**Remembering Troubled Pasts: Episcopal Deposition and Succession in Flodoard’s *History of the Church of Rheims***

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In the 1060s, Odalric, provost of the church of Rheims, appended a list of the city’s bishops to a page in his personal psalter.[[1]](#footnote-1) He omitted three prelates from his reckoning: Abel (743/4–747x62), Hugh (925–31, 940–6) and Gerbert (991–7). For different reasons, these men had not ended their lives in the see. Abel seems to have acted as bishop while the see was controlled by a layman named Milo. Some sources named Abel in the episcopal succession, but others asserted that he was only a chorbishop (an auxiliary or rural bishop). Hugh had been made bishop in 925 as a boy of just four years by his father, the count of Vermandois. Wider political conflicts twice led to Hugh’s removal, in 931 and 946, and, eventually, to his excommunication in 948. Gerbert (of Aurillac, the later Pope Sylvester II) had been installed in 991 following the removal of his predecessor, Arnulf (989–91, 998–1021), deposed for treason against Hugh Capet. That deposition was contested, however, and when Gerbert’s position eventually became untenable, he was forced to resign the see. While these were all reasonable grounds for Odalric to doubt the legitimacy of the bishops’ tenures, his list nevertheless featured other bishops who had been unseated in similarly notorious circumstances. Egidius (573–90), for instance, was deposed after being found guilty of treason against Childebert II. Rigobert (*c*.692–717) was banished by Charles Martel for refusing his army entry into the city during the civil war of 715–17. And then there was Ebbo (816–35, 840–1), infamously compelled to resign the office following his starring role in the 833 rebellion against Louis the Pious. Ebbo was briefly restored following Louis’ death but forced to abandon the bishopric once more within a year.

As this incidence of high-profile deposition shows, the office of archbishop of Rheims could be quite the poisoned chalice.[[2]](#footnote-2) Indeed, not long after Odalric compiled his episcopal list, another Rheims archbishop, Manasses I (1069–80), was condemned as a simoniac and deposed by Pope Gregory VII.[[3]](#footnote-3) In terms of how a deposed bishop was remembered, however, it is unclear what made Egidius, Rigobert and Ebbo apparently more legitimate than Abel, Hugh or Gerbert. This chapter therefore sets out to explore how the memories and reputations of Rémois bishops were received and, in some cases, reshaped in post-Carolingian Rheims. The critical text for such an enquiry is the *History of the Church of Rheims* (*Historia Remensis ecclesiae*), composed by the canon Flodoard in 948–52. This work, well known to Odalric and the community in the eleventh century, is a sprawling history of the bishops, saints and churches of the archdiocese, from the city’s purported foundation in the eighth century BC down to 948, when a long-running schism between the aforementioned Hugh and a rival archbishop, Artold (931–40, 946–61), was resolved in the latter’s favour. At a great synod in Ingelheim in 948, before Otto the Great, Louis IV, a papal legate and over thirty bishops, Hugh was declared an invader of the bishopric and excommunicated.[[4]](#footnote-4) The settlement of this conflict was a driving factor in Flodoard’s writing of the *History*, a work that has frequently been considered a landmark of early medieval institutional historiography (or *gesta*). The composite and varied nature of *gesta episcoporum* has led such texts to be interpreted in different ways. This is primarily a question of audience. On one level, *gesta* served as archives, bringing together charters, letters and other documents and situating property holdings and associated rights in a chronological framework for ease of reference. At the same time, taking their cue from the serialized biographies of the *Liber pontificalis*, authors of *gesta* often strove to enunciate a principle of apostolic succession in order to highlight a sequence of providential actions unfolding in a locality and thus to locate the bishops of a particular see within the sweep of Christian history. On this reading, *gesta* seek to harness an institution’s glorious past and use it to reinforce social prestige and defend landed endowments. There is thus some debate about whether authors produced such works for the edification and benefit of their own communities or rather to advertise the power of their patron saints and the generosity of past benefactors. Clearly, these two views are not mutually exclusive, nor is there any one-size-fits-all approach to this highly flexible genre.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Flodoard is well known for waxing lyrical about illustrious bishops of his church such as St Remigius and Hincmar.[[6]](#footnote-6) But he also had to confront the controversial figures in Rheims’ distant and recent past. These latter bishops’ careers were stumbling blocks for an author intent on tracing an unbroken line of episcopal succession from his own day back to the first bishop of Rheims, Sixtus, who was thought to have been a disciple of St Peter.[[7]](#footnote-7) How, then, did Flodoard deal with such difficult episodes? In what follows, I argue that specific contemporary concerns and recent turmoil at Rheims prompted Flodoard to reinterpret some of the church’s more disreputable moments and to explain or justify these calamities by teasing out merit in the lives of controversial bishops. Far from being the reflexive, uncritical ‘archivist’ he is sometimes assumed to have been, Flodoard was uncommonly attentive to the rich sources he had at his disposal. He was particularly interested in episcopal trials and ecclesiastical property, both live issues in the Rheims of his day. Flodoard’s treatment of deposed bishops, I suggest, allows us to observe how he juggled the competing demands of his task as an historian and of his mission to memorialize Rheims’ illustrious past within the confines of a delicate contemporary political situation. In a post-Carolingian playing field of political uncertainty and opportunity, authors drew on rights, privileges and powers from the past in order to negotiate the challenges of the present. At Rheims, with the benefit of rich archives and libraries and the intoxicating traditions of episcopal leadership in Merovingian and Carolingian high politics, Flodoard reimagined and revised the biographies of Rheims’ bishops, especially those of questionable legitimacy.[[8]](#footnote-8) His episcopal portraits thus emerge, more clearly than is usually thought, as products of his and his archbishop’s agenda in the years around 950.

*The treason of Egidius*

The earliest Rheims bishop known to have been deposed was Egidius in 590.[[9]](#footnote-9) Flodoard opened his chapter on the bishop by drawing on several charters to show how he had enriched the diocese by obtaining royal grants and purchasing property:

[Egidius] is found to have enlarged the bishopric with arable lands and to have purchased slaves. Certain records of his acquisitions are found even today, such as that by which, it is read, he acquired for a fixed price two fields above the Retourne river from Bobolenus, one of which, it is written, supported a thousand *modii* of seed, the other four hundred.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Flodoard summarized several other documents, including a privilege of immunity for Rheims issued by Childebert II, which is in fact the church’s earliest recorded immunity.[[11]](#footnote-11) Such abridgments are typical of his archival methods. Flodoard occasionally retained the diplomatic language of charters, and frequently used verbs such as *invenitur* and *reperitur* to indicate that information had been learned from documents. He often specified charters with terms such as *testamentum*, *instrumentum*, *privilegium*, *carta*, *pagina*, *littera* and so forth.[[12]](#footnote-12)

For the rest (and bulk) of this chapter, however, Flodoard relied on the witness of Egidius’ contemporaries Venantius Fortunatus and Gregory of Tours, adding very little of his own summary, comment or interpretation. He first reproduced a poem by Fortunatus on Egidius’ life and preaching.[[13]](#footnote-13) Then, Flodoard turned to Gregory’s works, primarily the *Histories*, but also his *Miracles of St Martin*. Flodoard quoted a number of passages from the *Histories* recounting Egidius’ political activities, and in particular the intrigue that led to his deposition. Egidius, a key adviser to the king, had been involved in the negotiation of a new alliance between Childebert and his uncle, Chilperic, king of Neustria. In his promotion of Chilperic’s interests at the Austrasian court, Egidius aroused the enmity of Childebert’s other uncle, Guntram, king of Burgundy. Childebert soon struck a new alliance with Guntram, and, as Egidius’ influence at court waned, the bishop was accused of having knowledge of a plot by Queen Fredegund (Chilperic’s wife) to assassinate Childebert. At a council in Metz in 590, other charges of treason, corruption and forgery were brought against him. Egidius confessed his crimes and awaited his expected death sentence, but, following the intervention of his fellow bishops, ‘after they had read the decrees of the canons’ (*lectis canonum sanctionibus*), he was instead deposed and banished to Strasbourg.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The absence of any comment from Flodoard on Egidius’ downfall suggests that he felt Gregory’s account spoke for itself, and he seems not to have had any further information on the matter with which to compare Gregory. Egidius had admitted his guilt and the trial had apparently, if vaguely, been canonically valid. Michel Sot has suggested that Flodoard quoted Gregory at length in this instance as ‘less a literary source than a legal document’ in order to demonstrate the procedural impeccability of Egidius’ deposition.[[15]](#footnote-15) The regularity of episcopal trials was certainly a concern in the tenth century, when archbishops of Rheims were deposed or expelled on five occasions, in 931 (Hugh), 940 (Artold), 946 (Hugh), 991 (Arnulf) and 996 (Gerbert), as we shall see in more detail below. But Gregory’s status as an historiographical authority surely also played a large part; Flodoard cited him by name, not something he usually did when drawing on earlier histories.[[16]](#footnote-16) As a foil to Egidius’ treason, however, Flodoard could stress his model diocesan work, which he backed up with reference to charters found in the archive and to the poetry of Fortunatus. In the following chapter, moreover, the historian emphasized that it was Egidius who had received the Aquitanian monk Basle (Basolus) and permitted him to pray in the area where an important monastery subsequently grew up in his honour (Saint-Basle at Verzy).[[17]](#footnote-17) In sum, Flodoard could not contradict the weighty authority of Gregory’s testimony, but he could soften Egidius’ downfall by sandwiching it between his narrative of the bishop’s commendable estate management and pious deeds.

*The deposition of Rigobert*

A little more than a century later, the bishopric was plunged into another crisis, one from which it did not easily recover. Rigobert became bishop around 692, and, like Egidius, served the church of Rheims well. This time, Flodoard had much more evidence available: he devoted four chapters to Rigobert’s episcopate, and his account notably draws on a *vita*, for a local cult had grown up around the bishop.[[18]](#footnote-18) Flodoard’s admiration for Rigobert is clear, the historian beginning his biography by highlighting how he ‘restored the religion of the canons to the clerics’ of the cathedral (that is, Flodoard’s own community) and assigned new properties for their livelihood. Rigobert augmented the episcopal patrimony with purchases and exchanges of land and obtained charters from Dagobert III and Theuderic IV. Flodoard once again summarized a number of these records and stated that the documents could still be found in the church archives. In fact, he cited more charters for Rigobert than for any other Rheims bishop.[[19]](#footnote-19) Flodoard could also point to church-building activities such as his construction of an oratory in honour of the archangel Michael (Saint-Michel, Rheims).[[20]](#footnote-20) Miracles drawn from the *vita* and its associated *translatio* accounts punctuate the narrative.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Rigobert, as Flodoard mentioned, was the godfather of Charles Martel, which suggests good relations between the bishop and the Austrasian mayoralty in the days of Pippin of Herstal’s rule. In 717, during the war between Charles and the Neustro-Burgundian regime of Chilperic II and the mayor Ragamfred, Charles stopped off in Rheims in order to pray there. Rigobert, however, refused him entry, fearing that Charles’ army would loot the city, as it was alleged to have done elsewhere. Charles, enraged, promised that he would take revenge should he prove victorious. This he did, promptly returning to Rheims following his defeat of Ragamfred at the Battle of Vinchy and expelling Rigobert. The ousted bishop went into exile in Aquitaine. Charles replaced him with his supporter Milo, ‘a cleric only by tonsure’ (*sola tonsura clerico* – i.e., not by lifestyle), and the two proceeded to divvy up Rheims’ lands. Rheims, Flodoard wrote, was just one of many bishoprics that Charles gave away to laymen. The historian then recounted a story about Eucherius, bishop of Orléans, who had also been banished by Charles. Eucherius had a vision of Charles burning in hell, and an angel told him that the mayor had been condemned to eternal punishment for violating the property of the saints. When Charles’ tomb was opened to test the truth of the vision, a dragon flew out, and the sarcophagus was found empty and scorched. Rigobert, Flodoard continued, eventually returned to Rheims, having been promised his see back by Milo. But when he arrived, Milo demanded that Rigobert give him all the property he had previously donated to the church. Rigobert refused, but nevertheless chose to live out his days locally, occasionally being allowed to celebrate mass in the cathedral.[[22]](#footnote-22) It is also worth noting that the church of one of the villages Rigobert was said to have visited regularly, Cormicy, was a benefice held by Flodoard.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Flodoard’s source for the majority of this narrative was the aforementioned *Vita Rigoberti*, a text seemingly written under the aegis of Archbishop Fulk of Rheims (883–900) in the early 890s.[[24]](#footnote-24) On the evidence of this text, Rigobert has been considered one of several late Merovingian bishops punished for resisting the expansion of Carolingian power. Memories of Charles Martel’s treatment of such bishops as Rigobert, Eucherius, Ansbert of Rouen, Lambert of Maastricht and Bonitus of Clermont subsequently provided the basis for their veneration as saints.[[25]](#footnote-25) They were also the foundation for Charles’ later reputation as a systematic despoiler of church property, a charge now shown to have been a wholly ninth-century construction.[[26]](#footnote-26) Thus, Eucherius’ vision of Charles in hell, included in the *Vita Rigoberti* and reproduced by Flodoard, comes not from the eighth-century *Vita Eucherii*, but from a letter written in 858 by Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims on behalf of the synod of Quierzy to Louis the German in response to the king’s invasion of West Francia. It is widely agreed that Hincmar invented this vision, which was a clear projection of his property ambitions onto an imagined eighth-century past. The archbishop’s message to Louis was clear: royal misuse of ecclesiastical property risked eternal damnation.[[27]](#footnote-27) Immediately after invoking Eucherius’ vision, the author of the *Vita Rigoberti* turned to another dubious source, an undated letter purportedly sent by Pope Hadrian to Archbishop Tilpin of Rheims (762–94?). Hadrian lamented the injustices suffered by Rigobert, with particular attention to his deposition without apostolic consent or any judgement of his episcopal peers.[[28]](#footnote-28) The letter has often been thought to contain an authentic kernel that was heavily augmented by Hincmar, who referred to a papal privilege for Tilpin on several occasions.[[29]](#footnote-29) On this particular occasion, however, Hincmar’s reputation as a forger has come before him, and there is little reason to suppose his involvement. For one, Hincmar is unlikely to have fabricated a document claiming that it was illegal to depose a bishop without synodal judgement or papal consent, because his own right to do so as a metropolitan was precisely the crux of his disputes with his suffragan bishops Rothad of Soissons and Hincmar of Laon.[[30]](#footnote-30) Furthermore, although Hincmar did refer on several occasions to a privilege of Hadrian, he was extremely vague about it. He seems not to have known any of the details quoted by the author of the *Vita Rigoberti* or by Flodoard. Even more puzzlingly, Hincmar appears to have known virtually nothing about Rigobert. Only once, in a letter to Hincmar of Laon of 869, did Hincmar refer in passing to Rigobert’s expulsion.[[31]](#footnote-31)

If one recalls Hincmar’s curious use of the example of Eucherius of Orléans rather than his own predecessor to highlight the suffering of the Frankish church under Charles Martel, these documentary problems strongly suggest that the account of Rigobert’s deposition is a post-Hincmarian creation. This reworking is probably contemporary with the composition of the *Vita Rigoberti* around 890. That this cultural ‘forgetting and remembering’ coincided with the dislocation of the Carolingian political centre in 888 and a veritable caesura in contemporary historical writing is probably no coincidence.[[32]](#footnote-32) It was also in these years that Archbishop Fulk sought further papal assurances of Rheims’ apostolic and primatial status, as shown by his correspondence with successive popes. But we owe all these vignettes to Flodoard, who was the first to copy out and re-present these documents and stories in the overarching structure of his *History of the Church of Rheims* in the middle of the tenth century.[[33]](#footnote-33) It is difficult to disentangle this past from the aims and priorities of his narrative. The story of Rigobert’s expulsion would have had strong resonance around the time of the synod of Ingelheim.[[34]](#footnote-34) The *History*, as mentioned, was composed in the wake of the difficult conflict between archbishops Hugh and Artold. Flodoard dedicated his work to Archbishop Robert of Trier, who had taken a leading role in the settlement of the schism on Otto the Great’s behalf.[[35]](#footnote-35) Describing this recent turmoil, Flodoard contrasted the illegitimacy of Artold’s forced abdication in 940 with the procedural regularity and canonical basis of Hugh’s excommunication by a synod of over thirty bishops and a papal legate.[[36]](#footnote-36) Artold’s wholly unjust deposition at the hands of lay princes echoed Rigobert’s, while Pope Hadrian’s complaint about the absence of papal or synodal consent to Rigobert’s deposition implied that Hugh’s banishment had been lawful. Furthermore, Rigobert’s expulsion, according to the Rémois authors, had ushered in a period of lay control of the see which resulted in the alienation of ecclesiastical property under Milo, about whom we shall hear more shortly. During the episcopate of the adolescent Hugh, the see was managed by his father, Count Heribert II of Vermandois, who also despoiled the church’s lands. The detail Flodoard provided about the acquisition and defence of Rheims’ property by bishops like Rigobert was grounded in the church’s attempts to recover land lost during the struggles of the preceding decades.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Flodoard thus inherited a recently-minted tradition concerning Rigobert’s ill treatment and deposition at the hands of Charles Martel, a narrative that probably developed alongside the bishop’s local cult. But the historian was not merely a passive recipient of this tradition: he repurposed Rigobert’s biography to address contemporary concerns. Flodoard did not simply recycle the contents of the *Vita Rigoberti*; he augmented the text with reference to charters and other documents not used by the author of the Life, such as Pope Zacharias’ letter to Boniface in 751, which briefly discussed Milo.[[38]](#footnote-38) Flodoard also excerpted longer quotations from the Hadrian–Tilpin letter for which he is the only source.[[39]](#footnote-39) He may have felt the need to provide further justification because, as his sources showed, the nature of Rigobert’s deposition was obscure. Drawing on the *Vita Rigoberti*, which in turn may have picked up on a brief remark in Hincmar of Rheims’ letter to Hincmar of Laon in 869, Flodoard wrote that Rigobert had been allowed to return to Rheims and live out his years in quiet retirement at nearby Gernicourt.[[40]](#footnote-40) Two charters mentioned by Flodoard muddy the waters, however. Both are confirmations obtained by Rigobert from Theuderic IV (r. 721–37), whose reign postdates the bishop’s alleged deposition in 717 by several years.[[41]](#footnote-41) These suggest that Rigobert continued to carry out episcopal functions at Rheims, and, as mentioned above, both the author of the Life and Flodoard state that he still occasionally held mass in the cathedral. Was Rigobert ever actually deposed? Another charter, not used by Flodoard but preserved by Folcuin of Lobbes in his *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium* (*Deeds of the Abbots of Saint-Bertin*, composed 962), may suggest that he was no longer bishop. According to this document, in 723 a certain Rigobert (no title is given) sold his property in Saint-Omer to Erkembold, abbot of Saint-Bertin and bishop of Thérouanne.[[42]](#footnote-42) This could well be our Rigobert, who was from a well-born family in the Ardennes and had succeeded his kinsman Reolus as bishop of Rheims.[[43]](#footnote-43) The absence of any episcopal title in Folcuin’s version of the charter indicates that Rigobert no longer claimed the bishopric. In any case, the uncertainty produced by such documents was something that authors like Flodoard were happy to exploit in their attempts to recreate a morally instructive past. Rigobert’s deposition, real or not, became a model illustrating the perils of the unlawful removal of a bishop and princely domination of a bishopric.

*Milo and Abel*

Rigobert is presumed to have lived until 743 or 744, at which point another Rheims bishop turns up in the historical record: Abel. However, we cannot grasp Flodoard’s approach to Abel’s episcopate without first reviewing the evidence for the infamous Milo. Until recently, there was a consensus that Milo had been installed as bishop of Trier and Rheims by Charles Martel, probably around 722, remaining in charge of both sees for about forty years. In 2010, Olaf Schneider challenged this understanding of Milo, arguing that the image of the tyrannical lay ‘double-bishop’ was entirely a creation of Hincmar of Rheims. As Schneider observed, there is no contemporary evidence that Milo was ever bishop of Rheims, or even any kind of administrator of the *episcopium*.[[44]](#footnote-44) The key text in the construction of this portrait would appear to be a memorandum composed by Hincmar in 863 for the trial of his suffragan bishop Rothad of Soissons. Discussing the constitution and rights of metropolitan bishops, Hincmar turned to explaining their history in the Frankish kingdom. He wrote that Boniface had sought to appoint apostolic representatives in *Gallia*, *Belgica* and *Germania* to oversee a stricter clerical adherence to the sacred canons. Boniface thus ordained Grimo in Rouen and Hartbert in Sens, but (unnamed) bishops designated for Rheims and Trier were not able to succeed because the cities were ‘occupied’ (*occupaverat*) by Milo, ‘a cleric by tonsure, not by living’ (*tonsura, non vita clericus*). After Milo’s death, Hincmar continued, Weomad became bishop of Trier (*c*.762–91), but a vacancy ensued at Rheims because Milo had given away all the church’s property to his sons and followers. Eventually, Tilpin became bishop of Rheims and was able to begin restoring the losses with the help of King Carloman.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Hincmar’s source for this was the correspondence between Pope Zacharias and Boniface, which in fact provides the only secure contemporary reference to a Milo who might possibly have been bishop of Rheims and Trier. Responding to a query from Boniface in a letter of 751, Zacharias urged him to strive to correct the behaviour of ‘Milo and his like’:

As to Milo and his like, who are doing great injury to the Church of God, preach in season and out of season, according to the word of the Apostle, that they cease from their evil ways. If they listen to your admonitions they will save their souls, but if they die in their sins you who preach righteousness shall not lose your reward.[[46]](#footnote-46)

The pope’s allusive remark, it seems, was sufficient for Hincmar to cast Milo as Charles Martel’s villainous right-hand man. But in his use of this correspondence, Hincmar was disingenuous, for he cannot have overlooked the fact that Zacharias’ two letters of 744 named the bishop who was meant to succeed at Rheims as one Abel.[[47]](#footnote-47) Why would he have omitted this information?

Flodoard’s understanding of Milo was derived from the *Vita Rigoberti* and the writings of Hincmar. In Hincmar’s view, Rigobert had been succeeded by Milo, a layman and pluralist and thus clearly illegitimate, and Milo had eventually been succeeded by Tilpin. But Flodoard did not accept this version of events. He also had access to the correspondence of Boniface and Zacharias. And here he learned that Boniface had sought to elevate a man named Abel to the rank of metropolitan bishop of Rheims through a grant of the pallium. As he wrote in a chapter entitled ‘Abel, his successor’:

Abel is known to have followed the blessed Rigobert in the succession of the bishopric, although some relate that he was only a chorbishop. But I have found evidence of this bishop (*pontifex*) in an array of statements, and especially in the letters of Pope Zacharias to St Boniface.[[48]](#footnote-48)

As Flodoard goes on to point out via a quotation from Zacharias’ letter of 5 November 744, Boniface clearly stated that he had ordained Abel as well as Grimo and Hartbert. The historian also reproduced the portion of Zacharias’ letter of 22 June 744 mentioning Abel. He then added, somewhat vaguely, that ‘Some charters of this bishop are found with his name and title’.[[49]](#footnote-49) Finally, Flodoard turned to the aforementioned Hadrian–Tilpin letter – a document forged or at least interpolated at an uncertain date – where he learned of Abel’s expulsion:

He was not permitted to remain in his see and, in defiance of God, he was ejected. For many seasons and many years the church of Rheims was without a bishop, and the properties of the church were stolen from this bishopric and divided among the laity, as happened in other dioceses, but to the greatest extent in the metropolitan city of Rheims.[[50]](#footnote-50)

As Flodoard understood it, then, Milo had controlled the see, but was clearly never actually a bishop. Abel had been the legitimate successor of Rigobert but had been expelled at some point – presumably by Milo, though nowhere is this stated. A vacancy followed Abel’s ousting, until eventually Tilpin was elected bishop, probably sometime after Milo’s death in *c*.762.

The problem is that Abel, like Milo, does not seem ever to have been consecrated bishop, and, as Flodoard himself admits, was reported elsewhere to have been a chorbishop tasked with carrying out the episcopal ministry while Milo enjoyed the see’s temporalities. Chorbishops, literally ‘rural bishops’, were assistants who helped urban bishops administer their dioceses. The institution had existed in the East since antiquity, and in the eighth century it became a feature of the Frankish kingdoms, particularly in the north, where dioceses tended to be large.[[51]](#footnote-51) The early-ninth-century *gesta* of the abbots of Fontenelle may also furnish evidence for a chorbishop at Rheims, for it asserts that Lando, abbot around 731–3, was also *episcopus de urbe Remensi*.[[52]](#footnote-52) Boniface failed to implement his reform of the episcopal hierarchy: he apparently requested a pallium for Abel, but there is no evidence that he ever ordained Abel as a metropolitan.[[53]](#footnote-53) There are two further contemporary references to Abel, neither mentioned by Flodoard. In the acts of the council of Soissons, held in March 744, he is named as one of the new archbishops Boniface wished to elevate, albeit without reference to Rheims.[[54]](#footnote-54) And in a letter from Boniface to the Mercian king Æthelbald written in 746 or 747, Abel is named as a *coepiscopus*.[[55]](#footnote-55) This is not definitely the same thing as a chorbishop (*corepiscopus*); it may simply mean ‘fellow bishop’. But there are other instances in which *coepiscopus* clearly denotes a chorbishop.[[56]](#footnote-56)

If Abel was indeed a chorbishop, this probably explains why Hincmar airbrushed him out during his recasting of the eighth century. In the early ninth century, the irregularity of the chorepiscopate had made it controversial. The 829 council of Paris moved to restrict the office’s functions, and it became a target of the Pseudo-Isidorian forgers.[[57]](#footnote-57) Hincmar himself was particularly concerned to extinguish chorbishops, in no small part because Gottschalk of Orbais, Hincmar’s opponent in the predestination controversy, had been ordained priest by a Rheims chorbishop during the vacancy that followed the deposition of Ebbo in 835.[[58]](#footnote-58) It is not hard to imagine that it suited Hincmar to overlook this evidence for an eighth-century Rheims chorbishop in order to emphasize the ambiguity of the office (and the illegitimacy of Gottschalk’s ordination). Tilpin, as it happens, is another oddly elusive eighth-century bishop, for whose tenure there are no secure dates. This may be an indication that he served initially in a chorepiscopal capacity, before being consecrated bishop of Rheims only after Milo’s death.[[59]](#footnote-59) Since Hincmar wanted to make the point that Milo had been an illegitimate lay bishop, it suited him to leave Abel to oblivion.

Flodoard, on the other hand, was probably less worried by Abel’s possible status as an auxiliary bishop. In fact, as mentioned above, a remarkably similar situation had returned to Rheims in his day. When, in 925, Count Heribert placed his infant son Hugh on the see, he seconded a suffragan bishop of the province, Abbo of Soissons, to Rheims as an assistant to perform the liturgical and pastoral functions of the office, reserving for himself the right to administer the diocesan patrimony. In 928, Bishop Odalric of Aix-en-Provence (or perhaps of Dax in Aquitaine), having been driven from his see by Saracens, was appointed to perform the ministry.[[60]](#footnote-60) Interestingly, Odalric was still in the area in 947, when Flodoard recorded his attendance at a synod in Verdun.[[61]](#footnote-61) He may well have retained his auxiliary episcopal function in the province of Rheims throughout this time. Flodoard’s acknowledgement and justification of Abel’s episcopate, plain contrary to Hincmar’s opinion, might best be understood as an effort to find historical precedent for what was essentially lay control of Rheims throughout Hugh’s first pontificate. Carolingian canonists may have succeeded in substantially reducing the office of chorbishop, but the phenomenon of a prepubescent archbishop was clearly an irregularity that required a practical solution. In the Rheims of Milo and Abel, Flodoard found evidence for a similar *modus vivendi* which went some way in explaining a discreditable recent past.

*Remembering Ebbo*

Let us turn finally to Ebbo, arguably the most notorious figure in the episcopal history of Rheims. As has been explored recently in some detail, Ebbo’s departure from Rheims produced complex controversies that reverberated throughout the ninth century.[[62]](#footnote-62) In 833, Ebbo joined a rebellion against Louis the Pious and oversaw the emperor’s deposition and public penance at Soissons in October. Soon, however, public opinion swung back in Louis’ favour, and the emperor was released from confinement. Upon Louis’ restoration, Ebbo became the fall guy for the entire affair. In February 835, at councils in Thionville and Metz, the archbishop admitted his role in Louis’ deposition, confessed to unspecified crimes and resigned his episcopal office. However, the canonically ambiguous nature of this outcome, a compromise between defenders seeking Ebbo’s restoration and opponents clamouring for his deposition, created a host of problems for his eventual successor, Hincmar, who was appointed in 845 following a decade-long vacancy. After Louis’ death in 840, Ebbo was restored to the bishopric by Lothar I, but when Rheims came under the control of Charles the Bald in 841, he was forced to abandon the see once again. During this brief stint, Ebbo ordained a number of priests, several of whom went on to careers of some prominence. Hincmar objected to these clerics’ status, largely because the validity of Ebbo’s ordinations controverted the legitimacy of his own succession to the archbishopric of Rheims. The question of whether Ebbo’s removal in 835 had been procedurally regular therefore became a significant political issue, and it has been argued that this dispute was a driving factor in the production of the Pseudo-Isidorian False Decretals.[[63]](#footnote-63) Hincmar was accordingly relentless in his efforts to blacken Ebbo’s name. In a letter to Pope Nicholas I in 864, uniquely preserved by Flodoard in the *History*, Hincmar requested permission to scratch off Ebbo’s name from the diptych in the cathedral church listing the bishops of Rheims since he had not ended his life in the see.[[64]](#footnote-64)

Ebbo’s career and downfall therefore posed several problems for Flodoard, who devoted two long chapters to the disgraced archbishop. In the first, Flodoard described Ebbo’s rise to the archbishopric and his diocesan work, and the resulting portrait is the familiar ideal bishop: Ebbo was ‘a diligent man, and learned in the liberal sciences’. Charters showed that he had ably concluded many exchanges and purchases of property. Ebbo restored and extended the decaying cathedral church and oversaw the construction of the church’s archive, where Flodoard indicated he worked and prayed. He commissioned a new penitential from his suffragan bishop Halitgar of Cambrai, procured privileges from Carolingian rulers and embarked upon a successful mission on behalf of Pope Paschal to the Danes.[[65]](#footnote-65) Flodoard backed up this account with characteristic citation and excerption of sources, drawing on charters, inscriptions, letters, Thegan’s *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris*, and the *Annales regni Francorum*. Already at the end of this chapter, however, the historian signalled the coming storm, writing that Ebbo sided with Lothar against the emperor and participated in the 833 assembly that imposed Louis’ penance. Flodoard also included the so-called ‘Vision of Raduin’, in which a Lombard monk was visited by the Virgin Mary, who complained to him about the amount of time Ebbo was spending at court.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Flodoard devoted the next chapter to Ebbo’s deposition and abortive restoration, asserting that the archbishop’s expulsion in 835 was the result of ‘his infidelity to the emperor’ (*pro infidelitate imperatoris*). The historian narrated the affair almost entirely through documents and narrative sources, reproducing extracts from key texts such as the *Annales Bertiniani*, the *libelli* of the Frankish bishops’ admissions of complicity at Metz, Ebbo’s statement of abdication, the later account of the deposition by Bishop Theoderic of Cambrai, and the *edictum imperiale* of Lothar that restored Ebbo to Rheims in 840. Flodoard’s access to these texts was most likely mediated by the acts of the synods of Soissons in 853 and Troyes in 867 (or perhaps dossiers of texts prepared by Hincmar for these councils), both of which met to address the fallout from Ebbo’s deposition and reinstatement.[[67]](#footnote-67) Nevertheless, the historian proved extremely diligent in his inspection and excerption of these materials. Flodoard concluded the chapter by briefly recounting how Ebbo was forced to abandon Rheims in 841 by Charles the Bald, and, after falling out with Lothar, eventually wound up in the East Frankish kingdom, where Louis the German appointed him to ‘a certain bishopric in Saxony’.[[68]](#footnote-68) Then, after beginning the third book with an account of Hincmar’s monastic career and election to the archbishopric at the synod of Beauvais in 845, Flodoard described Ebbo’s final bid to regain the see. Lothar complained to Pope Sergius II that Hincmar’s election had been uncanonical because the archbishopric’s legal occupant was still alive. Sergius attempted to intervene by arranging a council in Trier in April 846, but apparently his legates never arrived. The West Frankish bishops instead met in Paris in either autumn 846 or spring 847, where they confirmed Ebbo’s deposition and Hincmar’s appointment.[[69]](#footnote-69) As a postscript, Flodoard reproduced one final Hincmarian text, the ‘Vision of Bernold’, in which Ebbo was seen burning in hell for spending too much time at the palace rather than in his own church.[[70]](#footnote-70)

Recent assessments of Flodoard’s treatment of Ebbo have tended to conclude that the historian embraced and embellished Hincmar’s damning picture of a treacherous bishop, largely because Flodoard is widely considered – not wrongly – to have idealized Hincmar.[[71]](#footnote-71) Indeed, Flodoard alone provided the incriminating details that Ebbo was Louis’ *collactaneus et conscolasticus* (‘milk-brother and classmate’), that he was given the monastery of Saint-Vaast in exchange for betraying the emperor, and that, following Louis’ release from custody, Ebbo fled with the church’s treasure to Denmark with a gang of Northmen. Flodoard is also the earliest witness to the vision of the monk Raduin. But the historian discerned two sides to this story: for all Ebbo’s faults, his episcopate was clearly a high-water mark for the office’s leading role in Frankish royal and imperial government. Flodoard did not reproduce the blatant hostility of sources like Thegan; he instead insisted that *all* the bishops had participated in Louis’ deposition in 833 and did not assign any particular role to Ebbo. While Flodoard preserved the canonical arguments advanced in favour of Ebbo’s deposition in 835, he also reproduced the full text of Lothar’s edict restoring him in 840. And finally, Flodoard chose not to relate that Ebbo eventually became bishop of Hildesheim, stating only that Louis the German appointed him *in regione Saxonie quoddam episcopium*. The bishopric was clearly identified as Hildesheim in the documents Flodoard had before him.[[72]](#footnote-72) This looks like an attempt to downplay a highly controversial – and, in the mid-tenth century, still canonically dubious – translation to another bishopric.[[73]](#footnote-73) There is an interesting contrast here with his treatment of Egidius’ treason and trial: whereas Flodoard, having no other evidence, submitted to Gregory of Tours’ account without comment, in the case of Ebbo he was able to demonstrate precisely why the situation had been so complex. Flodoard’s portrait is thus rather sympathetic, depicting Ebbo less as perfidious and unscrupulous than as naïve and tragic.

Steffen Patzold has observed that Flodoard’s Ebbo looks like a prototypical Ottonian *Reichsbischof*.[[74]](#footnote-74) Flodoard wrote the *History* in the same years that Otto, according to an older historiographical view, supposedly began to conceive of an ‘imperial church system’, the systematic appointment of loyal bishops as counterweights to the Reich’s mighty but unruly nobility. More recent research has tended to qualify or reject the notion of a coherent, long-term episcopal strategy on the part of the Ottonian–Salian rulers.[[75]](#footnote-75) As Patzold notes, Ebbo’s career was defined by his closeness with and service to the emperor. He used his position to promote Rheims’ interests at court, obtaining valuable gifts and privileges for the church from the royal family. He lost his office *pro infidelitate imperatoris*. Patzold makes the point that Flodoard’s portrayal of Ebbo was not inspired by any Ottonian political programme; it was shaped by his rich sources and by his own life in a city steeped in Carolingian tradition. Yet even if we discard outmoded conceptions of a *Reichskirchensystem*, it is clear that Flodoard composed the *History* in a distinctive Ottonian political milieu. As he wrote in his preface, he had been encouraged to produce such a history by its dedicatee, Archbishop Robert of Trier. Flodoard himself was in Otto I’s presence on numerous occasions. The canon travelled to Aachen as part of a royal West Frankish delegation in 944.[[76]](#footnote-76) He was present when Robert and Archbishop Frederick of Mainz restored Artold at Rheims before kings Louis IV and Otto in 946.[[77]](#footnote-77) He attended the synod of Ingelheim in 948, where the dispute between Artold and Hugh was settled before Otto and virtually the entire Ottonian episcopate.[[78]](#footnote-78) In 951, he was sent to Aachen to speak with Otto about the church of Rheims’ disputed property in the Vosges.[[79]](#footnote-79) Elsewhere in the *History* we find Flodoard explicitly linking Rheims with the Ottonian church, as when he recounted how, with Artold’s consent, Otto oversaw the translation of the relics of St Timothy from Rheims to his new royal monastery of St Maurice in Magdeburg.[[80]](#footnote-80) The archbishopric of Rheims owned considerable property in the East Frankish kingdom, and its suffragan diocese of Cambrai was actually in the Reich. In describing the activities of Ebbo and other Rheims bishops in the service of kings and emperors, Flodoard, acutely aware of an eastward transfer of imperial power in his own day, wanted to demonstrate that the office of the archbishop of Rheims still had a role to play in this new political order.[[81]](#footnote-81) We might therefore read his sympathetic portrait of Ebbo as an attempt to show that, despite his catastrophic error of judgement in 833, he was not an inherently bad bishop.

*Conclusion*

Flodoard perceived the church of Rheims in his day as a storied institution at a low ebb. Yet calamity had befallen the see before, and the church had recovered its eminent position in the Frankish episcopate. Illegitimate bishops, lay appropriation of church property, arbitrary depositions and treasonous acts echoed the darkest moments of Rheims’ past. But this past, Flodoard believed, offered some guidance for navigating the stormy waters of a fast-changing present. Because the *History of the Church of Rheims* gives an unparalleled look into an early medieval episcopal archive, there has long been a tendency to mine the text as the work of a humble ‘archivist’ who was simply taking cues from Archbishop Hincmar’s project a century earlier. Flodoard certainly did celebrate Hincmar’s life and deeds, but, as we have seen, he did not slavishly follow the great prelate when it came to history. Flodoard’s Rheims was very different to Hincmar’s, and he had his own duties and priorities. One of those priorities was reconciliation. The archiepiscopal schism of 925–48 was not resolved overnight by the synod of Ingelheim. Divisions within the church and province of Rheims and the West Frankish kingdom remained. When Artold died in 961, erstwhile supporters of the excommunicated Hugh clamoured for his restoration once more.[[82]](#footnote-82) Recent turmoil could not simply be ignored, still less while Hugh lived. Thus, Flodoard did not disparage Hugh in the *History*, nor did he explicitly state that Hugh’s tenure had been illegal, even though this was the verdict of the synod of Ingelheim. To help heal wounds, Flodoard fashioned an inclusive past that placed great emphasis on continuity and legitimacy yet remained faithful to his archival materials.[[83]](#footnote-83) He engaged with the past in a decidedly thoughtful way, highlighting virtues in the church’s less reputable prelates and drawing lessons from those who had been deposed in dubious or controversial circumstances. Flodoard did not just write to restore his community, however: in articulating the diocesan work, property rights, and royal privileges of the archbishops of Rheims, he was making a strong case for the role of the office in royal government at precisely the moment Otto I’s rule was adopting a distinctly imperial tenor.

In 991, questions surrounding the deposition of a Rheims bishop surfaced once again at the synod of Saint-Basle, where Archbishop Arnulf was found guilty of treason, deposed, and replaced with Gerbert of Aurillac. According to Gerbert’s own account of the synod, Arnulf was vilified through association with the seditious bishops Egidius and Ebbo.[[84]](#footnote-84) Here, Flodoard’s verdicts are nowhere to be seen, even though his *History* seems to have become authoritative: unusually for a work of *gesta*, his name became associated with it, and it was not continued in later generations. Other texts hint at changeable attitudes to episcopal legitimacy. As a list of benefactors of the monastery of Saint-Remi compiled during the second episcopate of Arnulf (who was restored in 998) reveals, there was no problem commemorating Hugh of Vermandois as ‘Hugo archiepiscopus’ for his gift of the *villa* of Crugny.[[85]](#footnote-85) In his *Gesta abbatum Lobbiensium*, Folcuin of Lobbes, writing around 980, believed that Abel of Rheims was the same Abel who was attested as abbot of Lobbes in the mid-eighth century. He had consulted Flodoard’s *History*, ‘the *gesta pontificum* of Rheims’. But Folcuin had also learned in conversation with Archbishop Adalbero (969–89) that Abel was not commemorated in the episcopal succession. Folcuin was clearly puzzled by this and the fuzziness of Flodoard’s account. He surmised that Abel had been appointed temporarily and had voluntarily withdrawn from the world, and so had not wished for his name to be included in the list.[[86]](#footnote-86) Adalbero’s remark suggests that Flodoard’s case had not won support. About a century later, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the canon Odalric still did not subscribe to the historian’s judgement of Abel, excluding him again from the episcopal series. As the circumstances surrounding Flodoard’s reasons for writing the *History* faded from living memory, later generations of Rheims clerics turned again to the past and redeployed it with their own priorities firmly in mind.[[87]](#footnote-87)

1. Rheims, Bibliothèque municipale MS 15, fol. 20v. See John S. Ott, *Bishops, Authority and Community in Northwestern Europe,* c*.1050–1150* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a sketch of early medieval Rheims, see Michel Sot, *Un historien et son Église au Xe siècle: Flodoard de Reims* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), pp. 17-42. Rosamond McKitterick, ‘The Carolingian Kings and the See of Rheims, 882–987’, in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. by Patrick Wormald, Donald A. Bullough and Roger Collins (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), pp. 228-49, remains a helpful overview of the archbishopric in the tenth century. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. John S. Ott, ‘“Reims and Rome are Equals”: Archbishop Manasses I (*c*. 1069–80), Pope Gregory VII, and the Fortunes of Historical Exceptionalism’, in *Envisioning the Bishop: Images and the Episcopacy in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Sigrid Danielson and Evan A. Gatti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 275-302. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Flodoard of Rheims, *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*, ed. by Martina Stratmann, *MGH Scriptores* 36 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1998) [hereafter *HRE*]. The fundamental study of this work is Sot, *Un historien*. On Flodoard and the dispute of 925–48, see further Jason Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century: The Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 215-34; Edward Roberts, *Flodoard of Rheims and the Writing of History in the Tenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), ch. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Within a substantial body of literature, see in particular Michel Sot, *Gesta episcoporum, gesta abbatum*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental, 37 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981); Constance B. Bouchard, ‘Episcopal *Gesta* and the Creation of a Useful Past in Ninth-Century Auxerre’, *Speculum*, 84 (2009), 1-35; Theo Riches, ‘The Function of the *Gesta Episcoporum* as Archive: Some Reflections on the *Codex sancti Gisleni* (MS Den Haag KB75 F15)’, *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 10 (2007), 7-46; Theo Riches, ‘The Changing Political Horizons of *Gesta Episcoporum* from the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries’, in *Patterns of Episcopal Power: Bishops in Tenth and Eleventh Century Western Europe*, ed. by Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Waßenhoven (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 51-62. See also Geoffrey Koziol, this volume. The classic work on ‘creative memory’ around the millennium is Patrick J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Remigius is the subject of the majority of the first book of the *History*, while the whole of the third is devoted to Hincmar: *HRE*, I.10-23, pp. 80-122; III.1-30, pp. 190-363. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *HRE*, I.3, pp. 66-7. Sixtus in fact lived in the third century: see Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 364-6; Marie-Céline Isaïa, *Remi de Reims: mémoire d’une saint, histoire d’une Église* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), pp. 599-602. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. On the place of biography in broader historical analysis, see the comments of Stuart Airlie, this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. On Egidius, see Guntram Freiherr Schenk zu Schweinsberg, *Reims in merowingischer Zeit: Stadt, Civitas, Bistum. Anhang: Die Geschichte der Reimser Bischöfe in karolingischer Zeit bis zur Bischofserhebung Hinkmars 845* (Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms-Universität, 1971), pp. 99-109; Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 420-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *HRE*, II.2, pp. 132-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *HRE*, II.2, pp. 132-3; *Die Urkunden der Merowinger*, ed. by Theo Kölzer, *MGH* *DD. Mer.* 2 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2001), Dep. 79, p. 533; Martina Stratmann, ‘Die Königs- und Privaturkunden für die Reimser Kirche bis gegen 900’, *Deutsches Archiv*, 52 (1996), 1-55 (pp. 26-7, 48) (= nos. 5, 6, 7, 75). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. On Flodoard’s archival methods, see Harald Zimmermann, ‘Zu Flodoards Historiographie und Regestentechnik’, in *Festschrift für Helmut Beumann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Kurt-Ulrich Jäschke and Reinhard Wenskus (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1977), pp. 200-14; Stratmann, ‘Die Königs- und Privaturkunden’; Martina Stratmann, ‘Die *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*: Flodoards Umgang mit seinen Quellen’, *Filologia Mediolatina*, 1 (1994), 111-27; Roberts, *Flodoard*, ch. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *HRE*, II.2, pp. 133-4; Venantius Fortunatus, *Opera poetica*, III.15, ed. by Friedrich Leo, *MGH Auct. ant*. 4.1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), pp. 68-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *HRE*, II.2, pp. 134-6. The key passage of Gregory drawn on by Flodoard is *Libri historiarum decem*, X.18-19, ed. by Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, *MGH SRM* 1.1 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1951), pp. 509-13. On the political context of this episode, see Raymond Van Dam, ‘Merovingian Gaul and the Frankish Conquests’, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 1:* c*.500–*c*.700*, ed. by Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) pp. 193-231 (pp. 219-20); and on Gregory’s account, Ian Wood, ‘The Secret Histories of Gregory of Tours’, *Revue Belge de Philologie et d’Histoire*, 71 (1993), 253-70 (pp. 267-9); Guy Halsall, ‘Nero and Herod? The Death of Chilperic and Gregory’s Writing of History’, in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. by Kathleen Mitchell and Ian Wood (Brill: Leiden, 2002), pp. 337-50 (pp. 345-7). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 423 (quotation), 641, 745-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *HRE*, II.2, pp. 134: ‘Qui tamen Gregorius in historia gentis Francorum de hoc presule narrat …’. On the Carolingian reception of Gregory, see Helmut Reimitz, ‘The Early Medieval Editions of Gregory of Tours’ *Histories*’, in *A Companion to Gregory of Tours*, ed. by Alexander Callander Murray (Brill: Leiden, 2016), pp. 519-65 (pp. 540-63). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *HRE*, II.3, pp. 137-40; Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 423-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *HRE*, II.11-15, pp. 156-66; Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 447-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. *HRE*, II.11, pp. 156-9; Stratmann, ‘Die Königs- und Privaturkunden’, pp. 12-13, 22-3, 30-1, 33, 52-3 (nos. 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 87-91). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *HRE*, II.12, pp. 160; Sot, *Un historien*, p. 454. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See especially *HRE*, II.13-15, pp. 162-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *HRE*, II.12, pp. 159-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. *HRE*, II.12, p. 162; cf. *HRE*, IV.28, p. 420. See further Roberts, *Flodoard*, ch. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Vita Rigoberti*, ed. by Wilhelm Levison, *MGH SRM* 7 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1920), pp. 54-80. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Paul Fouracre, ‘The Origins of the Carolingian Attempt to Regulate the Cult of Saints’, in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, ed. by James Howard-Johnston and Paul Antony Hayward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 143-65 (pp. 161-2). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Paul Fouracre, *The Age of Charles Martel* (London: Longman, 2000), pp. 122-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche, 843–859*, ed. by Wilfried Hartmann, *MGH Conc.* 3 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1984), pp. 414-16; *Vita Rigoberti*, 13, p. 70. Paul Edward Dutton, *The Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), pp. 171-5; Fouracre, *Charles Martel*, pp. 123-5; Olaf Schneider, *Erzbischof Hinkmar und die Folgen:* *der vierhundertjährige Weg historischer Erinnerungsbilder von Reims nach Trier* (Berlin: De Gruyer, 2010), pp. 85-6. On various aspects of Hincmar’s diocesan management, see Martina Stratmann, *Hinkmar von Reims als Verwalter von Bistum und Kirchenprovinz* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1991); and the essays of *Hincmar of Rheims: Life and Work*, ed. by Rachel Stone and Charles West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *Vita Rigoberti*, 14, pp. 70-1; *HRE*, II.13, pp. 162-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Émile Lesne, ‘La lettre interpolée d’Hadrien I à Tilpin et l’église de Reims au IXe siècle’, *Le Moyen Âge*, 26 (1913), 325-51, 389-413; Horst Fuhrmann, *Einfluß und Verbreitung der pseudoisidorischen Fälschungen. Von ihren Auftauchen bis in die neuere Zeit*, *MGH Schriften* 24, 3 vols (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1972-4), I (1972), 116-17; Zimmermann, ‘Flodoards Historiographie’, p. 213; Stratmann, *Hinkmar*, p. 52; Schneider, *Hinkmar*, pp. 52-6. Hincmar refers to the letter in his 864 letter to Pope Nicholas I, transmitted only by Flodoard at *HRE*, III.13, p. 233 (= Hincmar of Rheims, *Epistolae*, no. 169, ed. by Ernst Perels, *MGH Epp*. 8.1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1939), pp. 144-63); as well as in *Opusculum LV capitulorum*, 16, in *Die Streitschriften Hinkmars von Reims und Hinkmars von Laon, 869–871*, ed. by Rudolf Schieffer, *MGH Conc.* 4.2 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2003), p. 196; *De iure metropolitanorum*, *PL* 126, c. 20, col. 200; and possibly *Vita Remigii*, preface, ed. by Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 3 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1896), pp. 239-349 (p. 251). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. For an overview and context, see Rachel Stone, ‘Introduction: Hincmar’s World’, in *Hincmar*, ed. by Stone and West, pp. 1-43 (pp. 11-17); and further Fuhrmann, *Einfluß*, II, pp. 254-63 (on Rothad) and pp. 651-72 (on Hincmar of Laon). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *PL* 126, 515A-526A at 516C; see Schneider, *Hinkmar*, pp. 92-3. In his letter to Pope Nicholas of 864 (above, n. 29), Hincmar once again alludes to the expulsion of a bishop by Milo, but does not give his name: *HRE*, III.13, p. 233. See Schneider, *Hinkmar*, pp. 90-1. On the Hadrian–Tilpin letter, see further below. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Paul Fouracre, ‘Forgetting and Remembering Dagobert II: The English Connection’ in *Frankland: The Franks and the World of the Early Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of Dame Jinty Nelson*, ed. by Paul Fouracre and David Ganz (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 70-89; Simon MacLean, ‘The Carolingian Past in Post-Carolingian Europe’, in *“The Making of Europe”: Essays in Honour of Robert Bartlett*, ed. by John Hudson and Sally Crumplin (Brill: Leiden, 2016), pp. 11-28; and Koziol, this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. See further Edward Roberts, ‘Construire une hiérarchie épiscopale: Flodoard de Reims et la correspondance de l’archevêque Foulques (vers 850 – vers 950)’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 61 (2018), 11-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Sot, *Un historien*, p. 452, makes a similar suggestion, but does not develop the point. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *HRE*, preface, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Cf. *HRE*, IV.28, pp. 419-20, with IV.34, pp. 426-8 and IV.35, pp. 434-5. See further Ernst-Dieter Hehl, ‘Erzbischof Ruotbert von Trier und der Reimser Streit’, in *Deus qui mutat tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Alfons Becker*, ed. by Ernst-Dieter Hehl, Hubertus Seibert and Franz Staab (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1987), pp. 55-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See further Roberts, *Flodoard*, ch. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *HRE*, II.12, p. 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *HRE*, II.16-17, pp. 167-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *PL* 126, 515A-526A at 516C; *Vita Rigoberti*, 16-19, pp. 72-4; *HRE*, II.12, pp. 161-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *HRE*, II.11, pp. 157-8; *MGH* *DD. Mer.* 2, Dep. 387 and 388, pp. 656-7; see discussion here and in Levison’s introduction to *Vita Rigoberti*, pp. 54-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Diplomata Belgica ante annum millesimum centesimum scripta*, no. 13, ed. by M. Gysseling and A. C. F. Koch, 2 vols (Brussels: Belgisch Inter-Universitair Centrum voor Neerlandistiek, 1950), I, 27-9. On Folcuin’s use of charters, see Laurent Morelle, ‘Incertitudes et faux-semblants: quelques remarques sur l’élaboration des actes privés carolingiens à la lumière de deux gisements de France septentrionale (Sithiu/Saint-Bertin, Saint-Denis)’, in *Die Privaturkunden der Karolingerzeit*, ed. by Peter Erhart, Karl Heidecker and Bernhard Zeller (Zürich: Urs Graf, 2009), pp. 103-20 (pp. 103-11). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *Vita Rigoberti*, 1-2, pp. 61-2. Stratmann, ‘Die Königs- und Privaturkunden’, pp. 22, 54 (no. 92), identifies this Rigobert with the bishop of Rheims. The second abbot of Saint-Bertin was also named Rigobert, but he had clearly died before 723; Erkembold was the fourth abbot: Folcuin of Lobbes, *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium*, 12, ed. by O. Holder-Egger, *MGH SS* 13 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1881), pp. 607-35 (p. 610). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Schneider, *Hinkmar*, with findings summarized at pp. 388-9. The classic study of Milo is Eugen Ewig, ‘Milo et eiusmodi similes’, in his *Spätantikes und Fränkisches Gallien. Gesammelte Schriften (1952–1973)*, 2 vols, ed. by Hartmut Atsma (Munich: Artemis, 1976-9), II (1979), 189-219. Against Schneider’s thesis that Milo was never bishop of Trier, see now Patrick Breternitz, ‘Milo und die Münzen. Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion um Milos Trierer Episkopat’, *Deutsches Archiv*, 72 (2016), 161-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *MGH* *Epp*. 8.1, no. 160, pp. 125-6; see Schneider, *Hinkmar*, pp. 88-90. For the wider reorganization of metropolitan bishoprics under the Carolingians, see Steffen Patzold, ‘Eine Hierarchie im Wandel: die Ausbildung einer Metropolitanordnung im Frankenreich des 8. und 9. Jahrhunderts’, in *Hiérarchie et stratification sociale dans l’Occident médiéval (400–1100)*, ed. by François Bougard, Dominique Iogna-Prat and Régine Le Jan (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 161-84; Daniel Carlo Pangerl, *Die Metropolitanverfassung des karolingischen Frankenreiches*, *MGH Schriften* 63 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 87, ed. by Michael Tangl, *MGH Epp. sel.* 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1916), p. 198; trans. by Ephraim Emerton, *The Letters of St Boniface*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press: 2000), p. 140. See also Fouracre, *Charles Martel*, p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. *Die Briefe*, no. 57, p. 103; no. 58, pp. 106-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. *HRE*, II.16, p. 166. For an overview of the evidence for Abel’s career, including his probable Anglo-Saxon origin, see Marios Costambeys, ‘Abel (*fl.* 744–747)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. *HRE*, II.16, p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. *HRE*, II.16, p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. The fundamental study is Theodor Gottlob, *Der abendländische Chorepiskopat* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1928), pp. 77-8 for Abel. See also Jörg Müller, ‘Gedanken zum Institut der Chorbischöfe’, in *Medieval Church Law and the Origins of the Western Legal Tradition: A Tribute to Kenneth Pennington*, ed. by Wolfgang P. Müller and Mary E. Sommar (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), pp. 77-94. On chorbishops in the northern missions, see generally E. Knibbs, *Ansgar, Rimbert and the Forged Foundations of Hamburg-Bremen* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. *Gesta sanctorum patrum Fontanellensis coenobii*, V.1, ed. by F. Lohier and J. Laporte (Paris: Picard, 1936), p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. On the limits of Boniface’s programme, see J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 157; Gregory I. Halfond, *The Archaeology of Frankish Church Councils, AD 511–768* (Brill: Leiden, 2010), pp. 203-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. *MGH Conc*. 2.1, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. *Die Briefe*, no. 73, pp. 146-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Gottlob, *Chorepiskopat*, pp. 61-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, ‘Der “unbeugsame” Exterminator? Isidorus Mercator und der Kampf gegen den Chorepiskopat’, in *Scientia veritatis. Festschrift für Hubert Mordek zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Oliver Münsch and Thomas Zotz (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2004), pp. 173-90; Steffen Patzold, *Episcopus. Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2008), p. 234; Eric Knibbs, ‘Ebo of Reims, Pseudo-Isidore, and the Date of the False Decretals’, *Speculum*, 92 (2017), 144-83 (p. 152 n. 28). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Matthew Bryan Gillis, *Heresy and Dissent in the Carolingian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. On the problematic dates of Tilpin’s tenure, see Schneider, *Hinkmar*, p. 83 n. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Flodoard, *Annales*, ed. by Philippe Lauer (Paris: Picard, 1906), s.a. 925, pp. 32-3; 928, p. 42; *HRE*, IV.20, pp. 411-12; IV.22, p. 414. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. *HRE*, IV.34, p. 426. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. For an excellent summary of Ebbo’s career, see Courtney M. Booker, ‘The False Decretals and Ebbo’s *fama ambigua*: A Verdict Revisited’, in *Fälschung als Mittel der Politik? Pseudoisidor im Licht der neuen Forschung. Gedenkschrift für Klaus Zechiel-Eckes*, ed. by Karl Ubl and Daniel Ziemann, *MGH Studien und Texte* 57 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), pp. 207-42 (pp. 216-23). On Ebbo’s role in the deposition of Louis the Pious, see further Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 252-9; Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 183-209; and on the ramifications of Ebbo’s own deposition, see Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 315-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. See most recently Knibbs, ‘Ebo’. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. *HRE*, III.13, p. 236. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. *HRE*, II.19, pp. 175-83. See Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 471-8; Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 353-7. On the two diplomas of Louis the Pious reproduced in this chapter, see Philippe Depreux, ‘Zur Echtheit einer Urkunde Kaiser Ludwigs des Frommen für die Reimser Kirche (BM2 801)’, *Deutsches Archiv*, 48 (1992), 1-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. *HRE*, II.19, pp. 182-3. This text does not seem to be contemporary with Ebbo’s fall and is often attributed to Hincmar, but it may not be independent of Flodoard’s *History*: outside this work, the vision survives in just one eleventh-century manuscript. See Stratmann, *HRE*, p. 182 n. 75; Dutton, *Politics*, pp. 230-3. On Flodoard’s interest in visions, see Geoffrey Koziol, ‘Flothilde’s Visions and Flodoard’s Histories: A Tenth-Century Mutation?’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 24 (2016), 160-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. *HRE*, II.20, pp. 183-9. On Flodoard’s use of his sources in this chapter, see Zimmermann, ‘Flodoards Historiographie’, pp. 208-11; Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 478-9; Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 355-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *HRE*, II.20, p. 189. On Ebbo’s last years, see Hans Goetting, *Das Bistum Hildesheim. Die Hildesheimer Bischöfe von 815 bis 1221*, Germania Sacra, N. F. 2(Berlin: De Gruyter, 1984), pp. 70-9; Booker, *Past Convictions*, p. 196 nn. 55-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. *HRE*, III.2, pp. 191-3. See Elina Screen, ‘An Unfortunate Necessity? Hincmar and Lothar I’, in *Hincmar*, ed. by Stone and West, pp. 76-92 (pp. 77-80). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *HRE*, III.3, pp. 193-4. See Dutton, *Politics*, pp. 183-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. See, for instance, Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 471-85, 647-9, 744; James T. Palmer, ‘Rimbert’s *Vita Anskarii* and Scandinavian Mission in the Ninth Century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 55 (2004), 235-56 (p. 253); de Jong, *Penitential State*, pp. 253-4; Booker, ‘False Decretals’, pp. 224-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche, 860–874*, ed. by Wilfried Hartmann, *MGH Conc*. 4 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1998), p. 235 (a letter from Hincmar to Nicholas I on behalf of the 867 synod of Troyes). Sot, *Un historien*, p. 482, stresses Flodoard’s concern to demonstrate the various canonical arguments made throughout the affair. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. On this translation, see Knibbs, ‘Ebo’, pp. 168-73; and on tenth-century attitudes to the issue, see Conrad Leyser, ‘Episcopal Office in the Italy of Liudprand of Cremona, *c*.890–*c*.970’, *English Historical Review*, 125 (2010), 795-817. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 356-7; and, similarly, Sot, *Un historien*, pp. 484-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. A seminal criticism of the *Reichskirchensystem* was Timothy Reuter, ‘The “Imperial Church System” of the Ottonian and Salian Rulers: A Reconsideration’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 (1982), 347-74 (repr. in Timothy Reuter, *Medieval Polities and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 325-54). For full bibliographic discussion, see Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 19-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 944, pp. 92-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 946, p. 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 948, pp. 109-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. *HRE*, I.20, pp. 111-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. *HRE*, I.4, p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. See further Edward Roberts, ‘Hegemony, History and Rebellion: Flodoard’s *Historia Remensis ecclesiae* in Ottonian Perspective’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 42 (2016), 155-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. *Annales*, s.a. 961, p. 150; 962, pp. 150-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. For a comparable assessment of Folcuin’s *Gesta* of Lobbes, see Ingrid Rembold, ‘History and (Selective) Memory: Articulating Community and Division in Folcuin’s *Gesta abbatum Lobiensium*’, in *Writing the Early Medieval West: Studies in Honour of Rosamond McKitterick*, ed. by Elina Screen and Charles West (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 64-79. Similarly, Walter Pohl, ‘History in Fragments: Montecassino’s Politics of Memory’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 10 (2001), 343-74 (p. 353). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Glenn, *Politics*, pp. 98-109; Charles West, *Reframing the Feudal Revolution: Political and Social Transformation Between Marne and Moselle,* c*.800–*c*.1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 163-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Rheims, Bibliothèque municipale MS 300, fol. 233v: *Hugo archieps Crusneium*. On this text, preserved in a twelfth-century copy, see J.-P. Devroey, ‘Une liste des bienfaiteurs de Saint-Remi de Reims au début du XIe siècle, témoin d’un obituaire rémois perdu’, *Revue Bénédictine*, 114 (2004), 112-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Folcuin, *Gesta abbatum Lobbiensium*, 7, ed. by Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH SS* 4 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1841), pp. 52-74 (pp. 58-9). See Riches, ‘Function’, pp. 38-9; Rembold, ‘History’, pp. 74-5. It is unclear whether the bishop and abbot were one and the same: see Costambeys, ‘Abel’. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. See, for instance, the historiographical endeavours of Archbishop Gervais (1055–67): Ott, *Bishops*, pp. 154-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)