# The Catholic Historical Review

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PUERI, IU VENES, AND VIRI: AGE AND UTILITY IN THE GREGORIAN REFORM

BY

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This article explores the role played by ideas about age and appropriate behavior for different stages of life in shaping the eleventh-century ecclesiastical reformers' vision for an ordered Christian society—notable at a time when the role of the Church and especially the papacy as both the definer and enforcer of utilitas was increasingly emphasized. By focusing on how some influential reformers and writers characterized youth, adulthood, and that shadowy stage between them, the iuventus, this article examines the extent to which the reformers not only drew upon the language of age and life stages but also combined them with ideas of suitability and utility in a powerful rhetoric that reinforced their scheme of social definition.

The definition of precise roles for all parts of the societas christiana has long been acknowledged as a fundamental part of the movement for ecclesiastical reform in the later eleventh century.¹ Old

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¹The literature is vast: some seminal works include Gerd Tellenbach, Church, State, and Christian Society at the Time of the Investiture Contest, trans. Ralph F. Bennett (Oxford, 1940; repr. Toronto, 1991); Ian S. Robinson, Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest: The Polemical Literature of the Late Eleventh Century (Manchester, UK, 1978); Karl J. Leyser, "The Polemics of the Papal Revolution," in idem,
assumptions of privilege and status were often set to one side as individuals were increasingly evaluated in terms of their efficacy in the promotion of the reformers' goals. Not only were kings and nobles—friends and foes alike—reprimanded and castigated for their failure to live up to the reformers' expectations, even the clergy were pointedly reminded of their specific place in the new order of things. Indeed, it can be argued that Gregory VII in particular, as well as reformers associated with him, by increasingly defining individuals in terms of their function, their suitability (*idoneitas*), and perhaps especially their utility (*utilitas*), thereby focused their attention less on the broader issues of pastoral care, penance, and personal salvation than on more pressing practical and ecclesiological issues.

Such a view—however tenable in part—nevertheless presents a problematic characterization of the reformers and their program for the renovation of the Church and Christian society, one in which both pastoral care and concern for penance, in fact, played an integral part. Gregory VII, for instance, repeatedly displayed a strong interest in the spiritual well-being of the wider Christian *familia*. He exhorted and

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2 Even to the extent that—as in the case of William I of England—Gregory was prepared to overlook certain shortcomings: *Registrum Gregorii VII*, 9.5, pp. 579-80 (405-06): "The king of England, who to be sure does not in certain respects conduct himself as scrupulously [*ita religiose*] as we desire, nevertheless he does not destroy or sell the churches of God ... he compels even by an oath priests to abandon the wives and laymen the tithes that they are holding." See also *Reg.* 7.1, pp. 458-60 (324-25).

offered spiritual advice to individuals as diverse as Matilda of Tuscany, Empress Agnes, Queen Judith of Hungary, William the Conqueror, Count Albert of Calw, Olaf III of Norway, the kings and princes of Spain, Centullus of Bearn, the people of Bohemia, and the monks of Vallombrosa and Cluny, as well as addressing numerous letters, especially in the later years of his pontificate, to all the faithful.4 Indeed, it can be argued in many ways that even his letters of chastisement were motivated by pastoral concern, perhaps most notably seen in his rebuke of Abbot Hugh of Cluny over the monastic profession of Duke Hugh of Burgundy in 1079.5 Both before and during his pontificate, Gregory was clearly devoted to urging monastic and canonical orders to ever more stringent interpretations of religious life, and as Cowdrey has argued, “before all else, his motives were religious.”6 Moreover, at his November synod in Rome in 1078, Gregory famously promulgated an important initiative against false penances and described how true penance should be given. Here he not only showed himself to be especially preoccupied with specific consideration of individuals’ positions and occupations but also stressed the importance of inner contrition largely lacking in the earlier penitential tradition where, when determining the amount of penance required, considerable emphasis had been placed on formulaic compensation along with the status, age, and condition of individuals (be it clerical or lay).7 Although the connec-

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4For example, Reg. 1.47, pp. 71-73 (51-53); 1.85, pp. 121-23 (89-90); 2.11, pp. 142-43 (106); 2.44, pp. 180-82 (133-34); 2.72, pp. 232-33 (167); 4.28, pp. 343-47 (242-45); 6.13, pp. 415-18 (292-94); 6.20, pp. 431-32 (304). Epistolae vagantes, no. 2, pp. 4-6; no. 32, pp. 84-86; no. 39, pp. 96-98; no. 54, pp. 128-34; no. 55, pp. 134-36.

5Reg. 6.17, pp. 423-24 (298-99); see also 1.62, pp. 90-91 (65-66).


7Reg., 6. 5b, c.6 (14, 15), p. 404 (284): “Falsas penitentias dicimus.” The literature on penance in the earlier Middle Ages is vast; some key works include: Cyrille Vogel, Les “Libri paenitentiales” (Turnhout, 1978); Raymond Kottje, Die Bussbücher Halitgars von Cambral und des Hrabanus Maurus (Berlin, 1980); Alan J. Frantzen, The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England (New Brunswick, NJ, 1983); Pierre J. Payer, Sex and the Penitentials: The Development of a Sexual Code (Toronto, 1984); Ludger Körtgen,
tion of penance and reform in the eleventh century is beyond the scope of the present article, the extent to which ideas about age and appropriate behavior for different stages of life played a role in shaping the reformers' vision for an ordered Christian society remains something of a neglected topic. By focusing on how some influential eleventh-century reformers and writers characterized youth, adulthood, and that shadowy stage between them, the *iuventus,* this article explores the extent to which the reformers not only drew upon the language of age and life stages but also combined them with ideas of suitability and utility in a powerful rhetoric that reinforced their scheme of social definition. This is not to suggest that the Gregorian period was necessarily innovative in its concepts of youth and utility; the Carolingian world would offer any number of interesting parallels,


9For a number of late antique and medieval authors, *iuventus* did constitute adulthood: see Shulamith Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (London, 1990), p. 22; and Deborah Youngs, *The Life Cycle In Western Europe, c. 1300-c. 1500* (Manchester, UK, 2006), esp. pp. 96-125, 126-92. This usage was not consistent in the eleventh century: see below.
albeit in a different reforming context. Rather, the rhetoric seemed to acquire a new (or renewed) urgency as the reformers sought to underline the role of the Church and especially the papacy as both the definer and enforcer of utilitas.

Late antique and subsequent medieval writers had clear, if not always consistent, ideas about the different stages of life, on the whole taking their definitions from Isidore of Seville. These stages were generally seen to include adolescentia, iuventus, senectus, and senium, although some if not most literati also divided preadult life into infanti, pueritia, and adolescentia, leaving iuventus as something of a postadolescent period, which might or might not be equated with full adult status. Although many agreed that infancy lasted until age seven, and that pueritia ended at age twelve for girls and at age fourteen for boys (at least outside of a monastery, where pueritia might extend to age twenty-five), there was no clear consensus as to when adolescence came to an end, with some suggesting twenty-one, twenty-five, twenty-eight, or thirty and others extending it even to thirty-five. In the anonymous Life of Pope Leo IX, for instance, Leo (or Bruno as he was known before his elevation) was said to be entering the latter phase of adolescence in his twenty-third year. On the question of when iuventus ended, there was even less agreement: for some, "youth" lasted to age forty or even forty-five, as the famous case of William Marshall makes clear.

The ambiguity surrounding such intellectual definitions was if anything more acute in practice, especially in the ecclesiastical and, above all, monastic worlds, where what may appear in one context to be setting out a typology of life-stage categories is in reality a variable and frequently imprecise terminology intelligible only in the particular context of the record, and not always even then. Theodore of Canterbury, for instance, described the infantes monasterii as includ-

10 Although beyond the scope of the present article, such a comparative study would be a very useful one.

11 For more discussion, see Shahar, Childhood in the Middle Ages, pp. 21-31; and Youngs, Life Cycle in the Middle Ages, pp. 96-125.


ing those up to age fourteen, while the *pueri monasterii* encompassed monks up to age twenty-five.\textsuperscript{14} Giles Constable, however, has shown with evidence from tenth- and eleventh-century monastic customaries from Cluny that language was usually inconsistent, with a variety of terms such as *maiores, priores, seniores, infantes, iuniores, minores,* and *pueri* being used without clear definitions.\textsuperscript{15} The Rule of St. Benedict had displayed a predilection for the terms *seniores* and *iuniores,* the former generally suggesting older monks or at least earlier entrants into religious life, who were spiritually more experienced. Yet in many Cluniac and other customaries, although the two groups were often juxtaposed, what the words actually denoted in terms of position or status was not clearly specified.\textsuperscript{16} The terminology of *iuvenes* or *iuventus* was especially ambiguous. Sometimes in the customaries it seems to denote a position of authority, either in terms of liturgical duties or more broadly in situating this group’s place within the monastery’s hierarchy. At other times, it seems to refer to individuals who still needed guidance from the *seniores,* or to ones who were at least clearly distinct from, and generally inferior to, them. Bernard of Zell, for instance, referred to the *magistri puerorum* and the *custodes iuvenum.*\textsuperscript{17} In the Vallombrosan redaction of the Cluniac customary, the younger monks, who were not to speak except within the hearing of the master, are referred to as *infantes.*\textsuperscript{18} In the Fulda-Trier customary, however, where the separate arrangements both for retiring to the dormitory and sleeping for the *infantes* and the *adolescentes* are elaborated, it is noted that the remaining *iuventus* sleep among the *senioribus.*\textsuperscript{19} Yet elsewhere—in the *Liber tramits,* for instance—the *iuvenes* are to be under *custodia* whilst in the cloister.\textsuperscript{20}

In his article on youth in twelfth-century Francia, Georges Duby famously argued that boys between the ages of fifteen and about nine-

\textsuperscript{14}Meens, "Children and Confession," p. 54.

\textsuperscript{15}Giles Constable, "*Seniores et pueri* à Cluny aux Xe, Xe siècles," repr. in *idem,* Cluny from the Tenth to the Twelfth Centuries, [Variorum Collected Studies Series], 2 (Aldershot, UK, 2000), orig. pp. 17–24.

\textsuperscript{16}Constable, "*Seniores et pueri,*" pp. 17–18.

\textsuperscript{17}Ordo Cluniacensis, 1, 3–4 in Vetus disciplina monastica, ed. Marquard Herrgott (Paris, 1726), pp. 143–44.


\textsuperscript{19}Redactio Fuldensis-Trevirensis, c.29, *ibid.*, 3, p. 288.

\textsuperscript{20}Liber tramits aevi Odilonis abbatis, c.198, ed. Peter Dinter [CCM, 10], (Siegburg, 1980), p. 279.
teen who had not completed their military training were generally considered to be _puerī_ or at least _adolescentes_. Such individuals only became _iuvenes_ on the completion of military training, but remained thus until they acquired wives or fiefs when, as a consequence, they became _viri_. Although Duby did note that the term _iuvenes_ was occasionally used for certain groups of churchmen and especially monks, he argued that it was most frequently employed to denote warriors at a specific stage in their careers—warriors, moreover, who were no longer adolescents but quasi-adults. Thus, for Duby, _iuventus_ was more than simply an age group; it also denoted a socioeconomic condition, describing the young and (in some cases) less young who were unmarried, did not have their own lands, and required patronage or parental concession to become fully adult males. The consistency in meaning that Duby ascribed to _iuventus_ in early twelfth-century Francia seems, however, to be lacking in broader contemporary usage. Duby seems generally to have used _iuvenes_ to refer to knights up to the time that they married. In _The Ecclesiastical History_, however, as Duby does in fact note, Orderic describes married knights as “youths” but referred to knights who had fathered children (even if they were younger men) as “_viri_.” This suggests a more complicated criteria—at least for contemporaries—beyond actual age for what made a man a “man.” This was something that the reformers would problematize with ideas of utility and spiritual progress.

The language of the eleventh-century reformers drew inevitably upon a long tradition of pastoral rhetoric and biblical imagery that was invariably paternalistic, and, unsurprisingly, successive eleventh-century popes, priests, abbots, and monks addressed the recipients of their letters and their flocks as their sons or daughters and often more broadly as simply their children. This terminology of youth and age was, of course, a commonplace within the Church whereby ecclesiastical superiors instructed, chastened, and guided the spiritually less adept. The eleventh-century hermit and cardinal-bishop Peter Damian, for instance, frequently employed such language in his letters, although interestingly, he also on occasion inverted this discourse as means of emphasizing his own humility. For example, in a letter to the hermit


Teuzo between 1055 and 1057 following a particularly acrimonious face-to-face meeting, he noted that what a "iunioris" [meaning himself] has dared to say may perhaps taste bitter...24 The language suggests less one who is younger in age than one who is less tried in spiritual terms. Damian returned to this theme in a letter to his secretary, Ariprandus, between 1057 and 1058, whom he reprimanded for not following the rules of the hermitage on the "pretext of untested youth [ne per aetatis aduck inbecilis]" and who thus needed to be on his guard and accept reproof "even from those younger [iunioris] than himself."25 Here, it must said, the language is less ambiguous.

For Damian, however, both the analogies and language of youth and age were more frequently used to describe the state of one's spiritual ability, with youth often, although not always, denoting a less spiritually advanced person. For instance, in a letter to an unnamed bishop in 1043, he described the duty of episcopal office to "nourish us who are younger [iuniores and hence less adept] at the breasts of holy preaching."26 Damian would later chastise the lawyer Atto for his failure to undertake the monastic profession in terms of his emulating a puer, who "as in play" [quasi ludendo] attempted to take back from God what he had first offered him.27

Damian most often reached for the analogies of youth and age to express the idea of growing in spiritual ability. This had a long tradition in monastic hagiographic literature with which Damian was undeniably familiar.28 Writing to Countess Blanche in 1059-60 (and later to Alexander II in 1064) of how his disciple Dominic Loricatus tried to help a brother hermit who could not bring himself to endure the

25Ibid., letter 54, 2:141; trans., 2:345. Damian gives a comparable example with similar language in his Life of Romuald, in which the monks at Sant'Apollinare in Classe grow irate at being instructed by a "iunioris" who is still a novice: Vita beati Romualdi, c.3, ed. Giovanni Tabacco [Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 94] (Rome, 1957), p. 19.
28For example, John of Salerno, Vita sancti Odonis, c.16 [PL, 133:50] where Odo, although a "young beginner [iuventus]" is seen to surpass the ranks of the old men in spiritual ability. See also Odo of Cluny, Vita sancti Geraldii Aurillacensis comitis, c.9 [PL, 133:649], where Gerald, having experienced temptation, is described as a youth, but one who "like a man" was more discreet for the experience.
“blessed discipline”—that is, the self-flagellation for which Dominic was especially famed—Damian recorded Dominic as saying: “God is surely strong enough to lift you up from lowly things to those that are higher and to toughen the milk-fed days of your childhood [infantiam] until you grow to manly strength [ad iuvenalis roboris incrementa firmare].”\(^{29}\) Although here iuvenalis would seem to imply manly status and hence adulthood as Isidore had recommended, elsewhere Damian was more specific about different stages of life, which he clearly saw as reflecting different phases of the route to spiritual improvement. For Damian, of course, the spiritual life was a battle, a race in which only the true athleticism would come through.\(^ {30}\) That said, he recognized that men engaged in this “battle” not simply because of their own decision but chiefly through the prompting of God, who inspired to his service men of all different ages: some from “ripe old age” (senectute matures), some from the “full vigor of surging youth” (iuvenalis incrementi vigore robustos), some from the “flower of adolescence” (primo pubescentis adolescentiae), and even those who were still “nursing infants” (puericiae lactantis).\(^ {31}\)

Although in many ways Damian’s shifting language probably reflects the broader ambiguity within monastic culture in defining age, status, and condition, it is clear that he equated progress in spiritual life with the condition of becoming a “vir.” In a letter to the hermit William in 1045, Damian urged him to take up arms “like a man [corripite arma viriliter] . . . and eagerly charge where the battle rages.”\(^ {32}\) Acting viriliter for Damian was, of course, about more than mere age: it was essentially the ability both to exert control over one’s natural sinful proclivities and the means of transforming one’s self into a more perfect spiritual being. It was also, perhaps inescapably, gendered. This is evident not only when he urged Countess Adelaide of Turin in 1064 to act viriliter—to act beyond her normal condition of weakness as a woman to promote and enforce spiritual renewal and reform—but

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\(^{30}\) For example, *Vita beati Romualdi*, c.17, p. 41, where Damian describes Romuald’s ambition to reach new heights each day, to go from strength to strength. Cf. Irven M. Resnick, “Litterati, Spirituali, and Lay Christians according to Otloh of Saint Emmeram,” *Church History*, 55 (1986), 165-78.

\(^{31}\) *Die Briefe des Petrus Damian*, letter 117, 3:318; trans., 4:320. Here the context would suggest that “juvenalis” is not equated with full adult status, which is reflected in Blum’s translation by “youth.”

also in his *Liber gomorrhianus*, where Damian encouraged sodomitical bishops to eschew that sin and act "viriliter."\(^{33}\) For Damian, the highest means of acting *viriliter*, of exerting the necessary self-control, was naturally the monastic routine and especially the eremitical lifestyle, where individuals battled for spiritual perfection within the confines of their cells. Here again, his language is striking, even if we discount the use of *homo / homines* as principally aimed at underlining the opposition of man to God. For Damian, the cell was the "wrestling ring where brave men [*homen*] are engaged," a place where a "man [*homo*] of clean heart sees God."\(^{34}\) Moreover, within the hermit's cell, even "holy boys [*sancti pueri*] [could] curb the passion of raging fires."\(^{35}\) Indeed, for Damian, the cell was the key accessory "to the secret deliberation of God with men [*hominum*]."\(^{36}\) Although convictions such as these had long lain at the heart of monastic and especially eremitical ideology whereby the monastic routine promoted through its daily, weekly, and even annual cycles of liturgy the opportunity for self-examination that progressively dissolved the individual from his desires,\(^{37}\) Damian's flexible use of different stages of life here is intriguing. Although he clearly believed that a youth could aspire to and even reach this plateau, spiritual achievement was framed in terms of the ability to move beyond the capriciousness of youth, of extending self-control over desire—in short, of acting "viriliter."

Whereas Damian's terminology reflected the ambiguity of the monastic tradition, Gregory VII also had what might be called a flexible understanding of different stages of life, although a decretal (JL 5291) modeled on Isidore's *Etymologies* with a ruling about how to determine the age of puberty and adulthood is attributed to him in

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\(^{34}\)Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani, letter 28, 1:273-74; trans., 1:283.

\(^{35}\)Ibid. Blum translates *pueri* here as "young men"; I think, however, that "boys" is more appropriate given the context.

\(^{36}\)Ibid.

What is intriguing with Gregory, however, is the extent to which his letters juxtaposed ideas of utility and suitability with the terminology of age, even though not always consistently. For instance, the suitability of Gilduin as the candidate for the bishopric of Dol in 1076 was not, in the end, enough for his promotion. Gregory, while noting that Gilduin came from a good family and was of sound character, added that he was not yet “mature or informed enough to bear the weight of the episcopate quapropter eiusdem iuventis.”

Here, it is clear that *iuventis* is not equated with full adult status, especially as Gregory would refer to the successful candidate, Ivo, as *vir*, commenting that he was suitable in terms of knowledge and gravity of character as well as his age.

Yet on other occasions, age or youthful status was not an impediment, as can be seen in the promotion of Richard as the new abbot of St. Victor in Marseille in November 1079.

This, however, is an intriguing example. In a letter to Richard, Gregory expressed some reservations about the abbot-elect’s suitability, wishing that “the hope of so many brothers concerning you may not be in vain,” and he stated that Richard “should manfully [viriliter] put on the holy enthusiasm of [his] brother” (whom he was succeeding). Moreover, Richard needed to “flee worldly and youthful desires [iuvenalia desideria] like death . . . lest by reason of [his] youthfulness [iuentutis] a holy monastery should . . . suffer any kind of harm to its religion.” Here, even though Gregory accepted that Richard was suitable, it is striking that he emphasized the need for him to act beyond what he clearly saw as Richard’s “youthful” condition and to assume the “spiritual-age” that his position required.

Like Damian, Gregory seemed, at least rhetorically, to equate maturity with the ability for self-control and youth with the lack thereof. This can be seen clearly in his dealings with Philip I of France, who...
was repeatedly castigated on account of youthful, and hence for Gregory, inappropriate, behavior. Writing to the bishops of France in September 1074 for instance, Gregory noted that Philip needed "... to correct his faults, and abandoning the ways of his youth [iuventutis] ... begin to restore the bruised dignity and glory of his kingdom." Gregory would later acknowledge his own role in allowing the king to continue in these misguided ways. Writing to Count William of Poitou in November the same year, he noted that it had been a long time "that we have put up with his iniquities ... [that] for a long time by sparing his youthfulness [here called suae adolescentiae], we have overlooked the harm to the Church." (At that time, Philip was twenty-two.) Philip continued to be a thorn in Gregory's side throughout his pontificate, and after the prolonged struggle first to correct and then to oust Archbishop Manasses of Rheims, Gregory wrote to the king in December 1080 and again couched his condemnation of Philip's role in terms of age and suitability, noting that he had "bore with the past failings of your youth [adolescentia] in the hope of your correction," now that Philip had become a "man in years" (tam aetate vir factus), he was obliged to "see to it in this matter that we should not seem fruitlessly to have spared the faults of your youth [iuventutis]." Here it could be suggested that in aspiring to encourage Philip to act in accordance with what was apposite for his "life-age," Gregory had now recognized that it was perhaps less an issue of the king's physical age than the need for him to accept papal guidance and act like a "man" with maturity and gravity.

Gregory's most revealing attitudes toward age and utility are found, perhaps unsurprisingly, with reference to the German king Henry IV. In a letter written shortly after his elevation to the apostolic see in 1073 when Henry IV's status was still under scrutiny due to his continuing communion with advisers who had been excommunicated by Alexander II, Gregory sternly informed Bishop Bruno of Verona that he would fully esteem the king on "the condition that ... forsaking his youthful pursuits [here, puerilibus studiis] he be diligent in "wisely imitating the pattern of holy kings"—in other words, that he be "useful." For his own part, Henry IV relied on the excuse of "youth" (pueritia) to explain his less than ideal past behavior—something for which he had been reprimanded on the occasion of his majority in

43Reg., 2.5, p. 132 (98).
44Reg., 2.18, p. 151 (112).
45Reg., 8.20, p. 543 (386).
46Reg., 1.24, pp. 40-41 (30).
1065 by Peter Damian, who urged him "with manly vigor [to] rouse yourself to spiritual enthusiasm." Writing to the pope in late August 1073, Henry explained that his failing derived "partly [from] the enticement of deluding youth [pueritia], partly by the licenses of [his] own imperious power, and partly by the seducing deceptions of those whose counsels [he had] been all too gullible [seductiles nimium] in following." Here, perhaps unwittingly, youth was equated with delusion, with an inability to cope with the responsibilities of power and with a failure to discern the quality of counsel; in other words, Henry had effectively admitted to being unsuitable for kingship. This contrasted sharply with Gregory VII, who, even in adolescentia, possessed the ability to undertake a path to master his own desires, as recorded by his hagiographer, Paul of Bernried.49

For Gregory, however, Henry was not always characterized as a bad "youth." In December 1074, Henry was in fact the person to whom the pope intended to entrust the Roman Church while he journeyed to come to the aid of eastern Christians.50 Moreover, in the early part of 1075, Gregory commended Henry for "manfully" (viriliter) resisting simony.51 This suggests that Henry's apparent willingness to work to promote reform had compensated for his earlier juvenile behavior and had emphasized his suitability. Yet as their relations deteriorated throughout that year and thereafter, Henry's uncooperative, disobedient, and even sacrilegious behavior was frequently described in terms of youth, a behavior moreover that stood in sharp contrast to that of the "obedient" and "suitable" Rudolf of Rheinfelden.52

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48 Registrum Gregorii VII, 1.29a, p. 49 (35).
49 Paul of Bernried, Vita Gregorii VII, c.1.6 [PL, 148:42]; Ian S. Robinson, trans., The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII (Manchester, UK, 2004), pp. 262-364, here c.10, p. 266. This, of course, is a topos of hagiography, as a saint's youth was often described as a prodigious omen of sanctity or else was ignored altogether: see Pierre Toubert, Les structures du Latium médiéval: Le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IXe siècle à la fin du XIIe siècle, 2 vols. [Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 221], (Rome, 1973), 2:806-40, here p. 812. Also reprinted as "Essai sur les modèles hagiographiques de la réforme grégorienne," in idem, Etudes sur l'Italie médiévale (IXe-XIVe siècles), [Variorum Collected Studies, CS 461], (London, 1976), with same pagination.
50 Registrum Gregorii VII, 2.31, pp. 165-68 (123).
51 Reg., 3.3, p. 246 (176).
52 For example, Reg., 1.21, p. 35 (24-25), where the quality of Rudolf's counsel is emphasized; 2.45, pp. 182-85 (136), in which Rudolf, with the other princes, is required to assist with the boycott of simoniacal and unchaste clergy; and especially 4.23, p. 336
Other eleventh-century writers also suggest that ideas about utility and age were coalescing in reform rhetoric. Although clearly a work of hagiography, the *Vita Gregorii VII* by Paul of Bernried nevertheless offers some telling examples, especially given the fact that its author had access to the pope's letters, as well as other "Gregorian" materials such as works of Anselm of Lucca, Bernold of Constance, and Bonizo of Sutri. In the *vita*, Paul also described the problem of Henry IV in terms of his "youth." Noting the forbearance of successive popes, Paul wrote that "when all men reported the evidence of his youthful im- perfections [here, *pueritiae imperfectae*], the Roman pontiffs bore with his impudence, supposing that when he reached manhood [virile tempus] he could correct himself." For Paul, the king's inability to act like a man—having reached that age (maiorum ascendens currum)—necessitated action on the part of Gregory VII. Paul also underlined the failure of the king by stressing the suitability of Rudolf of Rheinfelden, whom he characterized as "a man [vir] outstanding for his humility and suitable [idoneus] for the royal honour in age and in morals." Moreover, according to the *Vita Gregorii*, Rudolf even refused to associate his own son with the kingship because of his insistence that the princes elect as his successor one whom they found worthy by virtue of his age as well as the dignity of his character. Writing in 1128 after the resolution of the investiture controversy, it was, of course, Paul's intention to refute contemporary critics and provide the reformers with their martyr and saint. Yet his characterization of Henry's failings and lack of suitability in terms of youth strikes a chord with the depic-
tion of the king by one of the most gifted, if idiosyncratic of eleventh-century historians, the monk Lampert of Hersfeld.

Lampert was among the most vociferous of Henry IV's critics and almost invariably expressed his condemnations in terms of the king's "youthful," even "juvenile," behavior. Thus in his annals for 1073, he referred to the king's youthful disposition (*iuvenilis animis*) and his correspondingly stubborn refusal to accept correction, both of which frequently led to inappropriate, even tyrannical, behavior.\(^57\) According to Lampert, Henry also displayed the inconstancy of a youthful disposition (*iuvenilis animi inconstantia*) and youthful ineptitude (*iuvenilis ineptiae*).\(^58\) Yet what is especially striking is Lampert's linkage of this youthful behavior to what he described as Henry's perverse sexual habits. The combination of these led him "to giving himself over to worse and to destroying the royal office to which he should have brought manly dignity [pro virili portione]."\(^59\) For Lampert, the office of a Christian king necessitated a display of *gravitas* and self-control whatever the individual's "year-age."

This is not the place to elaborate further on Henry's supposed sexual deviance. The cumulative effect in Lampert's depiction, however, is that a bad king results from one who—because of spiritual immaturity—is unable to master his own sexuality, like a *puer* to whom lenience may need to be shown; a *puer*, moreover, who needed the watchful eye of an ecclesiastical custodian. What might have been tolerated in a mere youth as misguided activity or even as incontinence, for a man, and especially for a king, was excoriated as a youthful, even unnatural, lack of self-control. In the end for some eleventh-century reformers, although ideas of utility were being expressed in the terminology of youth and age, it is evident that age itself was perhaps less the issue than the ability of an individual to act beyond his *pueritia, adolescentia, or iuventus*, as a useful *vir* in spirit.

