

Guy Jarousseau, *Églises, évêques et prince à Angers du Ve au début du XIe siècle, Limoges (Pulim) 2015, 485 p. (Cahiers de l'Institut d'anthropologie juridique, 42), ISBN 978-3-84287-665-4, EUR 30,00.*

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The past decade has seen the emergence of a new focus by scholars on the nature of the episcopacy during the early Middle Ages and the wide range of relationships that were maintained and utilized by bishops to carry out both their ecclesiastical and political obligations. In his revised *thèse de doctorat*, Guy Jarousseau joins this scholarly tradition with a detailed examination of the episcopal office and church of the city of Angers from its origins under the Merovingians during the fifth century through the dissolution of royal power and emergence of the Angevin principality during the tenth and early eleventh century, with a focus on the relationship between the bishops and their own church, with the clergy of their diocese, and with the royal and princely authorities that exercised secular rule within Angers.

Following an extensive preface by Olivier Guillot, the leading French specialist on the county of Anjou in the early medieval period, the volume is organized chronologically in three parts, which are bracketed by a substantial introduction and a brief conclusion. Jarousseau uses his introduction to provide readers with survey of the sources that are available for the investigation of the church of Anjou, including hagiographical and historiographical texts, liturgical works, material finds developed through excavations, and above all, charters. He also provides a useful survey of the historiographical traditions that impinge upon his study, noting the substantial lacuna dealing with the church of Angers in the period before c. 1000. The conclusion offers a brief synopsis of the main points of the three sections of the book.

In part one, consisting of three chapters, Jarousseau focuses on the church of Angers from the 5th through the mid-6th century. His main argument in this section is that the decision by the Frankish king Childebert I (511–558) to construct and dedicate a church to St. Aubin, bishop of Angers (529–550), had the effect of creating a locus of royal and subsequently comital influence and control at Angers that would endure for more than four centuries. Jarousseau observes that several of Aubin's predecessors as bishop also had been recognized as saints, but had been buried in already existing churches. Childebert's decision to honor St. Aubin with a new foundation can be understood as a consequence of the special veneration of Aubin by the Merovingian dynasty, and his elevation to the status of a »royal saint«. The subsequent transformation of Aubin's burial church into a monastery, whose abbot was appointed by the king, and the custom of having the bishops of Angers consecrated

there, further enhanced royal influence and control within the city and church of Angers. The ultimate result of Childeric's intervention, according to Jarousseau, was the creation of two centers of religious gravity within the walls and suburbs of Angers, one episcopal and one royal.

Jarousseau uses part two, which also is divided into three chapters, to trace the relationships of the Carolingian rulers with both St. Aubin and the bishops of Angers from the mid-eight to the late ninth century. Here Jarousseau identifies important continuities between the Carolingians and the Merovingians with regard to the elevation of St. Aubin as a special patron of the royal dynasty. He notes, for example that Bishop Theodulf of Orleans (798–818) repeatedly identified Aubin as an intercessor for the Carolingians in his poetry. Jarousseau also argues that the bishops of Angers played an important role in implementing the religious reforms of the Carolingian rulers from Pippin I to Louis the Pious, and also provided key personnel for the Carolingian court, such as Helisacher, the abbot of St. Aubin, who served as Louis' chancellor (814–819). In the final chapter of this section, Jarousseau introduces a new interpretative format, by focusing on a single episcopate, namely that of Dodo (837–880), and utilizing the corpus of surviving charters that becomes more extensive from the mid-ninth century onward. The main topics in this chapter are the circumstances of Dodo's elevation as a bishop, the economic resources of the bishopric, the bishop's relationship with the local, office-holding aristocracy, and his relationship with the subordinate churches within the city and surrounding area.

Part three, which is the longest of the volume, is divided into four chapters. Jarousseau continues the pattern established at the end of the previous section of the book by focusing his attention chronologically on the individual pontificates of the bishops of Angers, largely through the prism of surviving charters. In this context, he observes the gradual disappearance of royal influence at Angers in the period after 880, and the emergence of alternate secular office holders, who sought to influence or control the bishops of Angers. These included Count Alan of Vannes († 907), who assumed the title of *dux* of Brittany, the Robertine contenders for the Frankish crown, and the family of Fulk the Red († 942), who seized control in the city, first as the viscount and then as count of Angers. Ultimately, as Jarousseau makes clear, the counts of Anjou replaced the Frankish kings as a primary source of secular authority within the city and environs of Angers, and made use of the monastery of St. Aubin, much like their royal predecessors, to help cement their influence and control. The one exception to this pattern of largely secular control over episcopal resources, identified by Jarousseau, was Bishop Renaud (973–1005), who sought to use the weakness of royal authority and the competition among secular magnates to his own advantage by establishing the foundations for an episcopal principality. However, at Renaud's death in 1005, Count Fulk Nerra (987–1040) was able to exercise control over the appointment of the next bishop, and ended this experiment in episcopal self rule.

This text is equipped with a very extensive scholarly apparatus of notes including the full texts of the

numerous charters discussed in the text. The bibliography is divided among sources in manuscript, published source materials that are divided, quite helpfully, by genre, and a very extensive section of scholarly literature, which includes both French and English-language works on Anjou. Jarousseau has included a remarkable list of 18 appendices that include a list of the bishops of Angers, a genealogy of the counts of Anjou, several maps of the ecclesiastical institutions at Angers, and editions of eight charters. The volume is rounded out with an index.

In sum, Jarousseau has made a very important contribution to the institutional history of the church of Angers, which also ties into the broader scholarly reevaluation of the episcopal office in Frankish kingdom and its successors. This volume will be of great value to specialists in Merovingian, Carolingian, and Angevin history, as well as to those to investigating the structure of the episcopacy in the period before the Investiture Contest.