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Charles West

Knowledge of the past and the judgement of history in tenth-century Trier: Regino of Prüm and the lost manuscript of Bishop Adventius of Metz

When Regino of Prüm was putting the finishing touches to his chronicle in Trier in 908, he could hardly have suspected that it would go on to become one of the most influential of the historical texts written in tenth-century Latin Christendom, let alone that that people would still be reading it over a thousand years later, whether in its original Latin or in English or German translation, for profit or even for pleasure.[1] We can be confident that he wrote for more immediate purposes. Quite what these purposes were, however, remains contested, because historians are still not sure how best to characterise Regino's work. Was it a meditation on the virtues of rulers, a 'mirror of princes' in historical form for a young king?[2] Was it a calculated manoeuvre in a campaign for political rehabilitation, designed to restore its author to the position of leadership he had lost in mysterious circumstances almost a decade earlier?[3] Or was it a bleak reflection on royal dynastic failure, a narrative of slowly collapsing political certainties punctuated by kings' funerals?[4]

In truth, it could have been all of these things and more, for Regino was a sophisticated author whose work functioned on many levels. Though his chronicle was a year-by-year account of the past, recent research on early medieval history writing has shown how such a structure by no means precluded a carefully moulded representation of the past.[5] The aim of this article is to build on such studies, and to shed more light on the representation of the past in Regino's chronicle. It seeks to do so by approaching that chronicle not simply as a vehicle for the expression of its author's pre-determined historical, theological or political views, but as a crafted product of engagement with his sources. Its central tenet is that Regino was a reader as well as, or indeed before becoming, a writer; his sense of the past as represented in the chronicle was fundamentally shaped by what he knew from conversations, from memories and experience, but above all, from what he had read.

At one level, Regino's reliance on written sources is obvious. Like many other historical texts from the early Middle Ages, much of his chronicle is a verbatim copy, or nearly so, of earlier accounts.

What previous generations of historians tended to dismiss as derivative and unimportant – visually expressed by some nineteenth-century editors' decision to use a smaller type-face for recycled material – an impressive body of research has sensitised us to appreciate as the product of writers' often subtle and always deliberate interaction with existing texts, and an important part of their work as a whole.[6] History writers like Regino made choices about what they copied and how they copied it, and those choices merit study.

Yet we should not assume that early medieval history writers simply mined their material as mere proofs for interpretations already developed in contemplative isolation. Rather, we should consider how Regino's understanding of history, his *Geschichtsbild*, was created through dialogue: actual dialogue with his contemporaries, whose memories he demonstrably exploited; but also a more abstract dialogue with written texts. This is partly a simple question of the availability of sources, or lack of it. Regino's perspective on the past was – obviously enough – shaped by what he was able to know about it. As modern historians in prosperous countries become increasingly accustomed to instant, open access to their texts (and are increasingly encouraged to contribute to that development), it is all too easy to forget that people like Regino wrote in very different conditions. Texts could move fast in the early Middle Ages, but dissemination was often limited and transmission fragile, as contemporaries were aware.[7] As a consequence, Regino's knowledge of the past was surprisingly patchy in places.

It is however equally important to think about the influence exerted by those written sources that were available on the historical understanding of authors like Regino.[8] For these sources were often (though as we shall see, not always) themselves works of persuasion, intended to steer the reader's understanding of the past. To explore that influence in Regino's case is not to deny that he was an imaginative and insightful historian who interpreted his evidence, and did not simply copy it out. On the contrary, thinking about how Regino read the sources at his disposal brings both his imagination and his insight into sharp relief, by showing how he grappled with complex texts to make sense of a fragmented past. To coin a phrase, historians write their own history, but they do not write it just as

they please. We need to understand how Regino's interpretation of the past was itself constructed, creatively, through interaction with previous interpretations.

In this article, I want to emphasise the role played by two sets of texts in Regino's understanding of the past: the early ninth-century historical account known as the Royal Frankish Annals on the one hand, and a dossier of material most probably assembled by Bishop Adventius of Metz (d. 875) around 868 on the other. Beyond providing the bulk of what Regino knew about the ninth century beyond the limits of his own and his contemporaries' personal recollections, these two works, and more particularly the tension between them, profoundly affected his understanding of the shape of Frankish history in general terms. There is an unfortunate complication, which is that the original manuscript of Adventius's dossier is now lost. The article therefore begins by considering a surviving partial transcription in order to establish the original manuscript's likely content and purpose, comparing it with some analogous collections, before turning to how Regino read this dossier in the context of his other sources, notably the Royal Frankish Annals.

Given its emphasis on the limits of knowledge about the past, this article is in a way an inquiry into the fragility of cultural transmission in the early Middle Ages, even in the document-rich Frankish lands; it is also, though, a study of how 'archival pressures' did not simply impoverish tenth-century understanding of the ninth-century and earlier past, but provided conditions for its creative, and in this case powerfully enduring, interpretation.[9] Of particular importance here is the sense of decay which Stuart Airlie has convincingly argued suffuses Regino's account of the ninth century.[10] Regino has been described as the first historian to present not just the rise but also the fall of the Carolingian empire; he stands therefore at the origin of an interpretative paradigm which until recently dominated modern scholarship, and remains influential.[11] How he developed that interpretation through dialogue with his sources therefore merits closer investigation.

The Vallicelliana manuscript

Kept in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome is a late sixteenth-century manuscript, bearing the shelfmark I 76.[12] This manuscript was probably owned by Cardinal Caesare Baronio (or Baronius), a well-known scholar and historian, most of whose books passed to the Biblioteca Vallicelliana on his death in 1607. It was however not written by Baronius: rather, it was a transcription made from a 'very old' Trier manuscript by another historian, less generally well-known but no less exacting in his scholarship, the Jesuit Christopher Brouwer (d. 1617).[13] Brouwer used his transcription for his own historical research and writing, before sending it to Rome, where there was at that moment a renewed interest in the medieval manuscripts preserved in libraries across Europe.[14]

The different texts in Brouwer's transcription are now all available in modern editions, though scattered across different volumes, but the Trier manuscript from which Brouwer made his copy is now lost, presumably destroyed around the time of the French occupation of the Rhineland in the late eighteenth century. This is not intrinsically unusual – many important medieval texts are known only from early modern transcriptions – but it means that all we know about the original depends on Brouwer's notes, and on what we can deduce internally from its contents.[15] It is clear that the original manuscript was made up primarily of letters and conciliar texts from the ninth century, and these texts mostly had a direct connection to a notorious episode in ninth-century Frankish history: the attempted divorce of King Lothar II.

Frankish politics of the 860s had been dominated by the increasingly desperate attempts of this young king to rid himself of his queen, Theutberga, which had included trial by ordeal, orchestrated confession, self-humiliation and even a proposed duel.[16] Even while the affair was still playing itself out, contemporaries called a tragedy (*tragoedia*), and true to that label, the 'King Lothar affair' ended badly.[17] Despite all his efforts, Lothar II died in 869 still married to Theutberga, and his uncles divided his kingdom, Lotharingia, between them. Lothar's son Hugh, born from a union with Waldrada for whose formal recognition the king had struggled so hard, later asserted his claim to his father's heritage, but ended his life a blinded prisoner in the monastery of Prüm, near Trier. Regino had first-hand knowledge of this episode of Frankish history, which loomed large in his chronicle,

since he himself had personally tonsured Lothar and Waldrada's mutilated son, in his capacity as the abbot of Prüm.[18]

Several of the texts in the manuscript were written in the name of Bishop Adventius of Metz, an important actor in Lothar II's divorce case, and in 1925 Ernst Dümmler suggested in his edition of some of the letters that Adventius himself may have been behind the manuscript's production.[19] Only in 1981 however was Dümmler's suggestion given much further attention, when Nikolaus Staubach subjected Brouwer's transcription to sustained analysis in his book *Das Herrscherbild Karls des Kahlen*.[20] Staubach was interested in Carolingian ideals of Christian kingship, concentrating on Charles the Bald, king of West Francia. As part of his study, he sought to show how King Charles and his court, especially Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims, used the divorce case of Lothar II as an opportunity to assert a particular form of Christian kingship for political advantage. Staubach emphasised though that Charles and Hincmar did not have it all their own way, and this is where he turned to the Vallicelliana manuscript. He scrutinised the manuscript closely to reconstruct more closely the lost original's contents in their original order and extent, and provided more accurate dates for many of the texts. Above all though, he built on Dümmler's suggestion of Adventius's involvement, using comparisons of style to show that the bishop of Metz was probably the author of most of the texts it contained, even those written in other people's names, and so had almost certainly compiled the manuscript as a whole.[21]

Staubach's detective work allowed him to approach the lost manuscript's texts as a *corpus*, the 'Sammlung des Adventius', in order to uncover and reconstruct a particular perspective on the divorce case, and by implication Christian kingship. Other figures at the court of Lothar II seem to have held quite different views about how the king should pursue his cause, some toying with conceptions of royal authority that were by the 860s frankly radical. Adventius, by contrast, preferred a more subtle and more sophisticated approach: for Staubach, he was the only 'serious opponent to Hincmar'.[22] His manuscript was Lotharingia's answer, as it were, to Hincmar's *De Divortio*.[23] Once its contents were chronologically arranged, it showed how royal policy had developed within the kingdom, as

'moderates' like Adventius struggled to influence the king against hardliners like Archbishop Gunther of Cologne.

Having drawn attention to the Vallicelliana manuscript's value as a collection in order to argue that its contents could be treated as a *corpus*, Staubach subsequently lost interest in the vanished manuscript that lay behind it. While his research was immensely valuable for an understanding of Lotharingian and indeed Frankish politics in the 850s and 860s, Staubach therefore neither asked nor answered a question that seems nevertheless self-evidently important: why had this lost manuscript been made in the first place? At stake in answering this question is our interpretation of the Adventius collection itself, and a key to the influence it exerted on later readers, especially (as we shall see) Regino.

Adventius's lost manuscript

As Staubach set out, Brouwer's transcription of the lost Trier manuscript contains the following texts:

- Fols. 1-4: three letters from Pope Nicholas I[24]
- Fols. 4-11: four letters from Bishop Adventius of Metz to Pope Nicholas[25]
- Fols. 11-27v: seven royal letters, in the names of Lothar II, Louis the German and Charles the Bald, to Pope Nicholas and Pope Hadrian II, supplemented by three jointly authored episcopal letters[26]
- Fols. 27v-28v: a letter of the papal legate Arsenius[27]
- Fols. 28v-30v: records of the council of Aachen in 862[28]
- Fols. 30v-32v: a text known as Bishop Adventius's *narratio*[29]
- Fols. 32v-33: a letter from the bishop of Strasbourg to Rome[30]
- Fols. 33- 34v: two secret letters from Adventius to the archbishop of Trier and the bishop of Verdun[31]

Staubach was also able to show that the original Trier manuscript had probably contained a few additional texts. In a note added on fol. 35 of his transcription, Brouwer revealed that he had omitted

some papal letters already published in 1591.[32] He also abbreviated the contents of one text (the *narratio*), and omitted all but the first line of a *precaria*, a document that might have been copied into the manuscript at a later date. However, because Brouwer drew attention to his abbreviation in a marginal comment, mentioned the *precaria* grant elsewhere in his published work, and never referred to any other text that could have been in the manuscript, Staubach was confident that he had not left out much else. Moreover, because Brouwer made a marginal note commenting on the odd ordering of the letters, Staubach was sure that Brouwer had not re-ordered what he had found.[33]

On the basis of this reconstruction, it is possible to make further observations about the lost manuscript. It was certainly not a complete record of all Bishop Adventius's writing. There are a few surviving texts written by him not that were not included in the manuscript, and we know of several more that do not appear to have survived at all.[34] Only texts with a bearing on Lothar II's divorce proceedings, between around 859 and 868, were copied into this manuscript.[35] The manuscript was not simply a record of Adventius's correspondence in this matter either, because it contained important texts that were not letters, and in any case several of the pope's letters were not addressed to Adventius, or even Lothar. To describe the manuscript as 'archival', as Staubach does, does not therefore go quite far enough.[36] Texts of varying provenance had evidently been copied into this manuscript for a specific purpose.

That purpose was not primarily historical. The manuscript's content was not arranged in chronological order, but roughly in blocks arranged by author. Whether a chronological order was intended within these blocks is very hard to tell, because few of the letters are dated, but it seems unlikely.[37] Nor was it didactic. No clear moral or legal lesson was implied or promoted by its contents: texts harshly criticising Lothar were copied alongside letters in which he defended himself. The compiler even included documents that could have proved distinctly embarrassing for Adventius had they become public. One letter, from Adventius to Archbishop Theutgaud of Trier, rather dramatically declared that its pages must be burned after reading: 'let hungry Vulcan consume them once read'; another was explicitly for the recipient's eyes only.[38]

This seems rather staged – almost designed to prove the risk the bishop was taking – but the inclusion of the text known as the *narratio* was potentially explosive even by the time the manuscript was put together.[39] In this text, unfortunately only partially transcribed by Brouwer (who left out a 'very long introduction about the authority of kings and bishops'), Adventius explicitly praised the outcome of a synod of Metz held in 863 that had confirmed Lothar's marriage with Waldrada. Adventius must have written this very soon after the council, because when its minutes reached Rome, Pope Nicholas's reaction was volcanic. Denouncing it as not a council but a brothel, he swiftly deposed the archbishops who had presided over it, and wrote to all the bishops involved, calling on them to distance themselves from the council's decisions. In a letter preserved in the dossier, Adventius pleaded with Pope Nicholas that though present at the council, he had only gone along with the consensus; yet his *narratio* suggests a far more positive attitude, and more thorough involvement. No wonder historians have regarded this text as 'compromising'.[40]

Ninth-century political dossiers

A-chronological, thematically focused, full of potentially awkward material: what function could such a manuscript have been intended to fulfil? To answer this question, we might consider three comparable surviving manuscripts from the same period. As first example, let us take Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 407, closely studied by Steffen Patzold.[41] The content of this manuscript is similar in its range to that copied by Brouwer, including papal letters (again from Nicholas I), the records of some councils, and a range of episcopal letters. The ordering is not chronological, but the manuscript is thematically very tight. All or almost all the material relates directly to the row over the deposition of Archbishop Ebbo in the 830s, on which Hincmar of Rheims's legitimacy as archbishop depended, and there are marginal notes highlighting particularly important passages for Hincmar's purposes. Patzold has persuasively suggested that this manuscript was compiled expressly for the purpose of replying to a particularly alarming letter of Pope Nicholas,

calling for a thorough re-examination of the Ebbo issue, that Hincmar received in the summer of 867.[42]

Hincmar may well have had an analogous purpose in mind in compiling Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Lat. 1594. This manuscript has been rebound and is incomplete, but its contents refer almost exclusively to the deposition of Hincmar's own nephew, Bishop Hincmar of Laon, in 871.[43] It too contains conciliar minutes and letters to and from the pope, including some in the name of King Charles. There was every reason to make such a collection in the aftermath of Hincmar of Laon's deposition, which was fiercely contested from the start, and was partially overturned at the Council of Troyes in 878. That council is a plausible occasion for the preparation of this dossier.

It might also have provided the backdrop for the compilation of what was in some ways a counter-dossier. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS lat. 5095 once again contains conciliar material, letters to and from popes, and other kinds of letters, as well as the – at first sight – anomalous inclusion of a set of seventh-century Greek hagiographical texts, translated by the papal librarian Anastasius in the 870s.[44] Almost all the rest of the material was either written by Bishop Hincmar of Laon, or directly concerns him, and most relates to the dispute with his uncle, Hincmar of Rheims, which led to his deposition. It is generally supposed that this manuscript was produced not by Hincmar of Laon himself, but by a later bishop of Laon, Dido (d. 895), on the grounds that it was Dido who gave the manuscript to the library (according to an inscription in the book itself), and because we know that Anastasius's translation, known as the *Collectanea*, was made around 874, so after Hincmar's formal deposition.[45] Yet the inscription does not say that Dido wrote the book, or had it written.[46] And of course Hincmar of Laon did not give up fighting to be restored to his bishopric after his deposition, even after he was blinded whilst in exile, and as just mentioned, the Council of Troyes in 878 granted him a provisional restitution.

There is every reason to suppose that part of his preparations for this rather surprising victory would have involved the compilation of supporting material, and this manuscript would seem well-suited for that purpose. Marginal notes draw attention to points that would have been of special interest for

Hincmar.[48] True, Anastasius's translation of Greek material with which the manuscript begins seems to sit ill with such a context. Yet what has not hitherto been appreciated is that this material concentrates on the mistreatment of clerics in the context of the monothelite controversy, particularly on Pope Martin (d. 655) and his complaints about the deposition and exile imposed on him by his enemies.[49] Parallels to Hincmar of Laon's situation are unmistakable. Hincmar was always ready to draw on new texts to make his point, and after his confidence in Pseudo-Isidore had been shaken by his defeat at the hands of his uncle in 871, he may have deemed Anastasius's material a better basis for support.[50] As a consequence, it seems quite possible that the entire manuscript is a dossier put together by Hincmar and his allies after his deposition, as part of his eventually successful campaign to return to Laon.

What all three of these manuscripts have in common is that they contain a mixture of material, arranged in a rough thematic, not chronological, order. Moreover, they all seem to have been made with a particular, specific purpose in mind, created in the course of disputes that were not yet definitively over, as magazines of ammunition for the next salvo. These manuscripts show how closely texts and politics could run together in the ninth century, at least in certain circles. It was precisely these circles in which we know Bishop Adventius mixed. To judge from (another) lost manuscript, Hincmar of Laon may have shared canonical texts with the bishop of Metz.[51] Adventius intervened on his behalf with his uncle, Hincmar of Rheims; he seems moreover to have been a frequent correspondent with the latter, and to some extent may even have modelled himself on the canny archbishop.[52] Like Hincmar, Adventius used claims of illness to evade invitations to councils and meetings; like Hincmar, he drew considerably on canon law.[53]

Given this context, it seems plausible that the lost Trier manuscript was intended to fulfil a role analogous to that of the three discussed above, a kind of portable archive prepared for a specific purpose. Assuming for the sake of argument that it was not substantially interpolated after its completion, then it must have been compiled after 868, the date of its most recent letter; and it is difficult to see the point of its contents after Lothar II's death in 869. To my mind, the manuscript was most likely put together in haste by Adventius while Lothar II was in Italy negotiating with the new

and more flexible pope, Hadrian II. Michèle Gaillard expressed reservations about whether Adventius could have been the manuscript's compiler, given the potentially embarrassing nature of its contents.[54] But Carolingian bishops demonstrably did keep copies of awkward correspondence. When Hincmar of Laon accused his uncle of having written to the king to encourage him to imprison the wayward bishop, Hincmar of Rheims coolly cited the whole letter in question, so had evidently kept a copy.[55] Laon BM 407, discussed above, contained a considerable amount of potentially incriminating evidence against Hincmar too, most notably a letter to Eigil (the former abbot of Prüm), briefing him on what, and more importantly, on what not to say to the pope.[56] Adventius would have wanted a convenient, unexpurgated collection on which to draw, to make sure he was not contradicting himself, and for an easy overview of the major stages of the argument.

Adventius did not know in late 868 that his king and his kingdom were doomed; actually, he probably thought the worst was behind them. He had been consistently loyal to Lothar II, and there is no reason to suspect that he had any intention of ceasing to be.[57] In the event, though, Lothar II's death in August 869 rendered the divorce question obsolete, at least until his son Hugh was old enough to throw his hat into the ring. Within weeks of the news of the king's death, Bishop Adventius had stepped into line behind Charles the Bald, in whose coronation, choreographed by Hincmar of Rheims, he duly participated and indeed hosted at Metz. Lotharingia had begun its long journey to becoming a 'shadow kingdom'.[58] However, the Trier manuscript was not disposed of. On Adventius's death, it may well have passed to Adventius's nephew, Bertulf, the archbishop of Trier, who (as Regino pointed out) owed his appointment to his uncle's doughty service on behalf of King Charles immediately after Lothar II's death.[59] For it was probably in Trier that Regino, to return to the chronicler, stumbled across it, and put it to his own uses.[60]

Regino and the *Royal Frankish Annals*

Until his chronicle reached the 870s or so, when he could begin to make use of his own memories and experience as a well-connected individual, Regino necessarily depended on earlier sources. He made

the most of oral stories circulating in the monastery of Prüm or in the city of Trier, but the bulk of his evidence for the chronicle, and the key to its thematic shape, was textual. He drew on a wide range of texts for his chronicle, including hagiography, chronicles and monastic records.[61] Alongside his chronicle, Regino wrote a canon law collection, which shows he also had access to Carolingian church councils and royal capitularies; either that access was temporary, or he did not consider them helpful or appropriate sources for a historical account, since, apart from the 895 council of Tribur, they do not appear in his account.[62]

Of all the sources for his chronicle, the most important would seem to have been the Royal Frankish Annals, a version of which Regino declared he had found in 'a certain booklet'.[63] These annals were a set of detailed year by year accounts, originally composed at the Frankish royal court but that circulated widely in Francia. They are well-known today as a frankly tendentious representation of events that constantly emphasise the triumphs of the Franks in concert with their kings. In spite of their annalistic form, or indeed through it, they coherently promoted a celebratory understanding of the Frankish past that focused on both ethnicity and dynasty, and have been described as 'a skilfully constructed, highly selective portrayal of the careers of the Carolingian rulers whose fortune and success is identified with that of the Frankish people'.[64]

The most basic indication of their significance for Regino is that he imported them wholesale into his chronicle. Together with the 'Revelation of Pope Stephen' (added to the account of the year 753) and a few other, mostly anecdotal elements, the Annals make up his text between 741 and 812, effectively the first section of Book II. In a sense, then, the Annals were inserted into his work. It might however be more accurate to say that his chronicle was built out around them. Book I recorded history from the incarnation up to the beginning of the Annals. At its end, Regino explained that

> 'We have therefore brought this [narrative], beginning with the very year of the Lord's incarnation, up to this point so that, because the following little book set out by our humble self reveals the times and deeds of rulers according to the same incarnation years, likewise it may show the main points of what was done under each ruler, and when and where'.[65]

Simon MacLean has rightly drawn attention to the 'because' (*quia*) here: if most of Book II was a continuation of Royal Frankish Annals, Book I was effectively their 'back-story'.[66] In effect, Regino's entire chronicle is an augmented Royal Frankish Annals.

But the Annals were not merely the kernel of Regino's chronicle. They shaped the structure of the history he wrote too. To begin with, it is probably the format of the Royal Frankish Annals that inspired Regino to apply AD dating to a 'world history' style of chronicle, and very unusually to begin not with creation but with the incarnation.[67] Regino's conception of history, no less, was framed by the Royal Frankish Annals. It is significant that unlike other early medieval authors, he eschewed traditional periodisations of history, whether world ages or world empires, in preference for a two-book structure: before the Royal Frankish Annals, and after them. This must be connected to Regino's unusually acute sense of living in 'modern times' (*moderna tempora*), a concept that occurs not just in the chronicle but in his canon law book.[68] For Regino, mesmerised by the little booklet he found in Trier, it seems the modern world had started in 741.

If Regino saw his task as repurposing the Royal Frankish Annals into a universalising framework to write thereby the history of the Franks into world history, in a remarkable hybrid of ethnic, dynastic and universal history writing, he needed to do two things: provide the prequel, as it were, and bring the story up to date.[69] The first of these tasks, which constituted Book I, was technically challenging, because it involved fitting events reported by Late Antique sources using a range of chronologies into an AD format.[70] Conceptually, however, it was not difficult to write a history that led up to the rise of the Frankish kings as depicted in the Royal Frankish Annals: indeed, simply arranging the material before the Annals made the point at least implicitly. In contrast, the second task was more difficult than it might at first appear, for here Regino faced problems of both evidence and interpretation.

Regino's engagement with his sources

After the Royal Frankish Annals gave out in 813, and before he could rely on his own memory, Regino seems to have had remarkably little with which to work. He had, for instance, literally nothing

to say about the years 819–828, and complained about the general lack of sources for the reign of Louis the Pious: '…concerning the times of the Emperor Louis, I have included very little because I have not found written texts, nor heard from the elders anything that was worth committing to memory'.[71] This paucity of evidence, which has understandably puzzled modern historians – one of Louis's biographers, Thegan, had lived in Trier – is more likely to reflect Regino's marginal political position than an act of self-censorship. For reasons which remain obscure but were probably connected to political struggles over Lotharingia, Regino had been thrown out from the prestigious monastery of Prüm in 899, where he had been abbot since 892.[72] The archbishop of Trier had taken him in and given him the monastery of St-Martin, but charge of this poor and under-resourced institution hardly represented a return to Regino's previous prominence.[73] His lack of material might alternatively reflect the impact of the Viking raids, which seem to have caused genuine damage to Trier's libraries in 882 (indeed, Adventius's dossier could have arrived in Trier with other texts as part of an effort to restock).[74]

We can be confident that Regino had access to a text known as the 'Old Prüm Annals', a work now lost but that can be more or less accurately reconstructed. These annals though were decidedly thin, recording nothing about Lothar II other than his accession in 855 and his death as a young man (*iuvenis*) in 870 (an error for 869).[75] However, what Regino did unearth somewhere in Trier was Adventius's dossier about Lothar II's divorce. As long ago as 1890, Regino's editor, Friedrich Kurze, had realised that Regino must have had at his disposal a collection of letters relating to the case.[76] By looking closely at Regino's text, Staubach conclusively showed there is very little doubt that Regino used the same manuscript that Brouwer himself saw and partially transcribed. Regino quotes extensively from four letters that are preserved nowhere else; other parts of his chronicle paraphrase or rely on other letters in the collection.[77]

But we can and should go further. Regino did not merely use the manuscript; rather, to a great extent, his factual understanding of the mid ninth-century relied upon it. True, he did make heavy use of one papal letter not present in Brouwer's transcription (and not mentioned by Staubach either), in which Pope Nicholas gave a slightly muddled account of the divorce to the bishops of the east Frankish

kingdom, inadvertently leading Regino himself into confusion.[78] However, this letter was amongst those printed in 1591 that Brouwer explicitly stated he had omitted, so it may well have been in the original.[79] It seems then that it was this manuscript, and it alone, that provided Regino with solid material with which to work after his copy of the Royal Frankish Annals had fallen silent. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that if something about Lothar II's reign was not mentioned in the Adventius collection, Regino did not know about it.[80]

The nature of his material accounts for the often hair-raising errors in chronology which plague Regino's history of the middle ninth century.[81] These errors concerned not just Frankish history in general (for instance, Louis the German's 858 invasion of West Francia, wrongly dated to 866), but even the matter of Lothar's divorce. Pope Nicholas had sometimes himself become confused, many letters are undated, and anyway much information had been passed on orally, as the letters themselves explained.[82] The consequent errors in Regino's chronology, compounded by inaccurate recollections worked into the text, by no means invalidate the interest and importance of the chronicle, or even suggest that he failed in his task, since relative chronology was perhaps more important for Regino than specific accuracy.[83] It is nevertheless striking that he is often more accurate about the distant past than about events just a generation or two before his own time, including events as momentous, and as important for his narrative, as Lothar II's travails. The lack of evidence for the middle ninth century from which Regino suffered, compared with the relative riches at his disposal for the earlier period, is a sobering reminder of how precarious knowledge about the past could be, even when abundant documentation, which would have transformed his knowledge, existed just a couple of hundred miles away.[84]

Yet the Adventius dossier might also account for rather more than just Regino's chronological slips. Reading the letters it contained clearly made a great impression on Regino. It led him, for instance, to apply anachronistic standards of marital life to long-dead Merovingian kings, to pass implicit judgement on Charles the Fat's divorce, and in his canon law booklet even to overrule early Carolingian synods.[85] But more than that, it seems to have influenced his sense of the shape of Frankish history more broadly. If one reads the dossier side by side with the Royal Frankish Annals,

as Regino would have done – for these were, to underline the point, the only two substantial 'historical' written sources at his disposal for the ninth century – and if one took both annals and dossier at face value – as Regino appears to have done, perhaps unfamiliar with such collections which were less common in the tenth century – a disjuncture becomes glaring.[86] It is a disjuncture that lies at the heart of Regino's text.

As already mentioned, the Royal Frankish Annals are a triumphalist re-telling of Frankish achievement under glorious kings, written precisely to give the impression of breezy success and sustained glorious achievement.[87] In them the Franks are usually united, victorious, and led by powerful, confident kings, working in collaboration with the popes. For Regino, this impression would have been further strengthened by his access to the short but wholly congruent 'Revelation of St Stephen', an avowedly dynastic text which linked a devout Carolingian dynasty closely with the papacy.[88] In contrast, and simply by the nature of its function as an aide-mémoire, the Trier manuscript makes a very different impression. While the dossier is by no means consistently hostile to King Lothar II, it does contain some fiery papal letters written by Nicholas: 'We learned, I say, that you [Lothar], who long resting in wickedness did no little harm to the church of God, still do harm, and that you, who were in pollution, are still becoming polluted'; 'the affair of King Lothar – but would that he were king'; 'these kings and princes… are they truly kings and princes?'[89] The king himself complained that no predecessor had ever been so treated.[90]

Any reader of the dossier would have realised moreover that the problem was not just a matter of poor relations with the pope. In the Council of Aachen in 862, the king himself is represented as lamenting his own weakness (*sua imbecillitas*).[91] A good half dozen of the texts in the manuscript dwelled on the present as dangerous times, *tempora periculosa*, a phrase with strong eschatological connotations that seem to have weighed heavily on Regino.[92] A letter written in the names of the bishops of Lotharingia and West Francia (probably in 859) begins with a powerful description of contemporary disorder and disaster:

> 'Here we see the depredation of churches and the rapacious mutilation of their properties, the dishonouring of bishops, the treading under foot of the magnates, and the unbearable oppression, despoliation, widowing and imprisonment, as well as other intolerable hardships, of the subjects, in addition to all the other ills which are inflicted on us for our sins by the impious pagans [Vikings]'.[93]

Another letter of Lothar II's bishops is if anything even gloomier: 'Everywhere mourning and calamities, everywhere losses and ravaging, murders too and arson and innumerable kinds of wickedness, have grown up on account of dissent and most unjust ambition…'.[94] Lothar's letters to the pope draw attention again and again to rivals and enemies who are slandering him and weakening his position at Rome, while several of Adventius's letters similarly point to divisions within Lothar II's own kingdom.

How all this is read naturally depends on the reader, and what the reader brings to the text. For Adventius, the dossier would have served as a convenient record of the rhetorical positions taken by different participants, keeping him on a sure footing in a fast-changing and delicate situation. For modern historians like Staubach, it is invaluable evidence for showing both the development of the politics of the divorce, and Adventius's attempt to shape them into a discourse of Christian kingship, the *rex christianus*. For Regino, though, trying to decipher the meaning of the past, the impression would have been rather different: a shocking description of a king, kingdom, and society in crisis through God's judgement. Promoting that impression had not been Adventius's intention, but whether he knew it or not, Regino was reading against the grain. As a result, as Karl Ubl has suggested, the hero of Regino's ninth century is not Lothar II, but Pope Nicholas I, who had cursed Lothar II and his kingdom.[95]

When this picture is set against the record of Frankish history under Pippin and Charlemagne provided by the Royal Frankish Annals, it is difficult to avoid the obvious interpretation. As we move, as Regino did, from Frankish triumphs to the dismal, often sordid details of disputes around Lothar II's sexuality and a kingdom falling apart, a narrative of royal decline practically writes itself. Viewed

in this way, Frankish history – indeed the history of the world, in Regino's eyes – takes on a certain shape.

> '…under the great Charles, [the royal house] reached the highest peak of authority not only over the Franks, but indeed over various other peoples and kingdoms as well. After Charles's death fortunes changed, such that the worldly glory which had previously flowed beyond everything they had prayed for, began to gradually drain away in the same way it had risen…'.[96]

Measured against the culmination marked by the rule of Charlemagne in the Royal Frankish Annals, the reign of Lothar II, seen through the lens of Adventius's dossier, showed that decline had set in early, and revealed its causes too: the moral failure of kings, and the withering of the Carolingian dynasty that ensued. Regino, sure that the dynasty had been falling long before he first put pen to parchment, could make satisfactory sense of the turbulent politics of his own time as the final stages of a long-drawn out process, and did not hesitate to express this process as clearly as he could, with an interpretative confidence lacked by other history-writers.[97] Put together with his personal sense of injustice and the dates of death provided by the Annals of Prüm, the result was indeed a history in the 'shadow of Carolingian decline'.[98]

Conclusion

In his entry for the year 888, Regino's *Chronicle* provides the classic account of the 'fall' of the Carolingian empire, a passage often cited by historians.[99] Like many supposed historical turning points, however, this was an event whose significance was constructed retrospectively by observers, observers whose judgement was based not simply on what they saw happening with their own eyes, but on how it compared with what they knew of the past.[100] Historians now know that while Regino's time was certainly violent and disrupted, the localities in the Carolingian period had never really been peaceful; that the Royal Frankish Annals were a carefully constructed narrative promoting one particular, court-centred perspective, not an innocent year-by-year summary of events; above all, that

ninth-century Frankish history cannot seriously be reduced to an arc from dynastic glory to dismal failure.[101]

That however was exactly what it seemed to be to Regino, on the basis of a thin and tendentious body of evidence which he could read against the grain but not entirely transcend, even though there were two Carolingian kings on the throne as he wrote.[102] To form his own opinion, to construct a narrative of his own times in the light of the history that had preceded them, he could only compare, carefully and thoughtfully, a superbly partisan portrait of the Frankish people in glorious co-operation with a remarkably candid record of the intense and divisive politics of Lothar II's divorce. That Regino drew the obvious conclusion makes him neither naïve nor innocent – indeed he seems to have lightly edited his sources, including the Adventius dossier, to bring out the emergent point more clearly.[103] But Regino's powerful narrative of the Carolingian rise and fall should be considered at least in part a projection onto a wider canvas of the distance between the carefully polished Royal Frankish Annals and Adventius's collection of useful but exquisitely unflattering material.

This projection proved immensely influential. Regino's impact on later historiography cannot be discussed fully here – it would repay a full-scale study – but it must be noted that his text was widely and quickly disseminated.[104] Most of the major eleventh-century world chroniclers of the Latin West seem to have known it, and were perhaps even inspired by it.[105] In fact, Regino's implicit interpretation of the ninth century, as a slow slide into the disorder of the tenth century linked to dynastic collapse, remained dominant amongst many historians until quite recently; any account of how a narrative of Carolingian decline was created and elaborated, even up to the present day, would have to pay him close attention, as in a sense the first historian of the Carolingian Empire.[106]

Yet no matter how influential in this respect, Regino's work failed in what was probably its primary goal, to curry favour with the leading political figures of the east Frankish kingdom at the time.[107] He never did return to his post as abbot of Prüm, and died in 915, still living in Trier. Regino's work was successful, then, but not necessarily in the way he had intended. Something similar could be said of those two of his sources that this article has brought into discussion. The Royal Frankish Annals set

out to provide a positive portrayal of the Carolingian family's rulership of the Frankish kingdom. Ironically, in Regino's hands, they inadvertently provided the backdrop for documenting its decline, constituting a yardstick by which unworthy successors could be measured and found wanting. As for Adventius's dossier, this had been created as part of efforts to save a Carolingian kingdom and its king as they faced an uncertain future. These preparations were overtaken by events, and Adventius's political priorities changed in response. Yet through its chance arrival on Regino's desk, and treated as history rather than as case notes, Adventius's dossier took on a strange afterlife long after its compiler's death, shaping how that kingdom and dynasty's future would be narrated, interpreted and understood, once it had become the past.

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[1] Regino, *Chronicon*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH, SRG* 50 (Hanover, 1890). English translation: S. MacLean, *History and Politics in late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe* (Manchester, 2009). German translation: R. Rau, *Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 (Darmstadt, 1969). For the influence of Regino's chronicle, see below, n. 103 (manuscript dissemination) and n. 104 (historiographical influence).

[2] H.-H. Körtum, 'Weltgeschichte am Ausgang der Karolingerzeit: Regino von Prüm', in A. Schärer and G. Scheibelreiter (eds.) *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter* (Vienna, 1994), pp. 499–513.

[3] S. MacLean, 'Insinuation, Censorship and the Struggle for Late Carolingian Lotharingia in Regino of Prüm's Chronicle', *English Historical Review* 124 (2009), pp. 1–28.

[4] S. Airlie, 'Sad stories of the deaths of kings', in E. Tyler and R. Balzaretti (eds.), *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 105–31.

[5] Central here has been the work of R. McKitterick: see for instance her *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2004). For a wide-angled assessment of early medieval history-writing, see S. Foot and C. Robinson (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. 2, 400–1400 (Oxford, 2012).

[6] For the point in Regino's case, see MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 18–19. For a general discussion, see W. Pohl, 'History in Fragments: Montecassino's Politics of Memory', *EME* 10 (2001), pp. 343–74.

[7] See Warren Pezé, 'Un faussaire à la cour. Les accusations de falsification lors de la controverse adoptianiste', forthcoming, on a crisis of confidence about textual transmission at the Carolingian court. Regino himself had anxieties about the accuracy of textual transmission: see Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 40, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 119.

[8] On Flodoard's use of his sources, see now E. Roberts, 'Flodoard, the Will of St Remigius and the See of Reims in the tenth century', *EME* 22 (2014), pp. 201–30; on Richer, see now J. Lake, *Richer of Saint-Rémi: the methods and mentality of a tenth-century historian* (Washington DC, 2013).

[9] For a classic discussion of the impact of archival pressures, see P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1996). See also W. Brown, M. Costambeys and M. Innes (eds.), *Documentary culture and the laity in the early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2012).

[10] Airlie, 'Sad stories'. For further development of this widely-accepted approach to Regino's chronicle in recent research, see Maclean, *History and Politics* (e.g. p. 42); C. Booker, *Past Convictions: the Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009), pp. 69-73; L. Bohnenkamp, 'Regino von Prüm und die religiöse Bedeutung der Geschichtsschreibung im Frühmittelalter', *Concilium Medii Aevi* 14 (2011), pp. 289–317 (my thanks to Simon MacLean for bringing this article to my attention), e.g. p. 315,'Der Niedergang der karolingischen Herrschaft ist das grosse Thema der Chronica'; M. Innes, 'Historical Writing, Ethnicity and National Identity: Medieval Europe and Byzantium in Comparison', in Foot and Robinson (eds.), *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, pp. 539–575; and R. Meens, 'The Rise and Fall of the Carolingians. Regino of Prüm and his Conception of the Carolingian Empire', in L. Jégou, S. Joye, T. Lienhard, and J. Schneider (eds.), *Faire Lien. Aristocratie, réseaux et échanges compétitifs* (Paris, 2015), pp. 315-323 (my thanks to the author for sharing this with me prior to publication).

[11] MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 2. S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the late ninth century: Charles the Fat and the End of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, 2003), offers a good way into this scholarship.

[12] There is (still) no complete modern catalogue of the Vallicelliana library. For a history of the institution, including Baronius's donation, see E. Pinto, *La Biblioteca vallicelliana in Roma* (Rome, 1932).

[13] M. Embach, 'Christoph Brouwer (1599–1617)', in *Die Gesellschaft Jesu und ihr Wirken im ehemaligen Erzbistum: Für Gott und die Menschen* (Mainz, 1991), pp. 303–7, approvingly cites a nineteenth-century description of Brouwer as 'unzweifelhaft ein gewissenhafter, gründlicher und wirklich gelehrter Forscher'.

[14] The papacy's interest in Trier's library in the 1590s is discussed by P. Lehmann, *Nachrichten von den alten Trierer Dombibliothek* (Stuttgart, 1959). Brouwer's most important work was his *Antiquitatum Annalium Trevirensium* (Liège, 1670), only published decades after his death. It draws on the lost Trier manuscript.

[15] For instance, the Hannover Briefsammlung, also preserved only in a sixteenth-century transcription: see *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV*, ed. E. Erdmann, *MGH, Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit* 5 (Weimar, 1950), pp. 1–12.

[16] On the dispute, see K. Heidecker, *The Divorce of Lothar II: Christian Marriage and Political Power in the Carolingian world*, trans. T. Guest (London, 2010).

[17] 'Tragoedia'*: Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. E. Perels, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi IV*, *MGH, Epistolae (in Quart)* 6 (Berlin, 1925), pp. 257–690, here no. 53, p. 341; no. 35, p. 306 for 'causa regis Hlotharii'.

[18] Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 125, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 193–4. On the fortune of subsequent descendants of Lothar's family, see R. Balzaretti, 'Hugh of Arles and his family: narratives of failure in the *regnum Italiae*', forthcoming.

[19] *Epistolae ad Divortium Lotharii regis pertinentes*, ed. E. Dümmler, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi IV*, *MGH, Epistolae (in Quart)* 6 (Berlin, 1925), pp. 207–40.

[20] N. Staubach, *Das Herrscherbild Karls des Kahlens: Formen und Funktionen monarchischer Repräsentation im früheren Mittelalter* (Münster, 1981), pp. 153–214.

[21] Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, Anhang, pp. 278–84B, demonstrates the shared turns of phrase amongst the set of documents, including rare words like 'amifluus' and particular phrases, like 'ad consolationem sanctae matris ecclesiae'.

[22] Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, p. 192, for Adventius as the only 'gewichtige Gegenspieler Hinkmars'.

[23] M. Gaillard, 'Un évêque et son temps, Advence de Metz (858–875)', in H.-W. Herrmann and R. Schneider (eds.), *Lotharingia: eine europäische Kernlandschaft um das Jahr 1000* (Saarbrücken, 1995), suggests that the *narratio* (*Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 5), might even have made reference to Hincmar's *De Divortio*, but the text is in my view equivocal. Rachel Stone and I are preparing an English translation of *De Divortio* for Manchester University Press.

[24] *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, nos. 35, 52 and 41.

[25] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 8, 12, 16, and 10.

[26] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 3, 7, 14, 1, 2, 17, 9, 18 and 13, and Wilfried Hartmann, *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 860–874*, *MGH*, *Concilia* 4 (Hannover, 1998), pp. 43–45.

[27] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 11.

[28] Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*, pp. 70–74.

[29] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 5.

[30] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 6.

[31] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 4 and 15.

[32] This is the *Epistolarum decretalium summorum pontificum* (Rome, 1591).

[33] Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, pp. 159–160. The note reads 'Haec epistola recte subiciatur in sequenti…'.

[34] Gaillard, 'Un évêque'.

[35] The possible exception is the 859 letter edited in Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*: but see below, n. 92.

[36] Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, p. 160, 'archivalischen Brief-und Aktensammlung'.

[37] The only letters with dates are *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, nos. 31, 42, 46, 48, and 53 (assuming that the latter was indeed part of the transcription).

[38] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 4, '…Vulcanus edax perspectos consumat', p. 214; *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 15, p. 233.

[39] Thanks to Shane Bobrycki for discussion on this point.

[40] Gaillard, 'Advence'. *Narratio*: *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 5.

[41] S. Patzold, *Episcopus. Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern, 2008), pp. 346–50.

[42] Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 348–9.

[43] Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*, pp. 411–2.

[44] J. Contreni, *The Cathedral School of Laon from 850 to 930: its manuscripts and masters* (Munich, 1978), pp. 62–3; *Die Streitschriften Hinkmars von Reims und Hinkmars von Laon 869–871*, ed. R. Schieffer, *MGH, Concilia* 4, Supplementum II (Hanover, 2003), pp. 60–1; H. Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscripta: Überlieferung und Traditionszusammenhang der fränkischen Herrschererlasse* (Munich, 1995), pp. 555–7. The manuscript can now be consulted online on gallica.bnf.fr.

[45] Contreni, *Cathedral School*, pp. 62–3.

[46] 'Hunc librum dedit domnus Dido episcopus do. et sanctae ecclesiae Mariae. Si quis abstulerit iram dei et eius de genetricis offensam incurrat' (fol. 1).

[48] For instance, *nota* marks have been added to passages about metropolitan bishops overstepping their powers at fols. 62v, 87v and 112v.

[49] B. Neil, *Seventh-century popes and martyrs: the political hagiography of Anastasius Bibliothecarius* (Turnhout, 2006), provides an edition and translation, based on the Paris manuscript, of several of the constituent texts, and gives references to the others.

[50] H. Fuhrmann, *Einfluss und Verbreitung der pseudoisidorischen Fälschungen: von ihrem Auftauchen bis in die neuere Zeit*, 3 vols (Stuttgart, 1972–4), iii, pp. 625–756 for Hincmar's use of Pseudo-Isidore. It may not be coincidence that another manuscript about Pope Martin ended up in late ninth-century Laon too: Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale 199, on which see Charles Mériaux, 'From East to West: Constantinople, Rome and northern Gaul in the seventh century', forthcoming (I am grateful to the author for sharing his work in advance of publication).

[51] G. Schmitz, 'Die Appendix Dacherianae Mettensis, Benedictus Levita und Hinkmar von Laon', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung* 92 (2006), pp. 147–206.

[52] Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, ed. M. Stratmann, *MGH, Scriptores* 36 (Hannover, 1998), pp. 303–5; Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, calls him a 'gelehriger Schüler Hinkmars', p. 181.

[53] Claims of illness: *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 8, 10 and 16. Adventius cites or refers to canon law in *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 2, 5, 8, and 10, as well as in the letter edited in Hartmann, *Konzilien*, pp. 43–5, and in his record of the council of Aachen.

[54] Gaillard, 'Advence', p. 98.

[55] Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*, pp. 459–60.

[56] *Hincmari archiepiscopi Remensis epistolae*, ed. E. Perels, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi VI, MGH, Epistolae* (in Quart) 8 (1939), pp. 190–4.

[57] Cf. however Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, p. 213, for the suggestion however that Adventius was already wavering in 868.

[58] S. MacLean, 'Shadow Kingdom: Lotharingia and the Frankish world, c. 850 – c. 1050', *History Compass* 11 (2013), pp. 443–457. Cf. also S. Airlie, 'Unreal Kingdom. Francia Media under the Shadow of Lothar II', in M. Gaillard, M. Margue, A. Dierkens, and H. Pettiau (eds.) *De la mer du Nord a la Mediterranee: Francia Media, une Region au Coeur de l'Europe (c.840–c.1050)* (Luxembourg, 2011), pp. 339–356.

[59] Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 98, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 160. It would be interesting to explore whether other sources used by Regino might have come from Bishop Adventius, notably the canon law texts.

[60] It is usually assumed that many of Regino's sources came from Prüm, and in fact they have been used to show what the library of Prüm contained at that time: see W. Haubrichs, *Die Kultur der Abtei Prüm zur*

Karolingerzeit. Studien zur Heimat des althochdeutschen Georgsliedes (Bonn, 1979), pp. 93–94. Regino certainly took at least one Prüm manuscript with him to St Martin (Trier Stadtbibliothek MS 1245), and he may even have used a copy of the Royal Frankish Annals associated with Hilduin, who perhaps died in Prüm. However, F. Roberg, 'Neues zur Biographie des Regino von Prüm', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 72 (2008), pp. 224–29, casts doubt on how strong Regino's associations with Prüm really were, following his deposition; it may be that Regino's chronicle drew just as heavily on what was available at St-Maximin (see n. 73 below).

[61] Kurze, 'Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 312–324; further developed by MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 18–41. For context in Carolingian world histories, R. McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, 2006), pp. 30–32.

[62] For his *Libri Duo*, Regino certainly had at his disposal a Dacheriana, a Quadripartitus, an augmented Ansegis, and a 'Collection of Worms': in sum, a respectable array of material. See Haubrichs, *Kultur*, pp. 68–70. That wealth of material makes Regino's use in his chronicle of only the Council of Tribur (*Chronicon*, p. 143) puzzling. It could be however that Regino only gained access to this material after he finished the chronicle, since the *Libri Duo* is generally thought to have been written later.

[63] Regino, *Chronicon*, 'in quodam libello', p. 73, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 129. On their importance to Regino, which I would emphasise even more, *ibid*., pp. 16–17.

[64] 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. 101–129, here p. 115; cf. also her *History and Memory*, pp. 19–22 and pp. 101–19 (and centrally throughout much of the book).

[65] Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 40, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 1: 'Haec idcirco ab ipso incarnationis Domini anno exordium capientes usque huc perduximus, ut, quia sequens libellus a nostra parvitate editus per eiusdem incarnationis dominicae annos tempora principum et gesta declarat, iste nihilominus, quo tempore, quo in loco vel quid sub unoquoque principe actum sit…'.

[66] MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 16–17 and p. 120, n. 420, noting Regino's 'intention to make the distant past fit the pattern of the ARF'.

[67] For a good contextualisation of Regino's approach to Christian time in comparison to other early medieval history writers, see A. von den Brincken, *Studien zur lateinischen Weltchronistik bis in das Zeitalter Ottos von Freising* (Düsseldorf, 1957), pp. 128-133.

[68] W. Freund, *Modernus und andere Zeitbegriffe des Mittelalters* (Cologne, 1957), pp. 51–52. Cf. Haubrichs, *Kultur*, p. 71, and Bohnenkamp, 'Regino', though without reference to his canon law collection.

[69] MacLean, *History and Politics*, points to the text's 'hybrid appearance', p. 12. On ethnic history-writing, see A. Plassmann, *Origo gentis. Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen* (Berlin, 2006). It is interesting that Regino clearly regarded himself as a Frank, not a Lotharingian: see S. MacLean, 'Who were the Lotharingians? Defining Political Community after the End of the Carolingian Empire', forthcoming.

[70] On the earlier errors, MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 21–22.

[71] Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 73, trans. Maclean, *History and Politics*, p. 129: 'Et de Ludowici quidem imperatoris temporibus perpauca litteris comprehendi, quia nec scripta repperi, nec a senioribus, quae digna essent memoriae commendanda, audivi…'.

[72] MacLean, 'Insinuation'. For the puzzlement, MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 29 and p. 41.

[73] Contrary here to Bohnenkamp, 'Regino', p. 300.

[74] On St-Martin, see now K. Krönert, 'Saint Martin, l'abbatiola de Trèves', *Annales de Bretagne* 119 (2012), pp. 71–88. For the impact of the Vikings on Trier's written record, see O. Schneider, *Erzbischof Hinkmar und die Folgen. Die vierhundertjährige Weg historischer Erinngerungsbilder von Reims nach Trier* (Berlin, 2010), pp. 109 – 115, suggesting that 'Trier und wohl auch sein Umland verloren damit ihr Gedächtnis' (p. 111). I. Knoblich, *Die Bibliothek des Klosters St Maximin bei Trier bis zum 12 Jahrhundert* (Trier, 1996), notes that most of St-Maximin's ninth-century manuscripts had been imported: some probably came from Metz (see pp. 35–6, 39–43, 54–6, 61, 69–72, and summarised at 84).

[75] On the now lost 'older Prüm annals', see L. Boschen, *Die Annales Prumienses. Ihre nähere und ihre weitere Verwandtschaft* (Düsseldorf, 1972), pp. 216-226. Boschen provides an edition of the *Annales Prumienses*, whose content up to 898 probably reflects the lost older annals, at pp. 78–84.

[76] F. Kurze, 'Handschriftliche Überlieferung und Quellen der Chronik Reginos und seines Fortsetzers', *Neues Archiv* 15 (1890), pp. 293–330, at p. 320, hypothesising a 'Sammlung von Actenstücken, zumeist auf Lothars Ehehandel bezüglich'. Cf. Kurze's preface, *Chronicon*, pp. viii–ix.

[77] Staubach, *Herrscherbild*, pp. 161–5.

[78] For example, Regino's confusion between councils of Metz and Aachen, *Chronicon* p. 81, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 140.

[79] *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, no. 53. It may be that despite Staubach's confidence (see above, n. 33), there was other material in the Trier manuscript that Brouwer did not transcribe. Regino appears to make

reference to a letter of Gunthar and Theutgaud, *Chronicon*, p. 83 (for 865), which could perfectly well have been included; he also appears to refer to a letter of Hadrian II, *Chronicon* p. 94 (for 868).

[80] Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 84, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 144, names the lover of Ingiltrude as Wanger, a name not provided by any other source. This could have been preserved through oral tradition; it could equally have been a marginal note in the lost manuscript.

[81] K.-F. Werner, 'Zur Arbeitsweise des Regino von Prüm', *Die Welt als Geschichte* 19 (1959), pp. 96–116, talked of the 'ganz sinnlosen Daten' of the later part of Regino's text; Kurze wrote that he 'ad suos fere usque dies temporum ordinem mire neglexisse et confudisse', p. ix. Regino indeed made errors close to the time of writing. For instance, he placed the death of Archbishop Fulk, which took place in 900, in the year 903, though he was not quite sure about it: Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 149, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 227: 'circa haec tempora'.

[82] Participant confusion: *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, no. 53. Reference to oral messages: *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 2, 12; *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, no. 33, p. 303.

[83] Thus MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 21. For illustration of what must be traces of oral stories, see Regino's account of a fictive visit of Lothar II to Italy in 867 complete with spider bites, *Chronicon* pp. 93–4, and perhaps also an imagined Eucharist scene in Rome, *Chronicon*, pp. 96–7, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 155 and 159.

[84] I.e., in Rheims. Cf. though C. Wickham, 'Lawyers' 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, for an interesting comparable case of collective amnesia.

[85] On Charibert, Regino, *Chronicon*, p. 22, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 91 (with n. 246); cf. his insistence on the illegitimacy of Theudebert, *Chronicon*, p. 27, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 100. Charles the Fat: *Chronicon*, p. 127, commented on by Bohnenkamp, 'Regino', pp. 304–5. On overruling, see K. Ubl, 'Doppelmoral im karolingischen Kirchenrecht? Ehe und Inzest bei Regino von Prüm', in W. Hartmann with A. Grabowsky (eds.), *Recht und Gericht in Kirche und Welt um 900* (Munich, 2007), pp. 91–124, showing the compatibility of both canon law collection and chronicle. Regino cited papal letters from the dossier in the *Libri Duo* on six occasions (not all of which are included in Hartmann's new edition and translation). Cf. also below, n. 90 on *periculosa tempora*.

[86] An example of a comparable tenth-century dossier is however provided by Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reg. Lat 418, on which Edward Roberts has a study in hand.

[87] See above, n. 63.

[88] Ubl, 'Doppelmoral'. The text (BHL 2176) circulated widely in the Frankish world, and could well have been part of the manuscript of the Royal Frankish Annals on which Regino drew.

[89] 'Didicimus, inquam, te, qui prolixo tempore in scelere permanens ecclesiae Dei non modicum nocuistis, nocere adhuc, et, qui in sordibus eras, sordescere adhuc', *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, nos. 46, p. 323; 'sed utinam regis', *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, no. 35, p. 306; 'utrum reges isti et principes…veraciter reges et principes sint', *Nicolae I papae epistolae*, ed. Perels, no. 31, p. 299.

[90] *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 14 and 18.

[91] Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*, p. 72, c. 3.

[92] *Periculosa tempora* in *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, nos. 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 18, in the 859 letter (see note below), and in the Council of Aachen. One wonders whether this influenced Regino's own keen sense of living in 'periculosa tempora'.

[93] 'Hinc fieri videmus ecclesiarum depraedationes suarumque rerum rapacissimas mutilationes, pontificum quoque dehonorationes, optimorum conculcationem subiectorumque importabiles oppressiones, spoliationes, obrationes, captivitates et ceteras intolerabiles aerumnas, praeter omnia mala, quae nobis pro nostris peccatis ab impiis inferunter paganis', Hartmann, *Konzilien IV*, p. 44. The letter, calling for a synod at Troyes, is edited in Hartmann *Konzilien IV* under 860, but I agree with Staubach that a date in 859 makes more sense. If so, the called-for synod was in the end held not in Troyes but in Metz in 859. Records from that council make no reference to Lothar's divorce, so Staubach concludes the letter had no bearing on the divorce case (*Herrscherbild*, p. 172). Yet the records for the council are limited to another letter we know was written there (W. Hartmann, *Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiches 843–859*, *MGH, Concilia* 3 (Hanover, 1984), pp. 435–444); the presence of the document in the Adventius collection might in fact suggest that the divorce was discussed, or intended to be discussed, there.

[94] 'Ubique luctus et calamitates, ubique dispendia et vastationes, homicidia quoque et incendia atque innumerabiles scelerum facies inoleverunt propter dissensiones et iniustissimas ambitiones…', *Epistolae*, ed. Dümmler, no. 13.

[95] Ubl, 'Doppelmoral'. Regino provides a particularly glowing epitaph for Nicholas in 868. On Regino's consistent interest in popes, see MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 24–5. For the curse (*maledictum*), see *Chronicon*, p. 121.

[96] '…quousque in magno Carolo summum imperii fastigium non solum Francorum, verum etiam diversarum gentium regnorumque obtineret. Post cuius decessum variante fortuna rerum gloria, quae supra vota fluxerat, eodem, quo accesserat, modo cepit paulatim diffluere…'. Regino, *Chronicon*, pp. 116–7, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 183.

[97] For the difficulties that Flodoard had in making sense of the events of his own time, see G. Koziol, 'Flothilde's Visions and Flodoard's Histories: a Tenth-Century Mutation?', forthcoming; for other writers' preference for a more encoded message, see G. Vignodelli, 'Politics, prophecy and cryptic text: Atto of Vercelli's Perpendiculum', forthcoming.

[98] Airlie, 'Sad stories', p. 127.

[99] MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 199, n. 349. For a recent use of the passage, see F. Mazel, *Féodalités 888-1180* (Paris, 2010), pp. 20-21 (Regino's account arguably underpins the book's entire chronology).

[100] For a discussion of how observers interpreted contemporary events in the light of their imagined past in a different context, see K. Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: essays on French political culture in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1990), particularly pp. 203–23. Thanks to Rob Priest for the reference.

[101] See the thoughtful analysis of M. Costambeys, M. Innes and S. MacLean, *The Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2011).

[102] As pointed out by Bohnenkamp, 'Regino', p. 312.

[103] Regino quoted a letter from Nicholas to Charles but removed critical comments in it about Charles: *Chronicon*, p. 86 (and see n. 2), trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 145 (and see nn. 98 and 99). Cf. his omission of any reference to Dagobert's divorce in *Chronicon*, p. 31, trans. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 107 (with n. 339), which would have muddied his argument too. The grounds of this divorce, sterility, would incidentally seem to have been added to Regino's source, the *Gesta Dagoberti*, by its ninth-century compiler (Hincmar?) to his source, Fredegar, as justification.

[104] W. Schleidgen, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm* (Mainz, 1977) listed thirty surviving manuscripts of Regino's chronicle, twenty-one of which are twelfth-century or earlier; he also noted references to three lost manuscripts, and proposed the necessary existence of eleven lost manuscripts in a decidedly intimidating manuscript stemma (p. 120). For an illustration of Regino's influence in one particular context, see Steffen Patzold, 'Wie bereitet man sich auf einen Thronwechsel vor? Überlegungen zu einem wenig beachteten Text des 11. Jahrhunderts', forthcoming. I am grateful to Professor Patzold for sharing this article with me prior to its publication.

[105] Kurze, *Chronicon*, pp. x–xi, briefly discusses later chroniclers who drew on Regino, directly or indirectly, including Herman of Reichenau, Otto of Freising, Marianus Scottus, Hugh of Flavigny, and Sigibert of Gembloux. Cf. McKitterick, *Perceptions*, p. 31, and Schleidgen, *Überlieferung*, p. 158.

[106] See above, p. 000.

[107] The chronicle's dissemination was apparently through monastic networks from Trier, which suggests it did not win the favour of Louis the Child or his circle, as Regino probably hoped it would. See Schleidgen, *Überlieferung*, p. 157.