

Sharers in the Contemplative Virtue:
Julianus Pomerius's Carolingian Audience
by
Josh Timmermann

A graduating essay submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
in
The Faculty of Arts
History Department

We accept this essay as conforming to the required standard:

University of British Columbia
17 April 2013

Acknowledgments

This study centers, in large part, on the notion of authorship within an early medieval context of reception. The writerly “I” is nearly finished typing letters that appear as words on a computer screen, while the authorial “I” is almost ready to begin guiding you, the reader, through the various sections of this essay. However, while it is my name, as author, that is listed on the title page, it seems odd to alone receive credit. Hence, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize some of the other “co-authors” of this “work.”

Without the expert guidance of Courtney Booker, who supervised this thesis project, its completion would quite simply have been impossible. Dr. Booker first sparked my interest in seriously pursuing the study of early medieval history through his uncommon abilities as a teacher. Every step of the way, and in particular, at moments when my enthusiasm for the work threatened to give way to frustration, he has righted my course and served as an inspiring example of both scholarly erudition and generosity. Richard Pollard has likewise, through much of the writing process, been an invaluable source of knowledge and kind assistance. Others who have proven helpful in various ways with this project, and to whom I offer my sincere gratitude, include Martin Claussen, Abigail Firey, David Ganz, Bernice Kaczynski, William Klingshirn, Meg Leja, Conrad Leyser, and Paige Raibmon. Each of these scholars deserves some share of credit for whatever strengths this essay possesses in its completed form, while I readily and alone accept the blame for any errors or shortcomings that remain.

I would also like to acknowledge my father, John Timmermann, and the rest of my family dispersed across the United States, who encouraged me to return to school after an extended hiatus. They have been consistently supportive of my efforts, despite the geographic distance. Finally, this essay is dedicated with love and appreciation to Teresa and Logan, who remind me every day of the responsibilities and the pleasures of living an active life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
WITHIN AUGUSTINIANISM	13
CHAPTER TWO	
THE POSSIBILITY OF PERFECTION	37
CHAPTER THREE	
WATCHMEN UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL	59
AFTERWORD	83
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

Introduction

Midway through his examination of the “author” as a function of discourse, the post-structuralist philosopher Michel Foucault turned to a seemingly unlikely source: the Church Father Jerome (d. 420). Foucault summarized Jerome’s implicit “method,” inferred from the latter’s *De viris illustribus*, for evaluating whether a work had legitimately been composed by a particular, known author.¹ Those criteria for determining authenticity, fruitful for Foucault’s discussion, are also worth considering at the outset of this study. Foucault lists Jerome’s proofs, while, in parentheses, identifying the principle of criticism underlying each criterion:

- (1) if among several books attributed to an author one is inferior to the others, it must be withdrawn from the list of the author’s works (the author is therefore defined as a constant level of value);
- (2) the same should be done if certain texts contradict the doctrine expounded in the author’s other works (the author is thus defined as a field of theoretical or conceptual coherence);
- (3) one must also exclude works that are written in a different style, containing words and expressions not ordinarily found in the writer’s product (the author is here conceived as a stylistic unity);
- (4) finally, passages quoting statements that were made, or mentioning events that occurred after the author’s death must be regarded as interpolated texts (the author is here seen as a historical figure at the crossroads of a certain number of events).²

Foucault cites Jerome, in part, to demonstrate that a critical, multi-faceted comprehension of the relationship between authorship and authenticity stretched back, at least, to Latin Late Antiquity. While acknowledging that Jerome’s alleged criteria may “seem totally insufficient for today’s exegetes,”

1 Foucault, in his discussion of Jerome, worked from Karl K. Hulley, “Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 55 (1944): 87–109. Foucault’s description suggests that Jerome clearly articulated, rather than implied, his critical method and its operative criteria. Mark Vessey, “The Forging of Orthodoxy in Latin Christian Literature: A Case Study,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996): 508, argues instead that, “Foucault almost certainly overestimates the singularity, in this respect, of Jerome’s catalogue of ‘Famous Men.’ The scattered remarks in that work on problems of attribution contain little if anything that would have struck an Alexandrian critic of an earlier age as methodologically new and nothing for which precedent cannot be found in Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*. The *De viris illustribus* is not a particularly rigorous instance of the efforts of Christians ‘to authenticate the . . . texts in [their] possession.’ Indeed, Jerome seems more intent on possessing than authenticating. His criteria for inclusion are elastic.” See also Vessey, “Jerome and the *Jeromanesque*,” in Andrew Cain, Josef Lössl, eds., *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings, and Legacy* (Aldershot, 2009), 225–36.

2 Michel Foucault, “What Is an Author?” in Josué Harari, ed., *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (Ithaca, 1979), 151.

Foucault notes that they nevertheless “define the four modalities according to which modern criticism brings the author-function into play.”³ The polysemous range of meaning and value ascribed to an author’s name within a field of discourse thus constitutes the “author-function” (or “name-value,” a term I will sometimes alternately use in this study).⁴ It is from these different, if often overlapping, conceptions and value-associations of the author as a discursive entity that the “author-function” may be evaluated as a dynamic element of intellectual history. The “author-function” transcends, and often exists quite apart from, the historical individual, who produced certain written items. Those items, whatever their form or genre, have, as Foucault explains, consequently been lent the “curious unity” of “works” through the operation of the author-function.⁵ Therefore, while it may be the most prominent among those works that initially transform their specific writer into an “author” of greater and more varied cultural significance, those same works and others associated with the “author” will retroactively be imbued with an enhanced sense of unity and import based on the workings of the “author-function” within discourse over time. For example, while “major works” like *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake* cemented the status of their writer as a literary author, the “author-function” of James Joyce retroactively lent value and vitality to the “minor” items in Joyce’s literary oeuvre, as well as to other texts associated with him, such as letters or even, perhaps, more quotidian “works,” such as a grocery list. At the same time, Joyce’s name came to signify aspects of his “work” or style or perceived influence within modern literature that do not refer directly or necessarily to the Irish novelist himself.

This example of a modern writer and his author-function, similar to Foucault’s theoretical

³ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 151.

⁴ A wealth of scholarship has been devoted to analyzing Foucault’s conception of the author-function. See, for example, Adrian Wilson, “Foucault on the ‘Question of the Author’: A Critical Exegesis,” *Modern Language Review* 99.2 (2004): 339–63; Jed Wyrick, *The Ascension of Authorship: Attribution and Canon Formation in Jewish, Hellenistic, and Christian Traditions* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), 1–19; Roger Chartier, “Figures of the Author,” in idem, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford, 1994), 25–59; David Foster Wallace, “Greatly Exaggerated,” in idem, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I’ll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments* (New York, 1997), 138–45.

⁵ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 143.

illustrations of authorship using Nietzsche and Shakespeare, is relatively straightforward. The author-function is rendered somewhat more problematic, however, when applied to a premodern, and specifically an early medieval, context. Ernst Goldschmidt, addressing some of the same concerns decades before Foucault, identified and attempted to explain the peculiar obstacles that medievalists must confront in dealing with questions of authorship. Goldschmidt observed:

[T]he uncertainty of authorship of our medieval books is so general that it enters into the discussion of practically any question of literary and intellectual history during a period of a thousand years. One thing is immediately obvious: before 1500 or thereabouts, people did not attach the same importance to ascertaining the precise identity of the author of a book they were reading or quoting as we do now.⁶

Goldschmidt explained this widespread problem in a twofold manner. The first part of his explanation, that the uncertain or dubious authorial attributions in medieval texts are a symptom of the physical process of book production and transmission in the Middle Ages, while certainly valid, will not be explicitly addressed in this essay.⁷ The second part of Goldschmidt's explanation, which he qualified as stemming from the aforementioned material circumstances, was that a "psychological attitude towards the function of an author or a writer" that stands in stark contrast to modern ideas about authorship and literature inevitably frustrates the latter-day scholar.⁸

This observation cuts to the heart of the matter for the present study. In the sprawling, sometimes (necessarily) digressive historical narrative that follows, names and the discernibly shifting levels of value and authority attributed to those names play quite a large role—arguably a more prominent role than the individual writers associated with them. Specifically, I shall examine the extant "work" of the priest and grammarian Julianus Pomerius, a late fifth- or early sixth-century hortatory guidebook for bishops entitled *De vita contemplativa* ("On the Contemplative Life," hereafter *VC*).⁹

6 Ernst Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts and Their First Appearance in Print* (London, 1943), 88.

7 Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts*, 89.

8 Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts*, 89.

9 Pomerius, *De vita contemplativa*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina, Cursus Completus, series Latina*, vol. 59 (Paris, 1847), cols. 411–520. In English as *Julianus Pomerius, The Contemplative Life*, trans. Mary Josephine Suelzer

Sometime near the beginning of the sixth century, this paranetic text became erroneously attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine, the famous defender of Augustine's doctrine of grace in mid-fifth-century Gaul.¹⁰ Among medieval readers, Prosper's name carried with it a far greater degree of "patristic" authority than did the increasingly obscure (though never entirely forgotten) Pomerius, despite the latter's historical connection to the well-known Caesarius of Arles, a student of Pomerius's before ascending to the episcopate.¹¹

What all of these figures share is the historically inadvertent condition of working under the powerful shadow of Augustine of Hippo. Though Prosper alone among these three ecclesiastics experienced direct contact (via letters) with Augustine before the great bishop's death in 430, each of these writers was deeply influenced by the work, and posthumous reputation, of Augustine.¹² Thus, as I will argue in the opening chapter of this essay, it is "within Augustinianism" that the problem of authorial attribution, and the early stirrings of the "author-function" with regard to Pomerius/Prosper and the *VC*, must first be situated. While the *VC* could certainly, on its own merits, have passed muster as an "Augustinian" work, the closer, nominal connection to Augustine supplied by the mis-attribution to Prosper lent the *VC* an aura of patristic authority that Pomerius's author-function would not have bestowed. This value-added benefit of Prosper's name is clear by at least the middle of the eighth century, when Chrodegang of Metz, in composing his *Regula canonicorum*, invoked the name of "*sanctus Prosper*."¹³ However, as I shall argue, the "Augustinianism" evinced by Prosper, in his polemical tracts defending Augustine's more controversial writings, is not at all identical to, or indistinguishable from, Pomerius's mostly middle-of-the-road Augustinianism. While this study cannot

(Westminster, Md., 1947).

10 On Prosper, see Alexander Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace: The Life and Thought of Prosper of Aquitaine* (Washington, D.C., 2009).

11 William E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Cambridge, 1994), 73–75.

12 See, in particular, Conrad Leyser, "Augustine in the Latin West, 430–ca. 900," in Mark Vessey, ed., *A Companion to Augustine* (Chichester, 2012), 450–64.

13 Martin A. Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canonicorum in the Eighth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), 184.

conclusively answer the questions of exactly how or when this mistaken ascription of the *VC* to Prosper was first made, it will aim to demonstrate that discerning a significant, probably irreconcilable difference between Prosper's authentic works and the *VC* (using Jerome's or any like-minded criteria) would not have been particularly difficult, even for the later generations of readers who had inherited the erroneous ascription of the *VC* to Prosper.

One of these later generations takes center stage in the second chapter. In the years leading up to the reign of Louis of the Pious (814–840) and the Council of Aachen in 816, “Prosper's” *VC* was utilized in new ways that were particularly well-suited to the efforts of ecclesiastical and social reform spearheaded by Charlemagne and his empire's elite group of bishops. First, the *VC*'s provocative central message, that bishops, through the active life of their ministry, could share in the highest degree of perfection possible in this world, provided Carolingian bishops with a persuasive, “ancient” foundation upon which to argue for their greater authority over both monks and the lay political leaders of the realm.¹⁴ Second, the ever expanding textual strategy of pairing quotations from the *VC* with passages by the sixth-century pope (and likely reader of Pomerius) Gregory the Great simultaneously bolstered the authority of the *VC* as a patristic source, and re-contextualized Pomerius's (or “Prosper's”) work within the field of ecclesiological discourse. The Augustinianism of the *VC*, and perhaps more importantly its close association with Augustine through the ascription to Prosper, had firmly positioned the *VC* within the repertoire of authoritative sources for Carolingian bishops. Yet, the grouping of “Prosper” with Gregory also meant that new types of meaning could be drawn from the *VC*, with the content of the work now interpreted in ways that differed from its earlier author-function.

The third and final chapter of this study traces the years immediately following 816, when the Carolingian episcopate rose to new, precipitous heights of spiritual and political authority, aided in no small part by the *VC*. Following the pronouncement of the prophet Ezechiel—a scriptural passage also

¹⁴ On this point, see Michael E. Moore, “Ancient Fathers: Christian Antiquity, Patristics, and Frankish Canon Law,” *Millennium* 7 (2010): 293–342.

quoted and pondered by Pomerius—the bishops around Louis the Pious projected a powerful conception of themselves and their social function as “watchmen unto the House of Israel.” At a remedial council at Paris in 829, the *VC* would play a particularly crucial role in firmly asserting this ministerial argument for episcopal authority. Indeed, four years after the Paris council, these “Pomerian,” “Prosperian” bishops would preside over the extraordinary public penance and deposition of emperor Louis the Pious. However, the removal of Louis from the throne was short-lived. Upon his official restoration in 835, the audacious bishops who had collectively rebuked the wayward emperor fell quickly back in line. Forced to lay low and re-group, they retreated from their emphases of the bolder sentiments expressed in the *VC*. The value derived from both the author-function and the content of the *VC*, especially used in conjunction with the ideas contained in Gregory’s *Regula pastoralis*, had declined in direct proportion with the shrinking purview of the humbled bishops’ ministry.

Returning once more to Foucault, it is remarkably appropriate, for our purposes, that he invoked the name, albeit in passing, of a powerful, “patristic” author. Later in his article, Foucault recognizes the Church Fathers—exceptional alongside Homer, Aristotle, and the ancient originators of mathematics and medical science—as “transdiscursive,” functioning not only as authors in the same sense as later writers, but as creators and delimiters of fields of discourse within which those later writers would operate.¹⁵ The special position of the Fathers (a category of “ancient” theological authorities, which, as I shall discuss in the chapters that follow, remained somewhat fluid and variable throughout the earlier Middle Ages), and the great authority of sacred orthodoxy ascribed to their names and “works,” serve to problematize Goldschmidt’s claim that medieval audiences were relatively indifferent to the idea of authorship. Such indifference may well be true among medieval writers, who, out of sincere or perfunctory humility, often failed to attach their names to the works they had composed. Such indifference may also be true of this same literate minority in their capacity as

¹⁵ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 153.

readers of works by contemporaries or near-contemporaries; both writers and readers inhabited a world that had long since regressed from the inspired brilliance of the early *tempora Christiana*. But as readers of Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, Ambrose, Isidore of Seville, Prosper, et al., and, again, as writers re-inscribing and often re-purposing the words of these patristic authorities, authorship—that is, powerful names tied closely to edifying words—mattered quite a lot. Foucault’s intention in naming Jerome in his article is, given the rules governing modern philosophical discourse, somewhat different from the strategies adopted by the Carolingian writers of conciliar records, *florilegia*, and *specula* who cited patristic names. But not entirely. This strategy—what we might more informally call “name-dropping” today—is central to the narrative of reception charted in this essay, outlined briefly above. Foucault’s modern conceptualization of the “author-function” and the “work” as products of discourse should, thus, serve here as useful analytic tools. At the same time, however, I shall also attempt, on a different level of engagement (and insofar as it is possible), to think *with* the early medieval ecclesiastical audience on whom this study centers.

As the authority and value deposited into, and then extracted from, the *VC* waxes and wanes, Nietzsche’s famous observation, that “ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them,”¹⁶ seems remarkably apt. And yet, however obvious it may seem, this dictum nevertheless bears reiteration; the minds of the historical actors at work in these pre-modern periods were often preoccupied by very different concerns than those with which we are regularly engaged today. That is to say, while Foucault would concur with Nietzsche’s statement, Carolingian ecclesiastics mostly certainly would not. For the latter, the words of the Church Fathers, perhaps second only to the Word of scripture, were self-evident in their trans-historical, divinely-aided truth, not constructed by the discursive machinations of human society. Thus, while I shall argue that Carolingian bishops utilized the *VC* and the works of Gregory, Augustine, and others in a strategic and creative manner, it is

16 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, R.J. Hollingdale (New York, 1975), 327.

critical to acknowledge that they received these revered works with the utmost seriousness.

The inextricable provision of the spiritual and political authority that Carolingian bishops strove to attain was the expansive sense of ministerial responsibility that they accepted as foremost among the duties of their station. To focus on only half of this equation, the “interests” at stake for the bishops, is dangerous. In doing so, one risks missing the point that the soteriological objective of proper pastoral care administered to all souls living under right Christendom is what grounded most or all of the measures proposed or effected by Carolingian bishops. If those measures, their historical implications, or the entire enterprise of endeavoring to save souls register as dubious today, this is because they speak only to the biases of (post-)modernity, and tell us little or nothing about the constellation of discourses that defined the early medieval intellectual landscape.

Such a distinction between “secular” and “religious” analysis can often seem rather ambiguous, especially as it relates to the study of Christian church history. In a recent article pointedly entitled “The State of Church: *Ecclesia* and Early Medieval State Formation,” Mayke de Jong opens her discussion by noting, “It is difficult to achieve a dispassionate distance with regard to a religious past of which one is still a part, for historians as well as for anthropologists.”¹⁷ De Jong proceeds to cite the contention of Sir Edmund Leach, who, back in 1966, observed that scholars “have shown an extraordinary squeamishness about the analysis of Christianity and Judaism, religions in which they themselves or their close friends are deeply involved.”¹⁸ As stiff antidotes to this “squeamishness,” at least within the historical discipline, De Jong cites Robert Markus’s *The End of Ancient Christianity*¹⁹ and Peter Brown’s *The Rise of Western Christendom*.²⁰ Both of these books have proven indispensable for my work here, as they serve not only as comprehensive sources of information on late antique

17 Mayke de Jong, “The State of the Church: *Ecclesia* and Early Medieval State Formation,” in Walter Pohl, Veronika Wieser, eds., *Der frühmittelalterliche Staat – europäische Perspektiven* (Vienna, 2009), 242.

18 Edmund Leach, “Virgin Birth,” The Henry Myers Lecture 1966, in *Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (1966), 46; as noted by De Jong, “The State of the Church,” 242.

19 Robert A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990).

20 Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000* (Oxford, 2003).

Christian culture, but also as models for the type of balance that can, and should, be struck between “secular” and “religious” modes of analysis.

Markus, in particular, examines, as a category of historical analysis, the nature of the “secular” in relation to religion. In the introduction to his magisterial study of the cultural shift that took place between the time of Augustine and of Gregory, Markus observes:

The ‘secular’ can be defined as that sector of life which is not considered to be of direct religious significance. What, within a given culture, it includes will therefore be determined not only by the institutions and the patterns of living within it; it will also depend on the manner in which these are interpreted. I shall suggest that it is not only the world that changed in these two centuries—a matter generally agreed—but also the framework of thought, imagination, and discourse within which it could be interpreted—a subject much less explored.²¹

The process that Markus describes as the “drainage”²² of the secular from culture during this period, leading to the “ascetic take-over” of the early Middle Ages—and which, for his part, in an article addressed to Markus, Brown colorfully termed the “‘peccatization’ of the world”²³—had, by the Carolingian ninth century, reached its apotheosis. Exemplary scholarly approaches that take seriously the centrality of religion to Carolingian thought and discourse specifically can be found in De Jong’s own monograph on the the age of Louis the Pious,²⁴ as well as Courtney Booker’s study of Louis’s penance of 833.²⁵ These scholars repeatedly emphasize the importance of looking closely at belief and its articulation, particularly with regard to the long controversial and generally misunderstood episode

21 Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 15–16.

22 Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 19.

23 Peter Brown, “*Gloriosus obitus: The End of the Ancient Other World*,” in William Klingshirn, Mark Vessey, eds., *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R. A. Markus* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999), 313: “At the risk of offending the ears of Robert [Markus], a master of fastidious English, I am tempted to coin a neologism. We are dealing with the final stages of the ‘peccatization’ of the world: not with a ‘culpabilization,’ in the sense of the fostering of a greater sense of guilt in Christian circles; but with something more precise and significant—with the definitive reduction of all experience, of history, politics, and the social order quite as much as the destiny of individual souls, to two universal explanatory principles, sin and repentance.”

24 Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge, 2009).

25 Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009).

of Louis's public penance and deposition, rituals presided over by the "rebel bishops" who had sided with Louis's elder sons. My essay, which arrives at the events of 833 in its third and final chapter, centers on Carolingian bishops, figures whom modern historians have frequently cast as the over-ambitious villains of this period. Consequently, I have endeavored to be particularly sensitive to the "voices" of these oft-maligned historical actors, following the fine examples set by the recent, revisionist secondary literature. Booker, for example, observes of the Enlightenment and later treatments of Louis's penance that the emperor's episcopal opponents were assumed—from the secular, often anti-clerical viewpoint of the later age—to have rebuked Louis "not because they believed [the spiritual reasons they cited] but because of [their] immediate political expediency."²⁶ While this line of reasoning, informed by the determinedly secular viewpoint of the later age, "imparts agency" to the bishops, argues Booker, "it does so only at the expense of belief, for it implies that people either can ignore their inherited inventory of constituted patterns of meaning—that perpetual, unbidden bequest of the past to the present—or can selectively value those elements that are the most self-regarding."²⁷ Instead, Booker advocates an approach that "examine[s] [early medieval] words and deeds within the discursive context of their time."²⁸

I have tried to follow this sound advice here. When scholars, however erudite or well-intentioned, try to analyze theology or ecclesiology or the interpretation of such ideas from an explicitly "secular" position, the results tend to appear distanced and antiseptic, if not outright cynical. At the risk of my own (non-religious) subjectivity, I would nevertheless prefer to engage a complex theological concept like "the possibility of spiritual perfection" (the subject of this essay's second chapter) from the vantage point of how my subjects seemed to have understood this concept. For the *VC*'s readers among the Carolingian episcopate, an earthly form of "perfection" was indeed attainable,

²⁶ Booker, *Past Convictions*, 122–23.

²⁷ Booker, *Past Convictions*, 123.

²⁸ Booker, *Past Convictions*, 125.

and, as Pomerius/Prosper had contended, not only for monks but for secular clerics as well. However, as I will show, it was imperative to the program of reform that ever more work had to be done—in particular, the work of conscientious ministry—before such a lofty goal could be realized here on earth. As I hope to make clear in the pages that follow, my argument is not only that Carolingian bishops used the *VC* to bolster their authority in a political sense, based on the constructed “patristic” status of the text and the name(s) attached to it, but also, and just as importantly, that these bishops believed the message contained within the *VC* to be true and vital to their own spiritual health and to that of the church and realm.

Whereas Booker’s and De Jong’s recent efforts have contributed to the wealth of superb, Anglophone scholarship on the Carolingian era produced over the past few decades—a corpus from which I have gratefully drawn for this study—the historiography on Pomerius, the *VC*, and its historical reception are decidedly thinner. I have used the few major modern studies, by Joseph Plumpe,²⁹ Max Laistner,³⁰ and Jean Devisse,³¹ as points of departure for my own work here. However, the most recent among these, Devisse’s article, was published in 1970.³² In the four decades since, medievalists and in particular Carolingian specialists have, while inevitably working from this strong but small pool of scholarship on the *VC*, repeatedly echoed the call for further study of the *VC* and its influence in the Middle Ages.³³ It is my hope that this modest effort will serve as a useful synthesis of the various

29 Joseph Plumpe, “Pomeriana,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 1 (1947): 227–39.

30 Max L. W. Laistner, “The Influence during the Middle Ages of the Treatise *De vita contemplativa* and Its Surviving Manuscripts,” in Chester G. Starr, ed., *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages: Selected Essays by M.L.W. Laistner* (New York, 1966), 40–56.

31 Jean Devisse, “L’influence de Julien Pomère sur les clercs carolingiens,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France* 61 (1970): 285–95.

32 The most important exception to this trend of disregard since Devisse is Conrad Leyser’s chapter on Pomerius in his study of asceticism between the periods of Augustine and Gregory. Leyser expands upon the brief discussion of Pomerius in Markus’s aforementioned book. See Leyser, “The Pastoral Arts of the Rhetor Pomerius,” in idem, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), 65–80. Also, Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189–91, 205, 221.

33 E.g., Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895* (London, 1977), 167 n. 2; Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 185–86; David Ganz, “The Ideology of Sharing,” in Wendy Davies, Paul Fouracre, eds., *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995), 24–26; Abigail Firey, *A Contrite Heart: Prosecution and Redemption in the Carolingian Empire* (Leiden, 2009), 181–82; Michael E. Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300–850* (Washington D.C., 2011), 89–90.

discussions touching on different aspects of the *VC* and its Carolingian reception, while also adding something new and of interest to a conversation that needs to continue, expand, and evolve in the years ahead.

Chapter 1: Within Augustinianism

Let us begin with Augustine.

Yet not so much with Augustine the man, the bishop of Hippo, the author of the *Confessions* and *The City of God*, as with Augustine the name, replete with its complex, ever-changing, and thoroughly untidy set of associations and connotations. This emblematic Augustine, synoptically representing an impersonal process we might more impersonally call “Augustinianism,” obscures key components of the historical Augustine’s theological program, while emphasizing and distorting others. Apart from his corporeal remains, this emblem was the only Augustine accessible to anyone after August 28, 430, the day Aurelius Augustinus, in his seventy-fifth year, passed from this world.¹ According to his disciple and contemporary biographer Possidius, the great man died while, fittingly, contemplating a quotation regarding the intellect of the “*magnus*”: “He is no great man who thinks it a great thing that sticks and stones should fall, and that men, who must die, should die.”² The meaning of this representation of Augustine, the Catholic bishop, allusively invoking from his deathbed the pagan philosopher Plotinus, remains a source of some debate.³ For our purposes, what is most significant is that Augustine allegedly

-
- 1 On Augustine’s bodily relics and their fate, see Harold S. Stone, *St. Augustine’s Bones: A Microhistory* (Amherst, Mass., 2002). On Augustine’s own meticulous, textual preparation for his legacy, see Mark Vessey, “*Opus imperfectum*: Augustine and His Readers, 426–435. A.D.,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 52.3 (1998): 264–85. Vessey, “*Opus imperfectum*,” 266, argues that, in addition to other, more obviously “pre-posthumous” texts like the *Retractationes*, Augustine’s anti-Pelagian writings “may also usefully be viewed . . . as interlocking members of a textual bridge designed to carry Latin readers over the rift between the *saeculum Augustinianum* and the preceding age.”
 - 2 Possidius, *Vita Augustini* 28.11, ed. Michele Pellegrino (Alba, 1955), 226: “non erit magnus magnum putans quod cadunt ligna et lapides et moriuntur mortales.” The translation is by Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley, 1967/2000), 425–26.
 - 3 Peter Brown, in his famous 1967 biography of Augustine (revised substantially in its 2000 edition), wrote, “The ‘certain wise old man’ [quoted by Augustine, per Possidius], of course, is none other than Plotinus. Augustine, the Catholic bishop, will retire to his deathbed with these words of a proud pagan sage.” [p. 430] James J. O’Donnell, “The Next Life of Augustine,” in William Klingshirn, Mark Vessey, eds., *The Limits of Ancient Christianity* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999), considers the extent to which Brown’s Augustine has shaped, and inadvertently limited, our contemporary perception of Augustine and his work. He takes issue with Brown’s interpretation of Augustine’s quotation of Plotinus, writing, “the contingency, uncertainty, and distance that lie between Augustine’s words and Plotinus’s disappear in a purely scholarly ‘of course.’” [p. 220]. On the meaning of Augustine’s supposed last words, O’Donnell argues by contrast that, “The ‘quotation’ is not to be taken as homage to Plotinus . . . but criticism in the same vein as that directed against the anti-Christian polemics attacked in *City of God*.” [p. 219]

spent his final days still mulling over the role of men—specifically, “great” men—in this world of nagging distractions. Such uncertainty—a gnawing sense of, at once, urgency and unease—may be detected in Augustine from at least the *Confessions* (ca. 397–98). It continued to linger through much of the aging bishop’s writings in the decades that followed (even as Augustine himself changed dramatically, in mind and in character), enduring to the time of his death, when the Vandals ominously approached the “sticks” and “stones” of his diocese of Hippo. This constant wrestling with the disquieting ambiguity between spirit and flesh, contemplation and action, would characterize Augustine’s pervasive influence in the centuries that followed his death, as would his epochal separation and ordering of the “earthly city” and “the city of God.” In sum, “Augustinianism” can be described as a heady, peculiar, not entirely coherent mix of ideas—some taken more or less directly from Augustine’s work, some borrowed from the muddled understanding of his work by others, all of it associated powerfully and purposefully with one of the loftiest names in Christian history, outside of scripture.⁴

Yet, it is not at all clear how, and more to the point, when, the name of Augustine came to carry such tremendous gravitas. Even the notion of “Augustinianism” outlined above, while conveniently acknowledging the blurry contours of the reception of the great bishop’s thought, is still symptomatic of a historiographical narrative that both inevitably compresses the temporal dimensions of Augustine’s influence in the West, and suggests connections that are often extremely tenuous. As Conrad Leyser has recently reflected, “When we take soundings in the Latin West during the five centuries after his death, we see that ‘the making of St. Augustine’ captures only one of the ways in which his presence functioned. If we are honest, we do not know how any of the church fathers ‘became’ such, let alone when. The data are not ready.”⁵ While Possidius’s biography of Augustine cast its recently deceased

⁴ See James J. O’Donnell, “The Authority of Augustine” *Augustinian Studies* 22 (1991): 227–55.

⁵ Conrad Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West, 430–ca. 900,” in Mark Vessey, ed., *A Companion to Augustine* (Chichester, 2012), 450.

subject in the brilliant light of sainthood, core aspects of Augustine’s theology were fiercely debated in the decades immediately following his death. In particular, the late-career writings associated with Augustine’s doctrine of grace and predestination provoked serious contention between steadfast defenders like Prosper of Aquitaine (to whom we will return) and the so-called “semi-Pelagians” of Gaul.⁶ However, it was from this very period of controversy—when the name of Augustine, depending on the audience, might be as likely to start an argument as to end it—that a moderate, “middle path” emerged.⁷ Efforts such as Jerome’s guide to “great men,” *De viris illustribus*, and later the sermons of Pope Leo I combined with the saintly image of Augustine in Possidius’s biography to forge the origins of the “emblematic” Augustine.⁸

The details of how the towering, patristic Augustine came to be constructed are, of course, too complex and enormous a subject to be adequately addressed within the space of this essay. Nevertheless, the very idea that the name, works, and ideas of Augustine the historical man (including those that were erroneously or dubiously ascribed to him) were imparted, over time, with new shades of meaning, value, and authority is a critical point for this study for two reasons. First, the work of the specific figure on whom this study centers, Julianus Pomerius, was—at least initially—lent meaning and degrees of authority and value (i.e., cultural currency) within the particular context of how Pomerius’s work, the *De vita contemplativa* (hereafter *VC*), related to Augustine and changing conceptions of “Augustinianism.” Second, a brief overview acknowledging that Augustine’s own “author-function” was the product of historically contingent processes of construction, or “meaning-making,” readies us for some of the “problems” that we will soon encounter, albeit on a more modest scale, in tracking the reception of Pomerius and his work.

6 “Semi-Pelagians,” a term that is inaccurately and confusingly applied to different theological factions (none of them “part” or “halfway” Pelagian), is declining in use, but there is not a clear consensus on what term scholars should use in its stead. Alexander Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace: The Life and Thought of Prosper of Aquitaine* (Washington D.C., 2009), 4–6, argues for “*doctores Gallicani*” as the best alternative.

7 Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 454.

8 Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 452, 454.

Pomerius's Augustine

The composite emblem of Augustine, described above, was already the distanced, if not yet archaized, Augustine that Julianus Pomerius would inherit. Pomerius composed his treatise on the active and contemplative lives, *De vita contemplativa*, near the end of the fifth century or in the first few years of the sixth, almost seven decades after Augustine's death.⁹ It is possible that Pomerius, in writing this guidebook for bishops (allegedly commissioned by a certain bishop Julianus¹⁰), felt a kind of kinship with the late bishop of Hippo. Like Augustine, Pomerius was from North Africa, though he fled his besieged home of Mauretania (modern Morocco/Algeria) for Gaul. As with many African churchmen, Pomerius was doubtless eminently familiar with the writings of Augustine.¹¹ Arriving in Gaul, he was ordained as a priest and established a school of rhetoric—a subject that had also once commanded the attention of Augustine as a young man in Milan. Around 497, “the only date known with any certainty in Pomerius's life,”¹² the esteemed rhetorician accepted as his student another, soon-to-be prominent Augustinian disciple: Caesarius, the future bishop of Arles. A sixth-century *Vita* of Caesarius mentions Pomerius only briefly, noting that he had “achieved fame [in Gaul] by teaching the

9 The *De vita contemplativa* was apparently one of four works written by Pomerius. Only the *VC* remains intact, in complete form, though fragments of another text have survived. See Aime Solignac, “Les fragments du ‘De Natura Animae’ de Julien Pomère (fin V^e siècle),” *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 75 (1974): 41–60. Solignac identifies fragments of this otherwise “lost” work by Pomerius, misidentified in texts attributed to Julian of Toledo. He also shows (p. 44) that parts of Pomerius's *De natura animae* were utilized by “un certain Emmon (ou Hemmon),” and possibly, though less conclusively, by Hrabanus Maurus.

10 Nothing certain is known regarding this bishop. Joseph Plumpe, “Pomeriana,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 1 (1947): 227, hypothesizes that Pomerius may be referring to the bishop of Carpentras, while Robert A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), 189, speculates that this ostensible patron may have been an alter ego for Pomerius himself.

11 Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189.

12 Mary Josephine Suelzer, “Introduction,” in eadem, trans., *Julianus Pomerius, The Contemplative Life* (Westminster, Md., 1947), 4.

art of grammar.”¹³ Firminus (one of the numerous authors who together wrote the *Vita Caesarii*¹⁴) and an otherwise-unknown Gregoria had referred the promising student to Pomerius. “Seeing that the holy Caesarius was remarkably full of God’s grace, and was endowed by the gift of Christ with a wonderfully retentive memory, these noble-spirited individuals conceived of the idea that his monastic simplicity should be refined by the teachings of worldly knowledge.”¹⁵ Yet, such “worldly knowledge,” which the authors of the *Vita* associate with Pomerius, was precisely what Caesarius (allegedly) came to think needed abandoning. The *Vita* recounts a dream in which Caesarius, tired from his studies, received a disturbing sign, one pointedly reminiscent of God’s admonishment of Jerome for being a Ciceronian rather than a Christian:

During his brief nap, he saw the shoulder on which he was lying and the arm with which he had been resting on the book being gnawed by a serpent winding itself around him. Terrified by what he had seen, he was shaken out of his sleep and he began to blame himself more severely for wanting to join the light of the rule of salvation to the foolish wisdom of the world. And so he at once condemned these preoccupations, for he knew that those endowed with spiritual understanding possessed the adornment of perfect eloquence.¹⁶

The *Vita*’s implied distinction here between the worldly mentor (Pomerius) and the ascetic pupil (Caesarius), who, as a result of this edifying vision, would reject the “foolish wisdom” of his teacher, has been questioned by William Klingshirn as having any basis in fact.¹⁷ As

Klingshirn demonstrates, contrary to the *Vita*’s suggestion, Caesarius’s own reform efforts and

13 *Vitae Caesarii Episcopi Arelatensis libri duo* 1.9 (hereafter *Vita Caesarii*), ed. Bruno Krusch, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (hereafter *MGH*), *SRM* (Hannover, 1896), 3:460: “Erat autem ipsis personis familiarissimus quidam Pomerius nomine, scientia rethor, Afer genere, quem ibi singularem et clarum grammaticae artis doctrina reddebat”; “Life of Caesarius,” in William E. Klingshirn, trans., *Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters* (Liverpool, 1994), 13.

14 William Klingshirn, “The Life of Caesarius: Introduction,” in trans. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*, 1.

15 *Vita Caesarii* 1.9, ed. Krusch, 460: “Concipiunt igitur animo generosae personae, quantinus tanta Dei gratia sanctus Caesarius refertus tantaque memoria dono Christi videretur esse fulcitus, ut saecularis scientiae disciplinis monasterialis in eo simplicitas poleretur”; trans. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*, 13–14.

16 *Vita Caesarii* 1.9, ed. Krusch, 460: “in soporem aliquantulum resolutus, videt quasi scapulam in qua iacebat brachiumque quo inixus fuerat codici dracone conligante conrodi. Excussus ergo e somno, territus ipse visu, terribilius se ex eodem facto coepit arguere, eo quo lumen regulae salutaris stulti mundi sapientiae voluerit copulare. Igitur contempsit haec protinus, sciens, quia non deesset illis perfectae locutionis ornatus, quibus spiritalis eminet intellectus”; trans. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*, 14.

17 William E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Cambridge, 1994), 74.

approach to episcopal administration were clearly indebted to the “worldly” Pomerius’s views, not least Pomerius’s synthesis of asceticism and orthodox Augustinian ecclesiology.¹⁸

Nevertheless, the hagiographers’ casting of Pomerius as the profane man of letters—a deliberate foil to Caesarius’s “purer” form of devotion—may have informed later, medieval readers’ perceptions of Pomerius and their attitudes towards his name (if not his work).

To be sure, Pomerius, like his revered African forebear, possessed a great familiarity with classical literature, regularly quoting or imitating passages by Cicero, Vergil, and Terence. His allusions to these ancient authors, however, pale in quantity to the dozens of references he made to Augustine himself, spread generously across the three books of his text. Near the end of the third and final book of the *VC*, Pomerius precedes a pair of quotations from the *De civitate Dei* with some strikingly effusive praise for its author:

The holy bishop Augustine, keen in mind, charming in eloquence, skilled in human learning, zealous in ecclesiastical labors, celebrated in daily disputations, self-possessed in his every action, Catholic in his exposition of our faith, penetrating in the solution of problems, prudent in the refutation of heretics, and wise in explaining the canonical writings—he, I say, whom I have followed in these little books to the best of my ability. . . .¹⁹

If the authority of the emblematic Augustine remained partial and contested in Pomerius’s time,²⁰ then Pomerius’s unqualified ode to “*Sanctus Augustinus episcopus*” reads as remarkably prophetic. His praise seems to anticipate the hallowed reverence with which Augustine’s name would be treated in the centuries to come (particularly in the Carolingian ninth century, when “St. Augustine” fully emerges²¹).

18 On Pomerius’s melding of Augustinian elements with ascetic aspects taken from the writings of John Cassian, see Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), esp. 72–78.

19 Pomerius, *VC* 3.31, *PL* 59: col. 516–17: “Sanctus Augustinus episcopus, acer ingenio, suavis eloquio, saecularis litteraturae peritus, in ecclesiasticis laboribus operosus, in quotidianis disputationibus clarus, in omni sua actione compositus, in expositione fidei nostrae catholicus, in quaestionibus absolvendis acutus, in revincendis haereticis circumspectus, et in explicandis Scripturis canonicis cautus; ipse ergo, quem in his libellis pro possibilitate secutus sum.”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 165.

20 Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 196 n. 122, notes that this fervent praise of Augustine, in the excerpted passage from the *VC*, “was written in territory that still heard Augustine accused of heresy . . . [by] eminent opponents of Augustinism, such as Vincent of Lerins and Faustus of Riez.”

21 Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 455.

Described in modern scholarship as an “Augustinian handbook for bishops,”²² Pomerius’s seemingly introspective text is a meditation on the contemplative life in relation to the active life—in particular, the life of the bishop. Pomerius’s principal aim is to instruct *sacerdotes* and *pontifices* (terms he employs more or less interchangeably with reference to bishops²³) on how to achieve the contemplative perfection supposedly reserved for monks, while still properly attending to their pastoral duties in the world. Pomerius appears to agree with what Robert Markus has called the “Augustinian perspective”—that the highest degree of contemplation is unattainable by anyone, of any clerical order, in this life.²⁴ Early in the first book of the *VC*, Pomerius concedes that “the perfection of the divine contemplation itself is reserved for that blessed life which is to come; that there they may see God perfectly as He is where they themselves will also be made perfect by attaining eternal life and the heavenly kingdom.”²⁵ Immediately following this explanation about the time and place for divine contemplation, Pomerius finds himself obliged to consider the meaning of 1 John 4:12: “No man hath seen God at any time,”²⁶ which he quickly counters with a quotation from Matthew (5:8), “Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,” reasoning that John meant that the *Visio Dei* was not “refused . . . but deferred.”²⁷ John’s notion of “at any time,” Pomerius implies, does not include “the future life” (*futura vita*). This distinction between temporal and spiritual planes of existence is reminiscent of Augustine’s thought in the *De civitate Dei*, a work that Pomerius references more than two dozen times in the *VC*. While the passage above on divine contemplation is not one of those many direct references, it still speaks to how predominantly (though not exclusively) “Augustinian”

22 Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 454.

23 Plumpe, “Pomeriana,” 227–33.

24 Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189.

25 Pomerius, *VC* 1.7, *PL* 59: col. 424, “. . . ipsius contemplationis divinae perfectionem, in illa beata vita quae futura est, reservari; ut ibi Deum sicuti est, perfecte videant, ubi et ipsi erunt vitae aeternae ac regni coelestis consecutione perfecti.”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 26.

26 Pomerius, *VC* 1.7, *PL* 59: col. 424.

27 Pomerius, *VC* 1.7, *PL* 59: col. 424, “Denique ut evidenter ostenderet visionem Dei non negatam esse sanctis hominibus, sed dilatam, quod in praesenti tempore negavit, in futuro promisit. . . .”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 26.

Pomerius's thought was at the time of the *VC*'s composition.

Pomerius made use of approximately thirty different writings by Augustine, including those most familiar to later audiences—the *De civitate Dei*, *De doctrina Christiana*, *De Trinitate*, and even *Confessiones*, a work generally undervalued by early medieval readers.²⁸ Yet, Pomerius mostly avoided those “later”²⁹ works of Augustine that had quickly proven divisive, particularly in Gaul, and that likely remained controversial at the end of the fifth century. Works such as the *De correptione et gratia*, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, and *De praedestinatione sanctorum* are noticeably absent from Pomerius's long list of Augustinian references. These omissions, however, may have less to do with Pomerius shrewdly avoiding controversy, and more with his deeming unworkable “Augustine's refusal to claim certainty for the practice of moral correction.”³⁰ Pomerius sought instead to produce a fool-proof guide for right, clerical existence. It is in this spirit, too, that Pomerius—while dutifully accepting Augustine's verdict on the mysterious, other-worldly nature of contemplation—proceeds to elaborate on how, given the impossibility of achieving “true” contemplation in this life, one might best strive to attain something close to it. Indeed, Pomerius informs his reader—a mere six chapters after his Augustinian disclaimer discussed above—that “holy priests can become sharers (*participes*) in the contemplative life.”³¹ He begins the thirteenth chapter of Book One by shrewdly twisting the logic that divine contemplation is off-limits to all living men, taking this universal prohibition rather to mean that all religious orders, including those active in the service of the Church, are equally fit to achieve a this-worldly form of contemplation, a kind of *pre*-perfection. Pomerius explains:

One who diligently considers what I have previously said about the contemplative life and who, being adequately instructed, understands when and where its perfection can

28 On the reception of the *Confessiones*, see Michael M. Gorman, “The Early Manuscript Tradition of St. Augustine's *Confessiones*,” in idem, *The Manuscript Traditions of the Works of St. Augustine* (Florence, 2001), 216–47.

29 Significantly, Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 452, notes that while the “later Augustine is a figure of dubious appeal to a modern audience . . . early medieval readers probably did not recognize the distinction between the ‘early’ and the ‘late’ Augustine.”

30 Leyser, “Augustine in the Latin West,” 455.

31 Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 429, “sacerdotes sancti contemplativae vitae fieri participes possint”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 33.

be attained will not doubt that princes of the church can and should become followers of the contemplative life; for, whether, according the opinion of some, the contemplative life is [1] nothing but the knowledge of future and hidden things; or whether it is [2] freedom from all occupations of the world; or [3] the study of Sacred Scripture; or [4] what is recognized as more perfect than these, the very vision of God: I do not see what objection can be brought forward to prevent holy priests from attaining the four things I have mentioned.³²

Pomerius follows this statement by noting that the first and final point of the four that he has listed will be “incomparably more excellent in that blessed life than this” (*incomparabiliter praestantiora erunt in illa vita beata quam in ista*), but this is presumably as true for monks as it is for *sanctis sacerdotibus*, “holy priests.”³³ At any rate, the second and third criteria for achieving the contemplative life are, Pomerius concludes, perfectly attainable in this life—by bishops as well as monks. The monastic order may claim a spiritual monopoly on the “freedom from all occupations of this world” (*vacationem videlicet ab omnibus occupationibus mundi*), but bishops (like Augustine) were burdened by the worldly duties of the episcopal office.³⁴ Yet, following Pomerius’s equation, those “who are bishops not by title only but by virtue” are “men fit for the contemplative life, and co-heirs of the joys of heaven.”³⁵ Markus suggests that Pomerius’s liberal conception of the contemplative life, while essentially paying lip-service to Augustine, is more directly informed by the views of Augustine’s contemporary, the monk and theologian John Cassian (d. 435). But where Cassian’s position was more measured and qualified, Pomerius “went so far as to place the pastoral life on a level with the contemplative, at times

32 Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 429, “Qui diligenter ea quae superius de vita contemplativa dicta sunt considerat, et, sufficienter, instructus intelligit quando et ubi possit ejus perfectio comprehendi, non dubitabit Ecclesiarum principes vitae contemplativae posse et debere fieri sectatores: quia sive secundum opinionem quorundam nihil aliud sit vita contemplativa quam rerum latentium futurarumque notitia, sive vacatio ab omnibus occupationibus mundi, sive divinarum studium litterarum, sive, quod his probatur esse perfectius, ipsa visio Dei; non video quid impedimenti sanctis sacerdotibus possit afferri quominus ad haec quatuor quae commemoravi perveniant.”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 33–34.

33 Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 429; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 34.

34 Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 125–50, vividly describes the life of contemplation “lost” by Augustine upon his election to the episcopate. On the rather inauspicious office of the bishop in Augustine’s time, see Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 183–97. See also Kevin Uhalde, *Expectations of Justice in the Age of Augustine* (Philadelphia, 2007).

35 Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 430, “. . . qui sunt non appellatione tenus, sed virtute pontifices, vitae contemplativae capaces, et gaudiorum coelestium cohaereditas”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 35.

even hinting that it might be a higher calling.”³⁶ Put another way, Pomerius implicitly equated cloistered monasticism with an effete private leisure, whereas an active ministry in the world offered the possibility of far-reaching spiritual benefits. This sly, if subtle, re-ordering of the ecclesiastical *ordines* no doubt contributed to the *VC*’s later popularity among the Frankish episcopate (a point to which we shall return).

In the second book of the *VC*, Pomerius discusses the specific requirements for bishops hopeful of attaining contemplation. His prescriptions for the “princes of the church” (*Ecclesiarum principes*)³⁷ appear decidedly monastic in character—indeed, they are largely compatible with the precepts enumerated in the *Regula Benedicti*, a text composed approximately a quarter-century after Pomerius’s parnetic work. (Intriguingly, if incidentally, the “Rule of the Master,” the model for Benedict of Nursia’s *Rule*, is believed to have been written around the same time as the *VC*). As in Benedict’s work for monks, Pomerius repeatedly emphasizes that bishops commit themselves fully to the apostolic ideal of poverty. In what would later prove to be one of the *VC*’s most widely cited chapters (chapter nine of Book Two),³⁸ Pomerius instructs his readers that:

It is expedient to hold the goods of the Church and to despise one’s own possessions through love of perfection. For the wealth of the Church is not one’s own, but common; and therefore, whoever has given away or sold all that he owns and has become a despiser of his own property, when he has been put in charge of a church, becomes steward of all the church possesses.³⁹

After sketching this picture of ministerial responsibility, Pomerius cites Paulinus of Nola (d. 431) as an example of the “saintly” (*sanctus*) understanding of property and wealth to which bishops in pursuit of the contemplative life should aspire. According to Pomerius, Paulinus, by first ridding himself of his

³⁶ Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 191–92.

³⁷ Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 429; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 34.

³⁸ See David Ganz, “The Ideology of Sharing,” in Wendy Davies, Paul Fouracre, eds., *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995), 24–26; Michael E. Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300–850* (Washington, D.C., 2011), 198–99, 297–98, 323.

³⁹ Pomerius, *VC* 2.9, *PL* 59: col. 453, “Expedit facultates ecclesiae possideri, et proprias perfectionis amore contemni. Non enim propriae sunt, sed communes ecclesiae facultates; et ideo quisquis omnibus quae habuit dimissis aut venditis, fit rei suae contemptor; cum praepositus fuerit factus ecclesiae, omnium quae habet ecclesia efficitur dispensator”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 72.

aristocratic estates, and then carefully overseeing church property after his election to the episcopate, demonstrated the proper, admirable attitude to both personal property (which should, in theory, be shunned) and church holdings (which should be faithfully tended as a shared benefit to the community). Paulinus was a close friend and longtime correspondent of Augustine.⁴⁰ Given that Pomerius was clearly well acquainted with Augustine's writings, it seems probable that he was familiar with some of the bishop of Hippo's letters, and perhaps not only those exchanged between Augustine and Paulinus.⁴¹

The requirements that Pomerius details for episcopal poverty bear a suggestive resemblance to the so-called "Rule of St. Augustine," as partly outlined in Augustine's Epistle 211, written around 423/24 to the nuns of Hippo.⁴² Though the letter is relatively light on specifics, its apostolically inspired recommendations for communal life are largely in line with Pomerius's views. Augustine instructs his reader to "see . . . that you do not call anything your own, but that you have all things in common."⁴³ In the first rule enumerated in the letter, Augustine references Acts 4:35 in articulating a communal ideal based on the distribution of shares according to one's need, rather than a division into equal shares.⁴⁴ Augustine also quotes twice from Acts 4:32 to the nuns, assuring them that they are of "one heart and one soul."⁴⁵ As Mary Jane Kriedler observes, "Augustine is calling [the community] from its awareness of its multiplicity symbolized by its divisions to unite in Christ. . . . This unity does not describe a conglomerate of individuals. Unity describes an organic body, Head and members that define Church.

40 See Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 153–54, 206.

41 Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189.

42 Gerhart Ladner, *The Idea of Reform* (New York, 1967), 390, views the *VC* as strongly reminiscent of two of the texts that typically comprise the "Rule" of Augustine, *Sermones* 355 and 356. Ladner also notes, regarding Pomerius, that "the title of *abbas* by which he was addressed does . . . not necessarily make him the head of a monastery, but perhaps the superior of clerics living in *vita communis*." On the "Rule," see also Adolar Sumkeller, *Augustine's Ideal of the Religious Life*, trans. Edmund Colledge (New York, 1986), 283–87.

43 Mary Jane Kriedler, "The Pastoral Theology of Augustine of Hippo as Found in His Letters" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1987), 138–39.

44 Joanne McWilliam, "Augustine's Letters to Women," in Judith Chelius Stark, ed., *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine* (University Park, Penn., 2007), 195.

45 McWilliam, "Augustine's Letters to Women," 195.

In calling the group to unity, Augustine is calling them to a corporate sense of their own identity in Christ as Church.⁴⁶ Pomerius, in the *VC*, similarly utilizes Acts 4:32, and explains, “For, in order that a holy union of hearts may be effected and maintained, a fixed sharing of possessions is necessary.”⁴⁷ He exhorts his readers to “have one life as they have one substance.” Following the model of the apostles and perhaps the more recent example of Augustine’s “Rule,” Pomerius advises that bishops hopeful of attaining the fruits of the contemplative life must—like their monastic counterparts—strive for unity in collective poverty, while properly and actively caring for a Church, of which they themselves are spiritually and corporeally indivisible parts.⁴⁸ This communitarian strain of apostolic ecclesiology proved to be one of the most influential aspects of the *VC* for later generations of churchmen.⁴⁹ While an “ideology of sharing,” ostensibly inspired by the model of the earliest community of Christians, was of crucial concern to Augustine and his ecclesiastical contemporaries, the practical, this-worldly quality of Pomerius’s instructions for achieving such contemplative collectives carried special appeal for early medieval readers.⁵⁰ Indeed, in his study of Frankish aspirations to apostolic community, David Ganz has argued that “[t]he theology of Augustine was to prove less influential in shaping these traditions than the writings of [the] African Late Antique grammarian, Julianus Pomerius.”⁵¹ This is a remarkable statement, given both Pomerius’s own considerable debt to Augustine and the all-pervasive, if

46 Krielder, “The Pastoral Theology of Augustine,” 140. See also Luc Verheijen, *St. Augustine’s Monasticism in the Light of Acts 4: 32–35*, St. Augustine Lecture Series, 1975 (Philadelphia, 1979).

47 Pomerius, *VC* 2.17, *PL* 59: col. 462, “quia ut fieret et esset animorum sancta conjunctio, necessaria est facultatum iudicata communitio”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 86. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 78, however, contends that, “[a]bsent from Pomerius’s discussion . . . is any explicit reference to the earliest community of Christians at Jerusalem, and to the unity of hearts established by the community of property.”

48 Additionally, as Plumpe, “Pomeriana,” 237 n. 26, has demonstrated, Pomerius’s prescriptions for communal life follow Augustine’s *Serm.* 355, in which Augustine employed the term *monasterium* to describe the house where he and other clerics resided, while referring to those other clerics as *fratres mei*.

49 Glenn Olsen, “One Heart and One Soul (Acts 4.32 and 34) in Dhuoda’s ‘Manual,’” *Church History* 61 (1992): 28–33, notes that the Carolingian noblewoman Dhuoda interpreted Acts 4:32 not as referring specifically to the early Christian *vita communis*, but more universally encompassing all of the Christian community. The changing understanding and employment of this verse may be particularly revealing of changes in discourse and the contours of Christian society.

50 See Ganz, “The Ideology of Sharing.” Ganz also notes the prevalent appearance of Acts 4:32 in Christian literature relating to the administration of property.

51 Ganz, “The Ideology of Sharing,” 18.

idiosyncratic, influence that Augustine has often been assumed to have exerted upon early medieval—and in particular, Carolingian—thought.⁵²

Chrodegang's Pomerius

The case of Chrodegang (c. 712–766), the bishop of Metz whose career straddled the end of the Merovingian dynasty and the beginning of Carolingian rule, is particularly illustrative of Pomerius's enduring influence. Together with Benedict's *Rule* and works by both Gregory the Great and Pomerius's famous pupil, Caesarius of Arles, the *VC* served as one of the key texts used by Chrodegang for his *Regula canonicorum*.⁵³ As Martin Claussen has demonstrated, Chrodegang attempted to create a “Hagiopolis,” or holy city with a connection to Christian antiquity, in his relatively, historically inauspicious diocese of Metz.⁵⁴ The *Regula canonicorum*, with its impressive collection of patristic sources—each subtly, purposefully re-shaped to suit Chrodegang's aims—was a performative, ecclesiological tool, which imposed, at once, an order and air of authority rooted in ancient Christian wisdom.⁵⁵ To effect such authority, an appearance of Augustinianism was central to Chrodegang's

52 See Henri-Xavier Arquillière, *L'Augustinisme politique: Essai sur la formation des théories politiques du Moyen-Age* (Paris, 1934/1955). Arquillière's thesis, long accepted by historians, has recently been challenged by historians who argue that other patristic figures, such as Ambrose and Gregory the Great, were, at times, more central to Carolingian political and religious discourses. See Courtney M. Booker, “The Penance of Louis the Pious (833) and Episcopal *ministerium*: Political Augustinianism or the Influence of Ambrose?” delivered as part of the panel “Carolingian Pragmatic Responses to Authoritative Texts,” at the Medieval Academy of America 79th annual meeting, Seattle, Washington, 3 April 2004.

53 Kevin Madigan, “*Regula*, Use After Augustine,” in Allan D. Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1999), 707, notes that the *Regula canonicorum* remained widely in use up to the period of the Gregorian Reforms in the eleventh century. See also Jerome Bertram, *The Chrodegang Rules: The Rules for the Common Life of the Secular Clergy from the Eighth and Ninth Centuries* (Aldershot, 2005), 26, 84–96.

54 See Martin A. Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canonicorum in the Eighth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), 248–89.

55 Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 5, writes, “Chrodegang accomplished this not by breaking with the past, but by harnessing it, using the images and works of earlier periods in Christian and Frankish history to help him achieve his goals. This past, as he understood it, provided him with models, but they were not the sort of models that could be transplanted unchanged into his own environment. Instead, these were exemplars and norms, requiring adaptation and realignment if they were to fit into the world of mid-eighth century Metz.” Chrodegang's strategies represent an early example of the efforts by Carolingian bishops to construct an “archaized patristic tradition,” where no coherent tradition had previously existed, as argued by Michael E. Moore, “Carolingian Bishops and Christian Antiquity: Distance from the Past, Canon-Formation, and Imperial Power,” in Alasdair MacDonald, et al., eds., *Learned Antiquity: Scholarship and Society in the Near-East, the Greco-Roman World, and the Early Medieval West* (Leuven, 2003), 184.

program of reform. For example, by quoting a passage from a sermon by the Augustinian disciple Caesarius in the first sentence of his *Rule*'s first chapter, Chrodegang “parades his theological colors from the start.”⁵⁶ What may be more telling of the nature of Chrodegang’s reform program, however, is his implicit preference for Benedict’s *Rule* over that of Augustine, despite the seeming congruence of the bishop of Hippo’s text with the bishop of Metz’s circumstances.⁵⁷ It would appear that a deeply expressed reverence for Augustine was effectively *pro forma* by Chrodegang’s era; a dutiful alignment with some general aspects of Augustine’s theology, rather than a close reliance upon his writings, was sufficient for Chrodegang’s purposes. The “emblematic” Augustine and a short-hand “Augustinianism” were becoming crystallized, not least by Chrodegang’s own efforts.

However, the direct and particular work of other writers, rather than a general reverence for Augustine and Benedict, was, in fact, more central to the *Regula canonicorum*. In addition to the *Regula Benedicti*, Chrodegang carefully engaged with the *VC*. As the earliest Frankish writer to cite the *VC*, he marked the second book of Pomerius’s work as worthy of special attention, a preference often followed by the *VC*’s Carolingian readers.⁵⁸ Where the first book of the *VC* is concerned mainly with the eponymous contemplative life, establishing the distinction between “the nature and degree of perfection of the contemplative life in this flesh” (*quae et quanta sit in hac carne vitae contemplativae perfectio*),⁵⁹ and the great perfection of “the future life” (*futura vita*),⁶⁰ the second book provides detailed instructions for how the active life of a bishop should properly be led in order to achieve contemplation. If Pomerius’s specific prescriptions for episcopal activity served as points of noble aspiration for Frankish bishops, the *VC*’s core contention that bishops, like their monastic counterparts, were capable of attaining the greatest degree of perfection possible in this life must have seemed a

⁵⁶ Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 180.

⁵⁷ Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 115.

⁵⁸ Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 297–98, 323, demonstrates that Book 2 of the *VC*, and, in particular, the ninth chapter of the second book, was frequently and repeatedly drawn upon by Carolingian bishops in conciliar records.

⁵⁹ Pomerius, *VC* 1.8, *PL* 59: col. 425; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 27.

⁶⁰ Pomerius, *VC* 1.2, *PL* 59: col. 419; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 19.

remarkably enticing, and very clearly useful, proposition. Such status would allow bishops to fully exercise their ministerial duties, situating them, as the chief moral arbiters of the realm, in a position to correct even the politically powerful members of their flock. As Claussen notes, “by equating the life of the bishop with that of a contemplative, [Pomerius] gives the bishop the moral *auctoritas* of the contemplative.”⁶¹ Augustine had bemoaned the fateful burden of his election to the all-too-active position of Hippo’s see, wistfully recalling the more spiritually satisfying experience of his time spent among the small, contemplative community at Cassiciacum.⁶² For Pomerius, the harried life of a bishop need not be inevitably, spiritually inferior to that of those “dead to the world”; rather, *sacerdotes* could also become *participes*—“sharers in the contemplative virtue.”⁶³ This pathbreaking conception of the relationship between the active and contemplative lives must have appealed tremendously to an ambitious churchman like Chrodegang as a bishop who held the sanctity of the episcopal office in particularly high esteem. Chrodegang cites the author of this remarkable notion by name—the only such instance of explicit citation in the entire *Regula canonicorum*. Pomerius, however, is nowhere mentioned. Instead, Chrodegang offers his tribute to “*sanctus Prosper*,” the Aquitainian champion of Augustine’s controversial doctrine of grace.⁶⁴

Prosper’s Augustine

In order to understand the particular type of authority and set of associative meanings affixed to the *VC* through its attribution to Prosper (by Chrodegang and numerous other, later Carolingian writers), it is important to briefly examine the life and work of Prosper. What we shall see is that Prosper, while no doubt operating, like Pomerius, within the wide theological field of Augustinianism,

61 Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 189.

62 Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 108–20.

63 Pomerius, *VC* 1.25, *PL* 59: col. 440; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 52.

64 Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church*, 184.

espoused a particular type of Augustinianism discernibly his own.

Prosper of Aquitaine was born ca. 388, most likely into a Gallo-Roman family of some aristocratic pedigree, and died around 455—departing this life almost certainly well before Pomerius’s exodus from Africa to Gaul.⁶⁵ He first achieved prominence as an impassioned polemicist, defending Augustine’s writings on grace, perseverance, and predestination against different groups of opponents in Gaul. For better or worse, it is telling of Prosper’s success in this tireless campaign, and the nature of his polemical strategies, that the distinct groups and individuals criticizing specific aspects of Augustine’s work have been collectively branded by modern scholars as “Semi-Pelagians.” That most of Augustine’s Gallic critics in fact rejected the core principles of Pelagianism has proven largely beside the point; their misgivings regarding Augustine’s theology qualified them as at least partly Pelagian in character, according to Prosper (though, remarkably, not according to Augustine himself, as demonstrated by his own replies to these “brothers” before his death).⁶⁶

Following this early, acrimonious chapter of his career, the ascetic Augustinian disciple resettled in Rome, where he served as a papal adviser or secretary at the court of Leo I. Around this time, Prosper labored on the last version of his *Epitoma chronicon*, a work modeled after, and intended as continuation of, Jerome’s chronicle.⁶⁷ Alexander Hwang suggests that it was during this period that Prosper’s earlier, intractable association of Augustine with Catholic orthodoxy matured into a more

65 Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace*, 38–41, persuasively demonstrates 388 as a likelier *terminus ante quem* for Prosper’s birth than the earlier-accepted date of 390. Hwang bases his argument on, among other factors, the system of education in Gaul—badly disrupted by the Gothic invasions in 406—and the apparent maturity of Prosper’s thought in the poem *De providentia Dei* (416), Prosper’s earliest known work.

66 See Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace*, 81–90. Also, Ralph Mathisen, “For Specialists Only,” in Joseph Lienhard, ed., *Presbyter Factus Sum*, Collectanea Augustiana (New York, 1993), 35, shows that in fifth-century Gaul, “Augustine’s non-controversial works were read and admired,” but in general, Augustine was considered “to be a topic for experts. His complexities could only be evaluated by specialists.”

67 Robert Markus, “Chronicle and Theology: Prosper of Aquitaine,” in Christopher Holdsworth, T.P. Wiseman, eds., *The Inheritance of Historiography, 350–900* (Exeter, 1986), 40. Elsewhere in this article, Markus argues that Prosper, rather than simply echoing Leo’s emphasis on the *Roman* Church, merged components of Leonine ecclesiology with a more inclusive conception of the Church, dissociating himself, for instance, from Orosius’s Rome-centric interpretation of the barbarian invasions (p. 38).

nanced understanding of the Church, guided closely by Leo’s Rome-centered ecclesiology.⁶⁸ While Prosper may have softened aspects of Augustine’s position in this late period by making greater room for the role of free will, the majority of his work is solidly characterized by an unwavering partisanship. Augustine’s controversial statements⁶⁹ – 1) that grace is always both gratuitous and the *sine qua non* for the performance of good works, and thus is never earned through works performed independently of grace; 2) that the strength to persevere in faith is likewise a gift of God, not a product of individual human will; and 3) that those selected for salvation have been predetermined, with the results of this divine election being wholly mysterious and beyond our comprehension – were all, for Prosper, sacred truths, unquestionable because they had been expressed by the Church’s foremost doctor. However, unlike Augustine’s later, Carolingian admirers, who viewed this “ancient” Father as uniformly infallible, Prosper recognized in Augustine’s thought an important path of developmental progress.⁷⁰ Every word that Augustine had written may not have been correct, or equally so; hence, the apparent contradictions in his work—most notably regarding predestination—that critics pounced upon and Prosper gamely acknowledged. But through the perseverance generously granted to him by God, Augustine had constantly been moving toward the sacred truth of scripture. Thus, Augustine’s fully realized formulations of grace and divine election were, for Prosper, inevitable points of arrival in the trajectory of his thought. Because Augustine had, by the later years of his life and career, mastered the art of interpreting God’s Word, his pronouncements needed only to be attentively understood and emphatically affirmed, not supplemented or refined (even if Prosper eventually adjusted parts of Augustine’s program).

Consequently, much of Prosper’s “defense” of Augustine appears intent on rehashing his work,

⁶⁸ Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace*, 235–39.

⁶⁹ For a thoughtful, provocative reconsideration of Augustine’s oft-misunderstood position on free will and predestination, see James Wetzel, “Snares of Truth,” in Robert Dodaro, George Lawless, eds., *Augustine and His Critics: Essays in Honor of Gerald Bonner* (London, 2000), 124–41.

⁷⁰ On such development in the Church, see Karl F. Morrison, *Tradition and Authority in the Western Church, 300–1140* (Princeton, 1969).

occasionally muddling the finer points of Augustine’s theology, while caricaturing or misrepresenting the arguments of his critics and heatedly rebuking them as impious.⁷¹ Prosper’s *Epistula ad Rufinam* (“Letter to Rufinus,” an unknown ally), written ca. 426, displays these tendencies. Simplifying his opponents’ views on free will and human reason, Prosper exclaims to Rufinus, “[L]et such absurd and baneful opinion be far from the minds of Christians redeemed by the blood of the Christ!”⁷² Moving on to those critics’ “trite objection” in their reading of 1 Tim. 2:4, “God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth,”⁷³ Prosper follows Augustine’s interpretation of this passage in the latter’s recent *Enchiridion* (completed in 422). Augustine had argued that the “all” spoken of by Paul did not actually mean “all” humans, but only those whom God wills to save, among whom (following Paul) all different types and kinds of people may be represented.⁷⁴ Prosper similarly claims, “Only they who fail to see [Paul’s] meaning think it goes against us [e.g., Augustine and his defenders in Gaul, presumably including Rufinus, the letter’s addressee].”⁷⁵ Prosper challenges Augustine’s critics, asking, “All those who, from the past ages till today, died without having known God, are they of the number of ‘all men’?”⁷⁶ He then reiterates Augustine’s thorny problem regarding the difference between infants saved through baptism and those who die before being cleansed of original sin, ostensibly demonstrating thereby the fallacy in the belief that only “evil works” performed by the free will of adults can prevent salvation.⁷⁷

71 P. de Letter, “Introduction,” in P. de Letter, trans., *Prosper of Aquitaine, Defense of St. Augustine* (Westminster, Md, 1963), 3–20.

72 Prosper, *Ep. 12, PL 51*: col. 84: “Sed absit ab animis piorum et Christi sanguine redemptorum stulta nimium et pernicioosa persuasio”; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 30.

73 Prosper, *Ep. 13, PL 51*: col. 85A: “Et ubi est illud quod nobis quasi contrarium a non intelligentibus semper opponitur, quod *Deus omnes homines velit salvos fieri, et ad agnitionem veritatis venire?*”; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 31.

74 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 24.97, 27.3; Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace*, 77–78. For an expanded discussion of this topic, see Alexander Y. Hwang, “Augustine’s Interpretation of 1 Tim. 2:4,” *Studia Patristica* 43 (2006): 137–42.

75 Prosper, *Ep. 13, PL 51*: col. 85: “ubi est illud quod nobis quasi contrarium a non intelligentibus semper opponitur”; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 31.

76 Prosper, *Ep. 13, PL 51*: col. 85: “Numquid non sunt de omnibus hominibus qui a praeteritis generationibus usque in hoc tempus sine Dei cognitione perierunt?”; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 31.

77 Prosper, *Ep. 13*; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 31, following Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 24.97.

In a sense, Prosper's "Augustinianism" is closer to Augustine's own position than most other sets of ideas attributed to, or associated with, Augustine. In Prosper's second letter to Augustine (the first is lost), the disciple informs the elderly bishop of the controversies brewing in Gaul, and requests writings from Augustine that will set these wrong-headed men right. Prosper greets Augustine as "the most holy bishop lord . . . wonderful beyond words, honorable without comparison."⁷⁸ Prosper's fawning praise of his theological hero is rather similar to Pomerius's extended note of adulation quoted above ("keen in mind, charming in eloquence, skilled in human learning," etc.⁷⁹); in their effusive, unqualified praise of Augustine, Prosper and Pomerius may be somewhat remarkable, but they were by no means exceptional, among fifth- or early sixth-century writers. Their supreme reverence for Augustine seems more at home in a later age—specifically, the Carolingian era—when Augustine's name and reputation would acquire "patristic" status.⁸⁰

It is likely by way of Prosper's and Pomerius's shared enthusiasm for Augustine, and the clear influence that his writings had on their own works, that Pomerius's *VC* came to be mistakenly attributed to Prosper.⁸¹ Yet beyond this commonality, the Augustinianism of Prosper and that of Pomerius are deeply dissimilar. Pomerius grounds his *VC* in "a broad, moderate, and thoroughly practical Augustinianism," happily utilizing Augustine's widely embraced, non-controversial works, while conspicuously avoiding nearly all those aspects of Augustine's theology that had provoked such debate in Gaul not long before, in Prosper's time.⁸² Prosper, on the other hand, was an unabashed controversialist, a fervent "defender of the extreme views of Augustine."⁸³ Where Pomerius subtly synthesized ingredients from John Cassian's program for the contemplative and active lives with his

78 Prosper, *Epistula ad Augustinum*, PL 51: col. 67: "Domino beatissimo papae, ineffabiliter mirabili, incomparabiliter honorando"; trans. de Letter, *Prosper of Aquitaine*, 38.

79 See n. 19 above.

80 See Leyser, "Augustine in the Latin West."

81 Max L.W. Laistner, "The Influence During the Middle Ages of the Treatise *De vita contemplativa* and Its Surviving Manuscripts," in Chester G. Starr, ed., *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages: Selected Essays by M.L.W. Laistner* (New York, 1966), 45.

82 Suelzer, "Introduction," 6.

83 Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000* (Oxford, 2003), 130.

own middle-of-the-road Augustinianism, Prosper, identifying Cassian with the “semi-Pelagian” threat, wrote passionately against him.⁸⁴ By redirecting our gaze from the shared, general aspects of Pomerius’s and Prosper’s allegiance to Augustine, to look instead at the significant differences—within Augustinianism—that separate the two men, the re-attribution of the *VC* across this divide seems less understandable and more peculiar, if not outright perplexing.

Identity, Obscurity, and the Creation of Authority

The precedent set by Chrodegang in explicitly attributing the *VC* to Prosper would prove to be powerful and long-lasting. Pomerius’s name, on the other hand, had by the eighth century become relatively obscure.⁸⁵ Already in the *Testimonia divinae scripturae*, a seventh-century *florilegium* incorrectly ascribed to Isidore of Seville, excerpts from the *VC* appear within the chapter entitled *Testimonia de libro Prosperi*.⁸⁶ Similarly, even when the author of the *VC* was identified correctly, as in Isidore’s authentic *De viris illustribus* (this being the most prominent medieval attestation to Pomerius’s existence), he was still subject to confusion; as Conrad Leyser has noted, “[i]t seems likely that Isidore assimilated without warrant Pomerius to [the latter’s] interlocutor bishop Julianus.”⁸⁷ Regardless of whether this otherwise unknown Julianus was an actual bishop who commissioned the *VC*, or an alter ego fashioned by Pomerius to lend weight to his handbook for bishops (as Robert Markus has speculated), since at least Isidore’s time he has become nominally conflated with Pomerius.⁸⁸ Making matters even more problematic, despite an abundance of other texts by Isidore, his

84 On the conflict between Prosper and Cassian, see Augustine Cassiday, “Rehabilitating John Cassian: An Evaluation of Prosper of Aquitaine’s Polemic against the ‘Semipelagians’,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 58 (2005): 270–84. In Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 69–77 (following the suggestion of Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189), a strong case is made for Cassian’s influence on the thought of Pomerius.

85 Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 67.

86 *Testimonia divinae scripturae*, App XI, cap. 33, *PL* 83: cols. 1215C–17A. See Robert E. McNally, “Isidoriana,” *Theological Studies* 20 (1959): 438. Also, concerning the *Testimonia*, see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895* (London, 1977), 166 n. 1.

87 Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 66 n. 4. For pre-Isidorian attestations, Leyser refers to the *Vita Caesarii* and Pseudo-Gennadius’s continuation of Gennadius’s *De viris illustribus*.

88 Consequently, modern scholars identify Pomerius in a variety of ways: Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, for example,

De viris illustribus appears to

have been quite rare in the Carolingian eighth and ninth centuries, surviving in only three manuscripts of the period outside of Spain.⁸⁹ This paucity of witnesses containing (semi-)accurate information about Pomerius's identity may partly serve to explain his relative obscurity in the Carolingian era.

Meanwhile, as Pomerius's name faded, Prosper's was growing brighter. A recent survey of patristic texts in Carolingian manuscripts copied and preserved at St-Gall estimates that Prosper's name appears nearly as often as those of Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and Ambrose.⁹⁰

However, of the eleven extant St-Gall manuscripts containing works attributed to Prosper, three are copies of sections of the *VC* erroneously ascribed to him.⁹¹ In some ninth-century witnesses, the *VC* is copied alongside authentic Prosperian texts, most often Prosper's *Epigrammata*.⁹² Of course, ambiguity and confusion surrounding issues of authorship were certainly not limited to Pomerius: Another St-Gall codex, MS 570, groups the *VC* with works by Pseudo-Hormisdas, Pseudo-Gregory, and Pseudo-Cyprian, as well as authentic works by Isidore and Caesarius.⁹³ In other instances, such as Paris, BnF Lat. 13400, Pomerius was apparently confused with Julian of Toledo.⁹⁴

Although attributions of the *VC* to Prosper easily outnumber those to Pomerius in medieval manuscripts, Max Laistner, in his meticulous study of the *VC*'s transmission, raises two very important

cites "Julianus" Pomerius, while Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, "[adopts] the practice of the earlier witnesses in referring simply to 'Pomerius.'" Perhaps Isidore possessed some knowledge, left unstated in his work, that this "illustrious man," Pomerius, was up to something akin to R.A. Markus's aforementioned point of speculation—that the bishop Julianus was an alter ego for Pomerius himself? See Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 189.

89 Laistner, "The Influence," 45.

90 Bernice M. Kaczynski, "The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria," *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 9–12.

91 The following manuscripts contain works attributed to Prosper: St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 29; 125; 148; 167; 184; 185; 186; 187; 277; 570; 877. The *De vita contemplativa* is preserved in manuscripts 186, 187, and 570.

92 E.g., St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 187; Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek Weissenburg 56; Montpellier, École de med. 218; Montpellier, École de med. 484. For a careful study of Prosper's works, see Hwang, *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace*, 11–29.

93 On St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 570, see Gustav Scherrer, *Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek St. Gallen* (Halle, 1875), 183–84.

94 On Paris, BnF Lat. 13400, see Léopold Delisle, *Inventaire des manuscrits de Saint-Germain-des-Prés conservés à la Bibliothèque impériale, sous les numéros 11504–14231 du fonds Latin* (Paris, 1868), 101.

caveats, which must be considered in any estimation of Prosper's lofty status. First, the *VC*, quite ironically, "enjoyed infinitely more popularity" throughout the Middle Ages than any of Prosper's authentic theological writings.⁹⁵ While Prosper's name lent the *VC* a good deal of "patristic" weight, his reputation must have been itself at least partly, if not largely, based on the widely esteemed and influential *VC*. Second, Pomerius's name, as the author of the *VC*, was never entirely forgotten.⁹⁶ Attributions of the *VC* to Pomerius coexisted alongside those to Prosper in the early Middle Ages.

As a telling, early example of how Carolingian ecclesiastical writers made use of "Prosper's" *VC* as a source for patristic wisdom, let us consider the learned priest and theologian Paulinus of Aquileia's (ca. 726–802) *Liber exhortationis*, written in 795 and dedicated to a layman, Count Eric of Friuli.⁹⁷ In chapter eleven, Paulinus quotes (albeit somewhat liberally⁹⁸) passages from the *VC* that center around the contention that the "goods of this life" are the means by which the "eyes of our mind" (*oculos mentis nostrae*) are seduced by the devil (Pomerius's *decipiendi artifex* becomes in Paulinus *antiquus hostis decipiendo*).⁹⁹ In chapter fourteen, Paulinus follows Pomerius in adopting the Augustinian position on original sin, which had emphasized the irremediable sin of pride, before shifting subtly, yet strikingly, away from Augustine by attributing the sin of Adam to concupiscence (with the implicit suggestion that a rigorous, ascetic shunning of desire may be sufficient to transcend the *peccatum primi*).¹⁰⁰ Later in his text, Paulinus draws rather more loosely from the *VC*, invoking it in his discussion on the carnal indulgences of food, drink, and excessive sleep, among other vices, as

95 Laistner, "The Influence," 55.

96 Laistner, "The Influence," 43.

97 Paulinus of Aquileia, *Liber exhortationis ad Henricum*, *PL* 99: col. 197–282; McKitterick, *The Frankish Church*, 166–68.

98 Laistner, "The Influence," 46, notes, "Although [Paulinus] follows Pomerius's thought closely, he treats the text with some freedom; for example, he changes the verb from the third person singular to the first person plural. Thus, while his debt to Pomerius is great and obvious, his quotations are so free that they are valueless for determining what kind of text of Pomerius he used."

99 Paulinus of Aquileia, *Liber exhortationis*, 14, *PL* 99: col. 206.

100 Paulinus of Aquileia, *Liber exhortationis*, 14, *PL* 99: col. 208. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 73–74, briefly discusses this passage from the *VC* as a key example of Pomerius's dexterous negotiation of Augustinian and Cassianic perspectives.

perilous obstacles to spiritual progress. Paulinus appeals to Rom. 8:13 (“If you live according to the flesh, you shall die”) to illustrate this point,¹⁰¹ whereas Pomerius had cited both 1 Cor 3:1–2 (“And I, brethren, when I came to you, could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; . . . for you were not able as yet. But neither, indeed, are you now able; for you are yet carnal”) and 3:3 (“For, whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man?”).¹⁰² If Paulinus’s divergent scriptural citation is perhaps more pithy and emphatic, this might be because his intended reader, a lay nobleman, was all the more in need of unambiguous correction than Pomerius’s intended episcopal audience. As a clearly attentive reader of the *VC*, Paulinus was doubtless aware that Pomerius’s (or “Prosper’s”) text was meant to guide *sacerdotes* in the administration of their clerical duties. Yet, in drawing extensively on the *VC* for his book of exhortations, Paulinus seems to have considered the possibility that the valuable advice contained in the *VC* might even assist a layman in becoming a “sharer in the contemplative virtue.”¹⁰³ The ascription of that advice to Prosper, with his close connotative ties to Augustine, served to lend Paulinus’s book an ancient, recognizable authority that Pomerius’s more obscure name would not have possessed.

Paulinus was using the helpful moral instruction expressed within the *VC* as a tool to set Frankish Christians on the right path toward contemplation, while also seemingly testing its limits as a signifier of unimpeachable patristic authority. Its “practical” value stemmed from Pomerius’s specific, sporadically innovative articulation of a workable vision for achieving the highest earthly degree of perfection, without abandoning the world to become a monk. But, at the same time, the value of the *VC* as a formidable source for bolstering the authority of its user’s claims resided, in large part, in its status

101 Paulinus of Aquileia, *Liber exhortationis*, 17, *PL* 99: col. 210.

102 Pomerius, *VC* 3.1, *PL* 59: col. 474, “cum sanctus Apostolus etiam fideles quosdam qui, credentes in Deum, non secundum Deum, sed secundum hominem vivunt, carnales nominet, dicens: *Et ego, fratres, cum venissem ad vos, non vobis potui loqui quasi spiritualibus, sed quasi carnalibus: nondum enim poteratis; sed nec adhuc quidem potestis, adhuc enim estis carnales*. Et tanquam quaereremus quid carnales velit intelligi, secutus adjunxit: *Cum enim sit inter vos zelus et contentio, nonne carnales estis, et secundum hominem ambulatis?*”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 104.

103 See Thomas F.X. Noble, “Secular Sanctity: Forging an Ethos for the Carolingian Nobility,” in Janet Nelson, Patrick Wormald, eds., *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2007), 8–36.

as a thoroughly orthodox Augustinian text—authored, allegedly, by Augustine’s greatest Gallic disciple, Prosper. That is, where Pomerius’s words offered accessible advice for bishops on how to attain the contemplative life, the ascription of those words to Saint Prosper provided the *VC*’s episcopal readers with a far firmer bedrock upon which to build the arguments for their possible “perfection” and spiritual equality to monks. A recognition, by Carolingian bishops, of these different types of value in the *VC*—Paulinus hinted at both in his *Liber exhortationis*—served to foreshadow the increasingly bold and effective uses that Pomerius’s ninth-century audience would find for his text. It is to those prospective “sharers in contemplative virtue” that we shall now turn.

Chapter 2: The Possibility of Perfection

For Pomerius, there was no evident reason why the highest degree of perfection possible in this life should be the exclusive domain of monks, “dead to the world” and committed—at least in theory—to a life of prayer. Bishops, while administering their pastoral duties among their diocesan flocks, could also aspire to the perfection of the contemplative life. This could be achieved, according to Pomerius (or, for many of his medieval readers, Prosper of Aquitaine), both by diligently, thoughtfully attending to the important, everyday obligations of the episcopal office, and by complementing the fulfillment of those worldly demands with a rigorous commitment to prayer and the study of scripture. The *De vita contemplativa* instructed its readers on how one ought to strike such a precarious, yet possible, balance, which might even, implied the *VC*’s writer, facilitate a more complete, fully-realized form of contemplative perfection than that which could be achieved through a monastic life devoted solely—again, at least in theory—to study and prayer.

This chapter will examine the special appeal that the *VC*’s enticing offer—of possible perfection for bishops—carried for key members of the Carolingian episcopate in the opening decades of the ninth century. I shall examine the *VC*’s reception in light of modern theories envisioning the Carolingian Empire as *ecclesia* and as Benedictine monastery, in order to suggest that the *VC* was understood and employed by Carolingian bishops as a vital tool for leveling the ecclesio-political playing field, enabling them to “share” in the spiritual, moral, and (hence) political authority attributed to, and wielded by, monks. I shall also—alas, all too briefly, given the limits of this essay’s scope—consider the impact of the *VC* within the context of the Carolingian reception of the “patristic” pope Gregory the Great (d. 604), and argue that some of the aspects of Gregory’s thought that most appealed to Carolingian readers were Gregorian developments of points posited by Pomerius in the *VC*. This is particularly significant given that extracts from the *VC* were frequently paired closely alongside

Gregory's work by Carolingian ecclesiastics. As the cultural value "deposited" into, and then "borrowed" from, the *VC* continued to rise, Pomerius's (or "Prosper's") work, at the same time, benefited immensely by inheriting a share of the authority associated with Gregory's name and works. Put another way, the *VC* increasingly yielded not just the authority attributed to the text itself and to Prosper's name, but also something of the authority possessed by the names and works with which it was frequently grouped by Carolingian bishops—in particular, that of Gregory and the *Regula pastoralis*. I suggested in the previous chapter that it was likely through the perceived "Augustinianism" of the *VC* that Pomerius's work came to be frequently attributed to Prosper. However, the far more common Carolingian coupling of quotations from the *VC* with the words of Gregory (especially from his *Regula pastoralis*), as opposed to Augustine (much less the authentic work of Prosper himself), suggests a curious, subtly expanding rupture between the "author-function" of Prosper as the alleged writer of the *VC* and the applied use of the actual intellectual content of the *VC*.

Bishops and the Carolingian Reform Program

Though Frankish bishops since the time of Chrodegang of Metz gleaned much that could be of use in the *VC*, Pomerius's work came to be regarded as an even more essential source of edification and authority during the period of the Carolingian reforms. In the second half of the eighth century, the Frankish Church, in conjunction with the realm itself, strove toward a specific objective of *renovatio*, a movement that took center stage during the reign of Charlemagne.¹ The intended goal of this program of renewal was a recreation of "ancient" Christianity, an idealized, compressed vision of the age of the

¹ See Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895* (London, 1977). Also, Giles Brown, "Introduction," in Rosamond McKitterick, ed., *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1993), 1–51, who shows that the Carolingian reform program was, in part, informed by earlier, like-minded efforts within the Visigothic and Anglo-Saxon territories. On the reform tradition in ancient Christian thought, see the classic study by Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform* (New York, 1967).

Fathers.² This Carolingian vision was, to be sure, more a typological than historical conception of the past. Fourth- and fifth-century giants like Ambrose and Augustine shared this imagined space with later figures like Caesarius of Arles and Gregory; underlying these sacred names were their apparent scriptural forebears, together breathing the same rarefied, ancient air of perfect Christian orthodoxy. But before this lofty vision could be realized, some changes of a more practical nature needed to be made.

At the heart of the late eighth- and early ninth-century reform efforts—directed by Charlemagne, Louis the Pious, and the elite group of clerics advising them—was the contention that behavior among both clerics and laypeople must first be righted; the headier territory of ideas and beliefs could, by and large, be addressed later, and on a “need-to-know” basis.³ Consequently, within this particular climate of reform, it is hardly surprising that Pomerius’s guidebook for bishops, though frequently associated with Prosper’s prominent name, assumed a greater degree of popularity and prominence than Prosper’s own authentic works, which centered more on the finer (and more controversial) points of Augustinian theology.⁴ It is difficult to pinpoint the moment when, or geographic site where, the *VC* was first mistaken as a work by Prosper. Consequently, it would be rather audacious to directly, explicitly accuse the *VC*’s Carolingian readers of deliberately mis-attributing the *VC* to Prosper. The textual landscape of the earlier Middle Ages is, of course, littered with works or brief quotations from works that are ascribed to someone other than their actual writer—not to mention issues of pseudonymous authorship and forgery. And yet, the *VC*’s Carolingian audience included some of the period’s most learned figures, many of whom possessed a demonstrably

2 See Michael E. Moore, “The Ancient Fathers: Christian Antiquity, Patristics, and Frankish Canon Law,” *Millennium* 7 (2010): 293–342; Willemien Otten, “The Texture of Tradition: The Role of the Church Fathers in Carolingian Theology,” in Irene Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists* (Leiden, 1997), 1:3–50.

3 See Thomas F.X. Noble, “Secular Sanctity: Forging an Ethos for the Carolingian Nobility,” in Janet Nelson, Patrick Wormald, eds., *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2007), 8–36. Also, Brown, “Introduction.”

4 Max L.W. Laistner, “The Influence during the Middle Ages of the Treatise *De vita contemplativa* and Its Surviving Manuscripts,” in Chester G. Starr, ed., *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages: Selected Essays by M.L.W. Laistner* (New York, 1966), 40–56.

sophisticated knowledge of patristic literature and a discerning eye for the nuances of orthodoxy. It is not at all difficult to imagine that some of these attentive readers could have—or, in fact, did—notice curious, potentially irreconcilable differences between the Augustinianism of the *VC* and that which was expressed by Prosper in his other known writings. But what would it have benefited these powerful churchmen to question the status quo? Prosper's was a sacred and recognizable name associated not only with Augustine, but more generally, with the “ancient” Christian past that Carolingian reformers sought to recreate.

Hence, in these reform efforts, ecclesiastics drew increasingly heavily upon the *VC*. Paulinus of Aquileia's book of exhortations to the layman, Count Eric of Friuli, a work that drew purposefully on the practical wisdom of the *VC*, is indicative of attitudes toward reform in this period. Thomas F.X. Noble examines Paulinus's moral *speculum* as a notable example of clerical efforts to edify the lay elite, while situating such efforts within the context of the larger, imperial reform program. As Noble observes, “Charlemagne and Louis the Pious attempted to draw the City of God down to earth, and to make the nobility sharers in the burden of citizenship in that city. A Christian ideal of public service, of ministry, was both a vision and a plan of action.”⁵ Alluding to Augustine and his famous conceptualization of the Christian spiritual community, Noble implies something like “Political Augustinianism” at work. Certainly, to the extent that such a process occurred (a point discussed briefly in the previous chapter, and one to which we will return later in the essay), the active life of the secular ministry was imbued with a new urgency, while its episcopal practitioners were, thus, understood to wield a greater, more essential type of authority and power over the (lay and clerical) souls of the realm. Prosper's (and occasionally, still Pomerius's) *VC* was an important ingredient in the rising tide of the reform program—buoying, in particular, those bishops steering the *Ecclesia-navis*.

If Carolingian bishops indeed conceived of their ministry in such terms—as captains at sea,

5 Noble, “Secular Sanctity,” 36.

entrusted to guide the ship of God’s church through sometimes treacherous waters—it was likely a conception taken from the *VC*. Though Pomerius did not invent the metaphor of the *Ecclesia-navis*, his illustration of this trope is vivid and effective.⁶ Cautioning his reader about the serious threat to the Church posed by episcopal negligence, Pomerius wrote:

For, if it is dangerous not to steer a ship cautiously through the waves, how much more dangerous is it to abandon it storm-tossed to the swelling billows? Though it is better not to enter such a ship, once a man has taken it over, it behooves him to cast away fear of the stormy sea, and, taking hope of reaching shore, to steer into port without any loss of cargo. Since this comparison pleased you [Bishop Julianus, Pomerius’s patron], I added: And so a church, which sails the sea of the world like a great ship, which is buffeted by various waves of temptation in this life, tossed to and fro by the attacks of unclean spirits as though by stormy waves, dashed against the rocks and shoals of scandals, hemmed in as if by a reef of heavy sand, should not be deserted but directed. Just as it will bring all its passengers safely to port when it is controlled by the watchfulness of its pilot, so it will cause the loss not only of its passengers but also of the pilot himself if it is swamped by the waves or set adrift.⁷

Pomerius perfunctorily concedes that “it is better not to enter such a ship,” yet just before this passage, he pointedly chastises those bishops who have abandoned the obligations of their office to “withdraw to some solitary spot, not so much from a desire for rest as from despair of fulfilling [their] charge.”⁸ The greater man of God, Pomerius suggests, is the steadfast navigator of His ship. The graphic nature of Pomerius’s language, as he describes the various types of worldly peril that might endanger the safe passage of the Church-as-ship, paints a striking portrait of the bishop as an indispensable figure—one worthy of potentially attaining contemplative perfection through his courageous guidance of the

6 See Mary Josephine Suelzer, trans., *Julianus Pomerius: The Contemplative Life* (Westminster, Md., 1947), 181 n. 50. Also, Giles Constable, “Medieval Latin Metaphors” *Viator* 38.2 (2007): 1–20.

7 Pomerius, *VC* 1.16, *PL* 59: col. 431–32, “quoniam si periculosum est navim inter fluctus caute non regere, quanto periculosius est eam undis intumescens fluctuantem in tempestate relinquere? Ad quam sicut satius est non ascendere, ita semel susceptam convenit fluctuantis pelagi projecta formidine, ac spe perveniendi concepta, usque in portum sine ulla mercium jactura perducere. Quae cum vobis comparatio placuisset, adjunxi: Et idcirco Ecclesia, quae velut navis magna per mare mundi hujus enavigat, quae diversis tentationum fluctibus in hac vita contunditur, quae immundorum spirituum persecutionibus velut quibusdam procellosis fluctibus in diversa jactatur, quae scandalorum cautibus vadosis illiditur, quae velut aggere arenae gravantis cingitur, non relinquenda est, sed regenda: quae sicut omnes quos vehit, perducit incolumes gubernatoris vigilantia gubernata, ita non solum omnes quos habet, sed etiam ipsum gubernatorem perdet, submersa fluctibus aut soluta”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 37–38.

8 Pomerius, *VC* 1.16, *PL* 59: col. 431, “in aliquam solitudinem non tam studio quietis quam ipsius officii vestri desperatione secedere”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 38.

Ecclesia-navis. The *VC* cautioned its episcopal readers to keep their hands firmly on the wheel, however turbulent the waters.

Imperium and Ecclesia

Negligentia, with regard to one's *ministerium*, was among the most urgent concerns occupying the Carolingian elite in the first half of the ninth century.⁹ Worries surrounding *negligentia*, as opposed to the proper, conscientious administration of one's duties, beset both the clerical and lay-political leaders of the empire. Mayke de Jong, reflecting on the Carolingian understanding of the empire as *ecclesia*, contends that the geographical expansion of the boundaries of imperial territory (especially during the reign of Charlemagne) was significant mostly for the added number of souls that would be living under the *imperium* of right-ordered Christendom.¹⁰ Given the contemporary connotation of the ethno-political signifier "Frankish" as being essentially synonymous with orthodox Christian practice, or even with God's chosen people,¹¹ the grave concerns stemming from any behavior that might jeopardize the security of the empire, or the souls living within its boundaries, becomes more readily understandable. This conception of the empire and its populace seems to suggest at least the partial realization of something like "Political Augustinianism." Yet De Jong argues that, rather than an

9 On the centrality of *negligentia* to Carolingian ecclesiological and political discourses, see Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009); and Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge, 2009).

10 As Thomas F.X. Noble, "The Monastic Ideal as a Model for Empire," *Revue Bénédictine* 86 (1976): 249, observed, the "identification of empire and Church has long been recognized and no reputable book on ninth-century ecclesiology or political thought omits mention of it." De Jong provides a cogent, thoughtful take on this concept in her essays, "Ecclesia and the Early Medieval Polity," in Stuart Airlie, et al., eds., *Staat im frühen Mittelalter* (Vienna, 2006), 113–32; and "The State of the Church: *Ecclesia* and Early Medieval State Formation," in Walter Pohl, Veronika Wieser, eds., *Der frühmittelalterliche Staat – europäische Perspektiven* (Vienna, 2009), 241–54. On the translation of the term *imperium*, which, it is increasingly argued, should be translated as "imperial authority" as opposed "empire," with regard to Carolingian texts, see De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 27; and Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011), 100–1.

11 On this point, see Mary Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne," in Yitzhak Hen, Matthew Innes, eds., *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000), 114–61; and eadem, "Divine Election for Nations: A Difficult Rhetoric for Medieval Scholars?" in Lars Boje Mortensen, ed., *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom (c. 1000–1300)* (Copenhagen, 2006), 275–314.

indivisible merging of the political and the spiritual, the *ordines*, or “orders” of Carolingian society, remained mostly well-delineated and were, in fact, seen as integral to maintaining the stability of the realm. It was when the duties expected of one’s station—whether emperor or duke, monk or bishop—were neglected or insufficiently attended to that trouble was seen to occur. Thus, the *VC* contributed significantly to stability and right order within the empire by providing detailed instructions to bishops on how to fulfill the duties of their office, while cautioning against neglecting their ministry. At the same time, the contention in the increasingly popular *VC* that bishops, and not just monks, could become “sharers in the contemplative virtue,” subtly challenged contemporary understandings of the *ordines* themselves.

This point was especially true for the period of Louis’s reign. During this time, the monastic paradigm loomed large not only in Benedictine houses (the overwhelming majority of the empire’s monasteries), but also in the royal palace at Aachen and, more generally, in the governance of the vast empire that Louis had inherited from his father, Charlemagne. In his influential study of Louis’s reign, Thomas Noble argues that Louis, under the close guidance of his monastic adviser, Benedict of Aniane, conceived of the empire as a Benedictine monastery.¹² In this scenario, Louis was the empire’s stern, but not inflexible, abbot, responsible for the oversight and, when necessary, correction of the many souls under his care, while at the same time not above correction from others should he himself deviate from the rules of the house.¹³ Within this monastically-informed empire, did the *ordines*, particularly the orders of regular and secular clergy, function in the discrete, theoretically distinct manner in which they were conceived? Prominent monks, not least Benedict of Aniane, but also others like Wala and Paschasius Radbertus (successive abbots at the monastery of Corbie), were among the era’s key movers

12 Noble, “The Monastic Model.”

13 Noble’s revisionist take proved pivotal in changing the approach of scholars to this “monkish” emperor and his long-undervalued reign. See Janet L. Nelson, “The Last Years of Louis the Pious,” in Roger Collins, Peter Godman, eds., *Charlemagne’s Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford, 1990), 147–59; De Jong, *The Penitential State*, esp. 3, 9, 46–58; Booker, *Past Convictions*, esp. 226–33.

and shakers, actively involved in the high politics of the realm. Other monks preached to the lay population in the area around their monasteries, picking up the ministerial slack in the apparent absence of secular clerics.¹⁴ And what of bishops? If monks, who were supposed to have committed themselves to lives of prayer, study, and solitude within their cloistered communities, could preach to the populace and involve themselves in worldly politics, why, then, should bishops not be sharers in the contemplative life? And should the *abbas-imperator* require serious correction, who better to rebuke him than the able *gubernatores* of the *Ecclesia-navis* (including, but not limited to, the Bishop of Rome)?¹⁵ With the *VC* and other vital, authoritative works, such as Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis* and *Moralia in Iob*, lighting the way, the path to perfection, for bishops in particular, was increasingly, uniquely unobstructed.

Ministers of Authority

The ascendance of bishops can be discerned from the records of the Frankish reform councils of 813, five meetings of high-ranking ecclesiastics that collectively represent the culmination of Charlemagne's program of renewal. Held at Mainz, Reims, Tours, Chalons, and Arles, these councils were called, but not attended by, the elderly Charlemagne, who crowned his son, Louis the Pious, as co-emperor a short time later, before his death in January 814.¹⁶ Ushering in a new moment in Carolingian political culture, the 813 councils have been cited as the clearest example of the transition from legislation initiated mainly by the emperor to legislation initiated chiefly by the clergy.¹⁷ That *negligentia* and the proper adherence to one's *ordo* were among the most pressing topics of discussion

14 On this point, see Thomas L. Amos, "Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages," in Thomas F.X. Noble, John J. Contreni, eds., *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1987), 165–80.

15 See Booker, *Past Convictions*, 233–34.

16 *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 813, ed. Georg H. Pertz, Friedrich Kurze, *MGH, SRG* (Hannover, 1895), 138; trans. Bernhard Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1970), 95.

17 McKitterick, *The Frankish Church*, 12. On differing conceptions of the relationship between the royal and clerical institutions in the Carolingian era, see Karl F. Morrison, *The Two Kingdoms: Ecclesiology in Carolingian Political Thought* (Princeton, 1964).

seems absolutely appropriate; these were concerns that were understood to impact *Ecclesia* as a whole, and thus all aspects and segments of Frankish society.¹⁸ To instruct bishops and monks on how to satisfy the demands of their orders, Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis* and Benedict's *Regula* were read, respectively, to these clerical groups.¹⁹ The *VC* was also, less prominently, among the authoritative texts drawn on in 813 at Chalons; Chapter nine of Book II was quoted briefly, with no reference to its author.²⁰ Prosper's name was not needed to supplement this already well-worn passage treating the attitude that bishops should adopt toward the administration of church property, perhaps because the sentiment it expressed was uncontroversial (an aspiration to the apostolic ideal of ancient Christianity²¹), or perhaps just because Prosper's name was already closely connected with this recurring snippet of wisdom. Whatever the case, by 813 the *VC* had become a reliable source for establishing standards of conduct among bishops, so that they might aspire to something like the perfection of their monastic counterparts. Michael E. Moore argues that "[t]he councils of 813 insisted on the distinction of bishops as a separate group with a unique dignity and authority to rule the people of God."²² Yet, in terms of the consistent application of their *ministerium* and the place occupied by bishops within the structure of the *ordines*, work remained to be done before the impressive vision of right episcopal rule projected at the councils of 813 could come to fruition.

In the meantime, one of the key items addressed at Chalons was the problem of outdated, erroneous penitentials, a serious concern that would again, as we shall see, prompt Carolingian bishops

18 De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 121.

19 Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 280.

20 Council of Chalons (813), cap. 6, *MGH, Concilia* (Hannover, 1906), 2(1):275.

21 Pomerius, *VC* 2.9, *PL* 59: col. 454 "Et idcirco scientes nihil aliud esse res ecclesiae, nisi vota fidelium, pretia peccatorum, et patrimonia pauperum; non eas vindicaverunt in usus suos, ut proprias, sed ut commendatas pauperibus diviserunt"; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 73, that since "the possessions of the Church are but the vows of the faithful, the ransom of sinners, and the patrimony of the poor, [bishops ought not] claim them for their own use, as being their own, but [divide] them as a trust among the poor" Cf. Council of Chalons (813), cap 6, *MGH, Concilia*, 2(1):275, "res ecclesiae, quibus episcopi non ut propriis, sed ut commendatis uti debent, pretia sunt peccatorum, patrimonia pauperum, stipendia fratrum in commune viventium."

22 Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 281.

to turn for edification to the *VC*.²³ The *libri paenitentiales*, or penitential books, were handbooks for confessors, a non-canonical genre of texts frequently regarded as problematic by members of the ecclesiastical elite. The origins, manner of compilation, and uses of the penitentials remain contested and rather shadowy.²⁴ For instance, while they were supposed to have been carried by priests for use in administering penance among their congregations, it seems instead that these small, easily portable handbooks rarely circulated as such, and were actually more closely connected with groups of monks or bishops than with priests.²⁵ The obstacles that modern historians have encountered in their study of the penitentials are not altogether different from the problems lamented by the bishops gathered at Chalons. The conciliar record invokes the ancient canons, the sacred scriptures, and ecclesiastical custom as the proper, edifying examples from which to draw for administering penance, while calling to “eliminate those booklets which are called ‘penitentials,’ and of which the errors are as certain as the authors are uncertain.”²⁶ This damning criticism of the penitentials, in their contemporary, allegedly haphazard state, is striking because, according to the passage, the numerous errors that they contain were only half of the problem. The other complaint was that the authorship of these *libelli* was anyone’s guess. Dutiful, deferential references to scriptural and patristic authorities were required to ground the instructions for a ritual as important as penance. Again, recognizable names, and the weight of orthodoxy that certain names carried, mattered tremendously. Consequently, the creator of a superior replacement for the penitentials then in circulation should be someone well-versed in relevant writings by the key authors of “ancient” Christianity.

23 On the council of Chalons, see Abigail Firey, “Useful Guilt: Canonists and Penance on the Carolingian Frontier,” in Martin Brett, Kathleen G. Cushing, eds., *Readers, Texts, and Compilers in the Earlier Middle Ages* (Aldershot, 2009), 29–30.

24 See Abigail Firey, *A Contrite Heart: Prosecution and Redemption in the Carolingian Empire* (Leiden, 2009), esp. 65–71. Also Rob Meens, “The Historiography of Early Medieval Penance,” in Abigail Firey, ed., *A New History of Penance* (Leiden, 2008), 73–96.

25 Firey, *A Contrite Heart*, 65.

26 Council of Chalons (813), cap. 38, *MGH, Concilia*, 2(1):281: “Modus autem paenitentiae peccata sua confitentibus aut per antiquorum canonum institutionem aut per sanctorum scripturarum auctoritatem aut per ecclesiasticam consuetudinem, sicut superius dictum est, imponi debet, repudiatis ac penitus eliminatis libellis, quos paenitentiales vocant, quorum sunt, certi errores, incerti auctores. . . .”; trans. in Meens, “The Historiography,” 76.

Ebbo, archbishop of Reims, selected his suffragan bishop Halitgar of Cambrai for this important task. Sometime between 816 and his death in 831, Halitgar composed the treatise *De vitiis et virtutibus et de ordine poenitentium libri quinque* (hereafter *De poenitentia*), dedicated to his patron, Ebbo, a figure who would, by the 830s, fall dramatically out of political favor (a point that will be discussed in the next chapter).²⁷ As prescribed by the comments on penitentials from the Chalons council, Halitgar makes frequent reference to patristic sources, including Augustine, but especially Gregory the Great and “Prosper.”²⁸ Across the five books of the *De poenitentia*, Halitgar quotes or makes references to the *VC* no fewer than twenty times, relying principally on the treatment of the virtues and vices in the third book of the *VC*. References to Gregory are even more plentiful, with Halitgar mainly drawing from the *Regula pastoralis* and *Moralia in Iob*.²⁹ In the last four chapters of the *De poenitentia*’s first book, Halitgar places Gregory and “Prosper” in dialogue with one another. This strategy, to be sure, was not uncommon among *florilegia*; the specific, repeated use of Gregory and “Prosper” is made here to assertively demonstrate the authoritative positions on the vices of lust and gluttony, and the remedies to those vices.³⁰

These were issues of the utmost urgency to Frankish Christendom. For confessors, salvation was at stake in being correctly administered the rite of penance. For clerics, the responsible and orthodox application of their *ministerium* was no less of a concern, and was, of course, vital for members of the secular clergy to have a chance at attaining the contemplative perfection of monks. Bishops like Halitgar, standing as the final word on the ritual of penance—an often misunderstood or

27 Halitgar of Cambrai, *De vitiis et virtutibus et de ordine poenitentium libri quinque*, PL 105, col. 651–710.

28 The papal decretals of the actual Prosper’s patron, Leo I, are also repeatedly cited by Halitgar. Perhaps Halitgar was aware of the historical connection between Prosper and Leo, and that he considered the theological programs of Leo and his “Prosper” [Pomerius] to be harmonious and particularly appropriate to group together.

29 Firey, *A Contrite Heart*, 98, observes that these two works by Gregory share with the *VC* a common metaphorical language of medicine and physiology in discussing penance, the vices, and their remedies.

30 Halitgar of Cambrai, *De poenitentia*, 1.14–17, PL 105: col. 667–70. Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), 165, notes that, “Gregory, like Pomerius and Caesarius of Arles before him, was more committed to the rhetorical benefits of the denunciation of vice than to any consistent analyses of its operation.”

murkily conceived tradition in Christian practice³¹—signaled the broadening power and import of the Carolingian episcopate. And, of course, Halitgar’s word was only as good as the *verba* of known *auctores*, inspiring and grounding his reform-minded treatise.

Gregory the Great and the *De vita contemplativa*

The increasingly typical pairing of the *VC* with Gregory’s work lent the *VC* an even greater degree of patristic authority and cultural currency, while subtly recoloring both Pomerius’s ideas and Gregory’s when presented together. Halitgar was not the first, and would not be the last, Frankish bishop to bring together Gregory and Pomerius (or “Prosper”) as the ideal teachers for instructing the clergy on how to perform their work in the world properly—that is, in a manner worthy of the supreme authority that they hoped the episcopal office would command. Where Prosper’s name carried considerable weight among Carolingian readers, Gregory’s was as powerful as it was ubiquitous. Geoffrey Koziol has recently argued that, for the formation of early medieval Christianity, “Augustine was important, but not as important as Gregory.”³² Carolingian Christians, preferring to regard themselves, first, as faithful Augustinians, might have quibbled with this bold statement, but from the vantage-point of historical hindsight, it is difficult to refute Koziol’s claim. Some early medieval ecclesiastics might even have concurred. Though groupings of the Church Fathers varied among ninth-century list-makers, Gregory was consistently cited among Western Christendom’s most sacred post-apostolic names.³³ Traditionally, Gregory has been included among the Latin Church’s four principal doctors, along with Ambrose of Milan, Augustine, and Jerome. This standard inclusion, by medieval exegetes and compilers, of Gregory among these fourth- and early fifth-century figures subtly served to

31 See Mayke de Jong, “Transformations of Penance,” in Frans Theuws, Janet L. Nelson, eds., *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2000), 185–224.

32 Geoffrey Koziol, “Leadership: Why We Have Mirrors for Princes but None for Presidents,” in Celia Chazelle, et al., eds., *Why the Middle Ages Matter: Medieval Light on Modern Injustice* (London, 2012), 189.

33 Bernice M. Kaczynski, “The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria,” *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 9–12.

compress the past. The very different world of sixth-century Italy that Gregory (d. 604) lived in, and was shaped by, was rendered flatly as part of the “ancient” Christian landscape. Because Gregory’s ideas were accepted as uniformly authoritative and orthodox, they must, therefore, have been products of antiquity; of Christianity’s mythic golden age. This era was conceived as a moment of true and blessed clarity that was irrevocably severed from the present, but which Carolingian reformers were striving heroically to recreate.³⁴ While even later “patristic” writers like Isidore of Seville and Bede were sometimes treated in similar fashion by their Carolingian admirers, the implicit placement of Gregory within this imagined Christian golden age is particularly ironic: Gregory often remarked that his own era was a dismal one, past the glorious time of the martyrs and the miraculous, with the end of days just around the corner.³⁵ Clearly, “golden” or “dark” ages were a matter of perspective. Never mind the messy details: if Gregory’s era had produced a mind as blessed and inspired as Gregory’s, reasoned Carolingian exegetes, the true spirit of Roman Christianity must have still been intact. The process of becoming “patristic” played strange tricks on historical specifics, as Pomerius and Prosper would no doubt attest, had they known of their posthumous, textually-intertwined fates.

In a different sense, Pomerius’s most enduring text also became closely linked with the works of Gregory. This was probably not a matter of coincidence. “There is so much in Gregory’s writing that is reminiscent of Julianus’s that it is hard to suppose that he had not read it,” infers one of Gregory’s modern biographers.³⁶ There are “traces” of Pomerius in Gregory’s work, suggests another.³⁷ The comment by the first biographer, however, continues with a caveat: “but there is no conclusive evidence that he had [read Pomerius’s writing].”³⁸ Gregory is part of the “problem” here: he rarely

34 On these points, see Moore, “Ancient Fathers”; idem, “Carolingian Bishops.”

35 See Gillian R. Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge, 1986), 43: “[Regarding the Last Judgment,] Gregory stands on quite different ground from Augustine to whom the end of the world was a relatively remote reality. . . . Although Gregory does not draw any comparison between his own view and Augustine’s, this new strong sense of an end to all things coming close governs his thinking in all his work for Church and state.”

36 Robert A. Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge, 1997), 19.

37 Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection* (Berkeley, 1988), 16.

38 Markus, *Gregory the Great*, 19.

acknowledges or quotes directly from his non-scriptural sources. For instance, in the *Regula pastoralis*, another guidebook for the secular clergy that shares much in common with the *VC*, Gregory is especially reticent regarding his sources, aside from a brief mention of his namesake, Gregory of Nazianzus,³⁹ whose *Apologia* was a likely source for Gregory's work.⁴⁰ That the vast majority of the names cited explicitly in Gregory's work are scriptural may, in fact, have contributed to the Carolingian mythologization of the patristic Gregory, and made it easier to imaginatively connect the sixth-century pope with the prophets and apostles who populate his texts. But it makes the task of parsing his writing for evidence of its sources a significant challenge.

An even more formidable obstacle to detecting which works influenced Gregory is suggested by the other scholar quoted above. Carole Straw observes that “[G]regory always digests and transforms the ideas of others, shaping them to his own requirements.”⁴¹ This is certainly true. If Gregory had read the *VC*—and I strongly suspect that he did—he was not content to recite Pomerius's views. Instead, he used Pomerius's work as an intellectual launching pad, mulling over the contours of Pomerius's argumentation, then taking that path of argumentation one step further where, for Gregory, it logically had to go.⁴² Gregory's conception of the active and contemplative lives is a rich example of his (likely) use of Pomerius, pushing the already daring central conceit of the *VC* into new and uncertain territory. Gregory concludes the fifth chapter of the *Regula pastoralis*'s first book as follows:

So, there are those who, endowed, as we have said, with great gifts, in their eagerness for the pursuit of contemplation only, decline to be of service to the neighbor by preaching; they love to withdraw in quietude and desire to be alone for meditation.

39 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 3, prologue, *PL* 77: col. 49; trans. Henry Davis, *Gregory the Great, Pastoral Care* (Westminster, Md., 1950), 89.

40 Henry Davis, “Introduction,” in Davis, trans., *Gregory the Great*, 13–14.

41 Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection*, 16.

42 Gregory's writing is very different from Augustine's, but both are brilliant at effecting the appearance of transparent thought, ostensibly letting the reader in on the process by which they arrived at the end-point of their discussion. Even if, as skilled rhetoricians, they are fully aware of where their argument is going and exactly how they intend to get there, their writings are most vivid when Augustine and Gregory appear to be “thinking out loud,” working their ideas out on the page. On this point, see especially Roger Ray, “Triumph of Greco-Roman Rhetorical Assumptions in Pre-Carolingian Historiography” in Christopher Holdsworth, T.P. Wiseman, eds., *The Inheritance of Historiography, 350–900* (Exeter, 1986), 67–84.

Now, if they are judged strictly on their conduct, they are certainly guilty in proportion to the public service which they were able to afford. Indeed, what disposition of mind is revealed in him, who could perform conspicuous public benefit on coming to his task, but prefers his own privacy to the benefit of others, seeing that the Only-Begotten of the Supreme Father came forth from the bosom of His Father into our midst, that he might benefit many?⁴³

Robert Markus asserts that this key passage “defines the perspective Gregory adopts for his treatise on the pastoral office,” while representing “Gregory’s definitive solution of his personal dilemma,” his election to the papacy and consequent, permanent removal from the monastic solitude he had so cherished.⁴⁴ While Pomerius had flirted with the notion that the active life may be more noble than one devoted solely to monastic contemplation, Gregory unabashedly trumpets the merits of active involvement in the world, drawing pointedly on the model case of Christ’s ministry.⁴⁵ This is not to say that, for Gregory, the active life was simply superior to the contemplative life; rather, he saw the division between these two modes of existence as artificial, and counter-intuitive to the example set by Christ himself while he was present in the earthly world among men. Carole Straw reasons from Gregory’s thought that “[c]omplete devotion to the contemplative life is dangerous, as is the pursuit of the active life. Good stands in balance and equilibrium, which is achieved when both poles are embraced properly for the good qualities each possess.”⁴⁶ Both modes of life, or Gregory’s proposed amalgamation of the two, are carried out in this world of inherent imperfection. Yet, by blurring the lines delimiting the attributes of the active and contemplative lives, Gregory returns us promisingly to the level playing field of Pomerius, but with anything resembling perfection withheld from all until the

43 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 1.5, *PL* 77: col. 19, “Sunt itaque nonnulli qui magnis, ut diximus, muneribus ditati, dum solius contemplationis studiis inardescunt, parere utilitati proximorum in praedicatione refugiunt, secretum quietis diligunt, secessum speculationis appetunt. De quo si districte iudicentur, ex tantis proculdubio rei sunt, quantis venientes ad publicum prodesse potuerunt. Qua enim mente is qui proximis profuturus enitesceret, utilitati caeterorum secretum praeponit suum, quando ipse summi Patris unigenitus, ut multis prodesset, de sinu Patris egressus est ad publicum nostrum?”; trans. Davis, *Gregory the Great*, 31.

44 Markus, *Gregory the Great*, 26.

45 Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great*, 109, recognizes Cassian as an influence for Gregory’s position on contemplation and action, but she does not take note of Pomerius’s “synthesis” of Cassian and Augustine (argued best in Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 72–80), likely a closer source for Gregory’s discussion of these matters.

46 Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection*, 20.

next life.

The question remains whether Gregory would have made this brave leap forward without the *VC* as a probable catalyst for his consideration of activity and contemplation. His impassioned urging of the secular clergy to wholeheartedly commit themselves to their ministry, the Church, and their flock—and not simply to the monastic virtues of “quietude” (*quies*) and “meditation” (*speculatio*)—recalls Pomerius, though not necessarily Pomerius specifically or exclusively.⁴⁷ Suggestive, if not quite definitive, points of comparison abound between the *Regula pastoralis* and the *VC*. For instance, Gregory, like Pomerius, uses the struggle of the “captain” (or alternately, “pilot”; *gubernator*) to argue his case. However, proceeding from his quotation of Prov. 23:35, it is not clear from Gregory’s metaphor that the *gubernator* is standing in for the pastor (or bishop, as in Pomerius); and the vessel in Gregory’s figure is a “ship of the body” (*navem corporis*), not the Church.⁴⁸ A similar metaphor, in which the ship “hammered by the winds of a fierce storm” represents Gregory’s own mind (*navi mentis*), appears in the prologue to Gregory’s *Dialogues*.⁴⁹ This evidence, while intriguing, is admittedly inconclusive. Gregory comes closer to the spirit of Pomerius’ work in the second book of the *Regula pastoralis*. The danger that Gregory senses in neglecting either one’s internal or external life

47 Compare the ideas at work in the passages discussed above, Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 1.5, *PL* 77: col. 19; with Pomerius, *VC* 1.16, *PL* 59: col. 431–32.

48 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 3.32, *PL* 77: col. 114, “In medio enim mari dormit, qui in hujus mundi tentationibus positus, providere motus irruentium vitiorum quasi imminentes undarum cumulos negligit. Et quasi clavum gubernator amittit, quando mens, ad regendam navem corporis, studium sollicitudinis perdit. Clavum quippe in mari amittere, est intentionem providam inter procellas hujus saeculi non tenere. Si enim gubernator clavum sollicite stringit, modo in fluctibus ex adverso navem dirigit, modo ventorum impetus per obliquum findit.” Trans. Davis, *Gregory the Great*, 211–12: “A man sleeps in the midst of the sea who in the temptations of this world neglects to provide against the attacks of vices that beset him, like waves threatening mountain-high. And the pilot loses the rudder, as it were, when the mind loses all anxious solicitude for guiding the ship of the body. To lose the rudder at sea is to fail to keep attentive forethought amidst the storms of this world. But if a pilot carefully holds fast the rudder, he steers the ship, now against advancing billows, now by cleaving the impetuous winds aslant.”

49 Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* 1, prologue, *PL* 77: col. 152, “Ecce etenim nunc magni maris fluctibus quatior atque in navi mentis tempestatis validae procellis inlidor, et cum prioris vitae recolo, quasi post tergum reductis oculis viso litore suspiro. Quodque adhuc est gravius, dum immensis fluctibus turbatus feror, vix iam portum valeo videre quem reliqui.” Trans. in Richard Pollard, “A Cooperative Correspondence: Papal Letters in the Era of Gregory the Great” (forthcoming), 1: “For look: now I am struck by the waves of a great sea, and in the ship of my mind I am hammered by the winds of a fierce storm, and when I recall my previous life, as if I have sighted the shore with a backward glance, I sigh. And what is still harder to bear, as I am savaged and roiled by immense waves: I now can scarcely see the harbour I left behind.”

in favor of exclusive commitment to the other is entirely compatible with the balance that Pomerius suggests will help *sacerdotes* achieve perfection.⁵⁰ Yet, Gregory is not speaking only to bishops, but also to the “ruler” (*rector*); in this instance, his innovation of Pomerius’s formula is a broadening of the audience, potentially implicating kings alongside clerical “rulers.”

Carolingian bishops recognized such affinities between the thought of Gregory and the *VC*’s author.⁵¹ Following the creative compilation of Chrodegang of Metz’s *Regula canonicorum*, ninth-century writers like Halitgar, Jonas of Orléans (whom we will examine at length in the next chapter), and Aeneas of Paris found that the work of Gregory and “Prosper” complemented one another very well indeed. Conciliar records from this period evince a similar appreciation for the congruity of the *VC* with, in particular, the *Regula pastoralis*. Abigail Firey concludes that the *VC* was a “perfect companion text to the writings of Gregory the Great, who saw the ideal bishop as both practicing active service to his fellows and also restoring his spirit with the penitential exercises of the contemplative life.”⁵² However, beyond the basic harmony uniting the views of Gregory and Pomerius, it is my contention that the *VC* was sometimes used to temper the more powerful, but also more radical, ideas of Gregory. Conrad Leyser perceptively observes that, where Pomerius saw the monastery as “a separate space,” representing a still-significant difference between cloistered monasticism and the

50 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 2.7, *PL* 77: col. 38, “Sit rector interiorum curam in exteriorum occupatione non minuens, exteriorum providentiam in interiorum sollicitudine non relinquens; ne aut exterioribus deditus ab intimis corruat, aut solis interioribus occupatus, quae foris debet proximis non impendat”; trans. Davis, *Gregory the Great*, 68: “Let the ruler not relax the care of the inner life by preoccupying himself with external matters, nor should his solicitude for the inner life bring neglect of the external, lest, being engrossed with what is external, he be ruined inwardly, or being preoccupied with what concerns only his inner self, he does not bestow on his neighbors the necessary external care.”

51 This point is particularly true of northern, court-affiliated ecclesiastics. It is not necessarily so for the southern, “Visigothic” episcopate. Firey, *A Contrite Heart*, 138–39 and n. 78, suggests that Southerners, like the Lyonnaise bishops Agobard and Amulo, preferred localised authorities. Firey notes that Agobard scarcely used work by Gregory, and never Pomerius. David Ganz, “The Ideology of Sharing,” 26 n. 52, however, detects some allusion to Pomerius in Agobard of Lyons, *Liber de dispensatione ecclesiasticarum rerum*, ed. Lieven van Acker, *CCCM* (Turnhout, 1981), 52:121–42. Ganz refers here to Jean Devisse, “L’influence de Julien Pomère sur les clercs carolingiens,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France* 61 (1970): 285–95, though Devisse concedes in 293 n. 60, that he cannot identify any reference to the *VC* by Agobard. Agobard’s modern editor, Van Acker, in his *Index scriptorum* (pp. 405–14, 462), does not list Pomerius among Agobard’s sources.

52 Firey, *A Contrite Heart*, 182.

secular clerical orders, Gregory demolished the walls dividing the ecclesiastical *ordines*.⁵³ For “the idea of monastic community itself buckled at the approach of the Last Days.”⁵⁴ The profoundly eschatological character of Gregory’s thought should be understood, at least in part, as symptomatic of the deeply unstable socio-political landscape of his time and place. While the subject Gregory’s eschatological viewpoint is beyond the scope of this essay, it is nevertheless worth considering the close relationship between this integral feature of Gregory’s thought and his untidy conception of the *ordines*.⁵⁵ Bearing in mind, in particular, the extent to which these aspects of Gregory’s work were affected by the tenuous social structures of his time may serve us, by way of comparison, in better assessing the application of Gregory’s writings in Carolingian sources.

The early decades of the ninth century enjoyed a higher degree of institutional stability than Gregory’s sixth-century Italy. In the Carolingian era, the distinctions that demarcated the monastic order from other segments of society, far from appearing irrelevant, as Gregory had effectively concluded, were of paramount importance. This is why, as noted earlier in this chapter, Gregory’s *Regula pastoralis* and Benedict’s *Regula* were read to the episcopal and monastic attendees at the reform councils of 813. The campaign to unite the empire’s monasteries under the latter rule—initiated by Benedict of Aniane, Louis the Pious’s trusted adviser who had renamed himself in homage to the *Regula*’s writer—was a cornerstone of the Carolingian reform program.⁵⁶ Such reforms had served to erect a relatively solid (though by no means permanent-seeming) structural edifice, wherein the definition and delineation of the *ordines* felt vital⁵⁷—even if, in practice, the roles associated with the

53 Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 159.

54 Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism*, 159.

55 See, especially, Robert A. Markus, “*Appropinquante mundi termino*: The World in Its Old Age,” in idem, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge, 1997), 51–67. See also Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great*, 43.

56 On this point, see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987* (London, 1989), 109–24. On the self-refashioning of the “Visigothic warrior-aristocrat” Witiza as the revered holy man Benedict of Aniane, see Felice Lifshitz, *The Name of the Saint: The Martyrology of Jerome and Access to the Sacred in Francia, 627–827* (Notre Dame, 2006), 2–6.

57 On the relationship between institutional stability and religious culture, see Peter Brown, “*Gloriosus obitus*: The End of the Ancient Other World,” in William Klingshirn, Mark Vessey, eds., *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R.A. Markus* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999), 289–314.

separate orders were sometimes rather ambiguous. Carolingian ecclesiastics certainly found much in Gregory's work that felt immediately applicable to their needs. But a conceptualization of the *ordines* as distinct social entities made sense to ninth-century bishops and monks in a way that it had not to the sixth-century pope, for whom all was equally imperfect and soon to end. For Gregory's ardent Carolingian admirers, the specificity of Pomerius's message to the office of the episcopate was therefore a purposeful reminder of the normal order of things, modestly scaling back Gregory's radical vision of amorphous imperfection.

“Prosper” at Aachen

The “precise distinction” between the *ordines* was among the most critical topics addressed at the Council of Aachen in 816, a synod at which the *VC* and Gregory's work played extremely significant roles, if we are to judge from the conciliar record.⁵⁸ Where Charlemagne, in the final year of his life, had merely requested notice of the proceedings at the reform councils of 813,⁵⁹ Louis the Pious himself opened this gathering of the empire's ecclesiastical and lay elite.⁶⁰ With Benedict of Aniane at his side, Louis had recently, upon inheriting the throne, “cleansed” the palace of the vices tolerated at Aachen under his father.⁶¹ The council convened in the summer of 816 was meant to demonstrate the fruits yielded by Louis's “Christianizing” labor, while focusing the efforts of the empire's best and brightest toward correcting the problems that remained. Naturally, the “words of the sacred Fathers” (*sanctorum patrum dictis*) would be essential for these purposes.⁶²

The *acta* of the 816 council evinces an extensive familiarity with the *VC*. The identity of its author/compiler is unclear, but one recent study suggests that it may have been Bishop Amalarius of

58 De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 22–23.

59 McKitterick, *The Frankish Church*, 12.

60 On this council, see De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 23.

61 See Paul E. Dutton, *The Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire* (Lincoln, Neb., 1994), 54–60.

62 Council of Aachen (816), *MGH, Concilia* (Hannover, 1906), 2(1):313.

Metz.⁶³ This suggestion stands to reason if one recalls the pathbreaking use of the *VC* in Amalarius's diocese by the earlier bishop of Metz, Chrodegang. At any rate, the number of times that the *VC* is quoted or referred to is stunning, especially in comparison with its appearance in the Chalons council *acta* produced just three years earlier. The 816 record, essentially an extended *florilegium*, includes eleven chapters dedicated to Pomerius's words, cited as Prosper, among the approximately fifty-eight chapters that consist of patristic quotations.⁶⁴ In addition to the usual inclusion of Pomerius's remarks on church property, chapters thirteen, declaring explicitly that "holy priests can become sharers in the contemplative life," and fifteen, on the danger of pastoral *negligentia*, plus three others (20, 21, 22), are used from Book I of the *VC*. Six chapters are taken from Book II (chapters 9–14, which deal mainly with the administration of church property and the negotiation of personal assets by bishops).⁶⁵

The grouping of the patristic chapters in the conciliar *acta* of 816 may itself be telling of how the words—and names—of the Fathers were utilized as discursive tools by the Carolingian clergy. Of the eleven chapters from the conciliar record that center on "Prosper," five are preceded by other "Prosper" chapters. Three of the remaining six chapters using the *VC* immediately follow chapters drawing from Gregory's work (an especially generous portion of the *Regula pastoralis* is included in the conciliar text); a chapter or multiple chapters referring to Isidore are compiled between Gregory and "Prosper" in the other three instances.⁶⁶ The *VC*, when employed immediately or soon after chapters drawing from Gregory's work, clearly complements, but perhaps also, as I have suggested, tempers the commanding words of Gregory. (See Table 1, below.)

63 Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 295. In p. 295 n. 48, Moore names Ansegesis and Benedict of Aniane as other possible authors. On Amalarius, see Allen Cabaniss, *Amalarius of Metz* (Amsterdam, 1954).

64 Council of Aachen (816), cap. 19, 26, 28, 32, 35, 106–11, *MGH, Concilia*, 2(1):342, 347–48, 351, 353–54, 356–57, 381–85.

65 See n. 64 above. See also Devisse, "L'influence de Julien Pomère," 286.

66 See n. 64 above.

Table 1: The *De vita contemplativa* at the Council of Aachen (816)

“Prosper” chapters in the Council of Aachen record (book: chapter of <i>VC</i> used)	Patristic author cited in the previous chapter	Patristic author cited two chapters before “Prosper” chapter
XVIII (<i>VC</i> Book I: c. 13)	Isidore of Seville	Gregory the Great
XXVI (I:20)	Isidore	Gregory
XXVIII (I:15)	Gregory	“Prosper”
XXXII (I:21)	Isidore	Isidore
XXXV (II:9)	Gregory	Isidore
CVI (I:22)	Gregory	Isidore
CVII (II:10)	“Prosper”	Gregory
CVIII (II:11)	“Prosper”	“Prosper”
CVIII (II:12)	“Prosper”	“Prosper”
CX (II:13)	“Prosper”	“Prosper”
CXI (II:14)	“Prosper”	“Prosper”

Augustine, meanwhile, appears only occasionally in the conciliar record—just often enough, perhaps, that the general tone of the document might be considered sufficiently Augustinian, a credential that Prosper’s name also serves to endorse. Pomerius/“Prosper” and Gregory, along with Isidore, are center stage, names of weighty authority, providing correction and edification by virtue of their patristic antiquity.

For the *VC*’s audience within the Carolingian episcopate, the possibility of perfection was on the table as a point of aspiration, and a crucial reminder to heed the duties of their *ministerium*. The spiritual authority normally ascribed to monks—and perhaps even the political authority of kings—were up for grabs in Charlemagne’s final years and the early period of Louis the Pious’s reign, due in large part to the unique circumstances of reform in this period. The *VC*, especially when employed in conjunction with like-minded works by Gregory, lent the bishops’ case for authority and perfection an ancient *gravitas* that was absolutely congruous with the aims and ideals of Carolingian reform. In the

years that followed, the status of Carolingian bishops continued to rise. The *VC* played an increasingly indispensable role in that impressive ascent, not only instructing bishops on how to tend their flocks, but justifying the new level of power wielded by the “princes of the Church.”⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Pomerius, *VC* 1.13, *PL* 59: col. 429, “Ecclesiarum principes”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 34.

Chapter 3: Watchmen unto the House of Israel

In the twentieth chapter of Book I of the *De vita contemplativa*, Pomerius asserts that “it avails a priest nothing to live a good life, if by his silence he does not correct him who lives a bad life.”¹ Following this statement, Pomerius elaborates on the obligations of *sacerdotes* (for Pomerius, bishops) to correct, in particular, the most powerful souls under their pastoral care:

[S]ince he knows that if he spares the rich and powerful, if he even favors those who live a bad life, he causes their ruin and at the same time perishes himself, he should both live a holy life because of the example he must give, and teach because of the charge of his ministry, being certain that his personal justice will not avail him from whose hand a doomed soul is required. When any other person who has no obligation to teach perishes, he alone will pay the penalty of his crime; but he who has the commission of dispensing the word, however holy the life he lives, if he is either embarrassed or afraid to reprimand those who live wickedly, perishes with all who are lost through his silence. And what will it profit him not to be punished for his own sin if he is to be punished for another's? If I am not mistaken, this is what the Lord states through the Prophet Ezechiel under the threat of some fear, when he says to him: *So thou, O son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel* (Ezech. 33:7). Nor should we give passing heed to the fact that He calls a priest a ‘watchman.’ It is the work of a watchman to look out from a higher place and to see more than all others: so, too, a priest should stand out above all by the sublimity of his pattern of life and should have the attraction of a superior knowledge of the way of life whereby he may be able to instruct those who live under him.²

Pomerius's contention, that bishops must serve as “watchmen” (*speculatores*), steadfast in their instruction and oversight of God's chosen people, was one that his audience among the Carolingian

-
- 1 Pomerius, *VC* 1.20, *PL* 59: col. 434, “Quod nihil prosit sacerdoti, etiamsi bene viviat, si male viventem tacendo non corrigat”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 41.
- 2 Pomerius, *VC* 1.20, *PL* 59: col. 434, “Quapropter sciens quod si quibuslibet divitibus ac potentibus parcat, male viventibus autem faveat, eos perdat simul et pereat; et sancte vivere debet propter exemplum, et docere propter suae administrationis officium: certus quod ei nihil sua justitia suffragetur, de cujus manu anima pereuntis exigitur. Quando quicumque alius perierit, quem nulla docendi necessitas manet, solus poenas sceleris sui dabit; ille autem cui dispensatio verbi commissa est, etiamsi sancte vivat, et tamen perditte viventes arguere aut erubescat, aut metuat, cum omnibus, qui eo tacente perierint, perit. Et quid ei proderit non puniri suo, qui puniendus est alieno peccato? Mentior, nisi hoc Dominus per Ezechielem prophetam sub cujusdam terroris denuntiatione loquitur, dicens ad eum: *Et tu, fili hominis, speculatorem dedi te domui Israel*. Nec hoc transeunter debemus audire, quod sacerdotem speculatorem appellat: ut sicut speculatoris est, de loco editiori prospicere, et plus omnibus contemplari; ita sacerdos debet esse propositi sublimitate celsior cunctis, ac majoris scientiae propositi habere gratiam, qua possit sub se viventes instruere.” Trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 42–43.

episcopate took to heart.³ This chapter from the *VC* was utilized in the record of the 816 Council of Aachen, and, as we shall see, it would continue to function as a critical notion in the ecclesiastical and political discourse of the next two decades. The compatibility of Pomerius's instruction with statements by other revered figures—especially Gregory the Great in his *Homiliae in Hiezechihalem*⁴—made this a particularly compelling and potent message. A collective understanding that bishops were, by the duty of their *ordo*, Ezechiel's "watchmen unto the house of Israel" strengthened the moral authority of the "princes of the Church" as they rose boldly to Pomerius's challenge, not only correcting but eventually deposing a seemingly wayward emperor.

Before we proceed to examining the performance of Carolingian bishops as *speculatores*, it is important to again consider the relevance of the other half of this Ezechielian exhortation. The typological association, in the Carolingian cultural imagination, of the Frankish people with God's elect people, the "house of Israel," is a trope that should not be interpreted too literally, nor read from the vantage point of modern assumptions about the meaning of such rhetoric. It is also by no means unique to the Carolingians among pre-modern societies.⁵ Yet, the frequency with which such typology—casting the Franks as the Israelites of the Christian age, and their king in the role of David—entered into eighth and ninth century discussions of church and polity warrants consideration of how contemporary readers understood the pronouncement in Ezechiel 3:17/33:7. Bishops of this period—at once edified and empowered by their familiarity with the *VC*—believed it was their duty to "look out from a higher place and to see more than all others," guarding the new house of Israel against the

3 The episcopal role of the watchman has been discussed by Michael H. Hoeflich, "The Speculator in the Governmental Theory of the Early Church," *Vigiliae Christianae* 34 (1980): 120–29; Christine Mohrmann, "Episkopos-Speculator," in eadem, *Études sur le latin des chrétiens* (Rome, 1977), 4:232–52; and Conrad Leyser, "Let Me Speak, Let Me Speak: Vulnerability and Authority in Gregory's Homilies on Ezekiel," in *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo* (Rome, 1991), 2:169–82.

4 Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Hiezechihalem Prophetam*, 1.11.4–8, ed. Marcus Adriaen, *CCSL* (Turnhout, 1971), 142:170–73.

5 See chapter 2, note 11.

dangerous proliferation of sinful behavior, not least *negligentia* and *iniquitas* (“iniquity,” a serious concern at this time, and also addressed in Ezechiel.)

Remedies for Sin

For the deep spiritual and social ills caused by such serious sins, the ideal remedies were voluntary confession and penance.⁶ Indeed, Pomerius discusses the confession of sins and the necessity of stern rebuke in medicinal terms:

As to the sins of any persons that somehow come to light though in their guilt they did not intend to confess them, whatever sins are not remedied by the gentle medication of patience are to be cauterized and cured by the fire, as it were, of kindly reproof. But if even the remedy of such gentle forbearance and kindly reprimand avails nothing in persons who, though long endured and admonished for their own good, refuse to amend, like decaying parts of the body they should be cut off by the knife of excommunication. Otherwise, just as morbid flesh, if not removed, impairs the health of the rest of the body by the infection it brings, so those who despise correction and persist in their infirmity, by remaining with their depraved morals in the company of the good people, will infect them by the example of their own wickedness.⁷

Pomerius was likely inspired by the Gospels in his use of such a lurid corporeal metaphor.⁸ Yet, in neither Matthew (5:29) nor Mark (9:42–46) was the call to excise various, malignant parts of the body connected directly to a discussion of confession or penance. For Pomerius, the watchman must also be a physician, carefully inspecting the body of the church and, when necessary, placing in quarantine its infected parts, including potentially contaminated members of the clergy. But before such drastic measures should be effected, instructs Pomerius, sinners should be reprimanded with a “gentle rebuke”

⁶ See Abigail Firey, *A Contrite Heart: Prosecution and Redemption in the Carolingian Empire* (Leiden, 2009), 97–110. Also, Natalie Brigit Molineaux, *Medici et Medicamenta: The Medicine of Penance in Late Antiquity* (Lanham, Md., 2009).

⁷ Pomerius, *VC* 2.7, *PL* 59: col. 451, “Ea autem crimina quorumlibet si ipsis criminosis confiteri nolentibus undecunque claruerint; quaecunque non fuerint patientiae leni medicamento sanata, velut igni quodam piaie increpationis urenda sunt et curanda. Quod si nec sic quidem aequanimiter sustinentis, ac pie increpantis medela profecerit in eis, qui diu portati, et salubriter objurgati, corrigi noluerunt; tanquam putres corporis partes debent ferro excommunicationis abscidi: ne, sicut caro morbis emortua, si abscisa non fuerit, salutem reliquae carnis putredinis suae contagione corrumpit; ita isti qui emendari despiciunt, et in suo morbo persistunt, si moribus depravatis in sanctorum societate permanserint, eos exemplo suae perditionis inficiant.” Trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 69.

⁸ Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 184 n. 25.

so as to understand the severity of their sins and the value of proper correction.⁹ All the better that such a desire for “efficacious penance” (*efficacis poenitentiae*) be a “voluntary” (*voluntariae*) expression by the sinner, one “not convicted by human judgment, but of their own accord” (*non humano convicti iudicio, sed ultro crimen agnoscunt*).¹⁰

It cannot be known for certain whether Pomerius’s discussion of penance was on the minds of the court-connected ecclesiastical elite (or even, perhaps, that of the emperor himself) in 822; given the prominence of the *VC* in this period, it is not improbable. The sincere willingness which Pomerius had lauded was, at least ostensibly, on striking display in that year,¹¹ as Louis the Pious became the first emperor in over four centuries to perform an act of public penance.¹² In the interval between this gathering at Attigny and the Council of Aachen six years earlier, Louis, despite his “pious” aspiration to Christian governance, was understood to have committed several grievous wrongs: among them, ordering his nephew, Bernard of Italy, to be blinded following Bernard’s failed revolt (the lesser sentence of blinding, as opposed to execution, nevertheless had rapidly led to Bernard’s death); the banishment from court of Abbot Adalard of Corbie and his brother and successor Wala, key advisors to Louis’s father; and the forced tonsuring of Louis’s “brothers” (in Christ). At the assembly in Attigny, “after talking it over with his bishops and magnates,” Louis—apparently by his own volition and not by the compulsion of his clerical and lay inner circle—“made a public confession and did penance” for

9 Regarding the early medieval practice, and discursive limits, of correction and criticism, much has been written in recent years. See, for example, Mayke de Jong, “*Admonitio* and Criticism of the Ruler at the Court of Louis the Pious,” in François Bougard, et al., eds., *La culture du haut moyen âge: Une question d’élites?* (Turnhout, 2009), 315–38; Mary Garrison, “An Aspect of Alcuin: ‘Tuus Albinus’ – Peevish Egotist? Or Parrhesiast?” in Richard Corradini, et al., eds., *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010), 137–52; Courtney M. Booker, “Murmurs and Shouts: Speaking the Conscience in Carolingian Narratives,” forthcoming in Martin Gravel, Sören Kaschke, eds., *Politische Theologie und Geschichte unter Ludwig dem Frommen / Histoire et théologie politiques sous Louis le Pieux*, [Relectio. Karolingische Perspektiven – Perspectives carolingiennes – Carolingian Perspectives, 2], (Ostfildern: Thorbecke); and Irene van Renswoude, “License to Speak: The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages” (Ph.D diss., Universiteit Utrecht, 2011).

10 Pomerius, *VC* 2.8, *PL* 59: col. 452; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 70–71.

11 On the importance of penance being voluntary, or at least perceived that way, see Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge, 2009), 244–45.

12 The last instance was in 390, when the Emperor Theodosius was compelled by Ambrose of Milan to perform penance following the massacre at Thessaloniki. See Neil B. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Berkeley, 1994), 323–30; Van Renswoude, “License to Speak,” 137–74; De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 122.

these sins, while also, according to the writer of the 822 entry in the *Annales regni Francorum*, “[trying] with great humility to make up for any similar acts committed by him or his father.”¹³ A Davidic leader of the house of the Franks,¹⁴ Louis had publicly imbibed the spiritual medicine of confession and penance—even if some critics of the emperor would later charge that he was less than convincing in his display of guilt and contrition.¹⁵ Most onlookers at the time, however, were presumably satisfied by Louis’s show of humility, including the bishops whose counsel had been sought by the troubled emperor, and who, following Louis, repented for their own sins.¹⁶

Jonas of Orléans and the *De vita contemplativa*

It is probable that among those bishops to whom Louis appealed, and who, in turn, witnessed his confessions, was Jonas of Orléans, one of Pomerius’s most attentive Carolingian readers. Jonas seems to have been favored by the emperor,¹⁷ having been appointed by Louis as the bishop of Orléans, replacing the exiled, accused traitor Theodulf¹⁸ about four years before Louis’s penance at Attigny. Among his contemporaries, Jonas was highly regarded for his literary and theological abilities.¹⁹ It is possible that he developed these skills, in part, while attending the palace school as a youth.²⁰ Though little is known for certain about Jonas’s early life, it is likely that he was donated as a child to a

13 *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 822, ed. Georg H. Pertz, Friedrich Kurze, *MGH, SRG* (Hannover, 1895), 157–59; trans. Bernhard Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1970), 111.

14 On this point, see the fruitful speculation in De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 122.

15 See Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009), 163; De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 126–27.

16 De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 36, observes, “Louis set an example, for the bishops present followed him with a confession of their negligence in life, doctrine and ministry. The moral high ground during this assembly [at Attigny] was undoubtedly dominated by the emperor himself.” On the 822 penance, see also Thomas F.X. Noble, “Louis the Pious and His Piety Re-Reconsidered,” *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire* 58 (1980): 312–13.

17 Mary Jegen, “Jonas of Orleans (c. 780–843): His Pastoral Writings and Their Social Significance” (Ph.D. diss., Saint Louis University, 1967), 8.

18 On the rise and fall of Theodulf, see June-Ann Greeley, “Raptors and Rebellion: The Self-Defence of Theodulf of Orléans,” *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 28–75.

19 Jegen, “Jonas of Orleans,” 18–19, noting that all but one of Jonas’s extant works are known to have been commissioned by admirers.

20 James Lepree, “Sources of Spirituality and the Carolingian Exegetical Tradition” (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2008), 15–16.

monastery in Aquitaine.²¹ This explanation fits well with the asceticism that clearly informed the future bishop of Orléans' thought, while also helping to account for Jonas's preferences in source material; in addition to the *VC*, Jonas drew purposefully from the *Regula Benedicti* and the work of Cassian.²²

That Jonas drew on Cassian for his *De institutione regia* (c. 831), one of the relatively few Carolingian tracts that deals explicitly with the subject of kingship (written for Pepin of Aquitaine, son of Louis the Pious),²³ is particularly revealing for our purposes.²⁴ His apparently intimate familiarity with both Cassian's work and the *VC* put the bishop of Orléans in the best position, among Pomerius's Carolingian audience, to discern the un-Prosper-like qualities of the *VC*. Pomerius, as Leyser and others have demonstrated, strove to synthesize aspects of Cassian's ascetic writings within his core program of Augustinianism, whereas Prosper, by contrast, had written a polemic against Cassian. Lepree shows that Cassian's work, understood in conjunction with Benedict's Rule, was indeed central to the formation of Jonas's thought and spirituality.²⁵ More specifically, Jonas managed to weave a Cassianic treatment of the vices congruously, even seamlessly, into a treatise on ideal royal leadership that fit particularly well within the Benedictine model of governance established under Louis the Pious.

In his earlier *De institutione laicali*, written sometime before 828, Jonas drew liberally from all three books of the *VC*,²⁶ in addition to working from a familiarity with the *VC* itself, Jonas may additionally have utilized extracts of the *VC* collected in the *Liber scintillarum*, the late seventh- or early eighth-century *florilegium* compiled by "Defensor" of Limoges.²⁷ Writing at the behest of the lay

21 Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 16.

22 Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione regia*, PL 106: col. 279–304. See Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 19–29.

23 Karl F. Morrison, *The Two Kingdoms: Ecclesiology in Carolingian Political Thought* (Princeton, 1964), 10 n. 14.

24 Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 19.

25 Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 19. Lepree also observes that scholars have failed "to recognize Jonas as an early Carolingian transmitter of the principal themes of Cassianic monastic and ascetic literature."

26 Max L.W. Laistner, "The Influence during the Middle Ages of the Treatise *De vita contemplativa* and Its Surviving Manuscripts," in Chester G. Starr, ed., *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages: Selected Essays by M.L.W. Laistner* (New York, 1966), 48.

27 Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 37–39. In Jonas's *De institutione laicali*, the words of "Prosper" are situated alongside those of, most prominently, Gregory (especially the *Regula pastoralis* and *Moralia in Iob*) and Augustine (*De sermone Domini in monte* and *De doctrina Christiana*, in particular).

aristocrat Count Matfrid of Orléans, Jonas, for the *De institutione laicali*, followed the strategy of Paulinus of Aquileia in his *Liber exhortationis*, selectively re-contextualizing the *VC*'s advice for bishops toward the task of edifying the laity. For instance, Jonas quotes at length and nearly verbatim from the *VC* in reflecting upon the nature of “the blessed life” (*vita beata*), explaining that “those who attain it by accomplishing good works will be like the blessed angels and together with them will reign eternally with God” (*ad quam qui bonorum operum consummatione pervenerint, beatis angelis similes erunt, et simul cum Deo sine fine regnabunt*).²⁸ However, in adapting Pomerius’s episcopal guidebook “for the more worldly sensibilities of Count Matfrid,”²⁹ and perhaps a larger lay audience beyond Jonas’s patron, Jonas made some, mostly small alterations to the language of the *VC*. One minor yet, potentially very significant change among these is Jonas’s apparent removal of the term “the contemplative life” (*contemplativa vita*), which Pomerius had used in apposition to *vita beata*. That is, where Pomerius had written “*Haec est contemplativa vita, vita beata . . .*,” Jonas wrote “*Haec est, inquit, vita beata.*” While Pomerius used these two terms interchangeably, Jonas, in contrast, seems to have detected a not insignificant difference in their respective connotations. The inference one might draw from this omission is that, for Matfrid and other laymen, the blessed life of salvation could be aspired to through the performance of *bona opera*, but the *contemplativa vita* was for Jonas still the exclusive domain of Pomerius’s intended audience—members of the clergy, such as Jonas himself.³⁰

This possibly deliberate omission by Jonas of the *contemplativa vita* from his quotation of the

VC may be indicative of Jonas’s nuanced understanding of the distinctions between the *ordines*, of the

28 Pomerius, *VC* 1.4, *PL* 59: col. 421–22; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 21. Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali* 3.20, *PL* 106: col. 277–78.

29 Lepree, “Sources of Spirituality,” 42.

30 On Jonas’s understanding of the stratification of Christian society, see David F. Appleby, “Sight and Church Reform in the Thought of Jonas of Orleans,” *Viator* 27 (1996): 20–21. Appleby (p. 21) observes that, “Just as he refused to equate intellectual sophistication with wisdom, Jonas avoided the moral condemnation of simplicity, for even those who do not appreciate the depth of Scripture can at least learn the creed and understand the basic significance of the sacraments.” On p. 25, Appleby notes that, in Jonas’s understanding that the sense of sight need not be attributed to the Fall, he follows Augustine and Pomerius (= *VC* 3.6, *PL* 59: col. 480–83).

earthly roles and spiritual potential of society's respective orders. His moral *speculum* for Matfrid, like Paulinus's earlier book addressed to Eric of Friuli, suggests that Carolingian ecclesiastics advised members of the elite laity in much the same manner that they would one other, as articulated in the conciliar records or paranetic literature intended for clerical readers. It is easy to infer from the essential similarity in instruction offered to the laity and clergy alike a general haziness between society's constitutive parts, with a significant degree of overlap of roles, duties, and demands not just between monks and secular clerics, such as bishops, but also among the Frankish aristocracy and nobility, from whose ranks members of episcopate were sometimes—and, increasingly, controversially—plucked.³¹ The eighth century, in particular, was marked both by a high degree of fluidity between the orders of secular and regular clergy, and by conflicts between bishops and monks over matters of political authority.³² Some of this ambiguity was clarified by the reform program of the early ninth century. But the precedent set in the eighth century, dating back to Charlemagne's father, Pepin III, of Frankish kings favoring important abbeys and their representatives over the episcopate, in cases of dispute (regarding land issues and other privileges) remained the rule into the ninth century, and was perhaps strengthened under Louis, due to his apparently intense admiration for the principles of Benedictine monasticism.³³ To be sure, the ambiguity between the regular and secular orders, far more than the tension between them, is discernible in Jonas's work. The bishop of Orléans's clear appreciation of monastic asceticism, likely the product of a monastic upbringing, is evinced by his use of Benedict and Cassian. The VC functions, for Jonas as an ecclesiological bridge, uniting the pious spiritual rigor of the *vita communis* with the essential pastoral care and *bona opera* provided by the episcopate.

31 See De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 77, 166–67.

32 See Mayke de Jong, "Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer," in Rosamond McKitterick, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2, c. 700–c. 900 (Cambridge, 1995), esp. 624–29.

33 De Jong, "Carolingian Monasticism," 629–34. Also, cf. Thomas F.X. Noble, "The Monastic Ideal as a Model for Empire," *Revue Bénédictine* 86 (1976): 235–50.

What is good advice for ministers of God, suggests the *De institutione laicali*, is no less spiritually useful for His followers among the Christian laity. Jonas employed the *VC* as a tool for counseling Matfrid on the sin of Adam;³⁴ the importance of temperance;³⁵ the danger of envy to one's soul and its close connection to pride (Jonas softens Pomerius's "disease of pride," *superbiae morbo*, to *superbiae modo*, unless, of course, this subtle alteration is simply a transcription error);³⁶ the need for reflecting on one's own sins before rebuking the faults of others;³⁷ and other topics of seemingly equal concern for lay or clerical readers. In the majority of instances in which the words of "Prosper" are invoked, Jonas pairs his quotation with a complementary passage from Gregory the Great, a strategy that, as we have seen, was increasingly common in ecclesiastical texts of this period. Occasionally, though less frequently, the excerpts from the *VC* are placed near quotations from Augustine; in one case, Jonas's chapter on envy, the Prosper passage is inserted directly between quotations from the *De doctrina Christiana* and the *Moralia in Iob*, with the excerpt from the *VC* serving as a transitional link between the respective positions of Augustine and Gregory. The passages that Jonas selects are often lengthy and are usually not altered much from their original form. However, the modifications and simplifications that Jonas did make in adapting patristic ideas for lay readers are suggestive of the meaningful differences, in his view, between the laity and clergy. Among these alterations made with a lay audience in mind, Jonas's (seeming) deletion of "the contemplative life" from Pomerius's pronouncement to bishops speaks, in particular, to the spiritual potential and concomitant moral authority that Jonas implicitly reserves for ecclesiastical leaders. At the same time, Jonas also insisted upon certain commonalities between the laity and secular clergy, in contrast to regular clergy, by observing that "[t]he precepts that applied to monks were something entirely different from the

34 Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali* 1.1, *PL* 106: col. 125. Cf. Pomerius, *VC* 2.20, *PL* 59: col. 465–66.

35 Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali* 1.10, *PL* 106: col. 140–42. Cf. Pomerius, *VC* 2.22, *PL* 59: col. 467–69.

36 Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali* 3.5, *PL* 106: col. 242. Cf. Pomerius, *VC* 3.5, *PL* 59: col. 480.

37 Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali* 2.28, *PL* 106: col. 230. Cf. Pomerius, *VC* 2.6, *PL* 59: col. 450.

precepts demanded of laypeople and clergy in the secular world.”³⁸ On this basis, Andrew Romig notes that “Jonas did not privilege the ascetic life over the worldly orders of the Church . . . [but] simply acknowledged that life in the cloister and in hermitage was subject to a set of commandments that did not otherwise apply to those living in the world.”³⁹ Thus, by alternately aligning his own *ordo* with monks and the laity, while (implicitly or explicitly) contrasting the spiritual potential and responsibilities of bishops against those of monks and laymen, Jonas finally highlights the truly exceptional quality of the episcopate: that bishops, in contrast to monks, were present and necessarily active in the world of men, while serving dutifully according to their divinely-appointed ministry. In doing so, Jonas makes an even more oblique—though no less effective—case than Pomerius (subsequently echoed more emphatically by Gregory) that properly attentive *sacerdotes* might actually be more qualified to attain the fruits of the *vita contemplativa* than monks living in solitude.

Mediatores inter Deus et homines

The *VC* would again play a crucial role in 829 at the Council of Paris, a gathering for which Jonas served as notary, compiling most, though probably not all, of the conciliar *acta*.⁴⁰ This assembly at Paris was one of four reform councils called by Louis the Pious and his co-emperor and eldest son, Lothar, in 829 (the records for the other councils held at Mainz, Lyon, and Toulouse are lost). The foremost purpose of all of these councils was to address the problem of why both the lay and clerical elite had strayed from the proper, established duties of their respective *ordo*, and to set both orders back on course.⁴¹ This wayward behavior, of which no one, including the emperors, was innocent, was understood by both Louis and his bishops as the source of the troubles then plaguing the realm; other

38 Andrew Romig, “Love in the Material World: *Caritas* and the Changing Face of Carolingian Discipleship, 8th–10th Century” (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2008), 128.

39 Romig, “Love in the Material World,” 128.

40 Jegen, “Jonas of Orleans,” 250.

41 De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 170.

ills, such as the lingering presence of sorcerers and pagans,⁴² were viewed both as eliciting God’s wrath and as symptomatic of the disorder and confusion among the realm’s political and ecclesiastical leadership. Both orders of society were perceived to be in need of correction. To right the problematic behavior among the non-clerical leadership of the realm, sizable portions of Jonas’s *De institutione laicali* were included in the *acta* of the Paris council as a guide for the laity, while Pomerius/“Prosper” and strong doses of Gregory the Great, among other patristic authorities, were employed as models for the clergy. Right from the start of the synodal record, the remedial quality of penance is particularly emphasized.⁴³ As Michael E. Moore observes, “The reason a council could placate an angry God, the authors believed, was that the council was a penitential act for the king, and by extension, for the entire kingdom.”⁴⁴ The high-ranking *sacerdotes*⁴⁵ gathered at Paris consequently had to perform a high-wire act, simultaneously acknowledging that the episcopate itself required stern correction, while demonstrating that the empire’s bishops were nevertheless the most appropriate mediators between God and men—the true *vicarii apostolorum*⁴⁶—using carefully selected sources, such as the *VC*, as authoritative evidence that bishops alone should serve in this critical capacity.⁴⁷

42 Booker, *Past Convictions*, 151.

43 Council of Paris (829), ed. Albert Werminghoff, *MGH, Concilia* (Hannover, 1908), 2(2):606–7.

44 Michael E. Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300–850* (Washington, D.C., 2011), 316. See also, on this point, De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 178; and Booker, *Past Convictions*, 151.

45 The Council of Paris record often uses the general term *sacerdotes*, rather than the more specific *pontifices*, in referring to bishops, perhaps an echo of Pomerius’s unusual, if not altogether unique, choice of words. De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 179–80, provides a brief summary of the ancient uses of this term, though she does not consider its more recent, widespread use in the *VC*. See also Joseph Plumpe, “Pomeriana,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 1 (1947): 227–39, for a conclusive demonstration that Pomerius used the terms *sacerdotes* and *pontifices* interchangeably, and in both cases with reference to bishops.

46 Council of Paris (829), ed. Werminghoff, 608.

47 As observed in Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 315, Steffen Patzold, *Episcopus* (Ostfildern, 2008), 149, shows that at the Council of Paris the developing notion of the bishop as *mediator inter Deum et homines* came particularly to the fore. De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 177, argues that the bishops gathered at Paris, in setting a much remarked-upon precedent through their use of the provocative letter of Pope Gelasius (494), “had no intention of proclaiming a doctrine of the two swords, or of undermining the position of Louis the Pious; on the contrary, these bishops dealt with an extremely powerful ruler, and tried to reaffirm their own authority (*pondus sacerdotum*) by *projecting* themselves as the only valid mediators between an enraged deity and a penitent Carolingian leadership—royal, ecclesiastical and secular.” [The emphasis is mine.] Booker, *Past Convictions*, largely concurs with this revisionist position, which stands in stark contrast to the conclusions of earlier scholars. For instance, Jegen, “Jonas of Orleans,” 246, casually observes, “It is generally conceded that in his government Louis the Pious was hardly more than the spokesman for the higher clergy who used him as the agent for implementing their own programs.”

In the uncertain times of the late 820s, it was imperative that the watchmen themselves be on guard, attentive to ministerial duties they may have neglected or insufficiently fulfilled, and protective of the moral status they had progressively cultivated over the decades of the Carolingian reform. From the surviving *acta* of the Paris council, however complete or partial a glimpse they provide of the assembly itself, it is not hard to imagine the gathering at Paris as an intense ecclesio-political negotiation. Somewhat paradoxically, bishops were sincerely atoning in the face of accusations that they had overstepped boundaries, meddling too much in worldly affairs, and at the same time were formulating a compelling case for wielding even greater authority within the hierarchy of the *ordines*.

The *VC* was particularly useful in helping Jonas and his fellow bishops clarify some of this potentially dangerous confusion. The long-cited passage in Book II, chapter nine on church possessions being “the vows of the faithful, the ransom of sinner, and the patrimony of the poor” is again, predictably, trotted out in the 829 council *acta* alongside other quotations from this same chapter of the *VC* to remind bishops of how they ought to administer ecclesiastical property.⁴⁸ Pomerius’s consideration of the obligation of bishops not only to avoid sin themselves, but also to rebuke sinners had likewise been drawn on before by his Carolingian audience, but here the passage takes on a new potency and immediacy. In the excerpt quoted in the conciliar record, Pomerius asserts, “When any other person who has no obligation to teach perishes, he alone will pay the penalty of his crime; but he who has the commission of dispensing the word, however holy the life he lives, if he is either embarrassed or afraid to reprimand those who live wickedly, perishes with all who are lost through his silence. And what will it profit him not to be punished for his own sin if he is to be punished for another’s?”⁴⁹ The correction of sinners is firmly situated here as a spiritual obligation of the episcopate;

48 Council of Paris (829), 1.15, ed. Werminghoff, 623: “vota fidelium, pretia peccatorum, et patrimonium pauperum”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 73.

49 Pomerius, *VC* 1.20, *PL* 59: col. 434; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 42. In the Council of Paris (829), 1.5, ed. Werminghoff, 613: “Ille, inquit, cui dispensatio verbi comissa est, etiamsi sanctae vivat et tament perditte viventes arguere aut erubescat aut metuat, cum omnibus, qui eo tacent perierint, perit; et quid ei proderit non puniri suo, qui puniendus est alieno peccato?”

that bishops should be the members of Christian society administering the correction is proper and to be expected, given that this is an integral and inherent component of the job. This is the same section of Book I, chapter twenty, where, as mentioned above, Pomerius invoked Ezech. 33:7 to explain the role of the bishop as *speculator*. Perhaps working from this textual cue, the compiler of the Paris conciliar record anticipated this passage from Pomerius with the relevant quotations from Ezechiel (33:2–6; 3:17–18), including, in its earlier form (3:17), the Old Testament prophet’s message, “*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel.*”⁵⁰ Just after the passage from Pomerius quoted above, another brief quotation from the same chapter of the *VC* is added to the Paris *acta*, one that reflects on the special meaning for *sacerdotes* of these verses from Ezechiel.⁵¹ The message—that Carolingian bishops are, despite their own confessed sins and shortcomings, the empire’s true and loyal watchmen, deserving of the authority and respect associated with this vital role described by the prophet—was thus delivered loud and clear.

Naming Names

By contrast, what is not at all clear, but rather quite perplexing, are the attributions given to the excerpts taken from the *VC* contained in this chapter (5) of the Paris conciliar record. Both of the quotations drawn from Book I, chapter twenty, noted above, are attributed not to Prosper, but to Pomerius, who, for the second quotation, is cited as “*hisdem doctor Pomerius.*” This correct citation is remarkable on its own, given the overwhelming tendency of early medieval writers to attribute the *VC* to the far more famous and authoritative Prosper. Making matters even stranger is that, just a few lines after the second quotation from Pomerius, another quotation, again meditating on the meaning of the verses from Ezechiel, is lifted from the *VC*, but in this instance it is taken from a slightly later chapter

50 Council of Paris (829), 1.5, ed. Werminghoff, 613. See, on this section of the conciliar record, De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 114–18.

51 Council of Paris (829), 1.5, ed. Werminghoff, 613.

of the *VC* (1.22) and the attribution is to Prosper.⁵² Curiously, throughout the Paris *acta*, misattributions for excerpts drawn from the *VC* are split between Pomerius and Prosper (see Table 2 below), but in this specific instance, the peculiarity of the conflicting citations is magnified: how could the composer, or composers, of this chapter in the conciliar record correctly identify and then *misidentify* the *VC*'s author within such a limited textual space, and when the points being expressed are so clearly similar?

Table 2: The *De vita contemplativa* at the Council of Paris (829)

Chapters in the Council of Paris <i>acta</i> containing quotations from the <i>VC</i>	<i>VC</i> chapter from which the quotation was drawn	Name cited as source of quotation
Book I, chapter 3	Book II, chapter 2	Prosper
I.5	I.20	Pomerius
I.5	I.20	Pomerius
I.5	I.22	Prosper
I.13	I.15	Pomerius
I.15	II.9	Pomerius
I.18	II.9	Pomerius
III.9	II.2	Prosper

It is, of course, impossible to say for certain, but there are several possible explanations for this confusion. First, let us suppose that Jonas wrote this chapter. We know from his earlier work that Jonas was indeed very familiar with the *VC*, having employed passages from all of its three books in his *De institutione laicali*. Yet, throughout that work he always (mis)attributes those excerpted passages to Prosper. It is not impossible that Jonas somehow learned the true identity of the *VC*'s author in the period between his composition of the *De institutione laicali* and his serving as notary at the Paris council, especially if we suppose the former's composition date to have been significantly earlier than its *terminus ante quem* of 828. Still, if this were so, why would Jonas mis-identify the *VC*'s author as

⁵² Council of Paris (829), 1.5, ed. Werminghoff, 613.

Prosper so shortly after naming him correctly as Pomerius? Perhaps, if Jonas *did* know or learn that Pomerius had authored the *VC*, he split citations between “*doctor*” Pomerius and Prosper so that two “authorities,” rather than just one, would be providing useful quotations supporting the chapter’s bold invocation of the ministerial verses from Ezechiel. Yet, the title of *doctor* notwithstanding, what kind of authority could the nebulous Pomerius’s name have carried among attendees at Paris or among the potential readers of the council’s *acta*? Given that, almost since his death, Pomerius’s name had grown in obscurity in direct proportion to the *VC*’s staggering growth in relevance and influence (unless the textual evidence is entirely misleading), it seems that the addition here of Pomerius’s name, even as a second witness to the proposed interpretation of Ezechiel, would have contributed little in terms of “patristic” authority.

Another possibility is that Jonas alone did not write this section of the conciliar record. It has long been noted that the first and third books of the Paris *acta* appear to have been composed collaboratively by several individuals, possibly including Jonas, whereas the form and style of the second book suggest a single writer (seemingly Jonas) at work.⁵³ Consequently, if we posit that the unknown collaborators who assembled Book I of the conciliar record may have split duties even on a single chapter—such as the puzzling example in question (Bk. I, chp. 5)—the picture becomes somewhat clearer. We would also have to temporarily eliminate Jonas from the composition of this chapter, in order to make this scenario truly plausible. Had he been involved as even one among several figures at work on this particular chapter, it seems reasonable to suppose that Jonas would have spotted the “error” in ascribing quotations from the *VC* (a work he no doubt knew well) to Pomerius rather than Prosper. Furthermore, in the *De institutione laicali*, Jonas frequently followed the prevalent practice among Carolingian writers and compilers of clustering “Prosper’s” words close together with an excerpt from Gregory’s work. Gregory is conspicuously absent from the conciliar chapter under

53 Jegen, “Jonas of Orleans,” 250.

consideration (though there are three consecutive quotations from the *Regula pastoralis* in the previous chapter⁵⁴). It is, again, hard to imagine that, given the theme and scriptural content of this chapter, Jonas could have resisted the temptation to incorporate something of relevance from Gregory's corpus, most obviously the *Homiliae in Hiezechihalem*. Such an abeyance on Jonas's part is especially difficult to accept if one maintains that the logic behind splitting the *VC* citations between Pomerius and Prosper was the intentional creation of a second, supplemental authority on the Ezechiel verses.

Supposing that Jonas was not directly or closely involved with the composition of this chapter of the *acta*, we must subsequently wonder what type of sources the chapter's collaborators were working from that could have generated this sort of odd mistake. The presumption that a full copy of the *VC* must have, or was likely to have been, available to the collaborators allows no room for a position other than that the mis-attribution was deliberate, and made for some intended effect or another. This remains a possibility. As I have suggested at previous points in this essay, the name-value of "*sanctus Prosper*" may well have prompted some earlier writers or compilers to cite the more well-known fifth-century figure, rather than the marginal Pomerius. Meanwhile, the more discerning readers among the *VC*'s later Carolingian audience (including Jonas), who had inherited this "tradition" of mis-attribution, could reasonably be understood as simply not questioning the (useful) status quo, even when their inter-textual intuition may have pointed toward hard-to-reconcile differences between the divergent "Augustinian" theologies of Prosper's other known works and the *VC*. That said, the split citations in the conciliar chapter do not register as potentially "pragmatic" in the above-described manner; what greater end could anyone involved have hoped to achieve by the inclusion of Pomerius's name alongside Prosper's? Thus, while Prosper may have been assigned and accepted as the *VC*'s author due to the familiarity of his saintly name among early medieval readers, it seems highly doubtful that Pomerius's (seemingly obscure) name was being employed here with similar aims.

54 Council of Paris (829), 1.4, ed. Werminghoff, 612.

Turning away from this question of intention, we may find a clue of sorts in Lepree's above-noted suggestion that Jonas may have worked from both a full copy of the *VC*, as well as from references to it in the *Liber scintillarum*.⁵⁵ The possibility that the collaborators on this chapter of the conciliar record worked from multiple sources, such as *florilegia* or records from previous church councils, which each contained different assembled fragments from the *VC*, and that at least one of those sources attributed its excerpts from the *VC* to Pomerius, may, in the end, be the likeliest among a range of possible scenarios (which I have not, by any means, exhausted here). It is, in a sense, the most "medieval" scenario, given the vagaries of textual transmission and reception, and practices of composition and compilation in the Middle Ages.⁵⁶ Admittedly, it is less dramatic than an argument insisting that wily bishops intentionally manipulated the textual evidence to their own political profit. This is particularly true if our historical interest is centered one-dimensionally on the worldly interests of a medieval clergy that no doubt did, in numerous other instances, manipulate its records. A more sensitive approach, however, allows for the fact that, in far more cases, medieval readers and writers made honest mistakes as a result of the often haphazard transmission and circulation of texts.

At any rate, we do not need to be able to say that Jonas or some other bishop at Paris strategically mis-attributed the *VC*, in order to demonstrate what is absolutely clear from the conciliar *acta*: that the ideas expressed in the *VC* (whether ascribed to Pomerius or Prosper) provided crucial support for the bishops' overall case. The chapter centering on the Ezechiel verses and the *VC*'s conception of the bishop as *speculator* may be the most striking example of the council's use of the *VC*, but another instance, near the end of the conciliar record (Bk. III, chp. 9), also warrants close consideration. It is a rather lengthy quotation, from a chapter of the *VC* "in praise of holy priests" (*de laude sanctorum sacerdotum*),⁵⁷ which is introduced as being written by "blessed Prosper" in his book

55 Lepree, "Sources of Spirituality," 37–39.

56 On this point, see Ernst Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts and Their First Appearance in Print* (London, 1943). Also, Marcus Bull, *Thinking Medieval: An Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages* (New York, 2005).

57 Pomerius, *VC* 2.2, *PL* 59: col. 444; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 58.

“about the contemplative and actual life” (*de contemplativa et actuali vita*).⁵⁸ The chapter then proceeds with the following quotation from the *VC*, modified only slightly to fit the context of the synodal passage:

They especially have received the charge of caring for souls. Aply bearing the responsibility for the people entrusted to them, they untiringly supplicate God for the sins of all as for their own; and, like an Aaron, offering the sacrifice of a contrite heart and a humble spirit, which appeases God, they turn the wrath of future punishment from their people. By the grace of God they become indicators of the divine will, founders of the churches of Christ after the Apostles, leaders of the faithful, champions of the truth, enemies of perverse teaching, amiable to all the good, terrifying even in appearance to those of evil conscience, avengers of the oppressed, fathers of those regenerated in the Catholic faith, preachers of the things of heaven, shock troops in battles unseen, patterns of good works, examples of virtues, and models for the faithful. They are the glory of the Church, in whom her luster is enhanced; they are the very strong pillars which, founded on Christ, support the whole multitude of believers; they are the gates of the eternal city through which all who believe in Christ enter unto Him; they are the gatekeepers who have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven; they are also the stewards of the royal house whose decision assigns each one’s rank and office in the court of the eternal king.⁵⁹

This same passage from the *VC* was also used early in the first book of the *acta* in an even longer form that includes subsequent remarks by Pomerius,⁶⁰ but that were again attributed to Prosper. In this case,

58 Council of Paris (829), 3.9, ed. Werminghoff, 673.

59 Pomerius, *VC* 2.2, *PL* 59: col. 444–45: “Ipsis enim proprie animarum curandarum sollicitudo commissa est; qui pondus populi sibi commissi utiliter sustententes, pro peccatis omnium velut pro suis infatigabiliter supplicant Deo, ac velut quidam Aaron incensum contriti cordis, et humiliati spiritus offerentes, quo placatur Deus, avertunt iram futurae animadversionis a populo qui per Dei gratiam fiunt divinae voluntatis indices, Ecclesiarum Christi post apostolos fundatores, fidelis populi duces, veritatis assertores, pravae doctrinae hostes, omnibus bonis amabiles, et male sibi consciis etiam ipso visu terribiles, vindices oppressorum, patres in fide catholica regenerantium, praedicatores coelestium, primi phalanges invisibilium praeliorum, exempla bonorum operum, documenta virtutum, et forma fidelium. Ipsi sunt Ecclesiae decus, in quibus amplius fulget Ecclesia; ipsi columnae firmissimae quibus in Christo fundatis innititur omnis multitudo credentium; ipsi januae civitatis aeternae, per quos omnes qui credunt in Christum ingrediuntur ad Christum; ipsi janitores quibus claves datae sunt regni coelorum; ipsi etiam dispensatores regiae domus, quorum arbitrio in aula regis aeterni dividuntur gradus, et officia singulorum”; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 59.

Cf. Council of Paris (829), 3.9, ed. Werminghoff, 673: “Ipsis enim, inquit, id est sacerdotibus, proprie animarum curandarum sollicitudo commissa est; qui pondus populi sibi commissi viriliter sustententes, pro peccatis omnium velut pro suis infatigabiliter supplicant Deo, ac velut quidam Aaron incensum contriti cordis, et humiliati spiritus offerentes, quo placatur Deus, avertunt iram futurae animadversionis a populo qui per Dei gratiam fiunt divinae voluntatis indices, Ecclesiarum Christi post apostolos fundatores, fidelis populi duces, veritatis adsertores, pravae doctrinae hostes, omnibus bonis amabiles, et male sibi consciis etiam ipso visu terribiles, vindices oppressorum, patres in fide catholica regenerantium, praedicatores caelestium, praemiorum exempla bonorum, documenta virtutum, et forma fidelium. Ipsi sunt decus Ecclesiae, in quibus amplius fulget Ecclesia; ipsi columnae firmissimae quibus in Christo fundatis innititur omnis multitudo credentium; ipsi januae civitatis aeternae, per quos omnes qui credunt in ingrediuntur ad Christum; ipsi janitores quibus claves datae sunt regni caelorum; ipsi etiam dispensatores regie domus, quorum arbitrio in aula regis aeterni dividuntur gradus, et officia singulorum.”

60 Council of Paris (829), 1.4, ed. Werminghoff, 611–12.

Pomerius's effusive praise of the clergy was paired closely with a note of caution from Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*.⁶¹ Gregory warns that, "[I]t is obviously necessary that they, who give utterance to words of holy preaching, should first be awake in the earnest practice of good deeds, lest, being themselves slack in performing them, they stir up others by words only."⁶² Only after profound self-examination and "severe penance" is the minister qualified to "set in order the lives of others by their words . . . before they utter words of exhortation, they should proclaim in their deeds all that they are about to say."⁶³ In this instance, Gregory's words represent the weighty burden of responsibility for those in the pastoral order, while the passage from Pomerius paints a glowing picture of the ideal bishop. But these images are, of course, two sides of the same coin. In order to become "models for the faithful" (*forma fidelium*)—and consequently, in Pomerius's view, to become potential sharers in the contemplative virtue—righteous ministers must undergo the rigorous self-chastisement described by Gregory. In this capacity, per Matt. 18:18–19 (alluded to by Pomerius in the passage above), as "the key bearers of the kingdom of heaven," with the ultimate ability to bind and loose souls,⁶⁴ Carolingian bishops knew well that they themselves had to undertake some intense soul-searching. At the Council of Paris, they challenged the empire's lay leadership to do the same.

After 829

In 829, Louis's ability to lead his empire, that vast, unwieldy conglomeration of souls that comprised Christendom, was already a source of considerable friction among the realm's ecclesiastical and lay elite. Four years after the Council of Paris, a second attempt at rebellion, headed by Louis's elder sons and endorsed by key members of the clergy, led to a second public performance of penance

61 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 3.40, in Council of Paris (829), 1.4, ed. Werminghoff, 611.

62 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 3.40, PL 77: col. 125: "quia nimirum necesse est ut hi qui verba sanctae praedicationis movent, prius studio bonae actionis evigilent, ne in semetipsis torpentes opere, alios excitent voce"; trans. Davis, *Pastoral Care*, 233.

63 Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* 3.40, PL 77: col. 125–26; trans. Davis, *Pastoral Care*, 233.

64 On the special importance of this concept from Matthew for Carolingian bishops, see Booker, *Past Convictions*, 140.

by the emperor, presided over by the vigilant *speculatores* of the episcopate. But this time Louis was deposed, and promptly replaced on the throne by his eldest son, Lothar. “After such and so great a penance,” asserted the bishops in their record of this ceremony, “no one may ever return to the secular military service.”⁶⁵ And yet, within a year of this ostensibly binding ritual, Louis was restored to the throne, where he remained until his death in 840.

This is obviously a severely abbreviated and over-simplified summation of the Carolingian Empire’s most turbulent period. The complex, contentious details of “833 and all that”⁶⁶ lie largely beyond the scope of this essay, and need not be rehearsed here. Fortunately, Louis’s public penance and deposition, and the web of events and circumstances surrounding these rituals—long considered a source of intense shame and a sign marking the decline of the Carolingian dynasty⁶⁷—have been meticulously scrutinized in two recent, revisionist studies. Courtney Booker and Mayke de Jong, while approaching Louis’s reign and reputation with different sets of questions and concerns, come to at least three generally shared conclusions: First, that Carolingian political culture had changed markedly between the time of Charlemagne and that of his heir, Louis. Second, that Louis’s “sins” were evaluated within a discursive context that the emperor himself had essentially endorsed and helped to bring to the fore. And third, that, within this field of discourse, Louis managed to emerge politically strengthened upon his restoration to the throne because he had been revitalized by the important show of contrition and deference to God that his public penance represented. Ironically, the emperor had gained the higher moral ground, above the very bishops who had deposed him.

What bears consideration here is the question of how exactly the discourse surrounding proper leadership had shifted so dramatically by the time of Louis, and specifically, what role the *VC* may

65 *Relatio episcoporum* (833), ed. Alfred Boretius, Victor Krause, *MGH, Capitularia regum Francorum* (Hannover, 1897), 2:55: “ut post tantam talemque poenitentiam nemo ultra ad militiam saecularem redeat”; trans. Booker, *Past Convictions*, 263. Booker identifies this statement from the episcopal *Relatio* as a close reference to the words of Pope Leo I in Epistle 167.

66 De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 46.

67 On these points, see especially Booker, *Past Convictions*, 68–103.

have played in this apparent sea change.⁶⁸ Thomas Noble's proposal that Louis's reign should be evaluated through the lens of a Benedictine mode of governance, one that Louis himself both endorsed and subscribed to, has been particularly influential among subsequent revisionists. Building on Noble's study of Louis's reign, Courtney Booker argues that, in Louis's time, a binary discourse centered on the concepts of *aequitas* (equity)⁶⁹ and *iniquitas* (iniquity) replaced the former discursive binary of *utilitas/inutilitas* (utility/uselessness), by which the performance of earlier Frankish rulers, including Charlemagne, had been evaluated.⁷⁰ Booker contends that "the pernicious change that the rebel bishops believed had come over both the emperor and the empire *in processu temporis*, over the course of time, was an impression . . . itself ironically brought about by a subtle transformation in the bishops' own system of values. Rather than view Louis as an emperor who gradually failed, we should shift our gaze to the criteria by which he was judged, with an eye for the way they changed over time, holding him up to ever-higher standards he was not prepared to meet."⁷¹ Citing Gregory the Great, the Rule of St. Benedict, and especially the notion of "Peter's Equity" inherited from Pope Leo I as the sources that served to propel this discursive shift, Booker sheds new light on the criteria by which Louis's grave faults were judged by contemporary critics.⁷²

The missing piece in this puzzle is the *VC*, for *aequitas* was an issue of critical importance to Pomerius, a message that his Carolingian audience, in conjunction with the ideas contained in Gregory,

68 On contemporary models for evaluating exemplary versus poor kingship, see J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, "The *Via regia* of the Carolingian Age," in idem, *Early Medieval History* (1965; Oxford, 1975), 181–200; Janet Nelson, "Bad Kingship in the Earlier Middle Ages," *Haskins Society Journal* 8 (1996): 1–26.

69 For discussion of the concept of *aequitas*, see Maurice Amen, "Canonical Equity Before the Code," *Jurist* 33 (1973): 1–24, 256–95.

70 See Booker, *Past Convictions*, 213–46. Also Edward Peters, *The Shadow King: Rex Inutilis in Medieval Law and Literature, 751–1327* (New Haven, 1970), 47–48.

71 Booker, *Past Convictions*, 214.

72 On the late antique and early medieval discursive "rules" for speaking truth to power, "frank speech," see also Van Renswoude, "License to Speak"; De Jong, "*Admonitio* and Criticism of the Ruler."

Benedict, Leo, and others, clearly took to heart.⁷³ Near the end of the third book of the *VC*, following a chapter considering justice and its relation to faith, Pomerius wrote:

From justice equity also flows, which makes us call the necessities of all men our own and makes us believe we were not born for ourselves alone but also for mankind in general. It makes us avoid whatever can harm any man as though it were to harm ourselves; for we who are men should think nothing human alien to us. Of beasts it is of course characteristic to live for themselves and not to share their advantages. We differ from them not only by the gift of intelligence but also by respect for the quality of law if, looking on the advantage or disadvantage of others as on our own, we live for the benefit of all who share our nature. Furthermore, if it is the nature of wild animals to attack, to wound or kill one another, who doubts that it accords with human excellence for men to aid, teach, and edify one another, and to care for the advantage of all as for their own? From this it may be understood that those who, though they were born human, persist in oppressing and deceiving their fellow men, degenerate into the habits of wild beasts by a change not of their nature but of their manner of life.⁷⁴

In holding Louis to a high standard of *aequitas*, the empire's episcopal watchmen were attempting to halt what, in their view, seemed to be the regression (*degenerent*) of Frankish Christendom and its ruler into a baser state of existence. The increasing *iniquitas* that bishops perceived in Louis signified a portentous degeneration. They expected from an emperor, who had earlier denounced the less strictly Christian aspects of his mighty father's reign, something closer to the rigorous standard of ministerial excellence that they, being inspired by the words Pomerius/"Prosper" and Gregory, demanded of themselves. What they saw in Louis's behavior was, instead, the gross mutation of a once-admirable leader, now far from the pristine example of Christian equity that ought to be set for his kingdom.⁷⁵ As Pomerius declares elsewhere in the *VC*, "Those who respect this equity live for the good of all and, as

⁷³ The *VC* is conspicuously absent from Booker's analysis, and from De Jong's monograph as well.

⁷⁴ Pomerius, *VC* 3.22, *PL* 59: col. 505–6: "Ex iustitia manat et aequitas, quae nos facit ut omnium necessitates hominum nostras esse dicamus, nec nobis tantum, sed etiam generi humano nos natos esse credamus; et quidquid cuilibet homini nocere potest, tanquam si nobis noceat, evitemus: quia qui homines sumus, nihil humani a nobis alienum putare debemus. Siquidem bellarum est sibi vivere, nec suas utilitates in commune conferre. A quibus non solum mentis praerogativa, sed etiam servata juris aequalitate distamus, si nos in omnium commodis vel incommodis cogitantes, sicut nostris utilitatibus, ita omnium sociorum naturae nostrae vivamus. Deinde si invicem persequi, lacerare, vel perdere, ferarum est proprium, quis dubitet excellentiae humanae competere, ut se alterutrum juvent, instruant, aedificent, et utilitatem communem tanquam propriam curent? Unde datur intelligi quod qui opprimendis ac decipiendis hominibus homines nati persistunt, in mores ferinos, non naturae, sed vitae mutatione degenerent"; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 149.

⁷⁵ See Nelson, "Bad Kingship."

though born for another, guard and love one another's salvation."⁷⁶ This statement is from a chapter on the "social virtue" (*de sociali virtute*), a virtue that is integral to the conception of the "contemplative virtue" that Pomerius presents: a this-worldly form of perfection that rests crucially upon the careful, attentive exercise of one's ministry. This is precisely where Louis, in the eyes of some bishops, had failed: in properly guarding and guiding the salvation of the many souls entrusted to his care.

Where, for Pomerius, equity was key to social harmony and salvation, he used, again, the book of the prophet Ezechiel to illustrate the terrible soteriological danger of not rebuking the iniquitous. He quotes from Ezech. 33.8: "*When I say to the wicked: O wicked man thou shalt surely die: if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked man from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at thy hand.*" Following this quotation, Pomerius exhorts, "Who, I ask, will have so stony a heart, who will be so unfeeling, that this judgment does not frighten him? Who will be so far from faith that he does not believe this judgment?"⁷⁷ Readers of the *VC* within the Carolingian episcopate, eminently familiar with this verse from Ezechiel, heeded Pomerius's exegetical exhortation. Nothing for these bishops could be more terrifying than the denial of eternal salvation in God. In speaking sternly to warn Louis of his iniquity, they sought both to guard his own imperiled soul against damnation and to protect the souls suffering due to the negligence of his royal ministry; in the 833 episcopal *Relatio*, the bishops once again quoted Ezech. 3:18.

Following Louis's official restoration late in February 835, most of his episcopal opponents moved themselves back in line. Jonas, among other critics, became "completely loyal once more."⁷⁸ Ebbo, whom we previously encountered when he ordered Halitgar of Cambrai to compose a work correcting the erroneous penitentials, was removed from his office as the archbishop of Reims, and

⁷⁶ Pomerius, *VC* 3.28, *PL* 59: col. 510 "Cui aequitati qui serviunt, omnes omnium bono vivunt, ac velut sibi invicem nati, salutem mutuam tuentur ac diligunt"; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 156.

⁷⁷ Pomerius, *VC* 1.20; *PL* 59: col. 435: "Quis, rogo, tam saxei pectoris, quis tam ferreus erit, quem sententia ista non terreat? quis tam alienus a fide, qui sententiae isti non credat?"; trans. Suelzer, *Julianus Pomerius*, 43.

⁷⁸ De Jong, *The Penitential State*, 53.

served as the scapegoat for the “shameful” treatment of the emperor.⁷⁹ The increasing efforts of Carolingian bishops to become “sharers in the contemplative virtue,” worthy of acting as the ultimate mediators between God and man, had hit an enormous stumbling block and fallen short when Louis triumphed over the rebellion. In the years that followed, the influence of the *VC*, so formidable throughout the first three decades of the ninth century, quickly waned. In 836, Louis called another church council at Aachen, to be headed by Jonas.⁸⁰ At this council, many of the core concerns and convictions expressed at the Council of Paris in 829 resurfaced, despite the altered landscape of royal-ecclesiastical relations;⁸¹ the appearance of a return to normalcy, which, of course, meant reform, seems to have been the order of the day. The *VC*, however, was quoted only three times in the 836 conciliar record (in each instance being attributed to Prosper). Two of the quotations come from the by-then perfunctory remarks by Pomerius on the proper handling of church property.⁸² The third quotation comes, somewhat more surprisingly, from the same passage, transcribed above, “in praise of holy priests” (*VC* Bk. II, chp. 2, which had twice been invoked in the Council of Paris *acta*).⁸³ Perhaps, following the turbulence that had rocked the empire and its clergy in the time between the Council of Paris (829) and this gathering at Aachen (836), the re-insertion of this laudatory note from the *VC* was meant to serve as an implicit reminder that the *sancti sacerdotes* of the realm remained worthy of both the admiration of their flock and the authority of their sacred office.

79 On Ebbo’s fate, and the controversy that he would continue to generate for decades to come, see Booker, *Past Convictions*, 183–209; Bart Selten, “The Good, the Bad or the Unworthy? Accusations, Defense and Representation in the Case of Ebbo of Reims, 835–882” (M.A. thesis, Universiteit Utrecht, 2010).

80 Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 340.

81 Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 340.

82 Council of Aachen (836), cap. 19, 48, ed. Albert Werminghoff, *MGH, Concilia* (Hannover, 1908), 2(2):709, 719.

83 Council of Aachen (836), cap. 45, ed. Werminghoff, 717.

Afterword

If the relatively quick restoration of Louis the Pious to the throne, and the reigning in of an episcopal contingent that over-played its hand, is an anti-climactic conclusion to the story of the *VC*'s Carolingian reception, I cannot help but detect a faint echo of this deflating anti-climax, in miniature, in the narrative of authorship and authority that I have attempted to stitch together across this essay. Returning briefly to the odd case of the citations split between Pomerius and Prosper in the record of the Council of Paris, my tentative conclusion—that the likeliest explanation for this divergence centered not on strategic “name-value” but on dubious sources and confusion among collaborators—is certainly not the most exciting resolution to the *VC*'s strangest deployment. In more ways than one, this is a story about limits and limitations—on how much authority can be derived from a well-known name or a text; on how long that textually- or nominally-generated authority can be sustained in the face of changes and pressures outside the world of the text; and on how much theoretical mileage a modern (or post-modern) approach to authorship can really deliver in the study of the early Middle Ages, without the student of history having to force the issue beyond its tenability.

Foucault's proposed method for concentrating on the author-function as a means to track changes in discourse across time and space opens avenues of thought by which to ask different questions than have traditionally been posed to early medieval sources. However, it may finally, for a variety of reasons, be inadequate or—despite Foucault's reference to Jerome—too distinctively modern to fully illuminate the interrelationship of authorship and authority in the early Middle Ages. Toward the end of his article, Foucault asserts, “The modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation of discourses vary with each culture and are modified within each. The manner in which they are articulated according to social relationships can be more readily understandable, I believe, in the activity of the author-function and its modifications, than in the themes or concepts that discourses

set in motion.”¹ While this observation allows room for variation, it does not necessarily account for the later stages of the *VC*’s Carolingian reception within the scope of my study. While the name attached to the *VC*, and the manner in which that name was made to “perform,” were critical to the inclusion of the *VC* among the most authoritative sources of this period, the content—that is to say, the “themes and concepts” of the “work”—came to operate quite differently from how the author-function of the text would seem to dictate. The *VC* was initially lent value and weight as much through a close, nominal connection with Augustine as through the substantial Augustinianism of Pomerius’s work. However, the nature of the ideas expressed within the *VC*, regardless of its ascription to Prosper or Pomerius, contributed more directly than its apparent “author-function” to the frequent quotation of the text near the comparable content of Gregory the Great, and often in discursive contexts in which Augustine was, remarkably, something of a bit player.

The chapter in the Council of Paris *acta* containing the split attributions between Pomerius and Prosper (Bk. I, chp. 5) suggests another complicating factor in trying to utilize Foucault’s strategy for studying the early medieval era. While Jonas of Orléans was primarily responsible for composing the record of the Paris council, it is unlikely, as I have suggested, that Jonas, eminently familiar with “Prosper’s” *VC*, was directly involved in writing this chapter. Its uncertain writer or writers seem to have been less familiar with the *VC* as a coherent, three-book “work,” drawing instead from multiple, partial copies containing differing authorial ascriptions. The problem highlighted by this scenario, of the general confusion surrounding authorship in the Middle Ages and the range of reasons for this state of confusion, was raised by Ernst Goldschmidt prior to Foucault.² The medieval historian Patrick Geary, however, addresses this matter in light of the theoretical challenges to the notion of authorship posed by Foucault and Roland Barthes. As Geary contends, usually anonymous, typically monastic

1 Michel Foucault, “What Is an Author?” in Josué Harari, ed., *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (Ithaca, 1979), 158.

2 Ernst Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts and Their First Appearance in Print* (London, 1943), 88.

copyists were, in a certain sense, the predominant “authors” of the Middle Ages.³ Geary focuses specifically on the genre of cartularies, but his central contention is absolutely pertinent to all of the primary texts discussed in this study, including the *VC* itself. These “works” were first received by modern scholars through the active, subjective scribal filter of medieval archival preservation, a process compelled by its own idiosyncratic and dynamic socio-cultural demands. Geary reminds us that these scribes were “both more and less than authors” in the sense of the term as problematized by Foucault.⁴ This is because medieval texts, as we know them today, have been variably constructed through the uniquely intertextual process of manuscript transmission; the “work” of an “author” like Augustine or Gregory was passed on to future generations by way of the transcriptions and editorial decisions of a series of clerical copyists, whose claim to a share of “authorship” merits consideration. Geary’s reminder is particularly important to consider with regard to my study, which, regrettably, allows too little space for the critical role of textual transmission in historical reception.

On the other hand, despite the anonymity of so many of the figures responsible for the transmission of these texts, the early Middle Ages was by no means an era devoid of the individualistic (authorial) “I.”⁵ As Walter Pohl has recently observed, in his introduction to a volume devoted to the subject of “ego trouble” in this so-called dark age, “[E]arly medieval individuals were not necessarily dull, primitive and limited to archaic forms of additive, non-analytic thinking, lost in an unstructured time-space continuum and incapable of grasping how society worked.”⁶ Pohl notes, as one of the main obstacles in the way of recognizing the early medieval individual in his or her complexity, that “[m]ost scenarios of the medieval or early modern ‘rebirth of the individual’ require the death of the ancient

3 Patrick J. Geary, “Medieval Archivists as Authors: Social Memory and Archival Memory,” in Francis X. Blouin Jr., William G. Rosenberg, eds., *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 2006), 106–13.

4 Geary, “Medieval Archivists as Authors,” 112.

5 On this point, see Catherine Bright, *Ex quibus unus fuit Odorannus: Community and Self in an Eleventh-Century Monastery*, *Comitatus* 41 (2010): 82–84.

6 Walter Pohl, “Introduction: Ego Trouble?” in Richard Corradini, et al., eds., *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010), 21.

individual in the first place.”⁷ As the case of the *VC*’s reception and its social context shows, the “ancient” individual, in the figure of Augustine⁸ or Gregory⁹ or “Prosper,” served as an esteemed guide for Carolingian readers, but did not strictly delimit their path, as they articulated needs and concerns specific to themselves, their social role, and their age. From Chrodegang to Jonas, these readers drew upon the *VC* as an authoritative text, yet in a manner that was not merely perfunctory or additive, but (re)constitutive and creative.¹⁰

It is important to remember, regarding the final episode of the historical narrative recounted here, that not all Carolingian bishops rose in opposition to Louis. Those who did, even as they attempted to orchestrate an eternally binding ritual and compose a textual representation of that intended permanence, must have been aware of the dire risks involved. They nevertheless felt compelled to confront an emperor who, in their view, had gone too far astray. This ill-fated, if well-intentioned, event signaled the discernible decline of the *VC* in Carolingian political discourse. Yet it also stands as a testament to both the collective identity that those bishops had developed in the authoritative shadow of Pomerius/“Prosper,” as well as to the sense of individual, ministerial responsibility derived from taking the message of the *VC* deeply to heart.¹¹

7 Pohl, “Introduction: Ego Trouble?” 14.

8 See Kate Cooper, “‘If your delight is in souls, love them in God’: Augustine of Hippo, Religious Identity, and the Relational Self,” in Richard Corradini, et al., eds., *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010), 23–30.

9 See Conrad Leyser, “Pope Gregory the Great: Ego-Trouble or Identity Politics?” in Richard Corradini, et al., eds., *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010), 67–78.

10 On the creative impulse compelling Carolingian uses of patristic sources, see Bernice M. Kaczynski, “The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria,” *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 1–27. See also John J. Contreni, “Carolingian Biblical Culture,” in Gerd van Riel, et al., eds., *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena: The Bible and Hermeneutics* (Leuven, 1996), 1–24. Concerning the now-vigorously challenged notion of the Carolingians as passive receivers of “tradition,” Richard E. Sullivan, “The Context of Cultural Activity in the Carolingian Age,” in idem, ed., *The Gentle Voices of Teachers: Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age* (Columbus, Ohio, 1995), 61, pointedly asks: “When assessing Hrabanus Maurus’s dependence on Isidore of Seville in composing his *De rerum naturis*, evaluating how the disputants in the quarrel over predestination wrestled with the views of Augustine, tracing the extent to which John Scottus Eriugena borrowed from Pseudo-Dionysius in fashioning his *Periphyseon*, or assessing the dependence of the Carolingian architects who designed the new church at Aachen on Byzantine models found in Italy, have Carolingianists proceeded as if everyone knows exactly what Isidore or Augustine or Pseudo-Dionysius or Byzantine artists meant?”

11 Another, more dubious testament to the collective identity of the Carolingian episcopate—and to the humbling set-back that bishops suffered upon Louis’s restoration—are the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. These notorious clerical forgeries, in a sense, represent the post-script to this study of the efforts made by Carolingian bishops to acquire moral and political

authority. As the influence of the *VC* waned, the Pseudo-Isidorian texts filled in as a more under-handed strategy by which to bolster ecclesiastical authority. See especially Horst Fuhrmann, “The Pseudo-Isidorian Forgeries,” in Detlev Jasper, Horst Fuhrmann, eds., *Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages* (Washington D.C., 2001), 137–95.

Bibliography

Manuscript Sources

Montpellier

École de med. 218

École de med. 484

Paris

Bibliothèque nationale de France lat. 13400

St. Gallen

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 29

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 125

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 148

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 167

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 184

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 185

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 186

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 187

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 277

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 570

Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 877

Wolfenbüttel

Herzog August Bibliothek, Weissenburg 56

Printed Primary Sources

Annales regni Francorum. Edited by Georg H. Pertz and Friedrich Kurze. *MGH, SRG* 6. Hannover, 1895.

Royal Frankish Annals. In *Carolingian Chronicles*. Translated by Bernhard Scholz. 35–126. Ann Arbor, Mich., 1970.

- Augustine of Hippo. *The City of God against the Pagans*. Translated by R.W. Dyson. Cambridge, 1997.
- _____. *Confessions of St. Augustine*. Translated by F.J. Sheed. Indianapolis, 1993.
- _____. *The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Charity*. In *On Christian Belief*. Translated by Bruce Harbert. 273–343. Hyde Park, N.Y., 2005.
- _____. *Letters*, vol. 1–4. Translated by Ronald Teske. Hyde Park, N.Y., 2001–05.
- _____. *On Christian Doctrine*. Translated by D.W. Robertson, Jr. New York, 1958.
- _____. *Rebuke and Grace*. In *Answer to the Pelagians*, vol. 4. Translated by Roland Teske. Hyde Park, N.Y., 1999.
- _____. *The Predestination of the Saints*. In *On Christian Belief*. In *Answer to the Pelagians*, vol. 4. Translated by Roland Teske. 273–343. Hyde Park, N.Y., 1999.
- _____. *The Retractions*. Translated by Mary Inez Bogan. Washington, D.C., 1968.
- Benedict of Nursia. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Translated by Carolinne White. New York, 2008.
- Chrodegang of Metz. *Chrodegangi Metensis episcopi (742–66) Regula canonicorum aus dem Leidener Codex Voissianus Latinus 94 mit Umschrift der tironischen Noten*. Edited by Wilhelm Schmitz. Hannover, 1889.
- Council of Aachen (816): *Concilium Aquisgranense*. Edited by Albert Werminghoff. *MGH, Conc.* 2.1: 307–464. Hannover, 1906.
- Council of Aachen (836): *Concilium Aquisgranense*. Edited by Albert Werminghoff. *MGH, Conc.* 2.2: 704–24. Hannover, 1908.
- Council of Arles (813): *Concilium Arelatense*. *MGH, Conc.* 2.1: 248–53. Hannover, 1906.
- Council of Chalons (813): *Concilium Cabillonense*. Edited by Albert Werminghoff. *MGH Conc.* 2.1: 273–85. Hannover, 1906.
- Council of Mainz (813): *Concilium Moguntinense*. *MGH, Conc.* 2.1: 258–73. Hannover, 1906.
- Council of Paris (829): *Concilium Parisiense*. Edited by Albert Werminghoff. *MGH, Conc.* 2.2: 596–680. Hannover, 1908.
- Council of Reims (813): *Concilium Remense*. Edited by Albert Werminghoff. *MGH, Conc.* 2.1: 253–58. Hannover, 1906.
- Council of Tours (813): *Concilium Turonense*. *MGH Conc.* 2.1: 286–93. Hannover, 1906.
- Gregory (I) the Great. *Dialogi*. *PL* 77, col. 149–430.
- _____. *Homiliae in Hiezechihelem Prophetam*. Edited by Marcus Adriaen. *CCSL*. Turnhout, 1971.
- _____. *Moralia in Iob*. *PL* 75, col. 509–1162.
- _____. *Regula Pastoralis*. *PL* 77, col. 13–128.
- _____. *Pastoral Care*. Translated by Henry Davis. *Ancient Christian Writers*. Westminster, Md., 1950.
- Halitgar of Cambrai. *De vitiis et virtutibus et de ordine poenitentium libri quinque*. *PL* 105, col..

651–78.

Julianus Pomerius. *De vita contemplativa, libris tres*. PL 59, col. 415–52.

_____. *The Contemplative Life*. Translated by Sr. Mary Josephine Suelzer. *Ancient Christian Writers*. Westminster, Md., 1947.

Jonas of Orléans. *De institutione De institutione laicali*. PL 106, col. 121–278.

_____. *De institutione regia*, PL 106, col. 279–304.

Paulinus of Aquileia. *Liber Exhortationis*. PL 99, col. 197–282.

Possidius. *Vita Augustini*. Edited by Michele Pellegino. Alba, 1955.

Prosper of Aquitaine. *Epistula ad Augustinam* (Ep. 225, included among Augustine's letters). *CSEL* 57. 454–68.

_____. *Epistula ad Rufinam de gratia et libero arbitrio*. PL 51, col. 77–90.

_____. *Defense of St. Augustine*. Translated by P. de Letter. *ACW*. Westminster, Md, 1963.

Testimonia Divinae Scripturae. PL 83, col. 1215–1217.

Vitae Caesarii Episcopi Arelatensis Libri Duo. Edited by Bruno Krusch. *MGH. SRM* III. 433–501. Hannover, 1896.

The Life of Caesarius. In *Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters*. Translated by William E. Klingshirn. 9–65. Liverpool, 1994.

Secondary Sources

Amen, Maurice. “Canonical Equity Before the Code.” *Jurist* 33 (1973): 1–24, 256–95.

Amos, Thomas L. “Monks and Pastoral Care in the Early Middle Ages.” In *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*. Edited by Thomas F.X. Noble and John J. Contreni. 165–180. Kalamazoo, Mich., 1987.

Appleby, David F. “Sight and Church Reform in the Thought of Jonas of Orleans.” *Viator* 27 (1996): 11–33.

Arquillière, Henri-Xavier. *L’Augustinisme politique: Essai sur la formation des theories politique du Moyen-Age*. Paris, 1934/1955.

Bertram, Jerome. *The Chrodegang Rules: The Rules for the Common Life of the Secular Clergy from the Eighth and Ninth Centuries*. Aldershot, 2005.

Booker, Courtney M. “Murmurs and Shouts: Speaking the Conscience in Carolingian Narratives,” In *Politische Theologie und Geschichte unter Ludwig dem Frommen / Histoire et théologie politiques sous Louis le Pieux*, [Relectio. Karolingische Perspektiven – Perspectives carolingiennes – Carolingian Perspectives, 2]. Edited by Martin Gravel and Sören Kaschke. Ostfildern (forthcoming).

_____. *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians*. Philadelphia, 2009.

- _____. "The Penance of Louis the Pious (833) and Episcopal *Ministerium*: 'Political Augustinianism' or the Precedent of Ambrose?" Delivered as part of the panel "Carolingian Pragmatic Responses to Authoritative Texts," at the Medieval Academy of America 79th annual meeting, Seattle, Washington, 3 April 2004.
- Bright, Catherine. *Ex Quibus Unus Fuit Odorannus: Community and Self in an Eleventh-Century Monastery.* *Comitatus* 41 (2010): 77–118.
- Brown, Giles. "Introduction." In *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*. Edited by Rosamond McKitterick. 1–51. Cambridge, 1993.
- Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Berkeley, 1967/2000.
- _____. "Gloriosus Obitus: The End of the Ancient Other Word." In *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R.A. Markus*. Edited by William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vessey. 289–314. Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999.
- _____. *The Rise of Western Christendom* (2nd edition). Oxford, 2003.
- Cabaniss, J. Allen. *Amalarius of Metz*. Amsterdam, 1954.
- Cassiday, Augustine. "Rehabilitating John Cassian: An evaluation of Prosper of Aquitaine's polemic against the 'Semipelagians.'" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 58 (2005): 270–84.
- Chartier, Roger. *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Translated by Lydia G. Cochrane. Stanford, 1994.
- Claussen, M.A.. *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canonicorum in the Eighth Century*. Cambridge, 2004.
- Constable, Giles. "Medieval Latin Metaphors." *Viator* 38.2 (2007): 1-20.
- Contreni, John J. "Carolingian Biblical Culture," In *Iohannes Scottus Eriugena: The Bible and Hermeneutics*. Edited by Gerd van Riel, et al. 1–24. Leuven, 1996.
- Cooper, Kate. "'If your delight is in souls, love them in God': Augustine of Hippo, Religious Identity, and the Relational Self," In *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Richard Corradini, et al.. 23–30. Vienna, 2010.
- De Jong, Mayke. "Admonitio and Criticism of the Ruler at the Court of Louis the Pious. In *La culture du haut moyen âge: Une question d'élites?*. Edited by François Bougard, et al. 315–38. Turnhout, 2009.
- _____. "Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer." In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*. Edited by Rosamond McKitterick. 622–53. Cambridge, 1995.
- _____. "Ecclesia and the Early Medieval Polity. In *Staat im frühen Mittelalter*. Edited by Stuart Airlie, Walter Pohl, and Helmut Reimitz. 113–132. Vienna, 2006.
- _____. *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814-840*. Cambridge, 2009.
- _____. "The State of the Church: Ecclesia and Early Medieval State Formation," In *Der frühmittelalterliche Staat - europäische Perspektiven*. Edited by Walter Pohl and Veronika Wieser. 241–54. Vienna, 2009.
- _____. "Transformations of Penance." In *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle*

- Ages*. Edited by Frans Theuws and Janet L. Nelson. 185–224. Leiden, 2000.
- Delisle, Léopold. *Inventaire des manuscrits de Saint-Germain-des-Prés conservés à la Bibliothèque impériale, sous les numéros 11504–14231 du fonds Latin* (Paris, 1868), 101.
- Devisse, Jean. “L’influence de Julien Pomère sur les clercs carolingiens,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France* 61 (1970): 285–95.
- Dutton, Paul E. *The Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire*. Lincoln, Neb., 1994.
- Evans, Gillian R. *The Thought of Gregory the Great*. Cambridge, 1986.
- Firey, Abigail. *A Contrite Heart: Prosecution and Redemption in the Carolingian Empire*. Leiden, 2009.
- _____. “Useful Guilt: Canonists and Penance on the Carolingian Frontier.” In *Readers, Texts, and Compilers in the Earlier Middle Ages*. Edited by Martin Brett and Kathleen G. Cushing. 15–33. Aldershot, 2009.
- Fitzgerald, Allan D., editor. *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids, Mich., 1999.
- Fuhrmann, Horst. “The Pseudo-Isidorian Forgeries.” In *Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Detlev Jasper and Horst Fuhrmann. 137–95. Washington D.C., 2001.
- Gabriele, Matthew. *An Empire of Memory*. Oxford, 2011.
- Foucault, Michel. “What Is an Author?” *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*. Edited by Josué V. Harari. 141–160. Ithaca, NY., 1979.
- Ganz, David. “The Ideology of Sharing.” In *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre. 17–30. Cambridge, 1995.
- Garrison, Mary. “An Aspect of Alcuin: ‘Tuus Albinus’ – Peevish Egotist? Or Parrhesiast?” In *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Richard Corradini, et al. 137–52. Vienna, 2010.
- _____. “The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne,” In *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes. 114–161. Cambridge, 2000.
- _____. “Divine Election for Nations: A Difficult Rhetoric for Medieval Scholars?” In *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom (c. 1000-1300)*. Edited by Lars Boje Mortensen. 275–314. Copenhagen, 2006.
- Geary, Patrick J. “Medieval Archivists as Authors: Social Memory and Archival Memory,” In *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar*. Edited by Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg. 106–113. Ann Arbor, Mich., 2006.
- Goldschmidt, Ernst. *Medieval Texts and Their First Appearance in Print*. London, 1943.
- Gorman, Michael M. *The Manuscript Traditions of the Works of St. Augustine*. Florence, 2001.
- Greeley, June-Ann. “Raptors and Rebellion: The Self-Defense of the Theodulf of Orléans.” *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 28–75.
- Hoeflich, Michael H. “The Speculator in the Governmental Theory of the Early Church.” *Vigiliae*

Christianae 34 (1980): 120–29.

Hulley, Karl K. “Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 55 (1944): 87–109.

Hwang, Alexander Y. *Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace: The Life and Thought of Prosper of Aquitaine*. Washington, D.C., 2009.

Jegen, Mary. “Jonas of Orleans (c. 780–843): His Pastoral Writings and Their Social Significance.” Ph.D. diss., Saint Louis University, 1967.

Kaczynski, Bernice M. “The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria.” *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 1–27.

Klingshirn, William E. *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul*. Cambridge, 1994.

Koziol, Geoffrey. “Leadership: Why we have mirrors for princes but none for presidents.” In *Why the Middle Ages Matter: Medieval light on modern injustice*. Edited by Celia Chazelle, Simon Doubleday, Felice Lifshitz, and Amy G. Remensnyder. 183–198. New York, 2012.

Kriedler, Mary Jane. “The Pastoral Theology of Augustine of Hippo as Found in His Letters.” Ph.D. dissertation, Marquette University, 1987.

Ladner, Gerhart B. *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers*. New York, 1967.

Laistner, M.L.W. “The Influence During the Middle Ages of the Treatise *De vita contemplativa* and Its Surviving Manuscripts.” In *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages: Selected Essays by M.L.W. Laistner*. 40–56. Edited by Chester G. Starr. New York, 1966.

Lepree, James. “Sources of Spirituality and the Carolingian Exegetical Tradition.” Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2008.

Leyser, Conrad. “Augustine in the Latin West, 430–ca. 900.” In *A Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Mark Vessey. 450–64. Chichester, 2012.

_____. *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great*. Oxford, 2000.

_____. “Let Me Speak, Let Me Speak: Vulnerability and Authority in Gregory's Homilies on Ezekiel,” In *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo*. 169–82. Rome, 1991:

_____. “Pope Gregory the Great: Ego-Trouble or Identity Politics?” In *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Richard Corradini, et al. 67–78. Vienna, 2010.

Lifshitz, Felice. *The Name of the Saint: The Martyrology of Jerome and Access to the Sacred in Francia, 627–827*. South Bend, Ind., 2006.

Mathisen, Ralph W. “For Specialists Only: The Reception of Augustine and His Teachings in Fifth-Century Gaul.” In *Presbyter Factus Sum [Collectanea Augustiana]*. Edited by Joseph T. Lienhard. 29–41. New York, 1993.

Markus, Robert A. “Chronicle and Theology: Prosper of Aquitaine.” In *The Inheritance of Historiography, 350–900*. 31–44. Exeter, 1986.

_____. *Gregory the Great and His World*. Cambridge, 1994.

- _____. *The End of Ancient Christianity*. Cambridge, 1991.
- McKitterick, Rosamond. *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789—895*. London, 1977.
- _____. *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751—987*. London, 1989.
- McLynn, Neil B. *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital*. Berkeley, 1994.
- McNally, Robert E. “Isidoriana.” *Theological Studies* 20.3 (1959): 432–42.
- McWilliam, Joanne. “Augustine’s Letters to Women.” In *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*. Edited by Judith Chelius Stark. 189–202. University Park, Penn., 2007.
- Meens, Rob. “The Historiography of Early Medieval Penance.” In *A New History of Penance*. Edited by Abigail Firey. 73–96. Leiden, 2008.
- Mohrmann, Christine. “Episkopos-Speculator,” *Études sur le latin des chrétiens* (Rome, 1977), 4:232–52.
- Molineaux, Natalie Bridgit. *Medici et Medicamenta: The Medicine of Penance in Late Antiquity*. Lanham, Md., 2009.
- Moore, Michael E. “Ancient Fathers: Christian Antiquity, Patristics, and Frankish Canon Law.” *Millennium* 7 (2010): 293–342.
- _____. *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300-850*. Washington, D.C., 2011.
- _____. “Carolingian Bishops and Christian Antiquity: Distance from the Past, Canon-Formation, and Imperial Power.” In *Learned Antiquity: Scholarship and Society in the Near-East, the Greco-Roman World, and the Early Medieval West*. Edited by Alasair A. MacDonald, Michael W. Twomey, and R.J. Reinink. 175–184. Leuven, 2003.
- Morrison, Karl F. *The Two Kingdoms: Ecclesiology in Carolingian Political Thought*. Princeton, 1964.
- _____. *Tradition and Authority in the Western Church, 300–1140*. Princeton, 1969.
- Nelson, Janet L. “Bad Kingship in the Earlier Middle Ages.” *The Haskins Society Journal* 8 (1996): 1–26.
- _____. “The Last Years of Louis the Pious.” In *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814-840)*. Edited by Roger Collins and Peter Godman. 147–159. Oxford, 1990.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Will to Power*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale. New York, 1975.
- Noble, Thomas F.X. “Louis the Pious and His Piety Re-reconsidered,” *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 58 (1980): 312–13.
- _____. “Secular Sanctity.” In *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*. Edited by Janet L. Nelson and Patrick Wormald. 8–36. Cambridge, 2007.
- _____. “The Monastic Ideal as a Model for Empire.” *Revue Bénédictine* 86 (1976): 235–250.
- O’Donnell, James J. “The Authority of Augustine.” *Augustinian Studies* 22 (1991): 227—55.

- _____. "The Next Life of Augustine." In *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R.A. Markus*. Edited by William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vessey. 215–31. Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999.
- Olsen, Glenn. "One Heart and One Soul (Acts 4.32 and 34) in Dhuoda's 'Manual.'" *Church History* 61 (1992): 28–33.
- Otten, Willemien. "The Texture of Tradition: The Role of the Church Fathers in Carolingian Theology." In *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*. Edited by Irene Backus. 1. 3–50. Leiden, 1997.
- Peters, Edward. *The Shadow King: Rex Inutilis in Medieval Law and Literature, 751–1327*. New Haven, 1970.
- Plumpe, Joseph C. "Pomeriana." *Vigiliae Christianae* 1.4 (1947): 227–39.
- Pohl, Walter. "Introduction: Ego Trouble?" *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Edited by Richard Corradini, et al. 9–21. Vienna, 2010.
- Pollard, Richard M. "A Cooperative Correspondence: Papal Letters in the Era of Gregory the Great." In *Brill Companion to Gregory the Great*. Leiden (forthcoming).
- Ray, Roger. "The Triumph of Greco-Roman Rhetorical Assumptions in Pre-Carolingian Historiography." In *The Inheritance of Historiography, 350–900*. Edited by Christopher Holdsworth and T.P. Wiseman. 67–84. Exeter, 1986.
- Romig, Andrew. "Love in the Material World: *Caritas* and the Changing Face of Carolingian Discipleship, 8th–10th Century." Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2008.
- Scherrer, Gustav. *Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek St. Gallen* (Halle, 1875), 183–84.
- Solignac, Aime. "Les Fragments du 'De Natura Animae' de Julien Pomère (fin V^e siecle)." *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 75
- Selten, Bart. "The Good, the Bad or the Unworthy? Accusations, Defense and Representation in the Case of Ebbo of Reims, 835–882." M.A. thesis, Universiteit Utrecht, 2010.
- Stone, Harold S. *St. Augustine's Bones: A Microhistory*. Amherst, Mass., 2002.
- Straw, Carole. *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection*. Berkeley, 1988.
- Sullivan, Richard E. "The Context of Cultural Activity in the Carolingian Age." In *The Gentle Voices of Teachers: Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age*. Edited by Richard E. Sullivan. 51–105. Columbus, Ohio, 1995.
- Sumkeller, Adolar. *Augustine's Ideal of the Religious Life*. Translated by Edmund Colledge. New York, 1986.
- Uhalde, Kevin. *Expectations of Justice in the Age of Augustine*. Philadelphia, 2007.
- Van Renswoude, Irene. "License to Speak: The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages." Ph.D. diss., Universiteit Utrecht, 2011.
- Verheijen, Luc. *St. Augustine's Monasticism in the Light of Acts 4: 32-35*. St. Augustine Lecture Series, 1975. Philadelphia, 1979.

- Vessey, Mark. "Jerome and the *Jeromanesque*." In *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings, and Legacy*. Edited by Andrew Cains and Josef Lössl. 225–36. Aldershot, 2009.
- _____. "Opus Imperfectum: Augustine and His Readers, 426–435 A.D." *Vigiliae Christianae* 52.3 (1998): 264–85.
- _____. "The Forging of Orthodoxy in Latin Christian Literature: A Case Study," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996): 495–513.
- Wallace, David Foster. *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments*. New York, 1997.
- Wallace-Hadrill, J.M. "The *Via regia* of the Carolingian Age." In idem, *Early Medieval History*. 181–200. Oxford, 1975.
- Wetzel, James. "Snares of Truth: Augustine on Free Will and Predestination." In *Augustine and His Critics: Essays in Honor of Gerald Bonner*. Edited by Robert Dodaro and George Lawless. 124–41. London, 2000.
- Wilson, Adrian. "Foucault on the 'Question of the Author': A Critical Exegesis." *The Modern Language Review* 99.2 (2004): 339–63.
- Wyrick, Jed. *The Ascension of Authorship: Attribution and Canon Formation in Jewish, Hellenistic, and Christian Traditions*. Cambridge, Mass., 2004.