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Authorship and Authority in Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach's *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* (c. 1010–1022)

By

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The decades on either side of the year 1000 were a watershed era in the production of monastic customaries¹. Beginning at the latest in c. 970 and continuing into the middle of the eleventh century, compilers in different parts of the former Carolingian Empire submitted detailed accounts of how monks went through their liturgical routines, organized aspects of daily life in the cloister, and distributed responsibilities among various officeholders. Of the seven such documents that are currently known to scholars and that survive in more than a brief

1) Cf. by way of introduction to the genre and its development in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries Lin DONNAT, *Les coutumes monastiques autour de l'an Mil*, in: *Religion et culture autour de l'an Mil. Royaume capétien et Lotharingie. Actes du Colloque Hugues Capet 987–1987, La France de l'an Mil, Auxerre, 26 et 27 juin 1987 – Metz, 11 et 12 septembre 1987, études réunies par Dominique Iogna-Prat / Jean-Charles Picard (1990) p. 17–24; Anselme DAVRIL / Lin DONNAT / Dominique IOGNA-PRAT / Éric PALAZZO, *Moines et chanoines: règles, coutumiers et textes liturgiques*, in: *L'histoire des moines, chanoines et religieux au Moyen Âge. Guide de recherche et documents, sous la direction d'André Vauchez / Cécile Caby (L'atelier du médiéviste 9, 2003) p. 71–97; Isabelle COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced: Authorial Voices Behind Customaries and Customs (Eighth to Eleventh Centuries)*, in: *Shaping Stability. The Normation and Formation of Religious Life in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Krijn Pansters / Abraham Plunkett-Latimer (*Disciplina Monastica* 11, 2016) p. 153–173. This paper was written with the support of Ghent University and the Research-Foundation-Flanders. I am grateful to Melissa Provijn for her helpful comments on the draft version.**

fragment, three have almost strictly liturgical contents and pretend to describe life at the Burgundian abbey of Cluny: these are the *Consuetudines Cluniacensium antiquiores* (between 990 and 1015), a modified version of it from Saint-Bénigne in Dijon (c. 1031), and Farfa's *Liber tramitis* (second quarter of the eleventh century)². The other four customaries all originated in the German-speaking world, feature more hybrid contents, and pertain to a region that stretched from the Loire valley in West Francia over the former middle kingdom of Lotharingia, to Regensburg in East Francia. Three redactions of the so-called *Consuetudines Germaniae* (E from c. 980, FF¹ from 1000–1018, and HF from the first half of the eleventh century) each present a blend of West Frankish, Lotharingian, and East Frankish customs, while Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach's *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* (most likely c. 1010–1022) claims to give a comprehensive account of ones that were practiced at the abbey of Fleury³. Together these Cluniac and non-Cluniac customaries represent a stage in the development of the genre that is quite distinct, chronologically as well as in terms of the ideological and institutional contexts in which the texts originated, from an earlier one in the mid-eighth to early ninth century and a later one from the 1070s onwards⁴. However, the exact

2) These are presented (with references to the editions) in COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced* (as in n. 1) p. 162. None of the three customaries were Cluny products, but instead were created by outsiders for an audience of outsiders; on this cf. especially Isabelle COCHELIN, *Customaries as Inspirational Sources*, in: *Consuetudines et Regulae. Sources for Monastic Life in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Carolyn Marino Malone / Clark Maines (*Disciplina Monastica* 10, 2014) p. 27–72.

3) Cf. again the list in COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced* (as in n. 1) p. 162. Not considered in that study and in the present one is a fragment or partial draft of a customary that is preserved in a late tenth-century manuscript from the abbey of Werden and that is commented on and edited in Hartmut HOFFMANN, *Mönchskönig und rex idiota. Studien zur Kirchenpolitik Heinrichs II. und Konrads II.* (MGH *Studien und Texte* 8, 1993) p. 177–179. The contents of that text bear no relation to that of the four German customaries cited here.

4) On the customaries from the late eighth and early ninth centuries, cf. e.g. Josef SEMMLER, "Volatilia". Zu den benediktinischen *Consuetudines* des 9. Jahrhunderts, *StMGBO* 69 (1958) p. 163–176, and IDEM, *Benedictus II: una regula – una consuetudo*, in: *Benedictine Culture 750–1050*, ed. by Willem Lourdaux / Daniel Verhelst (*Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Series 1, Studia* 11, 1983) p. 1–49. On those from the late eleventh century onwards, Florent CYGLER, *Règles, coutumiers et statuts (V^e–XIII^e siècles). Brèves considérations historico-typologiques*, in: *La vie quotidienne des moines et chanoines réguliers au Moyen Âge et Temps modernes. Actes du Premier Colloque International du L.A.R.H.C.O.R. Wrocław-Książ*,

contents and nature of the extant evidence from that stage were for the most part obscure until the early 1980s, when all seven customaries were edited in the series *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum* (CCM) under the general direction of Kassius Hallinger⁵.

The CCM editions and their accompanying introductions greatly facilitated the work of scholars who were interested in how the customaries depicted various aspects of life in the cloister⁶. In addition, they also compelled specialists of the genre to reconsider traditional assumptions about the intended purpose of these texts. At the onset of the CCM project, Hallinger had assumed that the three Cluniac customaries were written for normative purposes, namely, to make it possible for communities that had joined the Burgundian abbey's reform movement to adopt its liturgical customs. He also stated that in contrast to this, the four other customaries had been created in a mindset that was typical of the so-called Gorze reform (which he named after the abbey of Gorze near Metz) and merely presented the works' users with descriptive accounts of monastic "best practice"⁷.

30 novembre – 4 décembre 1994, sous la direction de Marek Derwich (Travaux du L.A.R.H.C.O.R., Colloquia 1 = Opera ad historiam monasticam spectantia, Series 1, Colloquia 1, 1995) p. 31–49; Gert MELVILLE, Regeln – *Consuetudines*-Texte – Statuten. Positionen für eine Typologie des normativen Schrifttums religiöser Gemeinschaften im Mittelalter, in: *Regulae – Consuetudines – Statuta. Studi sulle fonti normative degli ordini religiosi nei secoli centrali del Medioevo. Atti del I e del II Seminario internazionale di studio del Centro italo-tedesco di storia comparata degli ordini religiosi (Bari/Noci/Lecce, 26–27 ottobre 2002 / Castiglione delle Stiviere, 23–24 maggio 2003)*, a cura di Cristina Andenna / idem (*Vita Regularis. Abh. 25, 2005*) p. 5–38; From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny / Du cœur de la nuit à la fin du jour: Les coutumes clunisiennes au Moyen Âge, ed. by Susan BOYNTON / Isabelle COCHELIN (*Disciplina Monastica 3, 2005*); MALONE / MAINES, *Consuetudines* (as in n. 2), and several of the contributions in: *A Companion to Medieval Rules and Customaries*, ed. by Krijn PANSTERS (*Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 93, 2020*).

5) *Liber tramitis aevi Odilonis abbatis*, ed. Peter DINTER (CCM 10, 1980), and *Consuetudines saeculi X/XI/XII*, ed. Kassius HALLINGER, 4 vols. (CCM 7,1–4, 1984–1986), here 1 (1984; introduction) and 3 (1984; edition). Refer also to the commentary in Lin DONNAT, *Les coutumiers monastiques. Une nouvelle entreprise et un territoire nouveau*, *Revue Mabillon N. S. 3* (1992) p. 5–21.

6) Among a wealth of scholarship, cf. by way of example Jörg SONNTAG, *Klosterleben im Spiegel des Zeichenhaften. Symbolisches Denken und Handeln hochmittelalterlicher Mönche zwischen Dauer und Wandel, Regel und Gewohnheit* (*Vita regularis. Abh. 35, 2008*), and Anselme DAVRIL / Éric PALAZZO, *La vie des moines au temps des grandes abbayes, X^e–XIII^e siècle* (2012).

7) On the German scholar's distinction between Cluniac "cultic monasticism" (*Kultmönchtum*) and Gorzian "cultural monasticism" (*Kulturmonchtum*) cf. the

But as he subsequently set out to study the seven customaries in detail and prepare the introductions for CCM 7, Hallinger realized that his normative versus descriptive interpretation of the two groups of texts did not hold up to close scrutiny, and accordingly he decided not to repeat it in this new publication⁸. Evidently the German scholar had realized that far too little was known about the precise context in which these texts were created and disseminated to make any firm statements about their true nature and intended purpose. However, some remnants of his former way of thinking did filter through in his argument when he referred to Theoderic's customary of Fleury as mere "propaganda", which is an assessment that he based on the observation that the Fleury monks never used the text as an instrument of monastic governance⁹.

By the later years of the 1980s, it had become apparent that the traditional narrative about the "how" and "why" of the seven customaries was in need of drastic revision. Commentaries by (among other specialists) Rudolf Schieffer, Lin Donnat, and Isabelle Cochelin brought sharply into focus the need for more empirical research¹⁰. The publications that sought to address this lacuna in scholarship aimed to make clear the ways in which the creation, dissemination, and early reception of each text responded to a specific institutional, ideological, and practical context¹¹. A 2014 study by Cochelin

discussion in Rudolf SCHIEFFER, *Consuetudines monasticae und Reformforschung*, DA 44 (1988) p. 161–169, esp. p. 161f. In an important article from 1977 Hallinger insisted on the normative nature of medieval monastic customaries as a genre; Kassius HALLINGER, *Consuetudo. Begriff, Formen, Forschungsgeschichte, Inhalt*, in: *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Stift (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 68 / Studien zur Germania Sacra 14, 1980)* p. 140–166, at p. 146.

8) DONNAT, *Les coutumiers* (as in n. 5) p. 8 and p. 13f.

9) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 424.

10) SCHIEFFER, *Consuetudines* (as in n. 7); DONNAT, *Les coutumiers* (as in n. 5) p. 12, and COCHELIN, *Customaries* (as in n. 2) p. 29f., 33 (for the expression "how" and "why").

11) For the Cluniac customaries cf. e.g. Susan BOYNTON, *Shaping a Monastic Identity. Liturgy and History at the Imperial Abbey of Farfa, 1000–1125 (Conjunctions of Religion and Power in the Medieval Past, 2006)*, and Isabelle COCHELIN, *Discipline and the Problem of Cluny's Customaries*, in: *A Companion to the Abbey of Cluny in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Scott G. Bruce / Steven Vanderputten (*Brill's Companions to European History 27, 2022*) p. 204–222. And for the non-Cluniac ones refer among other studies to DONNAT, *Les coutumes* (as in n. 1), and Anselme DAVRIL, *Points de contact entre la Vita Iohannis Gorziensis et les Consuetudines Floriacenses Antiquiores*, in: *L'abbaye de Gorze au X^e siècle*,

took stock of more than a quarter of a century of new research. In it, she argued persuasively that the interpretation of customaries as normative documents is only relevant from the late eleventh century onwards, when they became key tools to train adult converts and to impose on dependent houses the customs of a mother institution¹². And in a follow-up publication from 2016 she noted that the intended purpose of earlier customaries was “first and foremost to inspire the recipient community: one aspiring to a life of perfection would read about great customs as one would read the *vita* of a great saint”¹³. To this Cochelin added that to make the genre’s inspirational nature clear to contemporary readers, these texts “were usually and voluntarily written, and even more often kept and transmitted, without an authoritative voice”¹⁴. Suppressing that voice (and in some cases even outright anonymizing the text) arguably meant that its potential normative power was neutralized and that readers would easily recognize the texts’ true intended purpose as a means to reflect on, and improve, their own practices and customs¹⁵.

Cochelin’s argument is definitely paradigm shifting. But at the same time, it is important to realize that she formulated it in opposition to the earlier interpretation of Cluniac customaries as normative instruments for creating a homogeneous network of affiliated monastic houses, by imposing on these houses the obligation to strictly follow the Cluniacs’ observance. And that in postulating the absence in these and other customaries of institutional or normative claims to authority as well as that of an authoritative/authorial voice, she left out of consideration two notable things. One is that in the Middle Ages, authority and authorship were very closely linked concepts and

sous la direction de Michel Parisse / Otto Gerhard Oexle (Collection Lorraine, 1993) p. 183–192. Somewhat outdated in light of these studies is the categorization of extant customaries in DAVRIL / DONNAT / IOGNA-PRAT / PALAZZO, *Moines et chanoines* (as in n. 1) p. 74, which labels the former two Cluniac ones as “normative” documents, the *Liber tramitis* as “prescriptive”, and the non-Cluniac ones as “descriptive”.

12) COCHELIN, *Customaries* (as in n. 2) p. 33.

13) COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced* (as in n. 1) p. 155. Also refer to earlier comments by DONNAT, *Les coutumiers* (as in n. 5) p. 13f., and Isabelle COCHELIN, *Le pour qui et le pourquoi (des manuscrits) des coutumiers clunisiens*, in: *Ad libros! Mélanges d’études médiévales offerts à Denise Angers et Joseph-Claude Poulin*, sous la direction de Jean-François Cottier / Martin Gravel / Sébastien Rossignol (2010) p. 121–138.

14) COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced* (as in n. 1) p. 154.

15) *Ibid.*, p. 173.

that monastic written culture was not an exception to this rule. And the second is that authors' claims to authority came in many different forms, most of which were not normative (by which is meant here literally prescriptive and institutionally focussed) in the modern sense of the word¹⁶. Authority of a personal, moral, or other nature was widely invoked, and it would come as no surprise if we were to find traces of these claims in customaries too. Arguably neither the act of anonymizing a text nor that of omitting the reference to a commissioner or even a host institution would have completely erased them.

In order to verify this hypothesis, the present paper will consider the case of Theoderic's customary of Fleury, situating the work in relation to customary production in late tenth- and early eleventh-century Germany, the ideological and institutional settings in which the author moved, and his own trajectory in life. Doing so will help us appreciate his – and the customary's – threefold claim to authority for himself as a witness to contemporary monastic practice, for Fleury's status as a beacon of Benedictine observance, and for the ideas and values he acquired while he was there. Thus, this paper will submit new evidence for the study of how informal connections between religious institutions, personal memories, and the trajectories of individual people are important (if not always easily accessible) aspects to be considered in the interpretation of customaries from the turn of the first millennium. At the same time, it will also contribute to a new understanding of the customary and Theoderic's embedding in a then-culture of reflection and debate on Benedictine best practice and morals, as well as of both the text and its author's diverse claims to authority.

16) The literature on authority in medieval literature is very expansive. Cf. for instance Jan ZIOLKOWSKI, *Cultures of Authority in the Long Twelfth Century*, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 108 (2009) p. 421–448; *Autorschaft und Autorität in den romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, hg. von Susanne A. FRIEDE / Michael SCHWARZE (*Zs. für romanische Philologie*, Beiheft 390, 2015); Beate BÖCKEM, *Die Frage nach Autorschaft – eine Frage der Autorität? Jacopo de' Barbari und die Konstruktion einer Künstlerpersönlichkeit*, in: *Die Biographie – Mode oder Universalie? Zu Geschichte und Konzept einer Gattung in der Kunstgeschichte*, hg. von ders. / Olaf Peters / Barbara Schellewald (*Schriften zur modernen Kunsthistoriographie* 7, 2016) p. 49–60; *Autorität im Spannungsfeld von Bildung und Religion*, hg. von Peter GEMEINHARDT / Tanja S. SCHEER (*Studies in Education and Religion in Ancient and Pre-Modern History in the Mediterranean and its Environs* 9, 2021).

The *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* and the Problem of its Authoritative Voice

In her above-mentioned study from 2016, Cochelin pointed out that because in a number of cases modern scholars have made great strides in uncovering information about who wrote the customaries, who commissioned them, and/or in what institutional setting they were created, it is often difficult for us to appreciate their lack of authorial voice (and therefore also their lack of a claim to authority) at the time of their publication. To make her point, she presented, among other examples, Theoderic's customary of Fleury, whose authorship, she claims, was established only thanks to the careful reconstruction of nineteenth- and twentieth-century specialists¹⁷. Admittedly, she is right in saying that the few lines in the prologue that identified a monk named Theodericus as the customary's creator are absent from the only extant manuscript of the text¹⁸. But at the same time, we must be careful not to infer from this that medieval readers were unaware of Theoderic's authorship of the customary. The testimony of the late fifteenth-century Abbot Johannes Trithemius of Hirsau (1462–1516) is precious in this regard. In his *Annales Hirsaugienses*, he discussed the customary as part of the literary legacy of a monk from Fleury named Theoderic. Furthermore, he partially quoted the customary's now lost prologue in which Theoderic explicitly identified himself as the author, and added that the work comprised "two books on the customs and statutes of the monastery of Fleury (that he dedicated) to ... Bishop Bernward"¹⁹. Evidently this tells us that the Hirsau abbot had access to a written tradition that over nearly five centuries had passed down both Theoderic's identity as a Fleury monk and his role in creating the customary. Furthermore, Trithemius's testimony also

17) COCHELIN, *Downplayed or Silenced* (as in n. 1) p. 160. The state of the art on Theoderic's biography and written legacy is discussed in Hartmut HOFFMANN, *Theoderich von Fleury/Amorbach/Trier*, DA 71 (2015) p. 475–526, and Steven VANDERPUTTEN / Jeroen DE GUSSEM, *Monachus ac Sacerdos Peregrinus. A Stylo-metric and Contextual Re-Investigation of the Work of Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach* (fl. 970s–1020s), *Revue Mabillon* N. F. 33 (2022) p. 19–54.

18) On this manuscript, see n. 21 below.

19) Johannes Trithemius, *Tomus I. Annalium Hirsaugiensium*, ad a. 989 (St. Gallen, 1690) p. 134: *qui scripsit inter caetera ingenij sui opuscula duos libellos de consuetudinibus & statutis Monasterij Floriacensis ad praenominatum Bernwardum Episcopum*. Refer also to the discussion in Albert PONCELET, *La vie et les œuvres de Thierry de Fleury*, *Analecta Bollandiana* 27 (1908) p. 5–27, at p. 5–7.

reveals that the work's earliest readers (or at least those who had access to a complete manuscript of the text) would have had the opportunity to know the name and the affiliation of its author. As such, the text had broadcast to those readers at least a nominal claim to authority, on account of the author's membership of the institution whose customs he described.

Beyond these two things, up until the mid-1960s what the earliest users had made of the customary was unknown, since no commentator after Trithemius had been able to track down a copy of the text. In the introductory volume of the CCM from 1963, Kassius Hallinger still listed the work as likely lost²⁰. But shortly afterwards the Benedictine monk Carl Wolff discovered an incomplete copy of the customary in a manuscript from the middle decades of the fifteenth century, which had been made for a Benedictine house in northern Germany²¹. Although it lacked the prologue cited by Trithemius, the beginning of the extant manuscript text clearly identified its contents as pertaining to the abbey of Fleury: the first of two extant parts discuss the role and duties of the monastery's main officers, while the second offers a description of how the Loire monks' routine was organized on a Sunday, beginning with Vespers and continuing until mealtime at midday, at which point the text abruptly cuts off. On realizing the importance of his discovery Wolff reported it to the CCM's chief editor Hallinger, who relayed the news to Fleury specialist Anselme Davril and asked him to coordinate the work for a critical edition²². In a brief article from 1966 Davril shared his initial findings, which he subsequently elaborated in a follow-up study from 1975 and in the introductions to

20) *Initia consuetudinis Benedictinae. Consuetudines saeculi octavi et noni*, ed. Kassius HALLINGER (CCM 1, 1963) p. LXIV.

21) Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 71.22 Aug. 2°, fol. 235r–255r. The manuscript, which was created in the context of the Observant Reform, contains a miscellaneous set of texts on Benedictine spirituality, including a Latin and German version of the Benedictine Rule, multiple commentaries (including that by Hildegard of Bingen) on that text, and Theoderic's customary; cf. OTTO VON HEINEMANN, *Die Augusteischen Handschriften 3: Codex Guelferbytanus 32.7 Augusteus 2° – 77.3 Augusteus 2°* (Kataloge der Herzog-August-Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel. Die alte Reihe 6, 1898, repr. 1966) p. 374–376, and HALLINGER's additional notes in CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 149–152. Hallinger suspected that the manuscript originated from Sankt Aegidius in Brunswick, *ibid.* p. 151.

22) Davril's work was considerably facilitated by the transcription work of two Benedictine nuns named Maria Wegener and Candida Elvert. For HALLINGER's full account of the customary's discovery, cf. CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 151f.

two nearly identical editions of the text from 1984 and 2004²³. Davril established that the new text was a match with the one that Trithemius had described, despite the absence of the prologue the latter had paraphrased and partly cited. But more importantly, he was able to confirm the abbot's attribution of the work to Theoderic, as studies carried out in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by Ernst Dümmler and Albert Poncelet had verified and expanded on the Hirsau abbot's reconstruction of Theoderic's biography and literary output²⁴. Finally, Davril rejected Trithemius's claim that the Bernward mentioned in the lost prologue as the work's addressee was Bishop Bernard of Würzburg (r. 990–995). Instead, he provided arguments in support of an alternative hypothesis that the eighteenth-century Maurist scholar Antoine Rivet de la Grange had originally formulated, which was that Theoderic had dedicated the customary to Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim (r. 993–1022)²⁵.

All this was cause for excitement among specialists of early and high medieval monasticism. Given that the corpus of customs from before c. 1070 is very small, the recovery of a text whose contents were new to scholars had the potential to greatly enrich discussions of monastic liturgy and practice around the year 1000. However, it was the timing of the work combined with its suspected provenance that made the find especially notable, given that Fleury had played a major role in the renewal of monastic life since the 930s. Following an

23) Anselme DAVRIL, Un coutumier de Fleury du début du XI^e siècle, Rev. Ben. 76 (1966) p. 351–354; IDEM, Un moine de Fleury aux environs de l'an mil: Thierry, dit d'Amorbach, in: Études ligériennes d'histoire et d'archéologie médiévales. Mémoires et exposés présentés à la Semaine d'études médiévales de Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire du 3 au 10 juillet 1969, sous la direction de René Louis (Cahiers d'archéologie et d'histoire 4, 1975) p. 97–104; CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 333–338, and L'abbaye de Fleury en l'an mil 2: Le coutumier de Fleury. Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores par Thierry d'Amorbach. Texte édité, traduit et annoté par Anselme DAVRIL / Lin DONNAT avec la collaboration de Gillette LABORY (Sources d'histoire médiévale 32, 2004) p. 145–154. The two editions of Theoderic's *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* are that by Anselme DAVRIL / Lin DONNAT in CCM 7,3 (as in n. 5) p. 7–60 and the nearly identical one in L'abbaye de Fleury en l'an mil 2 by DAVRIL / DONNAT p. 167–251.

24) Ernst DÜMMLER, Über Leben und Schriften des Mönches Theoderich (von Amorbach), Abh. Berlin (1894) p. 1–38; Albert PONCELET, La Vie de S. Firmanus, abbé au diocèse de Fermo par Thierry d'Amorbach, Analecta Bollandiana 18 (1899) p. 22–33, and IDEM, La vie (as in n. 19).

25) Antoine RIVET DE LA GRANGE, Histoire littéraire de la France 7 (1867) p. 298f.

intervention by Abbot Odo of Cluny, the abbey had been involved in a series of institutional reforms in the kingdom of France and in nearby Lotharingia, while a delegation of monks had also attended the early 970s council of Winchester. And indirectly, Fleury's liturgical and other customs were also thought to have influenced those of major monastic centres such as Gorze, Sankt Maximin in Trier, and Reichenau, all three of which had in turn influenced further monastic institutions across the former Carolingian Empire²⁶. The customary's dating in the late tenth or early eleventh century also brought its contents tantalizingly close to the tenure of Abbot Abbo of Fleury (r. 988–1004), who was a fervent admirer of his colleague Odilo of Cluny (r. 994–1049) and a noted proponent of monastic and clerical reform²⁷. All these elements suggested that the customary would help scholars not only to better understand how the Fleury monks had experienced life in the cloister under Abbo's rule, but also to see what routines and practices had been disseminated to other places, and to what extent these were influenced by those of Cluny. In addition, there was the potential that the customary would help to enhance scholars' understanding of both written culture and monastic governance during Abbo's tenure, given that this was a phase of energetic literary activity as well as high ideological and political influence for Fleury²⁸. The expectation was that all these things would shed light on the customary's significance as a statement by the Fleury community.

26) On all this cf. in first place Lin DONNAT, *Recherches sur l'influence de Fleury au X^e siècle*, in: *Études ligériennes* (as in n. 23) p. 165–174.

27) Marco MOSTERT, *The Political Theology of Abbo of Fleury. A Study of the Ideas about Society and Law of the Tenth-century Monastic Reform Movement* (*Middleleeuwse studies en bronnen* 2, 1987) p. 27 (where it is asserted that the monks' daily routines were organized in accordance with the Rule of St Benedict and the *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*) and p. 92 (where the customary's creation is situated during Abbo's rule); also Elizabeth DACHOWSKI, *First among Abbots. The Career of Abbo of Fleury* (2008) p. 44 n. 75.

28) In addition to the studies cited in the above note, cf. Alexandre VIDIER, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire et les miracles de Saint Benoît*. Ouvrage posthume revu et annoté par les soins des moines de l'abbaye de Saint-Benoît de Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire) (1965); Marco MOSTERT, *Die Urkundenfälschungen Abbos von Fleury*, in: *Fälschungen im Mittelalter. Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica München*, 16.–19. September 1986, 5 vols. (MGH Schriften 33,1–5, 1988), here 4 p. 287–318; Abbon, *un abbé de l'an mil*. *Études réunies par Annie DUFOUR / Gillette LABORY* (Bibliothèque d'histoire culturelle du Moyen Âge 6, 2008), and Levi ROACH, *Forgery and Memory at the End of the First Millennium* (2021) p. 153–192.

It was Davril himself who tempered these high hopes. Beyond reasonable doubt, he argued, the text's attributing of the customs it describes to the late tenth-century community of Fleury is correct²⁹. And his and other scholars' preliminary analysis of its contents also revealed that the Fleury monks' liturgical and other practices were anything but slavish copies of those of Cluny, which helped to invalidate earlier ideas about the relationship between the two places and their respective observances. It turned out that Fleury's customs derived from Gallican tradition, with the addition of practices that dated back to the Carolingian reforms of the early ninth century, and that the impact of Odo's intervention in this respect had been minimal³⁰. All of this significantly added to the customary's interest as a historical source for the study of monastic life at the turn of the first millennium. But at the same time, Davril noted that there were strong reasons to suspect that the Fleury community and its leaders had nothing to do with its creation. The French scholar contended that Theoderic only began writing about his experiences at the abbey and his membership of the community in the second decade of the eleventh century, long after he had left Fleury for good in, or before, 1002. Among the arguments Davril made in support of this was the author's own admission that while he was at Fleury, he had held the lowly office of *refectorarius*, which would have hardly placed him at the centre of the abbey's bustling literary life³¹. Another argument was the absence in the abbey's later documentation of any indications that the monks of the Loire abbey were aware of the customary's existence, or even that manuscript copies of the text had ever circulated outside of the German-speaking world³².

It was clear to Davril that for answers about the "how" and especially the "why" of Theoderic's text, one would have to look outside of Fleury and its immediate zone of influence, and outside the chro-

29) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 334 and DONNAT, *Recherches* (as in n. 26) p. 166f.

30) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 337, 345–350.

31) DAVRIL, *Un moine* (as in n. 23) p. 101. We can infer from Theoderic's writings that he likely spent considerable time studying the community's book collection and at the time of his departure was well informed on its ideology and its liturgical practices. Regarding the timing of his arrival at Fleury and that of his subsequent departure, cf. HOFFMANN, *Theoderich* (as in n. 17) p. 504.

32) Refer also to HALLINGER's comments in CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 339–342. The thirteenth-century customary of Fleury bears no relation to Theoderic's text; *Consuetudines Floriacenses saeculi tertii decimi*, ed. Anselme DAVRIL (CCM 9, 1976).

nological scope of Theoderic's stay there. And as other scholars started to investigate the relationship of the customary to the production of such texts in late tenth- and early eleventh-century Germany, the exact purpose of the *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* became an even greater mystery.

An Inconsequential Piece of Propaganda?

In the opening paragraphs of the customary, Theoderic states with hardly concealed pride that he is "educated in the customs and ... disciplines of French monasteries". He also implies that his training there is the reason why Bishop Bernward had asked him to compose a succinct account of customs and observances in that part of the world, and especially at Fleury, "of which Gaul has no (monastery) that is more outstanding"³³. Davril estimated that these statements were enough to explain the "why" of the text, finding the answer in Bernward of Hildesheim's agency as a patron of Benedictine monasticism, more specifically his foundation of the abbey of Sankt Michael in Hildesheim between 1010 and 1015³⁴. Bernward had previously visited religious communities at Laterans and Monte Cassino, and may likewise have visited Fleury when he travelled to Saint-Denis and Tours in the mid-990s. However, he had no personal background in monasticism and was only directly familiar with the communal life for canons³⁵. In Davril's view this compelled him to look for inspiration when he set out to organize the Hildesheim monks' lifestyle and routines, inspiration that he presumably found in the person of Theoderic.

33) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 23) p. 7: *Gallicorum monasteriorum consuetudines atque monasticas disciplinas, quibus innutritum me profiteor*, and p. 7f.: *consuetudines atque monasticas disciplinas ... Ffloriacensis monasterii, quod quasi caput et archisterium quodammodo ceterorum videtur monasteriorum, quoque Gallia nichil excellentius habet*. A similar statement can be found at p. 9f.: *Generosus Floriacensis monasterii locus pro genere habeatur et cetera monasteria quasi eius species complectentur, ut eo facilius in capite membrorum validudo pervestigetur ... Hinc est, quod per totas citeriores Gallias quicquid monastice dignitatis ordo exigit, nisi apud eiusdem loci prius abbatem discutiatur, effectum non capit*.

34) DAVRIL, Un moine (as in n. 23) p. 101.

35) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 335f.; also DAVRIL, Un moine (as in n. 23) p. 110 n. 32, and DONNAT, Recherches (as in n. 26) p. 173 n. 56.

Still according to Davril, Theoderic was ideally placed to assist Bernward, for he not only represented the much-admired monastic observance of Fleury but also understood the bishop's clerical viewpoint well, given that he had spent several decades of his life as a cleric prior to entering the monastic life and (so we learn from several passages in the customary) was familiar with the communal life for canons³⁶. A final point not mentioned by Davril is the fact that the customary dwells comparatively little on liturgical practices and spends a great deal of time explaining the organization of Fleury and the monks' daily routines: this might help to confirm the hypothesis of a work written to assist a commissioner who was in the process of setting up a monastic institution. Yet whether any of this is truly relevant to the customary's interpretation as a normative instrument of monastic governance is unclear, as there are no primary sources that tell us anything about a link between the text's creation and Bernward's foundation. Furthermore, the German scholar Hartmut Hoffmann remained in doubt about the customary's link to Bernward of Hildesheim and preferred to go with Trithemius's original claim that it had been addressed to Bernward of Würzburg³⁷. For his part, Kasius Hallinger speculated that the text had been issued in two distinct versions, one of which had been addressed to Bernward of Hildesheim and the other to Abbot Richard of Amorbach (r. 1010/1011–1039). If

36) Cf. for instance the passage on vespers, in which Theoderic refers to the *mos canonicorum* before discussing the Fleury monks' liturgical routines; Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 23) p. 35.

37) HOFFMANN, Theoderich (as in n. 17) p. 502–504, correctly notes that Theoderic may have travelled to Italy prior to 1002. Based on this he concludes that Davril's and Hallinger's hypothesis for dating the customary (which mentions the author's experiences in Laterans and Monte Cassino) after 1006 is invalid and that the customary was therefore most likely written between 990 and 995. Hoffmann's interpretation carries with it the implication that Theoderic had either travelled to Rome and Monte Cassino prior to entering the monastic life at Fleury, or that he was held in such high regard by Abbo and his associates that he was allowed to travel extensively and to visit these places at a very early stage in his monastic career. This, and the fact that Hoffmann does not address the other arguments for linking the customary to Bernward of Hildesheim, means that the question of the text's dating remains unresolved. Pending further discoveries of new evidence pertaining to Theoderic's biography, the conventional dating in 1010–1022 remains the most likely one. Also see the evidence presented below, in n. 96.

correct, this would have invalidated the notion that it had been written strictly to help establish Sankt Michael³⁸.

Commentators who preferred to look beyond Davril's fragile hypothesis also wondered about the customary's relationship to other accounts of monastic practice that were circulating in Germany when Theoderic wrote his text. The earliest of these, which is known as the *Consuetudines Germaniae* Version E, had been compiled at some point around 970 by an author at Sankt Maximin in Trier or another institution in western Germany³⁹. Scholars suspect that the text, which shows notable West Frankish and Lotharingian influences, derived from an original set of (either written or oral) customs from Fleury that had been reviewed and reworked at a major monastic house in Lotharingia, probably the abbey of Gorze near Metz, and then passed on to the author and his milieu⁴⁰. This is certainly a plausible scenario, as the Fleury monks had been invited in 934 by Bishop Gozelin of Toul to communicate their customs to the Lotharingian abbey of Saint-Evre near Toul: from there they may have been exported once again to the newly reformed abbey of Gorze⁴¹. In the same year, 934, Abbot Ogo of Sankt Maximin (r. 934–945) in Trier set out to reform

38) HALLINGER, CCM 7,3 (as in n. 5) p. 7 n. 1, notes an incongruity between the suspected addressee, Bernward, and his invocation in the prologue as *vestra paternitas*, but resolves this by arguing that there had likely been two versions of the customary. So he hypothesizes that the one seen by Trithemius had been addressed to Bernward, whereas the one in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript represented another that Theoderic had intended for Richard, to whom the above-mentioned invocation did apply.

39) *Consuetudines Germaniae E*, ed. Maria WEGENER / Candida ELVERT, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 5) p. 187–256. On the contents and dating of the customary cf. CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 171–182, 426–429; Stephen A. SCHOENIG, *Ramwold's Reform: The Customary of St. Emmeram and the Gorze Movement*, unpublished M.A. Thesis, Fordham Univ. (1998); Bertram RESMINI, *Die Benediktinerabtei St. Maximin vor Trier (Germania Sacra. Dritte Folge 11. Das Erzbistum Trier 13, 2016) p. 640f.*, and Harald BUCHINGER, *Die monastischen Consuetudines von St. Emmeram (Ende 10. Jahrhundert) als Quelle der Liturgiegeschichte*, in: *Gottesdienst in Regensburger Institutionen. Zur Vielfalt liturgischer Traditionen in der Vormoderne*, hg. von dems. / Sabine Reichert (Forum MA – Studien 18, 2021) p. 57–130.

40) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 343f. and BUCHINGER, *Die monastischen Consuetudines* (as in n. 39) p. 59 n. 6. On the matches and further similarities between Version E and Theoderic's customary, cf. CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 337.

41) DONNAT, *Recherches* (as in n. 26) p. 169–171; also Neithard BULST, *Untersuchungen zu den Klosterreformen Wilhelms von Dijon (962–1031)* (Pariser Historische Studien 11, 1973) p. 90f.

his community's observance, and in the process established connections with multiple agents in the French-speaking part of Lotharingia, including Bishop Adalbero of Metz (who had initiated the reform of Gorze) and the abbots of Gorze and nearby Saint-Arnoul⁴². As part of these contacts, oral or written accounts of monastic observance would have easily been transferred to the Trier region. As for the context in which Version E was created, this is most commonly linked to the early actions of Sankt-Maximin's cellarer Sandrat and provost Ramwold in the 960s–970s⁴³. Between 963 and 984/985 the former was involved in a range of institutions in Germany (especially St Gall, Ellwangen, Weißenburg, and Gladbach), where he either assisted with the reform of the monks' observance or was directly implicated in the governance of these institutions⁴⁴. Meanwhile, Ramwold became abbot of Sankt Emmeram in Regensburg in 975, after which time he made substantial additions to the abbey's library⁴⁵. The earliest extant copy of Version E, from c. 980, was one of these additions⁴⁶. One of Ramwold's subjects at Sankt Emmeram, a monk named Poppo, later became abbot of Fulda (r. 1013–1018), where he may well have taken a copy too⁴⁷.

Version E was not intended as a normative instrument of monastic governance, but rather as a written record of an ongoing reflection on best monastic practice in reformist circles of late tenth-century Germany. Perhaps the best indicator for this (besides the absence of

42) RESMINI, *Benediktinerabtei* (as in n. 39) p. 232f., 1038f.

43) *Ibid.* p. 640f.

44) KASSIUS HALLINGER, *Willigis von Mainz und die Klöster*, in: *Willigis und sein Dom. Festschrift zur Jahrtausendfeier des Mainzer Domes 975–1975*, hg. von Anton Ph. Brück (*Quellen und Abh. zur mittelhheinischen KG* 24, 1975) p. 93–134, here at p. 106–109, 112–116, and RESMINI, *Benediktinerabtei* (as in n. 39) p. 1189f. Resmini postulates that Version E was Sandrat's own work (p. 1190).

45) Franz RONIG, *Abt Ramwold von Sankt Emmeram in Regensburg: Was brachte Ramwold aus der Trierer Abtei Sankt Maximin nach Regensburg mit?*, *Kurtrierisches Jb.* 42 (2002) p. 29–45, esp. p. 41–45, and RESMINI, *Benediktinerabtei* (as in n. 39) p. 1151f.; also the literature cited in BUCHINGER, *Die monastischen Consuetudines* (as in n. 39) p. 59f. n. 8.

46) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 171–182 and BUCHINGER, *Die monastischen Consuetudines* (as in n. 39) p. 57–59 (where the author asserts that the customary gives us insight in the organization of regular life at Sankt Emmeram, which in reality is far from certain). On the close ties between the scriptoria of Sankt Maximin and Sankt Emmeram, cf. RESMINI, *Benediktinerabtei* (as in n. 39) p. 1152.

47) Pius ENGELBERT, *Klosterleben in Fulda um das Jahr 1000*, in: *Kloster Fulda in der Welt der Karolinger und Ottonen*, hg. von Gangolf Schrimpf (*Fuldaer Studien* 7, 1996) p. 225–245, at p. 231.

any evidence that the contents of the text were imposed on a monastic community) is that shortly after the turn of the millennium another compiler, who may also have worked at Sankt Maximin, once again took inspiration from West Frankish and Lotharingian traditions to put together what is now known as Version FF¹ of the *Consuetudines Germaniae*⁴⁸. In doing so, he not only relied on an oral or written tradition that had previously served as the basis for Version E but also added material that he apparently obtained from Gorze abbey, and in a final stage adapted the entire text to realities and expectations in German monastic settings⁴⁹. Here again the author's intention was to present his readers with inspiring examples of best practice in Benedictine observance. To this end, he not only gave them an extensive account of liturgical and other customs as well as an overview of monastic offices, but also cited as particularly relevant the contemporary observance at the abbeys of Fleury, Gorze, Reichenau, and Sankt Emmeram⁵⁰. Furthermore, he also explicitly named Abbot Abbo of Fleury as a prominent benchmark of good monastic practice⁵¹. Yet another testimony of the same ongoing tradition of study and reflection is Version HF, which is usually dated between the beginning and the middle of the eleventh century and contains another variant on the *Consuetudines Germaniae* tradition and the dynamic culture of study

48) *Consuetudines Germaniae* FF¹, ed. Maria WEGENER / Candida ELVERT, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 5) p. 263–322. On the manuscript transmission and the dating of the text, cf. CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 183–188, 432.

49) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 360–367, 408, 411–415; on notable differences between the Fleury tradition and the German one represented in FF¹, cf. *ibid.* p. 368–370. Also the discussion in RESMINI, *Benediktinerabtei* (as in n. 39) p. 641 (where he highlights notable differences between E and FF¹, for instance in the description of various monastic offices). Lin DONNAT, *Vie et coutume monastique dans la Vita de Jean de Gorze*, in: *L'abbaye* (as in n. 11) p. 159–182, at p. 181, speculates that FF¹ was intended for use at Gorze and Trier, at a time when the monks in these places there were already following customs that were close to E but were looking to further adapt these.

50) Speaking of the signal to be given for the vigils during winter, the author states that the communities of Sankt Maximin and Gorze do not have the habit of sounding the bell in the dormitory. He encourages his readers to adopt the same custom and adds to this that he also witnessed it at Reichenau and Sankt Emmeram (*Vidi etiam Augie et Radespone*). Presumably this comment reveals us that he was not a member of either of the two latter monasteries; *Consuetudines Germaniae* FF¹ (as in n. 48) p. 264.

51) *Consuetudines Germaniae* FF¹ (as in n. 48) p. 294: *Monachorum autem multitudo debet esse tanquam unus homo Abonis sumens exempla religiosissimi, omnium artium peritissimi.*

and debate it reflects. The oldest manuscript witness is a twelfth-century copy from the abbey of Sankt Matthias in Trier, which suggests that the text originated in circles not far removed from the ones that spawned the two previous customaries⁵².

The existence and contents of these documents tell us three things. One is that during the decades on either side of the year 1000, multiple agents in Germany were celebrating Fleury as a beacon of monastic achievement⁵³. At least in part this was because the abbey's customs represented a form of Benedictine observance that still retained many features of the early ninth-century interpretation by Benedict of Aniane, which appealed much more to these commentators and their superiors in the Empire than the Cluniacs' tendency to experiment with liturgical and other practices⁵⁴. A second thing we can infer from the three customaries is that German authors did not strictly celebrate this inspiration in a historical perspective, but thought of its inspirational worth in the present tense – we already saw that the author of Version FF¹ explicitly mentions Abbo's influence, which is not all that surprising given the known instances of direct encounters between German agents and Fleury monasticism in the 990s⁵⁵. And a third and final point to consider is that by the turn of the first millennium, German agents were long past the stage in which they passively ab-

52) *Consuetudines Germaniae* HF, ed. Maria WEGENER / Candida ELVERT, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 5) p. 323–364 and commented on in CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 188–191, 433–435; HOFFMANN, *Mönchskönig* (as in n. 3) p. 180–185, and ENGELBERT, *Klosterleben* (as in n. 47) p. 234–236.

53) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 360–370; also Josef SEMMLER, *Das Erbe der karolingischen Klosterreform im 10. Jahrhundert*, in: *Monastische Reformen im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert*, hg. von Raymund Kottje / Helmut Maurer (VuF 38, 1989) p. 29–77, at p. 63.

54) DONNAT, *Recherches* (as in n. 26) p. 169f.

55) We know of Germans who stopped at Fleury as pilgrims on their way to St Martin in Tours: such was the case with Bishop Adalbert of Prague and possibly Bernward of Hildesheim; DAVRIL, *Un moine* (as in n. 23) p. 110 n. 32 and p. 173 n. 56 (regarding Bernward cf. also Michel PARISSÉ, *Bernward in Frankreich* [1007], in: *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen. Katalog der Ausstellung Hildesheim 1993*, hg. von Michael Brandt / Arne Eggebrecht, 2 vols. [1993], here 1 p. 133–143, at p. 140f.). Some scholars have argued that Berno, the future abbot of Reichenau and a notable commentator of monastic spirituality, spent time at Fleury in the 990s (e.g. Dieter BLUME, *Berno von Reichenau [1008–1048]: Abt, Gelehrter, Biograph. Ein Lebensbild mit Werkverzeichnis sowie Edition und Übersetzung von Berns Vita S. Uodalrici* [VuF Sonderbd. 52, 2008] p. 63–68), but others see no evidence for this (e.g. Berno Augiensis, *Tractatus liturgici*, ed. Henry PARKES [CC Cont. Med. 297, 2019] p. XVIII–XXII).

sorbed the inspirational elements in this and any other West Frankish or Lotharingian tradition, and had long started to process these into accounts of best practice that reflected both realities and expectations of the monastic life in their own part of the world. More generally, we can also see that there was growing resistance in the German-speaking world to West Frankish and Lotharingian reformers who thought that they could import their own institution's customs without taking into consideration regional sensitivities and emphases, alongside ones of a more political nature⁵⁶. It is possible that in another of his works, the *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum*, Theoderic alludes to this resistance when he states that he was criticized by none other than his patron Richard of Amorbach for proselytizing Fleury's customs and for mocking his German readers for their ignorance⁵⁷. Scholars suspect that Richard himself obtained a copy of FF¹: if correct, this might lend credence to Theoderic's statement⁵⁸. Given this context, it is not difficult to understand why none of the extant versions of the *Consuetudines Germaniae* or any other customary text from the Empire

56) Abbot Immo of Gorze's (r. 982–c. 1015) tenures as abbot of Prüm (1003–1006) and Reichenau (1006–1008) ended in failure; Anne WAGNER, Gorze au XI^e siècle: Contribution à l'histoire du monachisme bénédictin dans l'Empire (ARTEM. Atelier de Recherches sur les Textes Médiévaux 1, 1996) p. 39–52. And from a slightly later period we have Notker of St Gall's complaint about Richard of Saint-Vanne's and Poppo of Stavelot's arrogance in dictating their home region's customs, "each pretending that they were, indeed, St Benedict" (*quorum uterque dicit se sanctum Benedictum quidem esse*), cf. Die Schriften Notkers und seiner Schule 2: Psalmen und catechetische Denkmäler nach der St. Galler Handschriftengruppe, ed. Paul PIPER (Germanischer Bücherschatz 9, 1883) p. 70.

57) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum*, ed. Johannes A BOSCO (Floriacensis vetus bibliotheca, Lyon 1605, p. 219–229) p. 220: *Quare, inquires ad haec, ironicis schematibus, nostram nostrorumque inscientiam, tam impudenter verbosando deludis?*

58) FF¹ may have been the basis for Richard's *Ordo Amerbacensis*, which the monks of the Bamberg abbey of Sankt Michael in the early twelfth century claimed he had imported there, cf. Elmar HOCHHOLZER, Überlegungen zum Amorbacher "Reformkalender" des 11. Jahrhunderts und zum *ordo Amerbacensium* auf dem Michelsberg/Bamberg, StMGBO 108 (1997) p. 112–150, at p. 125–130. An eleventh-century manuscript of FF¹ originates from Sankt Michael, but whether the monks acquired it during Bernward's tenure as bishop or during that of his successor Godehard is unknown, cf. HOFFMANN, Mönchskönig (as in n. 3) p. 185. Further on Amorbach's links with Sankt Maximin in Trier and Richard's role in founding Sankt Michael, cf. CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 425 and Heinrich WAGNER, Amorbach, in: Die Männer- und Frauenklöster der Benediktiner in Bayern 1, bearb. von Michael Kaufmann / Helmut Flachenecker / Wolfgang Wüst / Manfred Heim (Germania Benedictina 2, 2014) p. 27–61, at p. 37–39, 52.

shows any sign of being influenced by Theoderic's customary⁵⁹. And the same is true of why there is no evidence of subsequent attempts to use the customary to aid with the Benedictine reform of a religious community.

In Kassius Hallinger's view, Theoderic's decision to ignore the fact that his testimony would have little direct impact on monastic practice in the German-speaking world could mean only one thing, namely that the *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* were nothing more than an inconsequential piece of "Fleury propaganda"⁶⁰. But as we already saw, the German scholar struggled to see as proper customs any of the non-Cluniac ones, due to the fact that the contents of these texts did not match his normative understanding of the genre. Against his model, Cochelin proposed to interpret all pre-1070 customs as documents that were strictly created for inspirational purposes. But, against her suggestions, the absence of evidence that Theoderic's customary was made with a normative aim in mind does not mean that the author (whether his contemporaries knew him by name or not) made no claims to authority. Three such claims can be identified in his work: namely, as a seasoned observer of monastic practice; as a reliable witness to Fleury's status as a "monarchic institution" towering above all other monasteries in "Gaul"; and as a relayer of key ideas and attitudes from that milieu. To understand how he arrived at these claims and subsequently justified them, we need to look at Theoderic's trajectory in life and the ideological and institutional settings that he frequented prior to writing the customary.

The Shaping of an Authoritative Voice

Central to Theoderic's claim to authority as author of the Fleury customary was his earlier ambition to personally witness, on a theoretical and practical level, how Benedictine tradition was lived in major institutions that were deemed significant as monastic sites of memory and/or because of their influence on contemporary monastic ideology and practice. We can make an educated guess about how this ambition emerged by looking at his reconstructed life prior to entering Fleury in 988–992. Scholars agree that he was probably born around

59) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 409.

60) Ibid. p. 424.

940–950, was a native speaker of German, and had been ordained as a priest by the time he wrote his first work, the *Vita sancti Deicoli*, in the 970s–980s⁶¹. Several references in the customary to aspects of the communal life for clerics suggest that he had either received his training at, or had been a member of, a cathedral community, which Anselme Davril suggested was that of Mainz⁶². If correct, this hypothesis would help explain Theoderic’s statement in the c. 1005 *Vita sancti Firmani posterior* that he had known Otto III before he became emperor, since the imperial palace was situated near the cathedral⁶³. It would also make sense of some of the connections that Theoderic had in the early eleventh century with clerical and monastic leaders in the Empire, including with Bernward of Hildesheim (who had received part of his training in Mainz) and Richard of Amorbach (who was a former monk of Hersfeld abbey, which was situated in Archbishop Willigis of Mainz’s territory)⁶⁴. Finally, Mainz was also a major centre of literary and intellectual life at the time, which nicely dovetails with the abundant evidence in Theoderic’s preserved body of texts regarding his knowledge of the classical authors, his use of Graecisms and neologisms, and his obvious experience as an author when he wrote the *Vita sancti Deicoli*⁶⁵.

Theoderic’s connection to Mainz would also help us to explain his familiarity with the city of Trier – which he refers to in the *Vita sancti Deicoli* and in the c. 1010 *Inventio sancti Celsi* as a “second Rome”⁶⁶ – and more specifically, with the abbey of Sankt Maximin, which in the

61) The most up-to-date discussions of Theoderic’s early life and work are in HOFFMANN, Theoderich (as in n. 17), and especially VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17).

62) DAVRIL, Un moine (as in n. 23) p. 103.

63) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Firmani posterior*, ed. Pierluigi LICCIARDELLO, *Scrittura e riscrittura della Vita di San Fermano di Montelupone* (*BHL* 3000–3001), *Analecta Bollandiana* 130 (2012) p. 89–150, at p. 125.

64) HALLINGER, Willigis (as in n. 44) p. 100.

65) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Deicoli*, in: AA SS Januarii 2 (Antwerp 1643) p. 200–210. On that narrative and the institutional and ideological context in which it was written, cf. now STEVEN VANDERPUTTEN, ‘Columbanus Wore a Single Cowl, Not a Double One’: The *Vita Deicoli* and the Legacy of Columbanian Monasticism at the Turn of the First Millennium, *Traditio* 76 (2021) p. 157–184.

66) HEINZ THOMAS, *Studien zur Trierer Geschichtsschreibung des 11. Jahrhunderts, insbesondere zu den Gesta Treverorum* (*Rheinisches Archiv* 68, 1968) p. 162.

former he describes as a major beacon of monastic observance⁶⁷. In the mid-tenth century strong links existed between the cathedral milieu of Mainz and the Trier abbey, since Abbot Ogo and his successors had rebuilt Sankt Maximin's library in part by sourcing manuscripts from there⁶⁸. Assuming that Theoderic was somehow involved with the cathedral milieu at the time and considering his strong interest in literary culture, we can even speculate that he was directly involved in some manuscript transfers and that it was through these that he had the opportunity to observe life at the abbey first hand. This in turn would explain his explicitly stated admiration of the Sankt Maximin community and the fact that he was well informed about liturgical and other aspects of life in both clerical and monastic milieus in the German-speaking world.

More implicit are the traces in his early literary work of a connection with the Metz area and the milieu around the abbey of Gorze. The *Vita sancti Deicoli* has some striking thematic interests that we also encounter in Gorze-influenced texts from the 970s–980s, which suggests that Theoderic was familiar with the specific ideological setting in which these originated⁶⁹. Also of note is the fact that in the *Vita*'s so-called second prologue there is a list of important sanctuaries in France and Lotharingia and the saints whose relics are venerated in these places: in this list Metz jumps out on account of the sheer number of saints' names, suggesting that Theoderic was especially familiar with the region and its religious institutions⁷⁰. Finally, the *Vita sancti Deicoli* also references the bishop of Metz in negative terms, which is a likely allusion to Bishop Adalbero of Metz's (r. 929–962) troubled relations with the Gorze monks, reports of which are known to have reached the Sankt Maximin community as early as the mid-930s⁷¹. All of this makes it plausible that Theoderic had encountered

67) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Deicoli* (as in n. 65) p. 201: *Maximinum incomparabilem virum, cuius monasterium specular habetur circum-circa monachorum.*

68) Isabel KNOBLICH, *Die Bibliothek des Klosters St. Maximin bei Trier bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (1996) p. 81–84, 117–119. A further connection between the two regions derived from the fact that Sankt Maximin owned considerable properties in the Mainz area. In the early 990s Archbishop Willigis of Mainz also made some donations to the abbey, cf. HALLINGER, *Willigis* (as in n. 44) p. 101, 106–109.

69) VANDERPUTTEN, *Columbanus* (as in n. 65) p. 178.

70) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Deicoli* (as in n. 65) p. 201.

71) *Ibid.* p. 209 and the commentary in VANDERPUTTEN, *Columbanus* (as in n. 65) p. 179. The Gorze monks' threat to the bishop to leave Gorze abbey and

the Gorze milieu either through his connection with Sankt Maximin (which again would not be surprising based on what we know about the monastery's networks at the time) or through some other channel. In addition to acquiring manuscripts from Mainz, Abbot Ogo and his successors had also obtained new volumes from religious institutions in the Metz area⁷². Potentially Theoderic was aware of these exchanges as part of his own (admittedly hypothetical) involvement with the Mainz milieu, and perhaps through this had the opportunity to engage directly with individuals from the Gorze scene. But even if it were to be revealed that this hypothesis is too farfetched, we can still tell from elements in the *Vita sancti Deicoli* that Theoderic was aware of Gorze's significance and of the distinguishing elements of its outlook on monastic identity and observance.

Instrumental in shaping Theoderic's later attitudes and interests as a commentator of monastic morals and practices was the fact that during his early life Gorze and Sankt Maximin had emerged as (to use Joachim Angerer's expression) "centres of gravity" in an informal network of Lotharingian institutions that nurtured a culture of intense reflection and debate on excellence in monastic observance⁷³. Both abbeys were also in the process of building extensive library collections in which a notable place was reserved for monastic rules, commentaries, and ascetic florilegia⁷⁴, and several of the manuscripts that the Sankt Maximin community acquired from its contacts in the Metz area belonged to that category⁷⁵. Except for the *Regula Benedicti*, none of these acquisitions took place with a normative aim in mind. Rather, the idea was that these works would become part of a balanced

relocate to Sankt Maximin is described in the 980s *Miracula sancti Gorgonii* ch. 10, ed. Peter Christian JACOBSEN, *Miracula s. Gorgonii. Studien und Texte zur Gorgonius-Verehrung im 10. Jahrhundert* (MGH Studien und Texte 46, 2009) p. 116.

72) KNOBLICH, *Bibliothek* (as in n. 68) p. 84f., 117–119.

73) Joachim F. ANGERER, *Consuetudo und Reform*, in: *Monastische Reformen* (as in n. 51) p. 107–116, at p. 115.

74) For Gorze, cf. John of Saint-Arnoul, *Vita Johannis Gorziensis abbatis* ch. 18, ed. Peter Christian JACOBSEN (MGH SS rer. Germ. 81, 2016) p. 196–199, and WAGNER, *L'abbaye* (as in n. 55). And for Sankt Maximin, cf. KNOBLICH, *Bibliothek* (as in n. 68) p. 81–85.

75) KNOBLICH, *Bibliothek* (as in n. 68) p. 59, established that the Trier monks acquired a copy of the Benedict of Aniane's *Codex regularum* (from Kornelimünster), two anonymous commentaries on the *Regula Benedicti* and a set of Greek-Latin glosses on the *Regula* (the latter from Saint-Amand; *ibid.* p. 102f., 113), and a copy of Charlemagne's *Admonitio generalis* along with Abbot Theodemar of Monte Cassino's letter to the ruler (from Mainz; *ibid.* p. 72f.).

collection of texts that was designed to aid the monks' reflection on the ethical and practical dimensions of their own conduct and daily routines. Furthermore, this shared culture of working with inspirational literature also encompassed the production and dissemination of new commentaries and florilegia, some of which were produced at institutions that we can firmly place in the ideological orbit of the two monasteries. A notable example of this is Albuinus's *De vitiis et virtutibus*, an ascetic florilegium that was produced around the turn of the millennium at Gorze or another institution in the Metz area; a copy ended up at Sankt Maximin shortly afterwards⁷⁶. Another is Grimlaicus's mid-tenth century *Regula solitariorum*, also a product of the Metz area. Of that text, too, a copy entered the Trier abbey's collection at some point in the second half of the tenth century⁷⁷. And earlier we already saw that an oral or written account of monastic customs from Lotharingia was reworked, possibly at Sankt Maximin, into the *Consuetudines Germaniae* Version E.

Arguably this trend of assembling and expanding collections of inspirational commentaries on monastic ethics and conduct decisively shaped Theoderic's later decision to write an account of Fleury's customs at a time when they had long been worked into indigenous accounts of monastic best practice. Presumably the same trend also explains Theoderic's fascination with Fleury in particular, for it must have made him aware of the high regard with which its customs were held in the intellectual and institutional circles that he frequented. The *Consuetudines Germaniae* Version E bears witness to this. And in the *Vita sancti Deicoli*, which Theoderic wrote up to two decades prior to taking his monastic vows at Fleury, he documented the fact that he was well familiar with a discourse that presented the abbey as a "spiritual school for monks and an invincible and always open asylum

76) Monique PAULMIER-FOUCART / Anne WAGNER, Lire au Haut Moyen Âge: un florilège spirituel de l'abbaye Saint-Vanne de Verdun, *Annales de l'Est* ser. 6, 52 (2002) p. 9–24, at p. 14, 18.

77) Berlin, Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, theol. lat. 726, fol. 1r–70r. On the *Regula solitariorum* and its transmission cf. in first place Gabriela SIGNORI, Textual Communities: Die frühmittelalterliche *Regula solitariorum* und die Waldbrüder und -schwestern im spätmittelalterlichen St. Gallen, in: *Manuscripts Changing Hands*, ed. by Corine Schleif / Volker Schier (Wolfenbütteler MA-Studien 31, 2016) p. 79–99, and most recently Steven VANDERPUTTEN, Grimlaicus's *Regula solitariorum* and Male Reclusion at the Turn of the First Millennium, *Studi Medievali* 65 (2024, in press).

for the miserable”, whose members reject the world and its desires whilst “steadfastly break(ing) a wedge in the devil’s battle line”⁷⁸.

Parallel to this focus on contemporary Fleury, the interest in monastic literary tradition had also triggered a fascination with the *lieux de mémoire* and founding fathers of monasticism in Gaul. At late tenth-century Reichenau and St Gall (two institutions that were linked through various personal connections to the Gorze–Sankt Maximin milieu) the monks invested considerable energies in putting together collections of hagiographies that celebrated the achievements of St Columbanus and several of his disciples⁷⁹. Meanwhile the monks of Gorze and Bishop Adalbero of Metz had links to Columbanus’s foundation of Luxeuil: besides evidence for the exchange of scribes we know of one member of the Luxeuil community who travelled to Gorze to join the monastic community there in the mid-tenth century⁸⁰. And we have already seen that Fleury, where the remains of St Benedict were famously kept, was also a prime destination for pilgrims, including from Germany. In the above-mentioned *Illatio sancti Benedicti*, which Theoderic produced for Richard of Amorbach some two decades later, he would write his own account of this East Frankish fascination with the Loire abbey, a fascination that viewed that institution as a Benedictine *lieu de mémoire* of the first order⁸¹.

Because it has been posited in part from circumstantial evidence, this reconstruction of Theoderic’s early life, his influences, and his interests cannot be anything other than hypothetical. However, it does contain enough reliable clues to infer with certainty that he ended up latching onto this triple fascination (with inspirational accounts of monastic best practice, high places of monastic observance, and prominent *lieux*

78) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Deicoli* (as in n. 64) p. 201: *Ibi quippe gymnasium invenitur spiritale monachorum, atque inexpugnabile semper patens azylum miseris ... diabolicas acies viriliter cuneati infringunt ... incessanter pugnant, incessanter triumphant.*

79) Ernst TREMP, Saint Coloman dans les manuscrits hagiographiques et liturgiques de l’abbaye de Saint-Gall, in: *L’eredità di san Colombano. Memoria e culto attraverso il medioevo / L’héritage de saint Coloman. Mémoire et culte au Moyen Âge / Saint Columbanus’ Legacy. Memory and Cult in the Middle Ages*, sous la direction d’Eleonora Destefanis (Art & Société, 2017) p. 217–228.

80) VANDERPUTTEN, Columbanus (as in n. 64) p. 178f. Another Luxeuil alumnus, Adso, travelled to Toul to become a schoolmaster (most likely at Saint-Evre) before he became abbot of Montier-en-Der in 968, cf. Adonis Dervensis opera hagiographica, ed. Monique GOULET (CC Cont. Med. 198, 2003) esp. p. VIII–XII.

81) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum* (as in n. 57).

de mémoire of the monastic past) to embark on what one might call a part-pilgrimage and part fact-finding mission. Such journeys were not uncommon at the time⁸². It appears that Theoderic set for himself several destinations that he had encountered as part of his reading – a sort of monastic must-see bucket list. First, he travelled to the Vosges, where he was hosted by the monks of the small abbey of Lure and apparently managed to establish some kind of connection with the nearby community of Luxeuil. In the *Vita sancti Deicoli*, which he wrote at the request of Abbot Werdolph of Lure, he stated that the monks of Luxeuil excelled in the “exercise of numerous virtues”, and mentioned their institution as a centre of monastic excellence alongside Sankt Maximin and Fleury⁸³. But evidently, his admiration did not tempt him to enter the monastic life at this relatively impoverished institution, which at the time was only just beginning to re-emerge as a regional centre of some resonance. By the late 980s he had travelled on to Fleury, where he joined the monastic community, no doubt relishing the opportunity to observe the inspirational quality of the Fleury customs first hand and to study the abbey’s extensive book collection⁸⁴. Theoderic’s journey of discovery was not over yet, for in the following decade he visited the abbey of Monte Cassino (that other major Benedictine *lieu de mémoire*) at least once⁸⁵. And after he left Fleury (for reasons that remain unclear, in or shortly before 1002) he spent time in Rome, where he observed the customs of the clerics at

82) Eleonora DESTEFANIS, *Mobilità monastica, monasteri e ospitalità nell’Italia altomedievale*, in: *Nach Rom gehen. Monastische Reisekultur von der Spätantike bis in die Neuzeit*, hg. von Peter Erhart / Jakob Kuratli Hüebli (Itinera monastica 3, 2021) p. 41–87, at p. 41–47, and Peter ERHART, *Monastische Reisewege durch das frühmittelalterliche Italien*, *ibid.* p. 89–120.

83) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Vita sancti Deicoli* (as in n. 65) p. 201: *ob experimentum plurimarum virtutum aptissimum est indutum vocabulum; appellatur quippe spiritaliter lux ovium*.

84) Marco MOSTERT, *La bibliothèque de Fleury-sur-Loire*, in: *Religion et culture autour de l’an Mil* (as in n. 1) p. 119–123, and Charles VULLIEZ, *Les centres de culture de l’Orléanais. Fleury, Micy-Saint-Mesmin, Orléans et leur rayonnement aux alentours de l’an Mil*, *ibid.* p. 125–132.

85) In the c. 1005 *Passio sanctorum Tryphoni et Respicii*, Theoderic indicates that he had travelled at least once to Monte Cassino prior to leaving Fleury before or in 1002; cf. the discussion in VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17) p. 43f. On the connection between Fleury and Monte Cassino cf. Amalia GALDI, *S. Benedetto tra Montecassino e Fleury (VII–XII secolo)*, *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome – Moyen Âge* 126,2 (2014), <http://mefrm.revues.org/2047> (accessed on 10 October 2024). In 1005 he would return there, after spending time in Rome, cf. VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17) p. 46.

Laterans, and again also at Monte Cassino. He then crossed the Alps in 1006 to live quasi-permanently at Sankt Eucharius in Trier, from where he travelled at least once to Amorbach in c. 1010⁸⁶.

Theoderic's move to Trier marked the start of the final and presumably also the most sedentary phase of his life⁸⁷. In the extant works that he wrote from that point onwards (the *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum*, *Commentaria in epistolas catholicas*, and *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*), he took stock of the fact that his theoretical and practical encounters with various iterations of the Benedictine ideal had profoundly shaped his understanding of self as an observer and commentator of monastic morals at the turn of the first millennium⁸⁸. These encounters, firstly, had given him the opportunity to thoroughly study and compare the practices and morals of different religious communities – several of which were located in famous *lieux de mémoire* of the monastic past – and to speak authoritatively on their qualitative differences. Secondly, they had also given him an authoritative voice on the “imitable” (*imitabilis*) nature of the Fleury monks' customs; the abbey's status as a “monarchic institution” (*archisterium*) that towered above all other Benedictine houses in “Gaul”; and finally, also the monks' ideology and its relevance to his German readership. While none of the three works Theoderic composed in the later part of his life was written with a normative purpose in mind, each contains passages that clearly allude to his threefold (but non-normative) claim to authority, as he expressed it in his last years.

86) VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17) p. 46.

87) Several scholars have suggested that at some point between 1010 and 1018 Theoderic permanently relocated to Amorbach. However, this cannot be reliably inferred from the evidence, cf. HOFFMANN, Theoderich (as in n. 17) p. 504.

88) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum* (as in n. 57). And for the *Commentaria in litteras apostolicas*, the full text of which remains unedited, cf. the commentary and extracts in DÜMMLER, *Über Leben* (as in n. 23), and Tina ORTH-MÜLLER, *Si ad plenum apostolica verba nequaquam valeam explanare: Theoderich von Fleury (Theoderich von Amorbach) und sein Kommentar zu den Katholischen Briefen*, in: *Medialatinitas. Ausgewählte Beiträge zum 8. Internationalen Mittellateinerkongress, Wien 17.–21.9.2017*, hg. von Christine Ratkowitsch (Wiener Studien. Beiheft 40 / Arbeiten zur mittel- und neulateinischen Philologie 11, 2020) p. 75–90. Regarding the possibility that Theoderic wrote a further work on Fleury's liturgical practices, cf. the discussion in VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17) p. 20f. n. 7 and p. 49f.

Theoderic's Complex Claim to Authority

In the three commissioned works he wrote between c. 1010 and 1022, Theoderic made it clear to his German readership that he was writing to them as a fellow countryman. He spoke their language and was able to rely on his personal experiences when comparing their liturgical and other practices to West Frankish ones. Furthermore, he also knew what aspects of the vocabulary and customs in West Frankish monasteries would sound unfamiliar to them⁸⁹. Consider, for instance, the opening paragraph of the *Illatio*:

*You have demanded, my reverend Father Richard, that I should not delay to explain ... for your convenience, briefly and to the best of my ability, for what reason there is that feast of the most blessed father of the monks Benedict, which in Gaul is celebrated not in a moderate but in a prominent fashion in the days of the Advent of the Lord, in which the monks from East [Francia], like they do during Lent, have the habit of living austerely and of waiting with great vigilance and under the strictest discipline of monastic observance for the birth of the Lord*⁹⁰.

But at the same time, Theoderic also included in these works clear indicators of his intention to be more than a reliable interpreter of foreign cults and customs. Strewn across the three texts are several statements to the effect that he was claiming the authority to instruct his German readers on the superior nature of Fleuriac practices and attitudes, as well as on the need to study these in an unfiltered form and, if possible, imitate them. The prologue to the customary contains what is his most explicit statement on these points:

Your fatherhood asks me, in accordance with a power that stems from the Rule, to briefly describe ... the customs and observance of the French monasteries in which I declare to have been educated, and more specifically of the abbey of Fleury, which is like the head and the mother abbey of all other

89) DAVRIL, Un moine (as in n. 23) p. 101f.

90) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Illatio sancti Benedicti Floriacum* (as in n. 57) p. 219: *Exigis a me, mi Pater Reverende Richarde, quatinus aliquo tibi compendiosae commoditatis stilo, pro modulo ingenii mei, palificare quantocius non differam: quatenam causa existat illius Festivitate Beatissimi Patris Monachorum Benedicti, quae apud Gallias non mediocriter, sed praecipue celebratur, in diebus Dominici Adventus, in quibus Orientales Monachi, velut in Quadragesima, austerius solent vivere: et sub maxima institutionis Monasticae disciplina, vigilantius Natale Domini expectare.*

*monasteries, and which is second to none in Gaul It seems to me that you are right to look to know the customs of this place that are so worthy of imitation*⁹¹.

Although these words were written in deference to the text's addressee, Theoderic made it clear that his first-hand knowledge of Fleury's customs and his experience in comparing these to those of monasteries in Gaul made him an authoritative voice on their superiority. Further on in the text (and further in support of his authoritative voice) he also mentioned that he had studied the customs of Italian monks and the clerics of Laterans and found that these compared negatively to those of Monte Cassino and (especially) Fleury⁹².

However, being able to argue authoritatively that Fleury's customs were superior to those practices in other places was one thing; claiming to be an authoritative source was another. Theoderic knew full well that his readers were already well informed on the Fleury monks' cultic practices and customs (the best proof of which is the existence of the *Consuetudines Germaniae* Versions E and FF¹, and the many attestations of other direct and indirect encounters by German agents with the Loire abbey and its customs). And he also knew that they might find patronizing his claim to speak authoritatively about these. Although one must always be careful not to be fooled by the obligatory humility statements in works of this nature, the prologue to the *Illatio* contains a passage that may well be revealing of real objections by Richard and his peers about Theoderic's lecturing tone. In it, the author pretends that the abbot spoke the following words:

For what ironic purpose is it that you mock mine and our lack of knowledge by speaking so impudently? ... You should know that it is not up to you to write about how this most holy Father of ours has journeyed from this world to the Lord, for that is something that all of Christendom knows. Nor is it your place to tell the story of his translation, but only of that feast, which is called Illatio, and why it is called Illatio, and why it is celebrated on the

91) Theoderic of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach, *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, in: CCM 7,3 (as in n. 23) p. 7f.: *Rogat paternitas vestra ymmo normali iniungit imperio, quatenus Gallicorum monasteriorum consuetudines atque monasticas disciplinas, quibus immutitum me esse profiteor, et precipue Ffloriacensis monasterii, quod quasi caput et archisterium quodammodo ceterorum videtur monasteriorum, quoque Gallia nichil excellentius habet, qualicumque sermone vobis debeam compendiose caraxare. Nec preposterum quidem iudico tanti loci imitabiles vos querere consuetudines ...*

92) CCM 7,1 (as in n. 5) p. 39.

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

These passages suggest that, for him, it was not his physical presence at Fleury or his obedience to its abbot that made him a member of the community and enabled him to be a spokesman for its customs and ideology. Instead, it was the fact that his training in monastic life there had permanently turned him into someone who acted and thought like one. As such, these passages give us a revealing insight into Theoderic's self-fashioning as someone who embodied the Loire community's way of doing things and looking at the world, regardless of his station – that is, someone who thought as a member of that community and acted as one, regardless of his whereabouts and affiliation. It seems one could take the monk out of Fleury, but could not take Fleury out of the monk.

No doubt Theoderic's claims to authority were of a very personal nature. And perhaps his suggestions that they were only somewhat begrudgingly tolerated by his German patrons (Richard of Amorbach in particular) do contain an element of truth. This becomes obvious if we briefly look at the *Commentaria in epistolas catholicas*, which he wrote for Richard after the latter became abbot of Fulda in 1018. Conceived as something akin to a moral sermon, it squarely addresses a monastic audience, telling readers that their cohort is superior to all others on account of its rigorous obedience to the *Regula Benedicti*⁹⁷. In a discourse that is no doubt influenced by Abbo of Fleury's controversial viewpoints, throughout the text Theoderic presents trenchant criticisms of clerical simony (a feature that it shares with Abbo's writings and with Theoderic's *Vita sancti Severi*), avaricious, ostentatious,

n. 23) p. 25f. (*quod nequaquam pauperes et peregrini apud nos communibus servitorum reficiuntur victualibus*), p. 30 (*Nunquam enim solet puer aliquis nostrum solus alicubi incedere sed semper bini*), and p. 58 (*Audivimus interdum in monasterio nostro a quibusdam perfectioribus fratribus*). When it comes to discussing monastic customs, Theoderic identifies with the Fleury monks: but when it comes to explaining the differences between the West and East Frankish monastic vocabularies, he identifies as a German monk, cf. *ibid.* p. 22 (*Est autem tritum apud eos proverbium unde se defendere solent, ne vilioribus cogantur uti vestimentis. Si inquirunt iuxta regule decretum ... necesse est aiunt ...*), p. 24 (*Horrea et granaria que apud nos spicaria vocantur*), p. 26 (*conchas quas mallias vocant ad corradenda legumina*), p. 28 (*vinum purum sive pigmentum quod clarum dicunt vel herbolatium vel hysopatum necnon et mellitum quod uuasledam vocant*), and p. 34 (*Sunt autem et in choro sedilia posita, tornatili politione compta que et dunigera vocant*). On this cf. also DAVRIL, *Un moine* (as in n. 23) p. 102.

97) On this cf. DÜMMLER, *Über Leben* (as in n. 24), and ORTH-MÜLLER, *Si ad plenum apostolica verba nequaquam valeam explanare* (as in n. 88).

and unchaste bishops, and those who steal monastic property⁹⁸. At the same time Theoderic has no doubt that monks, the “Lord’s flock of sheep”, will be martyred for defending the truth of Christian faith⁹⁹. In the *Vita sancti Deicoli* he had already evoked the image of monks as a cohort going into battle against the vices. However, no doubt there were also echoes of Abbo’s trenchant rhetoric that Theoderic will have witnessed during his time at Fleury¹⁰⁰. Although Abbot Richard would probably not have taken issue with Theoderic’s emphasis in the customary on the communal aspect of monastic observance, he may well have found more problematic (as Bernward of Hildesheim would likely have done) the passages that advocated the free election of abbots, abbatial discretion through counsel, and perhaps even the abbot’s participation in the monks’ ethos of communal life and poverty¹⁰¹. And we can only guess (or rather, further research would have to verify) what Richard and other readers of the *Commentaria* would have thought about Theoderic’s militant statements about monastic identity and ideology¹⁰². The abbot’s likely acquisition of a copy of FF¹ tells us that he neither felt the need nor the inclination to take the elderly monk’s words for gospel.

To understand how Theoderic’s self-assured rhetoric in the customary, the *Illatio*, and the *Commentaria* could be reconciled with the attitudes and expectations of his patrons, it is worth looking back at the reading culture he grew up in and that was being actively perpetuated in the institutional settings where he was active at the end of his life. To be more precise, we find that his activity as an author – and especially as a commentator – of monastic rituals, practices, and morals aligned well with a Gorzian (or perhaps more accurately, Lotharingian) habit of furnishing religious libraries with a diverse range of accounts and commentaries on monastic spirituality and practice, and of providing their users with the opportunity to study, compare, and process these accounts. When Richard was made abbot of Amorbach in c. 1010 he almost immediately set to work to complement the

98) DÜMLER, *Über Leben* (as in n. 24) p. 11–17, 35.

99) *Ibid.* p. 12 and the quotation on p. 34 (*Monachi vero oves domini sunt*).

100) VANDERPUTTEN / DE GUSSEM, *Monachus* (as in n. 17) p. 44f.

101) *L’abbaye de Fleury en l’an mil 2* (as in n. 23) p. 152.

102) The earliest of three known manuscripts of the *Commentaria in epistolas catholicas* is an eleventh-century copy from Amorbach, cf. ORTH-MÜLLER, *Si ad plenum apostolica verba nequaquam valeam explanare* (as in n. 88) p. 77.

abbey's collection precisely in this way¹⁰³. This explains why he not only called on Theoderic to submit several new texts with a distinctly 'Fleuriac' flavour, but also gave the latter free reign to express himself in a critical manner regarding the conduct and attitudes of his German peers, even if the abbot himself may not always have agreed.

Conclusions

At the beginning of this paper, we saw that according to the current state of research, monastic customs of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries were written not for normative but for inspirational purposes. But as the present paper has argued based on a study of Theoderic's *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, the then lack of incentive to use these documents as instruments of monastic governance does not mean that their authors declined to make any authoritative claims. Admittedly the personal background and full scope of the ones Theoderic made in his customary may not have been obvious to the earliest readers of the work. Indeed, these things must be carefully reconstructed from the fragmented evidence of his life history – more specifically his theoretical and real-life encounters with different monastic communities as well as with their practices and ideals – and a comparative reading of his extant body of work. However, this should not tempt us into thinking that we can ignore this information when trying to interpret Theoderic's intentions as author of the customary. If anything, as I hope this study has shown, any future discussions about the purpose and discourse of customs from this period ought to be embedded in a conversation about then current reflections and debates on monastic best practice. As highlighted here, these discussions should refer more explicitly to the broader literary context and reading culture in which the customs originated and were initially received. Further research into both things will no doubt help to uncover multiple claims to authority in these texts, beyond the normative one that scholarship has traditionally focused on.

103) HALLINGER, Willigis (as in n. 44) p. 100; Heinrich WAGNER, *Die Äbte von Amorbach im Mittelalter*, Würzburger Diözesangeschichtsblätter 54 (1992) p. 69–107, at p. 87f., and Hartmut HOFFMANN, *Schreibschulen des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts im Südwesten des Deutschen Reichs*, mit einem Beitrag von Elmar HOCHHOLZER, 2 vols. (MGH Schriften 53, 2004), here 2 p. 817.

Summaria

This paper argues that the non-normative purpose of monastic customaries from before the end of the eleventh century does not mean that these documents lacked an authoritative voice. Authors' claims to authority came in many different forms, most of which were not normative (by which is meant here literally prescriptive and institutionally focused) in the modern sense of the word. And although customaries from this early period were commonly anonymized and references to a commissioner or host institution were often removed or outright omitted, neither of these characteristics completely erased such claims to authority. These arguments are explored through a case study of Thierry of Fleury/Trier/Amorbach's early eleventh-century *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores*, which in addition seeks to demonstrate the text's embedding in a culture of reflection and debate on Benedictine "best practice" and morals.

In diesem Aufsatz wird postuliert, dass der nicht-normative Zweck klösterlicher *consuetudines* aus der Zeit vor dem Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts nicht bedeutet, dass es diesen Dokumenten an einer autoritativen Stimme fehlt. Die Autoritätsansprüche der Autoren kommen in vielen verschiedenen Formen vor, von denen die meisten nicht normativ (womit hier wörtlich präskriptiv und institutionell ausgerichtet gemeint ist) im modernen Sinne des Wortes waren. Und obwohl die *consuetudines* aus dieser frühen Periode häufig anonymisiert und Verweise auf einen Auftraggeber oder eine Institution oft entfernt oder ganz weggelassen wurden, hat dies deren Autoritätsansprüche nicht vollständig beseitigt. Diese Argumente werden anhand einer Fallstudie zu Theoderichs von Fleury/Trier/Amorbach *Consuetudines Floriacenses antiquiores* aus dem frühen 11. Jahrhundert untersucht, die darüber hinaus die Einbettung des Textes in eine Kultur der Reflexion und Debatte über benediktinische "best practice" und Moral aufzeigen soll.