

may be in a different hand¹³², we are left with four of five (or six) certain WB originals for southern recipients. A similar picture emerges WB's early activity on behalf of Otto II: all four of the diplomas he produced for the young co-emperor were for Swabian recipients. And even if we remove the two Einsiedeln diplomas of August 972 (DD O II 24, 25), which reveal close affinities to the Gandersheim privilege and may thus belong to a different notary, we are still left with two of two WB privileges before Otto I's death¹³³.

Where does this leave us with WB? In keeping with his policy of identifying as many leading notaries as possible with chancellors and archchancellors, Huschner inclines to see WB as none other than Archbishop Willigis of Mainz himself. Central to Huschner's argument are the close career parallels: WB first appears only shortly after Willigis was appointed chancellor, and he ceases operating soon after Willigis had been promoted to Mainz in January 975¹³⁴. Huschner also suggests that WB's affiliations with the new foundation at Aschaffenburg – the importance of which was first underlined by Stengel – can be explained by Willigis' interest as the centre's metropolitan. WB's wide-ranging scribal activity would certainly make sense were he to have been the imperial chancellor. Nevertheless, doubts remain. WB's first diploma for Aschaffenburg (D O II 84) pre-dates Willigis' promotion to Mainz by six months, suggesting a prior association with the centre; and with the exception of a confirmation of early 975, WB is never active in favour of Mainz itself, as we might otherwise expect. Huschner seeks to secure the identification by comparing Willigis' (apparently autograph) subscription to the synod of Frankfurt of 1007 with the diplomas of WB. Given the large temporal gap (WB's hand is last attested in 975) and extremely small sample size (the subscription is only nine words long!), a secure identification can scarcely be expected. Still, what stand out are not the similarities but the differences: the vertical stroke on Willigis' *r* pierces through the horizontal one, whereas this is not so with WB; Willigis' bowl on *g* is large, wide and

DD O I 324, 417, 420, 424. Note that DD O I 212, 421, which Sickel also believed to derive from authentic work of WB, should be treated with greater caution: Michael TANGI, *Forschungen zu Karolinger-Diplomen*, in: *AUF* 2 (1909) p. 167–326, esp. p. 304–306.

132) Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv, WO 6 Urk. 12. What most clearly distinguishes this scribe's work from that of WB are the forms of *g*, *x* and *d*.

133) DD O II 23, 24, 25, 26.

134) HUSCHNER, *Transalpine Kommunikation* (as n. 10) p. 159–168. Cf. SICKEL, *Programm* (as n. 2) p. 470 f.