Book Review

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BOOK REVIEWED: DAMIEN KEMPF (ED. & TRANS.), *PAUL THE DEACON: LIBER DE EPISCOPIS METTENSIBUS, DALLAS MEDIEVAL TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS 19* (PARIS-LEUVEN-WALPOLE, MA: PEETERS, 2013). 107 PP. ISBN: 978-9042929371.

Nineteenth in the ***Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations*** series is Damien Kempf's edition and translation of Paul the Deacon's brief work of the mid-780s on the bishops of Metz. In the introduction (pp. 1-39), Kempf argues that the *Liber* is not a work of Carolingian propaganda as some think, but a 'mythology of power', the literary relic of an attempt by Angilram, bishop of Metz 768-791, to have his episcopal see elevated in the Carolingian power grid. At Metz, Angilram had succeeded Chrodegang, who had been a powerful close advisor to Pippin III. By 784 Angilram also was attached to the royal court of Charlemagne as arch-chaplain, where 'until his death in 791, Angilram must have spent most of his time by the side of the king (p. 7).' In that office, in addition to being the king's 'minister of church affairs' he also managed the royal chancery, and thus bears some responsibility for the texts modern historians rely on for the period.

Early in his tenure as arch-chaplain, Angilram commissioned his fellow courtier Paul the Deacon, whose Lombard lineage and learning Kempf summarizes (pp. 2-4), to write a brief history of the earlier bishops of Metz, including Angilram's immediate predecessor. Paul cannot hide his lack of sources. The narrative's spine was largely a bare list of names. The author foregrounded four: Clement, the founder of the see of Metz and the bearer of apostolic charism from St. Peter at Rome; Auctor, bishop when Attila the Hun sacked Metz; Arnulf, bishop in the early seventh century, and a

big player in Merovingian politics; and Chrodegang. It is Paul's account of Arnulf that has drawn most scholarly attention. 'Paul provides the first genealogy of the Carolingian dynasty … that places Arnulf … at its origins (p. 1).' 'The *Liber* is the first document to provide the names of Arnulf's sons (pp. 15-6),' one of whom, Ansegisel, was Charlemagne's great-great-grandfather, having married Begga, the daughter of the Pippinids' eponymous ancestor, Pippin I.

Kempf questions the idea that the rise of the Carolingians was based on this union of two supposedly co-equal, powerful families, for the evidence that the earlier Carolingians valued their familial link to Arnulf is slight to none. In 708 Pippin II's son Drogo was buried at the church of the Holy Apostles at Metz (later the abbey of Saint-Arnould), where Arnulf himself was buried. Other than this isolated instance, no Carolingian was buried at St. Arnulf's until Adelaid, Pippin III's daughter, interred there by her father before his own death in 768. Carolingian charters of 691 and 715 that refer to Arnulf as an ancestor (*avus*) appear in a late cartulary that is rife with interpolated and forged documents.

Metz, then, was not an early Carolingian center from Arnulf's time on. It had even been a post of anti-Pippinid sentiment. Only after Charles Martel secured all of Austrasia in the early eighth century did Metz get 'plugged into' the Carolingian power grid. Even then, Carolingian onomastic tradition continued to be dominated by Pippinid and not Arnulfing names. It was Angilram, according to Kempf, who was responsible for elevating the Arnulfings in the Carolingian ancestry, and likewise (hopefully) the place of Metz in the political constellation. 'A personal and historical association is thus accomplished via Arnulf between the Frankish king and the city of Metz (p. 21).'

Paul's four bishops portray Metz as a political *and* spiritual capital of the Frankish kingdom. Chrodegang's reforms as bishop, related in the only section formally patterned according to the more typical episcopal biographies of the *Liber pontificalis*, made Metz 'the first Gallic city to adopt a liturgy *more romano*, soon implemented, though with varying and sometimes unclear results, within the whole Frankish kingdom.' Metz's early adoption of Roman liturgy and of Roman chant especially – Metz becoming a center for the teaching of the latter – laid claim to a special connection with the see of St. Peter, a claim reflected in Paul's references to Rome in the Chrodegang section, and in Kempf's analysis (pp. 22-9).

Kempf judges this attempt at a 'mythology of power' a failure (p. 33), but he may be too harsh. After all, Metz for a while under both Chrodegang and Angilram *did* rise in the Carolingian political universe, and both men served in the royal 'cabinet'. The *Liber* may be less prescriptive of what should be than descriptive of what is, less mythological than panegyrical. This takes us back to a reading of the *Liber* as court propaganda, written by a courtier, Paul, at the behest of another, Angilram. Kempf notes that in Paul's account of Chrodegang's escorting of Pope Stephen II to Gaul that he omitted the papal anointing of Pippin III and his sons, the highlight of the visit. This is

because Paul here focuses on Chrodegang's role in an event of still living memory among the political/religious elite, including royal courtiers, that was much of the *Liber*'s original audience. They already knew the story, and now were hearing an emphasis on Chrodegang's role in it. A reading of the *Liber* as court propaganda would also help explain in the Arnulf section the mini-panegyric of Charlemagne, which segues into an account of his family and the epitaphs of the Carolingian women buried at St. Arnulf" at Metz (pp. 74–9). Praise of Metz's exalted status in the Carolingian realm was necessarily also praise of Charlemagne.

Finally, there is a select bibliography and index, and the translation is good, overall helping to make this work an excellent addition to the series.