1 Introduction

Opening remarks

How did clerics build their careers in the western church in the Middle Ages? At what stage in their lives was the decision taken that they should enter the clergy, and who made this decision? Did they continue to maintain ties with their families, and if so, how? How were they trained for their roles in the Church? Attempting to answer these questions sheds light on central aspects of western European society: family networks, education, administration, pastoral care and ecclesiastical institutions. Unlike monks and nuns, however, whose career patterns and family background have attracted considerable attention,[1] the clergy of the period from 800 to 1200 have suffered neglect, but unjustly so, on several counts: they were numerous, and their lives and activities were woven into those of the laity of the societies in which they lived. Moreover, though the majority had significance only as part of a larger whole, a sizeable minority were doers and thinkers, many at the forefront of the whole range of cultural developments. No history of Europe in the central Middle Ages could overlook the contributions of – to take a few examples – Gerbert of Aurillac, Peter Abelard, Stephen Langton or Robert Grosseteste, all of them the products of a clerical formation and education.[2] At the highest level of the clergy, all bishops, most of whom had built up their ecclesiastical careers as secular clerics, had at least

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[1] For some idea of the range of literature on monks and nuns, see *NCMH*, II, 995–1002; III, 759–62; IV (2), 817–22; Thomas F.X. Noble and Julia M.H. Smith, eds., *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, III: *Early Medieval Christianities, c.600–c.1100* (Cambridge, 2008), 704–12.

[2] Pierre Riché, *Gerbert d'Aurillac: Le pape de l'an mil* (Paris, 1987); Michael Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life* (Oxford, 1997); F.M. Powicke, *Stephen Langton* (Oxford, 1928); Christopher Holdsworth, 'Stephen Langton', in *ODNB*, XXXII, 516–21; R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1986).

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some political influence, and many had appreciable political power.[3] Rulers expected bishops to assist them as political advisers, and employed numerous other clerics lower down the hierarchy to act for them as scribes, attendants, envoys, propagandists, chaplains, physicians and almsgivers.[4] The educational training undergone by clergy is also a necessary subject of investigation for those studying the culture and society of medieval Europe, and, while the intellectual, scholarly and literary dimensions of the process have been worked on by scholars for centuries and are reasonably well understood, the more practical aspects of obtaining an education have attracted rather less attention, even though they too helped to shape the careers of young clerics.[5] Although ordination was what principally distinguished clergy from laity, education was another distinguishing feature, since it was required for clergy but not for laity. Here, however, (unlike ordination) the difference was not absolute, since laity could be educated, and even, in some cases, learned.[6] Beyond this, clergy were visibly different, marked out from the rest of society by tonsure and dress.[7] These visual and cultural differences between clergy and laity helped to underline the importance of the Eucharist. Only bishops and priests, members of the senior ranks of the clergy, could celebrate this, though clerics in lower grades assisted them.

[3] Among a large literature see e.g. Timothy Reuter, '*Episcopi cum sua militia*: the prelate as warrior in the early Staufer era', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 1992), 79–94; Timothy Reuter, '*Filii matris nostrae pugnant adversum nos*: bonds and tensions between prelates and their *milites* in the German high Middle Ages', in *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X–XII*, Atti della dodicesima Settimana internazionale di studio, Mendola, 24–28 agosto 1992 (Milan, 1995), 247–76; Reinhold Kaiser, *Bischofsherrschaft zwischen Königtum und Fürstenmacht: Studien zur bischöflichen Stadtherrschaft im westfränkisch-französischen Reich im frühen und hohen Mittelalter*, Pariser historische Studien, 17 (Bonn, 1981); Olivier Guyotjeannin, *Episcopus et comes: Affirmation et déclin de la seigneurie épiscopale au nord du royaume de France (Beauvais-Noyon, Xe–début XIIIe siècle)* (Geneva and Paris, 1987); Olivier Guyotjeannin, 'La seigneurie épiscopale dans le royaume de France (Xe–XIIIe siècles)', in *Chiesa e mondo feudale*, 151–88; J.-L. Kupper, *Liège et l'église impériale XIe–XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1981), esp. 421–85; Steffen Patzold, 'L'épiscopat du haut Moyen Âge du point de vue de la médiévistique allemande', *CCM*, 48 (2005), 341–58; Steffen Patzold, *Episcopus: Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern, 2008).
[4] On royal household clergy, see Chapter 8 below.
[5] See literature cited in Chapter 6 below.
[6] For debate on lay literacy, see e.g. Rosamond McKitterick, ed., *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990); Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989), 211–70; Patrick Wormald and Janet Nelson, eds., *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2007).
[7] On tonsure and dress see Chapter 2 below.

Clerics are often confused with monks (an understandable confusion, given that monks can be ordained within the clerical grades),[8] but the two are not synonymous. Clergy are those members of the Church who perform sacraments, or assist in their performance; their origins lie in the very earliest beginnings of the Church. From early on, clerical office was, to all intents and purposes, restricted to men;[9] in the western church, although the grade of deaconess survived in a shadowy form and rites for it were copied into pontificals, it was in practice restricted to abbesses and did not allow them access to the altar.[10] Monks make vows of obedience, stability and conversion, live under a Rule, renounce personal property and are supposed to withdraw from the world, but clergy can own property, do not necessarily have to live under a rule, and can engage with the world.[11] The adjective 'secular', or 'worldly', began to be applied to the bulk of the clergy in the twelfth century, and at first it was used as a pejorative term to mark them off from those clerics who were trying to live a more monastic existence, following a rule, and who thus were called 'regular clergy', from the

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[8] The proportion of monks in the western church seeking ordination grew in this period; it was already high at Fulda in the ninth century: Karl Schmid, 'Mönchslisten und Klosterkonvent von Fulda zur Zeit der Karolinger', in *Die Klostergemeinschaft von Fulda im früheren Mittelalter,* II, *Untersuchungen,* ed. Karl Schmid, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften (Munich, 1978), Part 2, 571–639, 621–4. In general on this theme see C.N.L. Brooke, 'Priest, deacon and layman, from St Peter Damian to St Francis', in *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, ed. W.J. Sheils and Diana Wood, Studies in Church History, 26 (Oxford, 1989), 65–85. See also Chapters 2–3 below.

[9] For some of the consequences of this see e.g. R.N. Swanson, 'Angels incarnate: clergy and masculinity from Gregorian reform to Reformation', in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (London, 1999), 174–7; Gisela Muschiol, 'Men, women and liturgical practice in the early medieval west', in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300–900*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and J.M.H. Smith (Cambridge, 2004), 198–216, on gender and liturgy.

[10] Deaconesses were rare in the western church and the office appears to have survived in the west only within female monastic communities, and without any sacramental role: see Gisela Muschiol, *Famula Dei: Zur Liturgie in merowingischen Frauenklöstern* (Münster, 1994), 295–300; indeed, several church councils in fifth- and sixth-century Gaul forbade bishops to ordain deaconesses (ibid., 296–7); women were not supposed to place items on the altar or touch the altar cloth (ibid., 203–7). Deaconesses were more common in the eastern church, but there was ambivalence among eastern ecclesiastical authorities as to their precise status; see Valerie A. Karras, 'Female deacons in the Byzantine church', *Church History*, 73 (2004), 272–316; see also J.G. Davies, 'Deacons, deaconesses and the minor orders in the patristic period', *JEH*, 14 (1963), 1–15. The recent attempt by Gary Macy (*The Hidden History of Women's Ordination* (New York, 2008)) to prove that women were ordained as clergy in the western church down to the era of the Gregorian reform builds too ambitious a case on sparse and ambiguous evidence.

[11] François Mugnier, 'Cléricature', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, II, ed. Marcel Viller (Paris, 1953), part 1, 963–72; Jacques Dubois, 'Monachisme, IV: L'ordo monasticus chrétien', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, X, ed. Marcel Viller (Paris, 1980), 1557–71, esp. 1557–69.

4   Introduction

Latin word *regula*, meaning rule,[12] though the 'worldly' jibe lost some
of its edge after it had become widely accepted.[13]

Clergy faced criticism, often savage, from monks, who were irked by
what they saw as clerical laxity (as opposed to monastic asceticism) and
clerical disobedience (as opposed to monastic discipline). The harshest
outbursts of criticism occurred at times when monasticism was being
redefined, notably in the mid-tenth century and over the period from the
end of the eleventh century to the early twelfth, but in general, through-
out the entire period of existence of the Church, monastic authors have
proclaimed their superior spiritual qualities vis-à-vis those of the clergy.[14]
The reason for this is easy to grasp: monks were members of commu-
nities with a strong sense of identity, to join which they had had to
sacrifice individual freedom. Self-justification helped them to maintain
morale, and an effective way of doing this was to attack possible rivals.

[12] Alain Boureau, 'Hypothèses sur l'émergence lexicale et théorique de la catégorie de
séculier au XIIe siècle', in *Le clerc séculier au Moyen Âge*, ed. Francis Rapp, Publications
de la Sorbonne, Série histoire ancienne et médiévale, 27 (Paris, 1993), 35–43. Gerhoch
of Reichersberg's *Epistola cuiusdam presbyteri missa ad Innocentium papam quid distet inter
clericos seculares et regulares*, ed. Ernst Sackur, in *Libelli de Lite*, III, ed. Ernst Dümmler,
MGH (Hanover, 1897), 202–39, is a dialogue between a secular and a regular canon
defending the latter's position. For an example of the continuing tradition of criticism of
seculars, see *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry: A Critical Edition*, ed. John
Frederick Hinnebusch, O.P. (Fribourg, 1972), 152: 'Sicut enim homo pictus non est
homo, et denarius falsus denarius non est, ita qui huiusmodi sunt canonici seculares non
sunt canonici'. The term 'secular cleric' does occur before the high Middle Ages, in a
seventh-century exchange of poems between Bishop Frodebert of Tours and Bishop
Importunus of Paris: *Formulae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, ed. Karl Zeumer, MGH
Leges (Hanover, 1886), 220–6, 222, but here the distinction might be between a cleric
brought up at court and a cleric brought up in an episcopal household: I am grateful to
Danuta Shanzer for informing me about this passage and for discussing it with me.
[13] See discussion by Guy P. Marchal, 'Was war das weltliche Kanonikerinstitut im
Mittelalter? Dom- und Kollegiatstifte: Eine Einführung und eine neue Perspektive',
RHE, 94 (1999), 761–807, and 95 (2000), 7–53, 35–6. Godwin, precentor of
Salisbury Cathedral in the early twelfth century, argued that clerics ought not to be
called 'irregular' on the basis of property ownership: Kathleen Edwards, *The English
Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Manchester, 1967), 7; Teresa Webber,
Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral c.1075–c.1125 (Oxford, 1992), 128.
[14] For a few examples of monastic authors critical of clerks, cf Æthelwold (*CS*, I, i, 125–6,
136, 150); Bernard of Clairvaux, Ep. 2, in *Opera di San Bernardo*, ed. Ferruccio
Gastaldelli, 5 vols. in 7 parts to date (Rome, 1984–), VI, part 1, 26–45, addressed to
Fulk, a regular canon who had been persuaded by his uncle, a dean, to become a
(secular) canon at the Cathedral of Langres. On Fulk (of Aigremont, later archdeacon
of Langres), see *Cartulaire de Langres*, nos 18–19, 38, 299; for an English translation of
Bernard's letter, see *The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux*, tr. Bruno Scott James
(London, 1953), 10–18, no 2; Bernard, *De conversione ad clericos*, PL 182: 833–56; for
a twelfth-century debate between Master Theobald of Étampes and an anonymous
monk in which the monk is critical of clergy, see Raymonde Foreville and Dom Jean
Leclercq, 'Un débat sur le sacerdoce des moines au XIIe siècle', in *Analecta Monastica*, 4
(= *Studia Anselmiana*, 41) (Rome, 1957), 8–118.

Clerics, more likely even when living in communities to have some individual existence of their own, produced a much smaller quantity of apologetic literature than monks, and these texts tended to explain the various features of the liturgy, a branch of writing to which monks themselves also made a sizeable contribution.[15] The twelfth century produced considerable debate literature as monks and regular canons tried to define their own positions vis-à-vis each other and the rest of the clergy (the 'secular' clergy).[16] Few clerics attacked monks in a sustained way, though the courtier–cleric Walter Map (d. 1209/10) wrote a counter-blast against monkdom (*monachia*) and included this in his *De Nugis Curialium*.[17] It should be noted, however, that a surprisingly large number of monastic leaders, especially ones active in foundations and refoundations, had enjoyed a clerical formation, opting to become monks only in adulthood; evidently a clerical formation was better at encouraging initiative and qualities of leadership than a monastic one.[18]

The opening date chosen for this book, the turn of the eighth and ninth centuries, makes it possible to examine how the Carolingians shaped ecclesiastical institutions in western Europe for the rest of the Middle Ages. As far as a history of the clergy is concerned, the tenth century and much of the eleventh century can, indeed, be viewed as a continuation of

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[15] On the genre of *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, see Chapter 2 below, at nn. 58–64. By the twelfth century, much of this was being written by monks or by regular canons. Monastic writers had also made a contribution to commentary on the clerical life earlier on, notably Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856) with his *De Institutione Clericorum* (Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum libri tres*, ed. Detlev Zimpel (Frankfurt am Main, 1996)).

[16] *Libellus de diversis ordinibus et professionibus qui sunt in aecclesia*, ed. and tr. Giles Constable and Bernard Smith (Oxford, 1972) is a work by a canon in the city of Liège (perhaps Raimbald of the collegiate church of St John the Evangelist), which divides up the orders and callings of religious and canons into hermits, monks living close to laymen, monks living far from laymen, 'secular' monks, canons living far from laymen, canons living close to laymen (this group subdivided into three) and 'secular' canons living among laymen, and works out the spiritual significance of each *ordo* (cf pp. xxiii–xxv). Foreville and Leclercq, 'Un débat sur le sacerdoce des moines au XIIe siècle', 8–118, edit (with commentary) a letter of the secular cleric Theobald of Étampes to Archbishop Thurstan of York claiming the superiority of clerics over monks (at 52–3), followed by a treatise written in reaction to this by an angry anonymous monk (at 54–118), which points out among other matters that monks can be clerks (at 55–6). See also Gerhoch of Reichersberg, *Epistola cuiusdam presbyteri missa ad Innocentium*.

[17] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium: Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. and tr. M.R. James, C.N.L. Brooke and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford, 1983), 85–113 (Dist. i, c. 25), and see also 113–29 (Dist. i, cc. 26–31): these following chapters deal with Grandmontines, Gilbertines and Carthusians, and then also with various forms of heresy, clearly placed next to the discussion of the monastic orders to put the latter in a bad light. Walter's close contemporary Gerald of Wales was critical of the Cistercians: *Speculum Ecclesiae*, III, cc. 1–19 (Giraldus Cambrensis, *Opera Omnia*, ed. J.S. Brewer, J.F. Dimock and G.F. Warner, 8 vols., RS, 21 (London, 1861–91), IV, 129–48.

[18] See examples in Chapter 2 below.

6   Introduction

the Carolingian era, the time when we can observe the full implementa-
tion of Carolingian innovations over the long term.[19] However, sources
for the clergy began to diversify from the tenth century on. Whereas for
the pre-900 period the fullest sources tend to be prescriptive, for example
the diocesan statutes of Hincmar (archbishop of Rheims 845–82) and his
episcopal colleagues,[20] after about 900 the range of charter material,
especially charters issued by people other than rulers, begins to increase,
almost imperceptibly in the tenth century but more noticeably in the
eleventh and massively in the twelfth.[21] The steep rise in documentation
coincides roughly with the period when the process known as the 'Gre-
gorian Reform' slowly got put into effect within the ecclesiastical insti-
tutions. The Gregorian Reform was the eleventh-century movement
which demanded clerical celibacy and an end to the sale of ecclesiastical
office, and in a wider sense (but this was an aim which was much less
capable of achievement) the separation of the sacred from the secular.[22]
One of the principal results of this, though it was not one intended or
desired by the leaders of the movement, was the tightening up of legal
structures in the Church, which in turn necessitated a great increase in
documentation and in education, especially in law.[23] Although the

[19] Rudolf Schieffer, *Die Entstehung von Domkapiteln in Deutschland*, Bonner historische
Forschungen, 43 (Bonn, 1976), *passim*, but esp. 254–5, on how and when the Rule of
Aachen came to be applied in East Frankish cathedral communities: in the ninth century
in the valleys of the Rhine, Meuse and Moselle but not until the turn of the tenth and
eleventh centuries further east.

[20] MGH *Capit. ep.*; Alain Dierkens, 'La christianisation des campagnes de l'Empire de
Louis le Pieux: L'example du diocèse de Liège sous l'épiscopat de Walcaud (*c*.809–
c.831)', in *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)*,
ed. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford, 1990), 309–29; Wilfried Hartmann,
Kirche und Kirchenrecht um 900, Schriftender MGH, 58 (Hanover, 2008), 78–83; for
application of Carolingian episcopal statutes as a group to the study of the clergy see
Carine van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord: Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian
Period*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 6 (Turnhout, 2007).

[21] On the rise in charter output see e.g. M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 2nd
edn (Oxford, 1993), 44–80.

[22] I.S. Robinson, 'Reform and the Church, 1073–1122', in *NCMH*, IV, part 1, 268–334;
Kathleen G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and
Social Change* (Manchester, 2005); on debate over whether 'reform' is a suitable term,
see Julia Barrow, 'The ideas and application of reform', in *Cambridge History of
Christianity*, III, 345–62.

[23] Paul Fournier, 'Un tournant de l'histoire du droit: 1060–1140', in Paul Fournier,
Mélanges de droit canonique, ed. Theo Kölzer, 2 vols. (Aalen, 1983), II, 373–424;
Stephan Kuttner, 'The revival of jurisprudence', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the
Twelfth Century*, ed. R.L. Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 299–
323; Wilfried Hartmann and Kenneth Pennington, *The History of Medieval Canon Law in
the Classical Period, 1140–1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*
(Washington, DC, 2008); Charles Duggan, *Twelfth-Century Decretal Collections and
Their Importance in English History* (London, 1963).

principles of the Gregorian 'Reform' movement were spelled out in the
late eleventh century, it was a long time before they were generally and
fully accepted. Ending hereditary succession among the clergy was a slow
process.[24] However, by the opening years of the thirteenth century, many
of the changes demanded by Gregory VII had been put into practice, and
the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 show how, over a huge
range of issues and with great attention to detail, the papacy was directing
the activities of the Church.[25] Many of the decrees of the Fourth Lateran
concerned the clergy, and encouraged the intensive production of dio-
cesan statutes intended further to regulate the behaviour of clergy, in the
following decades.[26] The early thirteenth century is a suitable point to
close this study, since it marks the end of a period of development in
ecclesiastical administration.

In geographical terms, the areas studied here are principally France
north of (roughly) the Massif Central, the kingdom of Germany, and
England, with some attention to Scotland and Wales. The documenta-
tion available for southern Europe, particularly Italy, is vast, and the ratio
of unpublished to published charters is much higher there than in more
northerly areas of Europe. The time is not yet ripe for an overview of
Italian clergy in the central Middle Ages, highly desirable though it
would be.[27] Apart from the volume of material, there are good reasons
for splitting up the clergy of northern and southern Europe. Commu-
nities of cathedral clergy quite often became bodies of Augustinian, or
regular, canons in southern France, Italy and Spain in the eleventh and
twelfth centuries, but rarely did so in northern Europe.[28] They thus

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[24] See Chapter 4 below.
[25] Helene Tillmann, *Pope Innocent III*, tr. Walter Sax (Amsterdam, 1980), 189–201,
    237–40; C.R. Cheney, *Pope Innocent III and England* (Stuttgart, 1976), 43–9;
    Raymonde Foreville, *Le pape Innocent III et la France* (Stuttgart, 1992), 313–40.
[26] C.R. Cheney, *English Synodalia of the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1941); *Les statuts
    synodaux français du XIIIe siècle*, ed. Odette Pontal and Joseph Avril, 6 vols. to date
    (Paris, 1971–2011); Raymonde Foreville, *Gouvernement et vie de l'Église au Moyen Âge*
    (London, 1979).
[27] But cf Emanuele Curzel, 'Le quinte e il palcoscenico. Appunti storiografici sui capitoli
    delle cattedrali italiani', in *Canonici delle cattedrali nel medioevo*, Quaderni di storia
    religiosa (Verona, 2003), 39–67; Emanuele Curzel, *I canonici e il capitolo della cattedrale
    di Trento dal XII al XV secolo* (Bologna, 2001). Southern Tirol, unsurprisingly, had many
    similarities with cathedrals in Austria and in southern Germany; see also Leo Santifaller,
    Das Brixner Domkapitel in seiner persönlichen Zusammensetzung im Mittelalter, Schlern-
    Schriften, 7 (Innsbruck, 1924).
[28] For the few northern European exceptions (the Augustinian Salzburg, Gurk, Sées,
    Carlisle, St Andrews and Christ Church Dublin, and the Premonstratensian
    Ratzeburg, Havelberg, Brandenburg and Whithorn, see Chapter 3 at nn. 196–7, 228,
    230–1, 234). In general on Augustinian cathedral chapters, see Dereine, 'Chanoines',

adopted a more monastic pattern of life and their inmates had much less
scope to pursue individual careers. None of this is to argue, of course,
that the two areas did not influence each other. Developments in Italy
had a profound effect on northern Europe, and significant numbers of
Italian clerics travelled there to find employment. Examples include
Stephen of Novara in the tenth century, Lanfranc in the eleventh, Master
Vacarius in the mid-twelfth century and many members of the chapter of
York Minster in the late twelfth and the thirteenth centuries.[29] Nor is it
to argue that northern Europe itself formed a socially and culturally
united whole; this was far from being the case, as will emerge in what
follows.

The structure of this book

The aim of this book is to examine the entry of boys and men into the
clergy and the various stages of the careers they formed once there.
Fundamental to these questions are, first, an understanding of the cler-
ical office itself and, second, an understanding of the ways in which
clerical life was influenced by monasticism. Accordingly, Chapter 2 deals
with the clerical office and its relation to the clerical life cycle, and
Chapter 3 with the creation of rules for clerical life and with the wider
question of monastic attitudes to the clergy. These two chapters aim to
explain the ground rules under which clerical careers operated. The
remaining chapters deal with the relationship between clergy and their
families, the fostering of young clerics, education, the work of clerics in
courts and households, clergy in cathedrals and collegiate churches, and
parish clergy.

DHGE, XII, 353–405; on southern France see Jean Becquet, 'L'évolution des chapitres
cathédraux: Régularisations et sécularisations', in *Le monde des chanoines (XIe–XIVe
siècles)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 24 (Toulouse, 1989), 19–39; and Hélène Millet, 'Les
chanoines des cathédrales du Midi', in *La cathédrale (XIIe–XIVe siècle)*, Cahiers de
Fanjeaux, 30 (Toulouse, 1995), 121–44.

[29] On Stephen of Novara see Hartmut Hoffmann, 'Die ältere Burchardvita, die jüngere
Kilianspassio und Stephan von Novara', *Deutsches Archiv*, 62 (2006), 485–503. Lanfranc
taught at Avranches before entering Bec; Margaret Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford,
1978), 15, 20; H.E.J. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk and Archbishop* (Oxford, 2003),
10; on Vacarius see R.W. Southern, 'Master Vacarius and the beginning of an English
academic tradition', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard
William Hunt*, ed. J.J.G. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976), 257–86; also
R.M. Thomson, 'Serlo of Wilton and the schools of Oxford', *Medium Aevum*, 68
(1999), 1–12; and Michael Jones, 'Master Vacarius, civil lawyer, canon of Southwell
and parson of Norwell, Nottinghamshire', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 53 (2009), 1–20;
on York see *Fasti*, VI, 9, 24–7, 40, 50, 53, 66–7, 69, 72–4, 77, 83, 86, 88–91, 94–5,
109–10, 113–14, 116, 123–4, 127, 129–30, and cf 11 (mostly later thirteenth century).

The clerical office (Chapter 2) had been long established by the outset of our period, but some adjustments in how it operated and how it was bestowed are visible in the period from 800 to 1200, and these are worth exploring for the light they shed on clerical life cycles. Entry into the clergy was effected by ordination, which was not a one-off event but a series of rites conducted at intervals usually spread over about two decades, though canon law allowed that this could be greatly speeded up for adult recruits to the clergy. But although canon law allowed this and although entry of both children and adults is visible in late antiquity and the very early Middle Ages, by the outset of our period adult entry into the clergy had more or less disappeared. The reasons for this, and even more the consequences of this, are worth exploring for the light they shed on western medieval society between the eighth and the twelfth centuries, in particular the influence that parents could exercise over their children's futures and also the consequences of child entry into the clergy for the pattern of education. Another shift is visible in the later eleventh century when grades of ordination cease to be mentioned as much as they had been in hagiographies, biographies and charters. Here too is a pointer to educational developments. Similarly, tonsure, the visible sign of being a cleric, ceases to be mentioned much in narrative sources from the later eleventh century onwards, though references to it in administrative sources continue. Also of significance when reflecting on grades of ordination is the question of which grade clerics found it convenient to remain in without attempting further progression (it was not necessary to progress through all the grades, and many clerics stopped before reaching the priesthood). Discussion of the opportunities open to priests, deacons, subdeacons and so on over the 800–1200 time span helps to explain some features of the internal organisation of churches and also of clerical careers.

Looking over the shoulders of the secular clergy were their regular colleagues, monks, and, from the mid-eleventh century, regular canons as well, and these are the subject of Chapter 3. Since it was normal for monks in the western church to be ordained from the ninth century onwards (indeed, there are several examples of monks being ordained before this point), there was much overlap between monks and clergy in terms of sacramental and liturgical provision; monks, who were more vigorous in promoting their own cause, found it useful to upbraid clergy for what they saw as failings, and at intervals throughout our period clergy came under pressure to be more like monks. This led to the creation of a variety of rules for clerics living in communities, some composed in the eighth and ninth centuries, and with further work in the eleventh century, when the fourth-century Rule of St Augustine was

revised and considerably expanded. Monastic pressure on clergy was also manifested in demands from the tenth century onwards for individual churches run by secular clergy to be taken over by monks, a process which (when successful) limited opportunities for secular clerics. Examining this development from the point of view of the latter rather than (as has been more normal hitherto) their adversaries helps to provide some fresh insights into the powers of patrons and pressure groups over the period from *c.*900 onwards. The chronology of the monastic pressure points on the clergy is also worth attention.

Having set out the clerical framework and the responses it excited among the regulars the book proceeds to examine three facets of the early careers of clergy. Chapter 4 examines the relationship of clerics with their immediate families. Unsurprisingly, parents were the relatives with the most influence over young clerics, including the decision about entry into the office. This was true whether the fathers of future clerics were themselves clerics or were laymen. This question needs careful reflection. First of all, is it safe to assume (as some recent general studies of the eleventh and twelfth centuries have done) that clerical marriage and hereditary succession were widely accepted down to the later eleventh century and beyond and that they did not meet with serious opposition until the Gregorian Reform?[30] After all, moves to prevent clergy from marrying after ordination in the higher grades had been routine in canon law since the early fifth century. Examination of the family networking of high-ranking clerics over the period from 800 to 1100 shows a rather different picture in Francia and most of its successor states, apart from some peripheral areas, notably Brittany. By and large, the secular aristocracy seems to have embraced clerical celibacy with enthusiasm as far as their younger sons were concerned, as a useful strategy for limiting the numbers of heirs in subsequent generations, and parents sought reinforcement from brothers already in ecclesiastical careers to guide the careers of their young nephews. The role of the clerical uncle was a significant one during the Middle Ages. Father–son clerical dynasties certainly existed – chiefly in the British Isles, Brittany and eleventh- and twelfth-century Normandy – but outside these areas not at a high enough social level to be influential. Clergy were influenced not only by their parents and their uncles but also by their siblings, and the relationships between clerics and their brothers and sisters help to shed light on the

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[30] R.I. Moore, *The First European Revolution, c.970–1215* (Oxford, 2000), 10–11, 15–16, 62, 88; Henrietta Leyser, 'Clerical purity and the re-ordered world', in *The Cambridge History of Christianity,* IV: *Christianity in Western Europe, c.1100–c.1500,* ed. Miri Rubin and Walter Simons (Cambridge, 2009), 11–21.