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Sarah Greer, Alice Hicklin, and Stefan Esders, eds. *Using and Not Using the Past after the Carolingian Empire, c. 900-c.1050*. London and New York: Routledge, 2019. xi + 308 pp. Figures, tables, notes, and index. \$160.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9780367002510; \$48.95 U.S. (pb). ISBN 9780367002527; \$48.95 U.S. (eb). ISBN 9780429400551.

Review by John Eldevik, Hamilton College.

In the decades following the Second World War, the Carolingian Empire and the achievements of Charlemagne came to be seen by many historians, and often the broader public, as a symbol of European unity and a historical template for the Common Market and, later, the European Union itself. The fractious history of the post-Carolingian period, on the other hand, was often associated with the rise of violent feudal lordships, nascent nationalist formations, and the more contentious political divisions of later European history. Over the past generation or so, however, many scholars have begun to reassess these narratives about the later ninth through eleventh centuries, casting the period less as a dark age of dissolution and disorder, or as the cradle of later nation-states, and more as a distinct period of transition and creativity as local communities across Europe searched for new anchors of authority, legitimacy, and historical consciousness. Much of the groundwork for this shift was laid in works like Patrick Geary's *Phantoms of Remembrance*, Timothy Reuter's pathbreaking and still-essential explorations of episcopal authority and identity in the tenth and eleventh centuries and, more recently, Simon Maclean's studies of Regino of Prüm and the politics of post-Carolingian Lotharingia.<sup>[1]</sup> Readers in search of narrowly "French" (or "German" or "Italian") history are unlikely to find much to hang their hats on here, and that is, perhaps, the point.

The present volume gathers a series of essays by both younger and more senior scholars produced as part of an EU-sponsored research project, "After Empire: Using and Not Using the Past in the Crisis of the Carolingian World, 900-1050." As is the case in most edited collections of this kind, the relationship of the individual contributions to each other as well as the larger topic is not always as strong as one might like, but all of the articles are nonetheless of high quality and illuminating in their own right. It is a volume anyone interested in this period and the historiographical debates surrounding it needs to read. Judging by the title of the project and the volume alone, one might have expected historiography or historiographical models to be a central thematic strand, but this is not really the case. "The past" as conceived here really consists of a broad range of religious, historical, textual, and ideological structures and their subsequent transformations in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The first section, “Past Narratives,” is perhaps the most cohesive. Geoffrey Koziol opens the volume with a discussion of the shift from imperial annalistic history towards regional church- and episcopal-centered historiographies in the later ninth and tenth centuries, echoing what Theo Riche once evocatively described as the emergence of “creole episcopal cultures” in post-Carolingian Europe.<sup>[2]</sup> The subsequent case studies by Edward Roberts on Flodoard of Rheims, Maya Maskarinec on the chronicle of Benedict of Monte Soratte, and Lenneke van Raaij on local hagiographic traditions in Trier elaborate upon Koziol’s argument nicely. Stuart Arlie concludes the section with a thought-provoking post-mortem of sorts of the twentieth-century master narratives about post-Carolingian Europe, observing how the historiographies of the tenth and eleventh centuries have become intimately intertwined with interest in the often-colorful lives and careers of the scholars who defined them. To what extent, Arlie asks, can portraits of historical individuals—both medieval and modern—illuminate this period? It comes down to context, he reminds us, insisting that modern medievalists must remain attuned both to our sources and their contexts, as well as to the intellectual genealogies that have shaped our understanding of them.

The second section, “Inscribing Memories,” features a more eclectic set of articles, including a survey by Matthias Tischler on the influence of Carolingian intellectual culture and reform programs in the Spanish March and Catalonia; Megan Welton on the role of Carolingian and Ottonian queens in supporting their royal spouses with liturgical devotions; Philippe Depreux’s study of several model marriage charters (*chartae dotalis*) in Ademar of Chabannes’s personal notebook that shed new light on the circulation of early medieval *formulae* in post-Carolingian Francia; Sara Greer on an extraordinary genealogical table in an early eleventh-century manuscript that appears to be an attempt to trace the descent of the entire Carolingian royal family, as opposed to just its rulers, with significant implications for understanding the relationship between genealogical consciousness and royal power. Stefan Esders caps the section with a look at the persistence of certain oath-taking practices in the Salian era that consciously evoked Carolingian models.

The final section, “Recalling Communities,” opens with an essay by Maximilian Diesenberger that one hopes is serving as a prolegomena for a much more expansive future study on the subject of social and political solidarity in post-Carolingian Europe. The breakup of Charlemagne’s and Louis the Pious’s great empire in the 840s has been attributed frequently to an unfortunate “lack of solidarity” among their descendants. But what does this really mean? Diesenberger suggests that we might reframe the political transformations of the late ninth and early tenth centuries as a reordering of ideas about solidarity around more local and regional focal points and institutions, as opposed to the community of the realm writ large. Jelle Wassenaar extends this argument to the case of bishops in tenth century Italy, particularly Rather of Verona and Liutprand of Cremona, both of whom forged new models of episcopal solidarity as a counterbalance to royal power in northern Italy’s rapidly shifting post-Carolingian political landscape. Another instance of solidarity that represented significant continuity with the Carolingian past, however, was among the intellectuals and scholars surveyed in Giorgia Vocino’s splendid study, who continued to travel back and forth and transport manuscripts between Italy and the schools of Francia and the German kingdom in the tenth century, a transalpine traffic in books and people that would contribute in no small part to the growth of cathedral and monastic schools north of the Alps in the eleventh century. Two final contributions from Steven Vanderputten on monastic reform in tenth-century Rheims and Sarah Hamilton on developments in the canon law of excommunication in post-Carolingian Europe underscore how a number of religious reform

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initiatives we tend to view as innovations of the tenth and eleventh centuries very much drew upon Carolingian-era precedents as sources of legitimacy and authority.

This volume is an important contribution to the new historiography on post-Carolingian Western Europe, building upon what other recent studies have shown about the long shadow cast by Charlemagne's world upon its descendants while illuminating the new institutions, identities, and political and religious formations that emerged from it in terms that are no longer beholden to anachronistic images of a "dark age," nationalist narratives, or debates about feudal disorder. Those older paradigms are still with us, to be sure, as Stuart Airlie reminds us, but can now be profitably reconsidered in dynamic relationship with methods that place our sources in fresh contexts.

#### LIST OF ESSAYS

Sarah Greer and Alice Hicklin, "Introduction"

##### Part One, Past Narratives

Geoffrey Koziol, "The future of history after empire"

Edward Roberts, "Remembering troubled pasts: episcopal deposition and succession in Flodoard's *History of the Church of Rheims*"

Maya Maskarinec, "In the shadow of Rome: after empire in the late-tenth-century chronicle of Benedict of Monte Soratte"

Lenneke van Raaij, "Infiltrating the local past: supra-regional players in local hagiography from Trier in the ninth and tenth centuries"

Stuart Airlie, "After the fall: lives of texts and lives of modern scholars in the historiography of the post-Carolingian world"

##### Part Two, Inscribing Memories

Matthias M. Tischler, "How Carolingian was early medieval Catalonia?"

Megan Welton, "Orchestrating harmony: litanies, queens, and discord in the Carolingian and Ottonian empires"

Philippe Depreux, "Models of marriage charters in a notebook of Ademar of Chabannes (ninth- to eleventh-century)"

Sarah Greer, "All in the family: creating a Carolingian genealogy in the eleventh century"

Stefan Esders, "'Charles's stirrups hang down from Conrad's saddle': reminiscences of Carolingian oath practice under Conrad II (1024–1039)"

Part Three, Recalling Communities

Maximilian Diesenberger, "Notions of belonging. Some observations on solidarity in the late- and post-Carolingian world"

Jelle Wassenaar, "Bishops, canon law, and the politics of belonging in post-Carolingian Italy, c. 930-c. 960"

Giorgia Vocino, "Migrant masters and their books. Italian scholars and knowledge transfer in post-Carolingian Europe"

Steven Vanderputten, "The dignity of our bodies and the salvation of our souls. Scandal, purity, and the pursuit of unity in late tenth-century monasticism"

Sarah Hamilton, "Law and liturgy: excommunication records, 900-1050"

## NOTES

[1] Patrick Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). For Timothy Reuter, see especially "A Europe of Bishops: The Age of Wulfstan of York and Burchard of Worms," in *Patterns of Episcopal Power: Bishops in Tenth and Eleventh Century Western Europe/Strukturen bischöflicher Herrschaftsgewalt im westlichen Europa des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Wassenhoven, *Prinz-Albert-Forschungen* 6 (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2011), 17-38. For Simon Maclean, see *Kingship and politics in the late ninth century: Charles the Fat and the end of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) and *History and politics in late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: the Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg* (Manchester: Manchester, 2009).

[2] Theo Riches, "The Changing Political Horizons of *gesta episcoporum* from the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries" in Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Wassenhoven, eds., *Patterns of Episcopal Power: Bishops in Tenth and Eleventh-Century Western Europe*, *Prinz-Albert-Forschungen* 6 (Boston and Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 51-62, at p. 61.

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