

Introduction

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Among early medievalists today it is a commonplace to state that in the early Middle Ages politics and religion were so closely intertwined that they can barely be separated, not even conceptually. This awareness, however, is quite a recent one. Until the 1970s the history of religion remained mainly the domain of religious specialists, while political historians in general kept their distance from treating religious issues. It was only from that decade onwards that historians of the early Middle Ages started to see religion 'as an integral part of mainstream historical research'.¹ The process of deconfessionalisation and secularisation in Europe and the United States in the latter part of the twentieth century had made it possible to study medieval Christianity more on its own terms, instead of looking at it as the origin of particular trends in the Catholic Church that were often regarded as backward and/or an aberration of true Christianity. The cultural phenomenon known as the 'Carolingian Renaissance', or 'Frankish reform movement', for example, is now mainly understood as 'the reformation and reconfiguration of all the peoples under Charlemagne's rule to create a Christian realm in its institutional structures, moral behaviour and personal convictions'.² In the past, however, it was often seen as a programme 'to raise the intellectual standards of the realm', as a recent textbook still formulated it.³ Raising intellectual standards should, however, rather be seen as a means to attain a truly Christian polity that would retain God's favour and thus achieve success in war. One of the historians who has strongly advocated the integral importance of religion in early medieval society in general and

¹ M. de Jong, 'Rethinking early medieval Christianity: a view from the Netherlands', in *The Bible and Politics in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. M. de Jong, *EME* 7, special issue (1998), 261–76, p. 261.

² R. McKitterick, *Charlemagne. The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 306.

³ J. Bennet and W. Hollister, *Medieval History. A Short History* (Boston, MA etc., 2006), p. 111.

particularly for the world of the Franks is of course Mayke de Jong. The title of her study of the reign of Louis the Pious, *The Penitential State*, amply illustrates the intricate relationship between politics and religion.⁴

Throughout her professional career Mayke de Jong has staunchly maintained that all historians, and especially early medievalists, must take religion seriously as integral to politics. Further, all historians should take early medieval Christianity seriously; it was no mere shadow of 'real Christianity'; nor was it only a dim outline obscured by the notion, now thoroughly discredited, of 'Germanic paganism'. Some of Mayke's thinking about this was formed in her student days in Amsterdam in 1970s, when religion seems not to have had even a walk-on part in lectures on such topics as the Investiture controversy. Mayke explained this herself in the battle-cry introduction she wrote for the special issue of *Early Medieval Europe* in 1998, *The Bible and Politics in the Early Middle Ages*, based on sessions she organised for the Leeds International Medieval Congress in 1996.⁵ Indeed, this article served as both historiographical dossier and manifesto for the way in which biblical models shaped new forms of political self-representation in the post-Roman West. Mayke has been energetic in her championing of early medieval Christians who thought about their own positions in society vis-à-vis God, the past, and their present rulers. She has been unafraid in her confrontation of the intellectual, moral and emotional challenges faced by men and women in the early Middle ages, from the parents offering their children as oblates to monasteries, to the challenges faced by early medieval exegetes in relating the text of the Bible to contemporary politics and the texts relating to Wala of Corbie's tussles with Louis the Pious. Mayke has brought her sharp intellect and erudition as well as a distinctive imaginative sympathy to the elucidation of her subjects' thinking and their predicaments.

A survey of Mayke's work over the decades of her career exposes strong and consistent themes as well as a steady intensification of her approach, the clarity of her thinking and her close engagement with the texts of her protagonists so that we can understand their society from their own perspectives. Mayke never merely presents material on a topic. All her work addresses major questions, explores hypotheses, and offers finely honed arguments in a wonderfully direct and accessible manner. In her first book published in English, based on her earlier Amsterdam dissertation, she studied the phenomenon of the *oblatio puerorum* in the early Middle Ages: a child offered to God by child oblation – a living sacrifice – to a monastery by his or her parents. Here Mayke argued that child oblation was indeed to be understood as a gift to God with all that that implies in relation to social strategies of gift giving and communication

⁴ M. de Jong, *The Penitential State. Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge, 2009).

⁵ De Jong, 'Rethinking early medieval Christianity'.

with the supernatural.⁶ She exposed how secular concerns of modern scholars had contrived to obscure the religious implications and importance of child oblation. She also demonstrated the intertwining of the religious, political and social strands of early medieval monasticism more generally, which led to a number of new perspectives on the role of monasteries within Carolingian society, not least as ‘powerhouses of prayer’.⁷ It is one of Mayke’s special contributions to Carolingian studies that she has insisted upon the secular as well as the religious dynamics of eighth- and ninth-century monasticism. These ideas expanded still further to embrace Mayke’s concept of *ecclesia* – that is, a polity in itself, encompassing the secular public sphere as well as the ecclesiastical institutions generally called ‘the Church’ – as well as her emphasis on religion as a formative element of identity.⁸

In Samuel’s Image also emphasised the paramount inspiration and source for creative adaptation provided by the Bible, especially the Old Testament, within early medieval law, liturgy and religious practice. In a happy turn of phrase characteristic of Mayke’s remarkable feel for language, she described this as an ‘elective affinity, based on a perceived similarity and continuity between the biblical past and the present’.⁹ The cultural transformation that such absorption of the Bible into early medieval thought entailed was further developed in relation to Carolingian politics in other articles, such as her classic studies of Hrabanus Maurus and the Old Testament, and her explorations of the impact of biblical commentary, both on contemporary thinking and on the construction of historical narrative.¹⁰ Mayke’s interest in perceptions

⁶ M. de Jong, *In Samuel’s Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden, 1996). The first book she wrote on the topic was published in Dutch ten years earlier: M. de Jong, *Kind en klooster in de vroege Middeleeuwen. Aspecten van de schenking van kinderen aan kloosters in het Frankische Rijk (500–900)* (Amsterdam, 1986).

⁷ M. de Jong, ‘Monastic prisoners or opting out? Political coercion and honour in the Frankish Kingdoms’, in M. de Jong, C. van Rhijn and F. Theuvs (eds), *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden/Boston, MA/Cologne, 2001), 291–328; M. de Jong, ‘Carolingian monasticism: the power of prayer’, in *NCMH*, Vol. II, pp. 622–53.

⁸ M. de Jong, ‘*Sacrum palatium et ecclesia*: l’autorité religieuse royale sous les Carolingiens (790–840)’, *Annales: histoire, sciences sociales* 58:6 (2003), 1243–69; M. de Jong, ‘*Ecclesia* and the medieval polity’, in S. Airlie, W. Pohl and H. Reimitz (eds), *Staat im frühen Mittelalter*, FGM 11 (Vienna, 2006), 113–32.

⁹ De Jong, *In Samuel’s Image*, p. 11.

¹⁰ M. de Jong, ‘Old law and new-found power: Hrabanus Maurus and the Old Testament’, in J.-W. Drijvers and A. McDonald (eds), *Centres of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East* (Leiden, 1995), 161–76; M. de Jong, ‘The empire as *ecclesia*: Hrabanus Maurus and biblical *historia* for rulers’, in Y. Hen and M. Innes (eds), *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*

of incest, purity and penance, moreover, remains one crucial element of her elucidation of Carolingian society and politics.¹¹

Two interwoven strands of her work have been how institutions functioned in relation to their underlying ideologies and how those ideologies themselves were formed. In other words, she has focused on the ‘intricate connection between the physical topographies of power and their mental counterparts’.¹² Her particular conceptualisation of this connection bore rich fruit in the collection of essays she edited on the *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*. This volume was itself both an outcome of and a complement to the European Science Foundation Transformation of the Roman World research project (1992–97) in which Mayke had been a leading spirit.

Mayke’s keen understanding of the conjunction between penance and political action needs to be seen against this wider conceptual framework. Specific aspects of it were evident at an early stage, with the publication, among others, of her preliminary study of Louis the Pious’s penance in 1991, and culminating in *The Penitential State*.¹³ This path-breaking examination of the political and cultural context and implications of Louis’s public penance in 833 offered a finely nuanced reading of texts by Carolingian authors reflecting on legitimate

(Cambridge, 2000), 191–226; M. de Jong, ‘Exegesis for an empress’, in E. Cohen and M. de Jong (eds), *Medieval Transformations. Texts, Power, and Gifts in Context* (Leiden, 2001), 69–100; M. de Jong, ‘Bride shows revisited: praise, slander and exegesis in the reign of the empress Judith’, in L. Brubaker and J. Smith (eds), *Gender in the Early Medieval World. East and West, 300–900* (Cambridge, 2004), 257–77. See also her contribution to the volume arising from the HERA project (2010–13) on ‘Cultural memory and the resources of the past’: M. de Jong, ‘Carolingian political discourse and the biblical past: Hraban, Dhuoda, Radbert’, in C. Gantner, R. McKitterick and S. Meeder (eds), *The Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2015), 87–102.

¹¹ M. de Jong, ‘*Imitatio morum*: the cloister and clerical purity in the Carolingian world’, in M. Frassetto (ed.), *Medieval Purity and Piety. Essays in Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform* (New York/London, 1998), 49–80; M. de Jong, ‘An unsolved riddle: early medieval incest legislation’, in I. Wood (ed.), *Franks and Alamanni in the Merovingian Period. An Ethnographic Perspective* (Woodbridge, 1998), 107–40; M. de Jong, ‘Transformation of penance’, in F. Theuvs and J. Nelson (eds), *Rituals of Power from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2000), 185–224; and M. de Jong, ‘What was public about public penance? *Paenitentia publica* and justice in the Carolingian world’, in *La giustizia nell’alto medioevo (secolo IX–XI)*, 11–17 aprile 1996, Vol. II, Settimane 44 (Spoleto, 1997), 863–902.

¹² See C. Wickham, ‘Introduction’, in M. de Jong, F. Theuvs and C. van Rhijn (eds), *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2001), 1–8.

¹³ M. de Jong, ‘Power and humility in Carolingian society: the public penance of Louis the Pious’, *EME* 1 (1992), 29–52.

political authority and the definition of political crime as sin.¹⁴ It is one of the special qualities of this book that it combines literary, philological, historical and political analysis in a way few other medievalists can manage. Mayke's analysis of the politics of Louis's reign made it clear that the *Epitaphium Arsenii*, or *Life of Wala*, a major political protagonist in the circle of Louis the Pious, written by Paschasius Radbertus of Corbie, merited a detailed discussion of the political, religious and intellectual context of this extraordinarily sophisticated and subtle text in its own right. Nothing daunted, Mayke set out to provide just such a discussion in her new study, *Epitaph for an Era*.¹⁵

Mayke's intellectual profile might be seen as that of an adventurous explorer, ever pushing at the boundaries both of political discourse in relation to political action in a fundamentally religious context, and of our understanding and interpretation of the history of early medieval Europe. Her study of the *Epitaphium*, for example, has enabled her to explore the deployment of lament and invective, the role of asceticism and of writing about asceticism as an ideal, Paschasius Radbertus's own personal engagement with his subject, his classical and biblical frame of reference, and the wider discourse about public duty in antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

Mayke has always been notably receptive to the possibilities of methods and insights from other disciplines while maintaining her own disciplinary integrity.¹⁶ Authors of the many books and ideas with which she has engaged, even wrestled, ought to appreciate the serious critical attention and respectful evaluation she accords their work, whether of fledgling undergraduates or her doctoral students, her colleagues, or other established scholars. Among the many joys of my long and much treasured friendship with Mayke are the lively and candid discussions about our own research and reactions to books, articles and papers we have had over the years. There have been many opportunities: during the year she spent as Visiting Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge; our year together at the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study in 2005/06 when I was a member of the research group Mayke convened on Carolingian politics and identity; our meetings at the Leeds International Medieval Congress since that conference's inauguration two decades ago; and a regular sequence of visits among Cambridge, Amsterdam and latterly Utrecht; let alone the number of times we have coincided at conferences or seminars in Berlin, Paris, Rome, Spoleto, Vienna, Princeton and elsewhere. In between times there has been the exchange of letters and, thanks to the technology of the mid-nineties onwards, emails. I hope Mayke will not mind if

¹⁴ De Jong, *Penitential State*.

¹⁵ M. de Jong, *Epitaph for an Era. Paschasius Radbertus and the 'Epitaphium Arsenii'* (Cambridge, forthcoming).

¹⁶ See for example M. de Jong, 'The foreign past: medieval historians and cultural anthropology', *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 109 (1996), 323–39.

I give an extract from one of these from May 2014 as a characteristic example of her reflective way of working and her unerring eye for flaws in an argument, especially those that arise from assertions based on ignorance:

It's very hot here still. I'm reading Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity* – a highly instructive small book she made out of lectures given in Germany. I need this for my 2nd chapter – this is my excuse for sitting in the garden in the shade and reading ... While I do so, my ideas take a more precise shape. There's a whole bunch of people ... who think Xtianity killed the public arena, public debate, and 'real' dialogue (= open-ended). When I read [their work] in Princeton I thought, no no, my dears, this won't wash. It now turns out I'm in distinguished company.

Thus insights from cultural anthropology, confessional history, archaeology, literary criticism and political philosophy have been absorbed and turned to the service of helping to elucidate aspects of the early medieval texts Mayke has studied. Mayke remains a 'Young Turk', and a wonderfully articulate, clear headed and creative one. She always has new things to say and new perspectives to offer. Her systematic confrontation of evidence has also been a feature of her teaching, but she has also introduced generations of students to the fascinations of the study of the early Middle Ages. She communicates why the study of the past matters so well that she has galvanised the study of the Middle Ages in the decades during which she has held the Chair of Medieval History in Utrecht. It was a bold appointment at the time, in 1987, of a very young scholar; Utrecht University should congratulate itself on its courage and wisdom, for Mayke has offered unfailing leadership for medieval studies generally in her time at Utrecht. She has a particular gift for inspiring young students as well as more senior scholars, in drawing out interesting themes in seminar discussions, and in encouraging the young to advance their ideas but insisting that they do it from a secure base of knowledge and technical accomplishment.

The chapters in this book are consequently far more than a tribute to a beloved friend, respected and admired colleague, and superb scholar, though they are all of that of course. They also bear witness to the ways in which Mayke's work has inspired further reflection, whether to complement her insights or build upon them. The editors have commissioned chapters with a strong theme – religion and power in the Frankish Kingdom – and have created a coherent book rather than a miscellany of papers. They have neatly organised the book to embrace the principal themes of both Mayke's own interests and contributions to scholarship, and the work she has inspired among her students.

The first set of chapters are concerned with religious discourse and political polemic in studies that take up the themes of identity, the creative deployment of the language of the Old Testament within Frankish society, law and the definition of royal authority. They address different instances of the uses of the

resources of the past for contemporary debates. Thus Gerda Heydemann and Walter Pohl explore early medieval uses of the biblical metaphor of a 'chosen people' in the early Middle Ages and show how the use of ethnic rhetoric in a Christian context shaped medieval perceptions of community.

Rutger Kramer considers the implications of the invocation of the Emperor Constantine in the debates about Adoptionism at the end of the eighth century. The involvement of Frankish rulers in Carolingian religious controversies reflects the kings' understanding of their role as protectors of the Church. This theme is also addressed in a companion piece by Janneke Raaijmakers and Irene van Renswoude. They focus on one particular aspect of the king's responsibility as guardian of orthodoxy: namely, his role as arbiter, taking an active role as hearer and judge in deliberations about theological issues. Raaijmakers and Van Renswoude shed light on the great variety of possible examples and traditions to which Carolingian kings and their advisers could turn for guidance and inspiration. In an explicit continuation of a discussion begun by Mayke de Jong, moreover, Philippe Depreux investigates all the sources – annals, treatises, normative texts – that mention the assembly at Attigny and Louis the Pious's first penance in 822, and consider the *renovatio* of the Frankish realm. Depreux incorporates a discussion of what he regards as an instance of a 'working document' – a further set of *capitula* to the discussion, namely, the *Admonitio ad omnes regni ordines* in which Louis exhorts the bishops, counts and *fideles* with whom he shared his power. This document is made to yield further light on the involvement of bishops in political matters during the ninth century.

All the chapters in this book push into new territory, pulling texts into new contexts, analysing hitherto neglected texts, and unpicking and explaining the implications of interesting manuscripts. They collectively address, to one degree or another, manifestations of royal power, reform, *correctio*, monasticism and centres of learning, the power of bishops, and the Franks' relations with Rome. Thus Bart Jaski challenges the customary interpretation by art historians of some illustrations in the Utrecht Psalter as being related to political events and containing political messages. Jaski shifts the focus to the text and places it in the context of the production of psalters and gospel books at Reims in particular. David Ganz turns his attention to the lections in the eighth-century Northumbrian Gospel Book, now Durham Cathedral Library, A.II.16. These lections differ from other lections from Northumbria in that they share Gallican readings. This leads Ganz to suggest a hitherto unnoticed link, perhaps via Wilfrid of Hexham, between Northumbria and the Merovingian Church. Marco Mostert comments on the ludicrous scribal errors in manuscript copies of the *Admonitio generalis* of 789, such as the early-ninth-century Saint-Bertin manuscript, now Brussels, Bibliothèque royale lat. 8654–72. If this chapter exposes the inadequacies of certain scribes, Mariken Teeuwen analyses the annotations in three different manuscripts related to Auxerre that

demonstrate how students and scholars commented upon texts and at times engaged in a discussion about the proper transmission or interpretation of a text. She makes a strong case for the way such manuscripts reflect not only a world of scholarship in which an insistence on orthodoxy is paramount, but also a set of shared practices and language of signs within a widely dispersed scribal community – signs also specific enough to identify particular masters or centres. Another kind of community is identified by Régine Le Jan in her study of the *nomina amicorum viventium*, or ‘living friends’, of the monastery of Reichenau. These comprise members of the Carolingian royal family, bishop, abbots, priests and lay counts. Le Jan interprets the list as a representation of an ordered Christian society that embodies not only the connections between the monastery and the secular world but also competition between aristocratic families and the underlying ideas of peace, love and unity in Carolingian ideology.

Excerpts from Justinian’s *Novels* relating to Church property preserved in Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Phillipps 1735, a late-eighth- or early-ninth-century codex from Burgundy, afford Stefan Esders and Steffen Patzold the opportunity to demonstrate the kind of questions the Carolingian reproduction of such texts on ecclesiastical property might raise, as well as the wider issue of the degree to which early Carolingian rulers and Louis the Pious in particular may have been influenced by Roman ideas from Constantinople. The implications of particular compilations of texts in a particular historical context are also considered by Dorine van Espelo in her study of the copy made at Cologne under Archbishop Willibert (870–89) of the *Codex epistolaris carolinus* (now Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 449), the unique copy of papal letters to the early Frankish rulers originally compiled at Charlemagne’s request in 791. Van Espelo reflects on the social and ideological function of the collection both in 791 and when the sole surviving copy was made in the later ninth century.

Another early-ninth-century Frankish manuscript in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, lat. 2839–43 is investigated by Yitzhak Hen. This contains a copy of the compendium comprising the apocryphal correspondence between Seneca and St Paul and the supposed exchange of letters between Alexander the Great and Dindimus, king of the Brahmins. The compendium was apparently originally compiled by Alcuin for Charlemagne. Hen suggests that this compendium was carefully crafted in order to soothe the emperor’s anxiety and reassure him that his rule was rightful in God’s eyes. A mirror for ‘princes who had opted out’ is identified by Erik Goosmann and Rob Meens in their interpretation of Regino of Prüm’s detailed account of Carloman (Pippin III’s elder brother) and his retirement to the monastery of Monte Cassino. A further instance of the particularity of Carolingian commemoration at Prüm is the curious story, reconstructed by Julia Smith, of Pippin III and the relics of the sandals of Christ. She suggests that ancient fragments of elaborately worked leather

preserved at Prüm, first mentioned as relics in the ninth century, were Christ relics invented by Pippin III. She argues that ninth-century biblical exegesis retrospectively established a context for these relics.

Els Rose takes Marco Mostert's doubts about the accuracy of the copying of Latin in the 'Carolingian Renaissance' an important step further by analysing the language deployed in Frankish liturgical texts. She raises the question of the accessibility of the language and how much these texts might have been understood and appreciated by congregations in Frankish churches. That the 'Carolingian Renaissance' was not confined to intellectual audiences, but also reached the local levels of Frankish society, is borne out by a short priests' examination analysed and edited by Carine van Rhijn.

Closely related to issues of *correctio* in language and understanding are perceptions and representations of reform. Ian Wood assesses the development of the reform imperative in the early Carolingian Church in the light of his reappraisal of the *Vita Columbani* and *Vita Iohannis* of Jonas of Bobbio. Wood proposes that the Carolingian reform agenda was not so much a response to the failings of the Merovingian Church as a need to respond to the massive transfer of wealth to monasteries in the seventh and eighth centuries. Looking at *correctio* and reform from a different angle, but one that also depends on the effectiveness of language, Maximilian Diesenberger looks closely at the 'rhetoric of improvement' and moral discourse in the reign of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious in the light of an early instance of such moral criticism, namely, the *Sermo de cupiditate* of Ambrosius Autpertus.

Conflict and disagreement about various aspects of Louis the Pious's reform agenda, most particularly the role envisaged for bishops, abbots, the laity and rulers in such reforms, are exposed by Albrecht Diem's study of such major monastic hagiographic texts as the *Vitae Galli* and the *Vita Benedicti Anianensis*. Diem also stresses the 'pasts' evoked and invoked in these texts, whether institutional or ideological. He highlights the ways the construction of the past could become a tool for the expression of controversial ideas. In particular, he discusses the tension between the content of the *Regula Benedicti* and the reality of monastic reform, and the 'textual techniques' authors used to reconcile norms and practice. Attention to the invocation of particular forms of language and established discourses also enables Robert Flierman to offer a new interpretation of the *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, usually dated between 782 and 795. Flierman suggests that the Saxons are actually not being addressed as pagans who need to be converted but Christian members of the Frankish realm, in which allegedly pagan practices were actually acts of infidelity.

Two underlying themes of these specific studies of particular texts and manuscripts are, firstly, the ways in which the responsibilities of a Christian ruler within a Christian society are defined and, secondly, how the imperatives of Church governance are articulated. These themes are investigated more

fully with particular reference to texts relating to or by bishops and popes. Papal letters to the Frankish kings in the second half of the ninth century are the subject of Tom Noble's contribution. He addresses the large corpus of letters from Pope Nicholas I, and extracts what Nicholas's letters can tell us about papal and Frankish thought and action in the middle of the ninth century. Noble teases out both papal and Frankish thinking on questions of authority and Church governance. Further elucidation of Church governance is provided by Jinty Nelson in her examination of the relationships between Charlemagne and his bishops, while Giorgia Vocino presents some 'mirrors for bishops.' Vocino shows how a range of texts – *vitae* of exemplary bishops such as Martin, Hilary, Ambrose and Augustine as well as homilies, funeral orations and letters containing hagiographical and biblical exempla – helped to shape new hagiographical writing in Carolingian Italy in the late eighth and the ninth centuries, with striking portraits of the ideal bishop. One particular Carolingian bishop is the subject of Bram van den Hoven van Genderen's study of the reality and legend of Frederic, bishop of Utrecht (826 × 834) and the construction of a martyr saint in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The chapters in this volume are designed to complement Mayke's own work. The authors hope to contribute to an understanding of how texts shaped political identities, and to elucidate how early medieval ideologues had to rely on both the normative world of the Old Testament and a bristling arsenal of later commentary and creative composition. The chapters are offered with love, admiration and gratitude to Mayke de Jong on her sixty-fifth birthday and on the occasion of her retirement from the Chair of Medieval History in the University of Utrecht.

I have emphasised Mayke's scholarship throughout this introduction, but no tribute to Mayke should omit thanks to her too for her extraordinary commitment and hard work, her inspiring teaching, her extraordinary personal as well as intellectual generosity, her sense of fun, and her fabulous parties and picnics. We have written these chapters for her, but in the spirit we know she will endorse for a wider public as well, to demonstrate the remarkable creativity evidenced in the early Middle Ages and, above all, the intertwining of religious and political issues in these truly formative centuries of early medieval Europe.