

the Ottonian period had been identified with known notaries (with varying degrees of confidence): Adalbert of St Maximin/Magdeburg with Liudolf A; Eric of Havelberg with a scribe of Henry II's reign; Heribert of Cologne with Hildibald K; Adalbero of Utrecht with the Bruno A of Henry II's reign (rather than the earlier one of the 950s); Adaldag of Hamburg with Simon E; Pilgrim of Passau with Willigis C; and Bernward of Hildesheim with Hildibald A²⁷. We also have good reason to believe that Leo of Vercelli drafted (and probably also copied) the diplomas in favour of his own bishopric and its associates²⁸. To these Huschner adds a host of new identifications (of which, more anon). Their importance goes beyond our knowledge of the notaries in question. By demonstrating that charter scribes were not simply (or at least not always) lowly servants, Huschner has restored a degree of agency to them. As he emphasizes, we should not imagine these figures slavishly following orders, but rather actively contributing to the public face of royal and imperial authority. Diplomas were not direct and unalloyed expressions of the royal will, but virtuoso performances by leading churchmen.

Yet if Huschner is right that prelates could operate as charter scribes, this does not mean that most court notaries were bishops (be it in post or prospect), as he goes on to imply. Sickel's insistence that scribes were low-level functionaries may have been something of a *petitio principii*, but Huschner risks repeating the error in reverse. Central to his argument is the observation that literacy was limited in the tenth and eleventh centuries, particularly north of the Alps; and that any skilled charter scribe was necessarily of elite standing. This is certainly true,

27) Theodor SICKEL, Excursus zu Ottonischen Diplomen VI, in: *MIÖG Erg. Bd. 1* (1885) p. 361 f.; Harry BRESSLAU, Zum Continuator Reginonis, in: *NA 25* (1900) p. 664–671; BRESSLAU, *Handbuch* (as n. 2) 1, p. 471 (with n. 1); Wilhelm ERBEN, Excursus zu den Diplomen Otto III., in: *MIÖG 13* (1892) p. 537–586 at p. 577–579; Hermann BLOCH, Das Diplom Otto's III. für das Johanneskloster bei Lüttich (DO. III. 240) und die Gründung des Adalbertstifts zu Aachen, in: *NA 23* (1898) p. 145–158, at p. 158; Edmund E. STENGEL, Die Immunität in Deutschland bis zum Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts. Forschungen zur Diplomatik und Verfassungsgeschichte 1: Diplomatik der deutschen Immunitäts-Privilegien vom 9. bis zum Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts (1910, ND 1964) p. 139–142; FICHTENAU, *Urkundenfälschungen* (as n. 7); Hans Jakob SCHUFFELS, „Aulicus scriba doctus“ – Bernward in der Königskanzlei, in: *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen 2: Katalog*, hg. von Michael BRANDT / Arne EGGBRECHT (1993) p. 247–250.

28) Hermann BLOCH, Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bischofs Leo von Vercelli und seiner Zeit, in: *NA 22* (1897) p. 11–136. For more recent discussion: ROACH, *Forgery and Memory* (as n. 19) p. 193–255.