Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

The appropriation of saints' cults for secular purposes in ninth-century Carolingian Europe was a phenomenon already observed and made the subject of reform in its time.[1] Powerful figures such as the lay abbot Einhard, an advisor to Charlemagne, and the archbishop Hincmar of Reims encouraged the growth of religious cults around their communities' patron saints to increase the economic and political power of their churches and monasteries.[2] However, for these men, who were closely tied to the Carolingian royal family as advisors and courtiers, their connections to the saints' cults may have also served a more personal purpose—namely, the legitimation of their influence, particularly during times of monarchic transition. In this paper, I argue that Einhard and Hincmar fostered saints' cults to help stabilize and justify their continued relations and roles with the Carolingian royal family by strengthening the association between themselves and the names and legacies of their saints.

Saints' cults, which centered on veneration of saints and their miracles through their shrines and relics, had existed since late Roman antiquity. However, the establishment of large landed monasteries and churches along with the push for Christianization of Frankish society in the sixth and seventh centuries particularly encouraged growth and competition of rival cults.[3] Relics, whether of local origins or imported from Italy, Byzantium, or the Holy Land, were highly valued and formed the basis for the establishment of new churches and cults consecrated

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[1] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 35-40.
[2] On Einhard's activities, see Paul E. Dutton, ed. *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), xi-xli. On Hincmar's activities, see Edward Roberts, "Flodoard, the Will of St Remigius and the See of Reims in the Tenth Century," *Early Medieval Europe* 22 (2014): 223-224.
[3] Barbara Abou-El-Haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints*, 7-10.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 1 of 17

to long-dead and sometimes spurious saints.[4]

By the eighth and ninth centuries these practices had begun to receive greater scrutiny and even royal criticism. Charlemagne himself in an 811 capitulary deplored "people who as if acting out of love of God and of the saints, whether martyrs or confessors, transfer the bones and remains of holy bodies from place to place and there construct new basilicas and vehemently exhort whomever they can that they should donate their goods to it." He resurrected requirements that attempted to standardize the use of relics—altars were required to contain relics or they would be destroyed, and oaths had to be sworn on "either in a church or on relics."[5]

The attempts at reform, however, did not diminish these issues, but likely exacerbated them. By expanding the official roles of relics, they likely encouraged the relics trade further, while the emphasis on authentication promoted thefts.[6] In one 840 occurrence, two supposed monks in Dijon brought back from Italy what they claimed to be the relics of a saint whose name they had forgotten. The ensuing cult and reports of troubling miracles around the relics was sufficient to worry Theoboldus, who had jurisdiction over Dijon as the bishop of Langres, to write to Amolo, bishop of Lyons, for advice—Amolo recommended that the bones be buried outside the church.[7] From the Amolo case it is evident saints' cults acted as a potent draw for parishioners, donations and influence. It was in this sort of competitive environment that Einhard and Hincmar sought to promote their saints' cults—for Einhard, the cult of Saints Marcellinus and Petrus; and for Hincmar, the cult of Saint Remigius.

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[4] On the places of origin for relics, see Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 283-318.

[5] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 37-40.

[6] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 35-40.

[7] Charles M.A. West, "Unauthorised Miracles in Mid-Ninth-Century Dijon and the Carolingian Church Reforms," *Journal of Medieval History* 36 (2010): 295-296.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 2 of 17

Einhard began not as a member of the clergy but as a layman, a courtier to Charlemagne until Charlemagne's death in 814 (and his posthumous biographer), and later a lay abbot of several monasteries granted to him by Louis the Pious, Charlemagne's successor. Louis also gifted Einhard the relatively remote estates of Michelstadt and Mulinheim in 815.[8] Although Einhard transferred ownership of Michelstadt to the monastery of Lorsch in 819, he still retained a heavy presence in its administration.[9] Intending to develop the estate, by 827 he had "constructed…permanent houses and dwellings… [and] a well-built church," for which he sought a "saint or martyr—that church should be dedicated [to]."[10]

Because consecrated altars were required to contain relics, the establishment of a local saints' cult would have been a central aspect of a church and by extension, the surrounding community, as Einhard's words show. Einhard described his attempts to secure the relics of the saints Marcellinus and Petrus for the cathedral in his *Translatio et Miracula Sanctorum Marcellini et Petri* ("Translation and Miracles of the Saints Marcellinus and Petrus"). In it, he sends his notary Ratleig to Rome with a Roman deacon, Deusdona, to procure the relics of the martyrs Marcellinus and Petrus. They are accompanied by Hunus, a priest representing the abbot Hilduin of Saint-Denis, who seeks the relics of Saint Tiburtius. Ratleig opens the tombs of Marcellinus and Petrus, removes the saints' remains, and, by a convoluted scheme where he and the relics travel separate routes to avoid suspicion, finally brings them to Michelstadt.[11]

Translationes, recounting the theft of relics often by clergymen or their subordinates who

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[8] Julia M.H. Smith, "Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13 (2003): 10.

[9] Einhard, [Einhard and Emma grant Michelstadt to the Monastery of Lorsch], in Paul E. Dutton, ed. *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), 54-55.

[10] Einhard, *Translatio et miracula sanctorum Marcellini et Petri*, in Paul E. Dutton, ed. *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), 70.

[11] Einhard, *Translatio*, 70-79.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 3 of 17

would move the relics from one dilapidated tomb or church to another more esteemed location, emerged as a distinct component of hagiography during the ninth century.[12] Relics thefts in particular were viewed positively, as manifestation of the saints' own volitions to move location.[13] Indirectly, *translationes* thus emphasized the "chosen" nature of these new resting places, elevating both the reputations of the thieves and those of the guardians who commissioned them.

This concept of volition is prominent in Einhard's *Translatio*. The tombs of Marcellinus and Petrus open easily, "without any resistance."[14] In contrast, the altar of Saint Tiburtius, ostensibly containing Tiburtius's relics, resists such attempts, a subtle sign that divine favor is on Ratleig's and thus Einhard's side over Hunus's and Hilduin's.[15] It is notable that compared to Einhard's fledgling church, Saint-Denis was a thriving and powerful monastery complex that received heavy royal patronage and served as the resting place for many of the Frankish kings that preceded Charlemagne.[16] Einhard may have wished to assert the legitimacy of his new cult against one of the most established monasteries of the time. However, even Einhard's "successful" translation encountered some unexpected difficulties—following the arrival of the relics of Marcellinus and Petrus in Michelstadt, servants at the church experience troubling visions and the reliquaries begin dripping bloodlike fluid.[17] After much meditation and prayer, Einhard transfers the relics to his other estate of Mulinheim, which he renames Seligenstadt, where they are finally appeased.[18] This subservience of Einhard to the will of his relics also

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[12] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 11-13.
[13] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 14, 108-109.
[14] Einhard, *Translatio*, 76.
[15] Einhard, *Translatio*, 74.
[16] *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Saint-Denis."
[17] Einhard, *Translatio*, 78-81.
[18] Einhard, *Translatio*, 82.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 4 of 17

helped to support the image of Einhard as reliable chronicler and pious servant.

Upon their arrival in Seligenstadt, the relics begin to work miracles. Einhard writes, "Sight was restored to the blind, the ability to walk to the lame, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the speechless."[19] A lengthy record of miracles increased the credibility of a saint's cult and encouraged pilgrimages by new worshippers, which economically benefitted churches through the donations or tithes they gave.[20] It was also a common practice for clergy to travel with relics through the countryside, telling of their miracles and asking for alms.[21] Several such examples are described in the *Translatio*. In one, a woman is cured of a dislocated jaw at the church in Seligenstadt and her relatives bring "offerings according to their means" in gratitude.[22] Another man, Willibert, who decides to give away all of his property after suffering a near-death illness, makes a bequest of "forty silver coins" to the church to buy candles for the martyrs.[23] These candles would have been sold to parishioners who would light them during prayer.[24] Parishioners who arrive in Seligenstadt from other districts, enticed by the hope of healing miracles, are also mentioned at various points in the text.[25]

Einhard further emphasizes the perceived link between monetary gifts and piety in another miracle, in which a girl is exorcised of a demon named Wiggo in the presence of the martyrs' relics. Upon exiting her body, Wiggo makes an elaborate speech, warning the kingdom of the Franks of their wickedness. He says "those who faithfully and devoutly pay tithes are rare and rarer still are those who give alms." They also "do not observe Sundays and feast days,"

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[19] Einhard, *Translatio*, 87.
[20] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 56-58.
[21] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 63.
[22] Einhard, *Translatio*, 106.
[23] Einhard, *Translatio*, 93-94.
[24] Einhard, *Translatio*, 111.
[25] Einhard, *Translatio*, 92-110.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 5 of 17

working instead of resting.[26] In stories such as these Einhard could interject his own views of the perils facing the church while contributing to its economic gain by encouraging tithing.

The common themes of curating relics and hagiography to promote a saint's cult, as Einhard did, would be similarly employed decades later by the archbishop Hincmar of Reims. Hincmar, unlike Einhard, essentially grew up as a clergyman, spending his formative years at the monastery of Saint-Denis training as a monk under the abbot Hilduin before becoming archbishop to the See of Reims in 845.[27] His promotion of the cult of Saint Remigius, patron saint of Reims, would contribute to the increased political clout of Reims and its eventual status as the main place of coronation for Frankish kings in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[28]

Saint Remigius, also known as Saint Remi, was bishop of Reims in the early sixth century, best known for baptizing King Clovis and bringing Catholicism to the Franks.[29] In Hincmar's time, the cult of Remigius was still small and relatively local, especially in comparison to those of more well-known martyrs like Saint Denis. In response, Hincmar moved the relics of Remigius to a new and more elaborate tomb with Charles the Bald, son of Louis the Pious and king of West Francia, as witness in 852.[30] Translation of saints to newer and more lavish surroundings was not unusual, as the example of Einhard illustrates. The presence of Charles, however, may have helped to move the saint closer to royal attention.

Hincmar later claimed to have found the ampule used by Remigius in the baptism of Clovis, still containing traces of the original oil within.[31] He used this residue in the coronation

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[26] Einhard, *Translatio*, 104.
[27] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar of Rheims: Life and Work* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 3-7.
[28] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 201.
[29] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 201.
[30] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 223.
[31] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 223.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 6 of 17

of Charles in 869 as king of Lotharingia, anointing Charles's head with the chrism in a ceremony at Metz officiated by himself and a number of other bishops. A transcription of the blessings given that day reads: "May the almighty Lord stretch forth the right hand of his blessing, and may he pour over you the gift of his mercy….May the Lord crown you."[32] In this way Hincmar indicated himself (acting in the name of God) as the celebrant of this ritual, with Charles as the crowned, a setting highlighting the parallels of Hincmar and Remigius, Charles and Clovis.

This coronation was the first of several others that further strengthened the connection between the royal house and the cult of Remigius. The coronations of Kings Robert I in 922 and Lothar in 954 were held at Reims itself.[33] Lothar and his mother, Queen Gerberga, both devotees of Remigius, chose to be buried there as well, a considerable honor to Reims, as Saint-Denis was otherwise been the traditional resting place for kings.[34] Reims was also the site of the failed coronation of Charles the Simple in 893, conducted by Fulk, Hincmar's successor as archbishop, while the previous king Odo was still in power. Although Fulk's attempt to replace Odo was foiled, it is nonetheless reflective of the political significance Reims held. Odo was forced to acknowledge Charles and name him successor, and Charles took the throne in 898.[35]

The translation of Remigius and glorification of his relics were not the only means by which Hincmar sought to elevate the cult of Remigius and the See of Reims. Hincmar also worked to curate the hagiography of Remigius with his *Vita Remigii*, an account of the life and miracles of the saint, completed in 878.[36]

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[32] *Blessings said over King Charles before Mass at the altar of St-Stephen in Metz*, trans. D. Herlihy, *the History of Feudalism* (New York: Harper & row, 1970), repr. in Paul E. Dutton, ed., *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), 486-487.

[33] On coronation location of Robert I, see *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Robert I." On coronation location of Lothar, see Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 224.

[34] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 225.

[35] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 224.

[36] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 170-171.

The Remigius of Hincmar's *Vita* was portrayed as an active defender of his supplicants and their property. In one excerpt, Hincmar discusses a peasant at Reims who was "not able to use his land peacefully…because of the harassment of the residents on the royal estates."[37] The peasant travels to the basilica of the saint, makes gifts of bread, beer, and meat to the poor waiting outside, and carries back to his fields a cartful of the dust from the basilica floor—upon seeing which his tormentors flee, chased back to the royal estate by their own animals. In another excerpt, a man who purchases a farm from the abbey of Reims drives out the peasants, who call on Saint Remigius for aid—the man "swells[s] up to unbelievable proportions" and dies.[38]

Other portions of Hincmar's *Vita* contain embellishments or outright forgeries of records intended to further legitimize Remigius's reputation as a significant saint. One such forgery was a letter from the pope Hormisdas supposedly naming Remigius a papal vicar in thanks for "accomplish[ing] what we order tirelessly all others to do" and "maintain[ing] the observance of the rule of the fathers and the authority of the apostolic see."[39] Another suspect document—the will of Remigius—Hincmar claimed to have reconstructed from fragments of an earlier manuscript. While general consensus is that the will's existence is itself authentic, the accuracy of the content itself has been debated, as no transcriptions of the will have been found that predate Hincmar's account.[40]

Regardless of its origins, the will, which discussed the dispensation of land in the Vosges Mountains that had been granted to Remigius during his time as bishop of Reims, would become a significant piece of evidence for the See of Reims to justify its land claims in the tumultuous

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[37] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, trans. D. Herlihy, *the History of Feudalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), repr. in Paul E. Dutton, ed., *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), 484-485.
[38] Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, 485.
[39] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 176.
[40] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 202.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 8 of 17

tenth century. Control of the Vosges monastery of Kusel, disputed between Reims and the Lotharingian duke Conrad, was eventually awarded to Reims by King Otto in 953, based at least partially on the will's contents.[41] Historian Edward Roberts also suggests that Flodoard, a later canon at Reims under Fulk, modified the will to incorporate estates in which he had a personal interest, such as Cormicy, his own appointed seat.[42] This move enabled Flodoard to essentially backdate Reims's history on these estates, providing a saintly justification that gave greater legitimacy and security to their claims. The lands, with their associated serfs and *coloni* also provided economic benefits as an important source of income. While these later coronations and land claims greatly postdated Hincmar's death, they illustrate the long-term effects his work had for Reims' reputation.

Clearly the activities of Einhard and Hincmar elevated the names of their saints, bringing economic and political benefits to their churches. However, as guardians, essentially, of their respective cults, their own names were inextricably linked with those of their saints, allowing them to leverage their positions for not just church, but personal influence.

Einhard lent the relics of Marcellinus and Petrus for veneration in other churches, spreading their fame and adding any records of new miracles they performed to the *Translatio*. At one point, the relics reached the royal palace itself at Aachen, where they cured a king's chamberlain of a fever, lifted the paralysis of two pilgrims from nearby towns, and restored sight to an old blind man. Einhard himself comments that these miracles "came not only to the attention of many people, but also to the attention of the ruler himself, his chief men, and indeed,

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[41] Edward Roberts, "Hegemony, Rebellion, and History: Flodoard's *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* in Ottonian Perspective," *Journal of Medieval History* 42 (2016): 155-165.
[42] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 219-220.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 9 of 17

all his courtiers."[43]

Einhard would later use his royal influence to ask favors of his king. In an 830 letter to Louis the Pious, Einhard asks Louis permission to return to Seligenstadt from the monastery at Saint-Bavo, where he was at the time in service to Louis's wife Judith. In return, he promises Louis that he could "obtain a great reward for yourself before God" and that "those holy martyrs should intercede for you…if you wish to place my service to them ahead of my service to you."[44] Another letter to Louis, written around 830-832, directly discusses the estate of Seligenstadt, requesting that Louis finance a building campaign. Einhard begins the letter reminding Louis of his responsibility to Marcellinus and Petrus—"my most pious lord is always mindful of his patron saints"—and of Louis's "very kind promises" to grant benefices in their name. He then asks Louis to "increase, decorate, and venerate the resting place of the holy martyrs with both buildings and other necessities," promising that "your memory and the memory of the martyrs will forever be joined together and celebrated by all peoples."[45] Interestingly, Einhard seemed to indirectly acknowledge the importance that a link to the saints had, because he was offering exactly this to Louis—although he himself benefitted from it.

In these letters, instead of outright asking the recipients to honor his personal interests, Einhard makes himself a spokesperson for his saints Marcellinus and Petrus, justifying the favors as their wishes and not his. His requests to Charles promise not earthly but rather divine rewards—framing his actions in the name of the saints to be more persuasive.

That Louis actually initiated Einhard's building campaign by 835 shows Einhard's

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[43] Einhard, *Translatio*, 111-113.
[44] Einhard, [To the Emperor Louis. April 830], in Paul E. Dutton, ed. *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), 152.
[45] Einhard, [To Emperor Louis. 830-832], in Paul E. Dutton, ed. *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), 163.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 10 of 17

influence remained strong.[46] Although the bulk of Einhard's time at court occurred during

Charlemagne's rule, he managed to maintain a relatively close relationship with Louis amidst

Louis's court purges. Fearing potential rivals, in 817 Louis had blinded his nephew, King

Bernard of Italy, who died soon after, and exiled his own half-brothers into monastic obscurity.

Louis also named his son Lothar to rule with him as co-regent, in order to avert any potential

succession crises with his other sons. However, Lothar and his supporters who opposed Louis's

growing favor of his fourth son Charles ("the Bald") would revolt against him in April 830,

briefly placing Louis under house arrest while Lothar took control of the empire.[47]

It was just after this transition crisis that Einhard's *Translatio* was published. The revolt

had seen the brief rise of several nobles and ecclesiastics, including the abbot Hilduin of Saint-

Denis, who supported Lothar.[48] Notably, Hilduin was portrayed extremely negatively in the

Translatio—his emissary Hunus fails to secure true relics of Tiburtius, instead collecting a pile

of dust from Tiburtius's tomb and bringing that back as the supposed relics. Hunus and a servant,

Luniso, also conspire to steal a portion of Ratleig's relics of Marcellinus and Petrus for Hilduin.

Einhard later negotiates with Hilduin for the return of the relics, although Hilduin is still

reluctant—Einhard gives him one hundred gold pieces in exchange to pacify him.[49]

With the fall of Lothar, Hilduin's reputation declined greatly. He was removed from

court, reduced to staying in an outdoor tent during the winter of 830 and exiled briefly to Saxony

in 831.[50] Einhard's publication of the *Translatio* may have also been intended to assert his

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[46] Julia M.H. Smith, "Einhard," 67-68.
[47] Pierre Riché, *The Carolingians: A Family Who Forged Europe*, trans. Michael I. Allen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 148-154.
[48] Paul E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, xxv.
[49] Einhard, *Translatio*, 85-86.
[50] On Hilduin's winter in a tent, see Paul E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, xxv. On Hilduin's exile, see Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 3

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 11 of 17

support of Louis against Hilduin and Lothar, but indirectly, via his saints' cult, which would have compromised him less if the circumstances changed again. The stability and religious legitimacy afforded to Einhard by his association with the saints thus helped him to maintain his reputation and even request favors during the turbulence of these monarchial almost-transitions.

Most of Hincmar's activity in promoting Saint Remigius took place after Louis's and Einhard's time, during the reign of Charles the Bald. By this time, the Carolingian empire had been split among Louis's sons into three kingdoms.[51] Hincmar's predecessor as archbishop of Reims, Ebbo, had been forced to resign in the 830s under accusations that he had opposed Louis during the second rebellion of Louis's sons in 833. The See of Reims would remain without an archbishop for ten years, excepting a brief but temporary return by Ebbo to nominate clerics in 840. Portions of Reims's property were parceled away and given to various supporters of Charles the Bald during the civil war of 840-843 fought among Louis's sons after his death.[52]

It was thus a neglected Reims that Hincmar inherited in 845—the early years of his archbishopric were focused on reclaiming land lost during the war and fending off challenges related to Ebbo and the legitimacy of his own ascension. He also supported Charles in an attempted 858 coup by Louis the German, Charles's brother and ruler of East Francia.[53] Louis the German had attempted to call a synod at Reims, where he hoped to be anointed as king.[54] Hincmar refused, writing a letter to Louis on behalf of other West Frankish bishops reminding him of the sacrilege of attacking another king (Charles) already anointed by God. Following Hincmar's letter, Louis was forced to retreat and Charles's kingdom was restored.[55]

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[51] Pierre Riché, *The Carolingians*, 172.
[52] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 4-6.
[53] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 9-10.
[54] Pierre Riché, *The Carolingians*, 173.
[55] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 10.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 12 of 17

However, Hincmar did not remain consistently close to Charles and their relations slowly declined through the course of Hincmar's forty-plus year archbishopric. By the 860s, Hincmar was competing for influence with other prominent ecclesiastics like Wulfad of Sens, one of Ebbo's clerics who was rising in favor with Charles, and pope Nicholas I himself, who had begun to meddle more strongly in royal affairs.[56] The pope's power grew with the Council of Troyes in 867, where it was declared that his consent would be required to remove bishops from their seats.[57] The 869 coronation at Reims of Charles as king of Lotharingia could be viewed as Hincmar's attempt to re-ingratiate himself with Charles via the cult of Remigius.

With the death of Louis II, Lothar's son and the holder of the imperial title, in 875, Charles set off for Italy to be named emperor, ignoring warnings from Hincmar to abandon the coronation and focus on protecting his own West Francia against invading Vikings and Bretons. This opposition solidified Hincmar's steady fall from Charles's counsel, which is also evident in Hincmar's later repudiation of Charles. When Charles died in 877, Hincmar wrote critically of his stinking corpse and ignominious death outside the borders of his own empire.[58]

Although Charles had not named Hincmar as counsel for his son Louis ("the Stammerer"), who succeeded him in 877, Hincmar still managed to carve himself a role in advising the new king, at least initially.[59] He wrote and performed the coronation of Louis at Compiègne, a city under the jurisdiction of Reims, in 877—an action which promoted the cult of Remigius and the see of Reims, but also re-asserted his own position with the royal house even during this monarchial transition.[60] Hincmar also advised the new king to take a more active role

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[56] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 15.
[57] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 15.
[58] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 18.
[59] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 18.
[60] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 224.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 13 of 17

in reining in the nobles of his kingdom, a course of action that Louis initially did follow. However, Hincmar's influence diminished quickly after 877 as other advisors competed for power, and he was not named as a caretaker of Louis's sons following Louis's death in 879.[61]

While Hincmar's actions are difficult to directly tie to the cult of Remigius, it is unusual that a see such as Reims, whose primary claim to ecclesiastical relevance was an initially marginal saint, should have remained so influential politically.[62] His promotion of the cult of Remigius, along with the coronations of Charles the Bald and Louis the Stammerer, appear to have aided in making the archbishopric of Reims one of the main advisors to the West Francia kings. His successor, the archbishop Fulk, would continue to guide royal politics, as evidenced by the attempted coronation of Charles the Simple in 893.[63] However, Hincmar's activities can also be interpreted as attempts to retain his personal audience with the king. The aforementioned coronations helped reassert his authority as a senior archbishop during times of competition with other ecclesiastics and nobles, using the link that he had cultivated between the cult of Remigius and the Carolingians. By defining Remigius's role in writing the *Vita* and emulating it in his actions, Hincmar implied himself as a new Remigius to the new Carolingian "Clovises."

The close association of the cult of the saints with ecclesiastical institutions like churches and monasteries, combined with the intertwined roles of religious leaders as both spiritual and political leaders, suggests it was almost inevitable that figures like Einhard and Hincmar would eventually rise as they did. Activities like the acquisition of relics and writing of hagiography, undertaken for ostensibly pious motivations, not only demonstrated dedication to the saints but also yielded distinct economic and political benefits. In Einhard's case, these benefits took the

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[61] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 116-121.
[62] Rachel Stone and Charles West, eds., *Hincmar*, 170.
[63] Edward Roberts, "Flodoard," 224.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 14 of 17

form of parishioner donations and royal patronage; in Hincmar's, the positioning of the archbishopric of Reims in a royal advisory role, as well as the symbolic significance of Reims in coronations. Yet Einhard and Hincmar were not simply acting as agents of their churches—their actions were deeply tied to their personal interest and strengthening of their relationships with their respective kings. These connections, in which many such motivations often blurred together, illustrate the intertwining of the religious, economic, and personal that characterized ninth-century Carolingian politics.

Made in His image: The influence of personal motivation in the fostering of Carolingian saints' cults by Charlemagne's Einhard and Hincmar of Reims

Page 15 of 17

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