Sacer antestis **and** *rex christicolarum:* **The Carolingian Papal 'Real',**
'Ideal', and How to Write Between Them in Ermold the Black's
Carmen in Honorem Hludowici Christianissimi Caesaris Augusti.

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'Illud est diligentius docendum, eum demum dicere apte qui non solum quid expediat sed etiam quid deceat inspexerit. Nec me fugit plerumque haec esse coniuncta: nam quod decet fere prodest, neque alio magis animi iudicum conciliari aut, si res in contrarium tulit, alienari solent. Aliquando tamen et haec dissentiunt...'

'A point to be particularly emphasized in teaching is that no one can speak "appropriately" unless he sees not only what is expedient but also what is becoming. I am aware, of course, that the two generally go together. What is becoming is generally useful, and there is nothing more likely to win over the judges' minds or, if things have gone the wrong way, to alienate them. But the two sometimes conflict.'[1]

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[1] Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. trans. D.A. Russell. *The Orator's Education Vol. V, Books 11-12*. (Cambridge, MA, 2001): 13-14.

Contents:

Chapter One: Introduction.

I do not suspect to incur much rancour by stating that the history of Rome and the papacy's place within the early medieval Europe's developing intellectual and political discourse is a complex, sophisticated, and at times perplexing one. The tensions between religious institutions and their secular counterparts be they bishops and counts or popes and emperors are so central to the early medieval world that they have been described as not just characteristic, but foundational.[2] As the title suggests, the weeds into which we shall wade have long been the topics of discussion of modern authors, and so too those of whom they study. What follows is a treatment of a member of the latter category. Ermold the Black's *Carmen in Honorem Hludowici Christianissimi Caesaris Augusti* (hereafter the *Carmen*) written in the mid-late 820s Frankish Empire, was not a work aimed at disentangling the complexities of doctrine, politics and theology, but instead, as its title suggests, in singing the praises of its author's emperor; Louis the Pious. Ermold undertook this task to gain by praise a pardon from Emperor Louis for a crime that had led to his exile from Louis son, King Pippin of Aquitaine's, court. His petition took the form of the *Carmen*'s four books of poetry in celebration of his emperor and two letters in poetic metre addressed to Pippin, his own king. The *Carmen*'s second of four books' description of the already imperial Louis' reception of a crown at the hands of Pope Stephen IV in Reims in 816 required Ermold tackle the problem of precisely how to write of the pope's position in the Carolingian mind. The difficulty of writing around a topic so fraught with tension might suggest that one with a precarious and personal goal in mind (as we shall see Ermold very much is) may wish to avoid it. This was apparently not the case. Ermold assures us the events he chose to report were selected carefully, and that the author thus saw in his description of Stephen's visit to Frankia not a potential pitfall but what has been described as the overarching goal of Frankish historical texts dealing with their Carolingian elite: to persuade contemporaries and posterity of the importance and status posterity of this elite.[3] This, as I

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[2] Mayke de Jong, "*Ecclesia* and the Early Medieval Polity", in *Staat im frühen Mittelalter,* eds., S. Airlie, W. Pohl, and H. Reimitz (Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006), 132.

[3] A note on references to Ermold. When line numbers are referenced as out of order, their reference order is respective to their appearance in my own sentence. In instances where further quotation is given in a footnote that also contains references to Ermold already, a reference may follow the quotation in the footnote immediately for the sake of clarity. References references shall be as follows: Ermold, *Carmen in Honorem Hludowici Christianissimi Caesaris Augusti* [book number], l. [line number], [page number in, Edmond Faral ed. trans., *Ermold le Noir: Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au Roi Pepin,* (Paris, 1964)]; [page

argue, runs much deeper than a recollected interpretation of a ritual meant to confer significance through pageant.[4] Moreover, in his navigation of these difficulties, Ermold betrays the ways in which the at times contradictory ideologies of the Carolingians were accepted in thought and in literary methodologies that evidenced and reinforced this acceptance. We shall see how Ermold is exemplary of the authoritative Janet Nelson's description: 'Political thought is embodied not only in theories but in contemporaries' *ad hoc* responses to political problems and to perceived discrepancies between ideals and realities.'[5] These discrepancies between ideals and realities are what Ermold must contend with. This work's title is deliberately ambiguous. It is suggestive of the conflict in Carolingian ideology where the pope is at once 'ideal,' afforded a kind of universal status, but must be kept in-line also with what the Carolingians allowed to be 'real'; where the emperor was the individual inarguably at the helm of the Christian state.

This introduction's brevity is deliberate. The difficulties of the modern authors noted above certainly do not exclude the present author, and as such, much of the introductory content relevant to the various topics discussed will lie closer to the subjects and chapters that they treat.

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number in Thomas Noble's English translation of the *Carmen*, in Thomas Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and The Astronomer.* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009)]: Ermold, *Carmen* I, l. 50-59, Faral, 6-8; Noble, 128-129; Rosamond McKitterick, *Histoire et mémoire dans le monde carolingien,* (Brepols: Turnhout, 2004), 282.

[4] I borrow here the language of Philippe Buc, for whom 'interpretations' of events were written narratives that sought to achieve their own purposes through manipulation of text, meaning, or the event itself: Philippe Buc, "Ritual and Interpretation: The Early Medieval Case", *Early Medieval Europe* 9, no. 2 (2003): 183.

[5] Janet L. Nelson, "Kingship and Empire in the Carolingian World", in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation,* ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 65.

Chapter Two: *Status Quaestionis.*

Against the other richly treated biographies of Louis such as Thegan's *Gesta Hludowici,* or the Astronomer's, Ermold's has received relatively little attention in the historiographical Past. It is perhaps best to start with Edmond Faral.[6] Faral's edition, translation and treatment of Ermold, *Ermold le Noir: Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au Roi Pépin* published in 1932, was of strong opinions. To Faral, the undoubtedly ecclesiastic profession of Ermold was visible in the man's 'attachment a l'Eglise et à l'idée de la suprématie du pouvoir ecclésiastique.'[7] He scathingly treated Ermold's literary composition a poor shadow of those of the classical and contemporary authors from whom he borrowed: 'Son art du récit est des plus élémentaires, sa faculté d'invention, aussi pauvre que son habileté à peindre ce qu'il voit, ne lui fournit que des cadres raides et d'un effet monotone.'[8] The value of the *Carmen,* therefore, was in its 'parfaitements satisfaisant' historical capacity, when treated with great caution required by its literariness.[9] The result was an approach that mistrusted his history (Faral suggests his preference for the historic and poetic sources he relied upon in any case), and disregarded his value as a poet and as a mirror of his time.[10] Thus despite Faral's edition's usefulness, he has, I believe rightly, been since denounced as 'materialistic', and as failing to give Ermold sufficient room to breathe.[11]

Not so Peter Godman. Godman included in two works, "Louis 'the Pious' and His Poets" and *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* published 1985 and 1987 respectively, a section in both to treat the *Carmen.*[12] An authority on the poetic early Middle Ages, he explicitly placed himself in opposition to Faral, treating the work as poetry and not as history. He writes in response, 'no simple criteria of historicity or of realism will enable us to do

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[6] I here elect to pass over Ernst Dümmler's contribution in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, as his conclusions in the have been largely overwritten as to no longer be pertinent to this study.
[7] Faral, *Poème,* xi.
[8] Ibid., xi, xxiv.
[9] Ibid., xv, xxv-xxvi.
[10] Ibid., xv-xvi.
[11] Shane Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*: Self-promotion, Self-suppression and Carolingian Ideology in the Poetry of Ermold", in *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages,* ed. R. Corradini et al., (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010): 170.
[12] Peter Godman, *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 106–130.

justice to this poem as a work of art or to understand the circumstances in which it appeared.'[13] Godman's delicate treatment of Ermold's work alongside and within the respected Carolingian poetic cannon evinced from it far more than had Faral. He noted, among other things: panegyric's ability create obligation; a notion of patronage derived from Charlemagne's court and extrapolated upon; a deliberate and deft adaption of his influences; its intention, beyond its praise, to recommend the use of its author as a man of letters to its audience; and the use of deliberate ambiguity and obfuscations.[14] This last point I wish to accentuate as it is especially pertinent to our current study. Despite this summary's injustice to Godman's work, suffice it to say his Ermold, cognizant of the traditions of narrative verse, both religious and secular, was both conscious of and influential within the culture in which he worked.[15] This was based on a revision of Ermold the man as one who is learned of his inspirations, but not drably derivative. Indeed, Ermold's inclusion in Godman's treatment of Louis' poets and the argument created therein, that Ermold's was 'one of the most fruitful yet least recognised epochs in the development of Carolingian poetry', may be seen as the beginning of his liberation from the grasp of earlier 20th century scholarship.[16]

Perhaps most exemplary of the tradition fostered by Godman is Shane Bobrycki's contribution to the relatively recent (2010) *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, "Nigellus, Ausulus: Self-promotion, Self-suppression and Carolingian Ideology in the Poetry of Ermold."[17] To Bobrycki, Ermold is a capable writer of epideictic rhetoric in the Quintillianesque tradition, and equally adept at forging a polysemic, allegorical, and scrutable work of literature that by these features divulges much of the Carolingian culture, literary and otherwise, to the careful observer. It is through his cross-examination of the titular and paradoxical self-promotion and self-suppression (though perhaps self-depreciation might elicit a more immediately clear understanding) that his conclusions come. By tying his success to the will of the implored divine audience, and hiding his 'daring' petition behind diminutives - distilled in Bobrycki's examination of the term *'ausulus'* - Ermold demonstrates how his evident

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[13] Id., "Louis 'the Pious' and his Poets", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 19 (1985): 259.
[14] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 255, 256, 257, 258, 270.
[15] Ibid., 259.
[16] Ibid., 239.
[17] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 161-173.

literary complexity can be advanced to his benefit.[18] The most illuminating point of his argument comes at his conclusion, in what is in essence an expansion of Godman's contention that Ermold's 'emphasis on the ruler's clemency becomes a means of eliciting it.'[19] He reveals how and for what reasons individuals accepted Carolingian elite norms and, through panegyric, what mechanisms they effected to both reinforce and adapt those norms. This can be best summarised by the author: 'the petitioners who adopted ideological framework [*sic*] for their own purposes... also, cumulatively, reshaped that ideology to their needs – regardless of their own personal beliefs. The activity of interested individuals in the formulation of ideology was essential. The success of the process added to and further formulated the perceived power of the elite, but also kept the doors open for propagandists like Ermold, encouraging further petition and formulation, building and strengthening a self-reproducing mentality for a political community…'[20]

The reader may have noticed jumps of decades between the highlighted works. This is as a result, largely, of the underrepresentation of focussed scholarship on Ermold, his work having been instead utilised for the remaining categories here addressed; those of more thematic analysis. This is not a criticism of these works, they are, in most cases, just as informative.

Philippe Depreux's "*La* pietas *comme principe de gouvernement d'après le Poème sur Louis le Pieux d'Ermold le Noir*" (1998), as part of the new consideration of the *Carmen* as a text replete with meaning, concerned itself with a more specific analysis of Louis' piety in the *Carmen*.[21] His examination was predicated on the notion that Ermold's leitmotif of '*pietas*' and '*pius*' in reference to Louis utilised the term's diverse semantics as a way to communicate Louis' possession of the equally numerous qualities of Christian kingship, beyond what we might translate as 'piety.'[22] His helpfully structured article laid out through careful examination of theme and text how Ermold expressed the king's characteristics of, and concern for, justice,

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[18] Ibid., 169.
[19] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 255.
[20] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus'*, 173.
[21] Philippe Depreux, "La *pietas* comme principe de gouvernement d'après le Poème sur Louis le Pieux d'Ermold le Noir", in *The Community, the Family and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Joyce Hill and Mary Swan (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 201-224.
[22] Depreux, "*Pietas*", 204.

tradition and order, council, humility, imperial honour, conquering faith, and *pietatis ops* through an assertion of his *pietas.* Depreux's study focused heavily on the relationships of Carolingian ideologies, and how these are displayed and explored by Ermold. The interrelationship and consanguinity of these things under the banner of *pietas* as a way to assert ideals of Christian kingship is suggestive of this topic's complexity, and Depreux's study proves enlightening in its study.

More typical of Ermold scholarship is his materialisation in works dedicated to some greater theme. De Jong in her treatment of Ermold over seven or so pages subjects him to a brief but rigorous evaluation in pursuit of a greater understanding of the powerfully important courtly historiographical tradition emerging under Louis.[23] Borrowing much from Godman, Faral, and Depreux (as her brevity demands), she nonetheless brings to the fore in Ermold her own concerns. Particularly her points similar to Depreux's, highlighting the connection between the war-like and peace bringing features of Louis, are used to develop her own characteristic analysis of the relationship between the religious and secular in the personality of the emperor.
[24] Further, she notes the essential 'Frankishness' of the *Carmen,* reflecting a common refrain of Janet Nelson's extensive work on the nature of Carolingian kingship.[25]

Rutger Kramer's very recent *Rethinking Authority in the Carolingian Empire* (2019) approaches the *Carmen,* particularly book II, to reveal more of the Carolingian conception of their Benedictine monastic reforms. He too, writes of Ermold's weave of the biblical, antique and contemporary to demonstrate the emperor's embodiment of order.[26] To his ends, Kramer writes of the role of Benedict of Aniane and the monastery of Inda, seeing Ermold as presenting the latter's foundation by the form as the eye of the storm of Louis' reforms, and a chance to write of Louis as *Caesar et abbot simul.*[27] His treatment closes, importantly for our part, on the insight that 'even though both the narrative agency of Benedict and [Pope Stephen IV] was to

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[23] Cf: Mayke De Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814-840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 59, 89-96; id. "*Ecclesia*"; id. "The Two Republics: *Ecclesia* and the Public Domain in the Carolingian World", in *Italy and Early Medieval Europe, Papers for Chris Wickham,* eds., Ross Balzaretti, Julia Barrow, and Patricia Skinner (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018), 446-499.

[24] De Jong, *Penitential State,* 92.

[25] Ibid., 93; Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", esp. 215, 230-234.

[26] Rutger Kramer, *Rethinking Authority in the Carolingian Empire* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 178.

[27] Ibid., 179-180.

confirm Louis' actions, they were given a speaking part and both played a key role in the dialogue.'[28]

The early 1990s saw Johannes Fried's contribution to the important volume, *Charlemagne's Heir,* "Ludwig der Fromme, das Papsttum und die fränkische Kirche" and Philippe Depreux partially responsive work, "Empereur, Empereur associé et Pape au temps de Louis le Pieux", offer valuable insight into the imperial and papal relationship.[29] Fried tracked the course of the diversion of the Carolingians from their Roman partners, seeing men import such as Benedict of Aniane and Claudius of Turin, who famously denounced the significance of Roman pilgrimages and relics, as symptomatic of a 'westgotisch-aquitanischen Tradition' at court that asserted royal prescience over Roman.[30] He deployed the *Carmen* as evidence of this, declaring its account of things such as the gifts offered to Louis by Stephen in the poem were typical of normal imperial churches, and thus 'Der Papst und die römische Kirche sind ganz hineingenommen in das Frankenreich.[31] There occurred a change in c. 824. Fried contended that key events such as Lothar's coronation in Rome (823), Benedict of Aniane's death (821-822), and shifts in the personalities of court engended a shift toward a recognition of papal eminence.[32] Though it is not the place of the current work to comment on Franco-papal relations on such a grand time scale, it will be suggested (not least through Fried's treatment of the *Carmen*'s account of Stephen IV's visit as evidential of the feelings of the time it treats (816) and not of those it was written (826-828)) that a broad agreement with his conclusions, but perhaps not dating, is appropriate. Depreux sought to augment this conclusion, characterising the relationship not as one that swung wildly between humiliation and exultation each power by the other, but their relationship as a cooperative enterprise, where each in turn as at the origin of one or other of our source's claims to authority.[33]

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[28] Ibid., 181.

[29] Johannes Fried, "Ludwig der Fromme, das Papsttum und die fränkische Kirche", in *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814-840)*, ed. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 231-73; Philippe Depreux, "Empereur, Empereur associé et Pape au temps de Louis le Pieux." *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 70 (1992): 893-906.

[30] Fried, "Papsttum", 259.

[31] Ibid., 251-252.

[32] Ibid., 257-273.

[33] Depreux, "Empereur", 900.

Further engagement with these large-scale studies is not here appropriate, given our focus on Ermold. Moreover, Ermold, and so we, take a firmly Frankish perspective. As such a 'balanced' discussion that takes into account a papal understanding of their place in Christianity is largely avoided.[34] This is one of the many overlapping themes that we shall come across, each with their own vast literature, for example: notions of the church and state; papal and imperial relations; Carolingian political ideology etc. The remaining topics and the works pertaining to them, however cannot be afforded full treatment here, despite their influence upon the arguments herein; it is thus my hope that the citations shall provide a helpful overview of the literature where appropriate.

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[34] For works focussed on the development of papal authority from a Roman perspective, cf: Louis Duchesne, *The Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes,* trans. Arnold Harris Mathew, (London, 1908); Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages,* 2nd ed. (London: Methuen & Co., 1962); id., *A Short History of the Papacy in the Middle Ages.* (London: Methuen, 1972); Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society, 400-1000* (Macmillan: London, 1981); Thomas F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter: The Birth of the Papal State, 680-825.* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984); id., "Morbidity and Vitality in the History of the Early Medieval Papacy", *The Catholic Historical Review,* 81-4 (1995): 505-540; Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); George E. Demacopoulos, *The Invention of Peter: Apostolic Discourse and Papal Authority in Late Antiquity*, (Philadelphia, PA.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Rosamond McKitterick, "Rome and the Popes in the Construction of Institutional History and Identity in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of Leiden Universiteitsbibliotheek Scaliger MS 49", in *Rome and Religion in the Medieval World: Studies in Honor of Thomas F.X. Noble,* ed. O. Phelan and V. Carver (Aldershot: Routledge, 2014), 207-234.

Chapter Three: *Carmen in Honorem,* a Brief Treatment.

Ermold Nigellus is characterised by his status as something of an enigma to modern scholarship. No certain statement can be made on his origins. He recalls in the first of his verse epistles his homeland of Angoulême, and his wish to return to Aquitaine suggests he was a native.[35] Earlier scholars like the influential Faral held the belief that Ermold was likely an ecclesiastic.[36] Faral based this on the author's concern for the splendour of the church, autobiographical passages in which he reports King Pippin's laughing admonishment that he swap the sword for the pen in response to his own martial ineptitude, the monastic setting of his imprisonment, and his textual familiarities with churchmen such as Aldhelm.[37] Modern scholarship has convincingly argued against this on a variety of accounts; notable is Shane Bobrycki's astute deconstruction of two of the former points. In the first case, he argues that enthusiasm towards the church was by no means exclusively 'clerical,' and in the second, that in a panegyric work so carefully crafted to realise its author's freedom, it would be foolish to interpret self-reporting passages as a truthful, 'static mine of autobiographical ore.'[38] As such, the aforementioned passage is better interpreted as a tool with which the author can identify and display his familiarity with, and wish to return to, his king and friend. His familiarity with the secular and particularly clerical word can also be dismissed as indicative of a clerical background. They were not, as Kershaw has noted, mutually exclusive.[39] Noble has suggested an intermediate position, describing him as a lay priest.[40]

So we are in the dark as to his station. I am, however, favourably inclined to Bobrycki's claim that such a project of classification, even ignoring its impossibility, is misguided. With the boundaries between lay or ecclesiastic indistinct and rather permeable in Carolingian society, imposing a distinction on a case such as ours (that exhibits no clear proclivity for one side or the other in any case) would fail to meaningfully inform our study.[41] Indeed, as we are adjudging Ermold's portrayal of the balance of religious authority between imperial and papal ministries,

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[35] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 119; Faral, *Poème,* vi.

[36] Some still subscribe to this view, R. Kramer terms him a 'cleric': Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 178.

[37] Faral, *Poème,* vi-vii.

[38] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 161-173, 163, 171.

[39] Paul Kershaw, "Eberhard of Friuli, A Carolingian Lay Intellectual", in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. Patrick Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 82.

[40] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 119.

[41] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 163.

it is important to see the division between broadly 'pro' or anti' papal attitudes did not fall along secular and ecclesiastical lines. Take, for instance, the layman Einhard's profession of the importance of (Roman) relics and saints, and against him Bishop Claudius of Turin's vehement, public opposition to these beliefs.[42]

What little can be said of Ermold is based on what he himself deigns to record in his two surviving letters and poetry. Here we reach what must be a caveat always to the work that follows, already suggested in Bobrycki's refutation of Faral's ideas, that all of what has been written must be considered first as a deliberate formulation. Beyond the deep implications of its poetic, panegyric and public form, discussed below, it is first and foremost a work intended to be both pleasing and convincing to imperial ears. One must engage with Ermold critically and conscious of his intent to prevent reading him as an oracle of unequivocal truths about the relationships and events he deigns to represent. More telling will be what he reveals about the formulation of his presentation; its ideology and the methods by which he presents it as he does.

This is not to say Ermold is entirely devoid of merit to the cautious historian. We are able to infer a few points about his identity from the content of the poem. Let us begin with what we know. We can be confident that Ermold held position in court; despite the absence of specific detail, his familiarity with the actors and action of court suggest this.[43] He had an awareness of the hierarchy of courtiers, and of the shifting tides of influence brought by Judith and Charles the Bald's rising power.[44] In any case, we can infer from his (comfortable) exile that he certainly possessed enough caché and influence that his actions were noticed and of concern to the highest echelon of the empire.[45] We know he was a learned man; his literacy expresses

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[42] Einhard, *Translatio,* trans. B. Wendell, in *Carolingian Civilisation: A Reader,* ed. P. E. Dutton (Ontario; New York; Cardiff, 1993), 198-246; Claudius of Turin, *Claudius of Turin's Complaint,* trans. A. Cabannis, in *Carolingian Civilisation: A Reader* ed. P. E. Dutton (Ontario; New York; Cardiff, 1993), 247-251.

[43] Note his familiarity with the presence of those listed. 'For his part, Prince William set up his tents, as did Heridbert, Luitgard, and Bigo, as well as Bero, Sannio, Libulf, and Isembard…'. The specificity of numerous cases of people tied to important events means that we can both prove and rely on Ermold's close awareness of the court, as his specificity makes his account corroborable by his audience who are these stories are about: Helisachar (at *Carmen* II, l. 1039, Faral, 82); Bigo (at *Carmen* II, l. 1134, Faral, 88); Lantpreht (at *Carmen* III, l. 1262, Faral, 98); Witchar (at *Carmen III,* l. 1324, Faral, 104); Matfrid (at *Carmen* IV, l. 2176, Faral, 166); Ermold, *Carmen* I, l. 308-310, Faral, 28; Noble, 134-5.

[44] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 258.

[45] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 254; Faral, *Poème,* vii.

familiarity with ancient 'secular' classics and more recent Christian writings; he knew of Ovid, Juvenus, Seulius, Porphyrius among Roman poets, the sixth-century's Venantius Fortunatus and the seventh's Aldhelm of Malmesbury among others.[46] Godman, as part of Ermold's rehabilitation into a respectable intellectual, has pointed out that the poet operated in his own time within a colourful cultural milieu in Pippin's court at Aquitaine. Alongside access to the literary traditions fostered in Charlemagne's empire and the Veronese experiments of Pippin of Italy's court, Ermold swam in an ocean of developing literary culture.[47]

In dating the *Carmen*, we can be sure he had not yet been exiled by 824 due to his reporting his own presence of the Breton campaign of 824. The detailed description of the Danish King Harald's visit to Louis' court in summer 826 ensures the work was underway by 826 or after.[48] The deposition of Hugh of Tours and Matfrid of Orléans in February 828 - for their leadership of the 827 Iberian campaign's failure 'due to the negligence of the leaders… put in command' - provides a firm *terminus ante quem* on account of Ermold's glowing depiction of the two counts.[49] Resultantly, scholars are content to accept Faral's dating of somewhere between the autumn of 826 and February 828.[50]

Now to our uncertainties. The crime for which Ermold finds himself in exile is never defined in the *Carmen*, providing only admissions, 'I do not hold myself innocent of the offence that got me exiled' of his self-declared 'wicked deeds.'[51] Without any more specific details, no conclusion can be reached. This, of course, has not stopped historians from positing their thoughts. Mayke De Jong has suggested that his crime was of iconophile character, stemming from his 'vociferous protestations that the bodies of holy fathers should be venerated on earth.'[52] She evidences this in the lines, likely directed against Claudius of Turin's anti-Roman stance,

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[46] Noble notes that Isabella Ranieri has traced 500+ instances of Ermold borrowing from earlier poets, both words and full lines: Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 120, citing Isabella Ranieri, "I modelli formali del "*Carmen in honorem Hludowici Caesaris.*" di Ermoldo Nigello" *Annali Della Facoltà di Lettere E Filosofia* 36 (1983): 161-214; Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus"*, 168.

[47] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 254.

[48] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis*, 120.

[49] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 120; *Royal Frankish Annals, s.a.* 827, trans. Bernhard Walter Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories.* (Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 1972), 121. [Hereafter *RFA, s.a.* YEAR, Scholz, page number].

[50] Faral, *Poème.* viii.

[51] Ermold, *Carmen* I, IV, l. 43, 2640-2641; Faral, 6, 200; Noble, 128, 186.

[52] De Jong, *Penitential State*, 89.

'What mad idiot could say that the bodies of the holy fathers must not be worshipped on earth? Is not God venerated by these heavenly servants to whom we pray? Peter is not God, but I believe that by praying to Peter, I could be free from the guilt of my crime.'[53] In its syntactic abuttal of the issue alongside mention of his own crime, the evidence is persuasive, but sadly not conclusive. Scholars at this point in their introduction of Ermold will as indication of the possible success of his petition that there was an Ermold present as a *cancellarius* in Pippin's charters of the 830s.[54] They will also note that we are unable to confidently assert the unity of this man's identity with our Ermold the Black.[55]

The *Carmen*'s two extant manuscripts survive sandwiched between two other works both of verse epistle addressed to King Pippin.[56] These two epistles have not had their dates established firmly.[57] Though it does not concern the current work greatly, Godman's suggestion that these epistolae were sent prior to and after the *Carmen* respectively as complimentary additions is well-evidenced and convincing.[58] The importance of their unity to our current undertaking is that by this we know both the *Carmen* was almost certainly sent to both the courts of Louis and his son in Aquitaine, and can therefore be seen to speak to the attitudes that would be uniformly present in Frankish courts.

As a result of its influences' variance, as well as its own complexity, the *Carmen* is a work that defies any easy classification into a single genre. Chiefly, the work is a panegyric. It is, from the preface, intent on praising its addressee, the Emperor Louis, as a capable warrior, a clement and a just ruler, a pious student of the learning of Christ, and 'as if he were the sun, spreads brilliant light everywhere.'[59] He is the ideal Christian, titular *Christianissimus,* Emperor. The panegyric form of the *Carmen* is justified by the author's purpose; release from monastic exile in

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[53] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis*, 125; De Jong, *Penitential State*, 89, citing Ermold, trans. Carey D. Fleiner, Unpublished Work.

[54] Faral, *Poème,* x; Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 162, citing *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France* 6, ed. Martin Bouquet (Paris 1748), Diplomata numbers 16–18, 674–676.

[55] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 168; Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 258; Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 120.

[56] On the manuscript tradition, see, Faral, *Poème,* xxxi-xxxv.

[57] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 161.

[58] Certainly other respected scholars have agreed on this point, notable is Noble's introduction to his translation. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 120; Godman "Louis 'the Pious'", 255.

[59] Ermold's actual stated addressee is Christ, who is addressed in Ermold's prefatory elegy so as to grant his own inadequate efforts divine potency: Ermold, *Elegia Ermoldi,* l. 27, Faral, 2-4; Noble, 127-8.

Strasbourg and to return to his patron's court it Aquitaine. As part of the recent overhaul on the scholarship of Ermold, there have been numerous astute writings on the exact mechanisms by which Ermold's flattery would secure his release. Depreux's work on Ermold's evocation of Louis' *pietas* emphasised its clear connection to mercy; celebrations of his clemency engendered its application to Ermold's own case.[60] Bobyricki's work noted 'the basic assumption of panegyric: the success of an act of praise leads to the success of the petition connected to it.'[61]He showed how the combination of Ermold's appeals for clemency, his paradoxical self-depreciation and self-promotion, and descriptive praise of a mercifully just emperor made his panegyric not only propagandist but normative of Louis' excellence. Ermold's depiction of Louis' clemency thus functioned as an imperative, elsewise risking proving all the virtues Ermold had presented as false.[62] In Godman's words, to place an 'emphasis on the ruler's clemency' in the presence of his court and God became 'a means of eliciting it.' Bobrycki's succinct characterisation of this phenomenon, 'Imperatives flow from description in such a normatively charged atmosphere', is a point to which we shall return.[63]

As a work of panegyric it is of course indebted to the classical form of rhetoric within whose tradition it resides. In both the epistolae and the *Carmen* Ermold writes in elegiac couplets. Among [other features] of his poetry, this is evidence that has been marshalled to see Ermold's poetry as a 'lineal descendent' of Ovid's own exilic poetry, particularly his *Tristia and Epistulae ex Ponto* as a precursor to Ermold's own Epistolae.[64] His wish for the *Carmen* and its description of the Franks to exist in connection to the classical Roman literate past is notable in the Frankish Witchar's deployment of Rome's characters as a means to intimidate the hostile Breton King Murman.[65] Panegyric also had a presence in the Ludovician world aside from Ermold, most notably in the works of Theodulf and Jonas, successive bishops of Orléans.[66] Godman's comprehensive treatment of the text's indebtedness also has Ermold as utilising from that rich Carolingian literary tradition described above. Ermold borrowed from the similarly

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[60] Depreux, "*Pietas*".
[61] Bobrycki treats in far more detail the relevance and power of the classical model of panegyric as used by Ermold: Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 163.
[62] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 172.
[63] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 172.
[64] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 254.
[65] Ermold, *Carmen* III, l. 1397-1407, Faral, 108; Noble, 159.
[66] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious.'" 243.

utilitarian poetry of Moduin, whose writing had the purpose of securing Theodulf of Orléans'
release from banishment, and modelled his representations of the imperial-intellectual
relationships on those of Charlemagne and his court poets.[67]

Ermold's panegyric extends beyond the boundaries of sycophantic laudations. It offers
praise through a subtext of astute political commentary. Although a debate surrounding
Ermold's political acumen persists, it is certainly possible to see Ermold as a knowledgeable
commentator.[68] This commentary can take precedence over narrative, as in the case of book I's
digression to the foundation of Conques, or his self-contradicting reports of what motivated
Pope Stephen IV's visit in book II.[69] These sites of alteration for rhetorical purposes are therefore
targetable sites of interpretation.[70] This commentary was complimentary, presenting pleasing
formulations of challenging political and ideological questions. It is this subtext into which we
shall read to understand what Ermold saw as being 'pleasing' ways of representing the place,
politically and religiously, of Rome and Louis in the *ecclesia*.

Court poets bring us neatly into a discussion of the *Carmen's* audience. Aside from Louis
himself, and as Godman's work on the epistolae make apparent, Pippin, we can be sure of a
courtly audience for the poem. The parade of nobles besieging Barcelona listed in book I or
those in book III's recount of Louis' procession through Frankia have been seen as evidence of
their expected presence at the poem's reading.[71] In naming and praising their (and those Ermold
resourcefully includes as those 'it would take too long to name') deeds, Ermold sought to be in
the good graces of those whose 'council weighed heavily upon Louis' decision for clemency.'[72]
Indeed, it was imperative for Ermold to adroitly write for his audience. Bobrycki's
understanding of Ermold's panegyric in its classical sense points to Quintillian's appreciation

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[67] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 254, 256.

[68] Rutger Kramer, "To Heir is Human: Louis the Pious, Charles the Younger and Pippin of Italy in
Ermoldus Nigellus's *Carmen in Honorem Hludowici"*, Unpublished.

[69] R. Kramer has argued for seeing Conques' foundation as a facet of Louis' defence of the realm, a
spiritual defence to complement book I's predominantly martial. Regarding Ermold's report of Pope
Stephen's motivations, see below, Chapter Five; Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 33.

[70] For the subjection of historical truth to rhetorical ends, see, Anne Latowski, "Foreign Embassies and
Roman Universality in Einhard's Life of Charlemagne", *Florilegium* 22 (January 2005): 29; Noble,
Charlemagne and Louis, 122-123.

[71] Ermold, *Carmen* I, III, l. 308-311, 1522-1559 , Faral, 28, 116-120; Noble, 135, 161-163.

[72] The specifics of the war stories of the magnates Hildebert, William and Luitard are praised by Ermold,
Carmen I, l. 307-402, 407-409, Faral, 34; Noble, 137; De Jong, *Penitential State,* 92.

that the panegyricist must compose for the *audientum mores,* 'customs of the audience', so that, as Quintillain writes, 'the judgment will not be in doubt because it will have preceded the oration.'[73] Moreover, despite a historian's well-earned tendency to beware any works of praise's reliability, because Ermold's audience are often the very same people who writes about, he is held to a rough standard of truth - those whom he writes about must see the truth of themselves in his depiction, elsewise he has composed a farce.[74] In combination, these two ideas mean we can elicit a surprisingly strong measure of truth from Ermold about the beliefs, ideologies and motivations of the Frankish court and king.

So, too, useful to the historian are both Ermold's, and early medieval Latin poetry generally, production of highly allusive texts and Frankish audiences' expectation thereof.[75] The resulting culture of exegetical merit allows for our plumbing for meaning to not be misguided, but in places expected, justifying the close reading that follows the introduction.[76] On a final brief note regarding audience, I find difficulty in seeing Ermold as writing for an audience beyond Frankish courts, particularly a Roman one. Chiefly, and though I'm aware I allow for error in such a broad statement, it is broadly regarded that culture, textual or otherwise flowed out of and not into Rome.[77] Additionally, as we shall see, Ermold does not present Rome as Rome saw itself, offering instead a strongly Frankish sense of their significance and tending towards writing the pope as a tool for the aggrandizement of Louis. Though the evidence is certainly not exhaustive, it is enough that I shall not consider audiences beyond the Frankish.

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[73] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 164.

[74] De Jong, *Penitential State,* 91.

[75] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 167.

[76] Buc, "Ritual and Interpretation", 183.

[77] Such a view is made apparent in the titles of works in the important volume, *Rome Across Time and Space.* Further, one might look to the habitual Frankish transference of Roman works and culture, and the deliberate intent of Rome to inculcate such habits, cf.: Claudia Bolgia, Rosamond Mckitterick, and John Osborne eds., *Rome across Time and Space. Cultural Transmission and the Exchange of Ideas c.500–1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); J. M. H. Smith, "Old Saints, New Cults: Roman Relics in Carolingian Francia", in *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, ed. J. M. H. Smith (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000), 317–39; Caroline Goodson, *The Rome of Pope Paschal I: Papal Power, Urban Renovation, Church Rebuilding and Relic Translation, 817-824* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Kathleen G. Cushing, "Papal Authority and Its Limitations", in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity*, ed. John H. Arnold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Einhard, *Translatio,* trans. B. Wendell, in *Carolingian Civilisation,* 198-246.

The *Carmen* is divided into four books treating different phases in Louis' career. Book I covers Louis' kingship in Aquitaine only briefly; Ermold is open about his inability to tell of Louis' earlier exploits in all their detail.[78] The book concludes with a description of Louis' role in the monastic foundation of Conques. Its focus, however, is on its account of Louis' successful siege of Barcelona in 804. This passage's consistent use of Charlemagne as a foil against which to hold Louis, and the 'old emperor's moral and political preeminence,' is a display of the familial, filial comparative refrain that in part characterises the work.[79] This framing of Louis in his father's image is followed by book II's opening wherein a weakened Charlemagne, confident in his son's ability, crowns Louis his co-emperor; Chekov's gun is thus fired. This is relevant to our current study as Ermold has set up succession, both physically by the emperor's hands and figuratively in his virtues, as the instrumental aspect of the reception empire. The build and release of the literary instrument are both contained within reference to Charlemagne. Book I's worldly and, importantly for our purpose, spiritual comparisons are thus fulfilled, and Louis has all that is required of a leader of the Christians.[80] This is emphasised by Louis' subsequent vigorous renewal of the realm beyond even his father's capabilities. An account of the visit by Pope Stephen IV to Reims in 816 follows, whereupon he confers approbation of Louis' inheritance of the empire by blessing, anointing, and crowning him with a gold crown that Ermold claims once belonged to Constantine.[81] The book closes with a portrayal of Louis' religious reforms of the mid-late 810s, and his founding of the monastery of Inde alongside Benedict of Aniane thus stressing the emperor's *renovatio*. Book III details Louis's attempt at a peaceful resolution of conflict with the Breton king Murman in 824. This attempt to bring the Bretons into Louis' Christian empire is rejected on account of the 'insidious advice' of the king's 'cursed woman' and so Louis is brought to wage a righteous war.[82] The final book, IV, recounts principally the visit and homage of the Danish King Harold, who is baptised alongside his family under the sponsorship of Louis and his own.

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[78] Ermold, *Eglogia Ermoldi*, l. 20-23, Faral, 4; Noble, 128.
[79] Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 260.
[80] For the religiosity of Book I not first apparent, see, Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 260, 263.
[81] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1076-1077, Faral, 84; Noble, 142.
[82] Ermold, *Carmen* III, l. 1423, 1418, Faral, 110; Noble, 160.

Some have seen the subject matters of these books be constrained to illustrating either a secular, martial depiction of Louis or a religious one.[83] Noble's separation of these books into either books of secular or religious description may be warranted, but not helpful.[84] I say this as the *Carmen*'s project is to reflect, despite their distinction in this and wider Frankish texts, their unity under the personage of Louis.[85] The *Carmen*'s Louis is not a warrior who was also Christian, but simply a Christian ruler, whose perfection is not obstructed but proven and informed by his pursuits of war. As Ermold's introduction of Louis in book I, 'He was filled by the Holy Spirit, yet added to his rank by war and faith.'[86] It is Louis' piety that instructs his martial or political decisions.[87] The two are unified in the imagery of Ermold's poetry - he forms many *catervas,* translated by Depreux to *bataillons,* of monks for the service of God.[88] Ermold here is consistent with contemporary representations of ideal Christian rulership. To borrow the language of the Astronomer, only by embodying both the *rex et sacerdos,* can Louis be presented as the ideal Christian Emperor. Ermold shares this sentiment, declaring through Benedict of Aniane that Louis was at once both 'caesar and abbot' of Inde.[89] Therefore, regardless of the task's possibility, an attempt to categorize and distinguish along these lines seems misguided and unhelpful to the historian seeking to understand Louis' idealised representation.

The difficulty of the separation of the religious from the secular is a complex corner of Frankish thought. For this work's understanding of it and the place of the emperor therein, I shall follow De Jong, for whom the interdependence of the secular and religious, informing each other's unity by their separation, is typified in the person of the Emperor, who 'both straddled and transcended this divide.'[90] It was this transcendence that gave him his rightful place as

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[83] Notable before Noble's was Ebenbauer's categorization of the chapters. Both Godman and reviews of his work bring issues with its scholarship to light. See, Godman, "Louis 'the Pious.'" 259; T. M. Andersson, review of *Carmen Historicum: Untersuchungen Zur Historischen Dichtung Im Karolingischen Europa* by Alfred Ebenbauer, *Speculum* 55, no. 1 (1980): 114-16.

[84] He characterises books I and III as martial and secular, and books II and IV as peaceful and religious: Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 124.

[85] De Jong, "Two Republics", 497.

[86] Ermold, *Carmen* I, l. 86-87, Faral, 10; Noble, 129

[87] Depreux, "*Pietas*", 220.

[88] Ibid., 217.

[89] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1249, Faral 96; Noble, 154.

[90] De Jong, "Two Republics", 498.

leader of the *ecclesia*, a term I shall use to help conceptualise what exactly it was that Louis was leading, neither a 'church' in the restricted sense of episcopal matters, nor a 'state.'[91]

 I follow De Jong's description of a 'universal *ecclesia*': A 'universal community of the faithful' (particularly Carolingian faithful), stressing its universality and unity, as a helpful tool with which to conceptualise the Carolingian empire as a polity with its physical and ideological boundaries before its fragmentation in 840. This notion carried with it emphatically that leadership of the *ecclesia* in the imperial hands came with responsibility for the continued correctness of the *cultus divinus*, whose failure would result in the damnation of all Christian souls.[92] Thus Louis' suitability for this position, which Ermold sought to evidence and praise, was of paramount importance.

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[91] The exact complexities and distinctions between religious, secular, episcopal, public, *cultus divinus, res publica*, etc. and their place within Frankish conceptions of themselves are discussed excellently by De Jong, to whom the current work owes much of its basis: see, De Jong, "Two Republics"; id. "Ecclesia"; id., *Penitential State,* esp. 27.

[92] Id., "Two Republics"; id. "*Ecclesia*".

Chapter Four: The Importance of Rome.

What must precede analysis of Ermold's presentation of Rome and its bishops must be an understanding of their relationships with the Carolingian dynasty and the Frankish realm. The context of the Franks and Romans' relationship by the time of the height of Louis' power in the 820s is best begun in his father's reign. The imperial coronation of Christmas Day 800 was of course that famous and shining example of the relationship that had at first developed, and then been forged, between the two powers over the preceding century or so. In Charlemagne's reception of the imperial title and crown at the hands of Pope Leo III after coming to his defence in Rome, they exemplified the relationship that, at its simplest, was a mutually convenient exchange; security for Rome, and religious authority and legitimacy for Aachen.[93]

There existed manifold reasons for both parties to actively pursue and portray a relationship with one another. I shall here echo parts of Noble's seminal *The Republic of St. Peter* to gain an understanding of the political situation in which Ermold's writings are situated.[94] Noble contends that the pontiffs had, throughout the 8th century, increasingly established autonomous control 'with only the slenderest of formal ties to the Carolingian emperors.'[95] Following the decline of Byzantine authority in the Italian peninsula, the nascent state had been militarily and jurisdictionally threatened by Lombard dukes and kings, Saracens, and attempted Byzantine resurgence. Against these threats they had required protection, and thus deliberately pursued a 'friendship' - first formalised between the militarily capable Pippin and Pope Stephen II in 754, which would be tested and engrained on numerous occasions up to 800. Under this aegis, the popes, *pater*, were able to offer their *filius* Charlemagne and his kingdom the power of their prayer.[96] Though contemporary accounts rarely express explicit awareness of the political

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[93] Cf. Noble, *Republic,* esp. 266; Fried, "Papsttum", 251.

[94] Noble, *Republic.*

[95] Ibid., xxiv.

[96] Here I borrow the language of Mayke de Jong, whose work emphasises, although in a monastic context, the central importance of correct prayer to authority and stability in the *ecclesia* in Carolingian rulers' minds. Also borrowed is the language of *pater et filius* extant in the Franco-papal correspondence in the *Codex Carolinus,* and discussed in the work of I. Garipzanov: Noble, *Republic*, 266; Mayke de Jong, "Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer", in *The New Cambridge Medieval History vol. II, c. 750-900,* ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 622-53; *Codex Carolinus*, ed. trans. P. D. King in *Charlemagne: Translated Sources.* (Lambrigg: P. D. King, 1987), 276–307; Ildar H. Garipzanov, "Communication of Authority in Carolingian Titles", *Viator, Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 36 (2005): 76-78; id. *The Symbolic Language of Authority in the Carolingian World c. 751-877.* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), 110-113.

clout the papacy's endorsement of the Carolingian dynasty offered, their frequent reference to it even until the 840s suggests it nonetheless.[97] The papacy, for its part, received a commitment from the Franks to protect their rule in Rome and the *patrimonium*. This secured their (relative) economic and political freedom from Carolingian imposition.[98] This wasn't without precedent, it is to be noted, as Pope Zacharias had laid out in 747 in a letter to the 'bishops, abbots and principes welcoming their willingness, as reported by Pippin, to be *unanimes* and *cooperatores*, and succinctly setting out the meaning of this cooperation as *nobis orantibus et illis bellantibus*, 'with us [i.e. pope and clergy] praying and them [i.e. principes and secular men and warriors] fighting.'[99]

The relationship remained unchallenged until 816.[100] This year's election of the first new pontiff since Charlemagne's death, Stephen IV, required a clarification of the relationship between the powers. Though other reasons are not unreasonably posited, this requirement was likely a significant reason for Stephen's journey to Frankia where he would sign with Louis the *Ludovicianum* (816). This pact clarified precisely the papacy's holdings, its distinctly separate legal position, and confirmed the 'friendship alliance' in the now familiar language of '*amicitia*' - the document would be confirmed again in 817 with the newly elected Paschal I.[101] The next documentary milestone was the *Constitutio Romana* (824). In brief, it was a production necessitated by the violence of a relatively newly factionalised Roman aristocracy (very possibly

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[97] 'and Rome, fine mother of kingdoms, gave place; there the prince of this realm was crowned by the gift of the pope.': Florus of Lyons, *Lament on the Division of the Empire*, l. 62, trans. Peter Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 269.

[98] Incidents of impingement on their rule still occurred. Notable instances include: imperial intervention on behalf of the pope following violence in 799, 815, and 824; the constant struggle over territories between Ravenna and Rome; or the Abbey of Farfa and its frequent appearance in texts as it struggled against Roman attempts to exact from it taxation and land rights to the point of incurring Lothar of Italy's intervention in 823, or imperial envoys' in 829, who pronounced against the papal right to do so: *RFA, s.a.* 799, 823, Scholz, 77-78, 112; Noble, *Republic*, 282; Marios Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy: Local Society, Italian Politics and the Abbey of Farfa, C.700–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Raymond Davis, *The Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes* (Liber Pontificalis) *Translated with an Introduction and Commentary by Raymond Davis*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), 45.

[99] Janet L. Nelson, *King and Emperor: A New Life of Charlemagne* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2019) 100.

[100] Accepting some slight but unimportant in the long term examples of change; i.e. Leo III's execution on charges of treason those who had conspired against him that Charlemagne, had he been alive, would have presumably halted: Raymond Davis, *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes* (Liber Pontificalis) *Translated with an Introduction and Commentary by Raymond Davis* (2nd ed., Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 171.

[101] Noble, *Republic*, 300.

along pro and anti imperial lines), who in vying for the papal position had committed violent crimes against one another. The prime suspect and victor in the turbulence, Pope Paschal, had himself along with his men purged themselves by oath of any wrongdoing before imperial justice could be brought to bear.[102] The third such similar incident in 23 years, something needed to be done. To remedy this, its provisions, Noble argues, essentially preserved the standings of the *Ludovicianum*, with a few changes to establish closer imperial control, but not dominion, in Rome.[103] The changes enabled for imperial judicial proceedings to be brought to bear against those who interfered in the elections of the pope. They required the pope take an oath confirming the Franco-papal alliance in the presence of an imperial legate prior to his coronation, and his subjects to take an ordinary Frankish subject's oath.[104] While Noble is keen to highlight the continued autonomy and legal distinction of the potiff, confirmed through the *Constitutio*'s provision that Roman loyalty was sworn first to the Pope and then Emperor, the extent of Roman independence remains a contentious issue in historiography.[105] The most important result of the *Constitutio* for our current purpose is that it allowed the emperor a legal condition on which to pin his intervention in the case of that factional violence that had instigated the document in the first place.[106] This detail will later be relevant.

The most important symbol of the relationship, and the most pertinent to our current study, is the practice of the coronations and otherwise confirmation of Frankish kings and emperors by papal hands. The act of popes crowning and/or anointing Carolingians had, since 754, been a crucial element in establishing the legitimacy of Frankish kingship and since 800, empire. Its initial conception in 754 had had Pope Stephen II journey across the Alps to '[confirm] Peppin as king by holy anointing' at St-Denis, Paris.[107] This had the effect, put simply, of a spiritual endorsement of Carolingian authority - confirming and endowing Pippin's

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[102] Ibid, 309-312.

[103] Arguments whether the *Constitutio* was a continuation of the *Ludovicianum*'s policy or a departure from it are not uniform, *cf:* Costembeys, *Power and Patronage;* Goodson, *Pope Paschal I*, 33; Davis, *Ninth-Century Popes*, 36.

[104] Noble, *Republic*, 308-320.

[105] Cf: Noble, *Republic*, 318; Fried, "Papsttum", esp. 251-252.

[106] Noble, *Republic*, 320.

[107] For a discussion of anointing and coronation rituals generally, see Janet Nelson, "The Lord's Anointed and the People's Choice: Carolingian Royal Ritual," in *The Frankish World, 750-900* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), esp. 108-120; *RFA, s.a.* 754, Scholz, 40.

kingship with an immutable spiritual authority received from the successor of Peter.[108]

Additionally, irrespective of the competency of arguments warning against the 'magic' of ritual, the ritual of 754 was powerfully communicative for audiences chiefly in Frankia, Italy and Byzantium of the now-allied powers' cooperation and mutual interests.[109]

The imperial coronation of Christmas day 800 was an occasion of more marked significance.[110] This coronation contained the same expressions of religiously sanctioned legitimacy and a confirmation of the *amicitia* that 751 did. Conference of the imperial title, however, added another layer that was synthesised with those already present to create something greater than the sum of its parts. Coronation by the bishops of Rome within that city's walls was a continuation of the antique imperial ideology, and thus a deliberate impartation of classical Roman charisma[111] onto the now imperial throne of Frankia.[112] M. de Jong is characteristically lucid when she writes, 'the Rome-orientedness of the Carolingians was rooted in a post-Roman Western tradition that had continued to cherish Rome as the centre and locus of a pristine Christian past.'[113] In particular, coronation was an evocation of the

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[108] Even though I disagree with his mono-causal assessment, this is visible to J. Fried in our own Ermold, 'Ja, die ganze Krönung erscheint bei Ermold als geistliche Gabe für die kaiserliche Schutzleistung'; Fried, "Papsttum", 251.

[109] Cf: Christina Pössel, "The Magic of Early Medieval Ritual." *Early Medieval Europe* 17, no. 2 (2009): 111–25.

[110] The subject of imperial coronation is another exceptionally complex topic, only the fringes of which are here engaged with. For a survey of the coronation of 800, the various contemporary perspectives upon it, and its multiplicitous implications across audiences and commentators, see Janet L. Nelson, "Why Are There So Many Different Accounts of Charlemagne's Imperial Coronation?" in *Courts, Elites, and Gendered Power in the Early Middle Ages: Charlemagne and Others,* ed. Janet L. Nelson (Aldershot: Routledge, 2007): XII.

[111] The term 'charisma' is one that has a complex history at the intersectionality of history and anthropology. For the present work, it shall be deployed without any great specificity in its relation to this study. Should clarity be further required in cases where its use is unclear, it shall be used in E. Shils' broadly Weberian sense, who stressed the symbolic power of individuals and their (and its) relation to the active centres of social order, and that we look to the rites and images (of which Ermold is the latter and depicts the former) by which charisma is constructed and disseminated to achieve a full understanding of the polysemy of the term and what phenomenon it describes. Shils' work in this sense is summarised by Geertz in, Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology,* 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2000): 121-124.

[112] Hageman, M., "Between the Imperial and the Sacred: The Gesture of Coronation in Carolingian and Ottonian Images." in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. Marco Mostert, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 152.

[113] De Jong, "Ecclesia", 118.

Constantinian ideal, the paradigmatic Roman imperial and Christian ruler.[114] The Frankish crown received and was incorporated into the already complex understanding of the Roman past, itself inextricably bound to Christianity.[115] This is not, we must note, to reject the strong sense 'Frankishness' created around the imperial title, the *Annales Laureshamenses* conferred that Charlemagne was elevated ''*iustum eis* [i.e. the assembled Franks] *esse videbatur ut ipse cum deo adiutorio et universo christiano populo peteure ipsum nomen haberet.*'[116] Incorporation of these themes became part of the Carolingian every-day literacy; in 826-827, bishop Venerius of Grado addressed a letter to Louis as *totius orbis orthodoxi terra marique nostro domino,* exploiting the classical Roman expressions of *terra marique* and *orbis terrarum,* and Christianising the latter.[117]

Combined with the religiosity offered by coronation at papal hands inside St. Peter's, the imperial title was a heady mixture of the Frankish new, Roman old, religious, and secular. Though the result was a cultural understanding impossible to summarise succinctly, perhaps the closest might be W. Ullman's assertion that, '[t]he emperor thus created obtained the dignity of a universal ruler.'[118] This fed inevitably into the complex and infinitely self-referential nexus of the rhetoric of Rome in Frankia, explored below. The *Carmen* was well suited to the Frankish purpose. The written culture in which Ermold worked was particularly adept at conveying this multivalence. Early medieval Latin poetry's proclivity for intensely allusive style, referencing the Christian and Roman past, 'allowed its authors to pile up meaning upon meaning in a manner useful to an ideology that hoped to do the same.'[119]

With an understanding of these matters, I return to the source at hand, and how we might adduce the relevance of the *Carmen* to its time of composition, not that of which it writes.

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[114] Made evident by Ermold's invention of the crown with which Louis is crowned being Constantine's; Ermoldus, *Carmen* II, l. 1076, Faral, 84; Noble, 152.

[115] For a more complete consideration of the connections between the ideological Roman and Frankish empires, cf: Roland Prien, "The Copy of an Empire? Charlemagne, the Carolingian Renaissance and Early-Medieval Perception of Late Antiquity", in *The Transformative Power of the Copy: A Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Approach,* eds., C. Forberg and P. Stockhammer (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2017), 309-329; Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", 69.

[116] For this theme in Ermold, see, De Jong, *Penitential State*, 93; Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", 70.

[117] Garipzanov, *Language of Authority*, 115.

[118] Walter Ullman, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen & Co., 1962), 121.

[119] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 167.

At the end of one of Louis' lengthy exhortations to his assembled host of pope and *potentes* comes a section that is partially lost. I quote in full the remaining text:

> 'Then Caesar added a few more words beyond these, which the holy priest accepted with devotion: "If your rights persist, you who bear responsibility for Peter's government, and if in the role that has been assigned to you, you feed his flock [section missing] …; if otherwise, I warn you most seriously, let me know: I will right away act on your words easily. As my ancestors served Peter's honour, so I will serve it, prelate, for the love of God."'[120]

This is the *Carmen*'s account of the 816 agreement between Louis and Stephen, the *Ludovicianum.* But the text is not discussing the relationship established in 816; it is instead a proxy to celebrate the more recent relationship established in the *Constitutio Romana* (824)*.* Discussion of the more chronologically proximate *Constitutio* is veiled in an account of the 816 *Ludovicianum* as its commentary on politics will be more appropriate to the '*audientum mores'* of those for whom the petition of release is intended. If, in any case, Ermold wished to tell of the *Constitutio* itself, that would have brought with it the ugly baggage of the events that preceded it, doing violence to the picture of Christian harmony for which Ermold strove. Further, the papal visit that birthed the *Ludovicianum* lends itself to Ermold's structure, allowing for a commentary of Roman politics and of Louis' second coronation at once, the importance of which we have already stated. Additionally, as will be noted, the coronation has structural reciprocity with his initial coronation in 813 detailed earlier in book II.

It is clear too form what is said that Ermold is concerned with the contemporary relationship. Ermold has Louis' closing remark be his concern, emphasised in repetition, "the one who sits on Peter's summit should love justice."[121] It is difficult to see this fixation on justice as owing to anything other than the Roman violence of 824 that necessitated *Constitutio,* and that document's provisions against a repetition of imperial jurisdictional impotence that followed. Through this, Ermold assures his audience - and helpfully therefore the historian - of the relevance of his discussion to the contemporary imperial-pontifical relationship.

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[120] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1032-1039, Faral, 80; Noble 151.
[121] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1051-1052, Faral, 82; Noble, 151.

Chapter Five: The Carolingian Rome of Ideal.

Rome occupies a complex position in relation to rhetoric of unity, religiosity, and authority in the Carolingian world. Yitzhak Hen, through a study of the Frankish adoption of 'Romanised' liturgy, outlined the difference between Carolingian rhetoric and reality in relation to Rome. In his words concerning Charlemagne's reform, 'The concern with *correctio* on the one hand, and the preoccupation with authority on the other, gave rise to what I would call a 'rhetoric of reform' that… emphasized correctness, uniformity, and compliance with Rome.'[122] In his argument, the rhetorical significance of unity in the *ecclesia,* and especially (and as signified by) unity with Rome, in Carolingian writing ignores the real continued Frankish practice of their own liturgy. Despite this reality, the rhetoric of the superiority of the Roman inevitably became enmeshed with the political ideologies and developing ideas of Carolingian Christian kingship.[123] He notes the use of Rome as a symbol of unity and authority, and its crucial role in the creation and dissemination of a political and religious Frankish identity. '[U]sing Rome as a marker of authority, orthodoxy, and unity was not a superficial literary ornament, but rather a complex rhetorical device, deeply rooted in Carolingian intellectual, political, and religious thought.'[124] Its importance in rhetoric, however, belied what the Carolingians allowed to be reality. To illustrate the gap between rhetoric and reality, Hen gave the example of Pippin and Louis' confirmations as kings of Italy and Aquitaine respectively (781) and *divisio regnorum* (806) as 'concessions to local aspirations and fears of succession' while yet still Carolingian authors 'mitigated these concessions and continued to propagate the image of political unity.'[125] The same logic is applied to the request and celebration of Roman religious texts, whilst diversifying and diluting them in practice. The celebration of Roman significance, then, at once complimented and undermined Carolingian authority over the *ecclesia.*

Despite Hen's focus on the development of this ideology in the latter two decades of Charlemagne's rule, it shall be seen how it is under these conceptions that Ermold is labouring, thus caught in the gap between a Carolingian ideal Rome, present in his and wider rhetoric, and

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[122] Yitzhak Hen, "The Romanization of the Frankish liturgy: Ideal, Reality and the Rhetoric of Reform", in *Rome across Time and Space. Cultural Transmission and the Exchange of Ideas c.500–1400,* eds., Bolgia, C., R. McKitterick, and J. Osborne (Cambridge, 2011), 120.

[123] Ibid., 120.

[124] Ibid., 123.

[125] Ibid., 122.

the Rome Carolngians allowed to exist in reality.[126] To be clear, 'ideal Rome' is a concept I believe to exist within and be propagated by Caroligian rhetoric. Thus references to 'rhetoric' are concerned with the wider project, and 'ideal Rome' to the idea of a Rome and pope of equal charisma, authority and importance in the *ecclesia* as Louis. Though the debate over whether Louis' reigned over a time of continuity or change is ongoing, M. De Jong's first chapter of *The Penitential State*'s in its summary of his reign is most apt for a concise summary of his rule and its direction.[127] Moreover, the general motions of the current work shall evidence the position of Ermold at a time of change, if a nascent one, in both the Frankish and papal conceptions of the papacy's role in the ecclesia.[128] Where Hen wrote of the use of the 'rhetoric of reform' to declare and celebrate the importance of Rome through unity whilst suppressing a real laxity of the same, I see the same pattern in Ermold's rhetoric of the ideal papacy generally, concentrated in the occasion of coronation, and less concerned (though not unconcerned) with unity. Where the Frankish practice of contradictory behaviour and ideals is afforded the intellectual space necessary to do so by its size, the *Carmen* is a work that must set down such conflicting truths aside one another. Close enough, helpfully, for analysis. The contradictions about Rome's place in Carolingian thought visible within the *Carmen,* therefore, are evidential of Carolingian thought and the product of an irreconcilable duo; the idealised Rome and Rome and Louis in reality. What was born from this was the rhetorical and literary device of interdependence. It is proper not to attempt to justify its contradictions, but rather to accept them and understand their cause.

At times, the *Carmen* distinctly appears to conform to representations of Rome as the authoritative *'orbis... caput',* the most significant religious authority.[129] This is exemplary of contemporary Carolingian and Frankish rhetoric. Two particularly evocative episodes allow us to examine this. Later these episodes will be examined again to show how they contravene their

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[126] Indeed, the same concerns over unity Hen points to in Charlemagne's reign were likely tangible to Franks in the years 826-8 with the ascendant Judith and Charles of the mid-late 820s casting a long shadow over the dictates of the Ordinatio Imperii. That Ermold was aware of Judith's increasing importance is suggested in his book IV's closing appeal to her, not her husbands, mercy: Ermold, *Carmen* IV, 2644-2689, 200; Noble, 186.
[127] De Jong, *Penitential State*, 1-58.
[128] Explored at the conclusion of Chapter Six.
[129] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1080, Faral, 84; Noble, 512.

own stated intent and evince the gap between ideal and real Rome The request of the so-called *Hadrianum,* the authentic sacramentary of Gregory the Great, and the composition of its Roman-praising introduction by Benedict of Aniane in 790 is an example of the kind of spiritual significance Rome was granted. More recently and more complexly, there is the Paris Synod (825). Convened at Louis' behest, the council declared in opposition to Rome on the question of images which it was summoned to address. Nevertheless, they steadfastly declared they were defending "Roman" catholicism.[130] The privileging of the notion of "Roman" over even Rome itself speaks not only to the separability of the Rome of reality from its Carolingian rhetorical application, but to the central importance of this ideal Rome to their rhetoric. 'Rome' was a powerful byword by which they could convey the orthodoxy, correctness and authority of their position. The synodists' hesitancy in committing to a correction of the pope is palpable.[131] Their production addresses the pope as "*primus in hominibus arbiter*" and declares the pope bears a special name "*in toto orbe terrarum*", namely, "*universalis papa.*"[132] Bishops Jonas of Orléans and Jesse of Sens were instructed that upon delivery of the pronouncement to Pope Eugene II they should exude respect and patience.[133] So too in poetry was Rome celebrated. In Moduin's *Egloga,* praise of Aachen and its ruler is constructed by a metaphor where the emperor is Palaemon, the Roman-adopted Heracles, looking out from lofty *nova Roma.*[134] Should Ermold transgress this notion of incontrovertible Roman importance (if not primacy) by denigrating the pontiff, the city embodied, he would fly in the face of contemporary ideology. Not only would this likely run against his own belief, but would doubtless harm his petition. As Bobrycki summarises, 'The reality of elite power sent the literate petitioner to the textual arbiters of mental reality (chronicles, histories, letters, administrative documents and, especially for Ermold, poetry) to frame his/her own case on and against which he/she modelled his/ her petition.'[135]

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[130] Michael Edward Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300-850* (Washington, D.C.; Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 313.
[131] Fried, "Papsttum", 262.
[132] Ullmann, *Papal Government,* 127.
[133] De Jong, *Penitential State,* 38.
[134] Ermold draws heavily from Moduin's poetry. Note Moduin's use of '*Aurae Roma*' copied directly by Ermold; Moduin, *Egloga,* l. 24-27, trans. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 192; Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 730, Faral, 58; Noble 144; Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 253.
[135] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus"*, 173.

And so this ideal Rome, *venerandus*, also appears on the pages of the *Carmen* as it itself is a work of rhetoric. Though here we begin with a reading against the presentation of Louis as "the king of Christians", as unrivalled leader of the *ecclesia,* I would stress this is not the overwhelming sentiment of the text.[136] However, Ermold is clearly keen to stress the significance of Rome and its bishop. There are written a few occasions on which Louis promises to "serve Peter's honor", confirming Rome's "highest honor", and Ermold records Stephen's account of God's decree that "Rome would stand at the world's head."[137] The most important indication of the significance of the pope in rhetoric, however, is in Louis' second coronation in book II, at Pope Stephen IV's hands in Reims 816. This is preceded by his coronation at the hands of his father in 813. Understanding Ermold's narrative between these two crownings, and what subsequent actions they justify, is critical in understanding the purpose of the pope and coronation in both rhetoric and reality. I shall here partially summarise Ermold's narrative and its character.

Charlemagne crowns his son his co-emperor and successor in 813. The withered emperor states that the pleasing child's succession is justified by his renewal "of the rights of churches", and his warrior's prowess Ermold narrates in book I; the "destruction of the Moors", sending back "a king, weapons, prisoners and great trophies."[138] Einhard attests his accession is wanted by all Franks, greater and lesser, the church and Christ, and that he alone is capable of maintaining the rights of Charlemagne's empire 'by arms and skill and faith.'[139] The divinity of his accession is a point belaboured by Charlemagne's clustered claims immediately prior to coronation: that 'the government of my kingdom… God himself assigned to me', 'Christ gave me my father's kingdom' and most emphatically, "Receive, son, with Christ Himself conferring it, my crown, and receive with it the symbol of empire too."[140] Thus Louis' accession to the

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[136] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1030, Faral, 80; Noble, 150.

[137] It is to be noted Stephen's Latin, "*Qui Romae censes orbis habere caput*" (*Carmen* II, l. 1081, Faral, 84; Noble, 152), is derivative of the formulaic expression of Rome as the *caput mundi.* This, to my mind, in its lack of creativity and conformation to accepted titular norms impinges on any view of this as extensive praise for Rome on the part of Ermold: *Carmen* II, l. 1038, 1068 Faral, *Poème,* 82, 84; Noble, 151, 152.

[138] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 674-678, Faral, 54; Noble, 143.

[139] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 697, Faral, 54; Noble, 143.

[140] And once more again elsewhere as he begins his speech to Stephen, "*En mihi cunctipotens miseratus regna paterna / Cessit habere Deus et decus omne simul.*" (Ermold, *Carmen* II, 944-945, Faral, 74; Noble, 149). This was likely a faithful representation of the theology of the man who styled himself from 801, 'Charles most serene augustus, crowned by God, great peacemaking emperor governing the Roman empire and

empire is due to both his secular and religious excellence; the two ingredients of the ideal Christian ruler. He is, and this is key, made here already *christianissimus,* total leader of the *ecclesia*. Ermold's Louis as ideal Christian ruler here evidenced is the end to which he strives throughout the work. Following Louis' reception of the crown and empire, he is adored by the realm's populus, nobles, and priests too, and quickly sets about executing his father's will. What follows are his first actions as emperor, all in worldly governance. He distributed riches and weapons to church and needy. Prisoners are released, and exiles recalled. He sends *missi* to address abuses and corruption, releasing the oppressed from servitude. He confirms charters to maintain his subjects' rights.[141] In Charlemagne's empire, 'abuses grew up everywhere like thick weeds, but you, Louis, cut them down right away.'[142] Ermold's closing remarks in this section speak to his intention of emphasising the worldliness of what just transpired: 'he orders, arms, and nourishes the empire he inherited.'[143] In this construction, with his actions following on the heels of his coronation, the act of coronation is depicted as a mandate for the renovation and thus stabilisation of the worldly empire. This section is then concluded, followed by the pope's arrival.

Immediately following Louis coronation by the pontiff, Ermold recounts Louis' efforts in spiritual and particularly monastic reform, foundation, and provision. Louis goes about a renewal of his realms, sending clerical or morally exemplary envoys throughout his kingdom to examine the state of religion in Frankia. They are implored to examine both the customs and the resources of the church.[144] Upon consultation with Benedict of Aniane, Louis sends out the man's disciples as exemplary teachers to the monastics of the realm, and together they found the monastery of Inde, the new Abbot Benedict naming his emperor "*Caesar, et abba simul.*"[145] Naming the person and place most identifiable with Louis' religious reforms would be a powerful reminder of the emperor's significant contribution to *correctio,* monastic and

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also by God's mercy king of the Franks and of the Lombards.': Nelson, *King and Emperor,* 407; Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 711, 715, 722, Faral, 56; Noble, 143, 144.

[141] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 808-847, Faral, 64-66; Noble, 146-147.

[142] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 840-841, Faral, 66; Noble 147.

[143] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 847, Faral, 66; Noble, 147.

[144] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1138-1183, Faral, 88-92; Noble, 153-154.

[145] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1184-1249, Faral, 92-96; Noble, 154-155.

otherwise.[146] This is the direct but spiritual equivalent of his actions after his coronation in 813; the *missi* become monks, the injustice becomes clerical malpractice, and the oppressed become the canonical flock. The obvious implication of Ermold's evident parallelling of the two coronations is that coronation by popes did indeed transfer religious authority, as had 813 imperial.[147]

So we appear to have parallel but contradictory presentations; one in which the pope does confer some kind of authority, and one in which the divine reception of empire renders such a conference unnecessary, where coronation must instead be regarded as offering some kind of complement to existing authority. This contradiction, I argue, is a symptom of the contradiction of the Carolingian Rome of ideal and the Carolingian Rome of reality with which Ermold grapples. The ideal Rome does indeed confer a religious legitimacy and authority, its place at the world's and Christianity's head gives it the unique position to do so. Simultaneously, the Rome of reality cannot be seen as doing so. Power, *potentia* and *potestas*, were, after all, as a key tenet of Carolingian politics demanded, derived from God.[148] Ermold did not escape this contradiction and as we shall see continued as his panegyric expected - with a presentation of the Rome of reality and its subordinate position in the Carolingian ideology.

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[146] Indeed, Benedict and his role in the Carolingian production of the *Hadrianum* (and indeed the *Hadrianum*'s request itself) embodies well the paradox of Rome and its pope's significance in ideology, explored in Chapter Six.

[147] To recognise and forestall potential arguments to the contrary, I note it may be argued that Ermold was only aware that others might see this argument in the *Carmen*, without intending it himself, hence his assertions of the divinity of the imperial tite as his 'real' point, his parallel more accidentally required by chronology. However, I find it difficult to ignore such an obvious parallel between the coronations and the acts of the Emperor that follow. If we are to accept the rehabilitated competency of Ermold as a poet that now makes up a convincing scholarly consensus, it seems implausible he would write himself into a corner in this sense, unable to avoid the presentation he so clearly creates. Accepting the chronology of Louis' monastic reform and the foundation of Inde following his coronation in 816, it was still not necessary for Ermold to employ this parallel construction. He might have chosen to play less upon this foundation, and place instead more emphasis on his monastic foundation of Conques as a way to speak of his learned monastic reform. It may well have proven difficult for Ermold to find an occasion fitting of panegyric which exemplified Louis' reform prior to 816; our evidence of the same, as Kramer's *Rethinking Authority* attests, is at best spotty. I am no Carolingian poet, and so shall limit my suggestions of alternative constructions to these to simply illustrate its current form was not imperative. Suffice it to say, as Noble writes, Ermold is capable of subjecting his writing to omission or alteration, 'but not because of either ignorance or incompetence.': Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 122; Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 53-121.

[148] Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", 58.

Chapter Six: The Carolingian Rome of Reality.

So it is Ermold's *Carmen* contains within it acknowledgements of the significance of the papacy, necessitated by rhetorical standards. Focused primarily around the coronation, the benefits rub off on Louis. Ermold's work is representative of the place of coronation, and what this tells of pontifical importance, in Frankish ideology and rhetoric. This interdependence is explored below. Telling, however, is Ermold's caution in celebrating the papacy beyond this. In Carolingian rhetoric, the papacy was afforded its self-proclaimed importance, derived from the Petrine commission and some centuries of developed self-aggrandising doctrine, for the sake of the two powers' unity, amongst other things.[149] Franks accepted this, and themselves promoted an image of cooperation in the leadership of the *ecclesia.* Frankish reality was different, and Ermold's imperial audience demanded he conform to what I shall call the 'reality' of the relationship. This 'reality' was the Carolingian view of themselves that maintained their and their emperor's control of the Christians, the *ecclesia,* in a total, unrivalled sense.[150] This distance between ideal and reality has been observed by Janet Nelson. She has written that Carolingian theorists used the Church as a model of ordered society; in this sense, the king's job was within the Church. However, 'in practical politics, the Church was a part of the realm...'[151] Ermold's trouble was in their incompatibility. This was another ideal he could not compromise, made more consequential by his audience and purpose. He must write 'between' the two, in the gap between the Carolingian ideal of Rome and what they allowed its reality to be. Using oblique references to his point, allusions or obfuscations to achieve this, Ermold skirts the ideological inconsistencies of the Carolingians with surprising success.

To be clear, Carolingian claims to exercise leadership across the spiritual and worldly, often at the expense of the papacy's own claim, were not limited to their writings. Ermold's assertion of Louis' leadership of the *ecclesia* is a mirror of the Carolingian reality. Some events

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[149] For the Frankish awareness of papal claims through things such as the newly apparent Donation of Constantine, cf: Fried "Papsttum", 259-261; Hen, "Rhetoric and Reality"; n. 156.

[150] Total in both a secular and ecclesiastical, interdependent, sense. Their relationship and distinction is characteristically paradoxical, 'they cohere because they are distinct.' See Mayke De Jong, "The Two Republics: *Ecclesia* and the Public Domain in the Carolingian World", in *Italy and Early Medieval Europe: Papers for Chris Wickham,* eds., Ross Balzaretti, Julia Barrow, and Patricia Skinner (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018): 488, 497.

[151] Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", 60.

outside of the *Carmen*'s remit illustrate this reality well. Such an example can be found in Louis' skirting of papal involvement in matters within Frankia in which the pope certainly had the right to intervene. The troublesome replacement of Leidrad with Agobard to the Archbishopric of Lyon in 816 had left the former in possession of the pallium and thus an expected point of papal activity in Frankia. Yet Louis avoided Stephen IV's intervention despite the pontiff's presence in Frankia that year.[152] A return to our earlier examples is here appropriate. The aforementioned Paris synod, having been prompted by an embassy to Aachen from Byzantine Emperor's Michael II and Theophilus seeking rough Frankish accord with their iconoclastic position, pronounced in knowing opposition to Rome on the divisive issue of iconoclasm.[153] Despite the Synod's intent to 'schonen sie die päpstliche Autorität aufs hochste', Louis was taking an architectural role in a movement toward the unification in common orthodoxy of western and eastern Christendom - an impressive example of the emperor's attempted religious leadership.[154] In a particularly evocative illustration of the distance between rhetoric and reality, Benedict of Aniane's introduction and revision to the *Hadrianum* retained older Frankish Gallican rites, despite the intention of the document's request being to inculcate Frankish unity with Roman liturgy.[155] Indeed, in the light of the *Carmen*'s use of Benedict of Aniane as a man who embodies Louis' efforts in *correctio,* this pro-Carolingian sense the *Carmen* is felt even more. This is not to say the papacy was not hazarding its own claims to agency and primacy, for it certainly was, but it is this Louis, decisive and authoritative in action, who appears on the pages of the *Carmen.*[156]

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[152] Fried, "Papsttum", 252.

[153] On the healthy connections no doubt known to Louis between the papacy and Greek iconophiles such as Theodore of Studios, see: Goodson, "Paschal I", 189; Davis, *Ninth-Century Popes,* 37.

[154] Moore also attests to the religious significance of the emperor, saying the bishops present in 825 had been emboldened in their opposition to the pope due to their 'participation in a project of orthodox universalism under imperial leadership.': Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom,* 311-312; Fried, "Papsttum", 261.

[155] While much debate has taken place over the practical reality of the intent to replace Frankish liturgy, this was at least the Carolingian intent rhetorically: Hen, "Rhetoric of Reform", 118; Depreux, "Empereur", 895-896; Fried, "Papsttum", 237.

[156] Example of papal assertions include the co-opting of the thoroughly Frankish mission of Ebbo of Reims northwards by the papacy, Paschal I's novel wielding of the threat of excommunication of the Frankish abbot of Fulda Hrabanus Maurus, Eugene II's refusal to accept the conclusions of Paris 825, or the Roman Synod of 826 convened on papal authority with the absence of Frankish representatives. It is supposed around this time that the Donation of Constantine, contained within the Pseudo-Isidorian decretals, began to be propagated more widely. Caroline Goodson has also detailed the methods and results of Pope Paschal I's programmatic intention to claim his universal supremacy, over even emperors, within Rome: Thomas F. X. Noble. "The Place in Papal History of the Roman Synod of 826." *Church History* 45-4

Though we now move to the subject of Carolingian political control in Rome and its patrimonies, we should note that contests over its extent are plenty.[157] It would be ill-advised to use Ermold's utilitarian panegyric poem to attempt to decipher the complexities of this unresolved question better treated elsewhere.[158] What Ermold does assert, however, is imperial right of intervention (principally judicial) in Rome in accordance with the *Constitutio Romana,* in accordance with our summary in chapter three. That he does tells us firstly of his intention to assert specific imperial temporal rights within Rome. This speaks to Louis' leadership of the entire *ecclesia.* Also, as we shall point out, a familiarity with the *Constitutio* and its circumstance gives Ermold special capacity to suggest imperial right without inferring a loss of papal authority, a tactic of negative representation that allows him to avoid colliding with the contradictions of Carolingian ideology.

I return to the passage quoted in chapter four to examine the ways in which Ermold does this.

'Then Caesar added a few more words beyond these, which the holy priest accepted with devotion: "If your rights persist, you who bear responsibility for Peter's government, and if in the role that has been assigned to you, you feed his flock [section missing] …; if otherwise, I warn you most seriously, let me know: I will right away act on your words easily. As my ancestors served Peter's honour, so I will serve it, prelate, for the love of God."''[159]

(1976): ;438-444; Goodson, "Paschal I"; Johannes Fried, Donation of Constantine *and* Constitutum Constantini: *The Misinterpretation of a Fiction and its Original Meaning. With a contribution by Wolfram Brandes: "The Satraps of Constantine"* (Berlin; New York; Walter de Gruyter, 2007), esp. 88-109.

[157] Cf: Noble, *Republic,* 313-322; Fried, "Papsttum", 256; Depreux, "Empereur", 898-900; J.N.D. Kelly, "Eugene II", *The Oxford Dictionary of the Popes,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199295814.001.0001/acref-9780199295814-e-111, accessed 01/03/2020.

[158] As Fried of the document, 'Der Höhepunkt fränkischer Herrschaft über Rom ist erreicht.' cf: Fried, "Papsttum", 255-256; Noble, *Republic,* 299-324.

[159] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1032-1039, Faral, 80; Noble 151.

This quotation's beginning operates as a break in the text, coming at the end of the most spiritual section of Louis' address, by sentence-length switch from Louis' voice to Ermold's before returning to Louis'. This structural and accompanying tonal change reflect a thematic one. We switch from spiritual matters to wordly. We switch from Ermold having Louis prove his religious learning to Ermold's representation of the legal position of Rome, and the emperor's right of intervention there. The change suggests that Ermold expressly intended this as political commentary, and we can therefore read this more closely for such. Ermold's description of the extent of the delicate balance of Louis' overlordship of Rome is in equally delicate language, avoiding a depiction of a tyrannical emperor. Instead, Louis is a benevolent defender of the faith, whilst Ermold still manifests a threatening yet accurate portrayal of imperial rights in Rome. Of course the missing text frustrates our efforts to judge this passage fully, but Louis' threat of intervention (there seems to be deliberate positive/negative ambiguity here) in the case of an unknown event or instance is telling. The amicable tone of Louis to Stephen so far, coupled with our knowledge of past Roman violence, leads us to the not overly speculative conclusion that the missing text outlined some hypothetical instance where the pope is threatened, as in 799, 815 and 824, and Louis promises helpful intervention on the bishop's behalf. Thus the right of imperial intervention on behalf of the pope is established. However, the sword of imperial intervention could cut both ways.[160] A right to intervene in opposition to the Roman pontiff is implicitly communicated. A knowing audience familiar with the necessity of Frankish intervention in the conspiracy and Carolingian-antagonising murder that necessitated the *Constitutio* would have been receptive to this message.[161] In addition, we can note that Louis promises to defend the honour of St. Peter, a deliberately ambiguous formation reflecting the already proven imperial strategy for maintaining pontifical honour that could declare both for and against the incumbent pope.

Communicating imperial right in Rome through paradoxical depictions of the Franks as supplicants had precedent in other Frankish writing, too. The letter of Louis and Lothaire to Paschal on the Paris synod (825)'s verdict assured the pontiff of Frankish *auxilium.* This promise

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[160] A similar tactic is noted by Godman, 'Ermoldus was keenly aware that the ambiguity he was obliged to cultivate could be a two-edged weapon': Godman, "Louis 'the Pious'", 270.

[161] Carolingian-antagonising in the sense that it was very likely a murder of members of 'pro-imperial' (as much as we can suppose) faction of Romans: Noble, *Republic,* 309.

of protection, as an explicit affirmation of the protection offered to the papacy, reminded Rome of its dependence on what Noble termed 'St. Peter's Strong Right Arm.'[162]

Ermold also makes clear the reliance of papal independence on the imperial whim. After the issuance of the *Ludovicianum,* as we have seen Louis reiterates "no more than was said already, the one who sits on Peter's summit should love justice."[163] The format of this text, where Louis returns to the matter of justice in Rome after his confirmation of its rights, makes the independence and special dignity afforded to Peter's see clearly dependent on Louis' right, as though a parent reminding a just reprimanded child of the lesson learned. The conditionality of papal control of Rome is highlighted in the numerous cases of 'if' - it is 'if' papal rights persist, they are not guaranteed to do so. The implication is clear. While Louis may confirm the rights of St. Peter, they are his to confirm and to sit in judgment over as he had done in 824. The *Carmen* maintains its depiction of imperial rights over Rome - the Rome of Carolingian reality. Its indirect allusion to the issue of Roman justice known to cause strife between the powers functions as a both a reminder and justification for this. Moreover, it does not contravene the idea of unity and cooperation that the rhetoric breeds and requires of an ideal papacy.

The diplomacy Ermold describes begs another question; was Stephen's visit constructed as a foreign embassy? The relevance of this question is made apparent by Anne Latowski's discussion of the *topoi* of embassies as a means by which to communicate the subjugation of the visiting party's polity under the imperial authority at times of peace or without conflict.[164] The classical Latin device was in contemporary use, and present in works both eminently available known to influence Ermold; Suetonious, Virgil, Eutropius, Florus of Lyons, Einhard, and Paul the Deacon to name names.[165] It has a more certain and Christianised parallel in book IV's

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[162] Depreux, "Empereur", 900, citing: Ottorino Bertolini, "Osservazioni sulla '*Constitutio romana*' e sul '*sacramentum cleri et populi romani*' dell'824", *Studi medioevali in onore di A. De Stefano*, Palermo 1956): 43-78 (reprised in: O. Bertolini, *Scritti scelti di storia medioevale* (Livorno, 1968): 736; Noble, *Republic,* 61.

[163] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1050-1052, Faral, 82; Noble, 151.

[164] A lengthier treatment of this comparison, and its relevance to Einhard and other contemporary Franks seems deserved, but unfortunately will only be sufficiently here treated to aid in our current argument: Latowski, "Foreign Embassies", 30-31.

[165] Although some may subscribe to the possibility of Einhard's work being available only after 828, as in the footsteps of F. L. Ganshof, this seems extremely unlikely. For a complete discussion of Einhard and previous secondary literature including Ganshof and a resulting conclusion of a date c. 817, *Cf.:* Innes and McKitterick, "The Writing of History", in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation,* ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 203-208.

subjugation of the Danes by their embassy and baptism, but this does not discount a more subtle application in book II, and further suggests Ermold's readiness to use the *topoi*. Indeed, in Noble's construction, the books share the structural similarity of being the two books of 'peace.'[166] A wish to portray the papal embassy as distinct from the coronation would explain the separation of the political discussion from the spiritual described above, and an ambassadorial function of the visit would smooth the transition from Louis' worldly ordering of empire that precedes the papal visit.[167] Indeed, the visit of Queen of Sheba to Solomon by which Stephen describes his own visit is easily seen as a similar blend of devout pilgrimage and state embassy. I find it an interesting point that, to my attention, no scholar has yet drawn a connection between the Queen's 'many difficult questions' and the questions Stephen himself has resolved in Ermold's description of the *Ludovicianum*.[168] Latowski writes, 'The commonplace… provides a rhetorical device designed to praise the emperor for his ability to elicit the willing submission of distant nations through the power of his worldwide reputation. The foreign embassies that come seeking friendship alliance do so, in most cases, with gifts in hand, often sumptuous gifts and exotic beasts representing their native lands.' Certainly, Stephen supplies Louis with gifts.[169] But the more important point is that this rhetorical device allowed Ermold to suggest a subjugation, but also evade such a denigration of papal dignity by coupling the *topoi* with his adroit constructions. The example of Louis' rights of intervention being presented as defence, or his insecure sounding assertion that '[Stephen] received a hundred times more gifts than he had brought from fortified Rome.'[170]

By presenting Louis' rights in Rome in a kind of photographic negative, Ermold achieves two things. Firstly, he maintains the tonal consistency of his panegyric required by rhetoric. Louis is praised as a pious supporter of his Christian *amicus.* He does not threaten the pope, but defends him. Ermold adheres to a rhetorically orthodox representation of the basic tenant of the trans-Alpine relationship. Direct criticism of a friendly papacy would subject to a more troubled reception at court - a risky strategy for a freedom-seeking panegyrist. A presentation that

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[166] Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis,* 123.
[167] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 808-847, Faral, 64-66; Noble, 146-147.
[168] 1 Kings, 10:1, *New Jerusalem Bible,* https://www.bibliacatolica.com.br/en/new-jerusalem-bible/1-kings/10/, accessed 25/01/2020.
[169] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1108-1109, Faral, 86; Noble, 153.
[170] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1120, Faral, 86; Noble, 153.

openly suggested the possibility of intervention against the pope would carry with it the implication of papal deficiency. Such an accusation would contravene the rhetorical imperative of the ideal Rome under which Ermold is writing. Additionally, it would undermine the benefits that Louis would gain from the support of an unblemished religious authority in this text, both in Stephen's use as a mouthpiece for Ermold's praise and in the conference of authority from ideal Rome by coronation.[171] Secondly, his presentation of the Rome of reality is equally visible and coherent to those courtiers as we've seen who were capable of discerning it.[172]

Unfortunately for the cleanliness of his presentation, the complexity of Ermold's task would not allow for him to skirt the issue forever. At some point, it was necessary for him to rely upon that peculiar human capacity for 'doublethink'; that is to say, holding two opposing truths simultaneously as self-evident.[173] So it is we have the *Carmen*'s struggle to write of equality between pope and *princeps,* but also its unnoquivacated depiction of Louis' excellence in leadership of the Church.

The *Carmen* is from its first sentence contradictory about whether it was Louis or Pope Stephen IV who decided upon the latter's visit. In the first instance, it is Louis who orders the pope, ironically his 'patron', from Rome to Reims. Later, this is contradicted when Ermold has the emperor ask Stephen why he elected to visit the Franks.[174] The former of these representations of the dynamic is preferred throughout the text. Louis will later claim he summoned, *acerssio,* the Pope from Rome, who will elsewhere be summoned to court, 'accepting the royal command with pleasure'.[175] It seems likely Ermold only wrote of the pope's

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[171] This is explored further in Chapter Six.
[172] There is good reason to believe most of the audience would have understood what I believe Ermold is attempting to put forward, P. Buc makes an excellent case for the exegetical excellency of Carolingians, beyond even its normal extent. For the reception and importance of polysemy, *cf:* Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 167, citing: Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge 1989), 229; Buc "Ritual and Interpretation".
[173] The term 'doublethink' here borrowed from George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1949).
[174] The pope as ordered, and volunteering respectively: Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 848-849, 888-889, Faral, 66, 70; Noble, 147, 148.
[175] There may be a point here about the contradiction being of relative unimportance in a medium Ermold is expecting to be delivered as a performative speech where such things may be overlooked, but this is overshadowed by the introductory acrostic, clearly expecting a close regard of the manuscript also: Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1054, 934-935, Faral, 82, 74; Noble, 151, 149. (*N.B.* Noble's English translation renders

decision to visit to allow for his meaningful insertion of the Queen of Sheba as Stephen's *exempla*.[176] The narrative carries us just prior to Stephen's arrival, where Louis 'took charge and arranged, prepared, and arrayed the clergy, people, and senate,' a neat metaphor for his ordering of the judicial, religious and political life of the realm as well as linguistically stressing the empire's romanity - common refrains of the *Carmen*.[177] Louis stands in the centre of the assembly, his radiant piety justifying this position even more so than his glittering clothing. Ermold writes, 'as soon as one caught sight of the other, the pious men rushed to the embrace.'[178] In this pluralised, unified description, their equality in action informs Ermold's audience of their equality in piety and religious authority.[179] Kissing one another's eyes, lips, heads, breasts and necks they entwine their hands and enter together the church to send prayers up to God.[180] Depicted in their unity and prayer is a model of Christian empire.[181] The tension evident in this depiction of equality prefaced by a powerful image of Louis command of his clergy, is a far cry from Thegan's *Gesta Hludovici*'s account of Louis prostrating himself before Stephen, 'saluting' and blessing the pontiff.[182] Clearly, though not gratuitous, the *Carmen* is an account that gives greater eminence to Louis than its contemporaries. Moreover, we can conclude that it would be simplistic to assume Stephen's self-declared role as "suppliant" in the *Carmen* is a matter of formulaic papal humility.[183]

It continues with Louis then addressing the pope as the one 'who in the apostolic office feeds the flock of Peter', the first of numerous references to an office whose function as

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qua te accersire rogavi as, 'why I have asked you to come', lacking the imperative meaning of the Latin. Compare, for example, Faral's 'Voilá pour quelle raison, vénérable prélat, je t'ai appelé': Faral, *Poème*, 83).

[176] For the importance of *exempla* generally and this one specifically in Ermold, see, Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 165-166; Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 892-899, Faral, 68-70; Noble, 148.

[177] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 858-859, Faral, 68; Noble, 147.

[178] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 870, Faral, 68; Noble, 147-8.

[179] For the link in Ermold between piety and all aspects of authority, see, Depreux, "*Pietas*".

[180] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 874-881, Faral, 68-70; Noble, 147-8.

[181] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 165.

[182] It should be noted Thegan's account being likely composed c. 835-838 is more influenced by the deteriorated position of the imperial dignity following the crises of the early 830s, even particularly at the hands of papal intervention in imperial affairs at the Field of Lies. This evidences the development of papal significance, nascent in Ermold's time, that the rhetoric of papal salience Ermold embodies may incubate. Thegan, *The Deeds of Emperor Louis*, trans. Thomas F. X. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and The Astronomer*, (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 201.

[183] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 917, Faral, 72; Noble, 148.

shepherd of Christians Louis assumes.[184] Explaining his visit, Ermold has Stephen invoke the example of the Old Testament's Queen of Sheba, who came to Solomon to seek and verify his wisdom and prosperity.[185] Stephen here is an excellent example of being a mouthpiece of Ermold's panegyric, declaring

> '[H]ow much aid you bring, like a father, to the people of God, and how much your teaching is renowned throughout the world, and how you exceed your ancestors in skill and faith. Absolutely nothing could break my will to view your accomplishments for myself. No word could tell me so much about your kind deeds as I have seen with my own eyes.'[186]

Such sycophantic verbiage defines the pope's tone throughout their meeting. This biblical allusion puts in action what Ermold puts in words - it is Stephen who 'dares' to come to Louis as 'suppliant.'

Following a sleepless night of conversation between the two, Louis demonstrates his knowledge and thus suitability for leadership of the *ecclesia* as he adopts the role of a church leader, vigorously admonishing his bishops and the pope.[187] He sounds out 'golden words' to the pope, as if addressing him in a sermon.[188]

> *"Haud teneant, cedant dona maligna procul.*
> *Si quoque jure gregem Domini nos pascimus almum,*
> *Quem mihi sive tibi, pastor amate, dedit,*
> *Corrigimus pravos, donamus munere justos,*
> *Et facimus populum jura paterna sequi,*

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[184] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 887, Faral, 70; Noble, 148.

[185] 1 Kings, 10, *New Jerusalem Bible*.

[186] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 896-903, Faral 72; Noble, 148.

[187] Beyond even the general link between wisdom and piety present in Carolingian thought, knowledge, learning, *dogma*, in Ermold is explicitly indicative of excellence before Christ: Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 169.

[188] Kramer, Rutger, "Teaching Emperors: Transcending the Boundaries of Carolingian Monastic Communities", in *Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia: Comparative Approaches*, ed. Eirik Hovden, Christina Lutter, and Walter Pohl (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2016), 317.

> *Tum Deus excelsus nobis populoque sequaci*
>> *Praestabit miserans regna beata poli*
> *Atque in praesenti nostrum servabit honorem:*
>> *Infestos hostes hinc procul ire facit.*
> *Nos simus clero exemplum seu norma popelli,*
>> *Justitiam doceat praesul uturque suos.*"[189]

They are to work together as *nos*, and the *pastor amate* is made syntactically and figuratively subordinate. Louis adopts all the ministries of the religious leader of the church, rolling them into his secular, judicial leadership, becoming leader of, and *exempla* to, both laymen and clergy.[190] An attempt to claim equality and unity between them is evident, but it is apparent who is in control here. Ermold evidences his awareness that his presentation of Louis' leadership ought not to obstruct the ideal of unity. One can almost feel Ermold through Louis catch himself, careful not to promote one at the expense of the other, "Listen to what I have to say nobles, and you too, most holy pontiff, receive this good advice all at once and in a spirit of unity."[191]

The ideal of imperial leadership continues in an extended speech wherein Louis gives a sermon on the reintroduction of Christ and christianity to the world; a speech, Faral admits, 'mieux faite, semble-t-il, pour être placée dans la bouche du pape, présent à la cérémonie, que dans celle de l'empereur.'[192] After an embattled Christ's triumph over hell, the world now overflows with Christians, and the "troop of unbelievers, who reject the teaching of the Lord, flee, driven away by the Christian spear." In the context of Louis' martial successes of *Carmen* book I and later III, it is implied Louis himself is that spear, the spear which appeared after the 'victor [Christ] rose to heaven." Thus Louis continues the ascended Christ's work.[193] He is,

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[189] I deviate here from my standard practice and render this in Latin to make appropriate the examination of language and syntax that follows: Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 961-971, Faral, 76; "If we rightly feed the tender flock that the Lord has given to me, and you too, beloved pastor, if we correct the wicked and reward the just, if we make people follow their ancestral laws, then God on high will take mercy on us and on the people who follow us, vouchsafe us the kingdom of heaven, maintain our honor in the present, and keep the attacks of our enemies far away. Let us be an example for the clergy and a standard for the people; let both of us teach justice to our people."; Noble, 149.

[190] It should also be noted that the heavy focus on unity in Carolingian ritual texts so often present is symbolic of the presence and accord of the Holy Spirit: Buc, "Ritual and Interpretation", 200.

[191] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 941-942, Faral 74; Noble, 149.

[192] Faral, *Poème,* xviii.

[193] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1002-1017, Faral, 78-80; Noble, 150.

Stephen declares, "both father and spiritual leader, sustainer and protector of his people."[194] Ermold may suggest equality, but contained within the emperor's action is a demonstration of universal imperial leadership.

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[194] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1068, Faral, 84; Noble, 152.

Chapter Seven: Interdependence, Self-reliance, and Circularity.

So the question must be asked then, what motivates Ermold's caution in his presentation of Louis' leadership of the Christian people?[195] For guidance, we should return to Ermold's purpose; he was writing a panegyric to celebrate Louis. We must therefore conclude that his inclusion of the papacy and its rhetorically-necessitated celebration must serve this end. This brings us to their interdependence.

There exists, as others have seen, a paradox of papal power, an interdependence of imperial and papal authority.[196] As Carolingian rhetoric compliments the pope as the highest Christian authority, the ideal pope, they receive back through (most significantly) the rhetoric of coronation the authority their compliments bestow. Dealing as we are with a written text, I shall largely avoid the real event which is described.[197] Accounts of coronation like Ermold's are key in distributing both the ideal of papal significance and the charisma emperor received through coronation because of this significance. Therefore, the Carolingian promotion of ideal Rome both creates and sustains this interdependence in a kind of feedback loop. But it was also a literary and rhetorical technique. Due to its circularity, writing of this 'feedback loop' suspended answers to the question of ultimate authority. Its circularity allows its authors to avoid the music stopping on this merry-go-round of power and forcing them to make clear to their audience who is sitting on the highest horse. This suited Ermold's panegyric, as it enabled him to appease both imperatives of papal and imperial position in one neat package.

Furthermore, we are enlightened when considering the pope's exhortations of Louis' piety, wisdom, and qualities otherwise demonstrating his suitability for leadership of the *ecclesia*.[198] These are most effective for Ermold, for it is ultimately for his freedom that Stephen's laudations are composed, when coming from one 'powerful in his goodness.'[199] In this

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[195] The association and complementarity of the two complex institutions at hand is of course its own extensive topic of discussion that the present work can treat only deficiently in its brevity.

[196] Cushing, "Papal Authority", esp. 529

[197] Equally as circularly, just as this event created the rhetoric that surrounded it by its own existence demonstrating its importance, so too did the rhetoric of papal importance create the circumstances in which the event was beneficial. For discussions on the suitability of treating coronation only as a 'ritual in text', ignoring the reality, or otherwise, *cf:* Buc, "Ritual and Interpretation"; id. "Political Ritual: Medieval and Modern Interpretations", in *Die Aktualität des Mittelalters*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz (Bochum: D. Winkler Verlag, 2000), 255-272; Pössel, "Magic".

[198] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 892-925, 1074-1097, Faral 72, 86; Noble, 148, 152.

[199] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 869, Faral, 68; Noble, 147.

particular instance Stephen therefore functions as an effective mouthpiece for Ermold. In writing around the issue dodging the question of primacy in accordance with his audience's *mores*, Ermold makes apparent the Carolingian ideological project of upholding these simultaneous truths, and the difficulties inherent in doing so. Further, it will be explored by what methods the Carolingians navigated and thereby sustained such contradictions in their literature.

The pope's appearance in the *Carmen* must be seen in the context of the most likely purpose of the visit's inclusion, Louis' coronation.[200] It is here that the chapter three's discussion of the significance of papal coronation is relevant. Ermold was not looking to cheapen Louis' inheritance of all that association with Constantine, Rome, and the papacy offered; quite the opposite. As a result of its value to the crown, Ermold would have been keen to preserve a favourable presentation of the ceremony, and its most significant officiant, the pope. Upholding the charisma of the pope upheld in turn suitable reverence for the ceremony and what it conferred upon the emperor. Ermold demonstrates that he is acutely aware of the individual stems of significance that grow together into the synthetic whole of the Frankish ideology highlighted earlier. Elsewhere, in book III, Ermold's description of Ingelheim's Roman decoration deliberately inculcates continuity between the Franks and the ancient caesars, or Witchtar's threats to the Breton King Murman constructed around Louis' threefold description as 'Caesar of the world, glory of the Franks, ornament of Christians.'[201] Ermold's description of a *Caesar* who, *togatus*, addressed his *senatum* speaks to this.[202] Indeed Rosamond McKitterick evidences in great detail a wider, concerted Frankish effort to marry themselves into what she

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[200] At least, this is the reason (ignoring its own dubious claim that Stephen visited simply to see the wonders of Louis and his kingdom) the *Carmen* suggests, in it being the climactic scene of the visit; Ermold, *Carmen* II, 892-925, Faral, 72-74; Noble, 148

[201] For the importance of Ingelheim and palaces as places for the dissemination of the royal imperial ideal and authority, cf.: Stuart Airlie, "The Palace of Memory: The Carolingian Court as Political Centre", in *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe,* ed. Sarah Rees Jones, Richard Marks, A.J. Minnis (York:York Medieval Press, 2000): 1-20; H. Hoffmann, "Die aachener Theodorichstatue", in *Das Erste Jahrtausend* ed. V.H Elbern (Dusseldorf: Schwann, 1962), 318–35; D. W. Rollason, *The Power of Place: Rulers and Their Palaces, Landscapes, Cities, and Holy Places* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 273-289; Janet L. Nelson, "Aachen as a Place of Power", in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages,* ed. Mayke de Jong, Frans Theuws (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2001), 217-242; Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus."* 167.

[202] This semantic field persists throughout the work: Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 934-936, Faral, 74; Noble 148.

terms Rome's 'universal history.'[203] Most significantly, the idiosyncrasy of Ermold's claim to the crown's Constantinian origin communicates what he considers to be the reason for arguing for papal significance; it's ability to bestow this synthesis of Christian and Roman empire onto the Frankish.[204] In communicating these, Ermold betrays that the value of coronation by popes and its communication of multi-valent authority was still felt strongly in 826-8. Moreover, the *Carmen*'s account only sacralised the image of papal coronation further. Truly, then, the maintained position of Rome in rhetoric was not simply for tradition. Despite how much emperors may wish for the entirety of their authority to come from God, they had created a rhetorical machine that had empowered the popes to confer something upon them. The lengths Ermold goes to to promote the papacy's significance can therefore be seen as an attempt to avoid undermining this position as the authoritative transferee of these qualities. The promotion of the papacy's significance in religion and Romanity, whilst engaging in the inverse for their judicial rights, is telling of Ermold's understanding that it is the untarnished religiosity of the very Roman pontiff that his account (and its non-fictional source) values. This is a perfect example of the force that papal and imperial interdependence exerts upon the *Carmen,* and how through accounts of coronation the paradoxical ideal was enshrined and reflected back upon Carolingian minds.

Additionally, and this is perhaps the most simple aspect of their interdependence, with the pontiff's majesty upheld he remains a suitable mouthpiece for Ermold's own praise of Louis, the fundamental purpose of his text. A similar technique is employed in Book I wherein Zado, the Moorish commander of Barcelona '*rexerat ingeniis*', who, for Duke William, '*Miratur Maurum, sed magis ingenium.*'[205] It is no coincidence that from this capable man's mouth comes the effusive praise of the Franks as 'a remarkable people… powerful and well armed', subjugators of Rome by right of their well-ordered society, and whose very name means 'ferocity.'[206] Similarly after having been rehabilitated into a suitable spokesperson through baptism and a hunt, King Harold declares Louis to be 'distinguished, patient, brave, and pious,

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[203] Rosamond McKitterick, Lecture on Roman Authority in Early Medieval Europe, 2017 Foxcroft Lecture, *State Library Victoria,* https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/view-discuss/rosamond-mckitterick-roman-authority-early-medieval-europe, accessed 13/02/20.

[204] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1076, Faral, 84; Noble, 152; Ullmann, *Papal Government,* 146.

[205] Ermold, *Carmen* I, l. 350-351, 527, Faral, 30, 42; Noble, 136, 139.

[206] Ermold, *Carmen* I, l. 379, Faral, 32; Noble, 136.

armed yet merciful, all by God's gift.'[207] Obviously Ermold had more to motivate his sacralising

and ennobling of the papacy than he did for Moors or Danes, but it remains that the

'flawed-petitioner' whose struggle to maintain the paradoxical balance of self-promotion and

self-repression may mar his praise, had in deploying Harold and Zado's flattery an additional

and less troublesome flower with which to decorate his bouquet of praise.[208]

In his final, pithy, words before his coronation Louis justifies and summarises their

meeting: "*haec est causa, sacer, qua te accersire rogavi / Adjutor fortis, esto, beate, mihi.*"[209] I express

this in its original Latin for the word '*adjutor*' significant for its appearance in contemporary

Carolingian documents, and the nuance of its meaning. A document intended to clear up the

confusio over the place and function of the *potentes* of Louis' empire, his *Admonitio ad omnes regni*

ordines (825), De Jong writes, 'is the most forceful statement of a Carolingian ruler as to how the

ecclesiastical orders… should be included, along with the counts, in the emperor's ministry. The

respective ministries of the *ordines* who were his helpers (*adiutores*) were perceived as deriving

from Louis's supreme royal ministry and complimenting it. This capitulary certainly addresses

the issue of hierarchy, but it is also about the ideal mechanisms of shared responsibility.'[210]

Concerned with delineating the correct ministry of men within the *ecclesia* and their

complementarity to emperor, this document allows us to consider Ermold's possibly

unconscious representation of the correct ministry of the papacy, and how it is to properly

reflect upon the emperor. With *adjutor,* Ermold makes the implicit suggestion of Louis'

emphatic closing statement that Stephen's ministry is both derived from and complimentary to

the royal ministry. The word carried with it cooperative, non-hierarchical associations, and yet

there can be no doubt Ermold intended Louis' extended speech which the quotation just given

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[207] For the significance of the hunt in Ermold and poetry and its accreditation of its participants, cf*:* Eric J. Goldberg, "Louis the Pious and the Hunt." *Speculum* 88, no. 3 (2013): 613-43; Peter Godman, "The Poetic Hunt: From Saint Martin to Charlemagne's Heir", in *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious*, ed. Peter Godman, Roger Collins (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1990), 565–589; Ermold, *Carmen* IV, l. 2458-2459, Faral, 186; Noble, 182;

[208] The language here borrowed from, Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*".

[209] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1054-1055, Faral, 82; Noble, 151.

[210] It should be noted that here I am not claiming the pope is included in this document's audience: De Jong, "*Ecclesia*", 123.

concludes to speak of his place as leader of the *ecclesia*.[211] Ermold's language occupies a deliberately hazy linguistic area, communicating the cooperative and harmonious complementarity of the offices without tarnishing his overarching ideological position of imperial spiritual leadership communicated by the speech. I am cautious to note that this is not a claim on Ermold's or my own behalf that the Roman bishop was equal to his Frankish counterparts. We must, as its audience certainly did, see this suggestion in tandem with the special privilege of the Roman bishop present in Ermold and wider Frankish thought. Thus in the combination of the term *adjutor* and our author's writing, reflecting Frankish thought, the word becomes an elegant summary of the interdependence of imperial and papal authority. It both evaded the question of primacy, and indirectly answered it; perhaps just suggesting whose horse would be highest in the unfortunate event the music did stop.

If the basing of this argument upon a single term is insufficient, Ermold gladly supplies us with more evidence. As Ermold has Louis don his literary pallium, papal importance finds much of its recognition in the textual niceties of 'most blessed' and the like. He is simply another of Louis' bishops or magnates. Stephen is asked to bring counsel to Louis: 'bring me your assistance, you servants, and you too, holy priest, who will serve with me in my government.' The pontiff is placed in the position of a bishop and counsellor, an assistant in government, not a religious authority equal to Louis. Indeed, though counsel and the importance of counsellors are central themes of the text, it is made clear that by the upward nature of Carolingian counsel those who are summoned to give it are the Emperor's juniors.[212] It is important to stress this need not be considered an acrimonious attack; Louis' advisors are given an idiosyncratically respected role in the *Carmen*.[213] Note, for instance, Depreaux's

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[211] *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*, ed. J. F. Niermeyer, (Leiden: Brill) s.v. *adjutor, adjutorium*, through https://archive.org/details/JanFrederikNiermeyerMediaeLatinitatisLexicobOk.org/page/n5/mode/2up, accessed 13/03/2020.

[212] For examples of councils and counsel in Ermold, see n. 214.

[213] When compared to roughly contemporary Ludovician biography, Thegan's *Gesta Hludovici*, which historians have noted time and again condemningly remarked that Louis 'trusted his advisors more than he should have.' The important caveat, of course, is that Thegan was writing amidst the empire's faltering state, and his work was therefore more apt to look for someone to blame. Further, '*adjuotores*' discussed just below, as a 'mainstay of the Frankish polity' and therefore not a term of derision is discussed by De Jong: Thegan, *The Deeds of Emperor Louis*, trans. Noble, 203; De Jong, "*Ecclesia*", 123.

analysis of Count William's description of Louis as '*rector*'; in this instance a laudation of the emperor's willingness to heed his war council.[214]

But Ermold is once again cautious in his presentation, making his point without stating it. Keen to temper any indication of papal equality, it would be noted by the *Carmen*'s audience that despite the cooperativity of the language and advisory position, it is Louis who demands the pontiff's assistance, it is he who orders, places, and seats his magnates. This is a refrain of the *Carmen*, where quality kingship and the power therein is demonstrated by summoning and heeding counsellors.[215] Elsewhere, perhaps a little less cautiously, he has Stephen implore that Louis' dynasty is to rule the Franks "and potent Rome too", or by having the pope glad for the privileges Louis affords him, 'joyful for the respect shown him and the gift to Peter.'[216] By the necessity of panegyric and more crucially of the doctrine of Carolingian emperorship, he must serve and be seen to serve as something of a bishop of special significance, a *beatus et fortis adjutor*.[217]

A return to the term '*adjutor*' allows us to mine the passage for information about Frankish thought beyond Ermold. Whether Ermold had in mind the precise terminology of the *Admonitio* (825) as he scribed the word *adjutor* is academic. His adoption of this court production's vocabulary tells us of his familiarity with the linguistic *milieu* of court. In the *Carmen*, the term's terminal position in Louis' speech and its deliberate, concise, and emphatic construction can only have invited close attention from its audience. Its poetic character demands deeper consideration of its message. Moreover, the regulatory power the court and *ecclesia* exercised upon language made the term more of a safe site of interpretation - its meaning would not likely be misinterpreted.[218] Indeed, in the narrow margin of error the

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[214] Depreaux "*Pietas*", 212-214.

[215] Ermold, *Carmen* I, II, III, l. 146-217, 682-697, 1254-1271, Faral, 16-20, 54, 98; Noble, 131-132, 143, 156.

[216] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1096, 1070-1071, Faral 86, 84; Noble, 152.

[217] This conceptualisation is reflected in the work of Kathline Cushing, 'the pope was thus effectively another bishop even if he held certain jurisdictional privileges of convoking general or universal councils (in theory at least), creating new dioceses and especially archbishoprics, judging and translating bishops and presiding over imperial coronations.'; Cushing. "Papal Authority", 520.

[218] Kramer notes the regulation of information and language by the *ecclesia* and Carolingian court should not be overstated, however, I believe this, as a case that fulfills the requirement of 'a concerted effort on the part of the court and its emperor...to properly cater to their 'model readers' and their actual audience' that the point may stand when considered with the evidence above: Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 45.

difficulties of Frankish ideology permitted the *Carmen,* ensuring precise understanding was a requirement for Ermold. Despite the mutability of language, this seems enough to justify such an inflexible interpretation of its meaning. What Ermold can only have assumed to communicate by *'adjutor'* to his courtly audience was what they themselves had meant by their use of it in 825. Therefore, we can conclude the ideology of cooperative ministries in consonance with imperial leadership of the *ecclesia* can be drawn out to be seen as accepted and supported by the Frankish court.[219]

His familiarity with courtly language is potentially relevant to studies into Ermold's station, but also it is indicative of his membership and use of the existing 'discourse community' of the Frankish court.[220] In engaging in a 'discourse community', our author was able to reap the benefit of its functions. Further, signposting his membership and engagement with the social community of the court, consciously or otherwise, identified him as part of this social group, enhancing his legitimacy as a speaker and thus the strength of his argument. It tells us of his familiarity with the parlance of the court and his intention to deploy this linguistic familiarity to communicate the aforementioned sentiments both meaningfully and forcefully to his courtly audience.

Kathleen Cushing on the limitations and paradox of papal authority writes, 'what the pope could claim was almost never what he could impress or enforce.'[221] Perhaps a suitable understanding of the position of the papacy from a Frankish perspective would stand similarly: what the Carolingians claimed for the popes (and in an interdependent, utilitarian sense,

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[219] The other feature present in De Jong's analysis of the *Admonitio* (825) that using it requires I address, that episcopal ministry is derived from the emperor, is a thorny issue in reference to the papacy, and one around which Ermold exercises characteristic caution. Ermold's only reference to papal ministry as deriving from God is the rather weak, "You [God], who decreed that Rome should stand at the world's head." Comparatively, as we've seen (n. 139), the *Carmen* asserts clearly the divine origin of Louis' place as emperor. The examples given in n. 139 do not presume to denigrate the papacy's position, but nor do they celebrate it. So whilst it would be a gross error to say that, to Franks, papal authority was derived from the imperial - indeed, Louis even when given opportunity never required imperial confirmation of papal elections - there is in Ermold a conspicuous absence of the divinely ordained authority of the pope. Thus we can conclude that while he certainly did not believe in the derivation of papal authority from imperial, it was likely a subject that just did not fit well into the depiction of Louis' leadership of the *ecclesia* with which he was concerned: Ermold, *Carmen II,* l. 1080, Faral, 80; Noble, 152; Noble, *Republic, 313.*

[220] Kramer, *Rethinking Authority*, 45.

[221] Cushing, "Papal Authority", 529.

themselves) was almost never what they could allow them to impress or enforce, precluded by political and ideological realities.

I now depart from direct analysis of Ermold to take a more theoretical, functionalist view of the place of this interdependence in his work to briefly elucidate the effect of the *Carmen.* Bobrycki, as noted in chapter two, has made clear the capacity of Ermold's active, performative engagement with the normative claims of the Carolingians to affect and reshape ideology.[222] Viewed through this lens, the rhetorical techniques that Ermold uses to avoid answering questions of primacy become something more. Such a sustained effort as the *Carmen*'s in upholding contradiction is evidence of Ermold's exceptional literary ability, and of the learning of the Carolingian court more generally, but as it is a text that is received by the court and designed to appeal to them, it becomes an ideology being taught. This is, in part, how patterns of ideology are created.

The most significant of these rhetorical techniques is the use of the ideology of the interdependence of the pope and emperor. This interdependence was an ideological feature present before Ermold as a way to celebrate both emperor and pope at once. However, in writing of it, he brings it under his control, where it becomes not ideology but a device of rhetoric and of literature that Ermold is using to avoid the contradictions of real and ideal Rome. Under his duress the device is malleable. Ermold is able to add pathways of thought by which one can avoid the contradictions of Carolingian ideology and instead arrive at a cohesive ideological whole that recognises both ideal and real Rome without conflict. This is done for instance by drawing upon existing ideological frameworks to aid in understanding, as with the term *adjutor*, to demonstrate possible paths of thought. Moreover, beyond modifying it, he can justify it by the very act of creating a work that models without contradiction a presentation of both ideal and real Rome. Ermold would have likely seen the task of justifying and proving the propriety of an ideology whose contradictions he was aware of as a good opportunity, given he was celebrating Louis and the Carolingian elite to whom the ideology belonged.[223] The justice of such an ideology and the methods by which one can arrive at its conclusion proved and

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[222] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 173.

[223] One can see Ermold's awareness of the contradictions in the very project of avoiding and obfuscating them this work has highlighted.

augmented, it is ready to be served back to its audience. As it is heard and internalised by its audience, it becomes once more an ideology, one of renewed vigour that Ermold's text is teaching to his audience. Through rehearsal is found cogency. It is closer now to a cohesive, teachable ideology that begins to unify the seemingly un-unifiable strands of Carolingian ideology on which it is built.

But, as ever paradoxically with Ermold, there is a contradiction to be made apparent. Despite the relative ability of Ermold to control interpretation, texts have a life beyond their author's intention.[224] Ermold was brought, both by rhetorical standards and the interdependence of the papal and imperial powers, to offer at least some celebration of the Roman Bishops. In an account of coronation and regardless of his intention, he went some way to cementing that the ritual's and its officiant's significance in the minds of his audience. Despite assertions of imperial leadership, the rehearsal of papal salience, and the elites' expected agreement to it implicit by Ermold's reliance on it, was certainly heard too. The normative capacity of written texts as we've seen is a notion that bears heavily on the *Carmen*.[225] The beginning of chapter four noted that the *Carmen* was composed at a time of shifting relations between Rome and Aachen; it must be said this is not a novel claim.[226] Indeed, this was a time when the popes had already begun to zealously engage in a programme of self-promotion; possibly consciously inserting themselves (and Rome, too, in Louis' son Lothar's case) into the coronation ceremony.[227] Certainly, the Franks demonstrated a remarkable willingness to accept the primacy of the successor of Peter.[228] Against this background it is not hard to see how a celebration of the imperial reception of the crown might also convey to those increasingly disposed to hear it a celebration of the papal granting of the crown. In this way,

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[224] Buc, "Ritual and Interpretation", esp. 194-196.

[225] Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", 164.

[226] Cf. Fried, "Papsttum"; Noble, *Republic*, 325-337; Garipzanov, *Language of Authority*, 110.

[227] Though this point is certainly open to contest, both the respected older scholarship of W. Ullmann and the equally respected but eminently fresh work of J. Nelson point to the worthiness of its consideration. cf.: Ullmann, *Papal Government*, 145-147; Nelson, *King and Emperor*, 71.

[228] Some had come to call themselves in the 820s the pope's 'spiritual and most devoted sons.' De Jong writes that by the beginning of Louis' son and successor Charles the Bald's reign (840) there existed a 'vociferous minority' of churchmen for whom St. Peter was the highest authority who helped build the basis for papal authority: Garipzanov, *Language of Identity*, 111; De Jong, "Two Republics", 498. Fried, Donation of Constantine, esp. 88-109.

Ermold through writing of the coronation promoted through the interdependence itself, and by extension the papacy. He contributed to the very circularity he attempted to suggest against.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions.

Upon my own first reading of Ermold's *Carmen in Honorem Hludowici,* I recall being struck by the flagrancy of Ermold's self-contradiction in the matter of whether it was command or curiosity that brought Stephen to Frankia. Only upon closer inspection, as is often the way with texts of the past, was I struck by the extent not of what was obvious but what was not. Buried within are complex devices, allusions, structural comparisons and careful constructions that allow Ermold to achieve a level of great sophistication that his aims required. As suggested in our introduction, and outlined at the onset of chapter five, Ermold is a writer torn between Carolingian ideals and Carolingian reality. The rhetorical standard and the requirements of panegyric entrench the necessity of each of these respectively, deepening the conflict, and creating a heightened sense of paradox by their juxtaposition. The relevance of the quotation from Nelson given in this work's introduction is here elucidated. The *Carmen* and the ways in which it navigates the difficulties inherent in Carolingian ideology is one of those *ad hoc* responses to the 'perceived discrepancies between ideals and realities', that embodied, and importantly affected, political thought.[229]

Ermold had to maintain his place in the continuity of the celebration of Rome. This tradition had been long established, and would continue long after the *Carmen*. Presentation of an idealised Rome was not only an adherence to orthodox practice, but central to the promotion Louis as the Imperial Christian leader of the *ecclesia.* Just as unity in liturgy, Ermold's commitment doctrinal and rhetorical orthodoxy about Rome's position as the *caput mundi*, and a presentation of Louis' promotion of it, was essential to celebrate the unity of Christendom, the *ecclesia,* and thus the efficacy of Louis' rule. Further, the praise this allowed Ermold to lavish upon Louis' piety, Romanity, and learning, through speeches placed in Stephen's mouth and the crown placed in his hands, was an essential string to his panegyric's bow.
Ermold both partook in and propagated this image of an ideal Rome.

This was not, however, Ermold's aim. As Louis' real world actions make clear, he was an emperor intent on continuing a course whose professed aims of unity with Rome were

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[229] Nelson, "Kingship and Empire", 65.

rendered false by its imperial leadership and thoroughly pro-Carolingian outcomes. This was reflective of the movements of Frankish thought of the 820s. It was imperative for the salvation of Christian souls and the continued political success of the *ecclesia* that Louis led the empire correctly in its spiritual and worldly dimensions. It is apparent in the *Carmen'*s subtle, and it must be said sometimes not-so-subtle, assertions of Louis' supremacy. Subscription to this ideology is present in contemporary writings. In Florus of Lyons' lament of the empire, he bemoans the failure of the empire through a celebrations of its once great successes that he impliedly believes now absent. One of these is Charlemagne's subjugation of the Romulan people; the idealised notion of the Franks as exercising some kind of universality was a standard by which to measure the empire, and which he clearly felt they had lost.[230] Not least of these writings is Ermold's, whose task remained the representation of Louis as the successful embodiment of this ideal. This ideology left little room for the Rome of ideal, and instead must accept its cooperative input, but relegate it nonetheless.

Simultaneous adherence to them in Carolingian thought created a paradox, and it was required of Ermold to avoid presenting it as such. Fortunately, the tradition which taught Ermold and those who would be his audience had prepared in them both an ability to understand things obliquely. We have seen examples of obfuscation, evasion, and allusions to reality that allowed him to at once maintain rhetorical standards whilst cleverly promoting a conflicting ideal to the attentive listener (or, indeed, reader) without ever allowing his threads of argument to cross and thereby reveal their incompatibility. The methods by which Ermold marries conflicting ideals allowed the continued acceptance in thought of both. It was in promoting this ideal of simultaneous acceptance and methods by which to achieve it that Ermold allowed the Carolingians to reap the reward of both. This, of course, was the goal of his writing, but these models of thought were presented to his courtly audience, reinforcing existing patterns of thought, and perhaps providing novel but effective ones. Chief among these was the model of interdependence, drawn from ideology, whose circularity was deployed in rhetoric to uphold both the 'Romes' of Carolingian ideal and reality. It must be noted that the

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[230] 'Even the race of Romulus yielded before this people [i.e. the Franks] / and Rome, fine mother of kingdoms, gave place; there the prince of this realm was crowned by the gift of the pope.' Florus of Lyons, *Lament on the Division of the Empire*, l. 61-62, trans. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 269.

feelings of duality, paradox, and self-referentiality are quintessentially Carolingian, and occur time and again in studies of their thoughts.[231]

Despite Ermold's capability in upholding both the ideal and real Rome, his ultimate aim was, and as I have repeated, made artistically clear his poem's elegy's acrostic: '*Ermoldus cecinit Hludoici Caesaris arma*'.[232] Much of what I had missed in that original reading of mine was to this effect. Clever references to political policy, as with the *Constitutio,* or the *topoi* of diplomatic missions were veiled assertions of Louis' authority over the worldly arm of the papacy. Ermold equally dedicated passages to demonstrating to his audience the emperor's religious learning - sufficient even to teach the pope - who having proved this could implore the pontiff to work cooperatively, "Let us serve our people in dogma, law, and faith."[233] Crucially, however, not having been first reminded of his place, as Louis to Stephen, *"Tu sacer antestis; ego rex sum christocolarum."*[234]

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[231] The paradoxical nature of Ermold's work is a frequent feature in its scholarship, and is found expressed neatly by De Jong, 'Such combinations expressing two sides of the coin are ubiquitous in Carolingian narratives. These made full use of multiple meanings, anticipating and articulating the different ways in which certain concepts might be understood.': De Jong, "Two Republics", 597; Bobrycki, "*Nigellus, Ausulus*", esp. 169.

[232] Ermold, *Elegia Ermoldi*, l. 1-35, Faral, 2-4; Noble, 172.

[233] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1031, Faral, 80; Noble, 151.

[234] Ermold, *Carmen* II, l. 1030, Faral, 80; Noble, 151.

'Illud est diligentius docendum, eum demum dicere apte qui non solum quid expediat sed etiam quid deceat inspexerit. Nec me fugit plerumque haec esse coniuncta: nam quod decet fere prodest, neque alio magis animi iudicum conciliari aut, si res in contrarium tulit, alienari solent. Aliquando tamen et haec dissentiunt...'

quotiens autem pugnabunt, ipsam utilitatem vincet quod decet.

'A point to be particularly emphasized in teaching is that no one can speak "appropriately" unless he sees not only what is expedient but also what is becoming. I am aware, of course, that the two generally go together. What is becoming is generally useful, and there is nothing more likely to win over the judges' minds or, if things have gone the wrong way, to alienate them. But the two sometimes conflict.'

When they do, expediency must give way to propriety. [235]

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[235] Quintilianus, *Institutio Oratoria,* 13-14.

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