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## **Unauthorised miracles in mid-ninth-century Dijon and the Carolingian Church reforms**

### **Abstract**

In the early 840s, Archbishop Amolo of Lyons wrote to one of his suffragan bishops about extraordinary miracles reportedly taking place at Dijon in the wake of the arrival of mysterious new relics. This article examines the complex interaction of these relics with pre-existing social and political processes in the region and locally, but also explores other aspects of the text which have been less discussed, notably its manuscript transmission and the insights it offers into structures of religious organization. Finally, it argues that the way issues treated together in the letter tend to be separated or even opposed in the historiography points to the need for renewed, critically reflexive attention to the specificities of the Carolingian Church reforms.

**Keywords:** relics; parish; Dijon; Carolingian Church

### **Strange happenings in Dijon**

In the middle of the ninth century, the bones of an unknown saint, carried from Italy by travelling monks, were brought inside the church of St-Bénigne in Dijon, Burgundy.

Almost instantly, the church was electrified. Terrifying miracles (*miracula*) started to take place in the bones' vicinity: visitors to the church began to be buffeted by invisible forces and were thrown to the ground, writhing and shaking, and if they tried to leave, these supernatural assaults only intensified. Yet no trace of bruising or injury could

subsequently be discerned on the visitors' bodies. Not only was the number of people affected in this way surprisingly large – three hundred or more – but the disturbances also showed signs of spreading throughout the diocese and even beyond, touching the church of Saulieu in the neighbouring diocese of Autun.

We know all this because Bishop Theobald of Langres, the bishop responsible for Dijon, contacted his metropolitan, Archbishop Amolo of Lyons, to seek advice, and the letter the archbishop sent in response happens to survive.<sup>1</sup> It is clear from this letter that the news had made Archbishop Amolo uncomfortable. He thought the travelling monks' claim to have 'forgotten' the name of the saint whose relics they carried preposterous and unconvincing, and the lack of any prospect of establishing this saint's true identity – for one of these two monks had subsequently died, and the other had set out to find more information but had unaccountably never returned – alarming. Further deepening Amolo's concern was the nature of the miracles generated by these unauthenticated relics.<sup>2</sup> As he explained to Theobald, proper miracles cured people, they did not hurt them; and Amolo was quite convinced that these relics had only produced harmful miracles, because if any cures had taken place, they would be better attributed to St Bénigne, whose remains were equally present, and better certified.

Amolo was not quite prepared categorically to deny the bones' sanctity. He advised that they be handled respectfully, and that they should still be kept somewhere within a church compound. But he insisted that they should no longer be housed within the church itself, and that, moreover, they should be hidden somewhere they could cause no further

disturbance. As for the people affected, they should be sent home. In case further guidance should prove necessary, Amolo indicated that he was sending together with his own letter a copy of one sent by Agobard, his predecessor as archbishop of Lyons, to the bishop of Narbonne, dealing with an approximately analogous situation.<sup>3</sup> The relics are not mentioned again in any other surviving source, so perhaps Bishop Theobald took Amolo's advice.<sup>4</sup>

### **Recontextualising the relics**

Amolo was not the only Carolingian bishop to be worried by the appearance of strange relics, nor even the only Carolingian archbishop to write a letter of advice on the issue to a Burgundian bishop, but his letter is the only such one to survive.<sup>5</sup> As a result, it has not been altogether neglected, and sometimes wins mention or paraphrase as an illustration of the major themes of the cult of saints in the Carolingian age.<sup>6</sup> Prominent amongst these themes is the sheer popularity of relic-based devotion in the ninth century.<sup>7</sup> For though relics were hardly a new phenomenon by this point, it is widely accepted that they were relentlessly promoted by the Carolingian establishment, partly as a means of providing unity to the empire, and partly as a substitute for living holy men, notoriously thin on the ground in the ninth century.<sup>8</sup> But of course their very popularity brought 'abuses' with it, incurring the suspicion of wary bishops which Amolo's letter appears to illustrate so unambiguously.

However, it is the proposal of this article that while not exactly overlooked, the full value of Amolo's letter for historians of the ninth century, and of the early middle ages as a

whole, has yet to be realised, because, in spite of its potential importance as such a unique source, it has never been the subject of a detailed study.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps because of the lurid nature of much of its content, historians have been content to use it to instantiate generalisations based on an overview of other material. There is of course nothing inherently wrong with such generalisations, but they become more rigorous, more convincing, and more insightful when the underlying text is analysed as fully as possible in its local context, and, moreover, analysed as a whole. In other words, to understand the real interest of Amolo's letter, we must treat it first of all as a very particular source, written at a specific moment about conditions in Dijon, and not simply as a deracinated exemplar of wider trends. A detailed investigation holds out the prospect of refining our understanding of, to begin with, the mysterious Dijon relics.

The obvious place to start such a contextualisation is with the text's date. I began with a deliberately vague reference to the mid ninth century, justifiable in that the letter has no dating clause. However, as its nineteenth-century editor already noticed, it is nonetheless possible to be a little more precise. It must have been written after January 841, when Amolo was ordained as Archbishop of Lyons; and, since Amolo makes a passing reference to Bishop Bartholomew of Narbonne, 'who is still alive', it must date from before January 845, by which time Bartholomew was dead. Further, its references to Lent imply that it was not written before the spring, ruling out January 845. We can therefore be confident that the letter was written between 841 and the middle of 844.

Though quite broad, this dating bracket is significant, because it shows that both letter and miracles need to be considered against the background of the civil war which rocked the Frankish empire following Emperor Louis the Pious's death in 840. It seems very likely that this civil war had a major impact on the region around Dijon, for several reasons. The first of these is a structural one. While it may be that Frankish government did not concentrate political activity at court to the extent of later regimes, most historians of Carolingian Europe now accept that the Frankish kingdom worked not through 'bureaucratic' mechanisms, but through a finely calibrated articulation of local and central interest: a giant spider's web of interpersonal connections, with the court sitting at its middle.<sup>10</sup> If we think of the Carolingian empire as such a network, then the *a priori* presumption has to be that problems at the centre, such as those of the early 840s, would have had at least some effect on the periphery. If this is true in general, then it is particularly true of Burgundy, the region in which the decisive battle of the war, at Fontenoy, took place in June 841. Admittedly, Fontenoy is a good hundred miles from Dijon, but we know that Charles the Bald and Louis the German had planned just prior to that battle to meet in September at Langres, in whose diocese Dijon lay.<sup>11</sup> The devastation caused to the countryside by armies in transit, even friendly ones, is well known to historians, and was presumably even better known to contemporaries, including those living around Dijon.<sup>12</sup>

All this is informed supposition, but there is some direct evidence too which shows the real, immediate impact of the political turmoil on the locality. Around the time that the relics were brought into the church, the charters of the ecclesiastical community of St-

Bénigne began to show a marked ambivalence as to which king they considered the legitimate holder of authority in the region. Some are dated by Charles the Bald, others by Lothar, and consecutive charters switch from one to the other.<sup>13</sup> In a society based on the control of land, the transactions these texts recorded were of general importance, with a social impact reaching far beyond the religious community; the uncertainty in dating therefore plausibly reflects a broader-based uncertainty.<sup>14</sup>

In short, while Amolo's text certainly shows that the cult of saints was popular, we may suppose that in this instance, that popularity demands to be understood in the immediate political context. There is good reason to suppose that people living around Dijon knew about the civil war: they were unsure who their king was, and they were quite probably at least intermittently worried about the likelihood of ravaging and plunder as armies passed by. It is surely no great leap of faith to suppose that the arrival of relics provided an opportunity for a local population justifiably nervous about what the Frankish civil war would mean for them to express, and perhaps to alleviate, that nervousness. Connections between mass convulsions of this kind and pressing social and political issues are not historically unprecedented, and in fact, one might wonder whether other contemporary expressions of unrest, such as the Stellinga revolt, might benefit from more attention in this vein too.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, it may be that the political problems of the 840s perhaps stimulated a broader revival interest in the cult of relics, sufficient to prod Jonas of Orléans to complete his previously abandoned work on the topic.<sup>16</sup> As so often in the early middle ages, we should not presume that politics and religion can be neatly separated.

Of course, Frankish wars did not impinge only on the lives of the labouring population: even though their devastation was widely shared, they were primarily vehicles for elite ambition and dissent, and greatly affected that elite in many ways. And as it happens, the background of war might also help explain why Archbishop Amolo took such pains in his reply. The diocese of Langres was on the fault-line between Charles's and Lothar's regions of interest. It could have fallen to either, but in the end, it fell to Charles. Lyons, however, the head of the ecclesiastical province to which Langres belonged, passed to Lothar. This division presented a challenge to the metropolitan's authority over his suffragans, which, even if not yet realised at the time of writing, Archbishop Amolo may have anticipated.<sup>17</sup> We can be certain that Amolo was determined to protect this authority, since the twelfth-century chronicler Hugh of Flavigny, who had at his disposal sources since lost, records that he wrote at some indeterminate time to the archbishop of Bourges and others to assert the historical metropolitan primacy of Lyons in Gaul.<sup>18</sup> Amolo's letter to Theobald could be further evidence of that determination. Requesting further information from Theobald, Amolo responded anyway when it was not forthcoming. By advising his suffragan authoritatively and without delay, he clearly signalled that, come what may, he was eager to play a significant role in his subordinate's activities.

However, as well as serving as a conduit for popular anxiety and creating an opportunity for the display of metropolitan authority, we should not neglect the possibility that the arrival of these bones could have also been turned straightforwardly to bolster

conventional episcopal authority too. This point can be best approached by means of a comparison. While Amolo's letter discusses the position taken by St Martin concerning unidentified relics near Tours in the fifth century, it oddly fails to raise a parallel rather close to home. For according to the celebrated sixth-century chronicler Gregory of Tours, unknown relics had been something of an issue in early sixth-century Dijon too.<sup>19</sup> A mysterious saint had begun to cure people coming to his shrine, eventually drawing the attention of the local bishop. The bishop in question, Bishop Gregory, was like Theobald initially greatly concerned, and even commanded that the cult be discontinued. But the mystery saint paid Bishop Gregory a clarificatory visit in a dream, and thereafter the bishop threw himself behind the cult. A saint's *passio* (whose earliest manuscripts are, interestingly in this context, ninth-century) helpfully brought by passing travellers lifted the relics' anonymity, and the saint was identified as none other than St-Bénigne.<sup>20</sup> The episode in fact marked the origin of the very community at the centre of Amolo's letter.

Before drawing the almost self-evident comparison between these two episodes, it would be wise to consider the evidence carefully, since recent scholarship has tended not to take Gregory's story at face value, instead reading between the lines to discern the real issues at stake. In fact, the emergence of the cult of St Bénigne in the sixth century has been persuasively argued by Ian Wood to have been part of Bishop Gregory's attempts permanently to move the see from Langres to Dijon, a manoeuvre sympathetically reported by Gregory of Tours, his nephew.<sup>21</sup> In other words, the original cult of the saint later to be identified as Bénigne may have been engineered, and less 'popular' than it is

made to seem: Van Dam goes so far as to talk of Bishop Gregory inventing Bénigne's cult.<sup>22</sup> Yet this methodological caution only makes the comparison more revealing.

Bishops in the same place, facing analogous problems of newly discovered yet potent relics, responded very differently. Whereas the Merovingian bishop co-opted or even initiated a popular cult, using it as spiritual capital to impress his authority more clearly on his favoured residence, perhaps in preparation for an attempt to move the see, the Carolingian appealed to his superior, and plausibly – though admittedly we do not know the outcome for certain – quashed the new popular cult. That difference arguably speaks to the greater organisational capacity of the Carolingian bishop, who could rely, as Amolo makes clear, on a set of resources which Gregory's bishop did not, and perhaps could not – messengers, canon law collections (perhaps Pseudo-Isidore), and hierarchies of episcopal power.<sup>23</sup> But the contrast also reveals differences in attitude as well as capacity. No Carolingian bishop could be informed of such happenings and stand idly by, and the prospect of co-option was evidently unappealing.

Amolo's letter stands therefore as a classic illustration of the authoritarian Carolingian bishop, deeply uneasy with demonstrations of popular piety. However, it may be that the Dijon relics had still another role to play too, though one now only discernable in outline. Looked at more closely, some elements of the story jar, at least as recounted by Amolo, and merit closer scrutiny. To begin with, it is altogether unclear why miracles which consisted chiefly of the infliction of painful physical violence would have attracted large crowds of pilgrims. Amolo briefly considered whether those so afflicted might have been

pretending in order to benefit from alms, but in general he was persuaded that there was something more powerful at work; in truth, his discussion of possible fraud seems largely inspired by Agobard's discussion of miracles in the letter which Amolo appended to his own.

The fact that these miracles were allegedly spreading is also odd. It is never explained how or why these relics had sparked manifestations elsewhere in the diocese of Langres, let alone in Saulieu, a monastery in a different diocese altogether. As it happened, there was a connection between St-Bénigne and Saulieu, in that Saulieu was dedicated to Bénigne's co-martyrs, Andochus and Tyrus.<sup>24</sup> But since Bénigne's relics were not the ones held responsible for the miracles, that connection does not readily explain the miracles' dissemination. Finally, one of the most surprising, and surprisingly under-discussed, aspects of the letter is the sharply gendered quality of the miracles. Amolo had been informed that they were affecting only women: so he supposed that in the male community's church there were three or four hundred women, writhing and being thrown to the ground.<sup>25</sup> This would have made this distinguished but relatively small Burgundian community the temporary home to a group of conspicuously undisciplined women far more numerous than any contemporary convent.<sup>26</sup>

When these peculiarities are combined with the story of how the relics had been acquired – unnamed wandering pseudo-monks, who had 'forgotten' the saint's name – one starts to wonder whether Theobald was trying to wind Amolo up. Dubious authenticity, local disruption, ramifying disorder involving possessed women cooped-up in a male

institution: Amolo's horrified response must have been wholly predictable. And consideration of a key question makes us think about that predictability in a new light. The relics were being stored, Amolo was told, in the church of St-Bénigne, in fact in that church's most holy place, in the crypt next to the very tomb of St Bénigne himself. But how had they ended up there? Amolo does not discuss the issue directly, indeed makes no reference to it at all, but presumably someone had given permission for the relics to be brought inside the main church of this small but regionally significant religious community, important enough to receive intermittent royal grants. The question is who that had been.

Traditionally, St-Bénigne was a community under episcopal control, although the precise quality of this control had varied over its long history, for bishops had sometimes run the community directly, had sometimes appointed a provost, often seconded from the bishops' own staff, and had sometimes appointed an abbot.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of this long history of close episcopal involvement with St-Bénigne, it seems clear from Theobald's reaction that it had not been the bishop who had decided to bring the mysterious relics into the church. In the absence of any obvious alternative – for there is no indication that any other prominent figure was interested in acting as the community's patron – we must surely suppose that the transfer had been arranged by members of the community itself.<sup>28</sup> That would not be altogether unprecedented.<sup>29</sup>

Closer consideration of the contemporary relations between bishop and community allows us to grasp the issue more firmly. It may not be a co-incidence that the early and

mid ninth-century stands out as a moment of uniquely intense episcopal involvement in St-Bénigne's history. To the extent that Bishop Theobald preferred an interventionist approach, dispensing with an abbot, he was merely building on the foundations of his predecessor, Bishop Alberic (d.838).<sup>30</sup> Alberic was the first bishop of Langres seriously to impose reforming ideas upon ecclesiastical communities in his diocese, possibly the first bishop in fact in recent decades to devote his energies single-mindedly to that diocese, as previous Carolingian bishops of Langres had spent much time in Bavaria, where they had family roots.<sup>31</sup> Alberic's ideas of what reforming religious communities meant were positively old-fashioned, and his insistence on exercising authority over these communities was fully in line with wider Carolingian practice, but he clearly applied them with unusual vigour.<sup>32</sup> It would seem that Alberic selected one institution in his diocese, Bèze, as a flagship monastery, and classified the others, including St-Bénigne, as canonical, not monastic, and as of lesser importance. Studies of the Reichenau and St-Gallen necrologies, preserving lists of monks and canons from Dijon and Langres around 830, reveal that Bishop Alberic did not even hesitate physically to transfer individuals from one community to another, including a relocation of twelve St-Bénigne canons to Bèze, and another four to St-Mammes in Langres.<sup>33</sup>

This context of unusually strong episcopal pressure casts the decision of the community – if that is what it was – to bring relics inside their church in a new light. It may be that the relics were not only brought in without the bishop's knowledge, but with the intention of re-asserting the community's independence of action and local prestige. Since the community's point of view is nowhere explicitly recorded, this is only an inference, but it

is one which fits the historical context well. Alberic and Theobald's muscular direct management might well have been perceived as threatening St-Bénigne's status, and, given the large-scale transfers of people carried out by Alberic (perhaps half the community), probably its sense of identity too.<sup>34</sup> There are certainly parallels which can be drawn with the defensive responses of other ninth-century communities to episcopal intervention, such as St-Martin, St-Denis, Werden, and Nantua.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, if a time had to be chosen to attempt to act autonomously, then the 840s were the right moment. Not only might the local bishop have had other concerns in a time of war but the bishops of Langres, based in Dijon since the sixth century or perhaps earlier, had either just moved back to Langres or else were in the process of doing so.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps this transition should be connected to signs of an indirect contestation of episcopal power in mid ninth-century Langres, attested by Theobald's successor Isaac in his capitularies.<sup>37</sup> It is hard to say what the anticipated impact of this move on St-Bénigne would have been, but perhaps the community would have feared greater marginalization, or perhaps they saw an opportunity therein to push for greater freedom of manoeuvre, or perhaps both: in any case, it is surely inconceivable that they would not have given the matter thought.

So, we know that bishops were bearing down unusually heavily on the community of St-Bénigne, but that from the 840s they were also in the process of moving away from Dijon and back to Langres, with all the possible implications that such a move entailed. We may also suspect that the community acted at this moment to bring relics within its compound without authorisation, and either exploited the popular excitement which resulted, or made no attempt to quieten it down. The obvious conclusion is that the relics

were serving as a proxy for the community's attempt to gain a measure of autonomy, and perhaps, given the claim of the travellers 'to be monks' and moreover the fact that some of the people transferred by Alberic from St-Bénigne to Bèze had returned to St-Bénigne, to assert monastic status.<sup>38</sup> The fact that Amolo's letter indicates in a revealing phrase that the men who had brought the relics were not the wandering Italian relic tradesmen responsible for other such transfers, but Burgundians, since they are described as having wished to bring the relics 'within the boundaries of *their* region' might imply that the community had even sent its delegates to Italy explicitly to procure fresh spiritual resources.<sup>39</sup> The intention could well have been to develop an alternative or complement to the cult of the missionary St Bénigne, harnessed, as we have seen, by a sixth-century bishop of Langres and associated with the bishops ever since.

The above reconstruction makes no claim to be demonstrably true in every detail, only to be plausible in outline, and in line with the implications of the evidence. It may even be questioned whether the analytical effort has been worthwhile, when it is noted that if the community of St-Bénigne did have all this in mind, then their manoeuvre failed: the community remained under direct episcopal control until the late ninth century, and only became Benedictine in the 860s.<sup>40</sup> Clearly the bishop was able to meet the challenge posed by the relics. But this is where we come back to Amolo's letter. For if the relics were brought in as part of a struggle with the bishop, then the letter to which Amolo was responding was also part of that struggle, and we need to think of Theobald's message to Amolo as part of his measures to counter the risk these new relics posed to his control of the community. To judge from Amolo's response, Theobald's account of the relics was

so elaborated as to constitute a veritable anti-*translatio*, inverting all the norms of rightful relic translation, and destroying the credibility of any alternative account.<sup>41</sup> To put it bluntly, we cannot discount the possibility that those details which historians have used as to illustrate the problems of uncontrolled popular devotion leading to episcopal intervention were engineered to achieve precisely that result.

### **Beyond the relics**

To summarise the argument so far, closer attention to the context of Amolo's letter has suggested that the relics should be thought of as working simultaneously in three different registers. For the populace around Dijon, they perhaps served as a means of relieving some of the social tension associated with the fears of civil war. For the bishop and the archbishop, their arrival offered the opportunity for the demonstration of properly Carolingian episcopal authority at a difficult time. Finally, I suggest that the monks of Dijon initiated the situation in a bid to establish greater freedom of manoeuvre and indeed prestige, after a prolonged period of unprecedented episcopal pressure. These are not mutually exclusive explanations, since they could all have been true simultaneously, though we should not obscure the tensions involved as the meaning of the relics was contested. Although contextualisation of this kind cannot be said definitively to prove anything, the tremendous importance of relics in ninth-century society surely makes a certain complexity of interaction with pre-existing interests, participating in a variety of social registers, more plausible than the contrary.

Read in this way, Amolo's letter casts a great deal of light on the fine detail of what the arrival of new relics entailed: disruption, to be sure, but disruption refracted through the different layers of local politics and society. However, this is an appropriate moment to observe that the letter does not have to read simply for its information on relics, even though that is overwhelmingly how it has been treated in the broader historiography. In fact, it is precisely that single-minded concentration which has meant that other aspects have been neglected; for Amolo's letter can also be used to illuminate other aspects of ninth-century Christianity within Burgundy and maybe beyond. To begin with, we ought to bring the materiality of Amolo's letter into the discussion, insofar as Amolo sent not an abstract text to Theobald, but a real, physical manuscript of some kind.<sup>42</sup>

Today, Amolo's letter is preserved in a unique manuscript: Paris, Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, MS 717.<sup>43</sup> This manuscript is a thin little booklet, a single gathering of eight folios, contained within an early modern parchment binding, itself now bound within a modern white leather cover. It is not impossible that it once belonged to a larger codex, but there is no indication that this is the case.<sup>44</sup> A twelfth-century conciliar text was copied onto folio 8v, but it would seem that Arsenal 717 originally contained only Amolo's letter, and, significantly, the letter of Agobard which Amolo stated he would send along with it.<sup>45</sup> The palaeographical dating of this manuscript has varied. Some experts have considered it tenth-century, but others have been unwilling to exclude a mid ninth-century date.<sup>46</sup> This variation need not surprise us unduly, given the similarities between ninth- and tenth-century hands, and the difficulties too of classifying ephemeral manuscripts, as opposed to those intended for display and long use. The scribal errors in

the text do not present unambiguous evidence of eye-slip or other errors arising from the process of copying as opposed to composition, though this sort of evidence might in any case not prove a great deal either way. The provenance of the manuscript, which is Troyes, does not help much either.<sup>47</sup>

However, its format, size (27cm by 20cm) and *mise-en-page* clearly resemble a demonstrably 'original' Carolingian letter, that sent by Archbishop Gunther of Cologne, which was also in the form of a booklet.<sup>48</sup> Like Gunther's letter, the Arsenal manuscript also has signs of having been folded at some point to make a neat little parcel.

Admittedly, there is the possibility that this folding took place later, since the folds are very visible on the early modern parchment cover; but it is equally possible that the original little manuscript was folded before the cover was added, and refolded again afterwards. If this were not the original letter, one would have to ask why it was copied in this particular form, in what one would imagine to have been precisely the format of the piece of parchment sent by Amolo.<sup>49</sup> In their fascination with the phantom relics described by Amolo, historians have unduly neglected what could be in a way the only real relic.

If Paris Arsenal 717 does preserve Amolo's letter as it was actually sent, then it is an important example of an 'original' early medieval letter. Yet more important for the purposes of this article, as the real letter it would also then be a tangible link to the reality of the ecclesiastical institutions established in ninth-century Burgundy, to the issues of practical implementation and structure. And it is to these institutions and these structures

which I wish now to turn. For, reading Amolo's letter as a whole, and not merely for its information on extraordinary miracles, one thing becomes evident: the relics were not by any means Amolo's only concern, or even, to an extent, his main one.<sup>50</sup> For Amolo, the removal of the relics was only a provisional measure: the ultimate solution was for devotional energies to be poured out in the parish. The thrust of his argument was not just that the bones in question were dubious, it was that all the undesirable consequences of the relics' arrival would be resolved by a return to the parish churches, in which, Amolo explains, mass was taken, confessions heard, children baptised, and the dead buried – the everyday miracles of everyday life. The problem was not just that the relics were unauthenticated, it was that they were distracting people from what Amolo considered a more fulfilling religiosity.

That the ninth century was the key period for the emergence of the parish in western Europe is well-known.<sup>51</sup> It was under Charlemagne that efforts were first made to enforce the payment of the tithe, with important implications for the spatial organisation of pastoral care, and it was in the ninth century that systematic efforts were made to bring all churches, whoever had built or claimed to control them, under episcopal supervision.<sup>52</sup> Both these were necessary preconditions for the emergence of a localised and embedded system for the provision of pastoral care fully deserving the term 'parish' (*parochia*), a term first applied to local churches in the ninth century. Amolo's letter in fact allows us to glimpse this development in the very process of elaboration, for although Amolo's letter is modelled on that of his predecessor Agobard in many ways, Amolo puts conspicuously more stress on the parish – a term not even used by Agobard.

Admittedly, talking about the parish network does not in itself prove its actual existence, and it has been said that the Carolingians ‘were always better at preaching than practice’ (though we should remember that in the case of the parish, preaching actually *was* the practice, or part of it).<sup>53</sup> Yet not only does it seem *a priori* unlikely that Amolo was recommending that an entirely hypothetical institution take up the burden of satisfying specific people’s spiritual needs, there is also every reason to suppose that key elements of Carolingian reform, including the parish network, were in place around Dijon in the 840s. This is what is implied by other contemporary documents from around Dijon and Langres, such as a capitulary manuscript from the 850s, and the Pseudo-Isidorian capitularies of Benedict Levita which we know for certain were being read in Langres around this time, both of which make unambiguous reference to the parish.<sup>54</sup>

We must in any case take care that arguments about whether these institutions were more ideal than practical do not lead us to misconstrue the evidence, for clearly the parish was intended to be both at the same time. Not simply a form of organisation, the parish encoded an all-embracing religious orientation. This comes across in Amolo’s treatment of the gendered aspect of Theobald’s report, which returns again and again to the nature of the family. How, he asks, can these be deemed legitimate miracles, if they are preventing girls from returning home to their parents? Or if they are preventing married women from returning to their husbands?<sup>55</sup> Yet this stress on the household was not intended to produce a fragmented system, since there grew up alongside it the practice of systematic episcopal judicial visitation of the parish communities– for which, as it

happens, some of the very earliest evidence anywhere in Europe has a mid-ninth century Langres provenance.<sup>56</sup> The parish, in short, was a means of effectively connecting the family to the bishop, linking in this way the entire Christian community together.

In comparison with the sensational nature of the relics and their effect on the group sheltered in St-Bénigne, the organisational aspects of Amolo's letter, whether the manuscript itself as evidence for the reality of episcopal supervision or its comments about the parish, may seem rather dull. It is therefore all the more important to remember that from a macro-historical viewpoint the development of the parish system was arguably of greater importance than the cult of relics.<sup>57</sup> It was the parish, not relic devotion, which lent religious practice in the Latin West a distinctive character. A recent global history has rightly drawn attention to the particularity, and peculiarity, of having religious specialists embedded in every local community of any significance, a network in depth of a kind unparalleled anywhere else in the world.<sup>58</sup> Amolo's letter illustrates this development just as much as popular devotion to relics, and, moreover, in its very physical form, hints at the reality of the structures it describes.

### **Relics, parishes, and the control of the holy in the Carolingian reforms**

To summarise the argument so far, this article has suggested that Amolo's letter can be textually 'excavated' to reveal a reassuringly complicated impression of the impact of the new relics in and around Dijon; but that we also should consider Amolo's letter for what it can tell us about new forms of organisation and structure, and their implementation, as a necessary corrective to an excessively one-sided appreciation of the letter. Some of the

details of this reconstruction have been necessarily inferential, but the general form of the argument will probably be uncontroversial. Yet if that is true, it is partly because that form has reproduced a convention to consider these two aspects of early medieval Christianity separately, and even to an extent as in opposition, a tendency which, as Julia Smith has argued, needs to be explicitly tackled.<sup>59</sup>

This unspoken division of labour, according to which historians tend to concentrate either on the institutions of the Church or on saints and relics, has its roots in the influence of the ‘cultural turn’ in the 1970s, when cultural history made its appearance in early medieval history, diverting attention from conventional, institutionally-oriented ‘church history’ towards the richer pickings of ‘religious history’, with a whole new set of questions.<sup>60</sup> As a historiographical phenomenon, it is of course not restricted to the study of any particular period, but that is not to say that its impact has been the same across the broad sweep of medieval history. Indeed, its consequences now appear to have been rather unevenly distributed, affecting the perception of different movements and trends in different ways; and the ninth century is a case in point.

Whereas the Carolingian Church reforms used to be thought of as primarily exercises in the consolidation of Christianity, or as an important stage in the process of Christianization, they are now more often considered in juxtaposition to more ‘charismatic’ periods of religious history, and in particular, Late Antiquity. For since the seminal work of Peter Brown, Late Antiquity has the reputation as a period of immense cultural vitality and vibrancy: the time when, it is argued, Christianity crackled with a

thousand innovations and opportunities; when, according to Brown, all the great ideological groundwork of the emergent new world religion was done.<sup>61</sup> Since the ninth century is often treated, albeit vaguely, as an endpoint to Late Antiquity, it is logical enough to approach its religious history as the moment when some of the rich menu of possibilities of early Christianity were finally closed down in the West - when calculating, power-hungry bishops brought the efforts of their Merovingian predecessors to successful completion.<sup>62</sup> In this way, the Carolingian Church reforms, in the Late Antique perspective, become largely a story of the triumph of administration. For Peter Brown, the Carolingian period was 'a down-to-earth time, suited to the aims of an energetic managerial aristocracy', while Amolo's colleagues were 'straitlaced', 'the first technocrats of Europe'.<sup>63</sup>

The cult of relics is actually something of a classic illustration of this process. With more than a hint of notions of routinization of charisma, the Carolingian promotion of relics is sometimes viewed as an attempt to bring a greater degree of control over the spontaneous expression of religiosity previously articulated through the dangerously unpredictable holy man.<sup>64</sup> The idea is that western bishops promoted relics, a safer, more controllable vessel for the charismatic power formerly embodied by holy men, in order to remove a threat to their institutional authority. If Merovingian bishops faced some difficulties in this campaign, for example in the shape of politicised martyrs thrown up by the late Merovingian political bear-garden, Carolingian bishops followed Boniface's lead and fulfilled the programme, better controlling relics to do away with the dangerous power of the real holy man, and, for their own or the king's benefit, to harness charismatic

power.<sup>65</sup> It is surely hardly an exaggeration to say that this perspective, which we might call the view from Late Antiquity, now dominates non-specialist understandings of the Carolingian Church. It has, for example, effectively marginalized the paradigm of Christianization as the framing concept for the Carolingian Church in general, and relics in particular: no bad thing in itself, for though the concept of Christianization has many merits, it is notoriously difficult to define and moreover always threatens to smuggle in an essentialised understanding of Christianity, implying a process of growing convergence with a whiff of teleology suggestive of confessional origins.<sup>66</sup>

While the perspective of the Carolingian Church as essentially repressive has not hitherto been much internalised by Carolingian specialists, there are some signs that this is beginning to change.<sup>67</sup> For instance, some recent research on the Carolingian Church has pursued the enquiry along Foucauldian lines, portraying clerics as proto-colonial administrators bent on homogenising their empire, and their institutions as machines for discipline and compulsion, attempting to capture ‘charisma’ through a perfected organisation.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, all the recent stress on the notion of the authoritarian-sounding *correctio* as the guiding concept of the reforms bears the potential to lead in this direction, too.<sup>69</sup>

The overall consequence is that the ninth century becomes caught between the almost anarchic vitality of Late Antiquity and Southern-esque views of the eleventh and, especially, twelfth centuries as the beginning of the real Middle Ages, with the result that the Carolingian reforms are in effect talked down or represented in value-loaded terms.<sup>70</sup>

This correlates with other trends. A supposed concern to neutralise alternative sources of holy power resonates with a historiography which stresses church reform as mere rhetoric justifying royal authority, ‘a way of strengthening social control’.<sup>71</sup> The alleged crack-down on popular devotion makes sense in a historiography which often until recently stressed the repressive nature of reform and its disastrous consequences for women in particular, as the dominance of grey, dour men expert in legal procedure attempted to stamp out all traces of living charisma, demonstrated by the harsh treatment meted out first to the opponents of Boniface, and latterly to the likes of Gottschalk, Amalarius, and Eriugena.<sup>72</sup> Finally, an attempt to repress charisma which could hardly fully succeed echoes a broader tendency to depict the Carolingians as generally ‘premature’, and laying emphasis on the failure of the Carolingian Church reforms, not their success, as the necessary precondition to the glories, or perhaps tragedies, of eleventh-century reform.<sup>73</sup>

However, I would like to suggest that Amolo’s letter might cause us to reconsider these perspectives, encouraging us to move away from an opposition between organised and unconstrained religiosity, away from seeing relics as something intrinsically different from other strands of Christianity, and away from studying that church in the shadow of Peter Brown’s holy man, or at least Brown’s holy man as generally understood.<sup>74</sup> For it should be noted that Amolo’s letter does not depict devotion to relics as opposed to devotion based on the parish. Nor, for that matter does the bulk of the Carolingian evidence, taken as a whole. After all, every single Carolingian altar, including those of local churches, was supposed to contain relics, and elaborate liturgical *ordines* were devised at just this time to orchestrate their insertion, while as Amolo himself pointed

out, there was plenty of room for pilgrimage to saints' shrines in a parochially-organised Christianity.<sup>75</sup> In fact, I would suggest that the diffuse but widespread historiographical tendency to distinguish personal and institutional forms of holiness, a distinction which in certain views of the Carolingian reforms is heightened into an opposition, is in some ways an unhelpful approach to the issues at stake, imposed upon our evidence rather than arising from it.

The root of the issue arguably lies in the widespread habit of historians to discuss religion, and particularly sanctity, through notions of 'charisma'.<sup>76</sup> Though this is an approach which is often today used as though it were self-evident, or simply true, the idea of charisma is of course a model, not reality.<sup>77</sup> And it is a model with a revealing history. It is normally, and with good reason, attributed to Weber, who popularised it, and whose formulation of the concept underpins the modern sense of the word. But Weber did not in fact invent 'charisma' from whole cloth, instead adapting it from the work of the late nineteenth-century Lutheran theologian Rudolf Sohm.<sup>78</sup> Sohm's goal was to argue that the Catholic Church's emergent legal framework rendered it irredeemably inauthentic, indeed nothing less than a betrayal of the early church in which there had been no authority other than Christ and those directly blessed with his grace ('charisma'). In Weber's popularisation, that immanent opposition between the administrative and the charismatic, derived from Lutheran theology, was retained, and is sustained in normal usage today.

Historians who talk of charisma today might not realise that the idea they are using has such a genealogy, or perhaps think it does not matter. But recent work, like Buc's, has shown that we ignore the intellectual baggage of our theories at our peril, and it is therefore important to understand that the idea of charisma is to a certain extent intrinsically Protestant.<sup>79</sup> Of course, it may be that in spite of its transparently confessional origins, the idea of charisma is too valuable to jettison. In that case, we should at least consider alternative formulations which do not perpetuate older oppositions.<sup>80</sup> Of these, one which is especially interesting is that developed by the sociological theorist Edward Shils. Refusing to contrast charismatic authority with the bureaucratic, or even to identify it with the personal, Shils preferred to concentrate instead on different articulations and distributions of the charismatic, which he defined as relating to 'awe-inspiring centrality', including the centrality of values, and which as such could be embodied in officials as much as holy men, and in objects as much as personalities.<sup>81</sup> Shils's charisma is not the product of an extraordinary personality, it is a sense of being close to the centre of society. This notion simply does not have space for ideas of charisma being drained away through routinization. Instead, Shils suggests that we think in terms of different articulations and locations of the charismatic (for example, as concentrated or dispersed).

Quite apart from the intrinsic merits of the nature of Shils's concept of charisma, which unlike Weber's is not tied to a particular historical meta-narrative and is thus more flexible, thinking in Shilsian terms about Amolo's letter, and indeed the Carolingian Church in general, seems to make better sense of the particular combination of

developments at stake. In particular, Shils's reluctance to countenance the possibility of a suppression of the charismatic seems to resonate well with the ninth century. The ninth century after all witnessed not only a renewed stress on the parish church, but also a renewed interest in the sanctity of the Eucharist, indeed the emergence of the first ever Eucharist debate, and a prominence of Eucharistic transformation miracles (in which the consecrated bread reveals its true physical nature in often disturbingly graphic ways) new to western Europe.<sup>82</sup> What was happening in every local church every week was becoming more wonderful, and more mysterious, at just this time, even if that wonder (and Shils would say charisma) was concentrated in what appeared to be an object, not a person. From this angle, there is no justification for distinguishing between the kinds of holiness embedded in the parish and the relic as incommensurate, let alone opposed, they were merely different channels through which charisma was articulated in the ninth century.

The point therefore is that we do not have to see the Carolingian reform movement as either progress towards Christianization, or as a surreptitious attempt on the part of bishops to monopolise holy power just as they supposedly sought to monopolise political power.<sup>83</sup> This does not of course mean that the Carolingian period did not see major changes in religiosity. But instead of tacitly subordinating our analysis to either the Reformation or to Vatican II, or to stories about Late Antiquity or the eleventh century, we might consider whether the Carolingian Church reforms consisted of a programme of neither unfolding 'Christianization' nor the repression of the charismatic, but of an unprecedented set of co-ordinated efforts to diffuse holiness into the local community

through the mechanism of the parish and the parish priest. This in turn should be seen as part of the development of a new relationship between Christianity in the west and space, a transformation recently explored by Dominique Iogna-Prat.<sup>84</sup> For it was only now, in the course of the ninth century, that the church become truly anchored to the earth, a profound territorialization reflected not only in the parochialization of Western Europe, but also, at a larger-scale, in the emergence of St Peter's patrimony in Italy: together a truly momentous change in the very conception of what could be holy, and in what ways.<sup>85</sup>

So while it can scarcely be denied that Amolo was unhappy about the idea of unauthorised relics and their miracles in Dijon, this is not necessarily the key point to take from his letter. Rather, it is a massive – and moreover enduring – shift in the distribution and indeed form of the holy, not in the degree or quality of its presence, which I suggest is the signal theme of Amolo's letter, with its concern for every person to have regular access to the divine in a guaranteed, rather than episodic, fashion: and this change cannot be understood unless we read texts like Amolo's letter, and the theology and organisation behind them, as a coherent whole. Instead of one-dimensionally attesting efforts to bolster episcopal, institutional power at the expense of the popular and charismatic, and without reverting to problematic, de-historicised notions of Christianization, Amolo's letter can and should be read as evidence for an astonishingly successful, and historically specific, attempt to guarantee and to disseminate the holy into every rural community.

## **Conclusion**

Three points emerge from this extended gloss on a single, curiously evocative mid-ninth-century text. The first is that the noticeable tendency to subordinate the Carolingian Church to Late Antique narratives, even sometimes by historians who work on the Carolingian period, should be resisted. Amolo's letter shows that the Carolingian reforms cannot be described as simply being about closing down or controlling: they were full of creativity, too. Attempting to read Amolo's letter in its full context carries all the risks inherent to drawing historical inferences, but the prize is not only a sharper view of the role of the relics it describes, but also a contribution to a reclamation of the ninth-century reforms as neither marking the end of Late Antiquity, nor dimly prefiguring the so-called Gregorian movement of the eleventh century. Such an understanding would chime with a wave of very recent work picking up older historiographical strands which emphasised the dynamism, energy and impact of Carolingian Church reforms, doing more justice thereby to the richness of these reforms, and avoiding an insistent reduction of them down to the supposedly essential dimensions of control, interest, and power.<sup>86</sup> To view the reforms as productive of the charismatic, as much as repressive of it, is at the very least good to think with, re-opening approaches which ought not to be wholly ignored amidst all the unquestionably insightful historical attention to that Church's imbrication in relationships of power.

The liberation required is no longer one from explicitly confessional perspectives; but my second point is that we do need to consider how far confessional perspectives are being tacitly reproduced via the social science theory which, consciously or not, we apply to

our history. The issue is not that Weber's notion of charisma is 'wrong', but that, like many of Weber's other ideas, it is so ubiquitous as now to be hardly considered as a theory at all, which that makes this semi-secularised concept's influence on research agendas and perspectives all the more powerful. In fact, the way in which historians have used a language of charisma is a superb illustration of the benefits of explicit theorisation, on pain of having one's agenda invisibly shaped by the ghosts of arguments of previous generations of scholars. I have suggested that if historians are sure that charisma is a useful concept, they should at least consider alternatives formulations, and have suggested that Shils's version has much to offer to Carolingianists; but really the act of reflecting on the models which influence our work is more important than which one is eventually chosen.

Finally, Amolo's letter serves as a reminder of the limitations of merely mining texts, rather than closely examining them and situating them in as full a context as possible. That is not to say that such close examination invalidates the general themes, for that is certainly not the case for Amolo's letter: as many historians have already proposed, there is no doubt that Amolo's letter is a tremendous illustration of Carolingian episcopal reactions to strange, unauthorised relics and their miracles. It should, however, not be reduced to that role, for it is also a remarkable manuscript, offering remarkable evidence for the penetration of reform to the local level, and for the impact of that reform. Old-fashioned though it may be, a close-reading of rich texts like Amolo's still holds out the promise of rich interpretative reward.

[Acknowledgements]

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Amolo to Theobald, ed. E.Dümmler (Monumenta Germaniae Historica [hereafter MGH] *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* 3, Berlin, 1899), 363-368. A full English translation is available on the internet at (*departmental website*). [I will also offer it for listing on the *Episcopus catalogue of translations relating to bishops*, [www.episcopus.org](http://www.episcopus.org), run by John Ott.].

<sup>2</sup> On the fundamental Christian ambivalence towards miracles, see M. van Uytvanghe, 'La controverse biblique et patristique autour du miracle, et ses répercussions sur l'hagiographie dans l'Antiquité tardive et le haut Moyen Âge latin' in: *Hagiographie, Cultures et Sociétés, IVe–XIIIe siècles, Actes du Colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris 12–5 mai 1979* (Paris 1981), 205–33. S.Justice, 'Did the middle ages believe in their miracles?' *Representations*, 103 (2008), 1-29, is an excellent discussion of the thorny methodological problems involved in studying the miraculous. P.-A.Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle dans la France médiévale (XIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1985) is a wonderfully concrete study, including a typology of miracles, though the book is firmly focused on the post-Carolingian age.

<sup>3</sup> Agobard, 'De quorundam inlusione signorum', ed. E.Dümmler (MGH *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* 3, Berlin, 1899), 206-210, alternatively in: *Agobardi Lugdunensis Opera Omnia*, ed. L. van Acker (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis 52, Turnhout, 1981), 237-243.

<sup>4</sup> It is tempting to associate the relics with those of Apollinaris of Ravenna, later housed in a church two miles outside of Dijon which belonged to St-Bénigne, and whose miracles were recorded by an eleventh- or twelfth-century St-Bénigne monk: 'Miracula sancti Apollinaris in territorio Divionensi Burgundia' (BHL 627), in: *Acta sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*, ed. Jean Bollandus and others (Antwerp, 1643–present; new edn Paris and Brussels, 1868–1925), July, 5, 352-358. This tradition claims they were brought by a Merovingian queen, but the first miracles are early tenth-century, and there is no earlier reference to the cult. However, there is no explicit link, so the connection must remain speculative.

<sup>5</sup> Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* [hereafter HRE], ed. M.Stratmann (MGH *Scriptores* 36, Hanover, 1998), records a lost letter of Hincmar of Rheims to the bishop of Troyes on a similar theme, 316. For Bishop Erchanbert of Freising's decision to arrange a three-day fast as a means of testing newly-arrived relics in the late 830s, see his letter, ed. E.Dümmler (MGH *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* 3, Berlin, 1899), 338.

<sup>6</sup> The exemplary use of Amolo's letter is in the brilliantly path-breaking P.Geary, *Furta Sacra: thefts of relics in the central Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1978), 31, where it introduces the chapter on the Carolingians. The letter is mentioned too in J. Smith, 'The problem of female sanctity in Carolingian Europe c.780-920', *Past and Present*, 146 (1995), 3-37, at 35. It is also touched on in: M.Rouche, 'Miracles, maladies et psychologie de la foi à l'époque carolingienne en Francie', in: *Hagiographie, Cultures et Sociétés*, 319-337.

<sup>7</sup> On the popularity of relics in general, see J.Smith, 'Emending Evil Ways and Praising God's Omnipotence': Einhard and the Uses of Roman Martyrs', in: *Conversion in late antiquity and the middle ages: seeing and believing*, ed. K.Mills and A.Grafton (Rochester, 2003), 189-223. On Roman relics in

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particular, see J.Smith 'Old saints, new relics', in: *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: essays in honour of Donald Bullough*, ed. J.Smith (Leiden, 2000), 317-39. More generally, see also H.Röckelein, 'Über Hagio-Geo-Graphien: Mirakel in Translationsberichten des 8. und 9. Jahrhunderts', in: *Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen, Erscheinungsformen, Deutungen*, ed. M. Heinzemann, K.Herbers and D.R. Bauer (Beiträge zur Hagiographie 3, Stuttgart, 2002), 166-179; J.McCulloh, 'From Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change in Papal Relic Policy from the Sixth to Eighth Century', in: *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting*, ed. E.Dassmann and K.Frank (Münster, 1980), 313-324; and most recently, the work of G.Heydemann, for example 'Text und Translation. Strategien zur Mobilisierung spiritueller Ressourcen im Frankenreich Ludwigs des Frommen', in: *Zwischen Niederschrift und Wiederschrift. Frühmittelalterliche Hagiographie und Historiographie im Spannungsfeld von Kompendienüberlieferung und Editionstechnik*, ed. R.Corradini, M.Diesenberger and M.Niederhorn-Bruck (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 15, Vienna, 2009), 291-326.

<sup>8</sup> A argument made forcefully in Geary, *Furta Sacra*, and expanded on in Smith, 'The problem of female sanctity', especially at 4: 'The Carolingian era forms an interlude in the history of sainthood, for no charismatic ascetics, healers, prophets or visionaries made their mark on a church whose bishops were implacably hostile to any such form of religious expression'. The rarity of holy men in the Carolingian world was concisely explored in P.Riché, 'Les Carolingiens en quête de sainteté', in: *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental* (Collection de l'Institut de France de Rome 149, Rome, 1991), 217-224. A.Vaucher, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2005), offers a good overarching introduction to the general field.

<sup>9</sup> Nor for that matter has its author, who is altogether a rather obscure figure, though Lupus of Ferrières corresponded with him, and he was friends with Eberhard of Friuli. For what is known, see J.Heil, 'Agobard, Amolo, das Kirchengut und die Juden von Lyon', *Francia*, 25 (1998), 39-76.

<sup>10</sup> A good summary is provided by M.Innes, 'Carolingian government', in: *Charlemagne: empire and society*, ed. J.Story (Manchester, 2005), 71-88. The framework for much recent research was set out by *The settlement of disputes in early medieval Europe*, ed. W.Davies and P.Fouracre (Cambridge, 1992). For more recent discussion, see *Staat im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. W.Pohl, H.Reimitz and S.Airlie (Vienna, 2006), particularly S.Airlie's 'The aristocracy in the service of the state', 93-112, and the essays collected in *Der frühmittelalterliche Staat – Europäische Perspektiven*, ed. W. Pohl and V.Wiesner (Vienna, 2009).

<sup>11</sup> *Nithard: histoire des fils de Louis le Pieux*, ed.and transl. P.Lauer (Paris, 1926), 87-89.

<sup>12</sup> See for example J.Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), 60, n.46.

<sup>13</sup> The early charters of St-Bénigne can be found in: *Chartes et documents de Saint-Bénigne de Dijon: priurés et dépendances des origines à 1300*, ed. G.Chevrier and M.Chaume, 2 vols (Dijon, 1986), vol 1. See here nos.51-57, 84-90.

<sup>14</sup> For a taste of the work which can be done on local communities using church archives, see M.Innes, *State and Society in the early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000). There has been no comparable recent work on the archive from St-Bénigne, but Karl Heidecker is currently working on the charters (pers.comm.).

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<sup>15</sup> R.Harris, 'Possession on the borders: The "Mal de Morzine" in Nineteenth-Century France', *Journal of Modern History*, 69 (1997), 451–78, is a rewarding analysis of the convulsions of a couple of hundred women in a nearby region, though a millennium later, and their connections with contemporary politics and social developments. My thanks to David Hopkin for the reference. For the Stellinga, see E.Goldberg, 'Popular Revolt, Dynastic Politics, and Aristocratic Factionalism in the Early Middle Ages: The Saxon Stellinga Reconsidered', *Speculum*, 70 (1995), 467–501, who however rejects a genuinely 'bottom-up' interpretation.

<sup>16</sup> Jonas of Orléans, *De cultu imaginum*, ed. J-P.Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus completus, series Latina* (1844-65), 106, col.305-388, See T.Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009), 295.

<sup>17</sup> For Lyons's struggle to assert its authority over Langres in the late ninth century, see R.Folz, 'L'évêché de Langres dans les rivalités politiques de la fin du IXe siècle', in: *Aux origines d'une Seigneurie ecclésiastique: Langres et ses évêques, VIIIe-XIe siècles* (Langres, 1986), 115-132.

<sup>18</sup> Hugh of Flavigny, *Chronicon*, ed. G.Pertz (MGH Scriptores 8, Hannover, 1848), 288-502, here at 321 (claiming the 'primatum aecclesiarum' in Gallia). Amolo also claimed that Lyons archbishops were standing Roman legates ('vices Romanorum pontificum'), but the details cannot now be ascertained clearly from Hugh's abbreviated report. For the development of metropolitan authority in general, see now M. Schrör, *Metropolitangewalt und papstgeschichtliche Wende* (Husum, 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Gloria martyrum*, c.50, ed. B Krusch (MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 1, 2, Hannover, 1885), 522-24. Amolo's silence on the incident is interesting, since both he and Theobald would probably have known this widely-disseminated text, though I have not been able to identify a manuscript explicitly connected to Lyons or Langres. Lyons's Carolingian manuscript collection is now mostly digitised, at <http://florus.bm-lyon.fr/> (accessed 7 April 2010).

<sup>20</sup> J.van Straeten, 'Actes des martyrs d'Aurelien en Bourgogne', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 79 (1961), 115-145, provides an edition. For a recent introduction to *passiones*, see G.Phillipart and M.Trigalet, 'Latin hagiography before the ninth century: a synoptic view', in: *The Long Morning of medieval Europe*, ed. J.Davis and M.McCormick (Aldershot, 2008), 111-130. C.Bouchard, 'Episcopal Gesta and the creation of a useful past in ninth-century Auxerre', *Speculum*, 84 (2009), 1–35, suggests that Bishop Gregory of Langres was the first to put together the *acta* of the martyred Burgundian saints.

<sup>21</sup> I.Wood, 'Topographies of holy power in sixth-century Gaul', in: *Topographies of Power in the early middle ages*, ed. M. de Jong, F. Theuws and C. van Rhijn (Leiden, 2001), 137-153. On the move to Dijon, see S.Loseby, 'Urban failures in late antique Gaul', in: *Towns in Decline, 100-1600*, ed.T.Slater (Aldershot, 2000), 72-95.

<sup>22</sup> *Gregory of Tours' Glory of the Martyrs*, trans. R. Van Dam (Liverpool, 1998), 75, n.60.

<sup>23</sup> The Gelasius text Amolo cites was included in a number of canon law collections, but he uses it in a variant form which could point to a Pseudo-Isidorian source. This would in no way be surprising, given, for example, the proven presence of Benedict Levita in the region (see note 37 below). In general, see

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J.M.Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, (Oxford, 1983), eg 171: ‘The Carolingian church was above all to be an episcopal Church’.

<sup>24</sup> Their *passio* is integrated into Bénigne’s in the most common version: see above, note 20.

<sup>25</sup> Immo, ut nonnulli affirmant, tantummodo in feminis...: Dümmler, 363.

<sup>26</sup> By comparison, Hincmar noted that there were about forty nuns in the important convent of Avenay, near Rheims (Flodoard, *HRE*, 349). For the issues associated with female access to relics housed in male communities, see J.Smith, ‘Women at the tomb: access to relic shrines in the early Middle Ages’, in: *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. K. Mitchell and I. Wood (Leiden, 2002), 163-80. For a recent summary of Carolingian women in general, see V.Garver, *Women and aristocratic culture in the Carolingian world*, (Ithaca, N.Y., 2009) though she does not discuss this incident.

<sup>27</sup> *Chartes*, ed. Chaume and Chevrier, throughout. It should however be noted that there are problems in dating some of the charters in question, dated only by the years of ‘King Charles’: Chaume and Chevrier’s estimates cannot always be relied upon.

<sup>28</sup> St-Bénigne passed under the patronage of the dukes of Burgundy in the tenth century, but there is no indication for any predatory aristocratic involvement with the community before at least the very end of the ninth century. For the dukes of Burgundy, see the classic M.Chaume, *Les Origines du Duché de Bourgogne* (2v, Dijon,1925).

<sup>29</sup> For other examples of religious communities arranging translations, see Sigal, *L’homme*, 176-82. Bishops were supposed to be involved in these translations, but this obligation was not always followed; Vauchez, *Sainthood*, 19-20.

<sup>30</sup> For Theobald’s interventionist approach, *Chartes*, ed. Chaume and Chevrier, nos.54-66, 86-98.

<sup>31</sup> See W.Störmer, ‘Bischöfe von Langres aus Alemannien und Bayern – Beobachtungen zur monastischen und politischen Geschichte im ostrheinischen Raum des 8. und frühen 9. Jahrhunderts’, in: *Aux origines d’une Seigneurie ecclésiastique*, 43-77.

<sup>32</sup> Carolingian interest in supporting bishops’ authority over monasteries can be gleaned from the capitularies of Benedict Levita I, 29, I 257 and III, 18 (all passages widely available in other canon law collections). Benedict Levita’s text is now most easily accessed via [www.benedictus.mgh.de](http://www.benedictus.mgh.de) (accessed 7 April 2010) which houses old editions as well as the results of a new edition in progress.

<sup>33</sup> This account of Alberic’s reforms is based on G.Oexle, *Forschungen zu monastischen und geistlichen Gemeinschaften im westfränkischen Bereich* (Munich, 1978), particularly 64-81 on the necrological lists relating to Langres; and 163-182 on Alberic’s reforms in the light of these lists, including his promotion of Bèze, signs of a concomitant marginalisation of St-Bénigne, and the demonstrable movement of personnel.

<sup>34</sup> Oexle, *Forschungen*, justifiably describes the St-Bénigne community as having been ‘umgruppiert’ as a result of the transfers.

<sup>35</sup> For Werden, S.Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the medieval West* (Oxford, 2006), 255-6. The difficulties of St Denis’s relationship with its bishop are reflected in the *Gesta Dagoberti*, ed. B.Krusch (MGH *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 2, Hannover, 1888), 396-425, and the context is discussed in

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Oexle, *Forschungen*, 112-119, with a concentration on the earlier ninth century up to 832. For Nantua, see the charter of Lothar I, *Die Urkunden Lothars I und Lothars II*, ed. T.Schieffer (MGH Diplomatum Karolinum 3, Berlin, 1926), n.121, 278-9. St-Medard, Moyenmoutier and Fulda all complained about their abbots in the ninth century too, showing that communities could often act independently of their titular heads: see in general, though on a slightly later period, S.Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster. Studien zu Auseinandersetzungen in monastischen Gemeinschaften des ottonisch-salischen Reichs* (Historische Studien 463, Husum, 2000).

<sup>36</sup> The bishops' return to Langres was consolidated by a string of royal charters, for example those of Charles the Fat, *Die Urkunden Karls III*, ed.P.Kehr (MGH Diplomata regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum 2, Berlin, 1937), nos.129,147, and 152-4. The precise date at which the bishops decided to move back is however uncertain: Oexle, *Forschungen*, 165-170, prefers a very early date (around 815) for the intention to return, and puts the actual 'Verlagerung des Schwerpunkts des geistlichen Lebens' at around 830, in contrast to older historiographical preferences for a more gradual shift.

<sup>37</sup> *Capitula Episcoporum II*, ed. P.Brommer (MGH Leges, Capitula Episcoporum, Hanover, 1995), 180-241, here at 180, writing '...propter quorundam minus adquiescentium desidiam et querulam contra pastorem sollicitudinem inproborum insolentiam'. Isaac's capitularies are a reworking of Benedict Levita faithful enough to assist with editing the latter: see G.Schmitz, 'Die Capitula des Isaak von Langres', available at <http://www.benedictus.mgh.de/studien/schmitz/isaak01.pdf> (accessed 7 April 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Compare the difficulties caused by sharpened distinctions between different forms of religious community at St Martin, Tours: Oexle, *Forschungen*, 120-133. St-Bénigne eventually did become monastic, but not until the 860s. For the return of some members, see Oexle, *Forschungen*, 181.

<sup>39</sup> [I]n suae regionis finibus: Dümmler, 363. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, includes a discussion of Italian relic

<sup>40</sup> Oexle, *Forschungen*, 174-5.

<sup>41</sup> A genre whose standards were set by Einhard, 'Translatio SS Marcellini et Petri', ed. G Waitz and W.Wattenbach (MGH, Scriptorum 15, Hanover 1888), 238-64.

<sup>42</sup> On the importance of the manuscript context for reading hagiography, see P.Geary, 'Saints, scholars and society: the elusive goal', in his *Living with the Dead* (Princeton, 1994), 9-29, particularly 18-20.

C.Pilsworth 'Miracles, missionaries and manuscripts in eighth-century southern Germany', in: *Signs, Wonders and miracles*, ed. K.Cooper and J.Gregory, a special edition of *Studies in Church History* 41 (2005), 67-76, offers a sharply focused case-study on hagiographical material.

<sup>43</sup> Description in H.Martin, *Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal*, 2 vols (Paris, 1885-89), vol 1, 55-56.

<sup>44</sup> I would like to thank Dr Tessa Webber for her helpful comments, and Bruno Blasselle, the Directeur of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, for his advice on the manuscript's codicology.

<sup>45</sup> This is the Council of Troyes 1107: see U.Blumenthal, *The early councils of Pope Paschal II, 1100-1110* (Toronto, 1978), 74-90.

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<sup>46</sup> Dümmler thought it ninth-century, van Acker early tenth-century, while R.McKitterick and D.Ganz have advised that a mid-ninth-century date is by no means out of the question (pers.comm.), and this seems confirmed by my preliminary comparisons with other Lyons manuscripts of this date (see note 19 above).

<sup>47</sup> It seems to have passed, like much other Troyes material, through the hands of the seventeenth-century Troyes antiquarian Nicolas Camuzat.

<sup>48</sup> H.Fuhrmann, 'Eine im Original erhaltene Propagandaschrift des Erzbischofs Gunther von Köln (865)', *Archiv für Diplomatik*, 4 (1958), 1-51. The booklet in question, Cologne, Erzbischöfliche Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 117, f.93-97v, can be viewed at [www.ceec.uni-koeln.de](http://www.ceec.uni-koeln.de) (accessed 7 April 2010).

<sup>49</sup> For a recent state of the art review of original Carolingian letters, see M.Mersiowky, 'Preserved by destruction: Carolingian original letters and Clm 6333', in: *Early medieval palimpsests*, ed.G. Declercq (Turnhout, 2007), 73-98, though Amolo's letter is not discussed.

<sup>50</sup> It is revealing that a rough translation of the letter put up by Thomas Head in 1997 omits without further indication its material on the parish, translating only around a third of the overall text to stress similar themes to those centred by the historiography: <http://urban.hunter.cuny.edu/~thead/amulo.htm> (accessed 7 April 2010). C.Treffort,

(Lyons, 1996) briefly discusses the parochial relevance of Amolo's letter, 166.

<sup>51</sup> For general comments, see Wallace-Hadrill, *Frankish Church*, 279-82. P.Depreux and C.Treffort, 'La paroisse dans le *De ecclesiis et capellis* d'Hincmar de Reims. L'énonciation d'une norme à partir de la pratique', *Médiévales*, 48 (2005), 141-148. For sound observations mixed with surely unwarranted hesitations, see *La Paroisse: genèse d'une forme territoriale*, ed. E.Zadora-Rio and D.Iogna-Prat, a special edition of *Médiévales*, 49 (2005); and for a manuscript-based approach to the question, see Y.Hen, 'Educating the Clergy: Canon Law and Liturgy in a Carolingian Handbook from the Time of Charles the Bald', in: *De Sion exhibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on medieval law, liturgy and literature in honour of Amnon Linder*, ed.Y.Hen (Turnhout, 2001), 43-58.

<sup>52</sup> See in general Wood, *Proprietary Church*, 66-74.

<sup>53</sup> P.Fouracre, 'The Origins of the Carolingian Attempt to Regulate the Cult of Saints', in: *The cult of saints in late antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. P.Hayward and J.Howard-Johnston (Oxford, 1999), 143-165, at 164. On Carolingian sermons, see most recently J.McCune, 'Rethinking the Pseudo-Eligius sermon collection', *Early Medieval Europe*, 16 (2008), 445-476.

<sup>54</sup> *Capitularia regum francorum*, ed. A.Boretius, 2 vols (MGH Leges Sectio 2, Hannover 1897), vol 2, n.267, 291-2, from Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms Lat.4626, in which a *missus* apparently at Dijon lays responsibility on each priest to keep lists in his *parrochia* of all wrong-doers. Benedict Levita includes a considerable amount of material on the parish, for example at I 49-50, II 166, II 180, III 198 and III 316: all of which are quite unambiguously referring to the parish, not the diocese. Isaac's capitularies were based on Benedict Levita: see note 37 above.

<sup>55</sup> Quando istiusmodi sanitates sanctorum oratio apud Deum optinuit, quibus simplices et innocentes puellae in sanctuario Dei incolumes reddantur, sed si de salute sua gaudium parentibus facere voluerint,

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continuo...ad domos eorundem parentum suorum redire prohibentur? Quando autem martyres sancti ita coniugatas quasque fideles...sanitati restituerunt, ut eas a maritis seiungerent, et ne ad virorum suorum domos reverti possent, repentine cladis animadversione percuterent? Dümmler, 365.

<sup>56</sup> For the arguments linking Munich Clm 3851 to Langres, and by implication the early evidence for the so-called *Sendgericht* the manuscript preserves, see W.Hartmann, *Kirche und Kirchenrecht um 900: die Bedeutung der spätkarolingischen Zeit für Tradition und Innovation im kirchlichen Recht* (Hannover, 2008), at 254, with n.65.

<sup>57</sup> For a useful recent summary of the ‘fully developed’ parish system, see J.Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in medieval Europe* (London, 2005), 108-117 and J.Van Engen, ‘Conclusion: Christendom, c.1100’, in: *Early medieval Christianities, c.600-c.1100*, ed.T.Noble and J.Smith (Cambridge History of Christianity v.3, Cambridge, 2008), at 630-1, though the latter in particular stresses that the development was not completed until the central or even later middle ages.

<sup>58</sup> J.Darwin, *After Tamerlane: the global history of empire* (London, 2007), 30-1. More specifically, see the attention rightly given to the parish in the still useful J.Van Engen, ‘The Christian Middle Ages as an historiographical problem’, *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986), 519-552.

<sup>59</sup> See Smith, ‘Emending’, 190 and n.5, and indeed throughout that important article, for an argument rejecting an *a priori* distinction between relics and legislative/organisational reform at least in relation to Carolingian reform. As examples of institutional work on the Carolingians, see Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*; or, even more clearly, the distinguished strain of German legal scholarship superbly epistomised in W.Hartmann’s *Kirche und Kirchenrecht*. For an analagous take to Geary’s *Furta Sacra*, compare B.-S.Albert, *Le Pèlerinage à l’époque carolingienne* (Louvain, 1999).

<sup>60</sup> J.Van Engen, ‘The Future of medieval church history’, *Church History*, 71 (2002), 492-522 provides a penetrating discussion of recent historiographical trends.

<sup>61</sup> For a polemical critique of this single-minded pursuit of cultural vibrancy, see B.Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the end of civilization* (Oxford, 2005). For the notion that Christianity’s ideological work was essentially complete by the end of Late Antiquity, see P.Brown, ‘A life of learning’, *ACLS occasional papers* (2003), unpaginated: ‘As far as I was concerned, what had really mattered in the history of Christianity had happened in the centuries which preceded the middle ages...’.

<sup>62</sup> On the Merovingian roots of this movement, see C.Leyser, ‘Uses of the desert in the sixth-century West’, *Church history and religious culture*, 86 (2006) 113-134: “...all are fundamentally agreed that the dramatic charisma of a Simeon the Stylite was out of place in the increasingly dour corporate landscape of Frankish Gaul, its Church dominated by aristocratic bishops and monasteries”, 114. Leyser complicates the opposition by arguing that bishops also exploited ideas of the desert, but does not bring the conceptual opposition itself into question.

<sup>63</sup> P.Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: triumph and diversity, 200-1000 AD* (Oxford, 1995), 440 (for ‘managerial’), 450 (for Carolingian reformers as ‘experts’), and 455 (‘the first technocrats of Europe’). Similar phrases are used by R.W.Southern, *Western Church and Society* (London, 1971), 173-4.

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<sup>64</sup> See though C.Rapp, 'Saints and holy men', in: *Constantine to c.600*, ed. A.Casiday and F.Norris (Cambridge History of Christianity, v.2, Cambridge, 2007), 548-566, for a nuancing of the distinction between relics and holy men, taking up the point made forcefully in: *Charisma and Society*, ed. S.Elm and N.Janowitz, a special edition of *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 6 (1998), 343-549, that holy men should be considered primarily as literary constructs, and calling for 'a 'retextualisation' of the holy man' (349).

<sup>65</sup> For the classic exposition, see P.Brown, *Rise*, 422-3. A subtle and influential reworking of Brown's approach, explicitly tackling the Carolingian period along the broad lines outlined above, is offered by Fouracre, 'The Origins'.

<sup>66</sup> See however for a continued engagement with the concept S.Tada, 'The Creation of a Religious Centre: Christianisation in the Diocese of Liège in the Carolingian Period', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 54 (2003), 209-227, and more broadly M.Dunn, *The Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons, c.597-c.700: Discourses of Life, Death and Afterlife* (London, 2009). For an example of its specific use in framing approaches to sanctity and relics, see Vauchez, *Sainthood*, where relics are portrayed as a means of bringing those 'incapable of understanding dogmas and theological discourses' (16) into Christianity. For a recent critique of the concept of Christianization along similar lines to mine, see K.Bowes, "'Christianization" and the Rural Home', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 15.2 (2007), 143-170; and compare the important Van Engen, 'Future', particularly at 496. On the older confessional models from which Christianization emerged, see Van Engen, 'Christian Middle Ages', and M.Miller, 'New religious movements and reform', in: *A companion to the medieval world*, ed. C.Lansing and E.English (Oxford, 2009), 211-230.

<sup>67</sup> Though it should also be noted that the field remains diverse; for recent work which has not internalised the perspective analysed here, see note 86 below.

<sup>68</sup> L.Coon, 'Collecting the Desert in the Carolingian West', *Church History and Religious Culture*, 86 (2006): 135-162, arguing that Carolingian 'dynasts' sought single-mindedly to appropriate and transcend the charismatic lure of the desert through carefully regulated monastic practice and the 'imperialistic venture' of collecting relics, as a means of serving political ambitions; compare Smith, 'Saints and their cults', discussing the Carolingian attempt to 'stifle' the holy man (589).

<sup>69</sup> Which is not to deny the importance of 'correctio', or for that matter the advantages which conceptualising the Carolingian movement as one of 'correction' rather than 'reform' may have. See Smith, "'Emending'" for an excellent outline of the issue.

<sup>70</sup> J.Nelson, 'Society, theodicy and the origins of heresy', *Studies in Church History*, 9 (1972), 65-77 remains a tremendously stimulating account of the breakdown of Carolingian ecclesiologies. See R.W.Southern, *Western Church*, for a classic description of Western Europe 700-1050 as 'the primitive age', 29-30, an idea still prevalent in many textbooks.

<sup>71</sup> Brown, *Rise*, characterises the Carolingian reform as drawing 'on a remarkable convergence of aims, which betrayed a hardening of the will to rule, and to rule 'correctly', on the part of an entire diffuse

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governing class', 440, and as 'a movement of control from on top', 451. Compare Fouracre, 'The Origins', 145 and throughout, for similar arguments.

<sup>72</sup>On the Carolingian reform's impact on women, see the classic S.F.Wemple, *Women in Frankish society: society, marriage and the cloister 500-900* (Philadelphia, 1985); more recently (with greater attention to the twelfth century) G.Macy, *The hidden history of women's ordination: female clergy in the medieval West* (Oxford, 2007), and L.Coon, 'Somatic Styles of the Early Middle Ages', *Gender & History*, 20 (2008), 463-486 (for a more positive approach, see J.Smith 'Gender and Ideology in the Early Middle Ages', in: *Gender and Christian Religion*, ed. R.N. Swanson (Studies in Church History 34, Woodbridge, 1998), 51-73); compare the justly influential but decidedly gloomy article by S.Airlie, 'Private bodies and the body politic in the divorce case of Lothar II', *Past and Present*, 161 (1998), 3-38. On Boniface, see now M.Innes, "'Immune from heresy": Defining the boundaries of Carolingian Christianity', in: *Frankland*, ed. P.Fouracre and D. Ganz (Manchester, 2007), 101-125. On Gottschalk, Eriugena, and Amalarius, see G.Brown, 'The Carolingian Renaissance', in: *Carolingian culture: emulation and innovation*, ed.R.McKitterick (Cambridge, 1994), 1-51, at 41.

<sup>73</sup> For a classic exposition along the lines of prematurity, see J.Le Goff, *L'Europe, est-elle née au Moyen âge?* (Paris, 2003), 47-59. A good introduction to so-called Gregorian reform, and to the currently dominant approaches to it, is offered by K.Cushing, *Reform and Papacy in the eleventh century: spirituality and social change* (Manchester, 2005). A concise comparison between the two movements, though with a tendency nonetheless to subordinate one to the other, is offered by Miller, 'New religious movements and reform'. For the role of Carolingian texts in the eleventh-century reform movement, still the best guide is H.Fuhrmann, *Einfluss und Verbreitung der pseudoisidorischen Fälschungen: von ihrem Auftauchen bis in d. neuere Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1972-4). J.Smith, *Europe after Rome: a new cultural history 500-1000* (Oxford, 2005), offers a refreshingly elegiac inversion of the traditional triumphalist narrative (eg 239-4).

<sup>74</sup> Brown is fact somewhat hard to pin down on the relation between holy men and the institutional church, a nuance which is sometimes polarised by his readers. For a bracing rejection of any clear sixth-century distinction between relics and other bearers of holiness, such as the sacraments, see M.Dal Santo, 'Gregory the Great and Eustratius of Constantinople: The Dialogues on the Miracles of the Italian Fathers as an Apology for the Cult of Saints', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 17/ 3 (2009), 421-457, at 453.

<sup>75</sup> For an edition and commentary, see B.Repsler, *The rite of Church Dedication in the Early Medieval Era* (New York, 1998).

<sup>76</sup> For the dichotomy, see L. Coon, 'Historical Fact and Exegetical Fiction in Ermanrich's Vita S. Sualonis', *Church History*, 72.1 (2003): 1-24, at 22.

<sup>77</sup> For example, none of the articles in: *Charisma und religiöse Gemeinschaften im Mittelalter*, ed. G.Andenna, M.Breitenstein and G.Melville, (Münster 2005) brings the conference's Weberian questionnaire, distributed to participants and printed in the prefatory material, into question; and K-S.Rehberg, 'Rationalisierungsschicksal und Charisma-Sehnsucht. Anmerkungen zur 'Außeralltäglichkeit'

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im Rahmen der institutionellen Analyse', 3-23, even suggests that the dichotomy charisma/institution maps onto another old favourite, oral/written. There are however signs of an emerging rejection of the dichotomy between institution and charisma: see for example Smith, 'Saints and their cults', 590, though the point is based chiefly on methodological grounds, not theoretically. Compare the critique in L.Strauss, *What is political philosophy? and other studies* (Chicago, 1959), at 21; and more broadly, the broadside of EBF Midgley, *The ideology of Max Weber – a Thomist critique* (Aldershot, 1983), albeit from an explicitly acknowledged partisan perspective.

<sup>78</sup> On Weber's importance in reviving the notion of charisma, see J.Potts, *A history of charisma* (Basingstoke, 2009), particularly chapter 6, 'Weber reinvents charisma', 108-136. On Sohm's influence on Weber, see P.Haley, 'Rudolph Sohm on Charisma', *Journal of Religion*, 60 (1980), 185-197, and D.Smith, 'Faith, reason and charisma: Rudolph Sohm, Max Weber and the theology of grace', *Sociological Inquiry*, 68 (1998), 32-60.

<sup>79</sup> J.Goodman, 'History and anthropology', in: *A companion to historiography*, ed.M.Bentley (London, 1997), 783-804 for the same point, and on a larger scale, P.Buc, *The dangers of ritual: between early medieval texts and social scientific theory* (Princeton, 2001).

<sup>80</sup> In addition to the argument outlined in what follows, Weber's idea of the virtuoso has clear advantages over his idea of the charismatic religious leader; see for an exploration I.Silber, *Virtuosity, charism, and social order: a comparative sociological study of monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and medieval Catholicism* (Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>81</sup> Shils's ideas on charisma are present in a number of his articles, but see in particular his 'Charisma, Order, and Status' in: *The Constitution of Society*, ed.E.Shils (Chicago, 1982), 110-142. On the importance of Shils, with a concise discussion of his ideas of charisma, see S.Turner, 'The significance of Shils', *Sociological theory*, 17 (1999), 125-145.

<sup>82</sup> For example, the miracle in Paschasius's 'De Corpore', *De corpore et sanguine domini, cum appendice epistola ad Fredugardum*, ed. B.Paulus (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio mediaevalis 16, Turnhout, 1969), 89-91. On the debate in which this text was involved, see D.Ganz, 'Theology and the organisation of thought', in: *The New Cambridge Medieval History* v.II, ed. R.McKitterick (Cambridge, 1995), 758-785.

<sup>83</sup> For a critique of this old argument, see M. de Jong, *The Penitential State: authority and atonement in the age of Louis the Pious, 814-840* (Cambridge, 2009).

<sup>84</sup> D.Iogna-Prat, *St. Bernard and the Birth of the Monastic Ideal: the Cistercians in the twelfth century -age (v. 800-v. 1200)* (Paris, 2006); his argument, monumental in every sense, is conveniently summarised for anglophones in 'Churches in the landscape', in: *Early Medieval Christianities*, ed. T.Noble and J.Smith, 363-382.

<sup>85</sup> Though not entirely without earlier precedent, of course – and indeed relics played a major role in the shift, according to R. A. Markus, 'How on Earth Could Places Become Holy?' *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 2.3 (1994): 257-271.

<sup>86</sup> For example, S.Patzold, *Episcopus. Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern, 2009), and C.van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord: Priests and Episcopal Statutes in*

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*the Carolingian Period* (Utrecht, 2007), both drawing out themes present in R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church under the Carolingians 789-895* (London, 1977), and W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the idea of kingship* (London, 1969).