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978-1-107-05065-5 - The Social Life of Hagiography in the Merovingian Kingdom

Jamie Kreiner

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THE SOCIAL LIFE OF HAGIOGRAPHY IN THE MEROVINGIAN KINGDOM

This book charts the influence of Christian ideas about social responsibility on the legal, fiscal, and operational policies of the Merovingian government, which consistently depended upon the collaboration of kings and elites to succeed, and it shows how a set of stories transformed the political playing field in early medieval Gaul. Contemporary thinkers encouraged this development by writing political arguments in the form of hagiography, more to redefine the rules and resources of elite culture than to promote saints' cults. Jamie Kreiner explores how hagiographers were able to do this effectively, by layering their arguments with different rhetorical and cognitive strategies, while keeping the surface narratives entertaining. The result was a subtle and captivating literature that gives us new ways of thinking about how ideas and institutions can change, and how the vibrancy of Merovingian culture inspired subsequent Carolingian developments.

JAMIE KREINER is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Georgia where she researches and teaches the history of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

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To Bang, Flank, and Chuck

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Three teachers and friends stuck with this project from the start, and I only hope it shows. Peter Brown was always generous and always adventurous, and he taught me how our work can be kind. Bill Jordan is the reader I wrote to satisfy: he knows that some questions and answers are better than others. Helmut Reimitz shared his lunch breaks, his library, and above all his nimble perspective on the early Middle Ages. It was also a really lucky break that we were both writing our books at the same time. I thank Helmut for sharing that, too.

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Chapter 3 began as an article, ‘About the Bishop: The Episcopal Entourage and the Economy of Government in Post-Roman Gaul’, *Speculum* 86 (2011): 321–60, and some of that material is reprinted here with permission from *Speculum* and from Cambridge University Press. I’ve changed the focus of that article in some important ways, to address more directly the concerns of this book.

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

The regnal dates of the Merovingian kings follow Margarete Weidemann's analysis in 'Chronologie der Merowinger', published in two instalments in *Francia*. Biblical citations follow the numbering of the Vulgate, and when I quote the Bible directly I follow the Latin of the fourth edition of the *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, edited by Robert Weber and Roger Gryson.

ABBREVIATIONS

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
BHL	Société des Bollandistes and H. Fros (eds.), <i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina antiquae et mediae aetatis</i> , 2 vols. (Brussels, 1898–9, 1986)
BNF	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Scriptorum Latinorum
ChLA	G. Cavallo, J.-O. Tjäder, A. Petrucci, R. Marichal, A. Bruckner, et al. (eds.), <i>Chartae latinae antiquiores: Facsimile-Edition of the Latin Charters Prior to the Ninth Century</i> , 106 vols. (Zürich, 1954–2013)
CLA	E. A. Lowe (ed.), <i>Codices latini antiquiores: A Palaeographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts Prior to the Ninth Century</i> , 12 vols. (Oxford, 1934–66)
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
DACL	F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq, <i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i> , 15 vols. (Paris, 1907–53)
LHF	<i>Liber historiae Francorum</i> , ed. B. Krusch, MGH SS rer. Merov. 2 (Hanover, 1888)
Marculf	Marculf, <i>Marculfi formularum libri duo</i> , ed. A. Uddholm (Uppsala, 1962)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
	Auct. ant. Auctores antiquissimi
	Epp. sel. Epistolae selectae
	LL nat. Germ. Leges nationum Germanicarum
	SS Scriptorum (in folio)
	SS rer. Germ. Scriptorum rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum
	SS rer. Merov. Scriptorum rerum Merovingicarum
ÖNB	Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

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PL	Patrologia Latina
RB	<i>Regula Benedicti</i> , ed. T. Fry, in <i>RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes</i> (Collegeville, MN, 1981)
RGA	H. Beck, D. Geuenich, and H. Steuer (eds.), <i>Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde</i> , founded by J. Hoops, 35 vols., new edn (Berlin, 1968–2007)
RICG	H. I. Marrou (ed.), <i>Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule antérieures à la renaissance carolingienne</i> , 3 vols. (vols. 1, 8, 15) (Paris, 1975–85)
SC	Sources Chrétiennes