

THE ARNULFINGS BEFORE 687

A Study of the House of Pepin in the Seventh Century

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A Thesis

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of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

Richard A. Gerberding

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## I. INTRODUCTION

When Pepin II defeated the royal Neustrian forces at Tertry on the Somme in 687, he established the de facto rule of what was to become the Carolingian dynasty. The sons of Clovis would wear the crown for sixty-four more years, but after Tertry the sons of Pepin would wield the power. This study will examine the Arnulfing faction in the century preceding that clash at Tertry in an attempt to draw from its social and economic position some of the reasons for its triumph.

The construction of an accurate image of the Arnulfings in the seventh century is a difficult task. The written sources which that century has left us are so scarce and were often written for such non-historical purposes that historians have frequently been forced to utilize unique methods in their attempts to uncover wie es eigentlich gewesen ist. Nonetheless, as a review of those sources and methods will show, the means do exist with which we can create that image.

We will examine both the identity of the Arnulfings and the nature of their landholdings in detail. This information forms the heart of our study, for it is only after this has been gathered as completely and as accurately as the sources will allow, that we can then proceed to consider the ways in which the Arnulfings' position and holdings sired their success.

## II. HISTORIANS, SOURCES, AND METHODS

One of the most productive paths which historiography concerned with the early Middle Ages has trod is the ever-increasing willingness of historians to include more and different types of sources as the bases for their analyses. As we shall see, the basis for viewing the period has widened from consideration of just chronicles and legal documents to even include such things as grave locations and land measurement. The more historians have broadened this basis, the more sound their perspective has become. However, even with the inclusion of many valuable new types of documentation, the interpretation of an important event, or even of an entire phase of economic or social development, can still hinge on the meaning of a single word in one source.

### Modern Scholars

Among all students of the period the paucity of written source material is a standard lament. With the scarcity of contemporary written substantiation, historical interpolation, deduction, and even conjecture have necessarily flourished. Hardly a point is raised which doesn't find a speedy and often convincing opponent striving to ensure its fall. Often both antagonist and protagonist come armed with the same con-

temporary documentation.<sup>1</sup> Consequently only the broadest of historiographical overviews will be attempted by way of introduction; the more specific positions of the various scholars and schools will be considered as the issues arise in the course of the study.

The Renaissance humanists and their reason-deifying Enlightenment progeny struck up such a blinding love affair with the ancients that what they saw in the early Middle Ages were bands of barbarians living amongst the ruins of an ideal civilization they had recently overrun and wantonly destroyed. They were not at all interested in the contemporary medieval sources, seeing them as hopelessly barbaric and vulgar, but rather they viewed our period from the vantage point of the age which had preceded it. This dismal view of "the age between" lasted until the first part of the nineteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> A famous example: Sir Samuel Dill, among others, has held up the fact that the Lex Salica makes no mention of a Frankish nobility as evidence that a noble caste did not exist in the early sixth century. (Sir Samuel Dill, Roman Society in Gaul in the Merovingian Age, London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1926, p. 53). On the other hand, Karl Bosl points out that the nobility's absence in the royal law indicates the opposite. Not only did a noble caste exist, but it was powerful enough in its own right to exist without need of protection of the royal law. (Karl Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung 500 - 900", in: Hermann Aubin and Wolfgang Zorn, Handbuch der deutschen Wirtschafts - und Sozialgeschichte, Bd. I, Stuttgart: Union Verlag, 1971, p. 155.)

where, in the wake of Herder and Hegel, our once sword-swinging barbarian was now seen as the incorporation of noble qualities, primeval freedoms, and national character and destiny. It seemed that Rome had not been conquered from without by ruthless barbarians; its oppressive degeneracy had rotted it from within. One ideal type had merely replaced another.

Soon, however, von Ranke's hard-nosed requirements for sound historiography found an echo among the historians concerned with our period, and it is in the last century that a fruitful study of the seventh century really begins. The great German historians of the nineteenth century and the earlier editors of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica took a decidedly legalistic approach.<sup>2</sup> They were convinced that a constitutional approach was the method for sober historical understanding, and the very titles of their works broadcast their convictions.<sup>3</sup> Their notes abound in references to the barbarian laws and the various royal capitularies and

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<sup>2</sup> George Waitz, Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1880; Heinrich Brunner, Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte, Leipzig, 1906; and the MGH editors G. H. Pertz, D.L.C. Bethmann, G. Wattenbach, and again Waitz.

<sup>3</sup> Although entitled "Rechtsgeschichte", "Verfassungsgeschichte" "Diplomata" and so forth, these are monumental works giving an insightful general history of the period. Their titles have a somewhat unfortunate translation in English.

privileges. This, of course, yielded a far more "civilized" view of the barbarian "successor states" than had the late Roman sources which either cowered in front of a seemingly unimpedible mass of destroying barbarians, or which bewailed the godlessness of imperial ways. Their legal approach, however, assumed a modern picture of the state and often, therefore, yielded a correspondingly distorted view of Merovingian society.

Voices were heard in disagreement - first the Frenchman, Fustel de Coulanges, and then the Englishman, Sir Samuel Dill.<sup>4</sup> They, along with the great scholar Bruno Krusch, editor of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica's series on the Rerum Merovingicarum, took a more sociological look at the narrative and legal sources. They saw a society comprised not so much of constant feuds and composition formulas, but rather one of established agricultural communities with recognized political authority structures. Roman Gaul and Merovingian Gaul seemed to be drawing a bit closer together.

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<sup>4</sup> Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France, Paris: Librairie Hachette & Cie, 1912, and Sir Samuel Dill, Roman Society, 1926.



2.

Thanks to Krusch's<sup>5</sup> incomparable editorial achievement with the Merovingian saints' lives in the Rerum Merovingicarum series of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica the vita became more widely accepted as a credible contemporary source. Historians indeed had developed a concrete methodology with which they could squeeze valuable historical nectar from what might easily appear to be useless hagiographical pulp.<sup>6</sup> Men like Heinrich Bonnell and Englebert Muehlbacher had also widened the base by their skillful use of donation documents, charters, and deeds from whatever authority.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ". . . Bruno Krusch, the greatest Merovingian scholar who has ever lived..." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1960, p. lxii).

<sup>6</sup> A case in point, about which we will have much more to say later, is the valuable Vita Sanctae Geretrudis (MGH, SSRM II pp. 447-474). Here editor Krusch, confessing his delight in being able to edit "Pretiosum hoc historiae domus Carolingicae monumentum. . ." (p. 447) stands in direct opposition to Heinrich Bonnell, (Die Anfaenge des Karolingischen Hauses, Berlin: Verlag von Dunker und Humbolt, 1866, pp. 68 and 151ff). who considers it an unreliable creation of the eleventh century. Krusch goes on to use the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis brilliantly as part of his defense for contending that Grimoald I couldn't have been killed by Clovis II ("Der Staatsstreich des fraenkischen Hausmeiers Grimoald I." in: Festgabe fuer Karl Zeumer, Weimar: Hermann Boehlaus Nachfolger, 1910, p. 434 et passim).

<sup>7</sup> Heinrich Bonnell's Die Anfaenge des Karolingischen Hauses, published in 1866, has had an immense impact on historians; one finds authors acknowledging their debt to it even in the 1950's. The author himself, however, is virtually unknown for any other study. Englebert Muehlbacher's Deutsche Geschichte unter den Karolinger, Stuttgart: Verlag der J. G. Cotta'schen Nachfolger, 1896 is the work that picked up and

The real quantum jump in expanding our understanding, however, came from the economic historians, the great Belgian scholar, Henri Pirenne, and his Austrian counterpart, Alfons Dopsch. These men and their followers began to draw on all sorts of heretofore widely neglected sources. They evaluated tax rolls, estimated agricultural production capabilities, compiled land usage statistics, evaluated the use of different building materials, and examined the types and diffusion of coinage. Pirenne especially, analyzed trade routes and the dispersion and effect of the goods traded.<sup>8</sup> Their picture of early medieval society as a continuum flowing directly from its Roman predecessor without any cataclysmic disruption by hordes of barbarians has been taken to task

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<sup>7</sup> (cont'd) popularized Bonnell's efforts. Muehlbacher is, of course, known for much more. He is truly one of the great historians of late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

<sup>8</sup> From the innumerable works by both scholars, we mention only the one most general and most basic: Henri Pirenne, Mohammed and Charlemagne, New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1939, and Alfons Dopsch, The Economic and Social Foundations of European Civilization, London: Kegan Paul, 1937. Neither man's work sprang ex nihilo, and each acknowledges his debt to earlier economic historians, such as Karl Lamprecht (Deutsches Wirtschaftsleben im Mittelalter. . . , Leipzig, 1885/6) and Karl Theodor von Inama-Sternegg (Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Leipzig, 1909 . . . librum non vidi).

and greatly modified in many of its aspects by later scholars.<sup>9</sup> The French school especially tends to see a Roman type of stability returning to Europe at about the time of Charlemagne,<sup>10</sup> whereas on the other side of the Rhine it is still Dopsch and his followers who hold the historiographical field.

The American scholar James Westfall Thompson made use of a very simple tool - the map - with startling results.<sup>11</sup> By plotting the position of the pieces of the immense royal fisc it became obvious that the internecine wars of the later Carolingian rulers and their territorial divisions had a very tangible economic basis, the need to

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<sup>9</sup> Among countless modern scholars who have questioned various aspects of Pirenne's thesis, one who treats an aspect of concern to this study is the Englishman, J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (The Long-Haired Kings, London: Methuen, 1962, p. 227) who criticizes Pirenne's assertions that Dagobert I's wealth was based on trade. A good example of the type of criticism levied against Dopsch is Klaus Verhein's contention that the royal fisc was primarily in the form of many scattered holdings rather than in single large pieces as Dopsch had suggested (Klaus Verhein, "Studien zu den Quellen zum Reichsgut der Karolingerzeit" no.s I and II in: Deutsches Archiv fuer Geschichte des Mittelalters, X (1955) and XI (1956).

<sup>10</sup> For the most famous examples among many see Marc Bloch, Feudal Society, (L. A. Manyon, translator) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961; and E. H. Carr, Feudalism and Capitalism, (L. A. Manyon, translator) New York: Harper, 1964.

<sup>11</sup> James Westfall Thompson, The Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1935.

control fisc lands. Various aspects of his work, too, have found willing and convincing critics,<sup>12</sup> but modern historians owe an immense debt to his simple revelation which seems so embarrassingly obvious in hindsight.<sup>13</sup>

Based on the work of these great men<sup>14</sup> the past few decades have witnessed an explosion in our knowledge of the early middle ages. From the example of Herman Aubin<sup>15</sup> and others, historians began to accept more and more information

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<sup>12</sup> Two of his most vehement critics are the Germans G. Tellenbach and A. Bergengruen. (Gerd Tellenbach, Koenigtum und Staemme in der Werdezeit des deutschen Reiches, Weimar: H. Boehlaus Nachfolger, 1939, and A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft im Merowingerreich, Wiesbaden, 1958.) Tellenbach (p. 5-6) attacks Thompson's basic assumption and contends that the Carolingian divisions were for tribal and not fiscal reasons, whereas Bergengruen questions the validity of some of Thompson's geographical assumptions (p. 87).

<sup>13</sup> Thompson's fiscal contention has by now become a historical postulate. One finds its echo in passages far too numerous to mention. See Wallace-Hadrill, op. cit., p. 13 and 18f for valuable interpretative amplifications and Heinz Zatschek, Wie das erste Reich der Deutschen entstand. Staatsfuehrung, Reichsgut, und Ortsiedlung im Zeitalter der Karolinger, Prague, 1940, p. 26, for a marvellous "Thompsonesque" explanation of the importance of the Lorraine after 800 and the light that it sheds on the reasons why the Ottonians could succeed in Germany. Zatschek also sees the Merovingian wars of the sixth century as motivated by the need to control fiscal holdings. This analysis smacks of the influence of Dopsch who saw most things normally attributed to the Carolingian era as really developing during Merovingian times, and, of course, of Thompson's insight into the importance of the Carolingian fisc to politics. Zatschek, however, credits neither scholar. (pp. 12-14 and 24f).

from other disciplines. Archeology, genealogical research, numismatics, geography, art history, philology, onomastics, and epigraphy all began to make more than mere cameo appearances in the footnotes of the more recent works.

### The Sources.

Trying to imagine what actually went on in the period between the political fall of Rome and the year 700, it seems to us, is much like trying to imagine what might go on in a tunnel. Through use of late Roman sources historians have a rather clear picture of society as it entered the period and through various documents of the Carolingian era, they can again see it more or less clearly as it emerged from the other side. From knowing (or assuming to know) what it looked like upon entering and upon exiting, historians interpolate an image of what it was like while inside. This method makes the

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<sup>14</sup> "And two women", we hastily add - J. W. Thompson's capable assistant, Helen Robbins Bitterman ("The Influence of Irish Monks on Merovingian Diocesan Organization", in: The American Historical Review, XL (Jan. 1935) (pp. 232-245), and Helene Wieruszowski, (from among many publications on both sides of the Atlantic, "Reichsbesitz und Reichsrechte im Rheinland 500-1300" in: Bonner Jahrbuecher 131 (1926), pp. 114-153).

<sup>15</sup> Herman Aubin, "Die Herkunft der Karolinger", in Karl der Grosse oder Charlemagne?, Berlin: E. S. Mittler & Son, 1935, pp. 41-49.

student of a more visible era shudder, but for the study of the sixth and seventh centuries, we must frequently accept it, for there is often no choice. Ideas of the Merovingian conceptions of kingship, economic organization, tax structure, position of the nobility, and land-holding systems are often heavily dependent on information gained from analyzing the works of Caesar and Tacitus on the one hand, and the capitularia of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious on the other. Fortunately there are some breaks in the tunnel wall; we do have some contemporary sources which allow light to fall on the events of the period. But even in these cases virtually all of the manuscripts with Merovingian content stem from a later age, and a good deal of that content itself has been "corrected" by both well-meaning and self-serving later copyists. Thus with the exception of a few major contemporary works, in most of the Merovingian sources the "corrected" must be separated from the "uncorrected" content. This is in itself a task which not only requires a critical historical facility, but also a carefully honed philological ability, and is a task which, as might be expected, gives rise to many a learned skirmish among the experts.

Gregory of Tours is the only real historian of which Merovingian Gaul can boast. His work alone expands beyond mere chronicles or annals. Born about 540 of a Gallo-Roman senatorial family which had produced all but five of the previous bishops of Tours,<sup>17</sup> Gregory, too, followed the family calling and was consecrated in 573 to the see at Tours by Egidius, Bishop of Reims. He began the Historia Francorum about 576. Although by no means ignorant of things Roman,<sup>18</sup> the work is designed to instruct and to enlighten the reader in good Christian fashion. Augustinian rather than classical in nature; it begins with a profession of the bishop's Catholic faith, and thus on the very first page we come across one of Gregory's most noted biases - he is decidedly anti-Arian and therefore anti-Goth. Not only his own personal conviction but also his position as holder of a major

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<sup>16</sup> Bruno Krusch's edited text in the MGH, SSRM has become the definitive rendering for modern scholarship. O. M. Dalton has published a valuable English translation (O.M. Dalton, The History of the Franks by Gregory of Tours, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1927, Vol. I "Introduction", Vol. II "Text".) Dalton's introduction is a fine piece of scholarship and the reader can gain a good impression of Gregory's Gaul from it. He, however, now and again swallows some of Gregory's own biases - e.g. "Though it is often true that by mixing with the Gallo-Romans they the Franks learned corruption. . ." (Vol. I, p. 29).

<sup>17</sup> O. M. Dalton, Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 4.

Merovingian see makes him understandably opposed to any development or person whom he would consider injurious to the position of the Merovingian Church. He views the monarchy as the Church's chief benefactor and preserver of that peace which is necessary in order that the Church may prosper and the Gospel spread. This makes Gregory unsympathetic to the nobility whom he considers the disturbers of peace and the despoilers of Church property.<sup>19</sup> Kings are the heroes, and the local counts the antagonists; and the greatest hero of all is Clovis. However much historians may wish otherwise, our picture of Clovis is Gregory's picture of him. The fact that Clovis is so important to our picture of Merovingian kingship is due to the fact that Gregory chose to write about him. It was Clovis who brought Catholicism to the Franks, and it was his lineage which was there to protect it.<sup>20</sup>

Gregory is overly embarrassed about what he considers to be the poor state of his erudition and facility as a

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<sup>18</sup> One notes, for instance, his quotations from the Aeneid in: (book and chapter) II-29, IV-30, and IV-46 of the Historia.

<sup>19</sup> Again Dalton takes Gregory at his word: "The aristocracy in all the Merovingian kingdoms was turbulent and self-seeking, intent on the indulgence of its exorbitant desires." (O.M. Dalton, Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 16.)

<sup>20</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 163f.



latinist. Neither this fact nor the manuscript tradition of his works will concern us here. We are not interested in the beauty of his creation but in its clarity. Neither his latinity nor the whims of the various copyists have dimmed our focus on Gregory's content.

The Historia displays a structure standard for its era. Like Orosius, Jerome, and Prosper Trio before him, he begins his history with the creation of the world. Book I takes us from creation to the year 397. Books II to IV cover early Frankish history from 397 to 575 and may have been finished in that year. Books V to X treat the years 575 to 591 in detail and were probably completed in 594, the year of Gregory's death.

Much as we may fault Gregory for his churchly biases, and much as we may impute motives to his heroes which he would not accept, his Historia Francorum is our principal and our most believable contemporary source for an understanding of Gaul in the sixth century. Scholars have been able to find very few factual errors in his treatment of those things which he knew best. Without Gregory of Tours, the dark ages would seem much darker to us.

The chronicler of the early middle ages felt himself to be more of a compiler than an author and creator. He usually began his work with the creation of the world and then progressed by extracting sections from the works of Jerome, Eusebius, Orosius, Isidore of Seville and from the Liber Generationis until he had reached the period for which he intended to create his own reconstruction of events. Even here he would rely on other chronicles of local or national scope and extract large sections, sometimes verbatim, from these as well. Chronicles were usually anonymous since personal authorship was deemed to be of little importance. The Chronicle of Fredegar fits the pattern.

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21 A scholarly edition of the Fredegar Chronicle is easily accessible in two places. The first is Bruno Krusch's edition in the MGH, SSRM II, pp. 1 to 193. The rendition is typical of Krusch's mastery and results from a careful collation and analysis of all extant manuscripts. The MGH edition reproduces all four books of the Chronicle plus the work of its continuators. The second notable edition of Fredegar is contained in a monograph by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar with its Continuations, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1960. As the title implies, the book omits the first three books of the Chronicle and concentrates on the historically more valuable fourth book and the continuations. Although Wallace-Hadrill acknowledges his debt to Krusch, the Englishman's version is not a mere copy of the German's. He has also examined and collated the manuscripts and the result diverges from the MGH in several places. Wallace-Hadrill produces the Latin text on the verso and a valuable English translation on the recto  
(cont'd)

He charts the plan of his work for us in the prologue to the fourth book. He tells us that he will extract events concerning the period from the beginning of the world until the last years of the reign of King Guntramn (King of Burgundy 561-592) from five previous chronicles.<sup>22</sup> Then he will add a sixth chronicle of his own creation continuing from where he believed Gregory of Tours had left off. Since Fredegar only had the first six books of Gregory's Historia available to him, he created his own chronicle from where Gregory ended his book VI, i.e., with the death of Chilperic (King of Soissons 561-584). Some early copyist changed the organization of Fredegar's work from one of six chronicles

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21 (cont'd) This translation is the sine qua non for an understanding of Fredegar for anyone not thoroughly versed in the chronicler's "wild latin", as Krusch calls the Merovingian language ("Staatsstreich", p. 428).

22 "Itaque beati Hieronimi, Ydacii et cuiusdam sapientis [this "wise man" is supposed by most scholars to be Hippolytus of Rome to whom is attributed the so-called Liber Generationis (Wattenbach-Levison, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter, Weimar: Hermann Boehlaus Nachfolger 1952, p., 53.) However Krusch takes it to mean a previous compiler of the Fredegar Chronicle itself. (MGH, SSRM II, p. 7). "seo hysidori immoque et gregorii chronicis a munde originem dilientissime percurrens, usque decedentem regnum Gunthramni . . ." (Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. IV).

into one divided into four books; thus the fourth book of Fredegar in the manuscripts we now have equals his original sixth chronicle.<sup>23</sup> It is this fourth book and the continuations of the Chronicle which are of most concern to scholars.

Historians are by no means agreed on the authorship of Fredegar's Chronicle. In fact, the name Fredegar is first found in a marginal notation of a sixteenth century manuscript from St. Omer.<sup>24</sup> It is not found in any of the earlier extant manuscripts, nor has any explanation for its appearance ever been found. The name Fredegar is indeed a Frankish name, albeit a rather uncommon one for the seventh century, and thus the scholars have left it attached to the chronicle largely for the sake of convenience. The traditional view of the chronicle's authorship was that it was the work of one man who constructed it covering the events up to the year 658 plus the work of three "continuator" who extended the chronicle up to the year 768. Their work is listed as the "Continuationes" and is divided into 54 additional chapters. Another view, however,

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<sup>23</sup> W. A. Goffart, "The Fredegar Problem Reconsidered" in: Speculum XXXVIII (1963), p. 206.

<sup>24</sup> Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, p. 109 and Krusch, MGH, SSRM II, p. 1, note 1.

would make of the work of the basic Fredegar the production of two or three men, each working at different times and building on the work of his predecessor(s). For the purposes of our study it is not important that we concern ourselves with the various arguments of this scholarly battle. It will suffice to bear in mind the following simple five-part division when evaluating information gleaned from the Fredegar chronicle: - <sup>25</sup>

1). Book IV, chapters 1 to 23 or 24 (584 to 603). The chronicle here is largely a transcription of local Burgundian annals with the information becoming more complete as it progresses. It is written from a decidedly Burgundian perspective.

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<sup>25</sup> See Goffart's article (op. cit.) and Wallace-Hadrill's introductory remarks (Fredegar, p. XVI) for excellent historiographical summaries of the Fredegar authorship controversy. The disagreement has involved the most renowned of Merovingian scholars. On the one hand Bruno Krusch, S. Hellmann, W. Levison, and Wallace-Hadrill have argued for multiple authorship, while on the other side Ferdinand Lot, Marcel Baudot, and Leon Levillain have fought for the unity of Fredegar's personage. The Canadian Professor Gottart has had the last opinion, although not necessarily the last word: "Fredegar's chronicle . . . was compiled by a single man; and it should be taken to bear the authority of an author writing only in the vicinity of 658, at a considerable distance from the events he described." (W. A. Goffart, op. cit.).

2). Book IV, chapters 23 or 24 to 90 (603 to 642). In this section the information is much more complete. The account is alive with detail - especially for the reign of King Dagobert I (623-638). The reader gains the distinct impression that the author was most probably closely involved with, or had immediate access to, detailed information concerning the important events of the period. This section too is written from a Burgundian perspective even though the author is very favorably disposed toward both the Arnulfings and the Merovingian kings Clothar II and Dagobert I.<sup>26</sup>

3). Continuationes, chapters 1 to 17 (642 to 736). This is the work of the first continuator. For the period up to 727 (up to chapter 10) his work is simply an Austrasian revision of the Liber Historiae Francorum. As he carries the chronicle forward to the year 736 (chapters 11 to 17), his blatant pro-Austrasian bias comes more and more to the surface.

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<sup>26</sup> For this and for certain linguistic reasons, Krusch can see a third author of the basic chronicle, or at least a revisor, who is Austrasian: ". . . ein treuer Anhaenger des Pippinschen Hauses . . ." ("Staatsstreich", p. 417) and: "Itaque hanc Austrasiorum historiam ab homine quodam Austrasio conscriptam hisce Burgundionum chronicis insertam esse . . ." (MGH, SSRM II, p. 2). Krusch believes this Austrasian revisor to have written about the year 658 ("Staatsstreich", p. 417). Wallace-Hadrill takes the opposite view: "Neither chronology nor subject-matter suggests an Austrasian chronicler nor is the case much stronger for an Austrasian revisor of the chronicle." (Fredegar, p. XLIII).

4). Continuaciones, chapters 18 to 33 (736-751). With this, the work of the second continuator, the chronicle becomes an out and out Carolingian family history. The author was the hireling of the Austrasian Count, Childebrant, Charles Martel's half-brother. In addition to carrying the chronicle forward to the year 751, this continuer also adds to and revises certain passages in all the previous sections.<sup>27</sup>

5). Continuaciones, chapters 43-54 (751-768). This is the work of the third continuator who, like the second, was also in the pay of the Arnulfing family. His patron was Count Nibelung, Count Childebrant's son. By this point the style and the point of view have become drastically different from that of the original Fredegar.

Admittedly these observations contain an oversimplification of many knotty textual problems. If there were more than one Fredegar his various incarnations are not easily separated one from another. They would, of course, not be so kind as to revise and insert complete chapters in one another's work, but rather would work with a passage here and a passage there, making the above divisions at best a very rough approximation. The identity of the continuators is somewhat clearer, but even these are difficult to tell apart.

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<sup>27</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. XXVI.

Regardless of whether the whole Fredegar chronicle was the work of many men, or the work of a few men relying on many sources, our intention here is to underline the fact that as the chronicle progresses it carries an increasing Carolingian bias until in the Continuaciones it is a purely family production. Since the second section of book IV (chapters 23 or 24 to 90) is our most important narrative source for the first half of the seventh century, a period so vital to the development of the Arnulfing family, it will be important to remember the viewpoint of this Burgundian (Austrasian?) chronicler as we evaluate the information he gives us. Indeed just as Gregory of Tours is our key to understanding the sixth century, this interwoven string of chronicles known to us as Fredegar serves us in the same function for the first half of the seventh. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Again there is no need for us to evaluate the conclusions of competent scholars concerning either the linguistic difficulties or the manuscript tradition of Fredegar's Chronicle. In both cases they are considerably more complicated than those of Gregory. Wallace-Hadrill provides an excellent "How To" summary for those interested in tackling Fredegar's Latin. He speaks of the assimilation of one declension by another, the confusion of genders, the variations in endings and constructions such as "accusative absolute". (Fredegar, p. XXXII ff). He adds the following cheery note of encouragement: ". . . Fredegar knows that his Latin is bad; but I doubt if he knew that what he wrote was by traditional standards scarcely Latin at all" (Ibid, p. IX). We know of Fredegar only through a manuscript made over a generation later than the completion of the chronicle by a copyist named "Lucerius", perhaps at Chalon-sur-Saone, Lyons, or Luxeuil.



Liber Historiæ Francorum 29

The third, and last, major contemporary Merovingian history is known as the Liber Historiæ Francorum. To the previously discussed chronicle, scholars had at least tacked the name Frédegar to provide some sort of identity for its author. The name of the writer of the Liber Historiæ Francorum, however, is so totally unknown that the best Krusch could dub him was "Anonymus". 30

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28 (cont'd) Late in the 700's a copy came to Metz and it was from here, in Austrasia, and not from a Burgundian base that the chronicle proliferated (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Long-Haired Kings, p. 72.)

29 It is Bruno Krusch who has once more provided the definitive recension on which almost all scholarly comment concerning the Liber Historiæ Francorum is based. A useful English translation has been published by Professor Bachrach (Bernard S. Bachrach, (editor and translator), Liber Historiæ Francorum, Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1973). Professor Bachrach's book, however, cannot be considered an edition on the same scholarly level as O.M. Dalton's edition of Gregory or J. M. Wallace-Hadrill's edition of Fredegar. This may be because Professor Bachrach has seemingly intended his book for use by beginning students. He has merely translated Krusch's MGH text, apparently making no attempt to independently substantiate Krusch's textual conclusions. His introduction also is written largely without crediting the scholars on whose original work he is so heavily dependent and makes no mention of those sections of the Liber which are not to be trusted (e.g. chapter 43) or sections where different readings of the Latin render differing historically significant interpretations (chapter 48). A scholarly recension and translation of the Liber Historiæ Francorum in the Dalton/Wallace-Hadrill sense, it seems to us, is a real desideratum.

30 MGH, SSRM II, p. 215.

"Certe homo Neustrasius erat, id quod inter omnes constat", Krusch declares, but as with other characteristics of our author, he steps carefully when proceeding to designate more closely Anonymus's place of residence.<sup>31</sup> Most would make him a native of Paris because he is especially familiar with the events which occurred there.<sup>32</sup> Even so, one of Krusch's cautions must be taken to heart: "Certe scriptor V. S. Lantberti abbatis Fontanellensis prope Rotomagum siti necem Childerici regis atque Bilhildis filiisque Dagoberti multo fusius accuratiusque quam Historiae auctor narravit. Unde probatur etiam extra Lutetiam res a regibus Neustrasiis gestas conscribi potuisse."<sup>33</sup> For geographical reasons and because Anonymus shows an otherwise inexplicable disproportionate respect for Eudonius, Bishop of Rouen, Krusch's introduction cautiously allows us to believe that the Liber Historiae Francorum was written in that city or its environs.<sup>34</sup> Later, however, he changes his mind and places

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31 Ibid.

32 Bachrach, op. cit., p. 11, and Wattenbach, Geschichtsquellen, p. 114.

33 MGH, SSRM II, pp. 215-216.

34 ". . . contendo, libellum Rotomagi vel potius in dioecesi Rotomagensi scriptum esse." (Ibid. p. 216). Bachrach says it was at S. Denis in Paris (Op. Cit., p. 16).

our author in St. Denis.<sup>35</sup> The important point for our study is, however, not so much the work's geographical point of origin but its geographical point of view - ". . . res gestas omnino ex conspectu Neustrasio narravit. . .".<sup>36</sup> Just as the latter parts of basic Fredegar and his continuators show a decided Austrasian bias, Anonymus plants his perspective firmly in the Neustrian camp. The word "Franci" throughout the work means the Neustrians, and does not include the Austrasians who have equal claim to Frankish lineage. Although he borrows heavily from Gregory of Tours, his pictures of those two sixth century matriarchs, Brunhild and Fredegunde, are almost the reverse of Gregory's. The Neustrian Queen, Fredegunde, is Gregory's villainess, but Anonymus treats her much more sympathetically. He cannot avoid mentioning her scandalous exploits, but his use of language is an obvious attempt to soften them somewhat.<sup>37</sup> The old queen is also given a decent end and dignified burial.<sup>38</sup> His

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>36</sup> Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, pp. 114-115.

<sup>37</sup> "Erat autem Fredegundis regina pulchra et ingeniosa nimis atque adultera." (Liber Historiae Francorum, chapter 35, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 302).

<sup>38</sup> "Eo enim tempore mortua est Fredegundis regina senex et plena dierum, Parisius in basilica sancti Vincenti martyris sepulta." (Ibid., p. 306).

knowledge of things non-Neustrian is far less detailed than his command over the events and the conditions in the western sector of Francia. His account is especially detailed and valuable for the years of Theuderic III's reign (673-690/91) after which there is a marked decline in the precision of his knowledge. He is the exclusive source for certain details concerning Theuderic's family, and he is well informed concerning the royal villas. It is he who describes Warratto's character for us (Mayor in Neustria 681-686)<sup>39</sup> and he who relates what happened to Duke Martin after the Austrian's defeat at the battle of Lucofao (679).<sup>40</sup> Because the period for which Anonymus is our recording expert is so crucial to the career of Pepin II and Arnulfing fortunes, we shall have many occasions to refer to this author's work. His Latinity is not bad, considering the general state of literary production in the early eighth century.<sup>41</sup> This makes

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<sup>39</sup> Liber Historiae Francorum, Chapter 47, in: Ibid, p. 321.

<sup>40</sup> This story of trickery with the empty relics box is only known from the Liber Historiae Francorum: "Veniens Ebroin, Mayor in Neustria (658-673 and 678-681) cum exercitu Erchreco villa, ad Martinum dirigit nuncios, ut, data sacramenta, cum fiducia ad regem Theudericum veniret. Hoc dolose ac fallaciter super vacuas capsas ei iurantes, ille vero credens eos, Erchreco veniens, ibi cum sociis suis interfectus est." (Liber Historiae Francorum, chapter 46, in: Ibid, p. 320)

<sup>41</sup> Bachrach points out, for example, his correct use of eius and eorum instead of the incorrect application of suus which was otherwise pervasive in Merovingian writing (op. cit., p. 15)

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it a rather safe deduction that he was a well-educated man. Although Anonymus does not mention his own name, he is kind enough to tell us exactly when he wrote: ". . . qui Theuderic IV nunc anno sexto in regno subsistit." <sup>42</sup> Since Theuderic took the throne in 721, Anonymus wrote in 727. <sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> (cont'd) Krusch comments: "Sermo Fredegariano aliquanto melior est, quamquam persaepe casus quartus et sextus permutati sunt, nonnumquam participium pro verbo finito, verbum activum pro passivo accipiuntur, neque vocabula barbara desunt . . ." (op. cit., p. 218)

<sup>42</sup> These are his closing words. (Liber Historiae Francorum, chapter 53, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 328.)

<sup>43</sup> Krusch, Ibid, p. 217. Professor Bachrach has constructed a rough biography of our author using some ingenious historical deduction (op. cit., p. 16). Since we know that Anonymus a) had an intimate knowledge of the affairs of the monastery of St. Vincent, of royal politics for the years 673-690, and of the holdings of St. Denis; b) exhibits a rather good facility with Latin for his times; c) has a decidedly good opinion of Childebert III (Neustra 694-711), a king about whom very little is said elsewhere in the sources, and d) that his knowledge of royal affairs evidences a marked decline after 690, Professor Bachrach concludes that Anonymus was educated at St. Vincent and became a part of Theuderic III's court. Because of his erudition he was made tutor for the young Prince Childebert III - this explains his affection for Childebert. He retired from politics in 690 at the death of Theudebert to St. Denis where he wrote the Liber Historiae Francorum in 727. His purpose in writing was to encourage Neustrasian patriotism at a time when all of Francia was under the domination of the Austrasian mayor, Charles Martel. The construction seems plausible enough; we would add, however, that if Anonymus joined Theuderic's court in 673 at the age of 18 or 20, he would be a venerable 72 or 74 at the time of his writing in 727.

He used many sources, some reliable, some not so. He, like Fredegar before him, had the first six books of Gregory of Tours, and that which he takes from Gregory is, of course, as reliable as the Bishop of Tours himself. He also used Isidore of Seville's Etymologies, Marius of Avenches' Chronicle, the shorter prologue to the Lex Salica, and some sources no longer extant. Except for the period mentioned above where he was relying on his own experience, poor Anonymus is only as good as his sources and consequently the Liber Historiae Francorum is in places notoriously inaccurate.<sup>44</sup>

Annales Mettenses<sup>45</sup>

Like so many medieval written works and their various codices, the Annals of Metz have an unfortunate name. Until 1895 when Karl Hempe discovered an earlier manuscript at Durham - the version now called the Annales Mettenses Priores - these annals were only known to us through various later

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<sup>44</sup> This is the case with Anonymus' version of the events in the Arnulfing Grimoald I's attempt to usurp the Austrasian throne (Liber Historiae Francorum, chapter 43).

<sup>45</sup> The accepted text for the earlier version, the Annales Mettenses Priores, is edited by B. V. Simpson in: MGH, SSRG. The later version, the Annales Mettenses Posteriores, is edited by G. Pertz in MGH, SS I, p. 314-336.

manuscripts, the earliest of which stemmed from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This later tradition is now called the Annales Mettenses Posteriores. Since they were believed to have originated in the Monastery of St. Arnuf in Metz, the annals were dubbed "Mettenses". The Durham manuscript, however, is based on an edition of the Annales written in 805 (except for a later addition which is extracted verbatim from the Annales Regni Francorum and extends the coverage to the year 803). Because these annals evidence such good information about the Neustrian court and the various areas where St. Denis had holdings plus revealing the author's interest in Brittany and Maine, the most widely held opinion today is that they were not written in Metz but in St. Denis. The old name, however, seems to be a permanent appendage to the work.<sup>46</sup> What is today recognized as a very valuable source didn't fare so well in reputation until scholars had evaluated the annals in their "priores" form.<sup>47</sup> One major

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<sup>46</sup> Irene Haselbach, "Aufstieg und Herrschaft der Karolinger in der Darstellung der sogenannten Annalen Mettenses priores", in: Historische Studien 406 (1970), p. 12 et passim.

<sup>47</sup> Heinrich Bonnell (Anfaenge, p. 157 ff.) assumed that they were written in the late tenth century by an author very predisposed to the Carolingian house, and he warned against using them without a great deal of care: "Das Leben und die Thaten des mittleren Pippin, des eigentlichen ersten Karolingers sind durch die Phantasien des Vergassers der Annalen von Metz in einer Weise entstellt worden, welche es bis jetzt noch nicht gelingen lassen, den echten Kern aus der ihn

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problem with the credibility of these annals is that they, like the continuators of Fredegar, sing a lovesong of the Carolingians, obviously coloring the picture of the actual res gestae. Their coverage of Pepin II (687-714) and Charles Martel (614-641) is a mixture of data and emendata, whereas they are a quite credible source for the period of Pepin III (741-768).<sup>48</sup>

Our author begins in good ninth century hagiographical form by depicting Pepin II as a youngster destined by God to rise to leadership. The young hero first rightly avenges the murder of his father, Ansegisel, who was killed by the nobleman, Gundowin. Pepin is elected by the Franks as their "princeps". He is aided in his many weighty decisions by

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<sup>47</sup> (cont'd) umgebendenen Huelse herauszuschaelen." (Ibid, p. 118). His attitude was picked up by Muehlbacher (Engelbert Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 32) and as with most opinions of this eminent scholar, the hesitation was carried far forward into the historiography. Scholars of the mid-twentieth century, however, seem to find themselves in a position to separate more ably the Kern from the Huelse, and are thus more willing to accredit the annales value as a source. See, Bergengruen, Grundherrschaft p. VIII; Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, p. 164; and of course, Haselbach, "Aufstieg", passim.

<sup>48</sup> Haselbach, op. cit., p. 9.



his pious mother, Begga, and visions of his holy grandfather, Arnulf, and his sainted aunt, Gertrude. We are also told that he inherited vast lands between the Silva Carbonaria and the Frisian islands.<sup>49</sup>

Like all annalists, the author draws on many sources. He uses Paul the Deacon's Historia Langobardorum,<sup>50</sup> the later Vita Arnulfi,<sup>51</sup> a fable taken from the Monk of St. Gall's De Gestis Karoli Imperatoris,<sup>52</sup> the Vita Chrodegangi,<sup>53</sup> and other local works in creating his own.<sup>54</sup> Even though this source is primarily focused on a period postdating that which concerns our study, we shall have cause to refer to it. This will be especially true when we consider the Arnulfings' political relationships.

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49 ". . . durchaus verrueckt. . ." says Bonnell commenting on the report of the land holdings (Anfaenge, p. 118).

50 Text in: MGH, Scriptorum Rerum Langobardorum et Italicarum, Saec. VI-IX, 1879, pp. 12-187.

51 Text in: Petrus Boschius, Acta Sanctorum, Jul. IV, Antverpiae, 1775, pp. 440-444. This later life of Arnulf is not to be confused with the contemporary one (MGH, SSRM II, pp. 426-446). The later life is called "wertlos" by Levison (Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, p. 127) and by Krusch in his introduction to the contemporary life: "Altera Vita, quae Umnoni vulgo tribuitur, ex vetustiore hausta atque fabulis ampliata omnino nihil valet." (MGH, SSRM II, p. 428)

52 Text in: MGH, SS, II, pp. 726-763.

53 Text in: MGH, SS, X, pp. 552-582.

54 Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 119.

Other Contemporary or Near-Contemporary Narrative Sources.

Other narrative sources of the Merovingian or early Carolingian age do find their place too in the verification of this or that historical hypothesis. The four we have discussed, however, are the most dependable spring from which modern scholars draw their views. When we venture from these major works to what might be termed "local annals" we find even more signs of warning and caution for their use. Although well tainted from its official Carolingian sponsorship, Paul the Deacon's Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium<sup>55</sup> can reveal certain things about the earlier period. The Annales Regni Francorum,<sup>56</sup> the official Carolingian court record, which stretch back as far as 741 are valuable for the events leading up to Pepin III's usurpation in 751/52. Einhard's Vita

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<sup>55</sup> Text in: MGH, SS, II, pp. 260-270.

<sup>56</sup> Again, since an early manuscript was found at Lorsch, it was at first believed that that monastery was also the place of the annals' origin. Consequently the text was first published under the names "Annales Laurissenses Annis 741-788" and "Continuatio auctore Einhardo, annis 728-829" (MGH, SS I, pp. 124-218). A second recension has been edited by Kurze in MGH, SSRG under the title "Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi". Although editor Kurze reflects the opinion of the majority of scholars that at least part of the annals were indeed written by Einhard, Levison and Bloch give the royal biographer no part in the work. (Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, p. 253 ff).

Karoli Magni <sup>57</sup> treats the earlier period of Charles' family in its first chapter, but it contains no original insights. Other chronicles such as the Annales Fuldenses, <sup>58</sup> the Annales Laubienses, <sup>59</sup> or the Annales Stabulenses <sup>60</sup> and the like must be used with extreme caution. <sup>61</sup>

### Genealogiae

Carolingian genealogies have no historical credibility. Einhard, writing between 814 and 820, laments not being able

<sup>57</sup> Text in: MGH, SS, II, pp. 426-463. A newer recension in: MGH, SSRG.

<sup>58</sup> Text in: MGH, SSRG. According to editor Kurze it has no independent historical value.

<sup>59</sup> Text in: MGH, SS IV, pp. 8-30.

<sup>60</sup> Text in: MGH, SS, XIII, pp. 39-42.

<sup>61</sup> Concerning the last two Halkin writes: "La chronologie de ces Annales pour le VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle est tellement fautive, que nous ne pouvons aucunement en tenir compte. Ainsi les Annales Laubienses inscrivent à l'an 646 la mort de Dagobert I (M.639), à 648 celle de Pepin de Landen (m. 640), à 656 celle de sainte Gertrude (m. 659), à 661 celle de Sigebert III (m. 656), etc. Les Annales Stabulenses fixent à 647 la mort de Dagobert I, à 659 l'élévation de saint Lambert au siège épiscopal de Tongres en remplacement de saint Théodard qui cependant occupait encore ce siège en 670, à 661 la mort de saint Amand (m. vers 679), à 663 celle de Clovis II (m. 657) et celle de saint Gertrude, à 664 celle de saint Eloi (m.660), etc." (Jos. Halkin and C. G. Roland, Recueil des Chartes de L'Abbaye de Stavelot-Malmedy, Bruxelles: Librairie Kiessling et Cie, P. Imbreghts, successeur, 1909, p. XX).

to find reliable sources concerning even Charlemagne's birth.<sup>62</sup> This causes us to pay particular attention to the fact that Einhard only records the Emperor's lineage back as far as Pepin II.<sup>63</sup> Given Einhard's caution, one wonders how other contemporary authors were able to create extensive genealogies for the period when the family had not yet reached the pinnacle of power. Einhard had access to the same archival facilities as did Paul the Deacon and others, and yet the eminent scholar and biographer apparently could find no sources he deemed worthy. The Vita Sancti Arnulfi,<sup>64</sup> written about 680,<sup>65</sup> also mentions neither the saint's father nor his offspring.

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<sup>62</sup> "De cuius navitate atque infancia, vel etiam pueritia, quia neque scriptis usquam aliquid declaratum est, neque quisquam modo superesse invenitur, qui horum se dicat habere notitiam, scribere ineptum iudicans. . ." (Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni, chapter 4, in: MGH, SS II, p. 445)

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., ch. 2.

<sup>64</sup> Text in: MGH, SSRM II, pp. 426-446.

<sup>65</sup> "Ipse incendio a. 629 ab Arnulfo sedato intererat; . . ." (Krusch, in his introduction to the Vita, ibid, p. 428), and ". . . vita circa annum 680 conscripta . . ." (Pertz, in his introduction to Domus Carolingicae Genealogia in: Ibid., p. 305.)

With Paul the Deacon, however, a genealogy of the Carolingian house begins to form. Paul was an intimate of Charlemagne, and if we can believe Paul when he tells us that he heard the story about Saint Arnulf throwing away and retrieving his ring in a fish from the Emperor himself,<sup>66</sup> then it would seem that not only was Charlemagne aware of who his ancestors were, but he was also interested in them and went to tell stories about them. Compared to what will come later, Paul's information concerning Charlemagne's ancestors is still rather sober. Picking up the same legend as does Fredegar<sup>67</sup> and the Liber Historiae Francorum,<sup>68</sup> Paul too ascribes the origins of the Franks to Troy. Here he speculates that the name of Arnulf's son, Anchisius, was derived from Anchises, Aeneas' father.<sup>69</sup> Aside from this

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<sup>66</sup> "Haec ego non a qualibet mediocri persona dedici, sed ipso totius veritatis assertore, praeclaro rege Karlo, referente cognovi. . ." (Paul the Deacon, Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, in: Ibid., p. 264.)

<sup>67</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, II:4-8, in: MGH, SSRM II, pp. 45-47, and Chronicae III:2, in Ibid, p. 93.

<sup>68</sup> Liber Historiae Francorum, ch. 1-4, in: Ibid, pp. 241-244.

<sup>69</sup> ". . . cuius Anschisi nomen ab Anchisi patre Aeneae, qui a Troia in Italiam olim venerat, creditur esse deductum." (Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, in: MGH, SS II, p. 264.)

obvious touch of fantasy, Paul's genealogical comments have been generally accepted. He begins with Saint Arnulf, and through a series of "genuits", traces the accepted line to Charlemagne.<sup>70</sup> There is no attempt here to use ancestry to legitimize the new dynasty. Paul makes no attempt to connect the Carolingians either with the Merovingians or with the ancient Roman ruling classes. Of Arnulf's forebears he tells us only that the family was Frankish and noble.<sup>71</sup> He does not connect other bishops of Metz, such as Aigulf and Arnoald with Arnulf, and his descriptions of Arnulf's sons are happily lacking the cloud of holiness with which the tenth century hagiographers would obscure them.<sup>72</sup> But while Paul's genealogy seems modest, unelaborated, and relatively believable, there is still that gnawing awareness that the more reliable Einhard will apparently have none of it.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 265.

<sup>71</sup> "Qui ex nobilissimo fortissimoque Francorum stemmate ortus . . ." (Ibid., p. 264)

<sup>72</sup> Vita Sancti Chlodulfi Episcopi Mettensis, in: J. Bollandus, Acta Sanctorum, June 8, pp. 126 ff). See also Bonnell's "Excurs I - Die Biographie des Bischofs Chlodulf von Metz", in Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 137-139.

By the reign of Louis the Pious, however, formal Carolingian genealogies are the fashion; and if we have irksome doubts about the previous family trees, those of this era are blatant fabrications. Any attempt to gain insight into Charlemagne's ancestors from the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia,<sup>73</sup> which was written during Louis' reign, must be made with extreme caution. Serious scholarship has always recognized that it is by no means an accurate record.<sup>74</sup> It begins by

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<sup>73</sup> Text in: MGH, SS, II, pp. 304-314.

<sup>74</sup> Pertz in his introduction considers it wishful dreams ("Somnia") kept alive by desire for patriotism and glory. (Ibid, p. 305). Bonnell recalls that the probable reason for Charlemagne instituting his three year old son, Louis, as viceroy in Aquitaine in 781 was an attempt to provide this traditionally difficult to control part of the empire with its own native-born ruler and thereby vent the decentralizing tendencies on a member of his own house. This sort of ploy had been used by the Merovingians in their attempts to keep rambunctious Austrasia under their dynastic wing (Dagobert I as viceroy to Clothar II in 623 and Sigebert III as viceroy to Dagobert I in 633/34). There was good precedent for such a move. However, as it became evident that Louis would succeed his father to the whole Imperium and would move north to Paris, Bonnell concludes that the fabrication of Louis' genealogy containing a barrage of Aquitainian saints could be one way to point out to the local nobility just how united they were with the ruling dynasty. "Hatte sich schon der . . . in diesem Lande geborene Koenig als ein Bindmittel zwischen dem Volke und seinem Geschlechte bewaehrt, um wie viel mehr musste sich jenes [the Volk] nicht an dieses [the Bindmittel] gefesselt fuehlen, wenn sich dasselbe als einerlei Stammes mit ihm ausweis?" (Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 38). Muehlbacher uses it as an example of how a family tree can serve political purposes (Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 23) and again this great scholar's influence has made Bonnell's assumption the accepted opinion. Eduard Hlawitschka adds  
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having a certain Ansbert of an old and noble <sup>75</sup> Roman family marry Blithild, the daughter of the Merovingian King Clothar I. From this union springs the line which eventually leads through Saint Arnulf to Louis the Pious. Thus the genealogy makes Louis' house a product of both previous legitimate rulers of Gaul. By 869, at the crowning of Charles the Bald, Hincmar of Reims is telling us flatly that the Carolingians stem from the Merovingians, <sup>76</sup> and by the mid-tenth century

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74 (cont'd) that it could have served the church at Metz's purposes in trying to make her legal claim to her extensive possessions in Aquitaine more secure. (Eduard Hlawitschka, "Die Vorfahren Karls des Grossen", in: Wolfgang Braunfels (ed.) Karl der Grosse, Vol. I, Duesseldorf: L. Schwann, 1965 p. 52). Karl Stroheker is willing to disregard the source completely: ". . . darf der Domus Carolingicae Genealogia fuer das 6. Jahrhundert kein historischer Quellenwert beige-messen werden." (Karl F. Stroheker, Der Senatorische Adel im spaetantiken Gallien, Tuebingen, 1948 - reprint, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970, p. 173.).

75 "Ansbertus qui fuit ex genere senatorum, vir nobilis et multis divitiis pollens, accepit filiam Hlotharii regis Francorum nomine Blithild, et habuit ex ea tres filios et unam filiam." (MGH, SS, II, p. 308-309.)

76 ". . . domnus Hludowicus, pius imperator Augustus, ex progene Ludoici Clodovei in another manuscript regis Francorum inclyti, . . ." (Hincmari Remensis Annales. A. 869, in: MGH, SS, I, p. 484).



the Ansbert of the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia is being celebrated as the father of the dynasty.<sup>77</sup> In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the rhyme chronicles of Flanders and Brabant we find more Carolingian genealogies. As we progress further and further from the Merovingian period, so too does the genealogical information progress further and further from the truth, until in these rhyme chronicles Saint Arnulf is called "Duke of Overschelde", Pepin I is first named "Pepin of Landen", and his relatives are all portrayed as saints whose cults still exist in Belgium.<sup>78</sup> Clearly no genealogical source material, from whatever medieval age, is to be taken at face value - there must be heavy independent substantiation from other source genera.

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<sup>77</sup> This is the case in the Vita Sancti Chlodulfi where Ansbert is made the father of the dynasty and is provisioned with riches, illustrious kinship and high ecclesiastical position. Bonnell considers the Vita to have been written shortly after the Saint's translatio in 959, and sees in it an attempt of the tenth century bishops of Metz to adjoin the Arnulf family to Metz's ecclesiastical lords for the glory of the see: ". . . und wir irren gewiss nichts, wenn wir ihr [the vita] die Absicht unterlegen, mit dem karolinischen Stammbaum die metzer Bischoefe Aigulf, Arnoald, Goerich und noch etwa auch schon Godo in Verbindung zu bringen. . ." (Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 26).

<sup>78</sup> Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 24. The exposé of the Brabant chronicles is basically Bonnell's work (Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 49-51) and Muehlbacher is once more acting as Bonnell's propagator. The two men's accounts are embarrassingly parallel especially since Muehlbacher does not credit the earlier scholar.

Vitae

From the time of Constantine the Great until the fourteenth century, true biography or autobiography didn't exist. The medieval biographer was too influenced by classical or by monastic models.<sup>79</sup> A vita is primarily a traditional style exercise, and, for the saint's life especially, it is strictly bound to particular conventions both in form and content. With a little reading between the lines, however, this source-type can yield valuable historical information despite its unhistorical purposes. Normally a vita is constructed with very little input from its author. He comprises the work from written or oral sources and from other established formulaic components (topoi) which he often copies verbatim from other vitae.<sup>80</sup>

Learning to recognize topos from non-topos in a vita, it seems to us, is of inestimable value in evaluating the historical worth of the various pieces of information a vita may

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<sup>79</sup> Gerd Tellenbach, Zur Bedeutung der Personenforschung fuer die Erkenntnis des fruehen Mittelalters, Freiburg: Freiburger Universitaetsreden, N. F., 25, 1957, p. 6.

<sup>80</sup> The term topos meaning an established and formulaic component of a medieval vita is used by Bergengruen. The following discussion of topoi in the Merovingian and Carolingian vitae is dependent on his insights (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 16-24 et passim).

provide. Topoi can be divided into two general types - those which describe the man and his life, and those which describe his miracles and wonders. Into the second group fall such topoi as the saint as doctor (cures and resurrections); the bubbling spring on the site God has chosen for a monastery; or the incense smell at the saint's death signifying his assumption into heaven. Obviously this second group of topoi can be eliminated out of hand. They exist in both the Merovingian and Carolingian periods and are of no interest to the historian.

It is with the first group, then, that the historian is concerned, and here one finds many differing topoi concerning the man and his actions. The rendering of a saint's social class can be a topos. In the vitae written in the Merovingian period, the social position of the saint was given simply as it was. Social position becomes a topos with the vitae written in the Carolingian period and with the Carolingian revisions of Merovingian lives. These topoi require that the social position of the saint be an exalted one. This is explicable since the purpose of a saint's life is to show the superlative nature of the saint's spiritual, religious, and human qualities. Any lay position the saint or his people may have held (e.g. count or domesticus) is not to be mentioned. The identification of social class in a Carolingian vita is only to be

believed when it is verified by another source, or when it is given as low or unfree and the author seeks to excuse the low birth through great holiness on the part of the saint. Even so, an exact determination of the saint's social position from a vita will almost always be impossible because even the terms used - regalis, magna, medocris, etc. - have no exact meaning.

Genealogical information in the later vitae falls into a topos. As with the actual genealogies themselves, the genealogical information contained in the vitae could serve to legitimize a lord or an office-holder's claim to his position,<sup>81</sup> but more often it simply served to enhance the need to respect a local saint. Certain relationships developed as particularly status-lending. As one would expect, it was particularly desirable in a tenth century vita to find the Carolingians among one's ancestors, but strangely enough even more status-producing was a connection with the Merovingians and

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<sup>81</sup> As an example, Bergengruen points out how the dukes of Lorraine often sought to embellish their family with Carolingian saints. (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 18).



especially with Dagobert I. Whenever these royal connections appear in a Carolingian or post-Carolingian vita they are not to be believed. <sup>82</sup>

In the ninth and tenth centuries it was a great honor for a monastery to have been founded by the Irish and among these wandering saints the special favorites were Gall, Columban, and Pirmin (who was believed to be Irish). Ireland was considered the insula sanctorum. When later writers learned to distinguish between the Irish and the Anglo-Saxons, the poor Englishmen were not able to confer the same level of respect as their Irish cousins. <sup>83</sup>

The description of the character of the saint himself is another topos. Saints all tended to be idealized along the same lines. The image of the ideal saint, however, underwent a change during the Merovingian age. The original type - the dedicated ascetic and hermit of the ancient orient - is

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<sup>82</sup> This explains why Irmina of Oeren, Pepin II's mother-in-law, was so long held to be a Merovingian, i.e. "filia Dagoberti".

<sup>83</sup> Bergengruen makes the interesting aside that the later ages considered the holiness of their supposed founders to stem not from their activities as missionaries but from the sacrifice the exile from home and hearth entailed. "Die Heiligkeit des Iren ist durch die Peregrinatio bedingt, ihr Mission ist nicht so sehr die Mission als das Exil." (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 20). Considering the troubled conditions of the ninth and tenth centuries, it is easy to see why such great respect for exile from the security of home would arise.

still found in the sixth century as late as Gregory of Tours. The activity of the Irish and the influence of the Benedictine Rule changed the seventh century's ideas about what sainthood entailed. The saintly ideal became an active one. In the seventh century Saint Columban's and other saints' activities of clearing and building brought saintliness out of seclusion and put it among men. Even though, paradoxically, the older topos is occasionally found alongside the newer, after the seventh century holiness is no longer the result of exaggerated and self-inflicted searching for God but more the sum of noble birth and the formulaic but nonetheless normal activities of an abbot's or bishop's life. This is the ideal type that went on to control the high middle ages.

Once, then, we have recognized and evaluated topos material for what it is, what remains in a vita which we can believe? The historically trustworthy material is largely that material which is unimportant to the author of a vita and his Christian purposes. When the hagiographers speak we may believe the name of the saint, the name of his/her parents and his/her nationality. This last was a required datum in the Merovingian vitae, but was generally omitted in the Carolingian. The saint's birth place, possessions of the saint and his family which were designated as founding sites

or as donations for religious institutions and the places where a saint liked to visit or perform miracles can be believed as his area of activity. We can also believe the descriptions of other people in the vita as long as they are not obvious foils for the saint's holiness. <sup>84</sup>

### Leges

Much of the discussion about early Frankish society, the status of its nobility, the position of its king, the means by which it organized and exploited its agricultural resources, and even the nature of its social nexus reaches into the barbarian law codes for support for its arguments. This is a particularly difficult source-type, the interpretation of which demands the skilled hands of the specialist. Consequently, as we shall see, even the most noted of the Merovingian scholars will come to opposite conclusions while waving the self-same passage from one of the leges as proof. Part of the interpretive difficulty arises from the fact that the establishment of a text for any of the barbarian laws is so problematical. The Monumenta Germaniae Historica tried for

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<sup>84</sup> "Dass diese Realitaeten nicht zu Topen werden konnten, versteckt sich bei dem durch und durch literarischen Character der karolingischen und nachkarolingischen Hagiographie von selbst." (Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 23). We heartily agree.

over one hundred years to publish an established text of the Lex Salica, and scholars no less renowned than Pertz, Waitz, Krammer, Krusch, and Levison all tasted defeat in the attempt.<sup>85</sup> Yet if the text of the Lex Salica was the most difficult of the leges to establish, the other barbarian laws don't fail to present their own textual difficulties. The basic problem is that these laws are known to us only through manuscripts which post-date the apparent content by several centuries.<sup>86</sup> Nothing is more conservative than law, and this was especially true of medieval law where there was no concept of legal innovation. Rulers exercised their function by preserving and interpreting traditional laws, not by inventing new ones. Thus not only does the manuscript post-date the codification, but the codification itself is a representation of tradition which had long been present in the society.

The oldest of the Frankish laws and the one most used by historians is the Lex Salica.<sup>87</sup> Scholars generally agree

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<sup>85</sup> Karl August Eckhardt, in his introduction to the Pactus Legis Salicae, in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi IV, pars I, pp. 35-38.

<sup>86</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Long-Haired Kings, p. 106.

<sup>87</sup> Text in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomus IV.



that the text of the Lex Salica can be said to originate in the last few years of the reign of Clovis.<sup>88</sup> Certain of its passages indicate that the Franks had moved south of the Loire, and others indicate that the Regnum Francorum was still unified - a condition which ended with Clovis' death in 511.<sup>89</sup> Even though some of the legal precepts which it embodies may have held sway over the Franks at the time they were forming their first lasting settlements on what is today Dutch and Belgian soil (cir. 350),<sup>90</sup> the oldest extant manuscript is best dated between 751 and 768.<sup>91</sup> While too refined to have

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<sup>88</sup> Thus J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 181; Dill, Roman Society, p. 43; G. Frommhold, "Der altfraenkische Erbhof: ein Beitrag zur Erklarung des Begriffes der terra salica", in: Untersuchungen zur deutschen Staats - und Rechtsgeschichte, H. 148, Breslau, 1938, p. 18; and others.

<sup>89</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 181.

<sup>90</sup> Dill, Roman Society, p. 43.

<sup>91</sup> Manuscript A2 which carries the Merovingian version, the Pactus Legis Salicae, is divided into 65 titles. The earlier Carolingian version, the "lex Salica", contains 100 titles, and the later Carolingian version, the "Lex Salica Karolina" is divided into 70 titles. In referring to the law by titles, one must also include the text name since the titles do not agree across the three versions. (Eckhardt, op. cit., pp. X, XI and XIV.)

been completed without the help of Roman ecclesiastical or secular juristic consultants, it is by no means a coherent body of legal principles. It deals with actual problems, not with principles of jurisprudence, and thus its organization is at best chaotic. Nonetheless, from its various stipulations concerning land inheritance, wergild composition payment structures, taxes, ethnic privileges and the like, historians have sought to draw a picture of the society which fostered the ancestors of Charlemagne.

The other Frankish legal codes can also serve as valuable sources. The Lex Ripuaria,<sup>92</sup> which was probably codified during the later years of Dagobert I's reign (i.e. in 633 or 634),<sup>93</sup> also contains sections that may go back as far as the reign of Theuderic I (511-533). It is a more skillful legal presentation than is the Lex Salica, but it draws heavily from the earlier code. It is clearly a Merovingian instrument drawn up to apply to the Franks living in the Austrasian sections of their realm. Although it is by no means an easy

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<sup>92</sup> Text in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi III, Pars II.

<sup>93</sup> This is editor Franz Beyerle's conclusion (Ibid, Pars II, p. 21). Wallace-Hadrill (Long-Haired Kings, p. 213) agrees. Karl Eckhardt, however, would place the beginning of the recension under Clothar II (613-623) and have the law become effective about 625. (MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi V Pars I., p. 3)

task, once the borrowed sections and later interpolations have been weeded out, the Lex Ripuaria can yield valuable information for us especially because it was the barbarian law which pertained specifically to that geographical area where the early Arnulfings built their power-base. Even though comparing the Lex Ripuaria with the Lex Salica or other more specifically Neustrian or Burgundian pacts may yield what at first glance seem like temptingly believable revelations concerning conditions in seventh century Austrasia, any deductions thus drawn must be tempered by the fact that the law was not applied in geographical terms, rather it applied to the Ripuarian Franks. A Salian, Burgundian or Alamannian living in a Ripuarian area was not subject to the Lex Ripuaria but to his own people's law. <sup>94</sup>

Less fruitful for our particular study, but nonetheless still called upon by historians, are the other Merovingian

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<sup>94</sup> "Hoc autem constituemus, ut infra pago Ribvario tam Franci, Burgundiones, Alamanni seu de quacumque natione commoratus fuerit, in iudicio interpellatus sicut lex loci continet, ubi natus fuerit, sic respondeat." (Lex Ribvaria, Title 35(31):3 in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi III, Pars II, p. 87). See also Silvester Hofbauer, Die Ausbildung der grossen Grundherrschaft im Reiche der Merowinger, Baden bei Wien: Eligius-Verlag, 1927, p. 40f.

leges, the Lex Alamannorum<sup>95</sup> and the Lex Baiuvariorum<sup>96</sup> and the Lex Burgundionum.<sup>97</sup> This latter gives a better picture of life in southern Gaul than does the Lex Salica. Its first recension was issued under the Burgundian King Gundobad (480-516) and the second under King Sigismund (517-523).<sup>98</sup> Although of the same vintage as the Lex Salica, the Burgundian Code is a body of formal legislation reflecting the skilled hand of accomplished jurists. The society it reflects is also more stratified and urbane.

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<sup>95</sup> Text in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi V Pars I. edited by K. A. Eckhardt. This pact of the Lex Ripuaria is seen by scholars as a Merovingian legal instrument offered as a concession to a local people in order to bind them more closely to the Merovingian throne. The first recension dates to the last years of Clothar II's rule (613-623) although a second strictly local edition was produced under the Alamanian Duke Landfrid between the years 712 and 725.

<sup>96</sup> Text in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi V, Pars 2. This law is of a later date. Its first recension belongs to the eighth century. The name is misleading. Since the appearance of Heinrich Brunner's article, "Ein verschollenes merowingisches Koenigsgesetz", in: Sitzungsberichte der koeniglichen Akademie der Wissenschaft zu Berlin, XXXIX (1901), pp. 932-955, the law has generally been recognized as Frankish and not as Bavarian. Wolfgang Metz (Das Karolingische Reichsgut, Berlin: DeGruyter, 1960, p. 72f) agrees with Brunner in most of his philological reasoning and with his arguments that the sections on vitaculture and stone masonry could hardly be south German. Brunner would have us believe that it is a Merovingian instrument whereas Metz argues for one of the Carolingian period (Ibid., p. 76).

<sup>97</sup> Text in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomus II.

<sup>98</sup> Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, p. 11.

Formulae

Closely akin to the laws themselves are the text books used to train legal scribes, the formularies.<sup>99</sup> A formula has no legal authority as such, nor can it be taken as a specific and concrete piece of historical evidence; however, when an author included a formulaic expression in his formula collection, he did so because the expression was currently in frequent use. The Formulary of Angers<sup>100</sup> and the Marculf Formulary<sup>101</sup> are the two collections most frequently cited by the historians dealing with our period. The Formulary of Angers was written in that city of western France in 596/97. The author extracted most of his entries from municipal and ecclesiastical sources.<sup>102</sup> The Marculf Formulary is the most complete and the most important collection for the Merovingian period. It was either written in the mid-seventh or the early eighth century, and reworked and expanded under Charlemagne before the year 800. The vast scope of its contents which deals with both royal and private legal matters, has greatly

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99 ". . . ad exercenda initia puerorum . . ." Prefatio Marculfi Formularum, in: MGH, Legum Sectio V, p. 36.

100 Text in: MGH, Legum Sectio V, pp. 1-31.

101 Wattenbach-Levison, Geschichtsquellen, pp. 50f.

102 Ibid, pp. 51f.

increased our understanding of Merovingian legal and social conditions. <sup>103</sup>

### Chartae et Diplomata

With the diplomas and the charters the historical sources become specific. They no longer have general applicability but now pertain to carefully enumerated recipients for specifically delineated purposes. Thus added to all the usual problems of deciphering and evaluating, the historian using charters and diplomas must now also do his own generalizing. The sixth century is depressingly lacking in this type of material. After Clothar II's diploma for the monastery of Saint Denis in 625, <sup>104</sup> the royal diplomas at least appear in ever-increasing numbers. Until well into the eighth century, however, most are known to us only through copies, some of which post-date the original by several centuries. Thus the same familiar problems of dating and of weeding out later interpolations and changes beset the students of these documents as well. Scholars concerned with questions similar to the one with which this study deals have used these documents to determine such information as who owned what property,

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<sup>103</sup> Text in: Ibid, pp. 32-127.

<sup>104</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, p. 13.

how they came to own it, and under what conditions of tenure they held it. Although there are a fair number of royal Merovingian charters for the seventh century, extant charters of the Arnulfings don't appear in sufficient numbers to produce any kind of a land-holding image until well into the eighth century.<sup>105</sup> Thus we are once again trying to view the seventh century by looking through the near end of the tunnel. It is, however, remarkable what this peering backward can reveal about our family and its position in the seventh century. The method is fruitful for a number of reasons. Fortunately the Arnulfings were a family much given to donating

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<sup>105</sup> The oldest extant Arnulfing charter is the famous Testament of Adalgisel-Grimo (634). (Text in: Heinrich Beyer, Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der jetzt die Preuss. Regierungsbezirke Coblenz und Trier bildenen mittelrheinschen Territorien, Coblenz: J. Hoelscher, 1860, nr. 6, pp. 5ff, and in Wilhelm Levison, Aus Rhinischer und Fraenkischer Fruehzeit; Ausgewahlte Aufsaeetze, Duesseldorf: W. Holtzman, 1948, pp. 118-138. Levison's is an annotated edition, Beyer's is not.) Adalgisel is, however, by no means an undisputed member of the Arnulfing family. Pertz lists Grimoald I's charter for the monastery at Stavelot-Malmedy (dated about 650) as the first Arnulfing diploma (MGH, Dipl., I, nr. 1, p. 91). Pertz however, is only concerned with those Arnulfings who were supposedly mayors of the palace.

lands to religious institutions. By so doing they entrusted their land to a new owner who was not likely to alienate it again and to the only type of new owner who had both the facility and the propensity to preserve the donation documents. The Church required also that the origins of donated land be specified in the charter so that she could deflect any other contenders who might attempt to claim it. Consequently, any land that was inherited is clearly indicated, usually by such formulas as: "de alode patentum", "legibus mihi obvenit", "de hereditate" or "Portio meo".<sup>106</sup> It was also Frankish custom to divide the land equally among the male heirs, or in the absence of male offspring, among daughters. Thus the donation of a portio is a very frequent occurrence. In some cases, if the transmission of a villa is not complicated by sale or exchange of portiones, this Frankish inheritance practice can give us a good indication of when a certain villa came into the family's possession. If a villa is divided into portiones held by siblings we can

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<sup>106</sup> S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, pp. 24 and 27.



assume that their father had obtained it; if, however, the portiones are held by cousins, then the villa probably first entered the family two generations before. The reasoning can be applied in reverse as well. If two people are found to hold portiones of the same villa, it is a good indication that they belong to the same family. If the same people are found to hold portiones in several villae the assumption of common ancestry becomes even more reasonable.<sup>107</sup> Again one must be somewhat of a specialist in order to peer backwards accurately into our tunnel by analysing the portiones holdings of the succeeding age. The picture thus sketched would

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<sup>107</sup> Arguments based on analyses of portiones form a considerable part of Camille Wampach's monumental proof that the powerful abbess, Irmina of Oeren, was not really a daughter of Dagobert as some tenth century sources would have her be. (Camille Wampach, "Irmina von Oeren und Ihre Familie", in: Trierer Zeitschrift fuer Geschichte und Kunst des Trierer Landes und seiner Nachbargebiete, V. 3 (1928), p. 148).

be clear and conclusive if portio always and only meant land which has been passed on exclusively by inheritance. Portio does indeed often have this meaning,<sup>108</sup> especially in the Merovingian age, but soon these parts of a villa begin to change hands not only through inheritance, but also through purchase, trade, and gift so that by the Carolingian period portio can simply mean "part". It stands to reason also that in the later age even in those cases where portio still does mean inherited land, it no longer assures us that the bequeather also inherited it. He may have acquired it through

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108 "Erbgut" in German and, according to some interpretations of the Lex Salica, "sala" in Latin. See G. Frommhold, "Erbhof" pp. 20ff. A. Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 56f) disagrees.

other means.<sup>109</sup> The Testament of Adalgisel-Grimo shows much of his land already held in portiones by 634. This does not mean, however, that Merovingian land-holdings were always a hopeless morass of ever-increasing subdivision. There were attempts to reconstruct entire villae under one possessor by acquiring the other portiones. Since ecclesiastical institutions had no heirs among whom they would again have to divide any such reunited possessions, they were particularly adept at reforming and maintaining entire blocks of land intact.<sup>110</sup>

The student of charters and diplomas is, of course, grateful to any institution, personage or historical accident which manages to preserve or at least to copy contemporary documents. It is to three monasteries that we owe our particular debt of gratitude, for without their preservation efforts

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<sup>109</sup> S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, p. 21ff.

<sup>110</sup> F. L. Ganshof, "Manorial Organization in the Low Countries in the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Centuries", in: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4, 31 (1949), p. 33. The earliest charters of the Abbey at Echternach provide us with a good example of such reuniting practices. By 718 the abbey had managed to gain the villae of Echternach itself and Bollandorf in their entirety. (See Camille Wampach, Geschichte der Grundherrschaft Echternach im Fruehmittelalter, I-2 Quellenband, Luxemburg: Druck und Verlag der Luxemburger Kunstdruckerei A. G., 1930, documents numbered: 3, 4, 14, 25, and 27.)

we would know far less than we do about the holdings and positions of the Arnulfings. The oldest of these institutions is the double monastery at Stavelot-Malmedy which was founded in 644 by a grant of Sigibert III,<sup>111</sup> king of Austrasia, probably at the instigation of his Mayor of the Palace, the Arnulfing, Grimoald I. The Arnulfing family donations to this monastery formed the western edge of one group of the early family possessions. These lie along the lower Meuse River in what was once called the Condroz and Faminegauen.<sup>112</sup> The second is the abbey at Echternach founded in 698 by the Anglo-Saxon Willibrord on land donated by Irmina, the abbess of Oeren.<sup>113</sup> From the numerous family lands donated to this

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111 Text in: MGH, Dipl. I, Nr. 21, p. 21; and in: J. Halkin and C. G. Roland, Stavelot-Malmedy, Nr. 1, p. 1. Pertz, in the MGH, uses a different numbering system and names the king as Sigibert II; he obviously, however, does not mean the earlier great-grandson of Brunhild.

112 The documents pertaining to this monastery, as do those pertaining to most early monasteries, carry historical significance extending far beyond simply providing a picture of the patron family's holdings, as Halkin so correctly points out: ". . .mais [the documents] nous fournissent les renseignements les plus précieux sur l'état religieux, social, et politique du pays [eastern Belgium] à partir de l'époque mérovingienne." (J. Halkin and C. G. Roland, Stavelot-Malmedy, p. 1.)

113 Irmina's charter in: MGH, Dipl. I, Nr. 55, p. 173; MGH, SS, XXIII, p. 51; and in C. Wampach, Echternach 1-2, Nr. 3, p. 17.

monastery we are able to trace many of the Arnulfings' early holdings in the area of the middle Moselle. To the monastery at Pruem, founded in 721 by a donation of Bertrada I and her son Charibert,<sup>114</sup> came parts of the holding we assume to be the most important to the early Arnulfings. These were in the Mosel-, Bid-, Karas-, and Eifelgauen with some as far north as the bank of the Rhine.<sup>115</sup> Charters concerning the Arnulfing family are of course preserved by means and places other than these three monasteries, but it is a safe contention that had the heirs and family of Pepin I not been so active in donating to these institutions, we would have very little idea of who they were and where they came from.

What, then, are the students of charters and diplomas able to glean from their documents? In the first place, a charter tells us the names of the people involved, the names of their parents, their nationality, and usually their social class and any ecclesiastical or lay office they might have held. It tells us the forms of possession and inheritance.

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<sup>114</sup> Bertrada's charter in: H. Beyer, Urkundenbuch, Nr. 8, p. 10. Beyer dates it in 720. See also: Wilhelm Levison, "Zur aeltesten Urkunde des Klosters Pruem", in: Neues Archiv fuer aeltere deutsche Geschichtskunde, XLIII (1920), p. 383. Levison gives the charter the more accepted date of 721.

<sup>115</sup> E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 25.

It gives us specific examples of what a family owned. By examining the places of issue we can discern the author's preferred places of residence, which are also almost certainly his possessions, and by examining the witness lists we are liable to find names of his relatives complete with mention of their ecclesiastical or lay dignities.

### Onomastics

The forms and uses of personal names can in certain instances be good indicators of the attitudes and identities of those bearing or using them. In Frankish naming customs, names tended to be rather tightly bound to one family. A Frankish name is made up of two parts (Dago-bertus, Chlodovechus, etc.) and either part could be taken from the agnate or the cognate side of the family; there seems to be no fixed rule. Even when whole names were handed down, they seem to come with equal frequency from either side.<sup>116</sup> As we have seen, before 800 there was little interest in genealogy; a noble usually knew only the names of his grandparents or perhaps his great-grandparents. As a consequence, he was not

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<sup>116</sup> Marc Bloch, Feudal Society - Vol. I - The Growth of Ties of Dependence, (L. A. Manyon, translator), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, p. 137f.

likely to name his children after some supposed (or actual) dynasty founder but rather would choose names or name-parts for them from those in his vicinity on the family tree. 117

Thus even in the absence of a formal patronymic or metronymic, these naming practices will help us to identify certain familial connections because a common name or a common name-part is often a good indicator of membership in the same family. One must not assume that the customs were so closely defined that we could determine or even suppose the relationship of one person to another by use of the study of personal names. Usually personal name data are only to be used as one indication of possible familial commonality. How one person relates to another must be determined from other sources. 118

The theory for using the names of places to reveal historical data is not at all complicated, but its application has brought anything but unity of opinion among historians. Just as such North American names as Bagleys Mills, Virginia;

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117 G. Tellenbach, Personenforschung, p. 18. These Frankish customs are quite different from those which governed the high middle ages. As Tellenbach points out, there was a "tief gehende Veraenderung" in the tenth century which brought the agnate to almost complete hegemony over the cognate and which also made the concept of family dependent on descentance from a male dynasty founder. This, of course, rings far more familiar to our way of considering such things as nobility and family.

Grand Junction, Colorado; or New Glasgow, Nova Scotia can reveal the original economic function of the location or the ethnic composition of its original inhabitants, so too can certain early medieval place names reveal the same sort of data. We know what many of those early names were because medieval practice tended to copy place names exactly with only minor spelling differences. Even after the Normans renamed many places, the older pre-Norman names still tended to be copied in the documents.<sup>119</sup> There are two types of place names which historians use in the various arguments pertaining to this study. The first are those whose names carry the endings -heim or -ingen. In the Moselle area -heim usually indicates an original Frankish settlement while -ingen indicates one of Alemannish origins.<sup>120</sup> This sort of data is used in answering what the Germans call the "Landnahme"

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118 Karl Schmidt, "Zur Problematik von Familie, Sippe und Geschlecht", in: Zeitschrift fuer die Geschichte des Oberrheins, (1957), p. 3.

119 A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 26.

120 This last is complicated somewhat by the fact that some of the -ingen names are derived from the earlier Celtic place name ending -ancum. (K. Lamprecht, Wirtschaftsleben, Vol. 1, p. 154).



question - the problem of in what form and where the Barbarian tribes settled. The second type of place name is one formed with a Frankish initial element and the Roman ending -court, or -villa. There is much controversy in the literature concerning this type of name and one has to be somewhat of a specialist even to follow the arguments. The basic premise is that these types of names indicate some sort of Frankish manorial locality. Some assume that the Franks originally settled the land with a nobility ruling through a manorial system. Others see the manorial system as established much later through redistribution of royal fiscal land to the nobility.<sup>121</sup> We shall have cause to refer to place

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<sup>121</sup> When these localities were settled, and the extent of the development of their manorial institutions are important questions which are far from settled. Herman Aubin (Herkunft, p. 43) takes note of the large belt of these names just on the French side of the Romance-Teutonic language border in southern Belgium and northern France. He takes these names to indicate the farthest expanse of the Frankish manorial settlement. A. Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 132-139) however, building on the work of Steinbach, Lot, and Dopsch, sees this type of name not indicating new settlement but rather the expansion of manorialism on already settled land. He places this development in the late sixth and early seventh century. Heinz Zatschek (Wie das erste Reich, p. 41) offers a complicating, but nonetheless important, caution to bear in mind when evaluating place name data. He reminds us that the first mention of any place in the sources is at best determined by chance and should not be taken as an indication of the date of its first existence.

name data when we, too, try to describe the nature of the Merovingian nobility and their economic control systems in the sixth and seventh centuries.

### Graves

Historians also attempt to exhume clues concerning the nature of early medieval society by studying the way that society buried its dead. Those who wish to dispel the notion that the early Germans were a people bound in a free and equal society note that about the time of Christ the graves of Germans outside the Empire began to reflect the existence of a leading social class. This class buried its dead with costly possessions, including weapons, and in artful coffins vastly different from the simple containers used by the bulk of the populace. These practices developed in decades around the birth of Christ and spread across the whole of Germania even into the Scandinavian countries in the first two centuries of our era. The unity of this practice remains inexplicable - it crossed tribal and religious boundaries and areas of varying burial rituals. Despite the fact that in the third and fourth centuries this original unity began to break down geographically, the basic practice endured into the Merovingian and Carolingian ages on the continent and even into the high middle ages in Scandinavia. <sup>122</sup> By this time, of course,

scholars no longer need graves to prove the existence of a noble class. The best known example of such a princely grave is that of Childeric I (died 481/82) who was buried with an immense treasure. Here, however, we are no longer dealing with a "pure" barbarian prince, for the contents of his grave clearly indicate he was acknowledged by and benefited from the Romans. Whether or not he was recognized as a chieftain (or a king, as Gregory calls him) <sup>123</sup> by the leaders of Franks other than those in his own group around Tournai, we cannot say. <sup>124</sup> Clearly, however, Childeric's grave and the other graves like his indicate some sort of early favored class among the Germans.

About the year 500 another sort of grave appears, a type which the Franks did not bring with them from their trans-Rhenish homeland but one which they developed in the area of the Roman provinces. These are the famous row-graves. These graves hold their dead buried with prescribed weapons laid.

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<sup>122</sup> Herbert Jankuhn, "Wirtschafts - und Sozialgeschichte der Vor - und Fruehzeit Mitteleuropas", in: Herman Aubin und Wolfgang Zorn. Handbuch der Deutschen Wirtschaft - und Sozialgeschichte, Vol. I., Stuttgart: Union Verlag, 1971, p. 74f.

<sup>123</sup> Gregory, Historia, II-18 and passim.

<sup>124</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, 162f.

out in an east-west direction. The custom began in Wallonia and northern Francia and soon spread throughout the Seine basin over the Rhine toward Swabia and Thuringia and the eastern border of the Merovingian empire. These graves, too hold members of an elevated class, but just how elevated that class was remains a matter of controversy.<sup>125</sup> The custom died out about the year 700.

The foregoing is by no means intended to be a complete review. We have omitted entire disciplines such as numismatics, philology, and paleography. We have also not mentioned many other sources, both written and unwritten which have affected or could affect our picture of the Arnulfing faction in the seventh century. These historical resources and the tools with which historians exploit them, however, will be sufficient to allow us to sketch an image of that important family in better than broad strokes.

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<sup>125</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 154ff.

### III. THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Before looking closely at the Arnulfings themselves it will be useful to gain a familiarity with the political environment in Merovingian Gaul in which the family rose to importance. The Merovingian era witnessed the house of Clovis build an empire and then watched as control of it passed more and more into the hands of the leading nobility. It was also the era of expansion of the Arnulfings' power-base. The sources let us see them for the first time at the beginning of the seventh century as leaders of a local faction of nobles. By mid-century the head of their house was able to displace the legitimate Merovingian king of Austrasia and hold the royal power himself for seven years. With Pepin II's invasion of Neustria in 687 they had become powerful enough to move beyond the borders of the eastern kingdom and to take the political reins of all Francia.

The forging of this empire was largely the work of one man, Clovis, the Salian district-king of Tournai. In 486 he and his warriors marched southward, defeated Syagrius and absorbed his curious Roman kingdom of Soissons.<sup>1</sup> It was somewhat of a marvel that this small band of Salians and not

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<sup>1</sup> As with so much of the history of the early middle ages, the political event is more or less clearly discernible, whereas the social and economic substructure is clouded

the far more powerful Visigoths or Alemanni had become the barbarian masters of northern Gaul.<sup>2</sup> But even Soissons did not long contain Clovis' ambition. In 507 he again swept southward and crossing the Loire, he defeated the Visigoths at Vouillé, thereby adding Aquitaine, the most flourishing and culturally advanced part of Gaul, to his kingdom. When he died in 511, this son of a minor northern district-king had assembled an empire stretching from the Atlantic in the west to the Main valley in the east, and from the Rhine in the north to the Pyrennees in the south.

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<sup>1</sup> (cont'd) from our view. This event in 486, the Frankish conquest of northern Gaul, is the Landnahme. The fact that they conquered is clear, but almost every aspect of what sort of warrior conquered and how he held and controlled that which he acquired is still the subject of controversy. This controversy has at its base the nature of the early Frankish nobility - a nobility which was soon to produce the Arnulfings.

<sup>2</sup> "The Franks at Tournai were only a small band, probably not exceeding 6000 warriors." (O.M. Dalton, Gregory Vol. I, p. 77). Karl Bosl estimates the total population in the sixth century between the Loire and Rhine at 2 to 3 million, of which the Franks comprised between 150 to 200,000. By analogy with the proportion of warriors to total population among the Vandals, Bosl calculates the number of Frankish warriors to be about 40,000. (Karl Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung, p. 151). Charles Verlinden believes there to have been about 30,000. (Charles Verlinden, "Frankish Colonization: A New Approach", in: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, fifth series, Vol. 4, 1954, p. 15).

In 511 Clovis' empire was divided among his four sons, legitimate and illegitimate alike, in reasonably equal portions. This was in accordance with Frankish inheritance custom which pertained not only to dividing kingdoms among kings, but estates among nobles and farms among farmers. Despite the division of territory, the empire was regarded as a unity, the regnum Francorum. Each brother was every bit as much a king as each other brother. Each bore the title Rex Francorum and ruled with the consciousness that he was a Merovingian.

From Clovis' death in 511 to that of Charibert of Paris in 567, Frankish overlordship underwent a period of expansion. This at first benefited the eastern kingdom, but eventually the leading position in Francia was absorbed by the Kingdom of Paris under the long rule of King Childebert I (511-558). It was here in the area around Paris and in the Seine basin - soon to become known as Neustria - that the Frankish power center would remain until the rule of the Carolingians reflected the movement of that power-center eastward.

After a brief period (558-561) when all of Francia was united under one king, it was again divided among four brothers. The territorial division was much the same as it had been in 511. King Charibert I (561-567) received the old Kingdom of Paris. The Kingdom of Orleans went to King Grunthram (561-592) whose domains included all of Old Burgundy and most of

Provence.<sup>3</sup> King Chilperic I (561-584) took over the Kingdom of Soissons and Sigibert I (561-575) that of Reims. With this division of 561 we enter the turbulent era of Clovis' grandsons and our cast of characters begins to include those who will directly affect the fate of the Arnulfings.

From the death of King Charibert in 567 until the beginning of the seventh century, Francia suffered under a state of almost continual civil war as the grandsons of Clovis fought back and forth contesting and begrudging this or that piece of territory, privilege, or store of booty. The situation was further heated by the intense personal rivalry between two ruthless Merovingian matriarchs, Sigibert's queen, Brunhild, and Chilperic's queen, Fredegunde.<sup>4</sup> Both Gregory and Fredegar are filled with tales of treachery, cruelty, trickery,

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<sup>3</sup> E. Ewig, Teilungen, p. 675.

<sup>4</sup> The cause of this rivalry as told by Gregory of Tours (Historia, IV-27 and 28) and as repeated by Fredegar (Chronicae, III-60) is a familiar and favorite story. After Sigibert had won the hand of the rich and cultured Brunhild, daughter of Athanagild, the Visigothic king, Chilperic became exceedingly jealous. He repudiated his rather uninteresting wife, Audovera, and also won the hand of another of Athanagild's daughters, Brunhild's sister Galswintha. Chilperic, however, soon tired of his new bride and had her murdered in her bed. He then raised Fredegunde, a woman of low birth and one of his former mistresses, to be his queen. Needless to say, Brunhild was filled with a passion to avenge the death of her sister and destroy the servant woman who had usurped

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murder, assassination, and war. This senseless dissipation of royal power had two important effects. First, Francia's international influence waned considerably and her period of expansion came to an abrupt end. Secondly, as is usually the case when central authorities find their means of control lessened, local powers took advantage of the situation and increased the security and importance of their position. These powers were, of course, the nobility, among whom we find the family of Pepin.

In 575 Sigibert was about to have himself proclaimed king by the inhabitants of several areas south of Paris which he had just conquered from his brother, Chilperic, when he was slain by two assassins sent by Fredegunde.<sup>5</sup> A certain Duke Gundovald, however, spirited Sigibert's infant son safely away to Metz where he was proclaimed King Childebert II (575-595).<sup>6</sup> It is reasonable to assume that in so doing, Gundovald

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<sup>4</sup> (cont'd) her place. (The LHF, chapter 31, relates another account of Fredegunde's rise wherein she tricked Chilperic's first wife, Audovera. This account is, however, neither trustworthy nor important.)

<sup>5</sup> Gregory of Tours, Historia, IV-51.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory of Tours, Historia, V-1.

was representing the eastern Frankish nobility who wished to protect their interests against the powers of a centralized monarchy by establishing an infant King whom they could control. They underestimated, however, the wily Brunhild. As soon as she was able to free herself from Chilperic she returned to champion the royal prerogative in the east by ruling with an iron hand in the name of her five year old son.

It is during this period that the concepts and names "Neustria" and "Austrasia" begin to develop. The name Austrasia is used sparingly by Gregory of Tours <sup>7</sup> but finds greater currency in the seventh century. It means simply "eastern kingdom", and presents no particular etymological or explanatory difficulties. It was formed by the western Franks when the center of their authority was still in the Isle de France to express the peripheral position of the Rhine and Moselle area. The kingdom that came to be called Neustria was that formed by the fusion of the two older kingdoms of Soissons and Paris at the death of Charibert of Paris in 567. The Neustrians were wont to call themselves simply "Franks", <sup>8</sup> but the name

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<sup>7</sup> Historia, V-14 and 18.

<sup>8</sup> As does the author of the LHF.

Neustrians appears in several documents of the seventh century.<sup>9</sup> The exact etymology of the term is, however, still unclear.<sup>10</sup>

In 587 Childebert II signed an agreement with his uncle, King Gunthram of Burgundy which regulated certain disputed territories and declared each king the other's heir in case either should die without a son.<sup>11</sup> That situation occurred in 592 when King Gunthram died without male issue. Both kingdoms, Burgundy and Austrasia, were united under Childebert and the position of the eastern Merovingian monarchy

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<sup>9</sup> It is first encountered in Jonas of Bobbio's Vita Columbani, I-24 (MGH, SSRM IV, p. 498) from the year 642 and in Fredegar (Chronicae IV-47) who completed his work about 660. Other examples: a Neustrian royal list from 675 (MGH, SSRM VII, p. 498), a Charter of Theuderic III from 667 (MGH, Dpl. I, Nr 48, p. 44) and another of his from 681 (Ibid, Nr 51, p. 46).

<sup>10</sup> Franz Steinbach would like us to believe that the Austrasian historical and ethnic consciousness was at such a level in the seventh century that they would have recognized that their kingdom in the east along the Rhine and Moselle was actually an older Frankish domain than the western kingdom in northern France. The ancient Teutonic homeland of the Franks was indeed in the east, and thus when Clovis conquered northern France, he was conquering "new land" (Neustria). (Franz Steinbach. "Austrien und Neustrien: Die Anfaenge der deutschen Volkwerden und des deutsch-franzoessichen Gegensatzes", in: Rheinische Vierteljahresblaetter, X (1940), pp. 221ff.) O. M. Dalton offers the unusual solution that Neustria = "Ny-Oster-Rike", i.e., all the territory not of the eastern Reich. (O. M. Dalton, Gregory, Vol. 1, p. 142).

<sup>11</sup> Gregory, Historia, IX-11. This is the Treaty of Andelot for which Gregory is the text's only source. He gives the full text in Historia, IX-20. Fredegar also mentions the meeting (Chronicae, IV-9).

seemed stronger than ever. But Childebert himself died shortly, in 595, bringing about a fresh crisis. The newly united kingdoms were again separated, one going to each of Childebert's two sons. Theudebert II (595-612) received Austrasia while his brother Theoderic II (595-613) acquired King Gunthram's former Burgundian kingdom based at Orleans.<sup>12</sup> Brunhild probably managed to control the monarchy, defending it against the increasingly troublesome Austrasian nobility until 599 - the year in which the two boys reached their majority (12 years). In that year Brunhild retreated to Chalon in the Burgundian section, where the idea of strong monarchy enjoyed far more support. This move is an indication that the Austrasian nobility was now able to make the heretofore separation in law of the two kingdoms a separation in fact as well.<sup>13</sup> Despite her troubles with the local nobility and the fact that her old enemies, Chilperic and Fredegund, had passed from the scene in Neustria, Brunhild's ambition was not dampened. In 600 the brothers Theudebert

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<sup>12</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-16.

<sup>13</sup> "Eo anno Brunehildis ab Austrasies eiecta est. . ." (ibid, IV-19).

and Theuderic combined to attack Neustria's king, Chlothar II (591-629) <sup>14</sup> and managed to take all but the three civitates of Rouen, Beauvais, and Amiens from him. <sup>15</sup> Even in 603 when Chlothar tried to regain his losses, Theuderic's forces stopped him at Étampes. <sup>16</sup> With what used to be Neustria reduced to three small areas on the coast of the English Channel, and the rest of Francia in the hands of the two Austrasian brothers and their dominating grandmother, it seemed that Austrasia would win the field and that the center of Frankish power would shift to the East. But such was not to be the case - at least not for eighty years.

Brunhild's grasp on the reins of power was growing weaker. Even a cursory glance through the later books of Gregory of Tours and the beginning chapters of Fredegar's Book IV makes clear the increasing role the nobility was assuming in the direction of Frankish politics. The pages are filled with the accounts of mayors, domestici, counts, and other officials

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<sup>14</sup> Wallace-Hadrill dates Chlothar II's ascension in 591. (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 5, note 7).

<sup>15</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-20.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, IV-26.

leading campaigns, stirring up revolts, and plotting assassinations both in and out of the service of one or another of the kings. Brunhild soon began to experience trouble with the Burgundian nobility as well as with the Austrasian. It began when she named the Roman Protadius mayor of Burgundy in 605.<sup>17</sup> Fredegar reports that he was a clever man, squeezing all he could from nobles for the enrichment of both the fisc and his own pockets and thereby, of course, alienating the Burgundians.<sup>18</sup> When Brunhild persuaded Theuderic to attack his brother, Protadius of course heartily concurred. The rest of Burgundy's fighting force wanted no part of the war. Protadius alone clamored for the attack, causing a mutiny in his own forces in which he was killed.<sup>19</sup> Although this forced Brunhild to call off her plans for conquest, the nobility by no means stripped her of her power. She went right on appointing Romans as mayors and eventually had the

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<sup>17</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-27.

<sup>18</sup> "Haec his et alies nimia sagatitate vexatus, maximae cunctos in regno Burgundiae lucratus est inimicus." Wallace-Hadrill's translation: "In these and other ways his excessive cunning harassed everyone, and not least the Burgundians, every man of whom he made his enemy." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-27, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, text p. 18v, translation, 18r).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

murderers of Protadius punished.<sup>20</sup> The hour of the nobility was coming, but had not yet struck.<sup>21</sup>

Trouble and disputes between the two brothers increased over the years until in 612 Theuderic successfully invaded the north. He soundly defeated his brother Theudebert, first at Toul, and then marching farther northward he destroyed the Austrasian forces at Zulpich just south of Cologne.<sup>22</sup> Theudebert was eventually apprehended on the other side of the Rhine and he and his young son, Merovech, were executed.<sup>23</sup>

Once again Brunhild seemed to hold all the cards: Burgundy and Austrasia had been united while Chlothar II stood

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, IV-28 and 29.

<sup>21</sup> "Noch hatte die Stunde der Grossen nicht geschlagen." (E. Ewig, Teilungen, p. 691).

<sup>22</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-38. We note that the march from Toul to Zulpich proceeded directly across Arnulfing family lands. "Theudebertus terga vertens, per territorio Mittensem veniens, transito Vosago Coloniam fugaciter pervenit. Theudericus post tergum cum exercitum insequens. . ." (Ibid, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, pp. 30v ff).

<sup>23</sup> Fredegar reports that Merovech was killed; he notes that Theudebert was sent in chains to Chalons but does not mention his death (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-38). Jonas of Bobbio says that Brunhild first let Theudebert be shorn and become a monk and then had him killed (Vita Columbani, I-28, in: MGH, SSRM IV, p. 105). The LHF has the citizens of Cologne kill Theudebert: ". . . unus ex eis, abstracto gaudio, a retro eum in cervice percussit, et accepto caput eius sustellerunt per murum civitatis Coloniae." (LHF, Chap. 38, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 308). They do this in order to save their city from further plundering by Theuderic. According to his account Theuderic later killed Theudebert's sons when he returned to Metz. (Ibid, p. 309).

by helplessly in the west, unable to prevent it. But if this again seemed like the knell of eastern hegemony, it was once more a false alarm. As Brunhild and Theuderic now turned their full force against Chlothar, Theuderic died of dysentery on the invasion march in the city of Metz and his army immediately dispersed and went home.<sup>24</sup>

This succession crisis of 613 was the undoing of the old queen. When she once again tried to keep her grasp on the eastern kingdom by attempting to make Theuderic's young son, Sigibert II, king, the nobility would have none of it. Led by the Austrasian nobles Arnulf and Pepin,<sup>25</sup> the magnates of the realm appealed to Chlothar of Neustria to invade and save them from the Burgundian matriarch. This, of course, he willingly did. Since most of Brunhild's and

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<sup>24</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-39. The LHF would have us believe that Brunhild poisoned him (LHF, Chap. 39).

<sup>25</sup> These are the men who, of course, according to the most accepted accounts become the founders of the Carolingian dynasty. They are mentioned only once, and then, it seems, almost in passing, in Fredegar's version of the events of 613. This is their first appearance in the sources: "Chlotharius factione Arnulfo et Pippino vel ceteris proceribus Auster ingreditur." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-40, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, pp. 32-33vv.). While the LHF agrees that Chlothar was made king in the east at the instigation of the nobility, it makes no mention of Arnulf or Pepin. (LHF, chap. 40).



Sigibert's forces deserted to the other side at the instigation of Brunhild's mayor, Warnachar, Chlothar easily won the day. Sigibert and his brothers were captured during the battle of Chalons-sur-Marne (613) and Brunhild was arrested shortly thereafter and tortured until she died.<sup>26</sup>

Although all of Francia was indeed again united under one king, the three Merovingian kingdoms retained their separate geographical identity and separate administration. The boundaries of the kingdoms were neither fixed according to the last division (that of 584, the death of Chilperic) nor would Chlothar recognize any of the subsequent conquests made by Theuderic or Theudebert. In the north they were fixed according to the old boundaries drawn in 511 and 561,<sup>27</sup> Aquitaine remained divided between Burgundy and Austrasia as it had been in 587 in the Treaty of Andelot, and in the Seine/Loire area, and Neustria was expanded to what it had been in 592 and 595.<sup>28</sup> Thus the geographical identity of each part was preserved as the territorial limits were again brought somewhat into balance.

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<sup>26</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-42. LHF, Chap. 40.

<sup>27</sup> Austrasia retained Reims, Chalons, Laon and probably Meaux. Neustria gained Cambrai, Vermand, Soissons and probably Paris. (E. Ewig, Teilungen, p. 693).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The administrative measures confirmed by Chlothar's edict of 614<sup>29</sup> also prevented the three kingdoms from losing their separate administrative structures and forming one realm. This was especially true due to the stipulation that required the royal agents (judices) to be appointed from the local populace and not from another kingdom.<sup>30</sup> Each separate kingdom also kept its own mayor of the palace as that section's administrative head. Warnacher, to whom Chlothar certainly was in debt for delivering the Burgundian nobility to his side almost without bloodshed, retained the position of mayor in Burgundy. If Fredegar is correct when he tells us that the faction of Austrasian nobility which called in Chlothar was headed by Arnulf and Pepin, we would reasonably expect one or both of them to be made mayor in Austrasia. Such, however, was not the case. Instead, a certain Rado, about whom we know nothing more, became Austrasia's mayor.<sup>31</sup> Sometime before 617 he was probably succeeded by Chucus, who is also otherwise a stranger to us.<sup>32</sup> It isn't until 624

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<sup>29</sup> Text in: MGH, Legum Sectio II, Capitularia Regum Francorum, I, pp. 20-23.

<sup>30</sup> "Et nullus iudex de aliis provinciis aut regionibus in alia loca ordinetur. . ." (Ibid, paragraph 12, p. 22).

<sup>31</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-42.

<sup>32</sup> Chucus is mentioned as one of three people who received state gifts from the Lombards in 617. The other two in the

that Pepin is mentioned as holding the title of mayor of the palace, <sup>33</sup> although in the meantime he had been entrusted with the upbringing of Chlothar's son, Dagobert. <sup>34</sup>

Arnulf, however, did remain in the forefront. Since he had been brought to the court of Theudebert II to learn the ways of administration as a youth, he was in a position to gain political office. <sup>35</sup> He was given the administration of six royal fisci <sup>36</sup> and then in 614 succeeded to the episcopal chair at Metz. <sup>37</sup> Thus at the beginning of Chlothar's reign in Austrasia, Arnulf came to serve as the bishop of that kingdom's most important city and as domesticus administering

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<sup>32</sup> (cont'd) list are the known mayors of Neustria and Burgundy; thus it is reasonable that he was the mayor of Austrasia. (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-45).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, IV-52.

<sup>34</sup> LHF, Chap. 41.

<sup>35</sup> ". . . per multa deinceps experimenta probatum iamque Teutberti regis ministerio dignum aptavit." (Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chap. 3, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 433).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, chap. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, chap. 6. The date, 614, is Krusch's (MGH, SSRM II, p. 433).

the extraordinarily large number of six fisci.<sup>38</sup>

By 622, local pressure had risen to the point where Chlothar was forced to give the Austrasians their own king in the person of his son, Dagobert.<sup>39</sup> The kingdom which Chlothar carved out for Dagobert, however, was not the old Austrasia which Sigibert I had ruled, but rather a smaller realm more to the east. Chlothar kept the lands on the west side of the Ardennes and the Vosges under his direct rule.<sup>40</sup> It is at this juncture that we assume Pepin became Dagobert's mayor of the palace, and that both he and Arnulf became the young king's chief advisors.<sup>41</sup> In 625, on the occasion of

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38 ". . . sex provinciae, quas ex tunc et nunc totidem agunt domestici. . ." (Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chap. 4). Although the word used is "provinciae" the meaning is most likely fisci since a fisc was administered by a domesticus. Bonnell points out that since each province contained a fisc, the words were probably easily exchangeable. (H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 95).

39 ". . . Dagobertum filium suum consortem regni facit eumque super Austrasius regem instituit. . ." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-47, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 39v). Although the LHF has the Austrasians and not Chlothar the active party, there is probably no difference in meaning: "Austrasii vero Franci superiores congregati in unum, Dagobertum super se regem statuunt." (LHF, chap. 41, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 311).

40 Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-47.

41 They are so mentioned by Fredegar for the year 624 (Chronicae, IV-52); Arnulf is mentioned as an arbitrator between Chlothar and Dagobert in 625 (Ibid., IV-53); then again when describing King Dagobert Fredegar says: "Usque eodem tempore [628] ab inicio quo regnare ciperat consilio primetus beatissime Arnulfi Mettensis urbis pontefici et Pippino maiorem domus usus. . ." (Ibid., IV-58, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 49v).

Dagobert's marriage to Gomatrud in Clichy, near Paris, Chlothar was persuaded to restore to Dagobert all the lands that had once made up the Austrasia of Sigibert I. This important agreement between the two kings was arbitrated by twelve Frankish lords chosen for the purpose under the guidance of Arnulf.<sup>42</sup> But soon, however, sometime shortly before 629, the industrious bishop retired from both his political and his ecclesiastical duties to a life of religious seclusion in the western Vosges.<sup>43</sup>

Arnulf's place at court was filled by Bishop Chunibert of Cologne. Pepin and Dagobert most likely chose Chunibert for two reasons. Cologne was one of the most important sees of the realm, and since the support of the ecclesiastical establishment was especially important to the government,<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-53.

<sup>43</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-58 and LHF, Chap. 21. Fredegar begins chapter 58 with the words: "Dagobertus cum iam anno septimo. . ." which Krusch dates as 629/630 in his edition (MGH, SSRM II, p. 149) and Wallace-Hadrill as 628 in his (Fredegar, p. 48). Since this is the chapter in which Fredegar last calls Arnulf Dagobert's advisor and the one in which he speaks of Arnulf's withdrawal, we assume that he laid down his offices shortly before 629. Bonnell, however, gives the date 627 (Anfaenge, p. 98). Bonnell has assumed that Arnulf took the bishop's chair a few months after his predecessor, Pappolus, died (September 11, 611) and thus Arnulf ascended either on Christmas 611 or Easter 612 (Anfaenge, p. 189). Then taking Arnulf's tenure in office to be 15 years and ten days, as given by Paul the Deacon (Catalogus Episcoporum Mettensium, in: MGH, SS II, p. 269) Bonnell calculates

a leading prelate was a natural choice. Secondly, Chunibert also came from a noble family with landed possessions in the Moselle area <sup>45</sup> and was also a member of the same Austrasian noble faction as was Pepin. By 629 <sup>46</sup> the old king, Chlothar, died and contrary to Frankish custom Dagobert assumed rule over all three kingdoms. <sup>47</sup> Chlothar's other son, Charibert, attempted to assert his rights by force, but his efforts came to no avail. He had to content himself with the area between the Loire and the Pyrenees and even that was partially controlled by the Basques. This section too fell to Dagobert on Charibert's death in 631. <sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> (cont'd) his retirement to come in 627. Krusch dates Arnulf's entrance year as 614 (MGH, SSRM II, p. 426) which would make his retirement in 629 if Paul is correct. Ewig simply says: "Arnulf begab sich nach dem Schied von 625/26 in die Einsamkeit der Westvogesen." (E. Ewig, "Die Fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 111).

<sup>44</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 99. The period of 600-650 saw the Merovingian church at the peak of its power. (Albert Hauck, Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands, Erster Teil, 6th ed., Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1922, p. 299).

<sup>45</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 111.

<sup>46</sup> The date is Krusch's (MGH, SSRM II, p. 148). Wallace-Hadrill admits it is correct but points out that using Fredegar's dating system results in 628 (Fredegar, p. 47).

<sup>47</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae IV-56, 57. LHF, chap. 42.

<sup>48</sup> Krusch (op. cit., p. 154). 630 in Wallace-Hadrill (op. cit. p. 55). Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-67.

In 629 Dagobert moved his capital from Metz to Paris where his father's had been.<sup>49</sup> This was not at all a happy event for the Austrasians; their kingdom was once again in a peripheral position and their king liable to fall under the influence of Neustrian advisors rather than their own Pepin and Chunibert. Once in his new capital Dagobert's life seemed to suffer a decided moral collapse. We hear of divorces, mistresses, debauchery and the plundering of ecclesiastical property.<sup>50</sup> According to Fredegar, the reports of Dagobert's misconduct reached Pepin who then hastened off to Paris. The impression Fredegar leaves is that

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., IV-60.

<sup>50</sup> ". . . cupiditates instincto super rebus ecclesiarum et leudibus sagace desiderio vellit omnibus undique expoliis novos implere thinsauros, luxoriam super modum deditus tres habebat maxime ad instar reginas et pluremas concupinas." Wallace-Hadrill's translation: "He longed for ecclesiastical property and for the goods of his subjects and greedily sought by every means to amass fresh treasure. He surrendered himself to limitless debauchery, having three queens and mistresses beyond number." (Ibid., in: Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 50). Wallace-Hadrill also comments: "Paris seems to have been too much for Dagobert and the result (ch. 60) is a total collapse of morals. . ." (Long-Haired Kings, p. 90). One wonders, however, if perhaps Paris wasn't rather too much for Fredegar. Railing against what seems to be rather normal behavior for a Merovingian king could be a pro-Austrasian source's statement of disapproval of anti-Austrasian developments expressed in moral terms.

Pepin followed the king to Paris in order to dissuade him from his immorality and put him on the right moral track again. A more plausible explanation, however, would be that Pepin went for political reasons - to ensure that either his influence or Austrasian interests were not neglected in a now foreign court. Either his leaving Austrasia or his failure to control the king aroused intense animosity on the part of the Austrasians toward Pepin. Their dissatisfaction was kindled to such a level that they sought to ruin Pepin's standing in Dagobert's eyes and actually to have him killed. Their schemes came to nought, however, for we next find Pepin safe, probably acting as guardian and supervisor of the upbringing of Dagobert's son, Sigibert. This occupation seemed to take Pepin out of the political limelight <sup>51</sup> and his place

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<sup>51</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-61. The passage is awkward and disjointed. The causes for the actions of all concerned are blurred. "Fredegar is in a muddle. . ." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 90). The events are given: Dagobert moves to Paris. Dagobert becomes immoral. Pepin hears of the immorality. Pepin goes to Paris. The Austrasians become angry with Pepin. Pepin travels with Dagobert's son, Sigibert, to King Charibert. Charibert comes to Orleans and is Sigibert's godfather at his baptism (this last in IV-62). The question of the Austrasians' anger with Pepin has been interpreted variously. The Latin reads: "Zelus Austrasioum adversus eodem vehementer surgebat, ut etiam ipsum conarint cum Dagobertum facere odiosum ut pocius interficeretur;" (J. W. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 51). Bonnell takes it to mean the enthusiasm of the Austrasians ("Zelus Austrasiorum") in their support of Pepin caused other interests at court to seek Pepin's life (Anfaenge, p. 100). Wallace-

(cont'd)



at court as Dagobert's most trusted advisor was taken by Aega, the Neustrian mayor. <sup>52</sup>

Two unsuccessful campaigns against the Wends and their king, Samo, in 631/32 and 632/33 <sup>53</sup> seriously weakened

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51 (cont'd) Hadrill (loc. cit.) and Haselbach ("Aufstieg", p. 43) reject Bonnell's interpretation on linguistic grounds. Wallace-Hadrill surmises that the Austrasians were incensed at Pepin for his apparent failure to control the king (loc. cit.). Haselbach: ". . . und als Pippin d. Ae. an den neustrischen Hof reiste und dort Politik zu treiben suchte, muessen die Austrasier darin einen Verrat ihrer eigenen Belange gesehen haben. Denn sie erhoben sich gegen ihn und trachteten ihm sogar nach dem Lebem." (loc. cit.). Krusch feels that Pepin fell too much under the influence of the Neustrians at court and thus incensed the Austrasians. ("Staatsstreich", p. 413). Ewig sees a split in the Austrasian party ("Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 111). Muehlbacher makes it a court intrigue (Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 29). Since the report that Pepin accompanied Sigibert to Charibert is the last mention Fredegar makes of Pepin until he is again called mayor of the palace after Dagobert's death (Chronicae IV-85), most historians conclude that this passage represents Pepin's fall from power. "Pippin war verbannt," (Muehlbacher, loc. cit.) ". . . wo er als Prinzenerzieher praktisch kaltgestellt war", (E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 59). Haselbach tells us he was forced out of political life (loc. cit.). Bonnell proposes that it was the Neustrian nobility's attempt to keep Pepin away from court where he could make himself influential with the king (Anfaenge, p. 101). They all do agree, however, that Pepin did become the supervisor of young Sigibert's upbringing - a fact that Fredegar does not expressly state. If that was the case - as it indeed seems to have been - then we find it hard to see in it anything but a shrewd political move on Pepin's part. Why should he battle the intrigues of a hostile foreign court? How much better to plan for the day when Austrasia would have her own king again? We remember that this is exactly what he did in 613 with Chlothar II's takeover; he spent his time bringing up young Dagobert and in 623 emerged as that king's chief court advisor. Why should he not employ the same plan with Austrasia's next king?

Dagobert's position. He was forced to agree to a discontinuance of the yearly tribute of 500 cows the Saxons had paid to the Franks since the days of King Chlothar I,<sup>54</sup> and once again the king of all Francia was forced to grant the Austrasians their own ruler. The viceroyalty was set up in 633/34 in Metz with Dagobert's two year old son, Sigibert III, reigning as king of Austrasia. As regents for the young king, Dagobert installed Chunibert of Cologne and a Duke Adalgisel.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-62.

<sup>53</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-68, 74 and 75. The dates are Krusch's (MGH, SSRM II, pp. 154 and 158).

<sup>54</sup> See Gregory of Tours, Historia, IV-9(14).

<sup>55</sup> Pepin's absence here is puzzling. There are several possible explanations. Bonnell (Anfaenge, p. 102) equates this Adalgisel with Ansegisil, Saint Arnulf's son, thus making Pepin's party well represented. This identification has, however, been conclusively rejected. "Adalgisel ist nicht mit Pippins Vater Ansegisil zu identifizieren." (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 136). Both men appear in the list of secular nobles in a charter of Sigibert III (MGH, Dipl. I, Nr. 22, p. 23 - Pertz, the editor, numbers the king Sigibert II). Haselbach (Aufstieg", p. 46) remarks: "Es handelt sich um zwei etymologisch versch edene Namensformen." And Krusch (Staatsstreich", p. 416) argues that Pepin I as head of the family would not have yielded to his son-in-law, thus Adalgisel must be another person. Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 118), however, adds that although Adalgisel's relationship to the Arnulfings has not been conclusively proven, a connection is very likely: "Ein Blick auf die Karte der Besitzungen der Arnulfinger/Pippiniden im Departement Meurthe-et-Moselle und die des Adalgisels im gleichem Raum macht die Beziehung evident. Beide haufen sich im noerdlichen Teil des Departements." See also, W. Levison, Fruehzeit, p. 98.

With this semi-independent march government, Dagobert seems to have achieved his immediate defense objective, for as Fredegar reports: "Deinceps Austrasiae eorum studio limetem et regnum Francorum contra Winedus utiliter definsasse nuscuntur."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>(cont'd) When speaking of Dagobert's death, Fredegar says (Chronicae, IV-85): "Cum Pippinus maior domi post Dagoberti obetum et citiri ducis Austrasiorum qui usque in transito Dagoberti suae fuerant dicione retenti Sigybertum unanemem conspiracionem expetissint. . ." (in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 71v). Wallace-Hadrill translates: ". . .Pippin the mayor of the palace and the other Austrasian dukes who had hitherto been Dagobert's subjects. . ." (loc. cit., p. 71r). If, however, the correct meaning were slightly different, that is: "Pepin, the mayor of the palace, and other Austrasian dukes who had been retained in the meanwhile under Dagobert's authority. . ." then it could mean that Dagobert retained Pepin and other magnates, whom he probably considered dangerous, in Neustria where he could keep an eye on them. (see E. Ewig, Die frankischen Teilreiche", p. 111 and 112). It could be too that the property and jurisdiction of Pepin and these other nobles were in that part of old Austrasia which Dagobert had not affixed to the new viceroyalty, the Duchy of Dentilen. The LHF (chap. 42) carries a conflicting account wherein Pepin is indeed made Sigibert's advisor.

<sup>56</sup> Chronicae, IV-75, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 63v.

Sigibert's Austrasia was also a reduced Austrasia as Dagobert's had first been in 622; Dagobert kept the Duchy of Dentelin affixed to Neustria. <sup>57</sup>

On January 19, 638, <sup>58</sup> Dagobert I breathed his last and was laid to rest in the abbey church of Saint Denis - an abbey he had so richly endowed. The reign of the last great Merovingian king had found its end. No other Merovingian would enjoy such an honored reputation in the later medieval world - a reputation that endured even long after the crown had passed to the sons of Pepin. <sup>59</sup> His royal power and prestige, still very much intact, and his keen sense of the expedient managed to stem the forces of Frankish decentralization, at least temporarily. His treatment of his brother Charibert, the establishment of the viceroyalty for his son Sigibert, and the issuance of the Lex Ribuaria all made their contribution toward this end. His house still had vast wealth in the form of treasure, booty, incomes, and land revenues, and in

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<sup>57</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-76. See E. Ewig, "Die Fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 114.

<sup>58</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 67v, note 1. Fredegar's account in: Chronicae, IV-79. LHF, chap. 43, contains a brief mention.

<sup>59</sup> The fact that we possess about 35 medieval documents falsified in his name is a clear indication that his reputation far outshone those of his successors and many of his predecessors (H. Zatschek, Wie das erste Reich, p. 26).

the early medieval world it was wealth plus the magic of royal blood which made kings.

After a two-year interregnum under Dagobert's queen, Nanthild, and the Neustrian mayor, Aega, the old king's younger son, Clovis II (640-657) was installed over the combined kingdoms of Burgundy and Neustria in October of 640.<sup>60</sup> With Dagobert's death, Pepin could and did return to his position as mayor of the palace in Austrasia.<sup>61</sup> As both kings were very young (Sigibert was eight or nine and Clovis four or five) both kingdoms now became the scene of power struggles among the nobility. Pepin's return to politics was short lived as he died shortly thereafter in 640 and the Neustrian mayor, Aega died in 641. Even before Aega's death there seemed to be some sort of armed factional dispute involving his son-in-law, Ermenfred. Aega, however, was replaced peaceably by a certain Erchinoald in 641.<sup>62</sup>

In Austrasia, a long and bitter dispute between two powerful noble families evidences itself on Pepin's death.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., IV-80.

<sup>61</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-85.

<sup>62</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-83.

Pepin was not succeeded as mayor by his son, Grimoald, but by Otto, baiolus (tutor or supervisor) to Sigibert since his childhood.<sup>63</sup> Pepin and Chunibert had built up a strong personal following for themselves,<sup>64</sup> a following to which Grimoald was heir.<sup>65</sup> In 643<sup>66</sup> Grimoald apparently felt strong enough to take the office of mayor simply by having Otto killed by a certain Leuthar, an Alamannian duke.<sup>67</sup> But Otto probably had a strong following as well, which, however, is not so easily discernible as that of the Arnulfings. We have no other direct information about Otto other than the name of his father, the domesticus, Uro.<sup>68</sup> "Otto" is a short form of the name "Audoin" which doesn't appear anywhere at this time but does occur at the end of the seventh century among the family which founded the Alsatian monastery at Weissenburg. In this family also we find the

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., IV-86. The fact that Fredegar now expressly calls Otto Sigibert's tutor casts even more doubt on the supposition that Pepin ever held the position. Bonnell says that Otto presumably held the position under Pepin's auspices, but that is pure conjecture (Anfaenge, p. 107).

<sup>64</sup> ". . . omnesque leudis Austrasiorum secum uterque prudenter et cum dulcedene adtragentes, eos benigne gobernantes eorum amiciciam constringent semperque servandum." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-85, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, pp. 71v & 72v).

<sup>65</sup> "Grimoaldus filius eius cum essit strinuos, ad instar patris diligeretur a plurimis" (Ibid., IV-86).

<sup>66</sup> Krusch's date (MGH, SSRM, II, p. 165).

name "Radulf" which among the contemporaries of Otto and Grimoald was borne only by the dukes of Thuringia. In 641<sup>69</sup> when Sigibert, Otto, Adalgisel, and Grimoald led a force of Austrasians against Radulf and the Thuringians, Fredegar, while describing Sigibert's, Adalgisel's and Grimoald's exploits, is strangely silent about Otto's. Radulf had a fifth column among the Austrasians which only feigned the attack and in the course of the battle the group of Franks from around Mainz also proved totally unfaithful.<sup>70</sup> Thus, given the connection of the names Otto and Radulf through the Weissenburg family, Fredegar's strange silence concerning Otto during the battle, the existence of factions among the Austrasian nobility, one of which was allied with Radulf, and Grimoald's hostility toward Otto, Ewig concludes that

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67 "Gradus honoris maiorem domi in palacio Sigyberto et omnem regnum Austrasiorum in manu Grimoaldo confirmatum est vehementer." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-88, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 75v).

68 Ibid., IV-86.

69 Krusch's date (op. cit., p. 164).

70 Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-87. (See E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 118).

Radulf, Otto, and the family which founded Weissenburg were probably related.<sup>71</sup> This family came from the eastern parts of the diocese of Metz and thus its members were the uncomfortable neighbors of the Arnulfings. The name "Gundwein" is also found among the Weissenburg family. Gundewin is the supposed murderer of Ansegisel, Pepin II's father,<sup>72</sup> which may be another indication that this probable Weissenburg-Arnulfing feud, first evidenced by Otto and Grimoald, was carried on later with equal bitterness and equally high stakes.

The campaign of 641 also brings to light another of the Arnulfings' rivals among the nobility - the Agilofings. Before the Franks fell to attacking Radulf directly, they seized and killed the Agilofing, Fara, because he had made secret agreements with the Thuringian duke.<sup>73</sup> This is part

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<sup>71</sup> E. Ewig, op. cit., p. 113. Another indication that the Weissenburg family had connections in Thuringia is the fact that Saint Peter's Monastery in Erfurt was founded by a group from Weissenburg. (Ibid).

<sup>72</sup> Annales Mettenses Priores for 678 in: MGH, SSRG, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-87.



of an older hostility for Arnulf and Pepin I had persuaded Dagobert I to remove and kill Fara's father, Chrodoald.<sup>74</sup> Sigibert's campaign against the rebellious Thuringians did not end happily for the Franks. The field was not Sigibert's and from this time the Thuringians paid only nominal allegiance to their Frankish lords.<sup>75</sup>

From Dagobert's death onward the separatist tendencies of the three kingdoms show themselves more openly and the rivalry among them became less a matter of Merovingian dynastic feud and more a case of regional hostility under the direction of each section's mayor. While Grimoald and Erchinoald seemed to have a relatively tight grip on matters in Austrasia and Neustrasia respectively, the Burgundian mayor, Flaochad, who was a Frank, had to wage a bloody campaign before the Burgundian nobility yielded to accepting him. His rule did not far outlast his newly won supremacy, however, for after his death in 642, since Fredegar mentions no successor, it is reasonable to assume that the Burgundian and Neustrian mayoralties were combined under Erchinoald.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-52.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., IV-87.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., IV-89 and 90.

Between 642 and 656 we have no chronicler. Fredegar ends abruptly in 642 and his first continuator, extracting his material directly from the Liber Historiae Francorum, begins with Clovis II's death in 657.<sup>77</sup> Why Fredegar ends so suddenly in what seems to be the midst of his account of Clovis II's reign is not known.<sup>78</sup> Thus the political events that played themselves out during this period must be reconstructed without benefit of a coherent contemporary account. This is especially regrettable because that which transpired in Austrasia had such far-reaching effects on the future of the Arnulfing family.

After the Arnulfing, Grimoald, had eliminated his rival, Otto, in 643 and assumed the Austrian mayoralty, he had both

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<sup>77</sup> Fredegar, Continuaciones, I. See also LHF, chapters 42-44.

<sup>78</sup> "Aus einigen duerftigen Nachrichten laesst sich schliessen, dass es zu Reibungen und wahrscheinlich auch zu Grenzkriegen zwischen Austrasien und Neustrien-Burgund kam." This is Ewig's comment on the period ("Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 120) although Fredegar's continuator assures us it was a time of peace, "Chlodoueus itaque in regno pacem habuit absque bella." (Fredegar, Continuaciones, I, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 80v).

the young King Sigibert III and all the royal affairs of Austrasia in his hand. His power grew until he was ruler in all but name,<sup>79</sup> and this last, according to some accounts, seemed to be this all-powerful man's next objective.

The Neustrian Liber Historiae Francorum (chapter 43) contains an account, albeit a sketchy one, of a short-lived seizure of the throne by Grimoald for his son, Childebert. The Carolingian continuator of Fredegar, whose account of the period is largely comprised of direct extracts from the Liber Historiae Francorum, chose not to mention this coup.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> We have several indications of his extraordinary position in addition to Fredegar's comments about him upon his take-over (Chronicae, IV-88). Sigibert addressed a royal charter to him (MGH, Dpl. I, Nr. 21, p. 21). We also have two letters of Bishop Desiderius of Cahors addressed to Grimoald. In one the bishop calls him: ". . . totius aulae immoquae regni rectorem . . ." (MGH, Epist. III, p. 196) and in the other Grimoald is addressed with titles such as "excellencia vestra" which according to Roman ceremonial usage was reserved for emperors and kings. (Ibid., p. 194). Correspondents inquire about his health first and thereafter about the king's. (See also: E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 29f, and B. Krusch, "Staatsstreich", p. 443).

<sup>80</sup> "The LHF is the earliest written account of the episode, and Fredegar either did not know about it or feared to write about it because of his connections with the Carolingians." (B. Bachrach, Liber, p. 20). The second reason seems the more probable. Since the continuator of Fredegar was copying the LHF (Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 80v and Krusch, MGH, SSRM II, p. 168 note 1) it would be somewhat difficult for him not to know of the event. Also Bachrach's claim that the LHF is the earliest account of the Grimoald coup is technically incorrect. The account in the Vita Wilfridi by Eddius Stephanus (MGH, SSRM, VI, p. 221) probably antedates

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Thus our most complete source is the sparse account the author of the Liber Historiae Francorum, writing in Neustria in 727, has given us. It tells us the following: - <sup>81</sup>

After this, however, since Pepin had died, King Sigibert [III], of Austrasia instituted his son, Grimoald, as mayor of the palace. But truly some time after Sigibert had died, <sup>82</sup> Grimoald tonsured his [eius] young son, named Dagobert, and sent him to Didon, bishop of the city of Poitiers, so that he might make a pilgrimage to Ireland, placing his own [suum] on the throne [in regno]. The Neustrians [Franci], therefore being truly enraged by this, prepared an ambush for Grimoald, removing him, they brought him to be condemned by Clovis [II], king of the Neustrians [Francorum]. He was delivered into prison in the city of Paris and bound with the torture of chains, as he was worthy of death because he vexed his lord. His death ended in a good deal of torture.

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<sup>80</sup> (cont'd) the writing of the LHF by more than a decade. Stephan, however, does not mention Grimoald by name, he simply says that Dagobert was expelled by "inimicis regnantibus" (ibid).

<sup>81</sup> I use my own translation because I find Professor Bachrach's to be a bit misleading. It makes the LHF author appear even more incorrect than he is. (cf. B. Bachrach, Liber, p. 101).

<sup>82</sup> Sigibert III died in February of 656 (B. Krusch, "Staatsstreich", p. 417.)

This account does not mention Grimoald's son Childebert by name, nor does it expressly state that the boy was killed with his father. Since Sigibert died in 656 and Clovis in 657, and since Clovis judged Grimoald, we know that the whole usurpation attempt transpired between the deaths of the two kings. The significance for the Arnulfing family is quite clear. In the mid-seventh century the family's head made an unsuccessful attempt to usurp the Austrasian throne. In less than a year he had been removed, condemned, and executed by the legitimate Merovingian ruler of Neustria.

This was the traditional view <sup>83</sup> until Bruno Krusch,

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<sup>83</sup> Thus Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 113, and E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 30. Through Muehlbacher this view lingered long into the twentieth century. Like many such views based on only one prominent primary source, it even rears its head in very recent scholarship - to wit: William L. Langer, An Encyclopedia of World History, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968, p. 162, where Chlothar III is listed as ruling all the Franks 656-660; H. Moss, Birth of the M.A., p. 199; H. Aubin, "Herkunft", p. 10; and Bernard S. Bachrach, Merovingian Military Organization, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972, p. 94 where: "Grimoald's inability to unite effectively such men [powerful, armed followers] behind him was responsible. . . ultimately for his death in 656." (Bachrach's acceptance of the LHF account's version of Grimoald's short reign is even more peculiar since the one secondary reference he lists for his comments is Eugen Ewig ("Die fraenkischen Teilreiche") who expressly says on page 120, "Der Liber Historiae Francorum bringt die chronologisch irrigte Nachricht, dass Grimoald schon unter Chlodwig II in paris hingerichtet worden sei." Ewig is, of course, aware of the careful scholarship that places the date in 661/662 and uses this date throughout his article.

and after him, Leon Levillain, began to assemble bits and pieces of a mountain of indications and evidence that the author of the Liber Historiae Francorum was once again poorly informed about things Austrasian.<sup>84</sup> If the Liber Historiae Francorum were correct it would mean that in 656 the Neustrian king, Clovis II, and after his death in 657 his successor to the Neustrian throne, Chlothar III (657-673), would have controlled both Neustria and Austrasia until 662 when Childeric II (662-675), the next Austrasian king expressly stated by the sources was established in the eastern kingdom.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Krusch's original work in "Zur Chronologie der Merowingischen Koenige", (Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte, XXII (1882), pp. 473-477) (librum non vidi), was expanded and refined in his longer article, "Der Staatsstreich des fraenkischen Hausmeiers Grimoald I." (Festgabe fuer Karl Zeumer, Weimar: Herman Boehlaus Nachfolger, 1910, pp. 411-438). Leon Levillain's original article is, "La succession d'Austrasie au VII<sup>e</sup> siecle", (Revue Historique, 112 (1913), pp. 62-93). Although their proof that the LHF is in error cannot be repeated in detail here, in tracing it through with them, one is soon aware that he is in the midst of one of the finest exercises in early medieval historical deduction by two of the finest minds ever involved with the discipline.

<sup>85</sup> LHF, chap. 45; Fredegar, Continuationes, 2; Series Regnum Francorum, in: MGH, SS, XIII, p. 724; etc.

However, snippets of evidence from many independent sources show us that Austrasia was indeed still in the hands of the Arnulfing family for approximately seven years in the mid-seventh century.<sup>86</sup>

The details of the events of these seven years still elude the realm of historical certainty,<sup>87</sup> but when what we know and what we suspect are filtered and refiltered, certain important currents emerge. On Sigibert III's (656) and Clovis II's (657) deaths the focal points of both Austrasian and Neustrian legitimate power were again two women - in Austrasia, Sigibert's widow, Chimnechild, and in Neustria,

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<sup>86</sup> See appendix, below page 260.

<sup>87</sup> "They must always be a matter of conjecture." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 234). When Krusch weighs all the evidence, he concludes that it was in 661/62 that Grimoald raised his son to the throne and sent Dagobert packing ("Staatsstreich", p. 429 and MGH, SSRM, V, p. 90ff). Levillain, on the other hand, thinks that Childebert was elevated in 656, killed in 657, and that Grimoald then ruled on until 662. "Si l'on relit maintenant le texte du Liber Historiae Francorum, ne doit-on pas être légitimement tenté de croire qu'au fils de Grimoald, fait prisonnier et mort dans les fers à Paris, notre auteur a substitué par inadvertance Grimoald lui-même." ("La Succession", p. 67)

Clovis' widow, Bathild. Sigibert's son, Dagobert II was raised to the throne upon his father's death under the regency of Grimoald and Chimnechild. Grimoald, however, managed to have Dagobert abdicate. The Neustrians agreed to this because they saw in it the end of the independent Austrasian royal line and thus more Neustrian control. <sup>88</sup> Grimoald and his Austrasian party wanted it, of course, for just the opposite reasons - more eastern autonomy. The move would also most certainly benefit Grimoald in a bid to gain unquestioned supremacy among the local Austrasian powers. <sup>89</sup> Grimoald ruled for seven years, for one of which he raised to the throne his own son, who had taken the Merovingian name,

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<sup>88</sup> E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 59. Ewig reminds us that the Neustrians must have been happy to see Dagobert's abdication, or they at least tolerated it, because they allowed Grimoald to send Dagobert to Bishop Didon of Poitiers. He also levels the possible supposition that Didon may have been out of favor with the Neustrian rulers and acting on his own by noting that Queen Bathild raised Didon's nephew, Loedegar, to the episcopal chair of Autum in 663. (Eugen Ewig, "Beobachtungen zu den Klosterprivilegien des 7. und fruehen 8. Jahrhunderts", in: Josef Fleckenstein und Karl Schmidt (eds), Adel Und Kirche, Freiburg: Herder, 1968, p. 122).

<sup>89</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill. Long-Haired Kings, p. 235.



Childebert. The west, the legitimate Merovingian line, and its partisans within Austrasia, led by Chimnechild and her mayor, Wulfoald, <sup>90</sup> eventually prevailed, however, and in 661/662 Grimoald, perhaps together with his son, Childebert, was swept from power and executed. Childeric II (662-675), the son of the Neustrian queen, Bathild, was married to Bili-child, the daughter of the Austrasian queen, Chimnechild, and imposed by the Neustrians as king of Austrasia. <sup>91</sup> The Neustrians had clearly won the upper hand over the Austrasians, Chimnechild's and Wulfoald's party had certainly won over the Arnulfings', and a decade of relative peace settled over northern Francia.

What do these events signify for the political position of the Arnulfings? Certainly not that the head of the family, dizzy with the desire for power in name as well as in fact, made a feeble attempt to grab a crown he couldn't hold. Rather, it seems to us that these events are the political

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<sup>90</sup> Wulfoald probably came from a noble family which lived around Verdun. "Eine Verwandtschaft mit dem jüngeren gleichnamigen Gruender von St. Mihiel ist sehr wahrscheinlich." (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 123).

<sup>91</sup> E. Ewig, "Die Fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 123. Vita Bathildis, chap. 5, in: MGH, SSRM, II p. 487.

expression of certain forces which the Arnulfings both exemplify and control, forces which are not yet able to overcome the western establishment and its partisans in the east, but ones which could and did support their family's head in power for seven years. Their day had not yet come, but Grimoald's colorful career shows us that they did indeed command a power-base in Austrasia that was independent of that of the Merovingians and able to run counter to their wishes for seven years. <sup>92</sup>

After Grimoald's fall the family passed from the political limelight for almost twenty years and Wulfoald, at first enjoying the support of the Neustrians, secured his grip over the government. <sup>93</sup> In the person of Pepin II, however, the

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<sup>92</sup> Wallace-Hadrill concludes the opposite: "The lesson of the crisis was not so much that the Arnulfings had betrayed their ambitions as that a mayor could be made a king provided he were disguised as a Merovingian." (Long-Haired Kings, p. 235). Out of Grimoald's seven years, Childebert only ruled one, and the sources show us that his disguise fooled no one.

<sup>93</sup> "Le rétablissement en Austrasie de la dynastie merovingienne marque pour la famille des Arnulfingiens le début d'une période d'effacement: la marie du palais échappait aux Pippinides, et le nouveau marie du palais, Vulfoaldus, allait rester pendant tout le règne de Childeric II et sous Dagobert II le premier personnage de la cour austrasienne." (L. Levillain, "La Succession", p. 74). We note with Bonnell (Anfaenge, p. 113) that although they had indeed lost the mayoralty, Arnulf's supposed son, Chlodulf remained as Bishop of Metz until 694 and his brother, Ansegisel, (Pepin II's father) was also still politically active. We remember too that the important abbey of Nivelles was still in family hands.

Arnulfings were to appear again in 680 as the political heads of Austrasia, and thus unless we are prepared to accept an ex nihilo explanation for Pepin's emergence, even from a purely political perspective we should be able to see that they may have been down, but they certainly weren't out.

This period of the Arnulfing intermission, from Grimoald's fall in 662 till we again see Pepin II emerge as dux in Austrasia in 679, witnessed the Neustrians once again playing the leading role in Francia. The dominant political position of Neustria was due in no small part to that country's powerful mayor, Ebrion, whose volcanic career reads like a grade B Hollywood script.

In 657 when the Neustrian, Clovis II, died he left three sons, Chlothar, Theuderic, and Childeric. Contrary to Frankish custom, his kingdom was not divided among the three, but given in its entirety to his oldest, Chlothar III (657-673), with Clovis II's widow, Bathild, now queen-mother, as regent for the five-year-old monarch.<sup>94</sup> The queen ruled the whole country of Neustria-Burgundy with her chief counsellors Chrodobert, the bishop of Paris, Audonin, bishop of Rouen,

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<sup>94</sup> LHF, chap. 44. Fredegar, Continuaciones, 1.

and the Neustrian mayor, Erchinoald.<sup>95</sup> In 657/58 Erchinoald died and the strong-minded Ebroin succeeded as mayor over the combined Neustria and Burgundy.<sup>96</sup> Together with the queen-mother he began to implement a forceful plan of consolidation and strengthening of the royal, centralized power, especially in the south where royal control was at its weakest.<sup>97</sup> The queen, however, was moving too quickly in trying to eliminate those opposed to strong royal authority. After 662 when the bishop of Paris was murdered and Bathild tried to punish the offenders she, herself, was forced to retire to the cloister at Chelles.<sup>98</sup> Her retirement

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<sup>95</sup> Vita Bathildis, chap. 5, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 487.

<sup>96</sup> LHF, chap. 45. Fredegar, Continuationes, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Again our narrative sources leave us in the dark for this period. Both the LHF (chap. 45) and Fredegar's continuator (2) jump from Ebroin's appointment (657/58) to Chlothar III's death (673) without a word. But again bits of evidence from a variety of sources allow us to see Bathild's and Ebroin's policy: From the ninth century Vita Eremberti (MGH, SSRM V, pp. 652-656) we learn that Bathild appointed Erembert, a native of Poissy and a monk of St. Wandrille (Fontanella) as bishop of Toulouse (op. cit., chap. 1, in: ibid., p. 654). From the Vita Bathildis (MGH, SSRM, II, pp. 475-508), the oldest version of which was probably written by a contemporary of the queen (Krusch, in his introduction, ibid., p. 478), we learn that Bathild had Aunemund, Archbishop of Lyon, killed by her "duces", and replaced him with her partisan, Genesius (op. cit., chap. 4, in: ibid., p. 486). According to the Vita Wilfridi, in chapter 6 she had 9 other bishops who were contrary to her interests killed (MGH, SSRM, V, p. 199). See E. Ewig, "Klosterprivilegien", p. 121f.

probably came sometime in late 664 or the first half of 665.<sup>99</sup> With the queen-mother thus out of the way, the whole government was left in Ebroin's grasp. Resistance to his centralizing policies wasn't long in coming, however, and it fell under the leadership of two brothers - Loedegar, bishop of Autun, and Warin (Gaerin), the Count of Paris. Ebroin first tried to rid himself of the bishop by litigation in front of his puppet king, but in the midst of the proceedings, Chlothar died (673).<sup>100</sup> Ebroin then had Clovis II's and Bathild's youngest son, Theuderic III, proclaimed king in Neustria and prevented the nobility from performing the customary privileges and oath-swearing at the coronation in

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<sup>98</sup> Vita Bathildis, chap. 10, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 495.

<sup>99</sup> The dates are Ewig's (Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 124). He takes them from the last charter she signed (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 40, p. 36) and the first charter Chlothar III signs without her (ibid., nr. 42, p. 39). Pertz, the editor, dates the charters 662 and 664 respectively. Ewig also notes, however, that the absence of Bathild's signature can also be explained by the fact that Chlothar had reached the Frankish age of majority (12 years) during this period. (loc. cit.).

<sup>100</sup> LHF, chap. 45. Fredegar, Continuationes, 2.

an attempt to keep them from gaining influence with the new king.<sup>101</sup> The infuriated nobles rebelled, and deposed and tonsured both the king, whom they sent to Saint Denis, and Ebroin, whom they locked away in Luxeuil. They then called Childeric II, the king they had sent to reign in Austrasia at Grimoald's fall, to assume the throne of Neustria-Burgundy as well, and thus rule all of Francia.<sup>102</sup> As Childeric and his mayor, Wulfoald, came to assume the power in the west, the king was forced to agree to several conditions. These, as might be expected, all favored the nobility. Childeric agreed that the laws and customs of each kingdom, were to continue, the royal officials of one kingdom were not to interfere in the affairs of another kingdom, and that the office of mayor was to be filled with members of the nobility on a rotating basis.<sup>103</sup> It seemed that

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<sup>101</sup> Passio Leudegarii, chap. 5, in: MGH, SSRM V, p. 287.

<sup>102</sup> LHF, chap. 45. Fredegar, Continuationes, 2. Passio Leudigarii, loc. cit.

<sup>103</sup> "Interea Childerico rege expeditiunt universi, ut talia daret decreta per tria quam obtinuerat regna, ut uniuscuiusque patriae legem vel consuetudinem deberent, sicut antiquitus, iudices conservare, et ne de una provintia restores in aliis introirent, neque unus ad instar Ebroini tyrrannidem adsumeret, ut postmodum sicut contubernales suos despiceret; sed dum mutua sibi sucessionem culminis habere cognoscerent, nullus se alio anteferre auderet." (op. cit., chap. 7 in: ibid, p. 289).

the noble party had won; Ebroin was in prison, his king shorn and safely locked away, and the king of their own calling on the throne and limited by agreements designed to prohibit the increase of central authority. However, with Wulfoald and his strong backing in Austrasia, the king began to act independently, violating the conditions he had agreed to and even managing to ban the Neustrian leader, Bishop Leudegar. As fate would have it, Childeric sent him off to Luxeuil, the very monastery where Leudegar's old enemy, Ebroin, was also being held prisoner.<sup>104</sup> The Austrasian-Neustrian antipathy seethed and boiled over into a conspiracy in which both Childeric and his pregnant queen, Bilichild were murdered in 675. Ebroin and Leudegar, strange cell mates indeed, had probably come to some sort of understanding and were probably both involved in the plot.<sup>105</sup> Wulfoald fled and escaped to Austrasia. Leudegar was freed from Luxeuil, and the only remaining legitimate Merovingian

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<sup>104</sup> (Ibid., chap. 12 and 13, pp. 294-296.)

<sup>105</sup> The deduction is Ewig's who notes that, Inglebert, one of the conspirators mentioned by the LHF (chap. 45, where: ". . . Ingobertus videlicet et Amalbertus et reliqui maiores natu Francorum, sedicionem contra ipsum Childericum concitantes."), is later made count of Paris by Ebroin. (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 128).

(so it was believed), Theuderic III, was recalled from Saint Denis and returned to the throne. Leudegar's party was again in power and they called Leudesius, the son of Ebroin's predecessor, Erchinoald, to be the new mayor.<sup>106</sup> The murder of this king, Childeric II in 675, and the lack of a strong successor in either Austrasia or Neustria is seen by some as a real turning point in Frankish history. It was now the nobility who would unleash a round of violent civil war, ". . . aller gegen alle . . ." <sup>107</sup> the fittest survivors of which were to be the Austrasian Arnulfing party with young Pepin II as the new family head. However, this strange and bloody scenario would take another twelve years to play itself out.

Wulfoald retained his control in Austrasia, and Leudegar's party held sway in Neustria. Ebroin was clearly odd man out. His one-time friend in adversity, Bishop Leudegar, apparently forgot the bonds of friendship now that times were better.

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<sup>106</sup> LHF, chap. 45. Fredegar, Continuationes, 2.

<sup>107</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche, p. 128; and Gabriel Fournier, L'Occident de la fin du V<sup>e</sup> siècle a la fin du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970, p. 132, where: ". . . l'histoire de la Gaule fut désormais [675] celle de l'antagonisme entre l'Austrasie et la Neustrasie, ce'est-à-dire entre les deux entités de la Gaule septentrionale. . ."



Ebroin was out, perhaps, but certainly not friendless. Leaving Luxeuil he raised a sizeable force of Austrasian troops from the factions disgruntled over Wulfoald's rule. His followers included Duke Waimar from the Champagne, Duke Eticho from Alsace and the displaced bishops Desiderius of Chalon and Bobo of Valence. Although not expressly stated by the sources, it is reasonable to assume that the Arnulfings were also among Ebroin's new partisans. They indeed had reason enough to be antagonistic to those currently in power.<sup>108</sup> Sporting a Merovingian pretender, Clovis III, the supposed son of Chlothar III, Ebroin invaded Neustria in the fall of 675. In a lightning campaign he crossed the Oise near Pont Ste. Maxence, captured the royal treasury in Baijieux and the king, himself, in Crécy-en-Ponthieu.<sup>109</sup> Meanwhile, however, Wulfoald had caught his second wind - from Ireland. In 676<sup>110</sup> he placed Clovis II, long-lost and presumed dead, on the Austrasian throne. Since this managed

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<sup>108</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 129. Passio Leudegarii I, chap. 25, in: MGH, SSRM V, pp. 306f. The supposition is further supported by the fact that once back in power in Neustria, Ebroin for a while, at least, did nothing to try to dislodge Pepin II and Martin from their position in Austrasia.

<sup>109</sup> LHF, chap. 45. Fredegar, Continuationes, 2.

<sup>110</sup> "Dagobertus II inter Kalendas Apriles et Iulias anno 676 in regnum Austrasiorum restitutus est" (Krusch in: MGH, SSRM, p. 366, note 1).

to lure away some of Ebroin's Austrasian support, Ebroin countered by dropping his pretender and recognizing the legitimate Theuderic III.<sup>111</sup> He tricked the mayor, Leudesius, into coming into his presence, killed him, and made himself mayor again. As soon as he held the machinery of power he went ahead with his former unification and centralizing policy. His first job, of course, was to rid himself of his old enemies, the brothers Leudegar and Warin. He saw to it that they both met ends of terrible torture.<sup>112</sup> With these gruesome examples he frightened and drove most of the opposing party into exile.<sup>113</sup> With the exception of Aquitaine, which maintained its status as a semi-independent duchy, he seems to have established himself and his government firmly throughout both Neustria and Burgundy by 678/679. He was probably not able to thrust his heavy hand any further into Aquitaine because of a war which broke out between

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<sup>111</sup> Passio Leudegarii I., chap. 28.

<sup>112</sup> LHF, chap. 45, Fredegar, Continuationes, 2. Passio Leudegarii I., chap. 28 and 29.

<sup>113</sup> "Reliqui vero Franci eorum [Leudegar's and Warin's] socii per fugam vix evaserunt; nonnulli vero in exilio pervagati, a propriis facultatibus privati sunt", (LHF, chap. 45, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 319).

Theuderic and Dagobert - that is to say, between himself and Wulfoald - over disputed territory, the most prized of which was probably the Champagne. <sup>114</sup> Austrasia may have actually gained the upper hand, <sup>115</sup> but any advantage was short-lived because assassination, that old companion of Merovingian politics, was soon to make another bloody appearance.

On the twenty-third of December, 679, in Stenay in the Ardennes, Dagobert II was murdered. <sup>116</sup> Behind the act

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114 "Denique nuper civile bellum inter reges Francorum Theodericum et Dagobertum circa illos fines est actum. . ." (Vita Sadalbergae Abbatissae Laudunensis, chap. 13, in: MGH, SSRM, V, p. 57). See E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 133. This source is enough for Ewig to assume the existence of the war. The other sources are silent.

115 The supposition is Ewig's (Ibid.). Exhibiting a skill and familiarity with the sources reminiscent of Krusch's, he points out that in 677 Dagobert probably laid claim to most of Austrasia's traditional borders, including the southern sections insofar as they were not part of the Aquitainian duchy. His claims included:

Poitiers. Filbert of Jambiege fled to Poitiers to escape Ebroin (Vita Filiberti, chap. 24-26, in: MGH, SSRM, V, pp. 596-598).

Chalons. A vita of Saint Memmius, bishop of Chalons, is dated according to Dagobert's reign: ". . . novissimo tempore in anno secundo sub imperio Dagoberti regis. . ." (Inventio Memmi Episcopi Catalaunensis, chap. 1, in: MGH, SSRM, V, p. 365).

Alsace. At least we can assume that Duke Eticho of Alsace recognized Dagobert II because Theuderic III confiscated Eticho's holdings in the diocese of Langres on September 4, 676 (MGH, Dipl. I. Nr. 46, p. 43).

Strassbourg. Dagobert offered the diocese of Strassbourg to Wilfred of York on his trip to Rome in the spring of 679. (Vita Wilfridi, chap. 28 in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 519.

probably stood Ebroin, Reolus, the metropolitan of Reims and the Arnulfings.<sup>117</sup> With the king's death, Wulfoald, his mayor, also disappears from the narrative sources. In his place as new rulers in the east, they simply name "Duke Martin and Pepin, son of Ansegisel".<sup>118</sup> We assume that

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116 Martyrologium Adonianum auctum ad diem 23. Dec. (quoted by Krusch in MGH, SSRM II, p. 519, note 1). See E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 134, and L. Levillain, "La Succession", p. 88.

117 E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 134.

118 LHF, chap. 46. Fredegar, Continuationes, 3. The indentification of this Duke Martin is somewhat of a mystery. The LHF reads: "Eo quoque tempore, decente Vulfoaldo de Auster, Martinus et Pippinus iunior, filius Anseghiselo quondam, decedentibus regibus, dominabunter in Austria. . ." (MGH, SSRM II, p. 319f). Fredegar (Continuationes, 3), adds more information: "In Auster quoque, mortuo Vulfoaldo duce, Martinus dux et Pippinus, filius Anseghysilo quondam Franco nobile, dominabantur, defunctis regibus." (Ibid, p. 170). Krusch (Ibid., p. 579 "addenda") found the following in a calendar of the church in Vienne, "quo tempore Pipinus, Ansegelli filius, et Martinus, frater eius, Austrasiorum regnum sub rege disponebant." Krusch, himself, then comments: "Itaque Martinus frater esset Anseghiseli et Patruus Pippini." K. Eckhardt ("Merowingerblut I: Die Karolinger und ihre Frauen", in Germanrechte NF, Deutschrechtliches Archiv, Heft 10 (1965), p. 21 - opus non vidi), according to Edward Hlawitschka, ("Merowingerblut bei den Karolinger?", in: Josef Fleckenstein und Karl Schmidt (eds), Adel Und Kirche, Freiburg: Herder, 1968, p. 70) assumes that "eius" is used for "suus", a common grammatical mistake of the time, and thus Martin is really Pepin's, not Ansegisel's, brother. There is some other support for this argument. If Krusch's punctuation of the LHF were changed slightly it could read: ". . .Martinus et Pippinus, junior filius Anseghiselo. . ." thus making Pepin Ansegisel's younger son (H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 123). Hlawitschka counters by saying if Martin and Pepin were brothers then the Latin in all cases should

(cont'd)

these new leaders and their Austrasian party had received some sort of guarantee of Austrasian independence from Ebroin before they eliminated Dagobert. Even if by so doing, they would finally rid Austrasia of Wulfoald and the party which had triumphed over Grimoald some seventeen years

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118 (cont'd) read, "Pipinus et Martinus Ansegelli filii." (Loc. cit.) Krusch's muse that Martin might be Pepin's uncle, it seems to us, should not be given much credibility, for even those sources which claim Arnulf to be Pepin II's grandfather fail to list Martin among Arnulf's sons. They specify Chlodulf and Ansegisel, but never Martin. (Pauli Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, "duos filios procreavit, id est Anschisum et Chlodulfum", in MGH, SS II, p. 264; Domus Carolingicae Genealogia, "Domnus Arnulfus genuit Flodulfo et Anschiso," in: ibid., p. 309; and the Commemoratio genealogiae domni Karoli gloriosissimi imperatoris, "Domnus Arnulfus genuit Flodulfum et Anschisum." in: MGH, SS XIII, p. 245). Another Genealogy, the Genealogia Sancti Arnulfi (MGH, SS XIII, p. 245), which editor George Waitz thought to be the oldest of the Carolingian genealogies (ibid., p. 242) but which now has been proved a forgery (E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 74), lists Martin as a son of Chlodulf. This would be a nice solution, it would give both men a familial reason to head the Arnulfing party. But unfortunately Hlawitschka reports (ibid.) that the genealogie's forger took his information from an interpolation in the Genealogia Domus Carolingicae and thus has no historical value. P. Neu ("Beitraege zur Gruendungsgeschichte der Abtei Pruem", in: Landeskundliche Vierteljahresblaetter (Trier), Jg. 7 Heft 4 (1961), p. 148f - opus non vidi) would make Martin the husband of Bertrada I, and thus Pepin's brother-in-law. (E. Hlawitschka, "Zur landschaftlichen Herkunft der Karolinger", in: Rheinische Vierteljahresblaetter XXVII (1962), p. 6.). E. Ewig ("Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 134) offers a political solution. He proposes that Martin is the Duke of the Champagne. This would make him the natural enemy of Bishop Reolus of Reims and thus explain the bishop's defection from the Arnulfings to Ebroin. Ewig seems to us to be the closest to the truth. A political connection between Pepin II and Duke Martin is obvious, a familial connection doubtful.

earlier, without a pact of some kind they would lay themselves open to unbearable pressure from the west where Ebroin would then control the only remaining legitimate Merovingian king, Theuderic III. But if there was a peace, it was an uneasy one at best for east and west again locked in a bitter struggle. In late 679 or early 680 the armies met at Lucofao where Ebroin routed the Austrasians. Pepin escaped into inner Austrasia while Martin fled to Laon, where he walled himself up only to be later tricked by Ebroin into coming out. Once the strong-willed Neustrian mayor had his hands on Martin, he had him killed.

Which side broke the peace and initiated these hostilities is an important question. If indeed it was Ebroin, then the Arnulfings would have to be considered simply as defenders of Austrasian autonomy. If, however, they themselves were the aggressors it would indicate that they perceived themselves to be in a strong position and that their ambitions now definitely extended beyond the borders of the eastern kingdom. Our two narrative sources typically follow their respective biases. The Neustrian LHF (chap. 46) makes Martin and Pepin rebel against Ebroin. The Austrasian continuator of Fredegar (chap. 3) on the other hand, erases the indication of Arnulfing instigation. He changes the Liber Historiae Francorum's account by saying that, the princes having argued

amongst one another, the Austrasians were incited to war against Theuderic.<sup>119</sup> The Annals of Metz, exhibiting their strong Carolingian leanings, make no mention of this Arnulfing defeat at all.<sup>120</sup>

Geography might be of some help. If Lucofao were the modern Lafaux, between Soissons and Laon, that is, in Neustria, then we might assume that the Austrasians invaded.<sup>121</sup> If, however, Lucofao could be identified with Bois-du-Fays near Rethel in the Austrasian Ardennes,<sup>122</sup> then Ebroin would appear the aggressor; but unfortunately the location is not a certainty.<sup>123</sup>

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119 The LHF: ". . .donec tandem aliquando hii duces in odium versi contra Ebroinum, exercitum plurimum Austrasiorum commotum, contra Theudericum regem et Ebroinum aciem dirigunt." (MGH, SSRM II, p. 320). And Fredegar: "Conmissis invicem principibus Ebroino, Martino adque Pippino adversus Theudericum regem excitantur ad bellum." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 83v). Wallace-Hadrill's translation (ibid., p. 83r), however, obscures the difference between the two texts.

120 I. Haselbach, "Aufstieg", p. 61.

121 Thus I. Haselbach, although she mistakenly calls it "auf austrasischem Boden" ("Aufstieg", p. 54).

122 Thus J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 83r and L. Levillain, "La Succession", p. 88, although the latter cautions against using the location of the battle as an indication of who instigated the hostilities.

123 "Doch kann ich dieses nicht nachpruefen." (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 134).

Whether it was their attempt at defense or their desire for expansion that was ruined at Lucofao, the Arnulfing prospects for any political success at all seemed most grim after the rout. Ebroin's position was invincible - he had two kingdoms in his hand and the other on the run. It was invincible, perhaps, to all but that time-worn Merovingian leveler. In May of 680 Ebroin was assassinated by a certain Ermenfred who then made good his escape to Pepin in Austrasia.<sup>124</sup> The Arnulfing fortunes suddenly reversed.

Both the Liber Historiae Francorum (chap. 47) and Fredegar (Continuaciones, 4) tell us that Ebroin oppressed the Neustrians, and it was for this reason that he was killed. Another expression of the same thought, however, is to say that Ebroin managed to stem the flow of power to the local nobility and reunited and strengthen the central government at their expense. This stronger central position which Ebroin had created was the one which the Arnulfings were soon to inherit. To say that Pepin II could never have ruled without Ebroin's preparatory work is probably saying too much, but without the "oppression" which his determined enemy so long

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<sup>124</sup> LHF, chap. 47. Fredegar, Continuaciones, 4.



exercised over Neustria and Burgundy, Pepin would have had a much harder bridle to hold once in the saddle.

Ebroin's successor to the mayoralty in Neustria, a certain Waratto, seems to have been willing to live with Pepin's independent position in the east. He received guarantees from Pepin and the two entered into a peace accord. Waratto's rule was interrupted for a time by his trouble-making son, Ghislemar, who pushed his father from office and undertook an offensive against Pepin, defeating him near Namur. It was not, however, a decisive defeat for the Arnulfings. Shortly thereafter Ghislemar died, bringing his father back into office, and peace returned. <sup>125</sup>

In 686, however, Waratto died, and under his son-in-law and successor, Berchar, Neustrian policy toward the east drastically changed. Again we hear of the mayor spurning the "friendship" and the "advice" of the nobles. <sup>126</sup> Bishop Reolus again changed sides along with Audoramnus and others of the Neustrian nobility. <sup>127</sup> Perhaps the deserters urged

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<sup>125</sup> LHF, chap. 47. Fredegar, Continuationes, 4.

<sup>126</sup> "Francorum amicitia atque consilia sepe contempnens." (Fredegar, Continuationes, 5, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 85v).

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

him on to it, or perhaps with the support of the Champagne which they had delivered to his side, he now felt he had the wherewithal to succeed. Whatever the cause, this time our sources leave no doubt that they feel Pepin was the aggressor.<sup>128</sup> He "rose up in Austria", "gathered his warbands" and in June of 687,<sup>129</sup> at the head of his array, crashed into Neustria. His invasion was not a deep one for he met the Neustrian forces under Berchar and Theuderic not far from the Austrasian-Neustrian border near the town of Tertry on the Somme.<sup>130</sup> This time the field belonged to the Austrasians. Berchar and Theuderic were put to flight and Pepin followed up his victory in good military fashion. Berchar was soon murdered and Pepin was free to organize affairs in the west. He proceeded cautiously, however. We don't

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<sup>128</sup> Bonnell, however, reminds us that the aggression wasn't necessarily all one-sided. Berchar may have wanted to punish the deserters or simply to use their desertion as the excuse he needed to attempt to end at last Pepin's autonomous position in the east (Anfaenge, p. 124).

<sup>129</sup> "Pippinum, qui a. 714, mense Decembri obiit, 'annis 27 et dimidio' principatum gessisse, anonymus infra c. 51 scripsit, unde a 687, mense Iunio ad illum adisse videtur." (Krusch in: MGH, SSRM, p. 322, note 5 to LHF, chap. 48). Wallace-Hadrill, however, dates the battle in 688 without telling us why (Fredegar, p. 85r, note 1).

<sup>130</sup> LHF, chap. 48. Fredegar, Continuationes, 5.

hear of oppression, banishment, confiscation, trials, or any other acts which could lead us to believe that he at once set about eliminating the rival parties. He simply left one of his own men, Norbert, in charge at the Neustrian court, and, taking the royal treasure he returned to his Austrasian heartland. It was from there that he exercised his rule over Francia. <sup>131</sup>

Unlike other victories of Austrasia over Neustria, Neustria over Austrasia, royalty over nobility, or nobility over royalty, the decision at Tertry was not to be overturned. Pepin had done it. The Arnulfings were in power and, except for a brief succession crisis between 714 and 720, there they would stay for over 200 years. What we have seen thus far are the events in their rise - the visible, and sometimes not-so-visible, tip of the iceberg - the "what" in "what actually happened". It is the chroniclers and hagiographers who have shown us the "what" in the Arnulfing's rise, leaving the historians to argue the "how".

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131 LHF, chap. 48.

#### IV. THE ARNULFING FACTION

"Chlotharius factione Arnulfo et Pippino vel ceteris procerebus Auster ingreditur." <sup>1</sup> Fredegar chose his words carefully in this sentence. The Arnulfings were indeed a faction of Frankish noblemen. They were bound together not only by the ties of blood kinship and marriage, but also by bonds of formal "friendship", ones of comitatus-like loyalty, and the feudal ties of protection and maintenance. These all reflected the members' common economic and political interests. The men of the middle ages bound themselves together for mutual security when the government could not offer them adequate protection. <sup>2</sup> As we have seen, the regna Francorum were subjected to an almost constant state of violence in the last part of the sixth century. It was during this turmoil that the Arnulfing faction was formed, and it was the following century which saw it grow and triumph.

##### Family Ties

The most obvious to us of these bonds is the familial. We must not, however, assume that "natural" ties of familial

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<sup>1</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-40, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, pp. 32v. f.

<sup>2</sup> M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. I, p. 142.

affection among these noblemen were a basis for common political action. Husbands and wives often lived apart.<sup>3</sup> Male children were often given up at a tender age to court officials in order to be prepared for a bureaucratic career.<sup>4</sup> Daughters also were given in marriage as the guarantee of certain alliances which their families had formed.<sup>5</sup> We would carry too much of our twentieth century view of the family with us if we were to use the sort of reasoning that might conclude: "Of course he supported the Arnulfings, he was so-and-so's brother-in-law," when he very well may have been so-and-so's brother-in-law because he supported the Arnulfings. It is an elementary point perhaps, but elementary only because it is important. The familial bond may or may not have been the most important; it is simply the most obvious.

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<sup>3</sup> A prime example, Pepin II, lived in Metz with his concubine, Chalpaida, while his wife, Plectrude, lived in a palace in Cologne (Henri Adolphe Reuland, Willibrord, der heilige Glaubensbote, Dubuque, Iowa: Gonner Luxemburger Gazette, 1884. p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> Such was the case with St. Arnulf, who spent his childhood at the court of Theuderic II under the tutelage of the official, Gundolf (Vita Arnulfi, chap. 3).

<sup>5</sup> Jean-Pierre Bodner, Der Krieger der Merowingerzeit und seine Welt, Zurich: Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag A G, 1957, p. 22.

For a number of reasons we know that the bonds of family had definite and powerful political effects. The passing on of land - the basis of most economic power - was a family affair. There was an increasing tendency for theoretically non-inheritable ecclesiastical and secular positions to fall into the possession of one family.<sup>6</sup> We see families controlling powerful monasteries,<sup>7</sup> and it was the marital and blood connections that the contemporary annalists, hagiographers, and historians most often mentioned. We shall begin with the Arnulfing family.

It is, of course, Saint Arnulf and Pepin I who are the generally recognized dynastic fathers of the Carolingian line; yet despite the importance of their own political positions and the power their progeny were to exercise, we know little or nothing about their contemporary relatives or their ancestors. About Pepin I's ancestors we know absolutely nothing. The sources are silent. About Arnulf's forebears, however, we have some clues. Arnulf was considered the father of the

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<sup>6</sup> The passing of the mayoralty from Pepin I to Grimoald, and the episcopal chair at Metz from Arnulf to Chlodulf are both obvious cases in point.

<sup>7</sup> For the Arnulfings the "family cloisters" included: Pruem, Nivelles, Echternach, and Stavelot-Malmedy.

male line, and thus his origins would seem more important to later generations than would Pepin's. The contemporary vita of Saint Arnulf tells us he came from Frankish noble stock.<sup>8</sup> Paul the Deacon, writing in 784, concurs, but says no more.<sup>9</sup> If these authors are correct, Arnulf's ancestors are to be sought among the Frankish nobility. In Paul's work there is also mention of another family of Gallo-Roman background which had provided two of Arnulf's predecessors, Agiulfus and Arnoaldus by name, to the see at Metz. The author of the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia, however, who wrote about thirty years after Paul and used Paul as a source, makes Arnoald the father of Arnulf and carefully delineates Arnoald's brothers and uncles by name. This could give us a whole list of Gallo-Roman (largely Aquitanian) bishops, martyrs, saints, and secular officials who were Arnulf's ancestors.<sup>10</sup> These are for the most part independently

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<sup>8</sup> "Arnulfus prosapia genitus Francorum, altus satis et nobilis parentibus, atque opulentissimus in rebus saeculi fuit". (Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chap. 1, in: MGH, SSRM, II, p. 432.

<sup>9</sup> "Qui ex nobilissimo fortissimoque Francorum stemmate ortus . . ." Pauli Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, in: MGH, SS, II p. 264.

<sup>10</sup> MGH, SS II, p. 310.

verifiable historical personages.<sup>11</sup> Pertz, however, emphasizes that none of the older sources, nor any of the ones which the author of the genealogy used, make the connection between the Roman senatorial nobility and Arnulf.<sup>12</sup> Heinrich Bonnell, whose work on the genealogy remains the classic study of the document, totally rejects using it for ascertaining Arnulf's ancestors. He correctly points out that the work seems a literary attempt to unite three previous ruling elements - the Merovingians, the emperors of Rome, and the Gallic Roman senatorial nobility - in the family tree of

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<sup>11</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 7-42, passim. The identification of the figures in this genealogy is Bonnell's work. His method is to take a name from the genealogy, list all the contemporary figures from independent sources who have the same name, and then decide which one of these is most probably the same as the man named in the genealogy. This method, of course, leaves many of his conclusions and suppositions open to real question a fact, which Bonnell, himself, sees and admits.

<sup>12</sup> MGH, SS II, p. 305.



the new Carolingian dynasty.<sup>13</sup> The fact that the genealogy is riven with Aquitainian saints and bishops Bonnell sees as an attempt by the court of Louis the Pious (813-840), under whom the genealogy was composed, to bind more closely that traditionally hard to control province to the centralized, Carolingian, royal power.<sup>14</sup> Bonnell's work is so thorough and so convincing that the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia has remained a rejected source and scholars have fallen back on the vita author's and Paul's assurances that Arnulf was a Frankish nobleman.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 4. The conclusion is quite correct. In the genealogy, Ferreolus, the Praefectus Praetorio Galliarum, represents the senatorial Gallo-Roman element. His family is mentioned by both Tacitus (Annales, XII-23) and Gregory of Tours (Historia, VI-7). Ferreolus marries a daughter of Avitius, the Roman emperor. The product of this union, Ansbert, then marries a daughter of Chilperic I, the Salian king, thereby uniting all three elements.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> In the mid-1960's a hope flickered briefly that perhaps the genealogy's desire to find Merovingians among Arnulf's forefathers was indeed the truth. Led by K. A. Eckhardt ("Merowingerblut I: Die Karolinger und ihre Frauen", in: Germanenrechte NF, Deutschrechtliches Archiv, Heft 10 (1965) - opus non vidi), historians returned and again attacked the genealogical sources with new methodological viewpoints. If there were Merovingian blood in Carolingian veins, then both the Grimoald usurpation attempt of the mid-seventh century and Pepin III's successful ascension in the mid-eighth, would have to be viewed in a totally new legal light. Eckhardt raised three important points for the support of his proposition. 1). Given the conservative Frankish naming customs, the fact that Charlemagne named his twins Lothar

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It seems to us, however, that one should perhaps not be too ready to dismiss the Genealogia's contention that Arnulf had a familial heritage of Aquitainian churchmen. The sixth century divisions of Francia ensured that the rulers of the eastern kingdom also controlled a portion of

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15 (cont'd) and Ludwig, thereby continuing two Merovingian names (Chlothar and Chlodwig), is a strong indication of common ancestry. 2). Even though the exact lineage connection of the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia, i.e., Chlothar I's daughter to Arnoald to Arnulf, can be proven as false, the fact that this court genealogy contains a Merovingian-Carolingian connection is significant. 3). The most important reason for Eckhardt was the existence of Merovingian names among the early Arnulfings: Grimoald's son, Childebert; the son of Grimoald II (Pepin II's son) named Theudoald; and Charlemagne's maternal grandfather named Heribert.

However, none of these reasons can be taken as anything near conclusive proof. Pepin III's assumption of the crown was seen by all contemporaries as an assumption by a non-Merovingian ruler, not a shift to another branch of the legitimate family. Grimoald I's son, Childebert, was probably given this Merovingian name after his adoption by Sigibert III. Prior to that he was probably also called Grimoald as was his father. The Catalogum Regum Francorum reads: "Childebertus id est adoptivus Grimaldus regnavit annus VII" and "Childebertus adoptivus filius Grimoald regnavit ann. VII" (MGH, SS II, p. 308). The abbreviation at the end of Grimoald is -us and not -i, and thus the texts mean, "the adopted son, Grimoald." (E. Hlawitschka, "Merowingerblut", p. 84f). Grimoald II's son, Theudoald, was not named for Theudebald, the Merovingian king of Metz (548-555) who lived six generations earlier. It was unusual Frankish practice to dip so far into the past for a name. Grimoald II, rather, gave him the name of his Bavarian cousin, the son of Grimoald's aunt Regintrud and her husband, Duke Theodo II. (E. Hlawitschka, "Merowingerblut", pp. 75-84).

Aquitaine. This kept contact, and especially ecclesiastical contact, alive between the two regions.<sup>16</sup> As far back as the time of Clovis, Aquitainian monks founded the monastery of Saint Maximin in Trier. Theuderic I sent many clerics from Aquitaine to Austrasia to help fill ecclesiastical vacancies. The see of Metz had possessions in the South, in Rodez and Arisitum.<sup>17</sup> In fact even in the seventh century, many of Austrasia's high churchmen were Aquitainian; Amandus came from Poitiers, Eligius from Limoges, Filibert of Jumieges from Eauze, and Remaclus of Stavelot-Malmedy was also Aquitainian.<sup>18</sup> Thus even if the exact connections in the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia seem unlikely, its ninth century author may well be telling us that Arnulf's family did draw upon the higher level of ecclesiastical and administrative tradition of the more romanized south.

Thus what can we conclude about Saint Arnulf, Bishop of Metz, and his ancestors? They were of the nobility. This was no rags to riches story. They were most likely of the Frankish ruling class, although his ecclesiastical position

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<sup>16</sup> Eugen Ewig, Trier im Merowingerreich. Civitas, Stadt, Bistum, Trier: Paulinus-Verlag, 1954, p. 85.

<sup>17</sup> E. Ewig, Teilungen, p. 673.

<sup>18</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkische Teilreiche", p. 103.

and the ecclesiastical environment of early seventh century Austrasia would probably indicate some sort of Aquitainian background as well. We are able to say no more.

When we turn from the Bishop's ancestors to his progeny we would expect there to be a bit more light to aid in our surveillance, but such is, sadly, not the case. In fact, Saint Arnulf very well may not have been the physical father of the dynasty with which the last 1200 years have so faithfully credited him. It seems that the professional literature would like to remove him but cannot prove that he does not belong. On the other hand, if the burden of proof were reversed, as it should be, and modern historiography were forced to build a case to include him, that attempt would also fail. As with so many cases in the dark ages, Arnulf's position is at best in the twilight.

Let us review the sources. The oldest is the Vita Sancti Arnulfi, written by a contemporary of Arnulf himself. Here we learn only that Arnulf had two sons. They are not named: ". . . ut ex eadem egregia femina duorum filorum gaudia suscepisset." <sup>19</sup> Fredegar, writing about 658/660, makes no

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<sup>19</sup> Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chap. 5, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 433.

mention at all of Arnulf's children. The author of the Liber Historiae Francorum, writing in 727, likewise does not make the connection of Saint Arnulf to Ansegisel to Pepin II. He does call Pepin ". . . filius Anseghiselo quondam. . ." <sup>20</sup> but nowhere draws the link to Arnulf. The same holds true for Fredegar's first continuator who wrote sometime after 736. If we check the charters from the period, with the exception of one pious phrase of Pepin II in a charter copied at the St. Arnulf church in Metz itself, <sup>21</sup> we find, too, that none of them draws the necessary line between Ansegisel and Arnulf. Though we admit that in each of the charters where Ansegisel is mentioned the inclusion of a phrase, such as "filius Arnufi episcopi", would deviate from normal practice, nonetheless the connection is not made. <sup>22</sup> It is not until we come to the Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, which Paul the

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<sup>20</sup> LHF, chap. 46, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 320.

<sup>21</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 2, p. 92.

<sup>22</sup> These documents are found in MGH, Dipl. I: Nr. 22, p. 23; nr. 29, p. 33; nr. 2, p. 92; nr. 4, p. 93; nr. 5, p. 94; nr. 6, p. 95; and nr. 1 ("spuria"), p. 209, where he is called, "Anchisi".

Deacon wrote in 784, that we find Arnulf mentioned as Ansegisel's father.<sup>23</sup> To believe that Arnulf is the father of the Carolingians is to believe Paul, for all the later accounts and genealogies which make the claim are either directly or indirectly based on Paul's work. It was Paul that the author of the Domus Carolingicae Genealogia used, and from his work the word spread.<sup>24</sup>

There is indeed reason enough to doubt the good Deacon's information, not least of which is the above-mentioned silence concerning Ansegisel's supposed famous father by the chroniclers, historians, hagiographers, and diplomists who wrote during the one and one-third century between Arnulf's death and Paul's writing. Bruno Krusch had his doubts about Arnulf's position: "Nach der aeltesten karolingischen

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23 " . . . duos filios procreavit, id est Anschisum et Chlodulfum . . ." in: MGH, SS II, p. 264.

24 In 835, Thegan, a chorepiscopus at Trier, wrote a life of Louis the Pious (MGH, SS II, pp. 585-603) in which he makes loud assurances that Arnulf was Charlemagne's ancestor ". . . sicut paterno relatu didicimus, et multae testantur historiae." (Ibid., p. 590). In the fifty years since Paul's writing the opinion had indeed widened. Bonnell pertinently asks if this assurance couldn't be a protest against the many contemporaries who didn't believe that the lineage came from Arnulf (Anfaenge, p. 45).

Genealogie (SS. XIII, S. 243 N. 2. . .) heisst der Vater des 'Ansgihisus' und Grossvater Pippins II. 'Aodulfus', und erst Paulus hat daraus Arnulf den Bischof von Metz gemacht, dessen Ruhm als Stammvater des karolingischen Hauses also auf recht schwachen Fuessen steht".<sup>25</sup> Heinrich Bonnell sees Paul's Gesta as dedicated to no higher purpose than to portray Arnulf as the ancestor of the Carolingian line and to trace that line to Charlemagne.<sup>26</sup> We wonder, however, how much Paul's connection with the current Bishop of Metz, Angilramm, whose archives he used, and with Charlemagne himself, colored his perception of events which had happened some 150 years previously. The more reliable Einhardt does not trace Charlemagne's line beyond Pepin II, yet the same sources were available to him as were available to Paul.<sup>27</sup> The Annales Mettenses Priores also shrink from calling Arnulf Ansegisel's father, naming him a close relative instead.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Staatsstreich", p. 414, note 5.

<sup>26</sup> Anfaenge, p. 46.

<sup>27</sup> Vita Karoli Magni, chap. 2.

<sup>28</sup> "Ad solidandum quoque ipsius imperii fundamentum erat ei agnatione propinquus quidam vir plenus virtutibus, Arnulfus nomine." Pepin II (Annales Mettenses Priores, in: MGH, SSRG, p. 3).

We also note that, given the Frankish naming customs, it is very peculiar that it isn't until the Emperor Arnulf (896-899) that the name of the dynasty's supposed father again appears.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, there have been, of course, numerous Pepins, Charles, and even a second Grimoald. In such a pious family, why is the name of its most Christian alleged founder so strangely lacking? It seems perhaps a bold step to remove Arnulf from the Arnulfings, but the evidence does not allow us to include him. This is not to say that there was no bond between Pepin I and the powerful Bishop of Metz - Fredegar's account leaves little doubt of that - but that

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<sup>29</sup> Pepin II's son, Drogo, had a son named Arnold who is often mistakenly called Arnulf (sic in: E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 80). The confusion started with the twelfth century cartulary of the Abbey at Echternach where the cartulary's author calls Drogo's son Arnulf. It is from this cartulary that both Pertz (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 7, p. 96) and Weiland (MGH, SS XXIII, p. 60) took their recension of Arnold's donation charter for Echternach, the only authentic charter we have of his. Camille Wampach, however, gives us the following from another manuscript tradition which he says is nearer to the diplomist's usage than to that of the cartulary: ". . . Arnoldus dux dedit bona sua sancto W(illibrordo). . ." (C. Wampach, Echternach, I-2, p. 61f, note 25a). Drogo's son is also called Arnold by the Annales Nazariani for the year 723 (MGH, SS I, p. 25).



bond was not familial, it began as and remained a political tie.<sup>30</sup>

For the identification of Pepin I's family we don't have to rely on the politically tainted texts of Charlemagne's era; we have a contemporary seventh century source in the form of the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis.<sup>31</sup> Geretrude was the daughter of Pepin and his wife, Itta, who is also called Ittaberga, the founder and first abbess of the monastery at Nivelles in Brabant, south of Brussels.<sup>32</sup> The Virtutes

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<sup>30</sup> If we may be accorded the caprice of pure speculation we can use the absence of the familial tie between Arnulf and Pepin to make sense out of the confusing events of the 620's. If one is disinclined to accept the yearning for religious seclusion (especially when such a desire is a standard hagiographical topos) as the reason for the sudden retirement of a 57-year-old magnate at the height of his secular power, then one might keep half an eye open for some sort of political force-out. If indeed Arnulf's political star was falling, it would make sense for Pepin to look around for a new partner, which he seems to have found about 628 in the person of Chunibert of Cologne. However, Pepin, himself, was forced from the limelight in 629, and the former mayor then scrambled to find the best position he could, that of tutor to the infant king, Sigibert III. It is during this period of his political nadir that Pepin probably married off his daughter Begga (she died in 693). This would explain why he was only able to find a domesticus, Ansegisel, for her mate rather than one of the more powerful magnates.

<sup>31</sup> Text in: MGH, SSRM II, pp. 447-474. "Itaque Geretrudis Vita ut vix ante annum 670 composita est, ita non multo post." (Krusch, ibid., p. 448).

<sup>32</sup> ". . . beatae memoriae genetricis suae Ittane. . ." "Dum Pippinus, genitor suus. . ." (Vita Sanctae Geretrudis, chap. 1, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 454).

Sanctae Geretrudis, which are appended to the vita in most manuscripts and seem to have been written about 700,<sup>33</sup> also give us the name of another of Pepin's children, Geretrude's sister, Begga.<sup>34</sup> For Pepin's third known offspring, Grimoald, there is no lack of trustworthy sources, most of which assure us that he is Pepin's son.<sup>35</sup> Grimoald had two known children, his son, whom he made king with the adopted name Childebert,<sup>36</sup> and a daughter, Vulfetrude, who succeeded her aunt, Geretrude, as abbess at Nivelles in 658.<sup>37</sup>

It is through Pepin I's daughter, Begga, and her marriage with the domesticus, Ansegisel, that the family produced its

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33 "Quam ob rem eum circa a. 700. haec scripsisse veri simile est." (Krusch, ibid., p. 449).

34 ". . . in corde sue germane nomine Beggane. . ." (Virtutes, chap. 10, in: ibid., p. 469).

35 "Grimoaldus filius eius. . ." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-86 in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 72v); and "Pippino defuncto, Grimoaldo, filio eius. . ." (LHF, chap. 43, in: MGH, SSRM, II, p. 315f).

36 LHF, chap. 43, where the son is mentioned but not named, and Catalogum Regum Francorum (MGH, SS II, pp. 307-308) where he is called Childebert.

37 "Sie wird in der Vita S. Geretrudis c. 6. MG. SS. rer. Merov. 2, S. 459f., als neptis Geretruds ausgewiesen. Da dort zugleich vom odium paternum der Koenige und Koeniginnen gegen sie die Rede ist, womit auf den Staatsstreich Grimoalds angespielt wird, kann sie nur eine Tochter Grimoalds I. gewesen sein." (E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 76).

leader for the third generation in the person of their son, Pepin II. The oldest source telling us expressly that Begga was Pepin II's mother is again the Annales Mettenses Priores,<sup>38</sup> and even if we were not to trust fully this over-laudatory account, the commonality of Pepin's name with that of his grandfather should reassure us of the authenticity of the familial connection. That Pepin II's father was Ansegisel is clear not only from the Annals of Metz, but from many more reliable sources, both narrative and diplomatic.<sup>39</sup> Pepin had two wives, Plectrude, with whom he signed many of his donation charters,<sup>40</sup> and Chalpaida, from whom Pepin's undesired heir was to come.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> "Ad solacium autem prestante Domino tantae rei publicae administrationis erat ei gloriosa genitrix cunctis laudibus digna, nomine Begga, filia Pippini precellentissimi quondam principis. . ." (Annales Mettenses Priores, in: MGH,SSRG, p. 2).

<sup>39</sup> ". . . et Pippinus filius Anseghysilo quondam Franco nobile . . ." (Fredegar, Continuationes, 3, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 83); ". . . Pippinus iunior, filius Anseghiselo quondam. . ." (LHF, chap. 46, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 320); ". . . inluster vir Pippinus, filius Ansgisile. . ." (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 4, p. 93); see also numbers: 5, p. 94; and 6, p. 95.

<sup>40</sup> All of Pepin's charters collected by Pertz (MGH, Dipl. I, numbers 2-7, pp. 91-96) list Plectrude as his wife and co-signer.

<sup>41</sup> "Igitur praefatus Pippinus aliam duxit uxorem nobilem et elegantem nomine Chalpaida. . ." (Fredegar, Continuationes, 6 in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 86v).

With Pepin II's children we come to the last generation of Arnulfings who affected the family's rise prior to 687. The first two of Pepin's sons, Drogo and Grimoald II, were borne by Plectrude.<sup>42</sup> With his second, simultaneous, and quasi-official wife, Chalpaida, he conceived the irascible Charles Martel.<sup>43</sup> Duke Childebrand is called a "germanus" of Charles which makes Pepin his father. Who Childebrand's mother was, however, is still a matter of speculation.<sup>44</sup> These are all of the known direct Arnulfing family members. We can be as sure of their identity as we can of most things in the seventh century.

The Arnulfings were both careful and clever with family marriages, for indeed as we shall soon see, it was really the

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42 "Ex ipsa Plectrude genuit filios duos: nomen maioris Drocus, nomen vero minoris Grimoaldus." (LHF, chap. 48, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 323).

43 ". . . ex qua Chalpaida genuit filium vocavitque nomen eius lingue proprietate Carlo; crevitque puer, eligans atque egregius effectus est." (Fredegar, Continuationes, 6, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 86v). ". . .this alone would betray the continuator's feelings towards the Carolingians. If elegans has reference to Hebrews XI.23 a comparison of Charles with Moses is implied." (Wallace-Hadrill, ibid, p. 86r, note 3).

44 Fredegar, Continuationes, 20. Wallace-Hadrill thinks he was probably the son of Chalpaida (Fredegar, p. 86r, note 2) whereas Hlawitschka argues more convincingly for a son of an unnamed concubine ("Vorfahren", p. 78).

wives and their families who broadened and strengthened the family holdings. The direct members of the family are rather easily discernible to us, as we have seen, and the documentation of their identity is solid. However, when we begin to examine the families of the Arnulfing wives, we are again reminded of how dark the seventh century remains to even the most intense historical searchlight.

Of Pepin I's wife, Itta, and her family, we know no more than that which the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis and the donation documents for the two monasteries, Nivelles and Fossella-Ville, tell us.<sup>45</sup> From these, and by comparing the donation documents of three other noble families in the area, we know that she came from a powerful, landholding Frankish family. One of these other families, that of Adelgunde, had near relatives who held high positions in the Neustrian court.<sup>46</sup> Thus Pepin I's marriage not only brought the family vast holdings in Belgium, but may have been one reflecting some high-level political connections as well.

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<sup>45</sup> Additamentum Nivalense, in MGH, SSRM IV, p. 450f, librum non vidi. The exhaustive investigation of these Belgian families and their social conditions is the work of Alexander Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 109-117).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

The marriage of Pepin I's daughter, Begga, and the domesticus, Ansegisel, would not have been particularly advantageous for the family. Despite the laudatory comments of the Annals of Metz, Ansegisel, although at court, could only claim membership among the second level of the nobility. This can be seen from the charters in which he is mentioned, where his position is not among the highest nobility, but near the end of the second list.<sup>47</sup> We know nothing of his family unless we take Paul the Deacon at his word and assume that he was Arnulf's son.<sup>48</sup> In that case we would also be able to include Chlodulf, Ansegisel's supposed brother, in the family. Even Paul admits, however, that very little is known of him.<sup>49</sup> Since he was the Bishop of Metz for over 40 years (657-697) we can safely assume that he was a man of considerable status and influence. His name also appears in the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis along with Modessa, the abbess of Oeren in Trier.<sup>50</sup> The fact that his name appears in such

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<sup>47</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 22, p. 23, and nr. 29, p. 28.

<sup>48</sup> Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium, in: MGH, SS II, p. 264.

<sup>49</sup> ". . . ad episcopale culmen ob paternae sanctitatis gloriam tricesimus atque secundus ascendit, de quo nihil ad nos amplius, praeter quod a tali radice exortus est, fama perduxit." (ibid., p. 267).

<sup>50</sup> Vita Sanctae Geretrudis, chap. 2, in: MGH, SSRM II, p. 265.

a family document as this vita is a strong indication of his connection with the family, but again, we doubt that that connection was familial.

With the next generation, however, and Pepin II's marriage to Plectrude, we see the Arnulfings combining with one of the wealthiest land-owning families of Austrasia. The discovery of these important familial connections is the result of work by rather recent historians.<sup>51</sup> Consequently we find their arguments more often constructed with the newer historiographical tools - onomastics, analysis of land-holding patterns, private charter diplomatics, and the like. These types of methodologies do not often produce the sorts of hard and fast, or pin-pointed connections that we were able to see in delineating the immediate Arnulfing family; instead, this research produces indications, probable suppositions, and logical deductions. "What else can it be?" is often the level of "proof" with which we will deal. Nonetheless, even if many of the details cannot be straightened out and put in order, even if many of the characters cannot be assigned a fixed and definite twig on the family tree, and even if many

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<sup>51</sup> The most recent major contribution is that of Eduard Hlawitschka, whose various works appeared in the mid and late 1960's.

questions still remain unanswered, for the purposes of our study, this sort of work is almost as valuable as would be the work of some genealogicus ex machina who could fit the familial pieces together with assured precision. This new research essentially says, "We see this and that type of relationship and therefore we can assume that this or that marriage or familial tie existed". For our purposes it is those very pre-existing relationships of economics, politics, or real estate which carried the weight in building the power-base, and we are grateful to those modern scholars who have pointed them out to us even if they used the information to answer other questions.

Who, then, was this ". . . inlustris matrona mea Plec-trudis, filia Hugoberti quondam. . ." <sup>52</sup> and why did Pepin II marry her? The first part of the answer is buried in the donation documents for the family monastery at Echternach. That she was the daughter of Hugobert is expressly stated, and we find him listed in two royal charters as Seneschal and as Childebert III's comes palatii. <sup>53</sup> Thus from the father we know that the family must have had political influence. The

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<sup>52</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr 5, p. 94.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., nr. 66, p. 58 and nr 70, p. 62. See E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 74.



more revealing factor, however, is contained in the personage of Plectrude's mother who was much harder to uncover. The identification of this important historical character and her relationship to the Arnulfings was the work of Camille Wampach, the learned historian and editor of sources pertaining to Echternach and medieval Luxembourg.<sup>54</sup> He noted that Echternach's founder, a certain Irmina, donated lands in locations to her monastery, portiones of which were also held by members of the Arnulfing family. In one of her donation charters we learn that Irmina had two daughters, Attala (Adela) and Chrodelindis.<sup>55</sup> Knowing this, we can then find the missing connection between Plectrude and Irmina in a document of Adela known to us through an eleventh century copy. Here we learn the names of two more of Adela's sisters,

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<sup>54</sup> See C. Wampach, "Irmina von Oeren", passim, and his Geschichte der Grundherrschaft Echternach im Fruehmittelalter, I-1, Textband, Luxembourg: Druck und Verlag der Luxemburger Kunstdruckerei A. G., 1929, pp. 113-135.

<sup>55</sup> ". . . Ymena, Deo sacrata, et Attala atque Crodelindis, filie ipsius, dederunt viro Dei [Willibrord] portionem suam in villa Cabriaco et in villa Bedelinga, que eis a parentibus suis provenit." (C. Wampach, Echternach, I-2, nr. 12., p. 37 and MGH, SS XXIII, p. 55).

Regentrude and Plectrude.<sup>56</sup> Thus we can begin to build the family: we have the parents, Hugobert and Irmina, and four daughters, Plectrude, Adela, Regentrude, and Chrodelindis.<sup>57</sup> And when we begin to follow these names through the donation documents for the monasteries of Echternach, Pruem, and Pfalzel (on the Moselle, north of Trier), we realize that Pepin's marriage with Plectrude was one which combined the Arnulfings with a family of immense holdings in the middle Moselle region.<sup>58</sup>

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56 ". . . ad prefatum monasterium villas meas, que sunt Botbergis, Beslanc, quas ego a dulcissima germana mea Regentru-di dato precio comparavi, et ei ex legitima hereditate et de genitore suo Dagoberto quondam legibus obvenit, et ipsa germana mea Regentrudis vel missi sui contra Plectrudem in partem receperunt, sitas in pago quae dicitur Gildegavia." (De Rebus Treverensibus Saeculorum VIII-X. Libellus, chap. 16 in: MGH, SS XIV, p. 106).

57 The above is, of course, an oversimplification of Wampach's work. The identity of Attala and Adela had to be established, the parcels of land had to be identified and located, the authenticity of the charters established, the insistence of authors and copyists to call these pious women "filiae Dagoberti" had to be explained away, and so it went. In each case Wampach's work is both thorough and convincing.

58 Wampach, Echternach I-1, 117-121; Friedrich Prinz, Fruehes Moenchtum im Frankreich, Muenchen: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1965 p. 234; and H. Aubin, "Herkunft", p. 45.

When we scratch a little deeper we find further indications of Pepin's dealings buried behind this marriage. In 706 Pepin and Plectrude donated the other half of the villa Echternach to the monastery there. This was land that a Duke Theotar had once owned and that his son, Theodard, had sold or given to the pair.<sup>59</sup> This could mean, then, since Irmina and Theotar each held half of the same villa, that they were siblings.<sup>60</sup> However, Frankish inheritance custom would not have allowed Irmina to inherit a portion of Echternach if she had a male sibling.<sup>61</sup> It seems, then, that Theotar was her uncle and Theodard her cousin.<sup>62</sup> This would all remain somniferous trivia if it weren't for a very significant connection. If we look ahead to Irmina's death, we find that she was buried in the monastery at Weissenburg.

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59 ". . . illam medietatem de ipso Epternaco, quam Theotarius quondam dux ibidem tenuit, et postea filius suus Theodardus quondam nobis tradidit. . ." (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 4, p. 93, and C. Wampach, Echternach 1-2, nr. 14, p. 39).

60 Thus Ewig (Trier, p. 136) and Wampach (Echternach I-1, p. 128), although he says that there isn't enough evidence to prove it conclusively.

61 pactus Legis Salicae, Title LIX, 1-5. A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 48 and 55.

62 E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 73.

It also seems that these two noblemen, Theotar and Theodard, were that monastery's founders.<sup>63</sup> The family which supported the Weissenburg Monastery was the same family which had collaborated with Radulf of Thuringia against Pepin II's uncle, Grimoald I, in 641 - the same family to which Otto, Grimoald's political opponent had belonged, and the family which may have sent Gundewin to murder Pepin's father. Thus the Plectrude-Pepin marriage seems to indicate that somehow Pepin had ended this long and bitter feud and that his ambitions were stretching eastward into the Alsace. It was quite a match indeed, one which united Pepin with a rich land-holding family in the middle Moselle who had important connections farther eastward.

There is yet another important connection hidden behind Plectrude's wedding veil. If we skip ahead to 762 we find Pepin II's grandson, Pepin III, now King Pepin, and his queen Bertrada II, donating land to the family monastery at Pruem.<sup>64</sup> Among many other land parcels, the royal pair donated parts of Rommersheim, a villa on the right bank of the Nim south of Pruem, and Rheinbach, a villa southwest of Bonn in the

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<sup>63</sup> C. Wampach, Echternach, I-1, p. 128, note 5.

<sup>64</sup> MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, nr. 16, pp. 21-25.

Rhine valley. In both of these villae Pepin and Bertrade each had a portio which they clearly state to be inherited property from each of their fathers.<sup>65</sup> The villages lie about 70 kilometers apart as the crow flies, and thus the joint possession was no coincidence; somewhere up the line Pepin and Bertrada had a common ancestor who owned the whole of both villae.

We can trace Bertrada's family through the entry in the Annales regni Francorum<sup>66</sup> for the year 750 and a document of her grandmother, also named Bertrada. In 720 this Bertrada I, along with her son Chairebert (Heribert) founded the

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<sup>65</sup> "Idcirco inspirante nobis superna gratia donamus pariter ego et coniux mea Bertrada ad ipsum sacratissimum locum. . . res proprietatis nostrae in pago Charos villa quae dicitur Rumerucoyme, tam illa partione, quem de genitore meo Karolo mihi advenit, quam et illa portione ipsius Bertradane, quam genitor suus Heribertus ei in alode derelinquit, cum appenditiis vel ceteris", and "Similiter donamus in pago Riboariensi illam portionem in Reginbach, quam. . . genitor meus Karolus mihi in alodem derelinquit, et illam aliam partionem in ipsa villa, quam Heribertus uxori nostrae Bertrade in alodem dimisit." (Ibid., p. 23).

<sup>66</sup> "Pippinus coniugem duxit Beretradam, cognomine Bertram, Chariberti Laudunensis comitis filiam." (F. Kurze (ed), MGH, SSRG, p. 8 - librum non vidi). See E. Hlawitschka "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 4).

monastery at Pruem and donated to it many lands in the middle Moselle area.<sup>67</sup> It stands to reason that Pepin III would not have married Bertrada II if she did not come from a rich and powerful noble house. Such is indeed the case. We can see from the documents that her grandmother owned a good deal of property in the middle Moselle region, in the same areas where generations later Pepin II's and Plectrude's descendants are known to have had holdings.<sup>68</sup> Bertrada II's father, Heribert, in addition to inheriting those Austrasian holdings, was also count of Laon in Neustria.<sup>69</sup> If this

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<sup>67</sup> H. Beyer, Urkundenbuch, nr. 8, pp. 10f. Hlawitschka dates the charter in 721 ("Landschaftliche Herkunft, p. 4).

<sup>68</sup> E. Hlawitschka, "Landschaftliche Herkunft", pp. 12f.

<sup>69</sup> H. Aubin, "Herkunft", p. 46. It must be pointed out, however, that although Aubin says that the office of Count was an appointed position for Heribert and that his family lands were really in the Austrasian Moselle area, this may not be the complete picture. Karl Ferdinand Werner ("Bedeutende Adelsfamilien im Reich Karls des Grossen. Ein personengeschichtlicher Beitrag zum Verhaeltnis von Koenigtum und Adel im fruehen Mittelalter", in: Wolfgang Braunfels (ed.), Karl der Grosse, Vol. I, Duesseldorf: L. Schwann, 1965, pp. 105f and 141.) traced out Herbert's male ancestry (Bertrada I's husband's family) and found: "Ein ganz unzweifelhafter und zugleich bedeutsamer Fall merowingischer Abkunft. . ." (ibid., p. 105). E. Ewig (Trier, p. 138) found the name (Garibert) in two documents of Sigibert III (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 22, p. 23, and nr. 29, p. 28). This man was a domesticus whose territory was in the Ardennes and who lent advice when a forest was given to the monastery at Stavelot-Malmedy. Ewig wonders if this couldn't be the father of the "Bertrada family". Thus we should not, perhaps, assume that all of the status which Bertrada II so obviously carried can be

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rich and powerful lady's grandmother were found not to be related to the Arnulfings, then we would have to assume that many of the vast middle Moselle holdings of Pepin's family, as evidenced by their later donation charters, first came into it's possession with Bertrada II.<sup>70</sup> This would mean they came in long after the family was in power and were not part of the economic base which aided their rise. Thus we must look for the connection. Bertrada I could have been another of Pepin II's quasi-official wives, but that would make Pepin III and Bertrada II relatives of the fourth degree, and the Church would not have condoned their marriage. There was absolutely no ecclesiastical objection to the royal pair. Saint Boniface, who was an especially vehement opponent of marriage between blood relatives, anointed Pepin, and Pope Stephen II, himself, anointed the pair in Saint Denis in 754.<sup>71</sup> In 754/55 King Pepin issued a

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<sup>69</sup> (cont'd) ascribed to her grandmother. Much of it may have entered the family through the agnatic side. In fact, Werner concludes that Pepin III married Bertrada II not because of her Moselle, but because of her Neustrian connections. He also says that Hlawitschka's work missed that point because his work did not call for investigating the male line. (Werner, op. cit., p. 141).

<sup>70</sup> It is Eduard Hlawitschka's work which has established the link between Bertrada I and the Arnulfings. He considers the question so important that he would remove the whole of the family holdings in the middle Moselle area and search for the base of the oldest family lands elsewhere if the Bertrada

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capitulary against incestuosi and forbidden marriages including those of the fourth degree.<sup>72</sup> This rules out making Bertrada I a direct relative of any of Pepin III's blood ancestors.<sup>73</sup> The solution, then, lies with Pepin II who had two wives. Pepin III is a descendant of his grandfather's second wife, Chalpaida. Thus if Bertrada were a relative of Plectrude, Pepin II's first wife, there would be no blood connection between Bertrada II and Pepin III, yet they both could inherit land in the same villae. This is Hlawitchka's conclusion. He makes Bertrada I Plectrude's sister, adding her to the list of Irmina's daughters.<sup>74</sup> Thus Pepin III's

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70 (cont'd) connection could not be made ("Landschaftliche Herrkunft", p. 6). We find this conclusion a bit hard to follow for as we have seen, Pepin II, Plectrude, Charles Martel, and Pepin III all had holdings in the area which were not dependent on their relationship with Bertrada or Heribert.

71 E. Hlawitschka, ibid., p. 8.

72 MGH, Legum Sectio II, Vol. I, nr. 13, p. 31.

73 This is what Ewig suspected. He assumed Bertrada was somehow related to Pepin III's grandmother, Chalpaida (Trier, p. 138).

74 E. Hlawitschka, "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 11.



portiones passed to him from Irmina to Plectrude to Pepin II to Charles Martel and then to himself, whereas Bertrada II's came to her from Irmina to Bertrada I to Heribert and then to herself. This connection also explains why we find Bertrada I and Heribert donating land to her mother's monastery at Echternach in 721, the same year in which they founded Pruem.<sup>75</sup> The connections between Irmina and the Arnulfings were strong ones and they were both building toward the day when representatives of each would hold the throne of Francia.<sup>76 - 77</sup>

There is one other marriage uniting the Arnulfings with a rich and powerful family which will lead us to uncover some

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<sup>75</sup> C. Wampach, Echternach, I-2, nr. 33, p. 76, and E. Hlawitschka, "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> It is interesting to note that Plectrude's other sister, Regentrude, was the wife of Duke Theodo of Bavaria. She lived with her husband in Bavaria and administered her interests in the Moselle area through missi. (E. Hlawitschka, "Merowingerblut", p. 80). If, however, Pepin II derived any benefit from this contact, it was probably after 687 and thus doesn't concern our question.

<sup>77</sup> Ewig (Trier, p. 138) relates a fascinating bit of historical trivia concerning Count Heribert: "Eine Schwester Chariberts hiess Weta, ihr Gemahl Autcar. Beyer (Urkundenbuch, nr. 14) hat jedoch den Namen Autcar nicht erkannt und sinnlos als "aut Carius" oder "autem Carius" wiedergegeben. Der Autcarius der Pruemer Urkunde ist wohl kein anderer als der Rat Karlmanns II., der Anwalt von Karlmanns Kindern und Rebell gegen Karl den Grossen, der in der Saga als Ogier le Danois erscheint."

important preparations Pepin II had made before the confrontation at Tertry, although the marriage itself didn't occur until after 687. The union came between Pepin II's son, Drogo, and Anstrude, the daughter of the Neustrian mayor, Warrato, and his wife Ans fled. Anstrude had been married previously. When she married Drogo she was the widow of Warrato's successor as mayor, Berchar. The significance of this marriage for our purposes revolves not around Anstrude, herself, but around her mother, Ans fled. We remember that Ans fled's husband, Warrato, had taken up the Neustrian mayoralty at Ebroin's death in 681 and had maintained a peaceful stance toward Pepin in the east.<sup>78</sup> Upon Waratto's death and the succession to the mayoralty of his son-in-law, Berchar, that policy changed drastically and war between east and west was the result. As we know, Pepin was the victor at Tertry, and, as the account relates, soon afterwards Berchar was murdered and Pepin assumed the mayoralty.<sup>79</sup> Ans fled played an important role in these crucial events. She was at that time the ruling matron of a family that seemed to have the Neustrian mayoralty firmly in its hand,

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<sup>78</sup> LHF, chap. 47 and Fredegar, Continuationes, 4.

<sup>79</sup> LHF, chap. 48. Fredegar, Continuationes, 5.

and a family which had a strong economic base in holdings on either side of the Seine from Paris all the way to its mouth.<sup>80</sup> Our knowledge of the exact nature of her role unfortunately depends on the interpretation of a knotty textual problem in the account of chapter forty-eight in the Liber Historiae Francorum. Krusch has edited the Liber Historiae Francorum in two parallel recensions, 'A' and 'B', which differ from one another in this account only in the use of the small conjunction "et". 'A' has it and 'B' omits it: -

A

Cedendum itaque tempore ipse Bercharius ab adulatoribus occisus est, et, instigante Ansflide, post haec Pippinus Theudericorege coepit esse principale regimine maiorem domus. 81

B

Cedendum itaque tempore ipse Bercharius ab adulatoribus occisus est instigante Ansflid. Post haec Pippinus Theudericorege coepit esse principale regimine maiorum domus.

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<sup>80</sup> Again using the "tunnel approach", we trace these holdings from the donations made by her grandson, Hugo, Archbishop of Rouen and Abbot of Saint Wandrille, which the Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium record for us in chapter 8 (MGH, SS II, pp. 280f). See Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 127, and E. Muehlbacher, Regesta, p. 10.

<sup>81</sup> LHF, chap. 48, in: MGH, SSRM II, pp. 322f. The punctuation of recension B is not Krusch's but Zatschek's, whose book brought this problem to our attention, although he concludes that the difference is insignificant (H. Zatschek, Wie das erste Reich, p. 33). Krusch also points out the difference in meaning, "...at et B omisit, quare Bercharius ibi auctore Anseflide interimitur..." (MGH, SSRM II, p. 219).

The difference is significant. To follow 'A' is to believe that it was through Ans fled's instigation that Pepin was helped to the reins of official power in Neustria. To follow 'B' is to believe only that Ans fled instigated the murder of her son-in-law and that Pepin came to power without her involvement. We cannot hold the Fredegar continuator's account here to be of any independent historical worth since he took his version from the Liber Historiae Francorum. He copied from the 'B' version, which as Krusch proves, was an Austrasian tradition.<sup>82</sup> Thus both Liber Historiae Francorum's 'B' and Fredegar's continuator erase Ans fled's direct role in Pepin's assumption of power.<sup>83</sup> Since, however, the marriage contract between Pepin's son and Ans fled's daughter later took place, it seems to us that the original Liber Historiae Francorum (version 'A') is closer to the truth. We know that Waratto's policies between 681 and 686

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<sup>82</sup> MGH, SSRM II, pp. 219f.

<sup>83</sup> "Sequente tempore idem Bercharius ab adolatoribus falsis amicis interfectus est instigante Ans flede matrona socrui sua. Post haec autem. . ." (Fredegar, Continuationes, 5, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 85v).

had been friendly toward Pepin and thus it is not unreasonable to assume that the period saw the beginnings of an alliance between the two powerful families which was to prove to their mutual benefit. Pepin was secure in Austrasia, but he could see that in order to make any victory over the Neustrians a lasting one he would also need a base in that western kingdom. Waratto's and Ansfléd's influence and possessions would build just such a base. Accordingly the Neustrian mayor and Pepin cooperated, the mayor's widow then helped Pepin into power, and the later marriage confirms our belief that the two families had been collaborating.<sup>84</sup>

#### Other Ties.

The above familial connections are the ones most discernible to us; however, there are others which are less obvious

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<sup>84</sup> The exact relationship of Anstrude to Ansfléd is a bit in doubt. According to a document of Childebert III (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 70, p. 62) Berchar is called Drogo's father-in-law ("socer suos") which would make Anstrude Ansfléd's granddaughter. For our purposes, however, the result is the same. See Krusch in MGH, SSRM II, p. 323, note 3, and Zatschek in Wie das erste Reich, p. 33.

but equally important. We know of Bishop Chunibert's long-standing relationship with the Arnulfings. This relationship was a formal and a legal one. Fredegar uses the word "amicitia"<sup>85</sup> which is a technical Merovingian term for a formal treaty between equals.<sup>86</sup> It has a legal component which binds each to the other party, making not only the partner's friends one's own, but also carrying the obligation to fight the partner's enemies.<sup>87</sup> This was a strong bond between Pepin and the powerful Chunibert, and it was later renewed by Pepin's son, Grimoald.<sup>88</sup>

Duke Martin, who appears with Pepin II as the leader of the Austrasians in 679/680, is certainly to be included as part of the faction.<sup>89</sup> There were probably connections with the see of Trier from a very early date.<sup>90</sup> Bishop Chlodulf

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<sup>85</sup> ". . .Pippinus cum Chuniberto, sicut et prius amiciciae cultum invicem conlocati fuerant, et nuper sicut et prius amiciciam vehementer se firmeter perpetuo conservandum oblegant. . ." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-85, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 7lv).

<sup>86</sup> Wolfgang Fritze, "Die fraenkische Schwurfreundschaft der Merowingerzeit", in: Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung fuer Rechtsgeschichte, Germanische Abteilung 71 (1954), p. 93.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>88</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-86.

<sup>89</sup> LHF, chap. 46. Fredegar, Continuationes, 3. See above page 117, note 118.

of Metz appears in the Virtutes Sanctae Geretrudis <sup>91</sup> and if we can consider him to be a son of Saint Arnulf, we

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<sup>90</sup> The sources for Trier in the early seventh century are sparse. A certain Bishop Modoald, who was elevated sometime after 614 (his predecessor, Sabaudus, signed the acts of the Council of Paris in 614 - MGH, Legum, Sectio III, Vol. I, p. 190) was probably the first Bishop of Trier from a noble Frankish family. The Annales Laubienses make him a brother of Itta (MGH, SS IV, p. 11). A Vita Modoaldi, written in the early twelfth century by Abbot Stephan of Liège, tells us that he was retained at Chlothar II's court (J. Bollandus, Acta Sanctorum, quotquot toto orbe coluntur. . ., May Vol. III, p. 55 - librum non vidi). And a letter from Bishop Desiderius of Cahors, the advisor to Chlothar II, asks Modoald for news of Sigibert III's welfare (MGH, Epistolae, Vol. III, part 1, pp. 196f). From all these it seems that he was a member of the victor's party in 613 and so would have had a close tie with Pepin I and Arnulf. The foregoing is Eugen Ewig's work as well as his conclusion (E. Ewig, Trier, pp. 117f). However, in order to demonstrate how easily such hard won information about the early middle ages can be called into serious question, let us point out:

- 1). The Annales Laubienses are a notoriously untrustworthy source for the seventh century (J. Halkin and C. G. Roland, Stavelot-Malmedy, p. XX), and if Modoald were a brother of Itta as they claim, by Frankish custom he, and not she, would have inherited all the land.
- 2). Ewig says that since the Vita Modoaldi is not a work from Trier, its information is probably to be trusted. It is, however, a work of Liège, that is, from Belgium, where there was a long tradition of grafting names onto the Carolingian family tree.
- 3). W. Arndt, the editor of Desiderius' letter, dates it between 630 and 639. That is exactly the period when Pepin I disappeared from the political arena. Thus to inquire about Sigibert's welfare might indicate that Modoald belonged not to Pepin's party but to Otto's, the known baiolus of the young king. Ewig goes on to note that the Fundatio monasterii Sanctae Mariae Andernacensis (MGH, SS XV, pp. 168f), written by a prior of Andernach in 1158, lists a church that, according to the monastery annals, was founded by Dagobert I and Bishop Modoald. According to a chronicle from Namur, Itta and Gertrude donated land in the same area to Nivelles. If they owned land in the same area, they could, of course, be

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would have an even stronger connection to Pepin's family. There may have been connections with the Bishops of Maestricht and Liége. Pepin II reinstated Bishop Landibert to his seat in Maestricht once his predecessor, Pharamundus, was ejected in the wake of Dagobert II's murder (679) and Wulfoald's fall.<sup>92</sup> And the deacon Adalgisel-Grimo, who was so long confused by historians with Pepin II's father, Ansegisel, is also to be included.<sup>93</sup> As evidenced by his

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<sup>90</sup> (cont'd) related. (Trier, p. 119). This consideration could seem more conclusive than the other evidence. However, we have seen many instances reminding us to be very wary of anything ascribed to Dagobert I which comes from a source later than the seventh century. All of this is not to say that Ewig's considerations are not reasonable, and we defer to his conclusions, especially since we know that by the time of Irmina's founding of Echternach (698) the episcopal see at Trier had long been in the hands of the Basin and Leodovin dynasty which was certainly favorable to Arnulfing plans (Wampach, Echternach, I-1, p. 137).

<sup>91</sup> MGH, SSRM II, pp. 465f.

<sup>92</sup> B. Krusch in MGH, SSRM, VI, p. 300.

<sup>93</sup> Because Adalgisel's possessions were in such geographical proximity to the Arnulfings' Bergengruen concludes that he was related to them. (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 118, note 73). W. Levison (Fruehzeit, p. 98) apparently doesn't feel the evidence is conclusive enough and simply refers to him as belonging to ". . .der hohen Aristokratie Austrasiens. . .".



testament, <sup>94</sup> Adalgisel, too, was a rich land-owner in many of the localities where we know the Arnulfings to have had possessions.

Their Social Position.

The Arnulfings were hereditary land-owning nobility. Neither they nor their ancestors were totally dependent on positions of service to the king for their privileged status, but rather possessed their own independent means of support based in landed wealth. As we have seen, we cannot name specific members in the family lineage prior to Pepin I, and thus in order to establish the hereditary nature of the Arnulfings, we must examine the position of the Frankish nobility in general. In so doing we again encounter a heated dispute.

Since the death of the Markgenossenschaft theory <sup>95</sup> in the late nineteenth century, historians have generally agreed

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<sup>94</sup> His testament is printed in: W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 118-137. Another recension has been produced by H. Beyer (Urkundenbuch, nr. 6, pp. 5-8) in a manner Levison considers unsatisfactory ("ungenuegend"). (op. cit., p. 97).

<sup>95</sup> This theory maintained that the ancient Germans lived in village communities organized into groups (Markgenossen) which to a greater or lesser degree administered common lands. The theory first found popularity with the work of Justus Moser in 1768 and was the prevailing view until Fustel de Coulanges (1875) and von Inama (1879) managed to lay it to rest. See A. Dopsch, Foundations, pp. 12ff for a good historiographical review.

that the ancient Teutons had a privileged caste based on landholding. Thus, at least with the starting point of the Frankish nobility there is accord. Tacitus' Germania speaks of ancient German land division "secundum dignationem".<sup>96</sup> A class of free farmers also seemed to exist, but it was clearly the privileged warriors who received the bigger and better pieces of land. Caesar, too, in his Gallic Wars describes a noble military class set above the broad masses who were legally unfree or nearly so. Often these nobles had hundreds of serfs and followers.<sup>97</sup> There may even have been a type of early manorialism among these ancient Germans. Again it is Tacitus who describes how they used slaves as rent farmers and not just as forced laborers. The moralistic passages in Tacitus relating the German warrior's love of gaming and drink during peacetime could be taken to imply that someone else was doing the farming for him.<sup>98</sup> This, however, is where the academic unanimity ends. The social status and position of this German warrior as he and Clovis

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<sup>96</sup> G. Frommhold, "Erbhof", p. 15. A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 38.

<sup>97</sup> K. Strohhecker, Senatorische Adel, p. 8.

<sup>98</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 40.

made their way southward into northern Gaul is still a matter of much disagreement. Did this society contain a noble element or was it one comprised of a broad class of free farmers?

The Lex Salica, the oldest of the Frankish legal codes, would seem an obvious source to exploit in an attempt to describe the Frankish nobility in and around the time of the Frankish conquest. In the older literature the discussion quickly settles on the law's sections which delineate the various amounts of Wergild required as payment to a man's relatives for his murder or other bodily injury. Since the amount of Wergild differed according to the status of the victim, historians assumed they could piece together a picture of the structure of the society which the law reflected. They noticed two major factors: first, the value of a man's Wergild was calculated more according to his occupation, than according to his birth, with the most important factor being whether or not he was in the service of the king.<sup>99</sup> Second, the law did not mention any sort of nobility. Franks and the

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<sup>99</sup> The Pactus Legis Salicae, text 41, paragraph 1 assigns 200 solidi for the death of a free Frank whereas paragraph 5 assigns 600 for the death of a man in the King's service (" . . . eum qui in truste dominica est. . . "). (MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Vol. IV, part I, pp. 154 and 156). ". . . men in truste regis or antrustiones, and convivae regis, are frequently mentioned, and their safety is protected in a manner corresponding to their rank." (S. Dill, Roman Society, p. 53).

Romans were often kept separate and there was differentiation among free, slave, and half free (laeti), but there was no special mention of a hereditary privileged class.<sup>100</sup>

From Gregory of Tours, also, one could come to the conclusion that the old German nobles were gone. He provides us with many tales of how Clovis went about defeating, deceiving, and using all means possible to rid his and the neighboring domains of competitors for royal position, until at last he could sarcastically boast, "Vae mihi, qui tamquam peregrinus inter extraneus remansi et non habeo de parentibus, qui mihi, si venerit adversitas, possit aliquid adiuvare."<sup>101</sup> This might be the literary expression of a royal policy dedicated to the elimination of the hereditary noble element. When Gregory speaks of the status of the early sixth century leading personalities, he is lacking in the exactitude one comes to expect in a learned Latin author. Even the word, nobiles, is almost never applied to the Franks, but is instead reserved for Romans of the upper class, especially those in clerical orders. Adjectival nouns in the comparative, such

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<sup>100</sup> "There is absolutely no trace of a hereditary noble class". (S. Dill, ibid.).

<sup>101</sup> Gregory, Historia, II-42 in: MGH, SSRM I-1, p. 93.

as optimates, proceres, majores or seniores are used so interchangeably and so loosely that Gregory seems to be excluding the possibility that they represent any sort of a closed noble caste.<sup>102</sup> Gregory's history is, of course, replete with the adventures of many counts. But the comes in Gregory is none other than the Grafio of the Lex Salica, who is again a royal official appointed and removed at royal whim.<sup>103</sup>

Even if these two sources so important to our understanding of the early sixth century make no specific mention of a noble caste could it not be that the existence of that caste is buried within some other term, such as antrustiones in the law or leudes, in Gregory? That, it seems, is also not the case. The Antrustiones are, of course, the most privileged personages mentioned in the Lex Salica. The law makes it clear, however, that people of any origin, Frank or Roman, free or unfree, could be chosen by the king for his trustis.<sup>104</sup> The term leudes, too, does not hide the nobility. The great

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<sup>102</sup> S. Dill, Roman Society, pp. 226f.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>104</sup> Carl Stephenson, Medieval Institutions, Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954, p. 220.

number of these people shows that it was not a closed caste. Leudes is merely an expression of a dependent relationship; they are always the leudes of someone. Although they can be the servants of the king, they can also come from the lowest class. In the Lex Burgundionum they rank below the mediocres as minores personae.<sup>105</sup>

When we turn from the written sources to archeology we also seem to find little evidence for a group of rich, hereditary nobility among the early gallic Franks. The Frankish villages were much smaller than what we would consider a village today. Each consisted of about three small farms. The total acreage for such a village reached between twenty-five and fifty acres with each farm claiming from four to ten. These were not the seats of a powerful landed nobility, but rather appear to be those of warriors whom the king had rewarded.<sup>106</sup> And although the practice of row-grave burial was beginning about this time, there are not enough of them in the area of the conquest to give us any supportive evidence.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> S. Dill, Roman Society, p. 227.

<sup>106</sup> Wilhelm Abel, "Landwirtschaft 500 - 900", in: Hermann Aubin and Wolfgang Zorn, Handbuch der deutschen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, Bd., I, Stuttgart: Union Verlag, 1971, p. 86.

<sup>107</sup> Rolf Sprandel, "Struktur und Geschichte des merowingischen Adels", in: Historische Zeitschrift 193 (1961), p. 39.

Perhaps we can learn something about the position of the nobility by examining the position of the king. Clovis' power was absolute - it in no way seemed restricted by any sort of noble class. He and his immediate successors exercised unlimited power in legal, financial, military, and administrative matters. He appointed and he dismissed the men around him. There was no caste of powerful nobles such as those the Visigoths or the Lombards used to limit their kings. His succession was hereditary - he was not elected.<sup>108</sup> The tenor of his edicts and the ruthlessness of his behavior seem to indicate how firmly he alone held the reins of power.<sup>109</sup> If there was a nobility, it seemed either all in favor of what he was doing or too weak to offer a resistance important

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<sup>108</sup> Dopsch believes that an element of nobility participation and consent existed in Clovis' government which evidenced itself in the shield-raising reported by Gregory (Historia, II-41) after Clovis had his cousin, Sigibert, and his son murdered. (A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 191). However, shield-raising is mentioned by Gregory only three times for the Franks, and as Dalton points out (Gregory, p. 503), then only in cases where the succession was irregular. Merovingian succession was hereditary - the nobility had no say in it.

<sup>109</sup> S. Dill, Roman Society, p. 131.

enough that we would hear about it. The above is the "klassische Lehre" as it has been since Heinrich Brunner's work on the question in the early twentieth century.<sup>110</sup> It maintained that the old German nobility died out either during or shortly after the Frankish conquest and was then slowly replaced by a new leading class totally dependent on service to the king. However, since the 1960's historians have brought forward some considerations which must temper our acceptance of the viewpoint.

The theory has several inherent logical inconsistencies. One cannot reasonably imagine a political system wherein all power exists a priori with the king and then must be stolen from him. This is especially true of a conquering king who would have such need for a warrior class.<sup>111</sup> It is not reasonable to assume that Clovis would not reward his military chiefs and those in his immediate train more generously than he would every common Frank.<sup>112</sup> The very fact that the Lex Salica speaks of free, unfree, and half-free, means that not all Franks were simple free farmers. The unfree, of course, were slaves, and the half-free indicate those bound to the

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<sup>110</sup> Franz Irsigler, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des frueh-fraenkischen Adels, Bonn: Ludwig Roehrscheid Verlag (Rheinisches Archiv), 1969, p. 47.

<sup>111</sup> K. Werner, "Adelsfamilien", p. 86.



land. This servile agriculture labor presupposes a system which would employ it and that is not one of equal free farmers, but one of estates and a privileged class. This impression is strengthened when we note that the law speaks of private ownership of forests, mills, vineyards and such possessions which build a basis for riches and privilege independent of the king.<sup>113</sup> The fact that the Lex Salica doesn't mention a Wergild for the nobility doesn't necessarily mean they didn't exist. It could mean that they existed independently of the king's protection.<sup>114</sup> Sources later in the sixth century appear to indicate that the nobility found it dishonorable to accept Wergild, and perhaps herein lies the reason for the Lex Salica's failure to mention it.<sup>115</sup>

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112 Heinz Loewe, "Rezension zu: Alexander Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft im Merowingerreich", in: Historische Zeitschrift 193, (1961), p. 653.

113 R. Sprandel, "Struktur", p. 38.

114 K. Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung", p. 155. A. Dopsch raised the same point almost fifty years earlier (Foundations, p. 20).

115 R. Sprandel, "Struktur", p. 39.

Gregory's use of many terms to indicate people of privilege doesn't necessarily mean that they were a large, loosely defined group which had originally been free farmers. He found need for multiple terminology because the aristocracy contained many originally noble elements in Clovis' new kingdom - Franks, Romans and Burgundians.<sup>116</sup> Clovis couldn't have eliminated the original Frankish nobility, since this was where his support was based. If he had, he would have been at the mercy of the Gallo-Roman landed aristocracy.<sup>117</sup>

It seems to us that one can very easily lose his way in this controversy unless a few simple historical facts are kept in mind. A hereditary nobility does not need to be legally defined as such in order to live, act, and rule as a hereditary privileged class. The conquering Salian band was small in every way, and thus to expect them to be a group of splendidly endowed, broadly based, and pervasively effective noble families which would leave its archeological and legal mark for us to read some fourteen hundred years later, is to expect too much from that relatively primitive group of foederati. There were men of independent position and

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<sup>116</sup> K. Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung", p. 155.

<sup>117</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 203.

influence around Clovis. These had expelled his father and elected Aegidius in his place.<sup>118</sup> Both Clovis and these men held their positions through inheritance. It was only after the conquest that they both saw their stature increase almost explosively as they drew vast new power and wealth from the same source - that which they took from Gaul.<sup>119</sup>

This conclusion may be based more on deduction and ration and less on an unquestionable proof from the contemporary sources than one would like, but as we have seen and will see again, such is often the unavoidable case in the early middle ages. We know, at least that for the period after 579 Gregory begins to refer to the leaders of the kingdoms of

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<sup>118</sup> Gregory, Historia, II-12.

<sup>119</sup> Karl Bosl describes the nobility in what seems to be a different expression of the same conclusion. He divides them into three groups: I. an early Frankish hereditary nobility which didn't find it necessary to enter the service of the king because it was powerful enough in its own right; II. a nobility of service which gained its privileged position through service to the king and assimilation with the Gallo-Roman senatorial class; and III. a provincial nobility which perpetuated the hereditary element but also contained elements from the service nobility. It is this last category in which he places the Arnulfings. (K. Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung", p. 141). Charles Verlinden ("Colonization", p. 15) also seems to agree.

Chilperic, Childebert II, and Gunthram as "maiores natu". And, insomuch as this is the period with which Gregory is the most familiar, we can safely conclude that by his time there was a hereditary nobility which reached back at least one generation (550) and probably even further. 120

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120 R. Sprandel, "Struktur", pp. 56f.

## V. ARNULFING LAND-HOLDINGS

The Arnulfing family and its allies controlled a vast system of manorial estates located in Francia's eastern kingdom of Austrasia between the Meuse and Moselle rivers. We know of the existence of these family lands through analysis of the donation charters of the eighth century. When these charters are examined in light of our genealogical findings, we find that the most important section of Arnulfing holdings did not belong to Pepin's family directly but to that of a family with whom they were closely allied. The most important characteristic of these lands was their newness. They were largely unsettled before the seventh century. Because it was new land the Arnulfings would have found little resistance in equipping it with that age's most highly developed social and technological techniques for agricultural exploitation.

### Location of Their Holdings.

We have only one charter of the direct Arnulfing family which ante-dates 687.<sup>1</sup> It is not until after the turn of

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<sup>1</sup> A charter of Grimoald I for Stavelot-Malmedy from about the year 650 (MGH, Dipl., I, nr. 1, p. 91).

the eighth century that family charters begin to appear in sufficient numbers to provide us with a picture of the extent and location of their possessions. Thus once again we must peer into the seventh century from the near end of the tunnel. For some parts of their holdings this later perspective, however, is severely handicapped. The problem lies in the fact that after Pepin II took power, the family began to exercise control over the huge Merovingian fisc. Sometimes they did so in the name of the king, but as their power became more and more secure, the differentiation between fiscal land and family land became more and more clouded. Thus in order to determine what land would have served to further the family interests before 687 we must eliminate the lands the family would have acquired from the fisc after that date. This differentiation is often impossible to make.

The Merovingian kings became heir to all the Imperial fiscal lands, much of the land of the late Roman provincial nobility, and all of what remained of the Roman colonization settlements in Gaul.<sup>2</sup> The royal holdings were immense, and although their greatest concentration was in the area between

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<sup>2</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 101.

the Seine and the Somme - around Soissons, Beauvais, Vermand-Noyon, Amiens, Rouen, and especially Paris <sup>3</sup> they were spread throughout the Frankish empire. The place-names of Merovingian fiscal locations reveal that they usually had been inhabited before the Franks arrived. In all of the Isle de France only one fisc which was newly founded is known to have existed. <sup>4</sup> This means that parts of the empire which were not inhabited at the time of the Frankish takeover are those parts where the Merovingian fiscal holdings were the thinnest. The king owned these areas as well but in the form of royal forests or marshlands. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> E. Ewig, "Die Fraenkishchen Teilreiche", p. 88. A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 90. Both scholars correctly and fundamentally disagree with J. W. Thompson (Dissolution, p. 8) who found only four fiscal possessions in the Carolingian fiscal complex around Paris that dated back to Merovingian times. Why Thompson's research on this point is so drastically incorrect did not fall within the parameters of this study. W. Metz (Reichsgut, pp. 3f) notes that Thompson failed to use the important documents of the later Carolingians and A. Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 87, note 6) adds that most of Thompson's sources were secondary. Perhaps therein lay his difficulties.

<sup>4</sup> A. Bergengruen, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>5</sup> J. W. Thompson (Dissolution, p. 2) states that the major concentration of the Merovingian fisc was in Austrasia, which it clearly was not. This time Thompson's error does concern our study and his reasons for it are clearer to us. He has failed to "peer backwards" correctly. He begins his work (p. 1) by stating that Heinrich Bonnell has delineated the old Carolingian family lands and thus he will only need to summarize Bonnell's work. As we shall see, this is in large  
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The first scholar who successfully identified the exact location of the oldest Arnulfing family lands was Heinrich Bonnell.<sup>6</sup> It was he who rescued the subject from a morass of legend and late medieval chronicles and based it firmly in authentic charters and trustworthy narrative sources. His conclusions have been modified and refined, sometimes slightly, sometimes substantially, by later historians,<sup>7</sup> but never significantly changed. The fact that knowledgeable scholarship no longer looks to Landen or Heristal to find the base of Pepin I's or Pepin II's power is the result of Bonnell's work. It was he who told us that the "cradle of the Carolingians" lay between the Meuse and the Moselle between Metz, Verdun, Liège, Bonn, and Koblenz.<sup>8</sup> Bonnell

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<sup>5</sup> (cont'd) part true. There must have been, however, some linguistic difficulty on Thompson's part in trying to understand Bonnell, for in summarizing Bonnell's work he places the Arnulfing holdings exactly where Bonnell went to great lengths to prove they did not exist. The immense value of Thompson's work for the Carolingian period cannot be disputed; it can, however, be misleading for the Merovingian age.

<sup>6</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge des karolingischen Hauses, Berlin: Verlag von Dunker und Humbolt, 1866, pp. 52-133.

<sup>7</sup> The most significant changes to Bonnell's conclusions have come since scholars have accepted the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis and the Annals of Metz as credible sources, both of which Bonnell rejected.

<sup>8</sup> "Freilich aber erweist sich num eben dieser Theil, den wir zwischen Maas und Mosel zu suchen haben, als das eigentlich Ursprungsland, die Wiege der Karolinger." (Anfaenge, p. 75).



published in 1866 and his cradle has been rocked several times since then, but not yet overturned.

Based on a phrase of Peter Damian's written about 1060, a tradition grew up in Flanders and Brabant in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that the heartland of the Carolingians lay in central Belgium. In this tradition Saint Arnulf even became a Duke of the Upper Schelde, the area around Ghent. It is here, too, that Pepin I acquired the appellation, "of Landen" which was tacked to his name in the thirteenth century with the similar "of Heristal" following suit for his grandson, Pepin II, in the fourteenth.<sup>9</sup>

Bonnell assumed that he had moved the Carolingians safely across the Meuse and erased any supposition that they might

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<sup>9</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 49-51. Bonnell offers speculative, but nonetheless plausible, reasons for the growth of these traditions. In 1213, in a feud between the Duke of Lorraine and the Bishop of Liège, Landen was burned to the ground. The city was faced with total neglect - it was of no economic or military importance. However, by "discovering" that it was Pepin I's usual place of residence, it became Saint Geretrude's birthplace, where, of course, miracles soon began to occur. A monastery dedicated to Saint Geretrude soon sprang up and the city survived. (ibid., pp. 63-65). In 1235, at the death of Duke Heinrich of Lorraine, his son, Duke Gottfried, was given Heristal among other districts. It was here that Gottfried established a local dynasty that was to rule for over a century. It is also during this period that Pepin II is named "of Heristal". It was undoubtedly done to honor the thirteenth century house. (ibid., p. 61).

have originated in central Belgium. His case has held true for some of those areas which were once thought to have belonged to Pepin's family. These are the lands which are the most distant from the Meuse. The properties Vechten and Graveningen, in and near Utrecht, are openly called fiscal property by Charles Martel in 722.<sup>10</sup> Even though a charter of Charlemagne's does mention Vilvoorden (near Brussels) and Budels (in Toxandria) as being gifts of Pepin II to the Saint Mary's Monastery in Chevremont, this is not seen as sufficient proof that they were family land because Pepin II probably acted as middle-man on behalf of the king in transferring them to the monastery.<sup>12</sup> Bonnell also claims that Meldert (near Tirlemont) and Chevremont<sup>13</sup> were fiscal property, as were Ockerzeel,<sup>14</sup> Jupille,<sup>15</sup> and Ham.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 11, p. 98.

<sup>11</sup> MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, nr. 124, p. 173.

<sup>12</sup> Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 71.

<sup>13</sup> ibid., pp. 72 and 74. Bergengruen claims Meldert was owned by the noble woman, Ermelinde, quoting the Acta Sanctorum, October XIII, p. 843 (where we found no mention of it) as his source (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 209).

<sup>14</sup> ". . . in villa Okinsala habebat, que tunc fiscus publicus erat. . ." (Gestorum Abbatium Trudonensium Continuatio Tertia, in: MGH, SS X p. 369). A late fourteenth century source (Pertz, ibid., p. 224).

<sup>15</sup> Jupille lies on the east side of the Meuse but is mentioned as "villa publica" in the Annales Mettenses (posteriores) for the year 714 (MGH, SS I, p. 322).

It is now generally believed that the Carolingians did indeed have family holdings west of the Meuse before 687, at least as far away as the region around Nivelles.<sup>17</sup> Bergengruen has pointed out that the argument using the fact that a certain location may appear as fiscal in a later charter works both ways. He feels that since the later Arnulfings also administered the royal lands in their regions, the distinction between public (i.e., royal) and family land disappeared. Thus land that is later called public may have originally been family, as well as vice versa.<sup>18</sup> In the charters, however, he still notices some formulaic usage patterns which allow some differentiation. Pepin II and Plectrude do not use the term fiscus for villae which have been divided into portiones between heirs, but rather seem to reserve its use for larger centers such as Saint Hubert or Maastricht. Even here, however, the difference is merely a practical rather than a legal one.<sup>19</sup> This sort of reasoning

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<sup>16</sup> Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 72-75.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., F. Ganshof, "Manorial Organization", pp. 30f.

<sup>18</sup> "Faktisch hat das Hausgut der Herzoege von Austrasien dieselbe Stellung wie in Neustrien das Koenigsgut, und eine Scheidung zwischen pippinischem und merowingischem Fiskus ist in Austrasien nicht moeglich." (A. Bergerngruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 119).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

would allow us to restore to the list of Arnulfing family holdings some of the Belgian localities Bonnell had ruled out. This is especially true for the localities which appear in the reliable narrative sources as administrative centers or favorite visiting spots of the family heads. Thus modern scholarship has returned Heristal and Jupille which Bonnell had rejected as fisc,<sup>20</sup> to the family estates in addition to the holdings of Itta's and Geretrude's family around Nivelles.<sup>21</sup> Bergengruen's research into the possessions of the Frankish nobility in that area discovered a group of rich land-owners whom he calls the "Willibrord Franken" because of their donations to the Anglo-Saxon missionary. He states that they all come from one large family whose holdings were extensive. The pertinence formulas used by these Willibrord Franks are remarkably similar to those used by Pepin's family further south; that is to say, their holdings

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<sup>20</sup> Heristal is called "villa publica" in a charter of Charles Martel from 722 (MGH, Dipl I, nr. 11, p. 99). Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 59. It is likewise rejected by E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 25, where, ". . .es war nie Privatbesitz der Karolinger." Heristal is, however, listed as Carolingian by Bergengruen (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 201). H. Zatschek (Wie das erste Reich, p. 36) has noted that Jupille is named as a favorite visiting spot of Pepin II in various vitae, and it was probably here that he became sick and died. (Vita Landiberti episcopi Traiectensis auctore nicolao, in: MGH, SSRM VI, p. 419 where: ". . .cum Pippinus ad tractanda regni negocia in Joppilia resideret.")

were organized in the same way as were those of Pepin's family.<sup>22</sup> Thus in addition to re-evaluating the fiscus question on Bonnell's work and accepting the locations mentioned in the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis<sup>23</sup> and the Annals of Metz, we have a third indication that Pepin's family did indeed have land in Brabant and even that its origins might be sought here. Nevertheless, even if we do accept the above as true, to find the real concentration of Arnulfing lands, the actual "cradle" of the family, we must still cross the Meuse to the east, just as Bonnell has indicated.

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<sup>21</sup> H. Aubin suspected that the origin of Pepin's family might be buried somewhere around Nivelles. ("Herkunft", p. 45).

<sup>22</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 113f. Some of their documents have been collected by C. Wampach in his edition of the documents pertaining to the history of Echternach. They are: Echternach I-2, nr. 20. p. 50; nr. 21, p. 52; nr. 28, p. 68; and nr. 39, p. 83. The last is a charter of Willibrord, himself, known as his testament in which he transfers the lands from his name to that of the monastery.

<sup>23</sup> The Vita mentions the monastery at Fosse by name (chap. 7) and the Virtutes (chap. 10) relate that Begga came to Geretrude's successor at Nivelles wishing to found another monastery herself. Although the name is not given, Krusch's note assures us that the monastery at Ardenne is the one referred to. (MGH, SSRM II, p. 469).

The Lower Meuse Group.

Bonnell defined three major groups of original Arnulfing family lands between the Meuse and the Moselle. Each of these groups has its religious institutions which served as the preserver of the donation charters from which we estimate where the lands were. We assume Pepin's family followed normal pious donation practices and that those lands which they did concede to one monastery or another indicate the location of many more family lands which they did not. The first group is located in southeast Belgium in a large area southeast of the Meuse between Liége and Namur. The existence of this complex is known to us because of the family donations to the monasteries at Stavelot-Malmedy and at Saint Hubert.

In a forgery attributed to Pepin II and Plectrude supposedly in the year 687, the pair donated Castrum Ambra (Saint Hubert) to a certain Beregisius so that he might found a monastery.<sup>24</sup> Pertz rejects the charter because the monastery wasn't founded until the year 706 and Beregisius was not known to Pepin or Plectrude until 696.<sup>25</sup> Notwithstanding,

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<sup>24</sup> MGH, Dipl. I., nr. 1, p. 209.

<sup>25</sup> "Diploma suppositum, quum initia monasterii Andaginensis ad annum demum 706. cum Mabillonio (Annal. II, 16) Revocanda videatur; nec Pippino nec Plectrudi Beregisus ante annum 696. notus fuit, ut ostendit Le Cointe IV, p. 325." (Pertz, ibid).

the pair controlled the land, and due to the fact that there is such a concentration of family land in the area, most scholars conclude that it, too, was family land.<sup>26</sup>

In 746, Carloman, Pepin III's brother, donated the huge villae of Leignon and Wellin to the monastery at Stavelot-Malmedy.<sup>27</sup> Many of the dependent holdings connected to the two main villae which are listed in the charter have not been identified and located. Nonetheless, from the ones that have been identified we can begin to draw a picture of the vastness of the holdings in the area.<sup>28</sup> In the following year, the

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<sup>26</sup> Bonnell (Anfaenge, p. 77) accepts it as family land. Bergengruen points out that it was the seat of a large fiscus and one of those cases where fisc doesn't necessarily mean Merovingian (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 118). From the document we can list the following locations: (modern names are Bergengruen's, ibid., pp. 200f) Ambra (St. Hubert); the whole fisc of Amberlacensis (Amberloup); Mollis Campellus (Mochamp); Campilonis (Champlon); Haletus (Halleux); Nasania (Nassogne); Awanna Tabulae (Awenne); and they signed it in Jupille.

<sup>27</sup> MGH, Dipl., I, nr. 15, p. 102.

<sup>28</sup> Bergengruen's lists are not as much help with this charter as with others. For some reason he omits five of the dependent holdings plus Wellin itself and adds Coldinus (Conneux) which is not mentioned in the document (Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 201f). The modern names are from both Bergengruen and Bonnell (Anfaenge, p. 77): Lenione (Leignon); Caldina (Schatin); Mosania ( -- ); Warsipio (Warzee from Bonnell, Yschippe from Bergengruen); Barsina (Barcenne or Barzin); Rudis ( -- ); Provote (Purnode); Halma and Haist (Halma and Haid); Solania (Solanne Fontaine); Waldalino (Wellin); Rudis ( -- ); Olisna (Olenne); Ferario ( -- ); Palatiolo (Pailhe or Paliseul); and Brabant (Braibant).

same Carloman confirmed Pepin II's donation of Lierneux to Stavelot-Malmedy.<sup>29</sup> Bonnell considers it to be family land,<sup>30</sup> whereas Bergengruen<sup>31</sup> avers that it is mentioned as late as 667 as royal domain ("curtes nostras") in a charter of Childeric II.<sup>32</sup> Although we cannot be sure, it is reasonable to assume that Lierneux did not fall into Arnulfing hands until at least after 679 when Pepin II and Duke Martin surface in the narrative accounts as the rulers of Austrasia.<sup>33</sup> The year, 679, is the first date after 667 that an Arnulfing is known to be in control again in Austrasia.

If we examine the Adalgisel-Grimo Testament,<sup>34</sup> we find that he, too, had possessions in the area.<sup>35</sup> As this is a contemporary document (634) there is no need to peer backwards.

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<sup>29</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 16, p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 77.

<sup>31</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 119.

<sup>32</sup> MGH, Dipl. nr. 29, p. 28. The locations named in the charter are: (modern names are Bonnell's) Villa Lethernau (Lierneux); Brastis (Bras); Fernio (probably Fairon); Unalia (probably Eneille); and Aldania (Odeigne).

<sup>33</sup> LHF, chap. 46 and Fredegar, Continuationes, 3.

<sup>34</sup> Text in: W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 118-138 and Beyer, Urkundenbuch, nr. 6, pp. 5-8. Levison's text has an introduction and is annotated.

<sup>35</sup> W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 132f. (The modern names are Levison's) Fledismamalacha (Flemalle-Haute and Flemalle-Grande); Chambro (Han); and Bastoneco (Bastogne).



The formulas Adalgisel used for his possessions in the area differ from those used in the aforementioned mayoral and royal charters. Adalgisel used expressions such as "quam mihi legibus obvenit" (Flémalle) and "portio mea continet" (Han) which leave no doubt that these are hereditary family lands.

#### The Metz-Verdun Complex.

When we move farther south into the modern French Départements of Meurthe-et-Moselle, Moselle, and Meuse, there to the north between the cities of Metz and Verdun, we find another group of what could be Arnulfining family holdings. This is the group that scholars have long assumed to be the oldest of the family properties.<sup>36</sup> Bonnell assumed so because he identified Adalgisel with Ansegisel, Saint Arnulf's supposed son. As we shall see, Adalgisel's Testament confirms that he held much land in the area and thus Bonnell could assume that he inherited it from Arnulf himself. Although Bergengruen separates Adalgisel and Ansegisel, he

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<sup>36</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 78-80. H. Zatscheck, Wie das erste Reich, p. 37. E. Ewig, "Die fraenkische Teilreiche", p. 137. A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 121.

assumes that Adalgisel is related to the Arnulfings and thus he, too, includes his holdings in the area as Arnulfing property.<sup>37</sup>

We do have several family documents through which we might be able once more to look backwards into the seventh century. Again the old problem of family land versus royal land presents itself. Although not conclusively proven, it is probable that the diocese of Verdun, where this group of holdings is located, was part of the area which Pepin II and Martin controlled after 679, thus giving Pepin ample opportunity to absorb crown land.<sup>38</sup> Since this was also the home of Wulfoald, the Arnulfing's bitter political enemy who held the reins in Austrasia from 660 to his death in 679,<sup>39</sup> it is unlikely that either Ansegisel or Pepin II would have been able to snatch land from the royal fisc in the area before the family returned to power. Hence if we can ascertain that Pepin II did not acquire a certain piece of land after 679 it would most likely be old family land.

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<sup>37</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 203.

<sup>38</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkische Teilreiche", p. 137.

<sup>39</sup> "Verdun war andererseits wahrscheinlich der Hausmeir Wulfoald beheimatet, ein Gegner der Arnulfinger im 7. Jahrhundert." (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkischen Teilreiche", p. 110).

The best method for such an inquiry is to proceed document by document. The oldest is Adalgisel's Testament and here, of course, there is no problem because its very date, 634, gives us a firm year ante quem the land came into his hands. For his possessions in this area also he applies the formulas "portione mea" (Montmédy)<sup>40</sup> and "legibus obvenire" (Mercy-le Bas)<sup>41</sup> which leave no doubt that he inherited them.<sup>42</sup>

When we turn to the direct Arnulfings we have five documents which donate land in the area. Unfortunately three of the charters are forgeries. The first is authentic and is from Pepin II and Plectrude and dates from the year 691.<sup>43</sup> In it the couple transfer the villa Nugaretum (Norroy-le-Sec)<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> W. Levison, Fruehzeit, p. 127.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Adalgisel's holdings in the area are (modern names are Levison's, ibid, pp. 127-131): Madiaco (Montmédy), Wichimonhaiga (Woinville), Hogregia (Iré-le-Sec), Nogaria (Noers), Belulfiaga (Beauveille), Mariaco (Mercy-le Bas), and Fatiliago (Grand-Failly and Petit-Failly). Bergengruen (Adel und Gundherrschaft, p. 203) only includes the first three locations. We can find no reason why he should have omitted the others.

<sup>43</sup> MGH, Dipl I., nr. 2, pp. 91-92.

<sup>44</sup> Modern name is Bergengruen's (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 203).

to the Church of the Apostles in Metz. Of all the charters this one gives us the most hope that the lands in the area were not acquired after 679. In addition to its reassuring early date, 691, the couple used the formula "villam proprietatis"<sup>45</sup> which in Frankish usage means inherited land.<sup>46</sup> The next charter is also dated 691 and is from Duke Godefrid, a grandson of Pepin II and Plectrude.<sup>47</sup> It is, unfortunately, a forgery. The forger copied it word for word from still another forgery attributed to Godefrid's father, Drogo.<sup>48</sup> Aside from adding the villa Flavigneiaco (Flavigny) to our list of holdings in the area, it gives us no clue about the land's origins.<sup>49</sup> There is more hope from the one from which it was copied. This forgery is attributed to Duke Drogo in the year 691. Drogo gives his property in the villa Mariolas (Marieulles) to the Church of the Apostles in Metz. The property is described in the following words: ". . .quidquid mihi legibus in ipsa villa obvenit, tam de paterno quam de materno, seu de comparato. . ." The formula

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<sup>45</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 46.

<sup>47</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 8, p. 215.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., nr. 5, p. 212.

<sup>49</sup> Bergengruen gives us the modern name and accepts the villa as Arnulfing, naming this forgery as his source. (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 203).

indicates inherited property, this time from both his mother and father, in addition to some that he has apparently purchased ("de comparato"). Drogo is a son of Pepin II and Plectrude, and the mention of his mother here makes it especially tempting to call this property family inherited land. Our case would be conclusive if it weren't for one unfortunate fact: Drogo died before either of his parents. The formulas and the land parcels fit the picture, but unfortunately either the donor or the date does not.

In 702, in an authentic charter, we again find Pepin II and Plectrude donating land in the area to the Church of Saint Videnus in Verdun.<sup>50</sup> The charter mentions three main locations and defines the limits of a forest,<sup>51</sup> all of which seem to be widely spread from one another. Unfortunately the charter gives us no indication of how long they had been in the family possession. For one of the possessions, Commenarius (Cumières-sur-Meuse), there is actually a good indication that it was not Arnulfing

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<sup>50</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 3, pp. 92-93.

<sup>51</sup> The locations mentioned are (modern names from Bonnell, *Anfaenge*, pp. 78f): Pararito (Pareid), Luponis fontana ( -- ), Domus fontana ( -- ), Perfunt (Parfondrupt), Biunna (Pienne), Filealina ( -- ), Herberica Villa (Herméville), Sancti Maurici (St. Maurice), and Commenarius (Cumières-sur-Meuse).

hereditary land. The Gesta Episcoporum Verdunensium,<sup>52</sup> an early tenth century source,<sup>53</sup> reports that Cumières was donated to the Church in Verdun by King Childebert<sup>54</sup> (II of Austrasia, 575-595). In our present document it appears that Bishop Armonio of Verdun and an Archdeacon Anglebert also have some rights in the property, because they seem to donate it along with Pepin and Plectrude.<sup>55</sup> This charter, then, could illustrate at least one example of Pepin and Plectrude making a donation of land that was not part of the family possessions.

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<sup>52</sup> Text in: MGH, SS IV, pp. 36-51.

<sup>53</sup> ". . .916, vel 917, et paulo post Bertarium historiam suam conscripisse verisimile est. . ." (G. Waitz, ibid., p. 36.)

<sup>54</sup> Gesta Episcoporum Verdunensium, chap. 6, in: ibid., p. 41. Bergengruen also lists Cumières as Merovingian, giving this as his source (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 203).

<sup>55</sup> "Similiter donat ipse apostolicus vir Armonius episcopus et venerabilis vir Anglebertus archidiaconus loco nuncupante Commenarias, quem ipse Pippinus eiusque inlustris matrona Plectrudis ad ipsam ecclesiam domno Videno per cartulam concessionis eorum tradiderunt. . ." (loc. cit., p. 93). Bonnell also finds the wording here strange, and thus does not include Cumières as family land. (Anfaenge, p. 79).

The next charter is another forgery attributed to Duke Arnold (here called Arnulphus) in the year 706.<sup>56</sup> In it the Duke signs over an impressive list of holdings in the area to the Church of the Apostles in Metz.<sup>57</sup> The charter's language also clearly indicates inherited family land: ". . . ipso alodo ver ipse vel antecessores mei visisumus habuisse. . ." and ". . . ipsum locum praedium meum . . ." <sup>58</sup> However, the fact that the charter is a forgery of a later age and that in 706 both Drogo, Arnold's father, and Pepin II, Arnold's grandfather, were still alive must temper our willingness to believe that this charter proves these lands to be old family possessions.

The last charter is likewise the product of a later age attributed to Hugo, another son of Drogo, in the year 715.<sup>59</sup> This document transfers the villa of Vidiacum

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<sup>56</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, p. 213.

<sup>57</sup> The holdings are: Floriacum (Fleury - from Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 203), Liedes villa (Leyviller - from Bergengruen, loc. cit.), Beruldi villa (Bruville - from Bergengruen, loc. cit.), Marconis pratum ( -- ), Amolberti campus ( -- ), Bouerex silva (Bois Bourrus - from Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 79), Intriberes ( -- ), and Marchei pratum ( -- ).

<sup>58</sup> Both formulaic words, alode and praedium, meaning inherited land, in this case refer to Fleury. MGH, Dipl. I, p. 213

<sup>59</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 7, pp. 214-215. The charter also mentions Hugo's residence as being in a place called Romana Sala.

(Vigny) to the Church of the Apostles in Metz. It mentions that Pepin had owned the land, but gives us no further indication of how long the land had been in family hands.

Moreover, there are two pieces of evidence not drawn from the charters which might indicate that this area contained the oldest of the Arnulfing family possessions. These villae and locations in the Metz - Verdun area played an important role in the itineraries of later Carolingian rulers.<sup>60</sup> It was also here in the Vosges that Saint Arnulf retired to religious seclusion, rather than seeking his retreat further north in the Ardennes.<sup>61</sup>

Thus it is clear that the evidence "proving" this area to be the oldest of the Arnulfing family possessions is not nearly as conclusive as most modern accounts treating the subject would lead us to believe. If we eliminate any information gained from the spurious documents, assume that Saint Arnulf's connection to the Arnulfings was political rather than familial, and suppose that eighth and ninth century Carolingian kings and emperors would not be concerned with when a royal palace or villa fell into family

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<sup>60</sup> H. Zatscheck, Wie das erste Reich, p. 38.

<sup>61</sup> Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chap. 15. See E. Hlawitschka "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 16.



or royal hands when planning their itineraries, then we are left with the information gained from three documents. These are the two from Pepin II and Plectrude and Adalgisel's Testament.

With Adalgisel we cannot prove a familial connection although we can see the political one. We know that at the time of Sigibert III's campaign against Radulf of Thuringia, there was political cooperation between Adalgisel and Grimoald.<sup>62</sup> We do not find Adalgisel owning a portio in a villa where a known Arnulfing owns another; that would be strong support for his inclusion in the family. Though he did own property in the areas where the Arnulfings later also evidenced ownership, this is not sufficient evidence to make him a family member.

This leaves us with the two authentic charters of Pepin II and Plectrude. Of the two, not only does the charter of 702 use no formulaic phrase which indicates hereditary land; it actually includes a locality which was most likely Merovingian in origin, and which at the time of the charter's production was probably held by the see of Verdun. Unhappily we can add nothing from this charter.

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<sup>62</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-87.

For the holdings of the direct family, then, we have only the one charter of 691 in which to seek our proof. Indeed here we do find that Norroy-le-sec is called "villa proprietatis", i.e., inherited land.<sup>63</sup> Once again the seventh century leaves us to draw our conclusions about an important historical problem based on our interpretation of one word in one source.

#### The Middle Moselle Group.

Extending north of Trier well into the Eifel and Ardennes lies the third area where Bonnell located a concentration of Arnulfing family holdings.<sup>64</sup> The family charters carrying names of locations in this area were preserved for us almost exclusively by the three monasteries of Echternach, Pruem, and Pfalzel. Upon first examination of the charters produced by known Arnulfings and their descendants, one would come to the same conclusion as did Bonnell and Muehlbacher, i.e., that this area carried the heaviest concentration of Arnulfing family land and was the area most important to family interests.<sup>65</sup> As we shall see,

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<sup>63</sup> Even here, if we are not mistaken, the exact formula should read "villa proprietatis meae" Cf. A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 46.

their conclusions are correct, but they arrived at them with false assumptions and incorrect data.

The oldest pertinent document is from the noblewoman, Adela, Irmina's daughter and Abbess of Pfulzel. It is generally known as Adela's Testament.<sup>66</sup> Pertz assigns it to the year 685, but calls it a forgery because it makes Adela a "filia Dagoberti regis". Yet there seems to be no reason to doubt the authenticity of the charter's other information or its date. Aside from presenting a long list of her own properties to the monastery at Pfulzel, we learn that she obtained the villa Pfulzel, itself, from Pepin II.<sup>67</sup> Thus this villa on the Moselle could be our first family possession in the area.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, pp. 80ff.

<sup>65</sup> E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 25.

<sup>66</sup> MGH, Dipl I, nr. 60, p. 177.

<sup>67</sup> ". . . monasterium in villa, quae dicitur Palatiolum. . . quod ipsum a Pippino maiore domus Treviris permutatione quaesivimus. . .". The other localities she lists are (modern names from K. Francke in index to MGH, SS XIV, where another version of this charter appears on p. 105): Scip-  
tinas (--), Botbergas (Bietbergis), Beslanc (Besslingen - from E. Hlawitschka, "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 9), Anchiriaca (Enkirch), Ursiaco (Uerzig), Caimitas (Kaimt), Regnemoseht (Roscheit?) which she bought, Bedelingas (Badelingen - from Hlawitschka, loc. cit.) which she also bought, and Machariaco (Machern) which she acquired from a certain Bertonius.

In 706 Pepin II and Plectrude donated a portion of the villa Echternach to that monastery.<sup>69</sup> This is not land from Pepin's side of the family. The charter specifically tells us that the couple received it from Theodardus, whom we now know to be Plectrude's cousin. The fact that Irmina, Plectrude's mother, also had a portio in the same villa makes it almost certain that Echternach was an old family possession of the Hugobert-Irmina family.<sup>70</sup>

Upstream a little distance from Echternach is the huge villa Bollendorf which appears in the next two of the family's charters. In 715/716 we find Duke Arnold donating his portio in Bollendorf to Echternach.<sup>71</sup> The formula makes

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<sup>68</sup> E. Ewig assumes that the Arnulfings had obtained it from the royal fisc. He doesn't tell us when they acquired it or his reasons for assuming they did. Perhaps it is an easy deduction from the name "Palatiolum" itself. E. Ewig, Trier, p. 136).

<sup>69</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 4, p. 93.

<sup>70</sup> Zatscheck (Wie das erste Reich, p. 39) is in error when he claims that Echternach is old Arnulfing family property.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, nr. 7, p. 96.

it clear that this is inherited land.<sup>72</sup> The next year we find Charles Martel, the step-brother of Arnold's father, giving Echternach another portio in Bollendorf.<sup>73</sup> Here again the formulas which Charles uses leave no doubt as to the hereditary nature of the property.<sup>74</sup> Thus to the villa Pfalzel, we can probably add Bollendorf as Arnulfing inherited land.

Four or five years later, in 720/721, Duke Arnold also donated a vineyard in Klotten to Archbishop Willibrord.<sup>75</sup> All that remains of this transaction is a register of the charter which unfortunately does not state Arnold's source for the vineyard. However, since a certain Gerelindis, a daughter of Adela of Pfalzel and thus a granddaughter of Irmina,<sup>76</sup> had already donated a vineyard in the same location to Willibrord in the year 698,<sup>77</sup> it would seem highly likely that Klotten entered the family with the marriage of

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72 ". . . quantumcumque in ipsa villa Bollane mihi legibus obvenit, meam portionem in integrum dono atque trado. . ." (ibid).

73 Ibid, nr. 9, p. 97.

74 ". . . quantumcumque mihi ibidem obvenit de genitore meo Pippino, quod contra allodiones meos recepi. . ." (ibid). We know, of course, that at least one of those "allodiones" was his step-nephew, Arnold.

75 C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 29, p. 70.

Irmina's daughter Plectrude to Pepin II, and thus was not older Arnulfin family property.

Pertz lists a charter of Pepin III donating properties in Croev to Echternach between 747 and 751 as an authentic document.<sup>78</sup> Wampach, however, points out that its formulas give it away as a forgery,<sup>79</sup> and thus we cannot conclude anything from it concerning Croev's former status.

In 762, Pepin III (now King Pepin) donated his portio of a forest at Mellere to the monastery at Kesseling and then in turn ascribed the monastery at Kessling to the monastery at Pruem.<sup>80</sup> We might be able to add Mellere and Kessling to our list. With this charter, however, we are now two generations removed from Pepin II and the battle of

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<sup>76</sup>E. Hlawitschka, "Vorfahren", p. 76.

<sup>77</sup>C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 5, pp. 23f.

<sup>78</sup>MGH, Dipl I., nr. 42, p. 102.

<sup>79</sup>C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, p. 103.

<sup>80</sup>MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, nr. 15, pp. 20f.

Tertry, and with Pepin III we are tracing backwards along that particular lineage within the family which held the summit of political power. Therefore, the assumption that a possession of King Pepin is old family land is far more dangerous than a similar assumption for land belonging to a less powerful branch of the family. Nonetheless, these two locations, Mellere and Kesseling, cannot be dismissed out of hand.

The last pertinent document from a known Arnulfing mentioning land in the area is the one traditionally deemed by most historians to be the most important. It is the famous confirmation and donation charter of King Pepin and Queen Bertrada for the monastery at Pruem also from the year 762.<sup>81</sup> From this document alone we might conclude that Pepin's family had been the most powerful landholders in the area. Aside from the villa of Pruem itself, the charter donates or confirms eleven other locations in the area which gives us twelve possible candidates for inclusion as Arnulfing family land. It is clear from the words portio and alode, which abound in its phraseology, that we are dealing with private and not public land. We have already noted how

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<sup>81</sup> MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, nr. 15, pp. 21-25.

modern historians have used this charter to help prove that Queen Bertrada's grandmother, Bertrada I, was a daughter of Irmina and sister of Pepin II's wife Plectrude.<sup>82</sup> Thus when we compare the land mentioned in this charter with that mentioned in Bertrada I's original charter which founded the monastery at Pruem,<sup>83</sup> we find that where we might have thought to have been able to add twelve locations to our list of Arnulfing family land, four were owned not by Pepin's family but by Bertrada's and thus immediately fall away.<sup>84</sup> The charter tells us that another (Sarabodisvilla) was owned by Bertrada II's father and thus it too must be ascribed to Irmina's family and not to the Arnulfings.<sup>85</sup> The charter also tells us that both Pepin III and Bertrada II had a portio in Rheinbach and as we have shown, when we

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<sup>82</sup> See above p. 153.

<sup>83</sup> H. Beyer, Urkundenbuch, nr. 8, pp. 10f.

<sup>84</sup> In Bertrada I's charter four out of the seven locations mentioned reappear in Bertrada II's. Those four are: (modern names are Bonnell's, Anfaenge, pp. 82f): Prumia (Pruem); Saraingas, which Bonnell assures us is the same as Soiacum (Schweich); Burzis, which is the same as Birgisburias (Bonnell) (Birresborn); and Romairo Villa, which is the same as Rumerucoyme (Bonnell) (Rommersheim).

<sup>85</sup> "Sarabodisvilla. . .Garaberto possessa fuit. . ."  
(MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, p. 23).



traced backwards to discover the possible common ancestor who once owned the property, we arrived at Irmina and not at an Arnulfing.<sup>86</sup> We must also dismiss Altripp, which Pepin III acquired from its previous owners,<sup>87</sup> and Revin, which the charter merely confirms as belonging to Pruem and thus gives us no clue as to its origins.

From the charter which we had hoped would make the Arnulfings the great landlords of the middle Moselle area, we are left then with only four locations which might be original family holdings. These are: Casleoca (Kessling), (which King Pepin's other charter of 762 also mentioned), Wathilentorp (Wetteldorf), Marningum (Mehring on the Moselle), and Marciaco (Merzig or Moetsch).<sup>88</sup> When we add the three others we discovered in the earlier charters - Pfalzel, Bollendorf, and Kesseling's forest at Mellere - we have the total list of all possible locations taken from the charters of known Arnulfings which could be old family inherited property. In no case can we conclusively prove that any of these existed in the family before 687. How then can we

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<sup>86</sup> E. Hlawitschka, "Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 13.

<sup>87</sup> ". . .in loco qui dicitur Altrepio. . .quem Herlebaldu et Weolentio nec non et Bagulfus mihi tradiderunt. . ." (MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, p. 23).

<sup>88</sup> Modern names are from H. Hirsch's index to MGH, Dipl. Kar. I

along with Bonnell and Muehlbacher conclude that this middle Moselle area was the early center of Arnulfing family power? For the answer we must return to that shadowy figure, Irmina, Abbess of Oeren. Let us, then, from Irmina's charters and from the charters of her descendants, try to build a picture of the extent of hers and her husband, Hugobert's, landed possessions. We can begin the list from her original founding charters for Echternach: Epternaco (Echternach), Baidalingo (Balelingen), Mathulfavillare (Matzen), Oxinvillare (Osweiler) and Monte Viennense (Vianden).<sup>89</sup> In 699, she adds Villam Montis (Berg) which she purchased from her cousin, Erminitrude.<sup>90</sup> In 704, Willibrord received Staneheim (Steinheim) from her.<sup>91</sup> In the same year she and her daughter, Attala (Adela) add a portio in Cabriaco (Koewerich) and another portio in Bedelinga (Badelingen)<sup>92</sup> to the monastery at Echternach.

When we move to the next generation the list grows even more. We have already met the property her daughter

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<sup>89</sup> MGH, Dipl I., nr. 55, p. 176 and nr. 56, p. 174. Modern names are Wampach's (Echternach I-2, passim).

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., nr. 57, p. 175, where ". . .dato precio comparavi".

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., nr. 58, p. 176, where ". . .quantumcumque. . .mea possio et cominatio est. . ."

<sup>92</sup> C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 12, p. 36. (It is a register).

Bertrada I donated to Pruem in that monastery's founding charter. In the same year, 721, Bertrada and her son Charibert also donated Creucchovilare (Schankweiler) to Echternach.<sup>93</sup> Her daughter Adela revealed six more family holdings in her testament.<sup>94</sup> And Irmina's granddaughter, Gerelindis, has proven that Irmina had a vineyard in Klotten, while her great-granddaughter, Bertrada II, has proven that in addition to the places mentioned by Bertrada I, Irmina also controlled Rheinbach.<sup>96</sup>

It is now evident then which family really had the monopoly in the middle Moselle area.<sup>97</sup> Pepin's power-base here was not grounded in his own family's land, but in that of his wife's. The middle Moselle was bound to Pepin II not so much by ties of heredity as it was by bonds existing between his family and Hugobert's and Irmina's. Pepin's marriage with their daughter is the contractual proof that those ties existed. Bonnell was right, but for the wrong reasons.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 33, p. 32.

<sup>94</sup> MGH, Dipl., I, nr. 60, p. 177.

<sup>95</sup> C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 5, p. 23.

<sup>96</sup> MGH, Dipl. Kar. I, nr. 16, p. 23.

Our point is made. Where did the Carolingians come from? Exactly where Bonnell said they did, 110 years ago. The possessions in the north, on the lower Meuse, were mostly to the east of that river, although the oldest ones may have been on the other side as far west as the area around Nivelles. Pepin II most likely augmented this group with confiscation from royal lands after he assumed power in 679. In the south, in the area around Metz and Verdun, Arnulfing family holdings are harder to discern. We cannot prove conclusively, for instance, that any of what might be old family land can be traced back to Saint Arnulf, the dynasty's supposed father. This was the home of Wulfoald, the Arnulfings' bitter political enemy, and thus whatever advantage they derived from the area they probably received

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97 The revelation is E. Hlawitschka's ("Landschaftliche Herkunft", p. 15) who would, however, thereby reduce Bonnell's original three groups to two.

98 Adalgisel's Testament shows us that he also had possessions in the area: Tamaltio (Tammels), Adtautinna (Taben) and Fidinis (Weiten), and Callido (Kell). (W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 127-129. The modern names are Levison's). If we could somehow draw a closer connection between the Duke and the Arnulfings, the importance of this middle Moselle area to Pepin's family would be that much clearer.

before Grimoald I's collapse and Wulfoald's takeover. The chief Arnulfing instrument in this area may have been Duke Adalgisel, whose Testament proves that he had extensive holdings there. The most important area to the Arnulfings was the middle Moselle. Here there was little royal fiscal property and the Arnulfings close allies, the family of Pepin II's parents-in-law, had a virtual monopoly on the landed estates in the area.<sup>99</sup>

#### The Nature of Their Holdings.

When the first Arnulfings suddenly sprang into the light of history in 613 as the head of a faction opposing Theuderic and Brunhild, they did so as the holders of a privileged position which had its own power-base of landed estates. These were organized as manors, that is, as "great farms" where the agricultural labor force was comprised of those in an unfree or semi-free status. The ancestors of

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<sup>99</sup> The Arnulfings may have had possessions elsewhere in Francia other than between the Meuse and Moselle, but it seems highly unlikely that the scattered possessions that we know of are anything but later acquisitions. An exception to this is the land that Grimoald I probably owned near Reims. The Vita Nivardi (MGH, SSRM V, p. 164) mentions his possessions in Calmiciacum (Chaumuzy), Victuriacum (Wintry-les-Reims), and Wasciacus (Vassy). However lands in this area are never again mentioned as Arnulfing possessions, and thus we must assume that when he fell, they too fell from family ownership.

Pepin I had enjoyed the benefits of such a system since the time of the Frankish conquest, and by 613 it was capable of supporting independent local political activity.

Such a view of the manorial nature of the early Arnulfing holdings is by no means undisputed. Because we lack specific information concerning the faction's early holdings we must again examine the question on the more general level. By so doing we will discover when and how the Frankish manorial system developed. We can see the manor in its mature state in the eighth century because of the relative abundance of contemporary sources. When it was born and how early it reached that state, however, are questions not easily answered.

As the Franks followed Clovis southward into Gaul they brought with them the legal, social, attitudinal, and structural customs which led to the development of the manorial system. The missing element was the dimension of scale. The learned battle over the character of the early Frankish agricultural system seems to have missed this basic consideration. One party argues that there was no manorialism (Grundherrschaft) at the time of the conquest <sup>100</sup> while the other enthusiastically waves its proof that there was. <sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> ". . . zur Landnahmezeit ein fraenkisch-adliger Grundbesitz noch nicht vorhanden gewesen ist." (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 58).

Those opposed to the concept see a village system of free farmers. Some of these farmers then entered the service of the king, and in complete dependence on him formed the new "service nobility". This new nobility was based first in royal service but eventually acquired its own wealth through gifts from the royal fisc. The other group of scholars perceives an established nobility accompanying Clovis. By right of birth they took the biggest and best pieces of Gallic land which they exploited with the manorial system. There are also the compromisers who see both systems existing side by side. <sup>102</sup> The important point is that these holdings

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101 "Seigneurial estates (Grundherrschaften) were in existence among the Germans in the time of Tacitus, and certainly increased with the introduction of Catholicism and the establishment of the monarchy in the period of the great conquests and the extension of the kingdom;" (A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 105). "The type of economic organization known as the manor existed in the north of Gaul, including the regions which were later to be known as the Low Countries in the Merovingian period and even in Roman times. . . ." (F. Ganshof, "Manorial Organization", p. 29).

102 "Die in der wirtschaftsgeschichtlichen Literatur viel erörterte Frage, ob die Ansiedlung in doerflichen Genossenschaften oder in groesseren Einzelhoeften als Grundherrschaften stattgefunden hat, ist wohl in dem Sinne zu beantworten, dass beide Wege praktisch beschritten worden sind." (G. Frommhold, "Erbhof", p. 15).

were small. They had not yet built a sufficient economic base which would have enabled their owners to carry out large-scale, independent, political action. There was an immense difference between the position of Pepin I and Itta, and that of their ancestors who wielded a sword at Clovis' side, but they all were manorial lords. The difference was in the scale of their holdings, and not in the type, and there is no need to invent the free farmer in order to explain it.

When Clovis and his war band crushed Syagrius and fell heir to the land between the Somme and Loire in 486, only thirty to forty thousand Franks were settled over this vast area. There is no record of any one-third/two-thirds division of land between the land's inhabitants and the "guests" such as we see in the Visigothic and Burgundian codes;<sup>103</sup> Frankish conditions in Gaul simply didn't call for it.

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<sup>103</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 101. Dopsch insists that the failure of the law to mention any such division is not proof that it did not exist. He traces the Burgundian, Visigothic and Salian codes back to the Ostrogothic code of King Euric. Since all three codes have a common origin, Dopsch concludes that the Salian code probably would have held the one-third/two-thirds land division just as the others did if it were not for the fact that its codification came at such a time when the stipulation was no longer needed. We find his reasoning weak. The first versions of the Lex Salica are attributed to the reign of Clovis who died in 511, which means that it was recorded within a generation of the conquest. If such a division had taken place it is far more likely that it would have been included than excluded,

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As inflation had made owning a slave a luxury, the Roman land owners of northern Gaul had replaced him with the colonus, a semi-free land renter. The small free-holder had also disappeared by the time of the Frank's arrival. He too had sunk into a dependent status under the great land owning families or on the huge fiscal estates of the prefect.<sup>104</sup> Thus when the Franks settled they found relatively few land owners and the one-third/two-thirds division was not necessary. They also did not drive the previous inhabitants from the land, but kept them as dependent labor.<sup>105</sup> As we have seen, the most plausible assumption is that the best land was taken by the leading families and that the remaining warriors settled down with their families, their renters and their slaves to administer a relatively modest amount of acreage.<sup>106</sup> Most of the land fell to Clovis, himself, as heir to the huge imperial fisc.

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103 (cont'd) especially since other codes with a common origin do contain it, and the Lex Salica's codification took place so soon after the conquest.

104 K. Bosl, "Gesellschaftsentwicklung", p. 159.

105 H. Aubin, "Herkunft", p. 43.

106 "We must again envisage the theory of a Herrensiedling, but with the proviso the Herren must be understood as including all Frankish fighting men." (C. Verlinden, "Colonization", p. 15).

We can see and/or imagine the above picture with reasonable certainty from the few sources we have. The Lex Salica and the early Merovingian capitularia, which would now reflect the post-conquest society, seem to mirror this picture. The first books of Gregory's History are not filled with the revolts, plots, and escapades of great nobles as are the books describing the end of the century. And from the beginning (510) we find the royal house donating land from the "fisci nostri".<sup>107</sup>

To understand the development of the nobility's holdings throughout the rest of the century, we must take at least a superficial dip into legal history. There is a distinct and important difference between the Roman and German concept of private property. In the Roman sense, private property is absolute - the owner may do with it what he pleases. In the German sense, this is not always true, as an owner's right to dispose of his property may carry many restrictions with it. The owner may not have the right to sell it, but may only be allowed to pass it on to his children through inheritance. In other cases, it may only remain in the owner's

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<sup>107</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 1, p. 3.

family as long as he lives, reverting to a previous owner (usually the king) on his death. Often it could not be divided and had to be passed on to the eldest son. Sometimes continued possession of it was made conditional on the continued existence of a determined type of relationship between the present and the previous owner.<sup>108</sup> It was, of course, in the Church's interest for the Franks to hold the Roman rather than the German concept of property whereby the faithful would be less restricted in their donating of land to ecclesiastical institutions. Indeed as Francia became more and more Catholicized we do see an increasing instance of the formula "quidquid facere (agere) volueris, liberam in omnibus habeas potestatem" in the donation, sale, and exchange charters.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The article which first propagated these distinctions was Heinrich Brunner's "Die Landschenkung der Merowinger und Agilofinger, in: Sitzungsberichte der koeniglichen preussischen Akadamie der Wissenschaft zu Berlin, 1885 II H. 52, pp. 1173-1202. It is a masterful piece of work, careful attention to which clears up many confusing aspects of the sixth century landholding picture.

<sup>109</sup> H. Brunner, "Landschenkungen", p. 1192. For example: a charter of Childeric II from 661 (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 25, p. 25), one of Pepin II from 702 (ibid, nr. 3, p. 93), Irmina's founding document for Echternach from 698 (ibid., nr. 55, p. 173), donation charters for Echternach from the "Willibrord Franken" (C. Wampach, Echternach I-2, nr. 16, 28, etc.). There are many more.

A passage in the Lex Salica lets us see how such limitations on land ownership would help these leading warrior families over the course of the sixth century to develop into powerful noble houses. Title fifty-nine of the law concerns the inheritance of allodial land.<sup>110</sup> Paragraph six of this title mentions a type of land called "terra salica" which it prohibits from ever falling to women by inheritance.<sup>111</sup> Since the other paragraphs of the title delineate an order of succession which does include women in cases where there are no male heirs, it would seem that this terra salica is a special portion of the allod which must be kept within the male line of the family.<sup>112</sup> The existence of this "inheritance-allod" (Erbhof) would form the economic center of an estate which over the generations would attach other lands to it by sale, exchange, gift,

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<sup>110</sup> MGH, Legum Sectio I, Vol. IV, pt. 1, pp. 222-224.

<sup>111</sup> paragraph 6. "De terra vero Salica nulla in muliere (portio aut) hereditas est, sed ad virilem sexum, qui fratres fuerint, tota terra pertineat." (MGH, Legum Sectio I, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 223).

<sup>112</sup> This is the conclusion of G. Frommhold ("Erbhof", p. 20). It is by no means undisputed, but in light of Brunner's revelations concerning the limitations often placed on allodial land, it seems to us to be a very plausible, if not highly likely, interpretation. For the opposite opinion, see A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 50-57. He sees the terra salica as simply meaning "Salhof" or

expropriation, or whatever means.<sup>113</sup> One of the most important means of aggrandizement for these estates was by gifts from the royal fisc. This would tend, of course, to increase the wealth and stature of those who were in favor with the king.

In 589 a plot against the Austrasian royal family was discovered and among other conspirators two noblemen, Sunnegisil and Gallomagnus, had their lands confiscated

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112 (cont'd) indominicatum as it did in the high middle ages. He argues that the first paragraphs deal with non real estate property and thus the terra salica means the whole allod. This is obviously not true since the whole of title 59 is entitled "De Alodis". Bergengruen is worried that if the terra salica is found to be a special hereditary allod it would mean that a land-holding Merovingian nobility could trace itself hereditarily back to the time of the Lex Salica and thereby destroy his contention, derived from the "portiones method", that such a nobility hardly existed before 650. This is questionable reasoning. There is no mention of the terra salica in the later charters which mention the portiones, thus the term itself cannot create the link. Far more dangerous to his theory, it seems to us, is his own contention that terra salica in the Lex Salica means indominicatum. This would be a far weightier piece of evidence for an early sixth century dualistic manorial system than would be the existence of an exclusively heritable allod.

113 ". . . in consequence of intercourse with the Romans the principle of free exchange of property was applied also to land, so that in both larger and smaller estates purchase, gifts, precariae, and other transactions were the order of the day." (A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 104). Although one should be rather hesitant to judge a society by its criminal codes or by the laments of those charged with upholding the mores, we should not neglect the illegal

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and were sent into exile. It appears that while the king could confiscate the land which had come from the fisc, he could not touch the conspirator's other property (proprium).<sup>114</sup> We hear of other reversions of lands to the fisc in the cases of those who presumably died a normal death while enjoying the king's favor and cases where such lands passed undiminished to the deceased's heirs.<sup>115</sup>

When we put these sparse pieces of evidence together we can perhaps see how one hundred years later the progeny of Clovis' leading warriors would be strong enough to defeat a powerful queen and establish another Merovingian in her stead. We know that the privileged warrior began at least with an allodial farm, as the Lex Salica makes this clear.

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113 (cont'd) methods of increasing property. Both the fourth Council of Orleans (541) and the Council of Macon (585) speak out against the unlawful confiscation of ecclesiastical and lay properties by royal officials and their following. (ibid., p. 198).

114 "At vero Sunnegisilus et Gallomagnus, privati a rebus quas a fisco meruerant, in exilio retruduntur. Sed venientibus legatis, inter quos episcopi erant, a rege Gunthchramno et petentibus pro his, ab exilio revocantur; quibus nihil aliud est relictum, nisi quod habere proprium videntur." (Gregory, Historia, IX-38, in: MGH, SSRM I, part 1, fasc. 2, p. 459).

115 "Quaecumque de fisco meruit, fisci iuribus sunt relata." (Op. cit., VIII-22 in: ibid, p. 389).

What else he may have had, we can only guess. Since, however, the law also speaks of free and half free, we can assume that he controlled other land - perhaps encumbered, perhaps not - which would have provided him some sort of rent or service income. And, insomuch as the Roman idea of property was continued by the Franks, there was ample opportunity for him to trade or buy other lands to increase his holdings. The existence of the terra salica in the Lex Salica, and the instances of unconfiscable proprium at the end of the century, seem to indicate that these families were never entirely dependent on service to the king for their privileged position. However, it is reasonable to expect that Clovis' favorites were originally granted the best farms. Since both Gregory and the charters indicate that the kings never wearied of granting fiscal lands, it is also obvious that those who best served the king would have been most able to overtake their brethren in the accumulation of wealth.

The differentiation between the Roman and German concepts of property helps to explain many elements in this process. In reading the standard accounts of the development of feudalism, the question arises as to why the Merovingians were so shortsighted and gave away clear title to their

lands, whereas their far more clever Carolingian successors wisely made their gifts in the form of benefices so as not to lose control. It is clear now, however, that the Merovingians were not quite so blind. By encumbering a fiscal gift, restricting its resale or inheritance, or by making it dependent upon loyalty to the crown, the king could enjoy many of the advantages of granting a benefice even though he had not legally and technically done so. This also provides the king's motivation for making such gifts and thus explains why there were so many of them and why the warriors of Clovis who remained in royal grace could so quickly acquire the scale of wealth and power necessary to rebel against Chilperic, Gunthram, and Childebert, as well as against Brunhild and Theuderic.<sup>116</sup> The expansion of the Roman idea of property (helped along by the support of the Church)<sup>117</sup> assists us in understanding how these nobles

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<sup>116</sup> Gregoria, Historia, IX-8, IX-9, IX-10, IX-12 (where a rebel, Ursio, has estates in Arnulfing territory), and many more.

<sup>117</sup> "Es ist aber doch zu beachten, dass es sich dabei um eine erhebliche spaetere Rechtsentwicklung handelt, die unter dem erkennbaren Einfluss des roemischen Rechts steht, und dass die Interessen der Kirche die volkstuemliche Fortbildung des nationalen Rechts hinderten. So zeigt das salfraenkische Recht des 5. Jahrhunderts im wesentlichem noch germanischen Character, aber schon die koenigliche Gesetzgebung der Folgezeit laesst fremdartig Einfluss erkennen. . ." (G. Frommhold, "Erbhof", p. 16).



could increase their holdings in ways and with lands not dependent on the king. As the unwritten encumbrances fell away from former royal property, so too would the royal "benefice without a benefice system" collapse and the whole process of building a powerful aristocracy accelerate. In any society where property rights are well protected, that is to say, where private property is absolute and totally alienable in the Roman sense, it will tend to accumulate in the hands of the few - why should we assume that it was any different for the early Merovingian nobility?

As one moves into the seventh century one can decrease the level of speculation and conjecture about the nobility's land-holding position drastically. By the end of the century the large manor is clearly in view in the hands of an independent nobility,<sup>118</sup> and the development of their estates as well as their independence is now much easier to see.

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<sup>118</sup> Historians no longer credit the Carolingian period with the great development and expansion of the manor, realizing that those nineteenth century historians who did so confused a growth in the number of sources describing the system with a growth in the system itself (S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, p. 5). ". . .there can be no doubt from the texts of the seventh and early eighth centuries that large, indeed very large, estates existed at this period." (F. Ganshof, Manorial Organization, p. 29). "Though an essential element in feudal society, the manor was in itself an older institution, and

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One of the most prolific indicators of the mediatization of the nobility's position is the presence of immunity. Royal immunities usually forbade officials from entering immune lands, released the immune lord from certain fees and dues, and gave him certain jurisdictional authority over his people for minor offenses. This last is especially important because it put the noble in a legal and powerful position between those under him and the king or his agents.<sup>119</sup> We know from the capitularies of Chlothar II (584-629) that he and his predecessors granted immunities to both ecclesiastical and lay recipients.<sup>120</sup> By the mid-seventh century the Lex Ripuaria had made mention of the royal immunity<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> (cont'd) was destined to last much longer." (M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. II, p. 442). It is obvious from the sources which affect our question that in 691 Pepin II is also describing a manorial system in his charters: ". . . mansum videlicet indominicatum cum adiacentibus. . ." (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 2, p. 92).

<sup>119</sup> S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, p. 97.

<sup>120</sup> ". . . salva emunitate praecedentium domnorum, quod ecclesiae aut potentum ver cuicumque visi sunt indulsisse pro pace atque disciplina facienda." (Chlotharii II Edictum, chap. 14 in: MGH, Legum Section II, vol. 1, p. 22).

<sup>121</sup> "Si quis legatariam reges. . . hospicio suscipere contempserit, nisi emunitas regis hoc contradixerit, 60 sol. culpabilis iudicetur." (Lex Ripuaria, LXVIII-3, in: MGH, Leges Nationum Germanicarum, Tomi 3, Pars 2, p. 119).

and soon its use became so common that the monk Marculf included it in his formulary. <sup>122</sup>

Another indication that the manor was entrenching itself is the incidence of free men lowering themselves into a dependent status. Gregory reports that the famine of 585 forced many of the poor to sell themselves into servitude in order to obtain food. <sup>123</sup> The Formulary of Angers from the late sixth century makes mention on several occasions of people entering into voluntary subservience. <sup>124</sup> And the Lex Baiuvariorum shows us that the extent of the practice necessitated its inclusion in the law. <sup>125</sup>

After Clothar II had defeated the forces of Theuderic II and Brunhild and established his rule over all Francia,

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<sup>122</sup> A vir illuster could sign over land ". . .in integra emunitate, absque ullius introitus iudicium. . ." (Marculfi Formularia, I-14; in: MGH, Legum Sectio V, p. 52).

<sup>123</sup> Gregory, Historia, VII-45.

<sup>124</sup> ". . .quicquid de nus ipsis ve de heredis nostris facere voluerit, licenciam (h)abeant potestatem faciendi." Formularia Andecavenses, 25, in: MGH, Legum Sectio V, p. 12.

<sup>125</sup> ". . .quamvis pauper sit, tamen libertatem suam nisi ex spontanea voluntate alicui tradere voluerit, hoc potestatem habeat faciendi." (Lex Baiuvariorum, VII-4).

he summoned a general council at Paris, and there, on October 18, 614, issued his famous edict.<sup>126</sup> The political events of the preceding decade show us that a powerful and independent nobility existed in all three regna, and this edict too gives us several glimpses into how they were becoming firmly anchored at the local level. The king was not allowed to reap the benefits of his victory - all land was to be restored to its rightful owners.<sup>127</sup> He confirmed all his and his predecessors' gifts,<sup>128</sup> forbade his royal judices to hold lands other than in the district they administered,<sup>129</sup> and, as we have seen, confirmed that there were lands which enjoyed immunity from the royal agents.<sup>130</sup> These stipulations as well as those which threatened punishment for the judex who abuses his office<sup>131</sup> manifest a

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<sup>126</sup> Text in: MGH, Legum Sectio II, Vol. I, pp. 20-23.

<sup>127</sup> "Et quae unus de fidelibus ac leodebus, sua fide servandum doninio legitimo, interrigna faciente visus est perdisse, generaliter absque alicui incommo de rebus sibi debetis praecepimus revestire." Chlotharii II Edictum, chap. 17, in: MGH, Legum Sectio II, vol. I, p. 23.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., chap. 16.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., chap. 12, p. 22.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., chap. 14.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., chap. 10.

decided friction between royal agents on the one hand, and a land-holding nobility on the other. There were two groups, and one was no longer directly dependent on a position of service to the king.<sup>132</sup>

Only twenty years later a document which significantly increases the likelihood of truth in the above conclusions appears. The testament of Adalgisel,<sup>133</sup> which, thanks to his probable connection to the Arnulfings and the geographical proximity of his holdings to theirs, provides us with useful information which can safely be applied to Pepin's family. Because Adalgisel was both the temporal and social equal of Pepin I and Grimoald I, it is reasonable to assume that the nature of his rights and properties would be very similar to theirs. The holdings of the nobility are no

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<sup>132</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 203. S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, p. 91. R. Sprandel ("Struktur", pp. 62f) offers the rather strained interpretation that the edict is not all that concerned with the nobility but seeks rather to limit their power and that of the royal agents in favor of a class of freemen below them.

<sup>133</sup> Text in: W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 118-138.

longer modest. Adalgisel controlled some twenty-six different localities which, as we have seen, stretched from Liège to Metz and Verdun. Most of these he had acquired through inheritance, but purchase and sale transactions are also present.<sup>134</sup> The characteristics of a huge seigniorial system permeate the testament. With most of the villae there is mention of dependent inhabitants (mancipia) who are donated with the land. Special mention is made of dependent herdsmen (vervicarii) which indicates the importance of livestock and the lands for its support. He owned mills and vineyards, spoke of funds and rents,<sup>135</sup> and also held a piece of land on precarial tenure from the church at Verdun.<sup>136</sup> Still there is no mention of indominicatum and mansus and so we do not know whether the organization was dualistic, but seigniorial it certainly was, and seigniorial on a significant scale.<sup>137</sup>

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134 "Casa in Treveris, quam a matriculis comparavi. . ." (W. Levison, Fruehzeit, p. 128). "Alia vero quarta portio nepoti meo Bobone duci vendere ceperam. . ." (ibid., p. 131).

135 ". . .cum omni superlectili vel appenditiis et redditibus suis. . ." (ibid., p. 127).

136 ". . .et ego ipse sub usufructuario per precatoria possedi. . ." (ibid., p. 133).

137 In defining the word curtis, F. Ganshof makes an interesting conjecture concerning the organization of Adalgisel's estate at Bastogne: ". . .it appears that the word curtis

Pepin II and Plectrude also exhibited seigniorial control over their holdings in their charters. The Arnulfing holdings seem to evidence two significant differences from the holdings of nobility in other parts of Austrasia and from those in Neustria and Burgundy. First, they seem to be of recent origin - those in south-east Belgium probably came into the family with Pepin I in his capacity as Duke in Austrasia.<sup>138</sup> Those around Echternach probably go back one or two generations before the time of Irmina, thereby placing them in the early part of the century, being ante-dated slightly by those in the south around Metz and Verdun. Several pieces of evidence support this view. The villae are not yet hopelessly divided into portiones; indeed, Adalgisel owns several estates whole and entire. The areas in south-east Belgium, and those in Luxembourg contain few, if any, of the early Frankish row-graves, which

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137 (cont'd) implied a centre of mixed production which combined exploitation of the forest with pasture and perhaps farming on the land which had been cleared. Something of this kind must have been the case on the estate of Adalgisel-Grimo at Bastogne; it is not described as a villa, but it included herds of cattle sufficiently important to make them worthy of special mention in his will (634)". (F. Ganshof, Manorial Organization, p. 33).

138 A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 123.

indicates that they were not part of the original Frankish settlement, while the Ardennes lacks evidence of the usual villae of the nobility.<sup>139</sup> Second, and this applies to the Belgian and middle Moselle groups, the Arnulfing holdings seem to have a significantly large number of dependent villae in which a class of "homines nostri" lived.<sup>140</sup> These differences are important for our understanding of Arnulfing economics in the seventh century.

In later Carolingian times the dominant type of manor was dualistic with a clear distinction between the lord's land (indominicatum) and that of the dependent peasant (mansus). Such a system built on service is a very efficient means for transferring economic advantage from the exploited to the owning class in cases where, for whatever reason, there can be no prevalent payment of a durable medium of exchange. It would be wonderful to point to several charters which show this system to be developing on the Arnulfing

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139 Ibid.

140 Ibid., pp. 119f. As proof Bergengruen mentions the following charters: MGH, Dipl I, nr. 1, p. 209; ibid., nr. 15, p. 102; ibid., nr. 55, p. 173; and ibid., nr. 60, p. 177.



lands in the seventh century. Unfortunately, the sources are not that kind. The system is first reflected in the written documents of that group of "Willibrord Franks" who donated much land to the monastery at Echternach in the early eighth century.<sup>141</sup> Their land was in southern Holland in an area that was also largely uninhabited. They probably moved into the area about 650 from the more eastern parts of Austrasia, bringing with them this "modern" dualistic system. It is because this area was lacking in previous settlement that the new manorial system could be set up with its clear differentiation between lord and mancipia without all the levels of different social status and types of tenure which encumbered the more settled areas.<sup>142</sup>

Although we cannot say with absolute certainty that this system also found roots in the Arnulfing lands before 687, it seems highly likely that it did. A document of Pepin II and Plectrude in 691 mentions mansus and indominicatum<sup>143</sup> and Pepin's new land would also be very susceptible to the new system.

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<sup>141</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 40.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 114f.

<sup>143</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 2, p. 92.

Another candidate for an agricultural innovation which Arnulfing land could have acquired comes in the form of the carruca, the heavy wheeled plow. It first appeared in the sixth century with the Slavs. The employment of this plow, which is, of course, far better suited to northern Europe's heavy soil, involves drastic social changes. It requires eight instead of the two oxen which the earlier scratch plow required. This means that it takes a relatively large holding in order to raise and support so many oxen. The simple maneuver of turning the plow is, as can be well imagined, a complicated and bothersome task. Consequently, long furrows and long fields are far more practical than are square ones. Long fields are impractical to fence, which again calls for some overseeing administrative arrangement.<sup>144</sup> Settled land, therefore, would tend to resist for a long time such sweeping changes despite the great economic advantage of the newer technology, whereas in unsettled land there would not be such social hindrances to its adoption. The first Frankish mention of the carruca is indeed Austrasian, in the Lex Alemannorum<sup>145</sup> from the years

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<sup>144</sup> Lynn White Jr., "The Expansion of Technology 500-1500", in Carolo M. Cipolla (ed.), The Fontana Economic History of Europe: The Middle Ages, London: Collins/Fontana, 1972, p. 147.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

724 to 730, but we can pinpoint its introduction with no more exactitude although, once again, Arnulfing lands were ripe for its adoption. For all these reasons the fact that their property was recently settled deserves decided emphasis.

It is obvious that a group of dependent noblemen, "homines nostri", is almost the sine qua non for successful political endeavor in the early middle ages. We will have much to say about them in our next and final section as we put all the above pieces together in the attempt to make Pepin II's success at Tertry more explicable.

VI. ADVANTAGES OF THE ARNULFING POSITION

The victory at Tertry is not to be explained simply as a victory of nobility over royalty, or of east over west. It was the triumph of the Arnulfing faction. From simply viewing the politics of the mid-seventh century, one would assume that the house of Ebroin or Wulfoald, rather than the house of Pepin would have secured the rule of Francia. The Arnulfing victory, nevertheless, was the lasting one, and the reasons for its stability are not contained in the family's politics but in its social and economic position.

Increased Advantage of Landed Wealth.

Historians have found good reason to modify Dopsch's view that the early Merovingians affected a nearly wholesale assumption of the imperial tax system.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, not all accept Pirenne's contention that the trade which generated commercial taxes (the teleonea) continued almost unabated

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<sup>1</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 377. For comments on later findings see: S. C. Easton and H. Wieruszowski, Era of Charlemagne, pp. 48ff.

until about 650.<sup>2</sup> They do, however, agree that from the fifth to the eighth centuries Gaul experienced a drastic reduction in the amount of her traditional Mediterranean-directed trade and a correspondent decrease in the royal revenues generated from it.<sup>3</sup> The degree to which the Merovingian monarchs depended on commercial taxation has not been determined, nor will it ever be.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that they did collect customs receipts, certain bridge tolls, harbor fees and the like, and the Roman population continued to pay a type of income tax as long as the registers were kept.<sup>5</sup> We know that the customs houses were kept in service at Marseilles, Arles, Avignon, and many other southern Gaullic cities.<sup>6</sup> And we can assume that the teleonea were a significant contributor to the royal coffers as long as trade was brisk. It seems to have been an important enough exaction for the monks of Stavelot-Malmedy to seek an immunity from it even as late as 814.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> H. Pirenne, Mohammed, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> S. C. Easton and H. Wieruszowski, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> "In Pirenne's opinion, Merovingian wealth depended more on teleonea, that is upon Commerce. . .but whether more or less, I see no means of determining." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long Haired Kings, p. 206).

<sup>5</sup> H. St. L. B. Moss, Birth, p. 65.

The decline of this Gallic trade, and with it the decrease in the teleonea contributed significantly to two major developments in the seventh century, both of which would have affected Pepin and his faction in the Austrasian east.

The first of these phenomena was the ruralization of Frankish society. As trade declined, so too did the urban centers. As the teleonea dried up, the king became ever more dependent upon rural sources of income, that is, proprietary rents, and dues from the fisc, and the general land and poll tax, the tributum.<sup>8</sup> The monarch, of course, still possessed other forms of income; booty, "gifts" from those seeking ecclesiastical or lay office, court fees, and the royal portion of composition payments (fredum).<sup>9</sup> Yet if we peer backwards again we can see that it was the rural revenues that were clearly taking on more importance. The amount of attention given to them by the early Merovingian legal instruments is slight in comparison to the attention other matters receive, whereas in the Carolingian period the

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<sup>6</sup> S. Dill, Roman Society, pp. 125f.

<sup>7</sup> J. Halkin and C. G. Roland, Stavelot-Malmedy, nr. 26, p. 68.

<sup>8</sup> The tributum was composed of two parts, the capitatio humana, a poll tax paid by all who were not free, and the census or iugatio terrena, a land tax paid by free and unfree alike. (O. M. Dalton, Gregory, Vol. I, p. 220).

administration of landed property is a matter of intense royal interest.<sup>10</sup> Even the means of collecting these rural exactions was becoming less urban. The same words, tributum and census, which once meant tax, undergo a change in definition during the seventh century, reflecting a breakdown of the land tax so that by the Carolingian period the words have taken on the meaning of proprietary rents.<sup>11</sup> It is also in the seventh century that the centers of royal administration, the residences of the counts, move from the cities of northern Gaul to the palatia in the countryside.<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>9</sup> Jean-Pierre Bodmer, Der Krieger der Merovingenzeit und seine Welt, Zurich: Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag A. G., 1957, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> Ferdinand Lot, L'Impôt foncière et la capitation personnelle sous la Bas-Empire et à l'époque franque, Paris: E. Champin, 1928, pp. 114-118; Charles H. Taylor, "Census de Rebus in the Capitularies", in: C. H. Taylor (ed.), Anniversary Essays in Medieval History. 1929. (Reprint 1967 by Books for Libraries, Inc., Freeport, New York), p. 348, and J. W. Thompson, "Statistical Sources", p. 636.

<sup>11</sup> J. W. Thompson, "Statistical Sources", p. 631 and C. H. Taylor. "Census", p. 337, who lists a Merovingian precaria formula as an example of the change (MGH, Formularia I, nr. 7, p. 7).

<sup>12</sup> S. C. Easton and H. Wieruszowski, Era of Charlemagne, p. 21.

coinage, too, echoes this shift to the rural milieu. In the seventh century, silver replaces gold as the medium of exchange, reflecting among other things a development of local buying and selling.<sup>13</sup> It would be wrong to interpret these developments as an economic decline. In fact, as the increase in silver coinage shows us, there was most likely an increase in prosperity.<sup>14</sup> What these things show us instead is how much more exclusively the proprietor of the large, efficient, landed estates controlled the economic mainstream. This is not to say that agriculture suddenly became the most important economic activity in Gaul during the seventh century. It, of course, always had been so. But as a result of the seventh century ruralization, land rose from being an important source of wealth and came closer to being the only one. It hardly needs mention that the Arnulfings were in an outstanding position to capitalize on this trend.

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<sup>13</sup> Philip Grierson, "Commerce in the Dark Ages: a Critique of the Evidence", in: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, 9 (1959), p. 126.

<sup>14</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 227.



Advantages of an Eastern Basis.

The other development to which the decline of Gaul's traditional Mediterranean-directed trade contributed was the general shift in the Frankish center of gravity to the east.<sup>15</sup> As the lands beyond the Rhine took on more and more importance for the Franks, Austrasia's position in the empire became less peripheral.<sup>16</sup> We see the shift reflected in the late sixth century as the capitals of both Burgundy and Austrasia move eastward, from Orleans to Chalon-sur-Saône, and from Reims to Metz.<sup>17</sup> In Neustria, too, the royal itineraries extend beyond the Paris basin towards the northeast to locations up the Oise river.<sup>18</sup> From the time

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<sup>15</sup> The connection between the decline of trade in the west and the shift of emphasis to the east is Steinbach's ("Austrasien", p. 220) who builds on the work of Henri Pirenne. See also: Franz-Josef Heyen, "Reichsgut im Rheinland - Die Geschichte des koeniglichen Fiskus Boppard", in: Rheinisches Archiv (48), 1956, p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> "In particular the Merovingians lacked power in the right places, in the Rhineland and beyond, where the shape of Europe was being determined." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Long-Haired Kings, p. 247).

<sup>17</sup> E. Ewig, "Teilreiche", p. 87. Metz probably became the capital under Childebert II (575-595). (ibid., pp. 96f).

<sup>18</sup> H. Zatscheck, Wie das erste Reich, pp. 28f. This eastward movement became even more pronounced in the eighth century. Zatscheck points out that at that time it was probably due to the desire of the Carolingian mayors to have the kings near them.

of Theudebert I's conquest of the east in the mid-sixth century, there seems to have been an increasing amount of trade coming from the lands east of the Rhine, as the stipulations of the various councils and folk-laws witness.<sup>19</sup> These vast, fertile lands with the Rhine, the Danube and the Main as their arteries were becoming increasingly important. Soon Paris, too, would yield to Aachen.

When we examined the Arnulfing land-holdings we posited that they were new land. They appeared to have the economic quality of an "internal frontier". There were older, established settlements to the south in Lorraine, to the west in the Champagne, and to the east and north in the flat lands of the Moselle and Rhine river valleys; but the Arnulfing area itself was largely unsettled at the beginning of the seventh century. We surmised that such land would be in a better position to adopt newer and more effective social and technological methods of agricultural exploitation and thereby yield its owners more wealth and influence. This would only hold true, however, if the larger authority structure did not impose burdens upon such a development,

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<sup>19</sup> A. Dopsch, Foundations, pp. 350-352.

for the building of an independent power-base would naturally take place best in a politically independent atmosphere. What, then, was the extent of Austrasia's political independence in the early seventh century? How tightly was she bound to the mainstream of Merovingian political control from the west?

The question is disputed. It revolves around the establishment of the two Austrasian viceroyalties in 623 and again in 633/34. A few scholars accord Austrasia's position a good deal of political autonomy,<sup>20</sup> while others see the viceroyalties as measures taken by the Neustrians to increase their central control.<sup>21</sup> In Fredegar's account of the circumstances surrounding Dagobert's establishment of his son, Sigibert, on the quasi-independent throne of Austrasia, he reported that thereafter the Austrasians waged a successful defense against the Wends.<sup>22</sup> From that assertion some have concluded that Austrasian autonomy was

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<sup>20</sup> H. Zatscheck, Wie das erste Reich, p. 24; B. Krusch, "Staatsstreich", p. 415; and F. Steinbach, "Austrasien", p. 221.

<sup>21</sup> R. Sprandel, "Struktur", pp. 65f.

<sup>22</sup> "Dienceps Austrasiae eorum studio limetem et regnum Francorum contra Winedus utiliter definsasse nuscuntur." (Fredegar, Chronici, IV-75, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 63v).

encouraged for Neustrian defense purposes.<sup>23</sup> One student of the period cautions against overemphasizing Austrasian autonomy and sees the reasons for the establishment of the viceroyalties as stemming from Frankish ideas of the supernatural efficacy of the physical presence of a king. Metz as a royal city had a right to a king just as Soissons had.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the controversy, it is clear that there was a marked degree of political independence in Austrasia and it exhibited itself from the early part of the century. The events of 613 did not simply cause the replacement of one Merovingian with another, they also profoundly affected the political position of Austrasia. The eastern kingdom had been under the control of powerful, local monarchs, Theuderic and Brunhild. Chlothar II, on the other hand, was a weak king. Before his expedition into Austrasia he could claim only the three civitates of Amiens, Rouen, and Beauvais; the remainder of Francia was ruled by the old queen and her grandson. By ridding themselves of Brunhild and

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<sup>23</sup> This is the conclusion of Wallace-Hadrill, who cites the Lex Ripuaria as further evidence. (Long-Haired Kings, pp. 91f.)

<sup>24</sup> E. Ewig, "Die fraenkische Teilreiche", p. 110. The political effects of the supposed magical quality of royal blood are discussed by Jean-Pierre Bodmer, Der Krieger der Merowingerzeit und seine Welt, Zurich: Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag, A.G., 1957, pp. 17f.

establishing Chlothar as their king, the Austrasians exchanged a powerful local monarch for a far weaker and remote one. The fruits of their labors were not long in coming, for as we have seen, Chlothar's Edict of Paris in 614 guaranteed many aspects of local autonomy not only to the Austrasians, but to the other two kingdoms as well.

Chlothar's new power erased his originally weak position. When he increased Neustrian control over the eastern realm, the Austrasians clamored for the establishment of their own king. They again achieved their ends as Dagobert was proclaimed King of Austrasia by his father in 623. Indeed he, too, began as a weak monarch. Not only was he placed under the guidance of Pepin I and Arnulf, but Chlothar had kept for himself the choicest pieces of Austrasian territory, the Champagne and most of modern Belgium.<sup>25</sup> Even so, the Austrasians watched their new king grow in stature enough so that a mere two years later, on the occasion of his wedding, Dagobert was able to regain the territory which Chlothar had kept.

The happy relationship between Dagobert and the Austrasians ended when he succeeded to his father's throne and

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<sup>25</sup> A. Longnon, Géographie, plate X.

moved to Paris in 629. Dagobert became a Neustrian and a powerful one. Fredegar spares no words in describing the Austrasians' resentment of him.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, in 633/34 another viceroyalty was established in Austrasia with Dagobert's two year old son, Sigibert III, as king. Fredegar's account does indeed make it seem probable that the viceroyalty was established as a defense measure against the Wends. The Neustrian motives, however, have little bearing on the fact that Austrasia once again found herself in a relatively autonomous political position, especially as the infant king was placed in the hands of Adalgisel and Chunibert, two of Austrasia's local leaders and staunch allies of the Arnulfining house. The boy king hardly reached the Frankish age of majority when the mayoralty passed into the hands of the powerful Grimoald I, who, until his demise in 662, ensured that the political climate remained favorable to his family's designs. Although by no means free of both Austrasian and Neustrian control, the Arnulfings in the first half of the seventh century would have found the particular political situation of Austrasia able to afford them a considerable degree of independence.

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26 ". . . dum se cernebant cum Dagoberto odium incurrissee et adsiduae expoliarintur." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-68, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 58v.)

The type of political control exercised within Austrasia itself also had a profound effect on the ability of the Arnulfings to build an independent power-base. Austrasian politics were conducted by the kingdom's two most important officials, the duke and the mayor. The differing nature of these two offices also reveals certain aspects of the Arnulfings' position of political independence.

The office of mayor of the palace existed among all the Germanic tribes, yet it was only under the Franks that it expanded to become the most powerful position in the royal government.<sup>27</sup> Even in the Frankish system its rise to prominence did not begin until the period of Brunhild's and Fredegunde's prolonged feud.<sup>28</sup> Throughout the sixth century it was still an unimportant office, so much so that Gregory of Tours mentions it only three times.<sup>29</sup> The origins of the office are probably to be found in a domestic official of the Roman emperors, and the Frankish mayor, too, began as the administrator of the royal household and servants.

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<sup>27</sup> E. Muehlbacher, Geschichte u.d. Karolinger, p. 28.

<sup>28</sup> H. Bonnell, Anfaenge, p. 91.

<sup>29</sup> Gregory, Historia, VI-9 (Badegisisus); V-45 and VII-27 (Waddo); and IX-30 (Florentianus). See S. Dill, Roman Society, p. 139.

Although its functions changed and its power increased greatly over the years, the office of mayor maintained the royal domestic character so apparent in its beginnings. It began and remained a royal position closely tied to the functions of central government. From the king it received its authority, and through the apparatus of the royal government it exercised its power. In the course of the seventh century the position came to be paramount not only in the royal bureaucracy, but also in the administration of the lands most important to the crown. <sup>30</sup>

Although the mayoralty was held by a noble, the position was a constant threat to the aristocracy. This was true because the mayor could not only further royal authority at the expense of the nobles, but he could also use the office to augment his own wealth, lands, and influence. In all parts of Francia, the nobles had the same interest - maintaining a power-balance so that no one of their number would gain an upper hand. <sup>31</sup> We see evidence of this in the many reports of revolts against, and desertions from the mayors, and in the aristocratic attempt to establish the mayoralty on a rotating basis with the ascension of

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<sup>30</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 180.

<sup>31</sup> B. Krusch, ("Staatsstreich", p. 413) who lists Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-52 and IV-54 as good examples.



Childeric II as sole ruler in 673.<sup>32</sup>

The duke was also a royal official, though his authority had a very different basis. The origins of this office were not domestic and administrative, rather they were military. The territories which came under the dukes (usually called principatus) were the border areas where the original military character of the office was indeed kept very much alive.<sup>33</sup> In fact, the duke may have actually been established in these areas as a colonizer in order to build up their defense capabilities.<sup>34</sup> Those royal officials whose territory was the farthest from the center of the royal administration and the concentration of fiscal holdings were naturally more loosely bound to that royal authority, and depended more heavily on their own landed

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<sup>32</sup> Passio Leudegaril, chap. 5.

<sup>33</sup> "Rund um das neustrische Kerngebiet der koeniglichen Fisci liegen im 7. Jahrhundert die Herzogtuemer an dessen Grenzen an: im Nordwestern die Bretagne, im Westen und Suedwesten der Ducat des Radevert, im Sueden das Herzogtum Aquitanien, im Suedosten Châlons, im Osten die Champagne, im Nordosten das Ardennenprinzipat des Pippin, noerdlich davon die Prinzipate des Odacrus und des Hydulfus, zweier Unterherzoege Pippins II. im suedlichen Belgien, und im Norden des Ponthieu." (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 179).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 174ff.

possessions for support. This was especially true for the duke, the military governor on Francia's borders. Whereas the mayor ruled with authority granted from above by the king, the duke ruled with authority granted from below by his warriors. Although this distinction in the nature of the two offices should not be taken as absolute, it is clear that they exhibited these differing tendencies.

Why, then, is this difference important for the history of the seventh century Arnulfings? It is significant because it appears that the political authority which the Arnulfing family heads exercised in the seventh century was far more ducal in character than it was mayoral. Indeed there is a good deal of evidence to indicate that neither Pepin I nor Pepin II were ever mayors of the palace at all.

It is Fredegar who calls Pepin I mayor of the palace;<sup>35</sup> the other sources do not. The Liber Historiae Francorum refers to him as "dux",<sup>36</sup> the Vita Sanctae Geretrudis gives him no title with the exception of "viri clarissimi",<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-52, 58, and 85 all call him mayor. In IV-40 he is grouped with "ceteris proceribus" and IV-61 gives him no title.

<sup>36</sup> LHF, chapters 41 and 42. In chapter 43, although he himself is given no title, his son, Grimoald I, assumes the mayoralty. ". . . Pippino defuncto, Grimoaldo filio eius in maiorem domato instituit." (MGH, SSRM II, pp. 315f).

<sup>37</sup> Vita Sanctae Geretrudis, chap. 3 in MGH, SSRM II, p. 457.

and the Annals of Metz call him "princeps".<sup>38</sup> From a donation charter of Pepin II from the year 687, we learn that his grandfather's principatus was in the Ardennes<sup>39</sup> that is, the area around Stavelot-Malmedy, where we have seen so many of the family's holdings. If we can trust the Annals of Metz, Pepin I also controlled most of central Belgium.<sup>40</sup> Indeed this is where Nivelles, Fosse, and the other holdings of his wife, Itta, are believed to have been. Irene Haselbach correctly points out that the Annals of Metz introduce Pepin I, not as the mayor of the palace in Austrasia, but as a local ruler of this area of Belgium and Holland who derives his authority from the comitatus-like ties with which his followers have bound themselves to

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38 "Pippini precellentissimi quondam principis. . ." (Annales Mettenses Priores, in: MGH, SSRG, p. 2).

39 "castrum Ambra, Amberlacensis fisci caput. . . ab Ardennae principatu avulsum." (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 1, p. 209). It is A. Bergengruen's conclusion that Pepin I held the principatus Ardennae (Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 179). He does not, however, tell us how he knows it to be true. As he quotes the same passage from Pepin II's charter (ibid., pp. 118f) we have assumed that it is the source of his deduction.

40 ". . . Pippini precellentissimi quondam principis, qui populum inter Carbonariam silvam et Mosam fluvium et usque ad Fresionum fines vastis limitibus habitantem iustis legibus gubernabat." (Annales Mettenses Priores, in MGH, SSRG, p. 2).

him.<sup>41</sup> It is not just the Annals of Metz which help us to see that Pepin I's leadership position was based on the personal ties of his noble following and not on the authority of royal office. When Arnulf and Pepin are first mentioned by Fredegar,<sup>42</sup> Arnulf was the public official. He had seen long years of service at the court of Theudebert II and had been made domesticus of six fisci.<sup>43</sup> For Pepin, on the other hand, we know of no such office on which he could lean, so his support as leader of the faction must have come from his possessions and his allies. The importance of this local ducal authority is made especially clear by the preference of the important early sources, with the exception of Fredegar, for such titles as "dux", "princeps",

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<sup>41</sup> "Pippin d. Ae. wird bezeichnenderweise nicht als Hausmeier in die Erzählung eingeführt. . .sondern er wird als bedeutender Gefolgsherr. . ." (I. Haselbach "Aufstieg", p. 46).

<sup>42</sup> Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-40.

<sup>43</sup> Vita Sancti Arnulfi, chapters 3 and 4.

and "vir clarissimus" to that of mayor.<sup>44</sup> Yet while Fredegar does call Pepin mayor, the description he gives of his means of government shows us it is clearly not based in any authority derived from royal sources, but rather is grounded in the loyalty of those below him: "Jointly and with suitable blandishments they [Pepin and Chunibert] drew the Austrasian notables into their orbit, ruled them generously, won their support and knew how to keep it."<sup>45</sup> Fredegar is well aware of Pepin's ducal status and the importance of his following, and he illustrates this whenever he speaks of Pepin's relations to the Austrasian nobles.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> "Er ist nicht Hausmeier, sondern dux. . ." (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 118). Although we agree that Pepin I's position as dux was more important than that as mayor Bergengruen simply pits his own opinion against Fredegar's. We prefer the opinion of the Merovingian author to that of the modern and see no reason why Pepin could not have held both positions.

<sup>45</sup> Wallace-Hadrill's translation from Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-85: ". . . omnesque leudis Austrasiorum secum uterque prudenter et cum dulcedene adtragentes, eos benigne gubernantes eorum amicitiam constringent semperque servandum." (J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, pp. 71vr).

<sup>46</sup> "Pippinus. . . ab omnibus delictus pro iustitiae amorem. . ." (Fredegar, Chronicae, IV-61, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 50v); in IV-85 Fredegar includes Pepin with the rest of the dukes: "Cum pippinus major domi. . . et citiri ducis austrasiorum. . ." (in: ibid, p. 163v); and he also tells us that Grimoald I was heir to his father's following: "Grimoaldus filius eius cum essit strinuos, ad instar patris diligeretur a plurimis. . ." (Chronicae, IV-86 in: ibid, p. 72v).

Grimoald I was certainly well on the way to placing the Austrasian royal machinery at the command of family interests. In fact, if his son, Childebert, had retained the throne, family interests and those of royal government would have become identified. His fall from power in 661/62, however, thrust the family back upon its own resources for the next seventeen years.

Pepin II's ducal authority is even clearer than that of his grandfather. Except for one mention by the Liber Historiae Francorum,<sup>47</sup> neither the narrative sources nor his own charters ever refer to him as mayor. This has led many historians to conclude that he never held that office.<sup>48</sup> Although true for the period preceding the battle of Tertry, it seems reasonable to conclude that after Berchar's murder Pepin did become mayor. He is expressly so described in

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47 ". . . post haec Pippinus Theuderico rege coepit esse principale regimine maiorum domus." (LHF, chap. 48, in MGH SSRM II, p. 323).

48 J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 84v, note 1. F. Steinbach, "Austrasien", p. 221. "Es ist hoechst wahrscheinlich dass in den vereinzelt Faellen, wo die fraenkischen Geschichtsschreiber die Pippiniden als Hausmeier auch in Austrasien bezeichnen, nur eine Analogie zum neustrischen Aemterwesen vorliegt." (A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, p. 180).

several royal charters whose originals are extant,<sup>49</sup> and the Liber Historiae Francorum's and Fredegar's accounts should be taken to mean that he held the title until he had his second son, Grimoald, assume it in 697.<sup>50</sup>

In the period before 687 there is no doubt of the ducal nature of Pepin's authority. When Pepin first appears Fredegar calls him and his ally, Martin, dukes ruling in Austrasia. Fredegar's account of the events leading to Martin's execution speaks of Martin's "sociis" and "suis omnibus".<sup>51</sup> When relating Ghislemar's campaign against Pepin at Namur, Fredegar refers to Pepin's party "plures eorum nobilis".<sup>52</sup> He further describes Reolus' and Audoramnus' joining Pepin's party in terms which show the private, voluntary nature of their arrangements.<sup>53</sup> Pepin held no central office; he

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<sup>49</sup> MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 70, p. 62. The title is also contained in the Tironic notations of nr. 67, p. 59 and nr. 71, p. 63. See W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 478f for more proof from various vitae and private charters.

<sup>50</sup> LHF, chap. 49.

<sup>51</sup> Fredegar, Continuationes, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>53</sup> ". . . ad Pippinum per obsides coniungunt, amicitias copulant, super Bercharium vel reliqua parte Francorum concitant." (Ibid., 5, in: J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, Fredegar, p. 85v).

ruled as dux, deriving his authority from his followers and dependants. <sup>54</sup>

We have noted that the Arnulfings possessed vast tracts of newly settled land in the Meuse-Moselle area. The economic advantages of holding such land becomes even more apparent if we examine contemporary conditions in the western kingdom. Circumstances in the western part of the regnum Francorum were very different from those which the Arnulfings experienced in Austrasia. In the seventh century the king and the church were the largest land holders in Neustria. There was also a substantial land-holding nobility, but in the practical organization of its holdings it was at a decided disadvantage. Often its estates were not in large, undivided pieces, but having passed through generations of distribution to multiple heirs, were hopelessly subdivided. As early as 590 royal officials had difficulty collecting the tributum in the area around Clermont because of the minute subdivision. <sup>55</sup>

Rolf Sprandel conducted an extensive investigation of the land-holding conditions in the Civitas Cenomannorum (Le Mans) in the sixth and seventh centuries. <sup>56</sup> He chose

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<sup>54</sup> E. Ewig sees Pepin's position in Austrasia between 679 and 687/88 as an official one. He claims that Pepin was "dux Austrasiorum", that is, the official Merovingian representative for a reduced Austrasia (E. Ewig, "Die fraenkische Teilreiche", pp. 137ff). Pepin, however, (cont'd)



Le Mans because twenty authentic, or only partly forged contemporary charters exist, thereby obviating the need to try to view the period from either ahead or behind. Conditions at Le Mans stand in sharp contrast to those of the Arnulfings. During those two centuries no one lay lord possessed more than one villa.<sup>57</sup> A testament of the Bishop Bertram from the year 613 indicates that many of his holdings had been acquired - usually through purchase - from various laymen. By the end of the period, however, the ecclesiastical

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54 (cont'd) is never called "dux Austrasiorum" by the sources. Both the fact that Austrasia had no king of its own after Dagobert II's death in 679 and Pepin's wars with Ghislemar and Berchar are proof enough that his authority did not come from the Neustrian Merovingians. Haselbach makes a strong case for the comitatus-like nature of Pepin's authority based on her study of the Annals of Metz with which she successfully defeats Ewig's arguments for Pepin's holding of an official Austrasian dukedom. (I. Haselbach, "Aufstieg", pp. 54f).

55 Gregory, Historia, X-7. See S. Dill, Roman Society, p. 129.

56 Rolf Sprandel, "Grundbesitz-und Verfassungsverhaeltnisse in einer merowingischen Landschaft: die Civitas Cenomannorum", in: Josef Fleckenstein and Karl Schmidt (eds), Adel und Kirche, Freiburg: Herder, 1968, pp. 26-51.

57 Ibid., p. 26.

holdings existed in such great numbers and were distributed in such a way that it was impossible for a single lay estate of any size to develop among them.<sup>58</sup> This was true even though there were many lay villae. Although some of the ecclesiastical holdings were administered by agentes, the lay villae were managed by a lord and not by a representative. Likewise, there was no noticeable clearing or colonization of new land.<sup>59</sup> What a different picture the holdings of Irmina or Adalgisel present with their vast expanse and multitude of dependent villae!

#### Organizational Advantages.

Another factor in understanding Pepin's victory lies in the organizational structure of the Arnulfing faction. They possessed vast tracts of land in the east where they enjoyed relative political autonomy, and it was land which was new and, therefore, not overly encumbered with entrenched patterns of agricultural exploitation or hopelessly subdivided into minute parcels. Still, economic advantages alone will

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<sup>58</sup> "Die Karte zeigt, dass sich die [ecclesiastical] villae ueber alle Wohn-und Verkehrsgegenden der civitas - mit Ausnahme wohl des Sudwestens - verteilen und so liegen, dass dazwischen kaum weltliche Grundgesitzpositionen groeserer Macht aufgebaut werden konnten." (ibid., p. 46).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

not produce a political triumph unless effectively organized toward political ends. The politics of that age were exercised either through direct military action or through the threat of its use.<sup>60</sup> Simply stated, then, the question is: how does one use landed wealth to create an efficient army? The Arnulfings enhanced their efficiency by binding a group of noble warriors to themselves through ties of dependence based on land tenure. When we speak of the union of land tenure and ties of personal dependence we are, of course, touching the basic dynamic in the classical description of feudalism. Feudalism was certainly not evident in all the splendid legal and structural intricacy of its later manifestation, but its organizational dynamic seems to have existed in the Merovingian era. It was this organization, coupled with the economic advantage provided by the "internal frontier" which put the Arnulfings on the road to creating an empire.

Feudalism is usually seen as developing in the mid-eighth century under Charles Martel and Pepin III, and then spreading out over the Frankish Empire under Charlemagne.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> ". . . war was for many centuries to be regarded as the normal thread of every leader's career and the *raison d'être* of every position of authority." (M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. I, p. 151).

Under Charlemagne, feudalism was the force used to construct the centralized government; under his successors, however, it was the element which destroyed it. Carolingian feudalism was not the offspring of the eighth century, since its component parts - and indeed those components in viable combination - existed long before the advent of Charles Martel. The Carolingians did not create western feudalism, but they did witness its application on a universal scale. The system developed into one of complicated, and often contradictory, legally specified relationships and responsibilities. We have no need here to deal with either the legal or the global aspects of feudalism. We will rather seek to find its organizational advantages.

Stripped of its legal finery, feudalism is a hierarchical system built on bonds of interdependence.<sup>62</sup> Those in the lower strata are dependent upon those in the upper for protection against famine or invasion, and those in the superior position depend upon the economic and military service of those below them. These ties were maintained by

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<sup>61</sup> F. L. Ganshof, Frankish Institutions Under Charlemagne, New York: Norton & Co., 1970, pp. 50-53.

<sup>62</sup> "[It was] the bonds of interdependence between men which, more than anything else, gave the feudal structure its special character." (M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. 1, p. XX).

the careful distinction between the possession and the usufruct of a certain amount of land. At the summit of the hierarchy was the possessor, the "lord". He granted the usufruct of a certain amount of land to his "man" in return for determined military dues and services. The man could in turn grant the usufruct of part of this land to a third person who would thereby become dependent upon him. In this manner the hierarchy was formed.

The organizational advantages of such a system were two fold. First, it eliminated the need for a medium of exchange. The lord's men were required by the terms of their tenure to present themselves with a stipulated amount of military equipage and support troops for service when the lord summoned them to do so. Moreover, there was no need to collect rents with which to pay soldiers, no need to search constantly for booty with which to reward them, nor to enlist them with the promise of a grant of land in full title.

Secondly, the system increased military efficiency. The Merovingian army was a motley collection of all the Merovingian types of fighting men, placed under the command of various royal officials with the king or the mayor at the head. <sup>63</sup> Discipline was lacking, <sup>64</sup> training and

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B. Bachrach, Merovingian Military, pp. 108f.

equipment were extremely primitive, while the soldiers had no interest in any political or military objective beyond booty and disbanding. Part of the reason for the poor discipline stemmed from the fact that the men were often placed under the command of a royal official with whom they had no relationship other than the military one. By outfitting his warriors with a secure means of support in the form of land, the lord would eliminate many of these causes of inefficiency. Once his support was assured, the warrior's desire for booty became less all-encompassing. Indeed, he might even begin to see the personal advantage of a war fought for the territorial defense of the country where his lands were located. The provision of permanent support also provided a lord's man with the ability to equip himself better and, to a certain extent, created a more dependable and experienced class of warriors. The common fighting man was no longer placed under the command of a stranger, but now as a part of his lord's support troops he stood in the ranks with his neighbors under the eye of the commander, who was his civilian as well as his military superior.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> "[The king] muesste sogar froh sein, wenn nicht er den Kriegern gehorchen musste." (J. P. Bodmer, Der Krieger, p. 77, See also pp. 148ff).

<sup>65</sup> O. M. Dalton, Gregory, Vol. I, p. 225, note 5.

Ties of interdependence and loyalty were by no means new in the eighth century. They had existed between western warriors and leaders from time immemorial.<sup>66</sup> At one time it was thought that the eighth century did see a shift in the means of maintaining these ties. The Merovingian lord employed a system with either the German (comitatus) or Roman (clientela) precedent in which he maintained the loyalty of an armed following (socii) through "gifts" and social privilege.<sup>67</sup> Feudalism was believed to have come about when, in the eighth century, the means of maintenance shifted from gifts to land, or more exactly, to the maintenance of interdependence through the conditional conferment of the usufruct of land. The reason for this shift was thought to have been the sudden need for a group of loyal warriors with sufficient economic resources to equip themselves as a heavily armed cavalry.<sup>68</sup> We now know this theory to be

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<sup>66</sup> M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. I, p. 149.

<sup>67</sup> J. P. Bodmer, Der Krieger, p. 48; and C. Stephenson, Medieval Institutions, pp. 220 and 225f.

<sup>68</sup> Several scholars had noticed what they thought was the sudden union of the institutions of interdependence and land tenure in the eighth century, but it was Heinrich Brunner who found the motivation in the form of the heavy cavalry. (H. Brunner, "Der Ritterdienst und die Anfaenge des Lehenssesens" in: Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung fuer Rechtsgeschichte, VIII (1887) - opus non vidi. See C. Stephenson, "The Origin and Significance of Feudalism", in: The American

incorrect. The Franks did not suddenly become horsemen in the eighth century in order to combat the Moslem threat; there had always been good horsemen among them.<sup>69</sup> More importantly, the Frankish army was, and remained, primarily a military force comprised of infantry.<sup>70</sup> Dopsch contended that the two institutions of conditional land tenure and interdependent ties did not become fused in the eighth century for indeed they had never been separate.<sup>71</sup> Our examination of the nature of the German idea of private property has shown that Dopsch's suggestion is at least true for Merovingian Gaul. Thus neither the distinction between the possession and usufruct of land, the ties of interdependence between warrior and leader, nor the fusion of the two first

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68 (cont'd) Historical Review, XLVI (1941), pp. 788-812 (reprinted in his Medieval Institutions, pp. 205-233) for an excellent historiological review.)

69 B. Bachrach, Merovingian Military, pp. 14 and 19, and A. Dopsch, Foundations, pp. 283f.

70 W. Erben, "Zur Geschichte des Karolingischen Heerwesens", in: Historische Zeitschrift, CI (1908), pp. 323f. and A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 286.

71 "On the contrary, these institutions were never separate anywhere or at any time in history." (A. Dopsch, Foundations, p. 288).



came about in the eighth century. They all had existed among the Franks since the time of Clovis.<sup>72</sup> What does seem to have happened in the eighth century was the extension of an essentially private system to the official organization of the whole regnum.<sup>73</sup> Historians mistook this extension for the system's inception.

Even from this brief summary of the nature and birth of feudalism we can safely extract two important points. Feudalism did not first appear in the eighth century; there is ample precedent for its basic dynamic throughout the Merovingian period. And the adoption of a feudal arrangement for their lands would have afforded the Arnulfings certain important political and military organizational advantages. In order to see whether they did indeed employ it, we must examine their charters.

There is substantial evidence to suggest that the Arnulfings outfitted their aristocratic subordinates with villae. Arnulfing donation charters are filled with the mention of

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<sup>72</sup> S. Hofbauer, Grundherrschaft, p. 75.

<sup>73</sup> ". . . there arose the idea of utilizing for the purposes of government the firmly established network of protective relationships." (M. Bloch, Feudal Society, Vol. 1., p. 157).

villae which are dependent on the main holding. These dependent villae are called adjacentiae or appenditia.<sup>74</sup> There is also mention of the "homines nostri", the noblemen, who hold these adjacentiae.<sup>75</sup> As early as the testament of Adalgisel (634) the adjacentiae and appenditia are part of the landholding system.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, Bergengruen has noticed that save in the estates of the Arnulfings and their allies, this sort of dependent structure occurs very rarely.<sup>77</sup> While this evidence is not conclusive, it is directional. The connection between the adjacentiae and the homines nostri first appears to us in a charter from 746. But throughout the

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<sup>74</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 41 and 119f.

<sup>75</sup> ". . . adiacentiis, appendiciis. . . nec non et in praedictis locellis, mansellis, et in locis Mosali et Barsina, quod homines nostri. . . tenuerent." (A donation of Carloman from 746 in: MGH, Dipl. I., nr. 15, p. 102). ". . . vel cum appendiciis suis, id sunt: Baidalingo, Mathulfo villare, vel portionem nostram in Oxinvillare, exceptis hominibus illis, quos per epistolas nostras ingenuos relaxavimus." (A donation of Irmina from 698 in: ibid., nr. 55, p. 173).

<sup>76</sup> W. Levison, Fruehzeit, pp. 127 (Tommels and Mercy-le-Bas) and 131 (Tholey).

<sup>77</sup> A. Bergengruen, Adel und Grundherrschaft, pp. 119f.

middle ages written expression only slowly followed practice. And inasmuch as the dependent villae existed before 634, and inasmuch as they existed almost exclusively in the very family which is known to have made such extensive use of the feudal relationship in later centuries, it is fair to conclude that the Arnulfings' dependent hamlets of the seventh century were inhabited by dependent aristocratic supporters.

VII. SUMMARY

Pepin II's decisive defeat of the Neustrian forces at Tertry on the Somme in 687 delivered the government of Francia into the hands of the Arnulfings where it was to remain for the next two centuries. If one is to understand how they achieved their victory, one must examine their position in the preceding period. This is a task which has not received the attention it deserves from historians. It is a task riven with difficulties for contemporary sources are not only scarce, but often written for non-historical purposes. This has meant that not only an analysis of the period, but also a simple reconstruction of events is often a matter of interpolation and deduction. Nonetheless, using both established and recent historiographical tools, it is possible to sketch a picture of the seventh century Arnulfings.

The Arnulfings were more than a family - they were a faction of hereditary nobles held together by the bonds of kinship, formal amicitia, and common political interests. They controlled vast lands in eastern Belgium, in Luxembourg, and in northeastern France. The most important of these were not owned by the Arnulfings directly, but by the family of Hugobert and Irmina. The Arnulfings had a close alliance with this family, and it was sealed on two occasions by marriage contracts.

The social and economic position of the house of Pepin carried with it certain significant advantages. Its estates were newly settled which meant they were readily adaptable to the latest in social and technological techniques for agricultural exploitation. A valuable degree of political autonomy was afforded the family by its location in the eastern kingdom and by its possession of ducal authority. And although it cannot be proven conclusively, it is reasonable to assume that the Arnulfings organized their vast holdings for effective political action through the use of a nascent form of feudalism. It was the combination of economic advantage and this efficient organization that helped them win both Tertry and an empire.

VIII. APPENDIX - Sources Pertaining to the Rule of Grimoald I, 656-662.

The Series Regum Francorum (MGH, SS, XII, p. 724), from a manuscript probably written before 840 and once belonging to the monastery of S. Remigius at Reims, lists the king following Sigibert as Childebert who ruled one year, and following him an illegitimate king, Grimoald, who ruled 7 years ("Regii Sigibertus annos 23. hucusque. Hildebertus adoptivus annum 1. Grimoaldus (nothus) annos 7."). The Catalogum Regum Francorum (MGH, SS, II, pp. 307-308) written by an early ninth century Austrasian author, lists the king after Sigibert as Childebert who ruled seven years. In one of its manuscripts it says: "Childebertus id est adoptivus Grimaldus regnavit annos 7." (Ibid., p. 308). Although neither of the MGH editors (Pertz and Waitz) nor Krusch and Levillain can tell from this exactly what transpired, it is clear that these two ninth century authors felt that the seven years between King Sigibert III [656] and Childeric II [662] were filled somehow by Childebert and Grimoald. If these sources are correct, then the LHF is wrong when it asserts that Grimoald was killed by Clovis II.

The reason for the above word adoptivus might be found in a passage in the Vita Sigiberti (Bouquet, Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France, II, Paris, 1869, pp. 597-602). This vita was written by a monk also named Sigibert who died in 1113, and thus it is a rather late source. In chapter V-15 the author says: "Quia [Sigibertus III] vero Grimoaldum majorem-domus sibi in omnibus fidelem, morigerem et cooperatorem aetenus expertus erat, filium ejus Childebertum regni Austrasiorum haeredem delegat: hoc tamen proposito conditionis tenore, si ipsum contingeret sine liberis obire. Rex quidem, utpote futurorum nescius, quod tunc sibi videbatur, ex temporis convenientia fecit: postea vero filium genuit, quem nomine patris sui Dagobertum vocavit: et priori testamento ad irritum redacto, hunc nutriendum commisit Majori-domus Grimoaldo, ut eius potentia contra omnes tutus sublimaretur in Austrasiorum regno." (ibid., p. 602).

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(cont'd) Levillain comments: "Et voici qu'on trouve un écho de cette conception dans une oeuvre hagiographique du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle dont l'auteur, Sigibert de Gembloux, semble avoir disposé de documents anciens." ("La succession", p. 67). Bouquet's editors, however, are not so anxious to credit this story of the adoption agreement with so much historical worth: "Huius delegationis, . . . nullam veteres nostri Historici mentionem faciunt: nec verisimile est, Sigibertum in ipso flore adolescentiae testamentum fecisse, et in ea aetate, qua plerique nondum uxores ducunt, de prole desperasse." (op. cit., p. 602, note b). We most certainly agree.

The Vita Wilfridi I. Episcopi Eboracensis by Eddius Stephanus (MGH, SSRM VI, pp. 163-263) gives us the following rather complete account of the events: "Nam supradictus rex [Dagobert II] in iuventute sua ab inimicis regnantibus in exilium perditionis pulsus, navigando ad Hiberniam insulam, Deo adiuvante, pervenit. Post annorum circulum amici et propinqui eius, viventem et in perfecta aetate florentem a navigantibus audientes, miserunt nuntios suos ad beatum Wilfridum episcopum, petentes, ut eum de Scottia et Hivernia ad se invitasset et sibi ad regem emisisset." (op. cit., chap. 28, in: ibid., p. 221). The "inimicis regnantibus" would refer to Grimoald's party and the fact that Dagobert's amici heard from sailors that he was still living indicates that they presumed him to be dead. (Krusch, "Staatsstreich", pp. 426 and 431).

The Vita Boniti Episcopi Arverni (MGH, SSRM VI, pp. 110-139) begins chapter three with: "Post cuius obitum [Sigibert III's] filisque defunctis, pronepos eius suscepit scepra." (Ibid., p. 120). If we assume that Sigibert had two sons, a real one, Dagobert II, and an "adoptivus", Childbert; that in 662 the adoptivus was dead and Dagobert assumed to be dead because of his Irish exile; and that Sigibert's pronepos, Childeric II, was the one who assumed his throne (not the Neustrians, Clovis II and Chlothar III, as the LHF would have us deduce), then this line from the Vita Boniti also falls into place. (Krusch, "Staatsstreich", p. 430f).

We have a donation charter from Grimoald for the abbey at Stavelot-Malmedy (MGH, Dipl. I, nr. 1, p. 91) which bears a curious date; "Facta exemplaria sub die Kalendis Augusti. Anno IIIII regni domini nostri Dagoberti regis." Pertz, (Ibid., note 1) and after him most scholars, assumed that "facta exemplaria" meant "copies" and since it was assumed that Dagobert II had been banished to Ireland in 656 by Grimoald without ever ruling, or only ruling very shortly, the date, "anno IIIII regni domini nostri Dagoberti regis"

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(cont'd) had to be the date of the copy made four years after Dagobert returned from Ireland to rule in 675. (Thus Engelbert Muehlbacher in his edition of J. F. Boehmer's Regesta Imperii, I under the title, Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter den Karolinger 751-918, Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Universitaets-Buchhandlung, 1908, p. 4). The date of the original was left open to question, but it had to be, of course, much earlier, when Grimoald and all the other persons mentioned in the charter were still alive. Krusch, however, ("Staatsstreich", p. 427) asks the very logical question, "Whoever heard of dating a charter according to a copy?!" In Merovingian Latin "exemplaria" is not a neuter plural meaning "copies", but a feminine singular meaning the charter itself. Thus the "anno IIII" has to be the first time Dagobert II ruled, that is, four years after 656. This means then, that in 660 Grimoald was still alive and Dagobert II was at least the nominal king of Austrasia.

A not too clever forgery of the eleventh century (MGH, Dipl. I., "Spuria" nr. 52, p. 169f) ends with "Data 7. Kalendis Septembris per manus Grimoaldi, maioris domus regiae. Anno regni domni Dagoberti secundo. . . Signum Dagoberti regis (M.)" (Ibid., p. 170). Although the forger has dates, formulas, kings and queens confused in this attempt, he probably did have some real charter of Dagobert II in front of him from which to copy the closing formula. The "Signum Dagoberti regis (M.)" indicates a monogram; that is, it means Dagobert couldn't write. We can see this from charters of other young kings; one such is from Clovis II from 640 (MGH, Dipl. I., nr. 18, p. 19) where: ". . . propria subscriptione inserere non possumus. . .". This charter also ends with a monogram. Thus Krusch (op. cit., p. 432) concludes that the forger was looking at a charter from 657, another indication that Grimoald outlived 656. (It is interesting to note that if Krusch is correct about the forger copying a real charter, it probably didn't come from the anno secundo of the king's second reign (677) because when we compared Dagobert's extant documents from that later period (MGH, Dipl. I., nr. 44, p. 41 and nr. 45, p. 42), the king was signing them "manus nostrae subscriptionibus" and the monogram had disappeared. Apparently his years with the monks in Ireland had taught him to write.)

The Vita Sanctae Geretrudis (MGH, SSRM II, pp. 447-474) gives the following account about Grimoald's daughter, Vulfetrude as she was abbess of Nivelles: "Contigit autem ex odio paterno, ut reges, reginae, etiam sacerdotes per invidiam diabuli illam de suo loco primum per suasionem, postmodum per vim trahere, et res Dei, quibus benedicta puella praeerat, iniquiter possiderent." (op. cit., chap. 6, in:

(cont'd)



(cont'd) ibid., p. 460). Krusch points out that Vulfetrude was installed as abbess in 658 by the former abbess, Geretrude, Grimoald's sister, apparently without any of the trouble described above. (op. cit., chap. 2). If the Arnulfings had been driven from power in 656, a trouble free installation for Grimoald's daughter certainly would not have been the case. Also, the above account specifically mentions reges (plural) and if her father had fallen in 656 it would have been only one king (Clovis II) who would have forced her out. After 662 there were indeed two kings - Chlothar III in Neustria and Childeric II in Austrasia - and thus reges would fit the situation. ("Staatsstreich", p. 430). Krusch's last argument seems a bit weak to us since it rests on the grammatical number of a single word in a hagiographical source. We note also that the word reges is absent from manuscript B of the vita which Krusch himself edited in a parallel column (MGH, SSRM II, p. 460). Levillain correctly points out that Nivelles lay in the duchy of Dentelin which at that time lay in Neustria and not Austrasia. Thus he assumes that the Neustrians could make attempts to dislodge Vulfetrude through persuasion while her father still ruled, resorting to force only after his death. ("La succession", p. 72). He also notes that the first part of the LHF account agrees with this one by Stephan: "Decedente vero tempore, defuncto Sighiverto rege, Grimoaldus filium eius parvolum nomine Daygobertum totundit Didonemque Pectavensem urbis episcopum in Scotia peregrinandum eum direxit, filium suum in regno constituens." (LHF, chap. 43, in: MGH, SSRM, II, p. 316). Thus far the two contemporary authors agree. However, in the rest of the LHF's version: ". . .ici l' emprunt à la source primitive a été contaminé par l'inadvertance de l'auteur du Liber." ("La succession", p. 65).

Grimoald, king of the Lombards, concluded a peace treaty with Dagobert II (Paul the Deacon's Historia Langobardorum V-32, in: MGH, SSRLeI, p. 154, where: "Hac tempestate Francorum regnum apud Gallias Dagipertus regebat, cum quo rex Grimuald pacis firmissimae foedus inierat.") This Grimoald of Lombardy ruled from 662-771; thus Levillain concludes that the treaty must have been signed by the Arnulfing Grimoald using Dagobert's name ("La Succession", p. 69). We note, however, that George Waitz, Paul's editor in the MGH dates this passage "c. 675", putting it in Dagobert's second reign. He, however, does seem to see trouble with this date: "Negant alii Paulo fidem, et pro Dagoberto Clotharium III. vel Childericum reponunt, pluribus innixi argumentis." (op. cit., p. 155).

(cont'd)

(cont'd) The Vita Nivardi Episcopi Remensis, (MGH, SSRM, V, pp. 157-171), written by the monk Almannus of Hautvillers in the ninth century, gives us the following account: "Praeceptum etiam emunitatis a Childeberta rege super theloneis et quibusdam tributis ecclesie Remensi [Nivardus] obtinuit. Cui Lodovicus Clovis II quoque rex sub ecclesie sue nomine res quasdam in Malliaco super fluviam Vidulam quas quibusdam infidelibus suis eiectis, receperat, auctoritatis sue precepto concessit. Huius etiam tempore tradidit Grimoaldus vir illustris sancto Remigio villas suas Calmiciacum et Victuriacum pro anime sue remedio." (op. cit., chap 6, in: ibid, pp. 163ff). Krusch points out, "Childebertus rex aevo Nivardi nullus fuit nisi filius Grimoaldi, maioris domus. . ." (ibid, pp. 163f, note 10).

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