

*day before the Nones of December: for you have attended that feast many times ...*⁹³.

The end of this passage contains part of Theoderic's answer to these criticisms. Many of his German peers were well informed about the Fleury monks' practices from studying them and possibly even witnessing them on an occasional visit. But because Theoderic had lived there for several years, he had benefited from the opportunity to become intimately familiar with these customs and could therefore speak from practical experience about their application. Another passage in direct speech from the *Illatio* has Richard say:

*We know that you ... who have spent many years with the Gauls – and not only that, but in that solitary and singularly disciplined monarchic institution of monks have pursued the regular life, which on account of the mortal remains of the most sacred monarch Benedict has obtained the sovereignty of nearly all the monasteries that the world contains*⁹⁴.

However, Theoderic's self-fashioning as an authoritative voice on all things Fleury relied on one further argument, which derived from the unusual way in which he spoke of his identity as a monk. In the *Vita sancti Firmani posterior*, which he wrote for the community of St Gall three years or more after leaving Fleury for good, he explicitly referred to himself as a Fleury monk⁹⁵. In the prologue of the customary he did the same, and later in the text repeatedly spoke of himself and the monks of that institution in the first-person plural⁹⁶.

93) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum* (as in n. 57) p. 220f.: *Quare, inquires ad haec, ironicis schematibus, nostram nostrorumque inscientiam, tam impudenter verbosando deludis? ... Nam noveris non esse te scribere, qualiter Beatissimus Pater noster de hoc mundo migravit ad Dominum, eo quod omnis Christianitas non ignoret. Neque Translationem eius proderet: sed tantummodo festivitatem illam, quam Illationem vocant. Et quare Illatio dicatur, quae pridie Nonas Decembris agitur: quia multoties eidem festivitati interfuisti ...*

94) *Ibid.* p. 220f.: *Te quippe solum, ac specialem novimus, Germanicis laetantem anfractibus, qui plures apud Gallos senuisti annos: et non hoc tantum, sed in illo solitario atque unico disciplinato obversatus es Monachorum archisterio, quod Sacratissimi Monarchae Benedicti glebae continentia, omnium pene Monasteriorum obtinet Monarchiam.*

95) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Firmani posterior* (as in n. 63) p. 125: *Theodericus, Floriacensis cenobii monachus ac sacerdos.*

96) Trithemius, *Tomus I Annalium Hirsaugiensium* (as in n. 19) p. 134 (*Frater Theodericus Floriacensis Asyli Coenobita perexiguus*), and Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, in: CCM 7,3 (as in