

Ottonian notariat. From this, it would seem that bishops were sometimes scribes, but only under exceptional circumstances, while even „future bishops“ were by no means a dominant force. This is not to say that individuals such as Otbert were „subaltern“ servants in the manner envisaged by Sickel or Kehr. The fact that they might become bishops and archbishops is a clear sign that they constituted part of the elite; it is simply that they were not (yet) members of its uppermost echelons.

Partial confirmation of these findings is offered by the evidence for diploma production in East Francia and its neighbours in the immediately preceding and succeeding centuries. Though here, too, the evidence is fragmentary and problematic, a number of named scribes are known, and what is striking is how few of these were leading bishops. Thus the recent critical edition of the diplomas of Louis the Pious has facilitated the identification of at least four of Louis' notaries by name, typically in those rare cases where scribe and recognitionner were one and the same. A number of other individuals can be identified from recognition clauses alone, without necessarily having supplied the main text. The crucial point is that none of these figures was a leading bishop or abbot; and indeed, the very large number of hands involved in producing Louis' diplomas makes it unlikely that many (if any) were<sup>188</sup>. Even those nominally in charge of the „chancery“ rarely rose above the rank of abbot in these years. We see similar patterns in the diplomas of Louis' successors in later ninth- and early tenth-century East Francia. Though the status of the chancellorship saw some elevation, now sometimes being occupied by abbots or even bishops, those who supplied recognition clauses remain firmly below episcopal rank; and it stands to reason that the same holds true for the notaries (not least since many recognitionners bear the title *notarius*)<sup>189</sup>. Similar trends can be observed in late Carolingian and early Capetian France. The most common figure here is the chancellor-notary, an individual

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188) Die Urkunden Ludwigs des Frommen, hg. von Theo KÖZLER, 3 pts (MGH DD Karol. 2, 2016) p. XXVI–XLII. See further EICHLER, *Kanzleinotare* (as n. 154); Mark MERSIOWSKY, *Die Urkunde der Karolingerzeit. Originale, Urkundenpraxis und politische Kommunikation*, 2 pts (Schriften der MGH 60, 2015) p. 666–690; IDEM, *Die karolingischen Kanzleien als Problem der Forschung*, in: *Le corti nell'alto medioevo* (Settimane di studio della fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 62, 2015) p. 503–541.

189) KEHR, *Kanzleien Karlmanns* (as n. 5); IDEM, *Kanzlei Ludwigs des Deutschen* (as n. 5); IDEM, *Kanzlei Karls III.* (as n. 5); IDEM, *Kanzlei Arnolfs* (as n. 5); *Die Urkunden Zwentibolds und Ludwigs des Kindes*, hg. von Theodor SCHIEFFER (MGH DD reg. Germ. ex stirpe Karol. 4, 1960) p. 81–84.