

MIRACULA, SAINTS' CULTS
AND SOCIO-POLITICAL LANDSCAPES
BOBBIO, CONQUES AND POST-CAROLINGIAN SOCIETY

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Thesis submitted for examination to the University of Nottingham
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

JULY 2012

ABSTRACT

Despite the centrality of monastic sources to debates about social and political transformation in post-Carolingian Europe, few studies have approached the political and economic status of monasteries and their saints' cults in this context, to which this thesis offers a comparative approach. Hagiography provides an interesting point of analysis with respect to the proposition of *mutation féodale*, and more importantly to that of the *mutation documentaire* and its relation to monastic 'reform', which Part I discusses.

Parts II and III consider Bobbio and Conques, and their *miracula* (dedicated to San Colombano and Sainte Foy) within their respective socio-political environments, since the best of the recent scholarship concerning the millennial period has emphasized the specificity of regional experience. At Bobbio the closeness of the king physically and some continuity in royal practices between the tenth and eleventh centuries shaped monastic experience. It directed and sometimes restricted monastic discourse, which maintained an older tradition of general service to the kingdom, although innovations in relic usage helped monastic negotiations with the sovereign. At Conques, the waning of royal control created space for literary and cultic advances that served to bolster the monastery's position within local power structures. In this landscape older forms of public authority were purposefully minimized and hierarchy and landownership were negotiated between aristocrats, including Sainte Foy at the head of Conques.

Whilst the categories of the 'feudal transformation' debate can offer a useful framework for the analysis of two very different monasteries and their local societies, the comparison demonstrates that placing monasteries at the centre of our debate is crucial to understanding the documents they produce, and therefore questions the potential that these have to shed light on wider societal change. Concerns over land and autonomy were central to both institutions, although these operated on different conceptual planes, because of different bases of landed patrimony dating back much further than the tenth century. Each monastery negotiated hierarchy and clientele through their *miracula* and according to local socio-political rules. Therefore, whilst related documentary and cultic transformations were inseparable from socio-political pressures, these were not necessarily pressures simply reacting to *mutation féodale*, but were formative processes in the direction and shape of social change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to many for help in the research and completion of this thesis. I received generous grants from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and School of History at the University of Nottingham, as well as travel grants from the AHRC and the Royal Historical Society. I thank wholeheartedly my supervisors Claire Taylor and Ross Balzaretti. Claire, for asking (rhetorically) during my undergraduate degree how the Miracles of Sainte Foy fitted in to the ‘feudal transformation’, and her unfaltering support ever since; likewise Ross, for his searching and concise questions that resulted in interesting new directions for my research. I am also grateful to my examiners, Chris Wickham and Julia Barrow, for their thorough appraisals and helpful suggestions.

Several others have helped me along the way, who I am pleased to have the opportunity to thank. Grégory Cattaneo and Alex O’Hara provided useful historiographical insights. Moral support came from many quarters, particularly Stefan Gordon, Ellie Clarke and Simon Quinn, and (in the form of tea, cake, generous hospitality and long chats) from Rachel Middlemass and Theresa Tyers, my compatriots in the thesis adventure. My research abroad was facilitated and made much more enjoyable by the kindness of Kim and Léo Marty, Elisabetta Pastori and Emilie Boube. Roland Viader, H  l  ne D  bax and especially Jean-Loup Abb   at the Universit   de Toulouse II - Le Mirail were incredibly accommodating. In the last frantic stages, Matthew Phillips and Bryan Taylor helped immensely with proof reading. Further help with formatting and bibliography chores came from Faith Widdowson, Lucy Lynch and Helen Taylor. Jemma Hey’s enthusiasm and generous time sacrifices made it possible to produce the maps herein; I thank her for my newfound love for GIS technologies and the possibilities they offer for medieval history. Of course, all errors are my own.

The greatest thanks go to my family, to whom I dedicate the work. My sister Chloe and Ben Albu provided me with a bolthole to escape to, huge amounts of love and encouragement and, recently, my beautiful niece Alice who I look forward to regaling with tales of Sainte Foy’s mischief. My mother and father Helen and Bryan were an incredible support in the practicalities but also in so many other ways, driven by their bottomless patience, generosity and love. I will never be able to repay them, but will attempt to nevertheless.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASS	Bolland, J. <i>et al</i> (ed.), <i>Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur</i> original ed. 67 vols. (Antwerp and Brussels, 1643-1940; rep. Brussels, 1965)
AB	<i>Archivum Bobiense</i>
AM	<i>Annales du Midi</i>
Annales: E.S.C.	<i>Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations</i>
Antichi Vescovi	Savio, F. (ed.), <i>Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia</i> (Bologna, 1913)
ASWF	Ashley, K. M. and Sheingorn, P., <i>Writing Faith: Text, Sign, & History in the Miracles of Sainte Foy</i> (Chicago, 1999)
Beaulieu	Deloche, M. (ed.), <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Beaulieu en Limousin</i> (Paris, 1859)
Bibl. Naz. Torino	<i>Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria di Torino</i>
BoSF	Sheingorn, P., <i>Book of Sainte Foy</i> (Philadelphia, 1995)
BSP	<i>Bollettino storico piacentino</i>
CDSCB	Cipolla, C. and Buzzi, G. (eds.), <i>Codice diplomatico del monastero di San Colombano di Bobbio fino all'anno MCCVIII</i> , 3 vols., <i>Fonti per la storia d'Italia</i> , 52-54 (Rome, 1918)
CDL	Bruhl, C., <i>Codice Diplomatico Longobardo</i> , vol iii.1 (Rome, 1973)
Châlons-sur-Marne	Le chantre Warin, <i>Cartulaire du chapitre de l'église cathédrale de Châlons-sur-Marne</i> , ed. by P. Pélicier (Paris, 1897)
Conques	Desjardins, G., <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Conques en Rouergue</i> (Paris, 1879)
DBI	<i>Dizionario biografico degli Italiani</i> (Milan, 1960-)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EME	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
JMH	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
JMS	<i>Journal of Medieval Studies</i>
Le Monastier	Chevalier, U. (ed.), <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Chaffre du Monastier, Ordre de Saint-Benoît: 570-1370</i> (Paris, 1884)
Lézat	Ourliac, P. and Magnou, A.-M. (eds.), <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Lézat</i> (Paris, 1984)
Mansi, SC	Mansi, G. D. (ed.), <i>Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio</i> (54 vols, Florence and Venice, 1758-1798; second reprint Graz, 1960-1961)
MGH Capit.	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Capitularia regum Francorum</i>

MGH Const.	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum</i>
MGH Dip. Germ.	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae</i>
MGH SS	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum</i>
P&P	<i>Past & Present</i>
Peace of God	Head, T. and Landes, R. A. (eds.), <i>The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response in France Around the Year 1000</i> (Ithaca, 1992)
PL	Migne, J.-P., et al., <i>Patrologia cursus completus, series Latina</i> , 217 vols. (Paris, 1852-1904 and 4 vols. index and 5 vols. <i>supplementum</i> 1958-1974)
SKH	Barthélemy, D., <i>The Serf, the Knight and the Historian</i> , trans. by G. R. Edwards (Ithaca, 2009)
St-Flour	Boudet, M., <i>Cartulaire du prieuré de Saint-Flour</i> (Monaco, 1910)
St-Victor	Guérard, B. E. C. (ed.), <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille</i> , 2 vols. (Paris, 1857)
Vabres	Fournial, E., <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Vabres au diocèse de Rodez. Essai de reconstitution d'un manuscrit disparu</i> , <i>Archives Historiques du Rouergue</i> , 21 (Rodez, 1989)
MSC	<i>Miracula sancti Columbani</i> , ed. by H. Bresslau, <i>M.G.H. Scriptorum</i> , 30, II (Hanover, 1934), pp. 993-1015
LMSF	Robertini, L. (ed.), <i>Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis</i> (Spoleto, 1994)

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Image 1:
Turin, Bibl. Naz.,
F.II.21, f. 188v.
Image showing a
monk receiving a
charter from a
king flanked by a
knight or prince



Image 2:
Turin, Bibl.
Naz., F.II.21, f.
188v, showing
water damage
following
1904 fire



Image 3: Ruins of the oratory at the *Spelonca di San Colombano*



Image 4: Coconut bowl held at the *Museo dell'Abbazia di Bobbio*, said to be the cup of Columbanus



Photo: Faye Taylor

Map 1: The *Via degli Abati* and the *Via Francigena*



Adapted from G. Magistretti, 'Contribuito per una ricerca su la 'via degli Abati' di Bobbio: da Bobbio a Pontremoli per Roma', in Nuvolone, *La fondazione di Bobbio*, pp. 287-302

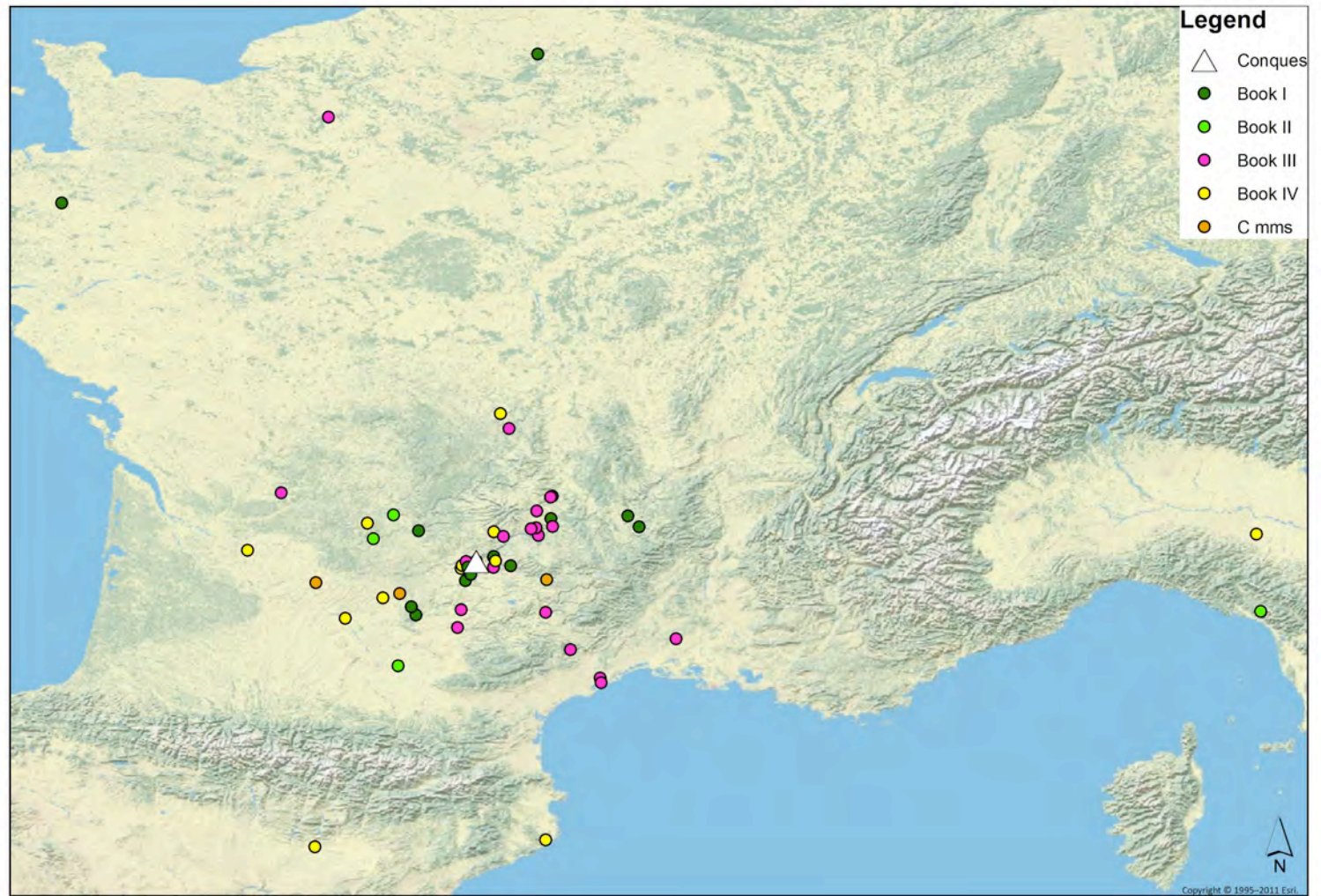
Map 2: Route of the translation procession from Bobbio to Pavia and back, 17–30 July 929

Locations in the MSC

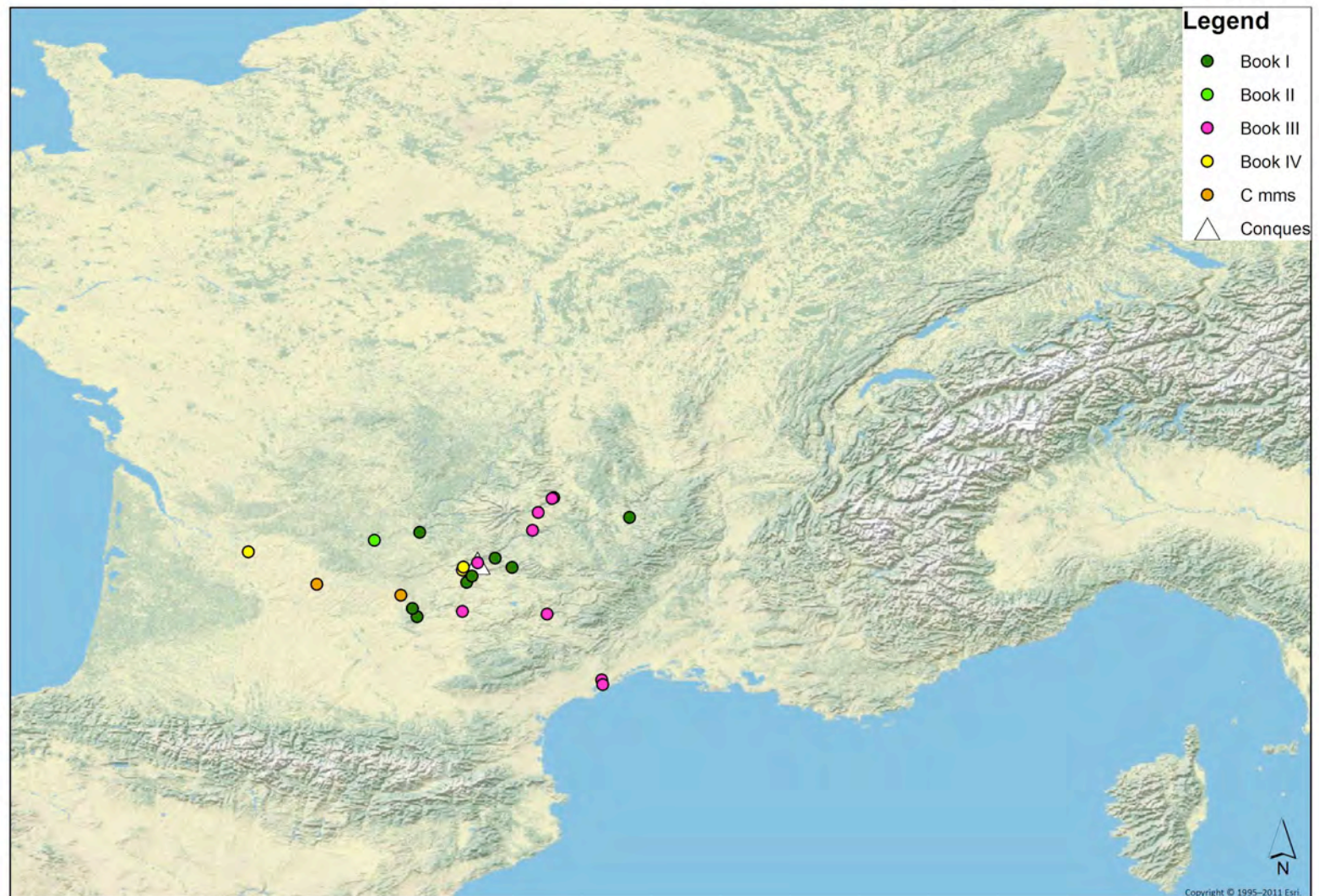
- Non-contested place
- Contested place
- Hypothetical waypoint (Tosi, 'Il trasferimento')
- Main Rivers



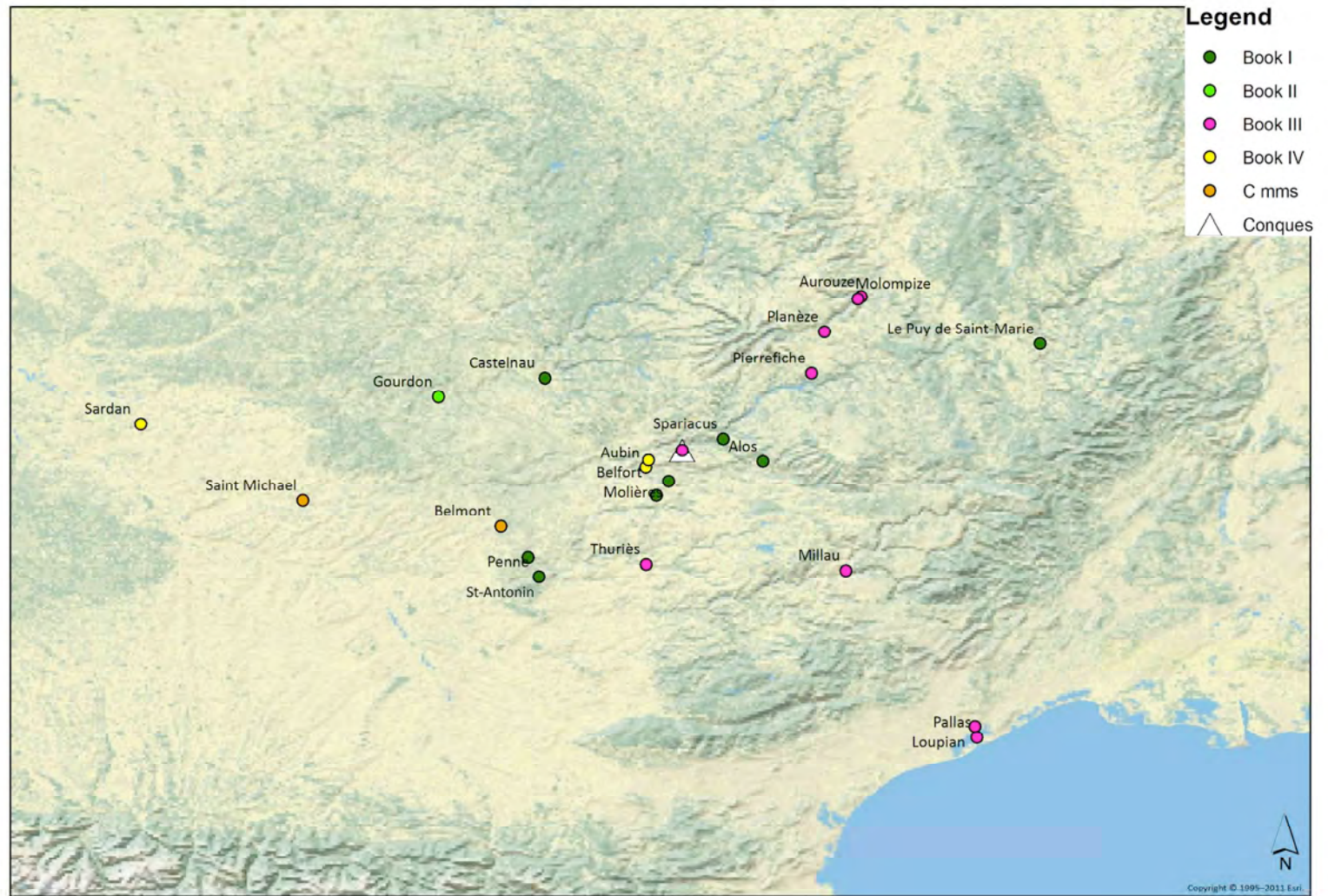
Map 3: All locations in the *LMSF*



Map 4: Punishment miracles in the *LMSF*



Map 5: Punishment miracles in the *LMSF*, close up



Map 6: Castles in the *LMSF*

Legend

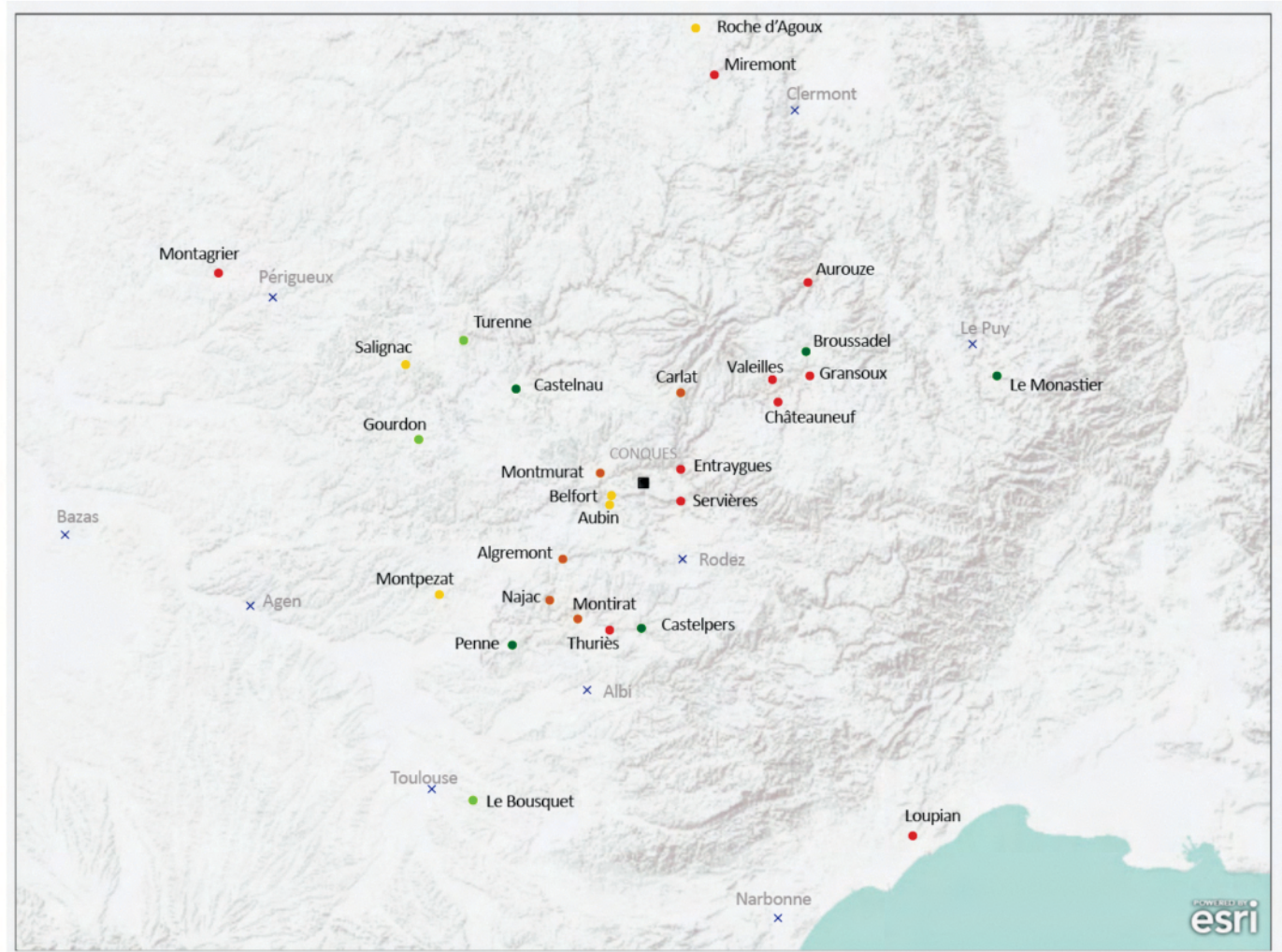
- Book i
- Book ii
- Book iii
- Book iv + C
- Supplementary



Map 7: Castles in the *LMSF*, Midi

Legend

- Book i
- Book ii
- Book iii
- Book iv + C
- Supplementary



Map 8: Origins of beneficiaries of positive miracles

Legend

- Book i
- Book ii
- Book iii
- Book iv + C
- Supplementary

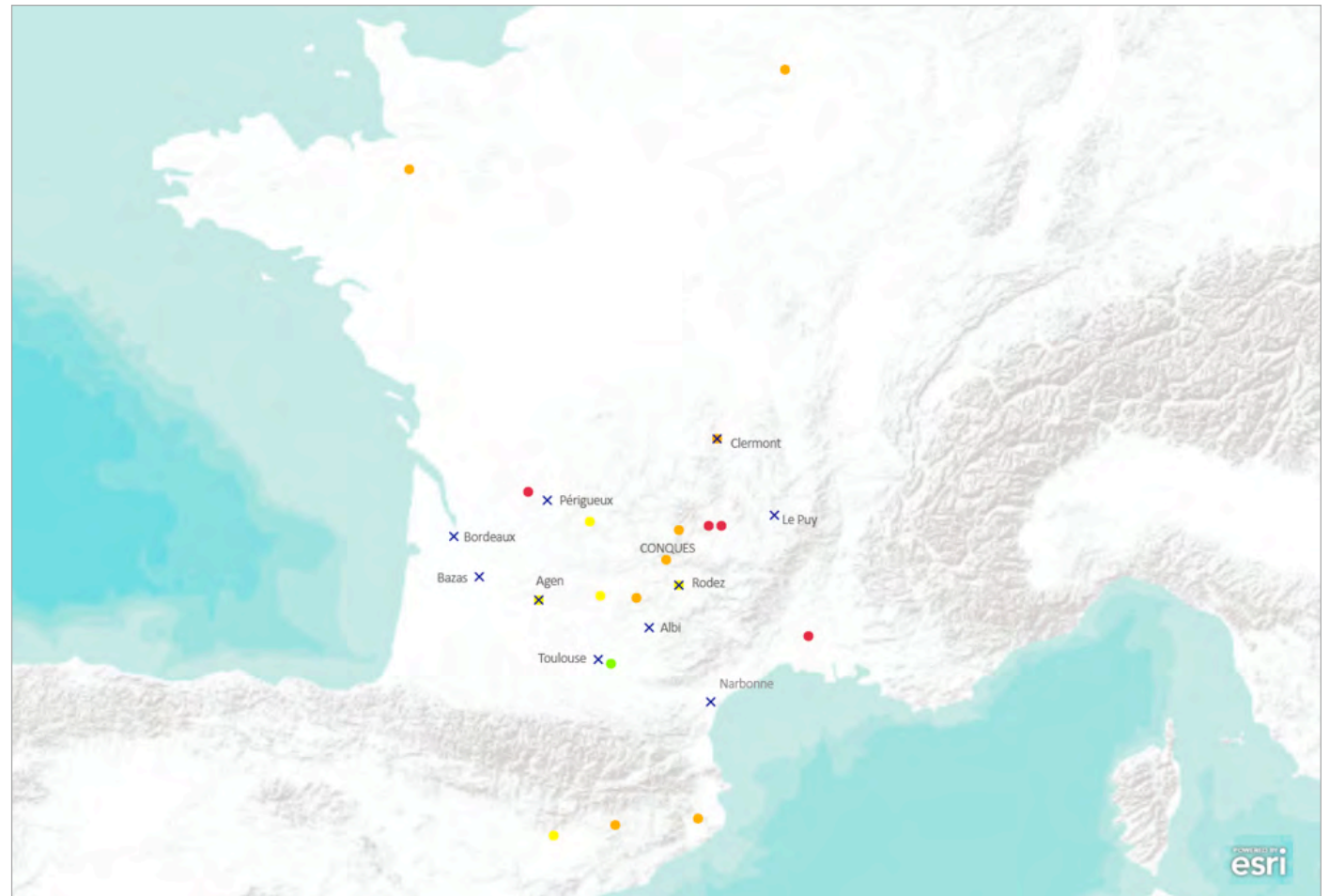


Table 1: Proposed manuscript tradition of the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis*
 Adapted from Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 3-55

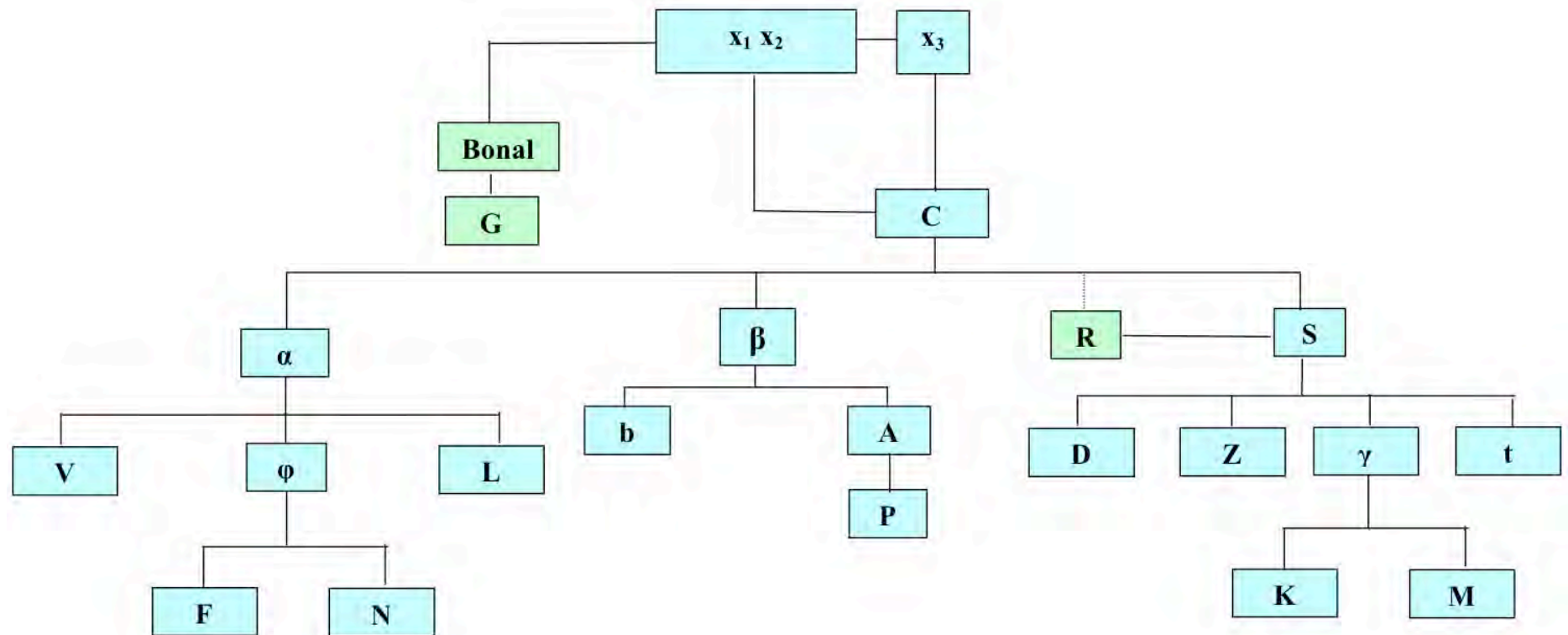


Table 2: Concordance of enumeration for X_{2b}

Robertini	Bouillet / Sheingorn	C mms
iv.1	iv.1	
iv.2	iv.2	
iv.3	iv.3	
iv.4	iv.4	
iv.5	iv.5	
iv.6	iv.6	viii fragmentary
iv.7	iv.7	viii fragmentary
iv.8	iv.8	x fragmentary
iv.9	iv.9	
iv.10	iv.10	
iv.11	iv.11	
iv.12	C.1	xvi
iv.13	iv.12	xvii
iv.14	iv.13	xviii
iv.15	iv.14	xviii
iv.16	iv.15	xx
iv.17	iv.16	xxi
iv.18	iv.17	xxii
iv.19	iv.18	xxiii
iv.20	iv.19	xxiv
iv.21	iv.20	xxv
iv.22	C.2	xxvi
iv.23	iv.21	xxvii
iv.24	iv.22	xxviii
iv.25	C.3	xxviii
iv.26	C.4	xxx
iv.27	C.5	xxxi
iv.28	iv.23	xxxii
iv.29	iv.24	

Table 3: Miracle types and causes of punishment miracles, internal statistics

	All miracles – Positive	All miracles – Negative	Violence against dependants of Conques and their property	Violence against monks and their property	Violence against non-dependants	Non-violent temporal sins against friends or dependants	Non-violent temporal sins against Conques	Religious sins against Saint Faith (blasphemy, doubt or disdain)	Religious sins (lust, pride, gluttony, greed, etc)
X_{1a}	51.2%	48.8%	4%	16%	4%	0%	32%	28%	16%
X_{1b}	71.4%	28.6%	0%	25%	0%	0%	50%	0%	25%
X_{1c}	87.5%	12.5%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bernard Total	60%	40%	6.7%	16.7%	3.3%	0%	33.3%	23.3%	16.7%
X_{2a} (Book 3)	70%	30%	30%	50%	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%
X_{2b} (Book 4+C)	83.7%	16.3%	25%	25%	0%	12.5%	0%	12.5%	25%
Supplementary	100%	0%	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL	72.9%	27.1%	14.6%	25%	4.2%	2.1%	20.8%	18.8%	14.6%
Sigal's mean	87.4%	12.6%							

Table 4: Castles in the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis*

	Castles mentioned	% of all castles mentioned within work	Locations (of all types) mentioned	Proportion of castles by all location types
X_{1a}	9	21%	23	39%
X_{1b}	3	7%	8	38%
X_{1c}	0	0%	2	0%
X_1 (Bernard total)	12	28%	33	36%
X_{2a} (Book 3)	16	37%	34	47%
X_{2b} (Book 4+C)	9	21%	33	27%
A	1	2%	7	14%
L-V	5	12%	14	36%
Totals	43		121	

Table 5: Direct beneficiaries and victims of positive and punitive miracles

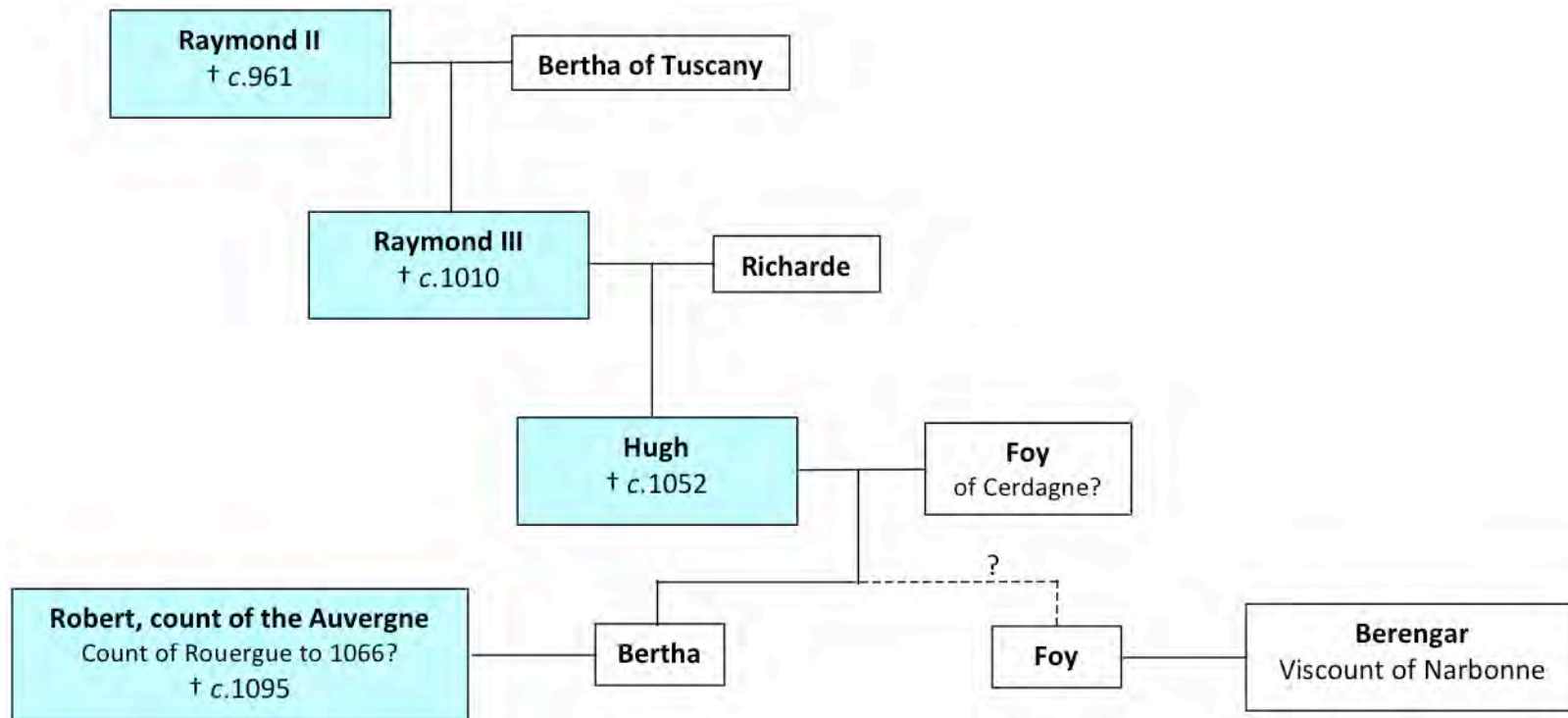
	Servant, peasant, tradesman or widow	Nobles & warriors	Sainte Foy and/ or her monastery	Monk or cleric	Unspecified
BERNARD	10% (beneficiaries) 27% (victims) 18% (total)	31% (beneficiaries) 32% (victims) 31% (total)	7% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 4% (total)	21% (beneficiaries) 18% (victims) 20% (total)	31% (beneficiaries) 23% (victims) 27% (total)
X_{2a}	15% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 11% (total)	55% (beneficiaries) 75% (victims) 61% (total)	0% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 0% (total)	0% (beneficiaries) 13% (victims) 4% (total)	30% (beneficiaries) 13% (victims) 25% (total)
X_{2b}	35% (beneficiaries) 13% (victims) 29% (total)	42% (beneficiaries) 75% (victims) 50% (total)	4% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 3% (total)	0% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 0% (total)	19% (beneficiaries) 13% (victims) 18% (total)
Supplementary	27% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 27% (totals)	60% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 60% (totals)	0% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 0% (totals)	0% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 0% (totals)	13% (beneficiaries) 0% (victims) 13% (totals)
ALL MIRACLES TOTAL	21% (beneficiaries) 18% (victims) 20% (total)	44% (beneficiaries) 50% (victims) 46% (total)	3% (beneficiaries) 2% (total)	7% (beneficiaries) 13% (victims) 9% (total)	24% (beneficiaries) 18% (victims) 23% (total)

Table 6: *Miles* and nobles as beneficiaries and victims

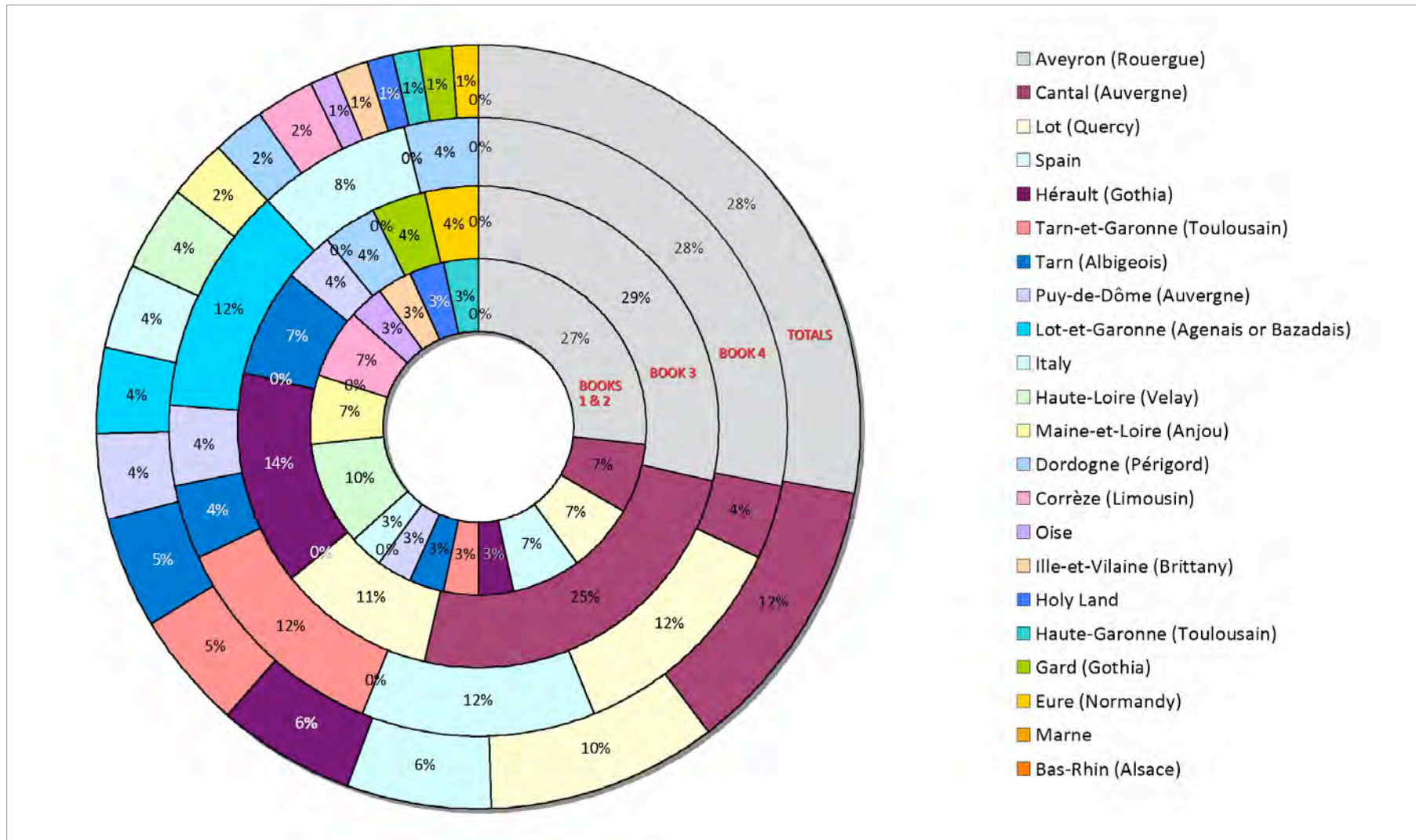
(+ denotes beneficiary of positive intercession; – denotes victim of punishment)

	<i>Miles</i> with no context	<i>Miles</i> of low status	<i>Miles</i> of elevated status				No warrior qualification		
		<i>Miles</i> attached to a castle or belonging to a band of men under a greater warrior	<i>Miles</i> who governed a castle	<i>Miles</i> with men under his command (no castle mentioned)	<i>Miles</i> known for high rank/lineage	<i>Miles</i> that had land/possessions indicative of wealth	Known for rank (but neither noble or warrior)	Noble – no mention of warrior (all women)	Aristocrat (i.e. count)
BERNARD	3+	1–	–	1+	2+ / 1–	–	5+	1–	1+
X_{2a}	1+	3+ / 1–	1–	2–	4+ / 1–	1+	1+	1–	–
X_{2b}	2+	3+	2+ / 1–	2–	–	–	2+	1+	–
Supplementary	1+	4+	–	–	1+	1–	1+	–	1+
TOTALS	7+	10+ 2–	2+ 2–	1+ 4–	7+ 2–	1+ 1–	9+	1+ 2–	2+
			11+ 9–					12+ 2–	

Table 7: Simplified genealogy of the counts of Rouergue



Graph 1: Locations by modern-day département (medieval region)



PART I: INTRODUCTION

Founded in very different circumstances and with diverse political, economic, cultural and social experiences in the early middle ages, the monasteries of Bobbio, in north-western Italy, and Conques, in the Midi of France, offer a point of convergence which merits study and comparison. Both were involved in cultic innovations for their patron saints, Columbanus and Foy, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, including new collections of posthumous miracles (*miracula*). Existing charters enhance and qualify each of the hagiographic texts, and improve our understanding of the function of saintly power and patronage, and of the hagiography itself. Equally, both *miracula* collections offer interesting perspectives on the nature of power relations, juridical systems and social interaction through the lens of monastic self-interest, endowing these texts with great value in studying the hopes and fears of tenth- and eleventh-century monastic institutions. They are the centrepieces in a wider quest to understand how these monasteries interpreted and negotiated their place within their socio-political landscapes.

Part I of this work addresses itself to certain major historiographical themes that underpin this study. The first is the key point of comparison between the two cases studied here – the posthumous miracles collections, or *miracula*, produced at the monasteries of Bobbio and Conques. The function of miracle stories in religious tradition is an issue long-debated amongst theologians, philosophers and social scientists, and hagiography as a literary genre has undergone something of a revival and re-casting in historical scholarship during recent decades. As for saints' cults, historians disagree widely on the extent to which popular support informed and drove developments in pilgrimage, relic veneration and other cultic trappings, which peaked between the tenth and early twelfth centuries. These issues pose further questions about elite Church culture and its interaction with society and politics, and lead to debates about the interrelation of high politics and ecclesiastical patronage, jurisdiction, land and power especially since large, landed ecclesiastical estates, the donations and sales they attracted and the charters and notices that report these all inform our understanding of wider relationships to land. Any studies seeking to comment on 'socio-political landscapes' around the year 1000 must also engage with debates on 'feudal transformation' and millennial crisis. Such models and debates serve as a framework for the present study, set out in chapters 2 and 3. Underlying everything is the issue of troublesome sources, the nuances of their production and survival,

and their effect on our interpretations; thus chapter 4 addresses itself to issues arising from proposals that the *mutation féodale* is actually a *mutation documentaire*, and places hagiography within this.

This study adopts a comparative approach of two case studies to highlight the particularities in regional and institutional experience, since recent scholarship has exposed the weakness of generalised models that fail to recognise the specificity of regional experience. Parts II and III take a closer look at Bobbio and Conques, the sources they produced and their local socio-political context; whilst both address the framework set out in Part I the varying situations of each monastery force the order in which these are addressed to be irregular. These categories underpin the comparison; a concluding chapter will highlight the fundamental issues and new avenues that the comparative study of the two monasteries raises.

1. MIRACLES AND MIRACULA

Miracles form an intrinsic part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Nevertheless, defining a 'miracle' has concerned theologians and philosophers from the early centuries of Christianity, with contributions from Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Reformation thinkers and the early modern 'enlightenment' – a journey well-served by scholarly critique.¹ Modern conceptualizations of the miracle are generally loosely based on the distinction made by early modern natural philosophers – notably David Hume, who saw miracles as 'a violation of the laws of nature'.² By these definitions a miracle is something that must be inexplicable by any other available explanation, which makes it relative to the limits of understanding of any era, and merely a yardstick of ignorance. Yet despite technological, scientific and medical advances, miracles are as relevant today as ever for some communities – modern stories of miraculous healings at Lourdes, or the Hindu 'Milk Miracle' of the mid-1990s, find the tradition alive and well – and modern scholars still seek to identify what function and meaning miracles hold for

¹ See J. Hardon, 'The concept of miracle from St. Augustine to modern apologetics', *Theological Studies*, 15 (1954), pp. 229-257; P. Harrison, 'Miracles, early modern science, and rational religion', *Church History*, 75 (2006), pp. 493-511; M. Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150-1350* (Aldershot, 2007), esp. chapter 1.

² David Hume, 'Of miracles', in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (originally published 1748; this edition in 1900, reprinted New York, 2008) p. 104. For Voltaire as well, 'a miracle is the violation of mathematical, divine, immutable, eternal laws', in his 'Philosophical Dictionary' written in 1764, published in *The Works of Voltaire*, vol. 11 (New York, 1901), p. 272.

humanity.³

Subjecting miracles to rational or scientific scrutiny alone, in order to deny them or reduce them simply to modes of understanding the unexplainable, tends to downplay earlier conceptual nuances that point to the religious and narrative functions of miracles as ‘signs’ and ‘wonders’. The New Testament presents miracles as signs demonstrating the power of Jesus, legitimizing claims that he was the long-awaited Messiah. But others besides Jesus worked miracles, and these were quickly and irrevocably ascribed to martyrs and saints. As with Jesus himself, we should properly understand miracles as indicating ‘one who works by God’s authority’.⁴ This is not a modern construction – as Augustine says, ‘[miracles] are incomprehensible to men and function to demonstrate God’s sovereignty to believers.’⁵ Ecclesiastical accounts of miracles in subsequent centuries, by then associated chiefly with holy relics, retained this notion, and miracle-stories maintained their didactic function to reinforce constantly the power of God, and signs of the intercessory powers of saints.

Miracle-stories fell on predisposed ears throughout the Middle Ages – devotees frequently spoke of miracles at shrines, some were then recorded by the shrines’ guardians. Yet there were sceptics throughout the period, beginning with Augustine himself.⁶ Arguing against assumptions of medieval credulity, Susan Reynolds notes that medieval ‘miracle stories are full of scoffers’ who must have ‘existed in real life and needed to be converted’.⁷ Bernard of Angers, who wrote the first two books of miracles of Sainte Foy, mounts a lengthy assault against one such ‘scoffer’ who denies the less conventional miracles included in his collection, such as resurrected mules and restored eyeballs. For Bernard the doubter is impious and heretical, a blind and foolish son of the devil – comparable to the Jews and Pharisees in their refusal to recognize the signs and miracles (*signis et prodigiis*) denoting Christ. Bernard feels

³ Comparative approaches to this issue include D. Aigle (ed.), *Miracle et Karama* (Turnhout, 2000); K. L. Woodward, *The Book of Miracles: The Meaning of the Miracle Stories in Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam* (New York, 2001).

⁴ P. J. Achtemeier, J. B. Green, and M. M. Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (Michigan, 2001), p. 191.

⁵ Quoted in H. de Vries, ‘Fast forward, or: the theologico-political event in quick motion (miracles, media, and multitudes in St. Augustine)’, in W. Otten, H. de Vries and A. Vanderjagt (eds.), *How the West Was Won: Essays on Literary Imagination, the Canon and the Christian Middle Ages*, (Leiden, 2010), pp. 255–280, p. 267.

⁶ For the development of Augustine’s theory on miracles see de Vries, ‘Fast forward’, pp. 268–276. On later expressions of doubt see Goodich, ‘Popular’ voices of doubt’, in *idem.*, *Miracles and Wonders*, pp. 47–68.

⁷ S. Reynolds, ‘Social mentalities and the case of medieval scepticism’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, 1 (1991), pp. 21–41, at p. 29.

compelled to justify his more unusual miracles, warning that to deny them because of unfamiliarity would be ‘to confine the omnipotence of the High Creator to the mode of human reason’.⁸ He goes on to emphasize the testimony of miracle beneficiaries, their corroboration by the whole province and Bernard’s personal contact with them – such ‘evidence’ is reinforced throughout the work. Rather than undermining miracle acceptance, doubts seem to have stimulated mechanisms for establishing their credibility, with eyewitness oral testimony a principal evidential device, as it was in court.⁹

Scepticism should not be taken out of proportion. Certainly, ‘if people in the Middle Ages liked miracle stories that need not imply that they believed them.’¹⁰ Yet like them they did. If we doubt exaggerated clerical accounts of the masses who reported miracles at shrines, we cannot ignore the torrent of hagiographic production between the tenth and twelfth centuries. This literary spike does not necessarily mirror a rise in the popularity of miracles,¹¹ but the proliferation of miracle-stories, whether or not these were ‘believed’ in a fundamental sense, confirms that the concept of miracle was culturally integral and well received by much of society. As John Arnold suggests, medieval religion is better understood as ‘lived’ rather than as doctrine.¹² Clerical authors would not have persisted with this form of text if it had no value or cultural resonance, and it represents encouragement of ‘participatory piety’.¹³ The enduring popularity of the Golden Legend, first published in the 1260s, shows that more vociferous scepticism from the thirteenth century failed to undermine the wider resonance of miracle-stories – they became an integral part of Western European Christian culture and remained so, barely challenged, until the Reformation.

⁸ *LMSF*, i.7, also i.23. Bernard’s proclivity to defend unusual miracles against scepticism does not mean that his more conventional miracles were free from cynicism; rather, it was an authorial strategy by which to approach the subject. Others have seen disbelievers in the Miracles of Sainte Foy as amounting to a challenge to the cult of saints, see P. Bonnassie and R. Landes, ‘Une nouvelle hérésie est née dans le monde’, in M. Zimmermann (ed.), *Les sociétés méridionales autour de l’an mil: répertoire de sources et documents commentés* (Toulouse, 1992), pp. 435–459, cf. with response *SKH*, pp. 277–278.

⁹ On evidence for miracles see B. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event 1000–1215*, rev. ed (Aldershot, 1987), pp. 208–209.

¹⁰ Reynolds, ‘Social mentalities’, p. 30.

¹¹ As Bob Moore suggests, ‘the popularly acknowledged miracle-worker enjoyed a much greater degree of continuity in fact between late antiquity and the High Middle Ages than the Latin sources care to record’: R. I. Moore, ‘Between sanctity and superstition: saints and their miracles in the Age of Revolution’, in M. Rubin (ed.), *The Work of Jacques Le Goff and the Challenge of Medieval History* (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 63–75, at p. 63.

¹² J. H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London, 2005), esp. ch. 1.

¹³ The term is Eyal Poleg’s, whose book on the *Bible in Late Medieval England* is forthcoming with the University of Pennsylvania Press.

Our inquiry is better directed towards questions of significance, interpretation and function than belief – issues altogether harder to settle and on which, of course, to draw conclusions. To medieval minds, miracles were not a simple matter of explaining the unexplainable, and the interpretative component of the concept of miracle, first expressed by Augustine, was not lost.¹⁴ Events that *could* be explained by contemporary understanding were nevertheless sometimes interpreted as miracles because of good or bad fortune in the face of the improbable, rather than the impossible.¹⁵ Thus a bell clapper lost from the boat carrying the Bobbio procession is ‘miraculously’ washed ashore;¹⁶ or Bernard of Angers’ student whose Psalter, left carelessly in a forest, was returned by a shepherd when he went back to look for it, which Bernard explicitly interprets as a miracle.¹⁷ Here, the significance lent to accounts by both authors and audience makes them miracles: miracles are thus inextricable from the meaning attributed to them by their reporters and redactors, and inseparable from the literature which reports them.¹⁸ Identifying this significance is the fundamental quest that underlies any modern study into the nature or use of miracles. Leading works have striven to fathom this, notably seminal studies by Ronald Finucane and Benedicta Ward, which make the exploration of miracles much less murky for historians of the Middle Ages.¹⁹ As its title suggests, however, this study is concerned less with the significance and function of miracles in and of themselves and more with the texts that encompass them.

The preserve of theology and religious history, hagiography has received increasing attention

¹⁴ Augustine did not draw a distinction between *natura* and *miracula*, since for him the very creation of the world was a miracle; instead, interpretation was key. In his later writings he associated miracles and miracle belief to ‘the publicness and even publicity of faith’: de Vries, ‘Fast forward’, esp. pp. 267, 279. Also Ward, *Miracles*, p. 42.

¹⁵ Moore, ‘Between sanctity’, pp. 59–60.

¹⁶ *MSC*, xiii.

¹⁷ *LMSF*, ii.15.

¹⁸ Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England* (Philadelphia, 2011) was published after the majority of this thesis was complete. She emphasizes the centrality of oral narrative in English miracle collections, whereas the present thesis emphasizes the redactors’ agency in directing the detail and editing of the miracles, but the two approaches are not incompatible. It is also worth noting that Koopmans shows that the tenth- and eleventh-century collections in her sample were more likely to represent authorial literary ambition than their later counterparts (ch. 4).

¹⁹ R. C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London, 1977); Ward, *Miracles*. Despite the promising title, Florence Buffet’s ‘L’approche psychologique des miracles de Sainte Foy de Conques’, *Revue du Rouergue*, 55 (1998), pp. 323–342, does not advance our understanding of the Sainte Foy miracles in this vein. Rather it is a depiction of Bernard of Angers’ characterizations of the saint and miracles, and often falls into the trap of reading the work too literally.

from social, economic and political historians in recent decades.²⁰ This new usage is partly driven by the unique perspectives afforded by the genre on otherwise poorly-documented issues, such as the wide audiences for such texts – from illiterate dependants to the highest ecclesiastical ranks – or the role of oral accounts in the compilation and dissemination process: both are interesting points of convergence between ecclesiastic and lay, high and popular cultures, and oral and written tradition.²¹ A comprehensive overview of scholarship on hagiography exceeds this study's capacity.²² Many arguments have been offered on the viability of hagiographic texts as historical evidence, not least variations in the genre over time,²³ which confirms that hagiography was adapted to its audiences and reflected the contemporary. Paul Fouracre proposes strategies for using hagiographic sources critically and productively in historical studies, and successfully defends them against post-modernist challenges. He particularly reinforces the need to give 'the whole text of each hagiographical work full consideration rather than simply chopping out of it the 'usable' historical information'.²⁴ Only

²⁰ Some examples, from a large and ever-increasing body, include D. Gonthier, and C. Lebas, 'Analyse socio-économique de quelques recueils de miracles dans la Normandie du XIe au XIIe siècle,' *Annales de Normandie*, 24 (1974), pp. 3-36; C. Doherty, 'Some aspects of hagiography as a source for Irish economic history,' *Peritia*, 1 (1982), pp. 300-328; A. Vuolo, 'Libelli miraculorum' *tra religiosità e politica: Napoli, sec. IX-XII* (Naples, 1990); C. Cheirézy, 'Hagiographie et société: l'exemple de Saint Léonard de Noblat', *AM*, 107 (1995), pp. 417-435.

²¹ S. Gaunt, 'Si les anges avaient un sexe: l'hagiographie occitane et la poésie des troubadours', in G. Gouiran (ed.), *Contacts de langues, de civilisations et intertextualité*, vol. 3 (Montpellier, 1993), pp. 895-906, at p. 896; A. G. Remensnyder, 'Un problème de cultures ou culture?: la statue-reliquaire et les joca de Sainte Foy de Conques dans le *Liber miraculorum* de Bernard d'Angers', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, 33 (1990), pp. 351-37; J. M. H. Smith, 'Oral and written: saints, miracles, and relics in Brittany, c. 850-1250', *Speculum*, 65 (1990), pp. 309-343; B. Merdrignac, 'Ut uulgo refertur...: Tradition orale et littérature hagiographique en Bretagne au Moyen Age,' in C. Laurent, B. Merdrignac, and D. Pichot (eds.), *Mondes de l'ouest et villes du monde. Regards sur les sociétés médiévales* (Rennes, 1998), pp. 105-114.

²² But see J. Dubois and J.-L. Lemaître, *Sources et méthodes de l'hagiographie médiévale* (Paris, 1993); G. Philippart (ed.), *Hagiographies. Histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en occident, des origines à 1500*, 5 vols. (Turnhout, 1994-2010); R. Aigrain, *L'hagiographie: ses sources, ses méthodes, son histoire*, 2nd ed. (Brussels, 2000); T. Head, *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York, 2001) and the review of J. M. H. Smith, 'Early medieval hagiography in the late twentieth century', *EME*, 1 (1992), pp. 69-76; H. Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints*, 4th edition, trans. D. Attwater (London, 1962); H. Delehaye, 'La méthode historique et l'hagiographie', *Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques*, 5:61 (1930), pp. 218-231; H. Delehaye, 'Cinq leçons sur la méthode hagiographique', *Subsidia Hagiographica*, 21 (1934), pp. 5-147. More recently, see M. Heinzelmann, (ed.), *Manuscripts hagiographiques et travail des hagiographes* (Sigmaringen, 1992). More recent developments in the field include a new focus on the practice of re-writing hagiographic texts, as in R. Bartlett, 'Rewriting saints' lives: the case of Gerald of Wales', *Speculum*, 58 (1983), pp. 598-613, F. Lotter, 'The process and significance of rewriting in Breton hagiography,' in J. Cartwright (ed.), *Celtic Hagiography and Saints' Cults* (Cardiff, 2003); M. Goulet, *Écriture et réécriture hagiographiques. Essai sur les réécritures de vies de saints dans l'occident latin médiéval (viii-xiii s.)* (Turnhout, 2005).

²³ B. Cazelles, *The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1991), p. 3.

²⁴ P. Fouracre, 'Merovingian history and Merovingian hagiography', *P&P*, 127 (1990), pp. 3-38, at pp. 5-8; P.

a thorough review of a source's production context can deliver an appreciation, both of its worth as a historical source, and its societal and political role.

Different sub-genres offer different opportunities within hagiography. Confessor-saints' *vitae* (saints' lives) needed posthumous miracles to make a case for the sanctity of their subjects, and by the fifth century the first Western Christian examples of posthumous saints' thaumaturgic or miracle-working powers (*virtutes*) collected separately began to appear, although Gregory of Tours' works on Saint Martin truly caused the sub-genre to take off.²⁵ By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, saints' dossiers frequently included *miracula*, either appended to another hagiographic work, such as a *vita* or *translatio* (commemorating the transferral or movement of relics), or as a distinct collection, like those of saints Columbanus and Foy. Nevertheless, posthumous miracles can and should be viewed as a separate genre to miracles *in vita*.²⁶ A posthumous miracle had a flexibility and independence from the saint over and above those attributed to his lifetime, and chronological detachment from the living saint often resulted in a re-characterization or disregard of a saint's 'personality'. Amongst the functions identified by Sigal, *miracula* might be composed to update the dossier of an older saint, to demonstrate that a saint continued to protect and aid their devotees, and/or to prove the permanence of a saint's thaumaturgic power.²⁷ The genre was certainly more than the didactic *exempla*-type *vitae* of earlier centuries, as in the Sainte Foy collection (i.31), where we are told the saint happily freed prisoners whether they were imprisoned justly or unjustly. The overriding message did not dictate how to live your life, but concerned the power and service the saint might offer devotees. We should, perhaps, think of the texts as moralizing rather than exemplary, in the sense of reinforcing an order considered desirable by its authors.

Questions of historical context and chronology assume greater importance when studying works of this kind, and collections of *miracula* offer perspectives on the mentalities of the

Fouracre and R. A. Gerberding (eds.), *Late Merovingian France: History and Hagiography, 640-720* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 37-48, quote at p. 39. Also see M. Bull, *The Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour: Analysis and Translation* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 12-20.

²⁵ P.-A. Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle dans la France médiévale: XIe-XIIe siècle* (Paris, 1985), pp. 12-13. On the sub-genre see M. Heinzelmann, 'Une source de base de la littérature hagiographique latine: le recueil de miracles', in E. Patlagean and P. Riché (eds.) *Hagiographies, cultures, et sociétés: IVe-XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1981), pp. 235-257.

²⁶ Bull, *Rocamadour*, p. 9. Despite the statistical differences he finds in types of *in vita* and *post mortem* miracles, Sigal sees little difference between the categories: Sigal, *L'homme*, pp. 17-35, 78, showing divergent statistics at pp. 289-293, cf. Moore, 'Between sanctity', at p. 55.

²⁷ Sigal, P.-A., 'Histoire et hagiographie: les *miracula* aux XIe et XIIe siècles', *Annales de Bretagne*, 87 (1980), pp. 237-257, at pp. 241-242.

communities that produced them. Sigal's function list may be augmented by a more general observation; *miracula* production could, in tandem with other literary, artistic and architectural innovations, form part of deliberate monastic attempts to raise patron saints' profiles. Miracle collections before the thirteenth century have been described as 'symptomatic of a more atomized and particularistic religious landscape in which institutions had greater opportunities to create particular identities for themselves and to make strategic choices about how they projected their status and prestige onto the wider world.'²⁸ Certainly, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* and the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* are inextricable from their respective contemporary environments. Likewise, they intended to instruct and influence; they were both products and manipulators of their time. The rhetorical nature of medieval hagiographical texts is increasingly acknowledged, with terms such as 'monastic weapons', and 'propaganda' applied to them – this study belongs with this current of scholarship.²⁹

The *miracula* sub-genre was flexible and non-restrictive, within broad hagiographic parameters.³⁰ The *Miracula sancti Columbani*, for example, record both *in vita* and posthumous miracles for Columbanus, and relate the *translatio* of the saint's relics from Bobbio to Pavia and return. A striking characteristic of both sets of *miracula* studied here, representative of the genre as a whole, is much of the content's historiographical nature. Such aspects are represented more explicitly in some collections than others; the hagiographers of Saint Benedict, for example, take care to relate his posthumous miracles to wider chronology (emphasizing Fleury's history and political connections).³¹ The *Miracula sancti Columbani* focus mainly,

²⁸ Bull, *Rocamadour*, p. 10.

²⁹ B. H. Rosenwein, T. Head and S. A. Farmer, 'Monks and their enemies: a comparative approach', *Speculum* 66 (1991), pp. 764-796, at p. 765; F. Bougard 'La relique au procès: autour des miracles de saint Colomban', in *Le règlement des conflits au Moyen Âge, XXX congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, Angers, mai 2000* (Paris, 2001), pp. 35-66, at p. 42; Ward, *Miracles*, p. 2 and *passim.*; D. Rollason, 'The Miracles of St. Benedict: a window on early medieval France', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis* (London, 1985), pp. 73-90 at p. 90; J. Hubert and M.-C. Hubert, 'Piété chrétienne ou paganisme? Les statues-reliquaires de l'Europe carolingienne,' in *Christianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto, 1982), pp. 235-75, at p. 265.

³⁰ I attribute more flexibility and responsiveness to my tenth- and eleventh-century miracle texts than Fouracre allows for his Merovingian sources, which is perhaps more indicative of the formative stage of the genre in the early medieval period than of differences between the *vitae* and *miracula* sub-genres: Fouracre, 'Merovingian hagiography', pp. 7-8; Fouracre and Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France*, p. 41.

³¹ Rollason, 'The Miracles of Saint Benedict', pp. 76-77; A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, et les Miracles de Saint Benoît* (Paris, 1965); also see K. M. Ashley, and P. Sheingorn, *Writing Faith: Text, Sign, & History in the Miracles of Sainte Foy* (Chicago, 1999), pp. 137-138. Other similarities in the practices and methods of hagiographers and historians are discussed by Sigal, 'Histoire et hagiographie', pp. 242-246. It was fluid ground – miracles were equally habitually included in historiographical works, on which see: Ward,

although not exclusively, on political and miraculous events taking place in 929, although they were redacted three decades later. Likewise, the Sainte Foy collection, commenced in 1013, reports events and individuals from the mid- to late-tenth century, although sometimes the miracles occurred shortly before their redaction, seen by the authors themselves or other living witnesses. The historiographical element is interspersed with the miraculous, and chronology expands and contracts. The disparity between dates when the miracles or events occurred, when these were first recorded, and their redaction are all investigated here, since they are often key to the hagiographer's objectives and later monastic use of their texts.

Conspicuously, historical evidence is included in names of places and individuals and, especially in the Sainte Foy collection, detail about social networks, wealth and property. This does not mean the world portrayed by the *miracula* is 'real'; in light of the constructions which best served the genre and its work, whole subjects could be ignored or subverted, or else given undue precedence.³² Nevertheless, the persons and places the miracle-stories record are frequently corroborated, mainly by diplomatic and charter evidence in this study since we lack relevant 'narratives' such as chronicles for the regions in question, confirming that at least this element of the miracle-stories represented something tangibly 'real'. To modern spectators the dichotomy of the miraculous appearing beside 'real' events and individuals may seem paradoxical. Yet this dichotomy is advantageous to the historian. Even if we reject the concept of miracles as violations of the laws of nature, the miraculous is still, by its nature, something that transcends the norm, which must also be presented within the text,³³ and 'the power of these narratives to convey meaning depended on their retention of *some* historical detail'.³⁴ The result, happily for the historian, is rich narrative, portraying ordinariness as much as wonder. This is most evident in the central section of the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, which relates events at Pavia a decade or two earlier in painstaking detail, with places and individuals, timings and objects accompanying tales of the miraculous, which often play second fiddle. In this case, as in the Sainte Foy collection, we see the importance of anchoring historical information in written hagiographic form to ensure its favourable reception at the time of writing as well as its use thereafter. How and why will be demonstrated, but suffice to say at this stage that committing

Miracles, pp. 201-207.

³² Such as the descriptions and inclusion of illnesses along biblical lines: Bull, *Rocamadour*, pp. 13. For constructions in the Sainte Foy collection see *ASWF*, pp. 117-135.

³³ Bull, *Rocamadour*, p.11

³⁴ S. Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 2006), p. 214.

such data permanently to the page to be read and re-read captures the essence of historiographical works – to preserve for posterity that which might otherwise be lost, in a form which best suits the requirements of the time. As Geary asserts for *translationes*, the *miracula* sub-genre surely lies between hagiography and history.³⁵

Hagiographic parameters were not a hindrance to the inclusion of extraneous historical information, nor did they remove any significant agency on the part of the ‘authors’, a term I retain since it better implies a range of intention which was broader than celebration of the saint alone. Hagiographers were also editors. The very selection of miracles and their order of presentation provide a window on to their rhetorical intent. The first author of the Sainte Foy miracles is explicit about his working methods: as a visitor to the monastery at Conques, Bernard of Angers took notes from oral accounts, redacting six miracle-stories there and then, and the rest back in Angers from his notes. We can safely assume that Bernard included narrative glosses for entertainment, and his choice of which miracles to include, and in which order, make it clear that his work (as his continuators’ as well) was no passive register of miracles reported at the shrine. Miracle-stories in the *Miracula sancti Columbani* are organized chronologically; in the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* they are organized thematically.³⁶ These structures in themselves relate to the manner in which they were to be consumed. The Columbanian collection is short enough to be read as a whole, and constructs a narrative which encourages this approach. The Sainte Foy collection, on the other hand, was to be consulted on an ad hoc basis, dipped into as and when necessary.³⁷ Such authorial choices – as well as the inclusion of temporal details in both in the form of characters, locations and miracles – are central to this study, which is concerned with the use of the hagiographic literary form by monastic institutions.

To be effective as didactic and propagandist discourse, miracle-stories had to appeal. To adapt the manner and delivery of religious teachings in order to engage specific, discrete audiences was not considered a debasement. Gregory the Great noted in his *Liber Pastoralis Curae* that ‘according to the quality of the hearers ought the discourse of the teachers to be fashioned, so as to suit all and each for their several needs, and yet never deviate from the art of common

³⁵ P. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 9-15. The debate whether hagiography forms part of historiography is summarized in Sigal, ‘Histoire et hagiographie’, pp. 237-239.

³⁶ For other organizational structures see Sigal, ‘Histoire et hagiographie’, pp. 249-251.

³⁷ See conclusion.

edification.³⁸ Medieval writers often repeated his sentiments, including the second continuator of Sainte Foy's *miracula*. Having noted his attempt to write succinct miracle-stories to avoid boring readers, but not so brief as to make them obscure, he continues: 'it is true that 'faith comes by hearing', and hearing is instructed through words. Therefore it is worthwhile that suitable words pass from the narrator's mouth so that listeners' hearts are caressed with honeyed sweetness and they easily grasp the content'.³⁹ Thus the nature of the miracle stories speaks volumes about their intended audience,⁴⁰ with much effort spent ensuring the miracles were as entertaining and original as possible within the genre limits, which were often pushed, particularly in the case of the Sainte Foy collection and especially under Bernard of Angers. One must assume this was not simply due to the self-indulgent creativity of their authors, but also a desire to ensure miracles were relevant, popular, widely-read, and transmitted orally, to perpetuate the narrative tradition. Miracle iv.18 of the Sainte Foy collection, for example, provides an example of the ever-elusive subject of the oral transmission of miracles, recounting the meeting of two warriors in Lombardy while on pilgrimage to Rome and the exchange of miracle stories. It is possible that the monastic author constructed this frame for the story to encourage such transmission, yet there is little reason to doubt that this was a typical mode. There was both life beyond the static text of a miracle-story, shown by re-workings of older miracle-stories to cater for new tastes; and life beyond its liturgical use, confirmed by the vernacular version of a miracle possibly circulated at the comital court of Toulouse.⁴¹

The two main texts under consideration here have received attention from scholars in different measure. Despite the importance of Bobbio, its monastery has been described as playing a 'mediocre role' in the hagiography of Irish saints in Italy.⁴² Following the *Vita* of Saint Columbanus by Jonas of Susa in the seventh century, nothing major was added to the dossier

³⁸ *The Book of Pastoral Rule and Selected Epistles of Gregory the Great Bishop of Rome* ed. and trans. J. Barmby (Oxford, 1895), prologue to Part III, at p. 24. The work was widely known throughout the Middle Ages and the prologue mentioned here oft-quoted: J. J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1974; repr. Tempe, 2001), pp. 292-293. I thank Eyal Poleg for directing me to this element of Gregory's teachings and the references here.

³⁹ *LMSF*, iv.20.

⁴⁰ Uses and audiences of eleventh-century hagiography, especially in liturgy, are covered in the seminal study: B. de Gaiffier, 'L'hagiographie et son public', in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Leonis Van Der Essen*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1947), pp. 135-166. For a wider chronological sample see Aigrain, *L'hagiographie*, *passim*.

⁴¹ For example *LMSF*, A.2 on the miraculous liberation and subsequent conversion of a Saracen prisoner, found re-worked in the 'spirit of the crusades' as R.2 and a now-lost Provençal version of miracle i.19, re-edited by Robertini, *LMSF*, App. vii, pp. 312-315.

⁴² P. Tomea, 'I santi iro-scoti nell'agiografia dell'Italia medioevale (secoli VII-XIV)', in L. Valle and P. Pulina (eds.), *San Colombano e l'Europa: religione, cultura, natura* (Como, 2001), pp. 97-135 at p. 98.

of Bobbio's founder-saint until the *Miracula sancti Columbani* during the tenth century. The various manuscripts of the miracles were surveyed and edited by Harry Bresslau (1848–1926) and published posthumously in *MGH*. Since most of Bresslau's previous work had focused on German and Italian diplomatics, it is perhaps unsurprising that the preface to his edition focuses predominantly on the political aspects of the work as opposed to its hagiographic form.⁴³ Only recently and partially translated by François Bougard, the Columbanus miracles are well known to many Italian intellectuals, but rather less so in Anglophone scholarship.⁴⁴ Those who have studied them are generally more interested in Columbanus than in tenth-century politics, with the exception of Bougard. Disconcertingly, sometimes historians of the monastery treat the anonymous *miracula* like a chronicle.⁴⁵ This opens the source to misinterpretation and misuse, and overlooks the important contribution a holistic approach to the text and the circumstances of its production can make to our understanding of Bobbio's manoeuvres.

By contrast, the Book of Miracles of Sainte Foy is a well-known, oft-discussed source, studied by social and political historians and Latinists alike, and has been the subject of much deeper critique. Nevertheless, there is room for an up-to-date review of the current leading scholarship. Many important studies, undertaken and published simultaneously during the 1990s, do not respond to each other's contributions. The translation by Pamela Sheingorn, made from Bouillet's 1897 edition, was completed at a similar time to Luca Robertini's revised Latin edition, and thus does not incorporate the revisions and adjustments made by Robertini to the nineteenth-century edition.⁴⁶ Equally Robertini hypothesized authorship dates for the various Books in his edition, which generally agree with proposals by Pierre Bonnassie and Frédéric de Gournay, but neither work responds to the other.⁴⁷ Kathleen Ashley and Pamela

⁴³ *Miracula sancti Columbani*, ed. by H. Bresslau, *M.G.H. Scriptores*, 30, II (Hanover, 1934), pp. 993–1015. Bresslau was centrally involved in the strategic planning (later writing a history) of the *MGH* and made especial contributions in his editions of the diplomas of Henry II and Konrad II, as well as his extraordinary *Handbuch der Urkundenlehre für Deutschland und Italien* (Leipzig, 1889; 2nd extended edition 1912).

⁴⁴ Bougard 'La relique', annex, pp. 58–66.

⁴⁵ Tosi explicitly calls the hagiographer a 'chronicler': M. Tosi, 'Il trasferimento di S. Colombano da Bobbio a Pavia: 17–30 luglio [929]', *AB*, 3 (1981), pp. 129–150, *passim*. See also M. Richter, *Bobbio in the Early Middle Ages: The Abiding Legacy of Columbanus* (Dublin, 2008), esp. ch. 11.

⁴⁶ A. Bouillet (ed.), *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* (Paris, 1897); Sheingorn, *BoSF*; L. Robertini (ed.), *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* (Spoleto, 1994). Throughout this work I use Sheingorn's English translations, and Robertini's edition, unless otherwise specified.

⁴⁷ P. Bonnassie and F. de Gournay, 'Sur la datation du 'Livre des miracles de Sainte Foy de Conques'', *AM*, 107 (1995), pp. 457–473. Bonnassie and de Gournay reference Robertini's work to a certain extent but not deeply since, as they inform us, they did not have his work at the time of writing. One significant impact of this, to my mind, is their failure to use the C miracles to date book 4, discussed further below.

Sheingorn's study provides an excellent literary analysis of the constructions and styles used by different authors of the miracles, but is not fully integrated into socio-political themes.⁴⁸ The foregoing studies are all important to this work, which seeks both to consolidate and progress current understanding.

In a reversal of the situation for the *miracula*, the monastery of Bobbio has been the subject of a number of dedicated studies in monographs, collections, conferences, and even a journal, *Archivum Bobiense*, whose founding editor, Michele Tosi, dedicated much of his career to the history of the monastery. Most recently, Michael Richter has dedicated a study to early-medieval Bobbio, which should be read in tandem with Eleonora Destefanis's work on the archaeological remains in the area. Like the majority of the bibliography, they celebrate the monastery's Lombard and Carolingian heyday in particular. Only Andrea Piazza's work is concerned with Bobbio's tenth- and eleventh-century experience, focusing on the relationship between the abbey and newly erected see from 1014.⁴⁹ Conques, on the other hand, has not benefited from a comprehensive study. Despite two thorough theses focussed on the monastery's documentary output, Frédéric de Gournay's monograph extends further than the institution itself, covering the whole of the county in which it lies, and touts a resolutely *mutationniste* structure and argument with the effect that the monastery is squeezed to the margins. Jacques Bousquet dedicates a chapter to Conques in his study of the Rouergue, which takes the form of a series of mini institutional case studies.⁵⁰ As a result, although the miracles of Sainte Foy have been well discussed in terms of 'feudal' debates, the monastery itself is yet to be similarly situated in the same manner, and the miracles have not been fully integrated into historiography as a production of the monastery. Fuller introductions to the

⁴⁸ ASWF.

⁴⁹ E. Destefanis, *Il monastero di Bobbio in età altomedievale*, Ricerche di archeologia altomedievale e medievale, 27 (Florence, 2002); E. Destefanis, *La diocesi di Piacenza e il monastero di Bobbio*, Corpus della scultura altomedievale, 18 (Spoleto, 2008) A. Piazza, *Monastero e vescovado di Bobbio (dalla fine del x agli inizi del xiii secolo): testi, studi, strumenti* (Spoleto, 1997). The classic monograph, still useful, is that of V. Polonio, *Il Monastero di San Colombano di Bobbio dalla fondazione all'epoca carolingia* (Genoa, 1962), also see *Bobbio, una città. Cronache, storie, leggende* (Piacenza, 1970) and A. Attolini, *Il monastero di San Colombano in Bobbio* (Modena, 2001), aimed at a broader audience.

⁵⁰ F. de Gournay, 'Etude du cartulaire de l'abbaye de Conques (actes postérieurs à 1030)' (unpublished Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 1988); 'Les documents écrits de l'abbaye de Conques (IXe-XIIIe s.)' (unpublished Diplôme d'études approfondies, Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 1992); *Le Rouergue au tourmant de l'an mil: de l'ordre carolingien à l'ordre féodal: IXe-XIIIe siècle* (Rodez, 2004); J. Bousquet, *Le Rouergue au premier moyen âge (vers 800-vers 1250)*, 2 vols. (Rodez, 1992), i, ch. iii.2. An extensive bibliography of works on the monastery and the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* is provided by its librarian, Pierre Lançon, at <http://www.tourisme-conques.fr/fr/histoire-patrimoine/bibliographie-historique/introduction.php> [accessed 2 March 2011].

histories of the monasteries and the sources they produced are found in Parts II and III. First, however, a framework must be established within which we can analyze the two.

2. 'FEUDALISM', 'MILLENNARIANISM' AND POST-CAROLINGIAN SOCIETY

Discussions on the socio-political landscape of the tenth or eleventh century must confront the issues raised by the separate, if overlapping, concepts of 'feudalism', 'feudal revolution' and millenarianism. Providing a synopsis of the well-known historiography of these concepts may seem superfluous, since ample summaries already exist. Yet it is important to anchor this research in these debates, and to explain the use and non-use of certain terms, particularly the avoidance of the terms 'feudal' or 'millennial' society. Avoidance of the former does not stem from a complete rejection of its utility, as demanded by Elizabeth Brown,⁵¹ since debates about feudalism as a supposed medieval 'institution' or form of social relations have and continue to provide indispensable, progressive studies for the period. Nevertheless, 'feudal' (and its derivatives) remains an unworkably ambiguous term. An anachronism before all else, it has been possible to speak of multiple 'feudal ages' and of 'feudalisms',⁵² and it has different implications for different countries and national historiographies (enjoying a particular castle-castellan dimension in France, a manor-based one in England, and a focus on bishops and the structure of Communes in Italy, for example). Even narrow applications of 'feudal' to individual elements – which persist in some quarters, despite the advice of Susan Reynolds⁵³ – are found wanting, since they tend to steam-roller the intricacies and flexibilities of such mechanisms: to speak of 'fidelity', for example, misleadingly homogenizes the nature of service or duty of lord-vassal relations, and downplays its negotiable nature.⁵⁴ Wider applications of the term to whole societies are similarly damaging.

A great weakness of traditional conceptualizations of 'feudalism' is their propensity to subvert the role of religious institutions and religious belief within political and social structures in

⁵¹ E. A. R. Brown, 'The tyranny of a construct: feudalism and historians of medieval Europe', *The American Historical Review*, 79:4 (1974), pp. 1063–1088.

⁵² M. Bloch, *La société féodale: la formation des liens de dépendance* (Paris, 1939), trans. by L. A. Manyon as *Feudal Society*, 2 vols, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1989); T. N. Bisson, 'The problem of feudal monarchy: Aragon, Catalonia, and France', *Speculum*, 53 (1978), pp. 460–478, at p. 461.

⁵³ S. Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994), p. 3.

⁵⁴ S. D. White, 'The politics of fidelity in early eleventh-century France: Fulbert of Chartres, William of Aquitaine, and Hugh of Lusignan', in *Rethinking Kinship and Feudalism*, ch. viii, pp. 1–9.

medieval Europe, at a time when their influence was, arguably, at its peak.⁵⁵ Whilst lordly qualities have been attributed to large, propertied ecclesiastical units and powerful ecclesiastics, especially bishops, allowing their integration into ‘feudal’ models, the tendency has been to prioritize secular relations in explanations of politics and society. This concern is not new – many historians have emphasized important horizontal ties and propounded a functionalist analysis, whilst continuing to embrace the term ‘feudalism’. The temporal and spiritual roles of an ecclesiastical entity have never sat comfortably in ‘feudal’ models, however, especially those focussing on hierarchical, vertical lines of power – despite the fact that these institutions and their inhabitants are the authors of much of our subject evidence. The intention here is to posit these religious institutions within contemporary systems, both to understand what those systems were (or purported to be) at a given time, and how their creation of documents sits with this and so affects our understanding. Viewing society and politics from a religious establishment’s perspective helps eradicate some assumptions and the focus on statist explanations, such as Barbara Rosenwein’s Cluny work has done for power relations in the Mâconnais.⁵⁶

Given these reservations, this study will not define a model ‘feudal’ society and then shore it up or knock it down with its case studies. It also avoids references to the ‘millennial’ period, even though this may be chronologically accurate, since this term now embodies a range of assumptions (‘terrors’, for example) that would require further clarification and exploration.⁵⁷ Instead I use ‘post-Carolingian society’; a term proposed by Dominique Barthélemy as an alternative term to ‘feudal society’ to ‘acknowledge the fact that society around the millennium was a development of that of the ninth century, that the ninth century was part of its genealogy, while the prefix ‘post’ allows for changes to take place’.⁵⁸ The alternative term ‘post-Carolingian’ implies something on which most historians can agree – that monarchies following the Carolingian period were, initially, less coherent and effective than their

⁵⁵ Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*. Susan Wood’s *The Proprietary Church* (Oxford, 2006) is the most comprehensive study of this, but on the whole is yet to be fully integrated in wider debates.

⁵⁶ B. H. Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of Saint Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049* (Ithaca, 1989), especially at p. 8: the region was ‘emphatically not’ a vertically-organized feudal society.

⁵⁷ For which see T. Head and R. A. Landes (eds.), *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response in France Around the Year 1000* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1992); R. Landes, A. Gow, and D. C. Van Meter (eds.), *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectations and Social Change, 950–1050* (New York, 2003), cf. the solid critique by Simon MacLean in his review article ‘Apocalypse and revolution: Europe around the year 1000’, *EME*, 15:1 (2007), pp. 86–106, especially at 96–105. Also see Frassetto, *The Year 1000* and the articles in the special issue ‘L’an mil en 2000’ of *Médiévales*, 37 (1999).

⁵⁸ *SKH*, p. 11.

predecessors. The term is also useful considering the subtleties its patronym now holds. Our understanding of Carolingian government, culture and society has grown to the extent that the term can be used without projecting too many assumptions. Amongst other things it allows for variation between different parts of the Empire and at different times in political strategy, cultural developments and relationships with the Church. In the feudal model, where so much emphasis is placed on the ‘private’ and the ‘personal’, related historiography has been surprisingly lacking in individualistic studies. This has not been an issue for the Carolingian era, where monarchical reigns have been usefully (and rightly) separated before analysis; unfortunately, similar in-depth studies are often lacking for monarchies in the post-Carolingian world.⁵⁹ The term reflects the shared heritage of the two areas under scrutiny in this study, as well as the limitation of the study’s scope.

3. HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE ‘FEUDAL REVOLUTION’

Although avoided, the value of the term ‘feudalism’ as an historiographical construct is not disregarded in this study – the ‘congenial tyrant’⁶⁰ has provoked so much deliberation that it has widened the horizons of historical enquiry and provided a wealth of valuable analytical categories, with accompanying historiographies, that can be usefully applied in studies of society and politics. Particularly fruitful here has been the controversial ‘feudal revolution’ (or ‘feudal transformation’, or ‘feudal crisis’) debate, which seeks both to explain the abrupt (or gradual?) ‘feudalization’ of European, particularly French, society in the tenth and eleventh centuries, or ‘around the year 1000’. The idea of ‘feudal revolution’, if not the precise terminology, has its roots in George Duby’s 1953 study of the Mâconnais.⁶¹ His model broadly proposed that between 980 and 1030 a collapse of royal authority brought changes in jurisdiction, with the withdrawal of castellans from comital courts and the transferral of juridical privileges into private hands; in taxation procedures, which were transferred from public to private hands (*exactiones* replaced by privately collected ‘customs’ (*consuetudines*),

⁵⁹ Of consequence to the present work is that neither Hugh of Arles nor Berengar (II) of Ivrea, both kings of Italy in the tenth century, is the subject of a dedicated study. Conversely their successors, the Ottonians, are well covered due to their dynastic significance. This historiographical focus implicitly infers the view that dynastic monarchies are more tangible than others. The same might be said for other title-bearing reigns such as those of bishops, counts and abbots.

⁶⁰ As described by Bisson, ‘The problem of feudal monarchy’, p. 461, responding to Elizabeth Brown.

⁶¹ G. Duby, *La société aux XIe et XIII siècles dans la région mâconnaise* (Paris, 1953). Duby’s thesis of abrupt change contrasts with the slower transition and chronology of Marc Bloch’s feudal ages, described in *Feudal Society*, especially from p. 60.

sometimes described as ‘bad’ or ‘unjust’); in rulership, which was dominated by banal lordship and extended to control over people rather than over land alone; and in diminished freedoms for peasants in landholding and work. Duby’s portrayal of rapid change was restated (if sometimes re-dated) and elements of it exaggerated in many subsequent studies, so that quickly a school of thought, referred to as *mutationnisme*, could be identified – notable members include Pierre Bonnassie, Jean-Pierre Poly, Eric Bournazel and Thomas Bisson, and their students.⁶² Transformationist discourse has been challenged on various fronts, instead emphasizing continuity. The *ajustementiste* approach, led by Dominique Barthélemy, has looked elsewhere to explain how medieval society regulated itself, producing anthropologically-inspired studies of normative cultural and legal processes.⁶³ Others have argued for the survival and extension of public military and judicial institutions,⁶⁴ although a more significant attack has been on the concept of the Carolingian age as a golden age of ‘public’ authority, asserting instead the interrelation of seigneurial and royal power,⁶⁵ and a

⁶² Important works from a long list include Pierre Bonnassie’s thèse d’État, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle: croissance et mutations d’une société*, 2 vols (Toulouse, 1975–1976), re-edited as *La Catalogne au tournant de l’an mil: croissance et mutations d’une société* (Paris, 1990); P. Bonnassie, *From Slavery to Feudalism in South-Western Europe*, trans. by J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1991); J.-P. Poly and E. Bournazel, *La mutation féodale, Xe-XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1991), translated by C. Higgitt as *The Feudal Transformation: 900-1200* (New York, 1991); G. Bois, *The Transformation of the Year 1000: the Village of Lournand from Antiquity to Feudalism*, trans. by J. Birrell (1992); T. N. Bisson, ‘The feudal revolution’, *P&P*, 142 (1994), pp. 6–42; T. N. Bisson, (ed.), *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia, 1995); T. N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government* (Princeton, 2009).

⁶³ D. Barthélemy, *La mutation de l’an mil, a-t-elle eu lieu?: Servage et chevalerie dans la France des Xe et XIe siècles* (Paris, 1997) recently translated and re-edited as *SKH*. Fredric Cheyette has made a similarly explicit renunciation of the ‘mutation féodale’, for example in F. L. Cheyette, ‘Some reflections on violence, reconciliation and the ‘feudal revolution’’, in W. Brown and P. Górecki, *Conflict in Medieval Europe: Changing Perspectives on Society and Culture* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 243–264 especially at p. 258; F. L. Cheyette, ‘George Duby’s *Mâconnais* after fifty years: reading it then and reading it now’, *JMH*, 28 (2002), pp. 291–317; F. L. Cheyette (ed.), *Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe: Selected Readings* (New York, 1968); S.D. White, *Feuding and Peace-Making in Eleventh-Century France* (Aldershot, 2005); S. D. White, *Re-thinking Kinship and Feudalism in Early Medieval Europe* (Aldershot, 2006). For a critique of the use of functionalist anthropology by medieval historians see P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual* (Princeton, 2001). At the same time German historians have studied other groups of (often elite) relationships, demonstrating mechanisms for creating and cementing personal relationships between groups of people as opposed to individuals: See the bibliography provided in Rosenwein, ‘Feudalism and its alternatives’, p. 113.

⁶⁴ E. Magnou-Nortier, *La société laïque et l’église dans la province ecclésiastique de Narbonne (zone cispyrénéenne) de la fin du VIIIe à la fin du XIe siècle* (Toulouse, 1974), on the connotation and extension of vigueries, for example, see pp. 183ff., challenged by C. Wickham, ‘La chute de Rome n’aura pas lieu’, *Le moyen âge*, 99 (1993), pp. 107–122.

⁶⁵ J. Nelson, review of Head and Landes, *Peace of God*, in *Speculum*, 69 (1994), pp. 167–169; D. Barthélemy, ‘The Year 1000 without abrupt or radical transformation’, in Little and Rosenwein, *Debating the Middle Ages*, p. 146; S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: Charles the Fat and the End of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 14. The public/private distinction has had particular ramifications for the debate around the operation of justice, on which see below.

similarly complex interplay continued in the subsequent period.⁶⁶ Warnings have been sounded, however, about making assumptions about the effects of political collapse, for example on economics, and others on the tendency of the debate to obscure other factors of historical enquiry.⁶⁷

In many ways then, the debate over 'feudal revolution' is now obsolete. Both the *mutationniste* or *ajustementiste* camps have found supporters, with regional and thematic studies providing support for all or parts of each. At the same time the debate has proved to be self-defeating since the effect of such regionally diverse conclusions has been to confirm the impracticality of applying either model across France, let alone Europe, and to add weight to the inadequacy of the term 'feudalism': neither of the societies under consideration here fit either ideal-type of *mutation* or *ajustement*. A dearth of scholarship on the tenth century with which to contrast helpfully the eleventh, particularly for France, is partly to blame for disagreement on continuity/change and has hindered the progression of the field of study.⁶⁸ More generally, the focus of the debate on central and southern France and Catalonia has left a disjointed historiography for the era, only rarely cross-fertilizing with studies on other European states,⁶⁹ although this may in fact be desirable since, as Chris Wickham has suggested, localization is the key trend 850–1100, and the significance of regional variations in the speed and manner of changes lies in the fundamentally local nature of the polities that developed.⁷⁰ The great value of the debate, however, has been to tighten methodologies and widen scopes, to divert our attentions back to the sources and their production, and to propose useful foci of enquiry. These include, but are not limited to: the nature and extent of 'public' institutions and authority, legal structures, lordship and castles, conflict and violence, fidelity, land 'ownership' and the status of peasants. At the very least, their multiplicity explains why it has been impossible for either side of the debate to triumph convincingly. Such divisions are somewhat

⁶⁶ G. T. Beech, 'The lord/dependant (vassal) relationship: a case study from Aquitaine c. 1030', *JMH*, 24 (1998), pp. 1–30, at p. 12.

⁶⁷ C. Wickham, 'Mutations et revolutions aux environs de l'an mil', *Médiévales*, 21 (1991), pp. 27–38, at pp. 34–36; P. Fouracre, 'Marmoutier and its serfs in the eleventh century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series, 15 (2005), pp. 29–49; MacLean, 'Apocalypse and revolution', pp. 93–95.

⁶⁸ MacLean, 'Apocalypse and Revolution', at pp. 9, 106.

⁶⁹ T. Reuter, 'The 'feudal revolution': iii', *P&P*, 155 (1997), pp. 177–195. The best point of convergence of Western European scholarship on feudal themes is still *Il Feudalesimo nell'Alto Medioevo*, Atti della Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, Spoleto, 8–12 April 1999 (Spoleto, 2000), although as the title suggests the focus is much wider than the 'feudal revolution' debate.

⁷⁰ C. Wickham, 'The 'feudal revolution': iv', *P&P*, 155 (1997), pp. 196–208, especially at p. 207; also D. Crouch, *Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France: 900–1300* (Harlow, 2005), p. 206.

arbitrary and certainly overlap and inter-relate. Yet their segregation permits the complex debates and methodologies of previous scholarship to be studied in more depth and may allow for a combination of elements from opposing paradigms to prove accurate for either of the examples herewith, avoiding assumptive conclusions about cause and effect. Although there is not the space for full syntheses here, an overview highlighting the key elements of each with relevant regional studies will provide the terms and structure by which the post-Carolingian societies around Bobbio and Conques can be practicably compared.

Justice and Dispute Settlement

Within the broad subject of legal structures and the practice of jurisdiction fall three distinct elements: the officials of justice (counts and their agents, *scabini*, legal professionals) and their institutions (*placitum*, *mallus*); the norms by which law was practiced; and the outcomes of legal systems. The broad *mutationniste* view sees the weakening and/or disappearance of the first; the informalization of the second, through shifts in proof-types used in disputes away from ‘formal’ written evidence to ‘less formal’ and ‘less rational’ witness testimony and ordeal proofs; and the increasing indecisiveness of the last, with private compromise settlements becoming more common (*convenientiae*).⁷¹ Regional studies have demonstrated the differing extents to which the highest juridical officials were able to retain control of justice,⁷² and a particularly persistent tradition of royal judges and notaries in Italy should be noted.⁷³ In line with general *ajustementiste* discontent with portrayals of ‘public’ Carolingian state structures, however, such a characterization has also been denied for its legal institutions. Particularly since the collective work of British historians on early medieval dispute settlement, the ‘public’ character of Frankish courts and its personnel can no longer be taken for granted.⁷⁴ The historiographical attack on Carolingian state structures as ‘public’, in jurisdiction at least, has been conclusive, and some would do away entirely with public/private distinctions as ‘inoperable modern

⁷¹ Bonnassie, ‘From the Rhône to Galicia: origins and modalities of the feudal order’, in *From Slavery to Feudalism*, pp. 104–131, esp. pp. 111–2, 118; Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle*, p. 562.

⁷² P. Geary, ‘Moral obligations and peer pressure: conflict resolution in the medieval aristocracy’, in C. Duhamel-Amado and G. Lobrichon, (eds.), *Georges Duby: L’écriture de l’histoire* (Brussels, 1996), pp. 217–222 at p. 218.

⁷³ F. Bougard, *La justice dans le royaume d’Italie de la fin du VIIIe siècle au début du XIe siècle* (Rome, 1995); C. M. Radding, ‘Legal theory and practice in eleventh-century Italy’, *Law and History Review*, 21 (2003), pp. 377–382.

⁷⁴ W. Davies, and P. Fouracre (eds.), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986); Cheyette, ‘Duby’s Mâconnais’, p. 310; J. Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks: Property, Proof and Dispute in Catalonia Around the Year 1000* (New York, 2004), pp. 220–222.

categories',⁷⁵ although the principle of the former may in fact have acted as an effective check on the latter.⁷⁶ Continuities have been emphasized in the use of Roman written law, either asserting its sustained use in the Carolingian period and beyond or denying its survival into the Carolingian period in the first place.⁷⁷ Jeffrey Bowman, working on Catalonian records like Bonnassie, contends that written law was 'always selective and frequently manipulative', and operated on 'the practical interdependence of different varieties' of proof.⁷⁸ Warnings have also been sounded against attempts to measure of the effectiveness of the legal system by their propensity to make a solid judgement, rather than negotiated compromise, which had long been and continued to be compatible with 'public' structures.⁷⁹ Dispute settlement in fact provided an arena for the creation of positive social ties,⁸⁰ and practices such as the liturgical *clamor*, aimed at God, as well as its secular juridical forms argue for a broader conceptualization of the maintenance of social order.⁸¹ We will see examples of both of these at Bobbio and Conques. Within these fluid judicial systems ecclesiastical establishments both partook and had a more active role to play, particularly as mediators, providing a useful juncture at which we can study at least one aspect of their role in society, politics and religion.

⁷⁵ D. Barthélemy, *La société dans le comté de Vendôme de l'an Mil au XIVe siècle* (Paris, 1993), p. 654. For other reservations with the public/private distinction see Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, p. 222, n. 31; A. J. Kostko, *Making Agreements in Medieval Catalonia: Power, Order, and the Written Word, 1000-1200* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 75. See also Patrick Geary's comments which do not dismiss concepts of public/private in dispute resolution models, but highlight nevertheless the centrality of moral obligations and peer persuasion in both: Geary, 'Moral obligations', pp. 217-22.

⁷⁶ Wickham, 'The 'feudal revolution': iv', pp. 203-205.

⁷⁷ Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, p. 76 and pp. 214-16; Barthélemy, 'Year 1000', p. 146. On some surviving forms and practices of Lombardo-Frankish law in Italy see Bougard, *La justice*. On the re-appearance of Roman law in twelfth-century Italy see C. Wickham, *Courts and Conflict in Twelfth-Century Tuscany* (Oxford, 2003).

⁷⁸ Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, pp. 214-217.

⁷⁹ Davies and Fouracre, 'Conclusion', in *Settlement of Disputes*, pp. 236-240; C. Wickham, 'Land disputes and their social framework in Lombard-Carolingian Italy, 700-900' in the same volume, p. 123, enhanced in its reprinted version in C. Wickham, *Land and Power: Studies in Italian and European Social History, 400-1200* (London, 1994), pp. 229-256 (this version cited hereon in); P. Geary, 'Extra-judicial means of conflict resolution', in *La giustizia nell'alto medioevo (secoli V-VIII)*, (Spoleto, 1995), pp. 569-601 and P. Geary, 'Living with conflicts in stateless France', in his *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1994), pp. 125-62; Kostko, *Making Agreements*, esp. chs. 1 and 3.

⁸⁰ F. L. Cheyette, 'Suum cuique tribuere', *French Historical Studies*, 6 (1970), pp. 287-299, at p. 291; S. D. White, 'Pactum legum vincit et amor iudicium: the settlement of disputes by compromise in eleventh-century Western France', *American Journal of Legal History*, 22 (1978), pp. 298-302. For another seminal study in this vein see W. I. Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland* (Chicago, 1990).

⁸¹ L. K. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions: Liturgical Cursing in Romanesque France* (Ithaca, 1993); R. E. Barton, 'Making a clamor to the Lord: noise, justice and power in eleventh- and twelfth-century France', in B. S. Tuten and T. L. Billado (eds.), *Feud, Violence and Practice: Essays in Medieval Studies in Honor of Stephen D. White* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 71-94.

Lords, Castles and *Milites*

Just as the officials of justice were said to lose their ‘public’ role in the ‘collapse’ model, so the same is argued for other secular powers. Evidently the subject of rule and rulership, touching on concepts of state, is a huge area – too huge for the current study to do full justice. It serves here simply to introduce those parts of the debate that relate most closely to the *mutationniste* model and its respondents. The particular question of castles and castellan lordship is fundamental to the ‘feudal revolution’ model of shifting power. Most historians agree that there was an increase in castles from the tenth century onwards, but alternative conclusions have been drawn about what this means, and how castles operated.⁸² The *mutationniste* perspective posits that the ‘castral revolution’ resulted in the reorganization of agrarian settlements (*castra*) over which the castle-holder assumed jurisdiction (*incastellamento*), independently of any higher authority and with the help of armed men.⁸³

Whilst we know very little of castellans in earlier periods by which to compare those of whom we hear more in the tenth and eleventh centuries,⁸⁴ it is evident that ‘private’ castles existed even during the supposedly ‘public’ Carolingian period.⁸⁵ As for castellan independence, the kings of Italy retained a licence system for erecting castles, and many continued to fulfil a ‘strategic’ function connected to a wider rationale of public service.⁸⁶ In some regions of France territorial princes gained more control over castle building after 1000,⁸⁷ including William V, count of Poitou, since the infamous *Conventum* with Hugh [IV] of Lusignan, demonstrates that in this part of Aquitaine at least the count was able to give or withhold

⁸² For a summary of some regional castral patterns see Poly and Bournazel, *Feudal Transformation*, pp. 26–28, and for the Midi B. Cursente, ‘Castra et castelnaux dans le midi de la France’, in *Châteaux et peuplement en Europe Occidentale du Xe au XVIIIe siècle* (Auch, 1980), pp. 31–55, at pp. 33, 39.

⁸³ Duby, *Mâconnaise*, p. 149; A. Debord, ‘The castellan revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine’, in Head and Landes, *Peace of God*, p. 146; A. Debord, *Aristocratie et pouvoir: le rôle du château dans la France médiévale*, ed. by A. Bazzana and J.-M. Poisson (Paris, 2000). P. Bonnassie, ‘Descriptions of fortresses in the Book of Miracles of Sainte-Foy of Conques’, in *From Slavery to Feudalism*, pp. 132–148, at pp. 145–146, P. Toubert in *Les structures du Latium médiéval: le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IXe siècle à la fin du XIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Rome, 1973), particularly ch. 4.

⁸⁴ Magnou-Nortier, *Société*, p. 247.

⁸⁵ Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, pp. 205–206.

⁸⁶ A. A. Settia, ‘Castelli e strade del Nord Italia in età comunale: sicurezza, popolamento, ‘strategia’’, in G. Sergi (ed.), *Luoghi di strada nel Medioevo: fra il Po, il mare e le Alpi Occidentali* (Turin, 1996), pp. 15–40, especially at p. 19; A. A. Settia, ‘L’incastellamento in Romagna-Montefeltro e le concordanze ‘padane’’, *Studi montefeltrani*, 29 (2007), pp. 7–18.

⁸⁷ A. Debord, *La société laïque dans les pays de la Charente: Xe-XIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1984); Cheyette, ‘Duby’s Mâconnaise’, p. 303; F. L. Cheyette, ‘The castles of the Trencavels: a preliminary aerial survey’, in W. C. Jordan et al. (eds.), *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Joseph R. Strayer* (Princeton, 1970), pp. 255–272.

permission for the building and possession of castles, and was able to demand their surrender.⁸⁸ These are not the only expressions of doubt about the independence of castellan lords – characteristically Dominique Barthélemy asserts them most explicitly and most wholly –⁸⁹ yet the initial impression given by the Miracles of Sainte Foy is of such a situation, which will be analyzed more closely. We cannot ignore the significance of castles to the rulership of great lords and their interplay with even their powerful dependents, since of all the ten assets that Hugh IV held or might have held of Count William in the *Conventum*, apparently only one was not a castle.⁹⁰ As we will see, at Conques it seems castles may have served more as political symbols rather than power centres in their own right, as Chris Wickham has described for the Casentino.⁹¹

From a *mutationniste* perspective the basis upon which castellan lordship operated was the appropriated powers of command and/or fine-levying, the initially royal prerogatives of the *bannum* (or *mandamentum*), often held in conjunction with the right of *destreit* or *districtus* (the right to apprehend and arrest): a process sometimes referred to as ‘the descent of the ban’.⁹² In short, banal seigneurie equated to lordship over people, rather than over land,⁹³ which became the basis of the new political order.⁹⁴ As we have seen, however, there are objections to the

⁸⁸ Beech, ‘Lord/dependant’, p. 20. The document is edited by Jane Martindale as ‘Conventum inter Willelmum Comitem Aquitanorum et Hugonem Chiliarchum’, *English Historical Review*, 84 (1969), pp. 528–548; reprinted with a new translation in her *Status, Authority and Regional Power: Aquitaine and France, Ninth to Twelfth Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997), ch. vii b, pp. 528–553; see also chs. vi and viii in the same volume. A more recent English translation made in 1988 by Susan Reynolds, Jane Martindale and Paul Hyams based on Martindale’s is published online at the Internet Medieval Sourcebook as ‘Agreement between Count William V of Aquitaine and Hugh IV of Lusignan’: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/agreement.html> [accessed 28 December 2010]. A further Latin edition along with French and English translations (providing the references for this study) are found in Beech, et al. (eds.), *Le ‘Conventum’*.

⁸⁹ SKH, p. 307. See also T. Evergates, ‘The feudal imaginary of Georges Duby’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 27 (1997), pp. 641–660 at p. 657 n. 42;

⁹⁰ Eight were explicitly castles and a further *honor* of Viscount Boso most likely included a fortress. The odd one out was described a *terram* – again, there is a chance that this may have included a castle: Beech, ‘Lord/dependant’, p. 19.

⁹¹ Here, ‘what mattered for the construction of local power remained what it had always been; the ownership or leasing of land’ – although he notes that elsewhere in eastern and central Tuscany *incastellamento* may have fulfilled a different role, one more akin to the *mutationniste* model: C. Wickham, *The Mountains and the City: the Tuscan Apennines in the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 291–292.

⁹² See the assumption of its unequivocal relationship expressed in Pierre Bonnassie’s phrase: ‘seigneurie châtelaine, donc seigneurie banale’: *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle*, p. 581.

⁹³ Rosenwein, ‘Feudalism and its alternatives’, in L. K. Little and B. H. Rosenwein (eds.) *Debating the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1988), p. 108.

⁹⁴ Bisson, ‘The feudal revolution’, p. 19; Bisson, *Crisis*, p. 47. From lordship and violence it is but a short jump to the question of those at the other end of the social spectrum, and the domain of studies on the free and unfree, on the transition (or otherwise) from one form of servility (slavery) to another (serfdom). Questions

this study prevents full engagement with these themes. It serves to note that here I will use ‘nobility’ only where it is consciously evoked by contemporaries, preferring ‘aristocracy’ to refer generally to the ruling elites, whatever their source of power or claim to authority.¹⁰⁰

Ecclesiastical lords deserve greater emphasis in this picture,¹⁰¹ and it is necessary to ask similar questions of the monasteries themselves, since they were large landowning lords in their own right. Barbara Rosenwein has already spoken in such terms for Cluny whereby a limited number of its land purchases were, ‘precisely, to create a banal territory’.¹⁰² Likewise, Bob Moore has pointed out the ‘unquestionable similarities between the saints and the qualities and powers of lordship’.¹⁰³ One of the important questions to ask is how our monasteries interacted with different types and aspects of lordship. The lines between fortresses and abbeys were not always clear cut – religious establishments in strategic locations had long held military roles, as we will see for Bobbio, and demonstrated more widely by Louis the Pious’s 819 memorandum which showed three tiers of obligations owed by abbeys – military services (*militia*) and gifts (*dona*); only gifts; and only prayers.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, castellans had traditionally been responsible for the protection of monasteries, but in some cases this became an exploitative and oppressive relationship – such as the actions of Hugh VI ‘the Devil’ of Lusignan who relentlessly pursued the lands of Saint-Maixent, on whose territory his ancestors had been

to family structure, modes of decent and inheritance of property and privileges, the use of surnames and interest in genealogy, claims to rule and so on. Such themes run through Duby’s work, but see in particular *Chivalrous Society*, pp. 59–81. Amongst many relevant developments see C. B. Bouchard, ‘Carolingian creation of the model of patrilineage’, in C. M. Chazelle and F. Lifshitz (eds.), *Paradigms and Methods in Early Medieval Studies* (New York, 2007), pp. 135–151; R. Le Jan, ‘Continuity and change in the tenth-century nobility’, in A. Duggan (ed.), *Nobles and Nobility in Medieval Europe: Concepts, Origins, Transformations* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 58 n. 25; P. A. Stafford, ‘La mutation familiale: a suitable case for caution’, in J. Hill and M. Swan (eds.), *The Community, the Family and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe* (Turnhout, 1998), pp. 103–125; R. E. Barton, ‘Aristocratic culture: kinship, chivalry, and court culture’, in C. Lansing and E. D. English (eds.), *A Companion to the Medieval World* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 500–524, at p. 500–504.

¹⁰⁰ Following D. Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000–1300* (London, 1992), pp. 2–9; Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Davies, ‘Lordship and community’, p. 32.

¹⁰² Rosenwein, *Neighbor*, p. 102.

¹⁰³ R. I. Moore, *The First European Revolution, c.970–1215: the Making of Europe* (Oxford, 2000), p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ Edition and discussion in É. Lesne, ‘Les ordonnances monastiques de Louis Le Pieux et la *Notitia de servitio monasteriorum*’, *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France*, 6:31–33 (1920), pp. 161–175, 321–338, and 449–493. Conques is listed in the third group of monasteries that owed prayers *pro salute imperatoris vel filiorum eius et stabilitate imperii*. Bobbio is not mentioned, but as Lesne points out, it is unlikely to be a comprehensive list (only one Italian abbey is mentioned and this was possibly interpolated later) and rather may reflect the reforming activities of Benedict of Aniane (pp. 471–472).

installed for its protection, before a new relationship of protection was re-established.¹⁰⁵ Here, castles cannot be dismissed as symbols of disorder, nor as the antithesis of ecclesiastical lordship. In fact many ecclesiastical lords, in Italy as in France, held and/or chose to add castles to their patrimonies. Closer analysis will be made of the relations of Bobbio and Conques to fortresses and secular lords, in order to better understand the modes and practicalities of lordship in their societies.

Conflict and Violence

The significance of violence and conflict in the feudal revolution debate should be unsurprising considering the centrality of ideas of public order and state. The pervasion of the Weberian definition of state as a monopoly on legitimate violence in modern-day thinking is opposed to a contested view of what violence might mean in a non-statist model of society.¹⁰⁶ Violence needs to be treated here as a discrete topic of study, since it is addressed within the feudal revolution debate in relation to both dispute processing and lordship – that is to say in both (overlapping) legal and political spheres – which have already been discussed.¹⁰⁷ It is worth analyzing separately, particularly because of a third way that it interacts with the themes of the feudal revolution debate: the use and significance of cultural manipulations of the concept of violence, often by the pens of ecclesiastical authors like our hagiographers. All three elements will be introduced briefly here.

In the *mutationniste* model, castle-based violence is held responsible for destroying public order. Here, the focus is on violence that we might call ‘vertical’, in the sense that it functions in the subjection of the less powerful by the more powerful leading to changes in peasant servility.¹⁰⁸ For Bisson violence underpinned a whole new form of ‘private’ lordship.¹⁰⁹ Whilst no one

¹⁰⁵ S. Painter, ‘The lords of Lusignan in the eleventh and twelfth centuries’, *Speculum*, 32 (1957), pp. 33-37; D. Callahan, ‘William the Great and the monasteries of Aquitaine’, *Studia monastica*, 19 (1977), p. 328.

¹⁰⁶ Max Weber’s concept was first expressed in his 1919 lecture ‘Politics as a vocation’, recently re-edited as M. Weber, *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. by D. S. Owen and T. B. Strong, trans. by R. Livingstone (Indianapolis, 2004).

¹⁰⁷ Two recent studies discuss violence and ‘feudal revolution’: the Festschrift to Stephen White ed. by Tuten and Billado, *Feud, Violence and Practice*; and W. C. Brown, *Violence in Medieval Europe* (Harlow, 2010).

¹⁰⁸ Bois, *Transformation*, pp. 150-152; Bonnassie, *La Catalogne au tournant de l’an mil*, pp. 304-305; Bonnassie, *From Slavery to Feudalism*, pp. 57-58.

¹⁰⁹ Bisson, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’’, pp. 14-16, 18, quote at p. 22. Such structural changes caused a qualitative shift in the experience of power: Bisson, *Crisis*, ch. 2, *passim*.

would try to deny violence ‘in and of itself’ for the period,¹¹⁰ claims that the frequency of violence increased have been dispatched by doubts that such a frequency can be quantified satisfactorily or meaningfully.¹¹¹ *Mutationniste* paradigms invoke, once again, oppositional concepts of public versus private and legitimate versus illegitimate and, again, the response has been to deny that these characterizations are accurate for the Carolingian period or the subsequent age, or indeed that the concepts are relevant at all. The loudest and most persistent counterarguments have condemned the application of modern views of violence, by those who see functional and normative roles for violence throughout the Central Middle Ages, and who deny, therefore, that violence in the post-Carolingian period was necessarily wrong, illegitimate, or criminal.¹¹² The legal-anthropological arguments made for the administration of justice are therefore equally applicable to interpretations of violence in dispute processing, in which it could be a normative legal act.¹¹³ *Ajustementistes* have also emphasized ‘horizontal’ violence, that is to say violence between members of the same caste, which was also (and perhaps even more) prevalent.¹¹⁴ In such cases the aim might be similarly to coerce and control, but just as important, and particularly evident in inter-aristocratic feuding, was the negotiation of relationships, and lay aristocrats by no means had a monopoly on violence. At Conques, as will be discussed, the monastery willingly negotiated with local lords on this plane.

Although historians disagree on its precise definition, they all tend to use the word ‘feud’ to mean a licit process – for John Hudson ‘feud can be said to be narrative, generally legitimizing narrative.’¹¹⁵ This idea of narrative is important for our miracle-stories: if violence could be spontaneous but legitimate, ritual and effective, it could also be stylized – even imagined – and

¹¹⁰ Barthélemy, ‘Year 1000’, p. 136.

¹¹¹ Brown, *Violence*, pp. 3–5.

¹¹² White, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: ii’, pp. 205–206; Reuter, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: iii’, p. 181; Davies and Fouracre, ‘Conclusion’, in *Settlement of Disputes*, pp. 234–235; Brown, *Violence*, p. 126.

¹¹³ Cheyette, ‘*Suum cuique tribuere*’, pp. 294–5; Reuter, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: iii’, p. 182; Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, p. 225.

¹¹⁴ W. I. Miller, ‘Feud, vengeance and the disputing process’, in *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking*, pp. 179–220, at p. 179; S. D. White, ‘Repenser la violence: de 2000 à 1000: l’an mil en 2000’, *Médiévales*, 37 (1999), pp. 99–113, at p. 103; White, *Feuding and Peace-Making*, *passim.*; P. Geary, ‘Living with conflicts’, pp. 125–62, at pp. 138–139; *SKH*, pp. 306–307.

¹¹⁵ S. D. White, ‘Feuding and peace-making in the Touraine around the year 1100’, in *Feuding and Peace-Making*, pp. 195–263 at p. 246 and *passim.*; J. G. H. Hudson, ‘Feud, vengeance and violence in England from the tenth to the twelfth centuries’, in Tuten and Billado, *Feud, Violence and Practice*, pp. 29–54, at p.33, see here also for definitions of feud. For related historiography on vengeance, see D. Barthélemy, F. Bougard and R. Le Jan (eds.), *La Vengeance, 400-1200* (Rome, 2006); S. A. Throop, and P. R. Hyams (eds.), *Vengeance in the Middle Ages: Emotion, Religion and Feud* (Farnham, 2010).

functional. As a result we are warned against taking claims of illegitimate violence and absent rulers at face value,¹¹⁶ and we would do well to remember the three actors in the ‘play’ of violence identified by Miller: the victim, the victimiser, and the observer.¹¹⁷ Legitimacy, of course, is in the eye of the beholder. Stephen White urges us to consider complaints of lay violence in the context of monastic rhetoric – since seigneurial violence is documented almost uniquely by monastic ‘victims’ – alongside ‘legitimate’ violence described by the same authors.¹¹⁸ Hagiography is particularly important here, since violence was met with counter violence and enemies were soundly beaten, often with the aid of saints.¹¹⁹ Ritual and symbolic monastic violence that threatened physical harm against its enemies is comparable to the violence of which they accused their lay enemies, thus it is difficult to distinguish ‘seigneurial violence’ from other forms, and impossible to single out castles as the centre of such. Laymen and clerics alike shared common attitudes towards violence, since as well as trumpeting their saints’ violent actions, monks and clergymen were known to accuse each other of similar depredations. White speaks of a ‘warring culture’ of monks parallel to that of nobles, which was not novel around the millennium, finding precursors in *clamores* developed from the early tenth century, and the genre of the punishment-miracle from even earlier.¹²⁰ That endemic violence was a characteristic of law and politics in all medieval society, lay or clerical, is generally accepted wherever one might stand on the feudal revolution question. Yet attitudes towards violence can clearly tell us something – the task here is to identify as far as possible what differing characterizations of violence signified for the societies that the monasteries existed in, and their negotiated place within them.

Fidelity and Relationships to Land

Georges Duby was less concerned with traditional ‘feudal’ relationships than one might

¹¹⁶ For violence as a rhetorical device in de-legitimizing the ‘Other’: W. I. Miller, ‘Getting a fix on violence’, in *Humiliation, and other Essays on Honour, Social Discomfort and Violence* (Ithaca, 1993), pp. 53–93, at p. 77, also in White, ‘Repenser la violence’ pp. 99–100; S. D. White, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: ii’, *P&P*, 152 (1996), pp. 205–223, at p. 206. Reuter, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: iii’, pp. 179–180;

¹¹⁷ Miller, ‘Getting a fix on violence’, p. 55.

¹¹⁸ White, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: ii’, p. 209, also pp. 212, 216–17. On the symbolic and ritual forms of monastic violence see White, ‘Repenser la violence’, pp. 106–7. Jeffrey Bowman calls Bishop Oliba of Vic, known for condemning lay violence, an ‘innovator’ in the protection of ecclesiastical possessions: Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, p. 223.

¹¹⁹ Rosenwein, *et al.*, ‘Monks and their enemies’, p. 766.

¹²⁰ White, ‘Repenser la violence’, p. 105, 111–112; White, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: ii’, pp. 211–12; see also Brown, *Violence*, pp. 108, 112, 125–126. Similar conclusions were reached by B. H. Rosenwein, ‘Feudal war and monastic peace: Cluniac liturgy as ritual aggression’, *Viator* 2 (1971), pp. 129–157, at p. 156.

presume, despite the sobriquet of *mutation féodale* model that is attributed to him. Duby denied that the fief ever ‘played more than a peripheral part in what is generally known as feudal society’, rejecting the emphasis placed on feudo-vassalic relations in the organization and government of society by legal historians like François-Louis Ganshof and others, instead seeing the distinction between free and non-free as the most fundamental social determinant in the tenth century.¹²¹ Nevertheless, many of those who followed in his wake did see the fief and vassal relations as fundamental and, here, the subject intersects with Italian scholarship on feudalism.¹²² Neither of our hagiographical texts use the terms ‘fief’ or ‘benefice’, although the word ‘vassal’ is mentioned once in the *Miracula sancti Columbani* – they thus avoid the confusion that can arise from the imprecision in the ways medieval authors used certain terms, and the temptation to read too much into their use.¹²³ A once rigid understanding of the bonds that tied a *fidelis* to his lord has now been superseded by an appreciation of the multiplicity of contracts and, more generally, an acceptance of the fluid, flexible, negotiated and reciprocal nature of such contracts.¹²⁴

We are better off, therefore, to follow Fredric Cheyette’s conceptualization of a more fluid ‘culture of fidelity’ in a society ‘knitted together’ by gift, companionship, service and protection; a society that was ‘oath-taking’ as opposed to ‘feudal’.¹²⁵ This approach is certainly more useful for the present study, since attention to fidelity and vassalage has had a propensity to focus on the role of these relationships in the structuring of secular society, despite the shared religious values on which oaths depended. Religious institutions (not including

¹²¹ G. Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. by A. Goldhammer (Chicago, 1982), p. 154; Duby, *Mâconnais*, p. 118.

¹²² Shaped by the seminal works of Giovanni Tabacco, Giuseppe Sergi and Cinzio Violante. Select examples of include G. Tabacco, ‘Il feudalesimo’, in L. Firpo (ed.), *Storia delle idee politiche, economiche e sociali*, II (Turin, 1983), pp. 55–115; G. Tabacco, *Profilo di storia del medioevo latino-germanico* (Turin, 1996), esp. chs. 4 and 6; for a summary of the development of his attitudes and further references see P. Cammarosano, ‘Giovanni Tabacco, la signoria e il feudalesimo’, in *Giovanni Tabacco e l’esegesi del passato* (Turin, 2006), pp. 37–46; G. Sergi, ‘Lo sviluppo signorile e l’inquadramento feudale’, in N. Tranfaglia and M. Firpo (eds.), *La Storia. I grandi problemi dal Medioevo all’età contemporanea*, vol. II: *Il Medioevo. Popoli e strutture politiche* (Turin, 1986), pp. 369–393; for Violante, *La società milanese*.

¹²³ MSC, xxii; warning in Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, esp ch. 2 (on vassals) and ch. 3 (on fiefs).

¹²⁴ Much of the scholarship on this subject has revolved around the *Conventum* since its narrative allows more detailed access than normal to the lived practices of such relationships: Beech, ‘Lord/dependant’, pp. 22–24, 28; White, ‘The politics of fidelity’; F. Behrends, ‘Kingship and feudalism’, *Medieval Studies*, 25 (1963), pp. 93–99, at p. 99.

¹²⁵ Cheyette, ‘Duby’s Mâconnais’, p. 310 and *passim*.; Cheyette, ‘Some reflections’, p. 259. Magnou-Nortier makes a parallel point in claiming that strategies of fidelity could support familial politics, but could never become a ‘politic’ in itself, in her ‘Fidélité et féodalité méridionales d’après les serments de fidélité (Xe-début XIIIe siècle’, *AM*, 80 (1968), p. 475.

bishops)¹²⁶ have never sat very comfortably in the simplified model of society based around lord/dependant relationships, yet they participated centrally in the society in which the ‘culture of fidelity’ reigned, and the relics they held formed the basis on which such contracts were solemnized. Perhaps religious institutions have been neglected because of the tricky overlap between the individual, man-to-man character of traditionally conceived feudo-vassalic contracts, and the community aspect of the wider institution. As H  l  ne D  bax has noted for the south of France, the personal seigneurial rights that came with a bishopric put them squarely in the feudo-vassalic sphere, but become more difficult to explain with collective institutions like cathedral chapters that, nevertheless, demonstrated seigneurial characteristics.¹²⁷ This is a fundamental point, and applies just as much to monastic institutions, whose abbots in this period often had obligations outside the cloister. Whilst the land attached to individual religious offices might be given *in beneficio* and perhaps also the rights that came with the title, tensions could and did arise from the dual status of an individual beneficiary and the abbatial role, and the ramifications for the institution as a whole could be ruinous, as we shall see at Bobbio. If nothing else, this tension demonstrates that even if there were a ‘system’ of contractual feudo-social relations that was understood by the parties involved at any given time, this could contradict with other social systems in play (of favour, gift-giving, honour, deserved office, and so on), and, over time and in the context of shifting power relations, could be subject to manipulation and change. The interplay of relations between sovereign and monastery are a particularly important aspect of the Bobbio miracles; their development and negotiation is discussed in Chapter 8.

The fact that the transmission of gifts of property and/or titles sometimes (but not always) underlay relations of fidelity,¹²⁸ brings us to the tenureship of land in a wider sense. There are inherent difficulties in establishing the nature of landholding within the sources themselves,

¹²⁶ See for example: C. Violante, ‘Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche nell’Italia centro-settentrionale durante il Medioevo: province, diocesi, sedi vescovili’, in G. Rossetti (ed.), *Forme di potere e struttura sociale In Italia nel Medioevo*, (Bologna, 1977), pp. 113–148; F. Menant, *Campagnes lombardes du moyen age* (Rome, 1993), pp. 580–583; 601–664. In describing the ‘feudalization’ of the clergy in general, Carlo Mor only provides episcopal examples: C. G. Mor, ‘La chiesa e la societ   feudale’, in *Problemi di storia della chiesa: l’alto medioevo* (Milan, 1973), pp. 47–57.

¹²⁷ H. D  bax, ‘Une f  odalit   qui sent l’encre’: typologie des actes f  odaux dans le Languedoc des XIe–XIIe si  cles’, in J.-F. Nieuws (ed.), *Le vassal, le fief et l’  crit. Pratiques d’  criture et enjeux documentaires* (Turnhout, 2008), p. 41.

¹²⁸ As the *Conventum* shows, for example: Beech, ‘Lord/dependant’, p. 23.

since charters are more concerned with the transmission of tenure than its definition,¹²⁹ and even the seemingly more promising *Conventum*, through its concern with relationships of dependency, neglects other forms of landholding like the traditionally-conceived allod.¹³⁰ In any case, tenurial vocabulary and dependent relationships do not necessarily go hand in hand,¹³¹ and there are, as ever, rather different experiences and usages of such terms in different regions and time periods. For southern France, where the term *feo* or *feodum* is relatively rare before the late twelfth century, it is generally held that the ‘fief’ constituted rights to collect taxes and dues on land rather than to direct production; neither was it always held in return for military service nor restricted to the aristocracy and/or *milites*. The giving and receiving of fiefs between equals was intended to form alliances, and the lord/subject relationship may have been restricted simply to the fief itself, rather than implying any wider hierarchy of social structure. The classic ‘northern French-style’ fief was only introduced to the south as a result of the Albigensian crusade.¹³² Likewise in northern Italy *feo/feodum* were rare until the twelfth century and, for Giovanni Tabacco, one can only speak of fiefs ‘true and proper’ from the age of the Communes and beyond, drawing a distinction between the public and jurisdictional nature of previous benefices and the political, legal and hereditary character of the fief held by the later *feudatori*.¹³³ Generally speaking, whilst traditional historiography cites a move from lands held by gift or favour to those with contractual obligations, it seems the elements of reciprocity in the former remained in the latter, most evidently in the ‘transition’ from the use of ‘benefice’ to ‘fief’.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ R. Balzaretto, ‘Land tenure and inheritance’, in C. Kleinhenz (ed.), *Medieval Italy: an encyclopaedia* (London, 2004), pp. 599–601, at p. 600.

¹³⁰ Beech, ‘Lord/dependant’, pp. 19–22.

¹³¹ Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*. In her wake, amongst others, see Barthélemy, ‘Year 1000’, pp. 139–145; Barton, *Lordship*, pp. 200–208. On benefices in particular see P. Fouracre, ‘The use of the term *beneficium* in Frankish sources: a society based on favours?’, in W. Davies and P. Fouracre (eds.), *The Languages of Gift in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 62–88.

¹³² P. Bonnassie, ‘Introduction’ in his edition, *Fiefs et féodalité dans l’Europe méridionale (Italie, France du Midi, Péninsule Ibériques) du Xe au XIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, 2002), p. 13; Elisabeth Magnou-Nortier’s article in the same collection, ‘La ‘féodalité’ méridionale a-t-elle existé? Réflexions sur quelques sources des Xe, XIe et XIIIe siècles’, pp. 167–201; and further references in L. Verdon, *La terre et les hommes en Roussillon aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Aix-en-Provence, 2001), p. 8; C. Taylor, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition in Medieval Quercy* (Woodbridge, 2011).

¹³³ Tabacco, *Profilo di storia*, pp. 53–54. Carlo Mor prefers to characterize the two periods differently: ‘un momento immunitario, che può diventare feudale ... e di uno vero e proprio feudale’ which was already in place before the mid-ninth century: Mor, ‘La chiesa e la società feudale’, p. 48.

¹³⁴ On which see P. Fouracre, ‘*Beneficium*’, pp. 79–82. See also S. D. White, ‘The politics of exchange: gifts, fiefs, and feudalism’, in Cohen and De Jong (eds.), *Medieval Transformations*, pp. 169–188.

For the present study, we will focus on the range of tenures that affected our monasteries and the people that held them. Here, the interest comes both with the manner of land- and office-holding by and of the monasteries and their abbots; that is to say the status of the monastery and its titular head as a 'possession', and the manner in which both of these operated 'their' land. Both, of course, have ramifications for lordship in a wider sense. Mindful of the inherent hazards, such issues deserve attention since land-holding underlies almost all of the debates at hand and was a particular concern for both of our monastic institutions, as reflected more or less explicitly in the documents they produced.

'Royal' monasteries and land tenures

Questions about monasteries and landholding fall under the huge subject of the proprietary church that has been extensively treated by Susan Wood, whilst issues of particular importance to the present study fall into two main categories. The first incorporates all the tenurial-type bonds to which the abbot and institution might be subject, and the consequences for the manner in which land could be used and/or disposed of. Related, but not quite the same, are concerns surrounding the status of other land that the monastery held, particularly that which was donated. Whilst both relate to the patronage and lordship of monasteries in a wider sense, they have distinct political ramifications, and each affects our two case studies in different measure - the first caused more headaches for Bobbio, the latter was more problematic for Conques - specificities that are as much related to the earlier histories of each institution as to local affairs in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and we will look closer at each in due course. For now, the parameters of these issues must be set, which involves looking back further than our period to the very beginnings of each institution.

Bobbio and Conques were founded by holy men but with the early support of generous royal grants of fiscal land, carrying both towards the somewhat unhelpful arena of 'royal monasteries'. It is a term which is inconsistently applied to various conditions, including those institutions founded on royal patrimony, or on fiscal land supported by royalty, or those in receipt of royal or imperial protection and/or defence, or owing *servitium regis* in some form. It may or may not imply aggregation to a wider policy, such as *Klosterpolitik*. The nature of monastic and abbatial landholding from royalty is hard to pin down even from the earliest days,

with charters of foundation (particularly those in Lombard Italy) often unclear as to the status of the land that was granted to nascent institutions.¹³⁵ Historians are generally in agreement that initial land grants were to be retained by these monasteries forever: thus implying alienation of the land and of all economic rights to it.¹³⁶ But with this alienation, not all ties were severed – there was still profit to be drawn and a reciprocal relationship remained in play – since these grants stood fully in a cultural system of gift exchange.¹³⁷ Confirmations and additions were made of grants at every change of king or abbot, giving the impression of the renewal of personal contracts, and through the giving and receiving of grants, the status of the monastery as an independent or dependent entity was blurred.

If founding (and subsequent) fiscal land grants did not give a king proprietary right over monasteries, they more and more came to be treated as subjects of royal lordship nevertheless, with many monarchs from Charlemagne onwards disposing of abbacies as benefices, or expecting that elected abbots would be *fideles*. This encroachment of lordship, says Susan Wood, came about as a result of the growing use of great churches as royal *beneficia*, rather than because of a *dominium* based on the (ex-)fiscal lands upon which the monastery stood.¹³⁸ The position of our abbeys and their abbots vis-à-vis the Crown (and the reverse) was therefore customary, rather than built on any invested tenurial right extending back to their foundation and their lands, and was thus particularly prone to change over time. The practice of repeatedly bestowing an abbacy reinforced the king's 'right' to do this and if, as sometimes – including at Bobbio in the ninth and tenth centuries – the king was able to maintain and normalize control over an abbacy, he effectively brought alienated fiscal land back into the fisc.

¹³⁵ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 167. Even royal foundations could be 'private', for example if established on 'allodial' land, thus the distinction is important to draw. For the Carolingian fisc as an institutional patrimony see J. Barbier, 'Du patrimoine fiscal au patrimoine ecclésiastique. Les largesses royales aux églises au nord de la Loire (milieu du VIII^e siècle – fin du Xe siècle)', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome: Moyen-Age*, 111 (1999), pp. 577–605, esp. p. 578. On the distinction of ducal and 'public' land in southern Italy see M. Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy: Local Society, Italian Politics and the Abbey of Farfa, c.700-900* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 91–99.

¹³⁶ Part of a larger fiscal policy sometimes perceived to have been behind royal decline: J. Martindale, 'The Kingdom of Aquitaine and the 'dissolution of the Carolingian fisc'', *Francia*, 11 (1983), pp. 131–192. Grants in 'toute propriété' were the norm if not the only manner of royal donations to churches: Barbier, 'Patrimoine fiscal', pp. 580–588.

¹³⁷ See most recently W. Davies, and P. Fouracre (eds.), *The Languages of Gift in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2010).

¹³⁸ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 211–216, quote at p. 215. On commendatory and benefice abbacies in general, including rites of investiture, see A. Dumas, 'La notion de la propriété ecclésiastique du IX^e au XI^e siècle', *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France*, 26 (1940), pp. 14–34 at pp. 32–33, although there is no documentary evidence for such rituals for the abbots of Bobbio and Conques.

Drawing on the discourse of a duty to protect the Church, rulers attempted to exert their authority over religious houses in other ways too. Susan Wood defines the ‘royal monasteries’ of the eighth and ninth centuries as falling under a ‘protective control’ more akin to outside lordship: a condition more specific and ‘proprietary’ than general royal authority, yet not ‘ownership’ in its fullest sense.¹³⁹ This ‘protective control’ came in various forms of privileges – defence, protection (*tutela, munderburdium*), immunity (*immunitas, emunitas*) – each bringing benefits but also requiring concessions. Monasteries often welcomed such privileges as beneficial, despite the fact that, in a circular manner, the bestowing and receiving of such privileges confirmed the authority of the king over the institution.¹⁴⁰ The significance of each of such privileges occupy whole studies, but it is worthwhile acknowledging briefly that the defence and protection of Carolingian kings, and sometimes their predecessors, are generally considered to be symptoms of outside lordship, whereas exemption and, especially, immunity are considered as confirmations of lordship and jurisdictional rights of the abbot and/or monastery itself. Immunity, which in theory freed the immunist from the taxes and jurisdictions of public officials, could also include positive concessions of jurisdictions (of *districtus* or *bannus*) and are therefore considered by some to have been the basis for later banal lordships. Yet the situation was not clear-cut, and it is important not to over-estimate the importance of immunity for public and private power.¹⁴¹ At the very least, the content of privileges was not standard and could be ambiguous,¹⁴² which explains why privileges are better studied in the context of each monastery, where the significance of the status of the monastery and its abbot in relation to the kings (and other privilege-bestowing authorities like the popes) can be properly explored, particularly in their consequences for landholding and lordship.¹⁴³

Despite the fact that monastic land seemed to preserve its ex-fiscal nature initially, there were

¹³⁹ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 218–219.

¹⁴⁰ For Carlo Mor, accepting large royal grants and immunity meant also accepting the underlying ‘patrimoniaity’ of the royal fisc, including that grants were retractable. He gives an example of a *villa* that was transferred from Bobbio to Oberto, marquis of Liguria: Mor, ‘La chiesa e la società feudale’, p. 55; C. G. Mor, ‘La fondazione di Bobbio nel quadro del diritto pubblico ed ecclesiastico longobardo’, in *San Colombano e la sua opera in Italia* (Bobbio, 1953), pp. 73–83, at p. 82.

¹⁴¹ Davies and Fouracre, *Property and Power*, pp. 12–15, esp. p. 15.

¹⁴² B. H. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint, and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1999), esp. the developments described in ch. 7; Mor, ‘La chiesa e la società feudale’, p. 52; Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 251–255.

¹⁴³ Mor, ‘La chiesa e la società feudale’, p. 55.

those monasteries that soon explicitly owed *servitium regis*; the closest suggestion (in terminology, at least) of a monastery as a tenorial subject. For Bernhardt, service was owed to the king in return for his protection and royal immunity.¹⁴⁴ The evidence for Conques does not clarify whether land donations also played a role since its earliest extant royal charter, from Louis the Pious, granted lands and bestowed immunity-protection privileges all at the same time, and likely came three months after this same king's *Notitia de servitio monasteriorum* in which Conques features as owing prayers.¹⁴⁵ The latter document is frustrating in its incompleteness, particularly in its geographic limitations (excluding Italy, for example), but also because it does not make it clear what precedent qualified a monastery's obligation for a particular type of service.¹⁴⁶ In many cases this document is the only indication we have of an 'official' expectation of services to the king: Conques' obligation of prayers for the kingdom is not replicated or alluded to by any other source. Beyond this, financial or material services such as supplies of goods were rare in the ninth century and, where they did occur, not as onerous as for the royal estates, falling 'somewhere in the area of gift-giving, hospitality or the primitive duty of feeding a king': such monastic lands were indeed no longer 'fiscal' and these were not tenorial services.¹⁴⁷ Later, in the Ottonian empire, the *servitia* owed by certain abbots and bishops would form a significant part of the king's income, but these were services specifically attached to the individual men bestowed with these titles and not to the monastery as a whole as under Louis the Pious.¹⁴⁸ Bernhardt believes there had always been, even before land divisions, a separation of services between those spiritual obligations to be fulfilled by the congregation and those material and secular services owed by the abbot and drawn from his land.¹⁴⁹ Yet it is interesting that the wording on the two lists obscures this, since Louis the Pious's speaks of *monasteria* (even under military services owed) and Otto II's of *abbates*.

There existed other non-formal forms of service that also implied duty from the whole institution. Whereas Bobbio seems to elude most 'subject' responsibilities in the Lombard period (receiving its lands in perpetuity, retaining its right to abbatial election, etc.), it was

¹⁴⁴ W. Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis and monastic property in early medieval Germany', *Viator*, 18 (1987), pp. 53-88, at p. 54, on services more generally pp. 54-55; 82-86.

¹⁴⁵ *Conques*, n. 480 (819, 8 April).

¹⁴⁶ See n. 104.

¹⁴⁷ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, quote at p. 259; R. Morris, 'The problems of property', in T. F. X. Noble and J. M. H. Smith (eds.), *Early Medieval Christianities, c. 600-c. 1100: The Cambridge History of Christianity*, iii (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 327-344 at p. 341.

¹⁴⁸ For example Otto II's index of troops owed (981/982), edited as *MGH Const.*, no. 436, pp. 632-633.

¹⁴⁹ Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis', pp. 55, 86.

nonetheless also in the service of the Lombard kings in ways that we cannot perceive precisely. It is likely Bobbio's foundation owed much to a political strategy that aimed at securing the main axes of communication in the *regnum Italicum*.¹⁵⁰ How the monastery itself was to fulfil its role (of defence? communication?) remains obscure; but its role in Agilulf's 'road politics' implies that it remained useful to the Lombard kings, even if proprietary rights over its land had been surrendered.¹⁵¹ The waters are further muddied by the prevalent idea that, joined in mutual desire to safeguard God's kingdom on earth, the king or emperor had a duty to protect the Church, in return for which the Church served the sovereign and his kingdom or empire. Such a concept was constantly reinforced, explicitly in royal foundation charters in clauses that stipulated prayers 'for the salvation and stability of our kingdom';¹⁵² and was echoed in the language of Louis the Pious's memorandum of services owed, where prayers were 'for the welfare of the emperor and his sons and for the stability of the empire'.¹⁵³ Arguably then, 'royal' monasteries played both a 'private' and 'public' role that were not founded upon their landholding but rather on a higher ideology that put them generally in the service of the king and the kingdom, a service that was more or less burdensome depending on royal policy and the efficacy and will of royal lordship.

Monasteries with royal origins or early histories therefore could find themselves locked into reciprocal relationships that, however closely they might sometimes resemble lord/dependent relationships, nevertheless evade straightforward categorisation by standard 'feudal' terminology. It may once again be better to see Cheyette's 'culture of fidelity' in play: society was built on such reciprocal relationships which involved obligations and commitment, but the terms of these were neither formalized nor consistent, and it was up to those on both sides to make what they could of a situation. The result is a changing discourse over time about the obligations and rights of each party. At Bobbio, as will be argued in Chapter 8, it was in the context of negotiation with the sovereign that the *miracula* played a major part. On the other hand, when either or both parties lost the will or the ability to keep the dialogue going (either by failure to donate lands, bestow privileges, or to ask for the confirmation of previous grants), such as seems to have happened at Conques from the tenth century, it could dissolve. This

¹⁵⁰ See ch. 7.

¹⁵¹ For other ways monasteries that could be useful to kings see Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 269.

¹⁵² *Pro salute et stabilitate regni nostri*, as in King Agilulf's grant to Columbanus (613), repeated in King Adaloald's confirmation to Abbot Bertulfus (625-6): *CDSCB*, i, docs. iii, ix.

¹⁵³ *Pro salute imperatoris imperii, vel filiorum ejus et stabilitate*: Lesne, 'Ordannances', p. 491. For these and further reasons for royal donations to churches, see Barbier, 'Patrimoine fiscal', pp. 595-604.

opened up a vacuum in lordship that provided opportunities for other laymen and the institution itself, as Chapter 14 discusses. For both our monasteries, the tenth century proved to be key for outside lordship, by which the trajectory of the later histories of each institution were fundamentally influenced.

Monasteries and donated land

Whilst royal grants were often significant for the operation of a monastery's patrimony, donations also arrived from other quarters to enhance it, with a notable upturn in generosity of this sort towards the end of the tenth century in Spain, southern France and Italy.¹⁵⁴ Individual donations were no more straightforward than royal ones, however, and were likewise accompanied by dilemmas over proprietary status. They were particularly susceptible to becoming objects of disagreement between the heirs and other family of the donor and the clerical donees, despite numerous laws and clauses that insisted on a donation or grant as alienated and irrevocable, in favour of the ecclesiastical recipients.¹⁵⁵ The cause of such disagreements was fundamentally linked to the underlying motivations and notions of donation, which constituted much more than a one-off 'payment' and, again, fitted into wider complex gift-giving systems. From a donor's perspective there might be many reasons to bestow gifts to a church, theories of which Marios Costambeys explains in Weber's 'persuasive' (acquisition of supernatural power) and 'productive' (for material political power) terms, noting that in fact the modes are compatible, since the counter-gifts expected from church recipients were often expected in all of these forms; the key point in all this being that to give and receive land was to construct a social relationship.¹⁵⁶ Why, then, were donations seemingly so often challenged? Stephen White has shown how there were multiple customs or norms as well as less-than-clear legal rules attached to donated land in Western France, and that there might be a variety of reasons for and outcomes to a challenge, which were often resolved by

¹⁵⁴ D. Herlihy, 'Church property on the European continent, 701-1200', *Speculum*, 36 (1961), pp. 81-105, at p.96.

¹⁵⁵ For examples in Lombard law, see R. Balzaretto, 'Monasteries, towns and the countryside: reciprocal relationships in the archdiocese of Milan, 614-814', in G. P. Brogiolo, N. Gauthier and N. Christie (eds.), *Towns and Their Territories Between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 235-258 at pp. 249-250; see also Fouracre, 'Beneficium', p. 65.

¹⁵⁶ Costambeys, *Farfa*, pp. 49-51 with references including, most famously, Rosenwein, *Neighbor, passim*. but esp. p. 143 on multiple motivations, as in B. H. Rosenwein, 'Property transfers and the Church, eighth to eleventh centuries: an overview', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome: Moyen-Age*, 111 (1999), pp. 563-575, at pp. 570-572.

compromise.¹⁵⁷ Thus a family member might challenge a donation or claim a previously gifted piece of land if it felt it would benefit from the disputation, but this gain may not always have been simply to 'recover' land. Challenges and re-confirmations were part of a continuing dialogue that was one way of reminding both parties of their involvement in the relationship, and the obligations that were expected on each side; a challenge might launch a family member into a network of relationships that they had not previously had access to. It was in ecclesiastical interests to entertain such challenges (if also to endeavour to win them), since 'in order to be preserved, ownership had to be seen as being preserved.'¹⁵⁸

Nevertheless, it is likely that some challenges to earlier donations were a reaction to a real shift in the way that ecclesiastics chose to perceive and hold their land between the ninth and eleventh centuries. There is evidence that land consolidation and the formalization of lordship was a particular concern of monasteries between the ninth and eleventh centuries.¹⁵⁹ Barbara Rosenwein found that Cluny's campaign of land-consolidation was already over by 994 when, at the Council of Anse, it declared some of its property inviolable – symptomatic of a shift away from social ideas about property that would be normalized, with the permanent alienation of donated land, by the second half of the eleventh century. Cluny's few purchases of land (only six percent of its property transactions, and all before 1049) were 'precisely, to create a banal territory and to cement social bonds at the same time', and as land came to characterise seigneurie and family inheritance, it lost its role in social bonding.¹⁶⁰ No longer were the same pieces of land given over and over again to a monastery by the same family, in a similar ritual to the re-confirmation of royal privileges: now monks began to insist that these donations involved permanency and alienation of the land from family interests. Tensions arose from these changing attitudes of recipients towards donations, especially since the reduction of the social significance of land was related to the simultaneous growth in interest in the agricultural exploitation of land, as well as the financial opportunities of lordship over

¹⁵⁷ White 'Pactum', esp. pp. 299–307; S. D. White, *Custom, Kinship, and Gifts to Saints: The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050–1150* (Chapel Hill, 1988).

¹⁵⁸ B. Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic sources and medieval documentary practices: an essay in interpretative methodology', in J. van Engen (ed.), *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies* (Notre Dame, 1994), pp. 313–343, at p. 323.

¹⁵⁹ Herlihy, 'Church property', pp. 94–95 for reorganization of land to overcome agricultural inefficiency.

¹⁶⁰ Rosenwein, *Neighbor*, pp. 87–94, 100–102; 142, 203–206, quote at p. 102. Harder to measure is how far changing ecclesiastical attitudes to land were influenced by lay practices, or themselves led the changes: Stafford, 'Mutation familiale', p. 113.

people.¹⁶¹ Within this new model, efforts were redoubled to secure the permanence of land donations since asserting a proprietary right over land was key to exploiting the resources (and people) on it.

Keen to render gifted lands irrevocable, but mindful of maintaining social equilibrium, the church used various means to sweeten the pill for the families of donors. One of these strategies was to re-grant donated land back to a recipient from the donor's family to be held for life *in precaria* or usufruct, in return for nominal rent. This both formalized the church's proprietary rights over the land and further cemented relationships with local families.¹⁶² Whilst the gifting of land to a religious institution or, best, using it to found a new one, had always brought considerable prestige to a donor or family, the development of this concept to prioritize the gifting of land permanently was neither organic nor passive, but rather meticulously cultivated by tenth- and eleventh-century 'reformers' and published through channels like the Peace of God and – notably – hagiography. Likewise those who were greedy and claimed lands 'unjustly' (sometimes expressed in terms of 'ravaging', 'usurping', 'plundering' or 'pillaging') would be punished; land alienation was better than land plunder, laymen were told.¹⁶³ Conversely, as Susan Wood explains, permanent gifting could bring moral prestige: whilst a lord might enjoy the benefits of his lay abbacy, 'if he pulled out of this he made himself a greater man', as did Hugh of Castelnau in granting the abbey of Beaulieu to Cluny. As Cluniac sources underline, it was a 'prince-like action'.¹⁶⁴ We must read monastic sources bearing in mind that they were often driven by an aspiration for autonomy, the campaign for which could equate to monastic 'reform'.¹⁶⁵ We turn to these wider questions now.

¹⁶¹ R. I. Moore, 'Property, marriage, and the eleventh-century revolution: a context for early medieval communism', in ed. M. Frassetto, *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform* (London, 1998), p. 188.

¹⁶² Morris, 'The problems of property', p. 339, citing evidence from Cluny and Gorze.

¹⁶³ G. Mollat, 'La restitution des églises privées au patrimoine ecclésiastique en France du IXe au XIe siècle', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 27 (1949), pp. 399–423, at pp. 419–420; Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic sources', p. 326.

¹⁶⁴ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 324 and n. 99.

¹⁶⁵ Stafford, 'Mutation familiale', p. 110; citing P. J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994), chp. 2.

4. HAGIOGRAPHY AND THE *MUTATION DOCUMENTAIRE*

Despite the vehement arguments for feudal mutation, recognition of revolutionary change by contemporaries is harder to come by. If changes were so drastic and rapid that they could have occurred in one lifetime, we might expect more direct observation of them. As it is, debates often rely on non-narrative documentary evidence, particularly legal or quasi-legal material, and look to the ‘sudden’ appearance of ‘new’ terms (*milites*, *malae consuetudines*, etc.) as evidence of drastic change; changes which then tend to be interpreted as either structural or social, but are rarely measured from the point of view of experience.¹⁶⁶ As well as the constant problem of language usage and meaning, such an approach is also complicated, for example, by the possibility of clerical conservatism that may delay the written use of some terms.¹⁶⁷ The equivocal nature of legal documents makes it possible for historians to interpret identical sets in contradictory ways, such as Duby and Cheyette using the Mâconnais sources, and Bonnassie and Bowman the Catalanian. Many interpretative differences in the historiography of this era result, however, from the irregular survival of source material. Continuity or change from previous eras is hard to establish when available evidence is not consistent in type or volume – as Paul Fouracre puts it, ‘The essential problem is that we cannot compare like with like’, and we have already heard Barthélemy’s criticisms of a failure to ‘relativize’ the effects of a diversification of sources after 990.¹⁶⁸ Identical problems apply to regional source divergences during the same period. Timothy Reuter pointed out that we can only glean so much from the evidence surviving from the post-Carolingian Midi – mainly charters and some hagiography – as compared to Anglo-Saxon England, Saxony, Normandy and so on, many of which lack extensive charter evidence but for which rich narrative sources survive.¹⁶⁹ Yet hagiographical texts can be comparable to the ‘rich narrative sources’ that Reuter located in other regions, and can be particularly useful when used in conjunction with available charter and diplomatic material. The diplomatic sources that survive at Bobbio are quite different from the charters preserved in the Conques cartulary, and their hagiographic productions are dissimilar in many ways. This divergence is very telling of the concerns and situations of each institution, as we shall see.

¹⁶⁶ With the exception here of Thomas Bisson and Claire Taylor who both consider experiential changes, in received lordship and the condition of peasantry respectively: Bisson, *Crisis, passim*. but esp. ch. 3; Taylor, ‘Those who laboured’, pp. 201–206.

¹⁶⁷ D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London, 1982), pp. 122–23.

¹⁶⁸ Fouracre, ‘Marmoutier’, p. 44; Barthélemy, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: i’, *P&P*, 152 (1996), pp. 196–205, at p. 200.

¹⁶⁹ Reuter, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’: iii’, p. 194.

Whilst such evidential concerns apply to most medieval studies, specific issues have been raised about sources and ‘feudal revolution’, not least fundamental changes in the nature of documentary evidence in the tenth and eleventh centuries both in form, such as the rise in *notitiae* (informal versions of charters) and *convenientiae* (‘agreements’ between individuals of varied nature) in place of ‘old style’ charters, and in increased volume. All agree that changes in documentation occurred, but the significance is as contested as other elements of the debate. Some argue that increasingly informal records exemplify the debasement of the previous (some say ‘public’) legal system and of written culture, experienced as a result of ‘feudal revolution’.¹⁷⁰ Such arguments are seemingly supported by the decline of formulae or the loosening of formal document types, but are contradicted by a concurrent widespread increase in the volume of written sources, and familiar problems with ‘public’/‘private’ distinctions. Instead it has been argued that the informality, flexibility, and greater quantity of the new types of records may simply reveal, through their more discursive, narrative nature, realities that were previously hidden by restrictions of genre and volume – a *mutation documentaire* resulting in the *révélation féodale*.¹⁷¹ A similar conclusion was reached independently of Barthélemy via a study of northern French charters by Brigitte Bedos-Rezak:

With the general increase of written documents in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there appeared all sorts of new elements, such as specific social categorizations and political definitions. Were these entirely new elements, or merely elements newly put into writing? Now that, by means of written artefacts, a medium for the preservation of complex context is made available, have we evidence for a new context, or for a new medium? ... could we, in talking about a feudal revolution, for instance, be confusing the clarification of social concepts performed through writing with a possibly asynchronous growth of specific social structure? If this were the case, might not the ‘feudal

¹⁷⁰ Bonnassie, ‘From the Rhône to Galicia’, pp. 111–2; *La Catalogne au tournant de l’an mil*, pp. 281–283, for whom ‘Le développement des *convenientiae* ne peut, en fait, se comprendre que dans un climat d’illégalité et même de violence’ (p. 282). See also de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 332–334. Others to bemoan a degeneration of documentary evidence include A. de Boüard, *Manuel de diplomatique française et pontificale*, t. II, *L’acte privé*, (Paris, 1948), esp. pp. 100–148, writing before debates on *mutation féodale* and seeing a rather longer process of decadence connected to royal decline; G. Tessier, *Diplomatique royale française* (Paris, 1962), for whom the ‘anarchy’, ‘disorganization’ and ‘contamination’ of early Capetian records compared with the Carolingian was also due to royal collapse; O. Guillot, *Le comté d’Anjou et son entourage au XIe siècle* (Paris, 1972): v. 2, p. 7 n. 8, who *did* relate documentary changes to *mutationniste* discourse (quoted in Barthélemy, *SKH*, p. 12 and O. Guyotjeannin, ‘*Penuria scriptorum*: le mythe de l’anarchie documentaire dans la France du nord (xe – première moitié du XIe siècle)’, *Bibliothèque de l’École des Chartes*, 155 (1997), pp. 11–44, at p. 11). On the problems with imposing private/public or royal/aristocratic divisions on documents and subsequently with the model of a ‘privatization’ of royal diplomas, see Bedos-Rezak, ‘Diplomatic sources’, at pp. 319–20. For a denial that changes in documents represent fundamental, revolutionary changes in legal and judicial systems, see Kosto, *Making Agreements*, p. 76.

¹⁷¹ First noted in D. Barthélemy, ‘La mutation féodale a-t-elle eu lieu? (Note critique)’, *Annales: E.S.C.*, 47 (1992), pp. 767–777 and repeated in subsequent works.

revolution' above all be a revolution in diplomatics?¹⁷²

The revelation explanation usually relates to the effects of monastic reform on documentary practice. As Pauline Stafford postulates, 'it may be the tenth century which is odd, or more generally any period after the arrival of a land-hungry, highly-organised, potentially autonomous and ultimately successful great church in an area, and the eleventh century which represents a return to more normal ... patterns.'¹⁷³ Monastic reform and cultural expansion cannot explain documentary change across the board, however: for example, it does not apply to Kosto's Catalonian ecclesiastical and comital *convenientiae* because, amongst other reasons, they were written by chapter clerics, and not monks.¹⁷⁴ Neither is monastic 'reform' always defined closely enough to justify either its own name or its significance for changing documentation. Arguments for the effect of changes in monastic strategies on documentary practices are nevertheless of central importance for this study.

Warnings have been sounded about historians' reliance on ecclesiastical texts to understand lay social relations, particularly for *mutation* studies, because of their authors' preoccupation with Church property and, more specifically, its 'plunder'.¹⁷⁵ Dominique Barthélemy insists that reliance on such loaded expositions and their accompanying terminology – using the example of the 'anti-Christ' lord who covets Sainte Foy's property or the 'blasphemous' vassal who defends his lord against Conques – is misleading, and reminds us of the 'eternal conflict' between the Church and the heirs of contested land; it is in fact because of the 'new expansion of the black monks [that] we see the feudal revolution'.¹⁷⁶ Here he has been joined by others who relate changes previously considered as evidence for *mutation féodale* such as the appearance of the *malae consuetudines*, or changes in the form of documents, to monastic reform

¹⁷² Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic sources', pp. 320–321. Also see Stafford, 'Mutation familiale', esp. pp. 108–114; and Kosto, *Making Agreements*, p. 75 who stresses that whilst the *convenientia* as a written form may have been new from the 1020s, the relationships expressed in such texts were not.

¹⁷³ Stafford, 'Mutation familiale', pp. 113–114.

¹⁷⁴ Kosto, *Making Agreements*, p. 74. Very reasonably, in my view, Kosto prefers to explain developments in documentary production by (non-revolutionary) social change that was a catalyst for 'new flexibility', which 'encouraged experimentation and allowed for the development of new forms' (p. 76). This is not incompatible with arguments of monastic assertion, which highlight a renewal of processes and strategies. The challenge is to identify what may have caused this 'new flexibility' in each case.

¹⁷⁵ Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 124.

¹⁷⁶ D. Barthélemy, 'Antichrist et blasphémateur', in *Mediévales*, 37 (1999), pp. 57–70; Barthélemy, 'Year 1000', pp. 135–137, quote at p. 147.

and revival, an often vaguely-defined notion which deserves a brief diversion here.¹⁷⁷

Julia Barrow has demonstrated the imprecision and, sometimes, anachronism with which the term 'reform' has been used, urging a more contextual understanding of and more precise terminology for different periods traditionally associated with 'reform'.¹⁷⁸ A local-level investigation of whether 'reform' is a valid term, and what that reform might mean for the society and societal change in any given region, is paramount. As opposed to the eleventh-century pre- and then actual Gregorian reform, in which wider concerns for the purity of clerical living and office-holding took centre stage, tenth-century monastic 'reform' concerned itself with observance of the Rule, chastity, liturgy and education. Benedictine restorations were also centrally concerned with property, including the building of new religious centres – resulting in the 'white mantle' of Ralph Glaber's oft-quoted description. Monastic changes undoubtedly took place across Europe, although they manifested themselves via different routes. In Anglo-Saxon England, the Benedictine revivals of Dunstan, Aethelwold and Oswald succeeded in instituting a particularly rigorous monasticism with a parallel creation of many new religious establishments. In Germany, reformations instigated initially from Gorze had a wide-ranging influence in liturgy, architecture and monastic rigour, despite the fact that Gorze itself was turned over to Cluny in the early eleventh century. In France, tenth-century reform is most usually associated to the developments at Fleury and particularly at Cluny. These initiated large-scale changes to the structure of monastic networks, and Cluny demanded a reorientation towards the Burgundian mother-house in a way that the *ordo Gorziensis* did not. It concurrently developed significant political sway in much of Europe (especially France and Northern Italy), although arguably had its greatest impact in the field of liturgy. In all cases, reformations were hardly an internal monastic movement, since lay parties – be it the secular clergy, bishops or powerful princes – were regularly complicit, and sometimes to be credited

¹⁷⁷ Y. Sassier, 'Patrimoines d'églises et pouvoirs locaux en Auxerrois (début Xe-fin XIe siècle)', in D. Barthélemy and O. Bruand (eds.), *Les pouvoirs locaux dans la France du centre et de l'ouest (VIIIe-XIe siècles): implantation et moyens d'action* (Rennes, 2004), pp. 175-192, at pp. 182, 190-193; Barton, *Lordship*, pp. 140-144; Guyotjeannin, '*Penuria scriptorum*', p. 44; and especially P. J. Geary, 'Monastic memory and the mutation of the year thousand', in S. A. Farmer and B. H. Rosenwein (eds.), *Monks & Nuns, Saints & Outcasts: Religion in Medieval Society: Essays in Honor of Lester K. Little* (Ithaca, 2000), pp. 19-36, at p. 32; Geary, *Phantoms*, esp. p. 26.

¹⁷⁸ J. Barrow, 'Ideas and applications of reform', in Noble and Smith (eds.), *Early Medieval Christianities*, pp. 345-362, for tenth- and eleventh-century monastic 'reform' see pp. 358-360; J. Barrow, 'The ideology of the tenth-century Benedictine 'reform'', in P. Skinner (ed.), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 141-154.

with its greatest successes.¹⁷⁹

'Reform' could therefore be as politicised, as any matter related to the proprietary church. The Gascon 'reforms' of Bishop Gombaud of Bordeaux were not the same as the contemporaneous Burgundian ones, for example, with disastrous results for Abbo of Fleury.¹⁸⁰ They took on a different shade which depended on the specific history of each monastery, as much as the country in which the monastery was situated, and indeed 'reform' often proves to be an unhelpfully loaded term which inadequately describes the sorts of monastic assertions that were taking place. The extent to which different parties in monastic self-assertion were involved often eludes us. As we will see at Conques there was a cessation of secular abbots towards the end of the tenth century, although at whose instigation (most likely the secular abbots themselves, since they kept a hand in in different ways after rescinding their positions) and under what social or moral impulse remains hidden, perhaps decidedly subverted by the sources. At other times, the process involved direct petitioning of secular parties to encourage their involvement in renewals, as seems to be the case at Bobbio.

When historians talk of 'reform' relating to the *mutation documentaire* they often avoid clear explication of the former term, although the implication is that the 'control of property' element of reformations – especially at Cluny, therefore – played a central part in developments (as opposed, for example, to liturgical developments). The general argument follows that instead of decline in social and political cohesion and a debasement of written culture therefore, we are witnessing progression in monastic culture and strategy. Patrick Geary also highlights such a phenomenon, working from a text produced at Saint-Victor at Marseille

¹⁷⁹ See for example the involvement of Prince Alberic of Rome (932-954) described by B. Hamilton, 'The monastic revival in tenth century Rome', in *Studia Monastica*, 4 (1962), pp. 35-68, reprinted with same pagination as Essay II in his *Monastic Reform, Catharism and the Crusades: 900-1300* (London, 1979); that of Bishop Adalbert of Metz (929-962) and almost immediately the Ottonians in Gorzian reformations: W. Sanderson, *Monastic Reform in Lorraine and the Architecture of the Outer Crypt, 950-1100*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new ser., v. 61:6 (Philadelphia, 1971), esp. p. 3 and J. Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons in the Gorze Reform: Lotharingia c.850-1000* (Oxford, 2001); and that of Edgar and Aelfthryth in England: J. S. Barrow, 'Chronology of the Benedictine 'Reform'', in D. Scragg (ed.), *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975* (Woodbridge 2008), pp. 211-223 and in the same volume A. R. Rumble, 'The Laity and the Monastic Reform in the Reign of Edgar', at pp. 242-251 amongst others. For a summary of monastic reform in this period see J. Wollasch, 'Monasticism: The First Wave of Reform', *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 3, *c.900-c.1024*, ed. by T. Reuter (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 163-185. For the eleventh century see P. G. Jestic, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 1997).

¹⁸⁰ C. Taylor, 'Reform and the Basque dukes of Gascony: a context for the origins of the Peace of God and the murder of Abbo of Fleury', *EME*, 15 (2007), pp. 35-52.

and relating events from the second half of the tenth century. Jean-Pierre Poly had dated this same text to c.1000 and used it as evidence for millennial crisis. Geary, on the other hand, re-dates the document to the end of the eleventh century, corresponding to a period in which the monastery and its abbots were systematically demanding autonomy and rights over their lands and estates. 'It is in the context of this new and radical reform that the image of the viscounts and their knights as rapacious, violent usurpers was created. Our document may confirm the image of the 'feudal mutation', then, because its author, long before Poly or Duby, was among the generation that created the myth of the mutation which subsequent historians have accepted for almost a millennium.'¹⁸¹ Put another way, monastic writers in the tenth and eleventh centuries were restructuring and re-creating the pasts of their institutions and regions for very specific purposes:

This massive revisionist undertaking was at the heart of what we call the reform movement which demanded a new and more acceptable past on which to base a new and radical future. ... This process largely created the mutationist tradition, not simply by identifying a radical break in social and political tradition, but by claiming that such a break indeed took place. Small wonder that nine hundred years later, conscientious historians would discover the mutation of the year thousand: it had already been created in the eleventh century.¹⁸²

As Geary has shown in more detail elsewhere, the effect of monastic reform on its documents was not a subconscious phenomenon, since 'leaders of secular and ecclesiastical institutions ... sought to use memory as a tool of power'.¹⁸³

How does this affect our debate? Can it still be viewed from either side: as a political, social or, now, monastic revolution that changed documentation; or a documentary revolution, which only seems to reveal political and social upheaval? Pauline Stafford says neither, and both. In studying Cluny's texts on inheritance practices, she highlights the complex role of monasteries which may not simply have influenced documentary practices but could have influenced society as much as represented it, insisting the production of documents should be understood as a formative, not simply reactive, process.¹⁸⁴ Similarly Brigitte Bedos-Rezak insists that the

relationship between the social terminology used in these documents and constitutional reality, and the related question of the evidential capacity of charters, are perhaps best addressed by considering the charter as an agent for the structuring of society... [Charters] can be conceived as literally producing and organizing social meaning. Perhaps they should even be evaluated as products and

¹⁸¹ J.-P. Poly, *La Provence et la société féodale, 879-1166: Contribution à l'étude des structures dites féodales dans le Midi* (Paris, 1976), p. 38; Marc Bloch had also used the text as evidence for royal and public collapse at the end of the tenth century: Bloch, *Feudal Society*, I, p. 39. Geary, 'Monastic memory', p. 32.

¹⁸² Geary, 'Monastic memory', p. 25.

¹⁸³ Geary, *Phantoms*, p. 26.

¹⁸⁴ Especially Stafford, 'Mutation familiale', pp. 113-114.

instruments of power'.¹⁸⁵

Whilst discussions on this point tend to revolve around the nature of charter and charter-derived evidence, the same principles must surely apply to other types of monastic literary outputs, like *miracula*. Was there a parallel transformation in hagiography besides changes in charter-type documentary styles? If so, how might these be connected to social or monastic contexts? Finally, coming full circle to questions on the uses and manipulation of hagiography; how might miracle-stories have reflected and influenced society?

It appears that areas of France (south-central and south-eastern France and Aquitaine) and northern Italy experienced a rise in hagiographic production during the tenth and eleventh centuries.¹⁸⁶ But we cannot answer the question in the same manner as for charter-type materials, whose form, formulae and volume can be analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively, even at the level of individual *scriptoria*. Hagiographic texts represent a different writing logic: rather than continuing production like charter-types, which seemingly create a coherent if transforming series, they are more unique. Generations might pass without an ecclesiastical *scriptorium* producing a written hagiographic work, so the moment of production is just as important, if not more so, than a general increase in volume. Likewise, opportunities to analyze changes such as terminology *within* the genre are limited. Hagiographic works are too geographically dispersed and terminology too author-specific to provide meaningful data by incorporating examples from a wide area, although combination with other local sources could be enlightening. Broad changes in formulae might be measurable if we accept that *topoi* or miracle types were hagiographic equivalents to formulae, yet there is as yet no comparable study to that of Pierre-André Sigal's quantitative study of eleventh- and twelfth-century miracle-stories for the earlier period by which we could attempt to quantify changes leading up to the millennium.¹⁸⁷ As for changes in form, the *miracula* genre was nothing new. Yet both sets of *miracula* were novel and unique for the *scriptoria* in which they were written, marking a

¹⁸⁵ Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic sources', pp. 321-322.

¹⁸⁶ P. Bonnassie, P.-A. Sigal and D. Iogna-Prat, 'La Gallia du Sud: 930-1130', in *Hagiographies*, i (1974), pp. 289-344; P. Tomea, 'L'agiografia dell'Italia settentrionale (950-1130)', in *Hagiographies*, iii (2001), pp. 99-178. In England it was the period after the Norman Conquest that saw the greatest flourishing of the genre: Yarrow, *Saints*, p. 4.

¹⁸⁷ A study of (the predominantly cathedral-based) hagiography in Naples between the ninth and twelfth centuries concludes that changes in the decades around the year 1000 were the result of a shift in the relationship between the Church of Naples and Rome, rather than social or spiritual disruption; neither were changes in Neapolitan spirituality in the same period rapid or revolutionary, but rather a revelation of much older traditions: T. Granier, 'Transformations de l'église et écriture hagiographique à Naples autour de l'an mil', in Carozzi and Taviani-Carozzi, *Année mille*, pp. 149-176.

departure from previous literary activities. Saint Columbanus' hagiographic dossier had not been enhanced for centuries and at Conques, although Sainte Foy's *passio* was rewritten at least once in the tenth century, nothing on the scale or character of the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* had previously been attempted.¹⁸⁸ Equally, both sets of miracles test the boundaries and norms of the genre. In this sense, both miracle collections appeared 'abruptly', and were certainly innovative, if only in the context of their monastic houses. *Miracula* and other hagiographic production in this period are often explained simply as part of wider attempts to stimulate and propagate saints' cults. Yet a cult's success did not necessarily depend on written materials – 'a cult did not need a text, and a text could not make a cult' –¹⁸⁹ and Conques had steadily received donations following Sainte Foy's popularity for almost a century before the *miracula* were written down.¹⁹⁰ There must be more to it. So the same questions apply to these works as to wider documentary shifts: why this literary 'innovation'? Why now? And why in this form?

With respect to the second question, there is no shortage of people using the hagiographic content to support arguments both for and against *la mutation de l'an mil*: the Miracles of Saint Benedict written at Fleury have been read as a 'chronicle' of *mutation*, and the eleventh-century miracles of Saint Léonard at Noblat as 'a significant popular response to the problem of social violence in eleventh-century France.'¹⁹¹ Another typical *mutationniste* reading regards the emphasis on divine justice in miracle stories as a substitute for deficient public justice.¹⁹² Yet this ignores the fundamental necessity to consider the nature of the *miracula* genre, especially the function of miracle-stories as signs of God and his saints' power.

In fact, Pierre-André Sigal's survey suggests that miracle-types remained relatively consistent throughout the period, although he notes a slightly higher percentage of punishment miracles in the first half of the eleventh century, 'fait probablement en rapport avec les désordres de la féodalité qui ont amené l'Église à lutter contre les seigneurs violents et pillards.'¹⁹³ He does not commit himself to comprehending social disorder completely in *mutationniste* terms although his choice of terminology implies as much, partly because, one suspects, he does not have

¹⁸⁸ Supplementary hagiographical literary works (including a verse version of the *Passio*, her *Translatio* and the vernacular *Chanson de Sainte Foi*) were only begun following the completion of Bernard of Angers's work.

¹⁸⁹ Koopmans, *Marvellous to Relate*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁰ Sheingorn, *BoSF*, p. 10.

¹⁹¹ Rollason, 'The Miracles of St Benedict', pp. 83–85; Sargent, 'Religious responses', p. 238.

¹⁹² De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 216–217.

¹⁹³ Sigal, *L'homme*, p. 312.

figures from an earlier period to measure whether this trend arrived abruptly or not. At the same time his view is clearly not that the miracles simply reflected such disorder, but that they were part of a monastic response or strategy against a perceived disorder. Similar themes of ‘exaction, devastations and pillage’ are present in the eighth- and ninth-century miracles of Saint Martial, as in later examples.¹⁹⁴ What Henri Platelle describes as the ‘unilateral message’ of the twelfth-century *miracula* of Saint Rictrude written at Marchiennes – the failures of human justice and the miracles’ compensation for these – is countered by the number of existing bulls, charters and diplomas in favour of the abbey.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, a particular emphasis of saints’ cults in all periods was the readiness of divine power to protect and to judge. As a result, miracle collections, including those of Saint Columbanus and Sainte Foy, are full of trials, tribulations and their divine solutions, and as such, they have been read as an alarming register of ills, dangers, wrongdoing and sin. But this disregards the fundamental aim of miracle-stories – to persuade and influence, whether the target were a king, as at Bobbio, or a wider audience, as at Conques. Either way, the cult, the saint and miracles were tools of manipulation and should be considered as such – especially in the context of an increasingly assertive monastic environment.

Hagiography and miracles have long been recognized as vessels for reform and monastic assertion. Saints’ cults in England were used by the tenth-century Benedictine reform movement ‘to secure their symbolic capital and attract material patronage’ and in the eleventh century and beyond, miracles were used as propaganda in Gregorian Reform.¹⁹⁶ Bob Moore argues that *in vita* miracles were representative of social and political power by popular acclaim, harnessed most dramatically for the cause of ecclesiastical reform in north and central Italy and south-west France from the second half of the tenth century. Moore sees them both as representative of reform *and* of a failure of authority – which for him were inseparable.¹⁹⁷ A broader general concern with property and property claims in some hagiographical texts was noted some decades ago by Baudouin de Gaiffier and more recently nuanced by Wendy

¹⁹⁴ É. Bozoky, ‘Les Miracles de Saint Martial et l’impact politique de son abbaye’, in C. Andrault-Schmidt (ed.), *Saint-Martial de Limoges. Ambition politique et production culturelle (Xe-XIIIe siècle)* (Limoges, 2006), pp. 59–69, at p. 61.

¹⁹⁵ H. Platelle, ‘Crime et châtement à Marchiennes: étude sur la conception et le fonctionnement de la justice d’après les miracles de Sainte Rictrude (XIIIe siècle)’, *Sacris Erudiri*, 24 (1978), pp. 156–202, at pp. 175, 202. Related studies on monastic appeals to divine justice include P. Geary, ‘L’humiliation des saints’, *Annales: E.S.C.*, 34 (1979), pp. 27–42; Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*; Rosenwein, *et al.*, ‘Monks and their enemies’.

¹⁹⁶ Yarrow, *Saints*, quote at p. 4; Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, pp. 177–182; Ward, *Miracles*, p. 208.

¹⁹⁷ Moore, *First European Revolution*, p. 28; Moore, ‘Between sanctity’, pp. 55–67.

Davies, who denies, however, that the preoccupation with the appropriation of property was necessarily inversely proportional to royal power.¹⁹⁸

Land, power and justice were certainly a key concern for all the authors of the hagiographical texts studied here, and so were a feature of monastic assertion in some form. Yet we need to define ‘monastic reform’ better for each of the monasteries under investigation before we can attribute the hagiography to such a process. Considering hagiography as part of the *mutation documentaire* also forces us to consider the chicken-and-egg nature of queries about monastic ‘reform’, social change and documentary developments, since a problem with the ‘feudal revolution’ versus ‘documentary revelation’ dichotomy is that historians often avoid the issue of how monastic assertion and social change might be connected in the first place. Evidently there is a need to understand this relationship better (as usual, probably variable between regions), before we can fully appreciate the significance of the documents produced by either (or both) of these phenomena. We cannot dismiss the significance of the nature of the hagiography’s content, including violence and rapacity, preoccupations with property and so on, because we would miss a chance to get closer to an understanding of the intended audience and to comprehend the way in which these texts, and their authors, hoped to interact with their societies. Such an approach does not appreciate that these texts are packed with evidence on the formation and negotiation of constructive relationships and complicity between monastic and lay society.¹⁹⁹ We can only hope to understand the impact that these documents had on society, and thus how we can hope to use them as evidence for that society, with closer inspection. We turn first to Bobbio.

¹⁹⁸ B. de Gaiffier, ‘Les revendications’, pp. 123-139; W. Davies, ‘Property rights and property claims in Welsh *Vitae* of the eleventh century’, in Patlagean and Riché, *Hagiographies*, pp. 515-533. See also I. Wood, ‘Saint-Wandrille and its historiography’, in I. Wood & G. Loud (eds.), *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages* (London, 1991), pp. 1-14.

¹⁹⁹ For a review of scholarship stressing the closeness of lay and clerical societies, see C. B. Bouchard, ‘Community: society and the Church in medieval France’, *French Historical Studies*, 17 (1992), pp. 1035-1047, surveying in particular the important and related studies of Rosenwein, *et al.*, ‘Monks and their enemies’; T. Head, *Hagiography and the Cult of the Saints: The Diocese of Orléans, 800-1200* (Cambridge, 1990); S. Farmer, *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (Ithaca, 1991); White, *Custom* and Rosenwein, *Neighbor*.

PART II: SAN COLOMBANO DI BOBBIO & SOCIO-POLITICAL LANDSCAPES

5. CULTIC MATERIALS AT BOBBIO

Most information about Columbanus derives from his seventh-century hagiographer, Jonas of Susa. Columbanus was born in 540 and received monastic instruction at the monastery of Bangor. He left for mainland Europe around 580, accompanied by twelve companions. The missionaries' reputation for piety and austerity spread and, by invitation of Merovingian kings in Burgundy, Columbanus founded monasteries at Annegray, Luxeuil and Fontaines. He disputed the Easter Question with Frankish bishops, and was expelled by Queen Brunhild and her grandson, King Theuderic II, following arguments over Theuderic's sexual conduct and lay access to the inner monastic sanctuary. Welcomed by the Neustrian court of Chlothar II, Columbanus established a monastery at Bregenz and later Saint-Gall (named after one of his companions) before crossing the Alps into Lombard Italy in 612. King Agilulf and his wife Theodelinda supported his foundation of a new monastery on a church site dedicated to Saint Peter atop Monte Penice in the Apennines. The following year Columbanus died and was succeeded by Attala as abbot. Jonas of Susa arrived at Bobbio a year later and wrote the famous *Vita Columbani abbatis et discipulorumque eius* around 639-642.²⁰⁰

Bobbio's scriptorium is famous for its books and literary productions on a scale hardly matched contemporaneously, yet following Jonas' masterpiece Bobbio produced no hagiographic work on Columbanus until the *miracula* three centuries later. Meanwhile scribes produced texts of literary merit and drew up and copied legal charters. Unlike their French counterparts Italian monasteries did not produce 'cartularies' en masse. That is not to say that similar instincts did not drive monastic pens to create analogous collections in Italy, although activities there were

²⁰⁰ The standard edition is *Ionae Vitae sanctorum Columbani, Vedastis, Iohannis*, ed. by Bruno Krusch, *MGH SS. Rer. Germ.* (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905), pp. 144-294. Recent analyses have underlined the rehabilitative qualities of the work which sought to overcome divisions that had arisen within the Columbanian network during Columbanus' lifetime and to promote unity via an official Columbanian tradition: C. Stancliffe, 'Jonas's *Life of Columbanus and his Disciples*', in J. Carey, M. Herbert and P. Ó Riain (eds.), *Studies in Irish Hagiography: Saints and Scholars* (Dublin, 2001), pp. 189-220; A. O'Hara, 'The *Vita Columbani* in Merovingian Gaul', *EME*, 17 (2009), pp. 126-153; A. O'Hara, *Jonas of Bobbio and the 'Vita Columbani': Sanctity and Community in the Seventh Century* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2009), revised edition forthcoming with Oxford University Press.

Columbanus's cup – a secondary relic the *miracula* mentions three times.²⁰⁵ **Image 4**

6. THE *MIRACULA SANCTI COLUMBANI*

The wide dissemination and influential nature of the *Vita Columbani* might explain why the hagiographical dossier of Saint Columbanus was untouched for so long before augmentation with the original twenty-eight chapters of the *Miracula sancti Columbani*. These posthumous miracles demonstrate a remarkable lack of intertextuality with Jonas' work, although it was not unknown to our hagiographer. This is perhaps not surprising given the different expediencies behind their production. Whereas Jonas hoped that his *Vita Columbani* would ameliorate divisions that existed internally in the broader Columbanian tradition, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* answered a more restricted, Bobbio-centred predicament and saw no benefit in referring to the wider Columbanian network. The focus of the *miracula* on Bobbio, especially its patrimonial interests, enables direct comparison with the similarly house-centred Sainte Foy collection. The miracle-stories performed a very specific function in the preservation and sanctification of legal precepts, which partly explains their small circulation in manuscript copies compared to the *Vita*, to which they are usually appended. Despite their failure to engage with the *Vita*, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* start where the earlier work ended – beginning with three *in vita* miracles from the end of the saint's life that Jonas did not report.²⁰⁶ The following four chapters contain miracles occurring after Columbanus's death and on his feast day.²⁰⁷ The subsequent nineteen chapters deal with translation of the saint's relics to Pavia and back, and miracles worked during and just after this. The *miracula* of Columbanus might thus be described as *miracula et translatio*, although this was no traditional one-way translation of relics to a new home, but rather a circular route.²⁰⁸ Both this *translatio* and the text that reports it are unusual; collections of posthumous miracle-stories were uncommon in the area and this was perhaps the earliest in northern Italy.²⁰⁹ Neither, if an extant booklist is representative of its

²⁰⁵ *MSC*, xvi, xxi, xxvi.

²⁰⁶ *MSC*, i-iii.

²⁰⁷ *MSC*, iv-vii.

²⁰⁸ *MSC*, viii-xxviii. Our text was written during the Martin Heinzelmann's 'classical' period (ninth-eleventh century) when the *translatio* genre was only just beginning to appear as a stand-alone hagiographic genre: M. Heinzelmann, *Translationsberichte und Andere Quellen des Reliquienkultes* (Turnhout, 1979), pp. 89-92.

²⁰⁹ On contemporary northern Italian hagiography including a comprehensive list, see Tomea, 'L'agiografia'. For the different southern tradition: O. Limone, 'Agiografia latina nell'Italia meridionale', in *La cultura in Italia fra tardo antico e alto medioevo* (Rome, 1981), pp. 755-769, at p. 755; O. Limone, 'Italia meridionale (950-1220)', in Philippart, *Hagiographies*, ii, pp. 11-60.

full tenth-century holdings, does it seem that the Bobbio scriptorium library held any obvious precedents.²¹⁰

The journey to Pavia was organized by Abbot Gerlan in order to reclaim, with royal sanction, usurped monastery lands at a convention presided over by Hugh of Arles, King of Italy – an event generally dated to 929. Liturgical records site the translation between 17–30 July.²¹¹ Burgundian influence, in the form of Abbot Gerlan and his patron, may explain the novel translation strategy (in fact it was explicitly attributed to King Hugh by the *miracula*)²¹² and may also elucidate the decision to record the events in a collection of miracle-stories decades later. The delay between the translation and the redaction shows the events of 929 had renewed significance in the second half of the tenth century: they thus have immediate relevance to two discrete time periods, although for connected reasons. This study considers both periods, placing particular emphasis on the point of redaction. Discussion of the authorship, dating and audience of the *Miracula sancti Columbani* has thus far been mostly conducted in footnotes, and merits closer attention here.

Manuscript tradition

The earliest known copy of these *miracula* forms part of MS F.IV.12 at the Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria di Torino,²¹³ a large bound codex, well known amongst Columbanus and palaeography scholars for its richly decorated manuscript of the *Vita Columbani*. It also contains liturgical texts and other Columbanian hagiographical works. All agree that Turin F.IV.12 was produced at Bobbio, but differ on its palaeographical dating. The manuscript can be divided into two. The first part is slightly older and contains the decorative copy of Jonas's *Vita Columbani* and other liturgical texts (ff. 1–64v), in a Carolingian minuscule from the early

²¹⁰ Muratori first published the fragmentary library inventory in the seventeenth century, most recently edited by Zironi, *Il monastero*, pp. 139–157. Even under the entry *Item de vita et passionibus sanctorum*, hagiography is mostly represented, as the title suggests, by *vitae* and *passiones*. Very few of these have been identified in modern-day archives and it is not possible to be certain of their full nature given the terse entries in the inventory, but nevertheless it seems the *miracula* genre was not well represented in the scriptorium's holdings.

²¹¹ M. Tosi, 'Il trasferimento di S. Colombano da Bobbio a Pavia: 17 -30 luglio [929]', *AB*, 3 (1981), pp. 129–150, at p. 137; although see F. G. Nuvolone, 'Viaggiatori e pellegrini a Bobbio all'inizio ai *Miracula Columbani*', in Nuvolone, *La fondazione di Bobbio*, pp. 73–119, at p. 101 n. 105.

²¹² *MSC*, viii.

²¹³ Turin, Bibl. Naz., F.IV.12, at ff. 104v–117r by the newest folio numbering. Those to use the older enumeration include the classic works on the Turin manuscripts: G. Ottino, *I codici bobbiesi nella Biblioteca di Torino* (Turin, 1890), whose reference to the codex finishing on f. 106r should read f. 116r; and Cipolla, *Codici bobbiesi*, i, p. 149, who mistakenly states that the *miracula* begin on f. 107.

tenth century.²¹⁴ The second part is in four discrete hands, the first relates the *Vitae* of Columbanus's successors (Saints Attala, Bertulf, and Eustasius), the *Miracula Evoracensia* and the *Versus de Bobuleno abbate*, and dates to the mid-eleventh century. The last three hands relate the *Miracula sancti Columbani*: a list of the chapters, the little preface (*prefaciuncula*) and chapters i–vii of the *Miracula* in fourteenth-century hand (ff. 104v–108v; Bresslau's A₂); chapters viii–xxvi in eleventh/twelfth-century hand (ff. 109r–116v; A₁), and chapters xxvii and xxviii in fifteenth-century hand (f. 117; A_{2*}).²¹⁵

Other manuscripts to transmit the *miracula*, divided into A and B classes by Bresslau, are more recent. B marks a secondary transmission of the miracles as part of the *Legendarium Francogallicum* from the twelfth century. Flavio Nuvolone supplemented Bresslau's manuscript information, adding and analyzing a divergent version of the *miracula* found in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, with an extra miracle unreported in other manuscripts including Bresslau's edition, although Bresslau was aware of it.²¹⁶ Nuvolone maintains Bresslau's class system, inserting the Ambrosian text into A, but notes some 'contamination' of A by B, unsurprising since many of these manuscripts were made at Bobbio in subsequent centuries.²¹⁷

Other manuscripts also provide interesting variations on parts of the *miracula*. Two further codices of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Turin are particularly interesting. The first, from the

²¹⁴ C. Segre Montel, *I manoscritti miniati della Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino* (Turin, 1980), i, pp. 25–27. Unfortunately she neglects to mention the *miracula* in the contents of the codex, ending at the *Versus de Bobuleno*.

²¹⁵ Segre Montel, *I manoscritti miniati*, i, pp. 26–27, 47. F. Crivello, *La miniatura a Bobbio tra ix e x secolo e i suoi modelli carolingi* (Turin, 2001), p. 101 dates the oldest part of the *miracula* to the eleventh century.

²¹⁶ Bresslau, *MSC*, pp. 994–996; Nuvolone, 'Gregorio Novarese', esp. pp. 46–81. Nuvolone reads the extra miracle in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana codex as a 'Gregorian' redaction, rather than part of the original work (p. 52) thus I do not incorporate it into the present study. After Turin Bibl. Naz., F.IV.12 the remaining two of Bresslau's A class are held in the Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Barberinianos lat. 2720, ff. 17–26 (sixteenth/seventeenth-century hand, of Bobbio origin and derivative of F.IV.12) and Trier, Dombibliothek, 23, ff. 183v–209v (transcribed in 1512 in Germany). The B manuscripts are held at Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 16 735 ff. 100–105 (twelfth century) and 17007, ff. 96–101 (thirteenth century) and Montpellier, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Médecine, H.1, ff. 144–152 (thirteenth-century hand, origin Clairvaux). The extra manuscript analyzed by Nuvolone was also produced at Bobbio and is now in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Codex signatus G. 33 Sup. ff. 22r–36v, edited by the Bollandists in *Analecta Bollandiana*, ii (1892), pp. 326–329. Whilst it contracts chapters xxiii–xxv, it carries an extra chapter it contains is n.26 (at ff. 34v–36v) is entitled: *De duab(us) fe(min)is a spiritibus / i(n)mu(n)dis i(n) ei(us) adue(n)tu lib(er)at(is)*. Aside from the Turin codices and the Vatican one, which I saw in digital form, I did not have the opportunity to view the other manuscripts.

²¹⁷ Nuvolone, 'Gregorio Novarese', p. 79. It is therefore impossible to propose a linear manuscript tradition, but it is worth noting that the differences between the manuscripts edited by Bresslau vary mainly in grammatical terms rather than in content.

eleventh or twelfth century, contains a *Breviarium* with chapters viii-xii of our book divided into eight readings.²¹⁸ A fourteenth- or fifteenth-century manuscript later included lectures based on chapters viii onwards.²¹⁹ Both these manuscripts exclude the hagiographic material relating to the end of Columbanus's life and the miracles worked at Spelonca, focussing only on the translation. In reworking the Columbanus hagiography into sixteenth-century vernacular, Gregorio Novarese made a similar distinction between these elements of the collection.²²⁰

Subsequent relevance of the *miracula*

Segre Montel notes that various Bobbio texts of the late-eleventh or early-twelfth century demonstrate renewed interest in the 929 translation of Columbanus and the *miracula*, proposing that this coincided with new controversies over Bobbio's lands.²²¹ This process included the copying of the earliest surviving portion of the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, reporting chapters viii-xxvi (Bresslau's A₁) in Turin F.IV.12.²²² Associated with this remembrance of the translation is a sketch, held in another manuscript held at Turin (F.II.21, f. 188v) depicting an enthroned sovereign, flanked by a smaller armed figure whilst he hands a parchment to a monk. **Images 1 and 2** The sketch may have been intended to accompany an illustrated version of the *miracula* redacted at the same time. Segre Montel seems correct in suggesting that the pictures are more likely to represent Hugh handing precepts to Gerlan, than Agilulf giving the foundation charter to Columbanus.²²³ It should be added that the illustrator would surely have symbolized Columbanus's sanctity, by a halo or some other indication, if the latter had been the case. The armed figure may represent Hugh's son, Lothar, whose childhood fever was miraculously healed according to the miracle-stories.²²⁴ Lothar later succeeded his father, following a period of co-rulership.

²¹⁸ Turin, Bibl. Naz., F.II.10, at ff. 122v-124v.

²¹⁹ Turin, Bibl. Naz., F.II.22, ff. 6r-7v. See also Nuvolone, 'Gregorio Novarese', pp. 60-63 on these two manuscripts.

²²⁰ Nuvolone, 'Gregorio Novarese', pp. 37, 41.

²²¹ Other manuscripts demonstrating a lively interest in the translation during the eleventh-twelfth centuries are Turin Bibl. Naz., F.II.13, F.II.10 and Ambrosiana D.84. *Inf.*: Segre Montel, 'I più antichi codici', pp. 71-72.

²²² Turin, Bibl. Naz., F.IV.12, ff. 109r-116v.

²²³ Segre Montel, *I manoscritti miniati*, pp. 76-77; C. Segre Montel, 'I più antichi codici decorati e miniati del fondo bobiese della Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino (sec. vi-xii)', in *Presenza benedettina nel Piacentino*, pp. 63-74, at pp. 70-72. The manuscript has water damage from the fire of 1904 – compare **Images 1 and 2**.

²²⁴ *MSC*, xvi.

Returning to the text of the miracle-stories, it seems pertinent that the different hands in the oldest manuscript relate distinct thematic blocks. The first seven chapters, in fourteenth-century hand, recount miracles from Columbanus's lifetime and those worked at holy places he had established. The explanation and preparation for the translation procession are reported from c. viii, precisely where the manuscript changes from fourteenth-century hand to eleventh/twelfth century. All subsequent miracles relate to the procession, the sojourn in Pavia or the return journey, except for the final two chapters (cc. xxvii and xxviii). These final two 'non-political' miracles are redacted in another fourteenth-century hand and relate miracles that occurred on the monks' return to Bobbio. For Segre Montel the different hands suggest that the codex had probably incorporated an older copy that was decrepit by the stage that the eleventh/twelfth century hand appears, part of which then had to be re-copied in the fourteenth century.²²⁵ Significantly, the themes of the chapters reflect these hands. Possibly chapters i-vii and xxvii-xxviii were copied in the fourteenth century directly from the tenth-century manuscript without a need to copy chapters viii-xxvi, because these had previously been recopied in the eleventh/twelfth century, when only chapters relevant to contemporaneous events were copied, that is to say chapters relating the events of the translation and particularly details of the diplomas read and issued at the royal convention, and the diatribe against those who sought to usurp the monastery's possessions. In the eleventh/twelfth centuries the monastery was undergoing disputes with the bishop of the newly erected see of Bobbio – and the miracle-stories were relevant once more.²²⁶ The production of these reworked sections tells us something of the later life and use of the *miracula*, but we turn now to the earliest stages of their redaction.

Authorship and dating

Little is known regarding redaction of the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, hardly helped by the manuscript tradition, since none of the surviving manuscripts are the archetype. The earliest part of Turin F.IV.12 (Bresslau's A₁) postdates the likely origination by at least a century. Instead we must rely on internal information to date the work. The events at the centre of the *miracula* occurred in 929, but internal and historical evidence suggests the *Miracula sancti Columbani* were written at least two decades later. Although anonymous, and providing

²²⁵ Segre Montel, 'I più antichi codici', p. 71 n. 7.

²²⁶ Segre Montel, 'I più antichi codici', p. 71 n. 8. The best study of this period is Piazza, *Monastero*, esp. chs. 2 and 3.

minimal autobiographical information, it seems the hagiographer was probably educated at the monastery and was writing from Bobbio's scriptorium. The hagiographer, in a miracle-story concerning the healing of Godinus from Francia during the reign of Berengar (889-924), claims that many witnesses to the miracle were still living, but does not count himself amongst them. In the *prefaciuncula* to the work, he says he wanted to write the saint's virtues for some time, but had been too young, instead placing his hope in God, who 'might through mercy grant me, the least of men, understanding which was lacking to me through age'.²²⁷ Bresslau suggested that the author was a young boy at the monastery at the time of the translation, which fits with the author's later description of seeing master carpenters work on the pinewood cask that would transport Columbanus's body to Pavia, without understanding the carpenters' purpose.²²⁸ Possibly the author entered the monastery in the mid- to late-920s, perhaps as a child oblate. The hagiographer says he was writing about the time of King Hugh some time after events, as delay was necessary, but does elaborate on the length or necessity behind the delay, although it was at least a decade after 929.²²⁹

Two further internal elements of the *Miracula* are used along with historical evidence to date the work more precisely, by identification of the presumed target of an address within the work. The key passages are both in chapter xxiii, which recounts in detail papal privileges that specified the extent (or, better, the limits) of episcopal rights in the monastery. The first says these privileges 'forbid the prelates, and above all those of the Holy Church of Tortona, and of Piacenza, which were neighbours, to ever seek – as had been tried recently – to remove from the Holy Apostolic See the aforesaid monastery or its belongings, and to subject it to their diocese.' The second passage is a long invective that follows details of the diplomas, and merits quoting at length:

I would like to know, Bishop, you who desire to annul the decrees of the aforesaid prelates, what you would wish to respond to that which you have just heard. ... Perhaps you would say, 'I do not want to be separated from their society, nor to be excommunicated from the body of our Lord Jesus Christ by the blessed Peter, because I know that it is truly the death of the soul, as He said: 'Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.' [John (6: 54)]. And I do not want to break their decrees, but it is because I saw this monastery almost destroyed, and I wish to return it to grace, to its former state.' Oh Bishop, do not deceive yourself! Be careful of those of whom I spoke! Listen to those who tell you: 'We will not let you enter the monastery without having been invited there by the father of the monastery or by the congregation

²²⁷ MSC, *prefaciuncula*: *quod ille mihi minimo intellectum posset tribuere per misericordiam, quod deerat per aetatem.*

²²⁸ MSC, *prefaciuncula*, ix. Bresslau, MSC, p. 994 n. 2, citing evidence at n. 3 that the author was not Irish, although this helps us little since there seem to have been few, if any, Irish monks at this point: Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 56 n. 45.

²²⁹ MSC, *prefaciuncula*, xxvii; Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 172.

of monks; and if you come invited, we forbid you by the authority of Saint Peter to usurp, appropriate or covet anything, but you should do freely everything that you were called to do, then return to your home without delay. You say that [the monastery] is almost destroyed. You speak the truth. But if you were to act truly, so that it returns to its former state thanks to you, see to it that it has an abbot according to the rule, which would accomplish that which you claim you want to accomplish; then it would be clear that you possessed divine zeal, and that which is said to you is true, because as it is written: 'No man can serve two masters.' [Matthew (6: 24)], just as you cannot manage your bishopric and govern the monks according to the rule of Saint Benedict.²³⁰

Together, these passages identify the addressee as a bishop of Piacenza or Tortona, although which diocesan and why he is targeted is uncertain. The events of 929 related in the *Miracula* reckon Bishop Guy of Piacenza and his brother Raginerius, probable count of Piacenza, among the worst offenders against the monastery. Guy is the only bishop mentioned by name and Michele Tosi, late in his career, proposed that Guy was indeed the recipient of the tirade. Tosi dismissed contemporary relevance for the Bishop of Tortona in the first passage, interpreting it as a reference to the seventh-century dispute with Bishop Probus of Tortona, which resulted in the first papal exemption for a monastic institution from its diocesan bishop.²³¹ Tosi added that the bishop of Tortona in 929, Andrea da Racle, was not present at the relevant events of 929, thus the target was doubtless a bishop of Piacenza.

Tosi dismisses arguments proposing Giseprand of Tortona as addressee on two counts. First, the anonymous author was present at the event, presumably believing he would have been too old to write it during Giseprand's time; and second, by the 'triumphal tone' of the closing section, 'tipica di chi ha vinto, più che di uno che deve sopportare un nuovo sopruso da parte di Giseprando'.²³² Tosi's hypothesis contains no reference to the time lapse between events and authorship, nor the problems that this causes for the correlation to Guy. If the account was written at least ten years later than the events at Pavia (939) and Guy of Piacenza died in either 940 or 941,²³³ there is a possible, but small, window in which the miracles could have been written if Guy was the intended addressee. Neither is there any external evidence to suggest that the monastery was still in conflict with Guy in this later period, nor does the 'triumphal

²³⁰ *MSC*, xxiii.

²³¹ Issued to Abbot Bertulf by Pope Honorius on 11 June 628, it still exists in the Archivio di Stato di Torino, Bobbio: S. Colombano, mazzo 1.1, doc. 4 and is edited in *CDS CB*, i, doc. x. On its authenticity see Piazza, 'Gli studi bobbiesi', p. 199; and on its novelty see Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 19 nn. 12-13. Jonas records the dispute in the *VC*, ii.23. For the context of this dispute see Stancliffe, 'Jonas's Life of Columbanus', pp. 207-208.

²³² M. Tosi, 'Il governo abbaziale di Gerberto a Bobbio', in *Gerberto: scienze, storia e mito. Atti del Gerberti symposium: Bobbio 25-27 luglio 1983*, *AB Studia*, 2 (Bobbio, 1985), pp. 71-234, at pp. 75-6 n. 11.

²³³ I. Scaravelli, 'Guido, vescovo di Piacenza', *DBI*, 61 (Rome, 2003), pp. 398-400, at p. 400.

tone' make sense after the time lapse.

Rather, one must read the events and the writing of them in the *miracula* as having significance in two different periods. The translation and oration of royal petitions in 929 probably did take place, yet committing the *Miracula* to parchment marked a renewed interest in these events later, and the invective in chapter xxiii makes more sense if read as holding contemporary significance when it was written. By this invective, the work is generally dated to the abbacy of Giseprand of Tortona, who was also the bishop of Tortona.²³⁴ Giseprand's interference in the monastery took a different form to that of Guy of Piacenza, but certain parallels allowed the author of the *Miracula sancti Columbani* to disguise his admonition of Giseprand as a tirade against Guy. Giseprand held his episcopal office from 945, having been active in Hugh and Lothar's court from at least 937 as *capellanus*, *notarius* and, later, *cancellarius*.²³⁵ The first document confirming Giseprand's abbacy of Bobbio dates to 952 and the last mention of Liudprand, his predecessor, was in 940, thus it is possible that Giseprand held his role at Bobbio for the full term of his episcopacy. The reference in the preface to *quae temporibus precellentissimi Hugonis regis* suggests that Hugh was no longer ruler at the time of writing. Berengar II was king from 950, and Giseprand was also well-connected to the new monarch. The first mention of Giseprand's abbacy arises in the same year as Berengar II's official reign, possibly meaning the Ivrean king commended the bishop to Bobbio as part of his political restructuring. Giseprand, listed by Liudprand of Cremona in his *Historia Ottonis* as one of the prestigious counsellors of the emperor, also attended the coronation of Otto I in 962, a year before his last appearance in records. He must have died, or fallen out of favour, between 963 and 967 when his episcopal successor is recorded.²³⁶

Miracle composition

The miracle-stories can be divided roughly into two sections and three time periods. The first five chapters concern the foundation of Bobbio and the churches of Spelonca and San Michele by Columbanus, and miracles that happened there after Columbanus's death.²³⁷ Two

²³⁴ Bresslau, *MSC*, pp. 993–994. Despite Tosi's rejection it is still accepted by most historians including Bougard, 'La relique', p. 41; Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 179.

²³⁵ I. Scaravelli, 'Giseprando, vescovo di Tortona', *DBI*, 56 (Rome, 2000), pp. 617–618, at p. 617.

²³⁶ *Historia Ottonis*, xiv, translated as 'Concerning King Otto' by P. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, 2007), p. 231; Scaravelli, 'Giseprando', p. 619.

²³⁷ *MSC*, i–v.

items and, on three occasions, miraculous relighting of candles.²⁴⁶

Miracle-stories concerning the translation to Pavia are the most relevant here, given the preoccupation of this study with questions of monastic property and ‘feudal’ relations. But a brief diversion is worthwhile to the first miracle-stories, discussing the foundation of Bobbio and the building of two small churches, one of which was dedicated to the Holy Virgin. Its site is uncertain, since the first miracle suggests it was at Bobbio but subsequent miracles say it was some distance away at the isolated grotto to which Columbanus retreated.²⁴⁷ Irish monks habitually withdrew to caves or grottos, and Jonas mentions a site some seven miles from Annegray, whence Columbanus had miraculously despatched a bear.²⁴⁸ Margaret Stokes described two grottos connected to Columbanus near Bobbio; one three or four miles to the north of the monastery known as the *Spanna*, another to the south, near Coli, known as Spelonca, the difficult ascent to which, tradition holds, took Columbanus three hours.²⁴⁹ The cave in the miracle-stories was Spelonca, since they specify a route via the Curiasco river (c. ii). A thirteenth-century list of the relics held at the church there notes an *altare sancte Marie, qui est in medio aliorum*, which Columbanus consecrated by *sua propria manu et sua propria lingua*, tentatively confirming the original dedication to the Holy Virgin mentioned in the *miracula*.²⁵⁰ The miracle-stories suggest that towards the end of his life Columbanus spent more time at the Spelonca than at Bobbio, living a solitary life, applying himself to God, fasting and praying, returning to the monastery only on the Sabbath or feast days, and spending the whole of Lent there (c. iii). Remaining stone foundations of a tiny church or oratory (measuring 4.5x3m) fit the hagiographer’s description that Columbanus had built a church there to his own proportions, although the remains must be a later construction since the first was made of wood (c. i). **Image 3** Just 200 metres from Spelonca is another church, mentioned in c. iv, now dedicated to Saint Michael.²⁵¹

²⁴⁶ *MSC*, ii, iii, v, ix, xi, xiii, xiv, xv, xxvi.

²⁴⁷ Discussed in Richter, *Bobbio*, pp. 28–30, 169.

²⁴⁸ *VC*, i: xv, xvi.

²⁴⁹ M. Stokes, *Six Months in the Apennines* (London, 1892), pp. 143–145, 187–200.

²⁵⁰ Turin, *Bibl. Naz.*, F.II.10, cf. Segre Montel, *I manoscritti miniati*, p. 41. Columbanus’s consecration of the altar is said to have come following his trip to Rome – a trip that Columbanus scholars in general do not consider happened. Jonas certainly does not mention it. The earliest reference to this journey comes in the additional miracle-story reported by the manuscript at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (n. 203 above), that which is considered to have been written in the ‘Gregorian’ spirit by Nuvolone, ‘Gregorio Novarese’, pp. 51–52, 70.

²⁵¹ *MSC*, i. On the *Spelonca* and San Michele: Destefanis, *Bobbio*, pp. 14–6, 116–117; E. Mandelli, ‘Le grotte di s. Columbano’, in *Bobbio, una città. Cronache, storie, leggende* (Piacenza, 1970), pp. 50–56. I was unable to access R. Zanuzzi, *La Spelonca di San Michele di Coli* (Bobbio, 2006).

The hagiographer's fixation with the Spelonca in the earliest chapters is unclear. It seems Columbanus may have spent most of his last year there, and perhaps even died there, although the author does not say.²⁵² The earliest stages of Amy Remensnyder's model of a foundation legend – revelation and construction – match well with the first chapters of the *miracula*; the site was both at elevated height and had a cave – ‘places considered in many religious traditions as in and of themselves sacred’ – the text creates ‘the revelation of the site as an unveiling of inherently Christian space’ via two miracles.²⁵³ The site was confirmed by the imprint of Columbanus's right foot in solid stone, as a seal in wax (c. ii). Later, after a little church (or oratory) was built there, Columbanus moved a rock that had fallen and blocked the footpath with miraculous strength – the faithful erected a cross there out of veneration for the great miracle (c. iii). Another concerns a type of pea (*Herbilia* in the vernacular) that grew at the same site, considered a miracle since it grew out of the stone (even from moistureless fissures) and sprouted in different places each year, proving prodigious rather than natural growth to the hagiographer (c. v). Another miracle-story tells of a second cross, erected by Columbanus close to the cave-church. En route from Francia to Rome, many pilgrims stopped at Spelonca, proceeding from there to this second cross, where their concerns would be dissipated so they could continue, glad of heart. Another miracle occurred at this second cross; a Frankish pilgrim reported to the custodian priest of Spelonca that his brother was cured of a long-term malady having returned part of Columbanus's cross he had seized on a previous pilgrimage. A church was then built at the second site (almost certainly the church now dedicated to Saint Michael) to house and guard the miraculous cross, by this miracle confirmed as a secondary relic of Columbanus.²⁵⁴ In this manner, despite their distance from Bobbio, the hagiographer manages to demonstrate the sanctified foundation of these two sites.

Given the initial miracle-stories' concern with these establishments, it is striking that

²⁵² Local tradition holds that Columbanus had died at the cave or at the oratory of San Michele: Stokes, *Six Months*, p. 145; Mandelli, 'Le grotte di s. Columbano', p. 50 n. 1.

²⁵³ A. G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca, 1995), pp. 43–45, quotes at p. 44. The following stages in Remensnyder's model – endowment, construction and the acquisition of privileges – were not relevant to these two little churches but, as we will see, the were central to the later chapters relating to Bobbio itself. I do not argue that the *Miracula sancti Columbani* are directly comparable to the later French foundation legends studied by Remensnyder, but it seems that the early section of the *miracula* were indeed concerned with evidencing and celebrating the revelation and establishment of these two churches in a similar manner.

²⁵⁴ *MSC*, iv, alluded to in *MSC*, i.

subsequent miracle-stories are almost entirely preoccupied with the wider patrimony of Bobbio. They mention the cave church only once more, when one of the two presbyters chosen by Gerlan to ring the bells in the Pavia procession is named as Raginerius, who ‘was afterwards made the guardian of the aforesaid holy cave’ (c. xi). The other priest remains nameless. Possibly the author of our work was in some way connected to Spelonca and San Michele, was perhaps even their guardian-priest (Raginerius maybe, or his successor?). We know Spelonca was equipped for literary activities at the time, since one of the sub-collections in the Bobbio library book list is reported under the title *Ad Speluncam* – either those manuscripts held there, or at some point transferred from Spelonca to Bobbio – and the only surviving manuscript amongst these dates to the tenth century.²⁵⁵ The author working outside Bobbio may also explain his freedom to write a work that may have been considered subversive, as we will see.

7. BOBBIO, PUBLIC AUTHORITY AND LANDHOLDING

Bobbio sits on the left bank of the River Trebbia, just inside modern-day Emilia-Romagna, close to its four-way juncture with the regions of Lombardy, Piedmont and Liguria. From the start the monastery was in a frontier zone, its foundation there by the Lombard King Agilulf part of a strategy to secure the Apennine region north of Byzantine-controlled Liguria. Bobbio lies at the foot of Monte Penice, the highest point in the Ligurian Apennines, before they descend towards the Po Plain to the north. To the south, the Apennines drop down to the Ligurian coast. Despite the dramatic relief, the temperate microclimate of the Ligurian Apennines sustains fertile and productive land, and archaeological finds confirm the area has been populated since the Paleolithic Era. The Val Trebbia falls within the large region settled by the Ligures and Etruscan, Celtic and Gallic influences were evident before the region was incorporated into the Roman Empire and subsequent Germanic kingdoms.²⁵⁶ The political import of the area was confirmed by Lombard invasions in the sixth century and cemented by the establishment of their capital at Pavia. Bobbio’s proximity (c.30 miles) to the throne of the *regnum italicum* proved an influential dynamic in the monastery’s political and jurisdictional development. Just as significant was the closeness of the cities and episcopal seats of Piacenza

²⁵⁵ The *Ad Speluncam* collection in Muratori’s list is edited at Zironi, *Il monastero*, p. 156. He identifies the copy of the Rule of Saint Benedict from this list as that now held at Turin Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, G.VII.18, dated to the tenth century: Segre Montel, *I manoscritti miniati*, p. 22.

²⁵⁶ M. Brea, *La Valtrebbia dal Paleolitico all’Età del Ferro* (Travo, 1991).

(c.27 miles) to the northeast, easily accessible along a good route by the banks of the River Trebbia; and Tortona (c.28 miles) to the northwest. Their jurisdictions were central in shaping Bobbio's history, until Bobbio itself was raised as an episcopal see in 1014. Situating Bobbio in a wider politico-geographical framework is not straightforward, despite the constant presence of royal authority throughout the early medieval period. The combination of papal exemption from episcopal jurisdiction and royal grants of immunity (including from counts, dukes and marquises) has led Bobbio to be described as both *nullius diocesis* and *nullius comitatus*, although this picture is incomplete, as will be discussed. At Conques, which was practically independent from royal agency from the tenth century onwards, it will serve to divide the subjects of public authority and landholding for analysis. At Bobbio, however, such an approach would be synthetic and unhelpful, since both were entwined.

The foundation of Bobbio and its patrimony

King Agilulf's grant of lands to Columbanus and his followers sealed Bobbio's status as a 'royal' monastery from its foundation.²⁵⁷ Various drivers lay behind the grant, including the Arian Lombards' desire to facilitate mediation with Rome during the Three Chapters controversy, the needs to colonize and assert royal authority in local areas, and to establish an outpost in an area of military importance.²⁵⁸ Despite Jonas's claims for its isolated and wild nature, some attribute Bobbio's foundation at Monte Penice in part to a Lombard political strategy termed 'road politics'.²⁵⁹ Since the primary route from Italy to the world beyond the Apennines relied on the Cisa Pass, controlled by the Byzantines, Bobbio, on a secondary communication route, became an important Lombard stronghold. The new route to the south of Bobbio was known as the Via degli Abati. **Map 1** It has also been suggested that Lombard foundations aimed to bypass sectional interests, which may explain Bobbio's equidistance from Tortona and Piacenza.²⁶⁰ Thus it was not only by merit of the fiscal land beneath it that the monastery

²⁵⁷ CDSCB, i, doc. iii. As we have seen the label of 'royal monastery' is too inconsistent to be helpful as a distinct category: Bobbio does not fit Voigt's *Eigenkloster* model, for example: Richter, *Bobbio*, pp. 20–23. I use the term here in its broadest possible sense, as a monastery with royal connections.

²⁵⁸ Mor, 'Fondazione'; O. Garbarino, 'Il diploma di Carlo Magno al monastero di San Colombano di Bobbio e i confini dell'alpe 'Adra': un documento 'intricato' autentico o un prezioso falso?', *Studi Genuensi*, 10 (1992), pp. 27–52, at pp. 35–37, Polonio, *San Colombano di Bobbio* 9–22 and the papers collected in Nuvolone, *La fondazione di Bobbio*.

²⁵⁹ Amongst others: R. Stopani, 'Prima della Francigena: Bobbio nel sistema delle vie di pellegrinaggio dell'alto medioevo', in Nuvolone, *La fondazione di Bobbio*, pp. 159–177, at pp. 159, 163, 169.

²⁶⁰ Costambeys, *Fatfa*, pp. 88–89.

served a ‘public’ function, which went above and beyond the general prayers for the ‘salvation and stability of our Lord’s kingdom’ (*pro salute et stabilitate regni nostri Dominum*).²⁶¹ Under the Lombards, Bobbio’s extensive network of monastic cells, *oracula* and hospices with their farms, were all part of local administrative structures.²⁶² Bobbio possessed lands from the Ligurian coast to Lake Garda, but from the Carolingian era the core of Bobbio’s properties were located nearby in a triangle of Apennine valleys stretching to the river Po and the ancient *via Postumia* in the north, the rivers Trebbia to the east and Staffora to the west, in the area also known as the eastern Oltrepò Pavese.²⁶³

King Agilulf’s precept marked the foundation of Bobbio giving Columbanus ‘license to inhabit and possess’ (*licentia habitandi ac possedendi*) granting the lands ‘to be possessed forever’ (*perpetuo tempore concedimus possedendum*), wording that was repeated by subsequent royal confirmations of King Adaloald to abbots Attala and Bertulf.²⁶⁴ The Lombard kings retained no direct influence over the choice of abbot and confirmed the treasured exemption from episcopal jurisdiction.²⁶⁵ Yet Carlo Mor argues that even though the lands were granted in perpetuity, they retained their fiscal nature,²⁶⁶ and for Susan Wood, ‘[m]onasteries in the [Lombard] palace’s defence seem to have been considered royal possessions like royal estates.’²⁶⁷ Whilst the monastery might have been considered part of the realm symbolically, the status of its lands

²⁶¹ *CDL*, iii.1, docs. 1, 3.

²⁶² Garbarino, ‘Diploma’, pp. 36–37.

²⁶³ Much has been written on Bobbio’s patrimony, but see in particular A. G. Bergamaschi, ‘Sul ‘*dominatus*’ fondiario del monastero di San Colombano in Bobbio nel periodo longobardo’, *BSP*, 52 (1957), pp. 57–64; A. G. Bergamaschi, ‘Sul ‘*dominatus*’ fondiario del monastero di San Colombano in Bobbio nel periodo carolingio (774–835)’, *BSP*, 58 (1963), pp. 51–75; G. Coperchini, ‘Quadro ecologico e interpretazione storica del territorio Piacentino–Bobiense’, *BSP*, 73 (1988), pp. 253–270; G. Coperchini, ‘Le terre di San Colombano: la ‘*valle in qua situm est monasterium*’ ed il monastero ‘*sancti Pauli de Mediana*’’, *AB*, 23 (2001), pp. 231–241; G. Coperchini, ‘Le terre di San Colombano: la ‘*valle in qua situm est monasterium*’’, *AB*, 22 (2000), pp. 291–305; Destefanis, *Il monastero di Bobbio*, pp. 9–29; Tosi, ‘Trasferimento’, pp. 130–32.

²⁶⁴ *CDSBC*, i, docs. iii, vii, ix; see Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 235 n. 1 for debate over the significance of these terms.

²⁶⁵ King Rodoald’s precept addressed to Abbot Bobulenus in 652 confirmed the free election of the addressee’s successor by the community on his death: *CDSCB*, i, doc. xv. Wood considers the part of this document relating to the freedom of election as genuine content: Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 184. It is generally held that no Lombard monarch had any say over the titular head of the abbey: Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 21; Mor, ‘Fondazione’, p. 77, quoting Jonas’s confirmation that Abbot Bertulf had been elected by the *conventus monachorum* without direct or indirect intervention from the Pavian court, although he qualifies this speculatively at pp. 78–79.

²⁶⁶ Mor, ‘Fondazione’, esp. p. 80; see also Garbrino, ‘Il diploma di Carlo Magno’, p. 36.

²⁶⁷ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 238. Pre-empting Carolingian strategies of lordship, the Lombard kings may also have held control over Bobbio under terms of ‘protection’, although this has to be constructed from Carolingian documents.

remained a grey area that escaped clarification beyond implicit and contradictory charter references. The Carolingians would clarify this ambiguity to their benefit.

Carolingian lordship and the partition of patrimony

The transition in dynasties at the head of the *regnum italicum* was smoothed by rapid land grants to monasteries, including the first charter Charlemagne signed using the title *rex Francorum et Langobardorum*, issued to Bobbio in June 774. This perpetuated the relationship between king and institution but did not necessarily clarify it further. Interestingly, in granting new lands to Bobbio, Charlemagne did not reconfirm his predecessors' concessions, nor does the document mention protection, although it does specify that the *abbas prefactus Guinebaldus sui que successores denominatas res teneant con integritate sicut de Palati possesse sunt, tenere ac dominare vel regere debeant*.²⁶⁸ Charlemagne's successors ensured Bobbio would be explicitly subjected to royal lordship, first in the form of the 'protective control' of Louis the Pious's immunity-defence, a record of which survives by his son Lothar's confirmation.²⁶⁹ Mor believes Carolingian defence owed more to the nature of the lands granted at the outset, never quite losing their fiscal character, assuming the character of a permanent concession intended to remain in the patrimony of the monastery despite being ultimately of the king. Yet it seems at least one Carolingian felt able to make transfers of patrimony from one religious entity to another, such as the goods dependent on one of Bobbio's *xenodochia* transferred by Louis II to the new nunnery established by his wife, Angilberga, at Piacenza.²⁷⁰ Susan Wood argues instead for an encroachment of Carolingian lordship based on custom and ability to enforce outside lordship, rather than any legal status attached to the land.²⁷¹ Either way the result was the same, although for Bobbio, 'subjection' to the Carolingian kings may have also relied on the grant made by Charlemagne, and was felt most keenly in the binding of the abbot to the palace. Immunity resulted in the abbot holding the rights of the excluded public officials; by investing abbots himself, the king could use some of the monastery's patrimony to serve his ends, enacted via

²⁶⁸ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xxvii. On this document see Garbarino, 'Diploma', *passim.*, for whom it is an interpolated copy of a real grant (pp. 37, 40–41). Bobbio was not fully immersed in Carolingian politics like some other monasteries were, such as Nonantola, which hosted an imperial synod in 883.

²⁶⁹ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xxxvii. The exact terms used Louis the Pious therefore cannot be confirmed; Lothar's uses *sub suae defensionis receperit immunitate atque tuitione*.

²⁷⁰ Mor, 'Fondazione', pp. 81–82; see also Mor, 'La chiesa è società feudale', p. 55; P. Racine, 'Les Ottoniens et le monastère de Bobbio', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 36 (2002), pp. 271–284 at p. 273.

²⁷¹ See above p. 37.

the abbot, whilst the monastery retained its service to the religious needs of the empire.²⁷² In the first half of the ninth century we encounter the first abbots at Bobbio who almost certainly owed their positions to the sovereign – Wala (c.833–835), Ebbo, also archbishop of Reims (?844), Hilduin, also archbishop of Cologne (?844), Amalricus, also bishop of Como (?843/844–864), Hermenricus (865), Liutward, bishop of Vercelli (c.887).²⁷³ A document of Louis II from 865 states that the abbot Hermenricus owed his position both to *nostra largitione et eorum electione*.²⁷⁴

To make this work in practice, it was opportune to define which lands would pertain to the abbot, and which would serve the monastic community. If there was ever a charter or *praeceptum divisionis* this is now lost and the first explicit reference to partition comes retrospectively in Louis II's charter of 865 to *quandam divisionem de rebus iam fati coenobii ad oram fieri permissimus* referring then to *illa parte quam in usus monachorum delegavimus*. Whether the division was effectively in place by the abbacy of Wala and his *Breve memorationis* of 833–835 or if it had been made under Louis in the 860s is debatable,²⁷⁵ but certainly provision was made for an abbatial mense separate from that of the monks by the tenth century. This arrangement was another contributing factor to the king's 'wide-ranging interest in the Church's wealth, demonstrated by the proliferation of surveys and inventories of church property, made often on royal initiative.'²⁷⁶ Bobbio had four such land surveys as well as the *Breve memorationis* of Wala.²⁷⁷ First, the *Adbreviatio* of Louis II (862) already mentioned, and three further polyptychs from 883, one of the late-ninth/tenth century, and another from the end of the tenth century. Bobbio's patrimony may be tracked over this period through these various surveys, although

²⁷² Bobbio's strategic position may again explain this interest: Garbarino, 'Diploma', p. 38 n. 62.

²⁷³ On Wala, cousin and counsellor of Charlemagne, see M.-A. Laurent, 'Organisation de l'espace mobilisation des ressources autour de Bobbio', in J. P. Devroey, L. Feller and R. Le Jan (eds.), *Les élites et la richesse au haut Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 479–494 at p. 480 n. 8. On the others see Polonio, *San Colombano di Bobbio*, pp. 85–87; Mor, 'Fondazione', p. 83.

²⁷⁴ *Diplomata Ludowici II*, doc. xlii; cf. Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 105. Held in Rome, this document was not edited by Cipolla but was mentioned by Buzzi, *CDSCB*, iii, pp. 54, 167. It is studied by G. Micheli, 'Le carte bobbiesi dell'archivio Doria di Roma', *Archivio Storico per le province Parmensi*, 23 (1923), pp. 371–398 at pp. 372–382.

²⁷⁵ See (preferring the earlier) Laurent, 'Organisation', pp. 484–485 and n. 16, following M. Nobili, 'Vassalli su terra monastica fra re e 'principi': il caso di Bobbio (seconda metà del sec. x – inizi del sec. xi)', in P. Toubert (ed.), *Structures féodales et féodalisme dans l'Occident méditerranéen (Xe–XIIIe siècles)* (Rome, 1980), pp. 299–309, at pp. 301–301 and n. 8. On land divisions generally, see Dumas, 'La notion de la propriété ecclésiastique', p. 28; Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis'.

²⁷⁶ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 268–9, quote at p. 268.

²⁷⁷ Carefully analysed in Laurent, 'Organisation', pp. 479–485.

not without raising further issues.²⁷⁸ Generally, the *Abbreviationes* of 862 and 883 concern the patrimony element reserved to the monks, whilst the third, from the late ninth/early tenth century, concerns those given in benefice. This is possibly because almost all of the first parchment is missing, which may have carried information on the properties directly administered by the monastery. When whole, it may have resembled the fourth and final inventory. This late-tenth century polyptych lists in three sections lands administered directly by the monks, the benefices (titled ‘those given by the marquis Oberto’), and lands in the *Maritima* (Liguria). The two latter documents show that near the end of the ninth century or the beginning of the tenth the partitions of Bobbio’s patrimony remained discrete, yet still assessed on the same imperial survey, and a contest over one of the properties in 915 made reference to *illam portionem, quam consuetudo fuit in beneficio dandi* – showing that the division also remained alive in practice.²⁷⁹

We must remind ourselves that many of the revenue-drawing lands also had a religious function and Bobbio, from its foundation, controlled an extensive network of *plebes* (pievi) and *xenodochia*. The former were part of the ancient pre-Lombard pastoral system: administered by a rector, holding baptismal rights and drawing tithes (or renders) and offerings. *Plebes* were usually subject to the bishop except, as in Bobbio’s case, when exemptions may have applied. As property-owning entities *plebes* could have their own sub-churches, and could be valuable revenue-earners.²⁸⁰ The most famous *hospitale* is perhaps the very large *xenodochium* at Pavia, which could house up to 200 guests.²⁸¹ But there were many others, including the hospice of San Benedetto at Montelungo, probably visited by the procession reported in the *Miracula*

²⁷⁸ CDSBC, i, docs. xxxvi, lxiii, lxviii, lxxvi, xcvi, the latter four re-edited (correcting Cipolla’s omissions) by A. Castagnetti (ed.), ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, i-iv, in *Inventari altomedievali di terre, coloni e redditi*, (Rome, 1979), pp. 119-192. Laurent’s study of the earliest *abbreviatio* (862) notes that its content is slightly different to the classic Frankish polyptychs, although retains its classification amongst them: Laurent, ‘Organisation’, pp. 493-494. Wala’s survey and the Bobbio polyptychs have drawn much attention since they give insight into the economics of the monastic estates. The classic study is L. M. Hartmann, ‘Die Wirtschaft des Klosters Bobbio im 9. Jahrhundert’ in his *Zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte Italiens im frühen Mittelalter: Analekten* (Gotha, 1904), translated into Italian as ‘L’attività economica del monastero di Bobbio nel ix secolo’, *AB*, 2 (1980), pp. 107-135.

²⁷⁹ CDSBC, i, doc. lxxxv.

²⁸⁰ Originally distinct from private churches and dependent oratories, *pievi* came increasingly to receive episcopally-nominated priests and to be treated as property by other entities: Wood, *Proprietary Church*, esp. pp. 86-91, p. 506.

²⁸¹ Castagnetti, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, i, ii. These surveys have one section entitled *De xenodochiis: hec xenodochia secundum illorum iudicata sicut subter scripta sunt, pauperibus debita persolvent hospitium, per omnes kalendas*. The term *xenodochium* seems to have been interchangeable with *hospitale*: R. Crotti, ‘L’attività caritativo-assistenziale degli ‘hospitalia’ colombaniani in alcune aree del Nord Italia’, in L. Valle and P. Pulina (eds.), *San Colombano e l’Europa: religione, cultura, natura*, (Como, 2001), pp. 169-183, at p. 170 and *passim*.

sancti Columbani.²⁸² These places were more than simple hostels. Many of them were highly productive, agriculturally, as the ninth-century *abbreviations* confirm. A *xenodochium* at Cagnano arranged the clearing of a forested area between 862 and 883; San Pietro at Boccolo dei Tassi supported six bookmen and owed all its revenues to the monastery of Bobbio (which had the right to nominate its chaplain), supplying ninety-three *moggi* of grain, four amphorae of wine, eggs and nineteen chickens; whilst San Benedetto at Auliano produced 3150 litres of wine a year.²⁸³ Yet they also fulfilled a religious function, of course – the role of *hospitalia* is defined by Crotti as ‘third sector’, that is to say to help the sick and poor, and pilgrims – and their sheer number represents the pervasiveness of Bobbio’s socio-religious presence in the area.²⁸⁴ Bobbio was well-endowed temporally, but was also a local religious powerhouse.

Post-Carolingian kings and the abbots

Once the formal division of lands was made the mould was set. Whatever their own levels of power and authority, both Carolingian and post-Carolingian sovereigns could lay claim to the lordship at Bobbio. From the death of Louis II in 875, Carolingian control over the *Regnum Italicum* began to falter. Charles the Bald (875–877) and Carloman (877–879) rarely crossed the Alps and even Charles the Fat (879–888), who spent half his reign in the kingdom, could not match Louis’ continuous presence. Powerful Italian aristocrats, who had enjoyed high status in Louis II’s court, flexed their muscles under his successors, Charles and Carloman who, distant from the realm and anxious to contain aristocratic conflict, devolved further jurisdictions and power to them, especially the bishops, whilst continuing to confirm but not extend those previously granted, as in Bobbio’s case from Carloman.²⁸⁵ Charles the Fat, to his benefit, managed to recoup some of Louis’ aristocratic networks in the Po area (less so elsewhere). He confirmed Bobbio’s privileges in 883 and probably ordered the survey resulting in the *abbreviatio* of 883.²⁸⁶ He also relied on powerful marcher lords like Berengar of Friuli and Guy of Spoleto, who (mostly successfully) would contest the throne after Charles’s death in 888.²⁸⁷

²⁸² MSC, xii.

²⁸³ Castagnetti, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, i, ii; G. Magistretti, ‘Contribuito per una ricerca su la ‘via degli Abati’ di Bobbio: da Bobbio a Pontremoli per Roma’, in Nuvoletti, *La fondazione di Bobbio*, pp. 287–302, at p. 294; Racine, ‘La forêt’, p. 192.

²⁸⁴ Crotti, ‘L’attività caritativo-assistenziale’, p. 170.

²⁸⁵ CDSCB, i, doc. lxvi.

²⁸⁶ Charles’s diploma at CDSCB, i, doc. lxvii. Although one of the ‘falsi bobbiesi’ of 1172, a subsequent diploma of Berengar considered a faithful copy refers to a diploma of Charles: Richter, *Bobbio*, pp. 157–158.

²⁸⁷ This survey of late-Carolingian kingship in Italy from MacLean, *Kingship*, pp. 91–96.

These regional powers, if now dynastic, were originally Frankish, and initially derived much of their power from Carolingian patronage, so – especially in Berengar’s case –²⁸⁸ the term ‘post-Carolingian’ is apt. Berengar and his rivals for the Italian crown continued to rule in the image of their Carolingian forebears,²⁸⁹ continuing to confirm immunity-defence and the *divisio* which Bobbio gained from Berengar I (March 888), Guy (III of Spoleto, April 893), Lambert (II of Spoleto, July 896), and Berengar again (September 903).²⁹⁰ These should not be seen as comparable to the new and extensive immunity concessions given particularly by Berengar, which decimated the royal fisc and contributed heavily to the shift in power towards the bishops,²⁹¹ rather the re-confirmations were a rite of passage for transitory and fragile kings. Outside lordship had been legitimized and administrated for and, if nothing else, the continuing dialogue between institution and king meant that a relationship was maintained and Bobbio continued to be a ‘royal’ monastery.

Whether these kings had real control over the abbacy is another question, since we lack data on how abbots maintained their position then. When Hugh of Arles ascended to the Italian throne, however, we can be certain that the king could commend the abbot, since the *miracula* say so explicitly. Following the death of Silveradus (917-926/928) Hugh had given the monastery to Gerlan.²⁹² Gerlan (abbot ...926-936...) was already Hugh’s arch-chancellor and a favourite of Queen Alda, who wanted him appointed as bishop (*cupiens eum episcopali fastigio sublimare*).²⁹³ Later, Giseprand (abbot ...952-963/7...), also chaplain, notary, chancellor under Hugh and Lothar and Bishop of Tortona from 945, held the abbacy either from Hugh or Berengar II (or both), and later under Otto I.²⁹⁴ Abbot Peter may have held the role from Otto I (...973-977...), and Gerbert of Aurillac held his position from Otto II in (?981-983).²⁹⁵ Two

²⁸⁸ Guy of Spoleto also had strong relationships with the papacy and southern duchies: MacLean, *Kingship*, p. 96.

²⁸⁹ Although legislative activities ceased from 898: G. Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 152-153.

²⁹⁰ *CDSCB*, i, docs. lxxix, lxxiii, lxxiv, lxxxii. A document of Berengar a month later confirms defence but not immunity unlike in 893 or 903: *CDSCB*, i, doc. lxxxii (October 903).

²⁹¹ Tabacco describes how the ‘feverish activity’ of the diplomas and privileges issued to different individuals in this period seemed to ‘encapsulate the whole meaning of the kingdom’. Such grants of immunity and concessions of further jurisdictional rights to various entities (especially bishops), particularly by Berengar I, created autonomous nuclei of power, often at the expense of the counts and dukes: Tabacco, *Struggle*, pp. 153-157, quotes at p. 154 and especially Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 172-177; C. Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome* (London, 2009), p. 434.

²⁹² *MSC*, viii.

²⁹³ *MSC*, viii; F. Bougard, ‘Gerlanno, abate di Bobbio’, *DBI*, 53 (Rome, 1999), pp. 431-434.

²⁹⁴ Scaravelli, ‘Giseprando’.

²⁹⁵ Mor, ‘Fondazione’, p. 83; Tosi, ‘Governo’, on the dating of Gerbert’s reign at pp. 97-103.

others who are never called ‘abbot’ appear to have acted in a management role within the community and to have been raised in the monastery itself – *Guberto preposito* appears in a document of Otto I in 972, and another, Petroaldus, may have been abbot or simply provost during a vacancy in the abbacy before Gerbert of Aurillac. Petroaldus retained an elevated position (despite being addressed simply as a monk by Gerbert, who writes to him directly), until 998 when he was apparently recognized as abbot.²⁹⁶ Petroaldus may have been elected internally *secundum regulam* to act as head before Gerbert’s commendation and retained his superiority, if not the abbatial title, or he may always have been a provost (or dean) until 998. But he clearly had some stature since he was the first, in 1017, to bear the title *abbas et episcopus monasterio sancti Columbani sito Bobio*.²⁹⁷ It is reasonable to suggest there must always have been such an individual leading the brethren, whatever his title, throughout the secular abbacies – this was almost certainly the case during Giseprand’s time, as will be argued below.

Considering secular abbots to be akin to ‘benefice-holders’ may also not be unreasonable, although the term *beneficium* is used only for the disposal of abbatial lands to secondary beneficiaries, and never specifically for the abbot himself.²⁹⁸ Yet we should note that new kings did not seem to have replaced incumbents with their own men, even when the dynasty changed: Hugh did not instate Gerlan until his predecessor, Silveradus, died, and Giseprand may have served under Burgundian Hugh, Ivrean Berengar II and Saxon Otto I. The situation was different for the tenth-century secular abbots we will meet at Conques: appointment remaining the king’s prerogative, the Bobbio abbacy never become hereditary (nor were there apparent attempts to make it so)²⁹⁹ and, significantly for the discussion below, there was no room for another abbot *secundum regulam* to work with the abbot ‘in title’, even if a system of elected provosts fulfilled such a role.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ On Guberto and Petroaldus see Tosi, ‘Governo’, pp. 88-90, 92-97. It seems Petroaldus was Gerbert’s predecessor in the abbacy and was left in charge, without the title, following Gerbert’s departure, finally recognized in this office by Otto III in 998 who confirms that Bobbio had been deprived of an abbot for fifteen years – that is to say, since the departure of Gerbert: *CDSCB*, i, doc. ciii; Racine, ‘Ottoniens’, p. 281.

²⁹⁷ Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 33-34, who raises doubts that Petroaldus was abbot until after the turn of the millennium (p. 117).

²⁹⁸ *CDSBC*, docs. lxxvi, cvii, edited as Castagnetti, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, iii and iv.

²⁹⁹ It may be, as Tosi proposes, that the provost (and perhaps abbot) Petroaldus was the nephew of the Abbot Peter: Tosi, ‘Governo’, pp. 92-94, although this is far from certain based on the surviving evidence – there is not even agreement that they were two distinct people. Both the abbacy and, once created, the bishopric, remained free of seigneurial familial control: Piazza, *Monastero*, p. 4 n. 7.

³⁰⁰ When the Bobbio diplomas mention anything of this they speak in the same breath of election and royal appointment of the abbot: see above text to n. 261.

The consequences of land partition and secular abbacy throughout the tenth century are the subject of several fine studies. This study focuses more on the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, which provide a window on to events in 929, and again on the resurgence of their relevance two or more decades later when they were produced.³⁰¹ Consequently, we learn more about the cultic activities of Bobbio, and their relationship to the political and proprietary upheavals of the tenth century, and the role of the *miracula* within these.

8. THE CULT OF SAN COLOMBANO, PUBLIC AUTHORITY & LAND-HOLDING

Italian nobles who developed their powerbase under the absentee Carolingian kings thrived in the post-Carolingian dispute for the realm, and aristocratic factionalism could make or break a king. Berengar I ruled for most of the first quarter of the tenth century, even taking the imperial title from 915, but continuing Magyar and Saracen incursions in the Po area and Piedmont and fierce inter-aristocratic battles in the 920s spelled the end.³⁰² For Chris Wickham Berengar's reign marked 'the fulcrum between royal power and royal impotence' in Italy, characterized by the alienation of fiscal land and the prerogatives of royal justice, with the result of increasingly-localized loci of power.³⁰³ On the wrong side of this watershed Hugh, count of Arles and Vienne, was invited to the throne by the same nobles responsible for his predecessor's assassination in 924.³⁰⁴ Initially Hugh's position was fragile, dependent on his ability to balance this volatile and powerful electorate. Initial revolts – such as one by Pavian judges Everard Gezo and Walpert – were controlled through negotiation. Violent punishments followed, undertaken by the count Samson, who removed Gezo's eyes and tongue and

³⁰¹ In particular Nobili, 'Vassalli', who mentions the *miracula* only obliquely at p. 302 n. 13; Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 5–31, on the *miracula* at pp. 17–21; Tosi, 'Governo', who denies that the *miracula* were written during the abbacy of Giseprand and thus dismisses them as a source for the later period. Only François Bougard places the *miracula* at the centre of his study, with more of a focus on the events of 929 than the period in which they were written: Bougard, 'La relique'.

³⁰² Bobbio seems to have escaped sackings like those suffered in the Arab incursions by southern Monte Cassino and San Vincenzo during the early 880s. For some of the effects on San Volturno, mostly from an archaeological perspective, see the articles in R. Hodges (ed.), *San Vincenzo al Volturno*, vols 1 and 2 (London, 1993 and 1995).

³⁰³ Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 172–177, quote at p. 172.

³⁰⁴ On Hugh's accession to the throne, for which evidence is scanty, and his subsequent reign see C. W. Previté Orton, 'Italy and Provence, 900–950', *The English Historical Review*, 32 (1917), pp. 335–347; G. Fasoli, *I re d'Italia: 888–962* (Florence, 1949), pp. 97–104; E. Cristiani, 'Note sulla feudalità italiana negli ultimi anni del regno di Ugo e Lotario', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 4 (1963), pp. 92–103; Sergi, 'The kingdom of Italy', pp. 349–355, Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 177–179.

beheaded Walpert. According to Liudprand of Cremona, such activities gave Hugh of Arles an unprecedented notoriety and new authority: ‘there grew great fear of the king not only at Pavia but throughout the territories of Italy; nor was this one treated as a nonentity, like other kings, but was honoured in every way.’³⁰⁵ Yet such violence did not define Hugh’s rule; he also focused on the patronage of individuals and families in important local posts, in which context we meet him in at Bobbio.³⁰⁶

The *translatio*, Bishop Guy of Piacenza and the events of 929

The events in the *miracula* encompass a curious local/national dimension. In essence a land contest between local lords and the abbot of Bobbio, they nevertheless pitched prominent members of Hugh’s court against each other and, being close to the capital, often took place in the royal palace at Pavia. Bougard believes justice and politics were inseparable in this period, since *placita* were so dependent on central power, in particular the itinerant nature of courts.³⁰⁷ Furthermore, the hearing of 929 occurred during an early phase of Hugh’s court politics. Gerlan, Hugh’s fellow countryman and arch-chancellor, once bestowed with the abbacy at Bobbio, brought a complaint over Bobbio’s patrimony (which Gerlan found seriously depleted on arrival) against Guy, the bishop of Piacenza, and to a lesser degree his brother Raginerius, count of the same city.³⁰⁸ Guy and Raginerius represented the Lombard da Gorgo family, whose status rose greatly during Berengar’s reign, rivalling even the dominant Carolingian Supponids in Emilia, and overtaking them in Piacenza.³⁰⁹ Other *principes* tangentially named as threats included Samson, the one-time military commander, rebel-quasher and now count palatine, and Gandolf, son of the Frankish gastald *Gamenulfus* and progenitor of the Gandolfingi, who would subsequently be made count and then marquis of Piacenza following Raginerius’s death in 929.³¹⁰ They represent Hugh’s early court dynamics, a mix of compatriots and local nobles formerly faithful to Berengar, although from 930 Hugh would increasingly entrust *homines novi*, often Provençal in origin, with high positions, and especially his relatives

³⁰⁵ *Antapodosis*, III.39–41, citation at III.41, translated in Squatriti, *Complete Works*, pp. 129–30.

³⁰⁶ Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 178–179.

³⁰⁷ Bougard, ‘La justice dans le royaume d’Italie’, in *La giustizia nell’alto medioevo: secoli ix–xi*, Settimane di studi del centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 44 (Spoleto, 1997), pp. 133–178 at p. 175.

³⁰⁸ MSC, viii. On Guy see Scaravelli, ‘Guido’. On Raginerius, see F. Bougard, ‘Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi: les comtes de Plaisance aux Xe et XIe siècles’, *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome: Moyen Âge*, 101 (1989), pp. 11–66, at pp. 19–20.

³⁰⁹ Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 182–183; Bougard, ‘Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi’, pp. 16–18.

³¹⁰ MSC, xxii, xxvi.

in the highest positions.³¹¹ The hagiographer assessed the nobles only in relation to their activities vis-à-vis Bobbio, however.

Given these nobles' court roles, it was easy for the hagiographer to paint the issue in a national context – Hugh informed Gerlan he was unable to force the *principes* who *res aecclisiae Bobiensis abstractas habebant* by his own power, because he feared them – should he go against their will, he might lose his kingdom (after all, the hagiographer adds, the *principes* were often known to rebel against him).³¹² Unable to help directly, Hugh advised Gerlan to bring Columbanus's relics to Pavia, where Hugh would be holding a colloquium with his *principes*, and where the presence of the holy body would help put an end to the *rapacitatis* (c. viii). Perhaps Hugh wanted to see his compatriot Gerlan in control of as much territory as possible, but was unwilling to rule directly against the powerful Guy who had maintained his episcopal position in Piacenza since being elected in 904, and had been an imperial *missus* of Berengar (915–920) and a counsellor and *fidelis* of Rudolph before Hugh.³¹³ So, was this a local or national issue? Gerlan's priority was to ensure the value of his abbacy. But he clearly owed his position to (and therefore held his land from) Hugh, whereas Guy, his opponent, did not. Indeed political preoccupations *were* now more localized, and Hugh could not intervene as king 'without making his intervention into a political enterprise'.³¹⁴ Later, the hagiographer explains that archbishop Lambert of Milan had given complementary advice to Gerlan's emissaries, to take the relics to the contested land (c. xxi). As Lambert was a political heavyweight this was significant authorization for Bobbio's actions and, probably, to Gerlan's accession to the abbacy. Informal political support from both Hugh and Lambert seems to have been important for Bobbio's cause.³¹⁵ Despite the hagiographer's emphasis on the national perspective, however, the *miracula* must primarily be understood in a local context.

By invoking Hugh and Lambert, the hagiographer also emphasized that Gerlan's cult-based strategy had political validity. The approach was two-pronged: the *translatio* procession affirmed Bobbio's rights to the lands its patron's relics crossed, and, once at Pavia, the saint played a

³¹¹ Cristiani, 'Note sulla feodalità'; Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, p. 178; Bougard, 'Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi', pp. 18–19.

³¹² MSC, viii: King Hugh *metuebat enim illos [principes], ne si aliquid contra eorum voluntatem ageret, regni dampnum incurreret. Quos scimus etiam contra eum sepius rebellasse.*

³¹³ Scaravelli, 'Guido', p. 399.

³¹⁴ Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, pp. 176–177.

³¹⁵ Wickham, 'Land disputes', p. 251.

central role in the courtly activities, confirming the privileges and patrimony of the monastery. This was a double innovation, in which converged cultic developments new to Bobbio and also relatively unknown elsewhere in continental Europe. In this case the translation facilitated the presence at the royal court of the relics of Columbanus, employed on behalf of Bobbio: that is to say, for the use of ‘interested’ or partisan relics in a legal context, to be discussed below. Yet the movement of the relics out of the crypt at Bobbio for the purposes of a circular translation was in itself a development. The *miracula* make it clear that the monks of Bobbio were not in the habit of transporting or translating the relics of Saint Columbanus. In carrying out the plan, the heavy tombstone in the crypt had to be broken and the saints’ bones removed (achieved with miraculous help, indicating the saint’s assent to the scheme) before they were placed in a chest especially fashioned for the occasion which the hagiographer calls an *arca* (c. ix); an invocation, no doubt, of the Ark of the Covenant, although that hagiographer specifies that Bobbio’s was made of pinewood, rather than the acacia of its biblical namesake (Exodus, 25:10). A procession was formed to accompany the reliquary shrine, included people ringing bells and holding candles, a cross and incense, and set off on Friday 17 July 929, arriving in Pavia two days later (cc. xi-xv).

The one-way translation of relics permanently to a new home was not new, of course, nor was the procession of relics in a liturgical church context.³¹⁶ There appears to have been a particular tradition in doing so in times of great universal social need. Hubert and Hubert note Gregory of Tours’ example of the procession of the veil covering the tomb of Saint Rémi at Rheims, and a circular procession of the relics of Saint-Germain and the fragments of the True Cross in the late ninth century in the context of the Norman invasions and the siege of Paris ‘pour rétablir une situation jugée désespérée’, a practice which became habitual from the end of the Carolingian period.³¹⁷ Analogous examples are found in the Byzantine Empire. Icons and

³¹⁶ Processional Rogation ceremonies mentioned by Gregory of Tours may have included relics, since he talks of an imposter bringing fake relics to one: Gregory of Tours, *Ten Books of the Histories*, iv.5 and ix.6, ed. and trans. by L. Thorpe as *The History of the Franks* (Harmondsworth, 1974), pp. 200 and 485. The Easter processions of Angilbert of Saint-Riquier also seem to have had relics present: Hariulf, *Chronique de l’abbaye de Saint-Riquier*, ed. by F. Lot (Paris, 1894), Appendix VI, pp. 296–306. Although Hubert and Hubert, ‘Piété chrétienne’, pp. 260–261 deny the presence of relics at Angilbert’s processions, the references to the greater *capsa* and lesser *capsae* in Angilbert’s *Institutio de diversitate officiorum*, in Hariulf, *Chronique*, ed. Lot, pp. 299–300 suggest otherwise. The most dramatic examples of one-way relic migrations are perhaps those discussed by F. Lifshitz, ‘The migration of Neustrian relics in the Viking Age: the myth of voluntary exodus, the reality of coercion and theft’, *EME*, 4:2 (1995), pp. 175–192. Many thanks to Julia Barrow for pointing out these examples, and for her direction to the other instances of early relic processions detailed in the text to n. 318.

³¹⁷ Hubert and Hubert, ‘Piété chrétienne’, pp. 241–243, 261, with quote at p. 261; P. Héliot and M.-L. Chastang,

reliquaries of the Theotokos were carried by Heraclius on the masts of his ships on his way to battle with Phocas in 609, and icons of Christ and the Mother of God again were processed around the walls of Constantinople during the Avar siege in 626.³¹⁸

Outside of the movement of relics around with the Frankish court, discussed below,³¹⁹ however, travelling or journeying with relics for legal reasons seems to have been relatively unknown on the continent. Only the Burgundian (and Columbanian) abbey of Luxeuil in the 920s seems to have journeyed their relics in order to claim rights over land before Bobbio.³²⁰ It sent out a strong message about the saint's role: as Steven Vanderputten puts it for his Flemish examples, the itinerant nature of saints' relics reflected secular lordly techniques for managing authority and government.³²¹ In a similar vein, the holy relics would be rested at the church of San Michele later on in Pavia: a noteworthy choice of location since the church had an auspicious royal pedigree as the coronation place of several kings of Italy.³²² The 'lordly' here pushed towards 'kingly'.

Archbishop Lambert had advised that taking relics to the contested areas would help the monastery reclaim the *res sancti Columbani* (c. xxi), and indeed it seems evident that this route and the stops made were intended to mark the claimed territory of the monastery. On making a stop in a field at *Adpontem*, the monks carved a cross in the bark of a tree to mark where the relics had been set down, and the abbot instructed that similar signs be carved at each place where the procession stopped.³²³ Besides the cultic implications – there had long been a tradition of marking the resting places of saints' relics in translation –³²⁴ it is possible that these

'Quêtes et voyages de reliques au profit des églises françaises du moyen âge', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 59 (1964), pp. 789-822 and 60 (1965), pp. 5-32, at pp. 799-801, quote at p. 790.

³¹⁸ As described in A. J. Ekonomou, *Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes: Eastern Influences on Rome and the Papacy from Gregory the Great to Zacharias, A.D. 590-752* (Plymouth, 2007), p. 258; although B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium* (Louisville, KY, 2006), pp. 50-52 has suggested that the Marian image processions at the Avar siege may be a subsequent (late tenth century) legendary embellishment.

³¹⁹ See paragraph following n. 432.

³²⁰ It thus it seems likely that the translation of Columbanus to Pavia owed something to the precedent set by Bobbio's Burgundian sister-house, as well as perhaps the influence of Irish monasticism: Bougard, 'La relique', p. 55-56. The practice later became popular in Flanders: S. Vanderputten, 'Itinerant lordship: relic translations and social change in eleventh- and twelfth-century Flanders', *French History*, 24 (2010), pp. 1-21.

³²¹ Vanderputten, 'Itinerant lordship', p. 4.

³²² Bougard, 'La relique', p. 39.

³²³ *MSC*, xi.

³²⁴ See examples in I. N. Wood, 'Constructing cults in early medieval France: local saints and churches in Burgundy and the Auvergne 400-1000', in R. Sharpe and A. Thacker (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, (Oxford, 2002), pp. 155-187, at pp. 176-177.

signs also had a function in marking territorial boundaries, perhaps similar to the fixing of iron nails in trees for the same purpose which is testified in a dispute charter under King Ratchis, an imperial privilege of Louis II in 860 and a court hearing over the forest of Montelungo in 972.³²⁵ As François Bougard has noted, the account of the peasants who prostrated themselves in front of the reliquary chest and adored the saint *baculis dimissis* was an ‘évocation discrète d’un rite d’investiture, auquel fait écho l’investiture *per fustem*’, similar to the ritual with the satchel to be repeated at the Pavian court.³²⁶

After the relics of Columbanus had been placed in the church of San Michele and various miracles had occurred, including the healing of the young prince Lothar (c. xvi), the action moved to Hugh’s court. There, Hugh had discussed the rights of the monastery with the powerful men of his kingdom and had drunk from the cup of Columbanus, before passing it round. Guy of Piacenza and his brother Raginerius were identified as the worst offenders against Bobbio’s patrimony and, by their refusal to drink from the cup, demonstrated their unwillingness to accede to the (implied) decision that the usurpation of Bobbio’s lands was illegitimate (c. xxi). That night Giseprand fell from his horse when fleeing the court, construed as divine punishment. Similarly Alineus, a *vassus* of count Samson – representing the other (unnamed) princes who had attempted to usurp Bobbio’s lands – was sent mad after publicly blaspheming against the saint and, more specifically, against the practice of bringing the relics there, shouting that ‘we refuse to let go of the possessions of the monastery that you are reclaiming because of the horse or donkey bones that you have brought here’. He was only healed after paying public penitence and completing a rite of *assainteurement* or auto-dedication to the saint, going with a rope around his neck at the shrine, and a nightlong vigil of his sister, a nun.³²⁷ Following such demonstrations of divine power, we are told, the other princes acceded to the king’s wishes and the divine right of Gerlan and Bobbio to the lands and undertook the *per fustem* investiture. Subsequently Bobbio’s papal privileges and royal grants were read aloud and confirmed by the king. The former were listed pope by pope, and explained in detail by the hagiographer were concerned with Bobbio’s independence from episcopal authority; the royal privileges (also listed by king and described) involved the

³²⁵ CDSCB, i, docs. xxiv, lx, xcvi. Carvings in trees as boundary markers may have been known elsewhere on the continent: D. Dreslerová and R. Mikuláš, ‘An early medieval symbol carved on a tree trunk: pathfinder or territorial marker?’, *Antiquity*, 84 (2010), pp. 1067–1075.

³²⁶ Bougard, ‘La relique’, p. 39 n. 12. Also Tosi, ‘Trasferimento’.

³²⁷ MSC, xxii. Bougard, ‘La relique’, p. 40 and n. 15.

protection of its lands and the enforcement of papal privileges. These privileges were followed by the pronouncement of a new royal confirmation in favour of the abbey by King Hugh.³²⁸ The hagiographer suggests (although not explicitly) that by this action the lands had been restored to Gerlan and Bobbio, but his failure to specify this has been noted as incongruous.³²⁹ It seems likely that such a precept did exist because unlike the detail provided for the preceding privileges, we are simply told that anyone who wants to know what that precept said can read it in the text itself; particularly frustrating since it is now lost.³³⁰ Perhaps Hugh's precept had not recovered lost lands but instead prevented any further erosion of the patrimony; furthermore the coveted episcopal exemption seems not to have been achieved.³³¹

Bishop Guy was not the only threat to the patrimony – his brother Raginerius (count of Piacenza, although this title is never used by the hagiographer) is named alongside him in the first mention of the rapacious princes, as were *non pauci alii* (c. viii). Later in the *miracula* appear the blasphemer Alineus, count Samson's vassal, and Gandolf 'one of the aforesaid princes' (and later Raginerius's successor as count of Piacenza) who had 'long ago' invaded *Memoriola* (Borgoratto Mormorolo, prov. Pavia), one of the stops on the way back to Bobbio (c. xxvi). Guy, Raginerius and Gandolf were early members of a seigneurial family, named after the latter as the Gandolfinghi, that would become extremely powerful and which was already showing signs of domination in this early period.³³² Yet the *miracula* seem to single out Bishop Guy in particular for his encroachments. The translation and relic rituals were a canny strategy to use against a fellow ecclesiastic. Whilst Guy could refuse to drink from the saint's cup, he could not have denied the efficacy of the saint's relics or, more broadly, divine justice, since his own power in part relied on the same discourses.³³³ Yet to avoid drinking from the cup was, as the hagiographer revels in implying, to acknowledge further its sacred potency. It is

³²⁸ MSC, xxiii; xxiv; xxvi.

³²⁹ Wickham, 'Land disputes', p. 251.

³³⁰ MSC, xxvi: *Si quis velit scire, quod in eo legitur, in textu ipsius agnoscere poterit*. This chapter is relatively sketchy compared to the detail of the papal privileges recounted in c. xxiii, and therefore does not lend itself to textual comparison with the other privileges also issued under Gerlan's archchancellorship from Pavia in 929, particularly that confirming the goods of San Pietro d'Oro in that city, which had a similar remit: L. Schiaparelli (ed.), *I diplomi di Ugo e di Lotario, di Berengario II e di Adalberto (sec. x)*, Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 38 (Rome, 1924), doc. xx. Other diplomas issued from Pavia in the summer of 929 involved a brief confirmation and two donations of slightly different structures: Schiaparelli, *I diplomi di Ugo e di Lotario*, docs. xxi-xxiii.

³³¹ Buzzi, *CDSBC*, p. 72.

³³² MSC, viii. On Raginerius, Samson and Gandolf, see Bougard, 'Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi', pp. 11-12, 19-25, with further references.

³³³ Bougard, 'La relique', pp. 52-53.

unsurprising to find the blasphemer who doubted the relics amongst the vassals of the layman Count Samson, rather than the bishop. To do so would have undermined the bishop's religious, diocesan authority, the very authority that underpinned Guy's threat to Bobbio.

It had long been a matter of contention whose episcopal jurisdiction Bobbio should be subject to, since Bobbio lay on the margins of four dioceses: 'Milan/Genoa, Piacenza, Tortona, and Pavia all had some claim in the area',³³⁴ although it was with the bishops of Tortona and Piacenza that the greatest battles were fought. Bobbio may have been in possession of the earliest papal bull exempting a monastery from episcopal authority,³³⁵ which should have effectively exempted Bobbio from the diocesan system, yet Bobbio did not remain *nullius diocesis* without challenge, and continuity in its exemption cannot be confirmed. By the 910s the bishop of Piacenza was able to claim that Bobbio had withheld payments of tithes and had operated independently in choosing a bishop to consecrate a new abbot. A letter of Pope John X (914-928) considered authentic admonished Bobbio's abbot, Theodelassius, for using a forging papal letters to argue against the claims.³³⁶ 'Jurisdictional uncertainty' characterized Bobbio's position vis-à-vis the bishops of the Po area.³³⁷

Despite the Pope's letter, the issue was not settled convincingly in the bishop's favour as the events of 929 show. The issue may have been raised again on Gerlan's initiative, and related to the shifts in power at the head of the kingdom – a good a time as any to re-confirm and perhaps re-draw the markers. The *miracula* use logically impossible terms that, like so many equivalents familiar to historians of the feudal transformation, imply the forcible removal of lands (with terms such as *abstrahere*), which intend to convey the illegitimate (and perhaps violent) assumption of lordship or propriety. Because of his episcopal dignity, the 'abstraction' of lands by Guy of Piacenza took the form of extending his jurisdictions into Bobbio's territory: *iniuste suo iuri coniunctas habebant* (c. viii). In the periods when Bobbio had not been subject to episcopal authority – despite Piazza's concerns, it is generally accepted that the initial exemption of Honorius did occur – this must have meant that the abbot adopted a quasi-

³³⁴ Balzaretti, 'Monasteries, towns and the countryside', p. 239. Even in the twentieth century local historians continue to argue vehemently that Bobbio had fallen in their own diocese, for example C. Goggi, *Per la storia della diocesi di Tortona*, I (Chieri, 1945), pp. 159-160.

³³⁵ CDSCB, i, doc. x, on which see Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space*, pp. 66-67, 106-107. and above

³³⁶ CDSCB, i, doc. lxxxvi.

³³⁷ Documents from both opponents in this contest reach us in post-Carolingian copies and should be read cautiously since they reflect a process of creating 'documentary memory': Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 12-17.

episcopal role in the jurisdiction of the this area.³³⁸ The prize that Gerlan was fighting for, then, was more than access to the abbatial patrimony but also to exclusive authority in the territory.

As Piazza puts it, the patrimonial presence of Bobbio in the proximity was so large was to be almost exclusive, reinforced by the fact that the monastery controlled almost the entire system of *plebes* in the area. It held five *plebes* – three in the Val Trebbia and two in the upper stretches of the valleys of the Tidone and Staffora rivers, not to mention numerous minor religious buildings.³³⁹ Nuvolone sees the procession to Pavia as ‘un atto simbolico di rivendicazione globale’, whose tour was restricted by a time limit imposed by the three-day timeframe necessary for every resurrection,³⁴⁰ yet the itinerary of the *translatio* may be able to tell us a little. The hagiographer was careful to note the places where stops were made, although some cases the identification of places is debated, and Michele Tosi and Flavio Nuvolone have proposed two distinct routes.³⁴¹ **MAP 2** On leaving the monastery the procession stopped soon next to the river Trebbia at the *pratum nuncupatur Adpontem* (Brayda de Ponte) before proceeding to *Sarturianum*,³⁴² the next day passing over *Montem Lungem* (Montelungo; Ruino Pavese) before reaching *Cannavini* (Canevino Pavese).³⁴³ It crossed the river Po by boat at the *Portum quod nuncupatur Peducolosum* before stopping for the night,³⁴⁴ and on Sunday entered Pavia via *Sanctum Petrum, qui dictur Leprosorum* (San Pietro-in-Verzolo) before the relics were

³³⁸ Piazza, *Monastero*, p. 19 n. 32.

³³⁹ Piazza, *Monastero*, p. 11.

³⁴⁰ Nuvolone, ‘I viaggiatori’, p. 105.

³⁴¹ Tosi, ‘Trasferimento’, proposing various way stations that are not included in the text; Nuvolone, ‘Viaggiatori’, pp. 101-105.

³⁴² MSC, xi. *Sarturianum* or *Saturianum* appears in many of Bobbio’s documents along with the *pieve di S. Paolo*. For Buzzi, Bresslau, Castagnetti and Tosi and others this is Sarturano di Agazzano, but Coperchini, followed by Destefanis and Nuvolone, identifies it with Zavatterello: Coperchini, ‘Quadro’, p. 261 and n. 20; Destefanis, *Bobbio in altomedioevo*, p. 81 n. 132; Nuvolone, ‘Viaggiatori’, p. 102 n. 108. Piazza disagrees: *Monastero*, p. 53 n. 52. Help may come from the *Abbreviationes* since the toponym *Sartoriano/Sarturiano* appears in three of them. Marie-Aline Laurent has recently shown each subsection of the 862 polyptych to be organized by geographical proximity to the monastery, and that a line feed character in the manuscript intimates a jump from one zone to the next: Laurent, ‘Organisation’, pp. 489-490. If she is correct, then Coperchini’s identification seems more likely. In 862, *Sartoriano* appears at the end of a group of *plebes* comprising of Sant’Albano and San Paulo (both in the Nizza valley) and Sant’Antonio (Ruino Pavia). Zavaterello is but a short hop from these locations. Furthermore, there follows after this group a line feed, perhaps indicating a change of region. The next group includes *Ancariano* (Ancarano, fraz. of Rivergaro, Piacenza) which is much further to the east and very near Sarturano (Agazzano), where it should have been listed if this identification was correct. This same *Sartoriano* appears as *Sarturiano* in the final *abbreviatio*, identifiable as the same place because of the *pieve* of San Paolo there – thus confirming that it is the same place as referred to in the *Miracula*.

³⁴³ MSC, xii.

³⁴⁴ MSC, xiii. Exact identification has not been made. Tosi sites it near to the present Portalberga: Tosi, ‘Trasferimento’, p. 143.

deposited in the royal church of San Michele.³⁴⁵ On the return leg they made stops at the *Curticella s. Colombani, que vocatur Barbadam*, and *Memoriola* (Borgoratto Mormorolo).³⁴⁶

The procession did not simply take the most direct route to Pavia, confirmed by the different path used on the return leg. As we have seen, it formed part of the strategy to claim lands by taking the relics there. It seems likely that the hagiographer was faithful to the general route taken, since the events had occurred within living memory and presumably the carvings in trees would still have been visible. However, since the procession must have passed many of the properties that Bobbio had claim to in the area, there may be significance for those locations that the hagiographer chose to single out. These will be discussed in more detail below. It is worth noting that in general the route approached Pavia from the east side of the river Versa and returned on its left bank: the first faced towards Piacenza, the other towards Tortona.³⁴⁷ Perhaps the tree markings intended more than claims to individual properties, but also drew out physically, as the *miracula* did figuratively, the borders of a claimed Bobbiese territory that excluded the bishops' jurisdictions. Certainly, the route taken by the procession seems to have passed by some of the monastery's *xenodochia*, and the author is careful to assert the importance of the stopovers they made in the sustenance and provision of the brothers, as well as the poor, infirm and pilgrims. Nuvolone sees this as a figurative assertion of the monastery's rights over the land in the face of challenge from the bishop of Piacenza for their control, opposing this simple but elementary function to the greed of the bishop.³⁴⁸ It also

³⁴⁵ MSC, xv. Canevino was an ancient *plebs*, long disputed between the dioceses of Piacenza and Tortona as much as Bobbio: C. Goggi, *Storia dei comuni e delle parrocchie della diocesi di Tortona* (Tortona, 1973) p. 69. Montelungo appears in the diploma of Charlemagne (774) and was perhaps purposefully confused by the copyist of this document in later centuries with its quasi-homonym *Montelugo* in the Liguria, in order to extend the land claimed: Garbarini, 'Il diploma', pp. 40-41. The Montelungo in the *Miracula* logically must be that at Ruino Pavese and this is the same place that Charlemagne and Wala's document and various others refer to. It had a large forest there (described as *silva nostra* in Charlemagne's donation), and was confirmed in the subsequent royal confirmations of Lothar (843), Louis II (960), Berengar (888, 903), Guy (893) and Lambert (896): CDSBC, i, docs. xxxvii, lx, lxix, lxxxi, lxxiv.

³⁴⁶ MSC, xxvi. Rejecting earlier identifications with Barbata in the region of Bergamo, Tosi prefers the more local oratory in the parish of Santa Giulietta: Tosi, 'Trasferimento', p. 148. Santa Giulietta is only mentioned for the first time in the tenth century, and it is unclear whose diocese it fell under at this point: Goggi, *Storia dei comuni*, pp. 331-333. For Nuvolone it would be better to identify it with nearby Barbanello: Nuvolone, 'Viaggiatori', pp. 103-104, as does Castagnetti in his editions of the *abbreviations*: Castagnetti, 'San Colombano di Bobbio', p. 187 n. 19.

³⁴⁷ Tosi was convinced that the *miracula* were aimed solely at the encroachments of the bishop of Piacenza, and sees the route at traversing the western part of the old *municipio* of Piacenza: Tosi, 'Trasferimento', p. 131. Yet Bobbio's land in the Oltrepò Pavese was precisely a border area between the dioceses of Tortona and Piacenza, and the Tortonese threat must not be denied.

³⁴⁸ Nuvolone, 'I viaggiatori', p. 104.

advertised the welfare duties expected of and provided by the monastic community.

This latter point is a critical reminder that Gerlan was able to use the cult of Columbanus and the socio-religious capital of the monastic community to serve the recovery of the abbatial mense; indeed, the whole strategy relied on the religious capital of the memory of Columbanus and thaumaturgic cult of his relics, as well as underlining the socio-religious services of the monastery. Gerlan had been able to convince the community to support the translation: no mean feat, if we consider that this was a very early example of the temporary extraction of the relics from their tomb (it had involved breaking open the stone covering it, after all), which must have raised some objection when first proposed. The procession involved many of the brothers, including the priest Raginerius who would later become the custodian of Spelonca, and two of the senior members of the community went as emissaries to Archbishop Lambert of Milan.³⁴⁹ Other evidence suggests a lively activity in the creation of cultic materials during Gerlan's abbacy, including perhaps the lavish copy of the *Vita Columbani* that precedes the oldest manuscript copy of the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, which Crivello has suggested may have been drawn up to celebrate the translation to Pavia.³⁵⁰ In 929, then, control of cultic trappings and the abbatial mense were inseparable, converging in the commendatory abbot. Gerlan was able to present Columbanus as the figurative head of Bobbio, as a whole. This would not be the case just two or three decades later, as we will see.

Abbot-Bishop Giseprand and the mid-tenth century

Whilst the translation and Pavian events of 929 had been mainly for the benefit of the dispute with Bishop Guy, writing the *miracula* responded to a new threat, this time from Giseprand, bishop of Tortona. Giseprand's activities elsewhere lend weight to his identification as the target of the invective in the *Miracula sancti Columbani*, and shed further light on the complaints of the Bobbio community. Early in his episcopal career, he was involved with the abbey of San Pietro di Vendersi, which he claimed had been reduced to profane (secular) use and had so been annulled and then donated to the Church of Tortona by King Hugh. Giseprand permanently installed priests and clerics to officiate there, on the premise of restoring its old

³⁴⁹ *MSC*, xi, xxi.

³⁵⁰ Crivello, *La miniatura*, p. 102; see also Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 167.

prestige.³⁵¹ Whilst Scaravelli assumes that the claims of the establishment's decadence were truthful, perhaps as a result of Saracen incursions, they might also be read as an expansionist move by the Tortonese diocesan.³⁵² There is accordance with the words attributed to the bishop by the author of the *Miracula*: 'it is because I saw this monastery almost destroyed, and I wish to return it to grace, to its former state' (c. xxiii).

Giseprand's foundation of a new abbey in Tortona dedicated to Saints Peter and Marcian (proto-bishop of Tortona) between 945 and 947 may also have posed a threat to Bobbio. It seems Giseprand was a patron of scholarly and artistic pursuits – San Marziano was a known centre of learning to which the first scriptorium of Tortona is attributed,³⁵³ and the scriptorium of Bobbio produced at least one manuscript commissioned by the abbot-bishop.³⁵⁴ It is possible that one of Bobbio's objections was to a removal of property from the scriptorium or library, and perhaps even scribes and illuminators, for the aggrandizement of San Marziano.³⁵⁵ At San Marziano, Giseprand also ensured that he and the Chapter held certain rights of access. Although the abbot and monks of San Marziano were told that they 'must receive the canons honourably' it was not before long they rebelled against these obligations, marking the start of a long-running dispute.³⁵⁶ The invective in the *miracula* seems to respond directly to fears of a similar intrusion at Bobbio: 'We will not let you enter the monastery without having been invited there by the father [*pater*] of the monastery or by the congregation of monks' (c. xxiii). There is no evidence that Giseprand alienated Bobbio's lands in favour of his new establishments, at least not successfully, since twelfth- and thirteenth-century papal and imperial confirmations of San Marziano's lands do not seem to include any properties that feature in Bobbio's own earlier surveys.³⁵⁷

Unlike Guy of Piacenza, the greatest threat of Giseprand came from his direct control over Bobbio's patrimony as abbot. The *Miracula sancti Columbani* is one of few contemporary sources that we have for his activities at Bobbio, even though the bishop-abbot is not named

³⁵¹ F. Gabotto, *Per la storia di Tortona nella età del comune*, vol. 2 (Turin, 1923), doc. III bis: 946, pp. 197-199.

³⁵² Scaravelli, 'Giseprando', p. 618.

³⁵³ U. Rozzo, *Tortona nei secoli: mostra di antiche piante e carte di Tortona e del Tortonese* (Tortona, 1971), p. 27.

³⁵⁴ Held at Turin, Bibl. Naz., E 20 inf., cf. Crivello, *La miniatura*, p. 92.

³⁵⁵ See for example the objections to the taking of furniture and books in *MSC*, xxiii, also Scaravelli, 'Giseprando', p. 618.

³⁵⁶ Goggi, *Per la storia*, pp. 144-145.

³⁵⁷ These lists are reproduced in Goggi, *Per la storia*, pp. 141-143.

personally. Only one document specifically names him explicitly as abbot: an exchange of goods with a deacon named Peter, dated 12 July 961.³⁵⁸ A later document of Otto III from 998 provides us more information of his activities, albeit retrospectively. The document's drafting is attributed to Gerbert of Aurillac, the future Pope Sylvester II, who had held the abbacy at Bobbio from Otto II briefly in the early 980s.³⁵⁹ Otto's diploma claims that Giseprand had taken the title illegitimately (*sumpto sibi nomine abbatis*), referred more generally to Giseprand's 'illegitimate' conduct regarding the diminution of the patrimony of the monastery and annulled all of Giseprand's actions, returning the land to the monastery. Otto's diploma did not denounce Giseprand as a commendatory abbot, as the *praeceptum divisionis* had stipulated and as Ottonian policy itself practiced. Neither would it have been deemed illegitimate to operate individual lands as sub-beneficiaries, as the *abbreviatio* of the ninth/tenth century demonstrates was already the case.³⁶⁰ The problem with Giseprand's actions was that he had attempted to alienate these benefices permanently in favour of his own men rather than using them only for the lifetime of his abbacy. His strategy seems to have been to make tactical exchanges of lands to the benefit of his own clientele and to issue *chartulae libellariae* for the lands that he granted. Since benefices were not stipulated in any written document, these holders of 'bookland' were able to claim right of possession after 29 years, causing the effective alienation of these lands from the abbatial mense and beyond the control of the king. Gerbert and Otto III's document has been seen as part of a movement of renewal at the centre of the Ottonian *Klosterpolitik*, which involved reorganizing and thus returning monastic lands to the uses of the Empire. The concept was not new – the goods of the Church were to contribute to the duties of State in the assistance of the poor and sick, and should contribute to the financial support of the military – but it found revitalized vigour under Ottos II and III; hence their reaction to the privatization of the lands at Bobbio, which had effectively removed them from the royal fisc.³⁶¹

³⁵⁸ CDSBC, i, doc. xcii, with translation and commentary in F. Bougard, 'Acte d'échange avec le diacre Pierre', in Guyotjeannin and Poulle, *Autour de Gerbert d'Aurillac*, pp. 51–55. See Scaravelli, 'Giseprando', p. 618.

³⁵⁹ T. von Sickel (ed.), *MGH, Dip. Germ. vol. 2: Ottonis II et Ottonis III* (Hannover, 1893), doc. 303, pp. 728–730; Nobili, 'Vassali', p. 303. Gerbert was abbot of Bobbio briefly in ?981–983 but continued to take an interest in the fortunes of the monastery, for which see his letters edited by J.-P. Migne in *Gerberti postmodum Silvestri II papae operum pars III: Epistolae et Diplomata, Patrologia Latina*, 134 (Paris, 1853), Epistolae xiv, xviii, lxxxiii. On Gerbert's abbacy see Tosi, 'Governo', *passim*.

³⁶⁰ CDSBC, i, doc. lxxvi.

³⁶¹ Nobili, 'Vassali', p. 299; P. Cammarosano, *Nobili e re: l'Italia politica dell'alto medioevo* (Bari, 1998), pp. 311–314. On the Ottonians, Bobbio and *Klosterpolitik* see Racine, 'Les Ottoniens', pp. 277–283; Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 27–31. Whilst it is convenient to speak of such Ottonian 'policy' in this area in order to make a distinction between the before and after, it should not be presumed that this was either consistent or systematic: T. Reuter, 'The 'imperial church system' of the Ottonian and Salian rulers: a reconsideration', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 (1982), pp. 347–374.

It also complemented and extended a process of internal restructuring and streamlining that the *miracula* had appealed for a few decades earlier. We might be better to characterize Bobbio's self-assertion as 'renewal' (of an idealized situation that probably never existed, however), and is certainly more accurate than 'reformation', although it should be noted that the term *renovatio* is never used. Bobbio's strategy was not necessarily a long-term process based on higher monastic values, but was perhaps more accurately an ad hoc response to different situations and political expediency. In which case to give it any name at all that might associate the strategy to wider monastic trends could be misleading, and should be avoided.

The *miracula* and the abbot-bishop Giseprand

Unlike Guy of Piacenza's external challenge by the extension of diocesan jurisdictions, Giseprand's threat to Bobbio's patrimony was internal, facilitated by his role as abbot. The *Miracula sancti Columbani* represent retaliation by the Bobbio community to Giseprand's management of the patrimony and his status as abbot. For Piazza, they testify to the 'forte volontà dei monaci di non cedere di fronte alle forze che minacciavano l'autonomia del loro ente.'³⁶² Their objections are expressed most directly in the invectives at c. viii and xxv, the first of which launches a stinging attack on Giseprand, and demands the return of an abbot *secundum regulam*: 'see to it that it has an abbot according to the rule... because as it is written: 'No man can serve two masters' [Matthew (6: 24)], just as you cannot manage your bishopric and govern the monks according to the rule of Saint Benedict.'³⁶³

Certainly it is clear that the monastic hagiographer believed it impossible for Giseprand to fulfil both his roles without compromising one of them, just as the continuation of the quote from Matthew predicts (and as the author well knew): '[No man can serve two masters.] For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other.' For Bobbio, this meant interventions suffered for the gain of the Tortonese church, and also for Giseprand's own personal ambitions, pre-empting some of the complaints that Gerbert of Aurillac and Otto III would make at the end of the century:

And I wonder what they think, those who invade the property of St. Columbanus and assign it to their retinue (*obsequiis*). Whosoever gave the possessions to this holy place, whether kings or the rest of the faithful, they did not offer them for this reason, to see them come into the possession of laymen (*secularium*), but instead for the necessities of the brothers who serve the Lord and Saint

³⁶² Piazza, *Monastero*, p. 21.

³⁶³ *MSC*, xxiii.

Columbanus here, and to continue the sustenance of the poor and pilgrims.

The hagiographer proceeds to describe the effects: whilst some are tortured by hunger, these men are extravagantly fed; whilst others freeze, these men are expensively dressed, and so on. Then he goes on:

The money and things that they now have, acquired by any manner, they desire to give away to their sons and grandsons in inheritance and they are not afraid to forcibly remove (*abstrahere*) those things that they know were offered to the Lord. How can they take that which in times past had been offered to God by the faithful, and submit it to their own right? Certainly it cannot be done justly or lawfully.³⁶⁴

Considering the nature of the complaints against Giseprand, we can assume that the *Miracula sancti Columbani* was written by a member of the monastic community at Bobbio, perhaps even the spiritual father himself, or writing under his direction. The hagiographer makes a clear distinction between the internal head of the community, and the bishop himself, in forbidding Giseprand's entry unless invited (c. xxiii). This is a relatively standard clause in charters regarding canonical access, but here, of course, the head of the monastery is the *pater* and not the 'abbot'. Whilst Giseprand had been abbot in title, the community continued to have an internal head who embodied spiritual and congregational interests – perhaps carrying the title of provost or dean. He is represented in the invective as a direct challenge to Giseprand's authority from within the monastery itself. The distinction between titular abbot and internal provost is a hazy one from the perspective of jurisdictions, as Bernhardt points out, and it may be that whilst the abbot in title retained jurisdiction over abbatial possessions, the brothers' provost retained jurisdiction over the conventual mense, although he still probably still answered ultimately to the abbot.³⁶⁵

Yet what Piazza calls 'autonomy' cannot be presumed to be a total rejection of the abbot *in commendam*. It certainly seems that under some secular abbots harmony was enjoyed. Despite the call to 'see to it that it has an abbot according to the rule' the hagiographer makes no objection to the commendatory system, or royal appointments in general – the monastery had received many principals in this way, and Gerlan is a good example of one whom Bobbio's tradition and our hagiographer remembers kindly. This may be because commendatory abbots

³⁶⁴ *MSC*, xxv.

³⁶⁵ Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis', p. 56.

had also always been ‘elected’ as Louis II’s 865 charter suggests,³⁶⁶ thus the call to reinstate the abbot *secundum regulam* did not preclude a new commendatory abbot. Instead, the hagiographer describes Giseprand’s dual office as the biggest issue and intimates neglect because of the abbot’s activities elsewhere. Indeed, Giseprand was evidently far enough removed from management of the scriptorium at Bobbio – or perhaps a little one at Spelonca – to allow the production of the *miracula*. The request was for an abbot entirely dedicated to Bobbio, and it would seem that the commendatory system was not felt internally to have been detrimental to the religiosity of the monastery.

The issue was one of plurality but the hagiographer, despite objecting on the basis of the bishop’s neglect of one office in favour of another, does not make any canonical objection, despite the fact that holding two or more benefices in plurality was uncanonical. The Council of Chalcedon had prescribed against clergymen having their names on a church roll in more than one city. The Councils of Agde (506) and Epone (517) and Justinian’s Code applied the same principal to monastic heads – one abbot should not preside over two monasteries at the same time. There may have been a loophole, however in that ‘there could be no plurality of benefices, but only plurality of offices in the same diocese’.³⁶⁷ Despite canon law, plurality was common, especially in the pre-Gregorian period, and was often encouraged for reasons of political expediency. In Anglo-Saxon England, for example, there were notable examples of royally-endorsed pluralities of bishops whose southern dioceses provided landed interests to guarantee loyalty, whilst local knowledge helped salve relations with the disaffected north.³⁶⁸ Only sometimes, usually in times of political expedience, did the practice attract especial condemnation by authorities, such as the case of Stigand who had presided over Canterbury and Winchester for almost twenty years before his eventual fall was orchestrated by (and to the benefit of) King William in 1072.³⁶⁹

The hagiographer’s reticence to use this line of attack at Bobbio may be explained by Giseprand’s episcopacy – since he probably claimed Bobbio as part of his Tortonese diocese, as

³⁶⁶ See text to n. 274.

³⁶⁷ J. Bingham, *The Antiquities of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, 2nd edition (London, 1856), p. 224.

³⁶⁸ For example in the cases described in the entries of J. Barrow, ‘Oscytel (*d.* 971)’ and P. Wormald, ‘Wulfstan (*d.* 1023)’ in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004, online edn, May 2011) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26523>, accessed 9 February 2012] [ODNB]. In the same volume see also those entries of B. R. Kemp, ‘Salisbury, Roger of (*d.* 1139)’, E. King, ‘Blois, Henry de (c.1096–1171)’.

³⁶⁹ H. E. J. Cowdrey, ‘Stigand (*d.* 1072)’, ODNB.

his sixth-century predecessor Probus had also insisted, and therefore made his dual role legitimate on the basis of two offices held in the same diocese. At Giseprand's newly founded monastery of San Marziano, he appointed a new abbot rather than adopting the position himself, perhaps mindful of prescriptions against dual abbacies. If his dual role were justifiable by being within his own diocese, absenteeism – the other common by-product of pluralism – would not have been an issue.

As we have seen, Gerlan was close enough and powerful enough to the community to have control of both religious and temporal aspects, and the achievement of the translation suggests there was no hostility between the two ‘partitions’ of the monastery under his abbacy. By the time the *miracula* were written, however, the situation had changed. This time, given the subversive nature of the attack on him in the *miracula*, we can be sure that Giseprand did not (or perhaps could not) control the cultic activities at Bobbio. The anonymity of the hagiographer played to the ‘corporate’ identity of Bobbio that transcended individuality, whilst the *padre* remained unnamed.³⁷⁰ Giseprand was not taking on a rival cleric, but Columbanus himself. Again, the saint could be used as a focal point that reasserted the religious capital of the monastery. By beginning with *in vita* miracle-stories of Columbanus himself and the foundation of Bobbio, Spelonca and San Michele at Coli, and moving rapidly through time to the tenth century, the hagiographer drew a solid line from the founder-saint to the present day. By capturing the papal and imperial privileges, otherwise incongruous amongst the records of divine intervention, the hagiographer asserted the inseparability of the temporal belongings and religious work of the monastery. We are constantly reminded of the wider social functions of the monastery, particularly hospital services. First is the Frank Godinus who had travelled from ‘Gaul’ with a painful and debilitating contortion of his spine and, after residing in the hospice there for many years, was miraculously healed in Columbanus’ crypt. He remained for several more months, then, most likely, died there.³⁷¹ A mute and paralysed adolescent named Andrew, healed during the translation of the saint’s relics to Pavia, was brought to the hospital at the monastery and received clothes and food there, as testimony of the miracle (cc. xx, xxviii). Similarly, the abbot distributed four women demoniacs who had also been healed at Pavia, between some of the other hospices that were dependent on the monastery (c. xxviii). Of course, the focus on healing is typical of the genre, but is more than a simple hagiographic

³⁷⁰ The failure to name the provost also helped disguise the double time zones in which the *miracula* operated.

³⁷¹ *MSC*, vii; Nuvolone: ‘Viaggiatori’ pp. 99–100.

topos. Unlike the miracles of Sainte Foy and other collections where healings could happen at distance or at the shrine and which usually conclude with the *miraculé* returning home, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* assert the long-term care that the monastery and its network of *hospitalia* could provide, underlining its large and sustained capacity for looking after the sick and needy.

In this, we are given a further hint of the possible audience for the *miracula*. We have already noted the discordant level of detail of the privileges amongst the miracle-stories – especially cc. xxiii-xxv, which contain no miracles at all. On one hand, this enabled the preservation of the memory of privileges, without a need to forge charters. It also gave the community direct access to a hearing, since such liturgical texts were intended to be read out in public. Bougard has suggested that chapter xxiii should be read as a speech, similar to a *querimonia* – an ecclesiastical plea usually directed against the laity – read in front of a tribunal at some point during the 950s and subsequently arranged amongst other pieces for moral, didactic or spiritual use in the dossier of Saint Columbanus.³⁷² I believe we can go further, and argue that the work was intended specifically for a royal courtly audience, and that it was intended to be read or, better, heard in its entirety. Certainly, the privileges and the invective were the key legalistic argument – but the power of the work lay in the narrative effect of the whole. Not only would this have provided an occasion to expose the bishop publicly for his transgressions, just as with Guido and Raginerius in 929, but also to remind the king of his duty to enforce the privileges that the community felt were its due, and emphasized the active service of the monastery in its territory. Perhaps the most likely candidate audience would have been Otto I in the early 960s. As in 929, the change of sovereign would have seen a change in personnel and was an opportune time to initiate, or at least petition for, change. Perhaps also there had been no appropriate forum under Berengar II, under whom *placita* seem to have ceased.³⁷³

Whilst the *Miracula sancti Columbani* expressed the same concerns as the later Ottonians and Gerbert would express a couple of decades later, Bobbio was less concerned with the alienation of the royal fisc than its desire to maintain the integrity of its patrimony, even if it was by one and the same action that this occurred. Whilst the miracles state their concern with the monastic lands that were ‘allocated to the needs of the brothers who served the Lord and Saint

³⁷² Bougard, ‘La relique’, p. 42. On *querimoniae* and public penitence see Bougard, *La justice*, pp. 239–243.

³⁷³ Below, text to n. 408.

Columbanus here, and to the upkeep of the poor and the pilgrims' (c. xxv), neither is it a simple case of a monastic community that saw itself as separate from (and in conflict with) the abbot *in commendam*, even one with his own distinct patrimony, because secular abbots were not rejected completely. In fact, the *miracula* clearly welcome – in fact, invite – royal involvement. The 'autonomy' sought was not one from all secular intervention, but specifically from this particular abbot-bishop and his destructive abbacy, which did not protect the integrity of Bobbio's patrimony – either abbatial or monastic – a concern perhaps to the point that one wonders how divided the lands really had been in practice in recent years. Instead, the miracle-stories paint a story of royal-monastic collaboration. They begin with its royal foundation by the Lombard Agilulf. They underline the alliance between Gerlan and Hugh and, of course, specify the royal privileges that the monastery enjoyed. Furthermore, the *miracula* highlighted the community's socio-religious value to the empire through the public services that Bobbio and its extensive network of minor religious houses performed.³⁷⁴ As a whole, the work reads as a lesson in the correct and positive reciprocal relationship that should be enjoyed between a royal abbey and the sovereign. As elsewhere, the monastic desire was for active royal intervention in support of the renewal.

After Giseprand

At first glance it seems that the Bobbio community, who had produced the *Miracula* and desired to be rid of their compromised head, were partially successful in their bid. Following Giseprand (who appears last in the same year as Otto I's imperial coronation in 962, either dead or fallen from grace) there is no documentation until a diploma of Otto II in 972, and we are in the dark about the abbot at this time – often presumed to have been a vacancy in the office. In fact, one is tempted to see Otto's precept as a response to the plea in the *miracula*: it confirmed the precepts of Otto's imperial and royal predecessors and the papal exemption that left Bobbio free from episcopal exemption (with the proviso *set cum necesse fuerit*), again bringing the monastery *sub nostra defensione ac tuicione*. Addressed to *Guberto preposito*, it confirmed the rights of the abbot who (again) owed his position both to the emperor and his 'election': *concedimus habenda et ordinanda per abbatem qui tempore fuerit nostra largitione et eorum electione ipsi sancto loco constitutum secundum dei voluntatem eorumque in omnibus competentem*

³⁷⁴ Also noted by Nuvolone, in 'Viaggiatori', esp. p. 104.

utilitatem.³⁷⁵

It may have been a case of ‘be careful what you wish for’, however. Whilst Bobbio was freed of a compromised bishop–abbot it seems also that the abbatial mense passed from ecclesiastical hands completely, granted by Otto I to Oberto I, progenitor of the powerful Obertenghi dynasty, probably as a reward for his aid in securing the throne from Berengar II. This was part of a wider reorganization of land to the south of the Po and the creation of Oberto’s Eastern Ligurian March.³⁷⁶ The transference of Bobbio’s land is witnessed by a court record from 972 which attested that Oberto ‘count and marquis of the palace’ held land of Saint Columbanus which he had received *de parte domnorum imperatorum in beneficio*.³⁷⁷ At least some of the extent of the lands at his disposal can be further reconstructed by the retrospective reference in the final polyptych to the *beneficia que Aubert marchio de abbacia dedit*.³⁷⁸ Thus was born – at least temporarily – a new marchional territory out of the lands that had once pertained to the abbatial mense at Bobbio. It seems that Oberto was dead by July 973, when an abbot – Peter – is finally named at Bobbio and to whom Otto II restored control of the abbatial *beneficia*.³⁷⁹ Some have suggested from this that Oberto was Bobbio’s first lay abbot, and whilst this is without evidential basis,³⁸⁰ neither is any abbot attested in the period between Giseprand and Peter.³⁸¹ The last imperial polyptych may have been made soon after the restoration of lands to Peter, as an imperial record of these beneficiary lands, and perhaps to pre-empt any subsequent claims of possession from those who had held benefices of Oberto. Significantly this latter restoration occurred under Otto II. Whereas Otto I’s transference of the abbatial lands to Oberto I has been perceived as a legitimization of the dismantlement of the patrimony caused especially by Giseprand,³⁸² Otto II has been associated with a new policy of *Klosterpolitik* particularly from 982. In this year, likely as a response to his heavy defeat at the battle of Stilo in Southern Italy, Otto made important appointments at the heads of three royal monasteries: Adam of Casauria at Farfa, Giovanni Filagato at Nonantola and Gerbert of Aurillac at Bobbio.

³⁷⁵ T. von Sickel (ed.), *MGH, Dip. Germ.* vol. I: *Conradi I, Heinrici I et Ottonis I. Diplomata* (Hannover, 1870–1884), doc. 412, pp. 560–563. Although this document is transmitted in a copy of the fourteenth century it was not, like many others at that time, transcribed from the 1172 *falsi bobbiesi*. Tosi provides arguments for it as a copy made directly from the original, suffering only minor truncations: Tosi, ‘Governo’, p. 88 n. 46.

³⁷⁶ Tosi, ‘Governo’, pp. 84–85 discussing the juridical qualities of a ‘March’ and a ‘marquis’ at n. 34.

³⁷⁷ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xcvi.

³⁷⁸ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xcvi. See also Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 25–26.

³⁷⁹ Tosi, ‘Governo’, pp. 90–92.

³⁸⁰ Tosi, ‘Governo’, p. 85, rejecting the notion of lay abbacy.

³⁸¹ See text following n. 296.

³⁸² Racine, ‘Ottoniens’, p. 276.

Gerbert, who would go on to hold the archbishoprics of Rheims and Ravenna before the papacy as Sylvester II, was long involved in Otto's policy, which involved the restoration and reorganization of monastic lands in order to render them efficient in their service of the empire, particularly to military ends.³⁸³ Gerbert's restorative actions in the form of the demonization of Gisebrand's actions came fifteen or more years after Gerbert's brief abbacy at Bobbio, however, and it is striking that the then Archbishop of Ravenna used a rhetorical strategy that made almost no reference to the memory of Columbanus, or his cult. Just a few decades earlier, the translation to Pavia and, subsequently, the *miracula*, had placed the cult at the centre of their land-reclamation strategy. For Piazza, Gerbert's rhetoric removes the role of the abbey as a centre of identity for the Bobbiese Apennines, partly an exaggeration to underline his point about Bobbio being besieged by a hostile aristocracy, but also attesting to a real institutional, as well as patrimonial, crisis towards the end of the tenth century.³⁸⁴ It is surely also a feature of the difference between internal and external approaches to restoration. Both the translation and the authorship of the *miracula* required support of the guardians of the saint's relics and his cult, and responded to patrimonial crises that directly affected the conventual mense, as well as the abbatial. They drew on various sources: informal political support, the potency of relic justice as well as local-level popular support and public memory, encouraged by cultic activities, all of which we will see. Despite some shared interests, the *miracula* were thus operating on a different level to the imperial concerns of Otto and Gerbert.

The *miracula* and the *terra sancti Columbani*

Besides the aural audience that the hagiographic form gave access to, the *miracula* were also important in written form. The durability of parchment was not lost on the hagiographer and the details recorded in the *miracula* are carefully chosen, as the detailed summaries of the privileges show. Other specificities throughout the work are also worth turning our attention

³⁸³ Nobili, 'Vassalli', p. 299 and Racine, 'Ottoniens', pp. 277-278, following M. Uhlirz, 'Die italienische Kirchenpolitik der Ottonen', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 48 (1934), pp. 201-321. On Ottonian *Klosterpolitik* and Gerbert's abbacy: Tosi, 'Governo' and the works cited at the start of this note. Ottonian policy towards bishops also shifted under Otto II, who granted some dioceses comital powers. It is at the expense of the counts that the bishops are considered to have gained: Racine, 'Ottoniens', p. 278; V. Fumagalli, 'Vescovi e conti nell'Emilia occidentale da Berengario I a Ottone I', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd ser., 14 (1973), pp. 137-204; Mor, 'La chiesa e società feudale', p. 56.

³⁸⁴ Piazza, *Monastero*, pp. 30-31, for whom the Otto-Gerbert restorations demonstrate an appreciation of the danger that dissolution of the political and economic presence of Bobbio would pose to the political balance in the kingdom and a pretext for Henry II's decision to erect Bobbio as a see in 1014 - the main focus of Piazza's subsequent analyses.

to, in particular the locations mentioned along the route of the procession. Of the eight specified locations, *Adpontem*, *Portum Peduculosum*, *s. Petrus Leprosorum* and *Cannavini* (Canevino) make no appearance in other contemporary charters by which to analyze their significance, if any, to the translation. The first, Brayde de Ponte, is very close to Bobbio and the *Portum* a means of crossing the Po – these may have simply been orientating details. It is not evident that the church of San Pietro on the way into Pavia held any significance for the translation, nor has Canevino left any trace in this early period.

The remaining four places do appear in the land surveys, however, and it is worth attending to these briefly here. Wala's document contains details on the conventual mense, specifically the provisions for the upkeep of the community listed as *curtes* destined respectively *ad victam*, *ad camaram*, and *ad ceteras necessitates*. In this document appear three of our places of interest: *Montelongo*, *Memoriola* and *Barbata con Solariolo* listed together in the first and most vital group, providing nourishment for the brothers. *Sarturianum* is absent.³⁸⁵ The *Abbreviationes* of 862 and 883 report similar findings to each other – *Barbata* is missing, but *Monte Longo*, *Memoriola* and now *Sartoriano* are listed; the first two as the sites of *cellis exterioribus* (dedicated to Santa Maria and San Nazario respectively) and *Sartoriano* as the site of San Paolo, one of the *plebes monasterii ordinationi subiecte sunt*, which in 862 (but not 883) are described as 'owing nothing' (*nihil reddunt*). As Laurent has discussed, the 'exterior cells' functioned as secondary nuclei in the monastic network (which could encapsulate multiple *domus coltae*, for example) and provided for the monastic table, whilst the *pievi* and *xenodochia* may have been included in the list (unusually so for polyptychs, since they did not provide for the monastic mense directly like the other entries) out of concern for the higher Benedictine ideal of 'good governance'; that is to say to demonstrate that the duties of hospitality and parochial integrity were being upheld.³⁸⁶ Indeed, the cells of *Montelongo* and *Memoriola* were both centre points of large agricultural units, as the *abbreviationes* show. *Memoriola* had a large vineyard capable of contributing forty amphorae of wine, for example, and *Montelongo* a huge wood, sustaining 'a thousand' pigs. *Sartoriano* was missing from Wala's survey because all of the *plebes* were: precisely they because did not contribute anything directly to the monastic mense, with which the *Breve* was concerned.

³⁸⁵ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xxxvi.

³⁸⁶ Laurent, 'Organisation', pp. 491-493.

There is no mention of any of our four properties in the partial third *abbreviatio* (late ninth/early tenth century), although there is little to be concluded from this considering almost the entire first page is missing and which could have reported the properties pertaining to the conventual mense, akin to Wala's *Breve* and the first two *abbreviatioes*. This third *abbreviatio* is the first to list lands under *beneficia*, and given its fractional state we cannot know if our locations appeared in it at all and, if they did, whether they were by this stage still pertaining to the conventual mense, or if they were now amongst those lands that formed part of the abbot's benefice, or if indeed this document even made such a distinction. As a result, there is almost a century between the last documentary source (883) for our locations and the next record, which comes in Otto II's 972 diploma addressed to the *Guberto proposito*, confirming various possessions. Amongst these were many in the Oltrepò Pavese, including our four places from the *miracula*, unfortunately listed only tersely: *Concedimus etiam cellas et oracula sanctorum que edificata sunt per universa loca sub ditione nostra... Barbada ... Montem longum cum Memoriola et omnibus appendiciis suis... ecclesia sancti Pauli in Sartoriano.*³⁸⁷ The toponym *Barbata*, which had disappeared in the 862 and 883 surveys, appears again now. This document is interesting because it seems to concern those lands that pertained still to Bobbio, and to ignore those that had been given to Oberto – in turn considered to be those previously controlled by Giseprand.³⁸⁸ In other words, the inclusion in Otto's document of all four locations from the *miracula* suggests that in 972, they still were, in part or in full, administered directly by the monastery for the conventual mense.

Can we presume, then, that the inclusion of these particular places in the miracle stories was arbitrary? Were they simply examples representing the entire monastic patrimony, which the hagiographer sought to protect by his opposition to Giseprand's alienations? An answer may come in the final imperial land survey, from the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century.³⁸⁹ This *abbreviatio* is more detailed than Otto's 972 diploma, which simply lists the lands by name, dividing the lands administered directly by the monks, the benefices 'given by the marquis Oberto', and lands in the *Maritima*. From this document we can see that the condition of our places from the *miracula* seems to have shifted – but not in a regular fashion. Significantly, only one is listed amongst the *terra sancti Columbani*: *as curte Memoriola manentes xvii cum domo coltile. Montelongo* does not appear at all. The remaining two were now part of

³⁸⁷ *MGH, Dip. Germ.*, i, doc. 412.

³⁸⁸ Racine, 'Ottoniens', p. 276.

³⁸⁹ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xcvi.

the *beneficia*. *Barbata* is listed under the *Beneficium Ubertus*.³⁹⁰ More complex is the case of *Sarturiano*, since the *beneficia* of *Eribertus*, *Viril*, *Ubertus* and *Benzo* all counted *sortes* in *Sarturiano* and the *beneficium Ildeprandi archipresbiteri* included *Sancti Pauli in Sarturiano, cum suis pertinentiis*. These shifts beg the question of how, why and when lands were moved between the different partitions. Where did ‘lost’ lands go? When and to what extent did Giseprand’s tactic of converting some parcels of land into bookland succeed? With such a large time gap between the documentation, any attempt to answer these questions would require a much larger scale analysis of the shifts in the individual pieces of patrimony between Wala’s *Breve* in 833–835 and the tenth/eleventh century polyptych, which is beyond the scope of the present study. On the basis of the four locations mentioned in the *miracula*, however, some preliminary observations can be offered.

Starting with the *plebs* of San Paolo in *Sarturiano*, we can see from the ninth century documents that it existed under the *ordinatio* of Bobbio but did not itself directly contribute to the upkeep of the monks. Like many of the ancient *pievi*, it must have been relatively well-endowed as witnessed by the numerous fractions that could be carved from it in the *beneficia* a century later. By this point, however, the church and its lands had been transferred into ‘property’ in a way that it had previously been excused from, like many other *pievi*.³⁹¹ Not only were its lands divided up in such a way as to contribute to the *beneficia* of four laymen, but the church itself was counted amongst the *beneficium Ildeprandus archipresbiter*, endowed not by the monks but whoever controlled the part *que Aubert marchio de abbacia dedit*. During the procession to Pavia, Bobbio may have brought the relics here to assert the fact that the church fell under its *ordinatio*, after all, it was not the fate of all *plebes* to become part of the *beneficia*; nor did all archpresbyters necessarily hold their land in benefice.³⁹²

Barbada is another interesting case since, despite its absence from the ninth-century polyptychs, it was successfully argued by the monastery in 915 to be *de portione et usu fratrum monachorum*, rather than – as their opponent claimed – *pertinet de illa portione quam consuetudo fuit in beneficio*

³⁹⁰ This *Ubertus* was not the same the marquis Oberto, who was likely dead by the time this was written, perhaps many decades later: Castagnetti, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, iii, p. 177.

³⁹¹ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 88–90.

³⁹² For example the *plebes sancti Iacobi* and *de Caulo*, and the *archipresbiter* Gandolf who held the first of these *pievi*, listed amongst the *terra sancti Columbani*: Castagnetti, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, iv.

dandi.³⁹³ In 972 all or part of it was administered by the monks, but by the time of the final polyptych it had reverted to the lands bestowed in benefice. As for *Memoriola*, the hagiographer tells us that Gandolf had attempted to invade it ‘long ago’, implying that by the time either of the translation or by the redaction of the *miracula* the land had been returned safely.³⁹⁴ It may be significant then that the only one of our locations that remained with any provision at all amongst the *terra sancti Columbani* by the end of the tenth century was *Memoriola*: this battle had been fought and, on the whole (since there were *manentes xvii cum domo coltile*), won – and the miracle-stories celebrated this.

The most puzzling case is *Montelungo*. Donated by Charlemagne and confirmed by his successors, it boasted amongst other things a large forest and had provided considerable produce to the upkeep of the brothers in the ninth century. Confirmed again by Otto I in 30 July 972 it was the subject of a dispute a few weeks later (20 August 972) with San Martino di Pavia, which was ruled in Bobbio’s favour, and in which the land is referred to as part of the *res ipsius monasterii sancti Columbani*.³⁹⁵ Yet the toponym is missing from the final land survey. Types of landholdings are relatively consistent between all surveys, with a place name followed by the type of landholding (*cellae*, *cortes*, etc.), so it is unlikely to have been excluded for reasons of differing focus.³⁹⁶ It is possible that Montelungo was the subject of fractionalization, since two local toponyms representing smaller parcels appear in the last polyptych amongst the benefices held by Rodolphus and Ubertus.³⁹⁷ On the other hand, it is surprising that not even the *cella in honore sancte Marie* at Montelungo receives mention since it was certainly part of the patrimony in subsequent decades.³⁹⁸ The fate of Montelungo and Santa Maria between 972 and

³⁹³ CDSCB, i, doc. lxxxv, discussed below. In this case, the marquis Radaldus who claimed to hold the land amongst the beneficiary part was pitched against the monastery of Bobbio and its abbot Theodelassius. This would suggest that at this time the abbatial lands were administered not by the abbot himself, but by a layman who was not a secular abbot, just like Oberto sixty years later: Nobili, ‘Vassalli’, p. 301. Whether this means Theodelassius was abbot elected by the brethren, cannot be confirmed, however.

³⁹⁴ It is possible although unprovable that ‘long ago’ was relative to the redaction, rather than the translation – and after Gandolf was raised as count and marquis, even though this would have been chronologically erroneous for the narrative.

³⁹⁵ CDSCB, i, doc. xcvi.

³⁹⁶ Further clarification on the minutiae of differences between the polytychs may be revealed by the work of M.-A. Laurent, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio. Administration et pratiques de gestion dans un monastère royal du royaume franc d’Italie (VIIIe–Xe siècles)’ (Thèse de doctorat, Université Libre de Bruxelles, forthcoming).

³⁹⁷ *Darvini* and *Vico Liberi*, respectively, the first being Da Ruino and the latter identified by Buzzi as Torre degli Alberi (also Ruino): Buzzi, CDSCB, iii, p. 101, although Castagnetti does not commit to an identification in his edition, ‘San Colombano di Bobbio’, iv, p. 187.

³⁹⁸ Also seeming to rule out a change of name, since ‘the church at Montelungo’ appears in a papal bull of Lucius II to Bobbio in 15 March 1144 and again at the end of the fourteenth century, amongst the properties listed in

the final polyptych remains a mystery, but it is possible that the mention in the *miracula* staked a claim in response to a long-running dispute with San Martino. In this case, it was not Giseprand who was the threat, but another religious establishment.

The first point to note is that all the specified locations in the *miracula* pertained, or had once pertained, to the conventual mense. Second, there was no regularity, that is to say no inevitability, in the fate of the lands of the monastery. Montelungo seems to have disappeared (i.e. been alienated) altogether; (although with the possible qualifications noted above); others were transferred to the abbatial mense, and some were retained for the use of the brothers.³⁹⁹ Despite the focus of the *miracula*, there were opponents other than Giseprand to contend with. We tend to see Bobbio's lands in a globalized manner as the *abbreviationes* divide them, either pertaining to the monks, or to the abbot or a secular lord in his place. But within these distinctions, there was flexibility – and it seems that battles were fought on an individual basis. Some of the battles were won, if only partially – this was a period when the fragmentation of pieces of land was commonplace,⁴⁰⁰ after all, the inclusion of toponyms, especially with terse entries, may misleadingly suggest the integrity of a holding when this is not the case. The term 'remaining' used for *Memoriola* suggests this plot at least had suffered fractionalization. Others were 'lost' to the benefit of the abbatial mense, or a third party. Setting down the precious relics and marking these spots along the way had been powerful visual propaganda for the monks to stake their claims to specific sites in 929. By recording the miraculous events a few decades later, the claimed status of these individual lands as part of the *terra sancti Columbani* was made similarly, this time in writing and preserved for posterity. It may also give a hint to the period in which these specific lands were being contested. The *miracula*, then, provided the monastic community not only an outlet by which to protest against the bishop-abbot, but also one that allowed them to register claims to individual pieces of land, just as we will see the monks of Conques were to do. It is interesting, therefore, that the *miracula* were concerned only with lands that had long been in the patrimony of the monastery. There is no hint of

an *extimum* of the bishopric of Bobbio: *CDSCB*, ii, doc. clxiii and iii, pp. 116–117 at p. 117.

³⁹⁹ Whilst it is possible that Montelungo only *appears* to have been lost because of a change in name or use between 972 and the final polyptych at the end of the tenth century it seems unlikely. Further clarification on the minutiae of differences between the polyptychs may shortly be revealed by M.-A. Laurent, 'San Colombano di Bobbio. Administration et pratiques de gestion dans un monastère royal du royaume franc d'Italie (VIIIe-Xe siècles)' (Thèse de doctorat, Université Libre de Bruxelles, forthcoming).

⁴⁰⁰ Herlihy, 'Church property', pp. 93–94.

dispute over the individual pieces of donated land that had trickled in over the years.⁴⁰¹ The *miracula* were a house-focused piece and, although sharing similar concerns on one level, were not of the same scope as the grand restorations of Gerbert and his Ottonian patrons. Through the cult of Columbanus, the monastic community at Bobbio had a tool by which they could resist encroachments on their land: that these were part of much greater trends was not the concern of our hagiographer, but the here and now of the mid-tenth century situation at Bobbio.

9. JUSTICE AND DISPUTE PROCESSING

Like other parts of Europe, law and legal structures in early medieval Italy drew on a mélange of different elements from a rich legal heritage, and diverse legal systems could operate in parallel. Carolingian justice joined a Romanist tradition which was already infused with Germanic influences from both the Gothic and Lombard eras, as well as the contribution of canon law. Only with the legal renaissance in the Communal era would the Romanist tradition prevail. The definition of ‘public’ justice is a hazy area in any case. Bobbio’s immunity raises questions about the abbot’s jurisdictions over the monastic territory, for example, on which we are none the wiser. There are no written records of abbatial justice until the twelfth century.⁴⁰² When the monastery was raised as a diocese in the eleventh century the abbot Petraldus was also elevated to be bishop, and it is not clear if he continued to operate jurisdictions that he had as abbot or acquired new ones: in a document of 1017 he refers to an exchange of land *iuris ipsius monasterii*, although Piazza notes a certain fusion of identities between the *civitas* and *monasterium* of Bobbio in this early period.⁴⁰³ It is possible, of course, that the documentary record of abbatial justice is lacking because Bobbio chose not to retain copies of third-party decisions if it had no direct interest in the outcome. Beyond the appearance of the advocates of the monastery alongside the abbots in our *placita* records, it may be significant that Bobbio’s library held no secular legal text in the ninth/tenth century except two ‘books of Lombard law’ (Rothari’s Edict).⁴⁰⁴ There were no Roman or Frankish legal

⁴⁰¹ Few private donations for the early centuries exist independently in the collection (*CDSCB*, i, docs. xxviii, xliii, xliv, lxiv) although some can be reconstructed and backdated by the royal diplomas (*CDSCB*, i, docs. xlvii–lix; xc, xci). None concern the lands mentioned in the *miracula* however.

⁴⁰² A. G. Bergamaschi, ‘I poteri giurisdizionali del monastero di S Colombano in Bobbio’, *BSP*, 63 (1968), pp. 113–125, at p. 117.

⁴⁰³ Piazza, *Monastero*, p. 34.

⁴⁰⁴ An innovation in the Carolingian period, advocates were secular legal representatives, often of clerics, with

texts that might suggest in-house resources for their judiciary officials, although this was also the case for many other monasteries too.⁴⁰⁵ Historiography suggesting that the advocates used their role in command of judicial rights of exaction to become the heads of militia bands throughout the eleventh century finds neither support nor refutation in the silence of the Bobbio documents.⁴⁰⁶

More important for the present study is Bobbio's experience of royal justice. Whilst the formulaic notices of Carolingian legal documentation no doubt misleadingly present a standardized and all-encompassing judicial system that in practice was far more varied and confused,⁴⁰⁷ the persistence of the *placitum* document form in Italy throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries is striking nevertheless, especially in comparison to the situation in France. Unlike their legislative activities, post-Carolingian royal representatives continued to operate public court hearings under crown officials and attended by professional judges. Whilst there may have been a hiatus during the time of Berengar II, there was a revitalised level of activity with Ottonian rule featuring many of the same legal personnel as under Hugh.⁴⁰⁸ François Bougard's comprehensive treatise on post-Carolingian justice in Italy describes the consolidation during the first half of the tenth century, particularly under Berengar I and Hugh, of the royal judges (*judices domni regis*) – professionals schooled together at the palace in Pavia – who both extended their own competencies and reinforced traditional activities, cementing the role of the *placitum*. Under the Ottos, there was a localization of the system and a conscious devolution towards its *missi*, under whom the number of *placita* rose. The judges, although now referring to themselves as the *judices sacrii palatii*, were no longer necessarily trained together at Pavia (as the lesser conformity of writing style shows) and were more static

duties both in secular courts and in relation to the dependants of the church that they represented. See, most recently, C. West, 'The significance of the Carolingian advocate', *EME*, 17:2 (2009), pp. 186–206, with further bibliography, including on post-Carolingian advocacy, at p. 186 n. 1.

⁴⁰⁵ Richter, *Bobbio*, p. 146; Bougard, *La justice*, p. 46. A collection known as *Anselmo dedicata*, containing articles of a capitulary of Lothar from 825 and capitularies of Lambert from 898, may have been written at Bobbio but also maybe at Milan, Vercelli or Pavia: Bougard, *La justice*, p. 33.

⁴⁰⁶ Bergamaschi, 'I poteri giurisdizionali', p. 123. In the twelfth century the monastery would concoct the 'falsi bobbiesi' of 1172 in attempt to claim a long-held comital title (and accompanying jurisdictions), in order to escape the power of their own bishop: Garbarino, 'Diploma', esp. pp. 38–40; Tosi, 'Governo', pp. 76–80.

⁴⁰⁷ Wickham, 'Land disputes', p. 238.

⁴⁰⁸ J. N. Sutherland, 'Aspects of continuity and change in the Italian *placitum*, 962–972: the nature and significance of courtroom procedures', *Journal of Medieval History*, 2 (1976), pp. 89–118, at p. 91, Bougard, 'La justice', pp. 161–162. The lull in *placita* from Berengar II's reign (as Arduin's later) may be explained by the controversy surrounding their reigns and questions about legitimacy: C. Wickham, 'Justice in the Kingdom of Italy in the eleventh century', in *La giustizia nell'alto medioevo*, pp. 179–250, at p. 195.

geographically, although they remained united by a broader judicial culture which sought to 'correct and consolidate' legal procedures.⁴⁰⁹ Bobbio, sited so close to Pavia, was in the heartland of judicial vigour.⁴¹⁰

Bougard rightly does not use *mutationniste* discourse as a framework, but for the present study it serves to note certain trends for Bobbio's experience of royal justice in these terms. At Bobbio we have formal records of two *placita* by which to illustrate the experience of royal justice from the perspective of our monastery, both of which involving lands appearing in the *miracula* – one for Babarda in 915 contested with the marquis Radaldus, and another relating to the forest of Montelungo in 972 against San Martino.⁴¹¹ In addition we have the contest of 929 presented in the *miracula*. In 915 and 929, kings Berengar and Hugh presided over the cases at Pavia; in 972 it was the marquis and count of the palace Oberto at *Villa Gragio*.⁴¹² In 915 Berengar presided whilst the *vassus et missus domni Regis* Odelricus sat in justice along with seventeen *judices domni regis et reliqui*. In 972 Oberto presided over judgment with only ten *judices domnorum imperatorum* (who signed in witness as *judices comitii palatii*) and three of Oberto's 'vassals' as well as 'many others'. Nevertheless, this devolution occurred under royal policy, not in spite of it, and justice still operated ultimately in the name of the emperor. Both the formal notices from 915 and 972 show that the monastery and its abbot were represented by an advocate, as were their opponents: in 915 the abbot of Bobbio was accompanied by Bonipertus *iudex domni regis et advocatus ipsius monasterii et monachi et ipsius abbati*, and in 972 one *Ildebertus filius quondam item Ildeberti advocatus monasterii sancti Columbani*.

Royal juridical structures in the form of *placita* thus remained a desirable and effective forum for arbitration accessible to Bobbio both in the early and later tenth century. On a documentary level there is little difference between Bobbio's experience of a *placitum* under Berengar I and that under Otto I; both were ruled over by those with royal or imperial functions in the presence of professional judges, and followed similar procedures. They also both contain many elements familiar to other *placita* of the Carolingian centuries. The invocation of juridical and procedural norms remained central to the operation of law, and

⁴⁰⁹ Bougard, *La justice*, esp. part 4; summarized at Bougard, 'La justice', pp. 152-169.

⁴¹⁰ For Bobbio and public justice in earlier periods see M. Ferrari, 'Nuovi frammenti documentari bobbiesi', *Italia medioevale umanistica*, 10 (1967), pp. 1-23 and Richter, *Bobbio*, pp. 110-114.

⁴¹¹ *CDSCB*, i, docs. lxxxv, xcvi. The latter is critically edited by F. Bougard, 'Notice d'un plaid contre Saint-Martin de Pavie', in Guyotjeannin and Poulle, *Autour de Gerbert d'Aurillac*, pp. 57-60.

⁴¹² On the locality of this latter site see Tosi, 'Governo', pp. 86 n. 40, 163-164.

although these norms shifted slightly according to the different legal systems of the post-Carolingian kings and their Ottonian successors, ‘the presentation and testing of evidence’ was consistent.⁴¹³ Lastly, defined rulings were made; unsurprisingly in our documentation, in Bobbio’s favour. All three of these concur with the model of pre-*mutation* ‘public justice’, whose collapse is seen as part of the transformation of the year 1000. Such a trend has been less willingly applied to Italy with the relative continuity of public institutions there, and Chris Wickham has already assessed how well eleventh-century Italian justice weighs up (or, mostly, does not weigh up) to the transformationist model of collapse – even if in this region Communal justice was the more typical replacement than seigneurial justice.⁴¹⁴ Since our Bobbio evidence relates to the tenth century it cannot add to this part of the debate; it should instead be read as part of the historiography discussed above that challenges the description of pre-collapse royal and imperial public justice. It is pertinent to observe therefore, in the vein of many other studies, that the royal judicial structures experienced at Bobbio infused both public and private aspects, if that distinction can be made; evidential proofs were always flexible, ‘irrational’ proofs were used alongside their more ‘rational’ counterparts, and recourse was had to the supernatural features, both in practice and in narrative strategy.

We have seen a little of the contest in 915 before, where the monastery objected that the marquis Radaldus had taken the fruits of *Barbada* illegally since it pertained to the portion and use of the brethren of the monastery. Radaldus had replied that it was not illegal, since that land in fact pertained to the portion that customarily was given in benefice and which he held *ex regia*. Following this *altercatio* – exchange of views of the two parties – the *placitum* held at Pavia in April 915 was the occasion for the marquis to provide written proof (*consignatio*) of his claim which he had made a judicial pledge (*wadia*) to do. Being unable to find *nec testes, nec homines per inquisitionem, neque ulla firmitates, nullamque rationes* to confirm his right, the marquis and his advocate professed that it must pertain to the use of the brethren and the ruling was made in the monastery’s favour.⁴¹⁵ Invoking both written documentation and witness testimony (even though none could be found), the ruling was made following the *professio* – renunciation of defeat – of the marquis. The court case in 972 shared many of these aspects, although the decision did not hang on the status of monastic/abbatial lands as here, but a more typical issue of propriety, this time contested between Bobbio and the convent of San Martino

⁴¹³ Sutherland, ‘Aspects’, p. 109.

⁴¹⁴ Wickham, ‘Justice’, pp. 234-239.

⁴¹⁵ *CDSCB*, i, doc. lxxxv.

di Pavia. At some point before the hearing of 20 August 972 in front of Oberto, Bobbio (via its *advocatus* Ildebert) had accused San Martino of cutting down a hundred trees in the forest of Montelungo without the right to do so. San Martino admitted that it could not provide witnesses for its counterclaim that the forest had belonged to it for at least forty years (the minimum time required to make a valid claim of possession in this case), which Bobbio then made a *wadia* to do. Our charter pertains to the second hearing at which Bobbio and Ildebert appeared *cum euvalia* [sic] *et testes* (with the Gospels and witnesses). In light of the evidence and the *professio* of San Martino's *advocatus* accepting the legitimacy of Bobbio's claim, the ruling was made in Bobbio's favour.⁴¹⁶ The different elements of this procedure included the *altercatio* and *professio* as before and, in this case, witness testimony rather than documentary evidence for proof of possession. Thus for this case the documentary proofs that Bobbio held in Charlemagne's original donation and the subsequent confirmations were not useful, since Bobbio had to respond to the forty-year claim of San Martino—the advocate instead willingly offered the testamentary proof required.⁴¹⁷ Bowman's 'practical interdependence of different varieties' of proof appears here in full array, as also in the earlier document.⁴¹⁸ That the *professio* – the admission of the 'losing' party that the other side had won – held such weight provides an interesting perspective on compromise settlements and social mediation. In many cases the formula probably hides such compromises anyway; the overall effect is to present the image that all were in agreement.⁴¹⁹

This case was one of seven from the remaining thirty-one *placita* from 962–972 presided over by the marquis Oberto, who was by this point in control of Bobbio's abbatial patrimony which was in turn bestowed in benefice to his own men.⁴²⁰ Listed at the head of the imperial judges who sat with Oberto in judgement is Benzo, a name that also appears amongst the *beneficia que Oberto marchio dedit* recorded in the later polyptych.⁴²¹ It is therefore possible that at the time of

⁴¹⁶ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xcvi.

⁴¹⁷ Bougard, 'Notice d'un plaid', p. 60.

⁴¹⁸ Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, p. 217; Bougard, *La justice*, esp. p. 318.

⁴¹⁹ It also prefigures the *ostensio cartae* (on which see the comments and bibliography in Wickham, 'Land disputes', p. 246 and n. 33) which whilst being 'adversarial' in presenting outright winners and losers, also has the curious effect of presenting disputes as non-contentious. Wickham discusses the significance of explicit renunciation of rights in the context of maintaining peace and the refusal of court judgments; compromise was 'not seen as antithetical to abstract justice, and not even antithetical to the outright victory of one party' (pp. 249–254, quote at p. 254).

⁴²⁰ Figures from Sutherland, 'Aspects', supplemented by the newer editions summarized at Wickham, 'Land disputes', p. 229 n. 1.

⁴²¹ *CDSCB*, i, doc. xcvi.

this court case, Bobbio's ex-abbatial lands (or still abbatial, for those who see Oberto as secular abbot) were held directly and indirectly respectively by the presiding count and marquis, and his foremost judge. Montelungo pertained to the conventual mense at this time, and in this sense Oberto was 'disinterested' since the land related to a distinct patrimony beyond his own – the conventual mense rather than his own *beneficia*. Yet one could hardly consider him and his judges impartial mediators by modern standards. We have here a similar case to Bowman's example from tenth-century Catalonia, in which the presiding count was both a public authority and also the protector of the plaintiff monastery: 'strands of public justice, ritual commemoration, private patronage, and affective affiliation were impossible to disentangle; public and private were inextricable because indistinguishable.'⁴²² For Wickham, such a situation represents 'a dialectic, between central (public) and local (private) power ... Lords ran the public political system, redirecting it to their own needs, but the public system determined what legitimate practices were supposed to be, and lords knew it; the norms determining their own local practice were, however, much more *de facto*, and some of them remained largely uncodified'.⁴²³ From Bobbio's perspective, however, what mattered was the victory over San Martino – the seigneurialization of the abbatial lands may not have been all bad, after all, as long as the integrity of both menses were protected effectively. Indeed, there are no complaints from the Bobbio community against the marquis Oberto similar to those made against Giseprand. In any case, was Oberto any more disinterested than King Hugh was when arbitrating between Abbot Gerlan and Guy of Piacenza in 929? Perhaps his ability to keep the abbatial patrimony together reassured the community that its own long-term future, both administratively and in real terms, was safer in the marquis' hands than it would have been with a lesser man, or one without imperial patronage.

The *Translatio* and the court

The third example of royal justice at Bobbio comes in the *miracula* themselves, mid-way between the two hearings that we have just seen. Whilst the *miracula* do not represent the hearing of 929 in the standardized terms recognizable in the formal notices, it is still a matter of a legal issue arbitrated by the king himself. Without a standard notice to accompany it we

⁴²² Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks*, pp. 220–22; similarly for ninth-century Francia: J. Nelson, 'Dispute settlement in Carolingian West Francia', in Davies and Fouracre, *Settlement of Disputes*, pp. 45–64, and for Bavaria: Brown, *Unjust Seizure*, p. 201.

⁴²³ Wickham, 'The 'feudal revolution': iv', p. 204.

cannot be certain that the contest at Pavia took the form of a royal *placitum* judged by Hugh – there are after all hints of familiar procedures such as the reading out of charters in court before judgment was made (cc. xxiii–xxiii) – or if it played out in a less formal manner in general court business.⁴²⁴ The hagiographer nudges us to believe the latter, calling the general occasion a *conloquium* of Hugh and his magnates, and by focusing as he does on the saints’ relics and their role in the procedures, but this may be a function of his strategy to paint the contest in much broader terms, as a battle of San Colombano against the princes, as we have seen.⁴²⁵ Consensus in this period held that saints were representatives of a universal, divine law and that their relics had intercessory powers on earth, and holy bodies had long enjoyed juridical functions. This was particularly true for the swearing of oaths on the relics or tombs of saints nearby (who were entreated to detect and punish anyone who perjured themselves), a practice current in Frankish tribunals of the sixth and seventh century that had spread widely by the Carolingian period and beyond,⁴²⁶ and under the Ottonians oath-helping and ordeal (especially duels) increasingly feature in the documents. What this meant, then, for the innovative holder of relics, was a valuable tool. As François Bougard puts it, the clergy in the tenth and eleventh centuries defended ‘tooth and nail’ the juridical personality of their saints, and this was particularly true in relation to the management, protection and recovery of their lands.⁴²⁷ In Bobbio’s case, this operated both in the sphere of land claims *in situ* operated throughout the procession and also at the royal court itself. Both represented a development in the juridical functions of saints and relics that included a migration away from the use of ‘neutral’ relics in law, that is to say relics not specifically allied to either party, which represented universal divine justice; and a move towards the invocation of ‘interested’ relics by the communities that held them.⁴²⁸

At court the secondary relics of Saint Columbanus, his cup (*cuppa*) and the satchel (*pera*) he had

⁴²⁴ Bougard, *La justice*, p. 394, who prefers the former.

⁴²⁵ *MSC*, viii. Later at Conques, the hagiographer would use a similar strategy to render the legal validity of a contestant’s case unintelligible: text to n. 680.

⁴²⁶ A capitulary of 803 decreed that all oaths be sworn either in a church or on relics, with the standard oath being ‘may God and the saint whose relics these are judge me, that I speak the truth’: *MGH Capit.*, I, 11, p. 118. N. Herrmann-Mascard, *Les reliques des saints: formation coutumière d’un droit* (Paris, 1975), on relics and oaths at pp. 235–270.

⁴²⁷ Bougard, ‘La relique’, pp. 35–36, 42–43, 53, quote at p. 36 and Bozóky, ‘Voyage de reliques’; see also B. de Gaiffier, ‘Les revendications de biens dans quelques documents hagiographiques du XIe siècle’, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 50 (1932), pp. 123–139.

⁴²⁸ Bougard, ‘La relique’, p. 53. Bougard’s study of the legal context of the *miracula* is almost comprehensive and this section is indebted to his work.

used to carry the Gospels took part in two ritual courtly activities. Having assembled the great men of the realm at his palace, King Hugh ordered that the cup of Columbanus be brought. He drank from it, followed by some of the other magnates, but the two men most implicated in the threats to Bobbio's land, Bishop Guido of Piacenza and his brother Raginerius, refused to do likewise (c. xxi). Michele Tosi has seen this as a kind of trial by ordeal,⁴²⁹ which had been closely tied to royal power by Carolingian kings.⁴³⁰ Yet this ritual was not strictly an ordeal without the hagiographic gloss of the miraculous fall of Raginerius from his horse. Rather, the drinking ritual may have demonstrated publicly the brothers' position vis-à-vis Bobbio (and its abbot, presumably), and that of the king, who aligned himself with the saint's cause. The manner in which the cup was used at court seems to mirror rites of sociability and concord that were common amongst the aristocracy; all those who drank from the cup were thus welcomed into the *comitatus* of the saint.⁴³¹ By such means the saint was at once made equal to the secular *optimates* – as a lord in himself – and remained elevated as a sacred being, which gave Gerlan and Bobbio somewhat of an advantage over their adversaries. It was a further development of the process of seigneurialization of the saint, just as the movement of his relics around his lands and the 'lying in state' at San Michele. After their acquiescence in the drinking ritual, the magnates visited the corporeal relics of the saint, where they placed their staffs in Columbanus' satchel and swore to return the lands they had taken: thus performing a *refutatio* of the usurped goods by reinvestiture *per fustem* on the satchel. All this was completed in front of the corporeal relics of the saint, in the same way as oaths were sworn.⁴³²

François Bougard devoted a study to the activities at Hugh's court and has identified this as the first example of the transference of specific relics to court, since older traditions dictated that oaths were sworn on relics held by the nearest church, and marks the move from the use of 'neutral' to 'interested' relics in judicial processes.⁴³³ It is an important distinction, although there was indirect precedence in the use of Saint Martin's cloak (*cappa*) by the Frankish court. Oaths taken on the *cappa* were considered to be particularly strong and the relic is 'to be

⁴²⁹ Tosi, 'Trasferimento', p. 147.

⁴³⁰ R. Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal* (Oxford, 1986), p. 36.

⁴³¹ Bougard, 'La relique', p. 40.

⁴³² *MSC*, xxiii; Bougard, 'La relique', p. 40.

⁴³³ Bougard, 'La relique', p. 55.

regarded as an important adjunct to the machinery of the royal court.⁴³⁴ Yet the *cappa sancti Martini* represented a wider interest than the court alone, ‘Saint Martin having been the closest thing to a patron saint for all of Frankish Gaul’,⁴³⁵ and its permanent presence at court (wherever the court may be as it moved around) provides a different context to that of the transference of the relics of Saint Columbanus to Pavia for the purposes of confirming Bobbio’s rights. The particular strength of oaths taken on the *cappa* may have had as much to do with the conceived potency of the relics of the famous saint, and to do with combined universal law as represented by the saints and the empire, as to do with Saint Martin’s special interest in protecting the royal holders of his relics. The sending out of royal relics at times of general oaths of loyalty to the king, however, may be a loose precedent for the Columbanian translation although these unspecified relics were not associated by their identification to the king in the same way as Columbanus’ relics were to Bobbio’s cause.⁴³⁶

It is noteworthy that both the primary and secondary relics of Saint Columbanus were taken to Pavia, although it is possible that the corporeal relics remained in the church of San Michele whilst only the secondary relics in the form of his *cuppa* were brought to the palace. The miracle-stories are inconclusive on this, although they describe how the magnates *came to* the corporeal relics for the ritual with the staffs, suggesting they were not in the palace itself. In any case the act of moving multiple relics from Bobbio to Pavia for the purpose of confirming the monastery’s claims and underwriting the decision in its favour is significant enough. Bougard argues that the outburst of Alineus about horses’ and donkeys’ bones did not represent general scepticism about the jurisdictional qualities of the relics but rather the objectionable use of ‘interested’ over neutral relics and was perceived as an unfair advantage. Yet the fundamental role of relics in justice was unshakable and the hagiographer repeatedly affirms that Gerlan and his monks were acting according to the law – if innovatively – and with secular approval. Indeed, Gerlan was at court as much as an arch-chancellor as plaintiff.⁴³⁷ The relics were only

⁴³⁴ P. Fouracre, ‘*Placita*’ and the settlement of disputes in later Merovingian Francia’, in Davies and Fouracre, *Settlement of Disputes*, pp. 23–44, at p.36. The Formulary of Marculf attests to the use of the relics for oath taking, both *in palatio nostro*, specifically sworn on Saint Martin’s cloak (i.38), and the dispatch of unspecified/general relics to accompany a royal *missus*, at times of general oaths of loyalty to the king (i.40): A. Rio (ed.), *The Formularies of Angers and Marculf: Two Merovingian Legal Handbooks* (Liverpool, 2008), pp. 173; 175–6. I thank Ian Wood for highlighting this usage of the *cappa sancti Martini*.

⁴³⁵ H. A. Myers, *Medieval Kingship* (Chicago, 1982), p. 103.

⁴³⁶ Rio, *Formularies*, p. 175.

⁴³⁷ Bougard, ‘La relique’, pp. 48, 53–54. Incidentally, the *placitum* in 915 makes reference to the presence of a Gospel book in proceedings; see text to n. 416.

one element in the legal process and did not replace other judicial tools. Just as with Saint Martin's *cappa* at the Frankish court, the relic and ritual aspects of the court process must be seen as supplementing, rather than undermining or substituting, the judicial process.⁴³⁸

The *Miracula* and royal justice

Recalling the events at the Pavian court decades later in the *miracula* added a further layer of complexity. By underlining that the relics were used in procession and at Pavia in conjunction with secular approval, the hagiographer asserted that the relics contributed towards the establishment of law. By the miraculous events that studded his account of events, however, he was also able to portray divine approval of the monks' strategy and the operation of divine justice, which also served to sanctify the decisions made. As if to verify the legitimacy of the procession the collection, as would Sainte-Foy's later, recounts miracles about a distinctive instrument used in the procession. A bell-clapper accidentally dropped into the River Po by one of the bell-ringers in Bobbio's processional party was found 'miraculously' washed ashore.⁴³⁹ At Pavia, returning to the 'ordeal' where Guy and Raginerius refused to drink from the saint's *cuppa*, the hagiographer interjects a miracle. Forgetful of their treaty with the king, the brothers fled the city that night and Raginerius had suffered a non-fatal fall from his horse; proof of the intercessory abilities of the relic. For the hagiographer, it was Raginerius' fate and the punishment of the blasphemer Alineus that had convinced of the authenticity and power of the relics, and persuaded the recalcitrant nobles to return the 'stolen' property (cc. xxi-xxiii). In this sense, the miracle-stories served as a further extension of the discourse of divine justice that underpinned the relic justice in court.⁴⁴⁰

Yet here we meet an inherent paradox. In striving to demonstrate the intercessory power of the saint and relics the *Miracula sancti Columbani* – just like those of Sainte Foy, which also often place dispute at their centre – needed to downplay the efficacy of temporal justice, whilst simultaneously arguing for the validity of relics in temporal judicial situations. At Bobbio, the

⁴³⁸ On the inseparability of ritual and law: Bowman, 'Do neo-Romans curse?', *passim*.

⁴³⁹ *MSC*, xiii. Later at Conques, one of the valuable ivory horns used to announce a procession was miraculously returned following a theft: *LMSF*, ii.11. The *Miracula sancti Columbani* also relate tales of the miraculous re-lighting of candles, which were integral to the procession's ritual (*MSC*, xi; xiv; xv), although this is quite a typical hagiographical *topos* and need not be procession-specific.

⁴⁴⁰ A later stage in this development would be the direct application of punishment miracles to feuding culture by the hagiographers of Conques: see ch. 17.

hagiographer blamed the necessity for the translation on Hugh's political weakness, and yet celebrated the capability of Hugh's court to issue a valid precept for the monastery. As Bougard argues, relic justice was invoked in *miracula* according to a 'une logique d'économie et de hiérarchie de la preuve' – that is to say, it had to be a 'last resort' so as to prevent the debasement of the saint. Furthermore their devaluation of the actions of public bodies only served to demonstrate the value of the saints' own actions. Thus in spite of the repeated sentiments of hagiographers that public justice was deficient, it was not a failure of public structures or 'State' that 'forced' recourse to relics. In fact, as in the case of Bobbio, hagiographic invocation as much as relic use came at times of political sensitivity rather than outright institutional decline.⁴⁴¹

This is an important point, and one worth pursuing a little further. At Bobbio it was certainly the case that the situation was sensitive, both in 929 and again in the 960s when Bobbio hoped to secure the support of the new king. Any advantage would be welcome in such an environment, and elements of both the translation of relics and the written *miracula* functioned as a form of public petition using high-visibility strategies and the invocation of popular support. These public displays nevertheless intersected with legal procedures, thus sharing ground with the judicial *clamor*. Rites of investiture 'represented the transfer of property rights at its most public',⁴⁴² and these were combined with relic veneration, as did the practice of tree marking. The miracle-stories also remind us that procession was an aural and visual spectacle, and in which it was common practice to sound thanks loudly to God as miracles occurred. The procession from Bobbio when passing over Montelungo could be heard over three miles away in Canevino as it was by a peasant boy who, mute since birth, greatly surprised his father by announcing the procession's approach. Likewise, at Pavia, miracles were accompanied by the ringing of a single bell which caused all the church bells in the city to peal in unison.⁴⁴³ Such exposure encouraged wide coverage, and we are told that many of the local people joined the procession of Saint Columbanus' relics as it passed by. In Pavia we are told that when the procession passed through the gate of San Giovanni, so many people had come to see the relics that the streets were incapable of accommodating them: they climbed on top of walls and on rooftops in an effort to get a glimpse of the holy body.⁴⁴⁴ It seems efforts were

⁴⁴¹ Bougard, 'La relique', pp. 46-50, quote at p. 46.

⁴⁴² Balzaretto, 'Land tenure', p. 601.

⁴⁴³ *MSC*, xii; xv; xx.

⁴⁴⁴ *MSC*, xv.

made to provide the greatest possible access: the corporeal relics may have been placed in the church of San Michele rather than the royal palace because the church gave access to a greater number of people.⁴⁴⁵ Involving the populace made a statement on the shared benefit of divine patronage bestowed upon the saint's community and wider society, whilst also providing a forum to advertise the seigneurial status of a patron saint.

Bernard Töpfer, in discussing the analogous processions of Sainte Foy, claimed that the processions had a triple function; firstly, to make contact with the peasant population,⁴⁴⁶ secondly, because 'in those insecure times, it was also safer to have the transaction witnessed by as many people as possible'; and 'finally, the corporeal presence of the saint, in the form of her venerated relics, promised a guarantee against usurpation, making any trespass on her property a sacrilege. By these methods, the monks secured in advance the condemnation of future usurpers by the widest possible range of public opinion.'⁴⁴⁷ Yet the invocation of public witness was not necessarily due to 'those insecure times' (i.e. a failure of legal systems) as Töpfer would have it. Witness testimony was integral to judicial systems and public memory could form legitimate proof part of legal claims to land: the ancient people of an area might be called in to confirm propriety of a claimant. Likewise the investiture-type rites seen on procession at Bobbio consciously invoked this most public mode of recognition of rights to land. What better way to cement in the public memory claimed rights to an area but a spectacular procession that would no doubt remain for a long time in a shared memory? We cannot make a useful division between the legal and the popular here. The presence of crowds is invoked not only as witness to miracles, and to the donations of land, but in those assemblies of people in the church when a community made a liturgical *clamor*, a ritual of tribulation to God also often made when monastic property was under threat or had been appropriated,⁴⁴⁸ and which also had a secular counterpart that Barton describes as representing 'substantive legalism'. Counteracting Little's comments on the liturgical *clamor* made within a *mutationniste*

⁴⁴⁵ Bougard, 'La relique', p. 39.

⁴⁴⁶ The movement of relics over distance certainly took the saint to areas where people, especially the poor, may not otherwise have had the opportunity to make contact. This is more relevant to the long-distance processions from Conques, where there is an example of a poor, elderly man who had to be carried to the nearest point by which the procession passed his home. Conques itself was certainly too far for him to reach: *LMSF*, L.3.

⁴⁴⁷ Töpfer, 'The cult of relics', p. 55. For an account of the later use of relics and crowds in the Peace movement, see Koziol, 'Monks, feuds'.

⁴⁴⁸ L. K. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions: Liturgical Cursing in Romanesque France* (Ithaca, 1993), esp. at p. 20. *LMSF*, iii.17 describes a scene similar to a *clamor* but in the public square of Conques, and asking for aid via the saint's intercession.

framework of collapsed secular justice, Barton emphasizes instead the continuity and effectiveness of non-institutional normative legal processes represented in both its liturgical and secular forms.⁴⁴⁹ The *miracula* also include an example of a maledictory sanction clause, included at the end of the summary that of privileges given by the hagiographer: anyone who was to go against the aforementioned privileges would curse themselves: they would be punished by anathema and at the final judgement they would share the fate of Judas the traitor (c. xxiii). Similar sentiments were expressed in the subsequent chapter, addressed *ad eos, qui res sancti Columbani iniuste suis obsequiis deputant* (c. xxv). The gathering of the local people at Bobbio and the ritual supplications that the author of the *Miracula sancti Columbani* mentions show that the basic components in the judicial *clamor* had already taken shape in the first half of the tenth century,⁴⁵⁰ in which converged the public, the sacred and the legal.

The very nature of the *miracula* genre was to demonstrate the celestial power of its protagonist and a space had to be created to demonstrate a need for such intervention. The *miracula* also reveal a proactive community aware of the tools at its command. Although often in the hands of increasingly powerful territorial lords, nominally imperial justice had not been rendered ineffective in Italy. Nevertheless, Bobbio used the cultic trappings under its control to influence legal outcomes, extending the privileged role of the relic in judicial culture in new directions. We will see this co-inhabitancy of cultic and legal procedures again at Conques and in the miracles of Sainte-Foy fifty years and more after the *Miracula sancti Columbani* were written: neither then was divine justice a substitute for a deficiency in temporal justice, but a complement, albeit to the advantage of the relic-holders.

10. VIOLENCE, *MILITES* & CASTLES

Violence

The *Miracula sancti Columbani* are not particularly forthcoming on most of the tenets of the 'feudal transformation' model of society. So central to the *mutationniste* rhetoric, the violence and 'anarchy' of tenth-century Italy – here a combination of Saracen and Hungarian attacks

⁴⁴⁹ R. E. Barton, 'Making a clamor to the Lord: noise, justice and power in eleventh- and twelfth-century France', in Tuten and Billado, *Feud, Violence and Practice*, pp. 71-94.

⁴⁵⁰ Bougard, 'La relique', pp. 43-44.

and weak central authority – had already been lamented before the debate began.⁴⁵¹ Yet the two collections of *miracula* studied here are strikingly different in their portrayal of violence and castles. At Bobbio, explicit violence does not feature and is only implied by the use of terms such as *abstrahere*, *invadere*, *usurpare* and *rapacitas*.⁴⁵² Such language echoes stipulations in earlier precepts, such as Louis II's 865 charter – the first to mention the *divisio* of lands, which had been made *pro summa rei publicae necessitate pacisque tranquillitate* and which stated that 'no public judge nor *missus* shall presume to inflict violence or disturbance unjustly'.⁴⁵³ In 889 the new king Guy (of Spoleto) had been implored to guarantee that bishoprics, abbacies and *xenodochia* would be free from the imposition of violence or new burdens of any kind, demanding that they remain in their current state with their ancient privileges intact.⁴⁵⁴ The language of violence related to 'attacks' on monastic land thus had precedence in the Carolingian period and immediately after, and applied equally to royal representatives as unspecified aggressors: such terminology would still be in use in the eleventh and twelfth centuries alongside the *malae consuetudines* attributed to the new 'castellan lords'.⁴⁵⁵ The Sainte-Foy collection paints an unequivocal picture, with explicit acts of violence throughout. This does not mean, however, that the experience of violence of these two regions was necessarily widely different. Instead it has much to do with the projected audience for the *miracula* at Conques.

Milites and Nobility

If violence is not as explicit in the Italian *miracula* as in the French, are we given any hint of the forebears of the castle-based violence considered by some to have revolutionized lordship and society in the millennium? *Milites* are mentioned only once. Following on from the punishment miracle of Raginerius, it appears in the preamble to Alineus' blasphemy: *Denique scimus esse scriptum incompositos iudices incompositos habere milites; et ideo non sufficiebat ad ruinam illorum, quod res supradicti coenobii invaserant, verum etiam virulentis linguis sancto Columbano coeperunt detrahere* (c. xxii). The first sentence recalls Ecclesiastes (10:2): 'As the judge of the people is himself, so also are his ministers' (*secundum iudicem populi sic et ministri eius*). We

⁴⁵¹ For example G. Falco, 'La crisi dell'autorità e lo sforzo della ricostruzione in Italia', in *I problemi comuni dell'Europa postcarolingia* (Spoleto, 1955), pp. 39–51 at pp. 45–46.

⁴⁵² MSC, viii, xxi, xxii, xxiii, xxvi. The less aggressive term *subtrahere* is used in the context of the papal privileges (c. xxiii).

⁴⁵³ *Diplomata Ludowici II*, doc. xlii. In 877 Carloman, confirming Louis II's charter, repeated the sentiment about the peace and tranquility of the realm. CDSCB, i, lxvi.

⁴⁵⁴ CDSCB, i, lxx: cf. Richter, *Bobbio*, pp. 158–159.

⁴⁵⁵ Brown, *Violence*, pp. 107, 124.

cannot be sure if our author intended to use the term in an abstract manner or if Alineus was actually qualified as a *miles* in contemporary eyes; whichever is true, for our author the term in this case certainly described an inferior. Presumably the ‘judges’ here were the *principes* of Guy, Raginerius and Samson’s level; the *miles* Alineus was subordinate – like a minister – to this level. His presence at the court suggests that he was nevertheless a man of some standing, of what level though remains hidden since his name does not seem to appear in other documentation of the time. From this brief reference alone it is impossible to draw any conclusions about the nobility, ancestry, or legal status of this man in relation to Samson, by which to contribute to relevant debates on the development of this condition into the eleventh century.

Castles

The *mutationniste* perspective on castles tends to posit a proliferation of fortifications, or ‘castral revolution’, which demonstrates the weakening of local public power, with the process of reorganization around castles viewed as a social and economic process (as well as juridical) first described by Pierre Toubert for the Latium.⁴⁵⁶ In the *incastellamento* model, castles came to be continuously inhabited, often becoming the fortified centres of newly re-organized agrarian settlements (*castra*) over which each castle-holder assumed jurisdiction. The role of monasteries sits rather uncomfortably in this model, however. Although there are no archaeological remains of Bobbio to analyze, it is possible that the monastery itself may have had fortifications from the beginning, like others that it was linked to along the Lombards’ safe route, such as Gravago (diocese of Piacenza) and San Giovanni in Pontremoli.⁴⁵⁷ By 1010 Bobbio was explicitly endowed with a *castrum*.⁴⁵⁸ The monastery had also long counted fortified buildings within its patrimony, such as the *curtis* of Turris, which controlled the crossing of the Taro river and the entrance to the valley of the Ceno, but which was also the centre of a thriving agricultural unit at the time of Wala’s *Breve* when it sustained 47 *livelli*, 85 families and

⁴⁵⁶ P. Toubert, *Les structures du Latium médiéval: le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IXe siècle à la fin du XIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Rome, 1973), particularly ch. 4. See also A. Debord, ‘The castellan revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine’, in Head and Landes, *Peace of God*, p. 146; A. Debord, *Aristocratie et pouvoir: le rôle du château dans la France médiévale*, ed. by A. Bazzana and J.-M. Poisson (Paris, 2000); P. Bonnassie, ‘Descriptions of fortresses in the Book of Miracles of Sainte-Foy of Conques’, in *From Slavery to Feudalism*, pp. pp. 132-148, at pp. 145-146. Bonnassie’s assertions are revisited in more detail in the context of the Sainte Foy miracles.

⁴⁵⁷ Magistretti, ‘Contribuito’, esp. pp. 288, 296

⁴⁵⁸ CDSCB, i, doc. cxiii; also see Piazza, *Monastero e vescovado*, p. 6 n. 3.

produced cereals, wine and more.⁴⁵⁹ Bobbio seems to have avoided the Hungarian and Saracen incursions even though nearby Tortona did not,⁴⁶⁰ but toponyms indicating the existence of fortifications proliferate from the tenth century especially. Aldo Settia has shown how purposeful resettlement into castellated centres was less a feature of the Po area than elsewhere in Italy however; rather fortifications were added to strengthen already existing settlements. Neither, he maintains, should we presume that fortifications were always related to securing routes.⁴⁶¹ In the Bobbio area, however, the oldest of these fortification toponyms, as noted by Baruffi and Calegari, were in the Val Versa – along the route followed by the monks of Bobbio in the 929 translation.⁴⁶² Santa Giulietta, identified by Tosi as the location of *Barbata*, is also mentioned for the first time in the tenth century with the term ‘castello’.⁴⁶³ The 972 *placitum* mentions a castle at *Villa Gragio* near Montelungo, where the hearing was held, likely built to fortify the valley en route to Bobbio.⁴⁶⁴

Baruffi and Calegari’s observation may be explainable besides by the route’s virtue of being a thoroughfare: in fact, it was likely not the most direct way to Pavia, not least because two different ways were taken in each direction. If instead, as it seems, the monks of Bobbio were tracing out a perceived boundary, castles (built on older settlements) in these places may very well have played a role in the incursions/defence of the patrimony, either by the monastery or other lay lords in the area; or conversely by the bishop of Piacenza and those on the other side. Settia also suggests that the foundation of a castle at Bardi in the late ninth or early tenth century may have been an attempt to draw men and resources from the nearby monastic lands (including Bobbio’s) by the bishop of Piacenza – not necessarily as a place of violence but as a nucleated settlement – which may tie in to the complaints against Bishop Guy.⁴⁶⁵ Either way, however, it confirms that castles were not unfamiliar or unusual to Bobbio’s immediate

⁴⁵⁹ CDSCB, i, docs. xxxvi; Magistretti, ‘Contribuito’, p. 296. On the castellation of monasteries, or fortified settlements growing to incorporate monasteries, see A. A. Settia, *Castelli e villaggi, nell’Italia padana. Popolamento, potere e sicurezza fra IX e XIII secolo* (Naples, 1984), pp. 248–254.

⁴⁶⁰ Goggi, *Per la storia*, pp. 135–137.

⁴⁶¹ Settia, *Castelli e villaggi*; A. A. Settia, ‘Castelli e strade del Nord Italia in età comunale: sicurezza, popolamento, ‘strategia’’, in G. Sergi (ed.), *Luoghi di strada nel Medioevo: fra il Po, il mare e le Alpi Occidentali* (Turin, 1996), pp. 15–40.

⁴⁶² G. A. Buffi and A. Calegari, ‘Dalla *via Francigena* all’alta Val Tidone: sulla rotta per San Colombano di Bobbio attraverso l’Oltrepò orientale’, in Nuvoletto, *Fondazione di Bobbio*, pp. 249–285, at pp. 268–275.

⁴⁶³ Goggi, *Storia dei comuni*, p. 331.

⁴⁶⁴ CDSCB, i, doc. xcvi; Baruffi and Calegari, ‘Dalla *via Francigena*’, pp. 264–265.

⁴⁶⁵ Settia, *Castelli e villaggi*, p. 169.

landscape.⁴⁶⁶ Yet there is no mention of fortifications or castle-based violence in the miracle-stories. Neither were the individuals therein associated to castles as their defining feature, as they would be in the Sainte-Foy collection: Gandolf, accused of invading *Memoriola*, held at least two castles and probably resided in the *castrum* of Portalbera, although the miracle-stories are silent on this point.⁴⁶⁷ Instead descriptions of individuals in the *Miracula sancti Columbani* were usually framed in terms of by public office or family connections, whilst others were simply denoted as *principes*. Yet neither precludes their use of violence or the threat of violence. Perhaps it was so normalized as to exclude its necessity; or perhaps their absence relates more simply to the strategy of the hagiographer who sought to petition for its legal status using the discourse of royal power.

11. FIDELITY AND TENURESHIP

Whilst the *miracula* tell us very little of the local society in which Bobbio was situated, they can tell us a little more on the monastic perspective of the lord/dependent relationship of a royal abbey and the sovereign. As so many of our sources, the focus of the *miracula* renders them uninterested in describing the rules (if any) that governed specific social relationships. Of the usual suspects, *vassallus* appears only once, for the *vassus Samsonis comitis nomine Alineus* who had blasphemer against the relics.⁴⁶⁸ It is never used for the other *principes* that made up Hugh's court, or for Abbot Gerlan who was certainly in receipt of a something akin to a royal benefice. Yet one of the central preoccupations of both 929 and the *miracula* themselves involved the negotiation of relationships with the king. In the *miracula* particularly the hagiographer sought to remind the king of his duties towards the monastery – as perceived by the community, and reminded him of their reciprocal 'services'. How then to categorize the relationship between king and monastery?

Certainly the complexity of the status of the abbot and community related to its land and vis-

⁴⁶⁶ Thus there is no evidence that Bobbio was engaged in purposeful reorganization as occurred via the *incastellamento* charters of San Vincenzo al Volturno: C. Wickham, 'The *terra* of San Vincenzo al Volturno in the eighth to twelfth centuries: the historical framework', in R. Hodges and J. Mitchell (eds.), *San Vincenzo al Volturno: The Archaeology, Art and Territory of an Early Medieval Monastery* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 227-259.

⁴⁶⁷ MSC, xxvi; Bougard, 'Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi', p. 23.

⁴⁶⁸ MSC, xxii. In Bresslau's 'B' class manuscripts – that is to say the twelfth-century and later version forming part of the *Legendarium Francogallicum* – the qualification of Alineus' status in relation to Samson is removed altogether; he is simply *unus nomine Alineus*. The term is rendered *vasus*, *vassus* and *vasallus* in the other manuscripts: Bresslau, MSC, p. 1008.

à-vis the king had led to the division of the abbatial and conventual menses, which thus formalized a division in the functions of the abbot and the community. Whether these were ever codified, however, is uncertain. Terms of vassalage and benefice are not used at Bobbio, and in any case the correlation between these two is rarely explicit in the documents of Lombard region.⁴⁶⁹ It is true that many of the abbots seem to have received the office from the king, even if 'election' was still in theory practiced. What they 'owed' the king in return – besides loyalty – is less clear. Gerlan was both archchancellor and abbot of Bobbio; Giseprand was both abbot of Bobbio and bishop of Tortona. All of these offices would have brought jurisdictions (frustratingly obscure for Bobbio's abbots) and other duties (more evident for the archchancellor in our written documents), but if there were further services beyond administration that were specifically attached to land that accompanied their titles, we are in the dark. Racine argues that the abbot was 'just another vassal' who would supply a contingent to serve in the army, even if he could not himself fight.⁴⁷⁰ By the installation of Oberto on the abbatial lands amongst others in his March presumably this portion of land also served a military function. Would Oberto's installation have seen a simple extension of services that had previously been paid by previous abbots? Indeed, the Ottonians seem to have increasingly 'requisitioned the abbots of the realm and the property of the monasteries to support the state politically, economically, and militarily... At the same time, however, the Ottonian rulers designated more and more of their private gifts, as well as a majority of grants emanating from the royal fisc, solely for the congregation's use and thereby contributed to a developing prebend or conventual *mensa*.⁴⁷¹ It is significant that in the Ottonian system, the division between abbot and community was often made clearer than ever. Yet it was not a global policy, since Otto II's *indiculus loricatorum* of 981/982 referred to by Bernhardt does not list abbots from every royal abbey,⁴⁷² including ours – Bobbio may not even have had an 'abbot' at this time, and if it did it was Petraldus, who was probably elected. A year or two later, Gerbert of Aurillac was installed there, and his role was certainly not a military one.⁴⁷³

The variation in the nature of invested abbots, sometimes with roles elsewhere, and the introduction of a layman on the abbatial lands argues instead for flexibility throughout the

⁴⁶⁹ Menant, *Campagnes Lombardes*, p. 568 n. 24.

⁴⁷⁰ Racine, 'Les Ottoniens', p. 274.

⁴⁷¹ Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis', p. 76.

⁴⁷² *MGH, Const.*, no. 436, pp. 632-633.

⁴⁷³ Tosi, 'Governo', *passim*. but esp. pp. 97-104.

post-Carolingian period, belying the transience at the head of the kingdom but also of the lack of standardization of such relationships. Gerlan's ability to use the cultic trappings at Bobbio when Giseprand could not shows how the relationship between monastery and abbot was not fixed; likewise we cannot presume that Gerlan had the same relationship with King Hugh as Giseprand would subsequently enjoy under Berengar. Giseprand is the perfect example of an attempt to 'privatize' land,⁴⁷⁴ and whilst this seems to fly in the face of an ideal unwritten code of beneficiary land and the abbot-bishop's role – an ideal to which the Otto-Gerbert changes would appeal – it is always possible that such an arrangement had been negotiated with (or coerced from) Berengar. We must, once again, re-state the flexibility of so-called 'feudal' bonds, which would have relied as much on personal and individual credentials as policy and political expedience.

If we needed reminding that all these social relationships were flexible, reciprocal and, most importantly, negotiable, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* provide an unusually vivid example of these in action. The *miracula* were redacted with a royal audience in mind, on an occasion when the Bobbio community felt it was both necessary and timely to reopen the discussion on the king-monastery relationship. Devoid of the obvious 'temporal' services that some abbatial menses explicitly owed, the community appealed to its socio-religious functions that were operated for the general good – or, indeed, in the service of the Empire. The foundation of Bobbio and other monasteries in Lombard Italy have been compared to the network of *arimanni* installed to secure and maintain the area, since it populated an extensive area with a network of monastic cells, *oraculae* and hospices, and some fortifications. With Frankish rule came further expectations to clear the land and exploit the natural resources in the area. The ninth-century imperial polyptychs demonstrate the keen interest of the sovereigns in the agricultural production of the conventual mense, but the inclusion of items atypical to polyptychs like the *xenodochia* and *plebes* suggest that these imperial surveys were also sensitive to other duties of the monastery, such as hospitality for the *hospitale* and religious direction for the *plebes*.⁴⁷⁵ It is these themes of public service that the community sought to emphasize in the *miracula*, and by extension, in their plea to the king. Protection of the integrity of the conventual lands (and presumably although not explicitly, physical protection when need arose) would be repaid with the valuable socio-religious function that Bobbio's monastic

⁴⁷⁴ For other examples see Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis', p. 76 n. 131.

⁴⁷⁵ Laurent, 'Organisation', p. 493.

community fulfilled in the area. The brethren's credibility was underlined by its connection to its holy founder and the anonymity of the whole set up – from the hagiographer, to the nameless *pater*, to the elevation of the 'lordly' Columbanus – was the perfect antidote to Giseprand's attempts to alienate the lands to his own gain. The monastery probably always had served such a social role but, under attack from its bishop-abbot, chose to appeal for Benedictine purity and a wider Christian discourse of service. By these means the monastery was able to refresh, even re-negotiate, its terms with the new sovereign, converging with the imperial pretensions of the Ottonians. Indeed, the monastery did not receive any more abbots with compromised ecclesiastical interests, and achieved the reconfirmation of its privileges.

PART III: SAINTE-FOY DE CONQUES AND SOCIO-POLITICAL LANDSCAPES

12. CULTIC MATERIALS AT CONQUES

The earliest reference to Sainte Foy is a terse entry in the sixth-century Hieronymian Martyrology noting her martyrdom in third-century Agen, celebrated on 6th October. The story was elaborated in her *passiones*, the oldest extant copy probably written at Conques during the tenth century, although there may have been earlier accounts. This *passio* describes the martyrdom of the eleven-year-old noble-born Foy by a Roman prefect. Refusing to renounce her Christian faith, Foy was burned alive on a bronze table. Witnesses reported a dove placing a bejewelled crown on Foy's head, confirming her eternal salvation and martyrdom. Later Christians recovered her body and entombed it at the basilica, which became a site for further miracles. Saint Caprais' martyrdom in Foy's footsteps is recorded in the same work.⁴⁷⁶ The famous *Chanson de Sainte Foy*, probably written around 1065-1070, is celebrated as one of the earliest French vernacular works, pre-dating other *chansons de geste* by two or three decades. It recounts elements of Foy's *passio*, reworked in secular terms.⁴⁷⁷ Two *translationes* also date to the mid-eleventh century, relating how monks from Conques had stolen Foy's relics from Agen during the mid-ninth century. The acquisition was related to Conques' rivalry with its neighbour Figeac despite, or perhaps because of, the intervention of Pippin I, to which, as Geary has shown, a flurry of other charters and forgeries also refer.⁴⁷⁸ Thus, whilst the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis*, started in 1013, may have been the earliest and most extensive work, it was not the only hagiographical piece produced by the Conques scriptorium in the eleventh century. Supporting hagiographic material for Foy's cult in the form of the *passiones* and *translationes*, particularly those in the mid-eleventh century, demonstrates the strength and complexity of cult developments following the success of the miracle-stories, particularly under the abbacy of Odolric (1031-1065), perhaps coinciding with the building of a new abbey-church. Yet the *miracula* contain much more contemporary information about people, places and monastery business than other hagiographic output, which primarily served liturgical functions.

The scriptorium was not only busy with hagiographic writings. There was constant,

⁴⁷⁶ *BoSF*, pp. 21-22; translated at pp. 33-38.

⁴⁷⁷ Translated by R. L. A. Clark as 'The Song of Sainte Foy', in *BoSF*, pp. 275-284, with further bibliography.

⁴⁷⁸ Geary, *Furta Sacra*, esp. pp. 58-63, 138-141, 169-174. The Bollandists' edition (*AASS*, October (6), III, 294-299) is translated in *BoSF*, pp. 263-274.

continuous production of charters, some of which are preserved via the cartulary. Caution must be taken with these charter copies and the selective process of their editors acknowledged, as recent work has highlighted. The Conques cartulary represents, after all, the priorities and concerns of its twelfth-century compilers rather than acting as a summary of all extant charters.⁴⁷⁹ At Conques, comparisons between the only two surviving originals and their cartulary copies show that the copies are generally faithful to originals, bar some copyist faults, but there is no evidence of re-working of content or grammar.⁴⁸⁰ This causes problems for the specifics of diplomatics, particularly in the physical information lost to us along with the original manuscript copy. It is partly for this reason that we are often prevented from dating the charters precisely; the lack of datable detail in some of the charters may also have been excluded in the copying process or never been there at all. The creation of the cartulary demonstrates an administrative and streamlining consciousness towards the landed patrimony of the monastery in the century after the period we are interested in. The twelfth-century priorities of cartulary production explain why the miracle collection must direct this enquiry into the eleventh-century situation. Yet the charter material can and does provide interesting support to the hagiographic work. Indeed, the process of drafting charters was not far removed from that of the Book of Miracles. The parallels between the vengeance scripts of the anathematizing clauses in charters and those in the miracle-stories themselves have already been observed,⁴⁸¹ and, as will be argued, both collections were driven by quite similar instincts to preserve and shape a view of donations and their donors and thus a ‘Conques society’. Whilst we never know the extent of charters excluded from the cartulary, those that were included – often relating to important pieces of land that had as much significance in the twelfth century as they had in the previous – can sometimes offer an insight into some of the characters and places that appear in the miracles-stories.

13. THE *LIBER MIRACULORUM SANCTE FIDIS*

The collection of Sainte Foy’s miracles encompasses 155 reports of individual miraculous events, and holds the potential for statistical analysis. Whilst the statistics used here cannot be used as absolute data they can at least give a sense of relative proportion and context across the collection as a whole, as well as in relation to Sigal’s huge analysis of over 5000 miracles

⁴⁷⁹ Guyotjeannin, Morelle and Parisse (eds.), *Les cartulaires*; A. J. Kostov and A. Winroth (eds.), *Charters, Cartularies and Archives: The Preservation and Transmission of Documents in the Medieval West* (Toronto, 2002).

⁴⁸⁰ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 22 n. 72.

⁴⁸¹ S. D. White, ‘Garsinde v. Sainte Foy: argumentation, threat and vengeance in eleventh-century monastic litigation’, in E. Jamrozik and J. E. Burton (eds.), *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000-1400: Interaction, Negotiation, and Power, Europa Sacra*, v. 2 (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 169-182, at p. 172 n. 9.

recorded in eleventh- and twelfth-century France, which serves as a useful control.⁴⁸² Percentages are calculated on the basis of a total of one hundred and fifty-five miracles within one hundred and fifteen unique miracle-stories, not including duplicates, that is to say R.2 (a re-worked version of A.2) and the Provençal version of i.19, nor do I include the fragment reported in *Gallia Christiana* which contains no miraculous content or later localised daughter-house miracles.⁴⁸³ I also do not include visions as miraculous since they support a reward or punishment either by counsel or threat.

Although often heralded as an exceptional hagiographic work, the Sainte Foy collection is in some ways typical to the conventions of the *miracula* genre, such as in the predominance of affirmative miracles: 73% of the miracles of Sainte Foy are ‘positive’ intercessions that somehow aid a beneficiary, whilst 27% are ‘negative’ or punitive, punishing sinful behaviour. **Table 3** Proportionally, however, Foy’s collection contains over twice the average number of punishment miracles, which Sigal’s survey calculates as 12.6% across the genre. Whilst healing miracles occupy 61.4% of Sigal’s sample, this miracle-type only accounts for 43% of Foy’s (of which 8% were resurrections), to the inclusion not only of more punishment miracles but also a particularly high preponderance of prisoner liberations, for which Sainte Foy was especially renowned (13%, against Sigal’s 4.6% mean).⁴⁸⁴ Other positive miracles include securing battle victories (2%), or more general intercessions (16%) such as restoring lost property or assisting escape or survival from enemy attack, shipwreck or fall. Others (2%) demonstrate Foy’s intercessory power to those who might oppose her, such as the violent shaking of a ship in response to doubts about her power, or a snake’s appearance at the death of a blasphemer, or, as we will see, to make a wider point about ownership through the trees whose paid-for branches did not regrow.⁴⁸⁵ Other intercessions, such as the stolen cloth turned hard as stone and a thief’s horse rooted to the spot preventing escape,⁴⁸⁶ were punitive – just like another 14% of miracles inflicting actual physical chastisement, and a further 10% where divine retribution resulted in death.

Miracle-stories, as we have seen, needed cultural resonance. Thus, besides the solid ‘historical’ data they contain, the nature of Sainte Foy’s miracle collection tells us much about its audience. **Table 5** For example it would appear, from the characters who feature as miracle

⁴⁸² Sigal, *L’homme*.

⁴⁸³ The editors attributed the authorship of a fragment of a miracle they included to Bernard of Angers, but this is unsubstantiated, in *Gallia Christiana*, II, col. 896.

⁴⁸⁴ Sigal, *L’homme*, p. 269; pp. 290–291.

⁴⁸⁵ *LMSF*, ii.3; i.8; iv.11.

⁴⁸⁶ *LMSF*, iv.1; iii.21.

recipients, that the accounts were primarily intended for a knightly and aristocratic audience, as Dominique Barthélemy has described.⁴⁸⁷ Miracle-stories were clearly not restricted to a clerical audience, and the teaching was not strictly religious in the mould of classic *exempla* texts, but rather socially moralistic (in a narrow sense), whilst always retaining the core message of God's intercessory powers, specifically through Sainte Foy. Yet distinct phases of authorship for the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* each mark a development and re-orientating of the cult over time.

Manuscript tradition

Nothing better demonstrates the development of cultic and hagiographic activities at Conques than the manuscript tradition itself. **Table 1** Redaction of the miracles of Sainte Foy was a continual practice: one hundred and fifteen unique stories written and relating miracles worked over a century reach us today, preserved in multiple manuscripts. No archetype or 'complete' manuscript of the *Liber Miraculorum sancte Fidis* exists, and probably never did. Nevertheless, distinct production phases can be discerned, as the manuscript tradition and internal evidence show. Luca Robertini produced a thorough survey of the manuscripts; I restrict myself here to those that will be used for the present study.⁴⁸⁸

The oldest manuscript containing miracle-stories of Sainte Foy is fragmentary. Known as C, it contains twenty-seven folios dating to the third quarter of the eleventh century. Produced in the Conques scriptorium, it is now on display in the Trésor d'Orfèverie at Conques. It is likely that C was made from another (now lost) document, or collection of documents, referred to by Robertini as X, although C likely forms the basis of all extant manuscripts, including the celebrated manuscript of Sélestat (S), thought to be a direct copy of C.⁴⁸⁹ The high quality script and colourful illuminations of this latter manuscript were probably copied on or soon after the occasion of the priory's foundation in 1094, it is suggested by copyists local to Sélestat rather than Conques considering the Germanic hand and decorative style. Less evident is whether the copy was made at Sélestat from a Conques manuscript, or if Alsatian monks travelled to the Rouergat monastery's scriptorium to read the manuscript *in situ*, although current consensus favours the former.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁷ See n. 689.

⁴⁸⁸ Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 3-55.

⁴⁸⁹ Conques, Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye, i; Sélestat, Bibliothèque humaniste, 22, available in a facsimile edition prepared by La Société des amis de la Bibliothèque humaniste de Sélestat, as the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* (Sélestat, 1995) Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 3-4, 16-17, 20-21.

⁴⁹⁰ P. Bonnassie and F. de Gournay, 'Sur la datation du 'Livre des miracles de Sainte Foy de Conques'', *AM*, 107:212 (1995), pp. 457-473, at 457-458; Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 5-6; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 438.

Robertini identifies three discrete branches of the tradition; one from S, and two from sub-archetypes designated as α and β .⁴⁹¹ Manuscripts on the alpha branch are *libelli* or passionaries, thus α itself was likely a *libellus* containing selected hagiographic and liturgical materials, probably made in the Conques scriptorium *c.*1070/80. This is the root of manuscripts containing Sainte Foy's miracles now at the Vatican (V) and in London (L) which, due to their shared authorship, are studied here as a unit.⁴⁹² The V-L group represents a distinctive phase in the monastery's attempts to expand the cult in the second half of the eleventh century, both literarily and geographically, through the production and reproduction of hagiographic and liturgical materials for dissemination outside the Rouergue.

The final, most elusive, branch of the stemma (β), refers to a hypothetical codex from which two further manuscripts, known as Besançon (b) and Chartres (A) derive. Dating to the fourteenth century, A was created at the abbey of Saint-Pierre de Chartres and is the most interesting of the beta branch for this study, since it contains four miracles not attested elsewhere (A.1-A.4).⁴⁹³ These miracles appear to have a consistency in structure, each containing an internal metric prayer to the saint – a form unique to these miracles. As such, it appears that the four unique A miracles have a single, unknown author and so are studied as a separate group here.⁴⁹⁴

Four further manuscripts do not fit into Robertini's stemma. Two, held in Paris and the Vatican, contain single, unique miracles of Sainte Foy.⁴⁹⁵ Drawn up at Saint-Martial de Limoges, the former dates to the twelfth century and relates a *Miraculum sancte Fidis in festo eiusdem et in ecclesia eius*. The second belongs to a codex created at the abbey of Le Bec in the fifteenth century. Amongst other hagiographic material pertaining to abbots Herluin, Lanfranc and Anselm of Bec is a single miracle attributed to Sainte Foy, entitled *Miraculum beate Fidis de episcopo Baiocensi qui postea factus fuit monachis Becci*. This particular miracle seems to have been

⁴⁹¹ From the Sélestat manuscript derive further manuscripts but since we hold the archetype in full with S, they do not form part of this study.

⁴⁹² Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 467; London, British Library, Arundel, 91. Joint origin was established by Weyman and Grémont and expanded by Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 36-37; *ASWF*, pp. 108-116.

⁴⁹³ The Besançon manuscript was published by Labbe in *Nova bibliotheca manuscriptorum librorum*, II (Paris, 1657), pp. 521-551 known as (b) since the editor made interventions: Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 13. The Chartres codex (A) was lost during bombardments in 1944, but its contents are known by the *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Bibliothecae Civitatis Carnotensis* edited in *Analecta Bollandiana*, 8 (1889), pp. 86-208. It is partly reconstructed by a seventeenth-century transcription (P), which is held at Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, n.a. lat. 2057 (formerly Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, 1009 [109 H.1.]).

⁴⁹⁴ First observed by Bernard Pabst, but elaborated fully by *ASWF*, pp. 107-108.

⁴⁹⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 3239, f. 42v; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 499, ff. 161r-162v.

drafted at the priory of Sainte-Foy at Longueville (now Longueville-sur-Scie, dép. Seine-Maritime) around the middle of the twelfth century, a priory established by Walter Giffard, lord of Longueville, in 1084 or 1093 following his pilgrimage with a lordly host to Conques.⁴⁹⁶ A foundation legend involving Sainte Foy's miraculous liberation of Robert Fitzwalter and his wife Sybil, captured on their return from Rome, serves as a pretext for their visit to Conques and subsequent establishment of a priory (Horsham Saint Faith, Norfolk), and should also be included amongst these later individual miracle stories.⁴⁹⁷ Like Sélestat, other daughter-houses of Conques wrote their own, locally-centred miracles, providing interesting examples of the continuing and, importantly, non-Conques-centred process of hagiographic production well into the twelfth century.⁴⁹⁸ Given their very specific geographic and temporal interests they have little to tell us about the nature of socio-political landscapes in eleventh-century Rouergue and thus fall outside the remit of the present study.

Slightly more can be said for the two remaining manuscripts anomalous to Robertini's stemma. The first is Rodez (R), which consists of two fragments of membrane which survived only by virtue of their use as protective covers of a fourteenth-century register.⁴⁹⁹ Bouillet dates R to the start of the twelfth century.⁵⁰⁰ The first folio recounts two miracles, the first of which (R.1)

⁴⁹⁶ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 12.

⁴⁹⁷ Robertini did not mention this miracle-story, perhaps because its earliest source is uncertain or because it was part of a larger foundation history. It was transcribed by William Dugdale from a now-lost late-sixteenth-century Old English manuscript: W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, J. Caley, H. Ellis, B. Bandinel (eds.), vol. iii (new ed. London, 1826) p. 636. Other documents relating to Horsham are preserved in *Conques*, nn. 519-523.

⁴⁹⁸ On the subsequent cult and monuments of Sainte Foy with details on many of her daughter houses, see A. Bouillet and L. Servières, *Sainte Foy, vierge et martyre*, 2 vols. (Rodez, 1900), i, pp. 253-378. There is a curious charter, dated by its epigraphy to the late-ninth or early-tenth century, inscribed in stone at San Simpliciano in which one *Guilitonis* places his newly-built church dedicated *in honorem Sancta Fidei* in the Somma Lombardo (Varese, northern Italy) under the monastery of San Simpliciano: N. Gray, 'The palaeography of Latin inscriptions in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries in Italy', in *The Papers of the British School at Rome*, 16 (1948), pp. 38-167, at p. 95. Unusually inscribed in stone, this charter is interesting in its own right: R. Balzaretti, *Lands of St. Ambrose. Monks and Society in Early Medieval Milan* (Brepols, Turnhout, forthcoming). Guilzone's church was recorded in Goffredo da Bussero's late thirteenth-century *Liber Notitiae Sanctorum Mediolani*, a list of churches and altars in the Milanese diocese: G. Vigotti, *La diocesi di Milano alla fine del secolo xiii: chiese cittadine e pievi forensi nel 'Liber Sanctorum' di Goffredo da Bussero* (Roma, 1974), p. 333. The dedication of this church to S. Fides could, chronologically, identify with the child-martyr Foy whose relics had arrived at Conques in the 860s, although this would be a very early example of transmission of the cult to Italy. Bernard of Angers would later appeal to make *Fides* a third declension rather than fifth declension name for the virgin of Conques, resulting in *Fides* rather than *Fidei* in the genitive: otherwise, 'it will seem that we mean the virtue named Faith, or the Faith who was martyred with her two sisters, Hope and Charity, at Rome under the emperor Hadrian'. (*LMSF*, i.34) Since Bernard's treatise post-dates this charter significantly, the use of the *Fidei* form cannot prove that this church was dedicated to this latter saint, yet it seems probable that this was in fact the case. The cult of Charity, Hope and Faith was 'well-diffused' in Milanese culture from the tenth century: Robertini, *Tra filologia e critica*, pp. xi-xvii.

⁴⁹⁹ Rodez, Archives départementales de l'Aveyron, 2 E 67.4.

⁵⁰⁰ A. Bouillet, 'Un manuscrit inconnu du *Liber Miraculorum sancte Fidis*', *Mémoires de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France*, 58 (1899), pp. 221-233.

is unique to this manuscript. The second (R.2) is set near Damascus and is a variation on A.2. The second folio contains the latter part of the miracle worked at the foundation of Sélestat. Although Robertini did not hypothesize on how R fits into the tradition, further extrapolation is possible.⁵⁰¹ Since R's second folio contains part of the miracle on Sélestat's foundation, one might suppose either that R either derived from the Sélestat branch or was made at the same time as S, perhaps in the same scriptorium. The presence of the Alsatian narrative in Rodez seems to make it more likely that S was created in the Conques region, since the alternative would involve a rotation of manuscripts between the two institutions unattested by any other evidence.

The final anomalous manuscript held in Paris, is known as G.⁵⁰² It is a seventeenth-century copy made directly from the original transcript of Antoine Bonal's *Histoire manuscrite de la comté et des comtes de Rodez*.⁵⁰³ Bonal relates extracts of three miracle-stories in his section on Counts Raymond II and III (his Raymond I and II) and was likely working from manuscripts held in the Conques archives. Interestingly, Bonal reports that Bernard of Angers' work was subdivided into three books, not two, with enumerative differences between individual miracle stories: that known in the Sélestat corpus as i.28 is reported as i.30, and miracle ii.10 (in S) as iii.5. So, Bonal knew another redaction of the work at Conques, structured differently to that of S, a significance that for Robertini 'farebbe pensare che la redazione del *Liber* di Bernardo, della quale disponiamo, non sia completa o comunque presenti una struttura diversa dall'originale.' Robertini surmises that the text Bonal was using was the now-lost 'first half' of C.⁵⁰⁴ It is even possible Bonal was using Bernard's original text, referred to by Robertini as X₁. Unfortunately, Bonal reported so few of the miracles that further conclusions cannot be drawn from G, although it serves as a warning to accepting the four-book model presented by S as the archetype, a caution that analysis of the manuscripts' contents reinforces.

The Sélestat manuscript, complete in its original form of ninety-six miracle-stories organised in four Books, is the closest we have to a complete work. This structure is maintained by modern historians, but it is important to stress that internal evidence confirms what the G manuscript suggests; that the manuscript tradition may not have preserved the 'original' structure, if there ever was such a thing. As discussed below, it is evident that the modern-day Book ii was actually composed over two separate visits to Conques by its author, Bernard of Angers, which

⁵⁰¹ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 7.

⁵⁰² Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 2638.

⁵⁰³ Bonal (1548-1628) was a jurist and historian of Rodez. His work was edited as *Comté et comtes de Rodez* (Rodez, 1885).

⁵⁰⁴ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 11.

may reflect the three-book model observed in the manuscript used by Bonal. Other evidence suggests that we do not possess the entirety, or the original structure, of Sainte Foy's miracle collection.

Certain 'unique' miracles are attested only in one manuscript. As the longest extant collection, S has the largest number of unique miracles, although this is due mainly to its length and its preservation in entirety. As such, S forms the basis of modern editions and enumeration, and is accepted as representative of material lost from X and C. However, of the twenty miracle-stories in C, five of these miracles are unique, in that they are not present in S or anywhere else. The other fifteen miracles are all found in Book iv of S.⁵⁰⁵ Seeking to recreate a master manuscript from C and S manuscripts, Robertini subsumes the five unique miracle-stories into his edition of Book iv, maintaining their order in relation to the duplicate miracles.⁵⁰⁶ This method, however, is problematic. C's fragmentary nature prevents us from substantiating the extent of the original manuscript: folio 1 starts in the middle of a miracle-story (reported as iv.6 in S), one folio is missing between folios 1 and 2, and a further unknown number lost between folios 6 and 7.⁵⁰⁷ More conspicuously, the C miracles are numbered on the original manuscript, and these do not accord with Robertini's numbering. The title and beginning of C.1 are missing, but C.2 to C.5 are numbered xxvi, xviii, xxx and xxxi respectively, whereas Robertini denotes them iv.22, iv.25, iv.26 and iv.27.⁵⁰⁸ The incomplete C manuscript allows us to glimpse the larger body of work from which it came: from the final fragment (Sélestat's iv.23, Robertini's iv.28) we can see it contained at least thirty-two miracles, a larger body than can be formed simply by combining the unique miracles in C and S (twenty-nine). However, the numbering indicates that C formed part of a unit with an order and structure, and that S maintained C's order, if not its entirety. It is interesting that the codex of which S forms a part contains a miracle worked at the time of Sélestat's foundation not integrated into the main book,⁵⁰⁹ which suggests the intent to preserve the integrity of the master manuscript as a distinct unit. For the purposes of this work, since no more satisfactory conclusion can be reached on the nature of an 'original' corpus, I will adopt the numbering system used by Bouillet and Sheingorn, referring to the unique miracles as C.1 to C.5, although for analysis I

⁵⁰⁵ See Robertini's tables of concordance for duplicated miracles and his re-creation of Book iv, *LMSF*, pp. 52–55.

⁵⁰⁶ Bouillet had maintained the separate integrity of these unique miracles, as C.1 to C.5. This is the root of enumerative differences between editions. For clarification, Bouillet's C.1 is Robertini's iv.12; C.2 = iv.22; C.3 = iv.25; C.4 = iv.26; C.5 = iv.27. Robertini's interpolation of the C miracles within Book iv has a subsequent knock-on effect in his enumeration from iv.12: for a table of concordance see **Table 2**.

⁵⁰⁷ Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 3–4.

⁵⁰⁸ I was not able to gain access to the Conques manuscript; the numbering of the C miracles is drawn here from Bouillet, *LMSF*, pp. 223–230.

⁵⁰⁹ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 5.

include the C miracles together with Book iv, as authorship phase X_{2b}.

At the very least this distinction forces consideration of unique miracle stories: why do miracle-stories appear in the Conques manuscript that are not in the Sélestat manuscript? Were more than eight lost in transcription? One hypothesis is that these miracles were supplementary chapters, part of a continuing process of recording at Conques, and that they were separate from the collection used by the Sélestat copyists. Yet C certainly predates S – palaeographical analysis, supported by historical evidence, suggests it dates to the third quarter of the eleventh century, that is, preceding Sélestat’s foundation by twenty years or more.⁵¹⁰ Additionally the unique miracle-stories only appear interspersed between other miracle-stories in Sélestat’s Book iv.⁵¹¹ As already discussed, Robertini’s textual analysis of the manuscripts suggests that S was transcribed directly from C. The Sélestat manuscript generally does not number the chapters – incongruously, only chapters 1, 2 and 12 of Book i contain after their title the suffix ‘*Cap[itulum] x*’ – so we have no clues on whether the copyist has specifically changed some of the numbering to account for rejected miracle-stories. It is noteworthy that miracles common to both C and S appear in the same order (excluded miracles aside), and all appear in Sélestat’s Book iv. Yet whereas the Conques manuscript reaches xxxii (with missing folios following this), S only contains twenty-four miracle-stories. It seems likely, therefore, that beyond miracle-stories C.1 to C.5 at least three others, now lost, were intentionally excluded by the copyists of Sélestat.

Robertini discusses in detail the ‘critical spirit’ the Sélestat copyists brought to their task, a spirit that included conscious awareness of the exclusion procedure.⁵¹² Take, for example, the tiny correction in the twenty-first miracle of Sélestat’s Book iv, which modifies *predictus Deusdet monachus* (in C) to *monachus nomine Deusdet*, smoothing over the inconsistency arising from the original wording. Omitting C.2 removed any mention of *Deodatus* (interchangeable with *Deusdet*) in the previous miracle in S and *predictus* did not make sense. This was noted and corrected by the copyists, but what criteria did the copyists apply to this exclusion process? As the Conques manuscript does not preserve any material from the other books, only a very small sample of miracles remains from which to draw conclusions about this activity. We cannot know, for example, its extent – were miracles from the other books ignored? Why were any of the miracles excluded?

⁵¹⁰ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 3; Bonnassie and de Gournay, ‘Datation’, p. 457.

⁵¹¹ See the table in Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 52–55.

⁵¹² Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 19.

There is no apparent link between the individuals in the C miracles; nor does there seem to be any geographical commonality. C.2 refers to the church of Sainte-Foy-de-Cailles (Lot-et-Garonne, medieval county of Agen),⁵¹³ C.3 to the church of Campagnac (Aveyron, medieval county of the Rouergue),⁵¹⁴ and C.4 and C.5 to the same church at Belmont, lying midway between Albi and Cahors, identifiable as Belmont-Sainte-Foi (Lot, medieval county of Quercy). One thing they *do* all have in common is to refer to churches owned by Sainte Foy, although there are two other examples of Sainte Foy's churches in Book iv: a church at the castle of Calogne (Spain) in iv.6 and a church built by Deusdet at Sardan (Lot-et-Garonne) (iv.21).⁵¹⁵ Perhaps, then, subject matter directed the choice of miracles. A prevalent theme, in four of the five miracles, is the threat or attack, or property and land dispute – themes that receive only three mentions in the rest of the Book iv. Perhaps the most significant miracle type in the C miracles is the infliction of death (C.2, C.4 and C.5) – a miracle type notably missing from the Sélestat Book iv miracles (there are eight examples in Bernard of Angers' works and three in Book iii). In fact, Book iv (without the C miracles) predominates in its preponderance of positive miracles (92%). Given the small sample the conclusion can only be tentative, but perhaps Sélestat's selection criteria for Book iv involved discrimination apart from the landed interests of Conques and her negative punitive power. We must therefore remember that the manuscript tradition preserves neither the totality nor the original form of the miracles of Sainte Foy, and since manuscript and narrative evidence suggests that the four-book model, at least the two-book model for the Bernardian miracles, is a later development, it would be misleading to use these books alone as a category for subdividing the collection for analysis. Rather, the various phases of authorship and their intended audiences provide a better framework for examination, to which we now turn.

Phases of authorship

X₁ - Bernard of Angers

Scholars agree that the earliest miracle redactions should be attributed to Bernard, head of the cathedral school at Angers, and thanks to a wealth of internal information corroborated by Conques' cartulary and other sources the dating of miracles can be estimated with loose precision.⁵¹⁶ Unusually for a hagiographer, his style is almost autobiographical in places, so we

⁵¹³ See n. 531.

⁵¹⁴ See *Conques*, nn. 187 (990-1010) and 188 (1031-1065), the latter confirming ongoing interest in this location in the mid-eleventh century.

⁵¹⁵ See also n. 585.

⁵¹⁶ The chronology and circumstances of Bernard of Angers' work as summarized here is also generally agreed on:

are able to glean some information about Bernard and his work from the text itself. The prefatory letter, which he dedicates to his former teacher, Fulbert of Chartres, and the *Epistola abbati vel monachis destinata, que primi libri habetur clausula*, are particularly useful. For example, we know of Bernard's three separate trips to Conques between 1013 and 1020. During his first visit, in 1013, he heard oral accounts of miracles, recording six in full at Conques and taking notes in order to write up further miracles when he returned to Angers: forming Book i by the Sélestat manuscript. His second visit was a short stop en route to Rome between 1015 and 1020, when the miracles he recorded correspond to the first six miracles of today's Book ii (ii.1-ii.6).⁵¹⁷ A final visit in 1020, possibly on Bernard's return journey from Rome, resulted in the redaction of further miracles preserved as ii.7-ii.15. The G (Bonal) and V-L manuscripts suggest the miracles written following these three separate trips were originally maintained in individual 'books', but at some point (from Sélestat onwards?) the second and third series were collapsed into Book ii. These three phases of authorship can be referred to as X_{1(a-c)}.

By virtue of his secure identification and the lively and unusual nature of his narratives, Bernard attracts the most scholarly attention of all authors who wrote miracles of Sainte Foy. Evidently of aristocratic birth, his frequent allusions to classical literature and grammatical precision (for example the correct declension of *Fidis* in i.34) betray Bernard's cathedral school education. He moved in high lay and religious society circles,⁵¹⁸ attending the court of one of the most powerful figures of the period, Count William V 'the Great' of Poitiers, self-styled 'Duke of Aquitaine', where he was able to verify a miracle of Sainte Foy personally with Lady Beatrice, wife of Ebles of Turenne and sister of Richard, Count of Rouen (ii.5). Bernard is sufficiently well connected to have led to suggestions that that his trips to Conques were politically motivated, more specifically that they formed part of an attempt by the Angevins and their Toulousain allies for control over the southern Auvergne.⁵¹⁹ Bernard's ambiguous role between political allegiance, High Church education and literary ego gives his accounts of the miracles of Sainte Foy a particular character.⁵²⁰ Whilst in many ways they follow the

Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 57-64 and 'Le Liber', pp. 65-74; *BoSF*, pp. 24-25; *ASWF*, esp. pp. 22-64; Bonnassie and de Gournay, 'Datation', pp. 458-459.

⁵¹⁷ Bernard made a subsequent addition to these miracles, since a postscript to ii.6 mentions the confirmation of that miracle by Beatrice of Turenne to Bernard in person, 'almost a year and a half after my second return from Conques'. The second visit has been dated 1013-1020 by previous authors but it was surely at least 1014 (since his first visit fell at the end of 1013, having been there for Foy's feast day in October) and it seems more likely to have been 1015 or later, since the procession to Molompize he recounts (*LMSF*, ii.4) complements a charter of c.1015-1020: *Conques*, n. 394.

⁵¹⁸ See his interchanges with Peter, 'abbot of abbots' (probably of Thiers: Lauranson-Rosaz *L'Auvergne*, pp. 245-247) and the list of men in his concluding letter to the first book: *LMSF*, i.34, ii.7-9.

⁵¹⁹ Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne*, p. 282; Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 62.

⁵²⁰ *ASWF*, p. 61.

conventions of *miracula*, Bernard is also renowned for pushing the boundaries of hagiographic norms. Unusually, Bernard organises the miracles by type rather than chronology, a practice he reflects on.⁵²¹ He also introduces curious miracle-types such as the resurrection of mules and a particular proclivity for the liberation of prisoners, which are later taken up and developed by his continuators. Contrary to later authors, Bernard portrays Sainte Foy as a young girl, a characterisation through which he is able to recount the infamous *joca* – the playful, apparently trivial miracles attributed to Sainte Foy.⁵²²

One group of Bernard's miracles stands out for its failure to fit classic modes of receiving punishment and reward, and are not known in any other collection.⁵²³ On eight occasions the saint coerced donations of gold and jewellery through threatening or petitioning visions, the miraculous loss (and recovery) of a withheld piece of jewellery, or the infliction of physical maladies – often after a donor reneged on an earlier pledge. Following her refusal to donate a ring inherited from her husband's first wife, who had bequeathed the ring to Foy the wretched Avigerna was inflicted with a painful swelling on her finger. Another woman suffered a terrible fever when she tried to avoid giving her ring to the saint. On one occasion the saint even traded divine aid, offering the barren countess Arsinde of Toulouse fertility in return for her golden bracelets, whilst another woman had her childbirth cure withheld until a donation had been made.⁵²⁴ Although they share elements of punishment/reward (healing, physical illness, and so on) with other stories in the collection, the encouraged behaviour or 'sin' in these miracles was seemingly the importance of donation or the failure to donate, or sometimes the failure to donate *enough*: gold that was offered as an equivalent to jewellery, for example, was considered inadequate and the trinket always found its way later to the saint. Whilst many other miracles are accompanied by references to donations, either made in thanks for a miracle or willingly offered by those beseeching aid, Bernard's compelled donation miracle-stories should not be read as an inelegant, transparent message about the importance of donation. Robertini believes the spirited nature of these miracles drew on a motif that sprang from a typically popular conception of sanctity, as did the *joca*.⁵²⁵ On the other hand, we might better read the portrayal of such enthusiastic and explicit abuses of celestial power to material ends as a wry observation on the nature of saints' cults. Such satirical comment was deemed

⁵²¹ Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle*, p. 41.

⁵²² Historians disagree whether the *joca* represent folklorish or high culture, on which see *ASWF*, pp. 32-36, in favour of the latter explanation. Also B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 64-71.

⁵²³ Sigal, *L'homme*, p.275.

⁵²⁴ *LMSF*, i.16, i.17 (in a general manner), i.18, i.19 (countess Arsinde), i.20, i.21, i.22 (Avigerna) and ii.10.

⁵²⁵ Robertini, 'Le *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis*', p. 68. On the *joca*, see in particular Remensnyder, 'Un problème', *passim.*; and Ward, *Miracles*, pp. 212-213.

inappropriate by the continuators of the text, whose central priority was indeed the cult and these very material benefits, but for Bernard, who envisaged a clerical and aristocratic audience, the joke stood. Likewise, the now-lost Provençal poetry version of miracle-story i.19 about countess Arsinde and her golden bracelets, argues for the relevance of miracle-stories as entertainment. Given its rhymed octosyllabic metre and the inappropriateness of the vernacular in a liturgical setting, it was probably intended for a secular, most likely courtly, audience.⁵²⁶ Since this version is preserved only in a seventeenth-century edition, it cannot be pre-dated with any precision, and we cannot know when this miracle found its way into secular entertainment – possibly as early as the second half of the eleventh century if the *Chanson de Sainte Foy*, also in the vernacular, is anything to go by.⁵²⁷ In any case, Bernard's satire need not have been simply a clerical in-joke; on the level of senior monks and lay aristocracy, the boundaries between cleric and layman were blurred and all parties appreciated their mutually beneficial relationship.

So who did Bernard perceive to be his audience and what was his purpose in writing? Or, to borrow a phrase from Ashley and Sheingorn, what was his 'cultural work'? Again, the question is complex and multi-faceted. For Benedicta Ward the purpose of the miracles of Sainte Foy is straightforward. Despite Bernard's Latin and theological reflection, the miracles 'retain a crude and primitive air. They are miracles for the protection of the monks, the extension of their lands, and the aggrandisement of their church through their saint.'⁵²⁸ From this viewpoint, the miracle-stories appear simply as an expression of local politics and ambition. Yet Bernard was neither from Conques, nor had any evident link to the institution. He was not a monk, and in many ways was unsympathetic to Benedictine monasticism.⁵²⁹ He characterised the saint variously as a joker and a tyrant, which his continuators were quick to conventionalise. In short, Bernard would be an odd candidate for author of a monastic, Conquois treaty. Ashley and Sheingorn identify three different messages and audiences for Bernard's miracle-stories, both the desire to provide authenticity to oral stories by committing them to letters and the creation of a literary masterpiece to be appreciated by other *literati* in the north of France and

⁵²⁶ G. Catel, *Histoire des comtes de Tolose* (Toulouse, 1623), pp. 104-107; re-edited various times, most recently by Robertini, *LMSF*, app. VII, pp. 312-315 and translated into French as 'Un miracle de Sainte Foi', by J. de Cantalansa (ed. and trans.), *Le Chanson de Sainte Foy* (Dourdou, 1985), pp. 39-47. Dated variously from the early eleventh century to the thirteenth (Cantalansa, p. 39), this poem refers to the Arsinde character as 'Delfonse' but retains the reference to Count William. It retained the 'joking' element: *com fo Santa Fe joglaressa a artous Delfonsa Comtessa*: the term *joglaressa*, related to *jonglaresse* and a synonym here for teasing, mischievous (Cantalansa, p. 41 n. 6).

⁵²⁷ On the dating and provenance of the *Chanson* see the summary in de Gournay, 'Relire', p. 393-394, who argues for a dating of 1060-1070, provenance at Conques and a Béarnais audience.

⁵²⁸ Ward, *Miracles*, p. 42.

⁵²⁹ *ASWF*, pp. 60-64.

to establish Bernard as a great author.⁵³⁰ Yet they also note that Bernard's letter at the end of Book i states explicitly the work was for the monks and abbot Adalgerius of Conques. It is uncertain whether they commissioned the work directly, since Bernard's declaration to have written the miracles 'just as requested' contradicts with his prefatory letter which proclaims his desire to write the miracles purely from personal aspiration, and Abbot Adalgerius was not yet abbot when Bernard first arrived at Conques.⁵³¹ Yet Bernard evidently had support from the Rouergat community, which accommodated him three times, provided his narratives, and treasured his literature once written. Although perhaps not as pervasively as in his continuators' works, Bernard supports Conques' interests.

X₂

A decade or so after Bernard of Angers completed his final miracle-story, another author picked up the baton. In the new prologue the author relates that he was both continuing Bernard's text, working from notes left by the now-deceased scholar, and creating a new work, which he named the *Panaretos, quod est omnium virtutum liber*. He had begun his work by updating the *passio* of Sainte Foy, elaborating on an existing brief and clumsy version, to which he attached *pauca de pluribus miracula deflorantes*.⁵³² This author was responsible for a concerted effort to update and expand the hagiographical portfolio of the saint, yet his and other authors' work was not entirely in step with Bernard's. All subsequent authors of Sainte Foy's miracles choose to remain anonymous, in line with more traditional hagiography, and tell of a change in direction for the collection. Post-Bernardian texts are more conventional in many ways, with the first-person singular of Bernard replaced by the plural: a consciously anonymous persona that represented 'the voice of the monastery.'⁵³³ The distinct authorship phases, even within this corporate persona, tell us much about the process of miracle-redaction at different stages.

Although scholars agree that Books iii and iv were both written at Conques, they disagree on the number of authors responsible for them. The narrative proclaims itself to be the work of one person: Book iii ends with a promise to write another book, and Book iv begins, seamlessly, with a claim to be returning to a long-neglected task.⁵³⁴ Based on this, Robertini identifies a single monk-continuator for Books iii and iv – his X₂ – writing c.1030-1040.⁵³⁵

⁵³⁰ *ASWF*, pp. 30, 51-52.

⁵³¹ *LMSF*, i.13.

⁵³² *LMSF*, *Prologus libri tertii*.

⁵³³ *ASWF*, p. 84.

⁵³⁴ *LMSF*, iii.24; iv.1.

⁵³⁵ Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 65-6.

Bonnassie and de Gournay adopt this view, tentatively identifying this single author as Abbot Odolric (1031-1065) writing between 1030 and 1050.⁵³⁶ On the contrary, and despite the internal claims for authorial integrity, Ashley and Sheingorn argue that different writers were responsible for each book, although they admit it is impossible to specify whether two or more authors were involved.⁵³⁷ Based on stylistic, linguistic, modal and constructive variation across the two books, their argument is convincing. Their insistence on the ‘corporate voice’ of Conques shares some ground with Bonnassie and de Gournay’s theory of Abbot Odolric as author. Although Robertini refers to both Books iii and iv as X₂, it is more helpful to make a further distinction; since the two books were written at some chronological distance and demonstrate different sensibilities and concerns, and were probably by different authors, here Book iii will be referred to as phase X_{2a} and Book iv and the C miracles as X_{2b}. Based on the datable elements the working hypothesis holds that X_{2a} dates between 1030 and just after 1035, with X_{2b} added before 1050.

X_{2a} - Book iii

X_{2a} does not display the same easy style and scholarly prose of Bernard, in fact Robertini describes it as ‘complicated and affected’. Nevertheless, the author, judging by his impressive range of classical references, many of which were in Bernard’s repertoire, was highly educated and probably enjoyed a chapter education similar to his predecessor.⁵³⁸ Two of this author’s main literary features are an interest in vulgar language and Greek terminology, and a tendency to remove any ‘gratuitous personality traits’ in his characterization of Sainte Foy.⁵³⁹ As for his identification, the miracle stories offer sparing and contradictory evidence. In iii.7 the author insinuates that he was an eyewitness to the miraculous regrowth of hair on a bald warrior during the abbacy of Gerbert (996-1004), implying that he was at the monastery at that time – thirty years earlier. Yet at iii.13 the author recounts a miracle *quod vestre fraternitati in promptu est*, suggesting that the author was addressing an external community.⁵⁴⁰ This latter miracle took place on the Planèze of the southern Auvergne (Cantal), thus either the author was from Conques and addressing an Auvergnat community on the Planèze, or more likely he was addressing Conques as a native of that region, and viewed Conques as sufficiently close to the Cantal to make this comment. The author’s eyewitness account of iii.7 may be compatible with the latter hypothesis, since the protagonist of this miracle is Bernard, lord of Gransoux, an

⁵³⁶ Bonnassie and de Gournay, ‘Datation’, pp. 467, 472.

⁵³⁷ *ASWF*, ch. 3, especially pp. 83-99. Sheingorn previously held that ‘several authors drafted [Book 4’s] stylistically diverse chapters’, in *BoSF*, p. 25.

⁵³⁸ Robertini, ‘Le Liber’, p. 69.

⁵³⁹ *ASWF*, p. 86.

⁵⁴⁰ As noted by *BoSF*, p. 298, n. 28.

important (and perhaps comital) strategic fortress in the Planèze.⁵⁴¹ Perhaps the author witnessed the miracle as a young man and inhabitant of the Cantal, and later transferred to Conques, since other miracle-stories written in X_{2a} (iii.4, iii.9, iii.15) suggest he lived within Sainte Foy's community. Statistical analysis of the geographic interests of Book iii also supports this tentative hypothesis [for which see **Graph 1**], as a third of all Auvergnat locations across the whole work appear in this authorship phase; in particular the author interests himself in locations within the modern-day arrondissement of Saint-Flour (Cantal). Bonnassie and de Gournay, in proposing Abbot Odolric as possible author of Books iii and iv, note that the first and last extant acts of Odolric's abbacy relate to the Planèze of Saint-Flour, seemingly confirming an interest, possibly personal, in this area.⁵⁴²

The miracles testify to the author's claims of embracing both recent and older miracle-stories. Some of the events related occurred as early as the abbacy of Girbert (996-1004).⁵⁴³ Yet it is clear the stories were not redacted until soon after 1035, by which time Roger de Tosny and his wife Goteline had built the church of Sainte-Foy de Conches in Normandy in thanks for the healing of Goteline (iii.1).⁵⁴⁴ Whether or not Abbot Odolric (1031-1065) wrote these miracle-stories, the renewal of the writing process coincides with the first decade of his abbacy and with other efforts to develop the cult, including the updating of Foy's *passio* by the same author, efforts perhaps forming the earliest stages of a programme of awareness and fund-raising leading to the building of a new, large abbey-church. It certainly seems compatible with the more 'corporate' tone that Ashley and Sheingorn mention. Taking authorial ego out of the work allowed the saint and the monastery to become the central concern, and the central beneficiaries, of attention and praise.

X_{2b} - Book iv and C miracles

The next instalment of miracles was equally Conques-centred and probably written during or after the church-building process, since iv.24 relates the healing of an injury caused to master mason, Hugh, whilst working on the site, although only one eye-witness, Sallust, a monk, bore witness to the tale. Since the exact dating of the church-building is unknown, it cannot help identify this authorship phase, and the miracle-stories themselves are also unhelpful for dating the construction period, since there is little to date them by internally. Many of the miracles report events at some temporal remove or with people for whom we have imprecise

⁵⁴¹ P-R. Gaussin, *L'abbaye de La Chaise-Dieu: 1043-1518* (Paris, 1962), p. 532.

⁵⁴² *Conques*. nn. 285, 441, 350; cf. Bonnassie and de Gournay, 'Datation', p. 472.

⁵⁴³ *LMSF*, iii.7, also iii.14 and iii.15.

⁵⁴⁴ Bonnassie and de Gournay, 'Datation', pp. 464-467.

chronological information.⁵⁴⁵ The ascension of Gerald, who appears in iv.8, to the episcopacy of Périgueux shows it must have been written after 1037 and Geoffrey of Vigeois also reports the first of the many miracles in this story – the healing of the epileptic Raymond, son of Bernard of Montpezat – which is dated by historians of Quercy to 1049.⁵⁴⁶ Another character in this same miracle-story, Gauzbert, has been tentatively linked to the fortress later called Castelnau-Montratier (Lot) and may be the same individual who appears in a charter from the abbacy of Odilon at Sauxillanges (994–1049), which offers no objection to this dating.⁵⁴⁷

Bonnassie and de Gournay make no attempt to date the C miracles, perhaps because they are also problematic, although it serves to look at them here in a little more detail. The first miracle exclusive to the C manuscript (C.1) is fragmentary, beginning mid-text and thus missing its title and number, with the remaining text carrying no datable elements. C.2 is numbered xxvi and recounts the theft of wine by Arnold from a church of Saint-Michel owned by Sainte-Foy *in colle Caliaco sitam*. In a vision Sainte Foy reassures the church's sorrowful obedientiary, Deodatus (Deusdet) that Arnold will receive his just deserts, and sure enough, he does, when he later meets his enemy, Isarn, and is chased back to the church he exploited and killed 'in accordance with the just judgment of God'. Arnold, we are told, was from the Agenais; he held land near the church, and 'did not hesitate to claim lands his daughter-in-law owned and had given to Sainte Foy herself', although her name and the land in question are not explicit. Arnold and Isarn are common names in the charters of the Agenais at this time, making their identification difficult. Whilst Deodatus was a common name for clergy he appears in the (originally)⁵⁴⁸ subsequent miracle story as responsible for building a church in the Bazadais, which the cartulary seems to confirm in the donation by *Amancuus* of two manses of land in *Escolt* (now Esclottes, dép. Lot-et-Garonne) in the *episcopatu Basatensi* where *Deusdet monachus* (or Petrus or Odalricus) would build a church for the salvation of his and his parents' souls. Frustratingly, this charter is undated and Desjardins' attribution to c.1076 is insupportable by any internal evidence, since there are no references to reigns of abbots or kings and the signatories cannot be identified.⁵⁴⁹ This seems likely to be the same Deusdet responsible for collecting dues from various of Conques' possessions, including the *ecclesia de*

⁵⁴⁵ Bonnassie and de Gournay, 'Datation', pp. 460–470.

⁵⁴⁶ J. Momméja, 'Un miracle de Sainte-Foi de Conques. Contribution à l'histoire de la maison de Montpezat', *Bulletin archéologique et historique de la Société archéologique de Tam-et-Garonne*, 23 (1895) pp. 77–80 at pp. 77–78.

⁵⁴⁷ *Sauxillanges*, n. 290. The undatable *Conques*, n. 347 also refers to *Gauzbertus de Castello novo*. On his castle: F. Galabert, 'Le *Liber Miraculorum sancte Fidis* et notre diocèse', *Bulletin archéologique et historique de la Société archéologique de Tam-et-Garonne*, 26 (1898), pp. 202–206; Bonnassie, 'Fortresses', p. 135 n. 7.

⁵⁴⁸ Above p. 138.

⁵⁴⁹ *Conques*, n. 50; Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 410.

Callia and that of *Escolt*, equally lacking in datable elements.⁵⁵⁰ The *ecclesia de Callia* is mentioned in a further charter but only as a geographical point of reference in relation to another church being donated, although this latter charter dates to the abbacy of Stephen II (1065-1087) confirming the church was in Conques' possession by this time. Furthermore, the reference to its proximity to Penne (d'Agenais) in this charter allows its firm identification with the church of Sainte-Foy-de-Cailles (Lot-et-Garonne).⁵⁵¹

The other C miracles are equally vague chronologically: Campagnac (Aveyron) in C.3 is mentioned twice in charters connected to a family with the distinctive surname *Sarracenus*, but which are no more precisely datable than Abbot Odolric's abbacy. Aicard, 'a warrior from near Belmont', of C.5 is unidentifiable,⁵⁵² and despite the four separate nominees in C.4 (Amelius Guy of Belmont castle, Arnold of Cahors, Raymond of Albi, and William, provost of Saint-Stephen protomartyr, cathedral of Cahors), safe associations cannot be made.⁵⁵³ Thus the C miracles provide no reasons to reject the idea that they were written at a similar time to the rest of Book iv, neither do they help date it more precisely, only providing a ceiling date range by the abbacy of Abbot Stephen. Bonnassie and de Gournay thus date the redaction of the X_{2b} miracles to 1030-1050 and prefer 1030-1040, probably because they believe Books iii and iv were written by the same author. But there is nothing certain here and with the evidence for a later dating we must remain content with an unsatisfying dating of 1037-1049, or 'mid-eleventh century'.

The author(s) of Book iv employ a different style again, with even more classical allusions, expanded further than elsewhere, and use of *prosimetrum* – an intermingling of prose and verse

⁵⁵⁰ Conques, n. 386.

⁵⁵¹ Conques, n. 49: *Nos tres fratres ... damus ecclesiam nostram in honore sancti Martini, sitam in episcopatu Agenensi, quae est fundata inter castrum Penna et aeccliam sanctae Fidis quae dicitur Callia...* Saint-Martin and Sainte-Foy-des-Cailles retained their separate status; no other evidence confirms that Sainte-Foy had once been dedicated to Saint Michael.

⁵⁵² Campagnac: Conques, nn. 187 (eleventh century), 188 (1031-1065).

⁵⁵³ *Amerlio Vuidoni cognomine* is one of only five dual-element names in all the miracle-stories, that is to say a baptismal accompanied by any other qualification including fathers' names (*nomen paternum*) nicknames or place-names. The others are *Barnardus quem Porcellum cognomine* (ii.1), *Hugo Excafridus* (ii.2), *Barnardus cognomento Astrinum* (iv.11), *Barnardus cognomina Pilitus* (i.12, iii.21). Yet contemporary documents in the cartulary increasingly include dual-element names between 1020 and 1050, along with a narrowing of the stock of baptismal names. This mis-match may reflect the literary mode used by the miracles, where prose could be used more flexibly to describe characteristics of an individual beyond their name. Despite the absence of any names formally derived from estates (i.e. 'of Calmont') in the miracle-stories, we can often establish identification by reference to land-holding – usually a castle. See V. Demontjean, 'Étude anthroponymique comparée entre le cartulaire de l'abbaye de Sainte-Foy de Conques et le 'Livre des Miracles'' (unpublished Mémoire de maîtrise d'Histoire, Tours, Université François-Rabelais, 1992), pp. 39, 55-56. For Claudie Duhamel-Amado, *nomen paternum* tended to denote a secondary line, deriving the second name element from a common ancestor as opposed to names derived from estates which denoted the dominant, agnatic line: *Genèse des lignages méridionaux*. See also the further bibliography in Taylor, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition*, p. 64, n. 72.

- particularly for internal praise and prayers. For Ashley and Sheingorn, the author's 'project of writing florid poetry' seems more important than the miraculous events recorded.⁵⁵⁴ Whilst in many ways this Book marks a return to more traditional modes of saintliness, the hagiographer retains elements of Bernard of Angers' humour and playfulness. He returned to the resurrections of animals (ignored by the first continuator) and included the graphic, bizarre episode of a *miles* suffering from what was most likely an inguinal-scrotal hernia, and which seems explicable only in terms of its base entertainment appeal. In a vision, Foy instructs the invalid to stretch his swollen scrotum over a blacksmith's anvil, to be pounded with a hammer. At the crucial moment (before the hammer falls), the man faints and his ruptured intestine is sucked back into place. In the vision, Sainte Foy comments that this was the first time she had been asked to heal such an ailment.⁵⁵⁵ For Ashley and Sheingorn, 'Chapters like this in book 4 exhibit mannerist style, taking the writing of hagiography to an artificial extreme of experimentation with the genre.'⁵⁵⁶

Later miracle narratives

Besides those reported by the Sélestat and Conques manuscripts, three subsequent phases of anonymous hagiographic production represented by the V-L, A and R groups contain nine, four and two unique miracles respectively. Diverse narrative styles suggest that different authors were responsible for each, although they were all created in the Conques scriptorium. The now-lost Chartres miracles are dated to the latter part of the eleventh century. The V-L group are likely no earlier than 1070, and perhaps date as late as the twelfth century - experts date the London manuscript itself to the first part of the twelfth century.⁵⁵⁷ L.3 tells of Sainte Foy's healing of count Robert which convinced him to donate the church of Tanavelle (Cantal), a grant confirmed in documents from c.1058/1059.⁵⁵⁸ It is unclear whether Count Robert was alive at the time of writing (he lived until 1095) although Raymond of Saint-Gilles began to use the title of count of Rouergue from around 1066.⁵⁵⁹ If these dates are correct perhaps the hagiographer chose to use Robert's Rouergat comital title in the miracle-story because he had

⁵⁵⁴ *ASWF*, pp. 87-88, 97.

⁵⁵⁵ *LMSF*, iv.23. The fact that the sufferer of this condition was a warrior whose lifestyle would have been characterized by physical exertion may argue, albeit tenuously, for the historical accuracy of the personal details contained within the text, since traditionally it was thought that increased physical activity was a risk factor for this condition: R. D. Matthews and L. Neumayer, 'Inguinal hernia in the 21st century: an evidence-based review', *Current Problems in Surgery*, 45 (April 2008), pp. 261-312 at p. 267, although recent research is inconclusive on the matter: C. E. Ruhl and J. E. Everhart, 'Risk factors for inguinal hernia among adults in the US Population', *American Journal of Epidemiology* 165:10 (2007), pp. 1154-1161, at p. 1160. I thank Stephanos Pericleous for his diagnosis of and instruction on this condition.

⁵⁵⁶ *ASWF*, p. 99.

⁵⁵⁷ Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 68; Bonnassie and de Gournay, 'Datation', p. 471.

⁵⁵⁸ *Conques*, nn. 46, 523.

⁵⁵⁹ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 373.

held this at the time of the donation and the author wished to emphasise the comital patronage. Or perhaps it reflected partisanship at Conques against Raymondine attempts to take back the Rouergat comital house.⁵⁶⁰ The unique Rodez miracles are the most recent and rework A.2's tale of a converted Saracen in the spirit of the crusades, and thus likely date to the turn of the twelfth century or later.⁵⁶¹

Miracle composition

Positive miracles

If miracles were to be interpreted as signs of a saint's intercessory power, the behaviour that the hagiographers attribute to invoking a miracle can also be seen as 'encouraged activity'. Miracles with a positive outcome for the beneficiary are useful guides in demonstrating approved behaviours; perhaps most surprising to the modern reader is how cult-centred this behaviour was. Despite general encouragement to virtue, like those words from the mouth of a repentant sinner – 'Love justice, flee avarice, speak the truth, keep the peace, and work no evil upon your neighbour. If you do these things, you will be blessed' –⁵⁶² living virtuously was not reason in itself to receive divine intercession, again underlining that miracle-stories cannot be read as *exempla* in a traditional sense. Prisoners finding themselves 'justly or unjustly' in captivity could still count on Foy's aid. Likewise, Roger de Tosny's wife was healed, even though Roger himself was known for evil deeds (*malefactis*).⁵⁶³ If miracle stories proved that the saint's power was limitless and achievable, they insisted that to reap the benefits, making contact with the saint, her relics or shrine (or best, all three) was of utmost importance. Across all authorship phases, direct prayers and pilgrimage (usually to the shrine, and to Foy's reliquary on procession or one of her churches) were the two most common ways indicated to promote Sainte Foy's intercession, occurring in 56% and 49% of positive miracles respectively and often completed in parallel. Sometimes these prayers turned to chastisement of the saint, imploring, and sometimes berating her for neglect, in a form of 'rustic humiliation'.⁵⁶⁴ This was piety at its most participatory. Cult trappings were very specifically about a give-and-take relationship.

One form this devotion might take was donating to the saint and her monastery, since 21% of miracles were achieved following a pledge or gift. Retrospective offerings of thanks, *ex-voto*

⁵⁶⁰ See text to nn. 629 and 653.

⁵⁶¹ De Gournay, *Etude du cartulaire*, p. 398.

⁵⁶² *LMSF*, C.1.

⁵⁶³ *LMSF*, i.31; iii.1.

⁵⁶⁴ *SKH*, p. 89.

and otherwise, accompany 19% of miracles, usually with a pilgrimage to the shrine if the miracle had occurred elsewhere. Gifts were often modest: half were candles, although some of these were large (i.e. the length of an animal that needed healing).⁵⁶⁵ Donations, even of modest value, were useful to the monastery as evidence of the miracle, most commonly the iron fetters and chains of liberated prisoners (11 – 50% of all post-donations), weapons dislodged from miraculously-healed wounds (2 – 10%), the hair shirt of a converted Saracen, and even the death shroud of one fortunate resuscitated man. Candles, gold jewellery and coins account for a further five (23%), whilst the most spectacular donation in kind was a chessboard stolen by a liberated prisoner from his captor and presented to the monks, much to the surprise of the captor's son who also happened to be at Conques.⁵⁶⁶ There seems to be no pattern in authorship trends here, except perhaps the V-L group, in which all four thanksgiving offerings were physical evidence of the miracles.⁵⁶⁷

Interestingly, given the preoccupation with land elsewhere, only three miracle-stories cite spontaneously-donated or pledged land as a spur for divine intervention (and none in thanks), all from high ranking individuals: Roger de Tosny and his wife Goteline, who founded a church dedicated to Foy in Normandy (Conches-en-Ouche; Eure) following Goteline's miraculous return to health; an unidentified Fredol from the Nîmes area who gave an unnamed manor for Sainte Foy's banner to protect his troops in battle; and the donation of the church at Tanavelle by Count Robert to ameliorate his ailment.⁵⁶⁸ Overall the message is unequivocal: anyone, of any means, could (and should) show their faith to the saint, although the upper classes set the example. But any donation counted as a direct interaction with the saint, and in a gift-giving society, would benefit the donor.

Punishment miracles

If affirmative miracles demonstrate how the saint's favour could be won, and why it was worth winning, punishment miracles depict behaviours to be discouraged. The latter fall into three broad categories: temporal offences (violent and otherwise) against Sainte Foy's community and her dependants (63%) or those outside the community (4%); religious sins against Foy (blasphemy, doubt or disdain directed against her or her statue – 19%); and general irreligious

⁵⁶⁵ *LMSF*, i.4; iii.11; iv.19, iv.22.

⁵⁶⁶ *LMSF*, iv.8.

⁵⁶⁷ *LMSF*, V.3, L.2, L.4 and L.6.

⁵⁶⁸ *LMSF*, iii.1; iii.18; L.3.

vices (especially lust and greed – 15%).⁵⁶⁹ **Table 3** As might be expected, given the cult-centred drive of the positive miracles, the preponderance of these sins concerned the saint and her community (81%). Here, however, unlike the endorsed conduct, there is more discrepancy between authorial stages. Bernard of Angers wrote the majority (62%) of all punishment miracles. Notably fewer punishment miracles occur in the continuators' texts (30% of Book iii and only 17% of Book iv, in comparison to Bernard's 41%). Punishments form half of Bernard's Book i: if the redaction had stopped there the collection would have appeared unusual compared with contemporary literature of the same genre. Whilst Bernard was the only hagiographer to include the 'compelled-donation miracles' (often involving punishments), he was also most predisposed to include religious sins against Foy. Thus 58% of the behaviours rebuked by divine vengeance in Bernard's stories corrected temporal or violent transgressions against the saint and her community, and X_{2b} has a similar balance. Book iii differs from these; 80% of the punishments in Book iii (X_{2a}) related to temporal sins against the monastery and general religious sins are absent. We will return to these punishment miracles, but it useful to note here that the first continuator was the most likely to portray punishments for the material sake of Conques, a shift corrected by the second continuator. After Bernard of Angers' works the degree of institutionalisation of monastic socio-political policy in the Books increased, resulting in a more purposeful and typically hagiographic text and a decidedly more corporate tone to the miracles in Books iii and iv. Book iii, particularly, uses the miracle-stories for socio-political ends, as a closer review of the 'feudal' themes will show.

14. CONQUES AND PROPERTY

Foundation

As we saw with Bobbio, the foundation and early history of a monastery could be central to its subsequent treatment by internal and external lordship, and for the condition of its lands. Typically, Conques' earliest origins are difficult to discern. A chronicle of the late-eleventh or early-twelfth century tells of a series of early Christian settlements on the site, destroyed by pagans, Franks and Saracens, until Conques' final reestablishment by Pippin the Short in cooperation with a hermit called Dado, and subsequent endowment by Charlemagne.⁵⁷⁰ The

⁵⁶⁹ Religious sins are sometimes solely responsible for punishment miracles – where they are implied alongside others (i.e. specified as gluttony or greed when stealing something from Sainte-Foy or her friends) then I have not included it as a separate sin.

⁵⁷⁰ The prologue is edited in M. A. F. de Gaujal, (ed.), *Etudes historique sur le Rouergue*, vol. 4 (1859), pp. 391–394. Another version reporting the abbots of Conques is edited as 'Chronicle B' by D. Martène and U. Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, iii (Paris, 1717), col. 1387–1390. See also J.-C.-E. Bourret (ed.), *Documents sur les*

head of the reliquary bust and other treasures held at the monastery were almost certainly imperial donations.⁵⁷¹ Paradigmatic of Remensnyder's 'foundation legend' model, the chronicle narrative cannot be accepted fully for the monastery's early history however, since there is no definitive evidence for direct royal foundation.⁵⁷² The earliest recorded donation is by one Leutard in 801, confirming an established institution by this date, but the earliest firm evidence of royal involvement is a diploma of Louis the Pious in 819.⁵⁷³ This document mentions Dado and the Saracen invasions, and a ninth-century poem by Ermoldus Nigellus seems to confirm the association of the hermit Dado to Louis,⁵⁷⁴ although a later charter from Pippin I claims that the monastery was founded by Dado, this time 'on fiscal land' by licence of a Count Gibert.⁵⁷⁵

Outside lordship

The monastery's status and relationship to its lands in these early days is thus impossible to discern exactly – for example there is no mention of the count Gibert and his licence to Dado in Louis the Pious's charter, and no mention of Louis in Pippin's. Whilst Louis may have been involved from Conques' beginnings, no charter evidence details any lands he may have provided and/or the terms. Also, as we have seen, initial land donations for a monastery's foundation may not have given the king any rights to rule over a monastery *de jure*. Instead, the nature of 'protective control' and the dispensing of the abbacy were equally important. This was clearly the case at Conques; Louis's 819 confirmation came soon after his *Notitia de servitio monasteriorum*, which required Conques to pray for the empire but exempted Conques from taxes or military service. Louis's charter to Conques granted lands as well as defining the monastery's position under the protection of imperial immunity and defence (*in nostra proprie speciali defensione atque tuitione devenire; sub inmunitatis tuitione; quiete semper imperiali et regali defensione tuta*). Evidently the terms of this immunity did not exonerate the monastery from its

origines chrétiennes du Rouergue (Rodez, 1887), pp. 236–251; de Gournay, *Documents écrits*, pp. 43–45.

⁵⁷¹ Amongst others, the Conques treasury holds a reliquary in the form of an 'A' that tradition claims as a gift from Charlemagne, and the imperial crown that adorns the reliquary–statue may have been given by Pippin: Desjardins, *Conques*, p. v; *BoSF*, p. 8, and especially Remensnyder, 'Legendary treasure', *passim*. A recent suggestion by the former Director of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, that the head of the reliquary was a portrait and perhaps even death mask, of Charlemagne (as opposed to a late Roman imperial bust as previously thought) is as yet unsubstantiated: T. Hoving, 'Letters: La Tête du Roi', *Harper's Magazine* (May, 2009), pp. 4–5.

⁵⁷² Remensnyder, *Remembering*, pp. 50, 56.

⁵⁷³ *Conques*, nn. 1, 580.

⁵⁷⁴ Remensnyder, *Remembering*, p. 56. As a courtly poet, Ermoldus was far enough removed from the scriptorium of Conques not to be implicated in a house-centred fabrication of royal connections.

⁵⁷⁵ *Conques*, n. 581, although Léon Levillain's edition is considered superior. His analysis suggests it is authentic: L. Levillain (ed.), *Recueil des actes de Pépin Ier et Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine: 814-848* (Paris, 1926), n. 32, pp. 133–151.

duty to the king; in fact, it underlined the king's right to offer immunity. As Susan Wood notes, Louis seems never to have granted immunity-defence to churches under the dominium of other lords. So, even if royal foundation cannot be confirmed for Conques, perhaps by this diploma Louis was 'pushing lordship into a gap where none existed'.⁵⁷⁶ Pippin's terms were slightly different. Reaffirming the *defensione atque tuitione*, he made no mention of 'immunity'. Instead, he confirmed exemption from the *dominationem et potestatem comitis*, placing the monastery directly under the authority of the kings of Aquitaine. In the ninth century this meant Conques remained firmly subject to the outside lordship of the king. Yet with the decline in royal authority and the failure to reconfirm the king-monastery relationship at Conques in latter centuries,⁵⁷⁷ this comital exemption surely realized a new value, creating a vacuum in lordship over the monastery and giving the institution its first real access to a treasured autonomy.⁵⁷⁸

In light of arguments that equate advocacy to outside lordship in the central medieval period, it is worth mentioning that there is little evidence for advocates acting for Conques in the cartulary – that is to say up to the twelfth century.⁵⁷⁹ Despite the clause in Pippin's charter that mentioned the monastery's advocates, Conques does not explicitly appear with one in any of its charter documents.⁵⁸⁰ One donor, William of Geneva, appears with his advocate, Toronbertus, in an eleventh-century document signed by other advocates named Odolricus and Witbertus, although it is unclear who these latter two represented.⁵⁸¹ The lack of advocates may be a function of the fact that there is little evidence for Conques' attendance at comital courts, as we will see, although the limited examples of the monastery's attendance at other non-comital *placita* (including in the miracle-stories) make no mention of advocates either. In most cases, the abbot is presented as the monastery's representative.

⁵⁷⁶ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 252, 254.

⁵⁷⁷ This was not true for all the Midi, but as Bousquet puts it, 'au XI^e siècle, les possibilités d'intervention royale vont jusqu'à l'Auvergne, mais pas au-delà': Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 155.

⁵⁷⁸ Part of Pippin's diploma had made possible a move to a more accessible location at Figeac, to be called New Conques, although this led to a superiority contest between the two institutions, coming to a head in the later eleventh century. The extant miracles make no reference to Figeac at all, and it seems that generally speaking during the first half of the eleventh century the monasteries' domains were clearly separated and their developments on the whole not hindered by the presence of the other. On Conques and Figeac: Remensnyder, *Remembering*, p. 70; *BoSF*, p. 8 and especially Bousquet *Rouergue*, pp. 481-488.

⁵⁷⁹ On which arguments, and a refutation, see West, 'The significance of the Carolingian advocate', pp. 204-206.

⁵⁸⁰ *Conques*, n. 581: *Volumus quidem ut, quia ipsum monasterium in nostro proprio constat constructum et nostra auctoritate est factum, a nullo quolibet, nostris et nec futuris temporibus, tortus advocatis eiusdem monasterii ullo modo requiratur.*

⁵⁸¹ *Conques*, n. 289.

Abbots

The king's outside lordship seems to have had no obvious substitute, a situation exacerbated by the fact that the internal community had, unlike Bobbio, theoretically retained the right to an elected abbot under Carolingian rule. The charter of Louis the Pious refers to the *vir religiosus* and later *abba* Medraldus who had been there from the time of Dado (confirmed by the earlier donation of 801, which mentions Meldraldus as Dado's successor) and who led the regular congregation there. In his *vita* of Saint Benedict, Ardo noted that Louis the Pious had determined those monasteries in which a regular abbot should remain and whilst there is no extant diploma for this, it 'appears to be closely connected with the *Notitia de servitio monasteriorum* of 819'.⁵⁸² Pippin is explicit on this point: *per hanc nostram auctoritatem et consensum, licentiam habeant eligendi abbatem* and whilst the bestowal of this election right confirmed Pippin's authority over the monastery, it seems, in the short term at least, to have served the monastery in the same way as his comital exemption. The terminology of *honor* and *beneficium* seem never to have been used for the abbatial position at Conques nor is there evidence for a *divisio* of conventual and abbatial menses there.⁵⁸³ With no formal right to (or even custom of) abbatial nomination that could be adopted or assumed by pretenders to Carolingian prerogatives, the monastery remained, theoretically, a regular community with an elected head.

The theory did not hold in practice, however. There appear to have been at least two external abbots at Conques in the early-tenth century – Ralph, archbishop of Bourges and abbot of Beaulieu (abbot of Conques 903-930), and his successor and 'godson', John, abbot of Aurillac, Saint-Martin-de-Tulle and Conques (abbot of Conques 933-935).⁵⁸⁴ During the latter half of the tenth century power lay with the family of the viscounts of Clermont. Stephen, son of the viscount Robert, appears as an external abbot of Conques (942-984) at the same time as he was bishop of Clermont. He shared these roles with Bego who joined him as abbot from at least 958 and as bishop from 961. Unlike at Bobbio, a parallel regular abbot named Hugh ruled with the two bishop-abbots between 958 and 984 and was often the only titled abbot in documents where the names appeared together. After 984 Stephen and Hugh disappear from the Conques charters, but Bego remains, sometimes in a leading role with a regular abbot, once as advisor and witness.⁵⁸⁵ Bernard of Angers refers specifically to the family of Clermont in miracle-stories written during his second trip to Conques. It seems that Bego (called simply

⁵⁸² Bernhardt, 'Servitium regis', p. 59 n. 22.

⁵⁸³ The situation in this regard at Conques remains unclear: Desjardins, *Conques*, p. xxix.

⁵⁸⁴ Desjardins, *Conques*, xl-xli; Lauranson-Rosaz, *Auvergne*, p. 244.

⁵⁸⁵ *Conques*, nn. 179 (997-1004), 325 (March 1007), 421 (March 1007).

‘the bishop of Clermont’ by Bernard) had passed direct control of the abbacy of Conques to his three nephews, Hugh, Peter, and Stephen of Calmont – the latter succeeded Peter ‘not only in the abbey but also in its castles and the wealth of all its properties’ (ii.5), although Bego retained a hand in their activities. The ‘tyranny’ of Hugh’s abbacy – echoes of Gisebrand – attracted Bernard’s disdain and was the subject of Sainte Foy’s holy vengeance; Hugh was struck down whilst languishing in captivity. From charter evidence Hugh was alive in 1007 and (following the miracle-story chronology) must have died before count Raymond of the Rouergue. Thus his punishment must have occurred between 1007 and 1010.⁵⁸⁶ Bernard recounts that the subsequent deaths of Hugh’s brother Peter and Bishop Bego of Clermont fulfilled a vision’s portent that others would suffer the same fate as Hugh. Only Stephen still lived when Bernard was writing, possibly after 1015. He is usually identified as Stephen of Calmont who also witnessed Austrin of Conques’ *breve memoriale* with his unnamed brothers, and donated a church with his brother Peter during the reign of the regular abbot Adalgerius.⁵⁸⁷ Although Hugh, Stephen and Peter are listed after Bego as witnesses to a charter of March 1007, the brothers never appear with abbatial title in cartulary documentation.⁵⁸⁸

It is not clear how this family had made inroads into holding influence at Conques. It may have been by the weight of episcopal jurisdictions, just as Ralph as archbishop of Bourges may have achieved his earlier, although while Bourges was at least the archbishopric under which the diocese of Rodez fell, there is little other evidence that the diocese of Clermont feigned any claim over this particular area. This was, however, an era in which diocesan boundaries were being contested in the south of France and it is possible that Stephen’s activity at Conques marked part of a Clermontois expansionism further south in the Midi.⁵⁸⁹ Thus the issue of pluralism here may have been addressed on the same grounds as at Bobbio: the bishops who simultaneously held the abbacy at Conques may also have been claiming that it fell within

⁵⁸⁶ *Conques*, n. 325. This Hugh should not be confused with the regular abbot Hugh who joined Stephen of Clermont and Bego; Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 279 makes this error.

⁵⁸⁷ *Conques*, nn. 23, 80 (referred to in 81). On the identification with Calmont: Lauranson-Rosaz, *L’Auvergne*, pp. 244, 435; C. Settipani, *La noblesse du midi carolingien* (Oxford, 2004), p. 322.

⁵⁸⁸ *Conques*, n. 325. See also Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 373–374; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 203–204.

⁵⁸⁹ As the miracle-stories demonstrate for the monastery’s own position, there was much ‘up for grabs’ in terms of power and authority in early medieval France, and dioceses were no exception, on which see the many relevant articles in Mazel (ed.), *L’espace du diocèse*, pp. 213–252. In one of his own contributions to this edition, Florian Mazel argues that the territorial boundaries of dioceses were still fluid in the eleventh century and only stabilised with the documentary rigour of cathedral chapters and following numerous border conflicts: Mazel, ‘Cujus dominus, ejus episcopatus? Pouvoirs seigneuriaux et territoires diocésains (Xe–XIIIe siècle)’, pp. 213–252. On episcopal authority just before the Gregorian period see the papers in J. S. Ott and A. Trumbore Jones (eds.), *The Bishop Reformed: Studies of Episcopal Power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages* (Aldershot, 2007).

their diocese, such as the case of Ralph, archbishop of Bourgues.⁵⁹⁰ Neither is there firm evidence for a precedence of commendation, and indeed, there was no one placed to do this: the king was absent and, even if he had wanted or been influential enough to, the count was expressly prohibited by the royal privileges from intervening at the monastery – Pippin’s charter could have been invoked at any point to support this. It is possible the Clermontois took an opportunity to install themselves and received no opposition, capitalising on a gap in outside lordship from the mid-tenth century, perhaps as Louis the Pious himself had done in the previous century.⁵⁹¹ The long co-rulership of Stephen and Bego and introduction of the latter’s nephews whilst he still lived was a strategy to establish this personal office as a patrimony. At the start, the secular abbacy of Stephen of Clermont took a very different direction to that of his contemporary Giseprand of Tortona at Bobbio. Rather than sapping the monastery’s lands in favour of his own patrimony, Stephen rebuilt the abbey (now known as Conques II) and commissioned the reliquary of Sainte Foy that would be the source of so much income over the following centuries, and was perhaps responsible for the drawing up of the tenth-century *passio* manuscript. His successors seem not to have been so constructive for Conques, however, and the charges levelled by Bernard in the miracle-stories suggest Bego was guilty of similar wrongs as Giseprand at Bobbio, expressed in analogous terms of plunder and illustrated specifically in the taking of Conques’ treasures to pay off a ransom demanded for his nephew Hugh’s release (ii.5). Based only on a three-generation co-rulership, the Clermont-Calmont stronghold was not necessarily sustainable, nor without challenge.

Throughout this period, the monastery appears to have enjoyed the continuing presence of a regular abbot.⁵⁹² Following Hugh who accompanied co-bishops Stephen and Bego of Clermont until 984, were Arlaldus (II), Girbert, Arlaldus (III), Airadus and Adalgerius, who reigned until 1024. De Gournay has posited that there was a ‘véritable révolution’ in the rule of the monastery in this period, because of a long silence in the cartulary between Hugh and

⁵⁹⁰ This cannot explain the plurality of Abbot John of Aurillac, Saint-Martin-de-Tulle and Conques, mentioned above, however, who awaits a dedicated study. Abbatial plurality was increasingly the subject of tenth-century reformers, often a byproduct of lay abbacy which was perhaps considered a ‘necessary evil’: Jestic, *Wayward Monks*, pp. 24–25, pointing out that Cluny diverged from tradition in having multiple abbots from the start (p. 25 n. 3).

⁵⁹¹ The viscounts of Clermont were *fideles* of the Guilhemide dynasty and Stephen himself a ‘royal vassal’ of the Carolingian king Lothar: J.-P. Chambon and C. Lauranson-Rosaz, ‘Un nouveau document à attribuer à Etienne II, évêque de Clermont (ca 950 – ca 960)’, *AM*, 114:239 (2002), pp. 351–363, at p. 351. Yet there is no evidence that any king had invested Stephen at Conques (despite Bousquet’s postulation in *Rouergue*, p. 279). The Clermont family was nevertheless well connected in this period including to the heads of many ecclesiastic institutions, as Chambon and Lauranson-Rosaz show. Stephen of Clermont’s appearance at Conques coincided with his various other activities in meridional abbeys and councils (Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 280) and may have been a Clermontois policy to extend and consolidate power through religious institutions.

⁵⁹² On the practice of having serving parallel abbots ‘in title’ and ‘according to the rule’ as an Auvergnat particularity, see: Lauranson-Rosaz, *L’Auvergne*, pp. 242–248.

Arlaldus (II) regarding abbots, but also because many contemporary charters made no reference to any leader at Conques during their reigns.⁵⁹³ Yet whilst the cartulary makes no mention of Arlaldus until 989, Bernard of Angers notes that he had been the abbot at the time of Guibert the Illuminated's miraculous healing, which had occurred 'around thirty years before' (*transmissio jam circiter sex lustris*) he was writing (in 1013), on the eve of the saint's feast day (5 October).⁵⁹⁴ Since the previous regular abbot Hugh is still attested in October 984, the miracle has been dated to October 985,⁵⁹⁵ thus so should Arlaldus' abbacy be. Nevertheless, the inconsistency of abbatial identity in the charter documents of this period marks a change in the direction of the monastery's image, away from its externalized associations to powerful aristocratic families. Whilst some or all of these subsequent abbots may have been elected *secundum regulam* (as is generally held) this did not prevent local families making their representation felt through them as they had in the tenth century,⁵⁹⁶ since the abbots Girbert (996–1004) and Airardus (c.1010–1013) seem to have been issued from the line of the viscounts of Carlat.⁵⁹⁷

Cultic changes and patronage

There were certainly noteworthy changes occurring at Conques in the decades around the millennium, precisely when the Clermont-Calmont representatives seem to have lost their grip over outside lordship of the institution and when the regular abbot, sometimes issued of the Carlat line, became the sole head once again. These changes occurred most markedly in the development of Foy's cult. Her relics had joined those of Saint Sauveur at Conques in 866 and had attracted donations throughout the late ninth and tenth centuries, but her first famous miracle – that of Guibert the Illuminated – occurred in 985, in the time of Arlaldus I, precisely when Bishop Stephen of Clermont disappears from the records and when, for de Gournay, 'l'abbaye entre dans la tourmente'. Likewise changes in the saintly titularies of donations to Conques – either Saint Sauveur, Sainte Foy, or both – saw Saint Sauveur lose ground to the joint appellation from 996, and Foy gained singular precedence from 1031.⁵⁹⁸ Indeed, the miracle-story about Bego and his nephews, we can see evidence of a 'reform' discourse, which described the decadence that the monastery had previously slipped into (ii.5):

These three brothers [Hugh, Peter and Stephen] had an uncle named Bego, bishop of Clermont,

⁵⁹³ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 204.

⁵⁹⁴ *LMSF*, i.1, i.2.

⁵⁹⁵ *Conques*, n. 259; Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 205 and n. 28.

⁵⁹⁶ For example the abbot Rodulfus, son of the wealthy Senegond, whose other son Fredelon headed up the monastery of Vabres: Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 278–279.

⁵⁹⁷ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 64, 205.

⁵⁹⁸ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 205–7, quote at p. 205.

who, as long as he lived, always urged them cruelly to plunder the abbey subject to their control rather than to defend it as their patrimony. But, as they say, with every crime that was committed against Sainte Foy the situation became that much more perilous. And this applied to anyone, whether a member of the monastic community or an outsider, who worked against monastic interests. And with a great abundance of material riches, the monks showed greater boldness in sinning. And so the wicked lives of the monastery's inhabitants, caused by an overindulgence in debauchery and by great wealth, drove the miracles of the saints to cease.

Only with the renewal of Foy's miraculous activities at Conques, resulting in the deaths of Hugh, Peter and Bego, was the new order, and hope, established. Guibert the Illuminated's healing fits well in this schema, since the biblical *topos* of (re)gaining sight could signify an awakening. Through this discourse Bernard seems to have interpreted a new regime at Conques, drawing a line under the previous mode of lordship of Calmont-Clermont line, although as we will see neither he nor his continuators bought into broader discourses of change. Bernard had arrived during the abbacy of Airadus (of Carlat). But this does not mean there was a straightforward power struggle between these two families, between the regular abbots (Carlat) and the secular abbots (Clermont-Calmont).⁵⁹⁹ Indeed, the two must have overlapped for many years. Bego was said to rule alongside Girbert in a charter of 997-1004 at Conques (*ubi Begon episcopus et Girbertus abba praeesse videntur*) and representatives of both lines again appear in one charter of March 1007 in which a certain Gerald made a donation to 'the lord abbot Arlaldus and the deacon Airadus' (he of the Carlat line and soon to be abbot) of things that he had acquired by an exchange with Bego of Clermont, with this latter's counsel and witness along with his three nephews.⁶⁰⁰ The Calmont influence did not wane for long anyway; neither did the Carlat line enjoy a straightforward victory, since there is no evidence to confirm a continuing direct filiation of subsequent regular abbots to that family. But it does mark an end to the Clermont-Calmont strategy of outside lordship via secular abbacy. Perhaps this was a situation of, as Susan Wood describes, a 'lay abbot ... [stepping] back in favour of regular abbot, as part of a plan of reform (enhancing his prestige and leaving him with a more princely role than formerly).'⁶⁰¹ Stephen of Calmont was still active afterwards, and members of the Calmont family remained notable figures at Conques throughout the eleventh century. They were not 'hounded out' completely, rather their relationship with the monastery changed.⁶⁰²

In fact, losing the short-lived secular abbacy was only the first stage in the developments at

⁵⁹⁹ As de Gournay sees it, the Clermontois were hounded out following Stephen's death in 984 in the context of a head-to-head battle between Clermont-Calmont and Carlat: de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 205-205.

⁶⁰⁰ *Conques*, nn. 179, 325.

⁶⁰¹ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, pp. 320, 324.

⁶⁰² See n. 599.

Conques. The real accomplishment came in the elevation of Foy as the symbolic head of the institution, to which the miracle-stories contributed the most.⁶⁰³ This new Foy-focused institution never forgot the other saint whose relics it guarded. Yet in the cultic materials, which knew the greatest public audience, Foy was clearly the focus. Undoubtedly these developments marked a move to de-humanize (in a literal sense) the lordship of the abbey, placing the emphasis instead on the powerful image of the lordly martyr-saint.⁶⁰⁴ The cult trappings that surrounded the saint served many ends – not simply to attract wealth alone, but to act as a focal point for institutional identity that transcended the familial ties of the men who were responsible for the running of her monastery. We might call this new schema a ‘reformation’ from the previous status quo – in the specific sense of a re-casting of the concept of rule at Conques. Whilst Foy embodied the religious over the lay, and the regular abbot prevailed as his secular counterpart was debarred, there is no solid evidence for purist Benedictine reformation or renewal in the community at Conques in this period. Whilst Carladez strategy may have drawn on discourses around the legitimacy of their elected candidate, it was precisely because of the election procedure the advantage did not – or rather could not – stay in their hands.

Besides the Carladez representatives, other regular abbots can also be identified as members of local families, such as Odolric of Maleville, Lautard de La Vinzelle (c. 1025), Bego of Mouret (1087-1108), and Boniface de Vigouroux (1108-c.1125).⁶⁰⁵ Accusations in a text from Figeac that Adalgerius had bought his office at a great price (*magno pretio*) may hold (scandalous) truth, if it meant he had made bribes to secure his election, but this would not necessarily mean that he had not been elevated through the ranks of the community.⁶⁰⁶ Indeed, he had acted as dean under his abbatial predecessor Airardus, just as this latter had been dean under his own predecessor, Arlaldus. Likewise the abbot Bego later in the eleventh century seems identifiable

⁶⁰³ For Bousquet, it was after the death of Bego (c.1010) that the real ‘revolution’ happened: Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 281.

⁶⁰⁴ North of the Alps there are examples of the conventual mense being transferred to saints or relics (Bernhardt, ‘*Servitium regis*’, p. 60), which suggests a similar move to replace symbolically the (secularized) abbot with the patron saint as the head of the religious community. It is a shame, therefore, that at Bobbio no *praeceptum divisionis* has survived from the ninth century, since it would have made an interesting comparison to the tenth century manipulation of Columbanus and his relics as the lord of the monastic patrimony.

⁶⁰⁵ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 131. Abbots were commonly, if not exclusively, aristocratic in France, Italy and Germany but rather less often so in Anglo-Saxon England. Prosopographical studies for other regions of France have illustrated abbatial familial roots, such as C. B. Bouchard, *Sword, Miter and Cloister* (Ithaca, NY, 1987) for Burgundy, and V. Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica* (Caen, 2007) for Normandy.

⁶⁰⁶ *Historia monasterii Figiacensis*: cf. Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 342-343 n. 22. The *Chronicle of Conques* also accused Adalgerius of trying to buy the archbishopric of Narbonne with money from Conques: cf. Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 287.

as a monk and scribe in documents preceding his abbacy.⁶⁰⁷ Yet no one family seems to have prevailed and their influence did not amount to proprietary rights like those that secular abbots attempted to enforce elsewhere. Perhaps restricted by their status as elected heads, such men did not draw resources away from the institution but rather constantly re-invested in the development of the monastery, building on the Foy-focused 'corporate' identity and maintaining the institution's integrity and autonomy. We perhaps have the Carladez Airadus to thank for Bernard of Angers' commission (or at least encouragement) to draw up the first collection of Foy's miracles and Adalgerius, the accused simoniac, for his continued support. And it was under Odolric II that the second wave of miracles and the ambitious rebuilding of another new abbey-church (Conques III) was undertaken.

Foy's miracles attracted attention and devotion from further and further afield, no doubt aided in part by their redaction and subsequent public airings, and both movable and immovable donations flooded in, from diverse quarters. Yet whilst no family dominated over patronage, neither was enhancement of the patrimony an organic process of growth, and Odolric (1031-1065) and Stephen II (1065-1087) in particular seem to have acted on their empire-building instincts. The former was particularly successful at receiving churches or parts of churches, as Jacques Bousquet's detailed summary of acquisitions by area shows.⁶⁰⁸ Many of Odolric's charters are dated only by his abbacy, although the miracles hint at the early expansion, including the church built at Sardan (Esclottes) on assart land (iv.21), which an associated charter tells us had been built at the bidding of the donor of that land.⁶⁰⁹

As will be discussed, the miracle-stories were often used to confirm and to consolidate land claims like the relic processions. At other times they simply celebrated and memorialized non-contentious donations, such as the treasures given by Raymond III (i.12) and Goteline and Roger de Tosny's foundation of Conches-en-Ouche (iii.1). A wider aim was to celebrate affiliations with secular parties beyond claims of land, and the miracles reported by *miraculés* themselves substantiate a relationship with the monastery and its saint, such as the miraculous healing of one *Vuilelmus ex castro quod Carlatum dicitur* (iv.14), verifying that associations between the Carladez lords still prevailed at least three decades after it had provided two of Conques' regular abbots. The association was commemorated on both sides, since William attended Foy's feast day where he was healed and where he celebrated with the monks afterwards; these last fulfilled their part with the inclusion of his story in the written collection.

⁶⁰⁷ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 298, p. 326 n. 53, p. 336 n. 171.

⁶⁰⁸ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 287-298.

⁶⁰⁹ *Conques*, n. 50.

Since 80% of the beneficial miracles, like William's, specifically involved or were followed by either pilgrimage to the shrine, donation, or public proclamation, these miracles mark the celebration of a two-way relationship, in which both the beneficiary and the monastery were engaged. Despite the emphasis that this study places on hagiographical agency in the content and detail of the written miracle-stories, the significance of miracle-reporting at the shrine cannot be forgotten, and this is particularly true for the reward miracles, which were willingly proffered by many of the beneficiaries; likewise the monastery could repay their loyalty including with memorialization of their story in written form and subsequent liturgical use. In these cases, which extended beyond specific donations, we can see that the miracle-stories contributed to the courting and nurturing of relationships with devotees, including important families as well as the less wealthy. A map of the origins of beneficiaries of Foy's positive miracles, where these were specified, demonstrates a wider spread than the victims of punishment miracles. **Maps 4, 5 and 8**

Members of the local aristocracy would also have publicized their devotion to the saint, but in ways only faintly perceptible now. The name *Fides* appears amongst the meridional aristocracy with increased frequency from the mid-tenth century onwards, a trend possibly mirrored lower down the social scale but hidden to us by the nature of documentation. We might discount perhaps the *Fides* married to Count Hugh of the Rouergue, since she is usually identified as the daughter of the count of Cerdagne in Catalonia and may represent a naming tradition local to that region and separate from Conques' patroness.⁶¹⁰ A later *Fides*, married to Viscount Bernard of Narbonne and active in the 1070s may have been Hugh and Foy's daughter.⁶¹¹ Locally, it was the name of a wife of Amblard I of Nonette, viscount of the Auvergne and cousin of Bishop-Abbot Stephen of Clermont and another (perhaps a daughter of the former?) was married to Bertrand, viscount of the Dalmatian line.⁶¹² The most direct impact of a Foy on Conques came from the wife of Hugh of Calmont since their son Bego would later be responsible for the move to submit Figeac to Conques in the 1060s, an act that his mother Foy also signed.⁶¹³ The naming of a daughter *Fides* must surely have held some contemporary significance and represented partisanship to the saint, if not also her monastery. Since the women who appear in the documents were all married, this was not a case of *assainteurement* or oblation. Frustratingly, since all but the Catalonian Foy appear as spouses, their parentage is rarely known and the families who chose to make such a pronouncement via the naming of

⁶¹⁰ *Conques*, n. 8.

⁶¹¹ Settiani, *Noblesse*, pp. 137-138.

⁶¹² *Brioude*, 140 (947); *Sauxillanges* n. 434 (c.979/986).

⁶¹³ *Conques*, nn. 82, 572 ; Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 487.

their children remain obscure.

Whilst there were certain families with patronage links at Conques, none predominated. The spread of devotees was wide. It must have been Conques' independence in this sense, as well as the lack of secular abbot, which helped the Rouergat institution resist the secularization of its lands as well as the clutches of Cluny throughout the eleventh century where others could not.⁶¹⁴ Conques' resistance to Cluny was not driven by a purity of Benedictine piety that rejected the worldly wealth of large patrimonies, unlike Robert de Molesme's Cîteaux. If anything, Conques shared similar expansive pretensions to Cluny, as testified by the large numbers of churches it received during Odolric's abbacy in particular. Conques likely resented – and resisted – the encroachments on its own patrimony by the Burgundian house, to which it would lose some of its dependencies.⁶¹⁵ Part of the reason Conques remained autonomous was surely the balance of interested parties there. Nobody had a clear right or ability to 'give' Conques to Cluny – or any other house come to that – unlike other important institutions in its vicinity. The *abbatia* of Moissac was ceded to Cluny by Gausbert of Gourdon in June 1053,⁶¹⁶ similarly Beaulieu was granted to the Burgundian monastic empire by its secular abbot Hugh of Castelnau in 1076.⁶¹⁷ Vabres was given to Saint-Victor de Marseille in June 1061, and the following year to Cluny, by the secular abbot Deusdet (and with the consent of the count Robert, his wife Bertha and the countess Richarde).⁶¹⁸ Indeed, later attempts to submit Conques to Cluny were made via the monastery of Figeac, rather than directly.⁶¹⁹ In this, Sainte Foy served as a potent defender of Conques. Her popularity encouraged wide patronage networks, demonstrated so well by the miracle-stories, which included a spread of the middling aristocracy as well as more powerful local lords. It gave the institution a solid and seemingly non-partisan foundation from which it could protect its independence better. Of course, other local institutions had their own holy patrons, but none seem to have so widely or so effectively encouraged such a pervasive image of saintly lordliness under which to unite their institution.

⁶¹⁴ Powerful families with an interest in Conques did succeed elsewhere in taking over monastic domains, such as the Carladez viscounts at Aurillac in league with the viscounts of Comborn in the 1020s: A. R. Lewis, *The Development of Southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, 1965), p. 329.

⁶¹⁵ De Gournay, 'Relire', pp. 397-398.

⁶¹⁶ Aymeric de Peyrac, *Chronique des abbés de Moissac*, cf. and for dating R. de La Haye, 'Moines de Moissac et faussaires', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Tarn-et-Garonne*, 121 (1996), pp. 7-28, annex 1.

⁶¹⁷ *Beaulieu*, n. 122, on which see Wood, *Proprietary Church*, p. 324.

⁶¹⁸ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 55, 261, 371.

⁶¹⁹ See Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 487.

15. PUBLIC AUTHORITY

Public authority and the Rouergue

Conques is situated in the northern part of the medieval county of Rouergue, which corresponds closely to the modern-day département of Aveyron.⁶²⁰ It is a border region in various senses. By modern delimitations it forms the north-eastern regional boundary of the Midi-Pyrénées with the Auvergne and Limousin. Linguistically, it forms part of the northern and eastern limits of the Languedocien dialect (bordering with Auvergnat and Provençal). Climatically, it is subject to oceanic, continental and Mediterranean climates throughout the year. Its varied topography belies its location on the southern border of the high Massif Central: from the deep valleys of the rivers Lot, Aveyron and Tarn amongst others, to the limestone heights of the Causse de l'Aubrac. It was described in ninth- to twelfth-century commentaries and charters as wooded, mountainous and with deep gorges making access difficult.⁶²¹ Conques itself is nestled on a south-facing slope in the rocky valley of the river Dordou, in a wild and craggy landscape typical of the region, around twenty-five miles north of the Rouergue's main (and for a long time only) town, Rodez. The history of the *pays* and city are inseparable since the latter was both a comital and episcopal seat. Situating the Rouergue in a broader region in our period is not straightforward. It was bordered by the Toulousain, Albigeois, Quercy, Auvergne, Gévaudan and Septimania (Gothia) and de Gournay traces the persistence of an 'Aquitainian sentiment' throughout the Carolingian period, which he sees as the overriding regional identity even in the eleventh century.⁶²² The term Aquitainian is ambiguous, however. Whilst the Rouergue had formed part of the Carolingian 'kingdom of Aquitaine' it was not subject to the direct influence of the later 'duchy of Aquitaine', under the comital house of Poitou. In the early eleventh century Bernard of Angers did not use any broad term to describe a wider region, using the term 'Aquitainian' only once in the context of describing Abbot Peter and the custom of wearing beards in that region (ii.8) and his continuators used the term only rarely themselves.⁶²³ From the early eleventh-century perspective of the northern Bernard the *pagus* of Rouergue was associable both to the Toulousain and the Auvergne, which he twice groups together (i.1,

⁶²⁰ Despite my divergence on some interpretative points from the theses of historians of the Rouergue, their rigorous and thorough studies provide an invaluable starting point. For the following section on counts and the monarchy, see in particular de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 48-60; Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 45-64. Where they disagree I tend to follow de Gournay except where noted. I was unable to access a copy of J. Belmon, 'Les vicomtes de Rouergue-Millau: Xe-XIe siècles' (unpublished thesis, l'École des Chartes, 1992).

⁶²¹ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 35. For a detailed topography see Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 14-16, also A. Debord, 'Châteaux et société dans le Rouergue médiéval (Xe – XIIIe siècle)', *Château Gaillard*, 14 (1990), pp. 7-28, at pp. 8-9.

⁶²² De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 44-45.

⁶²³ *LMSF*, iii.1, iv.16, A.2, A.3 and the *Gallia Christiana* fragment.

i.13), although politically the Rouergue was only formally associated to the Auvergne briefly under Bernard Plantevelue and later under Count Robert.

In fact, the Rouergue did not share long-term consistent administrative unity with neighbouring counties or *pagi*. From the Merovingian period to the early ninth century the comital title of Rodez was usually found linked to that of Nîmes and Uzès (in the medieval region of Gothia-Septimania).⁶²⁴ From 849, with Charles the Bald's reward of the counties of Toulouse, Rodez, Limoges and Pallars under the title of *comes et marchio* to Fredelon, and following the succession of his brother Raymond I in 856, a Toulousain-Rouergat bloc emerged in the form of the Raymondins, a bloc which often held sway over the marquisate of Gothia.⁶²⁵

An independent line of counts of the Rouergue is held to begin with Ermengaud, attested from c.906-932, since it is during his reign that there is first mention of a *comitatus Rutenicus* and it is generally held that Ermengaud was a Raymondin, thus the Rouergue counts were a cadet branch of the counts of Toulouse.⁶²⁶ The elder of Ermengaud's two sons by Adalaiz, Raymond and Hugh, succeeded his father after 948. Count Raymond II's testament (c.961) is one of the most important documents for the Midi in the tenth century.⁶²⁷ Raymond had married Bertha, daughter of Boso of Tuscany and niece of Hugh of Arles, King of Italy, who outlived her husband and their eldest son and successor, Raymond III († 1010).⁶²⁸ The comital title continued through the direct male line to Raymond III's son Hugh († c.1052), who therefore held the comital title for the entire span of authorship of books i-iv of Sainte Foy's miracle-stories. His mother Richarde seems to have acted as regent for him until the 1030s and continued to appear in some subsequent charters alongside Hugh, eventually outliving him. The title passed out of the Raymondin line briefly to Robert, count of the Auvergne, as

⁶²⁴ On the development of which area in the earlier period see L. Schneider, 'Aux marges méditerranéennes de la Gaule mérovingienne. Politiques et les cadres de l'ancienne ecclesiastiques Narbonnaise I^{ère} entre Antiquité et Moyen Âge (V^e-IX^e siècle)', in Mazel (ed.), *L'espace du diocèse*, pp. 69-95.

⁶²⁵ Recently the traditional Raymondin model proposed by the authors of the *HGL* and followed by many (including Jacques Bousquet) has been challenged, most directly by M. De Framond, 'La succession des comtes de Toulouse autour de l'an mil (940-1030): reconsidérations', *AM*, 204 (1993), pp. 461-488; see also H. Débax, *La féodalité languedocienne: XIe-XIIIe siècles: serments, hommages et fiefs dans le Languedoc des Trencavel* (Toulouse, 2003), pp. 26-27. Raymond I of Toulouse himself was never specifically entitled 'count of the Rouergue' but de Gournay argues that it was implied by the broader title *comes et marchio*: de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 50. The result is different numbering system for the counts of the Rouergue, for example from that used by Duhamel-Amado, *Genèse des lignages méridionaux*. Thus, Raymond II was married to Countess Bertha, and his son Raymond III to Countess Richarde. I use de Gournay's numbering system here.

⁶²⁶ Although caution is still urged by de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 52.

⁶²⁷ *HGL*, V, n. 111, cols. 240-250.

⁶²⁸ Bertha was the daughter of Boso, marquis of Tuscany and sister of Willa, wife of Berengar II of Italy: H. Keller, 'Bosone di Toscana', *DBI*, 13 (Rome, 1971), pp. 277-279 at p. 279.

husband of Bertha, Hugh's daughter with wife Foy and his sole heir, although it was re-associated to Toulouse under Bertha's cousin Raymond of Saint-Gilles in the following decade, who may have challenged the legitimacy of this inheritance through the female line upon Foy's death.⁶²⁹ With the succession of Raymond of Saint-Gilles to his brother William IV of Toulouse from around 1093, the two branches were reunited again.⁶³⁰

Although these counts were relatively autonomous, they were at least nominally faithful to kings into the tenth century.⁶³¹ Earlier counts had fulfilled an important military function. Charles the Bald had appointed Fredelon as *comes* following his support against Pippin II. Subsequent counts of Toulouse-Rouergue were also royal *fideles*. Both Raymond II and III of the Rouergue were also involved in royal military engagements, although not seemingly by investiture. The former appears to have been one of the *principes* of Hugh of Arles' campaign to regain the Italian crown in 946, for which service he may have received the hand of Bertha of Tuscany, Hugh's niece, although this marked an alliance between the house of Toulouse and its powerful Burgundian neighbours, rather than a subjection. Indeed Liudprand of Cremona describes how Raymond had given his services to Hugh in return for a thousand coins, as well as affirming his faithfulness to him by oath.⁶³² Raymond II also accompanied Louis d'Outremer in 941 and met the royal couple and Hugh the Great at Nevers in 944, making him, according to de Gournay, 'un des grands princes territoriaux du Xe siècle'.⁶³³ The royal connection seems to be lost from the time of Raymond III. Indeed, his military activities did not cease - he had collected war booty including a gilded riding saddle (which the miracles tell us was later gifted to Conques - i.12) following a battle against the Saracens, perhaps in the context of the sack of Barcelona by al-Manṣūr in 985 and the ensuing conflicts.⁶³⁴ If this was the case, Raymond III more likely fought in Spain as the brother-in-law of Count Borrell of Barcelona (to whom his sister Ledgarde was married) rather than on order from Lothar of West Francia or Louis V.⁶³⁵

⁶²⁹ This succession is poorly attested; some have postulated an all-out war but this cannot be confirmed absolutely: de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 372-373.

⁶³⁰ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 49-50, 56; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 60.

⁶³¹ Magnou-Nortier insists that the Raymondins were committed to the independence of the Midi, speaking of their 'kingdoms', without ever seeking to usurp the royal title: Magnou-Nortier, *Société*, pp. 15-16

⁶³² Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, V.31, translated in Squatriti, *Complete Works*, p. 193.

⁶³³ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 53.

⁶³⁴ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 53.

⁶³⁵ M. Zimmermann, 'Western Francia: the southern principalities', in T. Reuter (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History: III, c.900-c.1024* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 420-455, at p. 447.

Conques and royal authority

On ground level, the monarchy was as good as absent from a similar period. Following the visit of Pepin I to the *pagus Rutenicus* in the last year of his life (838), no king appears to have set foot there until the pilgrimage of Robert the Pious in 1019–1020 or 1031.⁶³⁶ As far as Conques and other local institutions were concerned, royal authority had lost its immediate importance: no royal or imperial diploma survives for any Rouergat establishment during the tenth century – in fact, no royal donation or confirmation of privileges survives for the Languedoc between 987 and 1108.⁶³⁷ De Gournay claims that local scribes were reticent concerning (or progressively uninterested in) both the Robertian and late-Carolingian kings, equating to a veritable rejection of the Capetians at Conques and other Rouergat institutions, concluding that the true heirs of the *regnum Aquitanorum* from the mid-ninth century were the counts of Toulouse–Rouergue.⁶³⁸ This was a *mutation documentaire* that signified a real decline in the celebration of royal authority in the Conques scriptorium as elsewhere. Likewise, regardless of when the pilgrimage of Robert the Pious to various holy shrines including Conques took place, neither Bernard nor his continuators of the miracle-stories took the opportunity to mention the royal visit, although undoubtedly it would have been a matter of contemporary note.⁶³⁹ The weakening of royal authority was thus matched by an equivalent lack of interest by Conques itself, which seems to have made little attempt to continue relations with the crown, but rather revelled in its independence from it. Aside from the semi-legendary claims of the donation of a golden reliquary to Conques by *Karolus magnus* (ii.4), no living king featured in the miracle stories.

Despite the waning of royal importance there seems to have been relative stability at comital level, and the Rouergat title succeeded from father to son from Ermengaud onwards. **Table 7** The effective regencies of Bertha of Tuscany, wife of Raymond II and mother of Raymond III, and Richarde, her daughter-in-law and mother of Hugh, made this stability possible. These two countesses make appearances in Bernard of Angers’ miracle-stories, where there is a notable absence of the contemporary count Hugh, an absence that is even more striking given the appearance of his two comital antecedents Raymond II and III in Bernard’s stories and that

⁶³⁶ Helgaud de Fleury, *Vie de Robert le Pieux*, ed. and trans. by R. H. Bautier and G. Labory (Paris, 1965), pp. 126–127.

⁶³⁷ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, p. 153.

⁶³⁸ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 45–47, 212–213, 201–203. See also J. Dufour, ‘Obédience respective des Carolingiens et des Capétiens (fin Xe siècle–début XIe siècle)’, in X. Barral i Altet et al. (eds.), *Catalunya i França meridional a l’entorn de l’any mil* (Barcelona, 1991), pp. 21–44, at pp. 27 n. 71, 34 n. 139. A similar trend is noted by Ourliac and Magnou in the acts of *Lézat*, p. xx.

⁶³⁹ On Robert’s visit, which was remembered at Saint-Flour by the *Inventoria Capituli sancti Flori*, and its cartulary, see Lauranson-Rosaz, *L’Auvergne*, pp. 449–451.

of his later successor, Robert of the Auvergne, in the miracles from the second half of the eleventh century that survive in the London codex.⁶⁴⁰ Raymond III had already passed away and count Hugh was still very young when Bernard of Angers made his visits to Conques, a period in which his mother Richarde was acting as regent, which offers one explanation for his absence in the miracle-stories. It is more significant that Hugh appears in none of the stories written by the continuators in Books iii and iv. Was this a symptom of comital weakness during Hugh's period? The *mutationniste* reading is that the absence of the count and higher authority, coupled with the monastery's appeal to divine justice, argues as such.⁶⁴¹ Yet neither of Hugh's comital antecedents, nor his successor, received mention in the miracle-stories in their administrative or judicial roles either, except for the short-lived and despised plans of Raymond III to build a castle near Conques, discussed below. Rather they appear as donors. Raymond III's gift of saltworks at Pallas in Gothia, the silver saddle and twenty-one silver vessels is honoured in the miracle-stories (i.12, ii.4), and Count Robert received mention in relation to the donation of Tanavelle (L.3).⁶⁴² Likewise, two countesses appeared as the victims of Foy's donation-coercions: Countess Richarde in whose dreams Foy repeatedly appeared, demanding her golden clasp (ii.10) and Arsinde, wife of William (Taillefer), count of Toulouse, with whom Foy bargained, obliging the countess's plea for a male heir in return for the donation of Arsinde's arm bracelets (i.19).⁶⁴³

Perhaps one reason for this lack of interest in contemporary comital authority, and particularly that of Hugh, is that despite sporadic patronage Conques cannot be seen as a comital house. It was certainly not a Raymondin one, as were the other Rouergat houses of Vabres and perhaps Saint-Amans de Rodez.⁶⁴⁴ Whilst Raymond II had given generously to Conques in his testament of 961, many other religious establishments were also similarly endowed at the same time, and the only donation preserved for Conques from Raymond III is that of Pallas celebrated by the miracle-stories.⁶⁴⁵ Count Hugh's absence may, then, only demonstrate the fact that he had bestowed nothing on Conques during the time when the miracle-stories were being written. His first documented donation to Conques was the church of Trébosc in 1052, after Book iv was complete. This was an important donation purportedly from both Hugh and his mother, although Hugh is missing from the witness list which was headed up by *Ricardis comitisse quae carta ista scribere vel firmare rogavit*, and for which reason de Gournay suggests that

⁶⁴⁰ Raymond II: *LMSF*, i.12; Raymond III: i.12, ii.5; Bertha: i.28; Richarde: ii.10; Robert: L.3.

⁶⁴¹ For example, de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 214.

⁶⁴² See text to n. 649.

⁶⁴³ It is this miracle that is preserved re-written in the vernacular.

⁶⁴⁴ Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 46-50, 260, 365-369.

⁶⁴⁵ *Conques*, n. 17.

Hugh had died soon after the donation (and before the charter was drawn up).⁶⁴⁶ Indeed a twelfth-century Occitan charter remembers accurately the donation to Conques of the ‘nine manses and eight appendices that countess Richarde gave’ at Trébosc, with no mention of Hugh.⁶⁴⁷ Hugh’s absence in the miracle-stories may merely represent a lack of patronage from his direction, and as we will see, comital authority was not necessarily welcome unless it benefited the monastery’s patrimony. It may also be a symptom of the incomplete survival of miracle-stories written post-1050, since Hugh’s successor, Count Robert (II) of the Auvergne, makes a fleeting appearance in the supplementary miracles.

Son of William V, count of the Auvergne, Robert took the comital title whilst his father was still alive and succeeded to the county of the Rouergue and the Gévaudan on the death of his father-in-law, Count Hugh. Hugh’s daughter Bertha and Robert seem to have been married at some point before January 1051, when they appeared together as signatories of Hugh and Richarde’s donation of Trébosc, and marking the beginning of Robert’s presence on the Conques radar.⁶⁴⁸ He made his own donation of the church of Tanavelle in 1058 which he confirmed a year later and is recounted in L.3. He also played a supporting role in other grants in the cartulary.⁶⁴⁹ Yet Robert’s relationship with Conques went no further than this, unlike with other institutions, including La Chaise-Dieu. This Auvergnat abbey, set up in 1043 by founder-abbot Saint Robert of Turlande, received a charter of protection from Count Robert in 1067 (also celebrated in its hagiography) as well as papal confirmation of its possessions and privileges from Alexander III.⁶⁵⁰ Robert also had close relations with Chaise-Dieu’s sister convent Saint-André-de-Comps, where his daughter retired to *c.*1070 and which received generous donations from the count *c.*1077.⁶⁵¹ This was not a new relationship – Abbot Robert had signed the count’s confirmation of his grant of the church of Tanavelle to Conques in 1059.⁶⁵² Gaussin suggests that Chaise-Dieu had played a central role in the mediation between Raymond of Saint-Gilles and Count Robert over the succession of the county of Rouergue, since Robert renounced his rights to the county in 1079 at a time that coincided with a pilgrimage of Raymond of Saint-Gilles to the abbey as well as the submission of two

⁶⁴⁶ *Conques*, n. 8 (January 1051); de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 371.

⁶⁴⁷ *Conques*, n. 566.

⁶⁴⁸ *Conques*, n. 8.

⁶⁴⁹ *Conques*, nn. 45, 46 (1058), 523 (1059), 572 (1060), 14 (1062).

⁶⁵⁰ É. Baluze, *Histoire généalogique de la maison d’Auvergne* (Paris, 1708), vol. I, p. 51. Protection from Count Robert of the Auvergne and Raymond of Saint-Gilles, both received in 1067, was celebrated alongside the celestial protection of La Chaise-Dieu in the *Vita* of its founder Saint Robert of Turlande: L. d’Achery, Mabillon T. Ruinart (eds.), *Acta ss. Ord. s. Benedicti*, saec. VI, ii (Venice, 1738) pp. 189–231, in *Distinctione 2 libri Tripartiti* c. x, p. 223 and *Distinctione 3 libri Tripartiti* c. i, p. 226.

⁶⁵¹ Gaussin, *Chaise-Dieu*, pp. 131, 330, 552.

⁶⁵² *Conques*, n. 523.

Toulousain abbeys to Chaise-Dieu.⁶⁵³ The abbey of Sauxillanges had a similarly privileged relationship with Count Robert, who features in no less than fifteen of the acts preserved in its cartulary in various roles.⁶⁵⁴ In this context, Conques was clearly a marginal institution for Count Robert, just as the count himself was in Sainte Foy's miracle-stories.

Further comital characters in the miracle-stories featured in other non-donor roles, such as countess Bertha, widow of Raymond II, who had observed at the episcopal synod that Foy was 'joking' (i.28). Counts of other lands appeared as the kin of female characters, including Pons, count of Gévaudun as the husband of the wise Theotberga who had convinced Gerbert, whose sight was restored by Foy, to give himself over to her service (i.2);⁶⁵⁵ Raymond, son of Roger, count of Carcassonne, as the deceased husband of Garsinde and former claimant to the contested land at Pallas (i.12); and Richard, count of Rouen who had sent his sister Beatrice, wife of Ebles of Turenne, to the court of William, count of Poitiers, where Bernard of Angers was able to confirm a miracle in person that had occurred on Beatrice's land (ii.6). The only other mention of court duties occurs as an aside in iii.14 to explain the character Renfroi's presence in Toulouse, where he had a vision. Comital characters in the miracle-stories on the whole therefore give very little insight into the nature or extent of comital authority (or otherwise) in the Rouergue or in neighbouring lands, despite what we might know of their authority from other sources, but rather appear as donors, witnesses or anchor characters.

Tracing the extent of comital authority in eleventh-century Rouergue from the Conques sources, the richest for the county, is therefore rather difficult. It makes one rue even more the loss of a document known to but not copied by Antoine Bonal: a '*Breve* of the land and the honour of Raymond, count of the Rouergue and Bertha his mother, and of Hugh, count, and his mother Richarde'.⁶⁵⁶ Beyond the donations in the *Liber miraculorum*, the only distinct brush with comital authority concerned a then-deceased count, Raymond III of the Rouergue, and demonstrates that the count was an ambiguous authority figure from Conques' standpoint. Besides honouring his donations, Raymond was also as depicted an adversary of the monastery in miracle-story ii.5, which tells of his abortive plan to build a new castle in the place of an existing settlement on a hilltop overlooking Conques, an unpopular scheme that was interpreted to have caused his untimely death on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Conques perspective did not welcome the count's assertiveness. In fact, two other divine slayings

⁶⁵³ Gaussin, *Chaise-Dieu*, p. 131.

⁶⁵⁴ *Sauxillanges*, nn. 279, 321, 401, 476, 486, 571, 572, 593, 610, 622, 668, 680, 843, 853, 880.

⁶⁵⁵ On the narrative construction of female characters as advisors see *ASWF*, pp. 121-126. Pons was count of Gévaudun and Forez in 1011 when he appears with Theotberga in *Brioude*, n. 331.

⁶⁵⁶ Bousquet, p. 62 n. 54 citing Bonal, *Comté*, p. 38.

reported in the same miracle-story, of Bishop Bego of Clermont and Abbot Hugh, also relate to threats to Conques' independence and power. There is no suggestion that the count's attempts to control local lords would be unsuccessful or that he was too weak to have any impact. Nor was the fact that his plan went unrealized on his death necessarily a symptom of a failure of comital authority, since this could have been due to any number of factors, including his son's minority, and perhaps due to pressure from Conques, or more pressing matters elsewhere. In other areas such as Normandy, Aquitaine and the Toulousain counts were perhaps demonstrably more successful at building castles and controlling the construction of castles by others,⁶⁵⁷ but this does not mean there would have been no dissenting voices when they did so.

For de Gournay, Raymond III was particularly concerned to combat the disorders in his county, citing this castle-building plan as a move to re-establish his authority over local lords.⁶⁵⁸ This may well have been the case; the count may have felt that his physical presence in the northern Rouergue needed strengthening. Yet it seems that his authority was at least comital in nature, rather than simply by merit of having a castle there, since the text suggests there was at the very least a perception of 'due submission' to the count. Bernard of Angers tells us that he planned to build it *ut debitum sibi neglegentes reddere obsequium violentia sua subiugaret sueque dicioni submitteret*.⁶⁵⁹ So whilst there may have been a failure of 'obedience' or 'allegiance' in some quarters, Raymond III still held clout by virtue of his comital function. A similar hint that Rouergat comital authority still existed as a concept, at least, under Raymond's son Hugh comes in a charter from around 1035 in which a certain Riguald gives himself to Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert (Gellone, dép. Hérault) after introducing himself as 'living in the Rouergue, under the *potestate* of count Hugh and viscount Richard'.⁶⁶⁰ Yet Count Raymond was no sought-after higher authority for Conques in the miracle-stories; the interpretation of his death as a result of celestial displeasure makes this clear. Indeed, the miracle-story makes no mention of the possible benefits of such close comital presence, nor does it suggest the monastery felt any need for protection against other lay powers from the count. Instead, the potential proximity of the count to the monastery, which would have provided the count with a strong military and watchful presence, was a threat to the monastery's treasured autonomy.

⁶⁵⁷ Debord, 'Castellan revolution', p. 149; Beech, 'The lord/dependant (vassal) relationship', p. 20; Magnou-Nortier, *Société*, p. 16.

⁶⁵⁸ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 58-59. Bisson and Moore on the other hand see the castle as representative of comital/castellan subjection of peasants: Bisson, 'Feudal revolution', p. 16, n. 40; Moore, *First European Revolution*, p. 48.

⁶⁵⁹ As noted by Reuter, 'The 'feudal revolution': iii', p. 183.

⁶⁶⁰ *Rigualdus, in comitatu Rutenico degens sub potestate Ugoni comitis et Richardi vicecomitis*: Gellone, n. 85 (1031-60, dated to 1035 in *HGL*, V, 207, iii).

As Bernard explains, ‘if the will of heaven had allowed him to do what he planned, the status and right order of the monastery would have been thoroughly and grievously transformed’ (ii.5).

Despite sporadic donations from various counts of the Rouergue, Conques had never enjoyed a particularly privileged position vis-à-vis the comital house, nor did it have frequent experience of its courts. Nor is there any impression in the miracle-stories that there was any concerted attempt to establish such a relationship, although the individual comital donations and donors were celebrated, as any other would be. Whilst the monastery sought actively to distance itself from comital lordship in the instance of the castle-building near Conques, Bernard is careful to divert responsibility for Raymond’s death directly to God in this particular story, thereby circumventing the contradiction that Foy protected her faithful – including wealthy donors – and allowing for the gracious acceptance of any donations that may have been made to the monastery in his will (ii.5). It is necessary to stress again how inward looking the miracle-stories were, and how narrow their intentions could be, despite their seemingly broad outlook. The *miracula* are first and foremost a house-centred document, particularly so in the second and third books. Bernard’s presence at the court of William V reminds us that the circles he moved in were different to those of his continuators, providing one explanation for his greater tendency to include individuals of higher social rank in his works than his continuator. In the subsequent books, a more assertive Conques appears as a player amongst a wide range of local aristocrats. The vestiges of comital authority – weaker, it is true, than in earlier documents, but perceptible nevertheless – are subverted almost entirely in the Conques sources and the *miracula* in particular. This was because the institution was not as firmly connected to the comital house as others were and because its patrons came from a broader sector of society, many of whom who may have been improving their positions at the expense of the counts’. Indeed, the very democratization of patronage describes the wider ‘trickle-down’ effect that marked the weakening of central authority. It also shows how and why sources like those from Conques might have downplayed comital authority, and in particular failed to appeal to comital jurisdiction in its dispute processing.

16. JUSTICE AND DISPUTE PROCESSING

The failure of public justice, as embodied by the decline of comital courts, is defined by mutationnistes as one of the key features of political transformation during the early eleventh century. It is true that evidence for direct comital justice, in the form of the *mallus publicus* or comital *placitum*, is absent from the miracles and the cartulary in the same period, unsurprising

since there is no evidence for these in tenth-century Rouergue either. Only one of the six *placita* identified by de Gournay in that century took place in front of a *judex* and *vicecomes Rotenensis, Daruardus*, along with other judges in 914. Others were either vicarial courts (with judges in one case and *boni homines* mentioned for the last time in 964), or held in front of men with no explicit qualification of their authority to hear the case. Such was true for the only example recounted in the Conques cartulary, which took place *ante Bernardo, Gualtado et Hictore* in 958.⁶⁶¹ This is not to say comital justice disappeared entirely, Count Hugh oversaw at least one dispute from 1030.⁶⁶² Yet Conques' cartulary does not preserve any record of the monastery's involvement in any *placitum* under Hugh or any other count until 1078.⁶⁶³ In Conques' experience over both centuries, arbitrations came in all manner of forms, with agreements and compromises a common outcome; the cartulary uses phrases like *pacem vel placitum mutuuum atque pacificum* and *concordia et placitum*.⁶⁶⁴

Yet justice in one form or another is central to the miracle-stories: their scope dictated as such. Wrongdoings (however Conques-centred) were punished, and exemplary behaviour rewarded. For de Gournay, it is a simple case that '[l]a justice divine s'est substituée à une justice publique déficiente'.⁶⁶⁵ Yet, just as at Bobbio, divine justice operated alongside more earthly judicial processes, which it complemented fully. As we have seen, a monastery could use measures including taking the reliquary statue in procession to influence a property dispute or to confirm legal possession of land. More so than the monks of Bobbio, who seem to have restricted themselves to one procession alone, the monks of Conques were apparently in a frequent habit of travelling with Sainte Foy's relics. They did this both in times of crises like famine or a more general 'calamity', and to confirm new donations and to reconfirm those donations that were contested, as the miracles of Bernard of Angers and his continuators tell us. Bernard first writes about the 'deeply rooted practice and firmly established custom that, if land given to Sainte Foy is unjustly appropriated by a usurper for any reason, the reliquary of the holy virgin is carried out to that land as a witness in regaining the right to her property' (*recipiendi iuris testimonium*).⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶¹ Conques, n. 293. De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 135-138.

⁶⁶² Bonal, *Histoire des évêques de Rodez*, I, pp. 577-578; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 208.

⁶⁶³ Conques, n. 20.

⁶⁶⁴ Conques, nn. 18, 31.

⁶⁶⁵ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 216-217.

⁶⁶⁶ *LMSF*, ii.4. Processions in times of general crisis: *LMSF*, i.14; i.15; for land (re)clamation: *LMSF*, i.11; i.12; i.13; ii.4; iii.20; L.3. See also Töpfer, 'The cult of relics', p. 55 and Ashley and Sheingorn, 'Sainte Foy on the loose', pp. 60-61. The miracles also refer to one procession within the church to the chapel of Saint Michael, on his feast day: *LMSF*, ii.1.

Just as at Bobbio, this move employed Foy's relics as an 'interested' legal tool. Likewise this type of relic justice relied both on the legal qualities of relics and the invocation of public support. Whilst the hagiographers' emphases on the legitimacy of these processional rites, claimed by virtue of their established, time-hallowed nature, prompt suspicion – we might extrapolate by their protests that it was actually a relatively new strategy for the area, and/or that such practices had come under fire from critics – they were also a judicial extension of earlier innovations in the presentation of the relics. At Conques and other places in the Midi this move of relics into the public arena was a mid-tenth-century development. The famous *maiestas* of Sainte Foy, believed to contain a fragment of her skull, dates to this period and possibly owed its creation to Abbot Stephen, also Bishop of Clermont (937–984). Stephen had commissioned a gilded statue of the Virgin Mary for his new cathedral, which he had placed on at the top of a marble column behind the altar, on full view.⁶⁶⁷ By the time Bernard had arrived in the south, he describes the construction of such reliquaries as 'an established usage and ancient custom in the whole country of Auvergne, the Rouergue and the Toulousain as well as in the surrounding areas'.⁶⁶⁸ The size and rich decoration of the new reliquaries indicate that both visibility and portability were important. A golden casket (similar to, if more richly decorated than, the chest that contained the relics of Columbanus) contained the bones of Sainte Foy and was carried along with the *maiestas* in procession. The statue has attracted more attention from modern historians just as it did from her hagiographers, particularly Bernard of Angers, who at first struggled to accept the reliquary-statue as anything other than an idol.⁶⁶⁹ This innovation in the presentation of relics in the Midi was a permanent development that saw relics liberated from their tombs forever and moved into more accessible places. The reliquary of Sainte Foy was kept in the church rather than the crypt, albeit behind lock and key, so that it could be seen by visiting pilgrims.⁶⁷⁰ This was quite different to the situation at Bobbio where, on return from the translation to Pavia, the relics of Columbanus were replaced in his tomb.⁶⁷¹ Complementary to the 'itinerant lordship' of travelling processions were the sovereign-like qualities of reliquary statues like Sainte Foy's. A martyr's crown might be seen as a royal crown, after all, and the term *maiestas* underlines the conceptualization further.⁶⁷² They were thus the perfect visual conduit to publicize the notion

⁶⁶⁷ Remensnyder, 'Un problème', pp. 362–364.

⁶⁶⁸ *LMSF*, i.13.

⁶⁶⁹ Remensnyder, 'Un problème', pp. 358–362; Hubert and Hubert, 'Piété chrétienne', pp. 235–237.

⁶⁷⁰ The portability of reliquaries is linked to a wider move towards increased accessibility of saints' relics: C. W. Solt, 'Romanesque French reliquaries', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 9 (1987), pp. 167–222, especially at p. 188.

⁶⁷¹ *MSC*, xxviii.

⁶⁷² Bozóky, 'Voyage de reliques', p. 272; Hubert and Hubert, 'Piété chrétienne', p. 262; Vanderputten, 'Itinerant lordship'.

that saintly patrons were the spiritual and legal lords of their institution and its lands, and represent a convergence of lordship and justice.

Relic-justice was inseparable from ‘rational’ justice, as it always had been, and the miracle-stories represent all such aspects. Besides the more innovative practices the *Liber miraculorum* includes two cases of the swearing of oaths on relics. In one Bernard of Angers himself tells how he swore a vow on a relic in the hand of a deacon (ii.13) and the first continuator mentions that Roger de Tosny had sworn on a relic in a bishop's hands (iii.1). It is not surprising that the work also contains evidence for more traditional judicial processes too, albeit with a divine slant. One particular miracle-story (i.12) has attracted attention from historians on both sides of the historiographical debate, since it includes one of the most detailed passages on a formal dispute settlement, and has been studied in detail by Stephen White.⁶⁷³ The context was a dispute hearing held in front of an authority – in this case one Bernard, presumably Bernard the Hairy (of Anduze), who was also husband of the plaintiff Garsinde.⁶⁷⁴ The fact that Bernard's wife was a claimant may have appeared anomalous (although Bernard of Angers gives no indication that this was considered unfair) if we had not already seen the marquis Oberto overseeing the *placitum* in 972 at Bobbio. Cheyette has suggested that an individual might be eligible to rule on a dispute because he was a local lord who was capable of persuading the disputants to accept his judgement, either because he was a friend, relative or frequent associate,⁶⁷⁵ and whilst we know little of Bernard of Anduze, he certainly owned land bordering on Pallas.⁶⁷⁶ Whether it was his land ownership, his relationship to Garsinde, or an invested or inherited authority which qualified him to rule on this case remains hidden, since Bernard of Angers was little interested in such matters. In any case, it does appear that certain rituals were obeyed, and that the proceedings followed a structure, despite the apparently chaotic proceedings that Bernard of Angers describes, and Bernard of Anduze appears to make a firm decision in favour of the monks. The monks present the ruling as a victory – but this ‘straight win’ was not without a counter-payment, and this marchesal *placitum* resulted in a compromise as many others.

Although the miracle-story employs narrative devices to construct meaning, elements of the

⁶⁷³ White, ‘Garsinde v. Sainte Foy’. For the traditional *mutationniste* perspective see de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 207–208. The original donation by Raymond III is testified by the original document in the Archives départementales at Toulouse, as well as in the cartulary: Archives départementales Haute Garonne, 102 H 82 bis, edited in C. Douais, ‘Une charte originale de Conques des premières années du onzième siècle’, *AM*, 5 (1893) pp. 487–493; *Conques*, n. 17.

⁶⁷⁴ *Conques*, n. 18; White, ‘Garsinde v. Sainte Foy’, p. 176.

⁶⁷⁵ Cheyette, ‘*Suum cuique tribuere*’, pp. 292–293.

⁶⁷⁶ As Raymond III's bequest to Conques details, White, ‘Garsinde v Conques’ p. 177.

dispute process also correspond with similar judicial proceedings preserved in other documents, as White has shown, and indeed the arbitration at Pallas represented in the miracle-stories was in fact only one episode in a long-running contestation over rights and probably borders in that place, which also involved Senegund.⁶⁷⁷ In Bernard's account, claimants and witnesses represent each side, and both are given the opportunity to present their case. The text provides no information on the common types of proofs or legal theory used at this stage of proceedings, although this does not necessarily support Bonnassie's claim that 'the law was no longer invoked',⁶⁷⁸ especially as in the related quitclaim of Senegund and Richard, written proofs were requested, if not provided.⁶⁷⁹ Rather, White shows that the exclusion of any legal detail fits into a wider narrative strategy, 'forcing the reader to dismiss the possibility that Garsinde might have had a plausible grievance'.⁶⁸⁰ Whilst a judicial procedure similar to that seen in charter-narratives of the same period was carried out in Bernard's miracle-narrative, he did not dwell on this, and we cannot assume that the paucity of references to normative judicial processes in the *miracula*, along with their glut of appeals to divine legitimacy, are evidence for a complete failing of the judicial system. It shows only that in hagiographical format, the monks preferred to emphasise the protection offered by (and vengeful qualities of) their saint, a phenomenon confirmed by examination of the role of violence in the miracles, discussed below.

The monastery as a centre of justice

The case at Pallas demonstrates the existence of capable normative dispute-processing systems even if they were not operated in the name of the king or his agents, as had also been the case in the tenth century. The operation of justice was fluid, but not arbitrary. In this environment, local sources of authority presented themselves. Sometimes this took on a secular form; on other occasions monasteries might fulfil the mediatory role, for which we find examples in the miracle-stories.⁶⁸¹ Two feuding warriors had sought recourse at Conques after one had taken the other prisoner and the latter had escaped through the saint's intercession. Going to her shrine, 'you could see both Hadimars (for they each had that name) arguing before the holy

⁶⁷⁷ White, 'Garsinde v Conques', pp. 176-177.

⁶⁷⁸ Bonnassie, 'From the Rhône to Galicia', p. 118.

⁶⁷⁹ *Conques*, n. 18. Written proofs were not cited in the brief Rouergat sources even in the tenth century: de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 137, thus in the inverse of the usual trend written proofs in Rouergat litigation 'appear' in the eleventh century, although this must be a consequence of the fuller source material described by the *mutation documentaire*.

⁶⁸⁰ White, 'Garsinde v Conques', pp. 171-174, 175.

⁶⁸¹ White, 'Feuding and peace-making in the Touraine around the year 1100', *Feuding and Peace-Making*, pp. 208-209.

image as if it were a tribunal ... But the senior monks of the monastery interceded, prescribed the legal reparation for a man's death, and restored harmony between them.⁶⁸² In this case, it is notably the saint to whom the two Hadimars first appealed, although it is the monks who arbitrated, and seemingly in accordance with legal custom based on accepted values of reparation.⁶⁸³

A similar process is acknowledged in the first unique miracle in the Conques manuscript, of which only the latter part is preserved. It begins abruptly in the middle of a tale of a man who had been resuscitated, and it is a shame that the first part of the miracle is lost, which may have given personal information by which to identify him. He was no innocent man. Much of the story is told from his perspective, unusually, as he recounts the vision that he had had in his deathly state, and the reason for his resuscitation. The hagiographer relates his words, directed to God and to the surrounding crowd:

The day before yesterday I carried off a heifer that belonged to one of [Sainte Foy's] peasants. She took up his case and brought a charge of accusation against me. No one argued on my behalf. And when she saw that I was losing my case she threw in the matter of the money that I unjustly stole from the relatives of the dead man. This nearly dispatched me to Tartarean exile. Through the intervention of [the archangel Michael and the apostle Peter] I barely made it back here where you see me now, where my purpose is to give satisfaction for the harm I caused and the injuries suffered through my misdeeds.

After recounting his vision, repenting for his sins and telling others to do the same, he then

surrendered part of his inherited property to the holy virgin to be held by her forever. He did this to gain her pardon for his crimes and his friends served as witnesses to guarantee that it would be done. In reparation for the cruel death of the peasant and the ransom he unjustly collected from the man's relatives, he obeyed the priests' decrees that recompense should be made of an agreed-on portion of his own wealth. In this way he would be freed from the lingering stain of his crimes and could avoid the tortures that he would otherwise suffer. And ... after he received the grace of his absolution ... his liberated soul soon soared into the upper air.⁶⁸⁴

The vision invokes an image of a celestial court, in which Sainte Foy acted as the plaintiff. She argued for the crimes committed against her – it took other merciful saints to secure him a pardon – and reminded the readers of ever-present divine justice in which the saints held a privileged position. On the other hand the earthly arrangements, made *iuxta sacerdotum decreta* (just as the priests decreed), describe elements of normative processes familiar to us through surviving charter evidence – the guarantees of relatives, a system for calculating just reparation

⁶⁸² *LMSF*, i.30.

⁶⁸³ On talionic systems in medieval Iceland and England and establishing the value of human life, see W. I. Miller, *Eye for an Eye* (Cambridge, 2006). On this miracle and the mediation of peace in the context of prisoner liberations, see D. Barthélemy, 'Saint Géraud, Sainte Foy et la chevalerie d'Aquitaine', in his *Chevaliers et miracles: la violence et le sacré dans la société féodale*, (Paris, 2004), pp. 45-113, at pp. 98-99; Barthélemy, 'Sainte Foy', pp. 94-96.

⁶⁸⁴ *LMSF*, C.1.

for the crime, donation to the church to secure salvation, and so on. In a character with parallels to the Repentant Criminal, the hagiographer therefore personifies the need for repentance and reparation for salvation – the inseparability of divine and earthly justice. We also see the ecclesiastical arbitrators capable of decreeing and enforcing the reparations. In both these miracles, the basic legal question of the misdemeanours and their appropriate compensation are presented as ‘givens’ that accorded to accepted principals. The monks’ role in pronouncing and securing these reparations is not portrayed as out of the ordinary or illegitimate and we must not underestimate the extent to which opportunism and innovation played a role in the shifting of legal power. The opportunity may have been symptomatic of a decrease in comital judicial structures. For Conques however, which seems to have had few dealings with comital justice in either the tenth or eleventh centuries, with documents too sparse before then to draw any conclusions from their silence, justice was never absent and always flexible. This presented openings for the monastery to offer its own services. It may be in this context that the altar became a renewed focal point for elements of legal processes, most likely by virtue of the relics contained within it, demonstrated by the appearance in Conques’ eleventh-century charters of sanction clauses – in the case of a donation being rescinded or challenged – to be given *super altare*.⁶⁸⁵ It reminds us how secular and ecclesiastical lords competed for other forms of authority (and its profits) as well as land. The new re-alignment of the monastery and its saint as judicial entities in their own right – a role publicised through the *miracula* – bolstered the monastery’s ability to make its own justice both in cases that concerned it and those that did not, a process that we see again in the miracles’ portrayal of violence and the punishment miracles.

17. VIOLENCE

Pierre Bonnassie described the Book of Miracles as providing ‘a very full picture of all the various types of violence practised at that period, [which] makes it possible to establish a veritable typology of exactions by nobles in the eleventh century’, followed by de Gournay.⁶⁸⁶ Bonnassie read the Miracles of Sainte Foy in the same vein as the now outdated view of the

⁶⁸⁵ *Conques*, nn. 9, 33, 50, 60, 62, 129, 130, 138, 139, 147, 167, 190, 215, 217, 219, 225, 233, 247, 255, 273, 320, 351, 426, 455, 562. A tenth-century charter notes that a quitclaim was made *ante cornu altaris*: *Conques*, n. 293 and two twelfth-century documents relate the corroboration of gifts by donors by laying hands and swearing oaths on the altar: *Conques*, nn. 485, 506. The altar-sanction clause seems to have been limited to the eleventh century. Altars containing relics were also the site of legal transactions in the tenth- and eleventh-century manumissions performed ‘upon Saint Petrock’s altar’ in Cornwall: O. Padel, *Slavery in Saxon Cornwall: The Bodmin Manumissions* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 6-7.

⁶⁸⁶ Bonnassie, ‘From the Rhône to Galicia’, p. 119; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 172-175, who relies almost exclusively on the *LMSF* for his section on ‘the typology of violence’.

Peace of God, as a reaction against castle-based violence by an ‘anti-noble clerical party’ that was in tune with the ‘peasantry’, who he sees as the prime victims of violence.⁶⁸⁷ This is a misleading characterization of the text, however, as Dominique Barthélemy, Stephen White and Warren Brown have shown.⁶⁸⁸ They emphasize in different ways the prevalence of ‘horizontal’ violence, that is to say inter-aristocratic feuding, in the Miracles, underlining that violence (real and symbolic) could be a normative political and legal act and a means through which social, political and legal relationships were negotiated and formed, particularly between the monastery and local aristocrats. Dominique Barthélemy refers to the privileged and exceptional relationship between Foy and the *faidale* (feuding) nobility.⁶⁸⁹ By implication the interaction with this same social group in matters of vengeance and feud denotes an ability to communicate directly with them, and required a carefully cultivated popularity amongst them. Statistical analysis of the punishment and reward miracles confirms their findings, and demonstrates how wider cultic developments in the legal qualities of saints’ relics intersected with the *miracula* so that Conques could both court and manipulate the local aristocracy.

‘Horizontal’ violence

The miracles contribute much about inter-aristocratic feud. Violence exchanged between aristocrats is the most prevalent form in the miracle-stories because Sainte Foy and her monastery participated fully in the ‘aristocratic warring culture’ that Stephen White has described.⁶⁹⁰ This monastic ‘warring culture’ was not restricted to textual conflict alone since there are plenty of examples in which monastic lords acted similarly or in league with their lay counterparts, such as the contracts with neighbouring lords to protect monastic land that lay at some distance and during the mid-tenth century even the presence of an on-site ‘warrior-monk’ in the form of the celebrated Gimon.⁶⁹¹ There was clearly an ongoing need to protect monastic land with armed retainers, although in the eleventh-century (perhaps in response to the concerns voiced at Charroux about armed clergy) such a function seems to have been provided by external allies instead of an internal appointment, and it took a more intermittent form such as the loan of mounted warriors to chaperone the monks to a legal dispute (i.12) or

⁶⁸⁷ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 147; also *AWSF*, pp. 121–123.

⁶⁸⁸ Barthélemy, ‘Sainte Foy’; D. Barthélemy, ‘Antichrist et blasphémateur’, *Médiévales*, 37 (1999), pp. 57–70; Barthélemy, *Chevaliers et miracles*, esp. ‘Saint Géraud, Sainte Foy’; Barthélemy, ‘Un jeu’; White, ‘Garsinde v. Sainte Foy’. See also Brown, *Violence*, pp. 111–116, who unfortunately does not utilise Barthélemy and White’s publications on this subject. This section is indebted to their work.

⁶⁸⁹ Barthélemy, ‘Un jeu’, p. 388; Barthélemy, ‘Sainte Foy’, esp. pp. 86–106.

⁶⁹⁰ White, ‘Garsinde v Conques’, pp. 180–181.

⁶⁹¹ *LMSF*, i.12, i.26; iii.10.

the various contracts that the monastery had with castle lords as we will see.⁶⁹² Elsewhere in the miracle-stories clerics (although never monks) were also the perpetrators of violence.⁶⁹³ White has also shown how it is difficult to distinguish 'seigneurial violence' from other forms of the same since monastic rhetoric actively participated in the creation of this 'warring culture' helping to legitimate and limit violence, and Barthélemy finds evidence for 'official vengeance' in the miracles of Sainte Foy.⁶⁹⁴ This question of legitimacy is central, since violence *per se* is never denounced in the miracles.

A particularly interesting diatribe by Bernard of Angers seems to carry many elements central to the *mutationniste* perspective of illegitimate violence, rapacity and a collapse of public order. Bernard presents a miracle that

should thoroughly frighten those who violently steal (*violenter diripiunt*) goods from God's holy Church, or those who appropriate, as if it were legally their own, property that the saints have inherited, and unjustly claim the rents and services due its owners... Blinded by their greed, they dare to seize what rightfully belongs to the Church; in so doing, not only do they show no respect for officials of the ministry, but they sometimes even assault them with insolent abuse and beatings. Sometimes they murder them. I have seen canons, or even monks and abbots, driven out of their positions, deprived of their goods, and slaughtered. I have seen bishops, some condemned by being outlawed, some driven from their episcopal sees without cause, others slaughtered by the sword and even burned to death in cruel flames by Christians for defending the rights of the Church.⁶⁹⁵

The failure either to mention the social status of these despoilers or to appeal to any failing secular authority argues against reading this miracle as direct evidence for seigneurial anarchy. Furthermore, the passage demonstrates strikingly the inseparability of disputes over land and personal violence in the mind of the author, which the rest of the miracle-stories confirm. Bernard seamlessly connects his accusations of land 'theft', including the appropriation of proprietary rights to 'rents and services', to accounts of personal bodily attacks on clerics. As Barthélemy has pointed out, he may be referring to Abbo of Fleury's demise in 1004, or Bishop Stephen III of Clermont's in 1013, both of which in any case had political dimensions that were much wider than arbitrary seigneurial violence.⁶⁹⁶ Nearer to Bernard's own lands and

⁶⁹² Presumably loaned *militēs* accompanied the monks on other occasions too, including the processions of the reliquaries to land claims. On one occasion we are told a *miles* had frequently loaned Sainte-Foy a horse to carry the reliquary-stature in processions, although there is no mention of any armed chaperone here (iii.12). The silence of the miracle-stories on the presence of armed retainers here and elsewhere was perhaps a function of the message that Foy was the only protector of her lands and her *familia*. My thanks to Claire Taylor for raising this point.

⁶⁹³ *LMSF*, i.1 (the priest Gerald who had inflicted Guibert the Illuminated's eye injury); ii.5 (the bishop-abbot Bego), ii.6 (Gozbert 'a cleric only in name; by employment he was a secular fighting man' who imprisons some pilgrims); iii.24 (the priest Hadimar who imprisoned the *miles* Regimbald). See also de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 188. Inter-clerical accusations are discussed in Brown, *Violence*, pp. 108, 112.

⁶⁹⁴ Barthélemy, 'Saint Géraud, Sainte Foy', pp. 95-96.

⁶⁹⁵ *LMSF*, i.11; I have changed Sheingorn's 'violently slaughtered' to simply 'slaughtered' for *morte peremptos*.

⁶⁹⁶ Barthélemy, 'Anti-Christ et blasphémateur', p. 69.

perhaps also in the forefront of his mind were other Church scandals of that Abbo himself had been drawn into, including the deposition of Archbishop Arnulf of Reims by Hugh Capet (991), or the monkish challenges against their abbots as at Marmoutier (where abbot Bernier was made to undergo a trial by ordeal) or two separate incidents in 1004 where the communities at Saint-Mesmin-de-Micy and Saint-Père-de-Chartres tried to have their abbots, Robert and Magenard, deposed.⁶⁹⁷ Yet these were not at the hands of seigneurial laymen, or violence, either. In fact, Bernard of Angers' introduction is curious since he goes on to recount the demise of an unnamed *miles* of Hildegare of Penne, who had publicly dared to oppose Conques' assertion of its rights to the contested land by taking the statue of Sainte Foy there. Bernard finishes off his tale with the crux of the message: 'Hear, you plunderers and ravagers of Christian property, how inevitable are the scourges and just judgments of God.' The issue here was land, not anti-clerical brutality; and whilst accusations of attacks on clerics may well have been well founded for some isolated cases across Francia, it was clearly not a prevalent concern for the authors of the miracle-stories. Bernard's diatribe aside, there are no specific examples of clergy being killed or wounded by *militēs* (or anyone else) in the miracle-stories, except the rare cases of threat discussed below. What might be portrayed as illegitimate violence was thus often commonly related to disputes over land.

The rhetorical creation of legitimacy and illegitimacy is shaped most evidently by the symbolic violence of the miracles themselves, both by describing the sins that would invoke Sainte Foy's retribution and by retribution in the form of violent deaths, accidents and the infliction of painful maladies. All but one of the punishments meted out were physical injury or death – the exception was one in which social demise was interpreted as the punishment. The belligerent Hector had committed many sins including starting a fight on Sainte Foy's feast day, resulting in damage to the reliquary-statue. The hagiographer interprets that he was punished by the disgrace of being found out committing adultery, to be rejected by his wife and children and living the rest of his life as a fugitive (iv.16). Siger of Conques, guilty of crimes against the patrimony of the monks was killed by divine vengeance, but also suffered further shame with the demise of the rest of his bloodline and his castle. All four of his sons died without heirs, and later his three daughters. One of these had suffered disgrace in rejection by her husband first, and another 'took up with a serf, thereby losing her rank' and her right to inherit. Furthermore, their castle fell down in a storm (iii.17). As is traditional for the genre, the majority of miracles in Sainte Foy's collection are positive intercessions, accounting for 73% of the 155 miraculous events reported across all miracle-stories. At 27%, 'negative' or punitive

⁶⁹⁷ Dachowski, *First Among Abbots*, pp. 92-122, 204-210, 213-217.

miracles account for more than twice the average of 12.6% indicated by Sigal's large survey.⁶⁹⁸ Two thirds of punishment miracles were attracted by temporal sins, with only a third for religious sins such as greed, lust and blasphemies (more than half of which were specifically aimed at Sainte Foy). **Table 3** The concept of monastic 'weaponry' is particularly apt, then, for the Sainte Foy collection. It was an armoury that was used mainly in defence of Sainte Foy and her direct dependents: whilst positive miracles could be prayed for and attract the help of the saint in ways that might consequently scupper another's plans, such as the prisoners who escaped from their captors, punishment miracles could not be summoned against a third party.⁶⁹⁹ Sainte Foy was not a mercenary, in this sense.

As we have seen, Bernard's penchant for punishment miracles in his first Book was unusual for the genre and the weighting may have much to do with Bernard's literary ego and his parody of saints' cults, since there seems to have been a correction to this balance by his subsequent miracles that reach us as Book ii, as well as the anonymous continuators', although the overall average still remained high. Such authorial choice means we cannot use this higher proportion of punishment miracles to presume that there were a higher proportion of sins to punish in the world. Punishment miracles directly related to monastic social politics: the geographical spread of locations that appear in the miracles reaches to Normandy, Italy, Catalonia, southern Spain and beyond, to the Holy Land. **Map 3** The sphere in which the punishment miracles took place, however, is significantly smaller, limited to the area around Conques. **Map 4; 5** We might see this as representative of the difference between cultic and socio-political spheres of the monastery, both of which extended beyond the county of the Rouergue.

Within the category of punitive miracles, those miracles involving temporal (including violent) sins should be viewed as part of the 'vengeance script' that Stephen White discusses and can be called 'vengeance miracles'.⁷⁰⁰ Indeed, two of Bernard's miracles refer to *celesti vindicta* in their titles (i.6, i.13). **Table 3** Real or threatened violence against the monks of Conques or her peasants is the direct cause of 19 out of the 48 punitive miracles (40%), of which ten in some way relate to named castles and with Book iii exhibiting the greatest concern with violent sins.⁷⁰¹ Although we will look more closely at castles later, it is worth mentioning that only in

⁶⁹⁸ Sigal, *L'homme*, pp. 290-291. Here I am concerned with those who are the direct victims of a harmful miracle.

⁶⁹⁹ Only on one occasion was this implied, when a pilgrim prisoner was released by his captor after the latter was struck with a dreadful malady – this is the only example amongst the prisoner-liberations where the evasion was aided by injury to the captor: *LMSF*, iii.24.

⁷⁰⁰ White, 'Garsinde v Sainte Foy', p. 172.

⁷⁰¹ These statistics support Dominique Barthélemy's observation that Book iii is particularly interested in holy vengeance, especially 'indirect' hostilities against the saint – i.e. pillages of her peasants, monks insulted: Barthélemy, 'Saint Géraud, Sainte Foy', pp. 80-81; 'Sainte Foy', pp. 72, 78, 103.

two of the punishment miracles is castle-based violence explicit. In one Bernard the Hairy was besieging the surrounding area from his castle of Loupian near Pallas (iii.21). In another Foy made use of the fact that the Abbot Hugh, nephew of Bego, was being held captive for ransom in Gourdon (Lot) by his cousin, which Bego intended to pay with treasures pilfered from Conques, and struck him down whilst there (ii.5). In the other eight cases castles were named as the origin of a character, where the hagiographers do not always make a direct link between power deriving from castles and consequent violent activities. Bodily attacks or threat of attack were committed by men who had castle connections on three occasions, although their castles were not specifically used to carry out such violence (i.5, iii.10, iii.17). Hector, the ‘barbarous’ master of Belfort (Aveyron), was disgraced and punished after copulating, fighting and causing damage to the reliquary-statue on Foy’s feast day (iv.16). We cannot draw a firm line between castle-based violence and punitive miracles; these examples related more generally the bad behaviour of *some* people who had castle connections. Just as frequently, as we will see, those with castle connections were the beneficiaries of positive miracles.

Despite the long diatribe from Bernard of Angers about the monks and clerics that he had seen attacked, threatened violence towards individual monks only loosely formed the subject of three punishment miracles. The first we should read as a personal feud, when a recently-tonsured monk at Conques was pursued by an enemy from his previous secular life (i.5). The second was the equivalent to a call to duel by the disgruntled Pons whose party had just lost out at the dispute settlement at Pallas (i.12), and the third, although framed as a personal attack against the monk-guardian of Molompize (Cantal), was part of a wider feud that involved the land that this guardian protected (iii.10) as we will see. Just as in Bernard of Angers’ tirade, all of the rest of the punishments for real or threatened violence related directly to land and property.⁷⁰² Property stolen or damaged during feud underpins other stories, such as the ‘violent snatching’ (*violenter auferret*) of straw belonging to a peasant whilst taking shelter in Foy’s church at Pallas during a conflict, or some geese from one of her villagers during an attack on Pierrefiche (Cantal). Other allegations of bodily attacks on peasants at Belfort and Belmont (Lot) and other peasant dependants at Conques itself should be perceived similarly, as events in wider conflicts that pitted Sainte Foy and Conques against other local land-owning lords, since violence against peasants could form part of the process of determining rights over peasants between monastic and lay lords, or more generally form part the one-upmanship of feuding processes.⁷⁰³

⁷⁰² The one exception being Hadimar, captor of Regimbald, above n. 668. On punishments for attacks on people and land, also see Sigal, ‘Un aspect’, pp. 41–42.

⁷⁰³ White, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’’, p. 21; Dominique Barthélemy calls it ‘indirect vengeance’: ‘Sainte Foy’, pp.

Sometimes the miracle-stories imply that attacks were arbitrary, simply through the lack of context that the hagiographers provide, like those who invaded the monastic land during Gimon the warrior-monk's lifetime (i.26), or the attack on the monk-guardian of one of Sainte-Foy's properties at Molompize (iii.10). In other cases however, the context shows that similar events, equally characterized using the terminology of violence, were in fact framed in wider, legitimate attempts to claim rights to land, such as the proposition of duel by a young warrior named Pons at Pallas: rare, but not unheard of, in judicial procedures.⁷⁰⁴ The punitive miracle-story played a particular role in this: within its 'vengeance script', it carried a threat of violence that was an important part of the dispute process, as valid as the violence of the ordeal as well as the rest of the oral and written trappings of the procedure.⁷⁰⁵ The dispute over Pallas partially hinged on the status of donated land to the monastery, just as was the case in other miracle-stories where the 'violent usurpers' were heirs claiming rightful ownership.⁷⁰⁶ These must be situated in the context of the shifts in clerical attitudes towards donated land and the growing insistence of monastic houses on the irrevocability of gifted property. Contests and their public rebuttals formed part of attempts to initiate or perpetuate the social dialogue that was caused by the giving and receiving of lands.

One example is clearer than most that vengeance miracles played an important role in negotiating and establishing relationships, since it follows the narrative through from conflict to reconciliation. In iii.10 an *oppido princeps* called Robert had been the perpetrator of an attack on the prior-guardian of Molompize, a *viculus* of Foy's which lay near Robert's castle of Aurouze in the Cantal (Auvergne), at some distance from Conques. Struck blind by Sainte Foy in retaliation, he was soon miraculously healed. Following a penitential pilgrimage to the monastery good relations were restored, resulting in the installation of Robert as the protector of the church at Molompize. Robert's attack, punishment and subsequent healing surely represent a negotiation over rights. Whilst the abbey had had a priory at Molompize since 823, the *vicaria* of the villa of Molompize had been sold to Conques for 160 *sous* a decade or two earlier than the miracle-story's redaction, between 1015 and 1020, by a forerunner of Robert named Hector.⁷⁰⁷ Hector's connection is established by his reservation within the sale of the rights to collect the albergue and corvée for the castle of Aurouze. It is plausible that Hector

83-85. These examples at *LMSF*, iii.21, iii.13, iii.17, iv.16, C.4. See also the partial C.1 discussed above.

⁷⁰⁴ White, 'Garsinde v Conques', p. 179. One example from the local area comes in a quercinois record from 962: *Beaulieu*, n. 47.

⁷⁰⁵ White, 'Garsinde v. Sainte Foy', pp. 175-177.

⁷⁰⁶ *LMSF*, C.2; also Barthélemy, 'Antichrist et blasphémateur', p. 61.

⁷⁰⁷ *Conques*, nn. 460, 394 (de Gournay's dating).

was Robert's father; whilst there is no mention of children in the act itself (as a sale, there was no clause relating to heirs), the second signatory on the charter is one *Rodbertus*, following *Stephanus*, likely the eldest son, named after Hector's father who is mentioned at the start of the text. It may not be a coincidence that a later prior at Molompize bore a name from the Aurouze line.⁷⁰⁸ In which case, could it be that Robert was contesting a new prior that the monks had put in at Molompize on the death of his father? Did he feel he had a right to a say in the appointment following his father's sale and its proximity to his castle? The miracle-story tells us that the outcome of the conflict was the formal placement of Robert back in a relationship of symbiosis with the monastery and its priory, as its defender.

With good relations restored neither Conques' thriving hold over Molompize and surrounding areas, nor its relations with the men of Aurouze, seem to have waned in subsequent decades.⁷⁰⁹ Why, then, did the monk-continuator write down this miracle-story? Were the monks of Conques concerned that Robert would renege on his protective role over their church and threaten it again? Instead, it might be better to think not only that the written miracle-story preserved for posterity the agreement, but also sanctified it, and, furthermore, advertised the relationship between the two parties. It is easy to see that to be immortalized in one of Sainte Foy's miracles, not to mention receiving public airing at every oral broadcast of the miracle-story, must have been an honour for local dignitaries – if nothing else it recognized their connection to the monastery. Similarly at Cluny, Barbara Rosenwein noted that 'Cluny's so-called enemies were people with whom its monks had a history of contacts, both good and bad; when they became Cluny's enemies, it was usually as lapsed donors rather than evil outsiders.'⁷¹⁰

Just as interesting as the sins that were punished by divine retribution are those that were not, and there were many violent acts that were not the focal point of punishment miracles, seemingly because they were examples of violence that were tolerable or normalized, if not explicitly condoned. Amongst other examples, it was not an attack on peasant huts that was the downfall of one of the men of a certain Amblard, but rather the 'illegitimate' theft of two geese from a poultry shed (iii.13). It was illegitimate not because it was wrong to attack the peasants' property (after all, this was accepted part of feuding practices), but because of gluttony, and he

⁷⁰⁸ Hector, in *Conques*, n. 525.

⁷⁰⁹ Barthélemy also cites this example in 'Sainte Foy', p. 85. The story seems to mirror in some respects the later events between Hugh VII of Lusignan and the abbey of Saint-Maixent, where following a long-running dispute over three local villages, relations were restored with the result that the abbey paid Hugh a sum in order to protect them: Painter, 'Lords of Lusignan', pp. 36-37. Could there have been a similar payment at Conques for Robert's services?

⁷¹⁰ Rosenwein, Head and Farmer, 'Monks and their enemies', p. 773.

was chided for this action not by the *rustici*, but by his comrades-at-arms. The theft was clearly portrayed as having violated accepted norms of behaviour. It also makes one wonder at the aim of the raids directed against peasants: in this case the pillagers had searched in vain for fire by which to put the peasants' homes to flame, since the villagers had carefully extinguished their own hearths. In what environment might burning houses be acceptable within feuding practice, but not stealing foodstuff? The very specific targeting of the housing suggests instead that the intention was to cause economic harm to the peasants' lord rather than to deprive the peasants of sustenance, and by implication that the lord had a responsibility to rebuild the houses of the peasants.

A speciality of Foy, prisoner liberations followed a particular narrative pattern: prisoners appealed directly to Foy, who often appeared in a vision encouraging and helping them to flee.⁷¹¹ The grateful freed brought their fetters to Conques as donations of thanks and miracle i.31 claims that the monastery received so many ex-voto donations of irons that most of the church's iron doors were fashioned from them. This type of miracle is made figure by every author of Sainte Foy's collections, including the supplementary collections and thus spanning the whole eleventh century, totalling 15% in comparison to the average of 4.6% indicated by Sigal.⁷¹² To these we can add the foundation legend written at and for Horsham Saint Faith that related the capture and miraculous release of Robert Fitzwalter and his wife Sybil at Saint-Gilles (near Nîmes) on return from Rome, in the late eleventh century.⁷¹³ As others in the collection that occurred in Jerusalem or Catalonia at the hands of Saracens, this latter example was not related to oppressive lordship or even local feuds.⁷¹⁴ Indeed, prisoner liberations had very little to do with the terrorization of the peasantry. On the single occasion when a peasant was the victim of imprisonment, we are told that he had been captured for his attempt to take back a calf that had been stolen from him: thus his imprisonment was connected to a 'crime'.⁷¹⁵ All other examples concern local warriors held at other local castles, sometimes explicitly related to land conflicts; on other occasions without explanation but implying longer-running disputes.⁷¹⁶ As with the punishment miracles, we would be on shaky ground to read this aspect of the Sainte Foy miracles, or the preponderance of other patron saints in the Midi who, like her, specialized in liberations (Saint Léonard at Noblat, Saint Théodard at Montauban and, a

⁷¹¹ On the liberation miracles also see Barthélemy, 'Sainte Foy', pp. 92-98.

⁷¹² Sigal, *L'homme*, p. 290. Even the second Rodez miracle, a re-worked version of A.2 and thus not usually included in my totals, is a liberation miracle.

⁷¹³ Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. iii, p. 636. This is the only example of a female captive.

⁷¹⁴ *LMSF*, iv.6; L.1; A.2, A.3.

⁷¹⁵ *LMSF*, iv.5; Barthélemy, 'Sainte Foy', p. 97.

⁷¹⁶ *LMSF*, i.33; iii.4, iii.5, iii.15, iii.19; iv.4, iv.7, iv.8, iv.9; L.5. In two further miracles there is no information about the captive by which to establish social status. Barthélemy, 'Sainte Foy', p. 92.

little further away, Sainte Marie Madeleine at Vézelay) as quantifiable evidence for an increase in ‘feudal anarchy’.⁷¹⁷ Instead, we should understand that the significance lies in the nature of the miracle story and its audience: it had cultural relevance for a particular aristocratic audience, and soon became established as a feature of Sainte Foy’s character. Indeed, the miracles make no attempt to moralize about the practice of imprisonment, nor to encourage people away from the practice. Sometimes an author might specify that an imprisonment was ‘just’ or ‘unjust’, but never clarifies what norms directed this distinction of legitimacy. In any case we are told that Sainte Foy did not discriminate and would release any prisoner whether or not they were imprisoned fairly (i.31).

Overall, 90% of the continuators’ negative miracles punished temporal sins either against Foy’s monastic community or her wider *familia*, as opposed to 60% of Bernard’s. In this sense it seems that the monk-continuators applied the miracle-stories more directly to monastic social politics than their esteemed predecessor. Struggles over land are particularly prevalent in Book iii, indicating a particular interest in using the texts for monastic social politics and which, considering that its authorship may have been in the hands of Abbot Odolric, may mark a distinctive ‘corporate’ policy to use the saint and miracles to this end. Importantly, whilst it is not always the case for every miracle throughout the work, every single one of the punishment miracles in Books iii and iv specifies a location and person by which to identify the event, as opposed to only 36% in Bernard’s case. If feuds were the negotiation of relationships, these punishment miracles formed part of very real disputes over land and were part of a constructive dialogue that settled Sainte Foy and (Conques)’s place in the lordly hierarchy. The preference of the continuators to specify the details about these feuds suggests a greater appreciation for the benefits of recording these ongoing socio-political negotiations literarily, where recourse to the agreements, disagreements, associations and disassociations preserved in the miracle-stories might be needed again.

If the miracles were intended to communicate particularly with a local aristocracy, other developments in the cult explain how this was facilitated. It has been discussed that the reliquary statue aimed at a ‘seigneurialization’, with Foy taking on seigneurial (or petty-kingly) characteristics by the movement of her relics around her lands practising itinerant lordship, and

⁷¹⁷ Sigal, *L’homme*, quote at p. 269 n. 11; J.-P. Poly, ‘Europe in the year 1000’, in R. Fossier (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 17-79 at p. 37; De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 180. On the latter of these see V. Saxer, *Le Culte de Marie Madeleine en Occident des origines à la fin du moyen âge*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1959).

an extension of the legal role of relics to ‘private’ ends.⁷¹⁸ The miracle-stories display different relationships with these cultic developments and there is a division between Bernard of Angers and his anonymous continuators. In the physical descriptions of Foy, invoked when describing her appearance in visions, Bernard portrays her almost invariably as a young girl. Books iii and iv, however, back away from the child-like character. Likewise there is a shift in the manner in which devotees addressed the saint, this time clearly towards a more lord-like image. All of the authors on some occasions report devotees beseeching her with direct dialogue, although in Bernard’s books they always address her as Sainte Foy. In the latter books, this personal address is replaced more formal and reverent titles, most commonly references to her holy virgin status but also as ‘Lady’ (*domina*), on one occasion ‘illustrious lady’ and on another as ‘divine majesty’. Again, we see the corporate face of the monastery bringing the characterization back into line with the lordly image invoked by the reliquary and her celestial superiority preferred by the guardians of her shrine.⁷¹⁹ The lord-like Foy is thus seen most clearly through Bernard’s continuators, just like her miraculous vengeance are, and particularly in Book iii.

The second cultic development, the use of relics as partisan legal entities, also supported the move towards the ‘seigneurialization’ of the saint. We cannot speak of the ‘privatization’ of religious power however, since to lay claim to the legal quality of relics, one had to accept the universality of divine law: this is how many ‘interested’ reliquaries could be present at episcopal councils, and why their presence suited all parties involved.⁷²⁰ The presence of reliquaries at land claims as in the processions of Foy’s *maiestas* invoked the saint both as holy witness and plaintiff, although the relics were as important as the lordly image here, since it was not just the reliquary that was carried in procession but the chest containing her bones too. If relics could be both ‘interested’ and still hold a valid legal function, then we should also accept the role of miracles and the threat of holy violence in disputes. Just as relics and ritual had for a long time provided a complement to the workings of courts, Foy’s miraculous intercessions recorded in the miracle-stories provided a complement to the judicial processes that Conques participated in. Going back to the example of the arbitration held at Pallas, we can see that Sainte Foy’s miraculous intercessions sat squarely within this culture of judicial sanctity, in which her reliquary statue also actively played a part, and which ran alongside regular judicial processes. Miracles are therefore not evidence that divine justice substituted for a deficient public justice, but were rather an extension of the relationship between sanctity, law and lordliness.

⁷¹⁸ As with Columbanus, as described above.

⁷¹⁹ Note the submissive kneeling in front of the statue-reliquary in iii.4, as subject to lord. See Barthélemy, ‘Saint Gérard, Sainte Foy’, pp. 87-89 and ‘Sainte Foy’, pp. 89-92 on the *passiones* and the second two books of miracles casting Sainte Foy in a ‘feudal’ (and *faidale*) role, as a chevalier, and a vassal of Christ.

⁷²⁰ Discussed below in the context of Peace of God.

‘Vertical’ violence

Amongst the various elements of feuding culture detailed in the miracles, which included kidnap, brigandage, individual acts of personal violence and, if rarely, siege or out-and-out battle, we have seen that inter-aristocratic conflict could also impact on those lower down the social scale, since attacks on another lord’s property might take the form of attacks on the people on their land too as we have seen in the punishment miracles. There was nothing new or necessarily illegitimate in this. It was not a ‘crime’, for example, but rather common practice in the Carolingian period to instigate a property dispute with a violent act against an opponent or his property (including their human dependents).⁷²¹ As we have seen, when Sainte Foy intervened on behalf of peasants, she did so because they were hers and because it was an attack on the patrimonial interests of the monks, but it also served to highlight yet again her vital protective powers to her devotees. What evidence is there, then, for other ‘vertical’ violence in the miracles, or violent lordship? That is to say, is there any evidence to support Thomas Bisson’s view that ‘the significance of violence lay in ‘institutionalization’ of violence as a ‘method of lordship’ that underpinned the *malae consuetudines*’?⁷²² In fact, there are no hints at all of the exactions or subjection to new jurisdictions that we might term ‘banal’, let alone unfair, illegitimate or novel examples of these.⁷²³ In short, *malae consuetudines* simply do not appear at all.

Sainte Foy and the Peace of God

This becomes even more relevant if we consider how under-engaged the Miracles are with the ‘Peace of God’. The traditional *mutationniste* view sees Peace councils as an alliance between the Church and the poor, a subversive reaction against castellan violence, which progressed swiftly towards collusion between episcopal and secular powers (including the new *ordo militum*) and ‘institutionalized’ the submission of the peasantry.⁷²⁴ That the ‘Peace of God’ was anti-seigneurial or reactive has been challenged on various fronts, however.⁷²⁵ In searching

⁷²¹ Davies and Fouracre, ‘Conclusion’, *The Settlement of Disputes*, pp. 234–235.

⁷²² Bisson, ‘The ‘feudal revolution’’, p. 16.

⁷²³ For Bonnassie, the early eleventh century was characterized by a growth in banal charges and exactions, in ‘Banal’, pp. 121–129.

⁷²⁴ Bisson, *Crisis*, quote at p. 49; after Duby, *Chivalrous Society*, esp. ch. 8. Debord, ‘The castellan revolution’, pp. 135–164; Debord, *Aristocratie et pouvoir*, p. 81; Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle*, vol. 2, p. 658; C. Lauranson-Rosaz, ‘Peace from the mountains: the Auvergnat origins of the Peace of God’, in *Peace of God*, pp. 104–134.

⁷²⁵ Particularly convincing is that the earliest councils at Charroux (989) and Le Puy (994) pre-date the multiplication of references to *milites* and castles in the Charente and Poitou: J. Paul, ‘Les conciles de paix

elsewhere for explanations of the councils of peace, attention has been directed to the particular stress laid by conciliar provisions on the protection and ‘restoration’ of Church lands. Thus the content of councils seem to be allied to – some would say even born of – the reforming (that is to say, here, restorative or renewing) instincts of the tenth-century clergy.⁷²⁶ Yet there was also discord in the interpretation and characterization of the peace councils between contemporary churchmen,⁷²⁷ including within monastic circles: Adémar of Chabannes sought to underline the popular element of conciliar success, whilst Andrew of Fleury emphasized saintly, divine protection over collective human action, for example.⁷²⁸ Of most interest here, however, is that the Miracles of Sainte Foy ignore the detail of councils almost entirely.

It has been argued that we should avoid conceptualizing it as the (capitalized) ‘Peace’ or as the ‘Peace of God’ at all, since these imply a uniformity of ideology where none existed,⁷²⁹ others have insisted that it would be better to speak of ‘peaces of God’.⁷³⁰ Again, it is important to emphasize the regional, chronological and situational diversity of the councils and co-existing, but not always complementary, perspectives in contemporary sources. Drawing too fine a distinction between ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ authorities is unhelpful, particularly considering the role of bishops, who occupied a grey area in which they could appeal to both religious precedent and Carolingian prerogatives of justice similar to those of secular rulers, and who often simultaneously claimed or reclaimed royal rights on behalf of both counts and bishops. Evidently bishops could also be secular lords in their own right, including those at the centre of peace councils, such as Count-Bishop Guy who was responsible for the peace *placitum* at Le Puy in 975, and ‘Bishop’ Gombaud (likewise for the council at Charroux in 989), who, besides his episcopal dignity, was also entitled (or at least self-entitled) variously as abbot, count, and even as duke.⁷³¹ To characterize peace councils as part of an ‘episcopal’ then ‘secular’

aquitains antérieurs à l'an mil’, in C. Carozzi and H. Taviani-Carozzi, *Année mille, an mil* (Aix-en-Provence, 2002), pp. 177-210, at pp. 198-199.

⁷²⁶ See SKH, p. 280; Magnou-Nortier, ‘The enemies of the Peace’, pp. 68-69; G. Lobrichon, ‘The chiaroscuro of heresy: early eleventh-century Aquitaine as seen from Auxerre’, in *Peace of God*, pp. 80-103.

⁷²⁷ *Gesta episcoporum Camaracensium*, ed. L. C. Bethmann, MGH SS, 7 (Hanover, 1846), pp. 402-489, quoted in Brown, *Violence*, p. 122.

⁷²⁸ T. Head, ‘The judgment of God: Andrew of Fleury's account of the peace league of Bourges’, in *Peace of God*, pp. 219-238 at pp. 234-236; R. Landes, ‘Between aristocracy and heresy: popular participation in the Limousin Peace of God (994-1032)’, in *Peace of God*, pp. 184-218.

⁷²⁹ Remensnyder, ‘Pollution’, p. 280 n. 2

⁷³⁰ D. Barthélemy, ‘Le paix de Dieu dans son contexte (989-1041)’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 40 (1997), pp. 3-35, at p. 3 and SKH, p. 273.

⁷³¹ For Guy, see Bachrach, ‘Northern origins’, pp. 409-410 who adds that ‘Guy held legitimate secular powers from the king and may be thought to have brought about peace at least as much in his capacity as count as in his capacity as bishop’ (p.413). For Gombaud, see Taylor, ‘Reform’, pp. 39, 45. Hans-Werner Goetz also notes

movement is therefore problematic. Councils may have been initially organized from ‘episcopal’ quarters, but some in Aquitaine came to be presided over by the highest secular authority, William V, as at Poitiers c.1010, Charroux 1027/1028 and Limoges 1028,⁷³² although this did not necessarily stop bishops from continuing to call their own councils simultaneously to William’s.

Indeed, one of the hazards of a powerful conceptual term like the ‘Peace of God’ is its potential snowball effect, whereby many minor or less well-documented councils are presumed to be part of (and so are aggregated to) the movement simply by chronological and/or circumstantial coincidence. Such is the case for the episcopal councils in the Sainte Foy miracles. Bernard of Angers reports how Bishop Arnald of Rodez *suis tantum parrochianis conflaverat synodum* (*concilium* and *synodum* are used interchangeably in the text), an assembly held at Saint-Félix meadows to the north of the city between 1004–1013.⁷³³ On the evidence of one of Bernard of Angers’ continuators, at least one more council seems to have been called by this same Arnald. Miracle-story iv.11 tells of the forced requisition by the monks of Conques of some trees from a forest belonging to a *miles* named Bernard Austrin, in order that the monks might use the trees for a pavilion to house the saint’s reliquary at the bishop’s council. Most commentators presume this council is the same one as that reported by Bernard of Angers. But the miracle-story tells us that the chief negotiator in the deal was Abbot Adalgerius, who we know, from the cartulary of Conques, was acting as dean under the abbacy of his predecessor Airadus during 1012, and Bernard himself tells us Adalgerius was not yet abbot when he was writing the first collection of miracles in 1013.⁷³⁴ The councils reported by the different authors must have been held on separate occasions: one between 1004 and 1013, and another between 1013 and c.1025 when Adalgerius’ successor is named.

Whilst some would have it that secular powers hijacked the ‘peace movement’ in Aquitaine, particularly through the high profile councils held by William V, these did not necessarily

how the dioceses of southern France were considered to be part of a secular patrimony, often with familial links to counts and viscounts: Goetz, ‘Protection of the Church’, p. 260.

⁷³² Callahan, ‘William the Great’ pp. 329–331. The dating of this second Charroux council to 1027/1028 is generally accepted although Callahan gives a wider range (1018–1029).

⁷³³ *LMSF*, i.28, also i.29 and ii.11. The dating of the Rodez synod is made on the basis of the earliest possible date of Arnald’s episcopal reign – his predecessor Deusdet is last mentioned in 1004 – and is capped by the moment when Bernard of Angers was writing the miracle-stories.

⁷³⁴ *Conques*, n. 244; *LMSF*, i.13, which intimates that Adalgerius succeeded Airadus shortly after Bernard’s first visit in 1013, and he is the addressee of Bernard’s letter closing his first Book (i.34), written a little time after his visit. Bonnassie and de Gournay, ‘Datation’, p. 468 dismiss the mention of Adalgerius in iv.11 as an error on the basis that it was one and the same synod, despite the fact that the title at i.28 speaks of councils in the plural.

prevent bishops from calling their own synods, as Bishop Arnald did at Rodez. Yet does this mean the episcopal synods were part of the same ‘movement’ as the large-scale ‘ducal’ councils? Certainly, peace and associated discourses *may* have been used at both or either, although we cannot tell, since this is not the focus of either of our hagiographers’ tales and no other source remains for either of them. Yet it is surely also significant that neither hagiographer mentions peace (let alone the *pax Dei*); nor associates the synod with any precedents or equivalents. In emphasizing his main message Bernard makes an oblique reference to other councils: ‘amongst the many sacred relics that are carried to councils according to the habit of that province, Sainte Foy shines forth, as though she were supreme over them, because of the glory of her miracles.’⁷³⁵ Yet these generic ‘councils’ are not given any unity of purpose. In telling us of the second synod neither does the anonymous author make explicit reference to conciliar discourses of peace, despite the fact that his main message accords very closely to the moralizing substance of some.

He sets the scene: the monks of Conques needed wood to construct a pavilion to house the golden reliquary at a synod called by Bishop Arnald. They asked the *miles* Bernard Austrin to give them branches from his trees, a demand refused on the basis that Bernard had already freely given many trees to many saints, and since ‘Sainte Foy was infinitely richer than the rest of them’ he insisted on some level of payment, ‘no matter how small’.⁷³⁶ When Abbot Adalgerius heard of this he authorized the payment of seven *solidi* to build the shelter. Access was granted and a leafy canopy was built, under which Sainte Foy worked many miracles. This time, however, it was not Sainte Foy’s primacy over other saints that the author wished to emphasize. Instead, he recounts how the patch of trees (whose branches had been paid for) miraculously did not replenish themselves after the winter, unlike all those around them. The story must have intended Biblical allusions to various mentions of withered plants, including the withered vine of the rebellious house of Babulon (Ezekiel, 17:9-10), Jonah’s uncared-for gourd that withered overnight (Jonah, 4:6-11), and the withered fig tree cursed by Christ (Matthew, 21:19-22). The message perhaps accords most closely with the last of these, as a demonstration of divine power. Yet, as in many of the miracle-stories, it was not a classic exemplar for Christian behaviour (where was Sainte Foy’s charity?). Neither was the ‘moral’ of

⁷³⁵ *LMSF*, i.28 – my translation. Thomas Head translates this passage differently, interpolating the phrase ‘[at these councils]’ (my emphasis) in the subsequent sentence, implying an association to other councils that is not made by the text itself: *Peace of God*, doc. 5, appendix A at pp. 331-332.

⁷³⁶ Bouillet, *LMSF*, p. 196 suggests that Bernard Austrin may be the same individual as the Austrin (I) of Conques featured in i.22, but this is not possible since this latter Austrin was already dead by the time Bernard was writing in 1013 – Bernard tells us he has met his successor. Bernard Austrin may be the Austrin (II) of Conques of ii.10, who is named as the son of the Austrin (I) of i.22, although this would be conjecture since the miracle-story tells us nothing further than his name by which to identify him.

the story simply one of punished greed; it was also one of purchasers' rights, since Foy could choose to do what she wished with something she had paid for.⁷³⁷ Of course, the author was chiding Bernard Austrin for asking the monks to pay for the branches; but he is also making a point about ownership and the right of legal 'owners' to do as they wished with their 'belongings'. It may not be unreasonable to see a parallel here for claimed rights over lands, which the monks increasingly viewed as immutable property. Perhaps there is also a similarity with the second provision of the council of Charroux, which allowed the forced requisition of beasts, as long as they were paid for.⁷³⁸ Yet the Rodez synod provides only a frame for the miracle-story, and the author makes no ideological link between the council's possible doctrine and his moralizing tale. Moreover, there is no parallel in the rest of the work to a pervasive ideology of peace such as Dan Callahan has found so readily in the liturgy of Saint-Martial at Limoges.⁷³⁹

Since the authors of the Sainte Foy miracles made no connection in their accounts of councils to wider peace discourses, we should be wary of presuming that Conques and its personnel associated themselves to 'peace', or even that they ascribed to a 'monastic peace' that itself substantiated an 'episcopal' one. Yet monastic and canonical guardians of saints' relics certainly did not pass up the opportunity to prove the superiority and power of their patrons in this public arena. Called to bring their saint's relics to the synod,⁷⁴⁰ communities used the highly visual spectacle of procession and, once there, could parade and profess the superiority of their own saint's thaumaturgic efficacy over the next. Certainly this occupies Bernard of Angers' accounts. At the bishop's (first) synod at Rodez, he tells us how the battle lines (*acies*) of saints' relics, conveyed in golden images and boxes, were arranged in tents and pavilions. Amongst their inestimable number he names just a few: the golden majesty (*maiestas*) of Saint Marius (patron of the abbey of Vabres), the same of Saint Amans (first bishop and patron of Rodez), the golden reliquary-box of Saint Sernin (first bishop and patron of Toulouse), the golden image of Saint Mary (perhaps that of the cathedral of Clermont), a holy golden cross, and the golden majesty of Sainte Foy. A blind and lame man had spent the whole night in vigil at the image of Saint Marius at the same synod, a saint whose many miracles, we are told, were the most renowned locally. Whilst sleeping, however, the man heard a voice urging him to go to

⁷³⁷ *LMSE*, iv.11.

⁷³⁸ Mansi, *SC*, vol. 19, cc. 89-90; English translation in *Peace of God*, appendix A, doc. 1, pp. 327-328.

⁷³⁹ D. Callahan, 'The Peace of God and the cult of the saints in Aquitaine', in *Peace of God*, pp. 165-183 at pp. 173, 175-176, 179-183.

⁷⁴⁰ Relics may have been requested at councils to swear oaths on: Callahan, 'The Peace of God', p. 177; or in attempt to exploit the popularity of the cult of saints to mobilize the masses: B. Töpfer, 'The cult of relics and pilgrimage in Burgundy and Aquitaine at the time of the monastic reform', in *Peace of God*, pp. 41-57, at p. 56.

Sainte Foy instead, and he was healed as soon as he entered her pavilion.⁷⁴¹ All of the saints Bernard lists by name at the synod are cathedral patrons, except for Saint Marius of Vabres; thus it seems that we have here a none-too-subtle tale of the primacy of Sainte Foy over Saint Marius, and therefore of Conques over Vabres, representative of local monastic rivalry for the cultic affections of the Rouergat population.

This aggrandizement of Conques' patroness is not just Bernard's charge but one that is repeated elsewhere, such as the primacy of Saint Martial for Adémar of Chabannes, and of Saint Benedict for Andrew of Fleury.⁷⁴² All this despite Adémar of Chabannes' claims that 'who offends one saint offends them all': perhaps the 'absolute necessity' for cooperation between churchmen was not as evident as has been suggested.⁷⁴³ It may seem obvious to make a point about inter-monastery rivalry, especially given the house-focused nature of the *miracula*, but it deserves to be revisited here as it provides an important (if less exalted) context for monastic attendance at episcopal synods, beyond genuine support for whatever constituted the bishop's policy. It might better explain how the monks would go to such lengths and expense to carry and display Sainte Foy's relics at the synod, only to ignore whatever message was being promulgated there in the miracle-stories. More generally, it mirrors a lack of interest in the miracles in 'bad lordship', eclipsed by Foy's positive powers.

18. LORDSHIP AND FIDELITY TO THE SAINT

Beyond protection from or revenge for attacks, which amounted to defence of her own patrimony, the miracle-stories say little explicitly about how Sainte Foy treated her own tenants. One short passage from Bernard of Angers relates how he had 'heard that her actions in regard to benefice-holders (*beneficiati*) are excellent and full of compassion. If, unjustly deprived of their goods by their wicked lords, they seek the help of Sainte Foy, they are restored to the good graces of their superiors through divine intervention'.⁷⁴⁴ Here, the saint offered redress to a very specific lordly wrongdoing – theft or withdrawal from agreement (no mention of violence). Although it implies that Sainte Foy was superior to the unnamed *senior* because she went over their heads, and that she was fairer, the goal was not to disrupt the status

⁷⁴¹ *LMSF*, i.29.

⁷⁴² Callahan, 'The Peace of God', p. 170; Head, 'The judgment of God', *passim*. Similarly the miracles of Saint Privat underline the effectiveness of his miracles before all others at the council of Le Puy in 1036: C. Brunel (ed.), *Les miracles de saint Privat*, (Paris, 1912), 7, pp. 14–15.

⁷⁴³ Callahan, 'The Peace of God', p. 168, also cf. for Adémar's words which are taken from one of his sermons. For the legitimizing quality of the *populus* as part of the struggle between ecclesiasts for the *corpus Christi*, see Nelson, review of *Peace of God*, p. 167.

⁷⁴⁴ *LMSF*, i.27, my translation.

quo, since they are returned to a 'state of grace' with their lord: it was a complex mesh in which hierarchy was central but not linear. A miracle worked for the *miles* Gerald repeats this same sentiment. He had borrowed his lord's falcon on the condition that if he did not return it his lord would take all his lands, only for the bird to go missing. It was returned through Sainte Foy's intercession, thus saving the unfortunate subject from the unreasonable demands of his lord and restoring their relationship (i.23). There was no attempt to try to poach these tenants or subjects; rather, the message was that they should serve both their own lord and Sainte Foy. The miracle-stories aimed no more to moralize to the local aristocracy about good lordship than they did to encourage general good Christian behaviour. Yet they do underline repeatedly the nature of Foy as a lord and the consequent bond between devotee and saint, which often accords closely to secular lord/subject relationships (in a post-feudal sense).

We would do well to invoke the more holistic approach to lordship advocated by Richard Barton in order to understand this phenomenon. For Barton, personal aspects of lordship such as honour, prestige and 'charisma' are as important as the practical ability to rule.⁷⁴⁵ The first thing to note is that the Foy-Conques unit, as painted by the miracle-stories, was a lord by virtue of being a proprietor of lands.⁷⁴⁶ There is no reference in the miracle-stories to jurisdictions or tax-collecting powers over tenants on their lands. Rather than claiming specific jurisdictions over people, it is the personal affective aspect of Foy's lordliness that the miracle-stories intended to cultivate.

Certain social markers indicating her status are emphasized, not least her wealth. The miracle-stories are full of gleeful tales of the great wealth of Conques. Foy herself was dressed magnificently and covered in jewels in the vision recounted by Guibert the Illuminated in Bernard's first miracle-story. The superior wealth of Conques is asserted again in the coerced donation series, particularly in i.17 'How Sainte Foy collected gold everywhere for the fashioning of an altar'. If hierarchy was important, gift and counter-gift were central. We have seen the benefits that Sainte Foy could offer her devotees: protection, healing, liberation, fertility, and so on. In return, she expected not just valuable donations but also fidelity, respect and other services due a lord. Devotees were to speak well of her, especially in public, and to help publicize her miracles and, if appropriate, to pay tributes, such as the castle of Calogne in Catalonia which sent gold to Conques and Sainte Foy every year, along with one-tenth of the spoils of their successful quests, in return for her banner to use in battle – that is to say, for her protection (iv.6).

⁷⁴⁵ Barton, *Lordship*, p. i and *passim*.

⁷⁴⁶ See n. 96.

Pledges were also central to the relationship between devotees and their saint, just as they were valid currency in the negotiation of captor/prisoner relations. On some occasions, beneficiaries of her aid pledged themselves or were vowed to her, although there is no ritual that could be equated to homage, rather it was a more general 'fidelity'. The priest Hadimar who had captured one of Foy's pilgrims repented after being struck with a malady from which he was subsequently cured, pledging himself to the saint and her monks and 'from then on honoured his pledge by visiting there frequently' (iii.24). The story of the father who 'pledged his boys with vows', children that he had received because of Foy's intervention (iii.9), has a more ambiguous meaning and could have equated to the practice known in French as *assainteurement* (devoting one's life to a saint) or oblation, as seems to have been the case for the mother of a dying boy who promised him to the saint (A.1). Other beneficiaries clearly felt less binding but nevertheless ongoing duty to the saint, such as Raymond, son of Bernard of Montpezat, who returned to Conques annually to give thanks for curing him from epilepsy (ii.8). Another young man who had been resuscitated returned to Conques the next year because he 'owed allegiance for the benefaction/favour he had received' (*debito suscepti beneficii obsequio* - iv.1).

More common, however, were pledges of trips to the sanctuary and of donations (which, when fulfilled, became *ex-voto* offerings) amongst the prayers in attempt to secure a miracle, often made because the devotee was indisposed or too far from the shrine to make a trip there in person. Whether or not a vow was specified in requesting a miracle, on 86% of occasions when intercession was received a beneficiary made a subsequent pilgrimage, donation, or both, which may imply the fulfilment of earlier vows.⁷⁴⁷ Whether consciously constructed by the hagiographers or not, vow-making and gift-giving were central to the relationship between Sainte Foy and her devotees. In all cases, a relationship of dependence and provision was perpetuated and encouraged, as long as due thanks were received. This was not a lord/subject relationship in the 'feudal' sense, but reflected the importance of hierarchy (underscored by wealth), service (in many forms), loyalty and submission. In order to make this work Sainte Foy had to have affective power, in the form of her thaumaturgic powers, and in this the saints had a quality that could not be matched by their secular lordly counterparts. Yet these counterparts had other means of displaying affective power, not least in the form of castles.

⁷⁴⁷ Sigal, *L'homme*, p. 80.

19. CASTLES

Castles do not seem to have been a dominant feature of the landscape in the Carolingian Rouergue, appearing increasingly in written sources over the tenth and especially in the eleventh century. Ninth- and tenth-century castles were not all ‘public’ (that is to say, comital): there are examples of familial (‘private’) castles too.⁷⁴⁸ Reading the Miracles of Sainte Foy, it is undeniable that castles were a significant feature of the geographical and socio-political landscape in the post-Carolingian Midi, covering a spread of comital and familial fortresses across the Languedoc, Aquitaine, Limousin, Auvergne, Midi-Pyrénées, and in Spain. **Map 6 & 7; Table 4** In total, 38 different castles are named along with a further unnamed 5, across 36 (31%) miracle-stories, those in Books i-iv forming the basis of a study by Pierre Bonnassie.⁷⁴⁹ Castles are particularly prevalent in the works of Bernard’s first continuator: Book iii, contains 37% of all the castles across the entire work. Book iv contains a further 21%, with another 21% in Bernard’s Book i and 7% and none in his following authorship stages. This weighting was not just because of the continuators’ preference to include specifics about the places and people they wrote about, since the figures show that castles accounted for 47% of all of the location types mentioned internally to Book iii compared to 39% and 30% for Bernard’s first and second phases respectively, with Book iv containing only 27%. This disparity must relate to the authorial preference to use the miracle-stories for monastic social politics, rather than any real changes in the role of castles in society. Castles could appear as sites of imprisonments (and liberations), as the destinations of travellers, as places of safety from pursuers, as battle-sites (and subsequent miraculous healings), or as devotees of Sainte Foy, such as the castle of Calogne in Catalonia which sent a tribute of gold to her each year (iv.6). Most frequently, however, castles are mentioned in the context of identifying a person (65%) – sometimes specifically as the lord of a castle or, more enigmatically, as *ex castello*, which might equally denote the *milites castri* as their lord, and as indistinct as the term *miles* itself.

⁷⁴⁸ *Conques*, n. 1; Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, pp. 12-13; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 79-81, 185-187.

⁷⁴⁹ For the 27 named and 5 unnamed castles in Books i-iv see Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, pp. 133-135 and n. 4 which erroneously states that the total is 30 including 25 named castles: his own table includes 27 named fortresses. Bonnassie rejects the reference in iv.6 to a *quidam Sarracenus ex castro Balagario* (Balaguer, Catalonia) as an exception (pp. 135 n. 6, 136 n. 13) since it applies to a Muslim town. It is true that in the supplementary miracle A.3 the same place is described as *civitatem*, but I see no reason not to interpret the first mention of Balaguer as specifically the castle at the town, thus I include it in my list. My statistics are calculated on a total of 43 castles, including an extra two mentions for Conques castle, one for Aubin and one for Belfort. It also includes the supplementary miracles, which bring the castles of Cardona (Catalonia; A.3); Najac (Aveyron; L.2); Montirat (Tarn; L.2); Montmurat (Cantal; L.4); Aigremont (Aveyron; L.6). The castrum *Filigerias* or *Filigericus* in V.3 has not been identified. Robertini, *LMSF*, pp. 417-418 n. 9 suggests it may be Fougères in Brittany (Ille-et-Vilaine) but there is nothing in the text to help localize the miracle to that region. In fact, as **Map 6** shows, other castles in the miracle-stories tend to be closer to Conques, in the more restricted socio-political sphere of influence of the monastery, and Fougères seems a little anomalous at some distance.

It is more difficult to establish the lordship of some castles, and how they were held. Carlat (Cantal) and Turenne (Corrèze) were viscomital fortresses, and Servières (Aveyron) likely comital.⁷⁵⁰ Whether Ebles held the castle of Turenne by right of patrimony or by investiture of a greater lord is unspecified; his wife at least nevertheless continued to answer to a higher authority through her duties at William V's court.⁷⁵¹ Elias, the *equus nobilitate* of the castle of Montagrièr (Dordogne) may have been Elias II, count of Périgord c.1010-1031/2, or at least a member of his family (iii.9).⁷⁵² Rainon of the castle of Aubin (Aveyron - i.5) may have been a descendent of an illegitimate child of Raymond II, count of Rouergue, since the castle was given to his sons by a woman named only as the 'daughter of Odo' in his testament.⁷⁵³ Other castles were described as 'under the command of' (*sub dominio*) a named lord, and terms including *regere*, *presidere*, *praesesse* used, but in many cases the person in charge remained unspecified or vague and it seems castles could still exist as edifices as yet independent from the person or people in charge.⁷⁵⁴ Sometimes familial descent based around a castle can be determined, such as Austrin of the *oppidum* in the *vico* of Conques and his son Austrin, who both appear as *Austrinus de Conchas* in the cartulary.⁷⁵⁵ When lords of castles are named, the *miracula* do not offer any explicit evidence towards the nature of their authority, although based on naming practices, de Gournay has proposed vicarial origins for the lords of both Conques castles (Siger and Austrin) as well as those of Arjac, Sévérac and Calmont d'Olt (all Aveyron).⁷⁵⁶

Whilst higher authority may be lacking, many of the castle lords can be traced to prominent local families. Guy of Calmilliacum (Haute-Loire - i.2, i.8) was probably part of the family of Brioude-Gévaudan who had interests in the neighbouring abbey of Le Monastier (Haute-Loire) – in the following generation the title *comes* was found alongside the name Guy.⁷⁵⁷ Aimon, *senior* of the castle of Broussadel (Cantal - i.31) appears with his son, Albuin and *omnes milites de Brossadolz* amongst the donors at the foundation of Saint-Flour c.1019; Broussadel (Cantal) was connected to the important House of Turlande by the second half of the eleventh

⁷⁵⁰ *LMSF*, ii.6, iii.15, iv.14. Bonnassie, 'Fortresses' p. 145 n. 58 admitted the viscomital castles but noted that none were denoted as comital fortresses. Yet Servières had been left by Raymond II to his successor Raymond III in his testament: *HGL*, V, 111, col. 249 and there is no evidence that it had passed out of the patrimony.

⁷⁵¹ *LMSF*, ii.6. On how it might be possible that both of these were correct, see White, 'Politics of exchange', esp. pp. 180-182.

⁷⁵² On this family see Settapani, *Noblesse*, pp. 166-75.

⁷⁵³ *HGL*, V, 111, cols. 248: *Illo castello de Albinio ... remaneat ad filios meos, quos ego Raymundus habeo de filia Odoino (sic)*. For de Gournay, such inheritance of this castle is symptomatic of the privatization of comital power: de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 183 and n. 96.

⁷⁵⁴ Bonnassie, 'Fortresses', p. 145; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 226.

⁷⁵⁵ *LMSF*, i.22, ii.10 and perhaps the Bernard Austrin in iv.11.

⁷⁵⁶ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 75.

⁷⁵⁷ *Le Monastier*, nn. 352, 356, 362, cf. Robertini, *LMSF*, p. 327 n. 11.

century and may already have been by this stage.⁷⁵⁸ Hector, ‘barbarous’ master of Belfort (Aveyron – iv.16) was part of a family which made generous donations to Conques and whose lineage is attested from at least the tenth century.⁷⁵⁹ Other lords are often untraceable, either because document survival is meagre and naming practices unhelpful for making strong identifications in the earlier centuries, or because they did not have the dynastic pedigree to have made appearance in the charters thus far. The hagiographers do not explicitly distinguish ‘new’ families however, although in some cases they are careful to underline the great nobility or rank of a person.⁷⁶⁰

It was not just some of the families that were appearing for the first time in the documents, but their castles too. The Miracles of Sainte Foy may be partly responsible for a particular spike in the number of ‘new’ castles attested in the first half of the eleventh century since their density bring many of them to our attention for the first time, including seven of the nine Rouergat castles mentioned therein: only Aubin and Servières grace our documents earlier in the testament of Raymond II.⁷⁶¹ Given the paucity of documentation for the region before the eleventh century, this does not necessarily confirm that they were all new (they rarely feature in our charters unless being transferred to the Church or in Raymond’s important testament). There are however two explicit references to the construction of castles.

The first is Raymond III’s plan to build one (ii.5), already mentioned in the context of public order. Bonnassie presumed that the ‘construction of a new fortress was seen not as a guarantee of security but as a deadly threat to the established order [since] it was a sin which would certainly call down divine punishment on its perpetrators.’⁷⁶² Elsewhere the relationship between castle and abbey was almost inseparable, such as abbey of Saint-Sever-sur-l’Adour (also known as Palastrion) garrisoned with comital troops, and the ducal fortified abbey of La Réole, both in Gascony, or the castle-monastery complex at Le Monastier, or the permission given by Count Lambert of Valence c.985 to a newly reformed abbey the right to protect itself by means of fortifications. There were also uneasy alliances between autonomous units, such as that struck between Saint-Maixent and the castle of Lusignan only after a long conflict.⁷⁶³

⁷⁵⁸ *Inventoria capituli sancti Flori*, c. 9: *Saint-Flour*, n. vi; Settipani, *Noblesse*, p. 333. Raymond of Le Bousquet (ii.2) was possibly also part of this Broussadel-Turlande group.

⁷⁵⁹ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 113, with further references.

⁷⁶⁰ *LMSF*, ii.2, iii.4, iii.17, iv.14

⁷⁶¹ See the list of Rouergat castles attested before 1214 in de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 196–200.

⁷⁶² Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 146

⁷⁶³ C. Taylor, ‘Royal protection in Aquitaine and Gascony by c.1000: the public, the private, and the princely’, in T. B Lambert and D. W Rollason (ed.), *Peace and Protection in the Middle Ages* (Durham, 2009), pp. 36–59, at pp. 51–52, citing other Gascon examples; *Cluny*, II, no. 1716, cf. Lewis, *Development*, p. 326; Painter, ‘The

Secular ‘protection’, after all, often corresponded to domination, as Carolingian privileges had intended.⁷⁶⁴ It is true that Bernard of Angers did not view the planned comital castle as protection, but neither did he imply that the castle would not be able to fulfil this role. Importantly, Conques would not wish it so. Conques in fact already held arrangements with castle lords to fulfil a military role where needed, including Austrin of the castle of Conques who we will meet again shortly, and others local to the monastery’s more distant lands, such as Robert of Aurouze (iii.10). Rather than operating a garrison itself, Conques used a clientele model where no individual secular force enjoyed (or could abuse) a privileged position.

The relationship between castle and monastery was more complex than one of protection or domination (welcome or not) of course. The symbiosis worked on many levels. The abbey’s own properties included castles, as Bernard noted in the same miracle-story of Raymond’s unpopular plan to build his own, thus an abbey might also control a castle. Likewise, abbeys could serve as important a function to castles as vice versa. As Bonnassie observed, none of the fortresses described in the Miracle seem to have internal chapels – this was a later development.⁷⁶⁵ Instead there were churches near to castles, or the monastery itself (and others like it), to provide religious services, including burial, and this was another arena in which relationships were built and maintained. Conques certainly had rights to churches in or near castles mentioned in the miracles, such as at Aubin from the second half of the tenth century,⁷⁶⁶ and the one at Calogne (iv.6).

There were probably two castles close to Conques, both of which carried its name. One was a small fortification on the edge of the village of Conques (*quoddam oppidulum, vico Conchacensi contiguum* - i.22) under the Austrins mentioned earlier; the other was that *Conchacensi in castro miles quidam, Sigerius nomine, habitabat* – perhaps located at the confluence of the rivers Ouche and Dordou at the place called ‘lo castel’.⁷⁶⁷ We have little information for the latter Conques castle, and the father and son Siger and Hugh who appear the miracle-stories present ambiguous figures. Whilst we learn how ‘Siger, who unjustly acted against Sainte Foy, met a disastrous end’ including the disgrace of his whole family and the collapse of his castle (iii.17), his son Hugh had been the grateful beneficiary of a liberation miracle just a few chapters earlier (iii.4). The absence of Siger’s name from any of the Austrins’ documents seems to confirm that

lords of Lusignan’, p. 27.

⁷⁶⁴ Archibald Lewis quotes a charter of Tulle in which the donor, Viscount Rainald of Aubusson, promised that he would not thereafter interfere with this property as a *defensor*. Tulle, n. 350; cf. Lewis, *Development*, p. 329.

⁷⁶⁵ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 140.

⁷⁶⁶ *Conques*, n. 35.

⁷⁶⁷ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 184 n. 100.

the two places and families were separate, although the name Hugh was common to both (as other families in the Rouergue).

The nearer castle seems to have had close ties with Conques; Austrin's second wife Avigerna was regarded as a 'compatriot and neighbour' (*patriotam suam ac vicinam*) by the inhabitants of Conques village and Bernard of Angers claimed that Austrin ruled over the *oppidulum* under the monastery's authority (*quod sub ditione monachorum quidam Austrinus presidebat* – i.22) – could this have been one of the *commandas quae Austrinus tenet de sancto Salvatore et de sancta Fide* that an eleventh-century charter refers to?⁷⁶⁸ Perhaps the monks insisted upon this point in order to pre-empt any attempts to extend 'protection' into domination: the monastery clearly wanted to maintain a distinct separation and to weight the balance of power in its own favour in this relationship and the *miracula* clearly played a part in this.⁷⁶⁹ They were also amongst the most generous benefactors of the monastery, and a daughter of one of the Austrins called Petronilla requested to be buried at Conques.⁷⁷⁰ This did not stop Bernard describing Avigerna as a 'shameless and heedless woman' when she held back the ring promised to Foy by Austrin's first wife, to be punished by a painful swelling on her ring finger that only abated on the promise to hand the ring over; but hand it over she did, and good relations were restored by the end of the miracle-narrative. This tongue-in-cheek compelled-donation miracle was unlikely then to have caused her shame. Surely those that heard it understood that through working a miracle against and then for Avigerna and, by implication, Austrin and their sons, Foy was engaging with them.⁷⁷¹ The Austrins and their relations were clearly closely tied to the monastery, despite Avigerna's transgression, and show that Conques could and did have positive relations with castles and their inhabitants. Likely, then, the count's castle was objectionable because it

⁷⁶⁸ *Conques*, n. 366. *Conques*, n. 366. This document cannot be dated with any precision, and therefore it is unclear which Austrin it refers to. The *commandas* are an interesting entry amongst a list of manses and parts of allods that Austrin was donating to Conques and it is unclear if he is referring to something that he himself held, or another Austrin, perhaps the *Austrinum filium Austrini* named in the charter, neither of whom seem to be the donor. It is possible that these *commandas* were the same as those listed in the *breve* of (the same?) Austrin of Conques between 1010 and 1053 (*Conques*, n. 23) which lists *illas meas commandas quae abeo in Castlaro, et in La Serra, et in Bonimont, e in Vercalmo, et in Licongas*. The first in this list, *Castlaro*, had first been donated to Conques in 984 (*Conques*, n. 98). These documents raise interesting questions about the ability to donate back to Conques a *commanda* that was held of it in the first place. For a *comanda* as responsibility for administration and surveillance of an ecclesiastic land, see Magnou-Nortier, *Société*, pp. 189-191.

⁷⁶⁹ The arrangements of abbeys with nearby fortifications like this may have been forced by conciliar provisions against arms-bearing clerics, but also involved the effective disarming of the abbey itself, and would have left them open to aggressive secular incursions. I thank Claire Taylor for her thoughtful comments on this subject.

⁷⁷⁰ *LMSF*, i.22, cf. de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 184 n. 100; *Conques*, p. lxxxv. Other donations at *Conques*, 23, 32, 33, 196, 366.

⁷⁷¹ Similarly, the monastery's relationship with the countess Garsinde was not destroyed despite the apparently fraught dispute over Pallas and her less-than-favourable characterization in Bernard of Angers' miracle-story. Garsinde later sold the church of Saint-Felix-de-Veyrac (now Villeveyrac, dép. Hérault), near Pallas, to abbot Odolric around 1035: Bousquet, *Rouergue*, pp. 118, 127 n. 10, 329 n. 90.

would not necessarily have been used to the benefit of Conques and its patrons, not by virtue of simply being a castle.

The second reference to castle-building comes in the London codex where ‘the most powerful men here in the territory of the Rouergue devoted their efforts to the building of a *castrum*’ at Aigremont (L.6). Significantly, the builders of the castle were just that – plural – and, furthermore, the feud that forms the background to the miracle narrative (of a healed *miles* injured in battle) was between the lord of Aigremont and the (again, plural) lords of another (singular) castle. At a similar time the cartulary reports the oath-taking of multiple lords (possibly brothers) at the castles of Cassagnes and Panat at the refoundation of Saint-Pierre-de-Clairvaux.⁷⁷² In fact, Debord has noted that the co-seigneurie of castles in the Rouergue was particularly developed and continued to be so throughout subsequent centuries.⁷⁷³ Shares in castles may sometimes have arisen from intra-familial divisions and the desire to keep a stake in the status of the patrimonial castle;⁷⁷⁴ Aigremont, built by multiple people who were not necessarily family members, may always have had sub-sections. These details encourage us away from the concept of independent castellan lords acting in a power vacuum. How multiple people practically held castles in common raises further questions.⁷⁷⁵ Jointly-held castles also must have equated to shares in the income generated by its lands, either through the fruits of harvest or the taxations and rents it generated from the *coloni*, or, as Debord suggests, those of the ban and justice.⁷⁷⁶ Shared revenues may also have encouraged the development of efficient administrative estate-management systems that subsequent centuries would see. And both revenue- and/or occupation-sharing argue for a self-regulatory arrangement in which it was in one’s interest to keep the castle standing and for collusion between peers. It also suggests that the symbolic power acquired through laying claim to a castle, even just part of it, held considerable weight – perhaps even more weight than the physical force might facilitate. Whilst the castles of the Rouergue were frequently sited in areas of good natural defence and thus intended for protection from attack,⁷⁷⁷ we must not forget the lessons of the recent historiography on later medieval castles, which highlight that they were symbols of status and power as much as (and sometimes more than) a military assurance of

⁷⁷² *Conques*, nn. 14, 15.

⁷⁷³ Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, pp. 14-15.

⁷⁷⁴ Magnou-Nortier, ‘Fiefs et fidélité’, pp. 468-469; F. L. Cheyette, *Ermengard of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours* (London, 2001), pp. 194-195.

⁷⁷⁵ There are no comparable examples from the Rouergue to Cheyette’s from the Narbonnais in which castle occupancy might be specified for two, four, or eight months of the year: Cheyette, *Ermengard*, p. 195, p. 210 n. 25.

⁷⁷⁶ Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, p. 14.

⁷⁷⁷ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, pp. 138-139; Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, p. 16.

such.⁷⁷⁸ As Barton has shown for the Maine, counts sought to shape their own image using traditional Carolingian symbols of authority, and surely there was a trickle-down effect too.⁷⁷⁹ Power was therefore not all ‘*de facto* power’, as Bonnassie claims, deriving ‘directly from their military power’, neither was ‘the sole function of fortresses, therefore ... war’.⁷⁸⁰

One notable feature of the eleventh-century Rouergue is the lack of settlements organized around castles.⁷⁸¹ Bonnassie suggested that this was due to fear of castles, although this presumes that the population had a choice in where they lived, and/or that, paradoxically, castellans were unable to use the fear of violence, which he sees as particularly developed in this area, effectively – that is to say in order to make people live closer to their centres of power, for easier management, as elsewhere. He saw territorial circumscriptions related to castles anyway, as indicated by the fact that Beatrice of Turenne had asked for a liberated captive to be escorted beyond the *fines castelli*, although this is an ambiguous phrase.⁷⁸² André Debord notes that no Rouergat castellan lord affirmed himself using the term *dominus* or *princeps* in ‘practical’ documents until the late twelfth century and that the notion of ‘castellany’ was only reflected (with terms such as *castellania*, *mandamentum*, *territorium*) from the mid-twelfth century. For him, this suggests ‘les droits du châtelain étaient avant tout patrimoniaux (ban, justice)’ – and this is how the phenomenon of coseigneurie can be explained.⁷⁸³ It is an interesting observation, since whilst the hagiographers did use terms like *presidere* and *sub dominio*, this was a particular habit of the northern Bernard of Angers and only appears once in the stories written by the native continuators.⁷⁸⁴ Whilst Debord has evidence for shared banal rights in subsequent centuries – not least the wonderful example of one Hugh de Belcastel who held $\frac{1}{192}$ of the seigneurie and jurisdiction of Aubin in 1323 – the Miracles of Sainte Foy and other sources offer nothing to support this for the first half of the eleventh century. Lords of castles like Austrin of Conques might hold land across a dispersed area, as suggests his *breve memoriale*; Conques castle was just one of his properties.⁷⁸⁵ Debord is right: much of the value of castles was indeed patrimonial, but this lay more in sharing a familial symbol than the spoils of ban and justice. If they were not the nuclei of settlements, at least some of the castles described in

⁷⁷⁸ For example C. Coulson, ‘Structural symbolism in medieval castle architecture’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 132 (1979), pp. 73-90 and subsequent scholarship.

⁷⁷⁹ Barton, *Lordship*, chp. 3.

⁷⁸⁰ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 146.

⁷⁸¹ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 136; Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, pp. 16-17 comments that there were some castral bourgs, but does not date these; de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 184, 359.

⁷⁸² Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, pp. 136, 145, 147, for whom *castrum* could mean both a building and a territory. De Gournay agrees that castles were ‘repulsive’ to the rest of the population, *Rouergue*, p. 360.

⁷⁸³ Debord, ‘Châteaux et société’, p. 14.

⁷⁸⁴ *LMSF*, i.6, i.11, i.22, i.33, iii.10: cf. de Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 183-184.

⁷⁸⁵ *Conques*, n. 23, locations identified by Desjardins, *Conques*, pp. lxxxv-lxxxvi.

the Miracles were residential centres for the lord and his family and often for some of his men, too, making some also garrisoned permanently.⁷⁸⁶

What it meant in real terms to hold a castle, jointly or alone, is thus left hazy by the miracle-stories. Imprisonments were the most common form of castle-based violence, with battles specified only rarely, perhaps because non-military family members could occupy them as much as armed men. We have already seen how inter-warrior feuds were common – and castles indeed played a role in this – but also that their lands were targeted more often than their castles. We seem to find here a situation closer to that described by Chris Wickham for Tuscany, where landlordship (including but not exclusively castles) continued to be the basis of politics, rather than banal castellan lordships.⁷⁸⁷ Castles may have retained much of their value simply in the fact that they *were* castles – an adopted symbol of lordliness – but may not have been the nuclei of affective power over those who worked the land. Neither did our hagiographers fundamentally condemn their violence. Is the impression of castles ‘totally negative’ then, as Bonnassie would have us believe?⁷⁸⁸ One rather gets the impression that they were a large, but normalized, part of the landscape. Most certainly, secular powers needed connections to castles, just as churches needed holy relics. Yet it was the people and their land that were in the castles that the miracle-stories were more concerned with. Because castles tended to be represented as a place to which individuals were attached, their symbolic power was more pervasive in the stories. Related to almost every castle we meet were *milites* of all ranks, characters that were worthy of Sainte Foy’s beneficence as much as they were capable of brigandage and pillage.

20. MILITES AND ARISTOCRATS

Aristocrats and *milites* of various ranks were the most prevalent social group at the receiving end of all positive and negative intercessions (46%), representing 50% of the victims of punishment miracles. Yet at 44% they were also the most frequent beneficiaries of positive intercessions. **Table 5** These figures offer a counter-balance to Frédéric de Gournay’s triumphant *mutationnisme*: ‘Sur 24 miracles de punition, 15 frappent des *milites*: proportion significative!’⁷⁸⁹ In any case, as we have seen, vengeance miracles were about creating a dialogue and engaging with an individual rather than straightforward ‘punishment’. The group

⁷⁸⁶ Caitucoli, ‘Nobles et chevaliers’, pp. 412–413; Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 143.

⁷⁸⁷ See text to n. 91.

⁷⁸⁸ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 146.

⁷⁸⁹ De Gournay, *Rouergue*, pp. 216–217. His totals of miracles are different to those mine used here – perhaps because the latter include supplementary miracles as well as primary miracles.

can be broken down further into sub-sections, for which see **Table 6**, although the terminology used is less than specific in this respect, warning us against the attributing tight social definitions to them. Those designated *nobilis* alone without further qualification were all women,⁷⁹⁰ and *eques* was explicitly interchangeable with *miles*.⁷⁹¹ The ‘nobles et chevaliers’ in the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* have been studied by Christiane Caitucoli, who concludes that all *milites* used weapons, rode horses and lived in castles, although there are differences in each author's usage of the word. For her, Bernard of Angers is consistent: a *miles* lived in a *castrum* and/or was in a situation of dependence, but was never explicitly described as ‘noble’. Being of the view that there was only one continuator, she treats Books iii and iv together, concluding that their usage of *miles* was broader and could apply to a lord as much as a simple man of arms. She concludes that the change in usage of the term over the twenty years between each redaction confirms social ascension of the *milites*, as described by Duby and Poly and Bournazel.⁷⁹² Yet on some occasions, Bernard does relate nobleness to a *miles*, albeit not in the same breath. The belligerent Pons who challenged the ruling at Pallas is described first as *ferocissimus iuvenis et valde turgidus, nobilis tamen et prepotens*, had *commilitonibus* and was himself as *miles audax* (i.12). The ‘nobility’ of Pons must have referred to inherited status rather than personal qualities given his antagonistic, almost lunatic, characterization in the story. Others were clearly not of the *milites castri*: one *miles* named Raymond had 50 men under his command (ii.7), and the *miles* Gerald described as ‘hardly an obscure person’ (*haut obscura persona*) surely hinted at an impressive lineage (i.4, i.23). Thus Bernard’s use of the term was just as broad as his continuators’ and seems to have held no specific social value beyond referring to a mounted warrior.⁷⁹³ Duby’s schema does not seem to hold for the Rouergue, as neither does the Belgian school’s,⁷⁹⁴ since between 1013 and 1050 a *miles* could fit anywhere in the secular hierarchy and did not alone carry connotations of any particular form of service or descent.

For the present study it is most important that the broader group of *milites* and aristocrats were most often the recipients of Foy’s intercessions. They could be maleficent, brutal characters.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹⁰ *LMSF*, iv.20 (positive); i.18, iii.16 (negative).

⁷⁹¹ For example *LMSF*, iii.13, iii.23, iii.14; iv.7; and in other sources also *caballarius*: see also de Gournay, *Rouergue*, p. 170.

⁷⁹² Caitucoli, ‘Nobles et chevaliers’, pp. 407–409, discussing the historiography of *miles* and nobility briefly at pp. 406–407, 412.

⁷⁹³ On all *milites* as mounted warriors, see Caitucoli, ‘Nobles et chevaliers’, p. 409.

⁷⁹⁴ Typically, Duby, *Mâconnaise*, pp. 239–241; L. Génicot, ‘La noblesse au moyen age dans l'ancienne 'Francie': continuité, rupture, ou évolution?’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5 (1962) pp. 52–59.

⁷⁹⁵ Bonnassie, ‘Fortresses’, p. 147; Bonnassie, et. al. ‘La Gallia du sud’, p. 306. *ASWF*, pp. 121–126 suggest that military males were portrayed pejoratively by Bernard and more positively by the continuators because the

Yet they could also be magnanimous, righteous and worthy. Just as there were positive relationships between castles and the monastery, *milites* and nobles might accompany the abbot and monks to a dispute settlement (*nobili beneficiatorum militum stipante caterva* – i.12) or lend use of their horses for monastic business like the transportation of the reliquary statue (iii.12). Such arrangements were necessary – it was no longer appropriate for a warrior-monk like Gimon to live on the premises (not that this had ever been a common practice). A division between the clergy and armed men was perpetuated in theory if not always in practice, if Gozbert ‘cleric only in name; by employment he was a secular fighting man’ is anything to go by (ii.6). Likewise the warrior-monk Gimon in operation at Conques during the tenth century, once a layman turned live-in armed prior-defender of the monastery, had a central and revered place in the eyes of Bernard of Angers. He slept within easy reach of his sword and breastplate (which hung next to his monastic garb). His warrior attributes and even his habit of berating the saint were excused on the basis that his motives were pure and focused only on the service of the monastery – thus he is cast as a *miles Christi*.⁷⁹⁶

Whatever the disposition of the individual *milites*, it was this group that the miracle-stories mostly engaged with and which was their primary audience. Barthélemy has demonstrated this beyond doubt, emphasizing how their content, from stories of falcons to the healing of battle-wounds, was primarily geared towards an appreciative aristocratic and warrior audience.⁷⁹⁷ It was not entertainment alone however, and the source seems to parade that ‘according to the quality of the hearers ought the discourse of the teachers to be fashioned, so as to suit all and each for their several needs’.⁷⁹⁸ They were more than a passive audience; they were the ‘market’ at which the cult was aimed and, in turn, whose patronage and good favour was coveted via repeated motifs of vows, pilgrimages, donations and fidelity. By writing it all down, the monastery also helped influence the social hierarchy and fuse together those who shared relationships with Conques. Here, Brigitte Bedos-Rezak’s musings on charters seem to be equally applicable to our hagiographic material:

The charters [for which, read miracle-stories] issued from and kept by a single monastery allow the identification of an aristocratic group unified by its gifts in its interactions with this monastery; perhaps it is possible here to perceive a medieval version of a clientele. By inscribing lay gifts, the titles of donors, their family connections, the list of their witnesses, the scribes are also inscribing the social order, mapping zones of authority, organizing its hierarchy. In noting that eleventh- and twelfth-century donations to Île-de-France abbeys register a sociological shift by which small

monastery became stronger and less fearful. In Bernard’s works, however, they were almost equally beneficiaries (31%) and victims (32%).

⁷⁹⁶ LMSF, i.26; Barthélemy, ‘Sainte Foy’, pp. 88. See above for ‘rustic humiliation’ of Sainte Foy, text to n. 564.

⁷⁹⁷ Especially Barthélemy, ‘Sainte Foy’, pp. 86–106. On themed miracle-provision see also Caitucoli, ‘Nobles et chevaliers’, p. 414.

⁷⁹⁸ Text to n. 38.

landholders become totally excluded in favour of wealthy noble donors, I wonder whether it is possible to conceive that monks screened their donors [or miracle characters], or at least the recording of gifts [or miracles], so as to create through an archive that pattern of landholding and that structure of authority corresponding to their specific vision of social order; and they enacted this order through documentary practice and symbolic manipulation of charters [or miracle-stories].⁷⁹⁹

For Conques, where the count was not central to patronage, this meant the playing down of comital authority and the weaving of a complex narrative of social order in which nobility, status, hierarchy and above all relationships to the monastery were publicized and preserved.

21. THE 'COMMON PEOPLE'

If the *milites* and nobles were the main targets of the message, other members of society were not totally absent. Other members of society play a lesser role in the miracle-stories. For Barthélemy, only the second continuator's work advertised that the saint's favours reached the common people.⁸⁰⁰ Indeed one of this hagiographer's characters, a servant of the monks of Conques whose donkey had died, posed this very question, asking 'if you watch over the great palaces of the wealthy, if you alleviate their troubles again and again ... why shouldn't you protect with your right hand the small possessions of poor people and especially of your own servants? (iv.19). Besides the aristocrats and *milites*, other members of secular society – from tradesmen and merchants, to the seemingly dependent – appeared both as victims and beneficiaries, accounting for 20% of characters overall (even fewer than individuals of unspecified status). The group is almost equally represented as beneficiaries of positive interventions and victims of divine punishments at 21% and 18% respectively. Bernard was particularly likely to include stories where lower-order characters as victims of his punitive miracles (27%, as opposed to 10% for his positive miracles). Since the first continuator was the most likely to use the stories for monastic social politics and to engage with local aristocrats, it is perhaps unsurprising that he ignores this group entirely from his victims. **Table 5**

As for these 'common people', there is often scant information by which to investigate their dependency and relationship to the rest of society. One miracle-story recounts multiple healings of illness that spread around the household of a farmer (*agricola*) named Arnald, who worked land at Saint-Martin-de-Belcassé. First an *inquilinus* of his house had fallen ill and was healed by Foy, the same happened to his wife and soon his oxen began to suffer from a pestilence. One of these was his best ox, which he ordered a *mancipium* to skin as it was dying

⁷⁹⁹ Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic sources', p. 322.

⁸⁰⁰ Barthélemy, 'Sainte Foy', p. 102. It is this author that includes the only certain liberation of a prisoner-peasant, which for Barthélemy 'fait une petite démocratisation de l'évasion miraculeuse'.

(iv.22). This is the only use of the term in the miracle-stories, and gives no context by which to establish the legal status of the man.⁸⁰¹ Another *servus*, of the wealthy Raymond who was shipwrecked en route to the Holy Land, appears more to have been a man-servant: he was accompanying him on his pilgrimage and returned his master's money to his wife when Raymond was thought lost at sea (ii.2). Other servants (*servitores*) appear in various guises, such as those of Guy of Calmilliacum were sent by their lord to steal wine from Conques' store at Molières in the dead of night (i.6), or servants of the monks themselves (iv.19). Elsewhere we have fleeting glimpses of others' roles, described with the ambiguous term *vernaculus*. This was how Guibert (the Illuminated) was described, as both the relative (*consanguineus*) of his pursuant Gerald and 'his household servant [who] vigorously managed his business affairs' (*sue domus vernaculum rerumque suarum procuratorum strenuum* - i.1). The same term was applied to three men who were keeping guard over a prisoner being held in the fortress of Castelpers (*sub dominio Amblardi nobilissimi viri ... trium vernaculorum custodia servabatur* - i.33). Such people were clearly at the lower end of the social strata but their legal condition remains elusive. The relative absence of more humble members of society is a reminder that, just as at Bobbio, the main patrons targeted by the *miracula* shaped the content and tone of the collections and, as a result, direct what we can learn from them about the respective societies in which Bobbio and Conques operated. We turn finally to see what comparisons can be drawn.

⁸⁰¹ *BoSF*, p. 302 n. 66.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

In over one hundred years between the translation to Pavia in 929 and the miracles written by the second continuator of the Sainte Foy miracles, this study has covered the pre-*mutation* period through to its apex. The categories of the ‘feudal transformation’ debate have provided a useful context for the comparison of two monasteries and their role in society, but comparative analysis has demonstrated the insufficiency of the model either in its assumptions about the earlier period, or to fully describe developments in society around the year 1000. The greatest weakness in the debate has been to underestimate the role of monasteries in this environment, particularly since it is their sources upon which historians often rely. For this reason, the conclusions here will not attempt to comment on how well either society accords to the model or its revision, but instead will place the monasteries and their documentary output at the centre of its enquiry, and compare instead the differences and similarities between the strategic manipulation of saints’ cults, and related texts, at Bobbio and Conques in the context of societal and political change.

During the tenth and early eleventh centuries superstructures in the south of France and the north of Italy evolved in very different directions. Formative differences between our monasteries were set during the Carolingian period, when royal authority manifested itself to differing extents. By extending privileges to a monastery, a king brought that monastery more firmly under his lordship: and once in his lordship, it was just one more step to extending proprietary rights over it, if the royal will was there. In Bobbio’s case, this came most drastically in the formal division of its lands into abbatial and conventual menses. On one hand, the move protected the community and preserved its self-sufficiency. But by secularizing the abbatial lands and making official the use of the abbatial title as a benefice to be given out, it tied the institution indefinitely to the king and his *fideles* who were installed there as abbots. Royal authority modelled on Carolingian precedent persisted in Italy in the post-Carolingian period, and was consolidated and extended by the Ottonians in their own image. On a documentary level, we see the survival or imitation of the *placitum* form which ‘marks nothing less than the survival or imitation of legitimate public power’.⁸⁰² A similarly consistent stream of privileges from sovereign to monastery and a kingdom/monastery dialogue that on the face of it was in harmony with the ideal of the unity of Church and Empire. A mere three-day walk to the capital of the *regnum* at Pavia and close to the location of the king’s lands to the north of

⁸⁰² Wickham, ‘Justice’, p. 195.

the Po,⁸⁰³ Bobbio's experience remained closely tied to the kings of Italy and the discourses of royal authority, although closer examination shows just how different the practicalities underlying these discourses could be, and the *miracula* invoke royal authority. Despite receiving similar royal privileges of protection in the Carolingian age, and owing 'prayers for the kingdom' in 819, there is little evidence to suggest that Carolingian lordship was ever felt as fundamentally at Conques as it was at Bobbio. Semi-autonomy easily moved to complete autonomy with the cessation of royal privileges. Other powerful laymen had tried and sometimes succeeded in extending direct lordship over Conques, but no dynastic primacy was ever established there. Two such diverse experiences of the king-monastery relationship demonstrates the flexible, negotiable and, sometimes, escapable nature of such ties.

But the role of public authority – central to Bobbio, absent for Conques – should not be presumed as a passive reflection of their respective societies. Certainly, Bobbio could and did appeal to kings for the confirmation of its lands and privileges. But this did not mean that Bobbio was better protected than Conques, or that Conques even aspired to royal protection. Complaints about attacks on land were just as pervasive under the nose of royal authority in Italy as they were in the 'kingless' Midi, although the means taken to redress these took different forms. Whilst Bobbio bemoaned the weakness of King Hugh it also invoked the discourses of royal authority in order to petition another king, probably Otto. The Miracles of Sainte Foy, on the other hand, practically ignored all other forms of public authority; the counts of the Rouergue appear only marginally and the incumbent Count Hugh, not at all. The answer surely lies in the intended audiences for each work, since these were proactive texts. In line with scholarship emphasizing the periods 'localization' of power, on the micro-level the cultic activities of our monasteries were aimed at local individuals who were foci of power, even if at Bobbio this took on a national aspect in its proximity to the capital. What, then, can a comparison of the two collections usefully tell us about the post-Carolingian socio-political world? There are three particular areas that will be addressed. First, the issue of what 'local' was from the perspective of our monasteries. Secondly, the role of 'reform' on the hagiography studied here. And lastly, how far the *mutation documentaire* model is applicable to hagiography and our understanding of the post-Carolingian world.

The obvious subject on which both collections of *miracula* unite is land, like so much medieval evidence. Without wishing to stray too far into debates about 'territoriality' and *in ecclesiamento* – which could serve a whole other study in itself for these cases – it is worth making some

⁸⁰³ See the map in MacLean, *Kingship*, p. 92.

observations on the spatial landscapes invoked by each of the texts. Unsurprisingly, both collections of *miracula* defined the centre as the monastery itself, particularly by the convergence of the cult there and especially by virtue of their relics. Despite the early focus on the *Miracula sancti Columbani* on Spelonca, Bobbio's place as the site of Columbanus' tomb and as the beginning and terminal point in the *translatio* anchored the monastery as the central focus of his cult, just as the continual references to Foy's shrine as the objective of various pilgrimages did at Conques. Both also employed relic processions that, in the terms described by Lauwers, formed the necessary performative practices of 'travelling' and 'marking' to supplement the *locus* of the monastic house in order to 'materialize space'.⁸⁰⁴

Yet there are some differences. Bobbio was more concerned with perimeters and 'inclusion' (and thus exclusion) in a material sense. Despite claims to far-flung lands at Lake Garda and in Tuscany, and a cluster slightly nearer in Liguria, the *translatio* and later the *miracula* of Columbanus drew the focus to lands in the immediate vicinity of Bobbio. Besides the stops on the route, the only other reference to the local socio-political landscape is the bishops of Tortona and Piacenza and their attempted incursions; the other *principes* Samson, Gandolf and Raginerius are not associated to particular places, even though at the time of the *translatio* Raginerius was the count of Piacenza and Gandolf took that role soon after: thus emphasis is placed on the diocesan landscape rather than the comital. Given the privileged and ever-improving position of bishops in the Italian kingdom, this is unsurprising, but is a point of great divergence to Conques in which the bishop of Rodez is a marginal figure at best. When San Colombano enjoyed an abbot whose interests converged with those of the community, and if one considers the exemptions and immunities granted to the abbot and monastery to have been in working operation, it is apt to speak of a bobbiese 'territory' akin to a diocese (which indeed it later became) that formed a pocket between those of Tortona and Piacenza.⁸⁰⁵ It was also these nearby lands that served the most immediate needs of the monastic *mensa*, hence their importance to the community. Bobbio certainly fought contests over individual pieces of land as and when expedience dictated, and the *miracula* use the opportunity of the translation to lay claim to some of these lands – but the prime aim of both the translation and

⁸⁰⁴ J.-P. Devroey and M. Lauwers, 'L'espace des historiens médiévistes: quelques remarques en guise de conclusion', in *Construction de l'espace au moyen âge : pratiques et représentations: XXXVIIe congrès de la SHMES: Mulhouse, 2-4 June 2006* (Paris, 2007) pp. 435-453, at p. 6.

⁸⁰⁵ I use the term cautiously, mindful of the inference of *dominatio* that accompanies the notion of 'territory'; likewise, that the limits of the territory were often not clearly defined, at least in documentary terms, until Ottonian rule, and the term 'territory' not generally explicitly linked to dioceses until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: M. Lauwers, '*Territorium non facere diocesim*. Conflits, limites et représentation territoriale du diocèse (Ve-Xe siècle)', in F. Mazel, *L'espace du diocèse. Genèse d'un territoire dans l'Occident médiéval* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 37-38.

the *miracula* decades later was on a conceptual plain. It aimed to stake a claim to its 'territory', and also to restore, rejuvenate and renegotiate relationships with the king on whose authority such a territory had always depended. It would not be fully successful in its quest, and the lands of Boso, son of Gandolf (count of Piacenza) would later control numerous individual plots of land right inside the triangle bordered by the rivers Staffora, Trebbia and the Po to the north that was traditionally the preserve of Bobbio.⁸⁰⁶ Furthermore, with the division of the abbatial and conventual menses, there was a combination of lands directly administered and those given out in benefice, which broke up any hopes of a consistent *terra sancti Columbani*.⁸⁰⁷

At Conques, it is less appropriate to speak of a 'territory' in an enclosed sense, although the miracles of Sainte Foy did seek to establish one on a representational level. Claim was made to land in a similar manner of procession like the Bobbio *translatio* and yet little emphasis is placed on the route taken; instead the impression is one of independent autonomous parcels of land, rather than defined borders. Despite the early royal grants of land, restricted to the north-west Rouergue, Conques' land-base had been steadily built up through the acquisition or donation of individual plots of land that spread over a much greater area. It is this land that forms the focal point of the monastery's concerns in the eleventh century and in the *miracula*, as demonstrated by the punishment miracles that sought to engage over these lands, and whose audience was accordingly much wider than at Bobbio. The impression given by the miracles of Sainte Foy is therefore larger than the resettlement patterns indicated by the term *inecclesiamento* (like *incastellamento* and *encellulement*, for example) but in its broader sense of the all-encompassing *ecclesia*: its perimeters were unspecified although in a sense, the *miracula* lead us towards particular areas of 'inclusion'.⁸⁰⁸ Just as the possibility of having two *seniores* (temporal, and Foy) is mooted in the *miracula*, so the work allows for 'co-spatialities'.⁸⁰⁹

Conques was operating willingly in an open or, at least, pluralistic market where it was normal to patronize multiple monasteries, even if family and political alliances directed some preferences. Through the miracles of Sainte Foy, Conques was concerned with power and hierarchy with respect to individual plots of land and, as a complete work, the collection

⁸⁰⁶ Bougard, 'Entre Gandolfingi et Obertenghi', map at p. 43.

⁸⁰⁷ Other important monasteries founded by generous initial grants of fiscal land can be conceived of in territorial terms and had clearly traceable (if increasingly threatened) boundaries, such as those of San Vincenzo al Volturno and Monte Cassino in the south of Italy, as described by C. Wickham, 'The *terra* of San Vincenzo al Volturno in the eight to twelfth centuries: the historical framework', in R. Hodges and J. Mitchell (eds.), *San Vincenzo al Volturno: The Archaeology, Art and Territory of an Early Medieval Monastery* (1985), pp. 227-259.

⁸⁰⁸ These distinctions based on Devroey and Lauwers, 'L'espace des historiens médiévistes', text to nn. 22-32.

⁸⁰⁹ This term is borrowed from B. Cursente, 'Autour de Lézat: emboîtements, cospatialités, territoires (milieu X – milieu XIII siècle)', in B. Cursente et M. Mousnier (eds.), *Les territoires du médiéviste* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 151-167.

demonstrated the dispersed and far-reaching dissemination of Foy's cult. It did not aim at anything absolute, unlike Bobbio which identified itself against the bishops of Tortona and Piacenza and ignored all reference to the broader patrimony and indeed to the wider Columbanian network. In this sense the Bobbio piece, despite its national aspect in relation to the king, is a better source for Bobbio's local political landscape than the miracles of Sainte Foy are for Conques'. The French work transcends the political units studied by historians of secular society – the Rouergue is highly featured but not exclusively so, as **Graph 1** reminds us. Furthermore, the Conques model of dispersed patrimony is precisely anti-'banal' – even if (and the sources are silent) the individual plots were operated in this manner, Conques itself did not match Cluny's consolidation of a surrounding 'banal' territory,⁸¹⁰ just as the local aristocrats that we meet in the *miracula* are often portrayed as attached to a castle without further reference to a related territory.

Using the *miracula* alone it is impossible to reconstruct a full picture of the social landscapes of Rouergue and the Oltrepò Pavese. Such texts are little interested in the nature and extent of all society, however inclusive a source like the Miracles of Sainte Foy might appear to at first glance. Their value comes in the different audiences and, accordingly, the different discourses that they use, also shaped by the identities of the saints themselves. At Bobbio the *miracula* reinforced those discourses of the king and of royal protection, and the socio-religious services offered by Bobbio and its monastic community and drew on its foundation by Columbanus to underline these. Relying still on early royal grants of land the *miracula* were negotiating on this level of donation – kings were not the only source of land, but initial Lombard and Carolingian grants had bestowed a significant amount including, most importantly, those in the local area that primarily served the brethren at Bobbio. Royal authority was a central theme to the Bobbio *miracula* because it was royal action that Bobbio sought to engage. Sainte Foy's *miracula*, on the other hand, worked on a different plane. They were able to manipulate and play with the concept of Sainte Foy herself, and were used particularly by the monastic continuators to speak directly to those who already had a relationship with Conques or who may have been persuaded into one. This was more akin to a 'marketing' document which perceived a much broader audience. Far from seeking to encourage or condone behaviour from a religious standpoint, miracle-stories such as those studied here were adapted to their audiences and pandered to their tastes and their consciences. Such an approach surely marks the an increasing accessibility of the written aspects of cultic activities to those lower down the social scale, in line with the practical popular elements of pilgrimage and veneration.

⁸¹⁰ Text to n. 102.

The tenth century witnessed some key shifts in cultic, particularly relic, practices including the increasingly frequent public airing of relics, which left their crypts and entered the world, sometimes permanently. Accompanying these were developments to the juridical functions of saints and relics. This included a migration away from the use of ‘neutral’ relics in law towards the use of ‘interested’ relics. The concept of universality of divine law remained important, nevertheless, since it underpinned the whole concept of the juridical character of relics, and was also used at Conques to develop its role as a forum for dispute processing. At Bobbio the innovations in procession and ritual use of relics invoked public witness as legitimizing the legal validity of claims. This is also true for Conques where, also, popular support *was* the aim. ‘Interested’ relics also formed part of a move towards the ‘seigneurialization’ of the saint, whereby saints were increasingly portrayed as lords. In enacting this, the abbot became less important in the figurative identity of each house. The concept of the saint as a lord might be invoked as a direct opposition to a detested abbot – such as Giseprand – but more generally it was used as the overall head of the patrimony. Such moves reoriented the monasteries as lords equal to their secular counterparts, confusing further the distinction between secular and ecclesiastical.

Relic movements and their related hagiographical texts elsewhere have been associated to Benedictine restoration, such as those associated with Gerard of Brogne in Flanders and Lotharingia.⁸¹¹ It has been noted that Conques showed little interest in the wider interests of some movements often related to reform, like the Peace movement. Yet evidently some other ‘reforming’ ideas had been taken on board, since there seem to have been no more secular abbots following Bego and his nephews’ reigns. As for clerics bearing arms, it was no longer acceptable in the eleventh century to have a residential armed warrior-monk like Gimon, although even Bernard of Angers (a chapter cleric) bemoans the disarmament, rather than embracing it (i.26). We see little evidence at Conques for a greater process of Benedictine purification; likewise the monastery ferociously resisted the clutches of Cluny, and therefore also, one might imagine, Cluniac reform. Yet just as Cluny’s reform was concerned with the recovery and control of church lands, this was clearly a prime concern for both of our institutions. It is on this point that converge all the interests of our two accounts; in a very broad concept of ‘reform as autonomy’. Innovations in cultic behaviour at Bobbio and Conques were certainly related to preoccupations of land and the quest for ‘autonomy’, but this did not necessarily always mean the same type of ‘reform’, nor can we define one type of

⁸¹¹ See for example Ugé, *Creating the Monastic Past*, pp. 72-90.

‘autonomy’. Their cultic innovations can be attributed as much to secular abbots (Gerlan’s translation procedure, Stephen of Clermont’s reliquary statue) as used against them (the *miracula* used against Giseprand of Tortona and to denounce other Clermont abbacies at Conques). Bobbio’s search for autonomy from episcopal domination operated fully within, and sought the help of, the structures of royal power (and perhaps might best be described as ‘renewal’), whereas Conques’ autonomy thrived on their absence. Whilst Conques may have been fully immersed in a cultural shift towards the frequently aggressive protection of church property that is elsewhere associated to ‘reform’, such as at Cluny, the term would be inappropriate for the Rouergat institution. At the very least it was not a concept that either Conques or Bobbio seem to have been self-reflectively part of, nor did they use related terminology. That both sets of *miracula* were part of movements of monastic self-assertion, however, cannot be denied.

How far were our examples of monastic self-assertion led by ‘social crisis’? At Bobbio, the incursions of the bishops may be related to their increasing powers (perhaps even under royal patronage), whilst at Conques land contests are described more explicitly between those lower down the social scale. Yet was the situation for Conques’ patrimony in the eleventh century so much worse than Bobbio’s in the tenth? Were not all types of local lords in the habit of attempting to extend their patrimony in all eras? Sainte Foy’s *miracula* were not written as a direct response to the particular land incursions, but as part of a greater process. Rather than a reaction to new forms of lordship and violence, the monastery was documenting for the first time the lower levels of its patronage; thus inscribing the very same ‘trickle-down’ effect, where the trappings of aristocracy – including the patronage of religious institutions – previously reserved for the very highest levels were becoming accessible to lower levels of society. Most notable at Conques was the avoidance of over-dependence on any single powerbase. Ignoring traditional modes of power and jurisdiction does not prove their complete absence, however, but a new diversified market that gave as much opportunity to the lesser aristocracy as more senior dynasties.

How far, then, do our sources fit into the *mutation documentaire*? In their interaction with more formal document types, they accord closely to the models set out by the ‘collapse’ model. The *miracula* of Sainte Foy relate only implicitly to other written documents, making no reference to comparable charter documentation even when these existed – such as the documents relating to Pallas now preserved in the cartulary – except on one occasion where many people gave over their manors ‘by the authority of their wills’ (i.17). At Bobbio, the *miracula* relate the papal and royal privileges read out to the king in close detail, and were explicitly inter-textual

with the diploma of King Hugh to which the reader is referred for detail (c. xxvi). These form a parallel to Bobbio's participation in *placita* where the written word was still a primary (if not exclusive) source of evidential proof, whilst Conques more frequently engaged in non-formal dispute processing systems. Yet in this environment, the opportunities for social negotiation presented by the miracles of Sainte Foy were more important than the presentation of written charters, although they did continue to write such legal texts – presumably because formal justice did still operate, and perhaps also for administrative reasons. Once again, audience is everything, since these drove both the content and the format of the texts. Shorter and chronological in organization, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* make most sense if read as a whole, or at least if the central chapters regarding the *translatio* are read together, as a narrative of royal and saintly protection. The miracles of Sainte Foy on the other hand are almost all self-contained and there were certainly too many (and always more being written) to imagine that the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* would have been read as a whole. Whilst both would have been drawn upon in liturgical contexts particularly on feast days, we would be better to liken the creation of the *Miracula sancti Columbani* to one-off document production and, conversely, that of the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* to an early example of the cartulary-type activities of the later eleventh and twelfth century, providing a series of independent records as a resource that could be dipped in and out of when necessary.

On one side of the *mutation documentaire*, the *Miracula sancti Columbani* advertised the ideal of royal protection, although in doing so also underscored its negotiable nature. It also represents the highest interplay of ecclesiastical institutions and State, although it should be underlined that despite the discourses to that effect the *miracula* still responded in essence to local contests for land in the area south of the Po and Pavia. Its proximity to the king and the role of its abbots with respect to the king only frame such events in a national context. Several decades later, the picture at Conques was very different. The use of the *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* by both sides of the *mutation* debate is unsurprising. Fully immersed in its socio-political landscape, the monastery of Conques sought to influence the broader society around it in order to sustain its own position. It did not enjoy a privileged detached position to moralize or reflect from. Neither, for the purposes of the *miracula*, was it of any consequence how other lords justified their power and how they operated their lands; although this may well have occupied monastic efforts using other means of social pressure. Yet the monastery did enjoy the position that its relics accorded it. The developments in Foy's cult took place in stages over many decades, from her reliquary statue in the mid-tenth century, through the writing of Bernard's miracle stories and their further manipulation towards socio-political ends by their continuators. The very presence of these written miracle-stories would have in turn influenced

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