Sacred time, sacred space. history and identity in the monastery of Fulda (744-856)
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II

Nostri maiores

Between 812 and 823 the names of the deceased monks were no longer regularly recorded in the *annales necrologici.*\(^1\) Additionally, in these years transactions of property were less frequently documented in Fulda itself.\(^2\) This waning interest in Fulda to record the names of those to be prayed for or to write down the property donated to the monastery in Fulda itself was one of the consequences of a crisis, caused by a bitter conflict between the abbot and a group of monks, that disrupted Fulda's monastic life severely. The events of the crisis will introduce this chapter.

When the conflict precisely started is difficult to establish, but it might have been in 807, when many brethren of Fulda died in an epidemic, including the children. Some young monks had tried to flee the monastery, but their plan was discovered and their custodian was punished for it.\(^3\) We know that two years later, in 809, the archbishop of Mainz had visited Fulda *abbatis et fratrum causa,* ‘for the sake of the abbot and the monks’.\(^4\) The reason for the visit of the archbishop is not known, but in light of what was to come one might expect that there was some disagreement between the abbot and the monks. In 812 a group of twelve monks together with their abbot travelled to the emperor to ask for advice in a *conturbatio non minima in monasterio sancti Bonifatii,* ‘not a small commotion in the monastery of St Boniface’.\(^5\) On this occasion the group of monks offered the emperor the *Supplex Libellus,* a petition, which lists the complaints of the monks.\(^6\) The emperor instituted an inquiry. He sent

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\(^1\) Schmid, ‘Auf der Suche nach den Mönchen’, pp. 142-52; idem, ‘Mönchslisten’, p. 618. See also the former chapter.


\(^3\) ‘et mortalitas maxima in monasterio sancti Bonifatii, ita ut fratrum iuvenum mortierunt [...] sanctos aufugiant pueri puerorum et pessime custo consilliis pravis conviccis multis tunc lacerat erat’. *Chronicon Laurissense breve* (AD. 807) ed. F. Schnorr v. Carolsfeld, *Neues Archiv* 36 (1911), p. 37. The *Chronicon Laurissense breve* is the only source, which reveals something of the events before 812. See also Corradini, *Die Wiener Handschrift Cup 430*.

\(^4\) ‘Richolfus ad monasterium nostrum Fulda [...] missus est abbatis et fratrum causa’. *Chronicon Laurissense breve* (AD. 809) p. 37.


\(^6\) It is certain that the monks offered the *Supplex Libellus* to Charlemagne. Candidus, *Vita Aegil* 1 c. 9, p. 9. *Supplex Libellus,* pp. 319-27; Josef Semmler, ‘Studien zum Supplex
the archbishop of Mainz and the bishops of Worms, Augsburg and Würzburg to the monastery to investigate and settle the matter. However, little seems to have changed by this committee. In the years following their visit monks continued to flee the monastery, others were expelled by the abbot. Somewhere between the end of August 816 and the beginning of August 817 a delegation of monks went to court again and they offered Louis the Pious, who by then had succeeded his father to the throne, a revised version of the *Supplex Libellus*. This time the emperor took tough measures against Ratgar. He was deprived of his abbacy and put into exile.

The conflict in Fulda gave rise to an intense discussion about monastic life, the priorities and responsibilities of the monastery and provoked a lively literary production. I have already mentioned the *Supplex Libellus*, a complaint booklet of a group of monks, written in 812-816/7. Another contemporary document that responded to the crisis in the monastery is the *Vita Strumi*. Eigil, who succeeded Ratgar as abbot of Fulda in 818, wrote the *Vita Strumi* in the aftermath of the crisis, sometime between 818 and 820. This chapter is about these two texts, which both appealed to the past of Boniface and Strumi, Fulda’s founders, though for different reasons, as we will see. The first part deals with the *Supplex Libellus*. This text records what the monks resented most about the abbacy of Ratgar. What did they complain about? How did they envisage their ideal monastic community? The second part of the chapter is about the *Vita Strumi*. It sets out to show that, on the one hand the text is a response to a discussion about monasticism of which we see a glimpse in the *Supplex Libellus*, and on the other an attempt on the part of the new abbot,
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Eigil, to soothe the disagreements and bring new unity in the disrupted community.13

The Supplex Libellus

No medieval manuscript surviving, we have to rely on Christopher Brouwer’s seventeenth century edition of the Supplex Libellus.14 The copy, which Brouwer edited in the Fuldensium antiquitatum libri IV, is addressed to Charlemagne. We know from the Vita Aegil, written around 840, that the document was indeed given to this Frankish emperor.15 Yet, the Supplex Libellus appears to contain a reference to the Aachen council of 816.16 On the basis of this reference Josef Semmler convincingly has argued that there once existed two copies of the Supplex Libellus, one written in 812 and one written after the summer of 816. Somewhere in the autumn of 816 or the spring of 817 the author(s) presumably added at least the chapter about the council of 816 in Aachen to their complaint booklet and offered it again to Charlemagne’s successor, Louis the Pious. We therefore cannot be certain about what the Supplex Libellus originally must have looked like and what was altered in 817. Next to this the authorship of the text is subject to discussion. Some have argued that Eigil was behind it, but there is no proof for this hypothesis.17 Let us now turn to the Supplex Libellus and the causes of the crisis.

The protests

The first issue that the Supplex Libellus brought up is that of memoria. According to the authors of the Supplex Libellus, the commemoration of the emperor, his family, the Christian people, the benefactors of the monastery, the deceased monks, abbot Sturmi and the fundatores of Fulda,

13 All the translations of the Vita Sturmi are based upon C. H. Talbot’s translation in: Soldiers of Christ. Saints and Saints Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (London 1995), eds. T.F.X. Noble and T. Head, pp. 165-87. Where I do not agree with the translation, I have altered it. Further, concerning the quotations from the Vita Sturmi itself, I have used the Würzburg copy of the Vita Sturmi, that is edited by Pius Engelbert in Die Vita Sturmi des Eigils von Fulda.
14 Browerus, Fuldensium antiquitatum libri IV (Antwerp 1612) pp. 212-6. For the other, later editions see the introduction to the edition of Semmler, Supplex Libellus, p. 320.
15 Candidus, Vita Aegil 1, c. 3, p. 5.
16 For in the Supplex Libellus we can read: ‘Quod ipse abbas corrigatur, ne instituitis sancti Bonifatii detrahat dicens, quod decreta eius synodus damnaverit’. Semmler is convinced that the concerning council is the Aachen one of 816 as he convincingly argues in ‘Studien zum Supplex Libellus’, pp. 286-8, and 296-9.
17 Idem, pp. 289-90.
the saints and the Holy Cross\textsuperscript{18} was the main responsibility of a royal monastery.\textsuperscript{19} The text does not say that Ratgar neglected the remembrance of these groups; the authors seem to have been concerned most of all with the precise implementation of \textit{memoria}, to keep the \textit{modus} of prayers, psalms and Vigils or processions in line with what Sturm (and Boniface) had instituted.\textsuperscript{20} However, Ratgar apparently did reduce the scope and intensity of the liturgy. The writers of the complaint document asked for permission to celebrate mass more frequently, as had been practice in earlier times.\textsuperscript{21}

In addition to this, a fear that the salvation of the monks was no longer secured seems to underlie certain chapters of the \textit{Supplex Libellus}.\textsuperscript{22} The monks complained that Ratgar sent the elderly to the \textit{cellae} of the monastery; since his abbacy these were no longer directed by priests, but by laymen. Without priests, there was no one for the aged monks to confess and nobody who could give a \textit{viaticum} to monks on their deathbed.\textsuperscript{23} Of course the monks were concerned about the consequences of all this for their life beyond the grave. The fact that the \textit{Annales Necrologici} were not kept up to date during the abbacy of Ratgar might have also roused the concern of the monks with their spiritual welfare.\textsuperscript{24}

Another issue that the \textit{Supplex Libellus} raised is how to protect the monastery from plunder and blood shed. The monks begged the emperor not to allow evil people to reside inside or in the vicinity of the monastery, for they were most likely to do harm. The \textit{Supplex Libellus} mentions the murderer of a monk who is imprisoned in the monastery and lay criminals who seem to have been accommodated in \textit{cellae} near the monastery.\textsuperscript{25} Concerning the murderer the monks were afraid of revenge of relatives. As for the criminals, they feared the plundering of their monastery.\textsuperscript{26}

The \textit{Supplex Libellus} was not only concerned with keeping bad influences outside monastic walls, but also with strategies to safeguard the purity and continuity of the monastery from inside. The authors of the \textit{Supplex Libellus} pleaded that only monks had proven themselves in the

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Supplex Libellus}, c. 1, 3 and 19, pp. 321-2, 326.
\textsuperscript{19} See the introduction.
\textsuperscript{20} 'In primis petimus pietatem tuam, clementissim e imperator, quod liceat nobis orationum, psalmodiae et Vigilarum modum tenere, quem patres nostri habuerunt pro amicis nostris viventibus atque defunctis', \textit{Supplex Libellus} c. 1, p. 321.
\textsuperscript{21} Idem, c. 2, p. 322.
\textsuperscript{22} Corradini, 'The rhetoric of crisis', pp. 269-321.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Supplex Libellus}, c. 1, 2, 3 and 5, pp. 321-2.
\textsuperscript{24} See Chapter One.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Supplex Libellus}, c. 17, p. 326.
\textsuperscript{26} Most likely it concerned public penitents. See Mayke de Jong, 'Monastic prisoners or opting out? Political coercion and honour in the Frankish kingdoms' in: \textit{Topographies of Power}, pp. 291-328; idem, 'What was public about public penance? \textit{Paeunitia publica} and justice in the Carolingian world' in: \textit{La Giustizia nell'alto Medioevo (Secoli IX-XI) II (Settimane 42: Spoleto 1997)} pp. 863-902.
holy way of life (and who were educated!) should be ordained priest; that everybody who entered the monastery should do so because of love for the monastic way of life, not because of a desire for money or earthly possessions or because he was forced to receive the tonsure, for, the writers of the *Supplex Libellus* argued, people who entered the monastery on wrong grounds, would trouble the monks. They were likely to commit crimes and to be defective. Once inside the monastery their disappointment and longing for the world outside could cause bitterness and unkindness. They might work off their bad tempers upon fellow-brethren, such as the weak and old monks.

The final issue brought up in the *Supplex Libellus* is that in every possible way, discord within the community had to be prevented. All property should be communal for private property and the distribution of possessions would cause 'quarrels, disputes, rivalries, wrath, brawls, hostilities, disagreements, jealousies, secret parties and drunkenness and almost all the other things that are bad and at variance with the well-being' on the part of the monks.

In short, these were all issues related to the problem of balancing inner purity and sacredness on the one hand and secular responsibilities on the other, in other words, issues related to the monastic identity that each major royal abbey had to deal with and that were discussed at every level, both in the monasteries itself as at the reform councils of the Carolingian rulers. Why it got out of hand in Fulda depended on several factors, for example the very rapid growth of the number of monks and the property of the community in the late eighth century, which transformed life in Fulda significantly, and the building of an enormous church that had upset life in the monastery.

In my opinion, the essence of the conflict, however, so far overlooked by historians, with the exception of Steffen Patzold and Luke Wenger, seems to have been the personality of the abbot and his interpretation of monastic governance, resulting from a lack of discretion.

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27 *Supplex Libellus*, c. 6, 7 and 9, pp. 323-4.
28 Idem, p. 323.
29 Idem, c. 15, p. 325.
31 Until 815 the number of gifts recorded in the charters increased. See CDF. Also Hussong, 'Studien 2' p. 155. Eigel refers to changes in the monastery in the *Vita Sturmi*. See his introduction and chapters 13 and 14, pp. 131, 144-7. According to Karl Schmid it was because of the growth that Ratgar reorganised the monastery. 'Mönchslisten', p. 632.
The abbot

The person, who was especially responsible for the state of affairs in the monastery, was the abbot and according to the authors of the *Supplex Libellus* he had done a poor job. What had disturbed the monks most was that the abbot had not protected the peace inside the monastery, but that his behaviour had only strengthened the unrest. The last chapter of the *Supplex Libellus* offers a portrait of a good and a bad abbot, the bad abbot being modelled after Ratgar.

The following we find of extreme importance above everything: this is to have unity and concord with our abbot as we had with our former abbots and to observe mercy, friendship, piety and modesty in him; and that he is kind toward the sick, gracious to the offenders, approachable for the brethren, a comforter of the sad, a helper of those who suffer, an aid for the kind, encourager of those in need of assurance, a reviver of the tired ones, supporter of the people who pass away, restorer of the fallen: that he loves all the brothers, that he hates no one and that he will punish no one with hatred and the malice of envy and that he will not cause disturbance with an angry look, nor troubled of mind, nor excessive in judgement, nor stubborn on advice, but with a happy face, a cheerful mind, discrete in work, harmonious in skill. And when someone of the brothers commits any crime, that he will not torture this person with tyrannical punishment, but that he will hasten to correct (him) with merciful discipline and to receive the penitent clemently and that he will not plague him again with vicious suspicion and not banish him with an everlasting hate. These things, lord emperor, were common with our former abbots and this we have asked this abbot many times but till this day we have not been able to accomplish.33

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33 'id est unitatem et concordiam cum abbate nostro habere, sicut cum anterioribus nostri abbatibus habuimus, et misericordiam et familiaritatem, pietatem et modestiam in illo sentire; et ut esset benignus infirmis, propitius delinquentibus, affabilis fratribus, maestorum consolator, laborantium adiutor, benevolentiam auxiliator, bene certantium hortator, lassorum refocillator, cedentium sustentator, cadentium restaurator; omnes fratres amaret, nullum odiret et nullum zeli uel liuoris dolo persequeretur fieretque non turbulentus uultu, non anxius animo, non nimius in iudicio, non obstinatus in consilio, sed hilares facie, laetus mente, discretus in opere, consentiens in utilitate, et, quando aliquis de fratribus praecocatus fuerit in aliquo delicto, non statim tyrannica uindicta illum excruciaret, sed misericordi disciplina corrigere festinaret conversumque clementer susciperet nec praua suspicione denuo illum fatigaret, neque perpetuo odio exteminaret. His et talibus, domine imperator, apud priores nostros abates usi sumus et de hoc istum
The authors of the *Supplex Libellus* clearly explained what they expected of an abbot: mercy, friendship, discretion, modesty, accessibility, charity and humanity. These were the conditions under which, as they had stated themselves, the monks could live in *unitas et concordia*, unity and concord.

The picture of the good abbot in the *Supplex Libellus* is clearly inspired by the Rule of Benedict. According to the Rule it was the task of the abbot to guide the monks to salvation, while taking into account the constitution and abilities of every individual monk. Some he needed to guide with mild goodness, others the abbot must correct with reprimands or persuasiveness. Therefore one quality that an abbot according to the Rule of Benedict should have and that the *Supplex Libellus* refers to, is that of moderation and modesty; the keyword is *discretio*. In the Rule we can read:

The abbot should not be agitated or anxious, not excessive or stubborn, not jealous or too suspicious, because otherwise he will not find peace. He should give his orders carefully and sensibly and whether the task that he gives is related to the divine or temporary things, he should always need to operate with discretion and in moderation and should of the discretion of the holy Jacob who said: ‘if I will overdrive the flock in walking, all will die on one day.’ (Gen. 33; 13) Let him take these and other examples of discretion, which is the mother of virtues, to heart and do everything with so much sense of measure that the strong can long after something and the weak are not put off.

The *Supplex Libellus* especially develops this theme of humanity, moderation and discretion, which is to know the proper measure of people. That Ratgar appeared to be the antitype of an ideal abbot becomes progressively more obvious as one reads through the *Supplex Libellus*, though we need to be aware that the *Supplex Libellus* was written by opponents of Ratgar. The authors of the *Supplex Libellus* belonged to the ‘winners’ of the conflict and therefore have determined the narrative of the affairs. But there existed several factions within the monastic community...
and not all the monks ranged themselves on the side of the rebellious monks.37

When the monks, who wrote the *Supplex Libellus*, demanded that immense and superfluous building-projects and other useless works are to be set aside, through which the brethren get extremely exhausted and the families of dependants outside perish', they did not mean that they were against building per se, but they resented excesses.38 The monks did not disapprove of the construction of the new abbey church started by Ratgar, but disliked the excessively heavy sacrifices they had to make for it, which to them were out of proportion to what monastic life was all about. ‘Everything should be done within certain limits and with discretion’ thus as befitted the powers of the monks, they argued.39 Contrary to Josef Semmler who has claimed that the building of the abbey church had caused the crisis, I thus think it was not the building project 'an sich' but the way the abbot had organised it and governed the monastery in general.40 Please note that Eigil, Ratgar’s successor, had been a very active ‘architect’ himself. During the four years he was abbot of Fulda he added two crypts to the new basilica, built a church on the cemetery of the monastery and started to replace the old cloister.41 The monks did not complain about this.

The authors of the *Supplex Libellus* protested against Ratgar’s way of governing the monastery, causing discord and threatening the existence of the monastic community. Ratgar seems to have advocated increasing austerity, separating the monks ever more strictly from the world by tying them to closer to the cloister. The abbot had for example replaced the monks who worked in the monastery’s workshops such as the bakery, the garden, and the brewery, and the monks who managed Fulda’s estates from the dependencies of the monastery by laymen.42 Furthermore, Ratgar had limited the Sunday procession, which used to also call at places in the vicinity of Fulda, to the confines of the monastic complex.43 In addition to this, he had reduced the hospitality towards pilgrims and strangers.44

Moreover, Ratgar and his associates had apparently not tolerated weakness, either physical or mental, in the monastery. It seems that Ratgar was lacking discretion, expecting all his monks to meet the same

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38 ‘Ut aedificia immensa atque superflua et cetera inutilia opera omissantur, quibus fratres ultra modum fatigantur et familiae foris dispereunt,...’. *Supplex Libellus*, c. 12, p. 324.
39 ‘sed omnia iuxta mensuram et discretionem fiant’. Idem, c. 12, p. 324.
42 *Supplex Libellus*, c. 10, 11 and 15, pp. 324-5.
44 *Supplex Libellus*, c. 13 and 14, p. 325.
obligations, taking no account of their measures and with no room for
differences. Anyone who could not cope with the abbot’s directives (for
example because of illness) was either refused entrance or send away from
the mother convent to one of the monastery’s cellae.45

To the authors of the Supplex Libellus the ideal monastery was a
community of love and charity, unity and concord, with as its main
responsibility memoria. Monks should look after their fellow-brothers,
especially the old and the weak.46 Everybody who wanted to enter the
monastery for love of the monastic way of life should be allowed entrance,
including the elderly. All the guests should receive a warm welcome; with
congruus honor et omnis humanitas, ‘appropriate honour and every
[suitable] hospitality’, in other words, as if it concerned Christ.47 As said
above everything should be done with discretion. In correspondence with
what is expected of the community the main qualities of a good abbot are
mercyfulness, kindness and modesty.

Nostri maiores

An ever-returning topic in the Supplex Libellus is a longing for the past. In
the defence of their ideal monastery the monks fell back on the time of
Ratgar’s predecessors, notably Sturmi and Boniface. Several times the
Supplex Libellus referred to earlier times: nostri patres; maiores nostri;
precedentes patres; secundum priorum nostrorum consuetudinem; sicut apud
decessores nostros fuerunt; sicut apud maiores nostros usus erat; and sicut cum
anterioribus nostri abbatibus habuimus.48 Occasionally the authors of the
Supplex Libellus specifically referred to the founders of the monastery,
Sturmi and Boniface. Ratgar had apparently changed the diet and outfit of
the monks. The Supplex Libellus recalled that since Sturmi had visited
Montecassino the Fulda monks were used to dress, drink and eat like their
fellow-brethren in the Benedictine monastery.49 Sturmi had instituted the
dress and diet with the consent of Boniface.50 Many monks could still
remember (and thus testify to) this, the Supplex Libellus stresses.

45 Idem, c. 6 and 20, pp. 323, 326-7. The abbot took away the crutches and the stools from
the elderly and the sick and sent them away to the dependencies of the monastery.
46 Idem, c. 5, p. 323.
47 Idem, c. 14, p. 325; RB c. 53.
48 Supplex Libellus, c. 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 16, 19 and 20, pp. 324, 326.
49 Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 14, p. 149; Supplex Libellus, c. 10, p. 324.
50 ‘Quod victu et vestitum sicut maiores nostri nobis constituerunt habere liceat, quia
primus abbas noster Sturmi in monasterio sancti Benedicti per annum conversans huc
postea rediens secundum electionem sancti Bonifatii habitum eorum et victum
diuidicantis nobis istum constituit, cuius rei plures adhuc testes supersunt.’ Idem, c. 10.
p. 324.
In Chapter Eighteen of the *Supplex Libellus* the monks referred to Boniface's legacy, his influence on their own present-day monastic life in Fulda.\(^{51}\) They asked the emperor to reprimand the abbot for questioning the validity of the *instituta sancti Bonifatii*.\(^{52}\) Ratgar appears to have carried through changes in the monastery, with the argument that the Aachen council of 816 had condemned the rules of Boniface. We know that one of the aims of the reform council of 816 held in Aachen was to bring all the monasteries under one monastic rule and *una consuetudo*. All monastic custom should be modelled after the directives determined by the council. For the monks of Fulda this would indeed mean a break with old traditions that Boniface once had instituted.

The *Supplex Libellus* does not explain what is meant with the *instituta* of Fulda's patron saint. Did the authors refer to a life in *eremo vastissimae solitudinis* as *viros strictae abstinen tie* and according to the Rule of Benedict, as Boniface described Fulda in a letter to the pope in 751?\(^{53}\) Did the writers of the *Supplex Libellus* mean that the monks should live in complete poverty with no servants, providing for their wants themselves with manual labour, as Boniface had obliged his monks to do?\(^{54}\) The *Supplex Libellus* only mentions Boniface when it discusses the dress and diet of the monks, but possibly Boniface and Sturm are included every time the text speaks of *nostri maiores*. If this is true the *instituta* were also concerned with the organisation of the monastery, the liturgy, the admission of new recruits and guests. But even if we can no longer ascertain the precise meaning of the *instituta sancti Bonifatii*, it is interesting that the monks behind the *Supplex Libellus* in this case referred to their patron saint. What matters is that they used the founders of the monastery to justify their claims against Ratgar's policy and to defend their vision of an ideal monastery.

The changes in the monastery and the issues, which the delegation of Fulda at court raised in the *Supplex Libellus*, had affected the community deeply. This much is clear from the many references to the olden days and what seems to have been a lively oral tradition centred on Sturm and Boniface. The writers of the *Supplex Libellus* used the age of Sturm and Boniface to advocate their ideas, emphasising that Ratgar had betrayed their ideals. They elaborated on existing traditions and stories in the monastery and created an idyllic past of peace and happiness. In other words, they turned the past of Sturm and Boniface into a 'golden age'. This period of peace and happiness had not happened a long time ago;
some monks could still remember it. By definition it was an uneven match. How could Ratgar defend himself against this idyllic time and against these heroes long dead (one of them even the patron saint of the monastery and a martyr) who in the eyes of the monks could do nothing wrong?

Ratgar seems to have turned to the Aachen reforms to legitimise his changes of life in the monastery. The abbot was part of the mainstream opinion about monasticism that dominated the discourse of the Frankish ecclesiastical elite in that time to defend his policy, although his measures not always corresponded with the directions of Benedict of Aniane.55 That Ratgar for example had placed all ministeria of the abbey in hands of laymen was only partly in agreement with the reforms of Benedict of Aniane and contravened the Rule of Benedict. To the church reformer laymen were only permitted in the cellae outside the convent.56 Yet, contrary to what was instituted under Ratgar, Benedict of Aniane instituted that monks were to fulfil the ministeria within the monastery.57 That Ratgar did not totally obey the directives issued at Aachen apparently did not keep him from using the council(s) by means of rhetoric to legitimise his attitudes towards monasticism.

Without any extant evidence produced by Ratgar or one of his supporters we do not know whether the abbot, beyond the fact that he apparently defended his position by citing the reforms of Louis the Pious, also appealed to the authoritative past. There may have been a Vita Bonifatii written under his abbacy, but if this was the case, we do not know who wrote it nor what it was about, as the manuscript now is lost.58

The second visit of the delegation of monks to court in 816 or 817 seems to have been the occasion for Louis the Pious to depose Ratgar as abbot of Fulda. The emperor sent two west Frankish monks, Aaron and Adalfrid, together with their companions, not only to bring peace in the community but also to correct the lives of the monks when necessary.59 According to

55 Supplex Libellus, c. 18, p. 326.
56 Semmler, ‘Studien zum Supplex Libellus’, pp. 284-5. Benedict of Aniane did not want monks to leave their abbey. He only allowed abbots to visit the administrative centres of their estates for compelling reasons. If a monk had to fulfil a special task in one of the dependencies, he had to return immediately to the monastery after his job was done.
57 For more examples see Semmler, ‘Studien zum Supplex Libellus’.
59 ‘Hic igitur misit nuntios suos, Aaron et Adalfridum, cum sociis ipsorum, monachos scilicet occidentales, qui nos in temptation temporalis miseriae consolando subleuarent
the *Vita Aegil*, the reforms in Fulda progressed smoothly and harmoniously, but one can ask oneself whether this was really the case. If the envoys of Louis the Pious emended life in Fulda according to the directives of the emperor, Aaron and Adalfrid must also have had to transform the liturgy of the monastery, the appearance and diet of the monks and the organisational structure of the abbey.60 These were changes to which barely a year earlier the monks who had initiated the *Supplex Libellus* had bitterly protested against. Probably it took some time before the unrest had actually settled down in Fulda. It was in this time of reform and restoration of peace in the monastery that Eigil wrote his work about the life of Sturmi and the origin of the monastery.

For a long time, historians believed that Eigil had composed the *Vita Sturmi* in the late eighth century, around 794 or 795.61 However, quite recently Petra Kehl convincingly has cast doubt on this date of the *Vita Sturmi*, suggesting that Eigil wrote the text circa 812-818.62 Eigil's text was certainly written after 794 and probably even later than the date proposed by Kehl. I think that Eigil wrote the text either just before or after he became abbot of Fulda, somewhere in the years 818-820. As the new leader of the monastery Eigil was confronted with the mess of some ten years of conflict. He needed to restore the cohesion in this fragile and divided community. The aim of this part of the chapter is to explore the way the *Vita Sturmi* can be seen as Eigil's answer to the crisis and the reforms that recently had taken place in Fulda.

**The Vita Sturmi**

Why 818-820?

In the *Vita Sturmi* Eigil recalled that the monks of Fulda, grateful for Charlemagne's gift of the fiscus Hammelburg to the monastery 'to this day

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60 See Josef Semmler, who has compared the *Supplex Libellus* with other monastic *consuetudines* that were current in that time and with the reforms of Benedict of Aniane, 'Studien zum Supplex Libellus', pp. 268-98.


62 Petra Kehl, 'Die Entstehungszeit der Vita Sturmi des Eigil. Versuch einer Neudatierung', *Archiv für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* 46 (1994) pp. 11-20. I will not repeat the whole debate in detail here, as Kehl has explained it at great length. The following only focuses on the main points.
pray to the Lord for his (meaning Charlemagne) *incolumitas*. The discussion about the dating of the *Vita Sturmi* revolves around the translation and interpretation of the word *incolumitas* and hence whether Charlemagne was still alive when the *Vita* was written or not. *Incolumitas* can refer to both the body and the soul. As Kehl has pointed out, the word can mean both healing, preservation of life and salvation. If Eigil used the word *incolumitas* with the meaning of ‘preservation of life’, Charlemagne was still alive when Eigil wrote the *Vita*. But *incolumitas* can also signify salvation, as it does for example in the prayer of the *Memento* for the living that was said during mass in Fulda in the 10th century: *qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis pro se suisque omnibus pro redemptione animarum suarum, pro spe salutis et incolumitates suae, tibi reddunt uota sua aeterno deo uiuo et uero*. The same clause, ‘hoping for their salvation and redemption’ we find in the *Gelasianum Vetus*. In the meaning of salvation the word can also be used to refer to dead people. Therefore one cannot conclude on basis of the *incolumitas*-sentence in the *Vita Sturmi* that Charlemagne was still alive, when the *Vita* was written, as for example Wolfgang Heßler and Pius Engelbert have argued.

The fact that Eigil stressed that the monks of Fulda still pray for Charlemagne *usque hodie*, ‘to this day’, suggests in contrast that Charlemagne was already dead. As we have seen in the former chapter, prayer for the living king or emperor was something that went on as a routine in Fulda. If praying for a living king was self-evident for a monastic community like Fulda, why mention it? When Eigil wrote that the monks prayed for Charlemagne ‘to this day’, he tried to emphasise continuity between the past and the present, precisely because the

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64 *See: Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* Vol. VII 1b, pp. 978-83.
66 But even then Charlemagne not necessarily needed to be alive as it was a standard formula in royal charters.
68 Canones, *Gelasianum Vetus* III, 17, 1245. Found in: Blaise, *Le Vocabulaire Latin des Principaux Themes Liturgiques* (Turnhout 1966) p. 433. Also Kehl refers to Blaise and to Jungmann. In my opinion the word has the same meaning in the royal charters. In the charters of Louis the Pious and of his son Lothar *incolumitas* is frequently used in the clause *pro incolumitate nostra, conjugiis ac proillis*. Fulda’s private charters use the following sentences: *pro malis peccatis mei, pro remedium animae, pro immensis peccatius meis et dibitis, remissione peccatorum, pro remedio et salute animae meae, pro retributione uiae aeternae*. Apart from the royal charters of Louis the Pious and his sons, I have not come across *incolumitas* in the Fulda charters yet.
70 *Supplex Libellus*, c. 1, p. 321.
Carolingian emperor had already died. There is good reason to believe that the *Vita Sturmi* was written after Charlemagne had died. But when then did Eigil write the text?

So far one source has been overlooked in the debate about the *Vita Sturmi*, namely a fragment from the *Vita Aegil*, written by Candidus, a monk of Fulda.71 This text, written in the 840s, deals with the aftermath of the crisis in the monastery and the abbacy of Eigil.72 The *Vita Aegil* records that the first thing that Eigil did as abbot of Fulda, was to finish the basilica that had almost been completed under supervision of Ratgar.73 On the first of November 819 the new basilica was consecrated and Boniface was transferred to his new sepulchre in the western choir of the church. Not only Boniface was buried in the abbey church; so was Sturmi. Sturmi's new grave was near the altar of an important second century martyr not far from the western choir where Boniface lay. Candidus also explained that Eigil subsequently ensured that the anniversary of Sturmi was celebrated 'with more honour and sweetness than usual'.74

Additionally, as we can read in the *Vita Aegil*, Eigil ordered that on the anniversary of Sturmi a *lectio* 'from his book about the life of the above mentioned abbot (Sturmi) and the origin of the monastery, which he (Eigil) has *very recently* composed with the help of Christ' was read out during the mealtime of the monks.75 What did Candidus mean with *nuperrime*, very recently? Eigil instituted the anniversary of Sturmi around 820.76 It follows that the abbot wrote the *Vita Sturmi* a bit before 820, either just before Eigil became abbot of Fulda or thereafter.

The theory of the later date is further corroborated by the reference to the Grapfeld aristocracy. In the *Vita Sturmi* we can read that after Sturmi had discovered a place fit to found a monastery, Boniface went to court to arrange the formalities. According to Eigil, Carloman donated all the property he possessed in that area, as did the Grapfeld noblemen. Yet, during the first sixty years of Fulda's existence, its benefactors mainly came from the Middle Rhine region. Contrary to what one would have expected, because of the closeness of the two districts to the monastery and because of the fact that already from the early 780s Fulda owned three considerable estates in these regions, hardly anyone from the East

71 Apart from Becht-Jördens, who has considered the translation of Sturmi to the new abbey church as the occasion to write the *Vita Sturmi*. 'Die Vita Aegil', p. 19, footnote 38.
72 See Chapter Four.
73 Candidus, *Vita Aegil* I, c. 14-5, p. 15. See also Chapter Three.
74 ‘cultius quid solito incundiusque fieri demandauit’. Idem, c. 22, p. 18.
75 ‘Lectionem quoque libri illius, quem de uita supradicti abbatis et origine monasterii nuperrime nominati Christi gratia largiante, composuit, fratribus ad mensam recitare praeceptit.’ Idem, c. 22, p. 18, l. 29-30.
76 Namely after the deposition of the altar, which according to the *Vita Aegil* happened the year after the dedication of the basilica, thus in 820.
Frankish areas of Grapfeld and Tullifeld presented Fulda gifts (figure 1, p. 2).\textsuperscript{77} Since Eigil had become abbot of Fulda the quantity of donations from the Grapfeld suddenly increased, with a sharp rise in the second quarter of the ninth century.\textsuperscript{78} Is the fact that Eigil provided the Grapfeld aristocracy with a prominent place in his history of the monastery not easier to understand against the background of the late 810s rather than the 790s? Perhaps Eigil’s \textit{vita} partly meant to reward and commemorate the support of these particular families in view of establishing lasting ties and ensuring future generosity.

Around 818-820 Eigil certainly possessed the status to write a text like the \textit{Vita Sturmi}. His knowledge, experience, connections and age granted him the authority to compose such a text. Eigil was probably in his late sixties or even his seventies by then. Trained in Fulda, he had lived there from his childhood. The author of the \textit{Vita Sturmi} knew all the ins and outs of the community. Eigil and Sturmi had even been kinsmen, who had come from the same part of Bavaria.\textsuperscript{79} Eigil successively followed the monastic curriculum that led to a priestly ordination. Candidus, the above-mentioned writer of the \textit{Vita Aegil}, called him a ‘companion and loyal servant of the abbot’, i.e. of Sturmi. Often Eigil advised Sturmi, finding himself amongst the seniors of the community. By order of the abbot, Eigil acted as an \textit{iudex} in juridical affairs, for which he must have known his way around outside the monastery. Furthermore, the monk was renowned for his virtues and orthodox belief.\textsuperscript{80}

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\textsuperscript{77} UBF, nrs. 145-6, pp. 203-6. In 781, in Quierzy, Charlemagne donated Hünfeld \textit{campo cum silvis suis} to Fulda. Rasdorf and Soisdorf were gifts of (Rasdorf) the brothers Count Roggo, Count Hatto and Nordiui and the brothers Count Brunicho and Moricho, and Egghart and Job, and Abbess Emhilt. And of (Soisdorf) Count Brunicho and Hadubraht, Ingelt, Degano, Aelis, Count Erlof and Cancur’s father Ruadptaht.

\textsuperscript{78} Freise, ‘Einzugsbereich’ pp. 1102-5.


Thus I would assert that it was no coincidence that Ratgar’s successor decided to compose a Vita about the life of Fulda’s first abbot in the late 810s, a time of change and reconciliation. Eigil used the Vita Sturmi to present Sturmi as patron (saint) of the monastery and to turn the founder of the monastery into a symbol of the collective identity of the monastery, now that the community was in desperate need of one. Eigil, like the author(s) of the Supplex Libellus, reverted to the past of Sturmi and Boniface to justify his views on monastic life, but most of all to create new unity in a divided community, as the following part of this chapter sets out to show. Let us now turn to what the Vita Sturmi was all about.

A foundation history

First of all, the Vita Sturmi is a foundation history: as Eigil himself already indicated in his introduction to the work, the foundation of Fulda is the central theme of the text.81 Eigil described the foundation (the moment that Sturmi and his brethren arrived at the spot where they were to found their monastery after Carloman had handed over this piece of land to them) right in the middle of the text in order to highlight its significance. Until this moment the text had been concerned with the preparations of the foundation and the search for the right spot to found a monastery. The importance of the event was stressed even more by using Incarnation years.82 As explained in Chapter One, this way of time reckoning was not common in those days. Apart from when Pippin died, it is the only occasion in the Vita where Eigil dates Anno Domini.83

According to Eigil, the foundation of Fulda was the goal Sturmi and his companions had pursued from the start. In reality however Sturmi probably had not directed his steps towards this single goal. After he had left the community where he was educated, it had taken Sturmi some nine years before he founded Fulda.84 Sturmi’s pursuits in this period are obscure, apart from the fact that he spent a considerable time in a place where the Hersfeld monastery was subsequently built, almost fifty kilometres north of Fulda. Yet Eigil viewed and described all Sturmi’s doings before 744 in light of the foundation of the Fulda monastery.

81 Eigil, Vita Sturmi, p. 131.
82 ‘anno incarnationis Christi septingentesimo quadragesimo quarto, regnante in hac gente Francorum duobus fratibus Carlmanno atque Pippino, indictione duodecima, mense primo, duodecimo die mensis eiusdem, sanctum et a Deo dudum praedestinatum ingressus est locum’. Idem, c. 13, p. 144.
84 ‘et nono iam tunc ex quo eremo inhabitare coeperat’, ‘which was nine years after he first began to live in the hermitage.’ Idem, c. 11, p. 142. Concerning nono see the introduction of Engelbert, Die Vita Sturmi, pp. 57-64.
That Eigil used a *Vita* of Sturmi to compose a foundation history was not strange. Apart from other, similar examples, the monks of Fulda had always remembered Sturmi in close relation with the foundation of their monastery. Before Eigil’s abbacy the monks of Fulda had remembered not only their first abbot, but also the *fundatores* of the monastery on Sturmi’s anniversary. The commemoration of Sturmi was closely connected with the foundation of the monastery, a theme elaborated on by Eigil.

**Solitude**

Sturmi started off with two companions, but only one person would discover the future site of the monastery: Sturmi himself. After the necessary preparations, Sturmi went into the woods alone. On his donkey he rode through the *vastissima deserti loca*. Earlier, when he and his two companions had searched together, they had hardly been able to see anything, except earth, sky and enormous trees. When Sturmi entered the last stage of the journey, he could see nothing at all, apart from wild beasts, birds, enormous trees and savage places of solitude. The woods were darker and more dangerous.

Reading Eigil’s words one pictures Fulda in the heart of dark, dangerous woods, far away from civilisation. This feeling is not only evoked by Eigil’s lively evocation of the environment through which Sturmi is travelling and of its residents, but also through the imaginary border between ‘world’ (*saeculum*) and ‘solitude’ (*solitudo*) that Eigil carefully constructed throughout the text. Where the woods of Buchonia came to a stop, the world started. Fritzlar was on the western border of the wilderness and was considered part of the *saeculum*. Both Hersfeld and Fulda were inside the solitude, but only Fulda was preordained by God to be a *monasterium*. By the time Eigil wrote his Life, Hersfeld also had become a monastery, with its own patron saints, a considerable amount of property and the same royal rights Fulda possessed. That the situation

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86 ‘nihil cernens’. Idem, c. 8, p. 141.
87 Every time Sturmi or other brethren went outside Buchonia, for example to visit Boniface, they crossed an imaginary border: *egressus de eremo*. Eigil, *Vita Sturmi*, c. 5, p. 135. Other examples are when Sturmi went to Italy and when Fulda monks collected the body of Boniface. ‘vir beatus Sturmi [...] perrexit ad eremum’; c. 14, p. 146, l. 17. And: ‘de Fulda coenobio in eremo constituito’, ‘de eremo’, ‘in solitudine’, ‘ad solitudinem’ etc. Idem, c. 16, pp. 149, l. 12, 22, 24, 27; c. 4, p. 134.
88 SS Jude and Simon, and from 780 onward St Wigbert.
was different in the early 740s was a theme exploited by Eigil to underline and strengthen Fulda’s distinct identity against its neighbours.

As he described the progress from moving from the world into the solitudo, Eigil’s depiction of the landscape became more detailed. Eigil’s description of the outer ring of Buchonia was vague. The landscape was generally characterised as consisting of valleys, hills, woods and mountains. As Sturmi got closer to the spot where God wished the monastery to be founded, Eigil became more precise. Here the author described Sturmi’s movements very carefully, naming every rill, river and road. It concerned the area in the immediate vicinity of Fulda, a region that Eigil must have known very well. It also roughly encircled Carloman’s donation in the early 740s. In the north, the territory that Eigil delineated was demarcated by the Lüder mouth and Kämmerzel, on the south by the stream Giesel and Bronzell. Both Kämmerzel and Bronzell were crossings of the river Fulda, at a distance of 4 a 5 kilometres from where Fulda was founded. The radius of Carloman’s gift was about six kilometres.

Even though Eigil depicts Fulda in the middle of nowhere, there are clues in the Vita Sturmi itself that the situation was quite different. The monastery was in fact founded near a network of roads and rivers. It was built almost precisely in between Mainz and Frankfurt in the southwest and Erfurt in the northeast, Büraburg and Hersfeld in the north and Würzburg in the south. From Fulda there were settlements every twenty, thirty kilometres along the roads, distances that could be easily covered in a day.

Excavations have made clear that this place was scarcely as solitary as the author had described. The advantages of the site – its closeness to the river Fulda, the fertility of the soil – were recognised early on. The place probably played a role in Merovingian times when Pippinids tried to gain control of these parts of Germany. As the walls of a villa rustica and of a small church found below the monastic foundation reveal, people had

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90 Sturmi and his companions used it themselves when they searched the woods. From their settlement in Hersfeld they sailed down the stream the Fulda, looking for a spot to found a monastery. During the last stage of the quest Sturmi came across a group of Slavs and a traveller from the Wetterau. The pagans he met on the road from Mainz to Thuringia, ‘which the merchants use’, mercandi causa [...] pergentes; the local on the Ortesweg, the route from the Wetterau to Grapfeld. Both places are Fulda-crossings, six kilometres remote from each other. The network of roads (the Ortesweg, the merchants road and two other roads mentioned further on in the vita) and rivers (Fulda, Haune and Lüder) connected the Fulda monastery with the long-distance traffic. Vita Sturmi, c. 7, p. 139, 13. Also Hersfeld lay near some junctions of important roads and rivers and was not as isolated as Eigil described it. W. Görich, ‘Nochmals: Hersfeld. Der Stadtgrundriß als Geschichtsquelle’, Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hessische Geschichte und Landeskunde 64 (1953) pp. 136-40. Wehlt, Reichsabtei, pp. 149-50.
already been living and worshipping there before the monks settled down.82

Excavations of other early medieval abbeys and hagiographical texts on other foundations show that it was not uncommon to use the remains of earlier buildings for the construction of a monastery.83 Gregory of Tours related how an abbot, who wanted to build a funerary chapel, to his joy discovered the foundations of an earlier building on the spot where he had planned his church. The find facilitated the construction work considerably and was interpreted as a sign of God.84 Why Eigil choose to be silent about the older buildings, while extensively describing the physical surroundings of Fulda, is one of the remarkable features of the Vita Sturmi.85

Several reasons can explain why Eigil had described the surroundings of the monastery as a wilderness. The solitudo as an ideal place to found a hermitage or monastery had become a topos in Western hagiography, though its shape was adjusted to the environmental conditions of Europe.86 Through the vitae of desert fathers as Anthony,

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85 Other hagiographic works often do not contain extensive descriptions of the physical surroundings of a religious settlement as the Vita Sturmi has. See Maria-Elisabeth Brunert ‘Fulda als Kloster in eremo. Zentrale Quellen über die Gründung im Spiegel der hagiographischen Tradition’ in: Kloster Fulda, pp. 72-3. Another exception to this is the Vita Wynnebalde. Also the place where the Heidenheim abbey was constructed had been occupied before. There stood a small church, when Wynnebald arrived there. However, Hygeburc did not mention this in the account of the foundation. David Parsons, ‘Some churches of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries in southern Germany: a review of the evidence’, EME 8 (1999) pp. 31-67, especially pp. 40-1.
Nostri maiores

Paul, Malchus and Pachomius solitudo had become the name for the place where monks and / or eremites lived. Eigil had clearly been clearly inspired by Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*. As in the *Vita Antonii*, Sturmi's ascent to the ideal of completeness was expressed spatially, in terms of landscape and nature. The desert father had proceeded from his hometown via a deserted fort at the Outer Mountain to the foot of the so-called Inner Mountain, Mount Colzim. Thus Anthony moved deeper into the desert, away from civilisation. So too Sturmi penetrated Buchonia's forests till he discovered the ideal place to found a monastery.

We not only find the idea of *solitudo* elaborated in the *Vita Sturmi*, but also in other, earlier and contemporary hagiography such as the *Vita Wynnebaldi* of Hygeburg of Heidenheim. Hygeburg, the sister of Wynnebald and nun of his foundation Heidenheim, dedicated a biography to her brother around 782/785.

Here, she gave an extensive and detailed description of the foundation of the monastery that was based in Sualeveld, near Eichstatt. Heidenheim was foreordained by God, in the middle of the woods, in a region that was inhabited by pagans.

Yet, Eigil's reasons to depict Buchonia as solitude did not merely spring from his wish to follow hagiographic models and to ground the *Vita Sturmi* in old traditions. There is more to it. Because of the richness of the objects found around the seventh-century buildings at Fulda, archaeologists think it belonged to a powerful family, like the Heden family whose centre of influence lay in the area around Würzburg, in Thuringia. Shortly after 716 or 717 Charles Martel expelled the duke of Heden, which fits in nicely with the date of the destruction of the place around 700. Eigil's silence concerning the foregoing occupation of the place could well have been a damnatio memoriae of the enemies of some of

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Brunert, 'Fulda als Kloster in *eremo*', pp. 68-9, and 74.


'illud regio, quod ille percipiebat, agrestum erat et silva totum'. Idem, c. 7, p. 111.


Fulda’s eminent patrons, the Carolingians, as Maria-Elisabeth Brunert has argued,105 often Carolingian sources are either negative about the Heden family106, or they silence their existence. Brunert thinks that the silence in the Vita Sturmi must be interpreted in the same way.107 Fulda was pro-Carolingian and had benefited from the expulsion of the Heden family and the confiscation of their belongings by the Carolingians. The Carolingians even gave away former Heden possessions as royal property. The fiscus Hammelburg, which the duke of Heden had previously donated to Willibrord, was bestowed on Fulda in 777.108 It is not unlikely that Carloman handed over one of the other Heden estates to found the Fulda monastery in 744.

By representing the woods of Buchonia as solitude Eigil also built on a (oral) tradition in Fulda to remember Sturmi as a hermit. Boniface himself seems to have initiated this tradition. According to the Vita Aegil Boniface called Sturmi ‘his hermit’.109 In the above-mentioned letter to the pope Boniface used the topos of solitude to describe the community of brethren under Sturmi in Buchonia.110 The brethren had founded the monastery in heremo vastissimae solitudinis, he wrote. We do not know if Eigil had Boniface’s letter in front of him when he wrote the Vita Sturmi or not. Until Hrabanus’ abbacy probably there did not exist a letter collection of the martyr in Fulda, but possibly the monks did have this letter, for in it Boniface asked the pontiff to grant Fulda papal exemption.111 Anyway, many stories must have circulated in the monastery about the early days, to which Eigil responded in the Vita Sturmi. One of the author’s reasons to picture Buchonia as solitude might have been to create an image of Sturmi which would correspond with the way in which the monks of Fulda remembered their first abbot, in order to appeal to and influence his audience.112
Founding fathers (I): Boniface

Boniface has a very prominent role in Eigil's story about the foundation and the first establishment of monastic life in the woods of Buchonia. According to Eigil the bishop personally guided Sturmi during his search for a place to found a religious community. Boniface encouraged his pupil and through him God revealed where to find an appropriate place. Sturmi finally found the spot on which the monastery was built 'through the merits and prayers of Saint Boniface', Eigil wrote. Once Sturmi had discovered this place, Boniface took care of the transfer of Carloman's property to Sturmi. When the place was legally theirs, Boniface brought a large group of men to help Sturmi and his brethren to build a church.

Thus Boniface was pictured not only closely involved in the foundation of the monastery but also as concerned with the institution of regular life in Fulda; 'For, as afterward appeared, the bishop was very eager to establish monastic life in the wilderness'. He guided his pupil at every step. Boniface educated Sturmi in Scripture and the monastic way of life, and taught him how to rule a monastery. During his frequent visits to Fulda the bishop also instructed the newly recruited monks of the fresh community in the discipline of a regular monastic life. To stress the bond of Boniface and the community of Fulda Eigil recalled in the Vita Sturmi that during his visits to Fulda Boniface used to retreat to the Frauenberg to pray and to meditate on the Bible. For this reason the hill was still called 'Bishop's mount' in Eigil's day.

The special bond of the saint with Fulda is clear throughout the whole vita but comes to a climax in the days after Boniface's death. Eigil stressed that first, his body was brought to Utrecht and the people there prayed that the martyr would stay with them. 'But the holy martyr wished his body to be taken to the place of solitude that by the will of God he had

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113 On the basis of chapter 4 of the Vita Sturmi Heinrich Hahn has concluded that Boniface knew the area where Fulda was founded quite well and already had a place in mind when he sent Sturmi to Buchonia. Hahn, 'Eihloha', p. 51.
114 Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 9, p. 141.
115 Idem, c. 13, p. 144.
116 Idem, c. 6, p. 138.
117 'consolationes scripturarum'. Idem, c. 5, p. 135.
118 'de spiritualibus tractavere rebus et de conversatione multum disputavere'. Idem, c. 6, p. 138. In the manuscripts of Erlangen, Bamberg and Paderborn monachica is added to conversatione (see the accompanying footnote in Engelbert's edition). It seems logical to me to assume that Eigil meant the monastic way of life, rather than the Christian way of life, as Talbot has translated it 'colloquium inter se de vita et conversatione monachorum diutissime habuerunt', Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 10, p. 142.
119 Idem, c. 13, p. 144.
120 'qui usque hodie Mons Episcopi appelatur.' Idem, c. 13, p. 144.
chosen for himself'. Through a miracle Boniface let them know he did not want to stay and the people of Utrecht brought him to the river Rhine. From there, Boniface was taken by boat to Germany. When the saint arrived in Mainz, the people of this town did not want the body to be carried further, for Boniface had been archbishop of their town. Lull, who had succeeded his master to the episcopal see, refused to give in and stubbornly clung to the relics. Boniface appeared in a dream to a certain deacon and said: 'why do you delay to take me to my place at Fulda? Arise and bear me into the wilderness where God has foreordained a place for me'. Under oath the deacon told the bishop his dream and finally Lull gave up; Boniface was brought to Fulda.

It was crucial to Eigil to justify the final resting-place of Boniface. The saint would bring prosperity to the monastery; not for nothing the ‘abbot Sturmi and his brethren gave thanks to God because they had been granted the presence of so powerful a patron as the holy martyr Saint Boniface in their midst’. Boniface’s burial led to an unexpected growth of the monastery. In this respect, the translation of the martyr to Fulda also reflected well on its first abbot. It was important to legitimise and stress the special bond between Boniface and Sturmi, and Boniface and the monastery. Thus in several ways Eigil pictured the bishop as the father, mentor and patron of Fulda: during his life he was the teacher of Sturmi and the monks of Fulda, after his death he became the patron saint of the monastery.

Founding fathers (II): Sturmi

The other person on whom the Vita Sturmi centres was of course Sturmi himself. Eigil portrayed Sturmi as a peaceful and modest abbot. Sturmi did everything in close consultation with his brethren. He did not elevate himself at the expense of others. He was a peace-loving father, who in his teaching embraced patience, mildness, humility, longanimity, faith, hope and charity as his principles. Whenever people were in disagreement, he ordered them to reconcile themselves before sunset.

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121 ‘Sanctus vero martyr ad locum in solitudine quem ipse sibi nutu die eligebat, corpus suum deferri voluit, quod statim claruit’. Idem, c. 15, p. 149.
122 ‘Cur me, inquiens tardatis ad locum meum Fuldam deferre? Surgite, surgite, ait, cito et propere me in solitudinem ad locum quem mihi praedestinavit Deus perducite!’ Idem, c. 16, pp. 149-150.
123 Idem, c. 16, p. 150.
124 Sturmi is for the first time called abbot in the Vita Sturmi after the death of Boniface.
125 For example Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 13, p. 144.
All the monks loved Sturmi and also the people outside held him in high esteem.\textsuperscript{127}

Eigil safely tucked away controversial episodes in Sturmi’s life. In 763 Pippin III (751-68) had sent the abbot of Fulda into exile, the same year in which Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, who had sworn him fidelity six years before, is reported to have betrayed the Carolingian king.\textsuperscript{128} According to Eigil this was the fault of Lull of Mainz. The biographer of Sturmi wrote that envy had led the archbishop of Mainz, together with some monks of Fulda who had been inspired by the devil, to slander Sturmi at the court by accusing him of conspiracy against the king. Pippin had sent the abbot into exile at Jumièges and had given Lull permission to place Fulda under the jurisdiction of Mainz. Thereupon Lull appointed one of his priests, a certain Marcus, as abbot of Fulda, which according to Eigil caused great discord within the monastery. The end of Eigil’s story about this tumultuous episode in the history of Fulda was that thanks to the prayers of the monks and the intercession of their patron saint, Sturmi was received back into the favour of the king and he returned to Fulda.

Eigil’s portrait of Lull is not favourable, to say the least. The archbishop had not only tried to prevent Boniface’s burial in Fulda, now he also attempted to take possession of the monastery. This negative image of Lull is questionable. As Eigil narrated, Sturmi was slandered by monks of Fulda, not by Lull. In addition to this, Sturmi was a Bavarian aristocrat and these were turbulent times for king Pippin. He had to deal with considerable aristocratic opposition in this part of Germany, especially in Bavaria, which had recently broken away from his lordship under Tassilo. Sturmi indeed seems to have been connected to the Bavarian leading elite or must have been familiar with these circles as, possibly in 769, after he had returned from exile, he was sent to Tassilo in order to negotiate between him and Pippin’s successor Charlemagne.\textsuperscript{129} Yet, in Eigil’s story Sturmi was so innocent as a lamb.\textsuperscript{130}

Eigil carefully recorded Sturmi’s contributions to the well-being of the abbey and its traditions. The author relates how Sturmi improved the administration of the monastery, beautified the church, repaired the

\textsuperscript{127} ‘amabilis omnibus in monasterio et foras in populo mirandus’. Idem, c. 17, p. 151.


\textsuperscript{129} Another argument is that Lull himself had negotiated the papal privilege on behalf of Boniface that protected the Fulda monastery from episcopal interference in the first place. Bonifatius, Epistolae, nr. 86, p. 194.

monastic buildings, channelled water from the river Fulda through subterranean channels underneath the monastery and gave the monastery its own waterworks. He decorated the tomb of Boniface by building a canopy over it. During his abbacy the monastery received gifts both from king Pippin and his son Charlemagne; these are carefully recorded in the *Vita Sturmi*¹³², to show the cordial and special relationship of Fulda and its abbot with the royal family, and also as evidence in case of future claims. Through Sturmi’s actions both inside and outside the monastery, Eigil showed that the first abbot was not only a humble disciple of Boniface and a peaceful father but also a competent manager of the monastery and its properties, and a worthy representative of Fulda in secular affairs.¹³³

**Monasticae vitae amor**

In the *Vita Sturmi* we read that Sturmi had initially wanted to found a hermitage, but that Boniface gently persuaded his disciple to build a monastery instead. The bishop stimulated him "to a love of the monastic life".¹³⁴ Eigil does not define or specify what kind of life Boniface had in mind, only that the bishop took his examples from the Bible, *secundum sanctae scripturae traditionem*.¹³⁵ So when Boniface read in the *sacras scripturas* that monks should not drink wine, the monks decided only to drink weak beer.¹³⁶ As in the *Supplex Libellus* Boniface’s guidelines concerning the arrangement of the monastery, the training of the monks and their way of life were valued highly. During one of the instructions of the archbishop, Sturmi told his master ‘Anything that you may command me, I believe to be holy’.¹³⁷

Together with his brethren and with the consent of Boniface Sturmi decided to follow the Rule of Benedict. Like the author(s) of the *Supplex*...
Libellus Eigil recalled the voyage of Sturmi to Italy in order to learn the fundamentals of a proper monastic life. Eigil was most determined to show that the monks passionately followed the example of the Rule of Benedict. He wrote that the monks ‘carried out in every detail the Rule of Saint Benedict that they had vowed to follow’. With this Eigil probably did not mean that they carried the rule out to the letter, but that the Rule of Benedict was (and should be) at the root of the existence of the community.

The Vita Sturmi itself is full of references to the Rule of Benedict and its ideas on, for example, the role of the abbot and the importance of obedience. Eigil stressed that Sturmi had built a water supply system, so that the monks should no longer have to go outside to fetch water, for the Rule of Benedict forbade monks from wandering around; for this reason it prescribed that various crafts should be exercised within the monastery. Thanks to the large channels underneath the workshops of the monastery the craftsmen were provided with water that came from of a nearby stream, without leaving the monastic complex.

In the Vita Sturmi, Eigil elaborated on two monastic traditions in Fulda without specifying his own ideas on monasticism (by giving a monastic programme, or without giving a judgement of preference). What Eigil showed was that both the teaching of Boniface and the Rule of Benedict, as the monks of Fulda had experienced it in Italy, underlay the present-day monastic traditions of Fulda. These are the same sources that the Supplex Libellus invoked.

A new patron

To understand Eigil’s motive to write a vita of Sturmi, we need to consider the abbot’s attempts to stimulate the veneration of Sturmi, as well as the crisis of the 810s. Before Eigil became abbot of Fulda, the monks had celebrated the anniversary of Sturmi with a Vigil and a psalter. After ascending to the abbacy, Eigil had arranged the translation of Sturmi to

138 That he went to Montecassino is not mentioned in his life, but in the one dedicated to his cousin Leoba. Rudolf, Vitae Leobiæ, c. 10, p. 125. Also for example Willibald and Wynneballd went to Italy, Willibald to Montecassino, Wynneballd to Rome. See Hygeburch, Vita Willibaldii, pp. 101-2; idem, Vita Wynneballdi, p. 91.
139 ‘et regulum sancti Benedicti quam se implesse promiserant, ad omnia observabant’. Eigil, Vita Sturmi, c. 14, p. 147.
141 Probably the Waidesbach. Eigil, Vita Sturmi c. 21, 11-14, p. 156 - RB c. 66, p. 660, l. 6.
142 Supplex Libellus, c. 1, p. 321. See also Chapter One.
the new abbey church and had changed his anniversary. Together with Leoba, Fulda's first abbot was buried near the altar of St Ignatius and not too far from the sepulchre of Boniface. The translation of Sturm and Leoba to the new basilica brought about an important change in their status in the monastery. It signified their transition from the memory of the dead to the veneration of both as house saints of Fulda.¹⁴³

Not long after this translation, Eigel ordered that Sturm's anniversary should be celebrated 'with more honour and sweetness than usual'.¹⁴⁴ The abbot had not only buried Sturm near St Ignatius, he also transferred the anniversary of Sturm to the *dies natalis* of the second century martyr, to 17 December.¹⁴⁵ Probably Eigel made the anniversary of Sturm coincide with Ignatius' feast to boost the veneration of the first abbot. Perhaps the abbot also tried to prevent the remembrance of Sturm from being overshadowed by the festivities of Christmas.¹⁴⁶

By the translation of the body of Sturm to the new abbey church and the change of his anniversary, Eigel highlighted the first abbot of the monastery as a powerful patron of Fulda, jointly with and in close relation to Boniface.¹⁴⁷ The same goal seems to have underlain the writing of the *Vita Sturmi*. A Vita was a step towards sanctity, and in any case, useful for a cult, to read aloud on specific occasions.¹⁴⁸ In early medieval times

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¹⁴³ Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien*, pp. 167-182; idem, ‘Zur Ehre der Altar erhoben. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Reliquienteilung’, *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Allertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 89 (1994) pp. 221-44; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, *Les Reliques des saints. Formation Coutumière d'un Droit* (Lille 1975) pp. 87-91. In Carolingian times, when it was not yet the pope who decided who was to become a saint or not, a saint was canonised through elevation of the body, under direction of a bishop.


¹⁴⁵ ‘Simili namque consilio atque devotione idem bonae voluntatis vir anniversarium Stymis primi abbatis et fundatoris monasterii Fuldae et memoriam omnium fratrum nostrorum de hac luce defuntorum in natale sancti Ignatii martyris Christi, qui paulo inferius ab hac anniversaria numeratur, propter intercessionem tanti patroni in missarum celebratione, psalmodiis et oratione sancta celebrare sanctiuit.’ Candidus, *Vita Aegil I*, c. 22, p. 18. Of the four manuscripts of the *Vita Sturmi* that have been transmitted to us the manuscript of the university library of Würzburg (M. p. th. q. 13) probably resembles the original text of Eigel most of all, as Pius Engelbert convincingly has demonstrated. In this manuscript the *dies natalis* of Sturm is on 17 December, as Eigel had instituted. The other three manuscripts (Bamberg Staatl. Bibliothek Hist. 141; Erlangen Universitätsbibliothek 417; Paderborn, erzbischöflich. Akademische Bibliothek Theod. Ba.2) contain copies of a younger revised and shorter edition of the *Vita Sturmi* that probably was made around the middle of the tenth century under the influence of Ottonian monastic policy. They record 20 December. Engelbert, *Die Vita Sturmi*, pp. 46-7 and 51-3.

¹⁴⁶ In Fulda the feast of Ignatius was celebrated on 17 December, rather than on 17 October as had been common in the West. This was likely due to a scribal error of Bede, whose martyrology the monks of Fulda used. ‘in natale sancti Ignatii [...] qui paulo inferius ab hac anniversaria numeratur’ suggests that there was a calendar that originally listed Sturm’s anniversary after the feast of Ignatius.


¹⁴⁸ A. Vauchez, *La Sainteté en Occident aux derniers Siècles du Moyen Âge d’après les Procès de Canonisation et les Documents hagiographiques* (Bibliothèce des écoles françaises d’Athènes et de
declaring someone a saint was a delicate and uncertain business. First of all, the Carolingian kings and ecclesiastical elite were not very fond of living wonder-workers, and they were also suspicious towards dead ones. Through their capitularies they tried to control the domain of the sacred. However, there was no clear procedure at all to make someone a saint. Ecclesiastical legislation and local circumstances, wishes and needs determined whether someone was declared a saint and how sanctity was defined.\(^\text{149}\) Sturm's anniversary and its details were open to discussion. Eigil tried to make the celebration authoritative by modelling the celebration after the example of an anniversary given by Johannes Cassianus, to prevent it from being superstitiosa and cassa, superstitious and vain.\(^\text{150}\)

There are hardly any miracles in the *Vita Sturmi*.\(^\text{151}\) Rather than as a wonder-worker Sturm is remembered as primus abbas et fundator monasterii Fuldae, the first abbot and founder of Fulda.\(^\text{152}\) As Eigil claims in the introduction it was his aim to write about 'both the early days and life of Sturm [...] and the foundation of the aforesaid monastery'.\(^\text{153}\)

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\(\text{149}\) Evidence from Carolingian legislation confirms the delicacy of this kind of business. *Admonitio Generalis*, nr. 22, p. 56, c. 42; *Concilium Francofurtense* (AD. 794), ed. Boretius, *MGH Concilii frumenti*, 2/1, p. 170; *Capitula ecclesiastica* (AD. 801), ed. J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* t. XIII, col. 1067; *Concilium Moguntinense* (AD. 813) ed. Albertus Werminghoff, *MGH Conc. 2/1*, p. 272. The legislation concerned both long-dead saints, as well as ones that had recently died and show the general Carolingian anxiety about legitimising cults and saints. This can partly be explained from political motives. See for example Paul Fouracre, 'The origins of the Carolingian attempt to regulate the cult of saints' in: *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, eds. James Howard-Johnston and Paul Anthony Hayward (Oxford 1999) pp. 143-65.

\(\text{150}\) 'But in order that no one would consider this celebration to be superstitious and vain, let him read the dialogues of the holy fathers and there he will find the example of this festivity.' 'Sed ne cui fortasse haec celebratio superstitiosa et cassa esseuideatur, legat conlocutiones sanctorum patrum, et iber repierre huius festivitatis exemplum'. *Candidus, Vita Aegil I*, c. 22, p. 18. Johannes Cassianus, *Collationes XIX* 1, ed. E. Pichery, SC 64 (Paris 1959), p. 39.

\(\text{151}\) Only the third chapter, which tells us about the ordination of Sturm as a priest, refers to certain miraculous power: 'Through the power of the Holy Spirit many miracles were wrought by him. Many times he drove out evil spirits by his prayers from sinful Christians. Many times he cured souls that had been infected with the poisonous doctrines of error'. These miracles sound pretty 'earthy' and are merely signs of good preaching and teaching in the Christian doctrines'.

\(\text{152}\) See also *Candidus, Vita Aegil I*, c. 3, p. 5.

\(\text{153}\) *Eigil, Vita Sturmi*, c. 3, p. 131. It was not uncommon to choose the form of a *Vita* of a first abbot to write a foundation history. See for example Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings' Past*; J. Kastner, *Historiae funationum monasteriorum. Frühformen monastischer*
of all portrayed Sturmi as a competent manager of the monastery and its properties, and a worthy representative of Fulda in secular affairs.

The lack of miracles in the *Vita Sturmi* is not extraordinary. The *vitae* of other Carolingian potential holy men, for example, Alcuin and Benedict of Aniane, both written soon after their main characters died, contain few miracles; these texts deal with ‘managers’, either of monasteries or divine knowledge. Presumably Eigel was also influenced by the new Anglo-Saxon approach to *vitae*, of which the *Vita Ceolfridi* and Bede’s *Historia abbatum* were the main representatives, even though these works themselves probably came to the Continent long after Eigel had died. These texts resemble histories rather than miracle books aimed to boost a cult. Although there are no indications in the *Vita Sturmi* that Eigel used Bede, the author was possibly inspired by the Anglo-Saxon ‘school’ that was related to this scholar.

In spite of the lack of miracles in the *Vita Sturmi*, Eigel did certainly not intend to write simply a historical account of an important person. In the *Vita Sturmi* the author portrayed Sturmi as a powerful patron of Fulda, a saint. At the end of the *vita*, in the section in which Sturm is dying, he writes:

> While we stood around his bed and saw how quickly his end would be, one of us said: ‘Father, we have no doubt that you are going to God and that you will enjoy eternal life. Therefore we beg your paternity to be mindful of us there and pray for us, your disciples; for our confidence is great that it will be our profit to have sent on before us so powerful a patron’.

This fragment hints at the intercessory role a saint could fulfil for his community, something the monks of Fulda hoped Sturmi would do for them.

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*Institutionsgeschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter* (München, Beiträge zur Mediävistik and Renaissance Forschung 18: Munich 1974).


135 See Engelbert’s introduction to the *Vita Sturmi*, pp. 22-4, 37.


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New peace

A reason for Eigel to stress Sturmi's role as a patron of Fulda might well have been to restore and reaffirm the cohesion of the monastic community. At the end of the Vita Sturmi Eigel reminded the brethren of Sturmi's incessant toil for the monastery. According to his biographer Sturmi spoke the following words at his deathbed:

I have laboured, even till the present day, for your profit and peace, particularly for the continuance of this monastery after my death, so that you may be able to serve God here with sincerity and charity according to the will of Christ. Persevere, then, o brothers, all the days of your life in the way of life that you have begun.  

It was a call to the present-day community to safeguard the continuation of Fulda. Therefore they needed to seek reconciliation.

Some indications in the Vita Sturmi suggest that one of the aims of the Vita Sturmi was to resolve current disagreements in the community. The last chapter of the Vita Sturmi contains a speech Sturmi supposedly delivered before he died. When he felt his death approaching, Sturmi gathered the monks of Fulda around his bed. The abbot asked the monks to pray for him: 'and if I have committed any fault among you through human frailty or wronged anyone unjustly, forgive me as I also forgive all those who have offended or wronged me, including Lull, who always took sides against me'. Just as Sturmi apologised for his own mistakes and forgave his enemies, so should the monks.

Another quotation of the Vita Sturmi that could be interpreted as a call for reconciliation and forgiveness is the rapprochement between Sturmi and King Pippin in 765. After having spent two years in exile, Sturmi was commanded by Pippin to return to court. Though it remains vague what actually had happened between the two men, Eigel carefully pictured their conversation. It seems that, by the mercy of God, Pippin suddenly changes his mind, without any other provocation. His words to

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158 'et si quippiam prave apud vos egi vel aliquem injuste offendi ignoscite mihi et ego cunctis ex intimo corde omnia convicia et omnes contumelias meas ignoscio, recon Lullo qui mihi semper adversabatur'. Idem, c. 25, p. 162.
159 Compare this to the speech of Eigel on his deathbed: ' “Si quem”, inquit, laesi, humili supplicacione ueniam rogo, et si a quouquam laesus fuisse: ‘dimittat illi’, dicitur, et ego ueraciter illi ex intimo corde dimitto”’. Candidus, Vita Aegil I c. 25, p. 20. Interestingly enough the speech Eigel held at his deathbed is very similar to Sturmi's. See also the speech of Wynnebald on his deathbed: Vita Wynnebaldi c. 9, p. 114.
the Fulda abbot in the *Vita Sturmi* are: ‘Whether or not you have ever conceived an evil design against me or have done me any wrong, may God forgive you as I do from my heart. For the future, enjoy my favour and friendship all the days of my life’.\(^{160}\) Did the new father of the community want to set an example for the monks of how to deal with conflicts and breaches of peace? Was his text an invitation to restore peace and harmony according to the principles of Fulda’s founders and to secure the continuity of the monastery? This is not unlikely; Eigil himself set a good example to his monks when he asked Louis the Pious to release Ratgar from his punishment.\(^{161}\) Ratgar then moved to the community of Frauenberg, which lies only at a fifteen minutes walking distance from the mother convent.

If Eigil wanted to use the *Vita Sturmi* to restore peace in the community, it would have been important to appeal to all factions in the monastery. It would explain why Eigil did not explicitly speak his mind about Boniface’s heritage, while we know from the *Supplex Libellus* that it was under discussion. In the text the author provided a collective set of symbols rooted in old traditions that the monks were very familiar with, and which must have appealed to all: Sturmi, Boniface, the wilderness, the Carolingian dynasty and the Rule of Benedict. Eigil reminded the monks of what they had in common. He bound them together by differentiating the monastery from the world outside. The forests of Buchonia he depicted as a sacred island of solitude in the middle of the transitory world. Its limits were revealed as soon as they were crossed. Within this solitude only Fulda was preordained by God to be a *monasterium*. In addition to this, Eigil stressed that Boniface had not want to be buried in Utrecht or Mainz; the martyr had chosen Fulda.

In his story about Fulda and Sturmi, Eigil dramatised common enemies, most of all Lull the archbishop of Mainz and his puppet Marcus, who the archbishop made abbot of Fulda while Sturmi was in exile.\(^{162}\) In this manner the author channelled all the resentment concerning the struggle over the relics of Boniface and the exile of Sturmi towards Lull. Thus Eigil not only created external enemies, but also glossed over certain controversies of Sturmi’s past and turned the abbot into a ‘saint’. As such Sturmi could become a symbol of the new unity in Fulda, based on the tradition of an authoritative past.

Eigil did not only use the *Vita Sturmi* as an instrument to soothe the conflicts and bring about a new unity in Fulda in the aftermath of the


\(^{161}\) Candidus, *Vita Aegil I*, c. 23, p. 19.

\(^{162}\) Eigil, *Vita Sturmi*, c. 18, pp. 152-3.
Ratgar crisis (for example by ordering the text to be read out to the monks at least once a year), but also included the commemoration of all the deceased monks of the community in the celebration of Sturmi’s anniversary. By connecting the anniversary of the founder of the monastery with the remembrance of the monks of Fulda who had passed away, past, present and future were connected. Sturmi, representing all the deceased monks, became a symbol of new agreement and unity of the entire community of Fulda. Promoting Sturmi’s cult and memory can only have strengthened this effect.

Eigil’s attempts to turn Sturmi into a patron saint may well have had also something to do with his attempts to legitimise his leadership within this community. Laying claim to Sturmi’s authority, Eigil put himself forward as a suitable and worthy replacement of Ratgar and successor of Sturmi. Hailing from the same part of Bavaria Eigil was a relative of the founder of the monastery as well as his disciple for more than twenty years. Eigil presented himself as the guardian of Sturmi’s heritage. The text created a lineage of tutors and disciples, clearly linking Eigil to Sturmi, and through this first abbot also to the patron saint Boniface. By casting himself into the role of self-appointed keeper of a venerable and ancient tradition represented by Sturmi and Boniface, Eigil also portrayed himself as a worthy candidate for Fulda’s abbacy.163 With the Vita Sturmi Eigil also intended to initiate a succession of abbots’ lives.

As said above, there might once have been a Vita Bonifatii. Shortly after he himself had finished the Vita Sturmi the abbot asked his pupil Candidus to write a vita of Sturmi’ successor, Baugulf. Unfortunately the Vita Baugulfi now is lost.164

Manuscript history

As we have seen, the content of the vita, its themes and interests mainly concerned the history of the Fulda monastery. For this reason it will come as no great surprise that the text did not spread much further than only to some places connected to Fulda and Boniface. The Vita Sturmi is transmitted in four manuscripts165. One manuscript comprises lives of

163 Perhaps Louis the Pious approved of Eigil’s election because of the monk’s old age and in the hope that it would calm down the monks. In that sense Eigil served as an intermediary between the several factions in the monastery.
164 See Chapter Four.
165 Bamberg, Staatl. Bibliothek, Hist. 141 (1492-1502); Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 417 (around 1200); Paderborn, Erzbischöf. Akademische Bibliothek, Theod.Ba 2 (probably 1459); Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. p. th. q. 13 (1417). Engelbert, Die Vita Sturmi, p. 130
saints, who have been living under the Rule of Benedict\textsuperscript{166}, the other three of lives of members of the ‘family’ of Anglo-Saxon missionaries.\textsuperscript{167} In the Paderborn manuscript the \textit{Vita Sturmi} is part of a \textit{legendarium}.\textsuperscript{168} The \textit{Vita Sturmi} has thus been transmitted to us particularly in relation to Boniface’s \textit{familia}. Textual sources from outside Fulda also place Sturmi in a Fulda context. Sturmi is mentioned in the \textit{Vitae} of Gregory, Leoba, Boniface (of Otloh) and Lull. Their \textit{Vitae} are one of the few sources that refer to Sturmi. Texts written outside Fulda that used or cited from the \textit{Vita Sturmi} were also connected with the cycle of Anglo-Saxon martyr. Otloh of St. Emmeram’s \textit{Vita Bonifatii}, written between 1062 and 1066, made use of the \textit{Vita Sturmi}. Also, Lampert of Hersfeld used the text, when, between 1063 and 1073, he composed a life on Lull, archbishop of Mainz.\textsuperscript{169}

Conclusion

As we have seem, the conflict, disrupting life in Fulda in the 810s, hinged on clashing interpretations of monastic life and the governance of a monastery. The authors of the \textit{Supplex Libellus} pleaded in defence of a community of prayer under the guidance of a friendly and mild abbot who showed consideration for what the average monk was capable of and a community where the monks themselves undertook all tasks of running the monastery as the Rule of Benedict prescribed. Ratgar seems to have facilitated the entry into the monastery, while those who were monks now had to meet stringent requirements and were separated ever more strictly from the worldly business. Certain responsibilities the abbot delegated to lay men. Moreover the monks were no longer allowed to give guests the usual welcome.

Ratgar, lacking discretion, appears not to have tolerated any weakness, demanding of all his monks to be similar. The authors of the \textit{Supplex Libellus} protested against this. They would have agreed with Hucbald of St Amand, writing in the late ninth century on music theory,

\bibitem{Bamberg} Bamberg: Engelbert, \textit{Die Vita Sturmi}, p. 41.
\bibitem{Erlangen} The Erlangen codex contains the \textit{Life of Boniface} of Otloh, the \textit{Vita I Burchardi}, the \textit{Vita Lulli auctore Lamperto}, the \textit{Vita Wigberti auctore Servato Lupo}, a sermon of Boniface, the \textit{Vita Gregorii Traiectensis auctore Liudgero abbreviata} and the \textit{Vita Leobae auctore Rudolfo}. Engelbert, \textit{Die Vita Sturmi}, p. 42; The manuscript of the university library of Würzburg contains the \textit{Vita Bonifatii} of Otloh of St. Emmeram (11th century), \textit{De adventu sancti patris nostri Bonifacii}, the \textit{Vita Leobae}, written by Rudolf of Fulda and the \textit{Vita Sturmi}. Engelbert, \textit{Die Vita Sturmi}, pp. 44-5. Also: A. Poncelet, ‘\textit{Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum Bibliothecae Universitatis Würzburgensis}’, \textit{Analecta Bollandiana} 32 (1913) p. 421; W. Levison, \textit{Conspectus Codicum Hagiographicorum}, MGH SRM 7 (Hanover 1920) nr. 834, p. 704.
\bibitem{Paderborn} \textit{Paderborn}; idem, p. 43.
\bibitem{Engelbert} Engelbert, \textit{Die Vita Sturmi}, p. 40.
that concord could not come from a soloist or from two singers with identical voices, but that it came from two or more entirely different voices.\textsuperscript{170} Also to them, distinction was essential to concord. When they spoke of \textit{unitas}, they probably meant peace and harmony; to them \textit{unitas} was the 'endearing and concordant sweetness' resulting from the heterogeneity of the monastic community.\textsuperscript{171}

In defence of their ideal monastery, the authors of the \textit{Supplex Libellus} fell back on the past, arguing that Ratgar had betrayed Fulda's principals, once instituted by Boniface and Sturmi and founded on biblical tradition. Also Eigil, only a couple of years after the \textit{Supplex Libellus} was offered to the Carolingian emperor for the second time, appealed to the authoritative past, when he wrote the \textit{Vita Sturmi}. With respect to their approach to the past, the biography of Sturmi and the \textit{Supplex Libellus} are very similar. Both the \textit{Vita Sturmi} and the \textit{Supplex Libellus} use the early past of Fulda to defend a certain image of what monastic life in Fulda should be all about. Both texts highlight the significance of Boniface and Sturmi for the foundation of Fulda and, therefore, the present-day community. The \textit{Supplex Libellus} pictures the age of Sturmi and Boniface as a golden age in which monks and abbot lived together in unity and concord, with charity and humanity as their standards. Its authors employed this idealised image of the past against their current abbot. In response to their attacks Ratgar seems to have turned to the present. According to the \textit{Supplex Libellus} he relied on the decrees of the Aachen council of 816 to legitimise his measures.

In a way the \textit{Vita Sturmi} responds to this idyllic period of peace and happiness evoked by the \textit{Supplex Libellus}, though from a different angle. Eigil elaborated on what he considered to be the origins of the monastery and the parameters of its authoritative past. He also created a golden age, but he did not use this ideal to carry on a controversy, gaining support for his own cause. On the contrary, Eigil seems to have tried to reconcile the disrupted community and unite its monks. His golden age was meant for every monk of Fulda, as he wanted Sturmi to be a patron for the whole community of Fulda, as a symbol of this new unity.

Eigil's attempts to turn Sturmi into a new patron saint of Fulda, next to Boniface, seem to have failed. Probably Sturmi was not able to compete with Boniface. His name is not listed in the late ninth- or tenth-century martyrologies or the tenth- and eleventh-century sacramentaries.\textsuperscript{172} There

\textsuperscript{170} Karl Morrison, "'To know thyself' Music in the Carolingian Renaissance', \textit{Settimane} 39 (Spoleto 1992) pp. 369-483, here pp. 380-1.
\textsuperscript{171} Again this Hucbald of St Amand, in the translation of Morrison, p. 381.
is no evidence to show that Sturmi was venerated before 1139, when Pope Innocentius II declared the abbot saint. But Sturmi certainly continued to have a special place in the memoria of Fulda, as the monks remembered him in their prayers, as primus pater et fundator Fuldensis coenobii.


173 Engelbert, Die Vita Sturmi, p. 112.
