles.[28] He ignored Augustine's later writings and focused only on the more reserved statements of the earlier works, even though the *De civitate Dei* was well-known in Iberia.[29] By siding with the earlier, more sceptical Augustine, Isidore de-emphasized the saints' agency, redirecting attention away from the miracles saints performed in exchange for veneration, and focusing instead on remembrance of the example they set: "the martyrs are to be honoured for the sake of imitation. They are not honoured for the sake of worship."[30] Through his silence on what supplicants might expect from the martyrs in return for prayer, and through emphasis instead on the valuable role saints could

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24 Augustine, *Retractationes* I, c. 13.7, ed. A. Mutzenbecher, *CCSL* 57 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 39: *Item quod dixi: "Nec miracula illa in nostra tempora durare permissa sunt… Sed non sic accipiendum est quod dixi, ut nunc in Christi nomine fieri miracula nulla credantur. Nam ego ipse, quando istum ipsum scripsi librum, ad Mediolanensium corpora martyrum in eadem civitate caecum inluminatum fuisse iam noveram et alia nonnulla, qualia tam multa etiam istis temporibus fiunt, ut nec omnia cognoscere nec ea quae cognoscimus enumerare possimus*. English translation in de Nie, *Poetics of Wonder*, 226.

25 Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XXII, c. 8, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb, *CCSL* 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 815-827. See Yvette Duval, "Sur la genèse des *libelli miraculorum*," *Revue d'Etudes Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 52 (2006): 97-112.

26 Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XXII, c. 8, *CCSL* 48, 815-816: *Nam etiam nunc fiunt miracula in eius nomine, sine per sacramenta eius sine per orationes uel memorias sanctorum eius.*

27 Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, c. 20, ed. Josef Zycha, *CSEL* 41 (Prague/Vienna/Leipzig: Tempsky, 1900), 653-654; trans. Dal Santo, "Gregory the Great," 423-424: "How the martyrs bring help to those people who, it is certain, have been helped by them (…), I do not dare assert."

28 He also does not even try to define or categorize miracles, as Augustine had done. See Djuth, "Agustín sobre la metafísica."

29 He uses it in a significant series of works: *Allegoriae*, *Chronica*, *De differentiis rerum*, *De differentiis uerborum*, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, *De natura rerum*, *Etymologiae*, *Prooemia*, *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, *Sententiae*. Cf. José Carlos Martín Iglesias, "La biblioteca cristiana de los padres hispanovisigodos (siglos VI-VII)," *Veleia* 30 (2013): 259-288, at 261.

30 Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* I, c. 35 (34), *CCSL* 113, 41. For Augustine, see Van Bavel, "Cult of the martyrs," 354-355.

play as models of Christian virtue, Isidore, like the younger Augustine, left any hope of miracles out of the equation.

The idea that saints are more venerable for the example they set their fellow Christians than for the miracles they might perform permeates Isidore's discussion of saints in his pastoral work, the *Sententiae.* Here, channelling Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob* (Book 27), Isidore listed a series of biblical saints, not for their wonder-working abilities but for the virtues they embodied and modelled for other Christians: "humility as in Christ, devotion as in Peter, charity as in John," etc.[31] But Isidore stopped there, omitting from the *Sententiae* the section that follows this one in the *Moralia.* Here, Gregory had constructed an elaborate metaphor based on Job 36:28 that compared the example set by the apostles and prophets to the clouds covering the heavens, the rain to their preaching, and the lightning to the miracles that lit up their words and made them visible to all.[32] By not mentioning the potential role miracles played in the apostles' preaching campaign, but focusing instead on their virtues, Isidore did not acknowledge Gregory's conviction that these wondrous actions were a potentially vital illustrative expression of the saints' divine power, necessary especially for the propagation of the faith.

Elsewhere, Isidore acknowledged that the apostles did indeed perform miracles, but unlike his sources he did not feel that they extended beyond that period of Christian history. The most relevant discussion appears in Book 1 of the *Sententiae*, which generally deals with the establishment of the church, and here Isidore integrated martyrs and their actions into a description of the church's early development. Miracles played an important role in this period, but about later times, Isidore was more cautious:

> Even if the power of miraculous signs was given to the apostles for the sake of nourishing the faith of the other nations, the power of works has been given to the church to provide for its own faith, and even in the apostles themselves the power of works was more extraordinary than the power of miraculous signs. Thus now also in the Church it is better to live well than to produce miraculous signs.[33]

It is not just better for the church to emphasize works over signs in the present day, argued Isidore; the church simply no longer produces miracles at all: "*now* the church does not produce those miraculous things that it was producing under the apostles, for the reason that *then* it was better for the world to believe by miracles, whereas *now*, already believing, it is better to shine by good works."[34] Isidore here distinguished between different phases of church history in explaining the role of miracles. In the time of the early church, miracles

[31] Isidore, *Sententiae* 2.11.12, ed. Pierre Cazier, *CCSL* 111 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 117; trans. Thomas L. Knoebel (New York: Newman Press, 2018), 98.

[32] Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 27.11.20, ed. Marc Adriaen, *CCSL* 143B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), 1345: *Per has ergo nubes lumine suo desuper fulgurat, quia per praedicatores sanctos insensibilitatis nostrae tenebras etiam miraculis illustrat.* See on this McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 20-21.

[33] Isidore, *Sententiae* 1.24.1, *CCSL* 111, 77; trans. Knoebel, 76.

[34] Isidore, *Sententiae* 1.24.2, *CCSL* 111, 78; trans. Knoebel, 76 (emphasis mine).

were necessary for the conversion of nonbelievers, following 1 Cor. 14:22: "at that time, signs were produced externally so that the faith might be strengthened internally."[35] He then cited the example of Paul, who healed the father of Publius to convert the unbelievers, but treated his sick companion, Timothy, medicinally, because there was no need for a miracle in the case of a believer. This example demonstrated to Isidore that miracles were unnecessary in a time of faith, leading him to go so far as to state that "whoever, already in the faith, demands miracles, seeks vainglory."[36] For Isidore, the time of miracles was quite clearly over.[37]

The above passage in the *Sententiae* on the miracles of the saints comes once again from Gregory's *Moralia in Iob* and in ways that again differ significantly from its source.[38] Book 27 of the *Moralia in Iob* reflects a particularly complex aspect of Gregory's thinking, since his claim that miracles belong to the age of the apostles (no doubt influenced by the early Augustine) appears to clash with his promotion of contemporary miracles in the *Dialogi.* William McCready has reconciled the seeming contradiction by pointing out that Gregory admits to the continuation of miracles in his day; they happened, but just less frequently than in apostolic times.[39] McCready draws attention to the numerous instances in which Gregory attributes miracles to contemporary holy individuals throughout his written corpus, including correspondence, homilies and, of course, the *Dialogi*.[40] If not a necessary condition for being proclaimed a saint, miracles were, in Gregory's eyes, important signs of sanctity, demonstrations that Christ continued to work in and through the saints.[41] It is therefore striking that Isidore excised a key phrase from the *Moralia in Iob* from which he was citing in his *Sententiae.* Gregory had stated that while the main age of miracles – that of the apostles – was over: "[the church] demonstrates through many [miracles] when the situation requires…"[42] The conversion of contemporary unbelievers, such as of the *Angli*, was one such situation that had relied on "the illustrious miracles of preachers."[43] This caveat about the ongoing possibility of miracles as and when needed is omitted from Isidore's reworking of

35 Isidore, *Sententiae* 1.24.2, *CCSL* 111, 78; trans. Knoebel, 76.

36 Isidore, *Sententiae* 1.24.3, *CCSL* 111, 78; trans. Knoebel, 77.

37 Having noted this: Eleonora Dell'Elicine, *En el principio fue el Verbo. Políticas del signo y estrategias del poder eclesiástico en el reino visigodo de Toledo (589-711)* (Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 2013), 204.

38 Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 27.18, *CCSL* 143B, 1358.

39 McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 21.

40 As brought together in McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 16-26. For a more tempered assessment, see Petersen, *Dialogues*.

41 George E. Demacopoulos, *Gregory the Great: Ascetic, Pastor, and First Man of Rome* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 49.

42 Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, 27.18.36, *CCSL* 143B, 1358: *Tunc quippe Ecclesia miraculorum adiutoriis indiguit, cum eam tribulatia persecutionis pressit. Nam postquam superbiam infidelitatis edomuit, non iam virtutum signa, sed sola merita operum requirit, quamvis et illa per multos cum opportunitas exigit ostendat.* Commented upon by McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 20.

43 Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 27.11.21, *CCSL* 143B, 1346: *quia emicantibus praedicatorum miraculis, ad fidem etiam terminos mundi perduxit. Ecce enim paene cunctarum iam gentium corda penetrauit; ecce in una fide orientis limitem occidentisque coniunxit; ecce lingua Britanniae, quae nihil aliud nouerat, quam barbarum frendere, iam dudum in diuinis laudibus Hebraeum coepit Alleluia resonare.*

Gregory's text. As a result, the *Sententiae* provides a much stronger sense that miracles are no longer necessary; there is no acknowledgment, however begrudging, that they might be useful in the here and now, not even as signs of inner perfection, in contrast to the way in which Gregory's accounts have frequently been interpreted.[44] Although closely following Gregory, Isidore's strategic selection from the *Moralia in Iob* promotes a reading of miracles that implies they simply no longer occur.[45]

The absence of saintly miracles from Isidore's theoretical discussion is further reflected in his vision of history. In all his historical works, we find only a handful of references to miracles attributed to the saints, almost all in the context of past inter-religious conflicts, and none is clear about the nature of the saint's intervention. In the *Historia Gothorum*, Isidore described how the Homoian (Arian) king Theoderic planned to attack Mérida in 453 after military conquests further north, but was "terrified by the portents of the holy martyr Eulalia," and turned back instead to Gaul.[46] There is a further episode in which the Visigothic Homoian Agila is said to have used the church of Saint Acisclus in Córdoba as a military barracks (551). This was a sacrilegious act that meant "he deserved to receive the merited punishment from the saints themselves in his battle against the citizens of Córdoba."[47] In a similar situation, Gunderic, the first Vandal king of Iberia and another Homoian, overthrew Cartagena and headed for Seville (425), where he was thwarted at the gates by a demon because he had "irreverently stretched forth his hand against the basilica of the martyr Vincent of this city."[48] These mentions of saints saving their civic homes might seem to defy the idea that the age of miracles is over. But they appear primarily intended to demonstrate the triumph of Nicene Christianity over Homoian rivals in a not-(always)-so-recent past. They might therefore have been considered parallel to the apostolic miracles that were necessary for the conversion of unbelievers. Furthermore, only in the case of Córdoba are "the saints" attributed direct punitive action. In the others, it is the *rumour* of Eulalia's miracles and the actions *of a demon* that cause the Homoian armies to be overthrown; no direct intervention of a saint is credited with their defeat. While not denying that the martyrs are capable of miracle-working actions, Isidore's *Historia* gives them significantly weaker agency than what we see attributed to saints in the works of some of his contemporaries. Gregory of Tours' works

[44] Van Uytfanghe, "Controverse," but also McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*; Stephen Lake, "Hagiography and the Cult of Saints," in *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Matthew Dal Santo (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 225-246; Petersen, *The Dialogues*, 94.

[45] On Isidore's selection process as meaningful, see Jamie Wood, "Brevitas in the Writings of Isidore of Seville," in *Early Medieval Spain: A Symposium*. Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar 63, ed. Martin Ryan and Alan Deyermond (London: Queen Mary University of London, 2010), 37-53; Emma Hornby, "Musical Values and Practice in Old Hispanic Chant," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 69 (2016): 595-650.

[46] Isidore, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 32, ed. Theodor Mommsen, *MGH AA* 9 (Berlin: Weimann, 1894), 280.

[47] This appears only in the revised version of the text, ca. 624: Isidore, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 45, ibid., 285-286.

[48] Isidore, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 73, ibid., 296.

of history, for example, feature many miraculous events directly attributable to the agency of the saints.[49]

To these few cases of martyrs in Isidore's corpus, we might add an even smaller number of non-martyr saints credited with the ability to perform miracles. In the *Chronica majora*, Isidore claims that bishop Donatus of Epirus killed a dragon by spitting in its mouth.[50] Later in the same text, he describes Martin of Tours as having "shone by the many signs of his miracles" (*multis miraculorum signis effulsit*), although these remain unspecified.[51] In one additional possible example in the same text, the body of Saint Anthony, the famous Egyptian hermit, is said to have been found by divine revelation, but whether this was thanks to the saint's own intervention is not specified.[52] Otherwise, Isidore lays emphasis primarily on the learned and pastoral qualities of ecclesiastical leaders in his historical works.[53] In his collection of episcopal biographies, the *De viris illustribus*, for example, there is only one miracle, in which the Homoian bishop Osius of Córdoba is struck down for trying to banish the Nicene bishop.[54] These few examples are therefore exceptions in Isidore's wider treatment of Iberian and world history, in which the virtuous deeds and illustrious writings of church leaders appear much more important than any miracles that may have been ascribed to them. One should not expect miracles from the saints, Isidore seems to say, but rather look to the accomplishments of holy men for inspiration, just as he had articulated in the *De ecclesiasticis officiis* and the *Sententiae*.

The rest of Isidore's body of work is similarly quiet on the place of miracles in the cult of the saints. In his *Quaestiones de veteri et novo testamenti*, the saints are treated as the building blocks of the church, whose prayers rise to God like the sweet odours emerging from the thurible.[55] Do these prayers then have an impact on the welfare of the bodies and souls on whose behalf they are presumably being made? Isidore did not say. He did provide one piece of positive evidence for the saints as heavenly actors in the *Synonyma*, one of his more pasto-

[49] See, most recently, Tamar Rotman, *Hagiography, Historiography, and Identity in Sixth-Century Gaul: Rethinking Gregory of Tours* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 111-116, but also Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 130-153.

[50] Isidore, *Chronica Majora*, ed. Sam Koon and Jamie Wood, *E-Spania* 6 (2008), l. 366, https://journals.openedition.org/e-spania/15552.

[51] Isidore, *Chronica Majora*, ibid., l. 355.

[52] Isidore, *Chronica Majora*, ibid., l. 400.

[53] Discussed in Jamie Wood, "Bishops and Their Biographers: The Praxis of History Writing in Visigothic Iberia," in *Writing History in Late Antique Iberia. Historiography in Theory and Practice from the 4th to the 7th Century*, ed. Purificación Ubric Rabaneda (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 155-179.

[54] Isidore, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Carmen Codoñer Merino (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1964), 133-134.

[55] Isidore, *Quaestiones in vetus Testamentum*, c. 55.12, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *PL* 83 (Paris: Migne, 1850), 317D: *Necnon et thuribula, virtutes scilicet operum bonorum, vel orationes*; c. 58.1, col. 318D: *phialas aureas plenas incenso, quae sunt orationes sanctorum*.

ral works.[56] In this moral treatise, Isidore staged a debate between man and reason in which reason tells man to follow a number of moral precepts, taking the saints as his examples.[57] Man, acknowledging the state of sin in which he is in, turns to the saints in prayer: "Pray for me to God, all you holy men; beseech him on my behalf, all you crowds of saints, implore him on my behalf, all you choirs of just men, if God should perhaps have mercy on me."[58] Here we do find Isidore, assuming the voice of "Man", invoking the saints in a way that implies faith in their ability to intercede in heaven for those praying to them on earth. As we saw in his other works, however, Isidore did not indicate what kind of assistance one might expect from praying to the saints. Miracles performed on earth certainly do not seem to be implied. Instead it seems that the chance to escape sin is implicit, although how one might expect the saints to help here is left unclear. Did their intercession occur at the moment of the supplicant's death or at the Last Judgement? Or was it meant to prevent the supplicant from sinning further in the earthly present? Given his insistence on the importance of saintly examples for true conversion away from sin, here and in the *Sententiae*, it seems likely that Isidore was imagining the latter situation, where saints encouraged people to lead virtuous lives in the here and now, and this most effectively by providing models to imitate.[59] The *Synonyma* thus echo Isidore's other works in presenting the saints more as examples of proper Christian virtue and less as souls actively engaged in assisting earthly supplicants.

Isidore's apparent lack of enthusiasm for miracles within saints' cults appears all the more surprising given his wider pastoral aims, mentioned earlier. As explored most recently by Molly Lester, the legislation over which Isidore presided, combined with his extensive pedagogical material on the basic precepts of Christian faith and practice (the *Synonyma*, *Sententiae*, *Etymologiae*, but also, *De fide catholica*), attests to an ambitious if pragmatic programme of ecclesiastical reform with a particular focus on religious practice.[60] Following the conversion of the Visigothic aristocracy to Nicene Christianity at the end of the sixth century, the threat of schism within the Iberian church appears to have remained, motivating bishops like Isidore to seek consensus and a greater regulation of clerical behaviour and learning. This in turn was aimed at promoting a deeper Christianization of the general

[56] See Jacques Fontaine, "Isidore de Séville auteur 'ascétique': les énigmes des 'Synonyma'," *Studi medievali, 3e serie* 6 (1965): 163-195; Jacques Elfassi, "Les Synonyma d'Isidore de Séville: Un manuel de grammaire ou de morale? La réception médiévale de l'œuvre," *Revue d'Etudes Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 52 (2006): 167-198.

[57] Isidore of Seville, *Synonyma* 2.41, ed. Jacques Elfassi, *CCSL* 169 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 94-95: *In omnibus actibus tuis, in omni opera tuo, in omni conversatione tua, imitare bonos, aemulare sanctos. Habeto ante oculos exempla sanctorum, exempla justorum imitando considera, exempla sanctorum propone tibi. Sint tibi patrum exempla disciplinae imitamenta.*

[58] Isidore of Seville, *Synonyma*, 1.67, ibid., 53: *Orate pro me ad Dominum, omnes viri sancti; obsecrate pro me, plebs omnis sanctorum implorate pro me, omnis chorus justorum, si forte misereatur mihi Deus…*

[59] Isidore, *Sententiae* 2.11.8, *CCSL* 111, 116.

[60] Lester, "Word as Lived," esp. 211-272.

population.[61] We know that saints (with their potential miracle-working abilities) were elsewhere deployed in contexts of conversion and Christianization, not least by Gregory the Great, who sent relics across Europe and the Mediterranean in the hope of procuring conversions.[62] The miracles such relics performed, like those of living holy men, were proof of the saints' participation in Christ's divine substance and therefore essential to evangelization efforts.[63] For all that relics could have served an equally useful purpose in Isidore's own programme of reform, we know of no such use nor does he ever credit them with conversions.[64] Considering Gregory's influence on Isidore's own pastoral programme in Iberia, a project reflected in almost all of Isidore's written output, the latter's quite different evaluation of the role of saints and their miracles within it is all the more striking.

We are left to puzzle over what precisely differed in Isidore's context that might have made him less open to promoting saintly miracles than his peers elsewhere. One possibility is the very fear of schism mentioned above, following the conversion of the Visigothic monarchy to Nicene Christianity in 589.[65] Given Isidore's inclusion in his *Histories* of miracles that involved saints defending Nicene cities against Homoian attack, we might expect him to have seen their value in establishing the new religious character of the kingdom. But once the scales had tipped in Iberia towards the Nicene side, it is possible Isidore was loath to promote saints and relics in ways that might have reopened old wounds and created division. By all appearances, even after the conversion, relics were still contested between the two churches.[66] At the Second Council of Zaragoza, held in 592, Homoian relics in that city were put to trial by fire, as churches changed into Nicene hands.[67] More recent saints could also prove divisive, as was Hermenegild, the murdered son of the last Homoian king Leovigild. Gregory the Great treated him as a martyr and prime example of a recent Iberian saint who performed many miracles.[68] Isidore all but ignored him, calling him instead a tyrant who

61 See Lester, "Word as Lived" and Stocking, *Bishops, Councils*.

62 Demacopoulos, *Gregory the Great*, 137-138.

63 See Petersen, *The Dialogues*, 116-117; McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 84-110; Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cults*, 45; and, more generally, Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3-5, 11; Isabel Velázquez Soriano, *La Literatura hagiográfica: presupuestos básicos y aproximación a sus manifestaciones en la Hispania visigoda* (León: Fundación Instituto Castellano y Leonés de la Lengua, 2007), 130; Peter Brown, "Enjoying the Saints in Late Antiquity," *Early Medieval Europe* 9 (2000): 1-24, at 11.

64 Their popularity and circulation in Visigothic Iberia are discussed in Ariel Guiance, "Santos, reliquias y milagros en la hagiografía visigoda," *Pecia* 8-11 (2005): 245-260; Pedro Castillo Maldonado, "Reliquias y lugares santos. Una propuesta de clasificación jerárquica," *Florentia Iliberritana* 8 (1997): 39-54.

65 See Stocking, *Bishops, Councils*; Lester, "Word as Lived."

66 Matthew Dal Santo and Phil Booth, "Conclusion," in *An Age of Saints?*, ed. Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth, 205-214, at 209.

67 Federico Beltrán Torreira, "El II Concilio de Zaragoza (592) y las últimas repercusiones de la crisis arriana en la Hispania Visigoda," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III, Historia Medieval* (1990): 41-48.

68 Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* III, c. 31, *SC* 265, 384-390.

was rightly overcome by his father.[69] Such condemnation of Hermenegild probably served to spare Reccared, Hermenegild's brother, and the king who ultimately brought religious unity to the kingdom.[70] The case of Hermenegild suggests that, in a post-conversion landscape, Isidore wished to reduce the potential for factionalism by turning attention away from relics and saints altogether. He may additionally have wanted to mitigate the regionalism that saints promoted as patrons of individual cities and regions.[71] Espousing a vision of religious unity for the Visigothic kingdom, Isidore may have seen the promotion of particular saints via their miracles as threatening rather than building a common sense of identity for the Iberian church at a delicate time.[72]

If fear of schism forms a potentially important background to Isidore's silence on miracles, his ambivalent stance on them could also be indicative of something more fundamental about his view of Christianisation processes on a personal level.[73] Throughout his works, Isidore demonstrated a deep concern with the interior formation of the Christian individual through fostering Christian virtues and values.[74] This concern shaped his *Sententiae*, for example, and his other pastoral/moral work, the *Synonyma.* Saintly intercession, especially through the performance of miracles, may not have seemed necessary for the accomplishment of internal reform. As he stated in the *Sententiae*, saints acted as mirrors for Christians, who would come to embody their virtue by imitating their actions, but not by relying on their inimitable wonders.[75] Not only would the expectation of miracles presumably have distracted from the appropriate message of virtue one should draw from the saints, they could also be something much more sinister. Isidore associated miracles with the Antichrist, who would seek to deceive

69 Isidore, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 23-24, *MGH AA* 11, 276-277.

70 Molly Lester, "Persecutio, Seductio, and the Limits of Rhetorical Intolerance in Visigothic Iberia," in *Heirs of Roman Persecution Studies on a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity*, ed. Éric Fournier and Wendy Mayer (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019). Also Castellanos, *Hagiografía visigoda*, 165-179; Castellanos, "Política y hagiografía," 496; Morín de Pablos et al., *Hermenegildus*, 106; Marcotegui, "Tratamiento históriográfico," 299-300.

71 Mark A. Handley, *Death, Society and Culture: Inscriptions and Epitaphs in Gaul and Spain, AD 300-750*). BAR International Series (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003), 153. On saints taking part in inter-city rivalry, see Pedro Castillo Maldonado, "¿Rivalidades ciudadanas en textos hagiográficos hispanos?", *Florentia Iliberritana* 10 (1999): 29-40.

72 Jamie Wood, *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain: Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

73 See Céline Martin, "Isidore of Seville's Theories and Practices of Pastoral Care and Church Organization," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 279-300; Justo Fernández Alonso, *La Cura Pastoral en la España Romanovisigoda* (Rome: Iglesia Nacional Española, 1975). For the more general conflict between promulgation of external signs and the fostering of internal conversion in late antique thought, see Van Uytfanghe, "Controverse biblique."

74 The centrality of good deeds to Christian identity is expressed in Isidore, *Etymologiae*, VI.14.3, ed. Díaz y Díaz et al., 172. See Jacques Fontaine, "Pénitence publique et conversion personnelle: L'apport d'Isidore de Séville à l'évolution médiévale de la penitence," *Revue de droit canonique* 28. *Mélanges Jean Gaudemet* (1978): 141-156.

75 Isidore, *Sententiae* 2.11.9, *CCSL* 111, 116: *Multi vitam sanctorum imitantur et de moribus alterius effigiem virtutis sumunt….*

people by performing them in great numbers; only the elect would be able to discern their falsity by recognizing that "the saints will become glorious through their perseverance, not through miracles as the martyrs did in former times."[76] Although Isidore did not see the end of times as imminent, he may have encouraged a distrustful attitude to miracles for fear they were signs of coming evil rather than of sanctity.[77] A lack of real eschatological concern would not in any case have stopped Isidore from seeking inner conversions through inspiration by saintly virtues rather than the expectation of saintly miracles.[78]

Asking ourselves about Isidore's view of the miraculous and its place in his understanding of sanctity does more than add just another voice to the increasing cacophony emerging from the late antique Mediterranean on questions of religious belief and practice. Isidore's work was immensely influential, with the potential to exercise significant impact immediately in Iberia and elsewhere via the Carolingian authors who actively copied and circulated it.[79] Not only that, Isidore's apparent ambivalence on the miracles of the saints, evident in his claims that the age of miracles was over and his silence on why people should pray to the saints, could help to explain features of religious literary culture in early medieval Iberia itself.[80] It has long been noted that Iberia lacks the written collections of miracles produced in the same centuries by Gregory the Great in Italy, Gregory of Tours and others in Merovingian Gaul, and the many accounts of saintly miracles coming out of the Greek- and Syriac-speaking worlds.[81] Although the *Passionarium Hispanicum* preserves a collection of mar-

76 Isidore, *Sententiae* 1.25.5, *CCSL* 111, 80: *In quo tempore per patientiam gloriosi erunt sancti, non per miracula sicut martyres fuerunt priores*.

77 Luís García Moreno, "Expectativas milenaristas y escatológicas en la España tardoantigua (SS. V-VII)," in *Los Visigodos y su mundo*, ed. Antonio Méndez Madariaga, Teresa Montoro, and Maria Dolores Sandoval León (Madrid: Consejera de Educación y cultura, Comunidad de Madrid, 1998), 247-258, at 253; Jocelyn N. Hillgarth, "Eschatological and Political Concepts in the Seventh Century," in *The Seventh Century. Change and Continuity*, ed. J. N. Hillgarth (London: Studies of the Warburg Institute, 1992), 212-235. See Dell'Elicine, "Signum vel res," 4.

78 The possibility of ongoing fear in the North-west of the peninsula of Priscillianism could have exacerbated fear of local saints. It is unlikely, however, that explicit support for Priscillian survived into the seventh century. See Francisco Javier Fernández Conde, "Prisciliano y priscilianismo. Historiografía y realidad," *Clio y Crimen* 1 (2004): 43-85; Virginia Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority and the Priscillianist Controversy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995).

79 Mark Lewis Tizzoni, "Isidore of Seville's Early Influence and Dissemination (636-711)," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Fear and Wood, 397-423; Sinéad O'Sullivan, "Isidore in the Carolingian and Ottonian Worlds: Encyclopaedism and Etymology, c. 800-1050," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Fear and Wood, 387-423; and, more broadly, *Isidore of Seville and his Reception*, ed. Fear and Wood.

80 The impact of doubts about miracles on hagiography is explored in Van Uytfanghe, "Controverse biblique."

81 Patrick Henriet, "Heurs et malheurs de l'hagiographie épiscopale dans l'Hispania des VIIe-XIIe siècles," in *Pratiques Hagiographiques dans l'Espagne du Moyen-Âge et du Siècle d'Or*, vol. 2, ed. Amaia Arizaleta, Françoise Cazal, Teresa Rodríguez, Luis González Fernández, and Monique Guell (Toulouse: Presses universitaires du Midi, 2020), 313-326; idem, "L'hagiographie latine médiévale hispanique (VIIe -XIIIe siècles). Typologie et Évolution," *Nuevos Estudios de Latín Medieval Hispánico* (2021): 75-97. An early exception is Severus of Menorca's fourth-century account of the miracles performed by the relics of Stephen: *Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, ed. and trans. Scott Bradbury (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

tyr *passiones*, many of which have been dated from the fifth to the seventh century (despite the tenth- and eleventh-century dates of the earliest codices), these include few accounts of miracles, and almost none performed by the martyrs post-mortem.[82] The Old Hispanic liturgy, an important substratum of which was no doubt in place by the end of the seventh century, says almost nothing about the miracles performed by the saints being prayed to for their intercession.[83] There is also very little literature promoting the miracle-working abilities of contemporary holy men, beyond the rural hermit Aemilian and the Galician founder of monasteries, Fructuosus.[84] One of the clearest exceptions is the *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium*, in which the miracles performed by the martyr patron of Mérida, Eulalia, for the benefit of the Nicene bishops of the city and their congregation, seem largely intended to prove the error of the Homoian king, Leovigild and the Homoian faction of the same city.[85] The similar polemical tenor of this text and Isidore's historical works, described above, suggests that the miraculous may have had a particular utility in the period of conflict between Nicenes and Homoians and the memorialization of that period, but one that Isidore thought should end once the conflict was resolved.[86]

With this reappraisal of Isidore's views of saints and miracles, I do not wish to claim that he refused to promote a kind of 'simple' or 'popular' credulity that belief in miracles has implied to some historians.[87] His reference to miracles in his *Histories* belies this reductionist view. We also cannot conclude with any confidence that he embraced the same kind of opposition encountered by Gregory on questions of the saints' post-mortem activities. Isidore adapted his sources and selected extracts from them in ways that suggest scepticism or ambivalence rather than outright criticism; he is more silent than he is polemical. In this study, it is hoped, however, that the significance of Isidore's silence has become clear, even if its impact was also diminished. While Isidore's potential distrust of saintly miracles may explain the absence of certain miracle-related literature in Iberia in comparison with

82 *Passionarium Hispanicum*, ed. Valeriano Yarza Urquiola, *CCSL* 171-171A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020).

83 The single-surviving source for the Visigothic liturgy is OV: *Oracional visigotico.* Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra. Serie liturgica, ed. José Vives and Jeronimo Claveras (Barcelona: CSIC, 1946).

84 Braulio of Zaragoza, *Vita Aemiliani*, ed. Luis Vázquez de Parga (Madrid: Instituto Jerónimo Zurita, 1943); *La vida de San Fructuoso de Braga. Estudio y edición crítica*, ed. Manuel Díaz y Díaz (Braga: Universidad de Braga, 1974).

85 Santiago Castellanos García, "Política y registro hagiográfico en la Hispania visigoda: Leovigildo en las *Vitae*," in *Studia Historica in honorem Prof. Urbano Espinosa Ruiz*, ed. María José Castillo Pascual and Pilar Iguacél de la Cruz (León: Universidad de León, 2018), 485-499; Castellanos, *La hagiografía visigoda*; Lester, *Persecutio*, 213-234.

86 Pedro Castillo Maldonado, "*In ecclesia contra ecclesiam:* algunos ejemplos de disputas, violencias y facciones clericales en las iglesias tardoantiguas," *Antiquité Tardive* 15 (2007): 263-276.

87 This has notably been the case with Gregory the Great, with Francis Clark even arguing that Gregory could not have written the *Dialogi*, given the theological sophistication reflected in his other works: *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues* (Leiden: Brill, 1987); idem, *The "Gregorian" Dialogues and the Origins of Benedictine Monasticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), countered, among others, by Paul Meyvaert, "The Enigma of Gregory the Great's Dialogues: A Response to Francis Clark," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 39 (1988): 335-381; idem, "The Authentic Dialogues of Gregory the Great," *Sacris Erudiri* 43 (2004): 55-130.

with other areas, we cannot conclude that his influence was universally silencing.[88] Some of his contemporaries did indeed compose hagiographical literature in which claims for saints (ancient and more recent) acting miraculously in the world are abundant.[89] Pilgrimage was also encouraged and undertaken by ecclesiastical elites in Visigothic Iberia.[90] This indicates a prevailing belief in the merits of contact with relics. There is also evidence of Iberian Christians visiting local hermits and leaving their marks on cave churches and hermitages, suggesting they were seeking the miracles of healing and exorcism described in the *vita* of the Riojan hermit saint Aemilian.[91] Seeing the many signs of the miraculous actually present in Visigothic Iberia, it may not be that Isidore did not believe in miracles or thought them beneath him, but rather that he wished to turn his fellow Christians, many of whom may well have found the miraculous ubiquitous and appealing, onto an alternative path, where the wondrous was at the very least to be considered less important than the interior workings of grace.[92]

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88 The Old Hispanic liturgy came to include the accounts of Stephen's miracles from *De civitate Dei* for the feast of Stephen: *Passionarium Hispanicum*, ed. Yarza Urquiola, 473-480.

89 Dell'Elicine, "Signum vel res," 4-10. In addition to the *Vita Aemiliani*, *Vita Fructuosi* and the *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* already mentioned, the works of the mountain priest Valerius of Bierzo credit saints with performing miracles. See *Valère du Bierzo: Écrits autobiographiques et visions de l'au-delà*, ed. Patrick Henriet, Jacques Elfassi, Florian Gallon, Céline Martin, and José Carlos Martín Iglesias (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2021); Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, *Valerio del Bierzo: su persona, su obra* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", 2006); Pablo C. Díaz, "Valerio del Bierzo: la equívoca marginalidad de un asceta tardoantiguo," in *Marginados sociales y religiosos en la Hispania tardorromana y visigoda*, ed. R. González Salinero (Madrid/Salamanca: Signifer Libros, 2013), 293-315.

90 Castillo Maldonado, "Reliquias y lugares santos," and Pedro Castillo Maldonado, *Los mártires hispanorromanos y su culto en la Hispania de la Antiguëdad Tardía* (Granada: Ediciones Universidad de Granada, 1999), 263-295; Pablo C. Díaz, "Peregrinos y lugares de peregrinación en la *Hispania* tardoantigua," *Questões e debates* 33 (2001): 41-75; Jamie Wood, "Narrating religious processions in Visigothic Iberia: a sociology of saintly power," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 15 (2023): 217-239.

91 Handley, *Death*, 161-162.

92 Interestingly, the fourth-century Spanish writer Juvencus, in a poetic synthesis of the Gospels, minimized miracles of healing in order to highlight the enlightening power of doctrine. See de Nie, *Poetics of Wonder*, 35-37.

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READING HAGIOGRAPHY IN TIMES OF REFORM: THE CAROLINGIAN LEGENDARY MONTPELLIER, BIBL. INTERUNIVERSITAIRE DE MÉDECINE, H 55

GORDON BLENNEMANN[1]

ABSTRACT

Based on a case study of one of the major Carolingian legendaries – Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire de médecine, H 55, dating from around 800 – this chapter argues that its choice of texts reveals a keen interest in the patterns of spiritual and institutional authority of religious women. In the context of Carolingian monastic reform, the serial logic of the hagiographical texts in this manuscript offered the basis of an argument in favour of the traditional variety of life forms of religious women, sometimes in partnership with men, at a time when this variety became increasingly criticized.

KEYWORDS

Hagiography; Codicology; Legendary; Monastic Reform; Religious Women; Burgundy; Autun; Alise-Sainte-Reine; Flavigny; Troyes

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Connecting People. Saints, Relics, and Communities in the Early Medieval World, in Memory of Janneke Raaijmakers,
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INTRODUCTION

Carolingian legendaries, which have come down to us through a quite dense chain of manuscripts from the mid-eigth century onwards, are without a doubt our most important layer of transmission of early medieval hagiography. François Dolbeau, Guy Philippart and others[2] have convincingly argued that these collections bear witness to a global activity of collecting hagiographical texts. Sometimes these became standardized forms such as the collection Guy Philippart[3] has labelled the Romano-Carolingian Passionary. Such activities reflect an intense exchange about how to define the socio-ecclesiological model of the *communitas* or *societas sanctorum*.[4] At the same time, one has to keep in mind that beyond globalized logics of transmission the choices of texts carry the mark of more intimate textual communities.

While Brian Stock developed the concept of "textual community" to describe the emergence of new forms of participative literacy in the 11th and 12th centuries within reform movements and so-called heretical groups,[5] it has since been used to describe a comparable logic for other historical contexts.[6] My analysis is above all concerned with the emergence of textual communities in the monastic world, more precisely the world of religious women. In this respect, I follow Guy Stroumsa, who considered monastic communities to be ideal case studies as textual communities.[7]

It makes sense to broaden the scope of this concept to embrace scriptural interpretation in hagiography for two complementary reasons:

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2 François Dolbeau, "Notes sur l'organisation interne des légendiers latins," in *Hagiographie, culture et sociétés, IVe-XIIe siècles* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981), 11-29; Guy Philippart, *Les légendiers latins et autres manuscrits hagiographiques* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977), 27-44; idem, *Mise à jour* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985); see also the following case studies: Maximilian Diesenberger, "Der Cvp 420: die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen und ihre Gestaltung im frühmittelalterlichen Bayern," in *L'hagiographie mérovingienne à travers ses réécritures*, ed. Monique Goullet, Martin Heinzelmann, and Christiane Veyrard-Cosme (Ostfildern: Thorbeke, 2010), 291-248; Monique Goullet, ed., *Le légendier de Turin: ms. D.V.3 de la Bibliothèque nationale universitaire* (Florence: SISMEL, 2014); Fernand Peloux, ed., *Le légendier de Moissac et la culture hagiographique méridionale autour de l'an mil* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

3 Guy Philippart, "Les légendiers, des origines au début du IXe siècle," in *Le légendier de Turin*, ed. Goullet, 48-72.

4 See on this concept Martin Heinzelmann, "'Adel' und 'Societas sanctorum': soziale Ordnungen und christliches Weltbild von Augustinus bis zu Gregor von Tours," in *Nobilitas. Funktion und Repräsentation des Adels in Alteuropa*, ed. Otto Gerhard Oexle and Werner Paravicini (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1997), 216-256, and Gerhard Ludwig Müller, *Gemeinschaft und Verehrung der Heiligen. Geschichtlich-Systematische Grundlegung der Hagiologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1986).

5 Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy. Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

6 On the use of the concept for the understanding of late antique contexts of scriptural interpretation and education, see Jane Heath, "'Textual Communities': Brian Stock's Concept and Recent Scholarship on Antiquity," in *Scriptural Interpretation at the Interface Between Education and Religion. In Memory of Hans Conzelmann*, ed. Florian Wilk (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 5-35.

7 Guy Stroumsa, "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16 (2008): 61-77.

1. Late antique and early medieval thinkers established the idea that, within the typological framework of salvation history, hagiography as *historia* continued and actualized Biblical narrative.[8]

2. As a consequence, hagiography absorbed to some extent the formal and moral authority of the Bible. This influence of the Biblical paradigm was essential for hagiography's normative effect.[9] In the monastic context, from the very beginning it developed a special quality as a narrated norm which may have helped (in the words of Brian Stock) "to structure the internal behaviour and to provide solidarity against the outside world."[10] But as texts circulated and monastic ideas about moral norms reached beyond the cloister,[11] it is worth analysing more closely how monastic communities, functioning at a social interface, established writing, reading and collecting hagiographical texts as both an act of distinction and a contribution to contemporary debates.

As an attempt to enrich this conceptual framework, this chapter explores the potential dynamics of a textual community around hagiographical traditions in the light of a particularly intriguing example of a Carolingian legendary, the manuscript Montpellier, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de médecine, H 55 (henceforth MpH. 55).[12]

MpH. 55 has resisted until now attempts to identify its place of production. According to a short note by Guglielmo Libri, MpH. 55 belonged in the ninth century to the library of Saint-Étienne at Autun. It might have been at Saint-Bénigne in Dijon during the thirteenth century. In 1721 it belonged to the collection of Jean Bouhier from which it went to Montpellier.[13]

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8 See Marc van Uytfanghe, *Stylisation biblique et condition humaine dans l'hagiographie mérovingienne (600-750)* (Brussels: Academie voor Weteschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten, 1987).

9 See Thomas Granier and Marie-Céline Isaïa, eds., *Normes et hagiographies dans l'Occident médiéval (Ve-XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

10 Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, 90. On hagiography as narrated norm, see Gordon Blennemann, "Hagiographie: une norme narrée. Regards sur les Vitae de Jutta de Sponheim et d'Hildegarde de Bingen et le Liber visionum d'Élisabeth de Schönau," in *Enfermements. II, Règles et dérèglements en milieu clos (IVe-XIXe siècle)*, ed. Isabelle Heullant-Donat et al. (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015), 115-127; Anne-Marie Helvétius, "Normes et pratiques de la vie monastique en Gaule avant 1050: présentation des sources écrites," in *La vie quotidienne des moines en Orient et en Occident (IVe-Xe siècle)*, vol. 1: *l'Etat des sources*, ed. Olivier Delouis and Maria Mossakowska Gaubert (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2015), 371-386; Albrecht Diem, "Vita vel Regula: Multifunctional Hagiography in the Early Middle Ages," in *Hagiography and the History of Latin Christendom, 500-1500*, ed. Samantha Kahn Herrick (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 123-142.

11 Anne-Marie Helvétius, "Hagiographie et formation politique des aristocrates dans le monde franc (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)," in *Hagiographie, idéologie et politique au Moyen* Âge *en Occident. Actes du colloque de Poitiers*, ed. Édina Bozoky (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 59-80.

12 On the manuscript, with further references, see Martin Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar vom Beginn des 9. Jahrhunderts: Montpellier, Bibl. Interuniversitaire Faculté Médecine H. 55," in *Zwischen Rom und Santiago: Festschrift für Klaus Herbers zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Claudia Alraum et al. (Bochum: Winkler, 2016), 211-225.

13 Ibid., 211.

The manuscript must be the product of an important scriptorium with a rather distinguished library or equivalent resources to hand, given the rarity of some of the texts. Bernhard Bischoff dated the manuscript to the beginning of the nineth century at the latest, and suggested a Burgundian or Lotharingian scriptorium. He identified one hand of MpH. 55 with that of a scribe belonging to the school of Metz under bishop Angilram (d. 791), whose script was to be found in a sacramentary destroyed in 1944.[14]

As Martin Heinzelmann has explained in a recent study on this manuscript,[15] its choice of texts reveals a keen interest in models of syneisaktism, that is, forms of collaboration and cohabitation of religious men and women comparable to the ascetic mindset which Felice Lifshitz has studied for Carolingian Eastern Francia.[16] My analysis complements Heinzelmann's study, and is based on a codicological examination of the manuscript that Martin Heinzelmann and I did together in Montpellier in 2012.[17] I should like to suggest that the serial logic of MpH. 55 was an effort to argue in favour of the variety of life styles of religious women as exemplified through the late antique and early medieval hagiographical texts brought together for the manuscript. Its focus reaches beyond the mere question of the legitimacy of forms of collaboration between ascetic men and women. As we shall see, the hagiographical *exempla* present longstanding traditions of female authority within the Church and their multifold practical articulations.

When MpH. 55 was assembled, the question of the spiritual and institutional authority of women had been discussed for centuries, but the manuscript's scribes worked in a context when this question became once again a matter of intensified debate. Bischoff's dating of the manuscript provides an immediate context of renewed efforts to standardise the female *vita religiosa* as part of a broad project to frame forms of religious life within the Carolingian Empire.[18] These efforts joined the imperial court, the Carolingian episcopate and of course the monastic world itself. They found an important high point in the series of synods in Aachen between 816 and 819. They imposed two normative references onto religious women: the *Regula Benedicti* and the *Institutio sanctimonialium*. The actual impact of

[14] Bernhard Bischoff, *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2: *Laon-Paderborn*, ed. Birgit Ebersperger (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 198, no. 2822.

[15] See n. 12.

[16] Felice Lifshitz, *Religious Women in Early Carolingian Francia: a Study of Manuscript Transmission and Monastic Culture* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014).

[17] I should like to thank Pascaline Todeschini, conservateur at the Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de Montpellier, for her help during our research stay, 17th to 20th April 2012.

[18] See *Monastic Communities and Canonical Clergy in the Carolingian World. Categorizing the Church*, ed. Rutger Kramer, Emilie Kurdziel, and Graeme Ward (Turnhout: Brepols 2022); Rutger Kramer, *Rethinking Authority in the Carolingian Empire. Ideals and Expectations during the Reign of Louis the Pious (813-828)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019); idem, "Monasticism, Reform, and Authority in the Carolingian Era," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, vol. 1: *Origins to the Eleventh Century*, ed. Alison Beach and Isabelle Cochelin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 432-449; Josef Semmler, "Benedictus II. Una regula – una consuetudo," in *Benedictine Culture 750-1050*, ed. Willem Lourdaux (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1983), 1-49.

these efforts of reform and its normative references, however, are still to some extent matters for debate.[19]

Our understanding of such dynamics of monastic or, more generally, religious reforms has gained a lot from recent research. This has set the focus precisely on the interplay between the global and the local in order to pay more attention to potential links and shifts between expectations and practices, and between imagined, perceived, and lived realities.[20] Here lies the distinctive link to Janneke Raaijmaker's work, which we honour in this volume.[21]

In the case of the female *vita religiosa*, the support but also the pressure of expectations from local societies, seem to be the reasons why the extraordinary variety of life styles and social involvement was able to resist and prevail against requirements for normalization. This reality and its dynamics are to some extent complementary to what we know now about the contemporary phenomenon of *correctio* and its local impact.[22]

Against this background, this chapter analyzes MpH. 55 as a local mirror of a specific idea of the *communitas sanctorum*, its history and its function as a model for the ascetic life for women. This model was a crucial one in a context of intensified debate about female religious life. The chapter examines in the first place the sanctorale of MpH. 55. I shall consider what has prompted the selection of texts, the editorial choices which we may grasp through the ways the chosen texts are presented, and how these editorial features are linked to the

19 See Thomas Schilp, *Norm und Wirklichkeit religiöser Frauengemeinschaften im frühen Mittelalter. Die Institutio sanctimonialium Aquisgranensis des Jahres 816 und die Problematik der Verfassung von Frauenkommunitäten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998); Franz J. Felten, "Auf dem Weg zu Kanonissen und Kanonissenstift. Ordnungskonzepte der weiblichen *vita religiosa* bis in 9. Jahrhundert," in *Europa und die Welt in der Geschichte. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Dieter Berg*, ed. Raphaela Averkorn et al. (Bochum: Winkler, 2004), 551-573; Michèle Gaillard, *D'une réforme à l'autre (816-934). Les communautés religieuses en Lorraine à l'époque carolingienne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de la Sorbonne, 2006), 121-188; Steven Vanderputten, *Dark Age Nunneries. The Ambiguous Identity of Female Monasticism, 800-1050* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 52-79; Michael Eber, "Loose Canonesses? (Non-)Gendered Aspects of the Aachen Institutiones," in Kramer, Kurdziel, and Ward, eds., *Monastic Communities*, 217-239; Albrecht Diem, "Choreography and Confession: The *Memoriale qualiter* and Carolingian Monasticism," in ibid., 59-98; for the general framework also idem, "The Gender of the Religious: Wo/men and the Invention of Monasticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith M. Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 432-446.

20 See now Carine van Rhijn, "Introduction: Rethinking the Carolingian Reforms," in *Rethinking the Carolingian Reforms*, ed. Arthur Westwell, Ingrid Rembold, and Carine van Rhijn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2023), 1-31, and with focus on the monastic world, for instance, Steven Vanderputten, *Monastic Reform as a Process. Realities and Representations in Medieval Flanders, 900–1100* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), and, with discussion of the historiography, idem, "Monastic Reform from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism*, vol. 1, ed. Beach and Cochelin, 599-617.

21 See Janneke E. Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c.744-c.900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

22 See Carine van Rhijn, "Charlemagne's correctio: A Local Perspective," in *Charlemagne: les temps, les espaces, les hommes. Construction et déconstruction d'un règne*, ed. Rolf Große and Michel Sot (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 43-59.

codicological structure of the collection. My analysis will then turn to the question of contextualization in the sense that I shall try to understand what institutional and ideological context might have inspired the creation as well the reading and argumentative use of the hagiographical collection of MpH. 55.

A. UNDERSTANDING THE SANCTORALE

The overall structure of the sanctorale may be divided into three groups of texts. It seems to be the result of text editing based on a mixture of smaller legendaries and *libelli*. Monumental display of some opening pages may go back to such isolated text models.[23] The large typological variety of saints, Apostles, martyrs, bishops, confessors, and virgins mirrors the idea of a textual *communitas sanctorum* as an image of the universal church. It is based on occidental as well as oriental hagiographical references common to the monastic world.[24] Within this idealized community of the saints, it is particularly significant and noteworthy that a majority of the texts concerns female saints and male-female couples. We find 16 female martyrs, the rather exceptional number of seven female confessors, and seven saintly couples. The numbers increase if we rename some of the texts based on their content rather than following their rubrics.[25]

Five broader hagiographical categories, which have been elaborated and defined in more detail by Martin Heinzelmann, determine the sanctorale and thus the editorial outline of the collection:

1. The syneisaktic quality of the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles has been stressed recently by Felice Lifshitz's research on hagiographical traditions in Eastern Francia, even if this is only one potential reading of this strand of *Apocrypha*.[26] Given the ecclesiological standing of the Apostles, the importance of these texts in MpH. 55 hardly comes as a surprise.[27] Placing a series of *Acta apostolorum* at the outset of a hagiographical collection

[23] For a more detailed analysis of the thematic logics of the sanctorale, see Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 213. For the links between the structure of the sanctorale and the quire structure, see the appendix to this chapter. Texts with monumental opening pages are marked there with an asterisk.

[24] See the complementary article by Anne Lester in this volume.

[25] See the quantifications, by Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Lgendar," 213-214 and by Anne-Marie Helvétius, "Les femmes dans la littérature martyriale diffusée dans le monde franc du haut Moyen Âge," in *Des saints et des martyrs. Hommage à Alain Dierkens*, ed. Sylvie Peperstraete and Monique Weis (Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2018), 68.

[26] Lifshitz, *Religious Women*, 41-49 and eadem, "Apokryphe Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden als feministische Narrative," in *Vom Blutzeugen zum Glaubenszeugen? Formen und Vorstellungen des christlichen Martyriums im Wandel*, ed. Gordon Blennemann and Klaus Herbers (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2014), 71-81; for a broader textual history and contextualisation of the *Apocrypha apostolorum* and the cult of the Apostles, see the pioneering study by Els Rose, *Ritual Memory. The Apocryphal Acts and Liturgical Commemoration in the Early Medieval West (c. 500-1215)* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009) and eadem, "From Eyewitnesses to Blood Witnesses: The Cult of the Apostles in the Early Medieval West," in *Vom Blutzeugen zum Glaubenszeugen*, ed. Blennemann and Herbers, 57-70.

[27] See Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 213-215.

corresponds with structural conventions of other such manuscripts.[28] It is still striking that MpH. 55 seems to emphasize the gendered reading of Apostle texts, compared to the Würzburg *Passionale* analysed by Lifshitz. The Montpellier manuscript offers, for instance, a rare non-Italian transmission of the *Acts* of Thecla (n. 29), which could be described as an epitome of collaboration between a male and a female saint, that is, the spiritual friendship between the virgin martyr Thecla and the Apostle Paul. Above all, it presents Thecla as a female Apostle.[29]

2. *Castitas*, which is a major issue of MpH. 55, is mainly exemplified through late antique virgin martyrs and their endurance of horrible forms of torture in order to preserve not only the Christian faith but also the integrity of their bodies.[30] One could name the examples of Agatha (n. 18), Lucia (n. 19), Marina (n. 30), Euphemia (n. 31), Iuliana (n. 46), and Regina (n. 61). As a variation, some texts, such as the *Passio Luceiae* (n. 53) and the *Passio Iuliae* (n. 26), present *sponsae Christi* resisting to the prospect of forced marriage. Complementary to these heroines of chastity, we encounter a series of male virgins, mostly bishops and popes, such as Clement (n. 16) and Silvester (n. 17). But on their way to perfection, women still play an essential role: as addressees of preaching and conversion; as embodiments of temptation; and, above all, as important assistants.

3. In some texts spiritual complementarity and the collaboration of saintly couples are presented as essential to the sanctification of both the male and the female saint, as in the case of Afra, bishop Narcissus and the deacon Felix (n. 34).[31] At the same time, the majority of the texts of this category present the female saint as playing the essential role in the shared path to salvation, as in the case of Saint Caecilia and her fiancée Valerianus (n. 32-33). It is not unusual for this idea to lead to editorial choices in order to emphasize the spiritual role of the female *persona*. This may even be a work of the scribes of MpH. 55, as in the case of the *Passio Hadriani* (n. 57), which offers a text that is particularly interested in Hadrian's wife Natalia.[32]

[28] The Turino Legendary (Turino, Biblioteca nazionale universitaria, MS. D.V.3) also opens with a series of *Acta apostolorum*, and is a collection possibly copied for a lay public. See Monique Goullet, "Langues des textes ou langues des copistes?" in *Le légendier de Turin*, ed. eadem, 170.

[29] On the different versions of this narrative, see Oscar von Gebhardt, *Die lateinischen Übersetzungen der Acta Pauli et Theclae nebst Fragmenten, Auszügen und Beilagen* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1902); see also Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla. A Literary Study* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2006); Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Gérard Poupon, "Les Actes de Paul et Thècle latins. Édition de la version A et de sa réécriture dans le manuscrit de Dublin, Trinity College, 174," *Apocrypha* 27 (2016): 9-110; Stephen J. Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla: A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[30] See on this aspect and its variation in the different texts, Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 215-216.

[31] Ibid., 217-218.

[32] See ibid., 218 for a comparison between the version of the Turino Legendary (ed. Marieke van Acker and Monique Goullet, "9. Passio Adriani et sociorum eius," in *Le légendier de Turin*, ed. Goullet, 337-356) and the version of MpH. 55.

4. In the same sense, some female *personae* who seem to be rather marginal to the overall narrative, contributed to the conversion of male saints.[33] This is the case of the *Passio* of the so-called *Tergemini* of Langres (n. 40) in which the *matrona* Leonilla takes care of the Christian education of her grandsons, the triplets Speusippus, Eleusippus and Meleusippus. It is quite common for such seemingly minor female figures to take care of burying the dead male martyr, as in the case again of Leonilla and Benignus of Dijon (n. 56) and of Quentin and the *matrona* Eusebia (n. 11a/b). As the edition of MpH. 55 does not mark the limit between the *Passio Quintini* and the *Inventio* of his relics, further emphasis is put on Eusebia's action at the end of the narrative.

5. Finally, we encounter an important number of female protagonists – martyrs, virgins and confessors – who are strongly involved in missionary or even ecclesiastical affairs. They are sometimes abbesses or even female abbots in male clothes (Euphrasia [n. 28], Euphrosyna [n. 35] and Eugenia [n. 36]).[34] The *Life* of Gertrude of Nivelles (n. 22a) is a particularly striking example of this, for it presents her as a preacher and teacher to a community composed of clerics and angelic virgins and other people connected to her monastery.[35] While Nivelles provides an example of a joint religious life of men and women, the hagiographical narratives of this category go beyond the tradition of synesaktism. Gertrude's erudition as specified in her *Vita* underlines her spiritual authority. In contrast to the *matrona* Leonilla's education of her grandsons, which was confined to the private sphere of family, Gertrude's teaching has a public impact. Presenting Gertrude as a preacher emphasises even this public authority, for it confers on her an episcopal, or at least priestly, prerogative. She is not the only example of a female preacher amongst the hagiographical exempla of MpH. 55. The two versions of the *Passio* of Euphemia of Chalcedon (n. 20 and 31), for instance, insist on her role as teacher and preacher to the Christian community of her city, even if the second version transforms the narrative in order to undermine this authority.[36]

Public preaching points to the broader question of religious women's status within the Church. So does another topic of the hagiographical *exempla* brought together in MpH. 55: the work of religious women as deaconesses. This had encountered severe but rather ineffective episcopal criticism in the Frankish context since the Merovingian period.[37] The *Passio Euphrasiae* (n. 28) and the *Passio Hadriani* (n. 57) both present female protagonists as

[33] See on this Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 216.

[34] See also ibid., 217.

[35] *Vita Geretrudis prima*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 2 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1888), 453-464, here c. 8, 458; see Anne-Marie Helvétius, "Le monachisme féminin en Occident de l'Antiquité tardive au haut Moyen Âge," in *Monachesimi d'oriente e d'occidente nell'alto medioevo. Spoleto, 31 marzo-6 aprile 2016*, vol. 1 (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2017), 193-230, at 218.

[36] See also Helvétius, "Les femmes dans la littérature martyriale," 79.

[37] Ibid. for *diaconissae* in female martyr passions; on the *diaconissa* in late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages: Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination. Female Clergy in the Medieval West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 67-74.

diaconissae. In addition, those texts which describe women visiting martyrs in prison or burying them, insist on an important function of *diaconissae*, namely, the care for the poor, the sick, and the dead.[38]

A third topic confirms the interest of a large proportion of the texts in MpH. 55 in the institutional authority of women, with examples of female liturgical agency.[39] The *Passio* of Luceia of Rome (n. 53) reminds us of the well-established public importance of female religious prayer for king and realm, as Luceia and her twelve fellow virgins pray for military victory of the Barbarian king Aceia and for his and his family's salvation. The *Passio* of the Romano-Egyptian *virgo* Eufraxia, on the other hand, pleads in favour of a liturgical act celebrated by women which was questioned by the Frankish episcopate in the same way as they challenged the legitimacy of the *diaconissa*: the narrative offers a detailed description of the *consecratio virginum* of Eufrexia administered by the superior of the female community which Eufraxia had entered. In MpH. 55, as well as in the Torino Legendary, the superior is alternatively called *abbatissa* and *diaconissa*.

B. POSSIBLE CONTEXTS

What do these observations suggest in terms of MpH. 55's use as evidence for a more or less defined textual community, within the conceptual framework defined at the outset of this chapter? This entails establishing the scriptorium in which the manuscript was produced, and to whom the collection was addressed.

In a recent review of the posthumous third volume of Bernhard Bischoff's *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften*, David Ganz underlined the extent to which Burgundy remains a grey zone when it comes to our knowledge of Carolingian book production. This is the case despite Bischoff's monumental achievement. It was Bischoff who insisted that for most Carolingian manuscripts localization on the basis of paleographical features alone, without any historical or codicological evidence to hand, is an impossible task.[40] Given these observations, we return to the sanctorale of MpH. 55 to offer an hypothesis concerning the potential context of production of this specific manuscript.

[38] Kate Cooper, "The Martyr, the *matrona* and the Bishop: the Matron Lucina and the Politics of Martyr Cult in fifth- and sixth-century Rome," *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999): 297-317; eadem, "Poteri invisibili: la matrona christiana tra obsequium e autorità legittima all'epoca di Sant-Agostino," in *Agire da donna. Modelli e pratiche di rappresentazione (secoli vi-x)*, ed. Cristina La Rocca (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 11-22; Felice Lifshitz, "The Martyr, the Tomb, and the Matron: Constructing the (Masculine) 'Past' as a Female Power Base," in *Medieval Concepts of the Past. Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 311-341.

[39] On gendered aspects of liturgical authority: Gisela Muschiol, "Men, Women and Liturgical Practice in the Early Medieval West," in *Gender in the Early Medieval World. East and West, 300-900*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M. H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 198-216.

[40] David Ganz, "Carolingian Manuscripts. The Verdict of the Master," *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte* 42 (2015): 258-259.

Heinzelmann has persuasively argued that the manuscript was produced by, or at least for, a female community or several female institutions in the city and diocese of Troyes, since a series of texts points to this city.[41] The *Passio Memorii* (n. 58) presents a priest in the diplomatic service of Bishop Lupus of Troyes. In the *Passio Iuliae* (n. 26) we encounter a *sanctimonialis* of Troyes named Iulia as principal figure. The *Vita Melanii* (n. 27) mentions an anonymous consecrated virgin of Troyes. Quentin, whose *Passio* occupies a prominent position within the sanctorale after the series of *Acta apostolorum* at the begin of the manuscript, was the patron of a female community founded within the city during the seventh century.[42] The *Acts of Peter and Paul* (n. 1) which open the manuscript again point to Troyes, for both Apostles were the principal patrons of the city's cathedral. The patronage of Mary for two female communities of the dioceses – Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains and Puellemontier – could explain the important number of texts on the Virgin Mary.[43] One could add the *Passions* of Sabina (n. 42) and Patroclus (n. 39), who were also venerated at Troyes.[44]

At the same time, it is perhaps worth considering an alternative reference with the text which seems to close the collection, that is, the *Passio Reginae* (n. 61).[45] Until the end of the ninth century Regina's cult site was Alise-Sainte-Reine. Archaeological research has shown that around 400 a basilica had been built on a former *martyrium* above the martyr's tomb, next to the road from Paris to Lyon, perhaps with a male-female ascetic community. Archaeological evidence has also shown that a flourishing cult centre had been established as a highly appreciated burial place, as it seems, for the local population.[46]

During the 8th and the 9th centuries the local sacred landscape shifted. Around 717/719 the male monastery of Flavigny was founded, a 5 km walk from the site of Sainte-Reine and its community. The founder and later abbot Widerad and his successors had close ties with the Pippinids and later Carolingians. The growing influence of Flavigny led to the transla-

41 Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 218-219.

42 Isabelle Crété-Protin, *Église et vie chrétienne dans le diocèse de Troyes du IVe au IXe siècl*e (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2002), 196-198.

43 On these two communities, ibid., 241-249 (Puellemontier) and 212-214 (Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains), both founded in the seventh century.

44 Ibid., 90-96 (Patroclus) and 98-103 (Sabina).

45 On the *Passio Reginae*, see Nicole Courtine, "Sainte Reine et la tradition écrite. La Passio S. Reginae," in *Reine au Mont Auxois. Le culte et le pèlerinage de sainte Reine des origines à nos jours*, ed. Philippe Boutry and Dominique Julia (Dijon: Ville de Dijon/Cerf, 1997), 29-35 and 43-46. See on the following also Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 219-220 and Helvétius, "Le monachisme féminin," 225-226.

46 The *Vita* of Germanus of Auxerre (BHL 3453), written ca. 475-480, reports that Germanus was host in Alesia to a local priest and his wife on several occasions: Constance of Lyon, *Vita sancti Germani Autissiodoriensis*, c. 22, ed. and trans. René Borius, *SC* 112 (Paris: Cerf, 1965), 164-167. On the archeological evidence, see Patrice Wahlen, "La basilique Sainte-Reine d'Alésia," in *Reine au Mont Auxois*, ed. Boutry et Julia, 61-80.

tion of the relics of Regina to the monastery in 866.[47] The *Translatio Reginae* insisted that this was due to the impurity, laziness and error of the community of the basilica of Sainte-Reine.[48]

It is likely that the *Passio Reginae* had been written by the community of Sainte-Reine at the beginning of this process of shifting models of monastic life.[49] Yet another text present in MpH. 55 served as a model: the *Passio* of Marina of Antioch (n. 30).[50] It is striking to read in the text that Regina preached to the sisters and brothers of her city, who offered a continual sacrifice of praise. This is a barely hidden metaphor for the angelic model of continual prayer within a context of male-female ascetic collaboration.[51] This contextualization, however, accounts for only a single text of the collection at a time when the relationship between the communities of Flavigny and Alise-Sainte-Reine was perhaps more consensual than in the context of reform in the later ninth century.

This context of tension between Sainte-Reine et Flavigny points to a third potential hypothesis for the localization for MpH. 55.[52] The third part of the manuscript blends an important number of Burgundian texts into its universal tableau of the *communitas sanctorum*. Of particular interest are the *Passions* of the Cycle of Aurelianus with the eastern priest and missionary Andochius at its centre.[53] Andochius was patron of two monasteries connected to the family that founded Flavigny. In 722, Flavigny received from his founder Widerad the male abbey of Saint-Andoche de Saulieu, together with another male community in Besançon dedicated to Ferreolus, yet another martyr of the Burgundian Cycle. Saint-Andoche de Saulieu had been founded on the site of the martyrdom of the saint and his companions. A sister of Widerad by the name of Decia founded the female monastery

47 See Courtine, "Sainte Reine," 34-39; Christian Sapin, "La crypte de Flavigny, un 'reliquaire' pour sainte Reine?" in *Reine au Mont Auxois*, ed. Boutry and Julia, 81-82.

48 *Translatio sanctae Reginae* (BHL 7097), ed. Jean Marilier, in *Alésia. Textes littéraires antiques, textes médiévaux, textes originaux et traductions*, ed. Joël LeGall et al. (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1973), 149-152.

49 Helvétius, "Le monachisme féminin," 226 contra Courtine, "Sainte Reine," 34 who suggests that the text was written at Flavigny, likewise Jean Marilier, "Le scriptorium de l'abbaye de Flavigny au VIIIe siècle," *Annales de Bourgogne* 55 (1983): 30-33, at 32.

50 On the *Passio Marinae* Maria Carmen Viggiani, Sandra Isetta, and Monique Goullet, "32. *Passio Marinae* BHL 5303c," in *Le légendier de Turin*, ed. Goullet, 729-749 (with edition).

51 *La vie de sainte Reine d'Alise*, ed. François Grignard (Paris/Dijon: Darantière, 1881), 451-452.

52 See Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 220.

53 The *Passio* is part of a composite text transmitted in a manuscript from Farfa dated to the ninth century (Rome, Biblioteca nazionale, Cod. Farf. 29). Because all martyrs of this ensemble have the emperor Aurelianus as a persecutor in common, it is called the Cycle of Aurelianus; see Wilhelm Meyer, *Die Legende des hl. Albanus des Protomartyr Angliae in Texten vor Beda* (Berlin: Weidmansche Buchhandlung, 1904) and Joseph van der Straeten, "Les Actes des martyrs d'Aurélien en Bourgogne. Le texte de Farfa," *Analecta Bollandiana* 79 (1961): 115-144 and 455-468 (edition of the text). MpH. 55 offers separate copies of the different parts of the text given its liturgical order: the *Passio Andochii, Thyrsi et Felicis* (n. 59), the *Passio Symphoriani* (n. 60), the *Passio Tergemini* (n. 40), and the *Passio Benigni* (n. 56). See n. 27. On the Burgundian version of the *Passio Symphoriani* see Éric Chevalley, "La Passion de saint Symphorien d'Autun," PhD diss. (Université de Lausanne, 2006) and idem, "5. Passio Symphoriani BHL 7967-69," in *Le légendier de Turin*, ed. Goullet, 279-289 (with edition). In addition to these texts and the *Passio Reginae*, other Burgundian texts are the *Passio* of Marcel of Chalon (n. 50) and the *Passio* of Ferreolus of Vienne (n. 51).

Saint-Andoche in Autun; another sister founded the female community of Faverney.[54] During the ninth century Flavigny, Saint-Andoche de Saulieu, and Saint-Andoche d'Autun came under the control of the bishop of Autun.[55] Within this network, Saint-Andoche in Autun, or rather the female religious of the City of Autun in general, might be the potential public for the compilers of MpH. 55. That would explain the copy of the Burgundian version of the *Passio* of Symphorianus of Autun and perhaps even the copy of the *Vita et miracula Geretrudis*, given the close link of the monastic founders to the Carolingians.

MpH. 55 would have found in Autun a female public comparable to the one described for Troyes. Let us remember that the manuscript was in the library of Saint-Étienne d'Autun in the ninth century. In fact, it is possible that Saint-Andoche was rather a new foundation in comparison with older Merovingian institutions. In the sixth century Bishop Syagrius of Autun and the Merovingian queen Brunichild founded or supported a series of religious communities. Amongst them we find a female monastery dedicated to the Virgin Mary and a *xenodochium* run by a community of male religious.[56] Bruno Dumézil has suggested that these two institutions formed a large complex with a female and a male community under the joint direction of an abbess and an abbot.[57] Two female communities coexisted in Autun in the tenth century at the latest: Saint-Andoche and Saint-Jean-le-Grand. As Nathalie Verpeaux has shown, both communities claimed in the late Middle Ages that their institutional roots lay in the Merovingian foundation of St. Mary. Indeed, both communities had double patronage: Andochius and Mary, and John the Baptist and Mary respectively.[58] With regard to MpH. 55, this might explain the important number of texts on the Virgin Mary within the manuscript. This might also be the reason why the scribe took special care to prepare the inscipit title of the *Evangelium Pseudo-Matthaei* (n. 24). The text was written in capitals with features resembling an inscription, and covers four lines in alternating brown and red ink. Despite the gap between these claims for Merovingian roots and the historical realities to which they refer, this all suggests a certain closeness between the two communities.[59]

As an answer to the biblical complementarity between Mary and Martha, and between contemplation and active life, from an early stage of their history there may have been two female communities open to both spiritual tasks and the care for those in need. This is con-

[54] See the entry in the opening *necrologium* to the Chronicle of Hugo of Flavigny: *XII kal. nov. Decia obiit soror Widradi quae fecit monasterium Sancti Andochii Aeduensis et alia soror fecit monasterium Faverniacense, Chronicon Hugonis, monachi Virdunensis et Divionensis, abbatis Flaviniacensis*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH Script.* 8 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1848), 287; see on this Nathalie Verpeaux, *Des religieuses, les pieds sur terre et la tête dans le ciel. Saint-Andoche et Saint-Jean-le-Grand d'Autun au Moyen Âge*, vol. 1: *texte* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 43-44.

[55] Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 220.

[56] Verpeaux, *Des religieuses*, 38-43.

[57] Bruno Dumézil, *Brunehaut* (Paris: Fayard, 2008), 352-354.

[58] Verpeaux, *Des religieuses*, 46-47.

[59] See, for a synthesis with prudent conclusions, ibid., 45-49. It seems to me rather problematic to offer clear-cut distinctions between the Merovingian foundations and the post-Carolingian monasteries.

sistent with the fact that most of the known *xenodochia* in early medieval Gaul were hosted by female communities. The texts in Mph. 55 would have been welcome reading in this context because they synthesised models of the *vita contemplativa* and the *vita activa*.

CONCLUSION

Beyond the problems of identification in the context of the origin of MpH. 55, all three hypotheses of localization suggest that the manuscript reacted to the ideas and expectations of broad networks which included a female public as well as aristocratic and episcopal actors. MpH. 55's history suggests that it connected places at which similar debates about defining the female *vita religiosa* may have been taking place in the context of the Carolingian reform. This is consistent with Heinzelmann's observation that MpH. 55 combined different layers of legendaries and single texts.[60]

Yet it seems to me that we encounter a basic problem when we use Brian Stock's idea of a textual community as a way to conceptualize the contexts of hagiographical writing and its transmission. While Stock rightly emphasized the role of actors who created the textual communities in which he was interested, he still had less difficulty in localizing and circumscribing these communities, for he focused on movements of theological, often even heretical innovation. Conflict and distinction served to define these communities, and the textual practices helped to shape these forms of distinction.

With hagiography the situation seems to be different. Editors of collections such as MpH. 55 could hardly ignore that the internal logic of the collection they created was necessarily open to a broad and diversified tradition of hagiographical literature. This is why the creators of MpH. 55 took care to display examples of the different representatives of the *communitas sanctorum*. In other words, through textual references to the community of the saints as living members of the *ecclesia*, hagiographical collections like MpH. 55 offered a highly idealized image of a community which surmounted ambiguities at the level of institutional practice in order to enable all interested parties to observe an ideal representation of the *communitas sanctorum*.

At the same time such a collection of hagiographical texts could offer the means to engage with the dynamics of a normative debate on female religious life within a broader discourse community.[61] As a contribution to an ideological compromise in the context of global efforts for reform, MpH. 55 synthesized ambitions of episcopal control on the one hand and the self-consciousness of religious communities on the other. With the support

[60] Heinzelmann, "Ein karolingisches Legendar," 213.

[61] On this concept Martin Nystrand, *What Writers Know. The Language, Process and Structure of Written Discourse* (New York: Academic, 1982); John M. Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Dominique Maingueneau, *Genèses du discours* (Bruxelles/Liège: P. Mardaga, 1984); idem, *L'Analyse du discours, Introduction aux lectures de l'archive* (Paris: Hachette, 1991).

of aristocratic benefactors and local communities, these communities saw themselves as the true imitators of ancient and venerable female martyrs and virgins, and sometimes as guardians of their relics.

Such was the case with the *Passio Reginae* and the community of Alise-Sainte-Reine to which it was connected. In a context of a reform that was potentially traumatic for such old communities,[62] the Montpellier legendary MpH. 55 offered a form of serial textual argument of identification in the light of a highly idealized model of the *communitas sanctorum*, even if it came with a bitter aftertaste. Let us remember here that the compilers of MpH. 55 made efforts to combine competing narratives on the same saint, as was the case with the two versions of the *Passio* of Euphemia of Chalcedon.

In this sense it might be a prospect for future research to compare hagiographical collections, not only in terms of a coherent history of textual transmission but also as manifestations of complementary or competitive approaches to an idealized representation of the universal church and its saintly protagonists. In the Carolingian context these collections reflect local contributions to the question of how to define the Empire as an *Ecclesia*.[63] Through the interplay between such virtual forms of textual communities and the real life actors, they point to what one might call an early medieval "Öffentlichkeit", an early medieval public sphere.[64]

Appendix: sanctorale and codicology of MpH. 55

The asterisk indicates texts with an opening page with monumental display.

Text	Quire/fol.
First section of the sanctorale	
1. Passio Petri et Pauli apost., 2-8v, BHL 6657, Rome	$I^{8(-1)}$/1-7
	II^{8}/8
2. Passio Andreae apost., 8v-11v, BHL 428	|
3. Passio Iacobi apost., 11v-12, BHL 4093	|
4. [Adsumptio] Iohannis evangelistae, 12-17v, BHL 4320	15
	III^{8}/16
5. Passio Iacobi apost. fratris Iohannis evangelistae, 17v-20, BHL 4057	| |

[62] See Alison I. Beach, *The Trauma of Monastic Reform Community and Conflict in Twelfth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[63] Mayke de Jong, "The Empire as Ecclesia: Hrabanus Maurus and Biblical Historia for Rulers," in *The Uses of the Past in the early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew J. Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 191-226.

[64] See on this Hedwig Röckelein, *Reliquientranslationen nach Sachsen im 9. Jahrhundert.* Über *Kommunikation, Mobilität und Öffentlichkeit im Frühmittelalter* (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2002), 43-47.

6. Passio Thomae apost., 20-21v, BHL 8137a (8136)	|
7. Passio sancti Bartholomaei apost., 21v-25v, BHL 1002	23
	IV^{8}/24
8. Passio sancti Matthaei evangelistae, 25v-30, BHL 5690	|
9. Passio apost. Simon et Iudas, 30v-35v, BHL 7750/7751	31
	V^{8}/32
10. Passio Philippi apost., 35v-36v, BHL 6814	|
11a. Passio Quintini mart., 36v-39, BHL 6999, St-Quentin/Vermand	| 39
11b. Inventio Quintini mart., 40-41, BHL 7000, St-Quentin, Vermand	VI^{8}/40 |
12. [Ionas of Bobbio], Vita Vedasti ep. et conf., 41-45, BHL8502, Arras	| |
13. Passio Dionisii mart., 45-46v, BHL 2171, Paris	|
14. Vita Remigii ep. et conf., 46v-48, BHL 7150, Reims	47
	VII^{8}/48
15. [Venantius Fortunatus], Vita Paterni ep. et conf., 48-51 (48-48v), BHL 6477, Avranches	| |
16. Passio Clementis p. et mart., 51-54v, BHL 1848, Rome	|
17. Vita Silvestri p. , 54v-71v, BHL 7725, 7729, 7734, Rome	55
	VIII^{8}/56-63 IX^{6}/64-69
	X^{8}/70
18. Passio Agathae, 71v-74, BHL 133, 136g, Catania (Sicily)	|
19. Passio Luciae, 74-76, BHL 4992, Syracuse (Sicily)	|
20. Passio Eufemiae, 76-80v, BHL 2708, Chalcedon	77
	XI^{8}/78-
21. Passio Chrysanthi et Dariae, 80v-87v, BHL 1787, Rome	85
	XII^{8}/86
22a. Vita Gertrudis abb., 87v-91v, BHL 3490, Nivelles	|
22b. Virtutes Gertrudis abb., 91v-93v, BHL 3495, Nivelles	|
23. Vita Audoini ep. (fragment), 93v, BHl 750, Rouen	93
Second section of the sanctorale	
*24. Pseudo-Matthaei Evangelium, 94-97v, BHL 5333p, Jerusalem	XIII^{8}/94
25. Transitus Mariae, 97v-101, BHL 5351-5352, Orient	|
26. Passio Iuliae, 101-102v, BHL 4518, Troyes	101
	XIV^{8}/102
27. Vita Melanii ep., 102v-104, BHL 5895m, Troyes	|

28. Vita Euphrasiae seu Eupraxiae, 104-112, BHL 2719, Constantinople/Egypt	109 |
	XV^{8}/110-
29. Passio Theclae, 112-118, BHL 8020n, Iconium/Seleucia	117
	XVI^{8}/118
30. Passio Margaritae seu Marinae, 118-122v, BHL 5303, Antioch	|
31. Passio Euphemiae, 122v-126v, BHL 2708c, Chalcedon	125
	XVII^{8}/126
32. Passio Caeciliae, Valeriani, Tiburtii et Maximi I, 126v-131, BHL 1495, Rome	| |
33. Passio Caeciliae, Valeriani, Tiburtii et Maximi II, 131-135, BHL 1495, Rome	133 |
	XVIII$^{8(+1)}$/134
34. Conversio et passio Afrae, Hilariae, Dignae, Eumeniae et Euprepiae, 135-139, BHL 108-109, Augsburg	| |
Third section of the sanctorale	
35. Vita Euphrosynae, 139-142v, BHL 2722, Alexandria	142
Blank, 143	XIX$^{8(-1)}$/143-
*36. Vita Eugeniae, 143v-151, BHL 2666-2667, Rome	149
	XX^{8}/150
37. Passio Columbae virg., 151-152v, BHL 1894, Sens	|
38. Passio Fructuosi ep., Augurii et Eulogii mart., 152v-153v, BHL 3197, Tarragona	| |
39. Passio Patrocli mart. 153v-156, BHL 6520, Troyes	|
40. Passio Speusippi, Eleusippi et Meleusippi mart., 156-160v, BHL 7829, Langres	157 |
	XXI^{8}/158
41. Passio Babylae ep., 160v-163, BHL 889, Antiochia	|
42. Passio Sabinae, 163-166, BHL 7408, Troyes	165
	XXII^{8}/166-
43. Vita Paulae, 166-179, BHL 6548, Rome	173
	XXIII^{8}/174-
44. Protoevangelium Iacobi, 179-182v, BHL 5333m-n, Jersusalem	181
	XXIV^{8}/182
45. Passio Dorotheae et Theophili Scholastici, 182v-184, BHL 2321, Cappadocia	| |
46. Passio Iulianae virg. et mart., 184v-188v, BHL 4523, Nicomedia	|

47. [Venantius Fortunatuas], Vita Marcelli ep., 188v-191, BHL 5248, Paris	189 |
	XXV[8]/190
48. Passio Privati ep., 191-192v, BHL 6932, Javols	|
49. Passio Vincentii mart., 192v-194v, BHL 8621t, Pompeiac/Agen	|
50. Passio Marcelli mart., 194v-196, BHL 5246, Chalon	|
51. Passio Ferreoli mart., 196-197, BHL 2911, Vienne	|
52. Passio Christophori mart., 197v-200v, BHL 1766, Lycia	197
	XXVI[6]/198
53. Passio Luceiae, Auceiae et soc. mart., 200v-201v, BHL 4980, Rome	| |
54. Passio Eleutherii ep. et Antiae matris eius, 201v-203v, BHL 2451, Rome	203 |
*55. Passio Romani mon. et Barulae pueri, 204-206v, BHL 7304, Antiochia	XXVII[8]/204 |
56. Passio Benigni mart., 206v-207v, BHL 1153, Dijon	|
57. Passio Hadriani et soc. mart., 207v-216v, BHL 3744, Nicomedia/Constantinople	211 |
	XXVIII[8]/212
58. Passio Memorii presb. et mart., 216v-218, BHL 5915, Troyes	|
59. Passio Andochii, Thyrsi et Felicis mart., 218-219v, 221(220)-221v(220v), 220(221), BHL 424, Autun	219 |
	XXIX[(6-3)]/220
60. Passio Symphoriani mart., 220v(221v)<-223v> (fragment), BHL7967, Autun	| |
61. <Passio Reginae virg. et mart.>, <223v>-222(224)-222v(224v)-<225v> (fragment), BHL 7092, Alise-Sainte-Reine	<225>

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"REMEMBERED, BLESSED, AND PRAISED". IMMATERIAL RELICS IN RADBOD OF UTRECHT'S MIRACLE STORY OF ST. MARTIN

ELS ROSE[1]

ABSTRACT

The history of Utrecht has been deeply connected with St. Martin of Tours for many centuries. Although the beginning of the Utrecht cult of Martin is obscure, it developed long before actual relics of the saint were acquired in the final quarter of the twelfth century. In the time of bishop Radbod (899/900-917), relics of St. Martin were treasured in immaterial ways. St. Martin and the power of his relics were central to the *Libellus de miraculo sancti Martini* he composed. The liturgical commemoration of these relics, celebrated on 4 July, meant more to Radbod than the material remains as such, as the analysis in this chapter of his miracle story shows.

KEYWORDS

Relics; Liturgy; Cult of St. Martin of Tours; Radbod of Utrecht; Utrecht; Immaterial Relics

INTRODUCTION: RELICS AND THEIR MEANING IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

The cult of relics in the Early Middle Ages was everything but self-evident. Debates about this issue in the Latin West could take harsh and unyielding forms, finding defenders and opponents often at daggers drawn. This insight is an important part of Janneke Raaijmakers'

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scholarly legacy. Her work on the project *Mind over matter. Debates about relics as sacred objects, c. 350-c. 1150* stands out in recent scholarship; it is simultaneously the culmination of her scholarly explorations and the untimely final chord of an *Unvollendete*.

The aim of *Mind over matter*, with which Janneke obtained a prestigious "VIDI"-grant of the Dutch Research Council NWO in 2013, was to explore the cult of material relics in the Early Middle Ages (c. 350-1150), and to bring the debates about the nature and value of relics and the legitimacy of their veneration into focus. In Janneke's view, acceptance of relics and their cult in this period was far from universal. In her own words:

> Contrary to what is often maintained, the role of relics in Christian religious life was not self-evident and unchallenged. From their earliest history on, the boundaries of interaction between the material and the divine provoked debate and dissent. Could the remains of saints embody the divine or were they references to the divine? Should they be venerated or was this idolatry?[2]

Janneke's own main focus in the teamwork that she arranged, carried, and guided in *Mind over matter* was on intellectual debates about relics and the importance of the material in early medieval Christianity.[3] Yet through her publications she showed that such debates did not take place in intellectual isolation. On the contrary, medieval scholars expressed their opinions on the relation between the material and the divine in relation to the lived experience of their own faith and encounters with relics. One of Janneke's favourite case studies was Einhard (c. 770-784), mostly known as Charlemagne's biographer, but also the author of a treatise on the relics of Roman saints. In his *Translatio et miracula sanctorum Marcellini et Petri*,[4] Einhard reports on the "holy theft"[5] through which he had relics of the Roman martyrs Marcellinus and Peter (June 2) transferred from Rome to the Frankish lands.[6] Interestingly, Einhard is not only one of the key players to stimulate the phenomenon of relic translations in the ninth century. He also gave expression to his deep disappointment in the power of relics when his wife Imma did not heal from her illness but died, despite his fervent prayers to the saints whose relics he and Imma had obtained with much (financial)

2 https://www.nwo.nl/projecten/276-50-007-0, last accessed 13 July 2022.

3 Janneke Raaijmakers, "I, Claudius. Self-Styling in Early Medieval Debate," *Early Medieval Europe* 25 (2017): 70-84.

4 Einhard, *Translatio et miracula ss. Marcellini et Petri*, ed. Georg Waitz, *MGH Script.* 15.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1887), 238-264; English translation: Paul Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier. The Complete Einhard* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 1998), 69-130.

5 Patrick Geary, *Furta sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

6 Janneke Raaijmakers, "Een tijd van bijgeloof en superstitie? Reliekverering en geloof in de late oudheid en vroege middeleeuwen [A Time of Superstition? The Cult of Relics and the Christian Faith in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages]," in *Cultuurgeschiedenis van de middeleeuwen* [*A Cultural History of the Middle Ages*], ed. Rob Meens and Carine van Rhijn (Zwolle: Open Universiteit, 2005), 102-104.

effort.[7] In poignant wording Einhard describes the bitter experience of prayers that remain unanswered while they were faithfully poured out.[8]

Janneke recognized and rightfully called attention to the fact that rather more than "little new"[9] happened in the realm of relics and their cults in the eighth and ninth centuries. What is more, and this is also something that Janneke put on the agenda in the *longue durée* approach proposed by *Mind over Matter* (350-1150), the issue was not settled within the ninth century, the period with which she had been originally most familiar. Later medieval thinkers continued to question the cult of relics, at least in the narrowly understood sense of bodily remains of the saints, while grounding their opinions in earlier, even late antique, debates.[10] These individuals also tended to combine their thinking about the value of relics, whether implicitly or explicitly, with the practice of faith and worship. In what follows I shall explore the case of Utrecht and relics of its patron saint Martin of Tours, in the period, and through the eyes, of bishop Radbod (899/900-917).

Radbod was trained at the court of king Charles the Bald in Compiègne until the latter's death in 877. Compiègne itself was a court school known as a training centre for future bishops.[11] There is, as we shall see in further detail below, no full certainty about where he spent the two decades between his departure from Charles' court and his election as bishop of Utrecht late in 899. The most convincing interpretation of this period as described in the later tenth-century *Vita Radbodi*, is that Radbod spent these years in Tours, where the abbey of St. Martin at that time was supervised by Hugo, the royal lay abbot and cousin of Charles the Bald. Whether this is indeed factually true or not, we see in any case that Radbod brought a fervent love of St. Martin to his diocese when he was installed as bishop of *Traiectum*. His own works, including both prose and poetry featuring St. Martin as the protagonist and a

7 Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages*, chapter 9: "The Ninth-Century Relic Trade," (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 188-189; Julia M. H. Smith, "Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 13 (2003): 55-77.

8 Einhard's Letter to Lupus of Ferrières (April 836): Einhard, *Epistulae* 3, ed. Peter K. Marshall, *Servati Lupi epistulae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1994), 4-6; Raaijmakers, "Een tijd van bijgeloof," 103; Smith, "Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints," 55.

9 Geary, *Living with the Dead*, 193.

10 Janneke Raaijmakers, "*Mind over matter. Debates about relics as sacred objects, c. 350-c. 1150*," unpublished research proposal, NWO Grant application form, 2012, 2-3.

11 On Radbod's life and intellectual training, see Anton G. Weiler, "Sint Radboud, bisschop van Utrecht [Deventer] van 899/900 tot 917," *Trajecta* 12 (2003): 97-115; Albrecht Diem, "'Radboud was behalve bisschop ook nog eens een groot geleerde...': de heilige Radbod van Deventer en zijn geleerdheid kritisch bekeken ['Radbod was not just a bishop but also a great scholar.' A critical look at Radbod's learnedness]," *Ex Tempore. Verleden Tijdschrift Nijmegen* 23 (2003): 83-97; Marijke Carasso-Kok, "Hagiographie de l'entourage des évêques," in *Hagiographies. Histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographiques latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550*, vol. 3, ed. Guy Philippart (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), 383-397; Fabian C. Lochner, "Un évêque musicien au Xe siècle: Radbod d'Utrecht (†917)," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 38 (1988): 3-6.

complete office for the feast-day of St. Martin's relics on July 4,[12] as well as the tenth-century *Life of Radbod*,[13] testify to this outspoken predilection.

Radbod's case is a special case, as he was the one to put the feast day of St. Martin's relics' translation (July 4) on the Utrecht calendar[14], while Utrecht at the time most probably did not possess any material relics of its own patron saint.[15] As we shall see in what follows, Radbod combined a complete and faithful trust in the power of St. Martin's relics with a deep conviction that the saint's protection did not depend on the presence of *material* relics. Instead, it benefitted far more from the perseverance with which the faithful community (clergy and laity together) continually dedicated itself to the commemoration and imitation of the saint's virtuous life and deeds.

A. RADBOD OF UTRECHT AND HIS *MIRACLE OF ST. MARTIN*

Radbod was appointed the fourteenth bishop of Utrecht, that is, to the church of *Traiectum* (as the former Roman *castellum* was still referred to in his time), at the turn of the ninth century. The anxiety that such turns of the century caused to the medieval mind is clearly audible in the musing that Radbod, a keen writer of poetry, prose sermons, and music,[16] conveyed to parchment upon his election:

> In the year after the incarnation of our Lord 900, a miraculous sign appeared in the sky. Stars were seen to flow forth from everywhere, as if from on high, against all horizons, and to come together around the pole of heaven. Sad disasters followed this foreboding: extreme weather conditions and frequent heavy winds, the terrible image also of rivers overflowing their banks (…) and (…) the dire storms of people

[12] Lochner, "Un évêque musicien." The chants, for which Radbod composed text and music, are transmitted only in the early twelfth-century antiphonary MS Utrecht, University Library, 406, fol. 133v-135v.

[13] *Vita Radbodi episcopi Traiectensis*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, *MGH Script.* 15.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1887), 568-571.

[14] The feast occurs first in the twelfth-century calendar in MS Utrecht, University Library, 424, fol. 5v. A reference in a fourteenth-century Middle Dutch translation of Jan van Beke's chronicle Cronike van den Stichte Utrecht ende van Hollant, points to Radbod as the initiator of the feast on the Utrecht calendar, and the composer of the office "sung until the present day": MS Utrecht, University Library, 1182, fol. 14v.

[15] Anique de Kruijf, Miraculeus bewaard. Middeleeuwse Utrechtse relieken op reis: de schat van de Oud-Katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2011), 49; Els Rose, "Burgerschapslessen in Radbouds Wonder van Sint-Maarten," in Het wonder van Sint-Maarten: Utrecht een gelukkige stad, ed. Els Rose (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 101. The book Het wonder van Sint-Maarten, written as a public present for Utrecht's 900th city anniversary in 2022, is available at https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/57282.

[16] His sermons on various saints of the Low Countries are edited in *PL* 132, 547-558; his poetry by Paul von Winterfeld in *MGH* Poet. Lat. 4.1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 160-173; his music for St Martin's *Translatio* on July 4 uniquely in MS Utrecht, University Library, 406, fol. 133v-135v, accessible via https://objects.library.uu.nl/reader/index.php?obj=1874-327915&lan=en#page//11/50/27/115027284759368752298425683845315365 4.jpg/mode/1up, last accessed 13 July 2022.

> rising against God. In this same year (…) I, the sinner Radbod, deigned to be inscribed among the servants of the holy church of *Traiectum*.[17]

Whether it was this anxiety or a natural tendency to turn to the saints for help, Radbod's oeuvre in poetry, prose, and music is filled with works on Utrecht's patron saint Martin. While his small collection of sermons included those for other saints of the Low Countries, Radbod's *Miracle Story of St. Martin*,[18] possibly also composed to serve as a (model) sermon,[19] stands out as a display both of Radbod's learning and of his love for the special patron of the Frankish royal household ever since the days of Clovis. It was from this *miraculum* relating the wondrous intervention of St. Martin's relics to prevent the Vikings from capturing Tours in 903,[20] shortly after his election as a bishop of *Traiectum*, that Radbod drew when he composed the office for the summer feast of St. Martin on 4 July.

The question as to where Radbod developed his predilection for the Frankish saint *par excellence* cannot be answered with certainty. The *Vita Radbodi*, written during the exceptionally long tenure of his successor Balderic (918-975), is rather detailed about Radbod's early career. Radbod had spent his youth, first, at the Cathedral school of his uncle Gunther and, after the latter's fall into disgrace upon Lothar II's divorce,[21] at the court of Charles the Bald in Compiègne.

On the continuation of Radbod's career after Charles the Bald's death in 877, however, the *Vita Radbodi* is less outspoken. The text mentions a period of two decades spent by Radbod with "abbot Hugo, the then most outstanding abbot."[22] The phrase is most often interpreted as a reference to Hugo, lay abbot of Tours in the said period. While the incomplete reference to "abbot Hugo" leaves questions unanswered,[23] the *Vita Radbodi* clearly makes an effort to

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17 Radbod of Utrecht, *Nota de anno 900*, ed. Paul von Winterfeld, *MGH* Poet. Lat. 4.1, 160-161: *Anno ab incarnatione domini DCCCC apparuit in caelo mirabile signum. Stellae enim visae sunt undique tamquam ex alto in orizontis ima profluere. Circa poli cardinem omnes fere inter se invicem concurrere. Quod prodigium secutae sunt tristes rerum kalamitates, aeris videlicet maxima intemperies, crebrique ventorum turbines fluminum quoque terminos suos transgredientium terribilis* (…) *imago. Et* (…) *dirae hominum adversus Deum se extollentium tempestates. Hoc eodem anno* (…) *ego peccator Radbodus inter famulos sanctae Traiectensis aecclesiae conscribi merui.*

18 *PL* 132, 547B-558A.

19 Rose, "Burgerschapslessen," 82.

20 Yossi Maurey, *Medieval Music, Legend and the Cult of St. Martin. The Local Foundations of a Universal Saint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 110. Latin text and Dutch translation in Rose, *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, 44-77; a commentary on the work in eadem, "Burgerschapslessen." A German translation is published in Bernhard Vogel, "Der heilige Martin von Tours und der *Libellus de miraculo sancti Martini* Bischof Radbods von Utrecht (Anfang des 10. Jahrhunderts)," in *Mirakelberichte des frühen und hohen Mittelalters*, ed. Klaus Herbers et al. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005), 125-147.

21 Stuart Airlie, "Private Bodies and the Body Politic in the Divorce Case of Lothar II," *Past and Present* 161 (1998): 3-38.

22 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 1, *MGH Script.* 15.1, 569: *Hugoni summae dignitatis abbati tunc temporis et abbatum precipuo inctus.*

23 Most scholars interpret Hugo as the cousin of Charles the Bald who became lay abbot of Tours in 866. Cf. Simon MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: Charles the Fat and the End of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 65; Janet L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London/New York: Longman, 1992), 177–79, 214, 312. See also Weiler, "Sint Radboud," 102 (Weiler erroneously qualifies

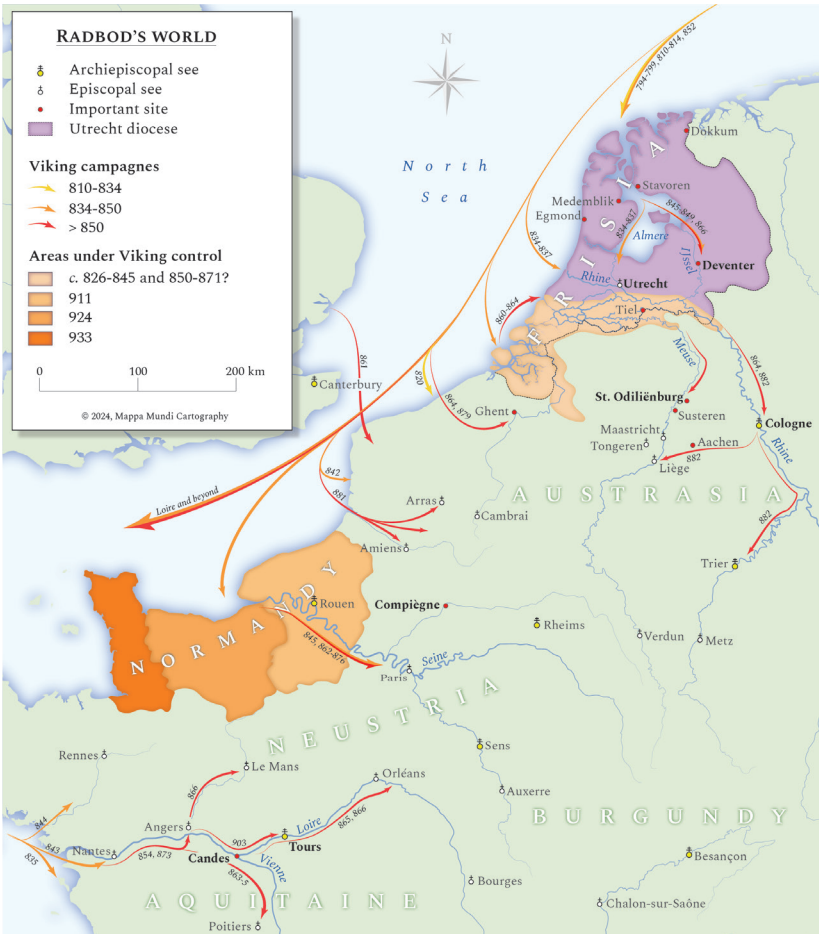

Fig. 1 Radbod's world. © Erik Goosmann, Mappa Mundi Cartography

portray Radbod as an exact copy of Martin of Tours. Now, this is in itself not exceptional, since Sulpicius Severus' *Vita Martini* served as a blueprint for later bishops' lives.[24] However, the degree of detail with which Radbod follows in Martin's footsteps *is* remarkable, to say the least, as I have explained elsewhere.[25] The visionary call of the holy virgins Mary, Agnes, and Thecla with which Radbod was honoured during an illness, just as Martin was visited by this same holy triad in his cell, is a remarkably detailed parallel.[26] The harmonious way

Hugo as Charles the Bald's uncle, rather than his cousin). Albrecht Diem contests this interpretation, suggesting that Radbod continued his political career at the royal court after Charles the Bald's death: ed. Rose, Diem, "Radboud," 89-91.

24 On the paradox of Sulpicius' writing, strongly criticized immediately after its publication but which gained such popularity in the Middle Ages, see Clare Stancliffe, *St. Martin and His Hagiographer. History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, reissued 2016), 6-7, 157-159, 341-362.

25 Els Rose, "Sint-Maarten, 'een tweede muur in moeilijke tijden'," in *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, 25-37.

26 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 10, *MGH Script.* 15.1, 571[b]; Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogorum libri II*, II, c. 13, ed. Carolus Halm, *CSEL* 1 (Vienna: Geroldi, 1866), 196; *SC* 510, 278.

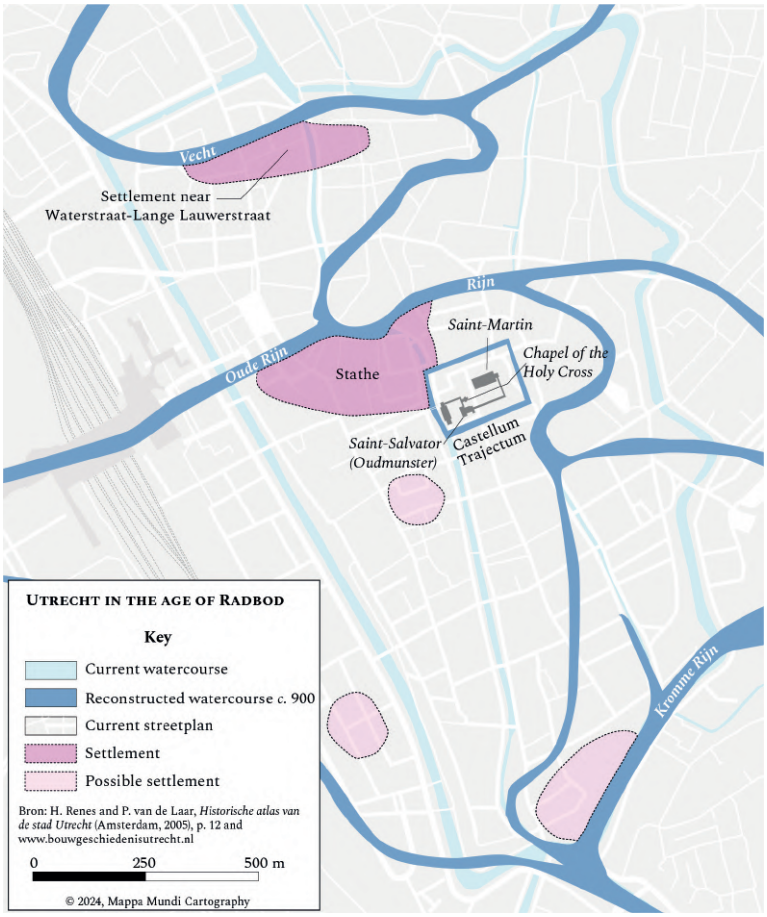

Fig. 2. Utrecht in Radbod's time/©Erik Goosmann Mappa Mundi Cartography

Sulpicius brings together the three early Christian models of virginity contrasts with the more competitive portrayal, particularly of Agnes and Thecla, by other patristic authors.[27] Up until Radbod's time of writing, reception of this specific motif in Sulpicius' writings about Martin is limited to later Martinian works, such as the rewriting of Sulpicius' *Vita* by Paulinus of Périgueux and Venantius Fortunatus. Only in the eleventh century do we find the holy trio in works not immediately related to Martin. In the Chronicle of Hugo of Flavigny (1065-c. 1114), Hugo recounts a similar visitation by Mary and her virgin companions Agnes and Thecla to bishop Berengerius of Verdun (940-962), in the year of his death 962.[28] Hugh also uses similar phrasing and wording.

[27] Léonie Hayne, "Thecla and the Church Fathers," *Vigiliae Christianae* 48, no. 3 (Sep. 1994): 211-212. See for Sulpicius' possible sources of inspiration, Stancliffe, *St. Martin and His Hagiographer*, 66.

[28] *Chronicle of Hugo of Verdun*, a. 962, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH Script.* 8 (Hannover: Hahn, 1848), 365. The *Vita Amelbergae* (*BHL* 323), likewise from the eleventh century, includes the three holy virgins as exemplary in the prayer of dedication to virginity (*Floreas cum Tecla, valeas cum Agne, et cum Maria optima sit pars tua*; the passage is quoted in the eleventh-century *Miracula Willibrordi*, ed. Wilhelm Levison, *MGH*

Fig. 3. Ruins of the 10th-century Abbey Church of Marmoutier, © Photo author

Whatever his source of inspiration, Radbod took an outspoken love for Martin with him when he was installed as bishop of *Traiectum*. The settlement on the Rhine, itself devastated by Vikings around the middle of the ninth century and, indeed, by the frequent floodings of the capricious river Rhine, was in Radbod's time a difficult place to live in.[29]

Radbod settled in Deventer beyond the IJssel, as his predecessors had done from the second half of the ninth century onwards, whence he supervised the diocese.[30] He started to promote the cult of Martin that had already been implemented in the Low Countries by Willibrord towards the end of the seventh century.[31] To this cult, Radbod added new stories to enrich the existing *Martinelli*,[32] and he inserted a new feast in the liturgical calendar.

Script. 30.2 [Leipzig: W. Hiersemann, 1934], 1369). Amelberga died as a holy virgin in 772, and Radbod dedicated one of his liturgical sermons in commemoration of saints to her (see n. 18 above). The link that some authors suggest between this virgin and Charles Martel is mistaken: Weiler, "Sint Radboud," 109; Stijn van der Linden, *De heiligen* (Amsterdam-Antwerpen: Contact, 2002), 48. I followed these publications erroneously in my own "Burgerschapslessen," 82.

29 René de Kam, *De ommuurde stad. Geschiedenis van een stadsverdediging* (Amsterdam: Spectrum, 2020), 31-32; Kaj van Vliet, "Traiecti muros heu! The Bishop of Utrecht during and after the Viking Invasions of Frisia (934-925)," in *Vikings on the Rhine. Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhineland and Scandinavia*, ed. Rudolf Simek and Ulrike Engel (Vienna: Fassbaender, 2004), 133-154.

30 Jos Stöver, "Proh dolor! De Utrechtse ballingschap (857-circa 925) in ander licht," *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht* [96] (2020): 145.

31 Marco Mostert, "Saint Martin parmi les Frisons. Le culte du saint à Utrecht dans le haut Moyen Âge," in *Un nouveau Martin. Essor et renouveaux de la figure de saint Martin, IVe-XXIe siècle*, ed. Bruno Judic et al. (Tours: Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, 2019), 99.

32 On the Utrecht collections of Martinian hagiography, the so-called *Martinelli*, see now the internship report by Hanna Muller, "A review of Dutch *Martinelli*," published online https://public.yoda.uu.nl/its/UU01/L9V9C5.html, last accessed November 9, 2022.

Fig. 4 The breach of "St. Martin" in the Gallo-Roman walls of Tours, © Photo author

Radbod's most elaborate prose text on St. Martin, the *Libellus de miraculo sancti Martini*, was written in response to the historical event of a Viking attack on the outskirts of Tours and St. Martin's Abbey of Marmoutier in the year 903. While the abbey outside the walls was destroyed, the city itself was saved from greater damage.
This deliverance, according to Radbod, was thanks to a miraculous intervention of St. Martin's relics, called upon by the inhabitants of the city when the bulwarks with which the Gallo-Roman walls of Tours were fortified did not hold.

Radbod's *Miracle Story of St. Martin* can be read at different levels. While he clearly addresses his fellow clergymen (*fratres karissimi*), who were most probably the canons of St. Martin in *Traiectum* or even of Lebuinus in Deventer,[33] the story he wants to convey is meant for a larger group, the "uneducated audience". These *auditores simplices* comprise all those "near and far off" (*his qui prope et his qui longe sunt*),[34] to whom Radbod urges the canons to preach about St. Martin.[35] Radbod's miracle story must thus be read not so much as an actual sermon but, rather, as a model, providing material to the canons to compose their own sermons about the patron saint. The miracle story of St. Martin differs from Radbod's actual sermons for various saints of the Low Countries (Lebuin of Deventer, Swithbert, Willibrord's helper, and the virgin Amelberga). While these texts are compact and clearly set in a liturgical context, the miracle story is much more elaborate, preceded by a prologue and without references to the actual feast-day of Martin's relics. Above all, it is a demonstra-

[33] Weiler, "Sint Radboud," 104.
[34] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, prologue, Latin and trans. Rose, 46-47.
[35] Rose, "Burgerschapslessen," 82-83.

tion of Radbod's love of learning and knowledge. Displaying his knowledge of (more than his esteem for) the classical authors (Cicero, Plato, Virgil, Ovid), he casually and frequently refers to the library of patristic authors he has at his disposal, with explicit quotations and even more implicit allusions.[36] Both kinds of references to ancient sources would hardly have been appreciated by the *auditores simplices*. For the canons, however, who shared their level and content of schooling with Radbod, they must have been easily recognizable. Like Radbod, the canons of the Utrecht diocese were well versed in patristic literature, even if only through the readings they heard during the liturgical night office. These, to a considerable extent, were drawn from the exegetical works of Augustine, Jerome and the other *patres*.[37]

At first sight, Radbod seems to envisage his learned fellow clergymen in the front rows of his hearers. This is suggested by the lengthy and learned digressions Radbod allows himself for example, on the meaning of various precious stones and their colours. A leitmotiv in the *Miracle Story* is the elaborate comparison of Martin and his relics with a gem (*gemma*).[38] This ancient Christian metaphor to refer to virtues and the virtuous life dominates the story, and I shall discuss this further in the next section. Likewise, the competition Radbod presents between St. Martin and the historical heroes of the Greek and Roman past (Xerxes, Alexander, Augustus[39]) can only be convincing for an audience capable of associating these ancient names with the epic poems they represent. In terms of word count, moreover, these and other learned digressions get more space (the lengthy prologue, cc. 1-3) than the actual miracle story (cc. 4-6). But if we look more closely, it becomes plausible that Radbod wants to see the *auditores simplices* as central, both in his story and within his audience.

This impression is already created by the call to spread the miracle story and the great deeds Martin accomplished during his life and after his death "near and far" (prologue). It is then confirmed by the way Radbod presents the miraculous intervention of Martin in the saint's own city of Tours (c. 5). In this miracle story, neither the clerical elite nor the fighters on the walls are at the heart of the narrative. Rather, the city's uneducated and unarmed inhabitants, the lamenting women, crying children and unhelpful elderly are the protagonists. It is they who are the agents that force the felicitous turn in the unhappy events that threaten Tours.[40] Tours is presented in Radbod's miracle story as a city on the verge of despair. The advancing Vikings have easily gained the upper hand during their incursion into the Loire Valley. The fighters on the city's walls, despite their attempts to fortify the wall with bulwarks and shields, already observe the first breach in the rampart. At this moment of fear and anxiety, they are unable to withstand the aggressor's superiority.[41] At that very

36 Ibid.
37 Ibid., 89-93.
38 Ibid., 83-87.
39 See, on the competitive element in ancient and Christian encomia, Stancliffe, *St. Martin and His Hagiographer*, 105-107.
40 Rose, *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, 12-15.
41 Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 5, Latin and trans. Rose, 67-68.

moment, the city's anxious inhabitants take the initiative. They, together with the city's clergy, manage to think of a better defence than swords and shields. Guided by the clergy to the saint's church that houses Martin's tomb, they perform a prayer for help, appealing to the saint's responsibility for "his own people" (*pro tuis*).

Radbod's miracle story becomes an interesting portrait of the division of roles in an early medieval city. This division is, in Radbod's view, surprisingly dynamic, and remarkably inclusive. A happy ending of a desperate battle is not accomplished by the fighters on the wall. Nor is the prayer for a successful intervention by the saint effective because of the clergy's leadership. For a felicitous turn of events that saves the city and grants it liberty, the entire city community is needed, including those who do not carry arms but rather, in an armed conflict, hamper progress and efficiency: the elderly, the crying children, and the lamenting women.[42]

It is precisely this "lame army" (*debilitatis agmine*)[43] that is accorded the leading role in the appeal to the saint. Gathering around the saint's tomb (*circumsteterunt*) as the congregation assembles at the altar to celebrate the liturgy,[44] the "lame army" entreats the saint to wake from his sleep, just as the disciples called Jesus from his sleep during the storm at sea,[45] and to rescue and liberate his city:

> Holy man of God, Saint Martin, why have you now fallen asleep so deeply? Why does it not occur to you to wake up to our distress? Or must we be handed over to pagans, and carried away as prisoners – if any of us will evade the swords' blow? And you, you act as if you do not notice all this at all. Show us, we beseech you, your love, come to our rescue, help us in our misery. You who did so many miracles for strangers (*pro alienis*), do at least one now for your own people (*pro tuis*) to liberate us. Otherwise, we as well shall parish, and your city (*civitas tua*) will be reduced to solitude.[46]

Radbod's *Miracle of St. Martin* presents the faithful community emphatically as an inclusive community, comprising clergy and lay people, male and female members, old and young, as the actors in the liturgical act of intercession. Liturgy, in Radbod's *Miracle of St. Martin*, is the communal prayer of all involved. While the successful interaction in battle does not depend on the armed fighters on the walls, the successful interaction with the saint does not depend

[42] The enumeration of these social groups in civic ritual is a topos: see Nathan Ristuccia, *Christianization and Commonwealth in Early Medieval Europe: A Ritual Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 106; Megan Welton, "*Felicior et sanctior*: Utrecht herbouwd in de tiende eeuw," in *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, ed. Rose, 109-112.

[43] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 5, Latin and trans. Rose, 68-69.

[44] Albert Blaise, *Le vocabulaire latin des principaux thèmes liturgiques* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966), 523.

[45] Rose, *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, 69, note 66.

[46] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 5, Latin and trans. Rose, 68-71: *Sancte dei Martine, quare tam graviter obdormisti? Cur ad pressuram nostram tibi evigilare non placet? En tradendi sumus paganis, en captivi abducendi, si quis tamen gladiorum ictus evaserit. Et tu haec omnia te nosse dissimulas. Ostende, quaesumus, pietatem, succurre, fer opem miseris et, qui multa quondam pro alienis signa fecisti, saltem unum fac modo pro tuis, ut liberes nos; alioquin et nos peribimus, et civitas tua redigetur in solitudinem.*

only on the sacred clergy: it involves, or even requires, the active participation of all members of the civic community. When this "lame army" congregates around the saint's tomb, the liturgical act of intercession becomes the performance of liberation of the city through the presence of the saint among his "own people", his fellow-citizens rather than the many "strangers" (*alienos*) he had helped before.

B. RADBOD'S VIEW ON RELICS

In Radbod's *Miracle of St. Martin*, the miraculous intervention of the saint and the preservation of Tours from complete destruction by the Vikings are fully supported by the saint's material relics. The prayer performed by the inhabitants of Tours, as we saw above, is uttered at the precise spot where the saint's relics rest in his tomb (*ad ecclesiam convolantes, sepulchrum defensoris sui undique circumsteterunt*).[47] Once they have completed their prayer, the *Turonici* take the box with the saint's precious relics from the tomb (*raptam ex sepulchro cistellam, in qua sacratissimae Martini reliquae servabantur*) and carry it unto the city wall, already breached by the aggressor.[48] Yet in the complex and multilayered composition of Radbod's *Miracle of St. Martin*, the precious presence of the saint is not always and not exclusively expressed in material terms. The word *gemma*, with which Radbod continuously refers to this treasure, plays at several levels, now referring to the saint's relics, and then to his virtuous personality as it comes to life in the miracle stories attributed to him during his lifetime and after his death.

As I indicated above and have elaborated elsewhere, Radbod's text is complex in the sense that he addresses two kinds of audiences, making use of two different kinds of style registers to convey his message to each of them in the most effective way. In his own words, these two audiences can be characterized, first, as his own circle of fellow clergymen (*vos fratres*), whom he urges in the prologue to help spread the word of St. Martin's miracles further in their own practice of preaching.[49] Secondly, the illiterate (lay) people are explicitly indicated as the *auditores simplices* in chapter 2.[50] For the latter group, Radbod prefers more direct language than the elaborate metaphors (*magis propria quam figurata*) with which he indulges his canons in the prologue and the first three *capita* of his text. Fully in line with his

[47] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 5, Latin and trans. Rose, 68-69.

[48] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 6, Latin and trans. Rose, 70-71.

[49] It is the style register rather than the single word *fratres* that suggests that Radbod had a learned audience in mind when he composed his text. With the phrase *vos fratres* Radbod does not necessarily refer to his fellow clergymen only; the word is more inclusive than that, especially in a liturgical context: Els Rose, "Gelukkige stad!," in Het wonder van Sint-Maarten, ed. Rose, 10-12, Igor Filippov, "Legal Frameworks in the Sermons of Caesarius of Arles," *Medieval Sermon Studies* 58 (2014): 74-76; Els Rose, "Reconfiguring Civic Identity and Civic Participation in a Christianizing World: The Case of Sixth-Century Arles," in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 287.

[50] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 2, Latin and trans. Rose, 60-61.

ambition to serve the two different kinds of audiences, Radbod refers in direct terms to the *material* relics of St. Martin in the chapters that tell the story of the miracle itself in language unveiled (*propria*) (cc. 4-6), while he saves his elaborate *metaphorical* reflection on the value of the saint and his relics through the key word *gemma* for the first three chapters (cc. 1-3), where he intends to impress his learned audience with his elevated knowledge and style (*figurata*).

In these first three chapters, the word *gemma* occurs seven times, once in c. 1, five times in c. 2, and once in c. 3, in addition to a number of references to it through pronouns (*ea, haec, quae*). The spread of the word over these three reflective chapters preceding the actual miracle story in c. 4-6 forms a climax. The first occurrence of the word is in the first line of c. 1, where Radbod introduces the *locus* of Tours in Gallia where this most precious gem (*gemma ista pretiosissima*) has its resting place (*sita est*), as was once discussed by "the three teachers of the church" Sulpicius (Severus) and his friends Gallus and Postumianus.[51] The contextualization of the word *gemma* tells us, first, that Radbod uses the word initially to refer to Martin's physical remains, most notably by using the phrase *sita est* which we also find in funeral inscriptions.[52] Secondly, by referring to Sulpicius, Gallus and Postumianus, the early fifth-century protagonists of Sulpicius Severus' *Dialogi* on miracles of St. Martin, Radbod situates the use of the word *gemma* in a late antique discourse that expresses the moral value of persons in terms of precious materials. These are, most notably, precious stones, referring, with their range of colours, to different kinds of virtues and their (divine) origin.[53] The tradition of comparing St. Martin in particular with precious stones goes back to the saint's earliest hagiographer, Sulpicius Severus.[54] Sulpicius' successors continued this tradition and especially used the term *gemma* to qualify Martin's virtues.[55] Radbod follows his illustrious late antique predecessors, and brings the "jewelled style" to full bloom in his *Miracle of St. Martin*.

While building a climax through chapters 1-3, Radbod not only instils the divine virtue of St. Martin's sainthood in his audiences' perception. He also allows himself the space of the veiled term *gemma* to play with the materiality *and* immateriality of the saint's presence in his "relics". While the *gemma* is clearly situated materially in the city of Tours in the first line of c. 1, it also represents more immaterially the presence of the saint in all the cities

[51] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 1, Latin and trans. Rose, 54-55.

[52] Harm Pinkster, *Woordenboek Latijn-Nederlands* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), s.v. *situs*; cf. Rose, *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, 55, n. 24.

[53] Christel Meier, *Gemma spiritalis. Methode und Gebrauch der Edelsteinallegorese vom frühen Christentum bis ins 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Fink, 1977); Christel Meier and Rudolf Suntrup, "Zum Lexikon der Farbenbedeutungen im Mittelalter. Einführung zu Gegenstand und Methoden," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 21 (1987): 390-478.

[54] Michael Roberts, *The Jeweled Style. Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1989), 143-144.

[55] Rose, "Burgerschapslessen," 83-85.

and places he and/or his relics after his death visited (*attigerit*) as well as his enduring place among the ranks of the saints in heaven (c. 1). In the first chapter, the explanation of what the *gemma* does to the places it visits (*attigerit*) allows various interpretations:

> Nec immerito, ea namque omnem suo fulgore christiani nominis orbem irradiat, omnes urbes et municipia, vicos, regiones angelici splendoris lumine circumfundit, sed et ipsos rusticorum agros iuxta modum capacitatis eorum quadam umbratili claritate collustrat et cuncta quae attigerit loca cum luce aetherea, tum etiam pretii magnitudine,[56] plena decoris relinquit et honestatis.[57]
>
> And rightfully so, for she (*gemma*) lightens with her radiance the entire orb dedicated to the name of Christ, all cities and towns, all villages and all regions with the light of angelic splendour. But she also brightens the fields of rustic areas according to the measure of their capacity with a somewhat subdued light, and all the places that she called at (*quae attigerit*) with her heavenly light and with the abundance of her wealth, she leaves behind (*relinquit*) full of honour and respectability.

While *ea* right at the beginning refers clearly to *gemma*, picking up the subject of the very first sentence of the first chapter, the travel of Martin's relics also echoes the saint's own travels through Gaul during his lifetime, and we could perhaps read *attigerit* also as a reference to the places that Martin "called at". Moreover, Radbod emphasizes the transforming power of relics that changes the most rustic areas into centres of *decus* and *honestas*. These are the ancient Roman values traditionally linked to cities with the authority of citizenship. Radbod thereby follows the dictum of his fifth-century fellow bishop Avitus of Vienne that the presence of saints and their relics transforms "minor places (*oppida*) into cities (*urbes*)".[58]

The preceding example already indicates that the subject of *gemma* understood as St. Martin's bodily remains, in Radbod's thinking easily overlaps with the subject of the saint himself. That this was confusing to the medieval readers of Radbod's text becomes clear from a manuscript variant, where the scribes hesitate between a feminine form of the reference word, implying *gemma* as its antecedent, and a masculine form, implying St. Martin as the actual subject referred to. Two comparatively late manuscripts (Paris, BnF, lat. 5329, s. XII) and Paris, BnF, lat. 5334, s. XIII)[59] provide evidence of this confusion in chapter 1, where the three partners in Sulpicius' *Dialogi* are said to agree on the fact that "there is no one on earth that can be compared with this [gem]" (*non esse aliquem sub caelo, qui possit huic aequari*). While the two scribes in the later manuscripts give *aliquam* as a variant for *aliquem*, it is diffi-

[56] *magnitudine*: already in classical Latin used to describe the size of the stars. *Thesaurus linguae latinae* VIII, c. 116, s.v.

[57] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 1, Latin and trans. Rose, 56-57.

[58] Avitus of Vienne, *Homilia* III, *PL* 59, 295D; see Rose, "Burgerschapslessen," 95 and Catherine Saucier, *A Paradise of Priests: Singing the Civic and Episcopal Hagiography of Medieval Liège* (Rochester: Rochester University Press, 2014), 12.

[59] For a full list of manuscripts, see Marijke Carasso-Kok, *Repertorium van verhalende historische bronnen uit de middeleeuwen* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff: 1981), 70.

cult for the translator to interpret *huic*. Is it a reference to *gemma*, the gem that is buried (*sita est*) in Tours according to this first sentence? Or does it refer to the saint himself, with whom no one can compete according to Sulpicius in his *Dialogi* (*Martino neminem conferendum*)?[60] The lack of gender specificity in the dative form of the pronoun (*huic*) enables Radbod to be intentionally ambiguous in this and to allow a rich, double interpretation of his phrases.

The remarkably frequent occurrence of the noun *gemma* in c. 2 seems to serve Radbod's purpose to elaborate on the spiritual value of the saint and his relics, before he turns to a more literal (*nudam evidentemque hystoriam*) understanding of *gemma* as the saint's bodily relics. The spiritual value of the metaphorical *gemma* is conveyed through biblical images. The parable of the costly pearl (*margarita*, Matt. 13:46) is called to mind, together with other biblical references that emphasize the value of moral riches over material wealth, and urge the rich to become the "poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3) to merit a spiritual heritage in terms of "healing", "rest", "liberty", and "eternal joy" (*salutem; requiem animabus; liberi effecti; sempiterno gaudio perfruentes*).[61] The prizes through which the gem can be purchased are the Christian virtues of faith, chastity, humility, patience and long-suffering, sincere love, mercy, and charity.

The programmatic and didactic call to his audience to race (*currite!*) for this precious gem then suddenly changes when Radbod halfway through c. 2 expresses his intention to turn now to his second group of auditors, the illiterate, and to explain to them in more concrete language and without further digressions the *gemma* as the saint's body (*corpus beatissimi Martini*) and its protective power.[62] Despite this good intention, it takes a while before Radbod really turns to the value of the saint's physical relics. In fact, he does not do so at all. For although he finally returns, in c. 3, to the miraculous virtue of "Martin's body lying in a coffin" (*Corpus autem Martini … cum parvissima iaceat in theca*), in the end his focus is not on these physical remains but instead on the lasting and liturgically contextualized commemoration of the saint's miracles.

In c. 3, Radbod continues the learned register that he uses throughout the narrative's prologue and first three chapters, and compares the classical heroes and their good deeds that benefitted empire and republic (Alexander, Xerxes, Augustus) with Martin and the miracles his relics procured. In this comparison, the difference through which the ancient rulers are overshadowed by the Christian saint consists in the way and the context in which they are remembered. While the stories about the illustrious Romans and Greeks only serve *didactic* purposes without being the cause for lasting praise (*a solis scolasticis recitantur, nec tamen laudantur*), the great deeds (*virtutes*) of the saint are commemorated in a *liturgical* context: they are "remembered, blessed, and praised by the worldwide church" (*istius vero vir-*

[60] Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogi* I. c. 24, *CSEL* 1, 177; *SC* 510, 198-200.
[61] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 2, Latin and trans. Rose, 58-59.
[62] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 2, Latin and trans. Rose, 60-61.

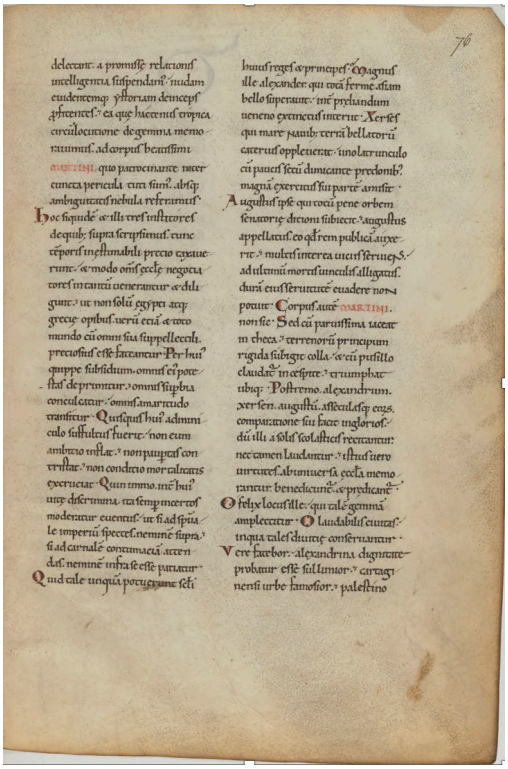

Fig. 5. Paris, BnF, lat. 9734, fol. 76r

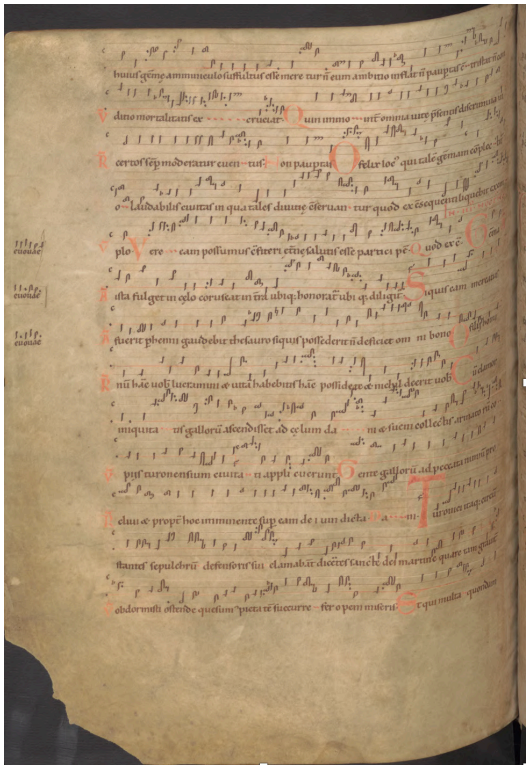

Fig. 6. Utrecht, University Library, 406, fol. 134v

tutes ab universa ecclesia memorantur, benedicuntur et praedicantur).[63] The combination of the verbs *laudare* (to praise) and its near-synonym *benedicere* (to bless, to praise) is common in Latin liturgical prayers,[64] while the verb *praedicare* occurs more often on its own, and has a plurality of meanings. Like the previous two verbs it can mean "to praise",[65] but the word is, of course, also used for the proclamation, or preaching, of the Gospel or Scripture in general.[66] *Memorare* usually occurs in liturgical prayers as the composite form *commemorare*, referring to the commemoration of a saint or, in general, the deceased members of the community.[67] All four verbs have a strong liturgical connotation. Radbod teases out their quality to distinguish the classical heroes and the academically-transmitted knowledge about their deeds from the performative force of Martin's living memory.[68]

63 Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 3, Latin and trans. Rose, 62-63.

64 Blaise, *Le vocabulaire latin*, 141.

65 Ibid., 143.

66 Ibid., 303-304.

67 Ibid., 214.

68 Els Rose, "Meer dan een schoolversje alleen. Wat 'de klassieken' betekenen bij Radboud van Utrecht (899/900-917)," *Frons, blad voor Leidse classici* 41, no. 2 (2021): 41-45.

This observation of the fact that Martin's actual remains, the *gemma* that is his true legacy, are the continuing commemoration and liturgical praise of the universal community of Christians then immediately leads to the final and most elevated use of the term *gemma* in the narrative:

> O happy city, which embraces such a gem! O laudable community of citizens, in which such riches are preserved![69]

For Radbod, the presence of bodily relics clearly does not determine the happiness of a city (*felix locus*). In Radbod's eyes, a place is happy when the memory of the saint that is represented by, but clearly not limited to, those material remains is kept alive in the rituals of liturgical commemoration and praise. Rather than being reduced to lessons to be learned in school, the miracle stories of St. Martin remain so powerful because they become true again in the community (*civitas*) that commemorates them in a liturgical context of blessing and praise.

With his masterly use of the metaphor of the gem, referring both to saint Martin's precious relics kept in a *cistella* in the tomb in Tours and to the divine qualities of Martin's virtuous life and miracles, Radbod nimbly plays around the delicate issue of Utrecht's lack of material relics of its main patron saint. He seems to convey the conviction that the living memory and imitation of the saint's great deeds, that shine as a precious stone in those communities that treasure them, are more important than material relics.

EPILOGUE

Radbod of Utrecht is widely acknowledged to have been an paragon of Carolingian learning.[70] In the preceding sections, we have also got to know him as a late representative of "the jewelled style", this specific late antique style that in literature, the visual arts, and music created by Christian authors and artists primarily served the purpose of exposing spiritual beauty, as expressed in virtue. Of course, the image of the gem was generously handed down to Radbod through the collection of Martinian works, starting with those of Sulpicius Severus himself. As we have seen above, Sulpicius and the fifth- and sixth-century Latin authors inspired by Sulpicius' *Life of Martin* applied the visual imagery of precious stones to express Martin's virtues. Precious stones also adorn visual depictions of Martin, such as the sixth-century mosaics in the basilica of S. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, formally dedicated to St. Martin, where Martin opens the procession of male saints carrying a jewelled crown.[71] Radbod added music to this heritage. In the chants that Radbod composed for the liturgical celebration of Martin's relics translation on 4 July, he included a number of passages taken

[69] Radbod, *Libellus de miraculo*, c. 3, Latin and trans. Rose, 62-63: *O felix locus ille, qui talem gemmam complectitur! O laudabilis civitas, in qua tales divitiae conservantur!*

[70] The context and quality of Radbod's learning is described and nuanced by Diem, "Radboud," 91-96.

[71] Roberts, *Jeweled Style*, 85-86.

from the *Miracle Story* in which the word *gemma* occurs. These passages are loaded with marked rhetorical figures in the music, such as microtones (intervals smaller than a minor second) or transgressions of the ambitus unexpected transgressions of the ambitus (the distance between the lowest and highest tone) in a given mode.[72]

The preceding analysis of Radbod's use of the word *gemma* in relation to his favourite Saint Martin, however, shows us that he did not only set forth what his predecessors had taught him. It also shows us Radbod's specific view on relics and the material remains of the saints. Far from rejecting the cult of relics in the limited sense of a saint's material remains, Radbod gratefully exploited the image of the gem that enabled him to let Martin's virtuous and divine qualities coalesce with his material remains. The ambiguity of the image, so that it is not always clear whether it refers to the saint's material relics or to his virtuous life and deeds, enabled Radbod to leave both possibilities open. Above all, it allowed him to praise his own diocese as a *felix locus*, a place that may not have housed material relics of St. Martin, but which did own his legends and feasts. Rather than the presence of material relics, it is, in Radbod's view, the liturgical commemoration of a saint's virtuous deeds that brings these legends to life again, and and effectively reenacts them.[73] Thus, he contributed in his own way to the lively debate about relics as "sacred objects" in the early Middle Ages. This is a debate that has come into focus so much more clearly since Janneke shed on it the radiant light of her sparkling mind.

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[72] Leo Lousberg, "Radbouds retoriek in tekst en muziek [Radbod's Rhetoric in Text and Music]," in *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten*, ed. Rose, 124-149.

[73] Els Rose, "Hagiography as a Liturgical Act: Liturgical and Hagiographic Commemoration in the Early Middle Ages," in *A Cloud of Witnesses. The Cult of Saints in Past and Present*, ed. Marcel Barnard, Paul Post, and Els Rose (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 161-183, at 176-178.

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FINDING FOUNDING FATHERS. BALDERIK OF UTRECHT AND THE PROPAGATION OF SAINTS' CULTS (C. 917-976)

JELLE VISSER[1]

ABSTRACT

Because of a remark by the mid-fourteenth century chronicler Johannes de Beke, it has been assumed that bishop Balderik of Utrecht transferred the relics of several saints to Utrecht and elevated a number of local saints as well. In this article I argue that Balderik also had saints' lives composed for the saints he elevated and that these saints' lives shed light on the ideals and ethics that underlay Balderik's policies as a bishop and the institutions that supported these policies. Furthermore, I show that fostering new saints was also a means to assert the saintly history of the bishopric through channels other than those of Willibrord and Boniface, to which other institutions had rival claims. Balderik wanted to extend a tradition of sanctity from Willibrord and Boniface up to the tenth century. Thus, the collection of saints' lives ascribed here to Balderik's circle is also viewed as a means of shaping both the perception of the past and the ideals for the tenth-century present of the bishopric after the disruption caused by the exile of the bishops in the period of Viking attacks.

KEYWORDS

Hagiography; Relics; Utrecht; Balderik, Bishop of Utrecht; Tenth Century; Church History

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In his mid-fourteenth century *Chronographia*, a history of the bishopric of Utrecht and the county of Holland, Johannes de Beke wrote of bishop Balderik (c. 917-976)[2] that he brought relics of the saints Pontianus, Benignus and Agnes from Italy in 961. Moreover, Beke says Balderik found the bodies of Werenfried, Lebuinus, Plechelmus, Wiro, Odger, Odulfus and Radbod, "with which holy patrons he embellished the church of Utrecht more gloriously."[3] Writing some five hundred years after the fact, Beke clearly got some of this wrong. As we shall see, relics of Benignus and Agnes were brought from West Francia, not Italy, and Beke's date does not correspond with other sources. Nevertheless, Beke asserted that Balderik of Utrecht was active as a propagator of saints' cults, and later historians have taken this up. For example, Kay van Vliet linked the propagation of some saints' cults with the foundation of new canons' minsters in the diocese, linking "new" saints to new communities.[4] But if Balderik did indeed promote the cult of these ten saints, why did he do so? What made these saints relevant to Utrecht? How did he propagate their cult, and what do these saints tell us about the communities with which they were associated?

A. BALDERIK OF UTRECHT

Contemporary sources, namely, the epitaph of his parents, Rikfried, count of Betuwe, and his wife Hersinda,[5] and a number of charters, paint Balderik as a member of a prominent Lotharingian family. The epitaph mentions the couple's four sons: Balderik, *preses* Rudolphus, *victor* (or *rector*)[6] Yrimfridus and count Nevelongus. Nevelongus is also known from a charter by Balderik in which the bishop gave usufruct of some of the lands pertaining to the minster in Odiliënberg (near Roermond) to Nevelongus' widow, a daughter of count Rainer.[7]

2 Balderik may have died in 975 or 977, but the *Annales necrologici Fuldenses* date his death to 976, ed. Georg Waitz, *MGH Script.* 13 (Hannover: Hahn, 1881), 203.

3 Johannes de Beke, *Chronographia*, c. 35b, ed. Hans Bruch, *Rijks geschiedkundige publicatiën* 143 (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1973), 69: *de quibus sanctis patronis Traiectensem ecclesiam gloriosius adornavit*. Older sources only mention Pontian, Agnes, and Benignus, but not the other saints.

4 Kay van Vliet, *In kringen van kanunniken. Munsters en kapittels in het bisdom Utrecht, 695-1227* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2002), 167.

5 *Versus infrascripti scripti sunt in cripta ecclesie sancti Salvatoris traiectini*, ed. Karl Strecker and Norbert Fickermann, *MGH* Poet. Lat. 5.1 (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1937), no. 26, 295-296, and older editions noted there. The verses remain in Utrecht, Utrechts archief, 223 Kapittel van Oudmunster te Utrecht, inv. no. 1.7.395 (olim Rijksarchief Utrecht, Inventaris boekdelen en bundels no. 4), fol. 2r, a collection containing the *Necrologium* and *Ordinarius* of Oudmunster. A Dutch translation is provided in Jos Stöver, "Proh dolor! De Utrechtse ballingschap (857-circa 925) in ander licht," *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht* (2020): 134-163, at 136. The epitaph is incompletely transmitted, and the relationship between the last three lines on the page of the Utrecht manuscript (edited by Strecker as no. 27) and the others is unclear. It may be that two brothers (two of Rikfried's sons?) were also buried in the same grave. Rikfried is mentioned as Dodo in 897; *MGH DD Zwentibold*, no. 15, ed. Theodor Schieffer (Berlin: Weidmann, 1960), 45.

6 Strecker and other editors have given *rector* based on a second, unidentified manuscript. The Utrecht manuscript gives *victor*.

7 *Oorkondenboek van het Sticht Utrecht tot 1301*, ed. Samuel Muller Fz and A. C. Bouman (Utrecht: Oosthoek 1920), henceforth *OSU*, no. 105.

Rainer, or Reginar, was a prominent figure in Lotharingia, son of Reginar I and brother of Giselbert, duke of Lorraine. The fact that Rikfried's son married one of Reginar's daughters stresses the significance of Balderik's family within Lotharingia. The charter also mentions Nevelongus' two sons, Baldric and Rodulf. Rodulf is believed to have been the ancestor of the counts of Haspinga/Loon;[8] Baldric/Balderik became bishop of Liège. The history of the younger bishop Balderik is relevant here as it shows the significance of Balderik of Utrecht as a player in Lotharingian politics: in order to appoint the younger Balderik to the see of Liège, his uncles, including Balderik of Utrecht, had the then bishop, Rather, deposed.[9]

Several attempts have been made to link Rikfried and his offspring, including Balderik, to further relatives. J. M. van Winter noted the large number of bishops in Utrecht in the ninth and tenth century whose name included the pre- or suffix -rik-, possibly one kin group.[10] Her argument is supported by a charter from 850 in which a landholder called Baldric donated goods in Wadenoijen to the church of Utrecht in exchange for the use of other lands.[11] The charter determines that after Baldric's death this usufruct will revert to his relations, namely, bishop Liudger, the cathedral provost Craft, Immo and Immo's grandson Baldric, if the last named would accept a clerical vocation. Names are significant here: this kin group included two Baldrics, and Immo is a short form for Irimfrid/Erenfried,[12] also the name of one of bishop Balderik's brothers. Additionally, Wadenoijen is situated within the Betuwe, the region of which Rikfried became count a generation or so later.[13] These people may thus be Balderik of Utrecht's relatives from a few generations before, who were already significant in the bishopric of Utrecht in the mid-ninth century.

While these sources indicate that he came from a family of some prominence in the bishopric of Utrecht and Lotharingia at large, other charters show Balderik's own significance in Ottonian politics in Lotharingia. Royal charters not only affirmed old possessions, but also provided the bishopric with new rights and sources of income. In one of his first royal charters (and the first one addressing a bishop), Otto I provided Balderik with the

8 Jean Baerten, *Het graafschap Loon (11de-14de eeuw). Ontstaan – politiek – instellingen* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1969) is the *locus classicus*. Cf. Geert Souvereyns and Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld, "De graven van Loon," *Limburg – Het Oude Land van Loon* 87 (2008): 111-152, at 113.

9 It was Balderik who called Rather a madman (*phreneticus*), whence Rather's *Phrenesis*. Rather, *Phrenesis*, ed. F. Weigle, *MGH Briefe der dt. Kaiserzeit* 1 (Weimar: Böhlau, 1949), 56-57. I was unable to consult the full edition of the work by P. Reid (*CCCM* 46A).

10 Johanna Maria van Winter, "De bisschoppen na de dood van Bonifatius," in *Geschiedenis van de provincie Utrecht tot 1528*, ed. eadem et al. (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1997), 87-91, but cf. the doubts voiced in Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 107, n. 451.

11 *OSU*, no. 67. cf. for context, Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 136-143.

12 Cf. Hein Jongbloed, "Immed 'von Kleve' (um 950). Das erste Klevische Grafenhaus (ca, 885-ca. 1015) als Vorstufe des geldrischen Fürstentums," *Annalen des historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* 209 (2006): 13-44, at 20.

13 We do not know whether the modern boundaries of the Betuwe and those of Rikfried's county are identical and, thus, whether Wadenoijen belonged to Rikfried's county.

right to mint.[14] From 944 onwards, Otto and his son Otto II added donations of land, a minster, hunting and fishing rights and the proceeds of taxation and the royal toll at Muiden, affirming previous donations in the process.[15] Other sources also suggest close ties. Though Balderik rarely appears as a witness in royal charters or at royal synods,[16] Henry I sent his youngest son Bruno to him to be educated, as testified by Bruno's biographer Ruotger, by a charter of Otto I, and by the *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior* (*BHL* 5684), which also reports that Balderik went to Cologne in the early 960s in order to visit Henry I's ailing widow.[17] Balderik may also have been related to Matilda,[18] which would explain Henry's choice for Utrecht as the place of Bruno's upbringing. Whether they were family or not, it is clear that Balderik's connections to royalty were of great benefit to his bishopric.

B. THE SAINTS

PONTIANUS, BENIGNUS AND AGNES

With this picture of Balderik's episcopate in mind, let us now look at the saints in question. Who were they, what was their connection to Utrecht, and what, if anything, did they offer to Balderik? First, it should be noted that Pontianus, Agnes and Benignus, the three saints who, according to Beke, Balderik brought from elsewhere, had no prior connection with Utrecht. There is no indication that Pontianus, a second century martyr from Spoleto, was venerated in Utrecht prior to the 960s.[19] The cult of the saint and the *Passio sancti Pontiani* (*BHL* 6891) had long been known in Spoleto and elsewhere,[20] yet the only connection of this *Passio* with Utrecht is a note which reports that Balderik brought the relics of Pontianus with him from Italy in 966 (*BHL* 6892) that was at some point added to some copies of the *Passio*.[21] Although it is difficult to date this note precisely, it was probably written soon after the event and thus possibly during Balderik's episcopate.

14 *MGH DD Otto I*, no. 6, ed. Theodor Sickel et al. (Hannover: Hahn, 1879-1884), 94-95, affirmed separately by Otto II, 975 in *MGH DD Otto II*, no. 108, ed. Theodor Sickel et al. (Hannover: Hahn, 1888), 122 and together with other donations in *MGH DD Otto I*, no. 164 and *MGH DD Otto II*, no. 106 (Otto II, 975).

15 *MGH DD Henrich I*, no. 27, ed. Theodor Sickel et al. (Hannover: Hahn, 1879-1884), 63-64; *MGH DD Otto I*, nos. 19, 58, 62, 98, 112, 124 and 164, *MGH DD Otto II*, nos. 106, 107 and 135.

16 *MGH DD Otto I*, nos. 14, 111; *Gesta synodalia* of Ingelheim (948), ed. Ernst-Dieter Hehl, *MGH Conc.* 6.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1987), 157-158; Flodoard, *Annales* for 948, ibid., 139-140; and Richer of Saint-Remi, *Historiae* II, c. 69, ed. Hartmut Hoffmann, *MGH Script.* 38 (Hannover: Hahn, 2000), 148-149.

17 Ruotger, *Vita Brunonis* (*BHL* 1468), c. 4, ed. Irene Ott, *MGH SRG, n.s.* 10 (Weimar: Böhlau, 1951), 5; *MGH DD Otto I*, no. 58, 140-141; *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior*, c. 22, ed. Bernd Schütte, *MGH SRG* 66 (Hannover: Hahn, 1994), 188-189.

18 Jongbloed, "Immed," 26.

19 E.g., Pontian's feast is not in the calendar in Paris, BnF, lat. 10837, fol. 34v-40r.

20 Cf. *AASS* Jan., vol. 2 (3rd ed.), 214-215.

21 *AASS* Jan., vol. 2 (3rd ed.), 217. The *AASS* text does not correspond with the explicit given in the *BHL*, however. For context, cf. Heinz Wolter, *Die Synoden im Reichsgebiet und Reichsitalien von 916 bis 1056* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1988), 71, 88-89.

Agnes, one of the most important female martyrs of the Roman era, was already part of the Utrecht liturgy by the eighth century,[22] but what links her to Utrecht in particular is the *translatio* of her relics as reported in the *Historia translationis Agnetis et Benigni* (*BHL* 165). Only the last two chapters concern the *translatio* proper; the remainder describes the *inventio* of Benignus and Agnes in Veuves (near Blois) and the miracles that happened there. The *Historia translationis* is puzzling, for it presents Benignus as a bishop of Chartres and a martyr whose feast is celebrated on June 28. No bishop Benignus of Chartres is known, and the feast of the bishop and martyr Benignus of Dijon was celebrated on November 1. The *Historia translationis* states, moreover, that relics of Saint Agnes were brought to Veuves when king Clovis I built a monastery there,[23] yet there is no evidence that Clovis ever acquired relics of Agnes, or that he built a monastery in Veuves.

Where modern historians have expressed their doubts about the authenticity of the report of the *Historia translationis* and the associated relics,[24] the *Historia* itself aims to establish a credible background for the relics mentioned by outlining the miraculous way in which they were found, and the miracles they performed after their *inventio*. The author particularly emphasizes the importance of the feasts of the saints: when Agnes appears in a vision to explain where her relics and those of her spiritual son Benignus are to be found, she also mentions the feast day of the saint. Two of the subsequent miracles concern the punishment divinely meted out to those who are unwilling to give the saints their due reverence.[25]

Though it may be that with Benignus and Agnes Balderik received less than genuine relics, Balderik's interest in the saints was sincere, as the final chapters of the *Historia translationis* tell that had heard of the miracles in Veuves and sent for the relics through an appeal to Theobald, the local count. After due comital deliberation, the relics were sent to Utrecht and deposited in the episcopal aula on Maundy Tuesday, 964.[26]

Like the note on the *translatio* of Pontianus of Spoleto, the *Historia translationis* was probably written soon after the event, that is, during Balderik's lifetime. There are also verbal parallels between both texts: the relics of the saints are referred to as "treasure" (*thesaurus*), "placed in the hall of the episcopal see."[27] Given the amount of detail on the *inventio* as well as the *translatio*, the *Historia translationis* may have been written in two phases: the note

[22] Her feast appears in Willibrord's calendar, Paris, BnF, lat. 10837, fol. 34v.

[23] *Historia translationis Agnetis et Benigni*, c. 1, *AASS* Jan., vol. 2 (3rd ed.), 721.

[24] Charles Caspers and Louis van Tongeren, "Body and Feast: The Liturgical Calendar of the Old Diocese of Utrecht," in *Sanctifying Texts, Transforming Rituals: Encounters in Liturgical Studies. Essays in honour of Gerard A. M. Rouwhorst*, ed. Paul van Geest et al. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), 206-237, at 215 for doubts on the report about Benignus and Agnes. Additionally, manuscript evidence (cf. appendix) points to Utrecht as the source of this cult.

[25] *Historia translationis Agnetis et Benigni* c. 9-11, p. 723.

[26] Ibid. c. 13-14, *AASS* Jan., vol. 2, 723-724.

[27] *De translatione sancti Pontiani*, *AASS* Jan., vol. 2 (3rd ed.), 217: *cum gaudio et* ***honore suscipiens*** *intra pontificalis* ***sedis aulam locavit***; *Historia translationis Agnetis et Benigni*, c. 14, p. 724: *quos* ***honore*** *condigno* ***susceptos*** *infra Traiectensem episcopalis* ***sedis aulam*** *pridie Kalendarum Aprilium loco* ***locavit***.

on the *translatio* may have been added in Utrecht to an existing *inventio* that came with the relics from West Francia.

WERENFRIED

This brings us to the saints whose bodies Beke says Balderik elevated, rather than brought in from outside the diocese. Their *vitae* link them to the history of the bishopric of Utrecht. The *Vita sancti Werenfridi* (*BHL* 8858) starts by tying Werenfried's sanctity to his imitation of Willibrord. Following this line of argument, the *Vita Werenfridi* describes how Werenfried did in Elst what Willibrord did in Utrecht: he converted the populace, dispelled the old errors of their ways and established the church of Christ. From Elst, Werenfried worked on the island Betuwe and in the nearby *villa* Westervoort, where he eventually died. This led to an altercation between the people of Elst and Westervoort about the location of the saint's burial. They resolved this issue through divine judgement: following Old Testament precedent (1 Sam. 6), the body of the saint was first loaded onto a ship which miraculously sailed to the shore of the river on which Elst lay. The body was then put into a cart, pulled by two oxen that had never before been used for such a task, yet headed straight for Elst, where the saint was then buried.[28] The remainder of the *Vita sancti Werenfridi* reports three miraculous healings.

Overall, the *Vita Werenfridi* suggests a good knowledge of the topography around Elst as well as some sources that are closely linked with Utrecht. Interestingly, it refers to Elst as "shortly before given by Charles." This indicates that the author knew Charles Martel's charter of 726 which gave all that had once belonged to one Everardus in *Marithaime* in the villa *Heliste* (this is Elst) to Willibrord's monastery in the same place.[29] This charter is only known from a charter collection of the bishopric of Utrecht, the *Cartularium Radbodi*.[30] We can therefore assume that the author of the *Vita Werenfridi* came from Utrecht, or was at least in contact with it. Dating the text is more difficult since all textual witnesses are late medieval.

LEBUINUS

Whereas the *Vita Werenfridi* does not explicitly mention Balderik, Hucbald of Saint-Amand dedicated his *Vita sancti Lebuini* (*BHL* 4812) to the bishop. Hucbald has little more to report

[28] *Vita sancti Werenfridi*, c. 7-8, *AASS* Aug., vol. 6 (1743), 103-104.

[29] *MGH DD Arnulf*, no. 13, ed. Ingrid Heidrich (Hannover: Hahn, 2011), 30-32. The idea that the monastery to which the goods in Elst were given was located in Utrecht in no way follows from the wording of the charter, nor is it necessary to doubt that Willibrord had a monastery (*basilica*) in Elst, as he did in other places, e.g., Susteren and Rindern. Cf. for the prevailing opinion to the contrary Herrius Halbertsma, *Frieslands Oudheid. Het rijk van de Friese koningen, opkomst en ondergang* (Utrecht: Matrijs, 2000), 208; Ton Derks et al., *Nieuw archeologisch onderzoek rond de Grote Kerk van Elst, gemeente Overbetuwe (2002-2003)* (Amsterdam: ACVU, 2008), 6; Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 75-76.

[30] Cf. Peter Henderikx, "Het Cartularium van Radbod," in *Datum et actum. Opstellen aangeboden aan Jaap Kruisheer ter gelegenheid van zijn 65e verjaardag*, ed. D. P. Blok et al. (Amsterdam: Meertens Instituut, 1988), 231-264; Johanna Maria van Winter and Cornelis Dekker, "De vroegste goederen van de Utrechtse kerk," in *Geschiedenis van Utrecht*, ed. iidem, 93-94.

about the saint than the *Vita sancti Lebuini antiqua* (*BHL* 4810b), on which his *vita* is based.[31] Its style, however, is far more ornate. Hucbald nearly quadrupled the length of the text, which deals at length with Lebuinus' education in his native Britannia before taking the saint and the narrative to Utrecht, where Gregory, a pupil of Willibrord and the abbot of the local monastery, gives him Marcellinus[32] as a companion in missionary work. Gregory's past as a pupil of Boniface and Marcellinus' connection to Willibrord serve as an excuse to sketch a quasi-apostolic succession for Lebuinus' mission. Together with his companion, Lebuinus builds a church at Wilp on the west bank of the river IJssel, and then another at Deventer on the east bank. From there Lebuinus attends a meeting with the pagan Saxons at Marklo on the River Weser. He urges the Saxons to be baptized and warns them that if they will not, a strong king will come and conquer them. Although some of the Saxons want to kill the missionary, Lebuinus escapes alive. Thus deprived of martyrdom, the saint dies in peace after a life of self-imposed asceticism. He was buried in Deventer, but his body was lost after the church was burned down, until it was retrieved by Liudger.[33] Balderik is not mentioned in the *Vita* itself.

WIRO, PLECHELMUS, AND ODGER

Like Werenfried and Lebuinus, the saints Wiro, Plechelmus and Odger came from Britain, according to their *vitae* (*BHL* 8973, 6867 and 6269). Wiro and Plechelmus were Irishmen who were elected bishop against their will and travelled to Rome together to have their ordination confirmed by the pope. On their way they were joined by an Anglo-Saxon deacon Odger. Later all three bishops went to Francia as *peregrini* where king Pippin gave them a monastery in a place called *Mons Petri* (now Odiliënberg), where they died and were venerated as saints.[34] Their *vitae* are very similar in structure and content, though there are also some differences. At only about half the length of the other *vitae*, the *Vita Odgeri* is little more than an afterthought. It also lacks the preface. Stylistically, the *Vita Wironis* is far more ornate than the other two. This suggests that the *vitae* were not written by the same author, at least not at the same time and/or with the same audience or purpose in mind. The exact relation of these related *vitae* therefore remains unclear.[35]

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31 *Vita Lebuini antiqua*, c. 14-16 used Altfrid's *Vita sancti Liudgeri* (*BHL* 4937).

32 *Vita Lebuini antiqua*, c. 9 calls him Marchelm, Hucbald opts for Marcellinus.

33 This section of the *Vita* is only found in some manuscripts.

34 The association of three *peregrini* working as missionaries to the Saxons from Odiliënberg (under the influence of Prüm) at the time of Pippin III has been defended as plausible by Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 97: Jan Oude Nijhuis, "Op zoek naar de heilige Plechelmus," *De Maasgouw* 126 (2007): 115-127; idem, "Bisschop Balderik en de heilige Plechelmus: feiten, hypothesen, verzinsels en bedrog," in *Plechelmus. Zijn kerk, liturgie en kapittel te Oldenzaal. Bijdragen over de heilige, zijn kerk en liturgie bij gelegenheid van het 1050-jarig jubileum van de translatie der relieken van Plechelmus naar Oldenzaal*, ed. Guus Goorhuis and Jan Oude Nijhuis (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2005), 11-41, 220-222. Cf. for a discussion of the *vitae* H. S. R. de Jong, *Hagiografieën en hypothesen: de heiligenlevens van Wiro, Plechelmus en Odger* (Rotterdam: Slootweg & Tromp Meesters, 1988).

35 C. A. A. Linssen, "Over Sint-Odiliënberg, zijn heiligen Wiro, Plechelmus en Odgerus, hun vinding en verheffing, hun verering en vitae," *De Maasgouw* 127 (2008): 3-20, at 17 suggested that all three *vitae* were

ODULFUS

In the *Vita sancti Odulfi* (*BHL* 6318) Utrecht takes centre stage for the first time. Odulfus, we are told, came from Oirschot in Toxandria, but joined the canons in Utrecht under bishop Frederik (c. 815-c. 835). At the bishop's request he went to Frisia to preach against heresy. Later, back in Utrecht, Odulfus nominated a canon named Hunger for the office of bishop after the provost of the canons, Craft (no doubt the same man as in the Baldric-charter of 850), had refused to be elected. Bishop Hunger (c. 854-c. 866), the author says, subsequently received the gift of prophecy and was the holiest bishop Utrecht had had since Willibrord and Boniface.[36] The appearance of Frederik and Hunger in the *Vita* firmly links Odulfus to the history of the bishops of Utrecht.

Both in Frisia and in Utrecht, Odulfus not only displayed great sanctity in his manners, but also prophesied, notably predicting to the Frisians in Stavoren that due to their lapse into heresy, pagans would come to their land, which, as the author states, has subsequently happened. This is clearly a reference to the Viking raids of the later ninth century.[37] In relation to this coming event, the saint also predicted that he himself would return to Stavoren, albeit after his death. Another miracle story is reported in the *Vita Odulfi*: when his house caught fire, the saint managed to quench the flames through prayer. The *Vita* says that the saint's walking stick was later placed on his grave and remained there "until the days of the late bishop Radbod" (898-917).[38]

RADBOD

The final saint on Beke's list is Radbod, Balderik's predecessor as bishop of Utrecht. His life was celebrated in the *Vita sancti Radbodi*, which is preserved in two versions (*BHL* 7046 and 7047). The version edited by Holder Egger (the B-Fassung) is generally reckoned to be the oldest.[39] The *Vita* outlines the life of the saint in far greater detail than any of the other saints, from his background in the *Pagus Lomacensis*, his upbringing in Cologne under his relative Gunthar, through his life in Tours under the abbot Hugo, to his election as bishop of Utrecht. Much is made of Radbod's prophecies concerning the growing power of Germany over (West) Francia and his prophetic designation of Balderik as the future bishop of Utrecht. The author becomes almost apologetic about the fact that Radbod himself remained bishop in Deventer rather than Utrecht, only visiting the latter when time and occasion allowed. It

originally one *vita*, split up in Balderik's time.

36 *Vita sancti Odulfi*, c. 11-12, *AASS* June, vol. 3 (3rd ed., 1867), 91.

37 *Vita sancti Odulfi*, c. 9, ibid., 90-91.

38 *Vita sancti Odulfi*, c. 13, ibid., 91.

39 For the discussion on this point, cf. Brigitte Ahlers, *Die ältere Fassung der Vita Radbodi* (Bern/Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1976), H. J. Bruch, "De twee recensies der Vita Radbodi," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis,* n.s. 38 (1951-52): 1-13, D. A. Stracke, "Over de vita Sancti Radbodi," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis,* n.s. 38 (1951-52): 129-141.

is difficult to date this text, but scholarly consensus is that at least the oldest version of the *Vita* was written sometime during Balderik's episcopate.[40]

C. THE VITAE AS EVIDENCE FOR BALDERIK'S INVOLVEMENT IN SAINTS' CULTS

DATING THE VITAE

Before proceeding, we need to provide an argument for two assumptions implicit in the preceding paragraph: that Balderik was indeed involved in the *translatio*, *inventio* and/or *elevatio* of all these saints, and that the *vitae* discussed so far point to his involvement.

Manuscript evidence is of little help in establishing a date for these *vitae*. With the exception of the *Vita sancti Odulfi*, which appears in manuscripts from the eleventh and twelfth century, all textual witnesses are late medieval.[41] However, there is circumstantial evidence for an early veneration of these saints in Utrecht. A litany of saints in the Psalter of Wolbodo (d. 1021), a canon in Utrecht before he became bishop of Liège, includes Benignus, Pontianus, Lebuinus, Werenfried, Plechelmus, Odger, Radbod, Odulfus and Agnes, as well as other saints with a connection to Utrecht: Boniface with his companions, including Eoban, Martin, Willibrord, Suitbert, and Liudger.[42] An older sacramentary (c. 961-976) mentions Werenfried, Lebuinus, Odulfus and Radbod, again together with other saints with a connection to Utrecht.[43] Given that the composition of a *vita* is often one of the first steps towards liturgical veneration, this suggests (but does not prove) that the *vitae* date from no later than the third quarter of the tenth century.

There is some internal evidence dating the *vitae* to Balderik's episcopate. Hucbald of Saint-Amand's *Vita sancti Lebuini* is dedicated to Balderik and was thus written between 917 (Balderik's ordination) and 930 (Hucbald's death). The mention of Balderik in the translation notes and the *Vita Radbodi* make a date during his tenure as bishop very probable. In the case of the translations this points to a date sometime in the 960s or 970s. In the case of the *Vita Radbodi* a precise date is impossible to establish. An internal reference in the *Vita sancti Odulfi* to the days of bishop Radbod of blessed memory suggests that the *vita* was written

40 I am not convinced by the idea that a reference to Agnes means the *Vita Radbodi* should be dated after 964 (as in Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 157, n. 653).

41 See the appendix for a list of manuscripts containing the *vitae* discussed.

42 The Wolbodo Psalter is now Brussels, KBR, 9188-9189, fol. 1r-2v. Consulted online: https://uurl.kbr.be/1973595, last accessed June 16, 2023.

43 The so-called Balderik sacramentary, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Theol. lat. qu. 2. Cf. Eef Overgaauw, "Sechs mittelalterliche Handschriften aus Utrecht, Nimwegen und Nordholland. Beispiele niederländischer Buchkultur," *Jahrbuch des Zentrums für Niederlande-Studien* 4 (1993): 115-143; idem "Sechs mittelalterliche Handschriften aus Utrecht, Nimwegen und Nordholland. Beispiele niederländischer Buchkultur. Addenda et corrigenda," *Jahrbuch des Zentrums für Niederlande-Studien* 7/8 (1996/1997): 261-266. I was unable to consult the manuscript while writing this paper and had to rely on secondary references for the saints mentioned in the litany.

within living memory of Radbod's episcopate, and therefore during Balderik's long tenure as bishop. Five of the nine *vitae* thus have internal references making a date in Balderik's episcopate either credible or explicit. The other texts, however, do not provide internal evidence for dating, nor are they known from early manuscripts.

In addition to the litanies mentioned above and Beke's remarks, there is circumstantial evidence which points to Balderik's involvement in Werenfried's cult. Excavations have shown that Elst not only had an eighth-century stone-built church, but also that this church was rebuilt and expanded in the tenth century. An inscription preserved in the church names Balderik as the person responsible, which could be taken as circumstantial evidence for his promotion of a local saint. Moreover, Balderik's father, Rikfried Dodo, was the local count, so there is also the possibility of prolonged family involvement with Elst.[44]

Internal evidence in the *Vita sancti Odulfi* suggests that it was written after Radbod's death and the Viking raids of the ninth century. There is no *terminus ante quem*, but it would be tempting to suggest that the amount of detail in the *vita*, such as the references to the provost Craft and the saint's stick, would fit with a date in the tenth century better than any later date. Moreover, the prophecy of the saint's posthumous return was probably a *vaticinium ex eventu*, indicating that the *vita* was composed after (or in combination with) a *translatio* of relics to Stavoren. Although there is no direct evidence that establishes that Balderik was behind such a *translatio*, he may well have been. Relics were brought from Stavoren to London by merchants in 1034, which is therefore a *terminus ante quem* for the *translatio* and the text "prophesying" it.[45] As a *translatio* to Stavoren seems unlikely in the Viking era, this *translatio* must have taken place sometime between c. 885 and 1034, indicating that Balderik probably had both the relics translated and the *Vita Odulfi* composed.

Circumstantial evidence again points to Balderik as a fosterer of the cult of Wiro, Plechelmus and Odger. The bishops of Utrecht had received possession of the monastery of Odiliënberg in 858 from king Lothar II.[46] Thus, Balderik, as bishop of Utrecht, had an interest in the affairs of the place where the saints were buried. This interest is confirmed by the charter in which Balderik gave the usufruct of the monastery to his widowed sister-in-law and her sons, discussed earlier.[47] Also, two early modern sources state that Balderik

[44] Engelbert ter Kuile, "De bouwgeschiedenis van de Hervormde kerk te Elst in de Overbetuwe," *Nederlandsch Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1952-1953): 46-69; Ada van Deijk, *Romaans Nederland* (Amsterdam: Zodiaque/Architectura & Natura, 1994), 284; Derks et al., *Onderzoek*, 52. A later building phase under bishop Bernold (1026-1054) is not a relevant alternative, for it does not explain Werenfried's appearance in the older litanies.

[45] *Translatio et miracula sancti Odulfi* (BHL 6319), ed. William Dunn Macray, *Chronicon abbatiae de Evesham ad annum 1418.* Rolls Series 29 (London: Longman 1863), 313-314.

[46] *MGH DD Lothar II*, no. 7, ed. Theodor Schieffer (Berlin/Zurich: Weidmann, 1966), 392-394. Cf. also Johannes de Beke, *Chronicon*, c. 27a, p. 53.

[47] *OSU*, no. 105, at 109-111.

translated Plechelmus' relics to Oldenzaal when he founded a canons' minster there in 954.[48] Perhaps this was the occasion for the composition of the *Vita Plechelmi*.

THE VITAE AS A CORPUS

While there is evidence for associating individual texts with the time of Balderik's episcopate, there are also textual parallels between the texts that indicate that they stem from the same context. For example, the phrase *peregrinus Christi* is used relatively frequently in these texts, appearing three times in the *Vita sancti Lebuini*, twice in the *Vita sancti Plechelmi*, and once in the *Vita sancti Odgeri*.[49] The term *peregrinus* with some kind of epithet is by no means unique to these texts, though. The first example outside this group that comes to mind is the *Vita altera sancti Bonifatii* (*BHL* 1401).[50] More significantly, perhaps, the *Vita Werenfridi*, *Vita Plechelmi*, *Vita Odgeri*, *Vita Odulfi* and *Vita Radbodi* all use the rare phrase *castra Christi* to refer to the monastic life of the saint, and the *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 6 and *Vita Odulfi*, c. 3 do so in a markedly similar context. The use of the phrase *miles emeritus* for the aged saint, which appears in two *vitae*,[51] is even rarer. Taking account of their exact wording and the combinations made of these martial descriptions of the saint, the parallels become yet more striking.[52]

The *vitae* share a number of *loci similes* and similar biblical allusions. To start with the latter, the *Vita Plechelmi* and the *Vita Lebuini* both link the *peregrinatio* of their subjects to Gen. 12:1,[53] and both the *Vita Wironis* and *Vita Radbodi* use Ps. 91:13/92:12 to describe their subject's growth in wisdom while in the monastery.[54] The conclusion of Christ's parable of the talents (Matt. 25:21) appears in both the *Vita Lebuini* and *Vita Werenfridi*,[55] Paul's epitaph (Phil. 1:21) in *Vita Radbodi* and *Vita Odulfi*.[56] The *Vita Lebuini* and the *Vita Plechelmi* both refer to Mal. 2:6-7[57] and 1 Sam. 2:30.[58] Both *vitae* and the *Vita Odulfi* also refer to the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16).[59] Other *loci similes* are:

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48 The *translatio* is dated August 4, the consecration of the chapter October 2. Cf. Linssen, "Sint-Odiliënberg," 16; Oude Nijhuis, "Op zoek;" idem, "Bisschop Balderik," Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 178.

49 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 10, c. 11 and c. 12; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 2 and c. 5; *Vita Odgeri*, c. 2.

50 *Vita altera sancti Bonifatii*, c. 7 (*athleta Christi*) and c. 12 (*fortis athleta*), ed. Wilhelm Levison, *MGH SRG* 57 (Hannover/Leipzig: Hahn, 1905), 67 and 71 respectively.

51 *Vita Wironis*, c. 9; *Vita Radbodi*, c. 3. The more common *miles Christi* appears in *Vita Lebuini*, c. 11, with allusions made in *Vita Wironis*, c. 1; *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 5 and *Vita Odulfi*, c. 3.

52 *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 4: ***caelesti rhomphaea viriliter armatus***. *Vita Odulfi*, c. 5: ***caelesti romphaea viriliter armati***. *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 5: *His vero munitionibus* ***fortis Christi athleta viriliter armatus***. *Vita Radbodi*, c. 3: *processurus ad pugnam* ***Christi miles*** *ut* ***emeritus***, *spiritualibus* ***viriliter*** *accingitur* ***armis***.

53 *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 9; *Vita Lebuini*, c. 7.

54 *Vita Wironis*, c. 3; V*ita Radbodi*, c. 1.

55 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 15; *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 5.

56 *Vita Odulfi*, c. 13; *Vita Radbodi*, c. 9.

57 *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 14; *Vita Lebuini*, c. 5.

58 *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 8; *Vita Lebuini*, c. 5.

59 *Vita Odulfi*, prologus; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 2. Cf. Radbod (?), *Sermo de sancto Lebuino*. All three texts use inclinations of *laborare in vinea Domini*.

- *contigit Traiectensem ecclesiam existere pastore viduatam (Vita Odulfi, c. 2, Vita Radbodi, c. 2).*[60]
- *humanae sagacitati (Vita Odulfi, c. 4, Vita Radbodi, c. 3).*
- *illis omnibus ardens divini luminis lucerna resplenduit (Vita Odulfi, c. 4)/caelestis lampas ubique resplenduit (Vita Radbodi, c. 1).*[61]
- *clam hominibus, palam deo (Vita Wironis, c. 6, Vita Odulfi, c. 11).*
- *iam extitisset senio fessus (Vita Plechelmi, c. 7)/iam longo fessus extitisset senio (Vita Odulfi, c. 7).*[62]
- *nullis umquam cor implicans illecebris (Vita Wironis, c. 2)/nullis se implicans illecebris (Vita Radbodi, c. 1).*[63]
- *iugi legis Dei meditatione (Vita Werenfridi, c. 3, Vita Radbodi, c. 6).*
- *spirituali vomere as a simile for preaching (Vita Werenfridi, c. 4, Vita Radbodi, c. 7).*[64]
- *mentis intentione (Vita Werenfridi, c. 4, Vita Wironis, c. 7).*[65]
- *Deo praedestinante procreatus (Vita Odgeri, c. 1, Vita Odulfi, c. 1).*
- *Dei obsequium (Vita Odgeri, c. 5, Vita Odulfi, c. 12).*
- *exequiarum ministeria (Vita Odgeri, c. 6) / exequiarum ministeriis (Vita Odulfi, c. 13).*
- *Et sic usque ad vitae exitum iis se vallari munitionibus satagebat (Vita Plechelmi, c. 2)/Huiusmodi autem beatus Christi Dei athleta se vallabat munitionibus (Vita Odgeri, c. 2).*
- *inter condiscipulos obedientiam maioribus exhiberet (Vita Plechelmi, c. 3)/inter condiscipulos erat obedientia infatigabilis (Vita Odgeri, c. 1).*
- *die noctuque secum tacite revolvens (Vita Odulfi, c. 1, Vita Werenfridi, c. 4).*
- *agmina reposcebant caelica (Vita Lebuini, c. 14, Vita Plechelmi, c. 12).*
- *gemellis sophiae traditur educandus uberibus (Vita Wironis, c. 2) / gemellis sophiae sic lactaretur uberibus (Vita Radbodi, c. 1).*[66]
- *aeternae noctis tenebras effugarent (Vita Plechelmi, c. 1, Vita Werenfridi, c. 1).*[67]

The *Vita Plechelmi* and *Vita Lebuini* share a number of phrases warning of the dangers of the secular world. As the *Vita Lebuini* has an opening clause which *Vita Plechelmi* lacks, the

60 The phrase is otherwise attested in letters of Hincmar of Reims and some papal letters; none of these seems a likely example to the *vitae*, so this is probably coincidental.

61 Cf. the saint as *lucerna* (Matt. 5, 15) in *Vita Radbodi*, c. 5 and c. 9; *Vita Wironis*, c. 3; and *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 2.

62 *Iam fessus senio* otherwise only appears in Statius' *Thebais*, which is an unlikely source, and in Liudolf of Mainz's *Vita et translatio sancti Severi* (BHL 7681-7682).

63 The only *locus similis* I could find was in Amalar of Metz's *Forma institutionis canonicorum* 2.16.

64 Elsewhere I only found Maximus of Turin, *Sermo* 16.

65 *Tota mentis intentione* is a phrase that appears several times in Alcuin, notably in his *Sermo in natale sancti Willibrordi* (BHL 8937) and his *Adhortatio ad imitandas virtutes sancti Vedasti* (BHL 8509, often copied for other saints as well). One of these texts may have been a source.

66 Where *Vita Wironis* continues *Sed quid necesse est plura prosequi?*, *Vita Radbodi* continues in similar vein, suggesting that the latter text was quoting the former, rather than vice versa.

67 The other parallels: *Vita Wironis*, c. 2; *Vita Lebuini*, prologus; also *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 4.

author of the latter must have borrowed from Hucbald.[68] As the *Vita Wironis* shares a similar relationship to the *Vita Radbodi*, this allows us to date both *vitae* more securely to Balderik's reign than before.

Some phrases even appear in more than two *vitae*.[69] Four *vitae* refer in similar terms to the birth or birthplace of the saint,[70] three describe the burial of the saint similarly,[71] while three *vitae* make mention of a wondrous scent at the funeral of the saint using similar wording.[72] Though there are parallels to be found (notably the *Vita Lebuini antiqua*) and three of the *vitae* refer to or derive their phraseology from Alcuin's *Vita sancti Willibrordi* (*BHL* 8935), the phraseology suggests a close relation between these *vitae*.[73] The closest textual resemblance, however, is found in the *Vita Werenfridi* and *Vita Plechelmi*, which both open with a reflection on the function of saints, likening them to the stars of heaven which shed their light on the world in the absence of the sun.[74]

In addition to biblical parallels, the *vitae* are notable for their reliance on association with older *vitae* to tie their saints to established precedents. The *Vita Lebuini*, *Vita Plechelmi*, *Vita Werenfridi* and *Vita Wironis* all refer to the many saints that came from Ireland.[75] *Vita Wironis* and *Vita Plechelmi* (at some greater length) mention Patrick, Cuthbert and Columba,

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68 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 4: ***abstinuit*** *a vulgari vita et conversatione,* ***a mundi voluptatibus*** *et spectaculis,* ***a saeculi pompis, a conviviis publicis, ab*** *usuris et* ***turpium lucrorum*** *occupationibus, a fraudibus* ***et ab ipsa*** *cunctorum criminum matre avaritia. Vita Plechelmi*, c. 9: *nam se* ***abstinuit*** *in tenerae aetatis tirocinio* ***a seculi pompis****, ab petulantiae carnalis illecebris,* ***a conviciis publicis****,* ***a mundi voluptatibus****,* ***a lucris turpibus et ab ipsa*** *malorum radice superbia.*

69 The not particularly rare *Christo duce* in *Vita Odulfi*, c. 3; *Vita Radbodi*, prologus; *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 9; *Vita Wironis*, c. 4, c. 5 and c. 6. *Corporeae molis* in *Vita Lebuini*, c. 15; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 13; and *Vita Odgeri*, c. 6. The otherwise unattested *in sacra lectione studiosus* in *Vita Odulfi*, c. 4; *Vita Werenfridi*; c. 3, and *Vita Odgeri*, c. 1. Variants of *in eleemosynarum dapsilitate largus* in *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 5; V*ita Odulfi*; c. 4, and *Vita Odgeri*, c. 2.

70 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 2: *sanctus Lebwinus,* ***ex*** *praefata* ***Anglorum patria oriundus****. Vita Werenfridi*, c. 1: *beatus Werenfridus, qui in eisdem partibus* ***Anglorum oriundus*** *extitit. Vita Odulfi*, c. 1: *Temporibus Ludovici piissimi augusti erat quidam vir venerabilis,* ***ex nobili prosapia****, Francorum* ***oriundus****, nomine Bodgis,* (…) *procreatus est filius nomine Odulfus. Vita Plechelmi* 2: *Sanctus itaque Willibrordus infra eius* ***patriae****, scilicet Northumbriae, fines* ***oriundus****.*

71 *Vita Wironis*, c. 9; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 12; and *Vita Odgeri*, c. 6.

72 *Odor mirae fragantiae, fragantia miri odoris* or similar in *Vita Odulfi*, c. 13; *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 5; *Vita Wironis*, c. 9; cf. *Vita Radbodi*, c. 10. Neither the miracle nor the phrase *mira odor* is rare.

73 *Vita Lebuini antiqua*, c. 2: *Hic* (Gregory of Utrecht, JV) *denique* ***ex nobilissima*** *Francorum* ***prosapia*** *oriundus.* Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* I, c. 1: *Fuit in Brittannia insula, provintia Northanhumbrana, quidam pater familias genere Saxo et nomine Wilgils.* Cf. especially the similarity to the *Vita Odulfi*. Other uses of similar phraseology: Agius, *Vita et obitus Hathumodae* (*BHL* 3763), prologus; Aldhelm, *De virginitate*, c. 36 and c. 37; and *De laudibus virginitatis*, c. 36 and c. 37 (copied in Bede's *Martyrology*, Jan. 13). Tenth-century examples of the same phrase are found in Flodoard, *Historia ecclesiae Remensis* I, c. 20 and II, c. 3; Stephen of Liège, *Vita quarta sancti Lamberti* (*BHL* 4683), c. 5; Ruotger, *Vita sancti Brunonis*, c. 38 (copied in Folcuin of Lobbes, *Gesta abbatum Laubiensium*, c. 23); and Liutprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis* I, c. 8 and III, c. 36.

74 *Vita Werenfridi*, prologus and *Vita Plechelmi*, prologus. Cf. also *Vita Wironis*, prologus and the use of the phrase *sol iustitiae* in *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 1 and *Vita Lebuini*, c. 1 and c. 16.

75 *Scotia. Vita Lebuini*, c. 2; *Vita Wironis*, c. 2; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 1; *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 1. Both *Vita Werenfridi* and *Vita Lebuini* refer to *Scotia sive Hibernia* (*Vita Werenfridi* continues about *Britannia eique adjacens Northumbria*). *Vita Plechelmi* refers to *Northumbria, Scotia, Hibernia.*

in that order.[76] The *Vita Plechelmi* expands the list by adding Willibrord as an example from Northumbria, without any further reference to Willibrord in the remainder of the *Vita Plechelmi*.[77] Willibrord also appears in the *Vita Lebuini*, as the teacher of Gregory and Marcellinus. Later on, it is another saint, Liudger, who retrieves Lebuin's relics in Deventer.[78] The *Vita Werenfridi* also refers to its subject as Willibrord's pupil.[79] Boniface appears in the *Vita Lebuini*, where Hucbald discusses the antecedents of Gregory of Utrecht,[80] and *Vita Radbodi* and *Vita Odulfi* refer to Willibrord and Boniface in tandem as the examples for the clergy of Utrecht par excellence.[81] Although there was some reason for mentioning these other saints in the *Vita Lebuini* and *Vita Werenfridi*, the references to Patrick, Cuthbert, Columba, Willibrord and Boniface in the other *vitae* are above and beyond what is necessary to move the story of the saint in question along, and serve only to prove the saintly antecedents of the authors' subject matter.

All of the above could be summarized in the following table of *loci similes*:

	V. Wironis	V. Werenfridi	V. Radbodi	V. Plechelmi	V. Odgeri	V. Odulfi
V.Lebuini	2	4	1	9	2	1
V.Odulfi	2	6	8	5	6	
V.Odgeri	1	2	1	7		
V.Plechelmi	4	4	2			
V.Radbodi	7	8				
V.Werenfridi	5					

Fig. 1. Loci similes

In short, the seven *vitae* are all closely interrelated textually, but the core texts of the corpus are the *Vita Odulfi*, *Vita Werenfridi*, *Vita Radbodi* and *Vita Plechelmi*, all of which share four or more *loci similes* with three or four of the other *vitae*. The *Vita Odgeri* is a far shorter text than any of the others and therefore cannot be treated on equal terms with the others but evidently belongs to the same group. These five *vitae* were therefore composed by one author or group of authors, which should then necessarily be located in the episcopal centre in Utrecht[82] between the 920s and 976, probably within a shorter period within these brackets.

76 *Vita Wironis*, c. 3; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 1-2.
77 *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 2.
78 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 17.
79 *Vita Werenfridi*, c. 1-2.
80 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 8.
81 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 5 and *Vita Odulfi*, c. 11.
82 This goes against earlier assessments, which have ascribed individual *vitae* to local efforts, i.e.:
- the *Vitae* of Wiro, Plechelmus and Odger in Odiliënberg, cf. De Jong, *Hagiografieën*;
- the *Vita Werenfridi* in Elst, cf. Halbertsma, *Frieslands oudheid*, 210;

The other texts stand somewhat apart from this core corpus. The *translationes* of Pontianus, Agnes and Benignus are not part of the group at all with regard to *loci similes*, and Hucbald's *Vita Lebuini* stands out because, although the text is by far the longest *vita*, it does not produce a greater number of *loci similes*. The other more peripheral text is the *Vita Wironis*. Like the *Vita Lebuni*, it was written in a more elaborate style, perhaps indicating a different place or time of composition. The difference in style may derive from a difference in origin: the *Passio Pontiani* and *Vita Lebuini* were demonstrably imported texts, as were the first part of the *Historia translationis* and perhaps the *Vita Wironis.*

So far, we have seen that the *vitae*, *translatio* notes and the *Historia translationis* stem (with the noted exceptions) from Utrecht and the time of Balderik's episcopate. Does this mean that Beke was right when he said the bishop found the remains of these saints? It probably does, as the composition of a *vita* together with an *elevatio* or *translatio* often starts a saint's cult, with relics as the liturgical focus. In two cases (Werenfried in Elst and Plechelmus in Oldenzaal), as we have seen, we have independent witnesses for Balderik's propagating of the saint's cult with an *elevatio* or *translatio*, and in one case (Odulfus in Stavoren), the same is likely. In at least one case (Lebuinus in Deventer) the saint was clearly venerated before Balderik's time,[83] but the composition of a new *Vita Lebuini* may have accompanied some further elevation of the relics (Thietmar of Merseburg claims Balderik had renovated the church in Deventer), [84] and at least testifies to the lasting devotion to this saint by the bishops of Utrecht.

D. BALDERIK'S SAINTS AND UTRECHT

Finally, what made these saints relevant to tenth-century Utrecht? First of all, they highlighted the values of the community for which they were written. Both martyrdom and the confessor's life are represented. Pontianus, Benignus and Agnes provided the bishopric with a link to (Roman) martyrdom; the other saints extended the tradition of holy bishops and preachers that started with Willibrord and Boniface. Except for Agnes and Pontianus, all saints mentioned were churchmen: four bishops, two priests, a canon and a deacon. Most of them were associated with a communal way of life, except for the third imported saint, Benignus. The emphasis among Balderik's saints was therefore on clerics preaching and working in the secular world but living in monastic or quasi-monastic communities. This reflects the intended audience of the *vitae*. Martyrdom was praised in principle: Boniface

- the *Vita Odulfi* in Stavoren, cf. Jan Romein, *Geschiedenis van de Noord-Nederlandsche geschiedschrijving in de Middeleeuwen* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1932), 26; Rolf Grosse, *Das Bistum Utrecht und seine Bischöfe im 10. und frühen 11. Jahrhundert* (Cologne/Vienna: Böhlau, 1987), 8-9; cf. E. H. Waterbolk, "Een vlag-incident?" *It Beaken* 19 (1957): 1-13, at 1-2.

83 In addition to the *Vita Lebuini antiqua* (probably) predating Balderik, Radbod composed an *Ecloga de virtutibus beati Lebuini* (*BHL* 4811) and (perhaps) a *Sermo de sancto Lebuino presbytero* (*BHL* 4814).

84 Thietmar, *Chronicon* I, c. 12, ed. Robert Holtzmann, *MGH SRG, n.s.* 9 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1935), 18.

was remembered for his martyrdom[85] and both Odulfus and Lebuinus looked forward to being killed in the course of their work as preachers among the unbelievers, but neither actually suffers the ultimate consequence of this desire.[86] Though these *vitae* do not reflect the critical stance towards miracles found in some earlier saints' lives,[87] miracles are not the primary concern either. One exception is the "French" section of the *Historia translationis*. Some of the *vitae* describe miracles performed by the saint during his lifetime (*Vita Radbodi*, *Vita Odulfi*), only one includes posthumous miracles (*Vita Werenfridi*), while others (*Vita Lebuini*, *Vita Wironis*, *Vita Plechelmi*, *Vita Odgeri*) contain no miracles whatsoever or merely hint at them in general terms.[88]

Rather than in their martyrdom or miracle-working, these saints primarily excelled in abstinence and dedication to the liturgy. This is best exemplified by the catalogues of virtues that we find in all *vitae*, except for the *Vita Werenfridi*.[89] These catalogues are not identical, but several virtues appear in many of them, emphasizing the saints' ability to forsake the world, remain chaste and calm, and care for the poor, the liturgy and monastic life. These were examples from which any member of Balderik's clergy could benefit.[90] The saints themselves show the way by imitating earlier saints and learning from holy teachers: Odger from Wiro and Plechelmus, Odulfus from the teachers in Oirschot.[91] Together, these emphases serve to provide the example of an ascetic, liturgically focussed and strongly organized *esprit de corps* to the intended audience of these *vitae*, the clergy of the bishopric of Utrecht.[92]

The saints' *personae* extended beyond being models of a correct clerical life. Just as Pontianus, Benignus and Agnes provided the bishopric with early martyrs, Werenfried, Lebuinus, Wiro, Plechelmus, Odger, Odulfus and Radbod all expanded on the tradition of holy bishops and preachers established by Willibrord and Boniface. It is not without reason that Willibrord and Boniface are mentioned in the *Lives* of five of them. These new saints receive part of their sanctity from their association with these more famous predecessors; their sainthood is in some way secondary to that of Willibrord, Boniface, and, in some cases, other predecessors. Simultaneously, the new saints provide Utrecht with the notion of a

85 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 8.

86 *Vita Odulfi*, c. 5; *Vita Lebuini*, c. 14.

87 Wolfert van Egmond, "Misgivings about Miracles in Carolingian Hagiography from Utrecht," in *Miracles and the Miraculous in Medieval Germanic and Latin Literature*, ed. Karin E. Olsen, A. Harbus and Tette Hofstra (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 69-79; Bram van den Hoven van Genderen, "Incest, penance and a murdered bishop: the legend of Frederick of Utrecht," in *Religious Franks. Religion and Power in the Frankish Kingdoms. Studies in Honour of Mayke de Jong*, ed. Rob Meens et al. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 409-433, at 421.

88 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 14 and c. 17; *Vita Odgeri*, c. 6; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 10.

89 *Vita Lebuini*, c. 4; *Vita Wironis*, c. 2-3; *Vita Plechelmi*, c. 5; *Vita Odgeri*, c. 4; *Vita Odulfi*, c. 4; *Vita Radbodi*, c. 4.

90 Cf. *Vita Odulfi*, prologus; *Vita Wironis*, c. 7; Ludwig Zoepf, *Das Heiligen-Leben im 10. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig/Berlin: Teubner, 1908), 30-31.

91 *Vita Odgeri*, c. 4; *Vita Odulfi*, c. 1-2. Cf. *Vita Wironis*, c. 2. In Odulfus' case this is also associated with the progress through ecclesiastical orders. Cf. *Vita Wironis*, c. 3.

92 See also the discussion on martial phraseology above.

succession of sanctity, from Willibrord and Boniface through the Carolingian era, down to Radbod, the last bishop before Balderik's time. This awareness of a long-term succession, in turn, created the sense that the sanctity of the church of Utrecht not only rested on its perceived founders, Willibrord and Boniface, but had remained with the church throughout.

In fact, the church of Utrecht had at best a tentative claim on Willibrord and Boniface.[93] Willibrord had been the first bishop to place his see in Utrecht, to be sure. But he had been an archbishop *in* Utrecht, not the archbishop *of* Utrecht.[94] He had been personally appointed as archbishop of the Frisians, outside an established diocesan structure, because there was no such structure at that time. This was also the reason why Willibrord did not have a formal successor as bishop or archbishop in Utrecht, and the leadership of the mission devolved to a lesser dignitary. Writing in the early 750s, Boniface says that Willibrord had appointed a chorbishop in Utrecht, and that he himself appointed a bishop there.[95] A *chorepiscopus* named Eoban appears in Willibald's account of Boniface's final mission to the Frisians, but this Eoban appears also in Boniface's letters from the 730s, working with Boniface in Germany, not in Utrecht.[96] In his edition of Willibald's *Vita Bonifatii*, Levison suggests that Boniface did appoint a bishop in Utrecht but that that bishop had died before 753.[97] If so, he left no trace in the historical record and can hardly serve as an example of institutional continuity. As Boniface mentions Carloman, the bishop can only have been appointed sometime after 742 (implying a vacancy of at least several years after Willibrord's death in 739) and having presumably died before 753 and left the see vacant again for some time afterward. Moreover, Boniface's account of the ecclesiastical arrangements in Utrecht is coloured by attempt to state his case against the bishop of Cologne over control of Utrecht, and should

93 Cf. for the following Arnold Angenendt, "'Er war der erste…' Willibrords historische Stellung," in *Willibrord, zijn wereld en zijn werk. Voordrachten gehouden tijdens het Willibrordcongres. Nijmegen, 28-30 september 1989*, ed. Petra Bange and Anton Weiler (Nijmegen: s.n., 1990), 13-34; Ludo Milis, "The Conversion of the Low Countries and Church Institutions until c. 1070," in idem, *Religion, Culture, and Mentalities in the Medieval Low Countries. Selected Essays*, ed. Jeroen Deploige (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 53-79; Johanna Maria van Winter, "The first centuries of the episcopal see at Utrecht," in *Utrecht, Britain and the Continent. Archaeology, Art, and Architecture*, ed. Elisabeth de Bièvre (London: The British Archaeological Association, 1996), 22-29; and Van Vliet, *Kringen*. There is also much Dutch historiography on this subject.

94 Cf., e.g., Arnold Angenendt, *Geschichte des Bistums Münster*, vol. 1 (Münster: Dialog, 1998), 71-72; Van Winter, "First centuries," 22.

95 Boniface, *Epistola* 109, ed. Michael Tangl, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1916), 234-236, specifically 234.

96 Willibald, *Vita sancti Bonifatii*, c. 8 (*BHL* 1400), ed. Wilhelm Levison, *MGH SRG* 57 (Hannover/Leipzig: Hahn, 1905), 47; Boniface, *Epistola* 34-36, pp. 58-61; *Epistola* 41, p. 66; and the Martyrology of Fulda, p. 60. Cf. Georg Schreiber, "Iroschottische und Angelsächsische Wanderkulte in Westfalen. Mit Ausblicken auf den gesamtdeutschen Raum," in *Liudger und sein Erbe*, ed. Max Bierbaum et al. (Münster: Regensberg, 1950), 1-133, at 54-55.

97 *MGH SRG* 57, 48, n. 2.

not be taken at face value.[98] Whatever happened between 739 and 753 was not ecclesiastical "business as usual."

Boniface had been involved with the mission to the Frisians, but he was not formally Willibrord's successor. At any rate, his involvement in the 750s was a short-lived affair. After his martyrdom he was briefly buried in Utrecht but very soon moved to Fulda.[99] Thereafter the church in Utrecht was led by Boniface's pupil Gregory, the abbot of the local monastery, and Gregory's brother Alberic after him. Both were assisted by chorbishops.[100] It was Alberic who was appointed the first bishop of Utrecht by Charlemagne in 784, almost fifty years after Willibrord's death, and three decades after Boniface's. Then, and only then, did the history of the bishopric of Utrecht start in earnest.

Less than a century after the bishopric of Utrecht was eventually established, it was rudely disturbed by the Vikings. As noted earlier, in 858 King Lothar II gave bishop Hunger the monastery of Odiliënberg, outside of the bishopric proper. The donation charter explicitly states that the church of Utrecht was nearly destroyed, its canons scattered and some of them killed.[101] Even if the wording of the charter exaggerated the deprivations of the Utrecht clerics (it is the only source that mentions Vikings killing canons in Utrecht), the disruption of the episcopal hold over Utrecht was real. The fact that the king gave the bishop a monastery outside of the diocese to house his canons is testimony enough. For the later ninth and early tenth century the whereabouts of the bishops of Utrecht is unclear, which has led to some speculation. Some scholars argue that the bishops resided in Odiliënberg for at least part of the ninth century.[102] One redaction of the acts of the synod of Tribur (895) refers to bishop Odilbald (c. 870?-898) as "bishop of Deventer", which suggests that at least by that time the bishops were no longer resident in Utrecht.[103] Likewise the *Vita Radbodi* makes much of the fact that Radbod spent his time as bishop mostly outside Utrecht proper.[104]

These three sources, however, are the only ones which indicate some kind of exile. In 862 Hincmar of Reims asked bishop Hunger of Utrecht to ensure that the local Viking chief Rurik would not support count Balduin, the abductor of Charles the Bald's daughter Judith. Hincmar apparently believed that Hunger was on reasonable terms with Rurik, the man

98 Piet Leupen, "Sint Salvator en Sint Maarten, Willibrord en Bonifatius," in *Willibrord*, ed. Bange and Weiler, 317-327, at 318-323.

99 Cf. Eigil, *Vita Sturmi* (*BHL* 7924), c. 15, ed. Georg Pertz, *MGH Script.* 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1829), 372-373.

100 Cf. Van Winter, "First centuries," 22-23.

101 *MGH DD Lothar II*, no. 7: *…quod Traiectensis ecclesia* (...) *barbarica inminente nequicia pene desctructa et ad nihilum redacta sit, canonique olim in ea Domino militantes passim per diversa loca quidam dispersi, quidam etaim interempti sint*.

102 Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 45, Regnerus Post, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland in de Middeleeuwen*, vol. 1 (Utrecht/Antwerpen: Het Spectrum, 1957), 54-55; (more cautiously) Stöver, "Proh dolor!," 140-141. Cf. Linssen, "Sint-Odiliënberg," 8 for a dissenting voice.

103 *Epistola episcopalis* of the synod of Tribur (895), *MGH Cap.* 2, ed. Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause (Hannover: Hahn, 1897), 209-213, at 211.

104 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 5.

who supposedly caused the bishop to flee Utrecht only a few years earlier, but had recently converted to Christianity.[105] Additionally, where there is one council that refers to a bishop of Deventer, at least nine synods from the period of the exile refer to "the bishop of Utrecht".[106] Two royal charters, of Zwentibold (896) and Conrad I (914), confirm the possessions and the immunity of the bishop of Utrecht.[107] Odilbald, the "bishop of Deventer", was seemingly buried in Utrecht, albeit according to a late source.[108]

Taken as a whole, the period of episcopal exile may have been a more ambiguous affair than has been hitherto assumed. By 858 the bishop was clearly not in Utrecht but in Prüm, pleading his case with the emperor. Shortly after, the situation had normalized, sufficiently at least for Hincmar to suppose his colleague Hunger had some influence on Rurik. We do not know what exactly happened between 862 and 895, when the bishop was clearly absent from Utrecht. The evidence for the period after 895, that is the *Vita Radbodi*, should also be treated with caution. The *Vita Radbodi* explains that Radbod lived in Deventer, "due to the persecution of the Danes" in Utrecht, but that he visited Utrecht "when the time was right, in times of peace."[109] However, for all we know, the significance of the Danish threat in the early tenth century was barely comparable to that of the 850s or 880s, and Radbod's sojourns in Utrecht may well have been long-lasting.[110] This passage of the *Vita Radbodi* should be read within the context of two other stories in this *Life*, one concerning Radbod's journey to the lands of the Frisians (to the north or west of Utrecht), the other concerning Radbod's prophecies about his future successor Balderik.[111] The fact that the bishop was able to travel to the Frisians beyond Utrecht, as perceived from Deventer, confirms that the Danish threat was at times not what the author made it appear to be in other sections of the *vita*, even if Radbod did encounter Danes on this trip to the Frisians – and escaped unscathed. The prophecies on Balderik are significant because they stress that it will be Balderik who will restore the old episcopal see. This should in all probability be read as another *vaticinium ex eventu*, after Balderik's return to Utrecht. However, the earlier reference to Radbod residing in Deventer is probably meant to contrast with the prophecy, obscuring the fact that Radbod, like Hunger and Odilbald before him, did return to Utrecht, at least sometimes.

Nonetheless, the impact of the Viking incursions was a significant disruption for the diocese of Utrecht. Ideologically, the link with its perceived history had become even more

105 Hincmar, *Epistola* 156, ed. Ernst Perels, *MGH Epp.* 8.1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1939), 120.

106 E.g., *OSU*, nos. 71 (859); 72 (860); 74 (862); 76 (870); 79 (873); 80 (873); 82 (887); 83 (890/1); (indirectly) 85 (892).

107 *MGH DD Zwentibold*, no. 9; *MGH DD Konrad I*, no. 24, ed. Theodor Sickel et al. (Hannover: Hahn, 1879-1884), 23-24.

108 Johannes de Beke, *Chronicon*, c. 30 and c. 59, also referenced in Stöver, "Proh dolor!," 141 and 160-161, n. 26. Beke records each bishop's resting place and even says he does not know where bishop Hunger was buried (*Chronicon*, c. 29; c. 57).

109 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 5: *Episcopali vero sede Danorum persecutione Traiecto desolata, Daventriae sedem ipsius elegit* (…). *Quam* [scil. *Traiectensem ecclesiam*] *cum sepe temporis oportunitate, data pace, viseret* (…).

110 Cf. Stöver, "Proh dolor!," 143-144.

111 *Vita Radbodi*, c. 7 and c. 8-9 respectively.

tentative than it had been already. Institutionally, the few ecclesiastical structures above the level of parish churches attested within the bishopric seem to have suffered from the insecurity of the later ninth and the early tenth century. Economically, the effect had been that significant holdings in the western part of the bishopric had been lost.[112] Balderik's episcopate was therefore in large part concerned with the re-establishment of the bishopric in all three of these respects.

This reconstruction provides a context for understanding the *vitae* of Balderik's saints. Their *vitae* underline prior claims to significant localities in the diocese and emphasize the eventual and morally inevitable victory of Christendom over the Vikings. By promoting the cult of saints who were either Willibrord's pupil (Werenfried), his epigones (Lebuinus, Wiro, Plechelmus, Odger), or his successors in the later history of the bishopric (Odulfus, Radbod), Utrecht received a succession of saints that connected Balderik with his illustrious predecessors, plastering over the lacunae in Utrecht's history. The gaps in the eighth-century history are simply ignored in the *vitae* of the eighth-century saints. The Viking intrusions are mentioned, but from the perspective of the triumph of hindsight. Odulfus is said to have foreseen the Viking upheaval, but also its eventual end.[113] The *Vita Radbodi* likewise mentions the Vikings, but only in contexts in which they are without their sting: they cannot kill bishop Radbod,[114] they cannot pillage Utrecht without suffering divine vengeance,[115] and they cannot stop Balderik from ultimately restoring the Utrecht as the seat of his episcopate. The Vikings have been overcome and the church has eventually returned triumphant.

The saints also had another benefit for Balderik: with the obvious exception of Pontianus and Agnes (but hardly Benignus), these were saints to whom no other ecclesiastical institution could lay claim. This set them apart from the presumed fathers of the bishopric. Willibrord's cult was primarily fostered in his foundation at Echternach, where his body was buried. Utrecht only received relics of Willibrord in 1301.[116] Boniface's main cult site was Fulda.[117] Liudger, the third established saint with a clear connection with Utrecht, was primarily venerated in his own foundations in Münster and Werden. To stress other saints with local ties but without the rival claims of other institutions provided the bishopric with new access to a saintly past.

In addition to affirming Utrecht's ties with its imagined sacred past, the sanctity of Balderik's saints connected Utrecht with its hinterland, providing narrative links with local centres such as Stavoren, Oldenzaal, Deventer, Elst and Odiliënberg. All of these either had

[112] These holdings are the subject of the *Cartularium Radbodi* referred to above.

[113] *Vita Odulfi*, c. 8-9.

[114] *Vita Radbodi*, c. 7.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Cf. Jelle Visser, "*Parallel* Lives. *Alcuin of York and Thiofrid of Echternach on Willibrord, Sanctity and Relics*," PhD diss. (University of Utrecht, 2018), 22-23 and references there.

[117] Cf. Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c. 744-c. 900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

or received canons' minsters in Balderik's time as well. In Oldenzaal Balderik was credited with transferring relics of Plechelmus and founding a minster in 954. Perhaps the *translatio* of Odulfus' relics to Stavoren was linked with the establishment of a local minster as well.[118] There were already minsters in Deventer and Elst, but Balderik enhanced these by building larger churches. Odiliënberg, another existing minster, but located outside the diocese, is an exception. Thus, Balderik acted on the local circumstances to further his own interests, rather than based on a single policy, and each minster was tied to Utrecht in its own way. Still, regardless of whether a saint was translated or elevated, whether a minster was established, re-established, embellished or otherwise left as it was, the local canons cannot have been displeased to see their founder figures honoured by the bishop.

Geographically, the canons' minsters form an interesting pattern, with Stavoren in the far north of the bishopric, Oldenzaal and Deventer in the east, and Elst in the southeast. All these minsters were located in settlements which functioned as comital and commercial centres, and all lay on regionally significant trade routes, on navigable rivers in the case of Elst,[119] Deventer and Stavoren,[120] or on a land route in the case of Oldenzaal. These minsters were therefore excellently placed to aid in the administration of the diocese. The canons of the minsters could look to their patrons and prized relics and see their role models, who through their *vitae* emphasized the life of monastic obedience, preaching to the people, and had close ties with the bishopric of Utrecht. Thus, these saints provided not only a link between the centre and the periphery of the bishopric, but also between the heroic past and the tenth-century present.

[118] There was a minster in Stavoren by 1132. Cf. *OSU*, no. 340, at 311-313; Van Vliet, *Kringen*, 193.

[119] The Linge. Cf. Peter Henderikx, "The lower Delta of the Rhine and the Maas: Landscape and habitation from the Roman period to c. 1000," *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek* 36 (1986): 447-599, at 463.

[120] The Nagele/Vlie complex. The coastline has since changed, meaning that Stavoren is now on the boards of the IJsselmeer. Cf. Halbertsma, *Frieslands oudheid*, 141-142, and 157.

Shelfmark	Ms date	Ms origin	BA	L	Ot	Od	P	R	We	Wi	Total
Brussels, KBR, 9636-9637	s. 11	Liège				X					1
Paris, BnF, lat. 10870	s. 12	Echternach				X					1
Saint-Omer, B. de l''Aggl., 775	s. 12	St. Bertin?				X					1
Oxford, Rawlinson A 287	s. 13	Evesham				X					1
The Hague, KB, 129 G 3	s. 15	Unknown						X			1
The Hague, KB, 73 F 20	s. 15	Weesp					X		X		2
The Hague, KB, 73 F 21	s. 15	Weesp				X					1
Brussels, KBR, 380-382	s. 15	Zwolle				X				X	2
Brussels, KBR, 858-861	s. 15	Korsendonk							X		1
The Hague, KB, L 29	s. 15	Unknown		X				X			2
Gent, UB, 421	s. 15	Unknown				X					1
Köln, Hist. Archiv, GB 86	s. 15	Cologne						X			1
Utrecht, UB, 392	s. 15	Utrecht						X	X	X	3
Utrecht, UB, 390	1419	Utrecht				X					1
Utrecht, UB, 391	1423	Utrecht					X	X	X	X	4
Groningen, UB, 23	1446-1500	Groningen			X						1
Leiden, UB, Letterk. 611	1450-1460	Unknown						X			1
Berlin, StB, Theol. lat. fol. 706	1450-1470	Cologne	X			X	X	X	X		5
Paris, Mazarine, 1736	1450-1500	Belgium?				X	X			X	3
The Hague, KB, 70 E 21	1461	Muiden			X	X		X	X		4
Köln, Hist. Archiv, W 164	1463	Cologne		X		X				X	3
Wien, ÖNB, s.n., 12811-12814	1470-1479	Brussels	X			X	X	X	X	X	6
Wien, ÖNB, s.n., 12706-12707	1470-1486	Brussels				X					1
Brussels, KBR, 8414-8419	1475-1500	Unknown					X				1
Utrecht, Catharijneconv, BMH 125	1475-1500	Amersfoort					X			X	2
Alkmaar, RA, 128 A 1	1500-1550	Alkmaar/ Egmond		X		X			X		3
Total			2	3	2	16	7	8	8	7	

Appendix: manuscript evidence for the vitae discussed

Abbreviations

BA: *Historia translationis Agnetis et Benigni* (*BHL* 165)
L: *Vita sancti Lebuini auctore Hucbaldo Elnonensis* (*BHL* 4812)
Ot: *Vita sancti Odgeri* (*BHL* 6269)
Od: *Vita sancti Odulfi* (*BHL* 6318)
P: *Vita sancti Plechelmi* (*BHL* 6867)
R: *Vita sancti Radbodi* (*BHL* 7046, 7047)
We: *Vita sancti Werenfridi* (*BHL* 8858)
Wi: *Vita sancti Wironis* (*BHL* 8973)

The appendix only lists manuscript witnesses for the original *vitae*, not for later reworkings or abbreviations.

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Brussels, KBR, 9636-9637
Den Haag, KB, 129 G 3
Den Haag, KB, 70 E 21
Den Haag, KB, 73 F 20
Den Haag, KB, 73 F 21
Den Haag, KB, L 29
Gent, UB, 421
Groningen, UB, 23
Cologne, Historisches Archiv, GB 86
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PART 2: RELICS

INSCRIBING SANCTITY. AN APPROACH TO RELIC INSCRIPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This chapter outlines an approach to the study of inscriptions connected with artefacts and practices that sustained the cult of saints in the early medieval Latin West. This approach combines the insights that we have gained from recent investigations in the study of religious material culture and written culture. Particular attention is given to the materiality of the inscriptions associated with relics, including their spatial location, the layout of script, and the conditions of exposure within their original setting. In order to provide an example of my approach, the present essay focuses on reliquaries with inscriptions, using the goldsmith work known as the "Purse of Teuderic" as a case study to explore the functions of script besides and beyond the transmission of a verbal message to contemporary audiences.

KEYWORDS

Medieval Epigraphy; Material Culture Studies; Relics; Early Middle Ages; Latin West; Reliquaries; Functions of Inscriptions; Accessibility of Writing

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A. INSCRIBING SANCTITY

The potential of epigraphy for providing insights into the interpretation of social and cultural history of the Middle Ages did not escape Janneke Raaijmakers's attention, when, in 2012, she wrote a proposal for a VIDI-grant which aimed to investigate the cult of relics in the western earlier Middle Ages.[2] In the course of her scholarly career, she had realized that there was abundant, yet largely underexplored, evidence of a diffused and diversified use of inscriptions in the cult of relics. In her view, therefore, an examination of this material could offer new and valuable perspectives on the ways in which relic cults were constructed and understood by early medieval Christians in the Latin West.

Among the many innovative aspects of Janneke Raaijmakers's VIDI-project, one is of particular interest here: in contrast to most other works involving the study of inscriptions, Janneke's project did not focus solely or mainly on epigraphy. Rather, by adopting an explicitly multidisciplinary approach, it had the ambition to demonstrate to all students of medieval history the importance of a type of source that is still too little exploited by non-epigraphists. The study of inscriptions would thereby become integrated into current historiographical thought and practice.

As the postdoctoral researcher for this project, I was given the wonderful opportunity to explore the many and varied forms of written texts that are not confined to manuscript books or charters but belong to the broader material culture of the veneration of relics. I offer this contribution on relic inscriptions as a token of gratitude for Janneke Raaijmakers' teaching, support, and friendship over almost a decade. There is no doubt that she would have had many thoughtful comments and remarks on this text, which would have been greatly improved as a result.

During the past few decades, medieval epigraphy has become a highly developed discipline, with well-established catalogues and corpora series which allow scholars easy access to comprehensive collections of sources.[3] Without these research tools, it simply would not have been possible to pursue the general approach to relic inscriptions from the early medieval Latin West that was the overall goal of my postdoctoral project "Inscribing Sanctity". Useful as epigraphic collections may be for modern scholars, the main concern of my research was not to provide an exhaustive survey or catalogue of inscriptions to serve the cult of relics. Rather, by studying both quantitative and qualitative aspects of such production, I aimed at a better understanding of some of the principles that underlay the asso-

[2] The project, entitled *Mind over Matter. Debates about relics as sacred objects, c.350-c.1150*, was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

[3] The main epigraphic collections of the European Middle Ages include (but are not limited to): for France, *Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale (VIIIe-XIIIe siècle)*; for Germany, *Die Deutschen Inschriften*; for Italy, *Inscriptiones Medii Aevi Italiae*; for Switzerland, *Corpus Inscriptionum Medii Aevi Helvetiae*.

ciation of inscriptions with relics, and of the ways in which this relationship changed over time.

Hence, my project has taken into account the plurality of the epigraphic manifestations of the veneration of relics, and has attempted to detect any common tendencies and specific details that might throw light on the uses and purposes of such inscriptions. Consequently, I have drawn attention not only to the verbal messages conveyed by the inscriptions, but also to the graphic strategies used to communicate them, their spatial location, and the conditions of exposure of writing. All these aspects are key concepts in epigraphy, since they have an impact on the functions and meanings of the inscriptions as envisaged by those who had them made. Results from this approach have shown that there is a difference, in terms of function, between the following three categories: the monumental catalogues of relics that were erected inside church buildings; the texts written on the outside of relic containers that were either buried forever beneath the church altars or meant to be exposed publicly; and the writings that directly accompanied relics in order to identify them, which could take on both epigraphic and not-epigraphic forms.[4] One must keep in mind, however, that the boundaries between these different groups of inscriptions are not as clear-cut as they might appear in modern classifications.

The comparative analysis of such material was used to explore the relationship between relics and inscriptions within the context of their original placement, a context which could, simultaneously, include or exclude, either temporarily or permanently, contemporary audiences of both relics and epigraphic texts. Whatever the case, the point can be made that the function of all these inscriptions cannot be explained by considering them merely as texts to be read. Although it is undoubtedly true that inscriptions were, in general, more easily and more broadly accessible than most other types of written sources, a large number of epigraphic texts from the Middle Ages, including those found in public spaces, were by no means easily accessible (if they were at all). This is clear not only because of the location of some of these texts in places impossible or difficult to access in normal circumstances (for example, below the pavement of church buildings, or inside a relic container), but also because of their graphic characteristics, which can be deliberately unhelpful to the reader.[5]

[4] For a survey of these three categories of relic inscriptions, cf. Elisa Pallottini, "Saints' Names and Relics. The Evidence of Church Inscriptions," in *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces. Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 56, ed. Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, Elisa Pallottini, and Janneke Raaijmakers (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023), 187-222.

[5] Within the context of the early medieval Western production of inscriptions, these issues have recently been addressed in relation to the names written in sacred spaces: cf. Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, Elisa Pallottini, and Janneke Raaijmakers, eds., *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces. Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.* Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 56 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023). On the broader epigraphic production, see, for example, Wilfried E. Keil, Sarah Kiyanrad, et al., eds., *Zeichentragende Artefakte im sakralen Raum. Zwischen Präsenz und UnSichtbarkeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018);

Scholars tend to consider public accessibility to be the most distinctive characteristic of epigraphic texts, "because of their appearance," as Janneke Raaijmakers said in her VIDI-proposal, "at popular and public spaces and their verbal nature."[6] The material reality of relic inscriptions, however, demonstrates that this was not always the case. They provide us with further evidence of the fact that not all the inscriptions are "exposed writings", as they are commonly referred to in scholarly literature.[7] At the same time, this material also helps to contexualise the concept of an exclusive textual use of writing by early medieval Christians, not only the members of the learned elite, but also ordinary people, who together were the users of those spaces and the actors of the devotional activities that took place in them.

Because the main focus of Janneke's project was the Early Middle Ages, my research for it dealt especially with the sacred space of church buildings, for they were the main settings of both written and devotional activities in this period. In addition to the pictorial narratives on church walls, the monumental lists of relics and other *ornamenta ecclesiae*, the space of church buildings often also included reliquaries, themselves understood as spaces invested with sacred meaning.[8] The material manifestation of the reliquaries' inscriptions is the focus of this paper. My overall purpose is to show how the study of the material culture produced by early medieval western practices of the veneration of relics, including writing practices, might benefit from an engagement with epigraphy. More specifically, I shall look at both the textual content and the accessibility of reliquaries' inscriptions, in an attempt to demonstrate how they promoted the cult of relics despite their not naming any relics.

B. AN APPROACH TO RELIQUARIES' INSCRIPTIONS

Over the past few decades, scholarly interest in the relics, reliquaries and associated artefacts and practices that sustained the cult of saints has grown considerably, as a result of a novel trend in the humanities which has become known as the "material turn".[9] Reliquaries in par-

Katharina Bolle, *Materialität und Präsenz spätantiker Inschriften. Eine Studie zum Wandel der Inschriftenkultur in den italienischen Provinzen* (Berlin/Boston/Munich: De Gruyter, 2020).

6 Janneke Raaijmakers, "Mind over Matter. Debates about relics as sacred objects, c.350-c.1150," NWO-VIDI scheme, 2012, 5.

7 On the definition of "exposed writing" given by Armando Petrucci, see idem, *Public Lettering: Script, Power and Culture*, trans. Linda Lappin (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1993). Among the most recent works on medieval inscriptions as "exposed writings", see, for example, Daniele Ferraiuolo, ed., *La dimensione spaziale della scrittura esposta*. Atti del Convegno di studio (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2022).

8 Cf. Wilfried E. Keil, Tobia Frese, and Kristina Krüger, eds., *Sacred Scripture/Sacred Spaces. The Interlacing of Real Places and Conceptual Spaces in Medieval Art and Architecture* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2019).

9 Some examples of this reorientation within the study of late antique and medieval Christianity are Patricia Cox Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination. Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011); Aden Kumler and Christopher R. Lakey, "*Res et Signifi-*

ticular have been subjected to increasingly sophisticated investigations across the fields of history and art history. In late antique and medieval studies, scholars of Christian religious art and material devotion have written extensively and thoroughly about the significance of the reliquaries' shapes, materials and decorations as deeply symbolic and often ambiguous languages conveying meanings about the special status of their interior contents. We now know that these artefacts were not just containers made to shelter and embellish relics; they were also powerful devices that mediated between saints and worshippers, which demanded a visual engagement from their contemporary audiences, on the part of both producers and users.[10]

At the same time, in part because of these developments, specialists of the premodern periods have become increasingly aware of the crucial importance of studying the material aspects of all kinds of written texts, in addition to their content, in order to understand the reasons behind the act of writing them down. Scholars of Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period have stressed the significance of the choices made in the use of specific material supports, types of scripts, writing techniques and layout of texts as inherently linked to the meaning of the message being conveyed. It has been demonstrated that, without an interest in the texts' material features and specific spatial location, it is not possible to understand the ways in which they were intended to work in their original environment.[11]

Remarkably, however, these new approaches and theoretical insights paid scant attention to the technical materiality of the epigraphic texts which can be found on the exterior of reliquaries. Scholars have mostly studied such inscriptions as textual sources to date a reliquary, identify its makers or the relics preserved within. As pointed out by Philppe George in relation to the lavish medieval production of reliquaries from the Meuse region, there has been limited interest in the epigraphic practices themselves, both in their technical

catio. The Material Sense of Things in the Middle Ages," *Gesta* 51, no. 1 (2012): 1-17; see also the collection of essays in Cynthia Hahn and Holger A. Klein, eds., *Saints and Sacred Matter. The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and collection, 2015).

10 Cf. Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty. Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400-circa 1204* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), esp. 199-208.

11 See, for instance, Antony Eastmond, ed., *Viewing Inscriptions in the Late Antique and Medieval World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Irene Berti, Katharina Bolle, et al., eds., *Writing Matters: Presenting and Perceiving Monumental Inscriptions in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berlin/Boston/Munich: De Gruyter, 2017); Sean V. Leatherbury, *Inscribing Faith in Late Antiquity: Between Seeing and Reading* (London/New York: Routledge, 2020). Fruitful contributions to this approach to the study of the materiality and meanings of the inscriptions include, for example, Erik Thunø, "Looking at Letters. Living Writing in Santa Sabina in Rome," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 34 (2007): 19-41. An example of this renewed approach to the study of inscriptions beyond the field of Christian material culture is provided by Sarah Mirza, "Shoes, Writing: Unspeaking Writing in the Material Culture of Pre-Islamic Arabia and Early Islam," *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture* 24, no. 2 (2017): 159-176.

aspects and their intellectual significance.[12] Furthermore, perhaps because most of the extant inscribed reliquaries date from the late-tenth and especially eleventh century onwards, relatively little effort has been made to think about earlier inscriptions in relation to the more familiar evidence of the central and late Middle Ages.

In this chapter, therefore, I propose to combine the insights we have gained from recent research, both on reliquaries and the materiality of written texts, with more attention to the relationship between inscriptions and reliquaries. This relationship, in fact, is as much one of physical proximity between the inscription's textual content and the reliquary's interior contents, as it is about the deployment of two powerful media simultaneously. There is the written word, on the one hand, and the reliquary, on the other –, and together they make such contents somehow "present" in the space of the church.

As reliquaries were essentially mediators between relics and audiences, one of the most intriguing aspects of this relationship is that the inscriptions, whenever present, do not necessarily refer to the relics that were enclosed inside.[13] Moreover, some of these inscriptions are of such graphic complexity that even specialists have trouble reading them, regardless of whether the texts in question, for example, praise the patrons of a reliquary, give the list of relics, or comment on the object's function. In addition, if one considers that the accessibility of early medieval western reliquaries was, in general, restricted, the presence of inscriptions raises many questions as to the meaning and intentions underlying the act of writing down words onto objects which were crucial from the point of view of veneration. Reliquaries, in fact, were supposed to provide relics with meaning, value and powers, and to shape the beholder's understanding of what was concealed inside them.

Hence, if it cannot be assumed that inscriptions were strictly or mostly verbal tools to convey pragmatic information, the question should be asked what other reasons were behind the placement of inscriptions on reliquaries, in addition to the transmission of a verbal message to the potential reader. Given that the majority of the still extant inscriptions were conceived as part of the reliquaries' artistic programmes, and thus were integral to their meaning, it follows that they must have played a role, along with the reliquary and its participation in rituals, in what Cynthia Hahn has called the "reliquary effect", a complex process through which to establish the meaning and value of relics as sacred objects.[14] But which role did inscriptions play in this process? How did they participate in the different set of duties which all reliquaries had, namely to underline that the relics contained inside were indeed a point of contact between the faithful and God?

In order to provide some answers to these questions and indicate a possible approach to the study of reliquaries' inscriptions, I have chosen, as an exemplary case study, the

[12] Philippe George, *Reliques et arts precieux en pays mosan. Du haut Moyen Age à l'époque contemporaine* (Liège: Éditions du Céfal, 2002), 166-167.

[13] On the mention of relics in church inscriptions of different kinds, see Pallottini, "Saints' Names and Relics."

[14] Cynthia Hahn, *The Reliquary Effect. Enshrining the Sacred Object* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2017), 6-7.

inscription on a well-known relic casket from the abbey of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, in Switzerland. It is the one commonly called the "Purse of Teuderic", dating to the late-seventh or early-eight century (Fig. 1-2).[15] As I hope to show in the following section, inscriptions, too, could be used by early medieval Christians as devices suited to their spiritual and devotional lives. These users were not only the individuals who had their names inscribed upon the reliquary, but also those who could gain close enough access to the object to see the letters and possibly read the text or know that it could be read. As pointed out by Janneke Raaijmakers in her VIDI-proposal, inscriptions "share the same cultural 'universe' as the other texts studied in the project, yet as physical objects they are at the same time different, offering a new perspective."[16] From an epigraphical perspective, reliquaries can also be studied as both written and material sources revealing significant aspects of the place of the written word in early medieval devotional practices of the veneration of relics.

C. A CASE STUDY: THE TEUDERIC PURSE'S INSCRIPTION

Among the many surviving examples of western portable reliquaries produced in the early Middle Ages, the casket from Saint-Maurice d'Agaune stands out not only for its early date, but also for bearing one of the most stylistically elaborate inscriptions found on a reliquary of this period. This casket belongs to a larger production of reliquaries shaped like a purse, which are typical for the period from the seventh to the tenth centuries.[17] The reliquary's small dimensions (12,5 x 18,5 x 6,4 cm) and richly decorated exterior are representative of what have been considered as the two most remarkable characteristics of purse-reliquaries.[18] One is that they were all of a size that enabled them to be hand-held and be easily moved, so they might be temporarily displayed both inside and outside church buildings, as objects of veneration. The other characteristic is the ability to stage themselves, through their seemingly odd shape and the expanse of their decorations, as the carriers of a holy treasure which was far more powerful because inaccessible. In fact, the other salient characteristic of this group of reliquaries is that they were all designed not to be opened, at least not regularly.[19]

Besides gems, gold, pearls, and other precious materials, the visual and decorative progamme of the Teuderic Purse also includes letters. With the presence of writing, this cas-

[15] *Corpus Inscriptionum Medii Aevii Helvetiae*, vol. 1: *Die Inschriften des Kantons Wallis bis 1300* (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1977), 89-91, no. 28. See also Édouard Aubert, *Trésor de l'abbaye de Saint-Maurice d'Agaune* (Paris: Vve A. Morel et C.ie Éditeurs, 1872), esp. 141-145 and xi-xiv; Pierre A. Mariaux, "Coffret reliquaire de Teudéric (Inv. 5)," in *L'abbaye Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, 515-2015,* vol. 2: *Le trésor,* ed. Pierre A. Mariaux (Gollion: infolio éditions, 2015), 108-111.

[16] Raaijmakers, "Mind over Matter," 5.

[17] Cf. Julia M. H. Smith, "Portable Christianity. Relics in the medieval West (c.700-1200)," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 181 (2012), 143-167, 154-56; Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 103-110; see also Daniel Thurre, "Le reliquaire d'Altheus, évêque de Sion et abbé de Saint-Maurice," *Helvetia Archaeologica* 24 (1993): 126-176.

[18] Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 103-110.

[19] Cf. Smith, "Portable Christianity," 154-156; Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 105.

ket is not fully representative of the broader production of purse-reliquaries of the period, since not all of them also contain inscriptions. It must be said, however, that written texts appear in the ornamental schemes of such reliquaries far more often than they do in late antique relic caskets.[20] Although not made on a regular basis, inscriptions on purse-reliquaries are not as uncommon as has been assumed.[21]

The inscription of the Teuderic Purse occupies the whole surface of the back golden panel (Fig. 2). It consists of a sequence of letters framed by a grid of filigree lines, with each alphabetic sign embedded in the rhomboidal space resulting from the intersection of the diagonal rows. The letters, so arranged, visually recall the decoration of the opposite side (Fig. 1), a detail that is more clearly marked on other medieval examples of reliquaries.[22] Thus, the grid of letters on the reverse of the Teuderic Purse echoes the decoration of its frontal panel, featuring rectilinear patterns of interconnected gems and pearls that develop symmetrically on both sides of a pseudo-cameo, contemporaneous with the reliquary.[23] As argued by Cynthia Hahn, these decorative patterns that are so common on purses may have had a binding or protective function, which reinforces the impression that these reliquaries did not open.[24] Similarly, the peculiar arrangement of script on the back panel seems to enhance the nature of the purse as an object that will never be unfastened.

Arranged on fifteen lines that begin at the upper right corner of the panel, is the text: TE/VDERI/GVS PRES/BITER IN HO/NVRE S(AN)C(T)I MAV/RICII FIERI I/ VSSIT AMEN / NORDOALAVS / ET RIHLINDIS / ORDENARVNT / FABRIGARE / VNDIHO / ET ELLO / FICER/VNT.[25] ("Teuderigus [the] priest ordered [it] to be made in honour of Saint Maurice. Amen. Nordoalaus and Rhilindis arranged [it] to be produced. Undiho and Ello made [it].") These kinds of inscriptions praising those who participated in the creation of an object in honour of one (or more) saint(s) are frequently attested in a wide range of devotional artefacts throughout the Middle Ages.[26] In early medieval western purses especially, dedicatory inscriptions appear to be the type of text that Christian sponsors most usually had had inscribed.[27] The one on the casket from Agaune mentions the

[20] Cf. Pallottini, "Saints's Names and Relics," 200-209.

[21] On this point, see Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 106.

[22] Among them are eleventh-century relic-crosses inscribed with a list of relics; cf. Elisa Pallottini, "The epigraphic presence on the Borghorst Cross (c.1050)," in *Sacred Scripture/Sacred Spaces*, 63-84.

[23] On the production and use of cameos in the early Middle Ages, including the one found on the Teuderic Purse, cf. Elisabetta Gagetti, "*Ex Romano vitro splendentes lapilli*. Ricezione di iconografie della glittica ellenistico romana in cammei vitrei altomedievali," in *Sertum Perusinum gemmae oblatum. Docenti e allievi del Dottorato di Perugia in onore di Gemma Sena chies*a, ed. S. Fortunelli (Naples: Loffredo Editore, 2007), 160-196, at 179-183.

[24] Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 103-109, esp. 107.

[25] My transcription. The bar "/" indicates the change of line; the abbreviation *SCI* for *sancti* is signalled in the original text by an angled *titulus* placed above the letter *C*.

[26] Robert Favreau, "Fonctions des inscriptions au Moyen Âge," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 127 (1989): 203-232.

[27] Cf. Pallottini, "Saints' Names and Relics."

name and role of all the people involved in the making of the reliquary, including the two craftsmen, the provision of whose names is exceptional, given the anonymity of most other early medieval artists.[28]

As Cynthia Hahn has noted, metalworkers are among the categories of artists who gained particular attention and praise in medieval textual sources, given the special significance that materials such as gold and gems had in Christian culture, where they were invested with the highest value and symbolic meanings.[29] It is therefore hardly surprising that the name of such artists could also be inscribed directly onto the very materials which they had the privilege to handle, as in the case of the casket in question. As is usual for these kinds of inscriptions, and here as well, the names of the craftsmen appear at the end of the text, in a hierarchically lower position than that of the other contributors to the reliquary, but nonetheless within the same graphic space, perhaps as a sign of recognition of their great skills and fame.[30]

In the period prior to the twelfth century, the occurrences of inscriptions naming artists are only scattered and sporadic in the epigraphic production from western continental Europe.[31] Conversely, they are particularly frequent in the group of extant inscriptions on pre-Norman metal reliquaries from Ireland (*ante* 1171); from the twelve epigraphic texts comprising this corpus, nine also record the name of the craftsmen, in addition to that of the promoters.[32] We are unsure as to whether the artists recorded in the Teuderic Purse's inscription were the same craftsmen who fashioned the letters, as Perette Michelli has argued with regard to the Irish material. According to Michelli, this would explain the awkwardness in the letter shape and the mistakes in grammar and spelling that can be found in almost all of the inscriptions.[33] Some deviations from classical Latin orthography can also be detected in our inscription: *honure* for *honore*, *ordenarunt* for *ordenaverunt*, *fabrigare* for *fabricare*, *ficerunt*

[28] Among the most recent contributions to the study of artists' signatures in early medieval inscriptions, see Emilie Mineo, "Le nom à l'œuvre. Les signatures épigraphiques d'artistes et de commanditaires entre quête de gloire et perspectives eschatologiques," in *Writing Names*, ed. Ingrand-Varenne, Pallottini, and Raaijmakers, 137-166.

[29] Cf. Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 31-44. See also Martina Bagnoli, "The stuff of heaven: materials and craftsmanship in medieval reliquaries," in *Treasures of Heaven. Saints, relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, ed. Martina Bagnoli et al. (London: British Museum, 2010), 137-148.

[30] On the place of craftsmen in the production of metalwork from the early Middle Ages, see, for example, Michelle Beghelli and Marina De Marchi, "Gli artigiani del metallo nell'Europa alto-medievale. Organizzazione manufatturiera, officine, firme e strategie di vendita," in *I Maestri del metallo: l'intelligenza nelle mani*, vol. 2: *L'alto-medioevo. Artigiani, tecniche produttive e organizzazione manufatturiera*, ed. Michelle Beghelli and Marina De Marchi (Rome: BraDipUS Communicating Cultural Heritage, 2017), 157-200. See, moreover, Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 32-35, with reference to the case of Saint Eligius.

[31] Cf. Mineo, "Le nom à l'œuvre," where it is noted that, within the general paucity of artists' signatures in the period prior to the eleventh and twelfth century, metalwork is among the kinds of artefacts most frequently inscribed upon with the name of craftsmen.

[32] Perette E. Michelli, "The Inscriptions on Pre-Norman Irish Reliquaries," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature* 96C, no. 1 (1996), 1-48: inscriptions nos. 1-3, 5-9, 11.

[33] Michelli, "The Inscriptions," 10.

for *fecerunt*.[34] It should be noted, however, that similar or identical linguistic forms are commonly attested in the Latin inscriptions of the early medieval period.[35] Hence, they do not suffice to support an argument in favour of the "autography" of this inscription.[36]

Differently from most texts inscribed on medieval Irish reliquaries, the one on the casket from Agaune is finely and elegantly executed, apparently without the use of any coloured pigmentation, in a majuscule script quite regular in both size and shape, with each letter only a few millimeters high (0,6-0,7). From a palaeographical perspective, the inscription features a typical early medieval script that perfectly agrees with the late seventh- or early eighth-century date traditionally attributed to the reliquary. It combines capital letters with uncial (E) and square (O) forms, which are common in the epigraphic production from central Europe dating to the seventh and eighth centuries.[37] This tells us nothing about the role (or roles) of the two craftsmen in the making of the inscription and their level of literacy, but we can be sure, at least, that the inscription belongs to the early medieval graphic culture of this area of Europe, and is contemporaneous with the manufacturing of the reliquary.

As recent research on early medieval western reliquaries has shown, one key function, although not the only one, of these objects was to carry the prayers of the faithful to God, thus dispensing salvation and grace, a function in which writing participated as well. I have elaborated elsewhere on the meaning of the act of inscribing the name of both the faithful and the saint onto reliquaries of the early medieval period.[38] Hence, suffice it here to say that the presence of such names had primarily to do with the desire of the faithful to be associated, in both a material and a symbolic way, with the sacred realm, in the perspective of eternal salvation. Furthermore, the fact that inscriptions found on purses usually do not reveal what was kept inside them further reinforces the idea that these reliquaries, while presenting themselves as containers of sacred matter, literally obscured, rather than clarifyied, their very interior contents. In the Teuderic Purse's inscription, not only the content of the written message but also the particular *mise en page* of the script can be seen as another strategy with which to achieve this effect.

[34] See the transcription above.

[35] Cf. Veikko Väänänen, *Introduzione al latino volgare* (Bologna: Patron, 1982), 91-92, 121.

[36] On this point, see the forthcoming contributions of Thierry Grégor, "Graver son nom dans la pierre: aspects techniques et," in *Writing Names*, ed. Ingrand-Varenne, Pallottini, and Raaijmakers, 41-62; and Mineo, "Le nom à l'œuvre," in *Writing Names*.

[37] On the palaoegraphy of the inscriptions of this area of Europe, see Paolo Cherubini and Alessandro Pratesi, *Paleografia Latina. L'avventura grafica del mondo occidentale* (Città del Vaticano: Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, 2010), 343-346.

[38] Cf. Pallottini, "Saints' Names and Relics" and Janneke Raaijmakers, "The memory of a person's name," in *Writing Names*, ed. Ingrand-Varenne, Pallottini, and Raaijmakers, 277-297. See also Elisa Pallottini, "Reliquiari come spazi grafici, tra esposizione e occultamento delle iscrizioni. Osservazioni ed esempi relativi alla produzione epigrafica altomedievale," in *La dimensione spaziale della scrittura esposta*, ed. Daniele Ferraiuolo (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2022), 1-23.

Thus, in order to come to a fuller understanding of the functions of the inscription as envisaged by those who had it made, it is necessary to take a closer look at the material and visual aspects of script, from two related angles. One considers them in relation to the wider context of the written culture of the period, as a remarkable expression of the overlap between writing and ornament that was so often exploited in medieval scribal practices.[39] The other aspect is concerned with the purposes that the makers of the inscribed text possibly wanted to achieve through the display of script, and the audiences to whom they wanted to address the message. Essentially, these two perspectives complement each other, for one focuses on some aesthetic principles that underlay the material composition of script, and the other on the reception of the inscription and the effects that it may have had on the beholder. While such issues have been thoroughly discussed in recent scholarship on medieval epigraphy and written culture, reliquaries' inscriptions, and mostly from the High Middle Ages, have merited only passing comments.

An aspect that is still little explored by students of early medieval western reliquaries concerns the potential of script as a pictorial sign, and the instances in which such a potential was purposefully transformed into an explicit function of writing. The text inscribed on the casket of Teuderic offers a case in point.[40] In this example, the layout of script enhances the iconic dimension of letters over their verbal function, assimilating them to other ornamental elements of the reliquary, such as the colours of the enamel as well as the pearls, the gems and the golden filigrees. The outcome is an extremely lively complex of signs which provides us with one of the most intriguing examples of the pictorial use of writing in early medieval inscriptions.

As noted by Armando Petrucci (and many others after him), the capacity of script to act as ornament is of the greatest significance in the graphic culture of the Middle Ages. It must, in fact, be seen in conjunction with a radical change in the ways that Christians understood their own writing and books, which led to a shift in the use and reception of the written word. This, says Petrucci, was part of an "ideological process of sacralisation" initiated by Christianity, whereby the written word and the book itself had gradually been transformed from tools for the transmission of verbal contents into objects of veneration in their own right, in which the ornamental elements had acquired considerable importance.[41] A reflec-

[39] Cf. Laura Kendrik, *Animating the Letter. The Figurative Embodiment of Writing from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999); among the most recent works on the topic, see also Jeffrey F. Hambuger, *Script as image* (Paris/Leuven/Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2014); Armando Petrucci, "Aspetti simbolici delle testimonianze scritte," in *Simboli e simbologie nell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1976), 813-844. On Western medieval inscriptions in particular, see, for example, Vincent Debiais, *La croisée des signes. L'écriture et les images médiévales (800-1200)* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2017).

[40] See also the discussion in Pallottini, "Reliquari come spazi grafici," where the Teuderic Purse's inscription has also been examined in relation to other early medieval exemplars of reliquaries and other kinds of devotional artworks connected with relics.

[41] Armando Petrucci, "La concezione cristiana del libro fra VI e VII secolo," *Studi Medievali* 14 (1973), 961-984.

tion of this process can be grasped in the iconography of the sacred book as it developed in Christian art between the sixth and the seventh century. By then, as Petrucci explains, the image of open and legible books had been gradually replaced by the representation of closed books encased in richly ornamented and sparkling covers, which were meant more to be venerated than understood by the faithful.[42] Significantly, this was also the period that saw the emergence of new, sumptuously decorated, forms of portable reliquaries meant for public display, which communicated visually and metaphorically, rather than literally, the spiritual nature of their sacred contents.[43]

This consideration brings us back to the inscription of our reliquary. What, then, can be said about the reception of the inscription as part of the reliquary's decoration? One answer is found in the manner in which script is presented to the onlooker. When the reliquary is accessed from the inscribed side, one can see that there is writing, but cannot understand what the text says. In this sense, the inscription also had an iconic function, working in concert with the casket's shape, materials, and decorations, in order to present the object as the container of a sacred treasure that was thereby captured and hidden. The difficulty inherent in deciphering the inscription must therefore be seen as a constituent part of its meaning, in that it contributed to the construction and transmission of a visual message designed to express the impenetrable mysteries of faith.

Hence, although purses spent most of the time hidden inside churches, in altars and treasuries, their temporary displays allowed those who could gain access to them at close quarters to see the letters as part of the decoration. The latter, while conferring meaning and status on the reliquary, also had the function to elicit veneration through the guiding of the faithful's thoughts and prayer from the level of the visible to that of the invisible, that is, towards the inner and most sacred space of the reliquary.[44] The inscription on the Teuderic Purse worked in the same direction, adding an element of mystery to the reliquary and a supplementary tool for the individual contemplation of relics.

Another related question we need to ask ourselves is whether the persons involved in the creation of the reliquary, who are also recorded in the inscription, wanted or expected their personal names to be read (and if so, by whom, and how), when the reliquary was exposed to veneration. It is also possible indeed that this reliquary was hidden in the abbey's treasure, rather than the altar. A closer look at the way in which letters are arranged reveals that writing works in two opposite directions simultaneously. In fact, while, on the one hand, the layout of the script is, clearly, deliberately unhelpful to the reader, on the other, the orientation and ordering of the letters on the page seems to encourage, rather than to restrict

[42] Ibid., with examples from early medieval Roman church buildings.

[43] Cynthia Hahn, "Metaphor and Meaning in Early Medieval Reliquaries," in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Giselle de Nie, Karl F. Morrison, and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 239-264.

[44] Hahn, *Strange Beauty*, 110.

Fig. 1. Abbey of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, Treasure. Purse of Teuderic, late seventh – early eighth c., frontal panel.

further, access to the textual content for those who had sufficient writing skills.[45] One must struggle to find the starting point of the text, but when found, in the upper-right corner, it is relatively easy to decode the text. The reading of the text, therefore, was ultimately possible, but it required time, focus, and, above all, the establishing of a close, intimate relationship between the reliquary and its user. By discouraging and then encouraging access to the textual content, the inscription devises a sort of selection of its audience: it reveals its textual content, and in turn the meaning of the object as a pious donation made to the titular saint, only to the literate viewer who could gain access to the reliquary without restriction in terms of either time or physical distance. Although exceptional, the example of Teuderic Purse's inscriptions may help explain the functioning of other inscriptions found on portable reliquaries.[46]

In the analysis of this case study, I have tried to embrace multiple viewpoints, without pretending, however, that a complete picture could be achieved. I hope to have shown that the question of who could see and read the inscriptions on medieval reliquaries, and how, is a multifaceted problem that involves not only the literacy and education of the beholder, but also, at least, three other main factors, which occur in combination:

[45] On the "audiences" of medieval inscriptions, see Vincent Debiais, *Messages de pierre. La lecture des inscriptions dans la communication médiévale, XIIIe-XIVe siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009).

[46] Pallottini, "Reliquiari come spazi grafici," esp. 20-21 for some comparisons.

Fig. 2. Abbey of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, Treasure. Purse of Teuderic, late seventh – early eighth c., back panel with the inscription.

The accessibility of the reliquary. One of the common characteristics of purse reliquaries is that they could be moved, allowing temporary displays and uses within the context of private rituals, liturgies and processions. The portability of reliquaries also implies the portability of the inscriptions that could be placed on them, and this in turn affected the way in which such writings could (or could not) be seen by contemporary audiences.

The physical distance between the reliquary and the beholder. The reliquary and its inscriptions could be approached in different ways simultaneously by different audiences, although the generally restricted accessibility and the small dimensions of the purses suggest that their inscriptions were not meant to be accessible directly by too many people at the same time.

The material features of the script. These are another crucial factor determining the visibility and legibility of the written text. For scholars they are also a key source of information for understanding why they were written down in the first place, and how they were intended to work within their original environment. The case study just presented shows that medieval patrons and craftsmen used specific materials, and formed a distinctive design of script, in order to influence the way in which the inscribed reliquary could be experienced by different audiences; for instance, when the letters were seen as part of the reliquary's ornamentation, or when the written text could be decoded by contemplating, and possibly even touching or moving, the object itself.[47]

But how can we really be sure about our interpretations? Most often, we simply cannot be certain. Nevertheless, the analysis of one individual example such as the Teuderic Purse makes it possible to propose interpretations and raise questions, and to confront them with

[47] On the engagement between inscribed objects ad their users through the Middle Ages, see, for instance, Ludger Lieb, Christine Neufeld, and Ricarda Wagner, eds., *Writing Beyond Pen and Parchment. Inscribed Objects in Medieval European Literature* (Berlin/Boston/Munich: De Gruyter, 2019).

similar or perhaps identical issues that scholars of the written word may have raised with regard to other kinds of textual sources, including inscriptions. I want to point out that the choices made by patrons and commissioners created a unique artistic product every time, but these options were also intimately related to, and dependent on, the social and historical context of those involved. At the same time, inscriptions conveyed meanings, displayed identities, and therefore helped to shape the very world in which they were conceived, commissioned and read. What this example shows is that inscriptions can provide information about practices of the cult of relics even without mentioning the relics explicitly. They certainly improve our understanding of some of the ways in which early medieval Christians may have engaged with sacred objects and used writing as another way to venerate the saints.

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OF GOLD AND SILK: ON THE POEM BY HINCMAR OF REIMS EMBROIDERED BY ALPAIS ON THE CUSHION OF ST. REMI

CÉCILE TREFFORT[1]

ABSTRACT

The Musée Saint-Remi in Reims owns an exceptional piece of fabric discovered in the saint's tomb under his head: a cushion of red oriental silk, with an epigraphic strip of cloth embroidered with gold thread. The inscription mentions Hincmar, archbishop of Reims, who ordered the cushion, and the abbess Alpais, sister of Charles the Bald, who made it in 852. While the use of precious materials places it among luxury objects, the fact that the cushion was buried in the tomb, and the inscription invisible to human eyes, reveals a deep and intimate trust in the saint's capacity for intercession.

KEYWORDS

Hincmar of Reims; St. Remi; Alpais; Carolingian epigraphy; oriental silk; embroidery

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The Musée Saint-Remi in Reims owns a piece of fabric commonly known as the "Cushion of St. Remi", which comes from the saint's tomb. In its current state it is a panel of purple silk twill, measuring 63.5 x 26 cm, on which is appliqued a strip of cloth with an embroidered inscription that forms two juxtaposed squares. Each segment of the cloth, on which the letters are embroidered with alternately beige or purple silk threads, corresponds to a verse. At the corners, X-shaped signs can be seen, serving as a form of punctuation.

The present arrangement, which may not be original, allows for continuous reading by turning the panel clockwise, with the bottom of the letters facing towards the centre of each square[2]. The text consists of four distichs that give us the name of the powerful archbishop who commissioned the cushion, Hincmar of Reims, and of Alpais, the woman who had embroidered it so that it could be placed in the tomb of St. Remi:

> The famous Bishop Hincmar ordered Alpais to make and donate this humble work. He indeed ordered it, but she, instantly and joyfully, completed it and brought him the finished work that you see. On the occasion of the new honour she made this little cushion, to support the sweet and holy head. By the merits of Remigius, may Alpais be assisted everywhere and his prayers take her to the stars.[3]

This text does not appear in any of the manuscripts of Hincmar's works, nor was it integrated into the *History of the Church of Reims* by Flodoard (d. 966) who reports other inscriptions dedicated to St. Remi. Now mutilated, this text is known only thanks to Dom Guillaume Marlot (1596-1667) who was the first to mention its existence and to provide a transcription.[4] Until recently, this exceptional 9th-century piece of fabric has remained relatively unknown outside the circle of those who specialize in the history of Reims. This is a very special artefact, created by a woman at the request of one of the most influential bishops of her time, for placing in the tomb of one of the most important saints in the *regnum Francorum*. It would have interested Janneke, and I should love to have discussed it with her. With profound emotion, I dedicate this article to her memory.[5] After a review of existing studies on the St. Remi's cushion, I shall situate it in the context of other textile productions of this

[2] Wonderful pictures of the inscription are available on Genevra Kornbluth's website (https://www.kornbluthphoto.com/Coussin.html).

[3] Ed. Ludwig Traube, *MGH Poet. lat.* 3 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1896), 414, no. 2, after Mabillon: *Hoc opus exiguum praesul clarissimus Hincmar / Alphedi jussit condere sicque dare. / Ille quidem jussit, sed et haec mox laeta peregit, / Protulit et factum, quod modo cernis opus. / Quae sub honore novo pulvillum condidit istum, / Quo sustentetur dulce sacrumque caput. / Remigii meritis Alphedis ubique juvetur, / Ipsiusque preces hanc super astra ferant.*

[4] Guillaume Marlot, *Le tombeau du Grand Saint Remy, apôtre tutélaire des François, ses translations miraculeuses et les respects que nos Roys lui ont rendu en divers temps, avec la cinquième Translation désignée pour la présente année 1647* (Reims: François Bernard, 1647).

[5] I am very grateful to Mayke de Jong, Albrecht Diem, Rosamond McKitterick and Irene van Renswoude for their kind assistance and careful revision of this paper in the course of preparing it for inclusion in this volume for Janneke.

period in order to determine its originality. Subsequently, I shall examine the significance of the embroidered inscription, and the placing of the cushion in the tomb of a saint.

A. THE DISCOVERY OF THE CUSHION

The first evidence of the presence in the tomb of St. Remi of three pieces of fabric – a cushion (*pulvinus*, *pulvillus*) under the head, a shroud (*sudarium*) over the face, and a winding-sheet (*brandeum*) wrapped around the body – dates from 1647. A year after the opening of the tomb and the official acknowledgement that the relics were genuine, Dom Guillaume Marlot, prior of the abbey of Saint-Nicaise in Reims, who attended the ceremony, wrote:

> As the head had to be straightened, because it was inclined to one side, the cushion, covered with a red silk cloth, was pulled out from below, having an antique gold border, with these verses written on both sides: *Hoc opus exiguum*….[6]

The reference to Hincmar on the cushion, but also on another piece of cloth used as a shroud, suggests that this was the 9th-century arrangement.[7] The fact that there was no translation of the relics of St. Remi after the one directed by Hincmar in 852 seems to corroborate this. Dom Marlot proposed to identify Alpais as the daughter of Louis the Pious mentioned by Flodoard as abbess of Saint-Peter in Reims.[8] About fifty years later, the Maurist Jean Mabillon (1632-1707) referred to the cushion, including its production by Alpais and its deposition inside the tomb, in his account of the translation of 852, specifying that it had been found during his lifetime under the saint's head and that it was almost intact.[9]

The cushion, which was described as perfectly preserved in the 17th century, and the other objects in the tomb of the saint were disturbed during the French Revolution. On 3 October 1793, the grave was desecrated; two years later, one of the verification reports of the relics relates how the bones and all the textile pieces, including the cushion, were

[6] Marlot, *Le tombeau*, 199-200: "Comme il fallut redresser la tete, pour ce qu'elle penchoit d'un côté, on tira le coussin de dessous, couvert d'une étoffe de soye rouge, ayant un tissu d'or à l'antique en forme de bordure d'une même pièce, avec ces vers écrits de part et d'autre: *Hoc opus exiguum*…" The report on the recognition of the relics drawn up by Archbishop Léonore d'Étampes de Valencay, published by Jean Dorigny, *Histoire de la vie de S. Remy, archevêque de Reims, apôtre des François, et des différentes Translations de son corps* (Reims: Gabriel Dessain, 1721), 481-490, specifies that the cushion was intact: "*pulvillus sub capite ex rubro serico, qui etiam extractus est, et repertus integer, et lucidus habens texturam auream per circuitum ex utra parte, cum his versibus hinc inde conscriptis: Hoc opus exiguum*…"

[7] The inscription is as follows: *Sancte Remigii pontifex Domini pretiose / cum pietate memento Hincmari / Nomine non merito episcopi / indigni quoque sed devoti servi tui*. Ed. Marlot, *Le tombeau*, 196.

[8] Marlot, *Le tombeau*, 200.

[9] Jean Mabillon, *Annales ordinis S. Benedicti occidentalium monachorum patriarchae*…, vol. 3 (Paris: C. Robulstel, 1706), 19-20: *"Appositus etiam sub capite sacro pulvinus ex rubeo panno itidem bombicino, cum his versibus litteris aureis adscriptis, qui Alpaïdem, Caroli Calvi sororem, ejus opificem esse probant: Hoc opus exiguum (…) super astra ferant. Nostro tempore, id est anno MDCXLVI, in detectione sacri corporis, pulvinus iste cum sacro corpore et sudario praedicto ita integer repertus est."*

deposited in the public cemetery in the tomb of a recently deceased man.[10] On 5 July 1795, a man named Favreaux, who wanted to find the body of the saint, returned to the cemetery, opened the grave, and removed as much as he could carry, including the textile of the cushion ("*le voile de même étoffe qui couvroit le coussinet sur lequel la tête de saint Remy etoit posé dans la chasse*.")[11] The report on the recognition of the relics, which is dated to 4 October 1796, confirms that, although the cushion was damaged and had to be reassembled from various fragments of fabric present in the tomb, enough letters were preserved to recognize the strip embroidered by Alpais.[12]

In 1796, after the revolutionary period that affected the physical integrity not only of the saint's body but also of the numerous textiles in the tomb, what was left was placed in a sealed shrine. During the 19th century, the relics of St. Remi were validated as genuine and transferred several times: in 1803, 1824 and, finally, in 1847, when they were placed in a new stone mausoleum.[13]

After the separation of State and Church in 1905, the archbishop of Reims decided to keep the relics safe in Belgium. After a journey over some decades, the reliquary finally returned to Reims on 22 September 1940. The religious authorities then asked for it to be opened again, an act performed on 11 August 1941[14]. On 24 February 1942, the French Department of Monuments Historiques removed the three textiles and officially registered them as *antiquités et objets d'art*.[15]

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10 Victor Tourneur, "Étude sur les reliques de saint Remi," *Travaux de l'Académie nationale de Reims* 60, no. 3-4 (1875-1876): 24: "Les citoyens Genin et Caranjeot (…) rassemblèrent du mieux qu'ils purent les os épars de leur saint patron, les enfermèrent et cousurent dans un drap de toile de chanvre, et ayant joint les voiles à lettres d'or, avec quelques morceaux de la tombe, le tout enveloppé du drap de satin rouge cramoisy ; que vers les sept heures du soir, il fut porté avec le corps d'un volontaire mort à l'hôpital militaire, au cimetière public."

11 Ed. Tourneur, "Étude," 25.

12 Ed. Tourneur, "Étude," 28-29: "Nous avons formé un coussin de différents morceaux restés du drap qui doublait l'ancienne tombe ainsi que du suaire (…) auquel nous avons joint différentes étouppes provenant de la même tombe et de l'ancien coussin ; et nous avons enveloppé cette espèce de coussin d'un ancien voile de soye cramoisy fait et donné à cet effet par Alpheide, à la demande d'Hincmar, comme l'annoncent huit vers latins en lettres d'or sur chacun des quatre bords des deux côtés du dit voile. Quoi que quelques lettres n'existent plus, il a été facile de reconnaître que ces vers sont les mêmes que ceux qui sont rapportés dans les anciens procès-verbaux, y en ayant plusieurs qui sont intactes, telles que les deux premiers: *Hoc opus exiguum* (…) Sur le coussin ainsi formé, nous avons placé la tête de saint Rémi."

13 Cf. Abbé Cerf, *Authenticité des reliques de saint Remi* (Reims: Impr. P. Dubois, 1866) and, about the reliquaries, Anne Prache, "Les reliques de saint Rémi à Reims et leur ancienne présentation," in *Art, objets d'art, collections: études sur l'art du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance, sur l'histoire du goût et des collections: hommage à Hubert Landais* (Paris: Blanchard, 1987), 164-167.

14 Jean Goy, "Les reliques de saint Rémi, apôtre des Francs," in *Clovis, histoire & mémoire. Actes du Colloque international d'histoire de Reims, 19-25 septembre 1996*, vol. 2: *Le baptême de Clovis, son écho à travers l'histoire*, ed. Michel Rouche (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), 649-657.

15 Cf. database *Palissy (patrimoine mobilier)* of the French Ministère de la Culture, portal POP – Plateforme ouverte du Patrimoine (www.pop.culture.gouv.fr.e cushion, 63,5 x 26 cm, red silk with embroidered strip [notice PM 51000824, 1994, revised 2021], the winding-sheet, 190 x 237 cm, red silk [notice PM 51000823,

B. TEXTILE STUDIES

The cushion has never been considered as a relic (not even as a contact relic). Along with the shroud, which also bears an embroidered strip, and the winding-sheet, the cushion has received the attention of textile historians since the 1960s. Although differing in detail,[16] the cushion and the winding-sheet are both decorated with images of a simurgh, the mythical bird of Persia. They were studied from a technical point of view in 1962 by F. Guicherd and G. Vial, who dated them to the eighth century and thought that they had been produced in Iran.[17] The oriental origin of these textiles has never been denied by scholars, but there is still debate whether they were produced in Persia or in the Byzantine world.[18] In 1976, the study of a green silk caftan with a simurgh motif discovered in a Caucasian tomb from the 8th or 9th century suggested the existence of a production site in post-Sassanid Iran, from which the Reims fabrics would presumably have come.[19] On the occasion of the Louvre exhibition devoted to Byzantine art in French collections (1992-1993), a new study suggested that the cushion fabric was a Byzantine product of the 9th or 11th century. If the later date is correct, this would imply that the embroidered strip was re-used and stitched for a second time, this time on a cushion of red silk, perhaps at the time of the dedication of the basilica of St. Remi in 1049.[20] In any case, no study has denied the authenticity of the epigraphic Carolingian strip, made on a ribbon of grey fabric, with letters alternately red or beige and a background embroidered with white silk thread wound with gold lamella[21].

C. AN EXCEPTIONAL WOMAN'S PRODUCTION

The fact that the metrical inscription explicitly mentions a woman as fabricator of the cushion, even if it was commissioned by a bishop, has been noticed more recently by several scholars, especially by Valerie Garver. Alpais and the Reims cushion play a central role in

1994, revised 2018] and the shroud, 67 x 56/65,5 cm, green silk on one side, violet on the other with woven strip [notice PM 51000825, 1994, revised 2018].

16 See previous footnote.

17 F. Guicherd and G. Vial, "Dossier de recensement (coussin d'Alapïs)," *Bulletin de liaison du Centre international d'étude des textiles anciens* 15 (1962): 48-50. After that, the cushion and the shroud were exhibited in 1965 at the Musée des arts décoratifs in Paris. Cf. *Les Trésors des églises de France* (Paris: Caisse nationale des monuments historiques, 1965), 78 (nos 154-155).

18 Fritz W. Volbach, *Il tessuto nell'arte antica* (Milano: Fratelli Fabri editori, 1966), 106 and 146, suggest a Byzantine copy of Sassanid silk.

19 A. Jeroussalimskaja, "Le caftan aux simourghs du tombeau de Mochtchevaja Balka (Caucase septentrional)," *Studia Iranica* 7, no. 2 (1978): 183-211.

20 Marielle Martiniani-Reber, "Les textiles IXe-XIIe siècles," in *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1992), 375-376 (nos 282-283).

21 For technical details and discussion of the provenance of the textiles, see Valerie L. Garver, "Girlindis and Alpais. Telling the lives of two textile fabricators in the Carolingian empire," in *Writing medieval women's lives*, ed. Charlotte Newman Goldy and Amy Livingstone (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 155-172, at 161 and 169-170.

an article from 2012 that studies them within the wider context of textile work by Carolingian women.[22] Garver agrees with the traditional assumption that the person mentioned in the embroidered inscription is to be identified as Alpheidis, the illegitimate daughter of Louis the Pious mentioned in the Annals of Lorsch.[23] She was married to Count Begon and, after the death of her husband, became the abbess of Saint-Pierre-le-Bas in Reims. This was already proposed in the 17th century and was accepted by Jean Devisse in his monumental work on Hincmar.[24]

Even if some scholars have expressed doubts,[25] there are strong arguments in favour of this identification. First, there is the closeness of the creator of the cushion to the archbishop of Reims, as evidenced by its commission and the association of their two names in the same text. The second clue is the exceptional privilege to have had her name put in direct contact with one of the most important saints for the Carolingian royal family,[26] which confirms the artisan's very high social and religious status. A third indicator is the relative rarity of the name *Alpheidis* (variant of *Alpaidis*)[27], held by an abbess of Reims precisely at the time of Hincmar. According to the testimony of Flodoard in the 10th century, the archbishop was in correspondence on religious matters with other women of the royal entourage who remained in the world, or became abbesses of great monasteries.[28]

Various studies have shown that *Alpheidis/Alpaidis*, the illegitimate daughter of Louis the Pious (and thus half-sister of Charles the Bald, Lothar and Louis the German), as already mentioned above, was married to Begon, Count of Toulouse and later Count of Paris. The couple is known to have had at least two sons, Eberhard and Leutard, and possibly a daugh-

22 Garver, "Girlindis and Alpais," which offers the most relevant and exhaustive study on Alpais, which is used extensively in this paper.

23 *Annales Laurissenses Minores* 816, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH Script.* 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), 122: *Picco* [i.e. Bego], *primus de amicis regis, qui et filiam imperatoris* [*nomine Elpheid*] *duxit uxorem, defunctus est*.

24 Garver, "Girlindis and Alpais," 158; Jean Devisse, *Hincmar archevêque de Reims: 845-882* (Genève: Droz, 1973), 65.

25 For example, Marie-Céline Isaïa, *Remi de Reims. Mémoire d'un saint, histoire d'une Église* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), 421, n. 3: "L'assimilation de la brodeuse et de la première fille de Louis le Pieux (…) ne m'apparaît pas évidente."

26 Philippe Depreux, "Saint Remi et la royauté carolingienne," *Revue historique* 285, no. 578 (1991): 253-260; idem, "*Imbuendis ad fidem prefulgidum surrexit lumen gentibus*. La dévotion à saint Remi de Reims aux IXe et Xe siècles," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 35, no. 138 (1992): 111-129.

27 Marie-Thérèse Morlet, *Les noms de personne sur le territoire de l'ancienne Gaule du VIe au XIIe siècle*, vol. 1: *Les noms issus du germanique continental et les créations gallo-germaniques* (Paris: CNRS, 1968), 29 finds only four occurrences for the 9th century, including two in the Reims polyptych in Courtisols (*Curtis Agutior*). Cf. Benjamin Guérard, *Polyptyque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Remi de Reims, ou dénombrement des manses, des serfs et des revenus de cette Abbaye, vers le milieu du neuvième siècle de notre ère* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1853), 46 [XVII, 34: *Alpaia ingenua, cum infantibus II*] and 47 [XVII, 44: *Alpaidis ingenua, cum infantibus III*].

28 Flodoard, *Historia Remensis* Ecclesiae III, c. 27 ed. Martina Stratmann, MGH Script 36 (Hannover: Hahn, 1998), 346: *Que aliquibus reginis scripta miserit),* Cf. Michel Sot, *Un historien et son Église au Xe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 608-614.

ter, Susanna.[29] If the inscription in the necrology of Reims indeed refers to her, Alpaidis seems to have died on 23 July, but the year is not specified.[30]

Two texts, the *Life of St. Rigobert*, written in the 9th century and Flodoard's History of the Church of Reims (10th century), mention that Emperor Louis the Pious gave the abbey of Saint-Pierre to his daughter Alpheidis.[31] Like Charlemagne before him, he granted a diploma of immunity to this monastery,[32] one of the two female religious communities in Reims dedicated to St. Peter[33]. This abbey, called Saint-Pierre-le-Bas, was located in close proximity to the gate "which is now called Bazée (*basilicaria*), either because there were formerly more basilicas in the vicinity than near the other gates, or because because it was on the route of those who made a journey to go to the basilicas of the *vicus* of Saint-Remi."[34] Founded by Gombert, brother of the bishop of Reims in the 7th century, this house had a special status under the Carolingian king. Flodoard described it as "royal" (*regale*) or "fiscal" (*fiscale*), before it became part of the heritage of the Church of Reims at the request (*per precariam*) of Alpais and her two sons.[35] In these conditions, it is likely that this Alpais is the person who made the cushion. I shall therefore retain this identification for the remainder of this chapter.

Various studies have considered the inscription on the cushion of St. Remi as a clear expression of the education and culture of the woman called Alpheidis, assuming that she was not only the embroiderer but also the composer of the poem.[36] There is no doubt that

29 Karl Ferdinand Werner, "Die Nachkommen Karls des Großen bis um das Jahr 1000 (1.-8. Generation)," in *Karl der Große. Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, vol. 4: *Das Nachleben*, ed. Wolfgang Braunfelds and Percy Ernst Schramm (Düsseldorf: L. Schwann, 1967), 430, 433-436, 445-446, 448; Hélène Débax, "Les comtesses de Toulouse. Notices biographiques," *Annales du Midi* 100, no. 182 (1988): 216-217; Annick Miro, "Deux comtes au service de Louis le Pieux. Bégon (806-816) et Bérenger (816-835), *semper fidèles*," *Le Moyen Âge* 120, no. 2 (2014), 392-401.

30 Vatican, BAV, Ottob. lat. 2690, fol. 88v: *Alpheidis Deo sacrata*. According to Jean-Loup Lemaître, *Répertoire des documents nécrologiques français*, vol. 2 (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1980), 724-725 (no 1679), the obituary dates from the 14th century.

31 *Vita Rigoberti*, c. 12, ed. Wilhelm Levison, *MGH SRM* 7 (Hannover: Hahn, 1920), 68: *… donec Hludowicus imperator dedit monasterium sancti Petri filiae suae Alpaidi…*

32 Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* IV, c. 46 [*De altero Remis puellarum monasterio*], *MGH Script.* 36, 448: *Quod monasterium Ludowicus Alpheidi filie sue, uxori Begonis comitis, dono dedit eidemque sacro loco immunitatis praeceptum delegavit, ut et pater ipsius, Karolus imperator, egerat olim.*

33 Michèle Gaillard, "Les monastères féminins de Reims pendant le Haut Moyen-Âge: histoire et historiographie," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 71, no. 4 (1993): 825-840 and Sot, *Un historien*, 335-336.

34 Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* IV, c. 46, *MGH Script.* 36, 448: *… que… nunc basilicaris vocatur eo, quod circa se basilicis dudum pre ceteris portis abundasse feratur seu quod euntibus ad basilicas in vico sancti Remigii consistentes pervia fuerit*. The same etymology can be found in *Vita Rigoberti*, c. 12, *MGH SRM* 7, 68: *Quae porta ideo nuncupatur Basilicaris, sive quod in giro sui reliquis plus portis feratur antiquitus basilicis abundasse, seu quia euntibus ad basilicas in vico sancti Remigii consistentes semper fuerit pervia.*

35 Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* IV, c. 46, p. 448: *Quod monasterium domnus Guntbertus, vir illustris, in honore sancti Petri construxisse traditur, quod regale vel fiscale vocatur eo, quod in regali potestate usque ad moderna tempora fuit habitum* (…) *Quod cenobium postea per precaiam ipsius Alpheidis vel filiorum Letardi et Ebrardi ad partem et possessionem Remensis devenit ecclesie.*

36 Apart from Garver, "Girlindis and Alpais," several recent articles have highlighted the production of this cushion by Alpais, in particular Elizabeth Coatsworth, "Text and Textile," in *Text, Image, Interpreta-*

she was a literate woman, like other great Carolingian aristocrats who have been studied in recent years.[37] But the choice to connect the genitive *Remigii* (verse 7) to the term *caput* (v. 6) and not to *meritis* (v. 7) has led some authors to attribute Alpais' salvation to her own merits.[38] However, if one considers that the genitive is generally placed before the name it completes and on which it depends, and that each line corresponds to a syntactic unit, it is more logical to consider *Remigii meritis* as a nominal group, and to translate verses 6 and 7 as proposed above, namely, "... to support the sweet and holy head. By the merits of Remigius, may Alpais be assisted everywhere..."

It expresses therefore the attitude of a donor who hopes, in return for her benefits, to receive help from the saint. This makes me wonder about the circumstances in which the cushion – of which no medieval source speaks, and which therefore remained hidden from human eyes until the 17th century – was created and placed in the tomb.

D. TEXTILES FOR A SAINT

The inscription embroidered on the strips of cloth applied onto the cushion and the shroud found in St. Remi's tomb explicitly mention Hincmar, the famous archbishop of Reims, who died in 882.[39] Although they are not mentioned in the narratives of the solemn translation of St. Remi's body on 1st October 852, they were certainly deposited there at this event, which took place after the renovation of the abbey church initiated by Archbishop Ebbo and the reconstruction of the tomb by his successor. In his *Vita Remigii*, Hincmar describes the event as follows:

> In the year 852 of the Incarnation of the Lord, as the church had been enlarged shortly before, the tomb and the body of Blessed Remi were being transported together out of the old crypt into a crypt built with much more art and beauty. Then, the bishops

tion: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature and its Insular Context in Honour of Éamonn Ó Carragáin, ed. Alastair Minnis and Jane Roberts (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 187-207; Valerie L. Garver, "Textile as a Means of Female Religious Participation in the Carolingian World," in *Religious Participation in Ancient and Medieval Societies: Rituals, Interaction and Identity*, ed. Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Ville Vuolanto (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2013), 133-144; and recently Christina Lee, "Embroidered Narratives," in *Feminist Approaches to Early Medieval English Studies*, ed. Robin Norris, Rebecca Stephenson, and Renée R. Trilling (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023), 53-82.

37 Among the immense bibliography devoted to women or to Carolingian literary culture, we shall mention only one fundamental article by Rosamond McKitterick, "Frauen und Schriftlichkeit im Frühmittelalter," in *Weibliche Lebensgestaltung im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz (Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 1991), 65-118 [revised English version, "Women and literacy in the early middle ages," in Rosamond McKitterick, *Books, Scribes and Learning in the Frankish Kingdoms* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), chapter 13].

38 Garver, "Girlindis and Alpais," 156: "… which will support the sweet and venerable head of Remigius. Through the merits of Alpais everywhere, may her prayers be borne beyond the stars," or Coatsworth, "Text and Textile," 189: "…by which the sweet and most holy head of S. Remigius is supported and everywhere assisted by the merits of Alpais."

39 For an overview of Hincmar's life and work, see Devisse, *Hincmar.*

of the province of Reims found this very holy body, as in the previous translation, perfectly preserved and wrapped in a red shroud. When it was time to take him out of his tomb and place him in a silver shrine, part of the shroud and the winding-sheet that had been on his head were removed and placed in a small ivory reliquary, where they are venerated with due honour in front of the altar of St. Mary's inside the city. The silver shrine containing the holy body was placed on the marble tomb in which it had previously rested. The other things found outside the tomb above the head of the saint were deposited by the present bishop inside this tomb, where he was lying. This took place on the October Calends, because the other translation had been celebrated many years before on the Calends."[40]

Hincmar – and Flodoard after him – mention several textiles found in the tomb at the time of the first translation in the Merovingian period: a chasuble (*casula*), a tunic (*tunica*) and a purple winding-sheet (*rubeum brandeum*). [41] At the time of the translation of 852, there is no longer any mention of the saint's clothes, but a shroud (*sudarium*) appears, which was deposited, along with part of the winding-sheet, in an ivory box (*scriniolo reconditur eburneo*) in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, while the greater part of the winding-sheet remained with the body, placed in a silver shrine (*in argenteo locello*) at Saint-Remi.[42] What medieval sources do not mention is that Hincmar probably replaced the primitive shroud (which had become a relic in the cathedral) with a piece of simurgh silk[43] and commissioned Alpais to create a cushion, each with an embroidered inscription expressing their devotion, which were found in the 17th century.

It is surprising that Hincmar in his report of the translation did not mention the inscriptions on the shroud and cushion that could be read on the reliquary (*scrinium*). The inscription on the upper part, dedicated to the saint, began with "Here, Hincmar, servant of the Lord, deposited the sacred body of the sweet Remi, inspired by love and devotion."[44]

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[40] Hincmar of Reims, *Vita Remigii*, c. 29, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1896), 325-326: *Anno incarnationis dominicae DCCCLII, nuper adhuc ampliata ipsa aecclesia, cum de loco criptae prioris sepulchrum, una cum beati Remigii corpore translatum est in criptam maiori et pulcriori opera factam, ipsum corpus sanctissimum, sicut et anteriori translatione, ab episcopis Remorum dioceseos integrum inventum est et brandeo rubeo involutum. Et cum de ipso sepulchro in locello argenteo est transpositum, pars de ipso brandeo cum sudario, quod fuerat super caput eius, assumpta in scriniolo eburneo, secus altare sanctae Mariae in civitate honore debito honoratur. Locellum autem argenteum cum corpore ipsius sancti sepulchro marmoreo, in quo ante iacuerat, superpositum fuit, et reliquiae que ad caput illius extra sepulchrum reperte fuerant, in sepulchro, in quo iacuerat, a prefatis episcopis fuerunt positae Kl. Oct.; quo Kalendarum die et altera eius translatio ante plures annos fuerat celebrata.*

[41] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, c. 25, p. 321: *Ipsaque die translationis eius cum divinis laudibus sumpte sunt reliquiae a corpore illius, de capillis videlicet eius et casula ac tunica ipsius et involutum est corpus illius integrum, sed desiccatum, de brandeo rubeo.* After him, Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* I, c. 20, p. 106.

[42] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, c. 29, pp. 325-326 (cf. note 35); similar Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* II, c. 21, pp. 112-113.

[43] On this second shroud and his inscription, see above, note 7.

[44] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, c. 35, p. 340: *Isti versus sunt scripti in scrinio corporis sancti Remigii in linea superiori per circuitum: Hic famulus Hincmar Domini sacra membra locavit / dulcis Remigii ductus amore pio…*

The lower part was dedicated to Hincmar himself and ended with these words: "May the prayers [of Remi and Hincmar] establish him in the celestial house; he whom he truly honoured and loved on this earth."[45] Flodoard reports these verses in one block, without distinguishing two parts, in his second book of the *History of the Church of Reims*.[46] In his third book he mentions another inscription, which he also attributes to Hincmar, around a *fenestella* (a small window) in a structure erected in front of the tomb of the saint:

> For you, great St. Remi, he made this sepulchre,
> He, Hincmar, prelate driven by his love for you,
> May the Lord, O Saint, give me peace
> Thanks to my prayer, my veneration and your noble merits."[47]

Despite the abundant details provided by Hincmar and Flodoard on the proceedings of the relics' translation, the treatment of the textiles found in the tomb and the inscriptions made on the new devotional structure, nothing is said about the cushion and the shroud. That both were probably also made at this time gives them a special status. Indeed, the ceremony must have been sumptuous: according to a poem written by Halduin of Hautvillers, King Charles the Bald himself, together with Hincmar, raised the relics and then placed them in the shrine.[48] The inscriptions on the shrine and the *fenestella*, which were made of precious materials, were visible to everyone who came to venerate the holy relics. Additionally, their meaning, namely the exaltation of the saint's glory and Hincmar's pious love for him was revealed in the manuscript copies of the works of Hincmar and Flodoard in which the inscriptions were discussed. The poem even became one of the pieces sung at the office of St. Remi, as is shown by the neumatic notation of an eleventh-century copy preserved at Montecassino.[49]

Yet the inscriptions on the cushion and the shroud completely disappeared from collective memory, as did the knowledge of the objects themselves, until they were found in the

[45] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, c. 35, pp. 340-341: *Isti sequentes versus sunt scripti in scrinio corporis sancti Remigii, in linea inferiori per circuitum: Isdem Hincmarus* (…) *Ipsius is precibus caelesti in sed locetur, / quem terris coluit verus amator.*

[46] Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* II, c. 21, pp. 113-114: *In loculo vero, ubi tunc depositum corpus, eius versus a domno Hincmaro editi leguntur insculpti: Hic famulus Hincmar…*

[47] Ibid., III, c. 9, p. 205: *Ante ipsius sepulchrum opus egregium auro edidit gemmisque distinxit, fenestram inibi, unde sancto sepulchrum videretur, fecit et circa ipsam fenestellam hos versiculos indidit: Hoc tibi, Remigi, fabricavit, magne, sepulchrum / Hincmarus presul, ductus amore tuo, / ut requiem Dominus tribuat michi, sancte, precatu / et dignis meritis, mi venerande, tuis.*

[48] Ed. Ludwig Traube, *MGH Poet. lat*. 3, 414: *…Rex verum Karolus Ludovici Caesaris almus / filius ac praesul Hincmar utique sacra / tecta augent decorantque simul bustoque recondunt / Francorum magnum pontificale decus.*

[49] Montecassino, Biblioteca dell'abazia, Ms K 494 (11th c.), fol. 76-78. On this manuscript and the neumatic notation, see Jean-François Goudesenne, "La musique de l'ancien office de saint Remi retrouvée (VIIIe-IXe siècles)," in *Clovis, histoire & mémoire. Actes du Colloque international d'histoire de Reims, 19-25 septembre 1996*, vol. 2: *Le baptême de Clovis, son écho à travers l'histoire*, ed. Michel Rouche (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), 117-118.

tomb in the 17th century. Unlike other texts, these inscriptions were not intended to be read, nor were the luxurious fabrics there to be admired by people throughout the ages. Even though the precious fabrics may have been glimpsed briefly during the ceremony of the translation, their deposit in the tomb was undoubtedly testimony to an intimate relationship with the saint.

E. A DISCREET OFFERING

The cushion of St. Remi is usually discussed in relation to other pieces of fabric offered by women to prelates or holy persons: generally liturgical vestments, tapestries to decorate the church, or altar cloths.[50] In the second half of the 9th century, we can think for example of the tablecloth given by Bertha, wife of Girart de Roussillon, to Archbishop Remi for his cathedral, which is now lost,[51] or the belt that Emma, the wife of Ludwig the German, made for Witgar, bishop of Augsburg, now preserved in the Diözesanmuseum St. Afra.[52] Precious textiles abound in church treasuries, including some made by women, as in Aldeneik Abbey, where the *Vita Harlindis et Relindis* (written in the third quarter of the 9th century) praises their skill in weaving and embroidery as much as their literary culture.[53]

Despite the great interest of these cases, they should not make us forget that the Reims' textiles were not intended to be used at the altar, nor to become devotional attributes. They were made to be enclosed in the shrine of a saint, placed in direct contact with the most precious part of his body, his head: the cushion to support it, the shroud to cover the face. No history was written to keep the memory of these objects and reveal their existence to future generations. The use of precious materials (gold and silk, textiles imported from the East), the length and precision of the work required to make the embroidery, and the affixing of an inscription, were therefore not, or not only, part of a strategy of social self-representation. The fact that they were hidden from human eyes would bring them closer to the practice of

[50] Many examples are given by Fiona J. Griffiths, "Like the sister of Aaron. Medieval Religious Women as Makers and Donors of liturgical Textiles," in *Female* Vita religiosa *between Late Antiquity and the Hight Middle Ages. Structures, Developments and Spatial Contexts*, ed. Gert Melville and Anne Müller (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011), 343-374.

[51] Vincent Debiais, "L'écriture sur le tissu de l'autel. Une liturgie dans les plis," in *Images, signes et paroles dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Rosa Maria Dessí and Didier Méhu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), 41-61.

[52] Eric J. Goldberg, "*Regina nitens sanctissima Hemma*: Queen Emma (827-876), Bishop Witgar of Augsburg and the Witgar-Belt," in *Representations of Power in medieval Germany: 800-1500*, ed. Björn K. U. Weiler and Simon MacLean (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 57-95.

[53] Calberg Marguerite, "Tissus et broderies attribués aux saintes Harlinde et Relinde," *Bulletin de la Société royale d'archéologie de Bruxelles*, 1951, 1-26, and Alain Dierkens, "Évangéliaires et tissus de l'abbaye d'Aldeneik. Aspect historiographique," in *Miscellanea codicologica F. Masai dicata*, ed. Pierre Cockshaw, Monique-Cécile Garand, and Pierre Jodogne (Gent: E. Story-Scientia, 1979), 31-40.

"endotaphs" (nominal inscriptions inside tombs) or to that of nominal graffiti on "lipsanothèques" (little reliquaries included in the altar).[54]

Despite the apparent opulence, beauty and luxury of the objects, the discretion of the donation made by Alpais and Hincmar invites us to go beyond the idea of a desire to display one's social status.[55] The enclosure in the tomb and the silence of the contemporary histories guarantees the discretion of the act of the donors, whose inscriptions express their hope to benefit from the intercession of the saint in return for their offering. The fact that Alpais, as the daughter and sister of kings, and Hincmar, a powerful archbishop, were among the most important people in the *regnum Francorum*, makes this discretion even more palpable: it is a significant form of a humility that is often affirmed in the inscriptions but rarely expressed in such depth.

In making and offering these cloths, Alpais and Hincmar wished to create an intimate relationship between themselves and the saint through the physical contact of their names with his relics.[56] For centuries, until the reopening of the saint's tomb, their words inscribed on the cloth spoke only to Remi. Nobody else was meant to read them. Unlike the rest of the *tituli* visible in the church and the historical narratives, these inscriptions are in a way true acts of faith, discreet and silent, of two religious people united by the same devotion to Saint Remi.

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[54] See, e.g., Cécile Treffort, "Une écriture cachée aux yeux des hommes. Quelques réflexions autour des 'endotaphes' médiévales," in *La mémoire des pierres: Mélanges d'archéologie, d'art et d'histoire en l'honneur de Christian Sapin*, ed. Sylvie Balcon-Berry, Brigitte Boissavit-Camus, and Pascale Chevalier (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 39-45.

[55] This is also proposed by Jean-Claude Bonne, "Les ornements de l'histoire (à propos de l'ivoire carolingien de saint Remi)," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, n. s. 51 (1996), 37-70, at 62: "À qui donc sont destinés é ornement de ce coussin placé dans un sarcophage et cette inscription où les destinateurs parlent eux-mêmes à la troisième personne en adressant au destinataire à la seconde – qui, sinon au regard absolu de Dieu (et à son serviteur céleste Remi)? (…) Il s'agit, pour ceux qui sont au sommet de la société laïque et religieuse et en ont les moyens un devoir tout particulier envers Dieu et envers leurs sujets qui émane de leur statut: en honorant Dieu par leurs offrandes, ils attendent en retour bienfaits ou miséricorde pour eux et pour leur peuple. De même, la beauté de l'œuvre n'avait pas pour seule fin d'éveiller chez les spectateurs des sentiments esthétiques, ou même de les intéresser au sujet d'une représentation. L'objet beau et l'image qu'il porte fonctionnent, à la manière de la prière et comme prière, sur un mode objectif – une rayonnante affirmation d'être – à l'intention d'un destinataire considéré comme (l'être) absolu."

[56] See, most recently, the studies collected in the volume *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces: Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, Elisa Pallotini, and Janneke Raaijmakers (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023).

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A GIFT OF ALMS? CHARLEMAGNE AND THE RELICS OF SENS CATHEDRAL

JULIA M. H. SMITH[1]

ABSTRACT

This paper exploits the abundant relic-related documentation which has survived in the Treasury of Sens cathedral to demolish the frequently repeated claim that its huge stock of relics had principally been donated by Charlemagne. Having demonstrated how this legend could have emerged by the twelfth century, it then presents evidence that a few relics did flow from the Carolingian palace to Sens. Finally, it proposes that relics might well have been among the treasures distributed to the archbishoprics of his empire under the terms of Charlemagne's will, thus serving as the kernel from which the later, much exaggerated, claims grew.

KEYWORDS

Charlemagne; Sens Cathedral; Relics; Relic-labels; Treasure

On a memorable day in 2010, Janneke took me into the Oudkatholieke Gertrudiskathedraal in Utrecht to see the remnants of the city's huge medieval collection of relics. There, she introduced me to Anique de Kruijf, at that time busy cataloguing and conserving them. Anique unlocked the cupboard in the back of the high altar where they were kept and explained the remarkable story of their survival through the Reformation. In her com-

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pany, Janneke and I spent the afternoon sitting on the floor behind the high altar, opening numerous cardboard boxes full of bones, textiles, metal, and assorted fragments.[2] This was the first time I had handled medieval relics in a church rather than a museum, and it left a deep impression. For Janneke, raised a Roman Catholic, venturing into the chancel felt transgressive, while I relished direct contact with *materia medievalia* that had not been curated or conserved. Since 2014, I have practised similar "cupboard archaeology" in Sens cathedral, and although I often shared anecdotes of my experiences with Janneke, sadly, our desire to make a joint *relieke reis* there never came about. I hope she would have appreciated this posthumous gift.[3]

Although little known, the Treasury of Sens cathedral is widely regarded as one of the two most important French collections of medieval ecclesiastical objects. As will become clear, Sens once possessed a massive assemblage of relics: this paper is an attempt to disentangle one small part of its history. It builds on some of my earlier work, which has emphasised two complementary ways of understanding relics. Firstly, we can regard them as the materialised traces of the supernatural. Viewed in this perspective, they are one of the ways in which the created world of Christian tradition – a tangible world of people and places amenable to being mapped along historical and geographical co-ordinates – intersected with the transcendent and intangible world of spiritual beliefs and values. But equally, we can view them as objects with an exceptional potential for being moved around by humans from one place to another, whether locally from tomb to shrine, or passed from person to person over vast distances. Their patterns of circulation were commonly complex, and can be very difficult to retrieve from the sources available to historians.[4] This essay uses a small subset of the surviving documentation from Sens to uncover one important node in the networks of contact through which relics travelled in the early Middle Ages, the court of Charlemagne, and suggests why they might have been appropriate gifts for the emperor to make towards the end of his life. It also demonstrates that, even after having been immobilised in one place, relics could acquire a changed meaning and history, one that made sense for their institutional keepers as distinct from their royal donor.

Some of Sens's medieval treasures are still kept in the upper chamber of the fourteenth-century treasury that opens off the south choir aisle, although they now spill over

[2] Anique de Kruijf, *Stof zijt gij....Een deel inventarisatie van de reliekschat van de Oud-Katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal te Utrecht* (Utrecht: Clavis, 2008); eadem, *Miraculeus bewaard. Middeleeuwse Utrechtse relieken op reis: de schat van de Oud-Katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2011).

[3] This paper owes much to the palaeographical advice of David Ganz and the expert image-editing assistance of Genevra Kornbluth.

[4] I initially outlined these approaches in "Rulers and relics, c.750-950: 'treasure on earth, treasure in heaven'," in *Relics and Remains*, ed. Alexandra Walsham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 73-96; "Portable Christianity: relics in the medieval West (c. 700-1200)," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 181 (2012): 143-167. Most recently, "The remains of the saints: the evidence of early medieval relic collections," *Early Medieval Europe* 28 (2020): 388-424, which also draws on evidence from Sens.

into the adjacent private chapel of the archiepiscopal palace.[5] I have spent many happy hours here, exploring the contents of the display cases and of the dozens of boxes stored in the "sous-vitrines", the cupboards beneath them.[6] On my first visit, a huge single-sheet document (60 cm tall by 37 cm wide) caught my attention. It is a poster-sized *notitia* announcing the translation of the cathedral's relics into a new shrine. A list of 131 items occupies two-thirds of it, while the final twelve lines explain the history of this assemblage and its successive transfers to new caskets. The prompt for the production of this *notitia* had been the relics' removal to a new shrine under Archbishop Gui de Noyers on 16 August 1192, but an earlier one had been conducted by Archbishop Richer on 3 August 1095.[7] Finding an ancient shrine in a poor state of repair with unknown contents, Richer had consulted the cathedral's canons, before proceeding to open it and move the contents into a newly commissioned one. Before reporting these details, however, the document outlines the collection's origin. "It is well-known that Emperor Charlemagne gave very many holy relics, the largest number of them, to this church and to Archbishop Magnus. Having gathered them together, the same archbishop Magnus placed them in a silver reliquary in the same year in which he dedicated the church at Melun. And because Charlemagne gave these relics to this church, the place in which they were kept is called the Charlemagne Chapel and [his] gifts [are there] right up until today."[8] In this paper, I review the frequently repeated assertion that Sens owed most of its relics to Charlemagne's generosity. I first interpret the claim as an origin legend, showing how it might have stemmed from knowledge readily available in late twelfth-century Sens. Having peeled away the myth, I then explore evidence for relics that reached Sens from the Carolingian royal centre – whether in the reign of Charlemagne or slightly later. Finally, I turn my focus to Charlemagne and explore the circumstances in which he might have given relics to the metropolitan cities of his realm.

5 Hélène Portiglia and Lydwine Saulnier-Pernuit, "La chapelle des archevêques et le trésor de la cathédrale de Sens," *Bulletin de la Société archéologique de Sens* 31 (1989): 41-49.

6 I am immensely grateful to Lydwine Saulnier-Pernuit, Virginie Garret, Michaël Vottero and Nicolas Potier for facilitating my visits to Sens.

7 "Procès-verbal de la translation des reliques de la cathédrale de Sens, opérée le 16 août 1192 par Gui de Noyers, archevêque de Sens," in Maurice Prou and Eugène Chartraire, "Authentiques de reliques conservées au trésor de la cathédrale de Sens," *Mémoires de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France*, 6e série, 9 (1900 for 1898): 129-172, at 135-140. Since my first visit, this document has been transferred to the Archives départementales de l'Yonne, under the call-mark G 2905-1.

8 Ibid., 139-140: *Et illud celebri memoria retinendum, quod Karolus Magnus imperator plurimam et maximam partem harum sanctarum reliquiarum huic ecclesie ac Magno archiepiscopo contulit. Que omnia collata idem Magnus archiepiscopus, in capsa argentea reposuit, et in ipso anno, idem Magnus ecclesiam Milidunensem dedicavit. Et quia hec pignora Karolus Magnus huic ecclesie tradiderat, vocatus est idem locus quo hec reposita fuerunt Capella Karoli Magni et munera usque in hodiernam diem [sunt].*

A. SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF SENS, 7TH-12TH CENTURIES

A preliminary word on the state of our knowledge of early medieval Sens is in order. It is meagre, to say the least. The extramural abbey of Sainte-Colombe is the first institution for which there is any evidence of literary activity. Lupus, bishop of Sens had been buried there upon his death at an uncertain point between 614 and 626 and its monks had inaugurated his cult and composed his *vita* by 660.[9] Brief annalistic records were kept here from c. 800 onwards; but apart from noting the 853 translation into the new abbey church of the virgin martyr Columba herself and of Lupus, they only contain notices of astronomical events until 868.[10] Historical and hagiographical endeavours at the cathedral city's other churches appear to have lagged far behind.[11] An efflorescence of historical and annal-writing did not begin until the early eleventh century, when sénonais authors all confronted a desperate lack of local information, especially acute prior to the reign of Charles the Bald.[12] There is no evidence that any attempt to compile an episcopal list was made before the eleventh century, and although the existence of a *Gesta episcoporum senonensium* has been posited, such a work, if ever there was one, has left hardly any traces.[13] In short, Sens was not an historically aware see in the ninth and tenth centuries, unlike Rheims; and unlike Tours, had no great literary heritage on which to rely.

To exacerbate modern historians' challenges, a fire had destroyed the cathedral, canons' residences, library, and more in July 967.[14] The episcopal archives too seem to have been in a lamentable condition by the end of the millennium. In the early eleventh century, the cathedral clergy were so concerned about the dearth of early charters that they resorted to confecting a "pseudo-original" imperial *pancarta* of 826 to remedy the deficit.[15] In the judge-

9 I follow the new analysis of Michael Eber et al., *Die Lebensbeschreibung des Lupus von Sens und der merowingische Machtwechsel von 613/14. Studien, revidierter Text und Übersetzung. MGH Studien und Texte* 70 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2022). I am very grateful to Stefan Esders for sharing this with me in advance of publication.

10 *Annales sanctae Columbae Senonensis*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH Script.* 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), 102-109. Cf. Wilhelm Wattenbach et al., *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter. Vorzeit und Karolinger,* vol. 5: *Die Karolinger vom Vertrag von Verdun bis zum Herrschaftsantritt der Herrscher aus dem sächsichen Hause. Das westfränkische Reich* (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1973), 558-560.

11 Michèle Gaillard and Alain Rauwel, "Aperçu de la production hagiographique en Bourgogne à l'époque carolingienne," in *Les royaumes de Bourgogne jusqu'en 1032: À travers la culture et la religion*, ed. Anne Wagner and Nicole Brocard (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 288-305, at 288-291.

12 As noted by Fraser McNair, "A post-Carolingian voice of dissent: the *Historia Francorum Senonensis*," *Journal of Medieval Latin* 28 (2018): 15-47, at 19-21.

13 Guy Lobrichon, "Moines et clercs à Sens et Auxerre au Xe siècle: culture et société," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 24/25 (1989/90): 277-294, at 280-281, note 11.

14 Odorannus of Sens, *Chronicon* a. 999. *Opera omnia*, ed. Robert-Henri Bautier (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1972), 96; *Chronique de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens, dite de Clarius = Chronicon Sancti Petri Vivi Senonensis*, ed. Robert-Henri Bautier et al. (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1979), 84-86.

15 Theo Kölzer et al., ed., *MGH Die Urkunden der Karolinger* 2.2: *Die Urkunden Ludwigs des Frommen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), vol. 2, no. 254, pp. 632-636.

ment of its most recent editors, a genuine original diploma of Louis the Pious does underlie this purported confirmation of all the episcopal properties and privileges in favour of Archbishop Jeremiah, and while it has many suspicious features, one clause deserves particular attention here: the bitter comment that charters prior to the reign of Charlemagne had perished as a result of the neglect and jealousy of the cathedral's officials.[16] Only a handful of genuine Merovingian- or Carolingian-era privileges and diplomas for sénonais churches have survived, and they do indeed suggest a sad case of serious institutional impoverishment, but that is another story. Overall, then, our knowledge of the history of the early medieval city, bishopric and monasteries included, is parlous indeed.[17]

Nevertheless, a massive store of written material does exist, material which was never housed in either the library or the archives and has been largely ignored by historians. It is Sens's copious early medieval relic documentation, and it lies at the heart of this paper. At the time of the French Revolution, the pious and generally conservative citizenry of Sens managed to save much of the contents of the cathedral treasury, except for anything made of precious metal which revolutionary officials seized as bullion. This jumbled hoard contained things which had belonged to more than one of the city's monasteries, in addition to those owned by the cathedral of St Stephen itself. In this context, special mention should be made of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, the most important of the suburban monasteries, whose relics were transferred into the cathedral upon its closure in 1791.[18] First appearing in the written record in 660 (although claiming a sixth-century origin), it had long, intimate associations with the cathedral, functioning as the archbishops' burial church until the late twelfth century, and under episcopal control for long periods. Several early medieval archbishops had deposited relics there, and it would be impossible fully to disentangle episcopal from monastic holdings – if indeed they should be regarded as fully separate.[19] So, although the contents of the treasury certainly offers an archiepiscopal perspective, the object biography of individual items remains elusive, especially as far as the collection up until 1192 is concerned.

Whatever their material substance, whether stone, textile, bone or anything else, relic-objects always need written documentation to supply the specifics of identity. In 1897, Eugène Chartraire (1862-1935), a native of Sens, antiquarian and priest who devoted much of his life's work to the cathedral and its Treasury, had published the first detailed inventory of the surviving vestments, ivories, reliquaries made of wood and non-precious metal, and

[16] Ibid., 636: *Continebatur etiam in eisdem preceptionibus, qualiter per neglentiam et invidiam rectorum et ministrorum eiusdem Senonicę ecclesię strumenta cartarum deperissent….*

[17] The archaeological record is no better; see J. C. Picard, *Province ecclésiastique de Sens (Lugdunensis Senonia).* Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule 8 (Paris: De Boccard, 1992), 19-32.

[18] Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques," no. 11, pp. 143-144.

[19] Saint-Pierre-le-Vif had itself absorbed at least one minor monastery's relics: Eugène Chartraire, "Inventaire du trésor de l'abbaye de Saint-Remy de Sens en 1467," *Bulletin de la société archéologique de Sens* 19 (1900): 80-88, at notes 1-2.

much more.[20] He then enlisted the expertise of another native of Sens, Maurice Prou (1861-1930), Professor of Diplomatic at the Ecole des Chartes. In 1900 they jointly published the 160 parchment labels, tiny notices and other documentation Chartraire had found among the relics, as well as the 1192 *notitia*. They categorised the script of each piece of writing, estimating its date wherever they could, thereby profiling a documentary assemblage whose scripts range from uncial to late sixteenth-century minuscule, 40% of which they attributed to the ninth century or earlier.[21] As established by Prou and Chartraire, the history of the relic collection at Sens is complex; as will be seen, more recent discoveries reveal it to have been even more so than this brief overview suggests.

Of the three dated documents among these finds, the oldest one is central to unravelling the early history of the relics as narrated in 1192.[22] It is a notice of numerous relics in the church of the *castrum* of Melun on the day of its dedication, 23 May 809: "in the eighth year of Charlemagne's reign as emperor and in the thirteenth year of the episcopacy of Magnus" (Fig. 1). The church in question was almost certainly the monastery, later collegiate church, of Notre Dame located within the late Roman fortifications of this strategically important town; Magnus had presumably installed these relics when he dedicated it.[23] He may well have made this list as an "archive copy" for the cathedral's own records, or perhaps he enclosed it in the altar at Melun along with the relic deposit. In the latter scenario, the document would have been retrieved when Robert the Pious rebuilt the church, probably between 1020 and 1031.[24] In either case, it would have been available in Sens in Gui de Noyers' day – and supplied him with written evidence of the conjunction between Charlemagne, Archbishop Magnus and a large number of relics.

[20] Eugène Chartraire, *Inventaire du trésor de l'église primatiale et métropolitaine de Sens* (Sens: Paul Duchemin, 1897). This had 30% more entries, and considerably longer descriptions, than the inventory made a few years previously by the local historian Gustave Julliot, who taught chemistry in the Sens lycée: *Trésor de la cathédrale de Sens. Inventaire dressé en 1885* (Sens: Ch. Duchemin, 1885).

[21] Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques."

[22] The others are nos 144 and 160, dated to 1503 and 833 respectively. No. 160 announces the date of dedication of an unknown altar but adds nothing to the early medieval history of the relics.

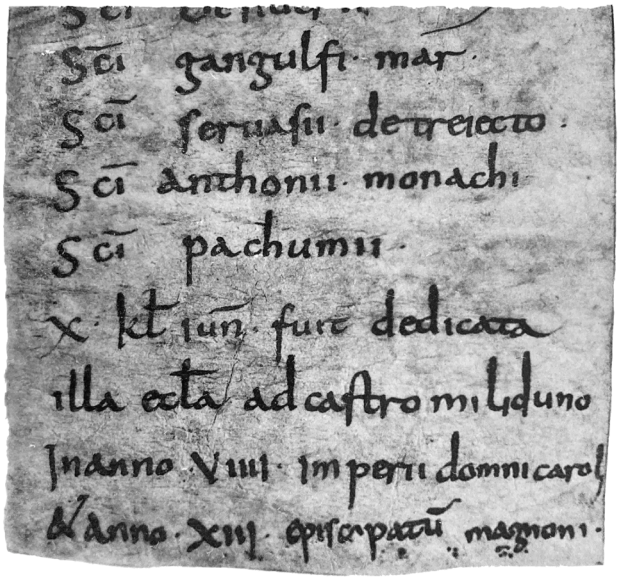
[23] This dedication notice adds significantly to the history of the churches in Melun, about which nothing is known between the sixth and tenth centuries. Yves Gallet, ed., *Art et architecture à Melun au Moyen Age: actes du colloque d'histoire de l'art et d'archéologie tenu à Melun les 28 et 29 novembre 1998* (Paris: Picard, 2000).

[24] Helgaldus, *Vie de Robert le Pieux, Epitoma vitae Regis Rotberti Pii*, c. 28, ed. Robert-Henri Bautier and Gillette Labory, Sources d'histoire médiévale (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1965), 130-131.

Fig. 1. Notice of relics deposited at Melun on 23 May 809

72 x 235 mm. Lost.

Transcription, measurements and image reproduced from Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques", no. 133, plate IX.



" qui | [sancti] Stephani. | De sepulchro D*omi*ni. | Ite*m*, de sepulchro D*omi*ni. | De presepio D*omi*ni. De pallio s*anct*ae Mariae. | De s*anct*o Johanne Bapt*ista*. | Ite*m*, de s*anct*o Johanne Bapt*ista*. | De petra de flumen Jordanis. | De s*anct*o Martino. | S*anct*i Gregorii pape. | S*anct*i Georgii mart*yris*. | S*anct*i Mauricii. | S*anct*i Candidi. | S*anct*i Exsuperii. | S*anct*i Victoris. | S*anct*i Helarii. | S*anct*i Sulpicii. | S*anct*i Anastasii. | S*anct*i Landeberti. | S*anct*i Vedasti. | S*anct*i Isidori. | S*anct*i Leodegarii. | S*anct*i Desiderii. | S*anct*i Gangulfi mar*tyris*. | S*anct*i Servasii de Trejecto. | S*anct*i Anthonii monachi. | S*anct*i Pachumii.

| x k*alendas* jun*ii* fuit dedicata illa ecl*esi*a ad castro Miliduno | in anno .VIIII. imperii domni Caroli | et anno .XIII. episcopatu*s* Magnoni."

Sadly, however, the number of relics deposited at Melun is unknown. Already damaged when published in 1900, the document has since been lost. Prou and Chartraire transcribed what remained, and included a photograph of its last seven lines. Their edition establishes that it took the form of a long thin strip of parchment, 23.5 cm tall and 7.2 cm wide. Neatly written in an early Caroline minuscule, the surviving text begins part way through the list of Holy Land relics and places each of its 27 entries on a new line. This was clearly a substantial relic deposit, one whose size testifies to the importance of Melun and also emphasises the large supply of available relics on which the archbishop of Sens could draw whenever he consecrated a new altar or church.

Like so many of his predecessors and successors, Magnus of Sens (795-817x822) is a somewhat shadowy figure.[25] He was one of the *missi* sent out on circuit in 802; in 810, in liaison with his suffragans, he responded to the emperor's request for a treatise on baptism.[26] He was also the addressee of one of the surviving versions of Louis the Pious's letter accompanying the distribution of the *Institutio canonicorum* and the *Institutio sanctimonialium* in 816.[27] He seems to have been something of a notarial specialist, for he compiled a handbook of legal abbreviations which he dedicated to Charlemagne, and Karl Zeumer suggested that he might have been behind the compilation of the *Formulae senonenses* and perhaps even the production of its sole surviving manuscript, Paris, BnF, lat. 4627.[28] A few letters to and from him survive.[29]

On the basis of the little we do know, it is entirely plausible that Magnus was also a careful administrator of his cathedral's relics and their associated documentation. If, as I supect, the Melun inventory was the copy made for safe-keeping in the cathedral's treasury, it would have been easy for later generations to read it as if it were a foundation charter for the collection as a whole. Indeed, memories of an association between Charlemagne, Archbishop Magnus and the cathedral's relics predated 1192. Writing in the first quarter of the twelfth century, the Saint-Pierre-le-Vif chronicler reported that during Magnus's pontificate, Charlemagne had endowed the cathedral with "estates, goods, various ornaments and also very precious relics of saints".[30] He went on to claim that many relics had been brought to Sens by Jeremiah, *procurator* of the Picard monastery of Saint-Riquier. The sénonais chronicler states that Charlemagne had given the relics to Saint-Riquier out of love for its abbot, his grandson, and goes on to explain that, in order to save them from Scandinavian attacks, Jeremiah brought them to Sens and placed them in Sainte-Colombe, but on succeeding Magnus as bishop, transferred them into the cathedral.[31]

Much but not all of this is garbled. It preserves hazy recollections of ninth-century contacts with Saint-Riquier, of Charlemagne's generosity with relics to favoured religious houses, of the movement of relics between Sens cathedral and the city's famous extramural abbey, of the importance of Magnus in the history of relic collection and the correct name

25 Louis Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1907-1915), vol. 2, 419-420.

26 *MGH Cap.* 1, ed. Alfred Boretius (Hannover: Hahn 1883), no. 34, p. 100; Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), vol. 1, 90-91, 147; vol. 2, 265-271.

27 *Hluodowici imperatoris epistolae ad archiepiscopos missae*, *MGH Conc.* 2.1 (Hannover/Leipzig: Hahn, 1906), 458-464, at 458.

28 *Grammatici Latini*, vol. 4: *Probi, Donati, Servii qui feruntur De arte grammatica libri, et Notarum laterculi*, ed. Heinrich Keil and Theodor Mommsen (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1864), 285-300; *MGH Formulae*, ed. Karl Zeumer (Hannover: Hahn 1886), 183-184.

29 *MGH Epp.* 4: *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. 2, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905), nos. 23-24, pp. 533-535; *MGH Formulae*, nos. 14-15, pp. 218-219.

30 Clarius, *Chronique de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens*, 48.

31 Ibid., 50.

of his successor. Thanks to Hariulf of Saint-Riquier, we know that during Scandinavian assaults after the death of Louis the Stammerer in 879, the Saint-Riquier treasurer Jeremiah did indeed take relics to safety at Sainte-Colombe.[32] The twelfth-century chronicler at Saint-Pierre-le-Vif had spotted the chronological disjuncture here, and resolved it by turning the unnamed abbot of Saint-Riquier, surely Angilbert, from Charlemagne's son-in-law into his grandson. All told, by the time of Gui de Noyers, the Sens clergy had ample information available that pointed to the conclusion that most of their huge stock of relics came from Charlemagne.

But did it? Although Gui de Noyer's inventory provides a crucial anchor point in tracking the earlier medieval contents of the archbishops' relic chest, its explicit acknowledgment that it also held some unlabelled relics, and others whose labels were so old as to be illegible, means that it is not a comprehensive guide to the collection as of 1192.[33] Equally signficant, the number of known labels and relic-notices in Sens has, approximately, doubled since 1900 – including the number of those in pre-Caroline hands. Maurice Prou had published another sixteen Merovingian cursive specimens in 1904, and another forty or so turned up in the 1980s.[34] In 1987, Hartmut Atsma and Jean Vezin decided that 94 relic labels were eligible for inclusion in the Sens entry of volume 19 of *Chartae latinae antiquiores*. They acknowledged uncertainty about whether to date the many difficult Merovingian cursive hands on them to the seventh or eighth centuries, but refraining from commenting on the challenges posed by the series' terminal date of 800, their decision about what to exclude was, inevitably, highly subjective. Including some which are so faded, rubbed, torn or chewed by vermin as to be scarcely legible, my own estimate is that there are at least one hundred texts which probably predate Magnus's episcopacy, and there is reason to believe that this estimate is conservative.

While palaeographical opionions will inevitably disagree about the finer resolution of the date range, two points deserve particular emphasis. In the first place, labels in Merovingian cursive or in scripts which are transitional between that and Caroline minus-

[32] Hariulf explains the choice of Sens on the grounds that Saint-Riquier and Sainte-Colombe shared the same abbot, Guelf. He also claims that Jeremiah duly became abbot of Sainte-Colombe and then archbishop of Sens. *Chronique de l'abbaye de Saint-Riquier (Ve siècle-1104)* III, c. 20, ed. Ferdinand Lot (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1894), 141-142. For Jeremiah's career, see R. Aubert, "8. Jérémie," in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie écclésiastiques* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1999), fasc. 159 1006-1007; Philippe Depreux, *Prosopographie de l'entourage de Louis le Pieux (781-840)* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1997), 275-276.

[33] Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques," 139: *Sunt et alie plures reliquie plurimorum sanctorum sive sanctarum in quibus litterarum note minime reperte sunt aut legi possent quod jam pre nimia vetustate dissolute defecerant*. Comments to this effect are common in relic lists: see my "Portable Christianity," 152-154.

[34] Maurice Prou, *Manuel de Paléographie. Recueil de fac-similés d'écritures du Ve au XVIIe siècle (manuscrits latins, français et provençaux) accompagnés de transcriptions* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1904), plate 5; Hartmut Atsma et al., *Facsimile-edition of the Latin Charters Prior to the Ninth Century: France* VII, *ChLA* 19 (Zurich: Urs Graf, 1987), 40-59. I have discovered only one unpublished Merovingian label; few of the scores of labels and notices post-dating circa 800 have ever been published.

cule signficantly outnumber those in Caroline hands.[35] They are also immensely difficult to read. But on the evidence of the Melun notice, by 809 scribes active at Sens were writing a clear, easily legible Caroline minuscule, so the hundred or so labels in pre-Caroline scripts provide prima facie evidence that the collection was already old when Magnus was archbishop. Secondly, many are composite, naming anything from two to a dozen different saints whose relics had been stored together in a single sachet, phial or wrapper. In effect, the number of individual relics was larger – very much larger – than the number of extant parchment tags either attached to them directly or placed with them inside their containers. It is a safe conclusion that there were a huge number of relics in Sens' churches by the time of Charlemagne, with the principal accumulation in the cathedral of St Stephen, and others in Saint-Pierre-le-Vif and Sainte-Colombe. While Magnus may well have curated and perhaps inventoried the episcopal collection in addition to commissioning a new silver reliquary casket, the surviving palaeographical evidence from the treasury undermines the claim that Charlemagne had donated the major part of the collection. Instead, Sens possessed numerous relics of disparate origin by the time of Magnus's archiepiscopacy.

So I conclude that the claim that Charlemagne lavishly endowed Sens with relics should be regarded as part of the twelfth-century cathedral's imagined past.[36] Founded upon one of the relatively few documents in the treasury that would have been easy for twelfth-century clergy to read, this narrative compensated for the lack of reliable information about the more distant past. Additionally, it addressed their present circumstances. By 1192, the archiepiscopal see was becoming outclassed by its suffragan see of Paris, a city whose rapidly increasing urban wealth, royal patronage, and flourishing cathedral school was relegating Sens into the position of a prestigious but sleepy backwater.[37] By the late twelfth century, Charlemagne had achieved semi-legendary status; by invoking the memory of his munificence, transferring the cathedral's large stock of relics to a glittering new shrine and publicising its contents, Gui de Noyers must have been hoping to attract donations and bolster his see's reputation. His claim cannot be taken at face value.

B. PALATINE RELICS AT SENS

Nevertheless, we should not throw out the baby with the bathwater by dismissing the possibility that Charlemagne might have added something to the already very substantial accumulation of relics at Sens. I turn now to evidence which reveals that Sens did indeed receive relics which came from close – very close indeed – to Carolingian centres of power. Cumu-

35 In addition, *ChLA* 19 includes a few in uncial, half-uncial, or capitalis.

36 Cf. Amy G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

37 Dany Sandron, "Sens et Paris: deux cathédrales face au pouvoir (second moitié du XIIe - début du XIIIe siècle)," in *Saint-Etienne de Sens: la première cathédrale gothique dans son contexte. Actes du colloque du 850e centenaire*, ed. Jean-Luc Dauphin et al. (Paris: Editions A. et J. Picard, 2017), 109-125.

latively, it builds a picture of the royal/imperial court as a node in complex networks of relic circulation and, although the trail does not not lead directly to Charlemagne himself, it does demonstrate that there is nothing inherently implausible about the claim that Magnus had received some relics from the emperor.

The hunt for these contacts starts with Angilbert, poet, trusted confidant of Charlemagne, arch-chaplain for Pippin of Italy, and partner of Charlemagne's daughter Bertha.[38] He was also lay-abbot of Saint-Riquier, which he rebuilt and lavishly furnished. At some point after 800 but before his own death three weeks after Charlemagne's in early 814, Angilbert composed an account of his beautification of the monastery's three churches and their liturgical arrangements, in which he detailed his own huge collection of relics, including their disposition among the monastery's many altars, and provided a systematic inventory.[39] By explaining their sources, he flaunted the extent and range of his contacts: Hadrian I and Leo III had sent relics from Rome, while bishops and abbots throughout the Carolingian empire and imperial legates to Constantinople and Jerusalem had all contributed to satisfying his thirst for relics. Importantly, Angilbert credited Charlemagne with helping him in this enterprise, and even declared that he had obtained a part of every relic belonging to the palace, the *sacrum palatium*.[40]

As archchaplain to Pippin of Italy, Angilbert must have criss-crossed the Alps with some frequency. On at least one occasion, he couriered relics, for when Charlemagne sent him as an envoy to Hadrian I in 795, Alcuin petitioned the abbot of Saint-Riquier to send back from Rome "the gifts sweetest and most necessary for me, that is the relics of the saints". Having earlier asked Egino bishop of Konstanz for relics, Alcuin used Angilbert's journey as an opportunity to remind him, suggesting he also use the abbot of Saint-Riquier to carry them.[41] It is in the context of a relic courier that Angilbert appears twice in the Sens documentation. Two labels can be assigned to the first third of ninth century, quite possibly within the second decade. They are on long, thin strips of parchment of the same colour and width, although one is slightly longer than the other. Both use the same dark brown ink and were probably written by the same accomplished scribe. Their wording makes clear that they were written after their arrival at Sens, for they refer in the past tense to Abbot Angilbert having brought relics of St Andrew and St Maurice respectively (Figs. 2, 3). The

[38] For a succinct summary of his career, see Susan A. Rabe, *Faith, Art, and Politics at Saint-Riquier* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 52-54. and for his family context, Dana M. Polanichka and Alex Cilley, "The very personal history of Nithard: family and honour in the Carolingian world," *Early Medieval Europe* 22 (2014): 171-200.

[39] Angilbert's booklet on his rebuilding of Saint-Riquier survives only in the transcription made by Hariulf of Saint-Riquier, *Chronique de Saint-Riquier* II, c. 8-10, ed. Lot, 57-69.

[40] Ibid., 62. Cf. Mayke de Jong, "*Sacrum palatium et ecclesia*: L'autorité religieuse royale sous les Carolingiens (790-840)," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003): 1243-1269.

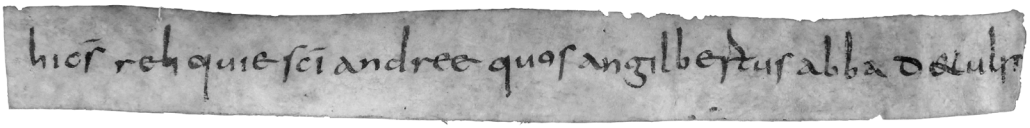
[41] Alcuin, *Epistolae*, nos. 11, 75, 97, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epp.* 4: *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905), 37, 117-118, 141-142. See also Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 448-451.

latter has as its ultimate referent Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, at the northern foot of the main early medieval pass over the Alps, and an essential stopping point for travellers on their route to and from Italy. The former, on the other hand, might well refer to one of the several churches dedicated to St Andrew known to have existed in eighth-century Rome, so it is in principle quite possible that Angilbert had acquired them on one of his many journeys to Italy and deposited them at Sens en route back to Saint-Riquier or the royal court. Alternatively, because both saints feature frequently in early medieval relic assemblages, these two relic-objects might have travelled a circuitous route, via one or more Frankish halting points but then been carried by Angilbert on his route south. That neither the precise date nor context for Angilbert's visit to Sens can be established hardly matters; rather, these two labels demonstrate that relics reached the city through networks of contacts intimately associated with Charlemagne's court.

Fig. 2. Label for relics of St Andrew brought by Angilbert

160 x 18 mm. Trésor de la cathédrale de Sens, propriété Etat, J 75, with permission. © Julia Smith

Previously published: Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques", no. 28, p. 147 and plate X.

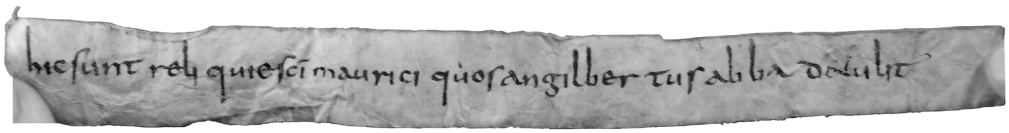


"hic s*unt* reliquie s*anct*i andree quos angilbertus abba detulit"

Fig. 3. Label for relics of St Maurice brought by Angilbert

193 x 19 mm. Trésor de la cathédrale de Sens, propriété Etat, J 490.2, with permission. © Julia Smith

Unpublished.

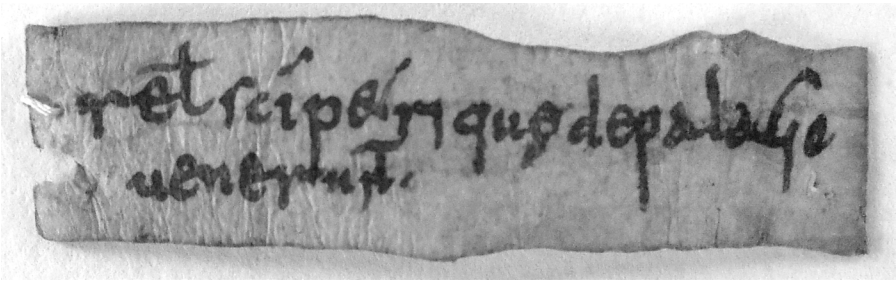


"hic sunt reliquie s*anct*i maurici quos angilbertus abba detulit"

The wording of this pair of labels emphasises the relic-objects' prestige. Unique among the corpus of medieval relic labels known to me for including information about who conveyed them, they are nevertheless not the only Sens labels which proclaim something about the circumstances of their acquisition, for other relics had arrived (by whatever route) from the Carolingian court. Notably, relics of St Peter reached Sens "from the palace" (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Label for relics of St Peter sent from the palace

39 x 10 mm. Trésor de la cathédrale de Sens, propriété Etat J 5, with permission. © Julia Smith
Previously published: Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques", no. 112, p. 158 and plate XII; Smith, *Early Medieval Europe* 28 (3), (2020), no. P15, p. 410 and Fig. 7.



"rel*iquiae* s*anct*i petri quę de palacio | uenerunt."

This label's script might be as late as c. 860, leaving wide open the question of which palace, under which ruler is meant. Although we are accustomed to think in terms of rulers accumulating relics, this indicates that they also disbursed them.[42] One other later document reveals that this was not a unique case and is suggestive of a significant royal donation. Unfortunately, it too is lost, leaving only Prou and Chartraire's transcription and photograph. In a Caroline minuscule which Prou assigned to the ninth or tenth century, it itemises ten relics of the Holy Land and biblical saints and then mentions "very many other saints" (Fig. 5). The practice of including an inventory-notice along with individually wrapped and labeled relics in a single container is attested elsewhere, and this evidently was one such document.[43] Two items are of particular note. Among commonly attested biblical objects such as the Lord's crib and the Holy Sepulchre, an extremely rare Passion relic occurs, "the basin in which the Lord washed the disciples' feet", an object otherwise only attested at the conceptual heart of Louis the Pious's empire, Saint-Denis under Abbot Hilduin.[44] Secondly, a "royal seal" is listed among the relics, as if it was itself regarded as an object of veneration. From the

[42] A curious label for which Prou suggested a tenth- or eleventh-century date is prefaced by a large cross and in a very pale minuscule with odd capitalisation declares: + *Hec sunt .Reliquie s(an)c(t)is Pallacii*; Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques," no. 105, p. 58. This might either refer to one of the several Merovingian saints called Palladius, or might be a garbled copy of a rather older label reporting relics which had been sent from the *sacrum palatium*.

[43] For comparanda, see Tino Licht, "Frühe Authentiken und die Mainzer Schriftkultur im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert," in *In Gold geschrieben. Zeugnisse frühmittelalterlicher Schriftkultur in Mainz. Festgabe für Dom Dekan Heinz Heckwolf zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Winfried Wilhelmy and Tino Licht (Mainz: Bischöfliches Dom- und Diözesanmuseum Mainz, 2017), 16-25; Tracy Niepold and Hedwig Röckelein, "Frühmittelalterliche Seiden und Authentiken aus St. Ursula in Köln," in *Seide im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Frauenstift. Besitz–Bedeutung–Umnutzung*, ed. Thomas Schilp and Annemarie Stauffer (Essen: Klartext, 2013), 199-231, at 219-231.

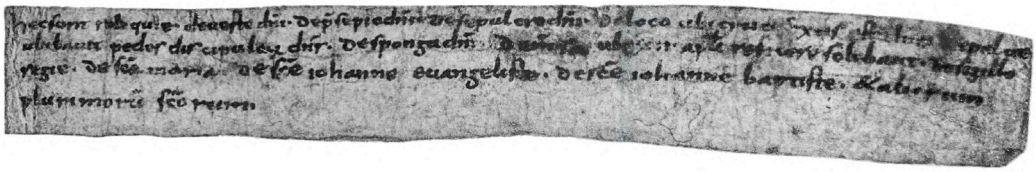
[44] I discuss this in "Relics and the politics of empire: Hilduin of Saint-Denis and his crypt, 825-834," *The English Historical Review* (forthcoming).

seventh century onwards, seals sometimes accompanied relics as tokens of credence when they originated as prestigious gifts from patriarchs or popes; here, then, we find evidence that the custom had spread to the Carolingian court.[45]

Fig. 5. Composite label for a reliquary containing numerous relics

109 x 15 mm. Lost.

Transcription, measurements and image reproduced from Prou and Chartraire, "Authentiques", no. 10, plate XI.



"Hec sunt reliquie de veste D*omi*ni. De p*re*sepio D*omi*ni. De sepulcro D*omi*ni. De loco ubi crucifixus est D*omin*us. De pelve | ubi lavit pedes discipulorum D*omi*nus. De spong*i*a D*omi*ni. De m*en*sa ubi XII ap*osto*li reficere solebant. De sigillo | regie. De s*anct*a Maria. De s*anct*e Johanne euangeliste. De s*anct*e Johanne Baptiste et aliorum | plurimoru*m* s*anct*orum."

C. A GIFT OF ALMS?

Admittedly, none of this evidence is sufficient to prove that Charlemagne himself gave relics to Magnus of Sens. It does, however, confirm the plausibility of the notion. So when might a generous donation of relics, accompanied by the royal seal, have reached Sens? Einhard offers a possible answer.[46] In the final chapter of his *Vita Karoli*, he cited – supposedly verbatim – the *descriptio atque divisio* which constituted Charlemagne's will of 811, a witnessed and ratified record of the disposition of his movable wealth.[47] Jinty Nelson characterised it as "an idiosyncratic text: a distinctive account of Charles's patriarchal charity and piety framed in learned number-symbolism".[48] After a religious invocation and dating clause, the elderly emperor stated his motives: to give the "gift of alms" (*eleimosinarum largitio*) expected of all Christians, and to ensure that there was no possibility of dispute among his heirs about their entitlements. The document then outlined how he had divided up "the treasures and money found in his chamber on this day" before explaining how he had divided into three parts "all his substance and movable goods… in gold, silver, precious stones and royal

[45] To be explored in detail in Julia M. H. Smith, *Christianity in Fragments: The Formation of the Cult of Relics from Constantine to the Carolingians* (Cambridge University Press, in progress).

[46] Hiltrud Westermann-Angerhausen first suggested this line of thought to me, and pointed out the implications for other metropolitan sees.

[47] Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 33, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, *MGH SRG* 25 (Hannover /Leipzig: Hahn, 1911), 37-41.

[48] Janet L. Nelson, *King and Emperor: A New Life of Charlemagne* (London: Allen Lane, 2019), 469.

ornaments" found there.[49] Two of the three lots were to be divided into twenty-one parts, each of which was to be placed in a chest, sealed, and labelled with the name of one of the twenty-one metropolitan sees in the empire.[50] For the avoidance of any doubt, he named the twenty-one metropolitans in question: they include Sens. His "heirs and friends" were to ensure that each reached its destination and, in their turn, each metropolitan archbishop was to subdivide his share into thirds, keeping one and splitting the others among his suffragans. Then, whenever the elderly emperor finally died – or retired to a religious life – the remaining third, which he had set aside for his own support during the remainder of his life, was to be split into four parts, with the archbishops to receive a final distribution of one quarter of everything that was left.

As Anton Scharer has pointed out, Charlemagne's will is infused with an elderly man's preoccupation with the biblical injunction to lay up treasure in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:19-21), in other words, between the relationship between worldly wealth and eternal salvation.[51] Whether or not the actual wording was Charlemagne's own, that of senior chancery clerics, or had been doctored by Einhard, as some have claimed, it bears emphasising that whoever chose the wording drew on a vocabulary of accumulated riches and Christian charitable generosity which straddled secular and ecclesiastical moveable wealth.[52] Indeed, under the influence of Jerome's Vulgate, the word *thesaurus* had not only displaced the classical *aerarium* to denote an accumulation of riches, but had added powerfully religious connotations to its formerly secular meaning.[53] Its expanding semantic range becomes evident in the ninth century, when, five years before Charlemagne made his will, he had instructed his *missi* to insist that bishops, abbots and abbesses kept all their "ecclesiastical treasures" safe, and ensure that no gems, vases or any other treasure be lost or sold.[54] Then, the year before his death, he ordered bishops to follow the canonical injunctions to feed the poor "from the church's treasure".[55]

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49 Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 33, *MGH SRG* 25, 38, ll. 4-5, 13-15:…*de thesauris suis et pecunia, quae in illa die in camera eius inventa est. … Omnem substantiam atque suppellectilem suam, quae in auro et argento gemmisque et ornatu regio….* Here and elsewhere I cite the translation of David Ganz, *Two Lives of Charlemagne* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2008), 41-44.

50 Ibid., p. 38, ll. 28 - p. 39, line 1, lines 6-7: *Harum divisionum, quae ex duabus primis partibus factae sunt et iuxta metropoleorum civitatum numerum XX et una esse noscuntur, unaquaeque ab altera sequestrata semotim in suo repositorio cum superscriptione civitatis, ad quam perferenda est, recondita iacet. Nomina metropoleorum, ad quas eadem eleimosina sive largitio facienda est …. Illis duabus in supradictas divisiones distributis et sub sigillo reconditis…*

51 Anton Scharer, "Das Testament Karls des Grossen," in *Urkunden–Schriften–Lebensordnungen. Neue Beiträge zur Mediävistik*, ed. Andreas Schwarcz and Katharina Kaska (Vienna: Böhlau, 2015), 151-160.

52 Matthew Innes, "Charlemagne's will: piety, politics and the imperial succession," *The English Historical Review* 112 (1997): 833-855, at 833, n. 2; Scharer, "Testament," 153-154; Nelson, *King and Emperor*, 469.

53 Anita Guerreau-Jalabert and Bruno Bon, "Le trésor au Moyen Âge: étude lexicale," in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge: discours, pratiques et objets*, ed. Lucas Burkart et al. (Florence: SISMEL, 2010), 11-31, at 15-16.

54 Capitulary of Nijmegen (806), c. 4, *MGH Cap.* 1, no. 46, p. 131.

55 *Capitula e canonibus excerpta* (813), c. 12, *MGH Cap.* 1, no. 78, p. 174.

By the ninth century, relics elided the difference between secular and sacred treasure and were valued as assurances of the intercessory power of saints even more than for their gold and jewelled reliquaries.[56] So might they have been among the "treasures" which Charlemagne distributed in his will? The evidence from the treasury of Sens is highly suggestive. Angilbert of Saint-Riquier had been among the will's thirty witnesses and signatories and, as we have seen, had brought relics to Sens, though neither their provenance nor the date of his visit there is known. Other relics in the cathedral had come from the ninth-century palace, and one sizeable package still had the royal seal tucked in among them. Taking all this into consideration leads me to suggest that relics might easily have featured among the "treasures" contained in the chests conveyed to Sens and the other twenty archbishoprics in fulfilment of the emperor's testamentary wishes. If so, it becomes evident that generations of cathedral clergy at Sens had told and retold stories of a special gift from Charlemagne that was kept in a chapel which bore his name. Through all the vicissitudes of the late ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, memories of that bequest had grown to fabled proportions. As the rationale of Sens's magnificant relic collection, the myth reassured the cathedral's clergy and congregation of its glorious past as a beneficiary of imperial patronage and largesse. As memories of Charlemagne's donation lived on at Sens, so memories of Janneke's generosity of spirit live on in this small gift.

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[56] Smith, "Rulers and relics" and eadem, "Portable Christianity," 151; Lucas Burkart, "Transfer und Transzendierung. Zum Wandel von Bedeutung in mittelalterlichen Schätzen," in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Discours, pratiques et objets*, ed. Lucas Burkart et al. (Florence: SISMEL, 2010), 69-87, at esp. 70-71.

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TOGETHER IN THE COMMUNITY OF THE SAINTS: RELIC COLLECTION AND "REMEMORY" AT THE ABBEY OF CORBIE

ANNE E. LESTER[1]

ABSTRACT

In the year 1283, the monks of Corbie translated their considerable relic collection into a new relic container intended for display on one of the abbey's main altars. There the community gathered its most prized relics, linking together relics of its founders and early abbots with newer additions carried by Robert of Clari in the wake of the Fourth Crusade of 1204. The translation corresponded to a moment of reflection and "rememory" that coincided with the first narrative history of the relic collection at Corbie. This text, authored by the monk Jean de Flixecourt, was copied into a breviary-*rituale* codex created at the abbey, now Paris, BnF, lat. 13222. Jean set out to explain the abundance of relics in the monks' collection and to unite the different relic fragments in order to form a larger whole that drew on the community's collective memory of its foundation, the patronage of Charlemagne, and the abbey's crusading connections. The monks recognized their prodigious collection as an impressive abundance of sacred matter that together made an argument for the enduring holiness of the community and the narrative power of memory.

KEYWORDS

Relics; Memory; Corbie; Fourth Crusade; Jean de Flixecourt; Charlemagne; Adalhard; Narrative; Liturgy

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The translation of relics, especially within a religious community, was often a moment of historical reckoning and reflection. Interacting with the material remains of the saints, moving bones, cloth, stones and other sacred materials from one place to another, or from an older container or box to a new one, afforded an opportunity for the human and the sacred to come into intense physical contact; a time when mundane matter was recognized and reinscribed as sacred.[2] Such *translatio* events were charged with meaning, frequently noted in chronicles, charters, and letters and accompanied by gifts of alms, the creation of lavish or renewed reliquaries, and new commemorative narratives. They were also instances generative of new forms of commemoration, reflection, reform, and community cohesion.[3] Often framed by and through relics, translation ceremonies created opportunities for the past and the present to converge, when history and memory could be scrutinized, reframed, and recorded.[4] Or, to borrow the powerful and evocative term from Toni Morrison, to interact with bones and holy matter afforded an opportunity for "rememory," a process beyond simply committing something to memory and beyond remembering it upon command or if questioned. "Rememory" is cyclical. It is also a recognition that memories, when evoked, have the force to change the present; the present self in Morrison's novels, and present communities when taken on collectively within a family, a social group, and an institution.[5] "Rememory", therefore, reaffirms certain key ideas and conceptions, brings them into the present, and has the potential to have them reemerge again at some future time. For medieval monastic communities, practices of "rememory", that is, remembering in a recursive

[2] For the religious and sacred potential of relics and their translations, see Julia M. H. Smith, "Portable Christianity: Relics in the Medieval West, (c.700-1200)," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 181 (2012): 143-167; Philippe Buc, "Conversion of Objects: Suger of Saint-Denis and Meinwerk of Paderborn," *Viator* 28 (1997): 99-143.

[3] The literature on this topic is vast. For examples pertinent to this essay, see Julia M. H. Smith, "'Emending Evil Ways and Praising God's Omnipotence': Einhard and the Uses of Roman Martyrs," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Seeing and Believing*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 189-223; Anne E. Lester, "Confessor King, Martyr Saint: Praying to Saint Maurice at Senlis," in *Center and Periphery: Studies on Power in the Medieval World in Honor of William Chester Jordan*, ed. Katherine Jansen, G. Geltner, and Anne E. Lester (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 195-210. See also Edina Bozóky, *La politique des reliques de Constantine à Saint Louis* (Paris: Bauchesne, 2006); and the essays in Jean-Luc Deuffic, ed., *Reliques et sainteté dans l'espace medieval* (Saint-Denis: PECIA, 2006). My own thinking about the Carolingian world has benefitted immensely from conversations with Janneke Raaijmakers as I note below, and further from conversations and correspondence with Julia M. H. Smith. I thank Mayke de Jong and Albrecht Diem for their comments, suggestions, and editorial acumen, and Rosamond McKitterick for her final reading, all which made this essay much stronger.

[4] For the ways that objects, like works of art, could affect a sense of time, see the arguments offered by Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 18, where they discuss "anachronic" senses of time, that is the effect of "a doubling or bending back of time." Many other scholars working on relics have made similar observations; see the essays in Jan-Peer Hartmann and Andrew James, eds., *Material Remains: Reading the Past in Medieval and Early Modern British Literature* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2021).

[5] Morrison develops this idea in her novel *Beloved*. See also Toni Morrison, *The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches and Meditations* (New York: Knoft, 2019), "Rememory," 322-325.

and transformative manner, were also fundamental to the work of the liturgy, which was carefully crafted to collapse Biblical and contemporary time, to bring together the present and the past, cyclically and commemoratively.[6] This essay takes up just such moments of reflection on the part of the monks of Corbie in the late thirteenth century when they began to remember and retell the longer history of the abbey's relic collection, seemingly for the first time. It is also an act of dedicatory "rememory" in honour of Janneke, a colleague and dear friend, who has been in my thoughts as I wrote, and who, had she still been with us, would have shaped my thinking on this subject in ways I now can only imagine.

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In 1283, during the abbacy of Hugh de Vere, the monks of the abbey of Corbie translated their relic collection from an older container, known to them as "First of Saint Peter" (*Prima Sancti Petri*) into a newly commissioned, large-scale reliquary made of the "highest quality work" (*materiam superat opus*), which brother Acardus, monk of Corbie and provost of the monks' lands, ordered to be made with the consent of the abbot.[7] The older reliquary, according to the abbey's ancient narrative tradition (*secundum antiquorum nostrorum narrationem*), was a gift from Emperor Charlemagne (d. 814) to Adalhard, his cousin and abbot of Corbie (*Princeps Karolus Magnus .. contulit sancto Adardo quondam Abbati Corbiensi, consanguineo suo*). That container had become too old and too decayed (*nimiam antiquitatem nimium deforme*) for proper veneration. Thus, in 1283, the abbot and other good men oversaw the translation of 208 relics into the new reliquary.[8] In that process they revisited and named the dozens of relics in the form of fragments of sacred materials, bones, cloth and more, collected at the abbey since its foundation in the seventh century. The translation came during a period of historical reflection on the part of the community, for eight years earlier, the monk Jean de Flixecourt wrote a short history of the abbey's relics that embedded them into the longer

[6] There is a vast bibliography on the interplay of memory, narrative, and liturgical time; see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "Memory and History: Liturgical Time and Historical Time," *History and Theory* 41 (2002): 149-162 and the essays in Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton, eds., *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 2016); and Katie Ann-Marie Bugyis, A. B. Kraebel, and Margot E. Fassler, eds., *Medieval Cantors and their Craft: Music, Liturgy and the Shaping of History, 800-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[7] The monks recorded the 1283 translation and a list of the relics translated into the abbey's new reliquary in a *rotulus* consisting of three pieces of parchment stitched together at the sort edge, now held in Amiens, Bibliothèque Amiens Métropole [hereafter: BAM], 527. As addressed below, the list was also copied into a breviary-*rituale* codex, Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 119r-121v. Jean Mabillon included an edition of this text as an appendix to his *Vita S. Adalhardi*, published in Luc d'Achery and Jean Mabillon, *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, vol. 4.1 (Venice: Coleti and Bettinelli, 1735), 350-354, at 354-355. Although Mabillon's edition of the *Vita S. Adalhardi* was reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina* (*PL* 120, 1507-1582), Migne did not include the material in the Appendix. In the notes below, therefore, I cite both the BnF codex, which is also available digitally on Gallica, and the 1735 edition, for it is the only printed edition available.

[8] Amiens, BAM, 527; Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 119r; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*, Appendix, 354.

narrative of the abbey's patronage and thus a broader sacred history of the community of the saints and their miracles. Jean's text, which has been given the title *Tractatus de reliquario dicto Prima sancti Petri* by later commentators, unfolds a remembered version of Corbie's relic acquisitions that united the community's first supposed gifts of relics under abbot Adalhard with Jean's thirteenth-century crusade-focused present. To do so, the author crafted a material and sacred narrative that wove Corbie and its relics into larger events in the history of Christian Europe, ideals and ambitions of empire, and the monks' ties to their local world in northern France at the outskirts of the episcopal city of Amiens.

The relic history Jean offered was neither a hagiography of the abbey's saints, nor a *translatio* of the movement and reception of relics, but rather a retelling of how the monks had amassed their assembled relics over time.[9] His was a narrative of memories, retold and recorded, that reflected how Corbie understood its role in sacred material history. Jean's text, which is the principal focus of this article, was copied and added into a breviary-*rituale* volume studied here: Paris, BnF, lat. 13222 at fol. 122r-133v, a volume that may have been composed and read for the celebration of the reception of the relics at Corbie or on related feasts honouring the community's relics.[10] To my knowledge, beyond the edition Luc d'Archery and Jean Mabillon produced as an Appendix to their edition of the *Vita S. Adalhardi* in 1735 and a few scant references to Jean de Flixecourt's other works, no one has worked on this text, nor has it been translated into English.[11] At some point in the late thirteenth century, Jean's text was also copied into another codex (Paris, BnF, lat. 13780 at fol. 128r-132v) also from Corbie, containing the *Lives* of St. Bernard and St. Francis among other texts. This volume may also have served as a lectionary for communal reading or private devotion. In some key respects, Jean's narrative is also a valuable resource for thinking about the textual histories of the Fourth Crusade and Corbie's role in the lead up to that event and during its aftermath. It also demonstrates how relics were framed as collections that worked together by virtue of being a sacred abundance to reaffirm the anachronic and cyclical workings of

[9] For *translationes* composed during the central Middle Ages, see Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2nd ed. 1990). Jean's text, however, is unique in many respects. It may be closest in form to some of the later medieval histories written for monastic communities discussed below, n. 33.

[10] See the description in Victor Leroquais, *Les sacramentaires et les missels manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, 3 vols. (Paris/Macon: Protat frères, 1924), vol. 2, 177-179, no. 362; and idem, *Les brévaires manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, 5 vols. (Paris/Macon, Protat frères, 1934), vol. 3, 229, no. 609.

[11] Françoise Vielliard gives Jean's text the title *Tractatus de reliquario dicto Prima sancti Petri*. The text has no formal title in BnF, lat. 13222, but rather begins: *Quoniam de illo vase quod vulgariter Prima sancti Petri dicitur*, spanning fol. 122r-133v. For Jean's work as a copyist at Corbie, see Léopold Delisle, *Le cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 3 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1868-1881), vol. 2, 116-17; and Françoise Vielliard, "La traduction du *De excidio Troiae* de Darès le Phrygien par Jean de Flixecourt," in *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature, and Translation: Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, ed. Peter Rolfe Monks and D. D. R. Owen (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 284-295, at 286-87. For Jean's work as an author-translator, see below n. 48-51.

sacred time and having the transformative potential of "rememory" to pull the past into the present.

In what follows, I survey the abbey's principal relics, much as its monk-historian Jean de Flixecourt did in the second half of the thirteenth century. I address what we know about how Corbie's relics were kept and used, as reflected in the three late thirteenth-century relic lists and the breviary volume that preserved a copy of the record of this event. Finally, I shall address the narrative that Jean put together, to make an argument about the community of the saints as remembered at the esteemed Picard abbey. What is most remarkable about Jean's account is that he does not privilege one saint or set of holy materials over another, but rather sees them as an assemblage modelled on the Ark of the Covenant and Charlemagne's alleged collection of relics. Together, they reflected the significance and sanctity of the abbey over time.

A. CORBIE'S RELICS

Founded by Queen Balthild and her son Chlothar III between 657 and 661, the Abbey of Corbie was at the forefront of a series of royal monastic foundations created in part to support and enhance the prestige and influence of members of the Merovingian royal family and their ambitions as religious and political leaders. Balthild intended Corbie to be part of the reform movement emanating from Columbanus's famed abbey of Luxeuil.[12] Corbie's first abbot, Theudefrid, and its earliest community of monks came from Luxeuil. Presumably they carried with them the earliest copy of the Luxeuil's distinctive rule and monastic liturgy, and conformed with the abbey's dedication to Saints Peter and Paul in order to mirror that of Luxeuil, thus signalling a spiritual association among the saints.[13] It is no surprise that the monks preserved relics of their sainted queen and founder, Balthild, as well as of Peter and Paul in their early collection, and that they venerated Balthild on her feast day. The oldest reliquary the abbey maintained was called simply "First of Saint Peter" (*Prima Sancti*

[12] David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990), here at 14-15. For a discussion of the abbey's early history, see also Mayke de Jong, *Epitaph for an Era: Politics and Rhetoric in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 57-64, esp. 62-64 at n. 82.

[13] It is possible, although I know of no such evidence, that the monks carried fragments of relics of Peter and Paul from Luxeuil with them to their new foundation of Corbie. Corbie also had a smaller church dedicated to St. Stephen and thus presumably also acquired relics of Stephen, who was similarly a popular saint for dedications during the later Merovingian period. On the spiritual connections fostered among such communities through shared devotions, see Todd Matthew Mattingly, "Living Reliquaries: Monasticism and the Cult of the Saints in the Ages of Louis the Pious," PhD diss. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2019). I thank Albrecht Diem for this reference. On such translations and the need for relic deposits in church altars more broadly, see also Julia M. H. Smith, "Eleventh-Century Relic Collections and the Holy Land," in *Natural Materials of the Holy Land and the Visual Translation of Place, 500-1500*, ed. Ranana Bartal, Neta Bodner, and Bianca Kühnel (London: Routledge, 2017), 19-35, at 20-26. I thank Julia Smith for sharing this article and for her comments on this topic.

Petri), presumably referring to the first relics the abbey was given upon its foundation and the dedication of its first altar.

The archival record sheds virtually no light on the later Merovingian history of the abbey, although the community steadily amassed lands and rights in the region. The monks preserved a series of protections, copies of charters from its founders as well as from their successors, which enabled the community's lands and rights to remain relatively intact and free from the depredations of agents of the royal fisc.[14] Over time, the abbey amassed a considerable landed domain within the Amienois. The monks administered these holdings with increasing attention and sophistication through a network of monastic provosts who collected the abbey's revenues and administered its material interests. From the eleventh century onwards, the monks maintained a carefully curated series of cartularies that brought together the community's earliest charters, donations, and privileges to preface their later acquisitions.[15] In the year 1200, the abbey also created a roll of fiefs that recorded an elaborate list used for the collections of rents, tithes, and military service due to the abbey.[16]

Corbie's political role and its connection to the royal court comes back into view beginning in the mid-eighth century. From the time of Charlemagne's accession, the Carolingian rulers favoured the abbey either directly or through advisers and family members close to the king and his heirs. Corbie was drawn into the political intrigue of the Carolingian court in the decades that followed.[17] Charlemagne's cousins Adalhard and Wala became successive abbots of Corbie, and during this time the abbey reached its height as a centre of intellectual efflorescence and manuscript production.[18]

Adalhard, who would be remembered as one of Corbie's most prominent abbots (r. 780/1-d. 826), had grown up in the same courtly world as Charlemagne. Adalhard's and Wala's father, Bernhard, was the son of Charles Martel and an unnamed woman.[19] Their brothers and sisters were likewise well-connected and similarly appointed to positions of

[14] Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 17-21; and Léon Levillain, *Examen critique des chartes mérovingiennes et carolingiennes de l'abbaye de Corbie* (Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1902). See also De Jong, *Epitaph*, 63.

[15] All of the major cartularies for Corbie are in Paris: *Cartulaire noir*: BnF, lat. 17758; *Cartulaire blanc*: BnF, lat. 17759; *Cartulaire Esdras*: BnF, lat. 17760; *Cartulaire Nehemias*: BnF, lat. 17761; and *Cartulaire Mercator*: BnF, lat. 17764.

[16] Amiens, Archives départementales de la Somme, 9 H 56 (1200) (a roll of sixteen parchments). The only study of the patrimony of the abbey and its administration is that of Luc Dubar, *Recherches sur les Offices du Monasstère de Corbie jusqu'a la fin du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Picard, 1951). Dubar includes an edition of the abbey's fief roll in Appendix 4, 132-154. It seems most likely that this document was drawn up in anticipation of the Fourth Crusade, 1202-1204.

[17] See Mayke de Jong and Justin Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire: Paschasius Radbertus' Funeral Oration for Wala of Corbie* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), esp. 1-46; also, more extensively, De Jong, *Epitaph*, esp. 44-68 and 149-177.

[18] Adalhard and Wala were half-brothers. According to Ganz, Adalhard entered the abbey of Corbie around 772; see Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*. On the abbots, see also Brigitte Kasten, *Adalhard von Corbie: die Biographie eines karolingishen Politikers und Klostervostehers* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1986); and for Adalhard's career, see De Jong and Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire*, 1-46.

[19] De Jong and Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire*, 15-18.

significance in powerful Carolingian abbeys that maintained close links with Corbie.[20] Adalhard took part in the literary traditions of the court, cultivated a shared love of classical authors, and became a long-time correspondent of Alcuin's during the latter's sojourn in England. Early in his career, Hincmar described Adalhard as "one of the chief councillors of Charlemagne." In this capacity he was sent to Rome in 809 in a contingent accompanying the Carolingian reforming abbot Smaragdus to discuss and redefine the Frankish rites of the Mass.[21] After a period of political exile in Italy following Charlemagne's death (814), Adalhard and his brother Wala returned to Corbie.[22] In 822, Adalhard put in place a series of statutes that reorganized the economic life of the abbey and empowered a new cadre of officials to oversee the hospital, garden, cellar, and the abbey gate. At that point, the abbey was one of the largest monastic communities in the Carolingian sphere, providing for 350 monks, 150 prebends (mostly for laymen, but also for clerics, and servants and staff of the abbey), and twelve paupers.[23] It is in the statutes that we glimpse the abbey's liturgical and memorial commemorations, which must have been related at least in part to the relics in the abbey's church. For example, special provisions of extra food and drink rations were given out at Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany, the feast of Balthild on 30th January; and on the celebration of the Purification (2nd February), Easter, Ascension, the Assumption of the Virgin, the Birth of the Virgin, the feasts of John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, Martin, Andrew, Stephen, John the Evangelist, Gregory, Philip, James, Paulinus, Laurence, Bartholomew, Matthew, Firmin, Thomas, and Benedict, as well as for the dedication of the abbey churches of Saints Stephen and Peter.[24] Adalhard's reformist vision propelled him to oversee the new monastic foundation of Corvey in Saxony, modeled on that of Corbie. At his death, in 826, Wala assumed the abbacy of Corbie and Corvey jointly and continued to pursue a similar line of reform and influence at court and beyond. Both men were the subject of commemo-

[20] Adalhard's sister became the abbess of Notre-Dame at Soissons. Ganz mentions that Radbert also "wrote a commentary on Psalm 44 for the nuns of Notre-Dame at Soissons, who had adopted him, and a treatise on the Virginity of Mary." (Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 32; alas, no footnote for these texts is given). Corbie and Notre-Dame of Soissons became important marshalling locations for the departure of the Fourth Crusade in 1202, suggesting that some of the ties between the two houses were maintained. See Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, in Joinville and Villehardouin, *Chronicles of the Crusades*, trans. Caroline Smith (New York: Penguin, 2008), paragraphs 11, 40 and 43.

[21] Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 24-25.

[22] On this context, see De Jong and Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire*, 18-24; De Jong, *Epitaph*, 149-177. Adalhard and Wala's sisters were likewise forced into exile; see Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 25-29; and Matthew Innes, "Charlemagne's Will: Piety, Politics and the Imperial Succession," *English Historical Review* 112 (1997): 833-855, at 842-843.

[23] *Statuta seu Brevia Adalhardi abbatis Corbeiensis*, ed. Josef Semmer, in *Initia Consuetudinis Benedictinae: Consuetudines saeculi octavi et noni*, ed. Kassius Hallinger et al., *CCM* 1 (Siegburg: Respublica-Verlag Franz Schmitt, 1963), 357-408.

[24] Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 26-27.

rative biographies written by Paschasius Radbertus, and the subject of recent studies in their own right.[25]

The early manuscript tradition of Corbie has been the subject of prodigious study, far more so than its relic collection.[26] Indeed, overall, the abbey's relics have remained rather overlooked by scholars. This may stem from the fact that there are no diplomatic sources attesting to gifts of relics specifically. During the Carolingian period, moreover, the monks were more compelled to write the *vitae* of their sainted abbots and commentaries on the Bible than histories or *translationes* of their relics. Although the early history of relic collecting at the abbey is somewhat opaque, it is possible that relics came to Adalhard, and hence to Corbie, as a personal gift from Charlemagne. This is the argument that Jean de Flixécount offered in 1275, noting that Corbie's relics moved within familial channels, through abbot Adalhard, to the monks, rather than as part of a more public donation or confirmation. But it is also possible that relics passed into the community's possession when they abbey's immunities were confirmed or at pivotal moments when the community was reformed, though no such evidence survives to confirm this. There were precedents for such gifts, especially those emanating from the court, as in the case of the abbeys of Prüm and St.-Riquier.[27] Charlemagne's will also enumerated gifts intended for his family, for servants of the palace, and for the purchase of some items from his chapel.[28] The relics attributed to Charlemagne that came to Corbie could have been acquired in any number of related, but unrecorded, transfers after the emperor's death.[29] Over time, the monks, no doubt by virtue of the connection with Adalhard, developed a retrospective tradition, a communal memory, associating their history, and especially the history of their relics, with Charlemagne.[30]

For reasons that remain unclear, Corbie never produced narratives of its earlier Merovingian or Carolingian relics or their process of collection like those generated by the monk Rudolf for the relics Hrabanus Maurus brought to the community of Fulda, or the *translatio* and *miracula* Einhard wrote for the relics he gathered at the abbeys of Michelstadt

[25] Ibid., 29-31; 104-120; and De Jong and Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire*, 21-46. For the Christianization of Saxony where Corvey was located and the movement of resources, see Ingrid Rembold, *Conquest and Christianization: Saxony and the Carolingian World, 772-888* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 143-187.

[26] See above n. 18.

[27] See the contribution in this volume by Julia M. H. Smith, "A Gift of Alms."

[28] For the will itself, see Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, c. 33, transl. David Ganz, *Einhard and Notker the Stammerer, Two Lives of Charlemagne* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 41-44; Innis, "Charlemagne's Will."

[29] The transfer, translation, and gift of relics could also proceed during periods of conflict. See Martina Caroli, "A Woman's Body for the Empire's Salvation: The *Translatio* of Queen Bathild's Body and the Crisis of the Year 833," in *Relics, Identity, and Memory in Medieval Europe*, ed. Marika Räsänen, Gritje Hartmann, and Earl Jeffrey Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 91-113.

[30] On this process, see Amy G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1995); Anne A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World: Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800-1229* (Ithaca NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2013), 59-98.

and Seligenstadt.[31] It may have been that the new crusade-related relics given to the community in the thirteenth century prompted the monks to generate a narrative stretching back to the abbey's founding and first reforming abbot.[32] Indeed, although there is no charter evidence connecting Charlemagne with a gift of relics to the monks of Corbie, this "memory" came to be attached to the relics the monks preserved.[33]

Surveying what is known about the abbey's history, it becomes clear that Corbie's relic collection grew in two crucial phases: in the first, as part of a collection of relics associated with a gift – whether imagined, or real but undocumented – made by Charlemagne to Adalhard; in the second, as part of the large cache of relics the local Picard knight, Robert of Clari, brought to the abbey between 1206 and 1213 in the wake of the Fourth Crusade. Like other Fourth Crusade collections, Robert's donations included numerous Passion relics and other sacred materials that hailed from the treasury of the imperial palace in Constantinople.[34] When Robert returned, he dictated a list of the relics he carried, which were put into a separate crystal reliquary. He also dictated a narrative of his experience on crusade, a version of which was recorded in Picard and was kept at the abbey until the seventeenth century when it was taken with other manuscripts to Sweden.[35] Over time, these two collections, that is, the relic gift ascribed to Charlemagne and Robert of Clari's Byzantine relics, came to inhabit the same space, and eventually, by 1283, they were set into the same large reliquary container (*vas)* as part of the greater assemblage or community of the saints whose histories were related and grew into and informed each other.

31 For Fulda, see Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c. 744-c. 900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and for Einhard's accounts, see Smith, "Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (6th series) 13 (2003): 55-77; and Smith, "'Emending Evil Ways."

32 Similar narratives were written for the communities of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif in Sens (in 1294) and for Saint-Denis outside Paris (in the 1230s and 1240s). See Geoffroy de Courlon, *Livre des reliques de l'abbaye de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens*, ed. Gustave Julliot and Maurice Prou (Sens: Ch. Duchemin, 1887). The Saint-Denis material has not been edited, but appears in Paris, BnF, lat. 2447 and BnF, nal. 1509. I thank Cecilia Gaposchkin, who is currently working on the Saint-Denis relic texts, for these references.

33 See Hyacinthe Dusevel, *Histoire abrégée du Trésor de l'abbaye royale de Saint-Pierre de Corbie* (Amiens: Imprimeries Lemer, 1861).

34 Anne E. Lester, "Translation and Appropriation: Greek Relics in the Latin West in the Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade," in *Translating Christianity*, ed. Simon Ditchfield, Charlotte Methuen, and Andrew Spicer. Studies in Church History 53 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 88-117.

35 For the list of relics, Lester, "Translation and Appropriation," 115-117; for Robert's narrative, see Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 2004); English transl. by Edgar Holmes McNeal, *Robert of Clari, The Conquest of Constantinople* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1936, reprint 1996). Robert's text was copied into what is now Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS, 487, fol. 100v-128r. In 1664, the king of Denmark purchased the library of the Danish scholar Petrus Scavenius, which included this manuscript. Hence it was moved to Copenhagen.

B. CORBIE'S RELIC LISTS

The most complete surviving list of relics from the abbey exists in a long-form double-sided *rotulus*, or *rouleau*, now in the Bibliothèque Amiens Métropole [BAM] (ms. 527). This roll, copied probably between 1281 and 1283, combines what may have been three separate lists.[36] The first enumerates a vast and varied assortment of relics ranging from relics of Christ's Passion and the Holy Land, to those associated with the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and the early Christian martyrs, as well as local Gallic saints, including the relics of the abbey's founding saints, namely, Balthild, Adalhard, and Paschasius Radbertus, among others.[37] A second list, continuous with the first but rubricated separately, sets out the relics that Robert of Clari brought with him from Constantinople to Picardy after the Fourth Crusade, which were kept initially in a separate crystal reliquary. Finally, a third list details the relics translated in 1283 into the new reliquary created to replace the older container associated with Charlemagne, known as the "First of Saint Peter." The three lists appear to be written in slightly different hands, but all date to the thirteenth century. It is possible that in its *rotulus* form this long parchment was meant to be used either in the liturgy or for public acts of recitation in one of Corbie's churches during major feasts celebrating the abbey's patrons, abbots, and sacred objects.[38]

Taken together, the three lists have considerable overlap. Numerous fragments of the cross are listed at various places in all three. Examples of relics related to Mary are also common across the lists, among many other repetitions. The texts copied on the *rotulus* do not represent a narrative of the relics the abbey possessed, but are closer to an inventory. Could this reflect a reading and listing of relic labels from the many (well over 300) relics in the abbey's various reliquaries? It is hard to say. The overall message, however, is clear: Corbie possessed an abundance of relics, some of which were of local provenance and of direct significance to the abbey, its monks, and the community's history. But there were also many that connected Corbie through a material presence to the larger and longer sacred history of the Church, to the Frankish Empire envisaged by Charlemagne, and to the Holy Land and Constantinople.[39] In this sense, as Janneke Raaijmakers noted for Fulda, the relics gathered at

[36] For the description of these lists and their copying, see Lester, "Translation and Appropriation," 90-91.

[37] For a survey of the relics, see Dusevel, *Histoire abrégée du Trésor.* This list, copied on the first of two rolls, appears to be the earlier of the two and was associated with the relics in the church of Corbie.

[38] See Smith, "A Gift of Alms;" and Sarah Hamilton, "The *Rituale*: The Evolution of a New Liturgical Book," in *The Church and the Book*. *Studies in Church History* 38, ed. R. N. Swanson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), 74-87. In this sense, the rolls may have served a similar purpose to that of earlier visible *tituli*, written to identify the saints within reliquaries like those at Fulda discussed in Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community*, 217.

[39] On the importance of the concept of abundance and sacred matter, see Robert A. Orsi, *History and Presence* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2016). For the connection with Charlemagne and the Holy Land, see Latowsky, *Emperor of the World*, 215-250.

Corbie "connected the present community of the faithful, … to the early Christian church" making Corbie, like Fulda, "another holy city and another centre of the world."[40]

At some point in the final two decades of the thirteenth century, as noted above, two of these three lists were copied into a late thirteenth-century breviary-*rituale* codex now in Paris, BnF, lat. 13222.[41] The volume is small in format and may have been used either in the main church of the abbey dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul or in the smaller church dedicated to Saint Stephen. The volume may also have been copied for personal use, a practice that was not uncommon for monks and canons by the later thirteenth century.[42] Unlike large-format complete breviaries copied in the 1280s, BnF, lat. 13222 is more of a service book and it contains a selection of offices and rites used for feast days and masses.[43] It also contains one full-page colour illumination on fol. 47r of the crucifixion with Mary and John the Evangelist flanking Christ hanging on the cross and bleeding from his side, an image most likely intended for personal prayer and meditation and inserted between two folios of short prayers with musical notation. The volume is rubricated throughout, clearly noting changes among offices and prayers, and interspersed with prayers, hymns, and psalms set to music. It was copied by no fewer than three different scribes. The final quarter of the volume (beginning at fol. 112) may have been added later, for the hands are different and form part of two separate gatherings (although not complete quires) of parchment pages. Folios 114v-117v contain yet another list of relics, similar to the first list copied in Amiens, BAM, 527, but with slight variations and changes in the ordering of the relics. The breviary list is written in a clear late gothic hand and is rubricated in red to highlight specific groups or sets of relics in a manner that could have facilitated reading either silently or aloud. This is followed on fol. 118r-v by a short prayer in the first person and then a note that the following narrative was written by Jean de Flixecourt in the year of the Lord 1275.[44] A curse of anathema follows

40 On the ways relics create networks and collapse time, see Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community*, 215-227, esp. 221.

41 I use the term breviary-*rituale* because the text appears to have had both functions and has been classified using both terms. On *rituale* volumes, see Hamilton, "The *Rituale*." Another, much earlier but related volume is Paris, BnF, lat. 8898, a *rituale* created for the cathedral community of Soissons just before the Fourth Crusade, which contains a narrative – copied after 1205 – of Nivelon de Chersiy's gift and translation of relics from Constantinople to Soissons. On this volume, see Lester, "Translation and Appropriation," 106-112; and M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, "Nivelon de Quierzy, the Cathedral of Soissons, and the Relics of 1205: Liturgy and Devotion in the Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade," *Speculum* 95 (2020): 1087-1129.

42 There were at least three churches at Corbie: The main abbey church dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul, a smaller abbey church dedicated to Saint Stephan, and possibly a parish and hospital church dedicated to Saint John. See, Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 15 and 26.

43 See the description and digitized version of the manuscript at https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc743015 and Leroquais's description, above n. 10. In contrast, see my analysis of another of Corbie's large-format breviaries: Anne E. Lester, "Prayer, Penance, and Pastoral Care: Innocent III and Devotion to the Veronica at the Abbey of Corbie," in *Lateran IV: Theology and Care of Souls*, ed. Clare Monagle and Neslihan Senoçak (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023), 183-210.

44 The subscription reads: *Ad honorem totius Trinitatis et perpetue ac gloriose virginis Marie et beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli et omnium sanctorum quorum corpora et reliquie in hac Corbeiensi ecclesia continentur, compos-*

for anyone who would speak against the text.[45] Jean's text, which will be discussed below, begins on fol. 122r. Inserted between the curse and the formal narrative, however, (on fol. 119r-121v) is another copy of the relic list bearing the date 1283, copied when the community translated its relics from the First of Saint Peter container into the new reliquary during the time of the abbacy of Hugh de Vers. This list and the short introductory text that prefaces it are exactly the same as the third list on the roll copied onto Amiens, BAM, 527. It describes and enumerates the relics placed into a sumptuous three-tiered reliquary, each containing different, though often overlapping and repeating, relic fragments. Finally, fols. 122r-133v, which forms a separate quire, contains Jean de Flixecourt's narrative describing and historicizing the relics listed in the previous ten folios.

The repeated copying of these detailed relic lists raises questions about how they were used, both in roll format and when copied into a breviary-*rituale* manuscript. Clearly, such lists functioned as an inventory of an abbey's relic collection, as they were recorded, copied and recopied, a process itself redolent of "rememory" at work.[46] If the lists were read aloud in a liturgical setting, they would echo litanies of saints, the prayerful unspooling of all those who shared in Christ's life and imitative suffering, and who stood as stalwart defenders of the Church. Such litanies and relic lists were a textual representation of the community of the saints materially manifest in the abbey's reliquaries. Taken together, the lists made clear that the full community of saints they recorded was present in the abbey's altars and, after 1283, in the new grand reliquary created to contain this sacred abundance. As well as Christ and the Apostles, it comprised eastern saints from Late Antiquity and the Gallic saints responsible for Corbie's founding. Gathered and encased in this way, the relics materialized the sacred ideals of the abbey's first patrons and of Charlemagne himself and grafted them onto the networks and ambitions fostered by the crusade movement, especially after 1204. The reliquaries functioned as formidable "arks," or containers of sacred matter reflective of past Carolingian triumphs. They signified the role the abbey played in pivotal moments of spiritual and political history, while also charging the community as a sacred space prepared for future events of equal significance to come.

itus est liber iste a fratre Johanne de Flissicuria, anno ab incarnatione Domini MCCLXXV. Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 118r-118v; Delisle, "Recherches sur l'ancienne bibliothèque de Corbie," part 1, 409.

45 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 118v: *Quem qui furatus fuerit seu maliciose abstulerit, anathema sit, et cum Juda traditore Domini et cum Juliano apostate, cum his etiam qui dixerunt Domino Deo: Recede a nobis, scientiam viarum tuarum nolumus, in districti judicii dei recipiat portionem. Fiat, Fiat. Amen.* As Delisle notes, this is a rather long and curious malediction formula, especially for the later part of the thirteenth century. Whether written by Jean himself or a copyist, such a curse formula suggests a self-consciousness about the "truth" of what follows. See Delisle, "Recherches sur l'ancienne bibliothèque de Corbie," part 1, 409.

46 On lists, see the essays in Claire Angotti, Pierre Chastang, Vincent Debiais, and Laura Kendrick, eds., *Le pouvoir des listes au Moyen Âge*, vol. 1: *Écritures de la liste* (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2019), esp. Elisa Pallottini, "Monumentalisation et mise en scène des saints dans le lieu de culte: Les listes épigraphiques de reliques dans l'Occident medieval (XVVVe-XIIe siècle)," ibid., 31-60; also Phillippe Cordez, "Gestion et mediation des collections de reliques au Moyen Âge: Le témoignage des authentiques et des inventaires," *Reliques et sainteté dans l'espace médiéval*, *Pecia* 8-11 (2005): 33-63.

C. JEAN DE FLIXECOURT'S NARRATIVE IN PARIS, BNF, LAT. 13222

At some point before 1275 the monk-author Jean de Flixecourt was tasked with writing a narrative history of the abbey's relics. In crafting his text, Jean carefully stitched together personal memories with historical accounts and biblical references. He linked the relics to the events of the Fourth Crusade, to miraculous occurrences at the abbey, and to the gifts of Charlemagne, which themselves looked back to the victories of Constantine, and of the Israelites before him. Curiously absent in Jean's text is a reference to Balthild and the Merovingian past of the abbey. Rather it is the legacy of Charlemagne and his imperial ambitions that dominate Jean's narrative. The text is neither a hagiography nor a *translatio* strictly speaking; it draws on the knowledge and memories of older monks at Corbie and stitches that information together with other sources that must have been available in the abbey's library.

Unfortunately, we know very little about Jean de Flixecourt. The texts attributed to him, however, show that he was part of multi-generational network of authors and monks connected to the abbey of Corbie who were part of a culture of Latin and vernacular writing centred in Picardy.[47] Authors and scholars like Jean were instrumental in creating an historical framework that drew together biblical precedent, antique histories, and contemporary romances to give narrative meaning and coherence to contemporary political events. Such texts served to demonstrate, in Massimiliano Gaggero's words, the "way in which the [long] history of the Levant [as the site of Biblical events and crusade expeditions] was very much tied to political interests in the West."[48]

Jean has been identified as the author-translator of two known texts. In 1262 or 1263, working from a manuscript in Corbie's library, he completed a French prose translation of the Latin poem known as the *De excidio Troiae* by Dares Phrygius.[49] Twelve years later,

[47] Robert of Clari and someone I believe was a clerical redactor were part of this, if not at the forefront of such vernacular recording at Corbie. Robert's text was related to other vernacular narratives of the period, and specifically following the Fourth Crusade, to that of Villehardouain; see Theodore Evergates, *Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Marshal of Champagne: His Life and Memoirs of the Fourth Crusade* (Ithaca NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2024). On this tradition more broadly, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993); Marcus Bull, *Eyewitness and Crusade Narrative: Perception and Narration in Accounts of the Second, Third, and Fourth Crusades* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2018).

[48] Massimiliano Gaggero, "Western Eyes on the Latin East: The *Chronicle d'Ernoul et de Bernard Le Trésorier* and Robert of Clari's *Conquête de Constantinople*," in *The French of Outremer: Communities and Communications in the Crusading Mediterranean*, ed. Laura K. Morreale and Nicholas L. Paul (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018), 86-109, at 99. See also, idem, "Ricordi della storia antica nella storiografia francese sulle Crociate," in *L'Antichità nel Medioevo: Testi, tradizioni, problemi.* Critica del testo 22.3, ed. Gioia Paradisi and Arianna Punzi (Rome: Viella, 2019), 181-205.

[49] Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS, 487, fol. 45: "Pour che que li roumans de Troies rimés contient mout de coses que on ne treuve mie ens u latin, car chis que le fist ne peust mie autrement belement avoir trouvee se rime, je, Jehans de Flicicourt, translatai sans rime l'estoire des Troiens et de Troies du latin en roumans mot a mot ensi comme je le trouvai en un des livres du livraire mon seigneur saint Pierre de Corbie, en l'an del incarnation Jhesu Crist .M. CC. et .LXII. el mois d'avril, a le requeste dant Pierron de

in 1275, Jean composed the text under consideration here (fol. 122r-133v of BnF, lat. 13222), which is entitled *Tractatus de reliquiario dicto Prima sancti Petri.* Tellingly, at the end of the thirteenth century, Jean's French translation of the *De excidio Troiae* (fol. 45r-60r) was copied into a manuscript (Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS, 487) which also contained the *Récits d'un ménestrel de Reims* (fol. 1-44r), a partial copy of the French Pseudo-Turpin (fol. 61r-78r), a text on *Discipline de clergie* attributed to Petrus Alphonsie (fol. 80r-99v), and Robert of Clari's vernacular memoir or "history" of the events of the Fourth Crusade known as the *Conquête de Constantinople* (fol. 100v-128r).[50] In short, Jean's work was associated with a set of texts that dealt with crusade history, the imagined fall of Troy, the victories of Charlemagne in the east, the translation of relics, and the ideal of *translatio imperii*.[51] Working in the abbey of Corbie, Jean certainly had access to these and other texts of both classical history and contemporary crusade histories. He was an author well-versed in Latin and French and could move in written form freely between the two. He was thus uniquely suited to bring together the histories of the relics at Corbie, for he was able to borrow from the French vernacular history tradition and apply its narrative details and themes to the Latin *Tractatus* composed for liturgical use at the abbey.

The *Tractatus de reliquiario* crafted an historical arc for the abbey's relics. Jean did so by deploying the voice of a first-person eye-witness, a living source for Corbie's history: the ninety-year old monk, Brother Gerard, the infirmarian of the abbey, who had heard the stories that adhered to the relics.[52] The use of a first-person eye-witness narrator was an increasingly common form for translation narratives relating the movement of crusade rel-

Besons, aumosnier de saint Pierre de Corbie." See Vielliard, "La traduction du *De excidio Troiae*," 285; and Gaggero, "Ricordi della storia antica," 193-194. It is possible that Jean's translation of the *De excidio Troiae*, a vernacular retelling of the fall of the city of Troy, may have been commissioned to correspond with the visit of King Louis IX to Corbie in 1262/63. On Louis's visit to the abbey, see the prefacing remarks in Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*, 350. Mabillon notes that the day after the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, 14 September, in 1263 the body of St. Adalhard was translated into a new reliquary (*nova theca*) by the Bishops of Laon and Cambrai in the presence of Louis IX, Charles of Anjou, his brother; Baldwin II, the Latin Emperor of Constantinople; and Phillip (III) the king's son; Master Albertus, pontifical notary and legate; Robert (II) of Artois, Gui of Châtillon, Count of St-Pol; Peter Mouret, abbot of Corbie; Gerard, abbot of Mont- St.-Quentin; and "a multitude of other princes and prelates." Unfortunately, this translation is not mentioned in Carolus-Barré, "Saint Louis et la translation des corps saints."

50 See above, n. 37.

51 For these and related texts, Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*; Latowsky, *Emperor of the Word;* and *Tales of a Minstrel of Reims in the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Samuel N. Rosenberg, intro. William Chester Jordan (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2022). On the *De excidio Troiae,* see Vielliard, "La traduction de *De excidio Troiae;*" Louis Faivre d'Archier, *Histoire et géographie d'un mythe: La circulation des manuscrits de "De excidio Troiae" de Darès le Fhrygien (VIIIe-XVe siècles)* (Paris: École des chartes, 2006); and Frederic Clark, *The First Pagan Historian: The Fortunes of a Fraud from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), esp. chapter 1-3. I thank Scott G. Bruce for the latter reference.

52 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 122r; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Ego Frater Iohannes de Filssicuria quod super hiis a senioribus meis didici, et precipue a reverentissimo viro fratre Gerardo dicto infirmario, iam tunc dum hoc mihi narraret fere nonagenario.*

ics.[53] That Jean chose to take up this narrative technique for historicizing the relics of Corbie is intriguing; it brought an immediacy and authenticity to the history he recorded in written form. These included stories of the relics' provenance, their associations with Charlemagne, their role in healing and castigating supplicants who came to the abbey, and their role in relation to the crusades. It was, thus, history and, specifically, memory that served to tie together the relics the abbey had amassed over time. Gerard's memories, recalled and reiterated through the process of reading or hearing Jean's text, bound together the community of the saints at Corbie.

Jean begins by introducing Brother Gerard and explaining that, following on what Gerard has told him, he will set out first the history of the original reliquary, the First of Saint Peter; why it was called that; and what it contained.[54] After introducing his source and the order of his composition, Jean turns to Charlemagne, lauding his prowess as king of the Franks who ruled with the insignia of the whole Roman Empire.[55] He then explains that it was Charlemagne's practice whenever he visited a city or town to enquire about the precious relics in the monasteries and churches there. He would humbly ask for the most precious objects to be given to him. Travelling from place to place, Charlemagne gathered relics into a great container that he would carry into battle and with it he would always and everywhere triumph over his enemies.[56] In this way, Jean notes, Charlemagne followed the example of the Israelites who carried the Ark of the Lord with them into battle and that of Emperor Constantine the Great who went into war with the banner of the Holy Cross.[57] When Charles grew old, Adalhard, his cousin and then the abbot of Corbie, asked the great emperor if he would give the container and its relics to the abbey of Corbie where it would be honoured in the church in his, that is Charles's, memory.[58] The emperor assented to the request and – again according to Jean – Adalhard accepted the reliquary and brought it

[53] For the use of the first person in crusader narratives, see Carol Symes, "Popular Literacies and the First Historians of the First Crusade," *Past and Present* 235 (2017): 37-67; and above, n. 48.

[54] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 122v; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Et primo quidem a quo et per quem vas illud nobis datum fuerit: Deinde quare sic appelletur, et quid in eodem contineatur, per ordinem videamus.*

[55] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 122v; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Karolus igitur magnus, … utpote qui non solum francorum et germanorum regna, verum etiam qui primus regum francorum, totius romani imperii regebat insignia.*

[56] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 123r; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Acceptis itaque reliquiis pius imperator prelatis super huis gratias* (…) *in praefato vase easdem honorifice reponebat* (…) *ut in bellis bellorum que expeditionibus praefatrum sibi vas praeferri iuberet. et sic opitulante Domino de suis semper et ubique hostibus triumpharet.*

[57] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 123r-123v; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Hoc nimirum agebat fidelissimus imperator ad exemplum israhelitarum archam Domini contra suos in bellis adversarios deferentium, necnon et ad instar potentissimi imperatoris Constantini magni, qui in initio fidei sue, cum Dominus eidem insompnis apparens, signum crucis ostendisset dicens, in hoc vince, labarum quod inter bellica romanorum signa erat preciosissimum, in sanctae crucis vexillum praecepit transformari, et ad suorum confortationem, et adversariorum terrorem in bellis constituit deportari.*

[58] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 123v-124r; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *in senium imperatore Karolo* (…) *Adalardus,* (…) *eidem imperatori familiarissimus, utpote ipsius consanguineus et in eius palatio ab infan-*

to Corbie to the great joy of the clerics and the people; from then on it has been venerated there.[59] As he unfolds these details, Jean adds contextual information, noting that Adalhard was the son of Bernard, the brother of Pippin, Charlemagne's father and thus the two were cousins.[60] They had, moreover, been educated together in the same Carolingian palace (*in eius palatio ab infantia educatus*), sharing a court culture. These details emphasize the closeness of Adalhard and Charlemagne, making Adalhard's request for the emperor's gift of relics all the more plausible. Of course, as Amy Remensnyder has shown, similar invented histories circulated widely, in each case substantiating a link between the great emperor and the relics collected, generating a narrative that tied the monastic house to Charlemagne and in turn to an influential imagined past.[61]

Jean then turns to the role of memory and the ways in which, within a monastic setting, a plausible relic provenance was passed down. He explains that, just as fathers tell details to their sons, so too the story of the relics, and especially the first relics that Charlemagne donated to Corbie, was told over generations. This chain of knowledge persisted until there arose one monk who did not believe the words of his father abbot, a brother named Godefridus, who wanted to see what was contained inside the reliquary.[62] Drawing an analogy to Uzzah [Ozan], who opened the Ark of the Covenant, Jean explains that Godefridus was struck blind when he opened the reliquary; a parable for all who would doubt Jean's history.[63] As a consequence – here is the explanatory force of the anecdote – no one had opened the reliquary for generations; indeed, a long time elapsed before the reliquary was used. But then, in 1198, Peter the Chanter and a host of other prelates came to the abbey to preach the cross, thus igniting the recruitment effort for the Fourth Crusade.[64] When Peter retired to the

tia educatus, (…) *praefatum imperatorem adiit, suis eum propulsans precibus, quatinus sibi vas praenominatum ob sui memoriam in Corbeiensi honorifice custodiendum ecclesia largiretur.*

59 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 124r; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *Accepto igitur vase beatus Adalardus omnipotenti Deo atque inperatori gratias egit, et cum magno cleri populique gaudio ad monasterium suum Corbeiense deferri faciens, illud in loco ubi extunc usque nunc in magna (ut decebat) veneratione habitum est, honorifice collocavit.*

60 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 124r; Mabillon, "Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix," 351: *recolens consanguinitatem, Bernardus quippe pater sanctissimi confessoris Adalardi, frater fuit Pipini francorum regis, patris scilicet imperatoris Karoli.* As Mayke de Jong pointed out to me, he also conveniently glosses over the fact that Bernard's and Pippin's mothers were different women.

61 Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past*, esp. 105-214; see also Latowsky, *Emperor of the World*, 215-250, for the broader impact of such invented histories.

62 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 125r; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 352: *Unde factum est, ut filii qui nascebantur et exsurgebant, quae et quanta de praefato vase et de reliquiis in eo contentis a patribus suis audierant et cognoverant, suis filiis enarrarent.* (…) *itaque prolixi temporis intervallo, surrexerunt in hac nostra Corbeiensi ecclesia filii, qui patrum suorum verbis increduli* (…) *visu cognoscere voluerunt.*

63 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 126r; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 352: *Neminem igitur moveat hinc fratri praesumptuoso justo Dei illata judicio caecitas oculorum perpetua; cum nos legamus Ozam, quia archam Domini bobus recalcitrantibus inclinatam manu sua quod non licebat tetigerit.*

64 Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 127v-128r; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 352: *Elapso denique longissimi processu temporis. Erat in urbe Parisiensi magister Petrus, ecclesiae beatae Mariae cantor* (…) *ut postpositis omnibus negotiis peregrinationem Iherosolimitanam in regno Franciae praedicaret.*

abbey of Longpont and died in the same year, he appointed Fulk of Neuilly to preach in his stead. Fulk, Jean recounts, soon became renowned for his holiness and for his preaching and came to the abbey of Corbie.[65] While there, he heard the story of Brother Godefridus and was distressed that the relics kept at the abbey were not revered as they should be. Therefore, he counselled the monks to fast for three days and to process to the reliquary, at which time Fulk himself opened the reliquary and found inside numerous small bags of precious relics, some pertaining to the Lord Jesus Christ, others to Mary, and still others to revered martyrs, confessors, virgins and saints, including John the Baptist.[66] These were shown to the monks. Jean goes on to explain that at that time Gerard, the infirmarian, was a young boy at the abbey who had seen and heard all these things. Jean notes that he recorded these memories from Gerard's mouth so that they might be known and passed down faithfully to another generation (*ego sicut ex ore eius accepi, scripto ut cognoscat generatio altera fideliter commendavi*).[67] At that time, in response to Fulk's preaching, he signed many men from France and the adjacent provinces with the cross. Certain of these men, Jean says, went to the promised land as they had vowed, whereas others went to Constantinople and took the city.[68] Jean then ends his text abruptly, explaining that there Count Baldwin of Flanders, whose daughter Margaret (d. 1279) now [1275] governs the county of Flanders, was recognized unanimously as Emperor of Constantinople.[69] Jean then affirms how his narrative was part of a chain of knowledge that drew on stories and information from eye-witness accounts that were remembered and told to him, and then folded into his present scripted narrative. His was a history generated through a circular form of memory and "rememory" that was finally written down to be shared and read by those who would follow him. Speaking, reading, reciting, and remembering around

[65] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 128v; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 353: *Post mortem igitur magistri Petri discipulus ipsius magister Fulco ei in officium praedicationis sanctae crucis succedens.*

[66] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 129v-130v; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 353: *triduanum eisdem indixit jejunium in quo tridui spatio ipse jejuniis vigiliis atque orationibus vacans, Dominum suis sollicitabat precibus, ut se ipsum et vas sanctum aperire et quae intus reliquiae continerentur, cognoscere pateretur* (…) *Aperto itaque vase, vir sanctus intus aspiciens, diversos intuetur sacculos reliquiis preciosis refertos* (…) *in sacculo, primum quidem de Domino nostro Jesu Christo preciosas invenit reliquias, videlicet de sanguine eiusdem Domini* (…) *de capillis, de umbilico, de praepucio, de vestimentis* (…) *Reliquias siquidem de beata virgine Maria* (…) *de lacte* (…), *de capillis, de camisia, de peplo, de panno quem ipsa propriis manibus operata est, et de multis aliis quae longum esset per singula numerare.*

[67] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 132v; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 354.

[68] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 132v; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 354: *scilicet magistri Fulconis, praedicatione, multi in regno Franciae et in adiacentibus provinciis, barones, principes, duces, comites, vicecomites, marchiones, milites, equites, nec non et cunei peditum innumerabilies crucesignati sunt: quorum quidam ad terram promissionis, ut sic vota sua Deo persolverent, transfretarunt. Alii vero ad urbem Constantinopolitanam transeuntes, et eam subiugantes.*

[69] Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 133r; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi: Appendix*, 354: *Virum illustrem Balduinum Flandrensium comitem, cuius filia Margareta in presentiarum vivit, et Flandrie comitatum gubernat,* (…) *imperatorem sibi unanimiter creaverunt.*

the relics of the abbey was a profound part of what generated community and, in this case, the care and custodianship of the greater community of the saints.[70]

Jean's text is not interpretative. It does not seek to reveal a hidden truth or to gloss an event or set of objects. It is, as it purports to be, a "telling" (*narraratum*), or a record of what the community of Corbie remembered about the relics it preserved. In this sense it relies on memories, told and retold; the work of "rememory", folded and collapsed together. In some respects, it reveals a core absence and silence, for at the centre is the revelation that the reliquary the monks preserved had been sealed for generations, its contents forgotten, unknown, unaccounted for. Jean's narrative was written to address a series of straightforward questions: what was inside the First of Saint Peter container; how did it come to the abbey; and how could the lack of knowledge concerning the abbey's relics be adequately explained? In unfolding his narrative, he also writes a form of *inventio*, a revelation within the abbey that was brought on through fasting, prayer, and humility.[71] Jean is less concerned with an historical truth than he is with the authority and authenticity of his source: the eye-witness memories of Gerard, who was there as a boy when the reliquary was most recently opened, who was an eye-witness to the events of his day, that is, men going off in 1202 to the Holy Land and arriving in Constantinople. Finally, the layers of miracles that Jean unfolds, namely, the blinding of a too curious monk, Godefridus, and the revelation to the holy man Fulk, show how potent relics were, with a power undiminished over time.

When read with the relic lists, both those copied in BnF, lat. 13222 that preface Jean's text and those in the Amiens *rolutus*, Jean's narrative explains how the generations of saints worked together as a complementary whole, reflecting the fullness of both ecclesiastical time in the world and the revelation of Christian triumph as it was remembered communally at Corbie. This record, complex and layered, is also at odds with how many modern scholars imagine the relics of the saints to be ranked and ordered within a post-Tridentine hierarchy: that is, with one set of relics outshining another.[72] The idea that relics within a community were or would be competitive commodities is simply unfounded, certainly not in the case of Corbie.[73] For most religious communities, relics were collected in order to work together, reflecting the abundance of grace and divine power through a process of amplification that

[70] Jean's final line reads as follows: *Hec idcirco dixerim, quatinus hiis que superius a me scripta sunt, maior fit in posterum fides a legentibus adhibenda; cum iudicio tante auctoritatis viri, et tam multa experti, ea fuisse cognoverint approbata*. Paris, BnF, lat. 13222, fol. 133v; Mabillon, *Vita S. Adalhardi*: Appendix, 354.

[71] A narrative parallel to the relic revelations at Corbie is found in the way that Charlemagne's relics were revealed in the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus*. On this better-known text, see Latowsky, *Emperor of the World*, 74-98, esp. 89.

[72] On such later conceptions imputed to the earlier medieval period, see Julia M. H. Smith, "Relics: An Evolving Tradition in Latin Christianity," in *Saints and Sacred Matter: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Cynthia Hahn and Holger A. Klein (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Library, 2015), 41-60.

[73] See principally: Geary, *Furta Sacra*; idem, "Sacred Commodities: The Circulation of Medieval Relics," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 169-191.

rendered the abbey and the region part of a broader and synchronic holy sphere. Medieval people did not curate their relics collections in competitive and hierarchical ways; this was not how they understood the power of the community of the saints.[74] Rather, it was the abundance of sacred matter over and above any sort of valuing or valuation that communities esteemed. From the Carolingian period through the late thirteenth century, Corbie kept its relics together in small bags (*sacculi)* that filled shared containers (*vasae*) that required continual revelation and reverence by specific (ideally holy) people at specific moments of need. The preaching of a new crusade campaign was just such a moment, as the monks of Corbie came to see. Moreover, relics required continual recognition, recitation, and "rememory" to facilitate their meaning as an assemblage but also, and perhaps more importantly, for the community that held and revered them. It was communal memory that stored the power and living *virtus* and the living memory of holy matter, and that saw them work in the world. Communal memory shaped those wonders and shared them within the liturgy on an annual, cyclical, basis. One way we might imagine Jean's text to have functioned could be as a supplement to the liturgy, as a set of lections to be read on the days various relics were celebrated, on the invention or exaltation of the cross, and on the feast of Saint Peter.[75] In this sacred context it mattered little that there were no charters or diplomas recording Charlemagne's gift to the monks of Corbie. His role had become the stuff of sacred history, put to use in a different way. By 1275, Charlemagne and the "memory" of his relic collection were used to justify and inspire renewed imperial ambitions and pilgrimage vows to the Holy Land and Constantinople.

CODA: REMEMORY AND JANNEKE'S LEGACY

I have had it in mind to write about Corbie's relics for many years. I had always assumed, trusted even, that I would be able to turn to my dear friend and colleague Janneke to ask her for her thoughts, close-reading, parallels, and insights and to talk again about how and in what ways Carolingian relics and relic stories influenced later Capetian histories and rituals. And in this case, how such "memories" were reworked and re-remembered by Picard monks and knights invested in a different, perhaps more independent, sense of Charlemagne and his imagined exploits in the east. My assumption was terribly, sadly, wrong. Now I have had to call upon Janneke and recall our many conversations as part of my own on-going process of "rememory" for my dear friend. I will continue to do so as I read and write and work as a medievalist in our world, to keep her with me, keeping her intellectual questions and ideas

[74] See Smith, "Portable Christianity;" eadem, "Old Saints, New Cults: Roman Relics in Carolingian Francia," in *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, ed. Julia M. H. Smith (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 317-339. Rather, as Smith points out, the movement of relics into new collections and locales, "[affirmed] the relics' sanctity for a new clientele, [and] crystallized new collective memory and commemorated the topographical redistribution of sacred authority." (328).

[75] The inclusion of Jean's *Tractatus* in the two liturgical manuscripts, Paris, BnF, lat. 13222 and BnF, lat. 13780, suggests that it was a text intended to be read during the liturgy or possibly in the refectory.

knit closely with my own and turning back to her writing about Carolingian monasteries and monks, relics and revelations, as I do so. I hope this essay will sustain that process of "rememory" – of bringing the past into the present to reshape it as we go forward – and will keep Janneke present with us, in our reading and thinking, for many years to come.

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SIGNED AND SEALED: DETERMINING THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE RELICS OF ST. ROMBOUT IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

RENÉE SCHILLING[1]

ABSTRACT

How Christians established which relics were trustworthy and deserved veneration has been a question of great importance in both the Middle Ages and the early modern period. This contribution uses the case study of the cult of St. Rombout (d. 775) in Mechelen to show how four markers of authenticity that validated a saint's cult in the Middle Ages changed over time and were redeployed to accommodate the needs of local communities in the early modern period.

KEYWORDS

Relic Veneration; Material Culture; Mechelen; Counter-Reformation; Authentication

INTRODUCTION

On the 9th of July 1580 Calvinist troops entered the city of Mechelen. They plundered the churches, smashed the statues of the saints and scattered and destroyed some of the city's most precious relics. During the invasion some citizens rushed to the cathedral in order to

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save and hide the religious objects. Five years later, when Spanish soldiers had reconquered the city, Archbishop Hauchinus (1583–1589) ordered all those who had taken one or more relics from the city's patron saint St. Rombout (d. 775) to return them to the cathedral. More than thirty people answered this call. They were questioned about how they had been able to take one or more bones of the saint and in what condition they had found the relics. The most spectacular statement came from a beguine named Anna van Roy. She had taken the skull of St. Rombout and a golden cloak of a statue of the Virgin and hid them both in her skirt. Outside the cathedral on the market square, she was searched by soldiers, but only the Virgin's cloak was taken from her. Amazed that the skull had not been detected, Anna showed it to some close friends and members of her household at home, and had a glass shrine made to protect the precious relic. The city council awarded Anna six guilders for her bravery. When all the relics had been returned, Archbishop Hauchinus examined the bones and drew up a certificate in which he declared that the bones were authentic. On the 3rd of November he read this testimonial out loud in the chapel of St. Martin, enclosed the relics in a new reliquary, added his official seal, and declared that the 3rd of November would be a holy day from now on, to celebrate the reassemblage of the relics of St. Rombout. The ceremony ended with a procession with the relics to the cathedral. The saint was finally home again.[2]

The reassembling of the relics of St. Rombout spelled the beginning of a campaign to reinforce the cult of saints in Mechelen, which had been repressed during the period of dominance by Calvinists. During and after the Counter-Reformation the question if, and if so, which, relics were authentic was of vital importance to counter the criticism of the cult of saints from both Catholics and Protestants alike. The question was, however, not new or solely provoked by Protestant criticism but had been a crucial element of relic veneration from the Early Middle Ages onwards. In "The Medieval Notion of Truth: The Trustworthiness of Relics," a contribution written for the exhibition catalogue *Fake for Real: A History of Forgery and Falsification* (2020), Janneke Raaijmakers investigated how Christians in the Middle Ages established which relics were trustworthy and deserved veneration, and which were not. This paper will look at three markers of authenticity which Janneke discussed in her contribution, namely miracles that were associated with the relics, written evidence regarding the saint, and reliable witnesses of the cult.[3] By examining the devotion of the relics of St. Rombout from the sixteenth to eighteenth century I shall demonstrate how the evaluation and the assessment of these three markers changed overtime. Moreover, I shall

[2] Joseph Jacques De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften dienende tot ophelderinge van het leven, lyden, wonderheden, ende duysent- jaerige eer-bewysinghe van den heyligen bisschop ende martelaar Rumoldus, apostel ende patroon van Mechelen* [*The Life, Death, and Miracles of St. Rombout and his Millenial Anniversary*] (Mechelen: Joannes Franciscus vander Elst, 1777), 234-243.

[3] Janneke Raaijmakers, "The Medieval Notion of Truth: The Trustworthiness of Relics," in *Fake for Real: A History of Forgery and Falsification*, ed. Andrea Mork et al. (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020), 100-128.

look at the materiality of the relics and the shrines in which the relics of St. Rombout were kept and show how changing ways of presentation mirrored changing attitudes towards relic veneration.

A. MIRACLES

The practice of relic veneration in Christianity arose together with the cult of saints around the third century AD.[4] It was believed that venerating and touching the remains of a saint could heal the sick, bring fortune, give blessing and cause miracles. Even though these abilities were ascribed to God and not to the saints, the miracles that were associated with relics were seen as powerful evidence of their trustworthiness. [5]

The Irish saint Rombout, or Rumoldus, was believed to have been martyred in Mechelen in 775. He is specifically known for two miracles that occurred near Mechelen. These miracles benefitted the local noble family who supported Rombout and provided him with a piece of land to build a chapel in honour of St. Stephanus. Here, Rombout was buried after suffering a violent death from a blow on the head with an axe at the hands of the very builders who had been commissioned to construct the chapel.[6] In 930 the chapel was renamed as the chapel St. Rombout.[7]

The cult of St. Rombout was not only popular among the inhabitants of Mechelen; Rombout also became the patron saint of sailors, fishermen, merchants, and farmers.[8] The miracles that were associated with St. Rombout in the first couple of centuries after his death vary from giving protection against enemies, returning lost goods, curing diseases and possession of the devil, and even surviving a decapitation.[9] The relics of the saint do not appear to have held particular significance during this early period; the abovementioned miracles almost never occur at his grave. The first account of an intercession by St. Rombout that was associated specifically with his relics took place in 1301. In this year Mechelen was surrounded by troops of the Duke of Brabant who threatened to conquer the city because its citizens had refused to accept him as their new lord.[10] The relics of St. Rombout were brought

4 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 131.

5 Raaijmakers, "Medieval Notion of Truth," 109.

6 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 69-82.

7 Ibid., 87.

8 Joannes Baptista Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi episcopi et martyris apostoli et patroni Mecheliniensium* (Antwerp: Jacobum du Moulin, 1718), 168.

9 Ibid., 162-168.

10 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 168-169. See for an historiographical account of this conflict Bram Caers and Pieter Verhoeven, "Sint Rombout in een Mechelse stadskroniek: laatvijftiende-eeuwse devotie geprojecteerd op het verleden [St. Rombout in an Urban Chronicle from Mechelen: Late Fifteenth-Century Devotion Projected on the Past]," *Queeste* 23, no. 1 (2016): 1-21, at 3-4. Sources disagree on the date of the conflict and attribute it to either 1301, 1302 or 1303.

to the Grote Markt, the central market square, where the citizens asked the saint for help and prayed for a good outcome of the war. Afterwards soldiers from the city went out to face the troops of the enemy and won the battle. The citizens of Mechelen attributed the victory to the saint and promised to hold a yearly procession in his name.[11]

It is striking that *vitae* and other narratives about the saint that were written after 1580 do not mention miracles, mediations or intercessions that occurred after this date. The exception is the story of the Calvinists being unable to find St. Rombout's skull under the skirt of Anna van Roy. Did this mean that people no longer prayed to St. Rombout to ask him for help? Were these prayers unsuccessful? Or were the accounts of miracles associated with the saint no longer recorded in writing? And what did this mean for the reputation and popularity of the cult of St. Rombout? As Janneke Raaijmakers has pointed out, the performance of miracles was not always a requirement for affirming the holiness of the saints or the authenticity of the relics. Some types of miracles, such as healing or curing, enjoyed more credibility than others. According to Guibert of Nogent (c. 1015-1124) miracles were a gift from God, and were not necessarily related to merits of the person through whom God worked his miracle.[12] Saints also had the agency to refuse to help if they did not wish to do so, and were no less saintly for it.

Even though miracles were not a necessary precondition to establish the trustworthiness and authenticity of a relic cult, the oldest *vitae* of St. Rombout show us that miracles formed an important element of this particular devotion in early medieval Mechelen, albeit unconnected to the saint's relics.[13] From the lack of accounts of miracles that occurred after 1301, one could conclude that miracles lost their significance for Rombout's cult in the later Middle Ages and the early modern period. Yet, even though no new miracle stories were recorded in the *vitae* from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, the miracles from earlier centuries continued to be recounted in the majority of these texts. When in 1718 the Bollandist Joannes Baptista Sollerius (1669–1740) copied the Latin translation of St. Rombout's *vita*, made by pastor Joannes Domyns (d. 1578), in the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi* he criticized the author for omitting the miracles in his version, which had been clearly set forth in the source on which Domyns had based his *vita*.[14] According to Sollerius, all miracles connected to a saint should be included in a hagiography, even when the last known miracle occurred centuries ago, in this case in 1301. The importance of miracles in determining and demonstrating the authenticity of the saint may have fluctuated during the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, but the popularity of St. Rombout was not affected by this development, as the following sections will show.

11 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 173.

12 Raaijmakers, "Medieval Notion of Truth," 104.

13 See for a critical edition of these vitae: Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*.

14 Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*, c. 96: *Notavimus in praedicto commentario, non satis recte se gessisse Domynsium, dum miraculorum seriem, tam clare et expresse in autographo Belgico.*

B. WRITTEN EVIDENCE

Texts played an important role in the cult of saints. Written evidence was one of the preconditions for veneration and served to corroborate the authenticity of the objects of devotion.[15] Examples of written evidence of an authentic relic cult were hagiographies or *vitae*, describing the life, deeds and miracles of the saint; descriptions of the relic cult in chronicles, books or church documents, proving that the cult was based on a long tradition; and *cedulae*, labels attached to the bones identifying them as relics. The textual tradition of the cult of St. Rombout fits this tradition of authentication.

The oldest source to mention St. Rombout is the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, written between 1024 and 1025 and commissioned by bishop Gerard I of Cambrai. In chapter 47 of the second book, the anonymous author mentions a convent near Maslina (Mechelen) where "the martyr Rumoldus rests, who was of Irish descent and precious to God; he led a hermit's life and was martyred here." [16] This brief description of the monastery in Mechelen shows us that St. Rombout was venerated as a martyr, as least as early as the eleventh century. The importance of the devotion for this particular area is also visible in the oldest account of the life and deeds of St. Rombout; a *vita* written in 1100 by Theodoricus, prior of Sint-Truiden.[17] Somewhere between 1300 and 1450 a new *vita* by an unknown author appeared, which gave an account of the miracles that had occurred between 1100 and 1301; the latter is the date of the last known miracle.

The advent of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century increased the number of publications, reprints, and the dissemination of religious texts. These texts, frequently written in the vernacular, were tailored to resonate with laypeople and nuns.[18] The proliferation of didactic and devotional literature, whether through printed volumes or handwritten manuscripts, underscored a growing accessibility. This trend is also apparent in the widespread circulation of accounts detailing the life of St. Rombout during the early modern era.

In the sixteenth century, the anonymous *vita* mentioned above was translated into the vernacular and at least two manuscript copies were made. Around the same time, the Dutch *vita* was also printed by Thomas van der Noot and a Latin translation of the same text was printed in Brussels by the abovementioned Jan Domyns in 1569.[19] The most important

[15] Raaijmakers, "Medieval Notion of Truth," 104.

[16] *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* II, c. 47, ed. L. C. Bethmann, *MGH Script.* 7 (Hannover: Hahn 1846), 465: *Monasterium in loco Maslinas. Apud Maslinas quoque monasterium est canonicorum, ubi quiescit preciosus Dei martir Rumoldus, genere Scotus, qui vitam eremiticam ducens, inibi martirizatus est. Hoc autem monasterium ab antiquitate constructum, regalibus emolumentis maxime augmentatur.*

[17] Theodoricus, *Vita Beati Rumoldi.* There are currently three manuscripts that contain this text. Gent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 422 from 1401 is the oldest.

[18] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 91-92.

[19] L. Le Clerque, "Sinte Rombouts legend [Legend of St. Rombout]," *De Gulden Passer* 23 (1945): 286-291, at 127-128.

addition of this *vita* was the story of how St. Rombout had helped Mechelen to attain victory in the conflict with the Duke of Brabant in 1301, leading to the yearly procession of the relics of the saint. Bram Caers and Pieter Verhoeven show in their article "Sint Rombout in een Mechelse stadskroniek" [St. Rombout in an Urban Chronicle from Mechelen] how this "miraculous" victory became an important element in the historiography of Mechelen. The urban chronicler Jan de Wilde used the *Life* of St. Rombout to enhance the image of the city and to shed a more positive light on its past. The chronicle, written around 1500, described the history of the city up to 1477. It was in large part based on the same sources as other Brabantine chronicles. Yet where other sources offered a negative description of Mechelen, De Wilde integrated parts of the *vitae* of St. Rombout to emphasize the importance of the city and the righteousness and piety of its citizens. The written tradition of St. Rombout not only legitimized the devotion to the saint and its relics but also strengthened the identity of the citizens of Mechelen in the Late Middle Ages.[20]

The importance of St. Rombout for the people of Mechelen was proven again in 1580 when some citizens took matters into their own hands and decided to rescue their patron saint from the Calvinists. During the reassemblage of the relics in 1585, recounted at the beginning of this chapter, written statements played an important role. The reassemblage was used to enhance a new narrative of the shameful and painful past to blot out the memory of how the citizens of Mechelen had resented the Spanish troops, supported the rebels of the North and sold the reliquary of St. Rombout. Instead, the citizens were encouraged to celebrate the victory of the Catholic faith and the endurance of the city and its inhabitants. Emphasising the role of St. Rombout in the alternative narrative reinforced the message about the way in which Mechelen was protected by its saint against enemies, not only the Duke of Brabant but also the Calvinists and other adversaries.[21]

Archdeacon Mathias Hovius, canon Melchior Huys, and notary Joannes Goossens were appointed to reassemble the relics and to take statements from the rescuers. They stated their age, occupation, how they had found the relics and what kind of relics they had taken. The certificate, drawn up by Archbishop Hauchinus, confirming the authenticity of the relics of St. Rombout was another important piece of written evidence of the devotion.

The seventeenth and eighteenth century saw a veritable mediatization of the devotion of St. Rombout. Around 1680 at least six works about the life of the saint were published. The authors of these books were all members of the clergy but three of the six works were written in the vernacular, aimed at a lay audience.[22] The authors of these books were able to influence the interpretation of the devotion of their readers. They could decide which events

[20] Caers and Verhoeven, "Mechelse stadskroniek."

[21] See for a more elaborate analysis of how the inhabitants of Mechelen tried to cope with the Calvinistic past: Renée Schilling, "Rescued from Oblivion," RMA thesis, Leiden University, 2018, chap. 1, 11-22.

[22] De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, ix.

they emphasized and which ones they omitted, just as De Wilde had done for his chronicle of Mechelen.

In 1718 the abovementioned priest and Bollandist Sollerius wrote the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi,* which was integrated in the series *Acta Sanctorum,* but also published separately.[23] The *Acta Sanctorum* series was a systematic and critical hagiographical collection of all of the early and medieval saints. Although the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi* were written in Latin, Sollerius added a Dutch version of the anonymous *Legend of St. Rombout*.[24] The fact that St. Rombout was included in the *Acta Sanctorum* shows that the textual tradition of his cult had survived the philological scrutiny of the Bollandists; the medieval narratives were considered authentic and the devotion to this saint and his relics was still endorsed in the eighteenth century.[25] The publication of the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi* contributed to a renewed appreciation of older copies of texts on the saint. The Royal Library in Brussels preserves a manuscript copy of the legend of St. Rombout from the late sixteenth century, which shows signs of intensive use. Many of the leaves are grubby and damaged, and the text is no longer complete. The moisture stains covering the first and last leaves suggest that the manuscript has been neglected for quite some time, or at least was not preserved under optimal circumstances. After the publication of the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi*, the manuscript was restored and the lost parts of the text were replaced by copying them from Sollerius' printed edition.[26]

C. RELIABLE WITNESSES OF THE CULT

The popularity of a cult often hinged on the endorsement of authoritative agents. As Janneke Raaijmakers points out "relics were considered to be reliable and therefore honourable if they were backed by people with a solid reputation, people with authority (…)."[27] During the Middle Ages, people with authority were predominantly male, often from the clergy. Women were excluded from the priesthood, and like many laymen, they had limited access to literacy. Consequently, the social standing of women and of the laity generally was diminished, eroding their credibility and authority within society.[28]

During the early modern period, the influence of the laity in local relic cults increased. Social groups such as the magistrate, the guilds, the crafts and confraternities were involved in organizing the anniversary celebrations of local devotions, and actively partook in the

[23] Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi.*

[24] Ibid., 154-168.

[25] On the verification methods of the Bollandists, see Marco Sawilla, *Antiquarianismus, Hagiography and Historie im 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2009).

[26] L. Le Clerque, "Legende des h. martelaers Sinte Rombouts [Legend of the Holy Martyr St. Rombout]," *De Gulden Passer* 25 (1947), 286-291.

[27] Raaijmakers, "Medieval Notion of Truth," 105.

[28] Irene van Renswoude, *The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 15.

yearly processions, protecting and venerating the relics.[29] Nevertheless, as in the medieval period, the clergy retained a vital role in establishing and maintaining the cult of relics and promoting popular devotion. Relics were typically kept within churches, thereby designating the clergy as the true "owners" of the objects of devotion. Moreover, the clergy assumed responsibility for the religious interpretation of the ways in which devotion was expressed: overseeing rituals, validating or refuting accounts of miracles, and stimulating active participation of lay people through the dispensation of indulgences and other spiritual rewards such as medals.

The devotion to St. Rombout became interwoven with the civic identity of the citizens of Mechelen in the sixteenth century. The question of whether the relics of St. Rombout were considered authentic may not have been relevant for the laity at this time. It was, however, a crucial period for the Roman Catholic Church, which needed to provide a clear answer to criticism of relic veneration from Catholics and Protestants alike.[30] During the twenty-fifth session of the council of Trent in 1563 it was determined to establish that the veneration of saints and their relics was not idolatrous in itself, but that all superstition, profits and lasciviousness elements should be abolished from devotional practices. New relics or miracles could only be recognized by a bishop, in consultation with theologians, pious men, other bishops and the Pope.[31] When a relic was acknowledged as being authentic the bishop was to compose an official certificate with his signature and his episcopal seal.[32] These rules re-confirmed the authority of the clergy, and especially bishops, over the cult of relics.

From the account of the reassembling of the relics of St. Rombout, it appears that the verification of the authenticity of the relics was in line with the procedure prescribed at Trent. Those who claimed to have taken one or more relics were asked to recount the events that had occurred during the attack of the city by the Calvinists in 1580. The people who provided their testimonies to the archbishop not only included priests but also lay men, lay women and multiple children; the youngest child was just seven years old at the time of the rescuing of the relics. Despite belonging to social groups considered non-authoritative in the Middle Ages, the accounts are upheld as credible in the account of historian Joseph

[29] See for a more elaborate description of those devoted to the cult of St. Rombout: Schilling, "Rescued from Oblivion," chap. 4, 53-67.

[30] The success of the Counter-Reformation should not be attributed solely to the clergy and the Catholic church. Recent studies have showed that "people of the middle" contributed most to its success. See, for example, Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520-1635* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and, specifically for Mechelen, Schilling, "Rescued from Oblivion."

[31] *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 232-236.

[32] Anique de Kruif, "Miraculeus bewaard: middeleeuwse Utrechtse relieken op reis: de schat van de oud-katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal" [Miraculously Preserverd: Medieval Relics from Utrecht on a Journey: The Treasure of the Old Catholic Gertrudis Cathedral]," PhD. diss. (University of Amsterdam, 2011), 26.

Jacques De Munck (1740-1792).[33] Particularly noteworthy is the extensive description of the testimony by Anna van Roy with which this chapter began, who rescued the skull of St. Rombout in 1580. The description spans several pages and praises her bravery and pivotal role in the collection of the relics.[34] In contrast, the accounts of clerical witnesses are not given precedence over those of the children, revealing a deliberate equality in attention and validation.[35] The corroboration of diverse witnesses, encompassing various social backgrounds, not only enhanced the credibility of the authentication of the relics but also underscored St. Rombout's significance as a patron saint of all citizens of Mechelen.

In the *Acta Sancti Rumoldi*, Sollerius recounts Archbishop Hauchinus' examination of the bones of St. Rombout following his review of the witnesses' testimonies. The author notes that not all relics were considered authentic, because of "the circumstances of the people who had collected them."[36] While the exact nature of these circumstances is not specified, the phrasing, "propter circumstantias personarum, quae easdem collegerant", suggests that they were related to the personal character and background of the collectors rather than specific factors, such as location, events, or means.[37] Since Antiquity, the seven circumstances (what, when, where, who, whom, which, whose, why, and how) were the main instruments for assessing the truthfulness and credibility of accounts. [38] Sollerius' phrasing implies that these criteria remained influential in evaluating the reliability of witnesses in the early modern period.[39]

Interestingly, the relics that were deemed inauthentic by the archbishop were not discarded but kept in a wooden box and placed next to the altar.[40] Was this because the archbishop believed that these bones belonged to a different saint? Or did he want to pay respect

[33] While women in the Middle Ages were permitted to serve as witnesses under certain conditions – such as when supported by influential men, speaking collectively, or addressing gender-specific matters – they were generally not deemed credible witnesses. See Elisabeth van Houts, "Gender and Authority of Oral Witnesses in Europe (800-1300)," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 9 (1999): 201-220.

[34] De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 235, 237-240.

[35] Ibid., 242.

[36] Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*, 45: *Ceteras porro reliquias, quas in examine supra relato recollectionis, non judicaverat esse authenticas, propter circumstantias personarum, quae easdem collegerant capsulae lignae imponere maluit, quam eas cum approbatis relinquere: eadem vero capsula, ad latus iam dicti altaris hodiedum reposita est.*

[37] On the circumstance(s) of persons, see Sulpicius Victor, *Institutiones oratoriae*, c. 25: Probationum expetitio (Seeking proof), ed. C. Halm, *Rhetores latini minores* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1863), 311-352, at 324: *Circumstantia autem personarum est genus, natura, aetas, disciplina, fortuna, studia, nomen, ante facta, habitus* [The circumstance of persons includes their descent, nature, age, education, fortune, pursuits, reputation, past actions, and character.]

[38] For circumstances as part of a procedure to establish proof, see Rita Copeland, "Ciceronian Rhetorical Tradition and Literary Theory," in *The Rhetoric of Cicero in its Medieval and Early Renaissance Commentary Tradition*, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 2, ed. Virginia Cox and John Ward (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006), 239-265, at 250-252.

[39] I should like to thank Irene van Renswoude for her valuable insights and guidance in directing my attention to the literature that has helped me shape the argument in this section.

[40] Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*, 45. See full quote in footnote 40.

to the unknown person to whom the remains belonged? Whatever the reason, the wooden box signifies that these relics were not deemed as worthy as the relics of St. Rombout. The fact that they were placed next to the altar, however, indicates that the bones were considered important nonetheless.

When archbishop Hauchinus had determined which relics were authentic, he had a charter drawn up to certify this.[41] The relics were taken to the chapel of St. Martin where they were shown to members of the clergy, the city council, the city magistrate, the governor, a notary and some prominent citizens. After reading the certificate out loud, archbishop Hauchinus placed the relics and the certificate in a reliquary and sealed the lock with his episcopal seal. The reliquary was carried in procession to the cathedral and placed in the altar.[42] Even though the archbishop asserted his authority in the process of authenticating the relics of St. Rombout, the presence of the members of the other elite social groups was vital for the public ratification of the proceedings; thus their influence on the devotion should not be underestimated. The cult of St. Rombout, after having been suppressed for five years, could only be successful if it won the support of other influential parties, who witnessed and acknowledged the authentication of the relics.

D. THE MATTER OF AUTHENTICITY

Relics were seen as the tangible proof of the presence of the saints on earth. This was not only true for the relics themselves but also for the reliquaries in which the relics were kept. Reliquaries were often the only visible part for the lay public to see during processions.[43] The reliquaries mediated between relics and their audience, teaching them how the relics should be perceived and treated.[44] The reliquaries in which the relics of St. Rombout have been kept can therefore provide an understanding of the significance and meaning of the devotion accorded relics in different periods of time.

There are no known details about the earliest reliquary in which the relics of St. Rombout were kept, except for the fact that it was probably not a very luxurious one. In 1366 the weaver-guilds of Mechelen donated a large amount of gold and silver to enhance the quality of this reliquary. The historian Remmerus Valerius writes in his chronicle from 1754 how the weavers increased the value of the reliquary to 66.000 guilders.[45] In 1578 this reliquary was melted down and sold to improve the fortification of the city and to pay off its debts. Two years earlier Mechelen had signed the alliance of The Pacification of Gent, which forced the city to contribute to the cost of the rebellion. The relics were moved to a simple wooden

41 A transcription of this certificate can be found in Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*, 44.

42 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 243.

43 Cynthia Hahn, "What Do Reliquaries Do for Relics?" *Numen* 57, no. 3-4 (2010): 284-316, at 287.

44 Ibid.

45 Remmerus Valerius, *Chronycke van Mechelen* [Chronicle of Mechelen] (Mechelen: J. F. Vander Elst, 1754), 18.

reliquary with gilded frames.[46] The decision to sell the reliquary of St. Rombout is striking and tells us something about the popularity of the devotion to his cult at the time. The interests of the new alliance with the States-General apparently superseded those of the local devotion of St. Rombout. The saint's remains had to make do with a modestly embellished wooden box. When the Calvinists raided Mechelen in 1580, it was this sober reliquary that they destroyed. The reliquary that was used after the reassembling of the relics in 1585 was also of modest quality; while placing the relics of St. Rombout in the reliquary, archbishop Hauchinus ordered that the reliquary should be replaced by a more precious one at a more fortunate time.[47] Mechelen, recovering from five years of oppression, needed all their funds to repair the destroyed buildings and sanctuaries.[48]

The plans to create a new reliquary for St. Rombout were made in 1616. De Munck writes that the people of Mechelen wished to follow the example of their ancestors by donating money to create a beautiful silver reliquary.[49] One year later the city magistrate officially asked the archdukes Albert and Isabella to donate money to support this wish. Current archbishop Hovius (1596-1620) also contributed three-thousand guilders on the condition that only clerics would carry the reliquary during processions.[50] At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the various social groups in Mechelen were still trying to leave their mark on the devotion to the saint. Creating something tangible and visual to honour the saint was one of the best ways to do this.

In 1775, when the millennial anniversary of St. Rombout was celebrated, another reliquary was created for the saint in the shape of a lantern, specifically for his skull. Interestingly, this reliquary did not cover the skull but displayed it. People could now actually see the remains of St. Rombout with their own eyes, and they were encouraged to do so. De Munck mentions that initially people were complaining that they were not able to see the skull because it was placed too high and was partly covered with a silken ribbon.[51] On the morning of the celebrations, two physicians were asked to examine the skull of St. Rombout, specifically the part where the skull was damaged. They declared that this fracture must have been inflicted by a hard instrument, which had coloured the area grayish, whereas the rest of the skull was brown. This was seen as proof of the way St. Rombout had been martyred, that is, by being hit on the head with an axe. These findings accorded with the account of St. Rombout's death in his *vitae*. The painter Willem Jacob Herreyns, who was also present during the examination, was asked to make a sketch of the skull which was later sent out

46 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 219 and 224.

47 Sollerius, *Acta S. Rumoldi*, 44: *et donec successu felicioris temporis, decentiori et magis ornato feretro reponi possent*.

48 De Munck, *Gedenck-schriften*, 224.

49 Ibid., 225.

50 Ibid., 227.

51 Ibid., 264-268.

as a print.[52] This print also contained a copy of the certificate that had been drawn up by the physicians. Afterwards the skull was put back in the lantern-reliquary but this time the clergy made sure the ribbon was not covering the skull.

Fig. 1. The skull of St. Rombout, sketch by Willem Jacob Herreyns.
Photo taken from The Hague, KB, KW 3069 B 21 (rotated 90°).[53]

Creating a transparent reliquary and spreading images of the relics of St. Rombout in print constitute a striking break with previous traditions. Not only does this show that the way relics were presented had changed, but also that an examination by lay experts was required to corroborate the written tradition of the saint, where it was already specified that the saint had died from a blow to the head. Even though the earlier markers of authenticity already prevalent during the Middle Ages remained important, they were complemented by new scientific methods at the end of the eighteenth century.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how the devotion to the relics of St. Rombout mirrored changing attitudes towards relic veneration from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Miracles, written evidence regarding the saint and reliable witnesses of the cult were important fac-

[52] Ibid., xci-xcii.

[53] Herreyn's sketch was adapted to fit De Munck's book and does not contain either the elaborate decorations or the certificate by the physicians that were present in the prints. Ibid., 276.

tors in the Middle Ages to determine if relics were authentic and worthy of veneration. The same elements were still present in the devotion to St. Rombout in the early modern period, but the way in which authenticity was assessed and presented changed during this period. Contemporary authors became important authorities on the devotion to the cult of the saint. While they continued to retell the stories about the life and death of the saint from the earlier *vitae*, they also subjected them to philological research and added more recent events to their accounts; the latter demonstrated the continued power of intercession of the saint. In these more recent publications, Rombout was no longer presented as a miracle worker but as the patron saint of Mechelen, the protector of citizens in times of upheaval. During the Counter-Reformation the clergy needed to reclaim their authority but were also forced to share it with local social groups. A change is also visible in the way the relics were presented; where once gems and stones demonstrated the importance of the relics, the people now wanted to see the actual remains.

Even nowadays, the way relics are being authenticated is subject to change. New scientific methods have influenced the way we treat relics, but they have not replaced the value of the other markers of authenticity for those who believe in the power of relics. In 2017 the Vatican presented a new canonical procedure for verifying the authenticity of relics. The procedure contains many of the same elements as the procedure from the sixteenth century. The Vatican states that authentication needs to be performed by the bishop of the diocese where the relics are kept but with the assistance of a medical expert. The minutes of the procedure need to be sealed by the bishop and placed in the reliquary, which also needs to be sealed and tied with ribbons.[54]

In 1975 the relics of St. Rombout were subject to radiocarbon dating. The research team concluded that the bones belonged to one person, most probably a man, who died between forty and sixty somewhere between 540 and 740. They also examined the skull, and concluded that the fracture offered no proof that St. Rombout was killed by a blow from an axe but that it was more likely that it had been inflicted *post mortem*. However, since the front part of the skull is missing, theoretically, it is still possible that his complete skull would have shown signs of a violent death. The results of the examination confirm that Archbishop Hauchinus had correctly authenticated the relics in 1585; only one bone had been misidentified that actually belonged to a cow; this has now been removed from the reliquary. But as scientific methods change, so does the need to keep re-evaluating and authenticating historical meaningful objects such as relics. In 2004 the relics were examined again and this time the

[54] Congregation for the Causes of Saints, "*Instruction* 'Relics in the Church: Authenticity and Preservation,'" The Holy See, Rome, 2017, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_doc_20171208_istruzione-reliquie_en.html (last accessed Aug. 13, 2023).

researchers concluded that the relics belonged to a man who had died somewhere between 580 and 655, which is in fact much earlier than the date of death provided by the *vitae*.[55]

The results of the recent examinations did not affect present-day devotion to St. Rombout in Mechelen. The relics that are kept in St. Rombouts cathedral are still officially regarded as the relics of St. Rombout. Each year, up to the present day, his relics are carried in a procession in honor of Our Dear Lady of Hanswijk on the Sunday before Ascension. The memory of St. Rombout is too much ingrained in the history and public life of the city to let new scientific methods get in the way of a cult that has been considered authentic for centuries and, importantly, still meets social and religious needs. For the present-day observers of the cult, the city council, the bishop, and a new class of guardians – heritage specialists – the value of the relics of St. Rombout is also assessed by other means.

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[55] Mark van Strydonck, "Rumoldus, stichter van Mechelen," in *Relieken, echt of vals?* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2006), 81-89.

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PART 3: COMMUNITY

SAINTS – WARRIORS – SLAVES – DISCIPLES: COMMUNITY AND AGENCY IN SIXTH-CENTURY MONASTIC RULES FROM GAUL

ALBRECHT DIEM[1]

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the interplay between theology and concepts of community in sixth-century Gaul – a post-Roman world that was in the process of inventing itself. The *Codex Regularum*, the most important collection of Latin monastic rules, which was compiled by Benedict of Aniane in the early ninth century as part of his efforts to promote the *Regula Benedicti*, contains a number of rules that were produced in southern Gaul more than three centuries earlier: the rules of Caesarius of Arles (d. 542), Aurelianus of Arles (d. 551), and Ferriolus of Uzès (d. ca 573), and the *Regula Tarnantensis*, all of which are intertextually tied together. Comparing them and reading them as programmatic and theological texts rather than simply as collections of monastic norms show that they form distinct contributions to a textual debate about the purpose of monastic life and the nature of monastic discipline. Each author had a different kind of monastery in mind when he wrote his rule. Caesarius emphasized in his Rule for Monks the necessity of perseverance in a life-long individual battle. His Rule for Nuns made the monastic space and strict enclosure of the community the main agents of salvation. Aurelianus defined monastic life as submission under a holy rule and the holy abbot/abbess. The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* conceptualized the monastery as a house owned by God and turned the monks into a community of fearful slaves. Ferriolus understood monastic life as the implementation of the precepts of Christ and the Apostles (especially Paul) to the community of the first Christians.

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Bishop Caesarius of Arles addresses in his *Regula ad virgines* the abbess and the prioress of his monastery with the following words:

> I admonish and I appeal to you before God and the angels, holy and highly venerated mother of the monastery, and you, the prioress of the holy congregation, let no one's threats or persuasions or flattery ever relax your spirit, and do not yourselves take away anything from the established form of the holy and spiritual rule. I trust, moreover, by the mercy of God, that you will not incur guilt for any negligence, but through your obedience, holy and pleasing to God, you will be able happily to attain eternal beatitude.[2]

Words matter – and it is not by coincidence that Caesarius uses the expression *sancta* no fewer than four times: the abbess is *sancta*, the community is *sancta*, the monastic rule is *sancta*, and even the nuns' obedience is *sancta*. Adherence to the *regula sancta* creates a holy community that can safely achieve the ultimate goal of all monastic striving: *beatitudo aeterna*.

Caesarius postulates here an idea that would become central to monastic life: a community can by means of adhering to monastic discipline gain agency regarding their own eternal salvation (but also that of others); it can turn itself into a holy community.

In the Carolingian period, in the world that Janneke Raaijmakers explored, the notion of a *congregatio sancta* guided by a holy abbot and a holy rule would not raise much controversy; the *Regula Benedicti* is called a *regula sancta* in numerous texts, and the agency of the monastic community – on its own behalf, but also for the benefit of the Christian community and its rulers – is taken for granted.[3]

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[2] Caesarius, *Regula ad virgines*, c. 47.1-2, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé and Joël Courreau, *SC* 345 (Paris: Cerf, 1988), 232: *Te uero sanctam ac uenerabilem monasterii matrem, et te praepositam sanctae congregationis, coram deo et angelis eius ammoneo et contestor, ut nullius umquam vel minae vel oblocutiones vel blandimenta molliant animum vestrum, ut aliquid de sanctae ac spiritalis regulae institutione minuatis.* 2 *Credo tamen de dei misericordia, quod non pro aliqua neglegentia reatum incurrere, sed pro sancta et deo placita oboedientia ad aeternam beatitudinem possitis feliciter pervenire*. Transl. Maria Caritas McCarthy, *The Rule for Nuns of St Caesarius of Arles. A Translation with a Critical Introduction* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1960), 187.

[3] Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c.744-c.900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. 36-40, 154-161, and 271-292. See also Albrecht Diem, "Inventing the Holy Rule: Some Observations on the History of Monastic Normative Observance in the Early Medieval West," in *Western Monasticism ante litteram. The Spaces of Monastic Observance in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Hendrik W. Dey and Elizabeth Fentress (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 53-84. An exception was the conflict around the radically predestinarian monk Gottschalk whose doubt about the salvific power of

When Caesarius made this statement, which expresses both triumphant optimism and a high level of anxiety, the shape, purpose, and theological foundation of monastic life was not yet set in stone – on the contrary. Caesarius experimented on a practical level with finding a workable model of a monastic institution for the religious women of his diocese. On a theological level he aimed at reconciling the monastic pursuit of salvation with the Augustinian theology of full dependence on divine grace, of which he was the main proponent in Gaul. Caesarius's two monastic rules, a *Regula ad monachos* for all monasteries in his diocese and the *Regula ad virgines*, represent two stages in his engagement with the question of human agency and prevenient grace.

In this contribution I will look at the discussions about the shape and purpose of monastic life in sixth-century Gaul that were inspired by Caesarius's two rules – discussions that manifested themselves in three monastic rules that critically responded to Caesarius's ideas, while harvesting from his repertoire of pragmatic provisions: the rule written by his successor Aurelianus of Arles, the anonymous *Regula monasterii Tarnantensis*, and the rule of bishop Ferriolus of Uzès. All of them proposed pathways towards salvation that were different from those proposed by their predecessors.[4]

Historians have mined these rules for specific provisions, but they did not study them as individual programmes, let alone as original theological texts and as important contributions to a highly dynamic process of "self-invention": three disagreeing voices written within one or two generations and within the narrow regional confines of southern Gaul. They may have formed just the tip of an iceberg of sixth-century debates on monastic discipline and its theological framing.

A. CAESARIUS OF ARLES: ENCLOSURE AND PERSEVERANCE

Before delving into the content of the three Gallic monastic rules, I shall provide a summary of Caesarius's monastic programmes.[5] Caesarius wrote and revised his *Regula ad virgines* over a period of more than a generation (between 508 and 534). At the end Caesarius added a lengthy *recapitulatio* (as he calls it himself) which insists with anxious vehemence that his nuns and their abbess may not alter anything of his rule, especially nothing pertaining to the requirement of strictest enclosure.

monastic life forced him into lifelong monastic imprisonment. See Matthew Gillis, *Heresy and Dissent in the Carolingian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

4 Adalbert de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité*, vol. 9 (Paris: Cerf, 2005), 157-182 and 199-266, provides the most thorough analysis of the texts. Cf. also Albrecht Diem, *Das monastische Experiment. Die Rolle der Keuschheit bei der Entstehung des westlichen Klosterwesens* (Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2005), 203-228. Matthieu van der Meer and I are currently preparing an English translation with an extensive commentary.

5 This section summarizes Albrecht Diem, *The Pursuit of Salvation. Community, Space, and Discipline in Early Medieval Monasticism* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 265-327.

Total enclosure – the prohibition to leave the monastic space for the rest of their lives – became the trademark of Caesarius's foundation. It formed the beginning and the end, as it were, the alpha and omega, of his *Regula ad virgines*. Many of its provisions aim at implementing and safeguarding a permanent separation of the nuns from their surrounding world. Caesarius's enclosure was also the centre part of his pursuit of salvation. It created an impenetrable safe space that protected the community from the "spiritual wolves" roaming around outside and allowed them to await their heavenly husband in safety: an earthly paradise so perfectly sheltered that Caesarius did not anticipate that any nun would want to reverse her joyful entry into this safe haven.[6]

Caesarius's optimism that his nuns may safely attain eternal beatitude seems hardly compatible with promoting Augustine's theology of prevenient grace, though it appears that Caesarius's experiment is closely tied to the so-called Semipelagian debate.[7] Three of his seven fellow bishops who confirmed the final version of the *Regula ad virgines* with their signature (c. 73.4-10) had sided with Caesarius in his battles in support of Augustine's theology. Caesarius combined the – somewhat shaky – work-around of separating the monastic space and its inhabitants from the sinful world with the idea that both his own foundation effort and the *regula* he imposed on his nuns were a product of divine inspiration and divine support, thus, in fact, a result of prevenient grace (cf. c. 1.1-3; 2.3; 4.1; 48.3; 49.2; 49.5; 49.9; 61.2; 64.2; 66.1). He took the stumbling block of dependence on good works, i.e. feats of renunciation, out of the equation. Entering the monastery became a joyful escape and certainly not self-imposed suffering for the sake of pleasing God. Caesarius's nuns could live a moderately luxurious life within the safe bubble of the monastic space.

The *Regula ad monachos*, which breathes a different spirit, was probably written before Caesarius had moulded his *Regula ad virgines* into a product and agent of divine grace. Here he ties the monastic pursuit of salvation to two requirements: *perseverantia*, that is, leaving the world for good, and understanding monastic life as a lifelong battle. His *Regula ad monachos* contains two lengthy chapters that explicate this idea of monastic life as a battle against vices (c. 19 and c. 26). Here is one of the key passages:

> But just as you had to fight for your life if you had marched into battle against one people or another, you should fight even harder in this spiritual battle, so that the adversaries of the soul do not slay you. You have as many adversaries as you have vices. And therefore, fight like soldiers of Christ...[8]

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6 Caesarius, *Regula ad virgines*, c. 2.2-3, *SC* 345, 180.

7 Ralph W. Mathisen, "Caesarius of Arles, Prevenient Grace, and the Second Council of Orange," in *Grace for Grace. The Debates after Augustine and Pelagius*, ed. Alexander Y. Hwang, Brian J. Matz, and Augustine Casiday (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 208-234 provides an excellent introduction and survey of older research.

8 Caesarius, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 19.4-11, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé, *SC* 398, 216: *Vos vero sicut certamen habituri eratis, si in pugnam contra gentem aliquam ambulassetis, ut non ibi mortem faceretis, quantum magis in isto spiritale*

As we shall see, the three texts responding to Caesarius's rules abandoned both the notion of the monastery as safe space and the idea of monastic life as lifelong battle. They came up with new responses to the challenge of giving monastic communities a salvific agency.

B. AURELIANUS OF ARLES: PLAYING BY THE RULE

Aurelianus (d. 551), Caesarius's second successor, founded two new monasteries in Arles only a decade after Caesarius's death. One of these monasteries was founded in collaboration with the Frankish king Childebert I (d. 558) and his wife Uultrogotha (d. 567).[9] Instead of giving his foundations the two monastic rules of his predecessor, he decided to combine material from both texts to produce one new rule for both of his foundations. He thus did exactly what Caesarius vigorously tried to prevent.

Aurelianus's *Regula ad monachos* and his *Regula ad virgines* are in their core the same text, with a few gender-adjusted alterations.[10] He had a monastic ideal in mind that was applicable to monks and nuns alike. Both were supposed to fulfil their core task – prayer – in exactly the same manner.[11] Even though about 90% of Aurelianus's *Regula* (if we exclude the liturgical *ordo*) quote, paraphrase, or merge provisions of both of Caesarius's rules, we cannot regard the work as a mere synthesis of his predecessor's works. Aurelianus shaped by means of omission, re-arrangement and some additions a new monastic program.[12] When he founded his two monasteries, he was in a different situation from that of Caesarius: Arles had, after a long series of sieges and conquests, come under stable Frankish rule. Childebert,

certamine pugnate, ut non uos adversarii animae percutiant. Quanta vitia habueritis, tantos hebetis adverarios. Et ideo certate sicut milites Christi…

9 On Aurelianus and his foundations, see Martin Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien. Zur Kontinuität römischer Führungsschichten vom 4. bis zum 7. Jahrhundert* (Zurich/Munich: Artemis Verlag, 1976), 138-152; Leo Ueding, *Geschichte der Klostergründungen der frühen Merowingerzeit* (Berlin: Verlag Dr Emil Ebering, 1935), 75-79; Albrecht Diem, "…*ut si professus fuerit se omnia impleturum, tunc excipiatur.* Observations on the Rules for Monks and Nuns of Caesarius and Aurelianus of Arles," in *Edition und Erforschung lateinischer patristischer Texte*, ed. Victoria Zimmerl-Panagl, Lukas J. Dorfbauer, and Clemens Weidmann (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), 191-224, at 191-198.

10 The epithets *ad monachos/ad virgines* do not appear in the manuscripts. A new critical edition of both versions is in preparation. Currently available editions: Albert Schmidt "Zur Komposition der Mönchsregel des heiligen Aurelian von Arles I," *Studia Monastica* 17 (1975): 237-256 (omitting the table of content, the *ordo psallendi*, and the *ordo convivii*) and *PL* 68, 385-395 (complete); for the female version: Hope Mayo, "Three Merovingian Rules for Nuns," PhD diss (Harvard University, 1974), vol. 2, 4-68 and *PL* 68, 399-406. In this contribution I quote from a forthcoming new edition, which deviates from Schmidt's chapter division after c. 42. I provide both chapter numbers. For an analysis of Aurelianus's Rule, see Albert Schmidt, "Zur Komposition der Mönchsregel des heiligen Aurelian von Arles II," *Studia Monastica* 18 (1976): 17-54; De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire*, vol. 9, 157-182; Diem, "…*ut si professus fuerit se omnia impleturum*."

11 Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, *Ordo psallendi*, *PL* 68, 393-396/*ad virgines*, *Ordo psallendi*, col. 403-406. On the question of gendered and non-gendered monastic ideals, cf. Albrecht Diem, "The Gender of the Religious: Wo/Men and the Invention of Monasticism," in *The Oxford Companion on Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith Bennett and Ruth Marzo-Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 432-446.

12 Diem, "…*ut si professus fuerit se omnia impleturum*," 198-207.

the new ruler, considered the bishop an ally worthy to collaborate on a monastic foundation.[13] Most importantly, Aurelianus founded his monasteries in a context that provided him with textual and institutional models he could follow. He did not have to re-invent the wheel.[14]

The differences between Caesarius's *Regula ad monachos* and Aurelianus's Rule become obvious in the sections that Aurelianus did *not* incorporate. Aurelianus used material from 24 of the 26 chapters of Caesarius's *Regula ad monachos*, on topics such as monastic entry, sleep, swearing, lying, slander, anger and quarrels, liturgical discipline, silence, the abbot's responsibility, care for of sick, and monastic liturgy. Yet he almost completely ignored its two programmatic chapters, which form the core of Caesarius's Rule (c. 19 and c. 26). Aurelianus did not envisage the monastery as a battlefield. He did, just like Caesarius, consider monastic conversion to be irreversible, but this conversion implied for him leaving the world and its possessions behind, achieving a new legal status as *monachus*, now clearly distinct from that of a *laicus*,[15] and henceforth submitting to the monastic *regula*. For him, being a monk or nun is a status, not a state of war or a feat of *perseverantia*. The willingness to submit to the *regula* suffices to such an extent that Aurelianus does not even require a trial period.

Following Caesarius's *Regula ad virgines*, Aurelianus did enclose both his monks and nuns (*Regula ad monachos*, c. 2.1/*ad virgines*, c. 1.3), but he ignored his predecessor's anxiety and his optimism. Caesarius's *Regula ad virgines* is scattered with emotional outbreaks similar to the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter.[16] Aurelianus hits this high note only twice, once in the context of illicit, potentially sexual contacts between monks (*Regula ad monachos*, c. 35/omitted in *Regula ad virgines*) and once at the end of the rule, reminding his abbot and abbess to fulfil their responsibility towards the community (*Regula ad monachos*, c. 53 (54).1-2/*ad virgines*, c. 38.1-2).

The notion that the enclosure forms a happy escape from the world has disappeared as well. The enclosed monastic space is no safe waiting room for the visitation of Christ, as Caesarius characterized it (Caesarius, *Regula ad virgines*, c. 1.3). Space and boundaries play in themselves no salvific role anymore. Aurelianus's foundations could have worked without enclosure. The *Regula Tarnantensis* and the *Regula Ferrioli*, as we will see, abandoned the requirement of total enclosure and any salvific function of space altogether.

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13 On the political context of Caesarius's and Aurelianus's foundations, William E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles. The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 244-271.

14 See Diem, *The Pursuit of Salvation*, 288-297; Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*, 117-124; idem, "Caesarius's Monastery for Women in Arles and the Composition and Function of the 'Vita Caesarii'," *Revue bénédictine* 100 (1990): 441-481.

15 Aurelianus differs from Caesarius by treating *laici* and *monachi* as different groups. See Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 4; c. 14; c. 16; c. 19.1; c. 47 (48).1.

16 See Caesarius, *Regula ad virgines*, c. 30.4, *SC* 345, 208; c. 36.1, p. 218; c. 42.1, p. 224; c. 43.1-2, p. 226; c. 48.4, p. 234; c. 49.2, p. 234; c. 50, p. 236; c. 55, p. 240; c. 59.3, p. 242; c. 62.1, p. 246; c. 63.1, p. 246; c. 63.2, p. 246; c. 63.8-9, p. 248; c. 64.4, p. 250; c. 69.25, p. 266; c. 70.4, p. 268; c. 72.1, p. 270.

There is one other notion central to Caesarius's *Regula ad virgines* that did not make it into Aurelianus's Rule. Caesarius's nuns entered the monastery and underwent its regime *feliciter et fideliter* (happily and faithfully), as he emphasized several times (c. 1.5; c. 47.2; c. 49.2; c. 49.7; c. 65.5). Aurelianus omits the expectation of happiness. He describes monastic entry as the decision to leave the world and its joys behind for the sake of one's salvation. The rule's dedicatory letter summarizes Aurelianus's monastic ideal:

> Inspired by God who precedes us through his ineffable mercy, we are aware that you reject the pleasures of the world and, having despised and spurned the transitory joys, choose the splendour of the most holy life and to form your flesh in the fear of the Lord by embracing the grace of virginity and chastity and by indulging in the love of God with all the longing of the body and the heart, and to say this: *I have sworn and determined to observe the judgment of your justice* (Ps. 117/118:106). And: *The world is crucified to me and I am crucified to the world* (Gal. 6:14). Therefore we have, by the order of the Lord who makes us want and achieve, arranged that we constructed a monastery for you for the sake of the benefit of your souls, just as we did. And therefore we have established for you a Rule and instruction which will prepare you to proceed straight on the way of perfection and to arrive happily at the kingdoms of heavens.[17]

There are several details to unpack in this statement. First, Aurelianus retains – albeit phrased slightly differently – Caesarius's notion of God's involvement: the nuns' conversion happens *deo propitio* and the foundation happens *iubente domino atque operante in nobis velle et perficere* (by the order of the Lord who makes us want and achieve). Aurelianus inserts the strong words from Gal. 6:14: *Mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo* in order to emphasize how burdensome his monks' and nuns' step into the monastery is. Most importantly, Aurelianus's *regula ac disciplina* – thus the text itself –sends them on the path for *perfectio*. In these ways he replaced both the notion of perseverance in fight and of joyful escape from the world. The Rule begins and ends with a call to follow the *regula*.[18] Much of Aurelianus's framework, especially the *regula* as salvific instrument, the foundation of the first "royal

[17] Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, dedicatory letter.2-8: *Et quia, deo inspirante qui nos praevenit ineffabili misericordia sua, visum nobis est ut repudiatis saeculi voluptatibus ac, temporalibis gaudiis contemptis simul vel spretis, elegeritis sanctissime vitae nitorem et, virginitatis ac castitatis gratiam conplectentes, amorem Dei tota viscerum et cordis aviditate sectantes, configere timore dominico carnes vestras et dicere illud: Iuravi et statui custodire iudicia iustitiae tuae, et: Mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo, disposuimus, iubente domino atque operante in nobis velle et perficere, ut monasterium vobis pro profecto animarum vestrarum construeremus sicut et fecimus. Et ideo regulam vobis ac disciplinam instituimus quae vos ad viam perfectionis rectae facerent gradi et ad regna caelorum feliciter pervenire.*

[18] Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 1: *Hoc iubente deo inprimis statuimus tenendum ut si quis ad conversionem venerit, regula in salutatorio legatur. Et si professus fuerit se omnia impleturum, tunc excipiatur.* c. 54 (55): *Et vos, sancta congregatio, per profectum vestrum et per deum omnipotentem coniuro, ut omnia quae in hac regula pro remedio animae nostrae et pro animarum vestrarum salute statuimus, integra et inlibata custodiatis. Et ne per oblivionem aliquid neglegatis, semel ea in triginta diebus relegite, id est in kalendis.*

monastery", and the imperative of intercessory prayer, develop lives of their own and eventually become mainstream in medieval monasticism.[19]

C. THE REGULA MONASTERII TARNANTENSIS: SLAVES IN THE LORD'S HOUSE

The *Regula monasterii Tarnantensis* is the second preserved monastic rule produced in the aftermath of Caesarius's monastic experiments.[20] Its author was not an external founder but probably a member of the community writing this rule from an insider's perspective (cf. *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 11.5). If we disregard the *Ordo psallendi*, the *Regula Tarnantensis* is about as long as Aurelianus's *Regula ad monachos*. Many of its provisions look similar, aside from one fundamental difference: the *Monasterium Tarnantense* was not enclosed. Its monks were allowed to move around in the outside world, albeit only for specific purposes and under mutual supervision.[21]

The *Regula Tarnantensis* consists of two parts. The first thirteen chapters contain straightforward, practical provisions, using words and phrases from Caesarius's *Regula ad virgines* and other rules. Themes are, as in the other rules, monastic entry, the transfer of property, liturgical discipline, the organization of the day, manual labour, control of speech, the responsibilities of the abbot, etc. The second part (c. 14-23) largely paraphrases the monastic rules of Augustine, though the author makes, as we will see, several important changes of Augustine's text.

If we look at the author's use of Caesarius's work, we can see that he was, despite using large parts of his textual material, even less inclined to implement Caesarius's programme than Aurelianus was. There is no enclosure and permanent separation from the world. Gone is the notion of monastic conversion as a joyful entry into a safe space. There is also no battle. God is involved neither in the foundation of the monastery nor in giving the *regula* or in the monks' conversion. The *regula* is neither *sancta* nor a salvific instrument. The

[19] On the development of regular observance, see Albrecht Diem and Philip Rousseau, "Monastic Rules (Fourth to Ninth Century)," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, vol. 1, ed. Alison I. Beach and Isabelle Cochelin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 162-194.

[20] Fernando Villegas, "La 'regula monasterii Tarnatensis'. Texte, sources et datation," *Revue bénédictine* 84 (1974): 7-65 provides a synoptic critical edition that documents the sources the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* used. The texts and translations presented here come from a forthcoming new critical edition and a new translation produced in collaboration with Matthieu van der Meer. Studies on the *Regula Tarnantensis* include Adalbert de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire*, vol. 9, 199-228; Lucien-René Delsalle, "Comparaison, datation, localisation relatives des règles monastiques de Saint Césaire d'Arles, Saint Ferreól d'Uzès et de la 'Regula Tarnatensis Monasterii'," *Augustiniana* 11 (1961): 5-26; Diem, *Das monastische Experiment*, 203-228.

[21] Cf. *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 1.3: receiving visitors; c. 2.2-3: monks on a journey are not allowed to report; c. 26: monks are not allowed to visit festivities; c. 3.10: on visiting the city, castle or village; c. 3.1-3. no interaction with women, no gossip with one's own sisters and mothers; c. 12.9-11 and c. 13.1-3: visiting relatives and attending weddings, etc.

notion that the monks attain a status of collective sanctity is not entirely absent but plays only a marginal role. The term *sanctus* appears all in all just four times in the entire text.[22]

The best point of departure for unpacking the *Regula Tarnantensis* is the beginning of chapter 14, which is based on the opening chapter of Augustine's *Praeceptum* but contains several important alterations:

Regula Tarnantensis, c. 14.1-2	Augustine, *Praeceptum* I.1-2
Haec sunt quae in monasterio constitutis ***pro dei amore et timore*** *convenit observare. Propter quod in unum estis pro* ***timore domini*** *congregati, oportet ut in* ***domo domini*** *unianimes habitetis et sit vobis anima una et cor unum in* ***timore domini*** *pervigilans.*	*Haec sunt quae ut observetis praecipimus in monasterio constituti. Primum, propter quod in unum estis congregati, ut unianimes habitetis in domo et sit vobis anima una et cor unum in deum.*
It is appropriate that those who are placed in the monastery observe these things for love and fear of God. Since you have been brought together for fear of the Lord, it is necessary that you live in concord in the House of the Lord. You should have one soul and one heart, being watchful in the fear of the Lord.	Here are the [rules] we prescribe for your observance, once you have been admitted to the monastery. The chief motivation for your sharing life together is to live harmoniously in the house and to have one heart and one soul seeking God.[23]

The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* inscribes here no less than three times the notion of fear of God (*timor Dei/Domini*) into Augustine's text.[24] This fear (along with love) motivates monastic conversion; fear of the Lord is the basis of living in concord. Making the monastic endeavour a matter of fear of God turns Augustine's programme upside down.

A second, equally crucial, intervention explains *why* the monks should live in constant fear: while Augustine simply assumes that the monks live in a house (*in domo*), the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* defines the monastery as the House of the Lord (*in domo domini*). The monks in the *Monasterium Tarnantense* do not engage with the granting or inspiring *deus* that we find in their rules, but with a fear-demanding *dominus* ruling over his house. The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* also omitted Augustine's *praecipimus* (we prescribe). In his entire

[22] *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 8.7: the monks should meditate on holy subjects; c. 14.15 calls the community a *societas sancta*; c. 17.4: the monks should behave in public in accordance with their *sanctitas*; c. 181: a *vir sanctus* should fear to displease God.

[23] Transl. George Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 81 (slightly adjusted).

[24] Verheijen's critical apparatus does not indicate that *timor* appears in any manuscript of the Augustine's *Praeceptum*. The same applies to *in domo domini*.

rule he almost completely omitted the words "I" or "we". There is, as we shall see, a reason why he remains anonymous and avoids speaking by himself.[25]

The notion of the monastery as *domus domini* is not absent from other monastic rules, though it never appears in a position as prominent as here and in a deliberate alteration of a source text.[26] The same applies to *timor*, though each rule invokes slightly different kinds of fear and assigns it different functions. Caesarius quotes in his *Regula ad monachos* two biblical verses referring to the fear of God.[27] According to his *Regula ad virgines*, the *cellararia* should carry out her work *cum timore Dei* – but for the rest his nuns' joyful retreat seems to work without fear.[28] Aurelianus requires his monks and nuns once "to form their flesh in the fear of the Lord."[29] The *Regula Ferrioli* invokes once the *metus damnationis* (fear of damnation).[30] We can therefore conclude that the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* deliberately inscribed fear of the Lord as motivator into his rule, expanding on an idea that was present, though not prevalent, in the tradition upon which he built.[31]

The revision of Augustine's *Praeceptum* at the beginning of chapter 14 is by no means coincidental: fear of the Lord appears throughout the *Regula Tarnantensis*: Monks should not care about the doings of worldly people but focus on meditation of the heart in the fear of the Lord (*Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 8.16). The *cellararius* should consider the needs of everyone with the fear of the Lord (c. 10.6). The stewards should guard the revenues of the monastery with greatest care out of fear of the Lord (c. 11.2). A monk as holy man should fear to displease God (c. 18.11). The *Regula Tarnantensis* paraphrases here a passage from Augustine's *Praeceptum* but inserts the notion that a monk should fear that God sees everything.[32]

There is a reason why the monks in the *Monasterium Tarnantense* should fear their Lord: being a monk does not just mean dwelling in God's House but also holding the status of a slave, a *servus* or *famulus*. The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* applies these terms both

[25] A collective "we" appears twice (*Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 11.5 and c. 14.6) and one "I" in a phrase quoted from Augustine's *Praeceptum* (c. 18.14).

[26] We find it in *Regula Pachomii*, *Praecepta et iudicia*, prologue, ed. Armand Boon, *Pachomiana Latina. Régle et épitres de S. Pachome, épitre de S. Théodore et „liber" de S. Orsiesius* (Leuven: Bureaux de la Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, 1932), 53; Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 2.2/*ad virgines*, c. 1; *Regula Ferrioli*, c. 34.9; *Regula magistri*, c. 11.6-13, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé, *SC* 106 (Paris, Cerf: 1964), 8-10; *Regula Benedicti*, c. 31.19, ed. Jean Neufville and Adalbert de Vogüé, *SC* 182 (Paris: Cerf, 1972), 560; c. 53.22, p. 616.

[27] Caesarius, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 19.21, *SC* 398 (Paris: Cerf, 1994), 218; c. 26.14, p. 224 quote Eph. 5:21 and Sir. 2:1.

[28] Caesarius, *Regula ad virgines*, c. 30.1, *SC* 345, 208.

[29] Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos/ad virgines*, dedicatory letter.4: *configere timore dominico carnes vestras*.

[30] *Regula Ferrioli*, c. 2.1-2; c. 37.2; c. 37.10 (fear of the abbot); c. 25.5 (fear of damnation, in the context of obscene speech).

[31] Fear does, however, play a crucial role in the *Regula magistri*, the *Regula Benedicti*, and the seventh-century *Regula cuiusdam ad virgines*. All of them revolve around a combination of fear of the abbot/abbess, fear of God, and fear of damnation. See Albrecht Diem, "Regulating Passions: Emotional Discipline in Early Medieval Monastic Rules," *Pakistan Journal of Historical Studies* 5 (2020): 11-40.

[32] Compare Augustine, *Praeceptum* IV.5, ed. Verheijen, 425 to *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 18.8-11.

to slaves and to monks making themselves slaves of the Lord.[33] There is therefore no reason to use the milder term "servant" when referring to a monk as *servus* or *famulus*. In her studies on monasticism and ancient slavery, Heike Grieser traces the notion of monastic conversion as a form of self-enslavement, and submission to the abbot as a common motif in monastic texts.[34] The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* confirms the understanding of monastic self-enslavement, but for him it is not the abbot who acts as *paterfamilias* but the Lord himself.

Among the monastic rules discussed in this chapter, the *Regula Tarnantensis* is the only one that places the notion of the monk as *servus* or *famulus Domini* in the centre of its programme, though it is not entirely unknown to the other rules discussed here. Aurelianus refers in his *Regula ad monachos* once to a monk as *servus domini* and once as *servus dei* and mentions once that the monastery owns real *servi*.[35] The *Regula Ferrioli* calls the monks *servi Dei* once and uses *servus* and *servitus* thrice in biblical quotations. Ferriolus dedicates one chapter to the slaves of the monastery, using the terms *servus* and *mancipium*.[36] Only the *Regula Benedicti* uses the notion of the monk as *servus* more often than the *Regula Tarnantensis*,[37] though for Benedict it is the abbot who plays the unchallenged role of the *paterfamilias* (c. 2.7). The notion of the monk as slave belonged, therefore, to a repertoire of concepts the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* could use to develop his programme – and he does it consistently:

A monk who enters the monastery as a slave along with his master should serve the entire *fraternitas* as a true *famulus Christi* with love and humility (c. 1.18). A junior monk should show towards strangers nothing but an attitude of humility and the required servitude (*famulatus*) (c. 7.7). Any postulant monk needs first to learn how to serve and whom to serve (c. 1.3-5). Interacting with outsiders, a monk should display his servile status (*famula-*

[33] The *Regula Tarnantensis* refers to *servi*, *famuli* and *servitus* in the context of slaves in c. 1.2; c. 1.5; c. 1.14; c. 23.14, and to monks as *servi* and *famuli* or as performing *servitium* or *famulatus* in c. 1.15; c. 1.18; c. 7.7; c. 9.3; c. 14.22; c. 16.14; c. 18.8.

[34] Heike Grieser, "Antike Sklaverei und entstehendes christliches Mönchtum. Facetten eines spannungsreichen Verhältnisses," in *Theologie und Sklaverei von der Antike bis in die frühe Neuzeit*, ed. Heike Grieser and Nicole Priesching (Hildesheim: Olms, 2016), 55-90, at 72-77; eadem, "Der Herr und seine Sklaven als Hausgemeinschaft: das Konzept der familia im westlichen spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Christentum," in *Ehe – Familie – Verwandtschaft: Vergesellschaftung in Religion und sozialer Lebenswelt*, ed. Andreas Holzern and Ines Weber (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2008), 125-143, at 132-133. On the practice of self-enslavement in general (which includes giving oneself to a monastic community, albeit not for spiritual reasons), see Alice Rio, *Slavery After Rome, 500-1100*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 42-74; on the church institutions as owners of slaves, see Mary E. Sommar, *The Slaves of the Churches. A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Julia Winnebeck, "Sklaverei im antiken und spätantiken Christentum," *Verkündigung und Forschung* 67, no. 2 (2022): 147-157.

[35] Aurelianus, *Regula ad monachos*, c. 38 (*servus domini*); c. 45 (*servus dei*); c. 18 (*servus* owned slave of the monastery).

[36] *Regula Ferrioli*, dedicatory letter.2 (monks as *servi Dei*); c. 2.5-6; c. 31.9; c. 39.13 (*servus/servitium* in biblical passages); c. 36 (the slaves of the monastery). See also Johanna Schwarz and Julia Winnbeck. "Der Umgang mit Sklavinnen und Sklaven im Mönchtum. Sklaven Gottes – Sklaven der Kirche," *Welt und Umwelt der Bibel* 2 (2023): 54-57.

[37] For reasons of space, the role of servitude in the *Regula Benedicti* cannot be discussed in detail here. The key passages are: *Regula Benedicti*, prologue.7; prlogue.45; c. 2. 20; c. 5.3: c. 16.2; c. 18.24; c. 19.3; c. 61.10; c. 64.21.

tum) (c. 7.7). Any monk should strive to serve (*servare*) the Lord in order to please him (c. 13.9). According to the *Regula Tarnantensis*, "it is fitting that the slaves of God (*famulos dei*) do not diminish the life of good work but increase it." (c. 16.14) A passage on the task of the *provisor* (steward) combines all three motives, that of the fear of the Lord, that of monks as *famuli Dei*, and that of God as the owner of the monastery:

> In fear of the Lord, [the stewards] should most carefully preserve alms that are given to the monastery and whatever is collected from the labour of the brothers. If anyone is negligent in taking care of the property entrusted to him by the slaves of God, he harms God, as one of the fathers states, and if he squanders these goods, he shall be held accountable to the Lord.[38]

Consistent with the idea of the monastery as slave-household, the author deliberately removed the notion of the abbot as *pater* of the monastery. After all, the abbot is not more than the head slave who deserves obedience from his monks but is the lowest of the low in the eyes of God (c. 23.5-6). There are two passages in which the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* eliminates the title *pater* from Augustine's *Praeceptum*. As it behoves the slaves of God (*servos Dei* – an addition to Augustine's text), monks ought to pay reverence to their abbot (not called *pater* anymore) after God, and obedience to their prior.[39] Augustine requires monks to obey the *praepositus* (in his rule the head of the monastery) *tamquam pater* (like a father). The *Regula Tarnantensis* demands that the monks obey their *praepositus* (here the prior) *specialiter* (especially).[40]

The notion of the monastic community as a community of slaves may explain why the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* entirely silenced himself, as we have seen already. In contrast to Caesarius, Aurelianus and especially Ferriolus, who all proudly present themselves as founders and regulators and who constantly prescribe, admonish, determine, decide etc., the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* does not consider himself entitled to give orders and therefore never speaks. After all, he is just a *servus* like all the others.

Understanding the monk as *servus* and *famulus* who fearfully serves in the *domus domini* has a curious practical consequence that resonates throughout the entire rule. Caesarius prohibited his nuns and the abbess from having their private slaves (*ancillae*), which implies that *ancillae* serving the entire community were also present in his foundation (c. 7.1). Ferriolus prohibited the abbot from freeing the monastery's slaves because they were the slaves of all the members of the community (c. 36). It is likely that the *Monasterium Tarnant-*

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38 *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 11.1-3: *… quique aelemosinam monasterio deputatam, vel ea quae a fratribus laborantibus colliguntur, summa cura pro domini timore conservent. Quia si creditam sibi famulorum dei neglegit servare substantiam, sicut ait quidam patrum, laedit deum, et dispergens ea rationem est domino redditurus.*

39 Compare Augustine, *Ordo monasterii*, c. 6, ed. Verheijen, 150: *Fideliter oboediant, patrem suum honorent post deum, praeposito suo deferant sicut decet sanctos ...* to *Regula Tarnantenis*, c. 14.21-22: *Abbati post deum impendatur honor et reverentia reservetur, praeposito, sicut dei servos decet, plena dilectio et concors oboedientia commodetur.*

40 Compare Augustine, *Praeceptum* VII.1, ed. Verheijen, 345: *Praeposito tamquam patri oboediatur ...* to *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 23.1: *Praeposito specialiter oboediatur.*

ense owned slaves as well, but the fact that the monks held the status of *servi* or *famuli* blurred the line between the self-proclaimed monks-slaves and the real ones. Both became part of the monastic *fraternitas*. The *Regula Tarnantensis* makes this clear in the context of masters entering along with their salves. A *famulus* remains a *famulus* even if he becomes part of the community because with God there is no regard for status, at least in this respect:

> If someone brings a dependent or slave (*famulus*) or parent with him and asks that they are admitted to the religious community, it is appropriate that this person joins the brothers after he is approved by a similar examination. And the one who had previously been subject to him in servitude (*in servitute*), must be considered a brother placed in the service of the Lord (*in domini positus servitio*), because, as the Apostle teaches, with God there is no regard for status (cf. Rom. 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col. 3:25).[41]

The main difference is that these *servi* just changed their master, while the real monks made themselves slaves in a self-chosen act of humility. Of course, only free people can do this. Whoever was a slave outside the monastery is not allowed to enter, unless he accompanied his master.[42] Roy Flechner and Janel Fontaine have shown that the admission of former slaves to monasteries was not uncommon and that they usually remained in their lower status, which indicates that the *Regula Tarnantensis* describes a two-tiered system that was also common among other monasteries.[43] The text contains numerous provisions that prevent monks of lower background from developing any sense of pride, showing aspirations to change their status, or makeing any claims of equal treatment, for example:

> But the one who is raised from a low status to brotherly equality should not become haughty in a swelling of pride. He should rather gain strength through humility in doing good things. And like a true slave of Christ, he should serve with love and humility not only the one to whom he has become equal, but the entire brotherhood. The reason is that, just as the one who seemed greater in the world, is called "brother" instead of "lord" out of desire for humility, he too must remain aware of his state and not have pretensions by striving for what is too high. Instead, he should elevate himself by the testimony of his humility, so that he finds favour with God.[44]

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41 *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 1.14: *Clientem vero, et famulum, aut parentem secum exhibens, si postulet in consortio religionis admitti, simili examinatione probatum fratribus convenit aggregari, et qui ei fuerat ante in servitute subiectus, frater est in domini positus servitio conputandus, quia apud deum, ut apostolus docet, nulla est acceptio personarum.*

42 *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 1.2: *… sed primum studiosius indagetur utrum voluntarie an necessitate aliqua coactus advenerit, aut si nulla servitutis conditione obnoxius teneatur.*

43 Roy Flechner and Janel Fontaine, "The admission of former slaves into churches and monasteries: reaching behind the sources," *Early Medieval Europe* 29, no. 4 (2021): 586-611. See also Isabelle Cochelin, "Les *famuli* à l'ombre des monastères (Cluny et Fleury, X^e^ et XIe siècles)," in *La vie quotidienne des moines en Orient et en Occident (IVe-Xe siècle)*, vol. 2, ed. Olivier Delouis and Maria Mossakowska-Gaubert (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2018), 321-344.

44 *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 1.18-20: *Et non solum ei cui aequalis effectus est, sed omni fraternitati, ut verus famulus Christi, cum pietate et humilitate deserviat, quia sicut is, qui esse maior videbatur in saeculo, per humilitatis affectum frater vocatur ex domino, ita ille sui memor conditionem suam, non altiora petendo decipiat, sed testimonio humilitatis exaltet, ut apud deum inveniat gratiam.*

The author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* assumes that monks who debased themselves to monastic life are in a morally superior position and may claim for themselves what is denied to the others, though they may not despise monks from a lower background. Those who entered the monastery, as it were, through the servants' entrance can redeem themselves only by retaining their low status and serving the rest (c. 14.7-18).

Monks of low and high background are to be treated the same only when they are sick, but this equal treatment ends as soon as they recover "because it is fitting that the slaves of God (*famuli dei*) do not weaken the habit of good work, but strengthen it."[45] Monks who think about escaping the monastery (*fugam meditari*) because they do not want to bear its strictness, are to be brought back. Fugitive monks are, as it seems, treated like fugitive slaves (c. 13.7-8).

On a practical level, the *Regula Tarnantensis* develops two different work schedules for monks inside the monastery who must divide their time between reading, meditation and household work, and the monks engaged in farm work who are given time to read only if no other work must be done (c. 9.9-14). It is likely that the author refers to two different tiers in the monastery.

A part of the appeal of the *Praeceptum* may have been that Augustine unapologetically dismisses the idea of monastic egalitarianism. A significant part of the rule prescribes how the status in the world and the physical constitution resulting from it needs to be considered when assigning tasks, enforcing rules of fasting, giving out clothing and granting special privileges. All of these provisions entered the *Regula Tarnantensis*.[46] The following passage underlines both the idea of shared servitude and social difference in the monastery:

> The brotherhood ought not be stirred up if those brothers whose parents have brought them up more delicately, receive more food and clothing. The reason is that, according to the constitution of the rule, what is given to some out of charity, is denied to those who have a stronger body. For one needs to respect how much they have given up out of love of devotion, and to which scorn they have submitted themselves by divine inspiration. And the entire community should not regard the above-mentioned entitlement, which is granted to a few, as if it applies to everyone. For it is not right that in a blessed dwelling where the rich are humbled, the poor are lifted up.[47]

[45] *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 16.11-14: *Sane inaequalitate constricti, ita sunt tractandi, ut vires commoditate confectas velocius praestatio larga corroboret, nec in infirmitate manentibus discretionem victus afferat distantia personarum. Qui tamen cum integram fuerint virtutem corporis adsecuti, consuetudinariis abenis abstinentiae teneantur; quia decet famulos dei boni operis consuetudinem non minuere, sed augere.*

[46] Augustine, *Praeceptum* I.3-7, ed. Verheijen, 418-420 and III.3-4, pp. 422-423, reproduced in *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 14.4-18 and c. 16.3-14.

[47] *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 16.6-7: *Et si eis quos parentes deliciosius aluerunt victus aut vestimenta largius tribuuntur, non ob hoc debet commoveri fraternitas, quod fortioribus corpore pro constitutione regulae denegatur, quod illis caritatis consideratione tribuitur, quia debet esse respectus quanta amore religionis contempserint, cuique se abiectioni divina inspiratione summiserint. Nec debet supra memorata praesumptio paucis inpensa ab universitate quasi*

By creating such a two-tiered structure and giving up the pretence of equality, the *Regula Tarnantensis* foreshadows the Cistercian division between monks and lay brothers. It is possible though that the *Regula Tarnantensis* just made an internal stratification visible that was present in many other monasteries despite all rhetoric of equality.[48]

Towards the end, the *Regula Tarnantensis* inserts in the words of the *Praeceptum* a paraphrase of Rom. 6:14-22: "You should not be like slaves (*servi*) according to the law but like free people placed under the grace."[49] This statement does not dissolve the notion of being *servi* or *famuli dei* but simply emphasizes the difference between legal serfdom and the self-chosen status of slaves of God.

The choice to become a fearful slave in the House of the Lord seems to be a peculiar form of agency; but in the eyes of the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* it works. Even though the fear of the Lord is ubiquitous in the text, there is no reference to the fear of damnation. A good fearful slave had little to fear in this regard.

D. THE REGULA FERRIOLI: IN THE APOSTLE'S FOOTSTEPS

Gregory of Tours praised bishop Ferriolus of Uzès (*fl.* 552-573) as a *"man of great sanctity, full of wisdom and intellect, who has written some books of letters, following the example of Sidonius."*[50] The *Regula* he had written for a community founded at the shrine of his namesake, the martyr Ferreolus, shows indeed the depth of his learning and his literary skills.[51] Ferriolus phrased his rule entirely in his own words, which makes intertextual links less visible. The text contains, however, traces of the *Regula Aureliani* and the *Regula Tarnantensis*, namely, shared terminology and pragmatic provisions found nowhere else, which indicates that Ferriolus knew these rules.[52]

The *Monasterium Tarnantensis* and the *Monasterium Ferriolacensis* (as it is called in the *incipit* of its rule) may have looked similar, at least from outside. The practical provisions in both rules are largely compatible, albeit that their authors showed different emphases. Both monasteries were situated close to an urban centre, maybe at a sub-urban shrine (*Regula*

canonica reputari. Aequum namque non est, ut in beata habitatione, ubi inclinantur divites, pauperes erigantur. The author paraphrases Augustine, *Praeceptum* III.4, ed. Verheijen, 422.

48 On the rhetoric of equality in the monastery, see Albrecht Diem, "Exclusion and the rhetoric of accessibility in the late antique and early medieval monasticism," in *La construction sociale du sujet exclu (IVe-XIe siècle). Discours, lieux et individus*, ed. Sylvie Joye, Cristina La Rocca, and Stéphane Gioanni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 123-147.

49 *Regula Tarnantensis*, c. 23.14: *Non sitis ut servi sub lege, sed sicut liberi sub gratia constituti.*

50 Gregory of Tours, *Decem libri historiarum* VI, c. 7, *MGH SRM* 1.1, 276.

51 A new edition and translation of the *Regula Ferrioli* is in preparation. Vincent Desprez, "La Regula Ferrioli: Text critique," *Revue Mabillon* 60 (1982): 117-148, provides the currently available critical edition. On the text, see also Georg Holzherr, *Regula Ferioli. Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte und zur Sinndeutung der Benediktinerregel* (Einsiedeln/Zurich/Cologne: Benziger Verlag, 1961).

52 Holzherr, *Regula Ferrioli*, 92-96.

Ferrioli, c. 4; c. 20; c. 27). They were not enclosed, and its members could interact with the surrounding world. Their monks were probably members of the upper class who had to give up private property and submit themselves to a lenient monastic regime. Ferriolus had to forbid them to wear fancy shoes, extravagant vestments, and soft undergarments, but also to use perfume and to hunt (c. 14; c. 32; c. 34). Monks from both monasteries spent their days largely with prayer, reading, and some manual work.

Yet the way both rules framed their provisions could hardly be more different, and we may read the *Regula Ferrioli* as a response to the ideas expressed in the *Regula Tarnantensis*. Ferriolus clearly does not imagine his monks as slaves. They were "sweet brothers in Christ" (c. 39.57) and "worthy inhabitants" who stay "in the living quarters prepared for them." Their monastery is their collectively owned *habitatio* (prol.3; c. 16.3; c. 16.4; c. 39.3), which includes the shared possession of slaves whom the abbot is not allowed to free without consent of the community (c. 36). If his monks did the right things, they had little to fear. Key ideas of the previously discussed rules – the battle, the enclosure, and the salvific *sancta regula* – are absent as well.

Ferriolus shares, however, one central idea with Caesarius. He also envisages his monastery as a holy community (*congregatio sancta*, dedicatory letter.3; c. 2.2) where his monks live a holy life (*conversatio sancta*; prol.5.6) with holy zeal (*sancta intentio*; prol. 2: *sanctum studium*; c. 11.2) in simplicity, which is "a companion of sanctity" (*simplicitas sanctitate socia*; c. 38.2) under the holy admonition (*sancta ammonitio*; c. 30.2) of an abbot who is holy himself (*abbas sanctus*; c. 37.1-2). The notion of the holy community thus returns, but without its protective enclosure and without the *regula sancta* as a salvific instrument.

Like Caesarius (but unlike the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis*) Ferriolus gives his monastic endeavour a strong eschatological dimension. His monks "despise the things of the present, so as to snatch away the things of the future" (prol. 4). Their attitude towards the abbot "either drags [a monk] to punishment or leads to glory" (c. 2.3). Grumbling (*murmuratio*) "squanders the land of promise" (c. 7.3). A monk should eagerly attend vigils "lest his spiritual soul die while his flesh is alive" (c. 13.3). "The expectation of the inheritance, the promise of glory, the eternity of life, and the very dwelling with the Creator" should "cleanse and purify them from the fifth of all vices" (c. 39.3).

The clue to Ferriolus's monastic programme and his vision of his monks' pursuit of collective sanctity lies in the no fewer than ninety-nine biblical quotations he had inserted into his rule. Almost half of the text consists of "divine precepts" (*praecepta divina*) that, according to the prologue, allow the monks to attain "eternal rewards" (*aeterna praemia*) (dedicatory letter.11-12).

In no other monastic rule does the Bible play such a central role as in the *Regula Ferrioli*. Instead of relying on older monastic normative material, as Caesarius, Aurelianus, and the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* did, Ferriolus built an entirely new rule around biblical quotations. He found about seventy five of them in a florilegium ascribed to Augustine, the

Liber qui appellatur Speculum.[53] Forty-four biblical quotations in the *Regula Ferrioli* come from the Apostolic Letters, sixteen more from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Ferriolus envisages his monastic life, his pathway to collective holiness and eternal salvation, as emulation of the first Christian communities following the precepts of Jesus and the Apostles. The *Apostolus*, that is, Paul, is explicitly invoked no less than twenty-two times throughout the rule; the other Apostles thrice; Jesus himself eight times.[54] Here are two random examples:

> After all, also the text of the Acts of the Apostles from the time of the early Church commemorates the fact that those who believed in Christ lived in this way. It says: *No one used to say that anything of his goods were his, but all things were held in common by them* (cf. Acts 4:32) (c. 10.5).
>
> We determine that, except at certain feast-days or because of apparent illness, a monk must be excluded from the common meal when he passes the day without work, just as the blessed Apostle commands: *Who does not work, should not eat* (2 Thess. 3:10) (c. 28.1-2).

With the simple requirement to follow the precepts given to the first Christian communities, Ferriolus allows his monks to live a moderately luxurious life, without submitting them to severe ascetic standards, to a holy rule, a lifelong battle,[55] or spatial and social separation from the rest of the world. For Ferriolus, monastic life has more to do with coping with human weakness than with ascetic self-perfection.[56]

We saw that the self-imposed servile status of the *Regula Tarnantensis* had a practical impact on the organization of monastic life. The same is the case with the focus on the *praecepta divina* as a pathway to salvation. Ferriolus envisaged his monastery as an "intellectual community" in which the engagement with the biblical text formed a central part of monastic life. Aside from the common general imperative to read at certain times of the day (c. 26.1), the *Regula Ferrioli* contains several references to teaching, studying, and engagement with the biblical text. Chapter 11 starts as follows:

> No one who wants to claim the name of monk, is allowed to be ignorant of the letters/Letters (*litterae*). He should, moreover, know all the Psalms by heart. And he should not defend himself with whatever kind of excuse from being captured by this holy zeal.[57]

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[53] Augustine, *Liber qui appellatur Speculum*, *CSEL* 12, 1-285. The forthcoming translation of the *Regula Ferrioli* documents all the parallels between the *Regula Ferrioli* and the *Liber qui appellatur Speculum*

[54] References to the Apostle (Paul): c. 1.2; c. 3.2; c. 6.6; c. 7.5-6; c. 8.8; c. 14.6-11; c. 19.4-5; c. 20.5; c. 22.4; c. 25.2; c. 31.5-9; c. 31.11; c. 32.2; c. 34.4; c. 37.16-18; c. 39.4; c. 39.17; c. 39.25; c. 39.29; c. 39.35; c. 39.44; c. 37.30-31; references to other Apostles: c. 3.8; c. 23.5; c. 37.19-20; references to Jesus's instructions: c. 2.6; c.14.2; c. 23.8-11; c. 29.2; c. 34.8; c. 37.24; c. 38.5; c. 39.42.

[55] There are references to the battle for chastity in c. 4.4 and the fight against envy in c. 9.3.

[56] References to human weakness appear, e.g., in c. 21.7; c. 23.1; c. 24.1; c. 24.8; c. 24.15; c. 37.1; c. 39.7.

[57] *Regula Ferrioli*, c. 11.1-2: *Omnis qui nomen vult monachi vindicare, litteras ei ignorare non liceat. Quin etiam psalmos totos memoriter teneat, neque se quacumque excusatione defendat, quominus sancto hoc studio capiatur.*

Ferriolus either refers here to the imperative of literacy – with the stern statement that only a literate person may call himself a monk – or he does indeed require that his monks know and engage with the Letters of the New Testament as the basis for their monastic life – in line with the numerous references to Paul and the other Apostles throughout the text.[58]

Elsewhere Ferriolus states that the abbot is dispensed from other work because he is supposed to read and to teach and have a book in his hands whenever possible (c. 30). He shares his teaching task with a specially appointed *formarius* (c. 27.4-6). Monks are supposed to be "burning to drink salvation from the Holy Scriptures," which means that they should be engaged with reading, even while being outside the monastery (c. 19).

Whoever cannot do physical work should spend even more time with reading. As Ferriolus phrases it beautifully, "a monk who is unable to draw the land with a plough should pencil a page with his finger." Those unable to do physical work can at least read and write, which is outstanding work as well.[59]

EPILOGUE

There are two ways of understanding the five different concepts of monastic community and collective agency developed in the rules of Caesarius, Aurelianus and Ferriolus and in the *Regula Tarnantensis*. On the one hand they document a discussion about the purpose of monastic life, about the nature of a monastic community, and about its salvific power, that belongs to sixth century. The respectful disagreements between our four monastic regulators open a – maybe small – window to a world that had to re-invent itself taking both the challenge of Augustine's theology of predestination and prevenient grace and the transformations of a post-Roman society into account.[60]

There is, however, another way of reading these texts. The rules of Aurelianus and Ferriolus and the *Regula Tarnantensis* are preserved only because the ninth-century monastic reformer Benedict of Aniane decided to incorporate them in his *Codex Regularum* and to excerpt them and juxtapose them with the *Regula Benedicti* in his *Concordia Regularum*.[61] In the codex Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28118, the only extant early medieval copy of the *Codex Regularum*, the collection of twenty-five rules for monks begins with the words *Incipit prologus sanctorum regulae patrum monachorum* (Here begins the prologue of the

[58] Augustine, *Liber qui appellatur Speculum*, *CCSL* 12, 154, l. 18, Ferriolus's main source on the Bible, uses the term *Litterae Apostolicae*.

[59] *Regula Ferrioli*, c. 27.8-10: *Ut quis non valet insistere operi, det promptius operam lectioni, quicumque agrum non excolit, deum dupliciter colat, et inter reliqua etiam hanc quaerat artem, ut paginam pingat digito, qui terram non praescribit aratro.*

[60] On the impact of Augustine's doctrine of grace on monastic rules, see Albrecht Diem, "L'espace, la grâce et la discipline dans les règles monastiques du haut Moyen Âge," in *Enfermements II: Règles et dérèglements en milieu clos (VIe-XIXe siècle)*, ed. Isabelle Heullant-Donat, Julie Claustre, Élisabeth Lusset, and Falk Bretschneider (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015), 215-238.

[61] Benedict of Aniane, *Concordia Regularum*, ed. Pierre Bonnerue, *CCSL* 168/168A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999).

Rule of the Holy Fathers of the monks) and ends with the words *Explicit regula sanctorum patrum* (here ends the Rule of the Holy Fathers).[62] For Benedict of Aniane, the three rules were part of one all-encompassing "Rule of the Holy Fathers." From the safe Carolingian vantage point of a monastic world that is undisputed in its spiritual power, these discordant voices of a sixth-century "sequential discussion" simply contributed to a repertoire of options for framing, conceptualizing, and ordering monastic life – a repertoire that was to be used for giving the *Regula Benedicti*, the text that was supposed to become the sole norm of monastic life, a meaning in the context of the Carolingian monastic reforms.

Benedict of Aniane wanted to show that the *Regula Benedicti* perfectly encompassed the entire monastic tradition.[63] At least with regard to our five sixth-century monastic rules, he may have had a point. Several programmatic aspects that emerge, albeit isolated from each other, in these texts, appear also in the *Regula Benedicti* or can at least effortlessly be read into the text. Benedict calls his monks *servi* as well (*Regula Benedicti*, prol.7; c. 64.21), though here it is the abbot who plays the role of the *paterfamilias* (c. 2.7). The *Regula Benedicti* somehow understands the monastery as a protective space (c. 66.6-7). The text is not free of the battle terminology (e.g. prol.3; prol.40; c. 1.4-5; c. 1.20; c. 2.20; c. 61.10). The last chapter of the *Regula Benedicti* emphasizes that the Old and New Testament should be the guide of human life (c. 73.3).

A safe distance of 250 years allowed Benedict of Aniane to turn the discordant voices of Caesarius, Aurelianus, Ferriolus and the author of the *Regula Tarnantensis* into a *Concordia Regularum* that just proves the superiority of the *Regula Benedicti*, because this text says it all. Eventually Benedict of Aniane comes to a strikingly simple answer to the question how living according to a *regula* relates to the pursuit of salvation. He, and several other Carolingian copyists, discreetly added a concluding sentence to their copies of the *Regula Benedicti* that definitively resolves the question of monastic agency – a sentence that was probably not part of the original: *Explicit regula. Facienti haec erit vita aeterna*: Here ends the Rule. Those who carry this out, will attain eternal life.[64]

[62] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28118, fol. 1r and fol. 184v.

[63] Prologue to the *Concordia Regularum*, *CCSL* 168A, 3-4.

[64] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28118, fol. 18va. A similar explicit (*Explicit Regula Patris Eximii Benedicti. Facienti haec vita erit aeterna*) appears in a ninth-century manuscript of the *Regula Benedicti* from Reichenau: Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Cod. Aug. perg. 128, fol. 71v. Other Carolingian manuscripts containing similar formulas include Augsburg, Bischöfliche Ordinariatsbibliothek, Cod. 1; St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 915; Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Cod. Rh. Hist. 28; Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Mp.th.q. 22; El Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Cod. a.I.13. It is striking that Adalbert de Vogüé does not include these words to his edition of the *Regula Benedicti*. Hanslik's edition, *CSEL* 75, 181, at least documents them in his apparatus.

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THE CREATION OF COMMUNITY THROUGH EPITAPHS: THE CASE OF EARLY MEDIEVAL LYON

OPHELIA NORRIS[1]

ABSTRACT

This chapter argues that communities were represented and created through the text, image, and space of funerary inscriptions (epitaphs), and that such epitaphs had a key role in the communication between the living and the dead in early medieval communities. The focus is a series of epitaphs from early medieval Lyon. This group of epitaphs comprises several elite epitaphs, commemorating the saints and bishops of Lyon, as well as a number of less elite inscriptions that invoke the saints. This selection of inscriptions provides insight into the formation of different yet overlapping communities, including the living Christian congregation in Lyon; the community of the living with the dead; and the relationships of the dead one another, through ad sanctos burials. This chapter finds that the community formation in Lyon was enacted through epitaphs and underpinned through the patronus, both the saintly patron and the earthly, episcopal one.

KEYWORDS

Epitaphs; Inscriptions; Burial; Saints; Martyrs; Merovingian Gaul; Lyon

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INTRODUCTION

Epitaphs – funerary inscriptions – provide insight into the way early medieval Christian communities were both represented and created through text, image, materials, and space. Some epitaphs were directly related to saints' cults by asking for holy intercession. This creation of community through epitaphs is unusually explicit in the corpus of inscriptions from early medieval Lyon, which includes a collection of metrical epitaphs for bishops and five "less elite" inscriptions that imply a close link to the saints. This chapter will provide some context for the role saints' cults played in communities and consider the communal function of epitaphs and burials to examine the way inscriptions linked the saint, the *patronus*, to the community.

"*Patronus*" is here understood in several ways. First, and primarily, the *patronus* was an elite actor who has dependent members of society bound to him, which is often referred to in a patron-client relationship. Clients may be bound to the patron in several ways (culturally, economically, legally). Patronage was a well-defined aspect of Roman Republican and Imperial society. This system of reciprocity is adapted to Christian and post-Roman society, especially in the role of the bishop in the community and the implementation of charity and care for the poor; it is also manifested in the martyrs' and saints' miracle-working and care of the sick. Second, the *patronus* is understood in the classical sense of the advocate, or defender before the court of justice. This sense of "*patronus*" was used in the pre-Christian world,[2] and continued to be used in the Christian context of the heavenly court of judgement. "*Patronus*" is but one of many examples of the continuation of Roman terminology into the Christian context and into the post-Roman Latin West, as is "*sanctus*".[3]

I focus on the reciprocal nature of saints' cults and episcopal patronage, the commemoration of the bishops of Lyon, and the patronage extended to the wider congregation through epitaphs. How did inscriptions create community in the afterlife as well as in the life of the living? Inscribed evidence provides a glimpse into the wider community that differs from that of other categories of sources,[4] which can be fundamental for understanding early medieval communities and the role played by saints' cults in their creation

[2] Cicero, *De officiis* 2.14.51, 91; id. *De oratore*. 2.69.280, 224.

[3] See F. Collart, "*Patronus*," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 26: *Nymphen – Pegasus* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2015), 1109-1138, at 1128-1137.

[4] Mark A. Handley, *Death, Society and Culture: Inscriptions and Epitaphs in Gaul and Spain, AD 300-750*. BAR International Series 1135 (Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2003), 1-3; E. Badian, "Introduction," in Giancarlo Susini, *The Roman Stonecutter: An Introduction to Latin Epigraphy*, trans. Anna Maria Dabrowski (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973), 1. There is a growing number of databases making epigraphic evidence, especially ancient inscriptions, more accessible: see, for Gallic languages: https://riig.huma-num.fr/; for the Greek and Latin epigraphy of the Italian peninsula in the Roman Republic and Roman Empire: http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php; for Latin and bilingual epigraphy of the Roman Empire: https://edh.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/; for ancient graffiti of Herculaneum and Pompeii: http://ancientgraffiti.org/Graffiti/. Furthermore, the ERC GRAPH-EAST project of the University of Poitiers expands this to later centuries and the eastern Mediterranean.

from another perspective.[5] I analyse a group of five epitaphs concerning the protection of one saint, Laurentius, which may also refer to their burial close to him. Even though these inscriptions are not representative of early medieval inscribed evidence, ideas of *ad sanctos* burials, or even burials in general, they act as a case study that provides insight into the local Christian community of south-eastern Gaul and Lyon particularly.[6] Previous scholarship on this material has for the most part surveyed the epitaphs in general, especially the vital work undertaken by Mark A. Handley,[7] or focused on the episcopal epitaphs, especially in the work of Martin Heinzelmann.[8] Where possible, the epitaphs are brought into conversation with other inscriptions and other categories of sources with the aim to contributing to the scholarly trend of bringing epitaphs into the limelight in the study of early medieval history, as Janneke Raaijmakers undertook in the "MEDNAME" project with Estelle Ingrand-Varenne and Elisa Pallottini.[9] The resulting publication from this project in many ways forms the initial inspiration for this chapter, for the research stresses the importance of the role of epigraphy in the creation of holy places and access to sanctity. Well established in the field but by no means less important is the serious consideration of the significance, both in this world and in the next one, of the cult of saints, which was also at the centre of Janneke Raaijmakers' work.[10]

A. SAINTS' CULTS AND COMMUNITY

There are three key aspects to the popularity of saints' cults and how they related to community: who venerated them; how saints became the focal point around which early medieval communities established themselves; and how saints acted as intermediaries between the living and the dead. This section examines these aspects and then considers how saints' cults bridged the gap between the living and the dead. Firstly, saints received both popular, or "grass-roots" devotion as well as the support of the elite – royal, episcopal, or aristocratic.

5 Raymond Van Dam, *Saints and their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

6 This is not limited to South-eastern Gaul, and this is one of the current developments in Merovingian archaeology. Bonnie Effros and Isabel Moreira described how "Crypts built under churches to accommodate the pious dead *ad sanctos*, (…), are also being examined, expanding our view of the world of the dead and the role of secular and religious patronage in shaping it." Cf. Bonnie Effros and Isabel Moreira, "Pushing the Boundaries in the Merovingian World," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Merovingian World*, ed. Bonnie Effros and Isabel Moreira (Oxford: Oxford University, Press, 2020), 21.

7 Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*.

8 Martin Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien: Zur Kontinuität römischer Führungsschichten vom 4. bis zum 7. Jahrhundert. Soziale, prospographische und bildungsgeschichtliche Aspekte* (Munich: Artemis Verlag, 1976), 98-184.

9 The result of which is: Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, Elisa Pallotini, and Janneke Raaijmakers, eds., *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces Inscriptions in the West, from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023).

10 Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c.744–c.900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Peter Brown in his highly influential 1982 book *The Cult of the Saints* comprehensively rejects a "two-tiered model" that assumes that a "vulgar" practice the and an "elite" one: change happens within elites, and vulgar belief is uniform.[11] In response, Brown shows that the entire Christian community participated in the veneration of saints and that we misunderstand its nature if we divide the Christian community into these two binary groups of elite and "vulgar". Instead, he described "the rise of the cult of saints… as part of a greater whole."[12] This notion played a central role in much of Brown's later work and is now widely accepted in the scholarship of Late Antiquity.[13] Furthermore, the centrality of the cult of saints is no longer questioned. Reading the histories and hagiographies from the early medieval Latin West, one gets a sense of a landscape firmly under the power of saints.[14] Believers visiting saints' tombs saw relic collections, received visions of martyrs and experienced healing miracles. That saints were popular and that they received devotion from all ranks of early medieval society, is fundamental to an understanding of the corpus of inscriptions from the Latin West in general and Lyon in particular. By studying both elite and non-elite epitaphs, we can see the dynamics in engaging with saints – or the *Very Special Dead* – as Peter Brown calls them.[15]

That early medieval communities formed themselves around a saint is not to be taken for granted, however. The popularity of individual cults had to be established and underpinned through a variety of methods, such as through liturgy, hagiography, and building churches.[16] Once a site had become associated with the cult, individuals could go there on pilgrimage. The payment for the commission of liturgical and hagiographical texts,[17] the ability to associate places with holy people,[18] and the financial support given to the pilgrims and pilgrimages most often came from ecclesiastical funds, usually out of the income of the bishop.[19] The popularity of certain saints was also highlighted in texts. Consider, for example, Gregory of Tours (d. 594) described in the *Life of Nicetius* of the *Liber vitae patrum* that

11 Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), esp. 1-22.

12 Ibid., 21.

13 Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013 [2003]); Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda*.

14 Danuta Shanzer, "So Many Saints – So Little Time… the *Libri Miraculorum* of Gregory of Tours," *Journal of Medieval Latin* 13 (2003): 19-60.

15 Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 69-85.

16 Van Dam, *Saints and their Miracles*, 20, 43.

17 Wolfert S. van Egmond, *Conversing with the Saints: Communication in Pre-Carolingian Hagiography from Auxerre*. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 15 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); Els Rose, "Citizenship Discourses in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 55, no. 1 (2021): 1-21.

18 Robert A. Markus, "How on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (1994): 257-271.

19 Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 37; Raymond Van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2020 [1985]), 236.

"an immense crowd of people near the tomb [of Nicetius], buzzing around like a swarm of happy bees around there."[20] Only a few chapters before, Gregory had established his personal connection to Nicetius.[21] In other words, Gregory describes Nicetius not only as widely popular, but also highlights that he was personally related to him; the boundaries between Nicetius' popularity then blends with Gregory's own popularity, resulting in both the promotion of the cult of Nicetius and the authority of the living bishop.[22] Yet it goes further. The saint was, in the words of Brown, "the *patronus*, the invisible, heavenly concomitant of the patronage exercised palpably on earth by the bishop."[23] Bishops and saints were, in many ways, inseparably linked, and in the case of Gregory and Nicetius, also through blood. The saint and the bishop each played central roles in the community, and the promotion of one usually meant the promotion of the other not far behind. Both the figure of Nicetius and the concept of the *patronus* are expanded upon below. To summarise this point, saints' cults were a core feature of the early medieval community, established and supported in part by the ecclesiastical elites.

Yet just as Brown stressed over four decades ago that one cannot separate the elite from the common people, saints received widespread, "grassroots" devotion, particularly as intermediaries between the living and the dead.[24] Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the depiction and in the evidence regarding death and burial. Here, saints were truly at the centre: "The graves of saints… were privileged places, where the contrasted poles of Heaven and Earth met,"[25] which had wide appeal for bishops and non-ecclesiastical elites alike, as explored in the epitaphs of this chapter. Saints could perform miracles; their tombs overflowed with life and suggested anything but death.[26] Burial was one way in which community is expressed, as can be seen in the catacombs of the city of Rome for early

[20] Gregory of Tours, *Liber vitae patrum* VIII, c. 6, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885), 246: *inmensum catervatim populum ad eius sepulchrum ac velut felicium examina apium ad consuetum alveare confluere*. Transl. Edward James, *Gregory of Tours, Life of the Fathers*. Translated Texts for Historians 1 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007 [1985]), 56-57.

[21] Gregory of Tours, *Liber vitae patrum* VIII, c. 2, p. 242.

[22] Martin Heinzelmann, "Gregory of Tours: The Elements of a Biography," in *A Companion to Gregory of Tours*, ed. Alexander C. Murray (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 8-9. For patronage dynamics in another case study, see Eduard Visintini, "Gift-Giving and the Seventh-Century Frankish Church in Merovingian Hagiography: The Case of the *Vita Eligii*," *Millennium* 19, no. 1 (2022): 1-34.

[23] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 38.

[24] Cécile Treffort, *Mémoires carolingiennes: l'épitaphe entre célébration mémorielle, genre littéraire et manifeste politique, milieu VIIIe-début XIe siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 25, 28.

[25] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 3.

[26] See, for example, Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, c. 50, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885), 328; trans. Raymond Van Dam, *Gregory of Tours, The Glory of the Confessors*. Translated Texts for Historians 5 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004 [1988]), 38-39; Constantius of Lyon, *Vie de Saint-Germain*, c. 45, ed. René Borius, *SC* 112 (Paris: Cerf, 1965), 202.

Christians,[27] and in early medieval cemeteries, such as those in southeastern Gaul.[28] While burial places are separate from the living,[29] they are still important places of devotion, due to services held at saints' tombs[30] and the centrality of holy graves as sites of pilgrimage.

In short, saints were popular; they were active in their miracles; and it seems they were everywhere. Their graves were important cultic and ecclesiastical sites and inseparably interwoven in the early medieval Christian community. An idea that is central to Brown's argument, albeit not emphasised as much in subsequent scholarship, is that saints were simultaneously "present" in their relics at their tombs but also in heaven.[31] The place was therefore crucial for the veneration of a saint, as were the miracles they could perform at their graves or by their relics. Sometimes these ideas become more literal – the lack of decay of certain martyrs when dug up centuries later suggested to medieval believers that, as Caroline Walker Bynum put it, "the body was in some sense alive after death", while also being in Heaven.[32] In scholarship, this concept is connected to debates about resurrection and afterlife; the saints are proof of this future resurrection by being still alive beyond the grave through their miraculous activities.[33] In Brown's words, "The tombs of the very special dead were exempt from the facts of death. This was… because the souls of the occupants are in Paradise: the deep peace of their sleep before the resurrection shows in their bones."[34] This relates to community for two reasons. Firstly, belief in resurrection was a core part of the Christian community and belief in saints was proof of this.[35] Secondly, the Resurrection itself formed a new community (Acts 1:1-22). However, despite the centrality of resurrection to Brown's arguments about the cults of the saints, this idea is rarely found so explicitly in early medieval sources. Instead, there are occasional echoes: the miracles performed by saints in the life beyond and their ability to act as intercessors. These echoes reverberate particularly in five unusual epitaphs from Lyon, which linked inscriptions with saints' cults

27 Éric Rebillard, *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2009), esp. 13-36; Vincenzo Fiocchi Nicolai, "The Catacombs," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Archaeology*, ed. D. K. Pettegrew (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 66.

28 Paul-Albert Février, *Le Développement Urbain en Provence de I'Epoque Romaine a la Fin du XIVe Siècle (Archéologie et Histoire Urbaine)* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1964), esp. 51-53, 70-76.

29 Although those boundaries were often more blurred in archaeological evidence, such as the finds of churches with graves inside them, or relics in altars. This kind of evidence is unfortunately beyond the scope of this chapter. See Brown, *Cult of the Saints*, 9.

30 As depicted in, for example, Sidonius, *Letters: Books 3-9*, ed. and trans. W. B. Anderson. Loeb Classical Library 420 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), 226-231.

31 Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 3.

32 For example, Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrum*, c. 46, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885), 69. Quotation: Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 200.

33 Ibid.

34 Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 76.

35 Ibid, 77; Augustine, *De civitate dei* XXII, c. 9, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb, *CCSL* 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 827-828.

and community. First, however, attention must be given to the communal aspects of epitaphs themselves.

B. EPITAPHS, BURIAL, AND COMMUNITY

In sum, saints' cults were a focus of early medieval communities, and the tombs of saints filled the landscape of the Late Antique West.[36] But it was not only the tombs of saints that populated the post-Roman world: cemeteries for the Christian community also began to spread across the Latin West.[37] Brown argues that "burial customs are among the most notoriously stable aspects of most cultures,"[38] though a gradual shift does occur across the first centuries of the common era. To oversimplify for the necessity of brevity, cremation became "passé"[39] by the third century, thus pagans, Christians and Jews largely buried their dead.[40] Following the Christianization of the Roman Empire and the donation of lands for Christian burial, Christians mostly buried their dead on church property, in large complexes. These ecclesiastical burials contrast with the private *hypogea* of their pagan contemporaries.[41] Large, connected Christian burials available for the entire community were not the only type of resting place used in Late Antquity, however. Family burial chambers, crypts, and mausolea are also used by early Christians.[42]

Family burials in Christian communities are not exclusive to the Roman catacombs: in Merovingian Lyon; only about a hundred years later,[43] the wider Christian community established their cemetery around a series of family burials. This family was the episcopal one: the graves of Saint Nicetius and the other bishops of Lyons who were buried next to him: Sacerdos, who was Nicetius' uncle; Rusticus, who was the father of Sacerdos; Viventiolus, who was Sacerdos' uncle; and Aurelianus, the Bishop of Arles, who was Sacerdos' son.[44] In this sense, the saint's grave was still part of a family grave, but it had become a family

36 Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 34.

37 Amy K. Hirschfeld, "An Overview of the Intellectual History of Catacomb Archaeology," in *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context. Studies of Roman, Jewish, and Christian Burials*, ed. Laurie Brink and Deborah Green (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 13.

38 Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 24, 29-32.

39 Nicola Denzey, *The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Early Christian Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), 27.

40 Cinzia Vismara, "Dalla cremazione all'inumazione (?)," *Archeologia Classica* 66 (2015): 595-614.

41 See, for example, the development of the catacomb of Domitilla, including "Flavian *hypogea*": Umberto M. Fasola, *Die Domitilla-Katakombe und die Basilika der Märtyrer Nereus und Achilleus* (Vatican City: Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra, 1989).

42 David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers* (London: Duckworth, 2000).

43 On the dating of the catacombs, see Leonard V. Rutgers, Klaas van der Borg, Arie F. M. de Jong, and Arnold Provoost, "Sul problema di come datare le catacombe ebraiche di Roma," *BABesch* 81 (2006): 169-184.

44 Jean-François Reynaud, *Lugdunum Christianum: Lyon du IVe au VIIIe s.: topographie, nécropoles et édifices religieux* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1998). See also Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft*, 98-184.

in service of the community at large.[45] Here, the traditions of the private *hypogea* of Roman pagan elites and the early Christian catacomb complexes are blended together: neither private, nor open, the bishops of Lyon's tombs occupy the space in-between. In some ways, the family grave of bishop-saints forming the central nucleus of the Christian community is a spatial representation of the familial metaphor employed in the Christian church (God the Father, the brothers and sisters in Christ, and so on). Yet the epitaphs and tombs commemorating the bishops of Lyon barely resemble their non-episcopal contemporaries in style or form at all.

How did it come about, with this disparity, that one way the community of sixth- and seventh-century Lyon was created was through the physical location and material, as well as inscribed language, of burial? This is where the abundance of evidence in inscriptions becomes important: for the most part, epitaphs are highly repetitive and consistent, using similar – if not identical – phrases, terms and decorations. Most Christian inscriptions from southern Gaul, not including those of singular names or those that are elusively categorized as "graffiti",[46] have the following elements: the sign of the cross, an introductory phrase (or *initium* formula), usually a variation of *hic requiescit* or *in hoc tumolo requiescit*, followed by a positive attribute, most commonly, *bonae memoriae*, then the name of the deceased, continuing with *vixit in pace* and the age of the deceased, and concluding with *obiit* and the date, either by indiction, or regnal or consular year.[47] This consistency in the language of early medieval epitaphs has local variations: inscriptions from Vienne usually began with *hic requiescit in pace*, while those from Lyon mostly commonly started with *in hoc tumolo requiescit*.[48]

To take the first epitaph of the case study from Lyon:

1
In hoc tomolo uel sub hic ces-
pete requiescunt membra bone me-
moriae Viuenti pr(es)b(iter)i eglesiae Lugd(unensis),
cui(us?) corpuscolum aula S(an)c(t)i Laurenti
recepit, (ivy) *qui uixit in pace an(nus) X[..?].*
O<b>(iit) sub d(ie) III k(alendas) septembres, i[ndictione …].[49]

[45] For more on family graves, see *CIL* XIII, no. 2386; Barbara E. Borg, "Family Matters: The Long Life of Roman Tombs." In *Roman Tombs and the Art of Commemoration: Contextual Approaches to Funerary Customs in the Second Century CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 123-190; Cilliers Breytenbach, *Early Christianity in Athens, Attica, and Adjacent Areas: From Paul to Justinian I (1st-6th cent. AD)* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), esp. 199-232.

[46] Graffiti is increasingly being brought to the forefront of research, for example by the ERC-Project Graff-IT (2022-2026) with PI Carlo Tedeschi that examines graffiti in the Italian peninsula across the Middle Ages.

[47] Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 110-138; *LISEG*, 124-166.

[48] *LISEG*, 167-193.

[49] *ILTG*, no. 298; *LISEG*, 371.

In this tomb and beneath this
mound rest the limbs of Viuentius,
of good memory, the priest of the church of Lyon.
The *aula* of Saint Laurentius has received his little body.
He has lived in peace for X[..] years.
He died at the third Kalends of September of the […] indiction.

This inscription from the necropolis of Saint-Laurent-de-Choulans blends formulaic elements with unusual ones. For example, the *initium, in hoc tomolo,* albeit with a variation on spelling,[50] is very common for the period and the place and the positive attribute *bonae memoriae* is found on almost all Christian epitaphs. The addition of *uel sub hic cespete* is extremely rare – no other extant epitaphs from Gaul use this exact phrase, apart from another one from the same cemetery that employs *In hoc tomolo uel sub hunc cesp[item]*.[51] Furthermore, the abbreviation *prbi* for *presbyteri* is also highly uncommon, although similar forms are found on an epitaph in Arles *(prbt)*[52] and one in Vaison-la-Romaine (*pbr*).[53] The core difference and thus point of interest on this epitaph, however, is the *cuius corpuscolum aula Sancti Laurenti recepit*. The meaning of this phrase is explored below, but it is only found on two other epitaphs, which are both from the same necropolis, although they are preserved as fragments:

2.
(cross) *Sequetur hoc tumol[um]*
meretus bone memoriae A[...]-
fus, cuius curposcolum [aula]
S(an)c(t)i Laurenti suscepit [ut ueni]-
am meruit interce[…]-
cerum cuius karet[ate?
f<id>e QVENTERAPPA ?
in pace annus XXX
quinta.[54]

Buried in this tomb is A[…]fus,
worthy of good memory.
The [*aula*] of Saint Laurentius has taken in

[50] For studies on spelling variation: Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 168; *LISEG*, 124-166.
[51] *ILTG*, no. 291; *LISEG*, 362, dated to 652.
[52] *CIL XII*, no. 943; *ILCV*, no. 1165.
[53] *CIL.XII*, no. 1500; *ILCV*, no. 1166. Albrecht Diem has pointed out that this may be the same abbreviation in a different case.
[54] *LISEG*, 368; *Riv. Arch. Crist.*, no. 2.

his little body, so that he will earn
pardon (*uenia*) through the pleading [*interce*…]
[…*cerum*] whose love (*caritas*),
faith (*fides*) [*quenter appa*??]
[…] in peace for 35 years.

3.
(cross) *Sequetur hoc tomolum me[retus bonae memoriae….]*
Atto, cuius corposcolum a[ula S(an)c(t)i Laurenti recepit]
ut ueniam mereat ipsum intercede [.....]-
sucus, cuius k(a)retas uel fedis pru[.....]-
rute, qui uixit in pace an(nos) LXXV. O[biit.....]. [55]

Buried in this tomb is Atto, who is worthy of a good memory.
The *aula* of Saint Laurentius has received his little body,
So that he deserves pardon (*uenia*) by him pleading (*intercede*) […]
Whose love and faith [*pru*…]
[…*rute*], who lived in peace for 75 years. He died […].

Inscriptions nos. 2 and 3 have a different *initium*, including a cross, and all three have different spellings of *tumulus*, with no. 3 employing an accusative, instead of an ablative, possibly implying the work of different stonecutters.[56] Furthermore, no. 2 uses *bone* instead of *bonae*, while it is unclear whether no. 3 employs the phrase at all. Nos. 2 and 3 both commend the *caritas* of the individual. Despite these differences, the overall structure is the same; all three use *in pace* with the age at death; and most significantly, all three use the highly unusual *corpuscolum/curposcolum/corposcolum*: three different spellings, but with the same concept. Nos. 1 and 2 reference *S(an)c(t)i Laurenti*, thus for no. 3 the estimation has been made in conjunction with these other two epitaphs and based on the space and size of the inscription that no. 3 most probably referred to Saint Laurentius. This combination of difference and similarity is at the heart of epigraphy. There are no other uses of *corpuscolum* on funerary epitaphs in Gaul.[57] Consideration for the meaning is given later, but the employment of *corpuscolum* term may imply a community within a community. Al-though the structure of Christian epitaphs of the Latin West was largely the same in the period, such variations might point to a

[55] *LISEG*, 378; *Riv. Arch. Crist.*, no. 1.

[56] On apparent errors in epitaphs, see Alison E. Cooley, *The Cambridge Manual of Latin Epigraphy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 293-297; Richard Grasby, "A Comparative Study of Five Latin Inscriptions: Measurements and Making," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 64 (1996): 95-138; relating to one or more stonecutter working on a single epitaph: Susini, *The Roman Stonecutter*, chapter 2.

[57] There is one other example from Dalmatia, HD055654, Gräf, 2020 (https://edh.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/); *CIL III*, no. 02671, *CIL III*, no. 08653. I would like to thank Albrecht Diem for bringing this to my attention.

"micro-Christendom" as proposed by Peter Brown: one Christendom, with many local realities.[58] This idea is an undercurrent in this study of epitaphs, with their many, highly localized variations. Although the epitaphs relate to the broader Christian community, they also have a highly localized character, which a pattern that is also seen in many saints' cults.[59]

The study of epigraphy is in part concerned with balancing the formulaic, ubiquitous elements with the unusual. Returning to the ideas from the previous section on saints' tombs as the meeting of Heaven and Earth, the line *corpusculum aula Sancti Laurenti recepit* must give us pause. Brown argued that his book, the *Cult of the Saints*, was "about the joining of Heaven and Earth, and the role, in this joining, of dead human beings."[60] In this line, the epitaphs Nos.1-3 say that the deceased's "the *aula* of Saint Laurentius has received the (little) body." Nos. 2 and 3 state the reason: *ut ueniam mereat ipsum intercede.* In these inscriptions, receiving the (little) body (*corpusculum*) into the court (*aula*) of the saint allowed intercession. The rarity of *corpusculum* in the epigraphic context is not shared with other textual sources; for example, it is found in many of Gregory of Tours' writings, referring to the body of Martin[61] and also to that of a poor man,[62] as well as in the Venantius Fortunatus *Life* of Radegund.[63] *Corpus* and *membra* appear, however, much more frequently in medieval hagiography.[64] Gregory arguably uses *corpusculum* indiscriminately: for individuals of both holy and non-holy, and elite and non-elite status. But what does it mean? The church of Saint Laurentius was the saint's *aula*, and these individuals were interred there. The entire semantic field, of *patronus*, *aula*, *intercede*, relates to the ancient Roman patronage system, but is now overlaid with the Christian idea of afterlife.[65] It is possible that this church held relics of Saint Laurentius, although this is not a given.[66] However, does this line suggest that these individuals were buried close to Saint Laurentius, or a part of him (i.e. a relic), in order to receive his intercession? If that were the case, this would again be returning to a kind of literal understanding of the saint and the body after death: that burial by Laurentius ensured protection, especially intercession during the Last Judgement. What is unclear is the spatial aspect: was physical

58 Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 14-15.

59 Carline Goodson, "Archaeology and the Cult of Saints in the Early Middle Ages: Accessing the Sacred," in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen âge* 126 (2014), http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1818 (last accessed October 4, 2022).

60 Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 1.

61 Gregory of Tours, *Libri de virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* I, c. 6, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885), 141-142.

62 Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, c. 17, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885), 307.

63 Venantius Fortunatus, *Vita Radegundis*, c. 25, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1888), 373: *…ut sanguis fusus ad extremum exinaniret corpusculum…*

64 See, for example, *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity* database: http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/ (last access: 18 June 2023).

65 Collart, "*Patronus*," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 26, 1128-1137.

66 For discussion, see Robert Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 92.

proximity to Laurentius necessary in the burial? It is possible that these three inscriptions describe an *ad sanctos* burial, and that it was hoped that through this *ad sanctos* burial, Laurentius could intercede? It is certain, however, that the saint is at the heart of this particular communal burial in Lyon and that this community used its own language and forms within the framework of the medieval epigraphic habit. To fully extend this understanding, this chapter finally considers the saint as the *patronus*.

C. THE *PATRONUS* AND THE COMMUNITY: RECIPROCAL PATRONAGE

The remainder of this chapter examines the role of saints' cults and that of burial and epitaphs to understand how these different religious and cultural practices came together to express, underpin, and even create community. First, an analysis of the saint as the *patronus* is required to understand the reciprocal relationship of episcopal and saintly patronage. Then, the chapter explores the way this patronage was disseminated to the wider congregation. The rest of this chapter uses the case study of early medieval epitaphs from Lyon, of which there are two groups: metrical episcopal epitaphs from the church of Saint Nicetius and formulaic epitaphs from the church of Saint Laurentius. The former church was situated on the northeast of the city between the Rhône and the Saône rivers and seems to have been in continuous use.[67] The crypt beneath the modern church of Saint-Nizier held the tombs of the bishops of Lyon.[68] The church of Laurentius lay to the south of the city and was discovered in 1947, with key excavations in 1976 that revealed the necropolis beneath. Many of its epitaphs are dated to the seventh century.[69] Of the four largest extant crypts and cemeteries in early medieval Lyon, Nicetius' church was reserved for the elite. As mentioned above in the context of family burials, the bishops of Lyon were buried here together.

Just as the *vita* of Nicetius written by Gregory of Tours linked the author to the saint, the epitaph of Nicetius linked him to another saint too. Beyond the collective placing in the crypt, with a visual representation of the bishops together, Nicetius' epitaph begins as follows:

Ecce sacerdotis tenuit qui iura sacerdus,
quo recubat tumulo nomine Nicetius.
Urbs Lugdune, tuum rexit per tempora clerum
Ecclesiamque Dei cordis amore colens

[67] André Pelletier, Jacques Rossiaud, and Françoise Bayard, *Histoire de Lyon: des origines à nos jours* (Lyon: Éditions lyonnaises d'art et d'histoire, 2007), 308.

[68] *CIL XIII*, no. 2398.

[69] Paul A. Reynolds, "A Comparative and Statistical Survey of the Late Antique and Early Medieval Latin Inscriptions of South-Eastern Gaul (c.300-750 AD)," PhD diss. (University of Leicester, 2000), 92-101.

quique Sacerdotis f<a>ctus bis proximus her<e>s
sanguine coniunctu<s>, culmine, sede simul.

Behold a priest who upheld the rights of the priesthood,
Nicetius by name; he rests in this tomb.
The city of Lyon, he ruled for many years over your clergy
and the church of God, caring for it with love in his heart,
twice next in succession to Sacerdos:
linked by blood, in dignity and at the same time in see.[70]

Although this epitaph is now lost and known only from manuscript copies, this tying of Nicetius to Sacerdos (*sanguine coniunctus*; *culmine*; *sede simul*), addressed to the *Urbs* of Lyon, makes explicit the relationship, emphasizing the status of both individuals. This epitaph brings together spatial elements of burial and commemoration, linking the bishops through their shared crypt and the metrical style of the inscriptions. It is addressed to outsiders, i.e. those not in the elite, ecclesiastical family of the bishops of Lyon. It speaks to the *urbs*, and yet the *urbs* is still a community: that of Lyon. In Nicetius' epitaph, Brown's idea of the bishop "as the visible *patronus* beneath the invisible *patronus*" can be seen, but the bishops and the saint are literally together. The bishops are also the saints, and the saint are not distant, unknown figures but family members related to each other (the family of the bishops of Lyon). Through the role of patron saint, the more intimate involvement of the holy *patronus* is extended to the *urbs*. Heinzelmann has explored these metrical episcopal epitaphs from Saint-Nizier in-depth. When examining that of Viventiolus (Sacerdos' uncle), Heinzelmann interprets the epitaphs through the lens of patronage, much like Brown's interpretation: "Beide Bereiche, der des Großen dieser Erde und der des Mächtigen in der anderen Welt, werden durch die Person des *patronus* ausgefüllt… Dabei muß in besonderer Weise beachtet werden, daß für die Zeitgenossen kein grundsätzlicher Unterschied zwischen dem Patron des Dies- und des Jenseits bestand, daß vielmehr die gegenseitige Abhängigkeit beider Funktionen als charakteristisch angesehen werden muß."[71] This community of bishop-saints blended this idea of this world and the hereafter, first through being the *patronus* of one another, but also through passing down the see of Lyon from one bishop to the next. They joined each other on heaven and earth and were active in miracle-working for the living community of Lyon.

This balance between explicit and implicit ideas of the *patronus* is also found in the epitaphs from Saint-Laurent-de-Choulans, albeit in a different way:

[70] *LISEG*, 395 Lyon; *CIL XIII*, no. 2400; *ILCV*, no. 1073.
[71] Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft*, 123.

4.
[(cross?*) In hoc tom]olo requiescit bone memorie Osildus cuius mens*
[gaudet? s(an)c(tu)m] Laurentium habere patronum, ad tubam uocantem
su[rrectu]rus in Deo et Xpo. Vixit in pace annis quadragin-
ta et quinque. Obiit mense octubre anno XVII regn(i) domi(ni)
n(ostr)i Chlothouei regis, indictione quinta decima.[72]

[In this tomb] rests Osildus, of fond memory, whose soul (*mens*)
[rejoices?] in having [saint] Laurentius as patron
when he is to resurrect in God and Christ at the call of the trumpet.
He lived in peace for 45 years.
He died in the month of October in the 17th year of the reign of our lord, king Clovis, in the 15th year of the indiction (October 656).

5.
(cross*) In hoc tomolo re[quiescunt membra bonae]*
memoriae Magencolae [?….siue]
pater suus Gaudentinus [condedit sepul]-
tura: cuius mens meruit S[(an)c(tu)m Laurentium]
habere patrono, qui fuit [...? mode]-
rata. Vixit in pace annus [... obiit...]
[ianu/febru]arias, ind(i)c(t)i(one) quart[a]. [73]

In this tomb re[st the limbs]
of Magencola, of [fond] memory,
[……].
Her father Gaudentinus [built this tomb?].
Her soul (*mens*) has merited to have Saint Laurentius
as patron. She who was a [respectable woman?].
She lived in peace for[...] years. She died [……] of
January(?) / February(?), in the fourth year of the indiction.

The similarities will be briefly highlighted, before we analyse the differences and bring nos. 1-5 into conversation with each other. These two inscriptions (nos. 4 and 5) use the same *initium* as no. 1; no. 5 even employs the same spelling (*tomolo*). Unfortunately, no. 5 is the only

[72] *LISEG*, 367; *ILTG*, no. 297.
[73] *LISEG*, 379; *Riv. Arch. Crist.*, no. 3.

one of this collection not available in the original, as it was stolen not long after its discovery.[74] Nos. 1, 2 and 4 all mention Laurentius by name, making it likely that nos. 3 and 5 may have too. All have the same *vixit in pace annus* + age, and *obiit* + month formulae as the epitaphs above, and are dated by indictions (although no. 4 uses a regnal year too).[75] In other words, many aspects of these inscriptions are in keeping with what is expected of such epitaphs. What is highly irregular about these two inscriptions is the *habere patronum* (no. 4) or *habere patrono* (no. 5), which is not an expression employed in the other epitaphs in this collection. I shall return to this phrase, but for now the material elements of these inscriptions are also important to note. The epitaphs from Saint-Nizier are now lost, and we can only speculate about similarities in writing style and stone. However, as four of these five epitaphs from Saint-Laurent are preserved, it is possible to compare them. The first striking element is the difference in writing style. No. 1, for the presbyter Viventius, and no. 3, for Atto, are very similar. Both have mostly angular letter forms, with diamond-shaped "O"s (although no. 3 also uses oval-shaped "O"s and rounded "Qs", as well as the angular letters). Nos. 1-4 use a great number of ligatures. The name on no. 3, for example, could also be Tato, as the "AT" and "TO" are formed in such a way that they are over one another. No. 3 employs a ligature between the "MME" of *ueniam mereat*, two separate words. None of the epitaphs (nos. 1-4) employs word dividers of any kind, with one exception: despite the number of ligatures, no. 1 does not combine different words in way expressed in no. 3, and even uses an ivy, or a *hedera*, as a word divider, which is very common on epitaphs in Rome, but is not found often in those from Gaul. In other words, there is little consistency in style between the epitaphs. This goes even further, as nos. 2 and 4 use rounded letters for "O" and "Q", in contrast to the primarily angular letters in nos. 1 and 3. Given the similarities in formulae used, it is surprising that the stonecutters have used such different styles. The different spellings suggest that different hands have been involved in the creation of these epitaphs. Furthermore, they have different sizes. No. 4 is nearly a meter long and rectangular with a border, while nos. 1-3 are largely square and much smaller, without border. Here we have the contrasts between the textual and material elements, which point to the complexity of community due to this variation in epigraphic practice. However, no. 4 has very similar ligature practices to the other epitaphs. Combining the textual and material aspects, one gets a more coherent picture: even though no. 2 and no. 4 use different *initia* formulae, different dating practices, and even different ideas (*habere patronum* and *corpusculum aula … recepit*), visually they share rounded letters, and the same "*bone*".

Receiving Laurentius' protection in no. 4 appears similar to nos. 2 and 3 with references to meriting intercession (*meruit interce…/mereat intercede*), and continues the semantic

[74] Jean-François Reynaud and Georges Vicherd, "Fouilles récentes de l'ancienne église Saint-Laurent de Choulans à Lyon," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 120 (1976): 460-487.

[75] See n. 46.

field of the *patronus*, the one is the defender before the court of justice: the *patronus* is the advocate, and here the saint intercedes on behalf of the interred individual in the heavenly court of justice before the Last Judgement. No. 4, lines 2-3 is unusual, but not extraordinary. Especially in Vienne where there are over sixteen extant epitaphs referring to resurrecting or arising again in Christ, God, the Lord, or with the Saints – some with the same abbreviation, *risurrec|turus in Xpo*;[76] and others with similar ideas, *Resurrecturus cum | sanctis*.[77] The *ad tubam uocantem*, as a phrase however, is completely unparalleled. These particular epitaphs raise more questions than answers, and they provide interesting material to bring into conversation with the scholarship on epitaphs more generally. Although Heinzelmann draws extensively on the saintly *patronus* as the Roman *patronus*, and although there may be considerable elements of that, there is something else at play:[78] As Brown argues, "The ascetic movement had articulated and, in so doing, amplified, Christian anxieties about sin and the last judgement… It is this hope of amnesty that pushed the saint to the forefront as *patronus*… by multiplying intercessors on their behalf, to find an easier road to Heaven than the straight and narrow path than had been offered by early Christian communities."[79] The patron-client relationship between bishops and saints wherein the bishop espoused a particular saint's cult and had the saint behind him as the "invisible *patronus*" was complex. Yet saints were not only the *patronus* of the episcopal elites; saints were also the *patronus* in the sense of the protector and the advocate. Although these five epitaphs are unusual, they are not so extraordinary as to provide doubt. Instead, their remarkable character lies in their uncommonly explicit nature. The individuals' remains are in some way close to him, providing security. The saint textually and spatially is at the centre of the community of the buried, related, perhaps, to his centrality to the community of the living.

CONCLUSION: THE *PATRONUS* AND THE HEAVENLY COMMUNITY

In sum, three epitaphs from Saint-Laurent describe that interred individuals' *corpuscolum aula Sancti Laurenti recepit* (nos. 1-3), while two others portray that *sanctum Laurentium habere patronum* (nos. 4-5), with no. 4 adding *ad tubam vocantem surrecturus in Deo et Xpo*. Why did all of these inscriptions refer to Laurentius, a martyr from Rome who was not buried in Lyon?[80] Historians are often interested in how burial qualified as *ad sanctos*.[81] Yet the significance is that Laurentius features on these epitaphs – whether there were really relics of him in Lyon

[76] *LISEG*, 545; *ILCV*, no. 3470.

[77] *LISEG*, 555; *ILCV*, no. 3470adn.

[78] See criticism by Walter Goffart, "Review: *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien: Zur Kontinuität römischer Führungsschichten vom 4. bis zum 7. Jahrhundert. Soziale, prosopographische und bildungsgeschichtliche Aspekte* by Martin Heinzelmann," *Speculum* 55 (1980): 127-128.

[79] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 64, 65, 67.

[80] Reynaud and Vicherd, "Fouilles récentes," 460-487.

[81] Wiśniweski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics*, 91-92.

is of no importance. For the Carolingian period, Cécile Treffort has argued the case for considering graffitied names inside sacred spaces as kinds of *ad sanctos* inscriptions.[82] Perhaps any remains or relics of Laurentius were then irrelevant – what mattered was the inscribing of his name with theirs, and the intercession and protection that the *patronus* would then bring. To put it another way, whether these individuals at Saint-Laurent were indeed buried near Laurentius perhaps had no bearing on this belief; this may be a reverse of the phenomenon of the names inscribed in sacred spaces, wherein the name is inscribed in a sacred space but the body does not reside there, yet also, in a way, does, through conceptions of memory and the name.[83] In this instance, in Lyon, the name of the *saint* is inscribed by the body of the believer, rather than the name of *believer* being inscribed near the body of the saint. It is possible that that is all that was necessary.

Although these five epitaphs are a tiny sample, they make explicit what is usually implicit, while at the same time posing further questions: what is the role of saint, and how does the concept of the *patronus* change depending on whom in the community it concerns? These five epitaphs are not representative for other inscriptions from Lyon, from South-eastern Gaul, and even from the Latin West more generally. Most scholarly focus has been on the episcopal epitaphs, although with growing interest in graffiti, non-Latin epitaphs, and nominal inscriptions, that is changing. Epitaphs, with their material, textual, and spatial elements provide a wealth of opportunity for understanding early medieval communities, due to the representation of a wider variety of individuals. It allows for fuller understandings of saints and their patronage, both in relation to ecclesiastical elites such as Gregory and Nicetius, and also to the wider congregation, such as Atto, or Tato.

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EDR: Epigraphic Database Roma (http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php).
RIIG: Le Recueil informatisé des inscriptions gauloises (https://riig.huma-num.fr/).

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[82] Treffort, *Mémoires carolingiennes*, esp. 44-45.
[83] Ingrand Varenne et al., *Writing Names in Medieval Sacred Spaces*.

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KEEP THE FAITH: HOPE AND FEAR AS EMOTIONAL CONCEPTS IN CAROLINGIAN CULTURE

RUTGER KRAMER[1]

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, I take a closer look at the significance of the concepts of "hope" (spes) and fear (timor, metus) in the way intellectuals at the Carolingian court expressed their emotions. Starting from an exchange of letters between Einhard and Lupus of Ferrières, I shall analyse the way these words were used as rhetorical devices, to signal deeper thoughts about the meaning of life, fate, and the place of individuals within God's greater plan.

KEYWORDS

Carolingians; Einhard; Lupus of Ferrières; Intellectual history; History of mentalities; History of emotions; Emotional communities; Letters; Patristics; Hope; Fear

When Einhard's wife Imma passed away late in the year 835, the old courtier was inconsolable.[2] As he wrote some weeks later to his friend Lupus, then a student in the monastery of Fulda, her absence had caused a deep depression – after all, he had lost a true companion, friend and partner.[3] This was in turn exacerbated by, as he continued, "the

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[2] On Einhard, see Steffen Patzold, *Ich und Karl der Große. Das Leben des Höflings Einhard* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cota, 2013); on his grief for about Imma's passing, and the letter exchange that is the subject of the following pages as well, see 262-271.

[3] On the significance of Imma for Einhard, see Rachel Stone, "Carolingian Domesticities," in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith M. Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras (Oxford:

Connecting People. Saints, Relics, and Communities in the Early Medieval World, in Memory of Janneke Raaijmakers, ed. Albrecht Diem, Mayke de Jong, and Irene van Renswoude (Budapest: Trivent, 2025), pp. 254-276, DOI: 10.22618/TP.REN.20243.372.013

fact that my prayers seem to have been to no avail and I have been utterly disappointed in the hopes which I had placed in the help and intercession of the martyrs."[4] Einhard had every reason to feel frustrated. Less than a decade earlier, he had procured the relics of the two martyrs he refers to – Saints Marcellinus and Peter – from Rome and brought them to his home in Seligenstadt with great pomp and circumstance. He had housed them, venerated them, established their cult, and they had indeed responded with several spectacular healing miracles.[5] Nevertheless, when the time came to work their benevolent influence on Einhard's own family, Marcellinus and Peter had refused to rise to the occasion. His wife was gone, and the reminders of her absence he finds everywhere as he goes through the motions of his life do not allow his wound to heal, nor his frustration to abate.[6] The only consolation he finds in her passing and the perpetual grief it has caused, he explains at the end of his lament, is that

> …it holds back and curbs, as if with bridle and reins, my spirit, hastening to find pleasure and happiness, and it reminds me of the call of death, whereas a care-free and forgetful old age had encouraged me to hope for and desire a long old age. I see that I do not have much time left to live, and yet I am utterly ignorant of how long it may be.[7]

The hope mentioned when Einhard expressed his frustration with the inaction of the saints, had been subverted. Imma's passing had become a *memento mori*. In the process, she had taught Einhard that it is futile to place too much hope in the future; life, especially life in the unyielding world of the early ninth century, was uncertain enough on its own.[8]

Oxford University Press, 2013), 229-245; on Lupus of Ferrières, see Louis Holtz, "L'humanisme de Loup de Ferrières," in *Gli Umanesimi medievali: Atti del II Congresso dell' Internationales Mittellateinerkomitee, Firenze, Certosa del Galluzzo, 11-15 settembre 1993*, ed. Claudio Leonardi (Florence: Sismel, 1998), 201-213.

4 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 3, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epp.* 6 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925), 9-10, at 9: *Huc accredit, quod ipsum dolorem identidem accumulate et vulnus semel acceptum exulcerat, quod vota scilicet nostra nihil valere permissa sunt, ac spes, quas in martyrum meritis atque interventione collocavimus, expectationem nostrum ex asse frustratae sunt*; trans. Graydon W. Regenos, *The Letters of Lupus of Ferrières* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 4.

5 Julia Smith, "'Emending evil ways and praising God's omnipotence': Einhard and the uses of Roman martyrs," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Seeing and Believing*, ed. Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 189-223.

6 Julia Smith, "Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 13 (2003): 55-77.

7 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 3, *MGH Epp.* 6, 9-10: *Arbitror enim, nec vereor, quod haec opinion falsum me habeat, hunc dolorem atque anxietatem, quae mihi de carissomae contubernalis occasione exorta est, perenniter mecum perseveraturam, donec id ipsum temporis spatium, quod Deus mihi ad hanc miseram ac temporalem vitam concedere voluerit, debito sibi termino finiatur: quam tamen proficuam potius mihi quam noxiam hactenusexperior, cum anmum ad laeta et prospera festinantem velut quibusdam frenis atque habenis remoratur ac retinet, mentemque ad revocationem mortis revocet, quam ad spem et amorem longaevitatis otium atque oblivio senectutis illexerat. Video mihi non multum superesse temporis ad viendum, licet quantum id esse debeat mihi penitus ignoretur,*" trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 6.

8 Peter von Moos, *Consolatio: Studien zur mittellateinischen Trostliteratur über den Tod und zum Problem der christlichen Trauer*, 4 vols. (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971-1972), vol. 1, 113-118.

In a lengthy response to this almost nihilistic but completely understandable letter of mourning, Lupus acknowledges the second sentiment, but in the same breath goes so far as to admonish Einhard for his initial frustration. The future abbot of Ferrières lauds his old friend for accepting that everyone's life is in the hands of God and advises him to lean into that sentiment. "Grief cannot bring back the past," he writes, following a quotation of Prov. 20:24 to clarify that it is indeed not worthwhile to look towards the future except, paradoxically, to accept that "it is certainly not in the power of man to choose his course of life, but his steps are directed by the Lord, and the freedom of the human will is entirely dependent upon the help of God's grace."[9] In the end, according to Lupus, God knows what is best. "Who, indeed, has placed his hope in the Lord and been deceived?" he asks, reminding Einhard once again that salvation depends on an unquestioning trust in His judgement.[10]

Lupus' rather haphazard attempts to encourage his tutor follow a longer and, in his own words, "more important" (*maxima*) part of his letter, in which he actually chides Einhard for having neglected to "place his hope in God" and wishing instead to control the life and death of his wife. Given the nature of human mortality, however, Lupus writes, one would inevitably have to live without the other at some point. How he bore his grief would determine how sure-footed he was on the road to salvation. This was not, it should be noted, as an act of self-control, but rather as a way to be corrected on the path to Heaven, the ultimate community, where he would be reunited with his loved ones.[11] After all, much as the earthly love between humans is a beautiful thing, Lupus writes, the only true comfort comes from love for, and trust in, the idea that God's power over life and death is always absolute and always, by its very nature, just. This is also why Lupus relies on a plethora of biblical examples and citations to make his points for him in this section. After all, Scripture shows us a record of God's grace in action, which, for a man in Einhard's position, should thus be an ultimate source of comfort. "For whatsoever things were written, were written for our learning," Lupus writes, quoting Paul's Letter to the Romans 15:4, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."[12]

9 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 4, *MGH Epp.* 6, 11-15, at 13: *Non est enim in potestate hominis via eius, sed a Domino gressus hominum diriguntur, et humani libertas arbitrii eget omnimodo auxilio gratiae Dei: sed plane quae facta sunt infecta esse non possunt, nec dolor revocare valet semel praeterita, nec est in homine unde a seipso petat auxilium*; trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 6-13, at 11.

10 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 4, *MGH Epp.* 6, 14: *Nam quis speravit in Domino et deceptus est?*

11 Frederick S. Paxton, "Communities of the Living and the Dead in Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval West," in *The Making of Christian Communities in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Mark F. Williams (London: Anthem Press, 2005), 49-62; Cécile Treffort, *L'Eglise Carolingienne et la Mort: Christianisme, Rites Funéraires et Pratiques Commémoratives* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1996), 170-172.

12 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 4, *MGH Epp.* 6, 12: *Quaecumque autem scripta sunt, ad nostrum doctrina scripta sunt, ut per patientia et consolationem scripturarum spem habeamus*; trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 9-10.

Many historians have commented on the apparent discrepancy between Einhard's expression of grief and Lupus' seemingly dispassionate, admonitory answer.[13] I am inclined to echo that initial bewilderment: Lupus' letter indeed does not readily conform to modern Western standards of grief and consolation. But that was not the point, if only simply because "our current understanding of emotions is distinctively modern, and reflects very different expectations about what it is to be a person."[14] This exchange of letters contains a number of significant intersubjective reflections on the effects of death, grief and salvation on individual persons.[15] To the extent that these were common ways of thinking at the time, the musings of Einhard and Lupus thus also present us with a very clear reflection on the idea of HOPE (*spes*) as it existed in the upper echelons of the Carolingian world. It is therefore worthwhile to delve a bit deeper into the meaning of this emotion in this limited number of sources, for it will help us better understand how intellectuals at the Carolingian court conceived of their present and shaped their future.[16]

In what follows, I shall do just that, focusing specifically on the word *spes* and the idea it represents. In order to avoid confusion with the modern English noun and verb "(to) hope", I shall henceforth use *spes* when referring to "hope" as an object of research, while retaining the common English usage for more general remarks and in the translations cited.

Judging by these two letters, *spes* is simultaneously deeply personal and completely futile. In Lupus' mind, it is a concept that expresses a view of a positive future that may or may not come to pass, but which may not be enforced or coerced. This focus on the unknowable would inadvertently trigger an emotional response in the person doing the hoping, meaning it carries a risk as well. In fact, it sometimes seems that to Lupus, to hope, or to expect things from the future, could be bordering on the sinful, precisely for that reason. There is Biblical and patristic precedent for this. In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ warns his followers that "no one knoweth" when He would return to this world.[17] Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians ends with a lengthy warning against too much speculation about the

[13] Patzold, *Ich und Karl der Große*, 262-263, perhaps makes the most of the inappropriateness of Lupus' attitude; whereas Von Moos, *Consolatio*, 113, posits that "Lupus würde die Antwort seines Meisters kaum veröffentlicht haben, wenn er sie nicht als persönliche Ehre und als eine Würdigung seines Briefchens empfunden hätte." Paul E. Dutton, in his "Introduction to Einhard" in *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), agrees with Von Moos that the main purpose in keeping Einhard's "personal and particular" letter in the collection was to set up Lupus' more "universal" response.

[14] Willem van Hoorn and Johann Louw, "Historical-Psychological Reflections on Emotion and Human Subjectivity," *South African Journal of Psychology* 44, no. 2 (2014): 205-215, at 215; Barbara Rosenwein, "Worrying About Emotions in History," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 821-845.

[15] Dennis Klass, "Grief, Consolation, and Religions: A Conceptual Framework," *Omega* 69, no. 1 (2014): 1-18.

[16] An early study of the intersection between the inner life of historical actors and their visions of "the future" is Paul E. Dutton, *The Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire* (Lincoln, NE/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

[17] Matt. 24:36.

end; "the Lord shall so come, as a thief in the night", he writes.[18] For Augustine this simply meant that people have to be on their best behaviour during the day. If they manage that, there is nothing to fear during the night.[19] Bede mirrored such apprehensions about putting too much trust in one's ability to foretell the end of time, and more generally, early Christian writers had a very tenuous relation with attempts to predict the future in this world as well.[20] *Spes* as a concept was fine in theory, it seems, but actually and actively to hope seemed too much like divination, an activity best left to the divine.[21]

Still, hope did have its more immediate uses too. Lupus' very first letter to Einhard, for instance, contains rather more positive expressions of hopefulness. As he introduces himself, Lupus makes excuses for writing to Einhard seemingly out of the blue, but admits that he decided to do so based on his knowledge of the senior scholar's reputation: "the kind and gentle character of your spirit which surely becomes the philosopher gave me hope of realizing my ambition."[22] In fact, he justifies his expectations by stating that Einhard, being a gentleman and a scholar, surely knows all about friendship already so there is no need to "carry wood into the forest" (a quote from Horace's *Satires* surely intended to mollify Einhard and show off Lupus' erudition in one fell swoop).[23] Lupus' ambition to enter Einhard's inner circle, he continues, has become all the more realistic now that they are practically neighbours. Lupus explains how he has "moved from Gaul to this other side of the Rhine" at the prompting of Hrabanus Maurus, and how this move in particular has given him "all the greater hope that this (that is, their friendship) can be accomplished."[24]

Going by these instances where Lupus expresses his hopes in his letter of introduction to Einhard, the idea of *spes* is not entirely negative. While Lupus heavily implies that one should not hope too much for the uncontrollable aspects of life, or of the afterlife for that matter, he seems comfortable invoking it to influence the very immediate future or, indeed, the mind of the recipient of his letter. These were not matters that superseded a vision of an individual's own path through life: these were realistic expectations based on real situations, reputations, and estimations. To the extent that these three letters provide a clear idea of the

18 1 Thess. 5:2.

19 Augustine, *Sermo* 229B, c. 1, trans. John Rotelle and Edmund Hill, *The Works of Saint Augustine* III.6 (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991), 273; Augustine, *Epistola* 199.1.2, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*, vol. 30 (Washington, DC: University of America Press, 1947), 358.

20 Peter Darby, *Bede and the End of Time* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 96; Robert Wiśniewski, *Christian Divination in Late Antiquity*, trans. Damian Jasiński (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 23-44.

21 Carine van Rhijn, "Precarious knowledge in the Carolingian period: The case of prognostic texts," in *Threatened Knowledge: Practices of Knowing and Ignoring from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Renate Dürr (London: Routledge, 2021), 52-73.

22 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 1, *MGH Epp.* 6, 7: *Ita vehementer astuanti facilis et modesta et quae sane philosophum deceat animi vestri natura tantae rei obtinendae spem tribuit*; trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 1.

23 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 1, *MGH Epp.* 6, 7: *Oratianum illud doctissimorum ore tritum merito accipiam: In silvam ne ligna feras*; trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 1.

24 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 1, *MGH Epp.* 6, 8: *Quod posse contingere hoc magis in* SPEM *ducor, quo ex Gallia huc in Transrhenanam concedens regionem vobis vicinior factus sum*; trans. Regenos, *Letters*, 2.

meanings of *spes*, it appears as a single word that operated at two extremes: a proud kind of hope that implies one had any say in God's plans, and a humble kind of hope meant to show that one had done the legwork to assess properly the circumstances determining the immediate future. The trick was, of course, to figure out which is which, both for modern historians *and* the historical actors reading about, and commenting on, each other's hopes and dreams.

The tensions between these two meanings of *spes* are central to this article. I work from the assumption that both Einhard and Lupus operated within the same discourse community centred on the Carolingian court and both were familiar with similar ways to express their emotions.[25] The dichotomy visible in their correspondence becomes a jumping-off point to start using *spes* as a hermeneutic tool to understand better the world-view prevalent among Frankish elites.

Given the apparently universal nature of grief, it seems relatively straightforward, in a way, "to crawl inside the mind" of the respective authors in this particular case; both of them express their own feelings, hopes and fears, after all, and it is easy to relate to the emotional state of Einhard especially.[26] Yet letters at the time were rarely meant to be purely private. They also served as public expressions of diplomacy or of *amicitia*, or even as didactic treatises, and as such they communicated much more than merely the words of one person to the next.[27] Einhard would have been aware of this function of epistolary correspondence when he expressed his grief to his friend, even if, given the state of his career and his state of mind, he might not have cared too much about it. Lupus, on the other hand, was still eager to make his mark, and appears to have made a conscious effort to ensure that his letters would stand the test of time.[28] He would in all probability have been more careful about the way he

[25] On discourse communities, see Rutger Kramer, *Rethinking Authority in the Carolingian Empire: Ideals and Expectations During the Reign of Louis the Pious (813-828)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 43-49; on the use of emotions as a way to reconstruct such communities, see Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 1-31.

[26] A rarity: Paul E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Mustache: And Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 143, even mentions how Einhard usually was a "particularly guarded correspondent."

[27] Verena Epp, *Amicitia: Zur Geschichte personaler, sozialer, politischer und geistlicher Beziehungen im frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1999); Walter Ysebaert, "Medieval Letters and Letter Collections as Historical Sources: Methodological Questions and Reflections and Research Perspectives (6th–14th centuries)," *Studi Medievali* 50 (2009): 41-73.

[28] Lupus' letters survive in a single ninth-century manuscript, Paris, BnF, lat. 2858, online at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10318625w (last accessed July 9, 2023), which was composed in the later ninth century by someone who had been part of Lupus' inner circle. On this manuscript, its glosses, and its possible author, see Bernhard Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne*, trans. Michael Gorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 127, and Mariken Teeuwen, "Three annotated letter manuscripts: scholarly practices of religious Franks in the margin unveiled," in *Religious Franks: Religion and Power in the Frankish Kingdoms. Studies in Honour of Mayke de Jong*, ed. Rob Meens, Dorine van Espelo, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen, Janneke Raaijmakers, Irene van Renswoude, and Carine van Rhijn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 221-239, at 228-231. The bulk of Einhard's own letters only

framed his response, so as to stay in tune with the opinions of his seniors, but also his peers, even if this meant alienating Einhard. This meant tapping into the discursive modes prevalent within the court community, and making sure his words would not just be consolatory, but also, in their own way, exemplary.

As it happens, *spes* counts as more than an emotion in the discourse community centred on the Carolingian court. As a concept, it links past, present and future together in the minds of author and audience alike. This is something that only really works if the emotional content implicit in written expressions of *spes* links up with the norms, convictions and social values of the intended audience. This in turn means that *spes* comes with extensive theological baggage: after all, as we have seen in Lupus' admonition to Einhard, the future is exclusively God's domain. That makes hope a powerful tool of emotional expression in the minds of the faithful. It is also difficult to come to terms with it.

A. LIVING ON A PRAYER

Spes is a complicated matter. Attempts to understand it have a distinguished pedigree reaching back to the olden days of classical philosophy, and any attempt at defining it will inevitably be dependent on the context within which it is studied. In what follows, I shall therefore work from the assumption that it is more fruitful to figure out what *spes* means to any individual author (be it modern or medieval), than it is to find a blanket definition that covers all the bases. The fuzzy nature of *spes* was, after all, what made it such a powerful rhetorical tool. Its very flexibility was what made it useful to Carolingian authors. It is also what makes it all the more important for modern historians not to take the ideas it contains for granted.

Despite this flexibility, it should be noted that *spes* in all its iterations signifies an expectation (realistic or not) of something positive to occur in the future – or at the very least the lack of a negative experience – which one can actively work towards.[29] Its use in texts, therefore, generally denotes an active yearning for something that is attainable but still somewhat uncertain. If certainty of success is a given, "joy" may be substituted for hope, which actually strengthens someone's resolve, such as when a marathon runner raises her arms already while sprinting towards finish line.[30] If something is deemed impossible, hopefulness instead turns to sadness, resignation, or even despair. An analogy might be what a child may feel when they asked for a pony, but the gift under the Christmas tree is definitely

survive in anonymised form, as a sort of formulary, in the ninth-century manuscript Paris, BnF, lat. 11379 (online at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b6001308b; last accessed 9 July 2023); see John Contreni, "Le Formulaire de Laon: Source pour l'Histoire de l'École de Laon au Début du Xe Siècle," *Scriptorium* 27, no. 1 (1973): 21-29.

29 Maria Miceli and Cristiano Castelfranchi, "Hope: The Power of Wish and Possibility," *Theory & Psychology* 20, no. 2 (2010): 251-276.

30 A point made using the philosophy of Spinoza by Remo Bodei, *Geometry of the Passions: Fear, Hope, Happiness: Philosophy and Political Use* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 21.

not in the shape of a small horse.[31] Between those extremes are various forms of hope, ranging from anxiety to optimism. This has two implications that need to be addressed before moving forward.

Firstly, *spes* requires an object, that is, something to hope for. In that sense, "to hope" is a cognitive and even somewhat conservative process, in which a present situation is weighed against past occurrences in order to project a likely outcome on the future. It amounts to a tripartite scheme which, for our purposes, is perhaps best expressed in Book 11 of Augustine's *Confessions*, written around the year 400, where the Church Father states that

> …what is now patently clear is that neither future nor past events exist, and it is incorrect to say, "there are three times, past, present, and future." Perhaps it would be appropriate to say, "There are three times: the present respecting things past, the present respecting things present, and the present respecting things future."[32]

But when Augustine admits that "These three things do somehow exist in the soul, and I do not perceive them anywhere else", he clearly implies that of these three only the present is empirically "real".[33] The other two phases only occur in relation to one's experience of the present: "for the present of things past is memory (*memoria*); the present of things present is paying attention (*contuitus*); and the present of things future is expectation (*expectatio*)."[34] Already in Book 4, he had explained that these three are closely linked, and that it was the combination of hopes and memories that provided him peace of mind in the present:

> [Time] does strange things to the mind. Time came and went from day to day, and by that coming and going it sowed in me seeds of new hopes, and new memories, and gradually it patched me up by means of the kinds of pleasure I had formerly enjoyed, before my feelings of distress took precedence.[35]

Using the "store" (*copia*) of memories and experiences, he may "construct future actions, events and hopes (*spes*) and think about all these things as if it were the present."[36] Thus,

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31 Randolph M. Nesse, "The Evolution of Hope and Despair," *Social Research* 66, no. 2 (1999), 429-469.

32 Augustine, *Confessiones* XI, c. 26, ed. and trans. Carolyn J. B. Hammond, Loeb Classical Library 27 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 230: *Quod autem nunc liquet et claret, nec futura sunt nec praeterita, nec proprie dicitur, "tempora sunt tria, praeteritum, praesens, et futurum," sed fortasse proprie diceretur, "tempora sunt tria, praesens de praeteritis, praesens de praesentibus, praesens de futuris."* For a more extensive overview of Augustine's ideas about hope, see Chen Yuehua, "On Augustine's Theology of Hope: From the Perspective of Creation." *HTS: Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022); for his views on time, see especially Sean Hannan, *On Time, Change, History, and Conversion: Reading Augustine* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

33 Augustine, *Confessiones* XI, c. 26, ed. and trans. Hammond, Loeb Classical Library 27, 230: *Sunt enim haec in anima tria quaedam et alibi ea non video…*

34 Augustine, *Confessiones* XI, c. 26, p. 230: … *praesens de praeteritis memoria, praesens de praesentibus contuitus, praesens de futuris expectatio.*

35 Augustine, *Confessiones* IV, c. 8, p. 152: *Faciunt in animo mira opera. ecce veniebant et praeteribant de die in diem, et veniendo et praetereundo inserebant mihi spes alias et alias memorias, et paulatim resarciebant me pristinis generibus delectationum, quibus cedebat dolor meus ille.*

36 Augustine, *Confessiones* X, c. 8, pp. 90-92: *ibi sunt omnia quae sive experta a me sive credita memini. ex eadem copia etiam similitudines rerum vel expertarum vel ex eis quas expertus sum creditarum alias atque alias, et ipse con-*

hoping for something concrete and predictable could be a motivating force, and thus the kind of *spes* that Einhard may have been referring to in his letter.

Contrary to this first point, *spes* could also be framed as an emotional state of being, a vaguely "objectless" or even "aimless" feeling of optimism. This has been labelled "fundamental hope" by such philosophers as Joseph Godfrey, and tends to be seen as a fundamental virtue in early Christian thought as well.[37] It is this *spes* that is conducive to the formation of communities, for instance, by giving groups of people a common goal for which to strive, and a way to express the expectations they hold for their fellows (that which Richard Rorty has dubbed "social hope").[38] As such, it is central to many early Christian ideas about eschatology and the (at the time, supposedly immanent) End of Time, given that the object of such "hopes" – salvation – is essentially unknowable and incompatible with Augustine's tripartite temporal division.

Indeed, the fact that the future is unknowable is the point of the whole exercise. As Paul summarised the problem in Rom. 8:24-25: "… our salvation is founded upon the hope of something. Hope would not be hope at all if its object were in view; how could a man still hope for something which he sees?" For the third-century bishop Cyprian, this was an explanation of why *patience* was a virtue; it was a reason for people to continue to do good works even if there were no immediate result.[39] Augustine, too, would acknowledge this type of *spes*. About two decades after his *Confessions,* around 420, he expanded upon his initial thoughts in an *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love* (*Enchiridion*) written for Laurentius, his pupil.[40] In this treatise, he used the Creed and the Lord's Prayer to explain how Faith (*fides*, exemplified by the Creed) "refers to things past, present and future", and includes a kind of moral ambiguity given that an individual may also believe in bad things.[41] Hope (*spes*), on

texo praeteritis atque ex his etiam futuras actiones et eventa et spes, et haec omnia rursus quasi praesentia meditor.

37 Joseph J. Godfrey, *A Philosophy of Human Hope* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 1-10 and passim.

38 Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1999). Rorty's Social Hope is akin to a second category of hope identified by Godfrey, the more socially minded, goal-oriented "ultimate hope." That latter category of hope is not the focus of the present article, but I have looked at ways in which we can read this into Carolingian historiography in another article, Rutger Kramer, "Past Perfect/Future Tense: The Politics of Hope in Carolingian Historiography," in *Annals in Carolingian Europe: A Genre in Motion*, ed. Sören Kaschke and Bart van Hees (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

39 Paul Dafydd Jones, *Patience: A Theological Exploration – Part One, from Creation to Christ* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022), 68-76, esp. 74.

40 Ladislaus Ballay, *Der Hoffnungsbegriff bei Augustinus: Untersucht in seinen Werken: De doctrina christiana, Enchiridion sive de fide, spe et caritate ad Laurentium und Enarrationes in Psalmos 1-91* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1964); but see also the short but enlightening review of this monograph by Luc M. J. Verheijen, *Vigiliae Christianae* 21, no. 1 (1967): 68-69.

41 Augustine, *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide, spe et caritate*, c. II.8, ed. E. Evans, *CCSL* 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 49-140, at 51: *Est itaque fides et malarum rerum et bonarum, quia et bona creduntur et mala, et hoc fide bona non mala. Est etiam fides et praeteritarum rerum et praesentium et futurarum*; trans. J. F. Shaw, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers:* First Series, vol. 3: *St. Augustine, On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises* (New York, 2007), 237-276, at 239.

the other hand, only refers to the future of the person hoping, while love (*caritas*) is there to ensure that faith and hope remains focused on good things, and that the faithful continue to engage in good works. These sentiments underpin the Lord's Prayer. "Devils also believe, and tremble": Augustine here quotes the Epistle of James.[42] But they do not hope; and it is love and hope that drive people to do better.[43] The idea of *spes* as being an essentially optimistic endeavour is, however, perhaps best expressed by Bede in one of his *Homilies on the Gospel*. Ruminating on the quotation by Paul at the start of this paragraph, Bede uses this reflection on *spes* to lay to rest the chicken/egg question by stating that

> …the certainty of hope is prefigured by the egg. No offspring is as yet discernible in the egg, but the birth of the bird to come is hoped for. The faithful do not yet look upon the glory of the fatherland on high in which they believe at present, but they await its coming in hope.[44]

While it is difficult to say with certainty which of these ideas even made it to the discourse community around Einhard and Lupus, it is worth noting that such a level of abstraction did exist at the time.[45] Even though its expression might change from generation to generation, the idea that *spes* is a reasoned response to the past and the present is not a modern construct *per se* but indeed seems to tap into some timeless ideas about human behaviour.[46]

What everyone seems to have agreed on is that *spes* could be used to express the idea of "looking ahead" but also the action of "going forward." This was already noted by Isidore, who was certainly a mainstay of Carolingian intellectual culture, and who in his *Etymologies* explained that "*spes* is so called because it is a foot for someone going forward, as if it were *est pes*."[47] To Isidore, who appears to develop his mode of thinking based on the groundwork

[42] James 2:19.

[43] Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. 8, ed. Evans, *CCSL* 46, 52; trans. Shaw, *Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers* 1st ser., vol. 3, 239.

[44] Bede, *Homeliarum evangelii* II, 14, ed. David Hurst and Jean Fraipont, *CCSL* 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 272-279, at 277: *Porro per ovum spei nostrae certitudo figuratur quia in ouo nondum fetus cernitur sed futurae avis fetus speratur; et fideles quique necdum in praesenti supernae patriae gloriam quam credunt intuentur sed futuram sperando praestulantur.*

[45] With regard to the *Confessions*, both Lupus and Einhard could have known the text, based on the extant early medieval manuscripts, but the only contemporary author to make extensive use of this work was the controversial Gottschalk of Orbais. See Gert Partoens, "Manuscript Transmission, Critical Editions, and English Translations," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine's Confessions*, ed. Tarmo Toom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 245-262, and, in the same volume, Eric Leland Saak, "Reception in the Middle Ages," 263-276.

[46] This interpretation of the *Confessions* and the way it has been taken up in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas was found in a book dealing with the manipulation of hope to influence consumer behaviour: Deborah J. MacInnis and Hea Eun Chun, *Understanding Hope and Its Implications for Consumer Behavior*, vol. 1: *Hope, Therefore I Consume* (Hanover, MA: Now, 2007), 5-26.

[47] Isidore, *Etymologiae* VIII.14.5, ed. W. M. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911): *Spes vocata quod sit pes progrediendi, quasi 'est pes'*; trans. Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 173.

done by Augustine, it is the second part of the three elements that make up a proper religion: "that is, faith (*fides*), hope (*spes*), and charity (*caritas*). In faith, what is to be believed; in hope, what is to be hoped for; in charity, what is to be loved."[48] Faith, to the Visigothic intellectual, is about believing in that which cannot be seen, or rather, trusting "that what was said or promised (the implication is: by God) all comes to pass."[49] Charity, meanwhile, is about loving those around you, unconditionally and, it is implied, with a view towards making the world a better place.[50] *Spes* resides between the two, and is the only one that is explained in terms of movement rather than intent. To Isidore, *spes* exemplifies the link between internalized faith and the expression of charity: a reason to make one's beliefs useful to their social environment.

Eventually, this tripartite division between *spes*, *fides* and *caritas*, which was also the starting point for Augustine's *Enchiridion*, was taken up most notably by Paschasius Radbertus (785-865), theologian, abbot, and *enfant terrible* of the Carolingian intellectual community. In the opening poem to a treatise he wrote in 833, also titled *De Fide, Spe et Caritate*, he compared faith, hope and love to three sisters. Of these three, Faith "governs the highest virtues", and Hope helps people strive for constant improvement.[51] In the opening chapter of Book II, he segues from *fides* to *spes* by explaining the differences between the two. He does so in a fashion very similar to Augustine's reasoning: people hope for good things, but believe in both good and bad things. The most obvious example for Radbert is Hell and divine punishment, which are believed by everyone but hoped for by none.[52] Love, or charity, meanwhile, was the mightiest, as he also explains in book 3 of the treatise. Not only does love contain both other virtues "just as each species is contained in its *genus*," and not only does love provide us with a little piece of Heaven even in this "valley of tears," it also is the thing that makes people act upon their hope for and faith in the future.[53] But without faith,

48 Isidorus, *Etymologiae* VIII.2.1 Lindsay: *In fide, quid credendum; in spe, quid sperandum; in caritate, quid sit amandum*; trans. Barney et al., *Etymologies*, 173. Note how Isidore does not manage to find a different way to express "what is to be hoped for": only *spes/sperare* seems adequate here.

49 Isidorus, *Etymologiae* VIII.2.3, ed. Lindsay: *Proprie autem nomen fidei inde est dictum, si omnino fiat quod dictum est aut promissum*; trans. Barney et al., *Etymologies*, 173.

50 Isidorus, *Etymologiae* VIII.2.6, ed. Lindsay: *Caritas Graece, Latine dilectio interpretatur, quod duos in se liget. Nam dilectio a duobus incipit, quod est amor Dei et proximi; de qua Apostolus "Plenitudo," inquit, "legis dilectio;"* trans. Barney et al., 173-174. On the early Christian (and indeed Augustinian) roots of this social aspect of *caritas*, see also Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 68-72.

51 Paschasius Radbertus, *De fide, spe et caritate*, ed. Beda Paulus, *CCCM* 97 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 3-423, at 3: *Tres sunt que ueniunt uno de fonte sorores / Virgineo gressu, Christi de sanguine lote / Sed caritas harum est cunctis precelsior una / Laude fides digna uirtutum summa gubernat / Et petit arma prior, sancti quibus omnia uincunt / Virgo beata Dei spes tendit ad ardua gressum.* It is not quite clear if the penultimate line refers back to *fides* or serves to introduce *spes* – although I am inclined to go for the latter option.

52 Paschasius Radbertus, *De fide, spe et caritate* II, c. 2, ibid., 70.

53 Paschasius Radbertus, *De fide, spe et caritate* III, c. 3, ibid., 110: *Vnde necesse est si quis illuc uult uenire hic iam per caritatem incipiat et per eam operetur. Quoniam quicquid sine caritate est aut fit prodesse ad eandem uitam non potest.*

love is worthless, for it is not given for the right reason. And without hope, the ambition to keep going in order to attain Heaven is gone, which renders the entire exercise worthless. In another work, the more famous *Epitaphium Arsenii*, composed by Paschasius upon the death of his abbot Wala in 836, the author latches onto this quality of hope to cope with his grief over the loss of his teacher. As noted by Mayke de Jong and Justin Lake in their recent translation of this work, Paschasius cleverly alters a rather stoic reflection on memory by the Roman philosopher Seneca into a celebration of hope. "Rather than the pure joy of remembering a friend,", they write, "what remains [for Paschasius] after [Wala's] departure is hope, the hope of meeting him again in heaven."[54] Through this alteration, he intended to follow the example of his old master, who allegedly also "was not cheered by any joys, but by hope alone."[55]

If this brief digression on the connection between love, faith and hope has shown us anything, it is that *spes* was seen as an emotion or a virtue that was difficult to express unambiguously. Whether pertaining to a realistic event in this life, or the belief in salvation in the next, *spes* needed to be internalized. It could serve as a catalyst for charity and a reason to believe, but should never be acted upon for its own sake.

The practical implication of this dual nature of *spes* is perhaps best summarized in the extensive comments and reflections on the concept by Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel (c. 770- c. 840).[56] As an abbot, courtier and intellectual, he was in a perfect position to comment on the intersection between the "objective" and "subjective" qualities of hope.[57] He does so most explicitly in his highly influential *Diadema Monachorum* (probably written near the end of the 810s), a work primarily aimed at the monks in his community, but presented as a work for all Christians hoping to attain the level of sanctity needed to live like a monk regardless of their station in life.[58] This treatise shows how, in Smaragdus' mind, *spes* should represent the perfect combination of self-awareness, patience and joy needed to attain salvation. This included, he explicates, complaining about the work God put in their path: that is the sort of *murmuratio* that will squash their hope of eternal recompense later.[59] *Spes* should drive

[54] Paschasius Radbertus, *Epitaphium Arsenii* I, c. 5, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften Berlin, Abhandlungen der historisch-philologischen Klasse* (Berlin, 1900), 18-98, at 27; trans. Mayke de Jong and Justin Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire: Paschasius Radbertus' funeral oration for Wala of Corbie* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 72, n. 106.

[55] Paschasius Radbertus, *Epitaphium Arsenii* I, c. 5, ed. Dümmler, 27: *Idcirco nullis adhuc, nisi de sola spe, hilaresco gaudiis*; trans. De Jong and Lake, *Confronting Crisis*, 71.

[56] Matthew Ponesse, "Smaragdus of St. Mihiel and the Carolingian monastic reform," *Revue bénédictine* 116 (2006): 367-392; idem, "Standing distant from the Fathers: Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel and the reception of early medieval learning," *Traditio* 67 (2012): 71-99.

[57] Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 123-168.

[58] Rutger Kramer, "L'insoutenable légèreté d'être moine : introspection et réforme individuelle dans l'Œuvre de Smaragde et le Chronicon de Saint-Mihiel (IXe-XIe siècle)," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 265, no. 1 (2024): 203-218.

[59] Smaragdus, *Diadema Monachorum*, c. 56, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *PL* 102 (Paris: Migne, 1853), 593-690, at 633A; trans. David Barry, *Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel: Diadema Monachorum – The Crown of Monks*. Cistercian

monks to persist in their chastity, while also allowing them to hope for another's success as it equals hope for one's own salvation. Quoting Jerome's commentary on Ephesians 2:10, Smaragdus argues that the lives (past), good works (present) and hopes (future) of people are all creations of Christ.[60] Christ, being the self-professed "way, truth and life", is the only one who can actually see whither the path leads on which they walk.[61] However, that should not prevent people from hoping to reach heaven, based on the way they learn from their past to be their best in the present.

B. FEAR

To hope is to be halfway there. Uncertainty for the direct future means putting faith in Christ's foresight – something which, for all but the most pious of people, implies a lot of uncertainty or even fear for what lies ahead. This was not a problem. Quite the contrary: to many theological thinkers in the Carolingian era, the definitive link between "hope" and "fear" was already made by Augustine and especially in the works of Augustine's near-contemporary, Fulgentius of Ruspe (c. 462-c. 533).[62] Both these Church Fathers acknowledged that there exists a tension between an omniscient God and the uncertainty of the believers, for whom "hoping" thereby becomes an active process.[63] This sort of *spes* could and indeed should lead to *timor* about whatever the Lord has in store.[64] And that fear, in turn, is only a positive if it is connected to the second – internalised, emotional – type of *spes*: if good works are undertaken out of fear for immediate reprisals, the effects will be nullified rather than enhanced by the experienced anxiety, which may be referred to as *metus* or, especially in the later Christian discourse, *timor*.[65]

Studies Series 245 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Studies, 2013), 140-141; see Courtney M. Booker, "*Iusta Murmuratio*: The Sound of Scandal in the Early Middle Ages." *Revue bénédictine* 126, no. 2 (2016): 236-270, esp. 253-255 on the dangers posed by *murmurationes* to the fabric of the community.

60 Smaragdus, *Diadema Monachorum*, ed. Migne, *PL* 102, 667B: *Ipsius enim sumus factura creati in Christo Iesu in operibus bonis, quae praeparavit Deus, ut in illis ambulemus* (Eph. 2:10). *Hoc est, quod vivimus, quod speramus, quod intelligimus, et credere possumus, ipsius est, quia ipse est conditor noster, nos autem factura ejus sumus*; the exact wording of the Biblical quotation points towards Jerome's *Commentarii in IV epistulas Paulinas*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, *PL* 26 (Paris: Migne: 1845), 501A.

61 This connection is made explicit in Smaragdus, *Lectio libri Apocalypsis beati Ioannis apostolis, Dominica Oct. Pentecostes*, ed. Migne, *PL* 102, 331-339, at 332; trans. Francis X. Gumerlock, *Carolingian Commentaries on the Apocalypse by Theodulf and Smaragdus* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2019), 86-96, at 86-87.

62 See Martine De Marre, "Augustine and Fulgentius: Parallel or Vying African Lives?" *Journal of Early Christian History* 6, no. 1 (2016): 1-28.

63 Eg. Fulgentius, *Epistula* 17, ed. J. Fraipont, *CCSL* 91A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968), 563-615, at 597; trans. as *First Letter to the Scythian Monks*, Rob Roy McGregor and Donald Fairbairn, *Fulgentius, Correspondence on Christology and Grace* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 43-107, at 84.

64 Eg. Fulgentius, *Epistula* 15, c. 13 and c. 20, ed. Fraipont, *CCSL* 91A, 447-457 at 453-454 and 456-457, trans. as *Second Letter to the Sctythian Monks*, McGregor and Fairbairn, 108-120, at 116 and 120.

65 Jean-François Thomas, "De *terror* à *vereri* : enquête lexicale sur des formes de peur et de crainte en latin," *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes* 84, no. 2 (2012): 143-168.

Although the letters between Lupus and Einhard betray many kinds of uncertainty in the minds of the authors, "fear" as such is only mentioned once in this part of their correspondence. This happens near the end of Einhard's letter, as conclusion to the self-reflexive and self-consoling lament cited above:

> Hence, I think that it will be far more profitable and blessed for me to spend this short and uncertain period of life in sorrow than in joy, for if, as our Lord says, those who now mourn and sorrow will be blessed and happy, then those, on the other hand, who do not fear (*metuunt*) to end their days in continuous and uninterrupted happiness will become wretched and unhappy.[66]

The passage started with the realisation that it was futile to hope for "a long old age" despite his hitherto "care-free" life. It ends here, with an oblique reference to Christ's Sermon on the Mount (Mat 5:5: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"), in which the sorrowful are contrasted to those who live life with reckless abandon. It is interesting, therefore, that the one explicit expression of fear (in this case, *metus*) in these three letters is thus a negative one. An absence of fear, a lack of concern for the future, does bring happiness in the short run, but leads to damnation further down the line.

It is noteworthy that Einhard uses *metus* here. In this context, it seems to refer to a more generic kind of fear, in line with its usage by Augustine in *De Civitate Dei*, who in turn based his ideas on Cicero's *Tusculanae Disputationes*.[67] Both authors were familiar to Lupus and Einhard. Einhard cites Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* in the prologue to his *Vita Karoli*, and mentions Augustine as Charlemagne's favoured bedtime reading.[68] Lupus, meanwhile, opens his correspondence with Einhard by citing the *Tusculan Disputations* and subsequently requesting, among others, Cicero's *De Rhetorica* and *De Oratore* – signalling a close familiarity with the works of the old Roman statesman.[69] Cicero uses *metus* as an umbrella term, and classifies *timor* under that concept, as a kind of dread "for an approaching evil."[70]

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66 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 3, *MGH Epp.* 6, 10: *Ac proinde longe utilius ac beatius fore censeo ipsam temporis incerti brevitatem cum luctu quam Laetitia ducere, quia, si secundum dominicam vocem beati ac felices erunt, qui nunc lamentantur et lugent, e contrario infelices ac miseri fient, qui dies suos in iugi et continua laetitia finire non metuunt*; trans. Regenos, 4.

67 Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 153-157.

68 Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, prologue, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, *MGH SRG* 25 (Hannover: Hahn, 1911), 1-41, at 2; trans. Paul E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 15-40, at 16; on Charlemagne's reading habits: Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 24, p. 29: *Delectabatur et libris sancti Augustini, praecipueque his qui De civitate Dei praetitulati sunt*; trans. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, 31. Einhard singles out *De Civitate Dei* as Charles's favorite, but notes that the emperor was fond of "the books of Saint Augustine," implying he also read his other works.

69 Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistola* 1, *MGH Epp.* 6, 8.

70 Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* IV, c. 19, ed. and trans. J. E. King, Loeb Classical Library 141 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 346-347: *Quae autem subiecta sunt sub metum, ea sic definiunt: pigritiam metum consequentis laboris [pudorem metum sanguinem diffundentem]* (…) *terrorem metum concutientem, ex quo fit ut pudorem rubor, terrorem pallor et tremor et dentium crepitus consequatur, timorem metum mali appropinquantis; pavorem metum mentem loco moventem.*

In a Christianised context, *timor* takes on connotations of being a more abstract fear for the uncontrollable, the unavoidable, and the divine. In his reflections on emotions in *De civitate Dei*, Augustine appears to use both terms synonymously, but a careful reading reveals that he reserves *metus* for an actualised, actual mode of thinking, whereas *timor* is more of a passive (but no less pervasive) state of mind. "What are fear (*metus*) and sadness but a volition of aversion from the things which we do not wish?" he ponders, before later explaining that *metus* is a form of caution in the present life, or a feeling experienced by the faithful in the City of God, who "fear (*metuunt*) eternal punishment, yet desire eternal life."[71] *Timor*, meanwhile, is used much less as a verb and more in a conceptual sense, as "fleeing that which is opposed to [love]."[72] It is an emotion that inhabits rather than inhibits *caritas*, "and *caritas* alone is capable of it," as it is the kind of fear ("of the serpent") that should ultimately bind a community together.[73] Einhard's use of *metus* in his letter thus refers to carelessness in this life. But That, according to his friend, is not the main issue. His lack of *spes*, Lupus fears, is inhibiting his aptitude for *timor*. And that is most definitely a problem.

To gain a clearer view of the relation between *spes* and *timor* as it was seen in the early ninth century, it is fruitful to turn to a treatise written by archbishop Agobard of Lyon at the behest of his colleague Ebo of Reims, most probably after 823 but well before the latter's downfall in 835.[74] Known as *De Spe et Timore*, it is a relatively obscure text.[75] While Agobard's main corpus had been fairly well known since the rediscovery of a manuscript with most of his works in 1605, it was not until the discovery of an additional manuscript in 1985 that historians gained access to the full text beyond the prologue – although the ending still remains lost.[76] Despite these lacunae, the text has been described by its discoverer as "sans aucun doute le meilleur témoin de la spiritualité d'Agobard."[77] Moreover, given that at the time of writing, neither Agobard nor Ebo had become the tragic and controversial figures they would become following the crisis years of the early 830s, the text may be as close as we get to an acceptable representation of the interrelation between *spes* and *timor* in the Carolingian era.[78] It is, at least, one of the earliest texts to explicitly unpack the connection between

[71] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XIV, c. 6, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb, *CCSL* 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 421: *et quid est metus atque tristitia nisi uoluntas in dissensione ab his quae nolumus?* And c. 9, p. 426: *metuunt poenam aeternam, cupiunt uitam aeternam*.

[72] Ibid., XIV, c. 7, p. 422.

[73] Ibid., XIV, c. 9, p. 428.

[74] Egon Boshof, *Erzbischof Agobard von Lyon: Leben und Werk* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1969), 186-189.

[75] Agobard, *De spe et timore*, ed. Lieven van Acker, *CCCM* 52 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981), 145-147, 429-454.

[76] On the rediscovery of Agobard in the early seventeenth century, see Courtney Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 98-100.

[77] Jean-Paul Bouhot, "Le manuscrit Angers, B.M. 277 (268) et l'opuscule *De spe et timore* d'Agobard de Lyon," *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 31, no. 3-4 (1985): 227-241, at 228.

[78] On Ebo and Agobard and the context surrounding their fall from grace, see Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814-840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 214-259; Stuart Airlie, "Security and Insecurity of Identity and Status in the Carolingian

the two emotions, and the fact that Agobard wrote for one of his peers appears to indicate that he was working within contemporary discourse, not reacting against it.[79] The other one, interestingly, is Paschasius' *De fide, spe et caritas*, but unfortunately it falls well beyond the scope of this chapter to engage in an in-depth comparison of both treatises.[80]

Essentially, this enigmatic but strangely compelling text is a *florilegium* of Biblical verses interspersed with exegetical observations and passages from Augustine, Bede, and other such intellectual heavyweights. Fortunately, however, the author provides an evocative metaphor right at the beginning of the work, which appears to summarize his argument in the broadest possible terms.

This particular metaphor borrows heavily from a similar idea explained by Gregory the Great in his *Moralia in Iob*, which the pope in turn based on his reading of Deut. 24:6.[81] It involves two millstones.[82] "The lower one," Agobard writes, "is said to be fear, and the upper one is hope. And if one of these is lacking, it is not possible to make flour because in your mind it is not possible to handle anything that is sensible...."[83] Later, he continues that

> …it is necessary at all times that these two millstones are present in the mind of the faithful, so that, because hope always excites the spirit and fear overwhelms it, and each may temper the other. Moreover, neither should hope grow into pride, as long as fear continues to press down upon the mind, nor should immoderate fear bury the soul in desperation…[84]

Elite," in *Théorie et Pratiques des Élites au Haut Moyen Âge*, ed. François Bougard, Hans-Werner Goetz, and Régine Le Jan (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 221-239.

79 Cf. Irene van Renswoude, *The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 206-229.

80 Especially Paschasius Radbertus, *De fide, spe et caritate* II, c. 9, *CCCM* 97, 96 – a chapter titled *Quod inpresentiarum nec spes sine timore admodum agitur nec timor sine spe ad alta subrigitur*, which also includes the metaphor of the millstones central to Agobard's argument. Given that Agobard specifically writes about hope and fear (and because the dating appears to be slightly earlier), I have opted to use his treatise as the backbone for what follows. It is, however, an interesting coincidence that two such outspoken authors decided to write about such similar topics at a time when the "penitential state" was in full development, with all the hopes and fears that came with it.

81 "Thou shalt not take the nether, nor the upper millstone to pledge: for he hath pledged his life to thee." Paschasius, incidentally, in *De fide, spe et caritate* II, c. 9, *CCCM* 97, 96, l. 992, places this verse *in libro Numerorum*.

82 Specifically Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 33.XII.24, ed. Mark Adriaen, *CCSL* 143B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 1694; on the reception of this pope's ideas in the early medieval West, see Conrad Leyser, "The memory of Gregory the Great and the making of Latin Europe, 600-1000," in *Making Early Medieval Societies: Conflict and Belonging in the Latin West, 300-1200*, ed. Kate Cooper and Conrad Leyser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 181-201.

83 Agobard, *De spe et timore*, *CCCM* 52, 430: *Que mole, licet utrumque testamentum recte figurare possint, intellegentur tamen utiliter spes et timor, ut inferior dicatur timor, superior spes. Cui autem una defuerit, farinam facere non potest, quia in mente sua nihil sanum pertractare potest, quem aut timor sine spe premit, aut spes sine timore leuat.*

84 Agobard, *De spe et timore*, ibid., 431: *Semper autem necesse est, ut he due mole fidelium mentibus incessanter adsint, ut, quia spes animum semper erigit, metus autem premit, et metus spem et spes temperet metum, ac ne spes in superbiam erigat, metus continuo adiacens mentem premat, rursum ne inmoderatus metus animum in desperationem obruat, hunc confestim spes erigat;…* Note how Agobard uses *metus*, indicating that he is writing

Agobard concludes this part: "fear without hope is called despair ... and hope without fear leads to vain stubbornness."[85] Both should be avoided. This can only happen if fear and hope work together – in which case *both* of these feelings are turned into virtues.[86] There is a "Gregorian" mentality underlying all this. One of Gregory's main points in his *Moralia in Iob*, for instance, is that "chastisement is the real test" of one's faith. Job's ability to remember his good works in the past allows him to cling to *spes*. This is in fact one of his main redeeming features.[87] Job's fear of God is not, as the Devil suspects, "for nought," but is offset by his ability to hope, and *vice versa*.

Near the end of the work, Agobard further explains these points in more eschatological terms: quoting and exegetically explaining a lengthy passage from Revelations 18, Agobard explains how the merchants and rich people who flee Babylon just before it gets destroyed, do not do so out of a desire to relinquish the earthly pleasures of the city, but solely out of *timor* for the punishments that await them otherwise (he later explains that they get their comeuppance anyway).[88] These are the "lukewarm" people from Revelations 3:16 – those who have neither hope nor fear: people who never wonder about the future, and who thus never manage to generate the appropriate amount of faith. They bear fruit, Agobard writes invoking the Gospel of Matthew, but it is not "good fruit." They might be servants, but they are the "useless servants" from the Parable of the Talents, the ones who know the will of God and still disobey Him, for which they will be "vomited out from the bowels of the *ecclesia* and relinquish the hope that even the infidel still retains."[89] They might have the millstones, but there is nothing (no *caritas*) to make them do something productive – meaning they are only in the way. From that perspective, Agobard seems to agree with a sentiment that was all too common in medieval ways of thinking about hope and fear: without (active) hope for the afterlife, life is not actually worth living.[90]

about immediate concerns rather than existential dread. *Timor* is a healthy state of mind, *metus* can be overwhelming. Compare Agobard's conclusion to the one formulated by Paschasius, *De fide, spe et caritate* II, c. 9, *CCCM* 97, 97: *Non sunt igitur auferende due iste uirtutes de mentibus singulorum eo quod quantum spes ad altiora mentem subuehit tantum necesse est timor cor male presumentis inferius premat. Que nimirum ita sibi utiliter uicissim iunguntur ut una sine altera salubriter flare nequeat quia incassum quisque misericordiam sperat si non etiam iustitiam districti iudicii metuat.*

85 Agobard, *De spe et timore*, *CCCM* 52, 431: *Metus namque si sine spe fuerit, desperatio rectius uocatur, spes uero si fuerit sine metu, uana praesumptio esse monstratur.*

86 Or, as Paschasius explained it in *De fide, spe et caritate* II, c. 9, *CCCM* 97, 96: *Superior quidem atque inferior mola qua mentes fidelium bene rediguntur in polentam*.

87 Kevin L. Hester, *Eschatology and Pain in St. Gregory the Great: The Christological Synthesis of Gregory's Morals on the Book of Job* (London: Paternoster, 2007).

88 Agobard, *De spe et timore*, *CCCM* 52, 450.

89 Ibid., 453: *de uisceribus Ecclesie meae euomeris absque spe redeundi, que adhuc infidelem manet*; for various interpretations of this biblical passage, see Timothy L. Decker, "'Live Long in the Land': The Covenantal Character of the Old Testament Allusions in the Message to Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)," *Neotestamentica* 48, no. 2 (2014), 417-446.

90 Susan Snyder, "The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition," *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965): 18-59.

CONCLUSION: BAD MEDICINE?

In Hesiod's didactic poem *Works and Days*, we read how Pandora, the first woman, opened the box (or jar) that would later be named after her. As she did so, all the evils contained within were released unto the world.[91] Only Hope (ἐλπίς) remained, the story goes. We are tempted to see this as a good thing, but in Hesiod's world, hope was a double-edged sword: while it allows people to see the good that remains in the world, it also makes them blind to the harsh realities of everyday life.[92] Hope, when all is said and done, was always a blessing *and* a punishment of the gods – a "comfort to man in his misery" or "the idle hope in which the lazy man indulges when he should be working".[93]

A similar mentality is visible in the early Christian interpretation of hope, and in the letters by Einhard and Lupus. Shaped as it was by his immediate grief, and, most importantly, by the expectations raised by the translation of the relics of Marcellinus and Peter, Einhard's hope was not the right kind of hope. According to Lupus, Einhard relied too much on certitudes and did not put enough effort in his faith – or rather, in the cultivation of his fear. Lupus felt obligated to warn him about the fact that God did not owe him anything. To hope, he stressed, only makes sense if it did not imply an attempt to control the future. To hope in the way Einhard professed in his letter, was to obliterate fear – and that would not only set a bad example to anyone reading the letter, but also place Einhard's soul in jeopardy. This is why Lupus seized upon Einhard's hope to make his own points. It was a reflection for the wider audience partaking in their conversation, and the members of the courtly discourse community at large. Would they have acted the same, felt the same, written the same? Would they have hoped, or feared, or simply acted on faith? Either way, it was counterproductive to fall into the trap of "therapeutic nihilism", Lupus seemed to have wanted to say.[94] There is always hope. It just depends what kind of hope there is. Hope that activates faith and love can, work as a balm – in the words of Paschasius Radbertus, it can cool the soul's ardour and dissipate emotions.[95] Hope for hope's sake would not work as well as a medicine. At best, it would lead to earthly joys and expectations for the immediate future – neither of which show an appropriate respect for God's plan.

Given all these meanings of *spes* and its counterpart, *timor*, as reflective of the wages of faith and love, it seems unsurprising that both Lupus and Einhard intended to make full use of the ambiguities contained within the concept when reflecting on their state of mind.

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91 Hesiod, *Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι* II.60-105, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most, *Theogony; Works and Days; Testimonia*, Loeb Classical Library 57 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 90-95.

92 Douglas Cairns, *Can We Find Hope in Ancient Greek Philosophy?* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 41-74.

93 Nancy Billias, "Hope as a Moral Virtue," in *The Resilience of Hope*, ed. Janette McDonald and Andrea M. Stephenson (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 17-28; W. J. Verdenius, "A 'Hopeless' Line in Hesiod: 'Works and Days' 96," *Mnemosyne, Fourth Series*, 24, no. 33 (1971), 225-231.

94 On this phenomenon, see Paul Starr, "The Politics of Therapeutic Nihilism," *The Hastings Center Report* 6, no. 5 (1976), 24-30.

95 Paschasius Radbertus, *De fide, spe et caritate* I, c. 5, *CCCM* 97, 76.

Spes provides an explanatory model for their ideas about the interplay between individual motives and cosmic consequences. We ought to be keenly aware of this when attempting to understand our texts. The way a given author made sense of what was happening around them was not used to reflect the realities of the past, but rather as a lesson to resonate with their audience in the future. Augustine already noted that joy may be "used in a good sense." The same, he continues, goes for fear: this, too, can provide a good motivation for future actions, after all. It is only "with respect to sadness" that "the question whether [fear] can be used in a good sense is more difficult."[96] That, it seems, is where hope comes in.

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[96] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XIV, c. 7, *CCSL* 48, 423: *De tristitia uero, quam Cicero magis aegritudinem appellat, dolorem autem Vergilius, ubi ait: "dolent gaudentque", (sed ideo malui tristitiam dicere, quia aegritudo uel dolor usitatius in corporibus dicitur), scrupulosior quaestio est, utrum inueniri possit in bono.* It is interesting to note that the passage quoted from Virgil's *Aeneid*, lib. VI, l, 733, ed. and trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library 63 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 582-583, explicitly states that both the joy and sadness experienced by humans, stem from the way their immortal souls are affected by earthly life – a sentiment that would have resonated with Augustine as well: J. Pearson, "Virgil's 'Divine Vision' (Aeneid 4. 238-44 and 6. 724-51)," *Classical Philology* 56, no. 1 (1961): 33-38.

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THE MANY FAMILIES OF AELRED OF RIEVAULX

BARBARA H. ROSENWEIN[1]

ABSTRACT

The Gregorian Reform, which banned clerical marriages and the inheritance of Church offices, not only changed the nature of priestly identity but also required sons of priests to find new career paths for themselves. Did it also change how those sons thought about their families? The example of Aelred of Rievaulx, who came from a long line of priests, suggests ways to consider the mental and religious impact of the Reform on the sons of priests in the early days of its implementation. In this paper I explore how Aelred retreated from his biological family (although not entirely rejecting it) while finding other sorts of families and affective connections.

KEYWORDS

Aelred of Rievaulx; Love; Family; Meditation; Gregorian Reform; Herrenfrage; Clerical Marriage

Carolingian priests were rarely married. Many had entered as youths into cathedral or collegiate communities; others had been given to monasteries as children. They had little opportunity to wed and every incentive to the contrary, since their clerical upbringing

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taught them that only pure men, untouched by sexual pollution, were worthy to serve at the altar.[2] Carolingian ideologists reinforced this idea, which held in most of the empire.[3]

But the British Isles had not been part of the Carolingian world. There, while some clerics were indeed formed within ecclesiastical environments, many others inherited the priesthood from their fathers. This should have been the case for Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167). He was born into an English priestly family. His great-great-grandfather had been provost of the church at Hexham, a Northumbrian town on the south bank of the Tyne River. His great-grandfather had been both sacristan at Durham and priest at Hexham, and that position was passed along to his son and in due course to Eilaf, Aelred's father. (See Genealogy of Aelred of Rievaulx.)

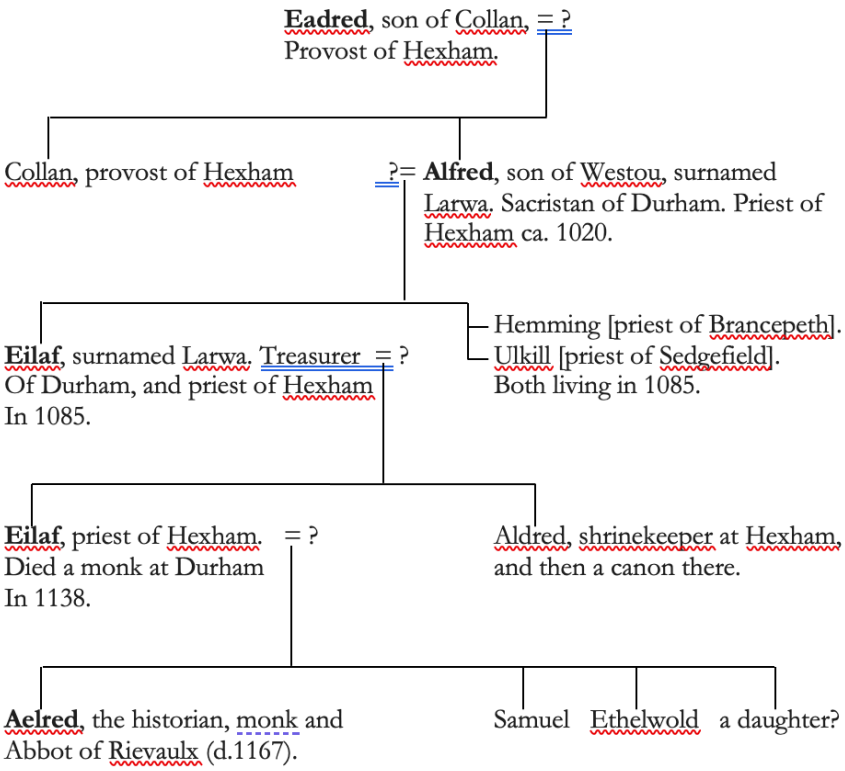

Fig. 1. Genealogy of Aelred of Rievaulx[4]

[2] See Steffen Patzold, *Presbyter. Moral, Mobilität und Kirchenorganisation im Karolingerreich* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2020), 391-403.

[3] Mayke de Jong, "*Imitatio morum*: The Cloister and Clerical Purity in the Carolingian World," in *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 35-61.

[4] Based on the genealogy in *The Priory of Hexham, its Chroniclers, Endowments, and Annals*, ed. James Raine, 2 vols, Surtees Society 44, 46 (Durham: Andrews and Co., 1864), 1, li-lii.

Yet Aelred's birth coincided with the moment when Gregorian reformers and their episcopal allies in England began to insist on clerical celibacy with renewed vigour. The winds of change hit Aelred's home directly in 1113, when the Archbishop of York turned Hexham into a community of Augustinian canons and expelled Eilaf as priest.[5]

Julia Barrow has observed that in England "the generation coming of age in the first quarter, or indeed the first half, of the twelfth century was less willing to accept the new requirements than the bishops had hoped, postponing Gregory VII's intended outcome deep into the twelfth century."[6] In that light, Aelred must be considered a generational rebel, since he apparently did not protest against the restriction on his inheritance. It seems that Eilaf accepted the new rules as well, perhaps because he was allowed to continue to keep most of the property belonging to his former church. Eventually, however, he turned his holdings over to the canons at Hexham and became a monk at Durham.[7]

It thus seems that Aelred accepted the new requirements, but we must recognize that they had an impact on more than his career. They called into question the very structure and purpose of his family. It is true that there was a venerable alternative to the birth family: it was common throughout early medieval Europe for parents to send their sons away to be fostered or educated by other adults. This practice normally had the effect of forging new networks of love and affection, even as the children retained affective ties with their parents.[8] However, as I shall argue in this paper, the abrupt rupture of family traditions at Hexham had more radical consequences for Aelred's attachment to and notions of "family." His experience suggests that in the wake of the Gregorian Reform, sons of priests were obliged to rejigger quite radically the ways in which they connected to others.

Barred from the priesthood, Aelred became (*seriatim*) a courtier, a monk, and the abbot of Rievaulx. Rather than resent losing his father's profession, he was convinced of the importance of chastity and expressed distaste regarding the practices of his paternal ancestors. He rarely referred to his biological family – his family in the ordinary sense of the term – and expressed little attachment to it. In its place, he found or created other affective connections.

Scholars have long recognized that "family" is a social construction. Understood in that way, Aelred had at least four families. The one he dwelled on least, and with least warmth, was the family of his birth. He had greater affection for the king of Scotland, at

[5] For this and other information on Aelred's life, see Marsha L. Dutton, "The Conversion and Vocation of Aelred of Rievaulx: A Historical Hypothesis," in *England in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Daniel Williams (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1990), 31-49. Other important biographies of Aelred include Pierre-André Burton, *Ælred de Rievaulx 1110-1167. De l'homme* éclaté *à l'être unifié. Essai de biographie existentielle et spirituelle* (Paris: Cerf, 2010); Aelred Squire, *Aelred of Rievaulx: A Study* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981); and Brian Patrick McGuire, *Brother and Lover: Aelred of Rievaulx* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

[6] Julia Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, Their Families and Careers in North-Western Europe, c.800-c.1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 138.

[7] Most importantly, Richard of Hexham, "Prior Richard's History of the Founding of the Church of Hexham," in *The Priory of Hexham*, 1, 54-56.

[8] See Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel's Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 215-227.

whose court he spent part of his youth. He clearly felt very much at home in the monastery. Finally, the family on which he lavished the most attention and in which he was happiest of all was the one carefully constructed by his imagination – though he would have said that it was *known* to him via the spiritual organ that he called his "mind (*mens*)."[9]

A. BIOLOGY: AELRED'S BIRTH FAMILY

Of his birth family Aelred said very little. He was probably educated at the cathedral school of Durham, with which his family had long association. He may have continued his studies when he left school, perhaps in 1124, to join the court of King David I of Scotland (r.1124-1153).[10] Marsha Dutton reckons that this plum position at a royal court was arranged for Aelred either by Thurstan of York or by Aschatil, who was at the time the prior of Hexham's Augustinian canons.[11] But Brian McGuire speculates that Aelred's transfer happened much earlier and was probably planned by Aelred's father.[12]

Although Aelred's paternal ancestors figured in his *Saints of the Church of Hexham*, written in 1155, he did not identify them as such.[13] (We know that they were members of his family only because of the testimony of others.[14]) Among the stories that Aelred told about the saints of Hexham was a miracle involving Alfred, son of Westou, a "priest at Durham adorned with many virtues." This was Aelred's great-grandfather. Alfred was anxious to bring many holy relics to Durham but, said Aelred, he held off from taking those of Saint Acca from Hexham because, "foreseeing perhaps in spirit … what reverence, what honour that very church was to have, he did not want – or could not – take away those holy relics." Here we see an example of the ambivalence that appeared repeatedly in Aelred's portraits of his blood relations: on the one hand he praised Alfred for his virtues; on the other he (subtly) criticized him for wishing to steal the relics belonging to Hexham by implying that Acca himself made it impossible: that is why Alfred "could not" take the relics.[15]

Aelred's father, Eilaf, (again, not identified as such) rebuilt and beautified the church, dug up the holy relics, placed them temporarily in a portico, and had his younger brother,

9 See Fiona Griffiths and Kathryn Starkey, eds., *Sensory Reflections: Traces of Experience in Medieval Artifacts* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2018). While I have profited from previous translations of Aelred's works, all those here are my own.

10 Chrysogonus Waddell, "The Hidden Years of Ælred of Rievaulx: The Formation of a Spiritual Master," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (2006): 51-62, esp. 59-62.

11 Dutton, "Conversion and Vocation," 38-40.

12 McGuire, *Brother and Lover*, 29.

13 Aelred of Rievaulx, *Saints of Hexham*, in *The Priory of Hexham*, 1, 173-203. For the authorship and date, see *Aelred of Rievaulx: The Lives of the Northern Saints*, trans. Jane Patricia Freeland, ed. and intro. Marsha L. Dutton (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2006), 14-20.

14 Most importantly, Richard of Hexham, "Prior Richard's History," 54-55.

15 Aelred, *Saints of Hexham*, c. 11, p. 190. Marsha L. Dutton, "Saints Refusing to Leave: Aelred's *The Saints of Hexham* as an Inverted *Translatio*," in *The Medieval Translator/Traduire au Moyen Age*, vol. 15: *In principio fuit interpres*, ed. Alessandra Petrina with Monica Santini (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 187-200.

Aldred, guard them. But Aldred was tempted to violate his charge and to distribute the relics to other churches. Happily, the saints themselves prevented this by turning the portico into a fiery furnace whenever Aldred tried to enter it. Here was wicked intent, indeed. However, Aelred balanced his account of his uncle's impiety by noting that "afterward (*postmodum*)" Aldred became a canon at Hexham "of upright life and good habits (*optimae vitae et bonorum morum*)."[16]

Eilaf, meanwhile, put the saints in a place of honour, showing them great devotion. Feeling himself "unworthy (*indignum*)" to approach them, however, he asked Archbishop Thomas to install canons at Hexham in his stead, and to "hand himself [i.e. Eilaf] and his property over to them (*illisque se et sua contraderet*)."[17] In short, in Aelred's telling, Eilaf made up for his unworthiness by inviting men more worthy than he to live at Hexham.

Aelred never mentioned his mother or his brothers, but Richard, prior of Hexham (d. 1155/67), said that Aelred had two brothers, Samuel and Ethelwold.[18] Did he also have a sister? Late in his life (1160-1162), Aelred wrote a treatise for an anonymous anchoress, the *Formation of Anchoresses*, whom he called "sister (*soror*)," noting that "I am your carnal and spiritual brother (*tibi et carne et spiritu frater sum*)."[19] Walter Daniel said that the recipient of this treatise was Aelred's sister: "He wrote it for his sister, an anchorite (*scripsit sorori sue incluse*)."[20] In his treatise for the anchoress, Aelred said that he was grateful that God turned "into good the evil of our parents (*bene utens malo parentum nostrorum*)," and that God wanted both children to be born, whole and healthy, into an age (*eo tempore*) and among the sort of people (*inter tales*) who would bring them to His faith and sacraments. He rejoiced that,

> up to this point, sister, we travelled the same path together; we whom the same father begot shared one and the same manner [of life] (*conditio*). We were held in the same womb, and we emerged from the same flesh.

Later, he lamented, they parted company in virtue, for she remained a virgin while he did not. He reminded her of his "foulness (*foeditates*)," about which she "would often deplore and reproach" him, both when they were young and when they had grown up (*puella puerum*,

16 Aelred, *Saints of Hexham*, c. 11, p. 192.

17 Ibid. This account contradicts that of Richard of Hexham, "Prior Richard's History," 54-56, which says that the canons at Hexham were established by the archbishop of York even while Eilaf continued to hold most of the property, but that he later "by his own volition (*sua sponte*)," relinquished it all to the canons. Dutton plausibly reconciles the two narratives in her "Introduction to Walter Daniel's *Vita Aelredi*," in Walter Daniel, *The Life of Aelred of Rievaulx*, trans. F. M. Powicke (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1994), 21. Henceforth I will use the original text of Powicke's translation, *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), which includes the Latin text on facing pages.

18 Richard of Hexham, "Prior Richard's History," 55.

19 Aelred de Rievaulx, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 1, ed. C. H. Talbot, in *Aelredi Rievallensis. Opera Omnia* 1: *Opera ascetica*, ed. Anselme Hoste and C. H. Talbot, *CCCM* 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), 637-682, at 637.

20 Walter Daniel, *Epistola ad Mauricium*, c. 32, in *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, 44.

femina masculum).[21] While none of this absolutely proves that the *soror* of the treatise was Aelred's biological sister, it seems likely.[22]

But did it matter? Aelred never mentioned the name of his sister; he never revealed his relationships to those men of his family whom he did name. All of Aelred's "blood relatives" – and he himself as well – were tainted. All had sprung from the wombs of improperly married women impregnated by the sinful intercourse of priests.[23] This did not mean that biology was immaterial to Aelred's notion of family.[24] It meant that he valued – and knew he might benefit from – different sorts of links, ones more metaphorical yet potent and "physical" all the same. In addition, perhaps Aelred also refrained from talking much about his blood relations because he did not want to embarrass them in the light of the new strictures on priestly inheritance. For Aelred, as for all monks, entering the monastery meant abandoning family ties. And this was perhaps truest of all for the Cistercians, for whom Jesus was mother.[25]

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21 Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum* 32, pp. 673-674.

22 On the other hand, the reference to the "evil of our parents" may be understood as Aelred's adoption of Augustine's jaundiced view of all marital intercourse. This is the view of Charles Dumont, trans., *La vie de recluse, La prière pastorale*, *SC* 76 (Paris: Cerf, 1961), 146 n. 6. Alternatively, it could refer to Adam and Eve, the "parents" of all mankind, whose "evil" was original sin, passed on to all their descendants. Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 26, p. 658 takes up this very point, quoting Ps. 50/51:7: *enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis concepit me mater mea* (for I was conceived in iniquities and my mother conceived me in sins). He added that baptism destroys the iniquity but does not heal the "weakness (*infirmitas*)." As for Aelred's assertion that he was the "carnal and spiritual brother" of his *soror*: this, too, does not decisively make the link between the two biological. In Aelred of Rievaulx, *De spiritali amicitia*, c. 3.7, ed. A. Hoste, in *Opera Omnia* 1, 318-319, Aelred wrote of a friend as someone who "should be so much yours, and you his – both in bodily and in spiritual matters (*tam in corporalibus quam in spiritalibus*) – that there should be no separation of souls, affection, wills, or opinions." The anchoress, then, may have been an Aelredian "friend." It is no doubt for all these reasons that Marsha Dutton has preferred to call her "the anchoress-audience of *Formation*," avoiding the question of her relationship to Aelred. See Dutton, "Conversion and Vocation," 32 n. 3, and Marsha L. Dutton, "Sacramentality of Community in Aelred," in *A Companion to Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167)*, ed. Dutton (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 246-267, at 251. But most commentators assume that she was Aelred's sister in the biological sense. E.g. Dumont, *La vie de recluse*, 9; Squire, *Aelred of Rievaulx*, 118 et passim; Damien Boquet, *L'ordre de l'affect au Moyen* Âge. *Autour de l'anthropologie affective d'Aelred de Rievaulx* (Caen: CRAHM, 2005), 259-260.

23 See Jennifer D. Thibodeaux, *The Manly Priest: Clerical Celibacy, Masculinity, and Reform in England and Normandy, 1066-1300* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), esp. chapter 3, which discusses how "clerical sons adapted to transitioning norms" (74).

24 Pierre-André Burton, "L'histoire comme *acte de mémoire*, *porte de la sagesse* et *chemin de sanctification*. Introduction à *La Généalogie des Rois d'Angleterre* d'Ælred de Rievaulx," *Cîteaux* 65 (2014): 5-81, at 75-78 discusses the interplay of "blood" and "virtue" in Aelred's notion of legitimacy.

25 Caroline Walker Bynum, "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother: Some Themes in Twelfth-Century Cistercian Writing," in Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 110-169. Bynum devoted only a few pages (122-124) to the theme as it appears in Aelred's works, but by now there is a small mountain of literature on the topic. I here limit myself to a few that provide different points of view: Marsha L. Dutton, "Christ Our Mother: Aelred's Iconography for Contemplative Union," in *Goad and Nail: Studies in Medieval Cistercian History* 10, ed. E. Rozanne Elder (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1985), 21-45, esp. 24-26 sees Aelred promising mystical union in this life through the imagery of Christ's maternity; Susanna Greer Fein, "Maternity

What, then, did the *soror* in the *Formation of Anchoresses* mean to Aelred? He never said that he loved his sister, though he did once call her "dearest (*carissima*)."[26] Yet, although this was his only work to address a female audience, Aelred's role was not very different from the one he had among men: he offered counsel and guidance. (She had no role in the treatise other than to listen.)

The *Formation* offered advice for virtuous living in the spirit of Jerome's letters to his female acolytes; it provided rules for organizing the day among prayer, reading, and contemplation; and it presented a long disquisition on the importance – and difficulty – of chastity.[27] After recommending the sparsest possible exterior life in food, material possessions, and companionship, it described in detail the richly emotional mental life that love of God required. "The *affectus* is nourished by salutary meditation," Aelred wrote, referring to a concept – the *affectus* – on which he had dwelt at length in his *Mirror of Charity*.[28] In that work, Aelred made the *affectus* the wellspring of love and sometimes the equivalent of love itself.[29] Thus, the final part of the *Formation* prescribed how to nourish the love of God by meditating on Gospel stories about Jesus. Sometimes Aelred stopped giving directives, describing instead his own meditations. In this way, he nourished his own *affectus* as he guided his sister to cultivate hers. The last part of the *Formation* turned to the present and compared his moral weaknesses to his sister's purity and chastity. Finally, he resumed offering guidelines for meditation, this time on the life after death.

Susanna Greer Fein has argued that the *Formation* allowed Aelred to forge a very complex relationship with his sister, involving the several dichotomies of "brother/sister, mother/daughter, even, in Aelred's final metaphors, virginal husband/wife."[30] This was,

in Aelred of Rievaulx's Letter to his Sister," in *Medieval Mothering*, ed. John Carmi Parsons, and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Garland, 1996), 139-156, at 140 claims that "no Cistercian father excelled Aelred in fashioning a life lived within a maternal sensibility." Burton, *Ælred de Rievaulx*, 331-335, sees Aelred's emphasis on "compassion" as the maternal dimension of his abbatial office. Marsha L. Dutton, "Intimacy and Imitation: The Humanity of Christ in Cistercian Spirituality," in *Erudition at God's Service.* Studies in Medieval Cistercian History 11, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 33-69 emphasizes the importance of the eucharist to the contemplative, who, through it, enters "into physical union" with Christ (50), who is at one and the same time "infant, lover, and mother" (51).

26 Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 13, p. 649.

27 See Stephan Borgehammar, "The Ideal of the Recluse in Aelred's *De Institutione Inclusarum*," in *In Quest of the Kingdom*: *Ten Papers on Medieval Monastic Spirituality*, ed. Alf Härdelin (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1991), 177-202, esp. 185-202.

28 Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 29, p. 662; Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, ed. C. H. Talbot in Aelred, *Opera Omnia* 1, 3-161. It is conventionally dated 1142-1143, but it is more likely that it was written piecemeal over the course of several years starting in 1143; see Charles Dumont, "Introduction" to Aelred of Rievaulx, *The Mirror of Charity*, trans. Elizabeth Connor (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990), esp. 55-59.

29 See Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 97-99; Boquet, *L'ordre de l'affect*.

30 Fein, "Maternity in Aelred," 150.

however, little different from the multiple roles of the ideal Cistercian abbot vis-à-vis his monks.[31] We shall return to this treatise when considering Aelred's monastic family.

B. POLITY: AELRED'S ROYAL CONNECTIONS

Before he became a monk, Aelred joined the court of King David I of Scotland. Although the precise date for this move is uncertain, it must have taken place in 1124 or shortly thereafter, for Aelred later wrote as if he had grown up with the king's family.[32] In his *Genealogy of the Kings of the English*, written 1153/4, he said of David's son, Henry:

> I lived with him almost from the cradle, I grew up with him as a boy when he was a boy, and I knew him as an adolescent when he was an adolescent. I left him plucking the flowers of youth, just as I left his father – whom I loved above all mortals – gleaming with the flower of old age: I left them in body, certainly, to serve Christ, but never in mind (*mente*) or affection.[33]

Without question, Aelred felt a close connection with King David and his court. Yet he did not use explicitly familial imagery to describe these relationships.[34] Rather, he called David his "dearest lord and friend."[35] After all, he was a courtier. His biographer Walter Daniel claimed that Aelred played a starring role at court "so that he might reign on earth with so great a king in order to learn the royal virtues of a great leader." In short, his time at court was preparation for governing a monastery. The king himself was complicit in this, said Walter, for he "embraced [Aelred] with such great love (*tanto amore*) that he made him great in his house and glorious in his palace, [having Aelred] preside over many things, [including] many dependents (*mancipiis*) and all of the courtiers, as if he were another lord and the second prince." He became steward (*echonomus*) of the royal household, and in the wake of an incident in which Aelred patiently bore an unruly knight's curses "he was joined more closely to his lord king by the power of love (*vi amoris*) and held more dear by everyone in very sincere affection (*caritate)*, so much so that the king now consulted with him and transferred to him his most important business."[36]

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31 On the many roles of Bernard, the exemplary Cistercian abbot, see M. B. Pranger, "Bernard of Clairvaux," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, ed. Mette Birkedal Bruun (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 186-198, esp. 191-193.

32 McGuire, *Brother and Lover*, 29 speculates that Aelred in fact went to the Scottish court before that time, probably at the age of six or seven.

33 Aelred, *Genealogia*, c. 2.13, ed. Domenico Pezzini, in *Aelredi Rievallensis. Opera Omnia* 6: *Opera historica et hagiographica*, *CCCM* 3, 3-133 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 56. See an English translation in Aelred, *The Genealogy of the Kings of the English*, in *Aelred of Rievaulx: The Historical Works*, trans. Jane Patricia Freeland, ed. and intro. Marsha L. Dutton (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2005). Burton, "L'histoire comme *acte de mémoire*," 5-81 explores the date and the historical context in which Aelred wrote this work.

34 Burton, *Ælred de Rievaulx*, 107 explores the court as Aelred's "seconde famille," but that relationship was adduced only by a later Cistercian writer, Jocelin of Furness (*fl*. 1199-1214).

35 Aelred, *Genealogia* 1.12, p. 21.

36 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 2-7 and 32, pp. 3-7 and 41.

Thus, there was mutual love between Aelred and David, although their relationship was more that of lord and loyal retainer than of father and son. We must wait for the monastery to see familial imagery.

C. COMMUNITY: AELRED'S MONASTIC FAMILY

Walter Daniel spent seventeen years as a monk at Rievaulx under Aelred and served as his physician.[37] He was thus well-qualified to write his hero's *Life*. Perhaps he was simply echoing the *Benedictine Rule* when he called Aelred "our father," as that was the very meaning of abbot."[38] But he went beyond the *Rule* by emphasizing the affective side of fatherhood. When a monk was dying, "the father [Aelred] ran here and there, giving comfort to his son and thoughtfully fulfilling the duty of a servant to the sick man."[39] No wonder Walter asked rhetorically, "who at any time came to him in weakness and did not find in Aelred paternal love and in the brothers due consolation?"[40]

His familial metaphors went still further, for to Walter, Aelred was also a mother. He recalled that when the abbot grew old and ill, he used to lie on a bed and "twenty or thirty brothers at a time (*viginti simul vel triginta*)" would come to see him. "Lying down [with him], they would speak to him as a little child would talk with its mother (*matre sua*)."[41]

Cistercian houses had "daughter houses." Modern writers often call them "dependencies," making the relationship between "mother" and "daughter" purely institutional. However, when Walter talked about the foundation of Revesby, he made it the youngest member of a family:

> The house of Rievaulx conceived in its womb a third daughter, and by the size of its swelling, it revealed the impending birth. When [Revesby] had been born, the midwives chose our Aelred to be bearer and nurse for the new-born offspring, asserting that if it was nourished by the milk of his solicitude, it would soon have a fair-sized future.[42]

Loving father and nurturing mother: these descriptions summed up the roles that Walter saw Aelred filling in the monastery. And what roles did Aelred himself say he had? In his sermons to the monks at Rievaulx and elsewhere, he addressed them as his "brothers" or, sometimes, "dearest brothers (*fratres carissimi*)."[43] Such sermons were delivered on feast days:

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37 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 32, p. 41.

38 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 1, p. 1.

39 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 28, p. 36.

40 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 29, p. 37.

41 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 31, p. 40.

42 *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, c. 19, p. 27. The "two earlier daughters" were Wardon and Melrose.

43 E.g. Aelred, *Sermones*, ed. Gaetano Raciti, in *Opera Omnia* 2A: *Sermones 1-46*, *CCCM* 2A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989).

Advent, Easter, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and so on. We have several of them for each feast, since Aelred delivered different ones in different years. His mode of address should remind us of his treatise to his dearest sister (*carissima soror*). His sermons and his treatise were alike as well in urging their audiences to enter experientially into whatever Aelred was talking about.[44] Thus, in a sermon for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, he did not simply remind his brethren that Peter had been the Apostle to the circumcised, while Paul had been the Apostle to the gentiles, but he included himself and his audience among the uncircumcised who were especially dear to Paul, who was "the Apostle for *us* – we who are gentiles."[45] In the same sermon, Aelred asked his brothers to "be present" with Peter and Paul as they argued about whether Jews and Gentiles might eat together. "Brothers, look at the wonderful openness of Paul, and the marvellous humility of Peter." Note the imperative "Look! (*Videte!*)"[46] Aelred wanted them to be right there, witnessing the dispute.

As in *Formation*, so also in his sermons, Aelred was most adamant about this imaginative participation when he talked about the Holy Family. In a sermon for the Nativity of Mary, he led the monks into the drama with a series of imperatives addressed to each individual: "Now consider (*considera*, here using the imperative in the singular) the Son of God in the lap of the Virgin, in the arms of the Virgin, at the Virgin's breasts. All of this is milk; suck it (*hoc suge*)!"[47] Here Aelred created an imaginary family consisting of the monks, the Virgin, and Christ. Indeed, Aelred was willing to claim a real biological link among all of them: "[The Virgin] is flesh and she is our sister. Don't let what I say seem presumptuous to you. The Son of God himself, because he is the son of man, is our brother."[48]

It is true that in his *Formation of Anchoresses*, Aelred elaborated in greater detail on the ways in which the contemplative should participate in this imagined family. There, his imperatives to join the Holy family abounded: "Escort (*prosequere*) Mary with all devotion as she goes to Bethlehem, … attend (*assiste*) and accommodate (*obsequere*) her as she gives birth."[49] But it is incorrect to imagine that this sort of meditation was for women only, even if Aelred developed it most fully in his treatise for his sister.[50] It was part and parcel of the affective life of the Aelredian monastery, as the sermons demonstrated. Indeed, by their

44 See Philippe Nouzille, *Expérience de Dieu et théologie monastique au XIIe siècle. Étude sur les sermons d'Aelred de Rievaulx* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999), esp. 146-151 for Aelred's sermons.

45 Aelred, *Sermo* 15.3, p. 121. My emphasis.

46 Aelred, *Sermo* 15.12, p. 123. The references are to Gal. 2:11.

47 Aelred, *Sermo* 23.10, p. 186.

48 Aelred, *Sermo* 23.13, p. 187: The passage echoes Gen. 37:27 when Joseph's half-brothers decide not to kill him but rather to sell him into slavery.

49 Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 29, p. 663.

50 Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 84-85 makes much of the inspiration of Aelred's *soror* in the making of the *Formation of Anchoresses*. But Nouzille, *Expérience de Dieu*, 137-151, who surveys other meditative writers of the mid-twelfth century, concludes that Aelred's approach was original with him and was already evident in his monastic sermons long before he wrote the *Formation*. Those same points may be adduced for Aelred's meditation on *Jesus at the Age of Twelve*, which he wrote between 1153-1157: for the date, see Burton, *Ælred*

close association with the liturgy, which itself enacted scripture, Aelred's sermons to his "brothers" were living examples of that meditation in action every day in church.[51] His monks – as they participated in the liturgy, listened to Aelred's sermons, and heard him call them "his" brothers – were part of the Holy Family: Christ was their brother, Mary their sister and mother. They suckled at Mary's breasts. This was Aelred's monastic family.

D. THEOLOGY: AELRED'S PARADISIACAL FAMILY

Entering fully into the heavenly realm of the Holy Family required not just imagination but, beyond that, what Aelred called compassion (*compassio*). It meant not only *participating* in the experiences of another but also *feeling* what the other was feeling. Aelred considered this to be a natural capability of all creation. He gave the example of Christ hanging on the Cross between two thieves. At that moment, "the heavens are aghast, the earth is amazed." And the person meditating on Christ on the Cross feels that same horror and amazement: "What about you? It is not strange if you mourn when the sun mourns, tremble when the earth trembles, or feel broken-hearted when the rocks crack open; if the women at the Cross are weeping, you weep with them (*collacrymaris*)."[52]

The idea came from Scripture: Rom. 12:15 says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep (*gaudere cum gaudentibus, flere cum flentibus*)." Aelred saw this as the foundation of love (*amor*), that is, the spiritual sense organs with which man knows about God. Addressing God, he says that love is:

> the 'palate of the heart' by which you are tasted, for you are sweet; it is 'the eye' by which you are seen, for you are good; and it is the part [of the spiritual body] big enough [to encompass] you, who are greatest. For whoever loves you grasps you, and the more he grasps (*capit*), the more he loves (*amat*), for you are love (*amor*) itself, because you are charity (*caritas*).[53]

Love is the multiplicity of capacities by which we taste, see, and touch spiritually.

Note Aelred's subtle switch from love (*amor*) to charity (*caritas*). For Aelred, love had two forms: the bad form he called cupidity (*cupiditas*), the good charity.[54] Charity was the way to heaven. Not just a "feeling," it also involved a process, beginning with love of self, continuing with love of neighbour, and ending with love of God. These stages were cumulative;

de Rievaulx, 241 and n. 2. For the text, see Aelred, *De Jesu puero duodenni*, ed. Anselme Hoste, in *Opera Omnia* 1, 249-278.

51 A point emphasized by Nouzille, *Expérience de Dieu*, 146-151.

52 Aelred, *De institutione inclusarum*, c. 29, p. 670.

53 Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 1.2, ed. C. H. Talbot in Aelred *Opera Omnia* 1, 13. On the importance of the senses in Aelred's thought, see John R. Sommerfeldt, *Aelred of Rievaulx: Pursuing Perfect Happiness* (New York: Newman Press, 2005), 12-15.

54 On Aelred's theory of love, see Boquet, *L'ordre de l'affect* and, more briefly, Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*, 94-104.

a person had to pass through them in their proper order.[55] Each stage was itself a process involving choice, movement (*motus*) towards that which was loved, and finally rest in the beloved. The time of rest, the achievement of each stage in the cycle, Aelred called a "Sabbath." That was the part he dwelled on most.[56]

Love of self – the right kind of love of self that came from charity – made one "move" in the first place toward loving one's own salvation (*propriae salutis*).[57] Caught up by such love, the lover imaginatively joins the Lord in the manger, gaping "with spiritual eyes (*spiritalibus oculis*)" at the breasts of the Virgin and nestling in her "maternal embraces (*maternis amplexibus*)."[58] In the First Sabbath, where "love of self" culminates, the Holy Family is metaphorically internalized, so that the lover inspired by charity *becomes* "like a very well-ordered and very peaceful family" in the "secret retreat of his mind (*secretarium suae mentis*)." This internal family produces "a wondrous security (*mira securitas*) … and from that security a wondrous delight (*mira iucunditas*)."[59]

In modern attachment theory, the sense of security is linked to greater empathy for others.[60] As if anticipating this, Aelred saw the next step in charity's progress to be the love of neighbour. The Second Sabbath, the culmination of that second stage, meant resting in the fruits of compassion. To the internal family of the first stage are joined many other people, as the lover rejoices "with those who rejoice," weeps "with those who weep," and so on. His "soul is united with the souls of all his brothers by the glue of charity." He is no longer assailed by those passions (such as envy and indignation) that alienate people from each other. Now his mind (*mens*) has become a "very tranquil lap (*tranqillissimum mentis suae sinum*)" into which he gathers the souls of his brothers, "where he may embrace and nourish all of them."[61]

Here Aelred is recalling the image of Abraham, who, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, gathers the poor man Lazarus into his lap.[62] In the Middle Ages, Abraham symbolized the "family" in three ways. He was the link to Christ's fleshly existence, as the genealogies in Luke 3:23-38 and Matt. 1:1-16 made clear. He was also the *spiritual* father of all who

55 Joseph Molleur, "The Notion of the Three Sabbaths in Aelred's Mirror of Charity," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1998): 211-220, at 218 explains the relationship as both sequential and concentric in that they "overlap" and "interpenetrate each other."

56 See Domenico Pezzini, "Le repos (*requies*) comme catégorie-clé de la théologie et de la spiritualité d'Aelred de Rievaulx (1) (2) (3)," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 77 (2015): 7-19, 127-139, 219-235.

57 Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 3.5.13, p. 111.

58 Ibid.

59 Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 3.3.6, pp. 107-108.

60 Omri Gillath, Gery C. Karantzas, and R. Chris Fraley, *Adult Attachment: A Concise Introduction to Theory and Research* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2016), 159-168.

61 Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 3.4.7, p. 108.

62 On the "lap of Abraham," see Luke 16:23-31, and for the elaboration of the image in the Middle Ages, especially as a metaphor for family, see Jérôme Baschet, "Medieval Abraham: Between Fleshly Patriarch and Divine Father," *Modern Language Notes* 108 (1993): 738-758, from which I borrow much of what I say here about Abraham's significance in the medieval period.

believed in Christ according to Paul. Finally, his lap was the place where the gathered faithful became spiritually kindred to one another as brothers. In Aelred's Second Sabbath, the lover of neighbour became another Abraham. As Aelred put it, all of the lover's neighbours, even his enemies, were united into "one heart and one soul with himself" in the lap of his mind.[63]

Charity's final stage is love of God. In its culmination, the Third Sabbath, the lover finds himself in the "happy embraces of [God's] very divinity (*ipsius divinitatis felices … amplexus*)."[64]

CONCLUSIONS

Although, as the son of a priest in the post-Gregorian world, Aelred could not follow his father's profession, he could perhaps have remained attached to his father and mother. For the most part, he did not. Men always had to leave their birth families behind when they entered a monastery, of course, and that was a constraint on Aelred when he made the decision to become a monk. Nevertheless, he neither quite repudiated his family nor acknowledged his relationship to them. Rather, he wrote about the church where his father and grandfather had been priests and he penned a treatise for an unnamed recluse who seems to have been his sister. I suggest that these were ways in which he let his family members into his life without allowing them to be closely associated with him.

Perhaps the court of David had indeed been Aelred's "cradle," as claimed by Walter Daniel. But it is more certain that the monastery was his happy family, for there he was father, mother, and brother; there he and the other monks participated meditatively in the Holy Family. For Aelred's most striking home was his "mind." It was the tool of meditation, the capacious "lap" that sheltered all, the place where the lover experienced God's embrace. In the wake of the Gregorian Reform, Aelred literally "rethought" connections, both human and divine.

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[63] Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 3.4.7, p. 108.

[64] Aelred, *De speculo caritatis*, c. 3.6.17, p. 113.

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PART 4: MEMORY

THE CHRISTIAN PAST IN SIXTH-CENTURY VERONA: BIBLIOTECA CAPITOLARE COD. XXII (20)

ROSAMOND MCKITTERICK[1]

ABSTRACT

The sixth-century codex Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20) offers an instructive case study for an understanding of the resources available to the clerical community in Verona in the early Middle Ages, as well as for the history of the transmission of the historical texts the codex contains. The palaeography and codicology of the codex as well as its contents, especially Jerome-Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, are set alongside the historical, political, and intellectual context in which the codex was written and in which it continued to be used well into the ninth century.

KEYWORDS

Orthodoxy; Historiography; Bibliographical Handbooks; De viris illustribus; Jerome; Gennadius; Augustine; Pacificus of Verona; Half-uncial script; Text transmission

From the fourth century onwards, the city of Verona in north-east Italy was a major episcopal see with its own clerical community serving the cathedral as a centre of cult and liturgical performance that involved other churches and urban monastic com-

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munities within the city. It was important enough during the Ostrogothic regime for King Theodoric to have built city walls, baths and a *palatium* close to the Roman theatre. Verona retained its political and ecclesiastical prominence throughout the Lombard and Carolingian periods. It is primarily the manuscripts of Verona which provide the best, if oblique, evidence for Verona's activities, its network of connections, and its clerical community. This is in marked contrast, for example, with the wealth of literary and documentary material relating to Fulda that Janneke Raaijmakers elucidated so superbly in her study of the making of its monastic community.[2] We rarely know the names of the scribes and other members of the Verona community. Even the details of the career of the Archdeacon Pacificus of Verona in the first half of the ninth century have been disputed, though, as we shall see later in this paper, he contributed substantially to Verona's intellectual life.[3]

Verona's library was organic in its development and gradual accumulation of books from the early centuries of Christianity in Italy. These books witness to Verona's importance in the development of early medieval intellectual culture more generally, as well as the consolidation of the authoritative character of the cultural tradition its library represents. The early medieval codices of the cathedral library of Verona offer an excellent opportunity to chart the formation of a library, and thus the way a group of clerics could form connections over time with the writers and thinkers of the past by means of the acquisition, reading and copying of texts. The extant books witness, moreover, to the reception of a variety of texts in a significant range of scripts and languages from Italy, the Frankish kingdoms, Spain, Africa, and the eastern Mediterranean from the fifth century onwards.[4] The early medieval library also contained books actually written in Verona, though it is difficult to establish when a Veronese scriptorium may have been organised. Taken together, the manuscripts reflect the intellectual and cultural alignments, connections, and theological sympathies of several generations of Veronese clerics.

In this paper I propose to offer a case study of one sixth-century codex, Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20), in order to explore how its contents and the history of the transmission of the historical texts it contains can shed light on the resources available to the clerical community in Verona in the early middle ages. The texts in the manuscript comprise first of all a *Life* of Pope Symmachus and a fragment of the *Life* of Pope Anastasius from the serial

[2] Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c. 744-c. 900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[3] Compare Cristina La Rocca, "A Man for All Seasons: Pacificus of Verona and the Creation of a Local Carolingian Past," in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 250-279, and Massimiliano Bassetti, "Da Pacifico a Raterio: scriptorium, biblioteca e scuola a Verona tra IX e X secolo," in *"Vera amicitia praecipuum munus": contributi di cultura medievale e umanistica per Enrico Menestò* (Florence: SISMEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018), 83-110.

[4] Massimiliano Bassetti, "Total eclipse of the text. Stories of palimpsests in Verona, Ravenna and Bobbio between late antiquity and the early middle ages," in *Identità di testo. Frammenti, collezioni di testi, glosse e rifacimenti*, ed. Francesco Santi and Antonio Stramaglia (Florence: SISMEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2019), 11-56.

biography of the popes known as the *Liber pontificalis*. The *De viris illustribus* of Jerome and Gennadius of Marseille (a biographical-bibliographical register of over two-hundred Christian authors and their works) follows. A substantial dossier of historical and theological texts related to the Acacian schism completes the codex. This dispute between the church of Rome and that of Constantinople between 484 and 519 centred upon the popes' denunciation of the patriarch Acacius and the eastern emperor's theological compromises; they were interpreted in Rome as a betrayal of the orthodox position on Christ's two natures defined at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.[5] These texts were among the principal building blocks that sustained the Veronese clerics' sense of a common cause with the Christian authorities of late antiquity and in their turn contributed to Verona's Capitular Library in the early middle ages. I shall first consider the palaeography and codicology of the codex, for these are of considerable importance for the determination of its origins. I shall then set the texts it contains alongside the historical, political, and intellectual context in which the codex was written and in which it continued to be used well into the ninth century.

A. VERONA XXII (20): PALAEOGRAPHY AND CODICOLOGY

Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20), is a parchment codex of 175 folios, dated to the middle of the sixth century. It measures 220mm x 195mm (173mm x 155mm), is of almost square format, with twenty-five long lines to a page.[6] The prickings to guide the ruling are in the outer margin. The bifolia are arranged with the flesh side on the outside and in the middle of each quire and the ruling was done on the flesh side, one bifolium at a time. The original quire marks in Roman numerals are at the bottom of the last page of each quire. One of the aspects of the text that becomes significant in trying to identify both its possible exemplars, and connections between this and other manuscripts, is the spelling. In this case the orthography is distinctive, with instances of betacism, such as on fol. 39v using "b" instead of "p" in words such as "*scriptor*", "*scriptura*" and "t" instead of "d" in the word *apud*. Some Greek words in the *De viris illustribus* are correct, but others are corrupt, so that Feder was of the opinion that the scribe did not know Greek.[7] Quire signatures with letters of the alphabet

[5] For the context see Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis, "The Roman *Liber Pontificalis,* papal primacy, and the Acacian schism," *Viator* 45 (2014): 1-16 and, independently, Philippe Blaudeau, "Narrating papal authority (440-530): the Adaptation of *Liber Pontificalis* to the Apostolic See's developing claims," in *The Bishop of Rome in Late Antiquity*, ed. Geoffrey Dunn (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), 127-140. For all subsequent references to Christological disputes see the relevant entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 4th edition, ed. Andrew Louth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[6] For fuller discussion of the scripts of this codex, see Rosamond McKitterick, "Le opere storiografiche (*LP, de vir. ill.*) [Ver. XXII(20)]," in *Città cattedrali e biblioteche al passaggio tra tardo antico e alto medioevo: a partire del caso di Verona. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studio dell'Associazione Italiana Paleografi e Diplomatichi (Verona, 16-18 settembre 2021).* Studi e ricerche. Collana dell'Associazione Italiana dei Paleografi e Diplomatisti, ed. Massimiliano Bassetti e Paola Degni (Spoleto: Fondazione CISAM, 2024)..

[7] Alfred Feder, *Studien zum Schriftstellerkatalog des heiligen Hieronymus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1927).

were added in the eighteenth century on the first page of each quire, possibly made by the same person who wrote the replacement pages for the missing portions of the Table of Contents of the *De viris illustribus*. Later readers added annotations, some in Tironian notes, an important characteristic in early medieval Veronese manuscripts.[8] In terms of the composition of the book, preparation of the pages, assembly and presentation of the texts, and the layout of each page, furthermore, the scribe is clearly fully expert, serious of purpose, and familiar with some apparently standard contemporary ways of setting out texts, with lists of contents, headings and indications of new sections as well as the distinctive preparation of the parchment for writing.

The half-uncial script of the scribe of this manuscript, moreover, has long been associated with the script in a number of other codices, also datable to the middle or second half of the sixth century, and commonly regarded as the work of the next generation of scribes after Ursicinus, scribe of the famous copy of Sulpicius Severus's Dialogues and *Life* of St Martin.[9] These later sixth-century codices include one containing texts relating to the Three Chapters dispute, namely, the treatise in defence of the Three Chapters by the mid-sixth-century north African theologian Facundus of Hermiane and his *Liber contra Mucianum scholasticum*.[10] The Emperor Justinian I had condemned the works by three fifth-century eastern theologians: Theodore of Mopsuestia, Ibas of Edessa and Theodoret of Cyrrhus, hence "the Three Chapters", and thus undermined the authority of the Council of Chalcedon. The provinces of Milan and Aquileia (Verona's metropolitan see) opposed the condemnation of the Three Chapters, though Pope Vigilius and his successor Pelagius I vacillated in relation to the Three Chapters even while insisting they upheld the Council of Chalcedon. Another member of the group is an extensive collection of fourth- and fifth-century theological works by Athanasius of Alexandria and Virgilius of Thapsus (in present day Tunisia) against Arianism, letters from various popes relating to orthodox doctrine and the *Acta* of the Council of

[8] Compare Luciana Cuppo, "Text and context: the annotations in MS Verona Biblioteca capitolare, XXII(20)," in *The Annotated Book in the Early Middle Ages: Practices of Reading and Writing*, ed. Mariken Teeuwen and Irene van Renswoude (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 597-620, who ascribes Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20) in the first instance to the milieu of Cassiodorus; see also below, 305-306.

[9] Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXVIII (36). See Massimiliano Bassetti, "Il codice di Ursicino [Ver. XXXVIII 36)]," in *Nell'anno del signore 517 Verona al tempo di Ursicino. Crocevia di uomini culture scritture*, ed. Massimiliano Bassetti (Spoleto: CISAM, 2018), 53-69. For other members of the group, see Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LI (49), LIX (57); Vatican, BAV, Vat lat. 1322 and Paris, BnF, lat. 12214 (Augustine, *De civitate dei*), the descriptions in Elias Avery Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, 12 volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935-71) (hereafter *CLA*), IV, 490, 506, 509; *CLA* I, 8; *CLA* V, 635 respectively, and Rosamond McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy: the Liber pontificalis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 32-35.

[10] Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LIII (51). On the Three Chapters dispute, see *The Crisis of the Oikoumene: The Three Chapters and the Failed Quest for Unity in the sixth-century Mediterranean*, ed. Celia Chazelle and Catherine Cubitt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

Chalcedon.[11] An additional copy of the *Acta* in this group is BAV Vat. lat. 1322.[12] The texts in this "Three Chapters group" together provide a comprehensive sample of contributions by Christian writers to Christian theology and an understanding of doctrine, alongside specific conciliar definitions of orthodoxy, particular papal affirmations of the correct understanding of the Trinity, and an historiographical presentation of the legitimating authority of both the Papal and Christian past as a reinforcement of the doctrinal discussions. Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20) enhances our understanding of this context still further, for its texts add to a substantial dossier of material that the Veronese clerics clearly thought would be necessary to support their metropolitan's opposition to the condemnation of the Three Chapters. Unfortunately there are gaps in our knowledge of the bishops between Valens (d. 531), Solatius (571-577) and Junior (589-591). The latter two are known to have supported the archbishop of Aquileia and also Archbishop John of Ravenna, so we might also surmise that they or their immediate predecessor(s) had recourse to this dossier, perhaps even compiled for their use.[13]

The books in the Three Chapters Group are similarly expertly produced and presented. They appear to be the products of a scriptorium fully conversant with contemporary practices of book production and developments in script, and with access to exemplars of patristic, legal, and contemporary texts from Rome, north Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. They fully complement the evidence for the library of Verona summarised at the beginning of this paper. There seems little doubt that the Three Chapters group is indeed to be regarded as the work of Verona scribes and were important for the solidarity of this particular clerical community, despite the recent arguments by Tino Licht in favour of Ravenna.[14] Licht's arguments and examples merit fuller consideration than can be offered here, though they have not so far won general acceptance. The palaeographical and codicological evidence, moreover, is crucial for understanding the work of the scribes of Verona in relation to other groups in Italy. We surely need to take more than the half-uncial letter forms into account. Some of the additional script types, scribal habits and codicological features referred to above are indeed to be found in the few Ravennate codices from the late fifth or early sixth century identified by Guglielmo Cavallo.[15] Yet some of these same codicolog-

11 Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LIX (57).

12 A possible further surviving product of the work of this group of scribes, described by Lowe as "palaeographically kindred" is a copy of Augustine's monumental *De civitate dei*, now Paris, BnF, lat. 12214 + St Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Lat. Q.v.I.4: *CLA* VI, 635. For discussion of the group see Gaia Sofia Saiani, "Un dossier attorno alla dottrina Cristiana [Ver. XXII(20), LIII (51), LIX (57)]," in *Nell'anno del signore 517*, ed. Bassetti, 140-152.

13 Francesco Lanzoni, *Le diocesi d'Italia dalle origini al principio del secolo VII (an. 607)* (Faenza: F. Lega, 1927), 933-934. See also Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* III, c. 26, ed. Georg Waitz, *MGH SRG* 48 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1878), 128-132 and Gregory I, *Epistolae* I, no. 16, ed. Dag Norberg, *S. Gregorii Magni Registrum Epistolarum*, *CCSL* 140 (Turnhout, Brepols, 1982), 16.

14 Tino Licht, *Halbunziale. Schriftkultur im Zeitalter der ersten lateinischen Minuskel (III.-IX. Jahrhundert)* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann Verlag, 2018), 209-221.

15 Guglielmo Cavallo, "La circolazzione libraria nell'età di Giustiniano," in *L'imperatore Giustiniano, Storia e mito*, ed. Gian Gualberto Archi (Milan: Guiffré, 1978), 201-236.

ical features are also to be observed in codices more generally located to northern and central Italy, including Verona's earlier Ursicinus codex and the uncial codices that Armando Petrucci argued were written in Rome.[16] The classic form of the "precise style" of half uncial as defined by Tino Licht, moreover, is the main script in codices from elsewhere in Italy, notably Castellum Lucullum near Naples. It is self-evident that any discussion of the possible origins of these codices now in Verona, and thus certainty about the work credited to the Verona community, needs to take more than the individual letter forms into account: codicology and a range of "scribal habits", the fact that most scribes were polygraphic, that is, were able to write several different scripts, orthography, punctuation, the affiliation of texts, and the annotations in each manuscript are all pertinent.

B. VERONA XXII (20): CONTENTS

The first short text in Verona Cod. XXII (20) has received considerable attention, for it presents what appear to be the last few lines of a *Life* of Pope Anastasius (d 498) followed by a *Life* of Pope Symmachus (498 to 514), and a brief list of the eight popes who succeeded Symmachus that ends with Pope Vigilius and a note recording his death in Syracuse.[17] This and the palaeographical evidence suggest a date for the production of this codex soon after 555. Both the numbering of Pope Symmachus as the fifty-second pope (he was actually the fifty-third) and the final sentences from the *Life* of Anastasius suggest that this is the remnant of a copy of the earliest section of the *Liber pontificalis*. The *Liber pontificalis* is usually understood to have been compiled in the early decades of the sixth century, and to have contained the Lives of popes 1-59, Peter to Agapetus. It was then continued in batches, or sometimes *Life* by *Life*, over the next three hundred years. The quire numbering makes it clear that this codex lacks a number of pages. The III on fol. 15v, marks the end not of the third, but only of the second quire in the present codex. Thus, an original quire of four bifolia and one additional leaf, eighteen pages altogether, are now missing, but would have been sufficient to contain the earlier papal biographies, albeit perhaps omitting some of the details of gifts and embellishment of church buildings.

This Verona remnant however is problematic, not only because it lacks the texts of the biographies of the eight popes after Symmachus but also because it presents a different version of the *Life* of Symmachus from that found in every other extant early manuscript of the *Liber pontificalis*. This famous alternative version of Symmachus' *Vita* is often known as the

[16] Armando Petrucci, "L'onciale romana. Origini, sviluppo e diffusione di una stilizzazione grafica altomedievale (sec. VI-IX)," *Studi Medievali*, ser 3, 12 (1971): 75-134.

[17] *Le Liber pontificalis. Introduction, texte et commentaire*, ed. Louis Duchesne, 2 vols (Paris: Ernest Thorin, 1886), 43-46; English translation: Raymond Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber pontificalis). The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*, 3rd edition (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 95-98. For discussion, see Eckhard Wirbelauer, *Zwei Päpste in Rom. Der Konflikt zwischen Laurentius und Symmachus (498-514).* Studien und Texte (Munich: Tuduv-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993).

"Laurentian fragment". It omits the details normally included in the papal biographies in the *Liber pontificalis* about the *natio* and parentage of the bishop, most of the notes about endowment and building of churches in Rome, and at the end the record of ordinations, death and burial and the length of the vacancy before the next pope. Instead, the Veronese version includes the hearing of the case of the disputed election by King Theodoric, the charges brought against Pope Symmachus, and how many of the bishops and senators went to his defence in order to consider the legal issue of whether a Roman pontiff could be judged.[18]

All this was omitted in what might be labelled the "Roman version" in all other manuscripts of the *Liber pontificalis*. The "Roman version" refers simply to a synod of 115 bishops who acquitted Symmachus of the "false charges" against him (*et facto synodo purgatur a crimine falso*). At the least, therefore, the differences between the small remaining portion of the *Life* of Anastasius and the *Life* of Symmachus in the Verona codex, in comparison with the edited text, appear to be that the Verona version of the *Life* had a more legal and document-oriented approach to writing this particular papal biography. I do not myself regard it as significantly anti-Symmachan or pro-Laurentian. It also has the character of a later re-telling of the story, an impression reinforced by the comment: "It is not the purpose of the present account to relate the civil wars that were fought and the terrible murders that were perpetrated during that time."[19] Whether the entire apparently missing remainder of the *Liber pontificalis* text was also modified, perhaps in a process involving some abridgement, cannot now be established, but it is significant that the end of the preceding *Life* also differs completely from that of the received text. It even appears to exonerate Anastasius as the secret supporter of Acacius that the Roman version of the *Liber pontificalis* makes him out to be. The scribe notes that Anastasius [II] "wrote a letter to the emperor Anastasius and sent it by the bishops Cresconius and Germanus backed up with so much corroboration from the heavenly scriptures that anyone who reads through it attentively and in the fear of God can see that the persistence *up till now* of so atrocious a schism between the churches of the East and Italy is quite pointless."[20] This suggests a scribe or compiler who was alert to the significance of the historical account he was copying and adapted the text as he went.[21] It is further possible, therefore, if this codex were indeed written in Verona as I have argued above, that this version of the *Liber pontificalis* reflects a distinctively Veronese emphasis concerning the events, given the apparent importance of Verona itself in relation to the Ostrogothic regime. To my knowledge there is no other such hint of possible relations between Verona's clerics and Theodoric's regime or that of his successors. If only we had the missing leaves!

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18 McKitterick, *Rome*, 34.

19 *Liber pontificalis*, 46: *per quae tempora quae bella civilia gesta sint, vel quanta homicidia perpetrata,* ***non est praesenti relatione pandendum***; trans. Davis, *Book of Pontiffs*, 95.

20 *Liber pontificalis*, 46: *Imperatorem Anastasium directa per Cresconium et Germanum episcopos, quae tanta scribturarum caelestium auctoritate suffulta est, ut qui hanc intenta mente sub divino timore perleherit,* ***inaniter hactenus*** *inter ecclesias Orientis et Italiae tam schisma nefarium perdurare cognoscit*; trans. Davis, *Book of Pontiffs*, 95.

21 For further comment, see McKitterick, *Rome*, 32-35, 184-185.

The compiler of Verona XXII (20) then added the entire text of Jerome's *De viris illustribus* (On illustrious men), a late fourth-century discursive bibliographical history of Christian writers beginning, like the *Liber pontificalis*, with St Peter, together with the supplement to Jerome's text provided by Gennadius of Marseille in the fifth century. After the *De viris illustribus*, there is a set of short narratives and papal letters, including those of Pope Gelasius, all of which relate to the Acacian schism between Rome and Constantinople during the decades from 484 to 519.

The original contents of the codex, therefore, were: the *Liber pontificalis* (fols 1-4v); Jerome-Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, including Jerome' s prologue to this text and a list of the chapters from St Peter to Pope Gelasius, *urbis Romae episcopus* (fols 4r-83); a series of short narratives and papal letters concerning the Acacian schism (fols 83v-175r).[22] In other words, as has long been recognized, this codex appears to have been designed as a unit, with a collection of testimonies to the papal championing of orthodoxy, authorial legitimacy, and papal leadership as a matter of historical record, using an already existing but locally-adapted text of part, or all, of the *Liber pontificalis*. It also constitutes a precious indication of Verona's perceptions of Rome and the pope's role of which we would otherwise be ignorant.

In summary, if it were once a full text in Verona XXII (20), the *Liber pontificalis* would have provided the historical and ecclesiastical framework for the doctrinal positions adopted by the papacy. Jerome-Gennadius's biographical history of Christian literature in the *De viris illustribus* augmented that historical background with information about orthodox adherents in discussions of Christology and thus a context for the material relating to the Acacian schism. As indicated above, one function of the book was to provide a supporting dossier for those embroiled in the Three Chapters dispute in the second half of the sixth century.[23] The condemnation of the Three Chapters by the Emperor Justinian was not accepted in either the province of Milan or that of Aquileia to which Verona belonged. The other codices produced in Verona containing texts relating to the Three Chapters dispute referred to above are an eloquent indication of the authoritative resources a community could create and continue to consult subsequently in order to reinforce their own theological positions.

C. JEROME-GENNADIUS, *DE VIRIS ILLUSTRIBUS*

Jerome-Gennadius' *De viris illustribus* merits further comment, for the function and influence of the text itself, and the significance of its inclusion in this codex has been undervalued hitherto. The nineteenth-century editors of the *De viris illustribus* of Jerome and Gennadius did not consult the Verona manuscript. Alfred Feder described it briefly and collated

[22] For details of the contents, see Silvia Marchi, ed., *I manoscritti della Biblioteca capitolare di Verona. Catalogo descrittivo redatto da don Antonio Spagnolo* (Verona: Casa Editrice Mazziana, 1996), 75-76.

[23] Chazelle and Cubitt, eds., *The Crisis of the Oikoumene*; see esp. Robert A. Markus and Claire Sotinel, "Introduction," ibid., 1-16.

the text, but Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo edited the text only of Jerome and Estefanía Sottocorno that of Gennadius.[24] There is obviously a lot more that could and should be said about this Veronese version of Jerome and Gennadius, but that is for another occasion. Here, the implications of its inclusion in Verona XXII (20) can be explored a little further.

Jerome's summaries of the basic biographical details and the works of 135 mostly Christian authors started with St Peter and ended with his own publication list up to his time of writing in the final decade of the fourth century. A century later Gennadius of Marseille added between 91 and 101 new chapters (the earliest manuscripts vary) with an emphasis on the Christian writers of Gaul. I have commented elsewhere on the spectrum of opinion about the text,[25] but it is worth repeating here that some have regarded it as a defective type of historiography,[26] or have focussed solely on the text's evidential value in documenting the knowledge of particular texts and authors in the fourth and fifth centuries and reflecting the resources on which Jerome, and Gennadius in his turn, could draw.[27] The text's role in defining and confirming the authority and orthodoxy of a large corpus of Christian writings has also been acknowledged.[28] Indeed, the *De viris illustribus* has often been interpreted as Christian apologetic designed to make the case for the quality and sophistication of Christian writers as a response to Suetonius's *De viris illustribus* on the writers of antiquity. Colin Whiting, moreover, has suggested that Jerome's text can be regarded as a handbook on heresy, similar to those by Augustine or Epiphanius.[29] Veronica Wieser has elucidated the way Gennadius's text constructed a "Mediterranean church community", strengthening its orthodoxy in an authoritative way that enabled its members to navigate their contemporary ecclesiastical conflicts.[30] I myself have emphasized the text's role as a bibliographical guide in the early middle ages, and characterised some of the Carolingian codices, in which the *De viris illustribus* is accompanied by Cassiodorus' *Institutiones* and Augustine's *Retractationes*, as bibliographical handbooks. All these texts functioned both as guidance on Christian

[24] Feder, *Studien zum Schriftstellerkatalog*, 10-11; Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Aldo Cereda-Gastaldo, *Girolamo. Gli uomini illustri* (Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 1988), 39; Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Estefanía Sottocorno, *Sobre los hombres ilustres* (Madrid: Editorial Ciudad Nueva, 2021), 26.

[25] Rosamond McKitterick, "The Versatility of Early Medieval Representations of the Past," in *Aneignungen der Geschichte. Narrative Evidenzstrategien und politische Legitimation im europäischen Mittelalter*, ed. Marcel Bubert (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2024), 91-110, on which I draw in this paragraph.

[26] John Norman Davidson Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 174.

[27] Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 183-184; Megan Hale Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 151-157.

[28] Albrecht Diem, "The Limitations of Asceticism," *Medieval Worlds* 9 (2019): 112-138, at 132.

[29] Colin Whiting, "Jerome's *De viris illustribus* and New Genres for Christian Disputation in Late Antiquity," in *Shifting Genres in Late Antiquity*, ed. Geoffrey Greatrex, Hugh Elton, and Lucas McMahon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 41-52.

[30] Graeme Ward and Veronica Wieser, "Reading Jerome's *De viris illustribus* in the Post-Roman World: Cataloguing Community in Gennadius of Marseille and Frechulf of Lisieux," *Medieval Worlds* 15 (2022): 95-124, at 98-109.

literature and as a wish list for librarians more generally.[31] Graeme Ward has also observed that the reception of the *De viris illustribus* in the Carolingian period can be seen as being at the intersection of canon formation and the understanding of history.[32] None of these suggestions about the role of the *De viris illustribus* is mutually exclusive; all are applicable, and the diverse manuscript contexts in which the *De viris illustribus* is to be found, not least in the Verona codex, testify to the text's many possible uses, in which Ward and Wieser's emphasis on the text's model of a "remarkably flexible and ostensibly all-encompassing" Christian community is particularly pertinent.[33]

With all this in mind, I should like nevertheless to emphasize the importance of Jerome's overriding preoccupation with the itemization of Christian authors and their work on the exegesis of scripture. Jerome explains to his friend Dexter, in the preface of the *De viris illustribus*, that his models in providing a survey of ecclesiastical writers were Suetonius' serial biography of authors and Cicero's catalogue of Latin orators in *Brutus*.[34] Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica*, furthermore, had provided both crucial information about, and the historical context for, the authors Jerome included in his own text.[35] Jerome's stated intention to record the men who founded, built and adorned the church (*quanti et quales viri eam fundaverint, exstruxerint, adornauerint*) is especially significant.[36] As I have explained more fully elsewhere, the "builders of the church" remains a recurrent theme throughout the rest of both Jerome's work and the continuation by Gennadius of Marseille, though Gennadius included many more monks, ordinary priests, popes and Gallo-Roman authors in comparison with Jerome's host of bishops.[37] Given the lively Christological disputes of Gennadius' own day, it is not surprising that he incorporated so many summaries of the different theological arguments of Arians, Nestorians, and supporters of Eutyches. Gennadius was manifestly more concerned than Jerome in whether someone's opinions could be classified as heretical or not. Popes who had published decrees against heretics, moreover, such as Pope Innocent of Rome (c. XLIV) Pope Celestine and Pope Leo I (c. LXXI), were singled out for special mention.[38]

In most copies of Gennadius's continuation there is a surprisingly brief entry for Augustine (c. XXXVIII/XXXIX), mentioning his works on the Trinity, the Incarnation and the

[31] See Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 200-205.

[32] Ward and Wieser, "Reading Jerome's *De viris illustribus*," 95-114.

[33] Ibid., 114-117.

[34] Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Cereda-Gastaldo, 56.

[35] For further comment on Eusebius's presentation of Christian writers, see Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 226-233, and James Corke-Webster, *Eusebius and Empire. Constructing Church and Rome in the Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

[36] Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Cereda-Gastaldo, 58.

[37] McKitterick, "The Versatility."

[38] Mark Vessey, "The Forging of Orthodoxy in Latin Christian Literature: a Case Study," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996): 495-513.

Resurrection, and stating merely that Augustine was a man renowned for both his sacred and secular learning, his purity of faith and conduct in life, who had written too many works to enumerate.[39] In Verona XXII (20), however, beginning at the end of the original quire 8, this brief note was extended with a remarkably long list of the works of Augustine for the whole of the next quire, from fol. 55v to fol. 69r. As far as I have been able to establish, this list, essentially the so-called "catalogue" or *Indiculum* of Augustine's works sometimes credited to Possidius, appears in no other copy of the *De viris illustribus*, though it is often appended to Possidius's *Vita Augustini*.[40] This list in the Verona codex appears to be by far the oldest, and was reported by Ernst Kalinka in 1928.[41] A copy of the *De viris illustribus* in Vercelli, Biblioteca capitolare Cod. 183, dated to the turn of the eighth century and probably written at Vercelli, is described by Alfred Feder and Aldo Ceresa Gastaldo as a copy made in part from the Verona manuscript but the list of Augustine's works was not included by the Vercelli scribe; Estefanía Sottocorno in her recent edition of Gennadius has noted that the Possidius list is indeed only to be found in the Verona codex.[42] The presence of the *Indiculum* in Verona XXII (20), however, has further implications for one function of the entire *De viris illustribus* being to serve as a guide for building a library that I shall address below.

In Verona XXII (20), there is another addition in the Gennadius section of the text in the form of a paragraph about Pope Gelasius before the concluding note about Gennadius himself. Although the words differ, the itemization of Gelasius' works: that is, his hymns in a form resembling those of Ambrose, his sacramentary, the tracts and letters against Eutyches and Nestorius and in relation to the Acacian schism, echo the brief list of Gelasius's works in the biography in the *Liber pontificalis*, possibly once in this same volume. The works listed in this entry also correspond to many of the texts actually written by Gelasius that were included in the final section of the codex. This too is significant, as I explain below.[43]

39 Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Sottocorno, 97 and n. 116. See also Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Ernest Cushing Richardson, *Hieronymus. Liber de viris inlustribus. Gennadius de viris inlustribus*. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur XIV, 1 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1896), 75, and ed. Carlo Bernouilli, *Hieronymus und Gennadius, De viris illustribus* (Freiburg im Breisgau/Leipzig: Minerva, 1895), 75.

40 Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, ed. Wilhelm Geerlings (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005), 109-137; Goulven Madec, "Possidius de Calama et les listes des oeuvres d'Augustin," in *Titres et articulations du texte dans les oeuvres antiques*, ed. Jean-Claude Fredouille (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1997), 427-445; Erika T. Hermanowicz, "Possidius on Augustine," in *Augustine in Context*, ed. Tarmo Toom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 30-36 and Eva Elm, *Die Macht der Weisheit. Das Bild des Bischofs in der Vita Augustini des Possidius und anderen spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Bischofsviten*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought 109 (Leiden: Brill, 2003). See also Cuppo, "Text and context," 608-613.

41 Ernst Kalinka, *Die älteste erhaltene Abschrift des Verzeichnisses der Werke Augustins*. Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 203.1 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1925); see also André Wilmart, "Operum A. Augustini elenchus," in *Miscellanea agostiniana; testi e studi, pubblicati a cura del-l'Ordine eremitano di s. Agostino nel XV centenario dalla morte del santo dottore*, ed. Germain Morin and Antonio Casamassa (Rome: Tipografia poliglotta vaticana, 1931), 152-253.

42 Gennadius, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Sottocorno, 26 and 97, n. 116.

43 Sottocorno, ed. *Genadio*, 29 and 150-151 (appendix A).

Quite apart from the function, contents, and historical context of Verona XXII (20) itself, and the questions the codex raises about the production of the *Liber pontificalis*, however, there are also the questions of its role in the transmission of the text of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*, and whether or not this may shed light on the origin of the codex itself. I now turn, therefore, to the earliest transmission of the *De viris illustribus*.

D. VERONA, BIBLIOTECA CAPITOLARE, XXII (20) AND THE TRANSMISSION OF THE DE VIRIS ILLUSTRIBUS

The earliest surviving manuscripts of the *De viris illustribus* date from over a century after Jerome completed the text, c. 406. The potential for error and variation arising out of Jerome's own practice of composition was already considerable, given Jerome's first dictating to a *notarius*; a fair copy then being made by a *librarius* who would expand the *notae* abbreviations; and the author thereafter making his own emendations.[44] The contributions made by subsequent scribes and users of the text have also to be taken into account. These have all left their traces in the extant manuscripts, both in the Latin version, and in the Greek translation attributed to pseudo-Sophronius and made in Italy sometime in the seventh century. The earliest manuscripts already have so many variations, and signs of error, correction, and alteration, that they make the reconstruction of the original text a fruitless exercise, and the construction of a single plausible stemma impossible. The small affinities that have been discerned among the earliest manuscripts may nevertheless yield hints of the sources of exemplars or of connections between different centres.

Each manuscript witness was treated by Alfred Feder in his preparatory study in 1927 for a new edition commissioned for the *CSEL*, as a representative of a "type" in the transmission history. Feder died with his work unfinished, but his work was used for the new edition of Jerome's section by Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo in 1988. Both Carl Bernoulli and Ernest C. Richardson, incidentally, mis-dated the Verona manuscript to the eighth century and thus completely failed to realize its potential importance in the history of the text.

Neither Bernouilli nor Richardson, moreover, appears to have known about the even earlier copy, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, patr. 87 (B.IV.21) dated to the first half of the sixth century and probably from Eugippius's centre at Castellum Lucullum in central Italy. This manuscript combines the *De viris illustribus* of Jerome and Gennadius with a number of short texts, including the *De haeresibus* (fols 51v-59v) and Augustine's letter to Bishop Quodvultdeus (fols 79v-95), the *Liber de cura pro mortuis gerenda*, and the *Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate* (fols 95-136). The Greek words in Greek letters are well written and reproduced in this codex, rather better in Feder's opinion than in most of the other manuscripts. The scribe also latinized

[44] Compare also Bernard Lambert, *Bibliotheca Hieronymiana manuscripta: La tradition manuscrite des oeuvres de Saint Jerome*, vol. 2 (Steenbrugge: In abbatia S. Petri, 1969), 429-457, who only lists twenty-two manuscripts dating from ss. VI-IX.

or transliterated some Greek words, and would appear to have known Greek. On fol. 33v there is a distinctive version of the contents of the chapter on the works of Jerome (c. CXXXV). Feder thought this was the oldest form of the list and may have been composed by a Roman contemporary or a close associate of what he called Jerome's "Roman-Aquitanian friendship circle".[45]

Another early Italian copy of the *De viris illustribus* is now in the Vatican (BAV, Reg. lat. 2077), written at the turn of the sixth century. It is a palimpsest. Chemical reagent was applied by Angelo Mai to try to decipher the underneath script and text by Cicero in uncial. This makes it difficult to read even in the flesh. The codex is now disbound, moreover, with each bifolium separately mounted so that one is obliged to read it one bifolium at a time, and thus in the order of leaves 1/8, 2/7, 3/6, 4/5 of each quire. This codex combines the *De viris illustribus* with a tractate on Enoch and Elias, a *Ratio paschae*, an *Epitome chronicorum Prosperianorum*, and an *Epitoma temporum et indiculum paschae* 464-543, a map of time and winds, extracts from Vegetius' *De re militari*, and on fol. 101 a list of heresies with ninety names in three columns, based on Augustine's list: from I *Simoniani* to XC *Eutychiana*. Feder commented on what he called *italischer Volkssprache*, but also noted that the Greek words were accurately transmitted, with this scribe being the only one to spell the city name *Thmuis* correctly (fol. 42 line 6). In other words, this scribe also knew Greek. Nevertheless, there are many omissions and additions of words and phrases, changes in word order, and alterations, apparently incorrect expansions of abbreviations found in the exemplar. Verona XXII (20)'s text shares many of the variant readings of this Vatican codex. In his conclusion on the grouping of the manuscripts, moreover, Feder said that the Verona and Vatican texts are closer to each other than to the version in Bamberg.

This brief consideration of the three earliest manuscripts of the *De viris illustribus* exposes signs of the text's associations with Jerome and his colleagues, that is, Jerome's "friendship circle in Rome". To this we need to add the knowledge of Augustine's works and the modern scholarship which has proposed the transmission of knowledge of Augustine's library to Rome in the fifth century after the Vandal attack on Hippo. The Greek translation of the *De viris illustribus* by pseudo-Sophronius may also have originated in Rome or nearby. The association of the Bamberg manuscript of the *De viris illustribus* with the Castellum Lucullum near Naples seems to be agreed; it may be that the Vatican manuscript was written in Rome, for the presence of Greek-speakers in the city in the early middle ages is well attested.[46] Although there is nothing in script, codicology or contents to contradict conclusively the localization of Verona XXII (20), or indeed all four of the "Three Chapters group" group to Verona, Rome itself needs to be considered as a serious possibility as the source, if not of the codex itself, then of the versions of the texts that the volume contains. In this respect, therefore, the Verona manuscript becomes an important witness to the reception in Verona

[45] Feder, *Studien*, 140-148.

[46] See Philipp Winterhager, *Migranten und Stadtgesellschaft im frühmittelalterlichen Rom: Griechsprachige Einwanderer und ihre Nachkommen im diachronen Vergleich* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

of texts from Rome and the role of Roman connections in the development of Verona's capitular library in the early middle ages.

E. PAST AUTHORITIES AND LIBRARY FORMATION: VERONA IN THE EIGHTH AND NINTH CENTURIES

I have emphasized so far the way in which the formation of the library of Verona and this crucial codex can be understood as connecting the community with authorities of the past by the preservation and use of their texts.[47] The *De viris illustribus* had a crucial role to play in this respect. As I mentioned above, *De viris illustribus* is to be found in a number of ninth-century manuscripts as part of bibliographical handbooks comprising Jerome-Gennadius, Augustine's *Retractationes*, and Cassiodorus *Institutiones*, and/or sometimes the text *De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*. The inclusion of so much bibliographical information in the Verona manuscript, and especially the addition of the full lists of the works of Augustine and Gelasius, suggest that the scribe may have had the idea that the codex could also serve an additional purpose as a check list to guide the acquisition of books. If this were correct, Verona XXII (20) would become a very early example of a book that could have served as a bibliographical handbook. As noted above, Vercelli, Biblioteca capitolare Cod. 183 appears to have had the Verona text of *De viris illustribus* as one of its exemplars. It is significant that this late eighth- or early ninth-century codex may also be counted as a bibliographical handbook. The scribes of the Vercelli codex, however, chose different codicological companions. Here the *De viris illustribus* that appears, as already mentioned, in other Carolingian bibliographical handbooks, is accompanied by the *Retractationes* of Augustine and the so-called *Decretum* of Gelasius, *De libris recipiendis and non recipiendis*, a sixth-century Gallic tabulation of orthodox and approved authors and their works.[48]

The varied annotations in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20), ranging in date from the sixth to the ninth century, indicate a sustained readership for this book into the time of the archdeacon Pacificus of Verona (†844).[49] It is clear from the extant manuscripts in the Verona capitular library that Pacificus of Verona (d. 844) and his fellow canons in the cathedral chapter inherited a remarkable library from their predecessors. They augmented that inheritance very substantially in the course of the ninth century. Pacificus was not the only attentive reader and active scribe in Verona. In addition to the complete manuscripts they copied at Verona, some of Pacificus's colleagues also added corrections, annotations and longer texts, and notes written in the shorthand known as Tironian notes are also remarkably

[47] For similar comments about the Carolingian library of St Gallen, see Paolo Chiesa, "Frugare tra gli scaffali: L'inventario di San Gallo del IX secolo," in *Venticinque lezioni di filologia mediolatina* (Florence: SISMEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2016), 3-14.

[48] Ernst von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1912); see also McKitterick, *Carolingians*, 200-204.

[49] On Pacificus, see the arguments of La Rocca, "A Man for All Seasons" and Bassetti, "Da Pacifico a Raterio."

frequent.[50] While Pacificus added notes and corrections on fols 192v, 201v, and 251 of Verona II (2), a seventh-century copy of the Book of Kings and the *Cosmographia* of Julius Honorius, another scribe wrote, in uncial script, the pseudo-Augustinian sermon *De die iudicii* (on the day of judgement) on fol. 1r (2). A contemporary colleague who inserted a reading from the book of Ezekiel xxxvi.22-28 also added liturgical readings to Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXVII (35).[51] A ninth-century scribe restored a page of the text of Kings, and this scribe's work is also to be observed in extra texts he added on blank pages in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXVIII (36) (the book written by the scribe Ursicinus mentioned above).[52] Sometimes the same scribe can be detected in short notes made in a number of codices. Another annotator in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, II (2), fol. 1v writing Latin in Greek letters, for example, also wrote in a note in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LXXXV (80), the important liturgical manuscript sometimes described as the Leonian Sacramentary. The latter note can be transliterated as *in dei nomine Ratpert clericus trudus Eginoni*, referring to a cathedral cleric in the time of Egino, Bishop of Verona (d. 802).[53]

Pacificus himself left many indications, in the form of *nota* signs, corrections, records of alternative readings, annotations and additions, of his own engagement with particular books, dating from the fifth century and onwards, that were already in Verona's library by the beginning of the ninth century.[54] Although some have doubted the identification with Pacificus, this remarkable evidence of intervention is undoubtedly that of an active and learned member of Verona's community in the first half of the ninth century. Pacificus's notes are to be found, for example, in the early fifth-century copy of Augustine's *De civitate dei*, Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXVIII (26),[55] as well as in the sixth-century fragments of the *Vetus Latina* on which he noted their use as liturgical readings (Verona I (1) Appendix Fragm. I (fol I-III).[56] Other sixth-century codices read by Pacificus and/or his colleagues include the famous copy of Sulpicius Severus's *Life of St Martin* (Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXVIII (36) made by the scribe Ursicinus in 517,[57] and the texts relating to the Christological disputes of the period that have been part of the discussion in this chapter, including Facundus's *Defence of the Three Chapters*, the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, and Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20).[58] The interest in canon law and theology apparent in these early Veronese codices was maintained, for seventh- and eighth-century manuscripts also contain

[50] Martin Hellmann, *Tironische Noten in der Karolingerzeit am Beispiel eines Persius-Kommentar aus der Schule von Tours*. MGH Studien und Texte 27 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2000).

[51] *CLA* IV, 477 and 493.

[52] *CLA* IV, 495.

[53] *CLA* IV, 514.

[54] Bassetti, "Da Pacifico a Raterio."

[55] *CLA* IV, 491.

[56] *CLA* IV, 473.

[57] *CLA* IV, 494 and Massimiliano Bassetti, "Il codice di Ursicino [Ver. XXXVIII 36)]," in *Nell'anno del signore 517*, ed. Bassetti, 53-69.

[58] Compare Saiani, "Un dossier attorno," 150-152.

Pacificus's notes. These included books that were locally produced, such as Augustine's *De agone christiano* and *De fide*,[59] as well as books imported from north of the Alps, such as the *Moralia in Iob* by Gregory the Great, Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XL (38), written in Luxeuil; the *Collectio Hispana* of canon law in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LXI (59) was apparently copied from a Spanish exemplar.[60]

A composite manuscript from Flavigny in the diocese of Autun from the late eighth or early ninth century, now Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LII (50), offers a precious glimpse of Pacificus's familiarity with the books in Verona's library.[61] In its present format this volume comprises three codicological units.[62] The first of these contains a Homiliary or sermon collection arranged in liturgical order, and the second the *Rule of Benedict* and other monastic texts. The third comprises the *Liber pontificalis*, a pilgrim itinerary to the Holy Land, a list of the ecclesiastical provinces of Gaul, and a very short commentary on the words *Gloria* and *Alleluia*. Although the *Liber pontificalis* epitome omits a great deal of detail from many of the papal biographies, it includes almost the complete text of the *Life* of Pope Gregory I (590-604) (*Life* 66). In the summary of Gregory's exegetical writings on fol. 266v, Pacificus added missing information: "XXXV" to indicate the number of books in the *Moralia in Iob* and "XX" for the number of homilies on Ezekiel. Further, he inserted "*Dialogorum libri IIII*" and extra details concerning Gregory's ordinations. These additions indicate both Pacificus's own knowledge of Gregory's works, abundantly represented in Verona's library, and his familiarity with at least the seventh-century extension of the *Liber pontificalis*, to which he appears to have had access, but which is no longer extant in Verona's library.[63]

To these early manuscripts can be added those from the ninth century, not only written during Pacificus's time but in which his interventions have been identified. These comprise works by Jerome, Augustine and Gregory the Great, collections of canon law, a selection of exegetical and theological works by such early medieval and Carolingian scholars as Bede, Alcuin and Hrabanus Maurus, and an interesting variety of liturgical books: Sacramentaries, Lectionaries, *ordines* (that is, the description of liturgical rituals) and prayer books. The commentary on Exodus in Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, LXIX (66), dated to the first quarter of the ninth century, has even been attributed to Pacificus himself.[64] The extent of the interventions by Pacificus in the work of the Verona scriptorium is still imperfectly

[59] Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXIII (31), *CLA* IV, 492.

[60] *CLA* IV, 497 and *CLA* IV, 511.

[61] *CLA* IV, 505 and see Rosamond McKitterick, "Perceptions of Rome and the Papacy in Late Merovingian Francia: the Cononian Recension," in *East and West in the Early Middle Ages: The Merovingian Kingdoms in Mediterranean Perspective*, ed. Stefan Esders, Yaniv Fox, Yitzhak Hen, and Laury Sarty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 165-186.

[62] Andrea A. Verardi, *La memoria legittimante: il* Liber pontificalis *e la chiesa di Roma del secolo VI* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2016), 57-60.

[63] Claudia Adami and Anna Maria Faccini, eds., *Gregorio Magno e le radici cristiane dell'Europa* (Verona: Biblioteca capitolare di Verona, 2005).

[64] Marchi, ed., *I manoscritti*, 129-130.

understood, for many more manuscripts contain his distinctive "R" notes, his corrections and occasional short phrases than have been noted in current surveys of the Verona manuscripts.[65] It is quite clear that Pacificus was not responsible as scribe for any of the full codices, but equally clear that he took a close interest in the books in the capitular library as a whole. In other words, on the evidence of all these manuscripts, Pacificus appears to have presided over the scriptorium and had a clear interest in the observance of liturgical ritual, two of the most essential activities of this community.

CONCLUSION

I have suggested in this paper that the texts in one sixth-century codex, Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXII (20), particularly the *De viris illustribus* of Jerome and Gennadius, give us an understanding of the textual and intellectual horizons of a particular community. The clerical community of Verona in the early middle ages not only served the cathedral as a centre of cult and liturgical performance, but also produced and acquired the books which fulfilled the needs and concerns of the cathedral and its canons and other working clergy. I have emphasized the continuities the books provided from the sixth to the ninth centuries. Finally, I have highlighted the consolidation of the authoritative character of the cultural tradition Verona's manuscripts represent and thus Verona's importance in the development of early medieval intellectual culture more generally.

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[65] Identified by Lowe in *CLA* IV and reiterated by Bernhard Bischoff, *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts (mit Ausnahme der wisigotischen)*, vol. 3: *Padua-Zwickau* (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz, 2014), #; see also Bassetti, "Da Pacifico a Raterio."

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THE SHADOW OF LEOVIGILD. ROYAL POWER AND EPISCOPAL DELIBERATION IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IBERIA

KAY BOERS[1]

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores seventh-century anxieties about royal manipulation of episcopal deliberation in Visigothic Hispania. It suggests that these fears were for the most part shaped by the legacy of the Homoian king Leovigild (569-586) and his brief flirtation with "Catholicism." By analyzing the different seventh-century perspectives on Leovigild's manipulation of episcopal deliberation and the theological innovation this sought to inspire, this paper will expose the generative and intertextual malleability of the figure of Leovigild, not only as a means to reflect on the past and present but also as a means to predict the risks of royal intrusion into religious affairs.

KEYWORDS

Adoptionism; Homoianism; Church Councils; Deliberation; Desiderius of Vienne; Hagiography; Isidore of Seville; John of Biclar; Leovigild; Sisebut

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In 2016, Janneke Raaijmakers and Irene van Renswoude published a thought-provoking chapter for Mayke de Jong's Festschrift *Religious Franks*.[2] They sought to explain the rather unconventional move by Charlemagne in 799 to chair a theological disputation between Alcuin of York and the Spanish bishop Felix of Urgell. On the table was the contentious issue of *Adoptionism*. Some Spanish bishops, most prominently Elipandus of Toledo, claimed that as far as Christ's human nature is concerned, Jesus was the adopted son of God.[3] The scholars at Charlemagne's court would have none of it. A debate chaired by Charlemagne, where his champion Alcuin would face off against Felix, was meant to provide a capstone on an old debate about Christ's relation to the Father. Scholars have pointed out that the role of referee was not normally associated with Frankish kings. They suggest that this innovation was modelled on Constantine's role at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Yet, based on the fact that it had been Elipandus in a letter written in 793 who suggested making Charlemagne the arbiter, Raaijmakers and Van Renswoude offered the hypothesis that it would not only have been Constantine's example that inspired Charlemagne's new role, but that of the Visigothic king Reccared.[4] Following Constantine's example, Hispania's first Catholic king had actively presided the deliberations at the Third Council of Toledo. If we can believe Gregory of Tours, he also chaired a theological debate between Homoians and Catholics which decided the future of the kingdom.

It is indeed likely that, next to Constantine, Elipandus had Reccared in mind when he first suggested to Charlemagne that he should take on the role of arbiter. However, Reccared's example does not imply that the Hispanic tradition always envisaged an active role for rulers in religious debates, nor that royal presidency of theological debates was unquestioned. Even though Elipandus suggested the debate as an adequate way to bring the dispute to a conclusion, for him the example of Constantine presented a warning: emperors and kings could influence religious debates and backtrack on any decision reached by conciliar deliberation.[5] Raaijmakers and Van Renswoude accurately remarked that in Visigothic Hispania "the engagement of rulers with the proceedings of councils appears to have been a delicate issue that needed to be carefully balanced with the responsibilities and autonomy of bishops."[6] This, they argued, is testified by one practice in particular. From the Fourth Council of Toledo onwards, Visigothic kings often departed from the council after a short opening

[2] Janneke Raaijmakers and Irene van Renswoude, "The Ruler as Referee in Theological Debates: Reccared and Charlemagne," in *Religious Franks. Religion and Power in the Frankish Kingdoms*: *Studies in Honour of Mayke De Jong*, ed. Rob Meens, Dorine van Espelo, Janneke Raaijmakers, Bart van den Hoven van Genderen, Irene van Renswoude, and Carine van Rhijn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 51-71.

[3] John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology in the West. Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785-820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era. Theology and the Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[4] Raaijmakers and van Renswoude, "The ruler as Referee," 56-64.

[5] For exact wording, see below.

[6] Raaijmakers and van Renswoude, "The ruler as Referee," 62.

tomus, leaving the bishops to deliberate freely and, at least in theory, without royal interference.[7] This practice seems tantamount to Hispanic bishops' persistent distrust of royal intervention in religious debates.[8] This chapter tries to understand why this was the case. I suggest that this anxiety was not so much inspired by the examples of Constantine and Reccared, but also for a large part by that of the Homoian king Leovigild and his brief flirt with "Catholicism." By analyzing the different seventh-century perspectives on Leovigild's manipulation of episcopal deliberation and the theological innovation this sought to inspire, this chapter will expose the generative and intertextual malleability of the figure of Leovigild, not only as a means to reflect on the past and present but also as a means to predict the risks of royal intrusion into religious affairs.

To highlight these perspectives, the first part of this chapter will present an analysis of the intricacies and tensions presented in contemporary historiographical accounts of the Council of 580, principally the chronicle of John of Biclar, Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*, and Gregory of Tours' *Historia*. The second part of the chapter will explore similar tensions in two seventh-century hagiographical writings: king Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and its offshoot, the anonymous *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*.

A. LEOVIGILD AND THE HOMOIAN COUNCIL OF 580

Any attempt to unravel the intertextual tissue of the anxieties surrounding the interventionism of Leovigild has to start with John of Biclar. His chronicle (c. 540-621) is the earliest and most detailed account of Leovigild's reign.[9] It seems that John's relationship with Leovigild was difficult. We know for instance that he had briefly been exiled to Constantinople, most probably for his support of the rebellion of the king's son Hermenegild. Some have even suggested that John was only a late convert to Catholicism. This would indicate that he wanted to disassociate himself as much as possible from Leovigild's peculiar brand of Homoianism.[10] It is therefore remarkable that John paints a largely positive image of the king's rule, particularly of his military and administrative achievements. His Leovigild was a power-

[7] Herbert Schneider, *Die Knonzilsordines des Früh- und Hochmittelalters. MGH Ordines de celebrando concilio* (Munich: Hahn, 1996), 18-19.

[8] Raaijmakers and van Renswoude, "The ruler as Referee," 62-63. This tension was also present in Byzantine discourse concerning the role of emperors in church councils: Evangelos Chrysos, "Konzilpräsident und Konzilsvorstand: zur Frage des Vorsitzes in den Konzilien der byzantinischen Reichskirche," *Annuarium historiae conciliorum* 11 (1979): 1-17.

[9] John of Biclar, *Chronicon*, ed. C. Cardelle de Hartmann, *CCSL* 173A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 59-83; trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Early Medieval Spain and its Chroniclers* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).

[10] On Leovigild's Homoianism, see Manual Koch, "Arianism and Ethnic Identity in Sixth Century Visigothic Spain," in *Arianism: Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed*, ed. Guido M. Berndt and Roland Steinacher (London: Routledge, 2014), 257-270; for its relation to the rebellion of Hermenegild, see Luis Garcia Moreno, *Leovigildo. Unidad y diversidad de un reinado* (Madrid: Academia de La Historia, 2008), 92-98; Silvia Acerbi and Ramón Teja, "The Image of Leovigild as an Arian Monarch in the 'Vitas Patrum Emeritensium': From Historical Reality to Hagiographical Deformation," in *Writing History in Late Antique Iberia. Historiography*

ful and ambitious king who successfully unified the Visigothic kingdom and strengthened its position in the face of internal and external challenges. He is a skilled military leader and an effective administrator.[11] After having destroyed all opposing "tyrants" (including his son Hermenegild), the king resided among his *plebs* in peace.[12] Like Constantine, John's Leovigild then builds a new city, Reccopolis, a foundation notable for its splendour, named after his son Reccared, and endows its *populus* with privileges.[13] John depicted Leovigild as everything a good *princeps* should be: a king who cares for the well-being of his subjects, who defeats tyrants, assertively displays *civilitas*, and whose financial policies enlarge the kingdom's treasury. Furthermore, within this positive depiction, the accession of Leovigild's Catholic son Reccared is never far off. By emphasizing the positive results of Leovigild's administrative and military duties, John showed his readers that the legacy Reccared inherited from his father was a positive one and a legitimate foundation of his newly acquired authority.

John's reflection on Leovigild's religious interventions, however, is less positive. He recounts how in 580, in the first year of the rebellion of Leovigild's son Hermenegild, the king summoned a kingdom-wide synod of Homoian bishops at Toledo.[14] Its purpose was to facilitate the conversion of the Nicenes to Homoianism. The usual obligation of a second baptism would be abolished and replaced by a mere laying on of hands and the admission to communion by an Homoian cleric. According to John, inspired by the king's formulation, the Council also adopted a doxological declaration by which it attempted to minimize the dogmatic differences between the Homoian and the Nicene-Chalcedonian Catholic creed. By simply denying the divinity of the Holy Spirit, through the expression glory "to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit," the convert "of the Roman religion" would join what John claimed Leovigild referred to as "our Catholic faith."[15] Even more troubling was that the king's innovation appeared to have been largely successful. John laments that "many of our own inclined towards the Arian doctrine out of self-interest rather than a change of heart."[16] What struck John as problematic was not only the king's active role in defining and imposing his doctrinal compromise, but the fact that it undermined the spiritual unity of

in Theory and Practice from the 4th to the 7th Century, ed. Purificación Ubric Rabaneda (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023), 293-306.

11 John of Biclar, *Chronicon*, c. 10-79, *CCSL* 173A, 61-77.

12 Ibid., c. 51 (anno 578), 70.

13 Ibid., c. 51 (anno 578), 70.

14 Ibid., c. 58 (anno 580), 71: *Leouegildus rex in urbem Toletanam sinodum episcoporum secte arriane congregat et antiquam heresem nouello errore emendat, dicens de Romana religione ad nostram catholicam fidem uenientes non debere baptizari, sed tantummodo per manus impositionem et communionis preceptione ablui, et gloriam Patri per Filium in Spiritu Sancto dare…*

15 Ibid., c. 58 (anno 580), 71: …*nostram catholicam fidem*, and the creed as *et gloriam Patri per Filium in Spiritu Sancto dare…*

16 Ibid.: *Per hanc ergo seductionem plurimi nostrorum cupiditate pocius quam impulsione in arrianum dogma declinant.*

the Catholic Church through the obfuscation of its religious and linguistic demarcations. Apparently, regardless of their claim to orthodoxy and unequivocal support by God, some Catholic bishops, it turned out, were easily swayed by royal influence, willing to accede to the king's wishes in fundamental opposition to their own beliefs.

John's contemporary Gregory of Tours expresses a similar fear. But in his retelling, Leovigild's ploy is less successful. A messenger, Ansovaldus, reported that:

> … those Catholics who still exist in Spain keep their faith unimpaired. [Yet] the king has a new trick by which he is doing his utmost to destroy it. In his cunning way, he pretends to pray at the tombs of the martyrs and in the churches of our religion. Then he says: "I accept without question that Christ is the Son of God and equal to the Father. What I cannot believe is that the Holy Spirit is God, for that is written in none of the scriptures."[17]

In Gregory's portrayal, Leovigild's tricks were futile in that they failed fundamentally to rupture the unity within Catholic ranks. For Gregory, it seems, it was quite impossible to imagine that anyone would fall for the king's trick or for the insincerity of his devotion to "the churches of our religion." Yet his version also reveals one crucial correspondence with John's. In both cases the new doctrinal statement is shown to be explicitly voiced by the king himself. By reproducing the king's speech, Gregory makes Leovigild directly responsible for the doctrinal innovation and frames the king's religious intervention as a direct challenge to Catholic unity. Indeed, what both John and Gregory appear to perceive as most troubling is a situation where a king would go to any extreme to establish religious compromise and his intervention in religious affairs would prove to be mere artifice.

Isidore of Seville's portrayal of Leovigild was also very much shaped by the conditions of his political world. His two successive recensions of the *Historia Gothorum* present an evolving perspective on the king's rule, where the positive aspects of Leovigild's rule are gradually subsumed to the larger story of the king's heinous attempt to enforce a religious compromise. Isidore published the first short recension of the work closely after the passing of king Sisebut in 621 and the second recension in 624 in honour of king Swinthila.[18] The objective of these recensions was to provide positive and negative *exempla* for his royal

[17] Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* VI, c. 18, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), 287: *Cui haec Ansovaldus respondit: "Christiani, qui nunc apud Hispanias conmorantur, catholicam fidem integre servant." Sed rex novo nunc ingenio eam nititur exturbare, dum dolose et ad sepulchra martirum et in eclesiis relegionis nostrae orare confingit. Dicit enim: "Manefeste cognovi, esse Christum filium Dei aequalem Patri; sed Spiritum sanctum Deum penitus esse non credo, eo quod in nullis legatur codicibus Deus esse."* Trans. Lewis Thorpe, *Gregory of Tours: The History of the Franks* (London: Penguin, 1974), 349.

[18] Jamie Wood, *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain. Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 65-132; Andrew Merrils, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 170-229; Pierre Cazier, *Isidore de Seville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), 62-68. Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 60-61, ed. Theodor Mommsen, *MGH AA* 11 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1904), 70; trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain. Second Edition* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 87.

patrons.[19] However, times changed, and as new kings took power, Isidore's writings could easily go out of date or upset the new rulers in power. To counter this, Isidore simply adapted his text in order to fit new political circumstances.

Isidore's modifications to his account of Leovigild reveal a fascinating perspective on king Sisenand's innovative decision to withdraw from the Fourth Council of Toledo, before the process of episcopal deliberation commenced. For example, in the first recension, Isidore delegitimizes Leovigild's political and military victories saying that the "error of his impiety" tainted "the glory of his great success."[20] In his account, Leovigild's fabulous wealth is not so much achieved through military strength, but by maliciously stripping the privileges and revenues from the Catholic Church and by persecuting and exiling its bishops. Furthermore, he claims that by means of this wealth the king tried to win many over to his cause:

> Filled with the madness of Arian perfidy, Leovigild ultimately launched a persecution against the Catholics, sent bishops into exile, and took away many of the revenues and privileges of the churches. By means of these terrible acts, he forced many into the Arian disease. Others he deceived without persecution, enticing them with gold and property. Among the other infections of his heresy, he even dared to rebaptize Catholics, not only laymen but also members of the priestly order, such as Vincent of Zaragoza, who went from being a bishop to an apostate and was thus cast down from heaven into hell.[21]

This connection between religious intervention and the origins and use of Leovigild's royal wealth is expressed even more clearly in the paragraph that follows. For John, Leovigild was first to sit with his *plebs* in peace, but for Isidore the king was "the first to enlarge the treasury, robbing the citizens and despoiling the enemy"[22] and also "the first to sit clad in royal vestments on the throne among his people."[23] To complete this rhetoric on wealth, Isidore's narrative contrasts the king's actions with those of Reccared and Sisebut. Whereas Leovigild takes wealth away violently and uses it to undermine Catholic unity and magnify his royal authority, Reccared uses the wealth he inherits to restore the revenues of the citizens and

[19] Santiago Castellanos, *The Visigothic Kingdom of Iberia. Construction and Invention* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 89, 101.

[20] Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum*, c. 49, *MGH AA* 11, 287: *sed offuscavit in eo error impietatis gloriam tantae virtutis*.

[21] Ibid., c. 50, p. 287: *Denique Arrianae perfidiae furore repletus in catholicos persecutione commota plurimos episcoporum exilio relegavit. ecclesiarum reditus et privilegia tulit, multos quoque terroribus in Arrianam pestilentiam inpulit, plerosque sine persecutione inlectos auro rebusque decepit. ausus quoque inter cetera haeresis suae contagia etiam rebaptizare catholicos et non solum ex plebe, sed etiam ex sacerdotalis ordinis dignitate, sicut Vincentium Caesaraugustanum de episcopo apostatam factum et tamquam a caelo in infernum proiectum*. Trans. Baxter Wolf, 84.

[22] Ibid., c. 51, p. 288: *iste locupletavit primusque aerarium de rapinis civium hostiumque manubiis auxit…*

[23] Ibid.: *primusque inter suos regali veste opertus solio resedit: nam ante eum et habitus et consessus communis ut populo, ita et regibus erat.*

the church, and to the benefit of the poor.[24] And whereas Leovigild treats his own subjects as *hostes*, Sisebut uses his wealth to ransom captive enemies.[25]

In the second recension, however, things change significantly. Adapted for a new royal patron, this recension draws a much closer exemplary connection between Swinthila and Reccared. It celebrates Swinthila's victories and his pious generosity, claiming that he used his wealth solely to the benefit of the church and the poor.[26] This revision however, created a problem. To celebrate Swinthila's rule, Isidore had prefaced his new redaction with a short panegyric called the *Laus Hispaniae*.[27] By means of the female personification of *Hispania*, the text sought to legitimize the Gothic conquest of the province by emphasizing Roman mismanagement of its natural resources. Isidore presents *Hispania* as a fair woman "rich in purple-clad rulers as you are in native gems, and, rich in imperial gifts, you are as wealthy in golden princes as you are blessed in producing them."[28] She is then seized and loved by the *gens Gothorum*, who "enjoy you [i.e. *Hispania*] up to the present time amidst royal emblems and great wealth, secure in the good fortune of empire."[29] These lines were meant to celebrate Swinthila's wealth and magnificence but they also created a problem. Did not the first recension show that these emblems were an innovation on Leovigild's part? Isidore's solution was simple. For his second recension, he simply removed the line on Leovigild's royal vestments, strategically disconnecting these emblems from Swinthila.

Why, then, was the connection between Leovigild and Swinthila's wealth and regalia such a problem? A possible reason presents itself in the records of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633). Just a year earlier, Sisenand had usurped the throne from Swinthila.[30] The new king immediately summoned a general council.[31] The Fourth Council of Toledo started with a well-orchestrated ritual of royal humility and episcopal autonomy. At its opening, Sisenand humbly threw himself to the ground and "with tears and groans sought God's intervention for himself."[32] After this well-staged act, which contrasted sharply with Rec-

[24] On Reccared's use of wealth, ibid., c. 55-56, p. 290.

[25] Ibid., c. 61, pp. 291-292.

[26] Ibid, c. 64 (long recension), p. 293.

[27] Merrils, *History and Geography*, 196-197, 205-226; on "material benefits," see Wood, *Politics and Identity*, 145; E. Grein, "Isidoro de Sevilla y los fundamentos de la Realeza Cristiana en la Hispania visigoda (siglo VII)," *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana* 34 (2010): 23-32.

[28] Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum* (long recension), *Laus Hispaniae*, *MGH AA* 11, 267: *Alumnis igitur et gemmis dives et purpuris rectoribusque pariter et dotibus imperiorum fertilis sic opulenta es principibus ornandis ut beata pariendis,…* Trans. Baxter Wolf, 68.

[29] Ibid.: *…denuo tamen Gothorum florentissima gens post multiplices in orbe victorias certatim rapuit et amavit, fruiturque hactenus inter regias infulas et opes largas imperii felicitate secura…* Trans. Baxter Wolf, 68.

[30] Santiago Castellanos, "Isidore of Seville: Historical Contexts," in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 21-42, at 35.

[31] Rachel Stocking, *Bishops, Councils and Consensus in the Visigothic Kingdom*, 589-682 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 145-149.

[32] Fourth Council of Toledo, *Preamble*, ed. J. Vives, T. M. Marín Martínez, and G. Martínez Díez, *Concolios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos* (Barcelona/Madrid: Consejo Superior de Ivestigaciones Científicas Instituto

cared's behaviour at Toledo III, the new king only delivered a short speech to the attending bishops. He then retreated from the Council with his followers, leaving the bishops to deliberate matters on their own. The bishops, in turn, responded with a sharp vilification of Swinthila condemning him for his "exactions from the poor.".[33] This reference to the maltreatment of the poor implies that Isidore's praise of Swinthila already may have been a far cry from reality.[34] Indeed, the fact that Isidore removed the passage on Leovigild's regalia from the recension addressed to Swinthila in 626 shows that even then there already may have existed some unease about the king's gradual accumulation of royal wealth and the potential this had for seriously undermining the unity and integrity of the Church and its bishops. This anxiety, it seems, was partially inspired by the faint memories of Leovigild which Swinthila's use of wealth and royal splendour had unintentionally evoked. Thus, Sisenand's prostration and strategic departure from the Council were not only meant as ritualized gestures to solicit episcopal approval for his illegitimate seizure of power; they were meant strategically to disassociate the new king from Swinthila and any indirect associations with Leovigild. Any attempt actively to preside over the Council's deliberation would have elicited the simmering anxiety that kings might use their wealth and power to undermine episcopal unity and sway bishops to act against their own conscience and beliefs.

B. ROYAL POWER AND EPISCOPAL DELIBERATION IN SEVENTH-CENTURY HAGIOGRAPHY

Sisenand's humility showed that, like bishops, some kings seem to have been keenly aware of the anxieties their interference in conciliar deliberation could produce. Interestingly, the conversation about these anxieties and their relation to king Leovigild, can also be identified in seventh-century hagiography. One of these reflections was presented by a king, Sisebut, in his *Vita Desiderii* (ca. 614/617).[35] Sisebut was in all respects a very proactive king in his interactions with the Church. He assertively admonished bishops and he had also taken the unprecedented step to force the kingdom's Jews to accept Christianity.[36] However,

de Enrique Flórez, 1963/1984), 186: *primum coram sacerdotibus Dei humo prostrates cum lacrymis et gemitibus pro se interveniendum Deo postulavit.*

33 Fourth Council of Toledo, c. 75, ed. Vives et al., *Concilios visigóticos*, 217-222.

34 Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum* (long recension), c. 64, *MGH AA* 11, 293: *sed etiam pater pauperum vocari sit dignus…*

35 Sisebut, *Vita vel Passio Sancti Desiderii*, ed. Juan Gil, *Miscellanea Wisigothica* (Seville: Publicaciones de la Universidad, 1972); trans. Andrew T. Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 1-14.

36 In 612. Cf. Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum* (long recension), c. 60, *MGH AA* 11, 291; see also Yitzhak Hen, *Roman Barbarians. The Royal Court and Culture in the Early Medieval West* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 124-152; Alfredo M. Rabello, "Sisebuto re di Spagna (612-621) ed il battesimo forzato," *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 51 (1985), 33-41; Wolfram Drews, *The Unknown Neighbour. The Jew in the Thought of Isidore of Seville* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 16-32; on Sisebut's admonishment of bishops and kings, see Yitzhak Hen, "A Visigothic King in Search of an Identity – Sisebutus Gothorum gloriosissimus princeps," in *Ego trouble.*

Sisebut appears to have been less interested in ecclesiastical councils.[37] No general councils are recorded during his reign, nor did he actively intervene in any of the regional councils.

His hagiographical work may provide one possible explanation for this reluctance. The *Vita Desiderii* tells the story of how a saintly Burgundian bishop, Desiderius of Vienne, was falsely accused at a synod of bishops for having ravished a woman named Justa. The deliberations found Desiderius guilty, and the saint was deposed and exiled to an island. This, the text claims, was the result of a false accusation inspired by the malicious maneuvering of king Theuderic II and his grandmother Brunichildis, formerly a Visigothic princess, and a Homoian.[38] Theuderic then decides to recall Desiderius from exile but soon afterwards he is stoned to death after a second conspiracy by the king and his grandmother.

Andrew Fear and Roger Collins suggest that the text is best read as a commentary on the nature of royal office, specifically on the king's interaction with the church and its representatives.[39] This view is also shared by Yitzhak Hen, but with two major reservations. First, Hen reminds us that the *Vita Desiderii* was a multi-layered composition that could have easily communicated different messages to different audiences.[40] Secondly, he warns us not to neglect the fact that Sisebut was a deeply religious person who not only actively intervened in the politics of the Church, but whose writings are suffused with attempts at moral and religious admonishment.[41] Thus, considering Sisebut's active correspondence with bishops, it is equally possible to interpret Sisebut's text as a commentary on the foundations and proper exercise of episcopal authority.[42] When read in this way, Sisebut's text reveals the king's particular unease about the moral integrity of bishops when they operated as a collective. His description of the circumstances leading to Desiderius' condemnation at the Council of Chalons is meant to elucidate for his readers how a pious man, regardless of his claim to innocence, could still be evicted by his own brethren. He describes how Theuderic and Brunichildis, as well as an anonymous "man of evil mind," made a pact with a noble matron named Justa, who fabricated the false claim that she had been ravished by Desiderius.[43] This inspired Sisebut to come up with a carefully veiled critique of conciliar deliberation:

Authors and their identities in the early Middle Ages, ed. Richard Corradini, Bryan Matthew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick, and Irene van Renswoude (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 89-100, at 93-94.

37 The Second Council of Seville was the only relatively major provincial council during Sisebut's reign. Cf. Stocking, *Bishops, Councils*, 129-132.

38 For Brunichildis in the *Vita Desiderii*, see Andrew Fear, "Ghost of Desiderius," *La Coronica* 29 (April 2001), 79-93, at 81-84, 87-90; on her Homoian background as a Visigothic princess, Emöke Horváth, "Violence and Passion at Court: Brunhilda, A Visigothic Princess," *Acta Hispanica* 25 (2020): 137-152.

39 Fear, "The Ghost of Desiderius," 87-88; Roger Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity and Diversity, 400-1000*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1995), 67.

40 Hen, "A Visigothic King in Search of an Identity," 97, derived from Fontaine, "King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii*," 125.

41 Hen, "A Visigothic King in Search of an Identity," 93-94.

42 Sisebut, *Vita Vel Passio Sancti Desiderii*, c. 2-3, ed. Gil, *Miscellanea Wisigothica*, 630-631.

43 Ibid., c. 4, 631: *pestiferae mentis hominem viru vipereo sauciavit…*

> All who attended were amazed that the servant of God should have been implicated in such things, but thought that the charges would be cast aside. Those presiding, however, in accordance with the schemes that had been devised beforehand, pronounced in their rash temerity a most unjust sentence against an innocent man. They stripped him of his office and banished him to a monastery on an island. (…) In his place was appointed a false priest, Dumnolus, a servant of the devil who soiled himself by his disgraceful deeds to the same degree that the man of God flourished through his manifold virtues.[44]

The passage exposes a very peculiar condition Sisebut wanted to warn his audience against. First, even though the bishops as a collective had righteously consented to Desiderius' innocence, those presiding over the Council had already decided on the final verdict; they were thus able to influence conciliar decision-making, regardless of episcopal consent. Using this example, Sisebut wanted to warn his readers that the influence of certain powerful individuals, bishops and kings included, could not only sway the collective decision-making of bishops against their own beliefs, but it could also undermine the basic premise of conciliar deliberation itself. According to the text's logic, a debate could only be conducted properly if bishops were allowed to deliberate freely, uninterrupted, and unrestrained by worldly motives or constraints. Sisebut warned that if one failed to meet these conditions, righteous bishops would be condemned and replaced by incompetent ones.[45] What Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* does by means of this example, is help its readers predict the conditions that threatened the integrity of conciliar unity and deliberation. Surprisingly, the main threat identified by Sisebut that could seriously undermine this integrity was the king himself. Sisebut's reluctance to intervene in conciliar deliberation displays an anxiety that is underlined by his own reflection on the working of church councils and the danger his own presence and influence might pose to their integrity. This is a sharp contrast, indeed, to the interpretation that Sisebut pursued a more Byzantine-style of authority where the emperor, as a representative of God, would actively preside and shape the results of conciliar deliberation.[46]

It remains unclear, however, whether Leovigild's example was actively on Sisebut's mind when he reflected on the Council of Chalons and informed his reluctance to intervene in conciliar deliberation. Leovigild, however, was certainly on the mind of a Meridan dea-

[44] Ibid., c. 4, 631: *mirantibus cunctis, talibus in rebus fore Dei servum implicitum, criminationes et obiecta commentitia adversus eum fore pensabant. Sed praesidentes sententiam contra insontem iuxta pridem machinationes abtatas ausu temerario malesanam dederunt, quem statim homines punituri ab honore pribatum exilio ad monasterium insula religarunt: cuius abiectio fuit summa felicitas, contumelia praespicua sanctitas, degradatio aeterna felicitas. Subrogatur ei pseudosacerdos Domnolus quidem nomine, servus quidem diabuli, et quantum vir Dei crescebat virtutibus copiosis, e contra actibus ille foedabatur nefandis.*

[45] Bishop Dumnolus who is a *servus quidem diabuli*.

[46] Stocking, *Bishops, Councils*, 125-128. Cf. also Fear, "The Ghost of Desiderius," 89, who claims that "Sisebut's reign was marked by strong centralizing and Caesaropapist tendencies."

con who read the *Vita Desiderii*.[47] In the 630s the deacon produced what is perhaps the most famous collection of saints' lives of seventh-century Hispania, the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*.[48] The work consists of five books of which the last two, the *vitas episcopales*, concern themselves with the bishops of Mérida.[49] The story of the most famous of them, Bishop Masona (ca. 570-610), is found in the fifth book. Masona's story focusses on his opposition to Leovigild and his Homoian accomplices.[50] In shaping this narrative, the deacon made heavy use of the *Vita Desiderii*.[51] Not only did he reuse large sections of the work, either by quoting them verbatim or rephrasing them slightly to fit the roles of Masona and his antagonists, but the story also largely follows that of St. Desiderius.

The reason why the deacon selected Sisebut's text as a narrative framework for the biography of Masona, and associated its villains with Leovigild, may lie in the implicit anti-Homoian subtext of the *Vita Desiderii*. For example, the evil Brunichildis was the daughter of the Arian king Athanagild (554-567).[52] Regardless of her conversion to Catholicism on marrying king Sigebert of Austrasia, her Homoian background would have remained a potent subtext. Likewise, the narrative's structure, with a saintly and admonishing figure thwarting a king and his grandmother, could have reminded readers of other heroic bishops resisting Homoian rulers, most prominently, Ambrose's conflict with Valentinian and Justina. Perhaps inspired by these implicit associations, and the historical reflections on Leovigild already in circulation, the deacon presents Leovigild as the classic Arian tyrant, who would do anything to convert a pious bishop.[53]

One of the key moments of book V inspired by this anti-Homoian subtext is the opening confrontation between Leovigild and Masona.[54] The episode starts with Leovigild requesting Masona to join the Arian faction. First, Leovigild uses arguments.[55] When these are repudiated, the king tries to sway Masona with "gifts and prizes."[56] Frustrated by Masona's steadfastness, Leovigild then attempted to snatch away the basilicas with all their

47 Fear, "The Ghost of Desiderius," 79-93.

48 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, ed. A. Maya Sánchez, *CCSL* 114 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992). The following translation will be used, but will be emended where necessary: Andrew Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 45-106.

49 *Vitas episcopales* from Sabine Panzram, "Mérida contra Toledo, Eulalia contra Leocadialistados 'falsificados' de obispos como medio de autorepresentación municipal," in *Espacios urbanos en el occidente mediterráneo (S. VI-VIII)*, ed. Alfonso García (Toledo: Toletvum Visogodo, 2010), 123-130.

50 For similarities, see Fear, "The Ghost of Desiderius," 83-84, 87, 89.

51 Ibid., 83-84, 90.

52 Horváth, "Violence and Passion at Court," 139.

53 For instance, *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, c. 5.5.1, ed. A. Maya Sánchez, *CCSL* 114 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 56. The presentation of Leovigild is quoted verbatim from *Vita Desiderii*, c. 15.

54 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, c. 5.4-5, *CCSL* 114, 54-62, which is inserted in place of *Vita Desiderii*, c. 4 (the Council of Chalons).

55 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, c. 5.4.1-4, *CCSL* 114, 54-56.

56 Ibid., c. 5.4.6, p. 56: *dona et premia*.

privileges.[57] Like Ambrose, Masona prevented the seizure of his basilica by organizing a defiant sit in. In response, the king's accomplice, the Arian bishop Sunna, presented his king with a long indictment against Masona, and proposed that the Basilica of Eulalia and all the Catholic possessions be placed under his jurisdiction.[58] Subsequently, Leovigild made a remarkable decision, not represented in any of the other textual witnesses:

> In response to this, the following judgment was made: judges were to sit in the episcopal palace and both bishops were to be summoned and appear before them. Then they were to engage in debate in the judges' presence, each setting forth in turn a defence of their position. And so, debating one after the other, they were to construct or adduce support for their case from their books of Holy Scripture, wherever these things might be written and whichever side won the prize of victory, they too would win for them the church of Eulalia.[59]

Masona immediately sped towards the Basilica of Eulalia and spend three days fasting in front of the altar.[60] This spiritual rearmament was sorely needed. The panel which Leovigild had assigned to judge the opponents' arguments was made up almost solely of Homoians and, thus, hardly impartial. Yet even though the stakes were stacked against him, Masona is said to have endured "scabrous and obscene" words of Sunna calmly.[61] His response was a barrage of eloquence and doctrinal truth. Impressed by the saint's arguments, the judges could no longer ignore the truth and Masona was declared the victor.[62]

Leovigild's plan to host a theological debate is roughly similar to Gregory of Tours' representation of Reccared. In his *Historia*, Gregory tells how prior to his conversion:

> … king Reccared was moved by the grace of God to call a meeting of the bishops of his own religion [that is, the Arian bishops] and said to them: "Why is there a dispute spreading between you and the priests who call themselves Catholic, while they produce so many miracles because of their faith, while you yourselves are not able to do likewise. I ask you therefore to meet together and to let us know, after you have discussed the creed of both parties, where the truth lies. Either they must accept our view and believe what you profess, or else you must recognize the truth of what they believe and subscribe to the principles of their teachings."[63]

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57 Ibid., c. 5.5.4-9, pp. 57-58.

58 Ibid., c. 5.5.8, p. 58.

59 Ibid., c. 5.5.9, pp. 58-59: *Ad hec ille talem fertur promulgasse sententiam, ut residentibus in atrio eclesie iudicibus utrique episcopi ab eisdem adsumti adessent ipsis que coram positis utriusque partis defensionem conflictu disputationis altercarent alternis que aduersum se congressionibus dimicantes de sanctarum scripturarum uoluminibus, queque ab eis essent dicta, prolatis testimoniis adstruerent uel roborarent; et cuius pars triumphum brabii obtineret, ipse nicilominus eclesiam sancte Eolalie sibimet uindicaret*. Trans. Fear, 80.

60 Ibid., c. 5.5.10, p. 59.

61 Ibid., c. 5.5.14, p. 60: *scabra et obscenosa.*

62 Ibid., c. 5.5.17, pp. 60-61.

63 Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, c. 15.1-4, *MGH SRM* 1.1, 429: *Igitur eo tempore in Hispania Richaredus rex, conpunctus miseratione divina, convocatis episcopis relegionis suae, ait: "Cur inter vos et sacerdotes illus, qui se catholicus*

In both cases, the king's active role in ordering the debate is explicitly stated, but in neither case is the king actively presiding over the debates. The underlying message in both is that kings should not interfere, yet the premise and effect of this neutrality is presented differently for both episodes. In Gregory's description, the emphasis is on the king's absolute neutrality but in the deacon's version, the king's neutrality is only superficial with Leovigild undermining justice by staking the committee with supporters of his own creed. It is possible that the deacon's inclusion of the debate was a faint albeit imprecise reminder of Reccared's presidency over the deliberations at Toledo III. The author may have assumed that since Leovigild is Reccared's father, the heretical king must have done something similar. The results of the debate were ultimately the same, but the circumstances that followed differed drastically. Reccared piously acknowledged the truth in the Trinitarian position and accepted the Catholic faith. Leovigild, in contrast, simply proceeds with his subversion of justice by disrespecting the results of the debate.[64] To underline this, the deacon tells his readers that, like Desiderius, Masona was pulled from his Basilica and sent off to Toledo, on the king's orders, to hand over the shirt of Eulalia.

It is very possible that that the deacon was aware of the tradition that Gregory represented. When compared to the narrative framework of the *Vita Desiderii*, the story of Masona and Sunna's debate occurs roughly in the same place in the narrative as Sisebut's depiction of the Council of Chalons. For the deacon, the only potential candidate for a similar council would have been the Council of 580. However, having Masona attend a Homoian council would have been impossible, and something had to come in its place. So, instead of a council, the deacon included a debate inspired by stories about Reccared. The episode conveyed an implicit message about the realities of royal power: not only could kings summon judges and bishops favorable to their own position; they could also blatantly ignore the outcome of a debate if they so wished.

The deacon's anxiety about royal manipulation of conciliar deliberation is possibly connected to the actions of another assertive king, Chintala.[65] The 630s saw two more councils. We have seen how Sisenand had wisely retreated from the council to leave the bishops to their own affairs. His successor Chintila convened another council at Toledo in 636.[66] The council produced only a few new canons, the majority of which were designed to strengthen the position of the king. One allows the king's properties to be inherited by his sons and

dicunt, iugiter scandalum propagatur et, cum illi per fidem suam signa multa ostendant, vos nihil tale agere potestis? Qua de re convenite, quaeso, simul et, discussis utriusque partes credulitatibus, quae vera sunt cognuscamus; et tunc aut accepta illi a vobis ratione ea credant quae dicitis, aut certe vos ab illis veritatem agnuscentes, quae praedicaverint vos credatis."

64 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, c. 5.6, *CCSL* 114, 62-71.

65 For Chintila, see Renan Frighetto, "*Tutaque sit inter inprobos innocentia*: aspectos teóricos e práticos sobre os limítes da autoridade régia no reino hispano-visigodo de Toledo segundo as fontes júridicas e conciliares do reinado de Chintila (636-640)," *Scripta Mediaevalia - revista de pensamiento medieval* 1 (2008), 117-139.

66 Fifth Council of Toledo, ed. Vives et al., *Concilios visigóticos,* 226-232.

others regulate royal property and that of the king's *fideles*.[67] The Sixth Council of Toledo, convened by Chintila in 638, aimed at getting as many bishops as possible back into one room. Few bishops attended, and its canons reveal a concerted attempt to enhance the royal position, for instance by anathemizing any person who claimed to have been injured by the king and reaffirming the ruling on royal property of the Fifth Council of Toledo.[68] Even though it is likely that Chintila also strategically left the Council for the bishops to deliberate their own affairs, attendance at both councils was drastically low and the points on the agenda very much favorable to the king and his family. The depiction in the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium* of an assertive king Leovigild, who imposed himself on religious affairs, undermined the integrity of episcopal deliberation, and subverted Mérida's religious capital in favour of Toledo, may well have recalled the actions of Chintila and his series of badly attended councils.

CONCLUSION: IN THE SHADOW OF LEOVIGILD

This chapter has shown how Elipandus' extraordinary suggestion to Charlemagne should also be read against the background of the seventh-century anxieties about royal interference in episcopal deliberation. A lingering anxiety shimmers through the careful phrasing of Elipandus' letter:

> Therefore, as if we lie prostrate before you, we tearfully ask you to restore your servant Felix to his original position and return the pastor of a flock dispersed by rapacious wolves. Remembering also what the Omnipotent God may bring about in the future, as in the case of emperor Constantine. When he was a follower of idolatry, he became a Christian through the blessed Silvester, but afterwards through the serpent that was his sister, he rejected the doctrine of the saints and converted to the Arrian dogma. He ended his last day, submerged in hell in lamentable ruin. As the blessed Isidore tells us about him: "Alas: he had a good beginning and a bad end."[69]

As suggested by Raaijmakers and van Renswoude, Reccared's example certainly also must have been on Elipandus' mind when he proposed the debate. Yet, as argued in this paper, the underlying anxiety present in the wording of Elipandus' request hints at another influence: king Leovigild's brief flirt with "Catholicism" and his assertive style of religious interven-

[67] Fifth Council of Toledo, c. 6-9, ed. Vives et al., 229-230.

[68] Fifth Council of Toledo, c. 18, ed. Vives et al., 245.

[69] Elipandus of Toledo, *Epistola Episcoporum Hispaniae ad Karolum Magnum*, 3-6, ed. Albert Werminghoff, *MGH Conc.* 2.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1902), 121: *Idcirco veluti prostrati coram tuis obtutibus cum lacrimis poscimus, ut famulum tuum Felicem in proprio honore restaures et pastorem gregi a lupis rapacibus disperso reformes, reminiscens et illut, quod omnipotens Deus a vobis longe efficiat, de Constantino imperatore. Qui dum esset idolatrie cultor, per beatum Silvestrium factus est Christianus, postea per serpentem, sororem suam, sanctorum trecentorum decem et octo sententiam refutans, in Arriano dogmate conversus et ad infernum flenda ruina dimersus diem clausit extremum; de quo beatus Isidorus dicit: "Eu, pro dolor! bono usus principio et fine malo."* Final quotation from Isidore of Seville's, *Chronicon*, c. 334, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *PL* 83 (Paris: Migne, 1862).

tionism. Ironically, in his assertive attempt to enforce religious unity, Leovigild had followed Constantine's example. Yet, whereas Constantine's example forewarned that kings could easily slip into heresy, Leovigild's example showed that their wealth and power enabled them to influence the debate or ignore its results entirely.

Indeed, Leovigild's assertive enforcement of religious compromise had cast a long shadow over the perception and experience of episcopal deliberation in the Hispano-Visigothic World. Yet precisely because of this, Leovigild was a useful ruler to think with for seventh-century Iberian churchmen. He was in many respects an ideal king, collaborating with clergy, convening church councils, and enriching the kingdom. However, his interference in religious affairs, the potential of his wealth and influence to change episcopal allegiances, and the potential to undermine the integrity of religious debate raised serious and lingering concerns. Yet, what these concerns did was help churchmen and jurists to reflect on the conditions under which a stable relationship between the king and the Church could be maintained, help to predict actions that might undermine this relationship, and set boundaries meant to mitigate possible transgressions, specifically those that threatened the integrity of episcopal deliberation and consensus-making.

King	Council	Reign
Athanagild		554-567
Leovigild		569-586
	Homoian Council of Toledo	580
Reccared I		586-601
	Third Council of Toledo	589
Sisebut		612-621
Swinthila		621-631
Sisenand		631-636
	Fourth Council of Toledo	633
Chintila		636-639
	Fifth Council of Toledo	636
	Sixth Council of Toledo	638

Fig. 1. List of Visigothic kings and councils

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CONSTRUCTING CANONICAL AUTHORITY. GREGORY THE GREAT AND THE LIBELLUS RESPONSIONUM IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

ROB MEENS[1]

ABSTRACT

This paper looks into the ways in which the memory of Gregory the Great was constructed and used in early medieval Europe. Conrad Leyser distinguished three main ways in which the memory of Gregory was constructed in the early Middle Ages: a Gregory as consolidator of Frankish power, a Gregory as model bishop of Rome and finally a Gregory as model for a bishop in a world without clear political order. By looking at the Libellus Responsionum, a set of answers by Gregory to questions from Augustine of Canterbury, constructions of other Gregories become visible: a Gregory who defended local ecclesiastical customs, endorsed patterns of close kin marriages, and a Gregory who promoted a lenient approach to ritual purity, in particular with regard to women.

KEYWORDS

Memory; Gregory the Great; Libellus Responsionum; Christianization; Ecclesiastical organisation; Marriage; Incest; Ritual purity; Bodily impurity; Local identity

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The choice for a papal name that bishops of Rome made upon their accession to the papal throne, was meaningful.[2] In the reform period of the eleventh century quite a few chose Gregory for a name, and the monk Hildebrand who became Pope Gregory VII is the most outstanding of these. Although it is hard to establish the precise motives that lay behind the choice of a papal name, then as now, it is clear that many eleventh-century Gregories had the first Gregory in mind when choosing their new name.

Hildebrand was probably influenced by his familiarity with the letters of Gregory the Great, by the fame that Gregory enjoyed in Rome in the eleventh century as one of the truly great masters in Christian thinking and writing, by Gregory's association with monasticism, the liturgy and singing, as well as by his physical legacy in Rome through his monastic foundation on the Caelian Hill. The name Gregory certainly rang several bells, and it can be certain that Hildebrand was well aware of the connotations that this name brought with it.

A. CONSTRUCTING GREGORY AND AUTHORITY

Historical memory is no simple thing. It has to be constructed and maintained and in doing so it is always answering specific needs that rose in specific historical circumstances, as Janneke Raaijmakers so wonderfully illustrated in her fundamental work on the identity of the monastery of Fulda.[3] This is also true for the memory of Pope Gregory the Great. In the following we shall look into the ways in which the memory of this pope was constructed. In a fine study Conrad Leyser has highlighted the importance of the memory of Gregory the Great for the formation of Europe in the early Middle Ages. This chapter will look at another authoritative Gregory that emerges from the wide dissemination of a text composed by this bishop in Rome in response to a set of questions put to him by Augustine of Canterbury. This document, best known as the *Libellus Responsionum*, that originated in the context of the early Roman organized mission to England, proved to be attractive in many different contexts. The following discussion will look into the context in which the *Libellus* remained relevant and how it was used to serve local interests. The memory of Gregory that resulted from this continuing use of the *Libellus Responsionum*, as we will see, adds another layer to the construction of the memory of this prominent pope. But let us first look at what we already know about the way in which the memory of Gregory was formed.

Alan Thacker has shown how the memory of Gregory the Great was of particular interest to groups within the English Church that looked back to the bishop of Rome as the founder of the English Church. There was no early cult of Gregory in Rome, which is nicely illustrated by the fact that the earliest *Life of Gregory* was written in Northumbria, in the royal female monastery of Whitby. In England, Gregory's cult was probably promoted by Arch-

[2] Bernd-Ulrich Hergemöller, *Geschichte der Papstnamen* (Münster: Regensberg Verlag, 1981).

[3] Janneke Raaijmakers, *The Making of the Monastic Community of Fulda, c.744-c.900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

bishop Theodore, who had been sent to England by the bishop of Rome, just as his predecessor Augustine had been. In Canterbury, the ties with Rome clearly remained of importance and the memory of Gregory as fount of English Christendom added to the prestige of the archiepiscopal church.[4] To regard Gregory as the founder of the English Church, moreover, helped to realize Theodore's ambitions to act as the sole head of the church in England, and to divide the Northumbrian diocese of Wilfrid.

Bede subscribed to Theodore's ambitions when he attributed the central role in the conversion process in England to Gregory. Bede, however, was not merely acting as a propagandist for Canterbury ecclesiastical policies, but seems to have been genuinely impressed by Gregory's exegesis, which he employed extensively in his own works.[5] The influence of Bede, of both his historical and his exegetical work, surely helped to assure Gregory a place among the Latin Church Fathers, together with Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome, as is already evident in Carolingian library catalogues and book lists.[6] For the monastery of Fulda, the history of which was so dear to Janneke Raaijmakers, the earliest book list, possibly composed during the abbacy of Baugulf (779-802) or Ratgar (802-817), contains at least four works of Gregory: his homilies on the Gospels and on the book of Ezechiel, his *Dialogues* and the *Liber Pastoralis*. Gregory's work is here closely associated with Biblical texts and with the works of Isidore of Seville.[7] It was, however, only in the catalogue from the fifteenth century that Gregory is part of an authoritative group of authors among whom we find Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Origen, Hrabanus Maurus and Bede.[8]

The memory of Gregory the Great was a key element in many different historical contexts and Conrad Leyser has demonstrated how it has contributed to the formation of Europe in a number of ways, for the period between ca. 600 and 1000 CE.[9] Leyser distinguishes three major phases in this process of constructing different Gregories for different purposes. First Gregory's memory was used to support the Carolingian Church and the

4 Alan Thacker, "Memorializing Gregory the Great: the origin and transmission of a papal cult in the seventh and eighth centuries," *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998): 59-84. See also Nicholas Brooks, "Canterbury, Rome and the construction of English identity," in *Early medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in honour of Donald A. Bullough*, ed. Julia Smith (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 221-247.

5 Scott DeGregorio, "The Venerable Bede and Gregory the Great: Exegetical connections, spiritual departures," *Early Medieval Europe* 18 (2010): 43-60, at 45: "Gregory, meanwhile, though not always Bede's most formative source in a given work, is clearly the authority who figures most frequently in each *CCSL* volume [of Bede's exegetical works, RM], suggesting that, of these four Fathers, he is the *auctor* whom Bede consults most consistently throughout his exegetical oeuvre."

6 Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 169-196.

7 Gangolf Schrimpf, *Mittelalterliche Bücherverzeichnisse des Klosters Fulda und andere Beiträge zur Geschichte der Bibliothek des Klosters Fulda im Mittelalter* (Frankfurt a.M.: J. Knecht, 1992), 5-8.

8 Schrimpf, *Mittelalterliche Bücherverzeichnisse*, 100.

9 Conrad Leyser, "The memory of Gregory the Great and the making of Latin Europe, 600-1000," in *Making Early Medieval Societies. Conflict and Belonging in the Latin West, 300-1200*, ed. Kate Cooper and Conrad Leyser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2016), 181-201.

kingdom/empire. His exegesis, the *Regula Pastoralis* and the *Dialogues* formed a vital part not only of Carolingian religious culture, but also of the political order of that era. In the later ninth century the Romans reclaimed Gregory, as is evident in the momentous and widely disseminated *Life* that John the Deacon composed in the early 870s. Gregory was here cast as a model bishop, or a model pope. In the third phase that Leyser distinguishes, Gregory was turned into a recipe for how to deal with a world in which there was no longer a firm secular power. With the fading of the Carolingian empire, Gregory taught bishops how to cope in such a world and his *Registrum*, the collection of his letters, was mined for legitimization of episcopal political behaviour that could at times be unscrupulous. After a Carolingian and a Roman Gregory, we now encounter a "European Gregory", who led the way to thinking about a church that was no longer dependent on secular rulers.

Leyser focusses particularly on the role of the *Life of Gregory* by John the Deacon as well as on Gregory's letters and their use in the *Registrum*. He argues that the world of Liudprand of Cremona, Rather of Verona and Atto of Vercelli was to a considerable degree created with the help of a constructed "legal Gregory", thus demonstrating "the power of cultural memory".[10] This "legal Gregory" was not evident. The image of Gregory as a legal authority was shaped on the basis of a collection of decretals that are found in his famous *Registrum*. This *Registrum*, however, contains only a portion of the letters written by Gregory. It does not reflect the entire corpus, but has been assembled on the basis of a process of selection. The precise criteria for selection are hard to establish, but one can detect a predilection for letters related to Italian affairs.[11] This state of affairs underlines Leyser's assumption that: "the Latin Christendom of Gregory's *Register* is a product not of sixth-century papal administration, but of Carolingian and post-Carolingian memory and myth-making."[12]

B. OTHER GREGORIES

In this contribution I will look into another Gregory that was part of historical memory and a canonical authority in the seventh and eighth century on the basis of a well-known letter that had been, perhaps deliberately, excluded from Gregory's *Registrum*. It concerns the set of answers that the pope supplied when confronted with peculiar problems that Augustine, the monk he had sent from Rome to England to convert the Anglo-Saxons, had encountered in the early phase of the Christianization of the South of England.[13] This *Rescriptum beati Gregorii papae ad Augustinum episcopum* was called *Responsiones beati papae Gregorii ad consulta*

[10] Ibid., 181.
[11] Ibid., 190.
[12] Ibid., 182.
[13] Richard Shaw, *The Gregorian Mission to Kent in Bede's Ecclesiastical History: Methodology and Sources* (London: Routledge, 2018).

reuerentissimi antistitis Augustini by Bede when he incorporated it in his *History of the English Church and People*, but is best known as the *Libellus Responsionum*.[14]

In this work Gregory responds to a number of issues raised by Augustine. The latter sought advice and support on a variety of topics, which can be divided into three major fields. The first field can be summarized as regarding ecclesiastical organization. Gregory discusses the proper relations of a bishop with his clergy, the way in which to ordain a bishop, his relationship with other bishops (in Gaul and Britain), the way of life of the clergy, how to deal with liturgical diversity and how to treat someone who had stolen church property (1-5).[15] A second field touches upon marriage and focusses mainly on the question of when a marriage was regarded as incestuous (6). Gregory allows two brothers to marry two sisters, but forbids marriage with a stepmother or a brother's wife. In most manuscripts we find Gregory allowing marriages within the third or fourth "generation". This lenient attitude towards incest regulation was one of the reasons why later readers questioned the authenticity of this document, from the missionary Boniface in 735 to Suso Brechter in 1941.[16]

The last issue raised by Augustine, to which Gregory responded in amazing detail, concerns the ways in which people who had become impure because of sexual intercourse, menstruation or childbirth had to relate to the sacred. Gregory here answers the questions, for example, whether a pregnant woman can be baptized, how long a woman who has given birth should abstain from entering church or receiving communion, and whether a menstruating woman can receive communion. Gregory also deals with men who had become impure from being sexually defiled in sleep and discusses whether a man can enter church in such a state and whether a priest is allowed to say Mass and receive communion after a nocturnal emission of this kind.

The *Libellus Responsionum* has a complicated textual transmission. It is known in a number of different versions and is found in numerous manuscripts. It is often found in combination with canonical collections and/or penitential books. One of the penitential texts with which it was regularly combined is the Penitential of Theodore of Canterbury, in particular with its two main versions: the *Discipulus Umbrensium*-version and the one known as

[14] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* I, c. 27, ed. Bertram Colgrave and Roger Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 78-102. For Bede's title of the work, see ibid. I, c. 28, p. 102; it is generally referred to as the *Libellus Responsionum*, see e. g. Paul Meyvaert, "Bede's text of the *Libellus Responsionum* of Gregory the Great to Augustine of Canterbury," in *England before the Conquest: Studies in primary sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 15-33, reprinted in Paul Meyvaert, *Benedict, Gregory, Bede and others*. Variorpum Reprints (Londen: Ashgate, 1977), or Bill Friesen, "Answers and echoes: the Libellus responsionum and the hagiography of north-western European mission," *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006): 153-172.

[15] I follow the order of the Letter version here that contains eight questions and answers.

[16] Boniface, *Epistola* 33, ed. Michael Tangl, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1916), 56-58; Suso Brechter, *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission Gregors des Großen. Eine historiographische Studie*. Beiträge zur Geschichte des alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinerordens 22 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941), 13-111. The issue of the authenticity of these parts will be discussed below, 338-339.

the *Canones Gregorii*. Where it is combined with the *Canones Gregorii*-version, as, for example, in the Prague Sacramentary, that intriguing manuscript composed at the end of the eighth century in Bavaria, the whole combination was attributed to Gregory's authority.[17] The *Iudicia Theodori* in this version went by the name *Canones sancti Gregorii pape urbis Romae*, and thus invoked Gregory's authority, although in some places the judgments did not accord with Gregory's views.[18] This attribution to Gregory can be understood as a confirmation of the high esteem in which Gregory was held in Canterbury.[19]

The construction of a canonical Gregory, therefore, need not always have been grounded on his genuine works. This is also demonstrated by the attribution to Gregory of another penitential book in the ninth century. This text contains the title *Excerptum a beato Gregorio Romano editum ex patrum dictis canonumque sententiis de diversis criminibus et remediis eorum*.[20] We can therefore conclude that Gregory's authority was used differently, and in more ways than the three identified and discussed by Conrad Leyser, especially if we take texts attributed to the Roman bishop into account. One of these other "Gregories" will be the subject of this contribution – a Gregory who could be used as a counterweight to the Gregory in the service of rulers, bishops or the papacy that Leyser discusses. This is the Gregory as author of the *Libellus Responsionum*. Although there has been some discussion about the authenticity of this text, it is now generally agreed upon that this is an authentic Gregorian composition. We are therefore dealing with a construction of a Gregory that has some basis in the "real Gregory".[21]

C. THE LIBELLUS RESPONSIONUM

For a long time historians had to rely on the edition of the *Libellus Responsionum* among the letters of Gregory in the *MGH* or on the text as it was included in Bede's *History of the English Church and People*.[22] These editions relied on a limited number of manuscripts, whereas the

17 For the Prague sacramentary, see Carl Hammer, "The social landscape of the Prague Sacramentary: the prosopography of an eighth-century Mass-book," *Traditio* 54 (1999): 41-80; Max Diesenberger, Rob Meens, and Els Rose, eds., *The Prague Sacramentary: Culture, Religion and Politics in Late Eighth-Century Bavaria* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016). For the second part, see Rob Meens, "The authority of Gregory the Great: Marriage and politics in Bavaria in the eighth century as exemplified in the 'Gregorian Part' of the Prague Sacramentary," ibid., 163-180.

18 *Canones Gregorii*, ed. Paul Willem Finsterwalder, *Die Canones Theodori Cantuariensis und ihre Überlieferungsformen*. Untersuchungen zu den Bußbüchern des 7., 8. und 9. Jahrhunderts 1 (Weimar: H. Böhlaus 1929), 253; on the differences with Gregory, see Rob Meens, "Ritual purity and the influence of Gregory the Great in the early Middle Ages," in *Unity and Diversity in the Church*. Studies in Church History 32, ed. R. N. Swanson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31-43.

19 See Thacker, "Memorializing," 75-76; Meens, "Ritual purity and the influence of Gregory the Great."

20 The so-called *Paenitentiale Pseudo-Gregorii*, ed. Franz Kerff, "Das Paenitentiale Pseudo-Gregorii. Eine kritische Edition," in *Aus Archiven und Bibliotheken. Festschrift für Raymund Kottje zum 65.Geburtstag*, ed. Hubert Mordek (Frankfurt am Main etc.: Peter Lang, 1992), 161-188, at 163; this is the title as it is found in Ms. Montpellier, Bibl. Univ. H. 137.

21 See 338-339 below.

22 Ed. Ludovicus Hartmann, *MGH Epp.* 2 (Berlin: Weidmann 1899), 331-343 and the edition of Bede, see n. 14.

work is, as already indicated, known in many different versions and was transmitted in a large number of manuscripts and in many different contexts. It is fortunate that the *Libellus Responsionum* has recently been edited anew by Valeria Mattaloni on the basis of a much larger number of manuscripts, providing us with the opportunity to get a deeper insight not only in the different forms in which this text was disseminated, but also into the manuscript transmission itself.[23] Mattaloni's meticulous work has in general confirmed the hypotheses of the late Paul Meyvaert.[24] Meyvaert was a strong advocate for the authenticity of the *Libellus* and his views are generally substantiated by Mattaloni's analysis of the filiation of the manuscripts. Mattaloni has investigated in a convincing way the relations between the manuscripts of the *Libellus* and the different versions in which it is transmitted. The fact that she missed a few manuscripts will probably not affect the overall results.[25] The issue of the authenticity of the incest regulation, however, is still problematic, as will be discussed below.

Meyvaert's preliminary work on this text established the existence of three versions in which it is transmitted: a Letter-version, which contains some formalities pertaining to a letter, a Capitula-version, in which the text is divided into ten different chapters (*capitula*), and a Question and Answer-version that is formatted around a formal question (*interrogatio*) and a response by Gregory (*respondit Gregorius*). Mattaloni has further refined this distinction, and added some subgroups: the *Capitula condensata* as a subset of the Capitula-version. The Question and Answer version is renamed as the *Redactio in decem interrogationibus sine prologo* (in short: *Decem sine*) by Mattaloni, which then contains three subsets, the group containing nine interrogations without the prologue, the group with nine interrogations to which the prologue was added from a different branch of the transmission and, finally, a late branch in twelve chapters.

Dating these versions is not easy because in general the manuscripts are quite late. The earliest manuscript containing the *Libellus* is Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Ny.Kgl. S. 58 8º, written in the first half of the eighth century, probably in Northern France, containing the Letter-version of the text.[26] Around the same period Bede included the *Libellus* in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Of the 52 manuscripts that Mattaloni used for her edition, only three

[23] Valeria Mattaloni, ed., *Rescriptum beati Gregorii papae ad Augustinum episcopum seu Libellus responsionum* (Florence: Galluzzo, 2017).

[24] See Meyvaert, "Bede's text" or idem, "Le *Libellus Responsionum* à Augustin de Cantorbéry: une oeuvre authentique de Saint Grégoire le Grand," in *Grégoire le Grand. Colloques internationaux du C.N.R.S.: Chantilly, Centre culturel Les Fontaines, 15-19 septembre 1982*, ed. Jacques Fontaine et al. (Paris: Éd. du C.N.R.S. 1986), 543-549.

[25] The *Libellus* is transmitted in the following manuscripts that Mattaloni was not aware of: Vienna, ÖNB, 2195 (s. VIII^{ex}, Salzburg); Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, Ms. O 83 (s. VIII^{ex}, Bavaria); Bruges, Openbare Bibliotheek, Ms. 99, fol. 82r-87r (s. XI); Brussels, KBR, 9706-25, fol. 113r-116v (s. XI^{in}, Liège).

[26] Rob Meens, "The oldest manuscript witness of the *Collectio canonum Hibernensis*," *Peritia* 14 (2000): 1-19 and the discussion in Michael Elliot, "Boniface, incest, and the earliest extant version of Pope Gregory's Libellus responsionum (JE 1843)," *Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte, Kanonistische Abteilung* 131 (2014): 62-111, at 105-109.

are from the eighth century. Given this relatively late manuscript tradition, it is not surprising that scholars in the past have argued that the text was a forgery, concocted in the early eighth century.[27] As is clear from the stemma codicum constructed by Mattaloni, however, Bede used a version that is quite removed from the original form of the document. His text represents a version that requires at least eight intermediary steps from the original document. Mattaloni's reconstruction of the manuscript transmission, therefore, substantiates Meyvaert's preliminary conclusions that Bede knew a later redaction of the *Libellus*, several steps removed from the original, and that therefore the *Libellus* must have been substantially older than its earliest manuscripts. This conclusion confirms that there is no reason to doubt that we are dealing with a document composed by Gregory the Great, reacting to inquiries from Augustine of Canterbury, as is the general consensus among historians who have recently scrutinised this text.[28]

The latest redaction of the *Libellus Responsionum* is named the version in twelve chapters by Mattaloni: the version *Duodecim capitula*. It contains the *Libellus Responsionum* in a reworking of the Question and Answer version combined with the Capitula version, in which the eight questions are now presented as twelve chapters. As the stemma indicates, this is a version at the bottom end of the transmission, requiring at least nine steps from Gregory's original letter. The oldest manuscript containing this version is, however, relatively early. It concerns ms. Paris, BnF, lat. 3848B, written at the end of the eighth or the early ninth century in the monastery of Flavigny.[29] From this we have to conclude that all the versions that Mattaloni distinguished and edited were already in existence by the beginning of the ninth century, if not earlier. The fact that we are dealing with so many redactions all dating from the seventh or eighth century, points to the interest that the *Libellus Responsionum* raised, although, as already indicated, most manuscripts stem from a later period. The fact that so many manuscripts from later ages survive, shows that the text continued to find avid readers.

Can we find out what these avid readers were looking for and what made it worthwhile to copy and edit this text for such a long time after its composition? After all, the questions posed by Augustine had arisen in a very specific historical context, the early phase of Christianization in England. Augustine felt the urge to seek papal advice, perhaps less because he did not know how to answer them, but rather because he was confronted with Christians who opposed some of his views and therefore needed papal backing.[30] Why were

[27] Forcefully argued by Brechter, *Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission*. For a review of the discussion regarding its authenticity, see Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 8-13

[28] Elliot, "Boniface, incest" and Karl Ubl, *Inzestverbot und Gesetzgebung. Die Konstruktion eines Verbrechens (300-1100)* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2008), 223; Friesen, "Answers and echoes;" Rob Meens, "A background to Augustine's Mission to Anglo-Saxon England," *Anglo-Saxon England* 23 (1994): 5-17.

[29] Hubert Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich: die Collectio Vetus Gallica: die älteste systematische Kanonessammlung des fränkischen Gallien: Studien und Edition* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 111.

[30] Meens, "Background."

these issues still of interest to later generations in different areas of Europe? And were all of the topics that Augustine raised of equal interest to later generations? We have seen that the topics for which Augustine sought advice and support can be divided into three major fields: ecclesiastical organization, marriage and incest and ritual impurity. Can we distinguish which of these were of particular interest to the eager readers and avid redactors of this document?

As I have argued elsewhere, all three of these fields probably appealed to leading figures in the Bavarian Church at the end of the eighth century.[31] In Bavaria there seems to have been an eager interest in the *Libellus*, often in combination with the Penitential of Theodore in one of its extant versions. We know of at least four manuscripts that were written in Bavaria or introduced there in the eighth century that contained this combination.[32] Both Theodore's Penitential and the *Libellus Responsionum* deal with issues of ecclesiastical organization, incest regulations and ritual purity, although they do not always agree. We have evidence of two periods in the eighth century where there was serious conflict in the Bavarian Church province, leading to political unrest where these issues were of major concern. In the 730s Boniface spent two prolonged periods in Bavaria where he tried to organize the Church according to his own ideals.[33] Boniface had found the Bavarians living "outside the ecclesiastical order", and with backing from the pope and Duke Odilo he sought to remedy this situation. The pope speaks about priests who had not been ordained properly, Christians who had not been baptized in a correct way, unruly Britons and the possibly Irish bishop Vivolo who did not live according to ecclesiastical regulations.[34] We know that there were other Irish bishops active in Bavaria at the time, such as Dobdagrecus and Virgil, who were closely associated with the monastery of St. Peter in Salzburg. Such bishops followed Irish ecclesiastical customs rather than the Roman ones that Boniface asserted. Boniface's attempt to organize the Church in Bavaria did not proceed smoothly. In the 740s political unrest forced duke Odilo to seek protection at the Frankish court. Boniface's actions seem to have played their part in provoking serious opposition. The reforms promoted by him must have endangered vested interest in such a way that his opponents resorted to violent resistance. One can understand that some of the ecclesiastical leaders criticized by Boniface belonged to, or had close relations with, powerful families in the region. The way in which Gregory

[31] Meens, "The authority of Gregory the Great."

[32] Mss. Vienna, ÖNB, lat. 2195 and 2233; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14780; and the Prague Sacramentary, Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, Ms. O 83.

[33] See, in general, Stephan Freund, *Von den Agilolfingern zu den Karolingern. Bayerns Bischöfe zwischen Kirchenorganisation, Reichsintegration und karolingischer Reform (700-847)*. Schriftenreihe zur Bayerischen Landesgeschichte 144 (Munich: Beck, 2004), 43-82 and Leanne Good, "Boniface in Bavaria," in *A Companion to Boniface*, ed. Michael Aaij and Shannon Godlove (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 299-326.

[34] See the letters from Pope Gregory III to Bavarian bishops (738) and to Boniface (739), *Epistola* 44 and 45, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1, 70-74. For Vivolo's possible Irish background, see Carl Hammer "'For all the saints'. Bishop Vivolo of Passau and the eighth century origins of the feast," *Revue Mabillon* 15 (2004): 5-26.

the Great had instructed Augustine to deal with bishops in Britain must have pleased Boniface: they were to be subjected to the authority of the bishop sent by the pope so that "the unlearned will be instructed, the weak will by strengthened by persuasion and the perverse will be corrected with authority."[35] On the other hand, the *Libellus* pleaded for tolerance regarding differences of ecclesiastical traditions. If Augustine were to encounter customs (*consuetudines*) that differed from those in Rome, he should be allowed to follow these if he thought they were more pleasing to God, "for things should not be loved for the sake of a place, but places should be loved for the sake of good things."[36]

In some Insular circles we can observe a concern for an improper relation between matters concerning sex, menstruation and childbirth on the one hand, and the sacred on the other. Substances related to sexuality, menstruation and childbirth were seen as causing impurity, and such impurity had to be separated from the sacred, that is the eucharist and the church building. Finnian's *Penitential*, for example, possibly the earliest handbook for the instruction of a priest to hear confession, provides rules for periods of sexual abstention between spouses. They need to keep to these rules, to be worthy to receive the body of the Lord.[37] This penitential circulated in Bavaria in the eighth century.[38] The penitential written by the Irish abbot Cummean in the seventh century, again a text known in Bavaria in the eighth century, adds the wife's monthly periods to the times spouses should abstain from sexual activities. Cummean also specified that a couple should abstain after the birth of a child, in the case of a son for 33 days, in the case of a daughter 66.[39] As demonstrated by the number of days, this regulation was inspired by prescriptions from the book of Leviticus 12, 4-5. Cummean also ordered a specific fast for someone who had received communion after having been polluted in a dream during the night.[40] Gregory the Great responded to such concerns in *Responsio* seven and eight at great length, stressing a more allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament regulations about impurity caused by menstruation, childbirth, or seminal emissions. He refers to the text of Leviticus that forbids the entry into the Temple for 33 days after the birth of a boy and for 66 days if it were a girl, but he adds that this should be understood figuratively. If the woman would enter a church in the very hour that she deliv-

35 *Libellus Responsionum*, Epistola Version, c. 5.6, ed. Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 424: *Brittannorum uero omnes episcopos tuae fraternitati commisimus, ut indocti doceantur, infirmi persuasione roborentur, peruersi auctoritate corrigantur.*

36 *Libellus Responsionum*, Epistola Version, c. 2, ed. Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 420: *Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt.*

37 *Paenitentiale Vinniani*, c. 46, ed. Ludwig Bieler, *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1963), 90-92; For Finnian's work, see Rob Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe 600-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 47-52.

38 Rob Meens, "Kanonisches Recht in Salzburg am Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts. Das Zeugnis des *Paenitentiale Vindobonense B*," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 113. *Kanonistische Abteilung* 82 (1996): 13-34.

39 *Paenitentiale Cummeani* II, c. 30-31, ed. Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 116.

40 *Paenitentiale Cummeani* (XI), c. 10, ed. Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 130.

ered to give thanks, she would not be burdened by a sin.[41] Theodore of Canterbury followed a more literal interpretation of the Old Testament rules and the tension between the different views on ritual purity would remain one of the remarkable continuities of medieval attitudes toward bodiliy impurity and the sacred.[42] Interestingly, the four manuscripts from Bavaria containing the *Libellus Responsionum* do so in combination with a version of Theodore's Penitential.[43] The circulation of the *Libellus* and Theodore's Penitential in Bavaria, as we have seen mostly in combination with one another, demonstrates that the topic of ritual purity, the body, and the sacred was of great interest in that region in the eighth century. The fact that this region was a point of contact between monks, missionaries and priests from different backgrounds – Bavarian, Italian, Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Irish – might explain this interest since opinions on these matters seem to have diverged quite a bit.

The third main topic in the *Libellus* concerns marriage and incest. Augustine had asked about the grade (*generatio*) up to which Christians could marry one another and whether it was permissable to marry a stepmother or a sister-in-law. Marriage with stepmother and sister-in law could not be permitted Gregory stated. He allowed, however, marriages concluded by partners who were related to one another in the third or fourth *generatio*. This papal ruling caused as much of a stir in the eighth century as it did in the twentieth. Boniface, for example, could not believe that a pope had decided that Christians could marry within the third grade of consanguinity (*in tertia generatione propinquitatis*) and in 735 made inquiries into the authenticity of the *Libellus Responsionum*.[44] Seven years later he wrote to Pope Zachary, having been confronted with a powerful lay person (*laicus quidam magne personae*) who claimed that Pope Gregory had granted him the privilege to marry within the third degree (*in tertio ienuculo*). The pope, Zachary, replied that although people in Germania were convinced that it was possible to marry within the third degree, this was certainly not allowed and a great sin.[45] It is uncertain whether the powerful person that Boniface wrote about was from Bavaria, but it seems certain that he was from Germania and, since this letter was written in the period that Boniface was mainly engaged in Bavaria, it is plausible that he

41 *Libellus Responsionum*, Epistola Version, c. 7, ed. Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 430: *Cum uero enixa fuerit mulier, post quot debeat dies ecclesiam intrare, testamenti ueteris praeceptione didicisti, ut pro masculo diebus XXXIII, pro femina autem diebus LXVI debeat abstinere. Quod tamen sciendum est, quia in mysterio accipitur: nam, si hora eadem qua genuerit actura gratias intret ecclesiam, nullo peccati pondere grauetur.*

42 Rob Meens, "Questioning ritual purity. The influence of Gregory the Great's answers to Augustine's queries about childbirth, menstruation and sexuality," in *St. Augustine and the Conversion of England*, ed. Richard Gameson (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 174-186 and idem, "'A relic from superstition'. Bodily purity and the Church from Gregory the Great to the twelfth century Decretists," in *Purity and Holiness. The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. Marcel Poorthuis and Joshua Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 281-293.

43 See n. 32 above.

44 Boniface, *Epistola* 33, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1, 57.

45 Boniface, *Epistola* 50 and the response by Zachary in *Epistola* 51, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1, 83-84 and 90; see also the reaction during the Council of Rome (743), ed. Albert Werminghoff, *MGH Conc.* 2.1 (Hannover/Leipzig: Hahn, 1906), 20 and 30.

had to deal with a powerful Bavarian nobleman who apparently had other ideas about the possible choice of marriage partners.[46]

In a letter written in the year 800 for the people of Bavaria, lay and clerical, the pope, this time Leo III, again referred to the *Libellus Responsionum*. In this letter of support for the new archbishop of Salzburg, Arn, the Pope not only urged the population to submit to Arn's authority, but also addressed the issue of the incestuous marriages in Bavaria that were to be found "in many places". He countered Bavarian claims made on the basis of the matrimonial decisions of Gregory the Great, that a marriage within the third degree was permissible. Leo in this context also referred to Pope Zachary's refutation of the claims of the *Libellus* on the behest of Boniface sixty years earlier.[47] We do not know precisely to whom this pertains, but we do know that Arn was involved some ten years earlier in an inheritance dispute among the powerful Huosi family. This dispute revolved around the possession of a church in Haushausen and must have been a matter of serious concern since not only bishop Arn of Salzburg was called in to help settle this dispute, but also the powerful prefect Gerold, brother of queen Hildegard, and the chamberlain Meginfred. Negotiations lasted for three days before these political heavyweights were able to settle the dispute.[48] Inheritance and marriage policies are, of course, closely related and it is therefore perfectly possible that the legitimacy of a specific marriage within the powerful Huosi family played a part in this conflict. Such a setting would explain the interest in the *Libellus Responsionum* in Bavaria at the end of the eighth century.[49]

The marriage regulations have also been a difficult problem for historians, for their authenticity has often been disputed. Suso Brechter in particular questioned their Gregorian origin because they use the "Germanic way" of counting degrees of kinship and because the *Libellus* forbade marriages with relatives through affinity such as a stepmother and sister-in-law.[50] Paul Meyvaert, a staunch defender of the authenticity of the *Libellus Responsionum*, regarded this specific response as a later interpolation, produced in the Lombard region. Many scholars have followed his suggestion.[51] Karl Ubl, however, in a fundamental study of early medieval incest regulations, argued that there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of these parts of the *Libellus*. One of the arguments was that it would be difficult for a Roman pope to employ the "'Germanic way" of counting the degrees of kinship. Ubl, however, has demonstrated that a "Germanic way" of counting degrees of kinship is a purely scholarly

46 Elliot, "Boniface, incest," 77 suggests the nobleman might be from Francia or Bavaria.

47 Leo III, *Epistola* 5, ed. Karl Hampe, *MGH Epp.* 5 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 60-63, at 62.

48 *Die Traditionen des Hochstifts Freising*, no. 142, ed. Theodor Bitterauf (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1967), 147; for the unusual character of this case, see Warren Brown, *Unjust Seizure. Conflict, Interest, and Authority in an Early Medieval Society* (Ithaca NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 68-72.

49 As I argued in "The authority of Gregory the Great."

50 Brechter, *Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission*, 74-81.

51 Meyvaert, "Bede's text of the *Libellus Responsionum*," 33; idem, "Le *Libellus Responsionum* à Augustin de Cantorbéry," 544.

construct that had no equivalent on the ground. Morover, he showed that Gregory did not follow Germanic customs here, but Biblical models. Gregory's decisions, moreover, were in perfect agreement with the provisions of Roman law of the period.[52] The authenticity of Gregory's decisions on incest and marriage has also been defended in a detailed study by Michael Elliot.[53] Elliott is the only one who challenged the chronology of the different versions of the *Libellus Responsionum* as proposed by Paul Meyvaert. Meyvaert regarded the Letter Version as the earliest one and the other two as derivative versions. The Letter version omits, however, the disputed judgments regarding the third and fourth degree of kinship.[54] Basing himself on the early transmission of the text and on stylistic arguments, Elliot is convinced that the Capitula version is in fact the earliest versions of the work. Mattaloni apparently was not aware of Elliot's article, that came out very shortly before the publication of her edition. If she did, she did not take his arguments into account and followed Meyvaert in regarding the Letter version as the earliest form of the *Libellus*. Yet, a look at the *stemma codicum* presented by Mattaloni demonstrates that Elliot's suggestion that the Capitula version is closer to the archetype, would be perfectly possible.[55]

The reform of the Bavarian Church by Boniface and Arn, the presence of insular bishops and monks in the region, and disputes over marriage policies at the time of Boniface and Arn, which involved aristocratic families in Bavaria, such as the Huosi, made all of the three main issues raised by the *Libellus* – ecclesiastical organization, marriage and incest, and ritual impurity – of topical interest. For Bavaria, we are in a position to evaluate at least to some extent the importance of the *Libellus* in the context of the politics, ecclesiastical reforms and cultural movements of the age. In other regions, interest in the *Libellus* was perhaps just as lively as its manuscript tradition, the existence of different versions of the text, and the regular citations and references to the text indicate.

Mattaloni's edition provides us with another means of looking into the question of what intrigued early medieval readers in Gregory's work. She notices a number of manuscripts which only contain particular parts of the text. According to Mattaloni it was mainly the questions concerning incestuous marriages and ritual purity that drew special attention.[56] Some of these manuscripts, however, date from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and we may assume that in the later Middle Ages readers had other interests in this text, prompted, for example, by its employment by Gratian in his *Decretum*.[57] If we look at the earlier manuscripts, dating to the year 1000, we can conclude that *responsiones* two (liturgi-

52 Ubl, *Inzestverbot*, 220-223.

53 Michael Elliot, "Boniface, incest."

54 *Libellus Responsionum*, c. 6, ed. Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 426.

55 See the *stemma codicum* in Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 415.

56 Mattaloni, *Rescriptum*, 50.

57 Gratian, *Decretum* D. 5, dict. Ante 1, ed. Emile Friedberg, *Corpus Iuris Canonici* 1 (Leipzig: Tauchnitz 1879), 7; translation in *Gratian. The Treatise on Laws (DD 1-20) with the Ordinary Gloss*. Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Canon Law 2, tr. Augustine Thompson, O.P. and James Godley and an Introduction by

cal diversity), six (marriage and incest) seven and eight (ritual purity) were apparently the favourites, so in general this complies with Mattaloni's observations regarding the whole corpus.

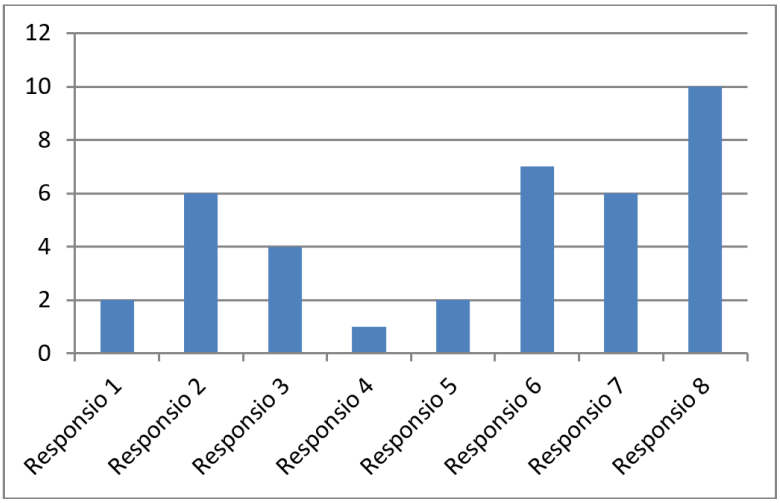

Table 1. Frequency of appearance of single responses in manuscripts before 1000 CE

The choice made in these manuscripts demonstrates that Gregory's marriage regulations and the careful discussion of ritual purity attracted a lot of attention, as did *responsio* two in which Gregory advised Augustine to learn from the Christian customs that he had encountered in Gaul on his journey to England.

CONCLUSION: A LOCAL ARISTOCRATIC GREGORY?

I think we can say that the *Rescriptum beati Gregorii papae ad Augustinum episcopum*, as the many versions that came into existence in the seventh and eight centuries clearly show, was a document that made quite an impact in this period. The surviving manuscripts are almost all from the ninth century and later, thereby indicating that the text remained of interest in a later period. The *Libellus Responsionum* was often connected to penitential and canonical collections, thus demonstrating Gregory's authority in these matters. It is noteworthy that most texts emphasize the Gregorian character of the text. Giles Constable and Michael Elliot have drawn attention to the fact that apart from Boniface, no one in the Middle Ages questioned the authenticity of the *Libellus*.[58] Gregory's canonical status, therefore, was clearly not solely

Katherine Christensen (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 16; for later canonists referring to the *Libellus*, see Meens, "A relic from superstition," 290.

58 Giles Constable, "The treatise 'Hortatur nos' and accompanying canonical texts. On the performance of pastoral works by monks," in *Speculum Historiae. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und*

based on his *Registrum* and we have to take into account the role of the *Libellus Responsionum* in the construction of Gregory as a canonical authority. The authority of the *Libellus Responsionum* was so respected that forgeries were being produced in order to counter the views on marriage found in the *Libellus*.[59] The *Libellus* was eventually included in Gratian's *Decretum* and this contributed substantially to a continuing interest in the text in the new field of the study of canon law for which Gratian had laid a firm base.

The Gregory of the *Libellus* does not fit the three Gregories that Conrad Leyser distinguished when considering the ways in which the memory of this Pope was constructed. Was Gregory put in the service of the Carolingian Church and of Carolingian rule here, or are we seeing him as a model Roman bishop or as a bishop having to deal with a Church free (or freed) from temporal lordship? I think we see a rather different Gregory here. This was a bishop of Rome who did not necessarily regard things Roman as superior, a bishop who allowed marriages within a degree of consanguinity that were forbidden by later Roman bishops, and a religious authority who was less strict in matters concerning ritual purity than for example Theodore of Canterbury, who had been sent to Canterbury by Gregory's successor Vitalian. In Bavaria, and possibly elsewhere, Gregory's authority was apparently invoked in order to withstand certain attacks on aristocratic marriage policies. We have no clear evidence that his moral support for liturgical variety, if that is what is being meant by ecclesiastical customs, was invoked in specific cases, but the stress on the second *responsio* in the transmission, does suggest this. The same could be said about his more lenient attitude towards women who were held to be impure because of their bodily state. As I have shown elsewhere, some authors of penitential books referred to Gregory's views when they encountered a stricter attitude in their sources, sometimes even supplanting the views of Theodore with those of Gregory.[60] Instead of a rather authoritarian Gregory, we can observe in the Gregory of the *Libellus Responsionum* a canonical authority that was remembered and constructed in order to defend local forms of Christian practice, to endorse existing marriage patterns among the aristocracy – and possibly among other Christians as well – and to support a more lenient attitude towards ritual purity, particularly in the case of women. If we want to bring this Gregory under a single label, we might perhaps regard him as a Gregory in the service of local aristocratic churches that were regularly in clear opposition to the centralizing tendencies in the Carolingian Church as promoted by Boniface *et eiusmodi similes*. As such this Gregory could not be further removed from the views and ambitions of his successor in the eleventh century, who took his name and whom we now know as Gregory VII.

Geschichtsdeutung, ed. Clemens Bauer, Laetitia Boehm, and Max Müller (Freiburg: Alber, 1965), 567-577, at 570; Elliot, "Boniface, incest," 67-70.

59 Lambert Machielsen, "Les 'spurii' de S. Grégoire le Grand en matière matrimoniale, dans les collections canoniques jusqu'au Décret de Gratien," *Sacris erudiri* 14 (1963): 251-270.

60 Meens, "Ritual purity and the influence of Gregory the Great."

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WRITING AS JEROME: ON PASCHASIUS RADBERTUS AND HIS SERMON FOR THEODRADA AND IMMA

MAYKE DE JONG[1]

ABSTRACT

Paschasius Radbertus, monk of Corbie and biblical commentator, wrote a sermon on the Assumption of Mary for Theodrada, abbess of Notre-Dame in Soissons, and her daughter, the nun Imma. Here, the author presented himself as Jerome, writing to Paula and Eustochium. This was not a forgery, but a way to define and enhance his relations between Radbert and the nunnery where he had been raised from infancy. 'Writing as Jerome' suggests a younger author who appealed to the familiarity he shared with his court-connected and highly influential recipients, aiming to impress and flatter them.

KEYWORDS

Paschasius Radbertus; Jerome; Exegesis; Notre-Dame (Soissons); Theodrada and Imma; Mary as mother and virgin; Widows and child oblates; By-names and aliases

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In 2017 Janneke Raaijmakers published a remarkable article on Claudius, bishop of Turin (817-827), with the subtitle "self-styling in early medieval debate". She argued that the later image of Claudius as a solitary figure who courageously deviated from mainstream beliefs, was largely of the bishop's own making. In the debates of the 820s about the status of relics, Claudius presented himself as a lonely truth-teller, entirely in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets. Despite the best efforts of Dungal and others to undermine Claudius' reputation, the latter's strategy proved successful. In modern times, critics of relic veneration still admired the bishop of Turin's stance on this topic, and held him to be a proto-Protestant. As Raaijmakers concluded, in court-connected Carolingian debates "one's *persona* was as much part of polemic (both as a critic of relic veneration and as the subject of discussion) as one's command of language and one's biblical expertise."[2]

These reflections on Claudius' self-styling reminded me of his contemporary Paschasius Radbertus, monk and abbot of Corbie (c. 790-c. 860/865). One of the most prolific biblical commentators of his generation, Radbert was a frequent presence in his own work. This is the case in his *Epitaphium Arsenii*, a funeral oration for Abbot Wala of Corbie, where Radbert figures as Pascasius (spelt thus in the original manuscript), the narrator who relates Wala's exploits to two fellow monks of Corbie.[3] In a very different way, Radbert was present in the Mariological treatise known to modern scholarship as *Cogitis me*, after its first two words.[4] Here, he wrote as Jerome, his much-admired example as a monk and biblical scholar. Allegedly at their request, "Jerome" sent his well-known patroness Paula and her daughter Eustochium a sermon (*sermo*) to instruct this twosome and the nuns in their charge on the Assumption of the Virgin Mary; the other aim of the operation was to provide appropriate readings for this particular feast day. The names Paula and Eustochium denoted two contemporary and highborn nuns: Charlemagne's cousin Theodrada (d. 846), since 810

[2] Janneke Raaijmakers, "I Claudius. Self-styling in early medieval debate," *Early Medieval Europe* 25 (2017): 70-84, at 84.

[3] Mayke de Jong, "Becoming Jeremiah. Radbert on Wala, himself and others," in *Ego Trouble. Authors and their identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 15, ed. Richard Corradini, Mattew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick, and Irene van Renswoude (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 185-196; eadem, *Epitaph for an Era. Politics and Rhetoric in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 132-148. For a more general discussion of personal identity in the early Middle Ages, see the articles collected in the volume *Ego Trouble* just mentioned, and Paul E. Dutton, "The identification of persons in Frankish Europe," *Early Medieval Europe* 26 (2018): 135-173.

[4] Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, ed. Albert Ripberger, *Epistola beati Hieronymi ad Paulam et Eustochium de assumption sanctae Mariae virginis.Der Pseudo-Hieronymus-Brief IX "Cogitis me". Ein erster Marianischer Traktat des Mittelalters von Paschasius Radbertus*. Spicilegium Friburgense 9 (Freiburg [CH]: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1962). The edition, but not the introduction, has been reprinted as *Pascasii Radberti epistula beati Hieronymi ad Paulam et Eutochium de assumptione sanctae Mariae virginis*, ed. Albert Ripberger, *CCCM* 56C (Turnhout: Brepols), 1985, 99-162. The chapter division of the original edition has been maintained; here I refer to the 1962-edition. It is easy to find the relevant passages in *CCCM* 56C via the chapter numbers.

the abbess of Notre-Dame in Soissons, and her daughter Imma who had also entered this court-connected convent.[5]

At first glance, the extraordinary success of this sermon seems to point towards some kind of fraud, pious or not. Archbishop Hincmar included it in a festive liturgical codex produced in Rheims in the late 840s, implicitly accepting Jerome's authorship. This happened while Radbert was still alive, and regularly encountered Hincmar at synods.[6] Some twenty years later, the archbishop explicitly threw the weight of his authority behind the ascription to Jerome. Thanks to a fine piece of detective work by Cyrille Lambot in 1934, it transpired that in the late 860s, and probably after Radbert's death, the latter's fellow-monk and competitor Ratramnus attacked the authenticity of Jerome's authorship of *Cogitis me*. Not only did he reveal Radbert as the actual author of this work, he also exposed his former abbot as having penned other texts pretending to be Jerome. In a letter of 868-869 to Odo, bishop of Beauvais and Radbert's successor as abbot of Corbie, Hincmar strenuously defended Jerome's authorship. Hincmar's view prevailed: well into the twelfth century *Cogitis me* counted as Jerome's homily, which provided the readings for the liturgy of Assumption.[7] But what about Ratramnus' attack on its authenticity in the late 860s? Surely, as a monk of Corbie he was in a position to know who the real author of the text was. If indeed Radbert had died by then, it may have made it easier for his critic to speak out in public.

Modern scholarship is divided on Radbert's reasons for writing as Jerome. According to Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, this made Radbert an even more likely candidate to be Pseudo-Isidore, the elusive forger who created the infamous False Decretals. For Zechiel-Eckes, *Cogitis me* was deliberate forgery in order to assume Jerome's authority.[8] The editor of the text, Albert Ripberger, argues that early medieval authors like Radbert were so beholden to patristic authority that any deviation from tradition required patristic support and foundation. Of course, this led to presenting one's own ideas by assuming the guise of the fathers; hence the many pseudo-writings in circulation.[9] For Conrad Leyser and Hannah Matis, however, it must have been crystal-clear who was behind "Jerome", at least to the recipients of the text, Theodrada and her daughter Emma: the brilliant young monk who had been raised in Notre-Dame of Soissons and with whom they enjoyed friendship and familiarity.

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5 Reinhold Kaiser, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Zivitas und Diözese Soissons in römischer und merowingischer Zeit*. Rheinisches Archiv 89 (Bonn: Ludwig Rörscheid Verlag, 1973), 256-277.

6 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 7-9, ed. Ripberger, 7-9; Hannah Matis, "The seclusion of Eustochium: Paschasius Radbertus and the nuns of Soissons," *Church History* 85 (2016): 665-689, at 671-688.

7 Cyrille Lambot, "L'homélie du pseudo-Jerome sur l'Assomption et l'Evangile de la nativité de Marie d'après une lettre inédite d'Hincmar," *Revue bénédictine* 46 (1934): 265-282; accepted by Ripberger in the introduction to his edition.

8 Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, "Fälschung als Mittel politischer Auseinandersetzung. Ludwig der Fromme (814-840) und die Genese der pseudoisidorischen Dekretalen," *Nordrhein-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Künste, Vorträge: Geisteswissenschaften* 428 (2011): 5-22.

9 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, ed. Ripberger, 7.

Matis compares Radbert's choice of aliases to Alcuin's role-playing at Charlemagne's court, which had included Theodrada's sister Gundrada.[10]

Indeed, it seems highly unlikely that Radbert's authorship remained hidden from Theodrada and her daughter, and from his inner circle in general. In what follows, I shall argue that taking Jerome's name, and designating the abbess and her daughter as Paula and Eustochium, was Radbert's strategy to associate himself with the much-admired biblical scholar he aspired to be like; it was also a way to articulate and shape his relationship with Theodrada and Imma. There was certainly an element of playfulness in this, yet it was deeply serious as well, in which Radbert's strong ties with these nuns were highlighted with reference to the most authoritative Christian past: the age of the fathers. Why Hincmar embraced Jerome as the author of *Cogitis me* in the 840s, and defended this authorship in the late 860s, is another matter altogether, which should be investigated in its own context.[11] Here I will focus on the early history of *Cogitis me* and on the question when and why in this particular work Radbert decided to cast himself in the guise of Jerome and his recipients in that of Paula and Eustochium.[12] Although it is difficult to pin a precise date on this text, there are indications that it was one of Radbert's earlier works. A young man wanted to impress and flatter his royal educators, and to honour the most brilliant biblical commentator and scholar of the Christian past.

A. RADBERT AND THE NUNS OF NOTRE-DAME

As Radbert proudly wrote in his *Life of Adalhard*, the latter and his four siblings – Wala, Gundrada, Bernarius and Theodrada – stemmed from a royal lineage (*regalis prosapia*).[13] Their father Bernard was a son of Charles Martel (714-741) and thus the half-brother of Pippin III (741-768). In the course of Pippin's reign, Bernard and his children came to be seen as illegitimate, that is, not suitable for royal succession, yet the sense that they were the kinsmen of the rulers remained strong; both Bernard and his sons Adalhard and Wala were close to the court and faithful magnates of Charlemagne. Gundrada was also part of Charles' entourage

[10] Conrad Leyser, "From maternal kin to Jesus as mother: Royal Genealogy and Marian devotion in the Ninth-century West," in *Motherhood, Religion and Society in Medieval Europe, 400-1400: Essays presented to Henrietta Leyser*, ed. Leslie Smith and Conrad Leyser (London: Routledge, 2011), 30-40, at 35; Matis, "The seclusion of Eustochium," 673-675.

[11] Irene van Renswoude is investigating ninth-century discussions on the reception of apocryphal and other anonymous texts, with special attention to the case of Hincmar, Radbert and Ratramnus. On censored manuscripts of apocryphal narratives on Mary and Jesus, see also Irene van Renswoude, "What (not) to read in times of crisis. Responses to the first index of banned books," in *Threatened Knowledge. Practices of Knowing and Ignoring in Times of Threat*, ed. Renate Dürr (London: Routledge, 2021), 25-51.

[12] Philip Rousseau, "'Learned women' and the formation of a Christian Culture in Late Antiquity," *Symbolae Osloenses* 70 (1995): 116-147.

[13] Paschasius Radbertus, *Vita Adalhardi*, c. 7, *PL* 120, 1511: *Qui cum esset regali prosapia, Pippini magni regis nepos, Caroli consobrinus Augusti, inter palatii tirocinia omni mundi prudentia eruditus, una cum terrarum principe magistris adhibitus* ... On Adalhard, Wala and their siblings, see De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 20-34.

and the recipient of letters and a work by Alcuin.[14] Theodrada, the youngest of these five, became abbess of Notre-Dame of Soissons in 810.[15]

The foundation of Radbert's life-long attachment to the community of Notre-Dame in Soissons was laid in early childhood. As an infant and an orphan, Radbert was taken in by the nuns of this wealthy and court-connected community, who brought him up and gave him his first education.[16] After some years in which he seems to have turned his back on monastic life, Radbert, by then in his twenties, made his profession in Corbie under Abbot Adalhard, Theodrada's brother, most probably between 810 and 814.[17] At this time her other brother, Wala, was still the leading magnate at Charlemagne's court, until after Louis' succession in 814, he entered Corbie as well. During his subsequent life and career, Radbert remained closely connected with these three cousins of Charlemagne. Adalhard (d. 826) and Wala (d. 836) he considered to be his monastic fathers, whose life and death he commemorated in two highly original biographical works modelled after late antique funeral orations. With Theodrada he also enjoyed a longstanding familiarity. Later in life, shortly after 844, he expressed his love for her, calling himself "your foster child (*alumnus*), from boyhood, although I have become very old."[18] This is in the preface to *De partu virginis*, a treatise on the perpetual virginity of Mary at the birth of Jesus; shortly after 846, when Theodrada was already dead, Radbert completed an extensive and complex commentary on Psalm 44 (45) which she had requested. It was sent to her daughter and successor Imma with a eulogy of her mother.[19] It is difficult to pin a date on *Cogitis me*, but the consensus is that it was written well before the two works just mentioned; perhaps as early as the late 820s, as I shall explain below.

Radbert's intimacy with the recipients of these three works about the Virgin Mary is striking, at both a spiritual and a political level. Hannah Matis compares the "role-playing" in *Cogitis me* with the exchanges between Alcuin and Charlemagne's sister Gisela, who was abbess of Chelles and Soissons until her death in 810. Like Gisela, her predecessor, Theodrada was able to appreciate this playfulness.[20] There was indeed a strong personal element in this literary interaction, yet this should not be seen in terms of a "private" spirituality that

[14] Irene van Renswoude, "The art of disputation: dialogue, dialectic and debate around 800," *Early Medieval Europe* 25 (2017): 50-51; De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 27, n. 48.

[15] Brigitte Kasten, *Adalhard von Corbie. Die Biographie eines karolingischen Politikers und Klostervorstehers*. Studia humaniora 3 (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1986), 103-104. For a specious argument that Theodrada was the widow of Pippin I of Italy, and that she died in 824, rather than in 846, see Johannes Fried, "Kanonistik und Mediävistik. Neue Literatur zu dem Kirchenrecht, Inzest und zur Ehe Pippins von Italien," *Historische Zeitschrift* 294 (2012): 127-140, with references to earlier stages of this argument.

[16] Henri Peltier, *Pascase Radbert, Abbé de Corbie .Contribution à l'étude de la vie monastique et de la pensée chrétiennes au temps carolingiens* (Amiens: L.-H. Duithoit, Editeur, 1938), 28-32.

[17] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 36-37.

[18] Paschasius Radbertus, *De partu virginis*, prologue, ed. E. Anne Matter, *CCCM* 56C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 47, ll. 5-6: … *longe diu a puero uester alumnus, multo iam senio confectus*.

[19] Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in psalmum XLIV*, ed. Beda Paulus, *CCCM* 94 (Turnhout: Brepols), 1991.

[20] Matis, "The seclusion of Eustochium," 671-674.

was the prerogative of just Radbert and his beloved nuns. Matis rightly remarks that they were "intimate acquaintances, both political and spiritual, drawn even closer to Radbert in the adverse climate of the 830s and 840."[21] The convent in Soissons was closely connected to the royal court under the Merovingian as well as the Carolingian rulers. In many ways, Notre-Dame was a female counterpart to Corbie: a large and wealthy religious community with a long and proud history, governed by kinsmen and women of the ruling dynasty – Adalhard, Wala, Theodrada, Imma – whose presence attracted monks and nuns of high social status and considerable learning.[22]

The involvement of Corbie and its illustrious abbots in the political strife during the reign of Louis the Pious has long interested historians.[23] Theodrada, who remained abbess of Notre-Dame, was the only one among her siblings who was not removed from her place and position when Louis succeeded in 814, yet there is no reason to assume that she was disconnected from the political upheaval of the new emperor's reign. Radbert's longstanding familiarity with his beloved nuns in Soissons may indeed have made them a comparatively safe and limited audience for his reflections on the virginity of Mary. Yet Notre-Dame and its leadership, royal and highly learned women, also functioned as a conduit to the royal court, and thus a religious and political ambiance where ambitious biblical scholars could try out their work, on their way to wider acceptance. The discussions about the Eucharist, in which Radbert and Ratramnus both played a central part, shows how crucial this core ritual of the *cultus divinus* was for Charles the Bald; identifying the correct interpretation of Mass was the king's business.[24] The same held true for the apparent paradox of Mary's virginity and motherhood, as addressed by Radbert and others: "Mary was integral to the discourse of Carolingian genealogy."[25] Not weeding out potential heresy with regard to such key issues would crucially affect the relations between the king, his people and God.

To those who engaged in such high-level debate, writing as Jerome was both playful and deeply serious. These were not so much private as semi-public and quite high-stake games, with contenders such as Claudius of Turin carefully building reputations for the benefit of a royal court ready serve as the umpire. Claudius' strategy to get the upper hand by presenting himself as a lone truth-teller is what Janneke Raaijmakers called "self-styling", or the development of a *persona*, which is perhaps best translated as a reputation created by

[21] Ibid., 667.

[22] See Radbert's vision of the illustrious past of Corbie in the episcopal privilege of 846, most probably drafted by Abbot Radbert himself, ed. Wilfried Hartmann, *MGH Conc*. 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1984), no. 13, pp. 144-149; De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 57-58.

[23] Lorenz Weinrich, *Wala. Graf, Mönch und Rebell: Die Biographie eines Karolingers.* Historische Studien 386 (Lübeck/Hamburg: Matthiesen Verlag), 1963; Kasten, *Adalhard*; De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era.*

[24] Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[25] See Leyser, "From maternal kin to Jesus as mother," 37.

the author himself.[26] Clearly, Claudius' case is different from Radbert's, for the bishop of Turin wrote under his own name, as Radbert did in most of his other works, yet both authors adopted strategies of identification that required, from themselves and their audiences, an expert knowledge of the biblical and late Roman imperial history. This authoritative past, Old Testament and early Christian, functioned as an imagined yet authoritative community, a frame of reference that guided actions and interpretations in the present. It also provided a range of authorial models, such as the marginalised prophet and truth-teller, a stance Radbert also deployed,[27] or "writing as Jerome" in a way that, although transparent, lent weight to one's argument.

B. COGITIS ME: DATE AND CONTEXT

The manuscript transmission of *Cogitis me* is vast, but starts relatively late. The two oldest manuscripts of *Cogitis me*, from Fleury and Soissons, have been dated to c. 875.[28] Both show that the text was copied with a view to liturgical use, as would be the case in subsequent centuries of transmission. As mentioned earlier, in the second half of the 840s Hincmar included the homily ascribed to Jerome in a festive liturgical codex, but this is no longer extant.

Despite the late manuscript evidence, *Cogitis me* counts as the first of Radbert's Mariological works. Albert Ripberger, the editor, opts for "shortly after 835" as a likely date, because of a possible reference to the Latin translation of Pseudo-Dionysius, which was completed in 835.[29] This is no literal citation, and the connection with this translation, commissioned by Hilduin, is tenuous.[30] Ripberger also argues that Hincmar could only have accepted and promoted the text in the late 840s if it had already existed for a decade or so, and the memory of the original authorship had somehow faded.[31] The second half of the 840s is precisely the period in which Radbert was abbot of Corbie, and in contact with his archbishop via his attendance at various synods.[32] Would he have been entirely unaware of the success of what he had once written on the Assumption? Did Hincmar have no idea of the origins of what he praised as a careful work, in style and content, and with a catholic understanding of the Assumption of the Virgin?

26 See above, n. 1.

27 Irene van Renswoude, *The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 198-203.

28 Vatican, BAV, Reg. Lat. 318, fol. 179r-195v (Fleury); Paris, BnF, lat. 18168, fol. 11v-40v. See Ripberger, *Cogitis me*, 49-51; ibid. 36-43 on the liturgical use of the text.

29 *Cogitis me*, c. 44, ed Ripberger, 77.

30 *Cogitis me*. c. 92, ed. Ripberger, 102-103, where Ripberger concedes that it is not clear whether Radbert used Hilduin's Latin translation.

31 *Cogitis me*, c. 44, ed. Ripberger, 77.

32 Radbert was abbot from late 843/early 844 until 849/851; De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 57-64. The two synods where both were certainly present, in view of their subscriptions, were Paris (846/847) and Quierzy (849).

My tentative suggestion for dating *Cogitis me* is based on no more than circumstantial evidence. First of all, there is only one other of Radbert's works that is as much inspired by the Song of Songs, namely the *Vita Adalhardi*, written in 826.[33] *Cogitis me* may well have been written when he had this particular biblical book on his mind, just as at a later stage of his life he turned to Jeremiah and Lamentations. Furthermore, in a pertinent critique of Lambot, Rita Beyers argues that Radbert actually penned two letters purportedly exchanged between Jerome and his friends/bishops Chromacus and Heliodorus. [34] These two letters came to serve as a preface to Pseudo-Matthew, an older and popular apocryphal narrative about the life of Mary.[35] The earliest manuscript of this fictional correspondence between Jerome and the two bishops has been dated before the second quarter of the ninth century, when Radbert worked on the first four books of his magnum opus, the commentary on Matthew, which he completed before 831 and dedicated to the monk Guntlandus of Saint-Riquier.[36] These were years when he had Matthew on his mind. On the other hand, there is no connection between these early manuscripts, which originate from Regensburg and Salzburg. [37] The only Corbie and copy of Pseudo-Matthew dates from the thirteenth century and is not prefaced by the letter ascribed to Chromacus and Heliodorus, and Jerome's purported reply.[38]

Possibly, therefore, Radbert tried his hand at "writing as Jerome" before he wrote the full-blown treatise on the Assumption for Theodrada and Imma. *Cogitis me* could then be his first semi-public entry into what was to become a major and lively debate. His highborn educators in Soissons were made part of this venture, drawn in by being turned into Paula and Eustochium, and proud of the precociousness of their *alumnus*. In my view, writing like Jerome was the serious game of a younger man, who had not yet made his mark in what, as Conrad Leyser expressed it,[39] would become brilliant group of Mariologues gathered at the court of Charles the Bald. Of these Radbert and Ratramnus were the most prominent. In Radbert's *De partu virginis,* written shortly after 844, Ratramnus figures as Jerome's opponent Helvidius, who had denied the perpetual virginity of Mary. [40] In order to get the better of

[33] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 79-81.

[34] Rita Beyers, "De nativitate Mariae: problemes d'origine," *Revue de theologie at de philosophie* 122 (1990): 171-188; for an edition and translation of the two letters, see Emile Amman, ed., *Le protoévangile de Jacqueset ses remaniements Latins* (Paris: Letouzey and Ané, 1910), 272-277.

[35] This is a Latin version of the Greek Gospel of Jacobus (protoevangelium of James) which dates from the seventh or eighth century, with manuscripts mainly from South Germany; Amman, ed., *Le protoévangile de Jacques*, 272-339; for some pertinent comments, see Leyser, "Maternal kin," 34-35.

[36] Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matheo libri XII*, ed. Beda Paulus, *CCCM* 56 (Turnhout: Brepols 1984), viii.

[37] Beyers, "De nativitate Mariae," 177, n. 28; Bernard Bischoff, *Die südostdeutschen Schreibsschulen und Bibliotheken in der Karolingerzeit*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1980), 158.

[38] Beyers, "De nativitate Mariae," 178, n. 31; Paris, BnF, lat. 12593.

[39] Leyser, "Maternal kin," 35.

[40] Paschasius Radbertus, *De partu virginis,* c. I, *CCCM* 56C, 47.

Ratramnus, Radbert still implicitly identified with Jerome, without the need to do so explicitly, or to write as Jerome.

Was *Cogitis me* a letter or a sermon? Most textual witnesses opt for the latter, but the two oldest and most important manuscripts differ in this respect. The one from Fleury (Vatican, BAV, Reg. lat. 318, fol. 179v-195r), was copied shortly after 865, which Ripberger takes to be Radbert's probable year of death; it bears the heading *Epistola beati Hieronymi ad Paulam et Eustochium de assumptione sanctae Mariae virginis*.[41] The other main witness, possibly from Soissons, copied in last third of the ninth century (Paris, BnF lat. 18168, fol. 11v-40v) has the title *Incipit sermo beati Hieronymi ad Paulam et virgines sub ea degentes*.[42] Although most manuscripts used by Albert Ripberger in his critical edition have *sermo* in their heading,[43] it was the widely known publication by J.-P. Migne as Jerome's *Epistola IX* that defined the first edition's title. That Radbert wanted his work to be read as a sermon or homily becomes clear from the beginning of the text:

> You force me, O Paula and Eustochium, or rather the love of Christ compels me, who in the past used to speak to you in treatises, that in a new mode of speaking I compose a sermon about the Assumption of the blessed and glorious always virgin Mary for the holy virgins who are with you, using Latin eloquence for exhortation, in the manner of those who are in the habit of speaking to the people in churches, in a rhetorical manner. Which in any case is a mode of teaching I have not yet achieved.[44]

The message is clear: Jerome, an expert biblical commentor but lacking experience as a preacher, tries his hand at a Latin sermon. What are these treatises Radbert wants his audience to think of as Jerome's? The most likely candidates are the many biblical commentaries Jerome dedicated to both women. Even though Jerome mentions the many letters he exchanged with them in Bethlehem, there is no *epistola* extant that is addressed to both mother and daughter.[45] There is plenty of Jerome's exegesis, however, with prefaces in which

[41] Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, ed. Ripberger, 49-50. Bernhard Bischoff and Birgit Ebersperger, *Katalog der Festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts (mit Ausnahme der wisigotischen)*, vol. 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 427 (no. 6661).

[42] Ripberger, ed., *Paschasius Radbertus, Cogitis me*, 50-51; Ripberger, ed., *De assumptione*, 100; Bischoff and Ebersperger, *Katalog der Festländischen Handschriften*, vol. 3, 229 (no. 50-83).

[43] Ripberger, ed., *Paschasius Radbertus, Cogitis me*, 55.

[44] Paschasius Radbertus *Cogitis me*, c. 1, ed. Ripberger, 57: *Cogitis me, o Paula et Eustochium, immo caritas Christi me compellit, qui vobis dudum tractatibus loqui consueueram, ut nouo loquendi genere, sanctis, quae uobiscum degunt, uirginibus latino utens eloquio, exhortationis gratia sermonem faciam de assumptione beatae et gloriosae semper uirginis Mariae, more eorum qui declematorie in ecclesiis solent loqui ad populum, quod utique genus docendi necdum attigeram.*

[45] Andrew Cain, *The Letters of Jerome. Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 222: In the Catalogue of his works (*De Vir. Ill.* 135) 1 Jerome says: "Of the Letters to Paula and Eustochium, the number is infinite: I write them every day."

Paula and Eustochium are cited as the recipients.[46] Despite its claim to be written for less educated nuns (*simplices*), *Cogitis me* is not exactly a simple and easily accessible text. Its central argument revolves around the paradox of Mary's virginity *and* motherhood, which required a long digression on the two natures in the one person of Christ, with a clear response to the debates on Adoptionism during Charlemagne's reign.[47] Apparently these were still vivid in Radbert's mind, which also suggests an earlier date for *Cogitis me*. Furthermore, he included much that qualifies as exegesis, with a central biblical text to which he returns, time and again: the Song of Songs.[48]

Together with an older Roman and Gallican liturgical tradition, the Song of Songs served as Radbert/Jerome's solid bedrock of textual authority, to which he clung amidst a rising tide of anonymous and apocryphal stories about Mary. The issue at hand is neatly summed up in Radbert's elegant preface addressed to Theodrada and Imma:

> About the assumption of that same blessed mother of God, always virgin Mary, how she was assumed, since your prayer requests it, I absent have taken care to write for your presence, what I present offered devoutly in your absence so that your holy company on the day of such solemnity may have the gift of Latin sermon in which tender infancy can experience the sweetness of milk and think extraordinary things from trifles: how with God's favour each year this day is spent in praise and celebrated with joy – lest that apocryphal work on the passing of the Virgin should have come into your hands and you accepted doubtful things as certain, which many Latins in the love of piety and zeal of reading dearly embrace – especially since nothing else can be proved for certain than that on that glorious day she left her body.[49]

In this passage, the opposition between "Greeks" and "Latins" is palpable. In Radbert's view, Greek chaos (*turbo*) needed to be corrected by a Latin purity that was defined by the irrefutable proof of Scripture.[50] As Rachel Fulton expressed it, the ninth-century West saw

[46] Ecclesiastes, the Four Books of Kings, Esther, Isaiah, Daniel, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai, Nahum, Job, Wisdom and Proverbs.

[47] In Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 53-85, ed. Ripberger, 80-98, Mary's motherhood is a persistent theme, in tandem with Christ's dual nature.

[48] Ripberger, ed., *Paschasius Radbertus, Cogitis me*, 26-29; E. Anne Matter, *The Voice of my Beloved. The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 151-156.

[49] Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 7, ed. Ripberger, 59: *De assumptione tamen eius, qualiter assumpta est, quia uestra id deposcit intentio, praesentia absens scribere uobis curaui, quae absentia praesens deuotus obtuli, ut habeat sanctum collegium uestrum in die tantae sollemnitatis munus latini sermonis, in quo discat tenera infantia lactis experiri dulcedinem, et de exiguis eximia cogitare, qualiter fauente Deo per singulos annos tota haec dies expendatur in laudem et cum gaudio celebretur, ne forte si uenerit uestris in manibus illud apocryphum de transitu eiusdem uirginis, dubia pro certis recipiatis, quod multi latinorum pietatis amore, studio legendi, carius amplectuntur, praesertim ex his cum nihil aliud experiri potest pro certo, nisi quod hodierna die gloriosa migrauit a corpore.*

[50] Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 80, ed. Ripberger, 95: *Haec idcirco dixerim tantisper de fide incarnationis Christi, carissimae, quia plures orientalium circumeunt suis fecibus obuoluti, ne suo nubilare uos uelint obscuritatis eloquio, uel graeco turbine latinam confundere puritatem. Sunt enim et prudentes uirgines; sunt et fatuae!*

a growing hunger for a new history of Mary.[51] It was no coincidence that Charlemagne's chapel in Aachen was dedicated to Mary, the Queen of Heaven.[52] People wanted to know what had happened to her body, and since neither Scripture nor the fathers provided a narrative, Latin translations of Greek apocryphal texts filled the gap. These provided the *historia* that was essential for the celebration of the saints' feast days.[53] By the 820s such a history was still lacking for the Assumption of Mary, even though it was already an important feast, as becomes clear from the liturgical texts Radbert could draw and comment upon. The devotion to God's mother was strengthened by the controversy over Adoptionism: Alcuin argued that Christ was not the son of God through adoption, but directly born from the Virgin, emphasizing Mary's motherhood and, *mutatis mutandis*, the interdependence between Mary and Christ.[54]

This emphasis on Mary's dual nature is a central theme in *Cogitis me*. She is virgin and mother, pure and fecund, which is a *novitas*, as Radbert/Jerome declares, defiantly – yet a novelty that should be accepted.[55] The other problem he tries to deal with in *Cogitis me* is the lack of witnesses or record of Mary's ascension to heaven. Was she assumed with her body, or did she leave it behind?[56] Radbert's approach to this conundrum is characterized by the circumspection (*cautela*) Hincmar later declared to be typical of Jerome. "It is not known," he cautioned, "at what time, or by which persons her most holy body was carried away from there or whether she was resurrected." Better that we commit it all to God, to whom nothing is impossible, than boldly try to define (*definire*) something on our own authority for which we have no proof.[57] As Radbert explains, the same holds true of the bodies of the saints who were resurrected together with Christ, according to the Gospel (Matt 27:52-53). There were no witnesses to this, and yet their resurrection was true, according to the doctors of the church.

Within the secure parameters of Scripture and the existing liturgy of Assumption, *Cogitis me* explores the Annunciation, Mary's role in the Incarnation as Christ's mother, her life on earth after Christ's Ascension and her Assumption.[58] Not only the Song of Songs, but

51 Rachel Fulton, "'Quae est ista quae ascendit sicut aurora consurgens?' The Song of Songs as the Historia for the office of the assumption," *Medieval Studies* 60 (1998): 55-122, at 90; see also Henry Mayr-Harting, "The idea of the Assumption of Mary in the West, 800-1200," in *The Church and Mary*. Studies in Church History 39, ed. R. N. Swanson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press), 2004, 86-111.

52 Leyser, "Maternal Kin," 33.

53 Fulton, "Quae est ista," 90-91.

54 Leyser "Maternal Kin," 33, n. 22; Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 82-86 and passim. Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 75-77, ed. Ripberger, 94, on the two natures of Christ.

55 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 17, ed. Ripberger, 65-66; c. 74, p. 92: *Et haec est mira et admirabilis novitas, supereminens novitas unitatis…*

56 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 8-9, ed. Ripberger, 60-61.

57 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 10, ed. Ripberger, 61.

58 Alan Zola, "Radbertus's monastic voice. Ideas about monasticism at ninth-century Corbie," PhD diss. (Loyola University Chicago, 2008), 2008, 83-84.

also the Gospels and Psalms figure frequently in the text; important patristic sources are Ambrose's *De virginibus* and John Cassian's *De incarnatione*. The sermons cited most often are by Petrus Chrysologus and possibly by Radbert himself; the latter have long been ascribed to Ildefonsus of Toledo, and need more research. None of Jerome's letters served as a textual model; although the celebrated letter 22 to Eustochium may have been a more general source of inspiration, it is only referred to a few times. This is more often the case with Jerome's letter of consolation to Eustochium after Paula's death, which provides information on Paula's biography and on monastic life in the Holy Land. Together with some echoes of *Adversus Iovinianum*, these are all the direct traces of Jerome's work in *Cogitis me*.[59]

Despite Radbert/Jerome's insistence on sermonizing for simple folk (*simpliciores*), this did not mean largely illiterate nuns, but rather the younger ones who were eager to learn, yet lacked appropriate Latin and orthodox texts. He clearly wrote for an educated audience, which could be relied upon to recognize proper learning including some grandstanding from one of their most learned alumni. There is a shared frame of reference, not just concerning the world of Jerome, Paula and Eustochium, but also with regard to some ongoing Christological debates that had affected the Carolingian court, such as Adoptionism. In her investigation of Radbert's three major works for the nuns of Soissons, Hannah Matis rightly emphasizes their aristocratic status, their learning and their seclusion, all of which made their prayer for the Empire all the more valuable.[60] She also signals that Radbert tries to do justice to the two main types of recruits to female monasticism in the Carolingian world: virgins and widows, that is, child oblates and those who had been married.[61] These are indeed the two intended audiences which jump from the pages of *Cogitis me*. For them, Radbert performs a veritable balancing act, harnessing Mary herself – virgin and mother – to this cause. The combination of Paula and Eustochium also incorporated and represented these two orders within the community, and so did the dual leadership of Theodrada and her unmarried daughter Imma.[62] Having grown up in Notre-Dame from infancy, Radbert had a first-hand knowledge of this divide, which, throughout the history of monasticism, created

[59] Ripberger, ed., *Paschasius Radbertus, Cogitis me*, 30-31; *CCCM* 56C, 169-170 (Index scriptorum).

[60] Matis, "The seclusion of Eustochium," 667. Matis argues that Radbert's model of female monasticism was more rigorously ascetic than what was common in the Carolingian world, and anticipates Cistercian spirituality; possibly, but this type of female religious seclusion has a long tradition in the early medieval West, originating with Caesarius of Arles; see Albrecht Diem, *Das monastische Experiment. Die Rolle der Keuschheit bei der Entstehung des westlichen Klosterwesens*. Vita regularis 24 (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005); idem, *The Pursuit of Salvation. Community, Space and Siscipline in Early Medieval Monasticism.* Disciplina monastica 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021).

[61] On child oblation and Notre-Dame of Soissons, see Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel's Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West*. Studies in Intellectual history 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 126-127.

[62] The two orders, virgins and widows, are intensively discussed in Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 106-115, ed. Ripberger, 108-112.

inevitable tensions. Who was the better monk or nun, the one who had always been shielded from sin, or the one who had consciously rejected it?[63]

This was the contradiction that Radbert tried to resolve by means of the "novelty" of Mary's virginity and motherhood. She was also the Queen of Heaven, in a way that must have been familiar to an aristocratic community with abbesses who were of royal lineage.[64] Writing as Jerome, Radbert appealed to this self-image of royal proximity by weaving much courtly imagery into his text. Not just is Mary enthroned, and served by Gabriel and Apostles,[65] she reigns in a Heaven populated by "senators", which is Radbert's preferred way to refer to lay magnates. [66] At the start of the Annunciation, Gabriel greets Mary in a very special and exclusive way, not even bestowed on the patriarchs.[67] She is worthy of a ceremonial reception (*occursus*),[68] in a heavenly court (*curia*) evoked in yet other familiar Carolingian terms, such as *ministri* and *militia*.[69] The nuns addressed are royal daughters, and beyond any marriage except the one with the highest King, who will turn their virginal white into royal purple.[70] All this imagery suggests more than just an aristocratic nunnery devoted to the kind of ascetic seclusion that only the wealthy could afford. It reflects what might be called a female dependency of the imperial court, where the *claustrum* guaranteed the inner quiet required for the efficacy of prayer, while the community in its entirety was part of the web of royal places – *palatia* and *monasteria* – that formed the fabric of the Carolingian state. Notre-Dame was a familiar place for Radbert, where he would find sympathetic readers for his writings, yet I doubt whether this audience could be called "comparatively safe and limited."[71] To write like Jerome for Theodrada, Imma and their community, on the cult of Mary as a royal queen, could well be a first try-out of his ideas within a smaller circle, but given the court-connected recipients, it might also be seen as the beginning of an ambitious intervention in a current theological debate which, like most others at the time, inevitably had a political impact.[72]

Carolingian rulers acted as referees in these theological discussions, for it was part of their "ministry" to identify and combat heresy, lest it would undermine the polity. To cite

63 De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, 126-132.

64 Paschasius Radbertus, *Vita Adalhardi*, c. 7, *PL* 120, 1511B (on Adalhard): *Qui cum esset regali prosapia, Pippini magni regis nepos, Caroli consobrinus Augusti…* On the Carolingian Mary, see Mayr-Harting. "The idea of the Assumption of Mary" and Leyser, "Maternal Kin."

65 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 14-15, ed. Ripberger, 64; ibid., c. 39, pp. 74-75: *Haec est, inquam, dies, in qua usque ad throni celsitudinem intemerata mater et virgo processit atque in regni solio sublimate post Christum gloriosa resedit*. See also ibid., c. 51, p. 80.

66 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 20, ed. Ripberger, 67; De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 178 and 184.

67 Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 32, p. 72.

68 Ibid., c. 44, p. 77; see also c. 45-46, pp. 77-78, on the royal marriage bed as a *holocaustum*, for which a sermon by Radbert has been used (or the other way around).

69 Ibid., c. 48-50, pp. 79-80.

70 Ibid., c. 43, p. 77. On the pure uterus of the virgin, untouched by sin.

71 Matis, "The seclusion of Eustochium," 667.

72 Leyser, "Maternal kin," 35.

Janneke Raaijmakers and Irene van Renswoude, "…Charles the Bald did consider himself a guardian of orthodoxy and performed the role of *arbiter* with new vigour, like his grandfather before him."[73] In 843 this still young king commanded a copy of Radbert's treatise on the Eucharist, written roughly a decade earlier, and thereby publicly recognized the learned author as an orthodox authority. This recognition was mutual, as transpires from Radbert's fine new dedication to King Charles, and paved the way for Radbert's advancement to the abbacy of Corbie.[74] I suspect that sometime between 845 and 849, when Hincmar deemed *Cogitis me* suitable for inclusion in a new codex for the liturgy of his cathedral church, the text had already met with influential approval, in Notre-Dame and other high places.

C. RADBERT AS JEROME

Finally, I return to my starting point: the question why Radbert wrote as Jerome. Are Janneke Raaijmakers' reflections on Claudius of Turin and his self-styling any help in finding an answer? At first glance, there are more differences than similarities, The most obvious disparity is that while Claudius used his own name, Radbert pretended to be Jerome. How is self-styling possible if the self is deliberately hidden by a pseudonym?

I doubt whether "Jerome" was ever meant to be an impenetrable pseudonym in the modern sense of the word. Radbert is famous for using bynames and aliases, especially in his funeral oration for Wala, the *Epitaphium Arsenii*. The aliases of the political protagonists in the second book – Justina, Justinus, Honorius, Gratianus – were taken from the history of the Christian Roman Empire, with Theodosius and Ambrosius as key figures, even though they were never named. All this was expected to be understood by an audience with access to a shared corpus of texts, but these were not names to be used in interpersonal or wider social communication, and neither were they pseudonyms, meant to hide identities. On the contrary, they revealed and defined the moral status of the person in question.[75] When Judith was referred to as Justina, Ambrose's enemy, it was clear that she was Wala's adversary, and a force of evil.

It was somewhat different with the by-names of monks of Corbie involved, and with their deceased abbot Wala/Arsenius: these were names not just deployed in the *Epitaphium*, but also in written communication other than the *Epitaphium* and most likely also in oral exchange. Already in the 830s his monks called their abbot Wala "Arsenius". Paschasius Radbertus" in many of his prefaces. In one of these prefaces, dedicating his work on the

[73] Janneke Raaijmakers and Irene van Renswoude, "The ruler as referee in theological debates: Charlemagne and Reccared," in *Religious Franks. Religion and Power in the Frankish Kingdoms. Studies in Honour of Mayke de Jong*, ed. Rob Meens, Dorine van Espelo, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen, Janneke Raaijmakers, Irene van Renswoude, and Carine van Rhijn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 51-71, at 70.

[74] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 42.

[75] De Jong, "Becoming Jeremiah."

Eucharist to his pupil Warin, he named the latter Placidus, after a child oblate in the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great. [76] The best candidate for the name "Paschasius", a sinful deacon saved by penance, also comes from the *Dialogues*. Radbert remained a deacon all his life, possibly because of his having left monastic life in his teens or early twenties.[77] In 843 he presented himself to Charles the Bald as "Paschasius Radbertus the Deacon, scum of all the monks" (*Paschasius Radbertus levita, monachorum omnium peripsema*), a self-designation that characterizes his later work.[78] Yet when signing the acts of a council in 845/6, when he was abbot of Corbie, Radbert did so as *Radbertus abbas*.

What do these varied and context-dependent by-names have in common? In the broadest sense, they presuppose a community with a shared knowledge of narratives about the past, be it biblical, profane, patristic or monastic. This enabled its members to use history as an interpretative framework for the present. Choosing and using names from the literary past, sacred or otherwise, helped to define contemporary social relations in the present. As Mary Garrison has shown, Alcuin set a creative trend in this respect, bestowing a wide variety of by-names on his own circle of pupils and friends, and, famously, on the members of Charlemagne's courtly entourage.[79] This was surely a familiar model for Radbert when he set about naming his protagonists in the *Epitaphium Arsenii*; quite apart from this, he came from a world in which meaningful monastic names were the norm rather than the exception.

Some of these by-names, such as Paschasius and Arsenius, gained a wider currency because of literary or political activity, yet others only functioned within more restricted groups. Radbert's writing as Jerome is a case in point, because of the author's deeply personal relationship with Theodrada and Imma. In such relations of *amicitia* and *familiaritas*, as Mary Garrison notes, "name-giving could be manipulated to dramatize relationships."[80] *Cogitis me* was written to strengthen the friendship between royal nuns and their monastic foster son (*alumnus*), but also to articulate his relation to these highborn women. They were his protectors; he was the one furnishing them with reliable and orthodox knowledge on the Virgin's Assumption.

It is no coincidence that most of the modest evidence for Radbert's identification with Jerome comes from his life-long connection with Notre-Dame of Soissons, where he received his first education and probably his most persistent ideals took shape. He was to become one of the most brilliant and productive biblical commentators of his day and age. If *Cogitis me*

[76] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 50-51; 134.

[77] Ibid., 36-37.

[78] Ibid., 37-38.

[79] Mary Garrison, "*Praesagum nomen tibi*: The Significance of Name-wordplay in Alcuin's Letters to Arn," in *Erzbischof Arn von Salzburg*, ed. Meta Niederkorn-Bruck and Anton Scharer (Vienna/Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag), 2004, 107-127.

[80] Mary Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin: Nicknames at York and at the Carolingian Court," in *Alcuin of York. Scholar at the Carolingian Court.* Germania Latina 3, ed. L. A. J. R. Houwen and Alasdair A. McDonald (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), 78.

were indeed written in the 820s, rather than a decade later, its author was a young and rising exegete, whose most admired model was Jerome.[81] Clearly, Radbert was out to impress the royal recipients of his sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin; in the preface, he even had Jerome maintain that he had no experience writing sermons.[82] On the one hand, this was a deft way to explain the total lack of sermons written by Jerome, but on the other, it may have been a reference to himself. Radbert did write sermons, but possibly only after he wrote this brilliant text for Theodrada and Imma. One is reminded of an expression used by both Alcuin and Radbert with regard to name-giving: *praesag(i)um*, foreboding or portent, which refers to the way in which the name in question would shape a person's future behaviour.[83] Did the nuns of Notre-Dame call their precocious biblical scholar "Jerome", and was this a self-identification that stuck? Or was writing like Jerome Radbert's way to honour Theodrada/Paula and Imma/Eustochium, while channelling his early contribution to the debate about the Virgin's Assumption through them, to even higher quarters? All of the above may be true, but we do not know. One thing is certain: in the more restricted communities in which the text originally circulated, it was known that this particular Jerome was Radbert. Ratramnus' sharp reaction in 868 makes this crystal clear. In the world outside Notre-Dame and Corbie, however, *Cogitis me* had a different fate. Hincmar may have had his doubts, but it should be kept in mind that in 852 he was also the first to cite the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals.[84] Why waste a perfectly orthodox sermon on the Virgin's Assumption when they were so difficult to come by, amidst all these apocryphal writings? This was a much-needed text, to be cherished and defended. And thus, it moved, from Radbert's personal friendship with the royal nuns of Notre-Dame, to the liturgy of the medieval Church, and then to Radbert being denounced as a forger in modern times.

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[81] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 97-98.

[82] Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, c. 1, ed. Ripberger, 57: *…more eorum qui declamatorie in ecclesiis solent loqui ad populum, quod utique genus docendi necdum attigeram*.

[83] De Jong, *Epitaph for an Era*, 133.

[84] Eric Knibbs, "Ebo of Reims, Pseudo-Isidore, and the Date of the False Decretals," *Speculum* 92 (2017): 145-183, at 180, n. 125.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BHL	*Biblioteca Hagiographica Latina*
CCCM	*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis*
CCM	*Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum*
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*
ChLA	*Charta Latinae Antiquiores*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinorum*
CLA	*Codices Latinae Antiquiores*
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*

Libraries

BAV	[Vatican City,] Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
BM	Bibliothèque municipale
BnF	[Paris,] Bibliothèque nationale de France
KB	[Den Haag,] KB nationale bibliotheek
KBR	[Brussels,] Koninglijke Bibliotheek/Bibliothèque Royale
ÖNB	[Vienna,] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
UB	Universiteitsbibliotheek

MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*	
	AA	Auctores antiquissimi
	Cap.	Capitularia
	Conc.	Concilia
	DD	Diplomata
	Epp.	Epistolae
	Epp. sel.	Epistolae selectae
	Poet. lat	Poetae latini
	Script.	Scriptores in Folio
	SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum
	SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
PL	Patrologia Latina	
SC	Sources Chrétiennes	

INDEX (PERSONS AND PLACES)

Abraham 288
Adalhard of Corbie 174-179, 186-88, 353-55, 357
Aelred of Rievaulx 277-289
Agila 37
Agnes 77-78, 94, 96-98
Agobard of Lyon 260-70
Alcuin of York 105, 164, 178, 309, 316, 353-354, 360, 364
Alpais, daughter of Louis the Pious 139-150
Ambrose of Milan 14, 17, 304, 325-326, 334, 361, 363
Anastasius, pope 295, 299, 300
Andrew, saint 164-165
Angilbert of St. Riquier 162, 164-165, 169
Angilram of Metz 53
Anthony, saint 38
Arn of Salzburg 343
Augustine of Canterbury 332-346
Augustine of Hippo 81, 215, 219-21, 223-25, 227-29 x 261-64, 266-69, 272, 302-6
Aurelianus of Arles 214, 216-19, 221-23, 227-30.
Balderik of Utrecht 93-113
Balthild, queen 176, 178, 181, 184
Bede 258, 263, 269, 309, 334
Begon, count of Paris 144
Benedict of Aniane 212, 229-30
Benedict of Nursia 30, 178, 222, 230 x
Boniface of Mainz 93, 99-101, 106, 108-110, 112, 336, 340-45
Brunichild, queen 61, 323, 325
Caesarius of Arles 212-221, 223, 227, 229-230
Cassiodorus 302, 30
Chalcedon 296-298, 308
Charlemagne 73, 110, 154-170, 174-180, 183-186, 190, 316, 328
Charles Martel 99, 178, 354,
Charles the Bald 76, 110, 139, 145, 148, 157, 355, 363, 365
Childebert I, king 216
Chintila, king 327-328
Cicero 81, 267, 306
Claudius of Turin 351, 355-356, 363
Conrad I, king 111
Constantine I 184, 186, 316-317, 328
Constantinople 31, 164, 180, 181, 188-190, 296, 301, 317
Corbie, abbey of 172-191, 350-365
Cordoba 37-38
David I, king of Scotland 279-280, 284
Desiderius of Vienne 323-327,
Deventer 79-80, 99, 106-107, 110-113
Durham 278-280
Ebo of Reims 146, 268
Einhard 73-74, 167-168, 179. 254-272,
Elipandus of Toledo 316, 328
Eustochium 350-365
Facundus of Hermiane 297
Felix of Nola 18, 22, 24
Felix of Urgell 327-328
Ferriolus of Uzès 212-230
Flavigny 50, 59-61, 309, 339
Flodoard of Reims 140-141, 144-145, 147-148
Gennadius of Marseille 294-310
Gertrude of Nivelles 57
Gisela, abbess of Chelles and Soissons 354
Gregory of Tours 42-43, 226, 237-238, 244, 250, 316-317, 319, 326-327
Gregory of Utrecht 99, 106, 110,
Gregory the Great 269-270, 332-376
Gregory VII, pope 279, 309, 333
Gundrada, sister of Adalbert and Wala 353
Hariulf of St. Riquier 162
Hauchinus, archbishop of Mechelen 196, 200, 203-207
Hermenegild, son of King Leovigild 40-41, 317-318
Hexham 278-289
Hildebrand, see Gregory VII, pope

Hilduin of St. Denis 166, 356
Hincmar of Reims 110-111, 139-150, 178, 352-353, 356, 360, 363-365
Hrabanus Maurus 179, 258, 309, 334
Hucbald of St. Amand 98-99, 101, 105-106
Hugo of Flavigny 61, 78
Hugo, abbot of St. Martin 74-76
Hunger, bishop of Utrecht 100, 110-111
Imma, daughter of Theodrada and abbess of Notre-Dame of Soissons 350-365
Imma, wife of Einhard 73, 254,
Isidore of Seville 28-44, 316-328, 334
Jean de Flixéncourt 172, 174-176, 182, 184
Jerome of Stridon 294, 301-310, 334, 350-365
John of Biclar 315-318
Justinian I, emperor 297, 301
Laurentius, saint 236, 242-250
Leander of Seville 31-32
Leovigild, king 315-329
Lothar II, king 76, 102, 110
Lotharingia 95
Louis the Pious 141, 144-145, 158, 161, 166, 354-355
Lupus of Ferrières 244-272
Lupus, bishop of Sens 157
Lyon 234-250
Mabillon, Jean. 141, 175
Magnus, archbishop of Sens 156, 159, 161-164, 167
Marlot, Dom Guillaume 140-141
Marmoutier, abbey of St. Martin 79-80
Martin of Tours 17, 18, 22, 24, 38, 72-89, 101
Mary, virgin and mother 59, 61, 77-78, 181-182, 188, 286-287, 350-365
Masona, bishop 325-327
Mechelen 195-208
Melun 156, 159-163
Nicetius of Lyon 237-238, 240, 245-246, 250
Notre-Dame, nunnery in Soissons 250-265
Odilbald, "bishop of Deventer" 110-111
Odilienberg 94-99, 102, 112-113
Odulfus 94, 100-101, 107-108, 112-113
Oldenzaal 103, 112-113
Pacificus of Verona 295, 307-310
Paschasius Radbertus 159, 181, 264-265, 269, 271, 350-365
Paula 350-365
Paulinus van Nola 14-25, 178
Pelagius, pope 297
Peter the Chanter 187
Plechelmus 94, 99, 101-103, 107-108, 112-113
Primulacium 18-19
Radbod, bishop of Utrecht 72-89, 100-101, 108-109, 111-112
Rather of Verona 335
Ratramnus of Corbie 352, 355, 357-358, 365
Ravenna 88, 295
Reccared, king 41, 316-318, 320-321, 326-329
Remigius, bishop of Reims 139-150
Robert of Clari 172, 180, 181
Robert the Pious 159
Rombout, martyr in Mechelen 195-208
Saint-Andoche de Saulieu 60-61
Saint-Laurent-de-Choulans, necropolis 242, 246
Saint-Maurice d'Agaune 129, 131
Saint-Pierre-le-Vif in Sens 158, 161-162
Saint-Remi in Reims 139-150
Saint-Riquier, abbey of 162, 164-165, 169, 357
Sens, cathedral of 154-169
Sisebut, king 315, 319-324, 329
Sisenand, king 327, 329
Smaragdus, abbot of Saint-Mihiel 178, 265-266
Stavoren 100-102, 107, 112-113
Suetonius 303
Sulpicius Severus 14-25, 77-78, 84, 86, 88, 297, 308
Sunna, Arian bishop 326
Swinthila, king 319-322
Symmachus, pope 295, 299-300
Thecla 56, 77-78
Theoderic, king 13, 37
Theodore of Canterbury 334, 336, 340, 342, 346 `
Theodrada, abbess of Notre-Dame of Soissons 350-365
Theuderic II, king 323
Toledo 316-329
Tours 76, 80-81, 83-84, 86, 88, 100
Troyes 59-66
Utrecht 72-89, 93-113
Venantius Fortunatus 64, 66, 72, 244
Verona 294-310
Vigilius, pope 297, 299
Vikings 76, 79, 81, 83, 110, 112
Wadenoijen 95
Wala 177-178, 265, 351, 353-354, 356, 363
Werenfried 94, 98-99, 101, 107-108, 112
Willibrord
Wiro 94, 99, 102
Zachary, pope 342

CONNECTING PEOPLE

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