

# USING THE PAST IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

EDITED BY YITZHAK HEN  
& MATTHEW INNES



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## THE USES OF THE PAST IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

This volume investigates the ways in which people in western Europe between the fall of Rome and the twelfth century used the past: to legitimate the present, to understand current events and as a source of identity. Each essay examines the mechanisms by which ideas about the past were subtly (and sometimes not so subtly) reshaped for present purposes.

As well as written histories, also discussed are saints' lives, law-codes, buildings, biblical commentary, monastic foundations, canon law and oral traditions. The book thus has important implications for how historians use these sources as evidence: they emerge as representations of the past made for very special reasons, often by interested parties. This is the first volume to be devoted fully to these themes, and as such it makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the role of the past within early medieval societies.

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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain  
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published in printed format 2000

ISBN 0-511-03561-6 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN 0-521-63001-0 hardback

ISBN 0-521-63998-0 paperback

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## *Acknowledgements*

The present volume begun in July 1995 as a series of four sessions organized by the editors for the second International Medieval Congress in Leeds. Since then, however, the plan and content of this volume were changed drastically. Two of the contributors to the original sessions opted out of this publication; three scholars, who did not participate in our sessions at Leeds, were invited to contribute papers to this volume; and all the papers that were presented in Leeds and see light here were thoroughly revised, expanded and ameliorated. Thus, although the seeds of this book were sown in Leeds, the final result is significantly different from what was envisaged at that time.

This book could not have been published without the help and advice of many friends and colleagues. We wish to express our warmest thanks, first and foremost, to our contributors for their labour, enthusiasm and patience, and to those who participated in the discussions at the Leeds gathering. Special thanks should also go to Rosamond McKitterick and Mayke De Jong who constantly provided us with helpful advice and encouragement. We are equally indebted to William Davies and the staff of the Cambridge University Press for their interest in this book and for seeing it through the press. Finally, we should like to thank our wives, Racheli and Jayne, for their support and encouragement throughout.

*Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes*

## *Abbreviations*

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum continuatio medievalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum series latina
CDL	<i>Codice Diplomatico Longobardo</i> , 3 vols.: vols. I–II, ed. L. Schiaparelli; vol. III, ed. C. Brühl (Rome, 1929–73)
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
AA	Auctores antiquissimi
Cap.	Capitularia regum Francorum
Epp.	Epistolae
LNG	Leges nationum Germanicarum
PLAC	Poetae Latini aevi Carolini
SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum
SRL	Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicum
SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
SS	Scriptores
PL	Patrologia cursus completus series latina, 234 vols., ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844–55)
SC	Sources chrétiennes
<i>Settimane</i>	<i>Settimane di Studio dell Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo</i> (Spoleto, 1953– )



# *Introduction: using the past, interpreting the present, influencing the future*

Matthew Innes

The past was a very real presence in early medieval societies.<sup>1</sup> It might provide a legitimating template for the current order of things, explaining how things were meant to be thus, or an image of an ideal order, a Golden Age against which the present could be judged. Within a social group, shared beliefs about the past were a source of identity: the image of a common past informed a *Wir-Gefühl*<sup>2</sup> (a sense of 'us-ness'), and the defining characteristics of that past identified those who were and were not part of 'us' in the present. This volume brings together a series of eleven essays studying different aspects of the past and its functions in European society between the fourth and twelfth centuries AD. Its central themes are the importance of ideas about the past in defining early medieval societies; and the role of the present in moulding these understandings of the past. What were the mechanisms which transmitted ideas about the past? To what extent were these mechanisms manipulated by wielders of cultural and political power? How far could the past be reshaped by the needs of the present? These are some of the questions we hope to answer. We are also concerned with the implications of these questions for our sources for the history of early medieval Europe. If early medieval historical writings were representations of the past made for present purposes, then we clearly need to understand the parameters within which they were shaped.

Neither the volume as a whole, nor this introduction, should be read as a manifesto for any school or methodology. The coherence of these essays comes from the common concerns of scholars from diverse historiographical traditions writing from a multiplicity of perspectives

<sup>1</sup> H.-W. Goetz, 'Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit im früh- und hochmittelalterliche Geschichtsbewußtsein', *Historische Zeitschrift* 255 (1992), pp. 61–97, is an excellent discussion of the consciousness of the past in the early and high Middle Ages.

<sup>2</sup> The term was coined by W. Eggert and B. Pätzold, *Wir-Gefühl und regnum Saxonum bei frühmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibern* (Berlin, 1984).

and dealing with different kinds of source material. These common concerns are the result of a series of stimuli which have affected all the contributors, and – hardly surprisingly, as all are professional historians who specialize in the study of the early Middle Ages – elicited similar responses. Some of our common concerns relate specifically to the development of early medieval history as a discipline since the 1970s, but most are manifestations of a series of wider intellectual developments affecting historical writing, indeed academic work in the humanities as a whole, in the late twentieth century. Although, then, these essays deal with western Europe between the fourth and twelfth centuries AD, their central themes – the relationship between texts and their social and cultural context, the mechanisms which construct shared views about the past, and the problems of using self-conscious representations of a past society as sources for the study of that society – will be of interest to all those involved in the study of the historical past.

Interest in the representation of the past in the early Middle Ages is in many ways the outgrowth of a long-established tradition of source-criticism. It was the proper practice of *Quellenkritik*, indeed, which, in the second half of the nineteenth century, came to define the study of history as an independent discipline with its own professional practitioners. For various reasons – not least, the difficulty of the sources and the difficulty of deriving an agreed ‘factual’ account from them – early medieval history for much of the twentieth century remained methodologically underdeveloped, insulated (others would say immune) from the new types of historical writing which were developing in other fields.<sup>3</sup> In that this positivist agenda largely relied on establishing the ‘reliability’ or otherwise of written sources, and in that the major written accounts on which historians attempted to base the stories which they told were themselves historical narratives, this inevitably led to interest in the writing of history in the early Middle Ages. Here, already before the war, scholars such as (to give just one example) Siegmund Hellmann were analysing written accounts in terms of the ways in which their authors achieved literary and ideological goals. That is, rather than simply judging their sources’ plausibility as neutral witnesses, a greater understanding of their literary and intellectual contexts allowed early medieval historians to be seen to be consciously

<sup>3</sup> Of course, in many ways national historiographies have always been a determining factor, particularly before the current generation, but my generalization still seems valid: in spite of the interest of the likes of Henri Pirenne and Marc Bloch in the early Middle Ages, the mainstream of early medieval history long remained wedded to a traditional agenda.

styling their accounts in particular ways: they could thus be exploited as sources for what Hellmann's pupil, Helmut Beumann, styled *Ideengeschichte*, the history of ideas about salient features of society (normally, in fact, kingship).<sup>4</sup> This approach, which spawned a whole school of German scholarship, was given a new spin in 1988 by the Canadian historian Walter Goffart. In a study of four of the canonical texts in early medieval history, Goffart argued that Jordanes' *Gothic History*, Gregory of Tours' *Histories*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* and Paul the Deacon's *History of the Lombards*, needed to be read as literary arguments, whose authors drew upon classical historiographical and rhetorical traditions inherited wholesale in representing the past of their societies to make a point about the present. In many ways, much of Goffart was already implicit in the work of Beumann or Heinz Löwe, but the way it was said prompted real debate: in some eyes, Goffart became a post-modernist who was arguing that conventional histories which attempted to reconstruct the 'facts' from these authors could not be written. Partly the reaction was due to Goffart's explicit citation of literary criticism, and in particular the work of Hayden White, in the course of his argument: the reception of his work was thus tied into a wider contemporary debate about post-modernism in academic life, and the 'linguistic turn' in historical writing.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, early medievalists being by and large a pragmatic bunch, the extreme position which would contend that all that we can work with is discourse, there being no reality external to that discourse, has had no real takers in early medieval studies. But the heightened consciousness of the constructedness of the sources has led to a series of interesting responses, which have much in common. In particular, techniques which were developed to enable the historical study of saints' lives – apparently barren material because of their domination by convention

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the collected essays in S. Hellmann, *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen zur Historiographie und Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt, 1961) and H. Beumann, *Ideengeschichtliche Studien zu Einhard und anderen Geschichtsschreibern des frühen Mittelalters* (Darmstadt, 1962). The important anthology edited by C. Holdsworth and T. P. Wiseman, *The Inheritance of Historiography, AD 350–900* (Exeter, 1986) rests on recognizably similar concerns: the contrast between that and the current volume makes clear the reorientation that has taken place subsequently.

<sup>5</sup> W. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (AD 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988). For the work of Löwe see his collected essays, *Von Cassiodor zu Dante. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zu Geschichtsschreibung und politischen Ideenwelt des Mittelalters* (Berlin and New York, 1973). Hayden White's œuvre is best represented by *Metahistory* (Baltimore, 1973) and his collection of essays, *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore and London, 1987); for the 'linguistic turn' and post-modernism, see G. Spiegel, 'History, post-modernism and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 65 (1990), pp. 59–86, and the debate on 'History and post-modernism', *Past & Present* 131, 133, 135 (1992).

– have been fruitfully applied to a range of other genres.<sup>6</sup> Texts are to be related to their context, and read as coherent statements designed to have an effect on a contemporary audience. Reading a text necessitates the assembly of as much data as possible about the author's chronological, geographical, social and cultural locations as a key to unlock historical context. This is precisely what recent research has done, and it has followed, broadly, two patterns. Firstly, scholars have studied the ways in which early medieval historians explained the past in terms of God's agency, providing counsel for current rulers in the messages they drew. Writing about the past thus emerges as an act of power, in that it sought to influence action in the present.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, contextual reading has also allowed historical works to be seen as statements of their authors' attitudes about the proper ordering of society.<sup>8</sup>

Such was the state of play when the current volume was first envisaged and the essays contained in it planned: hence the emphasis of the title, on *using* the past. In their completed form, these essays take the debate forward, exemplifying a number of newer concerns. The stress on context has excited precisely because it shifts attention towards texts as products of individual intelligences.<sup>9</sup> This has produced some stunning results, but the epistemological and ontological problems of accessing the author through contextual reading of the text, well known from debates in other disciplines, need acknowledging. There are also historical problems with such a procedure. The data about context, for example, are inevitably incomplete and available largely by chance and so we can only ever relate a text to a partial reconstruction of its context. There is also a danger of projecting a unifying intelligence behind works which may have shifted in form and been subject to multiple authorship. Indeed, it has even been suggested that a certain propensity to redrafting and reshaping in successive contexts may have been typical of many

<sup>6</sup> See, for the ways in which historians have used saints' lives, P. J. Geary, 'Saints, scholars and society: the elusive goal', *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London, 1994), pp. 9–29.

<sup>7</sup> K.-F. Werner, 'Gott, Herrscher und Historiograph: Der Geschichtsschreiber als Interpret des Wirken Gottes in der Welt und Ratgeber der Könige, 4–12. Jht.', in E.-D. Hehl, H. Seibert and F. Staab (eds.), *Deus qui mutat tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters. Festschrift A. Becker* (Sigmaringen, 1987), pp. 1–31.

<sup>8</sup> See H.-W. Goetz, *Strukturen der spätkarolingischen Epoche im Spiegel der Vorstellungen eines zeitgenössischen Mönchs. Eine Interpretation der Gesta Karoli Notkers von Sankt Gallen* (Bonn, 1982); M. Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours 'Zehn Bücher Geschichte': Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jht.* (Darmstadt, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> This paragraph owes much to Patrick Geary's analysis of the current state of play, and of reactions to Goffart's book, in a 1993 symposium – preserved, as delivered orally, in A. Scharer and G. Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichte 32 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 539–42.



early medieval texts.<sup>10</sup> Current research is tackling these problems head on. One area in which there has been important recent work is in the study of the original manuscripts of these texts as witnesses to their audience and reception, exemplified by Rosamond McKitterick's chapter in this volume. Walter Pohl also returns to the manuscripts, stressing the complex, shifting webs of Lombard tradition, and the role of their written redactors at nodal points within it.

Our awareness of the literary nature of our sources has led to study of how they work as texts.<sup>11</sup> One particularly fertile ground for analysis has been the implication of organizing written accounts of the past in narrative form, with events placed within a closed scheme of linear development. Catherine Cubitt's chapter demonstrates precisely how the creation of a coherent narrative reshaped material, before going on to relate the predilection for particular narrative conventions to their social context. Precisely because narrating is not 'telling things as they really were', but involves organizing them to fit a preconceived scheme, the study of narrative takes us beyond individual authors and invites us to relate them to the wider cultural world in which they worked. When individuals try to put together a coherent story about the past, they do so by drawing on standard patterns and expectations.<sup>12</sup>

Some narratives can come to shape the identity of an entire society. A series of contributors study what remains, in many ways, the most pervasive organizing story for historians of the early Middle Ages, that of the rise of the Franks under Carolingian leadership, the point being that the teleological metanarrative of Frankish triumph so often repeated by modern historians is based on the Carolingians' own self-representation in the historical narratives which serve us as sources. Following from McKitterick's analysis of political ideology in Frankish

<sup>10</sup> On 'soft' texts see e.g. J. L. Nelson, 'Public histories and private history in the work of Nithard', *Speculum* 60 (1985), pp. 251–93 [reprinted in J. L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 195–238]; M. Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy in an early medieval society', *Past & Present* 158 (1998), pp. 3–36; R. McKitterick, 'L'idéologie politique dans l'historiographie carolingienne', in R. Le Jan (ed.), *La royauté et les élites dans l'Europe carolingienne* (Lille, 1998), pp. 59–70 [the English translation appears in this volume as chapter 7].

<sup>11</sup> See here G. de Nie, *Views from a Many-Windowed Tower. Studies in the Imagination of Gregory of Tours* (Amsterdam, 1986); J. M. Pizarro, *A Rhetoric of the Scene. Dramatic Narrative in the Early Middle Ages* (Toronto, Buffalo and London, 1989) and *Writing Ravenna* (Ann Arbor, 1995); F. Lifshitz, *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria. Historiographic Discourse and Relic Cults 684–1090* (Toronto, 1995). A useful survey of medieval texts generally is R. Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> These observations ultimately derive from the work of White: see particularly 'The value of narratology in the representation of reality', in *The Content of the Form*, pp. 1–12. I have found E. Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts. The Social Construction of Oral History* (Cambridge, 1992), particularly stimulating in its discussion of similar issues in non-textual narrative.

history, Yitzhak Hen investigates the urgent needs in the present which lay behind the retelling of the Frankish past in wholly Carolingian terms dismissive of the Merovingian dynasty in one important ninth-century historical text. Mary Garrison and Mayke De Jong, in two important and complementary essays, offer the first two sustained studies of one of the most important Carolingian uses of the past, an intimate attachment to the biblical history of the Old Testament Israelites as a precursor to the Frankish present. Garrison traces the emergence of what was to become one of the standard tropes of Frankish political ideology under the Carolingians, the equation of the Franks with the Israelites of the Old Testament: an equation, she demonstrates, which was far from obvious or self-evident to the Franks, but was first made by outsiders and was internalized only slowly as the Frankish rulers came to re-educate their political community in the second half of the eighth century. Mayke De Jong explores the implications of this equation in the ninth century: debate on the biblical past became a code for thought about the Frankish present and thus a matter of real concern for Carolingian renaissance princes. These contributions likewise remind us that the past was not only conceived in linear, chronological terms: these elective affinities acquired their force from a typological mode of thought, in which the present was prefigured and explained in the Bible. The importance of the typological mentality is further stressed by Dominic Janes in his study of sacred art and architecture, which by offering the possibility of direct contact with the divine created pinpoints of timelessness where past, present and future merged.

Attempts to assess the significance of written representations of the past have encouraged work on the interface between the surviving sources and other, non-written, representations of the past: again, a shift from text to social context. This has been strongly influenced by current debate on the relationship between history and memory, whose rapid rise to historiographical prominence in the past decade seems to mirror a deep but as yet unidentified late twentieth-century intellectual need. (Indeed, it shows the scholarly maturity of early medieval history after a quarter of a century of quantitative growth and qualitative diversification that work on early medieval memory has been at the crest of this historiographical *nouvelle vague*, something that would have been scarcely thinkable before the 1970s.<sup>13</sup>) Although the buzzword, memory, rests on

<sup>13</sup> I am thinking in particular of the monograph by Patrick Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994), and the general work co-authored by James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992). In medieval studies generally, the recent interest in history as memory might even be seen as an outgrowth of earlier work on

an analogy between the ways in which societies construct their pasts and individual human remembrance, the study of social or collective memory is really the study of the common cultural pool which informed a vision of the collective past, explaining how and why present society came into being. For notions of memory to be meaningful, they must be specific: collective memory is by its very nature multivalent, with different memories being accessed by different groups in different situations. For the early medievalist, an additional problem is the written nature of our source material: we are inevitably studying memory at one remove, through a literary filter. Thus those who recorded the past in written form emerge as adaptors and editors of memory, but also as the authors of 'texts of identity' which in turn inform that memory.<sup>14</sup>

One of the features of this volume, indeed, is precisely that it is not simply an account of early medieval historical writing, but offers analysis of a much wider range of mechanisms which transmitted the past: as well as written histories, we encounter laws and buildings, documents and oral tradition. Notions of memory have proved attractive because they enable us to use a wide range of types of source material, and do not predicate a single, fixed, meaning. Memory, unlike tradition, is a concept that implies both continuity and transformation, and also allows for heterogeneity and malleability, phenomena stressed in Matthew Innes' reassessment of the evidence for transmission of oral traditions about heroic figures from the past. Other contributions stress the ways in which radical changes were negotiated by reworking identity-affirming traditions to meet new needs. Thus Rob Meens shows how the changing treatment of canon law by church councils was integral to the redefinition of Christian identity in the Merovingian period. Similarly, Marios Costambeys shows how what on first inspection might appear a stable body of thought about the monastic life was transformed as the social function of monasticism changed radically between the sixth and eighth centuries. Finally, Cristina La Rocca investigates the invention and

mnemonics and liturgical commemoration: M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990); J. Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories. Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past* (Cambridge, 1992); D. Geuenich and O. G. Oexle (eds.), *Memoria in der Gesellschaft des Mittelalters* (Göttingen, 1994).

<sup>14</sup> See, for ethnic identity, W. Pohl, 'Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung: eine Zwischenbilanz', in K. Brunner and B. Merta (eds.), *Ethnogenese und Überlieferung. Angewandte Methoden der Frühmittelalterforschung*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichte 31 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 9–26; for social identities, Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy'; C. Wickham, 'Lawyer's time: history and memory in tenth- and eleventh-century Italy', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. H. C. Davis* (London, 1985), pp. 53–71, and J. Byock, 'Saga form, oral prehistory and the Icelandic social context', *New Literary History* 16 (1984), pp. 153–73, relate the genre of written traditions to their social contexts.

elaboration of a largely fictitious Carolingian past in later medieval, early modern and modern Verona. This raises an important issue: when was it possible to get the past wholly wrong, simply to invent? As La Rocca shows, it was precisely because so much had been forgotten about the Carolingian past that the fictitious figure of Pacificus could be constructed: Pacificus, moreover, was a potent fiction precisely because he fitted preconceptions of what the Carolingian past ought to have been like. None of the users of the past that we are studying lived in a black hole of discourse: all were attempting to communicate to a present audience, and so, as Pohl reminds us, they had to construct a plausible version of that past.

Collectively, these essays demonstrate that the past was a vital force in early medieval societies. Yet precisely because of its potency, the past was a matter of debate, constantly being reshaped. We certainly cannot see the early Middle Ages as they are sometimes presented, a 'traditional' and 'archaic' world bound by the force of custom, where the power of the past led to a form of social inertia and a snail-like pace of change. Does not such a view of the period itself constitute a use of the past? It is an image which has strong echoes in popular images of pre-modernity as a kind of Prelapsarian Heritageland. Such an image is, of course, a form of self-definition in the present: this is what things are like now, and here is the photographic negative of the present, which might variously or simultaneously be a celebration of our progress, and a commentary on our failings. When it is dressed up in academic clothes, this image of pre-modernity can be conveniently anchored in a specific earlier period, providing a ready-made backdrop for later development. One of the consequences of the relative backwardness of early medieval history for much of the twentieth century, and of widespread and mistaken belief in the inadequacy of the evidence, was to make the presentation of the early Middle Ages as just such a backdrop a recurrent historiographical temptation. This is not to deny that the early Middle Ages were different from later periods, and the important quantitative and qualitative changes in the source material as one moves from the third century to the thirteenth. But to set up the early Middle Ages as a stateless, oral, organic Other is to avoid engaging with the early medieval evidence, and the growing confidence and sophistication of early medieval historians. The early Middle Ages were one of the most dramatic periods in our past. This volume helps us to understand how, through a dialogue with their past, contemporaries were able to negotiate their way through change.

*Memory, identity and power in Lombard Italy**Walter Pohl*

In 1222, a notary from Piacenza, Johannes Codagnellus, told a very uplifting story. Many centuries ago, he wrote, Longobards (*Longobardi*) under their king Gisulf had invaded this part of Lombardy. But in a terrible battle, another people called the Lombards (*Lombardi*) succeeded in defeating the invaders and putting them to flight.<sup>1</sup> In a northern Italian commune troubled by successive interventions of emperors from Germany, the public may have been pleased with such an example of self-assertion. They may not have been aware of the paradox implied in this way of 'using the past': in the sixth century, in this part of Italy the Roman Empire had succumbed to a 'Germanic' invasion by the Longobards, whose name was later turned into 'Lombards'. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, 'Germanic' Roman emperors invaded a country defended by 'Romanic' Lombards. Johannes Codagnellus had to stretch his material considerably, but his solution to 'double' the Lombards makes perfect sense in this contradictory situation.

Nowadays, Lombard origins are being used against another kind of 'Roman' interference, to argue for a secession of Padania from the bureaucracy in Rome which governs Italy. Such modern ideological contexts make early medieval barbarian 'histories', like those of the Lombards, an uncomfortable topic, full of risks and misunderstandings, but also more relevant to the contemporary world than most topics in early medieval history. They are also a field of scholarly polemic. Two conflicting modes of interpretation have stirred numerous debates. One school has brought together an impressive stock of ethnographic and mythological parallels to prove the basic authenticity of the material in

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Codagnellus, *Liber Rerum Gestarum*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *Neues Archiv* 16 (1891), pp. 475–505, esp. p. 479. See J. W. Busch, 'Die Lombarden und die Langobarden', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 29 (1995), pp. 289–311.

these histories, even where it is legendary.<sup>2</sup> Others have argued for the more or less fictional character of these texts.<sup>3</sup> The polemic has focused on two connected issues. One is the factual accuracy of the histories, especially those passages that deal with the remote period before the integration of Goths, Lombards or Anglo-Saxons into the late Roman world. Did Goths or Lombards come from Scandinavia, are the successive stages of their migration rendered correctly, and, probably more interesting, how reliable are the fragments of information about pagan beliefs and archaic societies in these histories? The second issue is more fundamental to the theme of this volume: did origin myths and histories have a function for the ethnic communities in which they were written down, or were their authors 'storytellers in their own right'<sup>4</sup> who only sought to entertain and to edify their contemporaries? Or, in short, what were the uses of the past in the early medieval *regna*? And, to add a further question: how did these uses shape the texts? Did they encourage codification or manipulation of historical narratives?

In the case of the Goths, Herwig Wolfram has proposed a rather complex model of the use of historical narrative in the *Getica*, a sixth-century Gothic history by Jordanes, and there has been a lively debate ever since.<sup>5</sup> Lombard texts have been studied less carefully. Those scholars who dealt with them mostly concentrated on the pivotal figure of Paul the Deacon who wrote his *Historia Langobardorum* towards the end of the eighth century, not long after the Carolingians had taken possession of the *regnum Langobardorum*.<sup>6</sup> But it may be misleading in this

<sup>2</sup> This approach was chosen by most pre-1945 German scholars. A more critical, but still optimistic view is found in post-war German scholarship (for instance R. Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen Gentes* (Cologne, 1961); 2nd edn (Cologne and Vienna, 1977) and in many contemporary Italian works. For the Lombards, see, for instance, S. Gasparri, *La cultura tradizionale dei Longobardi* (Spoleto, 1983).

<sup>3</sup> This point of view became popular in Anglo-American scholarship after the 'linguistic turn', and in early medieval studies with Walter Goffart's *The Narrators of Barbarian History AD 550–800. Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988). For a review of the debate, see W. Pohl, 'Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung', in K. Brunner and B. Merta (eds.), *Ethnogenese und Überlieferung. Angewandte Methoden der Frühmittelalterforschung*, Veröffentlichungen des Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 31 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 9–29.

<sup>4</sup> Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*, p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> H. Wolfram, *Die Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 6. Jahrhunderts*, 3rd edn (Vienna and Munich, 1990); published in English as *History of the Goths* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1988); Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*; P. J. Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford, 1996); P. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489–554* (Cambridge, 1977).

<sup>6</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* [hereafter: *HL*], ed. L. Bethmann and G. Waitz, MGH SRL (Hanover, 1878), pp. 12–187. Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*; W. Pohl, 'Paulus Diaconus und die *Historia Langobardorum*: Text und Tradition', in G. Scheibelreiter and A. Scharer (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 32 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 375–405, with further literature.

case to study just one author or one text, or even historiographic texts alone.<sup>7</sup> Distinguishing according to a *typologie de sources* or between literary genres may be helpful in understanding how a text works, but it does not explain how discourses are formed and diffused, and which texts contribute to the construction of identities. Social memory not only consists of narratives, but also, for instance, of implicit or explicit knowledge of how to act under certain circumstances.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, the whole body of texts that deal with the Lombard past has to be studied. Who was interested in Lombard memories, and how were they perceived and constructed? Answering this question requires going back to the manuscripts, for three reasons. Firstly, only the manuscripts can show with some precision how interest in certain texts develops. More than a hundred extant manuscripts of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* survive, and their specific geographical distribution allows a profile of interests in the Lombard past to be drawn, in spite of all hazards of *Überlieferungschance*, chances of transmission.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, this large body of copies of one text is surprisingly heterogeneous, and its variants often correspond to specific interests. The nineteenth-century editors of the MGH volumes of the *Scriptores Rerum Langobardorum* and the *Leges Langobardorum* did an excellent job, but they tried to reduce the multiplicity of textual variants to an *Urtext* so that the actual manuscript traditions, the many-faceted process of *réécriture*, were obscured.<sup>10</sup> Thirdly, our editions pay little attention to the way texts were arranged and combined in a manuscript. Many texts were copied into manuscripts that contain one or several other texts, thus establishing a textual configuration that could change the significance of each individual text. Sometimes, but not always, these manuscripts were organized according to affinities of genre. By separating historiographic from legal texts in two different volumes, according to the established typology of sources, the MGH editors drew much clearer lines than the texts themselves suggest, and split Lombard social memory into two parts. This chapter proposes to look at it as a whole.

<sup>7</sup> A recent, interesting attempt to discuss the historiography of Lombard origins before 800 in context is S. Cingolani, *Le Storie dei Longobardi. Dall'Origine a Paolo Diacono* (Rome, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> We may, of course, choose to regard even a lawcode as a virtual narrative that establishes what could, and what should happen. For social memory, see J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> For the term: A. Esch, 'Überlieferungs-Chance und Überlieferungs-Zufall als methodisches Problem des Historikers', *Historische Zeitschrift* 240 (1985), pp. 529–70; for an outline of the transmission of the *Historia Langobardorum*, Pohl, 'Paulus Diaconus'.

<sup>10</sup> F. Bluhme (ed.), MGH LNg 4; Bethmann and Waitz (eds.), MGH SRL.

In the year 643, the Lombard king Rothari promulgated the first Lombard lawcode.<sup>11</sup> The prologue explains that his aim was ‘to correct the present law, improving and amending all earlier laws by adding that which is lacking and eliminating that which is superfluous’ (*Necessarium esse prospeximus presentem corrigere legem, quae priores omnes renovet et emendet, et quod deest adiciat, et quod superfluum est abscidat*). The process is described in some detail in the so-called epilogue, chapter 386 of the *Edictus Rothari*: ‘We have ordered these laws to be written down on this parchment, thus preserving them in this edict so that those things which, with divine aid, we have been able to recapture through careful investigation of the old laws of the Lombards known either to ourself or the old men, we have put down in this lawbook.’ The text describes the process of legislation as a complex practice of social memory. ‘With the greatest care and most careful scrutiny, obtained by heavenly favour, after seeking out and finding the old laws of the fathers which were not written down’ (*cum summo studio . . . inquirentes et rememorantes antiquas leges patrum nostrorum, quae scriptae non erant*), the lawbook was improved and established ‘with the equal counsel and consent of our most important judges and with the rest of our most happy army’ (*pari consilio parique consensum cum primatos iudices cunctosque felicissimum exercitum nostrum augentes constituimus*). The wording makes it clear that the additions did not require a different procedure from the laws derived from memory.<sup>12</sup> The king gave order to write the resulting edict on parchment: *in hoc membranum scribere iussimus*. Again, the ‘subtle’ process of preserving memory is highlighted: ‘so that those things which, with divine aid, we have been able to recapture through careful investigation of the old laws of the Lombards known either to ourself or to the old men of the nation’ (*quod . . . per subtilem inquisitionem de antiquas legis langobardorum . . . memorare potuerimus, in hoc edictum subiungere debeamus*). Finally, the edict had to be confirmed by a formal procedure, by a ‘gairethinx’ according to the customs of the Lombards: *per gairethinx secundum ritus gentis nostrae confirmantes*. All subjects had to observe the new lawcode: *ab omnibus nostris subiectis custodiatur*. In chapter 388, Rothari provides for a carefully controlled distribution of the lawbook: ‘We add this general order lest any fraud be applied to this

<sup>11</sup> An English translation, with introduction, was published by K. Fischer Drew, *The Lombard Laws* (Philadelphia, 1973), c. 386 on p. 128. A recent Latin-Italian edition with commentary: C. Azzara and S. Gasparri (eds.), *Le leggi dei Longobardi. Storia, memoria e diritto di un popolo germanico* (Milan, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> Fischer Drew, *The Lombard Laws*, p. 128, oddly translates ‘cum primatos iudices cunctosque felicissimum exercitum nostrum augentes constituimus’ as ‘and with the rest of our happy nation assisting, we have established’.



edict through the fault of the scribes: if any contention arises, no other copies of this code shall be accredited or received except those which have been written or recognized or sealed by the hand of our notary Ansoald who has written this in accordance with our command' (*Et a hoc generaliter damus in mandatis, ne aliqua fraus per vicium scriptorum in hoc edictum adibeatur: si aliqua fuerit intentio, nulla alia exemplaria credatur aut suscipiatur, nisi quod per manus ansoald notario nostro scriptum aut recognitum seu requisitum fuerit, qui per nostram iussionem scripsit*). Repeated invocations of divine clemency and favour complete one of the most detailed descriptions of the process of social memory by any early medieval king.

Rothari's Edict, its sources and the act of legislation have stimulated numerous debates. The respective roles of the king and the people of the Lombards, and the rituals involved in their interaction spurred some controversy. For a long time, the *gairethinx secundum ritus gentis nostrae* was envisaged as an ear-shattering ceremony in which the whole of the Longobard army banged their spears on their shields to signal their approval. Some time ago, Ennio Cortese argued convincingly that the laws also provide for liberation of slaves or even sales of property *per gairethinx*, and therefore might not at all imply grand displays of martial shield-clattering.<sup>13</sup> The ritual employed by the first Lombard legislator thus may not have been as archaic as often envisaged. A similar question concerns the 'old laws of our fathers'. Chapter 386 has often been taken as proof of the existence of a Germanic oral judicial tradition and its direct confluence into the written lawcode, although some scholars have argued that, in spite of its claim, Rothari's Edict was copied from an existing written collection.<sup>14</sup> Here, I would like to disentangle myself from the looming problem of orality versus written memory by proposing a simple hypothesis: this question is central only if you automatically associate oral tradition with archaic origin, authenticity and purely 'Germanic' character of this tradition in content and form; and identify literacy with classical (or clerical) erudition, manipulation and dilution of the original text, but also with its transplantation into a Latin culture. I do not think that this bipolarity makes much sense. Latin and Germanic language, traditionalist and legislative rhetoric, and the attitudes

<sup>13</sup> Ennio Cortese, 'Thinx, gairethinx, thingatio, thingare in gaida et gisil', *Rivista di Storia del Diritto Italiano* 61 (1988), pp. 33–64.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., for instance, B. Paradisi, 'Il prologo e l'epilogo dell'editto di Rotari', *Studia e Documenta Historiae et Iuris* 34 (1968), pp. 432–57; A. Cavanna, 'Nuovi problemi intorno alle fonti dell'Editto di Rotari', *Studia e Documenta Historiae et Iuris* 34 (1968), pp. 269–361; G. Dilcher, 'Langobardisches Recht', in A. Erler and E. Kaufmann (eds.), *Handwörterbuch zur Deutschen Rechtsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1978), vol. 2, cols. 1607–18.

and rituals of late Roman judicial and 'Germanic' warrior cultures were, by the middle of the seventh century, too entangled to understand them as fundamentally different ways of dealing with the past. The year 643 was hardly the first instance when the Lombards encountered literacy, although it very likely marks the most ambitious attempt so far at integrating all available cultures of memory. Orality and literacy often seem to be quite inseparable on the basis of our evidence, and the 'milieu of memory' at the Lombard court certainly relied on both written and oral tradition.

Rothari's Edict does not set out to differentiate between what is old and authentic, and what is not; on the contrary, it suggests that there was no essential difference in dealing with both old and new law, for which it proposes a model for the correct interaction of *milieux de mémoire* and *lieux de pouvoir*, of memory and power.<sup>15</sup> This included the *antiqui homines*, but also the notary Ansoald, the *primati iudices*, the army, and, of course, the king in his palace at Pavia. A similar interface between memory and power is found in the prologue of the Edict. Again, we find a reference to the 'old men' from whose memory the text drew, this time because 'we found it useful for the memories of future times to write down the names of the kings, our predecessors' (*utilem prospeximus propter futuris temporis memoriam, nomina regum antecessorum nostrorum, ex quo in gente nostra langobardorum reges nominati coeperunt esse, in quantum per antiquos homines didicimus, in hoc membranum adnotari iussimus*). History and law obviously required similar strategies of memory. The Lombard past figures prominently in the prologue of the Edict: there is a list of seventeen kings and another list of ten ancestors of Rothari. And there is the protocol where the king's legitimacy is reinforced by two basic historical arguments. Firstly, he is explicitly presented as the seventeenth king, *Ego . . . septimo decimum rex gentis Langobardorum*, just like Romulus and, in the Amal genealogy constructed by Cassiodorus, Theodoric's grandson Athalaric.<sup>16</sup> And secondly, Rothari refers to the providential arrival of the Lombards in Italy under King Alboin: 'In the eighth year of my reign, the thirty-eighth of my age . . . and in the seventy-sixth year after the arrival of the Lombards in the province of Italy, since they were led here by divine power under Alboin, in those days king and my predecessor' (*anno deo propitiantie regni mei octavo, aetatisque tricesimo octavo, indictione*

<sup>15</sup> Cf. P. Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire* (3 vols., Paris, 1984–6).

<sup>16</sup> Wolfram, *Goten*, p. 42. Cassiodorus was an advisor of the sixth-century Gothic king Theodoric and wrote a History of the Goths in which he praised the ruling Amal dynasty, later used by Jordanes in his *Getica*.

*secunda, et post adventum in provincia italiae langobardorum, ex quo alboin tunc temporis regem precedentem divina potentia adducti sunt, anno septuagesimo sexto feliciter*). For Paul the Deacon (*HL* 4,42), this was an occasion to quote Rothari's prologue: 'This Rothari, king of the Lombards', he writes, 'put the laws of the Lombards that were only retained by memory and practice into written order, and decreed this manuscript to be called edict. This was the seventy-seventh year after the Lombards had come to Italy, as that king attests in the prologue of his edict' (*Hic Rothari rex Langobardorum leges, quas sola memoria et usu retinebant, scriptorum serie composuit codicemque ipsum edictum appellari praecepit. Erat autem iam ex quo Langobardi in Italiam venerant annus septuagesimus septimus, sicut idem rex in sui edicti testatus est prologo*). The chronology of the two texts differs by a year.

There is another reference to historical information in the lawcode in Paul the Deacon (*HL* 1,21). After mentioning that King Wacho (d. 540) subdued the Suevi, he goes on to say: 'If anybody considers that as a lie and not as the truth of the matter, he should reread the prologue of the edict that king Rothari composed of the Lombard laws, and almost in all of the manuscripts he will find it written just as we have inserted it into this history' (*Hoc si quis mendacium et non rei existimat veritatem, relegat prologum edicti, quem rex Rothari de Langobardorum legibus composuit, et pene in omnibus hoc codicibus, sicut nos in hac historiola inseruimus, scriptum reperiet*). For Paul's late eighth-century contemporaries, it must have sounded unlikely that the Lombards had ever subdued the Suevi, which in their view could only be the Alamanni; the Pannonian Suevi the text refers to had long been forgotten.<sup>17</sup> There is an element of imprecision in Paul's statement because it is not Rothari's prologue he refers to but a text called the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum*. Basically, however, Paul is correct, for this text is exclusively known from three of the extant manuscripts of the Lombard laws. It is also closely related to Paul's more elaborated treatment of the origin of the Lombards, and it even contains the information about the Suevi that Paul sought to prove by it.

The *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* is a brief text of a few pages and basically consists of a king-list with comments.<sup>18</sup> Its only elaborate narrative is the famous legend in the beginning that explains how the Lombards got their name. The Winnili, lead by Gambara and her two sons Ibor and Agio, faced battle against the powerful Vandals whose leaders Ambri and Assi appealed to Wodan to give them victory.

<sup>17</sup> From the sixth century, the Alamans were also called Suevi; but at that time other Suevi still existed in Pannonia.

<sup>18</sup> Ed. G. Waitz, MGH SRL, pp. 1–6.

Gambara, in turn, asked Wodan's wife Frea for help. On her intervention, Wodan promised victory to those whom he would see first on the battlefield. To make their side look more conspicuous, the women of the Winnili disguised themselves as warriors, with their long hair tied to their chins like beards. And thus Wodan really saw them first, asking: 'Who are these longbeards?' And Frea responded: 'As you have given them a name, give them victory as well.' Put into the context of Germanic mythology, the story offers a wide range of interpretations. For instance, in later Scandinavian sources, *Langbadhr*, the Longbeard, is one of Wodan's epithets, and it is hard to believe that this and other parallels are mere coincidence.<sup>19</sup> A careful analysis of the text should not cut it off from Germanic mythology, although most of what we know about it comes from thirteenth century Scandinavian sources; nor should it be read exclusively in this context.

However authentic such narratives may or may not have been, the whole complex of *lex* and *origo* was clearly intended to help give coherence and identity to a political and ethnic community like the Lombards.<sup>20</sup> The creation and preservation of ethnic groups was one of the contexts that required the production of texts, not just historiographic texts, but also laws and other forms of text designed to give meaning and lasting expression to a polity defined by an ethnic name. We may call this process of remembering what was essential about the common past a 'tradition'. But we have to be careful not to be misled by the implications that this term may carry. Ethnic 'traditions' are not necessarily broad, continuous and largely anonymous streams of social memory of which the texts that have come down to us represent but chance fragments. Long-term memory is not a natural process automatically shared by the members of a community.

Rothari's prologue and epilogue, and the prologues of the additions to the lawcode issued by the later kings Grimoald, Liutprand, Ratchis and Aistulf, repeatedly stress the efforts necessary to keep memories alive: *inquirere, rememorare, condere, corregere, constituere, scribere, confirmare, recognoscere, discere, emendare, renovare, adnotare*; the later prologues also use *adiungere, corrigere, revocare, innovare, instituere, inserere, adicere, auferre, minuere, subtrahere, purgare, ampliare, addere, (ad)augere, augmentare, supplere, conicere, annectere, affigere, annotare, reminiscere, pertractare, considerare, recurrere, definire, statuere, imponere*. Of course, we are dealing with rhetoric, but the insis-

<sup>19</sup> W. Bruckner, *Die Sprache der Langobarden* (Strasbourg, 1895), p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. H. Wolfram, 'Origo et religio. Ethnic traditions and literature in early medieval texts', *Early Medieval Europe* 3 (1994), pp. 19–38, and below.

tence with which this rhetoric develops the theme of preserving and changing the *edicti corpus* is remarkable. Grimoald set out to add (*adiungere*) the single matters that could be remembered so far and had not been included yet (*quod adhuc . . . memorare potuerimus de singolas causas, quae in presente non sunt adfite*). Liutprand's first prologue explored the theme of memory and oblivion in a series of binary oppositions: *auferre* – *adicere*, *minuere* – *ampliare*, *subtrahere* – *addere*. The prologue for his eighth year underlined the process of systematic revision of all previous clauses: 'We have investigated earnestly and carefully those particular matters which were covered in the earlier issues of this lawbook; now with all the people assisting, we have taken care to add, to clarify, or to establish the present rules contained in the following passages' (*dum singola, quae in anterioribus titulis huius edicti leguntur, studiosae hac subtiliter perscrutassimus, assistente omni populo, presentem, quam sequens sermo monstraverit, addere, elucidare sibi statuere prevedimus legem*).<sup>21</sup> His later prologues proposed to resolve the conflict between custom (*consuetudo*, *usus*, or in the Germanic term used in Liutprand 77 and 133, *cawarfida*) and deliberation (*arbitrium*).<sup>22</sup> The Benevantan prince Adelchis (d. 878), in his prologue of 866, recounted the process of legislation once more; the ancient kings had taken care to blot out (*pumice frangere*) what was superfluous, and to add what was necessary. This rich language that describes how one could deal with written memory shows how flexibly the process of memory and oblivion could be perceived in the early Middle Ages. The *subtilis inquisitio* employed by Lombard legislators is at the root of much of what people in the early Middle Ages knew about their past (and of what we know about it). The Lombards in Italy provide a good example for an analysis of the ways in which such memories took shape.

Who was interested in defining the Lombards, what material did they use, and what effect did their constructions have? What we can reconstruct on the basis of such questions is not so much a broad and continuous flow of tradition but a few knots in an interrelated network of memory. Before 800, three of these knots emerge clearly.<sup>23</sup> The first documented interest in Lombard history goes back to the days of

<sup>21</sup> Similarly in the prologue to the ninth year 'pertractantes omnia et recurrentes antiquioris edicti capitula'.

<sup>22</sup> Liutprand 77, in a specific context, explicitly refers to ancient custom that was now written down 'Ideo autem hoc scripsimus, quia etsi adfictum in edictum propriae non fuit, tamen omnes iudices et fidelis nostri sic dixerunt, quod cawarfida antiqua usque nunc sic fuisset.'

<sup>23</sup> For the context of Lombard history, cf. J. Jarnut, *Geschichte der Langobarden* (Stuttgart, 1982); C. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy* (London, 1981); R. Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns. Forms of Integration in Lombard Italy AD 568–774* (Lund, 1993); and W. Pohl, *Die Langobarden* (Munich, forthcoming).

Secundus of Trento and Queen Theodelinda around 600. The cleric from Trento, Secundus, seems to have been the queen's spiritual advisor and is known to have baptized her son, the future King Adaloald, in the basilica of St John the Baptist at Monza that Theodelinda founded. Paul the Deacon mentions in several instances that he could rely on a, now lost, *historiola* of the Lombards written by Secundus. He also admired the frescoes of 'some of the deeds of the Lombards' that Theodelinda had had painted in her palace at Monza. Only from these paintings, he says, did he know about the types of dress the Lombards once wore, which had changed long since.<sup>24</sup> It seems that Lombard ethnic memory and Roman administrative practice in Italy began to converge very soon after 568, and that Secundus was one of the Roman specialists who helped Lombard rulers with this task.

The second stage in the making of Lombard memory was the age of Rothari and his notary Ansoald, with the promulgation of the Edict that was to form the core of Lombard law in the year 643. Rothari, in spite of steering a different course in his religious policy, later respected the tradition of Theodelinda by choosing to be buried in her basilica of John the Baptist at Monza. Paul the Deacon later expressed his approval of the Arian legislator king in an anecdote: Rothari's grave is protected from a thief by St John the Baptist in person, who says: 'He may not have been orthodox, but he commended himself to me' (*HL* 4,47). It is quite probable that the Latin text of the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* was compiled at about the same time as the Edict, for the two king-lists are closely related. However, in the surviving form it seems to have been completed some twenty to thirty years later, during the reign of either Grimoald or Perctarit, the two last kings mentioned in the version that can be reconstructed on the basis of the three extant manuscripts. Most scholars thought that it could have been compiled on the occasion of Grimoald's additions to the lawcode, but more likely it was updated under Grimoald's ousted predecessor and later successor Perctarit. It contains all the necessary information to trace Perctarit's genealogy back to Theodelinda and the prestigious Lething dynasty in the first half of the sixth century, whereas it does not mention that Grimoald was related to Alboin and the dukes of Friuli (as Paul states). Whatever the case, Fredegar's *Chronicle* written in the same period attests that around 660 the story of how the Lombards got their name was also known in Burgundy. He records a battle of the Lombards with the Huns, at which

<sup>24</sup> W. Pohl, 'Telling the difference: signs of ethnic identity', in W. Pohl and H. Reimitz (eds.), *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300–800* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 17–70.

the women tie their hair to look like beards to frighten the enemy, whereupon a voice from the sky which they *fanatice* suppose to be that of their god Wodan exclaims: *Haec sunt Longobardi*.<sup>25</sup>

It is remarkable that the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* does not seem to have been updated after Perctarit, by either of the successive kings who added to the lawcode. The surviving early manuscripts do not show great interest in the text by those who copied the Edict, either. Neither the St Gall codex that originated around Pavia or at Bobbio in the seventh century, nor the north-western Italian manuscripts of Vercelli and Ivrea written sometime before and sometime after 800 respectively, nor a Vatican codex from Verona dating to the ninth century contain a trace of the *Origo*.<sup>26</sup> Only three tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts have the text.<sup>27</sup> Paul the Deacon's extended version of the origin myth was much more successful: his *Historia Langobardorum* is still preserved in over a hundred manuscripts. However, a comparison of the *Origo* and the initial sections of Paul's history shows that the Deacon remained rather faithful to his model. This comes as no surprise, for we know that Paul also copied other sources very faithfully, for instance Gregory of Tours.

After the pairs Secundus/Theodelinda around 600 and Ansoald/Rothari around 650, we reach the decisive stage in the making of Lombard memory: the late eighth century, the time when Paul the Deacon settled down at Montecassino to write the *Historia Langobardorum*, sometime after Charlemagne had brought the Lombard kingdom under control. Paul is not connected to a single royal figure but to a

<sup>25</sup> Fredegar 4,65. For Fredegar, cf. I. Wood, 'Fredegar's fables', in G. Scheibelreiter and A. Scharer (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 32 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 359–66. Cingolani, *Le Storie dei Longobardi*, pp. 38–41, argues that Fredegar's brief version is closer to the original, and that the fuller story in the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* (including Gambara and Frea) is due to later additions. Cingolani is correct in claiming that the Fredegar version, being the oldest to be attested, should receive more attention. But it is not very likely that, for instance, the Vandals came to supplant the Huns in a seventh-century version, when one might have at best remembered that they had once crossed the Rhine and lived in Africa. Likewise, there may have been stronger pagan survivals among seventh-century Lombards than we are aware of (cf. Pohl, 'Deliberate ambiguity: the Lombards and Christianity', forthcoming); but it is unlikely that the story about Frea and Wodan was only thought up to be added to a semi-official text under Christian kings.

<sup>26</sup> A hand-list of manuscripts of Lombard law is in preparation for the MGH, to be edited by Christoph Meyer, Charles Radding and Walter Pohl. So far, see Bluhme's list in MGH *LNG* 4.

<sup>27</sup> For these manuscripts, see below. From the manuscript evidence, it would be possible to argue that the *Origo* is only an abbreviated version of the story found in Paul the Deacon, which was annexed to some late manuscripts of the law. But this is not very likely. We would have to regard Paul's reference to the text found in the Edict as a lie that prompted others to fabricate exactly what he had pretended to have found; furthermore, the end of the king-list with Perctarit and several archaisms in the text would have to be explained.

number of power centres: the duchy of Friuli at Cividale where he grew up, the royal court at Pavia where he held office under the last Lombard kings, the duchy of Benevento where he served as an advisor to the *princeps* Arichis II and his wife Adelperga in times of confrontation with the Franks, and last but not least the Carolingian court in whose orbit he spent some years. His *History* therefore offers an almost uniquely broad horizon and displays remarkable skill in reconciling contradictions.<sup>28</sup> We know that he used both the *History* of Secundus and the lawcode containing the *Origo Gentis*. His personal fate also seems to have been linked with Theodelinda's basilica at Monza, as can be guessed from a curious story (*HL* 5,6). When the Byzantine emperor Constans II invaded Italy, he asked a hermit whether he would be able to subdue the Lombard kingdom. The hermit answered that he would be repelled by the personal protection of St John the Baptist for the Lombards. Only at a time when unworthy people would seize the basilica at Monza could the Lombard kingdom be shattered. We may infer that Paul blamed Desiderius, the last Lombard king, for giving the basilica into the wrong hands, squandering the kingdom's supernatural protection. For the historian of the Lombards, the very core of Lombard identity lay in the hands of John the Baptist, not in those of Wodan, King Alboin or any of his successors.

The Carolingian conquest did not end the interest in Lombard origins and Lombard law, but rather inspired attempts to promote its diffusion in writing. Sometime in the 830s, Eberhard of Friuli commissioned the monastery of Fulda and specifically the brilliant young scholar Lupus of Ferrières to compose a handbook of several laws he could use in office in Friuli. Cividale del Friuli, by the way, also was an early centre of diffusion of Paul the Deacon's *History*; one of the earliest surviving manuscripts can be seen in the museum at Cividale. The lawbook Lupus composed is mentioned in Eberhard's famous testament and went to his son and later king of Italy, Berengar.<sup>29</sup> The original is lost, but two extant manuscripts document the work Lupus had done. One is the Modena copy (O.I.2); it contains the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum*, although not immediately preceding the Lombard laws.<sup>30</sup> The

<sup>28</sup> Pohl, 'Paulus Diaconus'.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. C. La Rocca and L. Provero, 'The dead and their gifts. The will of Eberhard, count of Friuli, and his wife Gisela', in F. Theuvs (ed.), *Rituals of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2000).

<sup>30</sup> The date 991 given in the literature for Modena O.I.2 is derived from a calendar that may have been annexed to the manuscript some time after it had been written, and is therefore unreliable. I plan to come back to the problem in a forthcoming study.



other codex is a version that was written at Fulda (and is now at Gotha). It also contains a short *Origo* of the Lombards, probably compiled before the death of King Pippin of Italy, in the first decade of the ninth century, but from a Christian and Carolingian perspective, omitting most of the origin myth and introducing a strong sense of providence instead.<sup>31</sup>

In some ways, written expressions of Lombard identity became more important after the Lombard kingdom had lost its independence. Lombard tradition was used in many ways to reassert separate identities, to propagate ways of coexistence with mighty neighbours or to find comfort in defeat. Thus, Paul the Deacon was posthumously styled as a hero of southern independence who thrice tried to murder Charlemagne and was only pardoned because of his genius and erudition – a legend that became widely diffused in the south. His figure as commentator of the *Regula Benedicti*, as grammarian and poet, and as historian of the Romans and Lombards loomed for centuries over the monastic communities of the south so often threatened by foreign intervention. A growing corpus of Lombard historiographic and legal texts became a chief asset for the major monasteries in the country, like Montecassino, San Vincenzo, Farfa or Nonantola, in defending and extending their rights. Donations, forged or real, by Lombard kings and dukes played such an important part in the ceaseless efforts to preserve and enlarge their wealth in the recurring political crises that monastic communities were eager to accumulate any historical information that might prove useful. Paradoxically enough, they came to see their own story in a continuum going back, in the last instance, to Wodan and Frea. This conjunction of the origin of the Lombards and the identity of Benedictine convents, of ethnic and monastic memory, goes back to the historical synthesis Paul the Deacon achieved.

The strategies of monastic memory in central and southern Italy often work as a filter through which our surviving information from the seventh and eighth centuries has passed. Patrick Geary has described the transformation of early medieval memory on the basis of French and German material in his book *Phantoms of Remembrance*.<sup>32</sup> Brigitte Pohl-Resl is currently studying this process from the point of view of twelfth-century chronicle-cartularies like the *Chronicon S. Sophiae* or the *Regestum* of Farfa. My own research has concentrated on a number of manuscripts that assemble a variety of mainly ninth- and tenth-century texts

<sup>31</sup> The MGH edition calls it *Historia Langobardorum Codicis Gothani*; MGH SRL, pp. 7–11.

<sup>32</sup> P. J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994).

collected by the monks of Montecassino that deal with their troubled relationship with the powers that surrounded them. These mostly rather short texts comprise chronicles, king-lists, letters, poems and epitaphs, treaties, accounts of miracles and of pious donations, glossaries of Lombard law, accounts of chronology and other texts, right across the genres. In different, but related selections, they are found in a commentary to the Benedictine Rule from the 920s, in a manuscript of Lombard law dating to *c.* 1000, and in a collection of historiography (Erchempert and the *Chronicon Salernitanum*) preserved in a copy from *c.* 1300 but essentially put together in the course of the late ninth and the tenth century.<sup>33</sup> Most of the 'texts of identity' preserved in these collections refer to the period between 750 and 900, whereas relatively little of what mattered for the compilers goes back to the time before 750. But they used some basic information on St Benedict and on the early history of the duchy of Benevento derived from Paul the Deacon, an annotated Lombard king-list, and, of course, the lawcode including the *Origo*. The two manuscripts that, apart from Eberhard's version, contain both the lawcode and the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* are from the Beneventan area: one probably compiled at Montecassino around 1000 (and now at Cava de' Tirreni), the other one written at Bari in the eleventh century (now in Madrid).<sup>34</sup> It is of course not surprising that in this part of Italy, where Lombard rule had survived (although in smaller and smaller units), the interest in Lombard origins should be more marked.

Conspicuously enough, the period around the year 1000 witnessed a renewed interest in Lombard law and traditions in most parts of Italy. Maybe it is no coincidence that the last event recorded in the king-list in the Codex Cavensis is the succession of Arduin of Ivrea to the Lombard throne after the death of Otto III in 1002. The first decades of the eleventh century also show a veritable explosion in the references to Lombard law in private charters. In the troubled residence of Pavia, a law school began to study, comment and synthesize Rothari's Edict and its successive additions. Some of the manuscripts of the so-called 'Lombarda', a systematic version of the lawcode that ultimately emerged from their studies, again contained *origines* of the Lombards. The editors of the MGH called these *Historiae Langobardorum Fabulosae*. Indeed, they hardly resemble the old version of the *Origo*. Gambara, the wise woman

<sup>33</sup> Lawbook: Cava de' Tirreni 4; Rule: Montecassino 175; Histories: Vat. lat. 5001. The results of this study will be published elsewhere.

<sup>34</sup> G. Cavallo, 'Per l'origine e la data del Cod. Madrid. 413 delle Leges Langobardorum', *Studi di storia dell'arte in memoria di Mario Rotili* (Naples, 1984), pp. 135–42.

at the dawn of Lombard origins, becomes the one who leads the Lombards into Italy and defeats Narses in battle.<sup>35</sup> Interest in Lombard roots by lawyers obviously did not necessarily imply a codified version of their history. It may well be that among the manuscripts of Lombard law at hand in Pavia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, none contained the version of the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* as we know it.

This brief outline of the way in which texts about the Lombards were transmitted and reshaped should demonstrate that no simple model fits the process of 'memory and oblivion' in the early Middle Ages. The same text could be subject to any treatment from restrictive control to fundamental rewriting. Rothari, by restricting the use of lawbooks to those copies that had passed through his notary's hands, established a regulation for his own lifetime. But his codification was still faithfully copied half a millennium after his death, and survived more or less intact to our day, in a dozen manuscripts. On the other hand, the lawcode was also abridged, glossed, commented, revised, put in different order, and cited in histories and charters. The same happened to the text of the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum*, which was both copied and taken as a point of departure for a variety of historiographic texts; and, even more so, to Paul the Deacon's *History of the Lombards*. Successful medieval texts often oscillate between codification and restrictive use on the one hand, and growth and transformation on the other. This is not surprising as medieval societies always represented a plurality of interests capable of finding textual expression. The surviving texts are traces of a plurality of writings. Totalizing concepts of historical memory are no use in describing them. Uses of the past were not restricted to a uniform collective subject, a kingdom or a people in strict control of its memory and tradition. Specialized writers, whose roles as authors, compilers, copyists or correctors are often not easily distinguishable, made their point and could leave their mark.

On the other hand, reshaping the past was not the monopoly of a few autonomous individual subjects who could freely create it. Firstly, each of the successive stages of the 'making of a memory' was closely linked with the centres of Lombard power. Every single one of our authors had close links to royal or ducal courts and was instrumental in more than writing history. The Lombard history of Secundus was paralleled by the paintings in the queen's palace that were part of royal representation, and he certainly was an important advisor in her controversial strategy

<sup>35</sup> This is a mistake that may well follow from a superficial reading of the *Historia Langobardorum Codicis Gothani*.

of strengthening the Christian character of the Lombard kingdom. Rothari's Edict uses the historical material in the prologue and in the *Origo Gentis* that became attached to it to make a strong statement about the Lombard monarchy. Paul the Deacon, a man who had spent long years in the inner circle of the Lombard court, became an important promoter of reconciliation between Lombards and Franks under the auspices of Catholicism. Lupus of Ferrières worked for the duke of Friuli. Only eventually, proud monasteries tried to use the past to hold the powers of the present at bay, and established some control over the sources of written memory

Secondly, none of these authors could write without taking a limited, but qualified public into account. However limited its diffusion in its written form, the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum* was surprisingly well preserved even in its embarrassingly pagan aspects. Fredegar, writing outside the Lombard kingdom at about the same time, was conspicuously more reluctant to take all the pagan lore on board and distanced himself from those who *fanatice* attributed a simple voice from heaven to the god Wodan. Paul the Deacon did call the Wodan myth of the origin of the Lombards a *ridicula fabula*, but still he faithfully rendered it, in much the same words as the *Origo Gentis* had done more than a century before. A thoroughly Christianized version of the Lombard origin legend was only created in the early ninth century by an Italian admirer of Charlemagne. It can hardly be a coincidence that of the two lawbooks compiled by Lupus of Ferrières, this Christian version is found in the *Codex Gothanus* written at Fulda, whereas the Italian version that Eberhard of Friuli used still contained the traditional text of the *Origo*. Even Walter Goffart, who presented Paul the Deacon as an autonomous author, admitted that his audience might have missed the familiar pagan legends.<sup>36</sup> But that means that there was an audience who knew the story before reading it, and one to whom those legends mattered. It is in his frequent attempts to bridge contradictions or take the edge off embarrassing material that Paul's complex treatment of the Lombard past becomes most obvious.

Thirdly, we see that the different knots in our web of tradition are linked in a complex way. Various attempts to explain their relationship by simple models of derivation have failed. The great Theodor Mommsen believed that the *Origo Gentis* was just an excerpt from Secundus, from whose *Historiola* Paul copied the integral version, but not even

<sup>36</sup> Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*, pp. 382–3.

Mommsen's authority could make this hypothesis stick.<sup>37</sup> Of course Paul the Deacon knew most of the earlier texts we know, but he knew more than these. And the *Origo Gentis* is likely to differ from Secundus in important respects. The transmission of Lombard histories can only be conceived allowing for a few knots unknown to us, for instance the sources for most of Paul's account of Lombard history from Rothari to Ratchis. Some of it must have been material preserved at or near the Lombard court.<sup>38</sup> A century later, this type of material was not available any more, either to Andreas of Bergamo or to Erchempert who continued Paul's work.<sup>39</sup> For their account of the fall of the Lombard kingdom, they had to rely mainly on the *Liber Pontificalis*, which accounts for some bizarre changes of perspective, especially in the *Chronicle* of Andreas. Another example of (more recent) losses of material is the fact that today not a single manuscript of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* survives from southern Italy, although it is used in all of the Beneventan manuscripts that represent the specific southern Italian blend of ethnic and monastic memory; it appears in library catalogues; and we even know that a renegade monk of San Vincenzo stole it from his monastery. On the other hand, two manuscripts of the *Historia Langobardorum* from Eberhard's Friuli survive to this day, but none is mentioned in his testament. It thus seems obvious that both the surviving manuscripts and medieval library catalogues represent only a small percentage of what was originally there.

We have departed from the hypothesis that one of the functions of the texts about the Lombards was to reinforce their identity. This is in line with current narratology that analyses 'texts of identity' from the point of view of literary criticism, psychology, ethnology and, of course, history.<sup>40</sup> What can we really learn about the construction of Lombard identity from these texts? Certain recurring narratives and images seem to have been regarded as central to the social memory of a community that styled itself as 'the Lombards'. They explained where they had come from, why they were called Lombards, how they had subdued

<sup>37</sup> T. Mommsen, 'Die Quellen der Langobardengeschichte des Paulus Diaconus', *Neues Archiv* 5 (1880), pp. 51–103.

<sup>38</sup> Assuming that official court historiography and oral tradition preserved by court poets was Paul's source: D. Bullough, 'Ethnic history and the Carolingians: an alternative reading of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*', in C. Holdsworth and T. P. Wiseman (eds.), *The Inheritance of Historiography* (Exeter, 1986), pp. 85–105.

<sup>39</sup> Eds. L. Bethmann and G. Waitz, MGH SRL, pp. 220–30, 231–264.

<sup>40</sup> Cf., for instance, J. Shotter and K. J. Gergen (eds.), *Texts of Identity* (London, 1989); G. C. Rosenwald and R. L. Ochberg (eds.), *Storied Lives: the Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding* (Yale, 1992).

most of Italy.<sup>41</sup> They also related primordial deeds and instances of divine protection, although the agents of the latter changed, from Wodan and Frea to John the Baptist and Michael the Archangel. Implicitly or explicitly, these narratives called for certain types of behaviour to retain the extraordinary position of the Lombards. Some of them were quite universal: audacity in battle, sacrifices for the community, obedience to laws, love of freedom, veneration of saints. The late tenth-century *Chronicon Salernitanum* relates an incident in which a man called Rampho urges his *princeps* not to accept paying tribute: 'Have you never read, my lord, how our fathers left their homes because of the tribute the Vandals asked from them?' (Vat. Lat. 5001, fol. 23v). This is a direct reference to the Lombard origin myth, 350 years after it was first written down.

Some of these narratives call for virtues that are a little more specific. For instance, female counsel was valued highly, not only in the Gambara story. Social prejudices had to be set aside in times of crisis, when slaves were expected to join the ranks of the free Lombards. This point corresponds to the openness of Lombard identity in the texts: nowhere do we get a restrictive definition of who is a Lombard and who is not. Instead, we repeatedly hear how groups of non-Lombard origin become Lombards, for instance Alzecco's Bulgarians in the seventh century, a story that recurs in many Beneventan manuscripts.<sup>42</sup> What we would regard as a fundamental question of identity, the relationship between the Lombards and the Roman majority in Italy, is hardly ever addressed, and neither is the question of language. That does not mean that no differences were perceived at all, for instance in law or social status. But obviously these differences were not conceptualized on the basis of clear ethnic definitions.<sup>43</sup> Rather, to be Roman or Lombard or sometimes both seems to have been an option open to many in specific situations, for instance whether to write charters in the Lombard or the Roman way.<sup>44</sup>

In many respects, perceptions and concepts of Lombard identity vary in our texts. For instance, the *Origo Gentis* offers hardly any Christian interpretation of Lombard history. Paul the Deacon balances it against a strong Christian context without giving it a providential meaning,

<sup>41</sup> The *Historia Langobardorum Codicis Gothani*, p. 8, explains this in the following manner: 'Originem et nationem seu parentelam langobardorum, exitus et conversationem eorum, bella et vastationes quae fecerunt reges eorum, et patrias quas vastarunt.'

<sup>42</sup> *HL* 5,29. <sup>43</sup> Pohl, 'Telling the difference'.

<sup>44</sup> B. Pohl-Resl, 'Legal practice and ethnic identity in Lombard Italy', in Pohl and Reimitz (eds.), *Strategies of Distinction*, pp. 205–20.

whereas the history in the *Codex Gothanus* sees God's hand at work in the Lombards' arrival in Italy. Paul's rather ambiguous and complicated agenda that left room for very different successive interpretations proved most successful. Just as the Carolingians changed Merovingian history, he emarginated other views of the Lombard past where he did not integrate them. Even nowadays, he is our chief witness if we want to know who the Lombards were. No doubt this blurs our perception considerably. On the other hand, his broad perspective is adequate to a process whose initial stages he describes. In the Lombard period, Italy was a country of multiple ethnic and political identities. Lombards and Romans, Greeks and Franks became integral parts of a political universe that could not define itself as a clear-cut ethnic community. In Paul's early days, it seemed for a while that the Lombards might establish a political synthesis of the different groups in the peninsula. Paul's *Historia Langobardorum* reflects this concept when its historical moment had already passed. By the time he wrote it, it was already clear that he had to allow not only for increasing ethnic, but also for political diversity. Thus, it became as much a book about the future as a book about the past.

Paul the Deacon, and some other writers to a lesser degree, may in this sense have created Lombard history for us. Does this mean that this history cannot be perceived independently from their creation? Nowadays, historians love to talk about invented pasts, which is important as an antidote against academic attitudes that regard historiography as a simple reflection of past realities that may just be more or less accurate. The war between Lombards and Longobards reported by Codagnellus is invented to a considerable degree. But even to him, the distant Lombard past was not infinitely malleable. Medieval historiographers mostly dealt with truths that were already there, with an order of discourse about the past that gave meaning to the narrative modules they arranged or produced. Even invented pasts could not be created freely, they had to be likely enough to have come to pass. In the 1960s, the melodramatic Italian film 'Alboin, King of the Lombards' showed how Alboin made his Gepid wife Rosamund drink out of her father's skullcup, and she conspired to murder him. Thus far, the film was quite faithful to Paul the Deacon's narrative of Alboin's death. But it ended with the final victory of the Gepids over the Lombards, presented as a happy ending. Whoever wrote histories in the Middle Ages, even *historiae fabulosae*, could not have made the Gepids win. They could make Gambara lead the Lombards to Italy instead of Alboin, or they could

picture the Lombards as being there already when the Longobards came. But still the Lombards had to win, for a simple reason: Italy was a Lombard, not a Gepid kingdom, and the region around Milan and Pavia was called Lombardy. After all, people knew what their past had led to.



# *Memory and narrative in the cult of early Anglo-Saxon saints*

*Catherine Cubitt*

Medieval memory is now a burgeoning field of research, but surprisingly little has been written about the place of memory in that central plank of medieval religion, the cult of the saints. Yet for anyone living in, say, the eighth or ninth centuries saints' cults would have been one of the primary associations with the *memoria* – this was the word often used for saints' relics and writers of saints' lives frequently introduce them with the aim of perpetuating the memory of their subject.

This study is an enquiry into how saints were remembered in seventh- to ninth-century England, concentrating upon native saints whose cults were fostered within a generation or two of their deaths and investigating the relationship between the workings of memory and the conventionalized hagiographical form in which they were commemorated. It takes four case-studies which explore the interactions between memory, literary texts and experience, with, first, the example of St Boniface whose life and death demonstrate the impact of textual models upon lived sanctity. The remaining three case-studies take the form of detailed discussion of three *vitae* – the two prose lives of St Cuthbert, the first by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and the second by Bede, and the life of the hermit saint Guthlac of Crowland by Felix.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The sample of source materials chosen for this study means that its discussion is confined to male saints. A number of its more general conclusions (for example, about liturgical commemoration within a monastery) would apply to female saints. The paucity of material for early Anglo-Saxon female saints makes it hard to generalize about their memorialization; Julia Smith's 'The problem of female sanctity in Carolingian Europe c. 780–920', *Past & Present* 146 (1995), pp. 3–37 is suggestive for possible approaches to Anglo-Saxon female saints. This article originated as a lecture for the medieval English seminar at the University of Birmingham in June 1994 and I would like to thank its organizers, Suzanne Reynolds and Valerie Edden, for their stimulus and help. I have subsequently benefited much from the comments made on versions of this paper by those participating in seminars at the universities of London in 1994, Leeds in 1997 and York in 1998, and in conferences at the University of St Andrews in 1995, at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds in 1995, and at the University of London in 1996. I should like to thank Geoffrey Cubitt (whose interest in memory stimulated my own), Chris Wickham, Elizabeth Tyler and my editors, Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes for their advice.

Through analysis of the two prose lives of Cuthbert with regard to the workings of collective memory, I shall attempt to reconstruct the early stages of Cuthbert's cult and to chart his transformation from a figure whose sanctity was rooted in Irish practices to one whose *vita* could be used as a vehicle for Romanizing propaganda. The development of Cuthbert's cult emphasizes the deep rift within the Northumbrian Church caused by the rejection of the Irish Easter reckoning and other ecclesiastical practices.

Both memory and the production of written texts are vital activities in the process of political change. Bede's rewriting of the anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert* had a strongly ideological character which is explored particularly in relation to his use of narrative. (I use the term 'narrative' in this chapter to mean a way of writing distinguished by its emphasis upon causation and chronological linkage which tells a story in a linear fashion.) The politics of memory and textual commemoration form the focus of my study of Felix's *Life of Guthlac* which also shows the role of texts – here Bede's prose *Life of Cuthbert* – in creating memory. While the *Life of Guthlac* may be almost wholly dependent upon other texts rather than upon living memories of the saint, it poses the question of whether anything is recoverable about the men behind the cults. What lay behind these textual models of perfection? Was the saint for most Anglo-Saxon contemporaries a holy man, a source of wisdom and sage advice, rather than the model of monastic perfection portrayed by Bede in his interpretation of Cuthbert?

A number of themes run through this chapter: the interactions between texts and lived experience, and between texts and memory, and the role of memory and written narratives as powerful instruments of ideology. Although the evidence of written sources and especially hagiographies forms the core of the chapter, it will be set in the context of other forms of commemoration within Anglo-Saxon monasteries, particularly the liturgy. Finally, the study will conclude by raising two questions. Firstly, the relationship between early medieval literary forms and their social contexts will be questioned. Secondly, the structures of early medieval monastic memory will be examined and set against those of secular society. My aim in this chapter is threefold – to shed light upon the cult of the saints in the early Middle Ages, to contribute to the lively field of the historical study of memory (particularly collective memory) of all periods, and to raise questions about the function of early medieval literary genres.

## MEMORY AND THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Modern studies of memory have emphasized two essential features.<sup>2</sup> Firstly, that the process of recollection is not an exact one of information retrieval but rather one in which memories are put together from fragmented sources, often in a simplified form, according to pre-existing patterns. These are the necessary frameworks in which experience and knowledge can be stored and retrieved. Remembering is a creative activity in which the past is constantly updated according to the requirements of the present.<sup>3</sup>

The second feature is that remembering is an inherently social activity. Individual memory is structured through language and ideas shared by society. These include the cognitive structures which we use to make sense of our experiences, for example, narrative, and acquired physical skills such as writing. Further, the social groups, like the school class or set of work colleagues, amongst which our experiences take place play an important role in individual recollection. The memories of the individual are therefore inextricably bound up with those of others.<sup>4</sup> 'People depend on others to help them decide which experiences to forget and which to remember, and what interpretation to place on experience. People develop a shared identity by identifying, exploring, and agreeing on memories.'<sup>5</sup>

The realization of the social dimension of individual recollection has also prompted studies of the role of memory within society in, for example, shared memories of wars or industrial strikes and in the public commemoration of events, the shared participation in public events where individual experience and public events intersect.<sup>6</sup> Socially useful knowledge such as legal and religious customs (for which a society may

<sup>2</sup> A useful introduction to memory studies is J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> The classic study of memory is F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering* (Cambridge, 1932).

<sup>4</sup> The pioneering work on collective memory is by M. Halbwachs: *La mémoire collective*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1968) and *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris, 1925); there is a valuable selection of his writings in translation in M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. L. A. Coser (Chicago and London, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> D. Thelen, *Memory and American History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1989), p. xii.

<sup>6</sup> Studies of the social dynamics of memory are too numerous to list; apart from the work of Halbwachs listed in n. 4, I have also found the following particularly useful: P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, 1989); P. N. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover and London, 1993); D. Middleton and D. Edwards (eds.), *Collective Remembering* (London, 1990); J. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory: Native Historical Interpretation in the Colombian Andes* (Cambridge, 1990).

employ a professional remembrancer) is a further important part of the social dimension of memory.<sup>7</sup>

Study of medieval memory is now a lively area, with large-scale surveys such as Fentress and Wickham's *Social Memory* which discusses medieval material alongside modern, and Geary's *Phantoms of Remembrance*, a collection of studies looking at the endurance and obliteration of memories in the period 900–1100.<sup>8</sup> More recently, a number of more sharply focused studies have appeared – for example, van Houts' study of memories of the Norman Conquest in England, Remensnyder's discussion of the memories attached to reliquaries at Conques, and Innes' analysis of Notker's *Gesta Karoli*.<sup>9</sup>

Alongside these studies of the social function of memory two more technical studies of memory in the Middle Ages by Mary Carruthers and Janet Coleman have appeared.<sup>10</sup> Carruthers examines the art of memory, emphasizing how the memorizing of texts served to internalize their contents. Coleman chiefly investigates philosophical and theological ideas of memory. Her work brings out the theological significance of memory, for example, in the thought of St Augustine where it is seen as a means of knowing God. Both Carruthers and Coleman show that memory was central to religious and scholarly life in the Middle Ages.

#### THE CULT OF THE SAINTS AND ANGLO-SAXON MONASTERIES

Medieval religious communities provide a particularly useful forum in which to observe the working of collective memory since they were dedicated to the creation of a communal life in which individual wills were reformed in accordance with a common ideal. The life of each individual was subordinate to that of the community. Obedience to the abbot or abbess was one means of suppressing individual strivings; the daily routine and discipline imposed by the Rule were another. Collective activities – particularly participation in liturgical worship –

<sup>7</sup> On official remembrancers, see M. Clanchy, 'Remembering the past and the good old law', *History* 55 (1970), pp. 165–76.

<sup>8</sup> P. J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> E. van Houts, 'The trauma of 1066', *History Today* 46.10 (1996), pp. 9–15; A. Remensnyder, 'Legendary treasure at Conques: reliquaries and imaginative memory', *Speculum* 71 (1996), pp. 884–906; M. Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy in an early medieval society', *Past & Present* 158 (1998), pp. 3–36.

<sup>10</sup> M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990); J. Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories. Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past* (Cambridge, 1992).

dominated monastic life and even private study was undertaken at times fixed for everyone. The inculcation of a monastic mentality was easier to foster in those given to the monastery from early childhood than in adult converts; education and the constant supervision of the young were aimed at character formation in accordance with the demands of both the spiritual and practical sides of the monastic life.<sup>11</sup>

This communal discipline has found its most enduring and visible manifestation in the house-styles of individual monastic scriptoria and in the books created through the cooperation of a number of scribes.<sup>12</sup> Written texts – the Bible, patristic exegesis and hagiography – occupied a central place in the life of a monastery through public reading and private study. Monasteries were ‘textual communities’, organized around their Rules, participating in an interplay between written and oral where the Rule itself would have been supplemented by oral traditions (only codified as written customaries in the tenth century). They would also have consisted of more and considerably less literate members whose understanding of the written word must have varied greatly. But all members of a community would have been deeply marked by the public and to a lesser extent private reading of texts.<sup>13</sup>

Communities developed their own sense of time – dominated by the liturgical year – and their own sense of history, conveyed by the lives of their members. A number of monastic histories – such as Bede’s *Historia Abbatum* or Æthelwulf’s poem, the *De Abbatibus* – recount the story of their community through the lives of their founding figures and abbots. It is this recollection of and veneration for founding fathers which forms the context for the cult of the native saints in early Anglo-Saxon England – Bede and Æthelwulf describe the virtues of early members of their monasteries so that they can be imitated by the community. Here imitation is the key to their remembrance – the lives of the saints followed that of Christ more perfectly than those of other

<sup>11</sup> On Anglo-Saxon monastic communities, see S. Foot, ‘What was an Anglo-Saxon monastery?’, in J. Loades (ed.), *Monastic Studies: the Continuity of Tradition* (Bangor, 1990), pp. 48–57. On monastic memory, see Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories*, pp. 115–54. Coleman stresses the obliteration of personal memory and absorption by a monk in the world of texts; for a different view see my ‘Identity and memory in an early Anglo-Saxon monastery’, in W. Frazer and A. Tyrrell (eds.), *Identity in Early Medieval Britain* (Leicester, forthcoming). This article forms a companion piece to the present study and expands on a number of the issues raised here.

<sup>12</sup> On the discipline involved in manuscript copying, see D. Ganz, ‘The preconditions for Caroline minuscule’, *Viator* 18 (1987), pp. 23–43. For Parkes’ comments that the development of a house-style at Wearmouth-Jarrow corresponded to its strict adherence to monastic discipline, see M. B. Parkes, *The Scriptorium of Wearmouth-Jarrow*, Jarrow Lecture 1982, pp. 20–1.

<sup>13</sup> On the role of texts in a monastery, see Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories*, pp. 127–36; my ‘Identity and memory’ deals at greater length with a number of the issues raised here.

individuals and could therefore be used as patterns of Christian living for others.<sup>14</sup>

Saints were not therefore passive figures for remembrance in Anglo-Saxon monasteries but active figures since, through their exemplary power, their actions and words informed the lives of others. They acted too as patrons of communities, invoked not only for miracles of healing but also to safeguard monastic property.<sup>15</sup> Anglo-Saxon religious communities forged a common identity in which the memory of early saints played a key role and which could come to embody a house's identity. The community of Lindisfarne, although dedicated to St Peter, came to be known by the eighth century as the community of St Cuthbert, and when it was forced to flee its island site in the ninth century, it was the body of Cuthbert, transported by its members, which furnished the house's continuing identity.<sup>16</sup>

How did early Anglo-Saxon communities remember their saints? In a number of very different ways. A saint might be remembered, for example, through physical objects associated with him or her – through books that he or she was known to have copied or written, through buildings associated with him or her, for example, Cuthbert's hermitage, as well as through their relics, the tomb or bodily parts or through secondary relics like Cuthbert's shoes which were used to effect a post-mortem cure.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Bede, *Historia Abbatum* in *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, ed. C. Plummer (2 vols., Oxford, 1896), I, pp. 364–87; Æthelwulf, *De Abbatibus*, ed. A. Campbell (Oxford, 1967). On the importance of imitation with regard to the saints, see my 'Local and universal saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in A. T. Thacker and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches* (Oxford, forthcoming) and my 'Identity and memory'.

<sup>15</sup> On the role of saints as undying landlords, see D. Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 196–214.

<sup>16</sup> For the dedication of the church at Lindisfarne, see Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, trans. and ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969) [hereafter *HE*], III, 25. For the peregrinations of Cuthbert's community, see D. Rollason, 'The wanderings of St Cuthbert', in D. W. Rollason (ed.), *Cuthbert: Saint and Patron* (Durham, 1987) and G. Bonner, 'St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street', in G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (eds.), *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 387–95. *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, ed. T. Arnold, (2 vols., Rolls Series, London, 1882–5), I, pp. 196–214.

<sup>17</sup> On relics of Cuthbert, see Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti prosa*, in *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), cc. 45–6, pp. 298–307. See the letter of Lull to Dealwine where he asks for some of Aldhelm's writings to be sent to him 'ad consolationem peregrinationis meae et ob memoriam ipsius antestitis' (*Die Briefe des Heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl, MGH *Epistolae Selectae* [hereafter *Epistolae*] (Berlin, 1916), no. 71, p. 144). Æthelwulf, *De Abbatibus*, c. 8, pp. 18–23 for memories of the scribe, Ultan, and *Adomnán's Life of St Columba*, ed. and trans. A. O. Anderson and M. O. Anderson, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1991), II, pp. 8–9, and *Adomnán of Iona. Life of St Columba*, trans. R. Sharpe (Harmondsworth, 1995), pp. 284–5, n. 125, for books associated with the saint.

The saint and his or her miracles could be remembered through the personal reminiscence of members of the community. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* allows us some glimpses of this – for example, when Abbess Æthelhild of Partney visited Queen Osthryth at the monastery of Bardney which housed King Oswald's relics, 'the conversation . . . turned on Oswald, and Æthelhild told how she herself had seen the light over his relics reaching up to the very heavens. The Queen in her turn told her that many sick people had been healed . . .'<sup>18</sup> Another specimen of such saintly conversation occurred when Bishop Wilfrid stayed with Willibrord in Frisia on his way to Rome.<sup>19</sup> Given the rules of monastic silence, it may be significant that both these examples took place during visits to a monastery by outsiders.

A rare example of Bede's citing his own experience suggests that teaching and the study of scripture might provide another occasion for the discussion of saints and their virtues. Bede records how his teacher of scripture, Trumberht, had been a monk at Lastingham with St Chad, and this teacher recalled how Chad at the onset of stormy weather would cry out for God's mercy and would explain this by reference to Psalm 18, 'The Lord also thundered in heaven'.<sup>20</sup> Did Trumberht recall Chad's behaviour when studying this psalm with Bede? The very close personal bonds between master and pupil, forged explicitly for the transmission of knowledge, crossed generations and must have been a vital medium for the handing on of memories.

Such conversations may stand behind the hagiographies which were produced about saints, although, and I shall return to this later, they did not necessarily. These translated the saint of chat and recollection into an exemplar of the saintly life, honoured because his or her life conformed to the essential pattern of sanctity which originated in Christ; this conformity enabled the saint to be used as a pattern of holy living for the other members of the community. A *vita* could be used in a number of ways – for private study, public reading during meals and within the liturgy of the saint's feast day.<sup>21</sup>

The backbone of saintly memorialization was the liturgy, through which the saint was incorporated into the temporal framework and daily routine of the community. The most usual occasion to commemorate

<sup>18</sup> *HE* III, 11, pp. 246–9.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 13, pp. 252–5.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 3, pp. 342–5.

<sup>21</sup> K. Heene, 'Merovingian and Carolingian hagiography. Continuity or change in public and aims', *Analecta Bollandiana* 107 (1989), pp. 415–28; B. de Gaiffier, 'L'hagiographie et son public au XIe siècle', in *Miscellanea Historica in honorem Leonis van der Essen Universitatis Catholicae in Oppido Lovanienii iam annos XXXV professoris* (Brussels and Paris, 1947), I, pp. 135–66.

the saint would have been on the anniversary of his or her death, but a saint might have had more than one feast day, particularly if he or she had been translated. The feast day would have been celebrated with special prayers invoking the saint in the daily mass, requesting his or her assistance for the afterlife of the monks or nuns through the dead saint's presence in heaven, thus linking recollection of a past figure to present intercession and future salvation. Special prayers for the saint would also be included in the vigil before the feast day, and excerpts from the saint's *vita* might be read on the same occasion. The liturgy not only consisted of spoken texts but was a powerful amalgam of music and gesture, and should not be disassociated from its setting in church where objects linked with the saint might be displayed. Finally, the celebratory nature of the feast day might be marked with an actual feast.<sup>22</sup>

The community commemoration of a saint demonstrates a number of aspects of social memory. The saint's memory was certainly structured by shared ideas and language – a community's concept of a saint would have been formed by its reading of numerous other *vitae*, and its commemoration shaped by the traditional structure of the liturgy. My examples of monastic gossip show clerics actively remembering their saints and the liturgy above all represents a group activity focused upon commemorating the saint. Knowledge of the saint might be considered socially useful too – to be stored within the community for its edification. The hagiographer could thus be seen as a professional remembrancer commissioned by the community to preserve its knowledge of the saint.

#### TEXTUAL GENRES AND MEMORY

The incorporation of sections of hagiographical *vitae* into monastic services and their use as readings in the refectory took place against a background of monastic silence, a silence that must have greatly increased the impact of these texts. This raises the question of the part played by texts and narratives in shaping memory, of particular significance with regard to the stereotypical nature of hagiography which aimed to show how individuals conformed to the model pattern of sanctity. What effect did this stereotype have upon the structuring of

<sup>22</sup> The liturgical commemoration of the cult of the saints is most helpfully summarized by M. Lapidge, 'The saintly life in Anglo-Saxon England', in M. Godden and M. Lapidge (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 242–63, and see also Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Aethelwold*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1991), pp. cxii–cxliiii.



memories and indeed upon the lived experience of early medieval churchmen and women? The power of hagiographical texts to affect behaviour lay in the role of the saints revealed by these texts as exemplary types which demanded that their audience consciously internalize the models put before them.<sup>23</sup>

## ST BONIFACE

The impact of hagiographical norms is uniquely illustrated by the correspondence of St Boniface, one of the few early medieval saints for whom personal and contemporary records exist as well as posthumous hagiographical and cult material.<sup>24</sup> His own writings demonstrate his absorption of biblical and patristic texts from which he borrowed verbally to express his own concerns and anxieties. Boniface's frequent reliance upon the words of St Paul suggests a close identification with the saint who, like Boniface, was a *doctor gentium*.<sup>25</sup> Boniface's later career was dogged by bitter conflicts with the Frankish episcopate, particularly with the see of Cologne, and his final and fatal return to the mission field of Frisia was almost certainly prompted by his desire for the martyr's crown.<sup>26</sup> Boniface's reading of the Bible and *passiones* enabled him to interpret his personal and political troubles as a divine preparation for heavenly reward.<sup>27</sup> Others also responded in this way. His confidant Bishop Daniel of Winchester, replying to an anguished letter, told

<sup>23</sup> On hagiography, see H. Delehaye, *Sanctus: essai sur le culte des saints dans l'Antiquité*, Subsidia hagiographica 17 (Brussels, 1927); R. Aigrain, *L'hagiographie: ses sources, ses méthodes, son histoire* (Paris, 1953), pp. 11–192; W. Berschin, *Biographie und Epochstil im lateinischen Mittelalter* (3 vols., Stuttgart, 1986–8, in progress); and see C. W. Jones, *Saints' Lives and Chronicles in Early England* (Ithaca, NY, 1947). Arguing against the categorization of hagiography as a separate early medieval genre, see F. Lifshitz, 'Beyond positivism and genre: "hagiographical" texts as historical narrative', *Viator* 25 (1994), pp. 95–113.

<sup>24</sup> T. Schieffer, *Winfried-Bonifatius und die christliche Grundlegung Europas* (Freiburg, 1954) and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 149–61; I. N. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450–751* (Harlow and New York, 1994), pp. 304–14.

<sup>25</sup> E. Ewig, 'Milo et eiusmodi similes', in his collected papers, *Spätantikes und fränkisches Gallien: Gesammelte Schriften (1952–1973)* (2 vols., Zurich and Munich, 1974–9), II, pp. 189–219, at p. 189, reprinted from *Sankt Bonifatius Gedenkgabe zum 1200. Todestag* (Fulda, 1954), pp. 412–40; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'A background to St Boniface's mission', in P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (eds.), *England before the Conquest. Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 35–48, at p. 45, reprinted in his *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 138–54 at p. 148; M. Parkes, 'The handwriting of St Boniface: a reassessment of the problems', in his *Scribes, Scripts and Readers. Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London, 1991), pp. 121–42.

<sup>26</sup> Ewig, 'Milo et eiusmodi similes'; Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, pp. 304–21.

<sup>27</sup> See Boniface, *Epistolae*, no. 15, p. 27, where Bugga replies to Boniface's request for a manuscript of martyr *passiones*, and his own letter to her, no. 94, on salvificatory rewards of suffering.

Boniface: 'You ought, therefore, above all things to make every effort that the glorious beginning which, to my mind, is worthy of comparison with the struggles of the Apostles, shall on no account be abandoned . . . Our trials are easier to bear, the more certain we are that saints and martyrs have tribulation in this world but most abundant rewards in heaven, according to God's promise.'<sup>28</sup> Boniface's martyrdom was the culmination of a lifetime's reading.

If Boniface had undoubtedly read too many martyr passions, his *bête noire*, Aldbert (a priest on the make) illustrates in counterpoint to him the impact of saintly norms upon less exalted would-be saints. Aldbert set up his own cult, dedicating oratories to himself, calling upon the people to pray 'that merits of Saint Aldbert will help us', and distributing his own fingernails and hair as relics.<sup>29</sup> Boniface and his anti-type, Aldbert, provide persuasive examples of the absorption and re-enactment of the norms of sanctity – propagated by ritual practices and by texts – by individuals.

These norms could also shape how a person was remembered. The letters written by the Anglo-Saxons, Archbishop Cuthbert of Canterbury and Bishop Milred of Worcester, upon the news of his demise show how rapidly an outstanding figure like Boniface – whose death on the mission field had guaranteed him the martyr's crown – could be memorialized according to saintly stereotypes. Archbishop Cuthbert quickly ensured that Boniface was commemorated liturgically as a martyr and attempted to promote him as a special patron for the Southumbrians along with Augustine and Gregory the Great.<sup>30</sup> Bishop Milred of Worcester, who had only recently visited the saint in the flesh, was immediately able to describe him in the unindividualized clichés accorded to long-dead holy men:

We may well recall this sad news [of his death], and yet, when we have been permitted to send such an advocate before us into the kingdom of heaven, we have entire confidence that we are in every way supported by God's help . . . And though we lament with many and bitter tears the comfort we have lost in this present life, yet he who is now consecrated a martyr to Christ by the shedding of blood, the glory and crown of all those whom the fatherland has sent forth, soothes and relieves our saddened hearts by his blessed life, by the fulfilment of his noble work, and his glorious end.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*, no. 64, p. 132, translation from *The Letters of St. Boniface*, trans. E. Emerton (New York, 1940), pp. 117–18; see also Cardinal Bishop Benedict's letter to Boniface (*Epistolae*, no. 90, p. 205): 'Etenim, sanctissime pater, omnes sancti quanta passi sunt tormenta, ut securi possiderent vitae aeternae palmam!' and he goes on to quote from St Paul.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 59, p. 111. <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 111, pp. 238–40.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 112, pp. 243–4 (translation from Emerton, *Letters*, p. 188).

The correspondence of Boniface illustrates the impact of hagiographical reading upon the actual life of aspiring holy men. A comparison of the two prose lives of Cuthbert provides an excellent starting point for the investigation of the effect of hagiographical stereotypes upon the recollection of such figures. The following stylistic and structural analysis of the two lives looks at the role of social memory in the commemoration of Cuthbert and uses this to uncover the early stages of his cult and the considerable tensions underlying its development.

#### THE TWO PROSE LIVES OF ST CUTHBERT

The anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* was written by a monk of Lindisfarne c. 699–705, within approximately ten to twenty years of Cuthbert's death, and was dedicated to the bishop of Lindisfarne, Eadfrith.<sup>32</sup> It is divided into four books, which mark the transitions of Cuthbert's life from layman to monk/clerk at the monastery of Melrose, his move from there to the community of Lindisfarne and his life as a hermit on Farne, and finally his career as bishop. Although structurally the main turning points of Cuthbert's life are marked, the text itself shows very little interest in these apart from Cuthbert's elevation to the see of Lindisfarne, which is dramatically highlighted by the convocation of a great synod and his reluctance to take on this office.<sup>33</sup> The *vita* does not announce that Cuthbert had a great crisis of conversion although this would have been a hagiographical commonplace. Nor does it particularly mark his entry into the religious life; indeed Cuthbert's religious conversion makes little difference to his miraculous powers.<sup>34</sup> More striking still is the lack of emphasis upon his death – the *vita* records how the saint resigned his see and returned to the eremitical life, and after two brief chapters records his death thus: 'But after Bishop Cuthbert of holy memory had taken communion and lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, he commended his soul to the Lord, and sitting there, he breathed his last, and without a sigh went in the way of his fathers . . .'<sup>35</sup> Stancliffe has described this as a static model of sanctity which incorporates ideas of predestination – Cuthbert is shown as a fully-fledged saint from the start of his life. She suggests that this is an Irish model.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940). I have used Colgrave's translation for quotations in the text. On the dating of the *vita*, see p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, ed. Colgrave, IV, 1. <sup>34</sup> Ibid., II, 1. <sup>35</sup> Ibid., IV, 13, pp. 130–1.

<sup>36</sup> C. Stancliffe, 'Cuthbert and the polarity between pastor and solitary', in Bonner et al. (eds.), *St Cuthbert*, pp. 21–44, at p. 25.

It is also a snapshot method: the anonymous author presents separate frames which describe miracles and incidents which lack any causal or chronological connection with each other. Cuthbert's life consists of a series of discontinuous episodes. For example, the anonymous author describes two miracles when Cuthbert is visiting the Carlisle region.<sup>37</sup> In the first, Cuthbert realizes through second sight that the Northumbrian king, Ecgfrith, has suffered a major defeat and has been killed. In the second, which is recounted immediately afterwards, Cuthbert visits an old hermit friend and agrees with him to share the same hour of death. There is apparently no connection between the two incidents and none is made; they are simply juxtaposed because both take place at Carlisle.

This leads to a second point – the importance of topography and geography. The author's snapshots are often very precisely located, naming the villages and regions in which miracles happen. For example, one miracle is recorded in these terms: 'at a certain time the holy bishop was making his way from Hexham to the city which is called Carlisle, nevertheless, a halt was made in the middle of the journey in a district which is called *Ahse* . . .'<sup>38</sup> Some of these locations cluster around Melrose; the area around Lindisfarne is by contrast blank, although this picture does not take into account places which can no longer be identified.<sup>39</sup> The miracles associated with Lindisfarne or sourced to its members tend to take place at the monastery or on Farne Island, whereas those with a Melrose provenance are generally given named locations.<sup>40</sup>

The acknowledged sources of miracles also seem to indicate a predominance of Melrose material: of thirty miracles, ten are explicitly assigned informants and of these, five are reported by members of the Melrose community and three by Lindisfarne members. Moreover, all but two of the Melrose miracles are recounted by a priest called Tydi.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, IV, 8–9, pp. 122–5.      <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 5, pp. 116–17.

<sup>39</sup> Miracles possibly occurring in the Melrose area: Cuthbert's vision of Aidan's soul near the River Leader (*ibid.*, I, 4); miraculous provision of food by an eagle near the River Teviot (II, 5); revival of a thegn's dead servant near the River Tweed (although this is sourced to a Lindisfarne priest) (IV, 7).

<sup>40</sup> Miracles associated with Lindisfarne: all those taking place on Farne Island during Cuthbert's initial phases as a hermit (*ibid.*, III, 1–5); his healing of a brother with dysentery in his last days (IV, 12); and all his post-mortem miracles (IV, 15–17). Two miracles which do not take place at Lindisfarne or Farne are sourced to Lindisfarne informants: the childhood prophecy of his future greatness (I, 3) and the revival of a dead servant in the area of the River Tweed (IV, 7). Miracles from Melrose informants with specified locations: II, 3 at Coldingham; II, 4 in Pictland; II, 5 on the River Teviot; IV, 4 – *Bedesfeld*; IV, 6 – *Medilwong*; IV, 15 – Lindisfarne.

<sup>41</sup> Two miracles are assigned to Abbess Æfflaed (IV, 10), and to Penna, a figure who cannot be located (IV, 5). The Melrose miracles are II, 3, 4, 5; IV, 4, 6. The Lindisfarne informants are mentioned in I, 3; IV, 7 and 12.

This character seems to have played an active role in promoting Cuthbert's cult since he acted as the sponsor of one of the few post-mortem miracles recorded in the anonymous life, in which a demon-possessed boy was healed. It was Tydi who directed the boy to Cuthbert's shrine when his own attempts failed.<sup>42</sup> These hints that Melrose actively fostered Cuthbert's cult should be compared with a certain lack of Lindisfarne interest in the saint: when the occurrence of miracles is broken down chronologically, it is striking that none are recorded from Cuthbert's early time at Lindisfarne before he became a hermit on Farne (a point which will be discussed further later). The miracles linked to Lindisfarne chiefly concern Cuthbert's initial period on Farne (when four of the five derive from Gregory's *Dialogues*) or concern his last days.<sup>43</sup>

The Melrose element in this material is suggestive – its community seems to have been active in collecting reports of Cuthbert where Lindisfarne may rather have concentrated on miracles there. The degree to which those relating to Cuthbert's time on Farne were directly indebted to Gregory's *Dialogues* suggests that they may have been con-fected from texts rather than personal reportage. Cuthbert's cult may have been initially promoted at Melrose, particularly perhaps by the priest Tydi, and miracle stories concerning Cuthbert seem to have been focused in the landscape, not only around Melrose but also in neighbouring regions. It is possible to discern correspondences between the anonymous author's account and discussions of collective memory – the discontinuous nature of his *vita*, which is atemporal and lacks causation and dramatic turning points, is not dissimilar from the workings of memory. Moreover, the geographical associations of the miracles recall another common feature of collective memory, the role of the landscape in preserving and transmitting memories.

Turning now to Bede's account, this was written in *c.* 721 at the request again of Bishop Eadfrith and also of the Lindisfarne community.<sup>44</sup> It is very much the official remembering of Cuthbert, the result of shared memories and discussions over their meaning, with Bede called in as ghostwriter. Bede records at the beginning of the *vita* that he wrote in active consultation with the community and made notes

<sup>42</sup> *Two Lives*, ed. Colgrave, IV, 15.

<sup>43</sup> The Farne miracles are *ibid.*, III, 1–5, apparently using the second book of Gregory's *Dialogues*, cc. 9, 11, 5 and 8 (Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, ed. A. de Vogüé, SC 251, 260 and 265 (Paris, 1978–1980), II, pp. 152–50, 160–7, 170–1, 172–5). The post-mortem miracles are Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, IV, 12–17 (but note that IV, 15 is reported by Tydi).

<sup>44</sup> *Two Lives*, p. 16.

after his discussions with those who had known Cuthbert. He describes how he showed a draft of his text to the abbot and elders of the community, and finally the finished *vita* was read out publicly in the community over two days.<sup>45</sup> It is, therefore, an outstanding example of collective remembering.

Bede based his account firmly upon that of the anonymous author, with relatively little new material added. But it is astonishingly different from the earlier account, as Stancliffe has stressed: Bede refashions it to show Cuthbert's development from layman to monk, to hermit and bishop, and to stress his dual roles as a model of the active and contemplative life. Stancliffe describes Bede's treatment of Cuthbert as fitting in with a developmental model of sanctity.<sup>46</sup> It is a very striking reworking, in which drama and causation have been skilfully woven into the biography. One might take, for example, the two Carlisle miracles which I mentioned before. Bede takes these two disconnected events and ties them together by stating that the second Carlisle visit took place not long after the first and by claiming that Cuthbert went to Carlisle to veil Ecgfrith's widow as a nun.<sup>47</sup> A chronological and causal link has been created where previously there was none. Where the anonymous author seems to have recounted wonders as evidence of Cuthbert's powers and sanctity, Bede incorporates them into a coherent narrative of Cuthbert's life. Bede's portrayal of one miracle – Cuthbert's vision of the soul of Aidan being transported to heaven – simply recorded by the anonymous author with little comment again illustrates this point well. In Bede's version this is reported as a turning point in his religious life, the moment when he decided to become a monk.<sup>48</sup> Bede adds explanation, causation and context – a process continued by his editor, Bertram Colgrave who, in the footnotes to the life, then locates all his detail within a historical framework.

The changes wrought by Bede's rewriting also add a significantly didactic element. A good example is Bede's treatment of the miracle in which Cuthbert is caught out on a journey without food but miraculously uncovers a warm loaf in a shepherd's hut. In the anonymous author's description this is as much to do with the problems of travelling in

<sup>45</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, prologue, ed. Colgrave, pp. 143–5.

<sup>46</sup> Stancliffe, 'Cuthbert', pp. 27–8; see also R. Ray, 'The triumph of Greco-Roman rhetorical assumptions in pre-Carolingian historiography', in C. Holdsworth and T. P. Wiseman (eds.), *The Inheritance of Historiography 350–900* (Exeter, 1986), pp. 67–84, at p. 79 on Bede's amplification of the anonymous life.

<sup>47</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 27–8, pp. 242–51.

<sup>48</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, I, 5, pp. 68–71; Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, c. 4, pp. 164–7.

atrocious weather as anything else, whereas Bede transforms it into a lesson on the importance of fasting.<sup>49</sup> Bede seems to have had in mind a wider audience than the Lindisfarne community since he is careful to record who people are and to explain the unusual dual nature of the Lindisfarne community. He also leaves out much specific detail, omitting nearly all the anonymous author's attributions of reports of miracles to particular individuals, and virtually all of the geographical material that the anonymous puts in. This removal of localizing detail could be the result of Bede's desire to reach a wider audience, but it is also possible to see it as resulting from the workings of the memory, since this tends to remove specific detail from recollections. The miracles had become known to and absorbed into the community's consciousness through repeated recitals.

Although Bede makes the standard comment that he has too much material, he only adds thirteen new miracles. Four of these were reported by members of his own house of Wearmouth-Jarrow (one of whom had also been at Melrose), and six came from Lindisfarne sources.<sup>50</sup> The Lindisfarne material is dominated by the contribution of its abbot, Herefrith, who provided four new miracles, as well as his long, first-hand account of Cuthbert's death. Given the amount of consultation that Bede claims to have had with the community, the Lindisfarne input looks rather slight, and it is noteworthy that Herefrith is known to have passed some time at Melrose.

The prime impetus to maintain Cuthbert's memory and his reputation as a holy man seems to have come from Melrose and much seems to have been the work of two individuals, Tydi and Herefrith. Although bishops have been credited in recent scholarship with the leading role in

<sup>49</sup> Anon, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, I, 6, p. 71; Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti prosa*, c. 5, pp. 168–71. On this episode and Bede's narrative skills, see R. I. Page, 'Anglo-Saxon paganism: the evidence of Bede', in T. Hofstra, L. A. J. R. Houwen and A. A. MacDonald (eds.), *Pagans and Christians*, Germania Latina II (Groningen, 1995), pp. 99–129, at pp. 108–9.

<sup>50</sup> New miracles in Bede's *Vita S. Cuthberti prosa*: c. 3, rescue of the monks on a raft (no source); c. 6, Boisil's prophecy of Cuthbert's greatness (source – Sigfrith from Jarrow, formerly of Melrose); c. 8, Cuthbert's miraculous preservation from plague and Boisil's foreknowledge of his own death (source – Herefrith); c. 19, miraculous late crop of barley and obedience of birds miracle (unsourced); c. 23, the healing of Abbess Ælflæd and her nun by Cuthbert's belt (source – Herefrith); c. 27, – Cuthbert's prediction of the plague (unsourced); c. 31, Hildmer's healing from sickness (unsourced); c. 35, water turned into wine at the female monastery of Tynemouth (source – a monk of Wearmouth); c. 36, obedience/goose-eating miracle (source – Cynimund priest of Lindisfarne); c. 46, healing of Felgild's face (source – Felgild and Jarrow priest). Note that Bede occasionally gives sources for miracles which the anonymous author left unsourced: c. 5, the miraculous provision of food (source – Ingwald of Wearmouth/Jarrow); c. 25, healing of thegn's wife (source – Baldhelm, priest of Lindisfarne); and c. 38, Walhstod's healing from dysentery (source – Herefrith).

the promotion of saints' cults, the part of the bishop of Lindisfarne in Cuthbert's promotion is surprisingly small. Both *vitae* were dedicated to Bishop Eadfrith of Lindisfarne, but neither stresses his role in developing the cult. Moreover, the anonymous author portrays the decision to translate Cuthbert – a crucial and perhaps controversial moment in the development of the cult, as I will argue later – as a community initiative, taken by the seniors of the community, with the Bishop's permission. Bede's account minimizes Eadfrith's involvement even more, stating that the community decided to translate Cuthbert and then looked for his permission to do so.<sup>51</sup>

The crucial importance of the community's involvement in the cult of Cuthbert can be seen in other ways. Forgetting is as important as remembering: what is collectively discarded may be as significant as what is remembered. Cuthbert's time as abbot at Lindisfarne is marked by a curious paucity of miracles. The anonymous version passes over this time briefly, but remarks significantly that Cuthbert established the first monastic rule for the community which they still followed alongside that of St Benedict.<sup>52</sup> Bede compensates for the absence of miracles by giving a generalized account of Cuthbert's virtues, but also reveals that some brothers there resisted this new imposition, commenting on Cuthbert's fortitude in the face of opposition: 'In fact very often during debates in the chapter of the brethren concerning the rule, when he was assailed by the bitter insults of his opponents, he would rise up suddenly and with calm mind and countenance go out, thus dissolving the chapter, but none the less on the following day, as if he had suffered no repulse the day before, he would give the same instruction as before . . .'<sup>53</sup> Further evidence of Cuthbert's unpopularity at Lindisfarne can be seen in his final deathbed speech, where Cuthbert is made to remark, 'although I seemed contemptible to some while I lived, yet, after my death you will see what I was and how my teaching is not to be despised'.<sup>54</sup> Cuthbert appears to have been a deeply controversial figure at Lindisfarne. Possibly Bede's revised *vita* in some way acted to reconcile the brothers and to give an agreed meaning to Cuthbert's time at Lindisfarne.

Bede's *Life of Cuthbert* therefore reveals deep rifts in the Lindisfarne community after the saint's death. Bede's one substantial addition to the

<sup>51</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, IV, 14; Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, c. 42.

<sup>52</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, III, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, c. 16 (quotation from pp. 210–11).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 39, pp. 284–5. On Cuthbert's unpopularity, see D. P. Kirby, 'The genesis of a cult: Cuthbert of Farne and ecclesiastical politics in Northumbria in the late seventh and early eighth centuries', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46 (1995), pp. 383–97, at p. 390.



work of the anonymous author is Herefrith's account of Cuthbert's last days. Why was this addition felt necessary? It is largely taken up by Cuthbert's instructions over his burial – his insistence that he should be buried on Farne and the brothers' repeated request that his body should rest at Lindisfarne. Cuthbert eventually concedes, not only permitting his ultimate burial there but also specifying precisely where his tomb should be.<sup>55</sup> This interest in Cuthbert's burial is matched by a long account of his translation and incorrupt body. This surely must reflect some sort of internal dispute over the removal of the body from Farne. Alan Thacker has recently argued that the translation of saintly corpses was a Frankish practice, newly introduced in the case of Æthelthryth of Ely only a few years before that of Cuthbert.<sup>56</sup> Its novelty may have provoked controversy at Lindisfarne between the traditionalists and the modernizers.

Cuthbert's final sermon consists of exhortations to unity and peace among the brothers. He also warns them to 'have no communion with those who depart from the unity of the catholic peace, either in not celebrating Easter at the proper time or in evil living', and he orders them to depart from Lindisfarne with his body rather than to 'consent to iniquity and put your heads under the yoke of schismatics'.<sup>57</sup> Cuthbert's deathbed oration looks like a message to a deeply divided community. Indeed, Bede tells us in the next chapter that many members left, presumably (although Bede does not say this) as a result of Bishop Wilfrid's tenure of the see. Peace was restored according to Bede by the appointment of Bishop Eadberht. Goffart has argued that the conflicts and controversies wrought by Wilfrid had far-reaching consequences and acted as an impetus to the production of hagiographies and other texts in a sort of propaganda battle.<sup>58</sup> Cuthbert's final speech underlines the deep ideological clashes behind Wilfrid's career between Irish and Roman parties in the Northumbrian Church.

These conflicts extended beyond the question of the date of Easter to wider issues of ecclesiastical practice and spirituality, not least to sanctity and its commemoration. Bede's rewriting of the *Life of Cuthbert* effectively relocated his cult from the Northumbrian landscape to the

<sup>55</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, c. 37, pp. 270–81.

<sup>56</sup> A. Thacker, 'The making of a local saint', in Thacker and Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints*. I am most grateful for Alan Thacker's permission to use this material before publication; Kirby, 'Genesis of a cult', pp. 391–4.

<sup>57</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, c. 39, pp. 284–5.

<sup>58</sup> W. Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History AD 550–800. Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 235–327; see also Kirby, 'Genesis of a cult', pp. 390–7.

holy islands of Farne and Lindisfarne. Omitting the geographical detail of the anonymous version, Bede describes at some length Cuthbert's retreat on Farne, the miracle-working pit into which the water used to wash his corpse was poured, and his translation. Lindisfarne, which possessed the most potent mnemonic device of them all, the body, now fashioned its own sacralized landscape around its church and monastic enclosure.<sup>59</sup> The two lives of Cuthbert reveal the development of his cult from one topographically based and perhaps therefore more rooted in Irish traditions and popular belief to a fully-fledged tomb cult after the new Frankish fashion, complete with post-mortem miracles at the shrine and a Latin *vita*. Textual refashioning by both the anonymous author and Bede played a vital role in this transformation of Cuthbert and his cult.<sup>60</sup>

#### HAGIOGRAPHY AND NARRATIVE

Bede may have therefore transformed Cuthbert from an ascetic of a suspiciously Irish type to a model Roman bishop, exemplary in his combination of the contemplative and active lives according to the Gregorian model.<sup>61</sup> Bede refashioned not only the content of the anonymous author's life, shifting its emphasis from a static model, a type of Irish sanctity, to a picture of the development of the saint's spiritual life according to more continental norms.<sup>62</sup> His changes to the structure of the anonymous life were as significant as his alterations to its content – as Hayden White has stressed, 'narrative is not merely a neutral discursive form that may or may not be used to represent real events in their aspect as developmental processes but rather entails ontological and

<sup>59</sup> Bede reinforces Lindisfarne's status as a sacred site by his mention of Bishop Eadberht's burial in Cuthbert's first tomb and by the final miracle which records the continuing succession of holy men as hermits of Farne (*Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 43, 46, pp. 296–7, 299–307).

<sup>60</sup> See D. Bullough's comments in 'Hagiography as patriotism: Alcuin's "York Poem" and the early Northumbrian "vitae sanctorum"', in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés IV–XIIe siècles. Actes du colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris (2–5 mai, 1979)*, Etudes augustiennes (Paris, 1981), pp. 339–59, at p. 344. Bullough has pointed out that the anonymous author uses the Gallican psalter and not the Roman: 'Columba, Adomnan and the achievement of Iona', *Scottish Historical Review* 43 (1964), pp. 110–30, at p. 130; and see also his general remarks on the anonymous author's links to Iona and its intellectual milieu at pp. 129–30. On Irish and Celtic cult practices, see A. T. Lucas, 'The social role of relics and reliquaries in ancient Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 116 (1986), pp. 5–37, and J. M. H. Smith, 'Oral and written: saints, miracles and relics in Brittany, c. 850–1250', *Speculum* 65 (1990), pp. 309–43.

<sup>61</sup> A. Thacker, 'Bede's ideal of reform', in P. Wormald, D. A. Bullough and R. Collins (eds.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society. Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 130–53; Stancliffe, 'Cuthbert'.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

epistemic choices within distinct ideological and even specifically political implications'.<sup>63</sup> In the light of my earlier comments on the continuing reverberations of the Paschal controversy at Lindisfarne, it is surely significant that the Lindisfarne brethren called in that arch-Roman polemicist Bede to rewrite Cuthbert's *Life*.

Bede's prose *vita* effectively replaced that of the anonymous author, consigning the latter to virtual oblivion. Only seven manuscripts of the anonymous life survive compared with thirty-six (excluding fragments) of Bede's text. Moreover the anonymous life had a very restricted circulation and survives chiefly in late continental legendary collections. The manuscripts of Bede's *vita* are far more diverse and are both English and continental. At Durham, Cuthbert's own house, not a single copy of the anonymous text survives but copies of Bede's life are numerous.<sup>64</sup> In Bede's retelling, Cuthbert had a great future ahead of him, promoted by the West Saxons as a figure of unity within their hegemonial rule: it was Bede's *vita* which was included in the compilation of Cuthbertine materials perhaps made for King Æthelstan himself.<sup>65</sup> The Cuthbert who was remembered by later generations of Anglo-Saxons was Bede's and not the holy man portrayed by the anonymous author.

Bede's *vita* has won more favour with modern historians because of its satisfyingly coherent narrative with its emphasis on chronology and causation. Yet it is precisely these qualities that should make the modern scholar wary. Narrative is essentially an artifice, a literary device, the function of which is to create the illusion of actuality and to endow fragmented and disconnected events with meaning.<sup>66</sup> Bede's causality is rooted in his priorities not in the reality of Cuthbert's life. Further, Bede's interest in narrative makes him highly unusual; few early medieval authors were concerned to write a coherent and connected

<sup>63</sup> Hayden White, *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore and London, 1987), p. ix.

<sup>64</sup> Colgrave (ed.), *Two Lives*, pp. 17–55. See, however, the criticisms of Laistner in his review in the *American Historical Review* 46 (1940–1), pp. 379–81.

<sup>65</sup> L. Simpson, 'The King Alfred/St Cuthbert episode in the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto*: its significance for mid-tenth century English history', and D. Rollason, 'St Cuthbert and Wessex: the evidence of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 183', in Bonner et al. (eds.), *St Cuthbert*, pp. 397–411, 413–24. S. Keynes, 'King Athelstan's books', in M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (eds.), *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England. Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 143–201; Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 144–53.

<sup>66</sup> White, *Content of the Form*, pp. ix, 1–4, 26–82; and see also M. Innes and R. McKitterick, 'The writing of history', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 193–220, at pp. 201, 216.

account. Others – Gregory of Tours or Asser, for example – had no qualms about stringing together a series of episodes and anecdotes in a very loose framework. Why was Bede so interested in narrative? Perhaps because he was a chronologist, learned in the calculation and organization of time and an expert in reconciling contradictory temporal structures.<sup>67</sup> Paul Ricoeur has argued that narrative is closely linked to the reckoning of time and is a way of showing the passage of time.<sup>68</sup> Bede's interest in chronology was hardly an innocent pastime in the eighth century but a source of power and authority in a bitterly controversial and highly politicized area (as he himself knew to his cost, having been accused of heresy precisely for his views on world chronology).<sup>69</sup> Just as in writing his *History* Bede needed to bring together events embedded in different dating systems and place them in the same temporal framework, his narrative demanded that he translate discrete episodes in Cuthbert's life into a single interpretative framework and give them a common meaning.<sup>70</sup> Hayden White has related the creation of narrative to the impulse to moralize, arguing that narrative requires a system of meaning against which events can be measured and ranked.<sup>71</sup> Bede's desire to narrativize does exemplify this – his rewriting of the *Life of Cuthbert* transforms Cuthbert into an exemplar of monastic and pastoral perfection, his reworking of miracles converts them into lessons for aspiring monks, his narrative framework is provided by a model of spiritual progression and by an ideal of monastic life. Bede's system of meaning lies in his ideology of

<sup>67</sup> For Bede's interest in the reckoning of time, see Bede, *De Temporibus*, ed. C. W. Jones (Cambridge, MA, 1943), and C. W. Jones, *Saints' Lives and Chronicles in Early England* (Cornell, 1947); W. Levison, 'Bede as historian', in A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), *Bede, His Life, Times and Writings* (Oxford, 1932, reprinted New York, 1966), pp. 111–52; R. Ray, 'Bede, the exegete, as historian', in G. Bonner (ed.), *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirtieth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede* (London, 1976), pp. 126–7 on the relations between chronology and history.

<sup>68</sup> P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. K. McLaughlin and D. Pellaver (3 vols., Chicago and London, 1983), I, p. 3: 'time becomes human to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative; narrative, in turn, is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal existence'.

<sup>69</sup> *Epistola ad Pleguinam*, ed. C. W. Jones in *Beda Opera de Temporibus*, Medieval Academy of America Publications 41 (Cambridge, MA, 1943), p. 307, 4–6; see the discussion by Ray, 'Bede, the exegete, as historian', pp. 126–7.

<sup>70</sup> White, *Content of the Form*, p. 16: '[the] capacity to envision a set of events as belonging to the same order of meaning requires some metaphysical principle by which to translate difference into similarity'; p. 14: 'If every fully realized story, however we define that familiar but conceptually elusive entity, is a kind of allegory, points to a moral, or endows events, whether real or imaginary, with significance that they do not possess as a mere sequence, then it seems possible to conclude that every historical narrative has as its latent or manifest purpose the desire to moralize the events of which it treats.' And compare Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, I, pp. 152–5.

<sup>71</sup> White, *Content of the Form*, pp. 7–24.

the Christian life and agenda for the moral renewal of Northumbria.<sup>72</sup> Bede's moral aim and his interest in chronology are not incompatible explanations for his deployment of narrative since his sense of time was bound up with theological issues and eschatology. He believed that the history of the world was divided into six ages and that he and his contemporaries were living in the sixth and last age. As Robert Markus has said, for Bede 'the stream of human history was articulated within the panorama of the divine work of salvation'.<sup>73</sup>

An examination of the way in which chapters are linked to one another in the two *vitae* reinforces the connection between narrative and moralizing, and underlines the contrast between Bede and the anonymous author. The latter rarely endeavoured to provide causal relationships between chapters and the chronological connections he establishes are usually vague and weak (often specifying that the miracle which he is about to relate happened at approximately the same time as the previous one).<sup>74</sup> His preferred method of opening a new chapter is to announce the names of either the source of the miracle or of those involved and also to record shortly afterwards the physical location of the events. Some chapters begin by introducing the informant, whose account quickly states where the action took place and is then quoted as if in direct speech; more often, however, chapters are introduced by reference to the personal source of the story recounted: 'I learnt from the personal account of the priest Æthilwald who is now prior of the monastery which is called Melrose . . .' (IV, 4); 'There is also another miracle which I have plainly learned about from the account of very many reliable men who were present, one of whom, Penna . . .' (IV, 5). The anonymous author, therefore, chooses to place his stories within contexts that replicate the frameworks within which memories of Cuthbert were preserved, within communities or landscapes. This does not guarantee the factual accuracy or reliability of the anonymous author but simply suggests that his literary techniques perhaps remained close to oral discourse.

<sup>72</sup> Lucidly set out by Thacker, 'Bede's ideal of reform', pp. 130–53.

<sup>73</sup> R. A. Markus, *Bede and the Tradition of Ecclesiastical Historiography*, Jarroo Lecture (Jarroo, 1975), esp. p. 6; G. Bonner, *Saint Bede in the Tradition of Western Apocalyptic Commentary*, Jarroo Lecture (Jarroo, 1966). Note Levison's words, 'Bede as historian', p. 112, that Bede's historical studies 'derived their independent value from two roots belonging to the theological province of his age, chronology and hagiography'. R. W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York and London, 1966), pp. 1–43, has valuable discussion of the Christian tradition of historiography with remarks on the place of form and style within it. See also Ray, 'Bede, the exegete, as historian', pp. 133–4.

<sup>74</sup> For example, Anon. *Vita S. Cuthberti*, II, 4, pp. 82–3 ('at another time also'); III, 3, pp. 98–9 ('again on another day').

Bede's method is quite different. Not only does he omit much of the specific and localizing detail of the anonymous account and very rarely start a new chapter by reference to a place or person,<sup>75</sup> but the majority of his chapters open with some sort of statement concerning the spiritual import of the events to be related.<sup>76</sup> For example, chapter 2, which follows on the childhood prophecy of Cuthbert's future greatness and his reformed way of life, opens with these words, 'Truly "to everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance"; that is, to him who hath the desire and love for virtues, an abundance of them shall be granted by the heavenly gift' and tells of the saint's miraculous healing.<sup>77</sup> The desire to highlight the moral implications of Cuthbert's life permeates the chronological linkages which are the second commonest way of starting new chapters: many miracles are placed within Cuthbert's spiritual progress and the development of his career, or are said to occur during some habitual activity of the saint, but Cuthbert's exemplary virtue is implicit within these openings since they highlight aspects of his behaviour worthy of imitation. For example, chapter 19, which records another of Cuthbert's Farne miracles, starts with these words: 'Now at first he received a little bread to eat from his visitors and drank from his own well; but afterwards, in accordance with the example of the fathers, he considered it more fitting to live by the labour of his own hands', so placing the episode in Cuthbert's own personal life history but in such a way that draws out the desirability of manual labour for those in the religious life.<sup>78</sup> Rather than use the personal networks preferred by the anonymous author, Bede relies upon literary devices and moral teaching to create a coherent narrative.

#### FELIX'S *LIFE OF ST GUTHLAC*: MEMORY, POLITICS AND TEXTS

Bede created a new sort of memory in his narrativizing of St Cuthbert. My third hagiographical example – Felix's *Life of St Guthlac* – illustrates very clearly how texts could be used to create memory. Indeed, Felix's *Life of Guthlac* is almost entirely a textual confection, created from a modicum of personal recollection and much hagiographical borrowing. It was written c. 730–40 and describes the life of the Mercian hermit and resident of Crowland. It is dedicated to the king of East Anglia but

<sup>75</sup> For occasions when Bede does use these methods of chapter introduction, see *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 18, 25 (place); cc. 24, 30 (person).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 2–6, 10–12, 14–16, 19–21, 26. <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 2, pp. 158–9.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 19, pp. 220–1.

figures as an important player King Æthelbald of Mercia, who sought Guthlac's advice while in exile and who was probably at the date of its composition exercising overlordship in East Anglia.<sup>79</sup> It is therefore the exception among these three texts in being written not apparently for a monastic community but for a king. It does include didactic material suitable for a monastic audience but the political impetus behind it is the key to its creation. Guthlac was a saint created for political needs by the manipulation of textual sources.

Felix fashioned his account from a variety of sources, drawing upon the traditional library of hagiographical models, Martin, and the desert fathers, Paul and Anthony. The Antonine influence is most commented upon, since Felix draws upon it in his extraordinarily vivid portrayals of Guthlac's fights with demons, but the *vita* contains significant borrowings from other hagiographies like the second book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* and Bede's prose *Life of Cuthbert*. The *Life of Guthlac* is an extremely skilful compilation of these texts and hagiographical topoi: Guthlac is given the standard saintly *curriculum vitae* – with portents of his birth, a holy childhood, miracles, demonic temptations and struggles befitting a great hermit, until his death which he foreknows and post-mortem miracles.<sup>80</sup> It is full of drama and incident although – demon-fighting apart – its events are mundane (lost gloves, tipping disobedient clergy and so on). Felix's literary strength lay not in his ability to provide the type of causal links which make Bede's prose *Life of St Cuthbert* so attractive for the reader, but rather in his powers of description which describe both exotic and mundane incidents in a lively and exceptionally vivid way.

The borrowings in Felix's *Life* are not straightforward repetition of his sources but vivid re-imaginings of incidents from his sources. For example, he draws upon three miracles from Gregory's account of Benedict from Book II of the *Dialogues*, which are used by both Gregory and Felix to demonstrate the visionary powers and miraculous knowledge of their subjects. Felix recontextualizes them for an Anglo-Saxon

<sup>79</sup> *Felix's Life of St Guthlac*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1956); for dating and authorship, see pp. 15–19. Jones, *Saints' Lives and Chronicles*, pp. 85–7; B. P. Kurtz, 'From St Anthony to St Guthlac', *University of California Publications in Modern Philology* 12.2 (1926), pp. 103–46; M. Schuett, 'Vom heiligen Antonius zum heiligen Guthlac', *Antike und Abendland* 5 (1956), pp. 75–91. For late medieval reworkings of the *vita*, see W. F. Bolton, 'The Latin revisions of Felix's *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*', *Mediaeval Studies* 21 (1959), pp. 36–52.

<sup>80</sup> Felix's sources and his uses of them have been extensively explored by A. T. Thacker, 'The social and continental background to early Anglo-Saxon hagiography', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1976, pp. 279–328. I am most grateful to him for making his work available to me.

audience; for example, in the *Dialogues* Gregory recounts how a servant sent by his master to deliver two flasks of wine to Benedict conceals one for his own use. Felix transforms the wine into beer, and describes how two clerks (not Gregory's lay man) hid them in the marshy sand of the fens.<sup>81</sup> In another episode in the *Dialogues*, a priest jealous of Benedict's reputation attempts to poison him with a loaf of bread. In Felix's account, the priest is replaced by a clerk, Guthlac's servant Beccel, who hopes by killing the saint to replace him as the subject of visits from kings and princes, and meditates upon his murder while trimming the saint's tonsure.<sup>82</sup> Felix repeoples Benedict's world with clergy who replace monks, laymen and priests and relocates it in the damp fens; his use of these episodes is not simple borrowing but rather a process of re-imagining.

Felix's use of these sources does not therefore result from a failure of his imagination but from a complex set of aims. Hagiography and miracles were ideal vehicles for the early medieval penchant for dramatizing abstract ideas and moral concepts. Texts like Gregory of Tours' *Histories* portray complex historical processes through a series of anecdotes and vivid encounters.<sup>83</sup> The lives of the saints showed God's power at work in a concrete fashion; miracles were popular in the early Middle Ages not because of the credulity of their audience but because they acted out moral precepts. Many re-enact biblical commands: for example in Sulpicius Severus's *Life of St Martin* where Martin's sharing of his cloak with the beggar illustrates Christ's command to care for the poor; the same scriptural passage stands behind Cuthbert's feeding of the monastic visitor who turns out to be an angel in Bede's prose *Life of St Cuthbert*.<sup>84</sup> As didactic vehicles, they provided lively illustrations of virtues to be cultivated. As Gregory wrote in the *Dialogues*, miracle stories could provide as much edification as scriptural study:

An explanation of holy Scripture teaches us how to attain virtue and persevere in it, where a description of miracles shows us how this acquired virtue reveals itself in those who persevere in it. Then, too, the lives of the saints are often more effective than mere instruction for inspiring us to love heaven as our home. Hearing about their example will generally be helpful in two ways. In the first place, as we compare ourselves with those who have gone before,

<sup>81</sup> Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, II, 18, ed. de Vogüé, pp. 194–7; Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci* c. 44.

<sup>82</sup> Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, II, 8, ed. de Vogüé, pp. 170–1, Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*, c. 35, pp. 110–13.

<sup>83</sup> J. Martínez Pizarro, *A Rhetoric of the Scene. Dramatic Narrative in the Early Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1989). For similar comments on Gregory's use of miracles, see Goffart, *Narrators*, pp. 127–53.

<sup>84</sup> Matthew 25: 34–41: 'as you did it to the least of these my brethren you did it to me'. And see below n. 139.



we are filled with a longing for the future life; secondly, if we have too high an opinion of our own worth, it makes us humble to find that others had done better.<sup>85</sup>

The use of miraculous anecdotes as didactic vehicles facilitated recollection and internalization – the re-presentation of, for example, Gregory's miracles enabled Anglo-Saxon readers to learn universal lessons in familiar settings.

The recycling of miracles also enabled a hagiographer to cast his or her subject in the revered model of earlier saints and to show how the saint conformed to the archetype of sanctity. Felix's re-use of earlier hagiographical texts enabled him to present Guthlac as a native illustration of divine power conforming in an Anglo-Saxon context to universal (but originally Mediterranean) ideals of sanctity. Thus presented, Guthlac could act not only as a moral exemplar but also as a man filled with divine power. At times, however, this *imitatio sanctorum* could be competitive and this is clear in Felix's debts to the *Life of St Cuthbert* by Bede.<sup>86</sup>

Bede's *Life* underpins the whole of the second half of Felix's *Life of Guthlac* as Alan Thacker has shown in his thorough and extensive examination of the latter's sources. It not only provides verbatim passages in the text and the inspiration for many miracles (for example, the use of Guthlac's belt for healing, a miracle which clearly recalls a similar episode in the *Life of Saint Cuthbert*) but underlies Felix's treatment of Guthlac as a saint and solitary. Both saints exercise moderation in fasting and refuse all alcoholic drink. Guthlac's life as a hermit at Crowland is modelled upon Cuthbert's: Felix portrays Guthlac beginning his life as a hermit, fortified with the Pauline spiritual armoury, just as Cuthbert does; Guthlac's contests with demons are essentially an elaboration of Bede's comment that Cuthbert vanquished demons on Farne; and Felix, like Bede, follows his hero's victory over demonic temptations with a series of nature miracles.<sup>87</sup> Felix's account of Guthlac's death is taken almost completely from Herefrith's description of Cuthbert's last days, right down to the timing of his death and the description of where the sick saint lay within his oratory – the latter details taken verbatim from Bede's life.<sup>88</sup> It is certainly significant that Guthlac like Cuthbert is portrayed as a member of the saintly elite whose bodies never suffered posthumous corruption. Bede's *Life of St*

<sup>85</sup> Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, II, 16, trans. O. J. Zimmerman (New York, 1959), pp. 5–6.

<sup>86</sup> For competitive hagiographical texts, see Goffart, *Narrators*, pp. 235–327.

<sup>87</sup> Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*: demonfighting, cc. 29, 31–4, 36; Guthlac's authority over nature, c. 37–40; incorruption, c. 51. Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*: Cuthbert's remarks about demons, c. 17; authority over nature, cc. 19, 20.

<sup>88</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 37–40; Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*, cc. 50–1.

*Cuthbert* forms the essential backdrop to the *Life of St Guthlac* which attempts to show Guthlac's superiority over Cuthbert. Felix deliberately drew attention to his counterpoising of the *Life of Cuthbert* by occasional verbatim quotation which serves to underline his borrowing of an episode and Bede's *vita* effectively provides an underlying template endowing Felix's text with greater coherence and resonances for the knowledgeable reader.<sup>89</sup>

The structure of Felix's *vita* can be divided into two sections: Guthlac's life as a secular and his career as a clerk and then hermit. The initial part is constructed according to the phases of Guthlac's life – chapters frequently open by giving chronological bearings either in terms of the saint's life or in terms of the duration of time between incidents. It follows Guthlac's development from conception to his young manhood and eventual conversion to the religious life.<sup>90</sup> After this point, Guthlac's spiritual rather than biological growth takes over as the temporal framework, with Guthlac progressing from clerk at Repton to hermit at Crowland in search of the more perfect life, his victory over temptation, which is followed by his examples of his miracle-working powers, his ordination as a priest and reports of the growth of his fame until he becomes the spiritual force sustaining Æthelbald in exile. The miracles recounted within this progression are only vaguely positioned in time<sup>91</sup> although Felix retains a strong interest in precise temporal measurements throughout the text, recording, for example, that Guthlac was priested five days before the feast of St Bartholomew and that he had been a hermit for fifteen years at the time of his death.<sup>92</sup> The miracles are organized into blocks with the nature miracles succeeding acts of healing and concluding with Guthlac's prophecies and his death.<sup>93</sup> They are carefully located within the personal networks of Mercian political power however, since many concern Æthelbald, his thegns and Bishop Headda of Lichfield.<sup>94</sup> The *vita* contains fifteen miracles (exclud-

<sup>89</sup> Compare, for example, Notker's use of the Einhard's *Vita Karoli* in his own biography: see D. Ganz, 'Humour as history in Notker's *Gesta Karoli Magni*', in E. B. King, J. T. Shaefer and W. B. Wadley (eds.), *Monks, Nuns and Friars in Medieval Society* (Sewanee, 1989), pp. 171–83.

<sup>90</sup> Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*, cc. 1–19.

<sup>91</sup> For example, the opening of *ibid.*, c. 37: 'It happened also in the course of time that a servant of God came to talk with Guthlac the venerable man of God, and was lodged for some days in this same island . . .' (or *ibid.*, cc. 41–4).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 47 and 50.

<sup>93</sup> Nature miracles, *ibid.*, cc. 27–41; healing miracles, *ibid.*, cc. 41–2 and c. 45; second sight, *ibid.*, cc. 43–4, 46–9; death, *ibid.*, c. 50.

<sup>94</sup> Miracles concerning Æthelbald, *ibid.*, cc. 40, 49, 52; Æthelbald's thegns: Ecga, c. 42; Ofa, c. 45; Bishop Headda of Lichfield, cc. 46–7; Abbot Wilfrid, one of Felix's main informants is associated with Æthelbald in c. 40.

ing the angelic converse), of which eleven name people involved; of these eleven, six are the names of Æthelbald, his thegns and Bishop Headda.

The individual chapters of the second part of the *Life of Guthlac* are not linked to each other by time or causation but coherence is given by the restricted setting and *dramatis personae* of the *vita*. All the action takes place in the area of Crowland over fifteen years, and the number of characters involved is small, consisting chiefly of Abbot Wilfrid, Cissa the hermit, and Mercian secular and religious grandees like Bishop Headda or the thegn Ofa. For example, Felix is able to link Guthlac's death scene to his earlier narrative by giving Beccel, who had appeared earlier as the saint's murderously envious servant, the part of its witness.<sup>95</sup> Repetition of characters and the interrelationships between them serve to endow the narrative with a greater sense of continuity than its episodes – which generally lack any causal relationship to one another – would carry on their own.

Although Crowland provides the chief setting for Guthlac's exploits, there is little topographical interest in the *vita*. Even the description of Guthlac's hermitage built over a cistern in a shady grove is indebted to Jerome's *Vita Pauli*.<sup>96</sup> It is hard to discern any genuine oral traditions behind Felix's account; it is created out of hagiographies and other religious writings which are used deliberately for their resonances. Thacker noted that Felix deliberately chose commonplace episodes and descriptions well-known to a religious audience in order to present Guthlac as a saint in an accepted mould.<sup>97</sup> Did oral traditions about Guthlac not survive?<sup>98</sup> The fact that Crowland remained an anchorite site without a body of brothers or nuns to venerate the saint's memory may have led to the loss of memories, but it is curious that the community at Repton did not seem to foster his cult either.

Felix, however, may not have been interested in promoting a topographical cult or in portraying his hero in a monastic setting. The *vita* only mentions monks within the context of the desert fathers and is otherwise entirely concerned with clergy, priests and bishops. Repton appears to have been a house of nuns and clerks since Guthlac is only described as

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 50, pp. 151–61.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 35, 38. As noted by Thacker, 'Social and continental background', pp. 295–6.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 288–90: '[Felix] selected passages from the Evagrian Life apparently because they were standard currency amongst preceding and contemporary hagiographies' (p. 288).

<sup>98</sup> In *The Guthlac Poems of the Exeter Book*, ed. J. Roberts (Oxford, 1979), pp. 8–9, Roberts tentatively puts forward the idea that the poem *Guthlac A* may derive from another account of Guthlac's death in which Bartholomew is transported to heaven after his journey to the gates of hell.

receiving the clerical tonsure there.<sup>99</sup> Felix's own religious provenance is unknown and, indeed, whatever his training, he could have been a clerk of the East Anglian royal household.<sup>100</sup> Although the *vita* emphasizes Guthlac's spiritual perfection as a clerk, priest and hermit and recounts how clerical misdemeanours like disobedience could not be hidden from the saint, Felix is not concerned to turn this material to pedagogic effect. He does at times draw general spiritual inferences from Guthlac's behaviour (which are frequently borrowed from Bede), but his real intention is to advertise Guthlac's spiritual power. The miracles performed by the saint in his lifetime emphasize this: the largest number (seven) demonstrate the saint's powers of second sight and prophecy. Four attest to his dominion over the natural world while only three are miracles of healing, and significantly two of these are the exorcism of the demon-possessed, reflecting his power over devils.<sup>101</sup> Clearly these are intended to signal Guthlac's spiritual power as a prophet and man of God rather than his pastoral engagement, and they suggest not the desire to foster a miracle-working cult at this shrine at Crowland but rather to buttress his role in legitimizing the rule of Æthelbald.

Felix's *vita* portrays memories of Guthlac as embedded within the Mercian political community but this impression probably reflects the author's intentions as much as Guthlac's own career.<sup>102</sup> Felix's *Life* is structured by political chronology from its initial dedication to a king and its record of the saint's birth in the time of the Mercian King Æthelred to its final account of Guthlac's posthumous appearance to King Æthelbald.<sup>103</sup> The political motivation behind the *Life* is seen in

<sup>99</sup> Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*, c. 20; see also my comments on the clerical nature of many Anglo-Saxon communities in 'Pastoral care and conciliar canons: the provisions of the 747 Council of *Clofesho*', in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 193–211, at pp. 208–9.

<sup>100</sup> For priests of the West Saxon royal household in the ninth century, see S. Keynes, 'The West Saxon charters of King Æthelwulf and his sons', *English Historical Review* 109 (1994), pp. 1109–49.

<sup>101</sup> Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*: nature miracles, cc. 37–40 (four miracles); healing miracles, cc. 41–2, 45 (three miracles); second sight, cc. 43–4, 46–7, 48, 49 (five miracles). My analysis of miracles here is influenced by that of C. Stancliffe who uses the idea of 'vertical' and 'horizontal' miracles in 'The miracle stories in seventh-century Irish saints' lives', in J. Fontaine and J. N. Hillgarth (eds.), *Le Septième siècle: changements et continuités. Actes du Colloque bilatéral franco-britannique tenu au Warburg Institute les 8–9 juillet 1988. / The Seventh Century: Change and Continuity. Proceedings of a Joint French and British Colloquium held at the Warburg Institute 8–9 July 1988* (London, 1992), pp. 87–115.

<sup>102</sup> Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*: c. 40, Æthelbald's visit as an exile in which he is accompanied by Wilfrid thus linking Wilfrid to Æthelbald; c. 49, his second visit; c. 52, his posthumous appearance to Æthelbald; c. 42, gesith of Æthelbald, Ecga healed; c. 45, healing of Ofa, gesith of exiled Æthelbald; c. 46–7, visit and priesting by Bishop Headda of Lichfield; c. 48, visit of Ecgburh, daughter of King Aldwulf of East Anglia.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 1; c. 34, illusion of British attack set in the time of King Coenred; c. 49, during the reign of King Ceolred and the exile of Æthelbald.

the few geographical details recorded: Guthlac's clients hail from all over Mercia's eastern sphere of domination, from East Anglia, the Wissa and Mercia itself.<sup>104</sup> This, together with Crowland's location in the Gyrwe and Guthlac's early period at Repton, suggests that Felix was attempting to establish Guthlac's appeal within a pan-Mercian context.

Guthlac's cult achieved some popularity within Mercia and beyond.<sup>105</sup> The ninth-century Mercian text, *Old English Martyrology*, includes an entry for him which may be independent of Felix's *vita* and a number of other vernacular treatments of his life exist.<sup>106</sup> In addition to two Old English poems preserved in the West Saxon Exeter Book, an Old English prose translation of Felix's *vita* was made, possibly in ninth-century Mercia.<sup>107</sup> This vernacular interest in a native saint is unusual and is perhaps due to Guthlac's appeal as a warrior saint, famous for his battles against demons, a suitable subject for commemoration in verse.<sup>108</sup> Whitelock noted in Felix's Latin *vita* points of contact with *Beowulf*, and its interest in Guthlac's genealogy and warlike youth may also have given Guthlac a more popular status.<sup>109</sup> Guthlac's commemoration after Felix's *Life* was shaped by his conformity simultaneously to saintly and heroic archetypes.

#### CONCLUSION

Commemoration was a major function of Anglo-Saxon monasteries and saints were an important focus of this activity. Their remembrance shaped the monastic year and moulded the lives of individual monks

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.: c. 41, East Anglian young man Hwaetred; cc. 24–5, Crowland; c. 53, young man from the Hwissa healed of blindness; cc. 21–3, 26.

<sup>105</sup> A useful resumé of the evidence for Guthlac's cult can be found in J. Roberts, 'An inventory of early Guthlac materials', *Mediaeval Studies* 22 (1970), pp. 193–233.

<sup>106</sup> G. Kotzor, *Das altenglische Martyrologium*, Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse NF 88/1–2 (Munich, 1981), vol. II, pp. 52–3 and see Roberts, 'Inventory', p. 204.

<sup>107</sup> The poems are edited with commentary by Roberts in *The Guthlac Poems*. *Guthlac A* is possibly independent of Felix's *vita*, see *ibid.*, pp. 19–29. The prose translation survives in fragmentary form in the Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, CXVII, s. X<sup>2</sup> homily XXIII) and completely in London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D XXI (dating from the eleventh century): see J. Roberts, 'The Old English prose translation of Felix's *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*', in P. E. Szarmach (ed.), *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose* (New York, 1986), pp. 363–79; D. G. Scragg, 'The corpus of anonymous lives and their manuscript sources', in P. E. Szarmach (ed.), *Holy Men and Holy Women. Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts* (Albany, 1996), pp. 209–10, 219.

<sup>108</sup> See *ibid.*, for comparable material for other native saints. On interest in Bartholomew, see Roberts, 'Old English prose translation', pp. 373–4.

<sup>109</sup> D. Whitelock, *The Audience of Beowulf* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 80–1; Thacker, 'Social and continental background', pp. 314–17; Roberts, 'Inventory'; *Felix's Life of Guthlac*, ed. Colgrave, pp. 19–20.

and nuns; the most visible remains of this crucial activity are hagiographies and this study has explored the links between textual stereotypes and the workings of memory in three *vitae*. One question still remains to be discussed: do hagiographies only tell the historian about the development of a literary genre or do they preserve anything of their subjects? Are they simply testimonies to the exploitation of sanctity for a variety of purposes or do they record any traces of the saints themselves?

Cuthbert and Guthlac both evaporate under the weight of their textual reinterpretations. But underlying their biographies with their borrowed miracles and stereotypical dramatic incidents, one glimpses a static portrait of a holy man, one much in demand for spiritual teaching and advice. This too may reflect hagiographical stereotyping since it is a motif in a number of *vitae*, including Sulpicius Severus's *Life of Martin* and his *Dialogues* as well as the *Life of St Anthony*, but the number of miracles which take place in, for example, the *Life of Guthlac*, when important Mercians, including Æthelbald himself, visit the saint for the sake of discussion with him is striking.<sup>110</sup> A cumulative image is obtained from these three *vitae* of the saint primarily as holy man and sage, much sought after for political counsel, spiritual teaching and prophecy.<sup>111</sup> Bede's portrayal of Cuthbert was tailored for a monastic audience and projected an image of the saint as a model of the monastic life, but for the laity – and kings in particular – the saint was a man whose spiritual power was most importantly manifest in speech, in prophecy and second sight, rather than in his exemplary life or in wonder-working. Cuthbert could also act as a holy man and prophet, predicting Aldfrith's accession and advising Ecgrith of Northumbria against his ill-fated Pictish campaign.<sup>112</sup> This role can be seen very clearly in Bede's portrayal of Aidan in the *Ecclesiastical History* which is derived from court and not monastic circles. Aidan's miracles consist almost entirely of political prophecies and one of the few other miracles significantly demonstrates his power over nature.<sup>113</sup> But the

<sup>110</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*, ed. J. Fontaine, SC 133 (Paris, 1967), c. 20 and Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, ed. A. de Vogüé, II, 5, 5–10; Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*, cc. 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49.

<sup>111</sup> On the role of the holy man as teacher, see P. Rousseau, 'The spiritual authority of the "monk-bishop": eastern elements in some western hagiography of the fourth and fifth centuries', *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 22 (1971), pp. 380–419, at pp. 382–9, and his *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 19–32. Helpful studies of later medieval hermits are H. Mayr-Harting, 'The functions of a twelfth-century recluse', *History* 60 (1975), pp. 337–52; C. Holdsworth, 'Hermits and the power of the frontier', *Reading Medieval Studies* 16 (1990), pp. 55–76 (see particularly pp. 59–62 on the power of speech with regard to cursing and prophecy); A. Warren, *Anchorites and their Patrons in Medieval England* (Berkeley, 1985).

<sup>112</sup> Bede, *HE*, IV, 26; Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 24, 27.

spiritual authority of the holy man could have drawbacks for kings as shown by Cedd's cursing of King Sigeberht of Essex for his disobedience with regard to an impenitent follower.<sup>114</sup> The same moral can be drawn from the example of Ecgberht of Ireland whose words King Ecgrith of Northumbria disobeyed to his cost when he attacked Ireland.<sup>115</sup>

The tradition of holy man as political prophet is better recorded among the Irish where, for example, the first book of Adomnán's *Life of Columba* is taken up with prophecies and episodes involving second sight, a number of which are critical of kings and royal power.<sup>116</sup> But its presence in England need not necessarily reflect Irish influence since it was a widespread tradition; it is, of course, an important trait of Old Testament prophets. The duty of rebuking kings which is allied to political prophecy was also a significant aspect of episcopal office: Boniface's letter of remonstrance to King Æthelbald of Mercia, for example, belongs to this tradition and Alcuin's letters frequently urge his episcopal correspondents to admonish their kings, but we do not know with what success.<sup>117</sup> Anglo-Saxon texts, like the *Life of St Guthlac*, tend to portray holy men as supporters and legitimators of the political regime and relegate condemnation to posthumous visions of damned rulers.

Saints also provided spiritual advice for the lower laity, giving consolation and encouragement as well as more rigorous teaching. An important function of the holy man in Anglo-Saxon England may therefore have been to give advice and to listen in an age when the ability to give wise counsel was particularly highly esteemed and the use of speech subject to conventions now lost to us.<sup>118</sup> Cuthbert was commonly visited by Lindisfarne brethren on the Farne and consulted by royal abbesses

<sup>113</sup> Bede, *HE*: III, 6, Aidan's blessing of Oswald's right arm; III, 14, Aidan and Oswine's gift of a horse; III, 16, Aidan's supernatural knowledge of Penda's destruction of Bamburgh; III, 15, Aidan's power over a stormy sea. H. Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1972), p. 98.

<sup>114</sup> *HE*, III, 22.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*: IV, 3, Ecgberht's vision of Cedd's soul; IV, 26, Ecgberht's warnings to Ecgrith against his attack on Ireland – and note Bede's interesting words expressing his disapproval of cursing.

<sup>116</sup> *Adomnán's Life of St Columba*: for those critical of kings, see, for example, I, 12 and 14.

<sup>117</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*, no. 73, pp. 146–55; see Alcuin, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH Epp. IV (Berlin, 1895), no. 311, pp. 479–81, for example.

<sup>118</sup> C. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. C. Jacobson and B. G. Schoepf (New York, 1963), p. 68: 'There are cultures – and I am inclined to say most of the cultures of the world – which are rather thrifty in relation to language. They don't believe that language should be used indiscriminately, but only in certain specific frames of reference and somewhat sparingly.' See also the remarks of P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith. Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 105–6 on courtly conventions of speech.

and by queens.<sup>119</sup> Boisil at Melrose was also credited by Bede with prophetic powers.<sup>120</sup> The common topos of early medieval texts of the need for bishops, priests and the religious to match their deeds to their words reflects this attitude: exemplary speech and exemplary conduct were two sides of the coin of holy living.<sup>121</sup> The Christian equation of the 'Word' with Christ himself probably reinforced secular social attitudes. Robert Bjork has stressed the significance placed upon the speech of saints in Anglo-Saxon verse *vitae* – he argues that saints were considered to embody the Word of God and that their speech has a particularly strong significance in the verse *vitae*.<sup>122</sup> The saint as prophet and sage may have been a more valued figure (particularly by the laity) than the saint as miracle-worker or as the exemplary embodiment of the monastic way of life.

There may too have been many more holy men than we think, not only monastic saints but perhaps particularly hermits, a number of whose names are recorded fleetingly but who are otherwise unknown.<sup>123</sup> Alcuin, for example, devotes considerable space in his York Poem to the anchorites Balthere and Echa (the latter possessing prophetic powers) and seems to have had a special interest in hermits, as Donald Bullough has pointed out.<sup>124</sup> A letter and a number of prayers survive from the pen of one anchorite, Alchfrid, while the Lindisfarne section of the

<sup>119</sup> Anon., *Vita S. Cuthberti*, III, 6 and 7; Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*: c. 9 for Cuthbert's inspired teaching; c. 24 with his prophecy to Abbess Ælflæd.

<sup>120</sup> Bede, *HE*, IV, 27, 430–5, and see Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti Prosa*, cc. 6 and 8 for instances of this. In the *HE*, V, 9, for Boisil's appearance as a messenger of God in a vision to a companion of Ecgberht.

<sup>121</sup> Thacker, 'Bede's ideal of reform', pp. 130–53, esp. p. 131 (with references cited there – see, for example, *De Templo*, in *Baedae Venerabilis Opera, Opera exegetica I.i.a.*, CCSL 119A, ed. D. Hurst (Turnhout, 1969), p. 194); see, for example, Alcuin, *Epistolae*, no. 19, p. 54.

<sup>122</sup> R. E. Bjork, *The Old English Verse Saints' Lives: a Study in Direct Discourse and the Iconography of Style* (Toronto, 1985).

<sup>123</sup> See, for example, Alcuin's account of otherwise unknown hermits in his *The Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*, ed. P. Godman (Oxford, 1982), pp. lvi–vii and lines 1325–94 for Balthere and Echa. The significance of these figures is discussed by Bullough, 'Hagiography as patriotism', pp. 348–9, who drew attention to the importance of the eremitical tradition in England; M. Clayton, 'Hermits and the contemplative life in Anglo-Saxon England', in Szarmach (ed.), *Holy Men and Holy Women*, pp. 147–75. See also J. Corbett, 'Two early Anglo-Saxon holy men: Oswald and Cuthbert', in J. D. Woods and D. A. E. Pelteret (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxons. Synthesis and Achievement* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1985), pp. 63–75. On unsuspected monastic saints see my 'Local and universal saints', and J. Blair, 'A saint for every minster?' in Thacker and Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints*. On early medieval Frankish hermits, see J. Hueclin, 'L'ermite et la mort durant le haut Moyen Âge', *Revue du Nord* 68 (1986), pp. 153–68. I am most grateful to Dominic Alexander for bibliographical help with regard to hermits.

<sup>124</sup> Alcuin, *The Bishops*, lines 1320–94. Alcuin made provision in one of his letters for alms to be given to anchorites (Alcuin, *Epistolae*, no. 7). Bullough, 'Hagiography as patriotism', pp. 348–50, 352–4.



Durham *Liber Vitae* includes a long list of anchorites.<sup>125</sup> Such men may have provided alternative foci of spiritual power for the laity, outside the usual centres of ecclesiastical power in monasteries and cathedrals, just as Guthlac seems to have done.<sup>126</sup> The pseudo-holy man, Aldbert (though not a hermit), seems to have served the local population east of the Rhine in very much this way, establishing his own cult centres among the ordinary lay people and attracting those in need of forgiveness of sins: 'When people came and threw themselves at his feet asking to confess their sins he said to them: "I know all your sins, for your secret thoughts are known to me. There is no need of confession: your past sins are forgiven."' <sup>127</sup>

This raises the question why some of these holy men get written up and others do not. The answer partially lies in the absence of monastic communities who could revere their memory and foster their cult, and partially perhaps also in the political sphere. The structure of memory often reflects the hierarchy of power seen in the domination of Felix's life by the political world. Likewise, the accounts of Cuthbert's life are structured by political events. However, other texts, like Æthelwulf's poem, *De Abbatibus*, are less dominated by politics – the chronology is provided by the sequence of abbots who have replaced the secular power hierarchy. The saints and revered fathers of this monastery remain private figures: public sanctity arises at the intersection of memory with politics. Was Guthlac promoted as the saint for Mercia and its satellites? Goffart has argued that rivalry between Lindisfarne and Hexham and Ripon resulted in the writing and rewriting of the lives of Cuthbert and Wilfrid. Does Felix's debt to Bede suggest that Guthlac was created as a Mercian rival to the Northumbrian Cuthbert?

<sup>125</sup> The letter is edited by W. Levison, 'Alchfrid the anchorite and the Book of Cerne', in his *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century. The Ford Lectures delivered in the University of Oxford in the Hilary Term, 1943* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 295–302; *Liber Vitae Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, ed. J. Stevenson, Surtees Society 13 (London, 1841), p. 6.

<sup>126</sup> The inspiration for this approach is of course P. Brown, 'The rise of the holy man in late antiquity', and 'Town, village and holy man: the case of Syria', both reprinted in his *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982), pp. 103–52 and pp. 153–65 respectively. Brown's material for the interaction between holy men and local Syrian villages is enviably rich and with the poorer Anglo-Saxon sources, it is difficult to assess the extent of any interactions between hermits and other holy men and the ordinary laity. D. Rollason (in *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 89–104) has argued that the Anglo-Saxon Church was entirely elitist in its interests, but for a contrary view see my 'Local and universal saints'. It is certainly true that our written sources reveal little evidence of interactions with the low-class laity. Whether this was true in practice is a different question.

<sup>127</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*, no. 59, pp. 108–20 (quotation from Emerton, *Letters*, p. 101).

If public memory arises from the intersection of memory and politics, it was given enduring form through the production of written texts. A society's characteristic literary genres are linked to its ways of organizing human experience: narrative – one of the most common literary forms today – is also one of the primary means by which modern individuals make sense of their lives.<sup>128</sup> Although some modern scholars have tended to regard narrative as natural and a human universal,<sup>129</sup> it was by no means as important a literary form in the early Middle Ages as it is today. It is noteworthy that when Felix borrowed so much of the prose *Life of St Cuthbert* from Bede for his own *Life of Guthlac*, he did not imitate his narrative techniques. Scholars of medieval vernacular literatures have been keen to point out that these cannot be easily analysed by the techniques of modern narratology.<sup>130</sup> Old English literature is perhaps more marked by lists, catalogues and digressions than by linear narrative. The action of *Beowulf*, for example, is frequently interrupted by digressions and episodes which enrich its power and drama by providing an oblique commentary on its themes, while the Old English wisdom poems are essentially lists of traditional lore.<sup>131</sup> It was familiarity and an associative way of thinking on the part of the audience which endowed these poems with coherence. Enjoyment of *Beowulf* relies upon knowledge not only of its subject's life but also of the numerous heroic episodes alluded to in its digressions; its reader or hearer was required to make connections between the superficially disparate but juxtaposed events to appreciate fully the poem's resonances. Further, Orchard has argued that underlying its explicit story is an implicit parable of the perils of pride rooted in a traditional archetype of heroic doom.<sup>132</sup> The poem requires considerable familiarity on the part of its audience with ideas and events extrinsic to the poem itself but intrinsic to its meaning.

<sup>128</sup> Mark Johnson, *Moral Imagination. Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics* (Chicago, 1993), pp. 131–84.

<sup>129</sup> G. Genette, 'Boundaries of narrative', *New Literary History* 8 (1976), pp. 1–13, at p. 1; R. Barthes, 'Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives', in his *Images-Music-Text. Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath* (Glasgow, 1977), pp. 78–124. And see White, *Content of the Form*, p. 3.

<sup>130</sup> See, for example, E. B. Vitz, *Medieval Narrative and Modern Narratology: Subjects and Objects of Desire* (New York, 1989) and see the valuable review article of this and other works by A. Galloway, 'Narratology and the pursuit of context: three recent studies of medieval narrative', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 21 (1994), pp. 111–26; J. L. Byock, 'Saga form, oral prehistory and the Icelandic social context', *New Literary History* 16 (1984), pp. 153–73; J. Evans, 'Episodes in analysis of medieval narrative', *Style* 20 (1988), pp. 126–41; H. R. Jauss, 'The alterity and modernity of medieval literature', *New Literary History* 10 (1978–9), pp. 209–11.

<sup>131</sup> A. Bonjour, *The Digressions in Beowulf*, Medium Aevum Publications 5 (Oxford, 1950); F. C. Robinson, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style* (Knoxville, 1985); N. Howe, *The Old English Catalogue Poems*, *Anglistika* 23 (Copenhagen, 1985).

<sup>132</sup> A. Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies. Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscript* (Cambridge, 1995).

Historians studying Latin texts have perhaps been more puzzled by the apparent lack of structural unity and narrative coherence in, for example, a work like Asser's *Life of King Alfred* and have tended to alleviate their dismay by either finding organizing principles otherwise invisible or by explaining away a text's apparent inadequacies by suggesting that it must be an unfinished draft.<sup>133</sup> However, early medieval texts could be organized according to different principles: those of classical rhetoric, for example, or perhaps according to numerical symbolism.<sup>134</sup> But it is becoming increasingly clear that Latin learning and vernacular culture should not be divorced. Aldhelm's Latin poetry was deeply influenced by Old English verse and Old English poetry is deeply informed by the Bible, liturgy, patristic and classical texts.<sup>135</sup> The authors and audience of both vernacular and Latin writings were monastic, and their expectations of both may have been the same.<sup>136</sup> Familiarity was the key to the enjoyment of Old English poetry and the same might be said of hagiography. Few *vitae* could have held surprises for their audience since, like poetry, they recycle familiar wonder stories

<sup>133</sup> M. Schütt, 'The literary form of Asser's "Vita Alfredi"', *English Historical Review* 62 (1957), pp. 209–20; D. P. Kirby, 'Asser and his Life of King Alfred', *Studia Celtica* 6 (1971), pp. 12–35, who suggests that the existing life is a conflation of separate compositions; Asser's *Life of King Alfred and other Contemporary Sources*, trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 222 suggests that the life is a draft. J. Campbell, 'Asser's *Life of Alfred*', in Holdsworth and Wiseman (eds.), *The Inheritance of Historiography*, pp. 115–21, 133–5, provides a detailed refutation of Kirby's theory of composition and gives an extremely perceptive account of the claims of different genres upon Asser's work. On the possible numerological patterning of the Life, see D. R. Howlett, *British Books in Biblical Style* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 365–445, and *The Celtic Latin Tradition of Biblical Style* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 273–333. A. P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1995), p. 306, draws attention to Asser's and Byrhtferth's shared propensity to digressions as an argument for the latter's authorship of the Life of Alfred; but see S. Keynes, 'On the authenticity of Asser's Life of King Alfred', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996), pp. 529–51.

<sup>134</sup> W. Berschin, 'Opus deliberatum ac perfectum: Why did the Venerable Bede write a second prose Life of St Cuthbert?', in Bonner et al. (eds.), *St Cuthbert*, pp. 95–102 argues convincingly that Bede organized his metrical and prose lives of Cuthbert in forty-six chapters because of the spiritual significance of this number. See also Ray, 'Bede, the exegete', pp. 125–40; Ray, 'Bede's *vera lex historiae*', *Speculum* 55 (1980), pp. 1–21; Ray, 'Bede and Cicero', *Anglo-Saxon England* 16 (1987), pp. 1–15; Ray, 'The triumph of Greco-Roman rhetorical assumptions', pp. 67–84; R. Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages. Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality* (Cambridge, 1991). On lists and catalogues see Howe, *Old English Catalogue Poems*. For numerological structures see Howlett, *British Books in Biblical Style*.

<sup>135</sup> A. Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm* (Cambridge, 1994); M. Lapidge, 'Aldhelm's Latin poetry and Old English verse', *Comparative Literature* 31 (1979), pp. 249–314. On Old English poetry, see, for example, P. G. Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse: Studies in Genesis, Exodus and Daniel* (Cambridge, 1996); M. Godden, 'Biblical literature: the Old Testament', and B. Raw, 'Biblical literature: the New Testament', in Godden and Lapidge (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, pp. 206–26 and 226–42.

<sup>136</sup> P. Wormald, 'Bede, "Beowulf" and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy', in R. T. Farrell (ed.), *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 46 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 32–90.

by associating them with their subjects and by fulfilling the ancient archetype of the saintly life. The *vitae* of Cuthbert and Guthlac rely in different ways upon previous hagiographical lives to enhance their meaning; all show their subjects conforming to a conventionalized pattern of sanctity.

Moreover, the use of texts within a monastic environment can be compared to the environment of vernacular poetry. In the liturgy, the worlds of oral and written are inseparably linked since its essence lies in the performance of written text as a shared experience on the part of the whole community.<sup>137</sup> Liturgical performance also militates against lengthy narratives since the readings consist of short excerpts from the Bible, placed alongside other texts and prayers meditating often in an oblique fashion on the same underlying theme. Full understanding of the daily services required concentration and the ability to make associations between different texts. The connection between vernacular poetry and liturgical performance was clearly made by eighth-century priests who were scolded by the Council of *Clofesho* in 747 for reciting the liturgy in the manner of secular poets.<sup>138</sup> Nor would the monastery's scholarly activities have fostered a desire for connected narrative since exegetical works provide a disconnected series of meditations upon the scripture for intense study.<sup>139</sup>

Can literary forms be related to social contexts and patterns of thought?<sup>140</sup> The monastic environment and educational tradition must have conditioned particular mental habits on the part of its inmates. Howe has argued that the catalogue format of Old English wisdom poems reflects monastic education with its fondness for encyclopaedic texts like Isidore's *Etymologiae*.<sup>141</sup> The absence of narrative closure in early literature may be linked to a world-view in which God is immanent and his workings often mysterious.<sup>142</sup> The absence of narrative causation and coherence in the anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* directs its

<sup>137</sup> On the participation of the audience in oral recitation, see J. Miles Foley, 'The traditional oral audience', *Balkan Studies* 18 (1977), pp. 145–53.

<sup>138</sup> A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs (eds.), *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (3 vols., Oxford, 1869–79), III, p. 366, c. 12.

<sup>139</sup> There has not been space in this chapter to discuss the influence of the Bible on narrative techniques which is an important subject in its own right. On this, see M. van Uiterlinden, *Stylisation biblique et condition humaine dans l'hagiographie mérovingienne* (Brussels, 1987) and 'Le culte des saints et l'hagiographie face à l'écriture: les avatars d'une relation ambiguë', *Settimane* 36 (1989), pp. 155–202; Ray, 'Bede, the exegete', and 'Triumph of Greco-Roman rhetorical assumptions', pp. 69–70.

<sup>140</sup> Byock, 'Saga form', for example, links the structure of sagas with that of Icelandic society.

<sup>141</sup> Howe, *Catalogue Poems*, esp. pp. 9–28.

<sup>142</sup> Vitz, *Medieval Narrative*; Ganz, 'Humour as history'.

reader's attention to the working of divine power which stands behind every event within it.

The structures of early medieval memory are reflected in the different structures of early medieval texts. The anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* points to two important memory frameworks. Firstly, the role of landscape in encoding memories which is also demonstrated in many other texts and stories, for example, the Old English lists of saints' resting places, the *Secgan be þam Godes sanctum*.<sup>143</sup> The anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* incorporates early traditions about Cuthbert which carried topographical associations; in Bede's revision, he omitted these but effectively replaced them by linking memories of Cuthbert to his tomb and island hermitage. Secondly, the significance of communities in holding and preserving memories can be seen not only in the importance attached to the citation of (real or fictional) witnesses in recounting miracles but also in the use of the dialogues as an appropriate form for recording the actions of saints. The *Dialogues* of Sulpicius Severus and Gregory the Great replicate the sort of monastic gossip about saints which Bede reports in his *History* and which the anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* and Felix's *Life of Guthlac* may preserve in their structure. The dialogue is one of the commonest of early medieval literary forms and it must owe its popularity not only to its replication of oral discourse but also to the way in which it re-created social frameworks of memory.

Different social groups remember within different frameworks: the forms of monastic memory differed from those of lay society where kinship and genealogy were, for example, significant structuring devices. Within the Church, these were replaced by the succession of bishops and abbots, duly recorded in episcopal and abbatial lists. The very structures of time were different too: the lives of Cuthbert and Guthlac are measured out according to an exemplary childhood and progression through clerical and monastic offices – deacon, priest, guest-master, prior, abbot and bishop – their daily lives dominated by the demands of the liturgical office.<sup>144</sup> Hagiography suggests that the religious life cycle may have had a different rhythm from the secular: saints' *vitae* are generally uninterested in the process of ageing and present a static view in which the saint moves from a holy childhood

<sup>143</sup> F. Liebermann (ed.), *Die Heiligen Englands. Angelsächsisch und Lateinisch* (Hanover, 1889); D. W. Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting places in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 7 (1978), pp. 61–93.

<sup>144</sup> See also, for example, Bede's own autobiography at the end of his *History* (*HE*, V, 24, 566–7) which measures his life out according to the clerical grades (discussed in my 'Memory and identity').

(reflecting the importance of child oblation) to death without emphasis on ageing. In Old English poetry by contrast, old age is associated with the wisdom of experience and with decay and physical decline.<sup>145</sup> The monastic way of life unpunctuated by marriage and parenthood, and predicated upon intellectual, musical or spiritual skills rather than upon the short-lived physical prowess of a warrior, produced a different sequence for human development. The two patterns could intersect – in, for example, child oblation which involved secular parents or the retirement of aged warriors to monasteries – but the relatively unchanging demands of the monastic life coupled with its emphasis on spiritual striving and the replication of moral exemplars resulted in a static literary genre which stressed imitation rather than developmental narrative.

<sup>145</sup> For age and wisdom, see, for example, the poems of wisdom, *Vainglory* and *Maxims II* where Solomon and Saturn II expatiate on the ravages of age (T. A. Shippey (ed.), *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 54, 76, 90–2). *Beowulf* too portrays the decay of warrior prowess in the ageing of its hero.

## CHAPTER 3

# *The uses of the Old Testament in early medieval canon law*

The *Collectio Vetus Gallica* and the  
*Collectio Hibernensis*

*Rob Meens*

The Bible was arguably the most important historiographical text of the early Middle Ages. All history was in the end part of God's scheme of salvation for human kind, starting with creation and ending at the last coming. Early medieval historiography was concerned to establish its own place in this great scheme of creation, fall and redemption. Yet, the Bible is not only a historiographical text; it is also a code of moral conduct. In particular the Old Testament books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy supply God's chosen people with a detailed lawcode. One of the crucial problems for Christians was the question of how far Old Testament rules also applied to them. In Mediterranean Christianity with its enduring tradition of exegesis and ecclesiastical legislation, the episcopacy felt a certain tension between on the one hand certain Old Testament rules, in particular those touching upon the subject of ritual purity, and on the other proper Christian conduct. This attitude changed in the early Middle Ages when the prestige of the Old Testament increased to such a degree that for a Carolingian scholar and adviser of kings as Hrabanus Maurus the *vetus lex*, the 'Old Law', was of primary importance in dealing with contemporary matters.<sup>1</sup> This chapter investigates some of the ways in which early medieval compilers of canon law collections dealt with the 'Old Law'. In what respects did they feel free to depart from the ways of the Old Israel and where did they use Old Testament provisions for their own purposes? Did they see the biblical past as reflected in the books of the Old Testament as history that was over and done with, superseded as it was by the New Testament; or did they see themselves as the rightful heirs of the Israelites bound by the rules given to them in the Pentateuch?

<sup>1</sup> M. De Jong, 'Old law and new-found power. Hrabanus Maurus and the Old Testament', in J.-W. Drijvers and A. MacDonald (eds.), *Centres of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near-East* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1995), pp. 161–74; see also her chapter in this volume.

Paul Fournier and Wilhelm Levison when discussing the influence of the Bible, and especially of the Old Testament, on early medieval canon law, noticed that biblical models were particularly apparent in Irish texts.<sup>2</sup> Raymund Kottje's major study devoted to the influence of the Old Testament in early medieval Europe showed its influence in the fields of name-giving, liturgy and, again, canon law, which he could trace to Visigothic Spain and Ireland.<sup>3</sup> Recently, it was observed that 'a determining characteristic of the early Irish Church was its reverence for the Old Testament coupled with a kind of biblical literalism approaching fundamentalism that sprang ultimately from the Antiochene school of biblical interpretation'.<sup>4</sup> Old Testament rules, the 'laws of the Hebrews', were not only of interest to the Irish from an exegetical point of view; they also 'retained much of their original social force'.<sup>5</sup> The reasons for this preference for the Old Testament in the early Middle Ages remain something of a mystery. Johannes Haller, when commenting on the profound influence of Old Testament language in the papal letters to the Carolingian rulers, suggested that this was caused by the fact that Old Testament language was closely related to Carolingians' modes of thinking.<sup>6</sup> Arnold Angenendt suggests that the early Middle Ages were on a similar level of religious development to that of the Jews when codifying their Old Law. The early Middle Ages were 'alttestamentlich geprägt'. Not only early medieval Christianity but also society at large was 'archaic', ritualistic, formalistic and legalistic.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century. The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in the Hilary Term 1943* (Oxford, 1946), p. 100: 'In Ireland, with a less strict organization of the Church, moral and legal rules taken directly from the Bible and particularly from the Old Testament occupied a relatively large place in canon law.' See also by the same author, 'Die Iren und die fränkische Kirche', in F. Prinz (ed.), *Mönchtum und Gesellschaft im Frühmittelalter*, Wege der Forschung 312 (Darmstadt, 1976), pp. 91–111 [originally *Historische Zeitschrift* 109 (1912), pp. 1–22], p. 98–9; P. Fournier, 'De l'influence de la collection irlandaise sur la formation des collections canoniques', *Nouvelle revue historique de droit français et étranger* 23 (1899), pp. 27–78 [reprint in P. Fournier, *Mélanges de droit canonique*, ed. Th. Kölzer (2 vols., Aalen 1983), vol. 2, pp. 93–144]; R. Reynolds, 'Unity and diversity in Carolingian canon law collections: the case of the *Collectio Hibernensis* and its derivatives', in U.-R. Blumenthal (ed.), *Carolingian Essays. Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in Early Christian Studies* (Washington, DC, 1983), pp. 99–135 [reprinted in R. Reynolds, *Law and Liturgy in the Latin Church, 5th–12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1994), ch. 4].

<sup>3</sup> See R. Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss des Alten Testaments auf Recht und Liturgie des früheren Mittelalters (6.–8. Jahrhundert)*, Bonner Historische Forschungen 23, 2nd edn (Bonn, 1970).

<sup>4</sup> M. Herren, 'The "Judaizing tendencies" of the early Irish Church', *Filologia mediolatina* 3 (1996), pp. 73–80, at p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>6</sup> J. Haller, 'Die Karolinger und das Papsttum', *Historische Zeitschrift* 108 (1912), p. 60 [reprint in Haller, *Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1944)].

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, A. Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter. Die abendländische Christenheit von 400 bis 900* (Stuttgart, Berlin and Cologne, 1990), pp. 346–7: 'Das frühe Mittelalter ist nicht nur liturgisch-



'Broad similarities' between the society of the Old Testament and the early Irish one may indeed have caused the adoption of Old Testament rules in Irish text, but the force of the written word may have strengthened such a tendency.<sup>8</sup> One might also argue that the Old Testament, with its formalistic and legalistic character stressing authority and obedience, is much more useful when organizing a church or state than the New Testament, because it provides a basic set of rules for organizing a group of people. This chapter will investigate some aspects of the predilection for ritualism that seems so characteristic of early medieval religiosity and thereby focus on two important collections of canon law. It has to be borne in mind that in the early Middle Ages no single, uniform and all-encompassing code of ecclesiastical law existed, but only collections of texts that were held to be authoritative, such as canons promulgated by church councils, papal rulings, excerpts from the Church Fathers or quotations from the Bible. Though such collections, compiled by individuals, might include rules that were contradictory or had become obsolete and although we do not know how precisely they were consulted, it can safely be assumed that they gave guidance to the bishops when dealing with ecclesiastical affairs and played an important role in church councils' proceedings.<sup>9</sup>

Two influential early medieval collections of canon law will be considered in some detail: the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* and the *Collectio Hibernensis*. These two collections show a remarkable contrast when dealing with questions of ritual purity as raised by the Old Testament, in particular the subjects of the Sabbath's rest, dietary rules and the impurity pertaining to certain bodily functions.

#### THE *COLLECTIO VETUS GALLICA*

The *Collectio Vetus Gallica* originated in Lyon at some time around the year 600 (585–626/7), maybe under the guidance of Bishop Etherius of Lyon (c. 586–602). At the end of the seventh century it was edited anew

rituell geprägt gewesen, sondern auch alttestamentlich' and 'Wenn das frühe Mittelalter oft einen archaisch-rituellen und gesetzhaften Eindruck vermittelt . . .'

<sup>8</sup> K. McCone, *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature*, Maynooth Monographs 3 (Maynooth, 1990), p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> For the character of canon law in the early Middle Ages, see J. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London, 1995), pp. 18–43; for a survey of the manuscript evidence, see R. McKitterick, 'Knowledge of canon law in the Frankish kingdoms before 789: the manuscript evidence', *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 36 (1985), pp. 97–117. For the reading of the canons at councils, see R. Reynolds, 'Rites and signs of conciliar decisions in the early Middle Ages', in *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, Settimane 33 (Spoleto, 1987), pp. 207–44, at p. 223.

in Autun probably through the influence of Bishop Leodegar of Autun. In the second quarter of the eighth century the collection was reworked again in the monastery of Corbie, where it received the form in which we now know it.<sup>10</sup> The original Lyon version of the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* consisted mainly of canons from the ecumenical and sixth-century Gallic councils. In these councils the Bible did not figure greatly as an authority for the formulation of their canons.<sup>11</sup> The same holds true for the *Vetus Gallica*. In this collection of more than sixty titles the Old Testament is used thirty-four times and the New Testament twenty-three times, but these figures pertain to the text as it came down to us, that is in the Corbie edition.<sup>12</sup> If we subtract from this number the citations appearing in later additions made to this text, then only three citations from or allusions to the Old Testament and only two from the New Testament remain in the original Lyon text.

It is especially illuminating to see how Frankish bishops dealt with the ritual prescriptions of the Old Testament when they were addressing the question of the Sunday observance. In title XXIII of the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* the oldest western decree on this theme, formulated at the council of Orleans (538), is cited. This canon reacts against too literal an interpretation of the Sabbath's rest. It states that while some people are convinced of the fact that they are not permitted to travel on Sunday, to prepare food, clean the house or wash themselves on that holy day, the bishops assembled in Orleans condemned this attitude as belonging more to the Jewish than Christian teaching.<sup>13</sup> They only forbade engaging in agrarian activities on a Sunday and further admonished people to go to church and pray during that day, but did not want to go further than that. Finally they stated that people who transgress these rules should be subjected to priestly castigation rather than to lay punishment, which, interestingly enough, presupposes some kind of secular rulings, of which we, unfortunately, have no further knowledge. A similar stance

<sup>10</sup> H. Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich. Die Collectio Vetus Gallica, die älteste systematische Kanonensammlung des fränkischen Gallien. Studien und Edition, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 1* (Berlin and New York, 1975), pp. 62–96.

<sup>11</sup> See for the councils of Merovingian Gaul the biblical index in J. Gaudemet and B. Basdevant, *Les canons des conciles mérovingiens (VIe–VIIe siècles). Texte latin de l'édition C. De Clercq. Introduction, traduction et notes*, SC 353–4 (Paris, 1989), pp. 593–5.

<sup>12</sup> I only counted the citations and allusions referred to in Mordek's edition of the first sixty-four titles. There are some more allusions in the titles that were added later, for example when parts of Gregory the Great's *Libellus Responsionum* were included in this collection.

<sup>13</sup> *Vetus Gallica* XXIII, 5, in Mordek, *Kirchenrecht*, p. 440: 'Quae res ad Iudaicam magis quam ad christianam observanciam pertinere probatur' (= Council of Orleans (538), c.31 [28], *Concilia Galliae A.511–A.695*, ed. C. De Clercq, CCSL 148A (Turnhout, 1963) p. 125). See also Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, p. 44.

was taken by Pope Gregory the Great who condemned a too-literal interpretation of the Sunday observance as a Judaizing attitude.<sup>14</sup>

The *Collectio Vetus Gallica* also cites a canon from the council of Laodicea, warning Christians not to worship the Sabbath. Here it also speaks of a Judaizing attitude. If Christians are found who give in to this kind of Judaizing, they are to be anathema.<sup>15</sup> Fear of Judaizing tendencies may also have been the motivation for the canon formulated at the council of Agde and included in the *Vetus Gallica*, where it is stated that Christians should not eat together with Jews. Since Jews do not eat the food of Christians, because they regard this as unclean (though it was permitted by the apostle, the canon emphasizes), Christians in their turn should not eat the food of Jews, for this is unworthy and even sacrilegious.<sup>16</sup>

Galic church law, as exemplified in the *Collectio Vetus Gallica*, seems to aim at distinguishing Christian ritual attitudes from Jewish ones. The Church thereby defined itself against Jews as the 'other'. Among Christians, however, there was a tendency to keep to certain 'Jewish' customs, a tendency motivated by a more literal interpretation of the text of the Old Testament. Such a tendency was decidedly countered by the Merovingian episcopacy. There also seems to have been some pressure from a non-clerical source to punish transgressions of the Sunday observance.

#### THE COLLECTIO HIBERNENSIS

Totally different from the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* is the collection of canon law made in Ireland at the beginning of the eighth century: the *Collectio Hibernensis*.<sup>17</sup> This collection makes hardly any use of papal decretals or

<sup>14</sup> Ep. XIII, 1, *S. Gregorii Magni. Registrum Epistularum Libri VIII–XIV, Appendix*, ed. D. Norberg, CCSL 140A (Turnhout, 1982), pp. 991–3.

<sup>15</sup> *Vetus Gallica* LV, 1, in Mordek, *Kirchenrecht*, p. 577–8: 'Canon Laudocinsis Hira XXVIII: Quod non oporteat christianus iudaizare et ho[s]tiare in sabbato, sed operare eos in eodem \die/; praeferentes autem in veneratione dominicum diem, si vacare voluerint, ut christiani hoc faciant. Quod si reperi fuerint iudaizare, anathema sint a Christo.' (= Council of Laodicea, c. 29, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris antiquissima canonum et conciliorum graecorum interpretationes Latinae*, ed. C. H. Turner, (Oxford, 1907), vol. II, p. 367).

<sup>16</sup> *Vetus Gallica* LV, 6, in Mordek, *Kirchenrecht*, p. 580 (= Council of Agde, c.40, ed. *Concilia Galliae, A.314–506*, ed. C. Munier, CCSL 148 (Turnhout, 1963) p. 210).

<sup>17</sup> H. Wasserschleben (ed.), *Die irische Kanonensammlung*, 2nd. edn (Leipzig, 1885). For the character and date of this collection, see M. Sheehy, 'The Collectio Canonum Hibernensium – a Celtic phenomenon', in H. Löwe (ed.), *Die Iren und Europa im früheren Mittelalter*, (2 vols., Stuttgart, 1982), vol. I, pp. 525–35, at pp. 528 and 534. For the deficiencies of Wasserschleben's edition, *ibid.*, p. 534. The versions of the Bible used in the *Hibernensis* are analysed in L. M. Davies, 'The biblical text of the Collectio Canonum Hibernensis', in P. Ni Chatáin and M. Richter (eds.) *Irland und Europa im früheren Mittelalter / Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages* (Stuttgart, 1996), pp. 17–41.

canons from early Christian councils, but instead is full of citations from the Latin Fathers and from the Bible. Of the citations from the Bible, which abound at around a thousand, two-thirds derive from the Old Testament, not only from the legal books of the Pentateuch, but also from the books of Wisdom and the Prophets.<sup>18</sup> It has even been said that in this Irish collection of canon law 'there is . . . a presumption . . . that the Bible is capable of dealing with every tittle-tattle of daily life on the basis of the historical ordinances in the Old Testament'.<sup>19</sup> The Mosaic law is also the main source of two other Irish works from around the same period, which as yet remain unedited: the *De Decimis et Primogenitis et Primitivis* and the *Liber ex Lege Moysis*.<sup>20</sup>

Not only on the basis of the quantity of citations can it be said that Irish canon law was different from that in Gaul in the sixth and seventh centuries. The compilers of the *Collectio Hibernensis* also seem to have had a predilection for historical exegesis of the text of the Bible.<sup>21</sup> This may be shown from their approach to the Old Testament prescriptions concerning sacralization and ritualism. The *Collectio Hibernensis* cites the stipulation on the Sabbath from the book of Jeremiah (17:21 = LXVI, 10).<sup>22</sup> The *Liber ex Lege Moysis*, a selection of excerpts taken from the Pentateuch, which is best regarded as a juridical collection pertaining to questions that were of interest in Ireland at the time of its composition, that is the end of the seventh century, cites the texts on the Sabbath from Exodus (20:8, 23:12 and 31:14). These quotes were probably read as applicable to the Sunday observance.<sup>23</sup> How strictly the Sunday observance was interpreted in Ireland is shown by the Cáin Domnaig, an Irish tract on the Sunday observance dating from the first half of the eighth century, which forbids riding a horse, travelling, washing (your hair), bathing, cooking, woodcutting and cleaning.<sup>24</sup> Irish saints' lives, also,

<sup>18</sup> M. Sheehy, preparing a new edition of the *Collectio*, which he unfortunately was unable to complete, counted a thousand biblical quotations; see M. Sheehy, 'The Bible and the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*', in P. Ní Chátain and M. Richter (eds.), *Irland und die Christenheit. Bibelstudien und Mission / Ireland and Christendom. The Bible and the Missions* (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 277–83, at p. 281. Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, pp. 11–12 using Wasserschleben's edition came to a number of 500 quotations from the Bible, but to the same ratio between citations from the Old Testament and the New Testament.

<sup>19</sup> Sheehy, 'The Bible and the *Collectio*', p. 279.

<sup>20</sup> Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, pp. 11–12. See also R. Kottje, 'Der *Liber ex lege Moysis*', in Ní Chátain and Richter (eds.), *Irland und die Christenheit*, pp. 59–69.

<sup>21</sup> Sheehy, 'The Bible and the *Collectio*', p. 282.

<sup>22</sup> Wasserschleben (ed.), *Die irische Kanonensammlung*, p. 238: 'Hieremias dicit: Custodite animas vestras et nolite portare honora in die sabbati, nec inferetis per portas Hierusalem, et nolite portare honora de domibus vestris in die sabbati et omne opus non facietis in eo.'

<sup>23</sup> For the characterization of this text, see Kottje, 'Der *Liber*', pp. 60–1.

<sup>24</sup> Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, pp. 50–1. This text is edited by V. Hull, 'Cáin Domnaig', *Eriu* 20 (1966), pp. 151–77 and dated to the first half of the eighth century (pp. 156–8).

give evidence that the Irish interpretation of the Sunday observance went much further than that in Gaul. According to the life written by Muirchú, in the second half of the seventh century, St Patrick refused to travel on a Sunday, even if that meant he had to spend the night in the open – though God's grace saved him from getting wet in a heavy rainstorm.<sup>25</sup>

Another area which shows the difference in attitude towards the ritual prescriptions of the Old Testament concerns the question of the purity of food. We saw that the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* condemned the Jewish attitude towards food. According to the *Vetus Gallica*, the apostle permitted the consumption of food that the Jews regarded as unclean. Except for the canon forbidding eating together with Jews, food in the *Vetus Gallica* does not seem to be problematic. In the *Hibernensis*, however, we find a whole section dedicated to questions of food. Firstly it considers the edibility of meat in general, then it discusses the ways in which animals should be killed. After that several sorts of meat are considered, such as fish, poultry, deer and pork, which are explicitly allowed for human consumption. The text then forbids the consumption of pigs that have fed upon a human corpse, of the horse in general and of animals that have not been killed in the right way. It ends, however, with a citation from the letter of St Paul to the Romans, in which it is emphasized that Christians should not criticize each other for eating or avoiding certain kinds of food.

While food had been unproblematic in the *Vetus Gallica*, it obviously had become some sort of a problem in the *Collectio Hibernensis*. This was due to an interpretation of the Old Testament dietary prescriptions that led to an adoption of some of these rules as well as to an adaptation of such rules in an Irish context. We find dietary prescriptions already in the Irish penitentials, such as the penitential of Cummean or the *Canones Adomnani* that antedate the *Collectio Hibernensis*. In fact the Irish collection of canon law includes canons from the penitential composed by the seventh-century archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore, who probably reacted to older Irish dietary rules.<sup>26</sup> It should be stressed that the Irish dietary rules are no mere adoption of the Old Testament prescriptions,

<sup>25</sup> *Vita* II,3,1, ed. L. Bieler, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 10 (Dublin, 1979), p. 114. See also I,25 (23), where Patrick forbids pagans (*gentiles*) to work on a Sunday.

<sup>26</sup> R. Meens, 'Pollution in the early Middle Ages: the case of the food regulations in penitentials', *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995), pp. 3–19, at p. 19. On Theodore's penitential, see R. Kottje, 'Paenitentiale Theodori', in *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1984), vol. III, cols. 1413–16 and T. Charles-Edwards, 'The penitential of Theodore and the *Iudicia Theodori*', in M. Lapidge (ed.), *Archbishop Theodore. Commemorative Studies on his Life and Influence*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 11 (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 141–74.

as may already be clear from the fact that pork was in principle allowed, while consumption of horsemeat was forbidden.<sup>27</sup>

The dietary rules in the *Collectio Hibernensis* compared with the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* suggest a stricter and more literal interpretation of these Old Testament prescriptions. This stricter interpretation may well find its origin in a certain similarity of the native world view with that of the Old Testament. Sheehy stressed the fact that the *Collectio Hibernensis* was 'aimed essentially at the coming to terms with native Irish (and Welsh) law and civilisation insofar as the latter could be harmonised with the Christian Church'.<sup>28</sup> O'Corraín held that Irish lawyers mined the Scriptures to find precedents for native rules and justification of native institutions.<sup>29</sup> If this is true, then we may explain the tendency in the *Collectio Hibernensis* and other Irish texts to conform to Old Testament ritual stipulations as being a reflection of native Irish attitudes. Concerns for purity and fear of pollution especially seem to have been of importance.<sup>30</sup>

The same can be observed if we look at the impurity that was imputed to some bodily functions. The *Collectio Hibernensis* prescribes on the authority of an unknown Irish synod that man and wife after childbirth should abstain from sexual intercourse. When a boy has been born it demands thirty-six days of abstinence, if the child was a girl forty-six days. This is an obvious legacy from Leviticus (12:4–5), though because of some scribal error sixty-six has been changed to forty-six days.<sup>31</sup> The passage from Leviticus is also quoted in the *Liber ex Lege Moysis*, from which it may be inferred that the impurity of the woman also entailed exclusion from church. The *Collectio Hibernensis* further decreed that married couples abstain from sexual intercourse on Sundays and feast days, a stipulation that was probably motivated by the idea that sexuality causes a kind of spiritual pollution that is incompatible with the holy. We find such recommendations to abstain from conjugal intercourse on holy days already in the works of Caesarius of Arles, but in Gaul these did not enter church law.<sup>32</sup> Examples of impurity ascribed to sexual

<sup>27</sup> On the motives for early medieval dietary rules, see my forthcoming article 'Eating animals in the early Middle Ages. Classifying the animal world and building group identities'.

<sup>28</sup> Sheehy, 'The Collectio Canonum', p. 527.

<sup>29</sup> D. O'Corraín, 'Irish vernacular law and the Old Testament', in Ní Chátain and Richter (eds.), *Irland und die Christenheit*, pp. 284–307, at p. 294.

<sup>30</sup> Meens, 'Pollution in the early Middle Ages'.

<sup>31</sup> *Collectio Hibernensis* XLVI, 11, in Wasserschleben (ed.), *Die irische Kanonensammlung*, p. 188; see also R. Meens, 'A background to Augustine's mission to Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 22 (1994), pp. 5–17, at p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> See J. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago and London, 1987); P. Payer, *Sex and the Penitentials. The Development of a Sexual Code, 550–1150* (Toronto, 1984), p. 24.

deeds and to menstruating women abound, however, in British and Irish penitential texts.<sup>33</sup> Such an attitude towards questions of the purity of the body also reminds one of the Old Testament, although no exact parallel is to be found there.<sup>34</sup>

#### CONFRONTATION AND ASSIMILATION

We may therefore conclude that there is a remarkable difference in attitude between the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* and the *Collectio Hibernensis* not only in view of the actual use of the Old Testament but also with regard to the adoption of Old Testament attitudes towards questions of purity and impurity. It is interesting to see how these different attitudes came to interact during the course of the early Middle Ages. The *Libellus Responsionum* written by Pope Gregory the Great to Augustine of Canterbury emphasizes the need to explain the Old Testament purity rules in a spiritual way and to avoid a literal interpretation.<sup>35</sup> The successor of Augustine as archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore of Tarsus, in his penitential does not refer to this *Libellus Responsionum* when treating similar questions, but instead endorses the Old Testament turn. He forbids women during their menstruation or after childbirth to enter church, though he adapts the Old Testament rule insofar as he discards the distinction between the birth of a girl and a boy.<sup>36</sup> These two texts also differ in the way they deal with dietary prescriptions. Whereas the *Libellus Responsionum* declares in passing that the Old Testament rules on the purity of food have no meaning for the behaviour of Christians, the penitential of Theodore, while alleviating some of the prescriptions from the Irish penitentials, does not repudiate these prescriptions in principle, and so adopts the literal interpretation of Old Testament ideas.<sup>37</sup>

If we consider the later evolution of the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* we find that the Corbie redactor added precisely the texts mentioned above to this old Gallic collection: excerpts from the *Collectio Hibernensis*, the

<sup>33</sup> For example, *Paenitentiale Vinniani*, c.46 (abstinence in marriage), in L. Bieler (ed.), *The Irish Penitentials, with an appendix by D.A. Binchy*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 5 (Dublin 1963) pp. 90–2; *Paenitentiale Cummeani*, II,30–1 (new mother and menstruating woman), in *ibid.*, p. 116; *Paenitentiale Cummeani* XI,10 (seminal emission), in *ibid.*, p. 130; on periods of sexual abstinence in marriage, see Payer, *Sex and the Penitentials*, pp. 23–8.

<sup>34</sup> See J.-L. Flandrin, *Un temps pour embrasser. Aux origines de la morale sexuelle occidentale (VI–XI siècle)* (Paris, 1983), p. 99.

<sup>35</sup> This is in line with the general drift of Gregory's thought on this subject; see R. Markus, *Gregory the Great and his World* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 45–7.

<sup>36</sup> For the tension between the views of Gregory and Theodore, see R. Meens, 'Ritual purity and the influence of Gregory the Great in the early Middle Ages', in R. Swanson (ed.), *Unity and Diversity in the Church*, *Studies in Church History* 32 (Oxford, 1995), pp. 31–43.

<sup>37</sup> Meens, 'Pollution in the early Middle Ages', pp. 9–10.

penitential of Theodore and the *Libellus Responsionum* are all to be found among the appendices that were added at the monastery of Corbie in the beginning of the eighth century.<sup>38</sup> The surviving manuscripts of the *Vetus Gallica* all derive from this Corbie redaction, which suggests that the addition of these texts added to the collection's usefulness. The *Vetus Gallica* spread from the north of France to southern Germany and from there finally to Italy.<sup>39</sup> Remarkably, the *Collectio Hibernensis* took the same course and its influence can be shown in the same areas.<sup>40</sup> The more literal interpretation of Old Testament prescriptions also made its way into penitential literature and these texts are also found abundantly in northern France, southern Germany in the eighth century and later on in Italy.<sup>41</sup>

The combination of texts favouring a literal interpretation of biblical purity rules with those that prefer a spiritual interpretation of these rules seems to be symptomatic of early medieval religious attitudes. Early medieval Christianity seems to have been characterized by a constant tension between the letter and the spirit, the inward and the outward, the Old Testament and the New.<sup>42</sup> In the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* the Old Testament rules seem to have been used as markers of an opposition with the Jewish population. They are only referred to when Judaizing attitudes are to be condemned. This not only points to a deeply ingrained opposition between Christians and Jews in the minds of leading churchmen, but also shows that many Christians, apparently, felt attracted by such Old Testament purity rules. Similar tendencies seem to have existed in Ireland in the sixth and seventh centuries, but there the Church complied with this general tendency to interpret the Old Testament rules in a more literal way. Maybe the Irish church leaders could do this more easily, because there was no threat from a Jewish population. Such absence of an impending Jewish identity is, for

<sup>38</sup> See Mordek, *Kirchenrecht*, pp. 86–92, 217–29. <sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>40</sup> Fournier, 'De l'influence de la collection irlandaise'; Reynolds, 'Unity and diversity'.

<sup>41</sup> On penitentials, see R. Kottje, 'Busspraxis und Bussritus', *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, Settimane 33 (Spoleto, 1987), pp. 369–95; several hitherto unknown texts have been edited in R. Kottje (ed.), *Paenientialia minora Franciae et Italiae saeculi VIII–IX*, CCL 156 (Turnhout, 1994); see also L. Körntgen, *Studien zu den Quellen der frühmittelalterlichen Bußbücher*, Quellen und Forschungen zum Recht im Mittelalter 7 (Sigmaringen, 1993) and R. Meens, *Het tripartite boeteboek. Overlevering en betekenis van vroegmiddeleeuwse biechtvoorschriften (met editie en vertaling van vier tripartita)* (Hilversum, 1994).

<sup>42</sup> See *Libellus responsionum*, resp. VIII, as cited in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 1, 27, ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, rev. edn (Oxford, 1992), pp. 94–5: 'Sicut enim in Testamento ueteri exteriora opera obseruantur, ita in Testamento nouo non tam quod exterius agitur quam id quod interius cogitatur.' On this tension, see Meens, 'Ritual purity and the influence of Gregory the Great'.



example, apparent from the letters of Columbanus, where he obviously cannot understand the difficulties with celebrating Easter at the same time as the Jews celebrate Passover.<sup>43</sup> In Ireland the Old Testament was also used to build a Christian identity, for that is what rituals like these usually do, not by opposing Christians and Jews, but, rather, by adopting Old Testament regulations in a Judaizing way. We should bear in mind, however, that this was no simple process of copying the relevant regulations of the Old Testament. Although some of the Old Testament rules were used in an Irish context, others were adapted to a new situation, while still other Irish rules, although formulated in a biblical fashion, were really quite original. While such tendencies to comply with Old Testament ritual rules can be detected in Gaul and Rome as well as in Ireland, it was only in Ireland that these came to be adopted by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In Gaul and Rome the differences between Christians and Jews had to be upheld by opposing a Judaizing reading of the Old Testament, whereas in Ireland church leaders used the ritual obligations stemming from the Old Testament to mould a Christian identity. One is tempted to conclude that, for the definition of what a Christian in fact was, existing pre-Christian conceptions of purity and impurity may have played as big a part as the text of the Old Testament. This would certainly explain the appeal of this ritualistic religiosity to certain groups of believers in Ireland as well as on the Continent. On the Continent, however, Insular texts proclaiming Old Testament ritual obligations appear to have been acceptable only at a time when Jewish communities were no longer regarded as the formidable rivals they still were in the minds of church leaders in the early sixth century, when the *Collectio Vetus Gallica* was composed. The Bible, therefore, provided the Irish, and later Frankish people, not only with a historiographical framework for their own history. The Old Testament past with its rules for ritual purity also provided them with a means to model their behaviour on that of the Old Israel, thereby proclaiming that the 'pure' were the rightful New Israel.

<sup>43</sup> Columbanus, *Epistola I, Sancti Columbani Opera*, ed. G. Walker, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 2 (Dublin, 1957), p. 6: 'Cum Iudaeis Pascha facere non debemus? Quid ad rem pertinet?'; see also *Epistola V*, *ibid.*, p. 38: 'Nos enim sanctorum Petri et Pauli et omnium discipulorum divinum canonem spiritu sancto scribentium discipuli sumus, toti Iberi, ultimi habitatores mundi, nihil extra evangelicam et apostolicam doctrinam recipientes; nullus hereticus, nullus Iudaeus, nullus schismaticus fuit.' On Columbanus's letters see N. Wright, 'Columbanus's *Epistulae*', in M. Lapidge (ed.), *Columbanus. Studies on the Latin Writings*, *Studies in Celtic History* 17 (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 29–92.

## CHAPTER 4

# *The transmission of tradition: Gregorian influence and innovation in eighth-century Italian monasticism*

Marios Costambeys

Among the most potent paradigms of Christian practice handed down from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages was that which combined the pursuit of the perfect life with the communal tenure of property, in the form of the monastery. Already by the sixth century, a broad, but none the less identifiable, western monastic tradition had grown up. Those who entered monasteries shared a common ideological inheritance which was transmitted both in written form – in a canon which included the works of such writers as Augustine and Cassian – and in less formal, perhaps predominantly oral, ways. While the former constituted those written norms which defined the parameters of monasticism as an institution, they were only a part of the collective memory – the social memory – of monks as a whole and of individual monastic communities.<sup>1</sup> For the historian, a concentration on formal literary signposts is especially tempting in the case of the monastic tradition, since monks used writing to an extent unusual in this period. As with the study of other walks of early medieval life, however, there is the danger that viewing monasticism chiefly or solely in terms of a literary canon will produce a limited, even a distorted, image.<sup>2</sup> We need look no further than Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* for a written witness to a more broadly transmitted monastic culture, and no further than some of the older studies of that work for examples of the danger of interpreting written sources too narrowly.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For general comment, see J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> On the possibilities and limitations of the written sources, see R. McKitterick, 'Introduction: sources and interpretation', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History II, c. 700–c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 3–17.

<sup>3</sup> For valuable general comments on oral tradition, see M. Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy in an early medieval society', *Past & Present* 158 (1998), pp. 3–36, esp. pp. 5, 13–18, 34–6; note that there is a constant interaction between the literate and oral traditions in any given group: each informed the other. On Gregory, see S. Boesch Gajano, '“Narratio” e “expositio” nei Dialoghi di Gregorio Magno', *Bullettino dell'istituto storico italiano per il medioevo e archivio muratoriano* 88 (1979), pp. 1–33, especially the references at pp. 3–5. Gregory is explicit about the orality of his sources

This ramified tradition constitutes the monastic past, the transformation of which – its use by successive generations of monks – is the focus of investigation here. Gregory's work itself demonstrates that the western monastic tradition was not static. It could not be insulated from social and political change, which established new contexts for, and brought new perspectives to, the pursuit of the ascetic ideal. The collective monastic memory underwent almost continuous revision and supplementation. These changes come into the sharpest focus, however, after periods of dramatic hiatus in monastic fortunes: such a rupture seems to have occurred throughout much of Italy in the seventh century.<sup>4</sup> The transformation of Italian monastic culture across this divide will here be viewed through a comparison of two specific examples: Gregory the Great's foundation of and entry into the monastery of St Andrew in Rome, and the foundation of and entry into Monteverdi in Tuscany by the eighth-century aristocrat Walfred. Conclusions drawn from such a narrow selection naturally have only limited applicability, all the more so since I have chosen to concentrate only on perceptions of monastic patronage, and have considered neither changes in actual modes of patronage, nor the shifting practicalities of monastic life, the location of monasteries, their physical structure or their organization, all of which are potentially fruitful areas of research. My intention here is simply to offer an example of the nature of the transmission of one aspect of the monastic tradition from the sixth century to the eighth, and to sketch some of the innovations which transformed it.

By the sixth century, western monasticism had developed an enormous variety of ascetic practices and perceptions. The sponsorship of and participation in the ascetic life was in the process of being incorporated into social and legal structures as part of the late Roman and post-Roman preoccupation with sin that accompanied the adoption of Christianity.<sup>5</sup> Monasteries were only one of the targets of the patronage

for Benedict's life: Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, II, Prol., ed. A. de Vogüé, SC 265 (Paris, 1980). It may be examples from this less formal tradition to which Benedict himself alludes in his stipulation that the commitment of newly arrived novices be tested with tales of 'omnia dura et aspera per quae itur ad Deum': *Regula Benedicti*, 58, 8, ed. A. de Vogüé and J. Neufville, SC 182 (Paris, 1971).

<sup>4</sup> The recognition that this hiatus was part of a much broader process is indicated by the time-slices identified by the European Science Foundation's project on 'the transformation of the Roman world': see R. Hodges, 'Henri Pirenne and the question of demand in the sixth century', in R. Hodges and W. Bowden (eds.), *The Sixth Century. Production, Distribution and Demand* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1998), pp. 3–14, at p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> S. MacCormack, 'Sin, citizenship and the salvation of souls: the impact of Christian priorities on late-Roman and post-Roman society', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39 (1997), pp. 644–73.

thus provoked. Secular churches benefited from precisely the same kind of endowments: bequests, in particular, often endowed churches and monasteries with little discrimination.<sup>6</sup> Both secular and monastic clerics were also entrusted with gifts for widows, orphans and the poor. Roman philanthropy was thus replaced by Christian almsgiving. The rationale behind the latter was still indistinct: it could be intended as direct atonement for sin.<sup>7</sup> Such patronage could also be the means of seeking the protection of a saint.<sup>8</sup> Monasteries were therefore by no means the only beneficiaries of the emerging ideology in which God reciprocated Christian observance with entry into the kingdom of heaven. Nor, on the other hand, was the monastic lifestyle exclusively directed at such an end. The lives of monks and nuns served as models for the Christian community as a whole, as Caesarius of Arles stressed.<sup>9</sup> Christianization diffused a preoccupation with sin and salvation through many different facets of society, without yet giving it a particular focus.

The hazy diversity of the 'late antique' monastic tradition gradually clarified after *c.* 700 – the immediately pre-Carolingian and Carolingian period. Emphasis on the observance of the Benedictine Rule, coupled with a more uniform mode of patronage in which the donation charter conveyed the landed estates of the aristocracy into the hands of monasteries, produced houses whose physical appearance and internal organization were relatively similar. Such uniformity should not be stressed too far: great abbeys like Chelles, Fulda or Montecassino provide no kind of generally applicable model. But all participated in a religious culture which defined the perception and role of monasticism in Christian society with greater precision than had been the case two centuries earlier.

The success of monasticism in both eras nonetheless depended on the same impetuses to found a monastery, to endow an existing one, or to become a monk or nun. These stemmed, at least in part, from an ideology of sharing, that is, of the spiritual benefit of communal property. David Ganz has recently shown how this ideology evolved as it

<sup>6</sup> MacCormack, 'Sin, citizenship and the salvation of souls', pp. 667–8. Justinian laid down rules for the administration of pious bequests which did not specify a particular church or monastery as beneficiary: *Codex Justinianus* 1, 2, 25 in P. Kruger (ed.), *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (Berlin, 1872), vol. II.

<sup>7</sup> For Roman philanthropic gifts, see E. Champlin, *Final Judgments. Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills, 200 BC–AD 250* (Princeton, 1991), ch. 8; for Christian almsgiving, P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 30–2.

<sup>8</sup> P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints. Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981), pp. 3–4.

<sup>9</sup> W. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: the Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 117–22.

adapted to the social realities of the post-Roman west.<sup>10</sup> Although the apostolic ideal of holding all things in common provided a basis for the terms of all ecclesiastical property-holding, it was of particular relevance to monasticism. Its slow accommodation into the secular practice of property-holding helped to define the social meaning of the monastery. The creation of monastic property from secular property became an 'investment in the celestial treasury'.<sup>11</sup> By the early medieval period, as research of the past few decades has helped to show, this perception had impelled monastic patrons seeking a spiritual dividend into developing closer relationships with their beneficiary monasteries, and defining those relationships with greater clarity. For Frankish Gaul, the pattern of source survival displays this transformation as a gradual process, if punctuated by such decisive events as the arrival of Columbanus.<sup>12</sup> The evidence for Italy, being more fragmentary, offers a starker contrast.

That monasticism in Italy underwent a dramatic expansion in the eighth century is well documented.<sup>13</sup> The seventh-century lacuna in our evidence for most of Italy seems to reflect reality. The gap constitutes one instance when we can say that the absence of evidence is evidence for absence.<sup>14</sup> When, in the eighth century, sources emerge that tend to provide evidence for monasticism, notably charters, they reveal few monastic houses that are likely to have been established more than a generation previously. There is a difficulty of identification here, because a house that in one charter is called a *monasterium*, may be termed simply *ecclesia* in another.<sup>15</sup> But even if we take all references to *monasteria*, those in the Lombard realms which may have had a seventh-century

<sup>10</sup> D. Ganz, 'The ideology of sharing: apostolic community and ecclesiastical property in the early Middle Ages', in W. Davies and P. Fouracre (eds.), *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 17–30; see also MacCormack, 'Sin, citizenship and the salvation of souls', pp. 659–65.

<sup>11</sup> Ganz, 'The ideology of sharing', p. 21, referring to Bede's *Retractatio* on Acts: M. W. Laistner (ed.), *Beda's Venerabilis Expositio Actuum Apostolorum et Retractatio* (Cambridge, MA, 1939), pp. 113–14.

<sup>12</sup> I. N. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms 480–751* (London, 1994), pp. 184–9; P. Geary, *Before France and Germany. The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 169–71.

<sup>13</sup> In general, see R. Balzaretto, 'Cities, emporia and monasteries: local economies in the Po valley, c. AD 700–875', in N. Christie and S. T. Loseby (eds.), *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 213–34, esp. pp. 226–7; and D. Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns. Forms of Integration in Lombard Italy AD 568–774* (Lund, 1993), p. 177.

<sup>14</sup> A lacuna lamented by, for example, C. J. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy* (London, 1981), pp. 28–9.

<sup>15</sup> For example, the scribe of *CDL* I 83, which records the foundation of S. Maria in Solaro in Verona, refers to S. Maria in Organo as an *ecclesia*, even though it has an abbot. This is a topic on which historians of Anglo-Saxon England have made great advances. See the debate in *Early Medieval Europe*: E. Cambridge and D. W. Rollason, 'Debate: The pastoral organization of the Anglo-Saxon church: a review of the "Minster Hypothesis"', *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995), pp. 87–104, and J. Blair, 'Debate: Ecclesiastical organization and pastoral care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995), pp. 193–212.

vintage comprise a few possessed by bishops, situated in or near their cities,<sup>16</sup> and four foundations made with royal or ducal support.<sup>17</sup> There is evidence of only nine possible seventh-century monastic foundations in Rome itself, five of them Greek.<sup>18</sup> Recent archaeological finds datable to this period, such as those at Casale San Donato in the Sabina, while overturning the more extreme catastrophe theories concerning economic and population decline, nevertheless confirm the poverty of the church in the countryside.<sup>19</sup>

In terms both of source survival and of monastic vitality, the seventh-century situation contrasts with the periods before and after it. The relatively copious writings of Gregory the Great testify to the popularity of monasticism in Italy at the end of the sixth century. Although most of these houses were already in existence by 590, many were only a generation or two old. For example, Gregory wrote to his rector in Syracuse to resolve a dispute between a local aristocrat and St Mary's convent in Naples, founded by the *scholasticus* Felix, who we know from another letter died more than, but only a little more than, twenty-one years earlier.<sup>20</sup> In his recent trawl through the sources for early Italian monasticism from its inception to 604, Georg Jenal caught ninety-seven specimens evident between 500 and 604.<sup>21</sup> Few of these seem to have survived the next hundred years. By the eighth century, it is no longer possible to speak of an 'Italian' Church; it had barely been so even in Gregory's time.<sup>22</sup> Monasticism has to be examined through

<sup>16</sup> For example, those in dispute between the bishoprics of Siena and Arezzo: Sant'Ansano a Dofano, San Peregrino, San Pietro d'Asso and Sant'Angelo in Luco, see *CDL* I 14, 17 and 19. The bishop of Piacenza possessed five monasteries by 744: see *CDL* III 18.

<sup>17</sup> Bobbio (*CDL* III 1–3, 5), and the two Pavese abbeys of Sant'Agata al Monte and Santa Maria Theodota (see Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, VI.34 and V.37, ed. L. Bethmann and G. Waitz, MGH SRL (Hanover, 1878), pp. 156–7). I am not counting Farfa, which can only be said to have been founded by 705: see *Il Chronicon Farfense di Gregorio di Catino*, ed. U. Balzani (Rome, 1903), vol. I, pp. 136–9 and, almost certainly by 700, S. Pietro Maggiore *foras muros* at Benevento (Pail, *Historia Langobardorum*, VI.1).

<sup>18</sup> G. Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries*, Studi di Antichità Cristiana XXIII (Vatican City, 1957), pp. 414–15; a small number when compared to the sixth century.

<sup>19</sup> J. Moreland et al., 'Excavations at Casale San Donato, Castelnuovo di Farfa (Ri), Lazio, 1992', *Archeologia Medievale* 20 (1993), pp. 185–228. Similarly, the (re-)founder of Farfa, Thomas of Maurienne, was forced to reopen an abandoned 'basilica' on the site of the later abbey, rather than build a new one: see *Constructio Farfensis* in *Chronicon Farfense* I, pp. 4–6.

<sup>20</sup> Gregory the Great, *Registrum Epistularum*, ed. D. Norberg, CCSL 140 (Turnhout, 1982), Book IX, no. 54 [hereafter *Ep.* with book and letter number]; for the date by which Felix had died, *Ep.* IX.165.

<sup>21</sup> G. Jenal, *Italia Ascetica atque Monastica. Das Asketen- und Mönchtum in Italien von dem Anfängen bis zur Zeit der Langobarden (ca. 150/250–604)*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 39/1 (Stuttgart, 1995), Tabellen II and III, pp. 943–9.

<sup>22</sup> The vast majority of the monasteries that appear in the Register and the *Dialogues* were located in those areas of Italy still under the imperial aegis. Nevertheless, Gregory communicated with, or wrote of, for example, a monastery at Spoleto: *Ep.* IX.88. Whether or not the *Secundinus servus Dei*

the different sources for the various regions into which the peninsula then fell: Rome, the Exarchate, the south and so on. If the eighth-century picture is more fragmented, however, it is also much fuller. Our evidence for some of these regions reveal a veritable craze for monastic foundation in the eighth century. This is especially true of Rome itself, and of the Lombard areas. Monasteries in the latter are evident through the charters that begin to survive from about 700.<sup>23</sup> They give reliable notice of the foundation of twenty-six houses between 700 and 774; almost as many again appear after they were established, probably a generation or so before our first record of them.

This outgrowth of patronage is remarkable. Attempts to explain it have generally focused on the immediate legal and political context for the new eighth-century foundations. This need be considered only briefly. Traditionally, a seventh-century decline followed by an eighth-century rebirth of the Church in the Lombard realms has been seen as the concomitant of the supposed conversion of the Lombards from Arianism to Catholicism in the mid-seventh century.<sup>24</sup> This will no longer do, however, since Stephen Fanning has offered a convincing alternative picture of minimal Arianism among the Lombards, and their slow conversion through the seventh century from paganism to Catholic Christianity.<sup>25</sup> A more direct reason for the monastic expansion seems to be provided by the law passed in the first year of Liutprand's reign (713), explicitly allowing *pro anima* donations in cases of illness.<sup>26</sup> But evidence for ecclesiastical endowment before that date, not least the donations made by Duke Faroald of Spoleto to the abbey of Farfa,

*inclausus* and the *Secundus abbas* to whom Gregory wrote (*Epp.* IX.148 and XIV.12) were one and the same, both were clearly also cloistered somewhere in the Lombard kingdom. Jenal's suggestion that there was a monastery at this time at Lodi arises from a misidentification of the see of Venantius, bishop of Luni, cf. Jenal, *Italia Ascetica atque Monastica*, I: 282 with n. 96 and *Ep.* IV.22.

<sup>23</sup> The earliest Lombard private charter in fact dates from c. 650 – the first instalment in the interminable dispute between the bishoprics of Siena and Arezzo: *CDL*, I, 4. There is only one other seventh-century private charter, from 685 (*CDL* I 7), and one from 700 (*CDL* I 12). The run begins in earnest in 710, with a charter from Treviso (*CDL* I 14). There are seven genuine seventh-century royal diplomas, four of them concerning Bobbio: *CDL* III nos. 1–7.

<sup>24</sup> For the traditional picture of a concerted effort to convert the Lombards from their supposed Arianism to Catholicism in the late seventh and early eighth century, see G. P. Bognetti, 'Santa Maria Foris Portas di Castelseprio e la storia religiosa dei Longobardi', in G. P. Bognetti, G. Chierici and A. de Capitani d'Arzago, *Santa Maria di Castelseprio* (Milan, 1948), pp. 296–319. A clean break with Arianism is suggested especially by the contemporary *Carmen de Synodo Ticinense*, ed. L. Bethmann and G. Waitz, MGH SRL, pp. 190–1, which credits King Aripert I (653–61) with the extermination of Arianism among the Lombards.

<sup>25</sup> S. Fanning, 'Lombard Arianism reconsidered', *Speculum* 56 (1981), pp. 241–58.

<sup>26</sup> *Leges Liutprandi*, c. 6, in C. Azzara and S. Gasparri (eds.), *Le leggi dei Longobardi. Storia, memoria e diritto di un popolo germanico* (Milan, 1992), p. 130.

suggest that 'Lombard' customs of inheritance may not have been as all-pervasive as is sometimes supposed.<sup>27</sup>

The legal background does not therefore adequately explain the enthusiasm for monastic patronage among the eighth-century laity to which the surviving charters bear ample witness. For hermeneutic purposes, we can divide this kind of *pro anima* patronage into three forms: the foundation of an institution, endowments of land, and the monastic profession either of the patron or of his or her dependent(s). Beyond the relatively narrow context of pre-Carolingian Italy, historians have drawn the most lucid terms for explaining monastic patronage from the anthropology of the gift. Articulated initially by Marcel Mauss and Bronislaw Malinowski, this addresses the issue of reciprocity in gift-giving in so-called 'primitive' societies. As is well known, reciprocity, or the idea of *do-ut-des*, was an important facet of Roman religion.<sup>28</sup> Since early Christians found abundant scriptural justification for the practice, *do-ut-des* has been seen as one of the main concepts driving the expansion of the Church through the gifts of the faithful in the late antique period.<sup>29</sup> At the other end of the millennium, analyses of donations to monasteries attested in tenth- and eleventh-century charters have shown that they, created a social fabric of familiarity – *familiaritas* – with the sacred.<sup>30</sup> In this durable culture, monasteries accumulated property apparently perpetually and with little effort. This entanglement between the spiritual and the material occasionally gave rise to complaints from Christian commentators. Carolingian authors expressed concern about clerics amassing wealth by illicitly courting donations, but as Mayke De Jong has recently noted, they did not condemn the principle of reciprocity itself.<sup>31</sup> De Jong has attained a new level of sophistication in the

<sup>27</sup> For Faroald's donations, see I. Giorgi and U. Balzani (eds.), *Il Regesto di Farfa II* (Rome, 1879), no. 1, p. 22. For a relatively traditional view of Liutprand's law, see Azzara and Gasparri (eds.), *Le leggi dei Longobardi*, p. 210, n. 8.

<sup>28</sup> W. Eisenhut, 'Votum', *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Supplementband XIV (Munich, 1974), col. 964–71; see also M. De Jong, *In Samuel's Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden, Cologne and New York, 1996), p. 164, n. 28.

<sup>29</sup> This is a view based on devotional and theological texts rather than the normative ones which support the notion for the early Middle Ages (for studies of which, see note 30). Late antique normative texts, such as the Egyptian papyri, give no information on the reasons behind gifts to the sacred: see R. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993), p. 289, who notes: 'the process by which religious bodies, especially monasteries, came to have extensive landholdings and other property is difficult to trace'.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. B. Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St Peter* (Ithaca, 1989), pp. 137–8, 205–6; M. McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints* (Ithaca, 1994), pp. 141–5, 154–70; C. Bouchard, *Sword, Miter and Cloister* (Ithaca, 1987), pp. 241–46.

<sup>31</sup> De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, p. 275, citing Amalarius of Metz, *Expositio Missae 'Dominus vobiscum'*, c. 27, ed. J. M. Hanssen, *Amalarii Episcopi Opera Liturgica Omnia II*, Studi e Testi 139 (Vatican City, 1948), p. 306.



approach to early medieval gift-giving. She stresses, firstly, that individual gifts to the sacred generally lay somewhere along a social continuum, with pure self-interest at one end and pure altruism at the other, and, secondly, that the relationship that gifts established between donor and donee changed through time, but was rarely one of social, economic or political equality. Saints were initially powerful strangers, who could be turned into patrons or friends through gifts; once the relationship was established, the element of give and take became less prominent.<sup>32</sup> There appears therefore to have been some basic continuity in perceptions of pious endowment between the late antique and the Carolingian periods. Continuity is also apparent when we look at the crucially important issue of control over pious gifts. The clergy's control over the donations of the powerful laity was the main point of contention in the Laurentian schism at the beginning of the sixth century.<sup>33</sup> It may be from about this time that the Roman aristocracy began to use donations to the Church as a vehicle for their self-promotion. Civic munificence became Christianized.<sup>34</sup> The issue of authority had resonances in the ninth century too. Carolingian ecclesiastics occasionally railed against royal high-handedness with Church property, as when the synod of Aachen of 837 condemned Pippin I of Aquitaine for forcing Church landowners to make precarial grants.<sup>35</sup> In general, however, kings and magnates were accorded material counter-gifts – in the form of *precaria* – as well as spiritual ones, in return for their donations to and protection of the Church.

It can be argued, therefore, that the same basic perceptions both of the efficacy and of the consequences of pious gifts motivated ecclesiastical patronage across an enormous stretch of time between the fourth century and the eleventh. This does not, however, explain the undoubted fluctuations in the material fortunes of monasticism in all parts of the west at different times, nor does it satisfy the conviction among many medievalists that early medieval monasticism was different from its late antique predecessor, in its modes of patronage as well as in its

<sup>32</sup> De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, pp. 276–7.

<sup>33</sup> See P. Llewellyn, 'The Roman Church during the Laurentian schism: priests and senators', *Church History* 45 (1976), pp. 417–27; and C. Pietri, 'Donateurs et pieux établissements d'après le légendaire romain (Ve–VIIe s.)', in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IVe–XIIIe siècles*. Études augustiniennes (Paris, 1981), pp. 435–53.

<sup>34</sup> See, in general, Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, ch. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Episcopal complaints are voiced most fully in the anonymous Life of Louis the Pious, *Vita Hludowici Imperatoris*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 2 (Hanover, 1829), p. 362; see R. Collins, 'Pippin I and the kingdom of Aquitaine', in P. Godman and R. Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 363–89, at pp. 370–2, and De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, p. 279.

practices.<sup>36</sup> It may be, however, that some of this notion of difference is an optical illusion, created by the different spectacles through which classicists, on the one hand, and medievalists, on the other, view their respective periods. Authority over monasteries is one issue about which we can demonstrate continuous concern. Continuity should not be stressed too far: clearly, monasticism did change. To view it in discrete blocks of 'late antique' and 'early medieval', however, is to obscure the different elements within those blocks. In both periods, monasticism and its patronage involved a number of currents, some of them contradictory, which were more or less prominent in different places and at different times. It is in the hope of bringing out some of these nuances that I will compare two Italian monasteries founded on either side of the seventh-century lacuna in our evidence.

That this kind of comparison has rarely been made before may stem from unease about the different nature of the evidence in either period. For the late sixth century, we are largely dependent on the works of Gregory the Great, whose eschatological and moral agenda is held to lend a very subjective slant to his writings. For the eighth century, on the other hand, our sources are mostly charters: administrative documents concerned, it is often thought, merely to lay out the facts of an act. Neither of these assessments is strictly accurate. The Register of Gregory's letters includes many essentially administrative documents by which the pope and his officials transacted the business of the see. As Dag Norberg has shown, these bear the hallmark of a bureaucracy in the very formulaic way in which they were often written.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, it has long been recognized that early medieval charters could be vehicles for all kinds of expressions that were not strictly concerned with the nuts and bolts of a transaction. This is most obviously true of the royal styles in diplomas, but we can also see it in other clauses. Thus the Register in particular is comparable with charter evidence, if we keep the comparison within strict limits. If monastic patronage was not a single event but an on-going series of events, each of which differed from the last, we can distinguish the individual character of some of these

<sup>36</sup> An attitude perhaps most closely associated with F. Prinz: see his *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich*, 2nd edn (Darmstadt, 1988), and, on patronage, L. Kuchenbuch, 'Die Klostergrundherrschaft im Frühmittelalter. Eine Zwischenbilanz', in F. Prinz (ed.), *Herrschaft und Kirche*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 33 (Stuttgart, 1988), pp. 297–343, esp. pp. 297–9.

<sup>37</sup> D. Norberg, 'Style personnel et style administratif dans le Registrum epistularum de saint Grégoire le Grand', in J. Fontaine et al. (eds.), *Grégoire le Grand* (Paris, 1986), pp. 489–97, and see E. Pitz, *Papstreskripte im frühen Mittelalter. Diplomatische und rechtsgeschichtliche Studien zum Brief-Corpus Gregors des Großen* (Sigmaringen, 1990), pp. 279–83.

events – foundation *per se*, for example, or endowment with land – and identify some of the social and religious factors that influenced each.

Turning first to the eighth century, there is an example among the surviving non-royal charters of the Lombard kingdom that furnishes enough information about a monastic foundation to make possible some meaningful comparisons with the Gregorian material. In July 754, a Pisan aristocrat named Walfred issued a charter. This recorded that he had already constructed a monastery on his land at Palazzuolo, on Monteverdi in Tuscany. He now endowed it with property, and committed himself and four sons to it as monks.<sup>38</sup> Seen through this charter alone, a traditional view would describe Walfred's foundation as an *Eigenkloster*, all the more so because he specifically decreed that no bishop or secular official should have any power there.<sup>39</sup> Our picture of Monteverdi's origins is complicated, however, because, uniquely for eighth-century Italy, we also have a *Life of Walfred*, written by Monteverdi's third abbot Andreas at the beginning of the ninth century, which provides a rather different account of the monastery's foundation. Andreas stated that his monastery had had two other founders in addition to Walfred. One of these was an otherwise unknown bishop of Corsica, while the other was Andreas's own father, Gunduald. This latter claim contrasts too starkly with the evidence of the charter not to be questioned. Drawing a parallel with the evident tensions underlying the production of some of the Merovingian hagiographies, there are good precedents for seeing Andreas as a member of a family which contested control of Monteverdi with that of Walfred, eventually supplanting it. The *Life* might therefore have been written as a means both of reconciliation with the defeated party and of appropriating its cult.<sup>40</sup> Discounting the *Life's* prejudicial account, a traditional view might see the foundation of Monteverdi as an attempt to create a repository for family property and people secure from the intervention of lay and ecclesiastical authority.<sup>41</sup> Yet the very existence of Andreas and his work warns us that parties other than Walfred's own family had an interest in Monteverdi. If Walfred's sole intention

<sup>38</sup> CDLI 116.

<sup>39</sup> '... in eo uero tenore meus disposuit animo, ut nullus episcoporum aut iudicum ibi preueniat imperio...' Though it is doubtful that he had the legal authority to make such a prohibition, the fact that it is included, unusually, in his charter suggests that *de facto* power on Monteverdi rested solely with him.

<sup>40</sup> See in particular the *Passio Leudegarii* I, now translated in P. Fouracre and R. Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 215–54; for valuable comment, see pp. 195–206.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, P. Geary, *Aristocracy in Provence* (Philadelphia, 1985), pp. 124–5, for the example of Novaalesa.

was to create a proprietary monastery, the accession of Andreas as abbot shows that it was not ultimately very successful. Since the ownership of Monteverdi was open to dispute within two generations, a simple concern with the preservation of family property rights does not seem a sufficient explanation for its foundation.<sup>42</sup>

An alternative reason for the establishment of Monteverdi appears in Walfred's charter. On the face of it, it is very prosaic: 'I arranged to build a monastery in which to lead life according to a rule, and to offer myself together with my sons and property where our souls and those of others might be saved.'<sup>43</sup> What other founder, we might ask, would say any different? In the context of eighth-century Italy, however, it is in fact extremely rare to find a founder who also both provided the bulk of his foundation's endowment and entered it himself. Of monasteries known to have been founded in the eighth century (outside Rome), there is, in fact, only one other example. The monastery of S. Michele di Pugnano, also in Tuscany, was founded at some point before 727 by two brothers, of whom one, Ratchis, became the abbot.<sup>44</sup> Most eighth-century foundations either received their major endowment from kings or dukes,<sup>45</sup> or were endowed by founders who did not themselves become monks.<sup>46</sup>

The establishment of Monteverdi therefore reflects in practice the hermeneutic distinction between foundation, endowment and oblation. Only the latter two tended to produce charters. The perception of a difference between foundation on the one hand and endowment and monastic profession on the other is implicit in Walfred's charter: he had already founded Monteverdi before issuing the charter. We need to be

<sup>42</sup> The temptation to ascribe every event and circumstance in the early Middle Ages to an overwhelming preoccupation with land and its tenure should perhaps be resisted here, if not more generally, as Sabine MacCormack warns us: 'Sin, citizenship and the salvation of souls', p. 657, n. 48.

<sup>43</sup> '... disposui monasterio hedificare in que regulariter uitam ducere, et me una cum filiis et res mea offerre, ubi et nostras et aliorum anime saluarentur.'

<sup>44</sup> *CDL* I 40. The founder of Monte Amiata, Erfo, also became a monk there, but it received the bulk of its initial endowment from a royal gift: see W. Kurze, 'Die Langobardische Königsurkunde für San Salvatore am Monte Amiata', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 57 (1977), pp. 315–31.

<sup>45</sup> For example Montecassino, for which see L. Fabiani, *La terra di San Benedetto* (Montecassino, 1968), vol. I, pp. 17–23; Farfa, see I. Schuster, *L'imperiale abbazia di Farfa* (Rome, 1921), pp. 29–31; San Vincenzo al Volturno, see C. Wickham, 'The terra of San Vincenzo al Volturno in the 8th to 12th centuries', in R. Hodges and J. Mitchell (eds.), *San Vincenzo al Volturno*, British Archaeological Reports International Series 252 (1985), pp. 227–58; Nonantola, see M. Debbia, *Il bosco di Nonantola* (Bologna, 1990), pp. 10 and 19–26; and Monte Amiata, see W. Kurze, 'Die langobardische Königsurkunde'.

<sup>46</sup> For example, Sesto al Reghena and Salto (*CDL* II 162), Monticelli (*CDL* II 225), S. Pietro Cassiana and S. Michele in Lucca (*CDL* I 16 and 28), and S. Bartolomeo in Pistoia (*CDL* II 203).

precise here about the definition of 'foundation'. If there can be said to have been such a thing, the 'typical' eighth-century Italian monastery was constructed on a relatively small piece of land serving the immediate needs of its initial community: it is to this construction, along with the recruitment of monks and the institution of a Rule, that we may attach the tag 'foundation'. Only several years later, generally, did a monastic foundation receive the tract of land, usually well beyond the needs of its monks, which constituted its core landholding, its *terra*. Monteverdi followed the 'typical' pattern in this respect. While Walfred's charter of endowment and oblation is clearly dated to July in the sixth year of Aistulf's reign (i.e. 754), in his *Life of Walfred*, Andreas, who had no good reason for invention on this point, dates the foundation to the fourth year of the reign (i.e. 752 or 753). We can see an analogous situation in the case of San Bartolomeo at Pistoia. This was endowed by charter by its founder, the royal *medicus* Gaidoald, in 767.<sup>47</sup> But it must have been founded at least three years earlier, because in 764 it had received possession of two smaller monasteries near Pistoia from their proprietor.<sup>48</sup> The surviving charters provide a number of other examples of this kind of delay between foundation and endowment.<sup>49</sup> That foundation was certainly a separate activity from oblation, and often from endowment, is further revealed by the charter evidence that Walfred had earlier founded other monasteries in Tuscany – a convent near Monteverdi and San Salvatore in Versilia near Lucca.<sup>50</sup> No member of his family entered these houses, nor do we have the charters which would demonstrate that Walfred substantially endowed them (though their absence, at this date, does not prove that he did not).

If foundation and endowment can be seen as two separate activities, that may have had distinct motivations, the same can be said of entry into the monastic life. In Walfred's case, Karl Schmid has seen great significance in the timing of the founder's entry into Monteverdi. Schmid has suggested that Walfred was attempting to avoid service in Aistulf's army, which in the summer of 754 was gathering for its doomed campaign against Pippin III's invasion.<sup>51</sup> He reads Andreas's *Life* as implying that Walfred foresaw that God would prove to be on the side of

<sup>47</sup> *CDL* II 203, dated February 767.      <sup>48</sup> *CDL* II 180, dated July 764.

<sup>49</sup> For example, *CDL* I 18 (Pavia, S. Maria Senatoris), 28 (Lucca, S. Michele), 83 (Verona, S. Maria in Solaro).

<sup>50</sup> For both houses, see *CDL* I 116.

<sup>51</sup> K. Schmid, 'Merkwürdigkeiten um einen langobardischen Heiligen aus Tuszien', in K. Schmid (ed.), *Vita Walfredi und Kloster Monteverdi* (Tübingen, 1991), pp. 1–18.

the Franks, and draws a comparison with the testament of Walprand, bishop of Lucca, also issued in 754 expressly because the bishop was going off to war.<sup>52</sup> Neither piece of evidence is conclusive, however. Since he was writing during the high summer of Carolingian rule in Italy, it is hardly surprising that Andreas should seek to paint his subject with a pro-Carolingian tinge. Nor does Walprand's testament show that Aistulf's subjects were bound to respond to their king's general call to arms, for which there is no firm evidence anyway.<sup>53</sup> All it tells us is that Walprand was a contemporary of Frankish bishops like Gewilib of Mainz, who was censured by St Boniface for avenging his father's death in battle (his father had also been a bishop).<sup>54</sup> In any case, if Aistulf could draw bishops from their cathedrals into his army, could he not also draw monks like Walfred from their abbeys? A man who committed himself, four of his sons and a good part of his property to a monastery, and established at least two others, is likely to have been motivated, at least in part, by less worldly reasons. I shall come back to these, but first we need to trace the possible roots of Walfred's monastic culture, and especially his culture of patronage, by finding a suitable base of comparison in the sixth century.

Seeking the same combination of foundation, endowment and oblation in the sixth century, we need look no further than Gregory the Great himself. He founded the monastery of St Andrew on his own family property on the Celian Hill, endowed it with his lands, and entered it to live a monastic life.<sup>55</sup> In this he is as unusual in our evidence for late sixth-century Rome as Walfred is in that for eighth-century Tuscany.<sup>56</sup> Of the three other possible sixth-century founders of Roman monasteries apparent in our sources, two made their foundations in testaments, not living to see them built. The identity of the third rests entirely on an erroneous deduction from the *Liber Pontificalis* by Louis

<sup>52</sup> Schmid reads too much into several passages in the Life. When a ninth-century author uses the phrase 'quique se solos salvare siciebant, a Domino erat futurum ut ab eis plurimi salventur' (*Vita Walfredi*, pp. 42–4) he is unlikely to be writing of salvation from battle: salvation was a spiritual concept in this era. Walprand's testament is *CDLI* 114.

<sup>53</sup> *Leges Aistulfi*, c. 2, in Azzara and Gasparri (eds.), *Le leggi dei Longobardi*, p. 250, usually adduced to support this theory, lays down only how free men should equip themselves for war.

<sup>54</sup> On Gewilib, see, classically, E. Ewig, 'Milo et eiusmodi similes', *Spätantikes und fränkisches Gallien* II, Beihefte der Francia 3/2 (Zurich and Munich, 1979), pp. 189–219; for a more sympathetic view of the episode, see F. Staab, 'Rudi populo rudis adhuc presul. Zu dem wehrhaften Bischöfen der Zeit Karl Martells', in J. Jarnut, U. Nonn and M. Richter (eds.), *Karl Martell in seiner Zeit*, Beihefte der Francia 37 (Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 249–75.

<sup>55</sup> The sources for St Andrew's are collected by Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries*, pp. 138–51.

<sup>56</sup> Noted by Jenal, *Italia Ascetica atque Monastica*, p. 502.

Duchesne.<sup>57</sup> For a direct analogue to Walfred in late sixth-century Rome – the only part of Italy for which we have substantial evidence – we are left with Gregory. The combination by both men of the foundation of a monastery with substantial endowment from the family estate and their own assumption of a monastic life there is equally unusual. For most of their contemporaries in our evidence, foundation and/or endowment was sufficient. As we have observed, historians have seen endowments, in both periods, in the context of a culture of gift-giving. Yet the precise nature of this culture at specific places and times remains vague. It could have different components. Perhaps the most basic was that gifts were intended to provoke a specific counter-gift in the shape of divine, or saintly, intervention on earth.<sup>58</sup> Secondly, gifts sponsored prayer which, both before and after death, would help to purge the soul.<sup>59</sup> Thirdly, gifts established a long-term relationship with the holy, stimulating, it was hoped, on-going intercession on behalf of the donor.<sup>60</sup> The extent to which we can identify each of these components motivating specific gifts depends on our sources. The ultimate gift might be said to have been the gift of the self: oblation. Since, like Walfred, Gregory was peculiar in his own age for combining in his person oblation with the other elements of monastic patronage, we can turn to his writings for expressions of his attitude to these different elements.

This is a more difficult task than we might imagine, because Gregory has surprisingly little to say about an ideology underpinning monasticism that was in any way different from that which was applied to broader Christian society. His exegesis offers almost no comment on what monasteries were for, why people became monks, and what they should do.<sup>61</sup> Monasteries appear often in the *Dialogues*, but only as the

<sup>57</sup> *Le Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. Duchesne, 2nd edn (Paris, 1957), vol. II, p. 44, n. 84: Duchesne argued that the appearances of the name Barbara, in connection with St Andrew's monastery next to Santa Maria Maggiore, in the *Liber Pontificalis* biographies of Gregory II and Leo III, were references to the monastery's foundress. He thought that she could be none other than the *patricia* Barbara last reliably attested as travelling to Rome in 601, to the delight of Gregory the Great. These are hardly secure grounds for the attribution – Jenal rightly omits the monastery from his recent study of Italian monasteries before 604 – and they certainly allow us to say nothing about Barbara's attitude to monasticism. On Barbara, see *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. J. R. Martindale (Cambridge, 1992), vol. IIIA, s.n.

<sup>58</sup> See Y. Duval and L. Pietri, 'Évergétisme et épigraphie dans l'occident chrétien (IVe–VIe s.)', in M. Christol and O. Masson (eds.), *Actes du Xe congrès international d'épigraphie grecque et latine* (Paris, 1997), pp. 371–96, esp. pp. 381–4.

<sup>59</sup> A. Angenendt, 'Missa specialis. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Entstehung der Privatmessen', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 17 (1983), pp. 153–221.

<sup>60</sup> For example, Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St Peter*, pp. 202–7.

<sup>61</sup> C. Leyser, 'St Benedict and Gregory the Great: another Dialogue', in S. Pricoco, F. Rizzo Nervo

context for the deeds of the holy men who were Gregory's real concern. Even in Book II, where he relates the life of St Benedict, Gregory's emphasis is very firmly on Benedict's miracles; the fact that Benedict wrote a Rule is added almost as an afterthought.<sup>62</sup> This lack of interest in the institution of monasticism now appears all the more pronounced since the Commentary on I Kings, which contains a number of statements on the role of the monk, can no longer be safely attributed to him.<sup>63</sup>

In his formal letters, Gregory's preoccupation with monasteries mostly concerns their day-to-day administration.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, he does make a brief statement on the reasons why one might found a monastery. In 596 he gave some thought to the fulfilment of the will of a certain priest of the Roman clergy named John, who had died in the pontificate of his predecessor, Pelagius II.<sup>65</sup> Pelagius had not been able to carry out John's last wish, the transformation of his house near the baths of Agrippa into a monastery. Gregory himself must have found difficulty in doing this, because three years later he had to write to repeat his intention of handing over John's house to the community which, he now states, was a female one led by the abbess Bona.<sup>66</sup> In his letters, Gregory made it clear why he thought it was important that the monastery should be established: 'it is necessary that both now and in future times the praises of God may be celebrated by that congregation'.<sup>67</sup> There is a telling contrast between these words and those in Walfred's charter giving his reasons for founding Monteverdi. Walfred made his foundation to save both his own soul and the souls of others. Gregory mentions neither his own soul, nor that of the dead John, nor anyone else's. He was ensuring that the convent was founded to praise God. In the basic

and T. Sardello (eds.), *Sicilia e Italia suburbicaria tra IV e VIII secolo* (Catania, 1991), pp. 21–43, at p. 22.

<sup>62</sup> Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, II.36: 'Hoc autem nolo te lateat, quod uir Dei inter tot miracula, quibus in mondo claruit, doctrinae quoque uerbo non mediocriter fulsit. Nam scripsit monachorum regulam discretione praecipuam, sermone luculentam.' In general, see Leyser, 'St Benedict and Gregory the Great'. On Gregory's concern to relate the deeds of holy men in the *Dialogues*, see S. Boesch Gajano, 'La proposta agiografica dei "Dialoghi" di Gregorio Magno', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 21 (1980), pp. 623–64, and G. Cracco, 'Ascesa e ruolo dei "Viri Dei" nell'Italia di Gregorio Magno', in *Hagiographie. Culture et sociétés*, pp. 283–97.

<sup>63</sup> A. de Vogüé, 'L'auteur du Commentaire des Rois attribué à Saint Grégoire: un moine de Cava?', *Revue Bénédictine* 106 (1996), pp. 319–31.

<sup>64</sup> For Gregory's letters on monastic organization and discipline, see G. Jenal, 'Grégoire le Grand et la vie monastique dans l'Italie de son temps', in Fontaine et al. (eds.), *Grégoire le Grand*, pp. 147–57 at pp. 148 and 151–2; for his lack of concern with deeper monastic issues, R. A. Markus, *Gregory the Great and his World* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 69.

<sup>65</sup> *Ep.* VI.44 and IX.138. Gregory is not explicit that the Pope Pelagius in question was Pelagius II (578–90) rather than Pelagius I (555/6–60/1), but it seems likely.

<sup>66</sup> *Ep.* IX.138. <sup>67</sup> *Ep.* VI.44.



conception of reciprocal gifts to the sacred, the offer of such praise might be thought to bring salvation nearer, but this is not the central focus of Gregory's philosophy.

If he is terse on the subject of the foundation, Gregory is entirely silent on benefactions to monasteries. Pious gifts had been a concern of Christian writers for over a century, but the closest Gregory comes to addressing the issue is in his conception of the monastery as an almshouse. This is perhaps best evident in his praise for Galla, a member of the senatorial family of the Symmachi, who in the early sixth century entered a convent in Rome where 'she spent on bounteous works of alms for the poor'.<sup>68</sup> The monastery here is a means to an end, not the end in itself. As Gregory tells the story, Galla's reward was breast cancer and a vision from St Peter. The saint assured her that her sins had been forgiven, but also promised that a chosen sister would share her fate. It may be that in relating this latter point, Gregory was seeking to emphasize where true authority lay within the community, since Galla's family had led the party in early sixth-century Rome that asserted clerical control over gifts, against the Laurentian party that supported the interests of lay benefactors.<sup>69</sup> Surprisingly perhaps, given the prominence it has in modern biographies of him, Gregory also offers little specific information about the context of or motivation behind his entry into his own foundation of St Andrew's. His attitude to it is ambiguous. On the one hand, as pope, Gregory often pined for his own life as a monk: 'when I was living in the monastery, I was able to restrain my tongue from idle talk and to keep my mind almost constantly intent on prayer'.<sup>70</sup> On the other, he saw monasticism itself as relatively unimportant, in the face of his overriding eschatological concern. What was the point of withdrawal, of renunciation, when 'the world no longer announces its coming end, but shows it forth'?<sup>71</sup> For Gregory, the chief importance of monasticism lay in the emphasis ascetics placed on the contemplative life. But he did not equate contemplation with ascesis.

<sup>68</sup> *Dialogues*, IV.14. <sup>69</sup> For references, see above, n. 33.

<sup>70</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Hiezechielem*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 142 (Turnhout, 1971), I.11.6; and see C. Leyser, '“Let me speak, let me speak”: vulnerability and authority in Gregory's Homilies on Ezechiel', in *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo* (Rome, 1991), vol. II, pp. 169–82. See also the dedicatory letter to Leander, bishop of Seville, at the beginning of *Moralia in Job*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 143 (Turnhout, 1979), pp. 114–34.

<sup>71</sup> *Dialogues*, III.38.3, trans. Markus, *Gregory the Great*, p. 52: 'finem suum mundus non iam nuntiat, sed ostendit'. See further J. N. Hillgarth, 'Eschatological and political concepts in the seventh century', in J. Fontaine and J. N. Hillgarth (eds.), *Le septième siècle: changements et continuités* (London, 1992), pp. 212–30, esp. pp. 221–2. Robert Markus rightly stresses the ambiguity in Gregory's eschatology in his contribution to the discussion of Hillgarth's paper, p. 231.

The contemplative life was open to everyone. Gregory's attitude to monasticism should be seen in terms of his personal experience in which, as bishop, he sought a resolution of the tensions between the active and the contemplative lives. If it was his pastoral ministry that allowed the bishop to bring both forms of life into play in the pursuit of perfection in this world, a similar engagement in the world beyond the cloister seems to have been regarded by Gregory as desirable for monks too. His employment of monks for the English mission and in his episcopal administration certainly indicates as much.<sup>72</sup> In blurring the distinction between the monastic and secular clerical professions, Gregory stands firmly in a patristic tradition that sought to recast clerical office in the light of an ascetic understanding of moral authority.<sup>73</sup> In this he resembles Caesarius of Arles, whose chief concern in founding both his nunnery and a monastic establishment for his cathedral clergy was to set an example to the wider Christian community.<sup>74</sup> His concentration on the moral authority that accrued from asceticism may explain why, although over two hundred of his letters are devoted to questions of monastic order, Gregory wrote remarkably little on the salvific efficacy of monasticism, either for himself or for others.

For Gregory, the monastery was not a privileged vehicle for purification. The ascetic self-denial that monasticism entailed was not a form of penitence but a kind of bloodless martyrdom: 'There are some who keep nothing to themselves but offer to the almighty Lord their sense, their speech, their life and all the substance with which they have been endowed. Their offering can be nothing other than the "whole sacrifice" [*holocaustum*]; indeed, they are themselves the holocaust.'<sup>75</sup> In biblical terms, the holocaust was an all-consuming, perfect sacrifice. Thus, for Gregory, offering oneself as a monk or nun was a total commitment of the self to God. Naturally, that commitment was made partly in the hope of attaining salvation through God's mercy. Yet Gregory does not describe it as a penitential act, designed to wash away

<sup>72</sup> See C. Straw, *Gregory the Great. Perfection in imperfection* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1988), pp. 181–2, and C. Dagens, *Saint Grégoire le Grand. Culture et expérience chrétiennes* (Paris, 1977), pp. 145–9. Gregory expresses his view of the symbiosis of the pastoral role and the contemplative life in his *Moralia in Job*: 'It is by a wonderful divine benevolence that he who seeks contemplation with a perfect heart, is occupied in serving others; so that his perfected mind may profit others weaker than him, and that he himself may rise to the summit of perfection in humility from the very imperfection he perceives in himself' (*Moralia in Job*, V.4.5, trans. Markus, *Gregory the Great*, p. 24).

<sup>73</sup> R. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 181–98, and C. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, forthcoming).

<sup>74</sup> Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*, p. 105, n. 141 and pp. 117–22.

<sup>75</sup> *Homiliae in Hiezechielem*, II.8.16, trans. Markus, *Gregory the Great*, p. 61; and see his comments there.

sin: that would imply a kind of negotiation with the sacred that is very different from the notion of the holocaust. Robert Markus has rightly observed that in representing ascetic self-denial as a holocaust Gregory was seeing it in the traditions of martyrdom.<sup>76</sup> These had not always made the link between the holocaust and monasticism: Cyprian, the third-century bishop of Carthage, for example, thought that the 'peace-time equivalent of martyrdom' was almsgiving.<sup>77</sup> Gregory's view was more demanding. Christians no longer won the martyr's crown through death in a persecution, but could still make a sacrifice procuring victory over the flesh. It was through this victory that the monk's sins were remitted. This contrasts with the perception of the purgation of the soul by the penitent. Gregory cast purgation not as a monastic enterprise, but, like the contemplative life, as one open to all Christians. Thus he relates the story of Galla's contemporary and ideological opponent Paschasius, a Laurentian deacon, whose soul was saved by the prayers of a bishop to whom he had appeared, after his death, in a vision. Although he had sinned through ignorance, Paschasius was granted remission 'because of the generosity of his alms'.<sup>78</sup> This tale affirms that Gregory believed that purgation of the soul continued in the after-life. Crucially, however, Paschasius was not a monk. Gregory's conception of purgation of the soul is depicted in a broader eschatological context relevant to all Christians, a context which Gregory saw as the pressing spiritual concern of his age.<sup>79</sup>

Peter Brown has offered a picture of the spiritual environment in which Gregory was writing.<sup>80</sup> It is beyond the remit of this paper to examine all the nuances of this vision, but at the heart of Brown's argument is the perception that there was an ambiguous tension in western Christianity between two imaginative constructions of the after-life. One saw entry into paradise as dependent on God's sovereign prerogative of mercy. The other placed emphasis rather on the need to cleanse the soul through one's own actions and those of others after one's death. Brown sees the former view as rooted in the political situation of the later Roman Empire, in which earthly crimes could be absolved through the sovereign emperor's power of amnesty. In the same way, Augustine and his successors saw the quest for purgation as

<sup>76</sup> Markus, *Gregory the Great*, p. 61.

<sup>77</sup> L. W. Countryman, *The Rich Christian and the Church of the Early Empire* (New York and Toronto, 1980), pp. 195–9.

<sup>78</sup> *Dialogues*, IV.42.1–5: '... quia ex illa elemosinarum suarum largitate hoc obtinuit'.

<sup>79</sup> See Markus, *Gregory the Great*, pp. 59–67.

<sup>80</sup> P. Brown, 'Vers la naissance de purgatoire', *Annales: ESC* 52 (1997), pp. 1247–62.

occurring under the pre-eminent power of God's *misericordia*, and so requiring continuous penitence – in effect, a complete change of life-style.<sup>81</sup> It would seem to be this conception that lies behind Gregory's views on monasticism. By contrast, when he considered the question of purgation among Christians at large, Gregory's views seem more in keeping with a different kind of imaginary infrastructure. As the story of Paschasius demonstrates, Gregory believed that the active soul could continue to cleanse itself even after death. In a change in attitude that Eric Rebillard has traced back to Maximus of Turin, individual acts of penitence were taking on greater significance.<sup>82</sup> This points the way to what Brown sees as the true 'early medieval' perception of the soul's experience: that it consisted simply of sin on the one hand, and penitence on the other, each carefully calibrated. In this conception, gifts to the sacred were a form of penitence, and therefore firmly reciprocal, expecting the counter-gift of remission from sin. It is in this 'peccatised' world, to coin Brown's neologism, that Walfred ought to fit.<sup>83</sup>

Evidence for the motivation behind Walfred's endowment and oblation is close to hand, in the charter itself. This contains a proem, or *arenga*, that is uniquely extensive and elaborate for an eighth-century non-royal charter. It is worth quoting in full:

reflecting for myself on the fallen condition of this world and the transitoriness of life, and that it is right to disdain the vainglory of this world and follow Christ the Lord and fulfil his holy precepts and take up his promise and enjoy eternal life with him, and that the arrival of the kingdom of heaven is not to include the sinner unless he flee to the mercy of God with all his heart, and since because of my sins and in the course of my life which I led negligently, I corrupted my soul with sorrow, and I did not find which way to turn in times of danger, I then sought a protector, so that, although not through my merits, I may be worthy to attain that life, through which crimes may be washed away, and the protection of him to whom the power of binding and loosing has been granted; let me be led back into his fold.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See Brown, 'Naissance de purgatoire', p. 1250: 'Il faut changer pour être digne de Dieu.'

<sup>82</sup> E. Rebillard, *In Hora Mortis*, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Française d'Athènes et de Rome (Athens and Rome, 1994), pp. 163–4.

<sup>83</sup> Brown, 'Naissance de purgatoire', p. 1261.

<sup>84</sup> *CDL* I 116: 'recolente me istius mundi caduca ac transitoriam uitam, et quot oportet huius mundi uana gloria contemnere per Christum dominum sequi eiusque sacra precepta implere et promissione suscipere et eternam uitam cum eum frui, et quod peccatoribus aditus regni celorum non intercluditur si toto corde ad misericordiam Dei confugerit, et dum pro mea facinora et spatium uite quam neglegenter duxi me animi tedio inficere, et non inueni per quo me in angustiis conuertere, tunc protectorem quesui, ut quod non meis meritis ad illa ualeo

Although this is uniquely long, a good proportion of the surviving eighth-century Italian charters contain passages like this one.<sup>85</sup> The inclusion of an *arenga* to express the motivation behind an act was not new in the eighth century: it dates back to the origin of medieval diplomatic in the forms of Roman imperial rescript.<sup>86</sup> Throughout the late antique period, however, the clause was a vehicle only for secular sentiments: that legal acts should be put in writing, for instance. Religious language appears in a surviving *arenga* for the first time in a papyrus from Ravenna dated 625.<sup>87</sup> As a type of evidence, *arengae* like this are comparable to passages in many of Gregory's letters. As comparison with the *Liber Diurnus* shows, the latter were often essentially bureaucratic instruments, many of which were simply collections of formulae, such as the letter providing for the consecration of a church, which appears eight times in the Register.<sup>88</sup> While the form of expression was the same, therefore, the subject matter of Walfred's proem was a post-Gregorian innovation.

Yet the proem of Walfred's charter is no mere formula. Its language was clearly deliberately tailored to the act in question. Hence it includes a reference to 'him to whom the power of binding and loosing has been granted': i.e. St Peter, to whom Monteverdi was dedicated. This hints at a belief in the power of the intercession of the saint. But, in striking contrast to some contemporary examples, the clause makes no mention of pious gifts and their intended celestial pay-off. Nor is it concerned with the foundation of Monteverdi: this was not the purpose of the charter and, as we have seen, was dealt with briefly elsewhere in the text. The focus is very firmly on Walfred's assumption of monasticism.

In theological terms, the charter's perception of Walfred's oblation is ambiguous. By seeking the protection of St Peter it affirmed a belief in

peruenire uita, per qua commissa deleatur, illius protectio, cui ligandique et soluendi est concessa potestas, in ouile eius reducatur.'

<sup>85</sup> Forty-nine of the private charters from the Lombard kingdom, a fair proportion of the relevant charters: that is, the 291 in Luigi Schiaparelli's edition (*CDL I and II*), minus the forgeries and the charters of sale, which do not include *arengae* as a matter of form.

<sup>86</sup> The best analyses of the development of the charter form from the late Roman to the early medieval eras are P. Classen's, *Kaiserreskript und Königsurkunde. Diplomatische Studien zum römisch-germanisch Kontinuitätsproblem* (Thessalonica, 1977) and 'Fortleben und Wandel spätrömischen Urkundenwesens im frühen Mittelalter', in P. Classen (ed.), *Recht und Schrift im Mittelalter*, Vorträge und Forschungen 23 (Sigmaringen, 1977), pp. 13-54.

<sup>87</sup> J.-O. Tjäder, *Die nichtliterarischen lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700*, I (Lund, 1955), P21, p. 358: 'Sanctarum scribaturarum nos ratio praemonet illa semper disponere [. . . 75 . . .] evangelicam in me subsequi lectionem ut in hoc seculo centuplum et in futuro aeternae vitae esse participem . . .'

<sup>88</sup> *Epp.* II.11, VIII.5, IX.58, 72, 166, 181, 233, XIII.16, and see *Liber Diurnus Romanorum pontificum*, ed. H. Foerster (Bern, 1958), no. XI.

the intercessory power of saints. The more prominent theme of the text, however, is *misericordia* – God’s mercy – the bestowal of which is to Walfred inscrutable, though he knows that no deed of his will bring it about. In Peter Brown’s terms this is a very ‘late antique’ idea, emphasizing God’s sovereign power, rather than the power of men to act to cleanse the soul, either before or after death. In fact, Walfred’s text combines the two ideas: it is because of his impotence in the face of God’s will that Walfred seeks the aid – the *protectio* – of a saint; and what better saint than Peter? This is the motivation behind Walfred’s oblation: it is a search for the security of proximity to the holy.

The position of Monteverdi as the locus of the sacred protection that Walfred sought reveals a fundamental contrast between the eighth-century conception of monastic oblation and that of Gregory. While for Gregory the monastery was the place where ascetic sacrifice was played out, for Walfred it was a forum in which to associate with a saint, and thus to enter into that negotiation with the sacred through which ‘crimes may be washed away’. Walfred’s profession was intended to accrue salvific benefit more directly and purposefully than in Gregory’s conception of monasticism. This may be because, in the imaginative structures of which Peter Brown writes, sin and the atonement for it had acquired a new prominence. This is evident in phrases that we find in Walfred’s *arenga* such as *tedium animi*, which may here connote the pain or sorrow of the sinful soul.<sup>89</sup> By acting as a vehicle for such a negotiation with the sacred, Walfred’s profession has become a kind of reciprocal gift. In founding and entering Monteverdi, he was giving not only his property but himself, in the expectation that he would be rewarded directly with spiritual protection and the remission of his sins.

Walfred’s *arenga* emphasizes his personal commitment rather than that of his property. Among contemporary documents, however, the conception of monasticism was developed further, seeming fully to equate the idea of penitence with the giving of gifts – and to place all hope for salvation in the latter. Thus when, in 742, a Lombard aristocrat named Theopert entered Sant’Ambrogio in Milan, bringing with him an endowment that he modestly suggested constituted ‘not as much as I ought, but as much as I am able’, the emphasis of his charter falls very firmly on the gift of property, rather than on the self. It tells its reader that Theopert ‘confers land from his property on holy places, so that he

<sup>89</sup> On the possible meanings of *t(a)edium* here, I am indebted to Richard Sharpe (pers. comm.).

may receive eternal heaven from Christ'.<sup>90</sup> It omits any mention of Theopert's entry into the monastery. This may be a product of inappropriate selection of words on the part of the scribe, but nevertheless, the fact that he could write such an *arenga* at all indicates that an attitude to gifts was emerging in Walfred's lifetime that calibrated merit in material terms.

The emphasis in Theopert's charter on the gift of property becomes extremely familiar as we survey the charters that survive in increasing numbers through the eighth century and into the ninth. But we should not draw too clear a distinction between gifts of property and gifts of persons: since the entry of a person into a monastery almost always entailed a gift of property, the precise nature of the offering to God was less important than the fact of it.<sup>91</sup> As a new imaginative structure emerged which defined monastic profession as one gambit in an ongoing negotiation with the sacred, the conception of monasticism correspondingly changed. It came to be seen in a context of purgation: the statements in the charters of Walfred and Theopert, and many like them, imply that the peculiar and most effective locus through which to pursue purgation was the monastery. Although this idea is entirely absent from Gregory's writings, his belief pointed the way to the penitential ideology of the eighth century. His perception of atonement was appropriated by the monastic culture of Walfred's day. This was not explicit: no written memorial (at least from Italy) recognizes Gregory's authorship of such ideas. He was no literary totem. His work should be seen, rather, as an exemplar of a tradition in the process of transformation. What stands out most strongly is the contrast between his perception and that of Walfred, indicating the degree to which past monastic culture was transformed.

A more straightforward indication that Walfred stood in a tradition of monastic practice is his reference to the Rule of St Benedict.<sup>92</sup> This is one of the first explicit references in eighth-century Italy to the Rule, which had lain largely unexploited for nearly two centuries after Benedict wrote.<sup>93</sup> Its ultimate triumph over the next century demonstrates

<sup>90</sup> *CDL* I 78: 'de spe eternae uite salutis anime remedium cogitat, qui in sanctis locis de suis rebus confert terrena, ut a Christo recipiat aeterna caelestia'.

<sup>91</sup> Benedict himself had anticipated that an oblation would often also involve the transfer to the monastery of the oblate's property: *Regula Benedicti* 58, 24.

<sup>92</sup> *CDL* I 116: 'et tamen ordinatione abbati quam et alias ordiantiones, quod oportuna sunt in monasterio fieri, ita agant et perficiant secundum instituta regula ad sanctum patrem nostrum Benedictum'.

the durability of the monastic memory. It also shows the limits of our knowledge of the strands of transmission. There are no surviving witnesses to the text Walfred had before him, if, indeed, he possessed a written copy at all. Nor is it likely that Gregory was his direct source: despite his opaque reference to Benedict's Rule in the *Dialogues*, Gregory himself did not attempt to follow Benedictine precepts in his own monasticism, and sought in his writings to promote an asceticism born of contemplation rather than obedience.<sup>94</sup> It is not possible here to investigate fully the notable rediscovery of Benedict's Rule in the eighth century. The increasing clamour in favour of Benedictine precepts in eighth-century Italy simply serves as a reminder that, while the notion of a literary canon was evolving within the monastic tradition, that notion was not itself a purely literary one, and did not depend solely on writing for its transmission. Although an important example of the use of the past, therefore, the Rule was not a constant presence throughout the period. A more continuous ideological tradition probably stands behind the similar tensions experienced both in the sixth century and in the eighth over the control of the property offered to monasteries. The evidence for the Laurentian schism and that of the *Life of Walfred* demonstrates the continuing relevance of that issue.

In eighth-century Italy, the fight for control was played out against the background of a renewed enthusiasm for monasticism, an enthusiasm that owed little to the late antique notion of a sovereign and omnipotent God, but was influenced rather by the emerging predominance of concern with sin and penitence. The lesson of Gregory's story of Paschasius had been fully digested. It was in the eighth century that, for the first time in Italy, the idea arose that the best setting for penitential activity was the monastery. The immediate roots of this innovation in the seventh and early eighth centuries remain obscure. The charters which might furnish information, of which those examined here are only a small sample, survive in any numbers only from the second quarter of the eighth century. Many of these bear witness to a marked change in the material, as well as the ideological, context of

<sup>93</sup> In the context of Lombard Italy there is only one earlier reference to the Rule, in a donation of 730 by Warnefred, gastald of Siena, to the monastery of St Eugenius that he had founded in the city: *CDL* I 50. Montecassino itself had to procure the Rule from Rome: Paul, *Historia langobardorum*, VI.40. For a full list of pre-Carolingian instances of the Rule's use, see G. Moyse, 'Monachisme et réglementation monastique en Gaule avant Benoît d'Aniane', in *Sous la règle de St Benoît: structures monastiques et sociétés en France du moyen âge à l'époque moderne* (Geneva and Paris, 1982), pp. 3–19; for a synopsis, G. Filoramo, E. Lupieri and S. Pricoco, *Storia del cristianesimo. L'Antichità* (Rome and Bari, 1997), pp. 428–9.

<sup>94</sup> Leyser, 'St Benedict and Gregory the Great', esp. pp. 41–3.



monasticism, with the foundation of large rural abbeys. It is unlikely that these two developments are unconnected. Houses such as Montecassino, Farfa and San Vincenzo al Volturno themselves constituted a dramatic re-setting of the Italian monastic tradition: almost nothing like them had existed previously in the peninsula.<sup>95</sup> Explanations of these changes await the exploration of a number of avenues of inquiry. The proliferation of rural monasteries in Francia at a much earlier date, for instance, suggests that we should look across the Alps for one wellspring of that change. The emergence of such abbeys in Italy marks a newly crystalline phase in the western monastic tradition which Gregory had filtered and refined.\*

<sup>95</sup> The notable exception is Bobbio, founded in 612: see V. Polonio, *Il monastero de San Colombano di Bobbio dalla fondazione all'epoca carolingia* (Genoa, 1962), pp. 9–22.

\* This essay constitutes the first fruits of the project 'Family and monastery in sixth-century Rome', funded by the University of Manchester's Research and Graduate Support Unit. Principal thanks are due to the project's originator, Dr Conrad Leyser. It was first presented at seminars in Manchester and London. I should like to thank all the participants on those occasions, especially Kate Cooper and Mark Humphries in Manchester, and Jinty Nelson, David Ganz and Alan Thacker in London.

## CHAPTER 5

### *The world and its past as Christian allegory in the early Middle Ages*

*Dominic Janes*

Why is the world as it is and what is the meaning of past events?<sup>1</sup> There are many ways of looking at this issue, only one of which is to investigate developmental trends for chains of events and the evolution of society over time. As modern historians it is acutely important to be aware that the past may have been examined by earlier writers for very different purposes and understood in very different ways to those we might expect initially. Early Christians were certainly interested in chronologies and histories, but many writers expressed a different focus of concern by analysing narratives of events and descriptions of scenes and images for their timeless symbolism. The key idea behind this was that holy power transcended human time and that spiritual qualities were of undying potency and relevance.

In the important early Christian tradition of biblical exegesis it was of more significance to answer these questions than it was simply to describe what had happened. Biblical scholars understood that God's creation and its history were littered with His symbols. Time was dominated by the descriptions and predictions of Scripture from Genesis to the Apocalypse. The diagnostic tool for understanding this sacred and profane chronology was allegorical and typological reading, which acted to reveal universal symbols of goodness and evil from within the ancient narratives of Scripture. A similar mode of interpretative extraction of meaning was applied to description of art images in the churches, which were themselves a form of pictorial extraction from Scripture. Such forms of analysis would, likewise, have been important in the conception and depicting of more recent events, since history did not 'just happen', but was the mysterious expression of divine will. The use

<sup>1</sup> This is an adapted version of the paper 'Time, images and imagination in the early medieval churches', which was presented at the 1995 Leeds International Medieval Congress. Exegesis is discussed in more detail in D. Janes, *God and Gold in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 61–93.

of the world and its past was for the spiritual education of the present and preparation for the future.

I want to focus on the period up to the time of the Venerable Bede, eighth-century historian and exegete. Bede said of his motive for writing that 'if history tells good things of the good, the careful listener is stirred up to imitation, but if bad things are recorded of the evil, then the pious and religious listener or reader is encouraged to avoid what is noxious and perverse' (similarly, the histories of Gregory of Tours have been seen as 'moral tales' juxtaposing good and evil).<sup>2</sup> All Bede's writings and historical research were 'subordinated to his religious aim'.<sup>3</sup> Although most famous for his account of Anglo-Saxon events, it has been argued in the context of his overall output that his primary historical problem was with the kingdoms of the Old Testament rather than with those of England.<sup>4</sup> McClure has stressed that Bede's historical writings must be analysed in the context of his exegesis and ideals of royal behaviour as seen in ancient Israel. Scripture gave the crucial message that the fate of the chosen people was interwoven with the virtue and military strength of their kings. Saul, first king of the Israelites, prospered, as did his people, only so long as he paid heed to the word of God.<sup>5</sup> Not only the themes but also the very 'language and style of the *Historia* bear a profound Biblical stamp',<sup>6</sup> because Bede held that history was best written in the humble style of the Old Testament narratives.<sup>7</sup>

How was the Bible understood in the period up to 750? The answer, on the evidence of surviving scriptural commentary, is not simply as a literal description, but also as a succession of spiritual allegories. The diverse texts of the Christian past were interpreted according to a

<sup>2</sup> Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, eds. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, rev. edn (Oxford, 1991), preface: 'Sive enim historia de bonis bona referat, ad imitandum bonum auditor sollicitus instigatur; seu mala commemoret de pravis, nihilominus religiosus ac pius auditor sive lector devitando quod noxium est ac perversum, ipse sollertius ad exequenda ea.' This section is discussed by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: A Historical Commentary* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 2-6; J. Campbell, 'Bede', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Historians* (London, 1966), pp. 159-90, at p. 176; and P. Hunter Blair, *Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History' of the English Nation and its Importance Today*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1959), p. 25. On Gregory of Tours, see J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992), p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> J. McClure, 'Bede's Old Testament kings', in P. Wormald et al. (eds.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 76-98, at p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> R. D. Ray, 'Bede, the exegete, as historian', in G. Bonner (ed.), *'Famulus Christi': Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede* (London, 1976), pp. 125-40, at p. 125.

<sup>5</sup> McClure, 'Bede's Old Testament', p. 92. <sup>6</sup> Ray, 'Bede', p. 134.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132: 'Bede thought of the customs of scriptural narrative as the habits of perfect history'; and Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 5.

coherent system of symbolism, so uniting them.<sup>8</sup> The resulting elision of time and the creation of universal truths and messages can be seen all through late antique and early medieval exegesis. An example of this phenomenon is provided by commentaries on the Song of Songs<sup>9</sup> and the Revelation of John the Divine up to the time of Bede.<sup>10</sup> These two books of the Bible provide respectively Old and New Testament material which was worked upon by a considerable number of influential churchmen during late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Moreover, although the two texts appear very different to the modern eye, this was not so much the case for the medieval reader. Both the Song and the Apocalypse were seen as depictions of the triumphant Church and soul. They were 'increasingly read together, as two accounts of the same divine plan'.<sup>11</sup> The beauty described in the Song of Songs was seen as 'a *preview* of heaven like St John's apocalyptic vision of the bride and the lamb'.<sup>12</sup>

In *literal* terms, however, these two books are startlingly different. The Song of Songs consists of eight chapters of Hebrew love verse exchanged

<sup>8</sup> H. de Lubac, *Exègèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'écriture, première partie* (2 vols., Paris, 1959), a monumental work, is the best introduction to the typology of literal and figurative language in this genre. On symbolism, see J. Chydenius, *The Theory of Medieval Symbolism*, Societas Scientificarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanorum 27ii (Helsingfors, 1960). A bibliography of works on medieval exegesis is H. J. Sieben, 'Exegesis Patrum': *saggio bibliografico sull'esegesi biblica dei Padri della Chiesa*, Istituto Patristico Augustinianum, sussidi patristici 2 (Rome, 1983).

<sup>9</sup> There survive pre-Carolingian Latin Song of Songs commentaries by Hippolytus (third century), Origen (third century, Alexandria, as translated by Rufinus (fifth century)), Gregory of Elvira (late fourth century, Spain), Aponius (fifth century, Italy), Justus of Urgel (sixth century, Spain), Pope Gregory the Great (late sixth century) and by Bede (eighth century). In addition there exists a twelfth-century collection of Ambrose of Milan's (fourth century) observations on the subject. Finally, extensive reference to the Song is made by Jerome in a letter of the late fourth century.

<sup>10</sup> Pre-Carolingian Latin commentaries on the book of Revelation are by Victorinus of Pettau (late third century, Pannonia), Victorinus as *heavily* edited by Jerome (late fourth century), Tyconius (fourth century, Africa), Caesarius of Arles (early sixth century, Gaul), Apringius of Beja (sixth century, Portugal), Primasius of Hadrumantum (sixth century, Africa), Cassiodorus (sixth century, Italy), Pseudo-Isidore (seventh century, probably Italy) and Bede. In addition, there exist a number of references to these books in other works of the major later Latin Fathers (and of Greek writers influential in Latin translation), especially Ambrose and Augustine. Ambrose wrote a considerable amount of exegesis, but references to the Song and Revelation are scattered, though there is a particular concentration in his commentary on Psalm 118. Augustine left no verse by verse commentaries on these books, but his intellectual influence was enormous. His exposition, *De Doctrina Christiana*, has been seen as containing one of the prime expressions of the theoretical symbolism.

<sup>11</sup> E. A. Matter, *The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1990), for quotation, p. 89 and see also, p. 111: 'it is no historical accident that so many medieval exegetes commented on both the Apocalypse and the Song of Songs'.

<sup>12</sup> A. W. Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1990), p. 33 (my italics).

between a man and woman.<sup>13</sup> Though traditionally attributed to King Solomon, its date is a matter of controversy. The work's popularity during the Middle Ages appears to have derived from those very obstacles that lay in the path of understanding it as Holy Writ. Revelation is the only one of the many visions of the Last Things to be adopted by the western Church as canonical.<sup>14</sup> It probably dates from the later years of the first century. Its literalist overtones of the rule of Christ on earth and anti-imperial stance were, over time, to be concealed under allegorical interpretation.<sup>15</sup> The eastern Church never fully accepted it, whilst in the west its prophecies of the end of the world were to stoke bouts of millenarianism.<sup>16</sup> Sharing much imagery with the more ancient biblical texts, this book was accepted in the west as part of a large corpus of texts, every word of which was seen as the embodiment of divine truth.<sup>17</sup> Naturally, both of these texts were typically read in the west in one or other of the various Latin translations.<sup>18</sup>

The origins of Christian exegesis lie in ancient Judaic allegory, but it was very much a living tradition in the mind of a vigorous thinker. Most of the writers comprise what is often referred to as the 'Alexandrian' school of exegesis.<sup>19</sup> This school had a far greater influence than its rival, that of the 'Antiochenes', which favoured a much less thorough use of allegory. Embracing this latter approach was Victorinus of Pettau, who, martyred in 304, was one of the last Orthodox bishops to uphold a

<sup>13</sup> G. L. Carr, *The Song of Solomon*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, 1984), provides a standard modern interpretation, in which the *literal* love between two people can now be celebrated as a creation of God.

<sup>14</sup> L. Morris, *Revelation*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 2nd edn (Leicester, 1987), provides a typical recent view. C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: a Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London, 1982), on the Jewish background.

<sup>15</sup> B. McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1979), p. 32.

<sup>16</sup> See the papers in W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst and A. Welkenhuysen (eds.), *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Ser. 1, Studia 15 (Leuven, 1988), especially R. Landes, 'Lest the Millennium be fulfilled: apocalyptic expectations and the pattern of western chronography, 100–800 CE', at pp. 137–211, and J. Chocheyra, 'Fin des terres et fin des temps d'Hésychius (Ve siècle) à Beatus (VIIIe siècle)', at pp. 72–81. H. Bietenhard, 'The millennial hope of the early Church', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 6 (1953), pp. 12–30, at p. 30: after late antiquity, 'only cranks and heretics put forward an eschatological interpretation'.

<sup>17</sup> R. Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> Matter, *The Song*, pp. xxxiv–xxxv, provides an overview of some of the problems involved in the study of the Latin biblical texts themselves. There was a variety of texts in circulation. Matter, *The Song*, pp. xvi–xxxii, provides a useful composite text of the *Cantica Canticorum*, with an English translation, based on the *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. R. Weber, rev. 3rd edn (Stuttgart, 1983). Naturally, many writers, such as Ambrose, used various 'Old Latin' versions which are 'as elusive as they are common' (Matter, *The Song*, p. xxxiv).

<sup>19</sup> B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1983), ch. 1, 'The Fathers', traces development through to Bede. She stresses particularly the legacy of Philo of Alexandria (first century AD), who laid down rules for allegory in his *Questions and Answers*.

literalist view of a thousand-year kingdom of Christ on earth. In his edition of Victorinus on the Apocalypse, Jerome made considerable use of the work of Tyconius.<sup>20</sup> In the words of the fifth-century writer Gennadius, the significance of Tyconius was that he understood 'nothing carnally but everything spiritually'.<sup>21</sup> He believed in the imminence of the Second Coming, but nevertheless he understood 'the book of *Revelation* not so much as a prophecy of the end of the world, as an image of the history of the Church in the world, in other words, not eschatologically, but as a theology of history'.<sup>22</sup> His Seven Rules for scriptural interpretation were quoted by Augustine and Bede, amongst others, and so came to be well known during the Middle Ages.<sup>23</sup>

Figurative interpretation was all but essential for the spiritual understanding of the Song of Songs because, read literally, it is a highly sensuous (some might say erotic) love poem.<sup>24</sup> The only non-allegorical treatments were those of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was duly dismissive of the Song, and of Theodore's friend, the Pelagian, Julian of Eclanum, whose fifth-century work only survives in those fragments quoted for the purposes of derision by Bede.<sup>25</sup> Following on from the work of the earlier exegetes there were other commentaries that show 'a re-working of traditions and the re-application of earlier prophecies to meet later needs'.<sup>26</sup> Gregory the Great, who employed an especially complex allegorical style, was accorded particular respect by Bede,<sup>27</sup> who, writing at the very beginning of the eighth century, was the last of the pre-Carolingian exegetes of Revelation and the Song of Songs.<sup>28</sup>

Bede's Apocalypse commentary was one of his earlier works, pro-

<sup>20</sup> Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, in F. Lo Bue (ed.), *The Turin Fragments of Tyconius Commentary on Revelation* (Cambridge, 1963), and Victorinus-Jerome, *Comentararii in Apocalypsin Editio Victorini et Recensio Hieronymi*, ed. J. Haussleiter, CSEL 49 (Vienna, 1916).

<sup>21</sup> Gennadius, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, PL 58, cols. 1053-1120, at col. 1071: 'Exposuit et Apocalypsin Iohannes ex integro nihil in ea carnale, sed totum intellegens spiritale'.

<sup>22</sup> G. Bonner, *Saint Bede in the Tradition of Western Apocalypse Commentary*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1966), p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. J. Martin, CCL 32 (Turnhout, 1962), 3, 30, 42, and Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis*, PL 93, cols. 129-206, *Prologus*.

<sup>24</sup> Song, 7:8, 'your breasts are like bunches of grapes', etc.

<sup>25</sup> M. L. W. Laistner, 'Antiochene exegesis in western Europe during the Middle Ages', *Harvard Theological Review* 40 (1947), pp. 19-31.

<sup>26</sup> Smalley, *The Study*, p. vii.

<sup>27</sup> P. Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1964).

<sup>28</sup> Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis* and *In Cantica Cantorum Allegoica Expositio*, ed. D. Hurst, CCL 199 B (Turnhout, 1985). On *Revelation*, see K. B. Steinhauser, *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius: a History of its Reception and Influence* (Frankfurt, 1987), pp. 116-31, and on Song, see Matter, *The Song*, pp. 97-101.

duced before 710.<sup>29</sup> It was dedicated to Hwætberht, who became abbot of Jarrow in 716. He was the 'Eusebius' to whom an explanatory letter was attached as a prologue to the commentary. Bede relied heavily in his exegesis upon Victorinus—Jerome, Tyconius, Origen and Primasius. In addition he derived much intellectual strength from his reading of Augustine. There are, moreover, quotations from Eusebius (as translated by Rufinus), Cyprian, Gregory the Great, Jerome and Isidore. Bede's commentary on the Song of Songs is a complex piece. Of the seven books, the first polemicizes against Julian, and the last is a panegyric to the wisdom of Gregory the Great, so emphasizing the victory of the allegorical over the literal.

In these commentaries narrative structure was transcended, in places almost ignored, as a result of the imperative of drawing out essential symbolic connections. Red, for example, was understood as referring to blood and especially to the sacrificial blood of Christ and the martyrs. This was expressed by Bede as he had found it repeatedly expounded in the earlier exegetical tradition. So, from the Song of Songs, we read that the lips of the bride are compared to threads of scarlet.<sup>30</sup> The perceived imagery here was associated with the rivulets of blood that ran from Christ on the cross, which example was copied by the martyrs of the Church.<sup>31</sup> Figuratively, these threads are the watering streams of doctrine and holy wisdom, whose movement is an image of holy eloquence, such as emerges from the lips of the Church personified. Bede provides a lengthy exposition of the widespread idea that the threads are references to hairs and the 'ribbons' which bind the faithful in communities.<sup>32</sup> Such threads and bands could properly be said to be scarlet, as Gregory argued, because the preaching of the saints glows only with love.<sup>33</sup> Ambrose agrees, pointing out that *coccus* (scarlet dye) has the appearance of fire or blood.<sup>34</sup> For Aponius, these were partly a reference to the threads that were sewn to the mitre of Aaron the high priest of the

<sup>29</sup> Bonner, *Saint Bede*, p. 8, for the dating.

<sup>30</sup> Song 4:3. On colour symbolism in Latin, see J. André, *Étude sur les termes de couleur dans la langue Latine*, Études et commentaires 7 (Paris, 1949).

<sup>31</sup> As, for example, in Aponius, *In Cantica Canticorum Expositionem*, eds. B. de Vregille and L. Neyrand, CCSL 19 (Turnhout, 1986), 6, 9, p. 142, lines 106–7, 'qui proculdubio cruror martyrum intelligitur Ecclesiae "labia" rutilare'.

<sup>32</sup> Bede, *In Cantica Canticorum*, pp. 166–375, 2, 4, 3; p. 247, lines 133–48, *passim*.

<sup>33</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 143-A-B (3 vols., Turnhout, 1979–85), 2, 52, 82; p. 109, lines 10–12, 'Quam recte et coccineam asserit, quia sanctorum praedicatio solo caritatis ardore flammescit'.

<sup>34</sup> Ambrose, *Commentarius in Psalmo CXVIII*, ed. and trans. L. F. Pizzolato, *S. Ambrogio di Milano: Commento al Salmo CXVIII*, Sancti Ambrosii Episcopi Mediolanensis Opera 9 and 10 (2 vols., Milan, 1987), 18, 22; 2, p. 262: 'in cocco enim species ignis et crucis dominicae sanguis inrutilat'.

Tabernacle. They are insignia of royalty and honour obtained from the King of Kings.<sup>35</sup> This association of red is carried over into the interpretation of gems. So, for Bede, sardion stone is 'the revered blood-shed of the martyrs' and signifies their glory.<sup>36</sup> The symbolism relates to the context in which the colour is found. The sardion's colour must be emblematic of sanctity since Revelation 21:20 tells us that of this was built one of the twelve foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem. Rightly, he says, it is sixth in the list since 'our Lord was both incarnate in the sixth age of the world and crucified on the sixth day of the week'.<sup>37</sup>

But scarlet in Scripture also appeared in a diabolic context. The whore of Babylon of Revelation 17:4 'was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour' and is seen sitting on a scarlet beast. Allegorical interpretation acted to preserve the purity of the pre-eminent metaphor of blood and holy sacrifice by pointing out that her dress was a diabolic trick, as in the citation in the text of Caesarius which refers the reader to Matthew 23:28: 'even so ye shall also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity'.<sup>38</sup> The finery is a misleading covering, a veneer on the surface of darkness. The chalice she holds is *full of* abomination, it is not *itself* turpitude. The gold is not to be blamed for the wrongs that the world does with it. To function as a deception, the scarlet and splendour must be a clear signal of excellence. This understanding is notably different from the original attitude of John the Divine, who must have seen these treasure-ornaments as appropriate trappings of iniquity. Again, the four horses of the Apocalypse, described in Revelation 6:1–6, were white, red, black and 'pale' (*pallidus*). With regard to the red horse, we find in Bede an explanation of the fact that the martyrs are red-stained but glorious, when the devil is so coloured and damned. In Zachariah 1:8 appears the red horse of the Lord, but that one is 'red with his own blood, this one [in Revelation] with the blood of others'.<sup>39</sup> These examples show how 'red' and also the full range of words and phrases of all kinds were organized by their individual qualities and separated from the immediate textual context which was sometimes awkward.

<sup>35</sup> Aponius, *In Cantica Cantorum*, 6, 9; p. 142, lines 103–6: "uitta coccinea" mitra dicitur quae colligata rependebat in capite Aaron summi pontificis, regalem demonstrans insignem honorem, qui per confessionem nominis ueri regis Christi adquiritur' and *passim*. The priestly garments are described in Exodus 28.

<sup>36</sup> Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis*, col. 202, line c13: 'reverendus martyrum cruor'. See col. 199d, lines 7–12.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 199d: 'Merito sexto loco positus, cum Dominus noster et sexta aetate saeculi incarnatus et sexta feria sit pro totius mundi salute crucifixus'.

<sup>38</sup> Caesarius of Arles, *Expositio in Apocalypsin*, PL 35, cols. 2417–52, at col. 2441, lines 64–8.

<sup>39</sup> Bede, *Explanatio Apocalypsis*, col. 147a, line 10: 'ille suo sanguine rufus, hic alieno'.



If scarlet was given a consistent positive message in the texts, black was read as spiritually negative. Such a figurative association is supported in modern English in that blackness can be associated with being gloomy or dirty, bad or evil. Similarly, the Latin, *niger*, could mean black, bad or unlucky. It may be assumed that there is a basic association between darkness, the night and fear, since it is in nocturnal circumstances that the main human sense organ, the eye, is at its most disadvantaged. But this *natural* assumption is not shared by all cultures. In many parts of Africa white is the colour of death and black is associated with life and fertility.<sup>40</sup> Such associations may well have something to do with skin colour, a racial division that seemingly makes its appearance in the interpretation of Song of Songs, in which the bride is described as dark. The negative cultural association left the interpretation of 'I am black, but I am comely' (Song 1:4) as a not inconsiderable challenge for the Latin exegetes.<sup>41</sup>

The appearance of the passage today is of an attempt to play down the foreignness of the princess, who came from Egypt, in that she has been darkened by the sun.<sup>42</sup> For the Romans, used to a more vigorously negative rhetoric of blackness, the passage presented great difficulty. Origen, that father of allegorical interpretation, spent pages rising to the challenge. His response is ingenious. The bride, that is the Church, is black (negative attribute) in that she is of ignoble birth. She is the Church of the Gentiles and as such 'she is baseborn in their eyes, because she cannot count as hers the noble blood of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob'.<sup>43</sup> She is black, but beautiful. Black is seen as ugly, but she is only black on the surface. Her soul is pure and beautiful, for it has been purified by Christ. Her dark skin is the product of circumstance. She has been burnt by the sun and as is the manner of Ethiopians, 'bodies that have once been scorched by the sun, transmit a congenital stain', so she is *fusca et nigra*.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> D. Zahan, 'White, red and black: colour symbolism in Black Africa', *Eranos Yearbook* 41 (1972), pp. 365–96, at p. 385.

<sup>41</sup> Authorized version, 1:5.

<sup>42</sup> Any racial significance has been toned down in modern commentary. It is considered 'unlikely' that she was a Negro. It can be argued of the Hebrew that 'there is no suggestion in the verb of either revulsion or envy – just interest': Carr, *The Song*, p. 78. It can be viewed simply as a statement of modesty.

<sup>43</sup> Origen, *In Cantica Canticorum*, ed. W. A. Baehrens, Origenes Werke 8, Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 33 (Leipzig, 1923), pp. 61–198; 2, p. 114, lines 1–2: 'quamvis pro eo ignobilem, quod generositatem sibi Abraham et Isaac et Jacob non possit ascribere'.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125, lines 25–6: 'Quod in illis locis sol radiis acrioribus fervent et adusta iam semel atque infuscata corpora genuini vitii successione permaneant'; p. 125, lines 12–13 (Pre-Vulgate Song 1:5): 'Ne videatis me, quoniam infuscata sum ego, quia despexit me sol'.

In a minor echo of this dichotomy, ordinary Christians are black and subject to sin, but beautiful in that they seek to approach His supreme beauty. It was improper to claim that any worldly thing was without the need for Grace: the exegetes could point to the passage of John: 'if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us'.<sup>45</sup> Augustine was steadfast on this point, quoting in illustration of Tyconius' second rule, 'for it is not said, I was black as the tents of Kedar, but I am now comely as the curtains of Solomon. The Church declares itself to be both at present.'<sup>46</sup> The point is emphasized by Gregory the Great, citing Song of Songs in the *Moralia*, in which he writes of those called 'ravens', 'who never pride themselves on the light of their righteousness, but by the grace of humility confess in themselves the blackness of sins'.<sup>47</sup> Justus emphasizes the Christian theme of the vital significance of transformation, under baptism and through Grace. We are to recall the evangelist who said that 'ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy'.<sup>48</sup> The process is set out in the passage in which Ambrose comments of the bride, 'black by fault, but beautiful through Grace'.<sup>49</sup> Bede uses a variation of such arguments. For him the blackness comes from the 'adversity of pressures'. He also uses the idea of superficial colourations. Indeed, the Lord *appeared* as a thing black and of very little value, in the eyes of his persecutors.<sup>50</sup> In such ways came to be explained the contemporaneously paradoxical image of a black Church.<sup>51</sup> In these passages, a negative quality is reinterpreted such that it can be made out to be a mark of beauty. The text is made to fit within the system of allegorical interpretation of spiritual meaning. The integrity of the surface event in these texts was given scant respect. If this was the case of scriptural narratives, how would the daily events of the contemporary early medieval world have been viewed and analysed?

These examples demonstrate a method of reading, interpreting and writing. Symbolism was looked for in existing texts and written into new

<sup>45</sup> I John 1:8.

<sup>46</sup> Augustine, *De Doctrina Christina*, 3, 32, 45: 'Fusca fui ut Cedar et speciosa sum ut pellas Salomonis, sed utrumque se esse dixit, propter temporalem unitatem intra una retia piscium bonorum et malorum', 'because the good and bad are all mixed up in one net'.

<sup>47</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, 18, 30, 49; p. 917, lines 63–5: 'Qui recte etiam corui uocati sunt, qui a nequequam de iustitiae luce superbiunt, sed per humilitatis gratiam in se nigredinem confitentur' (on Job 28:4).

<sup>48</sup> John 16:20. Justus, *In Cantica Cantecorum*, 965, c2–4.

<sup>49</sup> Ambrose, *Commentarius in Psalmo CXVIII*, 3, 8; 1, p. 92: 'fusca per culpam, decora per gratiam'.

<sup>50</sup> Bede, *In Cantica Cantecorum*, 1, 1, 4, p. 195, lines 202–3: 'nigra scilicet aduersitate pressurarum'; lines 209–10: 'Uilis quidem nimis in oculis persequentium pareo'.

<sup>51</sup> A. Hermann and M. C. Di Azevedo, 'Farbe', in T. Klauser (ed.), *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 70 (Stuttgart, 1969), cols. 358–447, at cols. 432–3.

ones. Information was scrutinized for signs in need of elucidation, just as Gregory of Tours wondered at the meaning of rainbow-like light circling the sun, or roses blooming in mid-winter.<sup>52</sup> This represented a specific way of understanding and interpreting information which was applied to the wider world beyond texts. So it was that Gregory recounts the tale of the deacon overseeing the martyrdom of Julian of Brioude who was woken by a noise in the night as though someone had stepped into the sanctuary. In the morning the place was covered in brilliant red roses, even though it was November.<sup>53</sup> The bishop 'took the association of red roses with martyrdom as self-evident'.<sup>54</sup>

Visions and images were interpreted allegorically. Figural depictions of Christ and the saints in churches were understood as being intended to express the eternal spiritual truths to which these people had borne witness. I wish here to highlight the contemporary importance of the *functioning* of such art, just like written texts were interpreted to make *them* function. Depictions of the biblical past were sometimes expressed in the form of narrative cycles, as in the case of the gospel scenes on the lateral walls of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna. But very often a use was made of non-narrative symbolic compositions, such as depictions of Christ enthroned, of visions of the cross and so forth. This style of art can be understood as taking from Scripture the themes which were seen as being of overriding importance in the holy narratives of the Christian past. The resulting art displays a simplification of details, a suppression of relief, and an increase in stylization and the standardization of images.

Even early imperial descriptions often tended to read meanings or associations into the experience of viewing an object, and this process, of placing stress on the role of the viewer, appears to have intensified during the course of the Roman Empire, resulting in 'a heightened visual imagination, enabling one to see things that were not there'.<sup>55</sup> This meant that less and less detail was necessary on the original object, for a figure, for example, to be appreciated as a good image of a human, 'so real it might be expected to move'. This meant that for a Christian it really *was* possible to imagine that churches, with their repeated

<sup>52</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Decem Libri Historiarum*, eds. B. Krusch and W. Levison, MGH SRM I:1 (Hanover, 1951), VI, 44.

<sup>53</sup> Gregory of Tours, *De Virtutibus Sancti Juliani*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM I:2 (Hanover, 1885), 46b.

<sup>54</sup> G. de Nie, *Views from a Many-Windowed Tower: Studies of Imagination in the Works of Gregory of Tours*, *Studies in Classical Antiquity* 7 (Amsterdam, 1987), p. 121.

<sup>55</sup> J. Onians, 'Abstraction and imagination in late antiquity', *Art History* 3 (1980), pp. 1-24, at p. 17.

symbolic references to paradise, did, in some ways, provide a glimpse of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>56</sup> That is why the viewing of such worldly splendours was understood to lead the mind to the contemplation of heaven, just as exegesis led from the scarlet lips of a woman to the spilt blood of Christ.<sup>57</sup>

Complex iconographic schemes were, moreover, addressed in terms of abstractions, much as narrative lines of Scripture were interpreted as symbolic references to Christian moral qualities, such as humility, charity and divinity. Late Roman descriptions of churches focus not just on imagery, but also on overall effect, with particular emphasis on the play of light, brilliance and shine. A seminal article by James and Webb has pointed out the singular nature of much art description of the early medieval east.<sup>58</sup> They argue that the function of such texts was to re-create the impact of an image on the viewer, stating 'explicitly what was implicit in the image'. The importance of this lies in the fact that church art had specific functions, 'spiritual rather than purely aesthetic'.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, much Christian art description did not need to do more than praise artworks by stressing their spiritual power of stimulating the mind. The images themselves were, therefore, of secondary importance to the message they imparted, that is, to their effect on the imagination of the viewer. Images and metaphors were understood as a necessary concession to human weakness. Symbols were seen as repositories of mystery, the meaning of which was as much granted by revelation as by study. This attitude to the acquisition of spiritual comprehension shaped the fascination with image-contemplation and was driven by the same motivation as was the search for allegorically-hidden truth in the Bible.

Many people of the early medieval period were avid for contact with the divine, whether it could be found in contemplating the present and visible, or the past and invisible. If modern historical research is fre-

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>57</sup> Whether specific acts of worship before images should be performed was another question, and one which took this attitude of mind a significantly greater stage forward. E. Kitzinger, 'The cult of images in the age before iconoclasm', *Dumbarton Oaks Paper* 8 (1954), pp. 83–150, describes how the way for image worship was paved in the fourth century by the increasingly widespread adoption of other material props which were not barred by specific prohibitions, notably crosses and relics.

<sup>58</sup> It is interesting that eastern materials can be used to corroborate readings of the Latin texts, although the common origins of both literary traditions under the Roman Empire make this unsurprising.

<sup>59</sup> L. James and R. Webb, 'To understand ultimate things and enter secret places', *Art History* 14 (1991), pp. 1–17, at pp. 11 and 14.

quently about detailed accuracy, we should be acutely aware that histories of the early Middle Ages were written in an environment which regarded the universal as superior to the specific. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* should be read as the work of a man who was first and foremost an exegete. Douglas has suggested that Bede was thinking of the narrow windows of the church at Jarrow when he wrote of those of the ancient Jewish temple which widened out only within the building, that they represented the doctors of the Church, who received singly and openly the rays of truth and transmitted them widely, just as light is conveyed round the interior from the slender openings in the wall.<sup>60</sup> Not just prophets and kings, but colours and images from the past and present were used as sources of spiritual instruction, just as early medieval histories were expected to reveal *exempla* of good and of evil through the means of a literal description of events.

In the brief but remarkable historical note that Bede appended to the end of the *Ecclesiastical History* he listed his literary achievements and stated that he had entirely given his life to the study of Scripture.<sup>61</sup> He stood in a long intellectual tradition of being an allegorical reader and writer first and foremost. The world, its present and past were seen by Christians as the work of God. The Bible, that great account from Creation to Judgement Day, was read as a repository of complex symbolism such that each age and each text furnished a spiritual message to the believer. Church art, like literary exegesis, was an attempt to express the more prominent symbols and themes of the Christian life and past. Symbolic viewing of texts and images created a conception of the span of Christian time from origins to end as being filled with meaning that was waiting to be grasped and used in spiritual instruction, rather than simply to be recorded with as much accuracy as possible.

<sup>60</sup> Bede, *De Templo*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 119A (Turnhout, 1969), pp. 140–234, at p. 162, with I. M. Douglas, 'Bede's *De Templo* and the Commentary on Samuel and Kings by Claudius of Turin', in Bonner (ed.), *Famulus Christi*, pp. 235–333, at p. 325. G. Henderson, *Bede and the Visual Arts*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1980), discusses art references made by Bede. On descriptions of buildings in the early Middle Ages, see D. Parsons, *Books and Buildings: Architectural Description Before and After Bede*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1987).

<sup>61</sup> Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* V. 24, 'omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi'.

## *The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an identity from Pippin to Charlemagne*

Mary Garrison

'The Franks endeavoured, as it were, to wheel into Church history as the continuators of Israel's exploits rather than into Roman history as heirs of pagan Rome' wrote Kantorowicz in *Laudes Regiae*.<sup>1</sup> Even before Kantorowicz's epigrammatic formulation however, the Franks' self-representation as the Elect or the New Israel had attracted the notice of historians and it has gradually become part of the historiographical mainstream.<sup>2</sup> Yet the evidence adduced to support this notion of Frankish identity is sometimes equivocal. It may therefore be useful to take a critical look at this aspect of Frankish identity in the second half of the eighth century, to reassess some of the relevant texts and to set this development in Frankish self-definition in a comparative context in order to highlight what is most distinctive about the Frankish response to the history of Israel in the Bible. Before reviewing the Frankish evidence however, it will be necessary to consider briefly the idea of election itself, the problems it poses for historians and its assimilation into modern historiography.

The concept of election by God is one of the most enduring and influential legacies of the history of the Israelites as recounted in the

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley, 1958), p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> E. Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen für das Herrscherbild Karls des Grossen und seines Hofkreises* (Diss. phil. Tübingen, 1949); E. Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter' (1956), reprinted in his *Spätantikes und Fränkischen Galliens* (Munich, 1976), vol. I, pp. 3–71; G. Tellenbach, 'Römischer und Christlicher Reichsgedanke in der Liturgie des frühen Mittelalters' (1935), reprinted in his *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze* (Stuttgart, 1988), vol. II, pp. 343–410; C. Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* (Stuttgart, 1935), pp. 17–20. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and Offa', in his *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 98–123, esp. pp. 98–100; W. Mohr, 'Christlich-Alttestamentliches Gedankengut in der Entwicklung des karolingischen Kaisertums', in *Judentum im Mittelalter: Beiträge zum Christlich-Jüdischen Gespräche*, ed. P. Wilpert and W. P. Eckert, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 4, Veröffentlichung des Thomas-Instituts an der Universität Köln (Berlin, 1966), pp. 382–409, at p. 393; J. Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed and the people's choice: Carolingian royal ritual' (1988), reprinted in her *The Frankish World, 750–900* (London, 1996), pp. 99–132, at pp. 108–112.

Bible.<sup>3</sup> It has been, and continues to be, widely used by different Christian groups.<sup>4</sup> In recent years the Michigan Militia and some extremist Afrikaner groups have brought it into the headlines and into dispute.<sup>5</sup> In the early Middle Ages, however, the separatist possibilities seized on by contemporary North American and South African extremists were less frequently exploited. Indeed, throughout history, the idea has been used to promote unity as well as division; it has appealed to the powerful and the oppressed alike. It can be (and has been) used in a triumphalist way to justify oppression or territorial expansion into a 'promised' land, but it has also provided a rallying call for people longing for liberation, as illustrated, for example, by the reworking of certain gospel songs during the US civil rights movement.

In the first century AD, the exclusiveness of the Israelites' understanding of their election had been recalled and reinterpreted by Peter to emphasize the fact that all Christians had been specially chosen:

vos autem genus electum  
regale sacerdotium  
gens sancta  
populus acquisitionis . . .  
qui aliquando non populus  
nunc autem populus Dei . . .

But you are a chosen generation,  
a kingly priesthood,  
a holy nation,  
a purchased people . . .  
Who in time past were not a people:  
But are now the people of God<sup>6</sup>

From the third century on, Christian anti-Jewish polemic had accumulated scriptural statements and arguments in an attempt to demonstrate that the Jews had been decisively superseded as the elect by the Chris-

<sup>3</sup> For example Ex. 19:6; Deut. 7:6, 26:18; III Reg. 8:51.

<sup>4</sup> See E. Umansky, 'Election' and D. Hillers, 'Covenant', in M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York, 1987), vol. V, pp. 75–81, and vol. IV, pp. 133–7, respectively. For a critical account of the use of the idea in Church history, see W. Bühlmann, *God's Chosen Peoples*, trans. R. R. Barr (New York, 1982).

<sup>5</sup> A. du Toit, 'No chosen people: the myth of the Calvinist origins of Afrikaner nationalism and racist ideology', *American Historical Review* 88 (1983), pp. 920–52.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Petr. 2:9–10; for discussion, Bühlmann, *God's Chosen Peoples*, p. 51. This and all subsequent quotations from the Vulgate are from *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. R. Weber and R. Gryson et al., 4th rev. edn (Stuttgart, 1994); translations from the Douay-Rheims version.

tian Church, which came to regard itself as the true Israel.<sup>7</sup> But despite the authority of the Petrine view that *all* Christians were an elect, the notion of election would be privatized in successive appropriations. Medieval Franks, Britons, Anglo-Saxons and Spaniards alike at various times each claimed the status of God's chosen people for their own, sometimes in ways that excluded other Christians. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch Calvinists, some English Puritans and the Puritan settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony believed in the reality of their own peculiar covenant with God. Later, in a secularized guise, the idea begat the notion of Manifest Destiny, the putative charter of divine approval for the American westward expansion.<sup>8</sup> From these examples it should be clear that, despite its biblical grounding, the conviction of special election by God can have no single meaning or function – hence its great interest for historians. It is an enormously powerful idea and at the same time a malleable one. It may therefore be helpful to distinguish between its manifestation as an ideology and as a theology.<sup>9</sup> The concept of election becomes an ideology of legitimation when it is appropriated by ruling groups to justify political arrangements, territorial expansion, exclusion or oppression. One should also stress that election as a scheme of thought derived from the history of Israel must be distinguished from other views of sacral kingship derived from other scriptural precedents, or from none at all.

Some historians of religion have called attention to the relatively minor theological role of the idea in medieval Christian thought, in contrast to its signal importance among many Protestant groups after the Reformation. None the less, at certain times and places in the earlier Middle Ages, the concept of Election and the model of the Israelites played a significant role.<sup>10</sup> But precisely because the idea of election has been used by so many groups at different times, suggesting an illusion of sameness, it is essential

<sup>7</sup> On this development, dating from the time of Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258) and furthered by Isidore of Seville (d. 636), see B. Blumenkranz, *Juifs et Chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Etudes Juives 2 (Paris, 1960), pp. 275–8. J. Neusner, *Judaism and its Social Metaphors: Israel in the History of Jewish Thought* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 186–92.

<sup>8</sup> A. K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny* (Baltimore, 1955); F. Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: a Reinterpretation* (New York, 1963); W. H. Truettner, 'Ideology and image: justifying westward expansion', in W. Truettner (ed.), *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier 1820–1920* (Washington, DC, 1991), pp. 27–54.

<sup>9</sup> On the distinction, see Bühlmann, *God's Chosen Peoples*, p. 124; W. van den Bercken, 'The Christianisation of Russia in the tenth century: a unique missiological story', *Exchange* 25 (1996), pp. 261–84 at p. 263.

<sup>10</sup> See Hillers, 'Covenant', in Eliade (ed.), *Encyclopedia*; but cf. Bühlmann, *God's Chosen Peoples*, pp. 67, 127, n. 9, citing H. Jedin, *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte* (6 vols., Freiburg i. Br., 1962–73), vol. III, pp. 97–110, 'Vom regnum Francorum zum Imperium christianum'.



to keep sight of the distinctness and particularity of the notion in different times and places. The Frankish use of the idea is a world apart from the literal-minded conception of the seventeenth-century Massachusetts governor John Winthrop, who wrote of the 'Citty upon a Hill': 'Thus stands the case between God and us. We are entered into Covenant with him for this worke. We have taken out a commission. The Lord hath given us leave to drawe our own articles.'<sup>11</sup> It is important to stress, therefore, that no such explicitness is to be found in the Frankish sources; there are no direct references to a special covenant, and even the words *novus Israel* are nowhere used directly to designate the Franks.

Despite the diversity of its avatars and their functions however, such an appropriation of the biblical past does have one constant and perhaps easily forgotten dimension, from eighth-century Francia to the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Michigan Militia. The notion does not merely confer a new identity onto the group which adopts it, grafting their contemporary history and identity onto an ancient and sacred past. Rather, to its users, it affirms a belief in the abiding presence and intervention of God in history, a continual making present of the covenant with the elect, so that the present is not merely a re-enactment, but also in some sense a fulfilment of words and events of the Bible. For some self-defined elect groups, accordingly, their own contemporary history could be read for signs of divine approval and disapproval, although Augustine would have disavowed such an approach.<sup>12</sup>

Just as the idea of election itself is derived from the Bible, so too is the Bible the source of the intellectual method required to apply it – typological thought – whereby a new event can be understood as a fulfilment of an earlier one. Although typology can be used to reinterpret the past, its chief role in both the Old Testament and the New is to explain the meaning of a *present* or new event. In the Bible, according to A. C. Charity's subtle analysis, the primary role of typological thought is to interpret events, not texts; it is more a hermeneutic technique than an exegetical one.<sup>13</sup> Thus, to explain anything about the use of the concept

<sup>11</sup> From John Winthrop, 'A Modell of Christian Charity', as quoted in F. Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (1975; reprinted New York, 1976), pp. 180–1.

<sup>12</sup> See R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine* (1970; revised edn, Cambridge, 1988), pp. 14–17, 20. On the missionary Livingstone's criticism of the Transvaal Boers for 'appropriat[ing] to themselves in a temporal sense Divine promises only meant to be fulfilled to the Church or its head in a Spiritual sense', see Du Toit, 'No chosen people', p. 945. Compare Roger Williams' analagous criticism of the Massachusetts Bay Puritans, in Jennings, *The Invasion of America*, p. 181.

<sup>13</sup> A. C. Charity, *Events and their Afterlife: the Dialectics of Christian Typology in the Bible and Dante* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 99–100.

of election by a past society, we need to be sensitive to their own way of reading biblical history, and to their typological understanding of the Bible, as well as to the way they apply that understanding of biblical history to contemporary events. Every allusion to Old Testament history, every borrowing of biblical language, every reference to the concept of the elect cannot be taken at face value as a literal-minded self-representation as the New Israel. Old Testament typology, like all comparisons, can function as either simile or metaphor; it can express a wish or a hope; it can purport to describe things as they are, or imply a prescription about the way they ought to be. Any attempt to interpret apparent evidence for covenant theology therefore requires one to consider which of these modes – optative, descriptive or prescriptive – was intended.

For a historian, the notion of election raises questions about the role of the idea in the construction of identity and the political life of a particular group. Some of the questions one might pose about the use of this idea are: how is the concept of election or chosen people status introduced, and by whom? How is the idea communicated to the group's members? What implications does it have for their conduct and self-understanding? What function does it serve within the group, and how is it used to articulate relationships with outsiders? Where do the group's members locate their special legacy from God, the promised land? Finally, for the Franks in particular one might wonder: what happens to the notion of the *gens Francorum* once the Franks have become the *populus Dei*?<sup>14</sup> And what happens to the Jews once the Franks have assumed the status of the *populus Dei*?<sup>15</sup>

In view of its importance, it is curious that the diffusion and reception of the idea of election among the Franks has attracted *obiter dicta* rather than sustained attention. Even in superb studies tracing the development of related concepts, such as Old Testament typology, Christian ideas of kingship and royal anointing, the adoption of this crucial item of ideological baggage has usually been treated as a given rather than as a phenomenon with protracted and uncertain development. The reassessment that follows is intended to contribute to a more nuanced exploration of the notion that the eighth-century Franks regarded themselves as God's elect, the 'New Israel'. It will not be possible to

<sup>14</sup> W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London, 1969), p. 30.

<sup>15</sup> Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance*, p. 23. On Otfrid of Weissenburg's implication that the Franks had supplanted the Jews, in the preface to his *Evangelienbuch*, see D. H. Green, *The Millstätter Exodus: A Crusading Epic* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 204.

answer every one of the above questions for the Franks, but a critical look at the introduction and development of the idea in the crucial second half of the eighth century will answer some of them; it will also reveal that the idea took root later, and rather more slowly, than has sometimes been believed. Then selected examples of the adoption of the same idea in other times and places will be used to highlight what is most distinctive about the Frankish appropriation of the concept. Of course, Frankish notions about their identity and kings drew on many models besides the history of Israel. Biblical ideas were constantly used alongside models derived from the classical and early Christian heritage, not to mention Frankish tradition itself.<sup>16</sup> Despite the indisputable importance of these other sources of inspiration however, the task of cataloguing their interplay with the notion of election falls outside the scope of the present investigation.

Familiarity with the importance of covenant theology in other eras combined with a teleological view of the distinctiveness of Frankish imperial Christianity has contributed to a tendency to overemphasize the earliest evidence for the Franks' representation of themselves as God's elect. Accordingly, the presence of the idea has occasionally been inferred from examples of biblical typology which are merely literary flourishes and where the significance for the Franks themselves is unclear.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, some texts which are royal propaganda not relevant to the notion of election (such as the *laudes regiae*) have been uncritically adduced as evidence for covenant theology. Finally, in some cases, the prayers and blessings which have been construed as evidence of the Franks' identification with Israel in fact tell us more about the Franks' notion of God than about Frankish self-awareness.

When the relevant texts are assessed more sceptically, one sees that the notion that the Franks were a latter-day embodiment of God's chosen people does not have a linear history from the time of its earliest

<sup>16</sup> Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', pp. 3–71, and E. Ewig, 'Das Bild Constantins des Großen in den ersten Jahrhunderten des abendländischen Mittelalters' (1956), reprinted in H. Hunger (ed.), *Das Byzantinische Herrscherbild*, Wege der Forschung 341 (Darmstadt, 1975). H. Fichtenau, 'Byzanz und die Pfalz zu Aachen', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 59 (1951), pp. 1–54; T. F. X. Noble, 'Tradition and learning in search of ideology: the *Libri Carolini*', in R. E. Sullivan (ed.), *The Gentle Voices of Teachers: Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age* (Ohio, 1995), pp. 227–60; W. Hartmann, 'Die karolingische Reform und die Bibel', *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 18.1 (1986), pp. 58–78; on the multiplicity of models with reference to nicknames, see M. Garrison, 'The social world of Alcuin: nicknames at York and at the Carolingian Court', in L. Houwen and A. MacDonald (eds.), *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, Proceedings of the Third Germania Latina Conference, Groningen, May 1995 (Germania Latina III) (Medievalia Groningana XXII) (Groningen, 1998), pp. 59–79.

<sup>17</sup> L. Oelsner, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches unter König Pippin* (Leipzig, 1871), pp. 453–4.

articulations. Rather, its progressive domestication and elaboration by the Franks were protracted and uncertain. It was a tree which did not bear fruit until the final two decades of the eighth century and which required grafts from outside. Indeed, it was the non-Franks in Charlemagne's entourage who were responsible for some of the most explicit articulations of the idea. (In this connection it is interesting to note that the assimilation of the idea of election into Afrikaner historical writing and political discourse was not straightforward and began with statements from outsiders.<sup>18</sup>) Moreover, since identities often crystallize when the pressure to distinguish self from others is most acute, it should be no surprise that encounters with enemies did much to stimulate this way of thinking. Hence, the need for differentiation from Christian adversaries – Lombards, Bavarians and Byzantine Greeks – also played a crucial role.

The emerging Frankish self-definition as the elect invites comparison with the much-studied process of the ethnogenesis of distinct groups in late antiquity, but with a crucial difference in visibility. In this instance, we can attempt to trace the dissemination of the idea more precisely by considering the audience and diffusion of the relevant contemporary texts and rituals.<sup>19</sup> It will be clear that the idea was sometimes propagated in texts that had no public audience or which survive in one copy only. Moreover, the most important rituals that dramatized the idea were performed only once every few decades (royal anointing). In short, the diffusion of the idea was limited and halting; its eventual triumph is obvious only in hindsight.

Before tracing its history a few observations about the larger context of Frankish identity are necessary. Firstly, the domestication of the idea of election is part of a larger process of cultural change: the education of the Frankish kings from *reges christiani* to *reges christianissimi*. This education of the Franks and their kings was accomplished through meetings and assemblies as well as texts: the increasingly elaborate *Fürstenspiegel* as well as more modest letters of admonition and instruction;<sup>20</sup> through

<sup>18</sup> See du Toit, 'No chosen people'. It appears that the Trekboers were first accused of thinking this way in an attempt to discredit them; only later did they adopt the idea themselves and, still later, the ideology became a prop of apartheid, and historians mistakenly leapt to the conclusion that it had been a justifying ideology from the beginning.

<sup>19</sup> But see J. Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350–1450* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 211–51 at p. 213 for an important caveat about the representativeness of texts.

<sup>20</sup> See H. H. Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit*, Bonner Historische Forschungen 32 (Bonn, 1968); R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms 789–895*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History (London, 1977), pp. 155–83.

Pippin's upbringing at St Denis, through the presence of Charlemagne's foreign courtiers<sup>21</sup> and through the lessons and meal-time reading in the palace of Charlemagne, where Augustine's *City of God* was a favourite. The results of this process of royal education are reflected in the increasing sophistication of Frankish kings as patrons of poetry and exegesis, and in the increasing sophistication of the texts dedicated to them. The diffusion of these ideas from the court, in turn, depended on the circulation of men and manuscripts and on the audience of rituals.

Secondly, one must also bear in mind that direct adoption of religious practices from the Old Testament (as attested so abundantly in Irish sources) does not necessarily by itself signal a self-conscious adoption of the notion of being God's elect. The biblical literalism or fundamentalism sometimes evident in the early medieval Insular world might be seen as a direct reliving of the message of the words of the Bible, but the Irish, the English and the thinkers associated with King Alfred in the ninth century each put their own distinctive spin on the practice. The Irish, as Kottje and others have demonstrated, had a remarkable affinity for the Old Testament. Their thoroughgoing adoption of the Old Testamentary laws (for example, about diet) was an implicit rejection of Pauline Christianity. Their enthusiastic use of Old Testament names, laws and ideas about purity was perhaps facilitated by the absence of Jews from Ireland, which meant that the Irish did not feel the pressure (evinced, for example, in continental conciliar provisions about the Sabbath) to set themselves apart from Jewish neighbours.<sup>22</sup> Such practices seem to reflect a particularly literal-minded interest in the Bible, paralleled in the Irish predilection for parabiblical lore and apocrypha. In Alfredian England, on the other hand, the use of the idea of the elect and concomitant application of biblical law are something quite different again, shaped by Alfred's sincere conviction that the Viking attacks had been a scourge from God and only the revival of religion and learning could ensure His favour. Thus every appropriation or living out of the idea of being the elect does not mean the same thing. Each represents not only a different way of reading the Bible but also a different conception

<sup>21</sup> See M. Garrison, 'The English and the Irish at the court of Charlemagne', in P. L. Butzer, M. Kerner and W. Oberschelp (eds.), *Charlemagne and his Heritage: 1200 Years of Civilization and Science in Europe*, vol. I: *Scholarship, Worldview and Understanding* (Turnhout, 1997), pp. 97–124.

<sup>22</sup> R. Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss des alten Testaments auf Recht und Liturgie des frühen Mittelalters* (6.–8. Jahrhundert), 2nd edn (Bonn, 1970); M. Herren, 'The "Judaizing tendencies" of the early Irish Church', *Filologia mediolatina* 3 (1996), pp. 73–80; see also B. Jaski, 'The Irish conception of early medieval kingship and the Old Testament', *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), pp. 329–44; Meens, chapter 3, this volume.

of the past. The importance of these distinctions will emerge from the comparative examples discussed at the end of this essay.

Thirdly, one must remember that typological thought is subtle and ramifying, not merely an equation. A comparison can express a wish, a hope or an attitude.<sup>23</sup> Moreover it is in the nature of typological thought that images are not borrowed merely as discrete units: rather, a transplanted image (say, comparison with David or Solomon) may imply a whole network of accompanying relationships. So to liken a king to an Old Testament king may, in some cases, imply a corresponding likeness between the people he rules and the Israelites. But that second connection may be tenuous or impossible to document, for it depends on the response of the audience. Yet, however uncertain, such possible connections are important because early medieval evidence for the use of the concept of election is primarily concerned with kings rather than people (in striking contrast to the seventeenth- and twentieth-century sources that invoke the notion of election with the *populus* in the foreground).<sup>24</sup>

Acknowledgement of the ramifying quality of typological thought does not entitle one to draw connections indefinitely. The text of the *missa in profectionem hostium eontibus in prohelium* from the Sacramentary of Gellone illustrates the need for circumspection. Statements in that mass about what God has done in the past – providing safety for Israel during the Exodus, the strength for David to vanquish Goliath, and so on<sup>25</sup> – function as declarations about God's nature and past assistance. The celebrant wishes that similar divine assistance may be available in his time, but there is no mention whatever of Israel or the chosen people until *populus tuus* in the final prayer *ad populum*,<sup>26</sup> there the reference is so neutral as to preclude any special or exclusive equation between Israel and the people on whose behalf the mass is performed. *Populus tuus* in that context is a label which includes all Christians.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> On typological thought, see Charity, *Events and their Afterlife*; M. Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return; or, Cosmos and History*, trans. W. R. Trask (1954; rev. edn, Princeton, 1971) and above, pp. 117–18.

<sup>24</sup> On this point, and the 'prior and equally religious legitimization of the Franks', see Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 215.

<sup>25</sup> G. Tellenbach, 'Römischer und Christlicher Reichsgedanke in der Liturgie des frühen Mittelalters' (1934), reprinted in his *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze* (Stuttgart, 1988), vol. II, pp. 343–410, at pp. 407–9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409

<sup>27</sup> For an example of an early medieval prayer which affirms the universalism of *populus tuus*, see M. Frost, 'A prayer book from St Emmeran, Ratisbon', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 30 (1929), pp. 32–57, at p. 41: 'Pro cuncto populo catholico/Salvum fac populum tuum Domine & Benedic hereditati tuae; & rege eos & extolle illos usque in eternum.' The prayer is preserved in a ninth-century manuscript whose contents reflect those of the Insular private prayer books brought to the Continent by Boniface and others.

Before analysing the evidence in detail, it may be helpful to begin with a very brief summary of Old Testament typology and the notion of election among the Franks. The presentation of Frankish rulers as praiseworthy in terms of Old Testament kings is at least as old as Gregory of Tours and Venantius Fortunatus;<sup>28</sup> a possible (though rarely explicit) corollary of those comparisons is that the Franks themselves were God's chosen people, the New Israel. Yet Old Testament typology in Merovingian times, for all its possible implications, cannot be said to constitute a discrete and self-aware assumption of an identity. Under the Carolingians, from the middle of the eighth century onwards, these typological identifications gained prominence: in ritual, in liturgy, in art,<sup>29</sup> as well as in poetry, annal-writing, letters and legislation. Rulers were most often the beneficiaries of these comparisons, but as Janet Nelson has stressed, the Franks themselves begin to emerge into view alongside their rulers, sharing the new religious legitimisation.<sup>30</sup> Yet the seeds of this new Frankish self-representation were almost always planted by outsiders: first by the popes in the 750s and subsequently by Insular emigrés in the mid-780s and 790s.

#### THE LETTERS OF THE *CODEx CAROLINUS*<sup>31</sup>

Significantly, it was not the Carolingians themselves who began to depict themselves as the elect, but the popes. Almost simultaneously with the anointings of Pippin in 751 and 754 and his elevation to the kingship, papal letters to Pippin began to incorporate comparisons

<sup>28</sup> McKitterick, *Frankish Church*, p. 5 and Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, pp. 7–28. On Gregory of Tours and the Old Testament, M. Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours (538–94): 'Zehn Bücher Geschichte': Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 1994); Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 214; A. Demyttenaere, 'Clovis en de Kanaänieten: Het heilshistorisch perspectief van Gregorius van Tours', in *Ad Fontes: Opstellen aangeboden aan prof. dr. C. van de Kieft* (Amsterdam, 1984), pp. 13–38; Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos*, pp. 45–79; Y. Hen, 'The uses of the Bible and the perception of kingship in Merovingian Gaul', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.3 (1998), pp. 277–90 and I. Wood, 'Incest, law and the Bible in sixth-century Gaul', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.3 (1998), pp. 291–304.

<sup>29</sup> But on the limited evidence for Davidic representations (and its early prominence among the Picts), note the observations of Bullough in his 'Imagines regum and their significance in the early medieval West', in his *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage* (Manchester, 1991), pp. 39–96, at pp. 54–5.

<sup>30</sup> Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 215.

<sup>31</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, ed. W. Gundlach, in MGH Epp. III (Berlin, 1892), pp. 469–653 (hereafter cited as *Codex Carolinus*, with page and item numbers referring to this edition); see also the appendix of additional papal letters to the Carolingians separately preserved on papyrus in St Denis, ed. Gundlach, MGH Epp. III, pp. 654–7 and for one extant example, *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores: Facsimile Edition of the Latin Charters prior to the Ninth Century*, ed. A. Brucker and R. Marichal, part XVI, France iv (Zurich, 1986), no. 630.

between Moses and David and Frankish kings, between Israel and the Franks.<sup>32</sup> Yet although the anointings of Pippin (possibly the baptism of his sons) had probably included prayers inspired by Old Testament kings and kingship, the motive for the change in the language of the papal letters was a pragmatic one: the Lombard threat. First Charles Martel, and then Pippin, was beseeched for military assistance against the Lombards, praised for learning and thanked.<sup>33</sup> In letters replete with Old Testament language and images, the Frankish king was hailed as a new Moses, David, Joshua and so on, sometimes all rolled into one.

The language of the letters of the *Codex Carolinus* is indeed striking, but there are several caveats to bear in mind when interpreting its significance for Frankish identity. These limitations pertain to the larger context of the Old Testament flattery, to its discontinuity, and to the restricted diffusion and audience of the letters themselves. In the first place, the Old Testament comparisons play second or even third fiddle to two other ways of conceptualizing the Franco-papal relationship – namely the notion that the Franks are the sons of the ‘mother church’<sup>34</sup> and the implications of the baptismal sponsorship and the resulting baptismal co-parenthood of the popes with the Frankish kings in the second half of the eighth century. A special adoptive relationship between the Franks and Saint Peter himself was one corollary of this co-parenthood. (To the extent that the Franco-papal alliance was strengthened by anointing, baptismal *Firmung* was more important than coronation anointing.) Arnold Angenendt has illuminated the growing importance of the personal bond of compaternity between the popes and Carolingians and called attention to the paradox that, although Pippin and Pope Paul I (757–67) had expressly intended the Franco-papal alliance to be eternal, it was understood that the alliance would have to be renewed with changes in personnel on either side.<sup>35</sup> In the papal letters, this bond of charity and compaternity is mentioned more often than typological comparisons. The Carolingians were in the first instance the special people of the *pope*, and through him, of St Peter,

<sup>32</sup> Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, pp. 51–5; Mohr, ‘Christlich-Alttestamentliches Gedankengut’, pp. 390–7; Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos*, p. 117; Nelson, ‘The Lord’s Anointed’, pp. 102–3 and ‘Kingship and empire’, pp. 215–16.

<sup>33</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 11, p. 505, line 5.

<sup>34</sup> On the origins of this idea with Ambrose, see R. A. Markus, ‘The Latin Fathers’, in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Medieval Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 92–122, at pp. 95, 101.

<sup>35</sup> A. Angenendt, ‘Das Geistliche Bündnis der Päpste mit den Karolingern (754–796)’, *Historisches Jahrbuch* 100 (1980), pp. 1–94, at pp. 62–3.



and only through them, the special people of Yahweh.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly when the biblical phrase *populus peculiaris* is used in the letters, it almost invariably refers not to the Franks, but to the people under the pope's own dominion in Rome, Perugia, Ravenna and Venice, the territories that came to be known as the Republic of St Peter.<sup>37</sup> In one case where Pippin is likened to Moses and extravagantly praised, the Franks themselves are not likened to Israel; that identity is reserved for *Ecclēsia* whose afflictions at the hands of the Lombards are likened to the oppression of Israel of old.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the Franks are only rarely identified with the New Testament reflex of Israel, the People of the Covenant.<sup>39</sup> A neat typological triangle both guaranteed that the Franks would be defined positively in opposition to the Lombards and ensured that they could not regularly be cast as Israel: either *Ecclēsia* or the Republic of St Peter was Israel, the Lombards, the persecutors, and the Franks, the military heroes of Israel.<sup>40</sup> It is hardly surprising that the elaboration of the Old Testament terms of praise for the Franks was sometimes accompanied by an equally emphatic vilification of the pestilent and perfidious Lombards.<sup>41</sup> There is nothing like an unambiguously wicked enemy to promote black-and-white thinking. The Lombard threat was thus the essential catalyst for the Franco-papal alliance and for the flattering Old Testament comparisons.

To evaluate the influence on the Franks of these Old Testament comparisons, one must take account of the possible audience and circulation of the *Codex Carolinus*. I shall consider in order the genesis of the collection, its limited availability and then the evidence for reception that can be inferred from the headings and prefaces. In its present form, the collection comprises papal letters sent to the Carolingians from the

<sup>36</sup> See for example the astonishing letter *Codex Carolinus*, no. 10, pp. 501–3, written in the persona of Peter to Pippin.

<sup>37</sup> For Romans as *populus peculiaris* in the eighth century, see T. F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St Peter: the Birth of the Papal State 680–825* (Philadelphia, 1984), pp. 94–5; see *Codex Carolinus*, no. 1, p. 477, line 1; no. 2, p. 478, line 3 and line 22, and for Pope Leo's equation of Rome with 'holy nation, elect people', see R. A. Markus, 'The Latin Fathers', p. 102; Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 216.

<sup>38</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 42, p. 554, lines 29–30 and p. 555, line 1.

<sup>39</sup> See Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 216, n. 22 and *Codex Carolinus*, no. 10, p. 502, line 7, where the Franks are *peculiares inter omnes gentes* and no. 39, p. 552, lines 12–13, exceptionally quoting I Petr. 2:9 in reference to the Franks.

<sup>40</sup> On Pope Paul I's formulation of this typological triangle, inspired, as he said, by biblical history, see *Codex Carolinus*, no. 42, p. 554, lines 27–30.

<sup>41</sup> See *Codex Carolinus*, no. 45, p. 561, lines 13–18: 'ac foetentissimae Langobardorum genti polluat, quae in numero gentium nequaquam computatur, de cuius natione et leprosum genus oriri certum est . . . quae pars fideli cum infidelae?' (II Cor. 6:15). The context is Pope Stephen III's reaction in 770 or 771 to the rumour (well-founded, as it turned out) of a Frankish-Lombard marriage alliance.

time of Charles Martel, when the Carolingians were still mayors of the palace, to 791 AD; letters *de imperio* were declared to have been included, but there are none in the collection in its present form.<sup>42</sup> In 791, the letters were recopied into a single codex on Charlemagne's command.<sup>43</sup> That manuscript is no longer extant, but a single ninth-century copy transmits the letters and Charlemagne's introduction.<sup>44</sup> Before the initial copying, we might imagine a large pile of loose letters, at least some on fragile papyrus, stored in St Denis or transported in the royal *armaria*. The very survival of such a full (though not complete) series of letters may imply that the collection was little used and carefully guarded, and perhaps not itinerant. By whom, when and how often, the originals might have been consulted however is a matter for speculation. The loose originals of almost one hundred letters would have been cumbersome to consult. Moreover, because of their preservation in the royal archives, it is likely that only trusted royal *capellani* and *cancellarii* would have had access to them. In short, despite the fact that they were highly valued, the letters can certainly not be regarded as having any considerable audience in the eighth century and it is a reasonable assumption that they were scarcely known beyond the circle of the king's closest literate clerical associates.<sup>45</sup>

Yet the copy of the letters made in 791 was itself copied at least once to produce the single extant manuscript, a unique ninth-century codex signed by one Uuillibertus (probably archbishop of Cologne, 870–89),

<sup>42</sup> For the preface, see *Codex Carolinus*, p. 476; also fol. 1r in the facsimile cited below, n. 44. That the collection in its present form is not complete is evident: in the first place, from the absence of the letters concerning the empire (on which see D. A. Bullough, 'Aula Renovata: the Carolingian Court before the Aachen Palace', *Carolingian Renewal* (Manchester, 1991), pp. 123–60, at p. 129, 152 n. 26, arguing that the reference is to letters concerning the empire, rather than from the Byzantine rulers). In addition, the survival and separate transmission of a few stray papal letters preserved on parchment seems to indicate that some items escaped the compiler or were excluded. For these, see *Codex Carolinus*, appendix, pp. 654–7 and n. 31, above.

<sup>43</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, preface, p. 476 and n. 1; the dating termini established by Gundlach following Jaffé are 9 October 790–8 October 791. The basis for the widespread assumption that the copying was undertaken before the Avar campaign of the year 791 is not clear to me.

<sup>44</sup> That copy can be consulted in facsimile: *Codex epistolaris Carolinus: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Codex 449*, ed. F. Unterkircher, Codices selecti phototypice impressi 3 (Graz, 1962).

<sup>45</sup> A full survey of the evidence for the reception of papal letters to the Carolingians would include a study of apparent quotations from them in letters written north of the Alps, but one would have to distinguish expressions unique to the *Codex Carolinus* from those available in other papal letters. For a letter (written in 791, the year of the *Codex Carolinus*) which seems to reveal some knowledge of the *Codex Carolinus* letters, see E. Munding (ed.), *Königsbriefe Karls d. Gr. an Papst Hadrian über Abt-Bischof Waldo von Reichenau-Pavia, Palimpsest-Urkunde aus cod. lat. monac. 6333, Texte und Arbeiten*, I.6 (Beuron, 1920), pp. 12–18. On formulae in the *Codex Carolinus* letters distinct from those of the *Liber diurnus*, see W. Gundlach, 'Über den Codex Carolinus', *Neues Archiv* 17 (1892), pp. 525–66, at p. 536.

which attests to some limited availability of the texts.<sup>46</sup> But even this copy need not imply any considerable contemporary interest beyond the court clergy, for we might imagine Hildebald, Charlemagne's arch-chancellor, bishop, later archbishop, of Cologne, as the crucial agent in the conveyance of an exemplar, or even the original, to Cologne, where it was copied.<sup>47</sup> As arch-chaplain from 791, Hildebald had special responsibility for Carolingian relations with the papacy.<sup>48</sup> Hildebald is believed to have been responsible for the copying of the *Liber Pontificalis* in the royal *capella* and to have arranged for copies of the books given to Charlemagne by Pope Leo to be made in Cologne.<sup>49</sup> Together with Hildebald's appointment in Cologne, these activities and responsibilities form the most compelling explanation for the transmission of the *Codex Carolinus* through Cologne.

Some direct insight into the reception of the papal letters in the *Codex Carolinus* can be gleaned from internal evidence. Most of the letters are preceded (or rarely, followed) by lemmata, that is, lengthy rustic capital headings which describe their contents and which were probably drafted by the 791 compiler.<sup>50</sup> The lemmata refer mainly to the papal requests for help; when the Lombard trouble-making is described, that too is briefly adverted to. Effusive praise of the Franks (*uberrime laudes*) and papal thanks are sometimes mentioned after political matters have been summarized, for example: *in qua continetur gratiarum actiones et benedic-*

<sup>46</sup> MGH Epp. III, p. 469. On the probable Cologne provenance, see further *Codex Epistolaris*, ed. Unterkircher, p. xx; Uuillibertus signed his name in the book, but was apparently not one of its four scribes.

<sup>47</sup> On Hildebald, see E. Dümmler, 'Hildebald', *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie* xii (Leipzig, 1880), pp. 397–8; W. Schäfke, 'Hildebald', *Lexikon des Mittelalters* v (Munich, 1991), pp. 10–11; for the fullest account, J. Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle der Deutschen Könige I, Die karolingische Hofkapelle* (Stuttgart 1959), pp. 39, 49–51, 55, 234, 238. Hildebald succeeded Angilram as arch-chaplain after the latter's death during the Avar campaign in 791 and served in that capacity until his death in 818 or 819; as arch-chaplain, he will have had responsibility for the relics and documents of the *capella*.

<sup>48</sup> Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle I*, p. 51; Hildebald met and greeted both Pope Leo in 799 in Paderborn and Pope Stephen IV when he came to Rheims in 816.

<sup>49</sup> Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle I*, pp. 234, 238. It is instructive to compare his role with that of Fulrad of St Denis, on whom see Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle I*, p. 45 and M. Garrison, 'Letters to a king and biblical exempla: the examples of Cathulf and Clemens Peregrinus', *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), pp. 305–28, at p. 317. On the characteristic square format of many ninth-century Cologne manuscripts, possibly a sign of reverence for Roman or classical models, see *Codex Epistolaris*, ed. Unterkircher, p. xx.

<sup>50</sup> Consistency in the formulation of the lemmata throughout the collection argues against the possibility that the lemmata had been jotted on the originals as they arrived. On the ink and hand of the lemmata in the *Codex Carolinus*, see *Codex Epistolaris*, ed. Unterkircher, pp. xix–xx; on their probable drafting in 791, see Gundlach, 'Über den *Codex Carolinus*', pp. 525–66, at p. 531. Note that in Gundlach's edition, the lemmata are printed in the second apparatus and the italic headings preceding each letter are editorial.

*tiones uberrime pro victoria et restitutione sanctae dei ecclesiae*.<sup>51</sup> Papal *caritas* and the request to baptize Pippin's new son also rate a mention.<sup>52</sup> The overwhelming impression derived from the lemmata is that they were intended to aid someone consulting the letters by signalling main events in the relationship between the popes, the Lombards and the Franks. Thus baptismal sponsorship can find a place in the lemmata, but not the 'New Moses' or 'Israel'. The lemmata, then, reveal a consistent interest in the Carolingian alliance with the papacy and Lombard affairs, but no concern with the past for its own sake and they evince no interest whatsoever in Old Testament typology.

The most direct evidence for the contemporary reception of these letters can be inferred from Charlemagne's own preface to the *Codex Carolinus*. Charlemagne states that he regarded the papal letters as *testimonium sanctae ecclesiae profuturum*, testimony useful to the Holy Church, which should not be lacking to his successors, and that the letters were in a parlous state when he determined that they should be recopied, in 791, the twenty-third year of his reign.<sup>53</sup> Charlemagne's preface concludes with a quotation from Ecclesiasticus: *sapientiam omnium antiquorum exquiret sapiens et cetera*,<sup>54</sup> another clue to the reception of the letters. The emphasis is on *sapientia*, but *sapientia*, as the whole context of the original quotation makes clear, includes the knowledge of the wise men of the past as well as prophecies. Thus the evidence of the preface corroborates the lemmata: contemporary Carolingian reception of the letters of the *Codex Carolinus* seems overwhelmingly concerned with Lombard-papal politics and the spiritual alliance between the Franks and the papacy, not with the assumption of the identity of the New Israel; the recopying was for the sake of the Church and later rulers, rather than image-projection. These conclusions about reception are important because the papal letters contain some of the most striking examples of Old Testament typology applied to the Franks.

Within the time-span covered by the papal letters in the *Codex Carolinus*, there is an abrupt discontinuity in the application of Old Testament typology to the Carolingian kings. With the accession of

<sup>51</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 14, p. 511; no. 11, p. 504, second apparatus.

<sup>52</sup> For example, *Codex Carolinus*, nos. 25 and 31, pp. 525 and 537.

<sup>53</sup> MGH Epp. III, p. 476; on the implications of the preface for the existence of royal archives, see P. D. King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources* (Kendal, 1987), p. 36; on royal archives and the *capellani*, Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle* I, pp. 80–1; the preface page of the manuscript is reproduced in colour in *Codex Epistolaris*, ed. Unterkircher, fol. 1r.

<sup>54</sup> Ecclus. 39:1–2: 'Sapientiam omnium antiquorum exquiret sapiens et in prophetis vacabit, narrationem virorum nominatorum conservabit'.

Charlemagne and Carloman in 768, and the succession of popes Stephen III (768–72) and Hadrian (772–95), flattering comparisons to Old Testament kings abruptly ceased.<sup>55</sup> As one scholar commented, ‘the new Moses had already done his job’.<sup>56</sup> Yet the Lombards were still a menace, so the change in terminology must have other causes. Before investigating the demise of Old Testament comparisons in papal letters however, it is worth investigating the extent to which the Old Testament metaphors of the papal letters had found more popular corollaries among the Franks in the time of Pippin.

#### REVISED *LEX SALICA* PROLOGUE

How and whether Pippin and his literate personnel actually responded to the papal use of Old Testament flattery is unknown. If the pope could write in the persona of Peter, as Pope Stephen II did,<sup>57</sup> it is none the less most unlikely that Pippin ever styled himself as the new Moses or David in his own letters to the pope. Any pope was indeed vicariously Peter through the apostolic succession, but no Frankish king could make such a claim about Moses or David. However, a few texts and liturgical practices can yield some insight into the reception of Old Testament models in Pippin’s circle. I shall begin by surveying two documents written on Pippin’s behalf, the revised *Lex Salica* prologue and a distinctive charter for Prüm. The striking contrast in the tenor of the two texts can show how concepts of identity had to be adapted to different audiences; it also foreshadows a persistent tension in Frankish sources between notions of divine election and macho triumphalism.

The revised prologue was appended by Pippin in 763/4 to a new issue of the *Lex Salica*. It has been interpreted as a statement of a new and special divinely favoured status for the Franks<sup>58</sup> and its appearance

<sup>55</sup> A single apparent exception, the poem sent in 774 to accompany Hadrian’s gift of a copy of the Dionysio-Hadriana to Charlemagne, will be discussed below, p. 150.

<sup>56</sup> Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, p. 76.

<sup>57</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 10.

<sup>58</sup> *Lex Salica*, MGH *LNG* IV.ii, ed. K. A. Eckhardt, pp. 2–9, at pp. 3, 5 ‘Gens Francorum inclita,/ auctore Deo condita,/ fortis in arma,/ fidelibus atque amicis suis satsique firma,/ profunda in consilio,/ nobilitasque eius incolumna/ uel forma mirabiliter aegregia,/ audax, uelox et aspera,/ ad catholicam fidem firmiter conuersa,/ emunis quidem ab omni herese,/ dum adhuc teneretur barbara,/ Deo inspirante,/ iuxta morum suorum qualitatem/ desiderans iustitiam,/ peruenit ad lumen scientiae,/ custodiens pietatem’. See also pp. 6–9, § 4: ‘Uiuat qui Francus [*sic* MS, but understand ‘Francos’] diligit, Christus eorum regnum usque in sempiternum custodiat, rectores eorum lumen gratiae suae repleat, exercitumque eorum protegat atque defendat, fidem muniat, pacem et felicitatem atque sanitatem per infinita secula tribuat. Haec est enim gens ualida, quae Romanorum iugum durissimum de suis ceruicibus discussit pugnando, atque post agnitionem baptismi sanctorum martyrum corpora, quae Romani igne cremauerunt uel

coincided, as Bullough has pointed out, with the substitution, in the Frankish sacramentaries from Rome, of prayers for the kingdom of the Franks instead of for Rome or the empire.<sup>59</sup> It is undeniable that the prologue, with its proud statements about the Franks' Catholic faith *emunis ab heresa* and Christ's love for the Franks,<sup>60</sup> constitutes a striking expression about Frankish Christian identity<sup>61</sup> and indeed is reminiscent of some contemporary prayers. But the tenor of the rhyme-prose first paragraph, with such attention to the Franks' strength, speed, courage and physical magnificence is, for all its affinities with Deuteronomy 4:6–8,<sup>62</sup> more redolent of the world of secular heroism (or Old English verse) than the Bible. Similarly the lofty claims in the latter part of the prologue (about the Franks' honour for the bodies of neglected Roman martyrs<sup>63</sup> and their achievement in casting off the Roman yoke) are

ferro truncauerunt atque bestiis lacerando proiecerunt, Franci super eos aurum et lapides preciosos adornauerunt'. See also K.A. Eckhardt, *Lex Salica: 100 Titel-Text*, Germanenrechte Neue Folge, Abteilung Westgermanisches Recht (Weimar, 1953), pp. 82–91; R. Schmidt-Wiegand, "'Gens Francorum inclita": Zu Gestalt und Inhalt des längeren Prologes der Lex Salica', in U. Scheil (ed.), *Festschrift Adolf Hofmeister zum 70. Geburtstag am 9. August 1953 dargebracht von seinen Schülern, Freunden und Fachgenossen* (Halle, 1955), pp. 233–50.

<sup>59</sup> On the date of Pippin's revision (represented by the D-family of manuscripts), see Eckhardt, *Lex Salica 100 Titel-Text*, p. 90; for an overview of the dates of the various recensions of the text, see R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 40–55; on the preface, D. A. Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London, 1965), p. 39, and I. Wood, 'Defining the Franks: Frankish origins in early medieval historiography', in S. Forde, L. Johnson and A. V. Murray (eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, (Leeds, 1995), pp. 47–57, at p. 54; on substitutions for Rome and the empire in sacramentaries, see also G. Tellenbach, 'Römischer und Christlicher Reichsgedanke in der Liturgie des frühen Mittelalters' (1934/5), reprinted in his *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze* (Stuttgart, 1988), vol. II, pp. 343–410.

<sup>60</sup> A similar statement occurs in the Primary chronicle of Kiev about the conversion of the Russians (I quote from the translation given by W. van den Bercken, 'The Christianisation of Russia in the tenth century: a unique missiological story', *Exchange* 25.3 (1996), pp. 261–84, at pp. 280–1: 'Blessed the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved his new people, the land of Rus'). Van den Bercken's interpretation can also apply to the Frankish text: 'here Russia's self-conversion is given an explanation which puts it in the right theological context which removes the semblance of religious self-achievement'.

<sup>61</sup> Eckhardt, *MGH LNG IV*:2, pp. 2–9, odd numbered pages only for the Pippinid D-recension of the preface, see pp. 3, 7.

<sup>62</sup> First signalled by Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed', at p. 109, n. 35, citing echoes of Deuteronomy 4:1–8 (I see a clear relationship only with Deut. 4.4–8). Compare Deut. 4.6–8 'ut dicant: En populus sapiens et intelligens, gens magna. Nec est alio natio tam grandis, quae habeat deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut Deus noster adest cunctis obsecrationibus nostris. Quae est enim alia gens sic incluta, ut habeat caerimonias, iustaque iudicia, et universam legem, quam ego proponam hodie ante oculos vestros.' The reminiscence is illuminating, but it stops short of the direct verbal correspondences that would allow one to conclude that the author (identified as the notary Baddilo by Eckhardt) intended his audience to recognize the intertextuality. On Baddilo's identity, see Eckhardt, *Lex Salica 100 Titel-Text*, pp. 46, 54, and further discussion below. The alliteration of the text invites comparisons with Anglo-Saxon poets' attempts to duplicate the effects of their own alliterative verse in Latin.

<sup>63</sup> For a possible connection with the Frankish cult of St Petronilla, see Angenendt, 'Das Geistliche Bündnis', p. 48.

poised uneasily between Christian piety and the arrogance of heroic strength.<sup>64</sup> A similar fusion of God's favour and heroic personal qualities occurs in the description of Clovis, king by God's favour, but also *torrens et pulcher*.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, in the first part of the prologue, statements about the might and beauty of the Franks outnumber those about religion, orthodoxy and wisdom to such an extent that the preface has appeared to some as racial propaganda. In a brilliantly suggestive article, it has been seen as an exercise in 'unbridled self-glorification', celebrating and advancing a notion of the greater Frankish identity to counteract territorial fragmentation among the different Frankish groups.<sup>66</sup> In sum, although the *Lex Salica* prologue does not constitute a direct articulation of the idea of divine election, it is none the less a strong triumphalist statement about the Franks, and therefore of greatest interest as a source of insight into the developing views of Pippin and his milieu. Ewig's characterization, that the prologue evinces a 'Christian sense of mission and historical consciousness', is a fair assessment.<sup>67</sup>

More evidence for notions about Pippin's rule can be found in the remarkable *arenga* of a diploma that he issued for the abbey of Prüm on 13 August 762.<sup>68</sup> Like the revised *Lex Salica* prologue, this striking document mentions the bodies of the martyrs, but it also refers to Moses, to the tabernacle, to the temple of Solomon, and even to Pippin's unction, expressing the conviction of Pippin (or his notary) that Pippin had been anointed by divine providence to rule in God's name with all the responsibilities for the poor entailed by his anointing:

And since it is clear to us that Divine Providence has anointed [us] to the throne of the kingdom, it is right to exercise these things in God's name, in so far as we may be able to follow the grace and will of the Highest. And since kings reign from God and He in his mercy has entrusted to us nations and realms to be governed and looked after, so that we may be exalted rulers for the poor and needy, let us not fail to govern and educate [them] for the love of Christ. God

<sup>64</sup> Eckhardt, MGH LNG IV: 2, pp. 6, 8.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 6, §3: 'Ad ubi Deo favendi [for fauente] rex Francorum Chlodouius, torrens et pulcher'.

<sup>66</sup> A. Demyttenaere, 'De Franken, bodem en bloed', in M. Gijswijt-Hofstra and M. Mostert (eds.), *Saamhorigheid en Uitsluiting Lezingen en commentaren* (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 25–39; 'ongeremde zelfverheerlijking', at pp. 29, 35. Similarly, Kantorowicz termed the preface 'the language of unsurpassable pride', *Laudes Regiae*, p. 58. Compare also M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 385, where the prologue is characterized as 'the ethnicity of victory'.

<sup>67</sup> Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', p. 49: 'Christliche Sendungs- und Geschichtsbewusstsein'.

<sup>68</sup> See Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, p. 55; Eckhardt, *Lex Salica 100 Titel-Text*, pp. 45–6; MGH Diplomata Karolorum I, ed. E. Mühlbacher with A. Dopsch, J. Lechner and M. Tangl (Hanover, 1906), no. 16, pp. 21–5; Anton, *Fürstenspiegel*, p. 80.

indeed commanded Moses the law-giver to adorn the tabernacle of propitiation; also we know that the temple of King Solomon was built in His name and that he [Solomon] adorned it with gold and [gem]stones. We indeed, although we are not able to match such great things, [nonetheless wish to make an offering . . .]<sup>69</sup>

The contrast between this document and the *Lex Salica* prologue crystallizes two alternative ways of envisaging the Franks and Frankish kingship: on the one hand, there is warrior machismo slightly coloured by Christianity and on the other, divinely conferred kingship. To evaluate their significance for the assimilation of the identity of the elect during the reign of Pippin, we need to know more about the authorship, audience and dissemination of both texts. The Salic law scholar K. A. Eckhardt has convincingly argued that the two texts share an author: Baddilo, the religious notary, whose distinctive style, idiosyncratic dating-clauses, and predilection for *Reimprosa* alternating with plain prose also identify him as the author of the prologue of the Council of Ver of 755, itself a significant witness to Pippin's interest in religious reform.<sup>70</sup> Thus it was a single individual among the royal notaries who was sufficiently informed about the significance of royal unction and its relationship to Old Testament models to include these ideas in the *arenga* of a charter for a monastery.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> MGH Diplomata Karolorum I, no. 16, at p. 22, lines 18–27: 'Et quia divina nobis providentia in solium regni unxisse manifestum est, oportet ea in dei nomine exercere, in que potius gratiam atque voluntatem altissimi consequi valeamus . . . Et quia reges ex deo regnant nobisque gentes et regna pro sua misericordia ad gubernandum commisit, providendum, ut et sublimes rectores simus, inopibus et pauperibus pro amore Christi gubernare atque educare non neglegamus. Deus etenim Moyse legislatori tabernaculum propitiarii adornare praecepit; Salamoni quoque regis templum in nomine ipsius aedificatum scimus auro lapidibusque exornasse. Nos enim, quamvis non tam magna hisdem quoquequere valemus . . .' (I have not emended or rewritten the vulgar Latin idiosyncrasies.)

<sup>70</sup> W. Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien* (Munich, 1989), pp. 68–72; MGH Cap. I ed. A. Boretius (Hanover, 1883), no. 14, pp. 33–7. Eckhardt, *Lex Salica 100 Titel-Text*, pp. 46–55 at p. 52; see also Bullough, 'Aula Renovata', p. 125 and n. 11, p. 149. This use of prosimetrum is not signalled by K. Polheim in *Das Lateinische Reimprosa* (Berlin, 1925), pp. 94–6. Eckhardt, the *Lex Salica*'s editor, commented (p. 53 n. 83), 'aber freilich, wer sucht in einer Ausgabe der Capitularia regum Francorum nach Reimprosa!' However, Polheim does discuss rhyme and cursus in Merovingian and Carolingian documents and cites the Council of Ver in that connection (p. 96); Polheim's assertions about the rareness of rhyme in documents of this time further substantiate Eckhardt's Baddilo-theory. B. Pabst, *Prosimetrum: Tradition und Wandel einer Literaturform zwischen Spätantike und Spätmittelalter* (Cologne, 1994), apparently does not include the Salic Law preface.

<sup>71</sup> Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', p. 53–4 claimed that the prologue showed echoes of the papal letters in the *Codex Carolinus*, citing the phrase *Deo inspirante* and the concluding praise and blessings for the Franks, but conceded that the influence could not be proved because *Deo inspirante* can also be found in an earlier charter of Pippin, and because the concluding prayer also resembled royal intercessions in the Gothic-Spanish councils and Gallic councils, serving to emphasize only the shared emphasis on Frankish orthodoxy and divine election. While it is certainly plausible that Baddilo might have had access to Pippin's archives, I should stress that it is still more remarkable that he chose to compose a preface with such emphasis on the physical



To what extent his texts reflect the views of Pippin and his closest associates is unclear. One might wonder what currency (if any) the Prüm charter would have had beyond the monastery itself and the royal entourage. And why was it that just a year or two later, that same notary, Baddilo, stopped so far short of making those same ideas explicit when he came to draft a prologue for the *Lex Salica*? Could it be that Baddilo, or those who advised him, were aware that these concepts could be appreciated by monastic connoisseurs, but not by those who used the lawbooks?<sup>72</sup> Or that divine election pertained to the king far more than to the mass of the Franks?

A clue to Baddilo's contrasting intentions in the two documents can be gleaned from the epithets used of the Franks in the *Lex Salica* prologue. As mentioned above, the preface evokes the strength and physical prowess of the Franks more effusively than their religious qualities. Given the undeniable reminiscence of Deuteronomy 4:8 (*quae est enim alia gens si inclitya*) at the opening of the prologue, it is curious that Baddilo uses the phrases *gens inclita*, and *gens, que fortis dum esset robore ualida* (later shortened into *gens ualida*),<sup>73</sup> yet fails to exploit the obvious opportunity to evoke Israel of the Old Testament by using the word *beatus*. *Beatus* is frequently used of the chosen people in the Old Testament<sup>74</sup> but is never applied to the Franks here. For *gens beata* to be used of the Franks, we will have to wait for Alcuin (discussed below, pp. 159–61). Moreover, the prayer which concludes the prologue is as concerned with what the Franks have accomplished themselves as it is with what Christ should do for them. The radical dependence on God associated with the idea of election and with the thought about kingship of subsequent decades (and even in the Prüm diploma) is absent. It would seem that strength, vigour and nobility rather than sanctity were the qualities that Baddilo knew would flatter the secular Franks. The tenor of a parody of the *Lex Salica* extant in a manuscript of the *pactus legis Salica* from the second half of the eighth century seems to confirm the fact that

prowess and beauty of the Franks if he had those models at hand, and that the contrast provides further evidence that the prologue is directed to a different audience.

<sup>72</sup> On which see R. McKitterick, 'Some Carolingian law books and their function', in P. Linehan and B. Tierney (eds.), *Authority and Power: Studies on Medieval Law and Government* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 13–27; McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, pp. 23–76; P. Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis: legislation and Germanic kingship, from Euric to Cnut', in P. Sawyer and I. Wood (eds.), *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds, 1977), pp. 13–27.

<sup>73</sup> MGH LNG IV:2, pp. 2–3, 6–7.

<sup>74</sup> A few examples: Ps. 32:12, 'Beata gens cuius est Dominus Deus eius'; Ps. 143:15, 'Beatus populus cuius Dominus Deus eius'; Deut. 7:6, 'Quia populus sanctus es Domino Deo tuo'; 32:9, 'pars autem Domini, populus eius'; 33:29, 'beatus tu Israel'.

users of the *Lex Salica* were more attracted by machismo than piety.<sup>75</sup> The parody prescribes punishments for anyone who dares pour a bottle of wine into a *cuppa* rather than another sort of vessel. Both the punishments and the implied wine ritual evoke the world of heavy-drinking lords and their retainers. In the 760s it would seem that sacral kingship was an idea within the grasp of Pippin and Frankish monks, but that divine election was not yet regarded as accessible to Frankish warriors or lawmen.

#### CONTINUATIONS OF FREDEGAR

Further evidence for Old Testament ideas has been adduced from contemporary historical writing. Ewig has shown how the second and third continuators of the chronicle of Fredegar (writing in the mid-eighth century under Carolingian patronage) used progressively more biblical colouring.<sup>76</sup> Do these borrowings reveal progressively better educated continuators (or ones more familiar with the Bible), or do they constitute a conscious presentation of the Franks as Israel? A sceptic might insist that biblical scene-setting phrases such as *in gyro* and *et quievit terra a proeliis annis duobus* can bear no great interpretative weight.<sup>77</sup> But we simply do not know what the author intended to imply when he wrote 'and the earth rested from battles' nor what connection with the history of Israel this would evoke in the audience. The phrases are merely narrative formulae, not descriptions of Franks or their kings; at most, they might suggest a loose parallel between the history of Israel and the Franks, perhaps one more attuned to warrior machismo than notions of sacral office. (Recall that Wulfila refused to translate the Books of Kings for the Goths because he thought them already too warlike.) There can be no question of a sustained typological equivalence between individuals or nations and the history of Israel unless the borrowed phrase is actually accompanied by a direct reference to an Old Testament figure. This is the case for the account of Charles Martel's capture of Avignon from the Muslims in 737, which is likened

<sup>75</sup> For the text, a fine example of vulgar Latin on the way to Romance, mixed with parodies of notarial formulae, plus commentary and translation, see V. Väänänen, *Introduction au latin vulgaire*, 3rd edn (Paris, 1981), pp. 198–9; the language, combined with the fact that the parody occurs in only a single manuscript of the *pactus*, points towards an eighth-century date. The manuscript is listed by McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, p. 48: MS. A2, of c. 770.

<sup>76</sup> Ewig, 'Zum Christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter', pp. 40–1.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40, n. 174 and p. 41, n. 176, and Oelsner, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches*, p. 453, re. Jos. 6:20 and Judges 3:32, 3:11 and 8:28 respectively.

to Joshua's capture of Jericho.<sup>78</sup> In sum, the Continuations mark a tentative beginning phase in the assimilation of Old Testament parallels to Frankish notions about current affairs and their identity, but are not yet evidence of a clear, widely shared and exclusive sense of being God's elect.<sup>79</sup> It is also important to remember that Fredegar's Continuations had a very limited circulation until the ninth century.<sup>80</sup> Thus in view of its limited early circulation and how relatively underdeveloped the Old Testament references are in contrast to other evidence (for example, the flattery of the papal letters), the text cannot be regarded as effective educational propaganda for Frankish identity. Both the originality of the Old Testament allusions and their circumscribed significance will stand out against both the much bolder use of Old Testament images encountered in the 790s and the absence of such images from the traditions of some other medieval peoples. But if the reign of Pippin does not provide unequivocal evidence for the notion that the Franks were God's elect, it does none the less mark a new phase in Frankish self-definition. Developments in literacy, liturgy, monasticism, links with Rome, and contacts with Insular emigrés such as Boniface and Vergil of Salzburg provide the background without which neither Charlemagne's aspirations nor the achievements of the 790s would have been possible.<sup>81</sup> An important sign of this transition towards rulership increasingly influenced by Christianity is the fact that the Synod of Ver of 755 (one of those apparently drafted by Baddilo) dictated that one of two annual religious synods should be held on 1 March, previously the day of the 'Marchfield', the annual spring mustering; the 'Marchfield' itself was now transferred to May, thereby diminishing the likelihood of war during Lent.<sup>82</sup> This change in the calendar was significant enough to be

<sup>78</sup> Discussed by Ewig, 'Zum Christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter', p. 40, n. 175; his second example, based only on the phrase *in gyro*, seems to be more questionable.

<sup>79</sup> See Ewig, 'Zum Christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter', p. 40, on the tendency of the first continuator to credit victories to the assistance of God and Christ. Compare McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, pp. 360–87.

<sup>80</sup> Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, p. 56; Oelsner, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches*, pp. 453–4; Ewig, 'Zum Christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter', pp. 39–41; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Fredegar and the history of France', in his *The Long-Haired Kings* (London, 1962), pp. 71–94. On dissemination, see Wallace-Hadrill, 'Fredegar', pp. 71–2; on the limited circulation envisaged for even a ninth-century history, see Nelson, 'Public histories and private history in the work of Nithard', in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 195–238, at p. 200.

<sup>81</sup> P. Riché, 'Le renouveau culturel à la cour de Pepin III', *Francia* 2 (1974), pp. 59–70 and his *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West from the Sixth through the Eighth Century*, trans. J.J. Contreni (Columbia, South Carolina, 1976), pp. 442–6 and Bullough, 'Aula renovata', pp. 124–6.

<sup>82</sup> Boretius, MGH Cap. I, no. 14, pp. 32–37; on the Marchfield and the decrease in warfare during Lent: M. Sierck, *Festtag und Politik: Studien zur Tageswahl karolingischer Herrscher*, Beihefte zum Archiv

noted in contemporary annals.<sup>83</sup> It surely affected the mass of aristocratic Franks and must have provoked discussion and explanation; with it, education for a new identity among the warriors had begun.

#### LITURGY

When we turn from the evidence of the texts discussed above to liturgical practices, the importance of Old Testament typology looms into view.<sup>84</sup> Not only prayers and masses for rulers and for going into battle, but also the practices of royal anointing and the anointing of priests' hands seem to evince a direct connection between Frankish liturgical practice and Old Testament models, between the Franks and Israel. Yet closer scrutiny shows that the apparent typological identification between the Franks and Israel is sometimes tenuous and indirect.

Old Testament exempla in prayers are often used to invite God's similar action in the present; the prayers ask God to make a certain ruler safe and victorious, just as he did for various kings in the Old Testament.<sup>85</sup> The liberation of Israel from Egypt, or from all evil, is often invoked.<sup>86</sup> Yet such parallels were by no means ubiquitous in the eighth-century liturgical evidence. While some eighth-century Gelasian sacramentaries available in Francia use Old Testament exempla freely,<sup>87</sup>

für Kulturgeschichte 38 (Cologne, 1995), pp. 207–9 and W. Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit*, p. 69.

<sup>83</sup> *Annales Petaviani*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hanover, 1826), p. 11, s.a. 755.

<sup>84</sup> Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, pp. 47–9; Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and Offa'; Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed', *passim*, and especially pp. 102–8; also 'Kingship and empire', pp. 214–15; Angenendt, 'Das Geistliche Bündnis', pp. 81–6.

<sup>85</sup> Such a *missa pro principe* occurs in the *The Bobbio Missal: a Gallican Mass Book* (MS Paris lat. 13246), ed. E. A. Lowe, Henry Bradshaw Society, 58 (London, 1920), pp. 151–3; C. Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: an Introduction to the Sources*, translated and revised by W. Storey and N. Rasmussen (Washington DC, 1986), pp. 323–4: an eighth-century copy of a perhaps sixth-century original; Gallican liturgy but with some Roman-Gelasian formulae.

<sup>86</sup> As an example, see the Merovingian prayer for the victory of a Frankish king over rebels, preserved in a Karlsruhe Aug. Perg. 253, a seventh-century manuscript, later palimpsested. The prayer incorporates many successive phrases from II Macc. 1:24, which is a prayer said during a sacrifice by priests and people, recalling God's liberation of Israel and his election and sanctification of the forefathers, printed in A. Dold and A. Baumstark (eds.), *Das Palimpsestsakramentar im Codex Augiensis CXII, Ein Messbuch ältester struktur aus dem Alpengebiet mit Anhang: Zwei altfränkischer Gebete aus Codex Aug. CCLIII*, Texte und Arbeiten 1/12 (Beuron, 1925), p. 36–7; Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, p. 57 (sixth century), p. 108 (seventh century).

<sup>87</sup> Frankish Gelasian: *Liber Sacramentorum Engolismensis*, ed. P. Saint-Roch, CCSL 159C (Turnhout, 1987), pp. 358–61, but note the lack of comparisons at pp. 362–3, akin to the same prayer in Vat. Reg. Lat. 316 (edition cited below, note 88), pp. 214–15; Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, p. 71, copied c. 800 at Angoulême. Frankish Gelasian liturgy: *Liber Sacramentorum Gellonensis*, ed. A. Dumas, CCSL 159 (Turnhout, 1981), pp. 296–7 (*benedictiones regales*), 431–3 (*missa in profectionem hostium eontibus in prohelium*); Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 71, 73–8: probably copied at Meaux for Cambrai

one lacks Old Testament allusions in the various prayers and masses for kings and in times of war.<sup>88</sup> Given the liturgical diversity that prevailed even after Charlemagne's reforms, it would be hard to argue for pan-Frankish familiarity with the relevant prayers. Moreover, Old Testament comparisons are not a Carolingian innovation, nor are they confined to rites for purposes which we might see as political. (Thus, for example, Old Testament typology plays an important role in the Reichenau palimpsest sacramentary's order for baptism.<sup>89</sup>) In no case in the relevant prayers does the celebrant directly liken himself or his people to Israel, and the blessings for kings do not confine themselves to citing Old Testament kings as examples of recipients of divine beneficence.<sup>90</sup> Through such Old Testament allusions, then, God is invoked as the very God who accomplished wonders for the Israelites. The prayers express the hope that the steadfastness of God as revealed in the history of Israel will continue in the present. The nature of God, not of the Franks, is thereby evoked. To the extent that the prayers could convey a message about identity, the obvious typological implication was neither ethnically exclusive nor triumphalist: all Christians are now God's chosen people and the use of Old Testament prayers and language was a way to participate in this typological fulfilment.<sup>91</sup>

Of course, the meaning of any ritual is conveyed by more than just the words uttered; models are crucial too, especially in the case of royal consecrations and anointing. Whatever their ultimate origins, they were apparently pioneered in Francia by the Carolingians and are unmistakably inspired by Old Testament models: Samuel's anointing of Saul, and later of David, to make them kings.<sup>92</sup> Pippin was consecrated in 751, possibly by Boniface, and again, in 754, by Pope Stephen. Charlemagne's two sons were anointed to make them kings by Hadrian

cathedral 790×816. The *missa in projectionem hostium eontibus in prohelium* is also printed and discussed by Tellenbach, 'Römischer und Christlicher Reichsgedanke', pp. 406–10.

<sup>88</sup> Old Gelasian: *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Aecclesiae Ordinis Anni Circuli* (cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 316/Paris Bibl. Nat. lat. 7193, 41/56) (*sacramentarium Gelasianum*), ed. L. Mohlberg et al., *Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series Maior* 4 (Rome, 1968), pp. 214–18; Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 31, 64–70, 165; copied at Chelles, c. 750, from a seventh-century Roman prototype; p. 70: evidence for the evolution of the Roman-Frankish rite developing in Gaul perhaps even before Pippin III.

<sup>89</sup> Dold and Baumstark, *Das Palimpsestsakramentar im Codex Augiensis CXII*, no. 52 (Gallican).

<sup>90</sup> The texts from the Angoulême and Gellone sacramentaries cited above plus those in a ninth-century Freising collection can be conveniently compared in R. Jackson (ed.), *Ordines Coronationis Franciae: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania, 1995), vol. I, pp. 51–68.

<sup>91</sup> The most striking example of those surveyed is the incorporation in the Karlsruhe Aug. Perg. 253 prayer for the kings against rebels of many consecutive phrases of the prayer of Nehemiah from II Macc. 1:24.

<sup>92</sup> I Sam. 10:1, 16:3.

in 781.<sup>93</sup> Whether the Carolingians saw the transfer of power from the Merovingians to their own dynasty as typologically akin to the succession passing from Saul to David (who was not his son) has been doubted,<sup>94</sup> but certainly they took to heart the lesson of the Old Testament kings, namely that the security of a king's rule and the stability of his kingdom depended on God's favour and His requirements included correct liturgical observance.<sup>95</sup> This reading of the past underlies the reforms of Charlemagne and King Alfred alike, but it could not have been learned from the royal blessing alone.

In the case of royal anointing, the typological parallel with the kings of the Old Testament, and between Israel and the Franks was clear enough, yet royal anointing had a distinctly Roman dimension as well. The papal anointing of Pippin and his sons could be, and was, by some, associated with elevation to the status of *patricius*.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, it was also symbolically affiliated to post-baptismal confirmation-anointing, which made all Christians holy and was even seen as a type of 'royal investiture'.<sup>97</sup> (As Janet Nelson has stressed, 'the "anointed ones" of the Old Testament were models for *all* Christians'.<sup>98</sup>) This post-baptismal episcopal anointing had been established in Rome in the fifth century; thereafter it is first attested in Anglo-Saxon England, whence it was imported to the Continent (where it had not previously been practised) by Boniface.<sup>99</sup> It is impossible to say whether the witnesses to a royal anointing would have been more struck by their king's relationship to the kings of Israel or by the ceremony's resemblance to a new-fangled and sometimes controversial addition to baptism. The witnesses to such anointings in any case were few, for royal anointings occurred only in 751, 754 and 781<sup>100</sup> and then not again until the ninth century. Thus, although anointing was a

<sup>93</sup> Angenendt, 'Das Geistliche Bündnis', pp. 75–9; *Annales Regni Francorum*, s.a. 781, p. 57: Carloman was baptized and Pippin and Louis were anointed; Nelson, 'Inauguration rituals', in her *Politics and Ritual*, pp. 284–307, at pp. 290–1.

<sup>94</sup> Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, p. 55, n. 142, disposing of Eichmann and Caspar's adherence to that view; Nelson, 'Inauguration rituals', p. 291.

<sup>95</sup> On the preservation of letters with relevant liturgical advice, see Garrison, 'Letters to a king', pp. 317–19.

<sup>96</sup> Only in the *Annales Mettenses priores* and their derivatives: see I. Haselbach, *Aufstieg und Herrschaft der Karlinger in der Darstellung der sogenannten Annales Mettenses priores: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Ideen im Reiche Karls des Grossen*, Historische Studien 412 (Hamburg, 1970), p. 125.

<sup>97</sup> J. Nelson, 'National synods, kingship as office and royal anointing: an early medieval syndrome', in her *Politics and Ritual*, pp. 239–58, at pp. 249–50: 'an explanation of early medieval anointing as a revival of Scriptural practice is neither self-evident nor wholly satisfying'. On confirmation-anointing, see Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed', p. 110 and A. Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt, 1997), pp. 471–3.

<sup>98</sup> Nelson, 'National synods', p. 249. <sup>99</sup> Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität*, p. 472.

<sup>100</sup> Nelson, 'Inauguration rituals', p. 291 on the unprovable possibility of anointings in 768 and 771.

public spectacle, it simply did not occur frequently enough in the crucial decades with which we are concerned to constitute a dramatic and public reification of the Frankish kings' identity. Its educational influence was most important for the anointed royalty themselves, who would have been reminded of Old Testament models in a memorable and solemn moment. But exactly what the candidate would have learned from the regal blessing itself is harder to determine, for the blessings can be interpreted in so many ways – as an extra blessing, as a rebirth of the king into a new identity,<sup>101</sup> as an almost priestly sanctification of the king, as a wish for the king to be a certain kind of king.<sup>102</sup> Consecration anointing, then, did not convey a single clear message about election. Yet for all the questions about the meaning and models of the ceremony and even if it was not yet legally constitutive,<sup>103</sup> anointing accomplished a sanctification of royal office which had important and long-lasting implications for Frankish kings, bishops and people; moreover, when performed by the pope it cemented the Franco-papal alliance.

In contrast, the anointing of priests' hands has little connection with the identity of the *gens Francorum*. It has been construed as an over-literal imitation of Old Testament practice, and perhaps also a manifestation of a more widespread concern with cultic purity.<sup>104</sup> Yet the relevant blessings do not cite the obvious Old Testament precedent<sup>105</sup> and it is not even clear that the Old Testament was perceived as a model; rather, it was purity that Amalar of Metz stressed in his account of the practice.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the practice appears to have been transplanted into Francia from British–Celtic liturgical precedents rather than directly from the Old Testament.<sup>107</sup> It was apparently instituted in some areas that used the Gallican liturgy during the first half of the eighth century.

<sup>101</sup> On which Nelson, 'National synods', p. 250.

<sup>102</sup> Ps. 44:8: 'dilexisti iustitiam et odisti iniquitatem propterea unxit te Deus/Deus tuus oleo lactitiae'.

<sup>103</sup> But compare the *Liber Pontificalis* anecdote where the Lombard Desiderius is reported to have wished to trick the pope into anointing Carloman's sons: R. Davis, *The Lives of the Eighth Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of Nine Popes from AD 715 to AD 817*, Liverpool Translated Texts for Historians 13 (Liverpool, 1992), Hadrian, cap. 8, p. 126, c. 771 or 772.

<sup>104</sup> Ex. 28:41; Lev. 16:32; Num. 3:3; A. Angenendt, "'Mit reinen Händen": Das Motiv der kultischen Reinheit in der abendländischen Askese', in G. Jenal (ed.), *Herrschaft, Kirche, Kultur: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, Festschrift für Friedrich Prinz zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1993), pp. 297–316, at p. 309; Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität*, p. 456; B. Kleinheyer, *Die Priesterweihe im römischen Ritus*, Trierer Theologische Studien 12 (Trier, 1962), pp. 114–22.

<sup>105</sup> See Kleinheyer, *Priesterweihe*, p. 116: the one text where any Old Testament precedent is cited names Samuel and David, not, as one might expect, Lev. 16:32; the assignment of the prayer to priestly ordination is due to scribal error (elsewhere it is attested for episcopal not priestly consecration) and it had no diffusion for priestly consecration.

<sup>106</sup> Kleinheyer, *Priesterweihe*, pp. 119–20. <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 118.

Even without Charlemagne's sponsorship, the rite was eventually elaborated and ultimately introduced in Rome.<sup>108</sup> Both practices, then, royal anointing and the anointing of priests' hands, offer some evidence of harking back to scriptural cues from the Old Testament; without hindsight however, they would not appear to herald the emergence of the Frankish self-definition as the New Israel. More significantly, both bear witness to the importance of the Insular contribution to both Frankish liturgy and self-representation.

#### LAUDES REGIAE

A development that has often been held alongside the preface to the *Lex Salica*<sup>109</sup> is the introduction into Francia of the *laudes regiae*, liturgical acclamations for the king, the royal family and even, significantly, the army and the judges of the Franks. The earliest extant Frankish royal *laudes*-text, the formulary preserved in the Montpellier psalter, dates from 783–792,<sup>110</sup> the next extant example, from 795–814,<sup>111</sup> but the introduction of royal *laudes* into Francia certainly predates these examples. According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, *laudes* were sung to Charlemagne in Rome on Easter Monday 774<sup>112</sup> and we may wonder whether they had been performed even earlier for Pippin.<sup>113</sup> The approximate dating

<sup>108</sup> Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed', pp. 108–9; Nelson, 'Inauguration rituals', p. 291. I thank Yitzhak Hen for discussion.

<sup>109</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and Offa', p. 99; D. A. Bullough, 'Alcuin and the kingdom of heaven: liturgy, theology, and the Carolingian age', in his *Carolingian Renewal*, pp. 161–240, at p. 169; Nelson, 'Kingship and empire', p. 215; Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', p. 49.

<sup>110</sup> The date of the Mondsee Psalter *laudes*, the earliest extant example, is fixed by the death of Fastrada in 794 and the punishment for Pippin's conspiracy in 792; Kantorowicz believed them to be associated with the engagement of Hrotrud to the son of the eastern emperor (781–7), and accordingly dated them even more closely to 783–7 on the basis of the personal suffrage for Hrotrud after the litanies accompanying the *laudes* in the psalter (p. 37). But the *laudes*-text in the psalter is a formulary (hence the statements about including other saints) and it is not clear why Hrotrud would need the prayers more during her engagement than afterwards, nor can it be certainly proved that the Hrotrud here is Charlemagne's daughter. It is too often forgotten that Tassilo also had a daughter named Hrotrud, who was forced to become a nun in Chelles or Laon (*Fragmentum Annalium Chesnii*, ed. G. Pertz, MGH SS 1, p. 33). As a caveat against using Pippin's rebellion in 792 as a dating terminus, one should note that he is commemorated along with the rest of his family in a notice written after that date in the Prague sacramentary: see *Das Prager Sakramentar* [Cod. O.83 (fol. 1–120) der Bibliothek des Metropolitantkapitels] ii *Prolegomena und Textausgabe*, ed. A. Dold and L. Eizenhöfer, Texte und Arbeiten 38–42 (Beuron, 1949), pp. 124–5 and discussion at pp. 22–3. For a discussion of the manuscript in the context of lay literacy, see McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, pp. 252–5. See n. 120.

<sup>111</sup> The *laudes* in Paris BN lat. 13159, see B. Opfermann, *Die liturgischen Herrscherakklamationen im Sacrum Imperium des Mittelalters* (Weimar, 1953), pp. 41 and 102–3; Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae*, p. 33, gives 796–800 as dating termini.

<sup>112</sup> Davis, *The Lives of the Eighth Century Popes*, p. 140.

<sup>113</sup> Perhaps at the consecrations of 751 or 754; Angenendt, 'Das geistliche Bündnis', p. 50–2, argues that *laudes* had been sung for Pippin in Rome as early as 761.



termini for the introduction of the royal *laudes* are therefore 750–770.<sup>114</sup> Both through their liturgical form and through their manuscript contexts, the royal *laudes* are closely associated with the introduction of the litany of the saints into Francia.<sup>115</sup> The latter was certainly imported from the British Isles, yet the introduction of the *laudes* is usually held to be a distinctly Frankish innovation.<sup>116</sup> If the introduction of the *laudes* is accepted as such, the relative importance of Old Testament, classical and Byzantine sources of inspiration still needs to be considered.<sup>117</sup> Kantorowicz could confidently assert the priority of biblical and Insular inspiration, but he may have underestimated the influence and availability of late antique sources.<sup>118</sup>

What is the significance of the royal *laudes* for the notion of the Franks as God's elect, and for the image of the Franks more generally? It has been observed that the *laudes* invoke 'soldier-like qualities of Christ and king alike'.<sup>119</sup> Yet there is a crucial difference: Christ alone conquers, reigns and rules (*vincit, regnat, imperat*, all active verbs) while the king depends on Christ's aid; his whole title is used,<sup>120</sup> followed by *vita et victoria* – nouns, not verbs, expressing a wish, not an action – imploring the aid of Christ and of John the Baptist as well as that of 'any other saints you wish', as the text has it.<sup>121</sup> The language of the royal *laudes* has little to do with Old Testament typology or the New Israel. To be sure, the acclamation *Vivat rex* occurs for kings in the Old Testament, but in the *laudes*, that wish is transferred to Christ as king, while the Frankish

<sup>114</sup> G. Knopp, 'Die Anfänge der Allerheiligenlitanei und ihre Verbindung mit den Laudes Regiae', *Römische Quartalschrift* 65 (1970), pp. 185–231, at p. 224 for 750–770; p. 225 on the possible role of Chrodegang and Fulrad; Opfermann, *Die liturgischen Herrscherakklamation*, p. 59 proposes 750–770 and suggests Boniface, Chrodegang and Fulrad as sponsors; cf. Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae*, pp. 54–5, arguing for 751–774 dating termini.

<sup>115</sup> See Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, p. 35.

<sup>116</sup> See M. Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saints*, Henry Bradshaw Society, 106 (London, 1991), pp. 25, 33 and Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, p. 35; Knopp, 'Die Anfänge', p. 226.

<sup>117</sup> Contrast Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae*, p. 59. Kantorowicz sees more biblical undertones than I would allow: 'The *laudes* thus seem to fall in with the tradition peculiar to the Carolingian court, a tradition which was Biblical and Anglo-Irish in the first place . . . and Roman-Imperial only in a lesser degree.' Kantorowicz indicates that the acclamation *Vivat rex* was used in Aachen in the time of Louis the Pious (p. 59, n. 155 (citing Simson, *Jahrbücher* I, 5, 103)), but there is as far as I know no such evidence for Charlemagne in Aachen.

<sup>118</sup> See for example D. Schaller, 'Frühkarolingische Corippus-Rezeption', in his *Studien zur lateinischen Dichtung des Frühmittelalters*, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters 11 (Stuttgart, 1995), pp. 361–98; for some accounts of acclamation, see the index of S. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1981).

<sup>119</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and Offa', p. 99.

<sup>120</sup> F. Unterkircher, *Die Glossen des Psalters von Mondsee (vor 788)* (Montpellier, Faculté de Médecine Ms. 409), Spicilegium Friburgense 20 (Freiburg, 1974), p. 511: 'Karolo excellentissimae [sic] et a deo coronato magno et pacifico rege francorum et langobardorum ac patricio romanorum vita et victoria'.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 511 and Opfermann, *Die liturgischen Herrscherakklamation*, p. 101.

king, as we have seen, is to be the recipient of help from Christ and the saints.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, although the descriptions of Christ in the second royal *laudes* (795–814) are sometimes military and occasionally reminiscent of the psalms, the commonalities have no direct typological implications for the Franks since the relevant expressions are attributes of Christ.<sup>123</sup> The *laudes* enlist Christ and the saints on the side of the Franks and foreshadow the distinctive Frankish imperial Christianity of the turn of the century.

In contrast to the restricted exposure of the texts in the *Codex Carolinus*, the *laudes* were performed for and by an audience, however limited, of Franks and sometimes others. Accordingly, they, and to a lesser extent, the infrequent consecrations, are the first public ritual phase in educating the Franks for a new identity.<sup>124</sup> Although these various ritual performances shared the awareness that the Old Testament could provide appropriate liturgical models, the typological connection between the Franks and the Israelites was never made so explicit as it had been in the papal letters. The extent to which it would even have been experienced by participants and witnesses would depend on their ability to recognize Old Testament language and models, not just proper names. The contrast between the typology in the early papal letters and the *laudes* is similar to the contrast between the Prüm diploma and the revised *Lex Salica* prologue. In each case, typological thought is elaborated for a restricted literate audience, and the words directed to a larger audience emphasize might and victory. The *laudes* indeed are linguistically and conceptually far more accessible than the papal letters or even the *Lex Salica* prologue. The vulgar Latin forms of the responses in the earliest extant example of royal *laudes*, the Mondsee Psalter *laudes*, reinforce this conclusion: *Tu lo iuuua* and *tu los iuuua*.<sup>125</sup> This was what the participants had said themselves in their tongue, collectively imploring divine and supernatural help in a moment of prayer, ceremony and

<sup>122</sup> See Unterkircher, *Die Glossen*, p. 511.

<sup>123</sup> Opfermann, *Die liturgischen Herrscherakklamation*, p. 103: 'Rex regum. Rex noster. Spes noster. Gloria noster. Misericordia nostra. Auxilium nostrum. Fortitudo nostra. Liberatio et redemptio nostra. Victoria nostra. Arma nostra invictissima. Murus noster inexpugnabilis. Defensio et exaltatio nostra. Lux via et vita nostra . . . Ipsi soli virtus, fortitudo et victoria per omnia secula seculorum . . .'

<sup>124</sup> Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', p. 49.

<sup>125</sup> Unterkircher, *Die Glossen des Psalters von Mondsee*, p. 511 for the text and p. 8 for the hand; on the forms as evidence for Frankish provenance, see Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, p. 34. In the next extant example and subsequent texts, the response had been transferred back into Latin: *tu illum adiuvā*; see Opfermann, *Die liturgischen Herrscherakklamation*, pp. 162–3, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. lat. 13159, 795–800.

consensus. When the Franks performed the *laudes* they used only a single phrase that the Israelites had used to acclaim their kings: *vivat rex*, but nowhere claimed a likeness to the Israelites for themselves or their kings. Thus the *laudes*, like the other liturgical evidence discussed above, seem to show the Franks living out the experience of a *gens inclyta* with *caerimonias, iustaque iudicia et universam legem* (Deut. 4:8), but perhaps unawares.

After the accession in 768 of Charlemagne and Carloman, the idea of the king as the type of an Old Testament king and of the Frankish people as peculiarly special to God abruptly fell out of use in papal correspondence.<sup>126</sup> The comparisons that had been used for Pippin are neither immediately applied to either of his sons, nor to Charlemagne alone, as he ruled from 771 onward.<sup>127</sup> A putative change in notarial personnel coincident with the accession of Stephen III (768–72) or Hadrian (in 772) is not enough to explain the change, for the letters evince consistency of formulation in other respects, implying continuity in personnel as well as the availability of drafts of outgoing letters in the papal archives.<sup>128</sup> The reasons for the abrupt cessation must be political.<sup>129</sup> In 769 or 770, Pope Stephen III had written to both brothers to congratulate them on having restored peace between themselves and to thank them for having promised to maintain their obligations to protect St Peter and restore his rights and patrimony.<sup>130</sup> Stephen fell back on familiar imperial honorifics,<sup>131</sup> but perhaps unsure of the brothers' reliability and with no concrete acts of military assistance to thank them for, had stopped short of employing flattering biblical exempla. (The lemma of the letter alludes to *uberrimae benedictiones* and *gratiarum actiones*, indifferent to the absence.)<sup>132</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See Rieber, *Die Bedeutung alttestamentlicher Vorstellungen*, p. 76; Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königs-gedanken', p. 44; Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos*, p. 419; Angenendt, 'Das geistliche Bündnis', pp. 64, 74: the bond of compaternity between Charlemagne and Hadrian was not decisively renewed until 781, when Hadrian baptized Charlemagne's son Carloman in Rome (changing his name to Pippin), but this arrangement directly affected only compaternity-expressions, not the occurrence of Old Testament typology in subsequent papal letters.

<sup>127</sup> But note that Charlemagne is once called Moses (*Codex Carolinus*, no. 68, of 781).

<sup>128</sup> Both possibilities can be inferred from continuity of style and expression across the corpus, sometimes signalled by Gundlach; for Gundlach's more detailed study of the formulation (including a list of distinctly Hadrianic expressions) see his 'Über den Codex Carolinus', pp. 536–44.

<sup>129</sup> On the circumstances, see Angenendt, 'Das geistliche Bündnis', pp. 64–6; Noble, *The Republic of St Peter*, p. 121.

<sup>130</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 44, pp. 558–60.

<sup>131</sup> 'Praecellentissimi filii, magni, victoriosissimi reges et Dei providentia nostri Romanorum patritii': *Codex Carolinus*, no. 44, p. 559, lines 1–2.

<sup>132</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, p. 558, note a, apparatus.

Shortly afterwards, tension escalated. In 770 or 771, Pope Stephen III reacted to the rumour that one of the brothers intended to dismiss his Frankish wife in order to forge a marriage alliance with the Lombards.<sup>133</sup> His letter's 'exquisitely intemperate' language is a measure of the grave threat that this would have posed to the pope's security and the Franco-papal alliance: the Lombards are characterized as stinking, horrible, scarcely human, 'the origin of leprosy'.<sup>134</sup> Previously Old Testament typology in the papal letters had been consistently associated with thanks and praise. This letter contains neither. Yet there are three hints that the pope (or his notaries) remembered the special idiom for flattering Franks and withheld it deliberately. Firstly, Charlemagne and Carloman are reminded that, for all the diversity of their virtues, God's elect are characterized by steadfastness in their promises: a prescriptive use of typology which suggests that the ruling brothers are at risk of forfeiting their status.<sup>135</sup> Secondly, in his warning against any marriage between a Frank and a Lombard, the pope describes the Franks as *vestra praeclara Francorum gens, quae super omnes gentes enitet . . . tam splendifluae ac nobilissima regalis vestrae potentiae proles*<sup>136</sup> and Carloman and Charlemagne as *praeclari et nobilissimi reges . . . ex ipsa nobilissima Francorum gente*.<sup>137</sup> Thus the Franks are acknowledged as preeminent, but not elect: apart from the use of the word *regalis* (which echoes I Peter 2:9), the terms of praise are more reminiscent of the *Lex Salica* prologue than biblical typology. Such appreciation as there is is set off by extreme vilification of the Lombards, revealing an underlying structure of thought: the black-and-white polarization of Lombards and Franks. A third indication about (not) being God's chosen people is important because it states that this status is derived from St Peter via the pope, through papal consecration, and that it can be forfeited. It both affirms the election of all Christians and reminds the Frankish kings of the way that holy oil has set them apart. Inveighing against dismissing a Frankish wife in order to marry a foreign Lombard, Pope Stephen III wrote:

It is not meet that you should commit such wrong, you who acknowledge God's law and rebuke others to prevent their doing such things. Pagan peoples act

<sup>133</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 45, pp. 560–3; on which see Noble, *The Republic of St Peter*, p. 121 and Angenendt, 'Das geistliche Bündnis', p. 64.

<sup>134</sup> The characterization of the letter is Noble's, *The Republic of St Peter*, p. 121; *Codex Carolinus*, no. 45, see esp. p. 561. <sup>135</sup> *Codex Carolinus*, no. 45, p. 560, lines 24–6.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 561, lines 11–14. <sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 561, lines 21–2.

thus, to be sure, but perish the thought that you should, you who are fully Christian and 'a holy people and a royal priesthood' (I Peter 2:9)! Recall and reflect that through the hands of the vicar of St Peter you have been sanctified with celestial blessing by the holy oil of unction; you must beware of becoming involved in such sin.<sup>138</sup>

Beyond these scant indications and one flattering reference to Charlemagne as a new Constantine,<sup>139</sup> flattery and Old Testament typological compliments are absent. Strangely, the absence of Old Testament comparisons would persist even after Charlemagne's repudiation of his Lombard wife (771) and his successful takeover of the Lombard kingdom. There is no obvious single explanation for the irreversibility of the change in papal rhetoric, although an important factor must have been the unresolved tension resulting from Charlemagne's failure to grant Hadrian the Italian territorial concessions which Hadrian believed were his due after the Frankish king's Italian victories.<sup>140</sup>

When papal flattery ended, emigrés from the British Isles stepped in to fill the breach. First, and most strikingly there is the letter of admonition addressed to Charlemagne by the Insular Cathuulf in 775.<sup>141</sup> The letter is steeped in Old Testament thought about kingship, deliverance, fear of God and the law, and also reveals the author's familiarity with the Irish tract *de duodecim abusivis saeculi*. Cathuulf lists the things which he says Charlemagne should be grateful for, including his sole succession to the throne and the undivided kingdom after Carloman's death, his victory over the Lombards and his triumphal entry into Rome. He closes by citing threatening counter-examples of Old Testament kings who lost their kingdoms because of their misdeeds, and stressing the importance of justice. He also recommends specific prayers for the king

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., p. 561, lines 34–9, translation by King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources*, p. 271, 'Non vobis convenit tale peragi nefas, qui legem Dei tenetis et alios, ne talia agant, corripitis: haec quippe paganae gentes faciunt, nam absit hoc a vobis qui perfecte estis christiani et "gens sancta atque regale sacerdotium" (I Peter 2:9). Recordamini et considerate, quia oleo sancto uncti per manus vicarii beati Petri caelesti benedictione estis sanctificati; et cavendum vobis est, ne tantis reatibus implicemini.'

<sup>139</sup> Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken', p. 44 and *Codex Carolinus*, no. 60, p. 587, lines 16–18.

<sup>140</sup> On the territorial arrangements between Charlemagne and the pope after the conquest of the Lombard kingdom, see Noble, *The Republic of St Peter*, pp. 141–8. On Hadrian's dissatisfaction, see also the comments of Davis, in his translation, *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes*, pp. 112–14. Perhaps the baptism in 772 of Tassilo's son Theoto and the resulting bond of compaternity with Tassilo had detracted from the uniqueness of the Carolingians' relationship with the papacy. Evidence for Tassilo's baptism is summarized by Angenendt, 'Das geistliche Bündnis', p. 66, n. 298.

<sup>141</sup> On Cathuulf, see the literature cited by Garrison in 'Letters to a king', pp. 307, n. 8, 306, n. 4.

– all derived from the psalms – and other religious observances to be undertaken on behalf of Charlemagne and his army, plus days of national fasting and celebration. Cathuulf sees an easy connection between the history of Israel and current affairs and seems almost to reify the typological connection between Charlemagne and David:

For how many times have your enemies been turned to flight before your face, and you have been the victor, and this is exemplified about you [*sic*], what is read in the psalms, even though it is especially understood in reference to Christ and to David. ‘I shall pursue enemies and I shall overtake them’ and so on; and likewise in the person of God the Father: ‘And I shall turn his enemies to flight’; and . . . likewise in Moses ‘God fights for us’; likewise Saint Paul: ‘If God be for us, who is against us’. So also of Joshua, of David, of Hezekiah, of Judas Machabeus and so on.<sup>142</sup>

Unfortunately the sentence translated to read ‘and this is exemplified about you’ has been damaged in transmission. Cathuulf may merely have intended to say ‘and this example concerns you’. In either case, the flattering comparison between Charlemagne, Christ and David fore-shadows a new phase in the currency of Old Testament typology at the Carolingian court. Indeed, Cathuulf’s letter seems almost prophetic, for it anticipates the themes of Charlemagne’s subsequent legislation as well as liturgical developments, and even the David nickname.<sup>143</sup> As corroboration for the importance of Insular *peregrini* in transmitting this way of thinking about rulership to the Continent, one can cite the similar and nearly contemporary letter addressed to Tassilo of Bavaria by one Clemens Peregrinus.<sup>144</sup>

#### ADMONITIO GENERALIS

Eventually, just as Pippin and his notary Baddilo projected images influenced by the idea of Old Testament kingship and divine election, so too would Charlemagne, but with the assistance of the Insular Alcuin, and on an even grander scale, as the *Admonitio Generalis* of 789 demonstrates.<sup>145</sup> The *Admonitio Generalis* was intended to be widely circulated; it survives today in close to forty manuscripts.<sup>146</sup> It stands out

<sup>142</sup> MGH Epp. IV, p. 502, lines 34–6: ‘Quantis etiam modis, ante faciem tuam inimicis in fugam conversis, et victor extitisti, et hoc exemplatum (ed.) est de te, quod in [p]salmis legitur, quamquam de Christo et de David intelligitur’; the quotations are from Ps. 18:38 and 88:24. It is important to note that *exemplatum* is an editorial expansion of *exemplu e.tu*; one might also propose *exemplum est tamen* or *exemplum est tunc*.

<sup>143</sup> J. Hannig, *Consensus Fidelium: frühfeudale Interpretationen des Verhältnisses von Königtum und Adel am Beispiel des Frankenreiches* (Stuttgart, 1982), p. 226. <sup>144</sup> See Garrison, ‘Letters to a king’.

<sup>145</sup> *Admonitio Generalis*, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. I (Hanover, 1883), pp. 52–62.

from Charlemagne's earlier legislation in several respects: for its length, for the thoroughness of its provisions intended to shape a society based on Christian ethics and religious observance<sup>147</sup> and above all, for the prominence of the Old Testament justifications which had been absent from earlier Carolingian legislation and church councils alike.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, much of the second part of the capitulary is constructed from Old and New Testament quotations and in addition some provisions repeated from earlier legislation are newly justified by Mosaic law.<sup>149</sup> In this 'intensive and direct adoption of biblical law for the Christian kingdom of the Franks', Wilfried Hartmann has seen the inspiration of Alcuin, who, into old age, as his letters indicate, believed that biblical law should be applied directly to the contemporary world.<sup>150</sup> In the preface Charlemagne invoked the example of Josiah, the Old Testament king who had called the Israelites away from their idols, stating that this was a model for his own duty to govern the *regnum* entrusted to him in accordance with correct Christian living.<sup>151</sup> But although Charlemagne's zeal for correction, legislation and reform was directly likened to Josiah's, Charlemagne (or his amanuensis Alcuin) acknowledged the presumption of the comparison and insisted that it should *not* be understood typologically. Charlemagne was not a latter-day type of Josiah, but rather Josiah an exemplum for Charlemagne.<sup>152</sup> Despite this restraint, the exemplum of Josiah would later come to be represented almost typologically, as a simile, in the psalter of Charles the Bald.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>146</sup> See H. Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscripta: Überlieferung und Traditionszusammenhang der fränkischen Herrschererlässe*, MGH Hilfsmittel, 15 (Munich, 1995), index, no. 22, p. 1082.

<sup>147</sup> McKitterick, *Frankish Church*, pp. xv, 1–19. Compare E. S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York, 1963), p. vii.

<sup>148</sup> W. Hartmann, 'Die karolingische Reform und die Bibel', *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 18 (1986), pp. 57–74.

<sup>149</sup> This applies to injunctions concerning perjury, oaths, the feud, weights and measures, and, most strikingly, observance of the Sabbath; see Hartmann, 'Die karolingische Reform und die Bibel', p. 62.

<sup>150</sup> Hartmann, 'Die karolingische Reform und die Bibel'; on Alcuin's role as drafter of the *Admonitio*, see W. Scheibe, 'Alcuin und die *Admonitio Generalis*', *Deutsches Archiv* 14 (1958), pp. 221–9.

<sup>151</sup> *Admonitio Generalis*, p. 54, lines 5–6: 'et quoscumque poterimus, ad studium bonae vitae in laudem et in gloriam domini nostri Iesu Christi congregare necesse est. . .'. On the significance of Josiah, see McKitterick, *Frankish Church*, pp. 2–3 and Rieber, *Die Bedeutung Alttestamentlicher Darstellungen*, p. 152.

<sup>152</sup> 'Non ut me eius sanctitate equiparabilem faciam, sed quod nobis sunt ubique sanctorum semper exempla sequenda, et, quoscumque poterimus, ad studium bonae vitae in laudem et in gloriam domini nostri Iesu Christi congregare necesse est.' *Admonitio Generalis*, p. 54, lines 4–6.

<sup>153</sup> See McKitterick, *Frankish Church*, pp. 2–3 and notes, for discussion of the manuscript and reproduction of the image (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 1152, f. 3<sup>v</sup>), assumed to depict Charles the Bald, although the possibility that Charlemagne is intended cannot be entirely

## COURT POETRY OF THE 770S AND 780S

The *Admonitio Generalis* clearly marks a new departure, not only in Carolingian legislation, but also in the reception of the laws and history of Israel as a model for the Franks. Alcuin's arrival at the court had predated the *Admonitio* by several years; it had inaugurated a phase in which the contributions of English and Irish emigrés and those of the Spanish Theodulf were increasingly influential at the expense of the Italians who had been prominent in the 770s. The change in ideology that accompanied this change in personnel is clearly visible in the contemporary court poetry. Although the manuscript transmission of much Carolingian court poetry is remarkably poor,<sup>154</sup> the circumstances of its performance at court are documented.<sup>155</sup> With this evidence we are therefore on firmer ground with regard to questions of audience and dissemination. The poetry shows us how those close to the king represented him and themselves to each other (and sometimes to larger gatherings), and accordingly provides us with a barometer for changes in the intellectual hot-house around the king. Recent discoveries have corroborated the special contribution of the Insular *peregrini*.

Dieter Schaller has recently significantly revised the received picture of Carolingian court poetry in the 770s, the years of the Italians who joined Charlemagne's entourage after his conquest of the Lombards in 774. Schaller has demonstrated that Paulinus of Aquileia is the author of both a previously unpublished paraliturgical Easter composition (apparently sung to Charlemagne when he celebrated Easter at Treviso in 776)<sup>156</sup> as well as of a poem written in 777 to celebrate the conversion of the Saxons.<sup>157</sup> His discoveries reveal that Charlemagne had encountered

excluded. The inscription changes Charlemagne's prescriptive typology into the descriptive mode: 'cum sedeat Karolus magno coronatus honori/est Iosiae similis parque Theodosio'.

<sup>154</sup> For discussion and some recent literature, see M. Garrison, 'The English and the Irish at the Court of Charlemagne', in P. L. Butler, M. Kerner and W. Oberschelp (eds.), *Charlemagne and his Heritage: 1200 Years of Civilization and Science in Europe* (Turnhout, 1997), vol. I, pp. 97–123, at pp. 103–5, p. 104, n. 25 and 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature at the court of Charlemagne (780–814)', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 111–40, at p. 136; still fundamental is E. Dümmler, 'Die handschriftliche Ueberlieferung der lateinischen Dichtungen aus der Zeit der Karolinger', *Neues Archiv* 4 (1878/9), pp. 89–159, 293–322, 511–82.

<sup>155</sup> The classic study is D. Schaller, 'Vortrags- und Zirkulardichtung am Hof Karls des Großen' (1970), in his *Studien zur lateinischen Dichtung des Frühmittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1975), pp. 87–109; surveys can be found in P. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985) and A. Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum: Untersuchungen zur historischen Dichtung im Karolingischen Europa*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 1978).

<sup>156</sup> D. Schaller, 'Ein Oster-Canticum des Paulinus von Aquileia für Karl den Grossen: Erstedition und Kommentar', in his *Studien zur lateinischen Dichtung des Frühmittelalters*, pp. 361–98.

<sup>157</sup> The text printed in MGH PLAC 1 (Berlin, 1881), pp. 380–81 has been superseded by Karl



and begun to patronize political poetry a decade earlier than had previously been supposed.<sup>158</sup> And yet in this early Italian phase, the notion that the Franks themselves are God's elect is absent. Charlemagne, not the Franks, occupies centre stage. The Easter poem mentions Charlemagne in a mere three of its eighteen stanzas, asserting that he is a king crowned by providence, a merciful suppressor of rebels who serves Christ and compels the *gentes* to tread the straight path: thus the singers should rejoice to see a king under whom peace flourishes on earth.<sup>159</sup> The biblical concept of election is nowhere suggested and comparison with an Easter poem from the Merovingian court indicates that paraliturgical performances at the court's Easter celebration were no innovation.<sup>160</sup> The second poem attributed to Paulinus of Aquileia sets the conquest and forced conversion of the Saxons in the context of salvation-history and glorifies the political use of terror. The poet states that Charlemagne will attain heaven as a reward for converting the Saxons, who are depicted as evil, barbaric and unteachable demon-worshippers before their conversion. Although Charlemagne's victory is said to have been accomplished with the help of God's might, the poetic representation of Charlemagne and his messianic aura here owe more to Virgil than to the Old Testament.<sup>161</sup> Apart from a vague affinity with the Old Testament conception of God as the terrifying Lord of Hosts, there is no trace whatsoever of the idea of election, nor, indeed, of the valiant Frankish army which has disappeared behind its leader. Yet another early political poem by an Italian at court again praises Charlemagne's military prowess. In this poem, in contrast to the others, Old Testament exempla do figure, yet, significantly, not in connection with kingship.<sup>162</sup>

Hauck's edition, pp. 62–5 of his *Karolingische Taufsfalzen im Spiegel hofnäher Dichtung: Überlegungen zur Ausmalung von Pfalzkirchen, Pfalzen und Reichsklöstern*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse (Göttingen, 1985); on the authorship, see D. Schaller, 'Der Dichter des "Carmen de conversione Saxonum"', in his *Studien zur lateinischen Dichtung*, pp. 313–31. Also Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum*, pp. 7–17, 75 and Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', pp. 132–3.

<sup>158</sup> D. Schaller, 'Karl der Grosse im Licht zeitgenössischer politischer Dichtung', in Butzer et al. (eds.), *Charlemagne and his Heritage*, vol. I, pp. 193–219.

<sup>159</sup> Schaller, 'Ein Oster-Canticum', p. 389, strophes 15–17.

<sup>160</sup> D. Norberg, *La poésie latine rythmique du haut moyen âge*, Studia Latina Holmiensia 2 (Stockholm, 1954), pp. 54–9.

<sup>161</sup> See the apparatus of the editions of Dümmler and Hauck, but especially Schaller, 'Karl der Grosse im Licht zeitgenössischer politischer Dichtung', p. 205, on the importance of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

<sup>162</sup> The importance of this neglected poem is highlighted by Schaller in 'Karl der Grosse im Licht zeitgenössischer politischer Dichtung', pp. 198–201, who argues for a date in the 770s; for the text, see K. Neff, *Die Gedichte des Paulus Diaconus, Kritische und Erklärende Ausgabe, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters*, III.4 (Munich, 1908), no. 38, pp. 159–62, with an argument for a 788/99 date.

Noah, Samson, Gideon, and David's triumph over Goliath are cited, not as types for Charlemagne, but as inspiring examples of leaders who struggled against mighty odds and kept God's commands. The poet says that the stories should kindle the true love for God in Charlemagne's heart. This last poem as well as the Easter Canticum invite comparison with the verses inscribed in the copy of the Dionysio-Hadriana canon law collection given to Charlemagne by Pope Hadrian in 774.<sup>163</sup> That clumsy acrostic dedicatory-poem asserts the superiority of Christian doctrine above all kingdoms, celebrates Charlemagne's recent victory over the Lombards, and reminds him of his dependence on and promises to St Peter; it concludes by commanding him to obey the law – apparently the statutes of the Dionysio-Hadriana which it precedes. To be sure, all of the poems so far mentioned attempt to integrate Charlemagne into *Heilsgeschichte*<sup>164</sup> in various ways, but clear and obvious equivalences between the Franks and the Israelites are not to be found.

For a direct, unambiguous poetic articulation of the notion that the Franks were God's elect, one must move ahead in time to the late 780s. In perhaps 787 or 788 a shadowy figure who calls himself Hibernicus Exul addressed an ambitious composition to Charlemagne about his recent victory over Tassilo of Bavaria.<sup>165</sup> The fragmentary poem survives in a single manuscript.<sup>166</sup> In the first forty lines, the poet depicts a tribute giving ceremony and remonstrates with his muse, who stresses poetry's enduring ability to convey the deeds of kings as well as praise for God.<sup>167</sup> After a bloodless victory over Tassilo, the poet puts an astonish-

<sup>163</sup> MGH PLAC 1, pp. 90–1, *versus libris saeculi viii adiecti*, no. 3; on the bizarre attempt at 'word-counting hexameters' which seems to indicate that no one at the papal court was then capable of writing quantitative hexameters, see W. Meyer, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rhythmik*, (Berlin, 1905), vol. I, p. 235 and his amendment to his earlier view in vol. III (Berlin, 1936), pp. 233–4.

<sup>164</sup> Ebenbauer stresses this aspect of Carolingian poetry throughout his book, *Carmen Historicum*; for other views, see Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', p. 134, n. 97.

<sup>165</sup> On the problems of ascertaining his identity and the uncertain canon of his verse, see Garrison, 'The English and the Irish', p. 100, nn. 13 and 14. Since the poem is incomplete, it is impossible to determine the date with certainty. Later events could have been included in the missing (final) part of the poem: see Schaller, 'Karl der Grosse im Licht zeitgenössischer politischer Dichtung', p. 215.

<sup>166</sup> MGH PLAC 1, *Hibernici exulis carmina*, no. 2, pp. 396–99; Schaller, 'Karl der Grosse im Licht zeitgenössischer politischer Dichtung', pp. 213–16; Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 174–8 (a translation only of the poet's dialogue with the muse, not of the lines dealing with current events); Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum*, pp. 18–29, 81; Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', pp. 134–6, and 134, n. 98.

<sup>167</sup> This represents a distinct change from the Italian poetry: Charlemagne is now the elect and poetry has gained autonomy and power; in contrast Peter of Pisa had insisted that Charlemagne's honour would endure through the ages only if Christ granted it (Neff, *Die Gedichte des Paulus Diaconus*, carm. 38, p. 162, lines 56–7).

ing speech into Charlemagne's mouth in which the king hails his Franks as regal, chosen people, reminding them of their Trojan origin, asserting that they have been sanctified by God, and implying that the fields of Bavaria were granted to them by God, and had indeed been foreordained for them even before the conflict with Tassilo.

O royal nation, sprung from the lofty walls of Troy,  
The World's judge buffeted our fathers to these shores  
And bequeathed to them these fields  
And he placed the people of the Franks under fair laws.  
From on high the Creator ordained for them perpetually  
These broad bounds, cities to be captured completely,  
He entrusted to them slaves, maid-servants, all dominions,  
But lately an enemy has arisen in our fields.

O gens regalis, profectus a moenibus altis  
Troiae, nam patres nostros his appulit oris,  
Tradidit atque illis hos agros arbiter orbis,  
Subdidit et populos Francorum legibus aequis  
Perpetueque illis sanxit formator ab astris  
Hos fines amplos, capiendas funditus urbes,  
Ancillas, servos, famulatus credidit omnes.  
At nuper nostris hostis surrexit in arvis.<sup>168</sup>

In Charlemagne's fictional speech, the themes of election, hallowing, submission to law (presumably God's law), Frankish might and territorial rights are combined more concisely and clearly than in any of the other poems discussed. It is possible that the poet's Irish penchant for the Bible and panegyric might underlie this fusion, but the allusion to *gens regalis* could also be inspired by familiarity with Fredegar<sup>169</sup> and perhaps also the *Lex Salica* prologue, indicating that the travelling Irishman had studied his patron's texts and traditions.

It is interesting to consider why a poem about Charlemagne's victory over Tassilo, in particular, might employ an analysis of current events centred on the notion of election. The key may lie in the contrasting ideological challenges posed by non-Christian and Christian enemies. Charlemagne's conquests of non-Christians needed little justification – hence the triumphalist and *heils geschichtlich* notes in the poems on the

<sup>168</sup> MGH PLAC 1, p. 398, lines 85–92. In line 91 I have retained the manuscript reading 'credidit'; note also that line 86 contains a previously unrecognized reminiscence of *Aeneid* 3.715, reinforcing the likeness between the Franks and the Trojans, themselves 'chosen people' in another theological scheme. For discussion of the poem, see Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum*, pp. 24–5, and Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', p. 134, n. 98.

<sup>169</sup> MGH PLAC 1, p. 398, n. 3.

conversion of the Saxons or the defeat of the Avars.<sup>170</sup> Campaigns against other Christians however were more problematic. One might guess, therefore, that it was in confrontation with the Christian enemies, the Bavarians and the Iconoclastic Byzantine Empire, that Carolingian self-representation would come to rely most on the notion of the Franks' special election by God.

Support for this hypothesis can be found in the *Annales Petaviani* and the *Libri Carolini*. The *Annales Petaviani* are thought to contain a contemporary account for the years 771–9.<sup>171</sup> During these years, the annual writer sometimes departs from the terse factual format of the earlier annalists to introduce Old Testament typology, most strikingly with reference to the conflict with Tassilo. The entry for the year 788 reads:

In that year there was a court at Angoulême and the Almighty God fought for the lord king Charles, just as he did for Moses and the sons of Israel when Pharoah had been overwhelmed by the Red Sea; thus [was] mighty God a combatant; without battle and without any contest he consigned the kingdom of the Bavarians into the hand of the great King Charles; and Duke Tassilo was tonsured and incarcerated in the monastery of Jumieges.<sup>172</sup>

The annalist seems to be calling attention to the fact that God is on the side of the Franks, just as he helped his earlier elect, the people of Israel. The typological relationship is implied, not stated, but this annal entry constitutes the most direct prose evidence for viewing the Franks as God's chosen people. Yet although the annalist could see current events in biblical terms, no consistent homology with Old Testament history can be detected. The other remarkable entry in the *Petaviani* (for the year 777) likened Charlemagne's divine favour, earned by the baptism of

<sup>170</sup> MGH PLAC 1, pp. 116–17; Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum*, pp. 30–3; Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 186–91; Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', p. 134.

<sup>171</sup> The Annals are most conveniently available in the antiquated edition of G. Pertz, MGH SS I (Hanover, 1826), pp. 9, 11, 13, 16–18, who had not collated the manuscripts and uses aliases for them that are impossible to trace without the essential remarks of K. F. Werner, 'Das Geburtsdatum Karls des Grossen', *Francia* 1 (1973), pp. 115–57, at pp. 137–45. Relevant notices in Potthast and Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen are unreliable. A new edition, urgently needed, was promised by Werner. I thank David Ganz for much bibliographical assistance and hope to return to the *Petaviani* on another occasion.

<sup>172</sup> MGH SS 1, *Annales Petaviani*, s.a. 788, p. 17: 'Eodem quippe anno fuit placitum Angulisamo, et idem anno pugnavit omnipotens Deus pro domno rege Karolo, sicut fecit pro Moyse et filios Israel, quando demersus fuit Farao rubro mari; sic Deus potens praeliator sine bello et absque ulla altercatione tradidit regnum Bawarium in manu Karoli magni regis; et Taxilo dux tonsus est, retrususque Gemitico monasterio.'

Saxons, to that of John the Baptist.<sup>173</sup> The phrasing of the 788 entry is reminiscent of the liturgy, but has no exact parallel in the liturgical sources; it seems above all to affirm that God was on Charlemagne's side, not that of the Bavarians. The notion of election, then, could be used to write other Christians out of history. An even more thorough-going attempt to do so can be discerned in the *Libri Carolini*, prepared between 790 and 793 to combat the provisions on images of the sixth Nicene council.<sup>174</sup>

The poetry produced at the court in the 790s develops Old Testament connections even more energetically. Here, again, the Spanish Theodulf and Alcuin are the most influential spokesmen for the idea. Old Testament by-names for court personnel proliferated in their poetry.<sup>175</sup> Authors of Carolingian pastoral achieved an easy accommodation between the world of the eclogues and the world of the psalms.<sup>176</sup> But of course, the Old Testament names were used alongside names from classical antiquity and early Christian times to effect a playful rather than literal-minded rapprochement with the ideals they represented. Whether Charlemagne asked to be called David is unknown; the earliest evidence for the David name occurs in a poem from Paul the Deacon; the by-name came into its own in the 790s, but poets could play distinctive variations on the theme. To Angilbert, David the poet, singer of the psalms, rather than David the king, was more important.<sup>177</sup> Theodulf on the other hand called Charlemagne David, yet deliberately evoked the Queen of Sheba's extravagant flattery of King Solomon: 'blessed are thy servants, who stand before thee always and hear thy wisdom'.<sup>178</sup> The king's favourite Alcuin, ever versatile, played all the variations.

Interestingly, the rhetoric of election seems to be confined to Charlemagne's immediate entourage and although the court examples vary the theme, all are pitched in the same key of heady panegyric and

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 16: 'Karolus rex merito gaudet cum Iohanne baptista'; compare the entries for 792 and 796.

<sup>174</sup> See the persuasive interpretation of Noble in 'Tradition and learning in search of ideology: the *Libri Carolini*', in R. E. Sullivan (ed.), *The Gentle Voices of Teachers: Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age* (Columbus, Ohio, 1995), pp. 227–60.

<sup>175</sup> See the examples and literature cited in Garrison, 'The social world of Alcuin', pp. 59–81.

<sup>176</sup> On which see O. Murray, 'The idea of the shepherd king from Cyrus to Charlemagne', in P. Godman and O. Murray (eds.), *Latin Poetry and the Classical Tradition: Essays in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 1–14 and R. P. H. Green (ed.), *Seven Versions of Carolingian Pastoral* (Reading, 1979).

<sup>177</sup> MGH PLAC 1, Angilbert carm. 2, pp. 360–3.

<sup>178</sup> MGH PLAC 1, Theodulf carm. 25, p. 483, line 6, recalling III Reg. 10:8.

flattery destined for the king's ears, and intended to secure patronage for the poets. It is significant that ideas of election and Old Testament kingship are not present in the anonymous rhythm celebrating Pippin's victory over the Avars (in 796); that poem harks back to St. Peter's special aid and alludes to the *laudes*<sup>179</sup> – themes familiar from papal thought and Roman examples. Yet the 790s were the heyday of Davidic imagery at the Aachen court. If such a silence can be explained, one might consider two factors. Firstly, the rhythmical form and manuscript preservation of the poem seem to imply that it was by an Italian, and as we have seen, the idea was not part of the stock-in-trade of the Italians. Secondly, there may have been a tacit understanding that the idiom of Old Testament flattery was to be reserved for Pippin's father.

#### AACHEN

The symbolism of the Aachen palace and chapel complex is important because in contrast to the court poetry, where we may assume that the poets rather than their patron took the initiative in choosing by-names and metaphors, one can assume that Charlemagne himself gave some instructions to his designers and builders, and that the results reflect his intentions, at least to some degree. Accounts by Einhard and Notker corroborate this.<sup>180</sup>

The possible significance of the Carolingian constructions at Aachen is too complex a subject to treat in depth here. Like much of the other evidence so far discussed, the palace and chapel at Aachen point to the importance of Old Testament models, but alongside other sources of inspiration. Late antique Byzantine archetypes<sup>181</sup> and indeed classical *spolia* were also important, and the dedication of the Aachen *Dom* to Mary has been seen as an imitation of the Byzantine Empire, calculated to obtain for the new Western Empire the same protection that she had provided for Byzantium.<sup>182</sup> Notker claimed that Charlemagne was following 'the example of Solomon in his great wisdom' when he

<sup>179</sup> MGH PLAC 1, pp. 116–17, esp. strophes 4 and 14; partial translation, Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 187–91; Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum*, pp. 30–4; Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature', pp. 132, 134.

<sup>180</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, G. H. Pertz and G. Waitz, MGH SRG 25 (Hanover, 1911), c. 26, p. 30; and Notker Balbulus, *Gesta Karoli Magni Imperatoris*, ed. H. Haefele, MGH SRG n.s. 12 (Berlin, 1959), 1.27, p. 38.

<sup>181</sup> H. Fichtenau, 'Byzanz und die Pfalz zu Aachen', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 59 (1951), pp. 1–54.

<sup>182</sup> Fichtenau, 'Byzanz und die Pfalz zu Aachen'; Nelson, 'Women at the court of Charlemagne: a case of monstrous regiment?', in her *The Frankish World 750–900*, pp. 223–42, at p. 230.

undertook the work.<sup>183</sup> Notker was no eyewitness and had probably never been to Aachen, so it is tempting to connect his observations about Charlemagne with Solomonic panegyric in some of Alcuin's letters to Charlemagne, letters which Notker had certainly read.<sup>184</sup> How far Charlemagne himself consciously chose Solomon as a model is harder to determine. Is it perhaps more than merely coincidence that it was in the twenty-fourth year of his reign, when all building was complete, that Solomon dedicated the temple in Jerusalem,<sup>185</sup> and it was also precisely twenty-four years after he had begun to reign alone that Charlemagne celebrated Christmas and Easter in Aachen?<sup>186</sup> The construction work at Aachen itself seems to have begun in 788/9, that is some twenty years after Charlemagne's accession in 768.<sup>187</sup> If Charlemagne himself had intended a literal and direct emulation of Old Testament kingship, one might expect that this would be reflected in the design of his throne, and yet the evidence of the throne is equivocal.<sup>188</sup> The most decisive argument among many against a literal imitation of Solomon's throne concerns the shape of the so-called throne of Charlemagne. The throne of Solomon had a round back.<sup>189</sup> The throne of Charlemagne, however, did not: eighteenth-century drawings now preserved in London and Aachen clearly show a trapeziform back

<sup>183</sup> Notker, *Gesta Karoli*, I.27, p. 38.

<sup>184</sup> Alcuin, Ep. 145, MGH Epp. IV, pp. 231–5, at p. 235. See also Theodulf carm. 25, MGH PLAC I, pp. 483–9. On Notker's knowledge of Alcuin's letters and high regard for them, see his observations in a letter: E. Dümmler (ed.), *Das Formelbuch Bischofs Salomo III von Konstanz aus dem neunten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1857), p. 72.

<sup>185</sup> II Par. 3:2 and II Par. 8:1.

<sup>186</sup> *Annales regni Francorum* and *Annales quem dicitur Einhardi*, s.a. 794 and 795, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG i.u.s. 6 (Hanover, 1895), pp. 96–7, counting Charlemagne's regnal years not from his accession in 768, but from the beginning of his sole rule in 771. For an analysis of Charlemagne's 794–5 sojourn in Aachen which sees political contingency rather than any fundamental decision as decisive, see R. Schieffer, 'Vor 1200 Jahren: Karl der Große läßt sich in Aachen nieder', in Butzer et al. (eds.), *Charlemagne and his Heritage* (Turnhout, 1997), vol. I, pp. 3–21.

<sup>187</sup> R. Schieffer, 'Vor 1200 Jahren', p. 14, n. 48.

<sup>188</sup> A selection of literature on the throne: H. Appuhn, 'Zum Thron Karls des Großen', *Aachener Kunstblätter* 24/25 (1962–3), pp. 127–36; H. Beumann, 'Grab und Thron Karls des Großen zu Aachen', in W. Braunsfels and P. E. Schramm (eds.), *Karl der Große, Lebenswerk und Nachleben, Vol. IV: Das Nachleben* (Düsseldorf, 1967), pp. 9–38; P. E. Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, Schriften der MGH 13 (Stuttgart 1954), Vol. I, pp. 336–45; *Karl der Große: Werk und Wirkung* (Düsseldorf, 1965), p. 29, no. 5, plate 2; E. G. Grimme, *Der Dom zu Aachen: Architektur und Ausstattung* (Aachen, 1994), pp. 52–5. Note that this throne is assumed to be Charlemagne's, but is first attested in written sources in 936 (Thietmar on the coronation of Otto the Great). Of course, one ought to consider the throne in the larger context of throne-use; on that see R. Schmidt, 'Zur Geschichte des fränkischen Königsthrons', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 2 (1968), pp. 45–66 and the literature there cited.

<sup>189</sup> III Reg. 10:19: 'et summitas throni rotunda erat in parte posteriori'. See also III Reg. 10:18–20 for the full description of Solomon's throne.

which was only later rounded off, perhaps in the first decade of the nineteenth century, during French domination, in order to bring the throne into line with Empire-style.<sup>190</sup> The list of differences could be multiplied.<sup>191</sup>

But if the throne fails to provide evidence for Charlemagne's emulation of the physical trappings of Solomonic kingship, his concern with liturgical correctness does seem to reflect a vivid awareness of the history of Israel. When Solomon had finished building the temple, but had not yet consecrated it, God appeared to him and promised him and his descendants continued dominion if they would keep his commands and rites, but threatened to wipe Israel from the earth if Solomon and his people failed in this.<sup>192</sup> Charlemagne's (and Pippin's) liturgical interests are well known.<sup>193</sup> Einhard's account of Charlemagne's activity at Aachen indicates that Charlemagne did not merely attend services regularly, but also took care that they were performed properly, and that no dirt or pollution got into the church.<sup>194</sup> Einhard's juxtaposition of the description of the care with which Charlemagne built and decorated the *Dom* at Aachen with his remarks about Charlemagne's remarkable concern with the purity and correctness of the services seems suggestive of a similar sequence of events in the history of Solomon: the construction of a temple by a great ruler followed by warnings from God about ritual correctness and obedience. It is therefore important to stress that Einhard nowhere makes the connection explicit, nor does he ever in any way suggest a covenant between God and the Franks or speak about the one between God and the Israelites.

#### COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES

In order to grasp what is most distinctive about these developments in Francia and to appreciate the richness and versatility of the idea of being God's elect, some comparative evidence may be helpful. I shall begin with the Insular world. The British Gildas, writing his *De Excidio Britanniae* sometime in the sixth century, after the departure of the Romans,

<sup>190</sup> Appuhn, 'Zum Thron', pp. 127, 132.

<sup>191</sup> Solomon's throne was of ivory and gold, Charlemagne's of re-used late antique marble (and wood?); moreover, it apparently lacked the decorative metal lions and hands that adorned Solomon's; whether it had six steps in its original installation cannot be ascertained.

<sup>192</sup> III Reg. 9:6: '... custodientes mandata mea et caerimonias quas proposui vobis'.

<sup>193</sup> On the interest of the *capellani* in preserving liturgical instructions, as attested by two letters in the St Denis formulary, see Garrison, 'Letters to a king', pp. 317, 319.

<sup>194</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 26, p. 30-1.



but before Anglo-Saxon hegemony had been established, envisaged his British people as the elect of God, his family, or 'lawless sons'.<sup>195</sup> To be sure, the British had been running amok ever since their last victory over the invaders – hence the luxury, injustice, tyranny and lawlessness which Gildas rails against – and so it was Gildas's role, like an Old Testament prophet, to call his people back to God and righteousness. The Anglo-Saxons were accommodated in this scheme as the 'scourge of God', functioning, in Gildas's view, to purify God's family.<sup>196</sup> So in the *De Excidio*, the British status as the elect was imperilled, but not lost.

To the Anglo-Saxon Bede, writing his *Historia Ecclesiastica* at least two centuries later, the Anglo-Saxons were God's chosen people, even while they, as pagans, attacked the Christian Britons. Thus the victorious pagan King Æthelfrith could be glorified by comparison with Saul,<sup>197</sup> even after a victory over a British Christian king. Bede could write: 'nevertheless, God in his goodness did not reject the people whom he foreknew, but he had appointed a much worthier herald of truth [i.e. Augustine of Canterbury, sent by Gregory the Great] to bring the people to the faith'.<sup>198</sup> Bede's appropriation of the concept of election is both intensely particular and triumphalist. The identity and special providential role of the Anglo-Saxons is frequently held up against that of the indigenous British inhabitants, who, though Christian, are collectively viewed as excessively lazy and sinful – before, during and after the Synod of Whitby, and, to Bede, blameworthy above all because they failed to evangelize the Anglo-Saxons. (Of course, Bede's view of history is far more complex than can be indicated here, and Bede stops short of imposing typological equations throughout the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In Bede's view of providence, election is completed by a deep concern with mission and the idea of Anglo-Saxon history as a fulfilment and continuation of the evangelism that began in the Gospels: an apprehension of a deeper sense of continuity of revelation from Old Testament to Gospels to Anglo-Saxons.)<sup>199</sup> But however one summarizes Bede's view of his-

<sup>195</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and other Documents*, ed. M. Winterbottom (London, 1978), cap. 1.13 (hereafter Gildas's *De Excidio* is abbreviated as *DE*).

<sup>196</sup> *DE* 22.1.

<sup>197</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), I, 24 (hereafter abbreviated as *HE*).

<sup>198</sup> *HE* I, 22.

<sup>199</sup> H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Bede and the "English People"', *Journal of Religious History* 11 (1981), pp. 501–23; G. Tugène, '“L'histoire ecclésiastique” du peuple anglais: Réflexions sur le particularisme et l'universalisme chez Bède', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 17 (1982), pp. 129–72, stresses Bede's discretion in his use of the concept: see esp. pp. 142, 147–8, 151 (noting that Bede only uses the notion of election explicitly twice).

tory, his use of the concept of God's chosen people leaves no room for the British as the elect, despite his admiration for some British saints such as Aidan and Cuthbert.

Bede's pro-Saxon appropriation of the concept of election is in turn adopted by Alcuin, and even where Alcuin purports to summarize Gildas, he distorts the Gildasian view, apparently unable, or unwilling, to countenance the idea that the British could once have been the elect and lost their mandate.<sup>200</sup> A century after Alcuin, King Alfred of Wessex turned to the notion of election in order to project his image of the English as a united people, the successors to God's chosen people in the Old Testament and the heirs to their laws. Alfred accomplished this by prefacing a collection of his own laws and the earlier laws of some other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms with extensive extracts from the laws of the Old Testament and an opening essay on the divinely ordained nature of the law. Where, for Bede, the concept of 'chosen people' had been used to project an artificial sense of the unity of the various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms against the Britons, by the time of Alfred, the concept was used to project a common identity for the recently united peoples of kingdoms with disparate traditions and laws.

In Spain, a very different pattern in the use and avoidance of the concept of election can be discerned in the writings of some eighth- and ninth-century chroniclers. In the eighth century, Christians under Muslim rule did not represent themselves as the elect, and depicted Arab rule 'matter of factly, merely as a change in régime'; they thereby avoided an interpretation of history that would identify themselves as the elect gone astray and the Muslims as the scourge of God.<sup>201</sup> In the late ninth century, in contrast, Christians living outside Muslim rule, in the Christian kingdom of the Asturias, understood Muslim domination as a divine scourge 'for the sins of their forefathers', and, accordingly, could regard themselves as the elect.<sup>202</sup> That these permutations were shaped by contemporary circumstances rather than by the chroniclers' sources, or by any intrinsic implication of the idea of election itself is clear. Where John of Biclaro had occasionally used Old Testament typology about the Goths to represent them as the elect, Isidore of Seville had mainly avoided doing so, to the extent that he deleted

<sup>200</sup> Alcuin, MGH Epp. IV, Ep. 17, p. 47 and Ep. 129.

<sup>201</sup> K. Wolf (trans. and comm.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, Translated Texts for Historians 9 (Liverpool, 1990), p. xvi. I am indebted to Wolf's introduction for observations about Spain.

<sup>202</sup> Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p. xvi.

certain Old Testament references as he adapted the Chronicle of John of Biclaro.<sup>203</sup>

The use of the Bible is a use of the past, but what factor is most significant in the way that the biblical past is used? From the contrast between the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons, a clear conclusion emerges. It was a more recent past, namely each group's experience with Rome and the papacy, that shaped the political and ideological construction of a distinctive Christian national identity. The Franks recalled the self-chosen conversion of victorious Clovis and remembered that they had been the pope's special warriors in the eighth century, and went on to fight others in the name of Christ, up to the Crusades.<sup>204</sup> The Anglo-Saxons always looked back to Pope Gregory's efforts for their conversion in the sixth century and went on to convert others in the eighth.

By the 790s, Old Testament comparisons had gained a new prominence and a new public at the Carolingian court. Typology was reified, and the Bible's role as an authoritative text was such that biblical law could be applied to the Franks in the *Admonitio Generalis* and Charlemagne himself could be addressed as David rather than merely compared to him. In 801, after Charlemagne had been addressed as David for the better part of a decade, and after Alcuin and Theodulf had likened his wisdom to Solomon's, Alcuin dared to fuse the *beata gens* of the Old Testament<sup>205</sup> with the blessed *res publica* of the famous Platonic proverb that asserted that states would be blessed if their kings were philosophers or philosophers were their kings.<sup>206</sup> After a flattering description of Charlemagne's imagined *adventus* (with distinctly imperial echoes), Alcuin wrote:

Beata gens, cui divina clementia tam pium et prudentem providebat rectorem. Felix populus, qui sapiente et pio regitur principe; sicut in illo Platónico legitur proverbio dicente felicia esse regna, si philosophi, id est amatores sapientiae, regnarent, vel reges philosophiae studerent. Quia nihil sapientiae in hoc mundo comparari poterit . . . Quia solummodo vera est sapientia, quae beatos aeternos efficiet dies.

Blessed is the nation for which divine mercy has provided such a godly and prudent ruler; blessed the people which is ruled by such a wise and godly leader; just as it says in the Platonic proverb: blessed are kingdoms if philosophers, that is, lovers of wisdom, rule, or if kings study philosophy, since nothing in this

<sup>203</sup> Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp. 17, 25–6.

<sup>204</sup> Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgegensatzes*.

<sup>205</sup> Ps. 32:12: 'beata gens cuius est Dominus Deus eius'; cf. Ps. 143:15.

<sup>206</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 473D.

world can equal wisdom . . . Since it is true of wisdom alone that it will bring about blessed days for eternity.<sup>207</sup>

Alcuin was familiar with the 'Platonic proverb' from Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*,<sup>208</sup> but would also have encountered it in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.<sup>209</sup> Bede himself had perhaps learned the phrase from Lactantius.<sup>210</sup> In striking contrast to those earlier writers however, Alcuin is the only one to preface the proverb with the words *beata gens* and *felix populus* – words which unmistakably recall the *beata gens* and *beatus populus* of the Psalms and Deuteronomy, referring to the blessed nation of Israel:

ps. 32:12: *Beata gens cuius est Dominus Deus eius/populus quem elegit in hereditatem sibi*

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance.

ps. 143:15: *beatus populus cuius Dominus Deus eius*  
happy is that people whose God is the Lord.

DEUT. 33:29: *beatus tu Israhel quis similis tui popule qui salvaris in Domino*  
Blessed are thou, Israel: who is like to thee, O people that art saved by the Lord?

The boldness of the assimilation of the blessed republic to the chosen people of the Old Testament is all the more striking because Alcuin implies that such beatitude may be the Franks' under Charlemagne's wise rule. The suggestion is all the more remarkable if one is aware that the traditional exegesis of *beata gens* interpreted the *beata gens* as the heavenly Jerusalem or else the Christian people generally, but never as approximating any secular political entity as Alcuin seems to do.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>207</sup> MGH Epp. IV, Alcuin, Ep. 229, p. 373, lines 1–5, 7–8.

<sup>208</sup> Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, I. iv.19.

<sup>209</sup> Bede, *HE* V, 21, p. 534, quoted in the letter of Abbot Ceolfriht of Wearmouth-Jarrow to Naitan, 'nam et uere omnino dixit quidam saecularium scriptorum, quia felicissimo mundus statu ageretur, si uel reges philosopharentur uel regnarent philosophi'. On Bede's composition of the letter, and later instances of the proverb, see the note in C. Plummer, *Venerabilis Baedae Opera* (2 vols., Oxford, 1896), vol. II, p. 332.

<sup>210</sup> See Garrison, 'Alcuin's World through his Letters and Verse' (PhD dissertation, Cambridge, 1996), p. 103, n. 132; forthcoming in book form (Cambridge).

<sup>211</sup> Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmos I–L*, ed. E. Dekkers and J. Fraipont, CCSL 38 (Turnholt, 1956), pp. 245, 267; pp. 245–6: *enarratio* i, in psalmum xxxii, re 12; *enarratio* ii on the same verse is concerned with the wish for blessedness (*beata gens*, p. 265) and the identity of *Noster Deus* (p. 267). Cassiodorus, *Expositio psalmorum I–LXX*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 97 (Turnhout, 1958), p. 289: 'Gentem itaque dicit pertinentem ad Ierusalem supernam quem adunatam constat ex omnibus gentibus. Ipsa utique beata est, a qua Deus uere colitur et omnium Dominus adoratur'. At p. 283 the blessedness in what Cassiodorus sees as the second part of the psalm is said to pertain to the Christian era when *multitudo gentium creditura*. Compare also the gloss on Ps. 32:12 from the Mondsee Psalter; this gloss was copied in Bavaria, but is thought to have been composed in

(Even in the papal letters of the *Codex Carolinus*, Israel had been more often equated with *Ecclesia* than with the Franks.)<sup>212</sup> Alcuin stopped short of introducing the Franks directly into the equation, but none the less insinuated that Charlemagne's wise governance could make a blessed republic of Francia and that such a state would resemble that of God's chosen people. This is the notion of election in the service of royal panegyric, but its political implications are limited by its immediate purpose and context: the paragraph occurs as the *captatio benevolentiae* of a letter intended to secure Charlemagne's assent to Alcuin's plans for retirement. Thus, what appears to be the grandest equation of all between the Franks and the chosen people is flattery addressed only to Charlemagne.

For centuries afterwards, a particular, or ethnic, rather than a universalist appropriation of identity with the chosen people would continue to be an important theme in Francia, providing a basis for national self-awareness which did not so much supersede Frankish ethnicity as apotheosize it. The sacralization of kingship and the growing power of the bishops to confer that sacrality would accompany this development.\*

Ireland between the fifth and seventh centuries (Unterkircher, *Die Glossen des Psalters von Mondsee*, p. 27). It is historical and christological not allegorical, yet shows no interest in the *beata gens*: the verse including *beata gens* is glossed to clarify the word *hereditas*: *Nostra propriae quae (quia? ed.) idola spernit* – 'rightly ours, since it/which spurns idols'. As Unterkircher notes, the gloss is unclear in its received form, but the glosses collectively are oriented towards the historical, literal and christological sense of the psalms. We can suppose this gloss to have been read by a member of Tassilo's family, and probably also by Charlemagne's daughter Hrotrud: Unterkircher, *Die Glossen*, pp. 20, 24, 26, on the gloss; p. 160, for the text.

<sup>212</sup> See above, pp. 123–9 and *Codex Carolinus*, MGH Ep. III, no. 42, p. 554, lines 30–3.

\* Acknowledgements: I am grateful to Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes for very considerable editorial help at many stages and to Mayke De Jong and Rosamond McKitterick for valuable comments on an early draft. I also thank all colleagues with whom I have discussed aspects of this topic over the years.

*Political ideology in Carolingian historiography*

Rosamond McKitterick

At the monastery of St Amand in the second half of the ninth century, a compilation of historical texts was prepared with a very particular agenda. The manuscript was in the cathedral library of Worms by the thirteenth century and survives in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (lat. 473). It contains the following texts. First of all (fols. 1v–85v) there is the *Liber Pontificalis*. This is followed by the *Liber Historiae Francorum* (fols. 90r–107v), the Continuations to the Chronicle of Fredegar (fols. 108r–114) and the *Annales Regni Francorum*, in the ‘D’, that is, unrevised version (fols. 116–143v and 152v–169r). There is a portion of Einhard’s *Vita Karoli Magni* (fols. 144r–151) and the manuscript concludes with a truncated version of the *Genealogia Domus Carolingicae*, divided into two sections: *Genealogia Sancti Arnulfi* and *Historia Francorum Epitomata et Origine Gentis ad Ludovicum Pium* (fols. 169v–172r).<sup>1</sup>

This codex is among many such compilations of Frankish history produced in the ninth century all over the Frankish empire.<sup>2</sup> The most common combinations of text include the *Annales Regni Francorum* and the *Vita Karoli* of Einhard, but we also find them juxtaposed with Continuations of Fredegar, the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, or the Lives of Louis the Pious by Thegan or the Astronomer.<sup>3</sup> For any one of these

<sup>1</sup> For a brief description, see E. Erlich, *Karl der Grosse und die Wissenschaft* (Vienna, 1993), p. 38. The texts of the genealogy are edited by G. Pertz, MGH SS 2 (Berlin, 1829), pp. 308–12.

<sup>2</sup> R. McKitterick, ‘The audience for Carolingian historiography’, in G. Scheibelreiter and A. Scharer (eds.), *Historiographie im Frühmittelalter* (Vienna, 1994), pp. 96–114 and R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989). A further compilation is London, British Library, MS Arundel 375. This combines the history of the Trojans by Dares Phrygius, the *Liber Historiae Francorum* and the Continuations of Fredegar’s Chronicle with the portion of the *Annales mettenses priores* dealing with Pippin II’s military victories. Further, it sets out the text with a decorated *incipit* page, highlighting the words *In Principio* which is reminiscent of the beginning of Genesis in biblical manuscripts of this period.

<sup>3</sup> E. Tremp, *Die Überlieferung der Vita Hludowici imperatoris des Astronomus*, MGH Studien und Texte 1 (Hanover, 1991) and his *Studien zu den Gesta Hludowici imperatoris des Trierer Chorbischofs Thegan* (Hanover, 1988).

compilations the pertinent questions relate to who compiled this volume, why the selection it contains was made, for whom, and for what purpose. An analysis of the St Amand collection and examination of the specific place in the notoriously complicated stemma of each of the texts help us to focus on these questions. A codex such as Vienna 473, therefore, makes it necessary to explore the implications of the dissemination of Carolingian historiography in terms not only of the specific political impetus for the initial production of each text but also of their subsequent impact and use.

Let us look more closely, therefore, at the texts assembled in Vienna 473. Its version of the *Liber Pontificalis* is that classified by Duchesne as the B text and runs to Life 94, that is, Stephen II (d. 757).<sup>4</sup> It is closely related to the three copies of the *Liber Pontificalis* made at Laon in the first half of the ninth century, the earliest of which (Köln, Dombibliothek 164) is possibly a copy of an exemplar sent by Pope Leo III to Charlemagne. The Vienna recension, however, is essentially a Frankish one. It incorporates significant additions, notably in the lives of the eighth-century popes Gregory III and Stephen II, which are pertinent to Frankish affairs or offer a Frankish dimension to papal affairs. Thus in the life of Gregory III, for example, an appeal from Gregory to Charles Martel for help against the Lombards is recorded. Inserted into the life of Stephen II are references to Duke Hunuald of Aquitaine's perfidy, Pippin's embassy to the pope, led by Pippin's brother Jerome, and the pope's granting of the archiepiscopal pallium to Chrodegang of Metz.<sup>5</sup> Thus the history of the popes in the eighth century is deployed in this codex as an adjunct and historical context for that of the Franks. It serves to reinforce the associations of the Carolingians and the Franks with Rome and papal authority, and provides essential justification of the Frankish conquest of Italy.

Having provided the Roman and papal background, the compiler of Vienna 473 then added excerpts concerning the Trojan origins of the Franks, ending with the burial of Dagobert at St Denis and before the account of Grimoald's coup, from the *Liber Historiae Francorum* in its 'B' or Austrasian recension.<sup>6</sup> Unlike other Carolingian copies of the

<sup>4</sup> L. Duchesne (ed.), *Le Liber Pontificalis. Texte, Introduction et commentaire* (2 vols., Paris, 1886) and see the introduction to R. Davis, *The Eighth-Century Popes* (Liverpool, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, pp. 420 (interpolated section XIV); p. 441 (addition to section IV); p. 451 (addition to section XXXVIII); p. 356 (interpolation to section LIII); and compare pp. ccxxvii–ccxxix.

<sup>6</sup> *Liber Historiae Francorum*, c. 43, ed. B. Krusch, reprinted in a revised edition by A. Kusternig under the direction of H. Wolfram, *Quellen zur Geschichte des 7. und 8. Jahrhunderts, Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters* 4a (Darmstadt, 1982), p. 364.

Continuations of Fredegar, moreover, this one, Class 5 (f),<sup>7</sup> subsequently takes the text only as far as the death of Charles Martel and distinguishes that portion as the *Historia Rerum Gestarum Carli Maioris Domus*.

Similarly, the *Annales Regni Francorum* in Vienna 473 are divided into two sections. The one ending at 814 is described in bold red uncial letters as the *Gesta Domni Karoli Magni*, and the other, from 814–829, is headed *Gesta Hludowici*. In a style reminiscent of the *Liber Pontificalis*, it adds at 814 that while Charlemagne was passing the winter at Aachen he died aged 71, in the forty-seventh year of his kingship, the forty-third year of his rule in Italy and the fourteenth year of his rule as emperor, on 28 January. The portions of Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni* inserted between these two parts include the section in which Charlemagne repudiates the daughter of Desiderius and marries Hildegard. Louis the Pious, of course, was the only surviving son of Hildegard.<sup>8</sup> It thus serves to reinforce the legitimacy of Carolingian succession, the theme of the genealogy which completes the collection, where the Carolingian line from father to son, from its origins in the Trojan and Gallo-Roman past to Louis the Pious, is elaborated.

The *Annales Regni Francorum*, therefore, specifically described as the deeds of Charlemagne and Louis, constitute the principal piece of historiography in the book; all the other texts are designed to complement and enhance it. It is necessary to dwell a little longer on the content of the *Annales*, therefore, for it has been too little appreciated for the forceful political ideology it conveys. It is in fact a skilfully constructed and highly selective triumphal narrative and a subtly nuanced portrayal of the Carolingian rulers, whose success is identified with that of the Frankish people. This narrative needs, furthermore, to be seen in the context of the remarkable production of Carolingian historiography in the eighth and ninth centuries, all of which reflects an urgent political purpose in the interpretation of contemporary events;<sup>9</sup> much of it was designed to justify and even to legitimate particular courses of action and manifestation of power on the part of the Carolingian rulers in

<sup>7</sup> The Fredegar manuscripts are discussed in detail by B. Krusch, *Chronicarum quae dicuntur fredegarii scholastici libri IV cum continuationibus*, MGH SRG 2 (Hanover, 1888), summarized in Kusternig and Wolfram, *Quellen zur Geschichte*, pp. 33–8, and see Roger Collins, *Fredegar, Authors of the Middle Ages. Historical and Religious Writers of the Latin West IV*, no. 13 (Aldershot, 1996), p. 129.

<sup>8</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 18, ed. R. Rau, *Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte*, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters* 5 (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 188–90 and see M. Innes and R. McKitterick, 'The writing of history', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 193–220, at pp. 203–8.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193–220.



relation to specific political circumstances. Indeed, the more conventional treatises on political thought, such as Sedulius Scottus or Jonas of Orleans, drew in fact on ideas elaborated in the historical justifications for the actions of the Carolingian rulers.<sup>10</sup>

The most familiar aspect of the late eighth-century historical texts is of course the systematic derogation of the Merovingian rulers and, indeed, of Merovingian ecclesiastical and lay elites, Church, religion and culture. In matters of doctrine, Church organization, Christian observance and governmental control, Carolingian legislation skilfully belittled the Merovingian period and celebrated the great achievements of the Carolingians.<sup>11</sup> Similarly the Continuations of the Chronicle of Fredegar, disseminated widely throughout the Carolingian realm in its ninth-century version, present, from the vantage point of a family member and supporter, the steady accumulation of power and territory on the part of the Carolingian mayors, especially Charles Martel and Pippin III, at the expense of the Merovingian puppet kings.<sup>12</sup> As Collins has suggested, the Continuations as far as 751, where there appears to be a clear break (signalled by the famous colophon in Vat. reg. lat 213 concerning Childebrand's patronage of its composition),<sup>13</sup> might appear to indicate that the expansion of Fredegar's Chronicle to this point was undertaken in 751 to mark the inauguration of the new *rex Francorum*. The subsequent portion from 751 to 768 could be seen as an updating of the work to honour Pippin III's successors, possibly for Carloman alone rather than for Pippin as well. I have argued elsewhere, however, that the continuator could have put the whole text together after 768 and that this tenth-century colophon, added only to one manuscript of the Continuations, may not be as definitive as has hitherto been assumed.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Sedulius Scotus, *Liber de rectoribus christianis*, ed. S. Hellmann, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie 1,1 (Munich, 1906), pp. 1–91 and Jonas of Orleans, *De institutione regia*, ed. J. Reviron, *Les idées politico-religieuses d'un évêque du IXe siècle. Jonas d'Orléans et son De institutione regia* (Paris, 1930), pp. 119–94. See the classic survey by H. H. Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit*, Bonner Historische Forschungen 32 (Bonn, 1968).

<sup>11</sup> R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895*, Royal Historical Society, Studies in History 2 (London, 1977); I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450–751* (London, 1994); Y. Hen, *Culture and Religion in Merovingian Gaul, AD 481–751*, Culture, Beliefs and Tradition. Medieval and Early Modern Peoples 1 (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1995), pp. 198–205.

<sup>12</sup> R. Collins, 'Deception and misrepresentation in early eighth-century Frankish historiography: two case studies', in J. Jarnut, U. Nonn and M. Richter (eds.), *Karl Martell in seiner Zeit*, Beihefte der Francia 37 (Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 227–48; see also McKitterick, 'Audience for Carolingian historiography', pp. 99–100.

<sup>13</sup> Fredegar, *Continuations*, c. 33, ed. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and its Continuations* (London, 1960), pp. 102.

<sup>14</sup> McKitterick, 'The illusion of royal power in the Carolingian annals', *English Historical Review* 115 (2000), pp. 1–20, and compare Collins, *Fredegar*, pp. 113–16.

Nevertheless, the impact on a late ninth-century reader of the continuator's account as a whole would be to enhance an understanding of the Carolingian family's power and prestige.

Further, the *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium* by Paul the Deacon, commissioned by Bishop Angilram of Metz in 781, does not celebrate the bishops of one diocese so much as commemorate, however discreetly, events vitally concerning the entire Frankish Church and kingdom.<sup>15</sup> Paul simply omits all reference to the Merovingian kings or Church. The text, with its 'four-part allegory of the Carolingian achievement' and simplified genealogy of the Carolingian rulers, was designed to reinforce the legitimacy of Carolingian succession from father to son, and especially that of Charles the Younger, eldest son of Hildegard and Charlemagne, descended from Arnulf's son Anschisus. The name Anschisus, comments Paul, 'is believed to be derived from Anchises father of Aeneas, who long ago came from Troy to Italy. For as ancient tradition has it, the Frankish people traces its origins to Trojan stock.'<sup>16</sup> Thus Paul links the Carolingian house with the Trojans. In subsequently describing Charlemagne as the conqueror of Italy and ruler of Rome, he reunites the two branches of the Trojan diaspora.<sup>17</sup>

Preoccupation with the succession of the Carolingians is also the main point of the *Annales Mettenses Priores*.<sup>18</sup> It is now generally acknowledged that this was written as a justificatory dossier for the *Divisio Regnorum* of 806. It was most probably composed at Chelles under the auspices of Gisela, Charlemagne's sister. Like Paul the Deacon's *Gesta*, it had a specific concern for the inheritance of Charles the Younger.<sup>19</sup> Incidentally, Fouracre and Gerberding have doubted that the *Annales Mettenses Priores* were written by a woman because the author voices virulent criticism of Plectrude and is therefore a misogynist.<sup>20</sup> To my mind, this reinforces the link between the *Annales* and Gisela at Chelles,

<sup>15</sup> *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, ed. G. Pertz, *Liber de episcopis Mettensibus*, MGH SS 2 (Berlin, 1829), pp. 260–8.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 264: 'cuius Anschisi nomen ab Anchise patre Aeneae, qui a Troia in Italiam olim venerat, creditur esse deductum. Nam gens Francorum, sicut a ueteribus est traditum, a Troiana prosapia trahit exordium.'

<sup>17</sup> See W. Goffart, 'Paul the Deacon's *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium* and the early design of Charlemagne's succession', *Traditio* 42 (1986), pp. 59–94.

<sup>18</sup> *Annales Mettenses Priores*, ed. B. von Simson, MGH SRG 10 (Hanover, 1905).

<sup>19</sup> H. Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen zur karolingischen Annalistik*, Bonner historische Forschungen 10 (Bonn, 1958) and I. Haselbach, *Aufstieg und Herrschaft der karolinger in der Darstellung der sogenannten Annales Mettenses Priores*, Historische Studien 412 (Lübeck, 1970), pp. 1–208. See also chapter 8 by Hen, in this volume.

<sup>20</sup> P. Fouracre and R. Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France. History and Hagiography 640–720* (Manchester, 1996), p. 338.

for Plectrude was the *stepmother* of Charles Martel and had done her best to prevent Charles coming into his father's inheritance. Women are surely no less discerning than men when it comes to recognizing the failings of members of their own sex!<sup>21</sup> The *Annales Mettenses Priores* certainly are far more concerned with division and succession than they are with an idea of imperial unity, but their most important theme is the historical justification for the ruling position of the Carolingian family loyally upheld by their *fideles*. Each successive Carolingian ruler fulfils another element of God's plan for the Franks which culminates in the glorious rule of Charlemagne, though, as Fouracre and Gerberding have pointed out, the language to describe the early Pippinids is also replete with connotations of imperial and royal rule.<sup>22</sup>

The *Annales Regni Francorum* run from 741 to 829, deliberately created in 788 or so, as I have argued elsewhere, from a miscellany of both oral and written information.<sup>23</sup> In the *Annales Regni Francorum* the Merovingian rulers are also conspicuous by their absence, but there is a difference of crucial importance in the presentation of Carolingian success: it is always in concert with the triumph of the Franks. It is the Carolingian mayors who lead the Franks before 751. The Carolingian leaders do everything with the consent and support and on the advice of the Franks, that is, the lay and ecclesiastical elites. There is a remarkable stress on the Franks as a *gens*. The annalist created a far more encompassing idea of Frankish identity than ever before and a notion of the *gens francorum* specifically associated with the Carolingian mayors and kings and the legitimacy of Carolingian rule. The *Annales Regni Francorum* forge a Frankish identity by constant reiteration and triumphal narrative consolidated within a Christian chronological framework. The link with the year of the Incarnation first used by the royal Frankish annalist makes an explicit association between the history of the Franks and the progression of Christian history, and the secular rhythm of the court was fitted into the liturgical cycle. The *Annales* constitute a major contribution to the formation of the collective memory of the people under Frankish rule.

<sup>21</sup> For other arguments see J. L. Nelson, 'Gender and genre in women historians of the early Middle Ages', in J. L. Nelson, *The Frankish World* (London, 1996), pp. 183–97 and R. McKitterick, 'Women and literacy in the early Middle Ages', in *Books, Scribes and Learning in the Frankish Kingdoms, Sixth to Ninth Centuries* (Aldershot, 1994), ch. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, p. 346. They also highlight the contrast between the stress on divine plan in the *Annales Mettenses Priores* and that on family and politics in the *Liber Historiae Francorum*.

<sup>23</sup> R. McKitterick, 'Constructing the past in the early Middle Ages: the case of the Royal Frankish Annals', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series 7 (1997), pp. 101–29.

The continuators of the Royal Frankish Annals after 788 add skilfully to the effect created. Year after year sees the visits of embassies from Sicily, Rome, Huesca, Persia, Jerusalem, Dalmatia and Venice, Cordoba, Byzantium, Galicia and the Asturias who seek out the Franks and their ruler, bringing gifts, offering or confirming alliances and friendship or suing for peaceful terms after 'rebellions' swiftly dealt with by the emperor's magnates. Although embassies come to the court, it is the magnates who deal with the peripheral peoples in the field. Thus duke Eric of Friuli wins victory against the Avars and sends the treasure to Charlemagne, though Eric is subsequently killed in an ambush. Much of this Avar treasure was distributed among Charlemagne's *optimates*, ecclesiastical as well as lay and his other *fideles*. Count Gerold also was killed in battle against the Avars. Count Wido 'conquered' Brittany for the Franks in 799. Count Aureolus was killed on the Spanish border in 809. Again it is twelve Frankish magnates who in 811 conduct the negotiations for peace with the Danes after the systematic series of campaigns conducted in an effort to contain the Danish attacks under Godofrid. Support is given to Frankish allies, such as the Obodrites, by the leading men of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious. Saxon and Sorb rebellions are quelled; the Nordliudi, Wilzi and Bohemians are dealt with by the magnates or by the king's son. In all these details of international embassies, reference to internal matters is rare, but it is significant that it should be in 806 that the succession and division of the kingdom were discussed and that the annalist insists that the decisions were confirmed by an oath of the Frankish magnates. After Louis is established on the throne the annalist is quick to point out that it is 'business as usual'. Again, however, it is the magnates, the king's staunch supporters, who put agreed measures into effect. After a general assembly at Aachen, for example, Louis sends envoys to all parts of the kingdoms to render justice and relieve the oppression of the people. The annalist addresses his audience in 813 concerning the decisions made at the reform councils of that year. They have been distributed to the cities, he says, but anyone who wants to see them can also consult the palace archives. The years after 823 are especially replete with the record of assemblies being held after which decisions made are carried out. Occasionally the *Annales* can be recognized as having an admonitory role in pointing out the evils ensuing from military weakness or administrative incompetence.

What the Continuators of Fredegar, the *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, the *Annales Regni Francorum* and the *Annales Mettenses Priores* have in

common is the presentation of the eighth century as the Golden Age in which all the virtues and political strength of the Franks were elaborated. Within the framework of nostalgic triumphalist narrative, Carolingian legitimacy and clear principles about the succession to the throne are stressed. Legitimacy of succession and the ruler's relationship with his elites are the common themes of the principal historical writing of the first half of the ninth century, that is, the revised or 'E' version of the *Annales Regni Francorum*, most probably produced in the aftermath of the first restoration of Louis, Thegan, the Astronomer and finally Nithard. Keeping faith and fidelity are the dominant concerns. This historiography is not just about the Frankish rulers but about the ruling elites. It elaborates the importance of the rule of the *gens francorum*, the position of the Carolingian rulers, with the Franks, in relation to a Christian, ancient Frankish and Trojan past; it constantly reiterates the role of the clergy and the magnates in ensuring political success. There can be few parallels for such a concerted effort on the part of the elites to ensure the necessity for their support. This is not monarchical historiography at all. It articulates an ideology of consensus<sup>24</sup> and Frankish rule, in which the elites are just as important as the ruler himself.

The St Amand codex is thus no random assemblage of texts on Frankish history. Bridging passages from one text to the next, headings and colophons are added to give its point. Produced at a centre under the patronage of Charles the Bald and presided over by no less a personage than Charles the Bald's arch-chancellor Gauzlin,<sup>25</sup> and where the interest in Frankish history is also reflected in Hucbald of St Amand's *Vita Rictrudis*,<sup>26</sup> it serves, in its account of his illustrious predecessors, to underpin Charles the Bald's own rule and the importance of the support of the Frankish secular and ecclesiastical elites. Helmut Reimitz, indeed, has made a convincing case for this manuscript being probably associated with Charles the Bald's coronation at Metz in 869. It makes sense of all the Metz connections in the codex and is a reminder

<sup>24</sup> On consensus, see J. Hannig, *Consensus Fidelium. Frühfeudale Interpretationen des Verhältnisses von Königtum und Adel am Beispiel des Frankenreiches* (Stuttgart, 1982) and J. L. Nelson, 'Legislation and consensus in the reign of Charles the Bald', in P. Wormald et al. (eds.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 202–27.

<sup>25</sup> R. McKitterick, 'Charles the Bald and his library: the patronage of learning', *English Historical Review* 95 (1980), pp. 28–47, reprinted in her *The Frankish Kings and Culture* (Aldershot, 1995), ch. 5. On Gauzlin, see K.-F. Werner, 'Gauzlin von Saint-Denis und die westfränkische Reichsteilung von Amiens (März 880). Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte von Odos Königtum', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 35 (1979), pp. 395–462.

<sup>26</sup> See J. M. H. Smith, 'A hagiographer at work: Hucbald and the library at Saint-Amand', *Revue Bénédictine* 106 (1996), pp. 151–71.

of all the historical reasons which made such a political move comprehensible.<sup>27</sup>

Yet the St Amand compilation also raises important questions about the way in which the annals were produced and disseminated. We have tended to think of the *Annales* in a conventional nineteenth-century way. According to this, the many different recensions, most of them in ninth-century manuscripts from different centres throughout the Frankish realm, are organized into a stemma with five branches. They are understood to provide witnesses to a text that are simply judged as faithful or deviant copies rather than as the deliberate deployment of the text to serve some new purpose. That new purpose is certainly related to the original import of the text, but it gives any scribe or compiler a licence to alter it, and more crucially, to 'bolt it onto' other related texts according to a particular agenda. Past assessments of the *Annales* have rested on a contorted understanding of the original text's composition in relation to the surviving manuscripts. Whatever the original authors may have written, the later copyists and compilers felt at liberty to alter sentences, change tenses and adjectives, insert extra words and omit others. These changes are no doubt very minor, in that the main thrust of the narrative remains remarkably stable. Nevertheless, any alterations are more than merely useful clues for locating a centre of production. They point to a positive engagement with the text on the part of the scribe and compiler. In this light, the so-called 'E' version is simply the most dramatic of the reworkings of the annals, with revisions added to many entries between 741 and 817. These emphasize legitimate power even more strongly than the unrevised versions and express moral indignation at any opposition to the Carolingians. It is significant, for example, that Charlemagne's difficulties with treachery or lack of cooperation on the part of brothers, sons or *potentes* are offered by the reviser in the context of vindication of the way Charlemagne and Louis dealt with the various revolts against them.

The *Annales* text on which we now depend, therefore, is a composite text, in which many ninth-century scribes as well as nineteenth-century editors have played a role. But there is a far more positive way to assess this manuscript evidence, and that is to acknowledge that the text of the *Annales*, as represented in the manuscripts from the Carolingian period, mirrors its reception and attests to an audience in the ninth

<sup>27</sup> H. Reimitz, 'Ein Karolingisches Geschichtsbuch aus St. Amand. Der Codex Vindobonensis palat. 473', in C. Egger and H. Wiegand (eds.), *Arbeiten aus dem Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* (Vienna, 1999) J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), especially pp. 221–53.

century. It is an audience of people who were impressed by its message and wished it to be propagated further. Thus the message of the *Annales* is to be understood not just as the clever construction it once was, whose original text is unrecoverable, but also as a collaborative piece of image-making by many Frankish scribes over a number of decades.

For whom the various recensions and compilations of the *Annales* were intended is to be deduced from the internal evidence of the many composite history books for which the *Annales Regni Francorum* form the base text. Here I wish to stress that, important as the *Annales Regni Francorum* are, they must be seen in relation to the specific political impetus for most of the major works of Carolingian historiography. Hitherto each text has been strangely disembodied. That is, the annals, biographies and chronicles exist, we read them, and studies have been made of them as individual texts.<sup>28</sup> To think of them exclusively as separate texts, however, rather than as a concerted effort on the part of a group of associated members of an elite to present posterity with a very specific image of royalty and their own position in the Carolingian world, is to deprive them of their collective power. I say 'associated members of an elite' because all the major historiographical sources of the Carolingian period produced in the century between 780 and 880, that is, the *Continuations of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, the *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, the *Annales Regni Francorum*, the *Annales Mettenses Priores*, Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, Thegan's *Gesta Hludowici*, the Astronomer's *Vita Hludowici*, Nithard's *Historiae*, the *Annales Bertiniani* and the *Annales Fuldenses*, can be linked with the royal court in one way or another. There can be no doubt, for example, that copies of the Royal Frankish Annals, at least in its revised version, emanated from the court itself.<sup>29</sup> This is indicated by one fragment, now in Cologne (Historisches Archiv des Erzbistum Köln, Best. Stift St Maria im Kapitol A II 184), written in

<sup>28</sup> For the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, Fredegar, *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, *Annales Mettenses Priores*, *Annales Regni Francorum* and Einhard, Thegan and Astronomer, see notes 3, 8, 12, 17, 19, 20, 23 above. For Nithard and Annals of St Bertin, see J. L. Nelson, 'The Annals of St Bertin', in M. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald, Court and Kingdom*, 2nd edn (Aldershot, 1990), pp. 23–40 and J. L. Nelson, 'Public histories and private history in the work of Nithard', *Speculum* 60 (1985), pp. 251–93, reprinted in her *Politics and Ritual in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1986), pp. 195–238. For Notker, see H. Löwe, 'Die Geschichtsschreibung der ausgehenden Karolingerzeit', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 23 (1967), pp. 1–30 and H.-W. Goetz, *Strukturen der spät-karolingischen Epoche im Spiegel der Vorstellungen eines zeitgenössischen Mönchs. Eine Interpretationen des Gesta Karoli Notkers von Sankt Gallen* (Bonn, 1981).

<sup>29</sup> On the general context and 'court consumers', see J. L. Nelson, 'History writing at the courts of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald', in Scheibelreiter and Scharer, *Historiographie*, pp. 435–42.

the court scriptorium of Louis the Pious and containing the 'E' text.<sup>30</sup> A handsome, large-format book, the text agrees with Kurze's text for the entry for 824 almost exactly. Although it has some unique readings it also shares slight variations in spelling with the manuscripts containing the *Annales Regni Francorum* classified by Kurze as C<sub>3</sub>, D<sub>3</sub>, and no less than five of the E group manuscripts. This increases the likelihood that the E text itself is to be closely associated with the royal court and was disseminated from it. Further, the St Amand codex can be associated with a monastery patronized by Charles the Bald. Other codices containing the annals have been linked with the royal monastery of Lorsch<sup>31</sup> and Gerward, formerly at the court of Louis the Pious. The revised version does not appear to have been incorporated into collections until towards the middle of the ninth century. Lenka Kolarova has suggested that the 'E' version, in conjunction with the *Vita Karoli* of Einhard, can be linked to the initiative of Grimald and sponsorship of Louis the German.<sup>32</sup> Certainly it is striking how many extant manuscripts of the *Annales* and related texts are from the east Frankish kingdom. How many Franks and *exteriores gentes* were the Carolingians able to persuade of the rightness of their cause? Political change and disintegration can be the consequence of the breakdown of political loyalties, but a sense of a shared past would have great value in forging bonds between the many peoples under Carolingian *imperium*. Distribution out from the court was not for the promotion of the king's interest alone but also for those elites in whose interests it was to support the strong mutual bond between king and magnates. What needs to be emphasized, moreover, is the cumulative and comprehensive effect of this historiographical campaign on the part of writers associated with the Carolingian family and the Carolingian court. All of this historical writing taken together is astonishing in its consistency and its import. These texts are the voice of the elite. Reiterated over such a long period of time, the implicit and explicit

<sup>30</sup> B. Bischoff, 'Die Hofbibliothek Ludwigs den Frommen', in J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (eds.), *Medieval Learning and Literature. Essays presented to Richard William Hunt* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 3–22 and in English translation by Michael Gorman in B. Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne*, Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology 1 (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 76–92.

<sup>31</sup> Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 510 is a tenth-century copy of the *Annales Regni Francorum* which includes the *Vita Karoli* and was produced at Lorsch. The 'original' text of the *Annales* is also associated with Lorsch, though how precisely it is impossible now to establish. Lorsch also had the *Annales Mettenses Priores* by 807. Here the ties with Louis the German's court as well as Louis's are important in the person of Grimald and his interest in history. See also n. 32.

<sup>32</sup> L. Kolarova, 'The transmission and dissemination of Carolingian annals', Unpublished M.Phil. dissertation (University of Cambridge, 1995).



statements of Carolingian political ideology contained in the historical writings of the court elites are far more than a narrative of events; they articulate a clear ideology of political power and a very particular presentation of the past that certainly achieved far wider currency than the more conventional treatises on kingship.

I have stressed elsewhere that the sources for the Carolingian period are for the most part not designed to present us with a narrative interpretation of events.<sup>33</sup> The historiography, on the other hand, so abundant and so forceful, was so designed. The Carolingians created their own image of their past and offered it to posterity. But they also offered it to their contemporaries, who treated their own history as part of a larger progression of the history of the Franks, and set it in the context of deeds of the great and powerful whose success redounded to their credit as well.

An idea can hold a people together and sustain it. A shared political memory and an inspiring history of the Franks as the centre of the world, such as is presented in particular in the *Annales Regni Francorum*, and as was disseminated from the royal court and its most loyal adherents, may well have done much to buttress Carolingian rule. Recalled past experiences and shared images of the past are kinds of memories that have special importance for the constitution of social groups. Within these, the creation of accounts of past events that draw on memory but select from it in distinctive ways that become accepted, and thereafter are shared by a group, is what I have chosen to call constructing the past.<sup>34</sup> The historiography served to reinforce the Franks' own sense of place in the framework of history and in relation to the past.<sup>35</sup> Much has already been written about the role of the past in the political and cultural consciousness of the Frank.<sup>36</sup> Their interest in the Roman imperial and Christian past is clear from the surviving

<sup>33</sup> R. McKitterick, 'Introduction', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History II: 700-900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1-17.

<sup>34</sup> McKitterick, 'Constructing the past'.

<sup>35</sup> It is not until the versions of history written in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the Carolingians become part of a much simplified and glorious past with heroic attributes increasingly distanced from reality: A. R. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca, 1996); P. J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994); and K.-E. Geith, *Carolus Magnus. Studien zur Darstellung Karls des Großen in der deutschen Literatur des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, Bibliotheca Germanica 19 (Bern and Munich, 1977).

<sup>36</sup> T. F. X. Noble, 'Tradition and learning in search of ideology: the Libri carolini', in R. E. Sullivan (ed.), *'The Gentle Voices of Teachers'. Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age* (Columbus, OH, 1995), pp. 227-60, esp. pp. 248-9 and R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1995).

manuscripts and library catalogues,<sup>37</sup> but it is vital to set this beside the evidence for contemporary history, for it is in the image of the past that the Carolingian political ideology is presented at its most fervent, backed up by telling circumstantial detail and stories of success. The exegesis of past events was provided as a way of indicating the proper political positions of the present and the shaping of the future.

A number of factors have emerged in this chapter. It began as a study of one single manuscript but it implicates all other Carolingian codices containing historical texts. This is for the simple reason that it is the compilations of Frankish history in the ninth century which provide us with the clearest evidence for the impact of the texts and dissemination of the ideas they contain. Our presentations of ninth-century history in the surviving manuscripts are almost invariably an adjunct to the glories of the eighth century, the noble origins of the Franks in antiquity and Carolingian triumph. A fascinating reinforcement of the Franks' perception of the eighth century and the Golden Age of Carolingian rule, when the association with Rome was formed, and God's purpose manifested itself more clearly, is the evidence, as we saw above, of the *Liber Pontificalis* manuscripts. Thus the codices highlight the role of the eighth-century Golden Age in the political ideology of the Franks in the ninth century. The narrative of Carolingian triumph, the emphasis on Roman and Trojan origins, God's divine plan for the Franks as His new chosen people, the legitimacy of Carolingian rule and the secure succession from father to son, and the insistence on the role of the ruler as warlord and as centre of a vast empire, all supported by loyal *fideles* and *potentes*, were an inspiring legacy which ninth-century Franks clearly treasured. Far more was at stake in the annals than shaping the past. Even a cursory reading of the Frankish annals establishes a clear political agenda focused on the present and on the power and self-perception of the Carolingian secular and ecclesiastical elites.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> McKitterick, 'Audience for Carolingian historiography', pp. 100–6, 112–13.

<sup>38</sup> Earlier versions of this paper were presented at conferences in Utrecht (in English) and Lille (in French) in 1997. The French version was published as 'L'idéologie politique dans l'historiographie carolingienne', in R. Le Jan (ed.), *La royauté et les élites dans l'Europe carolingienne* (Lille, 1998), pp. 59–70.

## CHAPTER 8

### *The Annals of Metz and the Merovingian past*

Yitzhak Hen

The late eighth and ninth centuries were a significant period of Carolingian historiography. Many narrative compositions, whose main purpose was to interpret political circumstances or even to legitimate contemporary events, were compiled and disseminated throughout the Frankish kingdom.<sup>1</sup> One of the most fascinating and intriguing compilations produced during that period is the so-called *Annales Mettenses Priores*.<sup>2</sup> These annals, covering the years 678–830, provide a substantially different account from that offered by other contemporary sources, and their author's distinctive voice and interest give them a personal tone, rarely found in medieval historical narratives. The patriotic interest of the *Annales Mettenses Priores* in the rise of the Carolingian house and their systematic denunciation of the Merovingian rulers make them, to a greater extent, an unreliable source on Merovingian matters, and subsequently they have often been described as Carolingian propaganda *par excellence*. It is, therefore, well justified to ask whether such an image of the *Annales Mettenses Priores* is appropriate, and what interests and concerns of the present shaped the views of the author who compiled such an unusual narrative.

The *Annales Mettenses Priores* have been the subject of several debates since 1895, when their sole complete manuscript was discovered by Karl Hampe at Durham Cathedral Library.<sup>3</sup> Until now these debates have focused on two main questions: the place of production and the process

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, chapter 7 by Rosamond McKitterick in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales Mettenses Priores*, ed. B. Von Simson, MGH SRG 10 (Hanover, 1905) [hereafter: *AMP*]. The *Annales Mettenses Posteriores*, an eleventh-century composition based on the *Annales Mettenses Priores* and Regino of Prüm's chronicle, are also edited by Von Simson in the same volume (pp. 99–105). These later annals, however, are beyond the scope of this study, and whenever I refer to the Annals of Metz in this paper I mean the *Annales Mettenses Priores*.

<sup>3</sup> On the discovery of the *AMP*, see K. Hampe, 'Reise nach England vom Juli 1895 bis Februar 1896, III', *Neues Archiv* 22 (1897), pp. 609–99, at pp. 694–6. The manuscript is Durham, Cathedral Library C IV 15, ff. 2r–28v. On the manuscript itself, see Von Simson's edition, pp. v–vi.

of composition.<sup>4</sup> On the question of composition, the present consensus is that the *Annals of Metz*, as it survives in the Durham manuscript, can be divided into three sections on the basis of their content, style and language. The first section, covering the years 678 to 805, is a creation of a single author, writing in 806 or thereabouts. The second section, covering the years 806 to 829, was copied directly from the *Annales Regni Francorum* and added at a later stage, probably in or shortly after 830, when the third and last part of the annals, which describes in detail the events of 830, was composed.<sup>5</sup>

As to the place of production, scholars have not yet reached an agreement.<sup>6</sup> The title *Annales Mettenses* was coined by André Duchesne, who published the *Annales Mettenses Posteriores* from a codex that came from St Arnulf's at Metz.<sup>7</sup> This, however, must not be taken to imply that the *Annales Mettenses Priores* originated in Metz. Although Von Simson and, more recently, Paul Fouracre and Richard Gerberding argued for Metz as the probable place of composition,<sup>8</sup> most scholars consider-

<sup>4</sup> The most comprehensive studies of the *AMP* are H. Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen zur karolingischen Annalistik*, Bonner Historische Forschungen 10 (Bonn, 1958), and I. Haselbach, *Aufstieg und Herrschaft der Karolinger in der Darstellung der sogenannten Annales Mettenses Priores. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Ideen im Reiche Karls des Großen*, Historische Studien 412 (Lübeck and Hamburg, 1970). But see also W. Levison, 'Zu den Annales Mettenses', in *Aus rheinischer und fränkischer Frühzeit* (Düsseldorf, 1948), pp. 474–83 [originally published in *Kritische Beiträge zur Geschichte des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Robert Holzmann* (Berlin, 1933), pp. 9–21]; H. Löwe, 'Von Theodorich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen. Das Werden des Abendlandes im Geschichtsbild des frühen Mittelalters', in H. Löwe, *Von Cassiodor zu Dante. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Geschichtsschreibung und politischen Ideenwelt des Mittelalters* (Berlin and New York, 1973), pp. 33–74 [an earlier version was published in *Deutsches Archiv* 9 (1952), pp. 353–401]; H. Löwe, 'Die Karolinger vom Anfang des 8. Jahrhunderts bis zum Tode Karls des Großen', in W. Wattenbach and W. Levison (eds.), *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter. Vorzeit und Karolinger* (Weimar, 1953), vol. II, pp. 260–5; H. Beumann, 'Die Historiographie des Mittelalters als Quellen für die ideengeschichte des Königtums', *Historische Zeitschrift* 180 (1955), pp. 449–88, at pp. 472–88; F. L. Ganshof, 'L'historiographie dans la monarchie franque sous les Mérovingiens et Carolingiens', *Settimane* 17 (1970), pp. 631–85, at pp. 677–9; N. Schrör, 'Die Annales Mettenses Priores: literarische Form und politische Intention', in K. Hauck and H. Mordek (eds.), *Geschichtsschreibung und geistiges Leben im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Heinz Löwe zum 65. Geburtstag* (Cologne and Vienna, 1978), pp. 139–58; P. Fouracre and R. A. Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France: History and Hagiography, 640–720* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 330–49.

<sup>5</sup> See Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 42–53; Haselbach, *Aufstieg*, pp. 22–3. On the stylistic similarities between the *AMP*'s account of 830 and the so-called 'Le Mans forgeries', see W. Goffart, *The Le Mans Forgeries. A Chapter from the History of Church Property in the Ninth Century*, Harvard Historical Studies 76 (Cambridge, MA, 1966), pp. 71–3.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the manuscript tradition is of no help. The sole manuscript which transmits the entire *AMP* (Durham, Cathedral Library C IV 15) is dated to the twelfth century, and the earliest known fragment (London, British Library, Arundel 375, ff. 72v–75v) is removed by almost a century from the time of composition.

<sup>7</sup> See A. Duchesne, *Historiae Francorum Scriptores Coetanei* (Paris, 1936), vol. I, pp. 262, 333.

<sup>8</sup> Von Simson's edition, pp. xv–xvi; Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, pp. 339–40. Fouracre and Gerberding base their suggestion on the high regard in which the author held Arnulf of Metz and on the fact that Metz had strong relations with Charlemagne's court.

ed either the monastery of St Denis or the nunnery of Chelles as a more likely place. From the annals' accounts and attitudes it is obvious that they were written by someone interested in and familiar with the royal court. The argument for the royal abbey of St Denis is based mainly on the author's familiarity with the monastery's landed possessions, as well as on his report of the burial of Queen Bertrada at St Denis in 783.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand Chelles is mentioned twice, and in 806, when the major part of the annals was compiled, Gisela, Charlemagne's sister, was the abbess of the nunnery. Furthermore, women who played key roles in the history of the Carolingian dynasty, such as Begga, Ansfléd, Gertrude or Plectrude, are lengthily described, and the annals' entry for the year 830, focusing on Empress Judith, was written when her mother, Heilwig, was the abbess of Chelles.<sup>10</sup> Although the arguments for Chelles seem slightly stronger, they are certainly not conclusive.

The important questions of composition and location, as well as the preoccupation with the various aspects of *Königtum* which have characterized the interest of post-war historians, and particularly German historians, occupied the discussion of the Annals of Metz in recent decades. Whenever the Annals of Metz are mentioned, it is either to illuminate a particular literary use of royal attributes,<sup>11</sup> or to illustrate the bias of our sources in favour of the Carolingian house. Indeed, the latter has become the annals' principal characteristic in the eyes of early medievalists.

From the start, it appears that the heroes of the *Annales Mettenses Priores* are indeed the Carolingians. The whole composition begins with a long praise of Pippin II, and it continues with the glorification of Charles Martel, Pippin III and Charlemagne, presenting their success as a natural development of the achievements of their noble ancestors. No doubt the composer had the Carolingian house, as patrons or as a potential audience, in mind when compiling the Annals of Metz. Thus, the annals are often perceived as a piece of propaganda, designed to

<sup>9</sup> F. Kurze, 'Über die karolingischen Reichsannalen von 741–829 und ihre Überarbeitung. III – Die zweite Hälfte und ihre Überarbeitung', *Neues Archiv* 21 (1896), pp. 11–82, at pp. 31–2, 48–9; F. Kurze, 'Die verlorene Chronik von St Denis (–805), ihre Überarbeitung und die daraus abgeleiteten Quellen', *Neues Archiv* 28 (1903), pp. 11–35; Löwe, 'Die Karolinger vom Anfang', pp. 261–2; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill's review of Haselbach's book, *English Historical Review* 86 (1971), pp. 154–6, at p. 155; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford, 1983), p. 141; I. N. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450–751* (London, 1994), p. 160.

<sup>10</sup> Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 53–61; Haselbach, *Aufstieg*, pp. 23–4; J. Nelson, 'Gender and genre in women historians of the early Middle Ages', in J.-P. Genet (ed.), *L'historiographie médiévale en Europe* (Paris, 1991), pp. 149–63, at pp. 156–60; J. Nelson, 'Perceptions du pouvoir chez les historiennes du haut Moyen Âge', in M. Rouché (ed.), *Les femmes au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1990), pp. 77–85, at pp. 82–4.

<sup>11</sup> See above n. 4.

glorify the house of the Carolingians, and to portray their rise to power as the sole worthy, legitimate and, most importantly, divinely ordained surrogate to fill the political vacuum left by the last Merovingians. The author did not spare any praise when he compares, for example, Pippin II to the young and vibrant David who fought old and clumsy Goliath.<sup>12</sup>

Whether the Annals of Metz are what may be termed 'official history' in terms of royal impetus and sponsorship is very difficult to ascertain. We are aware that at least from the time of Pippin III the Carolingians sponsored the writing of history to justify their actions.<sup>13</sup> The first occasions were the second and third Continuators of Fredegar, commissioned by Childebrand and Nibelung, Pippin III's uncle and nephew.<sup>14</sup> The whole debate about 'official history' seems to have reached a point where everyone agrees that some texts, such as the *Annales Regni Francorum*, can reasonably be seen as 'public history' informed by royal patronage.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, it is very difficult to see any of these works as direct statements in the sense of modern propaganda, in that they normally also reflect the immediate concerns and personal interests of their individual authors. In other words, there is no real hard and sharp division between 'official history' and 'non-official history', but rather many reflections of an 'official viewpoint' coloured by the particular views of an individual compiler.<sup>16</sup> The strong Carolingian bias, the extensive use of the *Annales Regni Francorum*, and the Alcuinian undertones, that is, the incorporation of Alcuinian ideas on rulers and rulership,<sup>17</sup> give the impression that the

<sup>12</sup> AMP, s.a. 678, p. 1–2.

<sup>13</sup> This might well be a continuation of an even older Merovingian tradition. See M. Innes and R. McKitterick, 'The writing of history', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 193–220, at p. 208.

<sup>14</sup> Fredegar's Continuators, c. 34, ed. and tr. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and Its Continuation* (London, 1960), pp. 102–3 [hereafter: *C.Fred.*]; R. Collins, *Fredegar, Authors of the Middle Ages* 13 (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 32–7.

<sup>15</sup> See Innes and McKitterick, 'The writing of history', pp. 108–9. On the *Annales Regni Francorum*, see R. McKitterick, 'Constructing the past in the early Middle Ages: the case of the royal Frankish annals', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997), pp. 101–29; and see her chapter in this volume.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, the case of Nithard in J. Nelson, 'Public histories and private history in the work of Nithard', *Speculum* 60 (1985), pp. 251–93 [reprinted in J. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 195–237].

<sup>17</sup> Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 65–8. See also Haselbach, *Aufstieg*, pp. 173–9, who refers mainly to Alcuin's *De Virtutibus et de Vitiis*, PL 101, cols. 613–38. On this treatise, see L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne. Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca, 1959), pp. 229–54; and for further bibliography, see R. Newhauser, *The Treatise on Vices and Virtues in Latin and in the Vernacular*, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental* 68 (Turnhout, 1993), p. 26.

Annals of Metz were either a product of the court circle, or a product of someone not far removed from the royal court in terms of kinship or patronage.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, the Annals of Metz may be regarded as something close to 'official history', although there is no indication whatsoever that any of the Carolingians or their advisors were personally involved in their composition.

The questions that need asking here are: why were the annals written in the first place? Why did somebody find it necessary to compose an allegedly 'official' Carolingian history in about 806? What immediate concerns and personal interests led to the composition of the Annals of Metz, when the Royal Frankish Annals were already being written as an 'official' Carolingian record? Several answers to these questions have been put forward in the past.<sup>19</sup>

In her book, which is still the most elaborate analysis of the Annals of Metz, Irene Haselbach argues that the annals were written, first and foremost, to sell Carolingian imperialism, especially in Italy, to the Frankish magnates, who still had some doubts as to the legitimacy of Carolingian rule, and who often regarded Carolingian policies as being un-Frankish.<sup>20</sup> Hence, the annals were, in a sense, a concession to conservative feelings. This seems a perfectly sensible and feasible explanation, and it is clearly inspired by Haselbach's attempt to see Pippin II and Charles Martel as the annalist's heroes.

Several other possible motives, such as the author's intent to show Carolingian superiority over Rome or the Carolingian relationship with Byzantium, were also suggested.<sup>21</sup> More recently, Paul Fouracre and Richard Gerberding proposed that 'the author set out to define for his readers what the nature of *regnum* and *imperium* was in the Frankish historical terms they understood'.<sup>22</sup> All these assertions are indeed perceptive and attainable; however, none of them is sufficient on its own. Taking into account all the motives suggested above, I should like to offer in this chapter a slightly more comprehensive reading of the *Annales Mettenses Priores*, arguing that an immediate political and social crisis promoted the composition of the Annals of Metz in about 806.

In a paper read to the Anglo-French Historical Conference in 1949, Michael Wallace-Hadrill suggested that the political difficulties which

<sup>18</sup> Both St Denis and Chelles, which have been suggested as the place of production for the AMP, had at the time a strong Carolingian affiliation.

<sup>19</sup> For a short survey, see Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, pp. 340–9.

<sup>20</sup> Haselbach, *Aufstieg*, pp. 119–32.

<sup>21</sup> On these assertions, see Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, pp. 343–7.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349.

confronted the Carolingian kings affected historical writing in eighth- and ninth-century France and that comparable troubles in Anglo-Saxon England equally found their reflection in people's approach to, and use of, historical material.<sup>23</sup> He asserted that an interest in the past was cultivated by dynasties under threat, at the time when the very survival of the dynasty was at stake. Thus, Wallace-Hadrill mentioned Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*, Nithard's *Historiae*, Notker's *Gesta Karoli* and Abbo's poem on the siege of Paris.<sup>24</sup> He argued that the above-mentioned works were products of such circumstances, and therefore reflect the urgent political need of the Carolingians.<sup>25</sup> In brief, all these compositions, according to Wallace-Hadrill, were designed to persuade the Frankish subjects to support their king.

A similar point of view is adopted by Matthew Innes and Rosamond McKitterick in their recent and most illuminating analysis of Carolingian historiography.<sup>26</sup> According to them, political circumstances and difficulties, as well as an urgent need for imperial image-building, cultivated the historical writing in the Carolingian period, and it was above all during the reign of Louis the Pious that court historiography played such a crucial role in deliberately enhancing the public and political image of the ruler.<sup>27</sup> It is in such a context of political complications and imperial image-building that the composition of the *Annals of Metz* is to be understood. Let us concentrate, therefore, on the political circumstances prevailing at the time of the compilation of the *Annals of Metz*, in order to see what can be deduced from the relationship

<sup>23</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Franks and the English in the ninth century: some common historical interests', in his *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 201–16, at p. 201 [originally published in *History* 35 (1950), pp. 202–18]. See also P. Stafford, *Unification and Conquest. A Political and Social History of England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (London and New York, 1989), especially pp. 3–6, 15–23, 83–6.

<sup>24</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Franks and the English', pp. 203–9. With reference to England, Wallace-Hadrill had mentioned the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. His argument was followed and extended by R. H. C. Davis, 'Alfred the Great: propaganda and truth', *History* 56 (1971), pp. 169–82, at pp. 180–2; P. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, 2nd edn (London, 1971), p. 20. For some criticism of this view, see S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great* (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 41–2, with n. 62 at pp. 217–18; D. Whitelock, 'The importance of the Battle of Edington, AD 879', in her *From Bede to Alfred. Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Literature and History* (London, 1980), ch. 13, pp. 6–9.

<sup>25</sup> Abbo and Notker were also put in this context by P. E. Dutton, *The Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire* (Lincoln and London, 1994); but see the criticism by Rosamond McKitterick in *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 40 (1996), pp. 180–3.

<sup>26</sup> Innes and McKitterick, 'The writing of history', pp. 193–220.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209. See also J. Nelson, 'History-writing at the courts of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald', in A. Scharer and G. Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter* (Vienna, 1994), pp. 435–42.



between interests and circumstances as far as the annals' attitudes towards the Merovingian past are concerned.

All the chronological indications in the Annals of Metz suggest a date of composition in or shortly after 806. This implies that the author was writing at a time of political and social crisis. The years which immediately followed the imperial coronation at Rome were not easy ones for Charlemagne. Although the solemn coronation rite and the imperial title were not of any practical importance to him,<sup>28</sup> they presumably did make him realize the heavy burden that lay on his shoulders as God's chosen representative. This enhanced responsibility may well have brought social and religious shortcomings into sharp focus for him, and made him see signs and omens of disaster if God were not swiftly appeased. It was the salvation of himself and his people that the emperor was concerned about. He became emotionally pressured, argues Ganshof, and consequently his pronouncements became noticeably more religious. This 'psychological crisis within Charlemagne himself', to use Ganshof's words,<sup>29</sup> led to the reform enterprise of 802, best manifested in the so-called 'programmatic' capitulary, issued at Aachen in March of that year.<sup>30</sup>

Yet the *Annales Mettenses Priores* can be placed in an even more precise political and social context. A series of natural disasters fell on Charlemagne's empire shortly before the Annals of Metz were composed. In the winter of 803, as the Royal Frankish Annals report, 'there was an earthquake around the palace and in neighbouring areas and a large death toll was the result'.<sup>31</sup> The author of the Annals of Metz, although relying heavily on the Royal Frankish Annals, chose not to report this incident. A severe drought in 804 had resulted in a harsh famine in 805, which continued into 806 and 807, and perhaps even into 808. None of the Carolingian annals reports on the bitter famine of

<sup>28</sup> See R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians* (London, 1983), pp. 71–2.

<sup>29</sup> F. L. Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*, tr. M. and B. Lyon (New York, 1968), p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7; F. L. Ganshof, 'Charlemagne's programme of imperial government', in Ganshof, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy. Studies in Carolingian History*, tr. J. Sondheim (London, 1971), pp. 55–85 [originally published as 'Le programme de gouvernement impérial de Charlemagne', in *Renovatio Imperii. Atti della giornata internazionale di studio per il Millenario, Ravenna 4–5 November 1961* (Faenza, 1963), pp. 63–96]. For the capitulary itself, see *Capitulare Missorum Generale*, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 33, pp. 91–9.

<sup>31</sup> *Annales Regni Francorum*, s.a. 803, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 6 (Hanover, 1895), p. 117 [hereafter: *ARF*]. I cite the translation of B. W. Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles* (Ann Arbor, 1970). See also Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, s.a. 803, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 50 (Hanover, 1890), p. 64.

those years,<sup>32</sup> and we learn about it from references in several capitularies,<sup>33</sup> and from a circular letter addressed to Bishop Gerbald of Liège.<sup>34</sup> 'We have learned through our *fideles*', wrote Charlemagne,

. . . that everywhere, abnormally and extraordinarily, the soil is seen to be barren and the danger of famine to threaten. In addition, weather which is intemperate and highly adverse to the crops, pestilence in certain places, the continuous wars of the pagan peoples living around our frontiers, and much else, which it would take a long time to list here but of which we have received information, could be worthy of great note if we wished to reflect on the nature of the adversities which, for our deserts, we daily suffer.<sup>35</sup>

The situation was so severe, that Charlemagne had even ordered three three-day fasts to be held because of it.<sup>36</sup>

Natural disasters, such as earthquakes and famines, were as much moral as social crises, and they might have had some political implications as well. Such natural disasters were often interpreted as a form of divine punishment for all, but especially for rulers.<sup>37</sup> This is

<sup>32</sup> This omission is very odd, since Carolingian annalists do not usually overlook natural disasters in their reports. See, for example, *ARF*, s.a. 820, p. 154. For more references, see F. Curschmann, *Hungersnöte im Mittelalter. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Wirtschaftsgeschichte des 8. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, Leipziger Studien aus dem Gebiet der Geschichte 6:1 (Leipzig, 1900). Michel Rouche has challenged the existence of a genuine widespread famine, arguing for a psychologically generated fear of hunger, see M. Rouche, 'La faim à l'époque carolingienne: essai sur quelques types de rations alimentaires', *Revue historique* 250 (1973), pp. 295–320. Yet many references in the sources indicate quite clearly that droughts and famine did exist. For criticism on the Rouche conception, see J.-C. Hocquet, 'Le pain, le vin et la juste mesure à la table des moines carolingiens', *Annales ESC* 40 (1985), pp. 661–86.

<sup>33</sup> *Capitulare Missorum in Theodonis Villa Datum Secundum* (805), c. 4, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 44, pp. 121–6, at pp. 122–3; *Capitulare missorum Niumagae datum* (806), c. 18, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 46, pp. 130–2, at p. 132; *Memoratorium de Exercitu in Gallia Occidentali Praeparando* (807), preface, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 48, pp. 134–5, at p. 134. Although not referring to the famine explicitly, a capitulary from 808 might suggest that the famine continued into that year: see *Capitulare Missorum de Exercitu Promovendo*, ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 50, pp. 136–8, and see the comment by P. D. King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources* (Kendal, 1987), p. 34.

<sup>34</sup> *Karoli ad Ghaerbaldum Episcopum Epistula* (805), ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 124, pp. 244–6. This letter survives in the small collection of letters and official documents prepared by Bishop Gerbald in 806. On this collection, see W. A. Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung Bischof Ghaerbalds von Lüttich* (Göttingen, Berlin and Frankfurt, 1955). On the date of the letter, see *ibid.*, pp. 47–9, and see the comment in King, *Charlemagne*, p. 30.

<sup>35</sup> *Karoli ad Ghaerbaldum Episcopum Epistula* (805), p. 245. Throughout this paper I cite the translation of King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 245–7.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 32, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRG 25 (Hanover, 1911), pp. 36–7, and compare it with Louis the Pious' reaction to the appearance of a comet in 838; Astronomer, *Vita Hludovici Pii*, c. 58, ed. E. Tremp, MGH SRG 64 (Hanover, 1995), pp. 518–24. See also J. Nelson, 'The last years of Louis the Pious', in P. Godman and R. Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 147–59, at pp. 148–9.

undoubtedly the interpretation given to these disasters by Charlemagne. 'We can most certainly conclude from these external signs,' he wrote to Bishop Gerbald of Liège, 'that we who are obliged to suffer such ills outwardly, are in every way displeasing inwardly to the Lord.'<sup>38</sup> Charlemagne, who after the imperial coronation of 800 became preoccupied with his mission on earth and with his salvation, could not fail to see these events as bad omens. Consequently, he acted as in an emergency, ordering a fast to be held by all his subjects without exception, and issuing another reform capitulary, that is the double capitulary of Thionville,<sup>39</sup> where he refers to the famine and orders the people not to wait for a royal decree in order to pray for God's mercy in times of famine and pestilence.<sup>40</sup> No doubt the disasters of 803 and 805 contributed to Charlemagne's already existing confusion and anxiety, and if these were not enough, Charlemagne's anxieties were intensified by political uncertainty.

By 805 Charlemagne was in his mid-60s, and the uncertain succession to his throne with the confusion it might involve had, most probably, worried him. Thus, on 6 February 806 Charlemagne issued the so-called *divisio regnorum*, which divided the empire among his three sons, Charles, Pippin and Louis.<sup>41</sup> The anxiety and uncertainty felt by Charlemagne on the issue of succession can easily be detected in the preface to the *divisio regnorum*, which reads: 'So that we might not leave it to them in confusion and disorder or provoke strife and litigation by giving them the whole kingdom without division, we have caused to be described and designated the portion which each one of them ought to enjoy and rule in his way . . .'<sup>42</sup>

Although one may view this division as an establishment of three

<sup>38</sup> *Karoli ad Ghaerbaldum Episcopum Epistula* (805), p. 245.

<sup>39</sup> See F. L. Ganshof, *Recherches sur les Capitulaires* (Paris, 1958), pp. 28–9, 73–4; Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions*, p. 30.

<sup>40</sup> *Capitulare Missorum in Theodonis Villa Datum Secundum* (805), c. 4, pp. 122–3.

<sup>41</sup> *Divisio Regnorum* (806), ed. A. Boretius, MGH Cap. 1 (Hanover, 1883), no. 45, pp. 126–30. On the *divisio regnorum*, see H. Beumann, 'Nomen Imperatoris. Studien zur Kaiseridee Karls des Großen', *Historische Zeitschrift* 185 (1958), pp. 515–49; W. Schlesinger, 'Kaisertum und Reichsteilung. Zur *Divisio regnorum* von 806', in *Forschungen zur Staat und Verfassung. Festgabe für F. Hartung* (Berlin, 1958), pp. 9–52 [reprinted in *Beiträge zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Göttingen, 1963), pp. 193–232]; P. Classen, 'Karl der Große und die Thronfolge im Frankenreich', in *Festschrift für H. Heimpele* (Berlin, 1972), vol. II, pp. 109–34; M. Innes, 'Charlemagne's will: piety, politics and the imperial succession', *English Historical Review* 112 (1997), pp. 833–55. The concern over the succession is also depicted in a poem by Theodulf of Orleans, *Carmina*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH PLAC 1 (Berlin, 1881), no. 34, p. 526; and see also P. Godman, *Poets and Emperors. Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 97–9.

<sup>42</sup> *Divisio Regnorum* (806), preface, pp. 126–7. I cite the English translation from P. E. Dutton, *Carolingian Civilisation. A Reader* (Peterborough, Ontario, 1993), pp. 129–33.

different kingdoms which together constitute a single greater *regnum*, it seems that unity was rather less important to Charlemagne than the succession of his dynasty. Providing for the succession, as Charlemagne did in the *divisio regnorum* of 806, and having all the magnates promise under oath to respect this disposition,<sup>43</sup> had left little place for manoeuvring and manipulating on the part of the aristocracy. It was not a mere concession to conservative feelings, as argued by Wallace-Hadrill, but rather a way to secure the Carolingian succession and to eliminate any danger which might occur in the short period of interregnum which would follow his death.

The reasons behind these succession anxieties are complicated. At first glance it seems that Charlemagne, as all Carolingians, was well aware of the fact that every single magnate in his kingdom might do to him what his father, Pippin III, had done to the Merovingians. As Karl Brunner has demonstrated, the aristocracy could and did form a counter-force to the Carolingian rule, and a very threatening one.<sup>44</sup> Thus, according to this view, aware of the danger that lies within a strong aristocracy, Charlemagne made a thorough attempt throughout his reign to control the power of his nobles.<sup>45</sup> However, it is also fairly clear that Charlemagne was a realist who understood that he needed aristocratic support, and never tried to do without it. Consensus and cooperation were the name of the game throughout the Carolingian period. Thus, the relations between the king and his aristocracy were based on reciprocity – noble families did well from royal patronage, just as the Carolingians did well with their support.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, I would submit, the scenario of an aristocratic coup was very unlikely. Interestingly, the year 785/6 was the last time that

<sup>43</sup> See *ARF*, s.a. 806, pp. 121–2; *Capitulare Missorum Nîmagae Datum* (806), c. 2, p. 131.

<sup>44</sup> See K. Brunner, *Oppositionelle Gruppen im Karolingerreich* (Vienna, Cologne and Graz, 1979).

<sup>45</sup> See K. F. Werner, 'Important noble families in the kingdom of Charlemagne – a prosopographical study of the relationship between king and nobility in the early Middle Ages', in T. Reuter (ed. and tr.), *The Medieval Nobility. Studies on the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century* (Amsterdam, New York, and Oxford, 1979), pp. 137–202 [originally published as 'Bedeutende Adelsfamilien im Reich Karls des Großen. Ein personengeschichtlicher Beitrag zum Verhältnis von Königtum und Adel im frühen Mittelalter', in W. Braunsfels (ed.), *Karl der Große, Lebenswerk und Nachleben, vol. I – Persönlichkeit und Geschichte* (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 83–137]; Brunner, *Oppositionelle Gruppen*, pp. 40–95; R. Le Jan, *Famille et pouvoir dans le monde franc (VIIe–Xe siècle). Essai d'anthropologie sociale* (Paris, 1995), pp. 126–143.

<sup>46</sup> On the relations between kings and aristocrats, see Le Jan, *Famille et pouvoir*, especially pp. 99–153; J. Hanning, *Consensus fidelium. Frühfeudale Interpretationen des Verhältnisses von Königtum und Adel am Beispiel des Frankenreiches*, Monographien des Mittelalters 27 (Stuttgart, 1982). See also J. Nelson, 'Legislation and consensus in the reign of Charles the Bald', in P. Wormald et al. (eds.), *Ideal and Reality. Studies in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 202–27 [reprinted in Nelson, *Politics and Ritual*, pp. 91–116].

aristocrats staged an anti-Carolingian revolt by themselves. In every subsequent revolt, the rebellious aristocrats got an alternative Carolingian to lead them against a particular ruler they were unhappy with.<sup>47</sup> Hence, by 806 the worry was not so much an aristocratic uprising which would replace the Carolingian dynasty with a different family, but rather the possibility of one faction becoming discontent and rebelling under the leadership of one of Charlemagne's sons.

A certain fear had emerged during the years immediately preceding the *divisio regnorum*, on account of which Charlemagne decided to take action. In 805 Charlemagne had dedicated a long chapter in the Capitulary of Thionville to conspirators, clarifying their severe punishment if proved guilty.<sup>48</sup> In 806 he made all his magnates swear to respect the *divisio regnorum*, and ordered all those who had not yet promised him fidelity to promise it on the spot.<sup>49</sup> In the same capitulary which demands the magnates' confirmation of the division, Charlemagne also made it clear that his fears were not without any basis in reality. 'We have heard', he states, 'that both counts and other *homines* who are seen to hold our benefices arrange allodial estates for themselves out of those benefices of ours and make our servants from their benefices serve on those estates, and our estates are left deserted and in some places the people who live nearby suffer many evils.'<sup>50</sup> The aristocracy, then, although unable to impose strong limits on royal power, had assumed a prominent position within the political structure of the Carolingian empire. The possibility that these land-grabbing aristocrats would unite behind a member of the Carolingian family and thus jeopardize the legitimate succession to the Frankish throne is what made Charlemagne most anxious, and this, I would argue, is the impetus behind the composition of the Annals of Metz.

To clarify this point, one needs to refer to the question of audience.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, the conspiracy led by Pippin the Hunchback in 792; *ARF* (rev.), s.a. 792, pp. 90–3; Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 20, pp. 25–6. The same phenomenon continued well into the time of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald.

<sup>48</sup> *Capitulare Missorum in Theodonis Villa Datum Secundum* (805), cc. 10–11, p. 124.

<sup>49</sup> *Capitulare Missorum Niumagae Datum* (806), c. 2, p. 131. On the oath of fidelity, see F. L. Ganshof, 'Charlemagne's use of the oath', in Ganshof, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy*, pp. 111–24 [originally published as 'Charlemagne et le serment', in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen* (Paris, 1951), pp. 259–70]; M. Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft. Untersuchungen zum Herrscherethos Karls des Großen*, Vorträge und Forschungen 39 (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 78–212.

<sup>50</sup> *Capitulare Missorum Niumagae Datum*, c. 6, p. 131. The translation is based on King, *Charlemagne*, p. 256.

What was the possible audience for political polemic and history, such as the *Annales Mettenses Priores*? The Annals of Metz belong, in a sense, to the literary genre of aristocratic or royal 'house history', like Fredegar's Continuation or Paul the Deacon's *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*. It seems that such historical compositions were aimed at the ruling magnates, clerical or lay, and that they were written with the noble and literate in mind.<sup>51</sup> Such compositions, whose main interest was political polemic and history, were composed not as a mere narrative account of contemporary or nearly contemporary events, but rather as a series of interpretative judgements. Thus, their expected audience in the Carolingian period was the political and ecclesiastical elite, which was associated with the royal court and closely involved in the events described.

This notion receives further support from the way in which the aristocracy is depicted in the annals of Metz. According to the Annals, the Frankish aristocracy had supported the Carolingians from the start, and regarded them as the legitimate and appropriate rulers of the Franks. What the annalist presents here is an extremely supportive aristocracy, which owes its glory, wealth, property and influence exclusively to the Carolingians, and this, says the annalist, started with Pippin II. Such a depiction of the Frankish aristocracy was anachronistic already at the time when the Annals of Metz were written.<sup>52</sup> It overlooks the reciprocity of help and reward between nobles and Carolingians, and it further ignores the immense power accumulated by the nobility in cooperation with the early Carolingians, who relied on aristocratic support.<sup>53</sup> Pushing aside these characteristics of the relationship between the Carolingians and the Frankish nobility, a distorted picture of complete allegiance and gratitude to the Carolingians emerges, so as to justify the submission to Charlemagne and his demand to ratify the *divisio regnorum*.

Although the Annals of Metz sometimes add extremely illuminating information to the laconic reports of the *Annales Regni Francorum*, they were written with a completely different purpose in

<sup>51</sup> R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 236–41, and 'The audience for Latin historiography in the early Middle Ages: texts transmission and manuscript dissemination', in Scharer and Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, pp. 96–114; Innes and McKitterick, 'The writing of history', pp. 208–9; Nelson, 'Public histories and private history', especially pp. 156–65.

<sup>52</sup> See, for example, P. Fouracre, 'Frankish Gaul to 814', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, II – c. 700–c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 85–109.

<sup>53</sup> Werner, 'Important noble families', p. 173; S. Airlie, 'The aristocracy', in McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, II*, pp. 431–50.

mind.<sup>54</sup> The Annals of Metz, it appears, were set to present the Carolingians as the proper and sole legitimate rulers of the Frankish kingdom, and they represent Frankish history as the Carolingians wished to see it. The annalist, therefore, composed a piece of pro-Carolingian propaganda, in which the Frankish aristocracy owes its existence to the Carolingian ruler, in order to sell the *divisio regnorum* and the supremacy of the Carolingian house to the Frankish magnates.

In order to create this distorted picture of the aristocratic-Carolingian relationship, and in order to represent the Carolingian house as the sole worthy, legitimate and divinely predestined house to rule the Franks, the author filtered the history of the early Carolingians, by suppressing unfavourable facts, which were evident enough in his sources. Carolingian failures or scandals, such as the coup of Grimoald<sup>55</sup> or Pippin II's humiliating defeat at the battle of Lucofao (Bois-du-Fays),<sup>56</sup> are edited out and even denied, so as to keep the account of the Carolingians' divine preordained rise to power intact. The annals also fail to mention natural disasters, such as the earthquake of 803 and the famine of 805,<sup>57</sup> difficulties on the battlefield, such as the forced retreat of Charles Martel during his Frisian campaign,<sup>58</sup> as well as quarrels and disputes among the Carolingians themselves.<sup>59</sup> All of these unpleasant incidents, if reported, might have been interpreted as bad omens, or as the withdrawal of divine favour from the Carolingian house.

Aristocratic opposition receives very little attention in the Annals of Metz, and it is mentioned only when a courageous fight put an end to the embarrassing incident. Thus, the Grifo affair is reported at length,<sup>60</sup> and so is the revolt in Aquitaine.<sup>61</sup> But the deep discord and long vendetta between Pippin II and Gisilmar, for example, is reduced to a

<sup>54</sup> On the *ARF*, see McKitterick, 'Constructing the past', pp. 101–29 and chapter 7 in this volume.

<sup>55</sup> On this coup, see Fredegar, *Chronicle*, IV: 88, p. 75; *Liber Historiae Francorum*, c. 43, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM II (Hanover, 1888), pp. 315–6 [hereafter: *LHF*]. See also M. Becher, 'Der sogenannte Staatsstreich Grimoalds. Versuch einer Neubewertung', in J. Jarnut et al. (eds.), *Karl Martell in seiner Zeit*, Beihefte der Francia 37 (Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 119–47; Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, pp. 16–19.

<sup>56</sup> *C.Fred.*, c. 3, p. 83; *LHF*, c. 46, pp. 215–328, at pp. 319–20; R. Gerberding, *The Rise of the Carolingians and the Liber Historiae Francorum* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 72–3, 82–4.

<sup>57</sup> See above pp. 181–3. See also *C.Fred.*, c. 24, p. 97, which reports on various disasters and bad omens that preceded Charles Martel's death (AD 740), and *Annales Mosellani*, s.a. 792–3, ed. C. Lappenberg, MGH SS 16 (Hanover, 1859), pp. 491–9, at p. 498, which report on a severe famine.

<sup>58</sup> *C.Fred.*, c. 9, p. 88; *LHF*, c. 51, p. 325.

<sup>59</sup> Drogo, for example, Pippin III's nephew, who was handed over to him by Carloman before his retreat, is not mentioned at all (see *C.Fred.*, c. 30, pp. 100–1), nor do the annals explain the flight of Charlemagne's two young nephews after the death of their father, Carloman, in 771 (see *AMP*, s.a. 771, pp. 57–8).

<sup>60</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 748–53, pp. 40–4.

<sup>61</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 742, p. 33.

short notice on Gisilmar's impiety and foolishness.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, the annals do not mention the Thuringian conspiracy led by Count Hardrad in 785/6,<sup>63</sup> or the plot of Pippin the Hunchback and various members of the Frankish aristocracy that was formed in 792.<sup>64</sup> The latter was disclosed by the Lombard Fardulfus, who received the abbacy of St Denis as a reward, and whom Wallace-Hadrill regarded as a serious candidate for the annals' authorship.<sup>65</sup> From Charlemagne's order, following the Thuringian revolt, that all freemen should renew their oath,<sup>66</sup> and from the lavish rewards which he conferred at Regensburg to those who had kept faith during Pippin's revolt,<sup>67</sup> it seems that those incidents were more serious than the sources would like us to believe.

The unfavourable attitude of the annalist towards the Frankish aristocracy is also revealed in the way he or she describes those who contested Carolingian rule. These aristocratic opponents of the Carolingians tend to be the subjects of short notices, summing up their treacherous and ungrateful character. Gundoinus is *crudelissimus tyrannus*,<sup>68</sup> and Ebroin is an *immanissimus tyrannus* full of cupidity.<sup>69</sup> Berthar is a stupid *vagus et profugus timore perteritus*,<sup>70</sup> and Gisilmar is *impius, lubricus* and *callidissimus*.<sup>71</sup> Radbod is surrounded by a mist of stupidity,<sup>72</sup> and the envious Ragemfred is led by permanent fear.<sup>73</sup> The rest are either *superbi* or *tiranni*, and sometimes even both.<sup>74</sup>

Yet, the manipulation of sources and the slandering of aristocratic and royal opponents are not the whole story. The author of the *Annales Mettenses Priores* chose to stress events in which Carolingian dominance is

<sup>62</sup> *C.Fred.*, c. 4, pp. 83–4; *LHF*, c. 47, pp. 320–2.

<sup>63</sup> *ARF* (rev.), s.a. 785, p. 73. According to Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 20, pp. 25–6, it was caused by Queen Fastrada's *crudelitas*. On this event, see K. Brunner, 'Auf den Spuren verlorener Traditionen', *Peritia* 2 (1983), pp. 1–22; M. Innes, 'Kings, monks and patrons: political identities and the abbey of Lorsch', in R. Le Jan (ed.), *La royauté et les élites dans l'Europe carolingienne (du début du IXe au environs de 920)* (Lille, 1998), pp. 301–24.

<sup>64</sup> *ARF* (rev.), s.a. 792, p. 79; *Annales Mosellani*, s.a. 792, p. 498; *Annales Laureshamenses*, s.a. 792, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hanover, 1826), pp. 22–39, at p. 35; *Annales Guelpherbytani*, s.a. 792, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hanover, 1826), pp. 23–31, 40–6, at p. 45. This revolt, according to Einhard, was also encouraged by Queen Fastrada: see Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 20, pp. 25–6.

<sup>65</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'Review of Haselbach', p. 155–6.

<sup>66</sup> See *Annales Nazariani*, s.a. 786, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hanover, 1826), pp. 23–31, 41–4, at pp. 41–3.

<sup>67</sup> On the winter assembly at Regensburg, see *Annales Laureshamenses*, s.a. 793, p. 35.

<sup>68</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 678, p. 2. <sup>69</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 681, p. 6 and s.a. 686, p. 7. <sup>70</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 687, p. 11.

<sup>71</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 686, p. 6. <sup>72</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 687, p. 13. <sup>73</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 717, p. 21.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, *AMP*, s.a. 784, p. 40 (Grifo); s.a. 754, p. 45 (Aistulf); s.a. 773, p. 59 (Desiderius).



seen at its best. Thus, the Carolingian victories at the battles of Tertry, Vinchy and Amblève are portrayed as heroic fights, justly won by the Carolingians and their supporters.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, these three incidents are delineated as the three major turning points in the divinely ordained rise of the Carolingian house.

This source manipulation is indeed more apparent in the first part of the annals, which describes the time of Pippin II, Charles Martel and the early years of Pippin III. It is, no doubt, the result of the insecurity of the Carolingian position in the politics of the period, which required cosmetic alteration in order for it to fit the annalist's aims. Furthermore, the sources which were used by our author for that first period – the *Liber Historiae Francorum* and the continuators of Fredegar – do not hesitate to present difficulties in the Carolingian rise to power. From the 740s onwards the annalist followed closely the *Annales Regni Francorum*, which, one must remember, had already edited the information so as to fit the criteria of an official Carolingian history.<sup>76</sup> This, however, did not stop the annalist from adding new material complimentary to the Carolingians.

The permanent possibility of an aristocratic uprising under the leadership of a Carolingian, the immense power of the aristocracy and the king's dependence on it, together with the uncertainty over the question of succession, brought about the composition of the Annals of Metz by someone close to royal circles, in order to sell the *divisio regnorum* and the Carolingian unchallenged supremacy to the magnates, and to remind them of their supposed complete dependence on Carolingian rule and favour. It is, then, not at all surprising to find that the Merovingians themselves had an extremely marginal role in this *tour de force* of Carolingian propaganda. The only Merovingian kings who are mentioned in more than two words are Theuderic III and Chilperic III, both of whom took an active part in opposing the Carolingians. While the former is called by the annalist *superbissimus rex*, the latter is only a *superbus rex*.<sup>77</sup> Clovis II, Childebert III and Dagobert III are mentioned

<sup>75</sup> On Tertry, see *AMP*, s.a. 686–7, pp. 6–8, and compare with *C.Fred.*, c. 5, pp. 84–5; *LHF*, c. 48, pp. 322–3. On Vinchy, see *AMP*, s.a. 717, pp. 23–5, and compare with *C.Fred.*, c. 10, pp. 88–9; *LHF*, c. 53, pp. 326–8. On Amblève, see *AMP*, s.a. 716 pp. 21–3, and compare with *C.Fred.*, c. 9, p. 88; *LHF*, c. 52, pp. 325–6. On the place of the victory at Tertry in the rise of the Carolingians, see P. Fouracre, 'Observations on the outgrowth of Pippinid influence in the "Regnum Francorum" after the battle of Tertry (687–715)', *Medieval Prosopography* 5, 2 (1984), pp. 1–31.

<sup>76</sup> See Löwe, 'Die Karolinger vom Anfang', pp. 245–56.

<sup>77</sup> *AMP*, s.a. 686, p. 7 and s.a. 687 pp. 8, 10 (Theuderic); s.a. 717, pp. 21, 24 (Chilperic).

only when constituted as kings by Pippin,<sup>78</sup> and the last three Merovingians, Chlothar IV, Theuderic IV and Childeric III, are not mentioned at all.<sup>79</sup> The coup of 751 is mentioned, but it was less significant in the eyes of the annalist than the victories at the battles of Tertry and Vinchy, and anyhow, nowhere in the Annals of Metz does one find a lurid and derogatory description of the Merovingians, like the one known to us all from Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*.<sup>80</sup>

It is well justified, therefore, to describe the Annals of Metz as a pro-Carolingian piece of propaganda, aimed at their nobles, in order to sell Carolingian policies. They constitute a justificatory dossier for the new solution adopted in the *divisio regnorum* of 806, for which the Annals of Metz as a whole have set the tone. The Merovingians were not an issue anymore, not even to be used in such a biased and programmatic composition.\*

<sup>78</sup> AMP, s.a. 691, p. 15 (Clovis); s.a. 695, p. 15 (Childebert); s.a. 712, p. 18 (Dagobert). See also the annalist's remark on the Merovingian kings, s.a. 695, p. 16 - 'Illis quidam nomina regum imponens, ipse totius regni habens privilegia cum summa gloria et honore tractabat. Labentibus itaque annorum curriculis, subiectis domitisque vicinis nationibus, Francorum imperium Pipinus mirifico ordine disponebat.'

<sup>79</sup> This is quite similar to the way in which Carolingian sources treat Tassilo – they mostly ignore him, but when they do talk about him they totally misrepresent his position. See Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft*, especially pp. 21–77.

<sup>80</sup> See Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 1, pp. 2–4. See also A. Gauert, 'Noch einmal Einhard und die letzten Merowinger', in L. Fenske (ed.), *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein zu seinem 65 Geburtstag* (Sigmaringen, 1984), pp. 59–72.

\* I should like to thank Rosamond McKitterick and Matthew Innes for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

*The empire as ecclesia:  
Hrabanus Maurus and biblical historia for rulers*

*Mayke De Jong*

Shortly before his death in 855, the Emperor Lothar I, Charlemagne's grandson, wrote to Hrabanus Maurus, monk, renowned theologian and at this date archbishop of Mainz. He commissioned a liturgical compendium for use on his travels, containing the readings for mass all year round, each accompanied by its own explanatory homily (*expositio et omiliaticus sermo*). The homilies were to be read aloud to the emperor during meals, to sustain his *homo interior* with the infinite riches of spiritual food while he sat down at the imperial table.<sup>1</sup> Apparently earlier efforts to gather suitable homilies for the annual liturgical cycle had failed in the face of an overwhelming and impenetrable amount of patristic commentary. Lothar's requirements were specific. Not only did the emperor need homilies for ordinary Sundays and feast days, but also for a host of special masses: on fast days or rogations, against invading armies, famine and poverty, against winter floods, barren earth and failing harvest; for a multitude of saints' days, for Ember Days, for the commemoration of the dead and for ceremonies of consecration – and there would be other masses of which Hrabanus could easily think if he put his mind to it. Furthermore, Jacob's blessings for his sons should be

<sup>1</sup> Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistolae*, 49, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH Epp. 5 (Berlin, 1899), p. 503. About the lectionary for Emperor Lothar, see R. Etaix, 'L'homélaire composé par Raban Maur pour l'empereur Lothaire', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 19 (1984) pp. 211–40. Hrabanus' letters have been preserved mostly as prefatory letters to his writings, or as separate treatises: see Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, pp. 381–516. The abbey of Fulda's collection of letters is now lost, but it was used by Flacius Illyricus and his collaborators when in 1559–74 they produced the first comprehensive Lutheran church history; see H. Scheible, *Die Entstehung der Magdeburger Zenturien* (Gütersloh, 1966). Their quotations from the letter collection were added by E. Dümmler as an appendix to his edition of Hrabanus' letters: *Epistolarum Fuldensium fragmenta ex octava nona et decima centuriis ecclesiasticae historiae*, MGH Epp. 5, pp. 517–33. Hrabanus' work was edited by G. Colvenerius, *Hrabani Mauri opera quae reperiri potuerant omnia. Collecta J. Pamelii. Nunc vero in lucem emissa Antonii de Henen, Episcopo Iprensis, ac studia et opera Georgii Colvenerii* (2 vols., Cologne, 1627). This edition has been followed by most of Migne PL 107–112.

added, along with the benedictions Moses pronounced over the people of Israel on the eve of his death, as well as sermons for All Souls and the Invention of the Holy Cross. Initially Lothar demanded that all this be contained in one volume, but towards the end of the letter he relented, conceding that two volumes or even three might be needed to do justice to the scope of the undertaking, but no more. This was indeed the amount of room Hrabanus needed to comply with the emperor's wishes. Two volumes were written and duly dispatched to Lothar, with promises of a third to follow soon. Word of Lothar's death probably reached Hrabanus before he completed his task; there is no sign that the third volume was ever written.

Interesting as this homiliary – or *lectionarium*, as Lothar called it – may be in itself, it is an earlier passage from Lothar's letter which concerns me here. Explaining why he needed a handy volume, the emperor wrote:

Indeed it is well known to you, father, that on all my military campaigns I cannot always take and carry with me the entire wealth of commentaries, historical and allegorical, in which the aforesaid readings are embedded, when it is often difficult enough to have merely the *bibliotheca historiarum* at hand.<sup>2</sup>

What was this 'library of histories', which apparently had absolute priority among books to take along on military and other expeditions, even if it was too much trouble to bring the 'entire wealth of commentaries' (*omnis copia commentariorum*)? Scripture was often referred to as *sacra/divina historia* or, shortly, *bibliotheca*.<sup>3</sup> The latter might be further specified to be 'the library of the Old and New Testament', but there was no need for this: *bibliotheca* sufficed. At first sight Lothar's *bibliotheca historiarum* therefore appears to be a large and cumbersome full (most likely Turonian) bible.<sup>4</sup> This interpretation is problematic, however,

<sup>2</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 49, p. 503, ll. 38–41: 'Siquidem bene novit vestra paternitas omnem nos commentariorum copiam, in quibus iuxta gestarum rerum ordinem et expositionem preface continentur lectiones, in cunctis expedicionibus non posse semper gerere et habere, cum sola historiarum bibliotheca difficile possit etiam haberi plerumque.'

<sup>3</sup> M. Duchet-Suchaux and Y. Lefèvre, 'Les noms de la Bible', in P. Riché and G. Lobrichon (eds.), *Le Moyen Âge et la Bible* (Paris, 1984), pp. 13–23.

<sup>4</sup> I expressed my doubts about this interpretation in M. De Jong, 'The Emperor Lothar and his *Bibliotheca Historiarum*', in R. H. A. Nip, H. van Dijk, E. M. C. van Harts, C. H. Kneepkens and G. A. A. Kortekaas (eds.), *Media Latinas. A Collection of Essays to Mark the Retirement of L. J. Engels*, *Instrumenta patristica* 28 (Turnhout, 1996), pp. 229–35. J. P. Gumbert, arguing that both *historia* and *bibliotheca* could designate Scripture (I could not agree more, and said so in my article), countered that 'we should no doubt assume that this book, which should be taken everywhere, although with great difficulty, was simply the book which might also be referred to as 'bibliotheca' or 'historia': a (probably Turonian) Bible in one volume' (trans. by the present author): J. P. Gumbert, 'Egberts geschenken aan Egmond', in G. N. M. Vis (ed.), *In het spoor van Egbert*.

and not merely because it overestimates the logistics of transporting a hefty codex. The expression *historia* for Scripture without any further specification ('sacred', 'divine', 'of the Old and New Testament') is already very rare, and I have found no instances of the plural *historiae* designating Scripture. In combination with *bibliotheca* it may have assumed this meaning, but there are equally good reasons for arguing that Lothar had something more specific in mind. Given the importance of this *bibliotheca historiarum* to Lothar it seems safe to assume that the core of these 'histories' was indeed biblical, but not all of Scripture necessarily qualified as *historiae*. Lothar's letter itself indicates as much, for it envisaged the fathers having gathered suitable *lectiones* from the 'evangelical sentences' pertaining to 'various sacred histories', thus creating a distinction between the gospel on the one hand and 'historical' parts of Scripture on the other. Lothar's letter also mentions special masses when the epistle had to be substituted by a 'reading from some history' (*lectio ex quaquam historia*). Usually such an alternative first reading was taken from the Old Testament. I am therefore still inclined to think that Lothar's *bibliotheca historiarum* must have been a collection of Old Testament texts, possibly embedded in commentary. After all, Lothar complained of the difficulties of taking along the *omnis copia commentariorum*, 'the entire wealth of commentary' going with the annual readings, on 'all his expeditions'; this suggests that a section of this 'wealth of commentaries' was singled out to accompany the emperor on his travels, as an integral part of the *historiae*.

Although the precise contents of Lothar's *bibliotheca historiarum* remain elusive, this intriguing expression makes one wonder about the uses of Old Testament *historia* and Hrabanus' commentary for Carolingian kings and queens. Given the lack of critical editions of Hrabanus' vast exegetical production, or in some cases, of any edition at all, answers to this question can only be tentative.<sup>5</sup> Yet enough of his work is accessible

Aartsbisschop Egbert van Trier, *de bibliotheek en geschiedschrijving van het klooster Egmond* (Hilversum, 1997), p. 39. Gumbert's conclusion bypasses the issue I raised, i.e. whether the highly unusual combination of *bibliotheca* and *historiae* (plural!) might have a more specific meaning. As far as I can see Hrabanus did not use the expression *bibliotheca* for Scripture, but quite regularly for 'library' or 'collection of books'. Cf. Hrabanus, *Commentaria in libros IV Regum*, II, c. 1, PL 109, col. 72B; Hrabanus, *De Rerum Naturis*, c. 4, PL 111, cols. 121C, 405A.

<sup>5</sup> For a basic, but very incomplete list of manuscripts of Hrabanus' biblical commentary, see F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi* 5 (Madrid, 1955), pp. 7–37 (nos. 7019–87); see also H. Spelsberg, *Hrabanus Maurus Bibliographie*, Veröffentlichungen der Hessischen Landesbibliothek Fulda, 4 (Fulda, 1984), for a list of works and editions. A substantial part of Hrabanus' exegetical work remains unedited: see R. Kottje, 'Hrabanus Maurus', *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon* 4 (1983), cols. 173–4. Burton Edwards's unpublished bibliography of Carolingian exegesis (an ongoing project, now accessible on the Internet) lists more than 280 manuscripts for

to enable a provisional inquiry into royal interest in Hrabanus' commentary.<sup>6</sup> It is particularly the historical books of the Old Testament which interest me here, for it was to this part of Scripture that Hrabanus Maurus devoted most of his vast exegetical *oeuvre*, including the commentaries he wrote at the request of emperors, kings and queens, or dedicated to them of his own accord. Almost all these 'royal' commentaries were concerned with those parts of Scripture that Hrabanus unambiguously classified as *historia*: the four Books of Kings for Louis the Pious, Chronicles and Maccabees for Louis the German, Joshua for Lothar, and Judith and Esther for the Empress Judith; the commentary on Esther he later also dedicated to Lothar's wife, the Empress Irmingard.

Hrabanus; Kottje, 'Hrabanus Maurus', col. 167 mentions a total of more than 1200 manuscripts (until the sixteenth century) for Hrabanus' entire *œuvre*; however, Professor Kottje kindly informed me that he now estimates this number to be closer to 1500. For Hrabanus' commentary on Kings, Jeremiah, Matthew and Romans alone, his list of manuscripts contains 124 items (letter of 4 March 1998). An excellent example of the technical kind of research still to be undertaken for Hrabanus' biblical commentary is that of M. Gorman on various Carolingian biblical commentators; see, *inter alia*, M. Gorman, 'The encyclopedic commentary on Genesis prepared for Charlemagne by Wigbod', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 17 (1982), pp. 173–201; 'Wigbod and biblical studies under Charlemagne', *Revue Bénédictine* 107 (1997), pp. 40–76; 'The commentary on Genesis of Claudius of Turin and biblical studies under Louis the Pious', *Speculum* 72 (1997), pp. 279–329. An exemplary treatment of biblical commentary in relation to political thought is provided by G. E. Caspary, *Politics and Exegesis. Origin and the Two Swords* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1979). This model has inspired P. Buc, who combines manuscript work and historical analysis in *L'Ambiguïté du Livre. Princes, pouvoirs et peuple dans les commentaires de la Bible au Moyen Âge*, *Théologie historique* 95 (Paris, 1994), which treats the period from 1150 to 1350; see also P. Buc, 'David's adultery with Bathseba and the healing powers of Capetian kings', *Viator* 23 (1993), pp. 101–20.

- <sup>6</sup> Hrabanus' biblical commentary has none the less attracted a lot of interest: J. Hablitzel, 'Hrabanus Maurus. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Exegese', *Biblische Studien* 11/3 (1906), pp. 1–105; B. Blumenkranz, 'Raban Maur et Saint Augustin. Compilation ou adaptation? A propos du Latin Biblique', *Revue du Moyen Âge Latin* 7 (1951), pp. 97–110; H. Butzmann, 'Der Ezechiel-Kommentar des Hrabanus Maurus und seine älteste Handschrift', *Bibliothek und Wissenschaft* 1 (1964), pp. 1–22; H. Reinelt, 'Hraban als Exeget', in W. Böhne (ed.), *Hrabanus und seine Schule* (Fulda, 1980), pp. 64–76; E. A. Matter, 'The lamentations commentaries of Hrabanus Maurus and Paschasius Radbertus', *Traditio* 38 (1982), pp. 137–63; F. Brunhölzl, 'Zur geistigen Bedeutung des Hrabanus Maurus', in R. Kottje and H. Zimmermann (eds.), *Hrabanus Maurus. Lehrer, Abt und Bischof* (Mainz, 1982), pp. 1–17; Philippe Le Maitre, 'Les méthodes exégétiques de Raban Maur', in M. Sot (ed.), *Haut Moyen-Âge. Culture, éducation et société. Etudes offertes à Pierre Riché* (Paris, 1990), pp. 343–52; R. Savigni, 'L'interpretazione dei libri sapienziali in Rabano Mauro: tradizione patristica e "moderna tempora"', *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 9 (1992), pp. 557–87; R. Savigni, 'Istanze ermeneutiche e ridefinizione del canone in Rabano Mauro: il commentario ai Libri dei Maccabei', *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 11 (1994), pp. 571–604; M. De Jong, 'Old law and new-found power: Hrabanus Maurus and the Old Testament', in J. W. Drijvers and A. A. MacDonald (eds.), *Centres of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1995), pp. 161–76; D. Appleby, 'Rudolf, Abbot Hrabanus and the Ark of the Covenant Reliquary', *The American Benedictine Review* 46 (1995), pp. 419–43; M.-A. Aris, 'Nostrum est citare testes. Anmerkungen zum Wissenschaftsverständnis des Hrabanus Maurus', in G. Schrimpf (ed.), *Kloster Fulda in der Welt der Karolinger und Ottonen*, *Fuldaer Studien* 7 (Frankfurt, 1996), pp. 437–64.

Hrabanus was neither the first, nor the only, biblical commentator to dedicate his work to Carolingian kings.<sup>7</sup> His prefatory letters, however, provide an exceptional wealth of information concerning the 'utility' of biblical history for his royal patrons which has not yet been sufficiently tapped. These letters form the basis for the following exploration, together with three commentaries on biblical *historiae* for which Hrabanus had no patristic model: those on Esther, Judith and Maccabees. Here Hrabanus was forced to rely more than normally on his own devices; these commentaries are also special because two of them (Judith and Maccabees) dealt with apocryphal books, and those on Judith and Esther were dedicated to empresses.

Hrabanus could rely on a sophisticated royal audience, able to understand the restricted code of allegory and typology, assisted by *lectores* who were part of the retinue of rulers. The king acted as the final judge: to him, exegetical writing was sent *ad legendum et ad probandum*, but he was surrounded by *peritissimi lectores* who might find fault as well.<sup>8</sup> Hrabanus expected these 'readers' to discuss and criticize his work while reading it, as becomes clear from one of his dedicatory letters to Emperor Lothar:

Order this to be read in your presence, and if you discover something that is not correctly explained because of the weakness of my understanding, or distorted by scribal errors, make your learned readers correct it, and thus you will be rewarded forever with your just reward in Heaven by Christ, the lord of all, for your noble struggle and for having corrected me.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See above, n. 5; for an introduction to Carolingian biblical studies, see R. E. McNally, *The Bible in the Early Middle Ages* (Westminster, 1959); P. Riché, 'Divina pagina, ratio et auctoritas dans la théologie Carolingienne', in *Settimane* 27 (1981), pp. 719–58; J. J. Contreni, 'Carolingian biblical studies', in U.-R. Blumenthal (ed.), *Carolingian Essays: Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in Early Christian Studies* (Washington, DC, 1983), pp. 71–98 [reprinted in J. J. Contreni, *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts* (Aldershot, 1992), ch. 5]; J. J. Contreni, 'Carolingian biblical culture', in G. van Riel, C. Steel and J. McEvoy (eds.), *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena. The Bible and Hermeneutics. Proceedings of the Ninth International Colloquium of the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies*, Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, De Wulf-Mansion Centre, series 1/20 (Louvain, 1996), pp. 1–23.

<sup>8</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 34, p. 468 (to Louis the German, c. 842–6); see also another letter from this period to the same king, *ibid.*, 37, pp. 472–3, ll. 41–2: 'et si aliquid in eo dignum emendatione repertum fuerit, cum vestris sagacissimis lectoribus, prout ratio dicat, illud emendare curetis'.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 505, ll. 35–9: 'Iubete illud coram vobis legi et si quid in eo propter tenuitatem sensus mei non rite prolatum vel scriptorum vitio depravatum conspexeritis, per vestros eruditos lectores facite illud corrigi, et sic vobis merces condigna pro vestro bono certamine et nostra simul correctione a Christo omnium domino perpetualiter recompensabitur in caelis.' See J. Fleckenstein, 'Über Hrabanus Maurus. Marginalien zum Verhältnis von Gelehrsamkeit und Tradition im 9. Jahrhundert', in N. Kamp and J. Wollasch (eds.), *Tradition als historische Kraft. Interdisziplinäre Forschungen zur Geschichte des früheren Mittelalters* (Berlin and New York, 1989) pp. 204–13, esp. p. 212; De Jong, 'Old law', pp. 164–6.

This passage nicely shows which intermediaries intervened between the author of biblical exegesis and its royal recipient: not only scribes but also *lectores* helped to convey the message. This was a court culture in which rulers had Latin texts read to them by professional readers, pondering and censuring what they heard while the reading session progressed.<sup>10</sup> Biblical commentary for kings was not just a matter of image-building: a *rex sapientissimus* was expected to be familiar with the intricacies of biblical exegesis. Lothar's two extant letters to Hrabanus are revealing, for the emperor's requests for commentary were highly specific, evoking a ruler completing a collection of commentaries and taking a lively interest in them too.<sup>11</sup> Hrabanus also discussed the problems of exegesis with Louis the German, and worried about the criticism his work might receive in courtly circles – not entirely without reason, judging by his occasional mortification.<sup>12</sup>

It was not merely biblical *historia* itself that kings were interested in: they wanted exegesis. Sometimes this could be 'literal' or 'historical', but more often this exegesis would be 'allegorical', *spiritalis* or *mystice*, as Hrabanus expressed it. This was the kind of commentary he considered fit for kings and queens. He was not the only one who deemed a real, and therefore spiritual, understanding of biblical history an asset indispensable to a true ruler. Thegan celebrated Louis the Pious's learning, not only praising his fluency in Latin, but also his ability to grasp spiritual exegesis; accordingly, Louis had forsworn the *poetica carmina gentilia* he learned in his youth, refusing to read, hear or teach them.<sup>13</sup> At Louis the Pious's court 'stories gave way to histories',<sup>14</sup> but it was not an interest in contemporary record-keeping with which Thegan credited his ruler. He depicted a kind of *conversio*: from a young man liking 'gentile songs' Louis turned into a king who was an expert in understanding the spiritual, moral and anagogical meaning of Scrip-

<sup>10</sup> This also explains why Hrabanus was worried that the *lector* might leave out essential information, such as the names of authoritative authors that he had dutifully marked in the margin; if the *lector* did so, Hrabanus warned, the listener (*auditor*) might get confused; cf. Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 23, p. 429 (to Lupus of Ferrières).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 38 and 49, pp. 469–70 and 503. <sup>12</sup> Ibid., 39, p. 477; De Jong, 'Old law', pp. 173–4.

<sup>13</sup> Thegan, *Vita Hludowici*, c. 19, ed. E. Tremp, *Thegan, Die Taten Kaiser Ludwigs*, MGH SRG 64 (Hanover, 1995), p. 200: 'Sensum vero in omnibus scripturis spiritalem et morem, nec non anagen optime novererat. Poetica carmina gentilia quae in iuventute didicerat, respuit, nec legere, nec audire, nec docere voluit.'

<sup>14</sup> J. L. Nelson, 'History-writing at the courts of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald', in A. Scharer and G. Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 32 (Vienna, 1994), pp. 435–42, at p. 435.



ture. This was not the image of a king exchanging 'oral history' for its written counterpart, but of one who preferred the intricacies of Latin exegesis to the performance of secular – but not necessarily pagan – *carmina*.<sup>15</sup> Only a *rex sapientissimus* capable of fathoming the many-layered meaning of Scripture could be a true *rector* of his Christian people.<sup>16</sup> Judging by Hrabanus' correspondence with rulers, such kings were not a mere figment of Thegan's imagination. Thegan was anxious, however, to project this image of a scripturally based royal *conversatio* backwards, to include Charlemagne. Not only did he hail the son as an expert in allegorical exegesis, but he also radically redrew Einhard's portrayal of the father's preparations for death. According to Thegan, the old emperor had devoted the end of his life to prayer, almsgiving and assiduously correcting sacred texts, particularly the four gospels.<sup>17</sup>

Against this background of royal interest in biblical *historia*, including its spiritual meaning, secular history pales into insignificance. It has been maintained that the genre of *historia*, that is, narrative and moralistic historiography as opposed to mere record-keeping, catered to the needs of kings looking to their historians to unravel the confusing myriad of events they were faced with in this world. In other words, the secular *historia* of the early Middle Ages, including those histories dealing with contemporary events, should be viewed as a continuation of its Old Testament model; like biblical commentators, historians were to explain

<sup>15</sup> See M. Innes's contribution to this volume, chapter 10. The opposition between biblical exegesis and *poetica carmina gentilia* suggests equally biblical overtones in the expression '*gentilis*', in the sense of *gentes* which are not yet part of a Christian *conversatio*. Thegan's most recent editor, Ernst Tremp, does translate the passage as 'pagan songs', but suggests (p. 201, n. 101) that it might also mean 'germanische Heldenlieder', comparing this expression with Alcuin's renunciation of pagan classical texts (*Vita Alcuini*, c. 16, ed. W. Arndt, MGH 15/1 (Hanover, 1887), p. 193), and with Alcuin's celebrated pronouncement: 'Verbi Dei legantur in sacerdotali convivio. Ibi decet lectorem audiri, non citharistam; sermones patrum, non carmina gentilium. Quid Hieneldus cum Christo?' (Alcuin, *Epistolae*, 124, ed. E. Dümmmler, MGH Epp. 4 (Berlin, 1895), p. 183). The latter passage also points to a concern with Christian *conversatio* at the court, which should be oriented towards sacred texts rather than towards more traditional forms of conviviality.

<sup>16</sup> About the Carolingian image of the *rex sapiens* and its consequences for royal involvement in theological debates, see N. Staubach, *Rex christianus. Hofkultur und Herrschaftspropaganda im Reich Karls des Kahlen, II: Die Grundlegung der 'religion royale'*, *Pictura et poesis* 2 (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1993), pp. 21–104 (and p. 12, n. 45, about biblical commentary for rulers and royal preference for allegory).

<sup>17</sup> Thegan, *Vita Hludowici*, c. 7, pp. 184–6: 'Postquam divisi fuerant [i.e. Charlemagne and Louis], domnus imperator nihil coepit agere, nisi in orationibus et elemosinis vacare, et libros corrigere; et quattuor evangelia Christi, quae praetitulantur nomine Mathei, Marci, in ultimo ante obitus sui diem cum Grecis et Siris optime correxerat.'

God's intentions to rulers.<sup>18</sup> The influence of biblical – and especially Old Testament – models on early medieval historical narrative was indeed ubiquitous.<sup>19</sup> Yet it is one thing to say that Carolingian historians lived in a biblical universe which left a deep imprint on their work, but quite another to credit them with a role similar to that of biblical commentators, revealing God's hand in history for the benefit of kings.<sup>20</sup> Augustine had drawn a sharp line between sacred and secular history: only sacred history could be subjected to an *expositio*, an interpretation of its deeper layers of meaning, for only in sacred history had God revealed himself to humanity.<sup>21</sup> Carolingian authors were well aware of this distinction, and it was perhaps the most important reason why Carolingian kings and queens were more interested in biblical history and its commentary than in historiography of contemporary events. It may have been 'the most ancient practice, customary for kings from then to now, to have deeds written down in annals for posterity to learn about',<sup>22</sup> yet there is little evidence of kings actually requesting contemporary historiography: a teleological perspective was not easily combined with an intelligent approach to contemporary events.<sup>23</sup> The chronicle written by Hrabanus' friend Freculph, bishop of Lisieux, was an ambitious work running from the creation up to the seventh century and two highly symbolic events: the consecration of the Pantheon to the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs, and the establishment of papal pri-

<sup>18</sup> K. F. Werner, 'Gott, Herrscher und Historiograph. Der Geschichtsschreiber als Interpret des Wirken Gottes in der Welt und Ratgeber der Könige (4. bis 12. Jahrhundert)', in E.-H. Diehl, H. Seibert and F. Staab (eds.), *Deus qui mutat tempora. Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters* (Sigmaringen, 1987), pp. 1–31; K. F. Werner, 'L'histoire et les rois', in D. Iogna-Prat and J.-C. Picard (eds.), *Religion et culture autour de l'An Mil* (Paris, 1990), pp. 135–42. Also H.-W. Goetz, *Das Geschichtsbild Ottos von Freising*, Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 19 (Cologne and Vienna, 1984), pp. 78–86; H.-W. Goetz, 'Die "Geschichte" im Wissenschaftssystem des Mittelalters', in F.-J. Schmale, *Funktion und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung* (Darmstadt, 1985), pp. 165–213. About medieval notions of *historia*, see A. Seifert, 'Historia im Mittelalter', *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 21 (1977), pp. 226–84; J. Knappe, 'Historie' im Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit. *Begriffs- und gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen im interdisziplinären Kontext*, *Saecula spiritalia* 10 (Baden-Baden, 1984); H.-W. Goetz, 'Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Geschichtsbewusstsein', *Historische Zeitschrift* 255 (1992), pp. 61–97.

<sup>19</sup> On this topic, see M. Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours (538–594): 'Zehn Bücher Geschichte'*. *Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 1994), pp. 32–83.

<sup>20</sup> In a similar vein: N. Staubach, 'Christiana tempora. Augustin und das Ende der alten Geschichte in der Weltchronik Frechulfs von Lisieux', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 29 (1996), pp. 167–206, at p. 196, n. 112; M. Innes and R. McKitterick, 'The writing of history', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 193–220, at pp. 215–16.

<sup>21</sup> R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 1–21.

<sup>22</sup> Ardo Smaragdus, *Vita Benedicti abbatis Anianensis*, proll., ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SS 15, 2 (Hanover, 1887), p. 201; trans. Nelson, 'History-writing', p. 435.

<sup>23</sup> Innes and McKitterick, 'The writing of history', p. 215.

macy.<sup>24</sup> It consisted of two coherent parts, of which the first was dedicated to Arch-chaplain Helisachar, the second to the Empress Judith, for the education of her son Charles the Bald.<sup>25</sup> This work was certainly destined for the court, but it was not concerned with the confusing turmoil of the present needing to be sorted out by an exegetically minded historian. The central theme of Freculph's sophisticated Augustinian narrative, recently uncovered by Nikolaus Staubach, was the victory of the 'right cult', by which the universal *ecclesia* distinguished itself from older cultic unities narrowly identified with peoples and states.<sup>26</sup> Although Freculph did not engage in full-blown *expositio*, his kind of historiography bordered on biblical commentary, not least because his instructions from Helisachar included taking the historical level of exegesis into account when dealing with Old Testament history;<sup>27</sup> Freculph's central concerns – the *ecclesia* and the correct cult – had much in common with the truths Hrabanus Maurus expounded over and over again in his exegesis for rulers. Freculph's work seems to confirm that royal taste ran more to salvation history than to contemporary *historia*. The one significant exception was Nithard's *Historiae*, written at Charles the Bald's behest. This indeed was *historia* proper, a moralizing narrative of contemporary history by a historian writing for his ruler and trying to make sense of the confusing experiences of his own time. But with Nithard we are far removed from confident historical exegesis at the service of kings. His was the tale of an increasingly demoralized courtier and warrior, who looked backwards with nostalgia to times when aristocratic loyalty still reigned supreme, but none the less shared in the general confusion of his day and age.<sup>28</sup> Charles the Bald may even have been disappointed with Nithard's deeply pessimistic

<sup>24</sup> Staubach, '*Christiana tempora*', pp. 177–8.

<sup>25</sup> Freculph of Lisieux, *Chronicon*, PL 106, cols. 917–1258, at cols. 907–8, 1115–16

<sup>26</sup> Staubach, '*Christiana tempora*', *passim*.

<sup>27</sup> Freculph, Preface to Helisachar, ed. E. Dümmler, *Epistolae variorum* 13, MGH Epp. 5, ll. 19–20 (also PL 106, col. 917): 'iussisti ut perscrutando diligenter volumina antiquorum seu agiographorum sive etiam gentilium scriptorum, quaeque pertinent ad historiae veritatem, breviter ac ludice colligere desudarem, a conditione quidem primi hominis usque ad Christi nativitatem domini: eo scilicet modo, ut quicquid de primo saeculo, quod ante generalem fuerat cataclismus, sive de secundo, quod fit post diluvium usque ad nativitatem Abrahae, et regis Assyriorum Nini regnum, nostri sive gentiles senserunt scriptores, pandere diligentius curarem. Quaestiones etiam difficiles, quae per haec tempora in scriptis habentur legislatoris, enodare non negligere, quantum attinet ad historiae veritatem.'

<sup>28</sup> J. L. Nelson, 'Public histories and private history in the work of Nithard', *Speculum* 60 (1985), pp. 251–93 [reprinted in J. L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 195–237]. Nelson later criticized her own use of the public/private opposition, arguing that history might be court-oriented without necessarily being official: Nelson, 'History-writing', pp. 439–42.

historical account; certainly it did not offer the sure-footed exposition of truth a learned king might expect from biblical exegesis.

This is not to say that there was no such thing as court historiography in this period. On the contrary, history writing in the ninth century was overwhelmingly court-oriented, and, as Janet L. Nelson expressed it, the court was a 'frame of mind' encompassing episcopal sees and monasteries.<sup>29</sup> Yet when it came to kings expressing an active interest, biblical history and its commentary took precedence over secular historiography. Royal sensitivity to the implied criticism in some narratives about contemporary events may have played a role in this, but is only a partial explanation at best.<sup>30</sup> It was the self-assigned role of Carolingian rulers as the guardians of the correct interpretation of God's law and the correct cult which made them the recipients and connoisseurs *par excellence* of biblical commentary. Although the contours of a ruler safeguarding the unity and correctness of the *cultus divinus* are already in evidence in the *Concilium Germanicum* (743) and the capitularies of Pippin III, this image was only fully elaborated in Charlemagne's *Admonitio Generalis* (789): 'For we read in the *Books of Kings* (II Reg. 22–23) how the holy Josiah, by visitation, correction and admonition, strove to recall the kingdom which God had given him to the worship of the true God . . .'<sup>31</sup> King Josiah, who had reinstated the Temple, eradicated idolatry, found and imposed God's law, renewed the pact between God and his people and reorganized the priesthood, was the ruler with whom Charlemagne emphatically, though humbly, compared himself; like that of his biblical predecessor, Charlemagne's return to the *cultum veri Dei* was to be founded upon the 'words of the book of the law'. All this is well known, but it has taken modern historians a long time to realize the implications of this vision for 'political' history. As John Contreni observed recently:

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Nelson, 'History-writing', p. 439. Also R. McKitterick, 'Constructing the past in the early Middle Ages: the case of the Royal Frankish Annals', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997), pp. 101–29.

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of possible royal tolerance of criticism, revising her earlier view on this matter, see Nelson, 'History-writing', pp. 438–42; for an illuminating discussion of a royal and aristocratic interest in biblically inspired *sapientia* on the one hand and a dearth of contemporary court historiography on the other, see J. L. Nelson, 'Charles le Chauve et les utilisations du savoir', in D. Iogna-Prat, C. Jeudy and G. Lobrichon, *L'Ecole Carolingienne d'Auxerre de Muretach à Rémi, 830–908. Entretiens d'Auxerre 1989* (Paris, 1991), pp. 37–54. Nelson stresses that during the reign of Charles the Bald this royal and aristocratic *sapientia utilis* was expressed in capitularies rather than in historiography.

<sup>31</sup> *Admonitio Generalis*, Prologue, MGH Cap 1, ed. A. Boretius (Hanover, 1883), p. 54, ll. 2–4: 'Nam legimus in regnorum libri, quomodo sanctus Iosias regnum sibi a Deo datum circumeundo, corrigendo, ammonendo ad cultum veri Dei studuit revocare . . .'

The Bible and the Middle Ages are so interwoven for us, that it is difficult to appreciate the boldness – and the idealism – of Charlemagne's initiative. No secular leader before him – no Constantine, no Theodosius, no Clovis – had so dramatically privileged the sacred text. The history of the Bible and of biblical exegesis during the Carolingian period must begin with the realization of the Bible's significance in Carolingian culture broadly speaking, in religion and spirituality, to be sure, but also in political culture and in every thinking person's notion of the right ordering of Frankish society.<sup>32</sup>

In this biblically centred political culture exegesis was relevant to rulers,<sup>33</sup> and Hrabanus became their most important supplier. Flattering him into compiling a concise liturgical travel-companion, Lothar paid homage to Hrabanus' exceptional position as a *magister orthodoxus*. The bountiful Lord had provided his predecessors with the likes of Jerome, Augustine, Gregory and Ambrose, but he – Lothar – had been equally blessed with Hrabanus.<sup>34</sup> In 854–5, when he made his request, the emperor was looking back on decades of Hrabanus' scholarly service. Lothar himself was getting on for sixty, Hrabanus was almost seventy-five years old. For both men death was to come soon.<sup>35</sup> The old emperor appreciated Hrabanus' work more than later generations of scholars, who accused him of having done nothing except copying the Fathers. Those who now tend to evaluate his work on his own terms still feel the need to defend him against the taint of 'lack of originality'.<sup>36</sup> Even during his own lifetime Hrabanus came in for nasty criticism from 'know-alls' (*scioli*) maintaining that he never wrote anything he had thought of himself. Mortally offended, he asked Lothar what on earth was wrong with inserting excerpts from the writings of the Fathers if he duly indicated them as such, rather than passing them

<sup>32</sup> Contreni, 'Carolingian biblical culture', p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Charlemagne already appreciated for allegorical commentary, his son Louis the Pious and his grandsons had a preference for it, a development culminating in Charles the Bald's predilection for John Scotus Erigena; see Staubach, *Rex christianus*, p. 12, n. 45 and pp. 41–104; Gorman, 'Wigbod and biblical studies', pp. 74–6.

<sup>34</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 49, p. 504: 'Nam si illis Hieronimum, Augustinum, Gregorium Ambrosiumque et ceteros plurimos prebuit, et nobis idem opifex eiusdem meriti et scientiae contulit Rhabanum Maurum.' For a variation on this theme, see Notker Balbulus, *Gesta Karoli Magni* I, c. 9, ed. H. F. Haefele, MGH SRG n.s. 12 (Berlin, 1959), p. 12.

<sup>35</sup> For Hrabanus' biography, see M. Sandmann, 'Hraban als Mönch, Abt und Erzbischof', *Fuldaer Geschichtsblätter* 56 (1980), pp. 133–80; furthermore, R. Kottje, 'Hrabanus Maurus', *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon* 4 (1983), pp. 166–96, and the excellent introduction to Hrabanus Maurus, *Martyriologium, De Computo*, ed. J. McCulloh, CCCM 44 (Turnhout, 1979), pp. ii–xxiv, both with extensive references to older literature. Shortly before his death in 855 Lothar entered the monastery of Prüm: J. F. Böhmer and E. Mühlbacher, *Regesta Imperii I. Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter den Karolingern, 751–918* (Innsbruck, 1908), p. 481, no. 1177a.

<sup>36</sup> Aris, 'Nostrum est citare testis', p. 437.

off as his own work; proper humility had compelled him to give pride of place to the exegesis of the Fathers instead of his own.<sup>37</sup> Making patristic commentary available to his contemporaries was indeed his paramount goal. Much of his exegetical work operated according to the principle of the *florilegium*; gathering flowers – or wholesome food – in the works of the *patres* is a recurrent image in Hrabanus' prefatory letters.<sup>38</sup> In this respect he did precisely what those commissioning his commentary asked for. They wanted brevity *and* their Fathers, relying on Hrabanus either to supply patristic exegesis if they lacked it, or to provide a handy compendium when they had so much of it they got lost in it. When Freculph of Lisieux asked Hrabanus for a commentary on the Pentateuch he complained that in his new bishopric 'on the Western shores of the Ocean' he did not even have all the biblical books at his disposal, let alone the relevant commentary. He craved spiritual food from Hrabanus, 'so that our regard will be turned eastward, Judea will border us in the West, and our Breton neighbours will become Israelites'.<sup>39</sup> Hrabanus swiftly complied, producing five books of commentary at a time (822–9) when he was already the extremely busy abbot of Fulda. He explained to Freculph that he had distinguished patristic commentary from his own by marking his own additions with '*nota agnominis mei*';<sup>40</sup> a principle he was to stick to in later work, duly identifying his own commentary in the margin with an 'M'.<sup>41</sup> Already in his exegetical debut, a commentary on Matthew offered in 821–2 to Archbishop Haistulph of Mainz, Hrabanus was adamant that the layout of the text, including the colour of the ink and the size of the script, would not only help the reader to tell the biblical text apart from its commentary, but also make the commentary quickly accessible.<sup>42</sup> This in itself shows that his own voice was also heard, but in his prefatory letters he consciously projected the image of someone

<sup>37</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 39, p. 477, ll. 21–4: 'Nec enim illud silendum arbitror, quod quibusdam narrantibus comperi, quosdam sciolos me in hoc vituperasse, quod excerptionem faciens de sanctorum patrum scriptis, eorum nomina praenotarem, sive quod aliorum sententiis magis innisus esse, quam propria conderem . . .'

<sup>38</sup> For an analysis of Hrabanus' methods as expounded in his prefatory letters, see Le Maitre, 'Les méthodes exégétiques'; De Jong, 'Old law'; Aris, '*Nostrum est citare testes*'.

<sup>39</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 7, p. 392, ll. 22–4: 'vertetur occasus noster in orientem, et regio contigua axi occiduo fiet Iudea, nostrique Brittonum vicini erunt Israhelitae'.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, p. 394, ll. 4–7: 'Si quid vero gratia divina indigno mihi elucidare dignata est, in locis necessariis simul cum nota agnominis mei interposui, quatinus sciret lector, que ex patrum traditione haberet, et que ex parvitate nostra, licet sermone rustico, tamen ut credo sensu catholico exposita inveniret.'

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, p. 403; 23, pp. 429–30.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, p. 390.

who, like his master Alcuin, wished to do nothing but follow in the footsteps of the Fathers.<sup>43</sup> His concern with the layout of his commentary served the same purpose as his faithful adherence to the *vestigia maiorum*: he considered it his principal duty to make the *sententiae patrum* accessible to his contemporaries. The indefatigable energy with which he devoted himself to this task helped to provide the groundwork upon which later critics of Hrabanus' exegetical methods depended: the *scioli* who spoke ill of him in the 840s, claiming that the commentator merely copied the work of others, could do so because they enjoyed the benefits of two decades of Hrabanus' biblical scholarship.<sup>44</sup>

Hrabanus' emphasis on the *vestigia maiorum* was in keeping with the demands of his patrons and with the spirit of his age;<sup>45</sup> it was also reinforced by his monastic background. In the epitaph he wrote for himself, Hrabanus defined himself as a monk, first and foremost: born in Mainz, and reborn through baptism, he became acquainted with Holy Scripture in Fulda, where as a monk he obeyed the orders of his superiors and the Rule became the guideline of his life.<sup>46</sup> For Hrabanus himself these were the essential data about his life, and it was as a monk that he wished to be remembered. This is not surprising for someone who entered Fulda as a child oblate in 788, when he was eight years old at most, but probably younger.<sup>47</sup> Hrabanus bore the early imprint of the cloister for the rest of his life; as Hincmar was to say later, he had been brought up on milk from the breasts of the Church.<sup>48</sup> But already at an early stage the court began to impinge

<sup>43</sup> The tone is set in the prefatory letter of 819 dedicating *De Institutione Clericorum* to Bishop Haistulph of Mainz. Ibid., 3, p. 386: 'Confido tamen omnipotentis Dei gratiae, quod fidem et sensum catholicum in omnibus tenerem, nec per me quasi ex me ea protuli, sed auctoritati innitens maiorum, per omnia illorum vestigia sum secutus.' See also ibid., 11, p. 398, ll. 14–15; 18, p. 423, l. 24; 19, p. 424, ll. 23–4. About the expression *vestigia patrum* in Alcuin's work, see Aris, 'Nostrum est citare testes', p. 443. Hrabanus accurately summed up his method in a letter to King Louis the German, *Epistolae*, 34, pp. 467–8, ll. 31–2: 'Unde etiam ego non de propria scientia, sed de salvatoris nostri misericordia confidens, temptavi iuxta maiorum dicta vel sensum aliqua interponere, ubi vel minus ludice explanata, vel poenitus ommissa repperi, ut si non aliorum, tamen nostrorum paupertati consulerem, qui nec multos libros habent nec diversorum auctororum codices.' About the tension between Hrabanus' wish to follow the *patres* and his need to speak out for himself, see De Jong, 'Old law', pp. 170–3.

<sup>44</sup> Aris, 'Nostrum est citare testes', p. 461. <sup>45</sup> Contreni, 'Carolingian biblical studies', pp. 85–9.

<sup>46</sup> Hrabanus Maurus, *Carmina*, 97, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH PLAC 2 (Hanover, 1884), p. 244.

<sup>47</sup> M. De Jong, *In Samuel's Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996), pp. 73–7; E. Freise, *Die Anfänge der Geschichtsschreibung im Kloster Fulda*, Inaugural-Dissertation (Münster, 1979), pp. 80–4, and p. 202, n. 770.

<sup>48</sup> Hincmar, *Ad reclusos et simplices*, ed. W. Gundlach, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 10 (1889), p. 262: 'Rhabanum . . . ab orthodoxo et magno doctore Alchuino in sanctae ecclesiae utilitatibus uberibus ipsius catholico lacte nutritum.'

upon his life,<sup>49</sup> and it would continue to do so throughout his career as teacher and abbot of Fulda and archbishop of Mainz.<sup>50</sup> Most of his numerous biblical commentaries were written during his busy years as abbot of Fulda. Lothar called him the *magister orthodoxus*, but Hrabanus only gradually acquired this position of authority. His first 'royal' commentary, the one on Kings, was initially (829) dedicated to Arch-chaplain Hilduin. Judging by the accompanying letter Hrabanus carefully tested the waters, securing Hilduin's approval before he dared to offer his work to the one who should really understand Israel's royal history: Louis the Pious. Apparently Hilduin had asked him for a specimen of his exegesis, without being specific in his demands; Hrabanus humbly referred to the rich library Hilduin had at his disposal at the palace, and wondered whether this 'little work of ours' composed for Fulda's monks would be good enough for the great man.<sup>51</sup> Apparently it was, for Hrabanus later proudly recounted to King Louis the German how his commentary on Kings had been written at Hilduin's request (*Hilduini rogatu*); moreover, the work had been presented to Louis's father when he had been 'personally present in our monastery' – a reference to the emperor's visit to Fulda in 832.<sup>52</sup>

Was there a gift more suitable to a Christian ruler visiting a royal monastery than a commentary on the Books of Kings? When in 834 or shortly thereafter Hrabanus sent his commentary on Chronicles to Louis the German, he wrote:

It used to be the custom that a most Christian king, much occupied with divine precepts, was offered the history of the kings of Judah, that is, of the confessors, with some explanation of its spiritual meaning. Because your noble prudence rules over a Christian people [*populus ecclesiasticus*] redeemed by the precious blood of God's son and most accustomed to profess God's name, it suits a pious prince, that is to say, the *rector* of the members of the

<sup>49</sup> D. Schaller, 'Der junge "Rabe" am Hof Karls des Grossen (Theodulf Carm. 27)', in J. Autenrieth and F. Brunhölzl (eds.), *Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1971), pp. 123–41.

<sup>50</sup> M. Sandmann, 'Die Folge der Äbte', in K. Schmid (ed.), *Die Klostergemeinschaft von Fulda im früheren Mittelalter*, 1, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 8/1 (Munich, 1978), p. 185, with a list of Hrabanus' visits to various kings and emperors.

<sup>51</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 14, p. 402.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, p. 423, ll. 30–3: 'Ante annos enim aliquot rogatu Hilduini abbatis in Regum libros secundum sensum catholicorum patrum quattuor commentariorum libros edidi, quos et sacratissimo genitori vestro Hludowico imperatori presentialiter in nostro monasterio tradidi . . .' About this visit: H. P. Wehlt, *Reichsabtei und König, dargestellt am Beispiel der Abtei Lorsch, mit Ausblicken auf Hersfeld, Stablo und Fulda*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 28 (Göttingen, 1970), p. 236.



true king Christ, God's only son, to have and practice the right form of government which is in accordance with Scripture . . .<sup>53</sup>

This neatly summarizes Hrabanus' views on the uses of biblical commentary for rulers. It should be a practical guide to Christian kings who were *rectores*, first and foremost, ruling a people defined by the fact that it was '*ecclesiasticus*'. Yet it was not merely biblical history itself, but above all its spiritual commentary which was harnessed to this cause. 'Accept this history of earlier kings [*regum priorum historia*] and love most in it everything concerning its spiritual meaning, which pertains to the grace of Christ.' The reference to David's key (Apoc. 3:7) was another allusion to the ability of kings to fathom the spiritual meaning of Scripture.<sup>54</sup> Hrabanus was adamant that his exegesis was, above all, meant to be useful, but this 'practicality' operated primarily at an allegorical level: it was to aid the royal understanding of the deeper and truly Christian meaning of the 'history of prior kings'. After his usual protestations about following the *vestigia patrum* and doing so with the required brevity, Hrabanus clearly stated his intentions: instead of presenting long flowery treatises, 'I have decided to write commentaries on divine histories, of which the function is to pass over the obvious, and to explicate the obscure'.<sup>55</sup>

It was in this spirit that Hrabanus wrote biblical commentary for Carolingian rulers and their spouses. His royal recipients perceived his work as *munera*, gifts, a view shared by the author himself;<sup>56</sup> in this respect, exegetical production was part of the circuit of gift-exchange between royal *fideles* and the ruler. Presentations of work or royal

<sup>53</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 18, p. 423, ll. 1-8: 'Fas enim erat, ut regi christianissimo et in divinis preceptis studiosissimo historia regum Iuda, hoc est confitentium cum spiritali sensu aliquantulum explanata offerretur. Nam quia populum ecclesiasticum filii Dei pretioso sanguine redemptum et in confessione nominis Dei assuetissimum, vestra nobilis ad servitium Dei regit prudentia, ideo bene convenit piissimo principi, hoc est rectori membrorum veri regis Christi, unigeniti videlicet Dei, ritum regiminis secundum divinam scripturam habere et agere, maximentissime cum sapientia, quae in ipsis litteris maxime elucet, ammonens dicat: "Per me reges regnant et conditores legum iusta decernunt" (Prov. 8:15).'

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., ll. 11-15: 'Accipe ergo regum priorum historiam et sensum spiritalem ad gratiam Christi pertinentem super omnia in illa amate. Lex enim Dei spiritalis est, et revelatione opus est, ut intellegatur, ac revelata facie gloriam Dei contemplemur. Unde in Apocalipsin liber septem signaculis signatus ostenditur, quem nemo aperit, nisi ille resereat qui habet clavem David, qui aperit, et nemo claudit; claudit et nemo aperit.' Cf. Apoc. 3:7: 'Those are the words of the holy one, the true one who holds the keys of David; when he opens none may shut, when he shuts none may open'.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., ll. 27-9: 'Non enim longos florentesque tractatus, in quibus plausibilis ludit oratio, sed commentarios in divinas historias scribere decrevi, quorum officium est preterire manifesta, obscura disserere.'

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., ll. 37-9: 35, p. 469; ibid., 38, ll. 23-6, p. 475.

requests for commentary were instrumental in creating, maintaining or restoring good relations, yet this was more than an offering intended to curry royal favour. Hrabanus bestowed biblical exegesis upon the ruler both as a gesture of loyalty and as an acknowledgement of royal legitimacy. As his authority and renown grew, Hrabanus' 'gifts' became something like a hallmark of legitimacy. It was the legitimate ruler who deserved biblical commentary, for only he (or she) would possess the *sapientia* needed for a true spiritual understanding.

This particular function of exegesis emerged quite clearly once strife became endemic in the royal family, and Carolingian magnates – including Hrabanus – had a hard time identifying their legitimate monarch. Throughout the troubles of 830–4 Fulda and its abbot remained a bastion of loyalty to Louis the Pious.<sup>57</sup> Hrabanus' first gift of biblical commentary – the Books of Kings! – signalled his unwavering fidelity to the emperor, and in 832 can have been no less than an explicit gesture of support. It was Hrabanus who voiced the sentiments of the loyalists in a treatise which his pupil Rudolf called an *epistola consolatoria*,<sup>58</sup> but which was in fact a compilation of biblical texts on the obedience which sons owed to their fathers and subjects to their kings; once restored to power, the emperor requested a more extensive work on the *honor parentum* and the duties of the various *ordines* in the *ecclesia Dei*, that is, the realm.<sup>59</sup> The commentaries on Esther and Judith destined for the Empress Judith also belonged to this veritable avalanche of loyal support during and after the tribulations of 833; the abbot of Fulda referred to the enemies Judith had conquered, and would go on conquering as long as she followed the biblical models of her namesake, and her predecessor Queen Esther.<sup>60</sup> Hrabanus stressed the empress's legit-

<sup>57</sup> B.-S. Albert, 'Raban Maur, l'unité de l'empire et ses relations avec les Carolingiens', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 86 (1991), pp. 5–44 (esp. pp. 9–11); E. Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* (Darmstadt, 1996), p. 204. It was Fulda which served as a prison for the scapegoat of the rebellion of 833, Archbishop Ebo of Reims; P. R. McKeon, 'Archbishop Ebo of Reims: a study in the Carolingian Empire and Church', *Church History* 43 (1974), pp. 437–47, at p. 443; Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme*, p. 211.

<sup>58</sup> Rudolf of Fulda, *Miracula Sanctorum in Fuldenses Ecclesias Translatorem*, c. 15, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS 15/1 (Hanover, 1887), p. 341.

<sup>59</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 15 and 16, pp. 403–20.

<sup>60</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 17a, p. 421, ll. 3–8: 'Quae quidem ob insigne meritum virtutis tam viris quam etiam feminis sunt imitabiles, eo quod spiritalis hostes animi vigore, et corporales consilii maturitate vicerunt. Sic et vestra nunc laudibilibus prudentia, quae iam hostes suos non parva ex parte vicit, si in bono cepto perseverare atque semetipsam semper meliorare contenderit, cunctos adversarios suos feliciter superabit.' About Judith: E. Ward, 'Caesar's wife: the career of the Empress Judith, 819–829', in P. Godman and R. Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 205–37; G. Bühner-Thierry, 'La reine adultère', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 35 (1992), pp. 299–312.

imacy by calling himself 'a particle of the people committed to you by God', and reminded her of his daily prayers for the royal family.<sup>61</sup> In a prefatory *carmen figuratum* a crowned Judith is depicted at the centre of a square field of letters, under the blessing hand of God.<sup>62</sup> Concern for the unity of the realm may also have inspired the commentary on Chronicles for Louis the German. Did it serve as a gesture of gratitude to the young Louis, who had been instrumental in restoring his father to the throne? Hrabanus praised the king's *cultum pietatis*, of which he had long heard, but which he had now personally experienced, and invited him to scrutinize Scripture in order to govern legitimately, according to the example of 'preceding fathers' (*patres praecedentes*).<sup>63</sup> It looks as if Hrabanus had both biblical and contemporary fathers in mind: Louis the Pious hovers in the background, for it was in this letter that Hrabanus recalled how 'some years ago' he had presented the emperor with his commentary on the Books of Kings.<sup>64</sup> Like his father earlier, the loyal son now received the *divina historia* of his Old Testament predecessors.

When discord flared up again in 838, Hrabanus remained staunchly at the emperor's side, but in 840 the old emperor died, and the moment of truth had arrived. In a letter to Humbert of Würzburg Hrabanus complained not only of physical illness, but also of anxiety about the 'common peril which threatens us greatly at this time', expressing a fear of failure in the face of impending difficulties.<sup>65</sup> He could have written these words anywhere between 838 and 842, but they best fit the period after Louis's death, when minds had to be made up in an uncertain situation. Lothar seems to have taken the initiative in ensuring Hrabanus' loyalty and approval, requesting a 'mystical and moral' commentary on the part of Ezekiel not yet covered by Gregory the Great. Hrabanus pleaded an illness ('not that I ever amounted to much,

<sup>61</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 17a, p. 420, ll. 28–9: 'nos etiam quantulacumque pars plebis a Deo vobis commissae sub pietate vestra degentes . . .'

<sup>62</sup> E. Sears, 'Louis the Pious as *Miles Christi*: the dedicatory image in Hrabanus Maurus's *De Laudibus Sancti Crucis*', in Godman and Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's Heir*, pp. 605–28, at p. 620; M. Perrin, 'La représentation figurée de César-Louis le Pieux chez Raban Maur en 835: religion et idéologie', *Francia* 24 (1997), pp. 61–4; P. Delogu, '"Consors regni": un problema carolingio', *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano* 76 (1964), pp. 85–98. I owe this last reference to Cristina La Rocca.

<sup>63</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 18, p. 422, ll. 30–7. <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 423, ll. 35–7.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 27, pp. 441–2, ll. 27–33: 'tu tantum nostram infirmitatem sacris orationibus et piis exortationibus relevas, quia non solum proprie aegritudinis molestia, verum etiam communis periculi, quod instanti tempore valde imminet, anxietate pregravatus sum. Ac ideo vestra oratione atque omnipotentis Dei misericordia maxime indigeo, ne deficiam in tribulationibus, in necessitatibus, in periculis et in temptationibus diversis.'

but nowadays I feel much different from what I used to be: I lie in bed more often, oppressed by serious illness, than I sit in my study to write or read'),<sup>66</sup> but also complained of the 'difficulties of Ezekiel'.<sup>67</sup> This complicated book of visionary prophecy must indeed have presented problems without a reliable patristic guide; apart from this, there was its vitriolic denunciation of Jerusalem as a perfidious whore (Ez. 16:1–43), and its soaring vision of the New Israel and the restoration of the Temple (Ez. 40–8). The precarious political situation of 840 can hardly have facilitated a 'mystical and moral' commentary on such themes. Ezekiel's diatribes were too harsh, his prophecy of renewed unity too lofty. Instead, Hrabanus offered Lothar a commentary on Jeremiah which he had already started when 'your late father, the Emperor Louis' was still alive, and which he had finished after Louis's death.<sup>68</sup> Jeremiah was a meaningful gift in troubled times; again Hrabanus used biblical commentary to convey the message that Lothar was Louis's legitimate successor by explicitly linking the father and the son in his prefatory letter. Work on Jeremiah had started during Louis's life, and was now formally presented to the son and heir. 'And because the wills of many run in various directions, dispositions differ, and opinions waver and purposes vacillate, it pleases me to appeal to you as the one and only benevolent and most wise judge, saintliest and most august Emperor Lothar . . .'<sup>69</sup> Hrabanus' assertion that Lothar was the only one capable of judging the commentary's 'purity' had a clear implication: Lothar was the rightful emperor. Hence, Hrabanus ended his letter with a solemn pledge of life-long fidelity and a prayer asking God to protect Lothar from his earthly enemies and to grant him an eternal reign in heaven.

But things turned out differently. In the spring of 842 Louis the German occupied the region and claimed the royal abbey of Fulda. Hrabanus fled to Lothar, albeit only for a few days; when he returned,

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 28, p. 444, ll. 3–5: 'Qui licet aliquid magni numquam fuerit, tamen modo longe aliud me esse sentio quam fueram: qui gravi aegritudine pressus iam saepius in lectulo accumbo, quam ad scribendum vel ad legendum in meditatorio sedeo.'

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 443–4. <sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 444.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., ll. 20–9: 'Et quoniam plurimorum diverse sunt voluntates et differunt ingenia vacillantque sententiae, placuit mihi te unum ac solum iudicem benevolum et sapientissimum expetere, sanctissime atque augustissime imperator Hludhari, cuius mentem divina sapientia illustrans non permittit fraude invidorum corrumpi nec versutia perversorum seduci, sed in equitatis et iustitiae regula conservans per viam veritatis sedulo deducit. Tibi ergo equo iudici praesens opus offero, ut tuo examine ad purum probetur, et tua auctoritate contra invidios aemulorum morsus tueatur. Cum enim habuerim te propitium et benignum iudicem, pro nihilo aliorum opiniones falsas deputo, sed tui iuris amator ac tue sancte voluntatis devotus exsecutor, fidelis tibi, Christo tribuente, quamdiu vixero, perseverabo.'

the monks had elected his friend Hatto to the abbacy.<sup>70</sup> Hrabanus retired to the Petersberg, a small monastic establishment a few kilometres from Fulda with a church 'eminently visible' (*valde conspicua*) on the mountain, which he had founded himself in 836 and consecrated 'in honour of the sainted apostles, patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, confessors, virgins and all the heavenly saintly spirits'.<sup>71</sup> His reasons for giving up the abbacy were complex: not only his loyalty to Lothar counted, but also long-standing tensions in the community since Abbot Ratger's conflict-ridden reign, and then there was his advanced age.<sup>72</sup> When his old pupil Lupus commented on his master having 'relinquished all care and toil to our Hatto', he made it sound like a straightforward retirement, though he may have been suspicious, for he asked for a full account.<sup>73</sup> Whatever the case, Hrabanus withdrew with good grace, keeping excellent relations with Fulda and its new abbot Hatto, 'the dearest of men and the most solicitous keeper of God's flock', as he wrote shortly after retiring.<sup>74</sup> If there was any real estrangement between Hrabanus and King Louis it did not last long, for in 845 at the latest, but possibly as early as 843,<sup>75</sup> the king called him to Rasdorf, a *cella* of Fulda, where the two men discussed Scripture and the king commissioned an allegorical commentary on the Canticles for Matins.<sup>76</sup> Again a royal request for biblical commentary

<sup>70</sup> O. G. Oexle, 'Memorialüberlieferung und Gebetsgedächtnis in Fulda vom 8. bis zum 11. Jahrhundert', in Schmid et al. (eds.), *Die Klostersgemeinschaft von Fulda im früheren Mittelalter*, pp. 164–5.

<sup>71</sup> Rudolf, *Miracula*, c. 14, p. 339.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Oexle, 'Memorialüberlieferung', p. 164, n. 163; Hrabanus, *Martyriologium*, ed. McCulloh, 'Introduction', pp. xviii–xix. Yet Albert, 'Raban Maur', pp. 24–8 speaks of 'la disgrâce prolongée de Raban', and even of a most severe punishment, i.e. 'un exile prolongé et une démission irréversible', rejecting out of hand all suggestions that Hrabanus might have stepped down of his own accord, or at least with a minimum of fuss. Albert offers no arguments to support her view, however, and ignores all evidence pointing in the opposite direction. Hrabanus' exile a few kilometres from Fulda, with excellent relations with his successor and soon again with the ruler who 'punished' him, caused him no particular anguish. Sandmann rightly pointed out that Hrabanus remained a monk and a member of the monastic community of Fulda ('Hraban als Mönch', pp. 152–3); as Kottje ('Hrabanus Maurus', col. 169) noted, his literary production was copied out in the Fulda scriptorium and brought to its recipients by Fulda monks, which surely would not have been possible without Abbot Hatto's consent. A letter in which Hrabanus contentedly described how he sat 'quietly, far from all worldly business, in my little cell', concentrating on the study of Scripture, was most likely written during this period: Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 40, p. 478.

<sup>73</sup> Lupus of Ferrières, *Epistolae*, 27, ed. L. Levillain, *Loup de Ferrières, Correspondance* 1 (Paris, 1927), pp. 128–30.

<sup>74</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 31, p. 455, ll. 14–15: 'carissime virorum et solertissime custos gregis Dei Bonose . . .'

<sup>75</sup> Hrabanus, *Martyriologium*, ed. McCulloh, 'Introduction', p. xix, n. 69.

<sup>76</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 33, p. 465: 'Nuper quando ad vos in cellula monasterii nostri, quae vocatur Ratestorph, vocatus veni, et sermo fuit inter nos de scripturis sacris, persuadere mihi dignati estis, ut cantica, quae in matutinalis laudibus sancta psallit ecclesia, vobis allegorico sensu exponerem . . .' These Canticles for Matins were all taken from the Old Testament.

served as a way to cement or restore good relations, with Hrabanus hastening to express his faithful *servitium*. Significantly, he called Louis a *sapientissimus rex, in omnibus bene eruditus* – his hallmark of legitimacy – and vowed to pray for the king's salvation and the stability of his realm.<sup>77</sup> Hrabanus was no longer the abbot of a great royal monastery, but, as he subtly reminded the king, the power of his monastic prayer was still indispensable to political order.<sup>78</sup> More exegetical work for King Louis was to follow in those years when he was not burdened by the duties of high office. Contrasting busy monastic life with that of 'those who are well versed in reading books and meditating on Sacred Scripture, and have the leisure to read and write what they want',<sup>79</sup> he may have had himself in mind, and his obligation to make good use of his time. He sent the king a commentary on Daniel, and, one year later, the *expositio* on Maccabees he had written 'some years ago, at the request of friends', that is, for Gerolt, an archdeacon of Louis the Pious: a seasonal gift, offered between the first Sundays of November and December, 'when the Apostolic See has decreed the Books of Maccabees to be read in church'.<sup>80</sup> Louis asked for more: 'Recently, when I [Hrabanus] was in your presence, you said you heard I wrote a new work on the properties of language and the mystical significance of things, and you asked me to send it.' This was *De Rerum Naturis*, a gigantic undertaking made possible

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 467, ll. 12–17.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. M. De Jong, 'Carolingian monasticism: the power of prayer', in McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History II*, pp. 622–53.

<sup>79</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 34, p. 468, ll. 11–13.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 35, ll. 11–13, p. 470: 'Praeterito siquidem anno transmisi vobis tractatum in Daniele prophetem, quem non solum ex dictis maiorum, quin et ex nostrae parvitas sensu feceram. Nunc vero quia tempus est illud, quod apostolica sedis constituit libros Machabeorum legi in ecclesia, eorundem librorum expositionem, quam ante annos aliquot rogantibus amicis sensu historico simul et allegorico dictaveram, excellentiae vestrae defero, ut, si aliquando sensum mysticum in eis dinoscere vos delectet, habeatis in promptu, quo illum explicitum invenire valeatis: non dico valde disserte et oratione rhetorica, sed lucido sermone et catholica fide.' Given that this commentary was dedicated to King Louis after the meeting in Rasdorf, and one year after Hrabanus offered Louis his work on Daniel, c. 845 seems a likely date. In the mid-830s Hrabanus had already dedicated his commentary on Maccabees to Gerolt, an archdeacon of Louis the Pious; cf. ibid., 19, pp. 424–5. This dedication took place when Hrabanus had already offered Chronicles (for which Gerolt had also asked) to the younger Louis, but promised the archdeacon to 'reserve' Maccabees for him. About Gerolt: P. Lehmann, 'Corveyer Studien', in P. Lehmann, *Erforschung des Mittelalters* 5 (Stuttgart, 1959; orig. 1909), pp. 105–6; J. Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige* 1, Schriften der MGH 16 (Stuttgart, 1959), pp. 65, 85; also H. Keller, 'Machabaeorum pugnae. Zum Stellenwert eines biblischen Vorbildes in Widukinds Deutung der ottonischen Königsherrschaft', in H. Keller and N. Staubach, *Iconologia sacra. Mythos, Bildkunst und Dichtung in der Religions- und Sozialgeschichte Alteuropas. Festschrift für Karl Hauck*, Arbeiten zur Frühmittelalterforschung 23 (Berlin and New York, 1994), p. 422. Gerolt entered Corvey in 847, donating a great number of books to the monastery, which possibly included Hrabanus' commentary on Maccabees. Keller thinks the commentary was written c. 840; I would opt for an earlier date. It seems to belong to the work produced in or shortly after 834, in the aftermath of the revolt against Louis the Pious. A careful study of the manuscripts may shed more light on this matter.

by Hrabanus' retirement to the Petersberg. Predictably, his dedicatory letter was full of allusions to royal *sapientia* and Solomon. It opened with praise for a king whose good reputation had reached 'all of Gaul and Germany, and almost all parts of Europe'; Hrabanus said he could not write on Scripture without sharing his work with Louis. In this new work *de sermonum proprietate et mystica rerum significatione* the king could find *historia* as well as *allegoria*; like the Old Testament itself, it was divided into twenty-two books. In other words, to Hrabanus himself his 'encyclopedia' was above all another work of exegesis.<sup>81</sup>

Meanwhile Emperor Lothar also remained an eager recipient of Hrabanus' commentary. He sent his former *fidelis* two letters, 'one of which is to read, the other to read and append as a preface to your work',<sup>82</sup> making some very specific demands: a literal commentary on the beginning of Genesis, a spiritual exposition of those parts of the exhortations (*sermones*) of Jeremiah on which he lacked Jerome's commentary, and the anagogical commentary on the part of Ezekiel which had not been covered by Gregory the Great, for which he had asked earlier. Even the 'official' letter, written in Lothar's customary flowery prose, breathes the spirit of old friendship: the emperor alluded to their involuntary separation, and added some words of consolation about Hrabanus' rural exile, which surely was better suited to the *homo interior* than the beauty of royal cities.<sup>83</sup> Obviously political circumstances did not prevent excellent and frequent relations between the emperor and *Hrabanus noster*, for the letter makes it clear that a messenger had recently brought Lothar a copy of Hrabanus' commentary on Joshua, and promises of more (*de divinis aliis libris expositio*).<sup>84</sup> Hrabanus set to work, complying with the emperor's wishes but according to his own views. For a literal commentary on Genesis, Lothar had to turn to Augustine; Hrabanus was not going to improve on *De Genesi ad litteram*.<sup>85</sup> He did send

<sup>81</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 37, p. 472, ll. 30–1. See M. Rissel, *Rezeption antiker und patristischer Wissenschaft bei Hrabanus Maurus*, Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters 7 (Frankfurt, 1976); T. Burrows, 'Holy information: a new look at Raban Maur's *De naturis rerum*', *Parergon* 5 (1987), pp. 28–37.

<sup>82</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 38, p. 476, ll. 10–12: 'Duas tibi epistolas misi, quarum una tantum est legenda, haec vero altera et legenda et in libro operis tui antepoenenda.'

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 476, ll. 1–2: 'Plus enim interiorem hominem rustica montium solitudo, quam regalis urbium pulcritudo delectat . . .' Lothar had the needs of the *homo interior* on his mind; cf. *ibid.*, 49, p. 503, ll. 3–2.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 38, p. 475.

<sup>85</sup> B. Van Name Edwards, 'The commentary on Genesis attributed to Walafrid Strabo: a preliminary report from the manuscripts', *Proceedings of the PMR Conference* 15 (1990), pp. 71–89. Edwards suspects that 'Hrabanus Maurus himself was responsible for the abbreviated commentary on Genesis commonly attributed to Walafrid', and that it was this text which he sent to his imperial patron.

Lothar a commentary on the beginning of Genesis, but this also included allegory. Hrabanus also reminded Lothar of the fact that he had already sent him his exegesis of Jeremiah. Is this a case of imperial loss of memory or loss of commentary? As for Ezekiel, Hrabanus outdid himself: he treated not only the last part Lothar had asked for twice, but the entire Ezekiel, following Gregory's *vestigia* as well as the footsteps of others, with *nota nominorum eorum* in the margin, and adding the occasional commentary of his own. Hrabanus was somewhat apologetic about the length of the work, but assured Lothar he had left out a great deal that might have been included, for its 'utility' to the reader remained his first concern.<sup>86</sup> Lothar's wife, the Empress Irmingard, also became the recipient of biblical exegesis, for to her Hrabanus re-dedicated his commentary on Esther. He reminded her of her kindness towards him when he met the imperial couple in Mainz in August 841,<sup>87</sup> perhaps an indication that the commentary was offered not too long afterwards; his dedicatory poem emphasized Irmingard's imperial position, and the mantle of Judith having fallen onto her shoulders.

Judging by the letter of 840 in which he swore eternal fidelity to Lothar, Hrabanus' exegesis for rulers was part of a larger programme: 'After having written little commentaries on the Heptateuch, Kings and Chronicles, and after my little explanations [*explanatiunculae*] of the *historiae* of Esther, Judith and Maccabees, not to mention my work on books of Wisdom and Jesus Sirach and my other writings, I now put my hand to Jeremiah . . .'<sup>88</sup> It is to the three commentaries explicitly defined as *historia* that I will now finally turn.

What made these texts suitable for dedication to a king and two queens? Hrabanus was well aware that two of these texts were apocryphal according to the Hebrew canon, but the Apostolic See had given Maccabees a fixed place in the liturgy,<sup>89</sup> he assured Louis the German, and the Church 'of modern times' treated Maccabees and Judith as a part of Scripture.<sup>90</sup> All the same, Hrabanus' commentaries represented

<sup>86</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 39, pp. 476–8. <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 46, p. 500.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 28, p. 443, ll. 3–6: 'Post commentariolos, quos mea parvitas in Eptaticum et in libros Regum atque in Paralipomenon edidit, postque explanatiunculas historiarum Hesther, Iudith et Machabaeorum, necnon et voluminis Sapientiae atque Ecclesiastici aliorumque opusculorum meorum labores ad extremum in Hieremiam manum misi . . .'

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 35, p. 470, ll. 3–4: 'Nunc vero quia tempus est illud, quo apostolica sedis constituit libros Machabeorum legi in ecclesia . . .' (From the first Sunday in October until the first Sunday in November). Hrabanus included 'the saints of the Maccabees, seven brothers and their mother, who suffered under Antiochus' (II Macc. 7) in his Martyrologium, to be celebrated on 1 August: Hrabanus, *Martyrologium*, p. 76.

<sup>90</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 20, p. 426, ll. 5–9 (prefatory letter to the commentary on Wisdom, to Otgar of Mainz): 'divinae legis interpret Hieronimus dicat eundem librum apud Hebreos nusquam haberi, sed Grecam magis redolere eloquentiam, nec inter canonicas scripturas apud antiquos



an important stage in their canonization.<sup>91</sup> Esther was the last book to be included in the Jewish canon, and by a narrow margin. Hrabanus considered Esther to be a historical tradition *par excellence*, explaining to the Empress Judith that the 'interpreter of sacred history', Jerome, had translated the book of Esther word by word, 'from the archives of the Jews' (*de archivis Ebreorum*), and that its history derived 'from Jewish sources' (*ex Ebreorum fonte*).<sup>92</sup> Unable to follow his cherished *vestigia patrum*, he had to rely on what he called, with dutiful humility but not without pride, his own 'feeble intellect' (*nostri ingenioli*).<sup>93</sup>

This is not to say that Esther, Judith and Maccabees were the only books to be classified as 'history'. Surveying his work he distinguished between the *libri hystorici* he had already commented upon, and the *libri prophetici*, on which he was now about to embark seriously, except this order had been upset because 'friends' (read: kings) had begged him for exegesis of Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Daniel.<sup>94</sup> Here he considered all the biblical books he worked on prior to the prophets to be 'historical', including the Pentateuch. There was nothing revolutionary about this: after all, Isidore of Seville deemed Moses to be the very first historian,<sup>95</sup> and Augustine had classified all Old Testament books from Genesis to Ruth as *historia*, because they adhered to a chronological sequence –

recepti, ut Iudith et Tobi et Machabaeorum libros, quos et moderno tempore inter scripturas sacras sancta enumerat ecclesia legitque in publico sicut ceteris scripturas canonicas . . . ' (= Hieronymus, *Prologus in Libris Salomonis*, ed. R. Weber, *Biblia Sacra de Hebraeo Translatu Iuxta Vulgatam* (Stuttgart, 1969), p. 957). See also Hrabanus, *De Institutione Clericorum*, III, c. 7, ed. A. Knöpfler, *Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum Libri Tres*, Veröffentlichungen aus dem kirchenhistorischen Seminar München, 5 (Munich, 1900), p. 201 (= Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. J. Martin, CCSL 32 (Turnhout, 1962), p. 39; repeated in Hrabanus, *De Rerum Naturis* V, c. 1, PL 111, col. 105C/D). The expression 'moderno tempore' is Hrabanus' own, however; the opposition between the exegesis of 'ancient' (= patristic) and modern times (from Bede onwards) is a recurrent theme in his letters (*Epistolae*, 8, p. 393; 14, p. 403; 18, p. 423); cf. Savigni, 'L'interpretazione dei libri sapienziali'; for the expression 'modern' in Carolingian exegesis, see M. Laistner, 'Some early medieval commentaries on the Old Testament', *Harvard Theological Review* 46 (1953), pp. 29–30. About perceptions of time in Carolingian historiography, with insights valid for biblical commentary, H.-W. Goetz, 'Historiographisches Zeitbewußtsein im frühen Mittelalter. Zum Umgang mit der Zeit in der karolingischen Geschichtsschreibung', in Scharer and Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, pp. 58–78.

<sup>91</sup> Savigni, 'Istanze ermeneutiche e ridefinizione del canone'.

<sup>92</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 17b, p. 422, ll. 1–2, 5. Hieronymus, *Prologus Hester, Biblia Sacra*, ed. Weber, p. 712, ll. 1–2.

<sup>93</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 12, p. 399, l. 14; cf. also 47, p. 502, l. 8 ('iuxta modulum ingenii mei'); Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, II, c. 14, col. 1254A/B: 'allegoriae autem sensus iuxta modum ingenioli mei de hac eadem re ibi expositus est . . .' By 'ibi' Hrabanus refers to his commentary on the first Book of Maccabees.

<sup>94</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 47, p. 502, ll. 3–5. Given that at this stage he had finished the commentaries on these prophets this letter seems to date from the mid-840s or later.

<sup>95</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae*, I, c. 42.1, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1911), vol. 1: 'Historiam autem apud nos primus Moyses de initio mundi conscripsit. Apud gentiles vero primus Dares Phrygius de Graecis et Troianis historiam edidit, quam in foliis palmarum ab eo conscriptam esse ferunt.'

with the exception of Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith, Maccabees and Ezra which should have continued where Chronicles left off.<sup>96</sup> Hrabanus' definition of biblical 'history' varied. It was deeply influenced by the exegetical meaning of *historia*, that of the 'historical' level of exegesis as opposed to its counterpart which was 'spiritual' or *mystice*. This duality, which pervades Hrabanus' work, could of course apply to both Testaments, but the principle of prefiguration tended to turn the Old Testament into the part of Scripture which was by definition 'historical': what the Old Testament narrated in a historical way, the New Testament demonstrated spiritually.<sup>97</sup> The Old Testament remained 'history' as long as it had not yet been explicated by means of allegory; hence, Hrabanus referred to the spiritual meaning of Genesis as the *sacramentum historiae*.<sup>98</sup> Yet biblical *historia* also had a more restricted and simple meaning for Hrabanus: that of a chronologically ordered narrative of past events.<sup>99</sup> Thus he opposed prophetic to historical parts of the Old Testament: whereas prophetic narrative spoke about the future and should therefore not be expected to be chronologically accurate, one might search historical books for references to factual queries.<sup>100</sup>

Esther, Judith and Maccabees qualified on both counts: as historical truth to be unveiled through spiritual exegesis, and as exciting stories of

<sup>96</sup> Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, II, c 8, CCSL 32, p. 39, ll. 28–34: 'Haec est historia, quae sibi annexa tempora continet atque ordinem rerum; sunt aliae tamquam ex diverso ordine, quae neque huic ordini neque inter se connectuntur, sicut est Iob et Tobias et Esther et Iudith et Machabaeorum libri duo et Esdrae duo, qui magis subsequi videntur ordinatam illam historiam usque ad Regnorum vel Paralipomenon terminatam . . .' Hrabanus did not incorporate this passage into *De Institutione Clericorum*; instead, he cited Isidore's (and Jerome's) division of the Old Testament into law, prophets and historiographers. Cf. Hrabanus, *De Institutione Clericorum*, III, c. 7, p. 199; Isidore, *Etymologiae*, VI, 1. Cf. also Hieronymus, *Prologus in Libris Regum, Biblia Sacra*, ed. Weber, pp. 364–6.

<sup>97</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, no. 12, p. 399, ll. 17–20: 'scilicet quod ita historialiter ordinentur vetera, ut spiritaliter omnia demonstrentur nova, et legis per figuram patefaciat littera, quae sacer evangelii textus in se continet sacramenta'. About Hrabanus and the Old Testament (or certain parts thereof) as *vetus lex*, see De Jong, 'Old law'.

<sup>98</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Genesim*, III, c 3, PL 107, col. 568C.

<sup>99</sup> About the use of *historia* (including the *historia gentium*) as a chronological framework for exegesis, Hrabanus, *De Institutione Clericorum*, III, c. 17, pp. 219–20, which consists of excerpts from Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, II, cc. 27–8, CCSL 32, p. 62. Hrabanus left out a passage in which Augustine distinguished historical narrative about human institutions from history as an irreversible process instituted by God, and therefore not a human institution.

<sup>100</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Ezechielem*, XI, c. 30, PL 110, col. 812 AB: 'Possumus autem hoc dicere quod et in prophetis nequaquam historiae ordo servetur, duntaxat non in omnibus, sed in quibusdam locis. Neque enim narrant praeterita, sed futura praenuntiant, prout voluntas Spiritus sancti fuerit. In historia vero ut sunt Moysi quinque libri et Jesu, et Iudicum volumina, Ruth quoque Esther, Samuel et Malachim: Paralipomenon liber et Esdrae, juncto sibi pariter Noemia praeposteram narrationem nequaquam reperi' (= Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Ezechielem Libri xiv*, lib. 9, c. 30, ed. F. Glorie, CCSL 75 (Turnhout, 1964), p. 432, ll. 1456–64).

historical events. In different ways, these three books tell the story of the people of Israel faced with persecution and possible extinction, but ultimately gaining victory with God's help. Hrabanus' commentaries were written at a time of great political upheaval in the Carolingian Empire, and dedicated to rulers who, in the midst of turmoil, must have perceived some similarities between the plight of the Old Israel and that of its Frankish successor. The tale about Esther is set in the Persian Empire, where King Assuerus rejects his wife Vashti and chooses as a new wife Esther, the ward and niece of one of the Jews in exile, Mordecai. The latter earns the king's good favour by uncovering a plot against him, but incurs the wrath of the second man in the empire, Haman, who decides to exterminate not only Mordecai, but the entire Jewish people. This dire fate is prevented by Esther, who manages to turn the tables on Haman. He finds his death on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai, who now takes Haman's place; instead of being slaughtered themselves, the Jews are allowed to exterminate their enemies. Judith's story also features a female saviour of her people. Here it is 'Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Assyrians', who, together with his general Holofernes, threatens the Jews, just settled down after returning from exile. The Ammonite Achior tries to dissuade Holofernes from attacking the Jews, but the latter besieges Betulia. Judith, a rich and beautiful widow from Betulia, manages to gain access to Holofernes; she gets him drunk during dinner, and cuts off his head when he lies down in a drunken stupor. Here as well distress turns into triumph: Achior converts, and the fleeing Assyrians are now beleaguered by the Jews.

Unlike the narratives about Esther and Judith, which have no verifiable basis in history, Maccabees presents itself as the historical record of the revolt started in 167 BC by the priest Mattathias against the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC), who had robbed and desecrated the Temple. Mattathias' son Judas Maccabeus continued the revolt, purifying and newly consecrating the Temple (164 BC); his brothers Jonathan and Simeon eventually succeeded in procuring an independent status for Israel, with Simeon being chosen as 'king' by his people. The central theme of the first book of Maccabees is that faithful and tenacious adherence to God's law will pay off in the end. Whereas the first book mostly features human heroics and the perfidy of Israel's foreign enemies, the second book – which recaps large parts of the first – stresses God's help and vengeance, the expiating effects of martyrdom, and Israel's own guilt as the main cause of its suffering.

These biblical histories about a people overcoming deep distress to reach ultimate victory served as a source of inspiration in different times

and circumstances,<sup>101</sup> but their special appeal to Carolingian rulers in the troubled 830s and 840s is obvious. The image of victorious Judith and Esther, saviours of their people, was intended to please an empress who had repeatedly weathered revolt and captivity.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, Maccabees with its central narrative about the cultic unity of a people was offered to Louis the German, a king recovering from the wars of 840–3 and busily reorganizing his realm. Hrabanus' treatment of these texts was not a simple comparison between Israel and the Franks, however, not only because he worked within an exegetical tradition with its own restricted code, but also because he was acutely aware of the Jews as a people of the past, whose history was claimed by both Jews and Christians in the present. Writing about the fate of the biblical Israel in distress inevitably led to the vexed question of the relation between the Old and the New Israel.<sup>103</sup> Above all, Hrabanus intended to make it crystal clear that the history of Israel was 'ours' instead of 'theirs'. The drama of Esther's *historia* and its allegorical exegesis reach their joint culmination when the king prefers Mordecai over Haman:

What else is the fact that King Assuerus gave the house of Haman, the adversary of the Jews, to Queen Esther, if not that our true king and lord has given every dignity and every honour which the earlier people [*prior populus*] used to have because of their knowledge of the law and the prophets, and their pious cult – but which it spurned after the incarnation of the mediator between God and man, not wishing to accept his Gospel – to the holy Church for its full use, so that it may possess all spiritual riches and may become the most upright guardian of all virtues?<sup>104</sup>

Likewise, the golden sword given to Judas the Maccabee by Jeremiah (II Macc. 15:15–16) had been passed on to the *doctores*, who would use this gift – Scripture and its spiritual meaning – to defend the

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Keller, 'Machabaeorum Pugnae'; J. Dunbabin, 'The Maccabees as exemplars in the tenth and eleventh centuries', in K. Walsh and D. Wood (eds.), *The Bible in the Medieval World. Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 4 (Oxford, 1985), pp. 31–41. A nice instance of ninth-century enthusiasm about the Maccabees to which Matthew Innes drew my attention: *Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 868, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 7 (Hanover, 1891), p. 66, where the author calls Robert the Strong an 'alter quoddammodo nostris temporis Machabeus'.

<sup>102</sup> See above, n. 60, and Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 17b, p. 422, ll. 11–13, with an implicit comparison between the calamities of the past and the present, and the role of both queens: 'Deus omnipotens, qui illius regine mentem ad relevandas populi sui calamitates erexerat, te simili studio laborantem ad eterni regni gaudia perducere dignetur.'

<sup>103</sup> Savigni, 'Istanze ermeneutiche e ridefinizione del canone', pp 581–3.

<sup>104</sup> Hrabanus, *Expositio in Librum Esther*, c. 11, col. 661A: 'Quid est quod rex Assuerus dedit Esther reginae domum Aman adversarii Iudaeorum, nisi quod rex verus et Dominus noster omnem dignitatem et omnem honorem quem prior populus ex scientia legis et prophetarum atque cultu pie religionis habuit, postquam adventum mediatoris Dei et hominum in carne sprexit, atque ejus Evangelium recipere noluit, totum ad sanctae Ecclesiae transtulit usum, ut ipsa possideret spirituales divitias, et custos fieret honestissima omnium virtutum.'

Church.<sup>105</sup> His own sword in this particular battle was allegory, but this rested on historical foundations he tried to make as sound as possible, according to Augustine's instructions: 'History narrates facts faithfully and usefully.'<sup>106</sup> Many histories, also those of the *gentes*, could be helpful in understanding the sacred books.

Hrabanus' prefatory letter to Gerolt clearly expressed his views on the various types of history he had dealt with in his commentary on Maccabees:

For the rest I also want your Saintliness to know that I have fashioned this work partly from divine history, partly from the tradition of Josephus the historian of the Jews, and partly from the history of other peoples, for in this book not only the people of the Jews and their princes, but also those of other peoples [*aliarum gentium*] are mentioned, so the truth of sacred history will appear through the combination of many books and the meaning of its narration may become more clear to the reader.<sup>107</sup>

It was the truth of biblical history and the spiritual meaning of its narrative (*sensum narrationis*) which mattered most. None the less, the royal recipients of Hrabanus' commentary had to cope with long historical digressions, for which the key sources were Justinus' *Epitome* of Pompeius Trogus, Sulpicius Severus' *Chronicon*, Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* in Rufinus' translation, the *Chronicon* of Eusebius/Jerome, Bede's *Chronicon* and, above all, Flavius Josephus' *Antiquitates Iudaearum*.<sup>108</sup> Hrabanus heavily leaned on Josephus in his historical exegesis of Maccabees as a substitute of Jerome, the *sacra historiae interpres* who was his usual model for historical commentary, but his work on Esther and Judith also opens with an extensive historical background drawn from secular historiography. Given the shaky factual basis of these books, he predictably ran into trouble. Some might ask, he said, at which time and under which kings the *historia Iudith* had been written, all the more since

<sup>105</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum* II, c. 15, PL 109, col. 1256AB: 'Hic ergo dedit gladium aureum Judae cum divinam Scripturam sensu spiritali fulgentem ad munimentum totius Ecclesiae defensionemque populi sui concessit doctoribus, quatenus contra hostes universos armatura uterentur . . .'

<sup>106</sup> Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, II, 28 (44), p. 63; Hrabanus, *De Institutione Clericorum*, III, 17, p. 220: 'Historia facta narrat fideliter atque utiliter . . .' See also Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Genesim*, IV, c. 14, PL 107, cols. 654D–655A: 'Sed prius historiae fundamenta ponenda sunt, ut aptius allegoriae culmen priori structurae superponatur.'

<sup>107</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, no. 19, pp. 424–5, ll. 30–2: 'De cetero quoque volo sanctitatem tuam scire, quod ipsum opus ideo partim de divina historia, partim de Iosephi Iudaearum historici traditione, partim vero de aliarum gentium historiis contextui, ut quia non tantum gentis Iudaeae ac principum eius, sed et aliarum gentium similiter in ipso libro mentio fit, ex multorum librorum conlatione veritas sacrae historiae pateat et sensus narrationis eius lectori lucidior fiat.'

<sup>108</sup> R. McKitterick, 'The audience for Latin historiography in the early Middle Ages: text transmission and manuscript dissemination', in Schärer and Scheibelreiter (eds.), *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, pp. 96–114.

the two kings mentioned in Judith – Arphaxad of the Medes and Nebuchadnezzar of the Assyrians – were nowhere to be found in the lists of rulers of these peoples.<sup>109</sup> This led him into a potted version of the history of ancient peoples in order to uncover the ‘historical truth’ for his reader, but also into a chronological quagmire: an Assyrian king who should be a Babylonian. Eusebius had offered a way out by suggesting that the Persian king Cambyses had been called a second Nebuchadnezzar by the Jews, but this still left Hrabanus with sacred history saying that he was an Assyrian king conquering a Mede, which ran against all his notions of ancient chronology. Possibly there had been a time when the realms of the Assyrians and the Persians had been united, with Cambyses gaining victory over a Medan king Arphaxad – but ‘to this opinion I do not want to lead anyone against their will. Let everyone select from this what seems useful as long as it does not contradict the spiritual meaning of biblical truth.’<sup>110</sup> He faced similar problems when it came to identifying King Assuerus. Was he Cyrus, as Josephus suggested, or Artaxerxes, as Eusebius had it? Hrabanus settled for Eusebius’ explanation, all the more because Ezra never mentioned the story of Esther.<sup>111</sup>

While grappling with biblical chronology, Hrabanus did not exclude Scripture from a measure of historical criticism and analytical scrutiny. Of course he ultimately believed that the Evangelical Truth was the author of the two Testaments,<sup>112</sup> but he also actively engaged in a running debate with the *scriptor historiae*, the author of the biblical book he was commenting on, explaining why ‘he’ wrote as he did and why he might possibly be somewhat confused in his rendering of sacred history. His constant analysis of the way in which ‘the writer of this history’ had structured his narrative could even extend to the Acts of the Apostles,<sup>113</sup> but it occurs most frequently in the commentary on Old Testament books.<sup>114</sup> At times he was simply dissatisfied with biblical narrative,

<sup>109</sup> Hrabanus, *Expositio in Librum Judith*, c. 1, PL 109, col. 541: ‘Quidam quaerendum putant, historia Judith quo tempore, quibusve sub regibus edita fuerit; ob hoc maxime, quia ipsi reges in historia notati sunt, hoc est, Arphaxad et Nabuchodonosor, apud eos qui Assyriorum vel Medorum historias conscripsere, in ordine regum utriusque regni inserti non reperiuntur.’

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., col. 543C.

<sup>111</sup> Hrabanus, *Expositio in Librum Esther*, c. 1, PL 109, cols. 636C–637A.

<sup>112</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, I, c. 2, PL 109, col. 1147A.

<sup>113</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Genesim*, IV, c. 9, PL 107, col. 646AB: ‘sanctus Lucas, qui ipsius scriptor historiae est . . .’ Cf. Hieronymus, *Hebraicae Quaestiones in Libro Geneseos*, ed. P. de Lagarde, CCSL 72 (Turnhout, 1959), p. 50: ‘Non enim debuit sanctus Lucas, qui ipsius historiae scriptor est, in gentes actuum apostolorum uolumen emittens contrarium aliquid scribere aduersus eam scripturam, quae iam fuerat gentilibus diuulgata.’

<sup>114</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros IV Regum*, I, c. 1, PL 109, col. 25A; c. 13, col. 40D; Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros II Paralipomenon*, I, c. 2, PL 109, col. 293B; c. 12, col. 333A; II, c. 16, col. 352D;

concluding that important facts were omitted, or that the author of Maccabees called Alexander 'the first king' or Judas Maccabeus the 'tenth priest' for no good reason whatsoever.<sup>115</sup> Sacred history of course had its own laws. The beginning of the first book of Maccabees was incongruous, for it started with '*Et factum est*', which was not a real beginning: one would expect something in front of this conjunctive sentence (*sermo coniunctionis*). Hrabanus compared this with Ezekiel, which had a similar opening, and concluded that prophets and authors of divine history viewed things from the perspective of spiritual meaning and therefore perceived 'presence' where human ignorance could only see 'absence'.<sup>116</sup> On the other hand his analysis of the relation between the first and second book of Maccabees much resembles scholarly (and literary) criticism. The second book is shorter and has a different beginning, Hrabanus explained, but this does not destroy the *historica veritas*, for although it contains much of what is mentioned in the first book, it also adds new information left out earlier because of the 'haste of the narrator'.<sup>117</sup>

It is in this patently historical narrative about the Maccabees that Hrabanus relied most heavily on Flavius Josephus, to the extent that he inserted entire or abbreviated sections from the *Antiquitates*, and constantly compared Josephus' narrative and that of the *historiae gentium*, with that of the *scriptor praesentis historiae*, the author of his biblical text.<sup>118</sup> 'The author of the earlier book of this history' and 'Josephus in the

IV, c. 20, col. 492B; c. 26, col. 510B; *Commentaria in Librum Sapientiae*, II, c. 3, PL 109, col. 700D; c. 12, col. 726A; *Commentaria in Ecclesiasticum*, VI, c. 3, PL 109, col. 944D; VIII, c. 8, col. 1025A; *ibid.*, IX, c. 5, col. 1068A; X, c. 30, col. 1113D. Ubiquitous in the commentaries on Esther, Judith and Maccabees.

<sup>115</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Macchabaeorum*, I, c. 1, PL 109, col. 1129A; II, c. 5, col. 1234C.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, I, c. 1, col. 1128A; see also above, n. 99.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, II, prol., col. 1223BC; c. 4, col. 1254AB: 'quae omnia in prioris libri historia continentur; licet aliqua quae ibi propter festinationem narrantis omissa sunt, in hujus narratione inserta reperiantur: allegoriae autem sensus juxta modum ingenioli mei de hac eadem re ibi expositus est, nec iterare operae pretium esse videtur'; see also *ibid.*, c. 13, col. 1253A/B, where he added a brief summary of his earlier allegory (*ibid.*, I, c. 6, cols. 1174–5) of the story of Eleazar being killed by one of Antiochus' elephants (I Macc. 6:41–6), and his failure to find confirmation for II Macc. 1 in any other biblical books (*ibid.*, II, c. 2, cols. 1225D–1226A).

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, I, c. 1, col. 1132D: 'sicut in historiis gentium copiosissime scriptum invenitur. Sed ex iis plurimis omissis scriptor praesentis historiae ad Antiochum Epiphanem pervenit. . .'. Schreckenberg came to the conclusion that Hrabanus' use of Josephus' *Antiquitates* was merely indirect, but obviously did so without taking all his work into account – and certainly not all his commentary on Maccabees. Schreckenberg based his conclusion on expressions like 'de Josephi historici traditione' in Hrabanus' letter to Gerolt (*Epistolae*, 19, p. 424), which does not necessarily imply an indirect use of this text. Cf. H. Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter, Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums* 5 (Leiden, 1972), pp. 116–17. About Flavius Josephus' readership in the early Middle Ages, see McKitterick, 'The audience for Latin historiography', p. 105. Also, H. Schreckenberg and K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early Medieval Christianity* (Assen, 1992), pp. 76–84.

twelfth book of his Jewish Antiquity' sometimes seem to be treated on a par, as two equally reliable sources supporting Hrabanus' explanation of II Maccabees.<sup>119</sup> Clearly Hrabanus had access to a copy of the *Antiquitates*, though he must also have encountered parts of this text in Jerome's work. Josephus held a privileged position, for he offered an alternative version of Jewish history which might throw light on biblical narrative. To Hrabanus, Josephus was the *historiographus Iudaeorum*<sup>120</sup> or *Hebraeorum doctissimus*.<sup>121</sup> In his commentary on Maccabees, Hrabanus introduced an extensive passage from the *Antiquitates* as follows:

What Josephus has to say here does not seem unworthy to be inserted into this work; and it should not hinder the reader if the narrations from different histories are compared, for in combination they seem to enhance each other, to explain the chronological order of the matter and to uncover the truth at a historical level.<sup>122</sup>

In his historical exegesis Hrabanus operated much like a historian, comparing his sources, checking one against the other and being explicit about the problems he encountered. At this level the biblical text was just as much *historia* as Josephus, and therefore subject to criticism. All this was just the jumping board, however, for the actual aim of the operation: making 'sense' of the narrative, that is, spiritual sense. As Hrabanus wrote to the Empress Judith: 'We have explained what has come to us from the source of the Jews in an allegorical fashion.'<sup>123</sup> Hrabanus' typology was dominated by a set cast of characters.<sup>124</sup> The *ecclesia* and her *sponsus*, Jesus Christ, dominated the scene, aided by the ubiquitous *santi doctores* and *praedicatores* guarding the salvation of the Christian people; on the other side stood the Old Enemy, supported by

<sup>119</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, II, c. 1, col. 1225B: 'liber prior historiae istius commemorat, et Josephus in historiarum Antiquitatis Judaicae libro duodecimo testatur dicens . . .'

<sup>120</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Genesim*, II, PL 107, c. 2, col. 508D.

<sup>121</sup> Hrabanus, *De Institutione Clericorum*, III, c. 22, p. 231.

<sup>122</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, I, 8, col. 1175D: 'Quid Josephus hinc referat non indignum videtur huic opero inserere; nec grave debet videri lectori si diversarum historiarum invicem conferuntur narrationes, quia alterutrum se juvare videntur ad explanandam rei rectitudinem historice retexere veritatem.'

<sup>123</sup> Hrabanus, *Epistolae*, 17b, p. 422, ll. 5–6: 'Nos autem ea, quae ex Ebreorum fonte prolata sunt, allegorico sensu exposuimus.'

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Isidore of Seville, *Allegoriae Quaedam Scripturae Sacrae*, PL 83, cols. 99–130, which along with Jerome's prefaces to biblical books served as a typological 'Who's who' in the Old and New Testament. See *ibid.*, no. 122, col. 116A: 'Judith et Esther typum Ecclesiae gestant, hostes fidei puniunt, ac populum Dei ab interitu eruunt'; no. 129, col. 116BC: 'Machabaei septem, qui sub Antiocho acerbissima perpassi tormenta, gloriosissime coronati sunt, significant Ecclesiam septiformem, quae ab inimicis Christi multam martyrum stragem pertulit, et gloriae coelestis coronam accepit.'



the Antichrist and a perfidious army of the *pagani, heretici, schismatici* and *Judaei*, who together formed the *persecutores ecclesiae*. This typology ran along predictable lines, but the casting was not always simple. If Esther was the *typus* of the *sancta ecclesia*, who else, within the limits of this biblical narrative, could then be her bridegroom but King Assuerus?<sup>125</sup> Hrabanus realized that some might object to associating Jesus Christ with a king devoted to food, drink and a large harem, so he took his time to explain that other *typi* of Christ (Moses, Aaron, David, Saul, Solomon, Heseekiah, St Peter) were not exactly free from shortcomings either.<sup>126</sup> *Mutatis mutandis*, a reprehensible king who none the less had some virtues could also serve as the figure of Christ. Once the two lead roles were firmly in place, the rest of the casting went according to plan: Queen Vashti banished from the presence of the king stood for the synagogue;<sup>127</sup> Mordechai for the *doctores gentium* and preachers of the gospel, particularly Paul;<sup>128</sup> the eunuch Egeus for the *pastorum ordo castissimus*;<sup>129</sup> the two other eunuchs for the Scribes and Pharisees, or, alternatively, for the heretics and schismatics;<sup>130</sup> Haman, of course, for the Spiritual Enemy of the Christian people, leader of the persecutors of the Church,<sup>131</sup> but also for the arrogance of secular princes.<sup>132</sup>

A detailed analysis of Hrabanus' exegetical methods exceeds the scope of this article. None the less, I offer some preliminary comments on the possible contemporary resonance of his biblical scholarship to a ninth-century royal audience. Needless to say, Hrabanus stuck to the *vestigia maiorum*: the ubiquitous army of heretics and schismatics pervading his commentary was derived from an inherited typology. Moreover, there is nothing surprising about early medieval clerics being more intransigent about heretics, the perfidious insiders who should have known better, than about pagans or Jews. Yet Hrabanus' invective about perfidious *heretici* may have had a special resonance in the 830s, when these commentaries were written. Possibly Hrabanus' personal battle with one particular heretic had an impact as well: Gottschalk, the former child oblate who left Fulda in 829 under a cloud.<sup>133</sup> Hrabanus' typology of the *virī impī et iniqui ex Israel, et Alcimus dux eorum* as those who

<sup>125</sup> Hrabanus, *Expositio in Librum Esther*, c. 1, col. 637D–638A: 'Quod autem Esther typum Ecclesiae teneat, nulli dubium est; nec ipsa alicujus sponsa quam Christi ullo modo dicenda est. Unde refugere quilibet hanc interpretationem non debet, pro eo quod ille rex historicus perfidus erat, quasi propter hoc regis iusti typum tenere nullo modo possit . . .'

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 638AB. <sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 4, col. 649BC. <sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 3, col. 646B.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 646CD. <sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 5, cols. 650D–651C.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 9, col. 658B; c. 10, col. 659B. <sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 6, col. 652B.

<sup>133</sup> De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, pp. 77–91, with references to older literature.

relapse into apostasy after having embraced the faith, led on by heretics,<sup>134</sup> need not have been too specific, but his vitriolic remark about 'those who nowadays refuse to accept ecclesiastical discipline, and abominate those who try to eliminate their evil, making accusations against them with the secular powers, in order to convert the latter to hatred of them and to incite them to persecution' sounds as if he had contemporary adversaries on his mind.<sup>135</sup> The shockwaves of the conflict with Gottschalk in 829 reached the highest circles, for Hrabanus appealed to Louis the Pious; after his departure from Fulda the rebellious monk went to Corbie and Reims, where he took part in a public theological debate in the presence of the emperor himself.<sup>136</sup> Before Eberhard of Friuli took him under his wing in the early 840s, there doubtless were other *saeculi potestates* who lent their ear to the brilliant and wayward theologian.<sup>137</sup> Some of Hrabanus' frustration about the success of his wayward former pupil may have ended up in his commentary on Maccabees. Yet personal controversy does not entirely account for his shrill insistence on the evils of heretics and schismatics. In his typology he developed the image of social cohesion and purity (the *ecclesia* and her *praedicatores*) besieged by the forces of disruption and rebellion (*heretici* and *schismatici*).<sup>138</sup> Onto this typological drama of good and evil contemporary anxieties about disorder in the realm could be projected. Once the enemy was known as a 'heretic' according to the *sensus narrationis* of sacred history, a strategy of *diffamatio* could begin. The 'them' and 'us' of Old Testament history, translated into a clear-cut

<sup>134</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in libros Machabaeorum*, I, c. 7, PL 109, col. 1177BC.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 9, col. 1192BC, about I Macc. 11:21: 'sed sicut tunc quidam de his qui oderant gentem suam viri iniqui adierunt regem accusantes Jonatham, sic et nunc hi qui sibi iniquitatem suam auferre conantur, accusantes eos apud saeculi potestates, quatenus eos in odium illorum convertant et persecutionem eis insistant [suscitent]; sed non praevalent, quoniam Deus adiutor et protector eorum est, et ex omnibus tribulationibus eorum liberavit eos'; cf. also *ibid.*, II, c. 1213A: 'quales et istius temporis aetas nonnullos habet, qui, licet magistros non occidunt gladio, tamen invidia atque odiis persequi non cessant'.

<sup>136</sup> C. Lambot (ed.), *North Italian Service Books of the Eleventh Century* (London, 1928), pp. 298–300; D. Ganz, 'Theology and the organisation of thought', in McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, p. 768.

<sup>137</sup> D. Ganz, 'The debate on predestination', in M. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald. Court and Kingdom*, 2nd rev. edn (London, 1990), pp. 282–302; as Nelson noted, those who had sided with Ebo of Reims in 833 also tended to support Gottschalk; Hincmar linked the two issues: see his *De praedestinatione dissertatio posterior*, c. 36, PL 125, col. 386. See also J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), p. 168.

<sup>138</sup> See N. Zeddies, 'Bonifatius und zwei nützliche Rebellen: die Häretiker Aldebert und Clemens', in M. T. Fögen, *Ordnung und Aufruhr. Historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion*, Ius Commune, Sonderhefte 70 (Frankfurt a/M, 1995), pp. 217–63, for a perceptive analysis of early medieval definitions of social disorder in terms of 'heresy'. I owe this reference to Philippe Buc and Rob Meens.

typology, empowered the classification and domination of seemingly uncontrollable forces of evil and disorder. Typology, with its unmistakable cast of saviours and antagonists, could thus serve as an immutable and fixed universe, in which the confusing events of the present could be located and subdued.

Hrabanus' contemporaries were capable of grasping implicit and specific meanings which have become elusive to the modern reader, for the commentator used the restricted code of allegory and typology. This allowed him to say the unspeakable by appealing to biblical associations which came readily to mind. Historians like Hincmar and the author of the *Annals of Fulda* did the same when they wrote about Charles the Bald's corpse stinking so badly that his army could no longer stand it. Those who knew their Maccabees thought 'Antiochus!', and those who knew Hrabanus' commentary on Maccabees thought 'Antichrist!'.<sup>139</sup> The ability to determine the *sensus narrationis*, the spiritual reading of Scripture, was a powerful weapon within an elite used to the language of typology. Hrabanus was well aware of this: Judas' sword (II Macc. 15:15–16) was given 'with divine Scripture glittering with spiritual meaning' to the *doctores*, to strengthen the Church and defend the people committed to them.<sup>140</sup> In fact, 'spiritual understanding' was one of the key issues of Hrabanus' exegesis of Maccabees: he deftly wielded the sword of allegory to defend the validity of this very method. The insistence on the superiority of spiritual over 'carnal' understanding of Scripture was as old as the very beginnings of allegorical exegesis, but the endurance of such themes does not necessarily detract from their actuality. The central notion that shaped Carolingian political ideology and identity, *correctio*, hinged upon two aspects: a correct (that is, spiritual) understanding of Scripture and a correct liturgy. Hence, biblical interpretation and the *cultus divinus* were politically loaded issues which Hrabanus did not skirt in his commentary written for a court audience.

It was the spiritual exegesis which turned the history of the Old Israel into that of the New, and that of the synagogue into that of the *ecclesia*. For this very reason Old Testament history could never be complete without its spiritual interpretation, which made 'their' history into 'ours'. The transforming power of allegory was highlighted in Hrabanus' exegesis of the request by Judas Maccabeus of a peaceful

<sup>139</sup> *Annales Sancti Bertiniani*, s.a. 877, p. 254. I am grateful to Philippe Buc for alerting me to Hincmar's implicit reference to II Macc. 9:9.

<sup>140</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, II, c. 15, PL 109, col. 1256A.

passing through enemy territory from the people of Efron.<sup>141</sup> He compared Judas with the ‘saintly preachers’ who said: ‘Let us read the history of your books, so that through its allegorical meaning we may find our promised fatherland in heaven; and nobody will hurt you, because our passing will not be harmful to you.’<sup>142</sup> Not only Jews, but also heretics fell into the error of understanding ‘carnally’: in fact, this was the central defining characteristic of heresy. Those in Efron resisting Judas signified *haeretici* who followed the letter of the Old Testament, refusing access to a spiritual understanding of Scripture. Efron represented empty adherence to the law in times of grace, and for those who, lost in darkness, opposed the preachers of the gospel with the weapon of historical tradition;<sup>143</sup> Judas stood for the *doctores sancti* who gave their audience the free road of intelligence into Scripture, allowing everyone access to truth according to their needs – be it tropological, allegorical or anagogical.<sup>144</sup> If like Judas we want to be in possession of God’s law and its spoils (*spolia*), i.e. the different levels of understanding of Scripture, we should first get rid of the superficiality of literal interpretation, Hrabanus contended. This theme crops up time and again in his commentary on Maccabees, obviously within a Pauline frame of reference,<sup>145</sup> but also with a vehemence suggesting that Hrabanus was involved in a contemporary debate.

Ultimately, two interconnected issues were at stake: the spiritual understanding of Scripture and the proper *cultus divinus*. Both underpinned the social order, as is clear from Hrabanus’ diatribe against gentile philosophers and Christian heretics and schismatics attacking the ‘truth of Christ’s Law’ (*veritas legis Christi*), and to whom the ‘divine cult and Christian religion’ were an affront. The more they attempted to lead others into error, the more they induced them to discord, for they were incapable of concord themselves.<sup>146</sup> Just as Assuerus could be the ‘type’ of Christ, Antiochus’ letter ordering all in his realm to follow the same law (I Macc. 1:41–2) could have a positive meaning. After all, uniformity was something Hrabanus was strongly in favour of when it came to

<sup>141</sup> ‘Transeamus per terram vestram ut eamus in terram nostram et nemo vobis nocebit’ (I Macc. 5:48).

<sup>142</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, I, c. 5, PL 109, col. 1170BC: ‘Legamus librorum vestrorum historiam, ut ibi allegorico sensu promissam in coelis reperiāmus nobis patriam; et nemo vobis nocebit, quia noster transitus innoxius vobis erit; tantum pedibus transibimus, quando gressu bonorum operum regnum supernum adire cupimus. Qui nolebant aperire, cum in tradita sibi lege nolebant cum Evangelii praedicatoribus communicare.’

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 1170A. <sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 1170C.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 9, cols. 1186D–1187A. See also c. 2, cols. 1145D and 1147A; c. 3, col. 1149D. Ubiquitous.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 1, col. 1137B.

Frankish law;<sup>147</sup> he deftly managed to turn this biblical text about hostile unification into a diatribe against discord. Given the Carolingian ideology of *concordia* – and its concomitant horror of strife (*discordia*) – these words have an unmistakable resonance extending to the political and social domain. Yet there was more at stake: ‘correct liturgy’ itself defined the boundaries of the truly Christian society. The decrees of the Antichrist, Antiochus IV, ordered the Jews to follow the *leges gentium* in cultic matters, ‘and therefore these [laws] also defined the holocausts and sacrifices and *placationes* to be made in the Temple of the Lord’; Hrabanus again read this passage in terms of the dichotomy between carnal and spiritual, explaining that the ‘pagans and heretics’ were out to keep the faithful from the offer (*holocaustum*) of love in the secrecy of their heart, from the mystical sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord sustained by prayer and good works, and from the Sabbath, that is, future eternal rest in the celestial kingdom.<sup>148</sup> Antiochus’ onslaught on the Temple was that of all those attacking the cult of the one God (*cultus unius Dei*), and God’s house, the *sancta ecclesia*.<sup>149</sup>

The notion of the *cultus unius Dei* or *cultus divinus* under threat is as much part of the language of Carolingian capitularies and conciliar decrees as of the rhetoric of biblical commentary.<sup>150</sup> The restoration of the Temple and all it entailed – including reform of the clergy – was central to the Carolingian reform programme. In this biblically inspired re-ordering of the realm the king operated as the protector of the cult, safeguarding its unity and correctness – which is precisely what Carolingian rulers from Pippin III onwards set out to do. This meant that political boundaries were also cultic boundaries. Wherever the limits of this Christian polity were reached, the *confusio* of heresy, paganism, idolatry and Judaism began.

The empire as the *ecclesia*, and vice versa – this was the framework of

<sup>147</sup> Hrabanus, *Liber de Oblatione Puerorum*, col. 432AB. After explaining that there was no reason for the Saxon Gottschalk not to accept Frankish testimony (after all, which people had been converted first?) Hrabanus argued that in the Persian and Roman empires all *gentes* had happily followed one law: ‘Narrant enim historiae totam Asiam sub centum satrapis constitutam, legibus Persarum obedisce. Sic etiam Romanorum dominationi omnes gentes censu ac sensu secundum sancita imperatorem per diversas provincias suis temporibus subiectas esse, civemque Romanum ascribi pro magna dignitate ac veneratione apud omnes nationes haberi.’

<sup>148</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, I, c. 1, col. 1137C.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, cols. 1137CD and 1138D; II, c. 4, col. 1229D.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Staubach, ‘Cultus divinus’, esp. pp. 555–7; see also R. Kottje, ‘Karl der Grosse und der Alte Bund’, *Trierer theologische Zeitschrift* 76 (1967), pp. 15–31. Cf. MGH Cap. 1, no. 85, p. 184; for other capitularies in this vein, see *ibid.*, no. 87, p. 274, and particularly Louis the Pious’s letter to Archbishop Hetti of Trier (*ibid.*, no. 173, p. 356) where the emperor insists on the purity of the priesthood, with references to Leviticus and the consecration of Aaron.

Hrabanus' exegesis. The concomitant sacralization of political unity might lead to uproar over any subsequent *divisio imperii*, as happened in 833, but it also had the potential of transcending incidental division and strife. Within this vision of a united *ecclesia* clerical leadership inevitably took centre stage, as did the *sancti praedicatores/doctores* in Hrabanus' commentary. Yet the image of King Josiah who found the law and corrected his people was still a valid one in the 830s, certainly to loyal Hrabanus. The cooperation between King Demetrius and Jonathan (I Macc. 11: 41) elicited a clear comment on how the Carolingian *ecclesia* should function. The 'saintly doctors' and the 'rulers of the *gentes*' were mutually dependent: neither order could perform its ministry without the aid of the other. In other words, no preaching of the faith was possible without rulers dominating those to be converted, and no hope of eternal salvation could be held out by rulers to their subjects without proper instruction by *magistri*.<sup>151</sup> This might be read as a statement about the tactics of mission, but also as a programme for collaboration of rulers and clergy within the realm itself: kings should discipline their peoples and promise them salvation, but they were helpless without assistance from their ecclesiastical *fideles*.

The precariousness of a realm held together by, and defined in terms of the 'divine cult' was also the topic of Hrabanus' exegesis of the *historia* of Maccabees, and, albeit to a lesser extent, of his interpretation of the *historiae* of Judith and Esther. For this very reason his work was eminently relevant to its royal recipients: Hrabanus showed how sacred history about the cultic unity of the past prefigured the contemporary *ecclesia* – that is, Carolingian Christendom. To the diligent and well-trained reader, the perils of the 'prior people' signified and illuminated the hazards of the present. This was the *sensus narrationis* he wished his royal patrons to grasp.\*

<sup>151</sup> Hrabanus, *Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum*, c. 11, col. 1193: 'Quid est quod Jonathas a rege Demetrio petiit . . . nisi quod doctores sancti expetunt a gentium principibus et ab omni populo erroris et superbiae debellationem, et ipsi similiter a sanctis doctoribus postulant suffragium doctrinae et orationis ad superandos spiritales inimicos: neuter enim ordo sine alterius opitulatione effectum ministerii sui rite perficere valet, quia nec doctores sancti meritum lucrificandi sine conversione et oboedientia subditorum, nec ipsi subditi salutem promereri possunt sine documento et instructione magistrorum . . .' See also Hrabanus, *Expositio in Librum Judith*, c. 12, col. 571A.

\* Philippe Buc, Esther Cohen, Mary Garrison, Michael Gorman, Yitzhak Hen, Matthew Innes, Rosamond McKitterick and Julia Smith read drafts of this paper and gave helpful comments; Albrecht Diem volunteered to check the footnotes. I am greatly indebted to them all.

# *Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic past*

Matthew Innes

In 893 Archbishop Fulco of Reims wrote to Arnulf, king of the east Frankish kingdom. Fulco had just engineered the coronation of the Carolingian Charles the Simple in west Francia, in opposition to Odo, the aristocrat who had seized the western crown in the crisis of 888. After 888, Arnulf, as a Carolingian (albeit an illegitimate one), had established a hegemony over the various kings within the Frankish empire, Odo included. Hence Fulco's need to justify the coronation of Charles the Simple and warn Arnulf against intervention in the west in a letter which marshalled fascinating historical arguments. Fulco justified his decision not to consult with Arnulf over Charles's elevation by claiming that 'the custom of the Frankish people' was to elect a successor from the royal line without seeking the advice of other, more powerful, neighbouring kings. To buttress his argument about Frankish custom, Fulco needed historical examples. He cited a passage on Frankish succession practices from Gregory the Great's *Homilies on the Evangelists*, and then directed Arnulf to a story found 'in teutonic books' (*in libris teutonicis*) which told of Ermanaric, a ruler who murdered all his relatives on the advice of bad councillors, only to be overrun by the Huns. These were fairly threadbare examples, although they did both show kingship passing on in a dynastic line. But their real force lay in the morals they suggested to Arnulf. The story of Ermanaric in particular had a clear message: leave your kinsman alone or you may come to a sticky end at the hand of vicious nomads (remember that Arnulf faced raids from the Magyars, called Huns by contemporary writers).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The letter is transmitted through the summary recorded by the tenth-century historian of Reims, Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, IV:5, ed. G. Waitz and J. Heller, MGH SS 13 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 405–599, at pp. 563–4. On Fulco see G. Schneider, *Erzbischof Fulco von Reims (883–900) und das Frankenreich* (Munich, 1973).

Fulco's letter is a revealing prism through which one can gaze into late Carolingian politics and ideology. Note the concern with the Frankish past as a legitimating template for action in the present. The past to which Fulco appealed was not a settled body of agreed material, the agglomeration of peculiarly Frankish historical experience. Like all pasts, it existed in the present. It was a garment which was actively shaped by the demands of the present, stretched into a particular shape by its current wearer, its many hues and textures at times ripping apart at the seams. The materials from which it was fashioned were selected by a thousand decisions, conscious and unconscious, to include and exclude, to remember and forget. As present time was never frozen, it was a garment which was also in a perpetual process of reweaving and reshaping. That is, Fulco's past was socially constructed.<sup>2</sup> Its fundamental determinants were the cultural forces we bundle together and label 'the Carolingian renaissance', forces which not only impinged on the world of the intellectual, but also involved a series of efforts to 'reform' practice on the ground, and a transformation in the relationship between written and non-written language and therefore forms of communication.<sup>3</sup> The remainder of this essay, taking Fulco's letter as a point of departure, attempts to identify various elements in this past, and the points of contact between them.

The most recent historian to comment on Fulco's letter to Arnulf expressed admiration at the deft rhetorical footwork involved in the choice of historical justifications: 'note the double reference to a Roman Christian authority [Gregory the Great] alongside a Germanic pagan authority [Ermanaric]'.<sup>4</sup> The historical Ermanaric was leader of a confederation of Gothic tribes in the fourth century AD, a figure known through only a handful of contemporary reports. As Ermanaric was not a Christian, and the Gothic belongs to the Germanic

<sup>2</sup> On the social construction of the historical past see J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992); for the Middle Ages in particular, P. J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Cambridge, 1994). On Carolingian constructions of the past M. Innes and R. McKitterick, 'The writing of history', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 193–220; M. Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy in an early medieval society', *Past & Present* 158 (1998), pp. 3–36; R. McKitterick, 'Constructing the past in the early Middle Ages: the case of the Royal Frankish Annals', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997), pp. 101–29.

<sup>3</sup> See McKitterick (ed.) *Carolingian Culture*, and the contributions to R. McKitterick (ed.), *New Cambridge Medieval History II: 700–900* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> M. Sot, *Un historien et son église au Xe siècle. Flodoard de Rheims* (Paris, 1993), p. 198: 'Remarquons cette double référence à une autorité romaine et chrétienne et à une autorité germanique et païenne.'



family of languages, Ermanaric can be labelled a Germanic pagan leader. To label Fulco's story about Ermanaric a 'Germanic pagan authority' is not, however, so straightforward. The classification of the new groupings that came to dominate western Europe in the fifth and sixth centuries as 'Germanic' rests on the interrelationship between their languages. Since the early modern period, however, scholars have sought to identify a set of shared 'Germanic' cultural traits above and beyond these linguistic relationships, and thus uncover a specifically 'Germanic antiquity' which was originally conceived as a rival to the classical world of Greece and Rome. Their efforts have profoundly shaped our inherited mental map of early medieval history. The assumption that the new leaders of the post-Roman west brought with them a set of common cultural traits remains almost pervasive to this day. It effectively rests on the identification of a vast array of practices typical of the early medieval period with a postulated 'Germanic warrior culture' brought by the incomers. The identification of 'Germanic warrior culture' is problematical given the absence of written sources, other than Roman ethnographers, for the Germanic-speaking tribes before their arrival within the former Roman Empire. To compensate for this absence, it is argued that later sources – Old English poetry, sagas from twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iceland, vernacular epics from later medieval Germany – preserved lore transmitted orally which can be traced back to a homogenous archaic whole. 'Germanic warrior culture' is argued to have rested on the cultivation of oral tradition in the form of heroic poetry celebrating the deeds of a shared pantheon of Germanic heroes and reflecting the martial values of a warrior aristocracy. Fulco's reference to the story of Ermanaric has thus been read as an allusion to precisely this type of material, with its roots in pagan Germanic antiquity.<sup>5</sup>

These assumptions have begun to be challenged in the past quarter of a century. Historians – most notably Walter Goffart – have begun to challenge the idea of a coherent group of 'Germanic peoples', sharing a

<sup>5</sup> For this interpretation of Fulco and Ermanaric, see W. Haubrichs, '*Veterum regum actus et bella* – Zur sog. Heldenliedersammlung Karls des Großen', in W. Tauber (ed.), *Aspekte der Germanistik. Festschrift für H.-F. Rosenfeld*, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 521 (Göppingen, 1989), pp. 17–46, at pp. 45–6. The postulate of a Germanic warrior culture is virtually pervasive: for particularly coherent and influential statements, see K. Hauck, 'Heldendichtung und Heldensage als Geschichtsbewußtsein', *Alteuropa und das moderne Gesellschaft. Festschrift Otto Brunner* (Göttingen, 1963), pp. 118–64, and 'Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 1 (1967), pp. 3–93.

common cultural heritage.<sup>6</sup> On the level of consciousness, there was no perception of common cause between the various Germanic peoples in late antiquity, despite their linguistic brotherhood.<sup>7</sup> There is a vast and constantly growing body of research demonstrating that a huge range of cultural traits of the post-Roman west – from forms of burial to forms of legal proof – were developments of an adapting and evolving late Roman society, rather than unadulterated outgrowths of a homogenous ‘Germanic warrior culture’.<sup>8</sup> On the specific issue of orally transmitted poetry, in an exhilarating *tour de force* Roberta Frank has argued that the surviving fragments should be read as products of an ideologically loaded nostalgia which emerged in the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, like many of the traits allegedly inherited from ‘Germanic antiquity’, the cultivation of oral poetry is paralleled in many historical societies: it can scarcely be seen as a practice which is uniquely or by definition ‘Germanic’. In the past half century there has been a vast outpouring of comparative research into oral poetry and in particular into its formulaic components, covering material ranging from Homeric epic in ancient Greece to oral poetry as encountered by modern anthropologists. If our understanding of how historical traditions were transmitted orally in verse has been greatly augmented, the dangers of seeing early medieval manifestations of these practices as Germanic by

<sup>6</sup> See above all the articles collected in W. Goffart, *Rome's Fall and After* (London, 1989); also his *The Narrators of Barbarian History. Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988) on early medieval historiographers; P. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy* (Cambridge, 1997), with comments on ‘the Germanic culture construct’ in appendices 2–5. W. Goffart, ‘Two notes on Germanic antiquity today’, *Traditio* 50 (1995), pp. 9–30, is a provocative survey of the historiography. My debt to Goffart’s work throughout this chapter should be made clear at the outset.

<sup>7</sup> See W. Goffart, ‘Rome, Constantinople and the barbarians’, *Rome's Fall and After*, pp. 1–33, at pp. 4–5 [first published in *American Historical Review* 86 (1981), pp. 275–306]; W. Goffart, ‘The theme of “The Barbarian Invasions” in later antique and modern historiography’, *Rome's Fall and After*, pp. 111–132, at p. 113, n. 7 [first published in E. Chrysos and A. Schwarcz (eds.), *Das Reich und die Barbaren*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 29 (Vienna, 1989), pp. 87–107].

<sup>8</sup> Burials: G. Halsall, ‘The origins of the *Reihengräberzivilisation* forty years on’, in J. Drinkwater and H. Elton (eds.), *Fifth-Century Gaul: a Crisis of Identity?* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 196–207. Legal proof: I. Wood, ‘Disputes in late fifth and sixth-century Gaul: some problems’, in W. Davies and P. Fouracre (eds.), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 7–22.

<sup>9</sup> R. Frank, ‘Germanic legend in Old English literature’, in M. Godden and M. Lapidge (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 88–106. This article came to my attention – inexcusably – only as the current chapter was in the final stages of completion: I hope that my discussion of the Carolingian historical context complements Frank’s lucid and stimulating treatment of the literary record. For the stock image of the early medieval oral poet as a similar exercise in nostalgia, see R. Frank, *The Search for the Anglo-Saxon Oral Poet*, The Toller Memorial Lecture 1992 (Manchester, 1993).

definition ought to have likewise been exposed. Even if such a derivation could be firmly established, it would be of limited explanatory value, not least as orally transmitted material changes radically in new cultural, social and political contexts. The search for a putative heroic age in Germanic antiquity tends to prevent us from studying the surviving material in its actual context, centuries after the events it claims to record: it therefore precludes a proper appreciation of the social and cultural importance of the recitation of oral poetry in Carolingian and post-Carolingian society.<sup>10</sup>

The dangers of simply assuming that later literary traditions concerning fourth- and fifth-century barbarian leaders must be outgrowths of an ancient Germanic culture are eloquently shown by a closer look at Fulco's letter. The story to which Fulco alluded, in which Ermanaric had murdered all his relatives to secure his own position, only to be killed in turn by the Huns, is reported in a series of other sources, notably in several Anglo-Saxon poems and in vernacular literature from post-Carolingian Germany. Derivation from an oral tradition reaching back to Germanic antiquity and originally shared by various Germanic-speaking peoples is only one *possible* explanation for its diffusion, and it is by no means proven. The earliest version of this story is to be found in a written, Latin source, from the sixth century, Jordanes' *Gothic History*. Jordanes' work is difficult. Although its author claimed to retell Gothic legend, it may be little more than a literary cut-and-paste of the earlier written scraps: we simply have no way of telling whether it was Jordanes, or an older oral tradition, from which the story of Ermanaric originated. Certainly the fact that Jordanes wrote a Latin account does not preclude his story having been the basis of oral traditions circulating later in post-Carolingian Germany and Anglo-Saxon England. Fulco alluded to nothing which he could not have found in Jordanes. What is more, he referred Arnulf to a written version of the story. And it was hardly tied to a 'pagan', 'Germanic' or 'heroic' code. The moral intended for Arnulf – that evil deeds, and particularly the murder of kin, lead to a sticky end – implicitly rests on the medieval commonplace that God intervened in

<sup>10</sup> Oral-formulaic research essentially goes back to the work of Parry and Lord; since the 1960s the literature has ballooned. A good recent overview of its application to Anglo-Saxon verse is A. Orchard, 'Oral tradition', in K. O'Brien O'Keefe (ed.), *Reading Old English Texts* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 101–23. For an excellent comparative study stressing the variety of forms of oral poetry, and warning against an over-cohesive view of its transmission, see R. Finnegan, *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context* (Cambridge, 1977). M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West. Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin, 1994), emphasizes the social and cultural importance of the recitation of oral poetry in Carolingian society but insists on its enduring 'archaic' and 'Germanic' nature.

history to punish the bad and reward the good. That is, for Fulco and Arnulf the story of Ermanaric was a well-known morality tale, current in interacting oral and written traditions of unknown and unknowable origin: there is no hint of any consciousness of a pagan Germanic heritage.<sup>11</sup>

Fulco used the word 'teuton' (*teutonicus*) to describe the books in which Arnulf could read about Ermanaric. This was a rare word in the Carolingian period. It can be traced back to an early Carolingian origin in the western part of the empire: at Tours around 830 the 'Teutons' in Virgil's *Aeneid*, VII.741, were glossed as 'the people of *Germania* . . . who speak the *lingua theodisca*'. *Theodiscus* was derived from the Germanic vernacular noun for 'the people'. From the late eighth century it was used at the Carolingian court to refer to the vernacular, spoken language: vulgarized late Latin which was on the verge of becoming a distinct, Romance, language in the west of the empire (essentially modern France), dialects identified by modern philologists as versions of one of the Germanic family of languages in the east and north (essentially the Low Countries and the western part of modern Germany). *Teutonicus* was used by Carolingian writers as a classical sounding synonym for *theodiscus*. As the gap between written Latin and the spoken vernacular was far greater in eastern Francia than in the west, it was the Germanic vernacular which was most often referred to as *theodiscus* or *teutonicus*. And as a sense of political community developed in the east Frankish kingdom in the later ninth century, linguistic self-consciousness – the recognition that the inhabitants of the kingdom shared a language which differed from that spoken in much of west Francia – grew. Hence by the tenth century *teutonicus* became 'German'.<sup>12</sup> Thus

<sup>11</sup> On the Ermanaric legend, see H. Beck, 'Ermanaric: Sagengeschichtliches', *Reallexicon der Germanischen Altertumskunde* 7 (New York, 1989), col. 512 and W. Haubrichs, *Die Anfänge: Versuche volkssprachiger Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter* (Frankfurt, 1988), pp. 110–15. J. Hill, 'Widsith in the tenth century', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 85 (1984), pp. 305–15, undermines the foundation stone of the received view that the Anglo-Saxon Ermanaric tradition was early. Goffart, *Narrators*, pp. 20–111 and Amory, *People and Identity*, pp. 291–307, see Jordanes as writing in a late Latin literary tradition which has very little to do with any putative orally transmitted 'tribal legends'. P. Heather, *Goths and Romans* (Oxford, 1991) demonstrates that Jordanes cannot be used as evidence for fourth-century Gothic history (pp. 34–67), and sees Jordanes' Ermanaric as essentially a patching together of the fragmentary reports of the fourth-century source, Ammianus Marcellinus (pp. 23–5). The relevant passage is Jordanes, *Getica*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA, 5:1 (Berlin, 1882), pp. 132–4. For the possibility of widely diffused oral traditions being initially derived from texts see below, pp. 248–9. Fulco's use of the story differs significantly from that in the various vernacular traditions.

<sup>12</sup> See H. Thomas, 'Der Ursprung des Wortes Theodiscus', *Historische Zeitschrift* 247 (1988), pp. 295–331, and 'Frenkisk. Zur Geschichte von *theodiscus* und *teutonicus* im Frankenreich des 9. Jahrhunderts', in R. Schieffer (ed.), *Beiträge zur Geschichte des regnum Francorum. Festschrift E. Ewig*,

Fulco's *Libri Teutonici* might be associated with the Germanic vernaculars.<sup>13</sup>

Fulco lived at the end of a century which had witnessed a flowering of interest in vernacular language, a flowering of interest which had led some intellectuals, like their early modern successors, into a search for shared histories to explain linguistic similarities. This intellectual process is seen most clearly in Freculph of Lisieux's world chronicle, a work of historiography covering the ancient world in its entirety, written in the 820s and 830s, and dedicated to the Empress Judith for the education of her son, the future king, Charles the Bald. Freculph, after recounting the well-established legend which made the earliest Franks descendants of the Trojans, added that: 'other men insist that they [the Franks] had their origins on the isle of Scandza, the womb of nations, from which the Goths and the other *nationes theodiscae* came: what is more, the idiom of their languages shows this'.<sup>14</sup> This was a virtual paraphrase of Jordanes' account of the origins of the Goths: 'Long ago the Goths are said to have come from the isle of Scandza, as from a hive of races or a womb of nations, under their king Berig'.<sup>15</sup> Jordanes was the first historian to record a 'Scandinavian' origin legend for one of the barbarian peoples, but his account was influential, and soon other writers were imitating him and claiming that their subjects, too, had migrated from Scandinavia. Thus Lombards, Burgundians and eventually Franks were all depicted as originating on 'the isle of Scandza'.<sup>16</sup> It is Freculph's account of the reasoning behind the thesis that the Franks came from Scandza which interests us here: it proceeded from linguistic links between Goths, Franks and other peoples to posit a shared history and a shared origin legend beginning in a shared Scandinavian homeland. In detecting these links, Freculph was reacting to his own, contemporary, intel-

Beihefte der Francia 22 (Sigmaringen, 1990), pp. 67–96, on *theodiscus* and *teutonicus* in the Carolingian period; L. Weisberger, 'Vergil Aeneid VII 741 und die Frühgeschichte des Namens Deutsch', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 86 (1936), pp. 97–126, for the Tours gloss to Virgil; K. H. Rexroth, 'Volkssprache und Volksbewußtsein im fränkischen Reich', in H. Beumann and W. Schröder (eds.), *Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter*, Nationes 2 (Sigmaringen, 1978), pp. 275–316 for east Frankish linguistic self-consciousness in the ninth century.

<sup>13</sup> Haubrichs, '*Veterum Regum Actus et Bella*', pp. 45–6.

<sup>14</sup> PL 106, cols. 957–1258, here col. 967: 'Alii vero affirmant eos de Scanza insula, quae vagina gentium est, exordium habuisse, de qua Gothi et caeterae nationes Theotiscae exierunt: quod et idioma linguae eorum testatur.'

<sup>15</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, ed. Mommsen, p. 60: 'Ex hac igitur Scandza insula quasi officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationem cum rege suo nomine Berig Gothi quondam memorantur egressi.' Goffart, *Narrators*, pp. 84–96, argues that Jordanes' Scandinavian origin legend is actually a literary creation, resting on ethnographical topoi.

<sup>16</sup> Lombards: Pohl, chapter 1 this volume. Burgundians: Goffart, 'The theme', p. 114 (mid-eighth century *Passio Sancti Sigismundi Regis*).

lectual context. In the decades around 800 scholars close to the Carolingian court begin to grapple with the nature of the Germanic vernaculars. Writing a commentary on Donatus' Grammar c. 805, Abbot Smaragdus of St Mihiel was struck by the similarities of Gothic and Frankish personal names, and, like a good ethnologist, Smaragdus made the linguistic affinity the basis for a thesis of a historical link between the two peoples.<sup>17</sup> Walahfrid Strabo, tutor to Charles the Bald (for whom Freculph's work was intended), also linked the Goths' language, and thus their history, to that of the Franks.<sup>18</sup> Gottschalk, the Saxon monk and controversial theologian, saw Germanic speakers as constituting a single people, the *gens theodisca*.<sup>19</sup> Hrabanus Maurus, Gottschalk's and Walahfrid's teacher, and also Freculph's friend, made a similar link between peoples on the grounds of links between their languages, in particular identifying the Danes as Germanic on the grounds of their language and postulating their descent from the Marcomanni, whom one could read about in Roman ethnography.<sup>20</sup> In a panegyric description of the baptism of the Danish king at Louis the Pious's court in 826, Ermold the Black made a link between the Franks and the Danes, and claimed that the Franks originally came from Scandinavia.<sup>21</sup> The idea of a common Germanic linguistic heritage was evidently discussed by Hrabanus, Freculph, Walahfrid and others at court, and led to the idea that the Germanic-speaking peoples had a shared history.<sup>22</sup>

Freculph's comments on Frankish origins and the *nationes theodiscae* were essentially an aside, to which he made no other allusion in his monumental history of the world. Freculph's schemes of interpretation

<sup>17</sup> Smaragdus of St Mihiel, *Liber in Partibus Donati*, eds. B. Löfstedt, C. Holtz and A. Kibre, CCCM 67 (Turnhout, 1986), pp. 20–4.

<sup>18</sup> Walahfrid, *De Exordiis et Incrementis*, c. 7, ed. A. Harting-Correa (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996): Ulfilas, the missionary who converted the Goths and was author of a Gothic version of the gospels, was the first to translate the Bible into the *lingua theodisca*. (Walahfrid's is an interesting statement given the experimentation with vernacular biblical literature in the ninth century).

<sup>19</sup> C. Lambot (ed.), *Oeuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais* (Louvain, 1945), p. 195: 'Gens Teudisca sic habet pene distinctos casus in lingua sua sicuti sunt in latina . . .'

<sup>20</sup> PL 112, cols. 1579–83. For more on Hrabanus and the vernaculars, W. Haubrichs, 'Althochdeutsch in Fulda und Weissenburg – Hrabanus Maurus und Otfrid von Weissenburg', in R. Kottje and H. Zimmerman (eds.), *Hrabanus Maurus: Lehrer, Abt und Bischof* (Wiesbaden, 1981), pp. 182–93; M. Banniard, 'Hrabanus Maurus and the vernacular languages', in R. Wright (ed.), *Latin and the Romance Languages in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1991), pp. 164–74.

<sup>21</sup> Ermold, *In Honorem Hludovici Pii*, ed. E. Faral, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au roi Pépin* (Paris, 1964), line 1899, p. 144.

<sup>22</sup> The fundamental discussion in G. Baesecke, 'Das Nationalbewußtsein der Deutschen des Karolingerreiches nach den Zeitgenössischen Benennungen ihrer Sprache', in T. Mayer (ed.), *Der Vertrag von Verdun 843* (Leipzig, 1943), pp. 116–36, on whom the preceding paragraph freely draws. See now also Thomas, 'Der Ursprung' and 'Frenkisk'.

and organization were theological, as were his aims. He adapted traditional theories of history as constituted by four world kingdoms and seven ages, encountered in his sources. He was particularly influenced by the Augustinian idea of heavenly and earthly cities, which became central to his work's organization: the coming of 'Christian times' defined his ending point.<sup>23</sup> In ending with the inauguration of 'Christian times' in the post-Roman west, Freculph's work voiced a sense of discontinuity between the Frankish, Christian present and the Roman past. Although the caesura was informed by essentially theological concerns, in the political sphere it was complemented by the establishment of 'the kings of peoples' (*reges gentium*) in the place of the Roman *res publica* in the west.<sup>24</sup> Earlier historiographers in the post-Roman west, inheriting the traditional division of history into four world kingdoms, had still counted their early medieval world as falling within the fourth, Roman, world kingdom. It was only really in the eighth century that perceptions began to change: looking back, intellectuals began to sense a more radical discontinuity between their world and that of Rome. They also began to write of barbarian invasions shaping their world, telescoping what were actually longer and more complex processes of acculturation. The Roman past was now distant, something to be revered and revived. This shift from a sub-Roman to a post-Roman mentality was evident in the increasing ideological assertiveness of the Frankish court. Already under Charlemagne's father, Pippin, a new prologue for the Frankish lawcode had been drawn up, celebrating the Franks' orthodoxy and martial valour: as God's chosen people, the Franks had vanquished the impious Romans, who had persecuted the early Christians. By the end of the ninth century Notker of St Gallen was able to rework the prophecy of the four world kingdoms, with Charlemagne's empire as the fourth, God's chosen successor to the Roman Empire. Similarly, Freculph's friend, Hrabanus, had written of the Frankish empire as legitimate heir to those of the Persians and Romans.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> N. Staubach, 'Christiana tempora. Augustin und das Ende der alten Geschichte in der Weltchronik Frechulfs von Lisieux', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 29 (1995), pp. 167–206.

<sup>24</sup> F. Lošek, 'Non ignota canens? Bemerkungen zur Chronik ("Historia") des Frechulf von Lisieux', in K. Brunner and B. Merta (eds.), *Ethnogenese und Überlieferung. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 31 (Vienna and Munich, 1994), pp. 123–231, esp. pp. 128–31.

<sup>25</sup> See H. Löwe, 'Von Theodorich dem Grossen zu Karl dem Grossen', *Deutsches Archiv* 9 (1952), pp. 353–400. For Pippin's new prologue to Frankish law see *Lex Salica*, ed. K. Eckhardt, MGH LMG IV:ii (Hanover, 1969), pp. 2–9. For Notker see *Gesta Karoli*, ed. H. Haefele, MGH SRG 12 (Hanover, 1959), esp. I:1, p. 1, on which see H.-W. Goetz, *Strukturen der spätkarolingischen Epoche im Spiegel der Vorstellungen eines zeitgenössischen Mönchs* (Bonn, 1981), pp. 69–84. For Hrabanus, *Liber de Oblatione Puerorum*, PL 107, col. 432, and see De Jong, chapter 9 in this volume.

The shadow of Charlemagne, imperial ruler of the peoples who had replaced the Romans in the west, was cast long over the reflections of Freculph and his contemporaries. Carolingian intellectuals were developing a new attitude to the Roman past. This in turn led to the possibility of viewing the *gentes* who had succeeded the Romans as rulers of the west as a group of related peoples with a special historical role: the Germanic peoples of modern historical scholarship. The intellectual genealogy of our received view of early medieval history, as the story of the Germanic peoples who destroyed Roman rule in the west and began a new chapter in European history, perhaps has its seeds at the Carolingian court in the first years of the ninth century, with the likes of Freculph and Hrabanus. Their isolated and unsystematic reflections supply an important context in which Fulco's interest in Ermanaric can be placed. It draws on what was in origin an essentially intellectual interest in the barbarian past, an interest which was the result of Carolingian scholarly developments. As Frank puts it, 'the desire to forge ancestral links with the people of Ermanaric and Theodoric suddenly became fashionable around 800'.<sup>26</sup>

How did these intellectual developments relate to popular historical traditions? The strength of the 'Germanic warrior culture' postulate has meant that it has been assumed, but never demonstrated, that a consciousness of ancestral links with Germanic leaders of the heroic age was maintained on a popular level, and writers like Freculph have been seen as simply acknowledging this popular tradition, late in the day; it has even been argued that, unlike earlier Latin sources, Freculph's account of Frankish origins in the frozen North drew on a continuing tribal memory.<sup>27</sup> To substantiate such claims it would be necessary to trace some vestige of 'Germanic culture' in the period between Tacitus and Freculph. As the devotees of 'Germanic warrior culture' would argue that such vestiges were maintained by oral traditions, their claims can easily become untestable items of faith buttressed by *a priori* notions about the nature of oral traditions. In a recent book Michael Richter has assembled a sizeable number of references to actors, musicians, jesters and entertainers, and to the performance of poems and songs. Here is an important window into elite sociability and the cultural

<sup>26</sup> Frank, 'Germanic legend', p. 93.

<sup>27</sup> See E. Zöllner, *Die Politische Stellung der Völker im Frankenreich*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 13 (Vienna, 1950), pp. 46–7, R. Buchner, 'Das Geschichtsbewußtsein der Germanen', *Mannus: Zeitschrift für Deutsche Vorgeschichte* 29 (1937), pp. 459–77, and in general R. Wenskus, 'Die deutschen Stämme im Reiche Karls des Großen', in W. Braunsfels (ed.), *Karl der Große: Lebenswerk und Nachleben* (4 vols., Düsseldorf, 1965), I, pp. 178–220.



world of the aristocracy. But to see these practices as manifestations of an unchanging Germanic tradition is to fail to do them justice. There are no grounds in either the surviving historical evidence or the frequently cited anthropological parallels to assume that such traditions consisted of a homogeneous and stable body of material which was archaic and historical in nature. We should pay far more attention to heterogeneity and variability, and to differences over time, space and social position.<sup>28</sup>

Let us return to the fragmentary Carolingian evidence for the recitation of heroic poetry. Charlemagne's biographer, Einhard, told of 'most barbarous and ancient songs, in which the wars and deeds of kings of old were sung' which Charlemagne had recorded in writing. Those historians who have wished to argue for a warrior culture, separate from the Latin written sources and barely touched by their values, but transmitted orally, see Einhard as referring sympathetically to a vigorous, secular, oral tradition which Charlemagne went out of his way to preserve.<sup>29</sup> They relate Einhard's testimony to the comments of Tacitus on oral tradition amongst the first-century inhabitants of *Germania*. The surviving corpus of poetry in the Germanic vernacular from the twelfth century on is then invoked as a survival of the type of material to which Einhard and Tacitus refer, and a model of a culture which is transmitted without writing, and remains unchanged over a millennium marked by dramatic historical development, is constructed. Is this a plausible reading of Einhard? Tacitus' *Germania* was known in Einhard's circle, the oldest surviving manuscript written at his *alma mater*, Fulda; there is evidence that Einhard himself may have known the work and drawn upon it in the *Life of Charlemagne*.<sup>30</sup> Tacitus had commented that, unlike the Romans who recorded history in annals, the inhabitants of *Germania*

<sup>28</sup> Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West*; also M. Richter, *The Oral Tradition in the Early Medieval West*, *Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental* 71 (Turnhout, 1994). For wide-ranging comparative treatments see Finnegan, *Oral Poetry* and E. Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts. The Social Construction of Oral Historiography* (Cambridge, 1992). Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy' is an attempt to give an account of the variety and fluidity of early medieval oral tradition. On the surviving vernacular material see Haubrichs, *Die Anfänge*, esp. pp. 81–189; English introductions are C. Edwards, 'Germanic vernacular literature', in McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture*, pp. 141–70. J. K. Bostock, *A Handbook on Old High German Literature*, rev. edn K. C. King and D. R. McLintock (Oxford, 1976).

<sup>29</sup> See most recently the 'political' interpretation of Einhard's work developed by K. Brunner, *Oppositionelle Gruppen im Karolingerreich* (Vienna, 1979), pp. 66–95.

<sup>30</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, eds. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Ogilvie (Oxford, 1975). On the transmission of the *Germania*, F. Haverfield, 'Tacitus during the late Roman period and the Middle Ages', *Journal of Roman Studies* 6 (1915), pp. 196–200; L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmissions* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 410–11. M. Eggers, *Das 'Großmährische Reich'* (Munich, 1995), p. 133 suggests that Einhard used Tacitus in his geographical terminology.

relied upon oral tradition alone. This may have influenced Einhard's account of Charlemagne:

In ancient songs, which are their only form of memory and the equivalent of annals, they celebrate Twist, the earth god

(Celebrant **carminibus antiquis**, quod unum apud illos **memoriae** et annalium genus est, Tuistonem deum terra editum) (Tacitus, *Germania*, c. 2)

He ordered that those barbarous and most ancient songs, in which the wars and deeds of the kings of old were sung, be set down in writing and thus remembered

(Item barbara et **antiquissima carmina**, quibus veterum regum actus et bella caneantur, scripsit **memoriaeque** mandavit) (Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 29)

If Einhard was drawing on Tacitus, it is precisely because he lived in the intellectual circle of Freculph and Hrabanus, which had identified a group of Germanic peoples. It would be natural for a classicist like Einhard, when he came across Tacitus' *Germania*, to attempt to read it as a prehistory to his own world. (Indeed, this is precisely what the monk Rudolf of Fulda, another of Hrabanus's pupils, did in the next generation.<sup>31</sup>) It would be dangerous to use Einhard's account of Charlemagne as confirmation of the continuation of the practices described by Tacitus: not only was Einhard probably drawing on Tacitus in this passage, but the two passages actually describe different activities, Tacitus' the cultivation of songs about gods who were also tribal ancestors, Einhard's songs about kings and battles. Fundamentally, both authors are writing within a highly literate elite culture, and commenting on the difference between written and oral transmission of historical knowledge. The contrast between the continued remembrance guaranteed by writing, and the vagaries of oral tradition, is commonly made in such contexts; indeed, amongst Carolingian intellectuals it becomes a commonplace, hence Einhard's comments on the 'barbarous' nature of the songs performed for Charlemagne.<sup>32</sup>

Einhard placed his account of the 'barbarous and most ancient songs'

<sup>31</sup> See Rudolf of Fulda, *Translatio St Alexandri*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 2 (Hanover, 1829), pp. 673–81.

<sup>32</sup> It is used, for example, by Otfried of Wissembourg as well as Einhard. D. H. Green, *Medieval Reading and Listening. The Primary Reception of German Literature, 800–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 21, 239, takes their testimony at face value. It may be significant for our understanding of Einhard, c. 29, that in his preface Einhard justifies the project by arguing that without a written record Charlemagne will be forgotten (*Vita Karoli*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRG 25 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1911), pp. 1–2). See also the comments of Einhard's avid reader, Notker, on Pippin: *Gesta Karoli*, II:16, ed. Haefele, pp. 80–1.

at a very specific point in his work, in an account of the activities with which Charlemagne busied himself 'after taking up the imperial title'. At this juncture, Einhard chose to relate Charlemagne's reform of Frankish law and the making of written lawcodes for the other *nationes* under his *dominium*; the establishment of grammatical rules for the vernacular tongue; the creation of vernacular names for the winds and the months; and the making of a written record of the songs in which the deeds of ancient kings were recited.<sup>33</sup> Whereas through most of the *Life*, Einhard stresses the Frankish element in Charlemagne's actions – his Frankish dress, the education of his sons according to Frankish custom and so on – none of this *Kulturpolitik* is presented as narrowly 'Frankish', but rather as embracing all the peoples under Charlemagne's rule. The key words are those with which the account opens: 'after taking up the imperial title'. The production of written lawcodes was, for early medieval kings, a highly symbolic act drawing on both Christian and Roman-imperial models of rule. The naming of months and winds were imperial actions, about which Einhard – and indeed Charlemagne – might have learned in Suetonius' *Lives*; likewise the interest in grammar, for Suetonius told of Claudius' invention of new letters and remembered Caesar as a grammarian.<sup>34</sup> Einhard's account – and Charlemagne's deportment itself – was consciously modelled on a series of literary models of good rulers.

None the less, Einhard does demonstrate the importance of oral historical tradition in the Carolingian period. His work was well known and two later sources written under his influence expand upon his allusion to the 'most ancient and barbarous songs'. The first is the biography of Charlemagne's successor, Louis the Pious, written by Thegan, suffragan bishop of Trier, in 836. Thegan's portrait of Louis the Pious is consciously styled as the literary counterpoint to Einhard's

<sup>33</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 29, p. 33.

<sup>34</sup> In general see D. Geuenich, 'Die volkssprachige Überlieferung der Karolingerzeit aus der Sicht des Historikers', *Deutsches Archiv für die Erforschung des Mittelalters* 39 (1983) pp. 117–35; also P. Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis. Legislation and Germanic kingship', in P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (eds.), *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds, 1977), pp. 105–38, for law-making; K. Matzel, 'Karl der Große und die Lingua Theodisca', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 34 (1970), pp. 172–89, for grammar; and M. Richter, 'Die Sprachenpolitik Karls des Großen', *Sprachwissenschaft* 7 (1982), pp. 412–37, on linguistic policy. Einhard's account needs handling with care: it is clear, for example, that it was Charlemagne's grandson, Louis the German, half a century after Charlemagne, who was the real driving force behind the development of written literature in the Germanic vernacular. But the Suetonian models used by Einhard were known at Charlemagne's court and may have influenced Charlemagne himself: see M. Innes, 'The classical tradition in the Carolingian renaissance: ninth-century encounters with Suetonius', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 3 (1997), pp. 265–82, esp. pp. 275–7.

Charlemagne: thus, whereas Einhard's Charlemagne had attempted to preserve songs about ancient kings, Thegan's Louis dislikes the *poetica carmina gentilia* which he had learned in his youth. Thegan sketches out the social context in which 'barbarous and most ancient songs' were performed, before the king at court by a 'professional' performer accompanied by music, with the aristocracy participating and enjoying the occasion.<sup>35</sup> The second piece of evidence further complements Einhard. In the last decade of the ninth century, an anonymous poet at the Saxon abbey of Corvey, known as *Poeta Saxo*, wrote a Latin work on Charlemagne, versifying much of Einhard. He refers to the 'barbarous songs' concerning 'ancient kings' which were performed before the king, and later outlines the content of these 'vulgar songs' in more detail. They are made in praise and celebration of Frankish kings, Charlemagne's ancestors Pippin, Charles, Clovis, Theodoric, Charlo-man and Chlothar.<sup>36</sup>

The orally transmitted material to which Carolingian sources referred was thus resolutely royal, dynastic and Frankish.<sup>37</sup> That Carolingian oral tradition was primarily a means of royal, dynastic propaganda is suggested by much of the surviving poetic material, above all by the *Ludwigslied*, an Old High German poem recounting the victory of Louis the Stammerer over the Vikings in 881. The poem is both martial and profoundly Christian, as would befit the celebration of a Carolingian

<sup>35</sup> Thegan, *Gesta Hludovici Imperatoris*, ed. E. Tremp, MGH SRG 64 (Hanover, 1996), c. 19, p. 200. For a more contextualized reading of this passage, M. Innes, 'Laughing monks, smiling kings, frowning emperors: the politics of laughter in the Carolingian Empire', in G. Halsall (ed.), *Humour in the Early Middle Ages* (London, forthcoming).

<sup>36</sup> *Poeta Saxo, De Carolo Magno*, ed. P. Winfeld, MGH PLAC 4 (Berlin, 1899), esp. lines 117–21, 545–6, pp. 58, 68. The poet describes the songs as concerning Charlemagne's *avos et proavos* (l. 118), drawing attention to the tradition which made the Merovingians ancestors of the Carolingians: see Haubrichs, '*Veterum Regum Actus et Bella*', p. 18. Clovis and Chlothar are Merovingian royal names given by Charlemagne to his sons; they thereafter became Carolingian dynastic names. As the poet purports to record what was sung to Charlemagne, I assume that he is referring to the Merovingian rulers known to us as Clovis and Chlothar, not their Carolingian namesakes known to us as Louis and Lothar. The Theodoric listed is the Merovingian ruler whose campaigns against the Danes and Saxons were remembered by contemporaries and, indeed, the subject of a handful of surviving poems from the twelfth century.

<sup>37</sup> Haubrichs, '*Veterum Regum Actus et Bella*' is the best treatment. Also H. Moisl, 'Kingship and orally-transmitted *Stammes* tradition among the Lombards and Franks', in H. Wolfram and A. Schwarcz (eds.), *Die Bayern und ihre Nachbarn I* (Vienna, 1984), pp. 111–19, Geuenich, 'Die volkssprachige Überlieferung', pp. 114–15, Richter, *The Formation*, p. 135, n. 48 is wrong to dismiss the testimony of 'Poeta Saxo'. E. Ploß, 'Das 9. Jahrhundert und die Heldensage', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 89 (1970), pp. 3–27, is wrong to argue at p. 14 that Thegan's phrase, *poetica gentilia*, implies that the poems concern the rulers of many *gentes* (see De Jong, chapter 9 in this volume). There is an important discussion of orally transmitted praise-poems in modern Africa, and the relative insulation of 'popular' tradition from such royal propaganda, in D. W. Cohen, 'The undefining of oral tradition', *Ethnohistory* 36 (1989), pp. 9–18.

king; in many ways the closest surviving analogues in subject and tone are in Latin poems such as the *Avar Rhythm*, a short celebration of Pippin of Italy's victory over the Avars in 796. The message, about the triumph of the Franks under Carolingian leadership thanks to God's backing, is of a piece with that of the Latin historiography and literature of the period. This invites us to question the significance of the language in which such material was transmitted. The royal tradition reported by Einhard, Thegan and *Poeta Saxo* is usually taken to be a tradition transmitted in the Germanic vernacular. However, none of these sources specify the language that the tradition was performed in, and the evidence of texts like the *Ludwigslied* and the *Avar Rhythm* suggests that language depended on the precise context in which a work was composed and performed. It is abundantly clear that such poems, whether in Latin or the vernacular, were of a piece with Carolingian historical ideology as encountered in Latin historiography.<sup>38</sup>

None the less, not all oral historical traditions can be equated with the dynastic Frankish traditions which kings were so eager to disseminate. Like Ermanaric, Theodoric the Ostrogoth has been seen as a prototypical Germanic hero: by the high Middle Ages a rich tradition of vernacular epics was associated with him, in the guise of Dietrich von Bern. In the Carolingian period, stories already circulated about both Ermanaric, as we have seen, and also Theodoric. The most important allusion to a Theodoric legend is in the *Hildebrandslied*, an epic poem of which fragments were recorded in Old High German in a manuscript from Fulda towards the middle of the ninth century. The decision to record this poem in writing comes again from an intellectual milieu suffused with the influence of Freculph's friend, Hrabanus; but then under Hrabanus Fulda was *the* centre for the study of the Germanic vernaculars.<sup>39</sup> The legend of Theodoric was a story of wrongful exile and eventual return to victory, setting Theodoric against Odoacer, but

<sup>38</sup> *Ludwigslied*: trans. Bostock, *Handbook*, pp. 239–41, and see J. L. Flood and D. Yeandle (eds.), 'Mit regulu bithuungan'. *Neue Arbeiten zur althochdeutschen Poesie und Sprache*, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 500 (Göppingen, 1989), esp. D. Yeandle, 'The *Ludwigslied*: king, church and context' and P. Fouracre, 'Using the background to the *Ludwigslied*: some methodological problems'. See also Ploß, 'Das 9. Jahrhundert', pp. 28–32. The *Avar Rhythm*: ed. E. Dümmler, MGH PLAC 1 (Berlin, 1881), pp. 116–17, ed. with English translation by P. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 187–91. On Latin panegyric and historical poetry see A. Ebenbauer, *Carmen Historicum I* (Vienna, 1978); M. Garrison, 'The emergence of Carolingian Latin literature and the court of Charlemagne', in McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture*, pp. 111–39. The one hint at performance in the Germanic vernacular comes in Einhard's description of the *carmina* as *barbara*, an adjective he elsewhere uses to disparage the vernacular.

<sup>39</sup> See Haubrichs, 'Althochdeutsch' and for Hrabanus's positive attitude towards the vernaculars, Banniard, 'Hrabanus'.

also involving 'the lord of the Huns'. It was a tale well enough known to Fulda monks and their lay relatives to provide the background to the story of Hildebrand and his son Hadubrand, as told in the *Hildebrandslied*, without any recapitulation.<sup>40</sup>

It was not just in the vicinity of Fulda, however, that the legend of Theodoric was well known. Charlemagne himself was fascinated by Theodoric. The evidence is fragmentary but conclusive. It centres on a statue which Charlemagne had removed from Ravenna as he returned from his imperial coronation in Rome. This statue, which was believed to depict Theodoric, was set in pride of place before the palace at Aachen. Shortly after the translation of the statue in 801, Charlemagne named an illegitimate son Theodoric. Charlemagne's interest is confirmed by a complex political poem penned over a quarter of a century later. In 829 Walahfrid Strabo, newly appointed tutor to the young Charles the Bald, composed Latin verses *On the Statue of Theodoric*, and dedicated them to his patron, the Empress Judith. It is a highly dramatic poem, taking the form of a dialogue between Walahfrid and his muse as they survey Aachen and watch a procession, giving panegyrics on various members of the Carolingian family and court, but also making barbed political points. Walahfrid's point of departure, with which the message of his poem is inextricably bound up, is the statue of Theodoric, which Walahfrid counterpoints with descriptions of the emperor and his family and followers. Walahfrid is roundly critical of the statue and of Theodoric. His symbolism is consciously complex and the meaning consciously opaque; Walahfrid, like many other Carolingian courtiers, wrote a many-layered work which could only be fully appreciated by a knowing audience at court. Precisely how we decode its contemporary political message is not the issue here. What is significant is the judgement which Walahfrid made on Theodoric. Punning on the literal meaning of Aachen's Latin name, *Aquis*, and the reputation of the baths there, Walahfrid wrote that 'the rabble of the baths make a ford for him [Theodoric]': that is, at court Theodoric was, or had been, seen as a positive figure. Walahfrid then rounded on this judgement, condemning Theodoric as a miser, and an Arian heretic into the bargain, and alluding to his execution of the senator and philosopher Boethius.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> On the Theodoric legend, Haubrichs, *Die Anfänge*, pp. 109–18; Green, *Medieval Reading and Listening*, pp. 241–4; H.-F. Rosenfeld, 'Dietrich von Bern', *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde* 5 (New York, 1985), cols. 424–30. For the *Hildebrandslied*, Bostock, *Handbook*, pp. 76–7.

<sup>41</sup> Agnellus of Ravenna, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRL (Hanover, 1878), pp. 265–341, c. 94, p. 338, reports the translation, adding that some believed that the statue was actually of the Emperor Zeno. For the negative judgement see especially

What conclusions can we draw about the Theodoric legend at the Carolingian court from Walahfrid's poem? It clearly confirms that oral traditions about Theodoric as a legendary figure were circulating, as the *Hildebrandslied* suggests: Walahfrid called Theodoric 'Tetricius', a play on the 'Dietrich' of the vernacular.<sup>42</sup> Walahfrid claimed that Theodoric 'is cursed in every mouth', leading most commentators to see in Walahfrid's poem a conflict between 'Christian-intellectual' tradition, which made Theodoric a negative figure, and the 'popular-oral' tradition of Theodoric the Germanic hero (here, again, the all-pervading 'Germanic warrior culture' hypothesis underpins received interpretations). Yet the literary precedents for Walahfrid's attack on Theodoric are scarcely overwhelming: short anecdotes in Paul the Deacon's *Roman History* and Gregory of Tours' *Glories of the Martyrs* identify Theodoric as an Arian heretic, whilst Pope Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* recalled a local oral tradition that Theodoric was in the volcano of Mount Etna in punishment for his execution of Pope John and the senator Symmachus, events also recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*. These were all well-known sources which were available at the Carolingian court. None of them, however, offered an extended account of Theodoric's career.<sup>43</sup> Jordanes' *Gothic History* did. It is thus significant that, shortly after the arrival of the Theodoric statue at Aachen, Alcuin had written to his friend and fellow courtier Angilbert asking for a copy of Jordanes' *Gothic History*. Jordanes' portrait of Theodoric was a positive one, and the main historical account available to Carolingian and later medieval writers. Freculph of Lisieux, a member of the same intellectual circle as Walah-

Walahfrid, *De Imagine Tetrici*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH PLAC 2 (Berlin, 1884), pp. 370–8; or M. W. Herren, 'The *De Imagine Tetrici* of Walahfrid Strabo: edition and translation', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 1 (1991), pp. 118–39, lines 30–45, p. 123; 'rabble of the baths' l. 34; l. 256–7 citation of Boethius, identified by Herren at p. 120. On the poem and statue, see P. Godman, *Poets and Emperors. Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 34–8; F. Thürlmann, 'Die Bedeutung der Aachener Theodorich-Statue für Karl den Großen (801) und bei Walahfrid Strabo (829). Materialien zu einer Semiotik visueller Objekte im frühen Mittelalter', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 59 (1977), pp. 25–65; M. W. Herren, 'Walahfrid Strabo's *De Imagine Tetrici*: an interpretation', in R. North and T. Hofstra (eds.), *Latin Culture and Medieval Germanic Europe, Germania Latina* 1 (Groningen, 1992), pp. 25–41; Löwe, 'Von Theodorich', pp. 392–9.

<sup>42</sup> On Tetricius see Thürlmann, 'Die Bedeutung', pp. 48–9.

<sup>43</sup> Löwe, 'Von Theodorich', pp. 392–9, is the fundamental discussion of the Theodoric tradition in Latin sources. For the negative tradition, see Paul the Deacon, *Romana*, ed. T. Mommsen (with Eutropius), MGH AA 2 (Berlin, 1879), pp. 185–224, c. 16, pp. 218–19 (Arian who killed Boethius); Gregory of Tours, *In Gloria Martyrum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM I:2 (Hanover, 1885), pp. 484–561, c. 39, p. 513 (Arian who murdered Pope John); Gregory the Great, *Dialogi*, extracts ed. G. Waitz, MGH SRL (Hanover, 1878), IV:31, p. 540 (oral tradition about Mount Etna on account of deaths of John and Symmachus); *Liber Pontificalis* 55, 'Life of John I', ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Gestorum Pontificum Romanorum (Berlin, 1898), p. 136.

frid, writing almost simultaneously for the same audience and the identical patron, gave a positive account of Theodoric, an account based almost word for word on Jordanes.<sup>44</sup> Rather than championing Latin against vernacular, Christian against Germanic, learned against popular, or written against oral, traditions, Walahfrid was participating in a contemporary debate about a historical figure, a debate of which Alcuin's letter and Freculph's account are the other remaining traces, but which was driven by Charlemagne's personal interest.

The arguments about Theodoric which were debated at court cannot be divided into two distinct, sealed traditions, labelled Latin and Germanic, Christian and pagan, learned and popular or written and oral. Verdicts rested on heterogeneous material from a variety of sources, and Carolingian views of Theodoric were typified by interaction and cross-fertilization between these various traditions. Look at the issue of oral versus written: the negative view of Theodoric had its origins in oral tradition, recorded by Gregory the Great, whilst we have no direct evidence that a positive view was transmitted orally before written sources following Jordanes portrayed Theodoric as a great figure. Look at the issue of language: the earliest positive evidence for an oral tradition in Francia had its roots not in the Germanic vernaculars, but in spoken late Latin, in a tradition reflected in the legends about Theodoric and his Frankish wife retold by the historian known as Fredegar.<sup>45</sup> There is no evidence which suggests that late Latin and Germanic vernacular traditions stood in conflict, or that either conflicted with the written Latin tradition. The basically positive contents of the oral traditions fit neatly with one, in many ways dominant, aspect of the Latin tradition, namely the picture of Theodoric transmitted by Jordanes. There is no indication that oral traditions about Theodoric either subverted, or originated in a different context from, written discussions of his reign. The debate that occurred about Theodoric in the first years of the ninth century is essentially an intellectual debate within Latin culture, drawing on a wider set of interweaving and interacting traditions about him. There was no sense of confrontation between written

<sup>44</sup> See MGH Epp. IV (Berlin, 1895), p. 365, and PL 106, cols. 1249–52. In fact, Freculph was so conscious of the positive nature of the Jordanes passages he copied that he added, as an afternote, Gregory the Great's Mount Etna story. It is a distinct possibility that Freculph was aware of Walahfrid's attack on Theodoric and hence felt it necessary to note that there were two versions of this particular historical figure.

<sup>45</sup> On the Frankish Theodoric tradition see the comments and miscellaneous texts edited by B. Krusch, MGH SS 2 (Hanover, 1829), pp. 200–12; it is interesting, given the Fulda provenance of the *Hildebrandslied*, that one of these texts comes from ninth-century Fulda.



and oral verdicts on Theodoric, and none of those involved sought to adjudicate between Latin historiography and oral tradition.

That is, in the case of Theodoric – as in that of Ermanaric which we investigated earlier – it would be a mistake to think in terms of two distinct, hermetically sealed traditions with widely variant values and foundations. We need to think in terms of interaction between written accounts and oral legends, especially given the well-known fluidity of oral tradition and its ability to alter to fit new contexts. Indeed, it is not until the twelfth century that we encounter any sense of a conflict between written and oral traditions of Theodoric. The German chroniclers Frutolf of Michelsberg and Otto of Freising both dismissed songs recounting the deeds of Theodoric as ‘vulgar fables’, pointing out that they made Theodoric, Attila and Ermanaric contemporaries, when any reader of Jordanes knew that this was not the case.<sup>46</sup> Frutolf’s and Otto’s criticisms rest on a sense of outright opposition between oral and written, and an equation of the oral with the unlearned and uncouth, which are unmistakably twelfth century, the result of long-term changes in the relationship between the written word and oral communication.<sup>47</sup> The chronological confusion which made Theodoric, Attila and Ermanaric contemporaries and adversaries, whilst consigning Theodoric’s historical opponent, Odoacer, to oblivion, were, moreover, post-Carolingian. In the *Hildebrandslied*, Theodoric’s opponent was Odoacer, although the Huns were already involved; by the turn of the millennium Attila and Ermanaric were linked to the Theodoric legend, although Odoacer still had a role to play; by the twelfth century Odoacer had wholly disappeared.<sup>48</sup>

The key to explaining this pattern of development is politico-linguis-

<sup>46</sup> Frutolf of Michelsberg, *Ekkehardi Chronicon Universale*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS 6 (Stuttgart, 1844), pp. 33–231 at p. 130; Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive de duabus civitatibus*, eds. A. Hofmeister and W. Lammers (Darmstadt, 1961), p. 332.

<sup>47</sup> For Frutolf and Otto as voicing the opposition of Latin, clerical historiographers to popular, oral tradition see Green, *Medieval Listening and Reading*, pp. 242–3; E. van Houts, ‘Genre aspects of the use of oral information in medieval historiography’, in B. Frank, T. Haye and D. Tophinke (eds.), *Gattungen mittelalterlicher Schriftlichkeit* (Tübingen, 1998), pp. 297–311, at pp. 306–7. For this opposition as the result of changes in the social function of writing see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (London, 1993); B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983).

<sup>48</sup> The early eleventh century *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, MGH SS 3 (Stuttgart, 1839), pp. 22–90, at p. 31, refer to songs concerning Theodoric, Attila, Ermanaric and Odoacer. For the gradual simplification of the story around a small number of key characters, and chronological foreshortening, as characteristics of transmission by oral tradition alone, see Haubrichs, *Die Anfänge*, pp. 109–18, Green, *Medieval Reading and Listening*, pp. 241–4, but for qualifications see Innes, ‘Memory, orality and literacy’, pp. 31–6.

tic change. The political and cultural centres of the Merovingian world were located in areas where, until the Carolingian period, the spoken language was a version of late Latin which was eventually to become a distinct Romance tongue; in the Carolingian period, aristocrats and churchmen worked within, and circulated around, one polity in which Latin was the official language of politics and religion, and even easterners held lands and did business in the 'Romance' regions.<sup>49</sup> Until the emergence of the east Frankish kingdom in the late Carolingian period, there was little possibility of the development of a distinct Germanic vernacular culture at an elite level. (Local cultures at lower social levels are another issue entirely.) Hence, as we have seen, the language of recitation or transmission did not determine the content of traditions. The supreme example of fluidity and interchange comes in the legend of Walter of Aquitaine, transmitted in the Germanic vernacular in the east, in Old English from Anglo-Saxon England, and in Romance from southern France, northern Italy and Spain, and surviving in a written Latin version.<sup>50</sup> It is only in the tenth century, with politico-linguistic change, that oral traditions in the Germanic vernacular became more isolated, and the transpositions from which the vernacular epics of the twelfth century grew take place. One of the results of these politico-linguistic changes was the emergence of a very different set of heroic traditions in Old French from those transmitted in Middle High German. This fact must undermine the 'Germanic warrior culture' hypothesis, which cannot explain why allegedly archaic pan-Germanic traditions atrophy in west Francia but survive in east Francia and Scandinavia. It is post-Carolingian developments in politics and language alone which can explain the fact that eleventh-century aristocrats in France listened to *The Song of Roland* whilst those in Germany heard *The Lay of the Nibelungen*.

If, in the Carolingian period and before, oral traditions developed in symbiosis with written Latin sources, and were exchanged between Latinate and Germanic vernaculars, Germanic oral tradition in the sense of oral traditions peculiar to the Germanic languages must be a

<sup>49</sup> On aristocratic literacy see R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989). Surveys of linguistic development tend to concentrate on exciting new work on the development of early Romance from late Latin: see M. Banniard, 'Language and communication in Carolingian Europe', in McKitterick (ed.), *New Cambridge Medieval History II*, pp. 695–708 with literature. Work on the Germanic vernacular tends to be dominated by a 'grand narrative' about the development of German literature, rather than assessing the social and political role of the vernacular in early medieval society.

<sup>50</sup> U. and P. Dronke, *Barbara et Antiquissima Carmina* (Barcelona, 1977). This point stands independently of the date of the surviving Latin version of the Walter legend.

post-Carolingian, indeed a high medieval, phenomenon. A moment's reflection refutes the idea that the cultivation of orally transmitted heroic poems commemorating historical legends was a peculiarly Germanic cultural practice, implanted in western Europe by the new rulers of the fifth and sixth centuries: there are a vast range of parallels, historical and ethnological. Similarly, the values of martial valour, loyalty to one's lord and kin, honour and so on, which are promulgated in this material need to be interpreted with the greatest care. Not only are they values which are typical of martial aristocracies everywhere, but in their transmitted form they have important Christian components. Moreover, there is a clear element of conscious archaism in the presentation of a simpler, truer world where values of loyalty and honour were always observed. Nor need the wide diffusion of these historical traditions necessarily rest on any shared sense of Germanic brotherhood. There is no reason why the dynamics of the Theodoric tradition should rest on different factors from the rapid spread of Arthurian traditions in the high Middle Ages. In fact, it is startling that none of the surviving fragments of historically orientated oral tradition is concerned with delineating or promoting a 'Germanic' identity or a specifically 'Germanic' message. The surviving poems on *Waltharius* and *Beowulf*, for example, have both been convincingly seen as works using traditional material to plot out a parable on pride.<sup>51</sup>

Not that we should throw out the baby with the bathwater. Oral tradition, and particularly the oral transmission of historical lore in verse, clearly occupied a central place in early medieval culture. But entrenched hypotheses about 'Germanic warrior culture' do little to help us understand that importance. We need to think again about the context and message of the royal tradition of 'praise-poems'. And we need to examine the plentiful store of traditional stories about semi-

<sup>51</sup> Parable on pride: D. M. Kratz, *Mocking Epic. Waltharius, Alexandreis and the Problem of Christian Response* (Madrid, 1980); A. Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies. Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscript* (Cambridge, 1995). Lack of 'Germanic' consciousness: W. Pohl, 'Ethnic names and identities in the British Isles: a comparative perspective', in J. Hines (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century* (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 7–32, at pp. 23–4. Conscious archaism: E. M. Tyler, 'Treasure and convention in Old English verse', *Notes & Queries* 241 (1996), pp. 2–13. Problems of reading back heroic values: R. Woolf, 'The ideal of men dying with their lord in the *Germania* and *The Battle of Maldon*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976), pp. 63–81; R. Frank, 'The ideal of men dying with their lord in *The Battle of Maldon*: anachronism or *nouvelle vague*?', in I. Wood and N. Lund (eds.), *People and Places in Northern Europe, 500–1600: Studies Presented to P. H. Sawyer* (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 95–106. P. Wormald's important essay, 'Bede, *Beowulf* and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy', in R. T. Farrell (ed.), *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 46 (Oxford, 1979), pp. 32–95, stressed the malleability of oral tradition to changing religious, political and social contexts.

legendary figures like Theodoric, Walter and Ermanaric in the light of how they were used within early medieval culture. The surviving evidence implies that, in the case of the latter, we are dealing with a matter of folklore, a set of widely diffused common stories with stock characters, which served almost as parables, examples of morality in action, but which were multivalent and could be reshaped according to current needs. This set of common stories cannot be characterized as 'popular' or 'pagan' because it was such a central part of the world of archbishops like Fulco and kings like Arnulf. We then need to look long and hard at the specifics of the times and places in which unease about elements of these traditions was expressed – and we will find that it is excesses of alcohol and ribaldry, and particularly clerical involvement in such secular pastimes, that were the real cause for concern.

If we scan the Frankish sources for indications of the type of origin legend and historical tradition which would nurture a people's identity, we come across one such legend time and time again. It is not a legend which can be seen as an outgrowth of a postulated 'Germanic warrior culture'. It is the legend which made the Franks descendants of the Trojans and their rulers descendants of Aeneas, just as Virgil had traced the first Romans back to Troy. It must have originated in a context where a detailed knowledge of the literature of classical antiquity was available, but whether it was more than a literary invention with a limited audience is another matter. In late antique Gaul Trojan origin legends for cities and tribes had been common. The Franks' Trojan origin legend is thus likely to have arisen in the decades after their conquest of Gaul, or perhaps earlier as part of an alliance between a Frankish group and Roman leaders. Once it had acquired a certain currency, detailed knowledge of classical literature was unnecessary for its continued circulation on a certain social level: rather, the oral transmission of stories tracing Franks back to Trojans stimulated literary interest in written works on the Trojans. By the seventh century at the latest, the Trojan legend was widely diffused; by the eighth and ninth century Trojan material was pervasive, and incorporated into the Carolingian dynastic traditions current at Charlemagne's court.<sup>52</sup> The

<sup>52</sup> See R. Gerberding, *The 'Liber Historiae Francorum' and the Rise of the Carolingians* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 11–31; A. Giardina, 'Le origine troiane dall'impero alla nazione', *Settimane* 45 (1996), pp. 177–209; F. Graus, 'Troja und trojanische Herkunftssage im Mittelalter', in W. Erzgraber (ed.), *Kontinuität und Transformation der Antike in Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 25–43. For the origins of the legend, see J. Barlow, 'Gregory of Tours and the myth of the Trojan origins of the Franks', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 29 (1995), pp. 86–95; I. Wood, 'Defining the Franks: Frankish origins in early medieval historiography', in S. Forde, L. Johnson and A. V. Murray (eds.), *Concepts of*

Trojan legend is likewise repeated at the beginning of the surviving Latin version of 'Walter of Aquitaine', framing the story of a conflict between the Franks, Burgundians and Attila, and thereby relating this material to the 'Carolingian renaissance' view of the Frankish past.<sup>53</sup> Whilst the legend survived longest in France, where even in the early modern period scholars who doubted the Trojan origin of the Franks literally lost their heads, it also continued to circulate elsewhere. When an origin myth was created for the now emerged German polity in the eleventh century, it included the Trojan legend as an origin story for the inhabitants of Franconia and the Rhineland, and the distinct origin legends of other groups such as the Alemans, Bavarians and Saxons. The German kingdom was not seen as the heir of the 'Germanic peoples' – which we might expect if 'Germanic' identity related to the Germanic vernacular and informed by Germanic legend existed. Rather, the various groups which made up high medieval Germany were said to have allied with Julius Caesar and won him the title of Roman emperor, a title which they had, in turn, inherited, and hence they were now ruled by the medieval Roman emperor.<sup>54</sup> Although Fulco and Arnulf knew the legend of Ermanaric, they would have seen themselves as Trojans, not Teutons. Freculph stands almost alone amongst medieval authors in questioning this view. It was only in the Renaissance that historians once again began to see the agents of Rome's fall as a special group of Germanic peoples with their own distinct past.\*

*National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds, 1995), pp. 47–59. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings* (London, 1962), pp. 79–83 for the wide diffusion of the story by the seventh century; for its currency at Charlemagne's court, see Paul the Deacon, *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 2 (Stuttgart, 1829), pp. 261–8. Note that Hill, 'Widsith', pp. 306–7 demonstrates that material which ultimately must have derived from written tradition was transmitted to the composer of the Old English *Widsith* in 'popular' rather than 'learned' form; cf. also Innes, 'Memory, orality and literacy', esp. pp. 16–17, 21–22, for other examples of 'interference'.

<sup>53</sup> *Waltharius*, ed. K. Strecker, MGH PLAC 4 (Berlin, 1899), pp. 1–85, and on the significance of the Trojan–Frankish past for the poet's presentation of the Walter legend, see the important comment of Godman, *Poetry*, pp. 74–5.

<sup>54</sup> H. Thomas, 'Julius Caesar und die Deutschen. Zu Ursprung und Gehalt eines deutschen Geschichtsbewußtseins in der Zeit Gregors VII und Heinrichs IV', in S. Weinfurter (ed.), *Die Salier und das Reich* (Sigmaringen, 1992) III, pp. 265–73; see also B. Arnold, *Medieval Germany, 500–1300: A Political Interpretation* (London, 1997), pp. 1–17.

\* I am very grateful to Mayke De Jong and to Elizabeth Tyler for their comments and help, and to audiences at Birmingham, Leeds and London for their responses to this paper in various guises. All points of detail and argument remain my own.

# *A man for all seasons: Pacificus of Verona and the creation of a local Carolingian past*

*Cristina La Rocca*

## PACIFICUS' LIFE BETWEEN THE NINTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

Pacificus, an archdeacon of Verona, lived probably between the end of the eighth and the first half of the ninth century, when the city of Verona was starting its career as one of the main centres of Carolingian patronage in northern Italy. He – together with the local clergy of the *schola sacerdotum Veronensis ecclesiae* – probably supported the revolt against Louis the Pious organized by Bernard, Pippin's son, in 817.<sup>1</sup> As a political opponent of Louis the Pious and his ally Ratholdus, the bishop of Verona, Pacificus was probably exiled to the monastery of Nonantola (in the province of Modena) where he died. During his exile Pacificus did try at least once to regain his lost prestige within the *schola sacerdotum Veronensis ecclesiae* but apparently without success.<sup>2</sup> His existence is proved by one autograph signature to a private document in 809 and perhaps a second to a similar document of 814, now disappeared.<sup>3</sup>

Pacificus' story is therefore not very different from that of other priests, monks and bishops who tried unsuccessfully to voice their dissent from the Carolingian establishment.<sup>4</sup> Pacificus is unusual in that

This chapter was translated from the Italian by J. Ziolkowski.

<sup>1</sup> See P. Depreux, 'Das Königtum Bernards von Italien und sein Verhältnis zum Kaisertum', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienische Bibliotheken und Archiven* 72 (1992), pp. 1–24; M. Innes, 'Charlemagne's will: piety, politics and the imperial succession', *English Historical Review* 112 (1998), pp. 833–55, at pp. 842–8.

<sup>2</sup> Written sources of Pacificus' life in the Carolingian period are examined in C. La Rocca, *Pacifico di Verona. Il passato carolingio nella costruzione della memoria urbana* (Rome, 1995), pp. 173–84. On Carolingian monasteries as prisons for political opponents see M. De Jong, *In Samuel's Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996), pp. 252–66.

<sup>3</sup> The first original document, dated 13 May, is in the Archivio Segreto Vaticano under *Fondo Veneto*, I, no. 6529 (Verona, 809 maggio 13) and in the Archivio Capitolare Veronese [hereafter: ACV], III–4–3r (Verona, 814 giugno 20); Pacificus' work is here limited to his signature on a number of documents concerning the property of Verona's *schola sacerdotum*.

<sup>4</sup> K. Brunner, *Oppositionelle Gruppen im Karolingerreich* (Cologne, Vienna and Graz, 1979).

his name and identity did not disappear when he died: from the twelfth century his personality was completely reshaped and reinvented, initially with no great care, turning him into a local Carolingian forebear whose actions and prestige created worthy precedents for the new practices and legal relations coming into existence in the twelfth century between the cathedral chapter of Verona and the bishop and urban elites. In other words, Pacificus' life was invented in the twelfth century through the medium of the written word and the production of forged documents. The forgeries were the result of the need to produce documentary evidence that the property rights of the cathedral chapter went back centuries but, in terms of historical research, came to be considered reliable Carolingian 'sources' that proved both the cultural prestige enjoyed by the city in the Carolingian period and also the prestige of Pacificus himself as a Veronese intellectual.

While, as we shall see, the twelfth-century forgeries were produced to meet minor and limited requirements, the portrayal of Pacificus himself as a full-blown Carolingian intellectual, who symbolized the cathedral chapter and Carolingian past of Verona, was an entirely scholarly fabrication. Using documentary 'proofs' and epigraphs, Pacificus' 'true' life story was constructed in three stages, during each of which his personality underwent further development. Paradoxically, the greater the apparently objective basis (i.e. the documents) for the claims made about him, the more the claims diverged from the truth. The slow transformation of Pacificus into first a local hero and then an intellectual of European stature therefore has nothing to do with the true events surrounding the archdeacon's life in the Carolingian era or with the original reasons that, in the twelfth century, led the clergy to invent his involvement in a number of episodes in order that they might be able to assert property rights.

This study looks not only at the stages that led to the total divergence of the story of Pacificus' life from its reality but also at Verona's obsession during the course of centuries with its 'Carolingian era', a period that over the years came to be seen, despite variations and modifications, as a golden age.

The initial embroidery of Pacificus' true career was based on the only two authentic documents (of 809 and 814 respectively) to which he appended his signature. During the course of the twelfth century at least four documents were produced in which he is an interested party. The first invention is that he was the founder of Verona's *schola sacerdotum* at the beginning of the ninth century and was later supposed to have made

it directly subject to the patriarch of Aquileia. In June 813 he was supposed to have taken part in the production of a document in which Bishop Ratholdus granted the *schola sacerdotum* an independent income and three months later Pacificus is described as supporting the independence of the *schola* from the bishop's authority. The reason for the request is alleged to be that the *schola's* church had been built on land belonging to Pacificus himself and was therefore subject to its owner's wishes.<sup>5</sup>

From the appointment in the first two decades of the twelfth century of Theobald of Verona, who was the first bishop of Verona to be elected from among the members of the cathedral chapter,<sup>6</sup> Pacificus appears in several documents that were produced to demonstrate the antiquity of the chapter's claim to ownership of a number of churches in the city together with their property and rights. Originally the founder of the chapter during the Carolingian period, Pacificus subsequently became the founder of churches and *xenodochia* in documents that tended to underline his pious munificence. He thus became the co-author of a will with his sister Ansa, in which he appears as a landowner, a generous alms-giver to the needy and founder of a *xenodochium* dedicated to his memory.<sup>7</sup> In addition, in the foundation deeds for a church outside the city, which are written on the guidesheet to the will, he is described as a deputy for the bishop.<sup>8</sup> The fictitious pre-eminence of Pacificus within the *schola sacerdotum* changed the archdeacon into an influential political advisor to the *alamannus*, Bishop Rathold; in a document dated 840 (but written in the first half of the twelfth century) he appears as the *consiliarius* of the bishop and is referred to affectionately but respectfully as 'dilectus archidiaconus noster'.<sup>9</sup>

It is clear however that Pacificus was attributed with a series of concrete actions in the ninth century, not merely in order to provide the Verona chapter with a legal right to the property and rights it held in the twelfth

<sup>5</sup> There are two different versions of the document: the first is a twelfth-century imitation copy kept in the ACV as II-1-1r (813 giugno 24), and the second, now lost, was copied by Scipione Maffei and published by him in S. Maffei, 'Opuscoli ecclesiastici', in *Istoria teologica delle dottrine e delle opinioni corse nei primi cinque secoli della chiesa in proposito della divina grazia del libero arbitrio e della predestinazione* (Trent, 1742), p. 95. Maffei's manuscript copy is at the ACV *Buste Maffei*, co. DCCCCXLV, fasc. VIII, fas. 3-9.

<sup>6</sup> Theobald, *presbiter* of the chapter in 1118 (ACV, III-7-5r), was *archipresbiter* in 1120 (ACV, 53, m.2, no. 6, lost document copied by G. Muselli, *Memorie istoriche, cronologiche, diplomatiche, canoniche e critiche del capitolo e dei canonici di Verona* in ACV, cod. DCCCCXXXVI) and a bishop in 1136 (ACV, III-7-8r):

<sup>7</sup> *Codice diplomatico veronese*, I, ed. V. Vainelli (Venice, 1940) [hereafter: *CDV*, I] no. 176, pp. 248-254 (844 settembre 9): the document, whose original is missing, exists as a copy made by G. Dionisi, *De duobus episcopis Aldone et Notingo* (Verona, 1758), pp. 75-9.

<sup>8</sup> The document remains as an authenticated twelfth-century copy in ACV, 1-4-5r (844 agosto 6).

<sup>9</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano *Fondo Veneto* I, no. 6530 (840).



century, but also to emphasize Carolingian tradition as the basis for the chapter's life, at a time of ecclesiastic reform, when the institutions of the Church, and in particular bishoprics, were undergoing a period of major upheaval. From the middle of the twelfth century the title of *archipresbiter* in the cathedral chapter became a requirement for all aspiring candidates to bishoprics.<sup>10</sup> This broke the traditional pairing of *archidiaconus* and *archipresbiter* as administrators of the chapter's property and client relations. From 1120, the date on which Theobald became archpriest,<sup>11</sup> archpriest alone appears in documents approving and renewing agreements with the *fideles* of chapter and negotiating property deals on behalf of the chapter: from the administrative viewpoint, the archdeacon had now been completely deprived of all his traditional authority.<sup>12</sup> Politically, Theobald's position as *archipresbiter* – which was defined by his aristocratic social background and the new duties of *archipresbiter* in calming social unrest – therefore led to a similar redefinition of the duties of archdeacons, since the reorganization of the chapter had led to the two positions being assigned different levels of responsibility.

This true innovation was consciously and deliberately justified and emphasized through Pacificus. The qualities that had recently been attributed to him (supporter of the chapter's independence from the bishop and prolific builder) provided a model definition of the new duties of archdeacons and were publicly celebrated in stone – the famous epitaph – inside the city's new cathedral, building of which had commenced under Bishop Bernard and was finished under Theobald in the second half of the twelfth century.<sup>13</sup>

Pacificus' memorial comprises two stone inscriptions placed one above the other and each differing from the other in terms of lettering, literary style and presentation: both are now contained within a yellow

<sup>10</sup> This applied also to the ecclesiastical chapter hierarchies in other north Italian cities: in Padua, for example, the position of archpriest became a necessary stepping stone in the career of any aspiring bishop, while in Milan the requirement was to have held a position as archdeacon. See A. Tilatti, *Istituzioni ecclesiastiche e culto dei santi a Padova tra VI e XII secolo* (Rome, 1997), pp. 276–9; A. Ambrosioni, 'Milano e i suoi vescovi' in *Atti del 11° congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto medioevo* (Spoleto, 1989), pp. 310–12.

<sup>11</sup> Conflicting interpretations have been given to Theobald's work: while, politically speaking, he has been described as a corrupt bishop given to nepotism (L. Simeoni, 'Il primo periodo della vita comunale a Verona', in L. Simeoni, *Studi su Verona nel medioevo* (Verona, 1957–8), pp. 156–64), more recently, he was used as an illustrious *exemplum* of the complexity of the duties of the reform bishops (M. C. Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church. Ecclesiastical Change in Verona (950–1150)* (Ithaca and London, 1993), pp. 165–74).

<sup>12</sup> The first mention of archpriest and archdeacon as *custodes et rectores* of the *schola* is given in 846 (CDV, I, no. 182, pp. 274–278) and the last joint mention of them is in 1114 (ACV, I–6–2v, 1114 luglio 25).

<sup>13</sup> See the chronology recently proposed by A. Bartoli, 'Il complesso romanico', in P. P. Brugnoli (ed.), *La cattedrale di Verona nelle vicende edilizie dal secolo VI al secolo XVI* (Verona, 1987), pp. 101–65.

marble baroque frame and are set onto the north wall of Verona cathedral. While the lower epitaph is merely an adaptation of the metric epitaph of Alcuin of York,<sup>14</sup> the upper epitaph lists Pacificus' life and works in detail: the archdeacon is described as founder of ecclesiastical institutions in the city and an inventor, astronomer, painter, sculptor and last but not least, the author of 218 manuscripts and commentator of religious texts.<sup>15</sup> The bare details of his life are also given: his age when he died, the number of years he served as archdeacon, the year of Lothar's reign in which he died and finally the date of his death.

The text on both is as follows:

#### First epitaph:

Here rests Archdeacon Pacificus, renowned for his wisdom and his resplendent form. No such man has been found in our times, because we do not believe that any such man has ever existed. The best builder and renovator of churches: those of Zeno, Proculus, Vitus, Peter and Laurence, also that of the mother of God, as well as that of George. In whatever there was of gold and silver and other metals, whatever there was from various woods and white marble, there was no one as skilled in such arts. He wrote 218 books. No one had seen a nocturnal clock before [his time]. Behold, he discovered a method, and built the first one. He composed a gloss on the Old and New Testaments, he put the best song of the spheres of heaven in the clock, and he composed many other writings which the intelligent man will find. He lived sixty-eight years and was archdeacon for forty-three. In the twenty-seventh year of the age of Emperor Lothar, released from the mass of his flesh, he passed on to the Lord. He died on the Kalends of December, on that sacred night which we call Sunday. The best priests and ministers mourned him. The innumerable population grieved, indeed. O readers, I beg you, bow as if holding your feet, and please pray for the Pacificus.

#### Second epitaph:

Traveller coming by, I ask you now to stop a little while  
And examine my words in your heart.

<sup>14</sup> This contains no autobiographical material: the text contains the traditional invitation addressed to passers-by by Pacificus himself, to reflect upon the transience of human life. From Alcuin's epitaph, which was known only in manuscript form (E. Dümmler (ed.), MGH PLAC I (Berlin, 1881), no. 123, pp. 350–1), were changed vv. 3–4 and 14–15. Vv. 23–4 which contain Alcuin's name were changed to contain that of Pacificus and connected to vv. 15–16. The efforts of the anonymous poet from Verona were concentrated only on the last two verses. Pacificus' double epitaph is published in MGH PLAC II (Berlin, 1884), p. 656.

<sup>15</sup> Detailed analysis of the two inscriptions, with a proposed dating to the twelfth century, is given in La Rocca, *Pacifico di Verona*, pp. 128–72.

What you are now, I was – a famous traveller of the world –  
 And what I am now, you will one day be.  
 pursued the delights of the world with a perverse love.  
 Now I can ash and dust and food for worms,  
 Wherefore remember to take care of your soul  
 Than of your flesh, because the former endures, and the latter dies.  
 Why prepare your many things? What you see in this small cavity –  
 Peace – holds me here; so will it happen to your small things.  
 As flowers die when the menacing wind comes,  
 So indeed will your flesh and all your pride die.  
 Reader of this song, I ask you to do me a favour  
 And say, ‘Christ, give mercy to your servant.’  
 Pacificus, Salomon and Ireneus are my names.  
 Pour out prayers for me, you who read this inscription in your mind:  
 I beg that no hand should violate the holiness of the grave,  
 Until the angelic trumpet resounds from the citadel:  
 ‘You who lie in this mound of earth, rise from the dust!  
 The great Judge is here with countless hosts.’  
 Do away with your sluggishness here, and put down your haughtiness of  
 mind!  
 Believe me, brother, you will return from here better off.  
 In the year of the incarnation of the Lord 846, tenth indiction.

In the upper inscription, the praise of the work done by Pacificus in the past provided a list of the new intellectual duties of archdeacons in the twelfth century: inventing, writing, copying and above all ensuring that the chapter’s *scriptorium* recovered its original activity, which had been totally abandoned in the intervening years.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the details of the archdeacon’s age, the year of his death and the year of Lothar’s reign in which he died show the increased use of mathematical skills within historical narrative at the time. This was also taking place in Germany, a country with which Verona, and particularly its public government, had close contact.<sup>17</sup>

Pacificus’ personality, as portrayed in the epitaph which was positioned so that it could be read, or at least conceived, as a public

<sup>16</sup> The activities of the chapter library in the twelfth century were limited to exhaustively catering to liturgical needs: R. Avesani, ‘La cultura veronese dal secolo IX al secolo XII’, in *Storia della cultura veneta. Dalle origini al Trecento* (Vicenza, 1972), pp. 167–270 (quotation at p. 269).

<sup>17</sup> For the comprehensive historiography of Germany in the twelfth century, see the convincing analysis of T. Reuter, ‘Past, present and no future in the twelfth century Regnum Teutonicum’, in P. Magdalino (ed.), *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth Century Europe* (London and Rio Grande, 1992), pp. 15–36, especially pp. 33–5.

memorial to him, was constructed in such a way that he emerges as a model of dedicated alacrity who was clearly very different from his contemporaries, particularly as regards his interest in the chapter's production of books and manuscripts. The chapter's historic library is specifically described as a treasure that should be enriched in the future.<sup>18</sup> The fact that the lettering in which the epigraph is written is of the twelfth century rules out any possibility of the epigraph itself having been claimed to date from the Carolingian era. However, it was intended as a tribute to and celebration of the (fictitious but) meritorious acts of a citizen of Verona who had lived in the most prestigious era of the city's history. The insistence on the 'new' qualities that allegedly made Pacificus so outstanding in his time fits in very well with the twelfth-century habit of praising *novitas* as a renewal of the values proper to the city in the past.<sup>19</sup>

The Pacificus epigraph documents the unending efforts of Bishop Theobald and the clergy of Verona, as Pacificus' successors, towards improvement. Although originally sited inside the cathedral, the inscription was designed for open view to be read by all and not to be merely viewed from afar. The epigraph lost this original purpose and became a purely decorative ornament in the cathedral only in 1698 when it was raised several feet above the ground and closed within a marble frame together with Pacificus' second epitaph.<sup>20</sup>

The interpretation of this epigraph provides the best means of understanding the reasons behind the continued glorification of Pacificus over the course of the years, since the public fame of the archdeacon was closely linked to his appearance in documents as an interested party and vice versa. While the existence of the epigraph was the reason for the praise of Pacificus from the fourteenth century, at the same time the list of his multiple interests that it provides formed the basis for research into

<sup>18</sup> For the size and contents of the chapter library in Verona during the high Middle Ages, see C. Villa, 'Die Horazüberlieferung und die Bibliothek Karls des Großen. Zum Werkverzeichnis der Handschrift Berlin, Diez B. 66', in *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 51 (1995), pp. 29–52.

<sup>19</sup> See C. Wickham, 'The sense of the past in Italian communal narratives', in Magdalino (ed.), *The Perception of the Past*, pp. 173–89; an overview of recent literature on the meaning of the twelfth century *novitas* is given in C. La Rocca, 'L'ambigua novità: il XII secolo', in *Religiones novae* (Verona, 1995), pp. 29–55.

<sup>20</sup> The difference between the early medieval epigraphs and the *scritture esposte* (exposed writings) of the communal era is discussed by A. Petrucci, *La scrittura. Ideologia e rappresentazione* (Turin, 1986), pp. 11–13; A. Petrucci, 'Potere, spazi urbani, scritture esposte: proposte ed esempi', in *Culture et idéologie dans la genèse de l'état moderne*, Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 82 (Rome, 1985), pp. 85–97. See also the example of Bologna in B. Breveglieri, 'La scrittura epigrafica in età comunale: il caso bolognese', in *Civiltà comunale: libro, scrittura, documento*, Atti della Società ligure di storia patria 29 (Genoa, 1989), pp. 387–432.

his life and for the examination of the documents in which he appeared. In other words, if the epigraph was the vehicle by which his fame grew locally, it was also the general basis for the interpretation of the written acts of his life.

GIOVANNI MANSIONARIO, ONUPHRIUS PANVINIUS  
AND THE EPITAPHS

From the fourteenth century, the fame of Pacificus as a generous citizen and a pious commissioner of ecclesiastical buildings can only in part be attributed to the documents held in the Verona chapter library. It was more materially connected with the two funeral inscriptions of 846 that, as we have said, carefully list Pacificus' works and describe the extent of his learning. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Giovanni *de Matociis* (Giovanni Mansionario), a notary and *mansionarium* of Verona cathedral from 1311 to 1337, included in Book VI of his *Historiae imperiales*<sup>21</sup> an entire paragraph about the archdeacon, who thus took his place among the famous men of ninth-century Verona.<sup>22</sup> The ambitious aim of the *Historiae Imperiales* was to give a complete overview of all historical events from the time of Augustus up to the time the Della Scala family ruled Verona. However, the *Historiae* also included St Zeno, Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger because Mansionario believed them too to be from Verona. An interest in local history was therefore combined with an intellectual interest in chronology.

The portrait Mansionario paints of Pacificus is as follows:

The venerable man and excellent teacher Ireneus, who was also called Pacificus or Salomon, flourished in the Italian city of Verona. He was of the nation of Verona, descended from noble stock, and archdeacon of the holy church of Verona. He was trained in many disciplines, and it is written that he produced 218 books on many subjects. And, as he was the best astrologer, he first discovered in material figures the proof of the sphere of heaven with the circles and their connections, the motion of the sphere and of the fixed stars, the orbits of the planets, and the motions of the planets against the sphere. He put together a nocturnal clock through fine calculation, and he also obtained a daily one according to calculation and degree. This Ireneus, as he had been

<sup>21</sup> Iohannis de Matociis, *Historiae Imperiales*, fourteenth-century manuscript in ACV, cod. CCIV (189) of 246 numbered ff. As already noted in 1754 by G. Tartarotti, *Memorie antiche di Rovereto e dei luoghi circonvicini* (Venice, 1754), p. 151, 'on page 236.4 [Mansionario] founds all his praise of Pacificus the archdeacon of Verona on the stone that still exists within the cathedral; and it is curious to observe the manner in which he interprets several obscure points of that inscription'.

<sup>22</sup> For the biography of Giovanni Mansionario, see C. Adami, 'Per la biografia di Giovanni Mansionario' in *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 24 (1982), pp. 1-19, which lists the stages of development and the work of the cathedral chapter.

trained at the highest level in the holy Scriptures, compiled the sayings of the holy fathers as ordinary marginal glosses on the Old and New Testaments and set them off in the margins with a marvellous and laudable succinctness, and he did many other glorious things. On his own soil he built the church of the blessed martyr Georgius, which is called *in domo*, and he repaired many other churches. He cared for and fed the poor with generous alms. Such a man died here in Verona in the sixty-eighth year of his life, the forty-sixth year of his archdeaconate, the year of Our Lord 846, and the twenty-seventh year of the rule of Emperor Lothar through his father. His body is buried in the greater church of Verona on the northern side of that church, in a sepulchre on the wall of that church, with an epitaph placed upon it.<sup>23</sup>

Mansionario's sources are quite clear: from the first of the epitaphs he drew all the biographical information about Pacificus and from the second his three names (Pacificus, Salomon, Ireneus). But his portrait of the archdeacon is quite different from that painted by the inscriptions because no details are given in the latter. Mansionario first names the city in which Pacificus was born and his noble origins, neither of which are mentioned in the epigraphs; he names his main attributes as being *astrologus* and *doctor* and then a commentator of religious texts, but Pacificus' manual skills, although listed in the inscription, are summarily included among the *multa gloriosa* he performed. But in addition to the epigraphs, another source for the description of Pacificus' achievements is a clear reference to two of the most important documents in the chapter library in terms of the historical legitimacy they conferred upon the chapter itself: these are the forged documents which alleges that the chapter church had been built on land belonging to Pacificus himself and that the chapter was not subject to the bishop's authority, and the will listing not only Pacificus' property but also the details of the generous alms to be distributed to the poor on his anniversaries. Careful reference to the inscriptions also validated other written proofs of

<sup>23</sup> Florebat enim apud Veronam civitatem Italiae venerabilis vir et doctor egregius Ireneus qui et aliter Pacificus sive Salomon dictus est, natione Veronenis, nobili prosapia ortus et sanctae Veronensis ecclesiae archidiaconus. Hic diversis scientiis imbutus in diversis facultatibus libros CCXVIII edidisse describitur et cum esset optimus astrologus argumentum spere celi cum circulis et eorum connexionibus, motum spere et stellarum fixarum orbes planetarum et eorum contra speram motus in figuris materialibus primus invenit. Item horologium noturnum subtili calculatione composuit et diurnum etiam ad rationem et ordinem reportavit. Hic Ireneus, cum in sacris scripturis esset summe instructus, glosas ordinarias marginales veteris et novi testamenti sanctorum patrum dicta compillavit et in marginibus mira et laudabili brevitate distinxit multaue alia gloriosa fecit. Nam in proprio eius solo ecclesiam beati Georgii martiris que ad domo dicitur hedificavit, multas quas alias reparavit ecclesias. Pauperes elemosinis largis fovit et aluit. Obiit hic tantus vir Verone anno vite sue LXVIII, archidiaconatus XLVI, anno domini DCCCXLVI. Imperii Lotharii per patrem XXVII. Cuius corpus sepultum est in maiori ecclesia Veronensi a latere aquilonari ipsius ecclesie in sepulcro in muro ipsius ecclesie cum epithaphio posito.

Pacificus' greatness and wealth that were owned by the chapter, so that the fame of the epigraph authenticated the forged documents.

It appears that since epigraphs were on public view, they were of greater probatory value than documents and in his history *Mansionario* uses epigraphs and other material sources to support his claims not only about Pacificus but also about other personages. In these cases too, the authority of the proof depends on whether it is on public view, but it also served to underscore the continued importance of Verona as a city.<sup>24</sup> *Mansionario's* habit of giving material proofs for his histories has been described as a 'taste for the visual nature of monuments'<sup>25</sup> and this is the interpretation that has been given to the circus and theatre illustrations in the autograph manuscript of the *Historiae* contained in the Chigi Codex and to the medals bearing the heads of emperors that are drawn in the margins of the pages that deal with the same emperors: since these are clearly derived from the heads on coinage, they have been compared with the medallions bearing the portrait heads of emperors in the portico of the Della Scala palace in Verona attributed to the painter Altichiero.<sup>26</sup>

However, these portraits do not appear to result solely from a taste for the ornamental and we are more inclined to believe that *Mansionario* was fully aware of the political effectiveness of material proofs as a result of personal experience of it in his own time. *Mansionario's* continued reference to inscriptions in his work mirrored the new fashion for them in the Della Scala period. Although they continued to be used mainly in monuments to the dead, inscriptions now appeared celebrating the public works carried out by the Della Scalas themselves. One example of this is the pair of inscriptions produced at the end of the fourteenth century commemorating the construction of the Ponte delle Navi (the bridge of the ships) which the Della Scalas had built over the River Adige; the first is written in Latin and bears the Della Scala crest in the middle, the second is written in vulgate and presents rhythmic verses from the entire epigraphic stock.<sup>27</sup> It is immediately obvious that this

<sup>24</sup> As in the case of the epitaph carved into the main arch of SS Nazarius and Celsus (Iohannis de Matociis, *Historiae imperiales*, f. 33 v. 2); or the inscription on the city gate built by Emperor Galienus (ibid., f. 32 r 2) and the names of the martyrs carved into the stones of St Stephen (ibid., f. 130 r 2).

<sup>25</sup> R. Avesani, 'Il preumanesimo veronese', in *Storia della cultura veneta. Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), p. 120.

<sup>26</sup> G. L. Mellini, *Altichiero e Jacopo Avanzi* (Milan, 1965), pp. 30–2.

<sup>27</sup> D. Modonesi has produced a catalogue of the thirteenth-century Veronese inscriptions in the city's Musei Civici in 'Iscrizioni di epoca scaligera del Museo di Castelvecchio. Scipione Maffei e la riscoperta del Medioevo', in G. M. Varanni (ed.), *Gli Scaligeri (1277–1387)* (Verona 1988), pp. 567–77.

inscription follows the model of Pacificus' epigraph and comprises two parts, each with a different pagination and literary style.

Mansionario was therefore apparently aware not only of the legitimacy that the contents of inscriptions could confer but also that they bore all the authority of the *dominus* who had commissioned them.<sup>28</sup> Mansionario used the example of the Della Scalas' monopoly of Verona's public spaces, which they used to celebrate their public works, as a rhetorical device for expressing the political importance of the chapter through its monopoly over the space within the cathedral. This was borne out by confirmation of the peculiarity of the bishopric and the chapter of Verona: even in the middle of the fourteenth century, after the agreement with the Holy See, the bishop of Verona continued to be elected from within the cathedral chapter according to a 200-year-old tradition.<sup>29</sup>

The authority of Pacificus and the *schola sacerdotum* (to which he had belonged in the Carolingian period) was further underscored by an additional similarity between his tombstone and those typical of Mansionario's time: like the Della Scala inscriptions which celebrated the construction of fortifications in the city and the countryside by the lords of Verona,<sup>30</sup> the epitaph focused all praise of the archdeacon on his position as an indefatigable builder. The very success of the Della Scalas' propaganda indicated to Mansionario that the way to publicize the chapter was to apply their own contemporary assessment criteria when praising monumental buildings constructed for public benefit.

Excessive value should not be placed on Mansionario's work, how-

<sup>28</sup> This is discussed by Petrucci in 'Potere, spazi urbani', pp. 85–97 and N. Giovè Marchioli has specifically examined the situation so far as Verona is concerned in 'L'epigrafia comunale cittadina', in P. Cammarosano (ed.), *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento*, Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 201 (Rome, 1994) pp. 278–80.

<sup>29</sup> G. De Sandre, 'Istituzioni e vita religiosa delle chiese venete tra XII e XIV secolo', in A. Castagnetti and G. M. Varaini (eds.), *Il Veneto nel medioevo. Dai comuni cittadini al predominio scaligero nella Marca* (Verona, 1991), pp. 438–40. On the twelfth-century elections of the bishop see M. Ronzani, 'Vescovi, capitoli e strategie famigliari nell'Italia comunale', in G. Chittolini and G. Miccoli (eds.), *La chiesa e il potere politico dal medioevo all'età contemporanea*, Storia d'Italia, Annali 9 (Turin, 1986), pp. 101–46. On local elections see A. Rigon, 'Le elezioni vescovili nel processo di sviluppo delle istituzioni ecclesiastiche a Padova tra XII e XIII secolo', in *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome. Moyen Age – Temps Modernes* 89 (Rome, 1977), pp. 371–85; D. Rando, 'Le elezioni vescovili dei secoli XII–XIV. Uomini, poteri, procedure', in D. Rando and G. M. Varaini (eds.), *Storia di Treviso. II. Il medioevo* (Venice, 1991), pp. 375–97.

<sup>30</sup> Modonesi, 'Iscrizioni di epoca scaligera', no. 2: a. 1325, an inscription that commemorates the city walls built by Cangrande from S. Zeno to the SS Trinità church (pp. 569–70); no. 3: 1327, an inscription commemorating the fortification of Peschiera (p. 570); no. 7–8: 1373–5, a pair of inscriptions commemorating the construction of the Ponte delle Navi (pp. 573–4); no. 9: 1376, an inscription commemorating the construction of the donjon at Castelvechio (pp. 574–5).



ever, as the praise accorded to Pacificus is contained in only one of the three manuscript copies of the *Historiae* – the copy intended for mainly local use. It was the aura of truth with which Mansionario tried to impregnate all his work, and his frequent references to authors from the past, whom he names, that subsequently led to the *Historiae* being considered not merely a collection of texts but an authentic source.

De Matociis appears himself as a fully-fledged ‘source’ in a history of the *antiquitates* of Verona<sup>31</sup> compiled by Onuphrius Panvinus, an Augustinian monk who had a public career as a papal biographer and expert inventor of genealogies.<sup>32</sup> Before Panvinus, the only person to show any interest in Pacificus had been the poet Corna da Soncino who, at the end of the fifteenth century, ended his *Cantare in Onore di Verona* with a glorification of the archdeacon that once again was based on the epitaph.<sup>33</sup> Pacificus appears in Panvinus’ work at two crucial points: in Book I in the section entitled *De Vario Murorum Urbis Ambitu*, and in Book VI among the biographies of the illustrious citizens of Verona who are mentioned in the book; Pacificus appears together with St Zeno, the patron saint of Verona, among the ‘theologians’.

<sup>31</sup> O. Panvinus, *Antiquitates Veronenses* (Patavii, 1648), pp. 32–3. This work was left unfinished at Panvinus’ death in 1568 and was published a century later with a large number of queries, ‘with many errors that did not enter Panvinus’ thoughts and with such confusion as I believe is the miserable destiny of posthumous works’ (S. Maffei, *Verona illustrata* III (Verona, 1782), p. 337). C. Cipolla is of a similar opinion in ‘Di un falso diploma di Berengario I’ in *Atti della Reale accademia delle scienze di Torino* XXXII (Turin, 1897), pp. 1061–78 (now in C. G. Mor (ed.), *Scritti di Carlo Cipolla*, I (Verona, 1978), pp. 165–82). I have therefore checked the published text of the *notitia* against Panvinus’ original manuscript version in the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome: Panvinus, *Antiquitates Veronenses*, sixteenth-century manuscript, Biblioteca Angelica Roma, n. A–7–3. For the value placed upon the past by humanist historiography in terms of education and example, particularly within the Veneto, see E. Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago and London, 1981), p. 215–21.

<sup>32</sup> Panvinus’ life is examined by D. A. Perini in *Onofrio Panvinio e le sue opere* (Rome, 1899). For the falsification of genealogies and inscriptions, see W. McCuaig, *Carlo Sigonio. The Changing World of the Late Renaissance* (Princeton, 1989), pp. 224–6; S. Carocci, *Baroni di Roma. Dominazioni signorili e lignaggi aristocratici nel Duecento e nel primo Trecento*, Nuovi studi storici 23 (Rome, 1993), pp. 415–16. Roberto Bizzocchi’s work on the connection between learning and genealogies includes ‘“Familiae romanae” antiche e moderne’, *Rivista storica italiana* 103 (1991), pp. 355–97; ‘La culture généalogique dans l’Italie du seizième siècle’, *Annales ESC* 46 (1991), pp. 789–805; and finally *Genealogie incredibili. Scritti di storia nell’Europa moderna* (Bologna, 1995), pp. 17–18, 140–5, 415–16.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Ancor s’agionge in questa nova istoria\ che, al tempo de Lotario imperatore, fu uno archidiacon degno di memoria\ in ne la gesia catedral magiore\ (de Dio sia laude, onore e la gloria!)\ Costui fu il primo solenne inventore\ de far notturni orologi cum rote,\ onde le suo degne virtù son note.\ E si volle Verona amplificare:\ de Santo Zeno Magior fu fondatore\ e de Santa Maria Matriculare,\ la quale è oggi la gesia magiore;\ e San Laurenzo fece fabricare,\ cosi San Procul, ché non piglio errore,\ e fece far San Pietro in Monte Castro; de più metalli fu solenne mastro,\ de molte scienze e ingegni fu dotato,\ e fu de pura e bona condizione:\ Pacifico per nome fu chiamato’: F. Corna da Soncino, *Fioretto*, eds. G. P. Marchi and P. Brugnoli (Verona, 1973), ottave 252–4, p. 90.

Pacificus, citizen of Verona, was the greatest theologian and the greatest cultivator of many other disciplines. He was a man of great piety and great soul, and he was the archdeacon of our church. He flourished in Verona in the time of the Emperors Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, around the year 820 AD. He first discovered the nocturnal clock, and he wrote over three hundred volumes. He founded the (in my opinion) most famous library in the entire world, whose remains still exist in Verona in the Monastery of the Canons of Verona, and which is adorned with almost two hundred majuscule letters. The shrewdness of his genius and his famous accomplishments can be known from his ancient epitaph, which can still be seen carved in marble towards the north of the cathedral. This gives delight to its readers from the memory of a remarkable, great and worthy man of our church.<sup>34</sup>

Panvinius' portrait of Pacificus, again based on the epigraph, embroiders and expands that of Mansionario: the final reference to the epigraph as proof is identical, as is the description of its location within the cathedral. For greater accuracy, and as was Panvinius' habit, he also provides the text of the first inscription but leaves out the second (the copy of Alcuin's epitaph), probably because this contained no relevant biographical material.<sup>35</sup> Panvinius' portrait does however differ from Mansionario's in a number of significant areas: Pacificus is no longer described as *astrologus* or *doctor*, he now becomes *theologus*, the number of his writings is increased to three hundred and he is described as the founder of the chapter's library.

Pacificus the learned, pious and tireless writer now also becomes the means of divine justice under Panvinius. In Book I, Panvinius relates an entirely new episode in Pacificus' life, never before told: while mentioning the area of the city and giving the chronology of its fortifications, and after having comprehensively rebutted the assumptions of his predecessors who are accused of being forgers and of having made implausible claims,<sup>36</sup> Panvinius proposes his own versions of the facts but not before he has first demolished the 'proofs' of his predecessors, by repeated reference to Procopius, Anonymous Valesianus and a number of medieval private charters held in the chapter's archives. The impression of

<sup>34</sup> Panvinius, *Antiquitates Veronenses*, pp. 153–4: 'Summus theologus, summusque multarum aliarum disciplinarum cultor fuit Pacificus Veronensis civis, vir magnae pietatis atque animi, nostraeque ecclesiae archidiaconus, qui Veronae temporibus Caroli Magni, et Ludovicii pii Imperatorum floruit circa annos Christi DCCCXX. Hic horologium nocturnum primus invenit, et supra CCC volumina scripsit, bibliothecam totius orbis terrarum meo iudicio celeberrimam condidit, cuius vestigia adhuc Verone in Monasterio Canonicorum Veronensium extat, ducentis paene litteris maiusculis scripsit in membranis libris ornatum. Huius acumen ingenii resque preclare geste ex eius antiquo epitaphio quad marmoreo lapidi incisum adhuc in Cathedrali aquilonem versus cernitur, intelligi possunt. Quod legentibus delectationem ob insignis atque optime de ecclesia nostra meiti viri memoriam affert.'

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152–3. <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 30–1.

great philological accuracy is constantly reinforced by the writer's continued repetitions that he wishes to refer only to the sources.<sup>37</sup> Panvinus states that the only parts of the city walls that can be dated with any certainty go back to the third century (as supported by the inscriptions of the Emperor Galienus) and to the ninth century, as supported by a previously unpublished document discovered by chance by the author himself, which he quotes in full, despite the rather bad quality of the writing.<sup>38</sup> The document quoted by Panvinus is a *notitia* of 837 that refers to events that took place in 798 when Charlemagne rebuilt the walls of Verona to protect it from the danger posed by the Avars. The building costs gave rise to a dispute between the *pars episcopii* and the *cives* in which the former wished to contribute one quarter of the costs, as was their custom, and not one third as the citizens demanded. Since there were no proofs to support either of the claims, they had recourse to the ordeal of the cross, during which Pacificus, then a young deacon, defeated the champion of the *pars publica*. Pacificus' victory led to an undisputed tradition and, when Lothar again restored the city walls, the result of the ordeal was considered to constitute an accepted custom so that the clergy of Verona paid only one quarter of the cost of the work.

As I have already shown, this documentary proof was a pure invention on the part of Panvinus:<sup>39</sup> the clear distinction he makes between the Church and the city echoes the centuries-long battle between the bishops of Verona and the city, and its purpose was to persuade the Venetian Republic to adjust its 1493 tax assessment to take into account the changes in the Church's holdings.<sup>40</sup> The clergy insisted that the demand that they contribute one quarter of public spending, which was usual under the Della Scalas,<sup>41</sup> be reduced in line with the reduction in

<sup>37</sup> See for example pp. 11, 13–14, 27, 37.

<sup>38</sup> 'Ex antiquo hoc monumento didici quod in membranis mire vetustatis scriptum inveni, in vetustissima, nobilissimaque collegii canonicorum Veronensis ecclesie bibliotheca, quod quamquam barbare exaratum, subicere tamen placuit, ut unde ego hec acceperim, omnes intelligent, fedemque historice veritatis expleam': Panvinus, *Antiquitates Veronenses*, p. 32. According to A. Grafton, *Forgers and Critics, Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 8–9, 19–21, 'Claims of faithfulness in copying suggest, and tales of texts discovered in miraculous circumstances directly reveal, the presence of the forger.'

<sup>39</sup> La Rocca, *Pacifico di Verona*, pp. 27–48.

<sup>40</sup> The fiscal policies of the Venetian Republic as regards ecclesiastical property are examined by E. Stumpo, in 'Un mito da sfatare? Immunità ed esenzioni fiscali della proprietà ecclesiastica negli Stati italiani fra 500 e 600', in *Studi in onore di Gino Barbieri*, I, II (Salerno, 1983), pp. 1419–66, and 'Il consolidamento della grande proprietà ecclesiastica nell'età della Controriforma', in Chittolini and Miccoli (eds.), *La chiesa e il potere politico*, pp. 265–89.

<sup>41</sup> The reference to the problem given by L. Simeoni in 'Le origini del Comune di Verona', *Nuovo archivio veneto* 25 (1913), p. 50 is expanded by A. Castagnetti in 'Aspetti politici, economici e sociali di chiese e monasteri dall'epoca carolingia alle soglie dell'età moderna', in *Chiese e monasteri a Verona* (Verona, 1980), pp. 94–102 and its bibliography; and by G. M. Varanini 'Aspetti e

the number of ecclesiastics.<sup>42</sup> The long campaign of Verona's clergy, which consisted of an interminable number of appeals to the Serene Republic, was not finally successful until 1659.<sup>43</sup> The dispute to which the *notitia* refers was also a reaction to an event that took place in Panvinus' lifetime: the construction of Verona's bastions by the Venetian Republic at the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>44</sup> This had provided the opportunity for revising the *dadie* or extraordinary taxes imposed on the clergy to pay for public works.<sup>45</sup> As in the *notitia* invented by Panvinus, the sixteenth-century clergy of Verona declared that the taxes levied on them were iniquitous and excessive as they now represented only a small proportion of the city's population.<sup>46</sup>

This was nothing less than moving backwards in time a conflict that was well known in Panvinus' day: by moving its origins back to the Carolingian period an authoritative precedent could be established in the resolution of the conflicts with the *pars publica*. The use of the past as a model for the present is one of the driving forces behind Panvinus' historiography, especially where the citizens' responsibility for maintaining the prestige of their city and its monuments was concerned. Panvinus published the *notitia* in a highly controversial manner: it formed part of an *excursus* on the various stages of the construction of the city walls which were now being slowly destroyed along with Verona's other antiquities as a result of the neglect, lack of civic pride and short-sighted avarice of its inhabitants.<sup>47</sup> Although they lived in a city endowed with major architectural treasures from the past, the Veronese were described as being

problemi del sistema fiscale veneto nel Quattrocento: struttura e funzionamento della camera fiscale di Verona', in *Il primo dominio veneziano a Verona (1405-1509)* (Verona, 1991), pp. 143-91.

<sup>42</sup> See P. Lanaro Sartori, 'L'esenzione fiscale a Verona nel 400 e nel 500: un momento di scontro tra ceti dirigenti e ceti subalterni', in G. Borelli, P. Lanaro and F. Vecchiato (eds.), *Il sistema fiscale veneto. Problemi e aspetti (XV-XVIII secolo)* (Verona, 1982), pp. 191-215.

<sup>43</sup> See the documents quoted by G. Borelli in 'Aspetti e forme della ricchezza degli enti ecclesiastici e monastici a Verona tra secolo XVI e XVIII', in *Chiese e monasteri a Verona*, pp. 132-40; R. Scola Gagliardi, *La mensa vescovile di Verona* (Verona, 1987), pp. 135-7; P. Lanaro Sartori, *Un'oligarchia urbana nel Cinquecento veneto. Istituzioni, economia, società* (Turin, 1992), pp. 83-7.

<sup>44</sup> See the recent work of G. Mazzi, 'Il Cinquecento: i cantieri della difesa', in P. Brugnoli and A. Sandrini (eds.), *L'architettura a Verona nell'età della Serenissima (sec. XV-sec. XVIII)* (Verona, 1988), pp. 91-4, 108.

<sup>45</sup> A. Castagnetti, 'La pianura veronese nel medioevo', in *Una città e il suo fiume II* (Verona, 1977), pp. 88-9, 104-5.

<sup>46</sup> See the sources quoted by Borelli, 'Aspetti e forme della ricchezza', pp. 132-40; and also A. Briffardi (ed.), *Nunziature di Venezia XI* (Rome, 1972), no. 182, pp. 261-2; no. 206, pp. 293-4, etc., all concerning the reluctance of Verona's clergy to pay their proper share of taxes.

<sup>47</sup> Pavinus, *Antiquitates Veronenses*, p. 101, underlines the fact that the city, once rich in noble monuments 'temporum vi et civium negligentia (non, ut plerique opinantur, Barbarorum furore, quibus nullum cum edificiis bellum fuit) passim collapsa sunt, ut nulla amplius illarum vestigia aut facies extet'.

totally unworthy of them since throughout their entire history they had needed efficient government to care for their city and to settle the disputes that arose from purely selfish interests. For example, Panvinus imagines the Emperor Galienus, who had built the city walls in the third century AD, berating the Veronese for having allowed the walls 'senio et vetustate collabi faciente iacuerant'.<sup>48</sup> In order to make the people of Verona understand the importance of the architectural remains within their city, they had to be given practical examples of behaviour and the only way that this could be achieved was via historical narrative.

The use of historical narration as illustration therefore provides the pretext for producing the forgeries; their purpose is to provide proof of already well-known historical events by connecting them with the direct actions of famous personages and thus immediately emphasizing the morality of the past. The question of how to include documents produced *ad hoc* in past events is discussed in the correspondence between Panvinus and Carlo Sigonio: they talk about the importance of inscriptions as proofs of antiquity and how to create them *ex novo*.<sup>49</sup>

In order to prove the truth of his claims, Panvinus often quotes entire sections from documents and epigraphs and even in the only other case, other than this *notitia*, in which he quotes at length from an early medieval document, this too is a forgery. It is Berengar's charter, examined by Carlo Cipolla, which gives a full description of the ruins of the Roman theatre which collapsed after an earthquake.<sup>50</sup> Like the substantial appendix of inscriptions to the *Antiquitates*, which constitutes an entire compendium of proofs, this too contains a large number of extracts from classical authors that are given in epigraph form.<sup>51</sup> The true and the fake references (the first given in brief and the latter quoted in full) together make up the erudite baggage of the *Antiquitates* and authenticate each other.

Produced in the twelfth century and quoted by both Mansionario and Panvinus as proof of the stature of Pacificus in the ninth century, the archdeacon's epigraph had now become the material and verifiable evidence of a document that had never existed. When at the end of the eighteenth century Michelangelo Lupo, a scholar from Bergamo, wished to consult the document to confirm the true story of this most

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>49</sup> Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 309–10; McCuaig, *Carlo Sigonio*, p. 224.

<sup>50</sup> Panvinus, *Antiquitates Veronenses*, pp. 89–93; Cipolla, *Di un falso diploma di Berengario I*, pp. 1061–78.

<sup>51</sup> Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 426.

celebrated figure,<sup>52</sup> the awkward reply he received to his request from the canons seems almost joking.

#### THE DISPUTES OVER THE EPIGRAPHS AND PACIFICUS' TOMB

By the sixteenth century Pacificus had become the only Veronese citizen from Carolingian times worthy of being included in the city's hall of fame. Although this was his longest-lasting persona, there was a crisis in the eighteenth century, which was brilliantly weathered, when the epigraph that formed the basis for Pacificus' celebrity began to be subjected to critical analysis. This gave rise to a series of problems that continue to be troublesome today. First, as soon as Scipione Maffei published epitaph in 1721 it was pointed out that the text published by Panvinus was not complete and the second half was missing: Maffei quickly published it.<sup>53</sup> The epitaph was then discovered to be made up of two separate parts: the first written in rhythmic verse and the second in metric verse which Maffei believed had been written by Pacificus himself 'ut sepulcro suo aliquando inscriberentur'.<sup>54</sup> Maffei's contemporaries therefore found themselves with a second, previously unpublished, epigraph, even though, as Maffei himself said, it had been visible to all for many years.<sup>55</sup> This led to the first, and traditional, set of questions about the inscription: why had Panvinus published only the first part? Where had the second inscription come from? Had it been somewhere else?

The original site of the inscription was a problem that taxed eighteenth-century scholars for many years and soon became an attempt to identify the location of Pacificus' tomb and what it looked like. The

<sup>52</sup> M. Lupo, *Codex diplomaticus civitatis et ecclesiae Bergomatis*, (Bergamo, 1784), cols. 1093–4: 'ut hanc verisimillimam oculatissimi viri conjecturam confirmarem, per amicum egi, ut autographum, aut antiquum apographum chartae, de qua agitur, consuleretur; verum accepi membranam ipsam in archivo ipsius cathedralis iam a pluribus annis desiderari'

<sup>53</sup> S. Maffei, 'Praefatio', in *Cassiodori senatoris complexiones* (Florence, 1721) (now reissued with an Italian translation in G. P. Marchi, *Un italiano in Europa. Scipione Maffei tra passione antiquaria e impegno civile* (Verona, 1992), pp. 38–41): 'Ut autem constet, quo is [sc: Pacificus archidiaconus] anno decesserit, quam admirando ingenio floruerit, quantumque ecclesiam Veronensem Capitulumque nostrum – multis ac praeclaris titulis, ut alibi persequar, illustrem – decoraverit, inscriptionem afferam, candido marmori incisam et in cathedrali templo pulchre collocatam, cuius priorem tantum partem vulgarunt Panvinus, Ughellius, alii: XI disticha praetermittentes, quae ab ipso eximio viro, ut sepulcro suo aliquando inscriberentur, concinnata nullus dubito; cum e sensu, quinti praesertim versus et decimitertii, tum quia stilum praeseferunt a rithmico praecedente elogio longe diversum' (quoted on p. 39).

<sup>54</sup> Maffei, 'Praefatio', p. 39.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39: 'Qui celebrati huius ingenii foetum aliquem nancisci summo opere cupiebant, elegans pro tempore epigramma, quod prae oculis quotidie habentes non agnoscebant, plaudentes excipiant.'

dedication shown by Veronese scholars to the question did, however, conceal an underlying 'professional' defence against the ferocious assaults on his fellow-citizens made by Maffei. Maffei's explanation for the mutilation of Pacificus' epitaph was not at all flattering to Verona: he blamed it entirely on

our carelessness, on the laziness and – need I say it? – the at times negligence and stupidity of our fellow-citizens, very many of whom are ignorant of, or laugh at, anything concerning the understanding of facts and circumstances and are unable to see those testimonies of the past that lie before our very eyes, unless they first realize that people come from the most remote areas to seek them out and illustrate them.<sup>56</sup>

Consequently, Maffei believed, the second half of the epitaph had never been published because no one had ever bothered to check that Panvinius' transcription was complete. The reaction of local historians was predictable: they fell over themselves to prove that the second epigraph had been hidden, kept in some dark spot or had only been discovered by chance a few years before. The mystery surrounding the second inscription, which grew up in the eighteenth century and later continued, was initially an attempt to avoid being tarred with the brush of ignorance and negligence.

A rather complicated debate arose covering all possible, more or less ingenious, aspects which culminated in two clear views being developed about the original form of Pacificus' tomb. The first view<sup>57</sup> was that the two epigraphs had originally been in two different places and that Pacificus' tomb had comprised two marble mouldings carved with plant volutes, both Roman in origin, and together used to form a sarcophagus. This would have been fixed to the cathedral's external wall and supported by two marble lions. A bas-relief would have been placed above the tomb showing the Virgin flanked by St John the Evangelist on one side and by St John the Baptist and a kneeling Pacificus on the other. Panvinius' inscription would have been below the sarcophagus. The whole monument was supposed to have been demolished in 1625 and, while the bas-relief was resited opposite the entrance to the sacristy, Pacificus' sarcophagus remained outside the church and was included in Scipione Maffei's marble collection in around 1735. The two lions were identified as those still outside the entrance of the chapter library today and the inscription was first placed on an internal wall of the church

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 36 (Italian translation on p. 47).

<sup>57</sup> G. Muselli, *Della cattedrale ridotta in miglior forma dopo il 1400*, eighteenth-century manuscript in ACV cod. DCVII, fols. 114–19; followed by A. Spagnolo, 'L'arcidiacono Pacifico di Verona inventore della bussola', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto* 7–8 (1905), pp. 39–43.

before being finally relocated to its present position in 1689, together with the second epitaph which had been discovered in unspecified circumstances.<sup>58</sup> It was only at this time that the two tablets would have been set together inside a single yellow marble frame.<sup>59</sup> This complicated series of events was clearly intended to show that the second inscription could not have been copied because it had not formed part of Pacificus' tomb.

The second, more reasonable, view was that both inscriptions had originally formed part of Pacificus' tomb.<sup>60</sup> The tomb would have been inside the church, only raised above floor level so that its lower portion would not have been visible to scholars because it would have been hidden by the wooden covering on the walls. The tomb itself would have been buried and broken up at the beginning of the sixteenth century when the reforming bishop Matteo Giberti ordered all tombs inside the church to be removed. At this time, the two lions and the bas-relief bearing Pacificus' portrait would also have been moved outside. Pacificus' epigraph, comprising both inscriptions, would have been set inside the frame and moved higher in 1698.<sup>61</sup>

In both cases no blame could be attached to Veronese scholars for having failed to copy the second part of Pacificus' epitaph.

The enormous *querelle* that broke out about the tomb and the epigraph led to the invention of a 'funerary monument' for Pacificus, and eighteenth-century scholars imagined his tomb to be like the monumental Renaissance wall tombs inside Verona cathedral,<sup>62</sup> and selected its

<sup>58</sup> See the decree issued by the chapter on 22 September 1698 which states that the 'Reverendissimi Domini recitatis opinionibus decreverunt quo pro impensis in elevanda singraphe quondam reverendissimi Pacifici archidiaconi literarum et amplissimi capituli undique benemeriti et intuentium oculis exponenda reverendus praepositus facultatem habeat de publicis pecuniis': published by G. B. C. Giuliani in *La capitolare biblioteca di Verona*, in an anastatic edition of the original edition published in Verona in 1888, edited by G. P. Marchi (Verona, 1993), pp. 13–14.

<sup>59</sup> See the decree issued by the chapter on 1 October 1698 which orders that 'His Reverence the Canon Governor of the Canons' Table shall pay to Master Gio Batta Rangheri stonemason, eighty *troni* for his goodness in having mended the tombstones of His Reverence Pacificus the Archdeacon in accordance with the order given to him in the decree issued by the chapter on 24 September', published by Giuliani in *La capitolare biblioteca*, doc. II, pp. 416–17.

<sup>60</sup> G. Da Prato, *Dissertazione I. Sopra l'epitafio di Pacifico arcidiacono di Verona* (Verona, 1781), pp. 12–20; Giuliani, *La capitolare biblioteca*, pp. 11–14; see also A. Campana, 'Veronensia', in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati* II, Studi e testi 122 (Vatican, 1946), pp. 57–9 and N. Gray, 'The palaeography of Latin inscriptions in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries in Italy', in *Papers of the British School at Rome* 16 (1948), pp. 91–3.

<sup>61</sup> Giuliani, *La capitolare biblioteca*, pp. 12–13, in which the information obtained by Muselli is specifically described as having been found in 'a manuscript document in the chapter but whose manner gives me little guarantee of its truth' (p. 13, 1).

<sup>62</sup> As for example the tomb of Galesio Nichesola (c. 1530), bishop of Belluno, which is at the beginning of the left aisle of Verona cathedral. A major study of the development of medieval tombs is given in I. Herklotz, *'Sepulchra' e 'monumenta' del medioevo* (Rome, 1985): pp. 143–99 consider wall tombs bearing portraits of the deceased.



component parts from among the oldest or most attractive items available. The two columniferous lions date from the beginning of the twelfth century;<sup>63</sup> the urn supposed to have contained his body is a moulding from a public building dating back to classical times that shows no sign of ever having been adapted to form a sarcophagus,<sup>64</sup> and finally the sculpture of the Virgin with two saints is a fourteenth-century work.<sup>65</sup>

The learned writings on Pacificus' tomb, which concentrated on a mass of pieces that are totally extraneous to the Carolingian period, expressed the need to seek new proofs of Pacificus' identity (or at least of his funeral): the lively controversy stirred up by Maffei was now linked to other, more concrete difficulties directly relating to the archdeacon's fame and indirectly to the validity in law of the rights and prerogatives of the chapter of Verona.

The epigraph was subjected to minute investigation, not in order to adduce the fame of the archdeacon but to question it. There were long discussions about its date and about the contradictory dates given in the inscriptions. This concerned the chronology in particular, for while the first inscription puts Pacificus' death in the twenty-seventh year of Lothar's reign, the second states that he died in 846, the tenth indiction. The first inscription also reads that Pacificus died on the night 'que vocatur a nobis dominica', 'nono sane kalendarum' of December, so that according to this inscription he died on the night of 24 November 846; in CVI of the Chapter Codex, Pacificus' *obitus* is stated as *VIII kalendarum decembris*.<sup>66</sup> The generally accepted date of his death was therefore a compromise: it was agreed that he died on the night between 3 and 24

<sup>63</sup> See Bartoli, *Il complesso romanico*, pp. 139–47 and its biography.

<sup>64</sup> This is a controversial theory: Da Prato's claim in *Dissertazione I*, pp. 19–20 that the urn containing Pacificus' remains was a Roman frieze inside which a space had been made for the body ('above the small lions rose perpendicularly two beautiful pieces of marble, certainly worked by Greek or Roman hands and carved with flowers on two sides; these were then taken to the Museo Lapidario where they can be seen placed one above the other in the atrium or portico that leads from the museum into the main hall of the Academy', quoted on p. 19) is a pure invention and is specifically contradicted by Giuliani in *La capitolare biblioteca*, pp. 12–13, 1. An illustration of the two carvings in the museum as described by Da Prato is given in L. Franzoni, 'Il Museo maffei secondo l'ordinamento di Scipione Maffei', in *Nuovi studi maffei*. *Atti del convegno 'Scipione Maffei e il Museo maffei'* (Verona, 1985), p. 227, fig. 2.

<sup>65</sup> A badly supported tradition in Verona is that the bas-relief forms part of the triptych currently located on the right wall of the church of St Elena (a fourteenth-century work attributed to Giovanni di Rignano by G. L. Mellini, *Scultori veronesi del Trecento* (Milan, 1968), pp. 109–14), but it is clear that in the eighteenth century Muselli was referring not to this work but to the fourteenth-century tufa triptych of similar iconography, which is still on the outside wall of St Elena in the atrium of St Maria Matricolare; see L. Simeoni, *Guida storico-artistica della città e della provincia* (Verona, 1909), p. 100.

<sup>66</sup> See T. Venturini, *Ricerche paleografiche intorno all'arcidiacono Pacifico di Verona* (Verona, 1929), pp. 93–4. Venturini dates the Chapter Codex CVI before 810 but the necrologies have been added later in a different hand.

November 846, thus making the dates on both the inscriptions correct.

But this too gave rise to problems. Firstly, it was not long before it was realized that 23 November 846 was a Tuesday and not a Sunday;<sup>67</sup> secondly, 846, which appeared to be the twenty-seventh year of Lothar's reign and the date written on the second inscription did not agree with the documents still preserved in Verona: in 845 the archdeacon of Verona was no longer Pacificus, but Audo.<sup>68</sup> So when did Pacificus die?

As in the case of the location of Pacificus' tomb, another heated discussion broke out, this time complicated by the fact that every suggestion on how to make the dates given on the inscription agree with the documentary proofs gave rise to further anomalies, instead of eliminating them. The chronology given on Pacificus' epitaph had been challenged at what was a delicate time for Pacificus' reputation: in 1757 people like Biancolini were even questioning the authenticity of the epigraph, 'discovering in it characters that cannot be held to be of that time'.<sup>69</sup> A convincing explanation therefore had to be found that would eliminate the doubts about the epigraph and confirm it as undisputed proof of the greatness of Pacificus. In 1781 Girolamo Da Prato, despite noting the atypical shape of the letters C, G and L in the first epigraph, preferred to centre his arguments on the chronological disparity between the date given in the epigraph and that given in the documentation. He resolved the problem by assuming that the year in which the epitaph had been cut was not the same as the day and the year in which Pacificus had died. He believed Pacificus had certainly died on 23 November but in 844; in that year 23 November fell on a Sunday and Audo had not yet been appointed archdeacon. However, he also believed that the inscription must have been produced two years later in 846 so that the date given on the second inscription referred only to the year in which the epigraph was produced, celebrating the year in which it was finished and not the year in which Pacificus died.

This sleight of hand was not enough, however, to remove all Biancolini's objections as he had discovered another discrepancy between the dates on the epitaph and those given in the documentation. Accord-

<sup>67</sup> L. A. Muratori, *Antiquitates italicæ mediæ ævii* III (Milan, 1740), pp. 837–40: 'Verum assequi non possum, cur die IX kalendas decembris, sive die XXIII novembris, quæ dominica erat, Pacificus e vivis ereptus dicatur, quum anno DCCCXLVI litera dominicalis C in cursu esset, ac propterea die 23 novembris decurreret non dominica dies, sed feria tertia.'

<sup>68</sup> *I placiti del regnum italicæ* I, ed. C. Manaresi, *Fonti per la storia d'Italia* 92 (Rome, 1955), no. 49, pp. 160–9 (845 febbraio 6); the discovery was made by G. Biancolini, *Dei vescovi e governatori di Verona* (Verona, 1757), pp. 183–4.

<sup>69</sup> Biancolini, *Dei vescovi e governatori*, p. 183: 'Pacificus was archdeacon of the church of Verona and what manner of man he was can be learned from the inscription that we see within the cathedral, if we can trust to that inscription whose lettering cannot be reputed of that same date.'

ing to the epigraph, Pacificus was archdeacon for forty-three years and depending on whether his death was assumed to have occurred in 846 or 844, he would have commenced in 803 or 801. But a Veronese *placitum* of 806 shows Tisus as archdeacon of Verona at that time.<sup>70</sup> Da Prato therefore decided to settle this new and obvious discrepancy by suggesting two possibilities: either there had been two archdeacons, that is, 'several persons in the same parish bearing that dignity', or else the decree referred to events that had happened years previously, before the time of Pacificus' archdeaconate.<sup>71</sup>

Nobly engaged on 'elucidating the chronology of Pacificus', Da Prato found himself instead tied up in unending discrepancies between dates and facts: but his arguments appeared to placate the worries of the canons and his became the official reference work used to date Pacificus' career. The archdeacon was supposed to have been born in 776 and to have died on Sunday 23 November 844 at the age of sixty-eight after having been archdeacon for forty-three years, commencing in 801.<sup>72</sup> This was the undisputed version of events even though, as a few timid souls did point out, it involved an even greater discrepancy since it meant going against all documentary evidence and assuming Lothar's reign began in 818 and not 820.<sup>73</sup> Clearly this vital particular was perceived as totally irrelevant when compared with the relief of having saved the archdeacon's reputation.

The outpouring of erudition and the tenacity of both the critics and the supporters of the epigraph make it quite clear that Pacificus and his reputation were of enormous importance to the chapter. In losing Pacificus, the chapter members would be losing not only an illustrious predecessor but also the man on whose prestige rested their legal independence from the power of their bishop and their direct subjection to the patriarch of Aquileia.<sup>74</sup> The defence of Pacificus was all the more

<sup>70</sup> *I placiti del regnum italiae* I, ed. Manaresi, no. 28, pp. 58–9, a.806; Biancolini, *Dei vescovi e governatori*, p. 184.

<sup>71</sup> G. Da Prato, *Dissertazione III. Sopra l'epitaffio dell'arci diacono Pacifico di Verona*, eighteenth-century manuscript in ACV, cod. DCCCI, fasc. III, fols. 7–31.

<sup>72</sup> Da Prato, *Dissertazione I*, pp. 12–20.

<sup>73</sup> The remark was made by Venturini in *Ricerche paleografiche*, p. 5. For the dating of the documents relating to Lothar see J. Jarnut, 'Ludwig der Fromme, Lothar I. und das Regnum Italiae', in P. Godman and R. Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 352–62.

<sup>74</sup> The chapter's independence of the bishop was also emphasized by Panvinus who quoted at length the concession made by Bishop Ratholdus to Pacificus: 'ut in domo sua fabricaret ecclesiam Sancti Georgii, quam consecravit Maxentius patriarcha Aquileiensis. Cui consecrationi interfuisse memorantur Vido Cardinalis SRE legatus, ipse Rotaldus Veronensis episcopus, Reginaldus Vicentinus, Lupus Tarvisinus, Oaldericus Tridentinus, Georgiusque Mantuanus episcopi. Sigifridus archidiaconus Aquileiensis ecclesiae, Pacificus ipse, et alii multi anno regni

important in that Giovanni Bragadino, the bishop of Verona (1732–58), was determined to establish his total authority over the numerous ecclesiastical institutions in Verona that declared themselves subject only to Aquileia. After one failed attempt in this direction, the question came to the boil again in 1751 when the *Iniuncta nobis* bull of Pope Benedict XIV suppressed the See of Aquileia and Verona found itself subject to the new archbishop of Udine.<sup>75</sup> What was to become of the canons now that the authority to which they declared themselves subject had been suppressed?

At the instigation of Benedict XIV, the documents stating the exemption were declared forgeries by the papal commissioners Pietro and Girolamo Ballerini, on the basis of palaeographic arguments. Francesco Florio, who was defending the chapter, was unable to put his arguments convincingly and in 1756 Benedict XIV issued a bull entitled *Regis pacifici* which finally declared the chapter subject to the authority of the See of Verona.<sup>76</sup>

The fervour of the scholarly research into Pacificus' life had thus been aimed at defending the canons' cause and attempting to use the archdeacon to give legitimacy to their centuries-old privileges. But the evidence of Pacificus' and his work, which had been collected with such care and dedication over so many years, fell apart as soon as it was subjected to scrutiny from any point of view other than that traditionally applied – that is, as soon as the *a priori* assumptions about his intellectual importance, his role as benefactor of the poor and in particular his position in Carolingian society, to which such detailed epigraphy had been dedicated, were set aside.

#### PACIFICUS THE OMNISCIENT AND HISTORIOGRAPHIC EXPERTISE

The reason for the head-on clash between Pacificus' supporters and opponents now having evaporated, eighteenth-century scholars were left with an unwieldy bundle of dates, hypotheses, detailed research into 'Pacificus' tomb', and a debate apparently based on a rational examination of dates and the style of the lettering used on the epi-

francici Caroli imperatoris XLI, indicione VI, XVI kalendas octobris' (Panvinius, *Antiquitates veronenses*, p. 133).

<sup>75</sup> See F. Seneca, 'La fine del patriarcato aquileiese (1748–1751)', *Miscellanea di studi e memorie della Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie* IX (Venezia, 1954), pp. 10–66.

<sup>76</sup> This question is examined at length by O. Viviani in 'La fine delle controversie per l'esenzione giurisdizionale del capitolo veronese', *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia di agricoltura, scienze e lettere di Verona* 6a s., 5 (Verona, 1955), pp. 249–60.

graph. What remained was the 'Veroneseness' of Pacificus and nostalgic civic pride whose tenacity outlasted any palaeographic analysis. For Verona, the tradition established by Mansionario, Panvinus and particularly by the constant references to the inscriptions continued to fascinate.

It was no chance, I believe, that the numerous blows to the authority of Pacificus between the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century should have been inflicted by scholars who had not been accustomed since childhood to consider the archdeacon a local treasure. Firstly, the attribution to Pacificus of the second inscription, which had been proposed by Maffei and enthusiastically accepted by Veronese historians,<sup>77</sup> was disproved when it was shown to be merely an almost literal copy of the epitaph of Alcuin of York.<sup>78</sup> Pacificus the poet thus lost one of his most significant works. Secondly, Biancolini's doubts about the lettering used on the first inscription were borne out in full; in 1824 Friedrich Bluhme had denied its authenticity on the grounds of the abbreviations used and the style of the lettering, and he underlined how it differed visually from the second inscription.<sup>79</sup> Many years later for the same reason Nicolette Gray, after having comprehensively examined Italian inscriptions produced between the eighth and tenth centuries, said that the first of the Pacificus inscriptions definitely dated from the eleventh century, while the second was a mediocre product of the 'rather timid school' of Verona in the ninth century.<sup>80</sup> Gray's comments on the limitations of the execution were backed up by those of Wallach who said that the copy of Alcuin's epitaph revealed 'an astonishing lack of originality'; and although the latter had been widely known throughout all the Middle Ages, in no other case had it been simply copied to apply to another person.<sup>81</sup>

The denial of the authenticity of the Pacificus epigraph and the comments about its contents were taken by the Veronese as a major insult to the prestige of their city and consequently they remained totally

<sup>77</sup> Giuliani, *La capitolare biblioteca*, p. 121, who believes that the verses of the second epitaph do not reflect, 'that fame of purity of life that [Pacificus] left behind, nor could they have been dictated by any person who wished to decorate the tomb with praise: from him alone could have come that profound humility of spirit . . . yet the verse continues with fine and salutary warnings lest men, especially those of greatest ingenuity and ardour, lose themselves in search of earthly glory and finite things, thus losing their most blessed heavenly reward'.

<sup>78</sup> MGH PLAC II, p. 656, no. 2-6.

<sup>79</sup> F. Blume [*sic*, instead of Bluhme], *Iter italicum. Erster Band. Archive, Bibliotheken und Inschriften in den sardinischen und österreichischen Provinzen* (Berlin and Stettin, 1824), p. 255, no. 99.

<sup>80</sup> Gray, 'The palaeography', p. 93.

<sup>81</sup> L. Wallach, 'The epitaph of Alcuin: a model of Carolingian epigraphy', *Speculum* 30 (1955), pp. 367-73, at p. 372.

impervious to the observations of 'foreign' specialists; indeed even Carlo Cipolla, who admitted the 'extreme difficulty' of classifying the lettering used in the first inscription as typical of the ninth century, did finally agree that the inscription itself was authentic.<sup>82</sup> Canon Giuliani, on the other hand, was unable to understand how Dümmler could claim that Pacificus was not the author of the second inscription and found that 'he [Dümmler] has made a curious comment elsewhere that in the second set of verses, *Hic rogo pauxillum* etc., there are a number of lines taken from Alcuin'.<sup>83</sup> All the problems concerning the shape of the lettering used in the first inscription and the chronological discrepancies between the dates given on the epitaph and those given in the documents were simply ignored; Carlo Cipolla merely observed in a brief note that 'Biancolini and Bluhme did not like this stone', but did not explain the reasons for this attitude.<sup>84</sup> Teresa Venturini did not even glance at this aspect and instead considered the question of the dates, finally supporting the authenticity of the inscriptions by her comment that 'it is far more likely that the author of the epitaph might have been mistaken about the date of Lothar's reign than about the day of the week on which Pacificus died':<sup>85</sup> indeed she was more interested in 'the life and the work of the *schola sacerdotum* and even more on Pacificus life and its glorification as he was the heart of the school, its main driving force and, one might even say, its true founder'.<sup>86</sup> In her comprehensive study of early medieval inscriptions in Verona, Luisa Billo attributed the text of the first inscription to Pacificus (thus reinstating him as an author) but agreed that the two inscriptions had been produced by two different persons, claiming that the elegance and peculiarity of the lettering used and the abbreviations contained in the first of the inscriptions were a sure sign of the degree of refinement achieved by Veronese culture at the time of Pacificus. The stylistic differences between the lettering used in the inscription and that of other Veronese inscriptions of the Carolingian period were attributed to the fact that the workmen who carved them were 'old and antiquated' and old-fashioned.<sup>87</sup> The discrepancies

<sup>82</sup> C. Cipolla, *Il velo di classe*, in an anastatic restoration of the original edition published in Rome in 1897, ed. G. B. Pighi (Verona, 1972), pp. 45–9: 'I cannot hide that overall there is here such artifice that I find great difficulty in attributing to the ninth century' (p. 48).

<sup>83</sup> Giuliani, *La capitolare biblioteca*, p. 415, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Cipolla, *Il velo di classe*, p. 46; in his comments on Pacificus' epitaph, Dümmler too briefly notes that 'Biancolini et Bluhme hoc epitaphium adulterinum esse sibi persuaserunt, quibus minime assentitur comes Giuliani' (MGH PLAC, II, p. 655, 4).

<sup>85</sup> Venturini, *Ricerche paleografiche*, pp. 5–6. <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>87</sup> L. Billo, 'Le iscrizioni veronesi dell'alto medioevo', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto* s. 5a, 16 (1934), pp. 53–4, 61, who sees in the Pacificus inscription 'a clear example of the progress and innovation that was

between the dates on the two tablets were therefore seen as another point in favour of the authenticity of the first epigraph since 'the chronological detail of the "evening before Sunday" would have easily been forgotten two years after the archdeacon's death'.<sup>88</sup> Consequently, Pacificus emerged as the sole, splendid shining light of the cultural development of Verona at the beginning of the Carolingian period, all of which disappeared in the decadence of the tenth century.<sup>89</sup>

The *apologiae* of Venturini and Billó ended any remaining doubts in Verona. Subsequent writings appeared to accept not only that all the problems that had arisen in previous centuries over Pacificus' epitaph had been brilliantly resolved but even that they had never existed. The twentieth century reinstated Pacificus' double epitaph with dignity and without any shadow of doubt as to its authenticity as a true proof of the works of the archdeacon, while at the same time increasing and intensifying the research into his position within the wider framework of European culture during the Carolingian period. The epitaph thus once again became the basis for research into Pacificus' works and the suspicion that it might have been produced after the ninth century was turned on its head by the claim that this was yet another proof of the prestige enjoyed by Pacificus and Verona in the ninth century. The inscription was therefore not a forgery; it was simply atypical and exceptionally well written, the fact of its being atypical indicating 'the extent to which Verona was part of the beneficial influence of the school of Tours and the literary awakening taking place within Charlemagne's palace'<sup>90</sup> and 'although extremely early . . . this marks a clear step in the gradual development of epigraphic calligraphy'.<sup>91</sup> The fact that the second epitaph was a literal copy of Alcuin's was proof of 'contemporary

also taking place in in epigraphic lettering' (p. 63). The difference between this lettering and other lettering that was either contemporary or from the next century she therefore ascribed to the fact that the latter was old-fashioned: for example, the inscription currently inside the church of St Elena in Verona (c. 850) 'seems to have been cut either by an old craftsman who was used to simple and old-fashioned forms or else by one who was a follower of a rather old school' (p. 62). The lettering of Hubert's inscription (979) is explained as using an 'old Carolingian' style (p. 73).

<sup>88</sup> Billo, 'Le iscrizioni veronesi', p. 62.

<sup>89</sup> See for example G. Turrini, 'Frammento di lapide tra i ruderi della biblioteca capitolare di Verona', *Studi storici veronesi* 1 (1948), p. 17, who notes that the lettering in the first Pacificus inscription 'already [shows] the beginning of the decline'. The decline of Veronese culture during the tenth century is normally explained by reasons that are no longer acceptable today, such as the incursions of the Magyars, the political instability of the *regnum* or the corruption of the clergy. One particularly telling example of all these commonplaces is M. Venturini, *Vita ed attività dello 'scriptorium' veronese nel secolo XI* (Verona, 1930), pp. 11–14.

<sup>90</sup> G. Ongaro, 'Cultura e scuola calligrafica veronese del secolo X', *Memorie del Reale istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti* 29 (Venice, 1925), p. 88.

<sup>91</sup> Turrini, *Frammento di lapide*, p. 18.

understanding [of] the perfect parallel that existed between the lives of Alcuin and of Pacificus, both in terms of their genius and also of their works'.<sup>92</sup> The chronological discrepancies between the dates given on the inscription and those in the documentation were consequently a 'deliberate lack of historical focus which is a characteristic of the entire epitaph';<sup>93</sup> the *dies dominica* on which Pacificus died was therefore not a real date but 'an appropriate biblical quotation applied to the death of the archdeacon at night and which for him was the holy night on which the Lord came down to him'.<sup>94</sup>

Now that it had been rehabilitated as proof of Pacificus' life, the first epigraph became the starting point for investigations into each of the disciplines and arts of which Pacificus was declared a master. Although he was not credited with having invented the compass,<sup>95</sup> Pacificus was pronounced to have invented the nocturnal clock and a flame-throwing device for ships,<sup>96</sup> to have sculpted the capitals in Verona cathedral and even St Zeno's bronze doors;<sup>97</sup> he was also of course an author and had copied at least 218 codices,<sup>98</sup> while being also the architect not only of the seven churches named in the epigraph but of others too.<sup>99</sup> The epigraph became the undisputed point of departure for all the research into Pacificus' importance in European culture.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Venturini, *Ricerche paleografiche*, p. 24.

<sup>93</sup> G. P. Marchi, 'Sacra scrittura e tradizione classica negli scrittori latini del medioevo veronese', *Scriptorium* 22 (1968), p. 295.

<sup>94</sup> M. Carrara, 'Gli scrittori latini', in *Verona e il suo territorio II* (Verona, 1964), p. 381.

<sup>95</sup> L. Posteraro, 'Salomone Ireneo Pacifico inventore della bussola', *Bollettino della Società africana d'Italia* 22 (1903), pp. 13–21, and *Origine italiana della bussola nautica inventata dal veronese Salomone Ireneo Pacifico* (Naples, 1904). E. Spagnolo 'L'arcidiacono Pacifico di Verona inventore della bussola?', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto* 7–8 (1904), pp. 39–62.

<sup>96</sup> Giuliani, *La capitolare biblioteca*, pp. 118–21; Campana, *Veronensia*, pp. 57–91; R. Brenzoni, 'Intorno alle origini della pittura veronese', *Archivio veneto tridentino* 8 (1925), p. 209: 'He was the first to invent the mechanical nocturnal clock in Italy and also the *argumentum* which may have been a flame-throwing device for ships'; M. Carrara, 'Nota pacificiana. L'orologio notturno e il carne dello zodiaco', *Atti dell'Accademia di agricoltura, scienze e lettere di Verona* s. 6a, 7 (1955–6), pp. 1–6; D. Bullough, 'Le scuole cattedrali e la cultura dell'Italia settentrionale prima dei Comuni', in *Vescovi e diocesi in Italia nel medioevo (sec. IX–XIII)* (Padua, 1964), pp. 127–9; and recently J. Wiesenbach, 'Pacificus von Verona als Erfinder einer Sternenuhr', in P. L. Butzer and D. Lohrmann (eds.), *Science in Western and Eastern Civilisation in Carolingian Times* (Basle, Boston and Berlin, 1993), pp. 229–50.

<sup>97</sup> A. Da Lisca, 'L'arcidiacono Pacifico e la plastica veronese del secolo nono', *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia di agricoltura, scienze e lettere di Verona* s. 5a, 12 (1935), pp. 1–26.

<sup>98</sup> See Bullough, 'Le scuole cattedrali', pp. 127–9, and its bibliography. The reference to the 218 codices, despite its incredibility, is accepted even by the greatest scholar of Carolingian writing: see B. Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography. Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. D. Ó Crónín and D. Ganz (Cambridge, 1990), p. 115.

<sup>99</sup> See the list of churches attributed to Pacificus by S. Lusuardi Siena et al., 'Le tracce materiali del cristianesimo dal tardoantico al Mille', in A. Castagretti and G. M. Varanini (eds.), *Il Veneto nel medioevo. Dalla 'Venetia' alla Marco Veronese*, (Verona, 1989).

<sup>100</sup> A recent example of the unconditional affection shown towards Pacificus is the review of my



With the final disappearance of the reasons that had led the cathedral chapter in the twelfth century, Giovanni Mansionario in the fourteenth century, Onuphrius Panvinus in the sixteenth century and eighteenth-century scholars to either support or challenge the centralization of the power of the pope or the bishop in Verona, specialist historiographers were left to sift through the maze of true and false, assumed and demonstrable proofs that had been so lovingly created in the past, and finally to wipe out the Carolingian Pacificus and his two simple signatures.

book *Pacifico di Verona* by G. Silagi in *Deutsches Archiv für die Erforschung des Mittelalters* 52 (1996), pp. 349–50.

## APPENDIX

### *The Memorial to Pacificus of Verona*

#### FIRST EPITAPH

ARCHIDIAC(ONUS) QUIESCIT HIC VERO PACIFICUS \* SAPIENTIA  
PRAECLARUS ET FORMA PR(A)EFULGIDA\* - \  
NULLUS TALIS EST INVENTUS N(OST)RIS IN TE(M)P(OR)IB(US)\*  
Q(UO)D NEC ULLU(M) ADVENIRE UMQUA(M) TALE(M) CREDIMUS  
\* -ECCL(ESI)ARU(M)\  
FUNDATOR RENOVATOR OPTIMUS\* ZENONIS P(RO)CULI VITI  
PETRI ET LAURENTII \* - D(E)I QUOQ(UE) GENITRICIS\  
NEC N(ON) ET GEORGII \* QUICQ(U)D AURO V(E)L ARGENTO ET  
METALLIS CETERIS \* Q(U)CQ(U)D LIGNIS EX DIVERSIS ET MAR\  
MORE CANDIDO \* NULLUS UMQUAM SIC P(ER)IT(US) IN TANTIS  
OPERIBUS \* - BIS CENTENOS TERQ(UE) SENOS\  
CODICESQ(UE) FECERAT \* HOROLOGIUM NOCTURNUM NUL-  
LUS ANTE VIDERAT \* - EN I(N)VENIT ARGUM(EN)\  
TU(M) ET PRIMUM FUNDERAVERAT \* GLOSAM VETERIS ET  
NOVI TESTAM(EN)TI POSUIT \*- HOROLOGIOQ(UE)\  
CARM(EN) SPERAE C(O)ELI OPTIMUM(M) \* PLURA ALIA GRAFIA  
QUE PRUDENS INVENIET \* - TRES ET DECI(M)\  
VIXIT LUSTRA TRINOS ANNOS AMPLIUS \* XL ET TRES ANNOS  
FUIT ARCHIDIAC(ONUS)\* - SEPTI\  
MO VICESIMO (A)ETATIS ANNO C(A)ESARIS LOTHARII\* MOLE  
CARNIS EST SOLUTUS P(ER)REX(IT) AD D(OMI)N(U)M\*-\  
NON SANE KAL(EN)DARU(M) OBIIT DECE(M)BRIUM(M) \* NOCTE  
S(AN)C(T)A QUE VOCAT(UR) A NOB(IS) D(OMI)NICA \* - LUGENT  
Q(U)OQ(UE)\ SACERDOTES ET MINISTRI OPTIMI \* EIUS MORTE  
NE(M)PE DOLET I(N)FINITUS P[O]P[U]L(U)S\*- V(EST)ROS PEDES  
QUASI TENE(N)S\*\  
VOSQ(UE) P(RE)COR CERNUUS \* O LECTORES \* EXORARE  
QUESO P(RO) PACIFICO\*.

SECOND EPITAPH

+HIC ROGO PAUXILLUM VENIENS SUBSISTE VIATOR  
 ET MEA SCRUTARE PECTORE DICTA TUO  
 QUOD NUNC ES FUERAM FAMOSUS IN ORBE VIATOR  
 ET QUOD NUNC EGO SUM TUQ[UE] FUTURUS ERIS  
 DILICIAS<sup>1</sup> MUNDI PRAVO<sup>2</sup> SECTABAR AMORE  
 NUNC CINIS ET PULVIS VERMIBUS ATQ(UE) CILBUS<sup>3</sup>  
 QUA PROPTER POTIUS ANIMAM CURARE MEMENTO  
 QUAM CARNE<sup>4</sup> Q[UONIA]M HEC MANET ILLA PERIT  
 CUR TIBU PLURA<sup>5</sup> PA[RA]S QUAN PARVO CERNIS IN ANTRO  
 ME TENET HIC REQUIES SIC TUA PARVA FIET  
 UT FLORES PEREUNT VENTO VENIENTE MINACI  
 SIC TUA NAMQUE CARO GL(ORI)A TOTA PERIT  
 TU MIHI REDDE VICEM LECTOR ROGO CARMINIS HUIUS  
 ET DIC DA VENIAM XP(IST)E TUO FAMULO  
 PACIFICUS SALOMON MIHI NOMEN ATQUE IRENEUS  
 PRO QUO FUNDE P(RE)CES MENTE LEGENS TITULUM  
 OBSECRO NULLA MANUS VIOLET PIA IURA SEPULCHRI  
 PERSONET ANGELICA DONEC AB ARCE TUBA  
 QUI IACES IN TUMULO TERRAE DE PULVERE SURGE  
 MANGNUS ADEST IUDEX MILIBUS INNUMERIS  
 TOLLE HIC SEGNTIEM PONE FASTIDIA MENTIS  
 CREDE MIHI FRATER DOLTIOR HINC REDIES  
 ANNO DOMINICE INCARNACIONIS DCCCXLVI ND(I)C[IONE]X.

<sup>1</sup> MGH PLAC, I, p. 2350 1.7: *delicias*.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1.7: *casso*.      <sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1.8: *cibus*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1.10: *carmen*.      <sup>5</sup> Ibid., 1.11: *rura*.

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