

JOURNEYS TO HOLINESS:
LAY SANCTITY IN THE CENTRAL MIDDLE AGES, *c.970-c.1120*

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment

of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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University of Lancaster, January 2015

Abstract

This dissertation analyses a collection of Lives (*vitae*) of lay saints from western Europe who were neither martyrs nor from a royal family, to find that lay sanctity was a significant phenomenon throughout the eleventh century. Previously historians (notably André Vauchez) had assumed that the Gregorian Reform hampered its emergence until the twelfth century. In fact lay sanctity was a complex category of sainthood that both underscores and challenges historians' narratives of this reform. The principal, linking feature of its texts is found to be the saints' dedication to pilgrimage and voluntary exile at a time when the laity were increasingly exploiting the benefits of spiritual travel.

The first part of the dissertation consists of a series of local and individual studies, the most detailed of which pertain to southern France and northern Italy. These demonstrate, among other things, how lay sanctity was promoted during the Peace of God movement (chapter 1), the overlap between secular and spiritual heroic ideologies on pilgrimage routes (chapter 2), a reformist centre at Lucca venerating 'exotic' saints (chapter 3), and the emergence of a new asceticism in line with larger developments in eremitism and the evangelical revival (chapter 4). The second part argues for a vital link between pilgrimage, in all its forms, and lay sanctity, locating the *vitae* within both medieval beliefs about pilgrimage and modern explanations of ritual, especially anthropological models of liminality (chapter 5). This part also addresses the overlap between the laity and hermits, as well as the situation of knightly converts: these 'quasi-lay' saints were finding new ways to express their devotion and they too sought pilgrimage as a solution to their spiritual crises (chapter 6). The conclusion relates the findings to the twelfth century and beyond: following discussion of the cult of Homobonus of Cremona (d. 1197), it warns against simplistic attempts to construct grand narratives for the development of lay sanctity in the Middle Ages.

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without a Lancaster Pamphlets Fund Research Studentship, for which I am very grateful. My three years in the Lancaster History Department have been extremely stimulating thanks to its postgraduate community, among whom many ideas were tested. Special thanks go to my supervisor, Paul Hayward, and my examiners, Julia Barrow and Andrew Jotischky, for their helpful feedback and advice. John Thorley assisted with aspects of the Latin text in chapter 2, though any errors here and throughout are entirely mine. The following have made useful comments or pointed out fruitful directions: David d'Avray, Ross Balzaretto, Susan Boynton, Simon Conway, David Defries, Kathryn Dutton, Michelle Moat, and Miri Rubin, while Samantha Kahn Herrick and Mathew Kuefler both generously discussed or shared unpublished research. Finally the support of my wife Caroline, who married me during this, has proved invaluable beyond measure.

Abbreviations

AASS	<i>Acta sanctorum</i> , ed. Societé des Bollandistes, 68 vols. (Antwerp and Brussels, 1643-)
BHL	<i>Bibliotheca hagiographica latina antiquae et mediae aetatis</i> , 4 vols. (Brussels, 1898-1986)
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France
BS	<i>Bibliotheca sanctorum</i> , 13 vols. (Rome, 1961-1970)
<i>Cat. Paris.</i>	<i>Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum antiquorum saeculo XVI qui asservantur in Bibliotheca Nationali Parisiensi</i> , ed. Societé des Bollandistes, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1889-93)
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>Hagiographies</i>	G. Philippart and M. Goulet (eds.), <i>Hagiographies: histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550</i> , 6 vols. (Turnhout, 1994-)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
Briefe	Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit
Constitutiones	Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum
Libelli	Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum
SS	Scriptores
SSRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-64)
RB	St Benedict, <i>Regula cum commentariis</i> , PL 66, cols. 215-932; <i>The Rule of St Benedict in English</i> , ed. T. Fry (Collegeville, MN, 1982)

Introduction

At the beginning of our period, in 972, the cult of St Gerald of Aurillac gained recognition in the Auvergne in southern France when a church was first dedicated to his name in the presence of a large and illustrious assembly. Gerald was an arms-bearer, a secular lord who worked miracles and practised exceptional piety while keeping his powerful position in society. Soon after, in around 987, the cult of a very different saint, Alexius, was recognised for the first time in the West when a monastery in Rome was dedicated to his name. The cult spawned a legend of extremes that narrated this aristocrat's pursuit of poverty and exile at all cost. Both Gerald and Alexius were venerated as saints even though neither suffered martyrdom, came from a royal family, became a monk, or held a position in the clerical hierarchy.¹ But aside from sharing this achievement, they were different in most other respects. They exemplify an important feature of lay sanctity: that it was many-sided, not uniform. In the following century and a half, in a phenomenon that has gone unnoticed by historians, the cults of several other lay saints gained recognition in western Europe. Why this is so, what models of sanctity they represent, and how they reflect their times are key questions which this dissertation will address.

The point about historians is a major motivation for this study. There is a widely held belief that people in western Europe who pursued ways of life or professions of a worldly nature were effectively barred from the ranks of the saints until the twelfth century.² I aim to

¹ As will be discussed, martyrs and members of royal families had long achieved sanctity as laypeople. Gerald is discussed in ch. 1, and Alexius in ch. 4.

² André Vauchez most of all has proposed this view, which has been powerfully influential, in the following works (which are discussed below): idem, 'Lay people's sanctity in western Europe: evolution of a pattern (twelfth and thirteenth centuries)', in R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski and T. Szell (eds.), *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), pp. 21-32; idem, 'A twelfth-century novelty: the lay saints of urban Italy', in idem, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. D. E. Bornstein, trans. M. J. Schneider (Notre Dame, IN, 1993), pp. 51-72, with other articles in the same collection; idem, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1997), esp. pp. 354-6; idem, *The Spirituality of the*

challenge this assumption through an examination of hagiography from the eleventh century (more precisely *c.*970-*c.*1120, sometimes called here the ‘long eleventh century’). This established belief suggests a solid barrier between those who presided over the cult of saints and those who lived in the secular world. That barrier, however, is not as impenetrable as it seems. This study will explore its sturdiness, find where it crumbles, and see who could breach it and why. It will analyse a set of legends that reveal a surprisingly free flow between the secular and spiritual worlds. This, I will argue, is indicative of ‘a new acceptance of variety’ among different social groupings (or ‘orders’) that medieval historians have increasingly recognised as a feature of the age, *despite* the rhetorical sharpening of divides between clergy and laity in the greater struggle for control of the Church and its functions.³

The laity (*laici*), who were also known as secular people (*saeculares*) or those who married (*conjugati*), are defined here positively – by their secular or worldly life – as well as negatively, since they did not take vows, live by a religious rule, or assume any sort of

Medieval West: From the Eighth to the Twelfth Century, trans. C. Friedlander (Kalamazoo, MI, 1993), esp. pp. 135-43; idem, *Francis of Assisi: The Life and Afterlife of a Medieval Saint*, trans. M. F. Cusato (New Haven, CT, 2012), pp. 33-57. See also A. W. Astell (ed.), *Lay Sanctity, Medieval and Modern: A Search for Models* (Notre Dame, IN, 2000), esp. p. 11; J.-C. Poulin, *L'idéal de sainteté dans l'Aquitaine carolingienne d'après les sources hagiographiques (750-950)* (Quebec, 1975), esp. pp. 33-51; R. Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, NJ, 2013), pp. 3-84, 210-11; A. Benvenuti et al. (eds.), *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale* (Rome, 2005), pp. 31-156; C. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. M. W. Baldwin and W. Goffart (Princeton, NJ, 1977 [orig. 1935]), esp. p. 87. Also relevant are the studies based on quantitative approaches cited in n. 68, and for general studies of hagiography and bibliographies see n. 14.

³ Quote from C. Walker Bynum, ‘Did the twelfth century discover the individual?’, in eadem, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA, 1982), pp. 82-109, at 93. The Gregorian Reform is discussed below. The laity were often considered to be an ‘order’ but this term could mean different things to different people so will not be used too precisely: e.g., in the Life of the eleventh-century monk William of Hirsau, there is a description of five orders (‘gradus ecclesiastici ordinis’): monks; bishops and priests; laypeople; virgins, widows, and wives (‘mulieres’); and the poor of Christ and pilgrims (‘pauperes Christi et peregrinos’): *Vita Willihelmi abbatis Hirsaugiensis*, ed. W. Wattenbach, MGH SS 12 (Hanover, 1856), pp. 209-25, at c. 21, p. 218. The classic statement was G. Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago, IL, 1980), and this is still influential, e.g. in K. G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 35, 161; but cf. now, as well as Walker Bynum, G. Constable, ‘The orders of society’, in idem, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 251-324; K. A. Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture* (Woodbridge, 2011), esp. pp. 39-40; S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), esp. pp. 1-28, 60-160; M. Miller, ‘New religious movements and reform’, in C. Lansing and E. D. English (eds.), *A Companion to the Medieval World* (Chichester, 2009), pp. 211-30.

clerical role.⁴ However, the vocabulary of religious life in this period was very often complex, nebulous, and contradictory, and people often thought more in terms of a ‘way of life’ than a precise status.⁵ One important grey area lies where we consider ‘hermits’. The ones who simply sought a solitary life, inside or outside a religious community, are easier to identify; those who wandered, mixed with society, and never joined the regular clergy are not.⁶

Giles Constable, in surveying the diversity of these latter hermits, who despite their obscurity are known to have engaged in pastoral or charitable activities and even assumed the role of wandering preachers, concluded that by the twelfth century ‘it is almost impossible to say exactly what it meant to be a hermit’.⁷ However, most hermits who were socially engaged seem to have been ordained or taken religious vows, such as Wulfric of Haselbury (a priest) or Gerald of Corbie (a monk who founded La Sauve-Majeure).⁸ Contemporaries often considered them part of the monastic order.⁹ The lay saints discussed here are different. Some had a full and active secular life and clearly belonged to the laity, others less so, but none had clerical or monastic careers. As I shall explain in part II, they tended to express their piety by

⁴ J. Chélini, ‘Les laïcs dans la société ecclésiastique carolingienne’, in *I laici nella ‘societas christiana’ dei secoli XI e XII* (Milan, 1968), pp. 23-55, at 23-5. On defining and delineating the clergy, see J. Barrow, ‘Grades of ordination and clerical careers, c.900-c.1200’, *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 30 (2008), pp. 41-61; A. Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 263-5. The regular clergy, or ‘the religious’ (*religiosi*), who are most relevant here, took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and lived in communities where they dedicated their lives to practising religion: see G. Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 7-24; and for specific definitions, M. C. Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950-1150* (Ithaca, NY, 1993), p. 63; R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), p. 214. Note that a monk might be called ‘lay’ if unordained (see Constable, *Reformation*, p. 10), but this was a technical distinction and he remained a member of the regular clergy.

⁵ Constable, *Reformation*, pp. 7-8. Some good examples of how people could become tangled up in definitions are in *ibid.*, p. 74.

⁶ Peter Damian, for example, notes two types of hermit: those in cells and those who wander without a fixed abode: *idem, Opusculum XV: De suae congregationis institutis*, PL 145, cols. 335-64, at 338B. Hermits are more fully discussed in ch. 6, below. Their ambiguity is explored in G. Constable, ‘Eremitical forms of monastic life’, in *idem, Monks, Hermits and Crusaders in Medieval Europe* (London, 1988), ch. 5 = *Istituzioni monastiche e istituzioni canonicali in Occidente, 1123-1215* (Milan, 1980), pp. 239-64; Astell, *Lay Sanctity*, pp. 8-9.

⁷ Constable, ‘Eremitical forms’, p. 249.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

⁹ E.g. *Libellus de diversis ordinibus et professionibus qui sunt in ecclesia*, ed. and trans. G. Constable and B. S. Smith, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2003), pp. 4-16; Constable, ‘Eremitical forms’, p. 240.

going on pilgrimage. At this time laypeople were increasingly active in exhibiting their piety, and there is usually little reason to call them hermits.¹⁰ Our lay saints' early biographies do not refer to them as hermits, and their behaviour is not often very 'eremitic' (they do not retreat to forests or hill tops, for example, even if they do sometimes adopt ascetic practices). But given the insoluble ambiguities involved, it is not possible to argue against eremitism in every single case. Physical appearance does not assist us much, and is another area of ambiguity compounded by widespread variation and neglect of rules.¹¹ Most of the time we do not know how people looked, and when we do, we often find hermits blending in with the laity and looking purposefully unclerical.¹² Moreover, given that the linking theme in these lay saints' Lives will be shown to be pilgrimage, and pilgrimage in its broadest sense, including wandering and voluntary exile, was also an eremitic ideal (as we shall see in chapter 5), the ambiguities seem to worsen. Ultimately some complexity must be accepted, particularly in this time of social and ecclesiastical change before the increasing legal certainties of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. However, I will aim to show that this complexity resides in only a minority of the examples set out below.

André Vauchez and the historiography of lay sanctity

It is generally understood that the holiest layperson was almost never considered a saint unless he or she happened to suffer a bloody martyrdom or belong to a royal family: these

¹⁰ M.-D. Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. J. Taylor and L. K. Little (Toronto, 1997), pp. 219-30.

¹¹ Constable, *Reformation*, p. 194.

¹² We know that Herluin of Bec and Robert of Arbrissel, for instance, looked unclerical when behaving as hermits: Herluin only shaved his head and adopted clerical dress *after* being a hermit for some time, and Robert of Arbrissel discarded his canonical dress, changed his hair, and grew his beard in order to become a hermit and wandering preacher: Gilbert Crispin, *Vita Herluini*, ed. A. S. Abulafia and G. R. Evans, *The Works of Gilbert Crispin Abbot of Westminster* (London, 1986), pp. 183-212, at c. 38, p. 192; Marbod of Rennes, *Epistola VI* to Robert of Arbrissel, PL 171, cols. 1480-6, at 1483D.

two crucial exceptions applied throughout the medieval period.¹³ Otherwise cults of laypeople, especially as expressed in sacred biographical writings, were marginalised by a Western ecclesiastical tradition that appears to stretch as far back as Sulpicius Severus's *Life of St Martin*, bishop of Tours (written in 396). This tendency was reinforced by Gregory the Great and Gregory of Tours in the late sixth century, both of whom, like Sulpicius, sought to legitimise new types of sanctity beyond martyrdom, but in their influential works of hagiography gave saints an almost exclusively clerical role.¹⁴

The principle that lay sanctity did not emerge until relatively late was definitively stated by André Vauchez who, in a paper published in 1989, claimed to uncover

¹³ On martyrs, the original saints, see e.g. Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, pp. 3-16; for eleventh-century martyrdom, P. Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations* (Liège, 1969), pp. 294-7; P. A. Hayward, 'The idea of innocent martyrdom in late tenth- and eleventh-century English hagiology', in D. Wood (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, *Studies in Church History*, 30 (1993), pp. 81-92. On royal saints (often martyrs themselves): R. Folz, *Les saints rois du Moyen Age en Occident (VIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Brussels, 1984); G. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe*, trans. E. Pálmai (Cambridge, 2002); S. J. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge, 1988); M. Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J. E. Anderson (London, 1973); M. Goodich, 'The politics of canonization in the thirteenth century: lay and mendicant saints', *Church History*, 44:3 (1975), pp. 294-307; Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, pp. 211-21.

¹⁴ Sulpicius Severus, *Vie de Saint Martin*, ed. and French trans. J. Fontaine, 3 vols. (Paris, 1967-9); Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, ed. A. de Vogüé, French trans. P. Antin, 3 vols. (Paris, 1978-80); see comments on lay sanctity in S. Lake, 'Hagiography and the cult of saints', in B. Neil and M. Dal Santo (eds.), *A Companion to Gregory the Great* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 225-46, at 244 and n. 66. For confessors in Gregory of Tours, see his *Liber vitae patrum* and *Liber in gloria confessorum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SSRM 1 (Hanover, 1885), pp. 661-744 and 744-820; trans. E. James, *Life of the Fathers* (Liverpool, 1985), and R. Van Dam, *Glory of the Confessors* (Liverpool, 1988). Both Gregories present an overwhelmingly ecclesiastical and elitist conception of sanctity (which nevertheless included hermits, who had withdrawn from the world), but a few potentially secular laypeople are mentioned in *Gloria confessorum*, at cc. 41 (a married senator, pp. 773-4), 70 (a slave, pp. 788-9), and 102 (the mother of St Aredius, p. 813). On the Gregories' aims, see J. M. Petersen, *The 'Dialogues' of Gregory the Great in their Late Antique Cultural Background* (Toronto, 1984), pp. 130-1; and more generally, M. Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints' Cult in the Age of Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2012). On the debate over whether lay sanctity existed in late Antiquity, and its secular precedents, see M. Heinzlmann, 'Sanctitas und "Tugendadel": zu Konzeptionen von "Heiligkeit" im 5. und 10. Jahrhundert', *Francia*, 5 (1977), pp. 741-52; and references and discussion in T. F. X. Noble, 'Secular sanctity: forging an ethos for the Carolingian nobility', in P. Wormald and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 8-36, at 33 n. 108.

General bibliographies and guides to hagiography can be found in J. Dubois and J.-L. Lemaître, *Sources méthodes de l'hagiographie médiévale* (Paris, 1993); R. Aigrain, *L'hagiographie: ses sources, ses méthodes, son histoire* (Brussels, 2000); S. Boesch Gajano (ed.), *Agiografia altomedioevale* (Bologna, 1976), pp. 261-300; P. Golinelli, *Città e culto dei santi nel Medioevo italiano*, 2nd ed. (Bologna, 1996), pp. 277-303; S. Wilson (ed.), *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 309-417; H. Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints*, trans. D. Attwater (New York, 1962).

the appearance in the twelfth century of a new phenomenon in the religious history of the West: the fact that simple laypersons were able to become officially recognised saints and enjoy the honours of a cult. At an epoch when the prevailing opinion was that Christian perfection could only be attained by fleeing the world, and the leading figures in ecclesiastical life were monks and founders of religious orders like St Bernard and St Norbert, it may seem strange that the public took an interest in figures who were exceptional neither for their ascetic exploits nor for their devotion to prayer and contemplation. Nevertheless, this was the case in some Mediterranean countries, where the evolution of religious mentalities took place earlier than elsewhere because of the importance of urbanisation beginning in the early 1100s, and because of the peculiarities of their political and social structures.¹⁵

Vaucher, a French medievalist born in 1938, is one of the few scholars to have grappled with the problem of lay sanctity.¹⁶ Since the publication of his 1981 masterwork, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Age* (translated from the 1988 edition as *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*), countless scholars have benefitted from his description of the development of medieval sanctity in general and especially the more formal ‘sainthood’ that he assiduously tracks through canonization processes from 1198 to 1431.¹⁷ Vaucher began by

¹⁵ Vaucher, ‘Twelfth-century novelty’, p. 51, originally published as ‘Une nouveauté du XII^e siècle: les saints laïcs de l’Italie communale’, in *L’Europa dei secoli XI e XII fra novità e tradizione: sviluppi di una cultura* (Milan, 1989), pp. 57-80.

¹⁶ See n. 1, above. Aside from Vaucher, the following works approach lay sanctity as a concept but (with the exception of the first) as a very broad one, overlapping with royal saints and/or martyrs: Delooy, *Sociologie et canonisations*, pp. 323-74; Astell, *Lay Sanctity*; A. Barbero, ‘Santi laici e guerrieri: le trasformazioni di un modello nell’agiografia altomedievale’, in G. Barone et al. (eds.), *Modelli di santità e modelli di comportamento: contrasti, intersezioni, complementarità* (Turin, 1994), pp. 125-40; J. E. Damon, ‘Sanctifying Anglo-Saxon ealdormen: lay sainthood and the rise of the crusading ideal’, in T. N. Hall (ed.), *Via Crucis: Essays on Early Medieval Sources and Ideas in Memory of J. E. Cross* (Morgantown, WV, 2002), pp. 185-209; D. Baker, ‘Vir Dei: secular sanctity in the early tenth century’, in G. J. Cuming and D. Baker (eds.), *Popular Belief and Practice*, Studies in Church History, 8 (Cambridge, 1972); J. Huntington, ‘Lay male sanctity in early twelfth-century England’, unpub. Ph.D diss. (University of York, 2004). A useful discussion along the lines of Vaucher appears in D. Webb, *Saints and Cities in Medieval Italy* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 7-13.

On the historiography of sainthood more broadly, see S. Boesch Gajano, ‘La santità e il culto dei santi nella storiografia del Novecento’, in eadem (ed.), *La santità: ricerca contemporanea e testimonianze del passato: atti del convegno di studi* (Florence, 2011), pp. 7-25; F. Scorza Barcellona, ‘La letteratura agiografica: una scrittura di lungo periodo’, in *ibid.*, pp. 27-44; M. Goodich, *Vita Perfecta: The Ideal of Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Stuttgart, 1982), pp. 1-20; J. Howe, ‘Saints and society through the centuries’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 72:3 (1986), pp. 425-36; B. de Gaiffier, ‘Mentalité de l’hagiographe médiéval d’après quelques travaux récents’, *Annalecta Bollandiana*, 86 (1968), pp. 391-9.

¹⁷ Vaucher, *Sainthood*. The French *sainteté* may be translated as ‘sanctity’ or the more tangible and official ‘sainthood’. See T. Head, ‘The Legacy of André Vaucher’s “Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages”’, paper presented at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI (8 May 1998), available at

tracing the development of the cult of saints in the West from the first martyrs, through the emerging veneration of confessors, the strengthening of episcopal control over cults with the translation ceremony, and on to the gradual reservation of canonization by the papacy, which was more or less ensured by Innocent III (1198-1216) and solidified into practice thereafter.¹⁸

Vaucher's interest in the laity is strongly apparent throughout the work, from where it would develop in later publications, perhaps encouraged by his findings that of the official papal enquiries he researched, almost precisely a quarter of them involved non-ecclesiastical – that is, lay – individuals; when the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries are taken on their own, the proportion reaches nearly a third. Thus he discerned an 'increasing success of the laity'.¹⁹ These numbers are striking, though two caveats must immediately be made: first, that while Vaucher liked using percentages, a glance at his list of laypeople who were the object of a canonization process between 1198 and 1431 reveals that ten were canonized out of eighteen examined, so given the relative meagreness of the numbers, conclusions about the 'rise' or 'success' of the laity must be made with caution. Second, a large majority were of royal rank.²⁰ Indeed, of those achieving canonization itself in this period, there was a single layperson from outside Europe's royal families before the fourteenth century. This was the Italian merchant Homobonus, whose bull of canonization was promulgated by Innocent III in 1199, a mere two years after the saint's death.²¹

Rather than dismissing this unusual man of Cremona as an anomaly in the history of sainthood, Vaucher interpreted his papal recognition as the apogee of a certain movement. Homobonus's *processus* was far removed from formal, princely canonizations, with their feel

www.the-orb.net/encyclop/religion/hagiography/vaucher.htm (accessed 10 June 2013); and R. M. Bell's review in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 29:2 (1998), pp. 289-90.

¹⁸ Vaucher, *Sainthood*, pp. 13-57.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 263-4.

²⁰ See the list in Vaucher, *Sainthood*, p. 264. He includes mendicant third orders in his category of laity, which may be justifiable, but the number would be even smaller were they excluded. For a definition of lay sanctity that excludes them, see Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations*, pp. 323-6.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 356-8; see also A. Vaucher, 'Homebon de Crémone (+ 1197): marchand et saint', in *idem, Les laïcs au Moyen Âge: pratiques et expériences religieuses* (Paris, 1987), pp. 77-82 (not available in the English version of this volume, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*). Homobonus is discussed more fully in the conclusion, below.

of a cosy club of international elites, and was apparently concerned with a more local, popular veneration. He represented ‘a new category of saint’ which Vauchez called ‘saints of charity and labour’.²² Crucially, they were drawn from the laity. They were Italian, and their success, which continued until the end of the thirteenth century, seemed a clear result of the precocious urbanisation of parts of the peninsula. He went on to investigate them further, finding that they began in Italy with the tradesman Gualfardo of Verona (d. 1127), and that the phenomenon appeared even earlier in Spain with Domingo de la Calzada (d. 1109), who helped to build a bridge and hospital on the road to Compostela; but it was in Italy that they blossomed, with Allucio of Campigliano (d. 1134), Teobaldo of Alba (d. 1150), and Ranieri of Pisa (d. 1160) as early examples.²³

A vision of sanctity that began in 1975 with *La spiritualité du Moyen Âge occidental, VIIIe-XIIIe siècles*²⁴ had remained fairly consistent by the time of Vauchez’s most recent monograph, a biography of St Francis, published in 2009.²⁵ This vision puts emphasis on the twelfth century as a period of growing ‘contentiousness’²⁶ among the laity, tracing the eleventh-century spirit of religious reform to its adherents beyond the ecclesiastical orders who wished to live according to the gospels but, at the same time, continue in their work and marriage. Their concerns were often for helping the poor and travellers, while Vauchez also realised the primacy of pilgrimage in these saints’ lives, both as a personal undertaking and in the provision of assistance to other pilgrims.²⁷ They were part of the same desires and developments among the laity that would coalesce in the shape of the Arnoldists after 1155,

²² Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p. 199.

²³ Vauchez, ‘A twelfth-century novelty’; Vauchez, ‘Lay people’s sanctity’, p. 27. Although Domingo de la Calzada falls within our chronological limits (note he died in 1109, not 1120 as Vauchez states), I have not included him in this study with the aim of finishing approximately where Vauchez’s lay saints begin. There is also some contention over whether or not he was a priest or other member of the clergy, making him a risky example of lay sanctity: *De s. Dominico Calciatensi*, AASS Maii, pp. 167-80 (see c. 4, p. 168, and *ibid.*, note h; see also the conclusion, below).

²⁴ Published at Paris, trans. *Spirituality of the Medieval West*.

²⁵ Vauchez, *Francis of Assisi*.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁷ Vauchez, ‘Lay people’s sanctity’, p. 28; *idem*, *Sainthood*, pp. 197-9; *idem*, ‘A twelfth-century novelty’, p. 60.

the Waldensians from 1170 and the early Humiliati, Beguines, and other communities of laymen and -women in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Many of them were suspicious of the wealth and temporal power of the clergy, from the Patarenes of the Gregorian era to the Cathars, and finally Innocent III found himself needing to face up to, or make concessions with, popular religious enthusiasm. The prompt canonization of Homobonus was one such ‘significant gesture’; reaching an agreeable accommodation with that more famous merchant, St Francis of Assisi, was another.²⁸

According to this view, therefore, a certain twelfth-century urban, Mediterranean, spiritual milieu allowed the ordinary laity to achieve religious self-discovery, acceptance within a changing Church, and ultimately sainthood. Diana Webb has continued this line of scholarship, demonstrating a background of growing participation of the twelfth-century urban laity in cult rituals such as translations.²⁹ It is thought that lay saints before this period, such as Empress Adelaide, King Stephen of Hungary, or Queen Margaret of Scotland, were drawn exclusively from ruling dynasties – with the inevitable exception of Gerald of Aurillac (d. c.909), who is generally recognised as the first lay saint who was neither a martyr nor from a royal family. In Vauchez’s mind, Gerald was the product of a Carolingian era when the clergy tried to enhance the status of the warrior class and provide them with models (*specula*, or ‘mirrors’) in an effort to improve their behaviour, according to their secular station, and complete their Christianisation.³⁰ Yet at the same time, as historians now recognise, a new emphasis on pacifism and celibacy in his legend marks the end of the ‘Carolingian consensus’ which had previously seen churchmen more accepting of the

²⁸ Vauchez, *Francis of Assisi*, pp. 33-57 (quote at 51); idem, *Spirituality*, pp. 135-43.

²⁹ D. Webb, *Patrons and Defenders: The Saints in the Italian City-States* (London, 1996), pp. 60-92; eadem, *Saints and Cities*, pp. 7-13.

³⁰ On the Carolingian background, see Vauchez, *Spirituality*; R. Stone, *Morality and Masculinity in the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, 2012); Noble, ‘Secular sanctity’; J. M. H. Smith, ‘Einhard: the sinner and the saints’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 13 (2003), pp. 55-77; S. Airlie, ‘The anxiety of sanctity: St Gerald of Aurillac and his maker’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43:3 (1992), pp. 372-95 (though on Gerald himself see now the debate discussed in ch. 1, below); Dhuoda, *Liber Manualis: Handbook for her Warrior Son*, ed. and trans. M. Thiébaux (Cambridge, 1998).

realities of lay noble lifestyles.³¹ Gerald announces the new spiritual concerns of the central Middle Ages, and the definitive promotion of his cult in 972 is therefore an appropriate place to begin this study.³²

Between Gerald and the twelfth century stood lay sanctity's supposed stumbling block: the Gregorian Reform movement. For Vauchez this new religious agenda, aided by a reinvigorated monasticism, 'impeded the development and prevented the spread of hagiography that dealt kindly with life in this world',³³ that is, the life of the secular layperson (though paradoxically such monasticism also gave a new role to quasi-laity in the form of laybrothers, or *conversi*).³⁴ The red line between lay and ecclesiastical, previously more akin to a grey area, became defined and sharpened. The papacy tended to 'disparage the lay state'³⁵ in order to make laypeople 'passive and obedient subjects'.³⁶ Rulers (and their families) were still turned into saints in this pre-twelfth-century atmosphere, but they ought not to be counted in the same scheme, by virtue of their consecration which gave them a quasi-clerical status, raising them out of the profane world of laymen and -women.³⁷

³¹ Stone, *Morality and Masculinity*, pp. 334-8 on the end of the 'Carolingian consensus', esp. 337 on Gerald. Aside from the 'lay mirrors' surveyed in Stone's book, examples of this earlier representation of lay noble piety include royal biographies, e.g. Einhard and Notker the Stammerer, *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, trans. D. Ganz (London, 2008); *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge (London, 1983). Such works may be compared with certain eleventh-century royal biographies that promote more monastic standards of piety, e.g. Helgaud of Fleury, *Vie de Robert le Pieux*, ed. and French trans. R.-H. Bautier and G. Labory (Paris, 1965); *The Life of King Edward Who Rests at Westminster*, ed. and trans. F. Barlow, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1992).

³² Further to lay spiritual mores, the late tenth century has long been viewed as a suitable waypoint when attempting to 'periodise', not only for the marked increase in records but also for the beginning of the social, political, cultural, demographic, and technological novelties of the 'high Middle Ages'. The year 972 was also, coincidentally, chosen by R. W. Southern to begin his classic *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London, 1967), as it marked the likely date of the journey of Gerbert of Aurillac (the future Pope Sylvester II) from Rome to Rheims which would result in a considerable advancement of Western learning: see *ibid.*, p. 13. Among the voluminous other works which periodise in this manner, see e.g. C. Brooke, *Europe in the Central Middle Ages 962-1154*, 3rd edn. (Harlow, 2000), pp. 11-12; R. I. Moore, *The First European Revolution, c.970-1215* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 1-6 and throughout; or as the end of an era rather than a beginning, J. M. H. Smith, *Europe after Rome: A New Cultural History 500-1000* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 293-7.

³³ Vauchez, 'Lay people's sanctity', p. 22.

³⁴ E.g. A. Vauchez, 'The laity in the feudal church', in *idem*, *The Laity*, pp. 39-44; *idem*, *Spirituality of the Medieval West*, pp. 138-9.

³⁵ Vauchez, 'Lay people's sanctity', p. 22.

³⁶ A. Vauchez, 'Laity', in A. Vauchez, B. Dobson, M. Lapidge (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, trans. A. Walford, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2000), II, p. 814. See also his article 'Sanctity' in the same volume, pp. 1300-1.

³⁷ Vauchez, 'Lay people's sanctity', p. 25; *idem*, 'Twelfth-century novelty', pp. 51-2.

Vaucher acknowledged Gerald of Aurillac but continued to view lay sanctity as, essentially, an impossibility before the twelfth century:

This does not mean, to be sure, that the notion of lay sanctity was totally unknown in the West before the twelfth-century figures to be discussed below. Indeed, as early as the tenth century, the monk Odo of Cluny had tried to provide a model for the rising feudal aristocracy in his *Life of St Gerald of Aurillac*. But despite the interest of this text, which historians have commented on extensively in recent years, we must recognise that it was not influential, and that the only saints outside of the ecclesiastical world, in the tenth and eleventh centuries,³⁸ were almost all selected – except for a few hermits – from among the holders of power, such as Emperor Henry II, Empresses Mathilda, Adelaide and Cunegund, and Queen Margaret of Scotland, which brings us back to the model of royal sanctity The time for a modern notion of sanctity had not yet arrived in most of the West.³⁹

Vaucher's remark about 'a few hermits' underestimates the variety and potential of eleventh-century hagiography, as we shall see. But his general reasoning is within the mainstream: Gerald of Aurillac is thought to be something of a puzzle, an anomaly, and has little in common with later developments. Vaucher's view of the development of Christian sanctity through the Middle Ages contains his own unique flavour of the laity, but it fits, and indeed has helped to shape, a received wisdom.⁴⁰

This study suggests a readjustment of Vaucher's view. His development of lay sanctity leaps, unchallenged, from a promising Carolingian period over a murky Gregorian era to a flowering twelfth century. Here I aim to show that there were lay saints in the eleventh century too, and that they had no need to be martyrs or descended from a royal line.

³⁸ The original text, like the translation, refers to 'eleventh and twelfth centuries', which must be an error as the article goes on to discuss the new lay saints of the twelfth century: Vaucher, 'Une nouveauté du XIIe siècle', p. 58.

³⁹ Vaucher, 'Twelfth-century novelty', p. 52. I have anglicised some names in the translation.

⁴⁰ Aside from works already cited, the received narrative is also found in, e.g., G. Lobrichon, *La religion des laïcs en Occident: XIe-XVe siècles* (Paris, 1994), pp. 170-9; C. Walker Bynum, 'Religious women in the later Middle Ages', in J. Raitt (ed.), *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation* (London, 1987), pp. 121-39; G. G. Merlo, 'Religiosità e cultura religiosa dei laici nel secolo XII', *L'Europa dei secoli XI e XII*, pp. 197-215.

Lay sanctity, the laity, and 'reform'

What impulses might have given rise to lay sanctity? The first possibility is that the clerical view of sanctity shifted towards a positive appreciation of the laity. All textual sanctity was filtered through a monastic or clerical process of creation, and these authors' and their superiors' notions of what constituted sanctity changed whether or not the pool of saintly candidates did. This might have been the result of certain motives (the wish to engage with the laity and provide models, for example) or may have been a more unconscious response to changed conditions. The second is that laypeople, in their role as ecclesiastical patrons, were more likely to promote their own as saints, encouraging their clerical and monastic friends, family, and other office holders such as subservient priests to go along with their inclinations for dynastic glory or other reasons. The third is that laypeople were increasingly willing to take demonstrations of piety into their own hands, which in turn made clerical observers more likely to promote them as saints. Historians have long viewed the eleventh century as a time when acts of lay piety become increasingly noticeable, culminating in their expression in the First Crusade which, in the famous words of Guibert of Nogent, was instituted by God 'so that the knightly order and the erring mob ... might find a new way of earning salvation' without becoming monks.⁴¹ The fact that the crusade was, of course, a pilgrimage is suggestive of this desire to be more closely involved in religious ritual, and has a particular bearing on the pilgrim cults examined here, but any subtle mix of these three factors may have had a part to play in the origins of recorded lay cults.

⁴¹ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, CCCM 127A (Turnhout, 1996), I.1, p. 87: 'ut ordo equestris et vulgus oberrans ... novum repperirent salutis promerendae genus'; trans. R. Levine, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks* (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 28. On lay piety, see M. Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c.970-c.1130* (Oxford, 1993); Hamilton, *Church and People*, esp. pp. 284-315.

Some very substantial historiographical problems emerge from these basic impulses which, to name a few, include ecclesiastical reform, proprietary churches, religious mentalities, lay piety, and the origins of the First Crusade. Taken on their own, they are beyond the remit of this dissertation, though some are encountered in various local contexts in the following chapters. However, the problem that underlines all the others is the historians' mainstay of 'reform' in this period. As Julia Barrow has pointed out, the way historians use the word and the way it was used at various times in the Middle Ages are two very different things.⁴² The words *reformare* and *reformatio* were not especially current in the eleventh century – least of all on a universal or programmatic scale, though their use picked up soon after⁴³ – and although the word 'reform' is practically unavoidable here (particularly with regard to the Gregorian movement of the second half of the eleventh century), any single-minded view of what it means is unlikely to explain the appearance of lay sanctity, especially as historians usually see the eleventh century as an era of two or more distinct reforming periods. To borrow one of Constable's descriptions:

In the first half of the eleventh century the Church took the lead in promoting the *reformatio pacis* by preaching, pilgrimage, and liturgical intervention and, more positively, through the Peace and Truce of God. Later in the century the reformers

⁴² J. Barrow, 'Ideas and applications of reform', in T. F. X. Noble and J. M. H. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity, III: Early Medieval Christianities, c.600-c.1100* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 345-62. See also G. B. Ladner, 'Terms and ideas of renewal', in R. L. Benson and G. Constable (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 1-33; G. Constable, 'Renewal and reform in religious life: concepts and realities', in *ibid.*, pp. 37-67; G. B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Cambridge, MA, 1959), pp. 1-35. On the paradoxes of reform see Constable, *Reformation*, pp. 42-3; C. Brooke, *The Age of the Cloister: The Story of Monastic Life in the Middle Ages* (Stroud, 2003), pp. 14-17. A flavour of the vast bibliography of reform may be found, alongside important overviews and interpretations, in J. Howe, 'The nobility's reform of the medieval Church', *The American Historical Review*, 93:2 (1988), pp. 317-339, at 317-19, nn. 1-3; and more recently Miller, 'New religious movements', pp. 229-30.

⁴³ Barrow, 'Ideas', pp. 347-8, 361-2; eadem, 'The ideology of the tenth-century English Benedictine "reform"', in P. Skinner (ed.), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 141-54, at 141-2.

concentrated their attention on the Church itself, which was turned by their efforts into new spiritual directions and institutional patterns.⁴⁴

More recently, scholars have distinguished further sub-phases and divergences within the period,⁴⁵ while a local study of one diocese (Verona) has concluded that the term ‘reform’ is unhelpful for describing the period’s urgent innovations, creative ferment, and sense of spiritual possibility in new institutions.⁴⁶ Added to this, we must remember that the eleventh century grew out of the tenth, which had its monastic ‘reform’, while the grand ‘reformation’ of the twelfth century in turn grew out of the eleventh; indeed it is said to have begun half-way through it.⁴⁷ These different stages comprise varying and layered processes of social, political, and ecclesiastical change; as R. I. Moore has noted, “‘reform’ is an abstraction in which modern historians embrace a variety of objectives’.⁴⁸ In the eleventh century, lay saints potentially emerge out of, or in sympathy with, both of the basic processes of change outlined by Constable. Sometimes, as in the cult of Gerald of Aurillac (chapter 1), the link is direct, in this case with the aims of the Peace of God; at other times, as in the pilgrim cults of Bovo and Davino (chapters 2 and 3), the hagiography seems to be responding to a general upsurge in pious activity and lay engagement with the Church, which may just as easily originate among the lay aristocracy themselves as from any concerted effort on behalf of churchmen while, of course, the two influenced each other.⁴⁹ Ultimately, this dissertation aims not to ‘perpetuate

⁴⁴ Constable, ‘Renewal and reform’, p. 39. It should be noted, however, that *reformatio pacis* (restoration of the peace) was a standard term and did not usually have any moral agenda behind it: I am grateful to Julia Barrow for this point.

⁴⁵ Constable, *Reformation*, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Miller, *Formation of a Medieval Church*, pp. 175-7.

⁴⁷ Constable, *Reformation*, pp. 4-5; Howe, ‘Nobility’s reform’, p. 317; C. Walker Bynum, ‘The spirituality of regular canons in the twelfth century’, in eadem, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 22-58, at 22.

⁴⁸ R. I. Moore, review of Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy*, in *The English Historical Review*, 121 (2006), pp. 1516-17, quote at 1517.

⁴⁹ Several scholars have written about the eleventh and twelfth centuries in terms of ‘an outburst of religious feeling that touched clergy and laity as well as monks’, in the words of C. Walker Bynum, ‘The Cistercian conception of community’, in eadem, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 59-81, at 60-1, n. 4 (with references). For positive views of lay engagement with hagiography and saints’ cults, see S. Kahn Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), pp. 6-8; Bull, *Knightly Piety*, pp. 204-49.

the categories and the conflicts', to echo the warning of John Van Engen, but to break them down and see the period in all its human complexity.⁵⁰

As we have seen, Vauchez applied a single-minded approach to one of these reform periods – the Gregorian Reform of the later eleventh century – to explain a perceived absence of lay sanctity, relying on the commonplace that reformers sought to disparage the laity and distinguish themselves from them more sharply: such attacks from polemicists like Humbert of Silva Candida do not, it is true, seem conducive to lay sanctity, which requires the different orders to find common ground in order for one to gain a place in the other's liturgical calendars and sacred texts, but it is not the whole story.⁵¹ There is a difference between trying to exclude the laity from having authority over the Church – by attacking simony and lay investiture, as the reformers did – and ridiculing their whole spiritual potential, which reformers avoided. In the case of Peter Damian (1007-72), for example, positive engagement with and exhortation of the laity was a consistent feature of his correspondence, whether he was counselling a nobleman on his duty to recite the seven canonical hours every day, or urging a duke of Tuscany to be severe in his punishment of criminals – 'reform' here meant the purification of all society, recognising that the laity played their part too.⁵² One of the features of the age that historians are increasingly recognising is the extent to which clergy and laity could work together.⁵³ Even on a strictly political level, we may think of the reform programme of the second half of the eleventh

⁵⁰ J. Van Engen, 'The future of medieval church history', *Church History*, 71:3 (2002), pp. 492-522, at 495.

⁵¹ Humbert of Silva Candida, *Libri tres adversus simoniacos*, ed. F. Thaner, MGH Libelli 1 (Hanover, 1891), pp. 95-253; U.-R. Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia, PA, 1988), pp. 89-92. Recent scholarship from the papal perspective includes M. Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes: The Politics of Eleventh-Century Church Reform* (Leiden, 2012); Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy*. For a re-evaluation, see M. Miller, 'The crisis in the Investiture Crisis narrative', *History Compass*, 7:6 (2009), pp. 1570-80.

⁵² *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, ed. K. Reindel, 4 vols., MGH Briefe 4 (Munich, 1993), nos. 17 (I, pp. 155-67), 68 (II, pp. 289-97); further examples are discussed in P. Ranft, *The Theology of Peter Damian: Let Your Life Always Serve as a Witness* (Washington, DC, 2012), p. 198; and see the discussion in Peter Damian, *Letters*, trans. O. J. Blum, 6 vols. (Washington, DC, 1989-2005), I, pp. 3-33. Later in life, however, Damian despaired of reforming the secular world: *Die Briefe*, no. 165 (IV, pp. 173-230).

⁵³ Hamilton, *Church and People*, esp. pp. 15-22, 60-160; Miller, 'New religious movements'.

century in terms of Gregory VII's desire to make the Church 'free, chaste, and catholic' (*libera, casta, et catholica*), with a parallel emphasis on obedience to the papal see – an ideal which did certainly not exclude the laity from showcasing or appropriating clerical standards of piety.⁵⁴

Let us look briefly at an example of who the high-ranking laity were and how they could interact with the Church and its cults in the period of the Gregorian Reform. Countess Matilda of Canossa (or Tuscany, 1046-1115) was intimately involved in religious and ecclesiastical developments throughout her life. As a powerful ally of Gregory VII, she sheltered and supported the pope and his allies – such as bishops Anselm II of Lucca and Bonizo of Sutri – in the face of the violent Investiture Contest against Emperor Henry IV, with whom she was frequently at war. She remained loyal to the pope despite heavy defeats and setbacks, such as at Volta in 1080. It was widely said that her career and military service had, rightly or wrongly, resulted in the papal remission of her sins.⁵⁵ She embraced the purification of the Church, attempting, for example, to impose the regular and common life on the canons of Lucca. Her personal piety was no less lacking: after the failure of her first marriage, Gregory had to dissuade her from entering the cloister as a nun. Along with her mother Beatrice, who had facilitated the election of Pope Alexander II, she was active in founding or supporting further houses of monks and regular canons, and endowing numerous hospitals in towns and along important communications routes.⁵⁶ She had especially close

⁵⁴ *The 'Epistolae Vagantes' of Pope Gregory VII*, ed. and trans. H. E. J. Cowdrey (Oxford, 1972), no. 54, p. 132; Barrow, 'Ideas', pp. 361-2; Blumenthal, *Investiture Controversy*, pp. 117-18.

⁵⁵ *Vita Anselmi episcopi Lucensis*, ed. R. Wilmans, MGH SS 12 (Hanover, 1856), pp. 1-35, at c. 11, p. 16; and from a pejorative stance, Siebert of Gembloux, *Leodicensium epistola adversus Paschalem papam*, ed. E. Sackur, MGH Libelli 2 (Hanover, 1892), pp. 449-64, at c. 13, p. 464.

⁵⁶ R. Zagnoni, 'Gli ospitali dei Canossa', in P. Golinelli (ed.), *I poteri dei Canossa da Reggio Emilia all'Europa* (Bologna, 1994), pp. 309-23, at 313-23. In general: P. Healy, 'Merito nominetur virago: Matilda of Tuscany in the polemics of the Investiture Contest', in C. Meek and C. Lawless (eds.), *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women, 4: Victims or Viragos?* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 49-56, at 49-50; D. J. Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa 1046-1115* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 32-4 (with an overview on pp. 12-16).

links to the Vallombrosians.⁵⁷ Her family's commitment to ecclesiastical foundations and the cult of saints is most clear in its links to San Benedetto Po (then San Benedetto Polirone), the monastery near Mantua that her grandfather Tedald had founded in 1007, that she and her father Boniface endowed with a new church, and which she entrusted to the Cluniacs and raised to a position of considerable status with no fewer than twenty-two donations over a period of twenty-three years.⁵⁸ In 1016, the hermit Simeon died there after a life of pilgrimage and thaumaturgy that had begun in Armenia, and Boniface immediately pressed for his papal recognition, which was achieved, and oversaw the production of his *Life and Miracles* (which provide the first known use of the verb *canonizare*).⁵⁹ Simeon's was just one of several cults that has been linked to this line of lay counts and countesses who played an active role in the Church, often when their support was critical to its success.⁶⁰ They were by no means alone: John Howe has chronicled many of the other lay individuals and families who played significant roles in the Church's development in this period.⁶¹

In the end, despite their credentials, neither Matilda nor her ancestors were considered saints, though perhaps they were not far off: Donizo, a monk of Canossa, wrote their history in his *De principibus Canusinis* – often known as the *Vita Mathildis* – in the years before Matilda died (and therefore under her watchful eye).⁶² This metrical eulogy is political and secular in nature but, in the second book about Matilda herself, has some of the makings of a saint's *Life*, especially in its description of her virtues,⁶³ and its conformity to the *topoi* of her

⁵⁷ M. L. Ceccarelli Lemut, 'I Canossa e i monasteri toscani', in Golinelli, *I poteri dei Canossa*, pp. 143-61, at 154-61.

⁵⁸ P. Golinelli, 'Culto dei santi e monasteri nella politica dei Canossa nella pianura padana', in *Studi Matildici* (Modena, 1978), pp. 427-44, at 434-8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; E. W. Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948), pp. 1, 58, 163-4; the *Life and Miracles* are edited in P. Golinelli, 'La "Vita" di s. Simeone monaco', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 20 (1979), pp. 709-88, at 745-86 (see *Miracula*, c. 13, p. 786, for reference to the canonization).

⁶⁰ Golinelli, 'Culto dei santi'.

⁶¹ Howe, 'Nobility's reform'.

⁶² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ed. and Italian trans. P. Golinelli (Milan, 2008).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, II.14-57, pp. 124-6 (with spiritual qualities emphasised at II.20-7, p. 124).

protectorship of the poor and churches,⁶⁴ as well as increasing piety in old age.⁶⁵ If, perhaps, the project had been devised after Matilda's death, when her legend could be freely aired among devotees, sanctity might have been the upshot, in the manner of Ida of Bolougne's *vita* (see chapter 4). Nonetheless Matilda's legend as a new Deborah and an icon of feminine power remained compelling to clerics and laity alike.⁶⁶ Whether or not she was ever close to sainthood (which was not helped by a controversial reputation in some quarters) the history of the Canossa family is a concrete example of just how closely the laity and clergy could practise common aims and demonstrate mutual appreciation, the influence they could exert over one another, and the potential of lay piety itself. Like the so-called *Vita Mathildis*, the legends studied below are suggestive of this positive relationship.

* * *

The lay saints of the long eleventh century make a faint splash in larger waters, but exceptions often make for revealing cases because of the new or unusual impulses driving them. There is no easy way to evaluate typologies of sainthood, but a general notion can be understood from historians' efforts to compile lists of canonizations. There may have been thirty-three saints recognised by the papacy in the period covered by this study.⁶⁷ Nineteen of them were abbots and bishops and the rest comprise other ecclesiastical founders, martyrs, royal saints, three hermits, and one layperson: Nicholas the Pilgrim. (The three in the list who are usually described as hermits had a monastic career or association: Simeon of Polirone, Simeon of Trier, and Wiborada of Saint-Gall, who was also a martyr.) The elitist complexion

⁶⁴ Ibid., e.g. II.1277-82, p. 220; II.1436-41, p. 232.

⁶⁵ Ibid., II.1358-1535, pp. 226-36 (note esp. II.1449-69, p. 232).

⁶⁶ Hay, *Military Leadership*, pp. 214-15; P. Golinelli (ed.), *Matilde di Canossa nelle culture europee del secondo millennio: dalla storia al mito* (Bologna, 1999).

⁶⁷ Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations*, pp. 440-1; see also G. Löw, 'Canonizzazione', *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, 12 vols. (Florence, 1948-53), III, cols. 569-607. The evidence for some of these canonizations is problematic, but they still give a flavour of 'official' sainthood.

of this list, in which the highest ranks of Church and society dominate, is equally typical of local sanctity, as geographical surveys confirm, while the unusual phenomenon of lay sanctity is aptly represented in the marginal figure of Nicholas.⁶⁸

Nicholas is discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation, surveyed alongside five other lay saints. Before this, however, in chapters 1 to 3, I have chosen to bring detailed attention to three particular cults and their local contexts. The first, that of Gerald of Aurillac, was selected because it is the source of considerable interest, uncertainty, and lately controversy, and has been in need of further research. The other two – those of Bovo and Davino – were chosen because, unlike Gerald, they are comparatively unknown even to scholars in this field, and they arise from an interesting and at times surprising mix of influences. Along with Gerald's cult, they encompass a uniform geographical area that stretches from southern France across the western Alps to northern Italy, which will be useful when thinking in terms of the networks that provide a focus especially to chapters 2 and 3. Sometimes I have taken a broad approach in these three chapters in order to present original ways to explain or contextualise these exceptional cults, whether by evaluating similar local cults (as in chapters 1 and 3), incorporating non-hagiographic narratives (chapter 2), or adopting theoretical methods (chapter 3). The six saints of chapter 4, meanwhile, originate from both north and south of the central zone occupied by these cults. In each case, the relevant works of hagiography, which have all emerged in a monastic or clerical context, are evidence for a process of saint-making, however localised it may have been. All the protagonists are

⁶⁸ Many local studies can be found in *Hagiographies*. On the links between nobility, the Church, and sanctity, see Murray, *Reason and Society*, pp. 317-49, 405-15. Types of saint are discussed in Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, pp. 137-238. Aside from Vauchez, *Sainthood*, quantitative and long-range studies that address the make-up of saints include Delooz, *Sociologie*; D. Weinstein and R. M. Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700* (Chicago, IL, 1982); J. F. Broderick, 'A census of the saints (993-1955)', *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, 135 (1956), pp. 87-115; P. A. Sorokin, *Altruistic Love: A Study of American 'Good Neighbors' and Christian Saints* (Boston, MA, 1950); Goodich, *Vita Perfecta*; idem, 'A profile of thirteenth-century sainthood', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 18:4 (1976), pp. 429-437; K. George and C. H. George, 'Roman Catholic sainthood and social status: a statistical and analytical study', *The Journal of Religion*, 35:2 (1955), pp. 85-98; E. Anti, *Santi e animali nell'Italia Padana (secoli IV-XII)* (Bologna, 1998). For early medieval Aquitaine, see Poulin, *L'idéal de sainteté*, esp. p. 34.

represented as saints, with the ability to intercede from heaven, in their biographies. Usually this is enhanced in the Life by notice of a translation of relics to a more honoured position, a ritual which was overseen by a bishop and carried out in tandem with the dedication of a church or altar, and this marks the saint's official recognition. Recorded posthumous miracles, which are evidence of wider devotion, almost always follow, and I have endeavoured to point out any further evidence, such as liturgical calendars, where it exists. More modestly, an active cult may be suggested in the Life simply by exhortation of a house's brothers to continue to celebrate the deceased on his feast day (as in the Life of Burchard the Venerable in chapter 4), even if such an exhortation may imply anxiety over the saint's diminishing importance. Only in the case of Walstan of Bawburgh (chapter 4) are we unsure about the individual's contemporary status as a saint, as his Life cannot be dated with any certainty, though devotion in the later Middle Ages is well attested.⁶⁹

Overall these represent nine examples of lay saints whose biographies emerged from the long eleventh century, challenging Vauchez's theory that the period saw no interest in cults of this type. There may be other cases yet to be discovered, not least among later, apparently dubious legends that place their subjects in this period: some interesting stories emerge from Germany, for example, that have proved hard to trace back to the central Middle Ages.⁷⁰ However, this is very likely a representative sample that indicates how rarely lay holiness was recognised within the formal structures of the Church. But the fact that there were few lay saints, and that in most cases their legends survive in a limited number of

⁶⁹ On saint-making, see A. Thacker, 'The Making of a Local Saint', in idem and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 45-73. The word 'cult' is elaborated upon in Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, pp. 95-112, alongside most other aspects of Christian sanctity.

⁷⁰ E.g. the story from Carinthia of Agatha Hildegard (allegedly d. 1024), which is recounted by the Bollandists from oral legend in *De s. Agatha Hildegarde Palatina Carinthiae*, AASS Februarii, I, pp. 721-3; Irmengard of Süchteln (d. c.1089), whose record is late medieval: *De b. Irmgarde virgine comitissa Zutphaniae*, AASS Septembris, II, pp. 270-8; and Sebald of Nuremberg (of the eleventh century): *De s. Sebaldio eremita*, AASS Augusti, III, pp. 762-75, and see also the mentions in Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp. 66, 83-4, 264. There is no definitive register of saints for the period but among all the secondary and reference works, the substantial list in Delooy, *Sociologie*, pp. 440-59, is useful when used with care, as it does contain errors and its sources are not perfect (see the discussion on sources in *ibid.*, pp. 128-40).

manuscripts, does not detract from the important evidence they provide of how preceptions of sanctity were malleable and shifting.

In the second part, I broaden the enquiry to investigate the larger themes found in the texts. Chapter 5 explores the association between pilgrimage and sanctity, both in terms of historical development and the mythical and literary value of the ‘great journey’ in the works under discussion. There is also consideration of the apparently gender-specific emphasis on exile in the texts, while theoretical models are borrowed from the field of anthropology in an effort to explore the implications of these findings for the study of religion more generally. Chapter 6 extends the discussion to hermits and knightly converts – both of whom experienced the interchange between the secular and spiritual worlds – and applies their own special journeys and acts of exile to the same models in order to understand in broader terms how hagiographers constructed the life stories of the eleventh century’s spiritual pioneers. The conclusion returns to the subject of Vauchez’s narrative and addresses how my findings modify it. It identifies problems with the ‘rise’ of lay sanctity, particularly in relation to the landmark cult of Homobonus of Cremona, and places my research in the context of this typology’s changing fortunes through the Middle Ages.

PART I: SAINTS

Chapter 1

Lay sanctity in Aquitaine c.1000: Gerald of Aurillac and Martial of Limoges

The considerable tradition of scholarship on St Gerald of Aurillac has recently met a challenge that threatens to overturn it completely. Mathew Kuefler has argued that the famous Life of Gerald, which was thought to be written by Odo of Cluny in around 930, is in fact a forgery composed about a century later.¹ Therefore one aim of this chapter is to form a detailed response to this revelation and Kuefler's other arguments. It will carefully reassess the aims and development of the early cult of Gerald as evidenced in two biographies, miracle stories, wider religious and political change in Aquitaine, the dedication ceremony of 972 at Aurillac, and the celebration of the cult in Limoges in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Much of Kuefler's scheme will be found to be entirely persuasive, while certain aspects will be reconsidered.

Furthermore, this chapter will place the development of Gerald's cult alongside that of the neighbouring cult of St Martial of Limoges for the first time. Kuefler showed that the longer Life of each saint was written in similar circumstances, for similar reasons, in the early eleventh century at Limoges, but restricted full investigation to Gerald's *vita*. The circumstances of Gerald and Martial's longer biographies entailed engagement with the laity,

¹ M. Kuefler, 'Dating and authorship of the writings about Saint Gerald of Aurillac', *Viator*, 44:2 (2013), pp. 49-97; idem, *The Making and Unmaking of a Saint: Hagiography and Memory in the Cult of Gerald of Aurillac* (Philadelphia, PA, 2014), which contains a shortened version of his article in ch. 1. The modern historiography of the cult is discussed below.

and consequently each cult contains powerful models of lay sanctity. He also argued that they were written by the same person: Ademar of Chabannes (989-1034). The soundness of this attribution will be reconsidered. Kuefler himself admits that it ‘must remain somewhat speculative’, and this chapter will underscore the problems that arise when trying to attribute a single author to the longer Life of either Gerald or Martial, both of which are complex texts that were developed in stages.²

The figure of Gerald of Aurillac, a saintly lay aristocrat from the Auvergne in southern France, is well known: he eschewed fighting, stayed celibate, founded a monastery (though never joined it), and lived a devotedly pious life while staying engaged in secular affairs, according to the legend that grew up some time after his death (for which a date of *c.*909 is often supposed) and continued to develop into the eleventh century.³ He is commonly known as the first lay saint.⁴ His deeds are recorded in a short Life and the more famous long Life, known respectively as *Vita Geraldi brevior* (hereafter *VGb*) and *Vita Geraldi prolixior* (hereafter *VGp*); these are innovative texts written sometime between *c.*930 and *c.*1030.⁵ There is also a third, hybrid version which takes parts from each and had limited

² Kuefler, ‘Dating’, pp. 73-6, quote at 73. Among Kuefler’s reasons to attribute authorship of the long Life of Gerald to Ademar is the claim that Ademar ‘rewrote the detailed *vita* for Saint Martial’ (p. 74) known as the *Vita Martialis prolixior*, and therefore seems likely to have done the same for Gerald; Ademar, however, only tinkered with this text and cannot be held responsible for its substance, as argued below. Among the more promising links to Ademar, on the other hand, are the rather suspicious references he makes to Odo’s authorship of the Life in his other writings: *ibid.*, p. 64.

³ For the various dates that have been suggested for Gerald’s death, ranging from 887 (improbable) to 920, see Kuefler, *Making*, pp. 44-5.

⁴ On the uniqueness of Gerald’s sanctity, see esp. J.-C. Poulin, *L’idéal de sainteté dans l’Aquitaine carolingienne d’après les sources hagiographiques (750-950)* (Quebec, 1975), pp. 35-6, 81-98, with further comments on Poulin’s analysis in M. Heinzelmann, ‘Sanctitas und “Tugendadel”: zu Konzeptionen von “Heiligkeit” im 5. und 10. Jahrhundert’, *Francia*, 5 (1977), pp. 741-52, at 746-52; A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1997), p. 355 n. 362; T. F. X. Noble, ‘Secular sanctity: forging an ethos for the Carolingian nobility’, in P. Wormald and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 8-36, at 33 and n. 108; P. Bonnassie, P.-A. Sigal, and D. Iogna-Prat, ‘La Gallia du Sud, 930-1130’, in *Hagiographies* I, pp. 289-344, at 292-4; and almost all references below on Gerald.

⁵ The latter date reflects Kuefler’s interpretation, which is discussed below. Citations to *VGp* refer to the recent edition: Odo of Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldi Auriliacensis*, ed. and French trans. A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen (Brussels, 2009). The chapter numbering of the PL edition is given in brackets where different: see Odo of Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldi Auriliacensis comitis*, PL 133, cols. 639-704, which is taken from M. Marrier and A. Duchesne (eds.), *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis* (Paris, 1614), cols. 65-114. The translation in G. Sitwell, *St Odo of Cluny: Being the Life of St Odo of Cluny by John of Salerno and the Life of St Gerald of Aurillac by St Odo*

distribution, perhaps only at Cluny.⁶ The first two – original, unorthodox, and enigmatic – are the subjects of the important debate about Odo, Ademar, and who wrote what and when. The third is interesting for the later reception of the legend among a small circle but is otherwise a distraction from the aims of the present study.

From 1895 until 2013 the scholarly consensus more or less maintained that Odo of Cluny wrote *VGp* in around 930, and that *VGb* was a later abridgement of little interest.⁷ Kuefler's reversal, comprising the key claim that the short Life of Gerald was written first, does indeed appear to be the most reasonable explanation for the evidence, as the following brief points, which have been extracted from his greater argument, should be sufficient to show.⁸ First are the anachronisms in *VGp*, such as Gerald's identification as a count (there has never been a count of Aurillac: William the Pious, duke of Aquitaine, had jurisdiction as count of Auvergne), a description of a church at Aurillac built decades after Gerald's time (in a town which did not yet exist), and the discussion of a tripartite social order and the language of the Peace of God movement, lay piety, and secular comportment more akin to the period around the millennium and soon after, all of which are absent from *VGb*. Second, whereas *VGb* is openly circumspect about Gerald's sanctity, appropriately enough for the highly irregular cult of a lay lord in its early stages, *VGp* alone calls him *sanctus* and *confessor*, and often uses superlatives when referring to his virtues and emphasising his

(London, 1958) is used with some changes. *VGb* is in *Cat. Paris*. II, pp. 392-401, trans. Kuefler, *Making*, pp. 193-203, however the translations provided here are my own.

⁶ Known as *Vita Geraldi prolixior secunda*, this is unedited. All three Lives are fully discussed (with a traditional view of authorship and dating) in A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen, 'L'évolution de l'image de Géraud d'Aurillac (+ 909), seigneur laïque et saint, au fil de ses trois "Vitae"', in B.-M. Tock (ed.), *In principio erat verbum: Mélanges offerts en hommage à Paul Tombeur par des anciens étudiants à l'occasion de son éméritat* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 45-92; and in *VGp*, pp. 1-128.

⁷ The consensus was established by A. Poncelet, 'La plus ancienne vie de s. Géraud d'Aurillac (+ 909)', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 14 (1895), pp. 89-107. On the late-nineteenth century debate: Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 53-6; and on the historiography generally, D. Iogna-Prat, 'La *Vita Geraldi* d'Odon de Cluny: un texte fondateur?', in M. Lauwers (ed.), *Guerriers et moines: conversion et sainteté aristocratiques dans l'occident médiéval, IXe-XIIIe siècle* (Antibes, 2002), pp. 143-55.

⁸ Kuefler, 'Dating', should be consulted for its several other points which add up to a convincing whole on this matter.

sanctitas: why would an author abridge and rewrite a saint's life only to cut out the references to his hero's sanctity? *VGb* merely, and only once, calls Gerald *beatus*.⁹

Third, and to my mind most convincingly of all, concerns Gerald's death scene (the *Transitus*) and his posthumous *Miracula*: these are called books III and IV in *VGp* and are written in the same elaborate style as the rest of that work, but in the extant manuscripts initially circulated separately. The laconic and sparsely written *VGb*, however, ends before Gerald's death. To believe that *VGb* was written after *VGp*, one must suppose that its editor took a work in four books, broke it up, reduced and completely rewrote the first two (*VGb* would have been much more than an abridgement: it is a quite different work) but left the other two intact, renaming them as *Transitus* and *Miracula* in the meantime.¹⁰ The more sensible alternative is to conclude that *VGb* was written first and that the *Transitus* and *Miracula* were written later by others, as a way of 'finishing' the work, and this person or persons extended and rewrote the original *vita* as well, compiling the whole project into a coherent work of four books. The frequent mentions of Limoges and the cult of St Martial that were inserted by this rewriter tell us where efforts to amplify and augment the cult of Gerald took place: at the very least Limoges, and most likely at the monastery of Saint-Martial itself (this is supported by the provenance of the early manuscripts). The manuscript transmission even shows the text being added to in stages, before it was finally presented as one long work, with a new preface, which was now consistent in its model of a powerful but pious layman who wishes to spread peace, justice, and proper religious practice through Aquitaine in the face of violent and rapacious lay upstarts and lackadaisical monks, and whose miracle-working attests to his special status as a saint. The period when *VGb* began to be turned into *VGp* can be dated to between the 980s and the 1020s, thanks to a manuscript originating from Saint-Martial, Limoges (Paris, BN lat. 5301) which contains the original

⁹ Ibid., pp. 50-68.

¹⁰ To paraphrase from *ibid.*, p. 69.

VGb followed by the new *Transitus* and *Miracula* (as I will show, these would be further worked on before they became books III and IV). In the only other manuscript of *VGb* from this early period (Paris, BN lat. 3783 t. II), the *vita* travels on its own.¹¹

The different faces of Gerald, then and now

The vast scholarly archive on Gerald is very largely interested in *VGp*, which has been translated into English and other modern languages and commented on in almost every work that deals with the religious, intellectual, social, economic, or political landscape of tenth-century west Francia, so rich is its telling of Gerald's circumstances. *VGb* has gone neglected except in a few specialist articles.¹² Almost all scholars who have commented on *VGp* have described it as a 'model' of lay behaviour in a violent world, with the assumption that it was something to be acknowledged by the laity. In its concern for the lay order, it seemed to provide a bridge between Carolingian 'mirrors for princes' and the rhetoric of the Peace of God movement, a rhetoric to which we can now say it contributes directly.¹³

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-73. The version of the *Transitus* associated with *VGb* is edited by V. Fumagalli, 'Note sulla *Vita Geraldii* di Odone di Cluny', *Bulletino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano*, 76 (1964), pp. 217-40, at 235-40. Extant manuscripts of the *Vita Geraldii* are described in A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen, 'Le dossier de saint Géraud d'Aurillac', *Francia*, 22:1 (1995), pp. 173-206; and Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 91-7 (reprinted in Kuefler, *Making*, pp. 205-17). For the dating of BN lat. 5301, see Kuefler, 'Dating', p. 73.

¹² Aside from Kuefler, these include Bultot-Verleysen, 'L'évolution'; Fumagalli, 'Note'; and P. Facciotto, 'Moments et lieux de la tradition manuscrite de la *Vita Geraldii*', in Lauwers, *Guerriers et moines*, pp. 217-33.

¹³ On the 'mirrors', see K. Hallinger, 'Zur geistigen Welt der Anfänge Klunys', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 10 (1954), pp. 417-445, at 436: Odo wrote an *Adelsspiegel* for the reform of feudal lords (*Feudalherren*); this was trans. into French, and from French into English as 'The spiritual life of Cluny in the early days', in N. Hunt (ed.), *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 29-55. See also S. Airlie, 'The anxiety of sanctity: St Gerald of Aurillac and his maker', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43 (1992), pp. 372-95, esp. 376-80. On Gerald and the Peace of God, see J. Schneider, 'Aspects de la société dans l'Aquitaine carolingienne d'après la *Vita Geraldii Auriliacensis*', *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 117:1 (1973), pp. 8-19, at 18; J.-P. Poly and E. Bournazel, *The Feudal Transformation 900-1200*, trans. C. Higgitt (New York, 1991), p. 146. C. Lauranson-Rosaz directly links the Life of Gerald and the subsequent status of Aurillac to the Peace movement in 'Peace from the mountains: the Auvergnat origins of the Peace of God', in T. Head and R. Landes (eds.), *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response in France around the Year 1000* (Ithaca, NY, 1992), pp. 104-34, esp. 111.

This simplistic image of a lay saint for the edification of the laity goes back at least to Carl Erdmann, who claimed Odo as the first cleric to try to win the souls of the laity, while placing Gerald in the context of the development of holy war.¹⁴ The idea that the longer Life reflected a defining moment in the creation of chivalric knighthood was followed by Jean Flori, who emphasised Gerald's membership of a class of righteous warriors (*ordo pugnatorum*) whose task was to counter the rise of destructive knights (*milites*).¹⁵ Friedrich Lotter similarly saw in him the creation of a secular arm of ecclesiastical authority to enforce peace.¹⁶ Such historians have attempted above all to understand the contradictory behaviour of a saint who both did and did not fight: he ordered his men to wage war 'with the backs of their swords and with their spears reversed'¹⁷ and he never shed blood himself,¹⁸ yet Gerald, a powerful man (*potens*) in a militarised world, 'sometimes made use of fighting'¹⁹ and did go into battle, both on campaign and defensively,²⁰ 'for the cause of God'.²¹ Anglophone historians have been largely in accordance: 'there is no doubt that he [Odo] hoped to provide a model ... for the "nobles" and "powerful men" who were Gerald's equals in the world' may stand as a representative statement.²²

¹⁴ C. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. M. W. Baldwin and W. Goffart (Princeton, NJ, 1977 [orig. 1935]), pp. 87-8.

¹⁵ J. Flori, *L'Idéologie du glaive: préhistoire de la chevalerie* (Geneva, 1983), pp. 108-112.

¹⁶ F. Lotter, 'Das Idealbild adliger Laienfrömmigkeit in den Anfängen Clunys: Odo's *Vita* des Grafen Gerald von Aurillac', in W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst (eds.), *Benedictine Culture 750-1050*, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Series 1, Studia 11 (Leuven 1983), pp. 76-95, at 93.

¹⁷ *VGp*, I.8, p. 144: 'mucronibus gladiatorum retro actis, hastas inantea dirigentes'.

¹⁸ *VGp*, I.8, p. 146.

¹⁹ *VGp*, I.8, p. 146: 'usum preliandi ... aliquando habuerit'.

²⁰ *VGp*, I.33, pp. 180-2 (with William the Pious); I.40, p. 190 (after being harassed by a castellan).

²¹ *VGp*, I.8, p. 146: 'pro causa Dei pugnauit' (in the context of Odo justifying war as a defensive measure).

²² J. Martindale, 'The French aristocracy in the Early Middle Ages: a reappraisal', *Past and Present*, 75 (1977), pp. 5-45, at 25. For similar comments see esp. Airlie, 'Anxiety of sanctity', pp. 373, 395; B. H. Rosenwein, *Rhinoceros Bound: Cluny in the Tenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1982), p. 73; Noble, 'Secular sanctity', p. 33. However, qualifying or alternative emphases may be found in P. Rousset, 'L'idéal chevaleresque dans deux *Vitae* clunisiennes', in *Études de civilisation médiévale, IXe-XIIe siècles: mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande* (Poitiers, 1974), pp. 623-33; A. Romig, 'The common bond of aristocratic masculinity: monks, secular men and St Gerald of Aurillac', in J. D. Thibodeaux (ed.), *Negotiating Clerical Identities: Priests, Monks and Masculinity in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke, 2010), pp. 39-56. A. Barbero acknowledges the text's complexity in a comparison with the Life of Gangulf (an eighth-century lay martyr): idem, 'Santi laici e guerrieri: le trasformazioni di un modello nell'agiografia altomedievale', in G. Barone et al. (eds.), *Modelli di santità e modelli di comportamento: contrasti, intersezioni, complementarità* (Turin, 1994), pp. 125-40, esp. 134-5.

Yet the secular vision of Gerald's sanctity does not quite square with the text itself and the interests of its author. It is true, of course, that the author does appeal directly to the laity, and much of book I of *VGp* seems directed to this purpose. However, it is also true that great emphasis is placed on monasticism and Gerald's foundation of the monastery at Aurillac, which emerges as the single most sustained narrative in the *Life*, covering four chapters of book II and two chapters of book III.²³ It comes directly after Gerald's quasi-conversion, in which he is secretly tonsured as a symbol of his frustrated desire to enter holy orders.²⁴ These two seemingly contradictory layers of motivation for the work lie at the heart of understanding the meaning of Gerald as a saint and how this changed, not always seamlessly, through the rewriting process.

The 'secular layer' of *VGp* has been much discussed. On the other hand, the importance of monasticism in it has been underestimated. For instance, in the central passage of the *Life* related to Gerald's foundation, he builds a church dedicated to St Peter, just as his father built one for St Clement but, at the intervention of Satan, the foundations are badly laid and the walls collapse. This is how good things come into the world, we are told, with trial and difficulty.²⁵ Lent comes round and he tries again, choosing a better site this time, and the church goes up. There is a major catch, however: Gerald does not know where to find monks of good character who will live by a rule, such is their rarity. He sends some young men to be trained at Vabres, where a properly regulated community is growing up, but when they return they become lax, not having good masters. So he puts one in charge, who turns out to be dissolute; but Gerald

was not able to correct him, and he did not have another whom he could put in his place.

Therefore when he saw him and his associates advancing along the path of a corrupt life,

²³ *VGp*, II.4-6, 8, pp. 202-8; III.2 [1], 4 [3], pp. 246-50.

²⁴ *VGp*, II.2-3, pp. 200-2. This is discussed further below and in ch. 5.

²⁵ *VGp*, II.4, p. 204.

sighing profoundly, he repeated that saying of David, ‘O Lord, defeat the counsel of Achitofel.’²⁶

There could hardly be a clearer parable for the work facing the monastic reformers, namely building a better church in the face of the evils of the world. Gerald must persevere through inevitable setbacks; Lent symbolises the rising to come at Easter, and the church does rise again on its new foundations, but what of the monks? They are so few, and how can they be kept to a rule? Gerald cannot correct them himself: he is a layman and in a ‘perfect’ community should not assume any authority. His laity is emphasised in the reference to David, another powerful man lamenting the sin around him, personified in this case by his counsellor. Gerald’s frustration at the corruption around him leads to a plaintive outcry, and he ‘groaned with disgust at men whom he saw inclining to evil’ in a world where ‘iniquity abounded’.²⁷

The solution to this problem of corruption is not straightforward but seems most of all to involve monks:

[Gerald’s] mind was in turmoil day and night, and he could not forget his wish to gather together monks, often speaking about it with his household and friends. He was so distressed by this feeling that sometimes he would exclaim, ‘O, if someone would let me find religious monks ... I would give them all I possess, and then go through this life begging, I would enter that pact absolutely, without hesitation.’ Sometimes his friends would say, ‘Are there not many monks to be found in these regions from whom you can gather some together as you wish?’ But he would reply with the powerful words, ‘If monks are perfect, they are like blessed angels. But if they return to the desire of the world they are rightly compared to the apostate angels, who by their apostasy did not keep their home. For I tell you that a good layman is incomparably better than a monk who does not keep his vows.’ When they rejoined, ‘Why then are you in the habit of offering such great favours to monks, not just those nearby but also far off?’, making little

²⁶ *VGp*, II.6, p. 206: ‘illum corrigere non ualebat, neque alium habere quem loco illius subrogare posset. Cum ergo uel illum uel complices eius corruptę uite tramitem incedere uidisset, illud Dauiticum profunde suspirans dicebat: “O Domine dissipa consilium Achitofel [2 Sam 15:31].”’

²⁷ *VGp*, II.7, p. 206: ‘super homines quos ad malum procliuos uidebat pertesus ingemiscebat?; ‘iniquitas inundaret’.

of his deeds, with his usual humility he would reply, ‘What I do is nothing. But if, as you say, I do anything, I am certain that He speaks the truth who promised to reward a cup of cold water given in His name.’²⁸

The urge for reform, the search for perfection, the disgust at fallen monks, the assistance to monks near and far: all read as the concerns of a true monastic reformer. However, the hint that there is a more complex social problem behind this passage lies in the reference to the ‘good layman’ who is also allowed inclusion in this reforming mission. The author does not necessarily want to emphasise the divisions between the orders, and he certainly does not hate the secular world: the message is that there are good and bad monks and clerics, just as there are good and bad laypeople. Instead he wants to share the benefits of religious and social reform as widely as possible.

Much of Gerald’s everyday behaviour in *VGp* was of specific interest to monks as well as, of course, the laity. For example, his drinking and dining habits carry a strong flavour of the Rule of St Benedict, with prescribed meal times, mandatory readings, and due care with drink.²⁹ Gerald’s clothes are simple linen or woollen garments ‘of the old fashion’.³⁰ His nocturnal emissions are washed away with water and tears, and the author chastises those who disdain to wash properly after these incidents.³¹ When Gerald wakes up, gets out of bed, puts on his clothes, starts a journey, or many other daily actions, he says an appropriate little

²⁸ *VGp*, II.8, pp. 206-8: ‘Proinde die noctuque mens illius estuabat, et de congregandis monachis affectum obliuisci non poterat, sepius cum domesticis et familiaribus inde colloquens. Tanto enim in id affectu angebatur ut nonnumquam exclamaret: “O si quis michi daret ut sub tali pacto religiosos monachos invenirem, quo ego illis cuncta quę possideo dedissem, et deinceps uitam hanc mendicando exegissem, ad hoc pactum ineundum nichil prorsus morarer.” Cum itidem aliquando familiares ei respondissent dicentes: “Nonne plures monachi in his regionibus repperiuntur, e quibus ad uotum congregare potestis?” At ille fortem nimis sententiam proferens: “Si,” inquit, “monachi perfecti sunt, beatis angelis assimilantur. Sin uero ad seculare desiderium reuertuntur, apostaticis angelis, qui suum domicilium non seruauerunt, per suam utique apostasiam iure comparantur. Fateor enim uobis quoniam incomparabiliter melior est bonus laicus quam sui propositi transgressor monachus.” Cumque ei subiunxissent: “Quid ergo tanta beneficia, non solum uicinis, sed etiam longinquis cenobitis prebere consueuisti?” At ille consueta humilitate facta sua despiciens: “Ego,” inquit, “nichil facio. Si tamen, ut dicitis, aliquid facerem, certus sum quia uerus est promissor qui calicem aque frigide pro suo nomine datum remunerare promisit [Matt. 10:42].” See also the discussion in Romig, ‘Common bond’, pp. 47-8.

²⁹ *VGp*, I.13 (p. 156), I.15 (pp. 158-62), II.14 (pp. 214-6); cf. RB, 38 (cols. 601-4), 40-41 (cols. 641-58).

³⁰ *VGp*, I.16, p. 162: ‘antiquo more’; cf. RB 55, cols. 771-2.

³¹ *VGp*, I.34, p. 182.

verse or prayer.³² His prayer routine includes the night office, after which he remains alone in the oratory in the manner of an especially pious monk, just as the Rule allows.³³ He refuses to let services be cut short, a practice that most are guilty of, says the author, instead setting an example of immobile contemplation during the recital of the office. As for his chanting of the entire psalter ‘almost daily’, this can be seen as encouragement to only the most advanced of monks, for as St Benedict says on this, ‘we read that our holy fathers resolutely performed in a single day what I pray we tepid monks may achieve in a whole week’.³⁴

The longer *Life*, then, is interested in much more than the laity. Gerald is also a vehicle for the edification of monks, as well as a guide for their seniors – lay and ecclesiastical – interested in bettering themselves and their communities. It is concerned with power and its abuses as well as daily life and personal piety. It is a remarkably rich text. However, that richness is the final product of an elongated process of writing and rewriting. It is thanks to Kuefler’s paradigm that this now makes sense, and we are not forced to reconcile its complex agenda with the outlook of one man, Odo of Cluny.

Compared with *VGp*, *VGb* was known as the text that tried to ‘tone down’ Gerald’s laity and adopt a more ‘traditional’ model of sanctity; it had little to say about the lay order beyond the (almost embarrassing) fact that Gerald was in it.³⁵ The two oldest manuscripts of *VGb*, dating from the tenth or eleventh centuries, come from Saint-Martial, Limoges and somewhere that has been thought to be Moissac, but given the known difficulties in distinguishing between the output of these two *scriptoria*, they may well both come from Saint-Martial.³⁶ As in *VGp*, the author calls himself Odo and informs us that he is writing at

³² *VGp*, II.15, p. 216.

³³ *VGp*, II.16, pp. 218-20; cf. RB 52, cols. 747-8.

³⁴ *VGp*, I.11, p. 154: ‘pene cotidie’; cf. RB 18, col. 470B: ‘legamus sanctos Patres nostros uno die hoc strenue implesse, quod nos tepidi utinam septimana integra persolvamus.’ See also the analysis of Gerald’s dining environment in relation to monastic rules in Faccioto, ‘Moments’, pp. 217-23.

³⁵ Analyses of *VGb* along these lines include Bultot-Verleysen, ‘L’*évolution*’; Fumagalli, ‘Note’; Faccioto, ‘Moments et lieux’.

³⁶ Paris, BN lat. 5301 (Saint-Martial) and BN lat. 3783 t. II (Moissac?): see Bultot-Verleysen, ‘Dossier’, p. 198; Kuefler, ‘Dating’, p. 93. On the ‘curious parallels’ between the two *scriptoria*: D. Gaborit-Chopin, *La*

the request of Aimo, abbot of Tulle (c.929 to 931, when he was replaced by Odo of Cluny) and then abbot of Saint-Martial (c.936/7-43), as well as Aimo's brother Turpio, the long-serving bishop of Limoges (d. 944) who ordained Odo.³⁷ The abbot of Cluny may have been related to them.³⁸ We know from Ademar that Limoges had a church dedicated to St Gerald, so the interest from there is easily accounted for.³⁹

A comparison of the prefaces of *VGb* and *VGp* shows their very different approaches to Gerald's sanctity. The preface of *VGb* is apologetic and tentative about Gerald's status: the author worries about the novelty (*novitas*) of the project and Gerald's powerful position, which he justifies by emphasising Gerald's miracles as well as his comportment in the world:

For if he was powerful in matters of this life, this does not hinder the layman who has administered well things that were justly received: for there is no power except from God. It is more praiseworthy that he had means of being proud and yet, in the example of Job or David, remained poor in spirit.⁴⁰

He is unsure about why Gerald has been glorified and ruminates on the problem: is he somebody to be imitated (*ad imitationis incitamentum*), or is he testimony (*testimonium*) of our coming judgement?⁴¹ Gerald may be special but the author makes no positive acclamation of sanctity. Finally, it is worth pointing to a note of anxiety struck when the author refers vaguely to a 'gathering of peasants' occurring lately in connection with

décoration des manuscrits a Saint-Martial de Limoges et en Limousin: du IXe au XIIe siècle (Paris, 1969), pp. 84-5.

³⁷ *VGb*, praef., p. 392. In *VGp*, Aimo is the addressee of the dedicatory letter, while both Aimo and Turpio are mentioned in the prologue: *VGp*, pp. 130, 134 (and see 19-20). On Odo's ordination, see John of Salerno, *Vita sancti Odonis abbatis Cluniacensis*, PL 133, cols. 43-86, at I.37, col. 60A-C; also Odo's own *Collationum libri tres* [hereafter *Collationes*], PL 133, cols. 517-638, at praef., 517A-20A (addressed to Turpio). The chronology of this period is discussed below.

³⁸ *VGp*, p. 19 n. 83.

³⁹ Ademar of Chabannes, *Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain, CCCM 129 (Turnhout, 1999), III.35, p. 157.

⁴⁰ *VGb*, praef., p. 393: 'Nam si potens in rebus hujus vitae erat, hoc nihil obstat laico homini qui res juste acceptas bene disposuit: non est enim potestas nisi a Deo. Magis enim laudabilis est, quod superbiendi materiam habuit et tamen, ad exemplum Job vel David, pauper in spiritu mansit.'

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

Gerald.⁴² He appears worried about the dangers of an unofficial or quasi-pagan cult developing, which is given as a key reason for setting out his ‘official’ version.

On the other hand, the preface of *VGp* uses many of the key passages of its predecessor but twists them for effect, though it has no such worries about ‘peasant’ religion. It is more concerned about the kind of model Gerald might be to those who thought him ‘powerful and rich’ and ‘who strive indeed to excuse their luxurious lives by his example’.⁴³ It seems that such people may be clerical or lay: the text is unspecific. It preaches on observing the commandments of God, noting that if ‘a layman of great position’⁴⁴ could follow them, so can everyone else: this is the same sort of message we have already seen elsewhere in the text, when the author uses Gerald’s lay status to his advantage in the passage about the ‘good layman’.⁴⁵ This time, the author knows why Gerald is special and does not equivocate as his predecessor did: Gerald is ‘an example to the mighty’, given to us, he writes, reworking the words, *lest* we are condemned.⁴⁶ The author has ‘added something by way of admonition to those same mighty ones where opportunity has arisen, as you asked me’⁴⁷ and, finally, he endorses Gerald’s sanctity without any trouble, placing him in ‘the company of the saints’.⁴⁸ The author’s admission that he has ‘added’ something is a revealing one, as if unconsciously referring to the earlier text.

Much of the purpose of *VGp* is to acknowledge Gerald’s laity and to then use it; *VGB* prefers not to, with the result that it tends to ‘clericalise’ its hero. The moment of Gerald’s

⁴² *Ibid.*: ‘conventus rusticorum’. On the uses of the word *rusticus*, see D. Barthélemy, *The Serf, the Knight, and the Historian*, trans. G. R. Edwards (Ithaca, NY, 2009), pp. 274-7, who emphasises derogatory connotations; cf. M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 253-4.

⁴³ *VGp*, praef., p. 130: ‘potens et diues’; ‘qui nimirum suam uoluptuosam uitam eius nituntur exemplo excusare’.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132: ‘a laico et potente homine’.

⁴⁵ See n. 28, above.

⁴⁶ *VGp*, praef., p. 134: a reference to the Queen of the South (Matt. 12:42; Luke 11:31) is turned into a warning of our damnation if we do not heed Gerald’s example: ‘Quoniam uero hunc Dei hominem in exemplo potentibus datum credimus, uiderint ipsi qualiter eum sicut e uicino et de suo ordine sibi prelatum imitentur, ne forte, sicut regina Austri Iudeos, sic iste in iudicio condempnet eos.’

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: ‘aliquid ad eosdem potentes commonendos, ubi se oportunitas prebuerit, sicut rogastis, annectimur’.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘sanctorum consorcio’.

‘conversion’ highlights this difference. In both texts he takes advice to remain in the world but still receives the tonsure which he tries to hide, placing him perfectly on the fence, it would seem, neither one thing nor the other. The interpretation in *VGb* is that Gerald ‘accepted the blessing of clerical office’,⁴⁹ evidently thinking of him in the ecclesiastical camp. *VGp*, on the other hand, omits this, wanting Gerald to have the best of both worlds (he won ‘a double reward’).⁵⁰ Now Gerald is somehow comprehensible to both clergy and laity, and he has the requisite authority to speak to both. The point is made clear when we see some of Gerald’s most monkish or ascetic behaviour likewise omitted from *VGp*, such as his avoidance of embracing female relatives or his decision to spend a punishing night out in the freezing cold after experiencing sexual temptation.⁵¹

The shorter *Life*, then, is not really interested in laypeople *per se*. The author does not return to the subject for the rest of *VGb*, preferring to cast Gerald more as a religious than someone who acts in the secular world. Returning to the section in *VGp* about Gerald’s foundation at Aurillac and his difficulty in finding monks, this is quite similar in *VGb*, where Gerald’s woes on the subject are of central importance, standing out all the more in a shorter text that contains many traditional hagiographic themes. But it is treated in subtly different ways which have the effect of giving the story a more monastic context. For example, as in *VGp*, Gerald is most upset that he has not been able to gather together monks, but the author also says that Gerald ‘felt sick’⁵² about those who lived in a community without the Rule: the desire to see the implementation of reformed monasticism is, if anything, more vigorous. Likewise, when he discusses Gerald’s daily actions, and the little verse or prayer that fits with each one, he gives an example from the Psalms – ‘O Lord, set a watch before my mouth’ –

⁴⁹ *VGb*, 7, p. 397: ‘ut clericatus benedictionem susciperet’.

⁵⁰ *VGp*, II.2, p. 200: ‘duplicem ... remunerationem’.

⁵¹ *VGb*, 4, p. 395. See Kuefler, ‘Dating’, pp. 58-60, for further examples.

⁵² *VGb*, 8, p. 398: ‘nausiabat’.

but explicitly tells us that it is also used in the Mass,⁵³ whereas the author of *VGp* omits this link, in a nod to an audience that may not be so interested in liturgical details.⁵⁴

VGp has its own unique passages too, such as that describing the collapse and restoration of Gerald's monastery, and the section about the 'good layman'. As for the former, the author may have heard that something like this really happened; the message, however, is to emphasise the ongoing struggle to establish reformed communities, and the perseverance required of laypeople to this end. The latter was written for two apparent reasons: to spotlight the advantages of reformed monasticism, with its praise of perfect monks, but also to acknowledge the virtues of the laity, and to show that the order as a whole has the potential to shine spiritually and, as in the case of Gerald himself, be saved.

To summarise, we have a short Life which defines Gerald's lay state as a problem to be overcome. It does this by treating him as a kind of monk and doing its best to ignore the secular aspects of his life. It then demonstrates the author's real interest, namely the monastic order and its reform. The author of the longer Life takes this material and adds his own particular interest, namely the reform of the laity, while at all times keeping up his admonition and encouragement to the larger clerical community. In small ways he changes or omits some of the overtly ecclesiastical comments of the short Life but on the whole allows it to stand, and adds material encouraging the laity's positive involvement in monastic reform. It is to this topic that we shall now turn, to bring to life the context on the ground that so greatly exercised our authors.

⁵³ *VGb*, 8, p. 399: 'Nam sacra quaedam verba sibi notaverat quae corporalibus officiis convenire videbantur, ut est illud: *Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo*' (from Psalm 140:3), which is said during the offertory.

⁵⁴ *VGp*, II.15, p. 216.

The politics of reform in the Auvergne and the Limousin

The concerns about monastic reform that are so vividly seen in both Lives, and the role of the laity in this process, naturally reflect a world in which secular nobles frequently led or were intimately involved with ecclesiastical business; exploring this interaction is vital to understanding the historical context of each *vita*. At the time of Odo of Cluny's reforms in Aquitaine, the region was experiencing upheaval as laity and clergy jostled to make new alliances in a changing secular and spiritual landscape. This large area, which politically and culturally could extend from the Loire as far south as the Pyrenees and from the Atlantic coast to the Rhône,⁵⁵ saw the death of Duke William the Pious, the founder of Cluny, in 918, and the subsequent failure of his successors. Having no direct heirs, his lands went to his nephews William II and then Aelfred, who died in 927, by which time a formidable power bloc had been completely reduced. The counts of Poitiers were the main beneficiaries – Ebles Manzer claimed the inheritance and ducal title, passing them to his son William Towhead in 934 – and a power struggle would now ensue between these counts and the counts of Toulouse (such as Raymond III Pons who used the ducal title from 936 to 941), though it would not be long before the house of Poitiers was preeminent.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Notwithstanding the separate identities of Septimania/Gothia and Gascony. On the geography of Aquitaine: C. Lauranson-Rosaz and C. Juillet, 'L'Aquitaine carolingienne', *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, 8 (2002), pp. 167-76, esp. 167 and 173 n. 4; M. Zimmermann, 'Western Francia: the southern principalities', in T. Reuter (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, III: c.900-c.1024 (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 420-55, at 425-6. Lauranson-Rosaz has consistently argued for the south's cultural distinctiveness, which derived from an enduring *romanité*: see also idem, 'Le Midi de la Gaule en l'an Mil', *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, 6 (2000), pp. 123-33; and idem, 'Le non-conformisme de l'Eglise méridionale du haut moyen âge', in P. Guichard et al. (eds.), *Papauté, monachisme et théories politiques: études d'histoire médiévale offertes à Marcel Pacaut*, 2 vols. (Lyon, 1994), II, pp. 511-23.

⁵⁶ A. R. Lewis, *The Development of Southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, TX, 1965), pp. 201-2; J. Dunbabin, *France in the Making 843-1180* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 58-60; Zimmermann, 'Western Francia', pp. 420, 435.

Straight after his reform of the Burgundian monastery of Romainmôtier in 928/9,⁵⁷ Odo of Cluny became involved with two Aquitanian houses, at Tulle and Aurillac (in the Limousin and Auvergne respectively), whose reforms were close together geographically and chronologically.⁵⁸ These were in the contested border lands between the house of Poitiers, to the north-west, and the house of Toulouse to the south. Charter analysis of the period 900-975 confirms the unsettled nature of the Auvergne in particular, and supports the picture of a battleground between warring houses: on one count, 76 charters mention land acquired *ex conquestu* in this period, mostly in the central and southern parts of the province (which include Gerald's supposed heartland), compared with fewer in surrounding areas. Militarisation and castle-building were ongoing and significant factors in this.⁵⁹

The monastery of Saint-Martin, Tulle was known by the writer of *VGp* to be the site of one of Odo's reforms, as he has Odo explain in the preface by way of an excuse for visiting Aurillac and researching Gerald's life: 'But when cause arose that I should visit the brothers of the monastery at Tulle, I was glad to continue to his [Gerald's] tomb.'⁶⁰ Evidently, the need to create this excuse about Odo's visit shows he did not think that Odo had reformed Aurillac too.⁶¹ While we have no contemporary evidence that such a reform occurred (though it is likely),⁶² the messy situation at Tulle, where charters have survived,

⁵⁷ On the dating, see I. Rosé, *Construire une société seigneuriale: itinéraire et ecclésiologie de l'abbé Odon de Cluny (fin du IXe-milieu du Xe siècle)* (Turnhout, 2008), p. 197 n. 151.

⁵⁸ Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 213-222. Rosenwein, *Rhinoceros Bound*, pp. 46-8, places reforms at Saint-Sauveur (Sarlat) and Saint-Allyre (Clermont-Ferrand) in this context, but some suspicion hangs over these: Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 297-303.

⁵⁹ On charters and castles: Lewis, *Development of Southern French Society*, pp. 223-4, 240-1. Analyses of Gerald's estates, largely based on *VGp*, are in C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges (Velay, Gévaudan) du VIIIe au XIe siècle: la fin du monde antique?* (Le Puy-en-Velay, 1987), pp. 117-20, and A. R. Lewis, 'Count Gerald of Aurillac and feudalism in south central France in the early tenth century', *Traditio*, 20 (1964), pp. 41-58, at 43.

⁶⁰ *VGp*, praef., p. 132: 'Sed cum causa existeret ut Tutelensis cenobii fraternitatem inuiseremus, ad sepulcrum ipsius intendere libuit.'

⁶¹ Pointed out by Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 56-7.

⁶² The consensus that Odo reformed Aurillac was established by E. Sackur, *Die Cluniacenser in ihrer kirchlichen und allgemeingeschichtlichen Wirksamkeit: bis zur Mitte des elften Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Halle, 1892-4), I, pp. 77-8. This seems likely, but the attributions are later: from the early eleventh century, Aimo of Fleury, *Miracula sancti Benedicti*, PL 139, cols. 801-52, at I.4, col. 808D: 'Odo, ex monasterio Sancti Giraldi, quod Aureliacum dicitur, adveniens, huic sacro praelatus est coenobio'. The twelfth-century 'short chronicle' of

gives some indication of how these interventions could proceed, with the intrusion of new, secular powers causing abrupt and often uncomfortable change.

A charter of 931 for Tulle issued by King Raoul tells the story.⁶³ Raoul explains that at the request of Ademar of Échelles, the lay abbot, as well as the ‘suggestion’ of the powerful Ebles Manzer, count of Poitiers, he had previously made Aimo (Odo’s friend and the dedicatee of the Lives of Gerald) the abbot of Tulle with the intention of reforming it, and had subjected the monastery to Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe.⁶⁴ After the failure of William the Pious’s line, Ebles had taken possession of the region and become reconciled to Raoul by 930. However, something was apparently going wrong with the reform of Tulle because ‘it was shown by trial that the same submission was an obstacle to religion’.⁶⁵ After Aimo’s rule of 929-31, Odo was asked to try his hand at it and remains a sporadic presence in the charters until December 935.⁶⁶ In his decree of 931, the king also places Tulle under royal protection, grants free abbatial elections once Odo and his co-abbot, the local incumbent Adacius, have died. He also returns to the monks the part of the abbey that Ademar, the lay abbot, holds, effective after the latter’s death.

This charter effectively describes a benign usurpation and reform of the monastery – which had once belonged solely to the local lay lord, Ademar of Échelles – under the

Aurillac is also commonly cited: *Breve chronicon Auriliacensis abbatiae*, ed. J. Mabillon, *Vetera Analecta* (Paris, 1723), pp. 349-50. It lists Odo as the third abbot (with a co-abbot). On the reform of Aurillac, the best guide is Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 213-18.

⁶³ *Cartulaire des abbayes de Tulle et de Roc-Amadour*, ed. J-B Champeval (Brive, 1903), no. 15, pp. 36-8. This is originally dated 13 December 933 but has since been redated to two years earlier: see J.-P. Brunterc’h, ‘La succession d’Acfred, duc d’Aquitaine (927-936)’, *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*, 6 (2001), pp. 195-240, at 227-30; G. Koziol, *The Politics of Memory and Identity in Carolingian Royal Diplomas: The West Frankish Kingdom (840-987)* (Turnhout, 2012), pp. 289-91.

⁶⁴ *Cartulaire de Tulle*, no. 15, pp. 36-7: ‘Precibus autem viri Ademari, qui locum ipsum eatenus tenuerat, suggerente etiam Ebaldo de Pecteus comite cuidam religiosissimo abbati nomine Aymoni locum eundem ad restaurandum regulare propositum commendaveram (atque coenobium Sancti Savini subjectum feceram).’

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 15, p. 37: ‘experimento probatum est quod eadem subjectio religioni obstaret’. Geoffrey Koziol writes in *Politics of Memory*, p. 289: ‘Such unsubstantiated aspersions are always a sign that something very important is being concealed. Here, what is being concealed is that nothing at all was wrong with the reform ... except that it was no longer politically useful.’

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 574 (p. 311) and 297 (p. 177). For attestations within these dates, in chronological order, see nos. 216 (pp. 129-30), 229 (pp. 133-4), 561 (p. 307), 598 (pp. 325-7). An Abbot Odo is also attested in 900: no. 482, p. 258. For further comment, see Brunterc’h, ‘La succession’, pp. 217-222; Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, p. 219.

auspices of Ebles Manzer. It has also been read as the celebration of a political and spiritual alliance between Raoul, Ademar, and Ebles, in which Tulle was incorporated into Odo's 'network of allied monasteries'.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Ademar's change in fortunes is confirmed by his two wills, one written c.922 and the other c.930.⁶⁸ In the former, he and his wife freely dispense with their properties with no concern for, or approval sought from, any higher, secular authority. The latter testament, however, bears all the hallmarks of the Poitevin incursion that had occurred in the meantime after the death of Acfred, the nephew of William the Pious, in 927. It disperses gifts for the souls of family and friends, 'as well as for our king Raoul and our senior, Count Ebles'.⁶⁹ The authority of Ebles is then begged in the closing words of the couple's will, and his signature comes first.⁷⁰

With so little evidence surviving from Aurillac, whose monastic library has been sacked more than once,⁷¹ we can benefit from examining this portrait of local change at Tulle to better understand the role of secular authority over monasteries in the region at large. In the Auvergne, just south and east of the lands of Ademar of Échelles, Tulle's possessions became entangled with those of Gerald's abbey, requiring an amicable settlement in 916 which is referred to in a document from later in the century.⁷² As Jean-Pierre Brunterc'h has shown in his detailed treatment of the fate of William the Pious's duchy, Ademar of Chabannes omitted William's son and nephew from his *Chronicle* to make it seem as though Ebles inherited the Auvergne and Poitiers directly from the famous founder of Cluny who, he claimed, was Ebles's relative. (Either Ademar did this purposefully, as Brunterc'h suspects, or his sources were faulty.) The transition of power was not complete, however, until Ebles's son, William Towhead, saw his authority recognised by local nobility at the *placitum* of

⁶⁷ Koziol, *Politics of Memory*, pp. 290-1.

⁶⁸ *Cartulaire de Tulle*, nos. 12 and 14 (pp. 22-36).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 14, p. 32: 'praeterea pro rege nostro Rodulpho, atque seniore nostro Ebalo comite'.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-6: 'Ut autem haec autoritas firmius perseveret senioris nostri Ebali comitis hanc autoritate firmari rogavimus.'

⁷¹ Kuefler, *Making*, pp. 3-4.

⁷² *Cartulaire de Tulle*, no. 481, pp. 257-8.

Ennezat in 955. The counts of Toulouse certainly tried to fill the power vacuum before then, and one of them, Raymond Pons, lent his authority to the foundation of Chanteuges in 936, for example. (Odo was asked to lead the house but was busy so delegated the job to Arnoul, the abbot of Aurillac.)⁷³

Aurillac was clearly a model house by this time: Saint-Pons, Thomières and Saint-Chaffre, Monastier were importing its monks.⁷⁴ Before this – and before Odo's assumed reform there – the monastery likely struggled under the whims of lay authority, just as Tulle had done. And yet in *VGp* we read the idealistic references to Aurillac's freedom and subjection to only the papacy (in *VGb* these are vaguer; we are told only that Gerald gave a *census* to Rome for his monastery and nothing direct about its subjugation).⁷⁵

These references, especially in *VGp*, are little more than fiction. While we do not have documents from Odo's time, we do have two that are apparently contemporary with Gerald himself. First, there is a charter of 899 issued by Charles the Simple which takes the monastery of Aurillac under royal protection.⁷⁶ Second, there is Gerald of Aurillac's own will, his *Testamentum*, which has often been interpreted as a codicil because it contradicts certain details in *VGp*.⁷⁷ The charter exempts the monastery from all lay power, under King

⁷³ Brunterc'h, 'La succession', pp. 198-9, 227. On Saint-Marcellin, Chanteuges, see Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 289-91.

⁷⁴ A. G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca, NY, 1995), pp. 21, 27; Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, p. 214: the name of an Abbot Odo also crops up in the Saint-Pons charters.

⁷⁵ *VGp*, II.4, p. 202; *VGb*, 7, p. 398 (Gerald builds his monastery) and 8, p. 398 (he goes to Rome with the *census*).

⁷⁶ Different versions are in *Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple roi de France (893-923)*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1949), no. XXI, pp. 40-3; and D. de Jésus (G. Vigier), *La monarchie sainte, historique, chronologique et généalogique de France*, 2 vols. (Clermont, 1677), II, pp. 529-30. Neither is completely reliable yet give the gist of the original, which is believed to have existed: *VGp*, 'Introduction', p. 60 n. 265. For a round-up of the sources and a history of the early abbey, see N. Charbonnel, 'La ville de Gerbert, Aurillac: les origines', in N. Charbonnel and J.-E. Iung (eds.), *Gerbert l'Européen* (Aurillac, 1997), pp. 53-78.

⁷⁷ *Testamentum sancti Geraldii*, PL 133, cols. 671-2. For slightly different (and clearer) readings, see de Jésus, *La monarchie sainte*, II, p. 527. G. Bouange also prints the documents in *Saint Géraud d'Aurillac et son illustre abbaye* (Aurillac, 1870), pp. 472-3, 483-5.

Charles's protection, with the exception of Gerald and his sister.⁷⁸ Now, Gerald never married or had children – his reputed celibacy was a key plank of his sanctity – but his sister, Avigerna, had two sons called Rainald and Benedict, and it was Rainald who was to be the appointed heir.⁷⁹ With this crucial exception of Gerald's sister, the charter left the way open for familial control of the monastery through her: it was not to be independent of the laity, like Cluny, which in its foundation charter of 909/10 achieved freedom under the papacy alone.⁸⁰

Gerald's will points the way to what happened next. In it he divides his properties between his nephew Rainald and the monks, but after Rainald's death they are meant to cede to the latter.⁸¹ He also gives the ultimate authority over the monastery to Rainald, who becomes its protector and has the power to appoint abbots.⁸² Much therefore would hinge upon Rainald: would he honour the will and allow the monastery its wealth after his death, or would he attempt to maintain family control over some or all of it through his heirs? The consideration both documents give for Gerald's family strikes a realistic note, whereas *VGP* is highly tendentious on this subject.

⁷⁸ Lauer, *Actes*, p. 42: 'praecipimus atque jubemus ut ipse abbas [Adelgarius, the first abbot] et monachi ibidem degentes sine ullius iudicis potestate, nisi ipsius Giroldi et sororis suae, sub nostro mundeburdo securi permaneant'; this part is almost identical in de Jésus, *La monarchie sainte*, II, p. 529.

⁷⁹ Bouange, *Saint Géraud*, pp. 82-3.

⁸⁰ G. Constable, 'Cluny in the monastic world of the tenth century', in idem, *The Abbey of Cluny: A Collection of Essays to Mark the Eleven-hundredth Anniversary of its Foundation* (Berlin, 2010), pp. 43-79, at 50-1. On the documents showing the control of Gerald's family over the monastery, see the analysis in I. Cochelin, 'Quête de liberté et réécriture des origines: Odon et les portraits corrigés de Baume, Géraud et Guillaume', in Lauwers, *Guerriers et moines*, pp. 183-215, at 196-8.

⁸¹ De Jésus, *La monarchie sainte*, II, p. 527: 'hoc est in primis ad locum, quem Deo et Sancto Petro condonatum habeo, quod vocatur Aurilacus Monasterium, hoc est quod a die praesenti ipsi Monachi possident et medietatem de ipsa curte, et ipsum Castellum cum Bacalaria dominicata, et duos Mansos in Grandemonte, et in fabriciis manso, ubi stabilis visus fuit, manere Reynaldus teneat, dum vivit, post obitum illius ad Aureliacum remaneat'; cf. PL 133, cols. 671D-72B. Other properties are then listed in a similar way.

⁸² Ibid.: 'Et post obitum meum Reynaldus nepos meus habeat potestatem, de hoc supra nominato Monasterio, vel Abbates mittendi et tollendi sive causas Monachorum inquirendi, ante Reges et Comites et eorum Vicarios, sive in diversis plagis Monachorum, et eorum familiis, et tuitione tenendi.' This would seem to be a better version of the equivalent passage in PL 133, col. 672c, though according to Cochelin, 'Quête de liberté', p. 199, its original appears lost.

Much later, during the compilation of Gerald's posthumous miracles (book IV of *VGp*), the issue of Rainald's inheritance mysteriously resurfaces. The author clearly wishes to discredit Gerald's nephew and emphasise the liberty of the monks:

While he was still living the man of God [Gerald] had bound Rainald, whom he suspected, by an oath [presumably the *Testamentum*], as I said above, but Rainald broke his oath and with his followers greatly troubled the dependants whom Gerald had assigned to the monastery. But each of them, in the pillaging which they were suffering, used to invoke the name of Lord Gerald.⁸³

The deceased Gerald then appears to his nephew and demands he stop harassing the monastery; Rainald's wife persuades him to obey, but being 'prone to evil' Rainald continues.⁸⁴ The story ends with Gerald hitting his nephew on the head and threatening him with death. Much has changed since book II of *VGp*, which approvingly tells a story in which Rainald gave himself up as hostage to win his brother's freedom.

Two conclusions may be drawn from these documents and the Rainald episode. One is that contrary to the picture that is sometimes painted of Gerald, he did in fact pave the way for continued lay control of his abbey. The reality of family obligation and the ideals of monastic freedom clashed in a typically awkward compromise. (According to the later chronicle of the abbey, John, the second abbot and a relative of Gerald, did obtain the privilege of freedom under Rome.)⁸⁵ The other is that much later, someone in Limoges was interested in portraying Gerald's foundation as originally pure and free, abstractly subject to Rome, but susceptible to the evil snares of Gerald's direct descendants who, it is implied, should have nothing to do with the foundation. The fact that Gerald's other nephew Benedict

⁸³ *VGp*, IV.11, p. 276: 'Rainaldus, quem uir Domini suspectum habens, iuramento, sicut superius dictum est, adhuc uiuens constrinxerat, illius iuramenti fidem rupit, et familię quam cęnobio delegauerat nimis erat cum suis infestus. Singuli autem, inter predationes quas patiebantur, nomen domni Geraldi inclamare solebant.' Rainald is mentioned in I.32 and II.28 but not the oath.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*: 'pronus erat ad malum'

⁸⁵ *Breve chronicon Auriliacensis*, p. 349.

was, according to *VGp*, a viscount of Toulouse was presumably further reason to wish to exclude them.⁸⁶

Others wanted to claim Gerald for themselves; we need not look far to find them. The Lives were written at the behest of Aimo, abbot of Tulle and Saint-Martial, Limoges and his brother, Bishop Turpio of Limoges. According to Christian Settapani's efforts to trace the family links of this part of Francia, Gerald himself was almost certainly related to Turpio and Aimo through the viscounts of Limoges; why else would they show such an interest in this Auvergnat lord?⁸⁷ Intriguingly, in a break with tradition, one of these viscounts was named Gerald just after the saint's death.⁸⁸ His nephew Rainald has been identified as Rainald of Avalène, who had links to the Aubussons, the very family of Turpio and Aimo.⁸⁹ Further, there is the church of St Gerald in Limoges. This was used, we are told in the third ('gamma') version of Ademar's *Chronicle*, in the consecration ceremony of Bishop Hilduin in 990, when he was carried enthroned to the churches of St Gerald and St Martial.⁹⁰ This neglected comment tells us either how important the cult of Gerald was in Limoges by 990, or how important Gerald was in the eyes of Ademar in the late 1020s when this edition of the *Chronicle* was written, or both. Meanwhile, Ademar was related to Turpio, who knew Odo of Cluny, ordained him to the priesthood, and asked him to write his *Collationes*.⁹¹ Seen in this context, the cult begins to look like a family project, a memorial to a great ancestor, first set down in writing by one of the clan's closest spiritual confidants, Odo of Cluny.

⁸⁶ *VGp*, II.28, p. 232.

⁸⁷ C. Settapani, *La noblesse du Midi carolingien: études sur quelques grandes familles d'Aquitaine et du Languedoc du IXe au XIe siècle: Toulousain, Périgord, Limousin, Poitou, Auvergne* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 189-93.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 189; see p. 191 for the importance of names reflecting genealogy.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 197 (he is not Rainald of Aubusson as has been thought), 251-8.

⁹⁰ Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.35, pp. 156-7: 'Successit potifex Alduinus, frater ejus [of predecessor Hildegard], per manum Willelmi ducis, consecratusque est Egolisme ab archiepiscopo Burdegalensi Gumbaldo, et a Froterio Petragoricensi et Abone Sanctonicensi et Ugone Egolismensi, qui eum Lemovice intronizavit, primo in cathedra vectoria apud ecclesiam Sancti Geraldi, deinde in sede Sancti Marcialis.' There is little information about this church: see the note in *ibid.*, p. 288; and A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen, 'Des *Miracula* inédits de Saint Géraud d'Aurillac (+ 909)', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 118 (2000), p. 70 n. 76: it was destroyed c.1080.

⁹¹ On Turpio (related through Ademar's ancestor Raymond of Chabannes): Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.45, p. 165. On Odo: *ibid.*, III.25-6, pp. 147-8. For a full description of Ademar's family links, see J. Grier, 'Roger de Chabannes (d. 1025), cantor of St Martial, Limoges', *Early Music History*, 14 (1995), pp. 53-119, at 60-1. For the *Collationes*, see n. 37, above.

We have seen evidence of the complexities of monastic leadership and the almost inescapable presence of lay authority, which could be beneficial or otherwise. For the most part, however, there was no perceived incompatibility between lay authority and monastic reform in Francia: they needed one another, but the relationship had its pitfalls.⁹² The fluctuating fortunes of the monastery of Uzerche, south-east of Limoges on the way to Tulle, are a case in point. Seeing it as a rival episcopal base, Turpio seized the house and its possessions, handing it over to lay authority and dividing up its lands. From the monks' point of view, this was a disaster:

All the authority of the clergy was given over to one cleric alone, who was called the baron. ... The aforesaid man and his accomplices, the barons, brought much evil to this place of Uzerche. ... That same Bishop Turpio divided lands, honours, and alms which the faithful had given to this place for their souls among the lord of the castle of Ségur, the viscount of Limoges, and the viscount of Comborn, the said bishop keeping a not insubstantial portion for his own use.⁹³

Yet Turpio's successor, called Ebles, allowed the reform of Uzerche at the hands of one such layman by the name of Radulf.⁹⁴ Then in 977, Bishop Hildegard further undid Turpio's revolution, making the monastery largely independent, but keeping some power over the appointment of the abbot.⁹⁵ By then, however, the episcopacy was a family firm run by the viscounts of Limoges, whose representatives supplied its incumbents, and towards the end of the tenth century the appointment was becoming the personal gift of the duke of Aquitaine:

⁹² See e.g. C. B. Bouchard, 'Laymen and church reform around the year 1000: the case of Otto-William, count of Burgundy', *Journal of Medieval History*, 5 (1979), pp. 1-10.

⁹³ From *Historia monasterii Usercensis* (a later account) in *Cartulaire de l'abbaye d'Uzerche*, ed. J.-B. Champeval (Paris-Tulle, 1901), pp. 13-50, at pp. 15-16: 'Tota vero cleri dignitas in uno tantum clerico conversa est, qui Baro fuit appellatus. ... supradictus et complices sui barones multa mala huic loco Usercensi contulerunt. ... Terras vero, honores et eleemosynas quas fideles huic loco pro animabus suis contulerant, iste Turpio episcopus inter dominum Seguris castri, vicecomitis Lemovicensis, et vicecomitis Combornensis, divisit; ad suam vero utilitatem supradictus episcopus non retinens viliozem portionem.'

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁹⁵ *Actes des évêques de Limoges des origines à 1197*, ed. J. Becquet (Paris, 1999), no. 10, p. 35. On Uzerche, see A. T. Jones, *Noble Lord, Good Shepherd: Episcopal Power and Piety in Aquitaine, 877-1050* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 119-21; M. Aubrun, *L'ancien diocèse de Limoges des origines au milieu du XIe siècle* (Clermont-Ferrand, 1981), p. 162.

indeed William V's appointment of the layman Gerald (1014-22), son of the viscount of Limoges, required the latter to go through all the degrees of clerical ordination in one day.⁹⁶ It is interesting to consider that lay sanctity was being promoted as never before in Limoges, in the shape of the nobleman St Gerald, at around the same time as a viscount's son with no prior clerical experience, called Gerald, could be elevated to the diocese's chief ecclesiastical post in one fell swoop. It is, furthermore, interesting to note that some of Gerald's relics were translated from Aurillac to Limoges during his namesake's incumbency in 1021.⁹⁷

In this context, the Lives of Gerald have an urgency with regard to the monastic role of laypeople that was relevant not only *c.*930, when *VGb* was likely written, but also up to a century later at the time of *VGp*'s composition. Gerald behaves impeccably towards his foundation, trying his best to gather together good monks who follow the Rule, and then standing back to let them organise themselves under the theoretical protection of Rome. Odo fanatically enforced this model where he could.⁹⁸ Equally, the problem of recruiting monks in Odo's day, so vividly expressed in *VGb*, was by no means alleviated by the time of *VGp*, which keeps up the lament, and in doing so sounds the same desperate note as William V, one of whose surviving letters implores, for the third time, the abbot of Saint-Savin to release some monks to help populate the monastery of Charroux.⁹⁹ The author of *VGp* did not use the shorter Life blindly, but with care to give it meaning in his own time, which is why some of the text has kept the thrust of the original and much else has shifted concerns to new problems. Both, however, are greatly concerned for the laity's role in the monastic landscape. The story told about Gerald and his foundation at Aurillac may not have been quite what

⁹⁶ Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.49, pp. 168-9. See also C. Treffort, 'Le comte de Poitiers, duc d'Aquitaine, et l'Église aux alentours de l'an mil (970-1030)', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 43 (2000), pp. 395-445, at 433-5; Aubrun, *L'ancien diocèse*, pp. 134-6 (with commentary on p. 134 about the way Turpio's family divided up the principal lay and ecclesiastical posts).

⁹⁷ Kuefler, 'Dating', p. 72.

⁹⁸ G. Constable, 'Cluny and Rome', in idem, *The Abbey of Cluny*, pp. 19-41, at 20-21. By the time he got to Aurillac, Odo had helped to bring this model to Cluny, Déols, and Romainmôtier.

⁹⁹ William's letter is edited in *The Letters and Poems of Fulbert of Chartres*, ed. and trans. F. Behrends (Oxford, 1976), no. 96, pp. 174-76.

happened, but the disconnection between ideal and reality reveals one of the key messages of both Lives, that in a world in which the laity are still largely unchallenged in the power they wield over the Church, it is vital that they understand their responsibilities towards it.

As Steven Vanderputten has shown in his recent study of how monastic reform unfolded in Flanders, it was not just in the south that the reality of lay authority exercised monks. In the 940s and 950s, Count Arnulf I oversaw the reform of all of Flanders' major monasteries in an effort to expand his material and political grip on the region, mostly appointing abbots as he saw fit. By the end of the century and the beginning of the next, however, this overall control had given way to more complex arrangements of patronage in which abbots sought greater authority and which, furthermore, were reflected in hagiography: the Life of St Folcuin written at Saint-Bertin in the later tenth century, for example, purposefully minimises earlier comital influence.¹⁰⁰ And thus it was with the development of Gerald's legend, whose later authors' self-confidence manifested in a work which could promote a constricted and carefully controlled version of lay authority over monks. This is essentially how the meaning of lay sanctity changed in the writing of Gerald's *vitae*.

Odo's anomaly and the dedication ceremony of 972

Kuefler, focused as he was on dismantling all the assumptions about *VGP* that had accumulated since the late nineteenth century, assigned its old authorship and dating to *VGB*, seeing no good reason not to allow Odo of Cluny involvement in at least this minor work, whose author after all announces himself as *minimus abbatum Oddo* in the preface. And if

¹⁰⁰ S. Vanderputten, *Monastic Reform as Process: Realities and Representations in Medieval Flanders, 900-1100* (Ithaca, NY, 2013), pp. 31-49 on Arnulf and 50-78 on the later period, incl. 75 on St Folcuin. On lay control of monasteries and lay abbots, see also the discussion of Burchard the Venerable in ch. 4, below, and S. Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West* (Oxford, 2006); F. J. Felten, *Äbte und Laienäbte im Frankenreich* (Stuttgart, 1980).

Odo did write it, then the dates of 929-31 still make good sense for the period when he might have done so.¹⁰¹ While I accept this is a likely scenario, it does raise questions concerning the Life's place in Odo's oeuvre.

First of all, Odo of Cluny did not supply his name in his other works. A list of Odo's works that are extant and genuine, according to recent reassessments of attribution, is as follows: a Life of Gregory of Tours (the *Vita sancti Gregorii Turonensis*),¹⁰² five sermons (*In cathedra sancti Petri*, *De sancto Benedicto abbate*, *De combustione basilicae beati Martini*, *In festo sancti Martini*, and *De translatione sancti Albini*),¹⁰³ and two long texts on the nature of evil: a prose work known as the *Collationes*,¹⁰⁴ and a long poem, the *Occupatio*.¹⁰⁵ No certain version of Odo's abridgement of Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job* exists.¹⁰⁶ There are, however, a dozen antiphons and some hymns, largely in honour of St Martin.¹⁰⁷ All of these texts are anonymous. Of the three major works which have prefaces, and which are therefore more likely to be signed – the *Vita Gregorii*, the *Collationes*, and the *Occupatio* – we have to deduce authorship either from internal evidence or from attributions made by contemporaries.¹⁰⁸ Given everything we know about Odo's literary output, it seems strange to

¹⁰¹ Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 218, 632.

¹⁰² Odo of Cluny, *Vita sancti Gregorii Turonensis*, PL 71, cols. 115-27, which is now considered authentic: see Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 331-2. For the other works, see *Vita Geraldi*, ed. Bultot-Verleysen, pp. 6-9, though her attribution of the sermon *De festivitate sancti Geraldi* should probably be considered erroneous: Keufler, 'Dating', pp. 78-9.

¹⁰³ The first four are in PL 131, cols. 709-13, 721-9, 729-49, and 749-52 respectively. On the fifth, see *VGp*, Introduction, p. 8 n. 40.

¹⁰⁴ See n. 37, above.

¹⁰⁵ Odo of Cluny, *Occupatio*, ed. A. Swoboda (Leipzig, 1900). See Rosé, *Société seigneuriale*, pp. 91-107; C. A. Jones, 'Monastic identity and sodomitic danger in the *Occupatio* by Odo of Cluny', *Speculum*, 82 (2007), pp. 1-53; A. Baumans, 'Original sin, the history of salvation and the monastic ideal of St. Odo of Cluny in his *Occupatio*', in W. Verbeke et al. (eds.), *Serta devota in memoriam Guillelmi Lourdaux, II: Cultura mediaevalis*, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Series 1, Studia 21 (Leuven, 1995), pp. 335-57; R. Morghen, 'Monastic reform and Cluniac spirituality', in Hunt, *Cluniac Monasticism*, pp. 11-28; J. Ziolkowski, 'The *Occupatio* by Odo of Cluny: a poetic manifesto of monasticism in the 10th century', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, 24-25 (1989-90), pp. 559-67.

¹⁰⁶ Mentioned in John of Salerno, *Vita Odonis*, I.20, cols. 52A-D.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Odo of Cluny, *De b. Martino antiphonae XII*, PL 133, cols. 513-14; *De s. Martino Turonorum archiepiscopo* and *Hymnus in honorem sancti Martini*, in Odo of Cluny, *Hymni*, PL 133, cols. 513-16, at 515-16.

¹⁰⁸ Authorship of the *Vita Gregorii* and *Occupatio* is largely (but not entirely) dependent upon early manuscript attribution: Rosé, *Construire*, pp. 320, 331. For the *Collationes* it can be deduced from the preface dedicated to

think he wrote *minimus abbatum Oddo* himself. We also know from his own biography, the *Vita Odonis*, written soon after his death by his disciple John of Salerno, that he was a man of exceptional humility who could not talk about himself ('it was our father's [Odo's] custom deliberately never to describe his own person').¹⁰⁹ Could Odo's name have been added to give the text greater stature? It is possible; Odo's relationship with Abbot Aimo and Bishop Turpio was well known enough to be (suspiciously) added to Ademar's *Chronicon*, so when we see them mentioned in the preface of *VGb* we should not immediately believe its authenticity.¹¹⁰

That same preface also sets the tone for *VGb*'s unusually strong interest in miracles. These would be developed even further in *VGp*, but even in the short *Life* the promotion of the miraculous is extraordinary, above all because claims are made for several healing miracles performed by Gerald in his own lifetime, which is a rare feat in tenth-century hagiography.¹¹¹ Gerald, however, is able to heal through application of his washing water, which is taken without his knowledge. We are told this happens often, and five specific occasions are described, mostly involving blindness. He also heals a demonic woman by blessing her.¹¹² The preface makes clear that miracles are of the utmost importance and that they are the proof of Gerald's holiness that swings Odo's view from one of doubt to conviction.

Bishop Turpio of Limoges; it is also seemingly alluded to by John of Salerno, *Vita Odonis*, I.37, col. 60C, and is later attributed in Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.25, p. 147.

¹⁰⁹ John of Salerno, *Vita Odonis*, II.2, col. 61C: 'patris nostri mos fuit, ut deliberative suam personam nunquam ascriberet'. Similar comments are made in *ibid.*, I.35 (col. 58D), II.16 (col. 70B), III.11 (col. 83D).

¹¹⁰ Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.25, p. 147

¹¹¹ Kuefler, 'Dating', p. 61 and n. 38; J. M. H. Smith, 'The problem of female sanctity in Carolingian Europe c.780-920', *Past and Present*, 146 (1995), pp. 3-37, at 3-4. Live miracle-working is rare in early-medieval Frankish hagiography in general; St Martin of Tours, Odo's hero, is one exception, but even his few living cures pale in comparison to Gerald's: see Sulpicius Severus, *Vie de Saint Martin*, ed. and French trans. J. Fontaine, 3 vols. (Paris, 1967), I, 18-19, pp. 292-4 (where the closest to a blindness cure is for a clouded eye). On Odo and St Martin, see B. H. Rosenwein, 'St Odo's St Martin: the uses of a model', *Journal of Medieval History*, 4 (1978), pp. 317-31.

¹¹² On frequency of healing: *VGb*, 9 and 11, pp. 399, 400 ('Hoc praeterea saepe et in aliis gestum est'). The six healings are in 10, 11 (three healings), 12, and 16.

In the *Vita Gregorii*, which is attributed to the final period in Odo's life after his involvement in reform at Aurillac,¹¹³ his comments on miracles are of a different hue altogether. Odo takes up nearly half the preface to make the point that miracles ('signs') are unimportant, and even chastises those who put too much faith in them:

If anyone requiring signs in the Jewish manner measures whatever saint by quantity of signs, what will he think of the blessed mother of God, or of the precursor of Joanna? ... on the terrible day, with many condemned who made signs, those who pursued works of justice will alone be assembled on the right hand of the heavenly Judge.¹¹⁴

So adverse are miracles to Odo's theology of salvation that he goes so far as to suggest that performing them may result in damnation; only 'works of justice' are important. Gregory should be praised for his humility and deeds, even though miracles were not entirely lacking. Near the end of the same Life he repeats these sentiments in order to be clear.¹¹⁵

A certain consistency on this matter can be traced back to the *Collationes*, which was written before Odo became an abbot and before his time in and around Aurillac when he is believed to have written Gerald's Life.¹¹⁶ Here, Odo explains that miracles were a necessity early in the Church's ministry to reinforce faith, but they are no longer required. Then, spelling out his apocalyptic theology, he writes that in the period before the coming of the Antichrist – which is now – miracles are ceasing and that those who worship because of wonders alone will find themselves in the same condemned state as the miracle-working attendants of the Antichrist. Prefiguring almost precisely his comments in the *Vita Gregorii*, he is cautious to say that miracles among good people are not altogether lacking, but they will

¹¹³ Rosé, *Construire*, pp. 331-2, 636: in the period 937-42.

¹¹⁴ Odo of Cluny, *Vita sancti Gregorii Turonensis*, col. 115: 'Quod si quis Judaico more signa requirens sanctum quemlibet signorum quantitate metitur, quid de beata Dei Genitrice, vel de praecursore Joanne censebit? ... in tremendo die multis qui signa fecerunt reprobatis, hi qui opera justitiae sectati sunt ad dexteram superni Judicis soli colligentur.'

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25, col. 127B.

¹¹⁶ *Vita Odonis*, I.37, PL 133, col. 60C; this was in the period 917-27: Rosé, *Construire*, p. 631.

seem like ‘few or none’ in comparison to the productivity of such sinister characters.¹¹⁷ In his sermons too, Odo says that miracles only pertained to the early Church and that the faithful should not follow the Jewish example of trying to seek them out.¹¹⁸

Yet in *VGb*, in a perverse twist on his words elsewhere, Odo acknowledges that miracles ought to cease because the time of the Antichrist is imminent, but the Lord glorified Gerald with ‘a certain grace of healing’ because of the Old Testament promise of ‘who glorifies me, I shall glorify him’ (1 Sam 2:30).¹¹⁹ This argument had precedent elsewhere but remains surprising in the context of Odo’s works.¹²⁰ It provides an introduction to the miracles themselves, which are then described, some briefly, others in more detail. If Odo wrote this, it reads as if his principles have been compromised in order to fulfil the demands of this one commission, and the whole matter is quietly forgotten in later works (Gerald is never again mentioned by the abbot).

Another odd fact about *VGb* that has eluded comment is that it has no ending. It simply stops after one of Gerald’s healing miracles, its hero still alive. The reason for this may be that the copying process from the original was terminated early or was faulty in some other respect, leaving the extant versions incomplete, or that the original was not composed as a polished *vita* but was meant for a specific liturgical purpose: indeed, the earliest manuscript contains divisions of eight lessons for this reason.¹²¹ There was enough material

¹¹⁷ Odo of Cluny, *Collationes*, I.25, cols. 536A-D: ‘Unde sancta Ecclesia signis ad corroborandum suorum fidem in primordiis suis indiguit. Nunc vero constante jamdudum fidei statu signa admodum non requirit. ... Satellites ejusdem Antichristi mira facturi sunt, qua videlicet occasione fiet, ut qui Ecclesiam pro solis miraculis venerantur, illius veneratione contempta, ad illorum qui signa fecerint consortium transferantur. Bonis tamen signa omnimodis non deerunt, sed in comparatione eorum aut pauca, aut nulla videbuntur. ... jam tempus est ut signa cessent.’ On Odo’s eschatology, see J. Fried, ‘Awaiting the end of time around the turn of the year 1000’, in R. Landes, A. Gow, and D. Van Meter (eds.), *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950-1050* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 17-66, at 32-3.

¹¹⁸ Odo of Cluny, *De combustione*, PL 133, cols. 745D-46A; idem, *De sancto Benedicto abbate*, PL 133, col. 723B.

¹¹⁹ *VGb*, 9, p. 399: ‘Ceterum, licet instante tempore Antichristi miracula jam sanctorum cessare debeant, memor tamen Dominus suae promissionis qua dicitur: “Qui me glorificat, glorificabo eum”, hunc famulum suum per quandam curationis gratiam glorificare dignatus est’.

¹²⁰ E.g. on Gregory the Great and Eustratius of Constantinople, see M. Dal Santo, *Debating the Saints’ Cult in the Age of Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2012), p. 41 and n. 87.

¹²¹ Bultot-Verleysen, ‘Dossier’, p. 198.

to cover a single important occasion. For a saint's feast day, this would most likely be Matins when typically such passages were read; the early manuscripts of *VGb* are divided into either eight or twelve lessons, corresponding to the usual pattern of the nocturns during this office.¹²² In such a scenario, *VGb* may have been sufficient: there was certainly no lack of miracles, perhaps rendering the death scene with posthumous miracles less important.

Interestingly, the truncated nature of *VGb* is alluded to in a collection of Gerald's miracles that has been edited only quite recently, which is presumably why this collection has been generally ignored or underestimated.¹²³ This is a different collection from those which ended up as book IV of *VGp*. The miracles of book IV aside, the extra episodes now under discussion were recorded after the first known major turning point in Gerald's cult, namely the consecration of the new abbey church at Aurillac in Gerald's name in 972. The preface begins by acknowledging that the deeds Gerald carried out in life have only 'partly' been recorded so far by a more learned pen (the reason they are incomplete, we are told, is their great abundance).¹²⁴ After this, the title of the opening chapter announces that it will be about the first church to be built in honour of St Gerald, the event of its consecration, and miracles that occurred on that day.¹²⁵ The text says that Gerald died but was buried in a place without the dignity due to a saint; yet his miracles grew and the inhabitants of Aurillac finally built a church for him and asked Bishop Stephen (II) of Clermont to consecrate it. It tells of the wonders that occurred on the day the bishop came and the translation of Gerald. In the next chapter, Stephen prays to Gerald when ill, despite being chastised for venerating this 'secular layman' before all other saints.¹²⁶ The writer claims that Stephen testified to his miraculous recovery under oath, leading Bultot-Verleysen, the text's modern editor, sensibly to date this

¹²² T. J. Heffernan, 'The liturgy and the literature of saints' lives', in T. J. Heffernan and E. A. Matter (eds.), *The Liturgy of the Medieval Church*, 2nd ed. (Kalamazoo, MI, 2005), pp. 65-94, at 79-91.

¹²³ Bultot-Verleysen, 'Miracula inédits'.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, praef., p. 82: 'Quanquam igitur ea que uir domini Geraldus decenter gessit in hac uita docciori stilo partim habeantur conscripta [sic] – partim utique non omnia pre inmensa gestorum copia ...'.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, p. 84: 'de ecclesia que primitus in honorem beati Geraldus constructa fuit...'

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 2, p. 88: 'secularis hominis ac laici'.

first part of the text to 972-84, the latter being the date of the bishop's death.¹²⁷ Kuefler, wishing to focus the Gerald project post-*VGb* on one man, has attributed the whole text to Ademar of Chabannes, which is improbable given the early part of the text's intimate association with Aurillac and the events of 972, and the fact that Ademar was not born until 989.¹²⁸ If, like Kuefler, we try to argue that Ademar wrote *VGp*, we cannot reconcile its complete ignorance of the history and geography of Aurillac with the detail given in this account of the dedication ceremony.¹²⁹

Moreover, the miracles that immediately follow take place around Aurillac and the Auvergne. In chapter 4, the author refers to fulfilling a promise made earlier, at the end of a Life of Gerald (*in finem libri uite* – it is not clear to what text he is referring) to write more miracles about 'how he [Gerald] carefully protects from enemies the possessions submitted to his authority, and what battles he wages against the princes of the land and their evil men'.¹³⁰ The priorities are in accordance with the turmoil we might expect of the latter part of the tenth century and the demands of the Peace of God movement. Thus, the next four stories are about vengeance on such evil men, and are sited in various localities south of Aurillac connected to the abbey. Then, in chapter 8, the setting moves away from these regions and tells of the church dedicated to St Gerald in Limoges.¹³¹ Bultot-Verleysen notes a change of tone from the author, whom she supposes to be a monk from Aurillac: 'abandoning stories whose subject is respect for Gerald's properties, he now focuses on miracles establishing a

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 54.

¹²⁸ Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 68-70, 79-84. On p. 84, he admits the text 'remains a loose end that [can] neither be snipped off nor tucked neatly away'.

¹²⁹ In *VGp* the geography of Aurillac is hopelessly inaccurate, as Kuefler has pointed out ('Dating', pp. 71-2), and in the preface the author does not know that Odo reformed the monastery (*VGp*, praef., p. 132). He must not have spoken to anyone there because he also assumes that the church is from Gerald's day: *VGp*, II.5, p. 204; Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 51-2.

¹³⁰ Bultot-Verleysen, 'Miracula inédits', 4, p. 94: 'quemadmodum scilicet sui domini possessiones sedule tueatur ab hostibus, uel quales conflictus ad terrarum gerat principes et eorum malignos'.

¹³¹ Ibid., 8, p. 106: 'In uicino autem quedam ecclesia in honorem beati Geraldii consecrata manebat hac sita.' This implies that the church no longer existed at the time of writing.

direct relationship between the beneficiary, petitioner or ‘victim’, and the saint’.¹³² However, it may make more sense to say that we are now in the hands of a different author, one who refers to ‘our community’ when he speaks about the confraternity between his monastery and Solignac, evidence that may be writing from Saint-Martial.¹³³ From now on, too, there are overlaps between this text and elements of *VGp* (as well as, occasionally, *VGb*), so it would not be unreasonable to say that Ademar or his associates had a hand in this section.¹³⁴ The two manuscripts used for the edition support the idea of different authors, as one of them (the earlier of the two, from San Benedetto Polirone in the eleventh century) only goes as far as chapter 5 before ending neatly.¹³⁵

These miracles were written in stages which remain somewhat obscure, but it is fair to conclude from this that the cult’s first great public manifestation was in 972, and that subsequently it spread to Limoges where another church was built, which Ademar mentions as existing by 990.¹³⁶ The dating of 972 comes from the abbey chronicle as well as an important and unusual ‘charter’ of Saint-Flour (which in fact contains a mix of different types of text) relating what occurred on that day, referring to Bishop Stephen’s ‘love which he especially had for the blessed Gerald because of the miracles which he had seen while coming to dedicate the church and on the very day of the dedication’ – miracles which were soon recorded in the collection just discussed.¹³⁷

¹³² Ibid., p. 70: ‘abandonnant les récits dont l’enjeu est le respect des propriétés de Géraud, il s’attachera désormais aux miracles établissant un rapport direct entre le bénéficiaire, demandeur ou “victime”, et le saint’.

¹³³ See R. Landes, *Relics, Apocalypse and the Deceits of History: Ademar of Chabannes, 989-1034* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), p. 50 on Saint-Martial’s confraternity with Solignac.

¹³⁴ E.g. c. 10, a fish miracle, is similar to *VGp* II.19 and 29; the summation in c. 21 contains elements found in *VGp*, such as a direct quote from *VGp* I.11 about eating in the morning. Some of these elements may be found in *VGb*, but others such as a reference to Gerald’s corporeal beauty (in *VGp* I.12) are not. For other similarities, see Kuefler, ‘Dating’, p. 81.

¹³⁵ Bultot-Verleysen, ‘Miracula inédits’, pp. 58-60.

¹³⁶ Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.35, pp. 156-7.

¹³⁷ *Breve chronicon Auriliacensis*, p. 349; *Cartulaire du Prieuré de Saint-Flour*, ed. M. Boudet (Monaco, 1910), no. 1, p. 1: ‘amorem quem erga beatum Geraldum specialiter habebat, propter miracula que viderat dum ad dedicandam ecclesiam veniret, et ipso dedicationis die’.

The consecration of 972 was, if not the making, then the consolidation and official enhancement of the cult. It was an important local event, attended not only by Stephen but also the bishops of Périgueux and Cahors as well as an ‘innumerable multitude’ consisting of abbots, monks, clergy, and laypeople.¹³⁸ Naturally, it would have required readings about Gerald to go with the liturgy; no doubt the ‘partial’ Life, referred to alongside the consecration in the miracle collection, was used. There is good reason to suppose that this was *VGb*, either as it has survived or some earlier version of it. We must recognise the possibility that *VGb* was composed for this event. Much could hinge upon a specific internal clue: after Gerald has bemoaned the dearth of monks and his empty monastery, he makes a prediction: ‘I would like you to know that this house will frequently be crammed with people flocking to it.’¹³⁹ The writer goes on to acknowledge that this is indeed what has happened:

How he might have learned this, he did not say; but because it often happens as he said, that the house does not hold the gathering crowds, those who remember that Lord Gerald predicted this think that he knew it by divine revelation.¹⁴⁰

In truth, one might argue the significance of this either way. Those who wish to confirm that Odo of Cluny wrote *VGb* in around 930 might say that there is no indication here that the problem of overcrowding has yet been alleviated by the construction of the new church. Some time has clearly passed since Gerald’s death *c.*909 (but not so much that everyone who knew him is dead). According to the abbey chronicle, the new church was begun under

¹³⁸ Ibid.: ‘Froterio Petragoricensi et Gauzberto Caturcensi, abbatum quoque et monachorum et totius cleri ac populi innumerabili confluyente multitudine’. The charter’s editor has ‘innumerabili[s]’, and believes the text should read the bishop of Limoges (*Lemovicensi*) instead of Cahors (*Caturcensi*): see p. 568. If so, the cult has a concrete early link to that city.

¹³⁹ *VGb*, 8, p. 399: ‘Velim sane noscatis quod haec domus frequenter erit angusta confluentibus in ea.’

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.: ‘Qualiter autem hoc didicerit, minime indicavit; quoniam vero frequenter ita fit ut domus illa confluentes non capiat turbas, qui recolunt quia domnus Gerardus [sic] hoc praedixerit, putant quod idipsum divina revelatione cognoverit.’

Adrald, Odo's successor, and finished under the next abbot, called Gerald.¹⁴¹ The passage in the text ends up fitting Odo's abbacy quite well, and the date of *c.*930 usually given to *VGP*.

Alternatively, one might suggest that the 'gathering crowds' allude to a later period, after the construction of the church and in the build-up to its consecration and Gerald's translation. In the eyes of some, the events of 972 were of far-reaching importance: Christian Lauranson-Rosaz reads the Saint-Flour charter as evidence of a regional assembly presided over by bishops and local magnates, even as a form of early Peace council.¹⁴² Its allusions to miracles occurring, the innumerable numbers of clergy and people gathering, and the local relevance of, as he stresses, 'the first non-royal layman ever to become a saint'¹⁴³ made it highly pertinent to the themes of later, more recognised Peace councils. 'How appropriate to launch a peace movement by exalting the abbey of that saint of peace *par excellence*.'¹⁴⁴

The Peace of God clearly provides an important backdrop to the development of the cult from 972. While many scholars, like Lauranson-Rosaz, view it as a movement – referring to the bishop-led councils that began in Aquitaine and proliferated between 975 and the 1030s when the Truce of God developed – some, especially Dominique Barthélemy, have tried to downplay its significance while also holding reservations about any millennial, apocalyptic associations.¹⁴⁵ However, even Barthélemy acknowledges that in this period churchmen, increasingly concerned by the behaviour they saw all around them, 'were calling back "the clergy and people" to good habits, i.e. respect for the Church's rituals and

¹⁴¹ *Breve chronicon Auriliacensis*, p. 349.

¹⁴² Lauranson-Rosaz, 'Peace from the mountains', pp. 110-11.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ D. Barthélemy, *L'an mil et la paix de Dieu: la France chrétienne et féodale 980-1060* (Paris, 1999), esp. pp. 307-11; *idem*, *The Serf*, pp. 245-301. But cf. many of the contributions to Head and Landes, *Peace of God*; H.-W. Goetz, 'La paix de Dieu en France autour de l'an mil: fondements et objectifs, diffusion et participants', in M. Parisse and X. Barral i Altet (eds.), *Le roi de France et son royaume autour de l'an Mil* (Paris, 1992), pp. 131-45; H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'The Peace and the Truce of God in the eleventh century', *Past and Present*, 46 (1970), pp. 42-67; Poly and Bournazel, *The Feudal Transformation*, pp. 151-62; K. G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 39-54.

prohibitions'.¹⁴⁶ Contemporaries stressed the universal aspect of this effort. According to Rodulfus Glaber, 'the most important' oath sworn at the councils was 'that the peace should be preserved inviolate so that all men, lay and religious [literally: men of either condition], ... could now go about their business without fear and unarmed.'¹⁴⁷ This sentiment is directly echoed in passages such as this from *VGP* about Gerald: 'He therefore directed himself, according to widespread desire, to repress the insolence of the violent, taking care in the first place to promise peace and most easy reconciliation to his enemies.'¹⁴⁸ The bishops who convened the councils were encouraged by lay magnates, such as Duke William V ('the Great', 995-1030): the relationship ran both ways. Magnates, clerical or lay, shared similar concerns, and managed to mobilise 'councils of the whole people ... great, middling, and poor'.¹⁴⁹ It was a collection of meetings, oaths, and writings which aimed to encompass all of society.¹⁵⁰

If the ceremony of 972 that launched Gerald may be interpreted as a kind of 'beginning' of the Peace, with this violence-hating layman as its symbol, we can understand how the possibilities of the cult were quickly seized upon by those in Limoges who wished to promote it in their own locality and to their own ends. But where exactly does *VGb* fit in? There is as yet no convincing argument to show that it was not written *c.*930 by Odo of Cluny, but in this section some questions have been raised which could, perhaps, lead to novel answers with further research. *VGb* undoubtedly remains a strange saint's Life, and in light of Kuefler's findings about *VGP*, there is likely more to be said about the authenticity of its textual ancestor.

¹⁴⁶ Barthélemy, *The Serf*, p. 274.

¹⁴⁷ Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. J. France (Oxford, 1989), IV.16, pp. 194-6: 'In quibus potissimum erat de inuiolabili pace conseruanda, ut scilicet uiri utriusque conditionis ... absque formidine procederent armis uacui.'

¹⁴⁸ *VGP*, I.8, p. 144: 'Igitur ad insolentiam uiolentorum reprimendam se iam ex sententia dirigebat, id inprimis certatim obseruans ut hostibus pacem offerret facillimamque reconciliationem promitteret.'

¹⁴⁹ Glaber, *Histories*, IV.14, p. 194: 'ex uniuersa plebe ... conciliorum conuentus ... maximi, mediocres ac minimi'. See also Ademar of Chabannes' account of the council of Limoges in 994 which describes the participation of laity and religious: Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.35, p. 157.

¹⁵⁰ G. Lobrichon, *La religion des laïcs en Occident: XIe-XVe siècles* (Paris, 1994), p. 75.

Rewriting the Transitus

Soon after 972 the cult, along with its principal text at this stage, *VGb*, travelled to Limoges, where the ruling family had a special interest in Gerald. It was here, in the latter stages of the tenth century, that the motivation was born to tinker with and improve it. The composition of the death scene in particular – the *Transitus* – is a useful microcosm of the whole process that would culminate in *VGp*, and provides a snapshot of some of the priorities of those in Limoges who wished to promote the cult and give it a newly relevant message. In his analysis of the *Transitus* and *Miracula* (which became books III and IV of *VGp*), Kuefler shows that their style, word usage, and particular concerns (including a reference to Gerald's possession of a tooth of St Martial) mirror to a large extent those of the rest of *VGp*, and were likely authored by the same person or persons (Ademar, as he argues).¹⁵¹

However, this somewhat simplifies the true complexity of the rewriting process which, when further broken down, makes the scenario of Ademar's single-handed, grand forgery less likely. In particular, Kuefler treats the *Transitus* as a static text, while admitting that certain manuscripts had chapters added or taken away. In fact it underwent considerable rewriting, beyond the simple addition of chapters. One of the two early manuscripts of *VGb* (Paris, BN lat. 5301) which was copied at Saint-Martial, Limoges sometime between the 980s and 1020s, contains a prototype version of the *Transitus*, here called *T1*, which has been edited by Vito Fumagalli.¹⁵²

Aside from the dozens of small edits, rephrased sentences, and elaborations (many substantial), what follows are some of the main differences in content between *T1* and the *Transitus* (book III of *VGp*). First, *VGp* places Gerald's admission that his monastery has no monks and his prediction that in the future it will be crowded into its book III. This material

¹⁵¹ Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 68-73. For the tooth, see *VGp*, III.4 [3], p. 248.

¹⁵² Fumagalli, 'Note', pp. 235-40.

is not in *TI*. In doing so, the author has cut and moved the passage from earlier in the Life (we would expect it in book II). This indicates that *TI* was written to accompany *VGb*, where the same passage is in chapter 8, and that the later *Transitus* was written to accompany the new *VGp*.

Two sentences in *TI* stating that Gerald had his church consecrated and filled with the relics of saints have been greatly elaborated into a whole new chapter in *VGp* (III.4 [3]), in which he specifically places the tooth of St Martial and relics of SS Martin and Hilary in his church. In this new story, only Gerald is able to loosen the tooth from Martial's jaw, and when the church is consecrated, a boy who takes the covering off the tooth is afflicted with violent pains and chronic skin flaking, and takes a long time to recover; the author also adds that Gerald handed the church over to the monks. In the next part of *TI*, Gerald hands property that has not gone to St Peter over to relations and friends, while offering freedom to serfs. However, *VGp* adds that Gerald took care that all his dependents would be 'left in peace, lest any occasion of strife should arise among them'.¹⁵³ It also adds that Gerald gave property to serfs, and tells a short story of how he observed the law in the number of serfs he could set free, noting his adherence to temporal as well as divine precepts.

Then Gerald summons a bishop and crowds begin to assemble in preparation for his death. In *VGp*, additional references to the saints are made, including Gerald's frequent invocation, 'Help, ye saints of God'.¹⁵⁴ Among the other additions are laments among the crowd about the loss of Gerald, for example: 'Who will be a father to orphans or the defender of widows? ... Most indulgent father, how kind, how gentle you always were!'¹⁵⁵ The universal trauma is further elaborated upon. *VGp* also adds that Gerald will be received in

¹⁵³ *VGp*, III.5 [4], p. 250: 'in pace dimitteret, ne forte uero litis occasio posset inter eos oriri'.

¹⁵⁴ *VGp*, III.6 [5], p. 250: 'Subuenite sancti Dei'.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 252: 'Quis nutritor pupillorum uel defensor uiduarum? ... Indulgentissime pater, quam blandus, quam suavis semper fuisti!'

heaven ‘in the love of the saints’.¹⁵⁶ When the time comes for Gerald’s death, *VGp* adds his use of the sign of the cross and a long passage on the way he earned his salvation compared to others who have not: ‘How great is the difference between him and the *Vedii*, that is, the evil rich! ... They live their days in good things and have their consolation, as the gospel says, in this life. ... Of them it is said that in a moment they are brought down to hell.’¹⁵⁷ This is followed by an additional commentary in the next chapter concerning wickedness on earth. Finally, a chapter describing a miracle during the washing of Gerald’s corpse is unique to *VGp*.¹⁵⁸ As if alive, Gerald suddenly covers his genitals with his right hand. Servants (one is named as Ragambert, in accordance with *VGp*’s use of detail to create verisimilitude) try to move it back to his chest but the hand returns, and again a third time.

These changes, additions, and embellishments turn the text into one that fits the rest of *VGp*, with its interest in relics, miracles, pervasive wickedness, and good lordship.¹⁵⁹ However, the original *TI* does not really fit *VGb* either: it is far too long and elaborate in relation to that text, even if it would become more elaborate still in *VGp*. What we see, therefore, is a distinct and laboured process. Ademar of Chabannes may have been involved with the *Transitus* of *VGp*, but should we attribute *TI* to him as well? It may be more realistic to think of multiple authors operating at different times during the decades around the millennium – and perhaps different places too, as it is possible, even likely, that *TI* was composed by monks at Aurillac to give the *Life* a proper ending, and then copied at Limoges. The suspicious reference to St Martial in the *Transitus* is not in the original *TI*.

¹⁵⁶ *VGp*, III.7 [6], p. 252: ‘in caritate sanctorum’.

¹⁵⁷ *VGp*, III.8 [7], pp. 256-8: ‘O quanta diuersitas est inter illum et Vedios – id est male diuites! ... illi uero ducunt in bonis dies suos et habent consolationem suam iuxta illud euangelicum in presenti. ... de illis dicitur quod in puncto ad inferna descendunt [Ps. 30:18].’ The *Vedii* refers to followers of Pluto, who went by the name *Vedius* in Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*: see *VGp*, p. 305 n. 139.

¹⁵⁸ *VGp*, III.12 [10], pp. 260-2.

¹⁵⁹ Just as the *Transitus* was embellished during the production of *VGp*, so were the *Miracula*: in BN lat. 5301, after *TI*, only the first seven chapters of miracles follow (see Fumagalli, ‘Note’, p. 227). The remaining seven edited in *VGp* (note that the PL edition has two fewer) have not yet been added. Not surprisingly, the additional miracles added for *VGp* conform to the themes we are now familiar with, including an emphasis on relics and mentions of Limoges.

TI may have been composed for the events of 972, but the cult continued to be important at Aurillac after this, and there would have been motivation to work on the Life. Among the early meetings associated with the Peace, there was one in around 980 that took place in or very near Aurillac, at which jealousy erupted between the monks of Aurillac and Figeac over the latter's miracles of St Vivian.¹⁶⁰ Turning to Limoges, early figures such as Ademar's uncle and tutor, Roger of Chabannes, who was cantor of Saint-Martial, may have been interested in adopting the Life for local purposes.¹⁶¹ There is also a mysterious, brief sermon on Gerald that sometimes travels with *VGP* and reflects the priorities of the 'Limoges project'.¹⁶² It is hard to say much else about authorship, except that more energy and rewriting was directed at the texts associated with Gerald than has been fully acknowledged. When we look at a very similar scenario in the Lives of St Martial, this picture of different authors writing over a relatively extended time will become more meaningful through comparison.

The parallel project of St Martial

The manufacture of the apostolic legend of St Martial at Limoges has been exposed and commented upon in some detail, wherein emphasis is often placed on the role of Ademar of Chabannes, the antihero of the *scriptorium*, and on how the story reaches a critical climax with his activities as a forger.¹⁶³ The deeds of Martial, the third-century bishop who was

¹⁶⁰ Lauranson-Rosaz, 'Peace from the mountains', pp. 121-5.

¹⁶¹ See Grier, 'Roger de Chabannes': he was probably at the monastery at least as early as the 990s (pp. 57-9); idem, *The Musical World of a Medieval Monk: Adémar de Chabannes in Eleventh-Century Aquitaine* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 18.

¹⁶² P. Facciotto, 'Il *Sermo de festiuitate s. Gerdaldi* di Oddone di Cluny', *Hagiographica*, 3 (1996), pp. 113-36; Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 78-9.

¹⁶³ Landes, *Relics*; D. Callahan, 'The sermons of Adémar of Chabannes and the cult of St Martial of Limoges', *Revue Bénédictine*, 86 (1976), pp. 251-95; Grier, *Musical World*; idem, 'Hoax, history, and hagiography in Adémar de Chabannes's texts for the divine office', in R. A. Maxwell (ed.), *Representing History, 900-1300*:

apparently from the East but was sent by the Church at Rome to evangelise Gaul, were originally sketched out by Gregory of Tours,¹⁶⁴ but the first Life, known as the *Vita Martialis antiquior* (hereafter *VMa*), was not written until the first half of the ninth century.¹⁶⁵ In it, Martial's stature increases considerably as he is made a disciple of St Peter and the first bishop of Limoges, who is sent to the city by the prince of the apostles himself. He goes with two priests, one of whom dies on the road; he then returns to Rome where Peter hands him a baton which Martial uses to revive his deceased companion.¹⁶⁶ Thus Martial's special miracle-working abilities, which would be much exploited later on, become a key part of the legend.

Likewise, we meet the two secular characters in this Life who would each go on to become major figures in the Martial project. In this Carolingian text, however, they come and go only briefly. A noble girl called Valeria is betrothed to 'a certain man' (*quidam vir*), but under the influence of Martial is baptised and gives herself to God instead, no longer wishing to marry; as a result she is murdered by her fiancé. (The word 'martyr' is not yet used.) The only other detail we are told is that before she died she gave her burial place, or a space within it (the text is unspecific), over to Martial for his own use.¹⁶⁷ The implication seems to

Art, Music, History (University Park, PA, 2010), pp. 67-72. Also important on the cult and abbey are C. de Lasteyrie, *L'abbaye de Saint-Martial de Limoges* (Paris, 1901); C. Andrault-Schmitt (ed.), *Saint-Martial de Limoges: ambition politique et production culturelle (Xe-XIIIe siècles)* (Limoges, 2005); R. Landes, 'L'hagiographie de la Paix de Dieu', in R. Landes and C. Paupert, *Naissance d'apôtre: la Vie de saint Martial de Limoges* (Turnhout, 1991), pp. 9-39: this last is useful but has been partly updated by Landes' monograph *Relics*. Consensus over the forgery of Martial's long *vita* first emerged in L. Duchesne, 'Saint Martial de Limoges', *Annales du Midi*, 4 (1892), pp. 289-330, in which he also identified the participation of Ademar of Chabannes (pp. 329-30).

¹⁶⁴ Gregory of Tours, *The History of the Franks*, trans. L. Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1974), I.30, IV.16, X.29 (pp. 87, 211, 591); idem, *Glory of the Confessors*, trans. R. Van Dam (Liverpool, 1988), 27, pp. 41-2.

¹⁶⁵ *VMa* is edited in C.-F. Bellet, *L'ancienne vie de Saint Martial et la prose rythmée* (Paris, 1897), pp. 32-40; on dating see p. 32 n. 1, where the earliest manuscript is said to be from before 846.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37. In subsequent Lives they are named as Alpinian and Austriclinian (the latter was revived from the dead).

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39: 'Quae pro amoris gratia dicitur, eo quod vir Dei sanctus Marcialis, tam itinere fessus, quam labore senioque confectus, praefata puella sepulturam, quae suis cineribus fuerat praeparata, ut cum in Dei nomine beatus Marcialis de hac luce migraret ad Dominum, concessisse ut ibi beati viri membra tumularent, adtribuit.' The text goes on to say that the two priests were also buried with Martial.

be that she was buried there too. As for the fiancé, he remains mysterious. Neither layperson is especially revered in the text.

Where did this rather tangential story of the doomed couple come from, which the author for some reason felt necessary to include? Their tale, which is told in just a few sentences, but in the context of this brief Life seems heavily significant, is qualified with reticent phrases equivalent to ‘as they say’ (*ut aiunt, perhibetur, ut postea fertur, dicitur*), reflecting the story’s oral provenance as well as perhaps the author’s own hesitancy or distaste. As Louis Duchesne suggested, the reason why Valeria and her fiancé were included could be because in the original crypt containing Martial’s tomb, apart from his priestly companions, there were two other mysterious burials: that of a woman and, separately, a man.¹⁶⁸ This man is identified as ‘Duke Stephen’ in a posthumous miracle story credited to Martial from around the same time, in which a thief hides in the saint’s crypt to escape detection. To ensure his concealment, the thief goes deeper into a section of the crypt ‘which is seen to hold the tomb of Duke Stephen to this day’.¹⁶⁹ This crypt and the little church by it became the focus of considerable donations as Martial’s cult grew, resulting in the formation of a monastery in 848 and the completion of a larger church (Saint-Sauveur) in 852, when the saint’s body was translated.¹⁷⁰ The monks who honoured their saint in the lead up to these events must have wondered who was so important to be resting in tombs near his. Such figures demanded explanation. It seems the woman attracted particular attention; she may simply have been a pious donor, but a legend evolved and the author of *VMa* felt obliged to write it down, qualifying his statements with cautious remarks. Thus it would seem that the colourful story of the devoted laywoman Valeria began with little more than a physical tomb.

¹⁶⁸ L. Duchesne, ‘Saint Martial de Limoges’, *Annales du Midi*, 4 (1892), pp. 289-330, at 297.

¹⁶⁹ F. Arbellot, *Livre des Miracles de Saint Martial* (Paris, 1889), pp. 20-21, printed in parallel with a later version; see p. 21: ‘quae ducis Stephani retinere hactenus busta videtur’.

¹⁷⁰ Duchesne, ‘Saint Martial’, pp. 292-4; this shows a diagram of the crypt with the approximate positions of the tombs. For a full map showing how it was incorporated into the abbey, see de Lasteyrie, *L’abbaye de Saint-Martial*, plate II.

The next stage in the development of the Martial legend was the second, longer version of the Life, known as the *Vita prolixior* (hereafter *VMp*), which was fraudulently written under the name of Aurelian, the ‘successor’ to Martial as bishop of Limoges. In this story, Martial is further upgraded to become a follower of Christ rather than just Peter. It is not a static text but one that underwent a certain amount of rewriting over time, as the surviving manuscripts show; the outlines of the story remained fairly constant, however. Pending the publication of a new edition, the best attempt to trace this rewriting has been carried out by Richard Landes, who has identified three separate recensions. The earliest is seen in a manuscript from Saint-Martial, Limoges (Paris, BN lat. 5363) which is catalogued as a tenth-century work but which he dates to the late tenth or early eleventh century; we shall call this *VMp1*. Landes argues that this Life derives from popular legend that was stimulated by the early Peace councils of Charroux in 989 and, especially, Limoges in 994, where St Martial, elevated from his tomb, saved the people from *ignis sacer* – holy fire or ergotism. He has dated the next version, *VMp2*, to the period 1025-9, and a final version, *VMp3*, to 1029.¹⁷¹ This last recension has become famous as the one written by Ademar which took the escalating legend to its logical, if controversial, conclusion and dared to call Martial an apostle of Christ at the time when the monks of Saint-Martial were bringing their claims to a peak with an ambitious new liturgy.¹⁷² However, the project overextended itself, Ademar was humiliated in an argument with the Italian monk Benedict of Chiusa, and an

¹⁷¹ Landes, *Relics*, pp. 54-72, 215-17. Callahan, ‘The sermons’, pp. 258-63, has a similar account but breaks the rewriting process down into two distinct phases. *VMp3* is edited in L. Surius, *De probatis sanctorum vitis*, Iunius (vol. 6) (Cologne, 1618), pp. 365-74, which is generally used by scholars as well as here, and *Vita sanctissimi Martialis apostoli: The Life of St. Martial by Aurelianus, from a Manuscript in the British Museum*, ed. W. de G. Birch (London, 1872), which is perhaps more accessible but does not have the same chapter divisions. A French trans. is in Landes and Paupert, *Naissance d’apôtre*, pp. 45-104. On the council of 994, see Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.35, p. 157, and R. Landes, ‘Between aristocracy and heresy: popular participation in the Limousin Peace of God, 994-1033’, in Head and Landes, *The Peace of God*, pp. 184-218, at 186-90. On ergotism, which was probably caused by tainted flour, see Cowdrey, ‘The Peace’, p. 48.

¹⁷² Grier, *Musical World*, pp. 25-7; Landes, *Relics*, pp. 214-17. In this sense Martial may be grouped with saints such as Fronto, traditionally the first bishop of Périgueux, whose apostolic claims grew alongside his own. On this and other cults related to Martial, see de Lasteyrie, *L’abbaye de Saint-Martial*, pp. 17-29; S. Kahn Herrick, ‘Studying apostolic hagiography: the case of Fronto of Périgueux, disciple of Christ’, *Speculum*, 85 (2010), pp. 235-270.

apostolic liturgy was not embraced until the end of the eleventh century, well after Ademar's death in 1034 on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.¹⁷³

Connected to the development of the cult of Martial was, as we have seen, a growing interest in appealing to the laity at a time when the Peace of God was underway across Aquitaine, to whose councils 'were borne the bodies of many saints and innumerable caskets of holy relics' for the purpose of 're-establishing peace and consolidating the holy faith', in Glaber's words, after a period of famine and natural disaster; all types of person came, the cry of 'Peace!' went up, and many were healed.¹⁷⁴ Without doubt, the three *prolixior* versions of Martial's *vitae* (collectively referred to as simply *VMP*) are a product of this movement. After the council of 994, Martial became, in the words of H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'the patron *par excellence* of peace in all its aspects'.¹⁷⁵ Barthélemy describes how St Martial was placed at the heart of an overarching Christian vision, of which the Peace of God was but one name.¹⁷⁶

On the new Life which accompanied this movement, Landes writes:

... the most striking element of the *Vita Prolixior* is an atmosphere redolent of the Peace of God: the huge crowds 'flowing' to hear Jesus in Palestine (chapter 1) and Martial in Gaul (chapters 11-12); the army's fervent embrace of a Christianity of self-restraint, remorse, and pilgrimage (chapter 15); the vast three-day gatherings of all the people, sheltered in pavilions and tents (chapter 22); the duke's promotion of a popular religious movement without any consultation with the nominal ruler; the enthusiastic populace, committed to the church's sacraments.¹⁷⁷

The duke referred to here is Stephen: an anonymous murderer in *VMA*, mentioned by chance in the early *Miracula* of St Martial, and now the second most important character in *VMP* after Martial himself, he is named as the fiancé responsible for Valeria's death. He has her

¹⁷³ Grier, *Musical World*, p. 299; Landes, *Relics*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁷⁴ Glaber, *Histories*, IV.14-16, pp. 194-6; quotes from IV.14, p. 194: 'multa delata sunt corpora sanctorum atque innumerabiles sanctorum apoforete reliquiarum'; 'de reformanda pace et sacre fidei institutione celebrarentur concilia'; while 'pax!' and the healings are from IV.16, p. 196.

¹⁷⁵ Cowdrey, 'The Peace', p. 51. See also Callahan, 'The sermons', pp. 254-5.

¹⁷⁶ Barthélemy, *L'an mil*, p. 361.

¹⁷⁷ Landes, *Relics*, p. 59.

beheaded by his squire (*armiger*) in a fully narrated martyrdom (chapter 12 of *VMp3*).¹⁷⁸ Fully repentant, he becomes Martial's right-hand layman who works tirelessly for the furtherance of the Church and the pursuit of justice throughout Gaul. Among his deeds, he goes on pilgrimage to Rome (chapter 14), is adept at controlling his soldiers to stop them looting (chapter 14), and as the most powerful person in Gaul sends out edicts enforcing proper religious practice and the abolition of paganism (chapter 16). Meanwhile he is attentive to secular justice as well as alms, fasting, and prayer, observing prescriptions such as abstaining from meat and drink on Wednesdays and Fridays: he is a 'father of Christians and most fierce persecutor of pagans' while also 'staying chaste in mind and body'.¹⁷⁹ He is also, as has been pointed out, an idealisation of Duke William V, whom Ademar notably eulogises in his *Chronicle*, and a model of how temporal and spiritual power ought to work together for the furtherance of peace, justice, and true religion.¹⁸⁰ What is less often spelled out is that this is, in compressed form, almost the same model that Gerald of Aurillac represents. Gerald's humility, chastity, sobriety, love of justice, devotion to prayer, almsgiving, endowments, abstinence from meat (three days a week: one better than Stephen),¹⁸¹ and pilgrimages to Rome are all echoed in Stephen's deeds. They have their different emphases – Stephen is regal and repentant whereas Gerald embodies an earthier, monastic sanctity – but they stand out together as the products of a very particular culture. Stephen serves as much more than a prop for the apostolic claims being made for Martial: he is a rounded exemplar for the times, a powerful layman with weaknesses who comes to achieve self-control in the service of society and religion.

¹⁷⁸ Surius erroneously marked this as c. 14. (Because of the large folio size of his edition in *De probatis*, references are cited by chapter number only.)

¹⁷⁹ *VMp3*, 16: 'pater Christianorum ac ferocissimus persecutor paganorum ... tenens castitatem mentis et corporis'.

¹⁸⁰ Landes, *Relics*, p. 59; Ademar, *Chronicon*, III.41, pp. 161-3. For a succinct commentary on William, see B. S. Bachrach, 'Toward a reappraisal of William the Great, duke of Aquitaine (995-1030)', *Journal of Medieval History*, 5 (1979), pp. 11-21.

¹⁸¹ *VGP*, I.15, p. 160.

Valeria, meanwhile, is a model of personal piety (chapter 12 of *VMp3*), who learns from Martial the gospel story of the young, rich man who wanted to know how to achieve eternal life (Matthew 19: 16-26). *VMp* gives its own abbreviated version of the story for our benefit: Jesus tells the man not to kill, steal, or make false testimony. The man replies that he has been doing these things. He is told that if he wants to be perfect, however, he must sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor. Whereas the man disregarded this advice, Valeria follows it wholeheartedly and discards all of her personal items. As for her lands and servants, Valeria and her mother, also a follower of the bishop, ‘had long ago conceded them to St Martial, so that after his death, her holy body would be buried in that place’,¹⁸² that is, in his church: her endowment had assured her a burial place near the saint. Now therefore, in this longer, much more elaborate version of the Life, the woman’s tomb in the crypt that the author of *VMa* struggled to explain has been given a full and edifying explanation, and the opportunity has been taken to preach some teaching useful to the Peace movement. Meanwhile the promotion of these models of lay piety in the shape of Valeria and Stephen are integrated quite elegantly into the greater framework of the deeds of St Martial, wherein the orders come together to meet common aims relevant to all society.

In studies of Ademar, with all the excitement they generate around this interesting figure, the impression is sometimes given – or mistakenly inferred by readers – that he was responsible for much of the creativity witnessed in the Martial legend. This is not the case.¹⁸³ In particular, the new story of Valeria and Stephen seen in the *prolixior* versions of the *Vita Martialis* was not his invention, nor even that of the monks of Saint-Martial in the 1020s. Ademar and the monks of his generation refined material that was already there, and created

¹⁸² *VMp3*, 12: ‘iamdudum ... sancto Marciali concesserat, ut post eius discessum, inibi sancta illius tumularentur membra.’

¹⁸³ Barthélemy also comments on this in *L’an mil*, p. 362.

liturgies to go with it.¹⁸⁴ My examination of *VMp1* in BN lat. 5363, which was written in the years around the millennium, shows the story of Valeria and Stephen to be substantially the same as that in *VMp3*.¹⁸⁵ Unfortunately the manuscript cuts off during the equivalent of chapter 16 (out of 28 in *VMp3*), so we must assume that the Life continued in the same vein. By this stage, however, the life and martyrdom of Valeria has been fully told and Stephen's grand but repentant character has been developed, just as in later versions. Apart from the later apostolic aggrandisement of Martial's status, the significant difference is stylistic.¹⁸⁶ *VMp1*'s Latin prose is simple and concise in comparison to later efforts to finesse and embellish it and, as Landes has shown, hardly a sentence would go untouched in the *VMp2* rewrite. The differences between *VMp2* and *VMp3* are relatively minor and focused on further promoting Martial's status.¹⁸⁷

These long versions of the Life of Martial are of relevance to this study in the way they more or less 'sanctify' aspects of lay society in the urge to create appropriate models, most strikingly in the case of Duke Stephen who, while not a saint, is given recognition in an extensive biography that presents him as practising the highest forms of piety and service available to a nobleman, short of entering orders. Ademar, clearly taken by this character, inflated him in his liturgical writings, going so far as to call him 'king'.¹⁸⁸ Unlike Gerald of Aurillac, no known cult developed around Stephen; his legend, however, was not entirely confined to writings about Martial.

¹⁸⁴ On liturgies see Grier, *Musical World*, esp. pp. 25-34. Ademar composed new offices for Valeria and Austriclinian, for example, before the apostolic liturgy for Martial: *ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁸⁵ Paris, BN lat. 5363, fos. 123r-138v.

¹⁸⁶ A typical example, from c. 14, concerning Stephen's good management of the army and harsh penalties for those who steal, is originally written in *VMp1* (BN lat. 5363, f. 133r) thus: 'Sicque pergerent stabilita omnibus bonis ut nullis aliquot indigeret aut raperet. Statuitque decretum ut si quis aliquot raperet, capitalem sententiam subiret.' In *VMp3* it is rewritten with the same sense as follows: 'Sicque praecepit ut pergerent ditati facultatibus, ut nullus aliquo indigeret aut raperet, taliterque sanc[t]iens proposuit decretum, ut si quis aliquod raperet capitalem subiret sententiam.'

¹⁸⁷ Landes, *Relics*, pp. 71 (and n. 98), 216-17.

¹⁸⁸ Ademar of Chabannes, *Versus de sancto Marciale*, ed. P. Hooreman, 'Saint-Martial de Limoges au temps de l'abbé Odolric (1025-1040)', *Revue Belge de Musicologie*, 3:1 (1949), pp. 5-36, at 36: 'regem Stephanum'. *VMp3* stops just short of this, describing him as *princeps* of the Gauls (ch. 14) but effectively king in all but name: 'Rex tamen non vocabatur, licet rex potentissimus Galliarum esset' (ch. 16).

To see this, we turn to the cult of the ill-fated Valeria herself, which flourished after her translation from Saint-Martial to Chambon-sur-Voueize in the later tenth century. The earliest Life of Valeria is contained within a coherent, late-tenth-century *sermo* written for her feast day, in which the ‘dearest brothers’ of the monastery of Sainte-Valérie at Chambon are addressed, her life and some posthumous miracles are recounted, and the work is finished off with a brief ‘sermon of exhortation’ that reminds the monks of their obligations and commandments.¹⁸⁹ The single manuscript was heavily revised by Ademar in 1029 to promote the cult’s links with Martial, upgrade Martial’s own status to apostle, change the one date mentioned from 985 to 885 (giving his other ‘corrections’ the authority of an earlier age), and expand the role of Stephen, affirming Ademar’s interest in this powerful layman.¹⁹⁰ A crucial difference with *VMp* remains, however, attesting to the text’s reliance on an earlier tradition such as we saw in *VMA*: the murder is carried out by Stephen himself. After explaining to her ‘dearest young man’ (*carissime juvenis*) why she will not marry him, and suggesting he follow her pious example, ‘the raging young man could not bear the blessed virgin’s speech to go on any longer; but with sword drawn, he struck her neck and severed her head in one blow, and made her a martyr of Christ.’¹⁹¹ Her soul was then received by angels but her body rose up and, with its own hands, carried the head to St Martial’s church. In *VMp* – even in its first recension – her soul departs for heaven in similar, albeit elaborated, fashion; her lifeless body, however, performs no extraordinary head-carrying feats.¹⁹² Finally, it should also be noted that the Valeria of Chambon has nothing to say about the layperson’s path to heaven or

¹⁸⁹ *Sermo in festivitate sanctae Valeriae virginis et martyris*, from a tenth-century manuscript: see the *Vita* in *Cat. Paris.* I, pp. 196-8, while the preface and *Miracula* are edited in ‘Miracula sanctae Valeriae martyris Lemovicensis’, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 8 (1889), pp. 278-84. There are referred to here as *Vita Valeriae* and *Miracula Valeriae* respectively. For references to the ‘dearest brothers’ (‘fratres carissimi’), see *Miracula Valeriae*, pp. 278, 283-4; for the ‘sermon of exhortation’ (‘exhortationis ... sermonem’): p. 283.

¹⁹⁰ Landes, *Relics*, p. 224 (and n. 53).

¹⁹¹ *Vita Valeriae*, 7, p. 197: ‘Non passus est insanis juvenis prolixiorem beatae virgini facere sermonem; sed mucrone educto, cervicem illius percussit atque uno ictu caput ejus amputavit et Christi martyrem fecit.’

¹⁹² BN lat. 5363, ff. 131r-v.

the repudiation of wealth, unlike the Valeria of *VMp*, who knows Christ's teaching on salvation.¹⁹³

This *Vita Valeriae*, written at Chambon after 985, amounts to a relatively straightforward martyrdom story, and betrays little of the interest in the laity that would come in the *prolixior* versions of the *Vita Martialis*, confirming that *VMp1* represents the first occasion in the Martial-Valeria nexus of cults that such an interest would emerge. Landes' suggestion that we might link this first version of the *Vita Martialis prolixior* to the aftermath of the Peace council at Limoges of 994 is therefore a sensible one. The atmosphere of the time must have inspired some ambitious thinking. Landes posits:

the text was composed in crude Latin by a monk (or two – the dictator and the scribe) filled with enthusiasm for the Aurelian legend, by self-appointed mediators between the oral and popular culture of the pilgrims and the literate and learned culture of the scriptorium.¹⁹⁴

It was composed in an old-fashioned hand for its time.¹⁹⁵ By Ademar's day, a new generation had taken over, ambitious and clever enough to try to elevate their monastery to new heights. But that crucial spark of creativity mixed with religious fervour, which saw fit to idealise the laity in the quest to apply Christ's teaching to everyone including the most powerful, was ignited well before, at around the same time that the short Life of Gerald was being recrafted into its longer version.

¹⁹³ For the passage in *VMp1*: *ibid.*, ff. 130r-v.

¹⁹⁴ Landes, *Relics*, p. 70.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

These dual projects, which aggrandise two saints from obscure origins into major cultic figures, appear to have developed as follows. First, the short Life of Gerald was composed, seemingly by Odo of Cluny in around 930; however, it sits awkwardly in his oeuvre and its unusual content and truncated format make further research desirable. It is not yet possible to suggest alternative scenarios with any conviction, but it would not be at all surprising if the text we possess, or at least its preface, had been tinkered with, probably after the dedication ceremony at Aurillac in 972 (at least one if not both of its early manuscripts come from Saint-Martial, Limoges where forged attribution, as witnessed in the first *Vita Martialis prolixior*, was practised in the late tenth century). It is notable that the miracles associated with 972 mention a *vita* but not Odo's authorship. Given how central the forged attribution of Odo would become to the longer Life – where it was reinforced by additions to Ademar's *Chronicle* – monks at Limoges may have first appended his name to the short Life in the late tenth century at the same time that they were claiming Bishop Aurelian's ancient authorship of *VMpI*. Much remains necessarily speculative, but Kuefler's brilliant solution to the problems of the long Life has now made it possible to consider such scenarios.

Furthermore, I have argued that at Limoges, miracles concerning Gerald were added to a collection that originally pertained to 972. One likely context to much of this literary activity – the new Life of Martial, Gerald's miracles, and (perhaps) a new short Life of Gerald – is the council of 994, when the frenzy of the Peace reached a peak in the city: the cult of St Martial was dramatically resurrected with the removal of his body to Montjovis outside the city, and people were healed of *sacer ignis*. The Peace was under way, and strong lay leadership was desired that embraced Christian teaching and respected the Church's property. Models were provided in the shape of Duke Stephen and Gerald of Aurillac.

Eventually, Ademar in the late 1020s thought he could improve on them, and the final versions of the *Vita Martialis* and *Vita Geraldi* came into being, assuming Kuefler is right about the latter.

However, it has been emphasised that both went through rewrites before this, as witnessed in *VMp2* and the first version of Gerald's *Transitus* (*T1*) analysed above, and here I diverge from Kuefler. This version of the *Transitus* was written in order to finish the short *Life*, and is therefore more likely to be a product of the late tenth century than the pen of Ademar of Chabannes decades later. We must remember that there was a church of St Gerald in Limoges by 990, well before Ademar became interested in the cult. Apart from activity at Aurillac itself, such as the dedication of its church and early Peace meetings, the dedication of the church at Limoges would have been another critical moment to stimulate literary production. A further possible period was the episcopacy of Gerald (1014-22), who seems to have taken an interest in this 'family saint' and oversaw the translation of relics from Aurillac to Limoges in 1021. The fact that there are different versions of texts, as well as various historical scenarios that predate Ademar's involvement, should make us extremely cautious about attribution.

Moreover, when we look at Ademar's itinerary, the timeframe for an extended programme of forgery becomes rather narrow. Ademar in fact spent a very limited period at Limoges.¹⁹⁶ He was an oblate at Saint-Cybard, Angoulême and first experienced Saint-Martial, Limoges when sent there for further education in his late teens or early twenties; he was certainly there in 1010, aged twenty-one. He studied under his uncle, Roger of Chabannes, during this time and before long returned to Saint-Cybard. In 1027, he was passed over for promotion to abbot by the count of Angoulême and, devastated, sought refuge that summer at Saint-Martial again, where he began to contribute to the monastery's liturgical

¹⁹⁶ The following chronology is based on Grier, *Musical World*, pp. 17-36.

programme. (We note how Gerald of Aurillac, the model abbatial lord who insists on free elections at his monastery, was no mere theoretical ideal but grounded in the bitter human experience of contemporaries such as Ademar who had experienced electoral ‘abuses’.)

Ademar returned to Saint-Cybard for a few months in early 1028, where there was some turmoil after the death of the count, but was back at work in Saint-Martial’s *scriptorium* that summer. A new basilica was dedicated on 18 November 1028 in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm for Martial’s cult. From this time until 3 August 1029, Ademar was writing liturgies for Valeria, Austriclinian, and then the apostolic cult of Martial. On 3 August, the day of the inauguration of the new liturgies, Benedict of Chiusa suddenly argued against the apostolic campaign as part of a cathedral conspiracy. Ademar lost the debate and returned to Angoulême the next day. There he continued to write sermons, liturgical works, and other material – much of it dedicated to Martial and the apostolic claim – before leaving his manuscripts at Saint-Martial and embarking on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1033, from which he never returned.

In sum, Ademar spent a period of his advanced education at Saint-Martial, and then returned for two years, during which time he was exceptionally busy on compositions related to the abbey’s patron, which he continued after he left. In terms of saints, James Grier’s studies of Ademar reveal that the monk personally worked on or wrote liturgical compositions for Cybard, Justinian (the forty-day-old saint), Valeria, Martial, and the latter’s companions Alpinian and Austriclinian.¹⁹⁷ He also wrote a Life of St Amantius of Boixe.¹⁹⁸ He continued to use the model of Duke Stephen, for example in antiphons and responsories for Valeria.¹⁹⁹ Among all this there are barely any traces of St Gerald.²⁰⁰ If Ademar involved

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.; idem, ‘Hoax’, p. 68.

¹⁹⁸ G. Pon, ‘La culture d’Adémar de Chabannes à la lumière de sa *Vie de saint Amant de Boixe*’, in Andrault-Schmitt, *Saint-Martial de Limoges*, pp. 391-410.

¹⁹⁹ Grier, *Musical World*, pp. 327-35.

²⁰⁰ In an unedited sermon of post-1029, Ademar refers to the presence of Gerald and Valeria’s relics at the consecration of Saint-Martial’s basilica: Landes, *Relics*, p. 199 and n. 13.

himself in the cult of Gerald, it is unlikely he took on the whole project related to the *Vita prolixior*, with all the rewriting and composition of extra miracles that required a close knowledge of Aurillac (which the author of the long Life evidently did not have). Kuefler's best argument in favour of Ademar stems from the monk's references in his other writings to the longer Life of Gerald, to Odo's authorship of it, and to details of Gerald himself, bearing in mind his own family links to Turpio and Aimo, to whom both versions of the Life are dedicated (Kuefler's other arguments are largely circumstantial).²⁰¹ These facts support Ademar's involvement in a later stage of the project, but not all of it post-*VGb*.

While it would be unwise to propose an alternative scheme based on uncertain evidence, I have demonstrated the complexity of the writings of the two cults and placed their development over a period of decades rather than in single bursts of creativity. We have also seen how both Lives were rewritten to accommodate contemporary matters of concern to ecclesiastical authorities who believed it necessary to cajole the clergy *and* the laity into higher standards of behaviour and responsibility. This was a development of the period around the year 1000. The parallel comparison proves that the cult of Gerald did not manifest in a vacuum but as part of the profound changes related to the Peace of God in Aquitaine. There are, of course, numerous differences between the two cults, but it is the parallels that are most revealing and help us to construct a bigger and richer picture of lay sanctity. The cults' provenance, subject matter, and comparable maturation at Limoges in the period around the first millennium now make it almost impossible to discuss one without reference to the other.

Much more discussion will ensue. In the meantime, it is salutary to remember that just over a decade ago one eminent scholar questioned, quite sensibly it seemed for the time, the

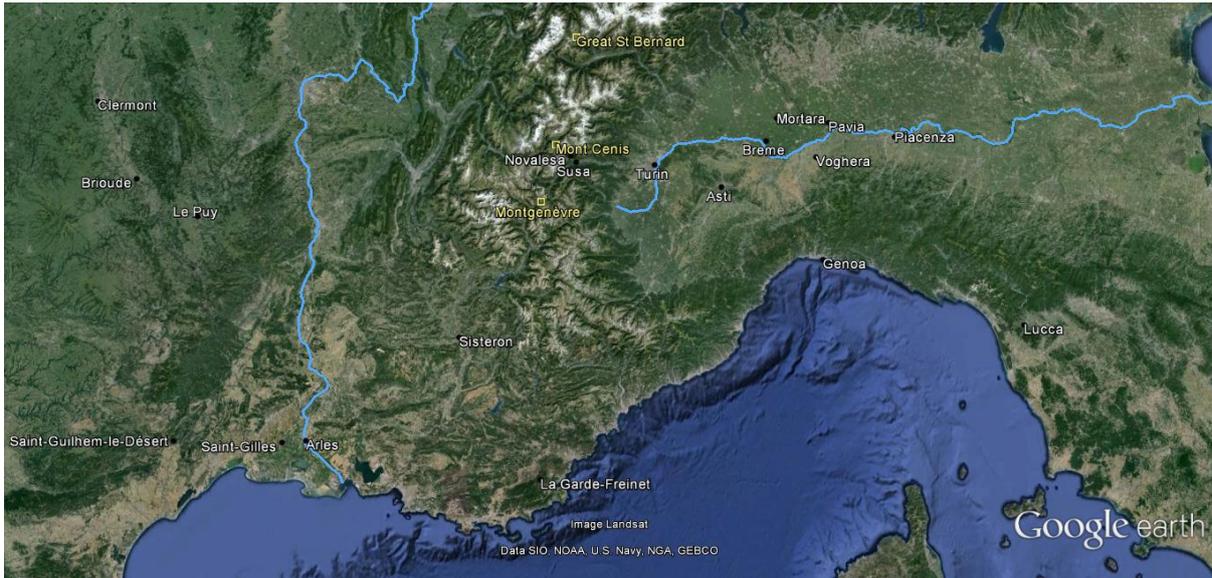
²⁰¹ Kuefler, 'Dating', pp. 73-6.

point of writing anything more about Gerald of Aurillac.²⁰² Now old certainties are left behind, and we must begin to see Gerald as part of a larger picture of change at a defining period in the development of lay sanctity.

²⁰² Iogna-Prat, 'La Vita Geraldi', p. 143.

Chapter 2

Bovo of Voghera and storytelling networks between the Rhône and the Po



The Rhône and Po valleys, with a selection of places referred to in the chapter

There are similarities between Bovo (or Bobo) of Voghera and Gerald of Aurillac: they both came from the arms-bearing aristocracy of southern France, remained laymen, exhibited dedicated piety, and went on pilgrimage to Rome. But where Gerald preached peace, Bovo sought war. Because Provence was the scene of his deeds, rather than Gerald's Auvergne and Limousin, in the place of local bullies his enemies were invading Saracens from Spain. Bovo defeated the Saracens, making him a hero first; only then, after devoting himself to pilgrimage, could he 'become' a saint. The emphasis on heroic exploits in the Life of Bovo creates a fusion of genres that takes us beyond pure hagiography and into the territory of epic, an interesting overlap that was once the focus of intense debate but has been little explored

recently.¹ At around the time of the First Crusade, storytelling was becoming a multifaceted and creative enterprise, not only in the French *chansons de geste* but in Latin chronicles too. This chapter will place Bovo in that very context while exploring a principal dynamic that drove creative storytelling in this period, namely roadways and their attendant networks of pilgrims, merchants, clerics, jongleurs,² and the legends they exchanged. ‘Storytelling networks’ is a phrase used to explain the oral and written transmission of legends along established pilgrimage routes, and to conceptualise a mixed culture that was of interest to monks and clerics as well as laypeople, and which exhibited creative content suitable to both orders. The principal setting for these networks will be the vibrant crossroads of the western Alps, within a broad Italo-Provençal zone whose western border was the river Rhône rather than the mountains. The identity of this region, as Patrick Geary has argued, is traceable back

¹ The Life of Bovo is in *De s. Bobone seu Bovo*, AASS Maii, V, pp. 184-91. The principal analyses, which do not explore this overlap (apart from the first briefly), are: C. Carozzi, ‘La Vita Boboni, un jalon vers une mentalité de croisade’, *Publications du Centre Européen d’Etudes Bourguignonnes*, 11 (1969), pp. 30-35; idem, ‘La vie de saint Bobon: un modèle clunisien de sainteté laïque’, in M. Lauwers (ed.), *Guerriers et moines: conversion et sainteté aristocratiques dans l’occident médiéval, IXe-XIIe siècle* (Antibes, 2002), pp. 467-91; M. A. Casagrande Mazzoli, ‘La tradizione testuale della Vita Sancti Bobonis’, *Annali di storia pavese*, 16-17 (1988), pp. 21-6; and for a more devotional but still scholarly perspective, D. Clerico, *Vita di San Bovo* (Voghera, 1985 [orig. 1946]).

The influence of epics on hagiography and vice versa was explored in Joseph Bédier’s classic study *Les légendes épiques: recherches sur la formation des chansons de geste*, 4 vols., 3rd edn. (Paris, 1926-9), a work which had no knowledge of the Life of Bovo; cf. F. Lot, ‘Études sur les légendes épiques françaises, IV: le cycle de Guillaume d’Orange’, *Romania*, 53 (1927), pp. 449-73 = idem, *Études sur les légendes épiques françaises* (Paris, 1958), pp. 239-59, published alongside other relevant essays; useful commentary includes E. Healy, ‘The views of Ferdinand Lot on the origins of the Old French epic’, *Studies in Philology*, 36 (1939), pp. 433-465; and U. T. Holmes, ‘The post-Bédier theories on the origins of the *chansons de geste*’, *Speculum*, 30:1 (1955), pp. 72-81. See also (in the mould of Bédier) I. Siciliano, *Les chansons de geste et l’épopée: mythes, histoire, poèmes* (Turin, 1968), and for more recent comments, K. A. Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 159-66; P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994), p. 120; J. J. Duggan, ‘Medieval epic and history in the romance literatures’, in D. Konstan and K. A. Raaflaub (eds.), *Epic and History* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 280-92; M.-A. Bossy, ‘Roland’s migration from Anglo-Norman epic to royal French chronicle history’, in *ibid.*, pp. 293-309; D. Boutet, ‘Route de Saint-Jacques ou conquête de l’Espagne? Chroniques et chansons de geste (XIIe-début du XIVe siècles)’, in E. C. Díaz (ed.), *In marsupis peregrinorum: circulación de textos e imágenes alrededor del Camino de Santiago en la edad media* (Florence, 2010), pp. 243-60, among other essays in the same volume.

² This word for professional performers, which derives from the Latin *ioculator* or *iocularis*, is discussed in M. Richter, *The Oral Tradition in the Early Middle Ages*, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, 71 (Turnhout, 1994), pp. 45-56; and idem, *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 160-72.

to the ancient Ligurians, whose coastal territory stretched well into today's French littoral: 'the Alps did not so much divide as unite the two sides of their slopes'.³

According to his succinct *vita*, Bovo died on a pilgrimage to Rome at the northern Italian town of Voghera, which venerates him on 22 May as its patron saint. The year of his death is thought to be 986 following a deduction by Godfrey Henschen, the early Bollandist, in his edition of the anonymous Life for the *Acta sanctorum*.⁴ This suggestion fits well with the expulsion of the Saracens from Provence during 972 and the period immediately after, which is the campaign that appears to provide the historical background to the story. Henschen's edition claims to be based on three different sources, one of which is the large collection of saints' Lives called the *Sanctuarium* made around 1477 by the Italian humanist Mombritius.⁵ The other two are late manuscript copies: one is from Henschen's own time in the seventeenth century and the other from the late fifteenth century.⁶ It has now been clearly demonstrated, however, that these were simply taken from the *Sanctuarium*, which leaves it as the only real source.⁷ (A further manuscript from Naples of 1470 has recently been brought to light but, despite some different readings, it does not reflect a separate tradition.)⁸ Despite the necessity of relying on the *Sanctuarium*, it is considered to be of high quality, based on a range of manuscripts, and carefully made.⁹ I have compared its version of the Life of Bovo to that of the *Acta sanctorum* and found that they are all but the same, with minor changes of

³ Geary, *Phantoms*, pp. 30-5, quote at 30; J. E. Tyler, *The Alpine Passes: The Middle Ages (962-1250)* (Oxford, 1930), pp. 48-73. On Liguria's changing boundaries, see R. Balzaretto, *Dark Age Liguria: Regional Identity and Local Power, c.400-1020* (London, 2013), pp. 3-4, 63-79.

⁴ *De s. Bobone*, pp. 184-5, based on Bovo's death on 22 May, which originally fell on the eve of Pentecost ('XI Kalend. Junii sancto Sabbatho Pentecostes', p. 187). The other possible year is 975, which is deemed less likely. J.-P. Poly places Bovo at the end of the ninth century in his *La Provence et la société féodale (879-1166): contribution à l'étude des structures dites féodales dans le Midi* (Paris, 1976), pp. 6-8, 16-18; this unlikely scenario is discussed below.

⁵ B. Mombritius, *Sanctuarium, seu vitae sanctorum*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1910).

⁶ *De s. Bobone*, 'Commentarius praevius', 3, p. 184.

⁷ Casagrande Mazzoli, 'La tradizione testuale', pp. 21-3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-5; Carozzi, 'La vie de saint Bobon', p. 470. There is also an abbreviated report of the Life in the *Liber notitiae sanctorum Mediolani*, written in the early fourteenth century: Casagrande Mazzoli, 'La tradizione testuale', pp. 25-6.

⁹ B. de Gaiffier, 'Au sujet des sources du Sanctuarium de Mombritius', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, 14 (1979), pp. 278-81.

little or no consequence. The *Acta* version is more clearly presented with short chapter divisions and is easier to access, so I shall refer to it here; it also appears to have corrected a few oddities and errors.¹⁰

An outline of the Life

Bovo is born into high nobility as the son of Adelfred and Odilinde at Noyers (Noyers-sur-Jabron, near Sisteron in the foothills of the Provençal Alps). He is brought up as a warrior but also pursues religious study; when not yet fifteen, he decides to follow a secular path but maintain his piety. He makes his name as a scourge of the pagans who come from Spain (they are never called Saracens in the text), as well as other brigands and thieves. The pagan stronghold in Provence, called Fraxinetum, is described as an impregnable peninsula:

No one could enter it, except that the land had extended a thin tongue into the sea, which was joined with an island, which they had blocked by the fortification of a very strong tower. They stayed in this without any fear, as if in their own land.¹¹

¹⁰ Cf. Mombritius, *Sanctuarium*, I, pp. 251-6. There is already a comparison of the two texts in *ibid.*, pp. 632-3, but it is not thorough; my own comparison found some 60 different readings, which are almost all insubstantial. Some of the more notable ones are as follows: on the Saracen occupation, Mombritius, p. 252, ll. 13-14: 'Possidebant enim assidue audacis crudelitatis auxilium insulam quae Fraxinetum dicitur: quam ipsi praeoccupauerant naturali munitione et maris amplexu munitam'; *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185: 'Possidebant enim **in suae** audacis ... **navali** munitione'. The reason why the Saracens wished to attack Bovo: Mombritius, p. 252, l. 27: 'ut fortiore deuicto: acolas leuiores ocyus delinirent'; *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185: '... ocius **delerent**'. Bovo's prayers prevent the Saracens entering his fortress: Mombritius, p. 253, ll. 4-5: 'Pagani tamen montem preoccupantes ante portam manebant et ingredi non ualebant. O mira potentia saluatoris. Bobo adhuc obsentabat et precibus repugnabat'; *De s. Bobone*, 4, p. 186: 'et ingredi non ualebat' is omitted, losing clarity, but 'Bobo adhuc **obsecrabat**'. A Saracen begs Bovo not to kill him because his death will please the devil: Mombritius, p. 254, l. 9: 'Si enim interfectionem distuleris suffocabo diabolum'; *De s. Bobone*, 7, p. 186: '... **suffocabis** diabolum'. Among the *Miracula*, Mombritius, p. 255, ll. 25-8: 'quidam caecus letus effectus ... [praying to Bovo] Exaudi in neccsitate [sic] laborantem...'; *De s. Bobone*, 11, p. 187: omits the strange 'letus' and has 'Exaudi **in caecitate** laborantem'.

¹¹ *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185: 'Nullus in eam introitus habebatur, nisi quod tellus tenuem linguam in aequora porrexerat, quae cum insula iungebatur, quam ipsi firmissimae turris munitione obstruxerant: in hac absque omni timore, velut in propria patria, morabantur.'

Fraxinetum has been connected with La Garde-Freinet and the area around the Gulf of St Tropez, where a Massif des Maures (after the ‘Moors’) may still be found.¹² From here, in the Life, the pagans raid the surrounding countryside with impunity: before the invasion fortifications were rare, with ‘each rejoicing in his *villa*’.¹³

Discovering that he is to be attacked, Bovo builds a fortress on Pierre Impie, a peak identifiable today just north of Noyers. He makes a vow that if he is victorious over the enemy, he will lay down his arms, take care of orphans and widows, and go every year to the tombs of SS Peter and Paul at Rome. Later, he sees St Peter in a dream warning him that the pagans are heading for his new fortress. There is a dramatic chase after which the pagans arrive there first but, thanks to the efficacy of Bovo’s prayers, are prevented from entering. Bovo himself goes into the fortress with his men and rains down an attack on the pagans, who retreat. This, at the end of chapter 4, completes the first part of the story.

The author then takes the opportunity for a digression on the wickedness of the pagans, before progressing on to the destruction of Fraxinetum (chapters 5-6), whose king (*rex*) lusts after the wife of his gatekeeper (*portitor*), both of whom are anonymous. The gatekeeper will not be bribed so the king takes his wife by force. The gatekeeper’s revenge begins with a written entreaty to Bovo, sent via a messenger, in which he recognises the evils of his people and implores Bovo to destroy them, promising to give access to the stronghold and desiring to convert. Bovo seizes his chance, and with knights and footsoldiers (*equites* and *pedites*) gains entrance to the island once the gate is opened for him. The author is not shy about Bovo’s role in the bloodshed: ‘entering joyfully, they chopped the necks of those opposing them. With each [pagan] running away in different directions, he slaughtered

¹² B. Luppi, *I Saraceni in Provenza, in Liguria e nelle Alpi occidentale* (Bordighera, 1973), pp. 50-1 (charter evidence), 100-3.

¹³ *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185: ‘unusquisque in villa sua gaudens’.

whomever he could'.¹⁴ The king agrees to convert to Christianity rather than die. The victors set about destroying the island, sparing those who convert and killing those who refuse. The king and several of his people are baptised, and peace descends.

In the third part of the story (chapters 7-8), Bovo is confronted with one final challenge after someone (*quidam*) kills his brother, and he must face his violent urges: 'the athlete Bovo did battle more with himself than the enemy. For whenever he thought of the enemy, he was inflamed; but when he thought of the danger to his soul, he was calmed.'¹⁵ He finally catches up with the killer and corners him (we never learn who this is). The man pleads for his life and Bovo grants him mercy. From then on, Bovo honours his vow and travels to Rome with a mule, on which he hardly ever sits, feeding and assisting the blind, lame, and poor along the way, and wearing down his body as a guard against vice. He stops at the house of a compatriot at Voghera and, foreseeing his end, disperses what he has to the poor, chooses a burial place, and dies.

The *miracula* (chapters 9-16) begin with an explanation that at first little happened and Bovo's virtues 'rested'; the implication is that some time passed.¹⁶ Then animals start dying when they pass over the burial place, so the locals build a wooden enclosure around it. After the first healing miracle – in which a young man from Liguria comes on behalf of his blind and sick sister – Bovo's body is raised and placed in a tomb in a new church containing three altars: the central one is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, St Nicholas, and Bovo; one is to St Bartholomew; and the third to the Archangel Michael and St Benedict. Several further miracles are recorded. Finally, it should be noted that there are occasional snatches of poetry in both the *vita* and *miracula*, with verses of either two or three lines of dactylic hexameter,

¹⁴ Ibid., 6, p. 186: 'gratanter intrantes, repugnantium colla caedebant. Unusquisque vero circumquaque discurrrens, quoscumque poterat trucidabat.'

¹⁵ Ibid., 7, p. 186: 'athleta Bobo plus intra se, quam in hoste praeliatur. Quoties enim hostem cogitabat, accendebatur; sed cum animae suae periculum pertractaret, molliebatur.'

¹⁶ Ibid., 9, p. 187: 'virtutes ad tempus primitus quievere'.

in the manner of Virgil and other epic poets, interrupting the prose on several occasions.¹⁷

For instance, when St Peter appears to Bovo in a dream, he says:

Take courage, Bovo, God is with you, be valiant
And not afraid, but scorn the threats which the destructive enemy
Now threatens to carry out with terrible deeds.¹⁸

Composition and dating

Whereas the Bollandists did not attempt to date the composition of the text, René Poupardin more than a century ago stated that its style indicated a date at the end of the eleventh or start of the twelfth century.¹⁹ The only ample discussion of the matter is by Claude Carozzi, who originally posited a primitive version of the Life dating to the late tenth or early eleventh century (specifically before 1030), with a later ‘compilation’ – the extant version including the miracles – created in the twelfth century. Much of this dating depends upon the absence of the word *miles* from the core part of the Life, with the word appearing in the supposedly later miracles. This early date is also suggested by the strong Roman and Petrine themes – in the pilgrimages and St Peter’s personal appearance to Bovo – which Carozzi judges to originate from a similar period, echoing accounts of William V of Aquitaine, Maiolus of Cluny, and St Adelrad, along with the emphases of the chroniclers Flodoard, Liudprand, and the monk of Novalesa abbey, all writing before Compostella and Jerusalem displaced Rome’s

¹⁷ Ibid., 1-3, p. 185; 7, p. 186; 12, 14, p. 188. In the last of these there is a line of pentameter between two hexameters.

¹⁸ Ibid., 3, p. 185: ‘Confortare Bobo, tecum Deus, esto robustus: / Nec timeas, sed sperne minas quas pestifer hostis, / Actibus immodicis nunc nunc implere minatur.’

¹⁹ R. Poupardin, *Le royaume de Provence sous les Carolingiens* (Paris, 1901), p. 248 n. 1.

pre-eminence on the pilgrim trail.²⁰ More recently, and broadly in keeping with this view, Carozzi has read the text in a loosely Cluniac context in the era of Abbot Odilo (999-1049).²¹

One source that may assist any dating attempt is the recently uncovered Naples manuscript of 1470, which is the only version to contain a prologue.²² Unfortunately this is generic and vague. It says that ‘various different things are told because of the time that has elapsed’.²³ The author makes unspecific generalisations about his sources rather than saying he had information from those who knew Bovo. He confesses he knew little about his subject at first, and emphasises the importance of the posthumous miracles: he at least had testimony of these, and prefers to highlight their importance rather than Bovo’s achievements in life. There is the undeniable impression of a writer who had little to go on except the nascent cult of an obscure figure and its associated miracles – he would not, of course, be the first hagiographer in such a quandary. Nevertheless, the prologue hardly prepares the reader for the extraordinary story that follows. The writer touches on his motivation in the final sentence; unfortunately the Latin here is vague, but it implies that he is being urged to write the Life by some people present, though this too is generic.²⁴ He has probably been tasked by his superiors to write the Life of a saint about whom there is little information, in order to satisfy some current demand.

If the prologue is genuine (and in the absence of earlier manuscripts we cannot say), the emphasis on posthumous miracles refutes Carozzi’s theory that they were inserted later by a ‘compiler’; they must have been part of an original, coherent work, even if, perhaps, one or two were tacked on to the end at a later date (indeed, the story containing the *milites*, which Carozzi considers anachronistic, comes at the very end of the miracle collection,

²⁰ Carozzi, ‘La Vita Boboni’, pp. 31, 33-4.

²¹ Carozzi, ‘La vie de saint Bobon’, pp. 484-90.

²² The prologue is printed in Casagrande Mazzoli, ‘La tradizione testuale’, p. 26.

²³ Ibid.: ‘pro vetustate temporis alia pro aliis recitentur’.

²⁴ Ibid.: ‘presentibus quoque quorundam compulsus’.

allowing for just such a later addition).²⁵ Furthermore, the brief prologue to the miracles themselves (which is included in the editions) might suggest that the same writer, using the first person plural, is continuing the work:

Now that we have written sufficiently about his praiseworthy deeds, in which he was involved while still confined within bodily form, [my] pen should not delay to set out the things which the Lord wished to carry out through him after the material of his body had been dissolved.²⁶

There are also stylistic similarities between the *miracula* and the *vita*. One is the frequent use of the imperfect where the perfect tense might be expected.²⁷ Another is the consistent use of unusual expressions such as *festinus adito* (to go in haste),²⁸ and *unusquisque* (each person) where *omnes* (everyone) may be more appropriate.²⁹ Likewise, the occasional verses of poetry are present in both sections until before the penultimate miracle. Meanwhile, there do not appear to be any particular stylistic differences between the parts which might indicate a second author.

So far we seem to have a coherent text written long after the event, as indicated in the prologue to the *vita*; a date of pre-1030 is possible, but likely to be too early as this period would be largely within living memory of the expulsion of the Saracens in the 970s. The text was almost certainly written at Voghera: the references to this town as Bovo's resting place

²⁵ *De s. Bobone*, 16, p. 188: 'Duo quoque milites...'

²⁶ *De s. Bobone*, 9, p. 187: 'Postquam de ejus laudabilibus actibus, in quibus ipse se adhuc carnali pondere circumseptus exercuit, sufficienter significavimus, ea quae per eum Dominus carnali dissoluta materia operari voluit, praesens stylus explicare non differat.'

²⁷ There are many occasions of this, e.g. *De s. Bobone*, 3, p. 185: '**Firmabatur** igitur in manibus ipsius monarchiae totius prosperitas, et admiratio cum virtutibus **accrescebat**'; 4, p. 186: '**properabat** ad arcem'; 6, p. 186: 'nolentes autem duplici interitu **damnabantur**'; 10, p. 187: 'ad stupendum miraculum **percurrebant**. Et ... rei gestae visionem per ordinem **audiebant**'; 11, p. 187: 'ingredi **festinabat**'; 15, p. 188 (where the monks deal with some *equites*): 'caritatis studio **impartiebant**; sed quia illorum non **replebatur** cupiditas, blasphemantes, monachos mirabiliter **vituperabant**: unde tristes effecti monachi, **lamentabantur** ... a minis nullo modo **desistebant**...'

²⁸ *De s. Bobone*, 5, p. 186, and 10, p. 187.

²⁹ *Ibid.*: 2, p. 185; 5, p. 186; 6, p. 186 (twice); 11, p. 187; 14, p. 188. Perhaps also notable is the author's occasional classical preference of *-ere* for the perfect *-erunt*, e.g. 5, p. 186; 9, p. 187; 10, p. 187; 13, p. 188; 16, p. 188.

and origin of his cult would make for a peculiarity if it were written anywhere else, and the repeated motif in the miracles of sick people from the region coming to be cured at Voghera must mean the writer had a direct interest in the cult based upon that town, and nowhere else.

The miracles mention the construction of a church with an altar dedicated to Bovo; the first reference to a church connected to the saint is from 1119, in a charter concerning a mill at Voghera which is described as sitting on the river Staffora (a tributary of the Po that runs past the town), ‘near the church of San Bovo’.³⁰ Assuming this is the new church to which the author of the miracles refers, 1119 represents if not a *terminus ante quem* for the text, at least a date by which the cult was established, meaning the text is unlikely to have followed much later. Apart from the Virgin Mary, the other saint to share the central altar, according to the miracles, is St Nicholas, the Byzantine saint whose cult took off in Italy after the translation of his relics from Myra to Bari in 1087. A dramatic increase in churches dedicated to him all over Italy follows this date. Previously, there are a handful of Italian references (from Rome and Naples) to the saint outside Bari, as well as a church in Pisa and a cloister in Venice (like Bari, both had the advantage of being ports with trading links to the East).³¹ It is unlikely, therefore, that the altar built at the inland town of Voghera was constructed before 1087. A date for the composition of the text of the late eleventh or early twelfth century therefore seems sensible. As well as giving the same result as Poupardin’s judgement of the work’s style, this also has the merit of being long enough after the Saracen expulsion to render its personalities and events potentially more legendary than historical (which may account for the sheepish tone of the prologue). However, the best evidence for assigning this dating range rather than an earlier one has yet to be explored: it comes from the Life’s crossover into the emerging genre of heroic legends epitomised in the *chansons de geste*. How Bovo fits in to this literature is explored in the next two sections.

³⁰ *Documenti vogheresi dell’Archivio di Stato di Milano*, ed. A. Cavagna Sangiuliani, *Biblioteca della società storica subalpina*, 47 (1910), no. 19, p. 42: ‘prope ecclesiam sancti boui’.

³¹ E. G. Clare, *St Nicholas: His Legends and Iconography* (Florence, 1985), pp. 51-5.

History and legend in the Life

Poupardin stated that the Life of Bovo holds no interest other than to show the legends that form around an invasion such as that of the Saracens in Provence.³² This may seem an unfairly dismissive view of such a rich text; certainly Jean-Pierre Poly attempted to demolish it in his later contribution to Provençal and ‘feudal’ history by placing Bovo in a precise historical setting while using the Life as evidence for feudal change. According to Poly’s theory, Bovo lived at the end of the ninth century, abandoned his lands to settle in Italy, and founded a religious community at Voghera, which he held as a benefice from King Berengar, and the Life was written soon after the departure of the Saracens from Provence.³³ This hypothesis is openly speculative and based on little evidence (and at one point a misreading of the Life).³⁴ We would do better to accept some degree of legendary storytelling and see how Bovo’s tale fits into the facts we do know about.

Saracen raiding and settlement in the south of France is well chronicled by contemporaries and much discussed by modern historians. After a period of some decades of attacking the coast, the establishment of Fraxinetum in the 880s by the Arabs marked a serious setback for the locals, whose civil strife allowed the Saracens to spread into the Alps. The base at Fraxinetum, which means ‘ash wood’ (after the ash tree, *fraxinus*),³⁵ stood for the best part of a century until 972, when forces led by William of Provence set out to destroy the threat soon after the Saracens’ infamous kidnapping and ransom of Abbot Maiolus of Cluny. Certainly by 975 this obliteration was achieved; we do not know exactly how but it is unlikely to have been through a single engagement. Liudprand of Cremona’s *Antapodosis*

³² Poupardin, *Le royaume de Provence*, p. 248.

³³ Poly, *La Provence*, pp. 7-8, 16-18, 88, 125.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18: Poly inexplicably states that Bovo was not a pilgrim, necessitating an elaborate scenario for the journey to Voghera involving political exile.

³⁵ *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. P. Squatriti (Washington, D.C., 2007), p. 45 including nn. 10, 12.

and Flodoard of Reims' *Annals* provide useful contemporary chronicles of much of the period (not, however, up to the final stages), and there are also accounts from a little later in the *Chronicle of Novalesa*, Rodolfus Glaber's *Histories*, and the hagiography of Maiolus, among various other texts including charters.³⁶

The world of Liudprand (c.922-72) was Italian, German, and Byzantine, so it might seem odd that he had a special interest in the Saracens of Provence. But his priorities reflect the fears of those from the Lombard plains: born in Pavia and later bishop of Cremona, his homeland was the Po valley. Although Hungarian incursions were under way from the east, we can only guess the alarm generated in the 930s, the time of his youth, when the Saracens came down from the western Alps and

quite thoroughly devastated those upper parts of Italy close to them; to such an extent that, having depopulated many cities, they reached Acqui, which is a city some 40 miles from Pavia Such great fear had filled everyone that there was no one who would await their arrival unless in very heavily defended places.³⁷

The Saracens' ability to threaten the wealthy towns of Italy is essential to understanding how knowledge and fear of this menace, even after its destruction, filtered down through local memory to remain a strong theme in the Life of Bovo. Voghera itself was directly threatened, lying vulnerable between Pavia and the luckless city of Acqui.

³⁶ The principal narrative sources are discussed below, and all other sources are compiled and discussed in Luppi, *I Saraceni*; see also P.-A. Amargier, 'La capture de saint Maieul de Cluny et l'expulsion des Sarrasins de Provence', *Revue Bénédictine*, 73 (1963), pp. 316-23 (at 321 for dating the end of the Saracens); Poly, *La Provence*, pp. 4-29 (at 28 n. 114 on dating); P. Sénac, 'Le califat de Cordoue et la Méditerranée occidentale au Xe siècle: le Fraxinet des Maures', in J.-M. Martin (ed.), *Castrum 7: zones côtières littorales dans le monde Méditerranéen au moyen âge* (Rome, 2001), pp. 113-26; S. G. Bruce, 'An abbot between two cultures: Maiolus of Cluny considers the Muslims of La Garde-Freinet', *Early Medieval Europe*, 15 (2007), pp. 426-40.

³⁷ Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, ed. and Italian trans. P. Chiesa, CCCM 156 (Turnhout, 1998), II.43, p. 53: 'quasdam summas Italiae partes sibi vicinas non mediocriter laniabant; adeo ut depopulatis plurimis urbibus Aquas venirent, quae est civitas XL ferme miliaris Papia distans ... Tantus enim timor invaserat universos, ut nullus esset qui horum praesentiam nisi forte tutissimis praestolaretur in locis.' See also IV.4, pp. 97-8. English translations are from P. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, DC, 2007).

The ways in which Liudprand describes the Saracens and their base are echoed in the Life of Bovo. All within a few lines he calls Fraxinetum an *op[p]idum*, *villula*, and *villa* ‘on the border of the Italians and Provençals’³⁸ without mentioning a peninsula, but the same idea is carried by his description of an impenetrable place, defended by the sea on one side and thick bushes of thorny plants on the other, accessible only by a very narrow path (which Flodoard also alludes to).³⁹ Likewise, Provence is a fruitful land,⁴⁰ and both accounts, although apparently referring to two separate periods in the tenth century, give the Saracens an especially evil and impious leader whom Liudprand calls Sagittus.⁴¹ The setting and background elements of the story are essentially the same, indicating that while the author of the Life of Bovo may not have known Liudprand’s work, he was working from a tradition in which certain salient details were common knowledge (‘plainly exposed to all’, as Liudprand says on the subject).⁴²

Maiolus, the fourth abbot of Cluny (954-994), was the subject of five Lives, the first and second of which – the anonymous ‘short Life’ (*Vita brevior*) of c.1000 and Syrus’s Life of c.1010 – are close to the events and give the Saracen abduction of Maiolus a primary place in their accounts.⁴³ In the *Vita brevior*, Maiolus’s capture, treatment, and finally release by the Saracens take centre stage.⁴⁴ The Saracens’ eventual defeat is painted in epoch-changing terms, for now the road to Rome is open and pilgrims can journey over the Alps to pray in the church of St Peter, whereas before, ‘scarcely anyone dared travel that road with

³⁸ Ibid., I.1, I.3, p. 6. Quote from I.1: ‘in Italicorum Provincialiumque confino’.

³⁹ Ibid., I.2-3, p. 6; cf. *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185; Flodoard, *Annales*, PL 135, cols. 417-90, at 441C.

⁴⁰ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I.4, p. 7; cf. *De s. Bobone*, 2, p. 185.

⁴¹ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, IV.4, p. 98; cf. *De s. Bobone*, 5, p. 186.

⁴² Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I.2, p. 6: ‘cunctis liquido pateat’.

⁴³ *Vita [brevior] sancti Maioli*, in M. Marrier and A. Duchesne (eds.), *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis* (Paris, 1614), cols. 1763-82; Syrus, *Vita sancti Maioli*, ed. D. Iogna-Prat, *Agni immaculati: recherches sur les sources hagiographiques relatives à Saint Maieul de Cluny, 954-994* (Paris, 1988), pp. 163-285: this is an edition of one of the three versions by Syrus, BHL 5179, which is also edited in *De s. Maiolo*, AASS, Maii, II, pp. 668-84; references are from Iogna-Prat’s edition. The full dossier is outlined in Iogna-Prat, *Agni immaculati*, pp. 11-46; see also Bruce, ‘Maiolus of Cluny’, p. 427 n. 4.

⁴⁴ *Vita brevior Maioli*, 7-13, cols. 1769-72.

confidence'.⁴⁵ As in the Life of Bovo, St Peter is both a personal saviour and a symbol of Rome:

For that key-bearer of heavenly inheritance, blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, has preserved the privilege of his special love for our lord Maiolus, while drawing the eagerness of good men, and the oblivion of the bad, through Maiolus's most famous captivity.⁴⁶

The author of this text was very likely from Pavia, which was an important centre of Cluniac influence in Italy and, from 999, the home of the first monastery dedicated to St Maiolus (San Maiolo).⁴⁷ Following in the vein of both Liudprand and Bovo's hagiographer, therefore, another author from in or around Pavia in the Po valley devotes much of his ink to the dreaded Saracens. Syrus's Life of Maiolus expands on the story but unfortunately, in common with its predecessor, is entirely vague about who defeated the Saracens.⁴⁸

Rodulfus Glaber (c.980-c.1046), the chronicler who lived in several Cluny-influenced monasteries in Burgundy, including Cluny itself for a short time, tells the story of Maiolus's capture in his *Histories*. He ends by stating that the enemy perished after being 'surrounded by the army of William, *dux* of Arles, in the place which is called Fraxinetus' – William II of Provence, or Arles, was the recognised hero from this Cluniac point of view.⁴⁹ Charters that mention or allude to the destruction of the Saracens in Provence seem to corroborate this, as scholars have shown, such as one of April 973 in which William gives land in Fréjus to one

⁴⁵ Ibid., 12, col. 1772: 'vix aliquis per illam ausus esset transire fiducialiter viam'.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 12, col. 1772A: 'Ille namque coelestis haereditatis Clauiger, beatus Petrus Apostolorum Princeps, priuilegium sui specialis amoris huic nostro domno Maiolo conseruauit, dum per eius famosissimam [comprehensionis suae] captiuitatem, malorum obliuionem, bonorum adduxit alacritatem.'

⁴⁷ Iogna-Prat, *Agni immaculati*, pp. 27-8; M. A. Casagrande, 'Fondazione e sviluppo del monastero cluniacense di San Maiolo di Pavia nei primi secoli', *Atti del 4° congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto medioevo* (Spoleto, 1969), pp. 335-51.

⁴⁸ Syrus, *Vita Maioli*, III.1-9, pp. 247-60.

⁴⁹ Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of Histories*, ed. and trans. J. France (Oxford, 1989), I.9, pp. 18-22, at 22: 'in loco qui Fraxinetus dicitur circumacti ab exercitu Wilelmi Arelatensis ducis'. On Glaber's life see *ibid.*, pp. xix-xxxiv, lviii-lxiii.

of his men in order to repopulate the area now that the enemy has departed,⁵⁰ or another of 980 which was issued by William to compensate Gibellin de Grimaud with land around the Gulf of St Tropez for his help in expelling the Saracens – the very land captured from them, as the text states.⁵¹ Further examples of c.990 and c.993 refer directly to William's victory and recognise his subsequent authority over the region where he was called margrave, duke, and even 'founding father' or 'father of the country' (*pater patriae*).⁵²

The legend of Bovo, however, appears to emanate from a separate tradition. One of its most striking aspects is the detailed account of the treachery and apostasy of the pagan gatekeeper, who because of a personal grudge against the Saracen king, who took away his wife, lets Bovo and his men in to massacre his own countrymen. From the writer's and audience's point of view, he plays the role of a selfless hero who recognises the superior qualities and religion of the Christian warriors. When we consider that the text was probably written in the late eleventh or early twelfth century, we cannot avoid reference to the siege of Antioch of 1097-8 which, according to early chronicles, was facilitated by a disgruntled Turkish insider.⁵³ In the anonymous *Gesta francorum*, this man was a guard called Firuz, who exchanged messages with the Frankish leader Bohemond. Bohemond promised 'that he would willingly have Firuz christened' and give him great riches in return for access to certain key towers that would allow the capture of the city.⁵⁴ The story became popularised in

⁵⁰ Poly, *La Provence*, p. 28 n. 11 (based on unedited material).

⁵¹ Printed in Luppi, *I Saraceni*, p. 50: 'sinum maris Sambracium, qui communiter rivus Sancti Torpetis appellatur, propria virtute, ab eisdem Agarenis et Mauris, sive Saracenis abstulerit, eiusque tale facinus peculiari principis munificentia recognosci debuerit. ... praefato Gibellino de Grimaldis, praefatum sinum maris ... cum toto tractu et circuito damus, donamus...'. This is one of the clearest geographical indications of the Saracens' stronghold, supporting others in pointing to the old county of Fréjus and to the likely *castrum* of La Garde-Freinet, and the only source to mention the nearby entry point the Saracens must have used, i.e. the bay of St Tropez: see also *ibid.*, pp. 51, 100-3.

⁵² Luppi, *I Saraceni*, pp. 51, 46; A. R. Lewis, *The Development of Southern French and Catalan Society* (Austin, TX, 1965), p. 344.

⁵³ See esp. *The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. and trans. R. Hill (London, 1962), 8 [20], pp. 44-7; Raymond D'Aguilers, *Historia francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*, trans. J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill (Philadelphia, PA, 1968), pp. 46-7. Further references and commentary are in R. L. Slitt, 'Justifying cross-cultural friendship: Bohemond, Firuz, and the fall of Antioch', *Viator*, 38:2 (2007), pp. 339-49.

⁵⁴ *Gesta francorum*, 8, p. 44: 'eique christianitatem liberius promittebat'.

the *Chanson d'Antioche*, in which a Turk called Datien betrays Antioch for the Christian cause.⁵⁵

Before we assume that the author of the *Life* is implicitly celebrating the capture of Antioch in his work, we must bear in mind not only the realities of how some sieges occurred, but also that the story of a force holed up in some seemingly impregnable position, but outmanoeuvred with the aid of a local traitor, 'is so commonplace and, in appearance, so worn that one is surprised to see so many military leaders taken in so easily and so cheaply', in the words of Félix Lecoy, who cites the demise of famous commanders such as Leonidas at Thermopylae and Desiderius at Pavia.⁵⁶ This last siege, after Charlemagne's advance across the Alps, was the Lombard king's final stand. As the legend goes, Desiderius was undone by two such local traitors. First, in return for a great reward of land, a Lombard jongleur led Charlemagne off the usual paths down from the Alps and around Desiderius's major fortifications, forcing the king to retreat to Pavia. Then, with Pavia put to siege, the daughter of Desiderius wrote to Charlemagne promising to deliver the city in return for his hand in marriage. The Frankish king agreed, and she stole the city's keys and let him in at night (whereupon she was accidentally trampled by his horses). These legends, which grew up around the events of 773-4, appear in the eleventh-century *Chronicle of Novalesa*, which of all contemporaneous narratives, I will argue, offers the clearest reflection of the particular storytelling tradition witnessed in the legend of Bovo.⁵⁷

The monastery of Novalesa was founded on the popular Mont Cenis pass through the Alps in 726, but after its destruction by the Saracens in the early tenth century, the monks were forced to flee, first to Turin then to Breme, which is not far from Pavia to the east and

⁵⁵ *The Chanson d'Antioche: An Old-French Account of the First Crusade*, trans. S. B. Edgington and C. Sweetenham (Farnham, 2011), vv. 237-58, pp. 239-51.

⁵⁶ F. Lecoy, 'Le "Chronicon Novaliciense" et les "légendes épiques"', *Romania*, 67 (1942), pp. 1-52, at 35.

⁵⁷ *Cronaca di Novalesa*, ed. and Italian trans. G. C. Alessio (Turin, 1982), III.10, 14, pp. 148-50, 152-4 (the jongleur); III.14, pp. 156-8 (Charlemagne's daughter). A likely source for the story of the daughter is Paul the Deacon, *History of the Langobards*, trans. W. D. Foulke (Philadelphia, 1907), IV.37, pp. 179-83; Lecoy, 'Le "Chronicon Novaliciense"', p. 33. See also Carozzi, 'La Vita Boboni', p. 32.

Voghera to the south-east.⁵⁸ Its chronicle was written during the original monastery's re-emergence in the early eleventh century, though the monks still held the abbey at Breme (where the text may have been written, rather than at Novalesa itself). Its rich collection of stories and legends have created a complex debate about its role in the evolution of epic and romance, for example in its extensive use and continuation of the legend of Walter of Aquitaine, the hero of the ninth-century *Waltharius* by Ekkehard I of Saint-Gall.⁵⁹

The chronicle has a keen interest in the Saracens; indeed, the author's own great-uncle was captured and ransomed by them.⁶⁰ Its version of their defeat goes as follows:⁶¹ the Saracens were at their fortification of Fraxinetum (*in castro Frascenedello*, as the author calls it), stealing and pillaging both people and animals. On one occasion when they were dividing their booty, a Saracen called Aimo was allotted a beautiful woman as part of his share. However, a stronger Saracen came and took the woman for himself. Aimo harboured a grudge over this and decided he wanted God to free the local people of his own countrymen. He went to Count Robald of Provence, decrying the wickedness of his fellow men and offering to help, urging him to keep their arrangement a secret, even from the count's own wife; Robald promised him everything he wanted in return (exactly what is unspecified). The count brought together a group of fighting men, including one called Arduin, vaguely asking them to help him in some business (*in quodam negocium*), and they set off. To his companions' annoyance, he kept the destination secret until the very end. Coming to the enemy *castrum*,

⁵⁸ Poly, *La Provence*, p. 12.

⁵⁹ *Cronaca di Novalesa*, pp. vii-xi, xxx-xxxix; II.3, 7-9, 11-13 (pp. 64, 72-100, 104-12). Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, II, pp. 158-78; Smith, *War and the Making*, pp. 161-2. On the chronicle generally: Geary, *Phantoms*, pp. 115-21; Luppi, *I Saraceni*, p. 23; C. Wickham, 'Lawyers' time: history and memory in tenth- and eleventh-century Italy', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davis* (London, 1985), pp. 53-71, at 61.

⁶⁰ *Cronaca di Novalesa*, V.9, pp. 264-6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, V.18, pp. 278-80.

Robald said: ‘O brothers, fight for your souls, because you are in the land of the Saracens!’ Those brave men fought to the end and ravaged that place. This vengeance happened because of the deceit of Aimo, whose line still endures in our time.⁶²

There the story ends; but who are the Christian fighters? Arduin is not mentioned in the *Life of Bovo*, which prefers to focus its glory on one hero alone, but he is most likely Arduin Glaber, margrave of Turin (d. c.977), who plays an important role in the *Chronicle of Novalesa* and who established his march in the face of the Saracen threat.⁶³ As for the identity of Robald (or Robold), his name matches the brother of William of Provence, and like William he was a count of that region. Consequently Arduin, William, and Robald, perhaps with other local leaders, are all thought to have taken part in the expedition of 972 against Fraxinetum.⁶⁴ A caveat, however, is that the wars against the Saracens endured for decades, even in Italy (Arduin had already fought them in the Susa valley, perhaps as far back as the 940s),⁶⁵ so different episodes of fighting may have been amalgamated into a single story.

Its history may be legendary, but from the *Chronicle of Novalesa* we can make a link to the *Life of Bovo* because their legend is the same in outline: the pillaging Saracens, the traitor who holds a grudge over a woman, the plea to the count, the hero’s assembly of an army, and the final massacre are elements common to both, though the version in the *Life* is extended by the baptism of some of the enemy, including the king, a figure not mentioned in the chronicle; yet *Bovo*’s story is truer to the chronicle’s account than to any other written source. Interestingly, while the chronicle sometimes calls the Saracens *pagani*, the *Life* does so exclusively, which may reflect a kind of popular motif, as *paiens* would become their

⁶² Ibid., V.18, pp. 278-80: ‘Robald ait: “O fratres, pugnate pro animabus vestris, quia in terra [estis] Saracenorum.” Illi vero fortes adhelete dimicant et depopulantur [lo]cum illum. Hęc ultio dolo Aymonis facta est, cuius genus nostris adhuc manet temporibus.’

⁶³ M. G. Bertolini, ‘Arduino’, in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, IV (Rome, 1962), searchable at www.treccani.it (accessed 1 May 2014).

⁶⁴ Ibid.; Carozzi, ‘La Vita Boboni’, p. 32; Poly, *La Provence*, pp. 27-8; Lewis, *Development*, p. 344.

⁶⁵ *Cronaca di Novalesa*, V.19, pp. 280-1 and notes.

collective name in the emerging vernacular epics – the *chansons de geste* – beginning with the *The Song of Roland* in the late eleventh century.⁶⁶

William died in 993/4 and Robald outlived him into the next decade, succeeding to the title of margrave.⁶⁷ If there is any historical nobleman who provided the basis for Bovo, this Robald is probably it.⁶⁸ Their names appear to match too: Bovo, or Bobo in the original Latin, sounds very much like a shortened form of Robald (just as Bob is to Robert). On the other hand, thanks to the Bosonids, Boso was not an uncommon name in the region (William and Robald's father was a Boso), so it could be a derivation of that. But the link between Bovo and Robald remains suggestive based on their shared legend rather than onomastics. It is also notable that the Life of Bovo mentions the hero's unnamed brother, who is mysteriously slain.⁶⁹ As Robald outlived William, this part of the story may conceivably be based in fact, although there is nothing to say that William was killed in such a way. However, if the author intended to write a paean to Robald, he no doubt had reasons for not alluding too closely to the real count of Provence of c.1000 – or the version told and chronicled at Novalesa – not least because it might prove embarrassing to sanctify someone who may have had no particular claim to holiness.

Storytelling networks and the chansons de geste

One way of understanding Bovo's mixed identity as a hero and a saint is to consider comparable texts within an emerging type of Latin chronicles and biographies whose heroes

⁶⁶ E.g. *Cronaca di Novalesa*, II.13-14, p. 112-14; *The Song of Roland*, trans. G. Burgess (London, 1990), with Old French extracts, pp. 164-210 (p. 8 on dating); J. V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, NY, 2002), pp. 105-34.

⁶⁷ Poly, *La Provence*, p. 174; Lewis, *Development*, pp. 344-5.

⁶⁸ Carozzi makes a similar suggestion in 'La Vita Boboni', p. 32. For a different discussion of the identity of Robald, see *Monumenta novaliciensia*, ed. C. Cipolla, 2 vols. (Rome, 1901), II, p. 261 n. 3.

⁶⁹ *De s. Bobone*, 7, p. 186.

overlapped with those of the vernacular epics. The *Chronicle of Novalesa*, which contains legends connected to Charlemagne that continued to be celebrated in popular verse, was the first.⁷⁰ Perhaps the best known of this type is the Life of William of Gellone, which was composed in the 1120s.⁷¹ It tells the story of the count of Toulouse who converted to monasticism, founded Gellone (which became Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert), and died there in around 812. This figure is historical but by the time of the *vita* had been merged with a secular epic tradition surrounding the legendary William of Orange, one of the sons of Aymeri of Narbonne. For the monks of Gellone, and for subsequent writers of the William of Orange cycle of *chansons de geste*, which centres around six core poems, they were one and the same.⁷²

As Joseph Bédier showed a century ago in his influential work on the origins of the *chansons*, the writer of this *vita* appropriated content from existing epic legendary material that was being sung by jongleurs (even though no surviving poem on the subject predates the *vita*).⁷³ In the prologue of the Life, there are direct references to this kind of storytelling about William's military exploits:

What choruses of youth, what meetings of people, especially knights and noblemen, what vigils of the saints do not sweetly resound and recite in singing voices what kind of man he was, and how great; how gloriously he fought under the magnificent Charlemagne; how boldly and victoriously he subdued and conquered the barbarians; how much he suffered from them and how much he fought back; and how often he threw them into confusion and finally drove them out, conquered and fleeing, from all the borders of the kingdom of the Franks? All these things and the multifarious story of his life, seeing that

⁷⁰ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, IV, pp. 419-20 (listing twelve such works); Smith, *War and the Making*, pp. 160-1.

⁷¹ *De s. Willelmo duce*, AASS Maii, VI, pp. 811-20; Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, I, pp. 118-32 (dating at 118).

⁷² *William, Count of Orange: Four Old French Epics*, ed. G. Price, trans. G. Price et al. (London, 1975), pp. vii-x. For William's composite identity from pilgrims' point of view, see *The Pilgrim's Guide: A Critical Edition*, ed. and trans. A. Stones et al., 2 vols. (London, 1998), II, pp. 40-2.

⁷³ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, I, pp. 126-32.

they are still considered very well known in nearly every land, do not seem to pertain to this narrative in a necessary way...⁷⁴

Despite the intention not to make military adventures part of the Life, the author cannot help but briefly describe William's ejection of the terrible Saracens from southern France along with their leader, 'Theobald'. He includes the capture of Orange, which William 'took easily and quickly with the invaders slaughtered and put to flight' before going on to win a long and bitter war.⁷⁵ Scholars have since agreed with Bédier that this is a résumé of an existing song.⁷⁶ Meanwhile it is especially interesting to note, at the beginning of this extract, the way the author integrates secular and clerical audiences into a larger 'textual community', to use Brian Stock's term, whose members had a mutual interest in heroic and apparently unsaintly material.⁷⁷

It is in this light that we should read the Life of Bovo, which appears to represent a précis of an oral tale, for a mixed audience, which also manifests in the *Chronicle of Novalesa*. Its cultural relatives were heroic songs rather than the epic saints' lives of the Carolingian and post-Carolingian schools, whose recondite poetry cast prose *vitae* anew for a highly educated audience.⁷⁸ As Michael Richter has shown, vernacular song and poetry for a broad-based audience of laypeople and clerics had a long pedigree: it was a feature of court life and beyond from the earliest Middle Ages – and is especially well attested among Carolingian

⁷⁴ *De s. Willelmo duce*, praef., p. 811: 'Qui chori juvenum, qui conventus populorum, praecipue militum ac nobilium virorum, quae vigiliae Sanctorum, dulce non resonant, et modulatis vocibus decantant, qualis et quantus fuerit, quam gloriose sub Carolo glorioso militavit, quam fortiter quamque victorioso barbaros domuit et expugnavit; quanta ab eis pertulit, quanta intulit; ac demum de cunctis regni Francorum finibus crebro victos et refugas perturbavit et expulit? Haec enim omnia et multiplex vitae ejus historia cum adhuc ubique pene terrarum notissima habeantur, nec modo ad hanc descriptionem pertinere necessario videantur'.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 5-6, p. 812; quote at 6: 'facile ac brevi caesis atque fugatis invasoribus'.

⁷⁶ M. A. H. Newth, *Heroes of the French Epic: A Selection of Chansons de Geste* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 32-3; P. E. Bennett, 'The storming of the other world, the enamoured Muslim princess and the evolution of the legend of Guillaume d'Orange', in P. E. Bennett et al. (eds.), *Guillaume d'Orange and the Chanson de Geste* (Reading, 1984), pp. 1-14, at 1.

⁷⁷ B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, NJ, 1983), pp. 90-2.

⁷⁸ A. L. Taylor, *Epic Lives and Monasticism in the Middle Ages, 800-1050* (Cambridge, 2013), esp. pp. 11-28.

writers – even if certain stricter clerics found it distasteful.⁷⁹ In the epics that came to be written down in Old French after 1100, there are, perhaps, surviving clues about Bovo himself. Bovo – or rather, Beuve – is identified as one of William of Orange’s five brothers, which may be a further onomastic link reflecting the reality of another William – William of Provence – and his brother Robald.⁸⁰ The name Beuve and its close derivatives come up again and again in various *chansons*,⁸¹ but this particular character – called Beuves of Conmarchis – was given the leading role in *The Siege of Barbastre*, which survives in a text of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, and which was retold as *Buevon de Conmarchis*.⁸² But not every story became a fully-evolved epic, and any attempt to trace Bovo of Voghera in later literature is unlikely to make definitive conclusions (but there may be suggestive links: a Saracen turncoat plays a major role in *Barbastre*, for instance, though admittedly this was a common enough motif).

Bédier, having placed the Life of William of Gellone within a thriving culture of contemporary *chansons*, set out his theory that the epics emerged out of a collaboration between monks, clerics, and the minstrels who travelled the pilgrimage routes. This partnership aimed to exploit pilgrims’ love of a good story, and in this case the road was from Paris to Santiago de Compostela by the *Via Tolosana* through Toulouse. This road goes by Gellone, and the promotion of the heroic William in hagiography in the early twelfth century served the abbey not only in ongoing competition with the monastery of Aniane over questions of dependency and relics, but also in creating heightened interest around an increasingly important pilgrimage stop (the monks’ efforts paid off in their shrine’s glowing

⁷⁹ Richter, *Formation*, pp. 125-80.

⁸⁰ See William of Orange’s genealogy in the unpaginated prefatory material of R. G. Koss, *Family, Kinship and Lineage in the Cycle de Guillaume d’Orange* (Lewiston, NY, 1990).

⁸¹ W. Calin, *The Epic Quest: Studies in Four Old French Chansons de Geste* (Baltimore, MD, 1966), p. 48 and n. 38.

⁸² *Le siège de Barbastre*, ed. B. Guidot (Paris, 2000), pp. 40-1 (dating); Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, I, pp. 49-51. This is a different character to the popular Beuve or Bevis of Hampton, on whom see J. Fellows and I. Djordjević (eds.), *Sir Bevis of Hampton in Literary Tradition* (Woodbridge, 2008).

entry in *The Pilgrim's Guide to Compostela*, written within a few decades of the Life of William).⁸³ The argument about the cycle of William of Orange is developed in convincing detail over the entire first volume of Bédier's four-volume opus.⁸⁴ Despite some objections to the application of this model to all *chansons*, and arguments against the origins of certain epics in the eleventh-century cloister, the fundamental role of the road as a powerful dynamic in the birth and propagation of heroic literature has remained a convincing notion.⁸⁵

In the twelfth-century *Pilgrim's Guide*, the *Via Tolosana* is the southernmost route through France, traversing west from Arles and Saint-Gilles to Toulouse before scaling the Pyrenees and meeting the other main roads. It is known as the road taken by Italian, Provençal, and Languedocian pilgrims.⁸⁶ However, Bédier also showed that it connected with northern France through the Massif Central and, by mining the place names and shrines in the *chansons* themselves, constructed a route based on Roman roads from Paris to Arles via Clermont-Ferrand, Brioude, and Le Puy.⁸⁷ His research remains a warning to scholars not to become reliant on 'textbook' descriptions of pilgrimage routes, but rather recognise their flexibility as well as the changing potential of shrines to attract traffic.⁸⁸

Bédier was not aware of the Life of Bovo but, had he been, it would have provided another interesting text to accompany his vision of dynamic storytelling. With this in mind, let us extend the *Via Tolosana* to the pilgrim route through northern Italy, the so-called *Via Francigena*, by following it east over the Alps and into the Po valley towards Voghera itself.

⁸³ *Pilgrim's Guide: Critical Edition*, II, pp. 40-2.

⁸⁴ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, I; see esp. pp. 118-147.

⁸⁵ On the importance of the road see S. Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia, PA, 2006), pp. 77-80. Objections include Lot, *Études*, pp. 258-9, who admits that monasteries and pilgrim routes were an undeniable influence but do not explain the oldest *chansons*, in particular the first poem in the William cycle (the *Chanson de Guillaume*) and the *Chanson de Roland*. See also n. 1, above.

⁸⁶ *Pilgrim's Guide: Critical Edition*, II, pp. 10, 22, 32 (at the latter it is called the *Via Egidiana*: the road of St Giles); *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela*, trans. W. Melczer (New York, NY, 1993), pp. 25, 135 n. 9.

⁸⁷ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, I, pp. 368-75.

⁸⁸ The editors of *Pilgrim's Guide: Critical Edition*, p. 146 n. 9, sound their own warning that the *Guide's* routes are a broad sketch, with many possible derivations and sub-routes.

A traveller could go by the Montgenèvre pass (the southernmost of the three main routes through the western Alps, the others being Mont Cenis and the Great St Bernard), or perhaps take one of the minor passes further south (the Col de Tende or the Col de l'Argentière, which is now called the Col de Larche or Maddalena Pass).⁸⁹ Alternatively, there was the four-day voyage by sea from Marseilles to Genoa, which involved its own hazards and expenses.⁹⁰ By far the most important and popular of these routes was the Montgenèvre pass which, on the French side, linked with Sisteron, next to the birthplace of Bovo at Noyers.⁹¹ In this area one may still find traces of the legend in the names of Castel Bevons, Tour de Bevons (Valbelle), and a chapel of Saint-Bevons.⁹² From the beginning of the twelfth century, a diffusion of charitable lodgings (*domus*) linking Provence with the Montgenèvre helped to reinforce communications along this route.⁹³ On the Italian side, travellers came to Susa, which is where the roads from Montgenèvre and Mont Cenis meet. It is here that they mingled with the pilgrims who had just stayed at Novalesa's hospice on Mont Cenis.⁹⁴ Together, they would have travelled on to Turin and into the Po valley, past Breme, the outpost of Novalesa. It is not hard to imagine the flow of stories and songs that would have accompanied them.

They would soon have come to Mortara, home of an intriguing hagiographic text that cannot be overlooked. The Life of 'dearest friends' Amicus and Amelius is another crossover work that has at its core a secular tale about two heroic companions whose adventures culminate in serving Charlemagne during his invasion of Lombardy in 773-4.⁹⁵ It is dressed

⁸⁹ Tyler, *Alpine Passes*, pp. 48-9.

⁹⁰ D. J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change* (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 48; Stopani, *Le grandi vie*, pp. 73-7. On the practicalities: M. Bennett, 'Travel and transport of the crusades', *Medieval History*, 4 (1994), pp. 91-101, at 96.

⁹¹ Tyler, *Alpine Passes*, pp. 49-50.

⁹² Carozzi, 'La Vita Boboni', p. 33.

⁹³ P. Pazé, 'Lungo la strada di Provenza: i Gerosolimitani a Chiomonte', in G. Sergi (ed.), *Luoghi di strada nel Medioevo: fra il Po, il mare e le Alpi occidentali* (Turin, 1996), pp. 179-212, at 185.

⁹⁴ For itineraries of Mont Cenis and Montgenèvre crossings, see Tyler, *Alpine Passes*, pp. 63-7.

⁹⁵ The *Vita sanctorum Amici et Amelii carissimorum* is ed. E. Kölbing, *Amis and Amiloun* (Heilbronn, 1884), trans. M. Kuefler in T. Head (ed.), *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York, NY, 2000), pp. 441-58.

up with narrative elements emphasising the heroes' piety and includes their eventual martyrdom in battle. It was written in the early twelfth century, and although the substance of the tale may have a long folkloric history, the concrete origins of its heroes can be traced no further back than two tombs at Sant' Albino, Mortara from the end of the eleventh century.⁹⁶ There is a distinct internationalism to the story, which follows a path through France and Italy: Amicus is the son of a German knight whose castle is at Bourges, in central France; Amelius is the son of a count of Auvergne; they first meet in childhood at Lucca on the way to be baptised at Rome; and the story's locations include not only Paris but also the Mont Cenis and Great St Bernard passes. By the end of the twelfth century, the heroes had their own Old French epic, *Ami et Amile*, in which they are not martyred but instead die at Mortara on their way back from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.⁹⁷ They also crop up in a number of other *chansons* such as *La chevalerie Ogier*.⁹⁸

Voghera is just the other side of the Po from Mortara. If Mortara could create its epic saints out of songs and roadways, so could Voghera. But how and why did its clerics come to promote their heroic pilgrim? In the next part we shall explore the importance of the cult of Bovo for the town, in an example of the demands of urban change during the dynamic twelfth century. In the meantime, however, it remains to be added that the Life of Bovo is further evidence of the complex interplay between orality and textuality in the central Middle Ages. If discussion about the origins of the French *chansons* is these days relatively subdued, debates over the wider relationship between the written and spoken word are not. Scholars are moving beyond the oral-textual dichotomy suggested by the opposing views of Michael Richter and Rosamond McKitterick, and in this period it may be more helpful to think of a

⁹⁶ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, II, p. 190; *Ami and Amile: A Medieval Tale of Friendship*, trans. S. N. Rosenberg and S. Danon (Ann Arbor, MI, 1996), pp. 1-2.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Bédier, *Légendes épiques*, II, pp. 182-94.

nuanced, symbiotic relationship between spoken and written forms.⁹⁹ With saints' Lives such as Bovo's, it is not entirely clear how this occurred, but it may be said, at least, that these unusual Lives were the product of storytelling networks that were essentially oral but which could at times manifest in textual form. In Bovo's case this transformation occurred first according to the exigencies of monastic chronicle writing, and second when it came time to create an appropriate context for a local cult a little way down the road.

Voghera and the pilgrimage trail

As we have seen, references to the church of San Bovo at Voghera begin in 1119. From 1158, we also have references to a hospital or hospice of San Bovo,¹⁰⁰ while a monastery of San Bovo is documented from 1273.¹⁰¹ Their foundation dates are unknown and these dates should not be taken in lieu; documentation is sparse and it is hard to guess when the buildings were established or associated with the saint. They were built next to each other outside the walls of the town by the river Staffora. The hospital was a particular success, and supplanted all other charitable institutions in Voghera until the mid-thirteenth century, and was often

⁹⁹ See Richter's monographs on orality, *Oral Tradition and Formation*, against McKitterick's emphasis on literacy in her *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989). M. Innes, 'Orality and literacy in an early medieval society', *Past and Present*, 158 (1998), pp. 3-36, is a useful corrective to this supposed dichotomy. See also L. Melve, 'Literacy-aurality-orality: a survey of recent research into the orality/literacy complex of the Latin Middle Ages (600-1500)', *Symbolae Osloenses*, 78 (2003), pp. 143-97; and C. Collier, 'Origins and development of medieval European epic: the problem of cultural transmission and transformation', *Mediaevalia*, 9 (1983), pp. 45-82. On the workings of epic poetry see A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA, 2000), alongside comments in Richter, *Oral Tradition*, pp. 57-61, or idem, *Formation*, pp. 235-9. Recent contributions to the general debate include S. Loutchitsky and M.-C. Varol (eds.), *Homo legens: styles et pratiques de lecture: analyses comparées des traditions orales et écrites au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2010); and P. Geary, 'Oblivion between orality and textuality in the tenth century', in G. Althoff, J. Fried, and P. Geary (eds.), *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 111-22.

¹⁰⁰ *Documenti vogheresi*, no. 76, pp. 116, involving a Johannes Novus, 'mis[s]um et rectorem [h]ospitalis de sancto bobone'.

¹⁰¹ A. Nada Patrone, 'Repertorio', in *Monasteri in alta Italia dopo le invasioni saracene e magiare, sec. X-XII* (Turin, 1966), pp. 629-785, at 781.

called simply the ‘hospital of Voghera’ (*hospitale Viquerie*).¹⁰² However, the monastery, like most religious houses in Lombardy, may have been extremely small, perhaps serving just two or three monks, which might account for its absence from documentation before 1273.¹⁰³ The rise of the hospital most likely attests to the growing importance of Voghera as a pilgrimage route – as pilgrims were among the principal beneficiaries of hospitals at this time¹⁰⁴ – and this section will show why Voghera wanted to attract pilgrims and the part Bovo played in ‘marketing’ the town.

At the time when the Life of Bovo was written, Voghera suffered from being just off the standard route to Rome, according to extant itineraries. Some pilgrims no doubt stopped there, but the evidence suggests that most did not. When Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury journeyed to Rome in the 990s, and the Icelandic abbot Niklas of Munkathvera in the mid-twelfth century, they crossed the Great St Bernard pass (since they were coming from north-west Europe), travelled to Pavia, and crossed the Po at Piacenza, like almost everyone else did, regardless of which route they had taken over the western Alps.¹⁰⁵ The ferry ‘port’ at Piacenza, with its lucrative takings from pilgrims, is vividly evoked in the long Life of Gerald of Aurillac.¹⁰⁶ The Life also describes the vibrant trading hub at Pavia.¹⁰⁷ The twin magnets of Pavia and Piacenza diverted people from crossing the Po a little earlier and passing Voghera. A visit to Milan might be another reason to stay out of Voghera’s way and keep

¹⁰² D. Rigaux, ‘San Bovo: l’iconographie d’un culte rural Italien du XVe siècle’, in J.-P. Massaut and M.-E. Henneau (eds.), *La christianisation des campagnes*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1996), I, pp. 171-98, at 175-6; Clerico, *Vita di San Bovo*, p. 46.

¹⁰³ On the small size of monasteries, see Casagrande, ‘Fondazione e sviluppo’, pp. 342-3.

¹⁰⁴ Birch, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 61-4; *Pilgrim’s Guide: Critical Edition*, II, p. 17 on hospitals: ‘They are sacred places, houses of God, places of refreshment for holy pilgrims, for the rest of the needy, for the comfort of the sick, for the salvation of the dead, for the protection of the living.’

¹⁰⁵ Itineraries and other sources are compiled in R. Stopani, *Le grandi vie di pellegrinaggio del Medioevo: le strade per Roma* (Florence, 1986): pp. 60 (Sigeric), 69-72 (Niklas). Another version of this work, with clearer maps, is in idem, *Le vie di pellegrinaggio del Medioevo: gli itinerari per Roma, Gerusalemme, Compostella* (Florence, 1991). See also V. Ortenberg, ‘Archbishop Sigeric’s journey to Rome in 990’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 19 (1990), pp. 197-246; D. Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 128-3; and eadem, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West* (London, 1999), pp. 18-20, 33-4.

¹⁰⁶ The *portus* is in *Vita sancti Geraldi Auriliacensis*, ed. A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen (Brussels, 2009), I.29, p. 176.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, I.27, pp. 172-4.

north, as Matthew Paris outlines in a route via Mont Cenis, as does another mid-thirteenth-century itinerary in the *Annales Stadenses*.¹⁰⁸

Yet Voghera was close enough to the traffic to try to attract pilgrims and reap the economic benefits. These included trade in food and drink and the provision of accommodation, as well as the sale of clothing items, medicinal supplies, and so on, not to mention offerings at sacred shrines.¹⁰⁹ It is not easy to find Voghera in pilgrim accounts – the journey of a mid-fourteenth-century merchant called Bartolomeo Bonis provides one of the rare exceptions¹¹⁰ – but the success of its hospice suggests that they did come. The conditions were favourable. In the eleventh century, long-distance pilgrimage flourished as previously challenging destinations opened up. An overland route to Jerusalem was now available, Compostela could be freely accessed and, as we have seen, the Alpine passage to Rome was considerably less chancy with the demise of the Saracens.¹¹¹ In the Alps a growing need for more hospices began to be met, as with St Bernard of Menthon's famous foundation before 1081 on Mont Joux, which would come to be called the Great St Bernard pass.¹¹²

Jerusalem and Compostela competed with Rome for pilgrims, but the prestige of St Peter's city ensured a flow was maintained. The possibility of attracting pilgrims via Voghera came from the route that the merchant Bonis took: Aldo Settia has shown that despite the sources' preference for the road going north of the Po, from the Alps to Pavia, the alternative way (which he calls the 'forgotten road') was in use from the ninth century. It was called a *strata romea* in documents from the twelfth century, and is clearly described in Voghera

¹⁰⁸ Stopani, *Le grandi vie*, pp. 85-6, 96-9.

¹⁰⁹ A. R. Bell and R. S. Dale, 'The Medieval Pilgrimage Business', *Enterprise and Society*, 12:3 (2011), pp. 601-27. On offerings: J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Medieval Religion* (London, 1975), pp. 158-67.

¹¹⁰ Stopani, *Le grandi vie*, pp. 117-18. A Florentine of 1477 also records going through Voghera: A. A. Settia, 'Strade e pellegrini nell'Oltrepò pavese: una via "romea" dimenticata', *Annali di storia pavese* 16-17 (1988), pp. 79-89, at 80, where the merchant Bonis is also discussed.

¹¹¹ Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 114-17; Bell and Dale, 'Pilgrimage Business', p. 619; Tyler, *Alpine Passes*, pp. 52-73.

¹¹² Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 200.

charters.¹¹³ Bovo himself is proof that a pilgrim might at least come that way, likewise St Contardo, another noble pilgrim and a subject of hagiography who perished on that same road. Contardo, who was going in the opposite direction towards Compostela, died in 1249 at Broni, which is about halfway between Voghera and Piacenza.¹¹⁴ Pilgrim-saints originating from such towns would become a common feature of the Middle Ages.¹¹⁵ Voghera was always assured a measure of local importance in any case, being at a crossroads between Tortona (the episcopal seat) and Pavia (the capital) and was therefore well placed for the traffic of the *Via Francigena*, while another source of travellers was the old *Via Emilia* to Genoa.

In Lombardy, the twelfth century was a time of rebuilding, and bridges in particular often needed attention in order to cope with the flow of pilgrims on the old Roman roads.¹¹⁶ Voghera, situated on the left bank of the Staffora, which runs north into the Po, was no exception. Travellers on the ‘forgotten road’ via Voghera needed a bridge in order to cross the Staffora and continue their journey either east or west on the *Via Emilia*. Grado Merlo’s exposition of the means by which Voghera built its links with the outside world demonstrates how the process was communal, involving local authorities, just as much as ecclesiastical, with the involvement of religious foundations.¹¹⁷ The institutions of San Bovo would play an important role. Their positioning was crucial: the church, and then the hospital and monastery, were situated in a rural area called Gerbo outside the gate of San Pietro, to the north-east, and near the river and the *Via Emilia*, where animals grazed and pilgrims stopped. Other extramural activities went on there, such as executions of criminals and the quarantining of animals, many of which must have died. The association with deceased

¹¹³ Settia, ‘Strade e pellegrini’, pp. 80-85.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 79, 81; *De s. Contardo peregrino*, AASS Aprilis, II, pp. 446-54, which was written in 1367.

¹¹⁵ Clerico, *Vita di San Bovo*, pp. 79-80; see also ch. 3, below.

¹¹⁶ F. Cognasso, ‘Ospedali di ponti’, in *Studi di storia ospedaliera piemontese in onore di Giovanni Donna d’Oldenico* (Turin, 1958), pp. 109-15, esp. pp. 109, 112.

¹¹⁷ G. G. Merlo, ‘Esperienze religiose e opere assistenziali in un’area di ponte tra XII e XIII secolo’, in *Sergi, Luoghi di strada*, pp. 213-34 = *Annali di storia pavese* 16-17 (1988), pp. 65-77; references are from the former.

animals sheds light on the beginning of Bovo's *miracula*, in which the area of his burial had to be enclosed so that animals would cease walking on it and expiring.¹¹⁸ Merlo has shown how the ongoing process of building and maintaining the bridge there – which was constructed in the 1140s but soon had to be rebuilt – was carried out by officials of the hospital of San Bovo 'in the name of the commune of Voghera' as well as 'in the name of the abness' of Santa Maria del Senatore at Pavia.¹¹⁹ It was during this critical period for the cult in the twelfth century that Bovo was first made an official patron of Voghera.¹²⁰

The connection with Santa Maria del Senatore, an important monastery in Pavia, created claims, counter-claims, and a situation of fraught rivalry for the rest of the Middle Ages, concerning both spiritual and temporal property. The origins appear to lie in the abness of Senatore's claim to land around the church of San Bovo, at a time when Senatore was developing a powerful hold over this area south of the Po.¹²¹ The extent of this claim around Voghera would cause a long and serious dispute with the bishops of Tortona from 1165, specifically concerning jurisdictional powers over the bridge and hospital, which required the intervention of different popes; by 1195 Senatore, working with Sant'Ilario in Voghera, had defended its claim.¹²² Moreover, Pavia and Voghera fought over who hosted the true resting place of Bovo himself. We know more about the period when the rivalry came to a head in the later Middle Ages. In 1469, the discovery of the body at Sant'Apollinare, Pavia on 6 February – with accompanying celestial prodigies – was matched only sixteen days later, on 22 February, by a corresponding *inventio* at San Bovo, Voghera with its own recorded

¹¹⁸ *De s. Bobone*, 9, p. 187; Rigaux, 'San Bovo', pp. 174-5; Settia, 'Strade e pellegrini', p. 83.

¹¹⁹ Merlo, 'Esperienze religiose', pp. 216-17; Giovanni Paradiso, 'hospitalerius' or 'minister hospitalis Sancti Bobonis', built the bridge of wood variously 'pro amore Dei', 'ad honorem Dei et comunis Vigerie', 'nomine comunis Vigerie et pauperum', 'nomine comunis Vigerie et abbatisse [of Santa Maria del Senatore, Pavia]', and 'nomine abbatisse [ditto]'. On the close links between the hospital and the town, see also *ibid.*, p. 232.

¹²⁰ Rigaux, 'San Bovo', p. 177.

¹²¹ E.g. *Documenti vogheresi*, no. 19, pp. 42-3, where the abness disposes of a mill on this land in 1119; Rigaux, 'San Bovo', p. 175 and n. 13.

¹²² G. G. Merlo, "'Capella cum adiacente parrochia": Sant'Ilario di Voghera tra XII e XIII secolo', *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, 85:2 (1987), pp. 325-86, at 335-8; R. Merlone, 'Cronotassi dei vescovi di Tortona', *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, 85:2 (1987), pp. 503-41, at 535.

miracles.¹²³ This rivalry appears to stem from a translation that took place by the early thirteenth century from Voghera to Pavia (perhaps to protect the relics during the Guelf-Ghibelline wars of the time). It seems the body was translated back and forth again after this, so it is no wonder that each side would make its own strident claims during the confusing winter of 1469.¹²⁴ It was this context of competitive interest in Bovo that may have stimulated the production of the Naples manuscript and Bovo's inclusion in the *Sanctuarium*. Based on the patchy evidence, it is at least clear that San Bovo's property and relics, including control over its institutions, were under pressure from formidable ecclesiastical authorities based at Pavia from the twelfth century onwards. Whoever built the church of San Bovo, the hagiography of the cult makes a striking claim for the saint to be associated with Voghera and not Pavia. Despite the tussles that would continue through the Middle Ages, it had the desired result of anchoring Bovo to the smaller town and attaching him to its communal identity. Voghera needed Bovo for itself: not only to stake a claim over his relics and property, but as a symbol of the town's emergence and, of course, as a draw for pilgrims. In this period, the sudden discovery of important relics, followed by shrewd publicity, could and did create thriving new pilgrimage destinations.¹²⁵ In the absence of any evidence to suggest otherwise, we should understand the emergence of St Bovo in a similar fashion.

¹²³ *De s. Bobone*, pp. 188-91, which includes the Voghera miracles; Carozzi, 'La vie de saint Bobon', p. 469.

¹²⁴ Clerico, *Vita di San Bovo*, pp. 61-74, 93-4, citing (at 61-2) *Il catalogo rodobaldino dei corpi santi di Pavia* of 1236 that locates the body of Bovo at Sant'Apollinare; extracted in Casagrande Mazzoli, 'La tradizione testuale', p. 26 n. 42.

¹²⁵ Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 116; H. Fichtenau, *Living in the Tenth Century: Mentalities and Social Orders*, trans. P. J. Geary (Chicago, 1991), p. 330.

Conclusion

The cult of St Bovo, which celebrates him as a warrior, pilgrim, and protector of animals (he is almost always pictured with an ox, in an echo of his name) became – and to some extent still is – widespread, especially in Piedmont and the Veneto. It even found its way back over the Alps in the nineteenth century in a neat return to the saint's place of origin in Provence.¹²⁶ We have seen how the cult developed hand-in-hand with the emergence of Voghera as a political and spiritual force, especially as defined against its neighbour Pavia. We have also seen how the cult of Bovo had a strategic goal in attracting pilgrims (though the exploitation of pilgrims in this period should not be over-emphasised),¹²⁷ and these would have included those coming from France who appreciated Bovo's dual characteristic of pious dedication to Rome and heroic deeds in the context of a developing Old French repertoire of epic poetry.

It is this last aspect of the Life that has received little attention and about which this chapter has sought to find some useful connections. A return to the scholarship of Joseph Bédier has helped to provide the models and comparisons to contextualise the Life, which might otherwise seem like a strange anomaly in the field of hagiography rather than intriguing evidence for mixed networks of storytelling.¹²⁸ These networks were neither secular nor spiritual but simply reflected a 'natural' culture of pilgrims, jongleurs, and clerics who shared an interest in material about local heroes. They are witnessed in the hagiographic and epic compositions about Amicus and Amelius as well as, more famously, William of Gellone or Orange. These hagiographic texts bear a close resemblance in their mixed style to

¹²⁶ Clerico, *Vita di San Bovo*, pp. 48-56; R. Crotti Pasi, 'La diffusione del culto del santo', *Annali di storia pavese*, 16-17 (1988), pp. 27-41.

¹²⁷ For a rationalisation of the principal explanations for cults which downplays the economic benefit, see P. A. Hayward, 'Saints and cults', in J. Crick and E. van Houts (eds.), *A Social History of England, 900-1200* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 309-20.

¹²⁸ See C. Cubitt, 'Universal and local saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in A. Thacker and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 423-53, for a useful overview of the more usual dynamics giving rise to saints' cults.

the Life of Bovo, and together they show an appreciation for secular storytelling while attempting to sanctify their protagonists. To modern observers they may seem a messy compromise, but to the pilgrims and poets who visited their cult centres, which were strategically located on or near important roads, their tales vividly brought tombs and relics to life in a way appropriate to the heroic literary styles of the era of the First Crusade.

A good story could evolve and be adapted in any way that its narrators saw fit. For example, in the final instalment of the William of Orange cycle, the *Moniage Guillaume*, in which the hero becomes a monk, all the details of William's testing time at the monastery – which include various burlesque elements – appear in the *Chronicle of Novalesa* where Walter, the hero of the *Waltharius*, replaces William in the story. Jessie Crosland summarised the dizziness induced in the reader who attempts to trace these concordances:

And so we find chronicles and poems, poems and chronicles, all dovetailing and overlapping until we sometimes hardly know which we are reading. The *Novalesa Chronicle* could as easily be transformed into a *chansons-de-geste* as the *Moniage Guillaume* could be turned into an equally fabulous chronicle. It is useless to ask which derived from which. The dates are difficult to attribute with any certainty to the documents; the episodes may be attached to different heroes; and each served in turn to build up the sort of semi-historical narrative which we find in the more ambitious chronicles of that age.¹²⁹

Although I have sought to bring to light the historical and literary context for the Life of Bovo, this advice about the limits of our knowledge is a salutary reminder. However, I believe I have been able to show that the early cult of Bovo expressed the dynamism and importance of different networks in a thriving age of pilgrimage. Bovo himself was a pilgrim, his cult took advantage of nearby pilgrimage traffic, and his legend reflects a tradition of storytelling that travelled with the pilgrims themselves, past the monks of Novalesa, along

¹²⁹ Crosland, *Old French Epic*, p. 41.

those propitious roads. It speaks of a close affinity between north-west Italy, the western Alps, and Provence, and reminds us how important the mountain passes were to the free exchange of people and ideas. Finally, it contributes another small part of the picture that sees the decades around the turn of the twelfth century as a flowering of creativity, stimulated by fresh connections, emerging hubs, and new journeys.

Chapter 3

Davino and the 'exotic' pilgrim cults of Lucca

Lucca is notable among Italian towns for its promotion of the cult of the traveller. Strategically situated on the *Via Francigena*, it provided a major stopping point for pilgrims heading to Rome after the trek through the Apennines. Out of this fact emerged an example of lay sanctity in the shape of St Davino, though many of Lucca's cults reflect the city's geography in the honour they bestow upon those who passed through it. Davino, the one non-royal layman among these saints, will be the initial focus of this chapter, which will then go on to discuss other pilgrim cults. The purpose of this is to take advantage of Lucca's rich hagiographic culture to provide the background to Davino's unusual cult, whose defining feature is pilgrimage; consideration of non-lay pilgrim cults within our period will provide illuminating points of comparison. While space restricts a discussion of every such pilgrim cult at Lucca, this chapter will demonstrate from what kind of beginnings lay sanctity was able to flourish.¹

The saints discussed below all came from far away, died in or near the city, and were venerated there or in its territory. In an effort to interrogate the appeal of these outsiders, the chapter will end by exploring the allure of the traveller from a spiritually 'aesthetic' point of view, and ask whether in Lucca, in certain circles, foreigners had a special cachet which came to be reflected in the number and importance of their cults. Lucca's great crucifix, the *Volto*

¹ For broad surveys of saints' cults at Lucca, see R. Grégoire, 'L'agiografia lucchese antica e medievale', in *Lucca, il Volto Santo e la civiltà medioevale* (Lucca, 1984), pp. 45-70; idem, 'Liturgia ed agiografia a Lucca durante gli episcopati di Giovanni II (1023-1056), Anselmo I (1056-1073) e Anselmo II (1073-1086)', in C. Violante (ed.), *Sant'Anselmo vescovo di Lucca (1073-1086) nel quadro delle trasformazioni sociali e della riforma ecclesiastica* (Rome, 1992), pp. 273-82; P. Licciardello, 'Agiografia latina dell'Italia centrale, 950-1130', in *Hagiographies*, V, pp. 515-32; E. B. Garrison, *Studies in the History of Medieval Italian Painting*, 4 vols. (London, 1953-62), I, pp. 127-53.

Santo (Holy Face), carved out of wood in this period but, to contemporaries, thought to be an ancient memorial made at Jerusalem, became the defining symbol of this magnetism. The fitting word with which to approach this is ‘exoticism’, which is sometimes employed by historians and scholars of different periods for its useful descriptive and explanatory functions. I will argue that the aesthetics of foreign sanctity, through ‘exoticism’, were important and compelling in the eleventh century, and within this was intricately bound the success of Davino’s lay pilgrim cult.

Before analysing his cult, however, it will be useful to consider the political background to the promotion of sanctity at Lucca, with its concern for religious reform, and how this relates to pilgrimage. From what can be gleaned from limited sources, it is at least clear that in the second half of the eleventh century, growing personal mobility became a pressing matter in the locality. Dozens of hospitals, which helped to house incoming travellers, sprang up all over the city and diocese; these were generally associated with houses of regular canons, as would become common elsewhere in Europe.² Developments had been under way since the first half of the century, however, and Martino Giusti dates the entire era of expansion to 1027-1140.³ The act of founding communities of regular canons, or converting existing secular clergy into their regular counterparts, was the principal application of reform at Lucca, and in this it was a leading light; in the eleventh century, eight houses appeared in the city, and another eighteen in the diocese.⁴ This development was promoted by a series of three reforming bishops: John II (1023-56), Anselm I (1056-73; he was also Pope Alexander II from 1061), and his nephew St Anselm II (1073-80/1, when he

² The Arrouaisian Order, for example, was active in hospitals in France, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, and Poland from the twelfth century: P. Montaubin, ‘Les chanoines réguliers et le service pastoral (XIe-XIIIe siècles)’, in M. Parisse (ed.), *Les chanoines réguliers: émergence et expansion (XIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Saint-Étienne, 2009), pp. 119-57, at 143-4; but see moreover F.-O. Touati, “‘Aime et fais ce que tu veux’: les chanoines réguliers et la révolution de charité au Moyen Âge”, in *ibid.*, pp. 159-210, for a thorough discussion.

³ M. Giusti, ‘Le canoniche della città e diocesi di Lucca al tempo della Riforma gregoriana’, *Studi gregoriani*, 3 (1948), pp. 321-67, at 322.

⁴ L. Schmugge, ‘Lucca e il pellegrinaggio medievale’, in *Lucca, il Volto Santo*, pp. 157-75, at 161. On Lucca as an early adopter of regular canons: J. C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), p. 41.

was expelled; he died in 1086). Anselm I's major contribution was to rebuild the cathedral of San Martino, which he filled with relics and consecrated in 1070. However, his tentative attempts (following Bishop John's) to reform the cathedral clergy became a flashpoint in the Investiture Contest and a symbolic cause for the reform party under his successor Anselm II, who enforced the communal life of chastity and took a hard line over its interpretation (following the Augustinian Rule, he insisted that canons' property should be held in common and that private benefices were forbidden – a solution, in part, to the pressing problem of dwindling church resources). He pushed the cathedral canons and the conservative majority of local leading figures into rebelling and welcoming the forces of Henry IV into Lucca. This temporarily put an end to Countess Matilda of Canossa's rule over the city, and Anselm II, Matilda's closest spiritual advisor, fled to her court. Before her death in 1115, however, Matilda was able to restore her rule after finally defeating imperial forces, and Bishop Rangerius (1096-1112), one of Anselm II's biographers, continued her reforming mission. However, the city now had a charter of privileges that would soon evolve, on Matilda's death, into the emergence of consuls and the trappings of self-governance.⁵

The significant and interlocking features of this narrative that will recur in relation to the cults discussed below are those of pilgrimage and ecclesiastical reform, which was enabled by the lay overlordship of the Canossa family, though it is not always clear how far their influence went. Another dynamic to note is that throughout this period, saints' cults were undergoing diversification as the city's liturgical emphasis expanded from an essentially Roman calendar to incorporate local preferences. This process allowed many new saints to be

⁵ C. D. Fonseca, 'Il capitolo di S. Martino e la riforma canonica nella seconda metà del sec. XI', in Violante, *Sant'Anselmo*, pp. 51-64, at 52-4; K. G. Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution: The Canonistic Work of Anselm of Lucca* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 58-63; H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII: 1073-1085* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 304-5; T. Schmidt, *Alexander II. (1061-1073) und die römische Reformgruppe seiner Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1977), pp. 37-8; Giusti, 'Le canoniche', pp. 332-3; M. E. Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca and the Evolution of the Renaissance State* (Oxford, 2008), p. 30; D. J. Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa 1046-1115* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 23, 243-4; P. Golinelli, *Matilde e i Canossa* (Milan, 2004), pp. 236-9. See the introduction, above, for further discussion of Matilda. On pilgrimage through the city, see also F. Cardini, 'La "religione popolare" a Lucca nella seconda metà del sec. XI', in Violante, *Sant'Anselmo*, pp. 283-95, at 294.

venerated who came from outside Italy, and the city's worldview became distinctively cosmopolitan.⁶ As a result traditions changed, novelties were embraced, and even a layman could become a saint.

Davino and the Armenians

Among the half-dozen saints studied in this chapter, Davino is the only non-royal layman. Like all of them, he was aristocratic, and like all of them, he came from afar and found in Lucca a resting place that would accept him and consider him exceptional. Lucca was a chance discovery for these men: never the intended destination, it was a unique haven on the road that was eager to nurture and even venerate the high-born foreigner. With Davino, we see this tendency at its purest. All other indicators of sanctity, whether derived from royal or ecclesiastical status, are stripped away, leaving us to notice the true significance of this travelling nobleman's personal dedication to *peregrinatio*.

The Life of Davino is short and sparsely told, eschewing the live miracles, pious foundations, or diverting escapades we have seen in previous chapters.⁷ A short prologue mentions the miracles worked through Davino in the church of San Michele in Foro, which is situated in the centre of Lucca. The anonymous author tells us that he writes 'from the telling of old men and especially of Catholics',⁸ who unlike imperial heretics, in the words of the contemporary chronicler Ekkehard of Aura, were 'all those preserving loyalty and obedience by Christian law to St Peter and his successors', and the qualification aptly evokes the

⁶ Changes through the eleventh and twelfth century can be charted in extant liturgical calendars: see Grégoire, 'Liturgia ed agiografia', pp. 278-81; further calendars are discussed in Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 130 (see also his comments on passionaries, p. 132).

⁷ *De s. Davino*, AASS Iunii, I, pp. 327-36.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1, pp. 329-30: 'relatione antiquorum virorum et maxime Catholicorum'.

schismatic nature of Lucchese religion in the later eleventh century, as well as indicating on which side our author sits.⁹

Davino, the story goes, was a wealthy nobleman from Armenia.¹⁰ As a youth, he takes to heart Christ's command to the rich man to go and sell all that he has, give to the poor, and follow the Lord to have treasure in heaven.¹¹ Having followed through with this call to poverty, he takes inspiration from another gospel command to set out on an epic pilgrimage that will take him to Jerusalem and Rome:

And since he was now stripped of all glory and worldly pomp, he did just as the Lord said in the gospel: 'Whoever wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me [Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34].' Therefore taking up the cross of the Lord, in this way he followed the Lord Redeemer. He left behind all his dearest family and neighbours, with all the household and his homeland, and set out abroad.¹²

The stages of renunciation and exile are potent enough in themselves for this author without the necessity of his hero going through ecclesiastical vows or coming from royal stock; in other Lucchese texts, as we shall see, a saint may be vaguely alluded to as a prince or a king even if there was no genuine historical basis for a royal connection. At one point in the *Life*, Davino is at least compared to a king, namely the Israelite David: parallels are made between David's victory over Goliath and the Philistines, and Davino's over the devil and his vice-loving attendants through vigils, prayers, and fasts while on pilgrimage.¹³ In the end Davino,

⁹ Ekkehard of Aura, *Chronica*, ed. F.-J. Schmale and I. Schmale-Ott (Darmstadt, 1972), III, p. 288, reporting the perception of Henry IV by Catholics: 'a catholicis vero, id est cunctis beato Petro suisque successoribus fidem et obediendum lege christiana conservantibus'; among other things he was called archheretic ('heresiarcha').

¹⁰ The implications of this are explored below.

¹¹ *De s. Davino*, 2, p. 330: 'Si vis perfectus esse, Vade et vende omnia quae habes, et da pauperibus, et veni sequere me, et habebis thesaurum in caelo.' Cf. Matt. 19:21, Mark 10:21, Luke 18:22.

¹² *Ibid.*: 'Cumque ita jam esset nudatus omni gloria et pompa seculi, fecit, sicut Dominus dicit in Euangelio; Qui vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum, et tollat Crucem suam, et sequatur me. Tollens itaque Crucem Domini, hoc modo secutus est Dominum Redemptorem. Reliquit omnes suos carissimos parentes et affines, cum omni familia et patria sua, et peregre profectus est.'

¹³ *Ibid.*, 3, p. 330.

like Bovo, purposefully ‘wore down’ his body through self-denial,¹⁴ though at no point is either of them called a hermit or reported to spend any time in the ‘wilderness’.

Davino’s intention is to continue on to Santiago de Compostela but it proves a journey too far. Leaving Rome, ‘he happened to arrive at a city of Tuscany which is called Lucca, shining among [all] other cities of Tuscany’.¹⁵ He is put up at the house of a noblewoman called Atha. Falling ill, he foresees his impending death (on 3 June, traditionally 1050 or 1051)¹⁶ and Atha has him buried with ceremony at her local church of San Michele in Foro. He rests ‘for some time’¹⁷ and people walk indecently over his grave. Davino then appears to one such woman and tells her to desist walking or sitting on it, and also heals her sickness. A vine grows up on the same ground whose fruits have the power of healing, and at night angels seem to burn incense above the tomb. In this way reverence grows among local clergy and laity towards a nascent cult, and the miracles occurring at the tomb reach the ear of ‘Bishop Alexander’ who, the text tells us, afterwards would become pope; this refers to Bishop Anselm I, who became Pope Alexander II while keeping his episcopal seat at Lucca.¹⁸ The bishop has the body translated to a place next to the altar of St Luke within a chapel of the church of San Michele. A succession of posthumous miracles based around the tomb follows, beginning with the vivid exorcism of a female servant of the noblewoman Atha, and they remain strictly local in aspect (apart from one involving a *peregrinus*) and are often coloured with detail. There is also a story about ‘a certain canon of our church’¹⁹ who tries to steal one of Davino’s fingers in the middle of the night but is rendered immobile until he is absolved

¹⁴ Ibid.: ‘maceravit’; *De s. Bobone seu Bovo*, AASS Maii, V, pp. 184-91, at c. 8, p. 187: ‘macerabat’.

¹⁵ *De s. Davino*, 4, p. 330: ‘ad unam Tusciae civitatem, quae Luca dicitur, fulgens inter alias civitates Tusciae, accidit pervenire’.

¹⁶ Ibid., note f, p. 332; cf. P. Lazzarini, ‘Davino Armeno’, *BS*, IV, col. 520.

¹⁷ *De s. Davino*, 5, p. 330: ‘per aliquantum tempus’.

¹⁸ Ibid., 6, p. 330. Alexander II is said to have canonized Davino, but this is most unlikely (and is not mentioned in the text). See Schmidt, *Alexander II*, p. 39, and *De s. Davino*, ‘Commentarius praevius’, 5-6, pp. 328-9.

¹⁹ Ibid., 11, p. 330: ‘Quidam etiam Canonicus nostrae ecclesiae’.

by the prayers of the congregation. The tale may stem from a need to persuade certain canons to show more respect for the cult.

There are clues pointing to the origins of the work. First of all, the internal evidence in the Life clearly shows that it was written at the church of San Michele in Foro, most likely by a canon: both the *vita* and *miracula* are based around this church, which had been home to a community of regular canons since before 1023, making it one of the first groups of clergy to follow a canonical rule in Lucca.²⁰ Within the walls of the city at this time, only the cathedral of San Martino – where the clergy put up heavy resistance to the introduction of the regular life – and Santa Reparata, the old cathedral, could claim to be such early adopters of this reforming practice.²¹

It is likely that the whole text was written not long after the time of Alexander II, whose papacy is spoken of in the past tense.²² The presence of Atha's servant among the posthumous miracles suggests that some or all of the *miracula*, with their detailed stories, were written down not long after the first translation, which must have happened, as the author tells us, before Alexander became pope (in 1061), but also after his accession to the see of Lucca in 1056.²³ We can therefore conclude that the traditional date of 1050/1 for Davino's death is sensible, that the translation of his body into the church took place between 1056 and 1061, and that the Life and miracles were written down not long after 1073 when Alexander died. When we recall that Davino heeded the call to 'take up his cross', however, it may be necessary to place the text's date not in the late eleventh century but in the early twelfth, when the assumption of the cross became closely connected with departures on

²⁰ Giusti, 'Le canoniche', pp. 339-40.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 329-37 (San Martino), 337-9 (Santa Reparata).

²² *De s. Davino*, 6, p. 330 (note 'præfuit'): 'haec tanta miracula ad aures Domini Episcopi Alexandri devenirent, qui postea Romanae et Apostolicae præfuit Ecclesiae.'

²³ Ibid.: the translation occurred as a result of his 'command and advice' ('jussione et consilio') when he was bishop.

general pilgrimage as well as armed crusade.²⁴ The year 1142, when a second translation occurred which goes unmentioned, is a certain *terminus ante quem*.²⁵ In any case, we may assume that a cult began relatively early, as a liturgical calendar from San Salvatore, written before 1070, lists Davino under 3 June.²⁶

The one surviving manuscript of the Life does not come from San Michele but from elsewhere in the locality.²⁷ It is part of a giant 'passionary' in two volumes, elaborately decorated and, based on its particular hagiology, clearly Lucchese in origin.²⁸ It now rests in the Lateran archives (Codd. 79/81) in Rome, having been sent to the Lateran canons by fellow brothers at Lucca.²⁹ Edward Garrison, who made a major study of the Lucchese passionaries and considered these two codices to be one work, dated it to the second quarter of the twelfth century (though some now believe the first quarter to be more accurate) and, following the Bollandists, deduced its provenance to be San Pantaleone on Monte Pisano, the hilly region just south of Lucca also known as Monti Pisani which has an ancient eremitic tradition.³⁰ The Life of Davino itself is a late addition to the codices, copied at the end of the first codex in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. There is a marginal note in the same volume under Davino's feast day, explaining that his Life has been added at the end, and that his feast is celebrated most solemnly in the manner of St Pantaleone's liturgy, at the latter's

²⁴ C. Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 21-3.

²⁵ *De s. Davino*, 'Commentarius praeuius', 4, p. 328.

²⁶ Grégoire, 'Liturgia ed agiografia', p. 279; on dating, see Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 130.

²⁷ In their edition the Bollandists also used a second (now lost) manuscript of a later date which was based on the earlier, surviving one: *De s. Davino*, 'Commentarius praeuius', 2, p. 328.

²⁸ Garrison, *Studies*, I, pp. 177-8. The Lucchese collections are known as passionaries, though legendaries might be a better name as they are not only for martyrs. In general, see G. Philippart, *Les légendiers latins et autres manuscrits hagiographiques*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, 24-5 (Turnhout, 1977).

²⁹ Rome, San Giovanni in Laterano, Archivio, Codd. A. 79/81; on their transfer from one canonical house to another, see *De s. Davino*, 'Commentarius praeuius', 2-3, p. 328.

³⁰ Garrison, *Studies*, I, pp. 177-91, at 178, 191. On subsequent dating, see D. Dinelli, 'Un *Passionario* lucchese del XII secolo: i manoscritti A. 79/81 dell'Archivio del Capitolo di S. Giovanni in Laterano', *Rara volumina* (1996:2), pp. 5-16, at 8; and A. Gransden, 'Abbo of Fleury's *Passio Sancti Eadmundi*', *Revue Bénédictine*, 105 (1995), pp. 20-78, at 73 n. 320. Monte Pisano and its ancient hermitages are colourfully evoked in Margaret Stokes' travelogue, *Six Months in the Apennines or A Pilgrimage in Search of Vestiges of the Irish Saints in Italy* (London, 1892), pp. 50-62.

altar.³¹ More recently, Daniele Dinelli has noted that the passionary may also originate from San Frediano, Lucca's most illustrious community of canons, or Santa Reparata, where Pantaleone was a co-patron of the church, but he acknowledges that the hagiological emphases of the work also fit well with the patrons of San Pantaleone.³²

However we look at it, all the suggested places of origin of the passionary – as well as the church where the cult originated – were communities of regular canons. The passionary itself is laid out in the correct manner for canonical, as opposed to monastic, liturgy, with appropriate readings for the office (most of the texts are divided into nine readings, with a few into six readings and one into three; for the monastic office we would see many texts divided into twelve readings).³³ As we have seen, internal evidence in the Life of Davino also betrays its canonical origins, and we can therefore expect its content to express a particular spirituality, especially in the context of the regular life which was becoming more important among Lucca's clergy.

An interesting aspect of this was regular canons' potential influence on lay society. As Davino's cult seems to have been prompted by the efforts of a laywoman, Atha, this influence could evidently work the other way too. Nonetheless, various historians have argued that, compared with Benedictine monks, regular canons had a special interest in serving the world despite their adherence to a common life.³⁴ Many communities of canons used the Rule of St Augustine in conjunction with a local rule; Maureen Miller has discussed the example of Santa Maria in Porto, at Ravenna, where the rule of Peter of Onesti (d. 1119)

³¹ From f. 244v of Cod. A. 79, transcribed in Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 178 n. 4: 'Vitam sci Davini conf. require in fine libri, tertio nonas junii, cuius festum devotissime consuevimus celebrare ad instar festivitatis beati Pantaleonis in officio et in pulchrioribus ornamentis, et eius officium fit in altari sancti Pantaleonis.'

³² Dinelli, 'Un *Passionario*', pp. 11-15.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁴ Recent examples include Montaubin, 'Les chanoines réguliers'; Touati, "'Aime et fais'". See also the classic essay by C. Walker Bynum, 'Spirituality of regular canons'.

was instituted at the end of the eleventh century.³⁵ It exhorts its adherents to reject the world, but states:

In addition, let them love fasting, let them comfort the poor, let them gather in guests, let them clothe the naked, let them visit the sick, let them bury the dead, let them serve the oppressed, let them console the sorrowful, let them weep with the weeping, rejoice with the joyful, let them not forsake charity, if possible let them have peace with all...³⁶

It goes on to speak of heavenly authority and the eternal life, love of Christ, obedience to earthly authority, and devotion to spiritual teachings, readings, psalms, hymns, and canticles, but as Miller notes, ‘the very order of these exhortations is revealing’, as caring for the disadvantaged takes precedence over more monastic and liturgical preoccupations.³⁷ This line of argument follows Caroline Walker Bynum’s findings that regular canons felt a greater responsibility towards service, and a more emotional and charitable commitment towards their neighbour, than monks.³⁸ This outward-looking spirituality was therefore directed towards pilgrims – who were sometimes categorised alongside the ‘poor of Christ’³⁹ – in a way that granted them a new respect. Regular canons, who comprised a key part of the religious reforms of the period, therefore tried to find ways to blend the active and contemplative lives. In the Life of Davino, the saint’s outward devotion to pilgrimage sits alongside his interior virtue of self-denial: this is an eremitic kind of juxtaposition even if he was not a hermit in fact, and contains a similar tension to that inherent in the role of the regular canon. Because of this tension, these monk-like clerics could arouse suspicion from

³⁵ M. C. Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950-1150* (Ithaca, NY, 1993), pp. 83-6.

³⁶ *Codex regularum monasticarum et canonicarum*, ed. L. Holstenius, 6 vols. (Augsburg, 1759), II, p. 143: ‘Ament praeterea jejunium, pauperes recreent, hospites colligant, nudos vestiant, infirmos visitent, mortuos sepeliant, tribulantibus subserviant, dolentes consolentur, cum flentibus fleant, cum gaudentibus gaudeant, charitatem non derelinquant, pacem, si fieri potest, cum omnibus habeant’; cited in Miller, *Formation of a Medieval Church*, p. 85 and n. 108 (a minor change has been made to the translation).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³⁸ C. Walker Bynum, ‘Spirituality of regular canons’, pp. 50-3.

³⁹ E.g. the description of the orders in the eleventh-century *Vita Willihelmi abbatis Hirsaugiensis*, ed. W. Wattenbach, MGH SS 12 (Hanover, 1856), pp. 209-25, at c. 21, p. 218.

monks themselves, who sometimes questioned, like Peter Abelard in this letter from the earlier part of the twelfth century, why they mingled with society regardless of their cloisters:

Why, even you, newly called ‘regular canons’ by yourselves, just as you are newly arisen, do you not remain separated from the enticements and temptations of the world, hedging your cloisters about with a great circumference of walls in the manner of monks? ... the advice is surely to avoid all temptations to the extent that we can, especially if we should choose that [monastic] life which both is of greater merit and lies less open to temptation.⁴⁰

Among efforts to find novel ways of life in the eleventh century, the objectives of hermits and regular canons were often related. Indeed, as has been acknowledged at least since Charles Dereine’s work on regular canons, these religious, with their strict adherence to the common life, arose from the same fresh impulse to live according to an ancient apostolic ideal that saw the widespread reform of institutions and the multiplication of hermitages and hospitals which served men and women striving to find a purer mode of piety in their lives.⁴¹ The new enthusiasm for eschewing the secular life, in the manner of monks, was seen at the same community of San Pantaleone where Davino came to be venerated. It was founded in 1042 in the solitude of Monte Pisano, which was tellingly known as *Mons Heremitaë*, by three priests, a cleric, and a layman, who despaired of the evils of the world and wanted to live ‘separated far from secular men’.⁴² To do this they agreed to live ‘according to the canonical rule’,⁴³ but apart from this what was to separate them from monks or hermits? It is

⁴⁰ Peter Abelard, *Epistola XII*, PL 178, cols. 343-52, at 351A-B: ‘Cur et vos ipsi canonici regulares a vobis ipsis noviter appellati, sicut et noviter exorti, magno ambitu murorum claustra vestra sepientes, more monachorum, ab illecebris et tentationibus saeculi manetis divisi? ... profecto consilium est omnia tentamenta, quoad possumus, evitare, praesertim si eam eligamus vitam, quae et majoris sit meriti, et minus pateat tentationi.’ Trans. J. M. Ziolkowski, *The Letters of Peter Abelard: Beyond the Personal* (Washington, DC, 2008), pp. 171-2, with minor changes here.

⁴¹ C. Dereine, *Les chanoines réguliers au diocèse de Liège avant Saint Norbert*, Université de Louvain: Recueil de travaux d’histoire et de philologie, 3:44 (Louvain, 1952), pp. 19-22. See works cited in nn. 44-5, below, and also ch. 6 for further discussion.

⁴² *Raccolta di documenti per servire alla storia ecclesiastica lucchese*, ed. D. Barsocchini, 5 vols. (Lucca, 1818-41), V, 3, no. 1787, p. 658: ‘a secularibus hominibus longe separati’.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 659: ‘secundum regulam canonicam’.

not surprising that the first houses of regular canons which took root in Italy at this time have been linked to earlier eremitic communities, from which they grew.⁴⁴ There was ambiguity in their nature, which was evident in the inconsistent naming of such groups, as is well known.⁴⁵ In an era when new forms of solitude were sought, whether at Camaldoli, Fonte Avellana, Chartreuse, or among the hills of Lucca, anyone seeking withdrawal from the world might fall into one of several categories, while *peregrinatio* in some form was often practised by such ascetics.⁴⁶

Davino was not the only Armenian venerated at Lucca: Biagio, an Armenian bishop and martyr of the early church, gained a special following there despite having a widely diffused cult.⁴⁷ However, another Armenian, Simeon of Polirone, was near-contemporary to Davino and bears important similarities. According to the Life written shortly after his death, which was on 26 July 1016, Simeon is motivated to depart his homeland by two gospel commands, one which exhorts him to abandon ‘houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, lands’ (Matthew 19:29) and another which orders him to ‘renounce everything’ in order to be a disciple (Luke 14:33).⁴⁸ He travels to Jerusalem, Rome, through northern Italy

⁴⁴ Dickinson, *Origins of the Austin Canons*, p. 38.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-223; J. Becquet, ‘L’érémisme cléricale et laïc dans l’ouest de la France’, in *L’eremitismo in Occidente nei secoli XI e XII* (Milan, 1965), pp. 182-211, at 185-6; E. Delaruelle, ‘Les ermites et la spiritualité populaire’, in *ibid.*, pp. 212-47, at 215; A.-M. Helvétius, ‘Ermîtes ou moines: solitude et cénobitisme du Ve au Xe siècle (principalement en Gaule du Nord)’, in A. Vauchez (ed.), *Ermîtes de France et d’Italie (XIe-XVe siècle)* (Rome, 2003), pp. 1-27, at 26; H. Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism: A Study of Religious Communities in Western Europe 1000-1150* (London, 1984), pp. 19-21; C. N. L. Brooke, ‘Monk and canon: some patterns in the religious life of the twelfth century’, in W. J. Sheils (ed.), *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, Studies in Church History, 22 (Oxford, 1985), pp. 109-29; C. Walker Bynum, ‘The spirituality of regular canons in the twelfth century’, in *ibid.*, pp. 22-58, at 32; G. Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 54-6.

⁴⁶ Further commentary specifically on pilgrimage includes P. G. Jestice, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 100-1, 129-36; Leyser, *Hermits*, pp. 23, 39. Traditional Benedictines, however, opposed pilgrimage: G. Constable, ‘Opposition to pilgrimage in the Middle Ages’, in *ibid.*, *Religious Life and Thought (11th–12th Centuries)* (London, 1979), ch. 4. See chs. 5 and 6, below, for further discussion of pilgrimage and hermits.

⁴⁷ G. D. Gordini, ‘Biagio’, BS, 3, cols. 157-60; Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 137.

⁴⁸ The Life and posthumous miracles are edited by P. Golinelli in ‘La “Vita” di s. Simeone monaco’, *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 20 (1979), pp. 709-88, at 745-86; see c. 1, p. 751 for the gospel commands. There is an earlier edition in *De s. Simeone monacho et eremita*, AASS Iulii, VI, pp. 319-37. Golinelli and others date the Life to between 1016 and 1024, which seems likely, but J. Howe argues for the mid-eleventh century in ‘The

(stopping to cure many sick at Lucca),⁴⁹ France, Spain, and even Britain, before attaching himself as a hermit to the monastery of San Benedetto Po, which had just been founded by Tedald of Canossa in the territory of Mantua. After his death he was quickly honoured by Pope Benedict VIII at the instigation of Tedald's successor Boniface, and both this monastery and the cult of St Simeon remained of crucial political and spiritual importance throughout the rule of the lay margrave and that of his daughter Matilda.⁵⁰ Simeon's cult spread to Lucca in the eleventh century where it is attested in liturgical calendars, and his Life was written up in all three of the extant Lucchese passionaries from the first half of the twelfth century (as well as later ones), indicating its special importance in our period.⁵¹ The patronage of reform-minded magnates, pilgrimage, and the eremitic way of life intersect in Simeon's cult in a way that is evidenced, in varying degrees, in the other Lucchese cults discussed here.

Finally, it is worth reflecting that the Armenian origins of these saints has a probable basis in historical reality. Armenian travellers were not uncommon in western Europe (though more common in the Byzantine empire), and in the eleventh century St Gregory of Pithiviers, Katholikos Gregory II, and a handful of Armenian bishops are all attested in Western sources. Rome in particular saw a fairly constant stream of Armenian activity.⁵² In the tenth and eleventh centuries, up until 1064, Byzantine attacks on Armenia resulted in considerable emigration west, usually into the heart of the Byzantine empire where many assimilated. But the final catastrophe for the kingdoms of Armenia was the invasion of Seljuk Turks who defeated the Byzantines in 1071.⁵³ Davino fits rather well into this chronology, if we assume he left his homeland in, say, the 1040s and continued further west rather than

true date of the "Life" and "Miracles" of St. Symeon of Polirone', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 25 (1984), pp. 291-9.

⁴⁹ Golinelli, 'La "Vita" di s. Simeone', 9, pp. 763-4.

⁵⁰ P. Golinelli, 'Culto dei santi e monasteri nella politica dei Canossa nella pianura padana', in *Studi Matildici* (Modena, 1978), pp. 427-44, at 434-8. On the canonization: Golinelli, 'La "Vita" di s. Simeone', *Miracula*, 13, p. 786; E. W. Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948), pp. 1, 58, 163-4.

⁵¹ Grégoire, 'Liturgia ed agiografia', pp. 278-81; Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 134.

⁵² A. E. Redgate, *The Armenians* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 231-3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-9; R. Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (London, 2006), pp. 59-61.

stopping in Byzantium. One historian has suggested that his name may be associated with the Armenian city of Dvin, an ancient capital.⁵⁴ Dvin did indeed see struggles in the 1040s between Byzantines and Turks, making it likely that nobility emigrated.⁵⁵ This is as far as we can go, but it is enough to counter any idea that Davino's origins are necessarily fictitious or generic. Much more important is why this seemingly marginal figure was elevated to a position of sanctity by Lucchese canons. To understand this, we shall turn to some other, similar cults that shed light on the matter.

Three Irish pilgrims

Excellent examples of how qualities associated with pilgrimage and self-denial evolved to become virtues of prime importance in reformist houses of the eleventh century are found in the Lucchese cults of the (supposedly) Irish saints Frediano, Silao, and Pellegrino.⁵⁶ Frediano, a bishop of Lucca, is the earliest of Lucca's pilgrim saints, and remains one of the most important saints of the city after its patron St Martin, while his church is second only to the cathedral.⁵⁷ He is first mentioned in Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, where he miraculously

⁵⁴ M. Bacci, 'An Armenian pilgrim in medieval Italy: cult and iconography of St Davinus of Lucca', *Hayagitut'yan ardi vichakë ev zargats'man herankarnerë / Armenian Studies Today and Development Perspectives* (Yerevan, 2004), pp. 548-58, at 551.

⁵⁵ *Armenia and the Crusades: Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, trans. A. E. Dostourian (Lanham, MD), pp. 73-5.

⁵⁶ On the wider phenomenon of Irish saints in Italy, see A. M. Tommasini, *Irish Saints in Italy*, trans. J. F. Scanlan (London, 1937); P. Tomea, 'I santi iro-scoti nell'agiografia dell'Italia medioevale (secoli VII-XIV)', in L. Valle and P. Pulina (eds.), *San Colombano e l'Europa: religione, cultura, natura* (Como, 2001), pp. 97-135; L. Gougaud, *Les saints irlandais hors d'Irlande: étudiés dans le culte et dans la dévotion traditionnelle* (Louvain, 1936).

⁵⁷ *Vita Sancti Fridiani: contributi di storia e di agiografia lucchese medioevale*, ed. G. Zaccagnini (Lucca, 1989): see introduction, esp. pp. 3-60 on the historical background of the cult; Licciardello, 'Agiografia latina', pp. 516-20; Tommasini, *Irish Saints*, pp. 360-77. On the church of San Frediano, see Giusti, 'Le canoniche', pp. 345-8. One of the other main episcopal cults of the city was for a martyred bishop of nearby Populonia called Regolo, who originally hailed from Africa. His prominence in the new cathedral, and a second translation in 1109, attest to the importance of this foreigner, who was also known as a pilgrim and a hermit. See *De s. Regulo episc. Africano martyre*, AASS Septembris, I, pp. 223-40; F. Caraffa, 'Regolo', BS, 11, cols. 84-7; Licciardello, 'Agiografia latina', pp. 521-4; Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 135. Closely connected to Regolo are other Africans

diverts the course of the river Auser (today's Serchio) around the city.⁵⁸ An early Life of Frediano (who is also known as Fridian or Frigidian), written before the eighth century, contains much the same information. Two more recensions follow, one from the ninth or tenth century and another from the eleventh century (probably the first half); recently edited by Gabriele Zaccagnini, they permit a useful case study of how the priorities of a cult can change over time.⁵⁹

The legend grew from humble beginnings through these three textual recensions (and continued further in an *Epitome metrica*). The second recension adds an interesting detail which would become central: Frediano is given his Irish origins, whereas previously they went unmentioned.⁶⁰ The author states that he is reporting 'Catholic' tradition, passing on a feature of the story which is judged authoritative.⁶¹ The addition of Frediano's Celtic background aligns him with the large collection of Irish missionaries and pilgrims such as St Columbanus who made their way into Italy.

After this, the third recension, which was composed at the canonical community of San Frediano at Lucca, states the following:

Instructed in the sacred heights from a young age, and carrying that gospel teaching in his heart – 'whoever does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be my disciple [Luke 14:33]' – he left behind everything and headed for the region of Tuscany. Once there, separated from all the pomp of this world, he led the life of a hermit.⁶²

venerated at Lucca among other places, namely Cerbone and the saintly pair Giusto and Clemente: see S. De Paoli, 'Carbonio', BS, 3, cols. 1130-31; Garrison, *Studies*, I, pp. 135-6; S. Ferrali, 'Giusto e Clemente', BS, 7, cols. 41-7; Grégoire, 'L'agiografia lucchese', p. 58.

⁵⁸ Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, ed. A. de Vogüé, French trans. P. Antin, 3 vols. (Paris, 1978-80), III.9, pp. 286-8.

⁵⁹ *Vita Fridiani*: on dating, see pp. 5, 63.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, c. 1, rec. II, p. 154: 'ex Hibernia Scotiae partibus oriundus extitit'.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 'sicut prisci catholici tradiderunt'.

⁶² *Vita Fridiani*, c. 1, rec. III, p. 155: 'Qui sacris apicibus a primeua aetate imbutus, illud euangelicum preceptum in pectore gestans nisi quis renuntiauerit omnibus quae possidet non potest meus esse discipulus, relictis omnibus Tusciae partes petiit, quatenus ibi, sequestratus ab omnibus pompis huius seculi, heremiticam uitam duceret'.

The most important new detail here, which would likewise become a salient feature of the cult, is Frediano's eremitism, which involved a sojourn on Monte Pisano before the populace demanded he descend and accept episcopal office, whereupon he led the city through a difficult period following the Lombard invasion. The other interesting new aspect to the saint's motivation is the gospel teaching on poverty, which we witness echoed in Davino's legend, well before poverty became the characteristic we see so often prominent in twelfth-century Italian saints' Lives.⁶³ By 1046 at the latest, the canonical regime was a considerable success at San Frediano, to which popes and emperors gave privileges and numerous churches were entrusted; indeed, its canons were responsible for bringing the regular life to the Lateran church at Rome in 1137.⁶⁴ The legend of Frediano would go on to be fused with that of Finian of Moville, another Irishman, in the twelfth or thirteenth century;⁶⁵ before this, however, one of Lucca's most important saints had developed in the eleventh century into a characteristic epitome of the spiritually reformist impulses reflected with such clarity in Davino's Life. Nurtured by regular canons, in communities which the reforming parties would consider shining examples of the new spiritual direction, both saints' legends highlight foreign origins, pilgrimage (or voluntary exile),⁶⁶ poverty (with the shedding of worldly *pompa*), and self-denial.

In the later twelfth century, the cult of another journeying Irish bishop was promoted at Lucca when in 1180 the nuns of Santa Giustina elevated the body of St Silao (or Silaus), who had died in the late eleventh century or *c.*1100.⁶⁷ The story goes that this former abbot of royal blood of the monastery of St Brendan, having heeded a similar call to poverty as we

⁶³ A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1997), p. 199 for the new saints of 'charity and labour'.

⁶⁴ Dinelli, 'Un *Passionario*', p. 11; Giusti, 'Le canoniche', p. 347; H. Schwarzmaier, 'Riforma monastica e movimenti religiosi a Lucca alla fine del secolo XI', in *Lucca, Il Volto Santo*, pp. 71-94, at 80.

⁶⁵ *Vita Fridiani*, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁶ On this wide definition of pilgrimage, see J. Leclercq, 'Monachisme et pérégrination du IXe au XIIIe siècle', *Studia Monastica*, 3:1 (1961), pp. 33-52, at 33; and ch. 5, below.

⁶⁷ *De s. Silao episc. hiberno*, AASS Maii, V, pp. 62-8. See Tommasini, *Irish Saints*, pp. 378-82; Licciardello, 'Agiografia', p. 516.

have seen elsewhere,⁶⁸ is elected to an Irish see and travels to Rome to be consecrated by Gregory VII. At around the same time, his sister Mingarda goes on pilgrimage to Rome, ‘as is the custom of her people’,⁶⁹ but while stopping at Lucca finds herself the object of a local nobleman’s attentions. On her return from Rome, this nobleman imprisons her, and she ends up relenting and marrying him before retiring to Santa Giustina, where she dies. In the meantime, Silao returns to Rome on business, learns his sister’s fate, and dies at Lucca on his way back, also at Santa Giustina. It would seem that Lucca’s ability to act as a kind of fateful nodal point, wherein foreigners are seen to perish before achieving sanctification, continued throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when this special quality of the city gave rise to new cults as well as the resurrection of old ones.

Eremitism was congruent with hilly terrain not only in the area south of Lucca, where Monte Pisano saw a tradition of withdrawal, but also north in the mountainous area of the Garfagnana and beyond, deep into the Apennines. It is in this region, on the road heading towards Modena, that a church and a hospital of St Pellegrino are mentioned in a charter of 1110.⁷⁰ The saint in question is known as Pellegrino delle Alpi in Garfagnana (or di Garfagnana) in order to distinguish him from the dozens of other saints called Pellegrino or Peregrinus (meaning ‘Pilgrim’). A church in the city of Lucca in honour of a St Pellegrino, which is attested in 1078, may well refer to the same cult.⁷¹ Pellegrino of the Garfagnana was allegedly an Irish prince and pilgrim who, after a series of extraordinary adventures and ordeals, found himself in the Apennines where he died a hermit and where his church was

⁶⁸ *De s. Silao*, 1, p. 64: he sells his belongings, gives to the poor (for there is treasure in heaven), and scorns earthly pomp: ‘*vendite quae possidetis, et eleemosynam date ... thesaurum non deficientem in caelis. ... spretis secularibus pompis...*’.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, p. 65: ‘*sicut moris est gentis illius*’.

⁷⁰ A. Mercati, ‘S. Pellegrino delle Alpi in Garfagnana: note agiografiche e storiche’, in *idem, Saggi di storia e letteratura*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1951, 1982), I, pp. 145-206, cited at 174: ‘*ecclesia sancti Pelegrini*’ and ‘*casa, quod est ispetale, qui est positam in loco et finibus, ubi dicitur Terme Saloni*’. This refers to *Termae Salonis* which was on the border of Tuscany and the diocese of Modena: *ibid.*, p. 173.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

built. The charter of 1110 shows that a cult was in existence at around the time of Davino's, even if the legend was composed later.⁷²

It is impossible to know quite how much of this legend bears a resemblance to stories that would have surrounded the original cult. When the obviously later or more fantastical elements of the *vita* are stripped away, however, certain salient details echo the other examples from this Lucchese corpus. The son of an Irish king,⁷³ Pellegrino renounces the succession, choosing the immortal crown over the temporal, and commands his 'barons' (*barones*) as follows:

'Bring me the crown and the gospel of Christ.' When he opened the book, he found the place where the Lord says, 'If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and come and follow me.' Hearing this, the blessed Pellegrino, in front of everyone placed the temporal crown under his feet; and whatever he had, he began to give it all to the poor, orphans, and widows. Once separated from such things, he retired into the silence of the night disguised in the dress of a pilgrim.⁷⁴

The gospel command is the same found in the Life of Davino, and is part of Christ's answer to the questions of the young, rich man who goes away sorry because he cannot live up to such demands. This, along with similar commands we have seen quoted, was the key authority behind the glorification of poverty and exile that is consistently witnessed in these texts. For as Jesus explains once the rich man has departed (as we saw in the Life of Simeon): 'Everyone who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or

⁷² *De s. Peregrino confessore*, AASS Augusti, I, pp. 75-80, where the *vita* is accurately labelled 'Acta fabulosa' (p. 77); on late-medieval dating, see Mercati, 'S. Pellegrino', pp. 167-73. See also the discussions in Tommasini, *Irish Saints*, pp. 346-59; and P. Golinelli, 'Culti comuni su versanti opposti: Venero, Prospero, Geminiano', in idem, *Città e culto dei santi nel medioevo italiano* (Bologna, 1991), pp. 91-110, at 94-7.

⁷³ This may be questionable, as Pellegrino's birthplace of 'Scotia' could refer to Scotland rather than Ireland from the eleventh century onwards: *De s. Peregrino*, I, p. 77; Mercati, 'S. Pellegrino', p. 153 n. 10.

⁷⁴ *De s. Peregrino*, 3, p. 78: 'Afferte mihi coronam, et Euangelium Christi, qui cum aperuisset librum, reperit locum ubi Dominus dicit; Si vis perfectus esse vade, et vende omnia quae habes, et da pauperibus, et veni sequere me. Hoc audiens beatus Peregrinus, coram omnibus coronam temporalem sub pedibus sibi posuit; et quidquid habuit, totum pauperibus orphanis, et viduis erogare coepit; quibus distractis, noctis silentio in habitu peregrini incognitus recessit.'

children, or lands, for my name's sake will receive a hundredfold, and will possess life everlasting.⁷⁵ The call to exile is above all a Christomimetic impulse, and part of a new dedication to gospel preaching.

The subsequent fabulous details of the Life of Pellegrino need not detain us for long; suffice it to say that his first destination is the Holy Land, where he spends forty years in the desert before making for Italy, via a disastrous mission at the court of a sultan where he endures tortures and burnings (in a kind of homage to the Franciscan legend). During the sea crossing to Ancona, he is thrown overboard but after reaching land by floating on his pilgrim's robe he visits Rome, Bari, and Monte Gargano, before finally retreating into the Apennine forests. Further ordeals follow at the hands of demons and he eventually makes his home in a hollowed-out tree where he dies. A rivalry breaks out between the Tuscans and the Lombards over who should have his body, so it is strapped to a cart pulled by a pair of oxen who are tasked with making the decision; the oxen take the body to the border between the two territories, where the church is built and miracles are performed. Plenty of colourful detail has undoubtedly been added to this legend over time. In its essence, however, it is the story of a layman who goes on a journey and dies near Lucca: in this way it shares a similar typology to Davino's *vita* (though Pellegrino is allegedly royal). Frediano and Silao may have been clergymen, but all of them shed significant light on the local importance of renunciation and pilgrimage which dominate the values of the written texts and make clear the motivations behind Davino's own veneration.

⁷⁵ Matt. 19:29; cf. Mark 10:29, Luke 18:29.

Two English kings

Lucca did not only develop its own pilgrim cults, but also imported them. Its position on the road to Rome made it susceptible to the liturgical, textual, and relic offerings of travelling abbots and bishops, and its citizens' willingness to embrace the trappings of foreign cults as their own allowed for a cosmopolitan openness to the possibility of sanctity. The cult of King Edmund of East Anglia, who was martyred by the Danes in 869, is not a 'pilgrim cult' like the others discussed here, but it came to Lucca as a result of pilgrim traffic to Rome. As Antonia Gransden has pointed out, the *Passio sancti Eadmundi* by Abbo of Fleury, written c.987, gained remarkable popularity abroad that was unusual for an Anglo-Saxon saint.⁷⁶ It made its way to various monasteries of northern Francia (as well as Arnstein, near Wiesbaden) but where the cult really seems to have found traction was at Lucca, the only southern European centre that embraced it. It was here, in the same giant passionary that contains the Life of Davino, that the *Passio* was first recorded in the city.⁷⁷ It was most likely brought to Lucca by Abbot Baldwin of Bury St Edmunds on his way to Rome in 1071. Probably at the same time, a confraternity was established between the canons of San Martino and the monks of Bury, evidence of which exists in a necrology from the cathedral that names thirteen monks from the English house.⁷⁸ The new cathedral of San Martino had only just been consecrated by Alexander II in 1070, and St Edmund was to have his own altar and relics within it; his popularity is reflected in the extant Lucchese calendars from the period.⁷⁹ Hansmartin Schwarzmaier, for one, sees in this contact with the Anglo-Norman

⁷⁶ Gransden, 'Abbo of Fleury', pp. 74-5.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 22 (dating), 69-70 (continental copies), 71-8 (Lucca). An edition of the *Passio* is in M. Winterbottom (ed.), *Three Lives of English Saints* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 65-87.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 71, 75.

⁷⁹ Garrison, *Studies*, I, pp. 134-5; Grégoire, 'Liturgia ed agiografia', pp. 278-81.

world a moment of great significance for the city, when Lucca truly made its mark on the pilgrimage movement of the time.⁸⁰

Gransden, who examined the Lucchese passionaries to trace Edmund's cult therein, found the *Passio* extant in the major passionary mentioned (Codd. 79/81 in the Lateran archives), and very probably once a part of Cod. P+ in Lucca's Biblioteca Capitolare (dated close by, to c.1100), as well as extant in Cod. F of the same library (dated to the third quarter of the twelfth century). The provenance of these manuscripts is particularly interesting. We have discussed Codd. 79/81, which probably came from San Pantaleone, or at least a similar house of reformist canons. Cod. P+ probably came from San Pantaleone too, while Cod. F is from San Pietro di Pozzeveri.⁸¹

Pozzeveri, sited in a rural location to the east of the city, was converted into a canonical house in 1056.⁸² Both San Pantaleone and Pozzeveri were the result of small groups of clerics, laymen, and hermits coming together with aspirations to live the common life out of the city; both had noble patrons to help create the original foundation, and in the beginning the simple, ascetic life endured before it dissipated and was swallowed up by larger institutions (San Pantaleone had to be reformed by the canons of San Frediano in 1137 and eventually became a Cistercian monastery, while Pozzeveri passed to Camaldoli before 1105). The original pioneering tendency, as Schwarzmaier has stressed, is the real story of 'reform' at Lucca. These two communities provide the best examples, but there were others too, and doubtless many which have gone undocumented because they never established an enduring rule.⁸³ Several churches of Lucca began to call themselves canonical in the eleventh century,⁸⁴ but some, like the cathedral, were not strict in their interpretation of the regular

⁸⁰ Schwarzmaier, 'Riforma monastica', pp. 71-2.

⁸¹ Gransden, 'Abbo of Fleury', p. 73.

⁸² Giusti, 'Le canoniche', pp. 357-8. It was called a 'monastery' within a few decades of this even though it maintained the clerical structure of a house of canons (the nomenclature was often interchangeable).

⁸³ Schwarzmaier, 'Riforma monastica', pp. 79-85.

⁸⁴ Giusti, 'Le canoniche', p. 326.

life. St Edmund's relics were deposited at the cathedral, but where we find the textual remains of the cult are the same places where we find most of the other new pilgrim-related saints: reformist houses of canons where, perhaps, the notion of geographical displacement was something to be celebrated rather than viewed with suspicion.

San Frediano, as we have noted, was the leading house of regular canons at Lucca, and it was from here that the relics of a certain 'King Richard' of the Anglo-Saxons were taken to Eichstätt in Bavaria soon after 1150. The king is mythical, and the Lucchese cult falls out of our chronological remit, but he is mentioned as another example of the adoption of a cult whose legend, like most of the others, was anchored in Lucca's burgeoning reputation as a source of exotic relics. He is of particular interest because he was originally based on an anonymous lay pilgrim, who was reimagined as a sainted king in the period up to 1150. Veneration of this figure at Eichstätt seems to have had the consequence of heightening curiosity about the saint at Lucca itself, attesting to the communications between the two centres, and it was only after this that the cult gained importance in the Tuscan city.⁸⁵

Richard's origins lie in the story of an eighth-century pilgrimage, the *Hodoeporicon*, which relates the Anglo-Saxon monk St Willibald's journey to the Holy Land, among other places, before he settled down at Eichstätt where he would be honoured as its founding bishop.⁸⁶ His father became the sainted king, but in the original narrative, which is told first-hand to the nun Hugeburc of Heidenheim, he is unnamed; he is introduced when Willibald wants to set out to Rome with his brother Winnebald (the future abbot of Heidenheim) and their father. To their father, who is reluctant to go abroad, Willibald spells out the perils and

⁸⁵ M. Coens, 'Légende et miracles du roi S. Richard', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 49 (1931), pp. 353-97, at 356. Richard appears in a later twelfth-century calendar from San Donato: Grégoire, 'Liturgia ed agiografia', p. 280, and Garrison, *Studies*, I, p. 130.

⁸⁶ The *Hodoeporicon* by Hugeburc of Heidenheim is edited as *Vita Willibaldi episcopi Eichstetensis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SS 15:1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 86-106; and translated in *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany*, ed. and trans. C. H. Talbot (London, 1954), pp. 151-77.

rewards of exile, and elucidates the vital spiritual role that the layman may play alongside the monk:

He invited him to share in this hazardous enterprise and to undertake this difficult mode of life, eager to detach him from the pleasures of the world, from the delights of earth and from the false prosperity of wealth. He asked him to enter, with the help of God, into the divine service and to enrol in the heavenly army, to abandon his native country and to accompany him as a pilgrim to foreign parts.⁸⁷

This early conception of pilgrimage would be somewhat suppressed as Benedictine monasticism gained a foothold throughout western Europe, encouraging stability along with disapproval or outright condemnation of monks' need to travel.⁸⁸ In the eighth century, however, the monk and the layman could still share in such benefits. But to Willibald and his mediator Hugeberc, the father, a layman, was peripheral to the story: he was struck down with a sickness at Lucca, and

as soon as the two brothers saw that their father was dead they wrapped his body in a fine shroud and with filial piety buried it in the church of Saint Frigidian [San Frediano] at Lucca, where it still rests. Immediately afterwards they set out on their way.⁸⁹

The suggestion that the family was from a royal line was not made until the late tenth century at Eichstätt, in an office of St Willibald.⁹⁰ Gradually, and mysteriously, the father was given a name and decoupled from the renown of his sons, SS Willibald and Winnebald, as well as a

⁸⁷ *Hodoeporicon*, 3, p. 90: 'Cumque illum ad tanti operis initio tantique vitae conversatione invitando a seculi voluptatibus, a mundi diliciis, a temporalis vitae falsis divitiarum prosperis suggerendo segregare volebat et illos opitulante Domino ad recte constitutionis formam et ad caelestis militiae tirocinio divinum inchoare servitium, propriamque deserere patriam et patulas secum peregrinationis perquirere ruras rogabat'.

⁸⁸ See ch. 5, below.

⁸⁹ *Hodoeporicon*, 3, p. 91: 'Statimque illi germani filii eius corpus patris eorum exanimem paternae pietatis affectu percipientes, venuste volverunt et terra tumaverunt, et in urbe Luca ad Sanctum Pricianum [i.e. in ecclesia S. Frigidiani: see n. 9 on the same page] ibi requiescit corpus patris eorum. Confestimque illi pergentes usque'.

⁹⁰ S. Weinfurter, 'Die Willibald-Vita und ihre mittelalterlichen Überarbeitungen', in *Hl. Willibald 787-1987: Kinder des Glaubens, Pilger, Mönch, Bischof* (Eichstätt, 1987), pp. 103-13, at 108; Coens, 'Légende et miracles', pp. 361-7.

daughter, St Walburg. Sometime *c.*1150 his translation took place at Lucca, and the first mention of Richard as ‘king of the English’ is from 1155/6, in a narrative about the reform of Heidenheim, the *Relatio Adelberti abbatis Heidenheimensis*, written after some of Richard’s relics had recently been brought there from Lucca.⁹¹ It appears that in some measure the cult was the result of travel between Bavarian monasteries and Rome, especially, as Maurice Coens showed, concerning the disputed reform of Heidenheim which required the intervention of the papacy.⁹² Moreover, it is evidence of Lucca’s growing reputation as a haven of sanctity.

Coens also edited a *vita*, *miracula*, and *Ex gestis beati Richardi regis et confessoris* (which is a sort of commentary on the *vita*), all products of the new cult at Lucca centred around San Frediano, and written not long after the 1150s.⁹³ In the *vita*, Richard is described as the nephew of Offa, and he rules the English with glory before ruefully reflecting on the two gospel sayings, ‘whoever does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be my disciple’ (Luke 14:33) and ‘whoever gives up his house or lands because of me, will receive a hundredfold and will possess life everlasting’ (paraphrasing Matt. 19:29) – again, gospel teachings on poverty are the source of motivation, and again, the saint abandons all that he has and sets out abroad, this time with his sons.⁹⁴ The paradigm of renunciation and exile, as far as we have witnessed it, has remained essentially unchanged at Lucca from the third recension of the Life of Frediano to the Life of King Richard, a period which spans the early

⁹¹ The translation is mentioned in a letter from the bishop of Eichstätt to the community of San Frediano, Lucca, written *c.*1154 and printed in Coens, ‘Légende et miracles’, pp. 372-3 (on dating, see p. 372 n. 6). On the *Relatio*, see Weinfurter, ‘Die Willibald-Vita’, p. 109; and Coens, ‘Légende et miracles’, pp. 369-72, with relevant passages printed.

⁹² Coens, ‘Légende et miracles’, pp. 371, 380.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 385-96; commentary on pp. 373-81. A later Life is edited in *De s. Richardo rege*, AASS Februarii, II, pp. 69-81.

⁹⁴ *Vita sancti Richardi*, 2, ed. Coens, ‘Légende et miracles’, pp. 385-6: ‘revolvens nichilominus in mente illud dominicum preceptum: “Nisi quis renuntiaverit omnibus que possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus”, et illud: “Quicumque dimiserit domum aut agros propter me, centuplum accipiet et vitam eternam possidebit”, et regnum et omnia que habebat propter Deum relinquens, sanctorum corpora visitando una cum filiis, sancto videlicet Willibaldo et beato Wnebaldo [sic] peregrinari decrevit.’ According to a later English tradition, Richard was the son of Lothar, king of Kent, while his wife, Winna, was the sister of St Boniface: Stokes, *Six Months*, p. 82.

eleventh century to the late twelfth. Throughout this era, reformed canons in particular saw fit to preach the values of poverty and pilgrimage, resulting in an unsettling time (as we shall see) for those who remained wedded to the claustral precepts of St Benedict's Rule.

Exoticism and the Volto Santo

In surveying these cults, we have noticed some important features associated with 'reforming' values that remain consistent in the texts associated with each saint. But there is a further factor that unites these examples, something that may be identified as 'exoticism', which is at least a sensation of 'foreignness' and strangeness; something 'unfamiliarly beautiful and enticing' that deprives us of the stability of our usual surroundings.⁹⁵ However precisely defined, the exotic is fundamentally a function of Otherness, and especially the Other that comes from far away, though this need not always be the case. While recognising potential objections to using such nomenclature in the postcolonial West, I propose to excavate the literary, aesthetic qualities of the word, as opposed to the political, as a useful tool to argue for a particular hagiological culture of difference at Lucca, in much the way certain historians and critics of the later Middle Ages and modern period have spoken of exoticism in their own contexts, despite the term not gaining currency until the nineteenth century.⁹⁶ Victor Segalen (1878-1919), the French writer who described his profound

⁹⁵ D. M. Figueira, *The Exotic: A Decadent Quest* (Albany, NY, 1994), p. 1 (quote); C. Gaullier-Bougassas, 'Un exotisme littéraire médiéval?', in eadem (ed.), *Un exotisme littéraire médiéval?* (Lille, 2008), pp. 7-20, at 11: 'L'exotisme suppose donc un goût / un appel pour le lointain et l'autre, et pour les nouveautés que réserve un déplacement spatial, pour la découverte de réalités qui étonnent, privent les auditeurs occidentaux de la stabilité de leurs repères familiers...'. I have paraphrased the last part.

⁹⁶ For defences of exoticism since postcolonialism, see Figueira, *The Exotic*, esp. pp. 1-18; and some more recent comments in eadem, *Otherwise Occupied: Pedagogies of Alterity and the Brahminization of Theory* (Albany, NY, 2008), pp. 89-90; R. Shapiro, 'In defence of exoticism: rescuing the literary imagination', in I. Santaolalla (ed.), *'New' Exoticisms: Changing Patterns in the Construction of Otherness* (Amsterdam, 2000), pp. 41-9. Objections may stem from the legacy of E. Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth, 1985), but among many responses (not specific to exoticism) see, e.g., J. M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the*

emotional and aesthetic responses to difference which were engendered by sojourns in the Far East, sketched a defining, yet unfinished *Essai sur l'exotisme* that remains the clearest statement on the emotional hold of the exotic over the individual.⁹⁷

For Segalen, who hesitated to use that 'bloated and compromised'⁹⁸ word, exoticism was broadly defined: 'a single yet universal thing: the feeling which Diversity stirs in me; and, aesthetically, the practice of this very feeling; its pursuit, its play, its greatest freedom; its greatest intensity; finally, its most brilliant and profound beauty.'⁹⁹ Diversity comes from meditation on the past and the future as well as the present.¹⁰⁰ He feared its demise at the hands of homogenising uniformity: 'Where are the martyrs? ... Where is the mystery? – Where are the distances?'¹⁰¹ In short, he put his finger on the seductive, living force of the Other, reapplying its power to a wide spectrum of instances beyond the already stale, 'the dreadful rubric of "exotic literature", "exotic impressions"'.¹⁰²

Exoticism is therefore not that kaleidoscopic vision of the tourist or of the mediocre spectator, but the forceful and curious reaction to a shock felt by someone of strong individuality in response to some object whose distance from oneself he alone can perceive and savour. ... [It is] the keen and immediate perception of an eternal incomprehensibility.¹⁰³

Arts (Manchester, 1995). The debate is summarised in J. Yee, 'French theory and the exotic', in C. Forsdick and D. Murphy (eds.), *Postcolonial Thought in the French Speaking World* (Liverpool, 2009), pp. 185-94. On exoticism in the later Middle Ages: Gaullier-Bougassas, *Un exotisme*. And in later periods, e.g., E. R. Welch, *A Taste for the Foreign: Worldly Knowledge and Literary Pleasure in Early Modern French Fiction* (Newark, DE, 2011); G. S. Rousseau and R. Porter (eds.), *Exoticism in the Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1990). For changing terminology down to the nineteenth century: Gaullier-Bougassas, 'Un exotisme', pp. 7-9.

⁹⁷ V. Segalen, *Essay on Exoticism: An Aesthetics of Diversity*, ed. and trans. Y. R. Schlick (Durham, 2002). On Segalen's life and works, see C. Forsdick, *Victor Segalen and the Aesthetics of Diversity: Journeys between Cultures* (Oxford, 2000); important criticism includes T. Todorov, *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought*, trans. C. Porter (Cambridge, MA, 1993), pp. 323-38; and J. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), pp. 152-64.

⁹⁸ Segalen, *Essay on Exoticism*, p. 56.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, e.g. pp. 18, 24.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-3.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

Segalen included the divine and mysterious in his scheme of diversity (and was much influenced by Hinduism).¹⁰⁴ Although this aspect of his essay was not fleshed out when he died, his call to the aesthetic extremes of religion ('where are the martyrs?') betokens a wider appreciation of the exoticism manifested in spiritual symbolism.¹⁰⁵ Meanwhile, the 'practice of feeling' – the aesthetics he describes, with all their intensity – is, if we choose, merely secular language for devotional zeal. What makes Segalen so useful for describing a spiritual sentiment is that he does not write in theorised abstractions but always from emotional experience. He 'travelled' all around the exotic, lived it, felt it as much as possible – and in the end died by it.¹⁰⁶ He speaks for the many *exotes* (as he calls them) who, on finding exoticism, 'are capable of savouring it with rapture'.¹⁰⁷ At this point in their quest, they must not come too close: total immersion in diversity leads to familiarity, when exoticism will perish. To remedy this, subject and object must always keep their distance.¹⁰⁸

A local saint's cult, like the spiritual impulse more generally, is already 'exotic' by this definition (provided the individual is open to its alterity). The cult is divine and mysterious, and rarely banal, at least until its power may eventually fade. Its objects – and consideration of the object is often the first step towards exoticism¹⁰⁹ – are powerful relics, separated and sealed, taboo. Its liturgy is occasional and special, and its sacred spaces few

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, pp. 67 (the divine etc.), 28 (Hinduism).

¹⁰⁵ See also, for example, the following notes (ibid., p. 60): 'Sacrifice: considered as the positive Tasting of Diversity. In Debauchery, suddenly deny the flesh: tasting Debauchery. In chaste tranquillity, exalt in Erotic joys. Monastic practice: they were connoisseurs. In this instance, sacrifice is *beautiful*, that is, in relation to Diversity.'

¹⁰⁶ He was found in mysterious circumstances, in a forest, with a bloodied foot and the *Complete Works* of Shakespeare by his side, opened at *Hamlet*: Forsdick, *Victor Segalen*, pp. 1, 7.

¹⁰⁷ Segalen, *Essay on Exoticism*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Todorov, *On Human Diversity*, pp. 328-31.

¹⁰⁹ J. Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*, trans. J. Benedict (London, 1996), esp. pp. 79-80; S. R. Pucci, 'The discrete charms of the exotic: fictions of the harem in eighteenth-century France', in Rousseau and Porter, *Exoticism*, pp. 145-76, at 146.

and exclusive; points of contact may thus be inferred between Segalen's exoticism and Mircea Eliade's distinction between the sacred and the profane.¹¹⁰

We might say that the exoticism of the saint's cult is therefore rendered doubly exotic when the saint comes from afar – in our cases, from the extremes of east and west, whence the exotic object, the relic, comes to rest at Lucca, where it radiates a strong gust of diversity enhanced by its special journey. The relics are sealed but their saints' legends are impossibly far off. The lack of much direct knowledge of these figures only enhances their mystery. Their narratives provoke fantasies of other places, fantasies which are reinforced by the steady flow of unsettled (and therefore unfamiliar) exotic traffic through the city. Their cults are the purest expression of exotic sanctity, with Davino's the purest of all: for what has he to distinguish himself except for his Armenian origins? The point could be made without reference to Segalen, but it would be all the harder to convince on an aesthetic, emotional level that such cults could induce a special 'rapture', and even feed off each other as curious canons and bishops demanded more of this 'eternal incomprehensibility'.

One Lucchese object epitomises this local exoticism more than any other: the *Volto Santo*, or Holy Face. This substantial wooden sculpture of a robed, crucified Christ (245cm high by 280cm wide), still on display in the cathedral and processed through the streets every 13 September, first appears in our sources from the late eleventh century. A list of altars of the cathedral of San Martino, written between 1065 and 1109, records one altar *ante Vultum* and another *ante Crucem veterem*: the distinction between being in front of 'the Face' and 'the old Cross' has been taken to mean that this was the period when the new crucifix appeared and supplanted an older one, probably between the beginning of the cathedral's reconstruction and its consecration (i.e. 1060-70). This would explain earlier references to merely a *crux* of Lucca, such as the one Abbot Leofstan of Bury St Edmunds had reproduced

¹¹⁰ M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York, 1959): see, e.g., some relevant comments on p. 29.

for his own church after a pilgrimage to Rome in the middle of the century.¹¹¹ We know that the new cross in the cathedral of Lucca was generally known as the *Vultus* because of the surprising fact that King William II of England used to swear by it, according to Eadmer's *Historia novorum*. On the question of whether Anselm of Bec ought to become archbishop of Canterbury, Eadmer reports the king's outburst: "But by the Holy Face of Lucca" – for such was his customary oath – "at present neither he nor anyone else shall be archbishop except myself."¹¹² Later, rebuking a Jew for converting to Christianity against the wishes of his father, the unchristian monarch tells him to return to Judaism 'or by the Face of Lucca I will have your eyes torn out'.¹¹³

It seems that there was something rather unusual about this Face, which had become famous even in England. Bishop Rangerius of Lucca appears to refer to it in the metrical Life of his predecessor, Anselm II. Discussing the recent decline of religion in the city (which in his scheme was merely the tail-end of decline through the ages), he notes how generous the people of Lucca used to be, how wealthy the city, and how 'clergy with people, like mind united with body, strove to sanctify their own ways'.¹¹⁴ But now the city is no longer rich, and 'foreign religion has grasped to possess the famous cross, [and] as happens, decency,

¹¹¹ R. Silva, 'La datazione del Volto Santo di Lucca', in *La santa croce di Lucca: il Volto Santo: storia, tradizioni, immagini* (Florence, 2003), pp. 76-81, at 78-9. A description of the cross at Bury is quoted in *The Life of St Anselm Archbishop of Caterbury by Eadmer*, ed. and trans. R. W. Southern (London, 1962), p. 139 n. 3. There is a complex debate, which Silva summarises, about dating the crosses and exactly how many there were, but all the contributors agree that the *Volto Santo* became a central part of Lucchese worship around the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century.

¹¹² Eadmer, *Historia novorum in Anglia*, ed. M. Rule, Rolls Series, 81 (London, 1884), p. 30: "Sed, per Sanctum Vultum de Luca," sic enim jurare consueverat, "nec ipse hoc tempore, nec alius quis archiepiscopus erit, me excepto."

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 101: 'alioquin, per Vultum de Luca, faciam tibi oculos erui.' Translations adapted from *Eadmer's History of Recent Events in England: Historia Novorum in Anglia*, trans. G. Bosanquet (London, 1964), pp. 31, 104.

¹¹⁴ Rangerius of Lucca, *Vita metrica s. Anselmi lucensis episcopi*, ed. E. Sackur et al., MGH SS 30:2 (Hanover, 1926-34), pp. 1152-1307, at 1248-9; quote from p. 1249, ll. 4427-8: 'Clerus cum populo quasi mens cum corpore iuncta / Certabant proprias sanctificare vias.'

probity, and the holy order are perishing from those profiting out of power and liberty'. He then decries the 'lay clothing' worn by the cleric of his day.¹¹⁵

Rangerius not only alludes to the pull of the cross on pilgrims – an effect that he clearly disapproves of – but also appears to sneer at 'foreign religion' (*peregrina religio*), one of the deleterious new influences on the city. Along with this, there is a dangerous mixing of clergy and laity: an irresistible by-product, no doubt, of the growth in pilgrimage. In the past, there was no need for this profiteering from foreigners, and the orders worshipped in their own ways. In Rangerius's eyes, much is changing. SS Frediano, Regolo, and Martin, the great patrons of his see, seem challenged, and during the twelfth century the emerging feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (first mentioned in 1118) would be associated with the commune rather than the city's traditional hierarchies and, as historians have suggested, the Holy Face would become the symbol of Lucca and its people.¹¹⁶ Raffaele Savigni, who is among those who has put the cult of the *Volto Santo* at the heart of a shift in civic identity, reads its origins as canonical rather than episcopal, a likely scenario given Rangerius's critical stance.¹¹⁷

The *Volto Santo* is not unique; there is a similar carving at Sansepolcro, for example, dating to the eighth or ninth century, by which time such crucifixes were not uncommon in the Carolingian church.¹¹⁸ But its strange humanity, compounded by its large, lidded, and mournful eyes, had a profound effect on Lucca's citizens and pilgrims, and aside from

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 1249, ll. 4429-34: 'Ast ubi diviciis non est modus, et peregrina / Religio celebrem caepit habere crucem, / Ut solet, ex opibus et libertate fruendi / Et pudor et probitas et sacer ordo perit. / Ac primo vestem luxu studioque placendi / Induitur laicam, qui sacra vasa gerit.' See the discussion of this passage in D. M. Webb, 'The Holy Face of Lucca', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 9 (1986), pp. 227-37, at 232.

¹¹⁶ R. Manselli, 'Lucca e il Volto Santo', in *Lucca, il Volto Santo e la civiltà medioevale* (Lucca, 1984), pp. 9-20, at 13-17 (see Dante's comments, pp. 14-15); Webb, 'The Holy Face of Lucca', pp. 232-4. For the earliest mentions of the cult, including its feast day, see R. Savigni, 'Il culto della croce e del Volto Santo nel territorio lucchese (sec. XI-XIV)', in *La Santa Croce*, pp. 131-72, at 137.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 132-3; see also idem, 'Lucca e il Volto Santo nell'XI e XII secolo', in M. C. Ferrari and A. Meyer (eds.), *Il Volto Santo in Europa: culto e immagini del Crocifisso nel Medioevo* (Lucca, 2005), pp. 407-97.

¹¹⁸ C. Chazelle, 'Crucifixes and the liturgy in the ninth-century Carolingian church', in Ferrari and Meyer, *Il Volto Santo*, pp. 67-93, at 67; L. Nees, 'On the image of Christ crucified in early medieval art', in ibid., pp. 345-85; Nees makes the important point that the Lucchese *Volto Santo* was not necessarily the product of Byzantine influence, as some have believed (pp. 372-3).

becoming the city's centrepiece it influenced even French poetry.¹¹⁹ Its written legend, which dates to the twelfth century, is a gem of exotic nostalgia.¹²⁰ Purporting to be by a deacon, 'Leboinus', writing in the eighth century near the time of the cross's translation to Lucca, it tells of the discovery of the relic in Jerusalem by a Bishop Gualfredus who was on pilgrimage in the Holy Land. Guided by a vision, he finds where it has been hidden for centuries after being carved soon after the ascension of Christ. With poetic drama, the bishop and his friends place the cross inside an unmanned boat, which they adorn with lit candles and lamps and cover with tar, and entrust it to the waves and Providence.¹²¹ The boat reaches the Tuscan city of Luni, and there is a disagreement with the people of Lucca over who should have it. The cross indicates its own inclination for Lucca, and Bishop John completes the translation to San Martino (compensating the people of Luni with an ampoule of Christ's blood which was found on the spot): the year is given as 742, and accounts of miracles follow.

Conclusion

Pilgrimage and spiritual innovation mutually underscore everything that has been discussed in this chapter. First, we have seen that the cults of the pilgrim saints surveyed were built upon reformist notions of a purer religious practice that strongly valued the ascetic qualities of self-denial, poverty, and – radically linked to them – exile. This impulse came from people, whether they called themselves hermits, monks, or canons, who were not content with traditional divisions of secular and regular clergy but recognised that all, including the laity, could participate in their spiritual zeal. From these motives came the highly unusual

¹¹⁹ U. Limacher-Riebold, 'Le Volto Santo dans la littérature française médiévale', in Ferrari and Meyer, *Il Volto Santo*, pp. 169-91.

¹²⁰ The *Relatio Leobini diaconi* is edited in G. Schnürer and J. M. Ritz, *Sankt Kummernis und Volto Santo: Studien und Bilder* (Dusseldorf, 1934), pp. 127-34. On dating, see Webb, 'The Holy Face of Lucca', pp. 229-30.

¹²¹ *Relatio Leobini*, p. 130.

veneration of a layman such as Davino. Davino himself was one of the mix of new pilgrims flooding into the city, helping to revitalise the atmosphere of worship and startle traditionalists with the introduction of a novel *peregrina religio*. The pilgrim culture burst upon the scene, with the *Volto Santo* standing as its powerful emblem: an image of Christ's humanity – therefore a fitting symbol of the new gospel teaching so prevalent in the saints' legends – and at the same time an exotic vision of devotion. This powerful religiosity, informed by an ideal of *imitatio Christi*, was made to thrive through the support of communities of regular canons who espoused such teaching and gave birth to the cults which represent their spirituality.

This chapter has also explored the profound possibilities of exoticism as a way to suggest a visceral interpretation of local veneration: to help define a coherent milieu as well as to identify a mode of understanding or empathy towards the latent power of today's dry Latin texts and crumbling relics. The 'aesthetics of diversity' help us to comprehend the lure of these remote, holy foreigners. In sum, we are left with an image and a feeling of an invigorated Lucca on the cusp of a new age, as old orders perished, new devotees arrived, and the city came alive with a fresh sense of movement that emerged among the canons and hermits, was supported by certain elites, and spread to the people, leaving itself indelible in the city's churches, its cults, and its cross.

Chapter 4

Six lay saints

This chapter will survey the remaining lay saints of the period, as far as I have discovered them, excluding martyrs and royalty as before. It will focus on some of the salient aspects of their Lives and cults before concluding with a discussion of the varieties of lay sanctity represented in their biographies. There are five male saints and one female, presented in chronological order. It is especially noteworthy that the male saints all shared a devotion to pilgrimage or exile; this aspect of their Lives provides a focus to the overviews below. In the next chapter, which is devoted to the theme of pilgrimage, there will be a full discussion of the consequences of this with regard to the meaning of lay sanctity, as well as a gendered explanation for the different model of virtue presented in the one female saint, Ida of Boulogne.

Alexius

Although of ancient origin, the story of St Alexius (or Alexis) exploded in popularity in the period around 1000, and because of the success of his cult, its themes would prove an important bellwether for changing spiritual attitudes and the sanctity of the laity, and perhaps, as one historian has argued, the rise of lay piety more generally.¹ Simon of Crépy, for example, was admiringly compared to him later in the century when, still a layman, he

¹ D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock* (Princeton, NJ, 1993), p. 106.

refused to consummate his marriage and in the bedchamber persuaded his bride to convert to monasticism.² Peter Damian, meanwhile, called Alexius ‘a new and unusual type of martyr’ who triumphed with ‘a new and nearly unheard of victory’ and whose ‘virtue is more pleasing to the Church because of its unaccustomed novelty’.³

The story of Alexius, in its outlines, may be traced back to a fifth-century legend from Edessa; in terms of its development in the West, versions of the Latin Life began to appear in the late tenth century after the cult and relics were brought to Rome by Archbishop Sergius of Damascus and fellow monks. A Latin version was written in the last quarter of the tenth century at the monastery of Santi Bonifacio e Alessio on the Aventine, which added Alexius’s patronage *c.*987 and would later become called simply Sant’Alessio. This Life became extremely popular and was transmitted in more than a hundred manuscripts throughout Europe, of which about twenty are dateable to the eleventh century and show significant transmission on both sides of the Alps. Vernacular, poetic versions emerge from as early as the mid-eleventh century or *c.*1100.⁴

The principal features of the story resonate strongly with the growing eremitic movement and reformist, evangelical spirituality that took root in the West around the turn of

² *Vita beati Simonis comitis Crespeiensis*, PL 156, cols. 1211-23, at 1215B. See ch. 6, below, on Simon.

³ Peter Damian, *Sermones*, ed. G. Lucchesi, CCCM 57 (Turnhout, 1983), no. 28, pp. 161-70, at 168: ‘nouo atque insolito martyrii genere’; *ibid.*: ‘noua atque inaudita fere uictoria’; p. 169: ‘uirtus ... propter insolitam nouitatem magis placet ecclesiae’. For other contemporary comments on Alexius, see U. Mölk, ‘La Chanson de saint Alexis et le culte du saint en France aux XIe et XIIe siècles’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 84 (1978), pp. 339-355, at 354-5.

⁴ L. J. Engels, ‘The west European Alexius legend: with an appendix presenting the medieval Latin text corpus in its context (Alexiana Latina Medii Aevi, I)’, in A. B. Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *The Invention of Saintliness* (London, 2002), pp. 93-144, at 95-105, 126-7; and *idem*, ‘Alexiana Latina Medii Aevi, III: The relationship between the prose vitae BHL 286, 287 and 290’, *Sacris erudiri*, 38 (1999), pp. 373-441, at 373-4; B. Hamilton, ‘The monastery of S. Alessio and the religious and intellectual renaissance of tenth-century Rome’, in *idem*, *Monastic Reform, Catharism and the Crusades (900-1300)* (London, 1979), ch. 3 = *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 2 (1965), pp. 265-310, at 265-72. Parallel editions of BHL 286, 287, and 290 are in Engels, ‘Alexiana Latina Medii Aevi, III’, pp. 414-41: the popular version mentioned above is hereafter cited from this edition as ‘BHL 286’ (it is also available in *De s. Alexio confessore*, AASS Iulii, IV, pp. 238-70, at 251-3). For the *Chanson*, the version cited here is *La vie de saint Alexis*, ed. C. Storey, 2nd ed. (Geneva, 1968), trans. N. V. Durling in T. Head (ed.), *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York, NY, 2000), pp. 317-40. Another version is *La vie de saint Alexis*, ed. T. D. Hemming (Exeter, 1994): see pp. xv-xxvii on versions and dating; and for a full, if somewhat dated, bibliography see C. Storey, *An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Alexis Studies* (Geneva, 1987), since which see Durling’s bibliography in Head, *Medieval Hagiography*, pp. 319-20. S. A. Ivanov, *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond*, trans. S. Franklin (Oxford, 2006), pp. 81-6, is informative on the story’s origins.

the millennium and whose beginnings are often represented by Romuald of Ravenna; its narrative of poverty and exile is especially relevant.⁵ Alexius, however, is a major exception to such hermits because he never joins a religious community or follows a rule, instead remaining an urban pauper. He is therefore a lay saint, though he does discard the symbols of his wordly life. The story, which is well known, is briefly summarised as follows, based on both the early, widespread Latin prose version and the Old French Life; these two provide us with a suitable sample of how it was heard and read in an eleventh-century religious context.⁶ Alexius is born to late-imperial, pious nobility of Rome as a longed-for only son. When he is old enough, a suitable girl is chosen to be his bride, and they duly marry. But that night in the bedchamber Alexius, rather than consummate the marriage, explains to his bride the value of chastity, symbolically gives her his ring and sword-belt,⁷ and departs, boarding a ship for the eastern Mediterranean. The French version adds: ‘in the middle of the night he flees the land’, recalling the nocturnal escapes of various religious who volunteered for exile in this period, such as Stephen of Obazine and Adeleme of La Chaise-Dieu.⁸

Landing at Laodicea (Latakia in modern Syria) and then moving to Edessa (Urfa in Turkey), Alexius gives away all the riches he has brought with him, dresses in simple clothing, and lives among the poor for seventeen years after a nearly successful attempt to find him. The story dwells upon the misery of his wife and mother, who console each other back in Rome. Eventually an image of the Virgin tells Alexius that his soul is saved; as a result his fame spreads and he is forced to go back to Laodicea where he boards a ship to

⁵ See ch. 6, below, on Romuald and other hermits. On the cult’s development in France coinciding with religious change, see Mölk, ‘La Chanson de saint Alexis’, esp. pp. 353-4.

⁶ The French version, sometimes called the *Chanson de saint Alexis*, is little more than a poetic retelling of the hagiographic legend and was suitable for devotional purposes. Storey’s edition, for example (see n. 4, above), is based on the early-twelfth-century St Albans Psalter which was owned by Christina of Markyate: *Vie de saint Alexis*, pp. 24-5; see his comments on the poem’s liturgical use, p. 11; also R. Bullington, *The Alexis in the Saint Albans Psalter: A Look into the Heart of the Matter* (New York, NY, 1991).

⁷ The sword-belt: BHL 286, 15, p. 417: ‘rendam, id est caput baltei quo cingebatur’; *Vie de saint Alexis*, 15, p. 96: ‘les renges de s’espethe’ (‘the straps of his sword’).

⁸ *Vie de saint Alexis*, 15, p. 96: ‘Ensur[e] nuit s’en fuit de la contrethe.’ See ch. 6, below, on Stephen and Adeleme.

make for Tarsus (in Turkey), but instead is blown off course all the way back to Rome. Confident that he will not be recognised, he finds his father in the streets of the city and begs mercy in the name of the son who is lost (i.e. himself):

Servant of God, look at me and have mercy on me, because I am poor and a pilgrim, and order me to be received in your home, and I will be fed from the scraps that fall from your table, so that God will bless your years and have mercy on the one whom you believe to be travelling abroad.⁹

Alexius self-identifies as a *peregrinus*, the one his father believes to be travelling abroad or on pilgrimage (*in peregrinatione*). The French version omits such allusions but does refer to Alexius as a *pelerins* later, after his death.¹⁰ Alexius ends up living in his family home for the next seventeen years (either in the entrance way or under the stairs, depending on the version)¹¹ and is bullied by the servants. Before his death, he writes down the story of his life recounting ‘how he was converted *in peregrinatione*’.¹² A heavenly voice alerts the city to the existence of this holy man, who is soon dead, written testament in hand. A long section follows detailing the mourning and remorse of all, including Pope Innocent I and the two Roman emperors (Arcadius and Honorius, locating the story between 401 and 408 when all three reigned together), and the burial of the saint at San Bonifacio on the Aventine. Little raw emotion is spared in this harrowing tale – remarkably for hagiography – and the irony of the wife and family’s situation, in which they are unwitting spectators to their loved one’s suffering, gives the story an added piquancy which presumably only increased its popularity.

⁹ BHL 286, 34, p. 423: ‘Serve Dei, respice in me et fac mihi misericordiam, quia pauper sum et peregrinus, et iube me suscipi in domo tua, et pascari de micis quae cadunt de mensa tua, ut Deus benedicat annos tuos et ei, quem habes in peregrinatione, misereatur.’

¹⁰ *Vie de saint Alexis*, 71, p. 111.

¹¹ BHL 286, 36, p. 425: ‘in atrio’; *Vie de saint Alexis*, 50, p. 105: ‘Soz le degrét’.

¹² BHL 286, 44, p. 427: ‘qualiter conversatus fuerit in peregrinatione’. The French merely says ‘how he left and how he came back’: *Vie de saint Alexis*, 57, p. 107: ‘Cum s’en alat e cum il s’en revint.’

But before commenting further on this model of sanctity, let us turn to the other lay saints whose veneration commenced in the West in the central Middle Ages.

Burchard the Venerable

Burchard the Venerable (who probably died in 1005)¹³ is alone among our lay saints for having been an important political personality attested in other sources. He was a close advisor to King Hugh Capet and was the count of Vendôme, Corbeil, Melun and Paris. His *Life* was written by Odo of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, near Paris, in 1058. Odo's aim seems fairly clear: at the time of writing, his monastery was under siege from rapacious and predatory lay lordship, and his sanctification of an exemplary steward or *advocatus* of this royal monastery, complete with detailed evidence of Burchard's munificence, is designed to showcase a model of the ideal lay protector.¹⁴

Burchard was, in fact, the king's closest and most loyal count (and with Bishop Arnulf of Orléans his most loyal counsellor),¹⁵ signalled in the royal gift of the county of Paris, the last time a king would alienate this important title.¹⁶ The author Odo recounts his

¹³ O. Guillot, *Le comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1972), II, p. 35.

¹⁴ Odo of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, *Vie de Bouchard le Vénérable comte de Vendôme, de Corbeil, de Melun et de Paris (Xe et XIe siècles)*, ed. C. Bourel de la Roncière (Paris, 1892). The date of the *Life* is provided by Odo himself: *ibid.*, 14, p. 31 and n. 2. See M. Lauwers, 'La "Vie du seigneur Bouchard, comte vénérable": conflits d'avouerie, traditions carolingiennes et modèles de sainteté à l'abbaye des Fossés au XIe siècle', in *idem* (ed.), *Guerriers et moines: conversion et sainteté aristocratiques dans l'Occident médiéval* (Antibes, 2002), pp. 371-418, for a thorough analysis. On the historical Burchard, see D. Barthélemy, 'Sur les traces du comte Bouchard: dominations châtelaines à Vendôme et en Francia vers l'an Mil', in M. Parisse and X. Barral i Altet (eds.), *Le roi de France et son royaume autour de l'an Mil* (Paris: Picard, 1992), pp. 99-109; D. Barthélemy, *La société dans le comté de Vendôme: de l'an Mil au XIVe siècle* (Paris, 1993), pp. 278-90; J. Flori, *L'essor de la chevalerie: XIe-XIIe siècles* (Geneva, 1986), pp. 155-6; E. Dachowski, *First Among Abbots: The Career of Abbo of Fleury* (Washington, DC, 2008), pp. 120-1 (on Burchard and the council of Saint-Basle); and refs. in n. 15 below. On the office of *advocatus*, see S. Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 328-38.

¹⁵ F. Lot, *Études sur le règne de Hugues Capet et la fin du Xe siècle* (Paris, 1903), p. 234; Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet* (Paris, 1986), pp. 148-9, 168.

¹⁶ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, p. xiii; J. Dunbabin, *France in the Making 843-1180* (Oxford, 1985), p. 163.

hero's noble birth, his upbringing in the Robertian entourage,¹⁷ his marriage, enrichment in lands and possessions, and two episodes of bloody warfare against Count Odo I of Blois (in the second of which at Orsay, Burchard 'fell upon the enemy' and took part in the bloody massacre).¹⁸ These are celebrated moments of secular splendour in the life of the *vir nobilissimus* and *inclitus comes*. At his death, Burchard, 'hope and refuge of all knights',¹⁹ was laid to rest at Saint-Maur, where Odo could glorify him half a century later. Most of the Life is taken up with (somewhat exaggerated) evidence gleaned from charters of Burchard and his associates' largesse towards the monastery, which has been analysed in detail by Michel Lauwers.²⁰ The reason for incorporating this evidence was that there had been ongoing problems since the 1040s concerning the depredation of Saint-Maur by its lords, most recently Count William of Corbeil, to the extent that Henry I had had to step in to set limits on a lay protector's permissible behaviour, even citing Count Burchard's good example of stewardship in a charter of 1058, the same year as the Life's composition, as the following extract from that charter shows:

the aforesaid Count Burchard neither had nor held anything in the same place from our aforesaid grandfather Hugh except that he had the [right of] provision and defence against enemies of the holy church of God and invaders of the farms of the same place, and that he was permitted to raise up and enrich the same place with the benefits and possessions of his lands. Therefore by the same reasoning we concede to the aforesaid William [of Corbeil] that he is never permitted to do things more damaging, harmful or worse, but similar or even better to the same place loved by God.²¹

¹⁷ The author Odo writes as if Burchard had been brought up at Hugh's court when the latter was king (which was not until 987, too late for Burchard's youth), an anachronism somewhat typical of Odo's historical accuracy: see Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 1, p. 5 and n. 1.

¹⁸ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 7, pp. 18-20, quote at 19: 'super hostes irruit'. The editor, Bourel de la Roncière, believed this to be Odo II of Blois and places the battle in 999 (see p. 18 n. 3 and p. 19 n. 1), however Lot, *Études*, p. 235 n. 1, asserts a date of 991x995, involving Odo I (d. 996).

¹⁹ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 11, p. 27: 'cunctorum militum spes et refugium'.

²⁰ Lauwers, 'La "Vie du Seigneur Bouchard"': see pp. 393-4 for a summary of the Life's use of charters; see also J. Favier, 'La fabrication d'un faux à Saint-Maur-des-Fossés vers la fin du XIe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, 119 (1961), pp. 233-241.

²¹ J. Boussard, 'Actes royaux et pontificaux des Xe et XIe siècles, du chartrier de Saint-Maur des Fossés', *Journal des savants* (1972), pp. 81-113, act of 29 June 1058, pp. 107-9, at 108: 'jam dictus comes Burchardus

In general, Odo has little to say about Burchard's piety beyond some formulaic remarks,²² at least up until the count's entry into the monastery at the point of death (this practice is not to be confused with conversion earlier in life with the avowed intent of following a monastic rule: Burchard's great rival, Odo of Blois, for example, entered the cloister to die, as did their contemporary William IV of Aquitaine).²³ The text does not attempt to chart Burchard's spiritual development towards sainthood in a satisfying, linear fashion, as its focus is the history of Saint-Maur just as much as its celebrated *advocatus*. It is notable, however, that the limited saintly narrative that there is revolves around an important journey. Aside from the count's final entry into the cloister, and a single miracle, this journey provides an exception to the Life's secular tone and stems from Burchard's personal involvement in the reform of Saint-Maur. His resolution to bring about change at the monastery comes after being secretly advised by one of its monks that the house is in dire need of reform.²⁴ He goes to King Hugh and asks to be granted this royal possession. Odo reports the conversation in direct speech: the king is unwilling to make a perpetual gift, fearing that Burchard's successors will ruin it, but they settle on the count's personal control for the purposes of restoration and rights of burial, and Burchard becomes the 'faithful supporter and defender' of the house against its enemies.²⁵

nil aliud ab avo nostro jam dicto Hugone de ipso loco habuit neque tenuit nisi ut providentiam atque defensionem adversus hostes et inimicos sancte Dei Ecclesie atque pervasores prediorum ipsius loci haberet et ut ipsum locum sublimare atque ditare terrarum suarum beneficiis atque possessionibus liceret. Eadem ergo ratione prescripto Guillelmo concedimus ut numquam deteriora vel inutiliora aut pejora, sed similia aut certe meliora ipsi Deo dilecto loco facere liceat.' See Lauwers, 'La "Vie du Seigneur Bouchard"', pp. 374-6, for discussion of the monastery's problems in this period.

²² Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 1, p. 6: 'For he was a faithful defender of churches ... a giver of alms, consoler of the wretched, most pious supporter of monks, clerics, widows, and virgins' ('Erat enim fidelis defensor ecclesiarum ... largitor elemosinarum, consolator miserorum, sublevator piissimus monachorum, clericorum, viduarum, atque virginum').

²³ Lot, *Études*, pp. 177-8, 180 n. 2.

²⁴ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 2, pp. 7-8.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2, p. 9: 'sublevator fidelis atque defensor'.

The means of reform will be to import the methods and personnel of Cluny, in particular Abbot Maiolus. Burchard wastes no time: ‘and so having taken leave of the king, the count continued on to that holy man’.²⁶ On arrival at the Burgundian house, he prostrates himself before Maiolus, whose polite curiosity is piqued: ‘he carefully inquired after the reason for such an admirable display of humility and his [Burchard’s] arrival to him from a country so far away’.²⁷ In the conversation, there is considerable emphasis on the long journey, no doubt with justification (it is some 260 miles by today’s road). Count Burchard speaks of ‘the effort of so great a journey’ and being ‘so tired by the long journey to a country so far away’,²⁸ which he claims is all the more reason for the abbot to take seriously his request for help. Maiolus is sceptical, replying:

It is very difficult for us to visit foreign and unknown regions, and leave behind our people and head for yours. Therefore this should be desired rather by your neighbours than by us, far off and unknown.²⁹

Burchard, in turn, becomes distressed that he has made ‘such a long journey’³⁰ for nothing, so prostrates himself at the holy man’s feet ‘again and again’.³¹ Finally defeated, Maiolus agrees to return with him. The episode marks Burchard’s significant journey in the *Life* – his historical journey to Rome and his pilgrimage to the tomb of Maiolus at Souvigny, both in the company of Hugh Capet, are ignored, no doubt through the author’s ignorance³² – and denotes his one moment of struggle to spiritual ends; this and the repeated emphasis on its

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3, p. 9: ‘Accepta itaque comes regis licentia ad eundem sanctum virum perrexit.’

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3, p. 10: ‘tam ammirabilem humilitatis exhibitionem adventusque ejus ad eum causam a tam longinqua patria inquirere studuit’.

²⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘Laborem tanti itineris’; ‘tam magno itinere fatigatus tam longinquam ... patriam’.

²⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘Valde enim laboriosum nobis est exteras atque incognitas adire regiones nostraque relinquere et vestra appetere. A vestris ergo hoc potius vicinis expetendum est quam a nobis longinquis et ignotis.’

³⁰ *Ibid.*: ‘tantum iter’.

³¹ *Ibid.*: ‘iterum ... atque iterum’. Cf. Robert the Pious’s prostration before Abbot Lezcelinus of Saint-Arnoul of Crépy: Helgaud of Fleury, *Vie de Robert le Pieux*, ed. and French trans. R.-H. Bautier and G. Labory (Paris, 1965), p. 114. On prostration, see G. Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY, 1992), pp. 98-9.

³² Rome: Richer of Saint-Rémi, *Histories*, III.84, ed. and trans. J. Lake, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2011), II, p. 142. Souvigny: Odilo of Cluny, *Vita beati Maioli abbatis*, PL 142, cols. 943-62, at col. 958B.

arduousness means we may read it as a pilgrimage, a difficult journey to a holy place and intense with acts of devotion and supplication.

Thenceforth the reform of Saint-Maur and its enlargement through various gifts are described. In the one miracle story, Burchard is asked by King Robert II the Pious to mobilise against Count Arnulf of Flanders, who has stolen the body of St Valery from its titular monastery. Having retrieved it peacefully, Burchard leads the relic through the parted waters of the Somme back to its proper resting place.³³ This reference to the passage of the Israelites, combined with the significance of St Valery as a Capetian patron who prophesied that the line would endure for seven generations, makes this a political miracle or metaphor designed to put Burchard at the heart of the new dynasty, rather than an event to emphasise his personal sanctity.³⁴

Finally, with Burchard *in articulo mortis* at Saint-Maur, Odo uses direct speech once more to put pious words in his hero's mouth as he reflects on his career and impending death:

And when the brothers asked him why such a noble man, elevated with wordly dignity and now broken by the hardships of old age, was worthy to demean himself with humble acts, he replied: 'If I was raised with military honour and, as you say, surrounded by an army of knights, I glittered with the dignity of my comital rank, and I preferred in my hand a lamp for a mortal king than a candle for the needy, how much more now ought I serve the immortal emperor and reverently bring before him a burning candelabra in my hands with a show of humility.' Saying and doing this, he displayed a great example of humility in himself to all those seeing and listening.³⁵

³³ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 10, pp. 24-6

³⁴ On the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan: Exodus 14:22 and Joshua 3:17 respectively. On St Valery, see J. W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA, 1986), p. 370; Lauwers, 'La "Vie du Seigneur Bouchard"', p. 413.

³⁵ Odo, *Vie de Bouchard*, 11, p. 29: 'Cumque ei a fratribus diceretur ut quid tam nobilis vir seculari dignitate præcelsus et senectutis jam labore fractus, se humiliando affligere dignatur, ille respondebat: Si, inquit, cum militari honore sublimatus essem atque, ut dicitis, militum stipatus agmine, comitatus dignitate fulgerem, mortali regi lucerne indigenti cereum manu anteferebam, quanto magis nunc immortalis imperatori debeo servire atque ante ipsum candelabra ardentia manibus cum exhibitione humilitatis reverenter ferre. Hoc dicens et agens, magnum de se humilitatis exemplum cunctis videntibus et audientibus proponebat.'

The language of humility recalls Burchard's earlier acts of submission before Abbot Maiolus, and provides an essential message about good lordship of monastic property. Overall, it is a curious Life, frequently overlapping with the genres of monastic chronicle and cartulary. In the end Odo beseeches his congregation to continue to celebrate the feast days of both Burchard and his wife Elisabeth (who is otherwise barely mentioned), and there is an understanding that their examples have taken on a special importance at the time of writing.³⁶

Walstan of Bawburgh

In an argument developed by John Edward Damon, lay sanctity was emerging as a strong potential ethos in Anglo-Saxon society until the Norman Conquest put an end to it. In the Life of Oswald of Worcester, for example, there is a 'definite sense' that the sainthood of the ealdorman Æthelwine of East Anglia (d. 992) is also being promoted.³⁷ However, there seems little more tangible than this in England, though lay martyrdom was still possible, as in the case of Earl Waltheof of Northumbria, who rebelled against the Normans and was executed in 1075.³⁸ Walstan of Bawburgh (d. 30 May 1016) appears to be an interesting exception to this dearth of lay saints. He has been the object of local veneration and pilgrimage activity in Norfolk since the late medieval period, but unfortunately we know little of his importance in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.³⁹ For this reason he will be afforded tentative attention

³⁶ Ibid., 14, pp. 31-2.

³⁷ J. E. Damon, 'Sanctifying Anglo-Saxon ealdormen: lay sainthood and the rise of the crusading ideal', in T. N. Hall (ed.), *Via Crucis: Essays on Early Medieval Sources and Ideas in Memory of J. E. Cross* (Morgantown, WV, 2002), pp. 185-209 (quote at 201).

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 207-8.

³⁹ E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT, 2005), pp. 200-5; idem, 'The dynamics of pilgrimage in late medieval England', in C. Morris and P. Roberts (eds.), *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 164-77, at 166-71; M. R. James, 'Lives of St Walstan', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 19 (1917), pp. 238-67, at 238-43. Local evidence is collected in M. R. James, *Suffolk and Norfolk* (Bury St Edmunds, 1987); C. Twinch, *In Search of St*

here as we simply cannot know to what extent his legend was current in our period, yet he is included because he is a lay saint who supposedly falls within it. The earliest copy of a Latin legend comes from the *Nova legenda Anglie*, a collection first published in 1516; M. R. James, who republished it along with an English metrical version, plausibly believed that they both drew upon a lost Latin Life, and that the extant Latin text is an abridgement.⁴⁰ Of interest is the fact that the Latin Life records Walstan's date of death, but its origins are unknown.⁴¹ There is no good reason, as we shall see, to suppose it originates from later than the eleventh or twelfth century. The Latin prose and English verse versions are substantially similar in content but the latter alone contains posthumous miracles; it was composed in the period around 1500 and hung for pilgrims at the Bawburgh shrine.⁴²

A brief outline of Walstan's story is as follows, according to the Latin text. As a prince of some sort born in Bawburgh (he is supposedly 'from royal stock' but the phrase, which has no consequences for the rest of the legend, is generic and historically meaningless),⁴³ he turns twelve and, motivated by Christ's warning to renounce all possessions (Luke 14:33), he gives up his old life and his claim to royal succession and heads to 'northern parts'.⁴⁴ This turns out to be Taverham, also in Norfolk. (In the English Life, he is born in Blythburgh, Suffolk and goes merely 'northward'.)⁴⁵ He embarks on a hard life as an impoverished labourer in the service of a local man and his wife, giving his food, clothes, and shoes to the poor and sick. In a single miracle *in vita*, after he donates his shoes to a

Walstan: East Anglia's Enduring Legend (Norwich, 1995); eadem, *Saint with the Silver Shoes: The Continuing Search for St Walstan* (Norwich, 2004).

⁴⁰ James, 'Lives', p. 241, whose Latin version is from *Nova legenda Anglie*, ed. C. Horstman, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1901), II, pp. 412-15. James's text (pp. 244-9) is cited hereafter as Latin Life of Walstan, and the English (pp. 249-67) as English Life of Walstan. The Latin is trans. D. Rollason in Twinch, *In Search*, pp. 169-72, and reproduced in eadem, *Saint*, pp. 15-20 (which also includes differences to the English Life in footnotes). The Latin Life does not appear in any predecessor collections, and was published at the end of *Nova legenda* as one of fifteen newly discovered lives: Twinch, *In Search*, pp. 37, 40-3.

⁴¹ Latin Life of Walstan, 14, p. 249.

⁴² Duffy, 'Dynamics of pilgrimage', p. 168; James, 'Lives', pp. 241-2.

⁴³ Latin Life of Walstan, 1, p. 244: 'ex stirpe regia'.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2, p. 244: 'partes aquilonares'.

⁴⁵ English Life of Walstan, p. 251.

pauper, his mistress maliciously sends him out to collect thorns and thistles but they do no harm to his bare feet; following this evidence of his holiness she is full of remorse. Walstan rejects his master's offer to become his heir and continues to work in the fields until the day of his death, which is foretold by an angel. When the day comes, he goes out to work and asks God that any labourers who come to his burial place because of illness, or anyone who comes on behalf of sick working animals, may receive healing. God grants his wish, and there is a claim of testimony from witnesses:

Those who were present with St Walstan when he went up to heaven and left this world are most veracious witnesses to the fact that it was as if a dove whiter than snow came out of the mouth of the saint and flew up to heaven, disappearing on high on a shining cloud.⁴⁶

A pair of oxen, undirected by human hand, takes his body to the church at Bawburgh which would adopt his name, stopping twice on the way for miraculous springs to appear.

The story as we have it is written with pilgrims in mind, with care taken to include the healing springs and their locations (which may be later additions), and with the plea for effective intercession coming directly from the saint's mouth. It ends by underscoring Walstan's healing powers, and the English Life contains further motivation for pilgrims in the shape of posthumous miracles. It is at least clear from some of the differences between the versions that the Latin story was recorded considerably earlier. Only in the English version does Walstan give away his 'gowne and vesture' when he renounces his birthright, and God then covers him so that he should not go naked;⁴⁷ this apparent reference to St Francis is evidence that the Latin was written before such allusions became known in the thirteenth century. Moreover the English version appends various details, some spurious, such as the

⁴⁶ Latin Life of Walstan, 8, p. 247: 'Illi quidem qui cum sancto Walstano personaliter fuerunt quando superna petiit et presentem mundum reliquit in hoc testes veracissimi extiterunt, quod quasi columba niue candidior ab ore eius sancto exiliens celi culmen ascendit et in superioribus clara nube euanuit.'

⁴⁷ English Life of Walstan, p. 251

bishop of Norwich's involvement in the burial, when the see was still based at North Elmham in Walstan's day.⁴⁸ The modest scale of the story and the small distance involved – which is smoothly covered up in the later English version by its vagueness about Walstan's destination – are likewise grounds for supposing the Latin Life's authenticity and composition in the eleventh century or soon after, otherwise the promoters of the cult might have wished to give their saint a more ambitious mission.

Walstan became a recognised patron of farmers and farm workers.⁴⁹ A Spanish lay saint after our period, Isidore the Farmer (d. 1130), who was eventually canonized in 1622 and made patron of Madrid, shows a similar typology of sanctity in action elsewhere. In this case we know that the earliest Life was written quite late (c.1275), but the cult goes back to the twelfth century, as his relics were translated in 1170.⁵⁰ There are interesting similarities, however: Isidore is a pious labourer who shares what he has with the poor. He too moves away, and although he marries and works for different employers, like Walstan he patiently bears the trials of the working man that come his way.⁵¹ In Walstan, however, it would appear that we have an early and exceptional case of a labouring lay saint who was likely to appeal to a wide cross-section of ordinary faithful.

Nicholas the Pilgrim

Nicholas the Pilgrim in many ways takes after the first example in this chapter, Alexius. Nicholas, who came from the Greek province of Boeotia, was a product of Eastern Christianity like Alexius, but his sanctity manifested at Trani, the east-facing port of southern

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 257.

⁴⁹ Twinch, *Saint*, p. 152.

⁵⁰ *De s. Isidoro agricola*, AASS Maii, III, pp. 512-50; J. F. Alonso, 'Isidoro l'Agricoltore', BS 7, cols. 953-7.

⁵¹ Another such rural peasant cult is that of Notburga, a Tyrolese saint who is thought to have died in 1313 but whom some have placed in the ninth or tenth century: see R. Mieler, 'Notburga di Eben', BS 9, cols. 1070-3.

Italy, where he died in 1094. Recently Byzantine, but technically part of Norman Italy by this time, the town was in effect independent as the dukes of Apulia could not claim control of the coastline.⁵² The cult was quickly recognised by the archbishop of Trani, Bisantius I, in 1098, and Pope Urban II approved of it, but the final decision over canonization was given to Bisantius.⁵³ We have, therefore, a saint based in Eastern tradition but whose impact was felt at Rome and above all at Trani where, it should be stressed, the Latin rite had been followed since long before the Norman conquest, Latin was the written language, and the population, including clergy, was overwhelmingly Lombard, despite the presence of some Greeks with Greek names.⁵⁴ Nicholas's sanctity is of a different type to most of our Western examples, but his recognition falls within the Latin Church.

Like Alexius, Nicholas moved between East and West, embracing the life of the destitute wanderer, and in this sense he was a real manifestation of the Alexius legend, with one major difference: he was considered insane. The first *vita* that deals thoroughly with Nicholas's history, including his life in Greece, is by an anonymous author who has been informed by a certain Bartholomew, a monk and companion of the saint. It is early but may not even be the earliest.⁵⁵ It narrates Nicholas's impoverished, rural upbringing and his apparently mad behaviour which involves crying *Kyrie eleison* ('Lord have mercy') continuously from the age of eight. He is ejected from his house by his mother at the age of twelve, and a life of wandering begins. Amid his adventures, his dealings with the local

⁵² P. Oldfield, 'St Nicholas the Pilgrim and the city of Trani between Greeks and Normans, c.1090-c.1140', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 30 (2007), pp. 168-81, at 168.

⁵³ E. W. Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948), pp. 68, 164-5.

⁵⁴ G. A. Loud, *The Latin Church in Norman Italy* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 40.

⁵⁵ *De s. Nicolao peregrino*, AASS Iunii, I, pp. 229-54, at 237-244 (BHL 6223). Following this in the Bollandists' dossier is another early Life by Adelferius, written at the behest of Archbishop Bisantius, which focuses on Trani and posthumous miracles and may be the first chronologically (pp. 244-8); there is also a *Translatio* by Amandus, deacon of Trani cathedral (later bishop of Bisceglie), focusing on the canonization and translation of 1142 (pp. 248-53). See S. Efthymiadis, 'D'Orient en Occident main étranger aux deux mondes: messages et renseignements tirés de la Vie de Saint Nicolas le Pèlerin (BHL 6223)', in idem, *Hagiography in Byzantium: Literature, Social History and Cult* (Farnham, 2011), ch. 14 = E. Cuzzo et al. (eds.), *Puer Apuliae: mélanges offerts à Jean-Marie Martin* (Paris, 2008), pp. 207-23, esp. 208-9; Oldfield, 'St Nicholas', pp. 170-1 and 170 n. 12; Ivanov, *Holy Fools*, pp. 196-200. On the translation and third Life, see Loud, *Latin Church*, pp. 366, 377, 408.

monks of Hosios Loukas stand out, beginning with his mother's attempts to have him exorcised at the famous monastery (having finally decided to take some responsibility for him after all):

Suspecting him to be possessed by a demon, she offered him to the monks living in the aforesaid monastery of St Luke [of Steiris, or Hosios Loukas] ... as is the custom, believing he would be freed by the virtue of the saints. There he was afflicted for a long time thanks to his treatment, and bore innumerable evils from these monks with acts of gratitude. What evils were not suffered by this noble athlete at the hands of the monks? For at first, suspecting him possessed by a demon, after many beatings and lashes, they expelled him from the church.⁵⁶

Nicholas stands outside, continuing to chant *Kyrie eleison*, so the monks try different means to lock him up or expel him but he always evades imprisonment and returns; finally they try to drown him in the sea, but he is rescued by a dolphin and saves the monks themselves from drowning by advising them to shout *Kyrie eleison*. His wanderings continue; his brother will not join him, despite his entreaties, so he progresses alone. Much of the section of the Life based in Greece centres around Hosios Loukas, contrasting Nicholas's virtuous life of peregrination with the monks' wickedness. Nicholas tells the monastery's steward (*dispensator*), a monk named Maximus, that he should not treat his workers on the land so poorly; in return, Maximus beats him so badly that he breaks the saint's legs and leaves him half-dead.⁵⁷ The final straw for Nicholas is the monks' refusal to allow him communion on an important feast day at a nearby church.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *De s. Nicolao*, 4, p. 238: 'Quae suspicans eum daemonio agitari, Monachis degentibus in praefato S. Lucae monasterio ... obtulit, sicut moris est; existimans eum Sanctorum virtute liberari: ubi multo tempore afflicto, curationis gratia, a praedictis innumera mala cum gratiarum actione sustinuit. Quae autem mala nobilis hic athleta a Monachis non est passus? Nam primum, vexatum a daemonio suspicantes, post multas plagas et verbera, de ecclesia ejecerunt.' On St Luke of Steiris, see A. Louth, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church, AD 681-1071* (Crestwood, NY, 2007), pp. 231-2.

⁵⁷ *De s. Nicolao*, 13, p. 240.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 14, p. 240.

An interesting incident follows at another village. An attractive young girl prostrates herself before Nicholas, beseeching him with tears to give her the tonsure and allow her to join him, in monastic dress, ‘as a companion on his wanderings’.⁵⁹ Nicholas is surprised but excited, and a lesson in temptation begins (only later in Italy does he prove himself immune to feminine attractions).⁶⁰ He briefly instructs her on his way of life, and sends her away. She changes her clothing and afterwards, in a nearby church, Nicholas cuts her hair ‘in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, all watching over, which is said according to custom on the assumption of the monastic habit’.⁶¹ They continue on together, shouting *Kyrie eleison*, but the girl is recognised, the pair are seized, and she turns on Nicholas, calling him a seducer and deceiver, causing him to endure more floggings. But when the girl is asked by the local lord how she came to this way of life, she finally confesses that she was the cause of it.⁶² By now Nicholas is attracting a following, including Bartholomew, the narrative witness, and he crosses over to Italy, where his disciples grow in number and include both men and women. His life in southern Italy is a combination of continued abuse and increasing recognition, including of his many miracles. Falling ill, he makes his way to Trani, having been directed there earlier in a dream,⁶³ and dies around the age of nineteen.⁶⁴

The story about the young girl raises interesting questions about Nicholas’s status or order. We must infer by her wishes concerning her hair and dress that Nicholas appeared in similar fashion, looking like a religious, yet the *Life* gives no indication that his prior miserable experience at Hosios Loukas was anything other than as a temporary guest, or that he took vows there. He lived the rest of his life moving between mountain caves and urban crowds. The end of the *vita* addresses the issue in a little epilogue, where we are told that

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 15, p. 240: ‘suae peregrinationis ... consociam’.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 25, p. 243.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: ‘in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, omnibus servatis, quae secundum morem in assumptione habitus monastici dicuntur’.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 16, p. 240.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11, p. 239.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 246, note c.

Nicholas was dressed in a monastic habit by the monks of Hosios Loukas, as if for a joke (*quasi per ludum*).⁶⁵ The ‘second’ contemporary Life by Adelferius, as if to answer the question, makes clear that Nicholas was a *peregrinus*; indeed that is already considered his surname, the author tells us.⁶⁶ He was neither hermit nor monk, simply a pilgrim. It explains that ‘he lived an angelic life’ at Hosios Loukas before (literally) taking up his cross in his hands and following the Lord away from that place: ‘condemning wordly pleasures, he set out abroad’.⁶⁷

If Nicholas was something of an enigma, with Western writers slightly uncertain how to categorise him, it is because he stems from a genre of sanctity that was alien to the West. The *salos* – ‘holy fool’ or ‘fool for Christ’s sake’ – first appeared in Egypt in the fifth century before spreading to the cities of the Byzantine Empire.⁶⁸ By consciously simulating madness and folly, the holy fool reveals a deeper wisdom while avoiding the vanity of wordly praise. A similar, connected motif is that of the ‘secret servant of the Lord’: unaware of his calling, at least initially, he is often a simple layman who practices great virtue to the amazement of experienced monks.⁶⁹ Nicholas was a holy fool, even if he was not nearly as eccentric as famous forerunners such as Symeon of Emesa in the sixth century, whose life was written in the following century,⁷⁰ or Andrew of Constantinople, the hero of a tenth-century work about a supposedly fifth-century saint.⁷¹ Symeon experienced monasticism for a mere two days before becoming a hermit and then moving to the city, breaking all rules, whether social or canonical, where he could. Andrew, for his part, was locked up at the church of St Anastasia for his lunacy and on being freed caused havoc in the city. Nicholas’s story contains echoes

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 28, p. 243.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 30-31, 47, pp. 244-5; see also the *Translatio*: *ibid.*, 51, p. 249.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 31, p. 245: ‘vitam egit Angelicam’; ‘secularia damnans, oblectamenta, peregre profectus est’. On taking up the cross: Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23.

⁶⁸ Ivanov, *Holy Fools*; A. Y. Syrkin, ‘On the behaviour of the “fool for Christ’s sake”’, *History of Religions*, 22:2 (1982), pp. 150-171.

⁶⁹ Ivanov, *Holy Fools*, pp. 42-8.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-24; Syrkin, ‘Fool for Christ’s sake’, pp. 151-7; D. Krueger, *Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius’s Life and the Late Antique City* (Berkeley, CA, 1996).

⁷¹ Ivanov, *Holy Fools*, pp. 156-68; *The Life of St Andrew the Fool*, ed. L. Rydén, 2 vols. (Uppsala, 1995).

of each, though in the West he was a *peregrinus* above all else.⁷² Returning to Alexius, who displays some of the behaviour of the ‘secret servant’, he may also be, as Sergey Ivanov has argued, a kind of holy fool because of his ‘aggressive’ and ‘provocative’ behaviour, first in the fact of his return home, and second in the posthumous revelation of his life to his family when it is too late.⁷³

Furthermore, and in common with much Byzantine hagiography, Nicholas’s narrative shifts easily between rural and urban environments, for in contrast to the West, in the words of Peter Brown, holiness might ‘spill out unselfconsciously’ among the people of Eastern cities.⁷⁴ It is perhaps because Byzantine sainthood could be less hierarchical and more interested in inverting the social and ecclesiastical order that Brown noted, for the earlier Middle Ages at least, ‘the basic east Roman assumption that laypersons had the same vocation to sanctity as had monks’.⁷⁵ This may overstate the matter,⁷⁶ but it contains at least some truth about possibilities of sainthood which were all but absent in the West, where saintly rebels are far harder to locate and sanctity in this period largely mirrored the make-up of the ecclesiastical elite.

⁷² Ivanov, *Holy Fools*, p. 200: ‘One might tentatively suggest that the Tranian hagiographer had some idea of the paradigm of holy foolery yet the character he described can only partially be defined as a holy fool.’

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁷⁴ P. Brown, ‘Eastern and western Christendom in late Antiquity: a parting of the ways’, in *idem*, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (London, 1982), pp. 166-95, quote at 191; see also E. Patlagean, ‘Ancient Byzantine hagiography and social history’, in S. Wilson (ed.), *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 101-21, esp. 110-11. On Byzantine sainthood in the ninth to eleventh centuries, see E. Patlagean, ‘Sainteté et pouvoir’, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint* (London, 1981), pp. 88-105. In general, see also the collected essays in Efthymiadis, *Hagiography in Byzantium*.

⁷⁵ P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, AD 200-1000* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), p. 137.

⁷⁶ Cf. R. Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 72, who observes that while sanctity was available to all, ‘it certainly could not easily be achieved in the lay world, and the fact that the vast majority of the saints of this period were monastic founders is indication enough of the environment in which these writers considered the most virtuous life could be led’.

Gerard of Gallinaro

The biography of Gerard's life is so short – comprising a modest paragraph of the *Acta sanctorum* – that he barely warrants a mention here.⁷⁷ Yet there is a certain authenticity to it. The author sketched the Life essentially as a preface to a collection of posthumous miracles which, we are told, began twenty-five years after Gerard's death, and which also tell of the construction of a church over his place of burial at Gallinaro, in Lazio. The hagiographer had a knowledge of this posthumous period at least. The text has been edited from a suitably old (but undated) manuscript from Gallinaro.⁷⁸ Gerard's date of death is given in relation to the First Crusade in the brief notice of his life:

In the third year after every spiritual power, inspired by the spirit of God, had taken up arms for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, a certain pilgrim, then a youth born in the province of Auvergne, landed on the coast of Campania, exhausted by a grave weakness from the hardship of the journey.⁷⁹

Gerard makes it to Gallinaro, where he is given lodgings by a distinguished man of the town, but his condition worsens and he dies fifteen days later and is buried. After twenty-five years, a sick pilgrim returning from Jerusalem lies down on the burial place, and Gerard appears to him, triggering the beginning of the miracles. In the vision Gerard also claims that his brother Stephen and another companion, Peter, were buried with him and have a share in the credit for his healing miracles.⁸⁰

A date of death of c.1100 is sensible: we cannot assume too much accuracy for the dates and numbers mentioned in the text, especially as the church is said to have been built

⁷⁷ *De s. Gerardo confessore*, AASS Augusti, II, pp. 693-8, at 1, p. 695.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 'Commentarius praevius', 8-9, pp. 694-5.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Tertio anno, postquam omnis spiritualis potentia, Spiritu Dei afflata ad liberationem sancti Sepulcri sumpserat arma, Campanis applicuit oris quidam Peregrinus, tempore jam ephebus, Arvernensi provincia genitus, gravi ex itineris incommoditate languore confectus.'

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3, p. 695.

under the auspices of a certain Bishop Roffridus of Sora after the miracles started.⁸¹ This is problematic as a Roffridus became bishop of Sora in 1073 and seems to have been replaced by a Goffridus by 1110, but it is just possible they are the same person.⁸² By the modern period the legend had become a complete distortion of the original, and Gerard was made an Englishman who in the seventh century travelled with some different companions to Jerusalem and elsewhere, spent some time living as a hermit, and died at Gallinaro where his cult has endured.⁸³ But the original twelfth-century cult was constructed around the tomb of an almost or completely unknown individual. The one sure fact is that his identity was understood to be that of a pilgrim and a stranger who had come from afar.

Ida of Boulogne

There are even fewer lay female saints in this period than male ones. Where we do find a suitable example, the paradigm of sanctity is distinct from that of the questing pilgrim or wanderer. The Life of Ida, countess of Boulogne (d. 13 April 1113), was written between 1130 and 1135 by an anonymous monk of Saint-Vaast in Arras.⁸⁴ It begins with her upbringing as the daughter of Godfrey the Bearded, duke of Lorraine, her marriage to Eustace II, count of Boulogne, and the birth of three sons: Eustace, Godfrey, and Baldwin. Their arrival is announced to Ida by a dream in which the sun descends into her lap, signalling her

⁸¹ Ibid., 7, p. 696.

⁸² B. Camm, *Pilgrim Paths in Latin Lands* (London, 1923), pp. 109-10.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 102-18.

⁸⁴ *Vita beatae Idae*, PL 155, cols. 437-48 (taken from *De b. Ida vidua*, AASS Aprilis, II, pp. 141-5); dating is deduced from internal evidence in B. de Gaiffier, 'Sainte Ide de Boulogne et l'Espagne: a propos de reliques mariales', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 86 (1968), pp. 67-82, at 68-9. S. N. Vaughn places the Life in its historical context in *St Anselm and the Handmaidens of God: A Study of Anselm's Correspondence with Women* (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 126-59; see also G. Duby, 'The matron and the mis-married woman: perceptions of marriage in northern France circa 1100', in T. H. Aston et al. (eds.), *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 89-108; R. Nip, 'Godelieve of Gistel and Ida of Boulogne', in A. B. Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *Sanctity and Motherhood: Essays on Holy Mothers in the Middle Ages* (New York, NY, 1995), pp. 191-223.

impending motherhood.⁸⁵ The first son succeeded as count of Boulogne; the second, Godfrey (of Bouillon), became the first Christian ruler of Jerusalem; and finally Baldwin became its second, calling himself king.

Ida is pious, humble, and generous with alms, compassionate towards the sick and lowly, and an exemplary wife and mother. After her husband's death, she devotes more time to her charitable works, including the renovation and building of churches; her spiritual advisors are Gerard, bishop of Thérouanne, and Abbot Hugh of Cluny.⁸⁶ (Her close friendship with St Anselm of Canterbury, with whom she exchanged letters, is not mentioned.)⁸⁷ She heals the sick by means of prayer and laying on of hands; two such miracles are briefly described.⁸⁸ She frequents one of her foundations, the monastery of La Capelle, which is dedicated to the Virgin, and it is here that the setpiece miracle of the Life occurs. A deaf and dumb girl is brought to the church by her mother one night during Matins. Seeing her trembling with cold, Ida takes her under her cloak, and the girl suddenly speaks, crying out 'mother, mother' (*mater, mater*).⁸⁹ Following this the abbot looks after the girl but she falls into sin and has a child, causing a return of her disabilities and the loss of her living; Ida cures her again, the girl sins once more, and Ida must repeat the miracle for a third time, whereupon the girl preserves her chastity for good. At the end of her life, Ida grows weak but ever more pious, finally predicting the day of her death at Saint-Vaast, where she is buried, having refounded it under the Cluniacs. The tomb is later opened, displaying her incorruptibility, and among the posthumous miracles, Countess Matilda of Boulogne, her granddaughter by her eldest son Eustace, is cured of a fever through her intercession. Matilda provides the key to the origins of the cult. By this time she had married Stephen of Blois, future king of England; besides Ida, her other grandmother was St Margaret of Scotland,

⁸⁵ *Vita Idae*, 3, col. 438C. This episode is commented on in further detail in the next chapter.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7, cols 441-2.

⁸⁷ Vaughn, *St Anselm*, pp. 126-59.

⁸⁸ *Vita Idae*, 6 (cols. 440-1), 8 (col. 442).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 10, col. 444A.

whose cult had already been promoted by Margaret's daughter, Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I of England. As well as taking part in a wider family tradition of remembrance through saints' Lives and chronicles that has been explored by Elisabeth van Houts, Countess Matilda was directly following the example of Queen Matilda, her aunt, by promoting Ida as a saint.⁹⁰

In his discussion of the Life, Georges Duby convincingly showed that almost everything in it is geared towards celebrating Ida's virtue of motherhood, and others have agreed with this assessment.⁹¹ We should note especially the biography's emphasis upon Ida as a progenitor of great sons (whom, we are told, she breast-fed herself)⁹² and the key miracle of the deaf and dumb girl who takes refuge with Ida and rejoices in her maternity in the very church of the Virgin and Holy Mother herself. There are no strong competing themes that might be found in lay sacred biography such as asceticism or good lordship, though her identity as a widow – which coincides with her miracle-working, preserved chastity, and the heights of piety – is of course significant, even if it is not followed by retirement to a monastery, and it is for this reason that the Bollandists called her Ida *vidua*. But without motherhood the text is devoid of purpose. Moreover, in her role as mother of Godfrey of Bouillon, Ida would soon be reborn in the poetic imagination and incorporated into the Old French Crusade cycle (through the *Enfances Godefroi*) in the later twelfth century, in which her breast-feeding and protective cloak play a role in the expanded legend.⁹³ Ida heralds an age of increasing devotion to the Virgin Mary and more positive clerical perceptions of marriage and motherhood, which are reflected in changing theological trends as well as

⁹⁰ E. van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900-1200* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 73-7; Duby, 'The matron', p. 95.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-7; Nip, 'Godelieve', pp. 211-18.

⁹² *Vita Idae*, 4, col. 440A.

⁹³ Nip, 'Godelieve', pp. 216-18; E. J. Mickel, 'The Latin visions of Calabre and Ida and the origins of the initial branches of the Old French Crusade Cycle', *Neophilologus*, 88:2 (2004), pp. 181-8; *idem*, 'Imagining history in the *Enfances Godefroi*', in D. P. Schenck and M. J. Schenck (eds.), *Echoes of the Epic: Studies in Honour of Gerard J. Brault* (Birmingham, AL, 1998), pp. 175-87 (note Mickel perpetuates the belief that Ida became a nun).

saints' cults.⁹⁴ In the original Latin *vita*, however, the tone of embarrassment that Duby detected in the prologue, in which the monk tries his best to celebrate all the good things about marriage such as procreation, is no doubt reflected in the most tentative cult: Ida appears late in martyrologies and calendars, liturgical items seem lacking, and the single manuscript of the Life is a fourteenth-century copy made as part of a compilation.⁹⁵

Conclusion

Each saint offers an individual and unusual manifestation of sanctity; none of these six can be considered especially generic. Some of them do share similarities, however. Alexius, Walstan of Bawburgh, and Nicholas the Pilgrim all show a commitment to poverty first of all, which was aided by a life of wandering and hardship as they sought to endure the afflictions that their fellow men and women could hurl at them. They were able to express this commitment from different social standpoints. Alexius's aristocratic background may heighten the ironic horror of his earthly struggle but matters little to the central message of abnegation. They lived not for liturgical purity, like the Benedictine monk, but for expressing their apostolic way of life in the world. Walstan, who appeals directly to the agricultural labourer, has a somewhat different, more pragmatic spirituality that is at odds with the high-minded asceticism of Alexius and Nicholas. Walstan shares their egalitarian attitude, but the extreme practices of the other two are indicative of a new and somewhat rarified approach to religion

⁹⁴ C. Walker Bynum, 'Jesus as mother and abbot as mother: some themes in twelfth-century Cistercian writing', in eadem, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA, 1982), pp. 110-69, at 135-43.

⁹⁵ Duby, 'The matron', p. 96; de Gaiffier, 'Sainte Ide', pp. 67 (and n. 1), 69-70.

(Alexius inspired both Christina of Markyate and Peter Waldo of the Waldensians).⁹⁶ This stands in contrast to Walstan's 'simple' piety and ethos of hard work.

This model of poverty, and the wandering asceticism that applies especially to Alexius and Nicholas, is associated with the spiritual reformation of the central Middle Ages which provides a consistent theme to this study and will be considered further in part II. Connected to this, these latter two were an Eastern phenomenon, as their origins lay in Greek rather than Latin sanctity. Bernard Hamilton has showed how important Greek influence was in the West, especially in Rome in the decades around the year 1000, where it centred around the monastery of Sant' Alessio itself, which observed a dual Greek and Latin rite.⁹⁷ Recently Andrew Jotischky has argued for a more positive and broader view of interaction between Greek and Latin monasticism than historians usually allow, highlighting non-textual modes of transmission from East to West.⁹⁸ The journey of Archbishop Sergius, which brought Alexius to Rome, was undoubtedly an important contribution to this cross-cultural pollination. Greek asceticism was also being promoted in Italy at the time through figures such as St Nilus the Younger of Calabria (d. 1005), who deeply influenced prominent ecclesiastical and secular leaders, not least the Graecophile Otto III.⁹⁹ Although such political influence faded during the eleventh century, this awareness of Orthodox tradition was, in Hamilton's judgement,

⁹⁶ On Christina, see n. 6, above. On Waldo: A. Kleinberg, 'The prodigal son: St Alexis and the role of saintly myths in medieval culture', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für Deutsche Geschichte*, 22 (1993), pp. 43-57, at 43.

⁹⁷ B. Hamilton, 'The city of Rome and the eastern churches in the tenth century', in idem, *Monastic Reform*, ch. 1 = *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 27 (1961), pp. 5-26; idem and P. A. McNulty, '*Orientalis lumen et magistra latinitas: Greek influences on western monasticism (900-1100)*', in Hamilton, *Monastic Reform*, ch. 5 = *Le millénaire du Mont Athos, 963-1963: études et mélanges*, 2 vols. (Chevetogne, 1963-4), I, pp. 181-216.

⁹⁸ A. Jotischky, 'Monastic reform and the geography of Christendom: experience, observation and influence', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 22 (2012), pp. 57-74.

⁹⁹ Hamilton, 'Greek influences', pp. 201-2.

an important contributory factor in the formation of a new climate of religious opinion in the Latin Church, which found expression in the spiritual centres of Camaldoli, Cîteaux and the Charterhouse in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries.¹⁰⁰

In the final chapter of this dissertation we shall examine how these traditions bore upon the eremitic nature of the saints who founded such institutions, and how their religious status, while not lay, frequently intersected with the conduct and aspirations of saintly laity. Although a detailed examination of Greek influence on Western sanctity is not possible here, its importance as a factor that both enriched and complicated Western categories and practices should be noted.

Burchard the Venerable represents a different concern altogether. Odo of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, the author of his *Life*, was principally interested in the proper power relationship between an abbey and its secular lord. As Susan Wood has shown, this relationship, where it existed, was poorly defined and the lord's role open to interpretation for good or ill.¹⁰¹ It would be wrong, however, to assume that such a relationship was widely disapproved of, even by reformers. By the time the *Life* had been written, Pope Leo IX had forbidden the laity to hold ecclesiastical office or 'altars' (meaning offerings and tithes), but the ambiguous question of lordship was still open and would be condemned only sporadically or in uncertain language during the eleventh century and into the early twelfth.¹⁰² As Wood puts it, 'Leo himself was at home in a world where not only bishops but lay nobles were lords of monasteries.'¹⁰³ This was, for the time being, part of the natural order of things, but the very existence of Burchard's *Life* in the context of attempts to shore up the excesses of the count of Corbeil shows that it was a vexed question and that monks could go so far as to create an ideal image of saintly lordship in response to it, and in this sense Burchard's model shows a

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

¹⁰¹ Wood, *Proprietary Church*, esp. pp. 328-38.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 826-9, 851-84.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 827.

great deal of agreement with Gerald of Aurillac's. Both *vitae*, however, stem from quite different local circumstances, so I would not go as far as Paul Rousset by claiming that they represent a coherent knightly ideal (which he called Cluniac, though in light of Mathew Kuefler's work on Gerald this word should be abandoned *vis-à-vis* this saint).¹⁰⁴

In Gerard of Gallinaro and Ida of Boulogne we see different models of laity again. Gerard's Life echoes the stories of Bovo of Voghera – another Frenchman journeying to Italy – and Davino of Lucca (of chapters 2 and 3). There is little to say about him in our period beyond his dedication to pilgrimage, and even his social origins are vague, but it was enough for the sketchy background to a cult, though reported miracles provided its firmer foundation. Ida's brand of sanctity is more influenced by her social position: she was celebrated as the begetter of a glorious dynasty, and her Life was written for the purposes of promoting the glory of that dynasty and continuing a tradition of family remembrance. She is therefore in a similar mould to many royal saints. A useful comparison is her contemporary, St Margaret of Scotland who, as we have seen, became a close relation through Ida's son Eustace (who married Mary of Scotland, Margaret's daughter), and who embodies a similar model of female aristocratic piety and charity. Margaret's Life served not only as a spiritual model for Queen Matilda of England, but also emphasised her ancestry, in keeping with the concerns of a leading aristocratic family.¹⁰⁵

This chapter shows that lay saints could be very different, serving diverse purposes and communities. In contrast to Vauchez's twelfth-century urban saints of 'charity and labour',¹⁰⁶ the lay saints of the long eleventh century cannot be encapsulated in a neat phrase. Lay sanctity was possible among aristocratic lords – who might be fighters or peace-makers,

¹⁰⁴ P. Rousset, 'L'idéal chevaleresque dans deux *Vitae* clunisiennes', in *Études de civilisation médiévale, IXe-XIIe siècles* (Poitiers, 1974), pp. 623-33, esp. 632-3. On Kuefler, see ch. 1, above.

¹⁰⁵ Turgot of Durham, *De s. Margarita Scotiae regina*, AASS Iunii, II, pp. 328-35, at cc. 3-5, pp. 328-9; trans. L. Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland: A Study in Medieval Queenship* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 161-78. See L. Huneycutt, 'The idea of the perfect princess: the *Life of St Margaret* in the reign of Matilda II (1100-1118)', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 12 (1989), pp. 81-97, esp. 93.

¹⁰⁶ A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1997), p. 199.

as we have seen from previous chapters – as well as pious ladies, humble labourers, or wandering ascetics. Each case is, in a sense, anomalous and yet each has something to say about this changing age. Most of all, they speak of *peregrinatio*, wandering, and the growing restlessness of the faithful, combined with a new appreciation of which groups might comprise those faithful.

PART II: THEMES AND BOUNDARIES

Chapter 5

Pilgrimage and sanctity

‘With a pang you remember your homeland,’ writes Goscelin of St Bertin in his mournful *Book of Encouragement* to Eve, who has left England to become a solitary at Angers.¹ Written around 1080, it contains a section entitled ‘The salvation of wandering saints’² in which Goscelin depicts the young woman, of whom he is so fond, as the heir to many of the biblical travellers from the Old Testament prophets to the apostles of Christ.

You also, among all wanderers (*peregrini*) and poor people of the Lord, have left your land, not only in the spirit of poverty and in the renunciation of worldly desires, but also by physical distance, so that you may commend yourself to the ear of the Lord the more nearly as you are the more distant in exile.³

Eve is attached to the church of Saint-Laurent, which has a community of anchoresses, but to her former tutor she is a wanderer, or pilgrim, who is exiled. She has given up the manifold

¹ Ed. C. H. Talbot, ‘The Liber confortatorius of Goscelin of Saint Bertin’, *Analecta monastica*, 3rd ser., 37 (1955), pp. 1-117, at 37: ‘patria ... compungit’; trans. W. R. Barnes and R. Hayward in S. Hollis et al., *Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin’s Legend of Edith and Liber confortatorius* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 95-212. In this one instance, however, I have used the evocative translation in M. Otter, *The Book of Encouragement and Consolation: The Letter of Goscelin to the Recluse Eva* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 37. On Goscelin and Eve, see Hollis, *Writing*, pp. 1-5, 225-31; Otter, *Book of Encouragement*, pp. 5-6.

² Talbot, ‘Liber confortatorius’, pp. 37-8: ‘Salus peregrinantium sanctorum’.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 38: ‘Tu quoque inter omnes peregrinos et pauperes Domini, non solum in spiritu paupertatis et abrenuntiatione terrene uoluptatis, sed etiam regionum longinquitate de terra tua existi, ut tanto propinquius quanto exulatus te commendare possis in aurem Domini.’

beauties of the world, including her homeland and the loving company of her friends and relations:

You have put off all these things for a short time, so that you might recover them for eternity, that you might recover a true mother, true sisters, true parents and friends inseparably in a true homeland. Whoever has left behind their goods for the Saviour has lost nothing. ... Direction from above has borne many of the saints on wanderings (*in peregrinatione*).⁴

Goscelin's comments summarise the special qualities of the religious life of exile which are the concern of this and the next chapter. He stresses poverty, renunciation, and distance from home: together, these three ingredients add up to salvation. For Eve, the act of giving up everything that is most important to her proves her devotion to God in the most powerful way. Goscelin notes that many saints were wanderers, and mentions paragons of the early Church as well as biblical exemplars, dwelling especially on the Old Testament prophets and descendants of Abraham.⁵

The link between wandering and sanctity is a key theme that emerges from this study. It is present in many works of hagiography, as we shall see when we come to discuss certain types of monastic saint in the next chapter. But when hagiographers were faced with the task of arguing for the sanctity of a layperson, who lacked the inherent virtue of an ecclesiastical career, this wandering came into its own as a way of demonstrating commitment to a more religious way of life. In the cases of the laypeople surveyed in chapters 1 to 4, a period of wandering or exile, or an act of pilgrimage, was a highly effective way to promote the holiness of someone who was not otherwise obviously holy. Other evidence of personal piety such as almsgiving, prayer, and good works, along with miracles and indications of divine

⁴ Ibid., p. 37: 'Hec omnia ad breue tempus exuisti, ut in sempiternum recipias, ut ueram matrem, ueras sorores, ueros parentes et amicos inseparabiliter in uera patria recipias. Nichil perdidit quisquis pro saluatore sua reliquit. ... Multos sanctorum in peregrinatione superna dispensatio transtulit.' I have changed the word order of the translation in the last sentence.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 37-8.

approval, played a crucial part elsewhere in their *vitae*, but these are ubiquitous in all types of hagiography. For a person who did not have an ecclesiastical career, a ‘career’ of wandering was a powerful alternative. It should be made clear that pilgrimage did not ‘equate’ with sanctity – miracles (usually posthumous) were a more persuasive argument for that. But it did provide powerful evidence of an individual’s devotion to God in the course of his life, before he was able to intercede in heaven after death.

When Goscelin discusses wandering, he uses the noun *peregrinatio*, and the noun *peregrinus* for a wanderer. *Peregrinatio*, far from meaning simply ‘pilgrimage’ in the modern sense, is rendered here as pilgrimage, wandering, or exile more or less interchangeably. In the Lives of many saints these acts express the equivalent experience of devotion which, as Goscelin notes, requires displacement and a commitment to renunciation (which may result in poverty and dislocation of relationships and be accompanied by ascetic practices such as fasting, vigils, and mortification). There were, of course, what Edmond-René Labande once called ‘authentic pilgrims’: those who sought specific tombs and relics and came in their droves to visit Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela during Jonathan Sumption’s ‘great age of pilgrimage’ that began in the decades around 1000.⁶ This period, whose larger impact bears closely upon this study, followed the departure of the Saracens in the Alps from the 970s, the opening of the overland route to Jerusalem after 985 (which was cheaper and safer than going by sea), and the promotion of pilgrimage to Compostela in the reign of Sancho III of Navarre (1004-35), which coincided with the decline of Muslim influence in northern Spain.⁷ Yet the modern sense of pilgrimage as a religious journey to a specific shrine only emerged in certain sources between the seventh century and the advent of

⁶ E.-R. Labande, ‘Recherches sur les pèlerins dans l’Europe des XIe et XIIe siècles’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 1:2 and 3 (1958), pp. 159-169 and 339-347 (in two parts), at 159; J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Medieval Religion* (London, 1975), p. 114.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-16; on the Saracens in the Alps see ch. 2, above. See also S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 284-315; R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London, 1967), pp. 50-3; D. Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West* (London, 1999), pp. 11-28.

crusading in 1095, solidifying thereafter. *Peregrinatio*, at its most basic level, may simply mean any journey made ‘through the land’ (*per agrum*). Maribel Dietz has argued that, for the early Middle Ages at least, *peregrinatio* should be translated most often as ‘journey’ and *peregrinus* as ‘traveller’ or ‘foreigner’, rather than ‘pilgrim’, which also reflects these words’ meaning in Roman law. In the eleventh century, as this loose notion of pilgrimage transformed into the description of a formal ritual, writers were in a cusp period when the definition was still necessarily wide.⁸

This chapter will explore pilgrimage – in these broadly defined terms – in the Lives of lay saints. First it will examine why pilgrimage could be such a powerful mode of piety for hagiographers. It will then make use of theoretical approaches to exile to show that writers’ representation of pilgrimage as a means of saintly ‘initiation’ fits into a larger picture of human ritual and mythmaking, and is not unique to medieval hagiography. This part of the chapter serves to put the relationship between pilgrimage and sanctity into a wider context, reminding us of the connections that these themes naturally make to other disciplines. Then we can return to our lay saints to uncover the remarkable potency of pilgrimage in their stories, and its various types of representation. The chapter proceeds from the point of view of hagiography as literary text; we are not generally concerned with the experiences of actual pilgrims, but in how sanctity was constructed and represented. There is one exception to this collection of pilgrims, namely the single female saint of the group, Ida of Boulogne, who will be considered on her own terms.

⁸ On changing definitions, see Labande, ‘Recherches sur les pèlerins’, p. 160; W. J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095-c.1187* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 20; Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 137; M. Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World, AD 300-800* (University Park, PA, 2005), pp. 27-8 incl. n. 61. On general etymology, see G. Constable, ‘Monachisme et pèlerinage au Moyen Age’, in idem, *Religious Life and Thought (11th-12th Centuries)* (London, 1979), ch. 3 = *Revue historique*, 258 (1977), pp. 3-27, at 4; B. de Gaiffier, ‘Pellegrinaggi e culto dei santi: riflessioni sur le thème du congrès’, in *Pellegrinaggi e culto dei santi in Europa fino alla I. Crociata* (Todi, 1963), pp. 11-35, at 12-15; T. M. Charles-Edwards, ‘The social background to Irish *peregrinatio*’, *Celtica*, 11 (1976), pp. 43-59, at 43-5.

Pilgrimage and penance

Why was pilgrimage such a forceful spiritual concept for pious people of the central Middle Ages? There is no neat answer to that question, which is ultimately too large to be fully considered here,⁹ but there are two aspects to it that appear to be consistently important in the sacred literature under review: first, it followed biblical example, and second, it was a way of cleansing sin. As to the first, the urge of the pioneering religious of the eleventh century to return to an idealised early Church and follow the *vita apostolica* taught by Christ is a well-recognised trend. Because it motivated a range of people to undertake an eremitic style of life which involved wandering, often outside of any official institutional control, its adherents sometimes look like our lay saints, and consequently this trend is discussed separately in the next chapter.

As to the second aspect, the cleansing of sin leads to salvation and heaven. One way to achieve this is by undertaking ‘penance’. Penance, however, is a technical subject that usually refers to a ritual of formal confession and absolution with regard to particular sins. Despite the continuing existence of liturgical *ordines* for this purpose in our period, we are usually in the dark about how penance affected ordinary people.¹⁰ Changing methods and attitudes to penance comprise a large scholarly literature with its own specialised debates.¹¹ However, living piously in non-prescriptive ways might achieve the same goal of expiating sin. Temporary (or, indeed, permanent) conversion to a religious life was one method.¹² The problem is that we cannot, and should not, always separate acts of penance with generalised

⁹ For a masterful overview, see G. B. Ladner, ‘*Homo Viator*: mediaeval ideas on alienation and order’, *Speculum*, 42 (1967), pp. 233-259.

¹⁰ K. Wagner, ‘*Cum aliquis venerit ad sacerdotem*: penitential experience in the central Middle Ages’, in A. Firey (ed.), *A New History of Penance* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 201-18; on this and other types of evidence, see S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050* (Woodbridge, 2001), esp. pp. 104-72 for the liturgy.

¹¹ Recently, Firey, *New History of Penance*; R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge, 2014); Hamilton, *Practice of Penance*; and on the Carolingian background, M. de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814-840* (Cambridge, 2009).

¹² D. Iogna-Prat, ‘Topographies of penance in the Latin West (c.800-c.1200)’, trans. G. Robert Edwards, in Firey, *New History of Penance*, pp. 149-72, at 154.

acts of piety and devotion that in the end came to the same thing. Some pilgrimage was conducted with the aim of obtaining formal absolution, but for most pilgrims, argues Sarah Hamilton, ‘concern about one’s general sinfulness’ was the primary motive.¹³ By the thirteenth century, theologians had distinguished between the two types of pilgrim, ‘yet the distinction was unreal’, notes Sumption, ‘for the need to expiate their sins was common to both classes’.¹⁴

In our period, nonetheless, pilgrimage was included in a recognisable tariff system of penance that originated in Irish practice, and which doled out punishments of temporary or even perpetual exile; this was only reformed completely around the end of the twelfth century.¹⁵ In 999, therefore, Arduin, marquis of Ivrea, was condemned at Rome in the presence of the pope and emperor for the murder of Bishop Peter of Vercelli, and among the conditions of his penance was the stipulation that, should he wish to remain a layman, he must not remain more than two nights in the same place (unless taken ill); the alternative was to become a monk. If he did decide to go into a state of permanent pilgrimage, his behaviour must remain strictly non-secular: arms-bearing, meat, linen clothes, and the kissing of men and women were all prohibited.¹⁶ Count Theoderic of Trier set out for Jerusalem to do penance for murdering his archbishop, but he, and more than a hundred others with him, drowned en route. As one contemporary noted, they were ‘cleansed by the sea’s waves from the filth of their sins’.¹⁷ But such sentences were handed out to only a minority of penitents.¹⁸ Most people went on pilgrimage of their own accord; often we have evidence of only the

¹³ Hamilton, *Church and People*, p. 292.

¹⁴ Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, p. 98. See also C. Vogel, ‘Le pèlerinage pénitentiel’, in *Pellegrinaggi*, pp. 37-94, at 39.

¹⁵ B.-S. Albert, *Le pèlerinage à l’époque carolingienne* (Brussels, 1999), pp. 68-99. Punishments involving pilgrimage in early-medieval penitentials are listed in Vogel, ‘Le pèlerinage pénitentiel’, pp. 53-6; see pp. 43-52 on later reforms; Hamilton, *Practice of Penance*, pp. 11-13, for modifications to Vogel’s model, also p. 173. See also Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, pp. 195-6; Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, p. 64.

¹⁶ MGH Constitutiones, I, ed. L. Weiland (Hanover, 1893), no. 25, p. 53; Hamilton, *Practice of Penance*, pp. 1, 173.

¹⁷ Bernold of Constance, *Chronicon*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 5 (Hanover, 1844), pp. 385-467, at 429-30: ‘marinis fluctibus emundati a peccatorum sordibus’.

¹⁸ Hamilton, *Practice of Penance*, p. 174.

nobles, and for them Jerusalem was generally considered the most effective destination for atonement.¹⁹ These famously included the fearsome Fulk Nerra, count of Anjou, who travelled there three times in a state of fear for his soul.²⁰

Pilgrimage was, for contemporaries, intrinsically cleansing; we need not always think in terms of canonical ritual. Tom Licence, focusing on English examples, has shown how the expiatory power of exile operated through three different models of washing away sin: the straightforward, uncomplicated belief that exile could perfectly cleanse the soul, which came to England with Irish missionaries from the seventh century; the idea that exile on earth was a form of ‘purgatory’, which was often to be combined with purifying exercises and would continue after death (this became more prominent in the twelfth century); and finally exile as modelled in the New Testament – *imitatio Christi*, in other words.²¹ The first and third of these are especially important in the texts under discussion here.

Moreover exile, as separation from the world, was a founding ideal of monasticism and so has had a place at the heart of Christian history since, one might say, St Antony went out into the Egyptian desert in the late third century. He was inspired not only by the example of the apostles but also by Christ’s words to the rich man which we have seen quoted in saints’ Lives several times already: ‘If you will be perfect, go sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven: and come follow me.’²² Taking oneself physically away from everyday society, whether by moving elsewhere or by solitary enclosure, has been a mainstay of the religious life ever since. As Jean Leclercq and Giles

¹⁹ Several examples of these are discussed in Hamilton, *Church and People*, pp. 287-96.

²⁰ Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. J. France (Oxford, 1989), pp. 60, 212-14.

²¹ T. Licence, *Hermits and Recluses in English Society, 950-1200* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 115-22. The last point is represented by frequent gospel allusions in the hagiography of lay saints, and is discussed further in the next chapter.

²² Matthew 19:21; Athanasius, *The Life of Antony and the Letter to Marcellinus*, trans. R. C. Gregg (New York, NY, 1980), 2, p. 31; M. Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 2-3.

Constable have shown, monasticism and pilgrimage therefore have much in common.²³ In the words of Constable:

Not only was the monk a pilgrim, both in a spiritual and also sometimes in a physical sense, but the pilgrim was also a sort of monk, at least a dedicated individual who had separated himself – temporarily or for ever – from life in the world.²⁴

This logic applies especially to hermits and recluses, who placed a special emphasis on separation and exclusion, undertaking ‘ritualised acceptance of social death in pursuit of spiritual rebirth’, in Licence’s words.²⁵ There was ample scriptural testimony to support anyone who wished to ‘leave home’ to be closer to God,²⁶ and the line between pilgrims and hermits can sometimes become too indistinct to define adequately.²⁷ For all the Church’s godly, it had been possible to consider themselves wanderers through this life since St Augustine’s influential idea that ‘the Church proceeds on its pilgrim way (*peregrinando*) in this world ... right up to the end of history’.²⁸

Despite the spiritual benefits of displacement and pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, the Church had long viewed it with suspicion, sometimes for laypeople as well as the clergy.²⁹

²³ J. Leclercq, ‘Monachisme et pèlerinage du IXe au XIIe siècle’, *Studia monastica*, 3:1 (1961), pp. 33-52; Constable, ‘Monachisme’.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7: ‘Non seulement le moine était un pèlerin, à la fois dans un sens spirituel et aussi, parfois, dans un sens physique, mais le pèlerin était une sorte de moine, du moins un individu consacré qui s’était séparé – temporairement ou pour toujours – de la vie du siècle.’

²⁵ Licence, *Hermits*, p. 69; see also Leclercq, ‘Monachisme’, p. 41.

²⁶ E.g. Genesis 12:1, Hebrews 11:8-9, 1 Peter 2:11, and esp. Matthew 19:21, 29; see Constable, ‘Monachisme’, p. 5. Goscelin of St Bertin gives a more thorough list of scriptural references in Talbot, ‘Liber confortatorius’, pp. 37-8.

²⁷ G. Constable, ‘Eremitical forms of monastic life’, in *idem*, *Monks, Hermits and Crusaders in Medieval Europe* (London, 1988), ch. 5 = *Istituzioni monastiche e istituzioni canonicali in Occidente, 1123-1215* (Milan, 1980), pp. 239-64, at 245: ‘It is often hard to draw the line between hermits and pilgrims, or between the ideals of eremitism and peregrination, which shared a common desire for separation from the world of human affections and concerns.’

²⁸ Augustine, *De civitate Dei contra paganos*, PL 41, cols. 13-804, at XVIII.51, col. 526: ‘in hoc saeculo ... usque in hujus saeculi finem ... peregrinando procurrit Ecclesia.’ Trans. H. Bettenson, *St Augustine: Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* (London, 2003), p. 835.

²⁹ As Jerome famously wrote, ‘it is praiseworthy not to have been in Jerusalem but to have lived well for Jerusalem’: *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi epistulae*, ed. I. Hilberg, CSEL 54 (Vienna, 1996), p. 529 (‘Non Hierosolymis fuisse, sed Hierosolymis bene uixisse laudandum est’). Giles Constable charts the ebbs and flows of official opposition in ‘Opposition to pilgrimage in the Middle Ages’, in *idem*, *Religious Life*, ch. 4 = *Studia*

Benedictine monks, of course, were for the most part restricted to enclosure, a principle that was reinforced by Pope Alexander II (1061-73).³⁰ In the hagiography under discussion, however, any such view is muted. Sometimes we see the different beneficial features of pilgrimage fuse together in a salutary example, such as the case of Pons of L eras (d. c.1140). His biographer Hugh Francigena, writing within living memory of his subject, says that as a brutal knight from Lod eve in southern France who was known for violent plundering, Pons suddenly resolved to devote his life to atonement for his sins. After despatching his family to monasteries, he enacted Christ’s teaching to the rich man on poverty and departure.³¹ On Palm Sunday, he came before his bishop to have his sins read out in the square while being whipped, as he had requested, and over the coming days gave his victims recompense. As a way of bringing completion to the penance, he and his companions slipped away one night on a self-imposed pilgrimage to Saint-Guilhem-le-D sert, Santiago de Compostela, and Mont-Saint-Michel, stopping at other important shrines on the way. They established a community at Silvan es in 1132, which would soon become affiliated with the Cistercians, with Pons becoming a laybrother, or *conversus*. Here we see a period of formalised, public penance lead naturally into an informal but powerfully expiatory period of pilgrimage, all of which is conducted under the guidance of Christ’s teaching. Although in most cases – like those discussed here and in the next chapter – the role of pilgrimage in the quest for salvation is not set out as part of such a careful scheme, the example of Pons demonstrates its clear, transformative potential in the life of the layperson.

gratiana, 19 (1976), pp. 125-46. On late Antiquity, see D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA, 2002), pp. 1-4. The Carolingians were especially exercised about the dangers and abuses of pilgrimage, which had a knock-on effect in this period: see Constable, ‘Opposition’; Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, pp. 30-2; Albert, *Le p lerinage*, pp. 97-9; Hamilton, *Practice of Penance*, pp. 42-3; Vogel, ‘Le p lerinage p nitentiel’, pp. 42, 76-81.

³⁰ RB 67, col. 914C. Pope Alexander II: Gratian, *Decretum*, ed. E. Friedberg, *Corpus iuris canonici*, 1 (Leipzig, 1879), causa 16.1.11, col. 763.

³¹ Ed. B. M. Kienzle, ‘The works of Hugo Francigena: “Tractatus de conversione Pontii de Laracio et exordii Salvaniensis monasterii vera narratio; epistolae” (Dijon, Biblioth que Municipale Ms. 611)’, *Sacris erudiri*, 34 (1994), pp. 273-311, at 287-311 (see 289); trans. eadem in T. Head (ed.), *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York, NY, 2000), pp. 495-513.

A little earlier, in 1067, Peter Damian eloquently addressed the matter of exile in the life of laypeople. After he had handed out the penance of pilgrimage to Jerusalem for some sins committed by Rainerius II, marquis of Monte Santa Maria (a dependency of Tuscany), the marquis put it off, fearing the difficulties of such a long journey. Damian urged him on, explaining his different positions on pilgrimage towards lay and monastic sinners, and in doing so encapsulated the advantages of spiritual wandering for the military classes:

Obviously, we maintain a certain restraint and regularity in assigning this kind of penance, so that we do not indiscriminately deny permission for this journey to all who come to me for counsel, nor do we let down the barriers for all who wish to go. Indeed those who live under a rule, and properly observe the dictate of the canonical or monastic life, we persuade to persevere in the vocation in which they find themselves, and not to neglect necessary tasks in favour of those left to our free choice. ... But we urge those who serve the world as soldiers, or who prefer the spiritual army but do not observe the custom of their profession, to undertake the journey of spiritual exile, and to give satisfaction abroad to the awesome judge, whose laws and commands they have not observed in between their domestic cares. Thus by wandering they may bring themselves peace, and by pilgrimage, a home in the fatherland.³²

Damian expresses the opportunity pilgrimage brings the layperson to leave his or her normal life and dedicate themselves to God. Travel creates an appropriate environment for spiritual devotion, in which the trials faced are expiatory in themselves: in the letter Damian goes on to give examples of difficulties encountered by others on the road, citing God's assistance to pilgrims in each case. But the principal benefit of going away is release from everyday cares,

³² *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, ed. K. Reindel, 4 vols., MGH Briefe 4 (Munich, 1983-93), 4, no. 151, pp. 1-2: 'Nos plane quendam tenemus in huius paenitentiae moderacione distanciam, ut nec omnes passim qui nobis consilium expetunt, ab hoc itinere compescamus, nec omnibus ire volentibus libera licentiae frena laxemus. His enim qui regulariter vivunt, et vel canonicae vel monasticae religionis legitime iura custodiunt, suademus, ut in ea qua constituti sunt vocacione permaneant, nec pro his que in humano constituuntur arbitrio, ea que necessaria proponuntur omittant. ... Hos autem qui vel paludati mundo deserviunt, vel spiritalis quidem praeferunt miliciae titulum, sed professionis suae non custodiunt institutum, hortamur ut spiritalis exilii iter arripiant, tremendoque iudici peregre satisfaciant, cuius intra domesticae curae sollicitudines leges ac mandata non servant. Et hoc modo vagando, quietem peregrinando patrie sibi provideant mansionem.' For the translation I have made use of both Peter Damian, *Letters*, trans. O. J. Blum, 6 vols. (Washington, DC, 1989-2005), 6, pp. 3-4, and Constable, 'Opposition', p. 132.

which will bring peace and quiet (*quies*). Monks already have the proper environment within a monastery, which is why Damian urges them to keep to their rule, just as Bernard of Clairvaux would do, writing that they should seek Jerusalem ‘not by proceeding with their feet but by progressing with their feelings’.³³ Damian writes in connection with assigning penance, but his view of pilgrimage is essentially a pragmatic one that views it as an excellent opportunity for concentrating on religious devotion, which supports the view that the benefits of exile were commonsense and inherent within the tradition rather than strictly legalistic.

Pilgrimage in the progression of the saintly life

Damian wrote about pilgrimage not only in penitential terms, as we have seen, but also about where it belonged in the life story, or career progression, of a saint. We turn now to a sermon he gave for the feast day of St Alexius; his interest in this saint should be no surprise, as Alexius was a paragon of personal, ascetic virtue that suited Damian’s eremitic stance and reformist principles.³⁴ As we have seen, the legend of Alexius tells of the saint’s secular and militaristic upbringing, his flight from marriage which coincides with his conversion to a life of ascetic poverty, the consolidation of this choice on his return back home (where exile from his family becomes all the more poignantly emphasised by his proximity to the unwitting household), and finally confirmation of his sanctity at death, when his message of salvation is made available to all. Damian treats the different stages in Alexius’s life with a thorough

³³ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Opera*, VIII, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais (Rome, 1977), ep. 399, pp. 379-80, at 380: ‘non pedibus proficiscendo, sed affectibus proficiendo’; see also, for example, Damian’s comments in *De contemptu saeculi*, PL 145, cols. 251-92, at c. 25, cols. 278-9.

³⁴ Peter Damian, *Sermones*, ed. G. Lucchesi, CCCM 57 (Turnhout, 1983), no. 28, pp. 161-70; see p. 161: Damian knew the popular version of the legend (BHL 286), discussed in ch. 4, above. The sermon is also edited in PL 144, cols. 653-60. On Damian’s principles, see e.g. W. D. McCready, *Odiosa Sanctitas: St Peter Damian, Simony, and Reform* (Toronto, 2011).

analysis, likening them to the growth cycle of the crop, which is used in Mark's gospel as a metaphor for the kingdom of God.³⁵ Seed that has been scattered on the land mysteriously sprouts: first the blade, then the ear, then the fully-grown corn in the ear, and finally the crop is harvested by the sickle. Damian matches these four stages with the career of Alexius:

The first [stage] relates to the world and worldly things, which he held in contempt. In the second he was a pilgrim, and bereft of all means he endured a want of all things for seventeen years in the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia. The third is inward, because going back to his own home in happy return, and having advanced into the hard battle with his wife and both his parents, among servants and diverse members of the household, so that only to God was it made truly known, he deceived everyone's sight. Finally there is the fourth, where in that place after blows and lashes from the servants ... at last he happily died, and brought the immense struggles of such great hardship to a blessed end.³⁶

Emphasising that Alexius did not attain perfection suddenly but arrived at it gradually, Damian goes on to explore each stage in depth, equating the wordly phase with the blade, pilgrimage with the ear, return with the fully-grown corn, and death with the harvest and the crop's removal to the 'heavenly storehouse'.³⁷ He then reinforces the four stages by drawing upon another biblical metaphor, this time of a river crossing in Ezekiel in which the water rises up the body to successive levels: first it goes up to the ankles, then the knees, then the waist, and finally it becomes a torrent that cannot be crossed, or in other words, explains Damian, cannot be expressed.³⁸

In Damian's four stages towards perfection, as in the Life of Alexius itself, the pilgrimage phase coincides with the critical period of conversion, which in turn leads to

³⁵ Mark 4:26-9.

³⁶ Damian, *Sermones*, no. 28, pp. 164-5: 'Primum est quod mundum et mundana quaeque contempsit. Secundum quod peregrinus et omni facultate nudatus, per decem et septem annos in Edessa Mesopotamiae ciuitate omnium rerum penuriam pertulit. Tertium uero internum est, quod domum propriam felici postliminio rediens, durumque certamen aggressus inter uxorem et utrumque parentem, inter uernaculos diuersamque familiam, ut soli Deo fieret ueraciter notus, omnium fefellit aspectus. Postremo quartum est quod illic, post alapas ac uerbera seruulorum ... tandem feliciter obiit, tantique laboris immensa certamina beato fine compleuit.'

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 4, pp. 165-6: 'caelestis horrei'.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 5-7, pp. 166-8; Ezekiel 47:3-5.

sanctity. Modern scholars have approached the legends of saints and other heroes with a similar eye for structural analysis, with the ubiquitous human myth of the transformative journey taking centre stage. Joseph Campbell made much of it in his study of the human ‘monomyth’, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, in which the initiate’s testing journey into the unknown is shown to be a hallmark of storytelling. He uses a basic threefold structure of separation, initiation, and return, with the journey coming at the initiation phase; Damian employs a similar conception in his sermon on Alexius but adds the fourth stage of death which is essential to his Christian theology.³⁹ My argument is that this period of initiation, which because of potential ambiguity I shall call ‘transition’, and its special journey away from the homeland with its spiritual trials, is the critical period that allows a layman to grow into his role as a saint.⁴⁰ Any given Jonah must enter and come out of the belly of the whale, as it were, before he can fulfil his destiny; trial by means of such a journey marks the path to the status of hero or saint.

Whereas Campbell largely passed over the fertile territory of saints’ Lives, Alison Elliott applied similar structural methods in her study of the desert fathers.⁴¹ She matched the threefold structure to the particularities of the texts under scrutiny, which usually have a story within a story:

We find this basic monomyth exemplified in the lives of the desert solitaries. The essential plot of these legends is a journey, a quest. The hero goes forth, finds a person who imparts knowledge (the story of his life) and who then usually dies. Although the traveller would like to remain in the enchanted spot, he may not do so but must return to the world with his acquired knowledge.⁴²

³⁹ J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 3rd ed. (Novato, CA, 2008 [orig. 1949]): part I systematically explores the threefold structure of the hero’s adventure (see pp. 23, 64-5, 74 for especially relevant comments).

⁴⁰ This is purposefully gender-specific; female lay sanctity is discussed below.

⁴¹ A. G. Elliott, *Roads to Paradise: Reading the Lives of the Early Saints* (Hanover, NH, 1987). Campbell briefly mentions saints in *Hero*, pp. 304-5.

⁴² Elliott, *Roads*, p. 73.

Our texts do not employ the dual-story conventions of Elliott's (which include the *Peregrinatio* of Paphnutius, the Life of Macarius the Roman, and Jerome's Life of Paul of Thebes)⁴³ but they share the crucial theme of the questing journey. Like almost all of Elliott's eremitic saints, laypeople had to 'leave home' to attain sanctity,⁴⁴ and like Elliott's saints they fled the threat of marriage, or sought a holier life, or pursued penance, while secret flight was frequent and the gospels were often cited as motivation.⁴⁵ Alexander Syrkin has similarly drawn upon the threefold structure and the way it corresponds to teachings in Hinduism to explain a specific typology of Christian sanctity, the 'holy fool'. Syrkin describes the saint's three phases as 'acceptance' of the world; 'nonacceptance', which includes escape or rejection of the world; and finally sanctity or bliss (*Brahman*).⁴⁶ Again, the middle period is one of exile and trials, and is essential for the initiate's transformation.

This kind of literary analysis finds strong parallels in ritual theory in anthropological studies. More than a century ago, Arnold van Gennep drew upon a wide range of field studies to propose the threefold structure in striking and original terms. He argued that the ceremonial rites that change one's status in society, such as marriage, initiation into adulthood or religion, funerals, and so on, comprise typical patterns of three types. These are 'preliminal' (which involve rites of separation), 'liminal' (rites of transition), or 'postliminal' (rites of incorporation into the new situation).⁴⁷ If we translate the context into a medieval one, using monastic initiation as an example, this implies that receiving the tonsure and changing dress is a rite of separation from the old life; the disorientating period as a novice is the liminal, transitional phase; and full acceptance into the community equates with

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 59-68.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 81.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 59, 82 (in general, see pp. 77-102).

⁴⁶ A. Y. Syrkin, 'On the behavior of the "fool for Christ's sake"', *History of Religions*, 22:2 (1982), pp. 150-171, at 161-2; H. Chaudhuri, 'The concept of Brahman in Hindu philosophy', *Philosophy East and West*, 4:1 (1954), pp. 47-66. On holy fools, see the discussion on Alexius in ch. 4, above.

⁴⁷ A. van Gennep, *Les rites de passage: étude systématique des rites* (Paris, 1909), trans. M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago, IL, 1960); references are from the latter: see pp. 11, 21, 191.

incorporation. Van Gennep showed that different rites among traditional peoples contain varying degrees of each stage; monastic initiation is an example that comprises each one. When we apply this ritual theory to the legends of saints, it can be a powerful tool. Historians such as Elliott have done this, while anthropologists have tested their theories on ancient myths and legends in similar fashion. Bruce Lincoln, for example, successfully applied female initiation ritual to the mother and daughter myth of Demeter and Persephone, drawing on the classicist Henri Jeanmaire's earlier observations.⁴⁸

Focusing for now on van Gennep's tripartite structure, among his key contributions was the discovery of how important the liminal phase is in such rites. The anthropologist Victor Turner seized upon this idea of liminality in his own studies of ritual, and with his wife Edith famously applied it to pilgrimage.⁴⁹ Liminality, like a pilgrimage, is a medial or marginal phase between two states, 'betwixt and between all familiar lines of classification'.⁵⁰ The journey takes place in an ambiguous 'sacred' zone and implies the assimilation of spiritual maturity or potency for the pilgrim, who is another kind of initiate, with trials and temptations along the way before reaching the culmination of the quest.⁵¹

However, van Gennep realised long before that liminality and transition tend to involve movement somewhere. He noticed the prevalence of 'territorial passage' in ritual, in other words physical movement over doorways, under portals, or out into the wilderness, and

⁴⁸ Elliott, *Roads*, pp. 168-80; B. Lincoln, *Emerging from the Chrysalis: Studies in Rituals of Women's Initiation*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1991), pp. 71-90, citing H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et courètes* (Lille, 1939).

⁴⁹ V. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York, NY, 1995 [orig. 1969]), esp. chs. 3, 5, and on the debt to van Gennep see pp. 94-5; V. Turner and E. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (Oxford, 1978), though in this later work the authors prefer 'liminoid' to 'liminal', a distinction too fine for our purposes (pp. 34-5, 253-4). The Turners' influence is extensive: see, e.g., M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London, 1978), esp. p. 97; C. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York, NY, 1997), p. 102; Elliott, *Roads to Paradise*, pp. 171-8. On liminality as a broad concept: E. Leach, *Culture and Communication: The Logic by which Symbols are Connected: An Introduction to the Use of Structuralist Analysis in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 33-6, 82. Debating and questioning Turnerian pilgrimage and liminality: J. Eade and M. J. Sallnow (eds.), *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London, 1991), pp. 3-5; A. Morinis (ed.), *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Westport, CT, 1992), pp. 8-9; E. Duffy, 'The dynamics of pilgrimage in late medieval England' in C. Morris and P. Roberts (eds.), *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 164-77, at 165-6.

⁵⁰ Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, p. 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

that to change social categories means changing one's location.⁵² To give an example, pregnancy often involves rites of separation into a place of liminal seclusion away from society, before the mother may be reincorporated after childbirth. According to one study of the Toda people of India, the pregnant woman, already separated from the village, was ceremonially placed in a special hut during a symbolic period of pregnancy (in the fifth month), and again a couple of days after giving birth, therefore living in two transitional homes and reintegrating into her new role as a mother in stages.⁵³ Elsewhere, male initiation rites that transform boys into men commonly, like those of various Australian tribes, involve seclusion out in the bush, and sometimes the initiate is even considered dead during this relatively long period of trial.⁵⁴ Van Gennep also argued that in traditional societies, the marches that divide territories may be viewed as imprecise 'neutral zones', which are often deserts, forests, or marshland, and are considered sacred to those outside:

Whoever passes from one [zone] to the other finds himself physically and magico-religiously in a special situation for a certain length of time: he wavers between two worlds. ... this symbolic and spatial area of transition may be found in more or less pronounced form in all the ceremonies which accompany the passage from one social and magico-religious position to another.⁵⁵

In other words, physical travel into sacred liminal zones is nothing less than a transition ceremony that has the capacity to change one's social and religious standing. The basic human recognition of territorial passage from one world or state to the next can help us understand, or conceptualise differently, the transitional nature of pilgrimage in the Lives of the saints. Whereas the Turners' work on pilgrimage focuses principally on journeys *ad loca sancta*, van Gennep's broader concept of sacred, desert-like marches which allow one to

⁵² Van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, pp. 20, 191-2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 74-5.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

progress to a higher spiritual level bears a closer correspondance to the pilgrimages and wanderings *ex patria* of the lay saints hitherto described (and the hermits and converts of the next chapter), as he showed that all acts of exile, with their significant threshold crossings, may be viewed in terms of transition to a new social status. Victor Turner's most useful contribution for our purposes was to reinforce this last point, namely that liminality can lead to positive (as well as negative) status change. He convincingly demonstrated the power of liminal ritual to transform the status of those undergoing it, citing examples of certain African chieftain initiations during which the candidate was exiled and subjected to humiliating verbal and physical abuse, some of it from those he had wronged, for what we may suppose to be similar regenerative purposes as comparable acts of medieval Christian penance (we recall Pons of Lérás's humiliating ordeal in the town square). The chieftain candidate was then incorporated into his new role with a lavish coronation ceremony.⁵⁶

The aim of this recourse to interdisciplinary theory is to suggest that it is simply human nature – or at least a function of human societies down the ages – to comprehend important journeys and acts of exile as transformative, and this is expressed not only in the storytelling conventions of myth and legend but also in the ritual processes described by anthropologists. What religion, indeed, does not celebrate journeys to godliness? As the Buddha said, imagining the words of one newly embarking on a life of faith:

Household life is crowded and dusty; a life gone forth is open air. While living at home, it is not easy to live the higher spiritual life that is completely fulfilled and completely pure like a polished shell. Suppose, having shaved off my hair and beard, and having donned the yellow robe, I were to go forth from home to homelessness.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Turner, *Ritual Process*, pp. 100-2, 170-2. On transforming status downwards, see the discussion in *ibid.*, pp. 166-203.

⁵⁷ *Early Buddhist Discourses*, ed. and trans. J. J. Holder (Indianapolis, IN, 2006), p. 69.

Religion aside, those who have experienced divorce from their land in our own time have written of their experience in transformative (if sometimes ambivalent) terms. Edward Said wrote of ‘the perilous territory of not-belonging’ which lies in the frontier zone somewhere between ‘us’ and the ‘outsiders’, where criminal exiles were once banished; it holds pitfalls and may even be fetishised by those who exploit it, jealously ‘clutching difference like a weapon’.⁵⁸ We think of Prospero in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, banished to his island where he weaves malicious enchantments before finally renouncing magic and returning to claim his duchy, bringing an end to his liminal crisis. But things do not simply return to normal in the incorporation phase. The literary critic James Wood has described ‘the light veil of alienation thrown over everything’ after departure which cannot be shaken off on return: the former exile is forever transformed, and there is no going back.⁵⁹ It is the natural conclusion of the heroic journey, the ambiguous and poignant return – the *nostos* of the ancient Greeks – when nothing is quite as it was.⁶⁰

Exiles, returned or not, can do little else but see themselves apart from those who have not experienced their transformation.⁶¹ They perceive the world differently, and the world views them likewise. As the early-medieval Irish showed, the leading religious *peregrini*, who preferred to be outsiders in foreign lands to careerists at home, carried enormous wells of spiritual potency.⁶² They created an unmatched culture of wandering, to be lauded, followed, and carefully recorded in saints’ Lives wherever possible. Many others tried to appropriate a heroic, exilic reputation for themselves or their forebears. In her study of ‘epic’ (or metrical) saints’ Lives from the ninth to eleventh centuries, Anna Lisa Taylor

⁵⁸ E. Said, ‘Reflections on exile’, in idem, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), pp. 173-86, at 177, 182-3.

⁵⁹ J. Wood, ‘On not going home’, *London Review of Books*, 36:4 (2014), pp. 3-8, at 5.

⁶⁰ M. Alexopoulou, *The Theme of Returning Home in Ancient Greek Literature: The Nostos of the Epic Heroes* (Lewiston, NY, 2009).

⁶¹ For a recent anthropological discussion (including bibliographical references and further discussion of Turner), see H. Ghorashi, *Ways to Survive, Battles to Win: Iranian Women Exiles in the Netherlands and United States* (New York, NY, 2003), esp. pp. 125-32.

⁶² T. M. Charles-Edwards, ‘The social background to Irish *peregrinatio*’, *Celtica*, 11 (1976), pp. 43-59; E. Duckett, *The Wandering Saints* (London, 1959).

noted how writers recast the careers of missionary bishops of late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages into the mould of the wandering Aeneas, that hero of the schools' core text, the *Aeneid* (often with a foundation story that mirrored Rome's).⁶³ Aeneas's epic quest was free to be reinterpreted in spiritual terms: the secular quest has a matching structural integrity, and we might substitute Georges Duby's class of knightly young men (the energetic *iuvenes*), wandering in search of glory, for their spiritual and (probably elder) counterparts.⁶⁴ Like Goscelin of St Bertin, who saw the intrinsic link between sanctity and exile, Hugh of St Victor, in the late 1120s, wrote on the ultimate unity between spiritual perfection and detachment from the homeland:

The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land.⁶⁵

Hugh himself experienced exile from an early age before settling at Paris, though the details of his life are uncertain. He was also a regular canon, and accordingly did not reject worldly engagement, in contrast to monks.⁶⁶ However it may be found, detachment has long been a powerful force for spiritual advancement, and for those who did not experience it in the cloister, usually because they had been given a secular upbringing, it could be found on the road. It is no coincidence that Damian's sermon on the lay saint Alexius, which eulogises the transformative power of exile, is directed at a secular audience at Santi Bonifacio e Alessio,

⁶³ A. L. Taylor, *Epic Lives and Monasticism in the Middle Ages, 800-1050* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 31.

⁶⁴ G. Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. C. Postan (London, 1977), pp. 112-22. On the greater likelihood of *seniores* to follow a religious path, see T. Head, 'The development of the Peace of God in Aquitaine (970-1005)', *Speculum*, 74 (1999), pp. 656-686, at 686.

⁶⁵ Hugh of St Victor, *Eruditionis didascalicae libri septem*, PL 176, cols. 739-838, at III.20, col. 778B: 'Delicatus ille est adhuc cui patria dulcis est. Fortis autem jam cui omne solum patria est, perfectus vero cui mundus totus exsilium est.' Trans. J. Taylor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts* (New York, 1961), p. 101.

⁶⁶ P. Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 5-11.

Rome.⁶⁷ Damian speaks ‘especially’ to those who ‘are still elevated with worldly deeds and bound by the chains of marital union’.⁶⁸ He urges them to strive for the pious life ‘inasmuch as your order dictates’⁶⁹ so that they may have children worthy of God, and his sermon is concerned to some degree with good parenting (‘if you live religiously ... you will excel both in your children and yourselves, but if you do the opposite, you will harm them and yourselves’).⁷⁰ It is these members of the congregation, who have certain freedoms because they have ‘not yet reached the peak of spiritual life’,⁷¹ who are the most appropriate audience for the story of Alexius, that unusual layman who managed to live religiously in the world after finding his calling abroad. The modern editor of the sermons plausibly believed this audience to be the parents and family of the residing monks.⁷² This was a message for the ordinary faithful, the people for whom the legend of Alexius caught a particular fancy, and for whom it was translated into the vernacular. The message is that laypeople can go on their own transformative journeys. Those bound to chastity and the cloister, on the other hand, ascend to holiness detached from the world. It now remains to demonstrate how lay saints – at least male ones – found just such paths to sanctity in the long eleventh century, and how the road away from home was their true hope for salvation.

⁶⁷ Damian, *Sermones*, no. 28, p. 161 (editorial comments). Damian wrote another sermon for this monastery on St Boniface, which is not directed at secular listeners: *ibid.*, no. 20, pp. 128-33; also in PL 144, cols. 615-19.

⁶⁸ Damian, *Sermones*, no. 28, p. 162: ‘specialiter alloquor ... saecularibus adhuc estis actibus editi et coniugalis copulae uinculis obligati’.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘in quantum uester ordo dictat’.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 163: ‘si religiose uiuitis ... et filiis uestris praestatis et uobis; sin autem contra, et illis nocetis et uobis’.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 162: ‘necdum spiritalis uitae culmen aggressi’.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Aspiring to Rome: Gerald, Bovo, and Davino

This dissertation has already examined the legends of the lay saints Gerald of Aurillac, Bovo of Voghera, and Davino of Lucca in separate chapters in the context of their historical circumstances.⁷³ The aim now is to revisit them to interpret the transformative journey within the dimension of sanctity: if we understand each saint's story as a rite of passage towards sanctity, the key transition period in each case is centred around pilgrimage.

The Lives of Gerald, Bovo, and Davino pivot their particular sacred geography around Rome. The city acts as the key facilitator in the saints' travels but is never the location for anything but the briefest and most perfunctory scene in the text. Instead it looms, vital but unknown, as a symbol in the background. Gerald of Aurillac led an active life as a just lord and administrator who followed a path of chastity and piety, and eventually wished to take the next step and become a regular monk. In the short Life in particular, this feeling is marked by increased withdrawal from worldly activities.⁷⁴ However, as this version narrates, he cannot find any monks to join so he takes advice from a respected bishop

that he should accept the blessing of clerical office, but that he should conceal it from people in order to curb the malevolent ones and those who reckon him a layman with greater fear.⁷⁵

Outwardly Gerald is to stay in the world but he still finds ways to adapt to a new inward condition: he receives the tonsure but hides it; he wears clothes made of skins; he keeps his

⁷³ Chs. 1-3, above.

⁷⁴ *Vita Geraldii brevior* (hereafter *VGb*), *Cat. Paris.* II, pp. 392-401, at cc. 6-7, p. 397: note esp. the transition between these two sections. The longer Life is *Vita Geraldii proluxior* (hereafter *VGp*) in *Odon de Cluny: Vita sancti Geraldii Auriliacensis*, ed. and French trans. A.-M. Bultot-Verleysen (Brussels, 2009), trans. G. Sitwell, *St Odo of Cluny: Being the Life of St Odo of Cluny by John of Salerno and the Life of St Gerald of Aurillac by St Odo* (London, 1958), which is used with some changes; the chapter numbering of the PL edition (vol. 133, cols. 639-704) is given in brackets where different.

⁷⁵ *VGb*, 7, p. 397: 'ut clericatus benedictionem susciperet: quod tamen hominibus ad hoc celaret ut malivolos quosque, qui eum laicum putarent, majori terrore comprimeret'.

belt and sword but makes a golden cross for them; and immediately he sets out for Rome. This compromised process of conversion has a marked rite of separation, which is apparent in rituals of hair and dress and the physical crossing of territory. If the short Life leaves a certain amount of ambiguity regarding Gerald's status – despite his interior feelings, he continues to live among laypeople – the longer Life places Gerald more firmly on the side of the laity, with a less marked withdrawal and no suggestion of 'clerical office' (*clericatus*): instead the bishop advises Gerald to stay in secular dress.⁷⁶

Both, however, have Gerald making for Rome straight after his conversion. There he makes a will (which in the longer Life hands substantial property to St Peter) and following this he builds his monastery at Aurillac. It is Gerald's habit to go to Rome every other year, carrying a monetary offering around his neck (the long text claims he goes seven times).⁷⁷ In the remaining part of the short Life, which consists of miracles performed while living, both Lucca and Asti are the settings for wonders on the road.⁷⁸ At Lucca, for instance, he is chased a long way by a woman who is desperate to get her hands on the water he has touched so that she can administer it to her blind son. Despite Gerald's best efforts, she manages to procure some which has the required healing effect.

The longer Life's treatment of Gerald's pilgrimages emphasises their importance even further, turning them into a coherent nine-chapter road narrative, comprising six miracles, in which Gerald comes to accept his miracle-working abilities and finally performs them purposefully, in contrast to the humbler, self-denying episodes of the shorter Life. Interest in the journeys is notable: detailed knowledge of the pilgrim routes to Rome is confidently exhibited, and whereas the short Life evokes Asti and Lucca, the long Life also includes the

⁷⁶ *VGb*, 7, p. 398; *VGp*, II.2-4, pp. 200-2. It should be noted that the preface of *VGb*, pp. 392-3, makes apologies for Gerald's status as if he did indeed remain a layman, comparing him to Job and David.

⁷⁷ *VGb*, 8, p. 398; *VGp*, II.17, p. 220.

⁷⁸ *VGb*, 8, p. 398; Lucca: 11, pp. 399-400; Asti: 13, p. 400.

inhabitants and geography of the Alpine passes, and the Italian pilgrim stops of Le Briccole and Sutri, where miracles occur.⁷⁹

Gerald's act of separation and entry into his transition phase, which is marked by the first journey to Rome, paves the way for his miracle-working, which by virtue of its unusual and sustained application in life, rather than only posthumously, is an especially important argument for his sanctity.⁸⁰ It is understood that we have now passed into a phase of exceptional holiness from one of merely elevated piety. By no means all the miracles occur on the road but it is the setting for their development from brief genre pieces into more substantial and vivid narratives. It is in Sutri where Gerald finally acknowledges his abilities. Rather than flee from a blind man who begs his healing water, Gerald brings him in secretly:

Then he carefully washed his hands and soaked his fingers in the fresh water, and made the sign of the cross over the same water with the holy relics. When the blind man poured it on his sightless eyes, he was immediately able to see.⁸¹

He then repeats the performance near Le Briccole, saying, 'the Lord's will be done'.⁸² He is changed, empowered, and knowingly goes on to perform two more such miracles nearer to home.⁸³ The short Life ends abruptly after a miracle story in life; if more was written, it has been lost. In the long Life, we can mark Gerald's 'incorporation' phase at his death and final recognition as a saint, which is the subject of book III. Yet Gerald's conversion to religion, which allows him to become a holy man and miracle-worker and, consequently, a saint, develops in parallel with the ritual of pilgrimage.

⁷⁹ *VGp*, II.17-25, pp. 220-30; on the identification of Le Briccole in Tuscany, see *VGp*, p. 302 n. 113. Earlier, Pavia and Piacenza are settings for different stories that are designed to showcase Gerald's secular qualities of equanimity and justice: I.27, 29, pp. 172-4, 176.

⁸⁰ Although Gerald's good works are the main justification in the long Life, miracles are cited as the definitive proof for the sceptical: *VGp*, II.praef., pp. 196-8, and II.34, 240-2. The short Life is more equivocal.

⁸¹ *VGp*, II.23, p. 226: 'Tunc manus diligenter abluit et in recenti aqua digitos intinxit, atque de sanctis pignoribus eandem aquam signavit. De qua cecus, ut orbata lumina superfudit, mox uidere meruit.'

⁸² *VGp*, II.24, p. 228: 'Fiat uoluntas Domini'.

⁸³ *VGp*, II.26 (pp. 230-2), II.32 (p. 238); in the meantime there are some miracles associated with the natural world.

Viewed as a whole, however, Gerald's legend has a rich and complex make-up in which pilgrimage vies with other important themes such as secular lordship. Bovo and Davino are, on the other hand, pilgrim saints *par excellence* whose spiritual calling revolves around an extravagant commitment to sacred journeying. Despite originating at different locales (Voghera and Lucca respectively) and having profoundly contrasting interests in the secular side of their heroes' early life, these texts about two aristocratic laymen exhibit the same threefold dynamic towards sanctity itself. Early on, Bovo vows that if God grants him victory over the Saracens (called *pagani*) he will put down his arms, look after orphans and widows, and travel to Rome every year to visit the tombs of SS Peter and Paul.⁸⁴ Almost in reply, St Peter appears in a dream to warn him of an enemy attack and provide him with comforting words, and from this point on Bovo seems under the apostle's protection. But his 'conversion' is only fulfilled after he achieves military victory. Thereafter, the contrast with the warmongering, bloodthirsty hero who among the retreating enemy 'slaughtered whomever he could'⁸⁵ is stark. Before he embarks on his liminal phase, however, he must undergo psychological separation from his old life. An encounter with the man who murdered his brother provides this. Sorely tempted to have his vengeance, Bovo wrestles mightily with his conscience but is finally moved to spare the man.⁸⁶ After this cathartic act of forgiveness, the text continues:

Bovo, growing day by day, in control of himself, and not forgetful of his vow, laid down his arms; and having become wholly peaceful, every year he was regarded as a Roman pilgrim.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ *De s. Bobone seu Bovo*, AASS Maii, V, pp. 184-91, at c. 3, p. 185.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6, p. 186: 'quoscumque poterat trucidabat'.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7, p. 186.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 8, p. 186: 'Bobo quoque accrescens quotidie, sui compos, et voti non immemor, arma deposuit; et totus pacificus effectus, per singulos annos Romipeta habebatur'.

The Life then turns to Bovo's spirit of abnegation on the road. There is no reference to eremitic poverty but rather to penitential suffering:

And so he wore down his body in the manner of a martyr lest vices of the flesh, with pleasures growing [around him], discovered an opportunity for invasion. Forgoing a horse for such reasons, he exhausted himself by walking; and bearing his own cross, he followed in the footsteps of Christ.⁸⁸

This phase of his life is described briefly, as if what the author really wanted to write was the heroic epic, but it remains the only part of the *vita*, as opposed to the *miracula*, that allows him to be a saint. Bovo's spiritual potency derives from his toils while on pilgrimage; in other words, like Rome in all three cases, the destination is merely symbolic, while the medial state of travelling itself lends him spiritual transcendence. Bovo's death brings his liminal, transitional phase to an end, and afterwards miracles occur at his grave and the newly recognised saint is translated into the local church, marking his final rite of incorporation.

The Life of Davino has no diverting back story; conversion to a spiritual path comes early in the text, and from that moment the goal is simply *peregrinatio*.⁸⁹ Davino is inspired to give up his riches by Christ's preaching on poverty, and then hears another call, that of Matthew 16:24 – 'if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me' – which inspires him to set out on his epic pilgrimage. Fasting and praying, he wears down his body like Bovo, and his battle against the devil and the devil's ministers is compared with David's against Goliath and the Philistines. He overcomes them 'along with all the vices and carnal desires of this world': from these authors' point of view, one of the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 8, p. 187: 'Macerabat itaque corpus genere quodam martyrii ne vitia carnis, deliciis accrescentia, irrumpendi aditum invenirent. Eques enim non talibus usus, pedestri exercitio terebatur; et bajulans sibi crucem [John 19:17], Christi sequebatur vestigia.' A few lines above the author also mentions Bovo's mule (*mulus*), on which the saint hardly ever sat.

⁸⁹ *De s. Davino*, AASS Iunii, I, pp. 327-36, at cc. 2-3, p. 330.

truest tests of pilgrimage was the worldly temptations it offered.⁹⁰ In a close parallel to Bovo's story, Davino's death at Lucca is followed by miracles at the grave, whereupon he is translated to the local church and recognised as a saint. The schema of separation (renunciation and departure), transition (pilgrimage), and incorporation (death and recognition) is likewise mirrored.

Alternative transformations

This dynamic in the Lives of lay saints may be easily applied to the male saints of chapter 4, and while it is unnecessary to labour the point in detail, some brief comments will be useful. We have already discussed Alexius in this context, while Gerard of Gallinaro clearly fits the same pattern of death on the road as Bovo or Davino. Nicholas the Pilgrim also endured a substantial period of exile after suddenly leaving home before finally coming to rest at his cultic centre of Trani; in the legend, most of Nicholas's religious life is spent in a state of heightened liminality as his wandering takes him to a variety of dangerous situations and places. Burchard the Venerable's legend is less obvious in this scheme, yet still discernible is the questing story of a lay saint who must make a journey to Cluny in order to fulfill his destiny as the protector of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, where he is eventually laid to rest. Burchard, as we have seen, encountered at Cluny the resistant figure of Abbot Maiolus. There, he entered into a struggle over the future of his monastery and won, allowing for its reform. It is the liminal moment in Burchard's life when he is in another's territory, unbalanced, full of emotion, and in the hands of a greater power. The author of the *vita*, Odo of Saint-Maur, makes much of the scene to vest his saint with spiritual purpose. Burchard's

⁹⁰ Ibid., 3, p. 330: 'cum omnibus vitiis et hujus seculi concupiscentiis'.

pilgrimage is necessary not only for his monastery but also for his own development as a saint.

So far we have seen saints leave their homeland in order to make long journeys: the epic nature of their travels, by medieval standards, is always considered something impressive. Even Burchard's trip to Cluny was emphasised for its length and difficulty. These factors naturally help the journey seem more meaningful, and lend a penitential idea to the pilgrimage even when this purpose is not explicit. So it comes as a surprise to realise that Walstan of Bawburgh's act of total disconnection with his previous life, which initiated his liminal phase, involved a northwards 'journey' of a mere five miles to Taverham. But this story shows that even the smallest trip, providing it leads somewhere 'else', can place its pilgrim in a state of heightened spiritual potency.

In the Life of Ida of Boulogne, however, we have no such journey. If we are looking for a rite of transition, as in all the other Lives above, which directs the saint to pastures new and ultimately towards sanctity, there are several alternative moments that might fulfil this function and help define Ida's type. One is the death of her husband and her entry into widowhood, which allows her free reign to carry out her spiritual ambitions. Returning to Georges Duby, however, we recall that he successfully argued that the Life celebrated Ida's motherhood.⁹¹ But because he was most interested in Ida in the context of medieval marriage, he posited that 'the major stage' in the biography was the moment when she becomes a wife.⁹² While this is justifiable, there is, it would seem, an even more important moment which precisely fits his argument about motherhood. Near the beginning of the text, after Ida's lineage and upbringing have been described, the author relates a dream she had:

⁹¹ See ch. 4, above; G. Duby, 'The matron and the mis-married woman: perceptions of marriage in northern France circa 1100', in T. H. Aston et al. (eds.), *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 89-108, at 91-7.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 91-2.

One night, when she had given herself over to a deep sleep, thinking of higher things, she saw in a dream that the whole sun had descended from the sky and, as it were, stayed a moment in her lap. This dream showed a great future because those who in time would possess power and authority proceeded from her.⁹³

Like the Virgin Mary, whom we are told Ida especially venerated,⁹⁴ Ida's mission is announced, and the arrival of the celestial sun to her very person expresses the idea of divine conception. From this vision, which provides the first unique waypoint in the text, everything else flows.

In his study of female initiation rituals, Bruce Lincoln argues that van Gennep's model of rites of passage is basically male.⁹⁵ He notes several rituals where the women never actually go anywhere; instead, they are placed in seclusion in their own homes.⁹⁶ As we have seen with the Toda people, this is not always true and women do sometimes leave, but it may be worth considering the gender consequences of our model thus far, and asking whether there are other anthropological schemas that might be usefully directed at female sanctity. As Lincoln says of female rites of passage:

Without a clear enactment of separation, one might question whether there can truly be a liminal period or a process of reincorporation, for nothing has been left behind and there is nowhere to which one can return.⁹⁷

He goes on to propose a new threefold dynamic of 'enclosure, metamorphosis (or magnification), and emergence', based on the structural similarities of a collection of

⁹³ *Vita beatae Idae*, PL 155, cols. 437-48, at c. 3, col. 438C: 'Quadam namque nocte cum se sopori dedisset, de supernis cogitans, vidit per somnium, quod de coelo sol omnis descendisset, unumque tanquam momentum in sinu ejus fecisset. Hoc autem magnum quid futurum ostendebat somnium, quoniam ex ea procederent, qui ad tempus possiderent regnum et imperium.'

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9, col. 443.

⁹⁵ Lincoln, *Emerging from the Chrysalis*, pp. 99-103.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100-1.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

initiation ceremonies that bring girls into womanhood.⁹⁸ Unlike the male initiate, who must often experience exile and loss of some sort before adopting higher status, the female tends to be cocooned before she is ready for her specific roles of marriage or childbirth. Lincoln argues that male ‘status change’ does not apply to women in any case, because it is not status in the sense of power and authority that is changing, but rather ‘their fundamental being The pattern of female initiation is thus one of growth or magnification, an expansion of powers, capabilities, experiences.’⁹⁹

Lincoln’s model works well with the development of Ida’s sanctity, as it would for any saint’s Life strongly influenced by the archetype of the Virgin and Mother.¹⁰⁰ Ida, therefore, emerges from her childhood virginity to be divinely blessed with ‘conception’ by the sun, and in this way develops into her role as nourisher and protector of a great line. At the same time, we need not reject van Gennep’s conclusions out of hand when it comes to female sanctity. Anthropological studies indicate periods of discernible liminality for both genders, and although women may not experience obvious periods of exile, their enclosure, where it takes place, is not dissimilar to the kind of transformative, interior exile – the pilgrimage of the soul – that was experienced by medieval monks.¹⁰¹ For our saints, a useful description remains of a tripartite structure resulting in growth and change through liminality. Whereas for male lay sanctity we may make clear statements about pilgrimage in this transitional process, social constructions of medieval gender, like those of other traditional societies, mean that these are likely to require modification for female lay saints.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 103-4.

¹⁰⁰ Examples include the cult of Aleth, mother of Bernard of Clairvaux, and in late Antiquity, Pelagia, mother of Are dius of Limoges. Aleth is in the various biographies of Bernard: PL 185, cols. 227-9, 470-1, 523-5, 535-9; see also B. Cignitti, ‘Aletta’, BS 1, cols. 825-6. Pelagia is mentioned in Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SSRM 1 (Hanover, 1885), pp. 744-820, at c. 102, p. 813; see also J. Marilier, ‘Pelagia di Limoges’, BS 10, col. 439.

¹⁰¹ Lincoln’s examples in *Emerging from the Chrysalis* imply liminality whatever the ritual: e.g., in India, Tiyyar girls were placed in an inner room of their ancestral home for three days before initiation (p. 9), while in North America, Navajo girls had to run to ‘pursue the sun’ on frequent occasions over a period of days (p. 20).

Conclusion

The link between pilgrimage and sanctity comprises a broad and multifaceted area of investigation not only within medieval Christianity but also human religion and ritual more widely. Its profound consequences have been shown to have a critical bearing on this study. In the studies of lay saints in previous chapters, it became apparent that pilgrimage, wandering, or exile were important aspects of the saints' careers – as represented in hagiographic texts – and that this feature of their development needed further research. Now therefore, in looking into this connection more closely, we have explored the following areas. First, it was necessary to understand why contemporaries saw such heights of spiritual potential in pilgrimage. We have seen that the ways in which they viewed its benefits were multidimensional: wandering was an inherent feature of Christian ritual and was part of what it meant to follow Christ (and, in fact, the Old Testaments prophets too, as Goscelin of St Bertin emphasises), and the earliest monks took this to heart as a way of expressing their devotion, making it central to the monastic tradition, even if the wandering ceased to be physical and became an interior quest instead. Alongside this, it developed as a method of penance for obtaining formal absolution, though for all those who went on religious journeys this was a natural consequence of such a ritual. It has been necessary to dwell on this particular problem in order to emphasise the complexity of pilgrimage's heritage while suggesting that for most contemporaries, it was not all that complicated in reality, especially once pilgrimage achieved widespread popularity among different levels of society from this period onwards.

Second, taking Peter Damian as our medieval model, we have seen that it is possible to consider the Lives of our saints in simple stages leading to sanctity. It turns out that this is an expression of the tripartite dynamic of separation, transition, and return that seems natural

in human mythologising. It may be said that this is little more than asserting that everything has a beginning, middle, and an end. But where it takes on a special interest for medieval sanctity is when we look at the middle. Using anthropological studies into ritual processes as a useful comparative tool, we find that the middle, transitional part of the life is, in a sense, predisposed towards pilgrimage, and that pilgrimage – or simply displacement – is a powerful way to change status. Exiles, religious or otherwise, have expressed this point in one way or another throughout the ages. Our lay saints, in their textual constructions, go on pilgrimage as a saintly quest. They set out as ordinary individuals and return as godly ones. The unsettled (liminal) nature of these journeys seems to give them added potency, and as we saw especially in the case of Gerald of Aurillac, it lends them miraculous powers too. The centrality of journeying as the principal means to transition towards sanctity in life has been demonstrated in eight out of nine of the lay saints in this study: Gerald, Bovo, Davino (of chapters 1 to 3), and Alexius, Burchard, Walstan, Nicholas, and Gerard (of chapter 4). Meanwhile, we ought briefly to note that the principle is upheld in the pilgrimage of the mythical layman Duke Stephen (discussed in the context of the *Vita Martialis* in chapter 1), who becomes a pious exemplar even if he is not the subject of a Life.

Finally, we looked at the one exception to this rule, and the one female lay saint, Ida of Boulogne. Rather than go on a journey, she becomes mother to an illustrious line. It is valuable to note how the imaginative medieval construction of her ‘emergence’ in some ways mirrors the model found in certain traditional societies, where the initiate grows into her reproductive role through a process of empowerment, just as anthropological male models parallel the male saints. Our lay saints, therefore, represent two poles of possibility. On the one hand, the layman goes on a journey to find new status, on the other, the laywoman is static but no less empowered. Gender is never so simple, however, and it is worth pondering on the directions this model could take, especially given a recent scholarly tendency to think

in terms of three genders within the ambit of medieval religion.¹⁰² If we consider the saint who is a lifelong monk, for example, he claims features from both our gender types, as he is an ‘emasculated’ man with a static life who nevertheless views it as a spiritual journey. It might therefore be possible to say that some of our laypeople underwent a ‘shift’ in gender when they gave up their old lives and moved towards the sphere of the religious. This question must be left for further study, however, as it is now appropriate to ask how the main themes of this chapter apply to sainthood more widely.

¹⁰² See esp. R. N. Swanson, ‘Angels incarnate: clergy and masculinity from Gregorian reform to Reformation’, in D. M. Hadley (ed.), *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999), pp. 160-77. For a recent historiographical overview, see J. Murray, ‘One flesh, two sexes, three genders?’, in L. M. Bitel and F. Lifshitz (eds.), *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives* (Philadelphia, PA, 2008), pp. 34-51.

Chapter 6

Pilgrimage in the Lives of hermits and converts

Any typology of sanctity loses its larger meaning when taken on its own. The purpose of this final chapter is to place the discussion of lay sanctity in a broader context and consider those who experienced boundaries and transitions between lay and clerical worlds. Thus far, apart from considering certain non-lay cults in Lucca and Aquitaine, we have confined ourselves within rigorous borders that have excluded all those who served in any kind of ecclesiastical institution, while also analysing how pilgrimage assumed such an important role in the making of their legends. A fair question to ask is whether this fully takes into account the saintly potential of the laity. What of the godly laypeople who came to institutions after practising religion outside? They may not be lay saints *sensu stricto* when we consider their whole careers, but they express something about the concerns of the laity and the Church's view of the laity at a time when these things were being reconsidered.

Some of our lay saints, we have observed, could behave rather like hermits in their recourse to exile and asceticism (Alexius and Nicholas the Pilgrim probably display these qualities most of all); now we will turn to some of the pioneering, 'authentic' hermits who experienced the same intensity of wandering in their lives but eventually sought radical new communities and institutions as outlets for their religiosity. Equally, we have surveyed lay saints on the cusp of becoming monks: Gerald of Aurillac experienced a compromised, interior conversion to monasticism, while Burchard the Venerable entered his monastery to die – this was a pious practice rather than a technical conversion, but nonetheless required a meeting of secular and spiritual worlds. Now, too, we will look at some aristocratic

contemporaries who felt a similar yearning but took the final step and fully embraced monasticism in their prime, showing how pilgrimage was an essential step in fulfilling this new tendency in society. Therefore by widening our boundaries a little, we can achieve useful results, namely to illustrate the crucial contextual background to our saints' spiritual concerns; to address any lingering anxieties that 'lay sanctity' ought to consider a broader canvas, including those who drifted in and out of its space; and to show how pilgrimage operated on a profound level in the Lives of many of the saints, not just the lay ones, who were products of the religious upheavals of the time.

The new hermits

This period saw 'the proliferation of new religious orders as well as the emergence of hybrid groups within the Church whose exact status remained unclear', as Katherine Allen Smith has aptly remarked.¹ In conceptualising clerical and social structures in this period, it is necessary to accept a certain degree of ambiguity.² In Peter Damian's letter to the layman Rainerius in which he urges him to go on pilgrimage, he leaves the door open to similar journeys for those who are among the 'spiritual army' but who do not follow the *institutum* (custom or rule) of their profession.³ These people, who considered themselves religious devotees in the manner of the regular clergy but did not always wish to be confined to a traditional, Benedictine monastery, amalgamated into the new hybrid orders of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, many of which had eremitic beginnings. As we saw in chapter 3, regular canons were an important result of this movement, such as the three priests, the cleric, and the

¹ K. A. Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 39.

² See introduction and ch. 3, above, for further discussion.

³ *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, ed. K. Reindel, 4 vols., MGH Briefe 4 (Munich, 1983-93), 4, no. 151, p. 2: 'spiritualis quidem praeferunt militiae titulum, sed professionis suae non custodiunt institutum'.

layman who retreated to the hills outside Lucca to found the community of San Pantaleone in 1042 in a state of despair at the world. They did so ‘according to the canonical rule’ but there is little else to separate their early foundation from a community of hermits.⁴ The Lateran councils of 1059 and 1063 formalised the existence of regular canons, but contemporaries as much as modern historians have often struggled to divide them from other orders within the Church. In addition, as was true of monks and hermits, some early regular canons were not even ordained into clerical orders but instead considered themselves lay *conversi*.⁵

Here we are broadly interested in the careers of ‘hermits’. A valuable text from north-eastern France or the Low Countries of the mid-twelfth century grapples with overlapping categories of orders, especially in the case of hermits, from a relatively impartial perspective when there was much disputation on the subject. For the clerical author of this *Little Book on the Different Orders and Professions Which are in the Church*, hermits are painted with a broad brush but are considered members of the monastic order.⁶ The author emphasises withdrawal and the solitary life, and ‘we find therefore a distinct likeness to hermits in the first age, when we find the just Abel living in the shade of trees and intent on grazing his sheep, having doubtless sought solitude’.⁷ He acknowledges that not everyone will agree that Abel may be called a hermit, but he prefers to judge how people live to how they are named, ‘for the fruits of that life can be acquired without the name, but without the life the name

⁴ *Raccolta di documenti per servire alla storia ecclesiastica lucchese*, ed. D. Barsocchini, 5 vols. (Lucca, 1818-41), V, 3, no. 1787, p. 659: ‘secundum regulam canonicam’.

⁵ J. C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), pp. 29-35 (councils), 197-223 (canons’ status in general), 204-5 (ordination). Also on origins, see C. Dereine, *Les chanoines réguliers au diocèse de Liège avant Saint Norbert*, Université de Louvain: Recueil de travaux d’histoire et de philologie, 3:44 (Louvain, 1952), pp. 15-32. See also the discussion in ch. 3, above.

⁶ *Libellus de diversis ordinibus et professionibus qui sunt in aeclesia*, ed. and trans. G. Constable and B. S. Smith, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2003), pp. 4-16; on the author’s impartiality, see pp. xiii, xxii-xxvii; on the disputes, pp. xii-xiii.

⁷ *Libellus*, p. 8: ‘Habemus ergo in priori aetate heremitarum similitudinem expressam, ubi inuenimus Abel iustum in arborum umbra morantem et pascuis ouium intentum sine dubio solitudinem quaesisse’.

alone is empty'.⁸ We immediately see how, when a layperson withdraws from his old life, he naturally approaches a disputed territory that borders the hermits.⁹

In writing about the eleventh-century movement of rejection of traditional monasteries and spiritual withdrawal, Henrietta Leyser called the protagonists the 'new hermits', arguing that there had always been hermits, but what distinguished these was a newfound determination to live according to the teaching of Christ and his apostles (following the *vita apostolica*) in order to return to the *ecclesia primitiva*.¹⁰ As they saw it, eremitism was the beginning and end of their religious life; previously it had been considered a goal for the experienced monk who wished to take his struggle against the devil to a higher plane, as St Benedict acknowledged in his 'little rule for beginners'.¹¹ Now it required rigorous adherence to New Testament commands; of these, the teaching followed by Pons of Lérans and others (to the rich man in Matthew 19:21)¹² took on a profound importance, as well

⁸ Ibid., p. 12: 'Nam sine hoc nomine potest eiusdem uitae fructus acquiri, sine uita uero solum nomen inane est.'

⁹ For modern historians' comments on this ambiguity, see A. Jotischky, *The Perfection of Solitude: Hermits and Monks in the Crusader States* (University Park, PA, 1995), p. 22, and his examples of Eastern and Western foundations on pp. 22-46; A.-M. Helvétius, 'Ermites ou moines: solitude et cénobitisme du Ve au Xe siècle (principalement en Gaule du nord)', in A. Vauchez (ed.), *Ermites de France et d'Italie (XIe-XVe siècle)* (Rome, 2003), pp. 1-27; J. Becquet, 'L'érémisme clérical et laïc dans l'ouest de la France', in *L'eremitismo in occidente nei secoli XI e XII* (Milan, 1965), pp. 182-211, esp. 185-6; G. Constable, 'Eremitical forms of monastic life', in idem, *Monks, Hermits and Crusaders in Medieval Europe* (London, 1988), ch. 5 = *Istituzioni monastiche e istituzioni canonicali in Occidente, 1123-1215* (Milan, 1980), pp. 239-64. On changing concepts of eremitism, see also J. Leclercq, 'L'érémisme en Occident jusqu'à l'an mil', in *L'eremitismo*, pp. 27-44, esp. 41-2.

¹⁰ H. Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism: A Study of Religious Communities in Western Europe 1000-1150* (London, 1984), pp. 18-28. On the *vita apostolica* and its influence on the wider church, see M.-D. Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. J. Taylor and L. K. Little (Toronto, 1997), pp. 202-69; G. Constable, 'Renewal and reform in religious life: concepts and realities', in R. L. Benson and G. Constable (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 37-67, at 51-6. On the new eremitic movement, see also P. G. Jestice, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 1997); B. K. Lackner, *The Eleventh-Century Background of Cîteaux* (Washington, DC, 1972); T. Licence, *Hermits and Recluses in English Society, 950-1200* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 27-42; J. Howe, *Church Reform and Social Change in Eleventh-Century Italy: Dominic of Sora and his Patrons* (Philadelphia, PA, 1997), pp. 21-3; G. Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 60-5; C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London, 1984), pp. 128-31. Three important collections that explore aspects of eremitism are: *L'eremitismo*; Vauchez, *Ermites*; W. J. Sheils (ed.), *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, Studies in Church History, 22 (Oxford, 1985). On earlier origins, see D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA, 2002). As we saw in the previous chapter with Goscelin of St Bertin (and the example of Abel in this chapter), the Old Testament as well as the New could be a valuable source of inspiration for hermits.

¹¹ RB 73, col. 930A: 'minimam inchoationis Regulam'.

¹² See ch. 5, above.

as the ideal of an apostolic existence based around communal living (as seen, for example, in Acts 4:32), for in reality the new hermit was rarely a solitary and preferred small communities. Eventually, however, these groups almost always became highly regulated, whether in lavriote style, like Fonte Avellana or Chartreuse, or cenobitic, like Vallombrosa or Cîteaux.¹³ But the movement also involved a deep respect for the literature of the early Church, not only the rules of Benedict and Augustine (which was being ‘rediscovered’), but also the hagiographic examples of St Antony and the desert fathers. The combination of New Testament teaching and the desire to return to first principles, Leyser argues, gave the movement its flexibility and originality, its ideology and its ‘quasi-legalistic, quasi-historical sense’.¹⁴

The first of these new hermits to achieve recognition was Romuald of Ravenna (d. c.1027).¹⁵ Damian, his biographer, proclaims that although Romuald did spend three years in a monastery (Sant’Apollinare in Classe), he lived for twenty years in the world before that, and afterwards ninety-seven in his true calling as a hermit.¹⁶ During this time he moved all around Italy, via a stint in southern Gaul and a trip to the borders of Hungary, meanwhile encountering Emperor Otto III (whom he persuaded to go on a barefoot penitential pilgrimage from Rome to Monte Gargano),¹⁷ nobility, abbots, bishops, monks, hermits, paupers, and the sick and lowly, living his profession both within and outside of institutional walls, following his own path as he saw fit. Despite founding several monasteries and

¹³ On the ‘renewal’ of the individual cells of the desert fathers’ *lavra*, see Licence, *Hermits*, pp. 27-30.

¹⁴ Leyser, *Hermits*, pp. 18-28, quote at 28. For more emphasis on the desert fathers: Licence, *Hermits*, pp. 28-9; Jestice, *Wayward Monks*, pp. 158-9. On the Rule of St Augustine: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), pp. 240-50.

¹⁵ Romuald and the late tenth century are almost always seen as turning points, even if Romuald himself cannot be given all the credit: see Lackner, *Eleventh-Century Background*, p. 167; Howe, *Church Reform*, p. 22; Leyser, *Hermits*, p. 25; Leclercq, ‘L’érémisme’, p. 41; Licence, *Hermits*, p. 29; Jestice, *Wayward Monks*, pp. 151-60.

¹⁶ Peter Damian, *Vita beati Romualdi*, ed. G. Tabacco, Fonti per la storia d’Italia, 94 (Rome, 1957), 69, pp. 112-13. Translations are my own, but see also C. R. Phipps, ‘Saint Peter Damian’s “Vita Beati Romualdi”’: introduction, translation and analysis’, unpub. PhD diss. (University of London, 1988); and the abridged translation by H. Leyser in T. Head (ed.), *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York, NY, 2000), pp. 295-316.

¹⁷ Peter Damian, *Vita Romualdi*, 25, p. 53.

hermitages such as Camaldoli, he did not stay in them long: ‘while he was doing one thing, he would soon hurry off to do another’.¹⁸ Elsewhere Damian adds: ‘when he saw the space of one location filled with inhabitants, after a prior had been appointed there, he would soon hurry to fill another’.¹⁹ There is a tension in Romuald’s career between the active and contemplative lives, between wandering and stability, which makes him a radical figure who pushes to the limit the theological consistency of his biographer, who was known for his contempt of worldly monks.²⁰ However, with Romuald and many such hermits, peregrination was coupled with separation, harsh asceticism and austere self-denial. Describing Romuald’s mountainous community at Sitria in Umbria, for example, Damian writes: ‘Some, indeed, enclosed by the condemned doors [of their cell], seemed so dead to the world it was as if they had already been placed in the grave. ... O golden age of Romuald...!’²¹

The dual impulses of renunciation and peregrination became characteristic of the new brand of eremitism. Jean Becquet asked whether we should say hermits were *pèlerins stabilisés* or pilgrims were *ermite en déplacement*.²² The movement spread north of the Alps and by the time Stephen of Obazine was leaving his life as a priest to start anew as a hermit in around 1120, a century after Romuald’s demise, the transformation into hermit had become ritualised, according to the biography that was begun soon after Stephen’s death in 1159.²³ Stephen and a fellow priest called Peter formed a plan to follow Christ, renounce the world together, and take up ‘the habit of holy religion’.²⁴

¹⁸ Ibid., 37, p. 78: ‘dum alia faceret, ad facienda mox alia properaret’.

¹⁹ Ibid., 49, p. 91: ‘cum unius loci spatium plenum habitatoribus cerneret, illic priore constituto, ad replendum mox aliud festinaret’.

²⁰ Jestice, *Wayward Monks*, pp. 151-60 (on Romuald), 217-27 (Damian’s attitudes).

²¹ Ibid., 64, p. 105: ‘Nonnulli vero dampnatis ianuis clausi ita mortui videbantur mundo velut in sepulchro iam positi. ... O aureum Romualdi seculum ...!’

²² Becquet, ‘L’érémisme’, p. 190.

²³ *Vie de Saint Étienne d’Obazine*, ed. and French trans. M. Aubrun (Clermont-Ferrand, 1970); trans. H. Feiss et al., *The Lives of Monastic Reformers, 1: Robert of La Chaise-Dieu and Stephen of Obazine*, (Collegeville, MN, 2010).

²⁴ *Vie de Saint Étienne*, I.2, p. 48: ‘religionis sancte habitum’.

Therefore, after a few days had passed ... they were ready to say a final farewell to a multitude of relatives who had been called together. They gave them a festive banquet and divided whatever remained of their property among the poor. Indeed, they spent the following sleepless night in vigils and prayers.... Then, putting on the religious habit, even before it grew light, they began their journey, barefooted, as if into exile, with their native land left behind.²⁵

In this passage, the act of exiling oneself has become a recognised excuse for celebration and represents a rite of passage before the next chapter of life begins, withdrawn from the world, in the desert (*eremus*) of the ancients. Like Romuald, Stephen and Peter initially find a local hermit to instruct them but are soon able to progress on their own, wandering here and there experimentally; unlike Romuald, however, Stephen ultimately seeks stability and devotes himself to the expanding community at Obazine, which is soon incorporated into the Cistercian order under his watch: a clear example of the usual development of the eremitic institution, from the initial exile of its founders, through settlement in a community, to adoption or reinterpretation of an established rule – in this case St Benedict's, or else St Augustine's.²⁶

Between Romuald and Stephen, many people of different backgrounds made the same decision to set out into the unknown and endure a period of displacement, or pilgrimage in its broadest sense, in order to fulfil a spiritual longing and devote themselves more ardently to God on their own terms. As this became more common, the pre-eminence of traditional Benedictine monasticism (as interpreted by the Cluniacs, for example) was tested for the first time. However, as we have seen, many hermits who formed new institutions in the eleventh century eventually discovered a newfound solace in the old Rule, especially if interpreted

²⁵ Ibid., I.3, p. 48: 'Igitur paucis interpositis diebus ... convocatis affinium turbis ultimum vale facturi, solemne eis convivium prebuerunt et quicquid de substantia superfuit pauperibus diviserunt. Sequentem vero noctem vigiliis et orationibus pervigilem ducunt.... Deinde, religiosa veste se induentes, mox antequam illucesceret, nativo solo relicto, nudis pedibus, quasi ad exilium ire ceperunt.'

²⁶ For a discussion of the adoption of rules, and the problems over when exactly hermitages became monasteries, see W. D. McCready, *Odiosa Sanctitas: St Peter Damian, Simony, and Reform* (Toronto, 2011), pp. 112-63.

with a more ascetic or eremitic bent. Indeed, Bruno of Querfurt called his master Romuald ‘the father of rational hermits, who live by a rule’.²⁷ Early in the eleventh century, John Gualbert, a Benedictine monk, wandering around (*peragrantes*) trying different monasteries after falling out with his simoniacal abbot, eventually settled at Vallombrosa, where he established a community with the two hermits already there, soon adopting the Rule of St Benedict.²⁸ Robert of La Chaise-Dieu started his career as a canon at Saint-Julien, Brioude, but then set out for a new life as a monk at Cluny; his associates, horrified to lose him, rushed after him and brought him back. This triggered a profound crisis in Robert’s life: ‘he fell sick from mental illness’, according to his biographer Marbod of Rennes.²⁹ So he went on a pilgrimage to Rome to seek the intercession of the apostles and gain counsel from God. After this cathartic journey, his plans to establish a small community took shape, and he found a knight – a *miles* seeking penance – to join him, and then another.³⁰ They founded a hermitage around the middle of the eleventh century which would grow into the monastery of La Chaise-Dieu under the Rule of St Benedict. At the end of the century Robert of Arbrissel, a priest turned hermit, combined his flight to the desert – in this case the forest of Craon – with preaching activity that took him further afield:

He began to traverse regions and provinces and ... scattered the seed of God’s word everywhere in highways and byways. ... He had not wanted to settle down in any one place, so that he could go forth freely, without staff or pouch. But he saw that the number of his followers was increasing.³¹

²⁷ Bruno of Querfurt, *Vita quinque fratrum*, ed. R. Kade, MGH SS 15:2 (Hanover, 1888), pp. 709-38, at 718: ‘patrem rationabilium heremitarum, qui cum lege vivunt’.

²⁸ Andrea of Strumi, *Vita s. Iohannis Gualberti*, ed. F. Baethgen, MGH SS 30:2 (Leipzig, 1929), pp. 1080-1104, at c. 10, p. 1082.

²⁹ Marbod of Rennes, *Vita beati Roberti*, ed. and Italian trans. A. Degl’Innocenti (Florence, 1995), quote at I.6, p. 12: ‘ex mentis egritudine morbum incurrit’: my trans. but see also Feiss, *Lives of Monastic Reformers*.

³⁰ Marbod of Rennes, *Vita beati Roberti*, I.7-8, pp. 12-16.

³¹ Baudri of Bourgueil, *Historia magistri Roberti*, ed. and trans. J. Dalarun et al., *Les deux vies de Robert d’Arbrissel fondateur de Fontevraud / The Two Lives of Robert of Arbrissel Founder of Fontevraud* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 130-87, at c. 15, pp. 158-60: ‘regiones et provincias coepit perambulare, et ... per plateas et compita semen verbi Dei passim seminare. ... noluerat adhuc locum quemlibet eligere, ut liber et sine baculo et sine pera posset procedere. Videns autem subsequentium multitudinem dilatari...’.

So Robert founded Fontevraud, which also turned to the Rule. To these hermit-pilgrims we might add several other well-known spiritual pioneers who discovered the benefits of exile, such as Bernard of Tiron, Vitalis of Savigny, Stephen of Muret, Bruno of Chartreuse, Robert of Molesme, and Norbert of Xanten; these examples stand for the men and women – Fontevraud notably welcomed, and indeed was run by, women – whom they brought with them.³²

Aristocratic and knightly conversions

Many of those who were convinced by the possibilities of conversion during the spiritual innovations of the eleventh century were laypeople, and these were often arms-bearers. ‘The knight lived close to death. So, as a Christian, he must surely turn his thoughts constantly to his Saviour,’ as Alexander Murray observed, before describing the revulsion that a good many felt at this predicament, and their subsequent world-sickness and conversion in the prime of life, rather than more routine entry into monasticism as a child or in old age.³³ We have already seen how this secular crisis affected Pons of Léras and the two knights who followed Robert to La Chaise-Dieu, but there are many others mentioned in the hagiographic record. Katherine Allen Smith and Marcus Bull have amply demonstrated this, with examples including the further two penitent *milites* who were converted by a hermit in the Life of

³² See Lackner, *Eleventh-Century Background* for the narratives of these founders (esp. pp. 167-216), and Leyser, *Hermits*, which contains a useful list on pp. 113-18 detailing how communities developed; another, smaller list which includes the pilgrimages of certain founders is in Becquet, ‘L’érémisme’, p. 204.

³³ A. Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 374-82, quote at 375. On the different circumstances of noble entry into the church, see C. B. Bouchard, *Sword, Miter, and Cloister: Nobility and the Church in Burgundy, 980-1198* (Ithaca, NY, 1987), pp. 46-64.

Robert of Molesme and the five laymen who followed Gerald of Corbie to found La Sauve-Majeure.³⁴

In keeping with the principal theme, this section will emphasise the place taken by pilgrimage in the process of conversion in the careers of several of these laymen. We shall see how hagiography privileged this type of journey when creating an effective life story for a converted saint. On the rare occasions when we can compare a saint's Life with other narrative sources about that saint, it appears that hagiographers were keener than others to emphasise these life transitions involving pilgrimage. One non-hagiographic writer, from towards the end of our period, usefully discusses a trio of saintly pilgrim-converts who are also written about elsewhere, providing an opportunity to analyse the transition phase between lay and religious from different angles. In 1115 this writer, Guibert of Nogent, looked back in his autobiographical *Monodies* at some of the famous conversions of laymen to monks in living memory, like many memoir-writers contrasting a rose-tinted past with 'the increasing iniquity of my contemporaries'.³⁵ He chose examples that he deemed important and influential, lay noblemen who, against all expectation, became monks: Thibaud of Provins, Evrard of Breteuil, and Simon of Crépy. Guibert does not explicitly make the point, but all experienced a period of voluntary exile during their conversions.³⁶ In addition, the lay

³⁴ Esp. for hagiography, see Smith, *War and the Making*, pp. 166-76; for charters (and some hagiography), M. Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c.970-c.1130* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 125-42. On the two knights: *Vita s. Roberti abbatis Molesmensis*, PL 157, cols. 1269-94, at 1272B-73C. Among the chroniclers of the period, Orderic Vitalis recounts several conversions: see C. Harper-Bill, 'Herluin, abbot of Bec and his biographer', in D. Baker (ed.), *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, Studies in Church History, 15 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 15-25, at 17-18.

³⁵ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, ed. and French trans. E.-R. Labande (Paris, 1981), I.11, p. 74: 'succrescentem modernorum nequitiam'. Translations are from J. McAlhany and J. Rubenstein, *Monodies and On the Relics of Saints: The Autobiography and a Manifesto of a French Monk from the Time of the Crusades* (London, 2011).

³⁶ In the same context, Guibert mentions a clerical saint, Bruno, the founder of Chartreuse and the Carthusian order, who renounced the world in a similar way: 'shunning contact with his friends and relations, he set out for the territory of Grenoble'. See Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.11, p. 66: 'suorum notitias horrens, ad Gratianopolitanum processit territorium'. A later medieval Life of Bruno would bluntly combine the language of the desert with travel: having 'ruled the desert of Chartreuse for six years ... he crossed over to the desert of Calabria', where he established another hermitage: *Vita antiquior sancti Brunonis*, PL 152, cols. 482-92, at

identity of these men was of pivotal importance to their renown: Guibert was interested in how and why they abandoned this identity, an act which provides the dramatic high point of his story in each case.

Thibaud, Evrard, and Simon came from interlocking aristocratic lines in and around the Champagne region, where their examples seem to have contributed towards a mutually affirming milieu of lay piety.³⁷ Guibert treats Thibaud of Provins only briefly, as a knight who ‘slipped away barefoot from his family’ and wandered about making charcoal to support himself.³⁸ His exile is described without any particular reverence. However, when we look at the hagiographic versions of Thibaud’s story, we see how exile or pilgrimage is turned into an unashamedly eremitic virtue.³⁹ An early *vita* (supposedly by Peter of Vangadizza, Thibaud’s abbot at the end of his life)⁴⁰ tells how Thibaud, who was born into the nobility of Provins, fled into the Ardennes with another *miles* called Walter.

The solitude of the hermits – the first of whom was Elijah, and then John the Baptist, and after them Paul and Antony – greatly moved the young man’s mind. He imitated the fragility of their way of life, the roughness of their clothes, their contemplation of mind, and their companionship of the angels in solitude.⁴¹

After a period making charcoal, they set out on a greater journey, visiting Santiago de Compostela and Rome. Then, on the way to Jerusalem, they stopped at a place called

491A: ‘eremum Carthusiae rexit sex annis ... ad eremum Calabriae ... transiens’; in between the author mentions Bruno’s sojourn in the service of the pope.

³⁷ M. Bur, *La formation du comté de Champagne v.950-v.1150* (Nancy, 1977), pp. 216-17, 243-4, 476-7; D. Iogna-Prat, ‘Évrard de Breteuil et son double: morphologie de la conversion en milieu aristocratique (v.1070-v.1120)’, in M. Lauwers (ed.), *Guerriers et moines: conversion et sainteté aristocratiques dans l’occident médiéval, IXe-XIIIe siècle* (Antibes, 2002), pp. 537-57, at 544-9.

³⁸ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.9, p. 54: ‘nudipes a suis elabitur’. On making charcoal as a *topos* of humility, see Constable, *Reformation*, p. 61.

³⁹ *De s. Theobaldo*, AASS Iunii, V, pp. 588-606.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, ‘Commentarius praeuius’, col. 592B; see also R.-P. Bernard, ‘Saint Thibault de Provins: vie, culte, iconographie’, *Provins et sa région*, 131 (1977), pp. 89-104, at 89.

⁴¹ *De s. Theobaldo*, 3, p. 593: ‘Movebat animum adolescentis maxime, Eremitarum solitudo, quorum initium extitit Elias, et Joannes Baptista: et post eos Paulus et Antonius. Aemulabatur victus eorum tenuitatem, vestium asperitatem, animi contemplationem, et Angelorum in solitudine contubernium.’

Salanica, near Vicenza in northern Italy, where Thibaud's asceticism reached new heights. He was ordained into the priesthood and finally became a monk at Santa Maria della Vangadizza, where he died in 1066. He was soon venerated in France as well as Italy, and even canonized, almost certainly by Alexander II (1061-73).⁴²

According to Guibert, Thibaud was the inspiration for Evrard's conversion, on which he devotes considerably more ink.⁴³ Evrard (d. c.1095) was a count of Breteuil famed for his nobility, looks, and riches, though a victim of arrogance and pride. Concerned for his sinful soul, he began to discuss with others how he could adopt the religious life, and formed a group of likeminded penitents, determining to take action secretly 'without the knowledge of those whom he would leave behind'.⁴⁴ It is apparent that unlike the clerical, festive conversion of Stephen of Obazine, the flight of a lay nobleman such as Evrard had more at stake: the sudden loss of military and social capital was dramatic, and the escape takes on a more poignant character. As well as being count of Breteuil, Evrard was viscount of Chartres, and his conversion resulted in his brother Hugh Blavons assuming this title.⁴⁵ Assembling his group, 'he fled with them as an exile into I don't know what foreign lands'.⁴⁶ He wandered about and supported himself by making and selling charcoal, consciously aping the example of Thibaud of Provins. The story follows of how Evrard, about to start work in a village, chanced upon a man claiming to be him, who was clearly trying to steal his pious reputation. But this man 'looked more like a gigolo than an exile'⁴⁷ with his long hair and silk hose. Horrified at this effrontery, Evrard decided to avoid scandal in the future by settling in a

⁴² On the cult and its influence on northern French aristocracy, see Bernard, 'Saint Thibault', pp. 91-3; Iogna-Prat, 'Évrard de Breteuil', p. 549; Bur, *La formation*, pp. 243-4, 316, 476-7. On the canonization, see E. W. Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948), pp. 64-5.

⁴³ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.9, pp. 52-8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I.9, p. 52: 'nemine remansurorum conscio'.

⁴⁵ On Evrard's background, see Iogna-Prat, 'Évrard de Breteuil', p. 546, with a family tree on p. 557.

⁴⁶ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.9, p. 52: 'cum illis ... in nescio quas exteras fugax excessit provincias'. I have kept the literal translation here.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I.9, p. 54: 'amasium potius exhibens quam exulem'.

monastery, ‘where we can cast off the name of exiles, which we have endured for God’,⁴⁸ and so he and his accomplices went to Marmoutier and became monks. Guibert assures us that he was close to Evrard and had the story first-hand.⁴⁹ But despite his sympathetic telling, his Benedictine perspective on the dangers of aimless wandering – as personified in Evrard’s ridiculous double – compared with the rewards of ‘the habit of a pure profession’, come through clearly enough.⁵⁰

The other source for Evrard, a charter from Marmoutier of 1073, narrates the conversion which took place in that year in some detail.⁵¹ Citing Christ’s command on the renunciation of all possessions⁵² and his invitation ‘Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you’,⁵³ it describes the state of spiritual fearfulness that led to Evrard’s transfer of lands and titles to his brothers, gold and silver to the poor, and property to the monks of Marmoutier. It then relates how he left his homeland and family and set out abroad (*peregre*). ‘He lingered for a long time on that pilgrimage, and when he returned to Marmoutier he came to take up the monastic habit there’.⁵⁴ ‘That pilgrimage’ is not described or explained, and seems a phase best forgotten. (Evrard’s conversion did not go without further hitches, and in a rare example of the family perspective we learn that matters were delayed ‘by certain impediments of his wife’ but were eventually overcome by mediation of the abbot.)⁵⁵ Both Guibert and the monastic author of the charter recognise Evrard’s period of wandering – Guibert calls it *exilium*⁵⁶ while the charter prefers *peregrinatio*⁵⁷ – but there is

⁴⁸ Ibid., I.9, p. 56: ‘sublato exilii, quod pro Deo patimur, nomine’.

⁴⁹ On possible links between the two, see J. F. Benton, *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent* (Toronto, 1984), pp. 235-6.

⁵⁰ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.9, p. 56: ‘sanctae conversationis habitu’; see the discussion in Iogna-Prat, ‘Évrard de Breteuil’, pp. 551-2.

⁵¹ *Cartulaire de Marmoutier pour le Dunois*, ed. E. Mabille (Châteaudun, 1874), no. 41, pp. 38-40.

⁵² Here, Luke 14:33.

⁵³ Matthew 11:28.

⁵⁴ *Cartulaire de Marmoutier*, no. 41, pp. 38-40, at 39: ‘Cumque de peregrinatione illa in qua multo tempore demoratus est, reverteretur ad Majus Monasterium, habitum inibi monachicum suscepturus devenit’.

⁵⁵ Ibid.: ‘pro quibusdam uxoris suae impedimentis’.

⁵⁶ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.9, p. 56, and he repeatedly refers to Evrard as an *exul*.

⁵⁷ See n. 54.

no eulogy for this transitional period before Evrard adopted a rule, and it is uncertain what spiritual benefit he has acquired from this phase.

Turning to Guibert's third example, Simon of Crépy, the matter-of-fact perspective of the Benedictine Guibert neatly contrasts with the readiness of Simon's hagiographer to discuss his journeys. Simon's conversion, which took place in 1077 at Saint-Oyend (now Saint-Claude) in the Jura, was well known in its day and has remained so.⁵⁸ Simon (d. 1081/2) was the heir to the principality of Amiens-Valois; his father Raoul, who had brought the territory to the peak of its power, held seven counties directly and received homage for seven more.⁵⁹ Guibert lays much emphasis on Simon's fear for his father's soul (prompted by Raoul's burial in a town that he had seized by force) and describes a scene in which the young count transfers his father's body to a more suitable site. 'When he saw the rotting corpse of his father, once so powerful and so fierce, he was moved to contemplate his wretched state'.⁶⁰ He made a new will, and 'fleeing his country and his family, he crossed the boundary of the Franks and arrived at Burgundy, near Saint-Oyend in the territory of Jura'.⁶¹ The conversion is swift and sudden. Guibert goes on to mention the conversion of Simon's fiancée and many others who followed his example.

The Life of Simon, which was composed at around the same time, is on an altogether grander scale, involving many of the great names of the day: Philip I of France, Pope Gregory VII, William I of England and his family, Abbot Hugh of Cluny, Bishop Hugh of Die, and Robert Guiscard are only the most famous individuals with whom Simon has connections

⁵⁸ H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Count Simon of Crépy's monastic conversion', in idem, *The Crusades and Latin Monasticism, 11th-12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1999), ch. 11 = *Papauté, monachisme et théories politiques. 1: Le pouvoir et l'institution ecclésiastique* (Lyons, 1994), pp. 253-66; G. Duby, *The Knight, the Lady and the Priest: The Making of Modern Marriage in Medieval France*, trans. B. Bray (Harmondsworth, 1985), pp. 124-7; M. Lauwers, 'Du pacte seigneurial à l'idéal de conversion: les légendes hagiographiques de Simon de Crépy (+ 1081-82)', in idem, *Guerrriers et moines*, pp. 559-88.

⁵⁹ Lauwers, 'Du pacte seigneurial', p. 559 n. 1.

⁶⁰ Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, I.10, p. 60: 'cum potentissimi genitoris quondamque ferocissimi tabidum attendisset corpus, ad contemplationem miseræ conditionis se contulit'.

⁶¹ Ibid.: 'patriæ suorumque fugax, fines excedens Francicos, Burgundiam ad Sanctum Eugendum in territorio Jurensi concessit.'

before and after his conversion.⁶² For Simon's entry into Saint-Oyend is by no means final: he subsequently moves into the forest as a tortured ascetic, and afterwards travels around Europe as a holy mediator of considerable standing, often at the request of the pope. He persuades many to convert: 'nearly sixty knights' put down their arms on one occasion, while Duke Hugh of Burgundy and Count Guy of Maçon are likewise major prizes.⁶³ As for his own conversion, it is gradual, but centred around two pilgrimages to Rome. On the first, Simon, who has made the journey for penitential reasons, considers Christ's call to renunciation,⁶⁴ with the religious life it implies, but Pope Gregory sends him back home to take up arms for the cause of peace, having offered him penance.⁶⁵ Later, it is Simon's second flight from marriage that provides the final turning point. Having first avoided marrying into Auvergne aristocracy after persuading his fiancée to take vows at the last minute, he claims consanguinity when later offered the daughter of William I. He makes for Rome again with his retinue to seek the advice of the pope over the marriage but suddenly, just before the Alpine crossing, enters Saint-Oyend.⁶⁶ Simon can only find his true identity on the road, away from home. In hagiography, the roads to Rome, with all their fateful gravity, therefore provide the mechanism by which he converted.

So far in this chapter we have seen how hagiographers were willing to value the combination of eremitism and pilgrimage most highly, not only with the great eremitic founders who came after Romuald of Ravenna, but also with secular men of the knightly and comital classes who followed similar paths. This radical way of life was used at the service of sanctity and for the purposes of fashioning a cult, despite the tenor of scepticism from

⁶² *Vita beati Simonis comitis Crespeiensis*, PL 156, cols. 1211-23. On the date of the text, which is considered to be in or soon after 1109, see Cowdrey, 'Count Simon', p. 254; and Lauwers, 'Du pacte seigneurial', p. 559.

⁶³ *Vita Simonis*, col. 1221A: 'pene sexaginta milites'; on Hugh and Guy (who is not named): col. 1216D.

⁶⁴ Luke 14:33, as in the case of Evrard.

⁶⁵ *Vita Simonis*, col. 1213C-D. Gregory dissuaded other high-ranking laypeople from conversion, and deplored Duke Hugh's entry into Cluny, complaining that it left Christians unprotected: see Lauwers, 'Du pacte seigneurial', pp. 560-1.

⁶⁶ *Vita Simonis*, col. 1216C.

monastic writers such as Guibert and the author of the Marmoutier charter, whose views were reflected by ecclesiastical opinion-formers such as Ivo of Chartres.⁶⁷

When we look at further examples of laymen whose conversions are recorded in hagiography, this emphasis becomes almost pervasive. Returning to Pons of Léras, his Life makes the definitive statement that the knight ‘went out to bring works of penance to completion’. In other words, going on pilgrimage was the appropriate way to conclude his atonement and start afresh.⁶⁸ Elsewhere, the Life of Gerald of Corbie, which illuminates the co-founders of La Sauve-Majeure in 1079 in some detail, is especially fruitful for the emphasis it places on pilgrimage among the secular converts in the group, as well as for Gerald himself.⁶⁹ Gerald was already an experienced pilgrim, having visited several Italian destinations on one journey and Jerusalem on another (after persuading his reluctant abbot, who feared he would end up as a hermit or recluse). After a stint as an abbot, during which he failed to impose his reforms, he reached a crisis point in his career. So he set out once more, this time on a different kind of spiritual quest, a ‘pilgrimage of discovery’, as Bull calls it.⁷⁰ He attracted a likeminded group of followers which included five who were still laymen; although of differing rank, they had all been active, military men and their sins were weighing on them.⁷¹ Making their way south into Aquitaine, the five laymen made sure to continue to Compostela before returning to La Sauve to take the habit at last. In this case, pilgrimage was not only the making of Gerald’s eremitic spirituality, but was considered a vital phase in the conversions of the laymen with him. Moreover, with the advent of

⁶⁷ Ivo of Chartres, *Epistolae*, PL 162, cols. 11-288, no. 192, cols. 198-202: in this letter to the monks of Coulombs, Ivo warns against the temptations of exile.

⁶⁸ B. M. Kienzle, ‘The works of Hugo Francigena: “Tractatus de conversione Pontii de Laracio et exordii Salvaniensis monasterii vera narratio; epistolae” (Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale Ms. 611)’, *Sacris erudiri*, 34 (1994), pp. 273-311, at 292: ‘ipse ad labores penitenciae perferendos ... exiens’.

⁶⁹ *De s. Geraldo abbate*, AASS Aprilis, I, pp. 409-33; Bull, *Knightly Piety*, pp. 128-33; Leclercq, ‘Monachisme’, p. 44.

⁷⁰ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, p. 128.

⁷¹ They are described in some detail in *De s. Geraldo abbate*, 22-3, p. 420.

crusading, it became quite common for knights to enter a monastery on return from the Holy Land, and Cluny took many.⁷²

Other pilgrim-converts were of considerable worldly rank, such as Peter Orseolo, the doge of Venice who became Romuald's first disciple. The identity of a saint such as Orseolo was much dependent on his exalted secular office and the dramatic conversion that turned his worldly priorities on their head: his first incarnation as a powerful layman provides the necessary contrast to makes his second as an ascetic all the more interesting.⁷³ Among the lesser nobility, the biography of a knight from the Low Countries called Poppo makes much of his pilgrimages to the Holy Land and then to Rome as part of the process of conversion around the turn of the millennium from layman to a monk of Saint-Thierry, near Reims; had Poppo not gone on to become abbot of Stavelot, his journeys would likely have remained untold.⁷⁴

Slightly later examples from our period of those who achieved renown in monastic circles include Hugh of Cluny, who ran away to become a monk without his father's knowledge, and Bernard of Clairvaux, who was on his way to assist his brothers at a siege when he turned into a roadside church and resolved to change his life – as close as one gets to a medieval Damascene conversion.⁷⁵ Bernard persuaded his five brothers, sister, and several other friends and family members to convert, setting the tone for the waves of Cistercian adult conversions that would mark the twelfth century.⁷⁶ Jean-Claude Schmitt has, in fact,

⁷² Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 126-7. On the fusion of pilgrimage vocabulary and symbols with crusading, see C. Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 20-22.

⁷³ Peter Damian, *Vita beati Romualdi*, 5 (pp. 21-5), 8 (pp. 28-9), 12 (pp. 33-4); A. Niero, 'Pietro Orseolo', BS 10, cols. 852-9.

⁷⁴ Everhelm, *Vita Popponis abbatis Stabulensis*, ed. D. W. Wattenbach, MGH SS 11 (Hanover, 1854), pp. 291-316, pilgrimages at 295-6.

⁷⁵ Hildebert of Le Mans, *Vita Hugonis Cluniacensis*, PL 159, cols. 857-94, at 861B; William of St Thierry, *Vita prima Bernardi abbatis Clarae-Vallensis*, I, PL 185, cols. 225-268, at 232A-B. It should be noted that Bernard had had some education as a child, with a view to a clerical role, at the chapter school of Saint-Vorles (Notre Dame de Châtillon): *ibid.*, col. 228B; A. H. Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Between Cult and History* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 12.

⁷⁶ Bouchard, *Sword*, pp. 54-5. For an overview, see J. Burton and J. Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011).

considered journeys of conversion in light of St Paul's experience on the road to Damascus in the context of Premonstratensian literature of the twelfth century, including the account of Herman the Jew, who converted to Christianity on a quest of discovery through Germany.⁷⁷

The importance of pilgrimage in the development of sanctity is the subject of an interesting moment of contention in the *Life of Adelelme of La Chaise-Dieu* (d. 1097), whose biography was written in the early twelfth century by a monk of that monastery. Adelelme attracted international renown in his day but is perhaps less well known among historians now. He was abbot for only a short time before renouncing the post whose trappings he found distasteful; his fame spreading, he was invited to Burgos in Spain by Constance of Burgundy, wife of King Alfonso VI of León-Castile, and he became known for leading the king's army, seated on an ass, across the River Tagus to victory against the Muslims at Toledo in 1085.⁷⁸

His conversion, however, centred around a pilgrimage to Rome. Born into Poitou nobility in the town of Loudun, he grew up to have 'the cloak of a knight but the heart of a monk'.⁷⁹ After the death of his parents, he sold his possessions, gave the proceeds to the poor, and

in case he was detained by friends, he left secretly in the dead of night with one of his squires, whom he had adopted as a companion, with the intention of travelling alone, away from his homeland.⁸⁰

After a while the two swapped clothes so that Adelelme could exchange his expensive attire for a simple cloak, and he continued barefoot by himself towards Rome. He stopped at La

⁷⁷ J.-C. Schmitt, *The Conversion of Herman the Jew: Autobiography, History, and Fiction in the Twelfth Century*, trans. A. J. Novikoff (Philadelphia, PA, 2010), p. 173.

⁷⁸ Rodolfus of La Chaise-Dieu, *Vita s. Adelelmi abbatis*, ed. E. Flórez, *España Sagrada*, 3rd edn., 57 vols. (Madrid, 2000-12), 27, pp. 479-88 (introduction on pp. 105-22). On Adelelme's career and cult, see G. P. Altabella, 'Adelelmo di Burgos', BS 1, cols. 238-9; and H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Pope Gregory VII and La Chaise-Dieu', in idem, *The Crusades*, ch. 12 = *Maisons de Dieu et hommes d'église: florilège en l'honneur de Pierre-Roger Gaussin* (Saint-Étienne, 1992), pp. 25-35, esp. 28-9.

⁷⁹ Rodolfus of La Chaise-Dieu, *Vita Adelelmi*, 3, p. 481: 'sago miles, corde monachus'.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3, p. 481: 'ne ab amicis detineretur, intempesta nocte cum armigero quodam suo, quem sibi comitem asciverat, clam ex natali solo peregrinaturus discessit'.

Chaise-Dieu in the Auvergne, which was then headed by its founder Robert. The Life explains that Robert kindly received him, and continues:

Although he [Robert] had decided to keep Adeleme at first, after a while he released him so that he might fulfil the vow he had made of visiting the tombs of the saints of Rome by travelling as a soldier [of Christ]. They made this agreement: that Adeleme undertook to return to the monastery of La Chaise-Dieu as soon as possible after his pilgrimage, when he would peacefully and willingly receive the habit of monastic religion, as his devotion desired.⁸¹

Robert appears to have had power over the journey's continuation but, perhaps remembering his own pilgrimage to Rome at a critical juncture in his life, let Adeleme go as long as he came straight back. It seems a temporary measure of doubt emerged over the value of this excursion. Adeleme proved his merits, however: he departed without any provisions, refused alms on the way, and returned after suffering two years of ascetic extremes in Rome. He was in such a state that only Robert recognised him. The pilgrimage had been worthwhile after all, and marked the critical phase of Adeleme's spiritual transition.

Sometimes, in the accounts of these pioneering converts who sought a new style of devotion, there is no straightforward pilgrimage or obvious act of self-exile such as those described. However, we usually find it buried or disguised in the story as a questing phase, during which the layperson must physically move about, restless and disorientated, until he finds solace in a promising new foundation as, for example, in the Life of Herluin of Bec (d. 1078), written in the early twelfth century about the foundation of that monastery in 1034. According to his biographer Gilbert Crispin, Herluin 'was especially suited to arms, and bore

⁸¹ Ibid., 4, p. 481: 'Qui Adelelmum licet primo detinere decreverat, postmodum solvit, ut votum de visitandis Romanae urbis Sanctorum tumulis, a peregrinante milite emissum persolveretur; hac conditione pactata, ut quantotius post peregrinationem Adelelmus in Casae Dei Coenobium repedare curasset, quo religionis Monasticae habitum ut illius expetebat devotio, quieta voluntate reciperet.'

them with no small courage'.⁸² But in his late thirties⁸³ he began to grow more pious and consider an alternative life, despite the taunts and jeers of the Norman household to which he was bound under its count. Eventually, freed from his obligations, he immediately set about building a hermitage and learning the basic trappings of religion: the transition is thus far relatively smooth and lacking in the instability we have come to expect from such narratives. However, it is only the beginning of the spiritual quest.

Herluin's true desire is to join an established monastery. He visits an unnamed one but finds its monks do not take their profession seriously. Worse, he is mistaken for a thief and physically thrown out. 'He was in consternation, now totally uncertain about what mode of life to favour.'⁸⁴ He tries another – also unnamed – with a better reputation, and finds a house of frivolity and ostentation, and even witnesses one monk punching another. These episodes are dramatically depicted as Herluin's own fight with the devil, who wishes to dissuade him from his ambition. 'In his hand Herluin carried a sword, which aimed at all the joints and marrows of the enemy'.⁸⁵ Eventually, he concludes that he must return to his hermitage: 'in his searches he had not found to his wishes those parts of the Lord's camp which he desired'.⁸⁶ He continues his work on the hermitage, a church is consecrated, he shaves his head, 'and taking off his secular dress, accepted the garb of sacred religion'.⁸⁷ The quest – called his 'searches' or 'things explored' (*explorata*) – is finally over, and in due course he moves the community to a better site at Bec where, within a few years, a cloister is built 'in which, according to the custom of the country, he instructed the brothers to settle and

⁸² Gilbert Crispin, *Vita Herluini*, ed. A. S. Abulafia and G. R. Evans, *The Works of Gilbert Crispin Abbot of Westminster* (London, 1986), pp. 183-212, at c. 3, p. 185: 'Habilis ille ad arma plurimum erat, nec minori ea animositate gestabat'; trans. S. N. Vaughn, *The Abbey of Bec and the Anglo-Norman State 1034-1136* (Woodbridge, 1981).

⁸³ Gilbert Crispin, *Vita Herluini*, 11, p. 187: 'annos ille iam excesserat triginta septem'.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 31, p. 191: 'Turbatus est, iam omnino incertus quod uiuendi genus approbaret.'

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 36, p. 192: 'Gerit in manu gladium, qui uniuersas hostis compages ac medullas exequitur'.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 37, p. 192: 'non exploratis ad uotum que uolebat castrorum Domini'.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 38, p. 192: 'ac secularem habitum deponens ... sacre habitum religionis accepit'.

not to go out from there in future',⁸⁸ thereby sealing off any further opportunity for displacement and wandering.

Christopher Harper-Bill has noticed that Gilbert's account exaggerates the dire state of Norman monasticism which, in fact, had been revived by William of Volpiano and his successor John of Fécamp.⁸⁹ The story of Herluin's wandering is more likely to be a literary device than an accurate chronicle of events, designed as a period of testing before the early history of Bec is allowed to take shape. The fact that it combines this testing with disorientation and movement from place to place makes it equivalent to the exile phases of the other hermits and converts of the day.

Conclusion

In these various saints' Lives, in contrast to the non-hagiographic sources discussed, a period of exilic limbo supplies a powerful argument for the purposes of promoting sanctity. Most 'real' pilgrims, of course, went on pilgrimage without feeling a need to convert, but it is significant that we see this need coincide with saints' journeys in hagiography.⁹⁰ It manifests in the Lives of lay saints, the 'new hermits' who were part of the religious revolution of the eleventh century, and the converts who abandoned their military standing in the world to become soldiers of Christ in monasteries or hermitages. We might just as easily apply the anthropological models of rites of passage set out in the previous chapter to the examples here, as in each case there is an obvious liminal phase which coincides with a journey that

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 47, p. 194: 'in quo ad morem patrie fratres iam nusquam progressuros considerare instituit'.

⁸⁹ Harper-Bill, 'Herluin', p. 18.

⁹⁰ Pilgrimage and conversion is also discussed in S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 301-4. On the continuation of this *topos* in the Lives of later lay saints, see A. Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125-1325* (University Park, PA, 2005), pp. 185-6.

proves critical to the religious transformation desired. We may contrast this with the more usual saint who has risen through the ecclesiastical hierarchy, such as the promising boy of the Benedictine monastery who is one day elected abbot and has a claim to sanctity for reasons of exceptional piety, effective promotion of his order, powerful contacts, or other circumstances, and who frequently travelled for administrative and business reasons (in the eleventh century, Odilo of Cluny and his successor Hugh are good examples); alternatively there is the devoted cathedral canon who is elected bishop and achieves sanctity by piously administering his diocese, promoting liturgical regulation, and tackling abuses, perhaps even becoming pope (examples include Hugh of Grenoble and Pope Leo IX, formerly Bruno of Toul).⁹¹ The pioneers of new kinds of sanctity, on the other hand, broke the mould and found radical solutions to their problems by going into spiritual exile.

The motivations of the hermits, first of all, are clear from the results. All the hermits we have considered saw that they had to release themselves from a clerical structure that had grown outmoded. They underwent personal crises as they sought to reconcile the demands of their devotion with a monastic system that struggled to accommodate it. Impressed by the example of Christ, the apostles, and the desert fathers, they privileged communities of poverty above wealth-seeking institutions. Their solution was to go away – into exile or on pilgrimage – and find the peace with which they could start afresh and build new religious groups in line with their needs. Pilgrimage provided them with this opportunity, and consequently it always comes at a major turning point in their life stories.⁹² The members of this group impact on this study by demonstrating how much they had in common with lay saints once they had both entered their exile phases, and how willing many of them were to

⁹¹ Among various biographies, see e.g. Jotsald, *Vita Odilonis abbatis*, PL 142, cols. 895-940; Gilo, *Vita Hugonis abbatis*, ed. H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Two studies in Cluniac history, 1049-1126', *Studi gregoriani*, 11 (1978), pp. 5-298, at 45-109; Guigo, *Vita Hugonis episcopi*, PL 153, cols. 759-84; *De s. Leone IX*, AASS Aprilis, II, pp. 641-73.

⁹² It was not unknown, of course, for clerics to travel simply to escape personal circumstances, such as Anselm of Bec, who ran away from Aosta because of a deteriorating relationship with his father: Eadmer, *The Life of St Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1972), I.IV, pp. 6-7.

establish communities with pious laypeople, with whom they shared the same desire to follow Christ. With subsequent generations these ideals would give way to the old necessities of clerical structure and hierarchy, but they would be rediscovered again elsewhere, first in the obscure communities and confraternities that multiplied in the latter part of our period,⁹³ then in the Humiliati and other fringe groups, and ultimately in the mendicant orders.

In the Lives of the laymen who converted to monasticism, we observe a similar crisis and struggle against expectations, which this time involved meeting the demands of secular knighthood and leadership (which may have involved the pressure to marry, as with Simon of Crépy) in the midst of an overpowering urge to live religiously. In the face of this uncontrollable pressure, these laymen found release in the same way as their clerical counterparts, by going into voluntary exile. This escape allowed them to come to terms with their choice and find an appropriate way to consummate it in a monastic institution. These converts confirm what we have seen in certain eremitic communities, namely that the laity possessed a strong potential to realise their ambitions to embrace religion, and it is notable that in their biographies their former identity and process of conversion is always considered important and memorable. To hagiographers, there was still an element of the laity about them, and this appreciation of what the laity were capable of played a major part in the new monasticism that emerged from this period, most notably among the Cistercians who accepted a great many converts into their order. Earlier in this study, we saw that lay saints were unusual cases where these same impulses did not result in religious conversion and entry into an institution; in this chapter we have seen the broader context in which such

⁹³ ‘The common life flourished ... not only among clerics and monks ... but also among laymen ... who were considered in no way unequal to them in merits’, wrote Bernold of Constance in the late eleventh century; see his *Chronicon*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 5 (Hanover, 1844), pp. 385-467, at 452-3: ‘communis vita ... floruit, non solum in clericis et monachis ... verum etiam in laicis ... nequaquam tamen eis dispaes in meritis fuisse creduntur’. Bernold was writing in Germany but Constable comments (in his *Reformation*, p. 80) that ‘these men sound like lay brothers, but they may have resembled the semi-independent lay religious communities that developed south of the Alps in the eleventh and twelfth centuries’.

impulses were engendered, in a time of growing religious complexity and a new culture of variety that ultimately allowed for the laity's recognition by the Church.

Conclusion

The importance of pilgrimage and exile as the implicit ‘solution’ to lay sanctity – the common key by which clerical writers could promote the worthiness of their saints in life (as opposed to after death) – is the overriding connection between our cults, as part II has stressed. This was closely connected to a wider devotion to *peregrinatio* witnessed in the new eremitism and the religious conversions of the arms-bearing laity. Yet added to this is another kind of movement or dynamic that we have had less opportunity to comment on. Part I, and especially the first three chapters, demonstrates new and unusual groupings of people and ideas that emerged from a southern European zone centred around the western Alps. These groupings, or exchanges, might otherwise be called ‘networks’. Such networks privileged Rome as an idealised destination (much spoken of but never described) and suggest a lively mingling of lay and ecclesiastical participants. This is evident in the mixed ideology of the Peace movement, the heroic-religious culture of songs that travelled up and down the pilgrimage routes and formed Bovo’s story, and the phenomenon of reformist hubs of spiritual exchange in the shape of Lucca’s new religiosity. In each case, the road to the eternal city acted as much more than a geographical entity: it was a pragmatic dissolver of divides, a conduit of exilic ideals, and ultimately a symbol of sanctity. This sanctity originated in human interaction. Saints’ cults and biographies acted as a networking medium which brought into contact people, ideas, and cultural products that might not otherwise have come together, or might not be obvious to modern eyes; they shine light on patterns and interchanges, some in the reforming mould, that would otherwise remain in the dark. The Life of Bovo is an especially useful text in this respect, elucidating a cross-cultural transmission of stories between the secular and spiritual domains. Similarly, the Lives of

Gerald of Aurillac, the Life of Martial of Limoges, and the pilgrim biographies of Lucca all help us to understand ways in which the worlds of the laity and clergy naturally connected. The idea of networks has allowed historians to conceptualise the interactions occasioned by pilgrimage later on, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,¹ but we have seen that it is highly valuable for understanding the eleventh century too, and suggests the development of a new culture, in a particular part of Europe, based on a novel mix of ideologies.

Taken individually, each lay saint tells us something unique about his or her milieu. From Gerald of Aurillac at the beginning of the period, who expresses models of social reform during a period of perceived crisis, to Ida of Boulogne at the end of it, who embodies the strength of female aristocratic piety and memory, each has a place that reflects a different, idealised role for the laity. Our corpus includes the legends of nine laypeople (ten if we count Duke Stephen, the mythical disciple of St Martial of Limoges, whose virtues were promoted in hagiography even if he was not considered a saint). In their biographies, these nine are painted as holy intercessors whose goodness is worthy of the miracles witnessed by the living. Ceremonial or ‘official’ appreciation of their sanctity manifests for the most part in translation and dedication rituals, except in cases where we only have evidence of a feast day, as with Burchard the Venerable, or notice of a tomb-opening and bodily incorruptibility, as with Ida of Boulogne. Given the wide dispersal of these cults, any conclusions about their larger meaning must be made with care, but we must nevertheless ask how they fit in to the general picture of religious change, and which parts of it they represent and underscore.

Overall the emergence of these extraordinary *vitae* articulates three important narratives in the context of the long eleventh century and its reforming innovations. These different aspects interlock and overlap in our texts, but may be reduced as follows. The first

¹ E. E. Jenkins, *The Mediterranean World of Alfonso II and Peter II of Aragon (1162-1213)* (Basingstoke, 2012), pp. 37-63. I am indebted to Samantha Kahn Herrick and her paper ‘Hagiographical networks: sharing stories about apostolic saints’, International Medieval Congress, Leeds, 9 July 2014, for inspiring me to think about networks.

concerns clerical pressure to reform the mores of the lay aristocracy. As we have seen, this is evident in the cult of Gerald and the legend of Stephen, which grew out of the powerful urge among clergy and laity to promote order during the Peace in Limoges. It is also the reason for sanctifying Burchard the Venerable, who provided the ideal model of the monastic protector. In these legends, the arms-bearers are promoted as society's leaders and reminded of their responsibilities to the powerless. Their piety reaches for the heights of what is possible in the secular world, but ultimately stays in that world, where their mission is justice for the Church and all its people. Their hagiographers have created ideal types, using semi-mythical models, at the service of clerical propaganda.

The second narrative is not as clear-cut but involves an appreciation of the laity's outward piety, and is more reflective than interested or partisan. The Life of Bovo may seem as if it belongs to the former group because it upholds an aristocratic ideal, but it does not harangue the aristocracy on pressing issues: rather than promote peace, it glorifies violence, and it has nothing to say about ecclesiastical institutions. Instead, its entire spiritual focus revolves around Bovo's devotion to pilgrimage, which comes after a career in arms and seems motivated by a penitential need. Bovo is legendary, and his identity as a pilgrim suited the cult's prospective worshippers. His *vita* may be read as a reflection, or idealisation, of external circumstances among the laity. Bovo reflects the best of all the pilgrims who came through the Po valley and whom towns wished to attract. Its tale of Saracens and battles reflects their popular culture, while its spiritual denouement reflects their Christian aspirations. Despite (or perhaps because of) its fictions, the Life of Bovo expresses a new reality based in crusade-era circumstances: that laypeople were increasingly keen to make their amends with God through extravagant expressions of piety, among which pilgrimage claimed an advantageous and efficacious place. The Life of Gerard of Gallinaro agrees with this sentiment, as this mysterious character has only one knowable identity, that of a lay

pilgrim. Arguably, we may place Ida of Boulogne alongside them. She was not a pilgrim, but her personal piety shines through her biography, which is not some tool of social reform but a genuine act of remembrance. These Lives accept lay piety as a reasonable basis for sanctity, but their socio-religious values are essentially traditional compared with the next category, even if they do mirror the growing concern for salvation that historians recognise among the laity of the central Middle Ages.²

There is the scent of revolution in the third narrative, which is embodied in Alexius, Nicholas the Pilgrim, Walstan, and Davino.³ These saints subverted social norms in the pursuit of poverty: the three who came from great wealth (Alexius, Walstan, and Davino) embraced poverty voluntarily, while Nicholas, whose background was humble, took to foolery and madness as his way of rejecting the world. The same tendency to follow Christ's example was manifesting in eremitic circles, as we have seen, and these laypeople overlap with that movement. With their pure and enduring asceticism, Alexius and Nicholas may come closest to the designation of hermit (but even Alexius was married). The early success of Alexius's cult in particular reminds us how powerful these apostolic values could be in the very first days of the monastic upheaval that used to be called the 'crisis of cenobitism',⁴ and it is salutary to note that this, by far the most widely used *vita* among those studied here, was among the earliest yet probably the most radical. Its popularity speaks volumes about the potential in the eleventh century to minimise restrictions based on perceived orders of society and instead prioritise the religious way of life for all. Peter Damian, that exemplar of reformist spirituality, was keen to spread news among the laity of Alexius's 'new and nearly

² For a recent overview, S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 224-50, 284-315.

³ For the period as a time of revolution: R. I. Moore, *The First European Revolution, c.970-1215* (Oxford, 2000).

⁴ J. Van Engen, 'The "crisis of cenobitism" reconsidered: Benedictine monasticism in the years 1050-1150', *Speculum*, 61 (1986), pp. 269-304.

unheard of victory'.⁵ Nicholas followed in the wandering footsteps of this saint, and Walstan fled to seek a life of labour just as hard. Davino joins them because, unlike his fellow pilgrim Bovo, he heard Christ's call to poverty and used it as the basis for a new life, like so many of his fellow saints at Lucca; there are, of course, many parallels between Bovo and Davino, and strict categorisation is unrealistic. Nonetheless, it is evident from these examples that historians' ideas about the 'divide' between clergy and laity based on the Gregorian Reform must be carefully set against the acceptance of the laity, and even leadership of the laity, within the new evangelical movement – a notion that is now becoming mainstream.⁶

Of these three strands of interpretation, this last – the apostolic, quasi-eremitic path – would exercise the most profound impact on both the reforming Church and society at large.⁷ From the point of view of saints' cults, this is best understood by following the vicissitudes of lay sanctity from where we have left off. One of André Vauchez's first lay saints was a merchant called Gualfardo of Verona (d. 1127), who came to that Italian city from Augsburg.⁸ He lived a life of charity, giving what he could to the poor, but soon wished to escape the vanity of the world, so he departed secretly to a nearby forest on the river Adige, where he lived alone for twenty years. He was then found by some sailors and taken back to the city, where he finally settled in a cell at the church of San Salvar Corte Regia. There he lived on for ten years, constantly praying and fasting, aiding outcasts and curing the sick. Maureen Miller has remarked:

⁵ Peter Damian, *Sermones*, ed. G. Lucchesi, CCCM 57 (Turnhout, 1983), no. 28, pp. 161-70, at 168: 'noua atque inaudita fere uictoria'.

⁶ E.g. M. Miller, 'New religious movements and reform', in C. Lansing and E. D. English (eds.), *A Companion to the Medieval World* (Chichester, 2009), pp. 211-30, esp. 222. See also introduction, above.

⁷ For a clear narrative of how such religious ferment turned into new orders, see B. Lackner, *The Eleventh-Century Background of Cîteaux* (Washington, DC, 1972). On lay participation in the 'evangelical awakening', see M.-D. Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. J. Taylor and L. K. Little (Toronto, 1997), pp. 219-30, 239-69.

⁸ *De s. Gualfardo solitario*, AASS Aprilis, III, pp. 827-32; A. Vauchez, 'A twelfth-century novelty: the lay saints of urban Italy', in idem, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. D. E. Bornstein, trans. M. J. Schneider (Notre Dame, IN, 1993), pp. 51-72, at 54, 60.

These acts of mercy, which captivated his contemporaries, signal a new focus in religious life. While Gualfardus's sojourn in the wilderness recalls the tradition of Saint Antony, his compassion for the poor ... presage[s] a new spirituality, one usually attributed to the great mendicant orders of the thirteenth century.⁹

In Gualfardo and the Italian urban saints who followed, we see the culmination of the trends in our third group. The emphasis on poverty in the Life of Alexius and others, which model a type of passive, personal Christomimesis, transforms in the Life of Gualfardo into a concern for active intervention. Gualfardo's long spiritual exile in the forest is vaguely compacted into his life story, and as the twelfth century wore on and turned into the early thirteenth, this kind of eremitic departure became less common in the Lives of lay saints, who turned instead to the realities of urban poverty and unrest, like the mendicant orders themselves.¹⁰

However, in the twelfth century we glimpse a dilemma in the historiography. To my mind, Gualfardo cannot be described as a lay saint because he lived in a cell attached to a church, even if the Life is vague about his status. He interacted with the world but from an apparently ecclesiastical standpoint. The same problem emerges with the earliest of Vauchez's lay saints, Domingo de la Calzada (or Dominic of the Causeway, d. 1109), who helped to build a bridge and hospital on the road to Compostela.¹¹ In Domingo's Life, however, he is described as a *discipulus* of Bishop Gregory of Ostia, the papal legate in Spain, and a later addition claims that he was ordained by Gregory.¹² These examples raise some important questions about how 'lay' Vauchez's lay saints really were, and call into

⁹ M. C. Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950-1150* (Ithaca, NY, 1993), p. 80.

¹⁰ Vauchez, 'Twelfth-century novelty', pp. 60-7.

¹¹ A. Vauchez, 'Lay people's sanctity in western Europe: evolution of a pattern (twelfth and thirteenth centuries)', in R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski and T. Szell (eds.), *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), pp. 21-32, at 27 (with the date of death erroneously given as 1120: cf. *De s. Dominico Calciatensi*, AASS Maii, III, pp. 167-80, at c. 8, p. 169); also briefly mentioned in Vauchez, 'Twelfth-century novelty', p. 53.

¹² *De s. Dominico*, 4, p. 168, and *ibid.*, note h.

question the foundations of the idea of lay sanctity in the twelfth century onwards that would benefit from further research.

One cult in particular should lead us to exercise caution over the ‘rise’ or ‘success’ of lay sanctity, and throws the whole question into sharp focus. The supposed movement gained its figurehead when Homobonus of Cremona (d. 1197) was canonized in 1199 at the behest of Pope Innocent III. One historian, in a classic textbook, called it ‘the earliest stage of a movement to foster lay sanctity and encourage it wherever it was to be found’.¹³ This view owes much to Vauchez, who saw Homobonus as the great model of a lay penitent whose canonization showed a Church coming to terms with new movements in lay spirituality, and who gave the saint a critical role in his scheme of developing typologies of sanctity.¹⁴ The unique success of Homobonus lured Vauchez back for a series of dedicated studies, and others followed under his influence.¹⁵ The early *vita*, most likely written before 1215 by Bishop Sicard of Cremona,¹⁶ narrates that this trader – of what exactly is unspecified – embarked upon the road to sanctity after giving up commercial activity. A further two

¹³ B. Bolton, *The Medieval Reformation* (London, 1983), p. 103.

¹⁴ A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 354-69.

¹⁵ A. Vauchez, ‘Le “trafiquant céleste”: Saint Homebon de Crémone (+ 1197), marchand et “père des pauvres”’, in H. Dubois et al. (eds.), *Horizons marins, itinéraires spirituels (Ve-XVIIIe siècles)*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1987), I, pp. 115-22; A. Vauchez, ‘Homebon de Crémone (+ 1197): marchand et saint’, in idem, *Les laïcs au Moyen Âge: pratiques et expériences religieuses* (Paris, 1987), pp. 77-82: not available in the English version of this volume, idem, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. D. E. Bornstein, trans. M. J. Schneider (Notre Dame, IN, 1993); A. Vauchez, *Omobono di Cremona (+ 1197): laico e santo: profilo storico* (Cremona, 2001), which I have been unable to consult; A. Vauchez, ‘Saint Homebon (+ 1197), patron des marchands et artisans drapiers à la fin du Moyen Âge et à l’époque moderne’, *Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques*, 6th ser., 15 (2004), pp. 47-56.

Elsewhere, see D. Piazza, *Omobono di Cremona: biografia dal XIII al XVI secolo* (Cremona, 1991), with an edition and Italian translation of the sources; idem, ‘Omobono di Cremona: le fonti agiografiche’, in A. Folgie (ed.), *Beatus vir et re et nomine Homobonus: la figura di sant’Omobono ad ottocento anni dalla morte (1197-1997)* (Cremona, 1998), pp. 13-38; M. Morandi, ‘Neue Wege zur Heiligkeit: Homobonus von Cremona’, in A. Wiczorek et al. (eds.), *Die Staufer und Italien: drei Innovationsregionen im mittelalterlichen Europa*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 2010), I, pp. 367-72; M. Wehrli-Johns, ‘Wie kommt der heilige Homobonus nach Basel? Vom Stadtpatron von Cremona zum Wappenträger der Schneider’, in H. Berger et al. (eds.), *Mundo multa miracula: Festschrift für Hans Conrad Peyer* (Zurich, 1992), pp. 97-106; D. Webb, *Saints and Cities in Medieval Italy* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 47-8; P. Bonometti (ed.), *Omobono: la figura del santo nell’iconografia – secolo XIII-XIX* (Cinisello Balsamo, 1999).

¹⁶ Vauchez, ‘Le “trafiquant céleste”’, pp. 116-18; Piazza, ‘Omobono di Cremona’, p. 19, but cf. idem, *Omobono*, p. 44.

medieval Lives would elaborate on the legend until Homobonus became the tailor who devoted his life to the poor.¹⁷

However, the canonization bull of 1199 contains the first biographical details and explains the point of the cult from the papacy's perspective.¹⁸ It says nothing of Homobonus's lay condition, and nothing of his profession or married life, which would become established parts of the legend. The preamble states that God grants the signs and wonders of the saints 'so that whomever he considers a saint is also considered a saint by men. And through this, most of all, the wickedness of heretics is confounded, when they see prodigies spring forth at the tombs of Catholics.'¹⁹ This is a theme repeated in the bull for the only another layperson canonized by Innocent, Empress Cunegunda (d. 1040).²⁰ At the beginning of Innocent's rule in 1198, the Humiliati, Waldensians, and Cathars were all taxing the pope's dual talents for conciliation and suppression to the utmost. His papacy, ever active, was acutely sensitive to developments in spirituality on the ground and the growing potential for heresy.²¹ He therefore took the lead in promoting a strong model of orthodox piety.

Homobonus rose in the night for Matins, attended the other daily hours, and concerned himself with restoring peace to the city, acquiring alms for the poor, and burying their dead. He had a habit of prostrating himself in front of the cross of Christ, and he prayed incessantly. The bull adds, pertinently: 'detached from the company of secular men, among

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 49-69; Vauchez, 'Le "trafiquant céleste"', pp. 118-20; see also the analysis of the Lives in Webb, *Saints and Cities*, pp. 48-53, with an English translation of the final Latin medieval Life (known as *Labentibus annis*) on pp. 57-61; an edition is in F. S. Gatta, 'Un antico codice reggiano su Omobono "il Santo popolare" di Cremona', *Bollettino storico cremonese*, 12 (1942), pp. 96-115.

¹⁸ Innocent III, *Quia pietas* (Lateran, 12.1.1199), ed. O. Hageneder and A. Haidacher, *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, I (Graz, 1964), no. 528 (530), pp. 761-4; also in PL 214, cols. 483-5.

¹⁹ Innocent III, *Quia pietas*, p. 762: 'ut, qui sanctus est apud ipsum, sanctus etiam ab hominibus habeatur. Et in hoc presertim hereticorum confundatur perversitas, cum ad catholicorum tumulos viderint prodigia pullulare.' The translation and interpretation of the text are my own; an alternative translation is in Webb, *Saints and Cities*, pp. 54-6.

²⁰ *Bulla Innocentii III de canonizatione s. Kunegundis*, AASS Martii, I, pp. 281-2.

²¹ On Innocent's approach to heresy, see J. Sayers, *Innocent III: Leader of Europe 1198-1216* (London, 1994), pp. 159-60; J. C. Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1060/61-1216): To Root Up and to Plant* (Leiden, 2003), p. 151-4; C. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 442-7; M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 2002), pp. 99-108. Also useful is H. Tillmann, *Pope Innocent III*, trans. W. Sax (Amsterdam, 1980).

whom he flourished as if a lily amid thorns, he stood out as a stern despiser of heretics whose mischief corrupted those parts'.²² He died while prostrated before the cross during Mass. Only one posthumous miracle is recounted, singled out 'for the assertion of the Catholic faith'.²³ It concerns a demoniac woman brought to the saint's tomb. A test was carried out to see if she really was possessed: her bad reaction to both the sprinkling of blessed water and a consecrated host confirmed this, and she was freed from possession by the saint. Doubt about the eucharist and other sacraments had been regular features of heretical belief since the eleventh century.²⁴ Rejecting the act of sprinkling holy water, an important part of preparation for the Mass, was specifically mentioned among heretical crimes, as at Vézelay in 1167 when seven people were burned.²⁵ This miracle, with its test for 'possession', has been underestimated, as it represents nothing less than a type of ordeal to test for heresy, with a cure in the shape of Homobonus. The value of the story lies in its emphasis on upholding Catholic doctrine, and especially the Mass, whose sacramental status would be forcefully defended against heretics with a new creed at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.²⁶

This also seems the most convincing way to interpret the bull's description of the saint himself, an 'ordinary' man of the urban classes that were so susceptible to heresy in this period,²⁷ and one who was called 'Homobonus both by fact and by name', as it states.²⁸ The play on the saint's curious name of 'Good Man' brings attention to what looks like an ironic inversion of the 'good men' (*boni homines*) of southern France, otherwise known as Cathars.

²² Innocent III, *Quia pietas*, p. 763: 'ipse a secularium hominum consortio segregatus, inter quos virebat quasi lilium inter spinas, haeticorum, quorum pernitias partes illas infecit, austerus exstitit aspernator'.

²³ *Ibid.*: 'ad assertionem catholice fidei'.

²⁴ E.g. allegations about the heretics condemned at Arras in 1025, the Petrobrusians of the earlier twelfth century, and early Cathar groups: see Peter the Venerable, *Contra petrobrusianos hereticos*, ed. J. Fearn, CCCM 10 (Turnhout, 1968); R. I. Moore, *The War on Heresy: Faith and Power in Medieval Europe* (London, 2012), pp. 45-9, 123-6, 133, 144-5, 204-5; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 52-69. For the theology see H. Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages 1000-1200*, trans. D. A. Kaiser (University Park, PA, 1998), esp. pp. 23-5, 77-80, 92-3.

²⁵ Moore, *War on Heresy*, p. 173. On sprinkling, see A. Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts for Mass and Office: A Guide To Their Organization and Terminology* (Toronto, 1995), pp. 82-3.

²⁶ On the council, esp. canon 1, see Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, pp. 447-8.

²⁷ C. Lansing, *Power and Purity: Cathar Heresy in Medieval Italy* (New York, NY, 1998), esp. pp. 60-78.

²⁸ Innocent III, *Quia pietas*, p. 762: 'et re et nomine Homoboni'.

But the emphasis on the manner of death is also significant. Homobonus's ever-constant devotion to orthodox religion, unyielding hatred of those who deviated from it, and finally his demise during its most central ceremony, the Mass, add up to a powerful message of conformity emanating from Rome. When the bull is compared with the first Life of Homobonus, which contains moralising material on sin and the social condition, the emphasis that it makes is even clearer. Vauchez himself showed how the trends and concerns of the papal curia came and went, frequently misaligned with the interests of ordinary worshippers and local cults, and this is no truer than in Homobonus's case, where a popular cult only emerged after the papacy took an interest.²⁹

The promotion of Homobonus, rather than stand as the apogee of the trends discussed in this dissertation, was a ploy to shore up orthodoxy at a time of crisis for the papacy.³⁰ This argument questions the idea that lay sanctity was actively embraced by the Church for its own merits, or that the lay saints of the eleventh century were the teleological forebears of Homobonus. The Church never truly celebrated lay sanctity in the Middle Ages. After Homobonus, the only other canonizations of 'laity', according to Vauchez, involved (in chronological order) five royal saints, one Provençal lord, two members of mendicant third orders, and an obscure preaching hermit.³¹ If we leave out the royalty, the others in this short list are hardly suggestive of any success of lay sanctity, especially as, following Pierre Delooz, it is justifiable to exclude tertiaries from the laity.³² Even on a local level, the lay saints of Italian towns, where they mostly flourished, were increasingly 'clericalised' (or

²⁹ On papal trends, see Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp. 385-6. On the limited early cult, see Vauchez, 'Saint Homebon', p. 47; idem, *Sainthood*, pp. 129-30.

³⁰ See also M. E. Goodich, 'The politics of canonization in the thirteenth century: lay and mendicant saints', *Church History*, 44 (1975), pp. 294-307, at 306; but cf. the approach in J. M. Powell, 'Innocent III, the Trinitarians, and the renewal of the church, 1198-1200', in idem, *The Crusades, the Kingdom of Sicily, and the Mediterranean* (Aldershot, 2007), ch. 9, at pp. 253-4.

³¹ Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p. 264: they are Cunegund, Elisabeth of Thuringia, Margaret of Scotland, Hedwig of Silesia, Louis IX (all royal saints); Elzear of Sabran (a powerful count); Bridget of Sweden, who founded the Bridgettine order, and Catherine of Siena (both tertiaries and mouthpieces of the Church); and Sebald of Nuremberg, who may have lived in the eleventh century but whose legend developed later.

³² P. Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations* (Liège, 1969), pp. 323-6.

‘monasticised’) by close association with the mendicant orders from the late thirteenth century onwards, and ‘in the end, this evolution led inevitably to the disappearance of the modest and useful movement of lay sanctity’, as Vauchez himself puts it.³³

We have seen how lay sanctity was modest and useful in the eleventh century too, before it withered away in the Middle Ages. It came in a variety of forms and had objectives that cannot be uniformly styled, but its presence should not be surprising. In periods of sustained upheaval, people will gravitate towards new heroes and models. Lay sanctity in the eleventh century was one such outcome of a time of profound religious change, and one that offers important clues about how these changes affected all of society, rich or poor, clerical or lay.

³³ Vauchez, ‘Twelfth-century novelty’, p. 72; see also idem, *Sainthood*, pp. 207-18.

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