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The article examines minor clerics (*clerici*) in Carolingian texts. Comparing episcopal capitularies from Italy and Francia suggests that *clerici* played a more prominent role in Italian church life. An analysis of charters from the monastery of Monte Amiata reveals a high proportion of *clerici*. They appear as a rurally-based group, with varying levels of education, but of some local social standing, and were often mature men with children. The prevalence of such *clerici* may be related to the northern Italian structure of *pievi*, and the opportunities these provided for mixed patterns of father-son and uncle-nephew inheritance of church office. The blurring of the lay/clerical divide by such *clerici* may have particularly worried eleventh-century church reformers coming to Italy from other regions of Western Europe.

Il saggio intende fornire una panoramica sui chierici minori nelle fonti di età carolingia, che, a partire dai capitolari episcopali, mostrano un ruolo assai più rilevante in area italica rispetto alle coeve dinamiche osservabili sul suolo francese. Tra le fonti, sono soprattutto le carte – dettagliatamente analizzate – provenienti dall'archivio del monastero di San Salvatore al Monte Amiata a mostrare una consistente presenza di *clerici*. Essi appaiono generalmente come un gruppo a forte radicamento rurale, differenziato al proprio interno secondo livelli non omogenei di educazione e alfabetizzazione, ma di una qualche eminenza sociale in ambito locale e con larga presenza di individui adulti con prole. La prevalenza di quest'ultima, ampia fascia di *clerici* potrebbe essere correlata alla struttura delle pievi dell'Italia centro-settentrionale e alle modalità di trasmissione dell'ufficio ecclesiastico che esse presentavano secondo la linea padre/figlio e zio/nipote. Tra le altre cose, sarà proprio l'appannamento di una netta divisione di *status* laico/ecclesiastico a preoccupare, inducendo a trovare soluzioni, i riformatori che, nel secolo XI, giungeranno in Italia da altre regioni dell'Europa occidentale.

Middle Ages; 5th-10th Century; Tuscany; minor clerics; clerical celibacy; monastery of Monte Amiata; charters.

Medioevo; secoli V-X; Toscana; chierici minori; celibato ecclesiastico; monastero del Monte Amiata; documenti privati.

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The list of abbreviations comes before the Works Cited page.

1. «*Mauricius clericus senex*»

In June 715, one of the early stages took place of a dispute between the bishops of Siena and Arezzo over which diocese should control a number of churches in Tuscany, a dispute which was to continue intermittently for more than four hundred years¹. The Lombard king Liutprand sent a royal notary Guntheram to enquire about the past of the disputed churches². Guntheram carried out a judicial enquiry that took evidence from over sixty lay and clerical witnesses in the area on episcopal markers of possession for these churches³. Which bishop had ordained the clergy of the church? Which see had consecrated the church and its altars? To which bishop did the ministers of the church go annually to obtain chrism, the consecrated oil used for anointing the sick and baptismal candidates?

Most of the clergy that Guntheram interviewed were priests of the churches concerned, but not all. At the «baptisterium Sancti Uiti», for example (possibly now the *pieve* of Corsignano in Pienza), he talked to three men⁴. One was the priest, Bonushomo. The second was described as «*Mauricius clericus senex*». The third was another man described as a *clericus* and probably even older than Maurice. Godo started his testimony with the words: «Habeo annos pene cento»⁵.

Godo's claim to be almost one hundred should not be taken too literally. Jean-Pierre Delumeau analysed a twelfth-century enquiry into the same dispute, whose greater detail allowed the claimed ages of some of the witnesses to be checked against known dates. He found the age of only one of eight claimed centenarians to be plausibly around a hundred, while some might have been only in their seventies⁶. Nevertheless, both Maurice and Godo were old enough for it to be noteworthy and nor were they the only old *clerici* mentioned in the region. At the church of Saint Marcellino, belonging to San Pietro of Pava, the *custos* (keeper) of the church was the *clericus* Godegis, who said he had been at the church for sixty years⁷.

Guntheram's enquiry provides us with a fascinating snapshot of the clerical landscape of Tuscany at one moment in 715. In this article I want to look more widely at the *clerici* of Tuscany as a class and also to ask a comparative question. Were they typical of the eighth and ninth century western church?

¹ An overview of the dispute is given by Delumeau, *Arezzo*, I, pp. 475-485; for recent discussions see also Gasparri, *Regno*, pp. 5-16; Fatucchi, *Antica documentazione*; Azzara, *Aspetto*. A detailed discussion of the early stages of the case is in the PhD thesis by Heil, *Clerics*, pp. 1-5, 23-89, 176-224, which he is now turning into a monograph. There is scholarly disagreement about the authenticity of some of the documents recording the dispute, but not about the text of the judicial enquiry cited here.

² CDL 19, vol. I, pp. 61-77.

³ Delumeau, *Mémoire*, pp. 46-47.

⁴ CDL 19, vol. I, pp. 67-68.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 68.

⁶ Delumeau, *Mémoire*, p. 50.

⁷ CDL 19, vol. I, p. 75: «Ocie sunt anni sexaginta quod hic ueni».

Or does comparison with the evidence from north of the Alps suggest a rather different pattern of expectations there about the men referred to as *clerici*? Answering this question has important implications for our understanding of the structures of the early medieval church as a whole, and how these may have affected eleventh-century church reformers coming to Italy from across the Alps.

2. Clerici in Carolingian normative sources

When discussing such men, we face an immediate terminological problem. The term *clericus*, and also such modern equivalents as “cleric” or “chierico”, have both broad and narrow meanings⁸. In a broad sense, *clerici* refers collectively to all those in ordained ministry within the church⁹. A frequent phrase in early medieval documents, for example, is «tam clerici quam laici», both clergy and laity¹⁰. In a text such as the 715 enquiry, however, *clericus* is being used in a narrower sense. Men who are priests, deacons or bishops are referred to by those titles. The implication is that those given only the title *clericus* are men in more minor orders within the church¹¹.

What grades counted as such minor orders, and what as the “sacred orders” above them, was not yet definitively fixed in the early Middle Ages. Several early medieval texts survive which list the different ecclesiastical grades and their roles, but they disagree about their number and names¹². There were also variations as to whether or not the bishop was included as a separate grade. For example, the fifth-century text *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua*, very widely read in the Gallo-Frankish church, gave ordination rubrics for the male grades of bishops, presbyters, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, lectors, doorkeepers and psalmists¹³.

In the Western church as a whole, by the eighth century the most common number of grades recognised was seven, although eight or more grades were also sometimes stated to exist. In the seven-grade scheme, the sacred orders were priests and deacons, with the minor orders being acolytes, exor-

⁸ For example, on the various meanings of the term “clericus” in the works of Gregory the Great, see Pellegrini, *Militia clericatus*, pp. 75-77. In this article, to avoid confusion I therefore use “clergy”/“clergyman” to indicate someone in any ecclesiastical grade and leave the term “clericus” untranslated.

⁹ See e.g. Isidore of Seville, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, Book 2, cap. 1, 1 (PL 83, col. 777): «Itaque omnes qui in ecclesiastici ministerii gradibus ordinati sunt generaliter clerici nominantur».

¹⁰ See e.g. *Chlodowici regis ad episcopos epistola*, MGH Capit. 1, n. 1, p. 2; *Concilium Vernense* 755, MGH Capit. 1, n. 14, cap. 9, p. 35.

¹¹ A third meaning of *clericus* developed later in the Middle Ages: a man who was literate (see Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 170). However, given the existence of illiterate *clerici* in the early Middle Ages as well as literate men who did not use this title (see below, text corresponding to note 94), the term was probably not used in this way in these texts.

¹² Overviews are given by Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 34-39; Reynolds, “At sixes and sevens”.

¹³ Reynolds, *Clerics in the early Middle Ages*, pp. 25-27.

cists, lectors and doorkeepers. Subdeacons were sometimes regarded as being a higher/sacred order and sometimes not¹⁴. The tracts we possess talk of the origins of these grades, their liturgical duties and the qualities required of their holders, but say little of the organisation of these ministers within individual churches¹⁵.

Looking specifically at the Carolingian church both north and south of the Alps, the numerous normative texts we possess, such as royal capitularies (decrees produced by the king), episcopal capitularies (rules by a bishop for his diocese)¹⁶, and canons from church councils are not particularly useful in pinning down the exact role and requirements for the minor orders. There are few references within such texts to specific orders below that of deacon, and the existence of some of the minor grades may have been largely nominal by this period¹⁷. Nor does Carolingian normative literature have anything to say about a pastoral role for *clerici*¹⁸. When the specific duties of such men are mentioned, these are predominantly that of assisting with the eucharist¹⁹.

Yet although Carolingian normative texts have relatively little specific to say on the role of the *clericus* within the church, they do include many references to such men. The problem is that it is often unclear whether a narrow or broad meaning of the term “clericus” is being used in these texts. For example, episcopal capitularies frequently demand that a priest may not receive a *clericus* from another diocese, at least without episcopal permission²⁰; this implies a narrow meaning of minor cleric. Yet when a church council states that none of the bishops or laity may receive a *clericus* from another church, is it possible that priests and deacons are implicitly included within this category as well²¹?

¹⁴ Reynolds, *Subdiaconate*, pp. 3-9.

¹⁵ See e.g. Isidore of Seville, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, Book 2, cap. 1, 15 (PL 83, coll. 777-794); Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 43-46.

¹⁶ On the genre of episcopal capitularies, see Brommer, “*Capitula episcoporum*”.

¹⁷ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 44-46 sees the doorkeeper (*ostiarius*) and exorcist as losing much of their role by Carolingian times, and they are certainly rarely mentioned in normative sources. However, the Council of Milan 863, cap. 13 (MGH Conc. 4, p. 162) orders that suitable subdeacons should be given control over the *ostiarii*.

¹⁸ On pastoral care in early medieval Italy and Francia, see Alberzoni, *La cura animarum*; Pellegrini, “*Plebs*” et “*populus*”; van Rhijn, *Local church*; van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord*.

¹⁹ See e.g. Willebert of Châlons, Capitulary, part 2, cap. 6 (MGH Capit. Episc. 2, p. 94): no-one is to sing mass without a *clericus* present; Ruotger of Trier, Capitulary, cap. 6, (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 64) either the priest or a suitable *clericus* are to take the eucharist to the sick; Haito of Basel, Capitulary, cap. 16 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 215): if altar cloths need to be washed, *clerici* are to take them to the women who will do this.

²⁰ See e.g. Ghaerbald of Liège, First capitulary, cap. 18 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 42); Theodulf of Orléans, First capitulary, cap. 15 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 113); *Capitula Florentina*, cap. 13 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 223); Radulf of Bourges, Capitulary, cap. 15 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, pp. 244-245); *Capitula Silvanectensia secunda*, cap. 15 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 90); *Capitula Frisingensia tertia*, cap. 20 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 227); Atto of Vercelli, Capitulary, cap. 33 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 277); *Capitula Casinensia*, cap. 16 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 328).

²¹ *Concilium Vernense* 755, cap. 12 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 14, p. 35), citing Council of Chalcedon, cap. 20.

The same difficulties in interpreting the word “clericus” apply to the frequent references to the way of life of *clerici* in Carolingian capitularies and councils. From the Merovingian period onwards, Frankish rulers and councils had made repeated attempts to ensure a clear divide between the clergy and the laity, for example by rules on tonsures and clerical clothing²². Another method of distinction was restrictions on the clergy bearing weapons. Three broadly similar regulations discussing this matter within fifty years show the uncertain category of the “clericus”. In 756, the Council of Verberie stated that «*clerici* must not bear arms»²³. Charlemagne in the *Admonitio generalis* of 789, in contrast, banned only priests and deacons from bearing arms²⁴. Yet in 802, in a text that repeated many of the clauses of the *Admonitio generalis*, Charlemagne ordered that «*presbyteri et diacones vel reliqui clerici*» should not bear arms²⁵.

A similar variability is visible in another key area of the distinctions made between clergy and laity in the Carolingian church: restrictions on their relationships with women. Priests and deacons were expected to be continent, separating from their wives on ordination if married and not marrying once ordained²⁶. Most of the minor orders continued, in contrast, to be allowed to marry and to sleep with their wives. The partial exception was the grade of subdeacon: some councils demanded continence from these, but not all did²⁷.

Alongside these demands for continence were regulations which specifically banned religious men from having “external”, i.e. non-related women in their houses; these regulations normally included a list of which relatives were permitted (e.g. mothers, aunts). In some Carolingian texts, restrictions on having women in the household were imposed on *clerici* generally, rather than only on priests and deacons. In these cases, the relatives who might be kept in one’s house did not include the wife that a *clericus* in a minor order might legitimately have²⁸.

Reading such repeated variants in texts on the behaviour expected of religious men leaves one with the increasing sense that the term *clericus* had no clear meaning, or, alternatively, that the minor orders were always something of an afterthought for legislators, whose main focus was on the grades

²² Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 29-34; Effros, *Appearance and ideology*; Mériaux, *Ordre et hiérarchie*, pp. 119-123.

²³ *Decretum Vermeriense*, cap. 16 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 16, p. 41): «*Ut arma clerici non portent*».

²⁴ *Admonitio generalis* 789, cap. 70 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 22, p. 59).

²⁵ *Capitulum missorum speciale* 802, cap. 37 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 35, p. 103); *Capitula a sacerdotibus proposita*, cap. 18, also from 802 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 35, p. 107) bans «*sacerdotes*» from bearing arms.

²⁶ On the Merovingian period, see Godding, *Prêtres*, pp. 111-154. He notes (pp. 131-134) that conciliar demands for married priests and deacons to be continent are far rarer in the Carolingian period than in the fifth and sixth centuries and sees this as an indication that such men were now uncommon in the Frankish church.

²⁷ See Reynolds, *Subdiaconate*, pp. 4-7.

²⁸ See e.g. *Pippini principis capitulum Suessionense* 744, cap. 8 (MGH Capit. 1, n. 12, p. 30); Council of Reisbach, Freising and Salzburg, cap. 17 (MGH Conc. 2, 1, p. 210, citing Council of Nicaea c. 3). Godding, *Prêtres*, pp. 450-453 summarises the Merovingian legislation.

from deacon upwards. Paradoxically, despite all the attempts to define the clergy as a whole as a group distinct from the laity, the minor orders included within the *clerici* made such a definition very hard to achieve.

3. *Regional distinctions: episcopal capitularies*

The normative sources also suggest an additional complication in analyzing minor clerics: *clerici* may not have been the same in every part of the Carolingian empire. This is best illustrated in texts produced by two episcopal reformers which discuss monthly meetings of clergy. The first reformer was Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims, who wrote the first of his five episcopal capitularies, setting out his orders to the clergy of his diocese, in late 852²⁹. One chapter of this capitulary refers to monthly meetings of priests within the diocese, normally on the Kalends (the first day of the month)³⁰. Hincmar warns priests that after they have met for a service on this day, they should not spend a long time together afterwards eating and drinking. After at most three drinks, they should return to their own churches³¹. In a slightly later text, the *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis* from 857, he makes further demands about such meetings: they should take place in each deanery (*per singulas decanias*) and the participants should discuss their ministry and their parishes, and consider how they should pray for the king, the *rectores* of their churches and their friends (*familiares*), living and dead³².

Hincmar's texts are not the first or the last Carolingian episcopal capitulary to refer to monthly meetings of clergy, but he is the first using them to provide moral instruction, rather than simply condemn them³³. The same hope of using such meetings for positive ends also appears in the capitulary

²⁹ On Hincmar see Devisse, *Hincmar; Hincmar of Rheims: life and work*.

³⁰ On such meetings see Avril, *Réunions de prêtres*, pp. 14-18.

³¹ Hincmar of Rheims, First capitulary, cap. 15 (MGH Capit. Episc. 2, pp. 42-43): «Ut, quando presbiteri per Kalendas simul convenerint, post peractum divinum mysterium et necessariam collationem non quasi ad prandium ibi ad tabulam resideant et per tales inconvenientes pastellos se invicem gravent, quia inhonestum est et onerosum (...) Et ideo peractis omnibus, qui voluerint, panem cum caritate et gratiarum actione in domo confratris sui simul cum fratribus suis frangant et singulos biberes accipiant, maxime autem ultra tertiam vicem poculum ibi non contingant et ad ecclesias suas redeant».

³² Hincmar of Rheims, *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis*, ed. M. Stratmann, Hannover 1990 (MGH Fontes iuris 14) Part 2, pp. 100-101: «Ut in unoquoque mense statuta die per singulas decanias simul convenient et convenientes non pastis vel potationibus vacent, sed de suo ministerio et de religiosa conversatione atque de his, quae in eorum parrochiis accidunt, sermonem habeant et, qualiter pro rege vel pro rectoribus ecclesie atque pro suis familiaribus, tam vivis quam et defunctis, orare debeant, simul considerent».

³³ Such monthly meetings are also mentioned by e.g. *Capitula Neustrica quarta*, cap. 5 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 71), probably soon after 829; *Capitula Monacensia*, cap. 5 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 163), after 858; *Capitula Trecensia*, cap. 1 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 169), after 858; Riculf of Soissons, Capitulary, cap. 22, (MGH Capit. Episc. 2, pp. 110-111), from 898; *Capitula Cottomaniana*, cap. 18 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 139), from late ninth or early tenth century; Ruotger of Trier, Capitulary, cap. 13 (MGH Capit. Episc. 1, p. 65) from the early tenth century.

produced by Atto, bishop of Vercelli³⁴. In a text dated from between 924-960 Atto orders:

in each individual *pieve* (*per singulas plebes*), every Kalends, all the priests and *clerici* are to meet together, so that they may deal in common with matters of faith and divine sacraments and life and behaviour and the individual offices pertaining to them. And if perhaps someone among them is found to be negligent or worthy of blame, let him be corrected by the others³⁵.

One immediate difference between the instructions from Hincmar and Atto is in the geographical area covered by the meeting. Hincmar's capitulary does not specify this, while in the *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis* he refers to the *decania*³⁶. Atto, in contrast, describes the geographical boundaries for these meetings as given by the distinctive northern Italian institution of the *plebs/pieve*, the territory of a particular baptismal church³⁷. But another important point should also be noted. Hincmar sees these monthly meetings as being of *presbiteri*, priests; Atto as involving both priests and other *clerici*, presumably those in minor orders.

Hincmar does, however, mention *clerici* in his first capitulary, as part of a warning about drunken celebrations by priests, particularly of the anniversary of the day of someone's death:

But when the priests meet for some feast (*convivium*), let the dean (*decanus*) or some prior begin some verse before their table and let him bless the food. And then let them sit down according to their order, giving honour to one another and let them through the interchange bless the food and drink and let one of their *clerici* read something from holy scripture and after the meal, similarly let them say sacred hymns³⁸.

These *clerici* are quite literally to be kept in their place, since seating is according to *ordo*, and they are also described as belonging to the priests. Hincmar's references place them as not fully part of the community; it is not clear whether all the *clerici* of a deanery need to be present. In contrast, Atto implies that such *clerici* are not only all present, but share fully in the fellowship: there is no reference to them as being excluded from the mutual theological scrutiny he demands. Placed together in this way, these texts suggest that

³⁴ On Atto see Wemple, *Atto of Vercelli*; Meens, *In the mirror of Eusebius*.

³⁵ Atto of Vercelli, Capitulary, cap. 29 (MGH Capit. Episc. 3, p. 275): «Unde a praesenti statuimus, ut per singulas plebes singulis kalendis omnes presbiteri seu clerici simul conveniant, ut de fide ac sacramentis divinis seu de vita et conversatione et singulis officiis ad eos pertinentibus communiter tractent. Et si forte aliquis inter eos negligens aut reprehensibilis invenitur, a caeteris corrigatur».

³⁶ On the *decania* see Mériaux, *Ordre et hiérarchie*, pp. 127-135.

³⁷ On the *pieve*, see below, note 47.

³⁸ Hincmar, First capitulary, cap. 14, (MGH Capit. Episc. 2, p. 42): «Quando autem convenerint presbiteri ad aliquod convivium, decanus aut aliquis prior illorum versum ante mensam incipiat et cibum benedicat. Et tunc secundum suum ordinem consedeant alter alterius honorem portantes et per vicissitudines cibum et potum benedicant et aliquis de illorum clericis aliquid de sancta lectione legat et post refectioem similiter sanctum hymnum dicant».

clerici may have had very different experiences and social status in northern Italy, as compared to other regions of the Carolingian empire.

4. *Regional differences: church structures*

Researchers on rural churches in the early Middle Ages have often stressed the contrast between structures north of the Alps (especially in France) and the situation in northern Italy. In France, the Carolingian period in particular has been seen as marking the start of a parish network³⁹. In most regions, parishes were successively created and slowly solidified territorially around individual churches, each of which had their own priest⁴⁰. Indeed, at the start of the tenth century Regino of Prüm quoted an unknown “Council of Rheims” as ruling that a church must not have more than one priest⁴¹.

These new parish churches included some built originally by private owners⁴². Some dependent chapels are also visible, but they too seem to have their own priests. Hincmar, one of our main sources for the organisation of churches within a diocese, saw the movement of particular churches between dependence and being parochial churches as an entirely sensible response to changing pastoral needs⁴³.

Reflecting such parish-focused structures, the emphasis of research on the personnel of rural churches in France (and also Germany) has been overwhelmingly on priests⁴⁴. Even studies of the church hierarchy have concentrated on men, such as rural deans, placed above these priests⁴⁵. This reflects the normative sources, which indicate only sketchily the existence of some subordinates below the parish priest. Hincmar, for example, in a detailed questionnaire that rural deans are to use for investigating parishes, wants them to check whether the priest «has a *clericus*, who can keep a school or is able to read the epistle or sing, as seems necessary to him [the priest]»⁴⁶. Such

³⁹ On the formation of the parish, see Aubrun, *La paroisse en France; Aux origines de la paroisse rurale*; Depreux, Treffort, *La paroisse dans le De ecclesiis et capellis d'Hincmar de Reims*; Fournier, *Mise en place*; Lauwers, *Paroisse, paroissiens et territoire*.

⁴⁰ One exception to this pattern was Brittany. Davies, *Priests and rural communities*, pp. 190-193 discusses the existence of groups of priests in some *plebes*. Unlike in Italy, however, she sees no sign of the existence of dependent minor churches within such *plebes*.

⁴¹ *Das Sendhandbuch des Regino von Prüm*, cap. 247, p. 134: «Sicut in unaquaque ecclesia presbyter debet esse, ita ipsa ecclesia, quae sponsa vel uxor eius dicitur, non potest dividi inter plures presbyteros, sed unum tantummodo habebit sacerdotem, qui eam caste et sinceriter regat. Unde interdicimus ut nullus praesumat ecclesiam inter duos vel plures dividere, quia ecclesia Christi uxor et sponsa debet esse, non scortum, sicut Calixtus papa testatur».

⁴² Wood, *Proprietary church*, pp. 67-73.

⁴³ See West, *Hincmar's parish priests*, pp. 230-232 on the case of the church at Folembay. For other examples of new parishes being created in France, see Fournier, *Mise en place*, pp. 535-563.

⁴⁴ See e.g. *Clergé rural dans l'Europe*; Heuclin, *Rôle du clergé; Men in the middle*.

⁴⁵ Mériaux, *Ordre et hiérarchie*.

⁴⁶ Hincmar, Second capitulary, cap. 11 (MGH Capit. Episc. 2, p. 48): «Si habeat clericum,

shadowy figures appear in other texts from Frankish bishops, but with little further detail.

A contrast between this Frankish model of the parish and the distinctive organisation of the church in northern Italy has often been recognised⁴⁷. There has been considerable research using normative and documentary evidence on the organisation of the Italian church, especially in Tuscany, which is particularly well-documented⁴⁸. There has also been considerable work relating *pievi* in many regions to their wider landscapes, drawing on both documentary and archaeological sources⁴⁹.

In its full form, northern Italian church structures were marked by a clear hierarchy of offices, churches and territories associated with them. At the top was the bishop in the episcopal mother church, with its associated diocese and below this was the priest or archpriest in a baptismal church, with a territory (however loosely defined), known as the *pieve/plebs*. Other minor churches, often referred to as oratories, were in turn subject to these baptismal churches⁵⁰.

This pieval structure developed early in Italy. A clear theoretical distinction between baptismal churches and minor churches was already being made by Pope Gelasius I at the end of the fifth century⁵¹. By around 700, networks of baptismal churches were developing in northern Italy, and references also appear to their territories, although such territories were by no means stable⁵². During the eighth century ecclesiastical institutions and the organisation of pastoral care became progressively more precisely and formally defined⁵³. Under the Carolingians, there was a further reinforcement of this ecclesiastical hierarchy⁵⁴.

The popes and Italian bishops were able to impose stricter controls on privately-founded churches than Frankish bishops were; for example, such churches could not include baptisteries⁵⁵. Alongside the theoretical monopoly of the *pievi* on baptisms, in the Carolingian period the laity in Italy were supposed to attend a baptismal church on the major feast days, rather than an oratory, and also to pay their tithes to the *pieve* in whose territory they lived⁵⁶.

qui possit tenere scolam aut legere epistolam aut canere valeat, prout necessarium sibi videtur».

⁴⁷ Ronzani, *Organizzazione spaziale*, pp. 544-545; Wood, *Proprietary church*, pp. 86-91.

⁴⁸ Some of the classic studies are Castagnetti, *Organizzazione*; Nanni, *Parrocchia*; Violante, *Strutture organizzative*. For an overview of more recent research, see Azzara, *Chiese e istituzioni rurali*; Stoffella, *Local priests*, pp. 98-101.

⁴⁹ See e.g. *Alle origini della parrocchia rurale*; *Chiese e insediamenti*; *Chiese rurali tra VII e VIII secolo in Italia settentrionale*; Settia, *Pievi e cappelle*.

⁵⁰ Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, p. 967.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 972.

⁵² *Ibidem*, pp. 1015-1019.

⁵³ Boyd, *Tithes and parishes*, pp. 58-64; Ronzani, *Organizzazione spaziale*, pp. 557-560; Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, p. 1054.

⁵⁴ Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, pp. 1058-1072, 1140-1141.

⁵⁵ Ronzani, *Organizzazione spaziale*, p. 545.

⁵⁶ Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, pp. 976, 1072-1073.

The rector in overall charge of a baptismal church was supposed always to be a priest, and he was later often referred to as an archpriest⁵⁷.

In contrast, oratories and similar minor churches did not have their own associated territories. Pope Pelagius I forbade private foundations from having their own permanent priests: instead a priest must be requested from the bishop for each mass⁵⁸. By the earlier eighth century some of these oratories did have priests of their own, but an alternative also visible is that priests and *clerici* from the baptismal churches would come to say the office or celebrate mass, possibly even daily⁵⁹. Minor churches might also have a rector officially in charge of them, but this man did not have to be a priest; he could instead hold a lower ecclesiastical grade⁶⁰.

Implementing a fully-articulated pieval network was not always a smooth process, as shown by the dispute between the dioceses of Siena and Arezzo referred to above. The judicial inquest from 715 provides some of our most detailed evidence of how hierarchies were created and sustained and the complex ties that could be created between churches and their personnel⁶¹. The inquest also shows that baptismal churches were at that point not necessarily staffed by only a single priest. In some two priests are visible or one priest along with several *clerici*; occasionally one priest was responsible for two baptismal churches⁶². Eighth and ninth-century sources suggest collegiate structures in some *pievi*, with groups of priests and *clerici* working and possibly living together there⁶³.

Yet despite all this research on Italian churches, there has been relatively little work done specifically on their personnel⁶⁴. As with other regions of the Carolingian empire, there have been a number of studies of bishops, who tend to be better documented⁶⁵. Research on the lower levels of church personnel has tended to treat all the grades together. For example, Mario Marrocchi's study of literacy contains a statistical analysis that compares the laity with a group labelled "religious" that includes monks, priests and all the subordinate orders together⁶⁶. There has also been a considerable amount of research studying the interaction of Tuscan lay and clerical elites at various levels⁶⁷.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 1060-1066. In practice, men of lower ecclesiastical grades could sometimes be appointed *rectores* of *pievi* (pp. 1086-1087, 1097). For other examples, see Ronzani, *Organizzazione territoriale*, p. 211; Nanni, *Parrocchia*, pp. 86-87, 94-95.

⁵⁸ Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, p. 994.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 1033-1035.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 967.

⁶¹ Stoffella, *Local priests*, pp. 104-107; Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, pp. 1019-1031.

⁶² Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, p. 1032. Boyd, *Tithes and parishes*, p. 59 and Castagnetti, *Organizzazione*, pp. 49-50 discuss other examples of churches with two priests.

⁶³ Boyd, *Tithes and parishes*, pp. 61-64; Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, pp. 1061-1062, 1109-1115.

⁶⁴ Stoffella, *Local priests* is a rare exception.

⁶⁵ See e.g. Bougard, *Vescovi di Arezzo; Chiese locali e chiese regionali*; Schwarzmaier, *Lucca und das Reich*.

⁶⁶ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 36.

⁶⁷ See e.g. Collavini, *Spazi politici*; Schwarzmaier, *Lucca und das Reich*; Stoffella, *Aristocracy*

Studies of early medieval Tuscany have often relied heavily on the largest collection of charters by far from early medieval Italy, those preserved in the archiepiscopal archives in Lucca⁶⁸. Such a vast collection, however, was not feasible to analyse in an initial study; it also raised the possibility that any differences between it and northern European charter collections were due to the effect of a substantial city on the area around it. For this project, I therefore chose to focus on a different collection of charters, those from the archival collection of the monastery of Monte Amiata, in southern Tuscany⁶⁹. These charters give us an unusual insight into rural Italy, since they come from an area without a dominant ecclesiastical church. The status and role of *clerici* in this territory can be compared with data from rural areas north of the Alps and used to explore the distinctiveness of Italian church hierarchies. A large majority of these charters also survive in the originals, meaning that we can be sure that their data has not been distorted by later copyists⁷⁰.

5. *The monastery of San Salvatore, Monte Amiata*

Monte Amiata is the largest lava dome of a volcanic complex in southern Tuscany, just over 1700 metres high. It is situated about 50 km south of Siena and around 50 km inland from the sea. The monastery of San Salvatore was built on its eastern slopes in the mid-eighth century. In terms of landholdings, San Salvatore was a relatively small monastery. Its importance lay in its site, which overlooked an important early medieval road, the *Via Francigena*, connecting northern and southern Italy⁷¹. Much of the monastery's later history was shaped by its position at the southern edge of the Lombard kingdom, in what became known as the march of Tuscia. The area was one close to papal territory and with deep ties to Rome; in the twelfth century, the papacy attempted to take over some of this zone⁷².

The exact details of the foundation of San Salvatore are hard to determine, since we have only one unreliable eleventh-century chronicle giving its origin

and rural churches; Stoffella, *Per una categorizzazione*; Wickham, *The mountains and the city*.

⁶⁸ On northern Italian charters generally, see Bougard, *Justice*, pp. 76-108; Mersiowsky, *Urkunde in der Karolingerzeit*, vol. 1, pp. 360-380.

⁶⁹ These charters are edited in CDA; the vast majority are also edited in the volumes of CHLA dedicated to the archives of Siena (volumes 23-24, 61-63, which include concordance tables for CDA). I have cited the CDA edition, since this is more widely available in libraries, but have also included CHLA references when discussing palaeographical features of the charters.

⁷⁰ All but 2 of more than 150 genuine private charters from before the year 1000 survive in the original: the exceptions are CDA 63, 114, vol. I, pp. 125-126, 240-244. The only comparable collection of ninth and tenth-century originals north of the Alps comes from St Gall.

⁷¹ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 3-7.

⁷² On the history of the area, see Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 21; Tabacco, *La Toscana meridionale nel medioevo* and the literature cited.

story, and some of its earliest royal charters are forged⁷³. Other charters show the monastery as one of several founded by a Friulian called Erfo. It was under construction by 762 and consecrated between 762 and 770. It is likely that Erfo initially had support for his foundation from successive Friulian kings of the Lombards, the brothers Ratchis and Astulf, in order to consolidate their position in Tuscany.

There was little immediate change to the monastery after the conquest of the Lombard kingdom by Charlemagne in 774. Charlemagne is known to have given a diploma for the monastery, possibly in the 780s, although this does not survive⁷⁴. The number of charters reached its peak in the first quarter of the ninth century, but a relatively high number continued to be produced throughout the ninth century and the monastery benefited from continuing Carolingian support⁷⁵. In the mid 830s, the monastery may have had a lay abbot for extended periods of time, with the head of the monastery shown in charters only as a prior⁷⁶. Such lay abbots, however, did not necessarily mean decline for the monastery; in 853 Emperor Louis II entrusted the abbacy to Adalbert, the marquis of Tuscia, in order to reform it⁷⁷. Although Adalbert probably remained as lay abbot for several decades, by 886 an abbot, Peter II, was running the monastery and did so for more than 25 years⁷⁸.

In contrast to the ninth century, during most of the tenth century the monastery struggled, and the number of charters is noticeably less, reaching a low point in the second quarter of the tenth century⁷⁹. There was a second phase of prosperity in the early eleventh century under abbot Winizo, during which a new church was built⁸⁰. The monastery was turned into a Cistercian one in 1231 and was finally suppressed by the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1782⁸¹.

Because of the lack of chronicle evidence, this history of San Salvatore has had to be reconstructed largely from charter evidence. There are a considerable number of these: Willhelm Kurze's edition of the monastery's charters contains 196 genuine extant charters from before the year 1000. An important point is that by no means all of them concern the monastery itself. Especially for the eighth century, the monastic archives held a number of charters which deal with earlier transactions concerning land which was later donated or sold to the monastery⁸². This means that the charters can provide a wider

⁷³ Details of San Salvatore's early history are in CDA, vol. 3, 1, pp. 10-19; Kurze, *I momenti principali*, pp. 46-47 discusses the eleventh-century myth of its foundation by king Ratchis, inspired by a vision.

⁷⁴ CDA, vol. 3, 1, pp. 20-22.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, vol. 3, 2, pp. 185-186 shows the number of grants in 5 and 25 year periods to 1198.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. 3, 1, pp. 24-31.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, vol. 3, 1, pp. 32-34.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. 3, 1, pp. 34-39.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. 3, 1, pp. 40-58; vol. 3, 2, p. 186.

⁸⁰ Kurze, *Momenti principali*, pp. 42-45.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 38, Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 3-4.

⁸² CDA, vol. 3, 2, p. 186: for the eighth century, there are 19 charters concerning the monastery and 29 which do not.

idea of the society in the Monte Amiata region, including indications of lay activity, and also that charters survive from before the foundation of the monastery: the first charter in Kurze's edition comes from 736, around twenty-five years before the monastery was founded.

6. Numbers of clerici in charters

It is useful to start the analysis of *clerici* in the Monte Amiata charters by comparing their numbers with those in other charter collections. To do this, I have used two sources which provide prosopographical and quantitative data on clergy elsewhere in the Carolingian empire. The first source is Michael Borgolte's analysis of the large collection of mostly original charters of the monastery of St Gall in Switzerland, including detailed indexes of personal titles⁸³. The second source is data from *The Making of Charlemagne's Europe* project⁸⁴. This project, carried out at King's College London between 2012-2014, compiled a database of information from charters produced within the Carolingian empire during the reign of Charlemagne (768-814). It currently holds data extracted from almost 1000 royal and private charters and can be searched in numerous ways.

There are potential methodological problems with trying to compile any statistics from early medieval charters, given the very varied ways in which they are initially written, altered by subsequent compilers of cartularies and edited. However, with caution, at least some broad conclusions can be drawn about the relative importance of different ecclesiastical grades in different charter collections.

For my analysis, I counted the number of genuine charters which included at least one clergyman of the grade in question. I excluded men who are said to be both deacon and monk or priest and monk. I also excluded ranks higher than priest (such as bishops, archpriests, deans, etc). Counting the number of charters rather than the number of individuals avoids the needs to identify whether individuals of the same name in different charters are the same person, something that is extraordinarily difficult to ascertain definitely in a period when most people only had a single name.

The charter collections used were the largest ones from the Carolingian period for which personal title information was readily available. I also aimed for a spread of material on both sides of the Alps. The collections used were Monte Amiata (covering 736-1000), St Gall (up to 840), Wissembourg in Alsace (768-814), Farfa in central Italy (768-814) and Freising in Bavaria (768-782). Table 1 shows the numbers of charters containing each of the different grades; it provides more evidence to support the suggestion that *clericus* was the normal term used by those in minor clerical orders (subdeacon or below), rather than any of the more specific higher grades.

⁸³ Borgolte, Geuenich, *Register der Personennamen*.

⁸⁴ *The Making of Charlemagne's Europe (768-814)*.

Table 1: numbers of ecclesiastical grades in selected charter collections

	San Salvatore Monte Amiata (196 charters)		Farfa (132 charters)		St Gall (382 charters)		Wissembourg (133 charters)		Freising (86 charters)	
	N° of charters	%	N° of charters	%	N° of charters	%	N° of charters	%	N° of charters	%
Secular priest (presbiter/ sacerdos)	68	35	29	22	147	38	17	13	59	69
Secular deacon (diaconus/ levita)	14	7	17	13	90	24	6	5	40	47
Subdeacon	3	2	2	2	12	3	0	0	0	0
Acolite	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lector	0	0	0	0	11	3	0	0	0	0
Exorcist	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ostiarus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clericus	56	29	17	13	24	6	2	2	10	12

The statistics also show that in absolute terms the collections vary greatly in how often any clerical title is mentioned. This reflects the different circumstances under which the charters were compiled (and sometimes also the cartularies subsequently compiled from them)⁸⁵. Freising, for example, is the collection of an episcopal church and thus has a large number of secular clergy appearing as witnesses. It is therefore useful to carry out a second statistical analysis, which compares the ratios of mentions of priests to *clerici* (and also to deacons). These figures appear in Table 2; while the relative frequency of deacons shows no obvious regional patterns, that for *clerici* does. Mentions of these are vastly more frequent in the two Italian collections (Monte Amiata and Farfa) than in charter collections north of the Alps.

Table 2: ratios of ecclesiastical grades in selected charter collections

	San Salvatore Monte Amiata	Farfa	St Gall	Wissembourg	Freising
Charters with deacons as % of charters with priests	21%	59%	61%	35%	68%
Charters with <i>clerici</i> as % of charters with priests	82%	59%	16%	12%	17%

⁸⁵ The relatively high number of lectors mentioned at St Gall may be a reflection of documentary practices in the area; both the lectors and the *clerici* overwhelmingly appear in the role of scribes.

These differences need not, of course, necessarily map exactly to the absolute numbers of clergy of different grades in a particular region or church. Not all inhabitants, even office-holders, are mentioned in surviving charters⁸⁶. Data from charters can, however, give us some hints as to the most significant men in a particular area. To be a witness, a scribe or someone involved in transacting land is in itself a sign of a certain social status.

7. *The education of clerici*

Men with the rank of *clericus* are mentioned particularly often in the Monte Amiata charters, but what else can the charters tell us about them? 56 charters from 736-1000 mention *clerici* 74 times in total⁸⁷; this gives us just over 60 different *clerici*, although the exact number is uncertain, given the difficulty of being sure if the same man appears in different charters⁸⁸. A few names are very common: there are 6 *clerici* called Peter, for example⁸⁹. Although Kurze's edition provides a detailed breakdown between names he sees as "Germanic" and others, such information cannot be used to deduce a person's ethnicity⁹⁰. However, one *clericus*, Richard, is specifically said to have a father who was from Alemannia⁹¹.

The high proportion of original charters within northern Italian collections has led to much interest in using them for assessing literacy in the Lombard kingdom, by comparing the proportion of witnesses who subscribe a charter with their name to those who simply make their mark, and also by analysing the quality of the writing used⁹². There are problems both with using the ability to subscribe a charter as a proxy for literacy and with assuming that the sign of a cross must indicate a witness unable to write⁹³. Nevertheless, subscriptions can indicate broad expectations of literacy. For *clerici* in the Monte Amiata charters, we have 31 subscriptions, as opposed to 11 marks,

⁸⁶ Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 67 cites evidence from a confraternity book that around 850, Constance Cathedral chapter had a chorepiscopus, eleven priests, seven deacons, two subdeacons and four *clerici*.

⁸⁷ CDA 12, 15, 28, 29, 34-37, 39-40, 43-45, 47-48, 54-57, 59, 68, 72-75, 80-82, 85, 89, 92, 94-99, 103, 105-108, 111, 117-118, 120, 127, 136, 143, 147, 152, 180, 183, 196, 209, 210.

⁸⁸ The *clerici* identified by Kurze as appearing in multiple charters are Christian (CDA 96 and 111); Liminosus (CDA 89, 92, 94); Odolbrand (CDA 180, 183) and Waltifusu (CDA 37 and 48). Other possible identifications are Agiprand (CDA 57, 72, 83) (see below, text corresponding to notes 111, 153-154); the *clericus* and *notarius* Gaudipert (CDA 105, 106); Liudicari (CDA 103, 106).

⁸⁹ CDA 59, 74, 82, 106, 127, 136.

⁹⁰ CDA, vol. 3, 2, pp. 169-218.

⁹¹ CDA 98, p. 204.

⁹² See e.g. Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 33-49.

⁹³ On the difficulties in using subscriptions for this purpose see e.g. Costambeys, *Laitry*, p. 233. Supino Martini, *Alfabetismo e sottoscrizioni testimoniali* argues that the use of signs sometimes indicates that the "witness" was absent when the charter was composed, not necessarily illiterate.

suggesting an illiteracy rate of around a quarter. In contrast Marrocchi found between 55 and 80% of lay witnesses in the collection to be illiterate, which indicates that *clerici* were substantially more likely to be literate than laymen⁹⁴.

Indeed an expectation that *clerici* should be literate is revealed by the fact that four of those who only make their mark are specifically referred to in the charter as being illiterate⁹⁵. Such phrases are not used in the charter of laymen, suggesting that literacy was assumed of *clerici* in a way that it was not of others⁹⁶. In addition, the cultural level of these illiterate *clerici* was not necessarily negligible. Though one clerical donor only made the sign of the cross on his charter, «because of his ignorance of letters (*propter ignorantia litteratum*)»⁹⁷, Mario Marrocchi argues that two of the others, Ingipert and Teudipert, may have known how to read, though not write⁹⁸. What is more, the charter in which these two make a donation was dictated by them and is noteworthy for its elaborate phrasing⁹⁹. Marrocchi sees in it evidence for a flourishing oral culture, if a subaltern one, marked by rhetoric and gesture¹⁰⁰.

Despite such expectations of literacy, its level was very varied, judging by the autograph signatures that survive. Armando Petrucci argued that in eighth-century Lombard Italy a nonstandardised minuscule was the foundational script taught at the earliest level of instruction to both laity and the clergy. Some writers, but not all, then went on to be taught the new documentary cursive¹⁰¹. This division between levels of script is reflected in the Monte Amiata charters. Some *clerici* had considerable difficulty in writing even a short phrase indicating their role as witness, using scripts that the editors of *Chartae latinae antiquiores* describe as a “basic elementary” miniscule or “at the lowest level of literacy”, and unable to write a consistent size of letters or align them properly¹⁰². In contrast, the autograph signatures of other *clerici* acting as witnesses suggest considerable familiarity with writing and refined use of a new cursive script, sometimes also including letters showing Caroline features¹⁰³.

There are also indications that some *clerici* had an education beyond the purely religious. Nine charters in the period were written by scribes who called themselves *clericus*¹⁰⁴. All but one of the seven scribes writing these

⁹⁴ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 49.

⁹⁵ Waltifusu (CDA 37, 48); Ingipert and Teudipert (CDA 47); Deusdatus (CDA 73).

⁹⁶ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 73.

⁹⁷ CDA 48, vol. I, p. 93.

⁹⁸ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 69.

⁹⁹ CDA 47, vol. 1, p. 91: «Ego Inseradu notariu (...) rogitus ad Teudipertu et Ingipertu clerici, ipsi presente mihique dictante, infra iscripsi».

¹⁰⁰ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, p. 68.

¹⁰¹ Petrucci, *Writers and readers*, pp. 71-72.

¹⁰² See e.g. Mosso (CDA 39 = CHLA 24/765); Grossulus (CDA 72 = CHLA 61/20); Peter (CDA 74 = CHLA 61/22).

¹⁰³ See e.g. Peter (CDA 59 = CHLA 61/9); Baldine (CDA 73 = CHLA 61/23).

¹⁰⁴ Waldipert (CDA 12 = CHLA 23/740); Liminosus (CDA 89, 94 = CHLA 61/36, 61/39); Chris-

charters called themselves *notarius* and some of these wrote with considerable professional expertise¹⁰⁵. One *clericus*, Radso is also described as being a *medicus*, a doctor¹⁰⁶.

8. Social status and activities of clerici

The Monte Amiata charters also provide some information on the varying social status of the men known as *clerici*, their family connections and their activities. Two of them are referred to with the title *vir honestus*, an indication of belonging to the local elite¹⁰⁷; two more were fathers of such *virii honesti*¹⁰⁸. One man, Christian, was not only a *clericus* and *notarius*, but also described himself as a *centenarius*, and thus had local administrative and judicial responsibilities¹⁰⁹. Yet not all the *clerici* were of such high status. One man, Inserad, is referred to as *clericus et liber homo*, suggesting that his free status could not be taken for granted¹¹⁰. Another may have been illegitimate. In 806, Cunipert gave a piece of land with a half-built oratory to one of his three sons, the *clericus* Agiprand. These sons were said to have born «from my sins (*de peccatis meis*)», and thus were probably illegitimate¹¹¹.

The land that Cunipert gave was adjacent to that held by Agipert and Ursulo, described by Cunipert as «nepotes et parentes nostri»¹¹². Agiprand, even if illegitimate, was therefore deeply embedded within a network of relatives. Although the term *nepotes* is ambiguous, it suggests that Cunipert already had adult grandchildren or that Agiprand had adult nephews and that therefore Agiprand was probably more than a youth¹¹³.

As already mentioned, some of the *clerici* in the charters are shown as having children; in fact seven of them are mentioned as being fathers¹¹⁴. (In contrast, there are no references in this corpus of charters to any priest as

tian (CDA 96, 111 = CHLA 62/2, 62/17); Gaudipert (CDA 105 = CHLA 62/11); Dominicus (CDA 117 = CHLA 62/21); Adelcisi (CDA 152 = CHLA 63/16); Odolbrand (CDA 180). Three charters in the collection were also written by men in specific minor orders: CDA 1 by the acolyte Tachinulf and CDA 14 and 24 by the subdeacon Bonifrid.

¹⁰⁵ See e.g. the comments by the editors of CHLA on Gaudipert (CDA 105= CHLA 61/11); Adelcisi (CDA 152 = CHLA 63/16). The one scribe who was a *clericus*, but not a *notarius* is Dominicus, the writer of CDA 117.

¹⁰⁶ Radso in CDA 99, vol. 1, p. 208. On doctors in early medieval Italy, see Castagnetti, *Medici nella Langobardia*; Castagnetti, *Medici nella Tuscia*; Pilsworth, *Could you just sign this for me*.

¹⁰⁷ Usipert (CDA 40); Arnicausu (CDA 55).

¹⁰⁸ Leo (CDA 97); Luoni (CDA 118).

¹⁰⁹ CDA 96, vol. 1, p. 200. On the role of the *centenarius* in Italy, see Bougard, *Justice*, pp. 166-168.

¹¹⁰ CDA 108, vol. 1, p. 228.

¹¹¹ CDA 57, vol. 1, p. 114. Before the church reforms of the eleventh century, such illegitimate birth did not bar one from the priesthood: see Wertheimer, *Illegitimate birth*, pp. 213-214.

¹¹² CDA 57, vol. 1, p. 114.

¹¹³ On Agiprand's later career, see below, notes 153-154.

¹¹⁴ CDA 35 (Posso); 36 (Arnipert); 97 (Leo); 107 (Maurinus); 118 (Lupo); 143 (Lampo); 196 (Aulsolcar).

being married or as a father). And while we have no explicit references to *clerici* as being “old” in these charters, there are nevertheless hints that some of the *clerici* may have been of fairly advanced years. In 789, the *clericus* Arnipert donated property to Monte Amiata on his entering there to become a monk. He did not donate all his property to the monastery, however, leaving the remainder of his property to be divided between his sons and heirs¹¹⁵. Since the charter starts by stressing Arnipert’s consciousness of the «fragility of the world (*seculi fragilitas*)», it is possible that he may have been entering the monastery in old age¹¹⁶. In 787 the son of the *clericus* Posso, Tao, was old enough to be a *clericus* himself and to be negotiating changes in a lease from San Salvatore. The charter implies that Posso was still alive at the time¹¹⁷.

The example of the father and son *clerici* Tao and Posso also suggests the possibility that the status of *clericus* may have run in families. The charters of Monte Amiata do not have the density of those elsewhere in Tuscany, which can sometimes allow researchers to identify the fortunes of one family over a number of generations¹¹⁸, and to identify families containing a high proportion of clergy¹¹⁹. However, we do have one example of a priest whose father was a *clericus* and the widowed mother of another *clericus*, Waltifusu, had entered the religious life (she is described as being an *ancilla Dei*)¹²⁰.

Further hints about the role and social status of the *clerici* around Monte Amiata can be deduced from their specific activities within charters. Nearly half their mentions (35 out of 75 references) are as witnesses; 9 more are as scribes. In contrast, they are less often the drivers of the transactions themselves. Only 6 charters show *clerici* making donations¹²¹, and this is often in the context of them entering a monastery themselves¹²². It is possible that in some cases becoming a monk at Monte Amiata was a long term family strategy: this is suggested by two charters of donation by the *clericus* Waltifusu. In 791 Waltifusu donated a homestead (*casa*) with its appurtenances to San Salvatore, while keeping its usufruct for himself and his mother¹²³. Eight years

¹¹⁵ Arnipert appears in CDA 36, pp. 69-70; he is discussed by Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 65-66.

¹¹⁶ CDA 36, p. 69.

¹¹⁷ CDA 35. Posso plays no direct role in the transaction, but he is not referred to as deceased, as is standard practice for Monte Amiata charters.

¹¹⁸ See e.g. *Carte di famiglia*; Feller, Gramain, Weber, *Fortune de Karol*.

¹¹⁹ Stoffella, *Per una categorizzazione*, pp. 336-339 shows the existence of “specialist” clerical families in the Lucca region; see also Wickham, *The mountains and the city*, pp. 40-49 on the Gundualdi.

¹²⁰ The priest who was the son of a *clericus* was Raghinald, son of Maurino (CDA 107). On Raghinald see Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 77-79; Waltifusu and his widowed mother Graffilinda appear in CDA 37.

¹²¹ CDA 36 (Arnipert), CDA 37 and 48 (Waltifusu); CDA 40 (Ursipert); CDA 47 (Teudipert and Ingipert); CDA 136 (Liudicari).

¹²² In CDA 36 Arnipert donates a vineyard and a homestead to San Salvatore when entering the monastery; the remainder of his property goes to his family; in CDA 47 Teudipert and Ingipert donate themselves, plus the monastery of San Quiricius in Climinciano to San Salvatore.

¹²³ CDA 37, pp. 71-72.

later, he states that he is entering the monastery and that his brother Arnicauso, to whom he has left his goods, must pay a yearly census to San Salvatore for them¹²⁴.

The census payment made by Waltifusu in 791 was a *tremissis* (one-third of a *solidus*); for Waltifusu's goods in 799 it was 12 *denarii*, suggesting that the properties in both charters were of the same order of magnitude¹²⁵. All but one of the other donations in the charters by *clerici* are also of relatively small amounts of property¹²⁶; the exception is a charter in which two brothers grant all their property, including a *monasterium*, to San Salvatore on entering the monastery¹²⁷. *Clerici* may also have been reluctant to sell land. We have over 70 charters of sale in total, but only 3 of these have *clerici* as vendors¹²⁸. Two more have the sons of deceased *clerici* sell land to San Salvatore, reminding us that the lack of charters showing sales and donations does not mean that *clerici* possessed no land¹²⁹.

We also have four *clerici* leasing property of varying sizes from the monastery¹³⁰. The most extensive of these was in 995, when the *clericus* Gotizo and his brother Teuzo were leased several churches, as well as lands and mills¹³¹. A lease made by San Salvatore to the *clericus* Appertus in the 860s, meanwhile, refers to the labour services that must be carried out by «the man» of Appertus, suggesting that he had dependents of his own¹³². Overall, there is little to distinguish the *clerici* from other local landowners and tenants, and they do not appear to be especially prosperous¹³³.

Similarly, although lay witnesses predominate in the Monte Amiata charters, *clerici* are visible as witnesses in a wide range of types of transaction¹³⁴. For example, there are 10 charters in which a *clericus* is among the witness-

¹²⁴ CDA 48, pp. 92-93.

¹²⁵ P. Grierson, M. Blackburn, *Medieval European coinage*, p. 102 refers to varying valuations of the *solidus* in terms of the *denarius*, with a *solidus* variously worth either 40 or 12 *denarii*, making a *tremissis* therefore theoretically worth either 13-14 or 4 *denarii*.

¹²⁶ CDA 40: Ursipert donates vineyard to church of San Quiricius; CDA 136: Liudicari donates piece of land to priest Pertifuso.

¹²⁷ CDA 47, pp. 89-92.

¹²⁸ CDA 55: Arnicausu sells 2 *scripula* of land for 4 *solidi*; CDA 98: Richard had previously sold unidentified property to San Salvatore; CDA 106: the priest Walcari and the *clericus* Domnicus had previously sold two pieces of land to San Salvatore.

¹²⁹ CDA 97: The son of a *clericus* sells two *cetinae* (cleared woodlands) to the monastery for 15 *solidi*; CDA 118: two brothers sell their property in the *vicus* of Ficlinule to San Salvatore for 40 *solidi*.

¹³⁰ On *livello* contracts, see Boyd, *Tithes and parishes*, pp. 69-71; Nishimura, *When a lease*.

¹³¹ CDA 210. The other three leases are CDA 35: a piece of land that Posso had sold to San Salvatore was then leased back to his son Tao; CDA 108: San Salvatore leases to Inserad 60 *modi* of land, on which he is to build a house and plant a vineyard; CDA 147: Appertus donates land to San Salvatore and is leased different land in return.

¹³² CDA 147, p. 311: «opera manuali sex perexolbatis ad cella nostra in Lamule per vestru homine».

¹³³ Stoffella, *Local priests*, pp. 199-202 gives cases from Lucca charters of *clerici* loaning money or taking out loans.

¹³⁴ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 39-44: laymen normally made up 80% or more of witnesses throughout the eighth to tenth centuries.

es of a transaction between two laypeople¹³⁵. *Clerici* regularly appear as witnesses to charters recording interactions between San Salvatore and the laity, such as sales and leases¹³⁶; they could also be witnesses when priests or other *clerici* carried out transactions with the monastery or with other churches¹³⁷. All this suggests a group of men firmly embedded within local society.

9. *Locations of clerici*

The charters can also potentially tell us something of the location of *clerici* within the area around Monte Amiata. In 11 charters we are specifically told that a *clericus* is an inhabitant of or from a particular place¹³⁸. We can also deduce their location more approximately from information on where such men held or leased land and also where they acted as witnesses and scribes.

The practical difficulty, however, is that many of the place names in the Monte Amiata charters cannot be precisely located. For example, it is possible to locate only 1 out of the 10 places in which *clerici* are specifically said to live¹³⁹. An analysis of the places of redaction of charters where *clerici* were present gives similar results. We have 23 charters redacted at 8 known places¹⁴⁰, as against 20 charters redacted at 18 locations which cannot be identified¹⁴¹.

The difficulty in identifying these places is in itself significant: it strongly implies that these were relatively minor settlements and that the *clerici* in

¹³⁵ CDA 15, 28, 29, 39, 44, 59, 73, 80, 183, 209. CDA 57 has a *clericus* witnessing a donation by the layman Cunipert to his illegitimate *clericus* son Agiprand (see above, note 111).

¹³⁶ Sales by laypeople to San Salvatore are witnessed by *clerici* in CDA 34, 43, 56, 74, 85, 98. Leases by San Salvatore to laypeople are witnessed by *clerici* in CDA 45, 54, 68, 81, 82, 92, 95, 103, 127.

In CDA 72 a *clericus* witnesses a gift by a layman to the church of *Oile* and in CDA 99 one witnesses a lease by a priest to a lay couple.

¹³⁷ There are 5 charters of this type. CDA 36: grant by *clericus* to San Salvatore when entering monastery; CDA 40: gift by *clericus* to the church in San Quirico d'Orica; CDA 48: disposal by *clericus* of goods on entering San Salvatore; CDA 75: lease by San Salvatore to priest; CDA 105: sale by priest to San Salvatore.

¹³⁸ CDA 35-37, 40, 48, 55, 57, 59, 85, 136, 147.

¹³⁹ The identified place is Frignano (CDA 36, 136); the unidentified places are Fauclanu (CDA 35); Citiliano (CDA 37, 48); Tabernula (CDA 40); Casule (CDA 55); Funiano (CDA 57); Orle (CDA 59); Runtianu (CDA 85); Ceriliana (CDA 147).

¹⁴⁰ These break down as follows: 7 at Chiusi (CDA 15, 103, 105, 111, 147, 183, 210); 5 at Monte Amiata (CDA 74, 75, 98, 108, 127); 4 at Montepulciano (CDA 44, 45, 57, 80); 2 at Siena (CDA 136, 209); 2 at Sovana (CDA 35, 56); 1 at Cosona (CDA 29); 1 at Marta (CDA 12); 1 at San Columban (CDA 68).

¹⁴¹ Unknown locations: Avennanu (CDA 180); Baiano (CDA 106); Capiclu (CDA 152); Cimerianu (CDA 95); Colomnate (CDA 59, 73); Conmarca (CDA 37); Fauloni (CDA 39); Foro (CDA 43); Laucinianu (CDA 36); Margarita (CDA 82); Munticlo (CDA 54); Pacilianu (CDA 99); Palia (CDA 81); Petronianu (CDA 47); Preturianu (CDA 89, 94); Rofinano (CDA 34); Runtianu (CDA 85); Stagnu (CDA 55). I have excluded charters where the location given is a church name only (CDA 28, 40, 48).

Tuscany were not a predominantly urban-based elite¹⁴². Nevertheless, even in such a rural area, towns did have an influence: 7 charters were enacted at Chiusi¹⁴³. Marrocchi analysed the locations at which San Salvatore's charters were produced, classifying these as belonging to five main territories, roughly centred around cities¹⁴⁴. As Table 3 shows, charters with *clerici* as witnesses are found in all these five areas, suggesting that *clerici* were spread throughout southern Tuscany.

Table 3: location of redaction of Monte Amiata charters (data from Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*)

	Classification of location zones				
	Chiusi	Tuscania (plus Norchia and Viterbo)	Roselle- Sovana	Siena	Castro (including Bagnoregio and Orvieto)
Charters from 8 th -10 th century	83	34	49	20	11
Charters with clerici witnessing	9	10	5	8	1

10. *Careers of clerici*

The evidence of the Monte Amiata charters thus shows the early medieval Tuscan *clerici* as a group of men who, despite varying levels of education and wealth, were of sufficient status to play important roles within local communities as landowners, family men and witnesses. What is harder to ascertain from the charters is specific information on their career; their progress or lack of it within the *cursus clericorum* that had existed since the early Christian period¹⁴⁵.

Previous research has predominantly tended to imagine early medieval *clerici* as young men taking part in such a *cursus honorum*, brought up in the household of a priest as preparation for their own ordination as a priest¹⁴⁶. For instance, Cinzio Violante's fundamental study of the Tuscan church sees minor clerics as being tonsured in infancy and then serving in a cathedral or baptismal church as they prepared for major orders. Their further progress would come when they were elected as deacons or priests of a church, theo-

¹⁴² On settlements in the area, see Farinelli *et al.*, *Chiese e popolamento nella Tuscia*; Francovich, *Beginnings of hilltop villages*; Kurze, *Monastero di San Salvatore*; Wickham, *Paesaggi sepolti*.

¹⁴³ See above, note 140.

¹⁴⁴ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 34-37. I have omitted Marrocchi's sixth group, Arezzo-Peregria, which contains no charters for the eighth-tenth centuries (p. 35).

¹⁴⁵ On the early history of this concept, see Gibaut, *Cursus honorum*; for Merovingian evidence, see Godding, *Prêtres*, pp. 42-48.

¹⁴⁶ Boyd, *Tithes and parishes*, p. 52.

retically by the congregation of the faithful. They would then be consecrated by the bishop and “ordained”, i.e. appointed to that church¹⁴⁷.

Studies of the church in the central Middle Ages, in contrast, argue that many men in minor orders chose not to follow this career path. Ronald Witt, for example, states:

Many men in lower orders never had the intention of advancing to the subdeaconate or beyond. Many sought clerical status, rather, because it guaranteed exemption from secular authority and because it offered possibilities for earning at least a partial income from ecclesiastical service of some kind¹⁴⁸.

It is difficult to use the Monte Amiata charters to reconstruct clergy careers, because they tell us relatively little about the *pieval* structure of the region¹⁴⁹. Indeed there are very few references to the institutional affiliation of any of the ecclesiastical grades below the bishop¹⁵⁰. In contrast, charters from elsewhere in Italy sometimes show us men progressing through several ecclesiastical grades, including a few who are first shown as *clerici*¹⁵¹. The Monte Amiata charters do, however, include two references to the *cursus clericorum*, in the form of men who are described in them as intended to become priests. In the first case, from 780, two laymen called Gairo and Ildulus arranged for the entry of the acolyte Lupard to enter the monastery of Saint Quirico, which Gairo’s ancestors had founded. Lupard was to become a priest, and was expected eventually to take over as abbot of the monastery¹⁵².

We can also trace the career progression of Agiprand, who first appears in 806. In that charter Cunipert, from *Hoile* gives property to Agiprand, his illegitimate son, who is then a *clericus* and described as «predestined for the good honour of the priesthood (*ad bono honore presviteratus predistinitus*)»¹⁵³. It seems likely that Agiprand achieved this aim. A charter from 812 records a certain Ascolf as donating land to the church of St Stephen «sita in casale Oile», and founded by the priest Agiprand¹⁵⁴.

Yet other *clerici* in the charters, including those making their own donations and sales, are not shown as on their way to priesthood. Nor are there

¹⁴⁷ Violante, *Strutture organizzative*, pp. 1042-1044. On documents recording such elections, see also Stoffella, *Local priests*, pp. 109-111.

¹⁴⁸ Witt, *Two Latin cultures*, p. 5. Cf. Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 47.

¹⁴⁹ As Farinelli *et al.*, *Chiese e popolamento nella Tuscia*, pp. 301-303 indicate, there are relatively few mentions of *pievi* in San Salvatore’s charters.

¹⁵⁰ The only possible identification of a *clericus* with a specific church is in CDA 73, p. 145, where a witness is described as «Deudato clericus de sancto Martinum». However, since the previous witness is «Crisci de sancto Martinum» and the donors are «de bico sancto Martino de Colomate», this is more likely to be an indicator of place than specifically of affiliation.

¹⁵¹ Collavini, *Spazi politici*, p. 334; Costambeys, *Laity*, pp. 234-235; CDL 272, vol. II, p. 382-383.

¹⁵² CDA 30, pp. 56-59.

¹⁵³ CDA 57, p. 114.

¹⁵⁴ CDA 72, pp. 141-143. CDA 83 also refers in passing to land given by Ascolf to «Aggiprand presbiter».

clear indications that they were all the subordinates of priests, under whom they were training. For example, *clerici* sometimes act as the only religious witnesses to a charter, even in locations where priests would presumably be available¹⁵⁵. And as already mentioned, some of the *clerici* around Monte Amiata and elsewhere were of a relatively advanced age.

One possible reason for the existence of old *clerici* is that these were the failures: the men who did not manage to climb the career ladder of the *cursus clericorum* as far as the major orders. But the evidence does not support such a view. In 798, for example, the *clerici* Theudipert and Ingipert gave San Salvatore their *monasterium*, San Quirico¹⁵⁶. Men holding substantial ecclesiastical property of this kind would surely have been capable of gaining priestly office if they had wanted it, especially in a landscape in which a single church might have more than one priest¹⁵⁷.

Nor is there any wider indication that the men who remained *clerici* long-term, perhaps into old age, were of lower social status than those who became priests¹⁵⁸. I think we need to recognise that in the early Middle Ages as well as later, some men in Tuscany made a deliberate choice to remain as *clerici*, rather than rise higher in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

11. Clergy inheritance patterns

My research has examined a class of early medieval men who have very rarely been studied collectively: the minor clerics. Using the data so far collected on this group, it is clear that *clerici* were considerably more numerous and more significant in Tuscany (and possibly in Italy generally) than in many other areas of Carolingian empire. These men were not simply the priests-in-training mentioned in the Frankish episcopal capitularies and firmly subordinated to “their” priest. Instead, many of the Tuscan *clerici* were men of local standing, mature men with children of their own, property-holders, with spheres of action spread throughout the rural landscape of northern Italy.

¹⁵⁵ See e.g. CDA 15, enacted at Chiusi.

¹⁵⁶ CDA 47.

¹⁵⁷ Perhaps the bar to their priesthood was that Theudipert and Ingipert were illiterate (see above, text corresponding to note 98). However from the Lucca archives we see similar cases of *clerici* who own or jointly own religious institutions: see e.g. CDL 138, vol. 2, pp. 34-37, where the brothers Deusdedi (priest), Deusdona (*clericus*) and Filipert (*clericus*), along with Filipert's son Wilipert jointly found the church of San Pietro a Vico; CDL 165, vol. 2, pp. 115-117 where the *clericus* Causari gives property to his church of San Giorgio Montalto; CDL 246, vol. 2, pp. 320-322 where the *clericus* Homulo has donated the church of Sant'Angelo. See also Stoffella, *Per una categorizzazione*, pp. 336-337 on the church of Brancoli, founded by the *clericus* Gheifred, with his son, George, a priest, made rector.

¹⁵⁸ See e.g. CDA 107 (a priest whose father was a *clericus*), as well as the *clerici* described as *virii honesti* (see above, note 108). Stoffella, *Per una categorizzazione* discusses families near Lucca which contain both priests and *clerici*, including (p. 349) the *clericus* Gumfred, the great-grandnephew of the eighth-century bishop Peretheo and the uncle of the ninth-century bishop Peredo. Gumfred himself acted as an advocate and *scabinus ecclesiae*.

Julia Barrow has recently shown the existence of two main patterns of family structure for clergy in north-western Europe. One was a layman as the clergyman's father, with young clergy often assisted by uncles already in the clergy (the uncle/nephew paradigm). The other was a clergyman father bringing up his sons as future clergymen (the father/son paradigm)¹⁵⁹. Barrow shows the uncle-nephew paradigm as existing from the mid-fifth century on, and prevalent in much of Francia¹⁶⁰. There are very few examples of married priests and priests with sons known, even in charter collections where the relatives of rural clergy are frequently mentioned¹⁶¹.

In contrast, the father-son paradigm is most often visible in more peripheral areas of north-west Europe: the British Isles, Brittany and northern Neustria¹⁶². Barrow refers to more «leniency» about the marriage of priests in those areas, but does not discuss in detail the reason for the different paradigms¹⁶³. The fact that Northern Italian charters, not considered by Barrow, mention frequent examples of married clergy at various levels and father-son inheritance of office by clergy shows that this is not simply a matter of Christian teaching on priestly celibacy not being spread to some more distant regions.

Instead, the structure of personnel in rural churches may be key. The regions where the uncle-nephew succession pattern was prevalent (broadly the Carolingian empire north of the Alps) are also marked by the predominance of churches and parishes with only one priest¹⁶⁴. Early medieval social norms of partible inheritance often resulted in the sharing of churches as property between heirs¹⁶⁵, but if only one of the sons of a married priest could be his official successor in the office, this brought potential tensions between him and his brothers¹⁶⁶. As an alternative, a celibate priesthood combined with the nomination of a successor from among a clergyman's nephews may have been less likely to cause conflict within the immediate family¹⁶⁷. Bilateral kinship also meant that the supply of nephews was likely to be larger than that of sons, lessening the chance of there being no close heir¹⁶⁸.

¹⁵⁹ Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 117.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 117-119.

¹⁶¹ See e.g. *ibidem*, pp. 119, note 17 on Freising charters; Zeller, *Local priests*, p. 37 on St Gall.

¹⁶² Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 119.

¹⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 136. Stone, *Spiritual heirs and families* argues that for bishops and more senior clergy generally, uncle-nephew succession allowed more options for family advancement in an expanded Carolingian empire than father-son succession did.

¹⁶⁴ See above, text corresponding to note 40. Wood, *Proprietary church*, pp. 629-630 records eastern Frankish councils worrying about multiple priests being appointed to churches.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 37-64, 601-637.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 57-58; cf. Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 118 on the urge to limit heirs.

¹⁶⁷ This nomination may have been made at an early age: Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 122-124 shows nephews named after clerical uncles, suggesting their career had already been determined in their infancy.

¹⁶⁸ Wood, *Proprietary church*, pp. 56-57 discusses the case of the Lombard priest Adoald, whose son, the priest Fortes had died before him: one of the possible successors to Adoald was a nephew who was also a priest.

In contrast, regions of father-son succession to the priesthood were often marked by more collegial church structures, such as in Anglo-Saxon England and Brittany¹⁶⁹. The north Italian *pieve* similarly offered the possibility of long-term careers in the clergy for several brothers simultaneously. In this setting, the status of *clericus* offered a respectable permanent position within the church hierarchy, while still officially allowing marriage and procreation. This helped allow a particularly flexible version of inheritance of churches in Italy, combining aspects of both the father-son and uncle-nephew patterns. It would be interesting to use the larger north Italian collections to investigate how often priests had brothers who were themselves *clerici*, using such strategies to maintain control of churches long-term¹⁷⁰.

12. Conclusion: Tuscan clerics and the lay/clerical divide

The existence of a number of men in Tuscany choosing to remain permanently in minor orders may have helped strategies of inheritance, but they also led to further blurring of the clerical/lay divide in the region. As a number of researchers have pointed out, early medieval northern Italy was noticeable for its relatively high levels of lay literacy¹⁷¹. In particular, notaries played a far more important role in Italian documentary culture than elsewhere, and there was a gradual laicisation of the notarial profession under the Carolingians¹⁷². The higher levels of lay literacy meant that there was no clear clerical/lay divide in literacy in Italy, in contrast to the situation north of the Alps.

A further characteristic shared by both laymen and *clerici* in the Monte Amiata charters was their having legitimate children. It is hard to estimate, of course, exactly how many *clerici* were married. Although studies that argue for ecclesiastics as being married throughout the Carolingian period and beyond have relied heavily on Italian evidence, their analysis has not always distinguished sufficiently between the frequency at which different grades married¹⁷³. There certainly were married priests in northern Italy, but more clarity is needed about when and where specifically they are found.

The married *clericus* Arnipert who entered the monastery of San Salvatore in 789 shows the uncertain boundaries between the laity and the clergy.

¹⁶⁹ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 136-137.

¹⁷⁰ An example is the founders of San Pietro di Vico (see above, note 157).

¹⁷¹ See e.g. Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*.

¹⁷² Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 51-55: more than three-quarters of notaries in the Monte Amiata charters between 736-903 are laymen; the last non-lay notary visible (a *clericus*) was in 903. On laicisation of notaries, which was not a linear process, see Keller, *Der Gerichtsort*, especially pp. 9-23; Bougard, *Tempore barbarici?*, p. 346; Costambeys, *Laity*, pp. 234-236.

¹⁷³ One of the classic studies is Rossetti, *Il matrimonio del clero*. At p. 533 she refers to Lombard charters from before 773 as showing 9 married priests and 12 *clerici*, but gives no indication of the relative frequency with which the two groups are mentioned in the charters as a whole. On p. 535 she refers simply to 66 examples of marriages in the Lucca charters from 774-885, with no indication of the breakdown by grade.

Arnipert donated some of his property to the monastery; the remaining portion of his goods was to be divided between his sons. Arnipert did not sign his charter of donation and was thus probably illiterate¹⁷⁴. Yet it was not simply illiterate *clerici* who fell into such a grey zone: the evidence of capitularies and councils shows that such men were always problematic for those regulating church structures. The young *clerici* north and south of the Alps who were «predestined to be priests» may have been in a stage of the lifecycle transient enough to be ignored by those wanting to stress lay and clerical distinctions. But the existence in Italy of permanent *clerici*, mature men who might play a prominent role in their local communities, may have been potentially far more troubling for those who wanted sharp lines between clergy and laity.

The ambiguous position of *clerici* may have been compounded by changes within the church after the year 1000. The development of the papacy from the eleventh century into as a transnational, centralising authority has long been noted¹⁷⁵. More recently there has been an interest in the pan-European concept of the bishop as increasing homogeneity within the western church in the tenth and eleventh century¹⁷⁶. Conrad Leyser, in particular, has argued for the tenth-century professionalisation of the episcopacy and the increased development of their career paths, with bishops becoming more able to obtain translation between sees, sometimes over large distances¹⁷⁷.

We already know that arrangements for pastoral care and the organisation of priests varied across different regions of western Europe¹⁷⁸. If I am right about the differences between the *clerici* of Francia and Italy, this adds an important twist to the story. How did eleventh-century reformers, especially those moving across the Alps, such as Leo IX and Humbert of Silva Candida, react to regions with different expectations about *clerici* and thus, potentially, with different assumptions about the boundaries and significance of the lay/clerical divide¹⁷⁹? In order to understand this bigger picture, it may be worth our while to look more carefully at these most minor figures in the church hierarchy.

¹⁷⁴ Marrocchi, *Monaci scrittori*, pp. 65-66.

¹⁷⁵ See e.g. *Companion to the medieval papacy*; Cushing, *Reform and the papacy*; Tellenbach, *Church in Western Europe*.

¹⁷⁶ Reuter, *Europe of bishops*.

¹⁷⁷ Leyser, *Episcopal office*.

¹⁷⁸ See above, note 39.

¹⁷⁹ On Humbert, see West, *Competing for the Holy Spirit*.

Abbreviations

CDA = *Codex diplomaticus Amiatinus: Urkundenbuch der Abtei S. Salvatore am Montamiata: von den Anfängen bis zum Regierungsantritt Papst Innozenz III. (736-1198)*, ed. W. Kurze, M. Marrochi, Tübingen 1974-2004.

CDL = *Codice diplomatico longobardo*, ed. L. Schiaparelli, C. Brühl, T. Kölzer, Roma 1929-2003.

CHLA = *Chartae latinae antiquiores*, ed. A. Bruckner *et al.*, Dietikon 1954-.

MGH Capit. = *Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. A. Boretius, V. Krause, Hannover 1883-1897.

MGH Capit. Episc. = *Capitularia episcoporum*, ed. P. Brommer *et al.*, Hannover 1984-2005.

MGH Conc. = *Concilia aevi Karolini*, Hannover 1906-2012.

Settimane = Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.

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